

The First World War on Foot



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Introduction

The present work has the purpose to present the events of World War I through the perceptions and the encounters of a young Italian journalist, Nicolò Giraldi, who decided to retrace the paths and the tracks of the conflict following a route from London to Trieste. However, the following analysis will focus on the stretch on the English soil only

The analysis consists of:

- Appendix I: the path of the journey
- Appendix II: a schematization of the reasons of Nicolò's journey
- Appendix III: a table organised according to the following:
 - I Historical records, People comments and Nicolò's perceptions
- Synopsis
- Bibliography

Appendix I

Paths of the journey on UK soil: from Harringay to Dover.



Appendix II

What are the reasons of Nicolò's journey?

1. He wanted to follow the experience of Patrick Leigh Fermor, who travelled on foot from London to Istanbul in 1933 as told in his novel;
2. The desire to fight his way into the world of journalism with a "different" story;
3. The wish to pay a tribute to his homonymous great-grandfather Nicolò Giraldi.

Appendix III

What is the perception of the 1st World War that comes to the surface from the diary?

Historical records	People's tales	The writer's perception/s
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Small crosses scattered in Kent as tiny memorials with the names of fallen soldiers.2. On the wall of Saint Mary's Church there is an inscription dedicated to lieutenant Kemball as well as a great number of plaques with the names of soldiers from Stansted and Sevenoaks.3. Canterbury Cathedral4. Visit to the Hermitage Museum to see the exhibition of the 1st World War edited by Craig Bower.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The English couple who hosts the protagonist shows him a book that recalls the story of the soldiers buried in Kent.2. Story of Ernie Brennan, director of the National Children's Football Alliance: in Belgium on Christmas Eve 1914, British and German soldiers stopped fighting to play football together in a kind of unofficial truce.3. Angie Hughes, the lady who hosts Nicolò at Dover, tells of the fall of the first German bomb on the British soil.4. Date with Lynda Pearce, the Dover Museum's curator.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The protagonist always imagine to have a silent dialogue with his grandfather.2. Reflection on how to escape from the atrocities of war: thought of something beautiful3. Disgust at the thought of war as a form of "<i>hygiene of the world</i>"4. Reflection on the consequences of the use of gas. World War I has continued to kill even after its end.

Conclusion

The first question the intelligent reader asks himself when reading N. Giraldi's work is:

Why walk the trails of the First World War?

A careful reading of the first few pages of the diary will allow the reader to understand that the writer's aim is to reconstruct the pieces of the protagonist's identity.

Indeed, the text is not really a diary, but rather an ongoing dialogue with Nicolò's grandfather who fought in the war with the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It is curious to notice that the journey takes place backwards: from London to Trieste and not vice versa. Indeed, Trieste symbolizes Nicolò's "homeland" and the place of affection. English soil traces are few since the soldiers were engaged on overseas fronts, away from anything that could tie them to their identity and their family.

The second question that the reader may pose her/himself is:

Why taking a journey on foot?

In a mobile society where everything is moving quickly, you easily lose your perspective and since everything tends to flatten everything on the same level. walking allows you to enjoy the trip and the meetings you might come across with, will make you rich with other people's experiences. It is a means of learning to learn. It is through personal reflection and improving one's learning opportunities the writer is able to experience the memory and the different memories of the conflict. War is above all violence, atrocity and horror, but it is through remembrance and awareness only that human beings can contribute to a future of peace, keeping record of ancestors' efforts

Bibliography

Nicolò Giraldi, *La Grande Guerra a Piedi, Da Londra a Triste sui luoghi del primo conflitto mondiale*,
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