



COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES



Historical Cases of Non-Commemoration Progress Report, Number Nine

We achieved the designation of the Kings Africa Rifles (KAR) Memorial in Zomba as an official CWGC point of commemoration for over 1,300 Malawian First World War casualties. Progress was also made at our sites in Kenya, and research continued to find more names. Inclusion of our work as part of the UK Royal Visit to Kenya shone a spotlight on our consultative, community first approach to commemorate significant numbers of the dead who might never be named. The quarter's highlights are:

Nairobi (Kariokor) Cemetery

- In November, Their Majesties, The King and Queen visited Kariokor War Cemetery in Nairobi; a significant choice of site as it is where un-commemorated African soldiers and carriers are buried. Hosted by the Director General and our East Africa Regional Manager, Their Majesties joined British and Kenyan military personnel in an intimate act of remembrance, awarded veterans replacement medals and then met with our teams, communities, and partners
- Kariokor War Cemetery has been widely accepted as the preferred location to create a fitting commemoration and heritage point; the project will include an impactful community-led, architectural response within the Kenyan context
- A collaborative animated sequence to help young people understand the untold stories of the one million African people who became porters and labourers during the First World War has been launched as part of a wider CWGC education resource

Abandoned Graves (East Africa)

- In September, the Royal Engineers completed a series of non-invasive land surveys across sites in Kenya. Their report will provide the operations team with clear insight so we can progress with commemorative solutions at these respective sites

Punjab Registers Project

- We announced a new, funded PhD post at the University of Greenwich, to be run in partnership with CWGC. Working with recently recovered records from Lahore Museum, the aim is to understand inconsistencies in Indian commemoration and to find the names of Indian war dead previously not commemorated
- Although we do not know for sure at this stage, it is possible we may add up to 10,000 names to CWGC's casualty database
- This work will join the ongoing efforts of a CWGC appointed researcher working in the state and military archives in India

Research - Kenyan Defence Force digitisation projection

- The partnership project to digitise the King's African Rifles records previously believed to be missing is progressing well. While in Kenya, the Director General paid a visit to the KDF and saw the digitisation project in action

Research - search for names

- Names found by the programme reaches 9050
- During our Vice Chairman's recent visit to Egypt, further discussions were held about archive access to search for records relevant to our programme with the UK Ambassador, Commonwealth Defence Attaches and the Director, British Council
- We established an oral histories project in Tanzania, working with the University of Dar es Salaam; this collaborative project will capture the voices of surviving Tanzanian Second World War veterans, alongside planned work in the Tanzania National Archives

Zomba KAR Memorial

- A physical and digital heritage trail to support the King's African Rifles Tower memorial designation in Zomba is being planned.
- As well as information panels that share the global nature of the World Wars, we will integrate the Chiwaya Voices interviews, a series of interviews completed in the 1960s by academic Mel Page and subsequently gifted to the programme for archive and restoration

Sierra Leone Carrier Corps Memorial

- Plans to create a new memorial in Freetown take shape; the memorial will acknowledge by name 930 servicemen not previously commemorated

Cape Town Labour Corps Memorial

- We initiated a closed tender for the construction of the memorial. The process of creating drawings for 1790 individually marked posts are inscribed with name, service number and date of death has begun. Timber procurement has taken place.
- An inclusive writing project to co-create a culturally fitting memorial epitaph, led by the Royal Society of Literature with poet Daljit Nagra, has been scoped
- Operational planning works towards a late 2024 opening; an architectural model is with South Africa House for UK-based engagement.

- Ends

Date of next report is our annual review of 2023, to be published in March 2024