

# Home by Christmas

Words and Music: Nigel Harbron

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). It consists of five staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. Chord symbols are placed above the notes. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' above it. The lyrics are: 'We'll be home by Christmas the sergeant said. Fighting's on the wane, there'll be few more dead. The enemy has no stomach when it comes to war, they nev-er have seen an-y-thing like this be-fore, I know that they have lost their es-prit de corps, And so we'll be home by Christmas.'

We'll be home by Christmas, the sergeant said.  
Fighting's on the wane, there'll be few more dead.  
The enemy has no stomach when it comes to war,  
They never have seen anything like this before,  
I know that they have lost their *esprit de corps*,  
*And so we'll be home by Christmas.*

You'll be home by Christmas, the General did say.  
With just one more push, we will win the day.  
I know that you are weary of this endless fight,  
And I feel for you all in your current plight,  
But victory for us is now in sight,  
*And so you'll be home by Christmas.*

All troops home by Christmas! it said in the press.  
Any land we have lost we'll soon repossess.  
We will stand our ground whoever the foe,  
All threatening tyrants we will overthrow,  
To any lengths we're prepared to go,  
*And so all troops home by Christmas.*

They'll be home by Christmas, the politicians claimed,  
Conveniently forgetting the dead and the maimed.  
The battle now is going just the way we planned,  
Its twists and its turns we understand,  
The whole of the nation is at our command,  
*And so they'll be home by Christmas.*

I'll be home by Christmas, my best mate thought.  
We'll drive them back with the next onslaught.  
But his head was in the wrong place when the rifles fired,  
And I'll spare you the sight of what transpired,  
As the Conchies with the stretcher were required,  
*And so I'll be home by Christmas.*

He'll be home by Christmas, my wife told a friend.  
He wrote it in a letter, and he wouldn't pretend.  
He told me that the food and weather weren't too bad,  
And that being away from home still made him sad,  
He said Happy Birthday to his Dad,  
*And so he'll be home by Christmas.*

I'll be here at Christmas, I know in my heart.  
Far from being won, this war is just at the start.  
I can't see either side backing down right now,  
Each will have to save its face no matter how,  
No sense of reason can they allow,  
*And so I'll be here at Christmas.*



*Far from being home by Christmas 1914, troops were more firmly entrenched than ever. However, strange things were reported at various points along the front, as men on both sides declared their own truce, and celebrated Christmas together. Apparently, some troops refused to resume fighting once the holiday season was over, and they had to be withdrawn (and court-marshalled) whilst 'willing' troops took over from them. There are quite a few songs about the ceasefire, and I rate Mike Harding's Christmas 1914 as one of the best.*