

Sent Missing in Africa

Briefing paper for *The Unremembered*

How Britain's colonial forces of the First World War
were treated by the War Graves Commission



Dar es Salaam. Statues were put up in three cities in East Africa, commemorating, unnamed and unnumbered, Africans who had died on the British side in the East African campaign of World War One.

by Michèle Barrett

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Introduction

The spring of 2017 saw the centenary of the founding of the Imperial War Graves Commission. Brought into being by royal charter, and headed by the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII), the Imperial War Graves Commission took a controversial stand for equal treatment of men of different military ranks and social classes. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as it has been called since 1960, has subsequently told its own story to make us believe that it treated everyone equally. It did not. The appearance of equality that we see in the cemeteries and memorials of the Western Front is restricted to that front. Outside Europe, no such principle of equality was followed.

In Africa, where the first and last shots of the First World War were fired, a policy of extreme discrimination applied. White soldiers were buried in what were called “white graves”, which have been maintained in perpetuity, often in beautiful cemeteries. But it was argued that the Africans who had fought and died as soldiers or lost their lives as porters, upwards of 200,000 of them, had not reached “the stage of civilisation” where they would appreciate individual graves and their remains were allowed to “revert to nature”, unmarked.

This paper focuses on Africa, particularly East Africa, and varying policies applied elsewhere, for Indian soldiers, at Gallipoli, and the Iraq memorial. Many Indian soldiers who had died fighting for the British appeared simply as numbers. Not their service numbers, just the numbers of them. In the Iraqi desert, near Nasiriyah, stands today the official memorial of the “missing” of the campaign in Mesopotamia. More than 33,000 men of the Indian Army,

whose final resting places were unknown, were commemorated on the Basra Memorial. The Imperial War Graves Commission had all of those names in printed registers, but the memorial itself only names the officers, with just the numbers of "other" Indian soldiers mentioned.

At the end of this briefing document a summary timeline of the actions and policies of the Imperial War Graves Commission in its work after the First World War is given. It looks at how its successor, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, has tried to bring its past into line with its stated aims of equality of rank, class, colour and creed.

The Imperial War Graves Commission in the 1920s:

Sir Fabian Ware and Lord Arthur Browne

The Imperial War Graves Commission, founded in 1917, was organised for two main tasks: one branch dealing with the graves and cemeteries and the other dealing with memorials to the "missing". Relatives, according to Rudyard Kipling, whose son John was one of the missing, were "fortunate" to have a name on a headstone. The Cemeteries branch was in charge of such graves, and the "M.M." branch would put the names of those with no known grave onto memorials to the missing (MM). The two forms of commemoration were regarded as formally equal, though one was obviously cheaper than the other.

When the Commission decided that a grave was "unmaintainable", a decision frequently linked, outside Europe, to the colour of the person in it, their name was sent to the Memorials to the Missing branch. "It has been decided by the Commission", runs one of many such memos, "that the Indians buried at Ahwaz should go 'Missing'".

Reference:- *copy* 3/M/392. *117111*

M.M. BRANCH. 29th October, 1925.

PERSIA. *WG 219/16/1*
Car no. 652
Box 1020

Indians buried at AHWAZ,

It has been decided by the Commission that the Indians buried at Ahwaz should go "Missing".

Particulars as follows:-

8th Rajputs.	3818.	BENI MADHO SINGH	Sepoy.	29.9.18.
I.W.T.	55170.	SALEY MOHAMMED	Khelasi.	6.11.18.
31st Mtn.Bty.	1153.	ISHMAIL KHAN	Gunner.	7.11.18.
12th Cavalry.	1361.	HIRA SINGH	Sower.	10.11.18.
8th Rajputs.	2200.	HAMZAB KHAN	Sepoy.	15.11.18.
3rd Mule Corps	7862.	RAMSAROOP	Blacksmith.	16.11.18.

In that case, which was a group of 18 named Indians who had been buried in Persia, it was agreed that their names would appear on the Tehran memorial.

In other cases, mainly in Africa, being “sent missing” meant no individual commemoration at all. It was decided that memorials in East Africa would not carry any individual names on them, but would be statues with general inscriptions to the dead of a region or large town. For Commission staff, sending these people “Missing” was a wry euphemism for refusing to commemorate their names at all.



Fabian Ware (left) with the Prince of Wales

The policies of the Imperial War Graves Commission have long been identified with the name of its venerated founder, Sir Fabian Ware. He laid down the blueprint about equality of treatment on the Western Front, and by the early 1920s the principles of equality that were to determine the pattern of cemeteries and memorials in France and Belgium had been firmly established. But the work in the Middle East, and in Africa, was on a later timetable. Throughout the 1920s, the crucial period for the world-wide work, the Commission was in practice run by a completely different man, and one who frequently disagreed with Fabian Ware. This was Lord Arthur Browne, who was the “Principal Assistant Secretary” or what we would now call the CEO or Director

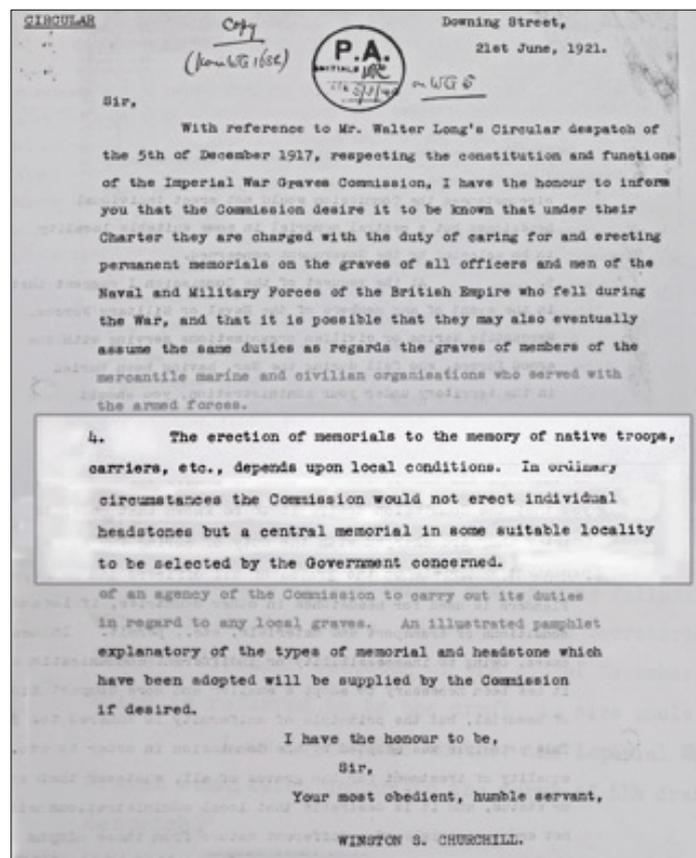
General of the Commission. He was in charge of operational decisions, often sanctioning forms of discrimination that were at odds with the official egalitarian rhetoric. Browne clearly had a free hand, as Fabian Ware was at times a remote manager. In March 1925 Browne recorded in his personal diary that his colleague, a Mr Ellison, was “complaining bitterly” about Ware’s “repeated & lengthy absences” from the office.

Whatever Fabian Ware’s principles, it was Lord Arthur Browne who was actually running the organisation. He was appointed in 1919 and stayed on until 1931. Arthur Browne’s personal attitudes towards Africans, whom he regarded as uncivilised pagans, and Indians, whose religions and cultures he

was respectful of, appear vividly in the many thousands of pages of the archives of the present-day Commonwealth War Graves Commission. In addition, at the end of his life he inherited an Anglo-Irish title, the Marquess of Sligo, and so his private papers and diaries have survived in the Westport archives at the National Library of Ireland in Dublin. From these two sets of documents it has proved possible to piece together what race and religion, or colour and creed (in the Commission's vocabulary), meant to the War Graves Commission in the 1920s.

Many of the staff who worked in the War Graves Commission's headquarters in London, as well as the regional directors abroad, were in sympathy with Lord Arthur Browne's attitudes. Many of the colonial administrators with whom he had to deal were similarly in tune with the way he saw the world – in fact Arthur Browne was a progressive liberal on race and religion compared with some of them. Even Fabian Ware himself did not extend his principle of equality to "African natives" – he thought that was a "political" question. At the highest level of government, in the Colonial Office, there was no intention to extend an egalitarian approach to the subjected peoples of imperial rule.

In 1921 this was made crystal clear in a letter sent from Downing Street to the Governors of the British Colonies and Protectorates. It came from Winston Churchill, by that time rehabilitated after his Gallipoli resignation and now Colonial Secretary. The wording of this important letter was run past the officials at the Commission for approval. He wrote to tell the Colonial Governors that they must abide by the principles that the War Graves Commission had adopted and that they should not deviate from the ideal of equality, as expressed in uniformity of treatment. This policy was laid down in a rather heavy-handed way, to leave no room for doubt. But the policy did not apply to the "natives" of the British colonies: memorials to the "natives", he added in a separate paragraph, would depend on local conditions. There was no intention to commemorate them individually, but general memorials in towns might be put up.



The policy about excluding “natives” from the general policy of equality was completely consistent. The original documents setting out the principles on which the Imperial War Graves Commission had been founded in 1917 referred only to military rank and social class. One such document, the Kenyon Report, was based on the brief that “no distinction should be made between officers and men lying in the same cemeteries”, and the principle of equal treatment set out in Kenyon’s 1918 report refers to equal treatment “whatever their military rank or position on civil life”.

The idea of equality between the different races and religions of the empire was never entertained seriously, though certainly there was brotherly imperial rhetoric. It was only later that claims for equality about what the War Graves Commission called “colour and creed” were retrospectively added on to its founding principles.

Implementation of Policy in Africa

The war in Africa was fought in Togo, in Cameroon, in German South West Africa, with the largest theatre of war being in East Africa. The first building block in the policies of the War Graves Commission concerning “natives” came from a colourful character, a Major George Evans. He was working in East Africa with the graves registration unit of the expeditionary force there. He was asked to make a report, which he did in 1917, on the state of progress. “In the case of the European burials”, he wrote, “the units concerned have always endeavoured to place some mark over each grave, so that the majority of these have been located – about 95% - by the Graves Registration Unit, and temporary metal crosses have been provided for these identified graves”.

In his report he estimated that there were about 4000 African soldiers who had died in the East African campaign and about 50,000 carriers. He considered that where the “native” soldiers had been buried in the bush, marking of their graves was unnecessary. Even more strongly, he suggested that in his opinion, permanent marking of the graves of the carriers would be “a waste of public money”. Major Evans reported that these people were “mostly illiterate” and that as the men who died had often come from villages hundreds of miles away it was “very unlikely that their relatives would visit the places where they fell”. Since many, particularly carriers, had been sent from other countries in Africa and from British territories around the world, he could have said thousands of miles.

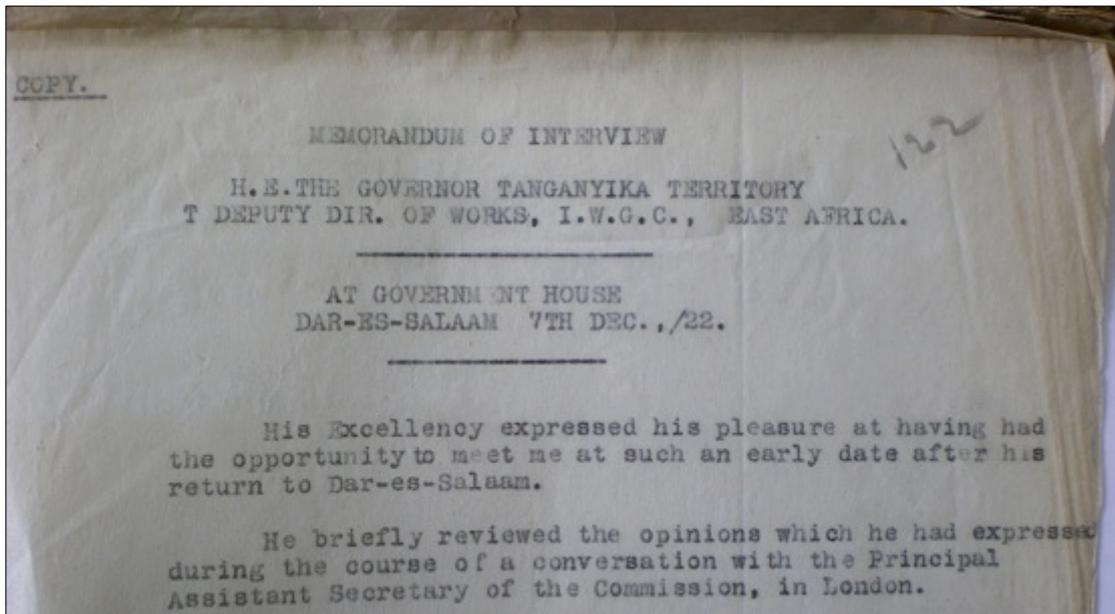
As regards Africans, many thousands of porters and others belonging to the Military Labour Corps have died from disease and other causes, I should think about 50,000 *(and about 4,000 native African troops)* and no marks of identity have been placed over their graves. In the case of African Natives who were not soldiers, I consider the erection of individual headstones would constitute a waste of public money. *at*

Excerpt from report by Major G. Evans

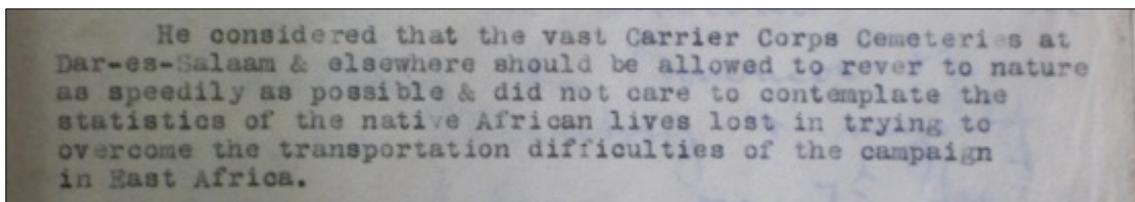
He came up with the idea that instead of individually commemorating these people, their contribution could be dealt with by putting up public statues in the principal towns of the region. Major Evans concluded that "with Indian and African Troops who have been buried in proper cemeteries at various Bases, I would suggest that individual headstones be provided, but as regards those buried in the bush, and in the case of porters, I consider some form of Monument characteristically depicting the Indian soldier, the African Askari [soldier] and Porter with an inscription to their memory be erected at each of the principal towns, such as Mombasa and Nairobi in B.E.Africa, Kampalla or Entebbe in Uganda, and Dar-es-Salaam and Tabora in ex German East Africa".

The Evans report fell on fertile ground when it reached Lord Arthur Browne: there was certainly no need to waste money on headstones for porters, he agreed and, "as Major Evans suggests", he wrote to colleagues, they could deal with the obligation by putting up special memorials in the towns.

Sir Fabian Ware himself, in February 1920, had said to the Commission that monuments to "Natives" were a "political question" on which the IWGC would have to consult Colonial and Foreign Office staff, and their local representatives. The IWGC kept records of such consultations, including a meeting between the Governor of Tanganyika Territory and the Deputy Director of Works of the IWGC, which took place in Dar Es Salaam in December 1922.



The Governor, it was recorded, “considered that the vast Carrier Corps Cemeteries at Dar-es-Salaam and elsewhere should be allowed to revert to nature as speedily as possible”: apparently he “did not care to contemplate the statistics of native African lives lost in trying to overcome the transportation difficulties of the campaign in East Africa”. It has been estimated by historians that upwards of 200,000 African lives were lost.

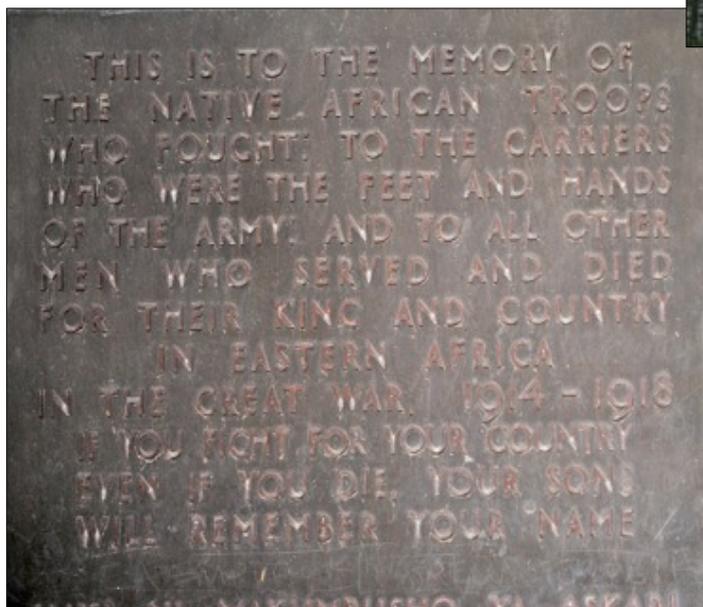


The special memorial at Dar-es-Salaam (Tanganyika Territory) was one of several erected in East Africa, others being in Kenya, at Mombasa and Nairobi. Major Evans had suggested that “the design of such a monument should emanate from the Architects of the IWGC”. Lord Arthur Browne, writing to his Director of Works, set out the position from London: “I think that one memorial in each of the countries, with 2 in Kenya, is very reasonable and that it should take the form either of a Lutyens Cenotaph or of a special form of Great War Stone”. He continued, however, to consider the view from the local colonial officials. “The local Governments in at least 2 cases are strongly in favour of a statue of an Askari &/or follower being erected either supplementary to, or in place of, a cenotaph. I suppose their wishes should be considered; their strong argument is that the statue would be understood by the natives but a Cenotaph would not.”

The memorials are very fine statues, designed by the London-based sculptor JA Stevenson, the one in Mombasa being the most impressive. It depicts a group of four figures, including a King's African Rifles soldier, a porter, and an Arab rifleman (and its inscription mentions Arab troops).

These "special", "central" memorials display no names or numbers. Many troops, notably from the Indian Army, were commemorated "numerically", which meant that printed lists of names existed but it was decided not to put them on the memorial - instead an exact number of deaths was attached to the regiment or military unit concerned. With these African memorials, however, what appears are general inscriptions.

On the Dar es Salaam plinth, in Swahili as well as in English, and in Arabic as well as Roman characters, are the specially composed words of Rudyard Kipling: "This is to the memory of the Native African troops who fought, to the carriers who were the feet and hands of the army and to all other men who served and died for their King and country in Eastern Africa in the Great War, 1914-1918. If you



fight for your country, even if you die, your sons will remember your name."

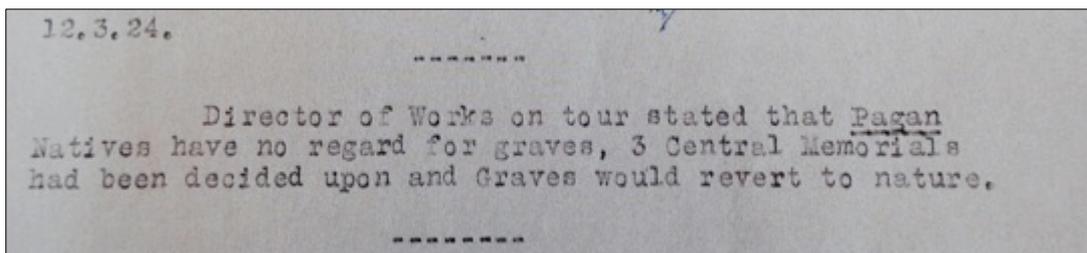
Kipling, an active Commissioner at the IWGC, was a genius at the finely calibrated epigraph in complicated colonial situations. He was perfectly aware that these men would need to be remembered by their families, as neither the colonial authorities nor the

Imperial War Graves Commission would be doing it.



Left, *The Lagos Memorial, now dismantled (and reassembled in Abuja). The official history of the CWGC (by Longworth) reproduces the photograph minus the top of the head of the Hausa soldier.* Right, *The Mombasa memorial.*

Religion was an important issue in decisions about commemoration in Africa. Following widespread practice among British travellers in Africa, African people were regarded simply as "pagans", as seen in the blunt memo that "Director of Works on tour [in East Africa] stated that Pagan Natives have no regard for graves, 3 Central memorials had been decided upon and Graves would revert to Nature."



In 1925 the Commission was working on the cemetery at Rufiji River in East Africa, with Mr Cormack in charge. Captain Miskin, the IWGC Registrar, wrote in June that year to the Director of Records about Cormack's report, attempting to rescue two graves of Christians from the "revert to nature" policy being applied to Africans: "The burial book shows that Hospital Boy Zensuriguiza was a Roman Catholic, and 13050 Cape Boy William was evidently a Christian too. I think Major Cormack should be asked about those two cases, and whether their bodies could be found and removed to Morogoro" [cemetery].



Morogoro cemetery in Tanzania. Perhaps the most beautiful cemetery in the world. But who is in it?

The headstone decision was, on the ground, an evaluative one. The same Major Cormack who was urged to retrieve for commemoration the bodies of the two Christian “boys” would have been sympathetic to the request. In a 1922 report about the cemetery in Voi, Kenya, he had noted that among “numerous other natives who died in the vicinity”, only 34 had been buried in the Christian cemetery, and he concluded that “the inference I draw is, that they may be regarded as Christians and worthy of commemoration by the standard type of Headstone”.

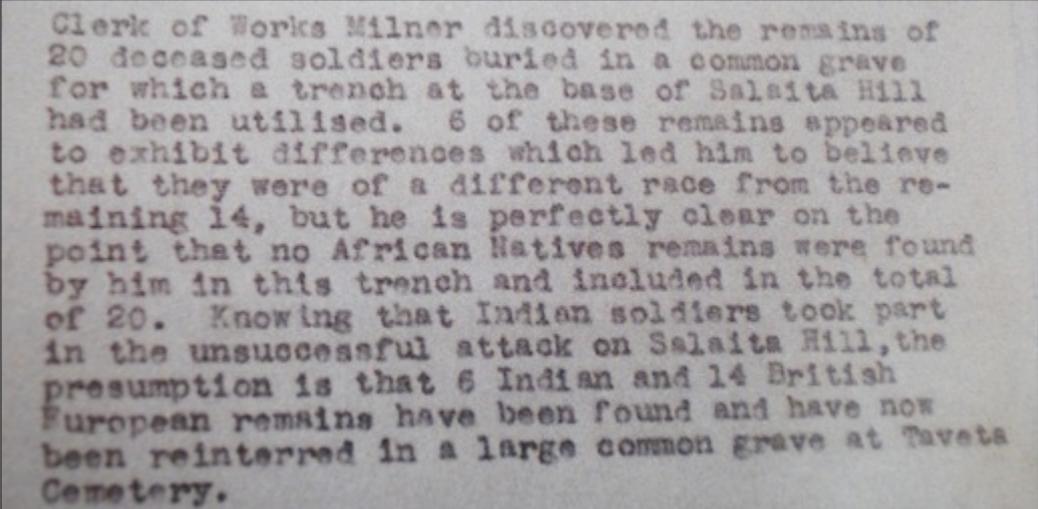
63 located British graves
2 Cape Corps
34 South African Native graves (presumably Christians)

Total 99 graves requiring headstones. Only 9 of the Native graves are specifically mentioned as being Christians but as these men have been buried in the Christian Cemetery and accorded special consideration compared with the numerous other natives who died in the vicinity, the inference I draw is, that they may be regarded as Christians and worthy of commemoration by the standard type of Headstone. Should you not approve of the suggestion to provide headstones for all the S.African Native graves or for only such of those as are specially mentioned in our records as being Christians, please mention this in the Cable, as in the absence of any special instructions I would provide concrete foundations for all these graves.

An internal Imperial War Graves Commission summary of decisions made in East Africa, dated 27th July 1925, refers to the following examples where Christian Africans were eventually commemorated by name: “we informed D[eputy].D[irector]. of works, that 2 South African Natives would have a

Kipling memorial in Morogoro as they [the graves] had reverted to nature. Christian religion being established." In a similar way at Mpangas, "the religion of 1 Native was established and he was given a Kipling in Morogoro, the other went to M.M. for central commemoration". A "Kipling" memorial carries the individual name of a body believed to be buried in the cemetery, whereas "went to M.M." means that the name went to the department of Memorials to the Missing, as opposed to the Cemeteries side - which in the African case meant that no name would be displayed anywhere.

An area of general controversy, in East Africa as elsewhere, was the policy of "concentration": this involved the exhumation of bodies and their reburial in centralized cemeteries. In the process of concentration, distinctions of race and creed appear to have been quite significant. In 1922-3 a member of the IWGC's UK staff was working in Kenya Colony. H Milner, Clerk of Works, was attempting to identify the remains of men killed at Salaita Hill. His report includes the following: "Amongst these remains were one skull with top set of false teeth, one skull with gold stoppings in 3 back teeth of lower jaw, and two skulls had each one gold tooth in the front of the upper jaws, 6 skulls had very low foreheads, apparently of a different race from the remainder but quite unlike African Native skulls. I feel sure that at least 14 of these remains are those of European soldiers." Milner engaged in a "close scrutiny of the remains" that he found in a common grave at Salaita Hill. On this occasion he found the remains, which he identified by shape of skull and other anthropometric devices, to be those of 14 Europeans and 6 Indians.



Clerk of Works Milner discovered the remains of 20 deceased soldiers buried in a common grave for which a trench at the base of Salaita Hill had been utilised. 6 of these remains appeared to exhibit differences which led him to believe that they were of a different race from the remaining 14, but he is perfectly clear on the point that no African Natives remains were found by him in this trench and included in the total of 20. Knowing that Indian soldiers took part in the unsuccessful attack on Salaita Hill, the presumption is that 6 Indian and 14 British European remains have been found and have now been reinterred in a large common grave at Taveta Cemetery.

On the same trip he found another common grave, near the railway station at Taveta. He reports that "on 15th May 1923 I excavated the 11 graves at this place and gathered 11 remains who were undoubtedly not Europeans as the shape of the skulls, leg and arm bones, were different, also the teeth were in perfect condition".

When it came to the work in West Africa, the IWGC was able to articulate what had already happened in East Africa, as the precedent to be followed.

On April 12th 1923 Browne wrote to the Governor of Nigeria (Sir Hugh Clifford) setting out the situation and asking for his opinion. "According to our records there are in Nigeria some 37 graves of European and 292 of native soldiers. It is proposed that the graves of European officers and men should be treated on the usual lines as far as local conditions permit. As regards natives, conditions are somewhat different. In Kenya Tanganyikaland etc. African natives are not being individually commemorated by headstones on their graves, chiefly owing to the fact that no proper records were kept of their places of burial but also because it was realized that the stage of civilization reached by most of the East African tribes was not such as would enable them to appreciate commemoration in this manner."

"It has therefore been decided to commemorate the native troops and followers in East Africa by central memorials of a general kind with suitable inscriptions." Browne pointed out to His Excellency that in the case of Nigeria "the individual graves appear to be known in every case" and that the alternative to individual headstones would be "to abandon the native graves" with no identifying memorial on them. The reply came back that memorials were being created for the Nigeria Regiment, which would name those who had died and "for this reason and for those set out in paragraph 3 of your letter [the civilization argument] the erection of individual memorials to African soldiers is unnecessary."

Earlier in 1923 Browne had had a similar conversation with the Governor of the Gold Coast territories [now Ghana] at a meeting in London. The record of the meeting shows that the IWGC's principles, compromised as they undoubtedly were by what they were doing in Africa, were nonetheless on the liberal side compared with the views of the colonial administrators. Sir Frederick Guggisberg thought that "the average native of the Gold Coast would not understand or appreciate a headstone" and that a central statue was a "more reasonable" idea.

To which Lord Arthur put a sophisticated point: "I mentioned that in perhaps two or three hundred years' time, when the native population had reached a higher stage of civilization, they might then be glad to see that headstones had been erected on the native graves and that the native soldiers had received precisely the same treatment as their white comrades." Sir Frederick doubted, against such high-minded thinking, whether "as a matter of fact" the individual African graves would still be identifiable. In practice, these graves were largely abandoned and the names of their occupants defined as being commemorated on general memorials to the missing.

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INTERVIEW WITH SIR FREDERICK GUGGISBERG.

18th May 1923.

Saw Sir Frederick Guggisberg with reference to the question of headstones over native graves in the Gold Coast territories. I explained to him the usual policy of the Commission in erecting headstones. He said he thought the average native of the Gold Coast would not understand or appreciate a headstone and that the original suggestion of the O.C. Troops, viz:- a central statue of a soldier of the Gold Coast Regiment - was a more reasonable suggestion. Such a memorial would be understood and greatly appreciated by the tribes from whom the majority of the men in the Regiment were recruited.

I mentioned that in perhaps two or three hundred years' time, when the native population had reached a higher stage of civilisation, they might then be glad to see that headstones had been erected on the native graves and that the native soldiers had received precisely the same treatment as their white comrades. He saw the force of this but thought a central monument at Kumasi would have precisely the same, or even greater, effect. He said, however, that he would like to consult Colonel Heywood, the Inspector General of the Gold Coast Troops, before making a final recommendation and asked what had been done in the other Colonies.

I explained and showed him a copy of the letter we had written to the Nigerian Government. After reading it he thought the best thing would be if we would address a letter on similar lines to him, when he could give us a considered reply. I promised that a letter on these lines would be written to him.

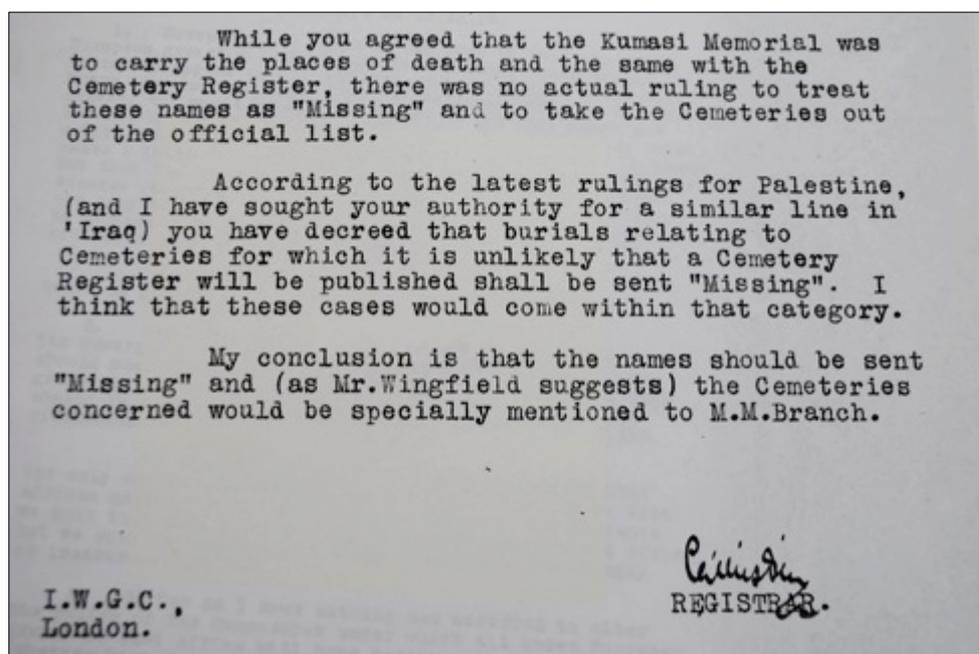
I.W.G.C.

AB
He doubted if as a matter of fact the individual native graves would be identifiable now.

In late 1928 Browne prepared for the IWGC a summary of the complex, and rather troublesome, West African colonies. There were approximately 4,500 casualties to commemorate. In comparison with those in East Africa, where neither soldiers nor carriers were commemorated by name (but by general inscriptions), "the Governments of West Africa have thought it necessary to commemorate by name the names of the soldiers concerned". Browne himself did not think that this was necessary. In Sierra Leone the West African Regiment was in 1927 commanded by an officer with a novel attitude. He complained that "more care was not taken at the time in keeping records... of

graves" and he wanted a memorial with "Native names" individually inscribed. Browne's response was "I do not see the necessity for it myself". Chettle (Director of Records) gave a grudging tribute: "I suppose we had better try to have the native names engraved. These men were definitely soldiers of a rather high quality and with a military organization apparently as good as our own." Browne drew the line at the Carriers, writing to Fabian Ware (from whom came the pressure for equal treatment) that "I am not including the names of the Carriers, as I do not know how far they are sufficiently civilized to justify the inclusion of their names", adding that "it would greatly increase the cost of the Memorial to include their names". This was true - there were a lot of them: 795, as against the 59 dead soldiers.

In 1929 there was a round of wrapping up the Gold Coast operation. In May, the Director of Records (Major Chettle) was asked about the position for the African graves in West Africa generally, and "if the Commission have decided to maintain the cemeteries concerned or abandon them". Captain Miskin, the Registrar, concluded that "for the Natives I should imagine that most of them are already commemorated on memorials, and apart from exceptional cases that will be considered adequate". Chettle added that for "Native" burials, "permanent marking of the graves will be carried out only exceptionally if at all". Miskin concluded that, as had also been ruled in similar cases in Palestine and Iraq, "burials relating to Cemeteries for which it is unlikely that a Cemetery Register will be published shall be sent "Missing".



Sending the Africans "missing" had one material advantage. At £10, the cost of erecting a headstone and maintaining a grave, which would have to be done in perpetuity, was much higher than the far cheaper option (£4) of

putting a name on a memorial. Memorials with no names on them at all, as happened in Africa, could be cheaper still. Chettle noted in 1932, considering the funding of a memorial in Accra as well as the one at Kumasi, that "we have, in fact, disposed of our liabilities in the Gold Coast at an extremely cheap rate, and the expenditure of £75 on a memorial at Accra would still leave our average expenditure very low".

The difference in practice between the "white graves" and the "natives" is shown up very clearly in the vexed history of the Cameroons, where the IWGC officials had to deal with what they experienced as uncooperative French colonial administrators. The situation had not been resolved by the time the Second World War broke out 20 years later. There were 63 "white graves" and the policy was to try to concentrate them in the cemetery in Duala. In 1933 the British Vice-Consul sent a report describing how, after 4 sets of remains had been exhumed, and transported to Duala (transport methods including a launch on the river), they were ceremonially reburied "with full military honours". The "white graves" up country were more of a problem and were discussed in great detail. At one point Browne proposed sending an official from London to oversee their fate, even though this would have raised the cost per grave from the budgeted £10 to an exorbitant £30 (and was rejected). Eventually they were marked with the smaller bronze-faced Gallipoli-style stone, which was designed for weather proofing. The African graves were another matter. In this instance there were 401 of them, of which only 11 were unidentified. These 390 known graves were given the now usual treatment and "with the concurrence of the West African governments, it is not proposed to maintain the native graves".

By 1930, these policy decisions had become routinised. Arthur Browne, summarising the position for West Africa [Gold Coast (now Ghana), Nigeria and Sierra Leone] was able to state that "so far as I know nothing has occurred to alter the policy of the Commission under which all known European graves in West Africa will have headstones and all Natives (whether buried in known graves or not) will be commemorated on memorials". He added that "for statistical purposes I should imagine that the only course practicable for the great majority of West African natives is to count them as missing".

In 1956 a military man, General Sir Frank Simpson, wrote to the IWGC, bringing to their notice the "un-cared-for condition" of two such First World War graves in British Cameroons, which he had stumbled across in the old

WEST AFRICA COMMITTEE

Blossoms Inn,
23, Lawrence Lane,
LONDON E.C.2.

FMI/SR 1st October, 1956.

The Secretary,
The Imperial War Graves Commission,
32, Grosvenor Gardens,
LONDON S.W.1.

Dear Sir,

I write to bring your notice to the fact that there are certain war graves in the British Cameroons which are in an un-cared-for condition. I myself have recently returned to U.K. from a visit to the Cameroons and have seen two such graves.

The graves are those of soldiers killed in World War I when fighting took place in the Cameroons. The ones I saw are in the old German Botanical Gardens in Victoria. I came on them only by accident as they are enclosed by a dilapidated fence much overgrown. The small enclosure itself is also overgrown and the two graves - which are of African soldiers, one of the Nigerian Regiment and the other of the Gold Coast Regiment - have wooden posts (instead of headstones) which are rotting and the inscriptions on which are nearly indecipherable. I was told that there are several, if not many, other similar graves dotted about the surrounding country.

As I stumbled on the two graves mentioned above while making for shelter in a tropical rainstorm, I did not take a note of the names on the grave posts, but my companion that day is still in Victoria, and would be able to send me the particulars if you require them. No doubt, too, the District Officer at Victoria, whom I saw before I discovered the graves,

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German Botanical Gardens in Victoria. He reported that "they are enclosed by a dilapidated fence, much overgrown. The small enclosure itself is also overgrown and the two graves - which are of African soldiers, one of the Nigerian Regiment and the other of the Gold Coast regiment - have wooden posts (instead of headstones) which are rotting and the inscriptions on which are nearly indecipherable". "I was told", he continued, "that there are several, if not many, other similar graves dotted about the surrounding country".

Simpson was an advisor to the West Africa Committee of the IWGC, and Arthur Browne's successor had to write and explain to him what the policy had been following the First World War. He replied that "the Commission's records confirm the existence of two natives' graves in the Victoria Botanical Gardens, but in accordance with the policy no action has been taken by the Commission to maintain them".

It was decided, with the concurrence of the Nigerian Government, that with a few exceptions the graves of the Nigerian native servicemen, which were scattered over a very large area, should not be marked by official headstones. The commemoration afforded by the memorials I have mentioned was considered adequate and proper in the circumstances.

The Commission's records confirm the existence of two natives' graves in the Victoria Botanical Gardens, but in accordance with the policy no action has been taken by the Commission to maintain them.

The maintenance of the graves of the 1939/1945 War in West Africa has again presented a problem, but in this instance those of all African servicemen which are so situated that adequate maintenance is practicable are being provided with headstones of the Commission's traditional design. In the comparatively small number of cases where headstones cannot be erected the names of the men concerned will again be engraved on memorials.

Yours faithfully,

Dar es Salaam

The Commission's policy in Africa in the interwar period, treating people differently according to their race and religion, faced its most challenging test in the case of cemeteries containing a variety of bodies. An important element of the initial context of their policy was the question of whether graves would be visited by relatives, and public visibility generally was also an issue. It was thought that relatives and visitors would travel to the Western Front, but that graves in other theatres of the war were unlikely to be visited. Another factor, that became apparent in East Africa, was that the IWGC had a completely different attitude towards, and practice of commemoration, of Indian soldiers than it did for Africans. In the campaign in East Africa, this difference became very obvious. Internal papers from meetings at the Commission in the 1920s illustrate the problem. In June 1923 "Director of Records was prepared to agree that Native Graves should not be individually marked, but the course should not apply to Indians". In March 1924, a tricky one surfaced: "Director of Records stated that collective commemoration will be decided on for Indians in all but European countries, except where Indian Graves are amongst British".

This problem came to a head in discussions about how to handle headstones at Sea View Cemetery in Dar es Salaam, and in the end Browne had to write to the Governor of Tanganyika to ask his advice. This cemetery, which had Christian and non-Christian sections, contained graves of various categories that would be marked with headstones; they included South African soldiers, the Cape Corps, soldiers from the British West Indies, "miscellaneous Europeans" and Chinese. This left the Indians and Africans to be considered, and Browne, having explained the position, pointed out that "if therefore the Commission adhere to their usual policy the result will be that in the Christian Plot there will be about 40 scattered headstones commemorating members of the units mentioned above, while the remainder of the known and identified graves of Indians and West Africans will have no marking". He noted that the argument that had been used with other Indian graves in East Africa, that the names were not known, would not apply: in this case, "the native African and Indian graves.. are properly recorded and identified" and concluded that "the argument based on imperfection of records therefore falls to the ground".

Browne's question to the Governor was "whether this marked differentiation of treatment will not cause unfavourable comment", and whether all the graves should be given headstones to avoid this. It appears, from a memo of October 1925, that the effects of the Commission's usual policy were thought just too anomalous: Dar es Salaam recurs as the exception to the rule. "The Indians buried at Dar-es-Salaam are an exception since their names are to be individually inscribed"; "no individual commemoration [of East African Natives] (except at Dar-es- Salaam for special reasons)"; "no individual commemoration [of West African Natives] except at Dar-es-Salaam"; "no

individual commemoration [of South African Natives] except at Dar-es-Salaam (if any) and also at places where identified graves exist among British graves".

The East Africa Carrier Corps Records

It is often said in exculpation of the IWGC's actions that no records were kept of the names of African Carriers. Although many registers may have been badly kept and names, like graves, lost, it is untrue that no records were kept.

The carriers for the British forces in East Africa were organized into a Military Labour Corps, colloquially known as the 'Carrier Corps', and Lt Col Oscar Watkins was responsible for running it. His Report and private papers show both the scandalous death rates (he estimates 'wastage' of carriers at 10% a month in 1917) and also the efforts he had to make for his carriers to be taken seriously. Officers in charge of animals were given more status than his officers in charge of African carriers.

The Watkins Report of 1919, in the National Archives, is his account of how the Carrier Corps was organised and administered. All the men were registered and tracked, notes made on their payments, hospitalisation, desertion and death. Hospital lists and Death records were kept too.

Watkins had to invent a system of registering carriers, men who were often not literate and had come from far away. The men were basically fingerprinted, under a *kipande* system. The African Carriers moved around a great deal, but Watkins describes how they were tracked and paid.

As well as Registration and Payroll documents, Watkins says weekly lists of names of deaths were sent out to local authorities but so far none of these lists has been found. Two payroll lists randomly survive among his private papers, dated 1915, proof that the carriers had their names logged. But the main lists - and we know he had listed a total of more than 42,000 named carriers who had died - apparently have not survived.

In the case of the many carriers brought in from west Africa, the book registering their west African as well as east African military details, enabling them to be traced, has also been lost. [Killingray and Matthews]

However, it is clear that in the early 1920s the large cemeteries in which Carriers were buried in Dar es Salaam (and other places) were still known by locations, and that official records of Carrier names still existed. The Carrier Corps originated in Kenya and moved to Dar es Salaam in the second part of the war. A letter from Watkins in 1919 to his wife mentions what an operation it will be to relocate everyone and everything back to Nairobi, where the records must have been stored after the war.

Watkins remained as a senior colonial officer in Kenya for the rest of his life. He and other Carrier Corps officers provided photos for the sculpted

monuments (which is why they are so lifelike). Carrier records would have been available in those early years after WW1 had the IWGC or Colonial Office been interested in them.

All the men on this Muster Roll are transferred from the 11th Coy.

*Chiefs:- Agoji - Loco. Namagamba
Agor - Loco. Namgoma
Opala - Loco. Namganda*

CARRIER CORPS. *1914*
Company No. *70*

PAY ROLL.

Form No

Rank	No.	NAME	Date of Engagement	Rate of Wage per month.	AMOUNT PAID AND DATE OF PAYMENT.												REMARKS.	
					Rs.	c.	Rs.	c.	Rs.	c.	Rs.	c.	Rs.	c.	Rs.	c.		
<i>Private</i>		<i>Odaniyi Oyama</i>	<i>(Namagamba)</i>															
<i>do.</i>		<i>Sidika Odera</i>	<i>(Namgoma)</i>															
<i>do.</i>		<i>Adela Oyungo</i>	<i>(Namganda)</i>															
	<i>1</i>	<i>Owari Okubi</i>																
	<i>2</i>	<i>Patoga Oziro</i>																
	<i>3</i>	<i>Ayungo Oziro</i>																
	<i>4</i>	<i>Abuya Oziro</i>																
	<i>5</i>	<i>Oziro Oyala</i>																
	<i>6</i>	<i>Oyungo Oyala</i>																
	<i>7</i>	<i>Oyala Oyala</i>																<i>Repatriated from Kajiko Hospital</i>
	<i>8</i>	<i>Ojala Longa</i>																
	<i>9</i>	<i>Okubidi Oyala</i>																
	<i>10</i>	<i>Achung Okunya</i>																
	<i>11</i>	<i>Agor Okelo</i>																
	<i>12</i>	<i>Oyala Okunya</i>																
	<i>13</i>	<i>Oziro Okunya</i>																
	<i>14</i>	<i>Adani Oyala</i>																<i>Repatriated from Kajiko Hospital</i>
	<i>15</i>	<i>Abul Oziro</i>																
	<i>16</i>	<i>Oziro Oyala</i>																
	<i>17</i>	<i>Oziro Oyala</i>																
	<i>18</i>	<i>Oziro Oyala</i>																<i>Sent to Longido Hospital Dec. 20th 1914 - Searched all Hospital Books along the line but could find no trace of him</i>
	<i>19</i>	<i>Oziro Oyala</i>																<i>Repatriated from Kajiko Hospital</i>
	<i>20</i>	<i>Oziro Oyala</i>																
	<i>21</i>	<i>Oziro Oyala</i>																

1915 payroll list for Carrier Corps company 70, showing registered men and notes on deaths, hospitalisation etc.

Lord Arthur Browne

Browne was appointed to his influential post before the days of equal opportunities. In early November (1919) Fabian Ware enquired at the War Office for the name of "a suitable officer" to act as Secretary of the IWGC. Philip Chetwynde there wrote to suggest that Colonel Lord Arthur Browne KBE "a retired officer at present employed under the Director of Military Intelligence as head of M.I.S. Room 344, War Office", whose work at the War Office is now coming to an end and "is very suitable for the appointment". Browne was appointed to the post in December 1919. He had begun his career by serving for two years in the South Staffordshire Regiment and then from 1889-1909 on the staff of the Royal Munster Fusiliers, retiring at the rank of Major. During this period he saw service in India and in South Africa. Promptly, on August 3rd 1914 he rejoined the army. In addition to his K.B.E, his wartime service earned him decorations from the Legion of Honour and the Grand Order of Christ of Portugal.



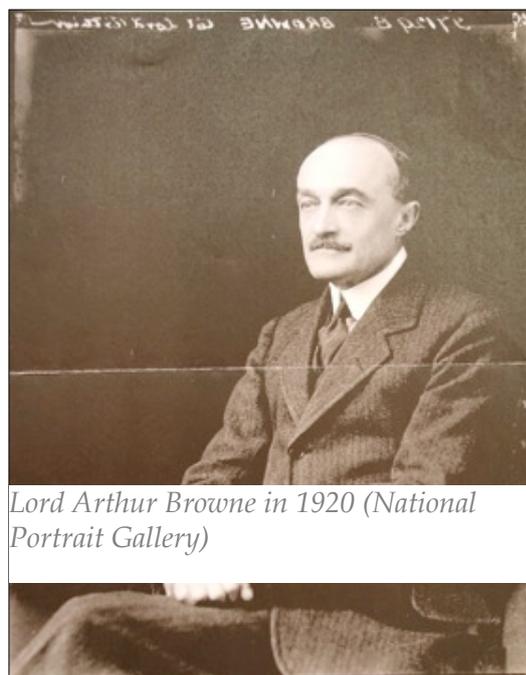
Browne's father playing polo in a turban, 1883

Browne had a background in Indian affairs, by virtue of his father's career in the Bengal Civil Service. Henry Ulick Browne, who was to inherit the title of 5th Marquess of Sligo in 1903, had been educated at Rugby School and then at Haileybury.

In 1851 he was posted to the Revenue and Judicial Department of the Bengal Civil Service, becoming an Under Secretary to the government of Bengal, and later to the government of India. He became a judge, and later was chairman of the Justices of Peace in Calcutta, retiring in 1886. The family albums, held in the Westport Estate Collection at the National Library of Ireland in Dublin, include many photographs of the Browne family in India.

Browne's wife, Lilian, whom he married in 1919, also had a background in India, as her father was Charles Chapman, Deputy Commander in Oudh (a province of British India).

Browne was well aware of what a departure from Fabian Ware's principles was occurring in Africa, and was at pains to hide it. He made a careful policy ruling at the IWGC on 24th November 1925, formally stated in his capacity as Principal Assistant Secretary. This is filed in a slim file of "Rulings" in the IWGC archive. It concerns cemetery memorial registers for Africans. Browne begins by adverting to Fabian Ware's view that "identical treatment" of British and "native" troops should be accorded so far as "circumstances permit". From this he concludes that registers should be compiled, which would include the names of "native" soldiers, and also followers "to the extent that satisfactory

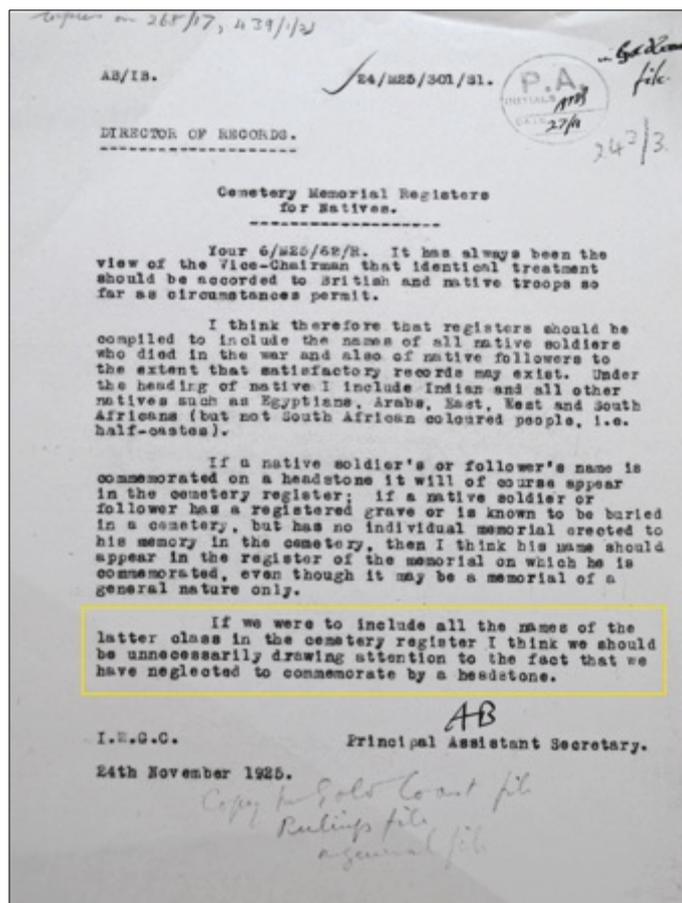


Lord Arthur Browne in 1920 (National Portrait Gallery)

records may exist". Browne then sails confidently into the definition of a "native", which for him includes Indians, Egyptians, Arabs, and East, West and South Africans, "but not South African coloured people". Although he was far more sympathetic to Indian cultures and religion than he was to African, he still regarded them as 'natives'.

Browne continues with a ruling on the position of "natives" buried in cemeteries but not accorded an IWGC headstone: these names, he says, should be put in the registers of appropriate memorials, but not in the registers of the cemeteries. He concludes by acknowledging that "if we were to include all the names of the latter class in the cemetery register I think we should be unnecessarily drawing attention to the fact that we have neglected to commemorate by a headstone'.

Arthur Browne 's family background in India emerges in his knowledge of Indian cultural forms. In September 1923 he explained to the Director of Works that "the religion of natives of India can always be told from their names except perhaps in the case of some of the followers"; he even offered to involve himself personally: "if you will send me down names I will probably be able to say what they are", adding that "Bhagwan Tikkum would be a Hindu". Earlier that year Browne had written to Sir Frederick Kenyon, the Director of the British Museum and author of the Kenyon Report mentioned earlier, for information on a point on which he had drawn a blank at the India Office - what religious emblem to use on the headstones of Indians buried in France, "whose religion is given as "Animist". In the African context such people would simply be "pagans" (with no headstones to worry about) , but Browne takes a far more sympathetic stance here - "as far as my experience goes Indian Animists appear to worship the spirits of the jungle, water, mountains, etc", he says chattily, and wonders if it might be best to put up a headstone without any religious emblem. By the end of 1925 Arthur Browne was getting frustrated at the fact that the India Office was not willing to take responsibility for the spelling of Indian names, which he said "does not



absolve the Commission from doing their best to engrave inscriptions at which no one with a knowledge of India can reasonably cavil".

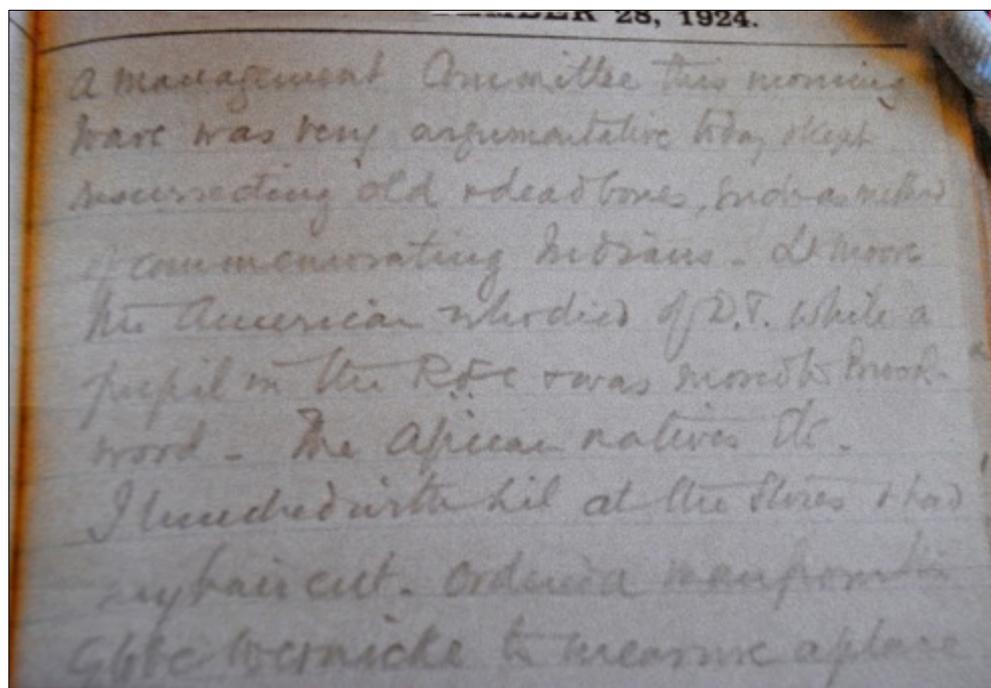
He asked Kenyon for advice about Buddhist headstones, too, which had also stumped the India Office. "I suggest inscribing the characters "OM", he writes, as "I understand that this forms part of the usual Buddhist invocation. Can you obtain any advice on this point?". Kenyon consulted an expert at the School of Oriental Studies (its Director, Sir Edward Denison Ross) who opined that there was an objection to OM in that it was a word rather than a symbol, and proposing a vajra instead. To this Browne, evidently no slouch on Buddhist symbolism, replied that "I have a good specimen of a Bhutanese dorjé myself but it is closed at the ends and not open as in your sketch". Browne thought that this matter of the Buddhist symbol was important enough that he made enquiries in India about it too. Browne also took to ticking off his staff for failing to pay sufficient attention to Indian religious and cultural matters. In January 1925 he wrote sternly to the Director of Records at IWGC, pointing out that "it would be a grave mistake to erect a memorial to Hindus and Sikhs in an exclusively Mohammedan Cemetery".

He chastised the Director of Works on several points, including the need to remove Mohammedan names from any memorial referencing cremation: "there is no grosser insult to a Mohammedan than to suggest that his body has been burnt". At this point he revealed why he felt that it was the duty of the IWGC to "exercise great care in the matter of religion". "There is much religious fanaticism in India", he said, and "there are many Indians on the lookout for any excuse to make trouble". He was particularly anxious "to avoid any mistakes which could be used as a weapon to attack the British or Indian Governments".

Browne kept a personal diary, usually a "Trail's Indian Pocket", tiny books, many of which had a lock on them, in which the entries were made in pencil. Browne's diary of the 1920s gives an informal gloss on several of the issues that the IWGC was dealing with and it paints a different picture from the usual: 1924, November 22nd: "talked to Mr Creed who we propose to send to Russia. He will want money for bribes."; 1924, November 24th: "Chettle attended one unveiling ceremony at Birmingham yesterday. Said that noone took any notice of him. He was very annoyed."; 1924, November 26th: "Col Heaton said he had tried very hard to get me a Belgian decoration in connection with the repatriation of Belgian dead but it was turned down by the F O"; 1924, November 29th: "I have been asked to a Toc H ceremony of distributing the wooden crosses received from France but I hope to be able to get out of it" 1925, November 23rd: "I dined in the evening at the IWGC dinner .. [at the Connaught Rooms]. It was a very wearisome evening endless speeches and we did not get away till a quarter past 11. Everybody sang the praises of everybody else."

Browne's diary entry for 28 Nov 1924, illustrates his differences with Fabian Ware: "A Management Committee this morning. Ware was very argumentative today and kept resurrecting old bones, such as method of

commemorating Indians - Lt Moore the American who died of D T [delirium tremens/alcoholism] while a pupil in the RFC & was moved to Brookwood - The African Natives Etc". An American, Wayne Hart Moore, Second Lieutenant in the Royal Air Force at the time of his death in February 1919, is buried at Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey.



Note from Lord Arthur Browne's diary for 1924

Politics in the War Graves Commission

The group of men who ran the IWGC in the 1920s included Ware and Browne, between whom there was an undercurrent of disagreement and conflict. Browne's stance has been fully described here, but Ware's is more enigmatic. He continued to argue in principle for equal treatment but in fact presided over systematic and dramatic inequalities on the basis of race and religion. Ware played a role in the exclusion of women from the work of the Commission. Rudyard Kipling, author of all IWGC inscriptions around the world, was another important figure, as were some of the other men taking decisions in the Commission, for instance Captain Miskin, the Registrar and Major Chettle, the Director of Records.

The brief timeline below notes changes during the period after the Second World War. These are clustered into two main historical groups, the 1960s and the 1990s. In the 1960s the most important change was that after the Port Tewfik Indian Memorial in Egypt was destroyed by fighting, the (by then) Commonwealth War Graves Commission moved it to a site near Cairo and used the registers to engrave the Indian names that had been excluded from the original monument. This was, as far as I can establish, the first time that a

new approach had been taken, as it were covering the tracks of the original commemoration.

The current policy was adopted, according to the Director-General in 2007, in 1995. Richard Kellaway wrote to me, saying that his predecessor took the decision in 1995 to “correct the anomalies” where names were held in registers and new memorials could be built. (I have so far found no trace of this important decision in the minutes of Commission meetings.) In the case of the Hong Kong Memorial, to 994 Chinese who lost their lives, the original memorial has now been relinquished.



The old and the new Hong Kong Memorials

The policy established during the 1990s is one of silent correction, and consequently sometimes occlusion of the evidence of the original forms of commemoration.

There are other examples of the importance of impression management in the work of the Commission. This characterised it from the beginning, as we saw in some of the descriptions above. Decisions were influenced by whether relatives would visit, by how many visitors would see them, by whether they were visible from railway lines, by how much British “prestige” was in play. In the centenary years of the war, the Commission was more concerned to maintain an appearance fitting its ethos of equality than it was to acknowledge what had been done in the past.

Brief Time Line of the IWGC/CWGC

Actions and policies, 1917 - 1939

EAST AFRICA

The IWGC in British and German East Africa: in southern Kenya the cemeteries at Voi and Taveta dealt with casualties from the fighting in the early years of the campaign in East Africa. Records in the archives of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission show how at Voi only those Africans who had converted to Christianity were accepted for burial in the cemetery. For the Taveta cemetery, an IWGC official dug up a group grave at the Salaita Hill battlefield, in order to establish the race of its occupants. Documents for Morogoro in Tanganyika (now Tanzania) show consideration of religion in deciding inclusion.

MAJOR GEORGE EVANS AND LORD ARTHUR BROWNE

The two men who set the policy for East Africa. The Evans report suggested that African soldiers and porters would not be commemorated by name but general memorials would be put up in the towns of the region. Europeans, including the German enemy, would be buried in "white graves", which would be maintained in perpetuity in IWGC cemeteries. African "natives" had not reached the stage of civilization at which they would appreciate individual graves. Major George Evans, appointed Director of Works for East Africa, turned out to be an alcoholic and an embezzler, but his policy was adopted by Lord Arthur Browne, the Principal Assistant Secretary (CEO) of the War Graves Commission in London. Evans and Browne both had a military background and experience of East Africa before the war.

THE AFRICAN STATUES

The "special memorials" that were put up, during the course of the 1920s, commemorating upwards of 4,000 African soldiers and 50,000 porters who Evans estimated to have died in the campaign in East Africa. The sculptor, J A Stevenson, was commissioned to produce bronze statues of "types of men" active in the British forces. The most impressive is the group of four figures at Mombasa; the one in Dar es Salaam was put on a landmark site in the town centre; a group of three was put up in Nairobi. There are vintage photographs from the period, and there is contemporary newspaper coverage of their unveilings.

WEST AFRICA

Lord Arthur Browne negotiated with Colonial Governors in West Africa to follow the East African precedent and not maintain any “native graves” found there. The argument that “natives” had not reached the appropriate “stage of civilization” was accepted there too, and general memorials were agreed upon, such as the one put up in Lagos showing a Hausa soldier and Ibo carrier. On the ground, some regimental pressure for naming all casualties of the war was put forward, sometimes agreed to by the Commission.

THE INDIAN ARMY

The IWGC agreed that on the Western Front Indians would be commemorated individually by name. This happened at the Neuve Chapelle Indian Memorial, opened in 1927 and remembering some 5000 Indian soldiers who had died during the Indian Corps tour of duty in 1914-15. Outside Europe, with the agreement of the India Office in London, they thought it acceptable to engrave only the names of the officers. Names of the sepoy were collected in a printed register. The first memorial to set this precedent was at Port Tewfik on the Suez Canal. The big memorial to the 33,000 Indian casualties of the campaign in Mesopotamia, sited at Basra, continued that tradition: the names of British and Indian officers and were engraved, followed by the number of “other Indian soldiers” from each regiment or unit.

LORD ARTHUR BROWNE

Browne regarded African “natives” as uncivilized pagans, but had great respect for the peoples and cultures of India: his family were established colonials in Bengal. His attitudes, shared by many in the IWGC and in the political institutions of the British empire, were influential in the treatment accorded to Indian soldiers. Although the “numerical commemoration” they received was never the way whites were treated, they were distinctly advantaged compared with Africans. Browne put both cultural and political pressure on his colleagues at the IWGC to maintain standards of accuracy and respect for Indian soldiers.

GALLIPOLI

The IWGC decided that the Middle Eastern region that included Gallipoli should be directed by, alternating, someone from Australia and New Zealand. The first incumbent, Lt-Col C E Hughes from Tasmania was a forceful man who respected the Anzac dead and took issue with the Turkish treatment of Australian graves. He had limited awareness of matters concerning the Indian dead at Gallipoli. One of his maxims was that where “Hindoos and Muslims” were mixed up together then “a decision should be made as to which should be ignored”. This episode shows how complex national, religious and cultural conflicts were treated in a region dominated by Anzac commemoration.

DAR ES SALAAM

It was at Dar es Salaam that the trickiest issues about race, religion and commemoration were to trouble Lord Arthur Browne. The cemetery there had been used for many casualties of the Indian Army and some Africans. Normally these would not be commemorated by name, but at Sea View cemetery their graves had been muddled up, in the “Christian plot”, with those of people who would be normally given named headstones, namely South Africans, the Cape Corps (counted as white by Browne), the West Indies Regiment and various Europeans. Browne had to write to the Governor of Tanganyika Territory, suggesting that perhaps the Indians and Africans should be given individual headstones, to avoid “unfavourable comment” on the appearance of scattered headstones in the plot .

MEN OF THE IMPERIAL WAR GRAVES COMMISSION IN THE 1920S

The men at the Commission decided who was to be commemorated and how: Fabian Ware was the architect of equality - but also a man who presided over the inequalities set out here. Arthur Browne was a champion of the Indian forces and regarded Africans as uncivilized. Rudyard Kipling was in charge of all the inscriptions worldwide; he was very adroit at composing ones that masked the racial and imperial inequalities in IWGC commemoration. Two important points about the IWGC are (i) that the founding documents of the Commission, from its Charter in 1917, through the Kenyon Report and the debate in the House of Commons in 1920, consistently state only equality of military rank and social class. Equality of race and religion was not originally an object of the Commission. (ii) The Commission was made up entirely of men, rejecting requests from women’s organizations for representation. In one telling private letter to his friend Kipling, Fabian Ware referred to

“naughty Lady Selborne”, trying to make the work of the Commission a “women’s issue”.

CHANGING TIMES AT THE COMMISSION

The 1960s saw some important changes at the Commission. In 1960 the name was changed from Imperial to Commonwealth. Just in time for its 50th birthday celebrations, they invited a woman to join them. Previously the very occasional woman had sat round the table only if a High Commissioner or other person with ex-officio membership had been a woman. The woman invited in her own right was the Matron of a naval hospital; at the formal 50th jubilee meeting she sat at the back with the female clerk. In 1967 the Indian memorial at Port Tewfik was destroyed in fighting; the Commission moved it to Heliopolis near Cairo and engraved on the new monument the names previously held only in printed registers – the first attempt at a new approach. At the request of the government of Pakistan, the word “Indian” was removed from the Neuve Chapelle memorial. A decision was taken that unmaintainable graves should be “completely obliterated”; a complaint had previously been received about the derelict state of African graves in Cameroun.

CORRECTING THE ANOMALIES

In 1995 the Commission took the decision to “correct anomalies” where they could. This meant that where they had names in printed registers, of Indians and Chinese for example, which had not been put up on memorials, they would then create new memorials with those names on them. This was done for 994 Chinese commemorated with no names in Hong Kong, replaced in 2007 with a monument on which the names were engraved. A roll of honour has been constructed from the printed registers for the Basra memorial, of 33,000 Indian names, and displayed at CWGC headquarters. The Hollybrook memorial near Southampton, carrying the names of 600 African labourers drowned when the *SS Mendi* sank in the English Channel has also been restored.