

WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?

We just returned from our annual visit to the US which, ever since the War of Independence back in 1812, has been known as the Land of The Free. Under the presidency of trump, (with a small tee,) it is now called the Land of Me!

Old age has but few perks, a free TV licence still being one of them as of now, but it also brings on a few unseen problems whilst traveling abroad, hiring a car being one of them, I was charged almost double as I was an old duffer. Another old age problem is the long-term suffering from extreme jet lag, there was a time when I was flying the Atlantic regularly on business, and often had to go from the airport to a meeting regardless of the time change, but here I am almost a week after getting back home, still reeling from the after effects. In fact, by day two of our trip, the Wife and I resembled Mr & Mrs Magoo, wandering around not knowing what we were supposed to be doing or, more importantly, where the hell we were going as we drove around areas of Portland Maine that neither of us had ever seen or been before despite the fact it was her home town!

I think I'm restricting future travel to merely channel crossings and even that restricted to ferries only, I can't be doing with the likes of Easy Jet or Ryan Air, cattle get more respect than their passengers.

It would appear that readers of my Ramblings are spread far and wide across the Globe, with my Grandchildren living in both Sydney and Cape Town I assumed this was already the case, but what self-respecting teenager would read what Grandpa says?

I just received a long communication from a retired couple in Canada who are already "regular readers". They are trying to trace their ancestry across the Seas, much of which is in Scotland, God forbid they find a connection to Sturgeon, the wee mealie mouthed lassie presently ruling the Picts! Apparently, the name Ruggie-Price peaked their interest, and why not indeed, but who do we think we are we?

Price the Prince no less, Taffies galore and Celtic to the core!

According to our family tree, authenticated by the College of Arms, our ancestor was the Prince (Chieftain or Brigand Boss?) of one of the fifteen Celtic tribes that made up the Welsh populace. No doubt rape and pillage were the cries of the unfortunates who fell foul of him but #MeToos didn't exist back then. Eventually the family married into the Tudor dynasty and the rest, of course, is history!

Talking of #Metoos, last week there was the British Reality Star who was arrested for drunk driving; she refused the offer of a Breathalyser on the basis that her new "puffed up" lips couldn't fit around the breathalyser nozzle!!

In bygone days I had a mate or two who lived in Harlem NYC, can you imagine one of them being asked to use a breathalyser by a New York Cop for DWI "Ma lips is too big Bro"

I went to a funeral in Weymouth of an old Regimental mate last week. We first met in Ipoh, Malaya in 1960, he was a trooper and I was green 2Lt. He eventually rose to the rank of Major, but by that time I was long gone to America. Ten years ago, we rekindled that friendship at a Regimental Reunion. There were many Old Coms at his service and it was lovely once more to hear that Yorkshire greeting "Ey oop thee" as we all came together and, as they say In Barnsley, "Ee were a good lad" and that he certainly was.

While still in military mode, my dear Brother's village of Eastern Royal in Wiltshire is putting on a vaudeville show to commemorate the Eleventh Day of the Eleventh Month of 1918, i.e. the end of World War 1. I think that's a brilliant idea and only wish we were doing something similar to honour those bygone but not forgotten men. This day, Sunday 11th 2018 is probably the most important day of this year. Does anyone know who went from here?

According to Mrs Letme Makeitclear, we have reached the end of austerity which is a great sound bite but from where I'm sitting, deaf as a post, "Nowt's happening".

And then Eeyore Hammond recently declared that our "High Street shops cannot be preserved in Aspic".

He obviously eats at the top table, for Aspic is formed from the juice of meat and veggies and was used in preserving the shape of moulded dishes served up to the Ruling Classes. I doubt very much that it was ever served to any of those sitting "beneath the salt"

I've experienced both ends of the "Have and Have Not" spectrum during my lifetime and while the above-mentioned Pols are both hard working people, I wonder if they actually know the price of a pint of milk?

There's a lot of folk out here that are really coal and coke and with nowt to eat in the old Mother Hubbard

Ah well, Next Year in Marienbad perhaps?

Jeremy R-P

November 2018

THE ORFORD RAT RACE

We have had some rats in the garden of late, but after quick action by Ron Scarse, the Pied Piper of Orford, they moved on.

It is quite normal in a fishing and farming community like ours to have a residential rat population dotted around the place, but it's always best to try and keep some element of control.

During the War, the Sergeants Mess of the 13/18th Royal Hussars was in a wooden barrack hut near Wickham Market and was overrun by rats. My Dad gathered up two Jack Russell's from the Officers Mess, took them down there, shut all doors and windows and put the dogs in. Much snarling and barking ensued, followed by high pitch screams and twenty minutes later the problem was solved.

The best rat extermination I ever witnessed was in Calcutta. Our cargo ship had a plague of rats because the lascar seamen were breeding and eating them, Vermin Vindaloo or Rogan Ratty were two "specials" of the day. We radioed ahead to the Calcutta Port Authorities that we needed a rat Walla on arrival, and sure enough as we nosed into our berth in the docks, a very smartly uniformed Sikh came aboard, his dress resembling that of a Bengal Lancer of yore. Below, on the dock, the whole area around our vessel had been cordoned off with fencing manned by his "sepoys", some twenty in all, each one armed with short razor-sharp lances. His instructions were that all mooring rope rat guards be removed, all hatches opened up, all water tight doors, every storeroom, storm doors to the bridge, including our accommodation and engine room should be open wide. His final

request was for a live rat to be caught in a cage, so as duty gangway quartermaster. I was able to get him one within five minutes.

He placed the cage on the gangway, facing down to the dock, told us to stand on the rails and not by the gangway. Then he poured fuel on the rat, set it alight and let it burn for a minute, during which time it screeched very loudly, then he opened the cage and the burning and screaming rat ran down the gangplank and fell into the water. The piercing screams had been heard by the rest of the tribe throughout the entire ship and within seconds, hundreds of squealing rats appeared from everywhere, all desperate to disembark by any means they could. Some went down the mooring ropes, others used the gangplank while many just leapt overboard and drowned. Those that made it to the dock were caught by the defending sepoy's manning the perimeter fence and stabbed to death. Ten minutes later we were rat free, simple and swift and ratproof.

There was an article in the Link not so long ago about Sudbourne being usurped by the War Department in the early forties. My Dad was one of those who arrived here as the Regiment needed to train on the new floating DD tanks, known as Hobart Specials, that were to be used in the Normandy landings in '44. The whole surrounding area of Suffolk became one enormous military training area interspersed with grass strip airfields and The Ness was also under siege from boffins and military alike. In Orford the only source of local recreation for many of these squaddies were our two pubs, and one REME Sergeant described it as "Orful Orford". The Brigadier had weekend shooting parties on Orfordness and my Dad was one of the regular guns invited to participate.

The Cone Heads of Summer have all gone, but it seems they begat a new species while they were here, the Deadly Cone Napper!! For the past two years, during the summer parking restrictions, I have put out some "no parking" cones on the lower section of Munday's Lane where we live. For if just a single car is parked at this particular junction, it becomes a real problem for farmers and large articulated trucks as they can't get through and there's no room to turn around.

After several discussions with the Town Office and a Councillor it became clear that there was slim chance of the SCDC taking any action soon despite having visited the site twice. So, I placed four cones to denote "no parking" in the designated space for even the yellow lines had been completely obliterated by leaves since last winter. This was done with a nod from above and with community spirit in mind, purely to assist our farmers and truckers. It worked a treat and we never had a problem all Summer. But I hadn't reckoned with the dastardly Cone Napper living in our midst. Earlier this month, these cones and one belonging to A.N. Other were "nicked", removed or stolen. They are expensive and will cost over £50 to replace.

These two photos show the site pre-May 30th and again in Early September on the day after they were removed, when this truck was parked there, in the exact spot where two cones had been, so not even a car could get through.

So, my dear Cone Napper, for whatever reason you removed the cones, your interfering action successfully created more havoc, and, just to drive the point home, when this occurs it blocks an emergency vehicle as well. This vehicle has to back up at least two hundred yards before it can turn around: all that takes at least five minutes and that five minutes could be crucial, God forbid it's you they are trying to save!

At long last our much-needed annual holiday approaches and we will shortly be off to Maine, but ere we go this is worth a mention.

Some weeks ago, Wendy Roberts remarked on the “picnic remains”, including odd items such as bits of folding chairs, that litter the foreshore of Orfordness after the summer visitors have gone. I emailed the NOTT and suggested we canvas for volunteers to pick up plastic and more this Autumn, and several locals emerged in agreement with the plot. However, in a subsequent Parish Meeting somebody remembered the National Trust, landlords of the Ness, had forbidden this in the past, saying that we would tread all over the flowers! So, I wrote to the Daily Telegraph and copied in the CEO of the National Trust. Within 24 hours I received a charming reply from Hilary McGrady, the National Trust boss, giving her consent to go ahead.

As Winston said, Never Give Up, you have to just KBO!

I have been asked if I would give some oil painting instruction this winter, and I would be pleased to do so. Lessons, landscape and marine, would be on a one on one basis in my home studio and would be adapted to fit each person’s needs. For further details please contact me in person on my return.

Jeremy R-P

October

“Is Summer finished?” Asked Piglet.

“I think so” Answered Pooh.

“Nobody cares” Said Eeyore.

As I write, the Summer season comes to an end with the Flower Show. Soon the village will be empty apart from back packed hikers. All told, this summer was a bummer in some ways; plenty of sun but fewer visitors, even the quantity of Coneheads was less, and those that did come tended to walk around with wallets shut like clam shells. It seemed that the cost of living for those on the lower rungs of the income ladder are more than just feeling the pinch, they are having a real hard time making ends meet with incomes that are stagnant while the spiralling cost of living is taking a severe toll on their daily lives. Did you know that the cost of a carrot has gone up 80% in the last month? So much for winter walks in the dark!

One of my own joys of summer is the sounds and sights of children that come here for the holidays; the squeals of delight as they play in the garden, the little bikers, clad in wetsuit and life jacket, whizzing down to the Yacht Club; the even smaller bikers, Princesses and Princes with brightly coloured mini bikes and helmets navigating their way down Quay Street under parental control (?)

“Hermione, stop there, Hermione, HERMIONE, did you hear what I said, WAIT THERE!”

Naturally Hermione isn’t listening for the simple reason that she hasn’t drawn breath since she left the house, for just like her Mum, she has learned to drive, talk and navigate through traffic at the same time.

It’s always good to see whole families, Grans and Grandads with their children and grandchildren meandering off down to the Quay to crab and have a picnic. My family are scattered in many directions including Australia and Cape Town, so that’s not so easy to accomplish.

Ah well, maybe next year in Marienbad!

My brother in law, Thomas Hughes-Hallet, just wrote an article in the Sunday Times News Review - Aug 26 - about a new idea he has started, Helpforce Volunteers, the purpose of which is to help out where possible the much-overstretched services of the NHS. I recommend everyone reads it, you can find it on www.helpforce.community It could make a whole heap of difference to many once it gets up a full head of steam across the Country and it will be able to assist those who slipping through some cracks and at the same time, release some of the pressures on NHS staff. I'm not going to paraphrase his excellent article but hope you inwardly digest what he says as we should all be helping to take the action he proposes.

Thomas is well versed in the needs of the sick as he was the previous Chairman of the Marie Curie Foundation and his eldest son and daughter in law are both well established in the Medical Profession. Thomas and family have a house in Iken

That same weekend was the annual dinghy race by the Quay, the Vende Orford.

This year the stewards altered the rules to include such craft as kayaks, canoes and even a two manned rowing shell. Whilst that may have opened the field to more entrants, it watered down much of the fun and amusement of past piratical entries. It's not difficult to beat a rowing boat with a kayak and I noticed that apart from the winner's family, few onlookers were watching their victory as the shenanigans of proper entries were far more appealing.

The two best boats (!) were the Ark and it's crew of animals that got in one by one, then a few planks of wood roped together resembling a dilapidated version of the famous Kon Tiki raft, and a plucky entry from an all-girl crew, Pass the Prosecco, all suitably kitted out in Naval Boaters. Last but not least, the two Grandfathers in a very professional two-man rowing shell. The latter admitted it took longer to fit the oars correctly than it actually took to complete the course, they were also warned by their spouses that should they win, don't expect Sunday Lunch!

As the start time approached, Mother Nature took a hand in the proceedings and the wind rose to around Force five, gusting to six which was going to make the whole race much more exciting to watch. A blast on the fog horn and the annual Vende Orford was underway. As always, the start was a total SNAFU but nothing to what then occurred as the fleet moved out of the lee of the Quay and was immediately beset by wind and tide. The scene resembled the aftermath of the Battle of Trafalgar when a severe gale caused mayhem with both those still under sail and the many drifting wrecks. It was the good ship Ark that started the chaos as the stretch of canvas they had hauled aloft displaying their name, caught the gale force winds and blew them off course, taking several other boats with them. The Kon Tiki and Girls Afloat were both relying on paddle power as opposed to rowing and both found the wind and tide far too strong, bearing them both swiftly away up river.

However, it was the Ark that really captured the attention of the public as, under sail with neither keel or rudder, and having lost all forward propulsion, they were broadsided to the waves and at the mercy of tide and wind and were it not for a rescue launch they could well have ended up having lunch in Aldeburgh.

As an interested bystander I think the joy of the race is in the efforts made by some participants to dress up themselves and their boat. Watching kayaks is akin to watching paint dry, and I do that every day.

So now it's back to school time, for me that was another summer bummer in days long gone. In a few weeks' time it will just be us Ancient Brits here, peace and tranquillity, but I'll miss the little tykes.

Jeremy Rugge-Price

Aug 30. '18

SNORTING A LINE

It has been said that money is the root of all evil, and when it comes to inhaling a little nose candy, it's very true as all you need is a credit card and five or ten pound note.

I find new money, the five and ten pound plastic notes, are not exactly user friendly, they are very slippery to handle and can slide out of pockets very easily. But it's not a total waste of money as I'm told that apparently Cokeheads prefer them when it comes to snorting up a little Booger Sugar. Now you are able to get all of the Mandy Candy up your nostrils in one big sniff, thanks to the Royal Mint!

On the subject of lines, "Hold the Line" is an order the British Army have used from Agincourt to Waterloo as they confronted and routed our many European foes. It is more than can be said for Mrs May and her Cabal whose constant muddle headed discombobulation must give the Euro negotiators the impression that we are not Holding a Line but actually "Snorting a Line", such is the Cabinet ineptitude in the handling of the Brexit plot.

The combined members of both parties in both Houses, Commons and Lords, really do seem more like the Wombles of Westminster than Her Majesty's Government and Opposition. As one of my favourite old comedians, Terry Thomas, would say "They are an absolute Shower"

Guy Fawkes, we need you badly!

If, like me, your brain is beginning to gently curdle at all this wombling the seemingly thorny question of a Customs Post at the Irish Border seems very simple to solve: if the EU wants this to happen, then so be it, but they have to install it on their side, then they have to staff it and pay for it!

How difficult is that!

A Special Relationship

I didn't watch the Royal Wedding, I went to see one of my grandsons play cricket at Rugby which was a roaring success as, with his first ball, he bowled out one of the opening batsmen of the opposing team, it doesn't come much better than that.

Earlier in the day I had compassion on my dear Mrs who doesn't understand cricket, and suggested that she took the day off and watched the Wedding from the comfort of her easy chair, Royal Weddings and Americans are a marriage made in heaven and I wasn't about to ruin her day. When I returned later in the evening it was very clear that it had been a wonderful day and one she would remember for a long time to come.

The mistake many of us make is thinking that Americans are like us, they are not! They may have some of the same values but they speak a different language as was very clear from Bishop Michael's "fire" cracker sermon in Windsor Chapel.

Americans are a much more religious nation than we are and I'm not talking about the mid America Bible Belt. Many churches in the WASP areas of New England are filled on Sundays, and once you get down into the Deep South, it's standing room only where preachers and gospel singers can, and do, raise the roof off the rafters.

And so while Bishop Curry was merely doing his normal Sunday "Sock it to You Spiel", judging by facial expressions it clearly caught many in the congregation by surprise, the more elderly with frowns or po-faced stares, while the grins on the younger element showed that they were loving it. Either way he clearly had the attention of one and all, which is a far cry from the norm in churches across our land, where many a bod takes the opportunity of a clerical nod.

My lack of ecclesiastical enthusiasm started once my boarding school days were over. There, we were closeted in the Chapel every morning and twice on Sundays, and the Chaplain, "Pumf" Bryant, was not known for his oratory skills from the pulpit, although his brother Sir Arthur Bryant, the historian, was quite the opposite and a renowned speaker.

So most Sunday evensongs there would be a visiting clerical big cheese who would chunter away from the pulpit for twenty minutes at five hundred ungodly urchins, all sat on pews in class formations and bored out of their skulls.

In my form, the infamous lower IV, Cedric Side Bottom, Harrow's version of Billy Bunter, would have a card game going, while some read books and others finished their homework. There was much coughing, sneezing and passing of wind, so it could be tricky to hear the good words of the orator even if one wished to do so.

However there was one occasion when you could have heard a pin drop. The speaker had been the Bishop of Singapore when the Japanese Army invaded and he regaled us with his own very real experiences. It was a Slam Dunk sermon, no coughs or sneezes, not a flatulent note was heard - Side-Bottom's personal prowess in this department was legendary, he could clear the classroom on occasions - but this time the attention of the whole audience were riveted throughout.

In Curry's words, two people fell in love and we all showed up; I think the C of E has to rethink its oratory presentation if it wants more people to show up, but then what do I know, all I ever go to now are funerals!

On the subject of last months "fatties" Rambling, the judges in a horse show in Yorkshire asked some twenty riders in the ring to dismount as they were too overweight for the horse they were riding.

It's known as doing a reversed Thellwell.

The best thing about Bank Holiday weekends is that as Monday afternoon draws to a close, coneheads, crabbers, Uncle Tom Cobby and all, squidge themselves into their cars, and head out onto the A12 for a lengthy, sweaty and smelly drive home, odours of crab, smelly bait and and general BO will waft them along, while we can all sit smugly in the peace and quiet of our houses and watch Corrie on telly!

Jeremy Ruge-Price

June 18

ps. That white powder is readily available at Boots or any chemist. I take some most days, thank God for Andrews Liver Salts!

BILLY BUNTERS OF TODAY

Billy and Bessie Bunter were two story book characters from my childhood, a Humpty Dumpty brother and sister, both of whom went to Greyfriars School, and the porky pair were almost always deep in the doo.

In those days fat children were in a minority at school, partly due to Government food rationing, partly due to the daily regimen of exercise and sporting activities at school and mainly due to the fact that there weren't any coolers filled with sugar laced fizzy drinks nor any purpose built low level shelving for sweets; both of which can now be found at the check-out counter of every grocery store and newsagent from John O'Groats to Land's End.

Nowadays we are told there are too many Bunter siblings abroad in our Land, and that is not only sad but also puts them at a physical and psychological disadvantage. Yet it isn't the fault of the kids but rather that of their elders who, to be very direct, should know better but fail to stop the rot. In many cases they would rather little Jack Horner reached out from his stroller and grabbed packets of Doritos and sweets rather than face a seismic in your face family confrontation.

What brought on this diatribe? It was an Instagram picture of my Australian grandson, Felix, playing rugby at his school in Sydney, an athletic and healthy teenager. I'm lucky insofar as all my grandchildren are athletic and excel in one sport or another.

Of course, kids are going to reach deep into the cookie jar and then wash it down with a Coke or Sprite, who can blame them. Man has been doing it since Adam had a nibble of Eve's apple in the orchard and, if the situation had been reversed, Adam had shown Eve his Cox's Pippin, I doubt she would have been able to resist either!

I feel very sad and sorry for those kids who are classified as obese due to a surfeit of over indulgence in hidden fat and sugar. It's not fair on them yet those confectionery giants like Nestlé and fizzy drinks megaliths like Coke and Pepsi, and cereal manufacturers like Kellogg continue to procreate the problem by marketing fat and sugar to children in the same way that tobacco companies market to those who still smoke. The attitude is "let's target the addicted!" and it would seem their bottom line counts for more than the lives of those they have already 'exterminated'.

During the War sugar was severely rationed, so we didn't get any sweets whatsoever and so didn't miss them. Then in 1948 we got a new nanny called Nicky, strictly Norland trained and all, and she rationed us to just one humbug a day! Of the three of us brothers, the youngest, Jamie was her favourite and every night she would put an egg cup filled with sugar lumps on his bedside table, and naturally he scoffed them all up before lolling gently off into the arms of Morpheus.

It turned out this sweet tooth intake was the root of all evil, for by the time he was sixty, my poor Brother was in constant pain of rotting teeth and required many visits to Madam Pain and her dentist's chair where he suffered in agony, and all this root pain came at considerable financial cost!

I suspect that there was a hidden motive in Nicky's sugar dealings, she wanted to ensure that he didn't wake up in order that she had a whole night's kip. She was merely following many others in this pursuit of forty winks. You see I think Nicky slipped him an Amontillado Mickey Finn in the sugar lumps so as to ensure that she had a good night's sleep. Luckily our Mum didn't cotton on or she would have scoffed the lot.

In the early forties, the nightly cacophony of air raid sirens, anti-aircraft guns and bombs meant sleep was in short supply and with most able bodied males away in the Armed Services, young mums had a tough time, especially if there were a couple of very small kids in the house, don't forget, no telly, iPhones or PlayStations back then, you actually had to keep them amused!

There were two ways of ensuring everyone got as much shuteye as possible; the first was to mix up the powdered baby milk formula and then add in a teaspoon of sherry to each baby bottle; the other was to turn on a ring of the gas stove without lighting it, then pick up little Billy and wave him head first over the escaping gas. Both methods for ensuring a good night's kip were proven to work equally well.

If you think this might worry Health and Safety today, then rest assured it's still happens but in a different form. A retired NHS Nursing Sister said recently that she had come across babies' bottles filled with Coca-Cola on more than one occasion in Paediatric wards.

I wrote this article before Hugh F-W's programme on Britain v Fat Fight was shown, it would be worth getting it on BBC iPlayer if you haven't seen it.

Just one quote:

W H Smith, Britain's stationery store, sells a mere 2% of all the chocolate consumed in this Country, that means they sell 900 candy bars every 45 seconds!

Well, that's it for now, time to go down to Lisa Marie's Ice Cream trailer, I think a double scoop of salted caramel will do the trick!

Jeremy Rugge-Price

April '18

PS. Brexit Negotiations?! To use Mrs May's favourite saying of "Let me make it clear",

"never have so few spake so much on behalf of so many yet achieved so little."

Now were we to ask Donald about negotiating skills?

THEM WERE THE DAYS

Many years ago, I had a young nineteen-year-old Yorkshire lad called Williams in my troop, He was my batman and tank driver and was doing his National Service. Tank crews spend much time together in a very confined space and as a result get to know each other pretty well. He was a great bloke and I was sorry when his time ended. Two years later he came back to Germany for a Regimental Weekend when we were presented with a new Guidon by the Duke of Gloucester.

By now Jonny was a long-distance truck driver and we had a long chat about his new life.

"Ee, I tell yer, these yung lads back 'ome, they don't do nowt, and what's more they don't know

‘owt either”

These words came back to me while I was watching our own Nick Robinson on Panorama the other night. He was doing a program on immigration, part of which was on EU workers here and their British counterparts. The former worked hard to earn while many young Brits remained jobless, yet various business owners and managers complained that they had huge vacancies but no takers as Brits didn't want to take the job on offer.

Seems to me Jonny Williams words are all too accurate even today, Nowt's changed in the last fifty-seven years!

But then perhaps that's always been an inbuilt trait in some English folk. In the 16th and 17th centuries the powers that be had a much more radical approach to the problem. They rounded up all the idle, incompetent, indolent, intoxicated, insolvent, both Male and #MeToos, and exported them all, lock stock and barrel, to the start-up colonies in the New World as casual labour. However, the habit of “no my job” was so deeply ingrained within their metabolism that they just continued on loafing around as before, their descendants today being the White Trash that live along the Appalachian Trail from Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, The Carolinas and on up through West Virginia. Strange it is though that Jocks who emigrated to the same colonies back then had a tough work ethic and their Grandchildren became the plantation owners of the South.

Since my last Rambling I have discovered yet another part time gallery is opening in Orford, the Great House is having a show in April! The more the merrier as it increases the numbers of buyers coming to visit us and the possibility of Orford becoming an art centre. So, we will now have not only Cone Heads and Crabbers but Connoisseurs of Art as well, Cool!

Austerity has its downsides, the actions of Putin the Poisoner caused much ado for many, however, it seems that austerity cut backs have resulted in there being no Cop Shop in Salisbury, and so extra Plods had to be sent from Devizes to cope with the furore. They had to travel to and fro by taxi! No doubt that old Putin must be quaking in his boots with this mobile “tour de force”

While watching MasterChef the other night, my wife asked what was the worst meal I have ever eaten? That is quite an event to contemplate and includes many years of chewing the culinary cud! To begin with I have to go back 1944/5 when food was scarce, and rationing controlled the diet of everyone. So, you start with the premise of small helpings, which considering the ingredients, was a saving grace! A slice of corned dog (beef to the uneducated) with neaps or mashed swedes - no green veg available at that time - and pud would be spotted dick and powdered custard. Fish on Fridays, tinned sardines or tripe and baked beans washed down with strawberry jelly and condensed milk, (substitute for cream) the jello had never met a strawberry in its life. Fruit didn't feature and I was seven before I saw a banana or a grape.

Sunday could bring an ounce or two of beef, but the ratio of fat to lean was 70/30, so I hated it. In '44 when an overshoot V2 landed near our cottage in the middle of the night, I sicked up my fatty beef meal in fright and lay in it till the morning as me and my brothers were “Home Alone” for the night! How come? You might well ask!

Dad was in Normandy while Mummy darling was dancing the night away in the 400 Club in Leicester Square, and the young sixteen-year-old who supposedly looking after us was playing an away fixture with a USAF staff sergeant in the local aerodrome. It was a different world altogether back then, you lived for the moment, but we nearly didn't! Prep school food was no better, I can remember whale meat patties, pulverised whale meat in fake breadcrumbs, that's a possible contender while the food

at Harrow sucked as our Housemaster's wife was in charge of the feeding trough for fifty boys, clearly pocketed the allotted funds, watery broth and two cheese crackers was a dinner for growing lads. Food on board a Merchant ship was good in comparison but Regimental Cookhouse slop in the sixties is best forgotten. On manoeuvres each tank crew cooked their own. The Ministry of War provided tinned Compo Meals, it could be sausage (soya) and beans or Irish Spew, mutton Jock (mutton scotch style) and EmnV, meat and vegetables. Puds consisted of Baby Heads, a roll of suety dough with a small hole at the top, just like a baby's head, I was reminded of this by a fellow ex-Army mate. Then there was a compo biscuit, a round 3-inch disc which could either be eaten as is or, alternatively, mixed with hot water to make porridge: either way the result was total constipation for several days. What always caught my eye was the date stamp - 1944 - that accompanied each tin.

My father's tank was knocked out by a mine on the second day after D-Day, and as he bailed out he put down the compo biscuit he was eating at the time. In 1947 he took us back to Normandy, and the remains of the burned-out tank was still there. The half-chewed biscuit was still sitting in the turret ring! No bird, field mouse or any animal had made the slightest attempt to eat it, they aren't stupid.

Despite all these heights of culinary cuisine, a take away from Taco Bell in South Carolina comes close to being the worst but one particular repast stands out above the others, lunch in the members dining room in the House of Lords in the nineties; fatty and greasy over cooked beef, soggy roast spuds and over cooked cabbage with a mud coloured and totally tasteless gravy. Considering where it was, this it wins the Wooden Spoon as the worst ever.

Yucky Doo!

We are told that millions of potholes are presently preventing the Nation from exercising, in fact potholes are a major talking point now. Recently I had to take a speed awareness course having been clocked by Plod, a fair cop it was tho. Our instructor asked the assembled throng if any one could name a static hazard, so I piped up with "potholes" as an answer, and he grinned and said correct!

The retirement of old Fred and Arthur, our two favourite potholes of bygone days, is still haunting the village. To those new to Orford or my Ramblings, these two natty gents in tar bespotted overalls and a greasy cloth cap, would pitch up every spring with a dirty old truck and systematically fill in every hole there was in Orford. They took their time, walking the course first, then back to the truck for a cuppa and a fag, then on firing up the kettle of tar on the tailboard with clouds of smoke, they set to work on the holy roads. They didn't need a computer to know where the holes were, as they had been filling up each and every pothole for the past decade. Midday they repaired back to the cab and munched on thick sarnies that had been prepared by their good lady wives, Hilda and Ada. All this was swilled down with the dregs from the thermos, and out they came again till three thirty when it was time to pack it in till tomorrow. Hail or shine, you could always rely on Fred and Arthur to get the potholes done for another year. RIP Fellas.

Much in the news lately about Prince Charles and his bed. Seems he sends his orthopaedic bed, soft loo paper and single malt whisky to wherever he is due to spend the night in the home of his hosts to be. Now us old Farts and elderly #Metoos all know that the first night in a strange bed

can result in a bloody awful night's sleep, so the idea of "Pick up thy bed and walk" is wonderful in concept but not practical, besides which it's incredibly rude to your hosts, and in his case even ruder as he failed to tell them.

Seems this is a family thing for, many years ago in Fallingbostal Germany, the Regiment was being awarded a new Guidon that was to be presented by the Duke of Gloucester. Months of preparation had gone on for this event and three days before the arrival of the Duke the same thing happened to us. I was the orderly officer of the day and was called to the guardroom. On arrival I found a three ton truck in the charge of Sergeant from BAOR HQ, some three hundred miles or five hours driving, south of us. He explained he had a load of furniture including two beds, for the Royal couple, the Duke and Duchess were long past the double bed age. I took him up to the large house that our Commanding Officer and his Mrs occupied. As we arrived outside the house, the Power behind the throne, boss's wife otherwise known as Colonel Margaret, marched purposefully out of the front door. I explained the situation to her and she berated both Sergeant and driver, so much so that I began to feel quite sorry for the hapless sergeant who was RTU'd without further ado or discussion.

I am very much a supporter of the Royal Family, but as an ageing old duffer, I wonder whether, in due course, the Crown shouldn't be passed to Prince William and allow Charles to potter about his garden as he is all too keen to do without ever having to pick up his bed and walk again?

Jeremy Ruge-Price

Easter '18

MUDDY WATERS

In various Ramblings of the past, I have admitted to having much the same problem as Pooh Bear, insofar as my brain is one of rather small proportions, so there are often occasions when events become both muddied and muddled for me. ADHD would be today's ruling, but in those bygone days my standard report card read, "Jeremy has difficulty in keeping his mind focused on the work. Could try harder!"

My present problem of muddled thinking lies with the factual broadsheets put out by various interested bodies dealing with our sea walls and future flooding. Below is my own understanding of what is happening and, hopefully, if you read this carefully, this problem will become much clearer to one and all. All the acronyms used are correct current usage for clarity.

The dykes along the coastline, no not the LGBT sort - the river walls - are much in the local news. There are probably too many folk involved in the investigation and at times tempers flare. At one PR meeting in a nearby village, the somewhat imperious attitude of the speaker raised the hackles of local Burghers and Yeomen who had gathered for a Q&A Meeting and the orator was lucky not to have been pelted with swedes and turnips.

To answer FAQs and aid us all in choosing which MO to support, much R&D has been done, and various PR broadsheets have been inserted into copies of our Village Voice and the Link Magazine, outlining the ebb and flow that the various entities intend on taking and to show us the SMART options that are available.

The incoming tides of the future look like swamping much of our local DZ and the AONB, AOEP, ED and HE along with the AOE, the NPPF and the SCDC plus every T, D&H, and not forgetting of course UTCAA, are all part of the usual committee stage SNAFU. There appear to be many unanswered FAQs and a good deal of NIMBY involved, but unless the COB can get it sorted PDQ, some of us could be wading in our GWs when the SH** hits the Fan. If this comes to pass then the RNLI, along with DEFRA, EA and LRF will all be heavily involved, and the NHS will need to alert all A&E Depts in the area. Meantime the HMCG will monitor the sea defences from their own HQ.

So, IMHO, it's QED that whatever the BDG may be, the COOP and the ensuing long-term construction will undoubtedly go way OB and Murphy's Law says that Orford will be the last KRA to be done by which time the empty coffers will be totally U/S, so as usual, the situation will be FUBAR to say the least.

To use our PM's favourite phrase, "Let's make it clear" MUCH clarity is required in any FYI bulletins TBA. EOM.

OMG!

I'm sure that explanation makes it much easier for one and all to understand.

Yet another school shooting in America, here are a few stats:

There are 283 million privately owned firearms in the US; 42% of the population own one gun, yet 50% of all firearms are owned by just 3% of that 42%! 75% of the shooters are white males, and according to a Republican senator from New York almost all of those are Democrats!

Only in the US would anyone politicalise the shooting of children, yet at the time of writing, when it comes to public reactions to NRA gun control, it is the pupils of the Florida High School that are achieving more than any politician has managed to do in the past fifty years, already over twenty high profile international businesses have cut their ties with the NRA!

The NRA is one of the most powerful lobbies in the Country and payed \$21 million to get Trump elected; for Governors, Congressmen and Senators to go against the NRA is political suicide, and there is but a "Forlorn Hope" up on Capitol Hill that Congress will ever make inroads into guns.

On Valentine's Day the NRA, National Rifle Association, put out a Valentine's Day tweet saying

"Make your Valentine present special this year, give a gun"!

Last November Trump actually removed a clause in the existing gun laws that prevented those with mental problems acquiring one! He now suggests arming teachers as a deterrent.

It is standard practice across the US for schools to regularly practice anti-terror Lock Down drills,

* The Forlorn Hope was the name given to the volunteer assault forces in Wellington's army in Spain.

Once a hole had been breached in the outer wall of a city under siege, the opportunity to force a way in called for volunteers. Young officers would ask to be included in the assault force in the forlorn hope that, should they be successful and survive, their promotion would be guaranteed.

Winds of Change

In the early part of the Twentieth Century, a prodigious passer of wind called M. Pujol, stage name Petamane, raised the "Art of the Fart" to a whole new level and he was a much-admired act on the stage of the famous Moulin Rouge. Amongst his adoring clientele were the Prince of Wales and King Leopold of Belgium. His act included the sounds of cannon fire, thunderstorms, animal noises, blowing out candle six feet away and playing a wind instrumental of La Marseillaise and O Sole Mio.

It was truly the flow of flatulence raised to a fine fart!

Last week a five-mile-high flatulence event won the day when, on a recent flight from Amsterdam to Dubai, a passenger sitting next to a prodigious new Petamane, objected to the fact that this windbag was letting his mauvaise odeur flow loud and free which in turn was overpowering the aircraft's own air circulation system.

The smell was such that fisticuffs broke out and the pilot was forced to make an emergency landing en route. Three people were escorted from the plane but the ever-venting wind bag, Monsieur Petomane retained his seat! With the help of this prodigious tail wind, the pilot was able to make up time.

Truth is always stranger than fiction.

It's good to know that as a Grandpa I have my uses! Of late my services have been required by two of my Grandchildren in their school studies. The first involved my Australian grandson who had to produce a fully-fledged family tree, so much info was passed and although the results aren't back yet, I gather he was quite surprised by some of the information going back to 1034AD in Wales. The second was a request for a true story from my past by another grandson at Rugby. The secret lay in giving him an histoire that nobody else would have, so I gave him a story that involved my association with a Chicago Mob Boss when I lived in Manhattan. I gather the markings gave us a "Credit". That's a First for me in my academic plaudits.

Golly gee, if I end up in a home before handing in my boots, the thought of pole dancers as opposed to playing endless mindless board games fills me with glee, I do hope our local oldies homes take note. Detractors from this idea, please note that this idea was the choice of the inmates of Fairmile Grange!

Jeremy Ruge-Price

March '18

PS. Snow, Glorious Snow, what a welcome sight, by Wednesday morning we had just over four inches in our garden, ten feet and eight inches short of that which has fallen in our old home back in Maine, but hey, for some six inches is better than nothing and as a onetime avid skier, to hear once more, your boots crunch over snow, Hallelujah!

MAIDS OF OLD

In days of old when men were bold, the maidens baked the bread,

In this new World, now we are told that men are maids instead,

But now it seems, there's frantic scenes inside the Ladies Loo

As Maids with balls invade their stalls each time they want a poo

Before launching into 2018, let me say first of all that seeing Bridget Logan leave Orford was a sad event. She was one of the first people I met when we came here, and she asked me if I would do painting classes at the school with the Shrimps. It was the beginning of an all too short friendship and we are both very sad to see her go, but I'm sure she will be happy being nearer her family.

The peace and quiet of the winter months was rudely shattered this morning by our new, but very charming, neighbour who has builders reconverting the front of his house, so the inevitable banging and power tool whining will be with us for some time to come. However, if the high winds we just had are anything to go by, the giant trees in Castle Close right across the road could well demolish his extension before the builders are done. For with each and every gale, bits of wood and branches come hurling across the road into our gardens. There are times when we feel quite nervous as our house is right smack in the DZ if one comes down.

We now have a new Labrador, Ace, who we found online from over near Elveden, West Suffolk. He had no papers, no microchip, no vaccinations and was thought to be about five years old. Against all of this we went to see him and of course, as soon as he appeared that was it, and we bought him immediately, and what a bargain. A beautiful black boy, probably around three years old, trained to walk to heel etc., and we are both delighted and very happy to have a Labrador again, it just didn't seem right without one. Ace is hardly an English name for a dog, how many Aces do you know? So, we suspect he was owned by an American family on the USAAF Lakenheath base whose term of deployment came to an end. Anyway, we are the lucky ones, and as far as Ace is concerned, the sofa makes a good, comfortable bed!

As usual at this time of year, flu abounds and stories of being given the wrong vaccinations arise yet again, it's a bit like the pusillanimous British Rail excuse some years ago for always running late, "it's due to the wrong sort of leaves on the line" or as happened just recently when it snowed, the Highways Department's excuse, "the salt didn't work as there weren't enough cars on the road!?"

Anyway, the poor old NHS is getting it in the neck yet again for not giving us the correct strain of jabs, but let's face it, first it was flu from Oz, then it was Japanese! You have feel very sorry for all the doctors, nurses, porters and ambulance drivers who are pushed to gallant but totally unworkable extremes, and wonder whether the NHS suffers the same problem as the Armed Forces, or what's left of them, top heavy with Admirals and Generals in comparison to boots on the ground, or in the case of the NHS, far too many managers in comparison to docs in the surgery or nurses on the wards?

Now as you all know, I'm a bear of Little Brain, so forgive me if you know all the answers cos I don't, but why are we spending and sending millions of pounds to the likes of China and India plus many others when some of our national infrastructure including the NHS is no better than some of Trumps third world "Sxxthole" Countries: the conditions of some of our roads, railways, and hospitals will do just for starters, miserable pay scales for nurses, police, teachers as well as our soldiers and sailors?

If Old Nelson, up high on his pedestal in Trafalgar Square, ever lifts his telescope and looks out to sea, his words: "I see no ships" will be right on the button cos there aren't any. If ever the level of boat migration across the channel increases to that in the Med, well, there's only the RNLI to stop 'em and, as far as the British Army is concerned, there were more soldiers killed in day one of the First Battle of the Somme than there are in the Army today!

A friend of mine went to a funeral the other day and discovered that amongst the congregation were several old bods that she thought were already done and dusted! Holy Moly, at this time of year in Orford we hardly ever see anyone at all, so it's quite possible that there's a whole army of old farts and fossils out there who are under the misguided impression that I've been lying beneath terra firma for months, Well I haven't, but there are times I wonder why not.

The Golden Years on Golden Pond, when referring to the age of retirement, is one giant fib and much ado about nothing: my days of climbing the foremast, clearing a jammed halyard and then shinning back down to the deck on a forestay are long gone. It's not just me sealegs either, for when I fall over in the local forestry around here, and believe me I do, it takes a Herculean effort, plus much cursing just to get back on all fours, let alone get up and stand on two feet! That takes a good deal longer and is only achievable with much pain and cursing.

When I can remember, which isn't very often, I try to take my fone with me but as there's no signal anywhere in the woods, I could well be in an acute state of rigor mortis before ever being found,

However, a useful thought occurred to me last time this happened. If I can get my fone out of my pocket I could at least take a selfie and then send it by Instagram to family and friends, so they could see my impersonation of an ancient cockroach lying on its back with legs and arms waving about in total futility.

But, all ye faithful followers, fear ye not, for despite being minus many teeth, deaf as a post, arthritic hip, a pronounced limp and a pair of glasses that are glued together with string and toothpick, I'm still buggering on.

However, reaching the stage of pre fossilisation isn't all bad, for as the fast-flowing current speeds us towards the Great Falls and the whirling abyss way below, there are some goodies to be had en route, and one of those is the resurrection of taste buds due to a second childhood.

Gone are the yearnings for wonderful haute cuisine dishes such as "Mousseline de Homard au Champagne et Caviar " or perhaps an entree of "Filet de Maigre Parfum de Ras-el Hanout et Fenouil de Camargue", all washed down with a litre or two of Chateau de Mal de Tete entre les Genoux. Instead there is a yearning for ice cream, especially the thick creamy Devon type, chocolate biscuits, brownies and Toblerone, apple pie and custard to name just a few of my sweet tooth yearnings, shepherd's pie, bangers and mash and even the odd Big Mac suddenly become the much-preferred plat du jour. On the odd occasions we eat out "en famille" I always ask to see the pud menu before deciding upon anything else to eat and have been known to have two puds instead of a main course

During the long winter afternoons, we watch many documentaries on various topics, crime, drug and opioid epidemics, racial tensions especially in the US, medicine and of course the NHS, programmes that cover the World. It has become all too apparent that the rise in drug related crimes and deaths amongst the young is alarming and growing by the day.

If you have ever lived in big cities around the Globe this will come as no surprise as you will have witnessed it at some point. However, if you live deep in the country, whether it's here, Arkansas or Provence, then it is much more of a rarity, and doesn't resonate so clearly with everyday life.

There are so many problems facing the young these days, so much so that I am very relieved to have lived most of my life when I did, all we had to contend with were bombs and being able to make do without toys and sweeties. But since we didn't know they even existed we didn't miss them in the first place When you see photos or ancient newsreels of kids playing in the streets, you notice they are all on the slim side due to an War enforced diet of rationing restrictions.

Being a child nowadays is quite a full-on task and many parents face a seemingly constant battle as their children grow up. If you have one of those kids that consumes cans of fizzy drinks and grabs mars bars and crisps from the conveniently placed low shelf by the payout till, then the chances are that they will end up being a fatty like Beryl and Billy Bunter; if the sweets don't get them, then there's the drug and opioid hurdles to overcome, all of which will make for a miserable and short life, and that's assuming they haven't succumbed to some form of sexual harassment or bullying from their iPhone or iPad.

Ee, yer don't know do yer, we never knew we 'ad it so good in them days!

Finally, my suggestion for the best effort of the year so far is the young lady, who as a child was one of those caught up in the Rotherham child abuse scandal. She is now going around schools giving a talk on her problems and how to not get embroiled. That takes guts.

Jeremy Rugge-Price

Feb 1 2018

ps RIP Neil

pps My remarks about the RNLI being our advance guard against immigrant invaders came true last night. Nine Albanians were picked up by the RNLI while trying to cross the Channel near Dover.

In twenty eighteen it remains to be seen

If May can move forward with Brexit

But if Blair has a say

And Sir Clegg gets his way

The road will be signed as No Exit

On Labour's front bench there's clearly a stench

As Momentum gears up for the fray

Add MacDonald's flying pickets

And May could lose wickets

Being all out by the end of the day

In Orford all's quiet, there's nary a riot

Of Cone heads in queues for ice creams

But with Winter soon past

T'will be Summer at last

And the Town fit to burst at the seams

So here's to you all, whether here or afar
But it's many a year since I drank
So don't sup like a twit
Or you'll go arse over tit
And wake up with the Drunks in the Tank

JRP. 2018

A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL WHO FOLLOW RAMBLINGS
AND A POLITICAL CAROL TO SING WHILE READING IT

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

For the Politically Correct among us
Deck the walls with boughs of holly
Falalalala la la la la
The Halls of Power are filled with Folly
Falalalala la la la la
Touching Knee and fondling bum
Falalalala la la la la
Join the Commons Christmas scrum
Falalalala la la la la
Warm your hands on my salami
Falalalala la la la la
Poor old Fallon must be balmy
Falalalala la la la la
Damian Green by now history
Falalalala la la la la
What he did remains a mystery
Falalalala la la la la
Mrs May is losing Brexit
Falalalala la la la la

Priti P was shown the exit

Falalalala la la la la

Boris J abounds like Tigger

Falalalala a la la la

Hammond's woes just get much bigger

Falalalala la la la la

While Jezza hangs his Christmas stocking

Falalalala la la la la

McDonalds Maths are truly shocking

Falalalala la la la la

He could loose us all our lolly

Falalalala la la la la

And Old Bent Toad is sniffing Molly

Falalalala la la la la

So join ye all this Christmas season

Falalalala la la la la

All of this doth give good reason

Falalalala la la la la

With only three wheels on our trolley

Falalalala la la la la

'Tis the Season to be jolly

Falalalala la la la la

JRP

Christmas 2017

THE WINTER OF OUR DISCONTENT

The actions of Weinstein et al., are despicable and, where "proven", the doer should be publicly named, shamed and prosecuted. However, it isn't all one sided, girls can also up the ante, as I discovered in the halcyon days of my youthful innocence!

Some sixty years ago at a Hunt Ball in Wales I was wandering along the terrace of the Country Pile where the event was being held, with a delectable debutante on my arm when suddenly, without so much as a "By your leave, my good Sir", she bent down and lifted the hem of her Ball gown above her slim waist and, lo and behold, she had forgotten to put her undies on!

The stress this action caused me was considerable for no gentleman is so churlish as to refuse the request of a lady.

Oh, the evil that men do!

Today the No Knickers Brigade are in the forefront of scientific agricultural research. Scottish farmers are joining the "Bury your Undies" scheme, whereby you take your smalls to a field then dig a hole and bury them: a few days later you dig em up. If just the elastic is left, and insects and grubs have eaten all the rest, that shows your soil is good. If they are untouched, then either your soil is useless, or you pooped your pants.

My dear Mrs made a good comment the other day "So that's the end of flirting, huh!"

It's a good point though, for all thru the ages both sexes, even the "ever in your face" LGBT groupies have flirted with one another. From the very beginning, sexual seduction has been a part of life, Eve had a go at Adam who offered her a mouthful of his Cox's Pippen; the femme fatale Cleopatra seduced Caesar and once assured that he was toast, she whispered sexily "Et Tu Antonius" in the ear of his old mucker Mark Anthony, while pulling the plug from the Roman Baths and then promptly led him by his Praetorian Pecker up the creek on the Nile; and how about Henry VIII, no "hand on the bum or knee" approach for him, having failed to gain an heir by knocking 'em up, he knocked 'em off while oozing his way along the corridors of the Royal Court after the next desirable Damsel in Waiting;

Casanova, Wallis Simpson, Marilyn Monroe, Errol Flynn, Alan Clark, Russel Brand and Donald Trump to name but a few, not forgetting the LGBT's own entry Byron; we merely follow in the footsteps of history and so if God hadn't wanted male and females to flirt, he wouldn't have planted an orchard!

Ere I get assaulted by an Army of Ageing Amazons or obliterated by a Snowflake Shower, let me say that anyone over stepping the mark of common decency should be dealt with by the Courts, regardless of their sex, but we don't need even more rules and regulations to do this, they already exist, we just need better manners.

More importantly, it's those that don't listen to the victim, and those that try to suppress the complaint who should be publicly named and pilloried, they are as complicit in the act as that of the aggressor, and right now that includes a senior member of the Wiltshire Constabulary.

I acknowledge that sometimes fear plays a lead role, but in all reality if you don't want a geriatric Toad in the Hole to play Snakes and Ladders starting from your knee on up, then just make it clear that this is a "No Touchee, No Feelee no Lookee!" situation.

However, amongst this plethora of criminal sexual accusations, who has potentially committed the worst crime, Fallon and his stupid flirting or those responsible for the deaths in Grenfell Towers, and I don't mean the RBK&C.

I refer to the Plastics Cladding Industry, including Rob Warren of Celotex, "working inside Government to maximise the benefits to his industry"; the Department for Communities and Local Development who are refusing, despite the Freedom of Information Act, to disclose 54 submissions from 2010 on how the fire safety rules needed to be changed; the Building Research Establishment

which receives over one million pounds per annum from the plastics industry, all the above, who are refusing now to answer questions, are involved in the Grenfell Tower disaster in one way or another.

In Fallon's case no one was killed or injured, but he resigned. In Grenfell Towers many died and that's manslaughter on a major scale. Many more were injured or displaced, but no one has been sacked or removed.

Luckily Mrs Plod of the Met is investigating and hopefully will prosecute those responsible.

On the subject of sexual predators, many of my vintage were cannon fodder at boarding school for the evil lusting paedo masters. There were always methods of achieving revenge though, rumours abound in such schools and eventually when it reached the ear of Matron, the Prowling Pederast was but burnt Melba.

In 1948 at my prep school, our history master tried to slide his hand up under my kilt as I was resting on my bed after lunch, a statutory "lie down and read a book hour" back then for us young whipper snappers. Luckily the dorm was occupied by eleven beady eyed Just Williams, all of whom knew his "form" so he was too wary to grab my "young man!" in front of this enthralled and giggling audience.

During the summer term at the same prep school, all boys had to swim one length in the pool before breakfast, naked and under the supervision of a master, in case we drowned perhaps?

My half-brother notes that one particular master used to attend this daily event with his box brownie, and snapped away as each boy got out, saying

"That will be a nice picture for your Parents"

At Harrow I was once chased around a grand piano by a master, but I burst out laughing and that ended the pursuit. As Winston so aptly put it during the War: "All you can do is just keep bugging on"

There are millions of viewers who are very upset that Netflix is cancelling the House of Cards, but fear ye not, it has been replaced by a reality show called the House of Commons, and it all takes place in the Royal Borough of Sexminster and is already being aired on most International news networks

I am told that the script writer is in line for an Oscar next year, that's providing he doesn't attempt to warm his mitts on Leadsom's knees between now and then. What a nauseating thought though, I mean her knees, not his hands.

Brexit, along with the volumes thus spoke and the tomes thus wrote, is fast becoming both tedious and a total farce. In fact, rarely in the history of British politics, "Have so many been so confused by so few."

A paraphrase of Churchill's famous statement to the House, but of course he was not only a politician but a Statesman as well, and there were other Giants of Old back then on both sides of the House, but not one in the present Cabinet or the Marxist Momentum Opposition can claim such an honour, they are all pygmies by comparison.

Mrs M maybe a good lady at heart but she couldn't lead the line in dancing the Hokey Pokey, Davis couldn't negotiate a discount in the Souk, Boris is all mop and mouth, Priti P was a liar, Greening is naturally promoting transgenderism, Cool Hands Leadsom, a back-stabber par excellence, and as for

the new Defence Minister, Weasel Williamson, I wouldn't want him in my tank troop, he might be inclined to shoot me in the back.

My dear departed brother in law spent much of his life proclaiming, "Aux Les Barricades" and I begin to think he was right!

There are some MPs of younger generations who could do a great job, and with a combination of Rees Mogg, as the face of Government and Dyson, as the advisor for business, our UK Brexit negotiators would have been unbeatable, and the huge payment demands from the EU a nonstarter for openers! Now it's one huge and unholy mess,

I am very fond of Europe and Europeans and neither they or us deserve the present morass. I just don't like being ruled by EU bosses who aren't even elected, there's something quite unsettling about that, it's not PC!

Across the Aisle the earthly bound version of JC - did you notice the similarities with the Leonardo da Vinci painting recently sold for £450 million - has his own problems including his Vice Chancellor who suffers mental bouts of Dyscalculia. Another is Emma Bent Toad, MP for Kensington. Amongst her many cantankerous croaks, including her latest airing filled with racist venom, was one aimed in the direction of the Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council and the dreadful Grenfell Tower fire disaster.

It so happens that, during the period when the cladding of that particular building was under discussion by the Kensington Tenant Management Organisation involved, Bent Toad was part of that group and involved in all the meetings. What a Grinch Of Murky Dismal proportions she is, a possible candidate for the Transgender Team perhaps?

Well, if you don't believe me, just have a Butchers Hook (Look, for those who never learned Cockney slang) at a photograph of her boat race and you can see where I am going!

A big player in today's existence within the corridors of power is Facebook and Twitter. Two days before the US election, various print media outlets including the New York Times, had Hilary winning by some 92%. However, over the lead up period prior to the election, Facebook had sent staff to work with both candidates but only the Trump team took up the offer. During that time 130 million Americans posted NINE BILLION items on the upcoming election and Trump won.

Think on Mrs May, cos punchy old Oligarch Putin is winning hands down at the moment with Internet media meddling.

Another of the dreadful major factors of life today is the bindweed type growth of Politically Correct attitudes. In real terms PC stands for Pusillanimous Comprehension or Pure Crap.

We appear to be harking back a century or two to the days of Puritanism: don't do that, you can't say this, don't wear that, statues removed, pre-screened speeches at University, safe space areas, Transgender changing room rights over heterosexual bods and lots more.

Horatio Nelson wasn't exactly PC with Mrs Hamilton, might they want him off his pedestal too? Never mind Catalonia, this is the Snowflake version of the Spanish Inquisition reappearing over the horizon. Jon Snow in place of Gladstone in Liverpool, what are students sniffing, Spice?

The saddest and most pathetic part of it all is to see the abject grovelling by terrified authorities, be they Governmental, local or educational, towards LGBT groupies and roadies.

For example, this week an NHS Trust made an official apology to a family whose small daughter was taken to an NHS appointment at a Lancashire hospital by her father as the mother was too ill at the time. The receiving specialist called the father's actions "manly". The parents, Mr & Mrs Martin complained his remark was sexist. Maybe Daddy Martin isn't a man, maybe he's a TG too?

So, if your daughter wants to go to school one day dressed up as Boy George, so be it, she hasn't thrown a wobbly she's just acting out a childhood fantasy, sometime next week she'll probably be Taylor Swift.

A onetime Government Mental Expert, a female to boot please note, says it's wrong to address a classroom of girls as "GIRLS" for fear of reminding them of their gender! She must be on a legal high!

Orford has its fair share of PC advocates which is par for the course, in fact the only entry for the book cover design prize in the Flower Show this year failed to make First Prize. It was awarded second prize with the judges' comment, "Too Political for a First Prize!". I'm absolutely certain that my Ramblings would never make it, thank heavens!

While in Sweden a church group has declared God is not a man so presumably Eve was and perhaps her son Abel was a TG? This is all a form of ethnic cleansing by the Maos, Mugabes and Robespierres of LGBT teams of the Snowflake generation.

All I can say is "Pass the Pot please, I'm in dire need of a Spiff!

As my old mate Rabbi Yuza Schmuck of Brooklyn Heights used to say. "Oi Vey all reddy, all that comes out of a cow ain't just milk my Son!

I notice that there are signs of movement by normal Muggles who are beginning to get fed up with this blizzard of Flakes, and that includes the boss of the new Office for Students, Sir Michael Barber, who stated in a recent publication, "Universities must be places of intellectual discomfort"

Well said Sir,

Driverless cars, the way of the future? just bring it on Bro! For this means that I can stay on the high road for ever and ever, regardless of the DVLA and age-related driving tests.

Since I won't actually be driving the car, it doesn't matter if I'm deaf and blind, all I need is a satnav to tell the car where to go! Oh boy, as Mr Toad of Toad Hall once said, "it's the thrills of the open road for me!"

Jeremy Ruge-Price

Nov 2017

ps As I watched the Remembrance Day Service, standing in silence, I worried about generations to come, will there be young men and women of various colours, creeds and ethnic backgrounds who are prepared to stand and fight for our Country as those of past generations have stood together side by side. One thing for sure is that the Snowflakes won't be of any use, for when things get hot snowflakes turn to slush and Snowmen melt!

pps Background music: a current TV producer, when asked why background music was always drowning out dialogue, replied. "It's only deaf people that complain"