Nil *Desperandum*

Published for Haywards Heath & District Probus Club

Picture Credit: **"The Ice Cream Brigade"** by Szoki Adams is licensed under **CC BY-NC-ND 2.0**

Overcoming Adversity

Excerpted from:

• https://www.electricireland.ie/news/article/team-ireland-hub/2016/07/15/against-the-odds-5-olympians-who-overcame-adversity-to-win
• https://www.worldathletics.org/news/series/great-athletics-moments-triumph-adversity
• https://theculturetrip.com/europe/hungary/articles/olympic-heroes-karoly-takacs-and-his-wait-for-gold/
• https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3746228/How-champions-forged-adversity-astonishing-number-medal-winners-overcome-illness-s-no-coincidence-says-experts.html
• https://metro.co.uk/2016/08/11/10-inspiring-stories-from-olympians-who-overcame-adversity-for-rio-2016-6061594/
• https://bleacherreport.com/articles/2655962-athletes-who-overcame-the-most-to-win-olympic-gold

Emil Zatopek

Emil Zatopek broke all the rules when it came to distance running. He did not train in running shoes but wore heavy work boots because it prepared him better for his events. In the 1952 Helsinki Olympics, the Czechoslovakian won the gold medal in the 5,000- and 10,000-metre races, even though he had an infected gland in his neck. Doctors had warned him not to compete, but he ignored their advice and won spectacularly. He didn't stop there. He also competed (at the last minute) in the marathon and won that event - even without training for it. Zatopek became the only competitor in history to win these medals in the same Olympics.

Picture Credit: "File: Fotothek df roe-neg 0006305 003 Emil Zátopek-2.jpg" by Fotothek_df_roe-neg_0006305_003_Emil_Zátopek.jpg: Roger Rössing derivative work: MachoCarioca is licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0

Wilma Rudolph

As a child, Wilma Rudolph suffered scarlet fever, whooping cough and measles, survived double pneumonia and required a leg brace until age nine. As a child, she struggled to walk – let alone run. As if that was not enough, at the age of four, she contracted infantile paralysis caused by the poliovirus and had to wear a brace on her left leg until she was nine. With the help of physical therapy and a huge determination, she overcame her disability.

At age seven, she began attending Cobb Elementary School in Clarksville, where she played basketball. It wasn't long before she started gaining acclaim for her running abilities. Under the training of Tennessee State University track coach Ed Temple, she qualified for the 1956 Olympic Games and won a bronze medal in the 400-metre relay. During the 1960 Olympics, she won three golds in the 100-metre individual, 200-metre individual, and 4 x 100-metre relay, respectively and became the first American woman to win three gold medals in track and field during a single Olympic games.

Jesse Owens

Jesse Owens made headlines worldwide when he set multiple world records within the space of one hour. His record-breaking feats at 100m, 200m, sprint hurdles and the long jump

underlined his status as the star of the 1936 Olympic Games under the sneering nose of Adolf Hitler. In the months leading up to the Games, Owens was under great pressure in the US to boycott the Olympics because it was said that an African-American should not compete at an event run under Hitler's Nazi regime. Hitler, meanwhile, had hoped that German athletes would dominate at the Games and show the world a resurgent Nazi Germany – a hope that a black American shattered.

Picture Credit: "No Known Restrictions: Jesse Owens in the 1936 Berlin Olympics (LOC)" by pingnews.com is marked with CC PDM 1.0

Lopez Lomong

Perhaps the crowning moment of Lopez Lomong's athletic career was the honour of being flagbearer for the US team at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. The middle-distance runner had come a long way to get there - Lopez was abducted at the age of six while attending Catholic Mass and was assumed dead by his family. He almost died in captivity, but other people from his village helped him escape. He sought refuge in the US in 2001 as one of the famous "Lost Boys" of Sudan and became a naturalized citizen in 2007.

He became a track star at high school and college level, and qualified for the national team one year after gaining citizenship.

Hiroshi Hoketsu

Sport is often seen as the preserve of the young. But, in 2012, Japanese competitor Hiroshi Hoketsu proved that you're never too old to be an Olympian. At the age of 70, the experienced athlete became the third oldest Olympic competitor of all time when he took part in the individual dressage at the London Games. Hoketsu may have finished 40th in this event, but he proved that life really does begin after 40.

Károly Takács

In Hungary, Károly Takács had ambitions to win gold at the Olympics long before he could, but national bureaucracy, personal tragedy and fate kept him waiting.

At the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, he was denied the opportunity to compete as only officers were allowed to compete – Takács having the rank of sergeant, wasn't available for selection. Fate stepped in again when he lost the use of his right hand, his shooting hand when a faulty grenade exploded in a military exercise.

After his accident, Takács practised with his left hand for participation in the 1940 Games, but the Second World War meant the 1940 and 1944 Olympic Games were cancelled.

By the time London hosted the Olympics in 1948, Takács had been waiting well over a decade to compete on the biggest stage of them all. The 25-metre rapid-fire pistol event had a clear favourite, Carlos Enrique Díaz Sáenz Valiente of Argentina, the reigning world champion - but he came off second best to Takács who won the gold medal with a world-record score. In 1952, it was a similar story, when Takács picked up a second gold medal in Helsinki.

Sydney Wooderson

Sydney Wooderson of Great Britain emerged as one of the world's top middle-distance runners in the mid-1930s when he won Commonwealth silver in the mile race in 1934. An ankle injury prevented him from participating in the 1936 Olympic 1500m final. He rebounded from the disappointment and set a world mile record of 4:06.4 in 1937 and an 800m world record of 1:48.4 in 1938. Two weeks later, he won the European 1500m title in Paris.

Wooderson was denied the chance of Olympic redemption in 1940 and 1944 as both Olympic games were cancelled because of the war. He worked as a firefighter during the Blitz, and his running was further suspended in 1944 when he spent several months in hospital suffering from rheumatic fever. Despite these issues, Wooderson recovered in time for the 1946 European Championships and won the 5000m in a national and championship record of 14:08.6.

Laura Trott

Cyclist Laura Trott was born four weeks prematurely with a collapsed lung and was transferred to an intensive baby-care unit. She had a tube inserted to inflate a lung, and her parents feared she wouldn't make it. She spent the first six weeks of her life in hospital. Then, as a toddler, she was diagnosed with asthma. Medics suggested exercise would help with the inflammatory disease of her airways by regulating her breathing. She took up trampolining but fainted. Having tried swimming, she then took up cycling. She also suffers from a build-up of excess acid in her stomach. Despite all these problems. Laura is Britain's most successful Olympic female competitor.

Picture Credit: "Laura Trott does a lap of honour" by garrellmillhouse is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Famous People who were also Doctors

Doctors who have achieved fame in fields other than medicine are pretty rare, says Oisin Curran in an article on How Stuff Works (here). As he says, the time and commitment required to become a doctor are so great that it's nigh on impossible to understand how a doctor could ever do anything else. Yet several have managed to find fame outside their area of expertise. The following is a snapshot of some doctors who rose to non-medical fame, excerpted from the article.

Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes

Picture Credit: "Sir Arthur Conan Doyle" by Occult World is licensed under CC BY 2.0

In Edinburgh, in the late 1870s, Dr A. C. Doyle, already in possession of a significant moustache, served as clerk to the famous surgeon, Dr Joseph Bell, who would demonstrate a method by picking a complete stranger and by observation alone, deduce what they did for a living and what they'd been up to recently.

Roughly ten years later, Doyle, who had been writing fiction after medical school, but had published little, wondered if Bell's forensic methods could be applied to the investigation of criminal activity. The result was the celebrated fictional detective Sherlock Holmes. After finding success as a writer, Doyle gave up practising medicine.

Che Guevara, Cuban Revolutionary Leader

Ernesto "Che" Guevara landed on the southeastern shores of Cuba with a small group of guerillas led by Fidel Castro. Guevara had a ferocious will and forced himself to carry on despite his own medical problems. Although he'd embarked on the mission as the unit's doctor, circumstances obliged him to become a military leader. It turned out that the role of revolutionary commander was one he was born to play.

Anton Chekhov, Russian Author

By the early 1890s, Chekhov was famed throughout Russia for his extraordinary body of written work, but that didn't stop him from working as a doctor and medical administrator during a horrible famine in 1891. He largely gave up medicine to concentrate on writing in the years following, producing some of his most memorable and influential short stories.

Michelle Bachelet, Former President of Chile

When she was still a teenager, Bachelet and her mother were tortured in a secret prison. Her father, a military commander, had been tortured too and died of a heart attack while in custody in 1974. Those were nightmare years in Chile after the U.S.-backed military coup in which Augusto Pinochet seized power from the democratically elected socialist president, Salvador Allende. But she managed to survive it and earn a medical degree in surgery and a specialisation in paediatrics and public health. She was a reluctant candidate for president and won her first term in 2006, becoming the first female president of the country and the first woman to lead a Latin American country who was not the wife of a previous political leader. She won a second term as President of Chile in 2014.

Maria Montessori, Italian Educator

At the end of the 19th century, medical schools in Rome were among the least demanding in Europe. One of the most exceptional students the school ever produced by the system was Maria Montessori, who graduated from medical school in 1896. She specialised in psychiatry and found work in an institution for children with mental disabilities. She experimented with children offering them different kinds of sensory experiences, and found that with the right approach, she could engage children who had been considered lost causes. The incredible success of her methodology meant that by 1910 there were Montessori schools across Europe and the first one in the US opened in 1911. Montessori schools are still popular all over the world today.

Mae Jemison, First African American Woman in Space

Picture Credit: "Black History Month" by the US Department of State is marked with CC PDM 1.0

Watching the moon landings of the 1960s from her childhood home in Chicago, young Mae Jemison loved almost everything she saw. Jemison went to medical school at Cornell University.

After graduation, she spent two years stationed in Africa as a doctor in the Peace Corps, among her many accomplishments. Along the way, she became fluent in Russian, Swahili and Japanese. She became the first African American woman in space when she blasted out of Earth's atmosphere on the Endeavour in 1992.

A determined woman

Picture Credit: "Women's History Month" by US Department of State is marked with CC PDM 1.0

An American journalist, industrialist, inventor, and charity worker made a record-breaking trip around the world in 72 days - in emulation of Jules Verne's fictional character Phileas Fogg, and published an exposé in which she worked undercover to report on a mental institution from within.

She was a pioneer in her field and launched a new kind of investigative journalism. Her name - Elizabeth Cochrane Seaman - may not mean too much to you, nor the pen name she used (Nellie Bly) - but she was a very interesting and determined woman.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nellie_Bly

As a teenager, she dropped her nickname 'Pinky' and changed her surname to Cochrane. A newspaper column entitled '*What Girls Are Good For*' in the *Pittsburgh Dispatch* that reported girls were principally for birthing children and keeping house, prompted her to write a response under the pseudonym '*Lonely Orphan Girl*'. The editor, George Madden, was impressed with her passion and ran an advertisement asking the author to identify herself. When Cochrane introduced herself, the editor offered her the chance to write a piece for the newspaper, again under her pseudonym. Madden was impressed again and offered her a full-time job. It was customary for women who were newspaper writers at that time to use pen names. The editor chose '*Nellie Bly*'.

In 1887, she left the *Pittsburgh Despatch* and talked her way into the offices of Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World* newspaper and took an undercover assignment for which she agreed to pretend insanity to investigate reports of brutality and neglect at the Women's Lunatic Asylum on Blackwell's Island, now named Roosevelt Island

'*Around the World in Seventy-Two Days*' is the 1890 book she wrote under her pseudonym, *Nellie Bly*. It chronicles her 72-day trip around the world, which was inspired by Jules Verne's 1873 book.
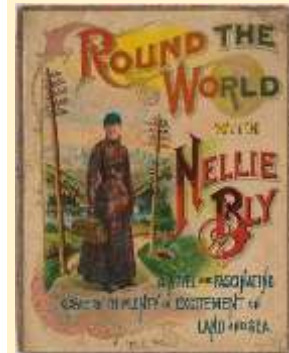
Picture Credit: "Round the World with Nellie Bly" by J.A. Grozier, active late 19th century is marked with CC0 1.0

2

The Priory of St Pancras, Lewes

Introduction

Lewes Priory was founded by *William de Warenne* and his wife *Gundrada* between 1078 and 1082 on the site of a Saxon church dedicated, as was the Priory, to St Pancras. *William de Warenne* was a leading Norman baron with extensive lands in Sussex and elsewhere in England. It was the first Priory in England in the reformed Benedictine Order of Cluny, based in France. It became one of the wealthiest monasteries in England, but, despite its wealth, it played little role in national affairs, except in the Battle of Lewes in 1264 when it was occupied by the troops of *King Henry III.*

The Cluny Connection

The Priory of St Pancras had one of the largest monastic churches in the country. It was set within an extensive walled and gated precinct and was laid out in a commanding location fronting the tidal shoreline at the head of the Ouse valley to the south of Lewes. The Priory was endowed with churches and extensive holdings throughout England. In Lewes, it had hospitia (hospices) dedicated to St James and to St Nicholas. The major church was built after 1140 AD, with the west towers recorded as unfinished in 1268 AD, but today, nothing survives above ground level. The church's design was based upon its mother church at Cluny, in France, then the largest church in the world. The church had an internal length of 420 feet from the west door to the chancel apse, with an inner vault height of 93 feet at the altar and 105 feet at the crossing. It was the largest church in Sussex, longer than Chichester Cathedral, including its Lady Chapel, and comparable to the original form of Ely Cathedral or the surviving form of Lichfield Cathedral.

The role of William de Warenne

Lewes Priory was founded by *William de Warenne*, and his wife *Gundrada*, probably in 1081, after visiting the Priory of Cluny in Burgundy in 1077. The dedication of the new Priory to St Pancras was followed by the presence of a pre-existing Saxon shrine to that saint on the site. The cult of St Pancras was a strong link between Saxon England and Rome, having been introduced by *Augustine* in 597 AD at the behest of *Gregory the Great*. *William de Warenne* was acting under the auspices of a Cluniac Pope, *Gregory VII.*

Dissolution of the Monasteries

The Priory is a nationally important historical site but an almost lost monument of medieval* England, as the buildings were systematically demolished after the *Dissolution of the Monasteries* in the reign of Henry VIII. Today, some parts of the lesser buildings survive above ground, fenced off within a public park.

The Priory was surrendered to the Crown on 16th November 1537, and its destruction was carried out at the direction of Thomas Cromwell, who appointed a specialist demolition team which undertook the destruction with exceptional thoroughness. In 1538, the manor of Southover and the site of the dissolved monastery were granted to Thomas Cromwell until his fall from grace.

* The term 'medieval' refers to the Middle Ages, a period of European history which is broken into three subdivisions: Early Middle Ages (5th century – 10th century), High Middle Ages (10th century – 13th century) and Late Middle Ages (13th century – 15th century).

The Site and Structure

The precinct comprises a rough quadrilateral of land about 16.1 hectares in area, bounded along the north side by today's Southover High Street and Priory Street. The Priory buildings were constructed in the western half, the major church and sacred buildings being in the north-west quadrant. The precinct was terraced in section, stepping down to the south with the buildings set at different levels. The north-east quadrant has an embankment and wall enclosing its southern side that is of medieval date with semicircular buttresses along its eastern extent. This southern wall is a remarkable feature of a defensive, military character. This quadrant is a triple square, the eastern half centres on the conical 'Mount', 150 feet in diameter and 50 feet high, aligned on a sunken field to its east with banks on all sides known as the 'Dripping Pan'. The ages and original functions of these two man-made features are not certain but may have been constructed as a salt works on an earlier, enclosed and elevated plot.

Precinct Walls

The most extensive surviving medieval structures are the precinct walls along the north (140 metres) and east (170 metres) sides of the Dripping Pan. Lengths also survive down Cockshut Road bounding the west side of the precinct. Significant secondary walls within the great precinct sub-divide the land, notably the south wall of the Dripping Pan. The precinct walls have otherwise generally been removed for housing development, the railway and a car park near the Mount. Fragments of the Great Gate (circa. 1200 AD) exist in a rearranged form adjacent to the east end of St John's Church.

The Railway and Excavations

In 1845, the Brighton Lewes and Hastings Railway (subsequently renamed the London Brighton and South Coast Railway) drove a new line through the site, digging down to a track-bed level to meet the new railway station at Lewes, and constructing a line of railway cottages at the east end of Priory Street. This line bisected the foundations of the chapter house and church apse, exposing the foundations and burials including those of William de Warenne and Gundrada. The destruction and collateral damage to the Priory remains were significant, and the site was split in two, but the railway work triggered an archaeological investigation. Elements of the fabric and finds are held by the Sussex Archaeological Society in their two Lewes museums and by the British Museum.

Modern understanding of the layout and development of the Priory comes largely from archaeological excavations carried out since the 1840s, most extensively by George Somers Clarke. The accepted plan of the Priory was drawn by archaeologist and antiquary Sir William Henry St. John Hope and architect Sir Harold Brakspear in 1906 based upon archaeology, documented accounts and hypothesis. The structural bay division shown of the nave is probably wrong, being elongated in a way inconsistent with Romanesque planning modules and different from that of the choir, the Lady Chapel is missing, and certain lay buildings are also not shown. Nonetheless, this is the best guide available.

The buildings accommodated around 50 monks at any one time throughout the 12th and 13th centuries and lay-incumbents and visitors. The precinct buildings were built for sacred and temporal functions and were of ashlar stone-faced chalk and flint core construction. Quarr limestone shipped from the Saxon quarries on the Isle of Wight was used in the first phase of construction. Caen limestone, imported from Normandy, was used with Sussex marble details for the second phase, including the great church's construction. The Priory had its own masons' yard. It manufactured decorated glazed floor tiles and had a school of sacred painting that worked throughout Sussex. The calibre of surviving figurative carvings displayed at the British Museum is of a highly sophisticated order.

Hospitia, now St John the Baptist, Southover

This church incorporates the original hospitia. The 12th century nave arcade, with short drum piers and un-moulded arches, probably divided the men's from the women's ward. The neo-Norman south chapel of 1847 houses the bones of William and Gundrada de Warenne – they were unearthed in two lead cists by railway workers in 1845 during the construction of the Brighton to Lewes railway through the site of the Priory chapter house.

Music

Music composed for the Priory has been found in a book called the Lewes Breviary, found in France and is now held at the Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge.

Sources: • https://www.lewespriory.org.uk/history-overview
• https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/sussex/vol2/pp64-71
• https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewes_Priory

3

My Adventures as an Illustrator

This selection is from a book with that title (pages: 52-53), by Norman Rockwell and Tom Rockwell, published by Abbeville Press, © Copyright 2019, Norman Rockwell Family Agency

Norman Rockwell, the sublime illustrator of covers for the legendary *Saturday Evening Post* and one of America's great artists, was very young indeed when he started to draw:

"I think I've always wanted to be an artist. I certainly can't remember ever wanting to be anything else. Not that I awoke one morning with the fullblown idea swimming about in my head. It was gradual. I drew, then I found I liked to draw, and finally after I had got to know something about myself and the people and things around me, I found that I didn't want to do anything else but draw.

"At first, though, my ability was just something I had, like a bag of lemon drops.

"Jarvis could jump over three orange crates; Jack Outwater had an uncle who had seen a pirate; George Dugan could wiggle his ears; I could draw. I never thought much about it.

"A bunch of us kids would be sitting around on the stoop, and somebody would say, 'Let's go up to Amsterdam Avenue and look in the saloons.' 'Naw, we did that yesterday.' Silence. 'Say, Norm, draw something.' So I'd draw a lion or a fire engine on the sidewalk with a piece of chalk. But it was just as likely that someone would ask George Dugan to wiggle his ears.

"I remember that when I was six or seven years old, I used to draw ships on pieces of cardboard for my brother and another boy. I worked from the picture cards of ships which were included in every package of American Fleet cigarettes in those days and which all of us kids collected and traded back and forth. (Cards and cigarettes celebrated Admiral Dewey's victory at Manila Bay.) Jarvis and his friend would cut the ships out and make little stands for them. Then they'd arrange their fleets in battle order on the floor and each would try to cut up the other's with scissors. It was sort of a frustrating form of art for me: five minutes after I had drawn the fleets, laboriously copying with much smudgy erasing, Jarvis and his friend would have cut them to shreds.

"My father used to copy drawings from magazines in his spare time. I sketched dogs, houses and vegetables, and, from my imagination, pirates, whales, Indians. I drew pictures, as I said, of the characters in Dickens. I found I liked to draw. Every so often at school a teacher would hang one of my drawings on the blackboard, or I'd be sent to show a drawing to Mr Holly, the principal.

"Once, I remember, after I'd shown him a drawing, I went home and told my mother that he'd asked me to stand in assembly, before the whole school, and holding up my drawing, describe how I'd done it. The next day my mother came to school, all excited, and said to my teacher, 'Isn't it wonderful! Mr Holly had Norman Percevel show his drawing in assembly!' The teacher glanced at me. I looked down at my desk, blushing, terribly ashamed.

"But if my ability to draw impressed the grownups occasionally, it didn't knock down any horses in the estimation of the other kids. And it counted even less as we grew older. George Dugan lost stature when the ability to wiggle his ears became less impressive to us kids than, say, how well he played baseball. I lost stature in the same way. I could draw. So what? Could I play baseball? Or throw a rock over Mr Cheeney's house? Or lick my brother? Those were the important things now, both to me and to the other kids. Our values had changed. The athlete was top dog."

Picture Credit: "Norman Rockwell - Triple Self-Portrait [1960]" by Gandalf's Gallery is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Comment from Martin Pollins
Delanceyplace is a FREE brief daily email with an excerpt or quote they view as interesting or noteworthy, offered with commentary to provide context. There is no theme, except that most excerpts will come from a non-fiction work, mainly works of history, and they hope will have a more universal relevance than simply the subject of the book from which they came. And there is not necessarily an endorsement, and in some cases an excerpt may be particularly controversial, and Delanceyplace may disagree with some or all of it, but nevertheless deem it worth noting.

Eclectic excerpts delivered to your email every day

Delanceyplace.com

Pandiculation

Pandiculation is an interesting word. It means the act of stretching oneself (especially on waking up) or opening your mouth wide with a deep inhalation, usually involuntarily from drowsiness, fatigue, or boredom (yawning).

The word comes via French from the Latin verb pandiculārī, *"to stretch, grimace."*
Source: Dictionary.com
Picture Credit: [Cropped] "Yawn" by Images by Petra is licensed under CC BY 2.0

Watch 37 Years of Change with Google Earth's 3D Timelapse

Receding glaciers, rapid urbanisation, and illegal slash-and-burn agriculture. These are just three events that you can witness with 3D Timelapse, an ambitious new Google Earth feature that utilizes 37 years of data to show how quickly we're changing our planet.

After opening Google Earth and clicking the ship's wheel icon to enter 3D Timelapse, you can click anywhere on the planet and watch how our environment has changed since 1984.
Source: ReviewGeek, here.

How Frustrating!

An elderly lady called the hospital to ask about a patient who was being cared for, and said:
"Hello, I'd like some information on a patient, her name is Mrs. Tiptree. She is in Ward P, Room 23."

"I'll put you through to the ward," said the receptionist.

When the ward nurse answered the 'phone, the elderly lady then had to repeat her request.

"Hold on, I will just check her notes… Oh, I am pleased to say she is doing very well and may be discharged on Monday," said the nurse.

"Oh, that is wonderful news! I am so happy, thank you," said the elderly lady.

"You seem very relieved, are you a relative, or a close friend," asked the nurse.

"No, I am Mrs Tiptree in Room 23. Nobody tells you a damn thing here!"

4

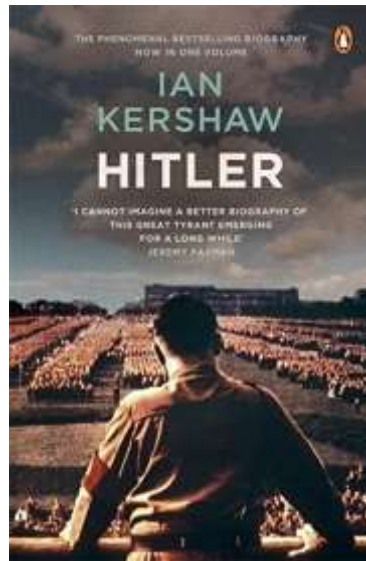## The Impossible Office: The History of the British Prime Minister
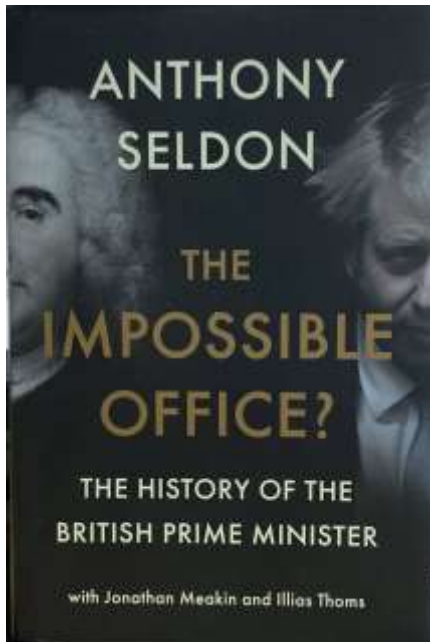
Marking the third centenary of the office of Prime Minister, this new book tells its extraordinary story, explaining how and why it has endured longer than any other democratic political office in world history.

Sir Anthony Seldon, historian of Number 10 Downing Street, explores the lives and careers, loves and scandals, successes and failures of all the Prime Ministers of Britain. From Robert Walpole and William Pitt the Younger, to Clement Attlee and Margaret Thatcher, the author discusses which of our Prime Ministers have been most effective and why. He reveals the changing relationship between the Monarchy and the office of the Prime Minister in intimate detail, describing how the increasing power of the Prime Minister in becoming leader of Britain coincided with the steadily falling influence of the Monarchy. This book celebrates the humanity and frailty, work and achievement, of these remarkable individuals, who averted revolution and civil war, leading the country through times of peace, crisis and war.

Biography of Hitler

Sir Ian Kershaw was a Professor of Modern History at the University of Sheffield from 1989 to 2008 and is one of the world's leading authorities on Hitler. When the two volumes of his biography of Hitler (*Hitler 1889-1936: Hubris and Hitler 1936-1945: Nemesis*) were published, they were immediately greeted around the world as the essential works on perhaps the most maligned figure ever to hold power in modern Europe.

In the face of considerable demand for such an edition, Kershaw has now created a single volume version. The result is a frightening, fascinating narrative of how a bitter provincial failure from an obscure corner of Austria rose to unparalleled power; how the half-baked, contemptible ideas of a vagrant former art student coalesced into an ideology that for twelve horrific years shaped the fate of millions; and how both in his determination to impose his will militarily and to fend off his many enemies he unleashed a genocidal Armageddon.

No one individual can stand in as the scapegoat for the vast social, technological, economic, and military forces that shape our societies, but if ever there was one man whose ideas and personality shaped and cowed those forces, as well as embodying them, it was Hitler. This is his story and Kershaw tells it with unique authority and with moral anger.

Bodies in Bogs

Sources and Further Reading:
• https://www.historyextra.com/period/prehistoric/bog-bodies-what-are-they-facts/
• https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/europe-bog-bodies-reveal-secrets-180962770/
• https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bog_body

Picture Credit: "Tollund Man" by emeuser is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

In an article on 31st March 2021 in HistoryExtra (here), Dr Melanie Giles*provides an introduction to the amazingly well-preserved prehistoric and early historical human remains that have been discovered in wetlands across north-western Europe. Perhaps the most-known body is *The Tollund Man* - a naturally mummified corpse of a man who lived during the 4th century BC, during the period characterised in Scandinavia as the *Pre-Roman Iron Age*. He was found in 1950, preserved as a bog body, on the Jutland peninsula, in Denmark.
*author of *Bog Bodies: Face To Face With The Past*

What are Bog Bodies
Bog bodies are naturally preserved human remains that are found in peaty wetlands, particularly in places that we call *raised bogs*. They are places where sphagnum moss creates deep layers of peat that react in complex ways to form acids that preserve anything organic that enters their clutches. These bogs were growing throughout prehistory when they began to really radically transform our landscape.

Prehistoric populations would put things in bogs; sometimes, this would be cauldrons or weapons or animal offerings, but sometimes it would be human beings. We know some of them also date to times later than prehistory, such as the Roman period. These would have been times of crisis, political change and social unrest, which might help explain why some communities asked their best and finest to take that next step into the next world and act as emissaries or intermediaries with the gods at times when nothing else had seemed to work.

Bog bodies are marvellous for archaeologists because they preserve flesh, tissue and clothing.

Red Hair
The hair on most bog bodies is red - caused by the hair's chemical reaction with the acidic water in the bog. Scientists don't know the actual colour of the mummies' hair.

Well Preserved
Much of the bodies' skin, hair, clothes, and stomach contents have been remarkably well preserved, thanks to the acidic, oxygen-poor conditions of peat bogs, which are made up of accumulated layers of dead moss.

The Great Plague in 17ᵗʰ Century London

The Outbreak

The outbreak in 1665 was caused by *Yersinia pestis*, the bacterium associated with other plague outbreaks before and after the Great Plague of London. The Great Plague was not an isolated event—40,000 Londoners had died of the plague in 1625—but it was the last and worst of the epidemics. It began in London's suburb of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, and the greatest devastation remained in London's outskirts, at Stepney, Shoreditch, Clerkenwell, Cripplegate, and Westminster, quarters where the poor were densely crowded.

The Plague

During the Great Plague of London, the disease (called the bubonic plague) killed about 200,000* people in London. In just seven months, almost one-quarter of London's population died from it.

Historic UK records that the Bubonic Plague (aka the Black Death) had been known in England for centuries. It was a dreadful disease. The victim's skin turned black in patches, and inflamed glands or 'buboes' in the groin, combined with compulsive vomiting, swollen tongue and splitting headaches, made it a horrible, agonising killer.

Incubation of the disease took only four to six days, and when the plague appeared in a household, the house was sealed, thus condemning the whole family to death. Their houses were marked with a painted red cross on the door and the words, *'Lord have mercy on us'*.

Medicine in the 17ᵗʰ century had little effect, and knowledge about disease generally was poor (most people thought that bad smells caused illness). Doctors were too expensive for ordinary people to afford.

The plague started in the East, possibly China, and quickly spread through Europe. Whole communities were wiped out, and corpses littered the streets as no one was left to bury them.

London's Reaction

When the Great Plague struck the English capital in 1665, the rich fled, the economy tottered, and tens of thousands of people were sent to an early grave. How Londoners reacted to pestilence in the 17ᵗʰ century is explained in a HistoryExtra article (here). The account opens in early 1665:

"January 1665 opened with "a fine hard frost". Samuel Pepys, a rising young government official, just short of his 32ⁿᵈ birthday, shared a dinner of a good venison pasty and a turkey with his family and reflected with satisfaction on his good health and increasing wealth and esteem. 1664 had ended "with great joy to me", "everything else in the state quiet, blessed be God", apart from preparations for conflict with the Dutch. And even the formal declaration of war in March was welcomed with optimism and a rush of nationalistic pride. An early naval victory in June 1665 seemed to fulfil all hopes.

But by that time, London knew it was menaced by a growing epidemic: plague deaths were increasing in number and spread. Pepys first mentions rumours of plague at the end of April, and he notes seeing houses shut up in Drury Lane on 7 June. Although this was probably the first time he had seen "two or three houses marked with a red cross upon the doors, and 'Lord have mercy upon us' writ there", he had no doubt what this "sad sight" meant."

* NOTE: According to Britannica.com (here), the records indicate that some 68,596 people died during the epidemic, though the actual number of deaths is suspected of having exceeded 100,000 out of a total population estimated at 460,000. See also Wikipedia about the recording of deaths.

Those who could, including most doctors, lawyers and merchants, fled London for safer pastures.

In his diary, Samuel Pepys wrote a vivid account of the empty streets in London. Charles II and his courtiers left in July 1665 for Hampton Court and then Oxford. Parliament was postponed and had to sit in October 1665 at Oxford, the increase of the plague being so dreadful. Court cases were also moved from Westminster to Oxford. All trade with London and other plague towns was stopped. The Council of Scotland declared that the border with England would be closed. There were to be no fairs or trade with other countries. Many people lost their jobs – from servants to shoemakers to those who worked on the River Thames.
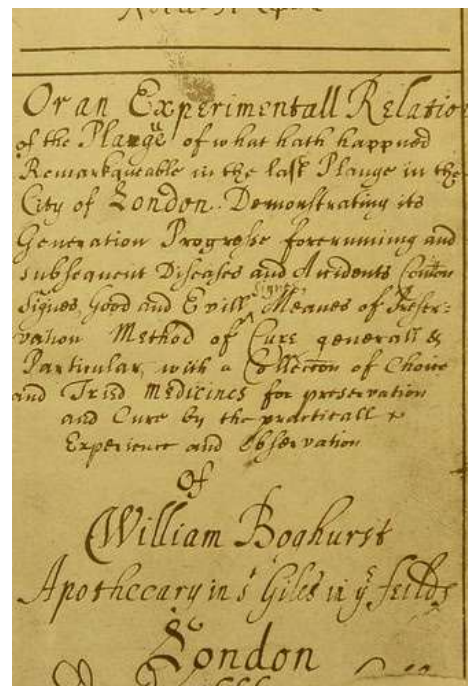
Those doctors who did not flee were powerless against the infectious disease. Germs, the fleas which carried them, and the rats which carried the fleas flourished in London and other dirty towns. The poorest people remained in London, in the company of the rats and fleas and other people who had the plague.

The Great Fire of London

The incidence of the Great Fire of London in September 1666, which killed many of the rats and fleas** who were spreading the disease, is widely thought to be why the plague disappeared from London. However, it also subsided in other cities without such cause. The decline has also been ascribed to quarantine, but effective quarantine was actually not established until 1720.

** The rats were attracted by city streets filled with rubbish and waste, especially in the poorest areas.

At its worst, in September of 1665, the plague killed 7,165 people in one week. Around September of 1666, it ended.

Nursery Rhyme Reminder

Some people claim the nursery rhyme 'Ring-a-ring-o'-roses' is about the plague:

> *Ring-a-ring o' roses,*
> *A pocket full of posies,*
> *A-tishoo! A-tishoo!*
> *We all fall down.*

- The **'roses'** are the red blotches on the skin.
- The **'posies'** are the sweet-smelling flowers people carried to try to ward off the plague.
- **'Atishoo'** refers to the sneezing fits of people with pneumonic plague.'
- **'We all fall down'** refers to people dying.

The First Astronaut

It happened just over 61 years ago - the daring launch that changed the course of human history and charted a map to the skies and beyond:

'The story starts at a top-secret rocket site in the USSR. A young Russian sits inside a tiny capsule on top of the Soviet Union's most powerful intercontinental ballistic missile – originally designed to carry a nuclear warhead – and blasts into the skies. His name is Yuri Gagarin, and he is about to make history.

Travelling at almost 18,000 miles per hour – ten times faster than a rifle bullet – Gagarin circles the globe in just 106 minutes. While his launch began in total secrecy, he became a world celebrity within hours of his landing – the first human to leave the planet.

*A new book came out in April 2021 – **Beyond**. It tells the astonishing story of the first human being to leave our planet and journey into space. It happened at the height of the Cold War as the US and USSR confronted each other across an Iron Curtain.*

Both superpowers took enormous risks to get a man into space first – the Americans in the full glare of the media, the Soviets under deep cover. Both trained their teams of astronauts to the edges of the endurable. In the end, the race between them would come down to the wire.

Drawing on extensive original research and the vivid testimonies of eyewitnesses, many of whom have never spoken before, the author (Stephen Walker) unpacks secrets that were hidden for decades and takes the reader into the drama – featuring the scientists, engineers and political leaders on both sides, and above all the American astronauts and their Soviet rivals battling for supremacy in the heavens.'

The History of Ice Cream

The meaning of the name "ice cream" varies from one country to another. Terms such as *frozen custard, frozen yoghurt, sorbet, gelato,* and others are used to distinguish different varieties and styles.

An ice-cream-like food was first eaten in China in 618-97AD. King Tang of Shang, had 94 ice men who helped to make a dish of buffalo milk, flour and camphor. A form of ice-cream was invented in China about 200 BC when a milk and rice mixture was frozen by packing it into snow.

"Cream Ice," as it was originally called, appeared regularly at the dining table of English King *Charles I* during the 17th century. He was said to have offered his chef £500 a year to keep his ice-cream recipe a secret from the rest of England. An alternative legend, but equally unsupportable, is that the chef was offered a lifetime pension to keep the formula secret.

France was introduced to similar frozen desserts in 1553 by the Italian, *Catherine de Medici,* when she became the wife of *Henry II* of France. But, as explained below, it wasn't until 1660 that ice cream was made available to the general public.

The origin of ice cream is believed to reach back as far as the 2nd century BC, when *Alexander the Great* enjoyed snow and ice flavoured with honey and nectar. Biblical references also show that *King Solomon* was fond of iced drinks during harvest time.

During the Roman Empire, *Nero Claudius Caesar* (A.D. 54-86) frequently sent runners into the mountains for snow, which was then flavoured with fruits and juices. Over a thousand years later, *Marco Polo* returned to Italy from the Far East with a recipe that closely resembled what we now call 'sherbet' – he had tasted it in the court of the Chinese emperor, Kublai Khan. Historians estimate that this evolved into ice cream sometime in the 16th century. England seems to have discovered ice cream at the same time, or perhaps even earlier than the Italians. The Sicilian *Procopio Cutò,* introduced a recipe blending milk, cream, butter and eggs at the place he founded, Café Procope, the first café in Paris.

Unusual 'E' words

You've probably come across these words already. Probably in a newspaper article or in a book. Awareness is one thing, but understanding what the words mean is something else:

Eidetic: Eidetic memory is the ability to recall an image from memory with high precision for a brief period after seeing it only once and without using a mnemonic device. An eidetic person claims to be able to still "see" an object that is no longer visually present. A good example is Stephen Wiltshire (see above), the autistic artist, who can draw and paint cityscapes in amazing detail after seeing the subject only once. See here. The word comes from the German *eidetisch*, coined by German psychologist Erich Jaensch, from the Greek *Eidetikos* "pertaining to images," also "pertaining to knowledge," from *eidesis* "knowledge," itself from *eidos* "form, shape".

Ethology: Ethology is the scientific and objective study of animal behaviour, usually with a focus on behaviour under natural conditions and viewing behaviour as an evolutionarily adaptive trait. The word was coined in the late 19th century via Latin from the Greek *ēthologia,* from *ēthos.*

Etiology: The word can also be spelled aetiology or aitiology. It is the science of causes or causation (giving a reason for…). It was first coined in the 1550s, from Late Latin *aetiologia*, from the Greek *Etiologia* "statement of cause," from *aitia* "cause, responsibility".

Etymology: Etymology is the study of the history (derivation) of words. By extension, the etymology of a word means its origin and development throughout history.

Epistemology: Epistemology is the philosophical study of the nature, origin, and limits of human knowledge. The term is derived from the Greek *epistēmē* ("knowledge") and *logos* ("reason"), and accordingly, the field is sometimes referred to as the theory of knowledge. It differs from ontology: epistemology is the study of knowledge, whereas ontology is the study of existence.

Entomology: Entomology is the branch of zoology dealing with insects. Britannica.com (here) says: *The Greek word entomon, meaning "notched," refers to the segmented body plan of the insect. The zoological categories of genetics, taxonomy, morphology, physiology, behaviour, and ecology are included in this field of study.*

Peter Ustinov – Witty and Erudite

Sources: • https://www.britannica.com/biography/Peter-Ustinov
• https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Ustinov
• https://www.royalsussex.org.uk/soldiers-stories/pte-6411623-peter-ustinov/ • https://www.notablebiographies.com/newsmakers2/2005-Pu-Z/Ustinov-Peter.html

Picture Credit: "File: Sir Peter Ustinov Allan Warren.jpg" by Allan Warren is licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0

Sir Peter Alexander Freiherr von Ustinov (born 16th April 1921, London—died 28th March 2004, Genolier, Switzerland) was an English actor, director, playwright, screenwriter, novelist, raconteur, humanitarian, intellectual and diplomat. He was also a very funny man.

Sir Peter's father - *Jona Freiherr von Ustinov* - was of Russian, Polish, Jewish, German, and Ethiopian descent. Jona (or Iona) worked as a press officer at the German Embassy in London in the 1930s and was a reporter for a German news agency.

In 1935, two years after Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany, Jona von Ustinov began working for the British intelligence service MI5 and became a British citizen, thus avoiding internment during the war.

Sir Peter's paternal grandfather, *Baron Plato von Ustinov*, was a Russian noble and an officer in the Tsar's army who was exiled because of his religious beliefs. His grandmother was *Magdalena Hall*, of mixed German-Ethiopian-Jewish origin. Ustinov's great-grandfather *Moritz Hall*, was a Jewish refugee from Kraków and later a Christian convert and collaborator of Swiss and German missionaries in Ethiopia, married into a German-Ethiopian family.

Ustinov was educated at Westminster School, where one of his schoolmates was *Rudolf von Ribbentrop*, the eldest son of the Nazi Foreign Minister *Joachim von Ribbentrop*. After leaving Westminster School (he is said to have hated it and left at age 16) and the London Theatre School, Ustinov made his professional stage debut at age 17, playing an old man in a production of *The Wood Demon*. The performance was something of a portent of things to come, as Ustinov's acting career has been characterised by numerous roles in which he displayed his talents for vocal mimicry and age affectation.

After a few uncredited bit parts in British films, he landed his first major screen role in *The Goose Steps Out* (1942).
Source: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Peter-Ustinov

In 1942, Peter Ustinov became number 6411623 Private Ustinov. P, 10th Royal Sussex Regiment. He spent time as batman to David Niven while writing the Niven film *The Way Ahead*.

The difference in their ranks—Niven was a lieutenant-colonel and Ustinov, a mere private—made their regular association militarily impossible, and so, to solve the problem, Ustinov was appointed as Niven's batman.

Sir Peter held various academic posts and served as a goodwill ambassador for UNICEF and President of the World Federalist Movement. Ustinov was the winner of numerous awards during his life, including two Academy Awards for Best Supporting Actor, Emmy Awards, Golden Globes, BAFTA Awards for acting, and a Grammy Award for best recording for children, as well as the recipient of governmental honours from, amongst others, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. He also displayed a unique cultural versatility.

Tending to be rather overweight, he suffered from diabetes and heart problems in his later years, and died of heart failure at a clinic near Lake Geneva, Switzerland; he was 82.

He became (well, almost) synonymous with Agatha Christie's Belgian sleuth *Hercule Poirot* in six films made throughout the 1970s and '80s.
licensed under CC BY 2.0

In 2003, Durham University changed the name of its Graduate Society to *Ustinov College* in honour of the significant contributions Ustinov had made as chancellor of the university from 1992 until he died in 2004.

Notable Biographies (here) describe Peter Ustinov as: *Cosmopolitan, erudite, and in possession of seemingly boundless stores of wit.*

"Sir Peter could make anyone laugh", UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy is quoted as saying.

Peter Ustinov (as Hercules Poirot) with David Niven
Picture Credit: "Peter Ustinov as Hercule Poirot – for blog post" by Jose C Silva is licensed under CC BY 2.0

8

Ernest Hemingway – a very interesting man

Sources and Further Reading:
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Hemingway#HeroSection
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Hemingway
- https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ernest-Hemingway
- From Nobel Lectures, Literature 1901-1967, Editor Horst Frenz, Elsevier Publishing Company, Amsterdam, 1969: https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/1954/hemingway/biographical/
- https://www.quora.com/Which-author-had-a-life-more-interesting-than-their-own-books/answer/Jean-Marie-Valheur
- https://www.zmescience.com/other/feature-post/ernest-hemingway-legendary-life-05335/

Ernest Hemingway in Cuba
Picture Credit: [Cropped] "MM00005791x" by Florida Keys--Public Libraries is licensed under CC BY 2.0

Ernest Miller Hemingway was an American novelist, short-story writer, journalist, and sportsman (a boxer). Born in 1899, his father was a doctor and his mother a musician. Their home was at Oak Park, a suburb of Chicago, Illinois. Ernest was the second of six children.

Like several other American writers, Hemingway worked as a journalist before becoming a novelist. After graduating from high school, he went to work as a junior reporter for *The Kansas City Star*, where he quickly learned that truth often lurks below the surface of a story. He learned about corruption in city politics and that in hospital emergency rooms and police stations, a mask of cynicism was worn "like armour to shield whatever vulnerabilities remained". In his pieces, he wrote about relevant events, excluding the background.

Hemingway left *The Kansas City Star* for the Italian Front to enlist as an ambulance driver for the American Red Cross in World War I (he had been rejected for military service because of a defective eye). In 1918, he was seriously wounded in both legs by mortar and machine-gun fire and returned home. Although not Italian, Hemingway was decorated by the Italian Government with the *Silver Medal of Military Valor*, for his efforts. His wartime experiences formed the basis for his novel *A Farewell to Arms* (1929).

As foreign correspondent for the *Toronto Star*, while living in Paris in the early 1920s, he covered the Greco-Turkish War in more than a dozen articles before resigning from journalism to devote himself to fiction. Hemingway's succinct and lucid prose style—which he called the iceberg theory—had a powerful influence on American and British fiction in the 20th century, while his adventurous lifestyle and his public

image brought him admiration from later generations.

Hemingway produced most of his work between the mid-1920s and the mid-1950s, and he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1954. He published seven novels, six short-story collections, and two nonfiction works. Three of his novels, four short-story collections, and three nonfiction works were published posthumously. Many of his works are considered classics of American literature. Hemingway used his experiences as a reporter during the civil war in Spain as the background for his most ambitious novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940). Among his later works, the most outstanding is the short novel, *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952), the story of an old fisherman's journey, his long and lonely struggle with a fish and the sea, and his victory in defeat.

In 1921, Hemingway married Hadley Richardson, the first of four wives, and said to be his favourite. They moved to Paris, where he worked as a foreign correspondent and fell under the influence of the modernist writers and artists of the 1920s' so-called "Lost Generation" expatriate community. His debut novel, *The Sun Also Rises,* was published in 1926.

He divorced Richardson in 1927. He then married Pauline Pfeiffer. They divorced after he returned from the Spanish Civil War, which he covered as a journalist and which was the basis for his novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940). Martha Gellhorn became his third wife in 1940. But he and Gellhorn separated after he met Mary Welsh in London during World War II. Hemingway was present with Allied troops as a journalist at the Normandy landings and the liberation of Paris.

A Larger than Life Figure

Ernest Hemingway was a larger than life figure. A boxer. A journalist. Of his many passions - which included bullfighting, war, and hunting animals - was a passion for horses and betting. He volunteered to drive ambulances in WWI as a teenager, and fought in and reported on the Spanish civil war, helped free Paris at the end of WWII. He was the lover of many women, husband of four, and winner of a Nobel Prize. He was a man who almost came to blows with Orson Welles once and many others. He befriended gunslingers, bullfighters, soldiers, fishermen, and even Fidel Castro himself. Ernest Hemingway is famous for being one of the most appreciated American fiction writers of all time, but his personal life is no less interesting. A tough, hard-driving, hard-drinking, larger-than-life figure who hunted big game on the savannah, cheered toreadors, he covered wars, and he always, always wrote.

Something else the great writer did in his later years, was fishing. He loved fishing. But he did not just fish for big nautical creatures to show off - Hemingway fished for U-boats: he had a sonar installed in his ship and informed the CIA of the whereabouts and movements of Russian submarines. He did so as he was living in Cuba.

A Survivor but Emotionally Troubled

Hemingway was also a genuine survivor, too. He had a troubled emotional life yet lived through anthrax, malaria, pneumonia, dysentery, skin cancer, hepatitis, anaemia, diabetes, high blood pressure, two plane crashes, a ruptured kidney, and a ruptured spleen, a ruptured liver, a crushed vertebra, and a fractured skull. It seemed as if the only thing that could kill Hemingway was Hemingway himself. Alas, this was exactly what happened - he believed the FBI would ransack his things and follow him around. This and other borderline psychotic episodes prompted his fourth wife (Mary Welsh Hemingway, an American journalist and author to whom he was married in 1946) to admit him to a mental hospital. There, he received electric shocks until he could no longer remember his name, let alone write. He killed himself, shortly after his 36th electric shock, with a shotgun. Ironically, the FBI later admitted they were following Hemingway, although why they were doing so is unclear.

Videos and Films

- Enjoy an adaptation of Ernest Hemingway's classic American short story *"My Old Man"* – click here* or unpack the story and learn about the author's time as an expatriate in Paris – click here.*

  * Both courtesy of Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.

Other online videos can be viewed by clicking:
- https://youtu.be/NO_qovNelA0
- https://youtu.be/y_lAw7D37ns
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yOjLaws9HQ

Several of Hemingway's books were made into films, including:
- ***A Farewell to Arms*** - a 1932 romance drama film directed by Frank Borzage and starring Helen Hayes, Gary Cooper, and Adolphe Menjou. The film received Academy Awards for Best Cinematography and Best Sound and was nominated for Best Picture and Best Art Direction.
- ***For Whom the Bell Tolls*** is a 1943 American war film produced and directed by Sam Wood and starring Gary Cooper and Ingrid Bergman.
- ***The Killers*** - a 1946 American film noir directed by Robert Siodmak, and starred Burt Lancaster (in his film debut), Ava Gardner and Edmond O'Brien. The film earned four Academy Award nominations, including Best Director and Best Film Editing.
- ***The Old Man and the Sea*** - a 1958 American adventure drama film directed by John Sturges. The film was based on Hemingway's 1952 novel of the same name. The film starred Spencer Tracy. Dimitri Tiomkin won the Academy Award for Best Original Score for his work on the film.
- ***To Have and Have Not*** - a 1944 American romance-war-adventure film directed by Howard Hawks. It was loosely based on Hemingway's 1937 novel of the same name. It starred Humphrey Bogart, Walter Brennan and Lauren Bacall.
- ***The Snows of Kilimanjaro*** - a 1952 American Technicolor film based on the 1936 short story of the same name by Hemingway. Directed by Henry King, it was written by Casey Robinson, and starred Gregory Peck, Susan Hayward and Ava Gardner. The film was nominated for two Oscars for Best Cinematography, Color and Best Art Direction, Color.

Sussex University Alumni

Sources: • https://www.greatbritishlife.co.uk/people/celebrity-interviews/45-famous-people-who-went-to-university-in-sussex-7203788
• https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_University_of_Sussex_alumni
• https://www.mybrightonandhove.org.uk/places/placeuni/university-of-sussex/university-of-sussex-2

Picture Credit: "University of Sussex, August 1967." by The JR James Archive, University of Sheffield is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

About the University of Sussex

In December 1911, a public meeting at the Royal Pavilion started a fund to establish a university at Brighton, but the project was halted by the First World War, and the money raised to that point was used instead for books for the Municipal Technical College. However, the idea was revived in the 1950s, and in June 1958, the government approved the scheme for a university at Brighton, the first of a new generation of 'red-brick' universities.

The University College of Sussex was established as a company in May 1959, and a royal charter granted on 16th August 1961 raised it to full university status, with Viscount Monckton installed as the first chancellor. The University is located in Falmer, Brighton, Sussex, England. Its large campus site is surrounded by the South Downs National Park and is around 5.5 kilometres (3.4 miles) from central Brighton.

More than a third of its students are enrolled in postgraduate programmes. The university has a diverse community of nearly 20,000 students, with around a third being international students, and over 1,000 academics, representing over 140 different nationalities. At the outset, Sussex University quickly developed a reputation for radicalism and liberalism amongst its student population, but its reputation for academic excellence, research and community involvement has grown enormously since the early days.

Impressively, Sussex counts 5 Nobel Prize winners, 15 Fellows of the Royal Society, 10 Fellows of the British Academy, 24 fellows of the Academy of Social Sciences and a winner of the Crafoord Prize among its faculty. By 2011, many of its faculty members had also received the Royal Society of Literature Prize, the Order of the British Empire and the Bancroft Prize. Alumni include heads of state, diplomats, politicians, eminent scientists and activists. For a comprehensive list of University of Sussex Alumni, click here.

University of Sussex Alumni

Harry Maddock wrote an interesting piece which appeared on Great British Life (here): *45 famous people who went to university in Sussex*. Here's my own list:

❖ From the journalism scene: Michael Buerk, Dermot Murnaghan, Clive Myrie and Lord Richard Cecil.

❖ Singer-songwriter Jessie Ware and musician Billy Idol also went to the University of Sussex to study English Literature and English respectively. Genesis' keyboard player Tony Banks and composer, orchestrator and conductor John Altman both went to the University of Sussex.

❖ From the world of politics Labour's Hilary Benn, the Conservative Party's Caroline Nokes and Lib Dem Andrew George, all graduated from Sussex University.

❖ English international cricketer Rosaline Birch, distance runner Brendan Foster, Wimbledon Singles Champion (1977) Virginia Wade and football manager Ralf Rangnick (FC Schalke 04 and VfB Stuttgart) all studied at Falmer.

❖ Edward Kamau Brathwaite, Vogue editor Alexandra Shulman, Kim Newman, Ian McEwan, Richard Calder and Sarra Manning, all gained their degrees at Sussex University.

❖ From the field of finance and business, Charles Hall (*CEO of HSBC Holdings plc*), Charles Morgan (*CEO of Morgan Motor Company*), Stephen Plum (*Executive Vice President, 20th Century Fox*), Dame Gail Rebuck (*Chair and Chief Executive of The Random House Group*), Herbert J. Scheidt (*CEO of Vontobel Banking Group*), Simon Segars, (*CEO of ARM Holdings plc*), Keith Skeoch (*CEO of Standard Life Investments*) - all graduated from Sussex University.

❖ The legal profession swelled their ranks (together with many others) with Raquel Agnello QC (*Barrister, Erskine Chambers*), Shakeel Ahmad (*Partner and Patent Attorney, Keltie*), Richard Armitage, David Roylance and Iain Cullen (*Partners, Simmons & Simmons solicitors*), Jeffrey Bacon (*Barrister, Littleton Chambers*), Alex Bailin QC (*Barrister, Matrix Chambers*), Sandra Davis (*Partner and Head, Mishcon de Reya Solicitors*), Nick Elverston (*Partner, Herbert Smith solicitors*), Jonathan Faull (*Director General Internal Market & Services, European Commission*), Emma Humphreys (*Partner, Charles Russell solicitors*), Ros Kellaway (*Partner, Head of Competition Law, Eversheds solicitors*), Richard Miller QC (*Queens Counsel, Three New Square chambers*), Michael Turner QC (*Barrister, Garden Court Chambers*), Richard Wilson QC (*Barrister 36 Bedford Row Chambers*).

❖ Theatre director and son of Richard (Lord Attenborough), Michael Attenborough** went to the University of Sussex and studied English. Richard's daughter followed later to study Sociology.

* The list above is limited to a selection of Alumni of Sussex University, which means omitting those who graduated from Brighton University.
** Richard Attenborough, as Lord Attenborough, became Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Sussex University in 1970 and Chancellor in 1998. He presented my graduation certificate (as Master of Business Administration) to me in January 1999.

Honorary Degrees from Sussex University

Honorary degrees are awarded to people who have made an outstanding contribution to society or a field of expertise, some of whom are:

❖ Beetle, Sir Paul McCartney, has a doctorate from the University of Sussex (1988).

❖ Anita Roddick, founder of the Body Shop – the retail brand based on ethical consumerism - also received an honorary doctorate in 1988.

❖ Jon Snow – the news reporter was born in Ardingly. He worked with Channel 4 from 1989 and is an active charity worker.

Picture Credit: "Lord Attenborough" by marco sees things is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

❖ Harold Macmillan (1963) was awarded an honorary degree just months before leaving office as Prime Minister.

❖ Paul-Henri Spaak (1963), one of the founding fathers of the European Union and was instrumental in forging the 1958 agreement that formed the European Economic Community (a forerunner of the EU).

❖ Harold Wilson (1966), another UK prime minister, this time on the other side of the political spectrum from Macmillan. He received his honorary degree while actively serving as prime minister (1964-1970).

❖ Yehudi Menuhin (1966), widely considered one of the greatest violinists of the 20th century, maintaining a recording contract with EMI for 70 years.

❖ Mstislav Rostropovich (1970), another musician, said by Julian Lloyd Webber to be "*probably the greatest cellist of all time*".

❖ Harry Ricardo (1970) is one of the foremost designers involved in developing the internal combustion engine as we know it. His company, Ricardo, is based nearby in Shoreham and is today a key consulting firm in the vehicle industry.

❖ Noel Coward (1972), the playwright, composer, director, actor and singer, who combined cheek and chic, was awarded a Sussex honorary degree nine months before his death.

❖ Laurence Olivier (1978), the actor and director who, along with Ralph Richardson and John Gielgud, was one of a trio of male actors who dominated the British stage of the mid-20th century.

❖ David Attenborough (1979), the man behind the jaw-dropping nature documentaries. His brother Richard and nephew Michael were also honoured by Sussex in 1987 and 2005.

❖ Harold Pinter (1990), the famed writer and director of dark comedies such as *The Birthday Party* and drama films such as *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, *Sleuth* and a screenplay of Franz Kafka's novel *The Trial*. He won the Nobel Prize for literature in 2005.

❖ Dirk Bogarde (1993), Sussex actor who first appeared at Newick, had a substantial post-war film career, including roles in *The Damned* and *A Bridge Too Far*. He also wrote six novels between 1980 and 1997.

❖ David Frost (1994), who came to prominence as the host of the satirical TV programme *That Was The Week That Was* in 1962, going on to interview countless high-profile figures for several shows, including his long-running morning programme *Breakfast With Frost*. He is best remembered for his interviews with former US president Richard Nixon.

10

Remembering the Death of Blair Peach

Sources: ● https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_Blair_Peach ● https://lithub.com/on-deadly-policing-and-the-1979-southall-protests/

Introduction

On the evening of 23rd April 1979, more than 2,800 police officers, 94 of them on horseback, confronted an anti-fascist protest outside Southall Town Hall. They were present to protect a meeting within that building for a National Front election candidate. The National Front had chosen Southall Town Hall to hold its St George's Day election meeting - the area has one of the UK's biggest Asian communities. By the end of the night, 700 protesters had been arrested, of whom 340 were charged, mostly with public order offences. Sixty-four people were receiving treatment for injuries at the hands of police officers, including several with head wounds. And one anti-fascist demonstrator, a New Zealand-born schoolteacher, Blair Peach, was dead.

See: https://lithub.com/on-deadly-policing-and-the-1979-southall-protests/

The Protest and Death of Blair Peach

Clement Blair Peach, an anti-racist activist, was killed after being knocked unconscious during a protest against the National Front at a candidature election meeting in Southall Town Hall.

Picture Credit: "Blair Peach" by 4WardEverUK is licensed under CC BY 2.0

Peach was a teacher at the Phoenix School in East London for children with special needs. On the fateful evening of his death, he was hit on the head, probably (says Wikipedia), by a member of the *Special Patrol Group* (SPG), a specialist unit within the Metropolitan Police Service. He died in hospital that night.

Another demonstrator, Clarence Baker (a singer of the reggae band Misty in Roots), remained in a coma for five months.

The Inquest and the Police Complaints Investigation

An investigation conducted by Commander John Cass of the Metropolitan Police Complaints Investigation Bureau concluded that Peach had been killed by one of six SPG officers, and others had preserved their silence to obstruct his investigation. The report was not released to the public but was available to John Burton, the coroner who conducted the inquest; excerpts from a leaked copy were also published in *The Leveller* and *The Sunday Times* in early 1980. In May 1980, the jury in the inquest arrived at a verdict of death by misadventure, although the press and some pressure groups (notably the National Council for Civil Liberties) expressed concern that no clear answers had been provided and criticised the way Burton had conducted the inquest.

Celia Stubbs, Peach's partner, campaigned for the Cass report to be released and for a full public inquiry to be held. An inquiry was rejected, but in 1989 the Metropolitan Police paid £75,000 compensation to Peach's family. In 2009 Ian Tomlinson died after he was struck from behind by a member of the *Territorial Support Group*, the SPG's successor organisation; the parallels in the deaths proved to be the catalyst in the release of the Cass report to the public. The Metropolitan Police commissioner, Sir Paul Stephenson, released the report and the supporting documentation. He also offered an official apology to Peach's family.

The damage to community relations in the area and beyond

The policing of the demonstration in Southall damaged community relations in the area. Since Peach's death, the Metropolitan Police have been involved in a series of incidents and poorly conducted investigations—the 1993 murder of Stephen Lawrence, the death of Jean Charles de Menezes in 2005, the botched 2006 Forest Gate raid and the death of Ian Tomlinson, a newspaper vendor, after he was struck by a police officer during the 2009 G-20 summit protests in the City of London - all of which tarnished the image of the police service.

Police Officers with Private Weapons

The Lit Hub website story by David Renton on 10th July 2020 (here) draws attention to something very worrying:

'… As part of the police investigation into Peach's killing, the lockers belonging to the half dozen SPG officers who had been in Peach's vicinity when he was struck were raided. Some 26 unofficial weapons were found, including a leather-covered stick, two knives, a large truncheon, a crowbar, a metal cosh, a whip and a whip handle. The fatal wound had been large—larger, the pathologists advised than an ordinary truncheon—but had not broke [sic] Peach's skin as a wooden truncheon would have done. But the discovery of these weapons raised wider questions even than Peach's death. How was it possible for officers to go on demonstrations with their own private weapons such as coshes or knives?'

Royal Consorts

Picture Credit: [Cropped] "Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, Cambridge, Waikato (January 1 1954)" by Archives New Zealand is licensed under CC BY 2.0

The marriage of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was the longest of any British sovereign.

Prince Philip was the longest-serving and oldest-ever *Royal Consort*, always keeping "two steps behind" his wife and the Queen of the United Kingdom and 15 other Commonwealth realms.

A royal consort is the spouse of a ruling king or queen. Consorts of monarchs in the United Kingdom and its predecessors have no constitutional status or power, but many have had significant influence.

Since the union of England and Scotland in 1707, there have been ten consorts of the British monarch. They are (in order of length of service):

- Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark From 06/2/1952 to 09/04/2021, (Monarch: Elizabeth II)
- Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz From 8/9/1761 to 17/11/1818, (Monarch: George III)
- Princess Mary of Teck From 6/5/1910 to 20/1/1936, (Monarch: George V)
- Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha From 10/2/1840 to 14/12/1861 (Monarch: Victoria)
- Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon From 11/12/1936 to 6/2/1952, (Monarch: George VI)
- Princess Caroline of Brandenburg-Ansbach From 11/6/1727 to 20/11/1737, (Monarch: George II)
- Princess Alexandra of Denmark From 22/1/1901 to 6/5/1910 (Monarch: Edward VII)
- Princess Adelaide of Saxe-Meiningen From 26/6/1830 to 20/6/1837, (Monarch: William IV)
- Princess Caroline of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel From 29/1/1820 to 7/8/1821, (Monarch: George IV)
- Prince George of Denmark and Norway From 1/5/1707 to 18/10/1708, (Monarch: Anne)

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_British_royal_consorts

11

To Knit or Knot to Knit

Sources: • https://www.darngoodyarn.com/blogs/darn-good-blog/5-facts-you-didnt-know-about-knitting-and-men
• https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_knitting
• https://kcguild.org.uk/sharing-knowledge/history-of-hand-knitting/
• https://www.standard.co.uk/hp/front/breaking-the-pattern-it-s-menonly-knitting-classes-8874104.html
• https://www.toftuk.com/Article_Pages_StitchDirectory.aspx

Picture Credit: "plate 38: Wensley Dale Knitters." by Leeds Museums and Galleries is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

Introduction
There's nothing new about men knitting - it just seems to be the exception to the rule in the modern world. Men probably invented the art of knitting, and they still do it.

Knitting, generally perceived as being for grannies and older women has become "manly" following an endorsement from macho actor Ryan Gosling, an accomplished knitter himself. He once claimed that hours of knitting was his idea of a "perfect day".

History of Knitting
Knitting is the process of using two or more needles to loop yarn into a series of loops that are interconnected loops to create a finished garment or some other type of fabric. The word *knit* is derived from *knot*, thought to originate from the Dutch verb *knutten*, which is similar to the Old English *cnyttan*, "to knot". Its origins lie in the need for clothing for protection against extreme weather conditions. More recently, knitting has become less of a necessary skill and more of a hobby.

Unlike weaving, knitting does not require a loom or other large equipment, making it a valuable technique for nomadic and non-agrarian peoples. The oldest knitted artefacts are socks from Egypt, dating from the 11th century CE. They are a very fine gauge, done with complex colourwork, and some have a short row heel, which necessitates the *purl* stitch*. These complexities suggest that knitting is even older than the archaeological record can prove. Earlier items having a knitted or crocheted appearance have been shown to be made with other techniques, such as *Nålebinding***, a method of making fabric by creating multiple loops with a single needle and thread - very much like sewing.

Some artefacts have a structure so similar to knitting, for example, 3rd to 5th century CE Romano-Egyptian toe-socks, that it is thought the "*Coptic stitch*" of *Nålbinding* is actually the forerunner to knitting.

* From the mid-16th century onwards, the purl was used as a decorative stitch.
** Men were the first to use Nålbinding, which required only one needle. Nålbinding predates knitting by about a thousand years and crochet by 1500 years. Nålbinding was used during the Viking age of 793-1066 AD in Scandinavia before knitting and crocheting were known.

Most histories of knitting indicate its origin was somewhere in the Middle East, from where it spread to Europe by the Mediterranean trade routes and later to the Americas with European colonisation.

The earliest known knitted items in Europe were made by Muslim knitters employed by Spanish Christian royal families. Their high level of knitting skills can be seen in several items found in the tombs in the Abbey of Santa María la Real de Las Huelgas, a royal monastery near Burgos, Spain. Among them are the knitted cushion covers and gloves found in the tomb of Prince Fernando de la Cerda, who died in 1275. The silk cushion cover was knitted at approximately 20 stitches per inch. It included knitted patterns reflecting the family armoury, as well as the Arabic word *baraka* ("blessings"). Numerous other knitted garments and accessories, also dating from the mid-13th century, have been found in cathedral treasuries in Spain.

For those readers interested in knitting history, the Knitting History Forum is a useful resource worth exploring.

Different Stitches
All knitting is made up of variations of knit and purl stitches:
- The knit stitch is made by creating a loop in the **back** of your work.
- The purl stitch is made by creating a loop in the **front** of your work.

The TOFT website has a very useful **Stitch Directory** (here). You can also find a useful **Knitting Glossary** (here). The TOFT company TOFT specialises in designing knitting patterns and knitting kits for beginner knitters. They produce lots of easy chunky knitting patterns where you can teach yourself to knit using their knitting videos here. Learning to knit is very fashionable and no longer the pastime of the retired, nor is it restricted to women or the old.

Nowadays, with the availability of YouTube and other videos widely available on the Web, it's easy to start learning how to knit. For example, let's say you want to know how to knit *Stocking Stitch*, all you need to do is click here or here and away you go.

Want to *Basket Stitch*? Easy, click here.

Using Different Needles
There are five basic types of knitting needles, with some overlap - some are plastic, and some are wood or metal:
- *Straight needles.*
- *Circular needles.*
- *Interchangeable needles.*
- *Double-pointed needles.*
- *Cable needles.*

With so many different types of knitting needles on offer, choosing the right one can be a problem, especially if you are new to the art of knitting. The key is to find which type is the most comfortable for you and can handle what you are about to create.

Your first port of call should be the **Let's Knit** *Ultimate Knitting Needle Guide,* which you can access here. You'll find everything you need to know in one handy location.

Famous (Fictional) Knitter
Charles Dickens(1812-1870) created the most famous knitting character for his classic novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*. During the French revolution, the fictional *Therese Defarge* appears using pattern stitches as a code as she knitted a list of the names of the upper class doomed to die at the guillotine.

Knitting Groups near Haywards Heath
- *u3a Stitch and Knit Group, Haywards Heath:* Adriana Mamoany—07891 618886
- *Crawley, Sussex:* https://www.meetup.com/Star-Citizen-UK-Meetup/
- *Brighton & Hove:* https://www.meetup.com/Sew-In-Brighton-Hove-Meetup/
- *Hangleton (Hove):* At Hangleton Library or Lynne Sherlock 07575 487049 haileysherlock@yahoo.com

A Few Books on Knitting
- "*A History of Hand Knitting*", by Richard Rutt, published by BT Batsford; ISBN 0 7134 5118 1
- *"The Complete Beginners Guide to Knitting: Everything you need to know to start to knit"*, by Sian Brown, Lou Butt, et al., published by Sona Books; First edition (28 April 2019); ISBN-10 : 1912918021, ISBN-13 : 978-1912918027
- *An Essential Guide Book On Knitting: Learn To Knit Easy, Fun, And Funky Knitting Projects Using Easy To Follow Instructions & Images,* by Carrie Kruckeberg, 6 January 2021, independently published; ISBN-13 : 979-8591171711

Picture Credit: "Wool" by 2 little banshees is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Nazi Plunder

Art theft and looting occurred on a massive industrial organised scale during World War II. It originated with the policies of the Axis countries, primarily Nazi Germany and Japan, as they systematically looted property and belongings in occupied territories.

Nazi plunder was the theft of art and other items due to the organised looting on behalf of the Nazi Party of Germany. The looting of Jewish property was a key part of the Holocaust.

Plundering occurred from 1933, beginning with the seizure of property of German Jews, until the end of World War II, particularly by military units known as the *Kunstschutz*, although most plunder was acquired during the war. In addition to gold, silver and currency, cultural items of great significance were stolen, including paintings, ceramics, books and religious treasures, and property (homes, apartments, buildings, etc.).
Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nazi_plunder

The Story

This true story (see below) tells of a quest by its author - Menachem Kaiser, a third-generation Polish-Canadian - to reclaim his family's apartment building in Poland owned before World War II by his Jewish family and of the astonishing entanglement with Nazi treasure hunters:

Kaiser's story, woven from improbable events and profound revelations, is set in motion when he resumes the battle started by his grandfather (Maier Menachem Kajzer (Zaidy)) to reclaim the family's apartment building on Małachowskiego in Sosnowiec, Poland. Soon, Kaiser is on a circuitous path to encounters with the long-time residents of the building and with a Polish lawyer (a woman whose nickname is *'The Killer'*).

Kaiser makes a surprise discovery: his grandfather's cousin (the well-known Abraham Kajzer) not only survived the war (as did the grandfather) but wrote a secret memoir while a slave labourer in a vast, secret Nazi tunnel complex [see information about *Riese* below]. It leads to Kaiser being adopted as a virtual celebrity by a band of Silesian treasure-seekers who revere the memoir as the indispensable guidebook to Nazi plunder.

Its light tone belies the book's seriousness of purpose: to tease out thorny issues of inheritance, reparations, and what it means to honour one's dead.
Excerpted (with adaptations) from:
https://www.amazon.co.uk/Plunder-Memoir-Family-Property-Treasure/dp/132850803X/ and The New Yorker

The Book: *Plunder: a Memoir of Family Property and Stolen Nazi Treasure*
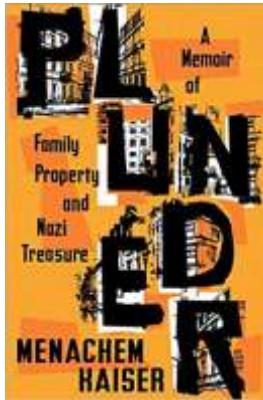
The book is published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company (16th March 2021) in hardcover, ISBN-10 : 132850803X, ISBN-13 : 978-1328508034.

The book is available for purchase from Amazon here.

The Tunnels
Riese (German for "giant") is the code name for a construction project of Nazi Germany in 1943–1945, consisting of seven underground structures located in the Owl Mountains and Książ Castle in Lower Silesia, which was at the time in Germany but is now in Poland.

Picture Credit: "Complex Riese, Poland / Kompleks Riese" by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland is licensed under CC BY-ND 2.0

The Author
Menachem Kaiser, a descendant of Polish Jews, is a young writer who grew up in Toronto, Canada. He never met his paternal grandfather, who passed away some eight years before Menachem was born. Kaiser holds a BA from Columbia University, an MFA in creative writing from the University of Michigan and was a Fulbright Fellow to Lithuania. His writing has appeared in the *Wall Street Journal, the Atlantic, New York, BOMB, Vogue* and elsewhere. He lives in Brooklyn, New York.

Selected Book Reviews
- New York Times
- New Yorker
- Goodreads
- Jewish Journal
- The Christian Science Monitor
- Jewish Week

Knowing Ecclesiastics from Ecclesiastes & Ecclesiasticus

Religious matters are not often mentioned in this publication but the three similar but different words in the title above cry out for an explanation. Hub Pages* cover the differences well. It says that:

- **Ecclesiastics i**s the study of religion, but Ecclesiastes and Ecclesiasticus are two separate books in the "Old Testament" section of the Bible.
- While "*ecclesiastics,*" "*ecclesiastical,*" and "*ecclesiastic*" might be terms used by theoligans and professors to refer to things appertaining to church, **Ecclesiastes** and **Ecclesiasticus** are words used by the translators of ancient Hebrew authors who composed writings containing advice and wisdom, later incorporated into what Christians call the "Old Testament."
- Other books like them include the Books of Wisdom, Proverbs, and Canticle. These books attempt to impart wisdom to readers and are called the *Sapiential* books of the Bible, the word "sapient" meaning wise. They were either written by Solomon or by unknown Hebrew authors attempting to extend the wisdom of the real or fictional person, King Solomon, son of King David.

* Source: https://discover.hubpages.com/religion-philosophy/Ecclesiastics-Ecclesiastes-and-Ecclesiasticus

Ecclesiastics
Ecclesiastics simply means something to do with the church.

Ecclesiastes
Ecclesiastes, written c. 450–200 BCE, is one of the Ketuvim ("Writings") of the Hebrew Bible and one of the "Wisdom" books of the Christian Old Testament. The actual author of Ecclesiastes is not definitively known, but the superscription (1:1) attributes the book to *qohelet* (commonly translated "preacher,"), who is identified as *"the son of David, king in Jerusalem."* Despite leaving only this rather mysterious name to indicate his identity, evidence in the book, along with most Jewish and Christian tradition, suggests that it was King Solomon who wrote Ecclesiastes.

Ecclesiasticus
The Jewish sage and author Jesus ben Sira (born around 170 B.C.), or Sirach, is the reputed author of the wisdom book which is commonly called **Ecclesiasticus.** According to the Hebrew text of this book, the author's full name was Simeon ben Jeshua ben Elazar ben Sira. The Greek text, and most of the Christian sources, refer to him as Jesus, the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Joshua.

This book, from from the 16 apocrypha (hidden) books of the Bible, was omitted from the Bible by the Protestant Church in the 1800's. This book is as true today, as it was in the 1800's before being omitted from the Bible.
Source: mainly from:
https://biography.yourdictionary.com/jesus-ben-sira

The town that nearly danced itself to death

Sources:
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dancing_plague_of_1518
- https://www.quora.com/What-event-are-scientists-still-unable-to-explain/answer/Vitmor-Gomes
- https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20161028-the-town-the-nearly-danced-itself-to-death
- https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2018/jul/05/bizarre-dance-epidemic-of-summer-1518-strasbourg
- https://iconbooks.com/ib-title/a-time-to-dance-a-time-to-die/

In July 1518, in the town of Strasbourg, Alsace (now France), something unexpected happened. A housewife called Frau Troffea, came out of her home onto the street and started dancing. People found it odd, including Frau Troffea's husband, but no one gave it much attention.

The Guardian story (here) describes the event:
'It started with just a few people dancing outdoors in the summer heat. Arms flailing, bodies swaying and clothes soaked with sweat, they danced through the night and into the next day. Seldom stopping to eat or drink and seemingly oblivious to mounting fatigue and the pain of bruised feet, they were still going days later. By the time the authorities intervened, hundreds more were dancing in the same frenetic fashion.'

Vitmor Gomes on Quora.com, here, wrote about this strange event - one that still puzzles scientists, historians, and anyone else who wants to understand it.

Frau Troffea literally danced all day, only stopping when she fell asleep due to exhaustion. The next morning, as soon as she woke up, she started dancing again.

This time, people did pay attention as this was highly unusual, and they formed a crowd around her to see her dance to no music. At this point, her feet were already bruised and bloodied, but she didn't appear to be willing to stop. But, within the next four days, something even more weird started happening. Thirty-four other people also started dancing non-stop.

Within four weeks, it is believed that up to 400 people were dancing uncontrollably. Those who weren't affected had no idea what to do as they saw their dancing neighbours screaming in pain and begging for help, seemingly not being able to stop their killer moves.

Because it was summer at the time, up to 15 people a day were dying because of the heat*, dehydration, and exhaustion. The city council asked for the help of local physicians to try and stop this madness, and eventually, they diagnosed the poor dancers had something called *hot blood,* which meant that the brain was overheated, which caused madness. But they couldn't use their remedy – *bloodletting* - since people couldn't stop moving for long enough to have some of their blood drained. So the council decided to try something else: they hired musicians and brought more people into the town to have a party and try to tire the dancers out.

* The sources of the city of Strasbourg at the time of the events did not mention the number of deaths or even if there were fatalities. There do not appear to be any sources contemporaneous to the events that record the number of fatalities.

The tiring of the dancers seemed to be working as the dancer's moves were slowing down, but the hired musicians decided to change the pace and play a more upbeat song, causing the villagers to resume their frenzied dancing activity.

The council believed that the problem was not hot blood, and they concluded it was something far worse - it was a curse on the city. A curse put upon it because of all the sinners in it.

So the council decided to take action. They closed down all gambling houses and brothels and they banished all those, who they considered being a sinner, from the city. They were so desperate that they even made music and dancing illegal.

But this did nothing to stop those bloodied and bruised feet from dancing, which lasted all the way until September 1518. To this day, it's still not known what caused this, even though there are some theories such as mass hysteria brought on due to extreme poverty and the superstitions surrounding St. Vitus, whom they believed had cursed them.

This strange event is also covered in an article on BBC Future, where you can watch a video (here) to discover the truth behind history's most mysterious illness.

An explanation?

Several modern historians have argued that the dancing plagues of mediaeval Europe were caused by *ergot*, a mind-altering mould found on the stalks of damp rye, which can cause twitching, jerking, and hallucinations — a condition known as *St Anthony's Fire.* However, historian John Waller has debunked the *ergot* hypothesis in his brilliant book on the dancing plague, *A Time to Dance, a Time to Die* (2009). Yes, *ergot* can cause convulsions and hallucinations, but it also restricts blood flow to the extremities. Someone poisoned by it simply would not be able to dance for several days in a row. Waller's explanation of the dancing plague emerges from his deep knowledge of the material, cultural, and spiritual environment of 16th century Strasbourg.

Waller's book opens with a quote from H. C. Erik Midelfort's *A History of Madness in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (1999):
'Madnesses of the past are not petrified entities that can be plucked unchanged from their niches and placed under our modern microscopes. They appear, perhaps, more like jellyfish that collapse and dry up when they are removed from the ambient seawater.'

According to Waller:
The Strasbourg poor were primed for an epidemic of hysterical dancing.
- First of all, there was precedent. Every European dancing plague between 1374 and 1518 had occurred near Strasbourg, along the western edge of the Holy Roman Empire.
- Then there were the prevailing conditions. In 1518, a string of bad harvests, political instability, and the arrival of syphilis had induced anguish extreme even by early modern standards. This suffering manifested as hysterical dancing because the citizens believed it could. People can be extraordinarily suggestible, and a firm conviction in the vengefulness of *Saint Vitus* was enough for it to be visited upon them. "*The minds of the choreomaniacs were drawn inwards,*" writes Waller, "*tossed about on the violent seas of their deepest fears.*"

Source: https://publicdomainreview.org/essay/the-dancing-plague-of-1518

The Book
A Time to Dance, a Time to Die, by John Waller, an historian of medicine at Michigan State University, is published by Icon Books Ltd - 1st Edition, Hardcover: 256 pages, ISBN-10 : 1848310218, ISBN-13 : 978-1848310216. It is available from Amazon's Book Store (here).
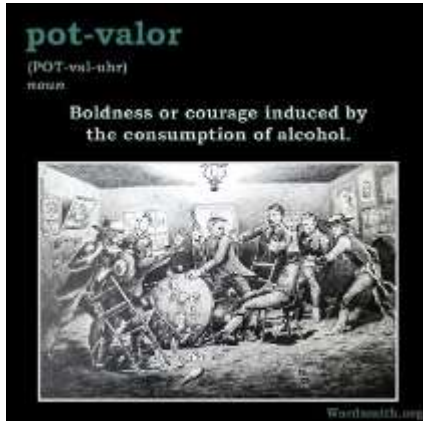
See Also
Other strange and largely unexplained, actions include:
- Sydenham's Chorea (also known as St. Vitus dance)– see here
- Tanganyika Laughter Epidemic – see here
- Autosomal Dominant Compelling Helioopthalmic Outburst (ACHOO) Syndrome is characterised by uncontrollable sneezing – see here

Unusual Words
From Dictionary.com

Picture Credit: "AWAD - pot-valor" by Wordsmith.org is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Add some guffaws, chuckles, maybe a snigger or two to your conversations with these funny words. Read on for a selection of some of the funniest words in the English language.

Booty: The funniest word in the English language is *booty,* according to a 2017 survey by researchers at the University of Warwick. *Booty* can mean "valuable stolen goods, especially those seized in war," or just "something gained or won." Perhaps, though, the people who took part in the survey were thinking of the idiom "shake your booty," in which case *booty* is slang for buttocks.

Bumfuzzle: *Bumfuzzle* means "to confuse or fluster." First recorded as a U.S. regionalism, this word is less popular (but much more hilarious) than some of its counterparts, such as befuddle or bewilder.

Canoodle: *Canoodle* is defined as "to caress, fondle, or pet amorously." This one is spotted in many a tabloid headline about celebrities, well, canoodling. It might be a blend of caress and noodle!

Cattywampus: It sounds like something President Lincoln might have said, and it's from his era: the 1830s. The definition also includes the spelling *catawampus*. If the word is used as an adjective, it means "askew or awry; positioned diagonally; cater-cornered." As an adverb, it means "diagonally or obliquely."

Collywobbles: Feeling anxious about something - you could say, "I have butterflies in my stomach." Or, simply exclaim, "*Collywobbles!*" You can also use the noun *collywobbles* to describe your upset stomach. The word seems to have been created from cholera (the disease) and the word wobble, meaning "unsteady." It first appeared in print in the 1823 edition of *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue.*

Crapulence: What does *crapulence* mean? Well, it's not related to a vulgar toiletry word, for sure. *Crapulence* is a noun meaning "sick from excessive drinking or eating." It comes from the Latin word *crapula*, which means "intoxication," and from the Greek *kraipalē,* meaning "hangover."

Diddly-squat: The word *diddly-squat* is a direct linguistic cousin to *doodly-squat*. The term is used with a negative context to mean something minimal and inconsequential.

Diphthong: It's a funny word that is hard to spell: *diphthong* (a phonetics term referring to an unsegmentable sound, like the OI in oil). Also, a sound formed by the combination of two vowels in a single syllable. 'Diphthong' has been described as the "the best word ever," and while that may or may not be true, the combination of *dip*, which can refer to a clueless individual, and *thong*, which is a style of underwear, creates auditory splendour.

Discombobulate: *discombobulate* is amusing to say. It's a verb that means "to confuse, upset, or frustrate." Then, there's the word's origin: it's thought to be a whimsical variation of discompose or discomfit.

Doohickey: a *doohickey* is a "gadget; a dingus; a thingumabob." One of those little things that sits in the kitchen junk drawer. "Sweetheart, have you seen the garage *doohickey*?"

Fartlek: The word *fartlek* stands for a training technique associated with runners. Swedish in origin and borrowed in the early 1950s, this word is funny because it sounds like a bodily function, which appeals to many of us on some addled *Beavis and Butthead,* high-school level.

Flummox: *Flummox* means "to bewilder, confound, or confuse." It's a word that generally grabs a person's attention, so it appears in lots of headlines, such as *Stock markets flummox masses.* It likely comes from the old English word *flummock*, meaning "to make untidy or confuse." Charles Dickens was one of the first writers known to have used it in his 1837 *Pickwick Papers*.

Jackalope: The word *jackalope* is a totally fictional portmanteau, but it's still fun. As anyone who's travelled the American West will inform you, a *jackalope* is a jackrabbit with... antelope horns. The *jackalope* was the clever invention of two brothers who proudly sold the prototype for $10.

Kerfuffle: *Kerfuffle* is quite popular. It is a British word meaning "a fuss; commotion" as in: *The price hike caused quite a kerfuffle.* It's mainly used in British English, as it originates from a Scottish Gaelic word combining *Car* ("twist, turn") and *fuffle* ("to disarrange").

Mugwump: The term *mugwump* stands for "a Republican who refused to support the party nominee, James G. Blaine, in the presidential campaign of 1884." It also means "a person who is unable to make up his or her mind on an issue, especially in politics; a person who is neutral on a controversial issue."

Panjandrum: A *panjandrum* is someone who claims to have a great deal of authority or influence. *Claims* is the key word. Panjandrums are pretty pretentious and pompous. Samuel Foote, a British dramatist, actor, and theatre manager, coined the word in 1755 during a lecture in which he performed a piece of nonsense prose.

Shivoo: *Shivoo* is Australian in origin. It stands for a *"boisterous party or celebration"* - you can imagine this happening Down Under.

Snark: Used as a verb, the word *snark* is a "mysterious, imaginary animal." (Who knew? Probably Lewis Carroll fans, or anyone who has read *The Hunting of the Snark*.) Use it as a noun to refer to rude or sarcastic criticism. Lewis Carroll coined this snappy word, along with many more!

Snollygoster: A *snollygoster* is a "clever, unscrupulous person." The word dates back to the late 1840s and was used in the American South to refer derogatorily to a politician. It might be connected to *snallygaster*, a mythical creature from rural Maryland that's half reptile and half bird and preys on children and poultry. That word may come from the German *schnelle geister*, meaning "quick spirits." And, fittingly, J.K. Rowling's *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* includes an entry for it.

Smellfungus: It's understandable why people avoid a *smellfungus;* however, it's not because of their scent. A *smellfungus* is "a person who complains and bickers to everyone about meaningless matters." This word comes from a fictional character in Laurence Sterne's 1768 novel, *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*. Smelfungus is based on Tobias Smollet, who complained about almost everything in his 1766 travel book *Travels through France and Italy*.

Widdershins: *Widdershins (*also spelt *withershins)* means "to go counter-clockwise or in a direction opposite of the usual way," such as the apparent course of the sun. The adverb comes from the Middle High German *widdersinnes* (literally "against the way"). In folk myths, walking *widdershins* was considered bad luck. But in a Jewish wedding ceremony, a bride circles her groom counter-clockwise seven times before marriage.

Pussyfoot: *Pussyfoot* is one of those very literal words, but that doesn't mean we don't chuckle every time we hear it. It's defined as "a person with a catlike, or soft and stealthy, tread," or as a verb meaning "to move cautiously."

Old Languages

Picture Credit: "ancient language." by Abould is licensed under CC BY 2.0

Records from primitive times show that before languages developed, people communicated with each other using hand gestures, signals, and odd sounds. Then, around 10,000 years ago, as the concept of linguistics came to exist, it provided a method of communication that was standardised and, thus, more understandable. Below are some languages that have stood the test of time and a few that haven't:

Basque: Spoken almost exclusively in the Basque country by approximately 750,000 native speakers and about 1,185,000 passive speakers. *Basque* remains an ancient language that is unique, as:
- its origins remain a mystery.
- despite being natively spoken by a small population of Spain and France, it remains completely unrelated to Spanish and French.

Basque is the only remaining Old European language, having survived on its own for centuries, while the others disappeared before the spread of Indo-European languages.

Tamil: *Tamil* is the oldest (dating back some 2,200 years) living language in the world. Inscriptions in Tamil dating back to the 3rd century B.C have been found. It is the official language of Sri Lanka, Singapore, and India (particularly popular in Tamil Nadu where it is the official language) and is spoken by nearly 80 million people. Tamil is the only classical language that has survived all the way through to the modern world. It forms part of the *Dravidian Language family**.

* Dravidian Languages: A family of some 70 languages spoken primarily in South Asia. The Dravidian languages are spoken by more than 215 million people in India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Source: https://www.britannica.com/topic/Dravidian-languages

Sanskrit: Unlike Tamil, which is still a widely spoken language, the *Sanskrit* language fell out of widespread common usage around 600 B.C. It is now a 'holy language' found in the scriptures of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. According to studies, Sanskrit forms the base for many European languages and is still one of India's official languages.

Aramaic: One of the oldest yet prestigious languages in the world, the *Aramaic* language belongs to the Afro-Asiatic region and was spoken by people — as far back as at least three millenniums (millennia) ago. It was used as the official language for multiple royal dynasties. Arabic and other older languages took words from the Aramaic language and can find their roots in it. Over million people still speak Aramaic as their first language.

Greek: *Greek* is the official language of Greece and Cyprus and was first spoken in Greece and Asia Minor, which is now part of Turkey. Greek has been used as a written language for over 3,000 years, which is longer than any other Indo-European language spoken today. This history is divided into three stages, Ancient, Medieval and Modern Greek. Today, 15 million people, mostly residing in Greece and Cyprus, speak Greek.

Arabic: The Arab world is known for its Golden Age under the Islamic empire, which put the *Arabic* language on the map for the entire world. This ancient Semite language was being used as far back as 125 AD. It was used by poets in the Arab world and was reflected in the Quran, which is one of the most read books in the world. Arabic itself consists of many different dialects and variants; however, most of it has been unified under *Classical Arabic*. Arabic has also been the inspiration behind languages like *Urdu*, which also has a script similar to Arabic.

Icelandic: The Vikings' language, *Icelandic*, takes roots from the Norse culture and derives its script from the Old Norse languages. Despite its age, it is still spoken as the first language by over 3 million people worldwide, ranging from Iceland to Canada, some parts of Denmark and the USA. Icelandic is a North Germanic Language.

Persian: Written in an altered version of the Arabic language, *Persian* (or Farsi as it is commonly known) is a language that dates back 2,500 years. It was the Persian Empire's official language and has left its mark in regions of Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Iran, and other nearby areas. Despite being a uniform singular language of the Persian Empire, multiple variants, such as the Dari, Tajik, etc., emerged for Persian. In Tajikistan, it was also being written in a different script than Arabic, called the Cyrillic alphabet. Persian, like other languages rooted in the Islamic world, has drawn inspiration from the religion; most of the Persian writers' fine work is in dedication to Islam.

Farsi: *Farsi* is the common language spoken in modern-day Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan. It is the direct descendant of the Old Persian language, which was the official language of the Persian Empire. Modern Persian emerged around 800 CE, and it has changed little since then. It is often said that *Farsi* is the language of the Sufi saints of Islam.

Egyptian: Egypt is considered to be one of the oldest civilizations in the world, and *Egyptian Coptic* is the oldest indigenous language of Egypt. Written records of its usage date back to 3,400 BC, making it an ancient language. Coptic was the most widely spoken language in Egypt until the late 17th century AD, when it was replaced by Egyptian Arabic, post-Muslim invasion.

Coptic is still used as the liturgical language at the Coptic Church in Egypt, but only a handful of people fluently speak the language today.

Lithuanian: *Lithuanian* forms a part of the group of the Indo-European language, which spawned modern languages like German, Italian and English. It is closely related to Sanskrit, Latin and Ancient Greek. Today, Lithuanian serves as the official language of the Republic of Lithuania and is also one of the official languages of the European Union. It is protected by special institutions and linguistic laws.

Hebrew: *Hebrew* lost common usage around 400 CE. With the rise of Zionism in the 19th and 20th centuries, Hebrew underwent a revival age and became the official language of Israel. Modern Hebrew differs from the Biblical version, but native speakers of the language can completely comprehend what is written in the ancient texts. Modern Hebrew is influenced by other Jewish languages. Hebrew is spoken today by over nine million people and is the official language of Israel. Being a Semite language, Hebrew and Arabic are similar in terms of their grammar style and share many common words despite their vastly different scripts. Hebrew is considered a '*holy language*' because the Old Testament was written in it. It is also one of the oldest languages in which the Bible was written.

Irish Gaelic: *Irish Gaelic, Gaelic, Erse, or Irish* is a member of the Goidelic group of Celtic languages, spoken in Ireland. Irish Gaelic has Celtic origins from the Bronze Age. However, the literary tradition can be traced back to the 6th century AD. The Irish language is related to Manx, Scottish Gaelic, Welsh, Cornish and Breton languages. The oldest inscriptions of the language can be seen in Ogham stones** of the 5th and 6th century AD.
** Ogham stones: An ancient rune-like writing system carved into stones across Ireland.

Chinese: Today, *Chinese* is spoken by about 1.2 billion people worldwide. It belongs to the Sino-Tibetan group of languages and has many complex dialects. The Chinese characters are about 3,000 years old. The hieroglyphs can be traced back to the Shang Dynasty of the 16th - 11th centuries BC. However, the written script was simplified as recently as 1956 for ease of understanding.

Akkadian: *Akkadian* is an extinct East Semitic language that was spoken in ancient Mesopotamia (Akkad, Assyria, Isin, Larsa and Babylonia) from the 3rd millennium BC until its gradual replacement by Akkadian-influenced Old Aramaic among Mesopotamians by the 8th century BC. It is the oldest Semitic language for which records exist.

Sumerian: *Sumerian*, the language of ancient Sumer and a language isolate (unrelated to others) was spoken in Mesopotamia, (in modern-day Iraq). During the 3rd millennium BC, there was widespread bilingualism (the ability to use two languages). Akkadian gradually replaced Sumerian as a spoken language around 2,000 BC but Sumerian continued to be used as a sacred, ceremonial, literary and scientific language in Akkadian-speaking Mesopotamian states such as Assyria and Babylonia until the 1st century AD.

The River Ouse, Sussex

The River Ouse (Celtic for Water) in Sussex begins from springs near Slaugham in West Sussex before flowing south-east. From Lower Beeding, it meanders easterly, passing under Upper Ryelands Bridge (see later), at one time the limit of navigation. After being joined by the outflow from Ardingly Reservoir, created by building a dam across the valley of a tributary, which resulted in the partial flooding of two river valleys, it turns to the south-east, passing to the north of Lindfield and Haywards Heath. It passes into East Sussex just before reaching Sheffield Park railway station. Feeder streams for the River Uck come from the north-east and south-east of Uckfield before meeting the main river. From their confluence (meeting point), the River Ouse flows southwards through Barcombe Mills to Lewes before finally meeting the sea at Newhaven.

Most of the tributaries in the upper catchment that join it originate in the heaths and forests of the High Weald, where fast-flowing small streams cut deep valleys through woods, and flow over underlying beds of sandstones and clays. Nearing the coast, it passes through Lewes and Laughton Levels, an area of flat, low-lying land that borders the river and another tributary, the Glynde Reach. At the time of the Domesday Book in 1086, it was a large tidal inlet, and over the following centuries, embankment attempts were made to reclaim some of the valley floor for agriculture, but the drainage was hampered by the build-up of shingle forming across the mouth of the river by longshore drift*.

* Longshore drift is the movement of material along the shore by wave action. It happens when waves approach the beach at an angle. The swash (waves moving up the beach) carries material up and along the beach.

In 1539, a new channel for the entrance to the river was cut through the shingle bar, and meadows flourished for a time, but flooding returned, and the meadows reverted to marshland. The engineer John Smeaton proposed a solution for the valley's drainage in 1767, but it was only partially implemented. William Jessop surveyed the river in 1788 and produced proposals to canalise the upper river above Lewes and radically improve the lower river. *The Proprietors of the River Ouse Navigation* were created by Act of Parliament in 1790 and eventually built 19 locks to enable boats to reach Upper Ryelands Bridge at Balcombe. Trustees and the Commissioners of the Lewes and Laughton Levels jointly managed the work on the lower river, and the agriculturalist John Ellman continued the progress while he was *Expenditor for the Commissioners* – it enabled 120-ton ships to reach Lewes by 1829. Navigation on the upper river could not compete with the railways, and all traffic ceased by 1868.

On the lower river, Newhaven became an important port and barge traffic and continued using the river up to Lewes until the 1950s. The river provides a habitat for many varieties of fish, including unusually large sea trout that swim up the river to spawn in the higher tributaries. The Lewes Brooks area of the levels is a *Site of Special Scientific Interest* because of its wide variety of invertebrates. Walkers can follow the course of the river by using the Sussex Ouse Valley Way (see below) long-distance footpath, and the Sussex Ouse Conservation Society promotes awareness of the navigation by publishing details of shorter walks. The Sussex Ouse Restoration Trust hopes to see navigation restored to the upper river, but this is not universally popular, as the *Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust* is opposed to the idea.

The Sussex Ouse Valley Way

Opened on 30th April 2005, the 42-mile *Sussex Ouse Valley Way* was developed by the 'Per-Rambulations' core team of Terry Owen and Peter Anderson with the support and encouragement of the East and West Sussex County Councils and the Sussex Downs Joint Committee (then the Sussex Downs Conservation Board). Support for the project was also received from the Sussex Ouse Restoration Trust, Harveys Brewery of Lewes, Footprints of Sussex and Ray Mears, the bushcraft expert, TV presenter and author.

The Sussex Ouse Valley Way traces the River Ouse and its valley from quiet beginnings at Beeding to reach the English Channel at Seaford Bay through the rich diversity of the Sussex landscape. It passes through some of the most beautiful scenery in England, including the High Weald Area of Natural Beauty at the start and the Sussex Downs Area of Natural Beauty towards the end. It takes in the very diverse landscape of Sussex, with abundant wildlife in the air, on the ground and in the river.

A series of 16 Circular Walks based on the Sussex Ouse Valley Way has been developed. Go to Circular Walks for details.

Changes in the Mouth of the Ouse

A research project at Sussex University (see here) records changes in the mouth of the Ouse, and the website provides a slide show:

'The Ouse was historically a large estuary similar to the Adur. Much of the land north and east of Newhaven is very low lying and consists of reclaimed tidal flats. The sea once reached upstream beyond Barcombe some 15km north of the present coast, and in Roman times the Ouse exited along the western margin of the valley beneath the chalk cliffs of Castele Hill. By Medieval times drifting shingle had deflected the exit eastward to the foot of Seaford Head. By the 16th century, the river mouth at Seaford had become so heavily silted that flood waters had difficulty escaping to the sea and so, to reduce the flooding of the Lewes and Laughton Levels, and to facilitate navigation, a new outlet was made by cutting through the shingle at 'new haven', probably in 1539, thus returning the mouth to its position of a millennium before. The condition of the new outlet started to deteriorate soon after the cut, and drifting banks of shingle frequently obstructed the new exit making entry to the harbour difficult throughout the 16th and 17th centuries.

'At the time of the Armada Survey in 1587, the mouth is shown 300-400m east of Castle Hill, and a small spit marked as 'beache' diverts the river 200m eastward. The Survey map also shows how the valleys draining into the main Ouse channel were reclaimed for agriculture or salt production. By 1698, Dummer indicates that drifting shingle closed the exit at 'Newhaven' and the new exit was 1km to the east at Tide Mills. The river escaped to the sea through a complex maze of channels and many low lying shingle banks. A kilometre to the east of the mouth, the old river channel running towards Seaford now formed a lagoon behind the shingle beach. Little was done to alleviate the situation for a long period.

'In 1731, the western exit at Newhaven was re-excavated, and piers were built to try to stabilise the outlet, but by 1766 shingle had again formed across the mouth. Lt. Roy in 1757 shows the 1731 exit with stabilising piers and a clear picture of the old sixteenth-century channel to Seaford. At the date of Yeakell and Gardner's survey, little had changed: the exit was roughly in the same position, possibly deflected slightly to the east and the lagoon occupying the old channel to Seaford appears to be larger than in 1698.

'In 1791, a short breakwater was built to the west of the harbour. The River Ouse was straightened at several points, and drainage sewers were constructed. The breakwater was improved by a groyne of over 150m in length in 1847, and this was subsequently replaced with a much longer breakwater of 800m in 1890, which survives to the present day. The first edition Ordnance Survey 6 inch of 1873 shows the confined exit and groynes established in 1847. Stabilising of the river inland is apparent with the construction of the Railway Wharf and the Wharf Station. The lagoon east of Tide Mills has been embanked, forming the Mill Pond in the channel feeding Mill Creek. The Salts situated between the river and the pond was a man-made inlet controlled by sluices to the creek and constructed for oyster cultivation until disease curtailed the industry. By the time the third edition 6 inch map was produced in 1911, the Mill Pond and the Salts had been drained leaving only a depression, although the Mill Creek remained. As the harbour grew in importance, the river banks were further developed creating the North Quay and East Wharf along with numerous jetties on the west shore. This map edition shows the 1890 breakwater and new East Pier with coarse material beginning to build up along its west side.

'The latest 1:50000 Landranger Ordnance Survey map surveyed in 1982 shows very little change to the river mouth. Mill Creek still exists, though as a rather dirty and unused backwater since its maintenance ceased after the mill at Tide Mills became redundant. Sediment has continued to build up west of the breakwater forming a vast accumulation of shingle which extends seawards for more than 120m and westwards for more than 500m.'

Other Ouses

There are other rivers in England which have the name Ouse:
- the 37 mile long *River Little Ouse*, which flows between the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk.
- the 42** mile long *River Ouse*, which runs through the counties of East and West Sussex.
- the 52 mile long *River Ouse*, which flows through the county of Yorkshire.
- the 143 mile long *River Ouse* which runs through East Anglia.

** Wikipedia says 35 miles.

Sources and Further Reading:
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/River_Ouse,_Sussex
- https://oart.org.uk/rivers-new/river-ouse/ • http://www.per-rambulations.co.uk/sussexouse.htm
- https://sites.google.com/site/majorriversofthebritishisles/river-ouse
- http://www.sussex.ac.uk/geography/researchprojects/coastview/Estuaries/ouse-slides.htm
- http://ea-lit.freshwaterlife.org/archive/ealit:3739/OBJ/20002407.pdf

Bradshaw and his Railway Guides

Sources: • https://spartacus-educational.com/RAbradshaw.htm
• https://www.erih.net/how-it-started/stories-about-people-biographies/biography/bradshaw
• https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bradshaw%27s_Guide
• https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Bradshaw
• https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Continental_Railway_Journeys

Bradshaw's Guide, written by George Bradshaw, was a series of railway timetables and travel guide books published by W.J. Adams and later Henry Blacklock, both of London.

George Bradshaw (29th July 1800 – 6th September 1853) was an English cartographer, printer and publisher. He developed a widely sold series of combined railway guides and timetables. George Bradshaw initiated the series in 1838/39.

Bradshaw became best known as a publisher of information about railway services, but he was not alone - he was one of several British writers who sought to profit from around 1840 following the growth of the railway system, his rivals including Samuel Sidney, George Measom, E C & W Osborne, and Edward Mogg.

Bradshaw also published the *Continental Railway Guide*, the *Railway Manual* and the *Railway Shareholders' Guide*. The Bradshaw's range of titles continued after his death in 1853 until 1961.

Great British Railway Journeys/Great Continental Railway Journeys

Former British politician Michael Portillo (see picture above) used a copy of what was described as a Bradshaw's guide (the 1863 edition of *Bradshaw's Descriptive Railway Hand-Book of Great Britain and Ireland*) for *Great British Railway Journeys*, a BBC Two television series in which he travelled across Britain, visiting recommended points of interest noted in Bradshaw's guidebook, and where possible staying in hotels recommended in it.

The first television series was broadcast in early 2010, a second in early 2011, a third in early 2012, and a fourth in early 2013; series 5 was broadcast in January and February 2014.

The success of the series sparked a new interest in the guides, and facsimile copies of the 1863 edition became an unexpected bestseller in the UK in 2011. In the 14th episode of the series, *"Batley to Sheffield"*, Portillo met a great-great-granddaughter of George Bradshaw, who showed him part of the family archive.

At the end of 2012, a new series, *Great Continental Railway Journeys*, was broadcast with Portillo using the 1913 edition of *Bradshaw's Continental Railway Guide* to make journeys through various European countries and territories, prompting two publishers to produce facsimiles of the handbook. A second series was broadcast in 2013.

Attribution: Michael Portillo reading his Bradshaw's
Picture Credit: screenshot from TV Great Continental Railway Journeys 23/4/2021, on the Yesterday Channel

Canal Guide
A reproduction of part of G. Bradshaw's 1830 Map of Canals & Navigable Rivers in the Southern Counties can be obtained from Weyarun.org.uk at the Canal Centre in Billingshurst (here). The print shows the River Wey from Woking through to Godalming, the Wey & Arun Canal, the River Arun to Littlehampton, the Rother Navigation and the Arundel & Portsmouth Canal and through to Portsmouth.

Bradshaw's Final Journey
While touring Norway in 1853, Bradshaw contracted cholera and died in September of that year without being able to return to England. He is interred in the Gamlebyen cemetery about a mile from the cathedral in Oslo.

Get Your Copy
A luxury facsimile edition of Bradshaw's Handbook of 1863, the book that inspired the BBC television series '*Great British Railway Journeys*', has been published by Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, ISBN: 9781908402486. You can buy it from here.
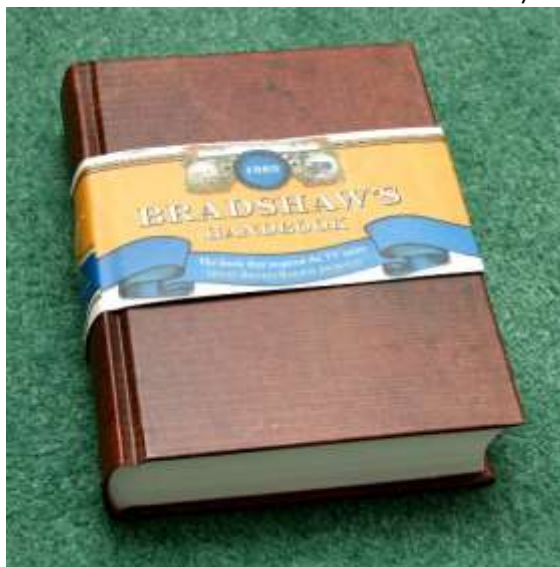
Picture Credit: "At last, a copy of Bradshaw's Handbook 1863" by Leo Reynolds is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Operation Countryman

Sources: • https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Countryman
• https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/aug/19/files-shed-light-on-alleged-efforts-to-hide-1970s-police-corruption
• https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/dYwKNJ8ZNngCwNPDYxqLD1/bent-coppers-crossing-the-line-of-duty

Picture Credit: "Met police helmet" by Matt From London is licensed under CC BY 2.0

Introduction
Operation Countryman was an investigation into police corruption in London in the late 1970s. The operation was conducted between 1978 and 1982 at a total cost of £3 to £4 million and led to eight police officers being prosecuted, though none was convicted.

The 'firm in a firm'
The initial allegations of corruption claimed that some officers, including members of the elite Flying Squad, were receiving bribes from criminals in return for warnings of imminent police raids or arrests, the fabrication of evidence against innocent men, and having charges against guilty criminals dropped.

In 1969, a petty South London criminal tipped off the Times newspaper that he was being extorted for money, not by other criminals, but by a Metropolitan police detective. Journalists concealed a recording device in his car as he secretly met D.S John Symonds, who revealed a hidden world of police corruption of a 'firm in a firm' and boasted, *'we've got more villains in our game than you've got in yours.'* When the explosive article was published in November 1969, it exposed a hidden world of corrupt officers, faked evidence, bribery and blackmail.*
* Source: 'Bent Coppers: Crossing the Line of Duty, BBC TWO documentary, here.*

The biggest gang in Soho

Picture Credit: "Screamy Soho - London - 1974" by Eric@focus is licensed under CC BY-ND 2.0

As the 1970s dawned, London was a city under threat from drugs, pornography and violent robbery. But behind the chaos lay a sinister hidden truth. Amongst honest officers, a secret network of bent coppers known as "*the firm in a firm*" operated with impunity across London. It was said that *'the biggest gang in Soho was the Police'* – see here.

The Investigation
The investigation initially targeted officers within the City of London Police but spread to include the Metropolitan Police based at Scotland Yard. Codenamed *Operation Countryman* because of its use of officers from the so-called 'rural' police forces of Hampshire and Dorset, the investigating team came to be disparagingly known by London officers as "The Sweedy."

The investigation was ordered by the then Home Secretary Merlyn Rees, and began by examining police activity around three major crimes:
- a £175,000 payroll robbery at the offices of the *Daily Express* newspaper in 1976.
- a £225,000 robbery outside the headquarters of *Williams & Glyn's Bank,* London, in 1977.
- a £200,000 payroll robbery at the offices of the *Daily Mirror* newspaper in 1978. During this robbery, Antonio Castro, a 38-year-old guard working for Security Express, was shot and killed.

As the investigation proceeded, it emerged that the corruption was not limited to "*a few bad apples*" within the forces but was "*historically and currently endemic*" and "*widespread throughout the hierarchical command rather than confined to those below the rank of sergeant.*"

Obstruction
In August 1978, officers began investigations into corruption within the London police services. At first. the unit was accommodated at Camberwell police station in south London but, following attempts to interfere with the team's documents, records and evidence, it was moved outside the Metropolitan Police District - to Godalming Police Station in Surrey.

Operation Countryman faced major obstruction from both senior management and the lower ranks of the police. Much of the investigation's evidence was obtained by police officers having to go undercover.

Witholding Evidence
Asst. Chief Constable Leonard Burt told his investigation team not to pass any evidence it obtained against Metropolitan Police officers to the Met Commissioner, David McNee. Shortly before his retirement in February 1980, the Chief Constable of Dorset Constabulary, Arthur Hambleton, Burt's superior, made allegations that *Operation Countryman* had been willfully obstructed by Commissioner McNee and Director of Public Prosecutions Sir Thomas Hetherington.

In May 1980, Leonard Burt returned to Dorset Constabulary, and responsibility for Countryman passed to Sir Peter Matthews, Chief Constable of Surrey Constabulary. He ordered that all evidence already compiled during the investigation should be given to the Metropolitan Police to be dealt with by their internal investigation unit.

After six years, and at a cost of over £4 million, Operation Countryman presented its findings to the Home Office and the Commissioner. Parts of the report were leaked to the public. Dale Norman Campbell-Savours, Baron Campbell-Savours, the Labour Party politician said that "*over 250 police officers were forced to resign and many faced criminal charges after investigations revealed that police membership of particular [Masonic] lodges** formed the nucleus of a criminal conspiracy.*"
** The Freemasons have denied anything is untoward and say that they see no conflict of interest between membership of a masonic lodge and a job in the police. *"We are parallel organisations… and have high moral principles and values,"* Mike Baker, spokesman for the United Grand Lodge of England, told the Guardian newspaper – see article 2/1/2018 here.

Unanswered Questions
Questions asked in the British Parliament have, on several occasions, called on the Home Secretary to release the findings of Operation Countryman, but such requests have been refused as these are protected by public interest immunity.

Even if they exist, definitive answers to the many unanswered questions, will not be available for some time as the Home Office is not due to release its papers on the matter until 2067.

Perjorative Nicknames
While the investigation was known officially as *Operation Countryman*, things were so bad that the team were variously nicknamed 'The Swedey' and *'Malice in Blunderland'*.

Recommended Reading
- *A Little Firm In A Firm.* The Times *(57730). London. 29 November 1969. p. 7. Cox, Barry; Shirley, John; Short, Martin (1977).*
- *The Fall of Scotland Yard.* Penguin Books. ISBN 9780140523188.
- *Operation Countryman (1998). Written-Answers. Historic Hansard. 26 March 1998. Retrieved 28 April 2020.*
- *Operation Countryman (1998). Written-Answers. Historic Hansard. 4 February 1998. Retrieved 28 April 2020.*
- Guardian article dated 19th August 2018 (here): *Files shed light on alleged efforts to hide 1970s police corruption.*
- *Operation Countryman: The Flawed Enquiry into London Police Corruption,* Paperback by Dick Kirby, published 30th April 2018, by Pen & Sword True Crime.

A brief history of the Lawnmower

Sources and Further Reading:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/ahistoryoftheworld/objects/NI2ZjBwpTcqYdtpXFnlzUQ • https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawn_mower
• https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawn_mower
• https://www.oldlawnmowerclub.co.uk/aboutmowers/history
• https://www.crewcut.co.nz/articles/backyard/lawn-mower-history
• https://www.thoughtco.com/first-lawn-mower-1991636

A lawnmower (aka as a mower, grasscutter or lawnmower) is a machine using one or more revolving blades to cut a grass surface to an even height. The height of the cut grass may be fixed by the mower's design but is usually adjustable by the operator, typically by a single master lever or by a lever or nut and bolt on each of the machine's wheels. The blades may be powered by manual force, with wheels that are mechanically connected to the cutting blades so that when the mower is pushed forward, the blades spin, or the machine may have a battery-powered or plug-in electric motor. The most common self-contained power source for lawn mowers is a small (typically one cylinder) internal combustion engine.

Picture Credit: "Edwin Beard Budding Mower-circa 1830." by pszz is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Before the invention of the lawnmower, lawns were mostly cut by scythe, which resulted in an uneven cut lawn. Formal lawns with neatly manicured grass began appearing in France in the 1700s, tended to by grazing animals or hand-cut with shears and scythes, and the idea soon spread to England and the rest of the world.

The world's first lawnmower was patented on 31st August 1830 by Edwin Beard Budding who came from Brimscombe and Thrupp, near Stroud in Gloucestershire. He described his invention as "*a new combination and application of machinery for the purpose of cropping or shearing the vegetable surface of lawns, grass-plats and pleasure grounds*". It's said that Budding tested his grass cutting prototype at night to avoid curiosity and ridicule from his neighbours.

In 1842, Scotsman Alexander Shanks invented a 27-inch pony drawn reel lawnmower.

In 1870, Elwood McGuire of Richmond, Indiana, designed a very popular human-pushed lawnmower in the US. Although it wasn't the first to be human-pushed, his design was very lightweight and became a commercial success.

In the early part of the 19th century, many towns in England started to develop more open spaces, including parks and lawns. This, together with the rise in popularity of lawn sports, helped prompt the spread of the invention. Lawnmowers became a more efficient alternative to the use of scythes and domesticated grazing animals

Budding came up with the idea of a lawnmower after seeing a machine in a local cloth mill which used a cutting cylinder mounted on a bench to trim cloth to make a smooth finish after weaving.

Budding's first machine was 19 inches (480 mm) wide with a frame made of wrought iron. The mower was pushed from behind. Cast-iron gear wheels transmitted power from the rear roller to the cutting cylinder, allowing the rear roller to drive the knives on the cutting cylinder; the ratio was 16:1. Another roller placed between the cutting cylinder and the main or land roller could be raised or lowered to alter the height of cut. The grass clippings were hurled forward into a tray-like box. But, it was soon realised that an extra handle was needed in front to help pull the machine along. Overall, these machines were remarkably similar to modern mowers. Two of the earliest Budding machines were sold to Regent's Park Zoological Gardens in London and the Oxford Colleges. Budding and a partner (John Ferrabee) allowed other companies to build copies of their mower under license, the most successful of these being Ransomes of Ipswich, which began making mowers as early as 1832.

From the beginning, two main styles of blades are used in lawnmowers:

- Mowers employing a single blade that rotates about a single vertical axis are known as rotary mowers.
- Mowers employing a cutting bar and multiple blade assembly that rotates about a single horizontal axis are known as cylinder or reel mowers (although in some versions, the cutting bar is the only blade, and the rotating assembly consists of flat metal pieces which force the blades of grass against the sharp cutting bar).

James Sumner of Lancashire patented the first steam-powered lawn mower in 1893, a machine that burned petrol and/or paraffin as fuel.

In 1919, the first gas-powered lawnmowers (manufactured by Colonel Edwin George) and gang mowers (with multiple sets of blades) were brought to the United States. It wasn't until after World War II that these rose in popularity.

In the 1920s, one of the most successful companies to emerge during this period was Atco, at that time a brand name of Charles H Pugh Ltd. The Atco 'Standard' motor mower, launched in 1921, was an immediate success. Just 900 of the 22-inch-cut machines were made in 1921, each costing £75. Within five years, annual production had accelerated to tens of thousands.

Prices were reduced, and a range and choice of sizes became available, making the Atco Standard the first truly mass-produced engine-powered mower.

Other types of Mowers

Hover Mowers
The hover mower, first introduced by Flymo in 1964, is a form of rotary mower using an air cushion on the hovercraft principle.

Corded Electric Mowers
Corded electric mowers are limited in range by the length of their trailing power cord. There is a hazard with these machines of accidentally mowing over the power cable, although installing a residual-current device (RCD) on the outlet may reduce the shock risk.

Cordless Electric Battery Mowers
Cordless electric mowers are powered by a variable number (typically 1-4) of 12-volt rechargeable batteries. Typically more batteries mean more run time and/or power. Cordless mowers have the manoeuvrability of a petrol-powered mower and the environmental friendliness of a corded electric but are more expensive and come in fewer models.

Engines
Founded in 1908 by a partnership between inventor Stephen F. Briggs and investor Harold M. Stratton, Briggs & Stratton was already providing power for numerous agricultural and military applications by the 1920s. In 1953, Briggs & Stratton revolutionised the lawn and garden industry by developing the first lightweight aluminium engine.
Source: https://www.briggsandstratton.com/na/en_us/support/maintenance-how-to/browse/history-of-the-lawn-mower.html

Whilst marginal improvements have been made in mower technology (including the all-important riding mower [*and more efficient batteries*]), some municipalities and companies are bringing back the old ways by using grazing animals as a low-cost, low-emission and 'greener' alternative to the humble lawnmower.
Source: Bellis, Mary. "Greener Pastures: The Story of the First Lawn Mower." ThoughtCo, Feb. 16, 2021, thoughtco.com/first-lawnmower-1991636

Picture Credit: "20160515-ROTL3008 1930 Atco Petrol Mower Powis Castle NT Powys Wales.jpg" by rodtuk is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Red Carpet Treatment

Sources and Further Reading:
- https://www.dictionary.com/e/red-carpet/
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_carpet
- https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20160222-where-does-the-red-carpet-come-from

When you hear the words **red carpet**, what comes to mind? Probably not the questionable red carpet from the 1970s that covers your living room floor. For many people, the **red carpet** is synonymous with prestige, status, celebrity, ceremony, and a whole lot of other pomp and circumstance. A red carpet is traditionally used to mark the route taken by heads of state on ceremonial and formal occasions and has in recent decades been extended to use by VIPs and celebrities at formal events, such as at the Oscars.

To fully understand what all this means, the Dictionary.com article is essential reading.

Picture Credit: "135063_0274" by Walt Disney Television is licensed under CC BY-ND 2.0

What is the *Red Carpet*?

In the celebrity sense, the red carpet treatment is *"an area abutting the entrance to a building, usually carpeted in red, where celebrities gather and walk on before participating in or taking their seats at a big event."* Another definition is *"a strip of carpet for high-ranking dignitaries and royals so they can avoid having to walk on the ground the rest of us use."*

People roll out the **red carpet** for special guests, while those who are held in high esteem can get the **red carpet** treatment at events and restaurants.

A brief history of *Red Carpets*

The red carpet was never intended for ordinary people in its earliest known incarnation. A path of dark red tapestries was rolled out in ancient Greece in the Aeschylus play Agamemnon, when the King's vengeful wife *Clytemnestra* prepares for the triumphant welcome home of her husband from the Trojan War. Even the King hesitates to walk on the "crimson path" laid before him because he is "a mortal, a man" and not a god. *"I cannot trample upon these tinted splendours without fear thrown in my path,"* he says – and indeed, he comes to a sorry end soon after setting foot on it.*

* Source: https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20160222-where-does-the-red-carpet-come-from

By Renaissance times, mere mortals walked on **red carpets** without instigating their death. Not just any mere mortals, though. Paintings from the time show religious leaders and royalty as the only ones who walked the **red carpet** because the colour came from a rare and expensive dye made from cochineal insects. The tradition was passed to people in the earliest days of the United States, as well. The fifth president, James Monroe, had a **red carpet** rolled out for him in 1821 as he walked off of a riverboat in South Carolina. Railroad executives in the early 1900s used the allure of the **red carpet** to give an elevated, first-class experience.

The *Red Carpet* and Hollywood

The **red carpet** has been rolled out for movie stars since the earliest days of big-time cinema. The premiere of *Robin Hood* at the Egyptian Theatre in Los Angeles in 1922 is thought to be the first to feature a **red carpet** for stars to walk on as they entered the establishment.

Despite the long history, **red carpets** today are most famously associated with the Oscars. At the Dolby Theater in Los Angeles, where the Academy Awards are held, organisers lay down a 900 feet long and 33 feet wide red carpet. The vast area is where stars pause to make an entrance.

What is Ramadan?

Sources and Further Reading:
https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zpdtsbk/articles/zjc2bdm
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramadan
https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ramadan
https://www.eatright.org/health/lifestyle/culture-and-traditions/ramadan--the-practice-of-fasting
https://www.dictionary.com/e/s/ramadan-words/

Picture Credit: "Five pillars of Islam" by vincentag is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Ramaḍan (Arabic Ramaḍān) in Islam is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar and the is the most sacred month of the year in Islamic culture. During Ramadan, Muslims fast and abstain from pleasures and pray to become closer to God. Fasting during Ramadan is undertaken to promote chastity and humility. It is also a time for families to gather and celebrate. It begins and ends with the appearance of the crescent moon.

Because the Muslim calendar year is shorter than the Gregorian calendar year, Ramadan begins 10–12 days earlier each year, allowing it to fall in every season during a 33-year cycle. Dates depend on the appearance of the crescent moon and may vary across countries.

Fasting is considered to be the biggest act of religious observance. Fasting (*sawm* in Arabic) is one of the five key pillars of the Islamic faith. The others are prayer (*salat*), giving a percentage of your salary to charity (*zakat*), making the *Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca,* and, of course, a belief in the Muslim faith (*shahadah*).

During the month of Ramadan, Muslims fast and won't eat or drink during the hours of daylight for 30 days. It is mandatory for all healthy adult Muslims. Children are not expected to fast until they reach puberty - usually around the age of 14. There are other exemptions, such as the elderly, those who are physically or mentally incapable of fasting, pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers. Most type 1 diabetics are advised to avoid fasting.

Muslims observe the month of Ramadan to mark that Allah, or God, gave the first chapters of the Qur'an (the Muslim holy book) to the Prophet Muhammad in 610 (see Times of India). The actual night that the Qur'an was revealed is a night known as *Lailut ul-Qadr* ('The Night of Power').

During Ramadan, before sunrise Muslims eat a meal known as *suhur*. This meal often resembles breakfast, but it may include more dinner-like foods in some cultures. After sundown, Muslims break their fast with *iftar*, a meal which usually starts with dates and water or milk, followed by dinner.

After Ramadan, Muslims celebrate a three-day holiday called *Eid-ul-Fitr*.

21

Who is Albert Bourla?

Sources and Further Reading:
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Bourla
- https://www.oebrg.at/a-true-story/
- https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/pfizer-ceo-shares-his-familys-tragic-story-during-the-holocaust-658818

See Attribution and Credit at the foot of the next column.

Over 80 years ago, 60,000 Jews lived peacefully in Thessaloniki, Greece. It was a valued and vibrant community.

Most of these Jews worked in the port. The port was closed on Saturday or Shabbat, the Jewish day when religion forbids working. Great emeritus rabbis also lived and studied there. Everyone hung out together and liked each other.

But with the outbreak of World War II, this peaceful community would one day feel the terror of the Nazis.

On 6th April 1941, Hitler invaded Greece to secure a southern front before launching the famous *Operation Barbarossa* and his military offensive against Russia.

Of the 60,000 Jews in Thessaloniki, around 50,000 were exterminated at the Birkenau concentration camp. The massacre of the Jews of Greece was brief but intense. Very few escaped. Among the survivors, there was a family known as Bourla.

And after the war, in 1961, a son was born into this miraculous family. His parents called him Israel - Abraham. He grew up and studied veterinary medicine in Greece. A brilliant student, Abraham got his doctorate in reproductive biotechnology at the veterinary school of Aristotle University in Salonika.

At the age of 34, he decided to move to the United States. He changed his first name from Abraham to Albert and met a Jewish woman named Miriam, who became his wife. Together they had two children.

In the United States, Albert was integrated into the medical industry. He progressed quickly and joined a pharmaceutical company to become "Head manager". From there, the road was short for little Abraham (Albert) to rise through the ranks to become Chief Operating Officer before obtaining his appointment as CEO of the company in 2019.

Throughout 2020, Albert decided to direct all the efforts of his company to try to find a vaccine against a new virus which had just struck the world. He expended great financial and technological measures to achieve his goal. A year later, his work paid off - the WHO (World Health Organization) and the US government authorised his company to produce the long-awaited vaccine.

This vaccine is now distributed in several countries, including Germany - ironically, the vaccine, which is saving the lives of millions of people around the world (including many Germans), is led by a Jew from Thessaloniki, the son of Holocaust survivors, when most of his people were exterminated by Nazi Germany.

And that is why Israel became the first country to receive the vaccine. In memory of his grandparents and his parents who gave birth to Israel - Abraham Bourla, known today as Albert Bourla: CEO of Pfizer.

The above is a true story. It was originally published on 23rd March 2021 on "Silicon Investor" by Savant. See https://oebrg.nu-media.at/index.php/en/blog/891-a-true-story

Albert Bourla's career*

Bourla joined Pfizer in 1993, first serving as a doctor of veterinary medicine and technical director for the company's animal health division in Greece. In 2001, he emigrated to the United States.

He was promoted to chief executive officer in October 2018, effective from 1st January 2019, succeeding Ian Read, his mentor. In April 2019, at the *Prix Galien Greece Awards* ceremony, he was presented with the award for "Preeminent Greek Leader" in the global pharmaceutical industry.

In January 2020, Bourla assumed the additional post of executive chairman, upon the retirement of Ian Read.

In 2020, Bourla pushed Pfizer employees for the fast development of a COVID-19 vaccine in partnership with German company BioNTech, telling his team that "*financial returns should not drive any decisions*" with regards to the vaccine and took the risk of producing the *Pfizer–BioNTech COVID-19* vaccine before approval from the US Food and Drug Administration so that it would be ready to ship immediately upon approval.

In 2020, he was ranked as America's top CEO in the pharmaceutical industry by *Institutional Investor*.

* Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Bourla

A Brief Look at Sussex History

Source:
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Sussex

Picture Credit: "Sunset at Brighton's West Pier" by hehaden is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

Sussex, from the Old English 'Sūþsēaxe' ('*South Saxons*'), is a historic county* in the South East of England. It was founded in 477AD as the Kingdom of Sussex by Ælle - the first king of Sussex. But people have lived in Sussex for over half a million years.
* The historic counties of England are areas that were established for administration by the Normans, were in many cases based on earlier kingdoms and shires created by the Anglo-Saxons and others.

A fossil of Boxgrove Man (*Homo heidelbergensis*) shows that Sussex has been inhabited for at least 500,000 years. It is thought to be the oldest human fossil ever discovered in Britain.

Near Pulborough, tools have been found that date from around 35,000 years ago and that are considered to be from either the last Neanderthals in northern Europe or pioneer populations of modern humans. On the South Downs lie Neolithic flint mines that date back to around 4000 BC - some of the earliest in Europe.

The county of Sussex is also rich in remains from the Bronze Age and Iron Age. Before Roman invasions, it was occupied by a Belgic tribe called the Atrebates. Togibubnus ruled over much of Sussex when the Roman conquest of Britain began and formed most of the Roman canton of the Regni (citizenship in ancient Rome).

The retreat of Roman forces from Britain in the 5th century precipitated the landing of migrants from what is now Germany and created the kingdom of the South Saxons under King Ælle, who is recorded as having held overlordship over other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and the first bretwalda, or 'Britain ruler'. Under Saint Wilfrid, Sussex became the last of the seven traditional kingdoms of the Heptarchy** to undergo Christianisation.
** Heptarchy is a collective name applied to the seven kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England (sometimes referred to as petty kingdoms) from the Anglo-Saxon settlement of Britain in the 5th century until the 8th century consolidation into the four kingdoms of Mercia, Northumbria, Wessex and East Anglia.

By the 8th century, the kingdom had expanded to include the territory of the Haestingas, or Heastingas/Hæstingas - one of the tribes of Anglo-Saxon Britain. Around 827 AD, in the aftermath of the battle of Ellandun, Sussex was annexed by the kingdom of Wessex, a kingdom that, with further expansion, became the kingdom of England.

Romans in Sussex

Sources and Further Reading:
- http://www.westsussex.info/roman-sussex.shtml
- https://www.romansinsussex.co.uk/roman-sussex/
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Septimius_Severus
- https://conservancy.co.uk/assets/files/cms_item/21/d-arch_Roman-5L2moeCfXr.pdf
- http://villagenet.co.uk/history/0040-romans.php
- http://www.sussexcastles.com/sussex-timeline/0043-arrival-of-the-romans.html
- https://www.wadhursthistorysociety.org/the-romans-in-sussex/

Introduction

Julius Caesar invaded Britain in 55 and 54BC as part of his Gallic Wars because, according to Caesar, Britons had been overrun or culturally assimilated by other Celtic tribes during the British Iron Age and had been aiding Caesar's enemies. Caesar conquered no territory and left no troops behind.

In fact, it wasn't until 43 AD that large parts of Britain were under occupation by the Roman Empire. During the period (until 410 AD), the territory conquered was raised to the status of a Roman province. The final Roman withdrawal from Britain occurred around 410AD, after which the native kingdoms are considered to have formed Sub-Roman Britain.

The Roman conquest and occupation of Britain was a gradual process, beginning in 43AD under *Emperor Claudius* and being largely completed by 87AD when the Stanegate was established as the northern frontier.

There are two outstanding Roman sites in Sussex. Fishbourne Roman Palace near Chichester is the largest Roman villa in Britain, whilst Bignor Roman Villa boasts some of the most complete Roman mosaics in the country. Over 20 pre-Roman Iron Working sites have been found, mostly in East Sussex, including one at Bardown just north of Stonegate. The largest Roman Settlement discovered is at Fishbourne, close to Chichester and neighbouring Chichester Harbour.

The Romans were attracted to Kent and Sussex to obtain the iron which before had been exported by the Celts to Europe. To smelt iron from its oxides, the Romans built bloomeries and furnaces at Robertsbridge, Sedlescombe, Brede, Bodiam and Stonegate. A thriving iron industry was developed in the Sussex weald, and evidence of iron working has been found from Crawley to Hastings.

Fishbourne appears to have been used as a supply depot, and Chichester was used as a troop garrison during the Roman invasion of AD43. The Romans were farming parts of the Sussex countryside not too long afterwards.

The Roman invasion of Britain

There's a comprehensive and interesting history and timeline of the Roman invasion and occupation of Britain covering the period from 43 to 410 AD, here. It's worth reading. The Roman invasion of Britain in AD43 resulted in major changes in social and economic conditions and changes in technology. It represents the start of one of the most dynamic and distinctive episodes in the history of South-East England. The actual landing spot has been the

subject of debate, ranging from Richborough in Kent to locations in the Chichester/Solent area, but there is no definite archaeological evidence from Sussex for the invasion itself. There is evidence of an early Roman military presence in Chichester and at Fishbourne, where the primary silts of a large early ditch yielded AD 30s pottery, and part of a sword scabbard dated to the Augustan period.

*The Roman invasion of 43 AD was under the command of *Titus Flavius Vespasianus*, who later became the *Emperor Vespasian*. The Romans decided the best way of achieving their objectives was to sponsor a local puppet king who already had authority over the people. *Tognidubnus* (or sometimes spelt *Cogidubnus*), one of the leading lights of the Regnenses tribe who lived in Sussex and Surrey, was chosen as the man for the job.

The Romans decided to build a strong garrison to protect their position, and they chose the site of Chichester for it, naming the town *Noviomagus Reginorum*. The best Roman buildings identified so far are situated in the area immediately north of Chichester's Market Cross:

- Roman baths near West Street
- Buildings which were probably barracks in Chapel Street
- Probably a basilica under the site of Chichester Cathedral.
- There was also an amphitheatre excavated and then built over, located partly underneath and partly near the Market car park towards Whyke.

* Source: http://www.westsussex.info/roman-sussex.shtml

The Invasion Forces**

The Roman invasion in 43AD was commanded by *Aulus Plavius,* who was governor of Pannonia, which was on the Danube, his force consisted of:

- Legio II Augusta, commanded by Titus Flavius Vespanius, was based in Argentoratum - present-day Strasbourg, France.
- Legio XX Valeria, which was based at Novaesium - current day Neuss, Germany.
- Legio XIV Gemina, which was based at Moguntiacum - present-day Mainz. Germany.
- Legio IX Hispania from Aulus province of Pannonia - corresponding to present-day western Hungary and parts of eastern Austria, as well as portions of several Balkan states, primarily Slovenia, Croatia, and Serbia (Vojvodina).

The legions consisted of about half the force, and the remainder made up of Auxillary Light Cavalry and Light Infantry from Gaul, Thrace and Germany. It is believed the Roman forces landed (probably at Richborough in Kent), and a few minor skirmishes took place as they marched towards London, and, at the Thames, they waited for about two months until Claudius joined them.

** Source: https://villagenet.co.uk/history/0040-romans.php

Fishbourne Roman Palace

Fishbourne Roman Palace is probably the best preserved, best presented and largest Roman Palace in Britain and was a substantial seat of power and wealth.

Other Roman Villas

Bignor Roman Villa is another fine Roman building, and is really a farmstead. Remains of other Roman villas have been found at Angmering, Arundel, Southwick, West Blatchington, Chilgrove and UpMarden (a small village in the parish of Compton).

Roman Roads

The biggest physical mark the Romans left in Sussex is Stane Street – the great, straight road from Chichester to London. An east-west road connected Chichester, Hardham (near Pulborough) and Hassocks. It is not clear if this road extended further east to Pevensey, although this might be a reasonable assumption, given the presence of the Roman castle at Pevensey.***

*** Source: http://www.sussexcastles.com/sussex-timeline/0043-arrival-of-the-romans.html

23

Sussex Place Names

Sussex is one of the most historic and interesting counties in the UK. The name of villages and towns tend to fall into two main categories being either:

- *named after their founder or an early leader, or*
- *are descriptions of the flora and fauna of the local topography.*

Place names ending in ing, inge or ings were usually found on higher ground or in places that controlled strategic points and appear to surround areas first settled by the Saxons. **Sussex-Live** and **VillageNet** (see sources noted above) looked at the origin and meaning of Sussex place names and compiled a detailed list of Sussex Villages, some of which are shown below. Other websites with useful information are listed above.

Arundel: Arundel's name comes from Old English '*Harhunedell*', which means "valley of horehound". Local people, however, believe the name comes from the Old French word *arondelle*, meaning "swallow". Swallows appear on the town's coat of arms.

Battle: The town of Battle gets its name from the Battle of Hastings, fought between King Harold and William the Conqueror in 1066.

Bexhill: Bexhill was first referred to in 772AD, then known as Bexelei. It was originally little more than a village atop a hill, and its name literally translates to "place where the box tree grows."

Brightling: This Saxon village is one of the first to be settled by Haesta around 475 AD. Brightling is derived from *Beorht* (Full View) or *Beorgh* (Hill) *el* (people), *ing* (fort or stronghold). Initially, it was probably just *Beorghing* or *Beorhting*, meaning Hill Fort or Full View Fort.

Brighton: Brighton first appeared written down as '*Bristelmestune*', although more than 40 variations have been used over the years. 'Brighton' was originally an informal shortened form; it overtook the longer name and was generally used from the late 18th century, but Brighthelmstone remained its official name until 1810.

Broad Oak: Broad Oak is most likely derived from a Broad Oak that was a landmark in the area.

Burgess Hill: The town's name comes from the *Burgeys* family name. The name stood for '*bourgeois*', which originally meant the inhabitant of a borough. The Burgeys owned the hill, and Burgess Hill was so named.

Buxted: The name is most likely derived from the Anglo Saxon *boc stede* (beech place). The spelling changed to *Boxstede* in the 13th century and *Busted* in the 14th century.

Chichester: Chichester, the only city in West Sussex, was captured towards the close of the fifth century by Ælle, the first king of Sussex. He renamed the city after his son, Cissa, and made it the chief city of the Kingdom of Sussex.

Crawley: One of the largest towns in Sussex, Crawley has been inhabited since Roman times. In the 5th century, Saxon settlers named the area *Crow's Leah*, meaning a crow-infested clearing.

Picture Credit: "Ditchling Beacon" by diamond geezer is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Crowborough: '*Croh*' in Old English meant saffron or golden-yellow colour, and 'berg' meant hill. The yellow flowers of the gorse shrub grow in the Crowborough area, which may have given the Wealden town its name.

Ditchling: This village is Saxon and one of the first to be settled by Ælle (also Aelle or Ella), the first king of the South Saxons, around 477 AD. Ditchling is derived from Dic (mound) el (people) ing (fort or stronghold), so it translates to the Mound peoples' Fort. Its original location would have been on Ditchling Beacon, but the village was moved lower down the hills, where the fertility of the fields was significantly better for growing crops.

Eastbourne: There are Roman remains buried beneath this town, dating back close to 2000 years. The ancient river 'Burne' gives Eastbourne its name, the town *East of the Burne*. All that remains of the River Burne is a small pond in Motcombe Gardens.

East Grinstead: East Grinstead's name comes from the Old English 'grene stede' or green place.

Fairwarp: the village is first mentioned in 1519 as *Fayre Wharp* in relation to the Wealden Iron Industry, possibly derived from *Wearp* (twigs used in basket making), with the Medieval *Fayre*, which was a licenced market from the 12th century.

Glynde: Home to the world-famous opera house at Glyndebourne, *Glynde* is derived from the Medieval *Glind* meaning an enclosure, the name hasn't changed since the 13th century.

Hailsham: This town's name has been spelt in a variety of different ways: *Hamelsham, Aylesham, Haylesham,* and finally *Hailsham*. The name is believed to have come from the Saxon for "*Haegels Ham*" (meaning the 'ham', or settlement, of *Haegel*). Its name has changed through the ages to *Hamelsham* in the Domesday book, *Aylesham* in the 13th century, and in the late 1600s to Hailsham.

Hastings: Hastings, the town that gave its name to England's most famous battle, was first mentioned in the late 8th century in the form 'Hastingas'. This is derived from the Old English tribal name Hæstingas, meaning 'the followers of Hæsta'.

Haywards Heath: The name Hayward comes from Old English, meaning a person who protected hedged enclosures from wandering livestock, or a 'ward of the hay'. There's a local legend that the name comes from a local highwayman named Jack Hayward.

Horsham: Previously known as *Horseham*, the first record of Horsham is in 947 AD. The name either means 'horse home' or 'Horsa's home', after a Saxon warrior who was granted the land.

Hove: Originally pronounced *Hoove*, it is only recently that the new pronunciation has caught on. Old spellings of Hove include *Hou, la Houue, Huu, Houve, Huve, Hova* and *Hoova*.

Lewes: Anglo-Saxons in the 10th century built a motte-and-bailey upon a hill, and so the town of Lewes was born. The name Lewes first appeared in 961AD, where it appears as *Læwe* and *Laewes*. The name means 'hills', from the Old English 'hlæw'.

Littlehampton: A small village known as 'Hantone' appeared in the late 11th century. Its name in the 18th century was Little Hampton. Later, as the town grew and developed as a port, the prefix 'Little' was added to 'Hantone' to distinguish it from Southampton further down the coast.

Midhurst: The name Midhurst was first written in 1186 as 'Middeherst', meaning 'middle wooded hill'. It derives from the Old English words 'midd', meaning 'in the middle', plus 'hyrst', 'a wooded hill'.

Newhaven: The Saxons established a village near the River Ouse in 480AD named Meeching. The River Ouse began to migrate eastwards, challenging the boundaries of the village. A new outlet (The Cut) was built on the river's present course, below Castle Hill. After that, the settlement began to be known as the "new haven".

Petworth:
Petworth's name literally means 'the pits in the woods'. Its name in the 18th century was *Pitworth*. The name comes from the word 'pit' describing a clay pit, plus the Old English word '*worp*', which means wood.

Rye: The name of Rye is believed to come from the old English 'rie', which means bank, or from the West Saxon 'ieg', which means *island*. Medieval maps show that Rye was originally located on a huge embayment (a recess in the coastline forming a bay) of the English Channel called the Rye Camber, which provided a safe anchorage and harbour.

Seaford: The source of Seaford's name could be simply that the town was named for sitting on a ford near the sea. The town lies between the mouths of the Ouse and the Cuckmere and could have been named as a ford on either river.

Selsey: The name Selsey comes from the Saxon phrase 'Seals-ey', which means the Isle of Sea Calves, or seals.

Shoreham: '*Scor*', pronounced 'shor', was most likely the word used to name this town. It is Old English for slope, probably describing Shoreham's position near the foot of Mill Hill.
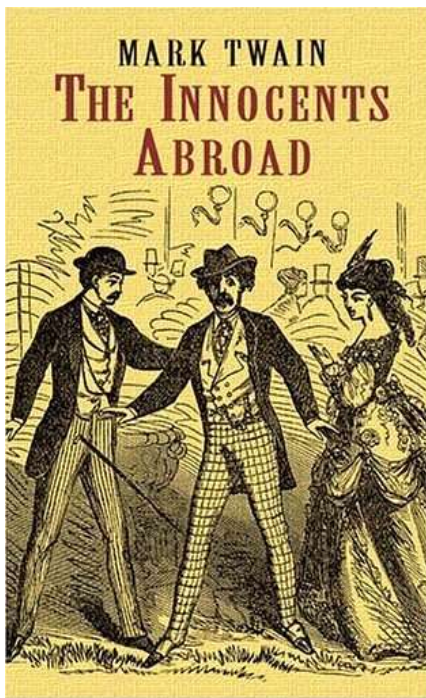
Steyning: The Shepherd, St Cuthmann, appears on many of the town's signs. The name comes from the Old English '*Stainingas*', meaning 'the dwellers ('*ingas*') at the stone ('stan').

Uckfield: Uckfield was first recorded as '*Uckefeld*' in 1220, an Anglo-Saxon place name meaning 'land belonging to a man called Ucca'. It combines an Old English personal name, 'Ucca', with the Old English locational term, 'feld'.

Worthing: Worthing is the largest town in West Sussex and has been populated for over 6,000 years. The name means 'place of Woro's people' coming from the Old English name *Woro*, and '*ingas*', meaning 'people of'. Previous names for the town include *Weoroingas, Wurdingg* and *Worthen*.

Innocents Abroad: Mark Twain and Palestine

Source: • https://www.theattic.space/home-page-blogs/2019/1/19/mark-twain-in-the-holyland
• https://www.israel365news.com/95337/150-years-mark-twains-visit-palestine-innocents-abroad-deemed-prophetic/
• https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Innocents_Abroad
• https://hyperallergic.com/400528/how-a-mark-twain-travel-book-turned-palestine-into-a-desert/
• https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Innocents-Abroad

Picture Credit: "'Innocents Abroad' Cover, 1869" by nathanh100 is licensed under CC BY 2.0

In the summer of 1867, Mark Twain and seven other rather bedraggled Americans came riding on horseback from Damascus and made their way toward Jerusalem. In June of that year, he had embarked on a journey from America to Europe and Ottoman Palestine, now Israel.

At the time, Mark Twain was a relatively unknown journalist for the *Daily Alta California.* He was reporting on the first American pleasure cruise to the Mediterranean. The culmination of the journey, for him and his fellow travellers from the United States, was the Holy Land.

1867 was a milestone year in Western interactions with Palestine – Twain witnessed what he did not then know was the start of the prophetic return of the Jewish people to the Holy Land. The renowned travel book that became the foundation for Twain's success, *The Innocents Abroad*, painted a picture of a place, the desolation of which would serve as the beginning point of a prophecy brought to life.

Twain's book, which was published 30 years before the first World Zionist Congress, has often been used to support the Zionist idea that Palestine was a *"land without a people for a people without a land."*

The Book
The Innocents Abroad or *The New Pilgrims' Progress* is a travel book by American author Mark Twain whose birth name was Samuel Langhorne Clemens. A major theme of the book is that of the conflict between history and the modern world.

Published in 1869, the book humourously chronicles what Twain called his "*Great Pleasure Excursion*" on board the chartered vessel Quaker City (formerly USS Quaker City, a retired Civil War ship) through Europe and the Holy Land with a group of American travellers in 1867.

Twain recorded his observations and critiques of the various aspects of culture and society he encountered on the journey, some being more serious than others. Many of his observations draw a contrast between his own experiences and the often grandiose accounts in contemporary travelogues. He sharply satirises tourists who learn what they should see and feel by reading guidebooks. Assuming the role of a keen-eyed, shrewd Westerner, Twain was, as Britannica.com records (here), '*refreshingly honest and vivid in describing foreign scenes and his reactions to them.*'

Above all, the book is known above all for its description of the desolation of the landscape and the ugliness of its people. In Twain's words (paraphrased): *'Most of the country is a silent, mournful expanse, dotted with nasty villages of miserable huts and the usual assemblage of squalid humanity — disfigured wretches fringed with filthy rags and infested with vermin, naked and sore-eyed children, in all stages of mutilation and decay.'*

Twain's five-month voyage included numerous stops and side trips on land along a journey - said to have covered some 20,000 miles on land and sea, including:
• A train excursion from Marseille to Paris for the 1867 Paris Exhibition during the reign of Napoleon III and the Second French Empire.
• A journey through the Papal States to Rome.
• The excursion through the Holy Land.

The book became the best-selling of Twain's works during his lifetime, as well as one of the best-selling travel books of all time. It is available on Amazon here. A free Gutenberg E-Book is available for download from here.

## Three brothers get married…

Picture Credit: "MAL 1, 2 & 3 - weddings" by Malmaison Hotels & Brasseries is licensed under CC BY-ND 2.0

The first brother married a woman from Brighton, and he said to her: *"When I get back from work, I want the house to be clean and tidy."*   He didn't see any changes on the first day, but on the second day he saw the house was clean and tidy.

The second brother married a woman from Portslade, and he said to her: *"When I get back from work, I want the house to be clean, the laundry done, and have food ready on the table."*   On the first day he didn't see any changes, and not on the second day either, but on the third day he saw it was as he had asked.

The third brother married a woman from Burgess Hill and he said to her: *"When I get back from work, I want the house to be clean, the laundry done, and have food ready on the table."*   On the first day he didn't see anything, and not on the second or third day either.   On the fourth day he could see a little bit with his left eye, but fortunately he had just enough mobility in his right hand to make himself a sandwich.
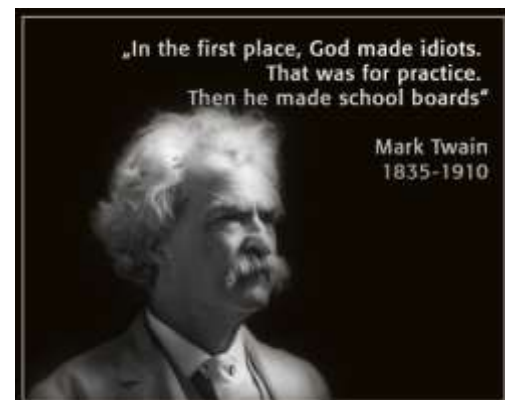
Picture Credit: "Mark Twain" by sfjalar is licensed under CC BY 2.0

The World's Greatest Jailbreak Artist

Sources and Further Reading:
- https://www.gq.com/story/worlds-greatest-jailbreak-artist-redoine-faid (story by Adam Leith Gollner)
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%C3%A9doine_Fa%C3%AFd
- https://www.france24.com/en/20200228-r%C3%A9doine-fa%C3%AFd-notorious-french-gangster-wants-his-day-in-court-%E2%80%93-on-his-terms
- https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-45729071
- https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2018/07/redoine-faid-french-prison-escape-hollywood-michael-mann (story by Julie Miller)

Picture Credit (below): Screenshot from Video on YouTube at: https://youtu.be/Ew2oyrr7eVk

Rédoine Faïd is a real-life French gangster and serial jailbreaker. He came from a place called Creil (Northern France), where he was born to Algerian immigrant parents. By 2013, he was France's most wanted criminal.

Track Record
In the mid-1990s, Faïd and Jean-Claude Bisel had led a criminal gang that was responsible for armed robbery, jewel theft, and extortion in the Paris area. In 1997, seven of eight accused were tried for these crimes (the eighth having fled to Algeria). Faïd spent three years on the run in Switzerland and the Palestinian Territories before being arrested in 1998. He was sentenced to 30 years in prison but was released on parole after serving ten years.

In his autobiography, he claimed to have disguised himself as an Orthodox Jew and learned Hebrew while in Israel and that he was taught firearms skills by an Israeli soldier.

Faïd is a fan of gangster films, which he credits with teaching him how to pull off raids. BBC News (here) reported that Hollywood movies, such as the Al Pacino thriller *Scarface*, inspired his lifestyle and some of his schemes, such as mimicking Robert de Niro's gang in the film *Heat*.

Faïd the Escape Artist
Faïd had been sentenced to 18 years in prison in 1999 after three years on the run for an attack on an armoured car but was paroled a decade later. It was during this time that he was linked to an armed robbery in 2010 when

26-year-old French police officer Aurélie Fouquet was killed. In July 2011, Faïd was taken back into custody for failing to comply with the terms of his release and ordered to serve out the remainder of his previous 18-year sentence. Faïd was later convicted of masterminding the robbery in which Fouquet was killed and, after an appeal, was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

Faïd is notorious in France for two widely-publicised jailbreaks:
- In July 2018, he broke out of Réau Prison (South of Paris) with the help of two accomplices who used smoke bombs and angle grinders to make their way into the facility's visiting room – after first disembarking from a hijacked helicopter that landed in the prison's courtyard. The helicopter had been hijacked from a nearby airfield by criminals posing as flight school students. At gunpoint, the flying instructor was forced to participate in the escape. Police found the helicopter north of Paris and arrested Faïd three months later (reportedly with his brother and two other men) in Creil, his hometown.
- In April 2013, Faïd used explosives to blow open gates and took four wardens hostage to escape from Sequedin Prison in northern France. One of the wardens was released just outside the prison, another a few hundred metres away, and the final two were left by a motorway. All were said to be in shock but unharmed. Faïd escaped in a getaway car, which he burned in Lille and completed his escape in another vehicle. Faïd was arrested the following month. In March 2017, he received a 10-year sentence for that prison break.

Faïd, the Author
In 2009, he wrote a book, *Braqueur - Des cités au grand banditisme* (translated: *Robber - From the Projects to Organized Crime*), about growing up in a life of crime in Paris' *banlieues* (a suburb of a large city) and claimed to have given up a life of crime. Contra Mundum Press published the translated version of his book in July 2020. The Amazon review says:

'Memoirs of celebrated criminals purvey vivid personal stories while spawning sharp questions about the cultures that produced them. In "Outlaw: Author Armed & Dangerous)", Rédoine Faïd, of Algerian immigrant parents, born and raised in the housing projects surrounding Paris, recounts his career as an infamous and renowned bandit.

    Drawing inspiration and instruction from a host of films and television series, Faïd styled himself and was known to friends and accomplices as "Doc" — after Steve McQueen in the legendary suspense thriller, "The Getaway".

'With self-discipline and a striking ability to learn from experience, Faïd carried off his first robberies while still a teenager. He soon graduated from petty thievery to armed robbery, targeting computer component suppliers, jewellery stores, banks, and most memorably, armoured trucks. A master of disguise, with bulletproof vest and a .357 Magnum as a prop to encourage compliance, he led a crew that operated with careful planning but eschewed bloodshed and physical violence.

'In imitation of Michael Mann's "Heat", Faïd and his cohorts donned hockey masks for one job, sometimes even quoting from other famous heist films during their capers. When bold plans went wrong, he reacted with fast thinking that served him well — until it didn't, and he was arrested and imprisoned in 1998.

'Outlaw was first published in France in 2009, after which Faïd was imprisoned again. Subsequently, his dramatic escapes from jail in 2013 and 2018 made front-page news in France and around the world.

'Interviewed by journalist Jérôme Pierrat, who specializes in crime and investigative reportage, Rédoine Faïd tells his own story with panache and humour, darkened by introspection and cautionary tales. His story, like that of a character out of a Jean-Pierre Melville film or Dassin's Rififi, is not only intriguing but is also as compelling as any high-grade thriller. Three months after his daring helicopter escape from Réau Prison in 2018, Faïd was captured again. He currently remains in jail.'

The book *Outlaw: Author Armed & Dangerous* is available for purchase from Amazon here.
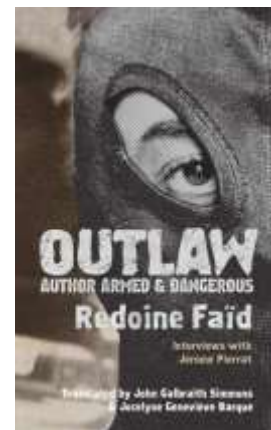
Picture Credit: Cover page of the book. © copyright of author, publisher and Amazon duly acknowledged.

A video on the incredible jailbreak of Rédoine Faïd can be viewed online at: https://youtu.be/Ew2oyrr7eVk

IMDB say (here) that Condé Nast Entertainment and Sentient Entertainment are to shoot **a movie** (to be directed by Pierre Morel, based on Julie Miller's Vanity Fair story "How Hollywood Inspired France's Most Daring Prison Escape."

Some of the Historic Buildings of Sussex

Sources and Further Reading:
- https://www.sussexlive.co.uk/news/history/ancient-ruins-sussex-how-find-4439377
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Ruins_in_East_Sussex
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Ruins_in_West_Sussex
- https://archaeology-travel.com/destinations/europe/england/west-sussex/
- https://archaeology-travel.com/destinations/europe/england/east-sussex/
- https://www.cowdray.co.uk/historic-cowdray/
- https://sussexpast.co.uk/properties-to-discover/fishbourne-roman-palace
- https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/bodiam-castle
- https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/nymans
- https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/education/educational-images/ruins-of-knepp-castle-shipley-5464

Picture Credit: "Ruins Of The Crypt, Battle Abbey, East Sussex." by Jim Linwood is licensed under CC BY 2.0

Sussex boasts a rich heritage in its buildings and structures from years gone by. In many cases, barely a trace of them remains, but they still offer a glimpse into thousands of years ago, as you can see from the selection below.

Amberley Castle: Amberley Castle stands in the village of Amberley, West Sussex. It was erected as a 12th century manor house and fortified in 1377. It was used as a fortress by the bishops of Chichester. The walls, gateway and two of the towers remain as a Grade I listed building and are now in use as a privately owned hotel.

Battle Abbey: The Abbey is a partially ruined Benedictine abbey in Battle, East Sussex. It was built on the site of the Battle of Hastings and dedicated to St Martin of Tours. It is a *Scheduled Monument* (regarded as a nationally important archaeological site or historic building, given protection against unauthorised change).

Beacon Hill Fort: Dating from the late Bronze Age and used into the late Iron Age, today, only the southern rampart remains clearly visible. As well as the Bronze Age remains, the area of the fort also includes an Anglo-Saxon burial mound and the foundations of a late 18th century telegraph station.

Bignor Roman Villa: In 1811, George Tupper uncovered a water basin after striking it with his plough. He couldn't have imagined what would later be uncovered here. Although the identities of the Roman inhabitants of this villa remain a mystery, the quality of the mosaics suggests it was someone of considerable wealth.

Bodiam Castle: Bodiam Castle is a moated castle near Robertsbridge, built in 1385 by a former knight of Edward III, probably to defend the area against a French invasion during the Hundred Years' War. It is considered one of the National Trust's finest ruins. The castle survives as a moated ruin. Its exterior remains in excellent condition, but the interiors fell into disrepair. The castle was repaired by its owners, most notably Lord Curzon, who owned Bodiam from 1917. It passed to the National Trust in 1926.

Boxgrove Priory: Excavations at Boxgrove during the 1980s and 1990s revealed deeply buried land surfaces dating back 500,000 years, making it one of Britain's most important Palaeolithic sites. It was then home to *homo heidelbergensis*, the hominin species from which *homo sapiens* probably evolved. The Benedictine priory was founded in the reign of Henry I, circa 1123, originally for just three monks. It was dismantled following the dissolution in 1536 when there were eight priests and one novice, as well as twenty-eight servants and eight children living in the priory. After the dissolution, the Priory church became the parish church - still in use as the *Church of St Mary and St Blais*.

Bramber Castle: The ruins of this once impressive stone castle sit on a high knoll overlooking the River Adur. It was built under the control of aristocrat *William de Braose* to defend a gap in the South Downs after the Norman Conquest. The castle remained in the family for several centuries, although for a time in the early 13th century, it was occupied by King John, who had the de Braoses imprisoned. Subsidence on a large scale led to the ruin of the castle during the 16th century, with stone being removed for road and house building. All that remains is the tower's 14 metre-high wall.

Camber Castle: Camber Castle is the ruin of an artillery fort built by Henry VIII to guard the nearby port of Rye. The castle was completed in 1544 and was equipped with 28 artillery guns and a garrison of 28 men, but it fell out of use in the mid-1600s when the sea receded so far that the harbour was out of range of cannons.

Chanctonbury Ring: This prehistoric hill fort once stood on Chanctonbury Hill in the South Downs, part of a group of associated historical features created over a span of more than 2,000 years. Chanctonbury Ring itself is thought to date to the late Bronze Age or early Iron Age. The purpose of the structure is unknown, but it could have filled various roles, including a defensive position, a cattle enclosure or even a religious shrine.

Cissbury Ring: The Iron Age hill fort in the South Downs was constructed around 400 BC and was used for defence for around 300 years. It covers some 26 hectares. After 100 BC, the fort's interior was used for agriculture, with rectangular fields being marked out with earthwork banks and terraces. There is also archaeological evidence of a settlement at Cissbury during the later Roman period.

Cowdray House: In the Parish of Easebourne, east of Midhurst on the north bank of the River Rother, are the remains of Cowdray House. It was one of England's great Tudor houses but was largely destroyed by fire in September 1793. The ruins have nevertheless been Grade I listed.

The Devil's Humps: These four Bronze age "barrows" are burial mounds and are among the most impressive round barrows surviving in the area. When excavated in the 19th century, burnt bones were found, as well as a horse's tooth, antlers and Iron Age pottery. Local folklore associates the humps with the burial place of Viking marauders killed by the people of nearby Chichester. The location is near the village of Stoughton, which is just north of Chichester.

Fishbourne Roman Palace: One of the largest and most impressive Roman sites in Britain, the palace at Fishbourne appeared approximately 30 years after the Emperor Claudius' successful invasion in 43 CE. Its plan mirrors that of the *Domus Flavia*, the palace of the Emperor Domition built upon Rome's Palatine Hill. It was expanded in the 2nd century, although around 270 AD, it was heavily damaged in a fire and then abandoned.

Hastings Castle: The ruins that exist today are the remains of a fortress rebuilt in stone following the crowning of William the Conqueror after his victory at the Battle of Hastings. The castle has a turbulent past. In 1216, under the reign of King John, it was deliberately slighted to avoid it falling into the hands of Prince Louis of France. The damage was then rectified in 1220 when Henry III ordered the re-fortification and repair of the castle. However, the castle went on to suffer from erosion during the 13th century and by the 14th century, the castle was in ruins.

Knepp Castle: The ruin of Knepp Castle - now no more than a single tower – dates back to the 12th century and was built by William de Braose, a leading supporter of William the Conqueror. Originally a fortified retreat from Bramber Castle, it served primarily as a hunting lodge and stood in the heart of a 1000-acre Norman deer park. In the late 16th century, it fell into disrepair, and in the 18th century, much of its masonry was taken to build what is now the adjacent A24 road. It is located to the west of the village of West Grinstead, near the River Adur.

Pevensey Castle: Pevensey Castle once stood as an important south coast defence, dating back to the 4th century when it was one of the strongest and last Roman Saxon Shore forts - two-thirds of which still stands today. It was famously the landing place of William the Conqueror's army in 1066. This site was first fortified by the Romans and later developed by William within the Roman structure, before being transformed into a medieval castle. It fell into ruin in the 17th century but was reoccupied in WW II, with machine-gun posts built into the walls to guard against the threat of invasion by Germany.

Robertsbridge Abbey: The Abbey was a Cistercian abbey in Robertsbridge, East Sussex. It was founded in 1176 by *Alured and Alicia de St Martin*. Due to its position, the Abbey lands suffered continually from the effects of the sea, and it was never rich or prominent. The abbey was eventually forcibly surrendered in 1538 by the abbot Thomas Taylor, and dissolved as part of the Dissolution of the Monasteries.

Stane Street Roman Road: Stane Street is one of the best known Roman roads in southern England and was established to connect London and Chichester. The exact time it was established is unknown, but on the basis of artefacts discovered along the road, it was in use by 70 AD.

27

Sussex Hamlets and Villages that Vanished

Sources and Further Reading:
- https://www.sussexlive.co.uk/news/history/exceat-ancient-east-sussex-village-5353492
- https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/18185765.black-plague-really-wipe-hamsey-village/
- https://villagenet.co.uk/history/1348-blackdeath.php
- http://www.westsussex.info/book-review-lost-villages-of-sussex.shtml
- http://orig.villagenet.co.uk/?v=peasmarsh_east%20sussex
- https://www.wealddown.co.uk/buildings/medieval-building-hangleton/
- https://www.historyextra.com/period/medieval/in-case-you-missed-it-the-villages-that-disappeared/
- *Video:* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GY67gTQQshs
- http://www.sussexcastles.com/sussex-timeline/1348-the-black-death.html
- https://sussexhistory.net/2016/09/02/how-exceat-was-discovered/comment-page-1/
- http://www.angmeringvillage.co.uk/history/Articles/Barpham.htm
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balsdean

Hard to believe that what is today is a peaceful place known for its natural beauty, the mouth of the river Cuckmere was once a thriving naval village founded in Saxon times. There stood the ancient village called Exceat. It was one of the most important naval bases for King Alfred the Great in his wars against the Danish. King Alfred was thought to have had a palace at nearby East Dene, between modern-day Seaford and Eastbourne. Exceat, as well as other places in Sussex, no longer exists as a village, abandoned to nature and the elements.

Throughout Britain, there are hundreds of lost or abandoned villages. Most were abandoned because the Black Death decimated their community while others were lost to coastal erosion or the encroaching sea. What remains of these deserted villages is little - occasionally, a ruined building marks the site of the past, sometimes part of a castle, or the ruins of a manor house or church – fractional remains of what would have been the only stone structures in the village.

This short summary looks at just a few villages that have a chequered past.
NOTE: The story of Tide Mills was covered separately in Nil *Desperandum*, May 2021.

Exceat: What was once a small but important and thriving village perched on a blustery hill overlooking Cuckmere came to a sticky end with the arrival of the Black Death in 1347 - most areas of Sussex were affected by the disease and none more so than the religious houses at the time. Whole families were lost. The subsequent raids by the French led to the village being abandoned by the mid-1400s, and Exceat became part of the parish of West Dene (originally known as *Eorlscourt*) in the 1500s. Historic England (here) records* the importance of the parish church:

'The east-west aligned church measured up to around 17m in length and 10m wide and survives in the form of buried remains and slight earthworks visible on the ground surface. Part excavation in 1913 revealed the stone dressed, flint and chalk rubble footings of a rectangular nave, entered on its northern side, with an apsidal chancel and a square south porch.'

'…The remains of Exceat parish church form part of an example of the nucleated form of medieval rural settlement predominant in the Coastlands local region. Part excavation has indicated that the monument contains archaeological and environmental evidence relating to the original form, development and abandonment of the church, as a core component of the medieval settlement.'.
* The content of the Historic England website is © Crown copyright, which is duly acknowledged.

Pangdean: Next to the eastern side of the A23 road, south of Pycombe, is thought to be the remains of a substantial medieval village at the time of the Domesday Book. In the 12th century, it boasted its own church, under the name of Pangdean (or *Pingeden*) Church in 1086, at which time the *St Pancras Priory* at Lewes held the Advowson**. In 1537, during the Reformation it passed to King Henry VIII. Pangdean Farm, at the heart of the South Downs, was the site of an evolving Anglo Saxon settlement following its earlier use as an early Bronze Age burial site. *The Church of the Transfiguration* is part of the Benefice (gift or reward) of Poynings with Edburton, Newtimber and Pyecombe.

The reasons for the decline and disappearance of Pandean are uncertain. It may have been the Black Death, but equally, bad weather, disastrous harvests and famine could well be the cause.
** Advowson or patronage is the right in English law of a patron to present to the diocesan bishop a nominee for appointment to a vacant ecclesiastical benefice or church living, a process known as presentation.

Hangleton: Hangleton has ancient origins - its parish church was founded in the 11th century and retains 12th century fabric, and the medieval manor house is Hove's oldest secular building. The village of Hangleton became depopulated in the medieval era, and the church fell into ruins. In the early 20th century, rapid development repopulated the area.

The spelling of Hangleton has varied over the centuries: ten variants were recorded between the time of the Domesday Survey (*Hangetone* or *Hangeton*) and the 17th century. Hangleton Lane is an ancient trackway that has been used since prehistoric times. It was also used by the Romans as part of their route from London to their port at the River Adur in modern-day Southwick. A small village gradually developed around a bend on this trackway, close to the church and the original manor house (today used as a public house).

Hamsey: Many towns and villages in Sussex suffered when the Black Death ripped through England in the middle of the 14th century. Some 300 years earlier, the ancient village of Hamsey, near Lewes, had been the proud site of Anglo-Saxon King Athelstan's royal court, but it was particularly stricken with the plague and the small hamlet was nearly wiped out by the deadly disease. As food stockpiles ran out, the surviving villagers starved to death. A good story - some say this is a myth.

Hamsey lies on an island in the middle of the Ouse valley. The island was a major Saxon town and port, but during the period of the Black Death, the island was abandoned, and the population moved across the valley to the south-west to Offham, which is just on the edge of the downs. The island remained abandoned or very sparsely populated, and all that remains is the village church, almost untouched since its medieval days, which stands as a reminder of Hamsey's former existence.

Balsdean: Balsdean (*'Beald's Valley'*) is a deserted hamlet, rather than a village *per se*, in a remote downland valley east of Brighton, on record since about 1100. It was formerly part of the parish of Rottingdean. The nearby hill known as *the Bostle* is the site of a Bronze Age cemetery as well as an Anglo-Saxon barrow cemetery. Archaeological finds in 1757 and 1798 have confirmed Roman occupation of the area. They were dated to the time of *Valerian*, who reigned 225 AD: *Gallienus, Claudius, Quintilius, Posthumus, Victorinus, Marius, and Tetricus.*

Balsdean originally consisted of two farms, *Norton* and *Sutton*, more generally known as *Norton* and *Balsdean*. By the 20th century, *Norton* became uninhabited, but Balsdean Manor house and two workers' cottages were inhabited until World War II when the population was evacuated, and the buildings were commandeered by the military. The buildings, and a medieval chapel, were never rebuilt, and the people never returned. *Norton* was used as a lunatic asylum in the early 19th century. Part of the original sheepdown is now protected by the *Castle Hill Site of Special Scientific Interest*. Much of the former sheepdown is now the site of the Brighton suburb of Woodingdean, the building of which started at the end of World War 1.

Barpham: Barpham is a deserted village and former parish, on the downs at the northern extremity of Angmering, within Angmering Park Estates. What is now Lower Barpham is a farm below Harrow Hill, with a meadow adjoining the house, in which are the distinct humps and ridges of the medieval village. At the top of a bluff to the west is Upper Barpham, with its manor house, with ruins of the Saxon parish church immediately west of the farmyard, its surrounding fields comprising the demesne farm. The church has been excavated, and its various stages of building reach back into the Saxon era, and it may even have Roman origins.

Barpham was abandoned after the Black Death took its toll. A substantial church has been excavated, showing that a community had built it hundreds of years before the Black Death overcame them.

Picture Credit and Acknowledgement: Screenshot from video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GY67gTQQshs by Richard Vobes, the Bald Explorer, showing the Lost Village of Burpham. His website is at: https://baldexplorer.com/

One-Liners: Come on, smile!

- A mate of mine admitted to being addicted to brake fluid. When I quizzed him, he said he could stop at any time.
- A recent study has found that women who carry a little extra weight live longer than the men who mention it.
- I told my girlfriend she drew her eyebrows too high. She seemed surprised.
- Alcohol is a perfect solvent: It dissolves marriages, families, and careers.
- Apparently, smoking cannabis can affect your short-term memory. If that's true, what do you think smoking cannabis does?
- At the hospital over the weekend, I heard a load of patients reciting Scottish poetry. It turns out it was a Serious Burns Unit.
- Atheism is a non-prophet organisation.
- Blunt pencils are really pointless.
- I didn't think orthopaedic shoes would help, but I stand corrected.
- Don't you hate it when someone answers their own questions? I do.
- Gambling addiction hotlines might get a lot more gamblers if every 10th caller was a winner.
- I gave my wife a glue stick instead of a chapstick. She still isn't talking to me.
- I always take life with a grain of salt. And a slice of lemon. And a shot of tequila.
- I backed a horse at Plumpton last week at ten to one. It came in at a quarter past four.
- I can't believe I got fired from the calendar factory. All I did was take a day off.
- Whenever I lose my TV controller, I always find it in a remote location.
- 'Dad, are we pyromaniacs?' 'Yes, We arson.'
- I do portraits of boxers. I can knock them out really quickly.
- I don't have an attitude problem. You have a perception problem.
- I failed maths so many times at school, I can't even count.
- I got a new pair of gloves today, but they're both 'lefts,' which on the one hand is great, but on the other, it's just not right.
- I have kleptomania. When it gets bad, I take something for it.
- I heard there were a bunch of break-ins over at the car park. That is wrong on so many levels.
- I just found out that I'm colourblind. The diagnosis came completely out of the purple.
- I know they say that money talks, but all mine says is 'Goodbye.'
- I like to hold hands at the movies – it always seems to startle strangers.

- I recently decided to sell my hoover— all it was doing was gathering dust.
- I recently got crushed by a pile of books. It's my fault - I've only got my shelf to blame.
- I refused to believe the road worker was stealing from his job, but when I went to his home, all the signs were there.
- I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
- I used to be addicted to soap, but I'm clean now.
- I used to be addicted to swimming, but I'm proud to say I've been dry for six years.
- I used to be addicted to the hokey-cokey, but I turned myself around.
- I used to have a handle on life, but then it broke.
- I want to die peacefully in my sleep, like my grandfather… Not screaming and yelling like the passengers in his car.
- I was wondering why the frisbee kept getting bigger and bigger, but then it hit me.
- I wasn't originally going to get a brain transplant, but then I changed my mind.
- I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. It's impossible to put down.
- I'm sceptical of anyone who tells me they do yoga every day. That's a bit of a stretch.
- I'm studying anthropology. I went to my local library and said: 'Do you keep books on pygmies?' The girl replied: 'No, only on shelves'.
- I've been reading a book about anti-gravity. It's impossible to put it down.
- I've just read a book on the psychology of camping. It was in tents.
- It was an emotional wedding. Even the cake was in tiers.
- It's easy to become addicted to helter-skelters. It's a downward spiral.
- It's hard to explain puns to kleptomaniacs — they're always taking things literally.
- It's OK to smoke weed in the rain but don't in hail.
- Light travels faster than sound, which is why some people appear bright before you hear them speak.
- Most people are shocked when they find out how bad I am as an electrician.
- My boss is going to fire the employee with the worst posture. I have a hunch, it might be me.
- My dad has a weird hobby. He collects bottles. It sounds so much better than alcoholic.
- My father has schizophrenia, but he's good people.
- My first job was working in an orange juice factory, but I got canned. I just couldn't concentrate.
- My therapist says I have a preoccupation for revenge. We'll see about that.

- My wife just found out I replaced our bed with a trampoline. She hit the roof.
- My wife told me to stop impersonating a flamingo. I had to put my foot down.
- My maths teacher called me average. She's so mean!
- Never trust atoms; they make up everything.
- People who use selfie sticks really need to have a good, long look at themselves.
- R.I.P boiled water. You will be mist.
- Receptionist: 'Doctor, there's a patient on line one that says he's invisible.' Doctor: 'Well, tell him I can't see him right now.'
- Russian dolls are so full of themselves.
- The first time I got a universal remote control, I thought to myself, *"This changes everything."*
- The future, the present, and the past walked into a bar. Things got a little tense.
- The man who created autocorrect has died. Restaurant in peace.
- The problem with kleptomaniacs is that they always take things literally.
- There are three kinds of people. Those who can count and those who can't.
- Two fish are in a tank. One says: 'How do you drive this thing?'
- At first, I didn't like my beard, but eventually it grew on me.