



# Football Remembers

The 1914 Christmas Truce  
Education pack





This pack has been designed with the aim of providing an engaging educational experience.  
Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy.

Design and production: Navig8 Ltd

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<http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/football-remembers>



# Welcome to Football Remembers

Football has the power to bring us together and to engage young people who would not otherwise feel part of the First World War centenary. The British Council, the Premier League, the Football League and the Football Association have joined forces in an imaginative partnership to encourage young people to remember the Christmas Truce of 1914, one of the greatest surprises of the First World War.

<http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/football-remembers>

## The partners

### The British Council

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and build trust between them worldwide.

### The FA – Supporting football since 1863

The FA is the not-for-profit, governing body of football in England. With more than £100m put back into the game every year, it grows participation, promotes diversity and regulates the sport for everyone to enjoy.

### The Football League

The Football League is the world's original league football competition. With 72 members, the League is the largest body of professional clubs in European football; it is responsible for the Championship, League 1, League 2 as well as the Capital One Cup and Johnstone's Paint Trophy.

### The Premier League

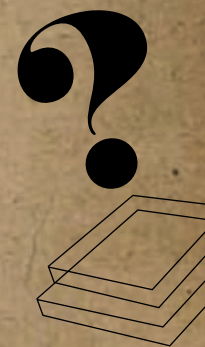
The Barclays Premier League is the most watched continuous annual global sporting event in the world. Off the pitch the Premier League will spend £168m solely on grassroots and community projects over the next three seasons.

## Don't forget to enter our competition

We are delighted to launch our pack with a very special competition to design a memorial to the soldiers who played football during the 1914 Christmas Truce. The designs will be judged by a panel that includes HRH The Duke of Cambridge and Theo Walcott. All shortlisted designs will also be displayed at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) this summer. The winning school will work with the NMA to realise their design, which will be unveiled at the NMA in December 2014.

More details are in  
**Activity G: Design a Memorial.**

Closing date:  
**16 June 2014**





# How to use the pack

This pack is in two parts – a set of activity plans for teachers and a set of additional original documents to be used with those plans.

The activities are aimed primarily at pupils aged 9-14 but they can be adapted to suit older or younger audiences who are studying significant historical events and people from their own locality. Each unit contains background information, ideas for discussion and cross-curricular activities. There are learning outcomes, links to curriculum subjects and lists of additional resources.

These can be used in individual lessons and assemblies or can form part of larger cross-curriculum projects over a number of subjects. They could also be a foundation for a joint curriculum project with a partner school overseas.

There are a number of sources suggested for each activity, catering for a range of reading abilities. You can find more sources relating to this pack at <http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/football-remembers>. You can also download more copies of the pack, in English and Welsh, from this link.

We would encourage you to treat the activities as examples of what you can do with the sources – and to use the original documents to develop and add to your own lesson plans and classroom activities. We hope your school will join in this special centenary event.

But whatever else you do, think about the courage of the soldiers in the trenches in 1914.

## Action plan

- Share the pack across your school
- Use it in lessons, assemblies, cross-curriculum projects with partner schools
- Visit <http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/football-remembers> for extra content including videos and the chance to take part in competitions
- Display the results in your community and/or online
- Take part in the competition to design a war memorial (UK schools only)
- Research local footballers who fought in the First World War and send us information on them
- Organise a commemorative truce match in December.

## List of activities and colour codes

- A Introductory activity** – find out about the truce
- B English and drama** – hot seating, improvisation, writing and performing short plays
- C English and creative writing** – write a truce diary
- D English and drama** – learn about footballers who fought in the war
- E Languages** – carry out truce conversations, use drama for language learning, read sources in the original language
- F Art and design** – cartoons from the First World War
- G Art and design** – design a war memorial
- H Moral education** – ethics and dilemmas
- I Sports activities** – make a football, plan your football match, think about the skills footballers need
- J Conflict resolution** – play a simulation game
- K History** – interpret and review the sources, make a judgement on the significance of the truce
- L History** – find a local footballer who fought in the war
- M English and media studies** – propaganda and football



# Background information

In the first months of the First World War, soldiers fighting in the trenches around Ypres held a truce. Over the Christmas period they set aside their weapons and met in 'No Man's Land'.

This Christmas Truce was an unplanned and unexpected event. It happened many times and in many places. German, French, British, Belgian and Indian soldiers were excited to meet one another. They sang Christmas songs together, exchanged souvenirs and took photos of one another. And in some cases, it seems that they even played football.

It's very hard to pin down the story of the 1914 Christmas Truce and even harder to find out about the football matches. This wasn't planned, arranged and recorded, like much else in the war. It was spontaneous and informal. It was an example of 'fraternisation' – when enemies met up, shared comforts and even became friends – which naturally met with disapproval from military command.

To this day, there is debate about whether or not anyone really played football in No Man's Land.

There is plenty of evidence, however, that the truce did take place. It involved thousands of men and was reported in dozens of newspapers as soldiers wrote home to family and friends. In the years after the war, many soldiers wrote about their experiences or gave interviews to museums, historians and the media.

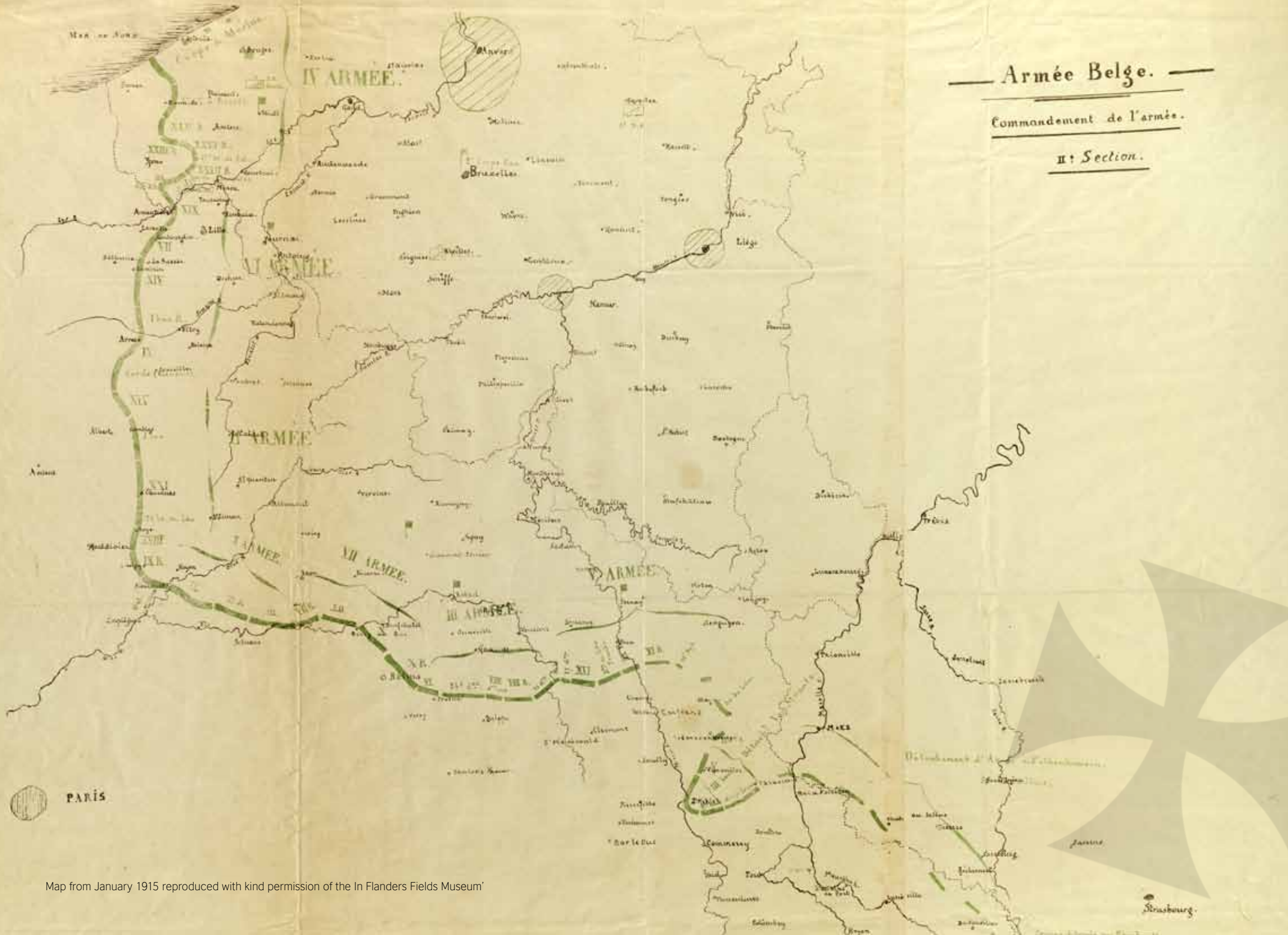
This pack contains a selection of original sources – sources which historians use when they piece together the story of the Christmas Truce. Some of these have not been published previously.

**This is real history. It's elusive, intriguing and inspiring.**

This is what No Man's Land looked like,

<http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/football-remembers>





Map from January 1915 reproduced with kind permission of the In Flanders Fields Museum



# Contents



## Activities

- A Introductory activity** – find out about the truce
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- L History** – find a local footballer who fought in the war
- M English and media studies** – propaganda and football

Source materials

Further resources

Acknowledgements

# Football Remembers Monday 8–Monday 15 December 2014

## Prepare

Get ready for match day by learning about the Christmas Truce through the Football Remembers education pack

## Play

Mark the centenary of the football played in No Man's Land, Christmas 1914, by playing a match

## Remember

Make sure your school joins the national week of football remembrance in 2014

#FootballRemembers



<http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/football-remembers>





**Age range:** 7–14

**Curriculum Links:** English, History

**Global citizenship skills and values:** Creative thinking, empathy, collaboration, commitment to peace, research skills

**Learning objectives:** Use research and literacy skills to identify key elements of the Christmas Truce and use it as a basis for creative writing

## A Introductory activity: find out about the truce

The accounts suggested below contain two descriptions of the Christmas Truce. Choose one which is appropriate for your learners and read all, or part, of the account with the class. Ask the pupils to highlight and research any words or phrases that they don't understand and share their results.

Watch the special videos made with the In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres, Belgium with your class to see some of the original source materials in this pack acted out. You can access these at: <http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/football-remembers>



**Suggested sources** are a memoir written from hospital after the truce and the transcript of a 1983 television interview with a soldier who was there.

17, 20



**Age range:** 9–14

**Curriculum Links:** English, History, Drama

**Global citizenship skills and values:** Creative thinking, empathy, collaboration, commitment to peace, research skills

**Learning objectives:** Use research skills to identify key elements of the Christmas Truce and use it as a stimulus for creative writing and drama

## B English and drama

The Christmas Truce of 1914 was a brief ceasefire during the bitter conflict of the First World War. It is remembered as a time of peace and humanity which interrupted months of brutal fighting.

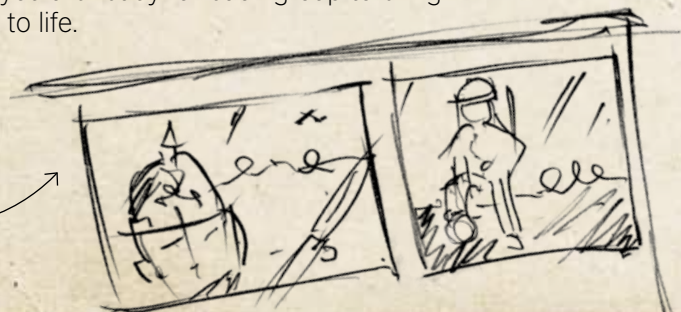
Give copies of the source materials related to this section to groups of pupils.

Ask each group to use highlighters to **pick out details of the events revealed in the sources** that particularly resonate with them. These could be carol singing, the sharing of gifts or the football match itself. **Discuss how the soldiers must have felt** as they gingerly stepped into No Man's Land and the sights and sounds that would have met them. How would they have felt when the fighting restarted? What would the reactions of friends and family at home have been when they heard what happened?

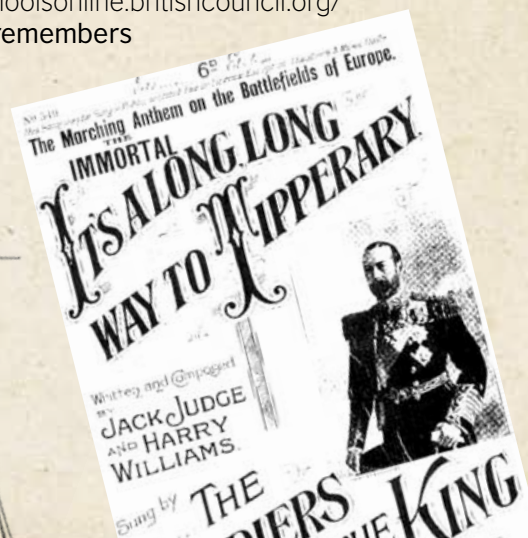
**Improvise the first contact between the German and Allied soldiers.** How might they have greeted each other?

- Encourage groups to create freeze frames, like still photographs, of the significant events that they pick out during their research. Blow a whistle (the signal frequently used by soldiers during the First World War) when you are ready for each group to bring their scene to life.

Your storyboards might look like this.



- After the session, discuss what worked well and how they could use the scenes they created as springboards for **creative writing**. Ask each group to produce a **storyboard and script** which tells the story of the Christmas Truce.
- **Rehearse these short plays together and perform them** for a larger audience. The drama can be accompanied by readings from the original accounts, use of appropriate props such as footballs, cameras, cakes and music from the time, such as 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary' and the Christmas carol 'Silent Night'. You can find the lyrics online at <http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/football-remembers>



**Partner school**  
Exchange your storyboards, scripts, photographs and films of the performances with your partner school.  
<http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/partner-with-a-school>



**Suggested sources**  
reflect different nationalities involved in the truce. These include three letters from soldiers, soldiers' diaries, a scene from a novel written by the son of an Indian soldier who served in the British army, items that troops exchanged, and photographs taken by soldiers during the truce.

9, 10, 15, 19, 23,  
25, 47, 49, 51





**Age range:** 9–14

**Curriculum Links:** English, History, Drama

**Global citizenship skills and values:** Creative thinking, empathy, collaboration, commitment to peace, research skills

**Learning objectives:** Use research skills to identify key elements of the Christmas Truce and use it as a stimulus for creative writing and drama

## C English and creative writing: write a truce diary

Many of the accounts of the Christmas Truce are in the form of letters and diaries. William Tapp was an army servant who died in 1915. In his diary he tells the story of Christmas Day, talks about what he had to eat and remembers his life at home. He shares his feelings and talks about wanting to play football.

Ask pupils to draft and **write their own letter or diary entry of the truce based on a character from one of the sources**, using William Tapp's diary or other letters and diaries as inspiration. The diary could be written in English or another language. It could relate to one of the football matches or to the wider truce.

**Students could choose a character that is mentioned in the sources. For example:**

- One of the military command who tried to put a stop to the truce (see documents from General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien)
- A soldier who had his picture taken with enemy troops during the truce and kept it as a souvenir (see photographs from the truce)
- An army chaplain who delivered the burial service of British and German troops (as reported in the *Staffordshire Sentinel*)
- A Scottish soldier who played football against Lieutenant Niemann's men – they lost 3:2
- A soldier from the Indian army who had just arrived in France and had never celebrated Christmas before (described in Walther Stennes' account)
- The German chef who had worked at the Trocadero restaurant in London and met some of his former clients at the truce (mentioned by Captain Robert Hamilton)

- A Belgian child who was forced to leave home because of the fighting (read Michel Toudy)
- One of the cooks preparing Christmas lunch for the soldiers (from William Tapp's diary)
- A soldier who was injured just before the truce
- A young person who had received a letter from a soldier who had taken part in the truce, for example, their father, brother, friend, etc.

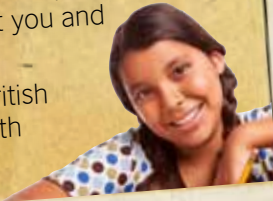
**You could include other sources for older pupils, including:**

- A soldier who had taken part in the truce and then refused to fight, from the *Staffordshire Sentinel* and the *Manchester Guardian*.

### Partner school

Exchange the accounts with your partner school. Create a display of the written work that you and they have produced.

<http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/partner-with-a-school>



**Suggested sources**  
include orders against truces from the high command, three soldiers' diaries, three regimental war diaries, two letters from the front, the interview and memoirs of two German officers, and two photographs taken during the truce.

4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13,  
16, 19, 21, 24, 47



**Age range:** 9–14

**Curriculum Links:** History, English, Drama, Citizenship

**Global citizenship skills and learning values:** Research skills, team work, community awareness, reading and comprehension, presentation skills

**Learning objectives:** Use research skills to learn about football in the First World War

## D English and drama: footballers who fought in the war

Read the footballers' case studies with your pupils, as well as the background information, about the lives of footballers, such as Alex Turnbull, Donald Simpson Bell, Walter Tull and Leigh Richmond Roose, who enlisted to fight in the First World War. Also look at the story of Florrie Redford and the rise of women's football during the war.

Ask students which questions they would have liked to have asked the footballers themselves. Ask members of the class to use the information in the stories provided and use **hot seating** techniques, where pupils sit on the 'hot seat' and act 'in role' as some of the players. They then answer questions about their lives by other members of the class. The pupils should always answer these questions in character.

Use the literacy activity 'write a truce diary' to explore how one of the footballers might have remembered events during the war. For example, the first day they arrived at the trenches, after they had been injured, when they played a football match behind the front lines on their down time, or when Florrie played in front of a crowd of more than 50,000 at Goodison Park.



Donald Simpson



Leigh  
Richmond  
Roose

**Suggested sources**  
provide background  
information on football and  
the war, as well as a range  
of footballers' stories, to  
inspire the pupils.  
38, 39, 46





**Age range:** 9–14

**Curriculum Links:** Modern Foreign Languages, History

**Global citizenship skills and values:** Intercultural contact, intercultural communication skills, purposes and uses of languages, translation skills, team work

**Learning objectives:** Discuss the importance of language skills and use the context of the truce for MFL conversation practice and vocabulary development

# E Languages and the Christmas Truce

Use the truce to inspire and develop language learning.

The truce illustrated the **value of language learning** as soldiers had to speak in any language they could in order to be understood, including gestures and body language.

The accounts in the source materials include many instances of troops speaking in a language other than their mother tongue. For example, some Germans could speak English:

"I met a Saxon who talked English well and who interpreted for me..."  
[Grimsby Daily Telegraph]

"Private Möckel from my platoon, who used to live in England for several years, and I call out to the Brits in English – and soon enough, quite a fun conversation develops between us."  
[Lieutenant Zehmisch]

"... some British officers also join us, with whom I have a delightful conversation in English, French and German!"  
[Lieutenant Zehmisch]

"We also talked as much as we could. English and German, but anyhow we understood each other."  
[Walther Stennes]

Discuss the benefits of being able to speak other languages. Try communicating simple messages without language, such as 'what is your name?' or 'where are you from?'

The **truce vocabulary** lists the phrases that troops could have used during the truce in English, French, Flemish, German and Hindi. Use these phrases to improvise conversations that the soldiers might have had in other languages. Include any languages of which the students have some basic knowledge.

We want to talk to you

हम तुमसे बात करना चाहते हैं

On veut vous parler

Wir wollen mit euch reden

We willen met je praten





## E Languages and the Christmas Truce

Select one or two of the sources in a different language. Ask pupils to work in groups to read the sources and **get a sense of the meaning**.

Videos available at <http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/football-remembers> will allow your pupils to hear some of the sources accompanying this pack being read in English, French, German and Flemish.

Students could also adopt the persona of one of the authors of the written sources and have **conversations in character**. Record these and play them back to the class.

Explore the characters in the sources through **'hot seating'** where one pupil sits on the 'hot seat' and answers questions from others in character in another language, then practise their truce conversations for performance or filming.

### Extension activity

More experienced language learners could do further work on translating the sources.

### Partner school

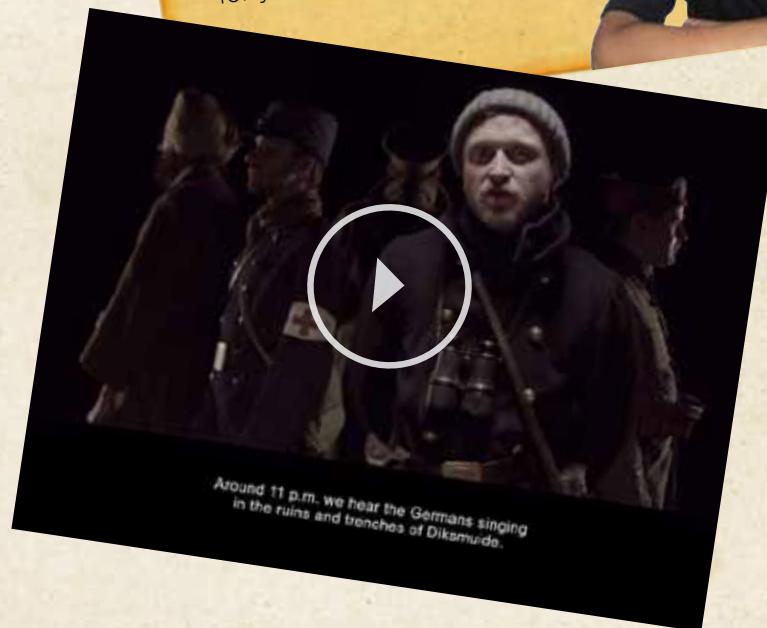
Work with your partner school to translate the resources so that everyone can understand. If your partner school speaks French or German, ask them to translate for you. Translate parts of English sources into another language for your partners to read them.



### Suggested sources

include one diary, three memoirs and a history of the regiment that Hitler served in during the First World War.

22, 23, 26,  
27, 28, 29,  
30, 31, 36, 37





# Truce vocabulary: French

🇬🇧 Come out!  
🇫🇷 Venez!

🇬🇧 Meet us half way  
🇫🇷 Rejoignez-nous à mi-chemin!

🇬🇧 Do you speak English / German / French?  
🇫🇷 Tu parles Anglais / Allemand / Français?

🇬🇧 Where did you learn it?  
🇫🇷 Où as-tu appris l'Anglais / l'Allemand / le Français?

🇬🇧 How long have you been here?  
🇫🇷 Depuis combien de temps es-tu là?

🇬🇧 Do you want to play football?  
🇫🇷 Vous voulez jouer au foot?

🇬🇧 Do you have a camera?  
🇫🇷 Tu as un appareil photo?

🇬🇧 Are you hungry?  
🇫🇷 Tu as faim?

🇬🇧 Have you seen the newspaper?  
🇫🇷 Tu as vu les journaux?

🇬🇧 I'd like to give you something to remember me by  
🇫🇷 Je voudrais te donner quelque chose pour que tu te souviennes de moi

🇬🇧 What are your trenches like?  
🇫🇷 C'est comment dans vos tranchées?

🇬🇧 Do you think we'll meet again?  
🇫🇷 Tu penses qu'on se reverra?

🇬🇧 We want to talk to you  
🇫🇷 On veut vous parler

🇬🇧 Meet in the middle  
🇫🇷 Rejoignons-nous au centre

🇬🇧 Yes I speak... No I don't speak any language but my own  
🇫🇷 Oui, je parle... Non, Je ne parle que ma propre langue.

🇬🇧 I learnt it at school / I lived in another country  
🇫🇷 Je l'ai appris à l'école / J'ai vécu dans un autre pays, à l'étranger

🇬🇧 I arrived a few weeks ago  
🇫🇷 Je suis arrivé il y a quelques semaines

🇬🇧 Do you have a ball?  
🇫🇷 Vous avez un ballon?

🇬🇧 Are we allowed to play?  
🇫🇷 On a le droit de jouer?

🇬🇧 Is it safe?  
🇫🇷 C'est sans risque?

🇬🇧 Can I take your picture?  
🇫🇷 Je peux te prendre en photo?

🇬🇧 Would you like some chocolate / an orange / bully beef?  
🇫🇷 Tu veux du chocolat? Une orange? Du corned-beef?

🇬🇧 I have a newspaper from Germany / England / France  
🇫🇷 J'ai un journal allemand / anglais / français

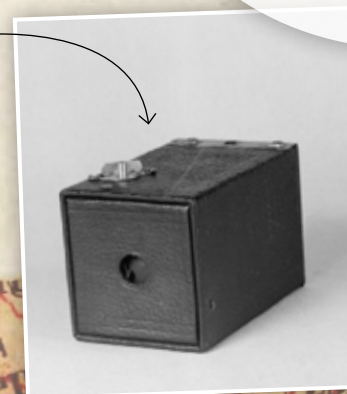
🇬🇧 Here is a button, newspaper, badge, hat...  
🇫🇷 Tiens, un bouton / un journal / un badge / un chapeau

🇬🇧 They are muddy, wet, cold  
🇫🇷 Il y a de la boue, c'est humide et il fait froid

🇬🇧 I would like to / I hope so / I don't think so  
🇫🇷 J'aimerais bien / J'espère que oui / Non, ça m'étonnerait

Je peux  
te prendre  
en photo?

A Kodak No 1  
Brownie Model B box  
camera, sometimes  
used during the First  
World War





# Truce vocabulary: Hindi

🇬🇧 Come out!

🇮🇳 बाहर आ जाओ

🇬🇧 Meet us half way

🇮🇳 आधे रास्ते में मिलो

🇬🇧 Do you speak English / German / French?

🇮🇳 क्या तुम अंग्रेज़ी, जर्मन, फ्रेंच बोलते हो?

🇬🇧 Where did you learn it?

🇮🇳 यह तुमने कहाँ सीखी?

🇬🇧 How long have you been here?

🇮🇳 तुम यहाँ कितने समय से हो?

🇬🇧 Do you want to play football?

🇮🇳 क्या तुम फुटबॉल खेलते हो?

🇬🇧 Do you have a camera?

🇮🇳 क्या तुम्हारे पास कैमरा है?

🇬🇧 Are you hungry?

🇮🇳 क्या तुम्हें भूख लगी है?

🇬🇧 Have you seen the newspaper?

🇮🇳 क्या तुमने समाचार पत्र देखा है?

🇬🇧 I'd like to give you something to remember me by

🇮🇳 मैं तुम्हें मुझे याद रखने के लिए कुछ देना चाहता हूँ।

🇬🇧 What are your trenches like?

🇮🇳 तुम्हारी खाइयाँ किस प्रकार की हैं?

🇬🇧 Do you think we'll meet again?

🇮🇳 क्या तुम्हें लगता है कि हम दोबारा मिलेंगे?

🇬🇧 We want to talk to you

🇮🇳 हम तुमसे बात करना चाहते हैं।

🇬🇧 Meet in the middle

🇮🇳 बीच में मिलो

🇬🇧 Yes I speak... No I don't speak any language but my own

🇮🇳 हाँ, मैं बात करता हूँ। नहीं, मैं अपनी भाषा के अलावा कोई और भाषा नहीं बोलता।

🇬🇧 I learnt it at school / I lived in another country

🇮🇳 मैंने विद्यालय में यह (भाषा) सीखी। मैं अन्य देश में रहता था।

🇬🇧 I arrived a few weeks ago

🇮🇳 मैं कुछ सप्ताह पहले आया हूँ।

🇬🇧 Do you have a ball?

🇮🇳 क्या तुम्हारे पास गेंद है?

🇬🇧 Are we allowed to play?

🇮🇳 क्या हमें खेलने की अनुमति है?

🇬🇧 Is it safe?

🇮🇳 क्या यह सुरक्षित है?

🇬🇧 Can I take your picture?

🇮🇳 क्या मैं तुम्हारी तस्वीर खींच सकता हूँ?

🇬🇧 Would you like some chocolate / an orange / bully beef?

🇮🇳 क्या तुम चॉकलेट या संतरा या बुलीबीफ खाना पसंद करोगे?

🇬🇧 I have a newspaper from Germany / England / France

🇮🇳 मेरे पास जर्मनी, इंग्लैंड, फ्रांस, इत्यादि का समाचार पत्र है।

🇬🇧 Here is a button, newspaper, badge, hat...

🇮🇳 यह रहा बटन, समाचार पत्र, बिल्ला, हैट...

🇬🇧 They are muddy, wet, cold

🇮🇳 वे मिट्टी से लथपथ, गीले और ठंडे हैं।

🇬🇧 I would like to / I hope so / I don't think so

🇮🇳 मैं ऐसा चाहता हूँ / मैं आशा करता हूँ / मैं ऐसा नहीं समझता

क्या मैं तुम्हारी तस्वीर  
खींच सकता हूँ?



# Truce vocabulary: German

🇬🇧 Come out!  
🇩🇪 Kommt raus!

🇬🇧 Meet us half way  
🇩🇪 Trefft uns in der Mitte

🇬🇧 Do you speak English / German / French?  
🇩🇪 Sprecht ihr Englisch / Deutsch / Französisch?

🇬🇧 Where did you learn it?  
🇩🇪 Wo habt ihr es gelernt?

🇬🇧 How long have you been here?  
🇩🇪 Wie lange seid ihr schon hier?

🇬🇧 Do you want to play football?  
🇩🇪 Wollt ihr Fussball spielen?

🇬🇧 Do you have a camera?  
🇩🇪 Habt ihr eine Kamera?

🇬🇧 Are you hungry?  
🇩🇪 Habt ihr Hunger?

🇬🇧 Have you seen the newspaper?  
🇩🇪 Habt ihr gesehen was in der Zeitung steht?

🇬🇧 I'd like to give you something to remember me by  
🇩🇪 Ich würde dir gern etwas zur Erinnerung an mich geben

🇬🇧 What are your trenches like?  
🇩🇪 Wie sind eure Schützengräben?

🇬🇧 Do you think we'll meet again?  
🇩🇪 Meint ihr, wir werden uns wieder sehen?

🇬🇧 We want to talk to you  
🇩🇪 Wir wollen mit euch reden

🇬🇧 Meet in the middle  
🇩🇪 Trefft uns in der Mitte

🇬🇧 Yes I speak... No I don't speak any language but my own  
🇩🇪 Ja, ich spreche... Nein, ich spreche keine Sprache außer meiner Muttersprache

🇬🇧 I learnt it at school / I lived in another country  
🇩🇪 Ich habe es in der Schule gelernt / Ich habe in einem anderen Land gelebt

🇬🇧 I arrived a few weeks ago  
🇩🇪 Ich bin vor ein paar Wochen angekommen

🇬🇧 Do you have a ball?  
🇩🇪 Habt ihr einen Ball?

🇬🇧 Are we allowed to play?  
🇩🇪 Dürfen wir spielen?

🇬🇧 Is it safe?  
🇩🇪 Ist es nicht gefährlich?

🇬🇧 Can I take your picture?  
🇩🇪 Darf ich dich fotografieren?

🇬🇧 Would you like some chocolate / an orange / bully beef?  
🇩🇪 Möchtest du Schokolade / eine Orange / Dosenfleisch?

🇬🇧 I have a newspaper from Germany / England / France  
🇩🇪 Ich habe eine Zeitung aus Deutschland / England / Frankreich etc.

🇬🇧 Here is a button, newspaper, badge, hat  
🇩🇪 Hier ist ein Knopf, eine Zeitung, Dienstmarke, eine Mütze

🇬🇧 They are muddy, wet, cold  
🇩🇪 Sie sind schlammig, nass, kalt

🇬🇧 I would like to / I hope so / I don't think so  
🇩🇪 Das fände ich schön / ich hoffe es / ich glaube nicht

Darf  
ich dich  
fotographieren?



# Truce vocabulary: Flemish

🇬🇧 Come out!

🇧🇪 Kom naar buiten!

🇬🇧 Meet us half way

🇧🇪 Laten we elkaar ergens halverwege ontmoeten

🇬🇧 Do you speak English / German / French?

🇧🇪 Spreek je Engels / Duits / Frans?

🇬🇧 Where did you learn it?

🇧🇪 Waar heb je het geleerd?

🇬🇧 How long have you been here?

🇧🇪 Hoe lang ben je hier al?

🇬🇧 Do you want to play football?

🇧🇪 Wil je voetbal spelen?

🇬🇧 Do you have a camera?

🇧🇪 Heb je een camera?

🇬🇧 Are you hungry?

🇧🇪 Heb je honger?

🇬🇧 Have you seen the newspaper?

🇧🇪 Heb je de krant gezien?

🇬🇧 I'd like to give you something to remember me by

🇧🇪 Ik zou je graag iets geven dat je aan mij herinnert

🇬🇧 What are your trenches like?

🇧🇪 Hoe is het in jouw loopgraven?

🇬🇧 Do you think we'll meet again?

🇧🇪 Denk je dat we elkaar nog zullen terugzien?

🇬🇧 We want to talk to you

🇧🇪 We willen met je praten

🇬🇧 Meet in the middle

🇧🇪 Laten we elkaar in het midden ontmoeten

🇬🇧 Yes I speak... No I don't speak any language but my own

🇧🇪 Ja, je spreek... Neen, ik spreek alleen mijn eigen taal

🇬🇧 I learnt it at school / I lived in another country

🇧🇪 Ik heb het op school geleerd. Ik heb in het buitenland gewoond.

🇬🇧 I arrived a few weeks ago

🇧🇪 Ik kwam hier enkele weken geleden aan

🇬🇧 Do you have a ball?

🇧🇪 Heb je een bal?

🇬🇧 Are we allowed to play?

🇧🇪 Is het toegestaan om te spelen?

🇬🇧 Is it safe?

🇧🇪 Is het veilig?

🇬🇧 Can I take your picture?

🇧🇪 Mag ik een foto van je nemen?

🇬🇧 Would you like some chocolate / an orange / bully beef?

🇧🇪 Will je wat chocolade, een sinaasappel of wat corned beef?

🇬🇧 I have a newspaper from Germany / England / France

🇧🇪 Ik heb een Duitse, Engelse, Franse krant.

🇬🇧 Here is a button, newspaper, badge, hat

🇧🇪 Hier is een knoop, een krant, een naamplaatje, een hoed

🇬🇧 They are muddy, wet, cold

🇧🇪 Ze zijn modderig, nat en koud

🇬🇧 I would like to / I hope so / I don't think so

🇧🇪 Ik zou het fijn vinden / Ik hoop het / Ik denk het niet

Mag ik een foto van je nemen?





**Age range:** 9–14

**Curriculum Links:** Art and design, History

**Global citizenship skills and values:** Empathy, communication, creativity

**Learning objectives:** Study authentic art resources and create drawings about the events of the Christmas Truce and designs for a war memorial

## F Art and design: cartoons

Captain Bruce Bairnsfather's accounts of the Christmas Truce are included in the source materials. He became a cartoonist during the First World War and was famous for his drawings from the trenches.

The photograph of Bairnsfather in the sources was taken on Christmas Day 1914 during the truce, and the cartoons include his 'Christmas card'. In an interview with Canadian television, Bairnsfather remembered playing football with the Germans.

In 1958, he was asked why he started drawing. This was his reply:

'Out of boredom, I should say. I suddenly thought, 'Well, I'd better pass the time,' you know. I had this complaint in my blood as it were, and I used to draw on the back of envelopes or odd bits of paper or cardboard boxes or anything about. Simply to amuse these chaps round about. And demand for these drawings slowly spread up and down. I never thought anything of it, except as a local entertainment.

'Well, then one night a staff officer came along the front line trench, and he looked into a dugout and he saw one of these things stuck up there and he said, 'Who did that stuff?' and they said a chap down here called Bairnsfather, and he said 'Oh,' and he found me, and he said, 'You know, you ought to send one of those things up to a paper'. I'd never dreamt of doing so, never thought of it. However, I thought that would be a good idea, so when we got out of the trenches – you know, we worked a week in and a week out, sort

of shuttle business – and when we were resting in this farm about five miles behind the line, I picked out the picture that I thought had the biggest punch about it at the time and copied it on to a respectable sheet of paper and sent it off to London.'

### Discuss the cartoons with the class:

- What can they tell us about life in the trenches?
- What do they not tell us?
- How do they make you feel? Are they funny, informative or sad?
- What message do you think Bairnsfather is trying to get across in each cartoon?
- Can you identify any themes that run through his cartoons?

There is no Bairnsfather cartoon of the football games. Ask pupils to represent the football game, or another element of the Christmas Truce, such as sharing Christmas presents, in a similar style by using pencil or charcoal.

**Suggested sources**  
include two accounts of the truce from Bruce Bairnsfather and four cartoons and drawings of the trenches.

32, 33, 54, 55

**Partner school**  
Exchange copies of the artwork you have developed. Create a photo gallery together.



### Extension activity

Find out how other artists portrayed the events of the First World War. Which do you think are the most powerful and why?

More cartoons by Bruce Bairnsfather are available online at <http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/football-remembers>.



Cartoon drawn by Bruce Bairnsfather.  
Reproduced with the kind permission of the Bairnsfather family



**Age range:** 9–14

**Curriculum Links:** Art and Design, History

**Global citizenship skills and values:** Empathy, communication, creativity

**Learning objectives:** Study authentic art resources and create drawings about the events of the Christmas Truce and designs for a war memorial

## G Design a war memorial

Look at images of different types of war memorials from a variety of different countries and conflicts. Discuss why memorials and events, such as Remembrance Day, are important.

If you have a war memorial close to your school, try to arrange a visit to study it in detail. Examine the names and the dates of those who are remembered on it. What does it tell us? How can you find out any more information about the people who are remembered on the monument?

Ask your pupils to design a monument to commemorate the Christmas Truce using the original sources as inspiration. You could share these ideas with your partner school.

This monument in Messines near Ypres marks one of the sites where football was played during the Christmas Truce. Visitors leave footballs.

Photo reproduced with kind permission of Steve Hawkins Photography



### Competition (2014 only)

Football Remembers is launching a competition for UK schools and football club academies to design a monument to remember the football played during the Christmas Truce. This competition closes on 16 June 2014.

To enter the competition, read the information below, then go to <http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/football-remembers>

### Suggested sources

all contain either a reference to football being played or troops who took part in the truce. They include two letters, the transcripts of two television interviews, a diary, a memoir and two photographs.

9, 10, 20, 21, 23, 33, 47



# Football Remembers Memorial Competition in association with the National Memorial Arboretum

Design a contemporary war memorial that honours the soldiers who played football during the Christmas Truce. Designs will be shortlisted by the National Memorial Arboretum. The winning design will be selected by a panel of judges including HRH The Duke of Cambridge and Theo Walcott and constructed at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire ([www.thenma.org.uk](http://www.thenma.org.uk)).

This competition closes on 16 June 2014. Find out more and enter online at <http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/football-remembers>.

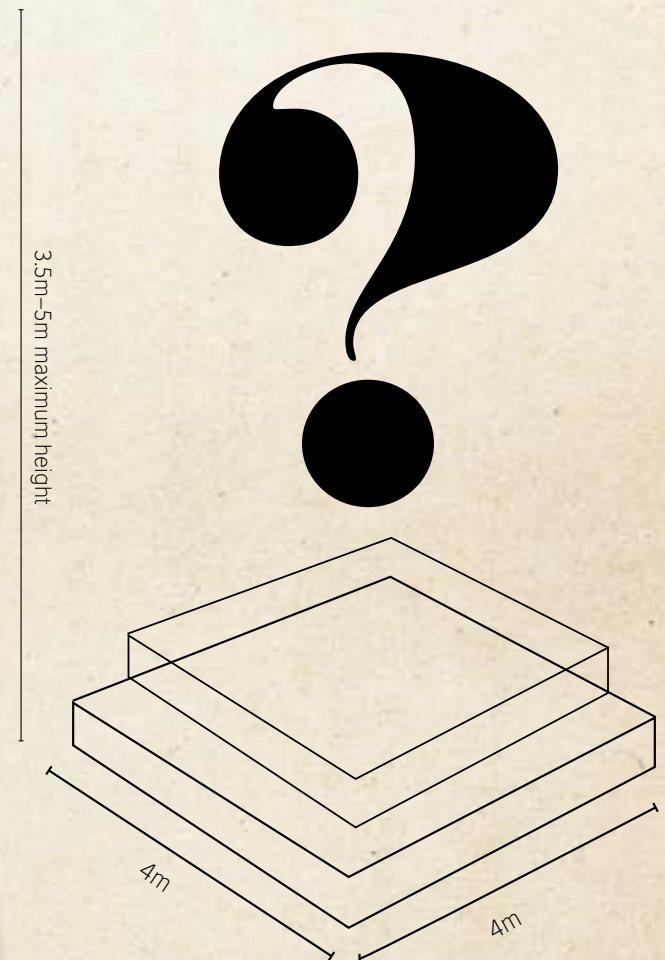
## Design Criteria

The memorial should inspire and educate visitors, as well as be a place of remembrance and reflection. It should be:

- A simple and timeless design with a sense of dignity
- Readily recognisable as a memorial, but not necessarily of traditional design
- Visually coherent when seen from all sides, allowing people to gather round it on at least three sides for a ceremony.



Photo reproduced with the kind permission of David Faul





# Brief for Football Remembers memorial

## Additional Design Considerations

The memorial should be:

- Readily visible for standing children and adults – the suggested height is between 3.5 and 5m
- Positioned on a stepped base to allow wreaths to be placed above ground level
- Have simple but informative text that can be read in less than 30 seconds and have a font size of at least 14mm
- Located on a base of suitable proportions not exceeding 4m by 4m
- Made of robust materials so that graffiti could be easily cleaned off and the impact of any vandalism is minimised
- Designed to require minimal maintenance
- Designed to accommodate small wooden crosses placed by visitors around the base.

## Suggested Materials

A wide variety of materials can be used. For example, a metal such as bronze, natural stone, glass or resin. The memorial could be figurative (for example, a sculpture), bas relief, a rough-hewn standing stone or cut blocks of stone.

If natural stone is used, it should be from a UK source, preferably local. For example, the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire uses Hollington Sandstone, a local stone.



Photo reproduced with the kind permission of Barry Turner



A memorial to the Footballers' Battalion.  
Photo reproduced with the kind permission of the Football League



**Age range:** 11–14

**Curriculum Links:** Citizenship, Religious Studies, PSHE, Drama

**Global citizenship skills and values:** Team work, communication skills, understanding intercultural contact, empathy

**Learning objectives:** Use the truce as an inspiration for developing questioning skills and the ability to see different perspectives by discussing ethical dilemmas.

## H Moral education

### Ethics and the Christmas Truce

This activity builds on the diary work in which pupils have already explored different perspectives.

Students carry out imaginary conversations between people who were involved in, or affected by, the truce. Adopting a persona from the sources, they discuss what they think of the truce, how it has affected them and the reasons for their point of view.

Students work in pairs or small groups. Assign a character to each student from the source materials or ask them to choose their own. A summary of the characters could be printed onto flash cards to help them. Older pupils could create their own.

Make sure that each group's characters have different back stories as this will create more interesting discussions. For example, mix up the different ranks of soldiers from the Allied or German forces and make these two enemy sides speak to each other. Include the Belgian soldier, Michel Toudy, in the discussions and think about why he opposed the truce. Include people at home who heard news of the truce in letters from their fathers, brothers, etc.

Students should spend five minutes in their pairs or groups discussing the truce from the point of view of their character, and then summarise their conversation to the rest of the class. Use this as the basis of a class debate about the rights and wrongs of the Christmas Truce.

#### Questions to answer (in character) during the conversations:

- What did the truce mean to them?
- How did the truce affect them?
- What impact did it have on the war?
- Was it right to make friends or play football with enemies who you had tried to kill and who had killed your friends?
- Was it right for soldiers to disobey orders to establish a truce?
- Was it right to use the ceasefire to try to gain information about the opposing forces?
- How easy is it to stop fighting and then start again?
- How did the soldiers feel when the truce ended?



The Pope and  
General Sir Horace  
Smith-Dorrien





# H Moral education

Here are some characters from source materials that could be used for the conversations:

**The Pope** – see reports about the ‘Truce of God’ proposed by Pope Benedict XV.

**British / French rank and file soldiers** – for example, the Wray brothers, Marcel Bechu, John Erskin from the *Edinburgh Evening News*, the account of the truce from the *Staffordshire Sentinel*, the unnamed officer in *The Times* and the soldiers mentioned in the East Sussex Regimental War Diaries who rebuffed a truce attempt by the Germans.

**German rank and file soldiers** – see the accounts from Hitler’s regiment, Lieutenant Niemann, and others who describe playing football.

**British high-ranking soldiers** – see General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien’s orders to troops before and after the truce.

**German high-ranking soldiers** – for example, Walter Stennes, Prince Heinrich or a German general seeing the truce through a periscope (photo).

**A Belgian soldier** – see Michel Toudy.

**Soldiers who took part in the truce and refused to fight afterwards** – see the report from the *Staffordshire Sentinel* of the *Guardian* report

**A young person at home reading letters and newspaper reports about the truce** – for example, *Taegliche Rundschau*, as reported in the *Staffordshire Sentinel*, or the *Guardian*, as reported in the *Staffordshire Sentinel*.

**Civilians, for example Belgians, who were made refugees by the fighting.**

**Partner school**  
After this activity arrange to have a debate with your partner school on these issues. Put the points of view of your class to your partner school.



**Suggested sources** provide many different perspectives on the truce and include three reports on the Pope’s call for a truce, orders from the high command before and after Christmas, the diary of a Belgian soldier, four soldiers’ letters, four memoirs, two regimental histories and a photograph of the truce taken through a trench periscope.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6,  
10, 13, 14, 15,  
18, 21, 24, 27,  
29, 34, 37, 52

**WHAT GERMANY WOULD LIKE.**  
The *Tagblatt*, Wednesday, Dec. 9, states that the Pope has sent an appeal to all the belligerent Powers with the object of bringing about a three days’ truce for Christmas.  
The truce would extend from December 23 to the date of the Roman Christmas.  
Germany is not opposed to the suggestion on principle, and the *Tagblatt* admits that the Papal suggestion is excellent from the humanitarian standpoint.  
—Bzelung.



Truce

God



**Age range:** 9–14

**Curriculum links:** PE, English

**Global citizenship skills and values:** Communication, collaboration

**Learning objectives:** To begin planning a football match to commemorate the Christmas Truce of 1914 and consider the attributes of an effective football player

# I Sports activities

The football that was played at Christmas 1914 was not like a football match you might see on a Saturday. It was played in a rough and often bombed area of ground between the trenches. Some of the accounts mention caps being thrown down as goal posts, but the pitch would certainly not be marked in any way.

There were unlimited numbers on each team – one soldier remembers two or three hundred taking part. There were no team captains, strikers or defenders. There was no referee.

Some accounts have a real football sent to the troops for Christmas and being blown up for the game. In other records the football was improvised, and was just something that they could kick around.

There was no strip. Soldiers wore their uniforms, including trousers and jackets, kilts and heavy army boots.

This lesson encourages you to recreate the spirit of this special football experience and to think about how you might go about organising your commemoration match.

## Memories

Ask the pupils who has played this kind of football and what made it fun? How and when did it happen? What's the difference between this and a 'real' football match?

## Make a football

In parts of the world today, children still play football on patches of land, often with their bare feet. Many cannot afford a leather football, so they make their own out of local materials. The most commonly used material is plastic bags. Encourage groups of students to make their own football. Have a competition to see which group can make the most successful and robust football and work together successfully as a team.

You don't need a real pitch, some children don't even need shoes



## Thinking Ahead

### Organising your football match

Ask your pupils to think about the organisation of your special commemorative football match in December.

- What resources will be needed?
- How can they involve as many people (boys and girls) as possible?
- How will they keep score?
- How can they share and publicise the event?

Encourage them to work together to develop a timeline and a list of who will be responsible for different parts of the event. Make sure someone will be on hand with a camera to take photographs of the teams together to show that you remembered.





This is a real football from the First World War. It was dribbled across No Man's Land by soldiers from the London Irish Rifles during an attack at the battle of Loos in 1915. They wanted to score a 'goal' in the German trenches. Photo reproduced with the kind permission of the Curator of the Regimental Museum of the London Irish Rifles.





# Four corners

Successful footballers can balance the technical, psychological, physical and social elements across their lives, to achieve the best results in sport.

One tool used to help them achieve this is the four corners approach. This looks at different aspects of a player's life – technical, psychological, physical and social – and develops these to achieve their potential on the pitch. The model aims to develop not just the player but the whole person.

The table to the right gives some examples of the skills footballers need in each of the four corners:

<b>TECHNICAL</b> As a footballer, the skills needed to be effective on the pitch, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Long and short passes</li><li>– Tackling</li></ul> <b>To develop these skills:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask the team to play in different positions during different periods of the game</li><li>• Let them play their own game</li><li>• Play different formations</li></ul>	<b>PSYCHOLOGICAL</b> The mental strength needed by footballers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Decision making on the pitch</li></ul> <b>To develop these skills:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allow the players to learn from their mistakes and take risks</li><li>• Let the players experiment and make their own decisions</li></ul>
<b>PHYSICAL</b> Footballers need to be in good shape for the match. <b>To develop these skills:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Incorporate generic movement – agility, balance and co-ordination into your warm-up</li></ul>	<b>SOCIAL</b> Being part of a team Following the rules of the game <b>To develop these skills:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allow the players to be involved in decision making processes</li><li>• Give the players responsibility</li></ul>



# Four corners

Ask pupils if they can add to the grid by giving further examples for each section and ideas of how these skills could be developed.

Soldiers fighting on the Western Front taking part in the Christmas Truce also had to balance these four aspects. Use the source materials to try and identify the technical, psychological, physical and social attributes that were important during this period and add to the grid to the right.



**Suggested sources** contain a reference to football being played or show troops that took part in the truce. They include two soldier's letters, transcripts of two interviews, a diary, a regimental history and two photographs of the truce taking place.

9, 10, 20, 21, 23, 33, 47

## TECHNICAL

The skills needed by a soldier in the trenches, for example:  
– how to use and arm a gun

## PSYCHOLOGICAL

The mental strength needed by soldiers  
– Risk taking  
– Strategic awareness  
– In the truce the courage to meet the enemy.

In the source materials, a soldier from RJR 16 (Hitler's regiment) described how an enemy soldier made his way across No Man's Land: 'An especially brave man came closer, with his arms waving, then another followed and then more and more...' The corporal writing in *The Saturday Review* explains that '... even to show your head above the parapet would have been fatal, but tonight we go unarmed (but a little shakey) out to meet our enemies.'

## PHYSICAL

Soldiers need to be fit. In the source materials, Lieutenant Zehmisch describes 'a vigorous football match'

## SOCIAL



**Age range:** 9–14

**Curriculum Links:** Citizenship, History, Literacy

**Global citizenship skills and learning values:** Conflict resolution, self-awareness, critical analysis

**Learning objectives:** To use the historical example of the Christmas Truce to develop understanding of conflict and conflict resolution

## J Friend and Foe conflict simulation game

### What is the game about?

A conflict resolution game for upper primary and lower secondary students based around the Christmas Truce on the Western Front in 1914. The game will challenge your students to think about their actions, as well as the cause and effect of conflicts. You can see a video of a school playing this game at <http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/football-remembers>.

### Why play the game?

The Friend and Foe game explores a process the two sides might have used to reach a truce.

In this game cooperation (playing the Friend card) results in the best pay-off for both sides, even if the temptation to double cross (playing the Foe card) is high.

A version of this game has been used in many communities in conflict including Kosovo, Northern Ireland, northern Nigeria, Sri Lanka and gangs in Colombia.

### The Scenario (read this to the students)

It is Christmas 1914 and the First World War started almost four months ago. German, Belgian, French, Indian and British troops have dug themselves into trenches in northern France and Belgium. From the trenches they fight one another across No Man's Land.

Around this time some enemy soldiers start to share Christmas greetings. Gradually the soldiers begin to rise out of the trenches and meet each other in No Man's Land. Carols are sung, presents exchanged and it is rumoured that football matches are played.

What might have happened if both sides had carried forward this good feeling and tried to sort out their differences? Could the war have ended then, without millions of lives being lost?



German soldiers of the 134th Saxon Regiment photographed with men of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment in No Man's Land on the Western Front





# Playing the Friend and Foe game

It will take around an hour to play.

**You will need:**

- 2 x Friend cards (REDS) and 2 x Foe cards (BLUES), so that each team has one of each colour
- Score sheet

Split the students into two teams, A and B. Each team needs an area to discuss tactics that is not within listening distance of the other team.

- Start by reading out the scenario
- You can also assign to each team an author from the written sources who was in favour of the truce, one from the German side and the other from the Allied Forces. For example, German Lieutenant Zehmisch and British Captain Robert Hamilton (their diaries are included in the source materials). Ask the teams to read the Zehmisch and Hamilton accounts of the truce and put themselves in the place of the officers
- Explain to the class that this game will give them an opportunity to end the war, either by building a lasting truce or by victory/defeat.

The game consists of ten rounds of each team playing either a red or blue card. Red cards are cooperative: Friend. Blue cards are uncooperative: Foe. If you play a red card you are building trust with your enemy. If you play a blue card you are undermining the truce, or 'defecting'.

The teams' scores depend on the cards played by the opposing team (see the score table) and whether their plays are Friend plays (maximum score three points) or Foe plays (maximum score six points).

*Note: Students will be confused by the explanation of the game, but all will become clear after the first few rounds. Tell students this before the game begins.*

**The possible plays in the card game are:**

- Two Red Friend cards – both cooperate and are rewarded for cooperation by receiving three points each.
- One Red Friend and one Blue Foe card – one cooperates and the other defects. The defecting player gets six points, while the cooperator gets none.
- Two Blue Foe cards – both defect and are punished for their mutual defection by having three points deducted each.

After each round, each team discusses what card to play next.

**Rounds 1–4:** During the first four rounds students may not communicate with the other team in any way. After each play, record the score.

**After Round 4:** Each team chooses an envoy or representative to talk to the other team (these are the brave soldiers who first stepped out into No Man's Land). They spend two minutes talking to each other about how they will move forward but they do not have to stick to what they promise. They then report back to their teams ahead of round five.

**Rounds 5–8:** Resume play. After each play, record the score.

**After Round 8:** Both teams meet to discuss how to move forward. The teacher should facilitate this and students should speak only when asked, to avoid a shouting match.

**Rounds 9–10:** Resume play. The final two rounds are worth double points. Add up the final scores and explain the conclusions below.

**Secret strategy advice for teachers:** The best strategy is to cooperate on the first move and then repeat the play made by the opponent on the previous move. Students should not find this out until the end of the game.



# Playing the Friend and Foe game

## The conclusions

**Peace:** both teams have more than ten points. The peace talks have worked and a truce is in place. Everyone wins.

**A fragile truce:** both teams score between zero and ten points. A fragile truce is in place but relations could easily break down again.

**One side wins the war:** if one team has between zero and ten points and the other has more than ten. For a decisive victory, the winning team should have more than 30 points.

**Everybody loses:** both teams have zero or minus points. The war continues at the cost of millions of lives.

## After the game

Students should complete the evaluation form independently to express their own feelings and not those of the group. Then discuss the findings together. Points to consider include:

- How the game helps you to understand the Christmas Truce
- The factors that are important in resolving conflict
- Why this game could be used to resolve and avoid conflicts

**Suggested sources** include two soldiers' diaries and a regimental war diary.

8, 16, 23



# Score sheet

ROUND	COLOR PLAYED		SCORE		CUMULATIVE SCORE	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
1						
2						
3						
4						
CONFERENCE (ENVOY)						
5						
6						
7						
8						
CONFERENCE (WHOLE TEAM)						
9						
10						
PLENARY REVIEW						

GROUP A	GROUP B	SCORE A	SCORE B
Red	Red	+3	
Red	Blue	0	+3
Blue	Red	+6	+6
Blue	Blue	-3	0
			-3



# Evaluation form

What was your strategy at the beginning of the game?

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Did your strategy change as the game progressed?

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If you played the game again what would you do differently?

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What did you learn from playing the game?

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**Age range:** 9–14

**Curriculum Links:** History, English

**Global citizenship skills and learning values:** Critical thinking, reading and comprehension, debate and discussion, analysis and value judgement

**Learning objectives:** Develop an awareness of different interpretations of historical events and an ability to review sources and consider their accuracy

# K History

In pairs or small groups, ask the pupils to make mind maps showing what they already know, or think they know, about the Christmas Truce.

Then ask each group to write down three questions or topics that they would like to investigate further before their commemorative football match. Encourage them to ask open questions that they can go on to research.

Share the pupils' mind maps. Talk about the pupils' existing knowledge and explore some of the questions or topics that have been raised. Discuss how they can go about finding their answers.

It is important that this sequence of enquiry questions and activities is taught in order, as it is designed to culminate in an assessment of the significance of the Christmas Truce to pupils today.

The activities could be differentiated for younger pupils by limiting the number of sources they use, simplifying text or leaving out material that is deemed inappropriate for a particular age group.

## 1. Why were soldiers friendly towards their enemies across the Western Front during Christmas 1914?

Use the information in the introduction to this pack to recap and explain details of the Christmas Truce of 1914. Using source material from the pack, make a single large copy of each suggested source and mount each one on an even larger piece of paper for annotation.

**Display the possible motivations for fraternisation listed below. Ask pupils if there are others they can think of:**

- Soldiers on both sides found they had experiences in common
- Soldiers enjoyed socialising with each other
- Soldiers on both sides were homesick and wanted to celebrate the Christmas holiday as they usually did with their families
- Soldiers on both sides were curious to meet their enemies
- Soldiers on both sides thought it was wrong to kill at Christmas
- Soldiers on both sides wanted to bury their dead.

Give time for individuals, pairs or small groups to circulate around the room reading and annotate each source in turn. Ask them to highlight comments or phrases within the text or details within an image that could suggest a particular motivation for the actions of soldiers on each side. Ask them to rank which they think are the most important.

Pupils could participate in a final debate on why soldiers fraternised despite propaganda depicting their enemies as cruel, treacherous or barbaric.

**Suggested sources** for question 1 include soldiers' diaries, soldiers' letters and extracts of war diaries.

7, 9, 16, 23, 53





## K History

**Suggested sources** for question 2 include four soldiers' letters, two memoirs, a diary and the photograph of the truce taken through a trench periscope.

10, 11, 12, 17, 19,  
27, 52, 53

**2. Since early 1915, people have disputed the idea that football could have been played in such difficult circumstances. Ask your pupils whether they think that football was played.** Display the possible reasons for debate listed below:

- People who say football was played are reporting hearsay, so it was just a rumour
- Some of the accounts of football being played only emerged years and years after the war – it was a myth which people wanted to believe in
- No Man's Land was very dangerous and filled with wire, shellholes and the dead – people could not have played football there
- Soldiers had guns and ammunition – not footballs – in the trenches
- Commanding officers would not have allowed soldiers to fraternise.

This lesson could be differentiated for younger pupils by selecting fewer or more accessible sources.

**3. How significant was the Christmas Truce of 1914?**

Lead a discussion about what pupils consider to be the most significant event in their lives so far and ask them to give reasons for this. Ask the class what 'significance' means to them.

**Now display the following criteria for ascribing historical significance to an historical event:**

- Remarkable – the event was remarked on at the time or has been since
- Remembered – the event has been remembered as important at some stage in history to a group or groups of people
- Resulted in change – the event had consequences for the future
- Resonant – people still connect with, or refer to the event, in the present
- Revealing – the event tells you something about what it was like to live at that time.

Ask the pupils to form pairs to carefully read the suggested accounts of the truce in this pack and to highlight words which indicate how significant the participants thought the truce was at the time. Lead a whole class discussion and take a vote, awarding a mark out of ten for how significant the truce appeared to be to people at the time.

Repeat the same activity for the extract over the page from the Official British War History published in 1926.

**Suggested sources** for question 3 include one diary, a photograph of the truce, the official history of 1915, a memoir, an interview and a regimental record.

16, 24, 31, 34,  
35, 48



# K History

‘During Christmas Day (1914) there was an informal suspension of arms (truce) during daylight on a few parts of the front and a certain amount of fraternization (friendly relations). Where there had been recent fighting both sides took the opportunity of burying their dead lying in No Man’s Land and in some places there was an exchange of small gifts and a little talk, the Germans expressing themselves confident of an early victory. Before returning to their trenches both sides sang Christmas carols and soldiers’ songs, each in their own language... There was to be an attempt to repeat this old time warfare custom at Christmas 1915 but it was a small isolated one, and the fraternisation of 1914 was never repeated.’

Steer the whole class discussion of the extract, so that pupils compare the accounts of 1914 with the extract from the Official British War History and explore the possible reasons why these accounts might differ and the relative significance the sources ascribe to the truces.

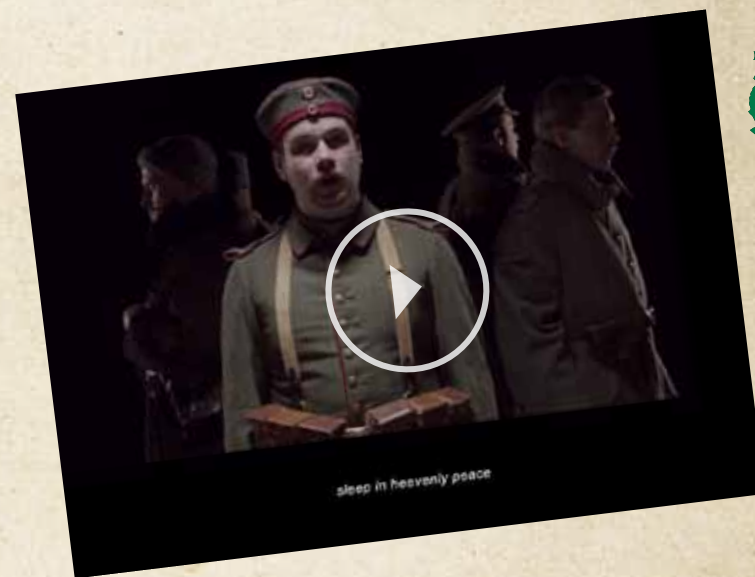
The Christmas Truce, and particularly the game of football, have often been depicted in plays, films and books about the First World War. For example:

- Film and play, *Oh What a Lovely War!*
- Michael Foreman’s *War Game*

- Michael Morpurgo’s *The Best Christmas Present in the World*
- Blackadder Goes Forth, Episode 6 *Good Bye*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vH3-Gt7mgYM>
- Horrible Histories  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oODjeoRbAp8>
- Paul McCartney’s 1983 hit *Pipes of Peace*, which depicts the Christmas Truce of 1914  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=sa7Wwmuo9yY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sa7Wwmuo9yY)

If you watch one of these, or study one of the books, you could have a similar discussion to those held above and take a vote, awarding a mark out of ten for how significant the truces appear to be in this source.

Lastly, lead a discussion ensuring that pupils understand the criteria and take suggestions as to how it could be applied to the Christmas Truce of 1914. Then ask them to consider what mark out of ten for significance they might award the Christmas Truce.





**Age range:** 9–14

**Curriculum Links:** History, English, Drama, Citizenship

**Global citizenship skills and learning values:** Research skills, team work, community awareness, reading and comprehension, presentation skills

**Learning objectives:** Use research skills to learn about football in the First World War and find out how propaganda was used to encourage footballers and fans to join up

## L Find a footballer

Create a profile of a First World War footballer and present your research as a poster. This could be someone from your area, someone from a local team or someone whose story inspires your pupils. This activity gives students a human connection with football in the First World War through an individual player's story, professional or amateur, man or woman.

Ask students to work independently or in pairs to research a footballer, record their findings and present them to the class. They could use a wide range of sources. Online research, libraries and football club historians are a good place to start. Remind them to record the sources they use.

They could use the following guidance and template to help them.

Make a display in your school of all the footballers your pupils find, swap stories with your partner school, and upload what the students find to the British Council Schools Online site.



**Suggested sources**  
include background reading and examples of footballers' stories to inspire pupils, as well as a photograph of British and Indian soldiers playing football behind the frontline, watched by local children.

38, 39, 46



# L Find a footballer research worksheet

NAME	DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH	A PHOTOGRAPH
<p><b>Deciding who to research can be one of the toughest decisions – here are a few options to help you get started:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you play football in a team today? Did your team exist at the outbreak of the First World War? If so, can you find out what happened to the people who played in your team during the war?</li> <li>• Do you support a football team today? Did your football team exist during the First World War? Can you find out who played for them, and what the team did during the war? (This is a good place to start whether you support a small local club or one of the Premier League's top four teams.)</li> <li>• During the war, did women play football in your area? What can you find out about them?</li> <li>• Are there any stories in your family or community about football in the First World War? There may be a very special story on your doorstep. Perhaps a great-great-uncle who loved to play football before the war signed up. Ask your parents, grandparents and other relatives or people from your local area. This could include sheltered housing for older people, as their parents might have been involved in the war, and local history groups.</li> </ul>	<p><b>BACKGROUND</b></p> <p>Where did he (or she) grow up, what was their family like, what was their job before, or as well as, playing football?</p> <p><b>WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM IN THE WAR?</b></p> <p>When did they join up to fight, and which regiment or battalion did they join?</p> <p>If you are finding out about a female footballer, what did she do during the war? Why did she start playing football?</p> <p><b>WHAT HAPPENED AFTERWARDS?</b></p> <p>If they survived, what did they do after the war? If they died, are they remembered somewhere? For example, on a war memorial or at their football club.</p> <p>Remember that most people who took part in the war came home – 88 per cent of soldiers returned.</p>	<p>If you can find one that is free of copyright restrictions.</p> <p><b>A DRAWING</b></p> <p>Be an artist! From what you have discovered, what do you think your footballer looked like?</p> <p><b>RESOURCES USED</b></p> <p>It's always important to explain how you got your information and where you got it from.</p>



**L** Find a footballer research worksheet

Name	What happened to them in the war?	An image
Date and place of birth		
Background	What happened afterwards?	Resources used



**Age range:** 9–14

**Curriculum Links:** History, English, Drama, Citizenship

**Global citizenship skills and learning values:** Research skills, team work, community awareness, reading and comprehension, presentation skills

**Learning objectives:** Use research skills to learn about football in the First World War and find out how propaganda was used to encourage footballers and fans to join up



## M Propaganda and football

### Recruiting footballers to the armed forces – propaganda

At the start of the First World War, football carried on as usual. Some people thought that this was wrong and that men who played football should be fighting for their country.

The Football Association (FA) and the government encouraged footballers to join up. One way they did this was through propaganda.

The source materials include posters and a letter from the FA sent to footballers encouraging them to enlist:

- **FA Poster – An Appeal to Good Sportsmen** – issued in 1914, urging men to enlist now and ‘show that they are good sportsmen... Every man must know his duty to himself and to his country’.
- The FA sent a **letter to footballers** encouraging them to join the ‘Footballer’s Battalion’. Its closing line was, ‘We do urge you as a patriot and a footballer to come to the help of the country in its hour of need.’



- **Football Battalion recruitment poster** – ‘Young men of Britain!!! The Germans said you were not in earnest... We knew you’d come and Give Them The Lie! Play the Greater Game on the Field of Honour.’ The poster quotes a German newspaper as saying, ‘The young Britons prefer to exercise their long limbs on the football ground rather than to expose them to any sort of risk in the service of their country.’

They also include a poster encouraging Irish soldiers to enlist by encouraging them to join a ‘Grand International Match’ against Germany and Austria, a football-themed game from the time and three newspaper articles.

**Suggested sources** include three recruitment posters, a letter written by the head of the Football Association, a game from the time and three short newspaper articles.

40, 41, 42, 43, 44,  
45, 50, 56

Divide the class into small groups and give them some or all of the sources from the above list to work with. Discuss your findings together. Ask students to look at the sources and answer the following questions:

- What message is the poster / letter / game / article trying to get across?
- How does it do this – through its language, layout, use of images?
- What kind of language does it use? How does its language help to get the message across?
- How do the posters and letter appeal to your emotions? What effect do they have?
- Compare and contrast the sources. Which do you think are the most effective and why?
- Design football recruitment posters for a display.



# Introduction to the sources

## **These original sources include a range of documents:**

- Letters published in newspapers
- Extracts from handwritten diaries kept by families and passed to museums
- Photographs taken by soldiers at the time and sent to newspapers to be published
- Examples of the souvenirs that soldiers exchanged
- War records sent to command headquarters
- Memoirs published during the war and in the years since
- Propaganda posters
- Histories of football and footballers during the First World War.

This selection has been chosen to reflect many different sides of the story. We have looked for accounts from the British and the Germans, French, Belgian and Indian soldiers and civilians and published them in their original languages, as well as in translation.

**The sources are presented authentically – with the original grammar and spelling.**

**This is real history.**

Thanks to the British Library for their help in finding these sources.

Every reasonable effort has been made to trace copyright holders and obtain permission from them. The British Council has acted in good faith at all times and on the best information available to us at the time of publication. Please contact the British Council if you own copyright in any material which has been included in this schools pack without your consent.





Map from January 1915 reproduced with the kind permission of the In Flanders Fields Museum



## *The Times*, 8 December 1914

Pope Benedict XV was one of a handful of international figures who saw the celebration of Christmas as an ideal opportunity to hasten the end of the war, and sent a communication to all the Powers on 6 December 1914. This proposed a Truce of God at Christmas to run for three days, from 23–25 December 1914. On 9 December, Germany stated it was not opposed in principle to the Pope's suggestion of a truce at Christmas and, two days later, Germany agreed to a truce. On 16 December 1914, the Cologne Gazette reported that Germany's allies, Austria-Hungary and Turkey, had agreed to the Pope's proposal for a Truce of God at Christmas.

The Pope is endeavouring to bring about an understanding whereby a truce may be made possible during the Christmas season. It is thought, however, that there is little hope of this succeeding.

Pope Benedict XV was Pope from September 1914 to his death in January 1922

**The Pope:** the leader of the Roman Catholic Church





## Daily Express, 10 December 1914

### WHAT GERMANY WOULD LIKE

The Hague, Wednesday, Dec 9.

The “Berliner Tageblatt” states that the Pope has sent an appeal to all the belligerent Powers with the object of bringing about a three days’ truce for Christmas.

The truce would extend from December 23 to the date of the Roman Christmas. Germany is not opposed to the suggestion on principle and the “Tageblatt” admits that the Papal suggestion is excellent from the humanitarian standpoint.

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—Exchange.





## The Church Times, 18 December 1914

THE POPE, it appears, has appealed to the belligerent Powers, exhorting them to suspend hostilities during the Christmas week [...] it may be felt that if a Truce of God were agreed to, there is no certainty the conditions would be honourably observed by a nation that contemptuously and immorally tears up a treaty as a mere scrap of paper. Shocking as it is that there should be war at the season of "Peace on Earth", the time for suspending hostilities has not yet arrived: it will come only when the beaten enemy sues for mercy.

THE Pope, it appears, has appealed to the belligerent Powers, exhorting them to suspend hostilities during the Christmas week. One of the Powers, which is thought to be Russia, has rejected the appeal, but the ground of refusal is not stated. If Russia is the State that stands out, one of her reasons may conceivably be the fact that she does not keep Christmas till we are observing Epiphany. She has never adopted the reformed Kalendar, and is, consequently, twelve days behind the rest of the Christian world with the dates of her great Church festivals. There may, however, be other reasons, and one of these possibly is the dislike of any interference on the part of a spiritual ruler whom the Russian Church does not recognize as the Supreme Pontiff. It may also be that Russia is of opinion that the neutrality of the Holy See is tantamount to its repudiation of spiritual and moral responsibility, and that this particular act of intervention is of comparatively little value. Moreover, it may be felt that, if a Truce of God were agreed to, there is no certainty that the conditions would be honourably observed by a nation that contemptuously and immorally tears up a treaty as a mere scrap of paper. Shocking as it is that there should be war at the season of "Peace on earth," the time for suspending hostilities has not yet arrived: it will come only when the beaten enemy sues for mercy.

**Belligerent:** one that is hostile or aggressive, especially one that is engaged in war

**Contemptuously:** feeling contempt/angry, disrespectful

**Immorally:** acting against established moral principles

**Hostilities:** fighting

# Truce of God



Source: 4

C Write a truce diary

H Moral education

## Orders issued

Orders issued to officers of the 3rd and 5th Division by  
General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, 4 December 1914

It is not surprising that groups of men who were sitting in opposing trenches could hear and sometimes even speak to each other. Sometimes, the British and German troops would hold singing competitions.

The British High Command became aware that incidences of this kind were taking place and had increased in the run up to Christmas. General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien was an experienced professional soldier who understood how his troops might be feeling. He became increasingly concerned that his soldiers would be tempted to fraternise with the enemy during the Christmas period, and this might have serious consequences for the war effort overall.

**This is an order he issued to try to prevent this.**

### The inculcation of the offensive spirit in the defence

Although the Corps Commander is of the opinion that the re-assumption of the reoffensive must ever be borne in mind [...] it must be realised that there may be a considerable period of antecedent waiting. It is during this period that the greatest danger to the morale of the troops exists. Experience of this, and every other war proves undoubtedly that troops in trenches in close proximity to the enemy slide very easily, if permitted to do so, into a 'live and let live' theory of life. Understandings – amounting sometimes to almost unofficial armistices – grow up between our troops and the enemy, with a view to making life easier, until the sole object of war becomes obscured, and officers and men sink into a military lethargy from which it is difficult to arouse them when the moment for great sacrifices again arises. [...] Socialising with the enemy, unofficial armistices [...] and the exchange of tobacco and other comforts, however tempting and occasionally amusing they may be, are absolutely prohibited.

**The inculcation of the offensive spirit in the defence:** getting soldiers to fight

**Antecedent:** something that comes before an event

**Morale:** mood of a person/group being confident, cheerful and willing to perform assigned tasks

**Armistices:** pauses in fighting where both sides agree not to attack another

**Lethargy:** laziness





Source: 5

C Write a truce diary

H Moral education

# Confidential memorandum

Issued to officers of the 2nd Corps by General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, 27 December 1914

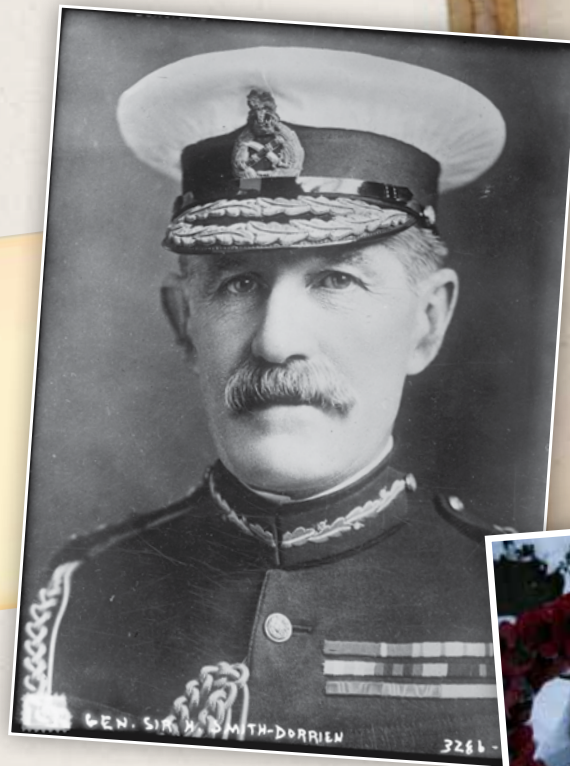
This memorandum was issued to British Officers by General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien after he heard reports of the Christmas Truce.

**Neutral:** belonging to neither side

**Illustrative:** an example of

**Apathetic:** lack of interest

**Disciplinary action:** punishment



I was shown a report from one section of how, on Christmas Day, a friendly gathering had taken place of Germans and British on the neutral ground between the two lines, recounting that many officers had taken part in it. This is only illustrative of the apathetic state we are gradually sinking into, apart also from illustrating that any orders I issue on the subject are useless, for I have issued the strictest orders that on no account is socialising to be allowed between opposing troops. [...] I am calling as to particulars of names of officers and units who took part in this Christmas gathering, with a view to disciplinary action.



Grave of General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, St Peter's Cemetery, Berkhamsted



Source: 6

**C** Write a truce diary

**H** Moral education

# The diary of Michel Toudy

Not everyone in the trenches wanted to take part in the truce. Shortly before Christmas 1914, front line Belgian troops stopped the German advance and held on to a small part of their land. This victory was a huge source of national pride as Germany had invaded Belgium and any victory against the occupying force was to be celebrated. Michel Toudy was a Belgian soldier who fought on the Western Front from 1914, until he was killed by a grenade in July 1917. In this extract from his diary, he describes how he felt when the fighting stopped.

**Dixmude (French) / Diksmuide (Flemish):** Belgian city in West Flanders that was occupied by the Germans after a fierce battle in 1914

**Ruins of Dixmude:** the town was badly damaged by the fighting in October and November 1914

**Grenadiers:** elite soldiers who traditionally led assaults on the enemy and threw hand grenades.

**Boche:** slang for German soldier

**Nauseating:** sickening

**Armistice:** pause in the fighting

*Evening in the trenches at Dixmude [...] During the night of 24-25. Unusually not a single rifle shot is heard. What's going on? Could it be the end of the war?! Around 23.00 we hear the Germans who are singing amid the ruins of Dixmude and in the trenches. They are celebrating Christmas in our ruins. Around midnight, to show them that we are not discouraged, some grenadiers sing patriotic songs and Christmas carols. This lasts the whole night.*

*It should be said that there are those who find this disturbing. From the first hours one asks what's happening, gentlemen the Germans are taking the liberty of walking about in front of us out of their trenches. If I had my way they wouldn't be strolling about for long, I would give them a taste of the delights of some machine gun bullets. But what can you do? All these grenadiers are also coming out of their trenches and the party begins. They push friendship a long way, all sorts of exchanges begin. The 'boche' throw us pipes, oranges, chocolate etc. Stolen probably from us, there are fools who quite stupidly accept and also send them souvenirs. What do our top brass do here? They do nothing to stop this scandal, this first step to 'germanisation'.*

*There are those who find it entertaining, they are also struck by some Germans who are preparing to bury our dear dead [...] It is really disgusting, it is not doing this that will deliver our dear ones and those who are under their heel. If we do such stupid things we have abandoned everything done in fire and blood and we drag our misery into the mud. Well fine. Thank you! Where are we going? Everywhere except Berlin! This nauseating spectacle finally stops around 15.00 hours.*



Source: 7

C Write a truce diary

K History

# Extract from the Regimental War Diaries of 7th Division, 20th Brigade, 2 Battalion, Scots Guards

Each division of the British Army kept a war diary in which they recorded a brief summary of the events which occurred on each day of the war. Here is an example of what one recorded during Christmas 1914.

**Scout:** a soldier who runs messages or gathers information  
**Amiable:** friendly, easy-going  
**Detachments:** small groups  
**Solemnity:** seriousness

25th Dec 1914 - Fromelles  
Xmas, fine and frosty, one man wounded. On the night of Christmas Eve, the German trenches opposite those occupied by the battalion were lit up with lanterns and there were sounds of singing. We got into conversations with the Germans who were anxious to arrange an armistice during Xmas. A scout named F Menzies went out and met a German patrol and was given a glass of whisky and some cigars, and a message was sent back saying that if we didn't fire at them they would not fire at us. There was no firing during the night. Early on Xmas morning a party of Germans 158 Regiment came on to our own wire fence, and a party from our trenches went out to meet them. They appeared to be most amiable and exchanged souvenirs, cap stars and badges. Our men gave them plum puddings which they much appreciated. Further down the line we were able to make arrangements to bury the dead who had been killed on Dec 18-19 and were still lying between the trenches. The Germans brought the bodies to a half way line and we buried them. Detachments of British and Germans formed in line and a German and English Chaplain read some prayers alternately. The whole of this was done in great solemnity and reverence...

I talked to several officers and men... Another officer who could not speak English of French appeared to want to express his feelings, pointed to the dead and reverently said "Les Braves" which shows that the Germans do think something of the British Army.

The men I spoke to were also reticent. They appeared generally tired of fighting, and wanted to get back to their previous employments. Some lived in England. One man told me he had been seven years in England and had married last March. Another said he had a girl who lived in Suffolk and said it had been impossible to communicate with her through Germany since war began.

**Reverence:** respect

**"Les Braves":** French for "the brave men".

**Reticent:** shy, holding back

**Previous employments:** the work they had done before the war

**Communicate:** get in touch



## Extract from the Regimental War Diary of 1 Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles

Each division of the British Army kept a war diary in which they recorded a brief summary of events that occurred on each day of the war. Here is an example of what one recorded during Christmas 1914.

25 Dec 1914 – Fort Desquin, Neuve Chappelle

This situation continued right through the night. At dawn, 25th, the Germans shouted out “Merry Xmas” from their trenches and danced and sang in front of their parapets.

Message from Bde [8:40am]

“8th Division reads so long as Germans do not snipe, there should be no sniping from our lines today but greatest vigilance must be maintained as Germans are not to be trusted. Our guns will not be firing today unless asked to do so by Infantry or the German guns fire.”

From OC 1/RIR

3 [11:30am] “Progress Report. All very quiet along my front. Has been no sound of sniping on either flank even for some time. Situation seems evolving into a kind of armistice terminating 12 m.n. tonight. The instructions are being obeyed by both sides. [...] Position in our trenches is – Careful guard by those being on duty while allowing those off duty to relax. This seems to be the German attitude also.”

(later) “Germans are now walking up and down outside their trenches. Our men are mostly in their trenches. Three are out in rear of their parapets. Actual communication with the enemy is forbidden.”

It is very doubtful how one should relate this curious soldier’s truce. The German soldiers themselves are probably simple minded enough about the thing but only time will show whether there is not something behind all this and whether we have not made a mistake in permitting this to take place.

continued overleaf



# Extract from the Regimental War Diary of 1 Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles (continued)

The following notes are recorded.

1. The truce sought entirely by the enemy.
2. The enemy have asked for 2 days of this which has been refused by the officers of the Battalion in the firing line.
3. The mutual arrangement is that if either side construct works or carry out such repairs to works that the other consider not playing the game they will fire shots over the other sides heads.
4. Captain O'Sullivan, commanding 'B' Coy of the Battalion will fire his revolver at 12 m.n. tonight (25th/26th) at which signal the truce ends.

Only a few shots were fired after the midnight signal was fired by Captain O'Sullivan from our trenches. Shortly before midnight a party of Germans came over towards 'B' Coy trenches and were ordered back.

**Parapets:** the top of the trench, very dangerous to look over

**Snipe:** snipers tried to shoot the enemy even when there was no open fighting

**Vigilance:** watching out, being very careful

**Flank:** side

**Armistice:** a pause in fighting

**Terminating:** ending

**12 m.n.:** 12 midnight



Soldiers from the Royal Irish Rifles (believed to be from 1 Battalion) in a communication trench behind the front lines in France in July 1916.



Source: 9

**B** English and drama

**G** Design a war memorial

**I** Sports activities

**K** History

## Edinburgh Evening News, 2 January 1915

This is a letter from Company Sergeant Major Fran Naden, II Corps, 5th Division, 15th Brigade, 6 Battalion, Cheshire. Soldiers regularly wrote letters home to their families about their experiences during the war. It was common practice, particularly early in the war when British newspapers were forbidden from reporting what was happening, for families to pass soldiers' letters to local newspapers so that they could be printed and read by everyone.

**Fraternised:** behaved in a friendly, brotherly way

**Jollification:** having a fun time

**Jack knives:** pen knives

25 Dec 1914 - Wulverghem/Messines Road

On Christmas Eve, as each fireball went up from the German lines, our men shouted 'Hurrah' and 'Let's have another'. They also sang 'Christians Awake' and other Christmas hymns. On Christmas Day one of the Germans came out of the trenches and held his hands up. Our fellows immediately got out of their trenches and the Germans got out of theirs, and we met in the middle, and for the rest of the day we fraternised, exchanging food, cigarettes and souvenirs. The Germans gave us some of their sausages, and we gave them some of our stuff. The Scotsman started the bagpipes and we had a rare old jollification, which involved football, in which the Germans took part.

The Germans expressed themselves as being tired of the war and wished it was over. They greatly admired our equipment and wanted to exchange jack knives and other articles. Next day we got an order that all communication and socialising with the enemy must cease, but we did not fire at all that day, and the Germans did not fire at us.



Postcard with the names of two German soldiers written on it. Sent by Harry Hackett, 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, who participated in the truce.



Source: 10

**B** English and drama

**G** Design a war memorial

**H** Moral education

**I** Sports activities

**K** History

## The Times, 2 January 1915

This is a letter from an unnamed officer of III Corps, 4th Division, 11th Brigade, 1 Battalion, Rifle Brigade, on 26 December 1914. Soldiers regularly wrote letters home to their families about their experiences during the war. It was common practice, particularly in the early months of the war when British newspapers were forbidden from reporting what was happening, for families to pass the soldiers' letters to the local newspapers so that they could be printed and read by everyone.

25 Dec 1914

When I got back to the trenches after dark on Christmas Eve I found the Bosche's trenches looking like the Thames on the Henley Regatta night! They had got little Christmas Trees burning all along the parapet of their trench. No truce had been proclaimed, and I was all for not allowing the blighters to enjoy themselves, especially as they had killed one of our men that afternoon. But my captain (who hadn't seen our wounded going mad and slowly dying outside the German trenches on the Aisne) wouldn't let me shoot; however I soon had an excuse as one of the Germans fired at us, so I quickly lined up the platoon and had those Christmas Trees down and out. Meanwhile, unknown to us, two officers on our right, without saying a word to anybody, got out of their trench and walked to half-way to the German trench and were met by two German officers and talked away quite civilly and actually shook hands! It was an awfully stupid thing to do as it might easily have had different results: but our captains were new and, not having seen the Germans in their true light yet, apparently won't believe the stories of their treachery and brutality.

On Christmas Day we had a sort of mutual truce: nothing on paper or even words, but a sort of mutual understanding and self after breakfast walked half-way to the trench in front of us, and shouted for an officer, as we wanted to see what regiment was in front of us. That did it! The Germans came out, and as soon as I saw it was Saxons I knew it was all right, because they are good fellows on the whole and play the game as far as they know it. The officer came out, we gravely saluted each other, and I pointed to nine dead Germans lying in midfield and suggested burying them, which both sides proceeded to do. We gave them some wooden crosses for them, which completely won them over, and soon the men were on the best of terms and laughing. Several of the Saxons spoke very fair English, and some hailed from London much to our cockneys' delight and talk became general.

continued overleaf



Source: 10 **B** English and drama  
**G** Design a war memorial  
**H** Moral education

**I** Sports activities  
**K** History

## The Times, 2 January 1915 (continued)

*The both sides returned to their trenches for their Christmas dinner, and afterwards went out again for another chat. They gave our fellows cigars and we gave them English newspapers! [...] One of them played a mouth organ, and then others did sort of weird dances or series of hops, in the turnip field where we were.*

*I think it did our men good to have a close inspection of their foes: three quarters of them seemed to be very young youths: I would not mind taking most of them on with a bayonet myself. They said we were very good shots, so I hope by that we've done some damage. They said to the men, "send us the time when you are relieved and we will fire over your heads until then". I don't think! Anyhow we have got orders not to fire till they do and if they have the same orders then this truce will continue indefinitely. It's really an extra-ordinary state of affairs. We had an inter-platoon game of football in the afternoon, a cap comforter stuffed with straw did for the ball much to the Saxons amusement. In the evening we said "Good night" and our men lit large fires in the trenches and sang songs though I took care to double the sentries as I trust these devils not an inch. This morning war has broken out again but not in front of us. It is a rum show; I believe politicians will be wrong now, and that the war will come to an end because everyone will get fed up and refuse to go on shooting. But it's stupid to take risks.*

**Bosche:** slang for German

**Henley Regatta:** high society event with rowing races that takes place each year near London, known as a place for high fashion and a great show

**Blighters:** troublesome people

**Aisne:** the Battle of Aisne was fighting between the Germans and the British and French troops near the River Aisne in France. It started on 13 September 1914 and led to the digging of trenches that became the Western Front

**Platoon:** an army unit made up of 27 soldiers, plus one officer in charge

**Cap comforter stuffed with straw:** a football improvised from odds and ends

**A rum show:** strange or odd business



The front cover of *The Sphere*, 9 January 1915



Source: 11

C Write a truce diary

K History

# The *Staffordshire Sentinel*, 6 January 1915 (1)

The *Staffordshire Sentinel* is a local British newspaper which published a first-hand account of the truce. It described how German and English soldiers worked together to bury their dead and how the state of the ground in No Man's Land prevented them from playing football.

British troops from the Northumberland Hussars, 7th Division meeting German troops in No-Man's Land during the unofficial truce  
Imperial War Museum document number Q 50720.



**Digging party:** a group of soldiers sent to dig graves or trenches

**Pay tribute:** to show your respect or value someone or something in front of other people

**Chaplain:** a religious representative stationed with the soldiers, such as a vicar / priest

**Padre:** a religious representative stationed with the soldiers, such as a vicar / priest

**The line:** the front line of the battle where Allied and German soldiers were fighting

**Pet enemies:** the writer showing he had mixed feelings about the enemy

**Foe:** an enemy

A truce had been arranged for the few hours of daylight on Christmas Day for the burial of the dead.  
[...]

The digging parties were already busy on the two big common graves but the ground was hard and work slow and laborious [...]

The German soldiers seemed a good tempered, amiable lot, [...] the officers were amusing themselves by taking photographs of mixed groups.

The digging completed, the shallow graves were filled in and the German officers remained to pay their tribute of respect while our chaplain read a short service. It was one of the most impressive things I have ever witnessed.

Friend and foe stood side by side, bare-headed, watching the full, grave figure of the padre outlined against the frosty landscape as he blessed the poor broken bodies at his feet.

Elsewhere along the line I hear our fellows played the Germans at football on Christmas Day.

Our own pet enemies remarked that they would like a game but as the ground in our part is all root crops and much cut up by ditches, and as moreover, we had not got a football, we had to call it off.



## Grimsby Daily Telegraph, 3 January 1915

In this article, a British newspaper reports on a first-hand account of the truce. The letter describes how they used the time to bury the dead and hoped to play football on New Year's Day.



A burial party of the 42nd Division. Groups of soldiers were occupied digging graves for the fallen.

### COLONEL'S CHALLENGE A NEW YEAR DAY'S MATCH

"This morning (Christmas Day) I went up to the trenches and wished every man a happy Christmas [...]"

As I was coming away [...] our men and the Germans both started running to one another and met half way and shook hands.

I did not like it at first and ordered my men back but was told they wanted a truce for the day to bury their dead, so I agreed with that.

After ordering half the men to keep a smart look out in the trenches [...] I went forward and joined the crowd.

I met a Saxon who talked English well and who interpreted for me [...]"

I said if they would have an armistice on New Year's Day we would play them at football between our lines [...]"

**Colonel:** high-ranking officer in charge of a battalion of several hundred soldiers

**Saxon:** a German from the region of Saxony, capital Dresden

**Truce / Armistice:** an agreement to stop fighting for a period of time



Source: 13



Write a truce diary



Moral education

## The *Staffordshire Sentinel*, 6 January 1915 (2)

After the truce, some soldiers did not want to go back to fighting the men they had met. This British newspaper article reports on this effect of the truce.

**Fraternising:** being brotherly, making friends  
**&c:** abbreviation for et cetera which means 'and other things' or 'and so forth'  
**Sequel:** events that followed

### **A SEQUEL TO THE TRUCE: FRENCH AND GERMANS REFUSE TO FIGHT AFTERWARDS** **A Paris correspondent of The Manchester Guardian says:**

The cases of fraternising between British and German soldiers at Christmas do not stand alone: similar incidents occurred between Germans and French. I have heard one such story from a wounded French soldier who has just arrived at a Parisian hospital from the front. He said that on the night of December 24th, the French and Germans [...] came out of their respective trenches and met halfway between them. They not only talked, exchanged cigarettes, &c, but also danced together in rings. The sequel was more interesting than the event itself. The French and German soldiers who had thus fraternised subsequently refused to fire on one another and had to be removed from the trenches and replaced by other men.



## The *Staffordshire Sentinel*, 9 January 1915

Local newspaper the *Staffordshire Sentinel* published this short notice on 9 January 1915. The British newspaper was telling its readers about a German news report that strongly disapproved of fraternisation.

The “*Taegliche Rundschau*” in a long article, points out the danger which lies in fraternisation between Germans and French, and greetings such as were recently exchanged between the trenches.

“War is no sport” the journal says “and we are sorry to say that those who made these overtures or took part in them did not clearly understand the gravity of the situation.”

These considerations did not escape the attention of the army authorities, and the newspaper states with great satisfaction that an army order issued on December 29th forbids for the future similar fraternisation and any rapprochement with the enemy in the trenches.

All acts contrary to this order will be punished as high treason.

“*Taegliche Rundschau*”: the name of a German newspaper (it translates as “Daily Observations”)

**Fraternisation**: brotherly behaviour, making friends

**Overtures**: openings to friendship

**Gravity**: seriousness

**Rapprochement**: starting friendship

**High treason**: the very serious crime of taking action against your country, punished at this time by death



Source: 15 **B** English and drama  
**H** Moral education

## Edinburgh Evening News, 12 January 1915

This British newspaper reports on a first-hand account by Rifleman John Erskin of what happened in the trenches at Christmas 1914. The letter describes the truce and what happened after a soldier disobeyed the order not to shoot.

**Narrative:** story

**Fraternisation:** brotherly behaviour, making friends

**Bully-beef:** army food, tinned beef

**Regulars:** ordinary soldiers

**Corporal:** a soldier ranked above a private

**Battalion:** an army unit of several hundred men

### A CHRISTMAS TRAGEDY

An interesting narrative of the Christmas fraternisation at the front is contained in a letter written by Rifleman John Erskin [...] to his mother in Dunfermline.

He says they spent the 24th, 25th, and 26th December in the trenches and it was the most peculiar Christmas he ever spent [...]

Rifleman Erskin continues:

We witnessed the amazing spectacle of a British officer and a German officer shaking hands, with a few thousand rifles on one hand and a few hundred on the other pointed at their heads.

They gave our men two barrels of beer, and we threw across a few tins of bully-beef.

We had a tragedy in the trenches during the time the hand-shaking etc was going on.

One of the Regulars disobeyed our strict order not to fire, and let off a shot.

The Germans immediately replied, and instead of firing at where the shot came from, they evidently fired at the first person they saw.

Unfortunately, this happened to be one of our corporals, who was shot through the head. He died within 24 hours.

A most regrettable fact connected with the affair was that he has other three brothers in this battalion, and it must have a most disheartening effect on them.





Source: 16

C Write a true diary

J Conflict resolution

K History

# Captain Robert Hamilton's diary

Captain Robert Hamilton fought in the trenches from 1914 to 1915. He was a senior soldier who was in charge of several hundred men. He kept a diary during the war and he described what happened at Christmas in 1914. His men fraternised with the Germans but he made sure they still kept watch for an attack.

**Saxon:** a German from the region of Saxony, capital Dresden  
**Double Dutch:** any language that you cannot understand  
**Armistice:** an agreement to stop fighting for a period of time  
**The Trocadero:** a famous London restaurant  
**Sentries:** soldiers who keep watch



A day unique in the world's history

Xmas Day

I went out and found a Saxon officer [...] We shook hands and said what as could in double Dutch, arranged a local armistice for 48 hours, and returned to our trenches.

This was the signal for the respective soldiers to come out.

As far as I can make out, this [...] extended itself on either side for some considerable distance. The soldiers on both sides met in their hundreds, and exchanged greetings and gifts. We buried many Germans, and they did the same to ours.

The chef of the Trocadero was among the Saxons in front of us, and he seemed quite delighted to meet some of his former clients. [...] Wasey and I went to a concert in 'D' company's trench, and at about midnight we attended another in our own.

[...]

Altogether was a most enjoyable evening.

A very merry Xmas and a most extraordinary one, but I doubled the sentries after midnight.



Source: 17 **A** Introductory activity

**K** History

## The Saturday Review, 25 December 1915

This British soldier was injured on Boxing Day 1914, just after the Christmas Truce ended. He wrote his story for one of the nurses in hospital afterwards. He describes what happened on Christmas Day and how they played football, possibly with the Germans.

*Middle Articles, Christmas in the trenches*

*Xmas Eve in the trenches, and not too comfortable - pumps going night and day, but we could never bring our water-line to less than two feet.*

*It was almost dark; and being only one hundred yards from the German trenches, and at night less than one hundred yards (advance), it was almost possible to listen to conversations in their trenches, and by raising the voice a very little above the usual we could make ourselves heard and understood [...] Very little sniping had been done by either side; we thought they were exceptionally quiet.*

*We started singing carols and they applauded us - they sang and we replied. I don't think we were so harmonious as the Germans - they had some fine voices amongst them [...]*

*The stillness of the night and our mood (Xmas feeling) may have helped, but as the sound floated over the turnip field onto our trench we were spellbound. We gave them three cheers (British ones) when they sang "God Save the King". Quietness reigns again - what are they up to? - behind our trenches they had Chinese lanterns arranged at about ten yards interval, illumination any other night, the glare of a lighted cigarette or the flash of a match, would have drawn our fire, but tonight no one sniped - it's Xmas Eve. We heard it rumoured that there had to be a truce, but nothing was given out to us officially - the order was as usual: "Keep a sharp look out."*

continued overleaf



# The Saturday Review, 25 December 1915 (continued)



Someone calling us from the enemy's trenches "Komradd [comrade], Ongleesh Komradd", I answered him, "Hello! Fritz!" (we call them all Fritz). "Do you want any tabacco?" he asks. "Yes." "Come half-ways"; we shout back and forward until Old Fritz clambered out of the trench and accompanied by three others of my section we went out to meet him. We were walking between the trenches. At any other time this would have been suicide; even to show your head above the parapet would have been fatal, but tonight we go unarmed (but a little shaky) out to meet our enemies. "Make for the light," he calls, and as we came nearer we saw he had his flash lamp in his hand, putting it in and out to guide us.

We shook hands, wished each other a Merry Xmas, and were soon conversing as if we had known each other for years. [...]

Soon most of our company [...] followed us [...] What a sight - little groups of Germans and British extending almost the length of our front! Out of the darkness we could hear laughter and see lighted matches, a German lighting a Scotman's cigarette and vice versa, exchanging cigarettes and souvenirs. Where they couldn't talk the language they were making themselves understood by signs, and everyone seemed to be getting on nicely. Here we were laughing and chatting to men whom only a few hours before we were trying to kill!

continued overleaf



Source: 17 **A** Introductory activity

**K** History

## The Saturday Review, 25 December 1915 (continued)

*I was surprised at the good English some of them had, especially Fritz; and I asked him about it. He had been 15 years in Edinburgh, and only left in August when called up. [...]*

*They kept their word to us, and neither of us fired during two days. It was like being in a different world. Here we were, Xmas Day, and able to walk about with our heads up - some of our men even left the trench to play football. A party from our "B" Company went over and were photographed with the Germans. [...] Our Colonel, who had not heard about last night's occurrence, saw them coming and also saw me up on the parapet and waving my hands as I called "Here you are, Fritz". Very soon he was in a rage. "Who is that man waving the enemy over here? Send them back." He called out to them in German, "Go back or we'll fire", and everything he said in German was answered by our German friend Fritz in English. Our Major went*

**Sniping:** snipers target and shoot individual soldiers. On the Western Front, they often camouflaged themselves in No Man's Land and kept watch for enemy soldiers' heads appearing above the parapet. This was one reason why it was so dangerous to look over it.

**Loopholes:** a gap in the sandbags at the top of the trench, sometimes fitted with a steel plate, which allowed soldiers to look out of the trench without exposing their heads.

**Shell:** a bomb

*out and spoke to Fritz. He told them that the only Germans he wanted near us were those who wished to give themselves up. Did he intend doing that? But Fritz was ready for him. "Respecting your rank, sir, but I am not here to talk 'politics'." They were sent back to their trenches, and we were left at our loopholes with orders not to fire unless they left their trench, and then we could warn them back and fire high.*

*It was a very quiet day, but we had made friends with the enemy, and all day we kept calling and joking across to their trenches.*

*26 December. They have not fired yet, but the artillery have been busy, and they have the range of our trench; they have started shelling on the right word is passed along for our section to retire to reserve trenches.*

*I had just left my mud hut but to carry out the order; the last shell I noticed had smashed our telephone wires and the next shell I didn't know was going to strike me - but it did!*

*Result: arm amputated at elbow and shrapnel wound in thigh. In all I had six pieces of shrapnel and two bullets removed from me [...]*



# Frank R Wray and Maurice Wray's memoir

Two British brothers – Frank R Wray and Maurice Wray – fought on the Western Front. They told their story of what happened during the Christmas Truce after the war had ended. In this account they describe the football match and how the truce lasted for more than a week.

**Front line trenches:** the first trenches at the edge of No Man's Land

**Nostalgia:** thinking fondly about the past / homesickness

**Armistice:** an agreement between both sides to stop fighting for a period of time

**Fraternise:** make friends

**Battalion:** an army unit of several hundred men

With the approach of Christmas it became clear that we should spend it either in or near the trenches.

And so on Christmas Eve we settled down to our normal watch [...] It soon became clear [...] that the Germans were celebrating Christmas Eve in their customary manner. They had brought up a band into their front line trenches and as we listened to hymns and tunes common to both nations, quite understandably a wave of nostalgia passed over us.

When it became quite dark the light from an electric pocket lamp appeared on the German parapet. Normally this would have drawn a hail of bullets and soon these lights were outlining the trenches as far as the eye could see and no sound of hostile activity could be heard. When the lights doused we waited in the stillness of a beautiful night, (nevertheless with the usual sentries posted and fully alert) for the dawn of the most remarkable Christmas Day that any of us was ever likely to see. As dawn was breaking a voice from the German trenches was heard "We good – we no shoot" and so was born an unofficial armistice.

After some initial caution the troops from both sides rose from their holes in the ground to stretch their legs and then to fraternise in No Mans Land between the trenches – a happy state of affairs which continued for about 10 days... a Battalion of the 10th Brigade on our left arranged a football match against a German Team – one of their number having contacted in the opposing unit a fellow member of his local football club in Liverpool who was also his hairdresser!

[...]

The idea seems to have got about that this Unofficial Truce [...] only lasted a very few days, but on our sector at least, it lasted into the New Year. In fact on New Years Eve a very drunken German was extricated from our wire. We relieved him of some cigars and sent him down to Brigade as a prisoner. Brigade returned him with thanks as they wanted the "Peace" to continue until some important defensive work on the edge of the wood was completed [...]



Source: 19

B English and drama

C Write a truce diary

K History

## William Tapp's diary

William Tapp was a British Army batman (personal servant) in the trenches who kept a diary until he died in April 1915. A batman's duties would often include acting as a 'runner' to convey orders from the officer to subordinates; maintaining the officer's uniform and personal equipment; driving the officer's vehicle; acting as the officer's bodyguard; and other tasks the officer did not have time to do himself. Tapp fought in the trenches from 1914 and he wrote about the Christmas Truce. Here he describes how they swapped souvenirs with the Germans and tried to set up a Boxing Day football match.

We go back to trenches tonight Xmas Eve...

We get near the trenches but can't hear any firing now we hear some singing from their trenches and ours, [...] and one of the Ger's who can speak Eng is shouting over to us to go over, we shout back "Come half way" it is agreed on, our sergeant goes out.

Their man takes a lot of coaxing but comes at the finish and we find they have sent two we can hear them talking quite plain they exchange cigarettes and the German shouts to wish us Merry Xmas we wait for the Sergeant's return, he gets back and tells us they are not going to fire tonight and not tomorrow if we don't, they have got lights all along their trench and also a Xmas tree lit up they are singing [...]

It is funny to hear us talk to one another our stretcher bearers have nothing to do no wounded to carry tonight, so they have all come from headquarters and are going round carol singing.

They sing several in our trench before going, the Ger's give them a cheer for singing, this night I would not have missed for a lot I don't go to sleep till 2.30.

Xmas morning, get up at 6.30, see all the Germans walking about on top of their trenches, now some of them are coming over without rifles, of course our fellows go to meet them including myself, it is a strange sight and unbelievable, we are all mixed up together, there are quite a lot can talk English they all say it is a pity to fire while we are up to our knees in mud, their trenches are worse than ours.

continued overleaf



Source: 19 **B** English and drama  
**C** Write a truce diary  
**K** History

## William Tapp's diary (continued)



**Stretcher bearer:** person who carries a stretcher for injured people  
**Plum duff:** plum pudding  
**Artillery:** large weapons or guns  
**Shells:** bombs

We exchange souvenirs I pull a button off my coat a German does the same so we exchange also cigars. I have got 2 buttons one cap badge and 2 cigarettes.

9 am Xmas morning, a mist come over and their men and ours are ordered to the trenches, about an hour after the mist suddenly lifts and we catch them putting barbed wire out, and they catch us doing the same thing, but there is not a shot being fired.

Here today we have another gathering of Germans and us it was one mass, about 150 of them and half as many of us all in a ring laughing and talking we are trying to arrange a football match with them for tomorrow.

Boxing Day, they say they are not going to fire if we don't, but of course we must, and shall do, but it doesn't seem right to be killing each other at Xmas time, I can't realise this being mixed up with Germans it is certainly go as you please today, we have arranged not to shoot till 4.30 pm Boxing Day.

I don't know what our General would say if he knew about this. Food is pretty good today, beef, potatoes and plum duff for dinner, toast and butter stewed prunes and custard and Xmas cake for tea. [...]

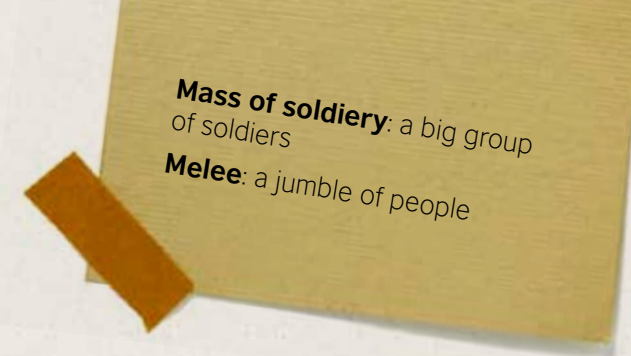
One of our Officers tells them to get back in their trenches as our artillery are going to shell them at 9 am, some of them say "we will get in your trenches we will be safer", this will stop the football match, shells are exchanged for a few hours.

I can't bring myself to shake hands with them, as I know I shouldn't if they were in our country I have not forgotten Belgium and I never did like the word German.



Source: 20

- A** Introductory activity
- G** Design a war memorial
- I** Sports activities



# Interview with Ernie Williams

Ernie Williams from Stockport, a private who served in the 6th Cheshire Territorials at Ypres at Christmas 1914, was interviewed for BBC Grandstand in 1983.

**Ernie Williams:** Christmas Eve – the Germans – we could hear singing. We guessed they were Christmas carols.

**Presenter:** *No shooting?*

**Ernie Williams:** No, no, no shooting at all. We never fired a shot. Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. And it went on for two or three days. Mind you the officers, when we starting swarming over the trench tried to rush us back. They didn't want – some of them – 'Get back you fools,' and all that sort of thing, but we didn't take any notice.

**Presenter:** *So how did that meeting come about in No Man's Land?*

**Ernie Williams:** Well, all I can tell you is this. That when I looked over the top of the trench I could see in the distance, in the mist, about four or five figures assembled and gradually they swarmed out of the trenches on both sides and soon it was a mass of soldiery in No Man's Land.

**Presenter:** *Exchanging cigarettes?*

**Ernie Williams:** Cigarettes, goodies from Christmas parcels, and what have you.

**Presenter:** *How did the football come about?*

**Ernie Williams:** Of course there was a mass of people there. It appeared from somewhere and I didn't know where. It came from their side, it wasn't from our side where the ball came.

**Presenter:** *It was a proper football?*

**Ernie Williams:** It was a proper football yes, and they kicked it about. They made like goals and one fellow went in goal and then it was a general kickabout.

**Presenter:** *How many people were taking part, do you think?*

**Ernie Williams:** Well, it was at least a couple of hundred.

**Presenter:** *Did you kick the ball?*

**Ernie Williams:** Oh yes, I had a go at it. I was pretty good then, at nineteen (laughs).

**Presenter:** *In what sort of spirit was the football match played?*

**Ernie Williams:** Everybody seemed to be enjoying themselves. There was no sort of ill-will between. There was some of them that could speak English of the Germans, I don't think there was many of our side that could speak German.

**Presenter:** *Was there a referee?*

**Ernie Williams:** Oh, no referee. No you didn't need a referee for that sort of a game.

**Presenter:** *Do you remember what the score was in the football?*

**Ernie Williams:** Oh, there was no score. No tally at all. It was simply a melee. Nothing like the soccer you see on television actually, oh no. The boots you wore was a menace. You know, the great big boots you had on. In those days the balls were made of leather and they got very soggy.



Source: 21

C Write a true diary

G Design a war memorial

H Moral education

I Sports activities

# Lieutenant Johannes Niemann's regimental history

Lieutenant Johannes Niemann was a German soldier. He wrote a history of his regiment and returned to visit the areas he fought in throughout his life.



Photo of  
Johannes Niemann

Text translated by Jonnie Robinson.

The night [Christmas Eve] was crystal clear and quiet. [...] Our people had placed a fir tree with burning lights above the trenches and the English started shooting under the impression it was a trick. Once they realised it was a Christmas tree they ceased firing.

After that not a single shot was heard all night. They even started singing Christmas songs over their side [...]

The next day [...] my duty officer, rushed into the dugout and announced that friend and foe were outside together moving between the trenches. A glance over their side and it looked like all our Christmases had come at once! [...] Was peace suddenly supposed to have 'broken out'? What was to be done? After a brief pause for thought, I and everyone else ran to join in. [...]

People everywhere were shaking hands. Opposite us were Scotsmen. Everyone swapped anything they had: tobacco, chocolate, spirits, butterflies and more besides.

**Lieutenant:** a senior soldier in charge of a platoon

**Dugout:** an underground sleeping space dug into the side of the trench

**Battalion:** an army unit of several hundred men

**Lancers:** army cavalry regiment

**Fritz:** slang for German soldiers

There were joyous scenes everywhere. [...] then one Scotsman dragged along a football... a proper football match began to evolve with caps laid down for goals. [...] One of us had a camera on him. Both sides quickly formed into an orderly group, neat rows, the football in the middle [...] the game ended 3:2 to Fritz [...]

Our Lancers had soon realised during the course of the kick-about that the Scotsmen weren't wearing any underwear under their kilts, so that their backsides were clearly visible the moment the kilt began to flap. [...]

The Battalion Commander soon came up. At first he was at a loss what to do until he suddenly snapped and the peace was once more broken. [...]





## Lieutenant Zehmisch's diary (German original)

Lieutenant Zehmisch fought for the German army on the Western Front from 1914. He kept a personal diary during the war. In this extract he describes the Christmas Truce, how news of it spread in the trenches and how an informal football match was played. This is the original text in German.

24.12.1914

Heiliger Abend und dann Weihnachtsfest!

Ich werde diese 2 Tage dieses Kriegsjahres nie vergessen!

[...]

Schon um 6 Uhr stellten wir zum Abrücken in den Schützengraben. Wir haben zunehmenden Mond. Es ist sternenklare Mondnacht. Das erste Mal seit langer Zeit. Es Beginnt auch wieder zu gefrieren. [...]

Ich habe meinen Leuten befohlen, dass heute am Heiligen Abend [...] kein Schuss von unserer Seite abgegeben wird, wenn es zu umgehen ist. [...]

Soldat Möckel von meinem Zug, der mehrere Jahre in England gewesen war, und ich rufen die Engländer auf englisch an und bald hatte sich zwischen uns eine ganz spaßige Unterhaltung entwickelt. Wir wollten uns auf halbem Weg zwischen unseren Stellungen, treffen und Zigaretten austauschen. Dann rief der Engländer nach unserem Schützengraben herüber: 'I wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year', worauf ich ihm und seinen Kameraden im Schützengraben erwiderte: 'Thank you very much, I wish you the same!'

Darauf brüllte [in die...] Engländer in dem englischen Schützengraben den Gruß und Wunsch gemeinsam herüber mit dem Versprechen, heute und morgen nicht zu

continued overleaf



## Lieutenant Zehmisch's diary (German original) (continued)



A photo of Lieutenant Zehmisch in his trench



schießen. Jetzt stellten wir auf unserem kilometerlangen Schützengraben noch mehr Kerzen auf als vorher. Wir sangen alle möglichen Weihnachts- und Heimatlieder. An einigen Stellen unseres Schützengrabens waren auf die Brustwehr Tannenbäume mit brennenden Kerzen gestellt. [...]

25.12.1914

Früh bei Tagesanbruch wünschten wir uns 'Guten Morgen'. Von uns näherten sich bald einzelne Leute den Engländern, die in gewisser Entfernung von unserem Schützengraben auf uns warteten. Als ich das sah, ging ich auch hinüber und begrüßte die Engländer [...] mit denen ich mich auf englisch, französisch und deutsch köstlich unterhielt! [...] Bald hatten auch ein paar Engländer einen Fußball aus ihrem Graben gebracht und ein eifriges Fussballwettspiel begann. [...] Ich sagte ihnen, dass wir auch am 2. Feiertag nicht schießen mochten. Sie waren auch damit einverstanden.



Source: 23

**B** English and drama

**E** Languages

**G** Design a war memorial

**I** Sports activities

**J** Conflict resolution

**K** History

# Lieutenant Zehmisch's diary

Lieutenant Zehmisch fought for the German army on the Western Front from 1914. He kept a personal diary during the war. In this extract he describes the Christmas Truce, how news of it spread in the trenches and how an informal football match was played. This is an English translation.

24.12.1914

Christmas Eve and, then – celebration! I will never forget these two days of the war!

At 6pm we are ready to take up our positions in our trench. There is a crescent moon. It is a clear night, we can see the stars. The first time in a long time. The ground is frozen again.

[...]

I have ordered my men not to fire any shots from our side today on Christmas Eve if it can be at all avoided. [...]

Private Möckel from my platoon, who used to live in England for several years, and I call out to the Brits in English – and, soon enough, quite a fun conversation develops between us. We decide to meet up half-way [...], and exchange cigarettes [...]

Seeing this, the Brits [...] start applauding and enthusiastically shout 'Bravo!' [...]

Then the Brit calls over to our trench: 'I wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year!' [original in English], upon which I reply [...] 'Thank you very much, I wish you the same!' [original in English].

In return, the [...] Brits in their trench roar the salute and good wishes, together with the promise not to fire any shots today or tomorrow. [...]

continued overleaf



Source: 23 **B** English and drama  
**E** Languages  
**G** Design a war memorial

**I** Sports activities  
**J** Conflict resolution  
**K** History

## Lieutenant Zehmisch's diary (continued)



A photo of Lieutenant Zehmisch in his trench and a watercolour portrait of him.

**Parapet:** the edge of the trench, it was dangerous to look over it

Now we put up even more candles on our [...] trench than before. [...] We sing all kinds of carols and songs [...]

[...] Christmas trees with burning candles have been put up on the parapet [...]

25.12.1914

Early, at daybreak, we wish each other a good morning.

[...]

Soon, men from our side approach the Brits, who are waiting some distance from our trenches.

When I see this, I go over, too, and greet the Brits, [...] with whom I have a delightful conversation in English, French and German!

[...]

Soon, some of the Brits bring over a football from their trenches and a vigorous football match begins. [...]

I tell them that we also do not want to fire on Boxing Day. They agree.



Source: 24 **C** Write a truce diary

**H** Moral education

**K** History

## Walther Stennes's account

Walther Stennes was a German infantry officer from 1914–18, who talked about his experiences in the trenches and how, in 1914, he was opposite Indian army trenches fighting with the British. There were a number of Indian troops fighting as part of the British Empire on the Western Front from the autumn of 1914. The Garhwal Rifles fraternised with the 16th (3rd Westphalian) Regiment near Richebourg. This account was recorded by the Imperial War Museum in 1977.

Actually, the whole thing was spontaneous action. [...] And when I rushed out of the dugout I saw so many of my company standing in the open [...] and on the other side also some Indian [soldiers] standing up and waving.

Then the men hesitated [and] advanced to the middle. [...] the whole No Man's Land was covered with Indian and German soldiers who shook hands and later on returned and fetch[ed] some small presents. [...]

We also talked as much as we could. English and German, but anyhow we understood each other.

And – very interesting – people warned each other for the places where mines were laid. No body stepped on the mine [...] And of course everybody was unarmed [...] That was given out as a rule. [...] But the sentries were standing on duty; ready on both sides.

Later on my men were in the British trenches, were fed there and had to drink and returned about 10 o'clock at night [...] They stayed there the whole afternoon with Indian troops.

First, they tried to court martial us but then it has never been confirmed who actually started this business.

I think at that time everybody wanted the war to come to an end. [...] Troops on both sides, they had had enough of the war. But no one took any action later on. No court martial nothing.

The war carried on as if it hadn't happened.

We had not refused any order – it was out of the question – but the inner feeling was that we should make peace.



**Spontaneous:** unplanned

**Dugout:** an underground sleeping space dug into the side of the trench.

**Sentries:** soldiers keeping guard

**Mine:** a bomb placed in the ground, it explodes when someone stands on it

**Court martial:** a special army court for soldiers. Penalties for those found guilty included imprisonment and death. The German army shot 48 of their own men during the war, the British army shot 306 and the French about 600.



## Across the Black Waters

Indian writer Mulk Raj Anand's novel, *Across the Black Waters* (1939), tells the story of Lalu, a sepoy fighting in the Indian Army on behalf of Britain on the Western Front in 1914. Anand's father had served in the war. The book features a scene describing how Indian soldiers on the Western Front took part in one of the Christmas truces.

Newspaper story about Sepoy Khudadad Khan, the first Indian recipient of the Victoria Cross, the British Army's highest war-time award for gallantry



**Phenomenon:** a remarkable event

**Sepoy:** soldier in the ranks of the Indian Army, equivalent to a British 'private'

**Spasmodic:** intermittent, fitful bursts

**Sap:** a covered trench or tunnel dug to a point near or within an enemy position

**Antic:** a funny act or gesture

**Contagion:** a disease passed on by direct or indirect contact

'Ohe look! Ohe look! Dhayan Singh interrupted him.

'There's a truly strange phenomenon.'

'What is it?' Lalu asked panting.

'Look there, in no-man's land', Dhayan Singh said. Lalu turned his head.

'To be sure, it is a strange phenomenon!' he said and, shading his eyes against the glare of the snow, peered deeper, into no-man's land. There were two English Goras and two German soldiers, shaking hands and talking to each other with gestures, even as they laughed little nervous chuckles which could be distinctly heard ... And now ... they were offering each other cigarettes [...] what had happened? [...] There had been no shelling this morning and he had heard the sound of singing in the Connaught's trenches while he had been talking to the sepoys [...]

'What is the matter?' Dhayan Singh asked him.

More groups of Tommies and German soldiers were scrambling up from their respective trenches and running, hesitatingly, towards each other. [...] there were ripples of laughter going across no-man's land in spasmodic bursts making a mockery of war, then jubilant shouts from the various trenches.



## Across the Black Waters (continued)

Lalu scratched his head [...] presently he heard a loud exchange between a German and an English soldier and then saw the German rush out of the opposite saps, with a cake in his hand as if he were taking an offering to the temple.

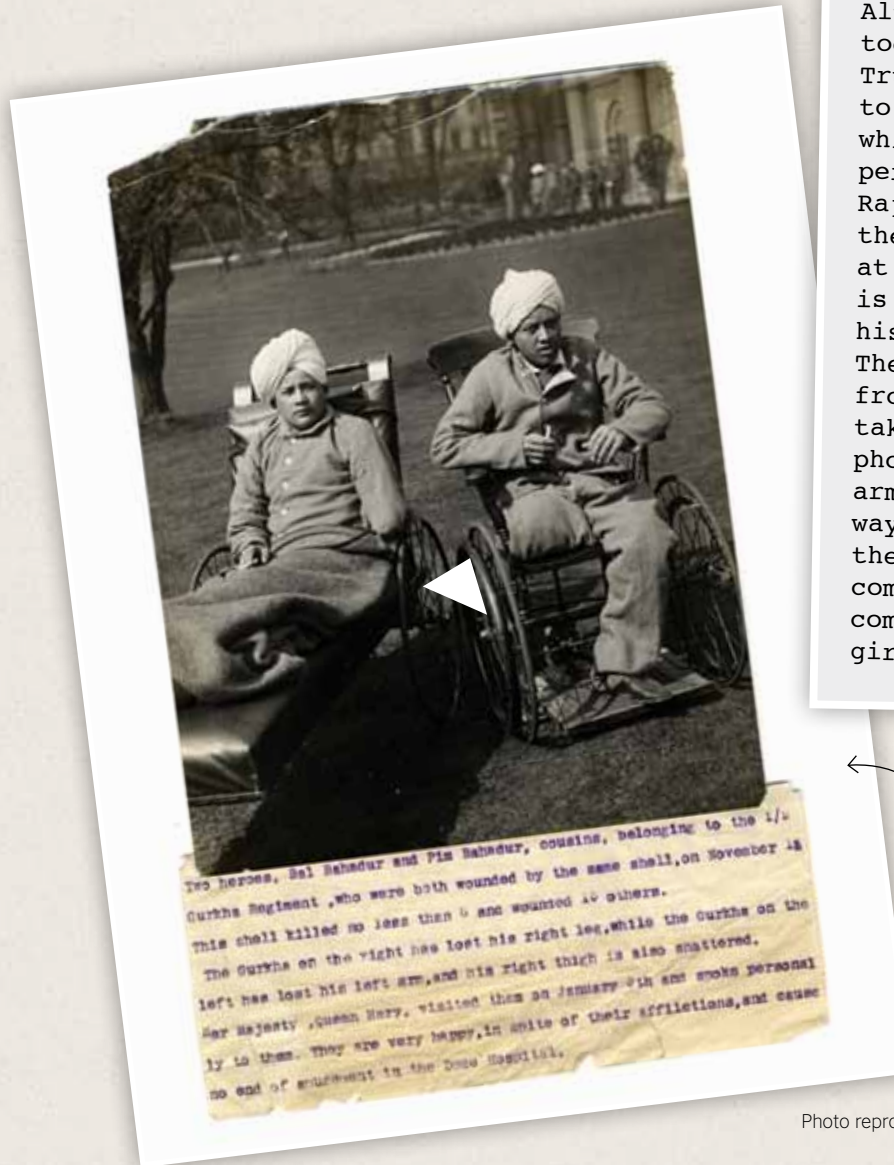
'Oh! It is a cake', said Lalu laughing [...] 'A Christmas cake! ... It is the Christmas festival today and both the enemies being Christian by religion they are wishing each other a happy Christmas... [...]

'I am going to get some sweets from the enemy', said Dhayan Singh struggling to scramble over the parapet with terrific alacrity.

'Ohe ohe, look out' the sepoys called out after him.

'Go ahead! Go ahead!' Lalu spurred him on and even gave a shove to his heavy buttocks so that Dhayan Singh was on top.

After months of shells and grenades, rifle and machine gun fire, this simple antic of fat Dhayan Singh made them laugh. [...] And for a moment they seem to have caught the contagion of innocent humanity hanging in the air.



Two heroes, Dal Bahadur and Pim Bahadur, cousins, belonging to the 1/4 Gurkha Regiment, who were both wounded by the same shell, on November 14. This shell killed no less than 6 and wounded 10 others. The Gurkha on the right has lost his right leg, while the Gurkha on the left has lost his left arm, and his right thigh is also shattered. Her Majesty, Queen Mary, visited them on January 24th and wrote personally to them. They are very happy, in spite of their afflictions, and cause no end of amusement to the Doss Hospital.

Although Indian soldiers took part in the Christmas Truce we have not been able to find diaries or letters which give us an Indian perspective. Author Mulk Raj Anand's father was in the Indian army near Ypres at this time and this novel is a fictional account of his father's experiences. The Girdwood Collection, from which this image is taken, contains hundreds of photographs of the Indian army and is a fascinating way to find out more about the Indian army: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/commons:british\\_library/girdwood](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/commons:british_library/girdwood)

Two wounded Gurkha soldiers recovering at a military hospital.



# Memoirs of Prince Ernst Heinrich Von Sachse (German original)

Saxon Prince Ernst Heinrich fought in the First World War and was in the trenches at Christmas 1914. He wrote his memoirs after the war and explains here what happened during the truce. In this extract he describes visiting the British trenches. This is the original German text.

Charly, der Engländer, blieb vor unserem Graben stehen und grüßte militärisch, was alle Engländer taten, wenn sie einem deutschen Offizier begegneten. Ich begrüßte ihn mit "Good morning", was er mit "Good morning, Sir", beantwortete. Dann sagte er: "Please come on". Dieser Charly schien mir eine Art Fremdenführer zu sein, jedenfalls gefiel er sich in dieser Rolle.

Was nun folgte, war etwas ganz Sensationelles. Ich war mir bewusst, etwas zu erleben, was nur ganz Wenigen beschieden ist, nämlich mitten im Krieg den Gegner zu besuchen. Im englischen Graben, der übrigens genauso aussah wie unserer, war eine Leiter aufgestellt, auf der wir in den "feindlichen" Graben hinunterstiegen. Wir sahen mehrere Soldaten und Unteroffiziere, die uns alle kurz grüßten, sahen aber keine Offiziere. Das war sehr eigenartig. Es ist niemals während der drei Wochen dieses Waffenstillstandes auch nur ein einziger englischer Offizier erschienen, obwohl ihnen die Situation genauestens bekannt war. Wir besichtigten einen englischen Unterstand, der sich von den unseren nicht unterschied. Auch die obligaten Mädchenbilder an der Wand fehlten nicht. Man bot uns Zigaretten an, und ein Engländer meinte "It is a pity to fight and it would be far better to play football, our regiment against yours." Das war typisch englisch und zweifellos ehrlich gemeint.



Source: 27

**E** Languages

**H** Moral education

**K** History

# Memoirs of Prince Ernst Heinrich Von Sachse

Saxon Prince Ernst Heinrich fought in the First World War and was in the trenches at Christmas 1914. He wrote his memoirs after the war and explains here what happened during the truce. This is an English translation of the German original.

**Saxon:** a German from the region of Saxony, capital Dresden

Charly, the Englishman stood at our trench and saluted, that all English soldiers did when they met a German officer. I greeted him with "Good morning" to which he replied with "Good morning Sir". Then he said: "Please come on". This Charly appeared like a tour guide, or at least he assumed a role as such.

What happened then was truly sensational. I was quite aware that I was about to experience something that very few are able to: that is to visit the enemy in the middle of the war. In the English trenches, which, by the way, looked just like ours, there was a ladder, on this we descended into the "enemy's trench". We saw several soldiers and sergeants, but no officers. That was strange. During these three weeks of truce not one single English officer appeared, although they must have been aware of the situation. We visited an English shelter, that was no different from ours. Even the obligatory images of girls were there. We were offered cigarettes, and one of the English soldiers said: "It is a pity to fight, it would be far better to play football, our regiment against yours." This was typically English and no doubt it was meant in good faith.



## Marcel Bechu, *En campagne 1914–15* (French original)

Marcel Bechu was a French army officer who fought on the Western Front and survived the war. In this extract from his memoir written after the war, he describes how the Germans in the trenches opposite them wanted a truce at Christmas in 1914 but his battalion refused. This is an extract from the original text, in French.

### 7 heures du matin

Un coup de feu tiré non loin de nous, vers la gauche, me fait sortir de mon abri. Cela semble extraordinaire après la calme complet de cette nuit. [...]

J'aperçois tous mes chasseurs qui [...] regardent avec intérêt une spectacle qui doit se dérouler en avant des tranchées [...] deux hommes qui sortent en plein jour de leur tranchée et s'avancent à pas hésitants dans la direction des tranchées ennemies. Derrière eux, cent têtes curieuses se dressent au-dessus de créneaux aménagés entre les sacs de terre.

Voilà certes une scène à laquelle je me n'attendais guère. Que fait donc le capitaine de la compagnie occupant cette tranchée ?

Vivement j'envoie un sous-officier porter l'ordre suivant à tous nos chasseurs ;

Que personne ne se montre... Chacun à son poste de combat... Les carabines chargées dans les créneaux.

Les Allemands qui nous font face se méfient en voyant que notre ligne reste silencieuse et que personne ne paraît. [...] Mais sur le reste de leur front le nombre des hommes émergeant des tranchées se multiplie. Ils sont sans armes et font des gestes joyeux et amicaux. L'inquiétude me saisit. [...]

J'avoue qu'il m'est assez désagréable de commander le feu sur ces hommes désarmés. D'autre part, pouvons-nous tolérer le moindre rapprochement [...]

Heureusement, l'officier qui [...] a dû suivre toute cette scène avec sa jumelle m'évite de prendre une résolution qui me serait pénible. Pan ! Pan ! Pan !

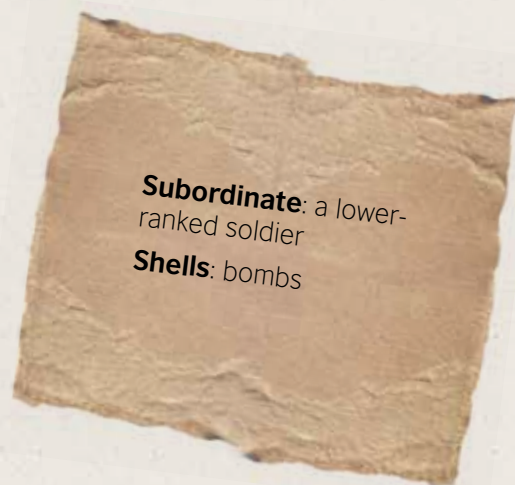
Quatre obus passent en sifflant sur nos têtes et viennent éclater avec précision admirable à deux cent mètres au-dessus de tranches allemandes [...] Les Allemands ont bien compris ce gracieux avertissement. Avec cris de rage et de protestation, ils regagnent en courant leurs abris et nos Français en font autant.

Et, comme pour montrer la bonté voulue de ce qu'il vient de faire, à peine les deniers casques à pointe ont-ils disparu derrière les parapets que de nouveau les mêmes sifflements se font entendre et pan ! pan ! pan ! pan ! Quatre obus viennent brutalement s'abattre en plein sur la ligne blanchâtre que fait dans la plaine verte la marne remuée de leur tranchée. On voit au milieu de la fumée la terre et les débris de toute sorte voler. Nos chasseurs crient : bravo ! Chacun sent que la meilleure solution a été prise et se réjouit que se termine ainsi la fugitive trêve de Noël.



## Marcel Bechu, *En campagne 1914–15*

Marcel Bechu was a French army officer who fought on the Western Front and survived the war. In this extract from his memoir written after the war, he describes how the Germans in the trenches opposite them wanted a truce at Christmas in 1914 but his battalion refused. This is an English translation.



### Seven in the morning

A shot fired not far from us [...] makes me leave my shelter. It seems extraordinary after the complete calm of the night. [...]

I notice all my fighters who [...] [are] gazing with interest on a sight which is unfolding in front of the trenches [...] Two men leave their trench in full daylight and are advancing with hesitant steps in the direction of the enemy trenches.

Behind them 100 curious heads rise up above the fortifications formed by sacks of earth. Some soldiers even, emerging from the trench, are sitting on the embankment of grey soil.

This is certainly a scene that I was hardly expecting. What is the officer in charge of that trench doing? [...]

Immediately I send a subordinate to carry an order to our fighters. Let no one show himself! Everyone remain at his post, rifles at the ready!

The Germans opposite are wary, seeing that our line remains silent and that no one appears. [...] But along the rest of their front the number of men emerging from the trenches multiplies. They are unarmed and make joyful & friendly gestures.

Anxiety seizes hold of me. [...] I admit that it is disagreeable to me to order fire against these unarmed men. On the other hand, can we tolerate the slightest reconciliation [...]

Happily, the officer who [...] has followed this scene through his binoculars spares me from taking a decision which is upsetting to me. Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Four shells pass whistling overhead and explode with admirable precision two hundred metres above the German trenches. [...] The Germans have perfectly understood this graceful warning. With cries of anger and protest they run to regain shelter and our Frenchmen do the same [...]

And, as if to show agreement with what has taken place, scarcely have the last pointed helmets disappeared behind the parapets than once more the same whistling sounds make themselves heard and Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Four shells explode brutally on the pale line which the dug up earth from their trenches makes on the green plain.

One sees in the middle of the smoke, the earth & debris of all sorts fly up.

Our troops cry 'Bravo!' Each one feels that the best solution has been taken and is delighted that the [...] Christmas truce is ended thus.



# Roland Dorgelès, *Je t'écris de la tranchée* (French original)

Roland Dorgelès was a French soldier who fought on the Western Front. He survived the war and became a well-known novelist and cultural commentator. In 1919 he wrote a book called *Wooden Crosses* about his experiences after the war. This is an extract from a letter that he wrote home, which describes how they celebrated Christmas with the Germans. This is the French original.

## **A René Bizet, le 29 Janvier 1915**

“Tenez, notre réveillon. Nous l'avons fait dans la tranchée, sous notre abri de mitrailleuses. De temps en temps, quelques balles: bzz... bzzz. Les Territoriaux chantaient le Minuit Chrétiens, la Marseillaise [...] Les ponts de Paris !!! Les Allemands chantaient l'Allemagne par-dessus tout !!

Eh bien, à notre gauche. A 4 kil., le 24e prenait, perdait et reprenait 3 fois une tranchée allemande sous un feu effroyable. Et à notre gauche le 74e, c'est incroyable, faisait le réveillon avec les Allemands!

Ceux-ci sortirent désarmés et déséquipés leurs tranchées, les nôtres les suivirent et bientôt, dans la plaine, 500 Français et Allemands bavardaient, échangeaient des cigarettes.

Les Allemands vinrent boire dans les tranchées du 74e, des Français allèrent trinquer chez les Allemands. Il en revint à 2 heures du matin, [...] Un sous-off. allemand, dans la tranchée, déclara en trinquant “Nous savons très bien que nous sommes foutus”.

Le général dans un ordre du jour extrêmement sévère a jugé la conduite extraordinaire.



↖ Roland Dorgelès  
(1885–1973)



# Roland Dorgelès, *Je t'écris de la tranchée*

Roland Dorgelès was a French soldier who fought on the Western Front. He survived the war and became a well-known novelist and cultural commentator. In 1919 he wrote a book called *Wooden Crosses* about his experiences after the war. This is an extract from a letter that he wrote home, which describes how they celebrated Christmas with the Germans. This is an English translation.

## To René Bizet, 29 January 1915

Take our Christmas Eve. We held it in the trench under our machine gun shelter. From time to time came a few bullets: bzz... bzz. The territorials sang the Midnight Christians, the Marseillaise, the Bridges of Paris!!! The Germans sang 'Germany above all!'

Well, on our left, 4 kilometres away, the 24th regiment gained, lost and regained 3 times a German trench under appalling fire. Also on our left the 74th, it's unbelievable, celebrating Christmas Eve with the Germans!

The latter came out of their trenches unarmed, our men followed them, and soon, on the plain, 500 French and Germans chatted, exchanged cigarettes.

Some Germans came for a drink in the trenches [...], some French went to drink their health with the Germans. They returned at 2 in the morning [...] One junior officer, German, in the trench announced while clinking glasses 'We know very well that we are done for'.

The General, in an extremely severe order-of-the-day judged the conduct to be extraordinary.

Commemorative plaque to Roland Dorgelès



**Territorials:** volunteer reserve soldiers

**Midnight Christians:** a Christmas carol

**The Marseillaise:** the French national anthem

**General:** second highest-ranking army officer, after a Field Marshall



## Captain Bruce Bairnsfather, *Bullets and Billets*

Captain Bruce Bairnsfather was a British soldier who started drawing cartoons 'to pass the time' in the trenches. His comic sketches were widely published and became very popular. In this account – published in 1916 – he describes the truce but doesn't mention football.

**Parapet:** the top of the trench, very dangerous to look over

**Fracas:** a noisy fight or argument

**Boche:** slang for German soldier

**Geniality:** a friendly or pleasant manner

**Fraternising:** being brotherly, making friends

A strange sight, truly!

I clambered up and over the parapet, and moved out across the field to look. [...] I joined the throng about half-way across to the German trenches.

It all felt most curious: here were the sausage-eating wretches who had elected to start this infernal European fracas, and in so doing had brought us all into the same muddy pickle as themselves.

This was my first real sight of them at close quarters. [...] There was not an atom of hate on either side that day [...] It was like an interval between the rounds of a friendly boxing match. The difference in type between our men and theirs was very marked. There was no contrasting the spirit of the two parties. Our men, in their scratch costumes of dirty, muddy khaki, with their various assorted head-dresses of woollen helmets, mufflers and battered hats, were a light-hearted, open, humorous collection as opposed to the sombre demeanour and stolid appearance of the Huns in their grey-green faded uniforms, top boots and pork-pie hats [...]

The shortest effect I can give of the impression I had was that our men, superior, broad-minded, more frank and lovable beings, were regarding these faded, unimaginative products of perverted kulture as a set of objectionable but amusing lunatics whose heads had got to be eventually smacked. [...]

Two or three of the Boches seemed to be particularly interested in me, and after they had walked round me once or twice, with sullen curiosity stamped on their faces, one came up and said "Offizier?" I nodded my head, which means "Yes" in most languages, and besides, I can't talk German.

continued overleaf



## Captain Bruce Bairnsfather, *Bullets and Billets* (continued)

These devils, I could see, all wanted to be friendly; but none of them possessed the open, frank, geniality of our men. However everyone was talking and laughing, and souvenir hunting [...]

Suddenly one of the Boches ran back to his trench and presently reappeared with a large camera. I posed in a mixed group for several photographs, and have ever since wished I had fixed up some arrangement for getting a copy [...]

Slowly the meeting began to disperse; a sort of feeling that the authorities on both sides were not very enthusiastic about this fraternising seemed to creep across the gathering [...]

The last I saw of this little affair was a vision of one of my machine-gunners, who was a bit of an amateur hairdresser in civil life, cutting the unnaturally long hair of a docile Boche, who was patiently kneeling on the ground whilst the automatic clippers crept up the back of his neck.



This photo of Bruce Bairnsfather was taken on Christmas Day 1914.



Source: 33 **F** Cartoons

**G** Design a war memorial

**I** Sports activities

# Captain Bruce Bairnsfather, 1958 television interview

In this interview, given 44 years after the Christmas Truce, Bruce Bairnsfather describes football being played with the Germans.

I happened to be walking down the trench when I looked over the parapet, and I was amazed to see a whole crowd of Germans in the field in front, and looking a bit closer I saw a whole lot of our fellows were with them too.

[...]

I joined this outfit, and there we were, all chatting and talking as best one could – nobody could understand a thing – out in the middle of No-Man's Land, with barbed wire and shell-holes and relics of previous encounters all lying about. It was mostly curiosity – they sort of walked round each other, looking at each other, observing the kind of differences in the uniform and that kind of thing.

This went on very nicely indeed until one of our chaps, a sort of Old Bill, had had a football sent out as a Christmas present, and blew this up and suggested a game of football with the Germans in No-Man's land.

Well this was going very nicely and everything, when suddenly the authorities, the owners and organisers of the war at the back, they didn't like this at all, and news came that we had to stop it at once. This fraternising must cease and so on, so we crawled back into the trenches again and that was the end of that.

**Old Bill:** a very popular cartoon soldier character which Bruce Bairnsfather created during the war.

A Christmas card drawn by Bruce Bairnsfather in December 1914.





## Colonel Pearse, Extract from the East Sussex Regimental War Diary

British soldiers were frequently rotated between the most dangerous frontline trench positions and safer postings behind the lines. Although the East Sussex Regiment were not at the front line during the Christmas Truce, their Regimental Diary records the handover comments of the troops they replaced.

**The Devons:** soldiers from the Devonshire regiment

Christmas day was very cold and foggy, but the distribution of the cards and gifts sent by their Majesties the King and Queen and by Princess Mary gave great pleasure.


For the next three days, companies were employed separately in trench digging, and in the afternoon of the 29th the Battalion marched up to the trenches and relieved the Devons, who reported that the Germans had made frequent attempts to leave their trenches and fraternise on Christmas Day and were not finally discouraged until one or two were shot.



## Brigadier-General J. E. Edmonds and Captain G. C. Wynne, *Military Operations: France And Belgium, 1915*

*The Official History of the Great War* is a massive 29 volume military history published between 1923 and 1949 and produced by the Committee of Imperial Defence. This is an extract from one of the volumes, published in 1927.

During Christmas day there was an informal suspension of arms during daylight on a few parts of the front, and a certain amount of fraternization. Where there had been recent fighting both sides took the opportunity of burying their dead lying in No Man's Land, and in some places there was an exchange of small gifts and a little talk, the Germans expressing themselves confident of early victory. Before returning to their trenches both parties sang Christmas carols and soldiers songs, each in its own language, ending up with "Auld Lang Syne" in which all contingents joined. On the part of front where happened to be two Irish battalions, the Germans suggested the prolongation of the cessation of fighting, naturally without result. There was to be an attempt to repeat this custom of old time warfare at Christmas 1915, but it was a small and isolated one, and the fraternization of 1914 was never repeated.



**Fraternization:** making friends with the enemy  
**Contingents:** everyone on every side



# Regimental History of the Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment 16 (German original)

This excerpt from a German regimental history describes the truce and the army's decision not to court martial the soldiers who took part in it. This is the battalion that Adolf Hitler was serving with at Christmas 1914. He worked as a dispatch runner on the Western Front in France and Belgium, spending nearly half his time well behind the front lines, and he was not in the trenches on that morning. This is the original German text.

## **Das kgl. Sächsische 11. Infanterie-regiment, Nr. 139, Dresden 1927**

Die Heimat hatte außerordentlich reichlich Geschenke aller Art, Christbäume und Lichter geschickt, so dass bei Anbruch des Abends auch in der vordersten Linie ein festliche Stimmung bei Lichterglanz herrschte. Frohe Weihnachtslieder wurden gesungen, die natürlich auch von den Engländern gehört wurden.

Plötzlich hörte man jenseits der Brustwehr den Wunsch in unserer Sprache äußern: "Noch einmal das erste Lied." Vorsichtig hatten sich einige Feinde nahe an unsere Stellung herangepircht, um dem frohen Treiben zu lauschen. Der englische Feldgeistliche erschien zuerst und verlangte seinen deutschen Amtsbruder zu sprechen. Da derselbe aber nicht in vorderster Linie war und nach und nach an vielen Stellen der Feind ohne Waffen in kleinen Trupps sich an unsere Stellung heranbegeben hatte, entstand eine allgemeine Verbrüderung.

[...]

Der Waffenstillstand ist beiderseits redlich gehalten worden. Es stellte sich später heraus, dass der Weihnachtsabend auch an weitergelegenen, ebenso feuchten Frontteilen ähnliche Erscheinungen gezeitigt hatte, die sich sogar am hellen Tage wiederholt hatten und seitens der Engländer photographisch festgehalten und in der "Times" veröffentlicht worden waren.

Diese Bilder kamen dem Armeeführer zu Gesicht, eine angeordnete kriegsgerichtliche Untersuchung wurde aber niedergeschlagen, da die eingeforderten Meldungen der Kampftruppen erkennen liessen, dass widrige Naturereignisse letzten Endes die Ursache waren, dass eine vorübergehende "Verbrüderung" stattgefunden hatte...





# Regimental History of the Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment 16

This excerpt from a German regimental history describes the truce and the army's decision not to court martial the soldiers who took part in it. This is the battalion that Adolf Hitler was serving with at Christmas 1914. He worked as a dispatch runner on the Western Front in France and Belgium, spending nearly half his time well behind the front lines, and he was not in the trenches on that morning. This is an English translation of the original German text.

## Court martial abandoned

The homeland sent exceptionally generous gifts of all kinds, Christmas trees, lights, so that by the time the evening drew to a close, there was a festive atmosphere with the glimmering of lights even in the first lines. Happy Christmas songs were sung, which of course were heard by the English too.

Suddenly, from the other side of the parapet we heard a wish expressed in our own language: "One more time, the first song!". Carefully some of the enemy were edging closer to our stands in order to hear the happy party. The English army chaplain appeared first and asked for his German colleague. But since he was not on the front line, and slowly from more and more positions the enemy was coming in small groups, unarmed, a general fraternisation started

[...]

The truce was kept on both sides with honesty. Later it turned out that Christmas Eve has produced similar events, even at farther away, equally damp parts of the frontline, which was repeated even during daylight and the English have recorded this in photographs to be later published in the "Times".

These pictures became known to the General, however a court martial investigation they ordered was then abandoned, as the reports requested from the combat troops explained that in the end the adverse conditions were the reason for the temporary "fraternization".

**Parapet:** the top of the trench, very dangerous to look over

**Dispatch runner:** messenger or courier

**Chaplain:** Church representative in the army, for example, a priest / vicar

**Fraternisation:** brotherly behaviour, making friends

**Front line:** first line of trenches after No Man's Land, closest to the enemy

**Court martial:** a special army court for soldiers. Guilty soldiers could be executed.



Source: 38 **D** Footballers who fought in the war

**L** Find a footballer

# Introduction – Football and the First World War

Football was a very popular sport in Britain and Germany in the years before 1914. In January 1900, representatives from 86 football clubs founded the German Football Association (Deutscher Fußball-Bund – DFB) and the German national football team has represented Germany in international football competitions since 1908.

While Britain and its allies were at war in 1914, football was still being played in the normal way at home. A lot of people thought this was wrong. In England, there were Division 1 and Division 2 Championships and an FA Challenge Cup competition. The FA was in charge of football in England then, as it is now, and the Dean of Lincoln wrote scornfully to it of 'onlookers who, while so many of their fellow men are giving themselves in their country's peril, still go gazing at football'.

There was criticism of the players too. Some people thought that young men who played football professionally should be fighting for their country. The FA made 'An Appeal to Good Sportsmen' and a poster was issued in November 1914 imploring footballers (and others) to join the armed forces. 'Every man must know his duty to himself and to his country', it said on the poster. Arthur Conan Doyle, the author of the Sherlock Holmes books, also made an appeal. 'There was a time for everything, but there is only time for one thing now, and that thing is war... If a footballer had strength of limb let them serve and march in the field of battle.'

Partly as a response to the criticism, a 'Footballers' Battalion' was formed in December 1914. The 17th Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment, to give it its official name, had Frank Buckley, the Derby County and England centre-half, as its first member. The Football League instructed their clubs to release professional players who were not married to join the armed forces. The Footballers' Battalion quickly grew with players from teams including Portsmouth, Crystal Palace, Millwall, Chelsea and the whole of the Clapton Orient (now Leyton Orient) team. The Footballers' Battalion, consisting of professional and amateur players, plus some football supporters, left for the war in November 1915. By the following March, 122 professional footballers had signed up for the battalion, which led to press complaints, as there

were some 1800 eligible footballers. By the end of the war they had lost more than 1,000 men and in the Battle of Arras alone, 462 were killed.

England's 1914–15 football season ended with the FA Cup Final between Chelsea and Sheffield United. The match was christened 'The Khaki Cup Final' due to the large number of uniformed soldiers present in the crowd at Old Trafford. The Earl of Derby presented the trophy to Sheffield United with the words: 'It is now the duty of everyone to join with each other and play a sterner game for England.' Everton won the First Division title and Derby County lifted the Second Division crown. After that, all competitive football was suspended.



Source: 39 **D** Footballers who fought in the war

**L** Find a footballer

# Women's Football and the First World War

In the early 20th century, women were thought too fragile to play football. It was considered inappropriate and degrading. Doctors declared that it was damaging to women's health.

The First World War changed that perception. 'All the men went off to war and the women took their places in the factories,' explained Sue Lopez, the former England international. 'The women working at the munitions manufacturers would kick around a ball, and [...] they would play matches to raise funds for the wounded soldiers.'

In the absence of the men's league, which had ceased at the end of the 1914-15 season, women's tournaments flourished. In the north-west of England, where heavy industries were at their most dense, inter-district matches were played, and a Munition Girls Challenge Cup was established. Dick, Kerr's Ladies from Preston were the most famous team and their match against St Helens in 1920, played at Everton's ground, Goodison Park, attracted a crowd of 53,000.

There was a suspicion that some teams were not giving the money they raised from women's football matches to charity and, in 1921, the FA banned women from playing at its affiliated grounds. 'Football is quite unsuitable for females,' said the FA. But those First World War factory workers, known as 'The Munitionettes', had kicked off a surge in women's football that rocked the men's game.

Photo of Dick, Kerr's Ladies' Football Team, initially made up of workers from Dick, Kerr & Co.







# Footballers' Battalion letter

A 'Footballers' Battalion', the 17th (Service) Battalion (1st Football), was formed in London on 12 December 1914 by W. Joynton Hicks MP. They arrived in France on 18 November 1915 and were transferred to serve with the 6th Brigade in 2nd Division the following month. The battalion was disbanded in February 1918. This letter was sent from the Football Association to encourage volunteers for the battalion.

**February, 1915**

Dear Sir

We are going to ask your very grave consideration for this letter. [...]

Some six weeks ago, the Army council authorised the raising of a Battalion of Footballers, making very special provisions that the professional player should be allowed to get away from his military duties in order to complete his football contracts up to the end of April next.

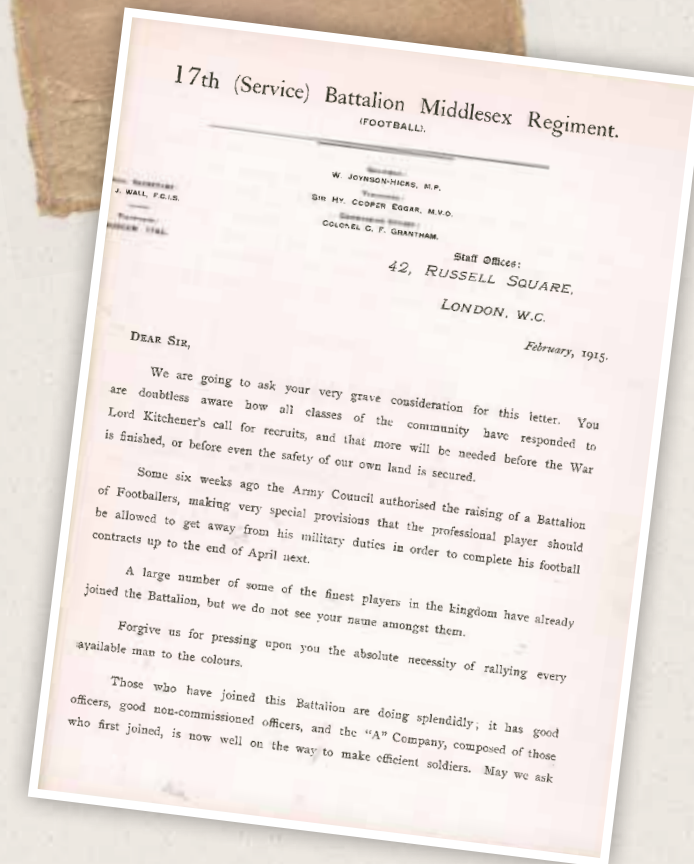
A large number of some of the finest players in the Kingdom have already joined the Battalion, but we do not see your name amongst them.

Forgive us for pressing upon you the absolute necessity of rallying every available man for the colours.

Those who have joined this Battalion are doing splendidly; [...] May we ask you to think over your own responsibility to your country and to your homes, and let us know on the enclosed postcard whether you cannot see your way to join? [...] We do urge you as a patriot and a footballer to come to the help of the country in its hour of need.

Yours faithfully,  
Lord Kinnaird and W Joynton Hicks

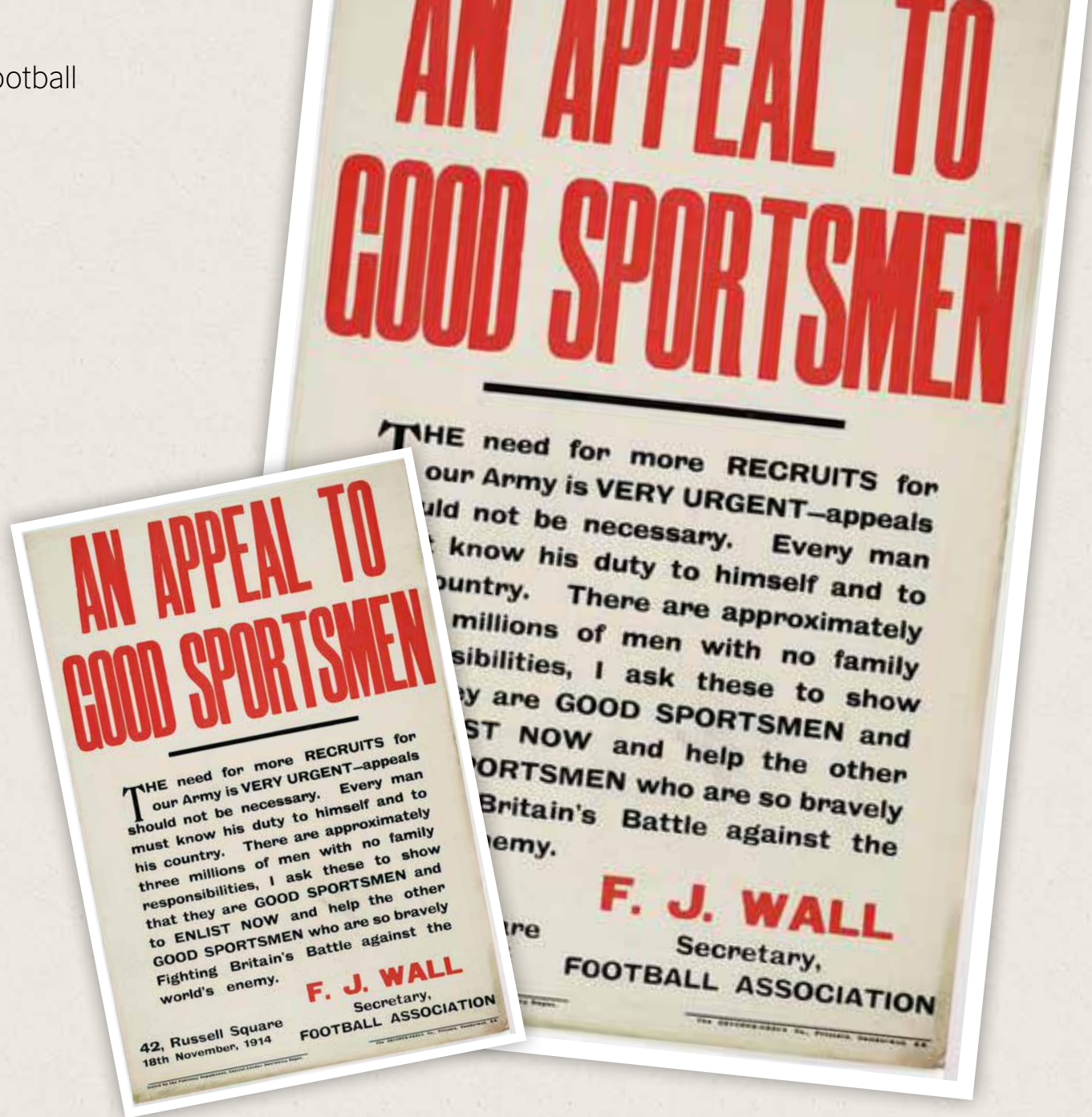
**Grave consideration:**  
serious thought





## An Appeal to Good Sportsmen

This poster from the Football Association encourages young sportsmen to join the army.





## Daily Express, 6 October 1914

On 26 September 1914 it was reported in the *Daily Express* that an officer in the new army only identified as 'Union Jack' was asking 'for the gift of a few footballs – 'the men's only joy''. Readers were informed that any footballs sent to the newspaper's offices would be forwarded to the front. Other national newspapers offered to send footballs to the front including the *Daily Mirror*.

### FOOTBALL IN BATTLE

#### BRITISH SOLDIERS' GAME AFTER LEAVING THE TRENCHES

Paris Oct 4

During a comparative lull along a large portion of the front from yesterday afternoon until early this morning the French soldiers were astonished to see the British come out of the trenches to play football.

While our artillery duel was still progressing the Tommies, who had been brought back for a rest to some distance behind the advanced firing line, inflated several footballs and started to kick them about.

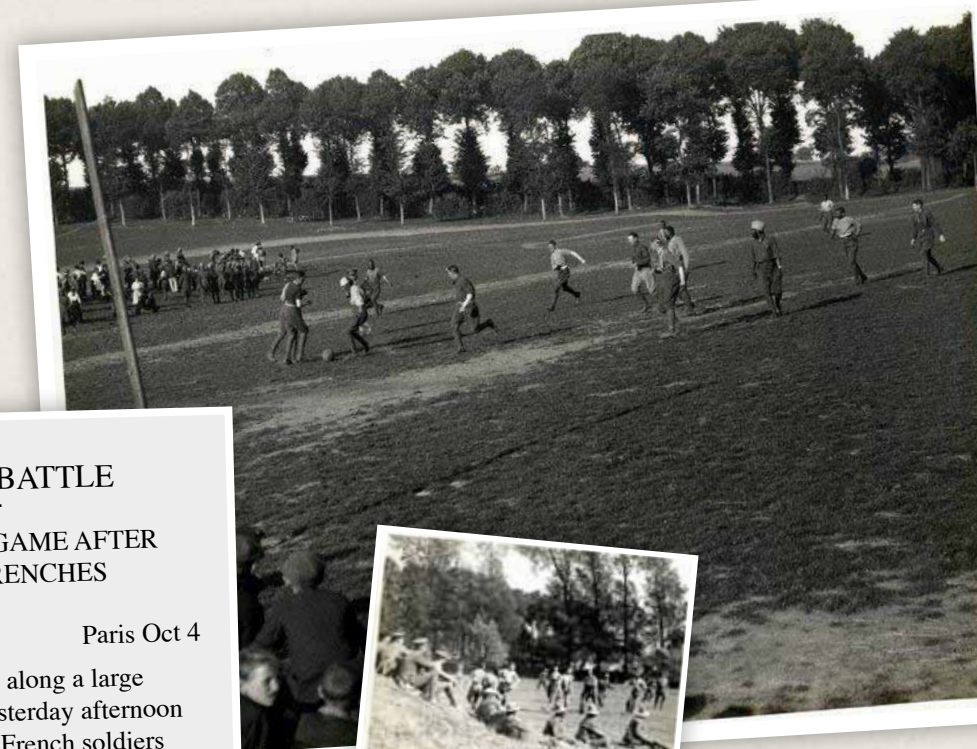
Soon afterwards another battalion challenged them to a game and an exciting match followed. Both battalions had in the recent fighting lost heavily, but their zest for the sport appeared to be hearty.  
Reuter Special.



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Reuter Special.

Football match between the 9th Ghurkhas and a Signalling Company



Artillery duel: gun battle



## Daily Express, 19 October 1914

**Lieut Quartermaster:** an officer who looks after the supplies for the troops

**Affrighter:** this is hard to define and may mean scared

**Uhlan:** soldier from the Uhlan regiment of the German Army

### OLD FOOTBALLS WANTED.

Lieut. Quartermaster Bone, who is with the King's Royal Rifles at Bisley, asks the "Daily Express" to appeal to its readers for some old footballs for his men.

You remember that story of the British officer who the other day propelled a uhlan from behind with his foot so hard that the affrighter German disappeared in a cloud of dust? Well, there is a lot more of this sort of thing to be done, and there is nothing like a football for strengthening the muscles of his toes.

Readers who desire to help this good work should therefore go over their stocks of old footballs at once and send some to the "Daily Express" Room 25, 23 St Bride-street, EC. All contributions will be acknowledged in the "Daily Express."

Of course there is no objection to new footballs.

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## Daily Express, 8 January 1915

Football and boxing gloves were not the only recreational items sent out to British soldiers. This announcement was made in the *Daily Express* newspaper to tell British servicemen that they were being sent mouth organs and other instruments in January 1915. This campaign was very popular among the readers of the newspaper, and a Roll of Honour was published throughout the war, featuring the names of donors and the amount they had given.

### GOOD NEWS FOR TOMMY

"Daily Express,"  
8 Shoe Lane, London E.C.  
January 8, 1915.

Dear Tommy, – In reply to your heart-cry from the trenches for something with which to "make a noise," and to while away your weary hours in the "dug outs," we are sending you as a first instalment, about one thousand mouth-organs, concertinas, accordions, and melodeons.

The mouth-organs, it is true, were made in Germany, but that cannot be helped at present. We sincerely hope that the noise you produce on the instruments will also be **MADE IN GERMANY!**

May you extract as much enjoyment out of these our readers' presents as you have obtained from the footballs and boxing-gloves sent by the same kind-hearted subscribers. Good luck to you, and thank you! – Yours sincerely,

THE SPORTS EDITOR

**Melodeon:** small German  
accordion





Source: 45 **M** Propaganda and football

## Play the Greater Game

Army recruitment posters drew on the popularity of football to encourage young men to join the army.

Chromolithograph recruiting poster by unknown artist, published by the Publicity Department, Central London Recruiting Depot, 1914.





Source: 46 **D** Footballers who fought in the war  
**L** Find a footballer

## First World War footballers' case studies

A number of footballers joined the armed forces and fought in the War.



**Edwin Latheron**, known as 'Pinky', played as a midfielder for England and Blackburn Rovers. He helped Blackburn win the league title twice and had dazzling footwork that created openings for the strikers. His career ended when he was killed while serving with the Royal Field Artillery at Passchendaele.

**Alex 'Sandy' Turnbull** played for Manchester United before the war and scored the first goal at Old Trafford. He was born near Kilmarnock and has been described as 'the prototype for the lowland, working class Scottish player like Sir Alex Ferguson' and as 'an Edwardian version of Wayne Rooney'. He was involved in setting up what was to be the first players' union, in May 1906 – later to be referred to as 'The Outcasts'.

Sandy joined the Footballers' Battalion in 1915 and then transferred to another regiment. It is believed that he was among the troops who dribbled footballs in to the battle of the Somme front lines on 1 July 1916. He died at Arras on 3 July 1917. He left a widow and four children.

Photograph from the 1909 FA Cup Final where Sandy Turnbull scored





Source: 46 **D** Footballers who fought in the war

**L** Find a footballer

## First World War footballers' case studies (continued)



**Florrie Redford** grew up in Preston, Lancashire. She enjoyed sport and played football with her brothers. When war broke out, she was working at Dick, Kerr's factory. The firm made war supplies, including shells for guns, producing up to 30,000 a week by 1917.

The workers often played football during their lunch breaks. Another player, Alice Norris, remembers that 'we used to play at shooting at the cloakroom windows, they were little square windows, and if the boys beat us at putting a window through, we had to buy them a packet of Woodbines, but if we beat them, they had to buy us a bar of Five Boys chocolate'.

A member of staff at the factory organised a girls' and women's team to raise money for the war effort. At a match on Christmas Day 1917, Dick, Kerr's Ladies beat Coulthard's Foundry 4-0, with Florrie playing centre-forward. A match report said that the team's 'forward work, indeed, was often surprisingly good, one or two of the ladies showing quite admirable ball control'. She became one of the leading scorers for the team and was described by the papers as blonde and glamorous, and was often pictured in their pages.

Her football career continued when she became a nurse after the war, as did many of her teammates, looking after wounded soldiers. Florrie emigrated to Canada in 1930 but played again for the team in 1938. She then retired from football and later moved to Coventry, where she spent the rest of her life.



Source: 46 **D** Footballers who fought in the war

**L** Find a footballer

## First World War footballers' case studies (continued)

**Scrupulous:** wants to avoid doing anything dishonest

**Victoria Cross:** the highest honour a British soldier can receive for bravery. The medal is usually presented by the King or Queen

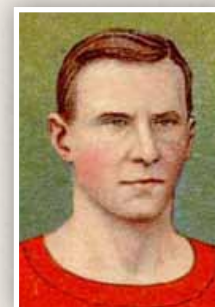


**Donald Simpson Bell** was born in 1890 in Harrogate, one of seven children. He was strong and tall and good at lots of different sports. Donald started to train as a teacher in London, while playing football as an amateur for teams including Crystal Palace.

He also played as an amateur for Newcastle United, before turning professional and moving to Bradford Park Avenue, where he was very successful and widely admired. One report said: 'Bell is one of the best types of the professional footballer, broadminded in outlook and scrupulously fair in his play.'

Donald was the first professional footballer to enlist, joining the 9th Battalion, West Yorkshire Regiment in October 1914. He fought initially at Armentieres, then moved to the Somme. He was cited for 'most conspicuous bravery' during an attack on 5 July 1916 and was awarded the Victoria Cross, but he was killed on 10 July.

His medal was presented to his wife of one month, Rhoda. There is a permanent memorial to Donald at 'Bell's Redoubt' at the Somme, and the Victoria Cross is on display in the National Football Museum, Manchester.



**Leigh Richmond Roose** was born in 1877 in Holt, near Wrexham. He became a goalkeeper for Aberystwyth Town while at college. He was described as being ideally suited to the position, being tall and well built. He became the Welsh national goalkeeper in 1900 and held that position for many years.

Leigh moved to study medicine in London and continued to play amateur football, before joining Stoke City for 'expenses'. He was popular with football crowds as he loved to talk to spectators, tell jokes during the game, and make a dramatic arrival at matches. He also led a celebrity lifestyle, becoming famous for his active social life in clubs and restaurants. Before the outbreak of war he had a very successful career. Leigh volunteered to join up almost immediately after the war broke out. He was in Gallipoli by April 1915 and France from 1916.

According to accounts from fellow soldiers, Leigh fought bravely in a failed attack on the Somme, and was presumed dead in October 1917. He is commemorated at the Theipval memorial in France, although his family did not discover this until many years later, as his name had been misspelled as 'Rouse'.



Source: 46 **D** Footballers who fought in the war

**L** Find a footballer

## First World War footballers' case studies (continued)

**Shell shock:** an illness caused by the trauma of fighting. It is also known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Symptoms range from tiredness and panic attacks to mental and physical breakdown. The British Army recorded 80,000 men as suffering from the condition, but it is thought that many more were affected but not diagnosed.

**Commander:** soldier in charge of a battalion of several hundred men

**Trench fever:** a common illness on the Western Front. Symptoms include headache, fever, sore joints, bones and muscles, swollen eyes, as well as a skin rash. It is passed on by lice. Most people recover in around five days but more serious cases can require a few weeks in hospital.

**Walter Tull** was born in Kent in 1888. His mother was from Kent and his father was a carpenter from Barbados. They both died before Walter was ten and he was then brought up in an orphanage in London. Walter became an apprentice printer, but his football skills led him to play first for Clapton and then Tottenham Hotspur in 1909, making him the first mixed race professional outfield player (the first black professional player was the goalkeeper, Arthur Wharton, in 1885).

He was subjected to racist abuse from some fans, despite his popularity with home crowds and the press. Walter transferred to Northampton Town in 1911 and played over 100 games for them.

In December 1914, he volunteered for the Footballers' Battalion, 17th Middlesex regiment. He was promoted to sergeant in 1916 while serving in France. Walter got trench fever (and probably shell shock) and was treated in England after the battle of the Somme. While in the UK, he trained as an officer, and returned to France, becoming the British Army's first mixed race officer.

After a period of fighting in Italy, he was posted back to France and was killed on 25 March 1918 at Arras. His men tried to rescue him after seeing him shot but his body was never found. He is commemorated on the Arras memorial. Another Spurs player, Alan Haig-Brown, who was the Commander of Walter's battalion, also died in the same attack.





Source: 46 **D** Footballers who fought in the war

**L** Find a footballer

## First World War footballers' case studies (continued)



**The Hawkshaw village team** were the champions of Division Two of the Bury and District Amateur League. Hawkshaw is a village in Greater Manchester and all the players in the team came from there. Lots of men from the village and football team enlisted and fought in the war. Many from the football team were injured or killed. The fighting had a profound effect on the community as the whole village had a connection with the war's tragic events. The team did not reform after the war.

**Of the men in the picture (from left to right, back row to front row):**

- Albert Sanderson served in the army and was wounded three times
- Richard Snape served in the army and lost his brother-in-law at Vimy Ridge
- William Howarth served in the army and lost his brother-in-law at Passchendaele
- William Longworth served with the artillery and died of the effects of a gas attack in 1920
- Richard Smith served in the army in the Middle East and survived a torpedo attack
- William H Longworth served in the army and came home disabled

- Ernest Howarth's history is unknown
- John Dickson served in the artillery and was wounded
- Tom Smithie died of wounds at the Somme
- John Horrocks was wounded and disabled, and his brother was killed
- Fred Whowell died in 1927
- Phillip McGregor served in the army
- Edward Chadwick served with the artillery and was wounded and gassed
- Charles Sims served in army and died after the war of a fever contracted overseas
- George Horrocks was wounded and his brother was killed
- James E. Johnson was killed at Gallipoli.

William Smith, who is not in the photo, was wounded on the Somme.



Source: 46 **D** Footballers who fought in the war

**L** Find a footballer

## First World War footballers' case studies (continued)



**Patrick Crossan**, known as 'Paddy', was born in 1894 in Addiewell, Midlothian. He was a Heart of Midlothian player who was known for his speed on the pitch. Paddy also competed as a sprinter in athletics meetings. He considered himself to be very good looking, and a teammate

and friend once remarked that 'Paddy could maybe pass the ball, but he couldn't pass a mirror if he tried'.

When war broke out, football continued for a while, with Hearts the most successful team in Scotland. Public pressure grew for fit, healthy young men to join up. In response, Lieutenant-Colonel George Macrae formed a battalion of the 16th Royal Scots, in Edinburgh. The whole of the Hearts team joined.

During the 1914/15 season, they continued to play football matches, as well as doing their army training, which affected their results badly. A huge crowd saw them off from Edinburgh in late 1915. They then trained in England and went to France in January 1916.

While on the front line, Paddy was buried in an explosion. He suffered severe concussion and spent three days crawling to safety. By the time he re-appeared, his fellow soldiers thought he had been killed. At the start of his fighting, he said: 'I think that instead of fighting, we should take the Fritzes on at football. I am certain we would do it on them.'

In September 1916, Paddy's foot and leg were badly injured. He woke up in hospital with a label on his foot marking it for amputation, but persuaded a captured German surgeon in the hospital that this must not happen, as he was a professional footballer. His foot was saved. Once recovered, he was posted to Palestine, then back to France, where he was the victim of a gas attack in August 1918.

After the war, Paddy was not able to resume a full playing career. He opened a pub in Edinburgh and was the landlord there until his death in 1933.

He is commemorated in the Hearts war memorials at Tynecastle and in Edinburgh's Haymarket.

**Fritzes:** slang for German soldiers





Source: 46 **D** Footballers who fought in the war

**L** Find a footballer

## First World War footballers' case studies (continued)



**Jimmy (James Marshall) Seed** was born in 1895 in Blackhill, near

Consett, Northumberland. He grew up near the Northumberland coast. He worked as a miner, playing football part-time with Whitburn F.C. His brother Angus also played professionally.

Jimmy's goal-scoring abilities impressed Sunderland, and he signed with them as a professional in April 1914. He continued playing for them until the end of the 1914/15 season, when football was officially suspended because of the war. Jimmy was then 20-years-old.

He joined the 8th Battalion of the West Yorkshire regiment and was sent to France. Here he was in the Cyclist Corps, whose members took essential information through the lines on their bikes. His brother Angus was also in France and was awarded the Military Medal for his courage after being wounded.

Jimmy was gassed towards the end of the war and was sent home. Once football resumed, he returned to playing for Sunderland, but appeared not to be fit enough and he was released on a free transfer. He got another chance to play with the Welsh side Mid-Rhondda, however, and from there joined Tottenham Hotspur. With Spurs, he had a successful career in the first team, appearing in the FA Cup Final, and then played for England. His playing career continued at Sheffield Wednesday, but ended when he got a knee injury at the age of 35.

Jimmy continued as a manager, at Clapton Orient (many of whose players had fought in the war), then Charlton Athletic (where there is a stand named after him), Bristol City and Millwall. Jimmy died in 1966, at the age of 71, just before England won the World Cup.



**Bernard 'Barney' Donaghey** was born in Derry in 1882. He began his career playing for Derry Celtic, the main football club in the city, which competed in the Irish League. He later played for Belfast Celtic, the leading team in Ireland at that time, and signed for Manchester United in the 1905/1906 season. He played one international game for Ireland, against Scotland on 9 August 1902.

He fought with the First Battalion of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers during the First World War. He was wounded in the head by shrapnel and spent time recovering in a hospital in Tanta, Egypt. He wrote a letter home saying that he was recovering and added, 'The other four soldiers that were beside me were killed. It was an awful sight. I am sure it was the prayers that saved me.' He was killed on the opening day of the Battle of the Somme, 1 July 1916. His body was never recovered.



Source: 47

**B** English and drama

**C** Write a truce diary

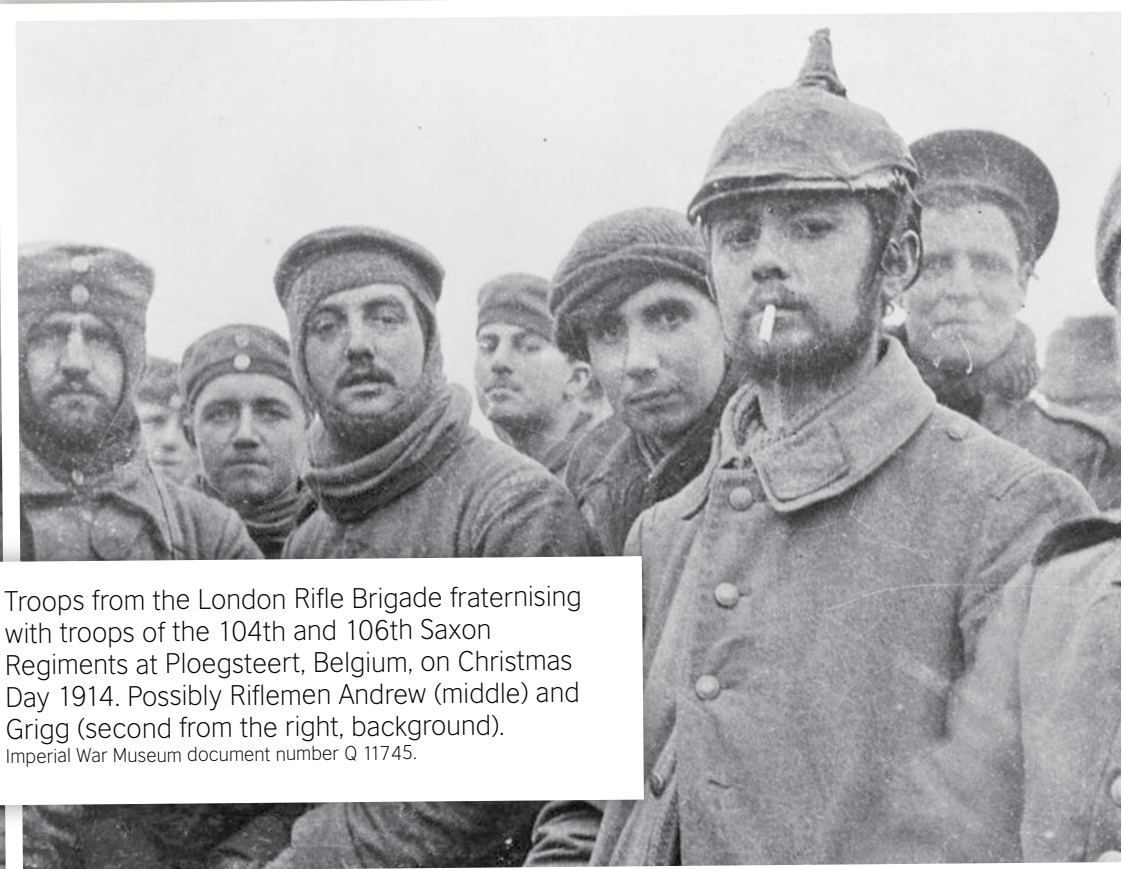
**G** Design a war memorial

**I** Sports activities

# Photographs taken by troops who participated in the Christmas Truce



German soldiers of the 134th Saxon Regiment photographed with men of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment in No Man's Land on the Western Front. Imperial War Museum document number HU 35801.



Troops from the London Rifle Brigade fraternising with troops of the 104th and 106th Saxon Regiments at Ploegsteert, Belgium, on Christmas Day 1914. Possibly Riflemen Andrew (middle) and Grigg (second from the right, background). Imperial War Museum document number Q 11745.



## Photograph from the front page of the *Daily Mirror*, 5 January 1915

During the truce, soldiers took photographs of enemies meeting. Some were sent to newspapers and published within days.





# Artefacts exchanged by troops who took part in the truce

This brandy bottle and many other artefacts were donated to the Royal Irish Fusiliers Museum after the death of Colonel Gerald Victor Wilmot Hill DSO. He served throughout the First World War, was promoted from Captain to Lieutenant Colonel and was awarded two Bars to his Distinguished Service Order. He died in 1959.

**Private Robert Boyd, a soldier in Hill's regiment, wrote about the gift of the brandy bottle in his diary:**

On 31.12.14 "German soldiers got up on their parapet and made friendly signals", Capt GVW Hill met two German officers in No Man's Land. One of them proffered a small bottle of brandy. When Capt Hill did not take it, the German officer took a sip and said "not poison" and then Capt Hill accepted the re-corked bottle."





## Artefacts exchanged by troops who took part in the truce (continued)

### Princess Mary's Box

Princess Mary, the third child and only daughter of King George V and Queen Mary, was just 17 when war broke out in October 1914. Her original intention had been to pay, out of her private allowance, for a personal gift to each soldier and sailor. This was deemed impracticable and a proposal was made that she lend her name to a public fund, which would raise the necessary monies to provide the gifts. The gifts were metal boxes for every serviceman at the front or at sea ('Class A') for the first Christmas of the War. The majority of gifts were for smokers and comprised an ornate embossed brass box containing tobacco, cigarettes, a pipe and lighter, Christmas card and photograph of Princess Mary. For non-smokers writing paper and a pencil were provided. For Indian troops sweets and spices were given instead of, or in combination with, cigarettes.

Princess Mary's Gift Fund 1914 Box, Class A smokers.

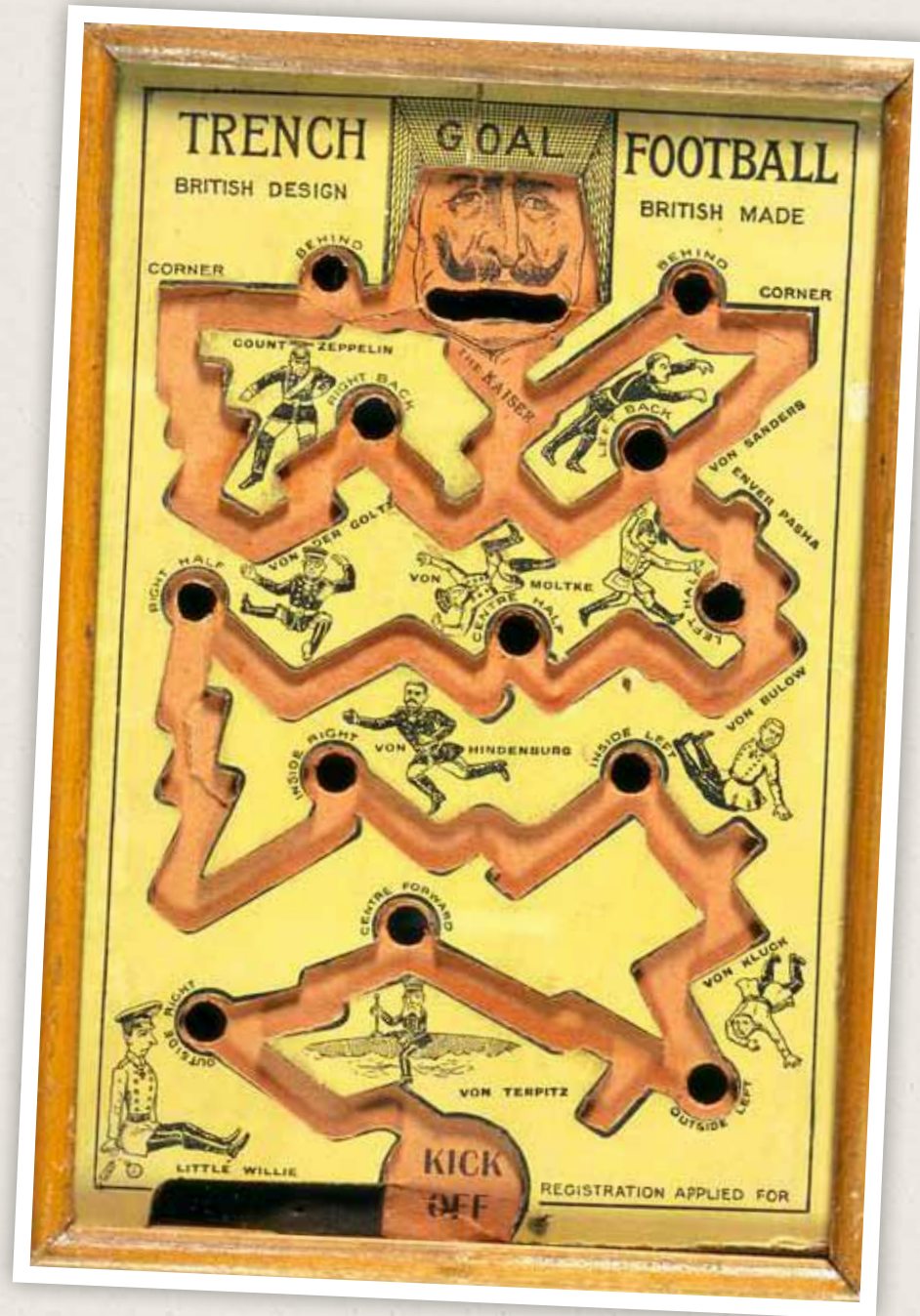




Source: 50 **M** Propaganda and football

## Trench Football game

In wartime, propaganda can be an important weapon. This 'trench football' game pokes fun at Kaiser Wilhelm, the head of the German Empire, making him a figure of fun.





# Photographs of German troops who took part in the truce



Group of Saxons from the 134th Saxon Regiment who took part in the truce



Group of Saxons who took part in the truce and a trench



# The truce seen through a trench periscope

This blurred photograph showing the Christmas Truce taking place belonged to Lieutenant Johannes Niemann, who provided one of the most vivid descriptions of football during the truce (Source 21). The photograph was taken through a special device which soldiers used to look out over the top of the trench without risking being shot, a type of 'trench periscope'. It was similar to a submarine periscope. The sketch of the trench periscope was drawn by the German soldier Karl König, a school teacher who was injured and died the following year.



A photograph of the truce taken through a trench periscope  
Photo reproduced with kind permission of Michel Pacaux.



Sketch of a trench periscope drawn by a German soldier, Karl König



Karl König, who drew the sketch of the trench periscope, before the war.  
Images from Karl König reproduced with kind permission of Dr Ulrich König



## *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 January 1915

This short article appeared under the heading, 'Sorry to fight us'.

**Rifleman E. W. Munday, 3rd Battalion Rifle Brigade, son of Mr and Mrs Munday, of 5, Queen Street High Wycombe, writing home under date December 26, says:**

"On Christmas morning some of us went out in front of the German trenches and shook hands with them, and they gave us cigars, cigarettes and money as souvenirs.

We helped them to bury their dead, who had been lying in the fields for two months.

It was a comical sight to see English and German soldiers, as well as officers, shaking hands and chatting together. When we had buried their dead, one of the Germans danced and another played a mouth organ.

We asked them to play us at football in the afternoon but they had no time.

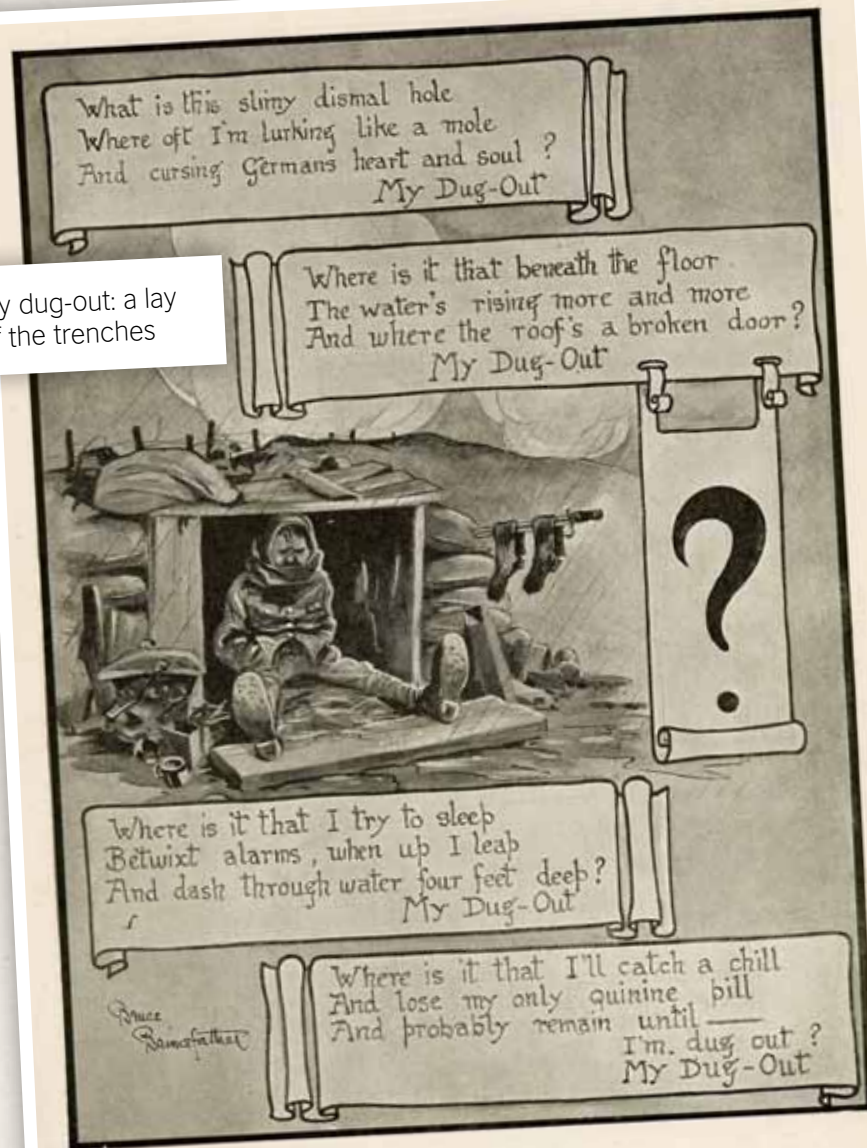
They seemed a decent crew to speak to, and I got into conversation with one who worked at Selfridges in London, and he said he was sorry to have to fight against us.

Well I don't expect we shall shake hands with the enemy again for a long time to come."

**Rifleman:** an ordinary soldier  
**Comical:** funny  
**Selfridges:** a department store in London

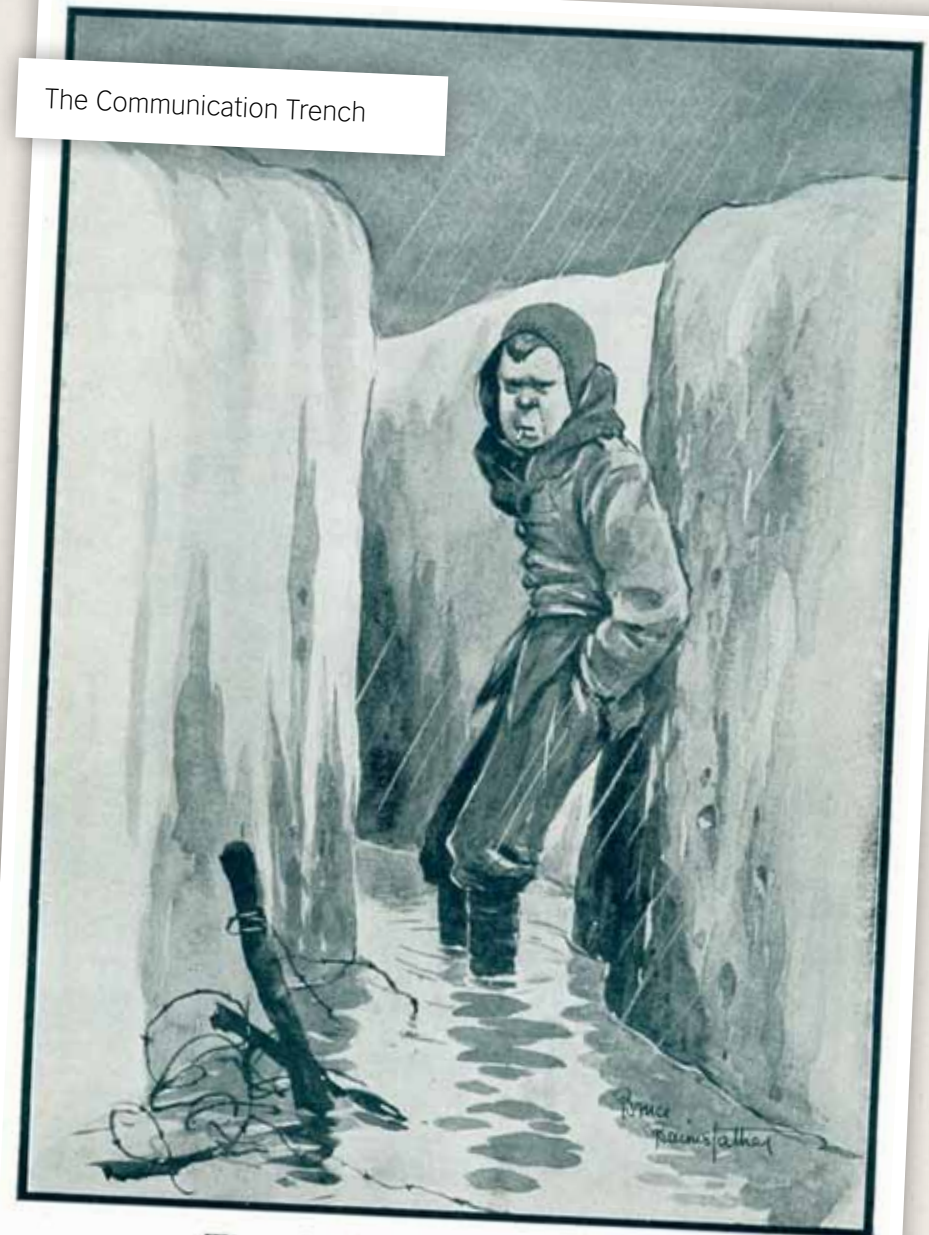


My dug-out: a lay of the trenches



My Dug-Out: A lay of the trenches.

The Communication Trench



The Communication Trench

PROBLEM—Whether to walk along the top and risk it, or do another mile of this



Keeping his hand in



**Keeping His Hand In.**

Private Smith, the company bomber, formerly "Shinio," the popular juggler, frequently causes considerable anxiety to his platoon.

My dream for years to come



**"My dream for years to come."**



## Grand International Match

Many recruitment posters were printed to encourage men to join the army. This poster was produced at a time when the whole island of Ireland was under British rule.





# Further Resources

Below is a selection of some useful resources for exploring the Christmas Truce and the role of football in the First World War more widely, including museums, websites and books.

## MUSEUMS:

**Several museums have information and collections relating to the First World War and the football truce. Among them are:**

**The Imperial War Museum:** [www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk)

**The National Football Museum:**

[www.nationalfootballmuseum.com](http://www.nationalfootballmuseum.com)

An exhibition on football in the First World War opens in December 2014.

**The National Army Museum:** [www.nam.ac.uk](http://www.nam.ac.uk)

**The National Memorial Arboretum:**

[www.thenma.org.uk](http://www.thenma.org.uk)

**The Scottish National Football Museum**

(Hampden Park, Glasgow):

[www.scottishfootballmuseum.org.uk](http://www.scottishfootballmuseum.org.uk)

**In Flanders Fields Museum** (Ypres, Belgium):

[www.inlandersfields.be/en](http://www.inlandersfields.be/en)

**Wrexham Museum service** holds the Welsh Football Collection: [www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/heritage/welsh\\_football](http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/heritage/welsh_football)

**Manchester United FC Museum** (Old Trafford, Manchester): [www.manutd.com/en/visit-old-trafford/museum-and-stadium-tour/welcome.aspx](http://www.manutd.com/en/visit-old-trafford/museum-and-stadium-tour/welcome.aspx)

**Chelsea FC Museum** (Stamford Bridge, London): [www.chelseafc.com/stadium-tours-info/article/2556087/title/about-the-tours--museum](http://www.chelseafc.com/stadium-tours-info/article/2556087/title/about-the-tours--museum)

**Arsenal FC Museum** (Emirates Stadium, London): [www.arsenal.com/history/the-arsenal-museum](http://www.arsenal.com/history/the-arsenal-museum)

**Westminster Archives** holds information about Walter Tull: [www.westminster.gov.uk/archives](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/archives)

**The Surrey History Centre** has information about football and the Somme: [www.surreycc.gov.uk/recreation-heritage-and-culture/archives-and-history/surrey-history-centre](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/recreation-heritage-and-culture/archives-and-history/surrey-history-centre)

**The Bodelwyddan Castle Museum** and the National Museum of Wales will have a special exhibition on the Christmas Truce between January and March 2015: [www.bodelwyddan-castle.co.uk](http://www.bodelwyddan-castle.co.uk) and [www.museumwales.ac.uk](http://www.museumwales.ac.uk)

**Football Clubs** may be able to help you find out more. Also see [www.premierleague.com](http://www.premierleague.com), [www.football-league.co.uk](http://www.football-league.co.uk), [www.thefa.com](http://www.thefa.com)

**Regimental museums** near you can be a great source of information about the First World War in general. Below are some regimental museums that hold displays or artefacts which specifically relate to the Christmas Truce:

**The London Irish Rifles Museum** has a football that was kicked ahead of the regiment's attack at the battle of Loos, 1915: [www.londonirishrifles.com/museum](http://www.londonirishrifles.com/museum)

**The Surrey Infantry Museum** has information about football and the Somme: [www.queensroyalsurreys.org.uk/new\\_museum/new\\_museum.shtml](http://www.queensroyalsurreys.org.uk/new_museum/new_museum.shtml)

**The Prince of Wales Royal Regiment and Queen's Regiment Museum** has information about football and the Somme: [www.royalwelsh.org.uk/regimental-museum-of-the-royal-welsh.shtml](http://www.royalwelsh.org.uk/regimental-museum-of-the-royal-welsh.shtml)



# Further Resources

## **The Green Howards Museum:**

[www.greenhowards.org.uk](http://www.greenhowards.org.uk)

## **Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Museum (Royal Warwickshire):** [www.warwickfusiliers.co.uk](http://www.warwickfusiliers.co.uk)

## **Royal Welch Fusiliers Museum:**

[www.rwfmuseum.org.uk](http://www.rwfmuseum.org.uk)

You can find other regimental museums here:

[www.armymuseums.org.uk](http://www.armymuseums.org.uk)

## **Remember the World as well as the War:**

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/publications/remember-the-world>

A British Council publication highlighting the truly global nature of the conflict and its lasting legacy

## **MORE FIRST WORLD WAR RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOLS**

### **British Council Schools Online**

<http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org>

Resources to help your students explore the world beyond their classroom

### **British Council First World War Resources for EFL/ESOL Students**

[www.teachingenglish.org.uk/world-war-1](http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/world-war-1)

### **The Imperial War Museum**

[www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk)

## **The Commonwealth War Graves Commission**

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

Learning resources, virtual cemetery and CWGC sites

## **The Royal British Legion**

[www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)

## **The British Library**

[www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk)

## **The National Archives**

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

## **The Europeana Collection**

[www.europeana-collections-1914-1918.eu](http://www.europeana-collections-1914-1918.eu)

## **The Glory Days**

<http://www.cwgc.org/glorydays/flash.html>

Football in the First World War

## **World War One – Playing the Game**

[www.ww1playingthegame.org.uk](http://www.ww1playingthegame.org.uk)

Educational resources based on the children's book *War Game* by Michael Foreman

## **Crossing the White Line**

[www.crossingthewhiteline.com](http://www.crossingthewhiteline.com)

Explores the life of Walter Tull, professional footballer and soldier in the First World War

## **Football and Peace**

[www.childrensfootballalliance.com/football-and-peace](http://www.childrensfootballalliance.com/football-and-peace)

Commemorates the truce and celebrates peace through play/sports

## **The Institute of Education**

[www.centenarybattlefieldtours.org](http://www.centenarybattlefieldtours.org)

Additional teaching resources

## **The Bruce Bairnsfather Society**

[www.brucebairnsfather.org.uk](http://www.brucebairnsfather.org.uk)

## **Dick, Kerr Ladies FC 1917-1965**

[www.dickerrladies.com](http://www.dickerrladies.com)

The pioneering women's football team in which Florrie Redford played

## **The Christmas Truce 1914 Operation Plum Pudding**

[www.christmastruce.co.uk/](http://www.christmastruce.co.uk/)

Letters from local papers

## **Spartacus Educational**

[www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk)

History with illustrations and primary sources

## **The First World War Centenary**

[www.1914.org](http://www.1914.org)

Local events taking place for Centenary commemorations

## **Royal Shakespeare Company**

[www.rsc.org.uk/whats-on/the-christmas-truce](http://www.rsc.org.uk/whats-on/the-christmas-truce)

New play about the Christmas Truce

## **Our Friends, the Enemy**

[www.ourfriendstheenemy.com](http://www.ourfriendstheenemy.com)

One man show about the Christmas Truce





# A small selection of further reading

Ali, J.: *Our Boys: The Great War in a Lancashire Village*, Landy Publishing, 2007

Bell, M.: *Red, White and Khaki*, Peak publish, 2011

Brown, M. and Seaton, S.: *The Christmas Truce*, Pan Books, 1994

Foley, M.: *Hard as Nails*, Spellmount, 2007

Hamilton, A. and Read, A.: *Meet at Dawn, Unarmed*, Dene House, 2009 ([www.meetatdawnunarmed.co.uk](http://www.meetatdawnunarmed.co.uk))

Harris, C. and Whipple, J.: *The Greater Game*, Pen & Sword, 2008

Harris, E.: *The Footballer of Loos*, The History Press, 2007

Jacobs, B.: *The Dick, Kerr's Ladies*, Robinson, 2004

Jenkins, S.: *They Took the Lead*, DDP, 2005

Lewis-Stempel, J.: *Six Weeks*, Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2010

Myerson, G.: *Fighting for Football*, Aurum, 2009

Riddoch A. and Kemp, J.: *When the Whistle Blows*, Haynes, 2011

Tate, T.: *Girls with Balls*, John Blake, 2013

Vignes, S.: *Lost in France*, Stadia, 2007

Weintraub, S.: *Silent Night: The Story of the World War I Christmas Truce*, The Free Press, 2001



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## This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



[http://schools online.  
british council.org/  
\*\*football-remembers\*\*](http://schools online. british council.org/football-remembers)



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