



CHEERFULNESS BREAKS IN (1940)

(Jan Gore and Hilary Temple)

“Cheerfulness breaks in” is from a remark by Oliver Edwards in 1778, quoted by James Boswell in his life of Samuel Johnson: “I have tried too in my time to be a philosopher; but I don’t know how, cheerfulness was always breaking in”.

- Page 9** “Haste to the Wedding” (chapter title): a three act comic opera by W.S.Gilbert.
- 10** Las Palombas: possibly Buenos Aires, Argentina or Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- 13** Ocarina Tree: Somerset Maugham was the author of a collection of short stories published in 1926, entitled “The Casuarina Tree”.
Ocarina: an ancient flute-like wind instrument, often ceramic, which became popular in the 1930s.
Hop o’ My Thumb: fairytale by Charles Perrault
- 14** Paris Exhibition of 1900 celebrated the achievements of the past century, and its universal style was Art Nouveau. Art Nouveau fireplaces are now fashionable once more.
- 15** the dreadful Ferris who became an H M Inspector of schools (now Ofsted): teachers may appreciate the nuance.
- 18** Camberley: Staff College for the Army until 1997.
- 21** Leapt lightly to the breach: Shakespeare: Henry V: “Once more unto the breach, dear friends” is from the ‘Cry God for Harry, England, and Saint George!’ speech of Shakespeare’s *Henry V, Act III, 1599*.
- 22** The Emperor Augustus (63 BC-14 AD) was born Gaius Octavius Thurinus and was known as Octavian between 44 and 27 BC.
- 23** Warbury: Naturalised German family, known as Gissing in the American edition of the book. Son Fritz, parents Oscar and Gloria. They were originally named Warburg and were Jewish, but when Alfred Knopf, Angela Thirkell’s American publisher, complained, the name and identity were changed. (Later: “The Warburys only changed their name from Warburg in the last war” p. 166)
- 24** Dagoes: Spanish people. The term was deemed less offensive in the 1930s.
- 27** Radio Luxembourg: English-language service began in 1933. It had the most powerful transmitter in the world in the late 1930s. Many of the programmes were sponsored by incongruous organisations, such as the Zam-Buk broadcast, the latest dance music sponsored by a medication “for cuts, burns and bruises”. The station was closed down by the Luxembourg government on 21 Sept 1939, but the invading German forces took it over in 1940 and they were/it was used for propaganda broadcasts including Lord Haw Haw. Glamora Tudor is thought to be the American actress Gloria Stuart (1910-2010).
- 28** Botticelli’s Flora – the nose of the goddess of spring in *Primavera* is perhaps too aquiline for mischief as she scatters her blooms?
- 31** VAD: Volunteer Aid Detachment, providing field nursing services, mainly in hospitals
- 33** champagne nippers: AT regarded these as key to successful opening of these bottles. More than once the neck of the bottle is broken for want of them. Has champagne technology changed that much?? They were used for cutting the wire cage that held the champagne cork in place, according to an Internet forum on corkscrews (!) They may include a corkscrew and a brush. Wonderful quote here:
"Don't ask questions," Enid cried. "Go and get me the champagne nippers. The champagne nippers at once. If you can't find them, then bring me a pair of pliers. Then come to me on the leads outside the bathroom. It's a matter of life and death."
From: *The Crimson Blind*, by Fred M White, 1905.

- 35 Jehu, King of Israel “The driving is like the driving of Jehu, the son of Nimshi, for he driveth furiously”. 2 Kings 9, 20
- 37 Nuptial hour drew on apace – why is this so exactly the kind of expression that an earnest school chaplain or jolly minister who goes for hikes with “lads” would use?? It’s from Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*: “Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour draws on apace” Theseus, Act 1 Scene 1
- 38 Miss Squeers and Mr and Mrs Browdie: Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby* (+GU35 {Ralph}+DA257{Mrs}+LAA100)
- 39 Paths of glory which lead but to the grave: Thomas Gray, *Elegy written in a Country Churchyard*
- 41 celluloid fish – a bath toy
Sparrowhill Camp: Larkhill Camp, Salisbury Plain
- 42 Go, lovely Rose: poem by Edmund Waller (1606-1687)
Little Ease: a type of small dungeon eg Little Ease in the Tower of London which measured 1.2 metres square.
- 43 Dim religious light: Milton, *Il Penseroso*.
“And love the high embowed roof, With antique pillars massy proof, And storied windows richly dight; Casting a *dim religious light*.” (+3S&10 135)
- 44 Registry offices – with pointing out of error: although they are officially register offices everyone says “registry”. A registry office is where you go (or went) to hire a servant.
Conscience’ or convenience’ sake – does anyone else use these forms? What does Fowler say? It is *The New Fowler’s Modern English Usage*, 3rd ed., 1996, edited by R.W. Burchfield, states:
“Practice varies widely in *for conscience’ sake* and *for goodness’ sake*, and the use of an apostrophe in them must be regarded as optional.” (+OBH79+LAR135+CQ81+3S&10 23,24)
- 45 in forma pauperis: in the form of a pauper
- 51 Simnet in all his glory “Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these” (Matthew 6:29)
- 59 The late Lady Hartlepton when she married Lord Dumbello (Griselda) +HaR 20;35 - how would Mrs Morland know about the moire antique? – or did she read it in Trollope?
“Moiré antique”; a superior type of thick moiré. Moire, a watered or moiré fabric (usually silk). Trollope *Framley Parsonage*: ch. 48, p. 255:
“Mrs. Grantly kissed her and blessed her in the hall as she was about to step forward to her travelling carriage leaning on her father’s arm, and the child put up her face to her mother for a last whisper.
“Mamma,” she said, “I suppose Jane can put her hand at once on the moire antique when we reach Dover?”
Mrs. Grantly smiled and nodded.”
- 60 PG: paying guest
- 62 The storm begins to lower: first line of “The fatal sisters: an ode”, by Thomas Gray
- 63 Bissell carpet sweeper: probably a libellous remark as this was a real trade name
- 65 Field-marshal’s baton in his knapsack – said by Napoleon , allegedly. “Every French soldier carries a marshal’s baton in his knapsack” (“Chaque soldat francais porte dans sa giberne un baton de marechal”)
- 66 schoolmasters conversant with dinner jackets. This is a genuine quotation from a correspondent to AT.
LCC – London County Council [for our younger readers]
- 73 Ryke: Reich [ditto]
- 80 mild versus bitter [beer]: AT appears to regard mild as more middle-class than bitter, which runs counter to my own observations (HT). Mild was the largest selling ale till the 1950s; since then bitter has been more popular in the South of England. “Old” is a stronger style of dark malty beer, like a Winter Warmer. (see also page 38)
- 81 Recording Angel expunging Philip’s lie: Recording angel is the messenger of God who records the events, actions, and/or prayers of each individual human.
French, Italian: types of vermouth. Gin and French = gin and Noilly Prat or Ricard, a dry vermouth. Gin and It = gin and Italian (sweet) vermouth.
- 84 Smigly-Rydz: Edward Smigly-Rydz, Marshal of Poland (1886-1941), took responsibility for Poland’s military defeat in September 1939
Benés: Edvard Benés (1884-1948), leader of the Czechoslovak independence movement
Schuschnigg: Dr Kurt von Schuschnigg (1897-1977), Chancellor of the first Austrian Republic
Zog: Zog of Albania (1895-1961), king of the Albanians 1928-1939
Selassie: Haile Selassie of Ethiopia (1892-1975), emperor of Ethiopia.
I have looked everywhere but still can’t identify the breed of dog with any certainty. Perhaps a Scottish or a cairn terrier? The “stumpy tail” (p. 189) may be a clue.
- 86 Esme Bellenden could be either male or female, which AT thinks appropriate for this gay couple.
On Ilkley Moor with or without hat. “On Ilkley Moor baht [without] hat” traditional song in Yorkshire dialect.

- 92 O.T.C.: Officer Training Corps
- 94 deteriorated: deteriorated
- 97 Pleasant custom in the country of keeping the outer door of the house open (+H55+ESR43;78;245+DA130+LAA287)
- 101 Single pair of scissors passed hand to hand like the eye of the Graiae – whom Perseus had to overcome. There are three Graiae, sharing a single tooth and a single eye. Perseus had to seize the eye from them in order to get information about where to find the sea nymphs.
Running and felling: types of stitch (straight and appliqué, respectively)
- 103 Like Niobe all ears: Like Niobe, all tears, Hamlet Act 1 Scene 2. Argus was all eyes rather than ears.
- 104 Liberty: the Regent Street store, famous for Liberty fabrics in Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau styles
- 110 Paderewski: I J Paderewski (1860-1941), Polish pianist, composer and politician
Royal Oak: HMS Royal Oak was sunk by a torpedo at Scapa Flow on 14 October 1939. 833 of her crew died.
- 116 British warm: military greatcoat for British officers [for our younger readers]
- 117 Richard Hannay: RH is the hero of five novels by John Buchan, and appears in Constantinople in “Greenmantle” (+SH243+OBH153+CC257+CQ81)
- 122 Ladylike pronunciation on the BBC a frequent target of AT (Joan etc WS awfulness MH &MH22+ESR173 (pronunciation)+CQ218+LAA252)
- 126 Dean Arabin: (Anthony Trollope’s Barchester Towers)(+OBH95 (Mrs)+CC212+HaR43+CQ277+3S&10 138 (Mr)CC212+HaR43+3S138)
- 127 Sleep several in a bed – (alternating heads and feet?). This comes in elsewhere I think? But I can’t trace where.
- 129 Gaiter’s Library: Boots circulating library
P. B. Baker & Son, Ltd: W.H. Smiths?
- 133 Catherine Barlass (appears as Katherine in County Chronicle): Catherine Douglas who tried to save King James I from attack by barring the door with her arm. Mentioned in Rossetti’s King’s Tragedy:
’Twas Catherine Douglas sprang to the door,
But I fell back Kate Barlass. (+CC84)
- 136 St Gingolph: small town on the south bank of Lake Geneva
- 141 Rather hoping that they would argue about the 39 Articles: (of religion) established 1563, defining Anglican doctrine re the Reformation (+CC100)
- 143 Pentateuch: first five books of the Old Testament
- 145 Busman’s holiday: a holiday that is not a real break from work.
- 146 Day of National Prayer: October 8th 1939
- 150 A.D.C.: Aide de Camp (personal assistant, secretary or adjutant)
- 157 Nothing will stop me saying St Petersburg – and how right she was in the long term!
- 157 Idles of the King by heart: even now “idyllic” is often pronounced with a long initial i. Elaine is Mrs B’s first name: the only occurrence?
- 160 Panderer must have been his sponsor [Smigly Rydz]: Pandora, who “had a casket with nothing but hope at the bottom of it” (p. 173)
- 160 If I had to pay income tax on Hampton’s income tomorrow I would be proud. We perhaps tend to forget that issues about marriage and gay marriage date back quite a long way!
- 160 Rory Freemantle: lesbian heroine of “Extraordinary Women” by Compton Mackernzie, published 1928
- 162 Battle of Jutland: 31 May-1 June 1916. Battle between Royal Navy’s Grand Fleet and Imperial German Navy’s High Seas Fleet, off Jutland, the largest naval battle in WW1.
- 163 China station: the China Station complement of the Royal Navy usually consisted of several older light cruisers and destroyers
Iron class: there are some wonderful “real life” names for destroyer classes, such as Ferret, Banshee and Sturgeon, but I cannot find an equivalent of AT’s Iron class
- 169 British Israelites: those who believe that people of Western European descent are also direct descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel. Often also believe that the British Royal Family is directly descended from King David. I suspect the latter idea was what appalled Tubby et al.
- 173 Pandora: Mrs Morland realises what Mr Bissell really meant on p. 160
- 179 Mixo-Lydia: a small Balkan country, which has elements of Romania, such as the –cu suffix and the use of French as a second language
- 183 What happened to the maiden? As a result of her relationship with Gradko, she becomes a mother and gives birth to four sons. The first is called Achmet, because he is a Turk, the second Boris because he is a Bulgar, the third, who is Russian, Ivan, and the fourth, who is the most handsome of all and has his father assassinated, along with his mother and his three older brothers, is called Gradko, like his father.

- 186** Rachel: Surely Mrs Warbury was called Gloria?
Mad, bad and dangerous to know: Lady Caroline Lamb's description of Byron
- 187** Petit point: needlepoint
- 190** Lithuania: Lietuva in Lithuanian, hence Mrs Morland's confusion with Latvia
- 191** Queen's Hall: concert hall in Langham Place. London's principal concert venue and home of the Promenade concerts until 1941
Return of: Handel's Return of Tobias? (Haydn's "other" oratorio)
- 194** Mais ce n'est pas: But it is not the custom in his country and this affected his liver. He has to be careful about his health, and since then he has had a horror of English nurses. It's an involuntary response, but what can you expect? It's like that with us.
- 199** Bell, book and candle: method of excommunication, described in Marlowe's Faustus
- 200** Thirty-Nine Articles: established 1563, defining statements of Anglican doctrine (see also p. 141 and 316)
- 203** Madame Brownscu – joke for Ionescu (=Jones-cu) – two of the three (supposedly) commonest English surnames, the first being Smith which would clearly not be euphonious. See p. 179: "There were even unbelievers who said that Brownscu was not a Mixo-Lyidian name, nor indeed a name at all"
- 204** Tu entends: You hear, my friend, this chap is a friend of Moscow, of these filthy Russians
- 205** Et savez-vous: And do you know why he says this? ...The Russians have also violated his mother, his four sisters, his cook (and he loves good food) and his wife...It gave him quite a turn.
- 206** Oh, celle-la: Oh, her. She wasn't unhappy. After all, the Russian was her lover.
- 207** Les Russes: The Russians? ... It was Gogo's wife that they raped; but in any case it was the Russian colonel, who was her lover.
- 210** The path of duty: tale by Henry James
- 215** ARP: Air Raid Precautions
- 216** Crown: the rank insignia for a major
- 221** Ingoldsby Legends: collections of ghost stories, myths and legends from c 1840 (+LAA65 – and probably more)
- 224** Steamer: the Brandon was sunk in early December 1939 (8th or 9th, depending on which account you select)
- 236** Wearing her heart on her sleeve for young Mr Warbury to peck at: Othello, Act 1, Scene 1, 55-65. (More usually daws to peck at)
- 237-8** Three Sillies who worked themselves into a panic on finding an axe stuck in the beam of the cellar: English Fairy Tales, by Joseph Jacobs
- 239** Flag Lieutenant: a lieutenant acting as an admiral's aide-de-camp
- 240** Trincomalee: port in what is now Sri Lanka
- 242** Mannerheim: Baron Mannerheim (1867-1951), who had just become Commander in Chief of the Finnish Army
Kalevala: Finland's national epic poem
- 243** Ci-devant: former
- 261** That marvellous battle: possibly the battle of the River Plate, 13 December 1939, in which case AT's South American geography leaves a little to be desired
- 262** Ride the whirlwind :(+PE138+OBH135;146+CC100+)[Addison: The Campaign, 1704]"An angel...rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm"
- 263** Rose-petal jelly baby: (+LAA57 – and others I think) – a bit like the heroic epithets used in classical literature. Or is it the pink colour of the jelly?
- 265** Struck all of a heap: suddenly very surprised or confused
- 270** Giddy harumfrodite: Kipling, describing a Royal Marine: " 'E isn't one o' the reg'lar line, nor 'e isn't one o the crew, 'E's a kind of a *giddy harumfrodite* - soldier and sailor too"(+CQ40)
- 271** The winter of 1939-40 was exceptionally cold
Grateful hearts for benefits conferred: could not trace [unless Tolstoy's War and Peace, where "the serfs...seemed touchingly grateful for the benefits conferred on them", or Psalms]
- 273** Ribald rumour had it that the Bishop's second best gaiters had been washed onto the front door steps of Canon Thorne (+ Thornes HaR 42; Mary JC 19+ DA94+LAA 138+ Doctor H15 +LAR 299)
- 275** Death's Head Hussar: Prussian cavalry during the Napoleonic Wars, who struck fear into the enemy for many years
- 279** Solitaire et glace: Verlaine.
"Dans le vieux parc solitaire et glacé,
Deux formes ont tout à l'heure passé."
"Dans le vieux parc solitaire et glacé
Deux spectres ont évoqué le passé."
Colloque sentimental, set to music by Debussy as part of Fetes galantes 2

- 282 Long winter of everyone's discontent dragged its slow length along: Shakespeare, Richard III, opening line "Now is the Winter of our Discontent / Made glorious summer by this sun of *York*..." (+LAR38)
Violation of Norway's hugely un-neutral waters: The Altmark incident of 16 February 1940. Churchill sent a flotilla of destroyers to intercept the Altmark and free the captive merchant seamen on board
- 288 One crowded hour of glorious vice – with caps! "One crowded hour of glorious life/Is worth an age without a name", Sir Walter Scott, Answer
- 290 Germany invaded Norway and Denmark on 9 April 1940
- 291 Nansen: Fridtjof Nansen (1861-1930), Norwegian explorer and diplomat who devoted himself to the League of Nations and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.
If they called a dog Nansen she would hate it: "If you call a dog * I will dislike it" Source? (+CC146)
Quotation from Longfellow, The Musician's Tale: the saga of King Olaf: "that is Norway breaking 'neath thy hand, O King!"
- 292 Haakon: Haakon VII of Norway (1872-1957)
Andersen: after Hans Christian Andersen, Danish author
- 292 Aurora Freemantle and nice cup of tea: could not trace the exact reference. Aurora Freemantle was the lesbian heroine of Compton Mackenzie's Extraordinary Women, 1928. (See also p. 160)
- 295 Niobe to whom Apollo had spared the last of her brood: in Greek myth Niobe was turned into a waterfall because of the tears she shed over her dead children (+ESR 138)
- 296 Pays du Tendre: the Carte du Tendre was a seventeenth century French map of an imaginary country called Tendre. It showed the different stages of the path towards romantic love.
Followed hard upon: Hamlet, Act 1, Scene 2, Horatio: Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.
- 299 Hiram's Hospital: the scandal about the pay of the warden of this charitable institution is the theme of Anthony Trollope's The Warden. A true-life version occurred at the Hospital of St Cross in Winchester.
- 300 Eating other people's mental bread and treading strange stairs (+H42+HaR 184+CQ181+bread bitter and stairs hard) WB Yeats "Ego Dominus Tuus" in The Wild Swans at Coole (1919):
To climb that stair and eat that bitter bread,
Also: Oscar Wilde in Reading Gaol has a reference to bitter bread: And the *bitter bread* they weigh in scales. Is full of chalk and lime, ...
And: Swinburne: Tiresias/Ave atque vale:
The steepness of strange stairs had tired his feet. [Tiresias] ...
Thy lips indeed he touched with bitter wine,
And nourished them indeed with bitter bread [Ave atque vale]
- 302 Juggernaut: (Hindi) Vishnu – ties in with shrine
- 303 Battle of the Marne: First World War battle, September 1914
- 304 Ha-ha inside herself: "Ha! Ha! among the trumpets" Job 39:25
- 307 Tucked up her wristbands: Dickens, Sam Weller in Dombey and Son
- 309 Old Adam: natural tendency toward sin
Gallows gape: Shakespeare, Henry V Act III Scene VI Let *gallows gape* for dog
- 312 Goat's cheese: Not a delicacy in wartime England
- 313 G.F.S.: Girls' Friendly Society
- 315 French for warming-pan is chandelier
- 316 Conge: dismissal
Thirty Nine Articles: See also p. 141 and 200
- 320 Death of Mr Keith: by January 1940 nearly twice as many Britons had been killed on the roads since the blackout started than by enemy action
- 322 Bedfordshire: Up the wooden hill to Bedfordshire, nursery phrase for going to bed
Betrayal of a little army: On May 10 1940 Germany invaded Holland and attacked Belgium; Neville Chamberlain resigned and Churchill became Prime Minister. The German invasion of France followed swiftly on.
- 323 Wistaria: alternative spelling for wisteria
- 324 Daisy-Chain-ish: Novel by C M Yonge (1856) about the large, motherless, May family, with a theme of missionary work at home and abroad and self-sacrifice.
- 328 Little army...friendly sea: allied forces moving back to Dunkirk
- 328 Fifth columnist: A group of people who clandestinely undermine a larger group from within. (From the Spanish Civil War) V popular term at the time [see also p. 331, people thought to be Fifth Columnists were interned on the Isle of Man]
- p 330 Dunkirk: Evacuation of allied soldiers from the beaches of Dunkirk was between 26 May and 4 June 1940. Thousand ships – number of ships used in the evacuation (technically 850)