

BLACK BRITONS IN WORLD WAR ONE IDENTIFYING THE MEMORIALS



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This publication contains the work of a group of community volunteers who first came together under the name 'Preserving Our History and Heritage' (POHAH) in 2015 to highlight the contributions of Black British servicemen and women to World War I. With an award from the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2016, the group managed a project that researched the contributors and identified the memorials of some of WWI's unsung heroes.

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PRESERVING OUR HISTORY & HERITAGE

POHAH



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UNITED KINGDOM MEMORIALS

What is the purpose of a Monument or Memorial?

The word 'Memorial' is sometimes used instead Monument, which is a structure erected to commemorate people or events associated with Commemoration and Remembrance. War memorials are seen in many locations around the United Kingdom, as well as globally.

In form, they range from wall plaques and scrolls on church walls, pillars, triumphant arches, to imposing obelisks in town centres, the most well-known being The Cenotaph [empty tomb] in Whitehall in Central London. This location is the focal point for the annual Remembrance Day parade and service, (on the Sunday closest to the eleventh day of the eleventh month, marking the day in 1918 when the armistice agreement was signed to end the First World War).



The Cenotaph, Whitehall, London

According to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission [CWGC], "memorials exist in order to officially record servicemen and women who died during the designated war years, in service, or of causes attributable to service, have no known grave, or were buried or lost at sea".



Tower Hill Memorial, London

The Merchant Navy Memorial at Tower Hill, London, is located in Trinity Hill Gardens across the road from the Tower of London. It is dedicated to the service personnel who lost their lives in the Merchant Marine and Fishing Fleets during World War 1, 1914-1918 and World War 2 1939-1945. From a distance, this WW1 monument is imposing as well as architecturally unique. The structure is approximately 10 metres high with bronze panels on which the names of the dead are recorded. The bold inscriptions at the top states:

"For men and women of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets who died in both World Wars and who have no known grave."



Tower Hill Memorial, London

Both the inscription and the plaque at the front, beside the road, give clear indications of the enormity of the loss of lives, reportedly around 24,000 in both wars. The engraved plaque by the roadside states:

**“TO THE GLORY OF
GOD AND TO THE
HONOUR OF TWELVE
THOUSAND OF THE
MERCHANT NAVY AND
FISHING FLEETS WHO
HAVE NO GRAVE BUT
THE SEA 1914-1918”**



The ships are listed in alphabetical order with the names of servicemen lost at sea. Not only are there names of ships that had been registered in various ports in the UK, such as Bolton Hall from West Hartlepool and Akassa from Liverpool, research showed that there were large numbers of men who had travelled from various countries in the Caribbean and Africa, at that time part of the British Empire. A book titled ‘The Cross of Sacrifice’, lists the names of those lost at sea. <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=2X2-BAAAQBAJ&lpg=PA5&pg=PA5#v=onepage&q&f=false>



Tower Hill Memorial, London

While the front monument is dedicated to the loss of lives in WW1, in the gardens behind, on low walls, are inscribed the names of the servicemen and fishing fleets lost at sea in WW2. Approximately 132 bronze panels record the names of those lost at sea in both world wars.

Furthermore, the Imperial War Museum (IWM), London, is currently compiling a ‘War Memorials Register’, which when completed will be a national register of UK memorials and the names they commemorate. It is claimed that there are up to 70,000 memorials which include places in the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

When located in church yards, these memorials incorporate a cross at the top, Cross of Sacrifice, with a memorable Biblical quotation carved into the stone, often from the New Testament. An example of this type is in St Mary’s Roman

Catholic Cemetery in Kensal Green London. Situated at the back of the cemetery (almost at the end of a path), separate from the surrounding graves, is the well looked-after CWG memorial. This memorial which includes a screen wall and a low kerb is dedicated to the British, Irish, French and Canadian servicemen. The screen wall lists alphabetically, the names of Commonwealth service personnel from both world wars, whose graves in the cemetery could not be marked by individual headstones

This memorial is constructed of Portland stone and comprises a Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), Cross of Sacrifice mounted on an octagonal pedestal and basestone https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cross_of_Sacrifice#Development_and_design_of_the_cross



Cross of Sacrifice, St Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery, Kensal Green

The cross is surrounded by three walls which have the inscription "THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE". It is accompanied by a screen wall with 14 panels on which are carved the names of the soldiers, their service numbers and rank. Panels 1 to 7 record the names of those buried in this enclosed space, while panels 8 to 14 record the names of those buried in other parts of the cemetery and who are not otherwise commemorated. Following the Commission's principles, there is no distinction made on account of race or creed, but regiment and military rank are clearly indicated. There's no indication of country of origin for those recorded here.



Private James Thomas Fitz-Evan Eversley's inscription.

This was evident when a visit was made to ascertain the whereabouts of the final resting place of Private James Thomas Fitz-Evan Eversley, of Trinidad. His military number and rank as a Private were recorded along with his date of death and age.

It should also be noted that within the area reserved and maintained by the CWGC, there are at least 14 white CWGC headstones, plus stone markers, while located in burial plots around the cemetery are other war graves. Nearby is the grave of a soldier, Vincent Geoffrey Gomes Pereira, late of the British West Indies Regiment (BWIR), who died on 16th September 1916, aged 24. The headstone was erected by his parents, not the CWGC.

While the CWGC is responsible for the general preservation of a large number of memorials, some fall outside their remit. For those that they maintain, only a few are dedicated to the lives of servicemen and women from Africa and the Caribbean.





The Memorial Gates was inaugurated by her Majesty the Queen on 6th November 2002:

One such memorial is located at Constitution Hill in central London. Set in The Royal Parks, just a stone's throw from Buckingham Palace and other memorials to conflicts within and beyond distant memory. The oldest, Wellington Arch, was built as long ago as 1826 - 1830, whilst the newest, the RAF Bomber Command Memorial, was built in 2012.

Baroness Flather, of the Memorial Gates Trust, which raised £2.7m towards the monument, told the BBC that the contribution of millions of volunteers from Africa, the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent had been largely overlooked. She said: "Somehow they have been erased from the memory of people here". "We need to inform the young ethnic minority children about this contribution. We need to inform everybody else as well."

The nearby plaque refers to services and sacrifices of those five million volunteers along with their magnificent contributions. This is important because the panel at the front with much information about the memorial itself was jointly donated by Friends of the War Memorials and the West Indian Ex-Servicemen Association UK. Architecturally, the structures consist of an Indian style open pavilion with four tall pillars; on top of each is a brass lamp which is lit on ceremonial occasions.

"In memory of the five million volunteers from the Indian sub-continent, Africa, and the Caribbean, who fought with Britain in the two world wars."

On each of the four pillars are the regions of the British Empire that recruited servicemen and women, namely Nepal, Africa, Caribbean, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. Under the dome of the pavilion, are the names of the recipients of the George Cross and the Victoria Cross. The final line of Ben Okri's poem *'Turn on your light' – Our future is greater than our past* – is engraved on one of the pillars of the Memorial Gates.



Memorial Gates London -
Copyright/Ownership National Army Museum

Close by are two stone tombs engraved with the 1914-1918 campaign theatres of war, as well as those of the 1939-1945 campaign. In fact the only memorial, singularly constructed to honour the contributions of servicemen and women from Africa and the Caribbean: African and Caribbean War Memorial was unveiled in Windrush Square, Brixton, London, on Thursday 22nd June 2017 (Windrush Day).

The 2.5 ton monument was designed by the Nubian Jak Community Trust. It is shaped in the form of two obelisks (one horizontal, to represent the fallen, the other vertical, to represent their descendants). Jak Beula, chair of the Nubian Jak Commemorative Plaque Scheme, said:

“The efforts of military contribution to both World Wars by African and Caribbean peoples have for too long remained overlooked and unheralded. This memorial will correct that omission and give justice and dignity to the hundreds of thousands of African and Caribbean servicemen and women who made the ultimate sacrifice for the mother country”.



African and Caribbean War Memorial in Windrush Square, Brixton, London

Author: Jennifer Brathwaite

Acknowledgements and further reading:
Explanation of the Cross of Sacrifice

<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=UnZfMbYczpUC&pg=PA111&dq=meaning%20of%20cross%20of%20sacrifice&pg=PA111#v=onepage&q=meaning%20of%20cross%20of%20sacrifice&f=falsehttps://books.google.co.uk/books?id=UnZfMbYczpUC&pg=PA111&dq=meaning%20of%20cross%20of%20sacrifice&pg=PA111#v=onepage&q=meaning%20of%20cross%20of%20sacrifice&f=false>

<http://www.memorial-gates-london.org.uk/location/index.htmlhttp://www.memorial-gates-london.org.uk/location/index.html>

The Voice article:

Memorial to 'Overlooked' African and Caribbean War Veterans'

https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=4&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiXj8q43ff0Ah-Vf8AKHTsZBu0QFgg2MAM&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.voice-online.co.uk%2Farticle%2Fmemorial-overlooked-african-and-caribbean-war-veterans&usq=AFQjCNE7VEyFM4bspT5le9feYls6nYN-JQ&sig2=qmeXwEY6I9k2BfDYV_yQRA&bvm=bv.131783435,d.ZGg



TIME WILL NOT DIM THE GLORY OF THEIR DEEDS

‘THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE’¹ BRITISH MEMORIALS TO BLACK CONTRIBUTORS TO BRITAIN’S WAR 1914–1918.

Participants called it the Great War but it is now known as the First World War. Men and women served in the army, the navy, the merchant navy and in the air force. They drove trains, ambulances, and tanks. They worked in factories making grenades, shells, bullets, rifles and other armaments. They tended the wounded in hospitals, and buried the dead. Those who had served were named on memorials on village greens, in churches, schools and colleges, in town halls, and places where they had worked, from the post office, railway stations to the draper’s shop. Statues were designed and erected.

What became the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, now responsible for maintaining cemeteries and memorials for 1,750,000 war dead in 140 countries, began in 1915. Visiting one cemetery near Boulogne in 1922 the British king (George V) noted: *‘this massed multitude of silent witnesses to the desolation of war’*.² The Commonwealth War Graves (CWG) cemeteries for hospitals have full details of the dead – including over ten thousand near Etaples on the French coast. Memorials to the missing list

thousands of names – 35,000 in Arras (northern France), 70,000 on the Thiepval memorial on the Somme, and Hollybrook (Southampton) has nearly 2,000 names of men lost at sea and includes Field Marshall Lord Kitchener and nearly six hundred Africans of the South African Native Labour Corps – all CWG memorials are based on the principle of equality.³



1. Ecclesiasticus chapter 44 verse 14: ‘Their bodies are buried in peace; but their name liveth for evermore’. The last part is carved on the Stone of Remembrance in all large (over 400 graves) war cemeteries.

2. T. A. Edwin Gibson and G. Kingsley Ward, *Courage Remembered. The story behind the construction and maintenance of the Commonwealth’s Military Cemeteries and Memorials* (London: HMSO, 1989), p 43.

3. Gibson and Ward, *Courage Remembered*, p 165. For the South Africans, see Albert Grundlingh, *Fighting their own War. South African Blacks and the First World War* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987) and Stimela Jason Jingoes, *A Chief is a Chief by the People* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975).

British West Indies Regiment

The CWG⁴ names 124 soldiers of this all-black regiment, their names appearing on the Hollybrook memorial, several cemeteries in Plymouth, in Seaford on the Sussex coast, and in Anfield (Liverpool) and so on. Four individuals show a little of the distribution of BWIR memorialized men in Britain (and different fragments of biography):

Private Allen Johnson 2509 died 17 June 1916. His name is on the screen wall of Wandsworth, Earlsfield, where 477 veterans are named: they may all have died in the 3rd London General Hospital which was nearby.

Private James Austin Thompson 2576, aged 19, from the Bahamas died from pneumonia on 14 July 1916. His name is on the screen wall of All Saints, Nunhead. The burials were widely distributed, not in plots and so the 592 men's graves lack headstones.

Private V. G. Pereira was an early recruit, having regimental number 191. He died on 16 September 1916 and is buried in St Mary's Roman Catholic cemetery in Kensal Green – plot C.2421.

Private Samuel N. Brown 5046 died from tuberculosis on 12 May 1918 and is buried in Brookwood (near Woking, Surrey). He was thirty-one and from Barbados.

There are 140 scattered First World War graves in Brookwood.

West India Regiment

Lance Corporal J. Francis 3585 died from tuberculosis on 16 January 1919, and is memorialised at Brookwood.

4. www.cwg.org.

5. Albert Grundlingh, *Fighting their own War*, p 94.

6. Calvin W. Ruck, *The Black Battalion 1916-1920* (Halifax NS: Nimbus, 1987).

South Africa Labour Corps

CWG memorials often give the date of Corps members' deaths as 21 February 1917, which was when their transport ship *Mendi* went down in the Channel after a collision. 615 men drowned, and 267 were saved.⁵

Bodies were washed up along the Channel, and buried locally as with the only First World War grave in the cemetery in East Dean, Sussex and the four men buried in Littlehampton (one known only as Jim) including Private Jim Mbombiya 9373 whose grave is plot C.1774.

The CWG names 678 individuals from the Corps. One of three war graves in Wembury in South Devon is a man from the Corps. Others are to be found in Bristol, Portsmouth, and in the cemetery at the military hospital in Netley near Southampton. A Canadian army hospital at Shorncliffe (near Folkestone in Kent) explains why so many of the 471 burials were Canadians but the presence of Belgians, a Chinese labourer, an Australian and a Portuguese reminds us that this was a global war. Private Piet Malinge 15099 of the SANLC who died on 3 February 1918 is buried in plot O.625.

Cape Coloured Labour Corps

The Corps were recruited in the Cape Town region. The Hollybrook memorial names Private Michael Abrams 1795 who died at sea on 16 April 1918.

Labouring - construction, loading and unloading, leading horse-drawn wagons, carrying shells, planks, barbed wire, ammunition and so on – was part of every soldier's experience of war (except officers) and involved fighting men who had been brought from the trenches for rest. SANLC member Stimela Jingoos from Lesotho left South Africa weeks after the *Mendi* sank. The trip from Cape Town to Liverpool took over six weeks. They went from Dover to France and spent a year unloading ships. A battalion of six hundred black Canadians were construction workers serving in France and visiting England.⁶

Labouring in munitions factories around Britain involved black people, some in uniform and others still civilians. The Belgian Army included war-wounded men and those who had worked in their nation's armaments factories (now in German hands) and their skills were used in a factory between Newcastle and Durham from 1916. The National Projectile Factory in Birtley employed 3,500 people and it was Belgian-run and Flemish-speaking. The Belgian management spoke French. There had been 32 Congo Africans in Belgium's forces in 1914, all resident when the Germans invaded. Corporal Jacques M'Bondo died in Birtley in early 1918, aged twenty-three. He and fourteen others were buried in the Catholic cemetery in Birtley and had their gravestones renewed following local pressure.⁷



Another WWI serviceman was the author, barrister and businessman A. B. C. Merriman Labor from Sierra Leone, and had lived in England for ten years when war broke out. By 1916 he was working a 12-hour shift in a munitions factory in Woolwich Arsenal. He inspected the armaments and checked their quality. He became known as Ohlohoh Maiji. His health suffered and he started to cough blood and developed tuberculosis. In June 1919 he was admitted to the Lambeth Infirmary where he died, aged 41, on 14 July. His body was entrusted to James and Mary Hillier, of Brixton, who had been his landlord in 1913. Where he was buried remains untraced.

He joined the Army Service Corps and drove an ambulance in Flanders. He settled in Bedford with his wife and daughters, eventually running a taxi company. He died aged 91 in 1976. His place of burial has not been identified.

Veterans

Individuals such as Clough and Hiawatha Coleridge-Taylor died in Britain and their graves did not qualify for CWG stones (the cut-off date being 31 August 1921).⁸ Many memorials list just the dead but some list all who served.

Driving motor vehicles

Three black men are known to have driven motor vehicles in France: Hiawatha Coleridge-Taylor, the son of composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, drove for the French Red Cross. He was born in Croydon in 1900 and so the work must have been in the last months of the war. A 'West Indian' named James McDonald Robertson served three years as a driver in the Army Service Corps (1915-6, 1917-9) and was the subject of debate in the House of Commons on 23 March 1922 over his application to be a taxi driver in London. His service record is available at the National Archives in Kew ref W0372/17/38832. His place of burial is not known. Jamaican chauffeur, Joe Clough, reached England in 1906 and in 1910 became a bus driver in London.

7. www.1418fotograven.com; calrn.info/congo on Yser.

8. Gibson and Ward, *Courage Remembered*, p 64.

Memorials

Some locations have been studied in detail by local historians, and old photographs have been recovered, as in the example of the war memorial in Port of Spain, Trinidad.⁹ It names 180 of the fallen, of which 83 were in the BWIR, 81 in the regular army, 9 in the navy and 7 in the air force. We know of Richard Henry Bascombe, of African descent, who made his own way to England and became private 12528 in the 3rd battalion of the King's (Liverpool Regiment).

He was recommended for the D.C.M. Bascombe died in a road accident on his bicycle in London on 5 August 1916 and was buried in Pembroke Dock Military Cemetery in south-west Wales.¹⁰ There is a total of forty WW1 graves there from an array of military groups, for it was close to a military hospital.

Another African-Trinidadian identified by an old photograph is James Thomas Fitz-Evan Eversley, 5130 of the 4th battalion of the London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers). He died, aged 26, on 1 June 1916 at Brompton Hospital in London and was buried in the Catholic section of Kensal Green Cemetery in west London on 6 June 1916. His name is on the screen wall, one of 208 World War I British soldiers commemorated there. The photograph of Valleton Sydney Algernon Redman is less distinct, but a historian of Trinidad families might clarify if the Redmans were of African descent. He was in the same battalion of the London Regiment as Eversley and his number was 5148 – so close to Eversley's 5130 that they might have enlisted on the same day. He died aged 19 from pneumonia on 22 February 1916. He was stationed on Salisbury Plain and is one of 34 soldiers who are buried at Compton Chamberlayne Cemetery. These three individuals are memorialized in Trinidad and in three British cemeteries.

The CWGC states it is responsible for graves and memorials to 220 men from or with Barbados connections, thirteen of whom are buried in Barbados and 54 commemorated on the Tower Hill memorial to merchant navy personnel, in London.¹¹ One grave with Barbados links is that of C. H. Yard who was in the 3rd battalion of the Dorsetshire Regiment, number 44686.



He died after the war, on 22 April 1919, and is buried near Portsmouth in the Portsdown (ChristChurch) cemetery. He was 28, and his parents lived in St Johns, Barbados.

Memorials vary in their details, some listing names and some adding the details of rank and regiment/ship/squadron. Many have the date of death but seldom the place. There seems to have been an unofficial contest to ensure that everyone was listed, and English memorials can have names of individuals whose parents lived locally although the hero had lived far away.

Schools, colleges and universities erected their own memorials but less elitist institutions seem to have had few memorials or they have not survived. Meeting halls – usually described as 'memorial halls' sometimes as 'victory halls' – were socially uniting memorials. Photographs of the always-young soldiers were often mounted on the wall. In Balcombe, Sussex, there is the Victory Hall: 'The Balcombe Working Men's Club and Institute opened in 1902. In 1923, it was extended to become the Balcombe Victory Hall, a village social club for men and women and the centre of village life – taking over from the Parish Church. This non-denominational place also became a memorial to the Balcombe men who fought in the First World War and their names are inscribed on a wooden panel inside the vestibule of the Hall. Two hundred men of all classes fought together, died together, returned together, and are remembered together'. It is famous for its frescoes by Neville Lytton.

9. caribbeanrollofhonour-ww1.

10. As Private Henry Bascombe, 012528 he is noted on the regiment's on-line system at the Museum of Liverpool. Details are not from army service records.

11. CWG country report: Barbados.

Born in Britain

It has been noted that Coleridge-Taylor was born in Britain. The activities of other black Britons have been uncovered.¹²

Said to have been enslaved on a Florida plantation Henry Parker, of African descent, escaped and eventually travelled to Bristol in the 1850s but all British census reports have his place of birth as Bristol. He married a Bristol woman. Their grandson Private Bertie Head was killed in action, 23 March 1918 according to a Bristol website that referred to family papers. Private Bertie Head seemed to have been a 20-year-old rifleman Edwin Thomas Charles Head, 318108, of the London Rifle Brigade, who died on 23 March 1918 and is buried in Roclincourt military cemetery in France. CWGC files noted that his parents were Thomas and Caroline Head, of Pear Tree Road, Addlestone, Surrey. His name is not included in the 130 on the Chertsey war memorial, or on the memorial scroll of the now-deconsecrated church in Addlestone, nor in the 142 names on the gates to Victory Park in Addlestone.

Since the memorials are to the dead we still have the problem of identifying black soldiers who survived the war years. Liverpool-born Herbert Gladstone McDavid (1898-1966) was a ship-owner later knighted, and whose grandfather had migrated from Antigua to Liverpool. His entry by Charles Kay in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* notes he served in the Liverpool Scottish from 1917, was a prisoner of war in Germany, and took such a leading role there that he was awarded a Meritorious Service Medal (rarely awarded, it was for non-combatant gallantry). He was cremated.

Individuals who achieved fame in sports and in other aspects of the entertainment field included black people. Lionel Fitzherbert Turpin is known largely because his England-born son Randolph was a world middleweight boxing champion in 1951. Lionel Turpin was born in British Guiana (now Guyana) in 1896 and died in Warwickshire in 1929 leaving five children. He joined the York and Lancaster Regiment in 1915 and served in France into 1919, latterly with the King's Royal Rifle Corps. Injured in a gas attack and wounded by shells he was put in a convalescent home in Warwick. He married a local girl in 1921 and settled in Leamington Spa. He died in March 1929 and was buried in the Brunswick Street cemetery. The funeral was paid for by the veterans' group, the British Legion.¹³

Entertainer Wendell Bruce-James was also from British Guiana, although he was born in Antigua in 1891. He was an organist at Christ Church in Georgetown and attended the elitist Queen's College. He was awarded the British Guiana Scholarship in 1910 and sailed to England where he studied classics at Keble College, Oxford.¹⁴

In a recollection published in 1936 Bruce-James stated he joined the 12th and later the 19th Battalion Royal Fusiliers (Public School Corps) and was sent to France. There were nearly fifty battalions in the Royal Fusiliers, and the 12th was a service battalion, supplying newly-trained men to other battalions. The 19th was in France from November 1915 to February 1916, when it was known as the 2nd Public Schools Battalion.

Like the 1st battalion the qualities of its well-educated volunteers suggested they were of officer material, and it was disbanded in April 1916. The War Office files researched by Howard Rye show that Bruce-James was in France from 13 April to 18 May 1916. He was then posted to the 5th Officer Cadet Battalion on 26 May (based at Trinity College, Cambridge) and was discharged on 13 September 1916.¹⁵

12. Ray Costello, *Black Tommies* is a good start to this subject.

13. Bourne, *Black Poppies*, pp 29-32.
Turpin's photograph appears opposite page 96.

14. Roberts, *Black Oxford*, p 70 states he was awarded second place for Greek composition (the Gainsford Prize).



Why Bruce-James was not retained (he was twenty-five years old in 1916), and trained as an officer or employed in an administrative role, etc. remains unresolved. His daughter had been told, years later, that her father 'joined the Officers' Training Corps at Oxford, but when a prominent member of the Royal Family – possibly 'His Majesty' – came to review the troop he said, indicating Bruce, "Who is he? There are no black officers in the Army," and he refused to review the men until Bruce was sent off'.¹⁶ It seems more likely that royalty inspected the Officer Cadet Battalion, rather than the OTC. The University Roll of Service 1920 noted he was discharged when a private. From 1919, he had a career in music – as Bruce Wendell - in England. He later abandoned his wife and two daughters in 1935: he died in New York in 1968. His daughter's memoirs deserve further research.¹⁷

Albert Duke-Essien was born in London in July 1899, the son of a Ghanaian. He was enlisted as soldier 55890 into the King's Royal Rifle Corps in September 1916 and was injured during his war service which ended in May 1919. He became an entertainer and died in Manchester in September 1983.¹⁸

Dr James Samuel Risien Russell was educated at Dollar Academy in Scotland, then at Edinburgh University where he was a prize winner and went on to study medicine in Berlin and Paris. He was an outstanding neurologist, well esteemed by colleagues and a contributor to reputable journals on medicine. He joined the territorial (militia) section of the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1912, to be one of the team working at a Wandsworth (London) army hospital which would open as soon as war broke out. He was a Captain in the RAMC. His understanding of the mind and brain helped his awareness of what was to be called shell-shock. He headed a hospital near Queen Square in London but it seems he never served abroad. Dr Russell died in 1939, and is buried in Highgate Cemetery, London.

15. Howard Rye, 'The Southern Syncopated Orchestra: The Roster', *Black Music Research Journal* (Chicago), Spring 2010, Vol 30 No 1, p 23; email from Howard Rye 29 May 2016.

16. Ann Franklin Bowes, *From Your Daddy* (London: Athena, 2006), p 16.

17. Bowes, *From Your Daddy*.

18. Rye, 'The Southern Syncopated Orchestra', p 43.

James Jackson Brown had received a decent private education in Jamaica and made his way to study medicine in Canada, moving to the London Hospital by 1906. Married with two sons (one became a doctor) he went with two African-Caribbean friends to volunteer for the RAMC during the war but was refused. The RAMC would accept him as a sergeant. All doctors were officers and it seems the thought of a black officer would upset the recruiting personnel. Brown told them if he was not to be treated as a British-qualified doctor (he qualified in 1914) he would not join. He died in 1953.

John Alcindor had attended the elitist St Mary's College in Trinidad and then studied for five years at Edinburgh University where he graduated in 1899. He worked in London and established his own practise. He applied for the RAMC and was rejected because he was 'of colonial origin' according to family memories. He worked for the Red Cross, meeting trains bringing the wounded to London railway terminals - and was awarded a medal accordingly. He died in 1924 and is buried in Kensal Green's Catholic cemetery. His eldest son became a regular soldier and was a Captain at the time of his death in 1946.¹⁹

Jenner Wright was a British-born qualified doctor whose father was a Sierra Leonean lawyer. He applied for the Royal Army Medical Corps and was eventually told to apply at 'home': Sierra Leone. He did, and served as a 'Native Medical Officer'. Dr. S. J. Allwood, a Jamaican was told the same by the War Office.²⁰

If British-qualified medical men could be rejected or scorned, perhaps we can see why Bruce-James ceased his military career in 1916?

Born abroad, served another army, died in Britain

Young men in the British West Indies, and those of British West Indies heritage but resident in the USA or Canada, and keen to enlist, joined Canadian forces. The CWGC graves in Bulford, Wiltshire, include that of John Kellman Chandler who was 25 years old when he died on 23 January 1915. He had probably been at one of the military training grounds in the area. Chandler was in the 14th battalion of the Canadian infantry, Quebec Regiment, number 25935. His parents lived in Barbados.

One man who was reported to have been a useful member of the British forces was Rufus Fennell, born in America in 1887 and was in England from 1915. *The South Wales News* of June 1919 said he was 'a coloured medical man' who had served in the Middle East, and the *Manchester Evening News* of 8 October 1917 said he was a 'Mons hero'.²¹ He died in America in 1974.

Author: Jeffrey Green

19. For Risien Russell, Brown and Alcindor see the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, and Jeffrey Green, 'West Indian Doctors in London' *Journal of Caribbean History*, Vol 20 No 1 (June 1986), pp 49-77.

20. David Killingray, 'All the King's Men?', in Rainer Lotz and Ian Pegg (eds), *Under the Imperial Carpet. Essays in Black History 1780-1950* (Crawley; Rabbit Press, 1986), pp 172-173.

21. Christian Hogsbjerg, 'Rufus Fennell: A Literary Pan-Africanist in Britain', *Race and Class*, January-March 2016, Vol 57 No 3, pp 71-87



James Thomas Fitz-Evan EVERSLEY

Full name	James Thomas Fitz-Evan Eversley
Date of birth	23rd August 1889
Place (Country) of birth	Port of Spain, Trinidad
When/Where volunteered? Regimental Number	Mansion House, 4th Battalion City of London Royal Fusiliers, 5130
Where served?	Died whilst still in training
WWI reward/medal	None known
Date of death	1st June 1916
Where buried?	Kensal Green (St. Mary's) Roman Catholic Cemetery, name on screen wall
Is there a memorial in the UK?	Memorial reference 6, Kensal Green (St. Mary's) Roman Catholic Cemetery.



James Thomas Fitz-Evan Eversley was¹ born on 23rd August 1889 in Port of Spain on the island of Trinidad. His parents were Thomas Fitz-Evan, originally from Barbados, and Elizabeth Ann Eversley. While there are few records of Private Eversley's life as a child or a young man, his secondary school is recorded as St Marys' Roman Catholic College for Boys, now known as CIC, College of the Immaculate Conception, in Port of Spain, the capital of Trinidad and Tobago.



Frederick Street, Port of Spain, Trinidad, West Indies circa 1915²

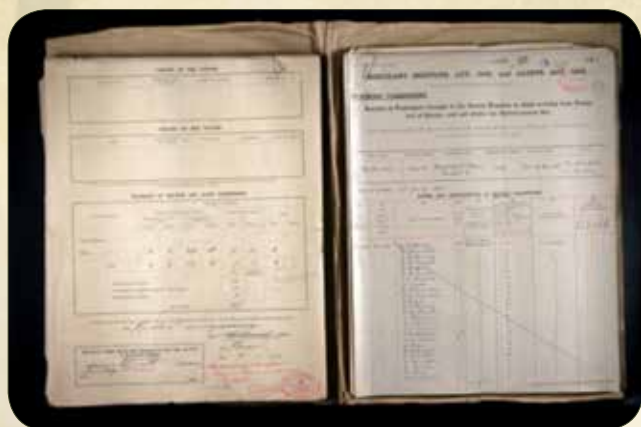
Information including photographs of the commercial areas of Trinidad around 1915, the year in which he left Trinidad on a ship for Britain, shows a bustling city of commercial and other buildings. One of which was St Mary's Catholic College which was located at 75 Frederick Street, Port of Spain. The school was established in 1863 with only a handful of students, but current enrollment is around 1200.

The school's motto "Virtus et Scientia" is Latin for "Manliness and Knowledge"[school's website translation]. St Mary's College had boarders as well as 'day boys', and students would have had lessons in academic subjects including languages, French and Latin. Such would have prepared them to enter the professional jobs available at the time.

Despite there being around 10,000 Black people in Britain in 1914 at the outbreak of WW1, King's Regulations forbade Black men from serving in the British Army during the First World War.

³ In spite of this, Black recruits could be found in all branches of the armed forces, either by accident, or due to local recruitment oversights. From 1914, Black Britons who volunteered at recruitment centers were joined by men from African and West Indian colonies in the British Empire. Many travelled to the 'mother country' at their own expense, or as part of a group recruited in their home countries. One of these men was James Thomas Fitz-Evan Eversley. A social diary at the time recorded a church parade [in Port of Spain] on 26th December 1915, followed by an inspection by the Acting Governor General on the day of departure.

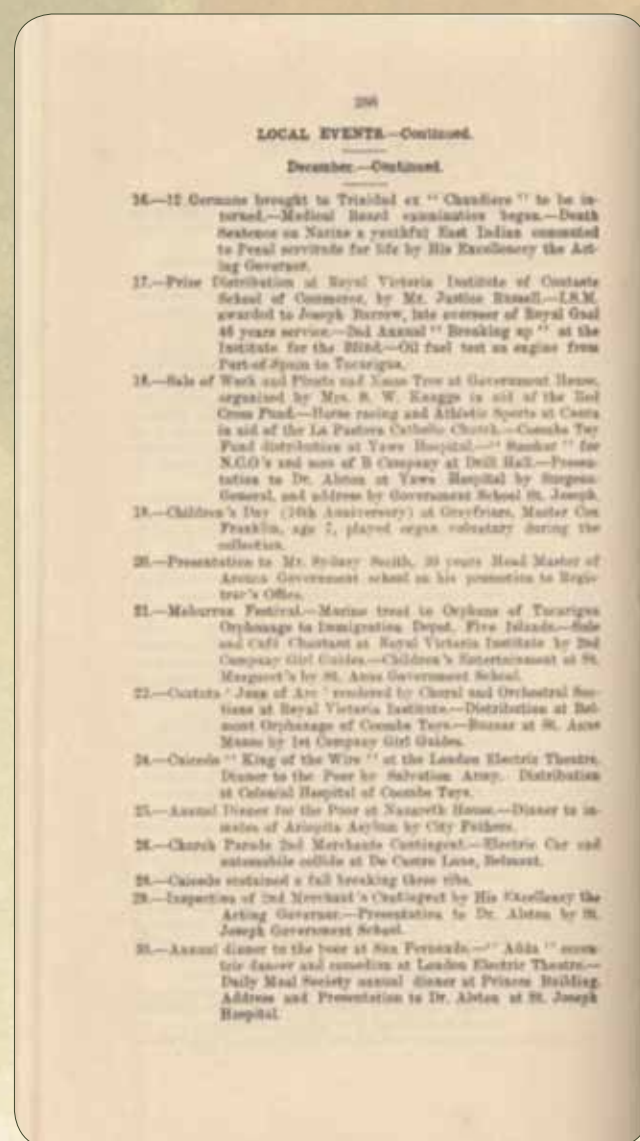
Trinidad and Tobago was a British colony with a large merchant community based around the city of Port of Spain, the capital of the country. The Second Trinidad Merchants' Contingent, of which there were 69 men, sailed on 29th December 1915 on Ex. E.M.S. 'Balantia'



Frederick Street, Port of Spain, Trinidad, West Indies circa 1915

⁴ This document dated 18 JAN 1916, according to the Merchant Shipping Act 1906 and Aliens Act 1905, listed the incoming passengers from Trinidad to London. J.T Eversley was recorded on the passenger list of SS 'Balantia' with other members of the Trinidad Contingent. The ship arrived at Tilbury Docks, England, on 17th January, 1916. The contingent was under the command of a Sergeant

J.B.L Todd, Officer in Command of the Trinidad Light Infantry Volunteers. The situation was such that even though a number of the volunteers were Black, more often than not, there would be a White officer in command.



<http://caribbeanrolllofhonour-ww1-ww2.yolasite.com/2nd-merchants-contingent.php>



THEY CAME FROM TRINIDAD TO BE SOLDIERS OF THE KING.

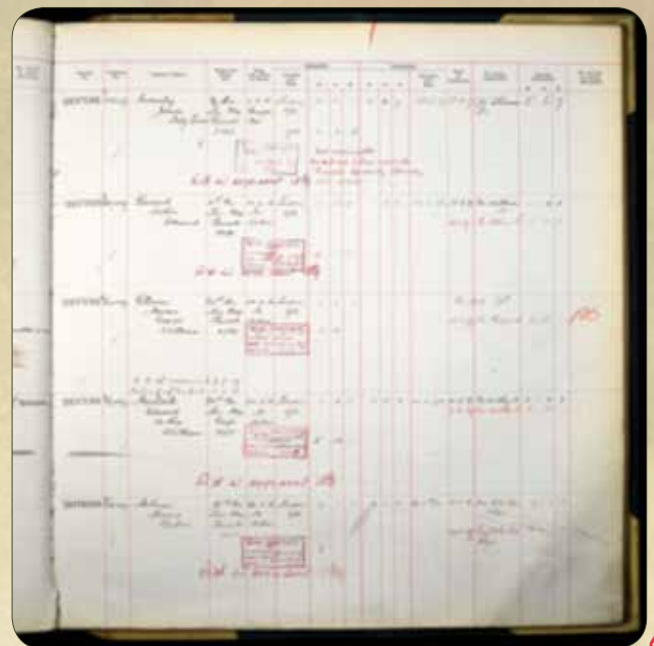


Trinidadian troops in London

Between September 1915 and December 1917, 40 officers and 1,438 men from Trinidad and Tobago volunteered to serve in the British West Indies Regiment, although some sources state as many as 5,000 enlisted.⁵ The photograph and caption serve as reminders that volunteers came from all walks of life in Trinidadian society. Following his arrival in Britain, JT Eversley enlisted in 4th Battalion City of London Royal Fusiliers. There is little information about the theatres of war this unit was engaged in. Private Eversley did not see active duty outside of Britain.

Record Number 267796, Registry Number 228635/1, appears to be a document about war gratuities and soldiers' effects. Private Eversley was recorded to have had an account with sums of money. This money would have been sent to his family in Trinidad, most probably his father.

Sadly Private Eversley died on 1st June 1916 in Brompton Hospital, just 6 months after joining the British Army while still in training with his army unit. The cause of his death was recorded as an illness, probably pneumonia. He was the 40th of the 210 soldiers from Trinidad and Tobago who died in World War 1.



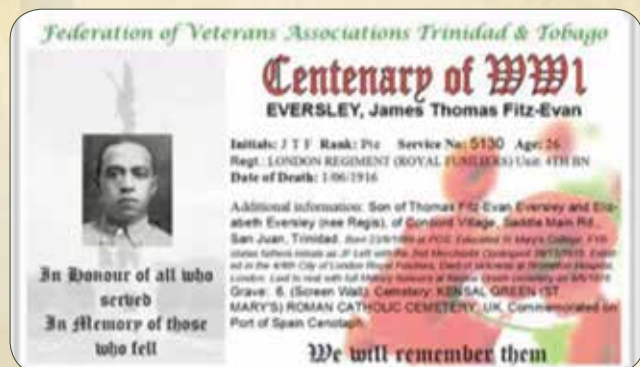
Confirmation of Death from Regiment National Archive- Ancestry

Kensal Green Cemetery was the final resting place of Private James Thomas Fitz-Evan Eversley. Documents obtained at Ancestry.com from CWGC, Commonwealth War Graves Commission, stated that Private Eversley though buried somewhere in the cemetery, does not have a headstone. Along with other deceased soldiers from World Wars 1 and 2, his name was carved into one of the panels of the stone wall.

This in itself provided additional information about both the deceased serviceman and the memorial itself. His name was on panel 2, with a stone marker on the ground nearby which it is believed was the reference to the number in the death records. It should be noted that there is no reference to regiment, or country of origin.



Private James Thomas Fitz-Evan Eversley is also commemorated on the Roll of Honour from the C.I.C. Annual 1919 "War Memorial Number", St. Mary's College of the Immaculate Conception, Port-of-Spain Trinidad. It appears that his photograph was obtained from these records.⁷



Authors: By Jennifer Brathwaite and Joseph McKenzie

1. Image courtesy of Caribbean WW1 Casualties while serving with Regular Army Units Commonwealth War Graves Commission & Franklin Yearbook 1919.
2. Image courtesy of University of Florida digital collection.
3. <http://caribbeanrollofhonour-ww1-ww2.yolasite.com/2nd-merchants-contingent.php>
4. Document courtesy of the National Archives, Ancestry.
5. Courtesy of the West India Committee
6. British Army documents from National Archives-Ancestry.
7. Image courtesy of Caribbean History Archives edited by Gerald Beeson
8. Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum
<http://www.everymanremembered.org/profiles/soldier/2906058/>
<http://www.thehistorypress.co.uk/articles/black-servicemen-unsung-heroes-of-the-first-world-war/>
<http://caribbeanhistoryarchives.blogspot.co.uk/2014/04/trinidadians-who-served-in-world-war-i.html>
westindiacommittee.org/caribbeangreatwar/map/africa/topics/trinidad-and-tobago/

Lionel Fitzherbert Turpin

Full name	Lionel Fitzherbert Turpin
Date of birth	February/March 1896
Place (Country) of birth	Georgetown, British Guiana (Guyana)
When/Where volunteered?	5th August 1915, York
Where served?	France
What contribution?	Kings Royal Rifle Corps (service number: A202638), fought with British Expeditionary Force campaigns in 1916, 1917 and 1918
Medals	British War Medal and Victory Medal
Date of death	6th March 1929
Where buried	Leamington Cemetery
Is there a memorial in the UK?	Lies in an unmarked grave

said he was 19 years and 5 months old when he enlisted in the Army in August 1915. On the same enlistment papers he declared that his next of kin was his father, John Turpin of 291, Thomas Street, Georgetown. Jackie Turpin (Lionel's son) says that Mr Turpin Snr was a master carpenter with the city works department.

It cannot be ascertained with certainty, why or when Lionel chose to leave Guyana. There is a family story, recounted by Jackie, that his father left home at sixteen (1912) because of a falling out with his own father.¹

Ray Costello has suggested that Lionel 'was disturbed by the long delays and the reluctance to allow units of the West India Regiment to be directly involved in armed combat ... His answer was to make his way to Britain where, as an individual recruit,² he

1. Jackie Turpin and W Terry Fox. 'Battling Jack - you gotta fight back' (Mainstream Publishing, 2005), page 24
2. Ray Costello 'Black Tommies' Liverpool University Press, 2015, page 73

Lionel Turpin's story starts in the British Colony of British Guiana. Information about his early life is hard to come by, the records are not available online and many of the source documents are probably lost. It is unlikely, for instance, that his birth certificate will ever be traced. However, it can deduce that he was born in 1896 (probably in February or March) because he

enlisted'.³ There is no doubt this was true of some recruits but it doesn't tally with Jackie's version of events.

Whatever the circumstances, it is unlikely Lionel would have been able to afford the fare to England so it is highly probable that he worked his passage. However, it is known, that by August 1915 when he enlisted he gave Collingwood, North Shields as his home address where he said he was working as a labourer.⁴

There was no conscription when Lionel signed up for service in August 1915 so he enlisted because he wanted to, not because he was obliged to.

Lionel's army records are seriously damaged and so the details of the campaigns he fought in are not entirely clear, however it is apparent that, after a period of initial training, he served with the British Expeditionary Force as part of the Kings Royal Rifle Corps in France in campaigns in 1916, 1917 and 1918. His record has an entry dated 15th September 1915: 'shell wound' and 'gassed' and the records also show that he was posted to hospital. It is possible that, he was treated at a hospital in Coventry and then at an Auxiliary Hospital, Hill House, on the outskirts of Warwick.

After leaving Hill House he lived initially in Warwick and subsequently in Leamington Spa. He met a local girl, Beatrice Whitehouse, and they married on 24th December 1921 at Warwick Registry Office. They had a total of four children together. Their final child, Randolph, was born only nine months before Lionel died. Randolph went on to become boxing middleweight champion of the world in 1951.

Lionel never fully recovered from his wounds. In Jackie's words he: 'put up with his war wounds as best he could but his health deteriorated fast. He was going backwards and forwards to the Coventry hospital more and more often. They took half his lung away. It reached a point where he needed round the clock nursing'.⁵

Lionel died in the 'Ministry of Pensions Hospital, Highbury, Kings Heath' on 6th March 1929. The funeral took place on Wednesday 13th March. Caryl Phillips relates

that 'his funeral hearse was drawn by four black horses, with six soldiers as an escort'⁶ and, according to Jackie 'the Leamington branch of the British Legion paid his funeral expenses'.⁷ His death was announced in the Leamington Courier on 15th April.⁸

Lionel is buried in Leamington Spa Cemetery. The plot is unmarked but with the help of staff at Warwick District Council, the exact location of the grave was identified and a temporary marker was placed.⁹

Authors: Roxanne Gleave and David Gleave



The house where Lionel lived in Willes Road, Leamington Spa (he and his family occupied the basement flat). The blue plaque commemorates his son Randolph, the boxer, not Lionel:



Lionel is buried in Leamington Spa Cemetery, his grave is currently unmarked:

3. Ray Costello 'Black Tommies' Liverpool University Press, 2015, page 73
4. Lionel's army records are available through www.ancestry.co.uk
5. Jackie Turpin and W terry Fox. 'Battling Jack – you gotta fight back' (Mainstream Publishing, 2005), page 29
6. Caryl Phillips 'Foreigners' Harvill Secker, 2007 pages 90-91
7. Jackie Turpin and W terry Fox. 'Battling Jack – you gotta fight back' (Mainstream Publishing, 2005), page 30
8. Researched in Leamington library
9. Warwick District Council, with particular thanks to Alan Tucker-Lee

Rifleman Albert Duke Essien (known professionally as Bert Marshall) (1899–1983): King's Royal Rifle Corps

Full name	Albert Duke Essien
Date of birth	1869
Place (Country) of birth	Accra, Gold Coast (Ghana) British colony WD
When/Where volunteered?	United Kingdom
Where served?	Not known
What contribution?	King's Royal Rifle Corps
Medals	Silver War Badge
Date of death	Not known
Where buried	Not known
Is there a memorial in the UK?	Not known

Albert Duke Essien was born in Accra what is today now known as Ghana. His age according to his military record is 32 when he registered. He was enlisted in the British army from the 14th September 1916 as a rifleman as part of the King's Royal Rifle Corps. He did not die in the First World War although he had to be discharged owing to injuries sustained on the 14th September 1918 (just two months before the end of the war). According to the London, England electoral registers he was believed to have lived in the borough of Lambeth in the Norwood area although according to

the available evidence it appears that he moved home around the time he started to have a family in Britain.

What is intriguing about Albert Duke Essien's life is that he was born on the eve of the scramble for Africa just as his home country of Ghana was being incorporated in to the British Empire. The Gold Coast and the Kingdom of Ashanti were conquered by the British in 1867 two years before Essien's birth and the whole of Ghana would not be under full British control until 1901.

Albert Duke Essien lived through the transition period from his country's self-rule to rule by a foreign power. It is from this perspective that Albert Duke Essien's story is inexplicitly wrapped up in the story of British imperialism. The connections that Britain enforced in Ghana are almost certainly linked to the means by which Essien would find himself fighting on the British side in the First World War.

At present we do not have any records of when Albert Duke Essien immigrated to Britain which makes it difficult to determine how long he had been residing in the country before the outbreak of war. There is evidence that Essien had been residing in Britain for a considerable period of time as evidenced by the fact that two of his children had been born in 1887 and 1899 respectively. This strongly suggests that he had a life that for a significant portion was spent in Britain. As such it is difficult to fully gauge Essien's motivations for entering the war whether it was out of a form of nationalism or for the prospect of obtaining British citizenship. There is the possibility that conscription played a part

in bringing Albert Duke Essien in to the First World War. A form of conscription was first introduced in March 1916 when the Military Service Act was passed that imposed military service on all single able bodied men between the age of 18 and 41. In May 1916 the act was extended to include married men.¹ Marriage records indicate that Essien was married at the time when the First World War started suggesting that he would not have immediately been eligible to enter the war. His enlistment date of 14th September 1916 could suggest that the extension of the Military Service Act to married men possibly had an effect on his timing and willingness to enter the war. At this stage we do not have all the information to know that aspect of Essien's service in detail. Therefore the information being developed on Albert Duke Essien is a work in progress.

There is evidence that his family lineage extends up to 2002 with a great grandson living in London. This puts forward the possibility that even more information can be obtained on Albert Duke Essien.

Author: Lyndon Mukasa

ROLL OF INDIVIDUALS entitled to the "WAR BADGE."

30759

Regt. No.	Rank	Name (in full)	Unit discharged from	No. of Badge and Certificate (To be completed at War Office)	Date of		Cause of Discharge (Wounds or Sickness and para. of R.E.)	Whether served Overseas (Yes or No)
					Enlistment	Discharge		
84250	SEN	WINTERETT, WILLIAM	GLIST	8217187	15-5-16	15-5-16	100% P.W. (100% W.)	YES
84251	"	CATTEL, WILLIAM	"	8217188	17-5-16	15-5-16	100% P.W. (100% W.)	YES
84252	"	HARRISON, CHARLES	"	8217189	17-5-16	15-5-16	100% P.W. (100% W.)	YES
84253	"	KATH, JOHN JOSEPH	"	8217190	17-5-16	15-5-16	100% P.W. (100% W.)	YES
84254	"	BEAVER, ALBERT	"	8217191	17-5-16	15-5-16	100% P.W. (100% W.)	YES
84255	"	RIDDLE, FRANK	"	8217192	17-5-16	15-5-16	100% P.W. (100% W.)	YES
84256	"	DODWIN, ALBERT H	"	8217193	17-5-16	15-5-16	100% P.W. (100% W.)	YES
84257	"	ESDLES, FRANCIS L	"	8217194	17-5-16	15-5-16	100% P.W. (100% W.)	YES
84258	"	HASLER, FREDERICK	"	8217195	17-5-16	15-5-16	100% P.W. (100% W.)	YES
84259	"	ESSIER, ALBERT D	"	8217196	17-5-16	15-5-16	100% P.W. (100% W.)	YES
84260	"	ANDERSON, THOMAS	"	8217197	17-5-16	15-5-16	100% P.W. (100% W.)	YES
84261	SEN	NEENAN, THOMAS	"	8217198	17-5-16	15-5-16	100% P.W. (100% W.)	YES

I certify that the particulars furnished hereon are correct.

Place WINCHESTER Date 2-1-17

Signature and Rank of Officer certifying claimants' service.

I certify that Badges and Certificates, numbered as above, have been issued to the individuals concerned.

Place _____ Date _____

Signature and Rank of Officer certifying issue.

1. Conscription: the First World War, Living Heritage: Your Country Needs You, Parliament.UK, [http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/private-lives/yourcountry/overview/conscription/] Accessed: 15th August 2016, Last Updated: 2016.

William Tull

Full name	William Stephen Palmer Tull
Date of birth	27th April 1882
Place (Country) of birth	Folkestone, England
When/Where volunteered?	Not known. Army records believed to have been destroyed
Where served?	Not known
What contribution?	Royal Engineer, Sapper (service number 545340)
Medals	Not known
Date of death	12th March 1920
Where buried	Folkestone Old Cemetery
Is there a memorial in the UK?	Yes, Commonwealth War Graves headstone

William Tull was older than his now well-known brother Walter Tull from Folkestone, Kent. Walter has attracted a lot of attention because of the belief that he was the first black or mixed race person to be commissioned as an Army Officer. This claim has been called into question as the names of others individuals have been put forward who received their Commission before Walter.

Daniel Tull was their father who came to England from Barbados in 1876. Daniel was born in 1855 and was said to have been the son of a freed slave. There were at least two persons with the surname Tull who owned slaves in Barbados before slavery was abolished in 1834. William M. Tull (who owned three slaves) and Debby Ann Tull (who owned seven).² It is possible that a slave named William (who was owned by Debby Ann Tull) was Daniel's father. Aged 4 in 1832, William could have been of an age to be the father of Daniel in 1855. Furthermore, Daniel's calling his first born son 'William' may lend some weight to this argument.

1. This photo shows William aged about eight or nine. It is taken from a group photo of the Tull family that is widely available on the internet.

2. Barbados slave registers 1832, viewed on www.Ancestry.co.uk

Daniel found work as a carpenter, a trade that his eldest son was also to follow. Being a carpenter in the days of slavery was preferable to labouring in the sugar plantation, (the main industry in Barbados at the time), back breaking work done under scarcely tolerable conditions. This is further evidence that Daniel followed in his own father's profession.

Daniel Tull married a local woman, Alice Elizabeth Palmer, in 1880, and William was born in 1882. William appears in all three census returns that were made during his lifetime: 1891, 1901 and 1911. Aged 9 in 1891, he was living with his mother and father at 51 Walton Road, Folkestone, Kent, with his three younger siblings, Lillian (aged 7), Edward (aged 4, Edward went on to have a long career as a dentist) and Walter (aged 2).

In 1895 tragedy struck the family when Alice died of cancer. William's father re-married to Clara Palmer, Alice's cousin, in 1896 but, by 1897 William was also dead. Clara was unable to cope with the large family and Walter and Edward were sent away to a children's home in London. Because he was old enough to earn a living, William (then 15) remained at home.

The 1901 census found William living as a boarder at 37 Oswald Road, Folkestone, and working as a carpenter. In 1903 William married Gertrude May Boxer and at the time of the 1911 census he was living there with his wife and their four children. William's trade was then described as 'house carpenter'. William's army service records were not located but it was known that he served in the Royal Engineers as a 'sapper' and that his service number was 545340.³

In the Royal Engineers, the rank of Sapper was usually held by people with a relevant skill or trade – in William's case, carpentry. The rank of Pioneer was usually held by people without such a trade. On the 'Long, Long Trail Forum' the role of the Pioneer was described in the following terms: 'the pioneers were responsible for maintaining trenches, installing barbed wire

William's army service records were not located but it was known that he served in the Royal Engineers as a 'sapper' and that his service number was 545340



William is buried at Folkestone Old Cemetery (also known as Cheriton Road Cemetery). His grave is marked by a standard Commonwealth War Graves headstone.

fencing, installing duck boards, building bridges, laying communication cable and communication trenches ... constructed buildings, created and maintained roads for artillery and mules... most of their work was done at night, yet over 10% were killed.'⁴ Another poster on the same forum thread added that 'they were also co-opted for front line fighting when the occasion arose.'⁵ Sappers additionally were involved in the digging of tunnels that stretched far out across no man's land until they were underneath enemy trenches. These tunnels were then packed with high explosive and detonated. William's army file may have been destroyed by an incendiary bomb that struck the War Office during World War Two, around sixty per cent of records were lost in this way and many others files were damaged. Details of when he enlisted or where he served were not found.

William died aged 37 on 12th March 1920. The cause of death is recorded as Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

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Unlike his brother Walter (who died in 1918), William's name is not recorded on any of the War Memorials that exists in Dover, Kent, however his grave in Folkestone cemetery is marked by a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

William lived most of his life in a small area a mile or so to the north of Folkestone town centre. It was the area in which his wife lived (barely half a mile from William's birthplace) at the time of his death in March 1920. The housing in this area consisted of terraces of workers cottages in tightly packed streets. As was the usual practice in the days before widespread owner occupation, the family moved regularly from one rented house to another. Most of the addresses where William lived are within a few hundred yards of each other.

Authors: Roxanne Gleave and David Gleave

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Walter Tull Epitaph, Sixfields Stadium, Northampton

3. www.forces-war-records.co.uk and these details also appear on his headstone

4. The long long trail forum, posted by Speake on 8th May 2009

5. Ibid Posted by David B also on 8th May 2009

FRANK DOVE

1897-1957

Full name	Francis (Frank) Sydney Dove
Date of birth	3rd September 1897
Place (Country) of birth	Hove, Brighton & Hove, UK
When/Where volunteered?	Enlisted age 19
Where served?	In 1917, he fought in the Battle of Cambrai, where he was awarded the Military Medal for his bravery. Regimental number : 91658
What contribution?	He joined the Royal Tanks Corps in 1916. In 1918, he joined the Cadet Unit of the Royal Air Force(RAF).
Medals	British War Medal and Victory Medal
Date of death	1957 Wolverhampton, West Midlands, UK Road traffic accident.
Where buried	Not known
Is there a memorial in the UK?	Not known

Frank Dove was born on 3rd September 1897. His father Francis (Frans) Thomas Dove was a respected barrister from Sierra Leone, but eventually moved to Accra in Ghana. His English mother Augusta Winchester was from Surrey.¹ Frank (Francis Sydney Dove) was from a middle-class family. His sister was Evelyn Dove (1902 - 1987). Evelyn Dove became a glamorous cabaret dancer, singer and entertainer. Both Frank and Evelyn Dove were born in Britain.

There are gaps in the recording of Frank's early education, but he attended Cranleigh public school in Cranleigh, Surrey, from 1910. Cranleigh school opened in 1865 as an independent boys' public school in Cranleigh, Surrey, where





Courtesy of Martin Williamson, Cranleigh

he was one of the first Black pupils. The school archivist Martin Williamson located some information on Frank's school days and a newspaper article on Frank the 'barrister boxer.' Frank's school records show that he was 'academically and athletically,' talented.²

Records in the archives of The Cranleighan of 1914 refer to the excellent gymnastics ability of Frank Dove at the Aldershot competition achieving third place out of 31 schools.

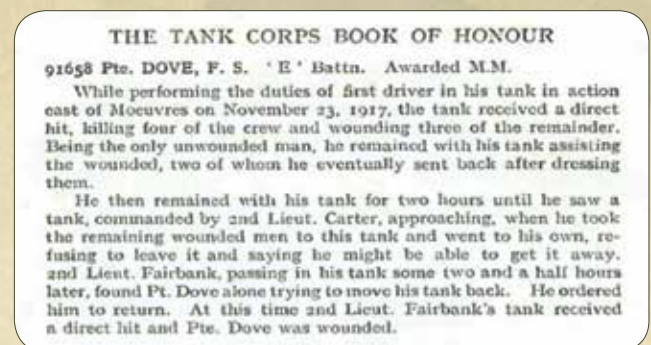
*'The result was most satisfactory, and all credit is due to Sergt.-Major Mills for his excellent coaching, and to Vinen and Dove for their hard work and keenness.'*³

After leaving school, Frank attended Merton College, Oxford University, hoping to follow the profession of his father as a barrister. However, in 1916, he was called up to join the army, cutting short

his studies at Oxford. He enlisted aged 19 years old and joined the elite Royal Tanks Corps as a dispatch rider. The 1911 census for English and Wales, showed that at the time, he lived in Brighton, Hove, Sussex.

In 1917, he fought in the Battle of Cambrai where the British tried out large scale attacks on the Germans on multiple fronts in which artillery, armour, aircraft and infantry operated together in an 'all arms battle.' The Battle of Cambrai involved the mass use of tanks. After that battle, Dove was awarded the Military Medal for his bravery. He was wounded and granted leave in 1917. An article in The London Gazette 12 March 1918 (Tanks Corps Book of Honour), made reference to Frank Dove's bravery and being wounded in battle.⁴ In June 1918, aged 20, he returned to Britain for a commission in the cadet unit of the Royal Air Force (RAF).

Although Frank Dove returned to his studies, there is no mention of him in the book Black Oxford by Pamela Roberts. Yet reference is made to other Black WW1 servicemen, such as brothers Norman and Douglas Manley. Norman Manley later became Prime Minister of Jamaica. Douglas Manley died in Ypres in Belgium in 1917.



The London Gazette 12th March 1918. Supplement: 30573 page 3231

1. Ancestry.co.uk (birth certificate/census records)
2. Martin Williamson. Archivist, Cranleigh School
3. The Cranleighan, VOL. XII. No. 2. The Cranleighan 1914~1921. Back. Select Journal July. 1914 . (pg 45 &pg 46).
4. The London Gazette 12 March 1918. Supplement: 30573 Page 3231

Frank was demobbed in 1920 and returned to Oxford to complete his law studies. That same year, he competed in the Olympic Games in Antwerp Belgium, in the heavyweight boxing division, where he was eliminated in the quarterfinals by the silver medallist Soren Peterson. While at university, Dove entered several boxing competitions. He continued to box while practicing as a barrister and was still winning ABA divisional cruiser-weight championships in 1945, at the age of 48.

Frank Dove died on 10 February 1957, aged 59, after being involved in a traffic accident in Wolverhampton.⁵ Despite intensive research, his final resting place has not been found. Frank Dove married Ameila Ethel Ellis Dove. He was the father of private Bolstad Dove, Anthony Brian Cedric Dove and private Bird Dove. 5 His son Tony later became a professional boxer.

Author: Beverley Hillman

NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP TO FRANK SIDNEY DOVE	AGE	SEX	PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE	PERSONAL OCCUPATION	EDUCATION	WORKING	BIRTHPLACE	NATURALITY	INFLUENCE
1. Edward Henry Windsor	Pupil	14	M		School			London - Strand Green	1913	
2. Johnnie William Bullard	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			Swansea - Trebarnon		
3. Clarence Bullock	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			Swansea - Trebarnon		
4. Henry Arnold Bayne	Pupil	17	M	Single	School			London - Highgate	1900	
5. Edward Cecil Birch	Pupil	18	M		School			Swansea - Gwilledd		
6. James Hamilton Butler	Pupil	18	M		School			London - Clapham	1911	
7. Victor Leslie Carlen	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			London - Clapham		
8. Fred Newman Carlen	Pupil	18	M		School			London - Clapham		
9. Paul Saint Francis Church	Pupil	17	M	Single	School			Leek - Barmley	1910	
10. Arthur Clifford Day	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			London - Clapham	1911	
11. Frank Sydney Dove	Pupil	18	M		School			London - Clapham	1911	
12. William Alfred Griffin	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1913	
13. Stanley Victor Jones	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			Swansea - Trebarnon		
14. Paul Angel Martin	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1911	
15. William Albert Owen	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1911	
16. Charles Hugh Thomas	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1911	
17. Kenneth Charles Sanderson	Pupil	17	M	Single	School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1911	
18. Kenneth William Sanderson	Pupil	18	M		School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1911	
19. Arthur Stanley Tubb	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			London - Clapham	1911	
20. George Tubb	Pupil	18	M		School			London - Clapham	1911	
21. James Frank Cecil Russell	Pupil	18	M		School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1911	
22. Augustus Cyril Byrne Overleigh	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1911	
23. Albert Thomas John Carstairs	Pupil	18	M		School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1911	
24. Victor Frank Bratton	Pupil	18	M		School			London - Clapham	1911	
25. William Davis	Pupil	18	M		School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1911	
26. Reginald Talbot Owen	Pupil	18	M		School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1911	
27. John Howard Evans	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1911	
28. Charles Montague Evans	Pupil	18	M		School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1911	
29. Arthur Cecil Johnson	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			London - Clapham	1911	
30. Edward Walter Matthews	Pupil	18	M	Single	School			Swansea - Trebarnon	1911	
Total		30		30						

1911 England Census for Frank Sidney Dove

5. Ancestry.com. England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (*Index of Wills and Administrations*), 1858-1966, 1973-1995 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010.

geni.com : Genealogy and Dove Family History

"February 1916: People — Frank Dove", Cranleigh school website

Stephen Bourne, *Black Poppies: Britain's Black Community and the Great War*, The History Press, 2013.

Black Oxford: The Untold Stories of Oxford University's Black Scholars by Pamela Roberts, 2013

Under the Imperial carpet: essays in Black history, 1780-1950, Rainer E. Lotz, Ian Pegg, Rabbit Press, 1986

Ancestry.com. England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (*Index of Wills and Administrations*), 1858-1966, 1973-1995 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010.

England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916-2007



England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (*Index of Wills and Administrations*), 1858-1966, 1973-1995, for Francis Sydney Dove - 1957

Name: Francis Sydney Dove

Death Date: 12 Feb 1957

Death Place: London, England

Probate Date: 29 Apr 1957

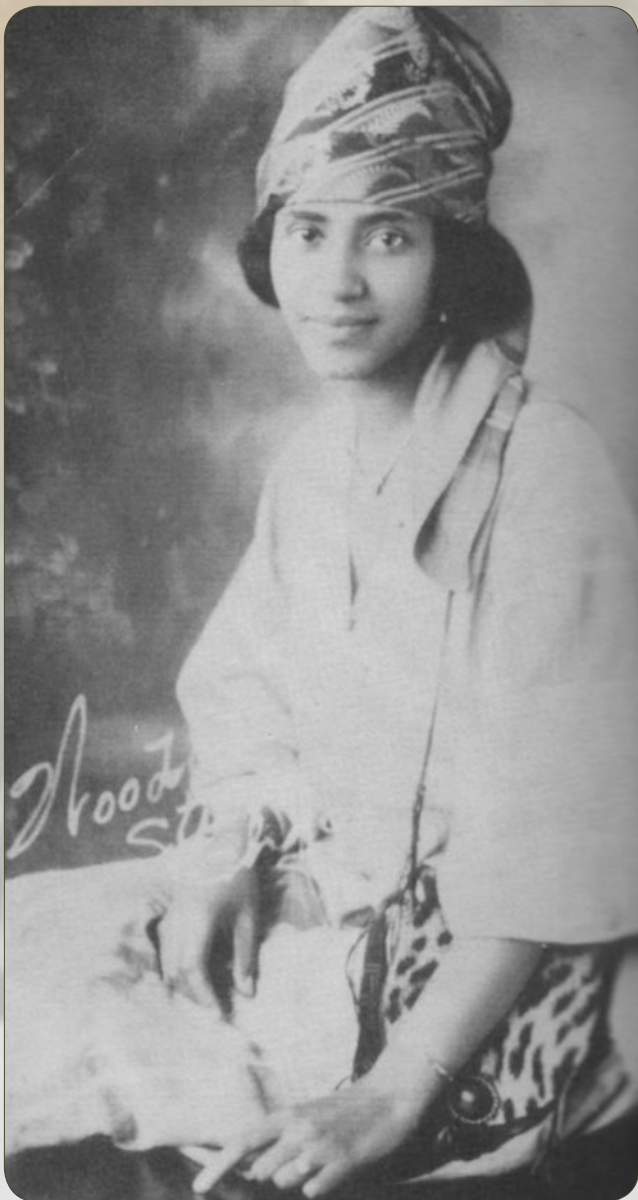
Registry: London, England

He died in February 1957 (aged 59), after being involved in a traffic accident in Wolverhampton



Kathleen Easmon Simango

Full name	Kathleen Mary Simango (née Easmon)
Date of birth	1891/2 ²
Place (Country) of birth	Accra, The Gold Coast (Ghana)
What contribution?	Fund raising (artist, musician, dancer)
Date of death	27th July 1924
Where buried	Hanwell Cemetery, London
Is there a memorial in the UK?	Yes



Kathleen was born in Accra in the Gold Coast (now known as Ghana) either in 1891 or 1892.² She was the daughter of Dr John Farrell Easmon and Annette Kathleen Easmon (née Smith). John was a prominent physician, credited with discovering an effective treatment for Black Water fever.

Kathleen made several trips to England (e.g. in 1896 she and her mother visited her maternal grandfather in Jersey) before settling in the UK in 1900 or 1901. The family doesn't appear in the 1901 census completed on 31st March / 1st April, and so it seems likely they arrived after 1st April. The move followed the death of Kathleen's father in June 1900, her mother having decided that Kathleen and her brother Charles would receive a better education in England.

Kathleen attended Notting Hill High School for girls; her brother attended Epsom College.³ After Notting Hill High School, Kathleen attended South Kensington College where she studied fashion design from 1910 to 1914,⁴ following her graduation she became an Associate of the Royal College of Art.⁵

1. A number of photos of Kathleen exists, this one can be found through Google images.
2. Her exact date of birth is not known, the year can be deduced from her death certificate.
3. This information comes from a very informative article that can be found at www.easmonfambuldem.com
4. Some extracts from her portfolio can be seen at www.easmonfambuldem.com
5. This information has been confirmed by the college



Kathleen is buried at Hanwell Cemetery - Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, London W7. The last line of the inscription reads: *'This is not the end but the beginning'*

Kathleen's mother and aunts were friends of the composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor whose father came from Sierra Leone. Samuel set some of Kathleen's poems to music published under the title 'Five Fairy Ballads'.

During the war years she made a number of appearances in theatrical productions in London. The Times carried a review of one appearance⁶ and The Crisis (an American publication) reported a 'matinee at the Shaftesbury Theatre in aid of the Indian troops in France', Queen Alexandra and other members of the Royal Family were said to have been present.⁷

Kathleen left England in 1917 for Sierra Leone but she subsequently travelled widely, including a visit to England in 1920; she travelled 1st class from Sierra Leone to Liverpool⁸ and to New York where she met her husband- to- be, Columbus Kamba Simango. She and Columbus visited England in 1923.

Kathleen's final trip to England was in 1924. She disembarked at Southampton on 15th June, having sailed from Buenos Aires aboard the *Almanzora*,⁹ but she was taken ill and died in Charing Cross Hospital, London, on 27th July 1924. It is apparent from her death certificate that her death followed a full hysterectomy.¹⁰ The London Times carried an obituary which said that she was to be buried at Kensington Cemetery. Her husband did not arrive in England in time to be with her before she died but he was the one who registered

her death on 30th July 1924. She is buried in a well-maintained cemetery in Hanwell and the inscription reads: 'This is not the end but the beginning'.

Her brother, Charles, qualified as a doctor, but moved to Sierra Leone to practice. He did enlist for service ('now serving the wounded and sick of the expeditionary forces at the Kamerons').¹¹ He survived the war and, after a long and distinguished career, died in Croydon, Surrey in 1972.

Authors: Roxanne Gleave and David Gleave

6. The Times, 9th February 1915.

7. The Crisis was the monthly journal of the NAACP, edited by W.E.B. DuBois. All issues are available online at www.modjourn.org. This item about Kathleen comes from the September 1915 issue

8. www.ancestry.co.uk passenger lists.

9. www.ancestry.co.uk passenger lists

10. Details taken from her death certificate.

11. The information that Charles was serving in the Cameroons was in the September issue of The Crisis.

Jacques M'Bondo

Full name	Jacques M'Bondo
Date of birth	1894
Place (Country) of birth	Quaka Prefecture, Belgian Congo ²
When/Where volunteered?	Belgium
Where served?	Flanders
What contribution?	Congolese Volunteer Corps, 5th Volunteers Regiment, Belgian Army
Medals	Not known
Date of death	28/01/1918
Where buried	Birtley, England (Elizabethville, Roman Catholic Cemetery)
Is there a memorial in the UK?	Yes

1



Jacques M'Bondo was born in the Belgian Congo in 1894. He spent time in England before moving on 5 December 1911 to Brussels where he worked as a waiter. In 1912 he went to Paris with a Wladislawa Olszewski, but returned on 1 January 1914 to Brussels and worked as a cardboard seller. They lived at No 7 Rue de Cannon, Brussels. The marriage didn't last and Wladislawa died, in 1929 in Bergen, Norway aged 42.

The Belgians did not allow any black soldiers to enlist in the army but a survey carried out at the end of the War showed that at least 32 Congolese fought for Belgium in World War 1.

Jacques enlisted in the Belgian Army (one of 32 Congolese soldiers to do so) on 10 August 1914, and joined the 5th Volunteers Regiment. The Germans had invaded Belgium on 4 August 1914. On 4 November 1914, Jacques was shot in the groin during a German attack near St George (Belgium). It was the aftermath of the Battle of Yser in which, after 2 months of defeats, the Belgians



The monument above is based in Brussels and commemorates the 32 Congolese who fought for Belgium in World War 1.



Jacques M'Bondo is buried in the Roman Catholic Cemetery in Birtley.

finally halted the German invasion that had given them control of over 95% of Belgian territory. He was taken to Charing Cross hospital, London, for treatment, and it seemed that Jacques remained in England living at 28, Larkfield Road, Richmond. He almost certainly worked at the Belgian run Pelabon munitions factory. He reached the rank of Corporal and married Biza Bemo M'Bondo. On 2 January 1918 he was posted to another Belgian operated munitions factory in Birtley, County Durham.

The National Projectile factory in Birtley employed 3,500 people the majority of whom were wounded Belgian servicemen. Jacques died of pneumonia at the age of 23 on 28 January 1918. A Belgian Chaplain, Peter Verpoorten, was with him, as was his wife Biza Bemo. The death certificate shows Jacques' previous address as No.7 Rue de Cannon, Brussels.

Jacques M'Bondo is buried in the Roman Catholic Cemetery in Birtley.

Author: Bill Hern

1. There were 32 Congolese soldiers in the Belgian Army at the time of WW1 so there is a 1 in 32 chance that this is Jacques M'Bondo. We are working with a project in Belgium to try and establish who this is
2. We have been unable to identify the location of Quaka Prefecture.

Amanda Aldridge

Full name	Amanda Christina Elizabeth Aldridge
Date of birth	10th March 1866
Place (Country) of birth	London, England
When/where volunteered?	Not applicable
Where served?	Home front ?
What contribution?	Musician, teacher and composer
Medals	Not applicable
Date of death	9th March 1956
Where buried	Streatham Park Cemetery, London SW16
Is there a memorial in the UK?	Lies in an unmarked grave

Amanda, born 10th March 1866, was the daughter of the famous black tragedian, Ira Aldridge. Originally American, Ira Aldridge had come to the UK in 1824, aged just seventeen, in search of better opportunities to work as an actor. Amanda's mother was born Pauline Amanda Brandt, she and Ira married in April 1865 although she had already had two children with him.

Pauline, a gifted singer, undoubtedly encouraged her children in their musical education. One of Amanda's earliest public appearances as a singer was in a

concert at the Crystal Palace in 1881, at the age of 15. In 1883 Amanda gained a scholarship at the Royal College of Music in London where she studied until at least 1886. Although not contemporaries at the Royal College (he did not enrol there until 1890), it is possible that she knew Samuel Coleridge Taylor, another composer of mixed heritage. Both were promising composers, living within a few miles of each other in South London, it would be surprising if they were not acquaintances and we know that she included his songs in her concert repertoire in the 1890s.²

Amanda enjoyed a successful career as a concert singer, piano accompanist and composer. She composed both under her own name and the pseudonym of Montague Ring. It was by no means uncommon for women wishing to pursue a career in a field where men usually dominated, to take on a male name.

1. This photo shows Amanda in her 40s [?] and is taken from Martin Hoyles book on Ira Aldridge, published by HANSIB in 2008.

2. There is an excellent article on Amanda Aldridge by Joyce Andrews in the 'Journal of Singing', published January 2010 and available through www.ancestry.co.uk (public member stories).



The house in Hamlet Road, London SE19, where Amanda lived as a child, has a blue plaque, it commemorates her father, Ira,

By the time war broke out in 1914, Amanda was 48 with a well-established career as a 'vocalist and teacher of singing'.³ Women played a wide range of key roles during the war, ranging from nursing, to working in munitions factories, to fundraising. Evidence for Amanda's war time activities is scant. It is possible that she performed in fund raising concerts but more research is needed to confirm this. Under the name Montague Ring, she composed a tune in 1914 for flute and piccolo called 'On Parade'.⁴

Amanda had to balance the demands of her own career with the need to care for her mother (who died in 1915) and her sister, Luranah, who was also ailing and in



Amanda is buried in Streatham Park Cemetery, her grave is currently unmarked.

increasing pain from rheumatoid arthritis, (Luranah eventually died in 1932).

Amanda continued her work as a highly respected vocal coach much sought after by leading singers and actors of the day. For instance we know that Paul Robeson used her services when he was in London and a series of hand-written letters from him to 'My Dear Miss Aldridge' have survived. 'I want to see you very much and I want you to hear me sing'. In a later letter he urges her to give him a copy of a song 'Summer is de lovin' time' that she had played to him as he wants 'to make a record of it for Victor, and sing it on our concert tour'.⁵

Amanda remained active well into her eighties. She died one day before her 90th birthday in Coulsdon Hospital. Records show that she was buried in Streatham Park Cemetery. However, her grave is unmarked.

Author: Roxanne Gleave and David Gleave

3. This is how she describes her occupation at the time of the 1901 census. She does not appear in the 1911 census.

4. The score is available on the Library of Congress website.

5. Letter dated 19th October 1925, obtained from the North Western University (Chicago) Aldridge Archive.

John Torbotoh, known as John Liverpool

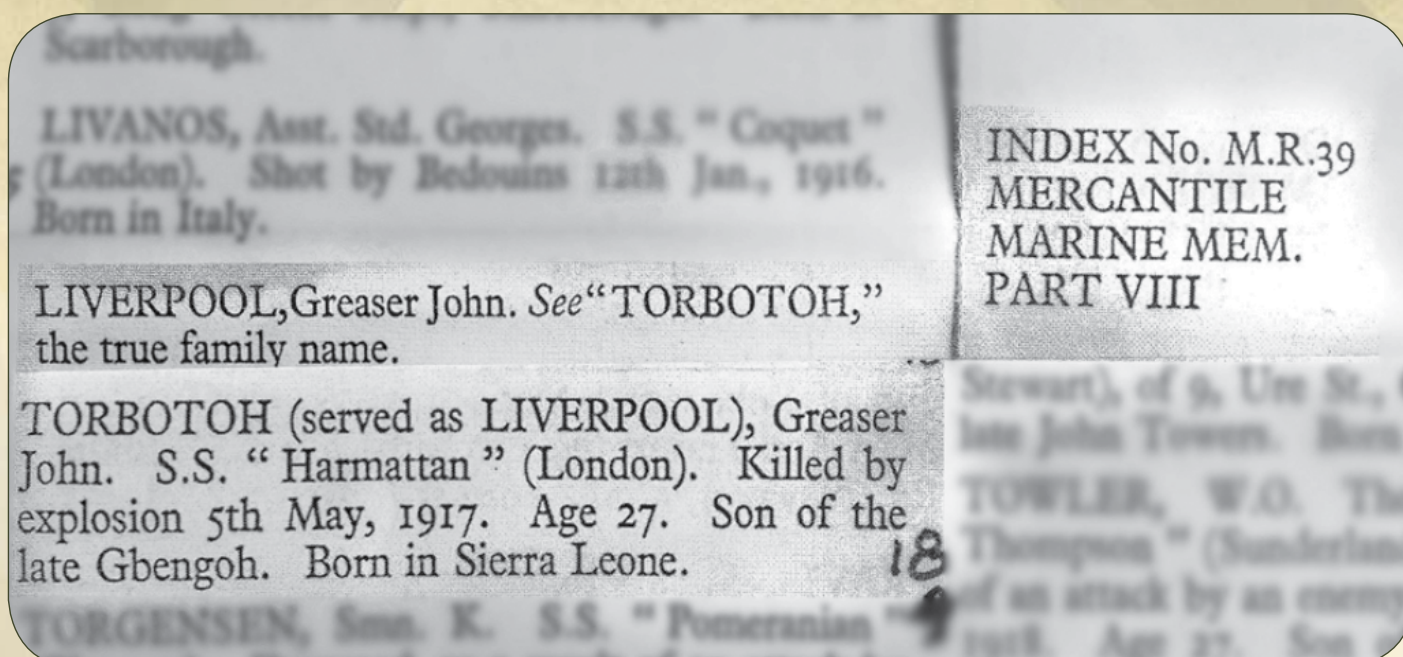
Full name	John Torbotoh, known as John Liverpool
Regiment:	Mercantile Marine
Rank:	Greaser
Unit:	S.S. "Harmattan" (London)
Died:	05-05-1917, aged 27
Cause of death:	Killed by explosion

John Torbotoh (known as John Liverpool) was a Kru from Sierra Leone who served on the ship SS Harmattan (London), but was killed, aged 27, on May 5, 1917, when the enemy's torpedo sunk the ship.

"It is recorded that he was the recipient of a medal for courage displayed in service, nationality raised its head. Enquiries were made by the Freetown Commissioner of Police, who concluded he was not a British subject and therefore could not be considered. He thought Liverpool was a Liberian subject brought to Sierra Leone when very young by his parents. His sister, Nimneh Jon, stated that she was

born in Liberia but that her brother John was born in Freetown, Sierra Leone [....]. It seemed that Liberian-born Kru residing in Freetown (Liberia being another part of the Key national territories since European colonial boundaries often ignored local tribal borders) were not officially classed as British subjects, in spite of members of that tribal group coming and going at will, crossing borders that may have had little relevance to them." John Torbotoh's contribution to WWI is commemorated at The Tower Hill Memorial, London

Author: Ray Hendricks



Ernest Alexander

Full name	Ernest Alexander
Date of birth	circa 1884
Place (Country) of birth	Trinidad, WI
When/Where volunteered?	UK
Where served?	UK
What contribution?	Merchant Seaman, Donkeyman
Date of death	22 September 1917
Where buried	Died and lost at Sea after UB attack
Is there a memorial in the UK?	At the Tower Hill Memorial (CWGC)

Ernest Alexander was born around 1884 in Trinidad but settled in Cardiff, Wales. It is not known when he did so. He married Alice Elizabeth Benders in early 1917 in Cardiff, and there is no record of their having any children. During WWI he served as a Merchant Seaman as a 'Donkeyman' on the SS Ballater.

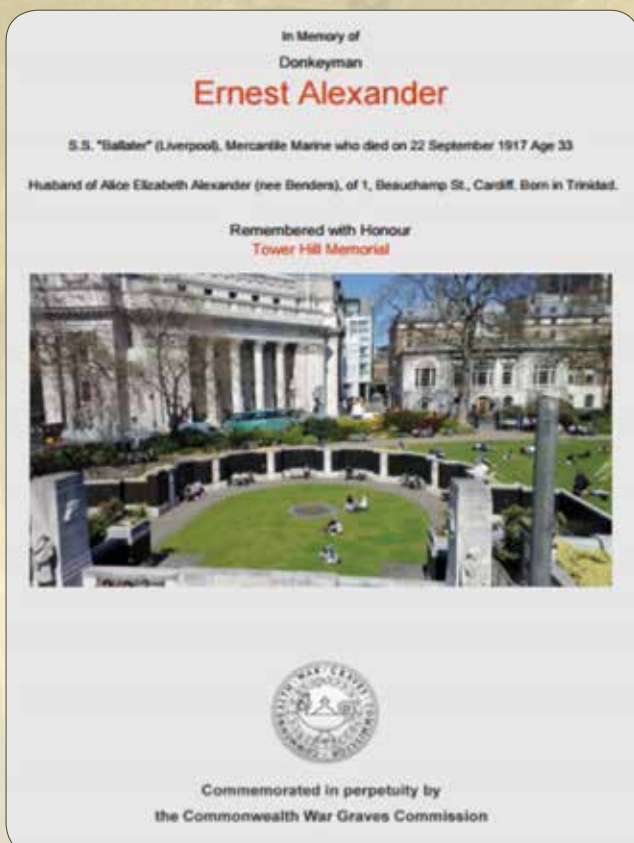


Tower Hill Memorial, London

The role of a 'Donkeyman' included assisting in the operation and maintenance of the ship's engines. On some ships the 'Donkeyman' might be employed to supply emergency propulsion. It was a dangerous job.

The ship was sunk by a 'German U-boat 40' in the English Channel on 22nd September 1917. There is no record that he survived, but his service has been recognised at the Tower Hill Memorial, London, by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Author: Lennox Salmon



Tower Hill Memorial, London

Hiawatha Bryan Coleridge-Taylor

Full name	Hiawatha Bryan Coleridge-Taylor
Date of birth	13 October 1900
Place (Country) of birth	Croydon, Surrey, UK
When/Where volunteered?	1917, France
Where served?	On the Western Front
What contribution?	French Red Cross driver
Medals	Victory Medal and British War Medal
Date of death	20 January 1980
Where buried	Cremated
Is there a memorial in the UK	Not known

Hiwatha was the eldest child of the famous composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. Hiawatha's medal card shows that he volunteered for service in the French Red Cross in November 1917. The medal card also indicates that he served on the Western Front until the war ended in 1918. He was also a musician, but not as famous as his father. The composer Benjamin Britten is one of the musicians with whom Hiawatha worked. Hiawatha married Sarah K D Markwell, known as Kathleen, in 1925 in Dorking, Surrey.

His sister, Gwendolyn Coleridge-Taylor, was also a well-known pianist, composer and conductor.



Hiawatha Coleridge-Taylor in later life.
Hiawatha with his Mother Jesse and Sister Gwendolyn

Author: Lennox Salmon

From Hiawatha's service record November 1917- November 1918

PRESERVING OUR HISTORY & HERITAGE

POHAH

Preserving Our History and Heritage (POHAH) was established in 2015. We received an award from the Heritage Lottery Fund to manage a project that marked the 100th anniversary of World War 1.

The Project: To identify and research the UK memorials and contributions of twenty Black servicemen and women who served in World War 1.

We brought together the family members of the servicemen and women in the UK. POHAH visited archives, libraries, museums and interviewed relatives and members of the public who had knowledge of those who served in WW1. The project has enabled local people to come together to preserve the stories and heritage of the unsung heroes.

About us

We are a group of people whose objective is to preserve the history and heritage of African and Caribbean people.

Our vision

To ensure that the history, heritage and contributions of Black Britons are valued, recognised and respected.

BLACK BRITONS IN WORLD WAR ONE POHAH

PRESERVING OUR HISTORY & HERITAGE

POHAH

Our Mission

- To create a permanent record of the contributions of Black British people, ensuring that their stories are correctly recorded and passed from one generation to the next.
- To ensure the heritage that was previously hidden, not well known or easily accessible, will now be available to the wider community.
- To educate the public and empower communities to explore, research and record their history.
- To ensure that people of African Heritage take a leading role in how their history and heritage are presented and preserved.
- To be a source of information on memorials for Black servicemen and women.
- To promote community cohesion, intergenerational work, social inclusion.
- To conduct research, arrange meetings, talks, workshops, seminars, conferences, discussion groups and exhibitions.

www.pohah.org

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