BBC iWonder

What really happened in the Christmas truce of 1914?

A popular Christmas story

In the summer of 1914, thousands of young men from all over the British Empire signed up to fight in the First World War.

They went to war thinking the fighting would not last long and they would be home by Christmas, but by December, it was pretty clear that was not going to happen.

The war had reached a bloody stalemate. All along the Western Front, the opposing troops were dug into trenches with just a few yards of no man's land between them.

But on Christmas Eve, something extraordinary happened - the soldiers on both sides just stopped fighting. And even more incredibly, as these photographs show, German and British troops left their trenches to spend Christmas together.