

## Letters from the Trenches

19<sup>th</sup> December 1914

Dear Mama,

Things are a little grim here at the **frontline**. We all need much more rest – we are fighting night and day. My feet are sore with **trench foot**. We are standing in water up to our knees all day.

The lads here need some hope from home that we are not going to be here forever. We know deep in our hearts though that we are going to be here for another year at **least**. The war has only just begun.

The food here is **sparse** and terrible. I long for your home cooking. Some of my **platoon** have already fallen. One whilst he was trying to repair the trench. It truly is terrible out here. But, we must do what we need for our great country.

All my love,  
Your son, Stanley



Dearest Eleanor,

6<sup>th</sup> April 1915

I am sorry that I have not written to you often. I do not want to weigh you down with the **reality** of life at war and away from home. I think about you and our darling daughter every single day. I want to be with you at home rather than being in this awful place!

I do hope that you're well cared for by our family, as I do not know how long it will be before I see you again.

I know that our letters are **censored** as they travel forward and back and I don't want my platoon to think that I can't do my job, but it is a sad time here. Everyday we lose a **comrade**; a friend. And we do not know who will fall next.

I hope that the country can make peace soon for I cannot **foresee** peace here at the trench.

Love P x



Dear Mother and Father,  
I am writing to you from the **makeshift** hospital near the frontline.

We have so many dead and wounded here and terrible conditions to treat the poor, fallen men. I am working **tirelessly** with my sister nurses to comfort those who have lost limbs and long for their families. Some can be sent home soon but it is a big **operation** to organise.

We can hear the fighting from where we are. And it goes through bursts of loud gunshots to **periods** of time with complete silence.

In addition, I am missing my husband. I know not of where he is. He is on the frontline somewhere and I pray that I don't see him arrive at the hospital, for that would mean he is injured or worse.

I, along with many of the other nurses try to keep the spirits high in the hospital tent, as the men in here are upset about what they have experienced. We sing a lot, and the soldiers join in, and we joke and **jest** with each other. It is all we can do to put a smile on their faces.

I hope this will all be over soon and I can travel home to you with my brave husband.  
All my love,  
Maggie

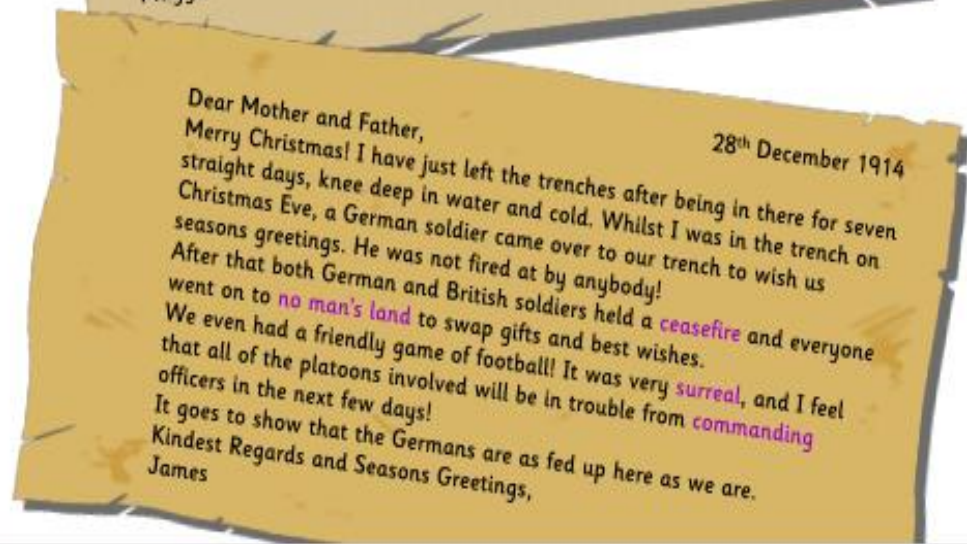
Dear Mother and Father,

28<sup>th</sup> December 1914

Merry Christmas! I have just left the trenches after being in there for seven straight days, knee deep in water and cold. Whilst I was in the trench on Christmas Eve, a German soldier came over to our trench to wish us seasons greetings. He was not fired at by anybody! After that both German and British soldiers held a **ceasefire** and everyone went on to **no man's land** to swap gifts and best wishes.

We even had a friendly game of football! It was very **surreal**, and I feel that all of the platoons involved will be in trouble from **commanding** officers in the next few days!

It goes to show that the Germans are as fed up here as we are.  
Kindest Regards and Seasons Greetings,  
James



How do you think the authors of the letters feel? How do you know? (P5)

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How do you think Eleanor feels about not receiving letters often from Peter? (P5)

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Do you think James' mother and father would be happy to read his letter? Why? (P5)

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Why is there an exclamation mark in the text below? What effect does it have? (C7)

*"Whilst I was in the trench on Christmas Eve a German soldier came over to our trench to wish us seasons greetings. He was not fired at by anybody!"*

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Are the letters formal or informal? How do you know? (T4)

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What is the main topic of the letters? (S2)

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