

# Nil Desperandum

Published for Haywards Heath & District Probus Club

**ISSUE 8**

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*Isolated but not alone*



Picture Credit: "Inverse proportions" by GB\_Teddy is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

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## Oh, Dear God (or) Oh Dear, God

It doesn't seem right, that with all of your might,  
You haven't observed yet, in man's efforts to know you,  
we created thousands\* of faiths, each claiming to be true,  
each one says and believes they are the closest to you.

It wouldn't be so bad, but they say the others are in error  
and come to the conclusion that the answer is terror.

Is it all an illusion which caused this confusion?

A little clarity might bring us to a greater communion.  
So, we ask, as you reign in your heavenly kingdom,  
Please bestow on us all\*\*, a little more wisdom.

\*4,200.

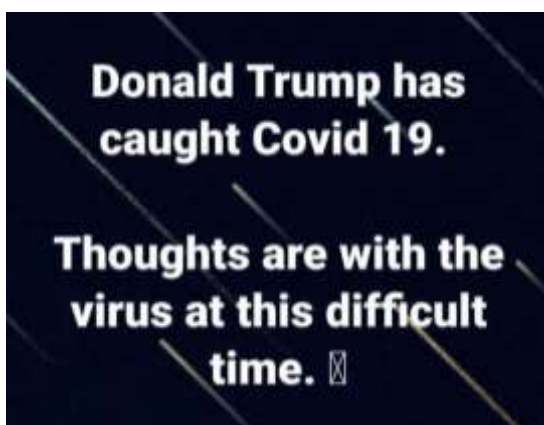
\*\*7.8 billion

Deo Gratias.

Contributed by Tony Warren



## Humour



## Ants aren't going to be hungry

Tariq Khan, a Bachelor in Botany & Biology, Gomal University D .I. Khan (Graduated 2019), posted an item about Ant food on Quora in July [here](#).

In the certain knowledge that members of our Probus Club have had many sleepless nights worrying about where the next meal would be coming from for these wonderful little insect friends of ours, the following information from the article's author may serve to put our member's minds at rest.

Ants are eusocial species of the Formicidae family that usually live in the form of nesting communities that can be found underground or in trees. Ants are common insects, but they have some special abilities. There are more than 10,000 known ant species in the world. They are found mainly in tropical forests where in some places up to half of all living insects.

They ranged in size from 0.08 to 1 inch (source: Geography) and belong to the invertebrates class. The ant community consists of queens whose job is to lay eggs to increase the ant population. The queen can lay thousands of eggs. Workers (usually female) who cannot reproduce or lay eggs perform other services such as caring for the queen's offspring or eggs, finding food, etc. Male perform only one service, mating with female ants. Male ants usually die after mating with females.

They have a vast number of different species. In fact, more than 12,000 different ant species have been identified. Some of the well known ants species include, Acrobat ant (Crematogaster), Argentine ant (Linepithema humile), Asian needle ant (Pachycondyla chinensis), Carpenter ant (Camponotus), crazy ant (Paratrechina longicornis), Dark rover ant (Brachymyrmex patagonicus), European fire ant (Myrmica rebar), Field ant (Formica).

Like humans beings and other animals, ants also need food for their growth and development. Have you ever noticed when sitting somewhere, especially in parks while eating something, a lot of ants will accumulate around the small food particles dropped by you.

No matter what kind of food it is, the ant will take it for its sustenance. This means that an ant can eat almost anything, including other ants, dead insects, dead animal parts, grains, fruits and vegetables, which means that the majority of ants are opportunistic feeders. Some species of ants prefer protein-based foods, fungi and sweets. Carpenter ants are famous for eating wood, but they do not actually eat cellulose. They nest in the wood, and hollow out the process. They prefer sweet foods such as honeydew (a sugary liquid) hidden by aphids, but they will also eat other insects and meat from dead animals.

Well, now you know. Ants aren't going to suffer from hunger anytime soon!



## The True Story of the American Frontier's First Gunfighter

A Delanceyplace extract of a book of that title, by Tom Clavin, © copyright. Publisher: St. Martin's Press.

The history of the circus in America, with the very first attended by George Washington himself:

"Following the White Tops' was the phrase describing people who were with the circus. The first equestrian display dubbed a 'circus' in the United States was held in 1793 in Philadelphia, and one of the impressed patrons was President George Washington. By the 1860s, there were as many as two dozen or more large companies crisscrossing the United States and the western territories. Most of them set off in the spring, worked their way north and west through the summer, retreated south in the fall, and spent the winter resting up and preparing for the next season.

"The circus was also known as a 'wagon show' because the nomadic troupes traveled in wooden wagons, and some of them were transformed into stages featuring performers who did not require much space. With the so-called freak shows, for example, the 'acts' simply had to sit or stand on a platform and be ogled by amused or horrified patrons.

"In 1871, there were twenty-six such traveling shows active in America. They included John Robinson's Circus, Menagerie, and Museum; Frederic H. Bailey's Circus and Menagerie; P. T. Barnum's Circus, Menagerie, and Museum; Mrs. Agnes Lake's Hippo-Olympiad and Mammoth Circus; and Adam Forepaugh's Circus and Menagerie. Many of the owners and managers and performers had worked for or with one another in previous circus incarnations. While inevitably there were rivalries and competitive conflicts, circus people were something of a society unto themselves.

"Gil Robinson, a third-generation circus proprietor, remarked in his memoir Old Wagon Show Days that 'circus people fairly earned the association of roughness which has always clung to them. But they were not a rude lot; under the skin they were, and have always remained, gentle and tender-hearted.' One example he pointed to was that when a traveling show came to a town 'where a circus man of any prominence is buried, memorial services are held at his grave between the matinee and the night show. Every troupier with the show attends, as well as a large number of the citizens of the town, who are attracted by the rather [strong] display of sentiment.'

"Many of the circuses were alike in having riding exhibitions, trampoline and trapeze acrobats, lion and tiger tamers, freak shows, elephants and hippos, fire-eaters, and of course clowns. The most prominent clown of the nineteenth century was Dan Rice. He joined the Robinson family's show in 1840 and traveled with its extended branches for fifty-three years. At the peak of his career, he earned one thousand dollars a week and thus was one of the highest-paid entertainers in the country.

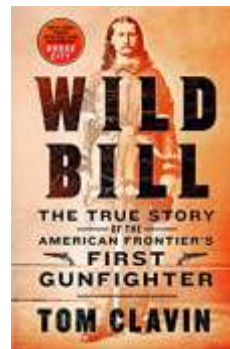


Picture Credit: "1-Minute History | 5/27 | Wild Bill Hickok" by CassAnaya is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

"The occupation the Robinsons, the Lakes, and vigorous entrepreneurs like Barnum and Bailey chose was often not a comfortable one, especially for the everyday performers who often doubled as the road crew. They did not eat in restaurants or sleep in hotels. They made camp on the outskirts of towns, ate what was cooked over open fires, and slept in or under their wagons. Only the worst weather stopped them, because if there was no show, there was no income. Treacherous and just plain poor traveling conditions had to be overcome. In the South, for example, for years after the Civil War,

"Gil Robinson recalled, 'it was necessary to send out a brigade of workmen with pickaxes and shovels to repair the highways before it was possible for the show to move.' Where bridges had been destroyed and not replaced, the traveling shows had to figure out ways to ford streams and rivers, which could involve 'the use of block and tackle.'

"The expansion of the railroads west meant fewer long wagon trains and new opportunities. As settlements grew, so, too, did the potential audiences, especially in areas that had few if any forms of entertainment other than singing and dancing girls in saloons, places not frequented by women and children. The wagon shows working their way west could cover thousands of miles in long, circuitous routes in a single season. They usually found grateful audiences. According to Linda A. Fisher and Carrie Bowers, in their biography of [famed circus performer and owner] Agnes Lake, 'The performances, however brief, gave isolated communities a break from the monotony of pioneer life and fueled the imaginations of individuals far from America's bustling cities.'"



Amazon describes this as The definitive true story of Wild Bill, the first lawman of the Wild West: In July 1865, "Wild Bill" Hickok shot and killed Davis Tutt in Springfield, MO-the first quick-draw duel on the frontier. Thus began the reputation that made him a marked man to every gunslinger in the Wild West. James Butler Hickock was known across the frontier as a soldier, Union spy, scout, lawman, gunfighter, gambler, showman, and actor. He crossed paths with General Custer and Buffalo Bill Cody, as well as Ben Thompson and other young toughs gunning for the sheriff with the quickest draw west of the Mississippi. Wild Bill also fell in love - multiple times - before marrying the true love of his life, Agnes Lake, the impresario of a traveling circus. He would be buried however, next to fabled frontierswoman Calamity Jane.

### 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.

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## Rat empathy is surprisingly like human empathy



Picture Credit: "New rats" by DeadlyCrisp is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

Rats are less likely to help a trapped companion if there are other rats around that aren't helping, according to a study from the University of Chicago. In other words, rats may also exhibit the social-psychological "bystander effect", just as humans do. Put simply (as Wikipedia often does), the bystander effect, or bystander apathy, is a social psychological theory that states that individuals are less likely to offer help to a victim when there are other people present; the greater the number of bystanders, the less likely it is that one of them will help.

In fact, the greater the number of participants, the more the perceived responsibility is diffused among the group, and people are less likely to act. Things have just got more intriguing: because it seems that the bystander effect isn't only limited to humans.

Way back in 2011, Peggy Mason, a professor of neurobiology, found that rats consistently free their trapped companions, even giving up on a bit of chocolate for them. The empathy of rats has been demonstrated in several later studies, and it's already a well-established phenomenon.

But Mason also found that when rats are treated with anti-anxiety medication, they are less likely to free a trapped peer because they are less likely to feel its anxiety. In another study, researchers found that rats were hesitant to save strangers, and only freed trapped rats they were familiar with. Rat empathy is remarkably similar to human empathy, maybe in more ways than we'd like to admit.

You can read the whole story by Mihai Andrei on ZME Science [here](#).

## Step up your walking game



Picture Credit: "strolling" by E>mar is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

A new study, the findings for which were published in the March 24-31, 2020, issue of JAMA, offers strong support for the life-extending effects of a daily walk.

Want to lower your odds of dying of heart disease? If you don't exercise regularly, taking an extra 4,000 steps per day may help, even if you walk at a leisurely pace, the new study finds.

Most people typically get around 3,000 to 4,000 steps per day doing any things such as doing household chores, checking their mailbox, or going grocery shopping. But if you regularly walk another 4,000 steps a day to reach a total of about 8,000 steps per day, there's a dramatic difference in whether you live or die over the next decade.

"This study supports what we know about the marked benefit of achieving about 8,000 steps per day," says Dr. Edward Phillips, assistant professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation at Harvard Medical School. Most people typically get around 3,000 to 4,000 steps per day without doing any intentional exercise, he notes. That includes things such as doing household chores, checking your mailbox, or going grocery shopping, for example. "But if you regularly walk another 4,000 steps a day to reach a total of about 8,000 steps per day, there's a dramatic difference in whether you live or die over the next decade," says Dr. Phillips.

Read the full article on Harvard Health Publishing [here](#).

**Caution: No content on Nil Desperandum, regardless of date, should ever be used as a substitute for direct medical advice from your doctor or other qualified clinician/medical practitioner.**

## What has happened to all our English Wild Flower Meadows?



Richard Vobes, aka *The Bald Explorer*, visited a beautiful English Wild Flower Meadow in June. The English countryside was once full of these meadows and now they have all but vanished. He talked to Michael and Jane Joseph from Sussex about their incredible meadow, and about the insects that thrive there, the birds that visit and all the other amazing creatures that live there.

Michael Joseph regularly gives talks about his meadow and the benefits for the environment, and farming in the UK. For more information check out the Sussex Wildlife Trust: <https://sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/>

Watch the excellent video at <https://youtu.be/nS39pIDvq5Y>.

Posted on 11/06/2020 by Richard Vobes on his website [here](#). Richard Vobes is an English entertainer, actor, independent filmmaker, writer and award-winning podcaster. He has produced close to 3,000 audio podcasts since January 2005. He has worked in both the corporate and broadcast sector. He trained in mime, was self-taught in various circus skills and experienced in both 16mm film and video production.

## Warfare History Network

If you're more interested in battles and wars rather than buttercups and daisies, then make your way to the front lines at the Warfare History Network website at:

<https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/>.

There are some free e-books available:

- **Dick Winters and the Band of Brothers:**  
<https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/download-our-free-e-books/dick-winters-and-the-band-of-brothers/>
- **The Battle of the Bulge:**  
<https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/download-our-free-e-books/the-battle-of-the-bulge/>
- **Killing Adolph Hitler:**  
<https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/download-our-free-e-books/killing-adolf-hitler/>

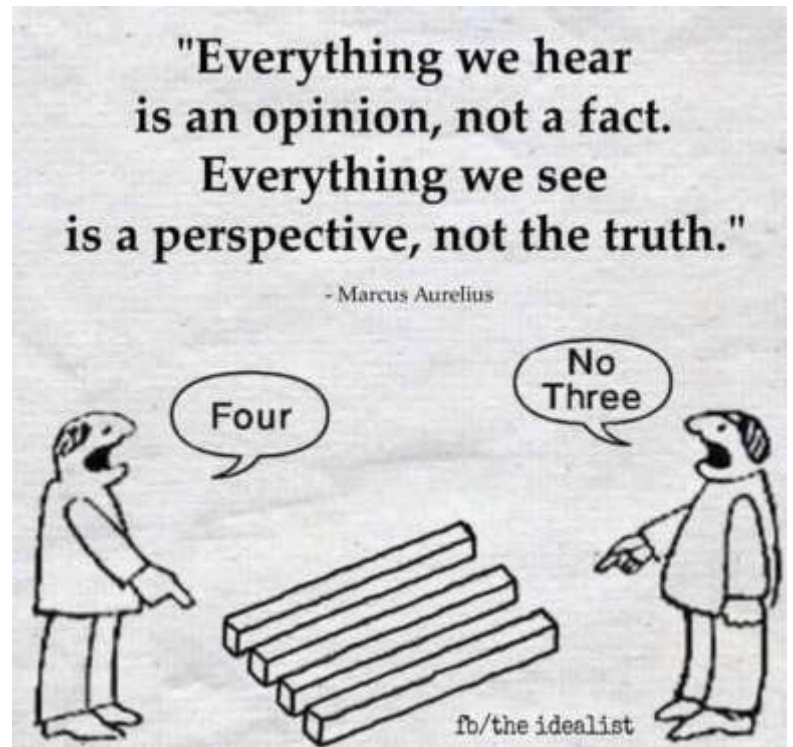
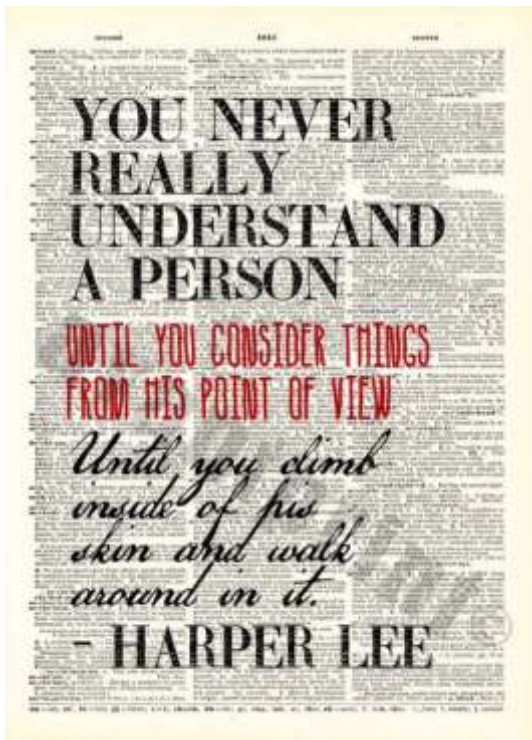
- **The Battle of Waterloo:**  
<https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/download-our-free-e-books/napoleon-bonapartes-last-campaign-the-battle-of-waterloo/>
- **Biblical Israel & Judah:**  
<https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/download-our-free-e-books/biblical-israel-judah/>



Picture Credit: "Battle of the Bulge" by The U.S. Army is licensed under CC BY 2.0



## Pause for thought



## Snappy one-liners (keep a straight face)

- How does Moses make tea? Hebrews it.
- Venison for dinner again? Oh deer!
- A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy.
- I used to be a banker, but then I lost interest.
- Haunted French pancakes give me the crêpes.
- England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.
- I tried to catch some fog, but I mist.
- Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.
- I know a guy who is addicted to brake fluid, but he says he can stop any time.
- I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.
- This girl said she recognised me from the vegetarian club, but I'd never met herbivore.
- When chemists die, they barium.
- I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.
- I did a theatrical performance about puns. It was a play on words.
- I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.
- Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?
- When you get a bladder infection, urine trouble.
- Broken pencils are pointless.
- What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary? A thesaurus.
- I dropped out of communism class because of lousy Marx.
- All the toilets in Mid-Sussex police stations have been stolen. The police have nothing to go on.
- I got a job at a bakery because I kneaded dough.
- Velcro - what a rip off!
- Don't worry about old age; it doesn't last.



## A young monk arrives at the Monastery...

The young monk is assigned to helping the other monks in copying the old laws of the church by hand.



He notices, however, that all of the monks are copying from copies, not from the original manuscript.

So, the new monk goes to the Old Abbot to question this, pointing out that if someone made even a small error in the first copy, it would never be picked up! In fact, that error would be continued in all of the subsequent copies.



The head monk, says, "We have been copying from the copies for centuries, but you make a good point, my son."

He goes down into the dark caves underneath the monastery where the original manuscripts are held as archives in a locked vault that hasn't been opened for hundreds of years. Hours and hours go by and nobody sees the Old Abbot.

So, the young monk gets worried and goes down to look for him. He sees him banging his head against the wall and wailing.



"We missed the **R**!"

"We missed the **R**!"

"We missed the **R**!"

His forehead is all bloody and bruised and he is crying uncontrollably.

The young monk asks the Old Abbot, "What do you mean, what's wrong, father?"

With a choking voice, the Old Abbot replies,

"The word was..."



**CELEBRATE!"**

## The year 1985

Source: Excerpted from  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1985\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_Kingdom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1985_in_the_United_Kingdom)

The Haywards Heath and District Probus Club was founded on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1985. Inflation stood at 6.1% – the highest since 1982, but still low compared to the highs reached in the 1970s. What else happened that year in the UK? Here's a selection of events etc, from 35 years ago...

### January

- The Waterside Inn at Bray, Berkshire, founded by the brothers Michel and Albert Roux, becomes the first eating establishment in the UK to be awarded three Michelin Guide stars.
- The first mobile phone calls in the UK are made.
- The Sinclair C5, a battery-assisted recumbent tricycle, designed by the British inventor Clive Sinclair is launched.
- London's Dorchester Hotel is bought by the Sultan of Brunei.
- British Telecom announces it is going to phase out its iconic red telephone boxes.

### February

- Civil servant Clive Ponting resigns from the Ministry of Defence after his acquittal of breaching section 2 of the Official Secrets Act 1911 concerning the leaking of documents relating to the sinking of the Argentinian ship General Belgrano during the Falklands War.
- EastEnders, the BBC1 soap opera set in the fictional London Borough of Walford, debuts on TV.

### March

- The UK Miners' Strike, involving at its peak 142,000 mineworkers; ends after one year.
- Mohammed Al Fayed buys the London-based department store company Harrods.
- Ford launches the third generation of its Granada. It is sold only as a hatchback, in contrast to its predecessor which was sold as a saloon or estate, and in continental Europe it will be known as the Scorpio.

### April

- Construction of Japanese carmaker Nissan's new factory at Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, begins.
- Bernie Grant, born in Guyana, becomes the first black council leader when he is elected as leader of the Labour-controlled London Borough of Haringey Council.

### May

- On 1 May 1985, The Haywards Heath and District Probus Club was founded.
- 56 people killed in the Bradford City football stadium fire.
- Scientists of the British Antarctic Survey discover the ozone hole.
- 39 football fans die and hundreds are injured in the Heysel Stadium disaster at the European Cup final in Brussels.

### June

- The James Bond film *A View to a Kill* is released, marking the final appearance by Roger Moore as 007.
- Police arrest thirteen suspects in connection with the Brighton hotel bombing of 1984.

### July

- 13-year-old Ruth Lawrence achieves a first in Mathematics at the University of Oxford.

- Unemployment for June 1985 falls to 3,178,582 from May's total of 3,240,947.

### August

- The first UK heart-lung transplant is carried out at the Harefield Hospital in Middlesex.
- The Sinclair C5 ceases production after just 7 months and fewer than 17,000 units.
- 55 people are killed in an air disaster at Manchester International Airport.



Picture Credit: "Sinclair C5" by Grant Mitchell is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

### September

- SEAT, the Spanish carmaker begins importing cars to the United Kingdom.
- A joint French-American expedition locates the wreck of the RMS Titanic.
- Rioting, mostly motivated by racial tension, breaks out in the Handsworth area of Birmingham.

### October

- Lord Scarman's report on the riots in Toxteth and Peckham blames economic deprivation and racial discrimination.
- Economists predict that unemployment will remain above the 3m mark for the rest of the decade.
- PC Keith Blakelock is fatally stabbed during the Broadwater Farm Riot in Tottenham, London.
- Members of Parliament react to the recent wave of rioting, by saying that unemployment is an unacceptable excuse for the riots.
- Production of the Peugeot 309 begins at the Ryton car factory near Coventry.

### November

- The Queen Mother commissions the aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal.
- Unemployment for September falls by nearly 70,000 to less than 3,300,000.
- Anglo-Irish Agreement signed at Hillsborough Castle.
- The Confederation of British Industry calls for the government to invest £1,000,000,000 in unemployment relief – to cut unemployment by 350,000 and potentially bring it below 3,000,000 for the first time since late-1981.
- Department store chains British Home Stores and Habitat announce a £1.5bn amalgamation.

### December

- Builders Alfred McAlpine complete construction of Nissan's new car factory at Sunderland.
- It is announced that unemployment fell in November, for the third month running to 3,165,000.
- Comic Relief is launched.

Contributed by

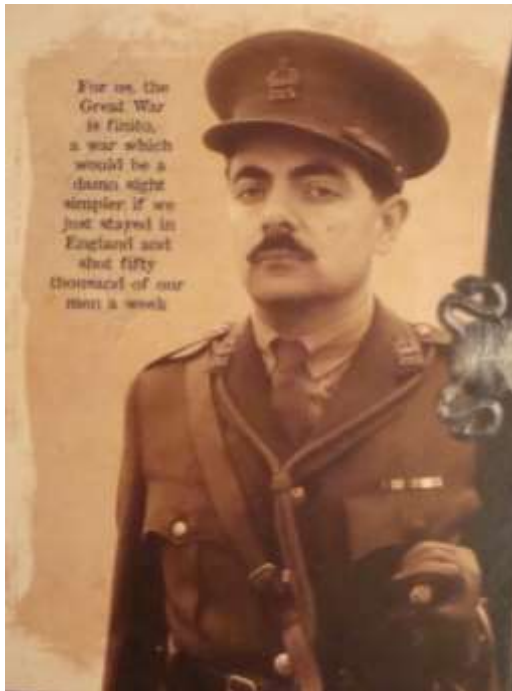


Martin Pollins



## Random excerpts from Blackadder

Picture Credit: "Blackadder Quote From DVD" by ChuckleBuzz.com is licensed under CC BY 2.0



Blackadder is a series of four BBC One pseudohistorical British sitcoms, plus several one-off instalments, which originally aired from 1983 to 1989. All television episodes starred Rowan Atkinson as the antihero Edmund Blackadder and Tony Robinson as Blackadder's dogsbody, Baldrick. Each series was set in a different historical period, with the two protagonists accompanied by different characters, though several reappear in one series or another e.g., Melchett (Stephen Fry) and Lord Flashheart (Rik Mayall).

Here are some examples of the unique Blackadder humour:

### Blackadder the Second – Elizabethan England:

**Blackadder:** Right Baldrick, let's try again, shall we? This is called adding. [gestures to the beans on the table] If I have two beans, and then I add two more, what do I have?

**Baldrick:** Some beans.

**Blackadder:** [smiles, impatiently] Yesss... and no. Let's try again, shall we? I have two beans, then I add two more beans. What does that make?

**Baldrick:** A very small casserole.

\*\*\*

**Blackadder:** I mean, look at this! [holds up a potato] What is it?

**Baldrick:** I'm surprised you've forgotten, my Lord.

**Blackadder:** I haven't forgotten, it's a rhetorical question.

**Baldrick:** Nah, it's a potato.

\*\*\*

**Blackadder:** Get the door, Baldrick.

[There is a crash. Baldrick enters, carrying a door.]

**Blackadder:** I would advise you to make the explanation you are about to give... *phenomenally* good.

**Baldrick:** You said: "Get the door."

**Blackadder:** Not good enough. You're fired.

**Baldrick:** But my Lord, I've been in your family since 1532!

**Blackadder:** So has syphilis. Now get out!

\*\*\*

### Blackadder the Third – Georgian England:

**Blackadder:** They do say, Mrs M, that verbal insults hurt more than physical pain. They are, of course, wrong, as you will soon discover when I stick this *toasting fork* in your head.

\*\*\*

**Blackadder:** Sir, I come as emissary of the Prince of Wales with the most splendid news. He wants your daughter, Amy, for his wife.

**Josiah Hardwood:** Well, his wife can't have her!

\*\*\*

### Blackadder the Fourth – First world war:

**Darling:** In short, a German spy is giving away every one of our battle plans.

**Melchett:** You look surprised, Blackadder.

**Blackadder:** I certainly am, sir. I didn't realise that we *had* any battle plans.

\*\*\*

**Blackadder:** We've been sitting here since Christmas 1914, during which time millions of men have died, and we've advanced no further than an asthmatic ant with some heavy shopping.

\*\*\*

**Bob:** I just wanted to be like my brothers and join up. I want to see how a war is fought... so badly!

**Blackadder:** Well, you've come to the right place, Bob. A war hasn't been fought *this badly* since Olaf the Hairy, High Chief of all the Vikings, accidentally ordered eighty thousand battle helmets with the horns on the *inside*.

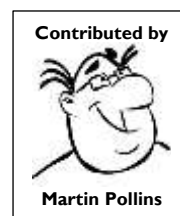
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### Blackadder Goes Forth: 6. Plan F – Goodbye

Laugh as much or as little as you can – watch this video at:

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x7ls0y0> or at:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b0078nnr/blackadder-blackadder-goes-forth-6-plan-f-goodbye>



## 'Pragmatic' versus 'Dogmatic': What's the Difference?

Some people have the incredible ability to set their emotions aside and make clear, calm decisions in a crisis. Instead of getting caught up in big-picture ideals or feeling overwhelmed by the scale of a situation, they manage to face the problem head on and address it practically one step at a time. For those who don't crumble under pressure, does this practical nature make them *pragmatic*? Or are they *dogmatic* because they are logical and able to get down to business?

In this case, the right word is *pragmatic*, and although these two words have similar definitions, they actually aren't synonyms and can't be swapped. Let's dig a little deeper ...

### What does *pragmatic* mean?

As an adjective, *pragmatic* means "of or relating to a practical point of view or practical considerations." It also refers to the philosophical movement pragmatism, which stresses practical consequences. *Pragmatic* can also mean "treating historical phenomena with special reference to their causes, antecedent conditions, and results," as well as "relating to the affairs of the community."

If you're in a sticky situation, you need the help of someone who is *pragmatic* and who can remain calm enough to think clearly while making practical calls. This person doesn't get stuck on big-picture ideals and emotions but instead can make decisions based on realistic, real-world circumstances. However, when used as a noun, *pragmatic* is defined as "an officious or meddlesome person." Even though this is more of an archaic sense of the term, it can insinuate that someone is overbearing and only plays by the rules.

And then there's also *pragmatic* sanction, which is "any one of various imperial decrees with the effect of fundamental law."

The word *pragmatic* was first recorded sometime around 1580–90. It is ultimately derived from the Greek word *pragma* ("deed; state business").

Synonyms for *pragmatic* include businesslike, down-to-earth, efficient, hardheaded, logical, practical, realistic, and sober.

### What does *dogmatic* mean?

*Dogmatic* is an adjective that's defined as "relating to or of the nature of a dogma or dogmas or any strong set of principles concerning faith, morals, etc., as those laid down by a church; doctrinal." For example, *each week her preacher delivers dogmatic sermons that incorporate relevant current events*. Someone who is *dogmatic* lives by a certain set of principles they follow. However, *dogmatic* can also have a negative connotation, as it also means "asserting opinions in a doctrinaire or arrogant manner; opinionated."

Therefore, this *dogmatic* person might look down on others who don't live according to those same morals. They might be intolerant to other beliefs. For example, *he could never win a fight with his dogmatic brother, who never stopped arguing long enough to consider anyone else's point of view*.

This word was first recorded around 1595–1605. It's derived from the Greek word *dogma* ("opinion, tenet").

Some synonyms for *dogmatic* include arbitrary, arrogant, assertive, obstinate, and stubborn.

### What are the differences between *pragmatic* and *dogmatic*?

In many cases, *pragmatic* is all about being practical while *dogmatic* refers to someone sticking to certain rules. *Dogmatic* people or things can also be arbitrary or intolerant since they revolve around specific morals or thinking while those who are *pragmatic* stick to what's matter of fact.

For example: when voting for the next president of the United States [or British Prime Minister] many take into account who is the most *pragmatic* candidate when casting their vote. In a time of national emergency or war, voters will ask themselves who is the most equipped to remain calm and think logically instead of being swayed by fear or heightened emotions. However a *dogmatic* candidate wouldn't be as appealing to a wide base if their beliefs aren't held by the majority.

Here are a few more examples:

- His mother makes *dogmatic* decisions based on her strict morale code and often looks down on her husband, who has a more *pragmatic* way of thinking.
- She is such a *pragmatic* thinker that when anyone tries to talk about hypothetical situations, she struggles with these big-picture theories.

Source: Dictionary.com [here](#).

## Pragmatic Quotations

"The academic and political atmosphere in the 1990s was decidedly **pragmatic**, rather than optimistic." (*The Guardian*)

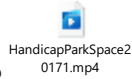
"Clinton, meanwhile, focuses on the **pragmatic** instead of the aspirational, using her experience as a guide to what can get done." (*Salon*)

"Shoes were thick-soled, while bags were **pragmatic** large backpacks." (*US News*)



## What happened next?

This will make your day...



Here's the video

It's about towing a Millennial's BMW from a Handicap Parking space in South Beach, Florida.

Watch this one to the end...

I love how the tow-truck driver handled this situation!

The girl is obviously and clearly a Millennial. As you may already know, they tend to think that the world owes them whatever they want because they are so special.

Unfortunately, folks have been telling them how special they are ever since they were born. Got to love it.

The Tow Lady was awesome, and she wasn't going to be pushed around!

Be sure to watch it to the end.

Contributed by Brian Bridges

## Wild Bison in Kent

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA



Wild Bison are coming back to Britain after they vanished 6,000 years ago. They had become extinct in Europe just after the end of World War I.

A herd (well, four of them) of the 1-ton beasts will roam Kent woodlands, at Blean Woods in Kent where they will be introduced to a cordoned-off area of quiet woodland by spring 2022, well away from public footpaths.

The move is part of a £1 million project led by Kent Wildlife Trust and the Wildwood Trust to help manage the Woods which are near to Canterbury.

Scientists hope the enormous animals, which they say pose no threat to people, will restore the area's ancient habitat and its wildlife.

## What does Pedagogy mean?

Pedagogy is most commonly understood as the approach to teaching and refers to the theory and practice of learning, and how this process influences, and is influenced by, the social, political, and psychological development of learners.

The word comes from the Greek word paidagōgia (paidos "boy, child" plus agogos "leader").

The pedagogy adopted by teachers shapes their actions, judgments, and other teaching strategies by taking into consideration theories of learning, understandings of students and their needs, and the backgrounds and interests of individual students. Its aims may range from furthering liberal education (the general development of human potential) to the narrower specifics of vocational education (the imparting and acquisition of specific skills).

Conventional western pedagogies view:

- (a) the teacher as knowledge holder; and
- (b) the student as the recipient of knowledge

Put more simply, Pedagogy is another word for education, the profession and science of teaching. Pedagogy refers to the teaching profession as well as the science of education, for example as a college subject.

## Some Jigsaws are difficult

A little silver-haired lady calls her neighbour and says, "Please come over here and help me. I have a killer jigsaw puzzle, and I can't work out how to get started."

Her neighbour asks, "What is it supposed to be when it's finished?"

The little silver haired lady says, "According to the picture on the box, it's a rooster."

Her neighbour decides to go over and help with the puzzle.

The lady lets him in and shows him where she has the puzzle spread all over the table.

He studies the pieces for a moment, then looks at the box, then turns to her and says:

"First of all, no matter what we do, we're not going to be able to assemble these pieces into anything resembling a rooster."

He takes her hand and says, "Secondly, I want you to relax. Let's have a nice cup of tea, and then," he said with a deep sigh

"Let's put all the Corn Flakes back in the box."



Picture Credit: [Cropped] from "Copenhagen Marathon" by Thomas Rockstar is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

## What is a vomitorium?

There is a common misconception that ancient Romans designated spaces called *vomitoria* for the purpose of vomiting during or after feasts so as to make room for more food, as part of a binge and purge cycle. In fact, that's far removed from what it is.

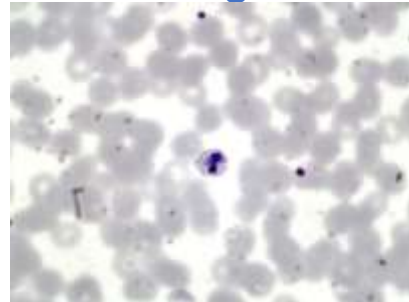
A **vomitorium** is a passage situated below or behind a tier of seats in an amphitheatre or a stadium, through which big crowds can exit rapidly at the end of a performance. They can also be pathways for actors to enter and leave stage.

It takes its name from the Latin word *vomitorium*, (plural *vomitoria*), and is derived from the verb *vomō*, *vomere* – which means "to spew forth". In ancient Roman architecture, *vomitoria* were designed to provide rapid egress for large crowds at amphitheatres and stadia, as they do in modern sports stadia and large theatres.



Picture Credit: "Vomitorium (accès a les grades), amfiteatre, Leptis Magna" by Sebastià Giralt is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

## What's a 'Pathogen'?



Picture Credit: "Plasmodium ovale x100mag (3)UK NEQAS" by Biology Open Educational Resources is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

In biology, a pathogen in simplest sense, is anything that can produce disease. A pathogen may also be referred to as an infectious agent, or simply a germ. However you refer to them, and irrespective of the type of germ they are, they should be avoided like the plague.

Pathogenic organisms are of five main types: viruses, bacteria, fungi, parasites, and worms. Parasites are organisms that behave like tiny animals, living in or on a host and feeding from or at the expense of the host. Though **parasitic infections** are more common in tropical and subtropical regions, they can occur anywhere.

Three main types of parasites can cause disease in humans. These include:

- protozoa, which are single-celled organisms that can live and multiply in your body
- helminths, which are larger, multi-celled organisms that can live inside or outside your body and are commonly known as worms
- ectoparasites, which are multi-celled organisms that live on or feed off your skin, including some insects, such as **ticks** and **mosquitos**

Healthline ([here](#)) says that all a pathogen needs to thrive and survive is a host. Once the pathogen sets itself up in a host's body, it manages to avoid the body's immune responses and uses the body's resources to replicate before exiting and spreading to a new host.

## Social Distancing in the Animal World

Picture Credit: "Tigers" by J Sonder is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0



Social distancing may feel unnatural to people, but the practice is very much a part of the natural world. Animals have strategies to separate during an outbreak, even changing behaviours to stop the spread of diseases that could kill them. An article in *Scientific American* explains how lobsters, birds and some primates use quarantine to avoid infections. The article, by Dana M. Hawley, Julia C. Buck says that animals have strategies varying from shunning a sick animal to maintaining interactions with only the closest relatives.

Immunity through behaviour does come with costs, though. Social distancing from other members of your species, even temporarily, means missing out on the numerous benefits that favoured social living in the first place. For this reason, researchers have learned that complete shunning is just one approach animals take. Some social species stay together when members are infected but change certain grooming interactions, for example, whereas others, such as ants, limit encounters between individuals that play particular roles in the colony, all to lower the risk of infection.

You can read the August 2020 *Scientific American* article [here](#).



## Mennonite Trickster and Dramatic Hero

As a boy, so many years ago, I worked in various shops in Hassocks: delivering newspapers, meat and even a milk round. The milk round had some moments, I can tell you, but not yet – except for the fact that the owner of the dairy was a man called Voigt. He owned a rather splendid estate car which of course was motorised, but sadly my milk trolley enjoyed no such luxury and I had to push it around the village with my own hands. Anyway, I digress.

This story is about a Mr Voigt but not the chap in Hassocks.

Friedrich Wilhelm Voigt (1849 – 1922) was a German impostor. In 1906, masquerading as a Prussian military officer, he rounded up a number of soldiers and placed them under his "command", and proceeded to "confiscate" more than 4,000 marks from a municipal treasury. He became known as *The Captain of Köpenick*. Although he served two years in prison, he became a folk hero and was pardoned by Kaiser Wilhelm II.

Voigt's story as an impostor is as follows:

In 1863, aged only 14, he was sentenced to 14 days in prison for theft, which led to his expulsion from school. He learned shoemaking from his father. Between 1864 and 1891, Voigt was sentenced to prison for a total of 25 years for thefts, forgery and burglary. The longest sentence was a 15-year conviction for an unsuccessful burglary of a court cashier's office. He was released on 12 February 1906.

Eight months later, on 16 October 1906, Voigt was ready for his next caper and return to crime. He had purchased parts of used captain's uniforms from different shops and tested their effect on soldiers. He had resigned from the shoe factory ten days previously. He took the uniform out of baggage storage, put it on and went to the local army barracks, stopped four **grenadiers** and a **sergeant** on their way back to barracks and told them to come with him. Indoctrinated to obey officers without question, they followed. He dismissed the commanding sergeant to report to his superiors and later commandeered six more soldiers from a shooting range. Then he took a train to Köpenick, east of Berlin, occupied the local city hall with his soldiers and told them to cover all exits. He told the local police to "care for law and order" and to "prevent calls to Berlin for one hour" at the local post office.

Voigt ordered the arrest of the Treasurer von Wiltberg and Mayor Georg Langerhans, supposedly for suspicions of crooked bookkeeping and confiscated 4002 **marks** and 37 pfennigs - with a receipt, of course (he signed it with his former jail director's name). Then he commandeered two carriages and told the grenadiers to take the arrested men to the Neue Wache in Berlin for interrogation. He told the remaining guards to stand in their places for half an hour and then left for the train station. He later changed into civilian clothes and disappeared.

Voigt was arrested just 10 days after his escapade (a former cellmate who knew about Voigt's plans had tipped the police in anticipation of the high reward). Voigt was sentenced to four years in prison for forgery, impersonating an officer and wrongful imprisonment. However, much of public opinion was on his side and the Kaiser pardoned him, purportedly saying 'Mr. Voigt was quite the amiable scoundrel'.

After his death, Voigt became a legendary figure in popular German lore and literature, including many films and dramas, especially the tragic-comedy in 1931 *Der Hauptmann von Köpenick* (The Captain from Köpenick). Variations of the event appeared in vaudeville sketches, films, dramas and literature. Popular film versions were made in 1906, 1931 and 1956. TV versions appeared more recently in 1960, 1997 and 2001.

Sources: Wikipedia ([here](#)), article by Ervin Beck ([here](#)) and article by Kyle Alexander on Quora.com ([here](#)).



Picture Credit/Acknowledgement:  
<https://qph.fs.quoracdn.net/main-qimg-8e731f5090a6114a4f89d47c757159f4>



Contributed by  
Martin Pollins

### Afterthoughts

The Voigt story may have a parallel with Francis Percy Toplis (1896 - 1920). Toplis was a British criminal and impostor active during and after the First World War. Before that war he was imprisoned for attempted rape. During the war he served as a private in the Royal Army Medical Corps, but regularly posed as an officer while on leave, wearing a monocle. After the war he became notorious following the murder of a taxi driver and the wounding of a police officer who attempted to apprehend him. The manhunt was major news at the time. He was tracked down and killed in a gunfight with police. There's some interesting information on the rogue [here](#).

But back to Voigt: It's even possible that Voigt's role as a trickster using a false uniforms influenced Adolf Hitler's way of starting World War II. In case you didn't know, it started like this: A 43-year old unmarried ethnic Polish Catholic farmer – *Franciszek (Franz) Honiok* - died on the last day of August 1939, one day before Germany invaded Poland. Poor Honiok was guilty of no crime, yet he was to die because a charade was about to be played out designed to be used as an excuse for the invasion of Poland. Adolf Hitler had told his Generals on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1939 that he would make up a fairy story to justify his planned invasion of Poland. The carefully contrived plan was for Nazi Party Schutzstaffel (SS) operatives to dress in Polish uniforms, attack a German radio transmitter station in Gleiwitz, Upper Silesia (now called Gliwice, Poland) and give the impression to the world that the Poles had dared to try to usurp Germany. The attack at Gliwice is widely regarded as a false flag operation, staged with some two-dozen similar German incidents on the eve of the invasion of Poland leading up to World War II in Europe.

## Is this the best speech ever?

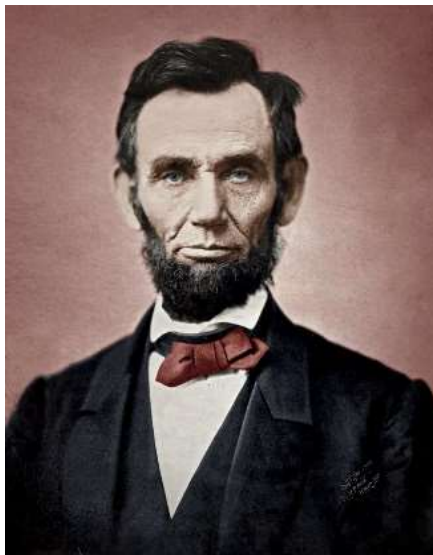
Source: <http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm>

On 1<sup>st</sup> June 1865, US Senator Charles Sumner referred to the most famous speech ever given by President Abraham Lincoln. In his eulogy on the slain president, he called the Gettysburg Address a "monumental act." He said Lincoln was mistaken that "the world will little note, nor long remember what we say here." Rather, the Bostonian remarked, *"The world noted at once what he said, and will never cease to remember it. The battle itself was less important than the speech."*

There are five known copies of the speech in Lincoln's handwriting, each with a slightly different text, and named for the people who first received them: Nicolay, Hay, Everett, Bancroft and Bliss. Two copies apparently were written before delivering the speech, one of which, probably, was the reading copy. The remaining ones were produced months later for soldier-benefit events. Despite widely circulated stories to the contrary, the president did not dash off a copy aboard a train to Gettysburg. Lincoln carefully prepared his major speeches in advance; his steady, even script in every manuscript is consistent with a firm writing surface, not the notoriously bumpy Civil War-era trains. Additional versions of the speech appeared in newspapers of the era, feeding modern-day confusion about the authoritative text.

Ever since Lincoln wrote it in 1863, this version has been the most often reproduced, notably on the walls of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. It is named after Colonel Alexander Bliss, stepson of historian George Bancroft. Bancroft asked President Lincoln for a copy to use as a fundraiser for soldiers (see "Bancroft Copy" below). However, because Lincoln wrote on both sides of the paper, the speech could not be reprinted, so Lincoln made another copy at Bliss's request. It is the last known copy written by Lincoln and the only one signed and dated by him. Today it is on display at the Lincoln Room of the White House.

### Bancroft copy of the Gettysburg Address



Picture Credit: "Abraham Lincoln" by casually cruel is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

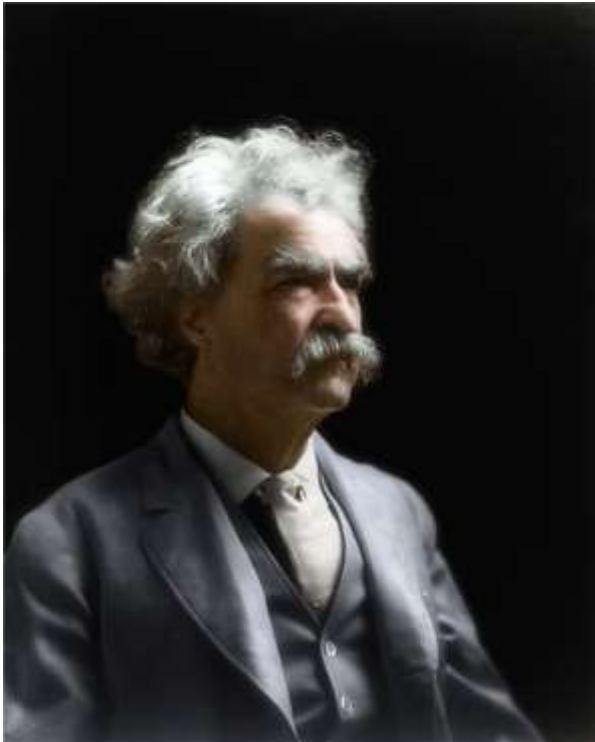
*Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.*

*But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate – we cannot consecrate – we cannot hallow – this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion – that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain – that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.*

**Abraham Lincoln**  
**November 19, 1863**



## How to Tell a Story



Picture Credit: "Mark Twain 1835 - 1910" by oneredsf1 is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

In case you've never heard of Samuel Langhorne Clemens, let me say that he is better known by his pen name Mark Twain. He was an American author and humourist most noted for his novel *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and its sequel, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885).

After failing at gold mining, he next turned to journalism. While a reporter, he wrote a humorous story, *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*, which became very popular and brought nationwide attention.

He achieved great success as a writer and public speaker. His wit and satire earned praise from critics and peers, and he was a friend to presidents, artists, industrialists, and European royalty. He was lauded as the "greatest American humourist of his age," and William Faulkner called Twain "the father of American literature."

Twain had some insightful things to say on the matter in *How to Tell a Story*, which he wrote in October 1895:

*"I do not claim that I can tell a story as it ought to be told. I only claim to know how a story ought to be told, for I have been almost daily in the company of the most expert storytellers for many years.*

*There are several kinds of stories, but only one difficult kind - the humorous. I will talk mainly about that one. The humorous story is American, the comic story is English, the witty story is French. The humorous story depends for its effect upon the manner of the telling; the comic story and the witty story upon the matter.*

*The humorous story may be spun out to great length, and may wander around as much as it pleases, and arrive nowhere in particular; but the comic and witty stories must be brief and end with a point. The humorous story bubbles gently along, the others burst.*

*The humorous story is strictly a work of art - high and delicate art - and only an artist can tell it; but no art is necessary in telling the comic and the witty story; anybody can do it. The art of telling a humorous story - understand, I mean by word of mouth, not print - was created in America, and has remained at home.*

*The humorous story is told gravely; the teller does his best to conceal the fact that he even dimly suspects that there is anything funny about it; but the teller of the comic story tells you beforehand that it is one of the funniest things he has ever heard, then tells it with eager delight, and is the first person to laugh when he gets through. And sometimes, if he has had good success, he is so glad and happy that he will repeat the "nub" of it and glance around from face to face, collecting applause, and then repeat it again. It is a pathetic thing to see.*

*Very often, of course, the rambling and disjointed humorous story finishes with a nub, point, snapper, or whatever you like to call it. Then the listener must be alert, for in many cases the teller will divert attention from that nub by dropping it in a carefully casual and indifferent way, with the pretence that he does not know it is a nub."*

You can read the full text of what Twain wrote [here](#).

You can listen to what Twain had to say at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch>



Contributed by  
Martin Pollins

## Intelligence Corps



Sources: Wikipedia, British Army ([here](#))

And excerpted from various source by Martin Pollins

This is for those who are interested in the military and warfare.

The Intelligence Corps ('Int Corps') is a corps of the British Army. The Director of the Intelligence Corps is a brigadier. Its Colonel-in Chief is HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.

The Intelligence Corps is responsible for gathering, analysing and disseminating military intelligence and also for counter-intelligence and security. Modern military operations are dependent on the provision of highly accurate and timely intelligence. To provide this, analysts are embedded in all parts of the Military to ensure that the Army's operations are successful. Although it is one of the smallest parts of the Army, the analysts have a monumental impact on decision making straight out of training.

The UK government maintains intelligence agencies within several different government departments. The agencies are responsible for collecting and producing foreign and domestic intelligence, providing military intelligence, performing espionage and counter-espionage. Their intelligence assessments contribute to the conduct of the foreign relations of the UK, maintaining our national security, military planning and law enforcement. The main organisations are the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS or MI6), the Security Service (MI5), the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) and Defence Intelligence (DI).

Intelligence Corps personnel wear a distinctive cypress green beret with a cap badge consisting of a union rose (a red rose with a white centre) between two laurel branches and surmounted by a crown. (According to the late Gavin Lyall, the I-Corps badge is referred to jokingly as "a rampant pansy resting on its laurels".

### History

In the 19th century, British intelligence work was undertaken by the Intelligence Department of the War Office. An important figure was Sir Charles Wilson, a Royal Engineer who successfully pushed for reform of the War Office's treatment of topographical work.

In the early 1900s intelligence gathering was becoming better understood, to the point where a counter-intelligence organisation (MI5) was formed by the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DoMI) under Captain (later Major-General) Vernon Kell; overseas

intelligence gathering began in 1912 by MI6 under Commander (later Captain) Mansfield Smith-Cumming.

Although the first proposals to create an intelligence corps came in 1905, the first Intelligence Corps was formed in August 1914 and originally included only officers and their servants. It left for France on 12 August 1914. The Royal Flying Corps was formed to monitor the ground, and provided aerial photographs for the Corps to analyse.

The **decryption of the Zimmermann Telegram in 1917** was described as the most significant intelligence triumph for Britain during World War I and one of the earliest occasions on which a piece of signals intelligence influenced world events.

On 19 July 1940, a new Intelligence Corps was created by Army Order 112 and has existed since that time. The Army had been unprepared for collecting intelligence for deployment to France, and the only intelligence had been collected by Major Sir Gerald Templer. The Corps trained operatives to parachute at RAF Ringway; some of these were then dropped over France as part of the Special Operations Executive (SOE). Intelligence Corps officers were involved in forming the highly-effective Long Range Desert Group, and Corps officer Lt Col Peter Clayton was one of the four founders of the Special Air Service (SAS). Around 40 per cent of British Army personnel at Bletchley Park were in the Intelligence Corps.

### Headquarters

Their headquarters, formerly at Maresfield, East Sussex, then Templer Barracks at Ashford, Kent, moved in 1997 to the former Royal Air Force station at Chicksands in Bedfordshire along with the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre and the Intelligence Corps Museum, in Campton and Chicksands.

**Footnote:** As you would expect, Amazon have an array of books on the subject of British Army Military Intelligence. Nick Van Der Bijl has authored several books on the subject. One such book is *British Military Intelligence: Objects from the Military Intelligence Museum* which, through a mix of objects, medals, photographs and documents held in the Military Intelligence Museum, tells the story of British military intelligence across the years, moving from its earliest object of the Waterloo medal awarded to the Duke of Wellington's senior intelligence officer to items recovered from operations in Afghanistan.



### A big black hole: It's very hungry



Black hole devouring its meal. Image credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech

Scientists are said to have discovered a huge black hole, 700 million light-years away, that eats about one sun per day. The black hole's mass is also about 8,000 times bigger than the black hole at the centre of the Milky Way. One of the authors of the study, Dr Christopher Onken, said that the black hole's mass is also about 8,000 times bigger than the black hole at the centre of the Milky Way. He went on to add, "If the Milky Way's black hole wanted to grow that fat, it would have to swallow two-thirds of all the stars in our Galaxy."

J2157 was first discovered by the team in 2018. Dr Onken said that researchers are looking at it at a time when the universe was only 1.2 billion years old, adding that it is the biggest black hole that has been weighed in that early period of the Universe.

According to a report in *CNET*, Fuyan Bian of the European Southern Observatory (ESO), who is also part of the team, said that how much black holes can swallow depends on how much mass they already have.

"So, for this one to be devouring matter at such a high rate, we thought it could become a new record holder," Bian went on to add.

The results of the study were published in *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*.

The research, led by The Australian National University found that the black hole is **34 billion times the mass of our sun** and eats nearly the equivalent of one sun every day.

According to the report, the team used ESO's Very Large Telescope on Chile to get the data on the black hole's mass. The black hole is hidden within the galaxy Holm 15A, which is 700 million light-years away from earth.

Posted on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020 by **Anil Agnihotri**

### Black History Month: Postboxes painted to honour black Britons

Story Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-54344961>

Four postboxes have been painted black to honour black Britons including Sir Lenny Henry and nursing pioneer Mary Seacole. The Royal Mail postboxes - in London, Glasgow, Cardiff and Belfast - have been painted as part of Black History Month in October.

Each postbox features a significant figure in the British black community and has a social media link. Royal Mail says the aim is to help mark the success of black Britons.

A QR code on the postboxes can also be scanned to bring up a list of the black Britons who have appeared on special stamps.



## Lost Love

Whilst with the Ministry of Defence between 1984 and 2002, my work often took me to NATO establishments in Europe, which allowed me to pursue my interest in the Rifle Brigade and the Peninsular Wars. Of the many personal accounts written few, if any, bettered that of Captain Sir John Kincaid who served under Wellington throughout the campaign and at Waterloo. What follows below, is his recollection of an event after British troops had driven the French from Badajoz in Spain and proceeded to sack the town and abuse the residents.

Whilst hardened by his many experiences in battle there was a softer side to Kincaid's nature as evidenced by his meeting with a young aristocratic Spanish girl Juana who, with her elder sister, had approached the British encampment pleading for protection. Describing the elder woman's plea Kincaid wrote:

*'Nor was it made in vain nor could it be abused for she stood by the side of an angel! A being more transcendently lovely I had never before seen or more amiable I have ever yet known. Fourteen summers had not yet passed over her youthful countenance, which was of a delicate freshness – more English than Spanish; her face, though not perhaps rigidly beautiful, was nevertheless so remarkably handsome and so irresistibly attractive, surmounting a figure cast in nature's fairest mould, that to look at her was to love her – and I did love her. But I never told my love and in the meantime another more impudent fellow stepped in and won her! But yet I was happy, for in him she found such a one as her loveliness and her misfortunes claimed; a man of honour and a husband in every way worthy of her.'*



The impudent fellow was Lieutenant (later Lt. General Sir) Harry Smith and they married soon after their meeting in April 1812 with Wellington giving the bride away; they had no children but remained together throughout their lives. Smith later became Governor of Cape Colony in South Africa and the couple remained friends with Kincaid until he died in Hastings in 1862.

**Contributed by Brian Bridges**

## Libel vs. Slander: What's the difference?

Excerpted from  
<https://www.dictionary.com/e/libel-vs-slander/>



Picture Credit: "The Defamation Act 2013: Complete and Unabridged" by robertsharp is licensed under CC BY 2.0

What do these two words mean, and are they interchangeable? Since both are types of **defamation** (that is "the act of making negative statements that hurt another person's reputation," and also illegal), you'll want to make sure you know the difference.

### First of all, what is a defamatory statement?

A **defamatory** statement is something factually incorrect being presented as the truth. A statement becomes defamatory when it is distributed to another party, whether through mass publishing or one-on-one interaction.

Defamation is the oral or written communication of a false statement about another that unjustly harms their reputation and usually constitutes a tort or crime.

Defamation of character happens when something untrue and damaging is presented as a fact to someone else. But making the statement only to the person the statement is about ("Martin, you're a thief") is not defamation because it does not damage that person's character in anyone else's eyes.

Defamatory is first recorded in English around 1275–1325 and is ultimately derived from the Latin word *diffāmāre* ("to spread the news of").

### What is libel?

**Libel** is written, published, or broadcast defamation. Defamatory statements made in newspapers, magazines, and blogs are considered **libel**. So are defamatory things said on TV or radio shows. Libel laws apply to both small- and large-scale publications.

**Libel**, which is attested by 1250–1300, is derived from the Latin word *libellus*, which is the **diminutive** of *liber* ("book").

### What is slander?

**Slander** describes spoken defamatory statements. The term applies to in-person interactions, like standing inside a restaurant and shouting false accusations about its sanitary conditions. Slander is harder to prove.

Slander is:

- accusing someone of a crime they did not commit, spreading a rumour about an untrue affair, and claiming someone has false credentials.

**Slander** dates back to and stems from the Middle English word *sclaundren* ("to cause to lapse morally, bring to disgrace, discredit, defame").



**Contributed by Martin Pollins**

## Donald Trump



Picture Credit: "Donald Trump - Caricature" by [DONKEYHOTKEY](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)

Someone asked "Why do some British people not like Donald Trump?" Nate White, an articulate and witty writer from England wrote the following response on Quora.com:

"A few things spring to mind. Trump lacks certain qualities which the British traditionally esteem. For instance, he has no class, no charm, no coolness, no credibility, no compassion, no wit, no warmth, no wisdom, no subtlety, no sensitivity, no self-awareness, no humility, no honour and no grace – all qualities, funnily enough, with which his predecessor Mr. Obama was generously blessed.

"So for us, the stark contrast does rather throw Trump's limitations into embarrassingly sharp relief.

"Plus, we like a laugh. And while Trump may be laughable, he has never once said anything wry, witty or even faintly amusing – not once, ever. I don't say that rhetorically, I mean it quite literally: not once, not ever. And that fact is particularly disturbing to the British sensibility – for us, to lack humour is almost inhuman. But with Trump, it's a fact. He doesn't even seem to understand what a joke is – his idea of a joke is a crass comment, an illiterate insult, a casual act of cruelty.

"Trump is a troll. And like all trolls, he is never funny and he never laughs; he only crows or jeers.

"And scarily, he doesn't just talk in crude, witless insults – he actually thinks in them. His mind is a simple bot-like algorithm of petty prejudices and knee-jerk nastiness. There is never any under-layer of irony, complexity, nuance or depth. It's all surface.

"Some Americans might see this as refreshingly upfront. Well, we don't. We see it as having no inner world, no soul. And in Britain we traditionally side with David, not Goliath. All our heroes are plucky underdogs: Robin Hood, Dick Whittington, Oliver Twist. Trump is neither plucky, nor an underdog. He is the exact opposite of that. He's not even a spoiled rich-boy, or a greedy fat-cat. He's more a fat white slug. A Jabba the Hutt of privilege.

"And worse, he is that most unforgivable of all things to the British: a bully. That is, except when he is among bullies; then he suddenly transforms into a snivelling sidekick instead.

"There are unspoken rules to this stuff – the Queensberry rules of basic decency – and he breaks them all. He punches downwards – which a gentleman should, would, could never do – and every blow he aims is below the belt.

"He particularly likes to kick the vulnerable or voiceless or female – and he kicks them when they are down. So the fact that a significant minority – perhaps a third – of Americans look at what he does, listen to what he says, and then think 'Yeah, he seems like my kind of guy' is a matter of some confusion and no little distress to British people, given that:

- Americans are supposed to be nicer than us, and most are.
- You don't need a particularly keen eye for detail to spot a few flaws in the man.

"This last point is what especially confuses and dismays British people, and many other people too; his faults seem pretty bloody hard to miss.

"After all, it's impossible to read a single tweet, or hear him speak a sentence or two, without staring deep into the abyss. He turns being artless into an art form; he is a Picasso of pettiness; a Shakespeare of *it*. His faults are fractal: even his flaws have flaws, and so on ad infinitum. God knows there have always been stupid people in the world, and plenty of nasty people too. But rarely has stupidity been so nasty, or nastiness so stupid. He makes Nixon look trustworthy and George W look smart. In fact, if Frankenstein decided to make a monster assembled entirely from human flaws – he would make a Trump."

Nate White is a London-based copy writer — that is, an advertising guy. His Quora profile says, "Drinks coffee. Writes copy." Nate took a swing at answering the question and knocked that ball into orbit. The posting went viral.

PS: The opinions above, are those of the author.



Picture Credit: "Donald Flintstone" by [Russ Allison Loar](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](#)

## 5 key dates in the Battle of Britain



**Writing for BBC History Magazine, Kate Moore, author of *The Battle of Britain* (2010), picks out five key moments from this epic battle for the skies...**

What are the key dates in the Battle of Britain? In the fateful summer of 1940, a group of Allied pilots were engaged in desperate battles with their German foes, hoping to secure control of the skies and prevent a Nazi invasion of Britain.

Following the **collapse of France**, the Luftwaffe had spent most of the latter half of June and early July 1940 preparing for the coming battle with the British. As **Winston Churchill** electrified the nation with **his soaring oratory**, it strengthened the resolve of the embattled British people and gave them hope, a small band of fighter pilots – just over 700 in total – would indeed act as that thin blue line of defence.

Tentative plans had been made for an invasion of England, codenamed Operation Seelöwe (Sea Lion), but Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring, commander of the Luftwaffe, believed that his air force alone could bring Britain to her knees. Göring, however, failed to recognise that the campaigns in the Low Countries and France had taken their brutal toll, and the Luftwaffe could now only muster 1,380 bombers and 428 dive-bombers, nowhere near the 5,000 he liked to boast of in his propaganda.

Supplemented by 1,100 fighters, the Luftwaffe still enjoyed a numerical superiority of almost five to one over the British defenders. But Göring's bomber pilots should have taken little comfort in this. They were simply 'potential kills' for Spitfire and Hurricanes, incapable of attacking the British fighters effectively themselves. If the British pilots were deployed correctly, then the dice would not be as heavily stacked against Fighter Command as is commonly believed. It all came down to how the imminent battle would be fought.

### 10 July 1940: the official start of the Battle of Britain

The battle began with the *Kanalkampf*, or Channel Battles phase, when the Germans launched sustained **attacks against British shipping** to prevent much-needed supplies from reaching the beleaguered British Isles. Such attacks had been taking place since late June, but early July saw a marked increase in the frequency and ferocity.

The tenth of the month was the date later chosen by the RAF as the official start date for the battle proper and this day certainly saw the largest dogfight fought over the Channel up to that point. By sundown the RAF had lost seven planes against the Luftwaffe's 13. This was an astonishing rate of success for the outnumbered British fighter pilots. German losses should have sent alarm bells ringing within the Luftwaffe high command but instead they chose to believe their own inaccurate intelligence reports that claimed 35 British 'kills'. It was a portent of things to come.

### 13 August 1940: Eagle Day

With the outcome of the *Kanalkampf* phase of the battle inconclusive, Göring made plans for an all-out assault against Fighter Command on the British mainland. Codenamed *Adlerangriff* (Eagle Attack), it was due to commence on 13 August. Yet the weather was to throw German plans into disarray. Grey skies and mist forced the Luftwaffe high command to order a postponement, and when several bombers – unaware of the change in plans – arrived over England unprotected by their fighter escort, they were badly mauled. The Luftwaffe regrouped in the afternoon and, flying in better weather conditions, launched a determined assault.

Throughout August the airfields would come under virtually unremitting attack, causing devastating losses to fighters caught on the ground as well as support crew. But the Luftwaffe continued to rely on faulty intelligence, frequently attacking bases that were not operational fighter stations. A total of 87 RAF aircraft were destroyed on the ground on 13 August, but only one of these was from Fighter Command. Three British pilots were killed, while the Luftwaffe lost almost 90.



Fighter Command could take heart from its performance. The tactic of deploying in small numbers to prevent all available fighters being caught refuelling on the ground was paying dividends. However this policy required nerves of steel from the heavily outnumbered British pilots.

### 18 August 1940: The Hardest Day

Believing their attacks were decimating the much smaller force of Fighter Command, the Luftwaffe planned a series of ambitious assaults on key British airfields including Kenley, Biggin Hill, Hornchurch and North Weald. With the British pilots putting up a desperate defence, the attacks were soon reaping a grim harvest. In fact, 18 August saw both sides suffering their greatest number of losses so far: 69 German aircraft versus Fighter Command's 29. It had been a terrible day but just one in an ongoing battle of attrition.

It is little wonder then that many pilots on the frontline of Britain's defence were beginning to show the strain, as Spitfire pilot Alan Deere recalled: *"You were either at readiness or you were in the air. It was pretty tiring. I was bloody tired, I can tell you; very tired. My squadron, 54, I think we were down to five of the original pilots so were operating on a bit of a shoestring."*

### 7 September 1940: The Blitz begins

Dismayed by the failure to destroy Fighter Command and incensed by a British bombing raid on Berlin, Göring turned his attention to London. Now the citizens of the British capital would **feel the full wrath of the Luftwaffe**, and in the process either the RAF would be destroyed or the British government would be forced to the negotiating table.

British radar screens lit up as wave after wave of German bombers streamed towards London. It was an astonishing and terrifying sight, 350 Luftwaffe bombers accompanied by 617 German fighter aircraft.

Within an hour, every squadron in a 70-mile radius of the capital was either airborne or waiting to be scrambled. Fighter Command realised too late that the raid's intended target was not its own airfields – and soon, bomb after bomb began to rain down on the docks, factories and houses below. The British were caught unprepared and lost 28 aircraft and 448 lives in the attacks. But once again there was no definitive result. Another test was required.

### 15 September 1940: Battle of Britain Day

A spell of bad weather had meant a delay in hostilities on Eagle Day. But 15 September dawned clear and bright. As the first German bombers began to appear one after the other, the British scrambled their fighter squadrons.

Air Vice-Marshal Keith Park, commander of No 11 Group, responsible for the defence of London, famously ordered all his aircraft into the air to defend the capital, abandoning his own policy of deliberate, smaller attacks by individual squadrons.

Drawing on reserves from No 12 Group to the north, the British fighters swarmed around the massed German formations, peeling the fighter escorts off into individual dogfights. It was a tactic that left the bombers unprotected – and they were soon falling in devastating numbers.

Park's decision was absolutely critical. If the Germans had launched a second mass raid immediately after the first, British fighters would have been caught on the ground refuelling. But Park had banked on the Luftwaffe having no reserves, as was the case with Fighter Command. He took a huge gamble, but battles are not won by the timid. For months the Luftwaffe had believed that Fighter Command was on its last legs and all that was required was a final knock-out blow. As the Germans tallied up their devastating losses, it was clear that they had failed.

**Kate Moore is the author of *The Battle of Britain* (2010), which was published by Osprey in association with the Imperial War Museum.**

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## Has Social Distancing gone mad?



Click this link to see what happens next:

<http://onesmartplace.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/1fea349c-5674-4773-a123-52a4830e0f59.mp4>

## Airbus and Commercial Hydrogen Planes

Story based on: <https://www.airbus.com/innovation/future-concepts.html> and <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-54242176>

Zero-emission flight is closer to reality than ever. Airbus has announced plans to debut three new hydrogen-fueled, commercial zero-emission aircraft by the year 2035.

According to Airbus CEO Guillaume Faury, the company has proposed three new aircraft designs – developed in collaboration with EasyJet – that could significantly reduce the climate impact of the aviation industry.

Unveiling its latest blueprints, Airbus said its turbofan design could carry up to 200 passengers more than 2,000 miles, while a turboprop concept would have a 50% lower capacity and range.

The pick of the lot however is its ‘blended-wing body’ aircraft that happens to be the most eye-catching of the three designs: see picture at: <https://airbus-h.assetsadobe2.com/is/image/content/dam/events/conference/press-conference/AirbusZEROe-Blended-Wing-Body-Concept.jpg>

A blended wing body, also known as blended body or hybrid wing body, is a fixed-wing aircraft that has no clear dividing line between the wings and the main body of the craft. The aircraft has distinct wing and body structures, which are smoothly blended together with no clear dividing line, as you can see from the picture at the hyperlink above.

All three planes will be powered by gas-turbine engines modified to burn liquid hydrogen, and hydrogen fuel cells to create electrical power.

## Dad's Army

Source: story by Phil Laing on Quora.com, who asked:

**Who are some actors who have always seemed old, no matter the role or what their real age was?**

The British sitcom Dad's Army, which ran for several successful series from the late 1960s to the late 1970s, told the story of a Home Guard battalion in a fictional small village (Walmington-on-Sea) on the South Coast of England during World War II.

The Home Guard were made up of retirees and army veterans, men too old to serve in the regular army but theoretically capable of providing a last line of defence in the event of a German invasion.

Corporal Jones was meant to be the old man of the platoon, the experienced soldier - often mentioning his time in the Sudan in the 19th century, and his involvement in the battle of Omdurman, in 1898. Assuming he was at least 20 at that time, his age would have been at least 61 by the outbreak of war in 1939. Probably older, in fact - much was made of Jones' age and decrepitude.



Picture Credit: "Lance Corporal Jones" by Tram Painter is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

The actor playing Jones, was Clive Dunn, who was 48 at the time the show started in 1968, younger than all the other main cast members apart from James Beck and Ian Lavender, who were in any case both playing much younger characters than Dunn.

This made good casting sense, as not only had Dunn already made a career of playing old men, but he could handle a more physical style of comedy than the older members of the cast.

The series regularly gained audiences of 18 million viewers, and is still repeated worldwide.

Dunn made the most of his “old man” image, having a number 1 hit single with the song “Grandad” in 1971, in which the 51-year-old played a dodderly old codger whiling away his final days in his rocking chair, surrounded by his grandchildren.

## Finish with a giggle



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"Yes, I can turn back time by reversing the Earth's rotation. However, it must be for a better reason than finding your phone."



Picture Credit: "Punch - Helping the Police" by Roger4336 is licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](#)



Picture Credit: "British humour" by BPPrice is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)

