



The 1914 Christmas truce, Sainsbury's ad, 2014

Document B

Document A

(...) on the 24th had a messenger come from the German lines, it said that if they did not fire Xmas Day, they (the Germans) wouldn't. So in the morning (Xmas day) a German looked over the trench - no shots - our men did the same and then a few of our men went out and brought the dead in (69) and buried them, and the next thing, happened a football kicked out of our trenches and Germans and English played football. Night came and still no shots. Boxing Day¹ the same.

1. Boxing Day (exp.) = 26th December

Staff Sergeant Clement Barker sent the letter home four days after Christmas 1914. It was only rediscovered in 2012.

This letter is of great historical value and the truce¹ was the last bit of chivalry² of the First World War. The war had already been costly but it was about to get far worse.

One of the reasons they were playing football was because they weren't able to communicate very well due to the language barrier. This was a way for them to share something. It wouldn't have been an organised match or anything, more of a free-for-all kick around. There is something appealing about the idea that nations could settle their differences in sport rather than war.

1. truce (n.): trêve
2. chivalry (n.): comportement digne

James Taylor, historian
at the Imperial War Museum,
Daily Mail, Dec. 23, 2012

Document C

Did you know?

When **World War I** broke out in 1914, many people thought it would be "over by Christmas". Instead, it lasted for four years, causing the death of tens of millions of soldiers and civilians.

1. 1. Read the letter (**Document A**) and create a timeline of the events

2. Imagine the hopes of the soldiers : they must have wanted.....They probably hoped....

3. Guess what happened in the following days

4. Read **documents B and C** and find information about the rôle football played at that moment

5. Imagine the letter (5 lines) Clement Barker wrote home a month after this event :
Use the elements below :
Dear...- t's hard to believe - in spite of - what an amazing ...- I wish - Take care - All my love