

# COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES

## RESEARCHING SOMEONE FROM AFRICA WHO DIED IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR - GUIDANCE SHEET



This bitesize guide is designed to help you research someone from Africa who died in the First World War. Firstly, you will need to decide who you will research... this might be a relative, or you could choose a name from a local war memorial, or you might select a name from a Commonwealth War Graves (CWGC) headstone in one of our cemeteries, or on one of our memorials.

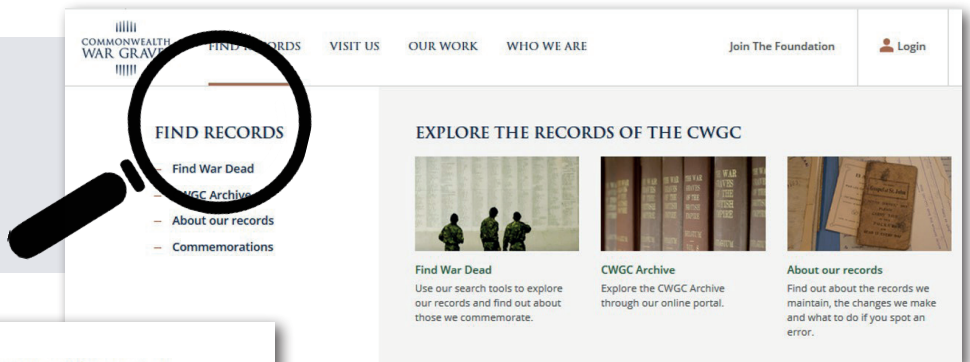
The first stage of your research starts with the **Commonwealth War Graves Commission Casualty Database**. At CWGC, we keep a record of the place of burial or commemoration of all the men and women of Britain and the Commonwealth who died in the First and Second World Wars.

### STEP 1: Visit our website at [www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org)



**Need help..?**  
Watch the 'How to search' video tutorials

Using the dropdown **FIND RECORDS** menu, select 'Find War Dead'



**FIND WAR DEAD**  
EXPLORE THE RECORDS OF THE 1.7 MILLION COMMONWEALTH MEN AND WOMEN THAT WE COMMEMORATE

Last name Enter the last name of the casualty   Match this search term exactly

First name Enter a first name   Match this search term exactly

or

Initials Enter initials   Match this search term exactly

Service Number Service numbers can contain numbers, letters and symbols   Match this search term exactly

Regiment Find records that relate to a particular regiment   Match this search term exactly

Served with (country) Served With   First World War  Second World War

Served in (army etc.) Served In   Match this search term exactly

War Select War

Fill in the name of the individual you are researching

Select **First World War** box



**Research tip**  
The names of Africans who served are usually only recorded in the last name section. Try both names, and reverse the order as this can happen in the records.

If you already have some more details about the person you are looking for such as their age, service number, date of death, or any medals they received, you can add these into the **ADDITIONAL FIELDS** section.

**ADDITIONAL FIELDS**

Select additional options to add them to your search criteria

+ Country (commemorated in)
+ Cemetery or Memorial
+ Unit
+ Rank
+ Secondary Regiment
+ Age at death
+ Date of Death

+ Honours & awards
+ Additional Information

If you know where the person you are looking for died, for example, you can put this into the Additional Information box.

You will then get a list of the results...

<b>SALIM</b> Porter Service Number: MSA/120853	East African Carriers East African Military Labour Bureau United Kingdom	Died 21 November 1916	EAST AFRICA BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE Online Commemoration	More details Save to My list
<b>OBOTH OLU</b> Carrier Service Number: KSU/300202	East African Carriers East African Military Labour Bureau United Kingdom	Died 22 June 1916	EAST AFRICA BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE Online Commemoration	More details Save to My list
<b>YOWAR NIKA</b> Driver Service Number: 2458	East African Mechanical Transport Corps United Kingdom	Died 15 March 1918	DAR ES SALAAM WAR CEMETERY Screen Wall Mem. Garden "C", Tanzania	More details Save to My list
<b>OLUCH</b> Porter Service Number: KSU/512116	East African Carriers East African Military Labour Bureau United Kingdom	Died 03 March 1917	EAST AFRICA BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE Online Commemoration	More details Save to My list
<b>KAGWA ERIA</b> Private Service Number: 419	East African Native Medical Corps. East African Army Medical Corps United Kingdom	Died 23 November 1917	DAR ES SALAAM WAR CEMETERY Screen Wall Mem. Garden "C", Tanzania	More details Save to My list

**Be aware,**  
CWGC records don't always include details about where an individual was from, or exactly where they died. Our records are centred around where a person is buried or commemorated.



If you have not found who you are looking for, you can refine the results

If you think you have found the person you are looking for, select 'More details' and you will get an at-a-glance record

If you cannot find the person you are searching for, you can contact us here <https://www.cwgc.org/contact-us/>

**Did you know...?**  
The records of the CWGC are not complete. Research is still being done and names are added to our records regularly.

Here you will discover the information held by CWGC. If known, the Additional Info can include next of kin details and address

**DRIVER YOWAR NIKA**  
Service Number: 2458

**Regiment & Unit/Ship**  
East African Mechanical Transport Corps

**Date of Death**  
Died 15 March 1918

**Buried or commemorated at**  
DAR ES SALAAM WAR CEMETERY  
Screen Wall Mem. Garden "C", Tanzania

Country of Service: United Kingdom

[Download certificate](#)

COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES

**FROM THE CWGC ARCHIVES**

**GRAVE REGISTRATION (2)**

Click to zoom in

**HEADSTONE (2)**

Click to zoom in

On the next page you will find a link to our **CWGC Archives** and any additional information which is held about this soldier. You can find several different types of official CWGC reports here. Find out more about these on page 3.

### What are **Headstone Reports**?

These provide details of what is inscribed on an individual's headstone. The main purpose of these reports was to help manage the enormous programme of headstone production and engraving embarked by CWGC during the world wars.

### What are **Grave Registration Reports (GRRs)**?

These forms detail the graves we are responsible for within a particular burial site. Each grave is listed by Plot, Row and Grave number. These reports often provide basic details of the individual such as their name, service number, rank, regiment, unit and date of their death, when known to us.

### What are **Concentration Reports**?

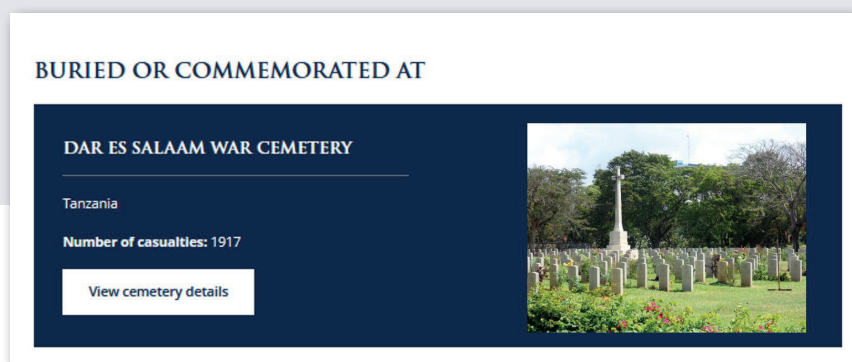
These record details of individuals who were originally buried in smaller or isolated cemeteries, but who, at a later date, were exhumed and reburied in 'concentrated' war cemeteries. This enabled CWGC to fully commemorate and look after otherwise unmaintainable graves.

Further down on your search page you can find more details about the cemetery where the person you are looking for is buried, or the memorial upon which they are commemorated.



#### Did you know...?

The CWGC maintains more than 200 memorials across the globe. These record nearly 700,000 names of those who have no known grave, were buried at sea or cremated



## Step 2: Exploring additional resources to find out more about the individual



You need to check if there are any the Enquiry Files held by the **CWGC Archives** <http://archive.cwgc.org> These contain correspondence between the family of those killed and the Commission. Only a small number of these files still survive.

Enquiry Files cover a range of subjects, including:

- Attempts to locate a missing individual
- Requests for the remains of a casualty to be returned to the country they came from, known as the 'repatriation of remains'
- The addition of a personal inscription to a CWGC headstone
- Requests for a photograph of a grave
- Issues about the maintenance or upkeep of a grave
- The exhumation and reburial of a casualty
- The return of wooden crosses to families



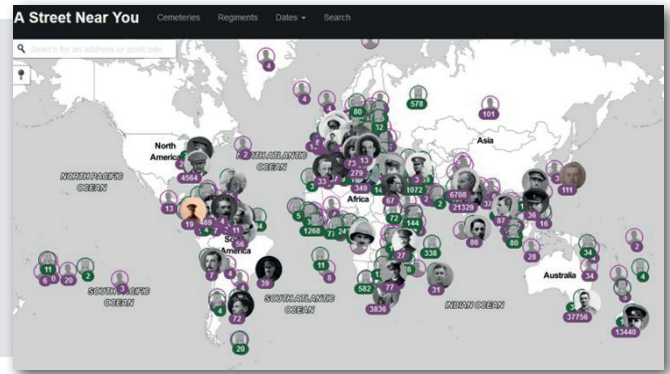
#### Did you know...?

The Imperial War Graves Commission was founded in 1917. Before that, an army unit, Directorate of Graves Registration and Enquiries (DGRE) began the work of recording details of those who had died

## Step 3: Searching for additional information online

**A Street Near You** uses maps to locate where those who died in the First World War originally came from and where they are now commemorated. You can search by lots of different terms so see what you can discover. It also provides links to other archives.

<https://astreetnearyou.org>



The King's African Rifles and East African Forces Association website includes some useful information about those who served in East Africa in the First World War.

<http://www.kingsafricanriflesassociation.co.uk/the-history-of-the-ka-r/>

A detailed summary of the fighting in Africa during the First World War can be found on the *Away from the Western Front* website.

<https://www.bl.uk/world-war-one/articles/the-first-world-war-in-east-africa>



## The Great War in Africa Association

The Great War in Africa Association website includes lots of information and links to discover more about the fighting in Africa during the First World War.

<https://gweaa.com/>

The Guerrillas of Tsavo website contains detailed information about the First World War in East Africa and those who fought and served in the campaign.

<https://www.heroes.guerrillasoftsavo.com/>

