



# God Rest Ye Merry, Soldiers: A True Civil War Christmas Story

*James McIvor*

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**God Rest Ye Merry, Soldiers: A True Civil War Christmas Story** James McIvor  
**In the tradition of the bestselling *Silent Night: The Story of the World War I Christmas Truce*, the true story of a Civil War Christmas miracle**

In the waning days of 1862, Union and Confederate troops set up camp within earshot of one another in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Christmas had just passed, and for many of these battle-wearied young soldiers the holiday season was a melancholy reminder of the families and loved ones they'd left behind. Bands from both camps played patriotic songs in an attempt to raise spirits, a musical duel that presaged the bloody battle to come. Then, something extraordinary occurred. One of the bands began playing a popular sentimental tune called "Home Sweet Home." Soon, bands from both sides picked up the tune, and before long thousands of Northern and Southern soldiers had joined together in song.

*God Rest Ye Merry, Soldiers: A True Civil War Christmas Story* tells the tale of this yuletide interlude, which came at a time when the early optimism of the Civil War had given way to the bitter realities of seemingly endless bloodshed. Told through soldiers' letters and period songs, *God Rest Ye Merry, Soldiers* is the hopeful and touching story of human compassion in the midst of unspeakable violence.



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