

ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE

asolo rep

asolo rep PRESENTS
ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE

A Special Holiday Event in Partnership with **The Ringling**

All Is Calm

The Christmas Truce of 1914



**DEC 3 -
DEC 19,
2025**

Written by **PETER ROTHSTEIN**
Vocal Arrangements by **ERICK LICHTÉ** and **TIMOTHY C. TAKACH**
Directed by **PETER ROTHSTEIN** Music Direction by **ERICK LICHTÉ**

SEASON SUPPORT

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JUDY ZUCKERBERG, IN LOVING MEMORY OF GEORGE KOLE

**SPECIAL SEASON SUPPORT PROVIDED BY
THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF SARASOTA-MANATEE**

* in memoriam

CAST
IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

SASHA ANDREEV*
PHINEHAS BYNUM
DANIEL GRECO
BRADLEY GREENWALD*
THOMAS MCNICHOLS
RILEY MCNUTT
RODOLFO NIETO*
ANDREW WILKOWSKE
EVAN TYLER WILSON*

*Members of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

PEOPLE CITED

Dick Barron,
2nd London Mounted Brigade
Private Frank Bass,
9th Battalion Norfolk Regiment
Robert Burns,
7th Queens Own Cameron Highlanders
Winston Churchill,
First Lord of the Admiralty
Private W. T. Colyer,
Artists’ Rifles
Lance Corporal Coulson,
London Rifle Brigade
Cyril Drummond,
Royal Field Artillery
Corporal John Fergusen,
Seaforth Highlanders
General Sir John French,
British Expeditionary Force
Count Gleichen, Brigadier General,
15th Brigade
Captain Sir Edward Hulse,
Scots Guards
Hugo Klemm,
133rd Saxon Regiment

Maurice Laurentin,
Commandant 6e Compagnie
Francis Edward Ledwidge,
Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers
Geoffrey Lillywhite,
Royal Engineers
George Littlefair,
Durham Light Infantry
Private Tom Macdonald,
9th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment
Patrick MacGill,
London Irish Regiment
Lt. General C.F.N. Macready,
British Army
Private Peter McGregor,
14th Battalion Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders
Albert Moren,
2nd Queen’s Regiment
Sgt. G. H. Morgan,
Royal Warwickshire Regiment
Oberstleutnant Johannes Niemann,
133rd Royal Saxon Regiment

Wilfred Owen,
Manchester Regiment
Second Lieutenant Arthur Pelham-Burn,
6 Gordon Highlanders
Private W.R.M. Percy,
London Rifle Brigade
Pope Benedict XV
Jack Rogers,
Sherwood Foresters
Siegfried Sassoon,
Royal Welch Fusiliers
Private Frank Sumpter,
London Rifle Brigade
Private Jack Sweeney,
1st Battalion, Lincolnshire Regiment
G. T. Forrestier-Walker,
Brigadier General
H.G.R. Williams,
London Rifle Brigade
Henry Williamson,
London Rifle Brigade
Frank and Maurice Wray,
London Rifle Brigade

Mr. Rothstein would like to extend his gratitude to these generous individuals and impressive institutions for their research assistance: Bibliothèque-Musée l’Opera National de Paris; Imperial War Museum, London; Dominiek Dendooven and the In Flanders Field Museum & Archive, Ypres, Belgium; Musée de l’Armee, Paris; Over the Top Tours, Ypres, Belgium; Royal Museum of the Armed Forces & Military History, Brussels; Anti-Kriegs-Museum, Berlin.

MUSICAL NUMBERS

PROLOGUE

Will Ye Go to Flanders? Scottish Traditional

THE OPTIMISTIC DEPARTURE

Come on and Join (Alexander’s Ragtime Band) Music: Irving Berlin, Words: Anonymous
God Save the King English Traditional
Good-Bye-Ee Weston and Bert Lee

THE GRIM REALITY

It’s a Long Way to Tipperary Jack Judge and Harry Williams
Les Godillots Paul Briollet and Eugene Rimbault, based on French Traditional
Pack up your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag George Henry and Felix Powell
The Old Barbed Wire English Traditional
I Want to Go Home Lieut. Gitz Rice
When this Bloody War is Over Music: Charles Crozat Converse
(What a Friend We Have in Jesus) Words: Anonymous
Raining, Raining, Raining (Holy, Holy, Holy) Music: John B. Dykes, Words: Anonymous
Deutschlandlied Franz Joseph Haydn
Keep the Home-Fires Burning Ivor Novello
O Come, O Come Emmanuel 12th Century Chant

CHRISTMAS

Christmas in the Camp Harrington and Scott
We Wish You a Merry Christmas English Traditional
Die Wacht Am Rhein Karl Wilhelm
Christmas Day in the Cookhouse English Traditional
O Tannenbaum German Traditional

THE TRUCE

Stille Nacht (Silent Night) Franz Gruber
Angels We Have Heard on High French Traditional
Er is een Kindeke geboren Flemish Traditional
Un flambeau, Jeannette, Isabella French Traditional
The First Noel English Traditional
Ihr Kinderlein, kommet Music: Johann Abraham Peter Schulz
Words: Christoph von Schmid
Wassail Erick Lichte based on Traditional English Texts
Minuit Chrétiens Adolph Adam
Will Ye Go to Flanders? (Reprise) Scottish Traditional
Es ist ein Ros entsprungen German Traditional
Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern Philip Nicolai
Good King Wenceslas Piae Cantiones

THE RETURN TO BATTLE

Auld Lang Syne Scottish Traditional
We’re Here Because We’re Here (Auld Lang Syne) Music: Scottish Traditional, Words: Anonymous

EPILOGUE

The Last Post English Bugle Call
Stille Nacht (Reprise) Franz Gruber

The Cast

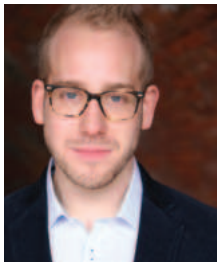


SASHA ANDREEV proudly returns to Asolo Repertory Theatre with *All is Calm*. Previous Asolo Rep credits include: *Good Night, Oscar*; *Twelve Angry Men*; *Intimate Apparel*; *Inherit the Wind*; and *Ragtime*. This year marks his seventh with the show, which he's performed at Theatre Latté Da, on tour, Off-Broadway, and on PBS. Regional credits include: Guthrie Theater, Repertory Theater of St. Louis, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Mixed Blood Theater, History Theatre, and Theatre de la Jeune Lune. On screen, Sasha recently appeared in *A Taste of Love* (Hallmark Channel), *Stranger Things* (Netflix), host of *Curb Appeal* (HGTV) and *Operation Build* (A&E), and in numerous commercials and films. IG: SashaAndreevNow



PHINEHAS BYNUM is thrilled to return to Asolo Repertory Theatre this holiday season! He is based out of Minneapolis, MN, and has previously worked with Peter Rothstein and Theater Latté Da in *Candide*, *All is Calm*, *Christmas at the Local*, and the NEXT Festival (new works). A security engineer by day, he's

also performed with Theatre Elision, Minnesota Opera, Artistry, and Skylark Opera. Phinehas is grateful to his steadfast partner Katie for supporting his time away from home to be with you. Enjoy the show and take a moment today to remember a past loved one!



DANIEL GRECO is a Twin Cities-based performer, voice teacher, songwriter, and music director. He is thrilled to be returning to Asolo Repertory Theatre for his fourth production of *All is Calm*. Other credits include: productions and new work initiatives with Theater Latté Da, Nautilus Music-Theater, and Minnesota

Opera. In addition to maintaining a private voice studio, Daniel serves as Director of Worship & Chorale at Meetinghouse Church and on the voice faculties of University of St. Thomas and Lutheran Summer Music Academy and Festival where he also supervises the vocal pedagogy fellowship. He is a graduate of St. Olaf College and NYU. www.danielgrecomusic.com



BRADLEY GREENWALD is a singer, actor, writer and director in Minneapolis. He adapted Madeleine L'Engle's novel *A Wrinkle in Time* for Libby Larsen's opera; wrote the book and lyrics for *C.* (adaptation of *Cyrano de Bergerac*), and *Johnny Skeeky* (adaptation of the Puccini comedy, with Steven Epp), both

produced by Theater Latté Da. Bradley has created innovative spoken word/music concerts for Open Eye Theater, Schubert Club Mix, Oratorio Society of Minnesota and Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh. He is the recipient of a Minnesota State Arts Board Fellowship in music, the McKnight Fellowship for Theater Artists, and the Ivey Award.



THOMAS MCNICHOLS is described by the *New York Times* as an "oceanic bass," Tom McNichols' work spans more than 20 years across five continents, 700+ live performances, radio broadcasts and fifteen studio recordings including the Grammy-Nominated Tyberg-Masses with the South Dakota

Chorale. His career started with Cantus in 2003. Tom holds a BA in Theatre performance from The State University of NY-Plattsburgh and a MM in Vocal Performance from The Peabody Institute at The Johns Hopkins University. Outside of his stage work, Tom manages custom development projects in New York's Adirondacks region and has worked as a real estate broker for over 20 years. www.thewoodlab.com



RILEY MCNUTT returns for Asolo Repertory Theatre's production of *All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914*, having been previously seen at Asolo Rep in *Twelve Angry Men: A New Musical*. Previously performed in productions of *All is Calm* Off-Broadway, in national tours as well as on PBS. Most recently, he was seen in *Treasure Island* at The Children's Theater Company. Additional regional credits include: Theater Latté Da's *Passion*, *Next to Normal*, *A Little Night Music*, *Ragtime*, and *Hello Dolly!* The Ordway Theater's *Beauty and the Beast*, Minnesota Orchestra's *Carousel*, Artistry Theater's *Phantom*, *Les Misérables*, *Cabaret*, *A New Brain*, *La Cage aux Folles*, and with Flying Foot Forum in *Heaven*.



RODOLFO NIETO is delighted to return to Asolo Repertory Theatre with *All is Calm*. He previously appeared at Asolo Rep as Dr. Carrasco in *Man of La Mancha*. He is a frequent presence on the Twin Cities (MN) Theater stage, appearing with Theater Latté Da: *Passion*, *All is Calm: The Christmas*

Truce of 1914, *Hello Dolly!*, *La Bohème*, *A Little Night Music*, *Assassins*; History Theatre: *Dirty Business*, *Buddy*; Mixed Blood Theatre: *Safe at Home*; Minnesota Opera: *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*, *Werther*, *Silent Night*, *La Bohème*; and Artistry: *The Sound of Music*, *A New Brain*. As a composer and songwriter, much of his original work can be heard on his YouTube channel @rodolfonieto8604. More at www.rodolfo-nieto.com



ANDREW WILKOWSKE Hailed by *Opera News* as "a natural comedian and a fine singer," Andrew Wilkowske is known on the opera and theater stage for his dynamic performances and masterful stage presence. He has performed at Minnesota Opera, Los

Angeles Opera, Komische Opera Berlin, Cincinnati Opera, Atlanta Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Chicago Opera Theater, and Carnegie Hall among others. His rock recital *Guns N' Rosenkavalier* has played across the country, and he and librettist Kelley Rourke were commissioned by Theater Latté Da in Minneapolis to re-imagine the Verdi/Piave opera *Macbeth* for rock instrumentation. Wilkowske lives in St. Paul, MN. www.andrewwilkowske.com



EVAN TYLER WILSON is thrilled to return to the cast of *All is Calm!* Credits include Asolo Repertory Theatre: *Sweeney Todd* (Pirelli); Theatre Latté Da: *Journey On*, *Cinderella* (Lord Pinkleton), *Assassins* (John Hinckley Jr.), *C.* (Uncle Monty); Chanhassen Dinner Theatre: *Grease* (Roger), *Footloose* (Garvin),

The Music Man (Quartet). Evan is a proud member of AEA. www.Evantylertwilson.com

AFFILIATIONS

Asolo Repertory Theatre is a member of the Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the League of Resident Theatres (LORT), the National Alliance for Musical Theatre (NAMT), Florida Professional Theatre Association (FPTA), the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County, and the Manatee County Cultural Alliance.

UNION CREDITS

Asolo Rep operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States; the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society; and the United Scenic Artists Local USA-829, IATSE Local 412 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Moving Pictures Machine Operators of the United States and Canada.



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The Creative Team

TREVOR BOWEN (Costume Design) is based in Minneapolis, MN. *Ragtime* (Asolo Repertory Theatre), *Sweat* (Asolo Rep); *The Watsons go to Birmingham-1963* (Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts); *Fellow Travelers*, *Champion*, *La Cenerentola* (Boston Lyric Opera); *The Histories*, *Hamlet*, *We Are Proud to Present*, *Choir Boy* (Guthrie Theatre); *The Color Purple* (Denver Center); *Black Beauty*, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* (Seattle Children's Theatre); *Moliere's 400th* (FIAF); *Ride the Cyclone* (Arena Stage); *Shane*, *Clyde's* (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park); *BLKS*, *True West* (Steppenwolf); *Corduroy*, *Something Happened in Our Town*, *Drawing Lessons* (Children's Theatre Company). Trevor Bowen is a 2021-22 McKnight Theater Artist Fellow at the Playwrights' Center, and a member of USA 829. www.trevorbowendesign.com

MARCUS F. DILLIARD (Lighting Design) is thrilled to be back at Asolo Repertory Theatre with *All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914*. He has designed for Theatre Latté Da, The Moving Company, Theatre de la Jeune Lune, the Guthrie Theater, Penumbra Theatre, Minnesota Opera, Minnesota Orchestra, American Repertory Theatre, Intiman Theatre, and Actors Theatre of Louisville. Opera designs include: Pittsburgh Opera, the Spoleto Festival (Italy), the Athens Festival, Flanders Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Vancouver Opera, Opéra de Montréal, Canadian Opera Company and Boston Lyric Opera. Marcus is a graduate of Boston University's School for the Arts, a member of United Scenic Artists and a University of Minnesota Professor Emeritus.

ROSS EGAN (Managing Director) is the Managing Director at Asolo Repertory Theatre. Ross's arts administration career began in Chicago where he was a co-founder of Jeff-award-winning Refuge Theatre Project. Ross has served as Managing Director at Barter Theatre, the nation's longest-running professional theatre, and as Director of Marketing & Operations at Illinois Shakespeare Festival. Ross holds a BFA in acting from Michigan State University and an MBA from Illinois State University. He lives with his family in Lakewood Ranch and proudly serves as a den leader for Scouting America.

GREG EMETAZ (Projection Design) THEATER: *Come from Away*, *Ken Ludwig's Lady Molly of Scotland Yard*, *All is Calm*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Ken Ludwig's The Three Musketeers*, *Murder on the Orient Express* (Asolo Repertory Theatre); *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *All Shook Up*, *Footloose*, *Singin' in the Rain* (The Muny); *Mamma Mia!*, *Newsies* (TUTS); *The Vagrant Trilogy* (The Public Theater); OPERA: *Champion*, *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* (The Metropolitan Opera); *La Fanciulla Del West* (NCPA Beijing); *M. Butterfly*, *Tristan*, *The Righteous* (Santa Fe Opera). CONCERT: Liz Phair *Exile in Guyville* Tour. FILM: feature film *Camp Wedding*; short films: *Bowes Academy*, *Spell Claire*, *Get the F K Outta Paris!*, *Death by Omelette*. Behind-the-scenes documentaries: Julie Taymor's *The Tempest* and *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark*. www.MINORapocalypse.com

HANNA HAGERTY (Assistant Stage Manager) is very excited to be returning to Asolo Repertory Theatre! Her previous Asolo Rep credits include: last season's production of *All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914* as Assistant Stage Manager, *Much Ado About Nothing* on Tour as Stage Manager, and *Crazy for You* and *Dial M for Murder* as Stage Management Apprentice. Other credits include *Ring of Fire* and *The 39 Steps* at Drury Lane Theatre in Oakbrook, IL. She'd like to thank her parents, family, friends, and partner for their unwavering support, and Asolo Rep for welcoming her back!

MICHELLE HART (Hair, Wig, and Makeup Design) designs for Asolo Repertory Theatre and FSU/Asolo Conservatory. Other credits: Sarasota Ballet, Palm Beach Drama Works, freeFall Theatre, Urbanite Theatre, Florida Studio Theatre, Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe, Banyan Theatre, Ruth Eckerd Hall, Venice Theatre, Dorset Theatre, Barrington Stage and Open Stage Theatre. She has also done hair and/or make-up for Joan Rivers, Doris Roberts, Martin Short, Jane Russell, Arlene Dahl, Soledad Villamil, Jane Pauley, Richard Dreyfuss, Castille Langdon, Christopher Higgins, Mary Mara, Heather Robb, Lauren Sweetser, Justin Long, Paul Downs, Douglas Sills and Nia Hills; music videos: "Second Chance" by Shinedown, "Reverse Cowgirl" by T-Pain; film and television: *Lady Of The Manor*, *Paradise, FL* and *The Real Stephen Blatt*.

KAITLIN KITZMILLER (AEA Stage Manager) is thrilled to be returning to Asolo Repertory Theatre. Previous regional credits include: Goodman Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Paramount Theatre, Drury Lane Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Resident Ensemble Players, Theatre Silco and Peninsula Players. Kaitlin is a proud member of Actor's Equity Association.

ERICK LICHTÉ (Music Director, Vocal Arrangements, & Original Compositions) has been hailed by *The Washington Post* for the "audacity" of his programming and noted by the *Chicago Tribune* for the "meticulous preparation" of his choirs. As a founding member, singer and Artistic Director of the male vocal ensemble Cantus, Lichte created and sustained one of only two full-time vocal ensembles in the United States. He is currently Artistic Director of Vancouver, BC's Chor Leoni, one of the most active and popular choirs in North America. He is a JUNO nominee, a two-time recipient of Chorus America's Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence and has won a Drama Desk Award for his work in the off-Broadway run of his a cappella musical *All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914*.

PETER ROTHSTEIN (Producing Artistic Director, Director, and Writer) is the Producing Artistic Director for Asolo Repertory Theatre where he directed *Come from Away*, *Ken Ludwig's Lady Molly of Scotland Yard* (World Premiere), *Twelve Angry Men*; *A New Musical*, *Inherit The Wind*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *Ragtime*. He works extensively as a director of theater, musicals, theater, opera, and new work development. For 25 years, Rothstein served as the Founding Artistic Director of Theater Latté Da, a Minneapolis-based company dedicated to new and adventurous music-theater. Other collaborations include: the Guthrie Theater, Children's Theatre Company, Ten Thousand Things, and Seattle's 5th Avenue, as well as the Minnesota Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Florida Grand Opera, and Chicago Opera Theater. Rothstein served on the board of directors for the National Alliance for Musical Theatre, Alive and Kickin', and the Twin Cities' Ivey Awards. He has been a panelist and evaluator for the Playwrights' Center, the McKnight Foundation, the Minnesota State Arts Board, and the National Alliance for Musical Theatre's Festival of New Musicals. He holds degrees in music and theater from St. John's University and an MFA in Directing from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

TIMOTHY C. TAKACH (Vocal Arrangements) Reviewed as "gorgeous" (*The Washington Post*) and "stunning" (*Lawrence Journal-World*), the music of Timothy C. Takach is rapidly gaining momentum in the concert world. Applauded for his melodic lines and rich, intriguing harmonies, Takach is a full-time composer and has received a number of commissions from various organizations including VocalEssence, the St. Olaf Band, Cantus, Pavia Winds, cellist Kirsten Whitson, Lorelei, The Rose Ensemble and the University of Notre Dame DeBartolo Performing Arts Center. His compositions have been performed on *A Prairie Home Companion*, The Boston Pops holiday tour, multiple All-State and festival programs and at venues such as the Library of Congress, Kennedy Center and Royal Opera House Muscat. Takach has been awarded grants from the American Composers Forum, Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, and the Minnesota State Arts Board and Meet the Composer, and yearly ASCAP awards since 2004. He studied Music Theory and Composition at St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN, where he graduated with honors. Takach lives in Minneapolis with his wife and two sons.

KEELY WOLTER (Dialect Coach) holds an MA in Voice Studies from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London. She has served as a voice and accent coach with Theater Latté Da, the Guthrie Theater, Jungle Theater, Park Square Theater, Old Log Theater, the University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater BFA program, and many others. Keely is also a voice and stage actor, a member of VASTA (the Voice and Speech Trainers Association), and former editor of the VASTA Voice Publication.

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS:

Production Assistant - **D. Marie Long**

Audio - **Pascal Danon**

Stagehand - **Rosland Drapkin**

Electrician - **Christy Perry**

Wardrobe - **Claire Wallenda**

Donor Spotlight



Matty Matheson

Retired Coast Guard pilot Matty Matheson occupies some rarefied air among Sarasota's distinguished veterans. Born in Maine in 1936, he was raised near Augusta airport, where planes would launch on their way to being ferried across the Atlantic during WWII. Watching military aircraft soar over his house, Matty determined that someday he would fly them. "My childhood dreams came true," he says now. Although Matty retired after 37 years of military and commercial flying, his legacy lives on with all three of his sons becoming Naval aviators and a grandson rising to the rank of Naval Lt. Cmdr. Feeling that theatre and the arts are catalysts for generating empathy, Matty loves the story of the Christmas Truce. "People need to know that the military does a lot of nice things other than defending [the country] with arms," he says. The competence, moxie, and courage it takes Coast Guardsmen to fly rescue missions in perilous weather are worth celebrating. Matty saved over a dozen people in his career and is very grateful for never having had to kill another person in combat. We are very grateful to you, Matty, for your support of great theatre and for your service.



Gold Coast Eagle Distributing, founded by John W. Saputo in 1996 after acquiring Twin City Distributors, proudly serves over 1,600 retailers across Florida. With more than 200 dedicated employees, the company upholds a mission of customer satisfaction through honest, timely, and high-quality service and merchandising. Saputo's extensive experience spans Michigan, New York, and North Carolina. Gold Coast Eagle is honored to support Asolo Repertory Theatre's 2025–2026 season.



WEDU PBS, West Central Florida's PBS station, is a trusted community resource offering award-winning, educational, and inspirational content across television, digital platforms, and community outreach. Supported by viewers, WEDU serves people of all ages and backgrounds through local programming, events, and educational initiatives. A window to the world for the homebound and a vital tool for lifelong learning, WEDU is proud to be a leader, partner, and valued member of America's most trusted institution—PBS.



Simply Gourmet creates an oasis of comfort and luxury through exceptional cuisine rooted in classic French tradition, enhanced by global flavors. With over 25 years of experience, our Executive Chefs craft gourmet dishes with care and precision. As a full-service catering company, we personalize each menu to meet your tastes and budget while guiding you through every planning detail. Passion drives us—because when you love what you do, it shows in every event we serve.



Locally owned SRQ MEDIA, founded by Lisl Liang and Wes Roberts in 1997, is a hyper-local media company capturing the vibrant stories of Sarasota and Bradenton. Through magazines, digital media, and documentaries, SRQ celebrates the people, culture, and creativity shaping Florida's West Coast. Dedicated to fostering community pride, philanthropy, and engagement, SRQ inspires audiences to live and love local—strengthening connections between residents and the region they call home.

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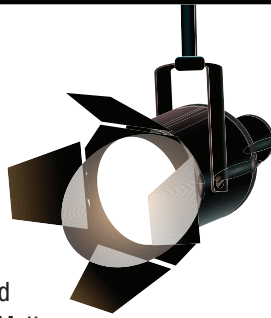
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CREATING ALL IS CALM: THE CHRISTMAS TRUCE OF 1914

By Peter Rothstein

I studied World War I in high school and college, but I don't remember reading about the Christmas Truce in any of my textbooks. This extraordinary event took place in 1914, the first year of the war, and was never repeated. Thousands of men put down their guns and left their trenches to meet their enemies in No Man's Land. They exchanged gifts of tobacco, rum, chocolates, and even photographs of loved ones. They sang songs, played a game of soccer, and buried each other's dead. Upon orders from above, they eventually returned to their trenches and re-instigated a war that would last four more years.

So why did I not learn of this remarkable event? The propaganda machine of war is powerful, and news of soldiers fraternizing across enemy lines would put a human face on the Germans and readily undermine public support for the war. The unsung heroes

of this story are the lowest of the ranks — the young, the hungry, the cold, and the optimistic — those who acted with great courage to put down their guns, overcoming a fear that placed a gun in their hands in the first place. Their story puts a human face on war, and that is why I chose to anchor our play with their actual words, taken from sources including letters, journals, and official war documents... as well as the songs they sang on that calm, cold, clear Christmas night.

One of the reasons I love working in the theater versus film or television, is because the theater is a two-way street. It asks the audience to engage their imagination to complete the story. *All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914* offers the words of these remarkable men. Completing the story and putting a human face on war — well, that's up to you.



Amazing Armistice

The Historic Christmas Truce of 1914

Despite the bitter fighting which had been going on for over four months, a remarkable armistice was observed in many sectors on Christmas Day 1914, and English and German soldiers ceased killing each other for one day and fraternized in a most genuine manner.

In the following letter a Captain of the Scots Guards describes the extraordinary scenes enacted between the lines during this highly unofficial truce. The author held a regular commission in the Scots Guards in 1914 — he was killed in action, France, March 12, 1915, aged 25.



By Captain
Sir Edward Hulse, Bart.

My Dearest Mother,

Just returned to billets again, after the most extraordinary Christmas in the trenches you could possibly imagine. Words fail me completely, in trying to describe it, but here goes! On the 23rd we took over the trenches in the ordinary manner, relieving the Grenadiers, and during the 24th the usual firing took place, and sniping was pretty brisk. We stood to arms as usual at 6.30 a.m. on the 25th, and I noticed that there was not much shooting; this gradually died down, and by 8 a.m. there was no shooting at all, except for a few shots on our left.

At 8.30 a.m. I was looking out, and saw four Germans leave their trenches and come towards us; I told two of my men to go and meet them, unarmed (as the Germans were unarmed), and to see that they did not pass the halfway line.

We were 350–400 yards apart at this point. My fellows were not very keen, not knowing what was up, so I went out alone, and met Barry, one of our ensigns, also coming out from another part of the line. By the time we got to them, they were half of the way over, and much too near our barbed wire, so I moved them back.

They were three private soldiers and a stretcherbearer, and their spokesman started off by saying that he thought it only right to come over and wish us a happy Christmas, and trusted us implicitly to keep the truce. He came from Suffolk, where he had left his best girl and a 3 h.p. motor-bike! He told me that he could not get a letter to the girl, and wanted to send one through me. I made him write out a postcard in front of me, in English, and I sent it off that night. I told him that

she probably would not be a bit keen to see him again. We then entered on a long discussion on every sort of thing. I was dressed in an old stockingcap and a man's overcoat, and they took me for a corporal, a thing which I did not discourage, as I had an eye to going as near their lines as possible.

I asked them what orders they had from their officers as to coming over to us, and they said none; that they had just come over out of goodwill.

They protested that they had no feeling of enmity at all towards us, but that everything lay with their authorities, and that being soldiers they had to obey. I believe that they were speaking the truth when they said this, and that they never wished to fire a shot again. They said that unless directly

ordered, they were not going to shoot again until we did.

They think that our press is to blame in working up feeling against them by publishing false "atrocities reports." We had a heated, and at the same time, good-natured argument, and ended by hinting to each other that the other was lying!

I kept it up for half an hour, and then escorted them back as far as their barbed wire, having a jolly good look round all the time, and picking up various little bits of information which I had not had an opportunity of doing under fire! I left instructions with them that if any of them came out later they must not come over the half-way line, and appointed a ditch as the meeting place. We parted, after an exchange of Albany cigarettes and German cigars, and I went straight to H.-qrs. to report.

On my return at 10 a.m. I was surprised to hear a hell of a din going on, and not a single man left in my trenches. I heard strains of

"Tipperary" floating down the breeze, swiftly followed by a tremendous burst of "Deutschland über Alles," and I saw, to my amazement, not only a crowd of about 150 British and Germans at the half-way house which I had appointed opposite my lines, but six or seven such crowds, all the way down our lines, extending towards the 8th Division on our right. I hustled out and asked if there were any German officers in my crowd, and the noise died down (as this time I was myself in my own cap and badges of rank). I found two, but had to talk to them through an interpreter, as they could neither talk English nor French. I explained to them that strict orders must be maintained as to meeting half-way, and everyone unarmed; and we both agreed not to fire until the other did, thereby creating a complete deadlock and armistice (if strictly observed). Meanwhile Scots and Huns were fraternizing in the most genuine possible manner. Every sort of souvenir

was exchanged, addresses given and received, photos of families shown, etc. One of our fellows offered a German a cigarette: the German said, "Virginian?" Our fellow said, "Aye, straight-cut." The German said, "No thanks, I only smoke Turkish!" It gave us all a good laugh.

A German N.C.O. with the Iron Cross, gained, he told me, for conspicuous skill in sniping, started his fellows off on some marching tune. When they had done I set the note for "The Boys of Bonnie Scotland, where the heather and the bluebells grow," and so we went on, singing everything from "Good King Wenceslaus" down to the ordinary Tommies' song, and ended up with "Auld Lang Syne," which we all, English, Scots, Irish, Prussian, Wurtembergers, etc., joined in. It was absolutely astounding, and if I had seen it on a cinematograph film I should have sworn that it was faked. From foul rain and wet, the weather had cleared up the night before, to a sharp



frost, and it was a perfect day, everything white, and the silence seemed extraordinary, after the usual din. From all sides birds seemed to arrive, and we hardly ever see a bird generally. Later in the day I fed about 50 sparrows outside my dug-out, which shows how complete the silence and quiet was. I must say that I was very much impressed with the whole scene, and also, as everyone else, astoundingly relieved by the quiet, and by being able to walk about freely. It is the first time, day or night, that we have heard no guns, or rifle firing, since I left Havre and convalescence!

It was now 11.30 a.m. and at this moment George Paynter arrived on the scene, with a hearty “Well, my lads, a Merry Christmas to you! This is damned comic, isn’t it?” George told them that he thought it only right that we should show that we could desist from hostilities on a day

which was so important in both countries; and he then said, “Well, my boys, I’ve brought you over something to celebrate this funny show with,” and he produced from his pocket a large bottle of rum (not ration rum, but the proper stuff). One large shout went up, and the above-mentioned nasty little spokesman uncorked it, and in a heavy, ceremonious manner, drank our healths, in the name of his “camaraden;” the bottle was then passed on and polished off before you could say knife.

During the afternoon the same extraordinary scene was enacted between the lines, and one of the enemy told me that he was longing to get back to London, I assured him that “So was I.” He said that he was sick of the war, and I told him that when the truce was ended, any of his friends would be welcome in our



trenches, and would be well-received, fed, and given a free passage to the Isle of Man!

Another courting meeting took place, with no result, and at 4.30 p.m. we agreed to keep in our respective trenches, and told them that the truce was ended. They persisted, however, in saying that they were not going to fire, and as George had told us not to, unless they did, we prepared for a quiet night, but warned all sentries to be doubly on the alert.

During the day both sides had taken the opportunity of bringing up piles of wood, straw, etc., which is generally only brought up with difficulty under fire. We improved our dug-outs, roofed in new ones, and got a lot of very useful work done towards increasing our comfort. The Border Regiment were occupying this section on Christmas Day, and Giles Loder, our Adjutant, went down there with a party that morning on hearing of the friendly demonstrations in front of my Coy., to see if he could come to an agreement about our dead, who were still lying out between the trenches. The trenches are so close at this point, that of course each side had to be far stricter.

Well, he found an extremely pleasant and superior stamp of German officer, who arranged to bring all our dead to the half-way line. We took them over there, and buried 29 exactly half way between

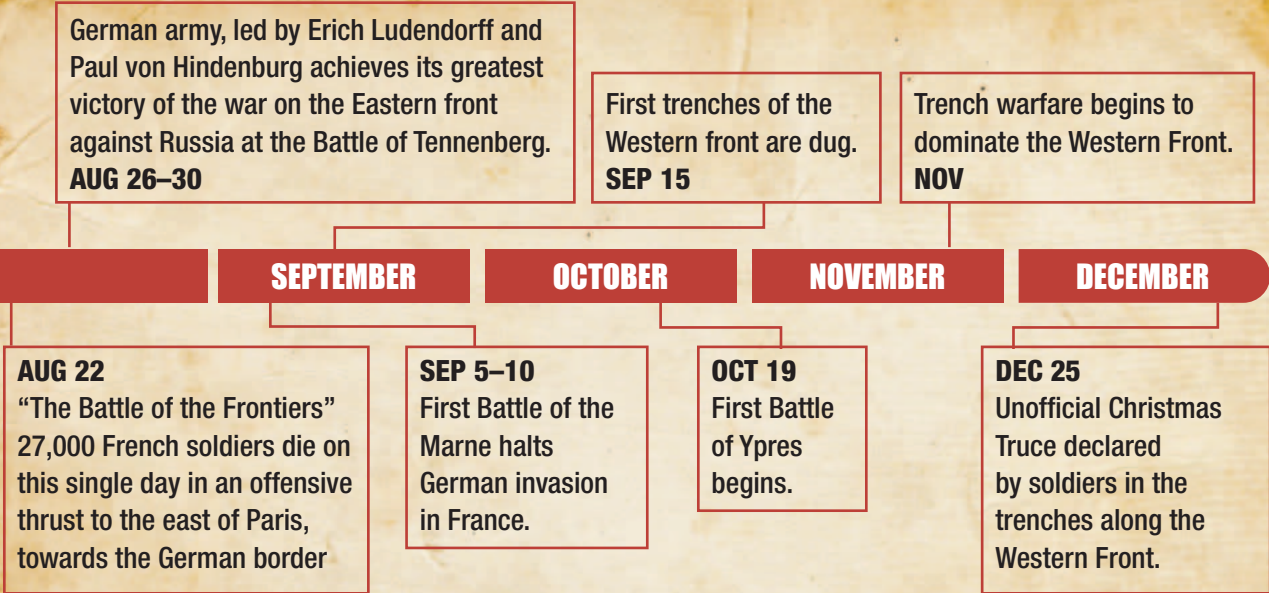
the two lines. This officer kept on pointing to our dead and saying, “Les Braves, c’est bien dommage.” When George heard of it he went down to that section and talked to the nice officer and gave him a scarf. That same evening a German orderly came to the half-way line, and brought a pair of warm, woolly gloves as a present in return for George.

Well, all was quiet, as I said, that night, and next morning, while I was having breakfast, one of my N.C.O.s came and reported that the enemy were again coming over to talk. I had given full instructions, and none of my men were allowed out of the trenches to talk to the enemy. I had also told the N.C.O. of an advanced post which I have up a ditch, to go out with two men, unarmed, if any of the enemy came over, to see that they did not cross the half-way line, and to engage them in pleasant conversation. So I went out,

and found the same lot as the day before; they told me again that they had no intention of firing, and wished the truce to continue. I had instructions not to fire till the enemy did; I told them; and so the same comic form of temporary truce continued on the 26th, and again at 4.30 p.m. I informed them that the truce was at an end. We had sent them over some plum puddings, and they thanked us heartily for them and retired again.

Many thanks for your letters, which amused me greatly with the various anecdotes. Please wish Gramps very many happy returns of to-day, and tell him that I have instructed you to hand this letter to him, as Birthday Wishes, as I have not a minute to write any others. Very Best Wishes for the New Year to you and O., and all at home.

*Ever Your
Loving Ted*



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