

**Christmas in the Trenches (John McCutcheon)**

G Em C Am  
My name is Francis Toliver, I come from Liverpool.  
D7 C G  
Two years ago the war was waiting for me after school.  
G Em C Am  
To Belgium and to Flanders, Germany to here.  
D7 G  
I fought for King and country I love dear.  
D7 C G  
'Twas Christmas in the trenches, where the frost so bitter hung.  
Em C  
The frozen fields of France were still, no Christmas song was D7  
sung.  
G Em C Am  
Our families back in England were toasting us that day,  
D7 G  
Their brave and glorious lads so far away.

G Em C Am  
I was lying with my mess mates on the cold and rocky ground.  
D7 C G  
When across the lines of battle came a most peculiar sound.  
G Em C Am  
Says I, "now listen up me boys." Each soldier strained to hear  
D7 G  
As one young German voice sang out so clear.  
D7 C G  
"He's singing bloody well y'know," my partner says to me.  
Em C D7  
Soon one by one each German voice joined in in harmony.  
G Em C Am  
The cannons rested silent, and the gas clouds rolled no more.  
D7 G  
As Christmas brought us respite from the war.

G Em C Am  
As soon as they were finished, and a reverent pause was spent,  
D7 C G  
"God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" struck up some lads from Kent.  
G Em C Am  
Oh the next they sang was "Stille Nacht", 'tis Silent Night says I.  
D7 G  
And in two tongues one song filled up that sky.  
D7 C G  
"There's someone coming towards us", the front line sentry cried.  
Em C D7  
All sights were fixed on one lone figure trudging from their side.  
G Em C Am  
His truce flag like a Christmas star shone on that plain so bright  
D7 G  
As he bravely strolled unarmed into the night.

G Em C Am  
Then one by one on either side walked into No-Man's Land.  
D7 C G  
With neither gun nor bayonet we met there hand to hand.  
G Em C Am  
We shared some secret brandy and we wished each other well.  
D7 G  
And in a flare-lit soccer game we gave 'em hell.  
D7 C G  
We traded chocolates, cigarettes and photographs from home.  
Em C D7  
These sons and fathers far away from families of their own.  
G Em C Am  
Young Sanders played the squeezebox and they had a violin.  
D7 G  
This curious and unlikely band of men.

G Em C Am  
Soon daylight stole upon us and France was France once more.  
D7 C G  
With sad farewells we each began to settle back to war.  
G Em C  
But the question haunted every heart that lived that wondrous  
Am  
night.  
D7 G  
"Whose family have I fixed within my sights?"  
D7 C G  
'Twas Christmas in the trenches, where the frost so bitter hung.  
Em C  
The frozen fields of France were warmed as songs of peace were  
D7  
sung.

G Em C Am  
For the walls they kept between us to exact the work of war  
D7 G  
Had been crumbled and were gone forever more.  
G Em C Am  
My name is Francis Toliver, in Liverpool I dwell.  
D7  
Each Christmas comes since World War I,  
C G  
I've learned its lessons well.  
G Em C  
For the ones who call the shots won't be among the dead and  
Am  
lame,  
D7 G  
And on each end of the rifle we're the same.

