



Liverpool
July 2014

Letter N°2

As I hid behind the Planck wall wearing my time travelling glasses, I watched the Earth and something caught my attention.

I saw huge dust clouds travelling in the direction of Liverpool.

I looked a little closer and saw thousands of men running through fields, jumping fences, tramping along paths and onto the roads; hundreds of carts with galloping horses mingled with the first motorcycles and cars.

With fire in their bellies, they resembled a flock of wildebeest throwing cries of joy up into the morning mist.

Even the sun, whipped up into this epidemic, trembled with giddiness and blushed red with pleasure.

The news had travelled at the speed of light overnight and had come to rest in the cottages: Lord Kitchener was arriving into Liverpool Lime Street Station at 10 am.

The Great War had arrived.

The government was recruiting volunteers.

Who could have stopped this unbridled show of patriotism?

The kingdom of England would eat the Germans up in one bite and everyone wanted to be at the party to squash the enemy into the ground.

(She opens a letter taken from her safe)

Diary

Tuesday 31st August 1914

“Tuesday 31st August 1914, I, John McCulloch of Heysham, have travelled these 60 miles cross country.

Despite being thin, nature has chosen to place my face 1m90 away from my toes. From this tiny fortress, I had an adequate watchtower to peer from over the crowd.

Having taken my place up on a roof, I saw the war chief appear.

A vast silence imprisoned our mouths. I don't know if I'm remembering correctly but we saw hundreds of black and white swans come out of the carriages behind him and fill the platform with the poise of calm animals.

This elegant armada accompanied his walk, in front, behind, to his left and his right and made a path for him through the crowd.

When finally he reached the podium, his opening words were addressed to the Kingdom of England.

A cheer, more powerful than a tornado, sent the swans flying up into the clouds.

He had just invented the Pals strategy: he suggested that work friends from offices, factories and other businesses should enlist and stick together in battle, as companions in the face of death.

Again, a cheer brought the swans flying back in a formation like a Royal Air Force parade in the sky. A million feathers fell slowly from the sky like snow and covered us all in white.

A wedding before the battle...”

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