

PRIVATE J E CULLING (12664)

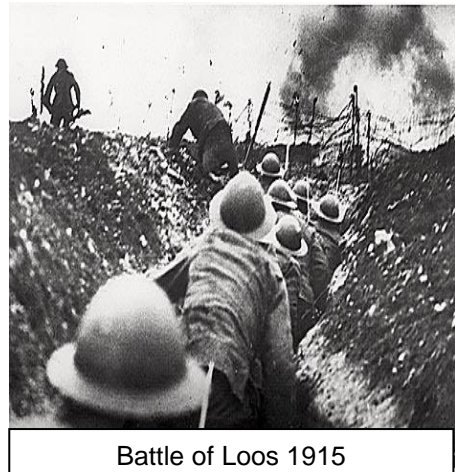


(Suffolk Regiment)

The 1837-1915 Births Marriages and Deaths Index lists births registered between Oct and Dec 1894 with James Ernest Culling's birth being registered in **Thetford**. The 1901 England Census has the Culling family (father James and mother Elizabeth) living in 'Hall Cottages' in the civil parish of **Bradfield Combust**.

Private Culling served with the 9th Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment; the 9th Battalion was formed at **Bury St Edmunds** as part of the new Kitchener's [volunteer] Army. On 30th August 1915 the Battalion landed at Boulogne to join The Great War as part of the British Expeditionary Force.

At the time of his death, Private Culling's 9th Battalion had been fighting in the Battle of Loos (2.5km from Lille) which, in September and October 1915, was the British Army's contribution to the major Allied offensive launched simultaneously with the main French offensive in Champagne. The 'Big Push' which saw the first use of chlorine gas by the British aimed to break the stranglehold of trench warfare. It was at Loos that men from Kitchener's Army (wartime volunteers of 1914) fought and died in great numbers in a major battle. The German machine guns were particularly deadly for the British, killing 8,500 men in a single day, the greatest single loss of life recorded since the beginning of the war. In the 2 ½ weeks of bitter fighting during September and October 1915 the British suffered 50 000 casualties including more than 20 000 deaths.



Battle of Loos 1915

The Battle of Loos saw the 9th Battalion receive a Victoria Cross, awarded to Sergeant Arthur Frederick Saunders.

Private Culling's records state that he died of wounds on 20th October 1915 while serving in France; his Medal Rolls Index Card shows that he was not only awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal but also the 1915 Star, awarded to those who saw service in France and Flanders from 23rd November 1914 to 31st December 1915.

Private Culling died at the age of 21 (possibly a month or 2 prior to his 21st birthday).

He is laid to rest in grave plot I.P.27 in La Brique Military Cemetery in Ypres, Belgium.



Remembered With Honour



Wg Cdr A Tucker RAF (Ret'd)