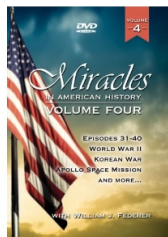
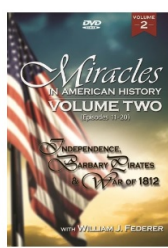
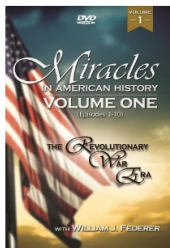


American Minute with Bill Federer
Christmas Truce of 1914, "Silent Night" & selected
Presidential Christmas Greetings "So CHRISTMAS
becomes the only holiday in all the year..."-FDR

When the **First World War** began, British women suffragists sent an **Open Christmas Letter** "To the Women of Germany and Austria" imploring peace as the first Christmas of the war approached.



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Pope Benedict XV, December 7, 1914, begged for a truce, asking:

"that the guns may

fall silent at least upon the **night the angels sang."**

These requests were officially rebuffed.



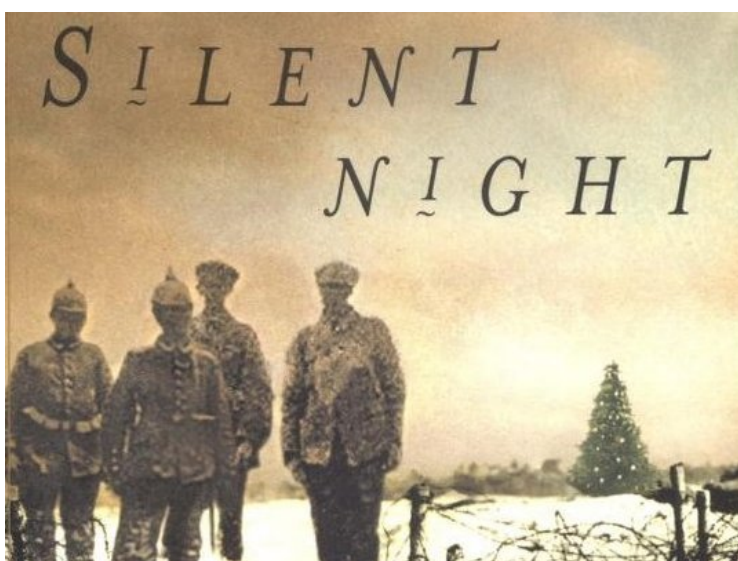
Nevertheless, on **Christmas Eve, December 24, 1914**, an estimated 100,000 British, French and German troops near Ypres in Belgium along the Western Front, **ceased fighting.**



The thunderous booming of **artillery fell silent** that night.

German troops started decorating their trenches with **Christmas trees** and candles in their branches.

They began singing "**Stille Nacht**"- "**Silent Night.**"



As this was one of the **Christmas carols** that soldiers on both sides knew, **English, French and German** troops all began to **sing across the battle lines.**

"Silent Night" was written a century earlier by a priest, **Father Joseph Mohr**, with the melody composed by Austrian headmaster **Franz Xaver Gruber.**





The song's origin dates back to Christmas Eve, December 24, 1818, at **Saint Nicholas Church** in **Oberndorf bei Salzburg, Austria.**

One version of the story is that the organ had broken for their **Christmas eve** service, possibly due to mice having eaten a hole in the bellows which were used to pump air through the organ.



Gruber quickly took **Fr. Mohr's** poem and composed a melody to be **accompanied by guitar.**

"Silent Night" has been translated into over 44 languages.

"Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother

and child.

Holy infant so tender and mild,

Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing alleluia;

Christ the Savior, is born,
Christ the Savior, is born.



Silent night, holy night,
Son of God,
love's pure light
Radiant beams
from thy holy face,
With the dawn of
redeeming grace,

Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth."



The 1914
unofficial
Christmas Truce



continued. Soldiers from both sides started **shouting Christmas greetings** to each other.

C. Ernest Furneaux of the British Rifle Brigade wrote in a letter to his parents:

"About five o'clock on **Christmas Eve** the Germans started **lighting up Christmas trees** in their trenches.

We took no notice of them until **they began to sing**. Then we began to cheer them and talk to one another as we are only about 80 yards apart.

... So by the light of their searchlight **our officers went across halfway and their officers came to meet them**.

They shook hands and conversed for a while. It was agreed that we

Daily Express, London, April 24, 1933, p. 21

Revealed: Secrets of 1914 Christmas truce

By Martin Sklar

IT WAS one of the most poignant moments of the Great War - with British and German soldiers emerging from the trenches to share a fleeting peace - and now one of the secrets of the First World War's Christmas truce has been revealed in a new account.

Captain Robert Hamilton, of the 1st Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment, was at the heart of these magical few hours.

The grandson, former history teacher Andrew Hamilton, was inspired to rediscover his relative's diary and other illustrations and documents after his daughter visited the battlefield with her school.

The real historian Alan Reed has drawn on more than 100 photographs, cartoons, songs and sketches to write a book.

Mr Hamilton's daughter Alice took the diary with her on a school trip to the battlefields of France and Belgium.

Mr Reed was one of the last recipients. "She gave me the diary to look at."

"We found we both shared a deep interest in the First World War and agreed to research my grandfather's experiences," Mr Hamilton says in the book, *Warwickshire*, said yesterday.

"The fact it was something following my grandfather's campaign bookkeeping and publishing the exact spot where he met a German officer, translated from the Belgian papers of 26. These on Christmas Day."

Writing in his diary, he remembered the December 25, 1914, Captain Hamilton wrote: "A day which to the world's history I don't see often and we arranged a brief armistice for a hour."

He added: "The soldiers on both sides met in their backyards and exchanged greetings and gifts."

Captain Hamilton returned to England in 1915 after being made dead by shell fire.

The book, *Secrets of Christmas*, has just been published.

The book illustrated in this cartoon was also recorded by Captain Robert Hamilton, left, in his diary below.

should have a **day off** and they would fire the first shot to start again.

So from five o'clock on **Christmas Eve** until ten o'clock this morning (December 26th) neither side has fired, only walked about.

Some of the Germans came across to us and we shook hands and had some chocolate and cigars from them."

Venturing across "No Man's Land," they recovered bodies and held joint burial services.

Lance-Corporal Imlah of the Gordon Highlanders wrote in a letter to his father:

"Our padre then gave a short service, one of the items in which was **Psalm XXIII.**



Thereafter, a German soldier, a divinity student I believe, interpreted the service to the German party.



I could not understand what he was saying but it was beautiful to listen to him.

The service over, we were **soon fraternizing with the Germans just as if they were old friends.**"



The Hertfordshire Mercury, January 9, 1915, published a letter, from British rifleman C. H. Brazier:

"All through the night **we sang carols** to them and they sang to

us ... to follow His example.

... On **Christmas day** we all got out of the trenches and walked about with the Germans, who when asked if they were fed up with the war said 'yes, rather.'



They all believed that London had been captured, and that German

sentries were outside Buckingham Palace. They are evidently told a lot of rot. We gave them some of our newspapers to convince them."



Soldiers even played soccer together. The Germans won 3-2.

Bruce Bairnsfather, who served during the **First World War**, wrote:

"I wouldn't have missed that unique and weird **Christmas Day** for anything ...

... I spotted a German officer, some sort of lieutenant I should think, and being a bit of a collector, I intimated to him that I had taken a fancy to some of his buttons ...



I brought out my wire clippers and, with a few deft snips, removed a couple of his buttons and put them in my pocket. I then gave him two of mine in exchange ...

... The last I saw was 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."



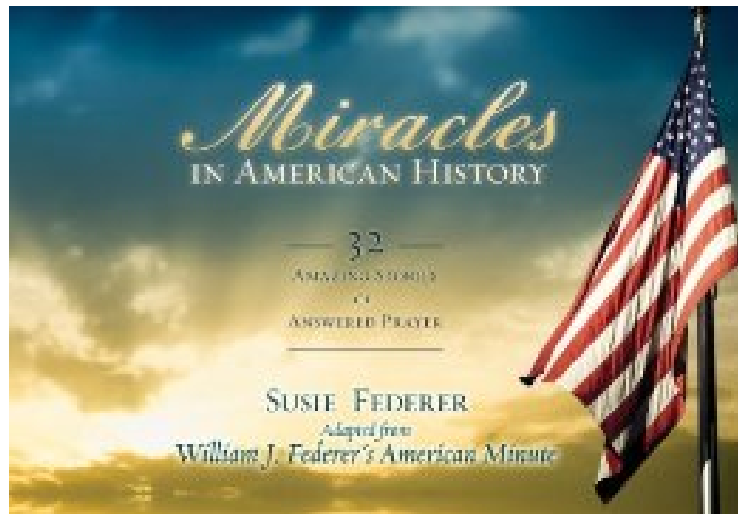
In *Christmas Truce* by Malcolm Brown and Shirley Seaton, they recorded:

"There was general handshaking; the dead were buried;

cigars, cigarettes and newspapers were exchanged and a general celebration ensued.

Then the **Frenchmen** suggested that we shoot no longer, promised that they themselves would not resume hostilities in that event."

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When General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, commander of the British II Corps, heard what was

happening, **he was irate** and issued **strict orders forbidding friendly communication** with the opposing German troops.

Someone else who was **opposed to the truce** was a young corporal in the 16th Bavarian Reserve Infantry named **Adolf Hitler**.



World War I continued for more than four years, and cost the lives of **9 million combatants and 7 million civilians--** one of the **deadliest conflicts in human history.**



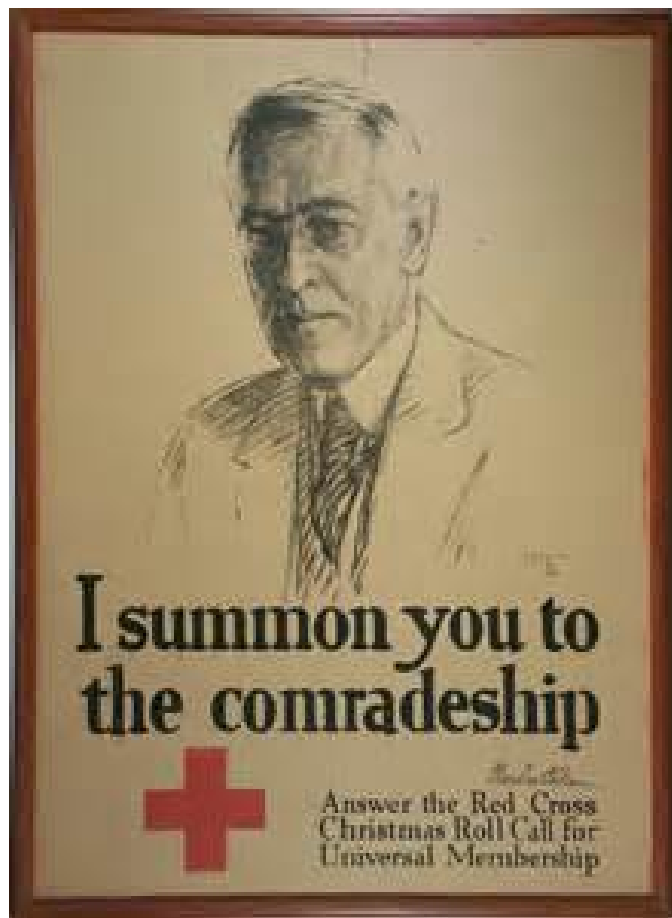
On December 25, 1918, **President Woodrow Wilson** wrote to **General Pershing** and the American troops stationed on the battle-front in France:

"While it is hard far away from home, confidentially, to bid you a **MERRY CHRISTMAS**, I can, I think, confidentially, promise you a Happy New Year, and I can from the bottom of my heart say, **God bless you.**"



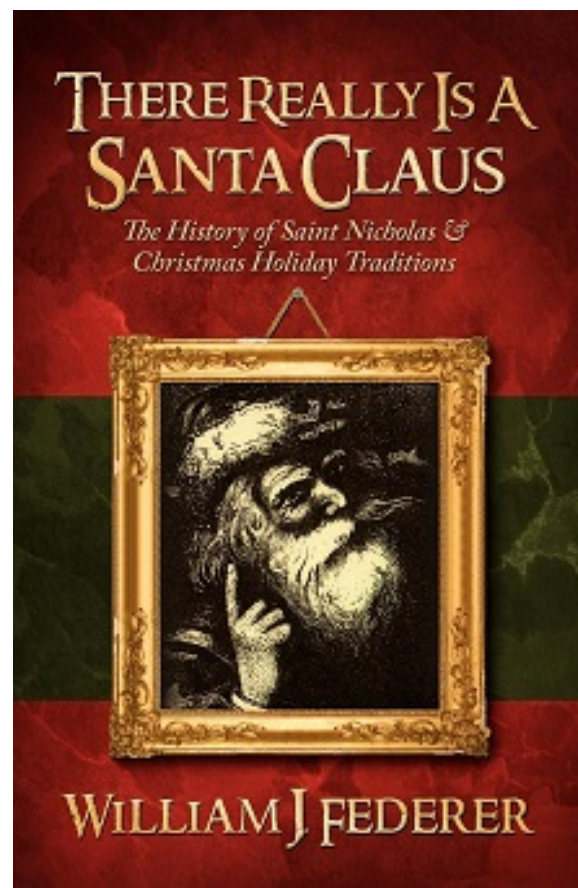
After **World War I** ended, President Woodrow Wilson gave an appeal, December 8, 1918, for support of the American Red Cross:

"One year ago, twenty-two million Americans, by enrolling as members of the Red Cross at **CHRISTMAS time**, sent to the men who were fighting our battles overseas a stimulating message of cheer and goodwill ...



Now, by God's grace, the Red Cross **CHRISTMAS message** of 1918 is to be a message of **peace** as well as a message of **good-will.**"

There Really is a Santa Claus- The History of Saint Nicholas and Christmas Holiday Traditions



Subsequent **U.S. Presidents** continued the tradition of acknowledging **Christmas.**

On December 23, 1921, **President Warren G. Harding** stated of the U.S. delegation drawing up the Four-Powers Treaty, that he:

"... is more than gratified over their efforts, because they are working out the greatest contribution to peace and goodwill which has ever marked the **CHRISTMAS time** in all the Christian era."

President Calvin Coolidge wrote:

"CHRISTMAS is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have **the real spirit of CHRISTMAS.**"



On December 22, 1931, **President Herbert Hoover** stated:

"I have received requests from Federal employees ... that they should be given two periods of holidays ... **CHRISTMAS** and ... New Year's Day ...

While I see little objection to the day following **CHRISTMAS** in order that Federal employees may have an opportunity to join their families ... I do not feel that we should extend the holidays at New Year's."

President Franklin D. Roosevelt stated in his Christmas Message,

December 24,
1942:

"It is significant that **CHRISTMAS Day** our plants and factories will be stilled. That is not true of the other holidays. On all other holidays work goes on--gladly--for the winning of the war.

So **CHRISTMAS becomes the only holiday in all the year.** I like to think that this is so

because **CHRISTMAS is a holy day.** May all it stands for live and grow throughout the years."



On December 24, 1946, **President Harry S Truman** stated:

"We shall find strength and courage at this **CHRISTMAS time** ...

He whose birth we celebrate tonight was the world's greatest teacher. He said:

'Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men

should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.'

Through all the centuries since He spoke, history has vindicated His teaching. In this great country of ours has been demonstrated **the fundamental unity of Christianity and democracy ..."**

Truman
continued:

"... We have our unique national heritage because of a common aspiration to be free and because of our purpose to achieve for ourselves and for our children the good things of life which the **Christ declared He came to give to all mankind ...**



The progress we have made gives hope that in the coming year we shall reach our goal ... the benediction of the Master: **'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God' ...**

I say to all my countrymen: **Merry CHRISTMAS!** ... and may **God bless you all!"**

In 1960, **President Dwight Eisenhower** stated:



"Through the ages men have felt the uplift of **the spirit of CHRISTMAS**. We commemorate **the birth of the Christ Child** by ... giving expression to our gratitude for the **great things that His coming**

has brought about in the world."

President John F. Kennedy stated December 17, 1962:

"CHRISTMAS ... is the most sacred and hopeful day in our civilization."



On December 18, 1963, **President Lyndon Johnson** stated at a News Conference:

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us about your **CHRISTMAS plans** yet?



THE PRESIDENT ... If God is willing and Mrs. Johnson is willing, I plan to fly to my home either the night of the 22d, after I **light the CHRISTMAS tree** ...

I hope to spend **CHRISTMAS Eve** with my family ... I don't want to keep my secrets from you people --- **I might even go hunting.**"

President Richard Nixon stated January 20, 1969:

"As the **Apollo astronauts** flew over the **moon's gray surface** on **CHRISTMAS Eve**, they spoke to us the beauty of earth -- and in that voice so clear across the lunar distance, **we heard them invoke God's blessing on its goodness.**"



President Gerald Ford remarked lighting of the National Community Christmas Tree, December 17, 1974:

"The glow of **CHRISTMAS**, however, should come from a power source which we will never run

short of, our abiding
faith and our love of
God."



**President Jimmy
Carter**
commented in
1977:

"CHRISTMAS has
a special meaning
for **those of us
who are
Christians**, those

of us **who believe in Christ**, those of us who know that
almost 2,000 years ago, **the Son of Peace was born.**"



**President Ronald
Reagan** stated in
his **Christmas
Address**,
DECEMBER 20,
1983:



"Sometimes, in the hustle and bustle of holiday preparations we forget that **the true meaning of Christmas** was given to us by the angelic host that holy night long

ago.

Christmas is the commemoration of **the birth of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ**, whose message would truly be one of **good tidings and great joy, peace and good will.**

During this glorious festival let us renew our determination to **follow His example."**

President Donald J. Trump stated in his **Christmas Address, DECEMBER 16, 2020:**

"To every family across our nation, the First Lady and I want to wish you all a very, very **Merry Christmas.**

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'The Son of God Came into the World': Trump's Address on True Meaning of Christmas

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For Christians, this is a joyous time to remember **God's greatest gift to the world.**

More than two thousand years ago, the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary. He said, 'Do not be afraid, you have

found favor with God.' The angel told her that **she would give birth to a baby boy, Jesus**, who would be called the **Son of the Most High**.

Nine months later, **Christ** was born in the town of Bethlehem. **The Son of God** came into the world in a humble stable. As Christians everywhere know, **the birth of our Lord and Savior changed history forever ..."**

President Trump
continued:

"At Christmas, we give thanks to God and that God sent his only Son to die for us and to offer everlasting peace to all humanity.

More than two millennia after the **birth of Jesus Christ**, his

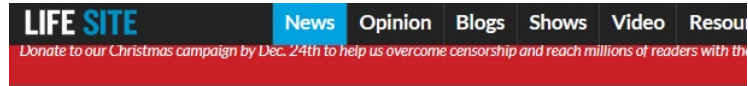
teachings continue to **inspire and uplift billions and billions of people all over the globe.**

His Divine word still fills our hearts with **hope and faith.**

And, **Christians** everywhere still strive to **live by Jesus' timeless commandment** to his disciples, **'Love one another'** ...

Above all, during the sacred season, our souls are full of **thanks and praise for Almighty God for sending us Christ His Son to redeem the world.**

Tonight, **we ask that God will continue to bless this**



NEWS

Trump thanks God for sending Jesus to 'redeem the world' in powerful Christmas message that's gone viral

'At Christmas, we give thanks to God and that God sent his only Son to die for us and to offer everlasting peace to all humanity'

Wed Dec 16, 2020 - 2:10 pm EST



nation. And, we pray that He will grant every American family a **Christmas season** full of joy, hope, and peace.

On behalf of Melania and the entire Trump family, **Merry Christmas** to all and best wishes for a very, very great and happy new year. Thank you."

--

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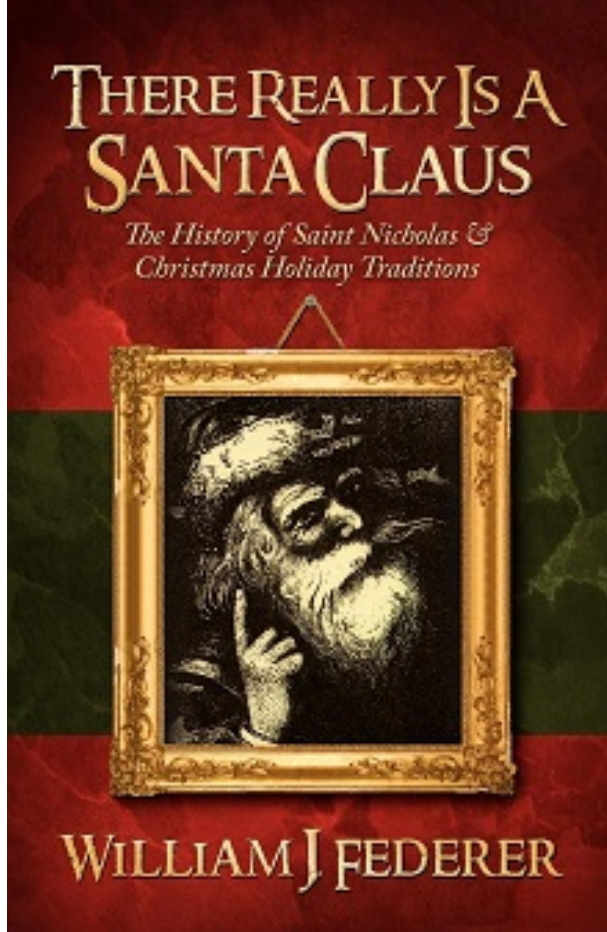
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