

## African-Americans in the UK in WW2

Millions of British Soldiers were fighting abroad during WW2, However, back at home....

During WW2, American servicemen and women were posted to Britain to support Allied operations in North West Europe, and between January 1942 and December 1945, about 1.5 million visited British shores. The arrival was marked as a 'friendly invasion', but it highlighted differences between the two nations, particularly the institutional racism in the US from issues such as segregation. Around 150,000 of the troops that came from America to Britain were black. Black personnel were largely left to do service and supply roles unlike the white soldiers who tended to be used in combat. This was a reflection of American society; the Jim Crow laws which ensured racial segregation which was particularly notable in the Deep South.



An American poster from WW2 notably with only White soldiers on it. The exclusion of Black soldiers from this shows how their involvement and importance to WW2 was ignored.

Watch this YouTube video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJsqMX5flGI&t=4s>



What does this tell us about the influence of American racial laws on the experience of Black people serving in Britain during the War?

<https://www.americanairmuseum.com/stories/black-americans-britain-sww>

Read this article and answer the following questions:

1. What were the Black construction engineers tasked with after the arrival in Britain?
2. What was the Black population of Britain before the American troops arrived?
3. Where was Evelyn Clarisse Martin-Johnson based during her time serving in the UK?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=II1T-JAL8dU&t=71s>



Watch this interview and answer the following question:

What were Evelyn Clarisse Martin-Johnson's experience like serving in the U.K and how did it differ from the U.S?