In the broadest strokes when talking about alternate history, asking simple questions poses a lot of far, far more complex questions that become infinitely more difficult to answer as you think about it, and one such question that does this is the question of what would have happened if World War 1 was truly over by Christmas, because this immediately then brings about the question of “Well, in who’s favor?”, as there was two ways the war could have concluded: with the Entente Powers winning or with the Central Powers winning. In the former, the overall course of history would have likely eventually followed the same route: Germany would be blamed for starting the war and made broke to high hell, and we likely see World War 2 maybe ten years earlier as a result. Given that this was a result of the war taking forever and the massive cost of life, however, maybe it wouldn’t’ve been so extreme, but that’s the fun of alternate history: we don’t really know.

But when asking if the Schlieffen Plan worked and Paris fell by Christmas, the war ending before it truly began, that raises a far, far more difficult question for us to answer, one that we can only loosely base off of what we’ve seen happen to Britain after World War 2: Britain, alongside France, would have likely had to give up a fair bit of the colonies and military power to Austria and Germany, and they would likely be humiliated much like they were after World War 2 via things like the Suez Crisis and the decolonization efforts that followed. America would have become the leader of the world’s hegemony far sooner, given that they were not directly involved in World War 1 by this point in the war, and so they would have continued to have the resources and manpower to overtake Britain and would not have been humiliated by their loss in the war, which would honestly likely only humiliate Britain further.

This is, of course, to say nothing of the loss that would occur no matter if Britain or Germany lost so quickly: the massive loss of culture that we have as a result of how fucking awful World War 1 was. Without the horrors of war being so fully realized in World War 1, we would not have received the Lost Generation; without the Lost Generation, we wouldn’t have such great literary works as *The Lord of the Rings* or other works that were made from the sense of hopelessness and despair that World War 1 had inflicted on so many. We wouldn’t have such great research into the effects of propaganda, as propaganda wouldn’t’ve had time to be developed because there wouldn’t’ve been a need to because by the time people needed to be motivated to keep funding and keep fighting the war, the war would have already been over.