

Explore how Journeys End uses the character of Stanhope to show the hardship of the First World War.

Journeys end is about Stanhope and his friends fighting together after three years of fighting on the front line, Stanhope is nervous and exhausted. As all the soldiers wait for the great attack, the full horror and futility of trench warfare in the First World War unfolds. Journeys end is set in a dug out, in the front line of British trenches before St. Quentin. The date is the 18th March 1918, the last year of the First World War. The First World War was so difficult because the conditions in the trenches was horrendous and it was quite useless war, as they did not actually achieve anything, maybe a few millimetres each month. Stanhope is a devoted company captain in the army; he went to war at the age on 18 years and has been fighting for three years. All the other soldiers like him and he has built relationship with some of his heavy drinkers and he say's its just takes away his nerves.

At the start of the play the audience admires Stanhope because he has been fighting for three years and all the soldiers admire him as well as they say: He's a long way the best company commander we've got' but they also think he is an alcoholic as he says: 'damn the soup! Bring some whisky!' This quotation revels that he does like his drink but he also says: 'She doesn't know that if I went up these steps into the frontline without being doped with whisky-I'd go mad with fright,' this quotation explains that he is ashamed of his drinking and fear. The war has affected Stanhope a lot because he used to be a clean living person, he never smoked or drank but he does it to escape from the war, and the war has hardened him and he knows he has changed as well and he is ashamed of it because he censors Raleigh's letter to make to make sure he doesn't tell his sister about him changing as he says: "Yes. I have to censor all letters." This quotation explains that Stanhope is very determined to read Raleigh's letter and explains that it is a rule, as he says: 'It's the rule that the letters must be read.' Stanhope's attitude and speech show his character because he is very organised, looks after his men and very good at commanding as Osborne says: "He's a long way the best company commander there is". He is organised and makes sure everyone knows what's going to happen because he says: 'So I gather. Have you told Raleigh about the riffle inspection?' This quotation revels that he is making sure the newcomer knows what's to happen.

Stanhope has internal conflict because he is censorings Raleigh's letter, he says: "Yes. I have to censor all letters". Stanhope does this to make sure Raleigh's sister does not

find out how much he has changed, Stanhope knows it is wrong but he has internal conflict in himself so he can not stop censoring the letters. The stage directions help us understand Stanhope's character because the way he acts, expresses his personality and how he feels: 'He is the picture of misery, Stanhope stands impatiently beside him.' This stage direction tells us that he is miserable and impatient because Osborne, his best friend died the day before and he properly has a hang over from the party night before.

The other characters help us understand Stanhope because Hardy say: 'How is the dear young boy? Drinking like a fish, as usual?' This quotation reveals that everyone knows Stanhope drinks a lot all the time, so they may think he is an alcoholic.

Osborne also says: 'He's a long way the best company commander we've got'. This quotation reveals that everyone thinks he is a great commander they have got. Hardy then says: 'Oh, he's a good chap...' This quotation reveals that even though he drinks a lot of alcohol, they all like him and look up to him.

Stanhope's relationship with Raleigh has a great impact on the audience because they both knew each other before they went to war, and Raleigh looked up to Stanhope at school: 'yes, rather'! We were at school to get her—at least-of course-I was only a kid and he was one of the big fellows: has three years older than I' am: they also are a bit related because Stanhope is seeing Raleigh's sister: 'Denis used to stay with us and naturally my sister' And also says: they're not-er- officially engaged- 'also Raleigh's got his uncle to pull a few strings to get into some regiment as Stanhope: 'yes I went to see him on the quiet and asked him if he could get me into this battalion. He bit my head off, and said I'd got to be treated like everybody else- 'Also Raleigh's means a lot to Stanhope because when Raleigh was dieing, he said: 'Steady old boy. Just lie there quietly for a bit'. All of these quotations show that Stanhope has a nice caring side to him and that Stanhope means a lot to Raleigh, because what ever happens Raleigh wanted to be in the same regiment as him and to look up to him. The conditions in the trenches were horrendous, more often then not they were in wet clothes and stood in slurry mud, as Hardy say's: 'It is rather isn't it? Guaranteed to keep the feet dry. Trouble is it gets so wet doing it'. The conditions in the trenches are so poor, that disease's spread rapidly, due to no hygiene facilities and infestation of rats. Many got trench foot due to the wet conditions. Flies also spread disease's and dead body's were not buried, as many was in no man's land: 'How can't I sit down and eat that-when-Osborne's-lying-out there'.

This quotation reveals that Osborne is lying in no man's land, which means that he is not buried. All the men have a wooden frame, covered with a wired net, this serves the purpose as a bed. The food is not very nice, they get things muddled:" I say, Stanhope, it's a terrible business. We thought we'd got a tin of pineapple chunks: it turns out to be apricots ". This quotation reveals that the tins of food have no labels on them to identify what is in them and this is how it gets muddled. The bacon is all fat:" there was a bit of lean in the middle of yours sir, but it's kind of shrunk up in the cooking". The porridge is also lumpy:" Is' pose." These reveal that the food given to the soldiers isn't very nice.

The water the soldiers drank was horrible so they put whisky in it as a disinfectant, (passing the whisky and the mug) don't have much water it's rather strong and there is sometimes tea leaves in it as well "...got some tea leaves in it, d'you mind?" this reveals that the water was horrible and could not drink it without whisky.

Stanhope's confrontation with Hibbert shows that he dislikes the war as much as Hibbert does: "...I hate and loathe it all, sometimes I feel I could lie down on this bed and pretend I was paralysed or something-and couldn't move-and just lie there till I died-or was dragged away." This quotation shows that Stanhope hates the war and wishes he was dead sometimes. This scene is so dramatic because Stanhope lies about him going to the doctor about Hibbert's neuralgia: "I've sent the doctor. I saw him this morning. He won't send you to the hospital, Hibbert; He'll send you back here. He promised me he would. So you can save yourself a walk". This quotation reveals that Stanhope is lying to Hibbert about seeing the doctor to stop him going to hospital and getting out of the big attack. Also it is dramatic because Stanhope threatens to shoot Hibbert for deserting:" if you went, I'd have you shot-for deserting...."you try to get out of that door-to desert. If you do that, there's going to be an accident. D'you understand? I'm fiddling with my revolver, D'you see? -Cleaning it-and it's going off by accident. It often happens out here. It's going off and it's going to shoot you between the eyes". This quotation reveals that Stanhope is very adamant that Hibbert will not leave and threatens to kill Hibbert with his revolver straight between Hibbert's eyes.

Stanhope is an important character because all of the soldiers like him, he has built relationships with Osborne, Raleigh's and Hibbert and he's an inspiration to everyone, not just the soldiers but the audience as well. Stanhope as a character shows the stress, nerves, and exhaustions of many soldiers in the First World War,

and how the horror and futility of trench warfare affects him dramatically. If Stanhope were not in this play, it would not show the realism of the war as it does with him in it. All in all the play was brilliant and it shows the audience what emotional trauma soldiers went through and makes the audience understand so it pays a tribute to the soldiers that died in the first world war.