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THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

NON-COMM PROJECT TEAM:

Claire Horton – Director General and Chair Barry Murphy – Project Sponsor Liz Woodfield – Project Sponsor Kirsty Mills – Project Coordinator

RESEARCH TEAM:

Dr George Hay – Research Project Lead Dr John Burke – Research Assistant Nick Bristow – Historical Research Coordinator

OPERATIONAL DELIVERY TEAM:

David McDonald – Operational Delivery Project Lead Stuart Hemsley – Operations Researcher Jaffer Gulamhussein – Field Team Coordinator Patrick Abungu – Field Researcher

COMMUNICATIONS:

Peter Francis – Communications Project Lead

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Simon Bendry – Education & Community Engagement Project Lead

GLOBAL ADVISORY PANEL:

EAST AFRICA

Chao Tayiana Maina – a Kenyan digital heritage specialist and digital humanities scholar. Works at the intersection of culture and technology, primarily focusing on the application of technology in the preservation, engagement and dissemination of African heritage.

Professor Oswald Masebo – established Senior Lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam whose publications focus on African history and the history of medicine, as well as Tanzanian experiences of the First World War. He is the president of the Historical Association of Tanzania.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Dr George Njung – an established historian at the University of the Witwatersrand with an interest in West and Central Anglophone and Francophone Africa. Among other subjects, he is particularly interested in colonialism, the First World War, African military and political cultures and warrelated disability.

Dr Greg Mills – Director of the Brenthurst Foundation, an organisation established by the Oppenheimer family to accelerate economic expansion in Africa, driven by the sharing of ideas, data and experiences.

WEST AFRICA

Professor De-Valera Botchway - head of the history department at University of Cape Coast, Ghana. He is interested in the social and cultural history of African and diasporic African peoples.

Dr Festus Cole – Born in Sierra Leone, West Africa, and an expert on the history of Sierra Leone during the First World War. Currently Assistant Professor at Bowie State University, his teaching experience spans three continents: Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

MIDDLE EAST

Dr Alia Mossallam – works at the Centre for Middle Eastern and North African Politics at Freie Universitat, Berlin and has published on the history of the Egyptian Labour Corps in the First World War.

PRE-PARTITION INDIA

Maj-Gen (retired) Ali Hamid – Retired from the Pakistan Army in 2005 and is an established military historian and author. He is a founding member of the board of the Pakistan Army Institute of Military History. He is also actively involved in the preservation of military memorials and cemeteries.

Sqn-Ldr (retired) Rana Chhina – Secretary and Editor at the United Service Institution of India's Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research, he has expertise in the history of the Indian Army in the world wars.

UNITED KINGDOM

Professor Michèle Barret – Professor of Modern Literary and Cultural Theory, Queen Mary, University of London. She has written about noncommemoration in Africa and was a member of the original Special Committee to investigate historical cases of non-commemoration.

Shrabani Basu – Shrabani Basu is a journalist and Sunday Times best-selling author. She is the founder and chair of the Noor Inayat Khan Memorial Trust and has written several books on Indian involvement in the two world wars. She also sat on the original Special Committee.

Dr Nick Westcott – Director of the Royal African Society and Research Associate at SOAS, University of London. He holds a doctorate in African history from Cambridge University, and worked for 35 years as a diplomat for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and European Union, including extensively in Africa. He also sat on the original Special Committee.

ARTISTIC, LITERARY, EDUCATIONAL AND COMMS ADVISORS

Vasuki Shastry – previously a journalist covering business and politics in India, Singapore, and Indonesia. After leaving journalism in 1998, he worked for the International Monetary Fund in senior communication roles including Asia Pacific spokesperson, head of internal communications, and global head of public affairs. He is a serving Commissioner with the CWGC.



INTRODUCTION

It has been almost a year since the publication of the Special Committee report into historical cases of noncommemoration. That report identified significant failings in the commemoration of some of our war dead – most notably those of African, Indian, and Middle Eastern origin - and made ten recommendations on how those historic wrongs might be corrected by the present-day Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC). For its part, CWGC welcomed the report's findings, apologised unreservedly for the errors of the past, embraced the Committee's ten recommendations, and publicly reaffirmed its commitment to equality of commemoration for all.

Upon the report's publication, there was significant media and public interest, with our Chairman and Secretary of State for Defence in the United Kingdom, The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP, making a formal announcement and apology on behalf of the Commission and UK Government, in Parliament. In the days, weeks, and months since, interest has remained high and we are grateful for the ongoing support of our Chairman, Commissioners, Member Governments and the wider public, as we implement an ambitious programme

of work to ensure that ALL those who served in, or with, the Commonwealth's armed forces during the World Wars are honoured and remembered in a manner befitting their sacrifice.

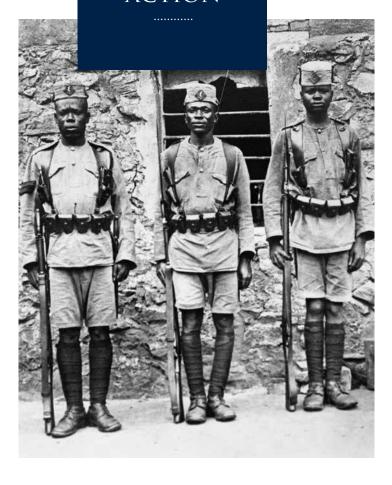
This review details our first year's work – divided into the various project strands of Research, Operational Delivery, Communications, and Education and Community Engagement.

I commend this report to you. Claire Horton CBE, Director General.





A YEAR OF ACTION



Over the past eleven months, CWGC has taken significant steps to address the issues identified in the non-commemoration report – using the Committee's ten recommendations as a framework for our actions and measures of success going forward.

The non-commemoration project sits at the core of everything CWGC now does. It is part of our culture and our daily work. It is also worth stating at the outset that everything CWGC is doing to address these issues is in line with a developmental approach that ensures the governments and communities affected by our report's findings, have a strong voice in our proposed solutions.



The grave and memorial to Major A.J.B. Wavell and his deputy Lt. Mackintosh.

In May of last year, CWGC created a dedicated project team (the members of which can be found on the inside front cover of this report) to deliver on the organisation's actions over the next five years. Supporting that work is the allocation of significant and dedicated financial support from within the CWGC's existing budget – amounting, initially, to more than 5 million pounds. Our investment, in both financial and human terms, underlines the importance we place on this work.

THE NON-COMMEMORATION PROJECT SITS AT THE CORE OF EVERYTHING CWGC NOW DOES. IT IS PART OF OUR CULTURE AND OUR DAILY WORK.



Our Field Team get a local perspective on the Arab Rifles Memorial at Mkongani (Kwale), Kenya

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THE SEARCH FOR NAMES

THERE WAS AND REMAINS A CLEAR COMMITMENT TO FIND THE NAMES OF THOSE WHO DIED AND WHO HAVE NEVER BEEN PROPERLY COMMEMORATED...

It was recognised early that CWGC's solutions to the issues identified, and the direction of the wider project, would depend largely on the ongoing search for names, numbers, and historical context. There was and remains a clear commitment to find the names of those who died and who have never been properly commemorated and the CWGC's dedicated team of historians, supported by a network of international partners, has prioritised this area of work. It was also agreed to extend the search to the Second World War and its aftermath – something the original report was unable to do due to the limitations imposed by time and Covid.

Focussing on the largest known unknowns (the areas where potentially the largest number of unrecorded war deaths exist), priority was given to archives in Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Egypt. At the same time, UK research targeted official government

collections at The National Archives and British Library, as well as personal papers held elsewhere. Although primarily focused on context and policy, this work surprisingly yielded 5,000 names. Our initial euphoria at such a significant discovery has been tempered by more modest finds in Kenya and elsewhere. Although every name found is a small victory, CWGC is planning for scenarios where significant numbers of names may never be recovered.

To date, the team have completed more than 100 in-archive research days across East Africa (the majority in Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Zambia). Later this year, during the second phase of research, focus will shift to West Africa, Egypt, India and Pakistan. In total, more than 6,000 names have been recovered and are in the process of adjudication (using a revised noncommemoration policy developed



specifically for this project) before they are added to our records.

Until we know how many names we may or may not find, it is difficult to quantify what our physical or digital commemoration programme might look like. But it is also important that we understand the historical context to these issues and get a better grasp on the potential numbers of individuals affected.



CWGC Historian Dr George Hay is leading our search for names

THE SEARCH FOR NAMES

E. A. T. C. CARRIER SECTION. MONTHLY DEATH RETURN.

List V. Month of October 1915.

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Our initial report detailed very broad figures for the number of potential individuals not commemorated at the end of the First World War. Through detailed research we are achieving a much better understanding of the scale of loss and equally important, the historical context around the contribution these individuals made, and the decisions taken that led to their non-commemoration.

Following research at The National Archives in the UK, for example, we are now increasingly confident that the total number of Egyptian Labour Corps and Camel Transport Corps personnel who died during the First World War sits at the lower, but no less significant, end of our original estimate – this means 16,000 individuals rather than 50,000 plus. We also have greater clarity on why the names of these men were not available to the Commission in the post-war period and are working with contacts within Egypt to gain access to any relevant archival material that may help us trace them.



Archives in the UK and elsewhere are being systematically scanned for lists of names and contextual information.

While the search for names continues, all newly commemorated war dead will be recorded online and physically in Rolls of Honour held at CWGC's Head Office and in the countries in which they died, pending discussions with governments and local communities as to what form and location physical commemoration might take. Rolls of Honour have been created for Iraq and Sierra Leone and are available online at www.cwgc.org

An example of a Military Labour Bureau 'death list' found within the Kenya National Archives.



UNDERPINNING THIS WORK IS A DEVELOPMENTAL BASED APPROACH, AIMED AT ENSURING LOCAL COMMUNITIES ARE AT THE HEART OF THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

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Following closely behind the search for names, is a desire and need for the CWGC to effectively memorialise these individuals. That work falls broadly into several categories...

- Ongoing projects, like our new memorial in Cape Town, that will commemorate almost 1,700 black South Africans not previously commemorated.
- Short/Medium Term projects which can be programmed for the first 1-2 years of the project including taking the necessary steps to discuss collaboration with local stakeholders in relation to third-party memorials in Africa that include names not currently held in our records, like the Kings African Rifles Memorial in Malawi and the search for abandoned graves.
- And finally, longer term projects which will derive from the research outcomes.



Left and above - A Public Participation Phase gave members of the public an opportunity to ask questions about CWGC's plans for a new memorial in Cape Town.

...... Operational Delivery

Underpinning this work is a development-based approach to heritage projects aimed at ensuring local communities are at the heart of the decision-making process and involved throughout the execution and future custodianship of the heritage assets. We believe our projects should add value to the local community they are intended to serve and in so doing, we believe these measures ensure community buy-in from the outset and create a sense of ownership and belonging for the future.

Supporting this work are several new roles – most notably in Kenya – where two additional staff have been recruited. They will be key in delivering on our commitment to engage communities, and in searching for sites of potential interest – including third-party memorials or potential individual or mass burial locations and we are pleased to report that several physical commemoration projects are developing.







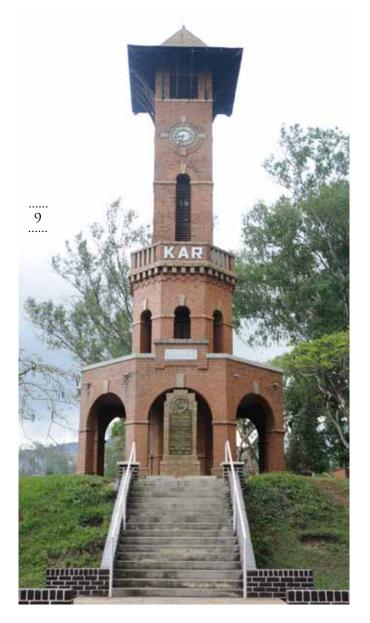
Above. Our team in Kenya, from left to right Daniel Achini, Jaffer Gulamhussein, Patrick Abungu and Beatrice Mwenesi are making significant progress on our key project at Kwale in the coastal region of Kenya

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MAKING Progress



Our new memorial in South Africa is on schedule with the completion in December of a nationwide Public Participation Process. Although this is a legal requirement of the planning process in South Africa, ensuring stakeholders have a voice in the memorial's construction, the process has the added benefit of raising the memorial's profile – and we are excited by the discussions already taking place within South Africa about how the memorial might further education and understanding in the future. We are on schedule to launch the architectural competition for the memorial this Spring and aim to commence construction in 2023.



Left: The King's African Rifles Memorial in Malawi Centre: Calabar Memorial in Nigeria Right: Ibadan Memorial in Nigeria



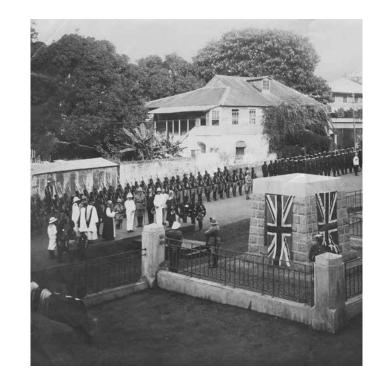
Through research, CWGC has identified several memorials erected in the aftermath of the First World War by various individuals, regiments, or associations. These "third-party" memorials occasionally bear the names of individuals not within our records and CWGC is aiming to clarify the ownership of these structures with the aim of partnering with the relevant local stakeholders and permanently preserving them. We have been working to understand the historical context of how this memorial came to be created, and in doing so ensure that casualties not previously known to the commission are added to our records. Efforts are underway to identify key stakeholders in Malawi, with a view discussing how we might collaborate to tell the story of those Malawians who served during the First World War.



On a slightly smaller, but no less significant scale, a memorial to 14 members of the Arab Rifles, previously not commemorated by the CWGC, has been identified at Mwele Ndogo in Kwale, Kenya. Discussions with the local community are advanced. CWGC engaged with the village elders at this remote location with a view to securing the long-term future of the memorial and capturing oral histories which discuss their relationship to this history and how we might use the location to bring tangible benefits to the community. The names of the 14 men have been accepted for commemoration and added to CWGC's records, while discussions are also underway with the Museums of Kenya, on how this and other

sites might be gazetted, and form part of Kenya's rich heritage offer.

In Sierra Leone, the names of 939 individuals – predominantly Sierra Leone casualties who died while serving with British forces during the First World War as carriers and porters – will be added to a new memorial in Freetown within the next 24 months. A regional radio campaign is planned to capture the views of the Sierra Leonian people as to the form and location of the new memorial and any oral histories about the men the memorial will commemorate. The campaign will be supported by an exhibition at the National Museum in Freetown.



Unveiling of the original Freetown Memorial, Sierra Leone by Captain C E Cookson in 1931 Below: The Mwele Ndogo Memorial in Kenya

CWGC IS AIMING TO CLARIFY THE
OWNERSHIP OF THESE STRUCTURES
WITH THE AIM OF PARTNERING WITH THE
RELEVANT LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS AND
PERMANENTLY PRESERVING THEM.

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DIGITAL Commemoration

CWGC is committed to co-creating with affected communities, digital and physical commemorative resources, spaces, and structures. As mentioned earlier, the form and scale will be dictated by the search for names but should large numbers of names prove impossible to find, the broader importance of capturing and telling stories, will increase. Indeed, part of our success criteria is defined by raising awareness of the contribution and sacrifices of all Commonwealth servicemen and women.

In many of the countries and communities we are working in and with, there exists a strong oral history tradition. We are also aware that there exists a rich vein of first-hand testimony from those who took part or were directly affected by the World Wars. CWGC is keen to capture and make available this testimony in what we hope will be a resource of international significance.



Patrick Abungu provides 97 year old Esther Mutava with a photo of her husband's grave

THERE EXISTS A RICH VEIN OF FIRST-HAND TESTIMONY FROM THOSE WHO TOOK PART OR WERE DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY THE WORLD WARS.

DIGITAL Commemoration

An oral history pilot project is in development for Sierra Leone, Tanzania and the United Kingdom and this year we will have costed and sought funding, through our charitable Foundation, for a wider oral histories project aimed at capturing the stories of the remaining African world war veterans and the families of those who had relatives that served in those conflicts. It is planned to deliver the project in partnership with several education and heritage institutions and diaspora groups in the UK and abroad. Some exploratory work in this area has already yielded moving results.

Esther Mbulwa Mutava is 97 years old and lives in the village of Kitui in Kenya. Esther recently met with CWGC's Kenya fieldwork team to tell her story.

In 1943, Private Mutava Ingati requested a month's leave to travel back to his home in Kitui so that he could be married. Mutava's elder brother had already been killed in the war and he was concerned that if he died unmarried and childless, his family name and legacy would be lost. His request was granted, and he married Esther – staying with her for just a month before he returned to the war, never to return.

Mutava returned to action and subsequently died on 1st August 1945. He is buried in CWGC's Calcutta (Bhowanipore) Cemetery, India. Esther received news of her husband's death from his older brother but as no official documents reached her, she was reluctant to believe the terrible news, and held out

hope for 79 years that he might one day still return.

Communicating the reality of what happened was hard for Esther to hear and CWGC's Kenyan team to deliver but was tempered by her response to our offer to add a personal inscription to Mutava's headstone. Without a moment's hesitation she asked that "NGAI NAIE THAGÛ WAKEVANDÛ VASEO" in her native Kikamba be added to the stone – something CWGC is delighted to do on her behalf. The inscription, translates to... "LET THE LORD KEEP HIS SOUL IN PEACE."

Esther's husband is buried in CWGC's Calcutta (Bhowanipore) Cemetery, India.





EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



"I'M HOPING TO BE A
HISTORIAN, SO I WOULD
LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT
THE PEOPLE WHO FOUGHT
IN THE FIRST AND SECOND
WORLD WAR."

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Discovering and telling stories, like Esthers', highlights the sacrifices made by communities currently underrepresented through commemoration, and the impact those deaths, and lack of wider recognition, still have to this day. In developing a broad and far-reaching range of relationships and partnerships, we hope to promote increased awareness of our work and the contribution and sacrifices of those who served and died in two World Wars. To aid this, we have created a series of research guides to assist people in discovering their own heritage.



In recent months we have held our first education outreach event at Kariokor in Nairobi with local students in the age range of 10 – 14. The students visited the cemetery and took part in activities designed to give them a better understanding of Kenya's role in the world wars and the diversity of those who served. The response from the students and teachers was positive and the intention is to roll the activity out more widely to make use of other CWGC sites in Kenya and Tanzania. CWGC is now developing and promoting a range of education resources that can be used at our sites globally to reinforce the theme of "world wars" – ie moving our audiences away from the purely Western Front/ European bias of the past.

At a more academic level, partnering with the University of Dar es Salaam,

the British Council and British High Commission in Tanzania, CWGC delivered an online seminar to discuss more widely with veterans' groups and others, how we might raise awareness of the contribution of Africans to the world wars. Interestingly, we have noticed a significant increase in audience traffic to our website since these events took place – something we wish to build on and sustain. And again, at an academic level, we are delighted to have secured funding from the CHASE Collaborative Doctoral Award, alongside partners at the Universities of Kent and Essex, for a PhD post. The successful applicant will specialise in helping CWGC understand the policy, practice and outcomes for Indian Casualties (with regard to commemoration) on the Western Front and other theatres of the First World War.

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Working overseas is just one aspect to our education and engagement activity as we recognise the significant interest that exists in the UK. Working with several organisations (including Black Rose of Remembrance, Arts Asia, The Royal Air Force, British Army, UK Punjabi Historical Association, We Are West Indies Association and others) we delivered a series of events across the UK for Black History Month, South Asian Heritage Month and more generally across all CWGC digital channels. Each of these organisations is now represented on a CWGC forum that meets regularly to explore activity and share ideas for reaching previously under-represented communities both in the UK and across the globe.

Our education efforts culminated in our remembrance campaign – #Remembranceis – in which we encouraged people around the world to use the hashtag and tell us what remembrance means to them. The campaign was deliberately designed to start a conversation around remembrance as we now know it, and what we may want or need it to become. It was and remains our intent, to explore what barriers might exist to remembrance, how they might be overcome and what we may need to do differently if we want the next generation or communities more widely, to take ownership of remembrance. The campaign was hugely successful, breaking all CWGC records for online engagement . It was supported by a short film and classroom activities designed for use in remembrance assemblies. The resource was sent to 34,000 educators.





Students and teachers at the neighbouring school trialled our new education resources at Kariokor Cemetery, Nairobi

THE VALUE Of External Voices

The benefit of external expert voices was proven by the work of the Special Committee and since April 2021 CWGC received more than 150 offers of assistance from individuals, institutions, and associations around the world. Each was assessed for their level of interest and potential benefit to the project, and many are now actively involved in our work.

A number of those individuals were invited to form our Global Advisory Panel, which met for the first time in February. The membership of the panel can be seen on the inside front cover of this report. It consists of subject matter experts from

around the world each of whom has agreed to freely provide their time and expertise to consult and advise CWGC upon its actions – ensuring the steps we take are appropriate and proportionate.





THE ROAD Ahead

As we approach the end of our first year, we are humbled by the support received from so many quarters and proud of the progress made. More importantly, we are excited and galvanised by the steps we will take in the next twelve months as we start to build – literally and metaphorically – on this year's foundations.

In the next year we will continue our search for names, so that by the year's end, we will have a much better grasp of what we may or may not uncover. This is vital as it will define much of our future work not least what commemorative structures may be appropriate, in what form and where. But we will also have made inroads into our search for abandoned graves and cemeteries, with a clear methodology on how to locate such places and how we might mark and preserve them as commemorative sites of international significance; we will have launched our oral histories project in Africa with the intent of gathering and preserving the stories of these individuals and their communities; we will have successfully judged the architectural design for the new memorial in Cape Town and begun its construction; we will commence construction of a new memorial in Sierra Leone; our education resources and strategy will be advanced and in use (both in the UK and abroad); and all this work and more will become an increasingly natural part of the Commission's daily activity – embedded in everything we say and do.

The past eleven months has witnessed a significant period of change and progress for CWGC. We don't yet have all the answers to the challenges we face, but we have a dedicated and passionate team, and the resources to support them. We have an engaged public and a supportive network of partners around the globe committed to helping us with our aims. All of this is backed by the CWGC's member governments and Commissioners. There may be a long and challenging road ahead, but it is a journey we embrace as we seek to live up to that commitment enshrined in stone at CWGC sites the world over - Their Name Liveth For Evermore.





FRONT COVER IMAGE:

CWGC Nairobi War Cemetery, Kenya

WITH THANKS FOR IMAGES

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission would like to thank all those who have contributed to the production of this annual report with information and/or images. Your help is greatly appreciated. Please note that some of the images used in this publication were taken before Covid-19 and therefore do not show the current social distancing advice being followed.

www.cwgc.org











