**Spartacus Educational Classroom Activity**

# [Walter Tull - Britain's First Black Officer](http://spartacus-educational.com/ExamFWWU1.htm)  (Questions & Answers)

http://spartacus-educational.com/EXAManswerFWW1.htm

Question 1: Read the introduction and study sources 1 and 2. Why were Walter and Edward Tull sent to the Children's Home and Orphanage (CHO) in Bethnal Green in 1898? Why was it unlikely that the boys had little hope of returning home until they were old enough to go to work?

Answer 1: Walter Tull was only seven when his mother died of cancer. His father remarried but he died in 1897. His stepmother was unable to cope with so many children. The eldest son William was working, and could therefore contribute to the family income, while the two girls - Cecilia, 13 and Elsie, 6 - could help Clara with baby Miriam and the domestic chores. Edward and Walter were at school and could not work. Therefore they were sent to the children's home.

Clara Tull did have the right to ask for Edward and Walter back. However, if she did, she had to pay eight shillings per week times the length of duration in the orphanage would have to be repaid. This meant it was virtually impossible to raise the money needed to reclaim her children.

Question 2: What do sources 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 tell us about Walter Tull's football career?

Answer 2:

(Source 3) Shows Walter Tull playing for Tottenham Hotspur in October, 1910.

(Source 4) Is an account in The Daily Chronicleof Walter Tull playing for Tottenham Hotspur against Manchester United? The reporter is very impressed with the quality of his play: "Such perfect coolness, such judicious waiting for a fraction of a second in order to get a pass in not before a defender has worked to a false position, and such accuracy of strength in passing I have not seen for a long time." Some people thought that Tull was too slow but the reporter rejects this idea: "Tull has been charged with being slow, but there never was a footballer yet who was really great and always appeared to be in a hurry. Tull did not get the ball and rush on into trouble. He let his opponents do the rushing, and defeated them by side touches and side-steps worthy of a professional boxer."

(Source 5) The writing on the photograph shows that Walter Tull was a member of the Tottenham Hotspur team in the 1910-1911season.

(Source 6) This newspaper report on the game between Tottenham Hotspur and Bristol City shows that Walter Tull had to endure racial abuse during games. The reporter commented: "Tull is so clean in mind and method as to be a model for all white men who play football whether they be amateur or professional. In point of ability, if not in actual achievement, Tull was the best forward on the field."

(Source 7) Football fans at the beginning of the 20th century used to collect postcards of their favourite players. This one shows Walter Tull when he was playing for Tottenham Hotspur.

Question 3: Herbert Chapman signed Walter Tull to play for Northampton Town in 1911. Read sources 8 and 9 and explain what Chapman was looking for when he signed a player.

Answer 3: Herbert Chapman was the first manager to believe it was important to discuss football tactics with the team before the game. As his biographer has pointed out in source 8: "Meetings were held each week to discuss both the previous game and the tactics to be used in the next. With Chapman presiding, every player was encouraged to express his own opinion. This was something entirely new in football, a marked contrast to the prevailing easy-going system where players were left to work out their own tactics." For his system to work he had to recruit intelligent football players: "The longer I have been on the managerial side of the game, the more I am convinced that all-round intelligence is one of the highest qualifications of the footballer." (source 9)

Question 4: Read source 10. What was Walter Tull's problem in January 1916? Do you think it remained his main problem over the next few weeks?

Answer 4: Walter Tull, like most soldiers, found waiting before battle, boring. Although it was at first exciting to be in the front-line trenches, fear eventually became the overwhelming emotion. In May 1916, he was sent home suffering from "acute mania" (also called [shellshock](http://spartacus-educational.com/FWWshellshock.htm)).

Question 5: Walter Tull was hit by machine-gun fire in No Mans Land on 25th March, 1918. Several men attempted to bring him back to British lines. Read sources 13 and 14 and explain what this tell us about 2nd Lieutenant Tull's relationship with his men?

Answer 5: In source 14 Lieutenant Pickard points out that Tull was popular "throughout the Battalion". When he was shot in No Mans Land several of his soldiers attempted to rescue him. Source 13 reveals how dangerous this was and would only happen if the officer was popular with his men.

Question 6: Study sources 11 and 12. How do these sources support one of the statements made in source 15.

Answer 6: Source 15 states that Walter Tull was "the British Army’s first black officer". Sources 11 and 12 show Tull in his officer uniform.

Question 7: Lieutenant Pickard in source 14 says Walter Tull was recommended for the Military Cross. Read source 16 and explain why Phil Vasili thinks he was not awarded this medal. Can you give any other reasons why he did not receive the medal?

Answer 7: In source 16 Phil Vasili points out that "Walter Tull was made an officer at a time when the Army was desperately short of men of officer material." However, under the rules at the time, black men were not allowed to be combat officers (they could become officers if they were in medical units). Vasili argues "I’m convinced that to have given him his Military Cross would have admitted to the powers-that-be at the War Office that rules had been broken in commissioning a black man."

There are other reasons why he did not receive the Military Cross. Not all men recommended for this honour received the medal. It is also possible that Lieutenant Pickard was telling the truth about this. He might have said it to make Tull's relatives feel proud of him. The Ministry of Defence say that an examination of their records show that Tull was not recommended for the Military Cross.