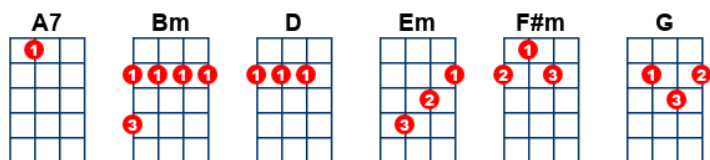


Christmas in the Trenches

written by John McCutcheon

key:D, artist:John McCutcheon



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJi41RWaTCs>

My **[D]** name is Francis **[Bm]** Tolliver.
I **[G]** come from Liver**[Em]**pool.
Two **[A7]** years ago the war was waiting
[G] for me after **[D]** school.
To Belgium and to **[Bm]** Flanders,
to **[G]** Germany to **[Em]** here,
I **[A7]** fought for King and country I love **[D]** dear.
Twas **[A7]** Christmas in the trenches
where the **[G]** frost so bitter **[D]** hung.
The **[Bm]** frozen fields of **[F#m]** France were still,
no **[G]** Christmas song was **[A7]** sung.
Our **[D]** families back in **[Bm]** England
were **[G]** toasting us that **[Em]** day,
Their **[A7]** brave and glorious lads so far a**[D]** way.

I was **[D]** lyin' with my **[Bm]** mess-mate
on the **[G]** cold and rocky **[Em]** ground
When a**[A7]**cross the lines of battle
came a **[G]** most peculiar **[D]** sound.
Says I "Now listen **[Bm]** up me boys",
each **[G]** soldier strained to **[Em]** hear
As **[A7]** one young German voice sang out so **[D]** clear.
"He's **[A7]** singin' bloody well you know",
my **[G]** partner says to **[D]** me.
Soon **[Bm]** one by one each **[F#m]** German voice
[G] joined in in harmo**[A7]**ny.
The **[D]** cannons rested **[Bm]** silent.
The **[G]** gas cloud rolled no **[Em]** more
As **[A7]** Christmas brought us respite from the **[D]** war.

As **[D]** soon as they were **[Bm]** finished
a **[G]** reverent pause was **[Em]** spent.
"God **[A7]** Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen"
struck **[G]** up some lads from **[D]** Kent.
The next they sang was **[Bm]** 'Stille Nacht'
"Tis **[G]** 'Silent Night'" says **[Em]** I
And **[A7]** in two tongues one song filled up that **[D]** sky.

"There's [A7] someone commin' towards us"
the [G] front-line sentry [D] cried.
All [Bm] sights were fixed on [F#m] one lone figure
[G] trudging from their [A7] side.
His [D] truce flag, like a [Bm] Christmas star,
shone [G] on that plain so [Em] bright
As he [A7] bravely strode, unarmed, into the [D] night.

Soon [D] one by one on [Bm] either side
walked [G] into no-mans-[Em]land
With [A7] neither gun nor bayonet
we [G] met there hand to [D] hand.
We shared some secret [Bm] brandy
and [G] wished each other [Em] well
And in a [A7] flare-lit soccer game we gave 'em [D] hell.
We [A7] traded chocolates, cigarettes
and [G] photographs from [D] home
These [Bm] sons and fathers [F#m] far away
from [G] families of their [A7] own.
Young [D] Sanders played his [Bm] squeeze box
They [G] had a vio[Em]lin
This [A7] curious and unlikely band of [D] men.

Instrumental Bridge (Air of 'The Minstrel Boy'):
[D](8) [G](2) [D](2) [A7](2) [D](2)

Soon [D] daylight stole u[Bm]pon us
and [G] France was France once [Em] more.
With [A7] sad farewells we each began
to [G] settle back to [D] war.
But the question haunted [Bm] every heart
that [G] beat that wonderous [Em] night
"Whose [A7] family have I fixed within my [D] sights?"
Twas [A7] Christmas in the trenches
where the [G] frost so bitter [D] hung.
The [Bm] frozen fields of [F#m] France were warmed
as [G] songs of peace were [A7] sung.
For the [D] walls they'd kept bet[Bm]ween us
to e[G]xact the work of [Em] war
Had been [A7] crumbled and were gone forever [D] more.

My [D] name is Francis [Bm] Tolliver.
In [G] Liverpool I [Em] dwell.
Each [A7] Christmas come since World War One I've
[G] learned its lessons [D] well.
That the ones who call the [Bm] shots won't be
a[G]mong the dead and [Em] lame
And on [A7] each end of the rifle we're the [D] same.

Outro (repeat bridge): [D](8) [G](2) [D](2) [A7](2) [D](hold)