

## 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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