

## Soldiers' Stories

### Lieutenant Walter Tull

- Born 1888 in Kent, one of six children.
- Became the first Black professional footballer when he played for Tottenham Hotspur and Northampton Town.
- He enlisted in 1914 with 17<sup>th</sup> (1<sup>st</sup>) Football Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment and fought in World War One.
- 1916 he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant.
- May 1917 he was commissioned and sent to the Italian Front. He led his men in the Battle of Piave and was mentioned in dispatches for his 'gallantry and coolness under fire.'
- In 1918, he was transferred to France and was killed in the last Battle of the Somme.
- Walter Tull is commemorated with honour on the Arras Memorial in France.
- In 1998 the Walter Tull Memorial Garden was opened next to Northampton Town's Sixfields Community Stadium.

Additional Information:

<http://www.waltertull.com>

<http://spartacus-educational.com/FWWtull.htm>



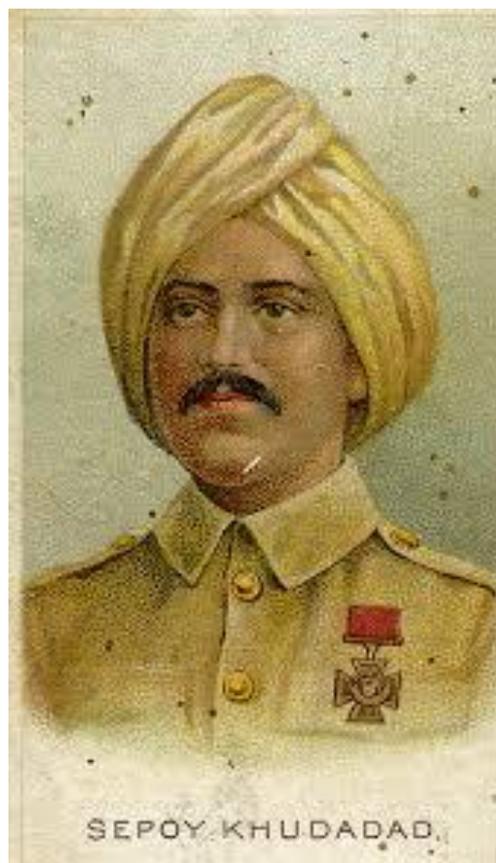
## Khudadad Khan

- Born 1887 in Dabb Village, Punjab State, Pakistan.
- When war broke out he joined the Army as a Sepoy or Private soldier and served with the 129<sup>th</sup> (Duke of Connaught's Own) Baluchis as a machine gunner.
- In October 1914 his regiment was sent to the front line in France to help exhausted British troops.
- The Baluchi's were pushed back by the Germans and all the gunners were killed apart from Khan who was badly wounded.
- He was involved in preventing the German Army reaching vital ports which supplied the British Expeditionary Force.
- For this and his bravery he was awarded the Victoria Cross, the first native- born Indian to receive this honour.
- In 1956 he came back to England for celebrations to mark 100 years of the Victoria Cross, where he stood on parade for Queen Elizabeth.
- He died in 1971 in Pakistan.

Additional Information:

<http://www.cwgc.org/foreverindia/stories/khudadad-khan-ghulam-haider-hollebke-east-africa.php>

<http://www.memorial-gates-london.org.uk/history/ww1/participants/indian-subcontinent/khudadad-khan.html>



## Kulbir Thapa

- Born in Palpa, Nepal
- Lance Naik Kulbir Thappa was a Rifleman in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Gurkha Rifles.
- He was sent to Fauquissart France, a diversionary attack which was to be the opening move of the Battle of Loos.
- He was in one of the leading companies, many of whom were killed trying to breach the German wire under the cover of thick smoke.
- Kulbir Thapa made it through but he was wounded and stranded on the German side of the line.
- He saved one wounded soldier from the Leicester Regiment and two wounded soldiers from his own regiment in broad daylight and under heavy fire.
- For his heroic deeds Kulbir Thapa was awarded the Victoria Cross, the first Nepalese recipient. He was promoted to the rank of Naik.
- He survived the war and retired eventually as a Havildar.
- His Victoria Cross is displayed at the Gurkha Museum (Winchester, Hampshire, England)
- He is remembered on a special panel in the Regimental Museum at the Newarke Houses Museum in Leicestershire.

Additional Information:

[www.cwgc.org/foreverindia](http://www.cwgc.org/foreverindia)

<http://www.europeana1914-1918.eu/en/contributions/5488>



## Buckam Singh

- Born 1893 in Mahilpur in Hoshiarpur District of Punjab.
- Migrated to British Columbia, Canada from Punjab in 1907, age 14.
- He moved to Toronto in 1912/1913 and enlisted with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the spring of 1915.
- He was one of the earliest Sikhs living in Ontario at the time, as well as one of the only 9 Sikhs who served with Canadian troops in World War One.
- Private Buckam Singh served with the 20<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion in the battlefields of Flanders during 1916.
- On July 24<sup>th</sup> 1916 he was admitted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Western General Hospital in Manchester spending two months recovering from his leg wound.
- He was admitted to the King's Canadian Red Cross Convalescent Hospital, Bushy Park at Hampton Hills on September 26<sup>th</sup>.
- On November 4<sup>th</sup> 1916 he was transferred to the Canadian Military Convalescent Hospital, Woodcote Park at Epsom.
- He did recover from his wounds, however he had developed a serious cough.
- On March 28<sup>th</sup>, test confirmed that Buckam Singh had tuberculosis.
- On May 5<sup>th</sup> he was sent with other TB patients in quarantine back home.
- Private Buckam Singh spent his final days in a Kitchener Ontario military hospital.
- He died aged 25 in 1919.
- His grave in Kitchener Ontario is the only known WWI Sikh Canadian Soldier's military grave in Canada.

Additional Information:

[www.sikhmuseum.com/buckam](http://www.sikhmuseum.com/buckam)

<http://www.sikhfoundation.org>

*The Curious Incident of the Gurkha Knife was an Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust project funded the Heritage Lottery Fund.*



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