



I Wonder...

I knew of Walter Tull before writing this,
I wonder how he progressed after such a difficult start,

The grandchild of a slave,
Sent to an orphanage at an early age,

Provided a trade in the world of print, spotted as a
footballer Firstly with Clapton then the dizzy heights of
Tottenham

Only the second Black player in the professional
game, Paid four pounds per week – considerable
fame.

But still called a 'Darkie' in the local press,
I wonder how he felt whilst racially taunted,

It still happens in today's beautiful game,
Banana throwing and monkey chants are we really just the same?

I wonder what caused Walter to be one of the first, To
join the Football battalion of the Middlesex regiment,

Was it Joynson Hicks rallying call,
Or was that Walter knew his duty and gave up the

ball. Walters leadership skills were soon rewarded,

Promotion to Sergeant and eager for action.

I wonder how others responded,
Take orders from a darkie? Not in this man's army

Walter suffered Shell shock and returned back home,
On recovery sent for officer training,

I wonder how this occurred,
Regulations forbid any person of colour to be referred.

The first black combat officer in the British Army,
I wonder how many more were overlooked,

Sent to Italy, then back to France a breakthrough needed,
Walter died in no man's land, a machine gun bullet
succeeded.

His body was never found, reported dead, 25th March
1918. Recommended for the Military cross, but Records
lost.

Walter was posthumously awarded his medal 89 years later,
Following a campaign by Micheal Morpurgo, no man
greater.

I wonder what he would have achieved, had his life been not cut
short, Would he have been the man he should have been?

A leader to fight the prejudice that has gone on so long.
A role model for others to believe in, someone so strong.

I already knew of Walter Tull as as My Great Grandfather's Brother

George, Was In the same regiment and proud to fight alongside Walter
Tull

George also never came home, killed a year earlier at Oppy
wood Again, no body found, I wonder what he would have
become.

By Grace M