One hundred years ago the Great War was still in its first few months, and at Christmas, with some remnants of humanity still remaining on both sides of No-Mans Land, the men in the trenches ignored the orders of their High Commands, emerged for the famous Christmas Truce and swapped stories and sauerkraut, cigarettes and chocolate...and played football. Twenty-four hours later hostilities resumed and over the subsequent years millions died. Unsurprisingly, amongst all those casualties there were many footballers from clubs the length and breadth of the country: Oxford City FC lost ten. They were:

**Cyril Samuel BENSON:** (b. 1891). He was the son of J.R. Benson, one of the founding-fathers of the Club. He went to Oxford High School and then on to Pembroke College, where he got a 4th Class degree in History in 1913. He played regularly for the Reserves, but made only two appearances for the 1st XI. He served in France from December 1915 and was an Acting Captain in the 6th OBLI when he was killed at Trescault on April 24th 1917. He is buried at Neuville-Bourjonval.

**Guy Richard Worstenholme DICKINSON:** (b. 1877). He was born in Yorkshire, but his father was appointed the headmaster of Beckley School and the family moved to Oxfordshire. He later became a teacher himself. He played for the 1st XI from 1895 until 1907 and scored 133 goals in just 197 games and played in the 1906 Amateur Cup Final. He enlisted in the 54th Canadian Infantry at Vernon, British Columbia, in July 1915 and was killed on November 6th 1917, the very last day of the Third Battle of Ypres. His name is recorded on The Menin Gate and in the Canadian Book of Remembrance.

**Bertram Thomas HONEYSETT:** (b.1890). He was born in Surrey, but his family had moved to Henley by 1901, and Grimsbury (nr. Banbury) by 1911 and he was working as a telegraphist where his father was a postmaster. He joined the Royal Engineers and was an Acting Lance Corporal in a Signals Company when he was killed on September 8th 1918. He is buried at Charmes Military Cemetery, Essegney. His medals and other WW1 memorabilia were sold at auction in 2011 and amongst the lot was a medal he won in the BEF Abbeville YMCA Football League in 1916. So organised football continued even in the depths of war!

**Charles LAKIN:** (b. 1888). He was born on the Isle of Wight and attended the Oxford High School. He played regularly over the three seasons from 1908 for the Reserves, but never made a 1st XI appearance. He enlisted with the 4th OBLI and died of his wounds on August 21st 1916. He is buried in the Puchevillers British Cemetery.
Bertram Frith PACKER: (b. 1892). He was born in London, but by 1911 he was attending the Church of England Training College in Cheltenham. He played in eight 1st XI matches and scored eight goals, including six in the Amateur Cup 10-0 rout of Slough in January 1915. He enlisted in the 3rd/4th OBLI but, on being commissioned in May 1917, he transferred to the Suffolk Regiment. He was a 2nd Lieutenant when he was killed in action on October 19th 1917. He is buried in Loos Military Cemetery.

Heber Percy SLATTER: (b. 1886). He was born in Wokingham, and by 1911 was living in Reading with his wife and two children, where he was ‘Assistant Overseer of the Poor’. He played 72 matches for the 1st XI between 1910 and 1914 scoring 7 goals. He enlisted on November 8th 1915 and was a Corporal in the 93rd Army Brigade (Royal Field Artillery) when he was killed in action on May 1st 1918. He is buried in Couin New British Cemetery.

Harold George TABERNACLE: (b. 1882). He was born in Margate in Kent. By 1901 he was living with his parents in Wheathampstead (nr. St Albans) working as an estate agent. He appeared in the 1911 Census in London as a ‘traveller’ (possibly in the food and drinks business?), but still living in Margate. However, between 1905 and 1910 he played 59 games for the 1st XI and scored a remarkable 57 goals, including one in the 1906 Amateur Cup Final. He first enlisted in the Middlesex Hussars, but had transferred to the Military Mounted Police towards the end of the war, when, as a Corporal, he died of malaria in Egypt on November 3rd 1918 whilst a part of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. He is buried in Alexandria.

Walter Henry WICKS: (b. 1890). He was born and raised in Oxford. He played just two games for the 1st XI in the two seasons immediately before the war, but played regularly for the Reserves. He enlisted in the 3rd/4th OBLI early in the war, received the 1914-1915 Star and was later promoted to Corporal. He died on August 26th 1918 in Nigeria and is buried in Baro Cemetery, Abuja.

H.G. SMITH, who played almost 100 games for the 1st XI between 1909 and 1913 and appeared on the left-wing in the 1913 Amateur Cup Final; and H.W. STEVENS who played over sixty games in goal for City between 1910 and 1913 were also killed during World War 1, but details of their service or date of death have, so far, proved elusive.

Mention must also be made of Leigh Richmond ROOSE, the famous Welsh international goalkeeper, who played twice in goal for Oxford City at The White House in friendlies (against Reading in 1902 and Civil Service in 1904). He was never seen again after the calamitous attack of October 7th 1916 on the Somme and was posted as missing presumed killed. His absorbing and colourful story can be read in full in the book “Lost In France” by Spencer Vignes.