

**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

**[Read American Minute](#)**

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 ...



**[continue reading ...](#)**

**[Download as PDF ...](#)**



**[DVD & Flash Drive collection](#)**  
**[Miracles in American History](#)**

**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.

# 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 their trenches to share a fleeting peace.

And now one of the very best of the First World War's Christmas Day truces 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.

His grandson, former history teacher Andrew Hamill, was inspired to retrace his relative's diary and other documents and documents after his daughter visited the battlefield with her school.

He and historian Alan Nevil have drawn on more than 200 photographs, cartoons, songs and sketches to write a book.

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

Mr Nevil was one of the first researchers - the game plan the diary to look at.

"The book, he told, showed a deep interest in the First World War and agreed to research my grandfather's experiences," he said.

"The day I was fascinated following my grandfather's campaign between 1914 and 1915, I don't see why and arranged a local amateur for at home."

He added: "The editors of it 'This is Christmas Day' - Writing in his diary, he described the truce on December 25, 1914. Captain Hamilton wrote: 'A day longer in the world's history. I don't see why and arranged a local amateur for at home.'"

both sides met in their trenches and exchanged greetings and gifts."

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

The book, *Men at Arms, December*, has just been published.



The truce illustrated in this cartoon was also recorded by Captain Robert Hamilton, set in the diary, below

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 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

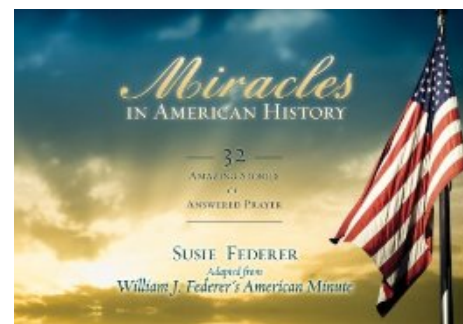
clippers crept up the back of his neck."

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."

[DVD collection Miracles in American History](#)



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 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



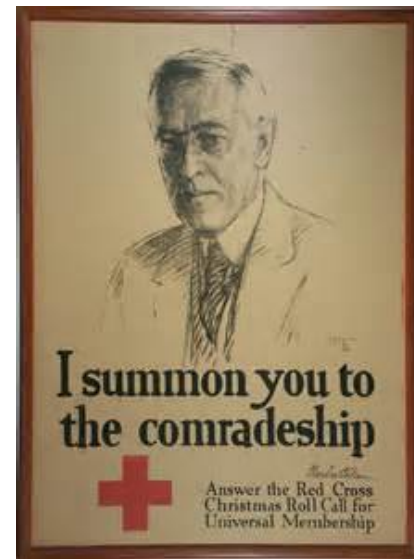
the American troops stationed on the battle-front in France:

"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.**"



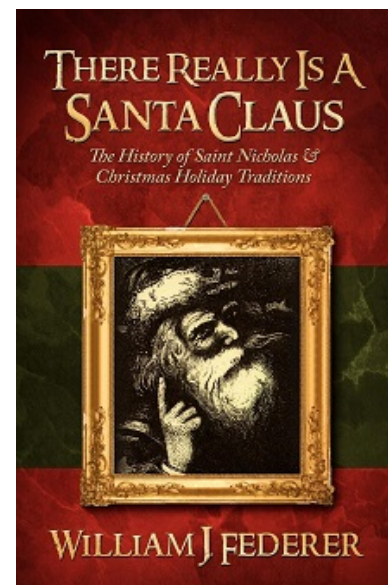
After **World War I** ended, President Woodrow Wilson gave an appeal, December 8, 1918, for support of the American Red Cross:

"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.**

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 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."

--

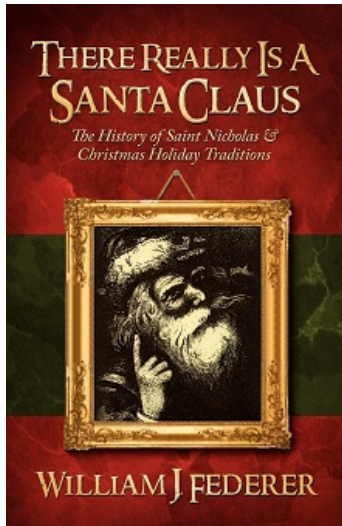
**[Download as PDF ... Christmas Truce of 1914, "Silent Night" & selected Presidential Christmas Greetings](#)**

**[Read as American Minute post](#)**

William J. Federer video &  
audio

**[Rumble](#)**

**[YouTube](#)**



[There Really is a Santa Claus- The History of Saint Nicholas and Christmas Holiday Traditions](#)

Schedule Bill Federer for informative interviews & captivating PowerPoint presentations: 314-502-8924  
[wjfederer@gmail.com](mailto:wjfederer@gmail.com)

American Minute is a registered trademark of William J. Federer. Permission is granted to forward, reprint, or duplicate, with acknowledgment.

[www.AmericanMinute.com](http://www.AmericanMinute.com)

[Please consider a donation to American Priorities. Thank you!](#)

[American Minute store](#)

[Understanding the Culture \(part 1\)](#)

[Understanding the Culture \(part 2\)](#)

[Understanding the Culture \(part 3\)](#)

[Interviews on The Eric Metaxas Show](#)

[Bott Radio Network, Encounter with Judy Redlich, Pilgrim History](#)

[700 Club - Miraculous Milestones in Science, Medicine & Innovation](#)

[700 Club - Socialism \(episode 1\)](#)

[700 Club - Socialism \(episode 2\)](#)

[700 Club - Miracles in History \(episode 1\)](#)

[\(episode 2\)](#)

[\(episode 3\)](#)

[Miracles in American History-Volume TWO \(D.James Kennedy Ministry\)](#)

*[Faith in History TCT](#)*  
*[Archives](#)*  
*[CBN "Liberty" Special](#)*



Amerisearch, Inc | PO BOX 60442, Fort Myers, FL 33906

[Unsubscribe mail@americanminute.com](mailto:mail@americanminute.com)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by [mail@americanminute.com](mailto:mail@americanminute.com) powered by



Try email marketing for free today!