The story of Sarah Sarai Thara wa Jommo is a tribute to her dedication and resilience in struggles for gender equity and national development, leaving a lasting impact on the nation's history and its path to independence. Born in 1913, after seven still births, she was named "Thara" while being ritually "snatched from the jaws of death." Defying cultural norms and parental wishes, she pursued education and embraced Christianity, which molded her professional pursuits as a nurse/midwife and social welfare assistant. In the turbulence wrought by African resistance to colonial rule, she was one of the two women arrested alongside Jomo Kenyatta and the Kapenguria Six, and ended up as the longest serving woman political prisoner. In prison she relentlessly gave of her training and skills to help fellow prisoners. Freedom fighters, such as Hon. Dr. Gitũ Kahengeri, have acknowledged her significant role in the struggle for justice and independence. Her efforts laid the groundwork for the human rights principles later reflected in Kenya's 2010 constitution.

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WHAT'S IN A NAME?

BEREWA R. S. JOMMO

What's in A Name?

Life Story of

Sarah Sarai T. Jommo

Former Secretary General of the Mau Mau Veterans' Association, Honorable Dr. Gĩtũ Kahengeri was the first post-colonial elected Member of Parliament for Juja Constituency. In an interview with Hillary Ng'weno for the Makers of a Nation series (2010), he voiced the opinion:

"I'd like the country to remember Sarah Sarai all the time. If there is a monument that can be built anywhere, and particularly in Nairobi city, I'd like to see Sarah Sarai's name on that kind of a monument because she is one of the freedom fighters who brought freedom and justice to our country"

The cover is a picture of a bag from Sarai's homecraft class at Kamiti Women's Prison. One of the early trainees at Jeans School, Sarai extended to her fellow inmates her skills in sowing, knitting, embroidery, cross stitching and even machine tailoring, helping to prepare the women to take control of their lives and family upon release.