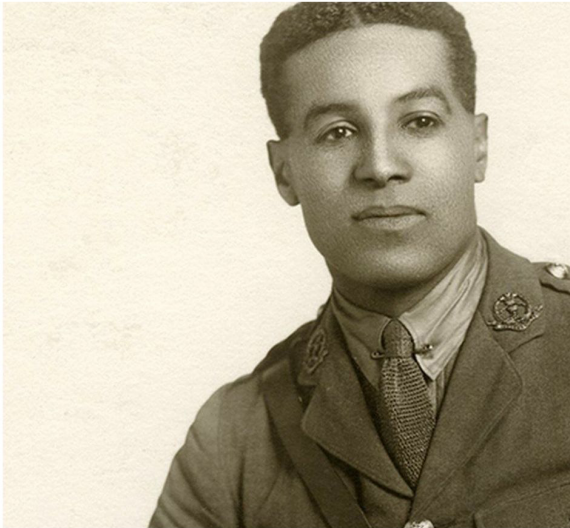


LOCAL HEROES

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Walter Tull

Submitted by: Just Trade

Location: Folkestone

Walter Tull is an incredible example of unyielding courage and determination. He was born on 28 April 1888 in Folkstone, Kent. From 1908 he started to play professional football and was signed by Clapham FC. He joined Tottenham Hotspur in 1909, becoming the first black professional outfield footballer, but suffered racial abuse so moved on to Northampton the following year. He was the second person of African-Caribbean mixed heritage to play in the top division of the Football League.

He enlisted in the army in 1914. Despite army rules which forbade a 'person of colour' being commissioned as an officer (a leader of men), Walter was promoted to lieutenant in 1917. Tull is widely considered the first African-Caribbean mixed heritage man to be commissioned as an infantry officer in the British Army.

Walter Tull died aged 29 (just a month before his 30th birthday) in 1918 while leading an attack on the Western front during the Second Battle of the Somme in March. The Commanding Officer of the 23rd Battalion recommended him for a Military Cross for bravery.

To coincide with Armistice centenary commemorations and Black History Month in October 2018, Folkestone Museum opened the first ever extensive exhibition about Walter Tull's life and his legacy.