

The Caribbean's Great War: Teaching Guide

HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, ART, MEDIA STUDIES

Ages 11 - 14

Overview

The West India Committee is a 280-year-old UK registered charity whose object is to improve the general welfare of the peoples of the Caribbean and the societies in which they live and work. The charity's has a unique, extensive archive on the region and has digitised its records from the First World War in which the charity supported servicemen and women from the Caribbean. During the conflict 16,000 patriotic men volunteered to form the British West Indies Regiment. Use the materials found on www.westindiacommittee.org/caribeansgreatwar to assist your First World War related lessons.

Objectives

The main objective is to instil an understanding of the Caribbean's contribution to the First World War. The aim is to encourage students to think about the impact of the First World War on the wider world and the roles played by various UK's minority communities.

Activities

Below are some suggestions for activities that may assist learning in the classroom:

1. Watch the short documentary film on the Caribbean's Great War website.
2. Ask students to find out a fact on every island from the interactive digital archive, including the West India Committee Circulars.
3. Use the downloadable poster and eBook, as points of references for students.
4. The interactive map on the website can also be used for activities relating to History and Geography.

Materials

- eBook
- Education pack
- Short film
- Online archive
- Online galleries
- Interactive map
- Poster



Other Resources

The West India Committee's website is filled with fact files and information on the British West Indies Regiment and the Caribbean during the First World War. The archive, galleries, film and interactive sections are unique. The charity has also recently published a book entitled: **'100 Things You Didn't Know About the Caribbean'** available to purchase online. Free copies are available to schools that are members of the West India Committee.

Adaptations

The education materials can be used for a variety of subjects and is useful for a range of ages. There are also activity sheets for children under the age of 11.

Evaluation

The evaluation may be centred upon testing whether the students had expanded their understanding of the First World War and the participation of minority communities. Flexible written tasks could be issued in English and History classes while the artwork found in the archives can provide a foundation for Art and Media lessons.

The West India Committee

Profile

The West India Committee was founded in London in 1735 in order to protect Britain's commercial interests in the Caribbean. In 18th century London, West Indians merchants were an influential group powerful enough to have included over 40 Members of Parliament.

As British Law changed so too did the Committee, adapting to the new reality of a post-slavery West Indies ultimately evolving into one of the region's most venerable charities.

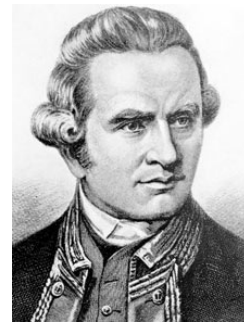
In 1767 the Committee commissioned HMS Bounty and Captain Bligh to introduce breadfruit to the West Indies to combat food shortages, one of the first instances of the Royal Navy being used for humanitarian purposes.

In 1798 it founded the world's first modern police force, the Thames River Police, (forefathers of the Metropolitan Police Service), by funding Patrick Colquhoun's *Treatise on Policing* thereby providing the blueprint for policing globally.

In 1802 the Committee was instrumental in the construction of West India Quay, at the time the world's longest brick building and London's first purpose built wet dock.

During the First World War the Committee was responsible for administering to the British West Indies Regiment comprising over 16,000 volunteers from the Caribbean and fought for equal pay and treatment of Caribbean troops.

In 2012 the Committee orchestrated Prince Harry's Diamond Jubilee Tour of the Caribbean.



Captain Bligh



Patrick Colquhoun



The West India Dock



The British West Indies Regiment



Prince Harry and Usain Bolt in Jamaica