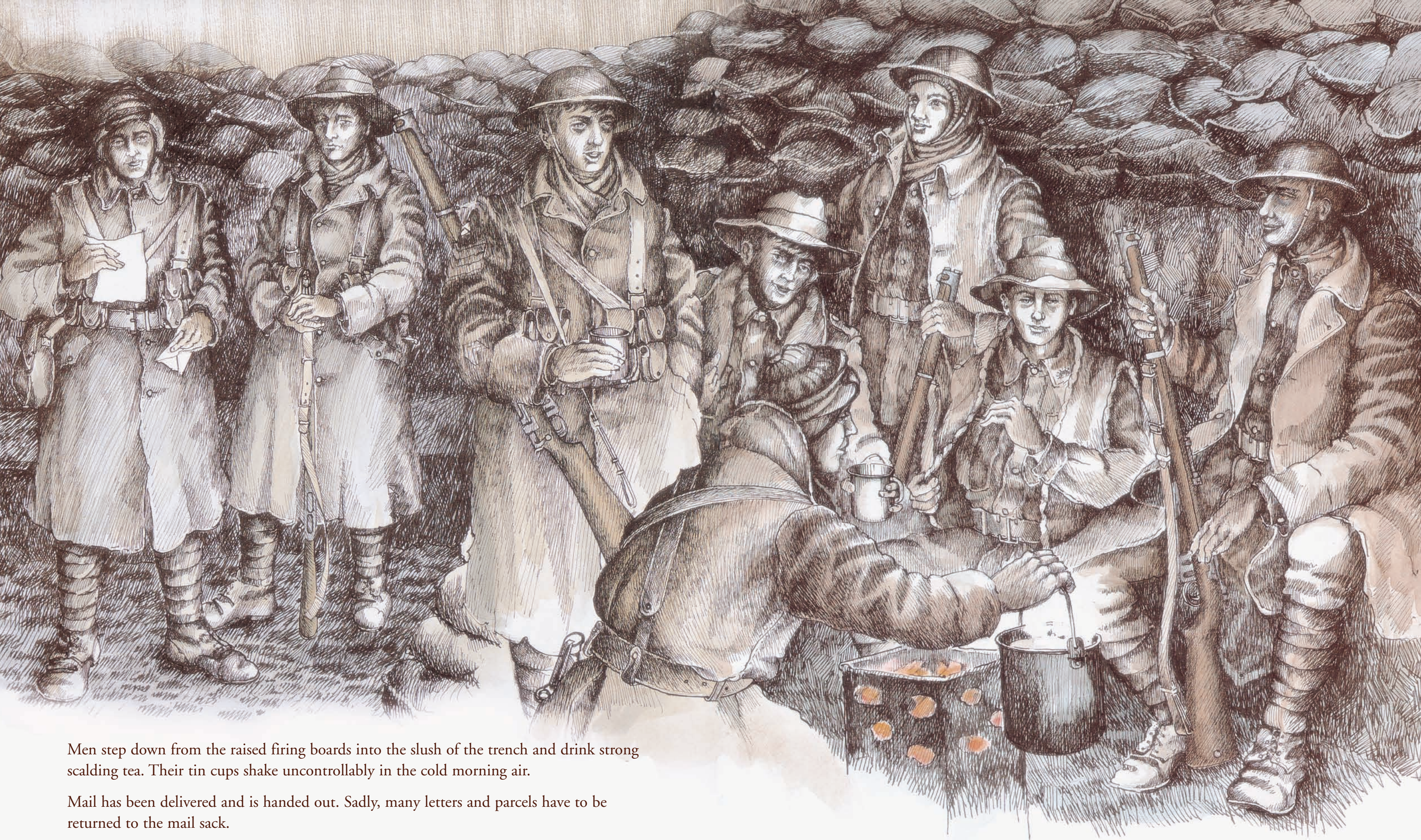




Early on Christmas morning the guns stop firing. A deathly silence creeps over the pitted and ruined landscape.

For many soldiers the sound of exploding shells and the chatter of machine-guns continues in their heads; their minds damaged by the weeks of deafening noise.



Men step down from the raised firing boards into the slush of the trench and drink strong scalding tea. Their tin cups shake uncontrollably in the cold morning air.

Mail has been delivered and is handed out. Sadly, many letters and parcels have to be returned to the mail sack.