

# PERIPLUM with WCT Saturday Session - May

## Synopsis of Letter Trail

- **Letter Trail** through points A-K, indoor & outdoor versions of same material. *NOTE – if developing this idea for full production, we would usually look to explore it through sites across the town, though still within walking distance, rather than next to each other as we did in the session:*
  - A. Anonymous soldier: 'Take this to my sweetheart', puts poppy in envelope along with letter. Envelope says 'To my Sweetheart: go to Point B'. Audience take letter/envelope to Point B.
  - B. 'Sweetheart': Receives letter from audience, opens it. It contains poem with words from 'living soldier' (Verse from Flanders poem, 'Pegging Away'). She unexpectedly reacts in shock(not relief), saying 'He's alive...'. She reads poem out loud, then writes message saying 'He was not killed at the Battle of the Somme'. Asks audience to deliver it in an envelope to C 'as quickly as you can'. (This scenario was roughly drawn from story of Elsie & Harry – Themes doc P.3.)
  - C. Point C is Censorship Centre. Actor takes letter from B, opens & censors it, crossing out 'killed', leaving 'He was not - at the Battle of the Somme.' Censorship Officer gives letter back along with white feather, says: 'Put this on the person at Point D'.
  - D. Conscientious Objector, tied up and harassed by guard who encourages onto to place white feather on objector/prisoner. Prisoner whispers 'take the letter from my coat pocket'. This new letter is note to butcher. (Idea that Prisoner won't need food provisions, as going to be executed – so gives them away.
  - E. Female Butcher – has taken man's role, explains: 'He's not here anymore, I'm the butcher now.' Hands over food a pound of food wrapped in brown paper... Says takes this to F. (Idea of linking to Pound Day/Fair at Dean's Court.)
  - F. Pound Fair Ladies accept food (black market food??), gives toy soldier in return: 'Take this to the boy at G, he lost it earlier.'
  - G. Boy takes Tin Soldier & says: 'I thought he'd never come back. Thank you. The king will be so happy.' Plays with soldier, gives telegram/letter (generic) from King (section 4 from Texts doc).
  - H. Conscription Office – King's Letter taken and read aloud by actor: 'You must report in proper uniform, etc...'. Audience sent to pick up uniform. (Could lead to extended 'dressing up' scene?)
  - I. Audience arrive at Reverend Fletcher, who lambasts them for not being in proper uniform. Reverend gives lucky St. Christopher and blessing to help them on their travels to Point J.
  - J. Cordite Factory – St. Christopher taken & melted down to become shell case/bullet. Audience asked to deliver it to K.
  - K. Front-line – a group of soldiers in trench who've been waiting for munitions to arrive, receive single bullet, 'Is that it – one bullet? We've got half the German army over there...' (Though this scenario could be interpreted in different ways – inadequate provisions for desperate soldiers or the Magic Bullet that will change everything...) Soldier says 'Get down, get down'. One soldier gets shot, says 'Take this to my mother...' – Envelope saying: 'To my dear mother'.
  - L. Mother – takes letter, crosses out 'Mother' and re-writes to read: 'To my dear son...'
  - M. Graveside/memorial – actor tells audience to place envelope alongside others on stone setting (*NOTE from Periplum: These were the first scenarios which we imagined, some of which link better than others. Can discuss which links worked, and what could have been added in.*)