



WW1 Christmas Truce

On the first year of the First World War 1914, it was the night of Christmas Eve, and the British were in one trench and the Germans in another. It was somewhat quiet, until the Germans in their trench were singing **Stille Nacht** or **Silent Night** in English and because it was Christmas the British heard and joined in across the no mans land (the space between the trenches). Then it fell silent again until the next morning when a British general called Brigadier-General Walter Congreve saw one of his men go over into no-man's land to exchange gifts between the Germans. Moments after, other men joined and the British traded wine, tobacco and various things they had for German chocolate, songs and German classics. After they held a game of football, which the Germans won 3-2 but we won the war, so I suppose we are equal now. Although the soldiers liked it, the commanders and various generals did not so that is why the next day was incredibly sad because they had to try and kill their newly made friends. Although Christmas day was fun for some, it was not for the soldiers on the Eastern Front because they did not have any truce since their generals were strict. On the Western Front one soldier said he "smoked a cigar with the best shot in the German army" **William Byrne Year 8**



1) What is your favourite historical time period?

The 1920's - Because this is when jazz blossomed, and the 'flapper' was a common look for women. Jazz is my favourite genre of dance and the Charleston is also one of my favourite dances due to the fun, social aspect and the quirky twisting movements.

2) If you could meet any person from history, who would you meet?

Anne Frank to discuss how scared she must have been and how she found the strength to display such bravery.

3) What are your family traditions at Christmas?

We get together as a family on Christmas Eve to attend Mass at St Mary's and St John's church in Wigan, We then usually get a takeaway, to prepare for Christmas Day. Then after visiting the cemetery on Christmas morning we open presents and enjoy a traditional Christmas dinner with all the trimmings followed by crazy family games.

Mrs Hawksworth – Teacher of Health and Social

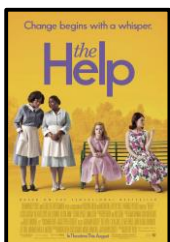


Mr Fitzsimons – Teacher of English and Deputy Head

1) Favourite historical film TV series Ken Burn's excellent Vietnam war series is the only thing to rival Laurence Olivier's World at War. The BBC's Hollow Crown series is the best fictional series with Tom Hiddleston was excellent as Henry V.

2) What was your memory of history lessons at school? My primary school teacher Mrs Hunt who inspired me the most. In the days before SATs, we had the freedom to learn about the French Revolution, the birth of the British parliamentary system and listened to her really interesting childhood memories about the bombing of Coventry. I remember she took us for a walk around Leicester one afternoon and explained to us the origins of the Jewry wall and Leicester's historical anti-Semitism. She was a scary but lovely woman.

3) What are your family traditions at Christmas? Family dinner with wife and two daughters. I also have two friends who join us every year. Barbara my neighbour joins us for a couple of hours when she has had her own dinner. Traditions would be board games, getting frustrated at Articulate and admiring the different shades and patterns of the socks I receive every year.



Want to watch a historical film over the Christmas break? **"The Help"** – set during the 1960s in America, the story tells the story of a white female journalist uncovering deep rooted racism towards black maids who worked in the homes of rich white women. Its funny, sad and worth a watch!

How did the Victorians create the Christmas we know today?

The Christmas we know today took shape in Victorian times, when the rowdier celebrations of earlier periods were toned down into a quieter family-focused festival. Queen Victoria and her beloved Albert, with their nine children, played a big part in these changes. The Christmas trees Albert popularised from his native Germany in 1840 rapidly caught on, as did decking them with lights and presents, by now given on Christmas Day itself. Victorian children's presents were usually quite modest, such as sweets, nuts or oranges, although wealthier kids might hope for a gift echoing the latest technology, such as a toy train. 'Christmas Box' tips to servants and tradesmen were left until 26 December, hence called 'Boxing Day'.

Many other now-familiar elements of Christmas also originated in this period, including printed Christmas cards, Christmas crackers, and eating turkey (instead of the traditional goose) and Christmas pudding. Even 'Santa Claus' and his reindeer sleigh first came here from America in the 1870s. Most Victorian families went to church at Christmas, and the words (if not always the tunes) of many popular carols (including 'Good King Wenceslas', 'Once in Royal David's City' and 'O Come All Ye Faithful') are Victorian.



Victorian Christmas Cake.

Ingredients

For the cake:

- 250g cake flour
- 75g ground almonds
- 5 large eggs
- 250g unsalted butter
- 250g sugar
- 8g baking powder
- 220g red glaze cherries
- 225g canned pineapple
- 250g sultanas
- 50g dried apricots
- 50g raw almonds
- 2 lemons (zest)
- Pinch of salt

For the decoration:

- Raw almonds
- red glaze cherries
- candied orange
- 2tsp fruit jam

Method

Preheat oven to 320°F/160°C.

Grease the pan with butter, set aside.

Sift the flour together with the ground almond, the baking powder and the salt.

In a large bowl mix the chopped pineapple together with the chopped apricots, the cherries, the chopped almonds, the sultanas and the lemon zest, mix.

In the bowl add the butter together with the sugar and beat, until a creamy consistency.

Begin to add the eggs, one by one and waiting for it to be completely mixed before adding the next one.

Add the mixture of dry ingredients.

Finally, add the fruit mixture.

Put the batter into a pan and decorated with the cherries, almonds and candied orange.

Place in the oven at medium height and bake for 2 hours and 15 minutes. Halfway through cooking, cover the cake with foil to prevent it from burning.

Take it out and let it rest on a rack for 60 minutes.

After, let it cool completely.

Heat the apricot jam for a few seconds in the microwave.

Brush the surface of the cake with it.

Enjoy!



Recipe created and tested by **Annabelle Lythgoe Year 8**

Don't forget about **History Club!**

