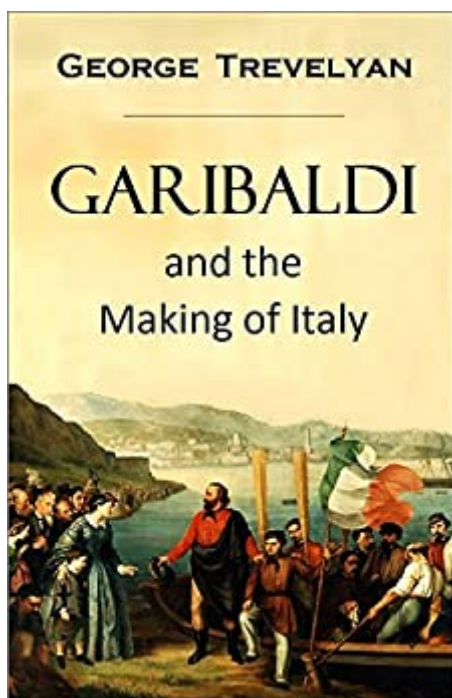


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Garibaldi And The Making Of Italy (1911)



Synopsis

To those who have read Garibaldi's *Defence of the Roman Republic*, or *Garibaldi and the Thousand*, not to mention several other volumes, the name of G. M. Trevelyan on the back of a book is lure enough to make them open it and read, especially if the book opens with an essay on History. Trevelyan, (1876 – 1962) was a British historian and academic. He was a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge from 1898 to 1903. He was once called "probably the most widely read historian in the world; perhaps in the history of the world." Garibaldi is a remarkable example of an brave and interesting leader who yet accomplishes seriously important results. George Washington and Frederick the Great were builders of nations, as he was; but both were incurably prosaic. The Italian, for all his powerful appeal to the imaginations of men, was in his way one of the world's greatest and most gifted generals. His tactics at the battle of the Volturno form one of the most instructive of lessons in military strategy. It is true that his art had its limitations, that he never showed remarkable abilities except in a certain irregular style of warfare with a small force under his command. He is one of those one-sided geniuses whom God seems to send at a special moment to do a special work which no one else could do. The present volume, is based upon personal knowledge of the ground, upon first-hand study of documents, and upon conversations with the dwindling band of surviving Garibaldians. Trevelyan, however, does not write for specialists alone, but also for the general public, which, fifty years after these events, has rather a hazy idea of ' the making of Italy'. For that large class of reader the book may be warmly recommended; for, although its author makes no concealment of his strongly liberal sentiments, he can see the faults of the Garibaldians and admit the bravery of those adherents of a lost cause who rallied round their king at Gaeta. The book covers the period extending from the capture of Palermo, in June 1860, to the return of the Liberator to his island farm on Caprera, in November of the same year, after the capture of Gaeta and the almost unanimous acceptance of Victor Emmanuel's government through a plebiscite had made United Italy a certainty. Garibaldi's work during the six months in question was the arousing of Southern Italy and the preparation of Victor Emmanuel's conquest of the Kingdom of Naples. And he was able to smooth the way for this glorious event, not so much by any actual conquest of his own, not so much even by any preparation of men's minds, as by the fear his successes aroused in the breast of Cavour. The author is fond of qualifying Garibaldi as a "poet," and of enlarging on the pleasant touches that give his delightful personality its relief. Thus, Colonel Bosco, sent from the mainland to Sicily to retake Palermo, had boasted that he would enter that city on the horse of Medici, the Garibaldian commander. When Bosco was defeated and captured, Garibaldi decided that poetic justice demanded Medici's entrance into Messina on Bosco's horse;

and the pageant went off as he had planned it, with the unhorsed boaster walking at the tail of the column, muttering invectives and pulling his formidable moustaches. Trevelyan's history is engaged and partisan. Of his Garibaldi trilogy, "reeking with bias", he remarked in his essay "Bias in History", "Without bias, I should never have written them at all. For I was moved to write them by a poetical sympathy with the passions of the Italian patriots of the period, which I retrospectively shared."

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Customer Reviews

The best history of the man and the period; a bit turgid but readable.

Good

A great history ruined by incredibly poor formatting. Do not purchase this kindle edition. Whatever sad computer did the adaption to kindle, did not know what it was reading. The footnotes are literally stuck in the middle of the page. Paragraphs end halfway through a sentence and pick up two pages later. There is hardly a page that is readable. I do agree that in its original version this is an

excellent history of Garibaldi's Neapolitan campaign. Unfortunately this is one of those serious failures to properly translate a book format into kindle. Cannot recommend this edition.

"I first came across the name *Garibaldi* as a child in the late 1950s and early 1960s. At that time - and still today - there were biscuits bearing that name. They consist of a sandwich of two layers of thin pastry with a blackish paste of mashed currants holding them together. They are also known as *squashed flies* because that is exactly what the fruit layer looks like! They were first manufactured in the UK in 1861, seven years after Giuseppe Garibaldi's popularly acclaimed visit to the country and one year after he landed in Sicily"Garibaldi was indeed "...the man who gave his name to a popular British biscuit and his efforts to liberate Sicily from the Bourbons (also the name of a popular British biscuit, incidentally)."These are extracts from my book "From Albania to Sicily"GM Trevelyan, whose book I am now reviewing, wrote his account of Garibaldi's successful taking of Palermo (in 1860) in 1909. He wrote the book using a wide range of available sources INCLUDING interviews that he was able to make with some of those men and women who had witnessed this event that led to the eventual unification of Italy. Trevelyan covers a complex subject beautifully and in great detail. I was able to follow the twists and turns of this fascinating story without losing the plot or becoming lost in the sea of names of those who were involved with or against Garibaldi. I have just visited Sicily including many of the places that Garibaldi and his army passed through as they made their way from Marsala to Palermo. Trevelyan's descriptions of the countryside ring very true even though he knew it more than 100 years before I visited it. This book, which is the second of a trilogy that Trevelyan wrote to chronicle Garibaldi's amazingly varied life, is historical writing at its very best. By the way, the footnotes and appendices should not be ignored!

As an Italian, I am grateful for this masterpiece. The 3-book series is a great read, and although Trevelyan's admiration for Garibaldi is noticeable, the author also mentions Hero's shortcomings and strategical mistakes. What emerges is the picture of a country born from ideals and sacrifices, as well as undeniable lucky circumstances.

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