

# **Maggie**

*Some Memories*



# Maggie

*Some Memories*

Compiled by John Collinge

THESAURUS PRESS

Published by  
Thesaurus Press  
10 London Street  
St Mary's Bay  
Auckland 1011, New Zealand  
Phone: (64) 09 360 8951 or 021 235 6281  
Email: johncollinge75@gmail.com

© John Collinge

First Edition 2019

ISBN 978-0-473-49051-5

Designed and typeset by Mary Egan Publishing  
Printed in New Zealand

# Contents

1	<b>Maggie</b>	7
2	<b>Paintings</b>	13
3	<b>Poems</b>	31
4	<b>Dougy the Dachshund</b>	55
5	<b>The Butterfly</b>	77
6	<b>Jeremy's Journal</b>	85
7	<b>Cornucopia</b>	199
8	<b>Photographs</b>	215



1

# Maggie



Portrait by Jane Bond – St Martins and Royal Society of Portrait Painters

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

**M**AGGIE was born Margaret O’Grady, the daughter of Patrick James Fallowfield-O’Grady and Ann Powell and grew up in Camberley, Surrey. She was one of four surviving daughters – all stunningly gorgeous who quickly attracted attention, still remembered, with their stunning looks, as the O’Grady girls.

At age sixteen, amongst the youngest ever to have been admitted to the prestigious college, Maggie attended St Martins, now the University of the Arts London for art, design, drama, fashion and media – the basis for the eminence of London in those fields. That was the time of Courege white boots and miniskirts – dashing around in her red Mini, Maggie did everything with style and enthusiasm.

She had from there engaged in modelling and her face and figure was commonplace on British billboards and television. She made many commercials in Britain and Germany – including for Fiat, Fanta, Pavisini, Triumph, British Steel, British Rail, Toyota, Honda and Rothmans. On one occasion, between shooting, she met a friend for lunch wearing the uniform of a British Caledonian air hostess.

Having studied fashion, design and drawing at St Martins, she had a strong interest in fashion and was a model for couture shows for Christian Dior and Pierre Cardin among others, and was subsequently involved in costume design for various shows.



## MAGGIE

She was involved in play and film making and voice overs for documentaries. She played the Baroness in 'Mary Ward' a German British co-production by Hermes Films. In New Zealand, she appeared in the Scottish play as a witch and in 'Taking Sides' as the musician Furtwengler's German Secretary.

She had a varied interest in the arts – painting, drawing, writing and poetry – all with no little skill. Antiques, jewellery, history and fashion were also passions.

She produced and organised charity concerts and, for over 25 years, did voluntary work for two of the leading hospitals for children – Great Ormond Street and Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Hackney – teaching and encouraging drawing and painting to severely ill and disabled children. She was for many years a Trustee of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children, part of the Royal Hospital of London.

She had a fondness for dachshunds throughout her life and was never without one or more, and usually several. She even reared a tiny dachshund pup which had been abandoned – it survived and was called TP (variously 'tiny person' or 'tiny pup').

With her two children at boarding school, she was, along with her husband, a sociable part of the London scene. By way of example, she captured media attention by wearing a cowboy hat to Ascot at the time of JR and Dallas.

On 28 April 1995, as a trustee of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children, having separated from her husband, she attended a Royal Surf Life Saving Society function in Bude, Cornwall. It was the Society's major meeting of the year and the Guest of Honour, HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, attended as Patron. It was there that I met her, attending as the New Zealand representative on the Society.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

I was immediately taken – with her beauty, her flowing hair, her superbly smart and elegant appearance, her friendly and approachable manner, backed by sparkling conversation and depth of knowledge. She was particularly vivacious and interacted well with all of the guests.

I recall that some-how I fumbled out a request for a contact number saying that I hoped we would meet in London. Having plucked up sufficient courage after several days, I rang her at her country home. Over the following three weeks, at my request, she came to the Chelsea Flower Show, representing New Zealand for the first time. At her request, I visited the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children for a tour of the Wards talking to the children and staff. From that point on we were inseparable.

As it turned out, Maggie was a superb hostess. For many years she had been acknowledged for memorable parties at her stylish homes in London. She became my hostess for the remaining two years of my term as High Commissioner for New Zealand to the United Kingdom – making them especially successful and enjoyable.

She accompanied me to most of the functions for which Britain is renowned – Ascot, Henley, Wimbledon, the Trooping of the Colour, the Guildhall, Downing Street, the Palace and so on. She hosted HM the Queen and HRH the Duke for dinner at the New Zealand Residence. She was remarkably quick on the uptake. At the Dinner, the Duke queried the dessert menu which said simply ‘Kiwi Mousse’ and raised his eyebrows. Quick as a flash Maggie responded and said ‘The fruit Sir and not the bird’. The Duke’s loud guffaw drew a disapproving look from his wife.

Maggie first came to New Zealand with me for the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in 1995. With her help, I had responsibility for looking after the British delegation including

## MAGGIE

the British Prime Minister John Major. Taking some time off, we toured the South Island and walked the Milford Track.

She was an asset to New Zealand in her role as hostess and as my consort generally. At the end of my term, I was required to visit the Palace to surrender my credentials. We were not married at the time and it was not then the protocol for the Palace to entertain couples who were unmarried. However, the Palace pointedly made an express and conscious exception in Maggie's case.

Maggie joined me in New Zealand and, shortly afterwards, we became formally engaged and later married. The relationship was entirely complementary – a vivacious London socialite and a measured lawyer – each admiring what the other was not – hugely successful for 21 years until her death in 2017.

During that time, we lived between New Zealand and England – at 'Akarana' (an iconic colonial home in Auckland) and at 'Frog Pond Farm', Ansty, Wiltshire (an equally iconic Grade 2 thatched and tiled yeoman's farmer's cottage) – each accumulating and bearing Maggie's significant influence.

Her two children, Marcus and Sara Postlethwaite from her former marriage, say they received an incredible roller coaster life from their mother. Notwithstanding, she was much devoted to them and her five grandchildren (Letty, Daisy, Willow, Julius and Freya) who she loved. At her death she was youthful and beautiful – always objecting to references to her age and the appellation 'Granny'.

She was thirsty for knowledge, adored history, literature, fashion, design, people and telling witty stories. Her endeavours developed and took up part of her later life, with a particular bent for stories for children. Her 2016 Christmas card, shortly before her death, had three dachshunds as the wise men lighting the way.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



Many will remember Maggie's vibrancy, her humour and zest for life, her friendly and welcoming style, complementing her very real beauty, dress sense and grooming. She was a free spirit and wonderful company.

Her funeral service was in the Chapel at New Wardour Castle, near Ansty, and she is buried at the Wardour Catholic Cemetery in accordance with her wish. Her Memorial was held in the Chapel of St Mary's College, St Mary's Bay, Auckland.

Following is a selection of Maggie's papers from New Zealand dating from 1997 to 2017 together with some prior pieces which I found among her records here.

To Maggie.

**John Collinge**

10 May 2019

# Paintings

Leaf from the old oak tree at London Street

Puriri leaf

Loquat tree at London Street

Pink Lady

Maggie's Flowers and Sky

Van Gogh's Flowers and Sky

Blue Vase (watercolour)

Blue Vase (oil)

Geraniums Imari

The work in progress

Rangitoto from Auckland

Through the Pohutukawa at London Street

Auckland City

El Pato in Auckland Harbour

Bluebell Collage

Grand-daughters

Pink and White Flowers

MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



Leaf from the old oak tree at London Street

PAINTINGS



Puriri leaf



MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



From the Loquat tree at London Street



PAINTINGS



Pink Lady

MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



Maggie's Flowers and Sky

PAININGS



Van Gogh's Flowers and Sky

MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



Blue Vase (watercolour)

PAINTINGS



Blue Vase (oil)



MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



Geraniums Imari

## PAINTINGS



The work in progress – from Shangri-la overlooking the Waitemata Harbour

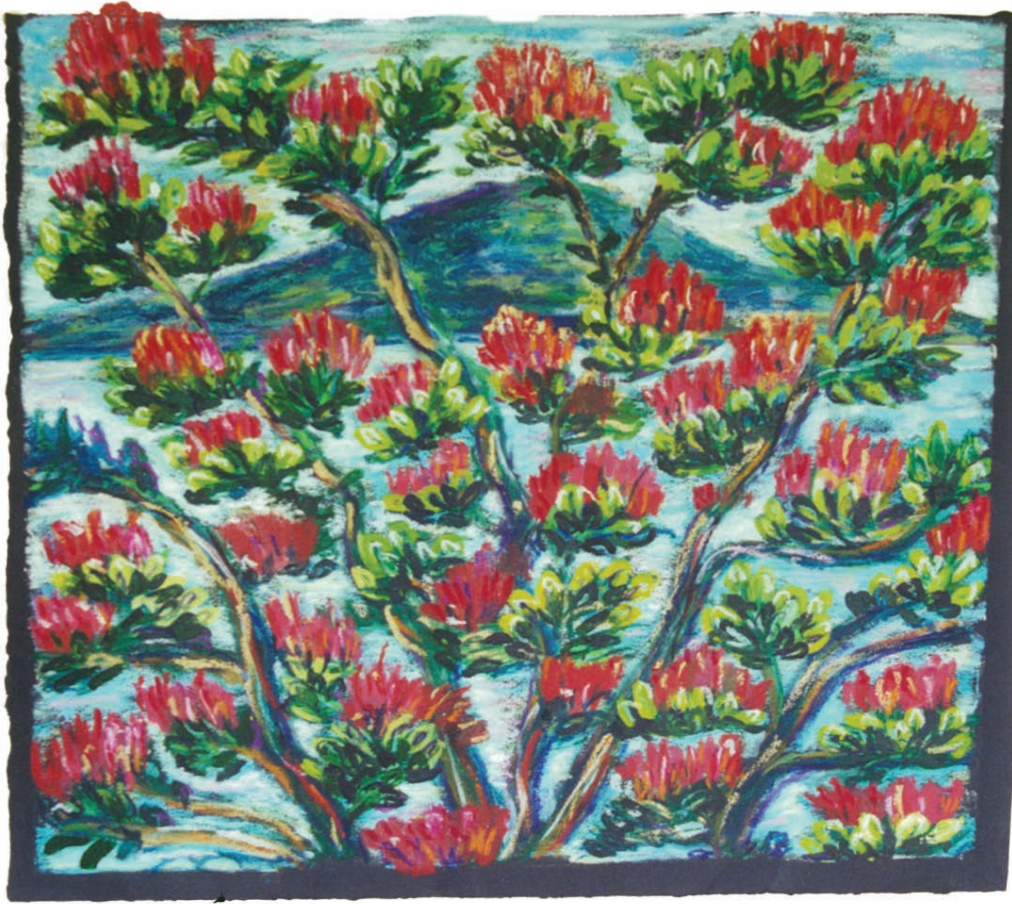
MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



Rangitoto from Auckland



PAINTINGS



Through the Pohutukawa at London Street

MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



Auckland City – From the North Shore

PAINTINGS



El Pato in Auckland Harbour

MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



Bluebell Collage



PAINTINGS



Grand-daughters

MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



Pink and White Flowers

**3**

# **Poems**

- 1**    **Love**
- 2**    **Life and Living**
- 3**    **Dachshunds**
- 4**    **Chickens**
- 5**    **The elements**
- 6**    **In foreign lands**
- 7**    **Rebellion**
- 8**    **Death**
- 9**    **Satire**

MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

**1 Love**

**THE LAMENT OF LING TAY**

Beneath the Bamboo Bridge  
where still waters lie  
I stood  
in the moonlight  
and watched  
the lilies light the water  
like stars reversed  
gleaming in the night.

And your voice  
sang to me  
carried on the wings of a passing breeze  
And your soul  
shimmered  
in the moonlight.

And I ached for you  
far away in a land  
beyond the mountains.

**Written as a fragment from 9th Century China, later put to music by  
Tom Eastwood and performed at Wigmore Hall, London.**



POEMS

**TO MY LOVE**

I will catch the moon in my butterfly net  
And leave the larger stars behind.

For my love this orb I'd save  
And shake the stars through a silver sieve.

To-night I will catch the moon  
And to my love this present give.

**MPC – 2015**

## 2 Life and Living

### COUNTRY LIFE

I wanted to go to the country  
To a quaint and a little abode  
To follow the day's gentle pattern  
Away from the Exeter Road.

But those jackdaws and thingamies  
Made nests in my chiminies  
And mice made holes in my roof  
They chewed and they pooed  
And they cost me a fortune forsooth.

My dear pretty garden  
Is now but forlorn  
Those moles and their pals  
Mole boys and mole gals  
Enjoyed making hills on my lawn.

I don't mind the bees  
They can buzz as they please  
But I hate all the aphids and can't do a thing  
With greenfly and blackfly  
And swarming red ants that do sting.

I planted my vegies in neat little rows  
Excited to watch as they grow  
Till an army of slugs  
Those Elysian thugs  
Slimed in to devour every row.

## POEMS

So did the rabbits with their horrid habits  
Gobble each lettuce they see  
With greed quite distasteful  
Rapaciously wasteful  
And hardly a leaf left for me.

As for my fruit trees  
Plums, apples and pears  
The birds they do think they are theirs  
I've tried nets and scarecrows  
But the raiders sneak in – and in pairs.

Of munching pests and slithering slugs  
My list could go on and on  
It was peace that I came for  
And, of course, quiet  
I'd not reckoned on fauna in riot.

But I am here to stay  
They'll not drive me away  
I now am aware of the score  
To survive in this place, it is no disgrace  
To arm and be ready for war.

So I am staying here  
In the country  
Set in my idyllic abode  
Near the fields, the woods and green meadows  
Far away from the Exeter Road.

**MPC – explaining what townfolk need to know.**

MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

**ODE TO A DEAD GERBIL**

Nibbler our Gerbil died today  
Dead in his gilded cage he lay  
His food uneaten, his wheel untrod  
I hope he is happy with Budgie and God.

**M O'G – Early published epic lament**

### **3 Dachshunds**

#### **THE DACHSHUND MARCHING SONG**

Dachshunds Unter Alles  
This is the Dachshund song  
We sing it as with paws in boots  
We gaily march along.

We sing it on the roadways  
And on the hillside bare  
The vales and dales have heard our song  
We sing it every where.

So gather round all Dachshunds  
Stand up four square and tall  
To show the world that greatness  
Can be in dogs quite small.

**MPC – said to be handed down by her dachshund’s Great Great Uncle Panzer.**

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### THE ICE CREAM PARLOUR

Down at the ice cream parlour  
Dachshunds like to meet  
To have a little ice cream  
And watch the busy street  
There's nothing better in the town  
Than ice cream brought from Guido Brown.

Guido came from Napoli  
A gallant waiter dog was he  
Plump and jolly at the door  
He shakes each customer – by the paw.

Among the tables long and low  
On roller skates the waiters go  
They push at wheel-ed tray devices  
Taking round the different ices.

Little dachshunds with their mummies  
Go to fill their tiny tummies  
One small dachsy, name of Dick  
Ate so much that he was sick.

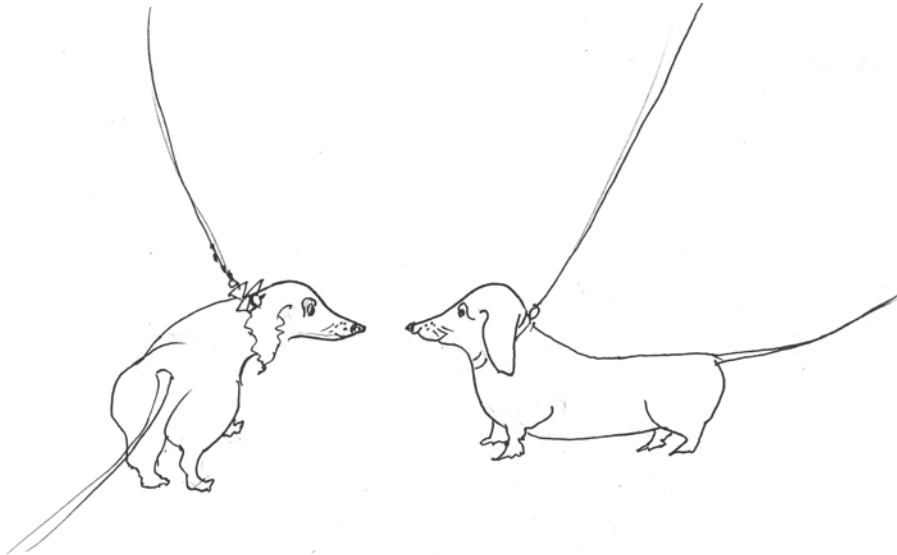
POEMS

Girly dogs with pretty bows  
Match their ice cream to their clothes  
Pensioner dogs who like their ices  
All tuck in at special prices.

A group of school dogs – waggy chaps  
Chucked ices at the others caps  
Granny dogs shook their umbrellas  
Complaining at such rude young fellas.

But all agree its the best in town  
Ice cream brought from Guido Brown.

**MPC – A dachshund's dream.**



## 4 Chickens

### THE FOX AND CHICKENS

There's fluttering in the chicken coop  
The fox has been to have a snoop  
He sneaked around, he scrutinised  
Nothing missed his nose or eyes.

Its nightfall now, he's coming back  
Alert and ready for attack  
Under hedge and over leat  
Across the lawn on light pawed feet  
Closer still, his whiskers twitch  
He's in the run without a hitch.

The sleepy chickens do not sense  
The fox has breached the fox proof fence  
Crossed the muddy potholed ground  
Slinking up the plank without a sound  
Through the one unfastened hatch  
The tired old man forgot to latch.

The chickens wake as the sly fox lurches  
And pulls them downwards from their perches  
He kills all but one of the feathery troop  
Leaving chaos and carnage inside the coop.



POEMS

Into the night, the way he came  
A plump hen in his mouth and without shame  
In his lair in the wood, with the moon shining bright  
The fox is well pleased that its chicken tonight.

**MPC – Reflections from experience.**

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### COMPARISON

When I was small  
Our chickens seemed so big and tall  
Light Sussex hens, Rhode Island reds  
A cockerel with his coxcombed head  
Eye to eye, they stared at me  
Which can be scary when you're three.

### THE CHICKEN RUN

In the mud pitted, moon surface, chicken run  
Pink roses twine through rusty wire  
Black Orpingtons, Sussex Whites, Rhode Island Reds  
Scratch among flung lettuce leaves and bowls of bran.

Looking up expectantly with amber eyes  
They see a small child and an older man  
Who close the gate and shut it tight  
A fox was seen on the prowl last night.

The man creakily bends and scoops an Orpington  
For the child to feel the warmth of its beating heart  
And to stroke the shimmering feathers  
Iridescent as oil in wind rippled puddles.

**MPC – Memories of childhood**

## 5 The elements

### SPRINGTIME

In the bleakness of those infertile days  
Persephone cannot be found  
She fled her home deep underground  
Leaving etched into the upper air  
Stark trees with blackened branches bare  
Dead flowers and mouldering leaves  
Ungathered ricks, forgotten sheaves.

There's bickering in the chicken pen  
From many a sad and listless hen  
Those pretty girls of yesterday  
Have lost the urge to peck and play  
They are not laying eggs at all  
Their faded feathers silent fall  
Onto the frosty hardened ground  
Persephone cannot be found.

But softly now and without a sound  
There's stirring in the cold dark ground  
Persephone has fled Poseiden's sway  
To seek once more the brightening day  
Leaves now a flutter in the breeze  
On trees that were so stark and bare  
In upper air, the buds unfurl  
Dancing in the spring time world.

**MPC – Springtime following winter.**

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **NIGHT AND DAY**

The new moon shines in northern skies  
Caught in the sun's fast fading light  
Climbing, climbing, swiftly climbing  
As daylight darkens into night.  
The sun has fled to southern skies  
Chasing the crescent moon away  
Rising, rising, swiftly rising  
To turn the night to brightening day.

Towards the east, a skein of silk  
The thin pink line of dawn  
Parts and pushes the cloak of night away  
The morning star, minute and piercing  
Shines on in lightening day  
And then the pink tinged clouds  
Chagall sheep in party frocks  
Flit and float across the morning sky.

**MPC – From the deck at Akarana, 'viewed through the still branches of the loquat tree watching the boats at anchor, safe in the still waters of Waitemata Harbour', thinking of home in the northern hemisphere.**

## 6 In foreign lands

### SHADOWS AND VEILS

The house of Senora Alvarez  
set into the rocky cliff  
at the end of a bleak street  
Only rendered acceptable  
by the sun searing  
between the gaunt faced houses.

The widows sit on low rush chairs  
beside their open doors  
A crone from midday shadows  
scuttling and shouting  
in her black widow's weeds  
all anger and territorial meanness.

A life too hard for understanding.

**MPC – Remembering Portugal, where she had been sent for further education.**

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### CONTRAST

Locked (for safety's sake)  
In stretch limousines  
Black and gleaming as beetles wings  
Like invading tanks in a foreign land  
Our cortege cleaves its way  
The admen and the banker's wives  
Recline in sparkling finery.

Through poverty's gulch, we pick up speed  
Past buildings that have seen a better day  
On whose walls do bulge and grip  
Air conditioners, as barnacles to a sinking ship  
Coke cans clatter, hydrants spatter.  
Kids leap and scatter - ball games delayed  
Old men sit on broken steps, ruptured spirits  
While women watch with weary eyes.

**MPC – En route to the Botanic Gardens in New York.**

## 7 Rebellion

### DEFIANCE

In the light on a sparkling street  
A girl with dancing feet  
In a bright mini skirt with swirling pleats  
Her long hair golden in the sun.

The object of disapproval  
She turns a defiant head away  
Not everyone appreciates  
That she is life and love anew.

**MPC – Not everyone always admired stunning beauty and fashion in the young.**

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### SCENTS AND SENSIBILITY

Dear Boss of Givenchy  
We find as you speak  
That you fill the position  
Of 'Twit of the Week'.

Why then, Peter Norman  
Should it be wrong  
For a lady and cleaner  
To wear the same pong.

Its sad to believe that  
You can be so crass  
To say that aroma's  
A matter of class.

You should carefully consider  
The words that you say  
What if your wife  
Was a cleaner some day?

There's no justification  
For prices so high  
Pare down your image  
Do give it a try.



POEMS

Just think of a world  
Where all can smell so nice  
When nannies and cleaners can  
Buy at half price.

When just did money  
Equate with class  
Oh my dear Norman  
You're really an ass.

Squadrons of cleaners  
And nannies too  
Have more sense and breeding  
Than snobbish old you.

Norman will not conquer  
And sales might well fall  
With Givenchy perfume  
Ending up in a stall.

So Boss of Givenchy  
We find as you speak  
You fill the position  
Of Twit of the Week.

**M O'G 1993 – on high-end marketing**

## 8 Death

### THE ONE DEATH

'I screamed' he said  
I could not – would not leave  
Clinging to the bars  
Of her little cot.  
And screamed and screamed  
'Till I could scream no more.

'I held her' she said  
I would not – could not  
Let her go. I tried to cry  
But tears they would not come  
My sorrow was too deep  
To show.

Nothing before  
Or since  
Could compare  
With the one death  
Dear God  
The Angels cried.

**M O'G – reflecting the reaction of her father and mother on the death of her older sister before she was born.**

POEMS

**THE PILOT**

They did not tell me  
They could not find the words  
In any case, there was no need  
On TV today, 'twas quickly said  
'Plane pitches into sea  
Pilot presumed to be dead'.

He flew too far  
Came in too fast  
Tipping over the edge  
Of the swaying carrier  
Diving sleek as a shark  
Into a turquoise sea.

An onlooker, a simple man  
Who watched along with me  
'He'll be dead alright  
And bones picked clean  
The fishes do a job alright  
I see'd it on the screen.

There is no hope for he  
Whatever was his name'  
The Force has lost another one  
He took a gulp of tea.

**M O'G – on the death of a trainee pilot boyfriend, reflecting the impersonality of the news.**

## 9 Satire

### THE CENTRE SPREADER

Trace knew she'd boobed  
Her taste so rude  
Inclined to polyester  
She ripped down drapes  
And threw out crepes  
Then ate her curry Vesta.

But what to do? Which way to turn?  
She really could not think  
She placed her dinner on the tray  
On the drainer by the sink  
And curried fingers trembling turned  
The Evening Standard's pages.

Salvation 'decorwise' burst forth  
Like birds from out of cages  
Quite galvanised, she there had found  
The answer to her rages  
Her little lounge is lilac now  
Her dining hall much redder.

Its thanks to you  
For décor true  
Oh, beaming centre spreader.

**MP – in praise of decorative advice?**

### THE OFFICE PARTY

Secretary, switchboard girl  
In a polyestered swirl  
Streaked blond hair and glitsy bows  
Black and shiny panty hose  
Flimsy dresses, tinsel glitter  
High pitched shrieks and girlish titter  
Olive in a feather boa  
Unrestrained and quite a goer  
Star dusted highlights in her hair  
Spotty cleavage bobbing bare  
Golden striped, and ample skirted  
Sharon twirled and how she flirted  
Kevin's trews are far too tight  
Gracious Tracey, what a sight  
Lots of fun, and if they're tarty  
Its once a year at the office party.

A dozen earrings in his lobes  
The DJ calls beneath the strobes  
'I can't get no satisfaction  
Come on fellas, lets have action'  
Gyrating now, the night away  
Hardwork all year, its time to play  
Smoochy music, stolen kisses  
Most with other people's Missus  
Did the Roue go too far?  
A pinch behind the service bar

MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

'Disgustin' is the word for it  
For he who grabbed at Sharon's tits.

The night winds on, its nearly done  
All that booze and all that fun  
Ancient roue and slick young smartie  
Had a ball at the office party.

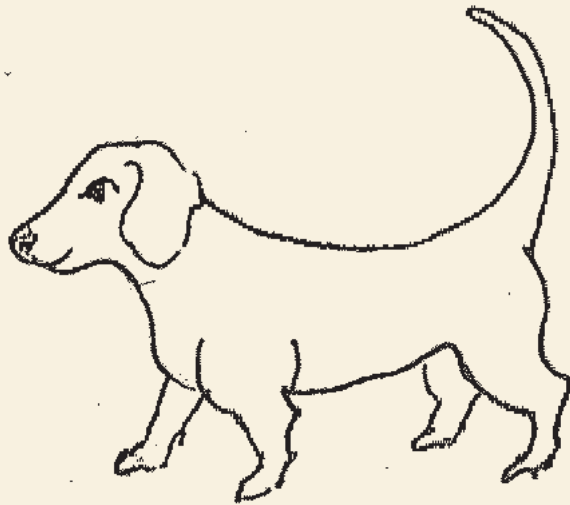
**MPC – not always the sophisticate.**



4

# **Dougy**

## **The Dachshund**



## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

Dougy, a dashing young  
Dachshund from town  
Was sent to the country  
But could not settle down.  
His owner had gone  
To a land far away  
To a hot jungle-y place  
Where he could not stay.  
So she sent him to live  
At Merrydown Farm  
Where the air was clean  
And he'd come to no harm.

Some cousins of Dougy  
Who lived at the Farm  
Would not accept him  
They disliked his town charm.  
Though he brought his own basket  
And own special toys  
They gave him no comfort  
From the mess and the noise.  
Of tractors and cows  
And owls hooting at night  
And the bangs of crow scarers  
Which gave him a fright.





## DOUGY THE DACHSHUND

As for the food  
It made him feel ill  
Nuggets of bran  
That stank like pig's swill.  
Which reminded him well  
Of some fish he once ate  
At a party in town  
Off a posh person's plate.  
His meals were eaten  
With dogs of the yard  
From chipped bowls of enamel  
His life was too hard.

He had always been pampered  
His owner's dear pet  
He was never allowed  
To be scruffy or wet.  
She would carry him high  
In bad weather outdoors  
In case the street dirt  
Might mess up his paws.  
She carried him always  
From carpet to car  
Although the short journey  
Was not very far.

He arrived at the farm,  
Clean, shining and fluffy  
Now the dust and the dirt  
Made him itchy and scruffy.  
And the mess and the mud  
Made his coat tangle  
It was caked and untidy  
And at an odd angle.  
There was no cosy corner

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

To doze or to hide  
The Farmer made all of the dogs  
Live outside.

Worst of all, he was bullied  
This happened a lot  
He could never escape  
From a mongrel called Spot.  
Spot was the top farm dog  
So rough, tough and mean  
And cruel to any dog  
New to the scene.  
Spot goaded the yard dogs  
To mock, growl and frown  
And this scared the wits  
Out of Dougy from town.

Each day at the Farm  
Seemed to him to drag by  
He thought of his home  
And heaved a long sigh.  
Gone were the carpets  
And cushions of silk  
China plates of chopped chicken  
And bowls filled with milk.  
He missed all the people  
And a beagle called Bert  
The yard dogs still mocked him  
His feelings still hurt.

When Spot bit his tail  
He tried to get tough  
And defended himself  
But Spot was too rough.  
So Dougy went out

## DOUGY THE DACHSHUND

To the far wood to roam  
To work out a way  
To get back to his home.  
None saw him leave  
Nor raised the alarm  
He squeezed under the gate  
And escaped from the Farm.

He ran through meadows  
And over a stream  
Where the kingcups were glowing  
In the sun's early beam.  
Coming at last  
To the top of a hill  
He looked back at the yard  
It was all quiet and still.  
Onward he ran  
Past a long line of trees  
With new leaves aflutter  
In the fresh springtime breeze.

He reached the far wood  
Where he ambled along  
To the buzzing of bees  
And the birds' happy song.  
Then to his surprise  
At the top of a track  
Two rabbits ran out  
One white and one black.  
To them he had said  
'It's a very nice day!'  
But the rabbits ran off  
With nothing to say.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

'You country folk are so rude  
'I've had quite enough  
'No more Mister Nice Dog  
'I'm going to get tough'.  
Douggy barked at the rabbits  
And quickly gave chase  
Up through the wood  
And all over the place.  
Across Fallow's field  
And along Fallow's furrow  
Till they slid down a bank  
And ran into a burrow.

The tunnel was dark  
And narrow and long  
Both rabbits had vanished  
Douggy followed their pong.  
Then rounding a bend  
He saw a dim light  
And a family of rabbits  
Then came into sight.  
Douggy slid to a halt  
On the soft sandy ground  
Old, young and teen rabbits  
All gathered around.

The pair of teen rabbits  
He met on the track  
The one who was white  
And the one who was black  
Giggled and pointed  
At Douggy from town.  
'You are really rude rabbits'  
He returned with a frown.

DOUGY THE DACHSHUND



'You have very bad manners,  
That is quite clear  
'You are Countryish Bumpkinish  
Animals here.  
'Country Bumpkins? Country Bunnikins!'  
The rabbits replied  
Laughing and rocking  
From side to side.

'Country Bumpkins? Country Bunnikins!  
'He does think he's posh  
'We needn't put up with  
That sort of tosh'.  
'We don't like your look  
You seem strange and foreign  
'So push off right now  
'And get out of our warren.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

But Boris de Borris,  
The boss of them all  
Who had been reading a book  
On a root near the wall  
Hopped hurriedly up  
His voice very cross  
'Just remember our families  
'Once came to this warren  
'From lands far away  
'So then we were foreign.  
'Hush and hear  
'What this dog has to say  
'And why he has come  
'To our warren today'.

Dougy then said  
He was lonely and sad  
And longed to go back  
To the life he once had.  
The ways of the Farm  
Had come as a shock  
His old self esteem  
Had taken a knock.  
He felt snubbed  
That the rabbits had nothing to say  
When he saw them and said  
'It's a very nice day'.  
To teach them some manners  
That was his intent  
To pursue them and catch them  
Where ever they went.



## DOUGY THE DACHSHUND

He explained that he once was  
A dear pampered pet  
And was never allowed  
In the dirt or the wet.  
Being a dog short of leg  
He saw ankles and feet  
But he'd never seen rabbits  
On any town street.  
And though Dachshunds were suited  
To go underground  
There were in the town  
Only pavements to pound.

Dougy then told them  
That Spot had been mean  
Because he was different  
And new to the scene  
And how all the yard dogs  
Would mock, growl and frown  
Which made life unpleasant  
For a dog from the town.  
He finished by saying  
'Don't think I'm a sneak  
But it's hard to bullied  
Week after week.  
We town folk will never be  
Wanted, I fear  
We'll never find friends  
Or be welcome down here.  
I'm a polite sort of dog  
Not aggressive or rude  
I can't help where I come from  
Its your attitude'.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

Boris looked at him thoughtful  
And nodded his head  
Glared at the teens  
Who shuddered in dread.  
'Enough of your rudeness  
You must turn a new leaf  
Let us welcome this dog'  
Douggy sighed with relief.  
So down in the warren  
Beyond the far wood  
Douggy was happy  
His life was so good.  
His new friends took care  
That he came to no harm  
He quickly forgot  
His time on the Farm.

The pair of teen rabbits  
He met on the track  
The one who was white  
And the one who was black  
Cleaned him and groomed him  
With brushes of teasel  
Taught him how to avoid  
The fox and the weasel.  
Fetching food for them all  
From the fox lair  
He enjoyed sneaking up  
To snatch what was there.



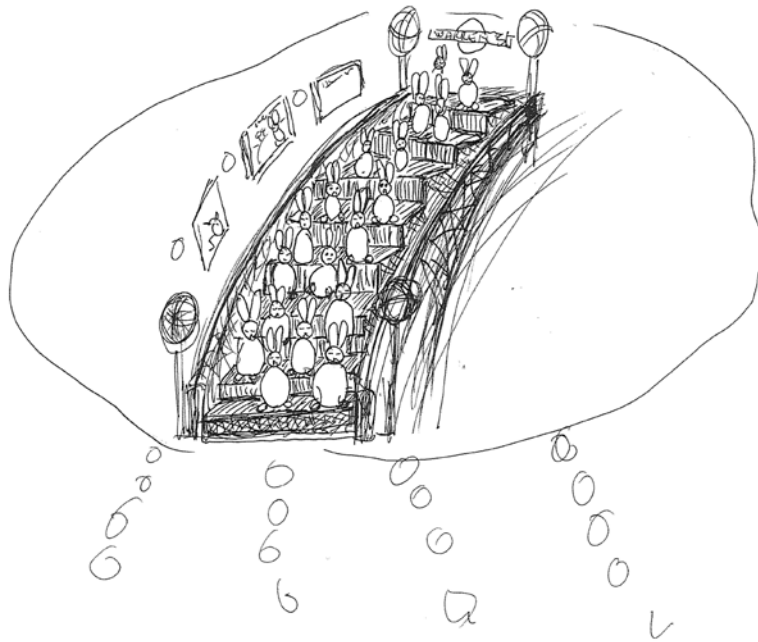
## DOUGY THE DACHSHUND



Most mornings the family  
Of rabbits sat down  
To hear Dougy's stories  
Of life in the town.  
There was no need for stars  
To light up the way  
When people went out  
To work or to play.  
As thousands of street lights  
Light up the dark  
In main streets and side streets  
And even the Park.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

He amazed them with maps  
Of the Underground scene  
With the lines and the stations  
Where he had been.  
And the great moving stairs  
That went down and up  
That he rode on quite often  
When he was a pup.  
And told them of tunnels  
And underground trains  
They asked for these stories  
Again and again.



## DOUGY THE DACHSHUND

But life was not happy  
Way back at the Farm  
Dougy's disappearance  
Had caused much alarm.  
The yard dogs were pining  
And filled with remorse  
They sniffed round the fields  
And searched in the gorse.  
They searched through the woods  
And warrens and dell  
Up to the hare path  
And the village as well.

But no trace of Dougy  
Could anyone find  
Spot now felt quite sad  
For being unkind.  
'Poor Dougy' he said  
Might be stuck underground  
'Didn't know that I'd miss him,  
Till he wasn't around'.  
And the Farmer felt badly  
He had let the dog down  
And had not taken care  
Of Dougy from town.

He said to himself  
In a very sad voice  
'What else can I do?  
I have only one choice  
There's no sight nor sound  
Not even a yelp  
I must call up the huntsmen  
And ask them for help.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

Their horses and hounds  
Know this neighbourhood  
And the way to the warren  
Beyond the far wood’.

That evening some rabbits  
Were playing around  
When they heard huntsmen talking  
Upon an old mound.  
What they were saying  
Gave the rabbits much fright  
They stopped at their playing  
And hopped out of sight.  
Then all turning tail  
The rabbits rushed back  
Across Fallow’s field  
And down the long track

Puffing and panting  
Along Fallow’s furrow  
They stumbled exhausted  
Back into the burrow.  
Telling their news  
They gasped and they spluttered  
The rest of the rabbits  
All twittered and muttered.  
Even Boris looked startled  
And put down his book  
‘Don’t panic’, he said  
‘We’ll first take a look.

‘Put up our periscopes  
And try to keep calm  
‘I want to be sure  
There’s no cause for alarm’.  
Up went the periscopes

## DOUGY THE DACHSHUND

Swivelling round  
The Farmer and huntsmen  
Were still on the mound.  
'I'll have to go out  
And creep very near  
'I can see what they're saying  
But it's too far to hear'.

Boris crept to the mound  
He hid by a thistle  
What the men said  
Made both his ears bristle.  
He returned to the rabbits  
A sad look on his face  
He said to them all  
'We must leave  
From this place  
Leave the warren tonight  
For the farmer and huntsmen  
Will search at first light.'



## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

But some of the rabbits  
Just wanted to stay  
In the home that they knew  
Not move far away.  
Till Boris said crossly  
'Can't you see, it's quite plain  
Something horrid will happen  
Should you remain.  
I am not telling you  
Any word of a lie  
If you stay you will surely  
End up in a pie.'

'Get into a line  
Come on and make haste!  
Muster all rabbits  
There's no time to waste.'  
They hustled and bustled  
And fretted and worried  
They pushed and they shoved  
And they bumped and they hurried.  
Mothers held babies  
Tight in their paws  
Toddlers shambled and scrambled  
And tripped on the floors.

Old rabbits they shuffled  
And held up the line  
Young ones bounced ahead  
Three hops at a time.  
Until they arrived  
At the top of the burrow  
And formed up for the flight  
Along Fallow's furrow.

## DOUGY THE DACHSHUND

When they reached Fallow's field  
They once again mustered  
Gathered their breath  
They were rather flustered.

Down in the valley  
At the breaking of day  
They heard yard dogs bark  
And eager hounds bay.  
And the sound of men's voices  
Determined and hard  
Mounting their horses  
Riding out of the yard.  
The rabbits feared then  
They had left far too late  
And trembled and shook  
At the thought of their fate.

Then Dougy cried out  
'Wait, this is wrong, don't you see?  
To put you in danger  
Because of me.  
If I should return  
To Merrydown Farm  
The Farmer will know  
That I've come to no harm.  
I'd be sorry to see you  
End up in a pie  
You have all been so kind'  
Dougy said with a sigh.

The rabbits then asked  
About Spot who was mean  
And cruel to any dog  
New to the scene.  
'Don't worry' said Dougy,

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

I'll be alright  
But the best thing for you  
Is to get out of sight'.  
Dougy said his goodbyes  
By the gnarled old oak tree  
The relief of the rabbits  
Was quite plain to see.

Calling 'Farewell to all  
I really must dash!  
He ran into the wood  
And was gone in a flash.  
Boris hid in a bush  
Listening and peeping  
At the yard dogs and hounds  
Running and leaping.  
And the sound of hooves  
Hurrying up to the wood  
Where Dougy was dashing  
As fast as he could.

Spot was running ahead  
With the hounds in a pack  
Although he was old  
His pace did not slack.  
Then his nose quivered  
Smelt a familiar smell  
From deep in the woods  
Beyond the far dell.  
Then suddenly  
To his great surprise  
He saw a small dog  
Of about Dougy's size.



## DOUGY THE DACHSHUND

And yes! It was Dougy  
He stood strong and still  
By the edge of the trees  
At the top of the hill.  
Yard dogs barked with delight  
Rushed up to their cousin  
Wagging their tails  
Nineteen to the dozen.  
But Spot stayed where he was  
And was hostile once more  
Growling 'Now that he's back  
I don't like him for sure'.

The yard dogs then snapped  
'Stop your wicked ways  
You know how you worried  
For days and for days.  
When Dougy vanished  
We missed him a lot  
So change your ways now  
You bullying old Spot.  
Now Dougy looks tougher  
And much more like us  
And no longer the town dog  
Who made such a fuss'.

Spot still snarled at Dougy  
'You may seem like us  
But to me you're a town dog  
A bit of a wuss.  
I'm still the top dog here  
So stay in your place  
Or I'll bite you and wipe  
The smile from your face'.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

But Dougy stayed firm  
He just would not yield  
He squared up to Spot  
Right there in the field.

‘You had better know now’  
Dougy then said to Spot  
‘That your bullying ways  
Don’t scare me one jot.  
I’m prepared to forget  
That you were cruel and mean  
When I came to the Farm  
And was new to the scene.  
I know I’m no yard dog  
I’m Dougy from town  
Sent to the country  
But I’ve settled down’.

‘Let’s go home to the Farm  
And run back at top speed  
Come on, follow me  
I’ll take the lead’.  
The dogs followed Dougy  
Till they reached the Farm gate  
Where Spot puffs and pants  
And said ‘Hold it, just wait!  
‘You are a brave dog  
I’ll have to admit  
But when you arrived  
I thought you a twit’.

DOUGY THE DACHSHUND

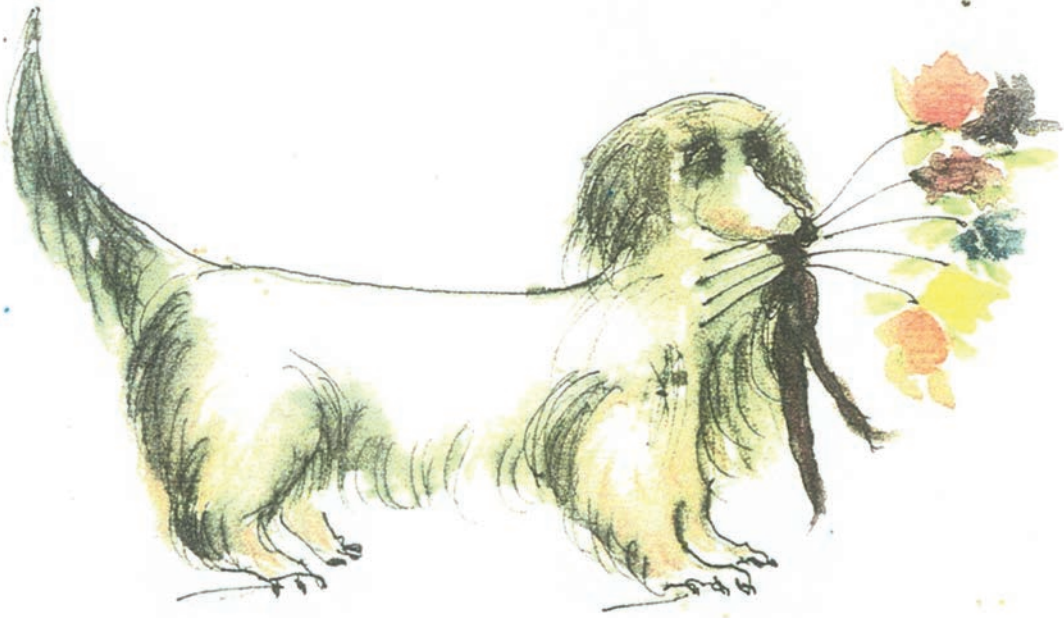
'And so stuck up and posh,  
That you turned up your nose  
At our tasty bran nosh.  
But you squared up to me  
Right there in the field  
And you showed all of us  
That you just would not yield.  
And we missed you so much  
When you went away  
Let's all be good friends  
We want you to stay'.

'I think', Dougy said  
'We've all changed a bit  
You're not such a bully  
And I'm not such a twit'.  
'I'm getting on' Spot replied  
'And now rather old  
And fed up with fighting  
And always so bold.  
I have heard people say  
Every dog has his day  
So you be top dog  
With me that's OK.'

The yard dogs barked out  
'We can all get along'  
And then from the far wood  
Drifts a rabbitty song.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

It came to their ears  
The sound of applause  
The family of rabbits  
Were clapping their paws.  
'I now know', said Dougy  
'I have nothing to fear  
We are all friends at last  
And I'm welcome down here'.



Smelling of roses

5

# The Butterfly



An Indian Butterfly.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

One day, not very long ago, a beautiful Indian butterfly was blown far away from his jungle home by a great gust of wind. It blew the butterfly beyond the hills to a place where lines of aeroplanes stood and people bustled about. 'Ah ha' said the butterfly to himself, amazed to see all those silvery planes standing on the ground. They were sleeping, like moths, with their wings extended, instead of flying high with him in the sky. Knowing that his species existed 50 million years ago, the butterfly imagined that he might have had a common ancestor with the planes at some very distant time in history.

The wind whistled and whirled, sending bits of paper and other debris spinning through the dusty air. 'Oooh, near miss' said the butterfly, dipping quickly past a particularly large piece of pink paper. Then, he himself, was blown through the open door of one of the planes.

It was still and quiet inside. He settled down exhausted in an overhead locker and fell into a deep sleep. As he slept, he dreamt that he was back in the jungle hanging from an orange bougainvillea, swaying gently to and fro in the hot sunshine. In his dream, noisy little brown monkeys leapt and chattered in the trees, and green parrots with a red beak (some with a tinge of blue and rings around their necks) swooped and screeched among temple turrets.

Then, a cold draught woke him. Huge hands reached into the

## THE BUTTERFLY

locker pulling out cases and coats. The frightened butterfly kept quite still, his wings upright and shut tight. When all was quiet he flew out of the locker, out of the aeroplane and into the open air.

It was grey and gloomy and very cold. The butterfly fluttered his wings to keep warm, then flew off, not knowing where he was or where he was going. Below him the roads were jammed with noisy, hooting cars and lorries. He followed the widest road which led him to an enormous City, far bigger than he had ever seen. He felt tired and decided to rest a while.

A letterbox at the corner of a street full of shops caught his eye. It was bright red and cheerful in the gloom. He swept down, landing gracefully on top and watched the people go by. They were moving like quick dark shadows along the busy pavement - they were so dully dressed the butterfly had to strain his eyes to see them. 'Oh why is everyone do drab? Where is the sun, and where on earth am I', he thought sadly.

Suddenly a group of women and children came around the corner. The women were carrying baskets and parcels in their hands (not on their heads as they did back home). They were not drab - they wore saris – wonderful bright silky saris. Recognising the clothes and the colours, looping the loop, he fluttered excitedly over their heads.

'Look, there's butterfly from India' one of the boys shouted, dropping his satchel in surprise. 'A butterfly from India! You're daft' the other children shouted. 'It is, it is, I know its an Indian butterfly, isn't it, Mum' he said tugging at her arm. 'Now Samagee, how could an Indian butterfly be flying around London? And don't interrupt, its rude', said his mother who was talking to her friends. 'Look Mum, do look' Samagee pleaded, but a bus arrived and everyone scrambled on.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

The butterfly could not understand. For one moment he thought his troubles were over. Now he was alone again in a strange land surrounded by strange people and feeling very hungry. 'It's no good, I cannot hang around here. If I don't get a nice nip of nectar soon, I'll die' he muttered.

His keen sense of smell led him past a supermarket to a flower shop. No one saw as he flew low between the flowers, sipping as he went. He sipped and sipped until satisfied. 'Mmmm, maybe life's not so bad after all' he sighed, and dozed off in a bucket of flowers. Again, he dreamt of home swaying among the bougainvillea blossom.

He awoke to a bright morning. His bucket had been moved outside onto the pavement. It was warm – he spread his wings in the sunshine, then danced over the flowers. Customers clustered around the buckets. 'WHAT IS THAT?' they shrieked, leaping about and making an awful fuss. 'Catch it, catch it'. 'Catch me, not likely' thought the butterfly, flying off at speed.

It was the same wherever he went. People stared in wonder or tried to trap him. One afternoon it was a near thing. He was resting on a wall when a fat man with a thin moustache crept up and snapped a net over him before he could move. 'Ahhh, got ya my beauty now...', the moustache quivered and a hand reached into a bag to bring out an evil smelling jar. 'Now, one whiff and you'll be pinned on a card and join my collection. This must be my lucky day'. The fat man laughed till he wobbled like a jelly.

He then took out a celebratory bun from a bag. At the same time, a cat walking along the wall saw the net and the butterfly, the cat stopped, sniffed and, in curiosity, tried to move the net with her paw. 'Shoo' said the fat man, sweeping the cat from the wall. Down fell the net, up flew the butterfly. The fat man leapt up



## THE BUTTERFLY

wildly waving his net, but it was too late – the butterfly was now high over the roof tops, floating on gentle air currents till the town disappeared.

The butterfly came at last to open country. It was full of flowers to feed off. Honeysuckle climbed in the trees and dog roses tumbled through thick hedges. Bees gathered pollen from fox gloves in the shady woods. Buddleia bushes beckoned from quiet gardens, and he joined other butterflies feeding off their purple flowers. He kept his eyes open for enemies, and steered clear of spiders. Each dusk he slept in trees while the moths were busy about their night's work. When it rained, he sheltered under leaves until the last drops had fallen and the sun shone again.

He drifted happily all summer long. Red poppies waved in the wheat. The corn ripened to a deep gold and was harvested. But soon, the first leaves began to fall and the days grew shorter. There was restlessness in the air now.

Swallows gathered and perched on telephone lines. Then he saw a crowd of butterflies, gathered as if for a journey. 'Better hop it pal', said one of them who described himself rather oddly as a 'Painted Lady'. 'We're off' said another. 'Off?' asked the butterfly 'Where, why?'. 'To Africa, of course! That's where. They've got palm trees and hibiscus – full of nectar, and its hot and sunny all day long. That's why'. 'But its sunny here too as well. I'm staying' said the butterfly. 'Suit yourself, you'll find out soon enough' – the Painted Lady darted off to join his friends. The butterfly hovered, uncertainly for a moment, staring after them as they took off in a cloud of wings. Then he soared, quite alone, over a high hedge.

He found himself in a garden. A stream flowed bubbling and splashing over stones, spraying the flowers along its banks. An old lady was weeding a flower bed, a wooden basket alongside her on

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

the grass. The butterfly dived down circling over the basket. The lady gently gestured towards the butterfly and asked why he was so far from home. ‘I will telephone Professor McGonagle who is a butterfly expert and from a family of explorers. He will know why’ she continued, speaking softly in Hindi. This surprised the butterfly so much that he followed her into her house.

Professor McGonagle arrived quite soon on a rickety old bicycle. His white hair stood out like a frill from his bald head. His baggy shorts were tattered and torn. His shirt pockets bulged. A large magnifying glass and a whistle dangled from a tartan ribbon around his neck. A rucksack and butterfly net were strapped across his shoulders and assorted jangling and clonking tin boxes tied around his waist. ‘Here I am, dear lady – McGonagle to the rescue’.

‘My my’ said he, his hair standing even further on end. ‘Well, well’ he said again, his eyes popping as he peered at the butterfly. It is indeed from India – and from the jungles – and of ancient heritage. But he is dependent upon a tropical or sub-tropical climate for survival. ‘Dear lady, home he must go’. ‘Oh Professor, you are wonderful’ said the lady in English. ‘All in a day’s work’ replied the Professor, lowering his eyes modestly.

When they all arrived at the Airport, the Professor was interviewed for Television. Cameras whirred and lights flashed as photographers crowded round taking pictures of the butterfly, now comfortable in a bed of cotton wool and fresh flowers. The butterfly dozed peacefully quite unaware of the fuss.

In a house in Hackney, an Indian boy watched as an odd-looking Professor was interviewed. ‘That’s him, Mum, that’s the butterfly I saw. You see I didn’t make it up, he was really there’ Samagee cried, jumping to his feet and pointing excitedly at the Television

## THE BUTTERFLY

set. His mother then watched the Professor and the butterfly and said "Oh dear me, Sammy, I'm so sorry I didn't believe you", giving him a hug. 'I should have known better'.

When the Professor arrived in Mumbai, he was met by more Professors all waiting to see the butterfly. They gaped and they gasped. They peered and they puzzled how such a butterfly came to be in England. They discussed and they argued, and asked daft questions such as whether Britain had ever been part of India. 'Should he be kept in England?' they asked.

However, Professor McGonagle said very firmly 'This butterfly like all creatures in this world, has his own special place to live, where he is comfortable. This is where he belongs, and he must go back to his home'. Allowing no more argument, he opened the plastic box and the butterfly flew out.

The butterfly fluttered his wings slowly, making long slow circles in the hot still air, then gradually gathered speed and flew away. Away from the Airport, away from Mumbai, towards the hills and the jungle beyond. Again he saw bougainvillea blossom hanging like bright lanterns – in pink, magenta, purple as well as orange. Chattering monkeys leapt and swung on the tall trees. Ringneck parrots flew screeching around the temple turrets. The butterfly swirled and spun for joy, circling high and dipping low, then soaring up into the blue sky of India. He was back in his jungle garden. Home at last.



## Jeremy's Journal

This diary describes a dog's life (that of Jeremy) for one year in the 1980's, incidental domesticity and the variation of Country and London life. Mr and Mrs P have a son William and a daughter Susie. Their country home is in Wiltshire and their London home is in the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. They have a dachshund (called Mum here) and her two offspring – Jeremy and Bengy. The events and dogs are real but the characters fictional.



## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **London, April 1st**

April Fool's Day – my birthday, one year older, but I'm no fool. Long suffering certainly. One has to be – living with this family. In spite of their shortcomings, I can't help loving them though they would try the patience of a St Bernard at times.

We three dogs went to Hyde Park. Paper cups, leftover hamburger buns and boxes of chewed KFC chicken bones (Bengy's favourite) but dangerous to dogs, littered the grass. We scampered from box to box munching as much as we could before being shooed away by Mrs P. I can't understand why she gets so cross about pop concerts and calls people 'litter louts' when they clearly know how to make a dog happy.

### **London, April**

Hyde Park again. Worried by six Japanese men looking at us in what I can only describe as a greedy sort of way (even at Mum – old as she is), but Mrs P explained that they were mostly vegetarian and fish eaters and not at all interested in dogs. Maybe I mistook greed for admiration. Anyway, it's the Chinese who eat bird's nests and snakes and things like sand worms in turtle blood and, horror of horrors, 'dog'. But strangers are not supposed to eye us unless we bark first.

### **Country, April**

Bright and sunny, but a nippy little wind. Rooted around under the oak tree by the garden gate. More aconites than ever peeping through last year's leaves and very pretty they look too. Snowdrops finished. Daffodils going strong. It took a long time for the cottage to warm up. The boiler wouldn't light. Mr P cleaned out the clinkers, lit up and almost set fire to the chimney. A 'heated'

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

exchange followed. Frankly, it does not take much to set those two off, so we dogs indicated that a walk would be in order. Mrs P came with us slamming the back door behind her.

### **Country April**

Scampered to Rowland Ridge's place down the road. Sniffed round the rabbit hutches and old cars dumped in his orchard. He certainly puts them to good use, calls them his 'cupboard cars'. He keeps a lawnmower and garden tools in the blue Ford, fertiliser in the three wheeler, and sprouting potatoes and chicken food in the van he crashed at Tinker's corner. The yellow mini without wheels is full of baby rabbits.

Mrs P and he talked about foxes, a subject that seems to fascinate everyone including me, so I pricked up my ears at once. The conversation went like this. 'Urrgh, t'was a messy sight indeed' Rowland Ridge said jerking his head towards the hutches. 'What' asked Mrs P 'was a messy sight?' 'Eadless rabbits!' Rowland Ridge replied. 'Ooh' she squealed – she can be quite a sissy – and pointed out that the hutches looked secure enough to her. SECURE MY PAW! We had already managed to work our noses under the wire netting. 'Ha, but they rabbits poke their 'eads right through the nettin' – then SNAP! down yer foxes gullet before ye can say John Peel!' 'How horrid' Mrs P squeaked again. 'Aarrgh' agreed Rowland Ridge rolling himself a cigarette. 'Utch of 'eadless rabbits, not a pretty sight' he added, giving her a sticky chestnut twig and a new laid egg.

### **London, April**

A dull rainy day. Dragged out for a walk after a chicken dinner. Resisted. Dug claws into hall mat and held on with all my might. So

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

did my mother and brother, but to no avail. It's O.K. for humans. Their under carriages don't get soaked and itchy. Sometimes I wish I had longer legs. My relations agree. None of us like walking in the rain especially after dinner – we feel so much closer to the ground. Absolutely refused to put my leg up. I ask you dear diary, how can a chap smell a good lamp post or tree, or anything in this weather? Held on until we got home and then had a sneaky one against the hall stand. Seemed like the right thing to do in the circumstances.

### **Country, April**

Mr P was looking at pea plants when Mr Sim's little girl runs up and tries to stroke Mum who naturally thought she was under attack and snarled. The little girl screamed quite dreadfully. Her reaction terrified Mum, who nipped her at once, then shot under the car and refused to budge. Mrs P returned from her bicycle ride after tea. She could not possibly tick Mum off so she ticked Mr P off instead. Although Bengy and I feel Mum has let the dignified breed of Dachshunds down, we cuddled together in canine solidarity, she is our mother after all, and people should keep their children under control.

### **Country, April**

Visited Cedric Brine's dad, Bob Brine, in the Village. They were burgled last Thursday. Two men distracted Bob Brine at his front door, while a third darted in the back door and stole Cedric's tranny, airgun and egg money, threw the empty egg boxes on the scullery floor, swigged the scrumpy and departed before old Bob realised what had happened. The Brines now lock and bolt both doors and told Mrs P to do the same. Bob's much nicer to us now



## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

he realises the value of having dogs around. Gone are the days of pitch fork chasings. He hasn't threatened to shoot us for ages, even saying I was a nice little fellow. I wagged my tail and rolled on my back for tickle tummies, which he did with the end of his walking stick. After all if a chap is appreciated, I see no reason to give flack. To basket early. Slept like a log.

### **London, April**

Jogging in Battersea Park with Mr P early this morning. What a lot of large dogs there are – dobermans, rotweilers – as well as bulldogs, German shepherds, etc. Big, fast moving chaps wagging tails, sniffing and barking and running in great bounding leaps across the grass. But we are not hunters for nothing and can go at a fast lick ourselves – though Mum is a bit slower these days. Magnolia and almond blossom towered overhead, it's all noise and hub bub. What with birds hopping about building nests and ducks quacking on the pond. I like this time of year, although the wind is still sharp, the sun is warm on our backs. Good dinner when back. Cold chicken and stale chocolate Bath Olivers, Mrs P found under her car seat. She is very generous, likes to share the good things of life. In my opinion, a stale Bath Oliver is almost as good as a Bonio.

### **London, April**

Leak in the cloakroom basin, water everywhere. The plumber (John) is here messing about. This afternoon a baby bird fell onto the back balcony. At times there are no bounds to Mother's greed. I know she enjoys raw meat, but we had just had a good mince dinner. She pounced on the bird and was about to gobble it up when out came Mrs P to spoil Mum's fun, with first her doggy

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

coaxing voice, that didn't work, we've heard it too often to take any notice, then the sterner commanding tones, which didn't work either, finally she pulled Mum off by the scruff of her neck. 'John, please come and pick up the poor little bird. I can't bear to touch it. I'll get a box to bury it in' she said, trotting off very agitated, returning a few minutes later carrying a large match box, with a picture of a soldier and a star on the sides. Susie, home from College early, informed everyone it couldn't be used – it belonged to William's collection. Nothing is ever simple in this family. 'Doesn't matter anyway' John said 'I've chucked it over the hedge'.

### **Country, April**

A lot of bird activity in the garden. Our holly bush is abuzz with them. Sparrows and finches are outnumbered by those yellow coated chaps with dark caps on their heads who seem to have made it their HQ. Swallows and swifts have returned. They sit on our telegraph wires chattering cheerfully to each other and fly in and out of the barn. The robins seem to have disappeared, except for one little fellow who hops around on the compost heap. Very friendly he is too. Just looks at us and gets on with his worm retrieval business undaunted.

### **Country, April**

I will draw a veil over these last few days. Suffice it to record we went to the kennels. Separate pens for Mum, Bengy and me, few home comforts, hardly any decent smells. The whole place ponged of disinfectant and the insecticide baths washed away our own personal doggy smells. A cocker spaniel in the next pen whined night and day for his owner who had gone sailing. The old spaniel is no sea dog, he is scared of water and refuses to get

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

in the boat, so he was dumped at the kennels with the rest of us unwilling inmates. I may like my fellow dogs, but in moderation. Best forget this interlude.

### **London, April**

Mr P collected us. Mrs P still away. He took us to his office for the day. Now there's a place to be! What a variety of smells. All those polished shoes. All those trouser legs. Milky drinks and biscuits and out to a splendid street with lamp posts for legs up. I wish we could go there every day.

### **Country, April**

Crack of dawn start. Hardly any time for our morning sniff or legs up, before what turned out to be a very good journey, mostly because a large fruit cake fell our way. For once there was enough for all of us. Not a crumb was left and harmony reigned. Not, however, on arrival, as the happy pair accused each other of leaving the Easter Cake behind. Mr P chopped up logs, Mrs P went off in a huff to pick daffodils.

### **Country, April**

Our first Easter guests are two jolly girls. Mrs P's youngest niece, Little Miss Victoria (LMV), and her friend Lallah. They think I am a dear dog, I'm sure they like me the best, confirming my opinion that most children have excellent taste.



### **Country, April**

More guests arrived today. Hall completely blocked with luggage. Managed a sneaky legs-up on a particularly interesting suitcase, was caught and put outside. All attempts at personal comfort foiled at teatime. Mummy and Bengy bagged a cushion in front of the fire so I sat on the big sofa next to Mrs D and was sat on by Mr D who thought I was a cushion. Hopped on to the small sofa and was swept off at once by Mr K who said that he did not hold with animals, especially 'rats' like us, imposing themselves on every comfortable seat in the house. 'Dogs', he said, thumping the arm of the sofa, 'should be kept in kennels, sleep rough, earn their keep'. 'Steady on', replied Mrs P with a defiant toss of her long fair hair, 'these dogs are Official Lap Dogs'. She glowered and gave my tummy a tickle. 'You can go anywhere, my little tickle tums'.

'Tickle tums! It's pathetic!' Mr K snarled colouring up a bit pink. 'No wonder this country is going to the dogs'. Going to the dogs eh? can't be all bad! There is no discipline. You let them run all over the house, sleep on your bed, it's disgusting and most unhygienic'.... 'Unhygienic!!!' Mrs P rose to the bait as usual 'I seem to remember your Oswald (his Oswald, that monstrously fat standard poodle) opening the fridge with his nose and ate nearly a whole plate of liver. I also seem to remember that you made a pate from the remains because you're so stingy and served it to your guests'. They are always like this – she and Mr K. They have been since they were children, an ancestor of Mum's told us. Mr P likes Mr K, we think it's because he says things he would like to say himself but dare not.

'Why is he so down on dogs? He's not that special' Mum muttered pointing her nose to his shoes which had clearly not seen a lick of polish in years. Mrs P told Mrs D we are not really lap

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

dogs at all – we are foragers who excel in burrowing down holes. Personally, I wouldn't mind being a lap dog at all. Mrs D said that she had often been accused of having a spoiled and pugnacious Pekinese. She sniffed and wiped her eyes and they both agreed on the importance of sticking up for their pets.

Late at night, Susie arrived home with some friends. Our happy greeting brought Mr P thundering downstairs brandishing his shotgun. There have been some awful burglaries around here but, as usual, I feel that he over reacted.

### **Country, April, Easter Sunday**

After breakfast there was a great deal of excitement. Mr P rang the Swiss cowbell and everyone including us, raced into the garden for an Easter egg hunt. I do admire Mum's sense of smell. She found and gobbled up three choccy eggs straight away. Lallah burst into tears. She said it wasn't fair and called Mum greedy. Mum shot her a look that would make a chap quake from head to tail tip. Final egg score. Mother, four. Bengy, two and a quarter. Me, one and three quarters, plus unfriendly growl from brother. Guests, half to one egg each. Family, half an egg divided between all of them.

### **London, April**

Had a bit of fun again on post duty. When the new postman shoves the letters half way through our letter box, I leap to grab them, he whisks them back, this toing and froing goes on a bit – sort of Postman's revenge, which he seems to find amusing. He is new and only a boy. He had better look out for his fingers.



## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **May, London**

What a May morning. Bright and sunny. The Household Brigade were practising their musical ride in Hyde Park. Soldiers trotted walked and cantered making patterns to music played by other soldiers, and the drummers sat astride huge shire horses who seemed quite unmoved by the banging of the drums strapped across each side their withers. What amazing fellows they are. I wish I could be a military mascot riding round in tanks, like Great Uncle Panzer, and win a medal for selfless devotion to duty like he did.

### **May, Country**

We left early this morning. The moment we arrived I sniffed it on the wind, squirrelly, foxy, badgery, woodland smells and something else besides. Barked to be let out. Humans, I note yet again, are frequently slow to react to a dog's needs – the not opening of doors on demand being one of life's great frustrations. Today was no exception. It took a lot of pestering before Mrs P opened the back door and we all rushed out, paused for a quick drink in the stream and charged up the hill to the woods. Bliss, oh bliss its bluebell time again. Nothing but badger holes and bluebells as far as the eye can see. Running under those bobbing flowers, nose to ground, senses alert, is one of life's great pleasures.

### **May, London**

Mr P's American friend came to stay. We took him sightseeing, walked up Whitehall, across St James's Park past beds full of red geraniums and fluttering flags to Buckingham Palace. Gates shut, poked noses through the railings. Couldn't see anybody on the balcony or looking out of the windows. I think I caught a whiff of corgi.

## DOUGY THE DACHSHUND



### **May, London**

My appetite has increased since the weird woman in the street told us the end of the world is coming. I'm eating everything in case it's my last meal. 'It is nigh' she screamed. 'No food. No drink. No night. No day. It is nigh, nigh'. Her laugh and odd smell always puts the wind up us, so we strained at our leads, barking and yelping. That sent her fleeing.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **May, London**

We sat by the back door in the sunshine. Relieved to note there is no sign of the end of the world. No sign of the weird woman either. An unusual absence of cats. The Nursery School children make such an exciting din at break time, Bengy and I wished we could join them. I have yet to meet the child who does not like me. I think it is my natural charisma. Mum disapproves – she thinks children are loud, fidgety and a nuisance. She stalked off in a huff to hang around Mrs P. That paid off for her – she smelled of dog chocs before dinner.

### **May, London**

I cannot understand it! Now they want a rabbit. As if there weren't enough in the country which, in the opinion of this writer, is where they should stay. Anyway, Suzie saw a lop eared some thing or other in a pet shop and said it was the sweetest creature she had ever seen. I think humans go a bit odd in the spring.

### **May, London**

Everything is upside down. Builders are working on the house again. We are on guard duty all day – like soldier dogs. My throat is sore from barking. I am put in mind again of our ancestor, G.U. Panzer, the regimental mascot dachshund. I wonder if he suffered from a sore throat.

### **May, London**

To Hyde Park this morning. Mrs P is back on her power walking again. These crazes come over her from time to time. Luckily, they don't last long. Saw a pair of pekes. Mum was reminded of Mrs D's old peke 'Fu Man Chu' who died in Kent just before Easter. He



## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

was buried in a boot box together with his very special little knitted mouse. He has a headstone engraved with his name, a poem and a picture of him and his mouse. His friend 'Mr Wong' pined for him for weeks and lay on the spot where 'Fu Man Chu' died refusing to move. Unhappily, Mr Wong died of a broken heart.

### **May, Country**

Miss Ferguson came to tea. I like her a lot. I never have to beg or whine for her to slip crusts and crumpet bits. She can only eat soft food at the moment, something to do with her gums, and her dentures being at the dentist in Dorchester. Never, she said, have the bluebells carpeted the ground so thickly. Whatever next? Any fool knows they are not a carpet, they are a roof.

### **May, London**

House even more chaotic. Builders swarming all over the place looking rather glum. Mrs P has banned cigarettes and loud music. I like these fellows myself. They give us tit bits. It was generous of them to leave their meat pies and sammy's on the floor this morning. The sandwiches were tasty but the meat pies were a bit rich. Our treat was somewhat spoiled, however, the old foreman's reaction. 'Git art of it' he yelled quite unpleasantly... "bloomin' dogs have eaten me dinner'. Followed by 'Aw no! I don't believe it! The filthy blighters have pooped in me plimsoles'. He thundered towards us. The writer and his relations beat a hasty retreat. There must have been a misunderstanding. In any case, it was his meat pie that had such a rapid effect on Bengy's bowel – and Bengy was not the only one caught short today. Unhappy me. Unhappy Mum and Bengy. Diarrhoea tonight.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **May, Country**

Terrible row today. Mrs Cole's whippet Willie was poisoned. He died in agony. She had a post-mortem on him as she thought a 'certain person' had done it on purpose. We all know Bob Brine is inclined to a little poisoning around the woods, but Mr P said he thought she was exaggerating and that she was an hysterical old cow (he doesn't like her). The post-mortem showed that Willie had indeed died from poison. He had eaten weed killer and Mrs Cole had killed him herself. As Bob said later 'that'd larn her goin' 'bout spreadin' wicked rumours'.

### **May Country**

Late frost. All hell let loose down here. What with the frost biting, our potatoes and runner beans and Mr P hoeing up all Mrs P's lettuce seedlings mistaking them for weeds. Suffice it to note, voices were raised. Then jubilation when dozens of dead slugs were discovered. The organic soot and salt method of pest destruction had actually worked. Then gloom set in again as, quite without warning, Mr Mountford's heifers stampeded down from Fallow's Ridge, charged across the field, and crashed through the hedge into the garden. Voices were raised once again. I want to go back to London for some peace.

### **May London**

They are still talking of a house rabbit. Makes me feel insecure. Mum says the only good rabbit is a dead rabbit...

### **May London**

William is on leave. We are going back to the country with him. We always have a super time when he's around. Front seat for all

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

in the car. Snacks at service stations. Free run of the cottage and the Crown in Alvediston after tea. They like us there. All dogs are welcome. They have dogs of their own, and two fox terrier puppies, who spent the evening gnawing bones between customer's feet. We left them to it. They are only young – one has to be indulgent. It's good to be with people who appreciate us. A great time.



### **June, Country**

Caught Cedric Brine skulking in our ditch. He yacked about there being too many magpies and said he would shoot the lot of them if his Dad hadn't smashed his new airgun while he was on the scrumpy. Chased a strange black and white cat into Colonel Trubbs' place, chased out ourselves by the Colonel. Dinner a bit rich. We all took the grass cure. Walked to village with William. The Five Village Dog Show notice has gone up. It will be held in our village this year.

### **June, Country**

Mervyn the lurcher hobbled past our gate this afternoon. Haven't smelt him for a long time and was surprised how old he has grown. His owner asked us to be kind to him as he is old, deaf, has cataracts to both eyes, and arthritis of the left front leg – she

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

having dropped an iron pot on it years ago. He is altogether in such a bad way that he has to be helped onto his chair. Mum said it comes to us all. As for me, I'm steering clear of ladies bearing iron pots.

### **June, Country**

Ran into Fallows Field for a romp. The grass is so high Mummy and Bengy completely disappeared when they were only paw paces away. Yet again life can be tough on we short legged dogs. Thistles scratch our tummies. Dandelion clocks burst in little clouds covering my coat and ears, sticking to my nose and flying into my mouth half choking me. Even the flowers fight back, buttercups and moon daisies, plantains and wild sorrell, flicked in my face, but I battled through to the top of the field and thought about life. Bitten on my right hind paw by some unseen insect. Limped home. Nursed paw, and removed various seeds from ears, coat and tail.

### **June, Country**

William's new friend has come to stay. She gets on my nerves, hugging and snuggling round him. We were banished from his bedroom last night, unlike William, he is usually so considerate. On my morning sniff around I noticed that her bed had not been slept in. She is a spiteful person and I don't like her sharp toed shoes. She shoves us out of the way with her foot when William's back is turned. She told us to scam after we took her to gather wild sorrel for soup. No gratitude. There is something else I don't like, she is always talking about food, cooks tasty smelling meals, nibbles at everything in the larder, but do we ever get so much as a tiny scrap? Not likely!

She had the cheek to call us FAT. Some chance with her around.

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

As for that supper they had on Sunday night, just the two of them, by candle light, very dim and unnecessary, after all the electricity was working. They became more and more giggly as the meal progressed, then lolloped onto the sofa, fidgeting and wriggling around. When we joined in William swore at us, which shocked me to the core. She said she was glad dogs couldn't talk – but we have ways.

### **June, Country**

Mingy meal. Her work we feel sure, but plenty of milk as they had over-ordered. She does not hold with dairy products. Says they will not pass her lips nor enter the 'temple of her body'. It seems that it is OK for us dogs though. What a load of piffle. Thank goodness she is going today.

### **June, London**

An uncomfortable night. Scratch, scratch, scratch. My old flea collar has run out of steam. Oh dear what a mistake to let the powers that be see us scratching. We are to have new flea collars, that's OK but the decontamination bath, urgh. What a fiasco that turned out to be. Soap in our mouths, bubbles up our noses bubbles up our bums, bubbles all over the bathroom floor. I hate having my tail washed, tried to jump out and was pushed back in. I haven't seen Mum so miserable since the baby bird was prized out of her mouth last April.

I bore the proceedings with dignity and controlled resignation, as I do for most of life's trials. After Mrs P and Susie had changed into dry clothes, they brushed us until our coats gleamed. When they finished, we charged into the garden and rolled in the grass cuttings which seemed to upset them.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **June, London**

Susie is definitely going to Australia – a working holiday. I only know that it is a long way away and over-run with rabbits and kangaroos, who hop all over the place and can kill a dog with their tails. I'm glad I'm staying here. Mrs P is in tears, keeps mumbling about people doing what they want. I wish she would apply that to us.

### **June, London**

The happy pair had a terrible 'set to' this morning. Mr P broke the dog gate on the stairs; we popped up to the sitting room and got screamed at for being there. It wasn't our fault. If a gate is open it is natural to go through it. Anyway, we cannot stand getting caught in the middle of their fights, it upsets our canine composure. Laid low in baskets.

### **June, London**

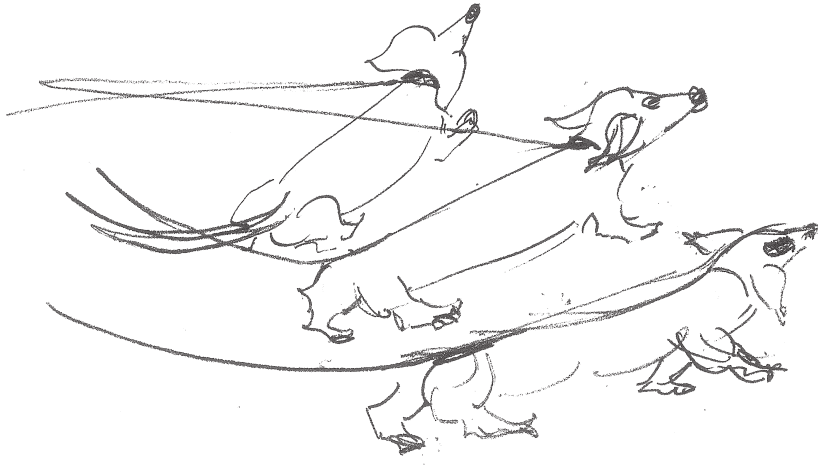
The weird woman came to tell us she has no date yet for the end of the world. She insisted that Susie fetch Mrs P (who was pretending to be in bed with a headache) to tell her the 'Triads'? were taking over England and that she saw 'Hitler'? in Kensington High Street this afternoon. He is coming back for good, which she thinks is terrific. Barked at her as usual. Mum growled. She does not like her smell, which hastened the woman's departure. Why do humans have to resort to subterfuge and don't see off unwanted people as we do?

### **June, London**

What a to do today! Baskets of grub were carried past our noses into the car – something to do with the Queen's horses and

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

frocks. We just gawped, hardly believing that any basket could contain such smells. Mrs E (the housekeeper from Jamaica) took us for a quick walk. She simply does not understand our need to sniff round lampposts or trees. We were yanked away from every decent smell so fast, there was hardly time to lift a leg. This attitude always gets the day off to a bad start. Family returned late in excellent spirits.



### **June, London**

The happy pair went off again this morning, all shiny shoes and new hats. I did not fall for the old biscuit in the boiler room trick. I ran through the gate, leapt into the car and slithered under the front passenger seat. Didn't that cause a scene? In a word, yes! Mr and Mrs P called and coaxed, alternating between the dog obey master voice, the threat tone – you'd better or else, and finally the Doggykins, who's a good boy then? Wheedle, wheedle, but I did not budge. Mr P tried pulling me out. I bit him. I couldn't

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

help myself, besides it's intimidating to be prized from one's lair. I make no apologies, they both behaved selfishly. Mrs P told her husband (in no uncertain terms) not to frighten me, I was only a little dog.

He said 'For heavens sake lets take him!' (a good idea) 'NO!' she said (a bad idea). 'Leave it to me. I'll get him out'. Will you? I thought. We'll see about that! Her face, framed by a hat with pink flowers, loomed over me. She spoke in doggykins. I growled, indicating my displeasure. She jerked abruptly, getting her hat stuck between the back of the front seat and the front of the back seat. 'Oh, Oh! Pull me OUT! Not like that, you idiot. You'll ruin my hat! Why are men so clumsy? And why did you let him out?' 'And why don't you SHUT UP?' Mr P shouted, pulling her out like a bung from a barrel.

'I'll get some fish. He'll fall for that!' Mrs P's voice had that determined rather menacing tone we all know so well in this family. Typical of humans to talk as if we dogs are complete dopes. I heard the clack, clack of her departing footsteps, then clackety clack back again as she returned on a waft of fishy smells. A piece of salmon held in her yellow rubber gloved hand dangled in front of my nose. Quick as a flash I snapped at it, and quick as a flash she whisked it away. This was repeated with increasing impatience and, I have to admit, her trick nearly worked, but this time I won. What a wonderful day! Everyone in the car park fussing over me. Kind voices and boozy breath, and enough salmon to last me a life-time. Slept so well, even Bengy didn't annoy me.

### **June, Country**

Went to Stonehenge for a run but couldn't get within sniffing distance. Every gateway and gap was blocked with farm machinery,



## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

tractors, bailers, muck spreaders, etc. There seemed to be a party going on. Music blared from caravans and old buses with painted out windows parked along the grass verge. Some odd-looking people sat around, smoking unusually large cigarettes and twanging guitars. A mottly bunch of dogs, mostly mongrels and lurcher types around. Mum had not seen so many hippy travellers since she was a puppy.

Police helicopters buzzed overhead like angry bees, then flew off, zooming low over the A303 which was choc a bloc with battered buses, old lorries and cars with curtains at the windows and horse drawn wagons packed with scruffy people, children and barking dogs. I cannot help feeling a teensy-weensy bit jealous. It must be a super life. Travelling all around the country, and new smells every day. Lucky them. Lucky us, we're going back tomorrow! Mrs P wants to take photographs for a foreign newspaper.

### **June, Country**

We returned to Stonehenge in our Land Rover, this morning. I like riding in it. I prefer the lingering smell of Labrador and pheasant to the stuffy smell of ordinary cars, and we can leap from seat to seat without being nagged about dirty paws. More people had arrived causing an even bigger traffic jam than yesterday. Police were all over the place, whizzing across fields on motor scooters, up trees, perched like rooks among the branches, surveying the scene through binoculars, and massed along the Ox Drove with teams of steely eyed police dogs. An ill-mannered lot, who neither barked nor twitched a whisker when we greeted them.

We parked by Mr Mountford's fields. He is still very sippy on Mrs P and very nice to us, considering he's a farmer and only deals

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

with working dogs. He was leaning against an oak tree looking at his field which was full of tents and people. Mrs P bounced up to him ‘How sweet of you to let them use your field! Doesn’t it look pretty?’ Her words had an extraordinary effect on Mr Mountford. ‘Pretty!’ he exploded, ‘I’ll give ‘em pretty! I’ve had enough of this. I’m going in!’ He leapt on his tractor and drove into the field flattening the tents and everything in his path, while fleeing hippies hurled pots and pans at him. Sounds of crashing branches and scuffling came from a thicket as the police thundered in and spikey haired men darted out. Mum growled at us to cover our ears with our paws at the disgraceful language. Personally, I do not know why humans make such a fuss about those dreary old stones. They are hardly worth the lift of a leg, anyway the Police stood in a ring round them.

Everything seemed more-or-less under control, until a line of people wearing long white robes were allowed through the police cordon, because they were Druids (whatever that means). Some travellers wielding branches and shepherds crooks charged in behind them and pandemonium broke out. Heads were whacked to left and right, fists landed punches hither and thither, people tried to bolt but got stuck in the swirling throng. A wild-eyed old Druid with a long white beard flung himself onto a high stone, yelling for help while the crowd battled around him. A helicopter appeared, hovering overhead. A man was lowered on a rope and, after a short struggle, the Druid was winched kicking and screaming to safety. There was more fuss later when people and dogs were put into Police vans. That meant all the most interesting smells were taken to Salisbury, or somewhere, and I lost interest.

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

### June, Country

Lots of fun in the field again. Out early, still damp. Spiders had been busy in the stubble during the night. Dew drops hanging like tiny glass beads from their webs, trembled and fell off as we chased each other about. Sniffed badgers by a newly dug set at the edge of the wood. We are not supposed to go into sets since Dot and Daisy, the Jack Russells, went down and never came out again. It is the same with fox and rabbit holes. What is the point of being bred to do these things, if we can't even follow our basic instincts? I love humans, but sometimes they just do not grasp the essentials of the inner dog. Went back up the field after tea. Put up pigeons, no wonder everyone complains about them, dozens flew out of the trees by the stream. Fox cubs played at dusk. Nature note: Bees are noisy, fox cubs have very sharp hearing and there are too many magpies.



### July, London

To Hyde Park after tea. It is so quiet in the summer evenings. Almost no joggers, or dogs, no squirrels or anything much to chase, just one old duck sitting in a mud hole under some bushes. The unsporting fowl flew off quacking when we ran at it. Some well-behaved Arab children were riding bicycles. Some were

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

sitting on the ground in a circle. They like us, but their mothers back off when we approach. A bit disconcerting for a chap as their faces are covered with veils. I prefer the morning walk myself, it's more fun, but Mrs P prefers the evening walk at this time of year. She says the scent of roses is stronger at dusk. I am a flower lover, have been since a puppy, but I can honestly say that nothing compares with the smell of an old bone, except perhaps another old bone.

Wrapped in towels for the drive home. Told we stank of duck muck. Mum, Bengy and self were bathed (quite unnecessary I'm sure we had one in April) and sprayed with flea killer for second time this week! What a fuss! Apart from that flea who tucked himself in behind my ear, fleas do not do dogs much harm, anyway in the opinion of this writer, dog fleas would not have been invented if they were not needed. Live and let live is what I feel.

### **July, Country**

Hot uncomfortable ride to the Cottage. Three fallow deer leapt out of the vegetable patch as we drove in the gate. Nasturtiums gone wild over the flowerbeds. Winter cabbage tops pecked by pigeons, carrots eaten by mice. Signs of rabbits on the lawn. It has been a busy week in our absence.

### **July, Country**

This persecution of dogs MUST stop. Even in a boy's school, dogs are discriminated against. All round the grounds and on the cricket pitch newly painted signs beam out the miserable message 'NO DOGS PLEASE'. Let's face it, dear diary, why pick on us dogs? Even rabbits have rights here and very cosy quarters too. New hutches and posh runs. I find the smug stares of sharp-

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

eyed rabbits almost too humiliating to note. SOMETHING MUST BE DONE. Dogs should have rights too. After all, it's us not them who are supposed to be man's best friend.

### **July, Country**

We will go to the Gunton Peverell Dog Show if we get through the village show. I hope I do. Evening walk to the village with Mrs P, Susie and Little Miss V for a sneak look at the Show Ground. Apart from some straw bales and two little tents, nothing was ready. Early to basket. Dream't I won the Show, then got expelled. Woke up with a jump just as I was leaving the ring in disgrace.

### **July, Country**

Morning dash into the garden sent dew drops flying and scared off the deer back nibbling in our veggy patch. They leapt over the sweet peas and ran into the wood leaving we three barking at the fence. Pottered round garden 'till dinner time. Great grub. Butcher's mince mixed with raw eggs and charcoal biscuits, followed by teeth cleaning. I simply cannot stand having my teeth sprayed and brushed, it's not natural and sets my nerves a tingle. This was followed by a bath. Our coats were brushed and rubbed down with extra attention to paws, ears and tails, thank goodness the bald patch on my tail has grown back.

We walked to the show with Susie and LMV. No excursions into ditch, stream or hedge allowed, they kept us on a very short lead, because we had to be clean – no dirty dogs could enter the competition. Humans place a lot of importance on appearances, especially for competitions. Of course, a well turned out dog is a good sight but no amount of grooming and pretty paws disguises a bad character. It is the inner dog that counts.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

Resisted the urge to mug a toddler for it's choc ice. Mum, however does not have the same scruples and polished off most of it, then licked the child's face and hands while its mother was yacking to someone. She glanced down saying 'Who's Mummie's best boy, den? Eaten all his ice cweam and what a clean little boy you are!' the child kept repeating "Goggy! Goggy" and pointing at Mum.

The village was crowded with people jostling about showing off their dogs, pretending to be friendly to each other, while scanning us all with narrowed eyes. I knew some of them but there were lots more strangers than last year. Well, it wasn't raining for once. In fact, the day was hot, 'perfect' is what Mrs P called it, with just a little breeze to keep us cool and flutter the flags that flew on the tent tops and posts surrounding the show ring. Stalls lined the street, all bright and cheerful and hamburgers and ice creams were on sale outside the pub.

A black van crawled along blaring out Mr P's second favourite tune – 'A life on the ocean wave' – followed by the Gunton Minimus drum majorettes swinging along behind twirling sticks. Big girls and little girls, fat ones and thin ones, wearing black hats and short swirling skirts formed up in front of the War Memorial and marched up and down on the spot doing extraordinary things with their sticks. The lines of white booted feet rising and falling in time made me feel dopey until I was jerked out of it when a golden retriever leapt towards the leader, a plump girl of about LMV's age, and tried to grab her stick. It took all the owner's strength to restrain the dog.

Suddenly Colonel Trubb's voice boomed out. I must admit it gave me a bit of a fright – the old canine subconscious recalled some unpleasant run ins – but he was just telling the competitors

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

to go into the show ring and register their names. Some dogs were obvious professionals, like that Lhasa Apso from Flowery Dean, who was here last year. I remember her smell and thinking 'How can amateurs even get a sniff in?' These chaps are used to shows, all done up swaggering about, doing the right things to catch the judge's eye.

Dogs from neighbouring farms and villages milled about barking excitedly. I have always thought Mr Mountford's Collies a scruffy pair, but not today. Someone must have taken hours to get them ready. Their coats gleamed, and their ears were like shiny black bows instead of the usual matted, muddy, old chewed carpet look. Other collies and sheep dogs, all unusually clean, and ponging of shampoo, waited together for the working dog class. They gave a display, jumping over gates, lying on the ground and rounding up flocks of confused sheep. The Mountford Collies won.

I greeted Monty, a friendly cocker spaniel with an incredible pedigree. He is descended from an ancient line of Spanish Retrievers. He was a bit down in the dumps because he had not been entered in the working dog class. Poor chap, he never gets a chance to show what he is really made of.

The gun dog section was bursting with eager fellows all waiting to go through their paces, Springers, Labbies, Retrievers, Wymaramers – and George. George is a bad dog in human terms, but rather a canine hero. He chases cows. No fence can keep him in or out and he killed a duck on the Village pond only a week ago. I cannot see what all the fuss was about myself. In any case, he didn't actually kill it. He barked, the duck took fright, flew up and electrocuted itself on some overhead wires, plunging the village into darkness and getting his picture in the Wessex Awakener.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

The duck wasn't wasted. Roland Ridge took it home plucked it and had it for his dinner.

George's owner is very nice, she was talking to Mr Mountford, they seemed to be getting on rather well. 'She's got a nerve entering him' Mrs P huffed turning pink. 'You're just cross that she's talking to that creep', Susie said. 'I agree with Dad, he's a jerk'. Mrs P stalked away with Mum to look at the stalls. Of course, Mum was not entered for anything this year on account of her behavior last year – something to do with her reaction to a judge and the judge's reaction to an anti-tetanus injection.

Greeted Pinky and Perky the Jack Russell twins from Pond Farm. Nice young chaps and as alike as two Bonios in a box. Sniffed at some strangers including a rather posh long haired dachsy, called Faustus, from the stately home nearby. A hunting horn announced the competition. Four judges stood together in an important smelling group, eyeing us keenly as we took it in turns to run round poles, and up and down between fences, and sit and walk on command. Spectators were clapping and encouraging us. I loved every minute, in spite of the hostile attitude of some owners. Luckily for me my puppy training stood me in good stead. I did not grab the bone like all the other entrants in my class and, it pains me to admit, even my brother. I stayed, walked, did a little run, walked again, remembered to hold my tail up and carry my head in the defiant way we dachshunds should. I sat tight while the judges stroked and patted us and looked at our paws, ears and right into our mouths. I recall it was at this point that Mummy clamped her mouth shut last year, with Ms Formston's fingers inside.

One of the twins, Perky I think, growled and was expelled at once. As were some others who made the fatal mistake of whining and had to leave the ring much to the annoyance of their owners. I



## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

let the judges feel my bones and check my muscles. This is where I have the advantage over my brother. He's OK, but my long low yet compact body is more dachy like. Bengy has a bit too much Dandy Dinwald in him to be truly elegant, but then I do not love him for his looks and he does have tremendous success with the female dogs which, within the confines of these pages, I have never quite understood. Oh dear, how these thoughts whirled round while I was being poked and prodded. I noticed the other competitors up to their little eye-catching tricks, putting paws out, tiny sighs, licking the judges hands, etc. Ms Formston fairly leapt back when a Lurcher licked hers. I just held my head high.

'This dachshund is a pretty decent dog, his conformation is excellent, a friendly nature' she said 'and an intelligent expression'. She stood in a huddle with the other three judges, who were looking at all of us intently. 'He did well in the ring and clearly is a well co-ordinated dog' she continued. 'I expect he would be a good hunter, given the chance. I have no hesitation what-so-ever in pronouncing him winner, not only of his class, but overall winner of the show'. I thought I would faint! Was I dreaming? But no, the judges were patting me and saying 'Well done'. 'I'm ten times better than him!' a Jack Russell muttered. The Lhasa Apso scowled and a bulldog growled. So much for canine solidarity, I thought, as glares spread from dog to dog like gravy over a bowl of biscuits.

But worse than the dogs were the owners. The smell of envy emanated from every one of them. The Lhasa Apso's owner could hardly contain herself when Col Trubbs announced my name over the loud-speakers, and Susie and LMV walked me up to the platform to collect first prize. Photographers rushed forward calling 'good boy' and 'over here' and 'great, great!' snapping their cameras.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

I sat beside the Digmore Peddy Cup with a suitably modest, yet intelligent, expression on my face. After all, I am not a bragger. I believe Bengy won a prize but I can't remember what for. Mum and Mrs P all happy again, fussed over us. I tried to ignore the hostile comments and sniffs whizzing around. I am of the opinion that comparisons are odorous, I won and that is that. I'll say one thing for my mother and brother – they shared in my triumph, and to think I go forward to the Gunton Peverell Dog show without having to do any qualifying rounds. Gobble a bone! If I win Gunton Peverell I could be Champion of Crufts. What a wonderful afternoon! Ran home chasing our shadows along the lane.

### **July, London**

Bengy has been invited on a picnic to meet Pixie again. Puppies are required. He is always being asked away for puppy duty. Beats me what people see in him. He was the runt of the litter, after all. Umph, hope they have fun tearing round Hampstead Heath. Never been there myself. Always stuck in these days, just slummicking around this dump. It is not fair! I cannot understand why females are attracted to him and not me.

### **July, London**

Botty very sore indeed. Quite off my food again. Bengy fussed over me like a mother hen, apparently unaware he had caused the problem in the first place by biting me there. Mum cleaned my ears, her healing tongue soothed away the irritation, but my botty went unnoticed. Mrs P had a fit when they saw the bite. Taken to the vet by William. Had to wait a long time, because of an emergency.

Eventually a weeping nurse came out of the operating room,

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

followed by a man and boy carrying a small bundle completely wrapped in a white cloth. Everyone bowed their heads, even we pets were silent. 'Do you want the collar and lead?' the receptionist whispered. The man nodded and she handed him a plastic bag. 'I don't know what I'm going to say to your mother' he said to the boy. The receptionist held the door open and told them quietly she would send the bill later.

It was our turn next. William held me while the nurse wiped the table with disinfectant. I'm glad she did, it had an unhappy smell. I was put on it, and the fight and bite explained. The vet seemed rather amused, even the nurse stopped sniffing. Humans do have an odd sense of humour, at times. The vet examined me, injected me and wrote 'Bite on Bum' in his notes

### **July, Country**

Mr and Mrs P left for America – Mr P works for an advertising agency – they are always competing with each other for junkets as well as clients. William is in charge again. Yippee! Life will be good with William. He is a true sport and is extremely generous with the doggy chocs!

### **July, Country**

To Heathrow with William to collect Mrs P. Concerned to smell other dogs! We dropped her off at her best friend's house, then returned to the cottage. The place is jam-packed with people staying for William's birthday party. We had to clamber over mattresses and sleeping bags to get to our water bowl. It is comforting to see that humans are not too proud to sleep on the kitchen floor or even in the bath, although it was a shame someone turned the cold tap on my namesake, Jeremy Dilks, while he slept.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

We all played Cowboys and Indians in Mountford Woods. Bengy and I were Indian Chief dogs, Mother a squaw dog.

William roasted potatoes and sausages on a little fire. Very generous his friends are with their grub. Later on they lolled about in the flickering firelight passing a large cigarette to each other, blowing smoke rings into the air and giggling in an extremely silly way. Suddenly, Jeremy Dilks went quite rigid and told everyone to keep calm and chuck the cigarette on the fire as he could see what looked like two policemen trudging up the field towards the wood. Of course, we had tried to tell them they were approaching but everybody was giggling so much they took no notice.

William told the policemen that Mr Mountford had given permission for the party and he couldn't see what harm they were doing. The Police Sergeant said someone in the village had reported an orgy going on and thought it might be a witches' coven (whatever that is) as there had been reports locally. The Sergeant apologised for interrupting. He said 'You know what village people are like'. They ate a sausage each and went off quite happily.

### **July, Country**

The Cottage party seriously panicked this afternoon. The sound of tyres and crunch of footsteps announced the arrival a day early of Mrs P and her best friend and her best friend's new dog, Minty a border terrier. Ignoring our merry greeting, Mrs P swept past us into the kitchen. Her voice seethed with "I might have known it" and "The moment my back is turned" "The place like a pig's sty". She pounded from room to room, her feet twitching frantically, the usual human reaction immediately prior to an outburst of rage. That came with earsplitting ferocity when the sodden mattress

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

was discovered. At this point the writer and his relations shot to their baskets and watched the proceedings in comparative safety. Mrs P told William the whole episode showed a disgraceful lack of responsibility – and what was the truth about a witch's coven up in the woods?

### **July, Country**

The dishwasher repair man came from Devizes. He found a mouse behind the machine. He jumped. Mrs P screamed. He said 'When a mouse is in, it's in!' This one wasn't. It scuttled across the kitchen and ran out of the back door before a dog could bark 'Trap!' After a fruitless chase we three returned to the kitchen to find the repair man full of foreboding. He shook his head and said with great wisdom 'Where there's one mouse, more 'n like there'll be another'.

### **July, Country**

Things have really been stirred up. Mouse droppings in the hall this morning. Mr P cleaned out the cupboard under the stairs. Mrs P had minor hysterics when a mouse ran out of one of her boots, then major hysterics when Mr P found more mice, a nest, and half nibbled biscuits and Bonios in a pair of fur boots. This might explain the holes in the Bonio box, which we were blamed for of course.

### **July, Country**

The ratcatcher came from Trowbridge today. He carried two plastic buckets full of little boxes with pictures of dead mice on the sides. A nice smelling man who enjoys his job, said he wouldn't change places with the King of England, if there was one. He told Mrs

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

He loved a good infestation, he had just come from a property where he had taken sixty buckets of boxes away. ‘A particular bad infestation, now let’s see what we have here’ he rubbed his hands enthusiastically and went round the cottage sniffing just like a dog and poking about, placing boxes in cupboards and corners and right up in the loft. He warned us dogs to keep away from the boxes, and suggested we get a cat! He said he would be back in a couple of weeks ‘to take the begger’s bodies away!’ This inspired Mrs P

‘All sorts of mouse have invaded my house  
They have settled in – on my patch  
The sound of their feet is very clear  
As they rustle around in the thatch.’

I hope that this is another temporary enthusiasm.

### **July, Country**

We collected the Gunton Peverell Dog Show entry forms. I’m being entered for the prettiest small breed and waggiest tail. Bengy for the biscuit race and best trick. We are both going in for musical chairs, most obedient dog and overall best dog in show. Raw egg mixed with butcher’s pet mince for dinner. Sunny. Good walk through Wardour Wood. Beech leaves make an excellent shade. The bluebells are over, their long stringy leaves lie flat on the ground. Champions still going strong and wild honeysuckle tumbling from trees. Lovely day.

### **July, Country**

Oh dear! We are in trouble for chasing the Kitten Cottage cat

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

and her three kittens through their own garden. We gave them a good run around, but being springy pawed felines, they all leapt onto a window-sill and hissed down at us. Their owner appeared from behind the water butt waving a broom in a most threatening manner. We bolted through a hole in the fence.



### **August, Country**

We are now officially on our summer holiday. No trips to London. Rather cold for the time of year. Grass damp on the tummy. Dug up my old bone. The one I buried ages ago. It's weathered well and makes an excellent chew. Carried it into the sitting room to gnaw in comfort. There is nothing nicer than an old bone and a soft sofa . . . Removed from sofa, evicted from sitting room to cries of "who let him bring that filthy old thing in here?" Bone confiscated and thrown into the dust bin. Later, I caught Mum hanging around the back door acting oddly sniffing the air with frantically twitching nostrils and sort of pretending to do nothing. When she thought the coast was clear she nipped to the dust bin, knocked it over, burrowed in and nicked my bone. She's been gnawing it under the wing chair most of the afternoon. Bengy tried to grab it but backed off at the warning growls. Early to basket to ponder on life's injustices.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **August, Country**

The first of the runner beans this year. Such a big crop, after all that frost fuss last May. Horrors! The bare botanist is back dancing on the downs. Mr Mountford rode over to warn Mrs P. He told her he had asked that the botanist put on his trousers at once, but the botanist refused and did something rude with a ragwort. All downland walks are to be cancelled. As Mr P went to Bath for the day, Mr Mountford tied Patrick the horse to the front fence and came in for a cuppa.

### **August, Country**

Dreamt I won the Gunton Peverell Dog Show. I jolly well should. The raw eggs are definitely working. My coat is shinier than ever. Worried about my tail. I seem to have suffered a slight loss of fur again. It must have happened when I caught it on some brambles the other day. After all, I think I am quite an exceptional dog. It's just that most people don't see it. A blissful day. Bright and sunny, with puffy little clouds. Makes a dog glad to be alive. The hazel nuts are filling out nicely. I think we will have a good crop this autumn if the squirrels don't get them first.

### **August, Country**

Trouble with a pig at Tarrant Pricket. They really can fly. This fellow jumped over a hedge and sped lickety split down the lane pursued by a frantic farm boy and a man on a tractor. They tried heading him off, but the pig would have none of it. He fled for his life, his trotters scarcely touching the ground and disappeared from view. He must have got wind of something. If it's not bacon today, it's bacon tomorrow. I'm glad I'm not a pig.



## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

### **August, Country**

Mrs A and Scruffy, her schitzoo, came for the weekend. Frankly, dear diary a more ungrateful, fussy dog I have yet to meet. She thought it boring here, hated getting her paws wet, had to be carried so her coat didn't get muddy and complained about the lack of street lights. As if that wasn't enough, she even brought a bag containing all sorts of goodies for spoilt dogs, including her own bowl, tins of the most expensive food and a special pillow. Nothing of ours was good enough for her. We were glad to see the back of her on Monday morning.

### **August, Country**

Saw Carlie this morning. Now there's a dog! She can hardly wait for the shooting season to begin. I must admit, within the privacy of these pages, I do rather admire her, in fact I go a bundle of bones on her! It is not only her sleek black coat and shiny nose, she smells so nice! Her brother is a decent chap, he's revving up for the shooting season too. Never been keen on shooting myself, but one makes allowances, besides Labradors like that.

### **August, Country**

Walked to an Agricultural Sale through Wardour Woods. Heavy rain in the night made the ground damp under paw. The beech branches formed an umbrella overhead – not a very good one, our backs were showered when the breeze stirred the branches. Being on our tri-lead in a wood is rather humiliating. I swear I heard rabbits sniggering as we passed. I have known One Barn Field since I was a puppy and was shocked to find it in such a mess this morning. Cars and trucks had churned the ground up, tents seem to have sprung up like mushrooms and junk was everywhere.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

There were dogs on leads all over the field. People, mostly men, jostled and milled about chatting, smoking pipes, peering and staring. I thought they were looking at me, after all, even with a muddy undercarriage and paws, I do bring a certain air of city sophistication to the rustic scene.

But no, not a bit of it. Black and yellow polythene bags and lines of junk seemed more important to them than me. What Mr P saw in boxes of rusty nails and bundles of barbed wire beats me, but as Mum constantly reminds us the human species are an odd lot. Fancy being interested in coils of old cable and muddy old poles! Mr J from Hookworth Farm was. He bent over them in a state of almost uncontrolled excitement, while Patch, his sharp-eyed sheep dog, stood guard.

Mr P strolled over to look at the big machine section. Tractors, trailers, bailers, chaffcutters, haymakers and harrowers, muck spreaders, and combine harvesters stretched all the way down to the stream. The stink was disgusting. Just when we thought the smell of engine grease would make us throw up, meaty whiffs wafted our way, followed by Mr P's favourite tune 'Land of Hope and Glory' and a hamburger van swung through the field gate. The crowd surged towards it in a most undignified display of greed, almost trampling us to death in the green wellie booted stampede.

We barked and nipped to left and right, and not for the first time seemed to cause amusement to the lower elements of the human race. 'Sausage rolls with teeth are on the loose! Mind yer ankles!' said one rascally smelling man to another, eyeing us up slyly, he whistled at Mrs P and asked her to 'Chuck Reg 'ere a couple' Mrs P turned away in disgust to look for Mr P who was nowhere in sight. 'Go on, darlin don't be a spoilsport! Reg dun

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

alflike a sausage dawg for 'is tea. Don't ye, lad' giggled the other man, pulling the tail of a mean mouthed lurcher, who growled quite horribly.

'Hedge rats! Nothing better than hedge rats!' snapped a lady wearing thick yellow socks and walking boots. For a moment I thought she meant us. Having been the target of many insults a chap can feel persecuted, but I was mistaken for the second time today. She glared at the men, turned to Mrs P and told her she knew who they were and where they came from. 'The scum of the hedgerow!' she snorted contemptuously, rounding on them 'We don't want your sort here. Get back to where you belong!' The men looked rather startled and darted away through the crowd dragging Reg behind them. 'You should have no more trouble from those two' the lady assured Mrs P.

She bent down and patted us. She had a whiskery chin and smelt of horses. She explained – at great length – that her family had always kept dachshunds; her late father had a hunting pack of us, and what game little chaps we were. Walked home along the foxglove path, flowers glowing pink in the afternoon sun. Mr P spent the evening sorting through his new lot of junk. There is no accounting for taste. This writer is of the opinion that the world is divided into people who like dachshunds and take us seriously and those who do not.

### **August, Country**

Feeling romantically inclined to Crispy, that young Jack Russell in the village. Bengy is keen on her too. Both shut in shed, our howling not appreciated. Col' Trubbs says we are a darn nuisance. I can't help it. I'm desperate for her.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **August, Country**

Our discount winter coal was delivered today. Unfortunately, the coal man is scared of dogs, and there was a little scene. All we did was rush through the back gate to greet him. OK we barked a bit, I'll admit, and Mum tried to stop him in her usual growly way, but she didn't actually bite him. The trouble is, not being as young as she used to be, having got her teeth halfway into his leather trousers she didn't have the strength to get them out. Her teeth became, as it were, locked into the leather. The coalman leapt up and down, Mum hung on regardless. The more frenzied he became, the closer Mother stuck. They danced a kind of wild jig together in front of the garage. When they were finally released, the coalman jumped back into his lorry and refused to come out until we were back behind the gate. Frankly, a most unwarranted display of cowardice.

### **August, Country**

Bengy went missing after dinner. We searched field and wood, rabbit warren and badger sets, but could not find him anywhere. The happy pair most unhappy. Suddenly, we heard Roland Ridge's geese squawking across the valley. That gave us a clue and everyone rushed there at once. Roland Ridge was out. Bengy had the run of the place. It was in an uproar! The geese stood near a patch of nettles in the orchard squawking frantically. Bantams flapped about in a pear tree, one of the cockerels ran round the chicken run followed by panic stricken chickens, clucking and making an awful din. Bengy darted hither and thither under the apple trees, sniffing round the cupboard cars – he did not even look up at our approach. Baby rabbits peered at him curiously from the yellow mini. At the far end of the orchard, hutch loads

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

of older rabbits huddled together too terrified to move. The only cat to be seen was Whiskers, who crouched in an apple tree hissing and spitting. I am not sure I believe Bengy's tale of how, single pawed, he routed the cats from the orchard. I think my brother is a boastful dog.

### **August, Country**

Betrayed by a mongrel. That wanton Crispy! How could she?



### **August, Country**

What a storm in the night. Thank goodness our baskets are on legs. Rainwater from the high ground swirled under the back door bringing mud and pebbles sloshing all over the floor. We all went up the hill to see what caused the flood. The Council had not cleaned the culverts, they were bunged up with mud and leaves. We gave the happy pair encouragement while they unblocked them. Mr P says he is not paying his Council Tax – the Council can go to hell.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **August, Country**

Fresh chicken dinner. Roland Ridge gave Mrs P two of his old broilers. She thought they must have seen a fox and died of fright. We could not possibly comment.

The bare botanist has left the district. Downland walks are to be resumed. Walked on downs. A glorious morning. Sky larks singing their clear summer song overhead. Ran through wild scabias and hare bells. Ate rabbit's droppings. Delicious. Given dry biscuits instead of a decent meal, something to do with our tummies. A ridiculous fuss. Will humans never understand the canine digestive system can cope with this sort of grub? Retired to my basket in despair

### **August, Country**

The rat catcher returned. He is well pleased with his booty. He told us that it was an exceptionally large haul. Enthusiastically, he said, and I quote, "If there was a pong, it could be rotting rodents under the floorboards.

### **August, Country**

A beautiful sunny morning that turned into a nightmare. Let out early and after a sniff and legs up against the new garden table, Bengy and I ran through the back gate and up the hill. I still don't know why, but for some reason neither of us could stop running. We zoomed across country through Wardour Woods and on until we came to Dandle Beeches. A big mistake, if ever there was one.

We scrambled under the fence into the wood and found ourselves tummy deep in what seemed to be a rubbish dump. Rusty tins and broken glass, TV sets, car tyres, bicycle wheels

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

and fridges full of earwigs lay among the nettles. It was dank and dark and the silence was spooky. Not a rustle or sniff of rabbit or rodent. The pong of rotting vegetation was overwhelming. Even a pile of filthy mattresses and a greasy old cooker couldn't wet the canine appetite. No birds sang and without them or any home bound smell to guide us we were completely lost. Keeping our paws high, we picked our way cautiously through the junk until we came to a steep narrow path winding up a hill between high banks covered with rotten tree stumps and wet moss. The trees were so close and overgrown with briars and spindly creepers not even a sunbeam could peep through the tangled branches. We climbed up and up until the path ended in a little wooden stile bound round with barbed wire. We wriggled under what we thought was the way to freedom, and promptly suffered electrical shocks. Juddering to a halt, Bengy and I both froze in horror! We were standing in a vast pheasant pen, slap up against a wall of dried crows and withered weasels! Oh gobble a bone, dear diary, I am used to the occasional dead mole hung as a warning to animals to keep away, but this was a sickly sight to see. Crow, weasel, crow, weasel, swinging stiffly by their necks in the breeze. That really scared the living day lights out of us. We turned tail and fled! Running across a downland field, scattering sheep to left and right, scrambling up a bank, we bolted under a hedge, fell into a ditch, scrambled up the other side and found ourselves on the main road with traffic whizzing by at an alarming speed.

Eventually a car stopped, a door opened, a man got out and bundled us inside. The car drove off at once. We observed a white poodle staring at us disapprovingly from the front seat. The man drove to a large brick building. He carried us both inside and the poodle came too. Our man spoke with some other men who had

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

shiny silver buttons and badges on their jackets and I realised that we were in a Police Station. After a lot of umming and comments on pet owners responsibilities, notes taken in a book, and a 'Right you are then', we were handed over. 'Come along, Donald.' Said the man, the poodle stuck his head up in a superior manner and trotted after him, his owner.

We were locked in a cage. A bowl of water and some uneatable bran mash was shoved in with us. After a sleepless night kept awake by Bengy's scratching – he must have caught a flea from Donald – the happy pair arrived to take us home. 'Boys, boys! You led us a merry dance,' Mrs P sighed 'We searched the woods, dug out a warren below the Hanging and went to the pheasant pens'. Mother shuddered muttering "Poor weasels, poor crows" over and over again. I agree.

### **August, Country**

Oh dear. We think Bengy has been hit by a car. He looks awful, lists to one side and topples over when he walks, which being short of leg is, luckily, not too far to fall. I had not noticed until now what ungainly shoulders he has, but I am not a dog to kick a dog when he's down, so I comforted him with friendly licks. I love my brother, very much. Bengy to the vet. All he has is a tiny cut paw, and to think my excema went unnoticed for ages.

### **August, Country**

Started a new box of choccy drops. Biscuit rations doubled. I've said it before and I'll say it again. It's all or nothing here, there is not much consistency in this family. Buried my marrow bone in a secret place under the rose bush by the garage. Had another anxiety dream about the Gunton Peverell Dog Show.



## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

### August, London

William returned from his hols in France. He said that they eat frog's legs and snails over there and would probably make garlic sausages out of Bengy and me. He said even Mum would be made into a big greasy sausage. Laughs from everyone except us. In spite of his affectionate greeting, I feel uneasy when these topics are raised. Retired early to the security of my basket.



### September, London

Swallows are gathering in Kensington, swooping about making an awful racket. Every TV aerial and overhead wire is covered with them, pushing and jostling each other along to get a decent perch. It seems like they arrived only yesterday and any day now they'll be off again. To basket early. Kept awake by Bengy and Mum. A scratchy night for all three of us.

### September, London

Still itchy. Extra good grub today. Chicken minced with onions and carrot peelings. Very tasty. I made the mistake of scratching in public. Everything in the boiler room sprayed, including us. To be honest, I think I prefer scratching to being sprayed, especially under the tail. Fleas are a nuisance, but I've said it before and I'll

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

say it again: If we weren't meant to have them, we wouldn't.

The Council are laying pipes and to add to the din Mrs P has started singing lessons. It's enough to drive a dog demented. The only consolation is these crazes don't last long. Mum was most unfriendly to a guest this afternoon. Well, he was wearing jeans. She was ticked off and banished to her basket. I feel deeply shocked, after all, she is getting on in years and has never liked men in jeans. Bengy smarmed up to the victim and was given a chocolate biscuit. He refused to share it. That dog is a continual source of disappointment to me.

### **September, London**

The happy pair gave a dinner party tonight. Us lot shut in the boiler room as usual, having fallen for the old biccy in the basket trick, but I managed to sneak out undetected, enter the dining room and lie quietly under the table, until Bengy joined me in quarrelsome mood. We cuffed and scrapped, rolling over and over, causing the guests to simultaneously lift their feet off the floor. Susie and Mr P crawled under the table, and were trying to separate us, when Mum staggered into the room her mouth wide open, gasping for breath and stinking of fish. 'Oh, My God' Mrs P blurted in horror 'Doris has a fish bone stuck in her throat!' We barked and couldn't stop, the guests were all talking at once" Get a vet! Get a vet" Mrs P said, turning Mum upside down. The more agitated she became the harder she shook poor Mum whose eyes were popping out of her head. 'Go on get the vet! Get the vet!'

Mr P replied that he would not get the vet, he would remove the fish bone himself (not worthy of a professional eh? Now we know where we stand) and could everyone calm down. So saying he put his fingers into Mum's mouth, and sprang back at once

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

yelping in pain. Mother had managed to bite him with her side-teeth and was wriggling like an eel. Susie fetched a T shirt and tied Mum into it, talking gently and comforting her while Mr P tried gripping the fishbone wedged between her back teeth and tonsils, watched by the now silent guests. At last he removed the offending bone and held it up triumphantly to a round of applause!

### **September, London**

Mum completely recovered. Rested in her basket most of the day. A liquid dinner for all. One must take the smooth with the rough, I suppose.

Visited Mrs P's sister on our way to the Cottage. Lottie smells super. I think I'm falling in love with her. Unfortunately for me, Bengy feels the same. Rampaging around the back door, then hurling himself at me. Brothers we may be, but at times like this I find it hard to like him.

### **August, Country**

A group from the West Country Flora Protection Society turned up this afternoon and parked their van in Bob Brine's gateway. He was very rude to a nice man wearing a zip up cardigan with reindeer galloping all over it and interesting smelling sandals. Someone had reported sighting a rare flower in Fallow's Field. The members darted hither and thither, but no flower was found. Bob Brine said who did they think they were? They should shove off back to Dorchester where they belong.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



### **September, Country**

Rummaged in the compost heap. It was in an awful mess. Tea bags, beetroot and other veg peelings had been scattered about during the night. Feathers and bird bones and a strong smell of fox. So Bengy and I were right – that dog fox chap who hangs round the poultry farm had slunk down from the blue bell wood to scavenge. We had barked our warning barks of course and were told to shut up. Our selfless concern for the protection of others went unappreciated as usual. It took Mr P some time and a lot of muttering to tidy up the mess.

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

### **September, Country**

Mrs P out all day. She was not the only thing to go out. So did the Rayburn, and jolly cold the kitchen is without it at this time of year. An unusually horrid dinner. Mother left hers. Bengy does not have the same discerning palate. After he gobbled Mum's grub he tried snatching mine but I stood guard over my bowl while he paced around growling. I see no reason to share even foul food.

The pong which has been troubling the happy pair for days finally traced to a dead mouse in the sitting room cupboard. It is interesting to note that humans seem a lot nicer when they sniff instead of talk.

### **September, London**

Out early to Hyde Park. A lovely misty autumny morning. Plenty of leaves to run through. My goodness, Mum's got pluck. We were walking along the Serpentine minding our own business when a Rottweiler became frisky with her. Mum wasn't having any of it. Her hackles stood on end. She swung round snarling in a way I've never seen before and grabbed his leg! He, the coward, bolted across the Park. His man chased after him shouting 'Heel Himmler, Heel'. In future pick on someone your own size, say I.

### **September, London**

Our chum Beezum came round after dinner. All four of us went down the King's Road with Susie – feeling like the four dogs of the Apocalypse. It pains me to note that everyone we passed looked at Beezum not at us and said things like 'Oooh' and 'Aaaah', and 'Isn't she sweet. It is a little girl then?' We met Susie's friend Jo Jo by the Town hall. She went into hysterics of delight over Beezum squealing 'I like Roughies best. They're adorable, I like little

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

ickle wickle Dandy Dinwalds' Yuk! Its enough to make this writer wretch. Noses thoroughly out of joint. Continued on our walk. Beezum spent the night with us.

### **September, London**

Feverish cupboard clearing all day. I think the dead mouse sparked it off. The fact that this happened a hundred miles away seems to have been over-looked. Never in all my life have I smelt the tiniest whiff of mouse in this house. I was born here, so I should know. Mother and Bengy agree.

Rupert (Mrs P's gay friend) helped sort old clothes into rubbish bags. 'Oh no!! he's got my school netball knickers!!' Mrs P sounded extremely cross. 'Give me a break please! You sure hang onto everything' Rupert shook his head sighing through pursed lips. 'I keep these things for fashion reference They don't make them like that anymore'. 'I should hope not' said he bagging all sorts of stuff up when Mrs. P's back was turned. 'Drop! There's a good dog' she tried the usual coaxing, but Bengy took no notice. He bounded about until he was caught. The garment now looking somewhat the worse for wear was prised from him and immediately cut into little squares.

### **September, London**

The purging continues. Mrs E (the cleaner cum housekeeper) grumpy – as she is not to have new dusters, but instead the knicker squares and T shirts with the sleeves cut off. She said that her 'lady friend' has yellow dusters, paper dishcloths and blue things dangling in the lavatory. 'That is not our policy' Mrs P told her 'we believe in recycling, but these stinking things will have to go on the bonfire'. So saying, she threw away our dog blankets

and replaced them with worn out jumpers smelling of washing powder. Gone are the cosy reminders of reassuring smells. Had a nightmare, dreamt I was locked in the larder without food, only burning blankets.

**September, Country**

Mushrooming this morning in Down Barn Field. Very disappointing, just a few near the stream, but hardly any in the rest of the field as the grass has grown too long, so we went for a walk instead. All scampered to the top of the Downs. Butterflies – mostly Red Admirals and Chalk Blues fluttered about. Mrs P picked branches of Hawthorne berries and got stuck on a bank. Lucky for her Mr Mountford rode past on Patrick and rescued her. I'm going off him a bit myself. The way he smarms round Mrs P.

**September, Country**

Some days are good dog days and some are not. Today was definitely not Bengy's day. Mr P reversed over him with the car. There was a dreadful crunch followed by a muffled squeak. Bengy lay lifeless and bleeding in front of the garage. Mum and I are terribly upset and, as for Mrs P, she had a lot to say to Mr P. Luckily Bengy was not killed, just bruised and cut. He was brought back returned from the vet with a bandage round the gash in his middle. It was awful. He lay in his basket and didn't want to play at all. Household very worried. A rather gloomy atmosphere. Mum and I slept on Mrs P's bed.

**September, Country**

Bengy perked up when the Vicar, who wears a dog collar, came for tea. My brother was paid so much attention, Mum and I jumped on

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

the Vicar's lap to remind him of our presence. He smells a decent sort of fellow, but I know that he is mistaken about St Francis of Assisi loving all animals. No one, not even a saint, could love cats.

### **September, London**

A beautiful sunny day. Returned to London after tea. Beat Bengy into the car, easy for a change. He is still weak and had to be lifted onto the front seat. Nothing weak about his vocal chords however. I wedged myself in to the corner of the back seat, standing on my hind legs, so had a tremendous view of the countryside whizzing past and dogs in other cars. Three identical bull terriers in a battered little van hung out of the passenger window barking and moving their heads from side to side like one dog. It was great until we got to the A303 which was jam packed with returning holiday makers. Mr P should know better. We crawled along for hours.

### **September, London**

The happy pair have gone to America. Susie is staying with Jo Jo. William in charge, again. Yippee. Had a good time with the post this morning. William doesn't mind at all. Referred to as Rats by Mr Pillyard and his men. I don't like Mr Pillyard any more but ate his packet of digestive biscuits before dinner. Not out of spite, but because they were there. Life is good.

### **September, London**

Mr Pillyard furious when we charged over the flower bed and flattened some flowers. He had quite a lot to say to William on the subject. 'Mr Pillyard', said William 'it is natural for dogs to chase cats. I would be going against nature to deny them that right'.



## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

'Weel, I'd rather not be around when you explained that to your Mum' he replied, then ran at us with a rake when William went inside.

### **September, London**

Mrs P returned. Not pleased to find steps unfinished, balconies still full of rubbish and the rest you can imagine. She became very moody and voiced my own thoughts about Mr Pillyard. William has rigged up a winch on the balcony. He attached a laundry basket to it and lowered us into the garden. It's tremendous fun going up and down. She perked up when William demonstrated his winch. She likes inventions. Good lamb dinner. Tickle tummies and cuddles on Mrs P's bed notwithstanding. It is good she is back.

### **September, Country**

Still recovering from my first ever train journey. How humans can do that rush and scramble every day beats me. In our dash to get tickets we were bumped into, trodden on and tripped over, swerving and weaving and dodging round and through a forest of legs whirling in every direction, with no consideration to man's best friend. Sprinting through a gate, past two pairs of feet wearing black boots with Mrs P huffing and puffing at the other end of our tri lead we joined a line of people running along a platform. Scrambled onto the train with a friendly smelling man. Somehow, and I'm not exactly sure how it happened, we wrapped ourselves round his ankles and became locked together. Mrs P and the man clung to each other when the train moved off with a jerk, plummeting all five of us into a compartment. A collie laying under one of the tables didn't bat an eyelid as we stumbled past in a muddle of leads and legs.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

The train gathered speed, rocking along the line. The man, who took it all very well, hung on to the back of a seat. Mrs P, in best behaviour apologetic mode, crouched at his feet trying to unravel our lead while the other passengers peered over the tops of their newspapers. Released at last and sat down. But, not for long. Dogs, it seems are not allowed on seats. Mum sulked in her usual way, she gets grumpier and grumpier, it must be old age, but Bengy and I didn't mind. I like a change of scene, always have, new smells are great. Anyway, there we were, clickety clacking, sitting nose to shoe among strangers and sniffing an assortment of scruffy footwear.

Eventually the clickety clack became a trundle, the train slowed down, and stopped at a station. Some passengers got off and a woman carrying a cat in a cage got on. She put the cage on the floor under the table. The moment the cat clapped eyes on the collie it went demented, twirling round and round, hissing and spitting through the bars. The Collie barked back, and Mum sprang into action, hurling herself at the cat, and yes, yes, yes so did we, as much as any chap can on the length of a lead. Our reaction seemed to amuse the passengers, all except the owner of the cat who became most unpleasant to the owner of the collie. Someone muttered something about the railways being taken over by livestock, so Mrs P took us, protesting, into another compartment.

As we approached Tisbury station we made our way to the door, Mrs P, carrying the writer, who had an excellent view (the old sore paw trick works wonders). The train had almost stopped, when quite suddenly it picked up speed again, through and out of the Station. The passengers shouted and banged on the doors, but no one could get off. The last I saw of the station were some frantic

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

figures jumping up and down, and Susie and Little Miss V waving their arms and, Cedric Brine's cousin, Oliver Brine, the station master, doing a sort of dance along the platform. We flew past the onion works, past the sewage works (tremendous aroma there), picked up speed past the pig farm, the rookery, the little stream, the old level crossing where William fell off his motor bike, the quarry, and field after field of sheep and cows. The noise from the passengers was deafening, but as a writer I felt gratitude for the new words describing our railway system including some old familiar ones Mr P uses when he stubs his toes or bangs into things. The railway company had better watch out because this lot are on the warpath.

### **September, London**

Top floor in an uproar. Ruck sacks and suitcases all over the place. Mum is in a terrible depression – the sight of suitcases always sets her off. Susie's girl friends in and out of the house all day. Spent the night on Susie's bed cuddling up to her.



## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **October, London**

Susie left for Australia. We all went to Heathrow to see her off. A rather strained atmosphere in the car. Mr P silent. Mrs P sniffing. Susie said she couldn't understand why they were in such a hump as she was hardly ever at home. And anyway it was for only six months, and as she had been sent to boarding school, which was the meanest thing any parent could do, it had probably psychologically scarred her for life.

Poor Mrs P was in a bad emotional state on the journey home, so we snuggled round and tried to comfort her. It is most upsetting when a member of the family is unhappy. The house does feel strangely empty. The not so happy pair had a slug of whisky each and Mrs P set to cleaning out the boiler room with a vengeance, throwing everything onto the balcony. A half chewed Bonio, I have been hoarding (who said dog's weren't prudent and that they gobbled everything down straight away) was discovered and thrown out, our baskets scrubbed and jumpers soaked in a biological powder, removing every decent familiar smell. Then she turned her attention on us, brandishing brush, comb, and more new flea collars, something to do with what the pet shop man calls an infestation due to unusually warm weather for the time of year. I have an awful feeling there will be a lot more of this fussing from now on. I suppose when Mum's fleas have gone she will sleep on Mrs P's bed, again. She has always been her favorite. At times like this, we all need extra love and tickle tummies.

### **October, London**

To Hyde Park early. The traffic nose to tail from one end of the park to the other. Mrs P still gloomy. We chased joggers and pigeons, then turned our attention on a tall man walking slowly round

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

the Albert Memorial reading a book and smelling of Spaniel. His shoes were so shiny I could see my face in them and on glancing up I saw he wore a dog collar. Mrs P got into conversation, as she does with everyone, and told him how unhappy she feels about Susie away on the other side of the world. He told her not to worry, the Lord would look after her. Mrs P replied that in spite of the Lord, men have wicked ways with pretty young girls. We followed him as he walked slowly round the Albert Memorial reading a book. He was, he explained, Spanish, and a priest at a hall of residence in West London, where they kept a Cocker Spaniel.

A parking attendant, shooed us away in the car park, then ticked Mrs P off for parking over the yellow line. A short sharp exchange followed. Family solidarity forbids further comment. Apart from that, a quiet time was had. Very few cats about. Excellent dinner. Basket early.

### **October, Country**

Quiet day. Warm for the time of year. Noticed a swallow on the washing line, and one or two stragglers still hanging around. They had better get cracking before it's too late.

### **October, Country**

Mrs P's French school friends are staying, and very nice they are too. We took them to Durdle Dor for a picnic treat. All the holiday makers have gone home now. The place was deserted. Just us, a few left over butterflies whirling about helplessly in the wind and the gulls crying overhead. We ran along the cliff tops – at times nearly swept off our paws trying to keep a grip on the short coarse grass, not easy with a south westerly blowing up our tails unbalancing us. Scrambled down a steep, stony path to the beach

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

followed by the ladies.

We crouched between some large rocks, huddling together out of the wind while the waves crashed on the shore sending foam and spray flying about. Mrs P unpacked the picnic basket. The wind and salty air made it hard for us to pick up smells, but not those gulls, circling round, quite undaunted by our barks, swooping with their great greedy beaks to grab our grub. The French ladies giggled and said things like ‘Oo ze Engleesh are extroadinaire’. ‘In France, eet ez not ze custom to have picnics in ze ‘igh wind’. They became extremely giggly after the soup which I noticed, on licking the mug out, had a strong taste of booze. Made a hasty retreat back up the path in the driving rain. Finished picnic in the car. To basket early, too tired to dream.

### **October, London**

Mr P took us to a private park in the afternoon. The rules and regulations annoyed me. Dogs are not allowed here, not allowed there. The few places dogs are permitted to walk, they have to be kept on leads at all times. There is no getting away from it, a dog is a third class citizen in this place. Squirrels have more rights here. They flaunted themselves, eating nuts under our noses. We tugged and strained, but no go. Being on a lead is so frustrating, at times it borders on cruelty. As for the stuck up looks two Yorkies and some other posh dogs gave us, who do they think they are? Bows and pretty paws – wouldn’t last five minutes in the country.

### **October, London**

My luck was in. I had the most marvellous grub and managed to avoid Mrs P by a whisker. If I hadn’t leapt off the dining room table and shot under the sideboard, I would definitely have been in for

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

it. My heart thumps just thinking about last night. I never thought to hear that sort of language coming from a lady. 'How dare you!' (this is the edited version). 'You pig, you pig, you greedy pig!' Inaccurate, I am a dog. 'The entire leg of lamb devoured!' 'And the ham'. Salty. 'And the salami'. Scrummy. 'All that work and my party completely ruined'. Her voice rose higher and higher with emotion. 'There's not a crumb of cheese left. Gone. Gone. Licked clean. And tooth marks in the butter'. I have experienced some over reactions before but this one was particularly bad. She wrung her hands and jumped up and down, for a moment I thought it was a new craze, it was not. She tried to get me out, but I did not budge. Felt bloated and queesy, was sick under the sideboard, retreated to my basket when the coast was clear.

Inexplicably her mood was quite jolly later on when everyone returned from the restaurant. She even had the cheek to say 'I suppose in a funny way, I have Jeremy to thank. After all, if he hadn't eaten the supper, we wouldn't have seen Sean Connery and he said hello! 'So who's a good little doggy pogy then?' She twirled me round holding my left front paw like a dancing partner singing 'He's gorgeous'. My ally, Mrs D, defender of all dogs, agreed. 'Not Jeremy. Sean Connery' said Mrs. P, going all sappy. It is funny how a dog can go off a person quite quickly. But better disappointed than walloped!

### **October, London**

After the conversation I heard, there is no doubt they are meant for us, well me in particular. Everyone is talking of muzzling dogs these days, it is disgraceful. There are photos and articles in the papers about dogs inflicting terrible injuries on people. Why we should be lumped in with ferocious yob dogs beats me. Of course,

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

it would be Rupert giving Mrs P an earful, stirring up trouble again, he can never resist poking his nose into family affairs, and getting a dig in about us. Her part of the conversation went like this. ‘UM...mm, do you? Yes, but they are not exactly Rotwielers or pit bull terriers. I always thought it was Bengy, he is extremely greedy. I never suspected Jeremy. He has quite broken my trust in him’ (have I indeed?). ‘How he got in to the dining room I shall never know. They were all asleep in their baskets when I left them.’ Well I’m for it in every direction. Mother is really upset. In her family the dachshunds are well trained and would not let people down (her memory is inclined to be selective). We must have inherited these unfortunate characteristics from our father’s side. I wonder what happened to Daddy? Dad? I haven’t seen him since before Bengy was born. In any case, I cannot take responsibility for all my actions.

### **October, Country**

No more muzzle talk, thank goodness, but an unexpected trip to the Cottage by way of Dorchester to collect pictures from the framers. A most uncomfortable journey all squashed in with boxes of old clothes. Bengy in a filthy temper. Mum sulking and as for Mrs P’s singing, it makes me shudder to think about it. A thump followed by a hideous scraping sound brought an immediate stop to her rendition of ‘Oh Happy Day...’. The car jerked backwards and shuddered to a halt. Mrs P gasped, Mother growled and Bengy bit my ear. We heard a man’s voice say ‘You didn’t ought to have done that m’dear! You’re well wedged. The back end is hanging over a trench and...there is quite a drop’. Humans do have an annoying habit of pointing out the obvious and getting people wound up in situations where a little silence would be more



## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

advisable. Mrs P gasped again, very uptight indeed. The next few moments were terrifying. The car rocked to and fro and up and down We were flung about like three Bonios in a box. The wheels spun, there was a smell of burning rubber, followed by a mighty bang as the car bounced forwards, and shot off at great speed.

After all that delay, it was dark when we arrived at the Cottage. The kitchen floor was freezing. Mrs P couldn't light the boiler. To make matters worse, just before basket time the electricity went off. We encouraged Mrs P, as she emptied the freezer by candle light, putting bags of freshly picked runner beans into a chilly box, then the lights came on again, then went out. I was amazed that she could find so many adjectives to describe the Electricity Board. As a writer, I feel a surge of literary gratitude towards her.

### **October, Country**

The wind howled across the valley making the oaks groan as if they were a dog in agony. It blew the trees along Fallow's Ridge tossing and crashing into each other, and the rain beat down pouring from the overflowing gutters onto the path, bounced back up, splattering against the back door like bursts of gun shot. Water seeped into the kitchen. Spent the night in the sitting room. Not a wink of sleep for any of us.

I have never seen anything like the devastation and flooding in all my dog days. The garden path has become a river of swirling water. A wall of mud and stones lay across the back door. We had to scramble over the mess to get out. The vegetable patch had turned into a lake. The spring cabbage seedlings were washed away, but Mr P's leeks had somehow held firm. Typical that my most unfavourite vegetable survived. Twigs and broken branches are all over the lane. Not a bird in sight. I wonder where they have

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

gone? All culverts blocked, ditches blocked, the A 30 blocked, and some lime trees have crashed onto the A303, so we made a detour back to London. It was the same everywhere. Fallen trees, gates blown off their hinges, gardens littered with debris, roofs torn off houses and barns blown down. We even saw a garage door on top of a garage roof!

Mr Mountford's farm dog, Girl and her seven pups nearly drowned. The rain had swept their box out of the barn, down the yard, and there they were afloat like tiny sailors in the middle of the duck pond, when Stephen the new yard man found them. He carried Girl to safety, then fetched two buckets, waded into the pond, put three pups in one bucket and four in the other, and took them to the stables. But Girl was having none of it. As soon as his back was turned she carried each puppy in her mouth to the high ground behind the chicken run and put them in a hollow between two tree roots.

### **October, London**

Oh dear! Mrs P left Mother behind! I must admit neither Bengy or I noticed she was missing. I blame it on the storm. It has undogged us both. Now back, much fatter, she enjoyed her time with the Vicar, went everywhere with him, even to Church and in the front pew with 'The Holy Dusters' his team of lady cleaners.

She also went to a Pacifist Supper party. The host, a retired old pop singer, has become a sort of Buddhist, water diviner and pacifist. A seeker of peace and universal love I quote. It was Derek, Mum recognised his smell at once. We have known him for years, he lived in a caravan painted with stars near the Woods till the Parish Council turned him out. After he came out of prison for armed robbery, changed his name to something foreign which

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

means 'Serene One In Touch With Sacred Elements' and will answer to no other these days. He nips about the countryside pointing a little stick at the ground which is supposed to twitch if there is water. He says things like 'peace, man' and 'the smallest flea or fly is sacred'.

Mum was given a whole tin of Chum before the party and plenty more grub there. The meal, she told us, was tremendous, but came to an abrupt end when an argument broke out. Voices were raised. The host used terrible language, then took a slug at a guest. The guest slugged him back, and the fight was on. Pacifist bashed Pacifist. Plates were thrown and chairs up-turned. Mum bit a Buddhist, who aimed a kick at her. It missed, catching the Vicar on the ankle. At this point both the Vicar and Mummy beat a hasty retreat, scrambling through the battling Pacifists and stumbled out into the starry night.

### **October, London**

To Hyde Park to inspect the storm damage. A tree has crashed on top of the iron gates near the Albert Memorial and smashed them to pieces. All over the Park trees have been uprooted and branches torn off. I am extremely worried about the birds. As fellow creatures their wellbeing causes me great concern. Where will they build their nests next spring? I am glad I am not a bird.

### **October, Country**

A fur raising journey to the Cottage. It seems every wobbly tree along the way has blown down. The Council have made a half-hearted attempt to clear some of the lanes but the culverts are bunged up again. Spent the afternoon in Mountford Field gathering hazel nuts. The storm passed right over and did no

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

damage, just shook the nuts down a bit earlier than usual. The ground under the bushes was covered with them. So we beat the squirrels to it this year. Mrs P got two large baskets full and is in a very cheerful mood. There is a stronger autumnal smell about now, damp, leafy and earthy. Caught whiffs of fox and deer on the wind. It is getting dark earlier. Smoke was rising from cottage chimneys as we set off across the valley for home in the gathering dusk. Bagged a good position in front of the sitting room fire. Lay there all evening. Very cosy. To basket early.

### **October, Country**

A sharp frost during the night turned the lawn completely white, and finished off the last of this year's runner beans. Mother refused to go outside. She feels achey, so Bengy and I romped around without her. The grass made our paws and tummies tingle. Spent rest of morning encouraging Mr P in culvert clearing activities. He lit a bonfire to get rid of fallen branches. I love the smell of wood smoke. Saw Carlie in the lane. She does not seem so attractive anymore.

### **October, Country**

Sometimes I really hate my brother. There I was dozing in the sitting room, minding my own business, when in he comes, puts his leg up on the sofa and slinks under the wing chair by the radiator. In walks Mr P, sees the wet patch, sees me, and rubs my nose in it! Yuk, yuk, yuk It is not fair that I get the blame for Bengy's uncontrolled actions. I have tried to love him as he is my brother.

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

### **October, London**

Another fur raising journey. This time in the opposite direction, back to London. Traffic moving very slowly. Barked at dogs in other cars. They barked back. Some leap from window to window. Good fun.

### **October, London**

Sunday in Hyde Park. The best I have ever had there. If we chased one squirrel we chased a dozen! Sending them fleeing from acorn gathering activities. Not keen on acorns myself, but there's no accounting for taste. Each animal to his own. The happy pair laughed, but were not so amused when we chased some ducks into the bushes.

### **October, Country**

An early start for the country with Mr P. Cottage, nice and warm. The night store heaters had been left on all week. Extravagant. Of course, I don't pay the bills, but I worry about the family finances from time to time. Fab dinner. Butcher's pet mince, cabbage outer leaves, and charcoal biscuits. Mr P thinks we look half-starved and our breath smells.

### **October, Country**

Colonel Trubbs came for supper. He talked for hours about the War. Mr P told him about my Great Great Uncle Panzer and recited the poem – The Dachshund Marching Song – written in his honour.

MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

‘Dachshunds unter alles  
This is the Dachshund song  
We sing it as with paws in boots  
We gaily march along.

We sing it on the roadways  
And on the hillside bare  
The vales and dales have heard our song  
We sing it every where.

So gather round all Dachshunds  
Stand four square and tall  
To show the world that greatness  
Can be in dogs quite small.’

Col. Trubbs recited it too and became very jolly. Popped out and followed the Colonel as he made his way home, swaying from one side of the lane to the other. He seemed to have trouble finding his key, knocking over his milk bottle holder and a flower pot. He found it on top of the porch, and, after a lot of fumbling, opened the back door.

**October, Country**

Saw Carlie again with her brother. They were practising retrieving in One Barn Field. It is only days to go to the first shoot. I cannot think why they get so steamed up. There is no fun in picking up dead birds without even a chase? And then to give them up without so much as a nibble. Well, it’s a funny old world at times.

**October, London**

Saw the weird woman this afternoon. She was darting in and out of cars screaming that the storm was a sign of God's anger and a warning that the end of the world was just round the corner. 'Must dash!' said Mrs P pulling us into a shop where we were told to leave immediately because dogs are unhygienic. So we did, only to find the woman blocking our way. 'You vate! You just vate! Ignore me at your perille! It's round the corner!' She was mistaken. There was nothing round the corner, except some blown down 'For Sale' signs.

**October, London**

We caught a burglar today! We had just had an after-dinner snooze when Mrs P dashed into the kitchen looking terrified but unusually controlled. She whispered to us to be 'As quiet as mice' (will enter thoughts on rodent comparisons later) and telephoned the Police. 'Come quickly, someone is smashing through my skylight! No" she said, her control rapidly giving way to agitation 'I can't talk any louder, I might be heard'. Signalling to us to follow her, she tip toed across the kitchen, opened the door and gasped in horror.

A weasely little man stood in the hall. He held an iron bar in his hand and smelt extremely bad. It all seemed to happen in a flash. We hurled ourselves at him. I took his left leg, Bengy took his right, Mum had him by the back of his left ankle. The man yelped in pain and made a bolt for the front door, dragging us with him. He flung it open and almost fell into the arms of a Policeman and Policewoman coming through our gate. Unfortunately, in barking at the Police we released the man – who fled down the street pursued by us, Mrs P, the Police

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

Officers and some passers-by. In the confusion, Bengy bit the Policeman and Mum bit Bengy. The burglar tripped over me and was arrested. Much attention followed. The word 'HEROES' is being used to describe us.

### **October, London**

A man from the local paper came to photograph us. I think I would like to do more of this. Every time we looked at him he told us we were good and gave us doggy chocs. He is welcome any time.

### **October, London**

Well, well. We are on the front page. Our picture and an article. Here it is.

'DOGS FOIL FELON, BURGLAR ADMITS BITE WORSE THAN BARK. On Thursday 25 October, James McVinney, 34, unemployed, of no fixed abode, smashed his way into the London home of Mr P (full name withheld) and his travel writer wife. Having gained entry by smashing through the skylight, McVinney was promptly set upon by the family pets, three miniature dachshunds, Jeremy, Bengy, and their mother Doris. McVinney escaped through the front door pursued by Mrs P and the dogs. Local residents joined in, and after a short chase, McVinney was arrested by P.C. Ainsworth and Police Woman Jenny Pike. McVinney, was treated for several dog bites, and was charged with breaking and entering. Recently released from Wormwood Scrubs, McVinney says he will sue the owners of the dogs. Both P.C. Ainsworth and P.W. Pike were also treated for minor lacerations and given anti tetanus injections. They said it was all in the line of duty and were unstinting in their praise of the three dachshunds'.



## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

### October, Country

William brought us to the Cottage and gave a party. What an odd do. He strung up ghost paper chains and dangled rubber bats and spidery things from the beams. He and LM Lucy made lanterns out of Cedric Brine's pumpkins. They cast strange shadows, making us feel jumpy. Every one dressed up in pointy hats and silly outfits. Some of the guests seemed surprised we recognized them! It amazes me how few members of the human race realize our superb noses pick up the faintest smell and once stored in the canine memory bank, we never forget.

Good grub. Ate very well, off various plates left on the floor. My leap from chair to table went unnoticed, and I was able to tuck into the puddings. Licked up the remains of a chocolate cake and polished off almost an entire bowl of trifle. My head spun, I wobbled so much I fell off the table. All I remember is stumbling through legs and feet, blurred faces looming over me and a distant voice—William's, I think—saying 'My God! That dog is drunk!' How I got to my basket, I'll never know.



## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **November, Country**

Felt queasy this morning. Perked up a bit during the afternoon. Walked to our secret lake at dusk with William and some friends. We came out of the trees into the clearing, and disturbed a poacher who slunk away into the night. A pair of swans glided across the lake towards us, the moon's reflection twinkling in their wash. The only sounds were a gentle lapping and an occasional rustle in the reeds. We were all spellbound by the silent beauty of the place. No one talked or barked, even William's friend Lucy a terrible chatter box was quiet for a change.

### **November, London**

Covered new ground this morning. Ran nearly all the way to Chelsea Embankment. It was all rather confusing, we walked for 12 steps, then ran at a brisk pace, then walked again. And what did we get when we got to the Embankment? Lorries jam packed nose to tail, and we poor dogs standing nose to wheel at the curb half choked by petrol fumes.

### **November, London**

A white West Highlander came along on a tartan lead. Very pretty, I really liked the smell of her. I walked towards her, wagging my tail, but her woman whisked her off the pavement into the gutter and glared at me. The poor dog looked back so longingly. I'm glad I don't have a woman like that. Fretful night, had my recurring dream, but this time the Westy was locked in the larder with me.

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL



### **November, London**

One of the worst nights of my life. Mrs P warned us there would be a lot of noise. Noisier, she said, than last year, as the fog had cleared and the night was bright and frosty. She made us snug in our baskets and sat with us. Then the terror began. Hour after hour. Bang after bang. Swooshes and wooshes, and wizzings, then silence, followed by flashes and crashes and spluttering explosions, and, rather oddly, by what seemed to be screams of glee. We huddled in our baskets quivering with fear, too terrified to move. Mum has never refused doggy chocs before. I myself, not entirely put off, managed to gobble a few between bangs, but the strain was too much for Bengy, he seems to have had a nervous breakdown and was still cowering in his basket at dawn.

### **November, London**

A crisp, beautiful morning. Bengy rather better, so we went out on the tri-lead with Mrs P. Damp rocket sticks with an unpleasant smell littered the pavements. Chopped hearts and liver for dinner.

Mr P returned from Australia. He brought Christmas presents

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

and photos of Susie. Mrs P started to sniffle. I wish she wouldn't, it upsets Mother.

### **November, London**

Up and out early to Hyde Park to show Mr P the storm damage. The place is over run with confused squirrels...their world of trees has been knocked sideways. This has certain advantages for us of course. They can't get away so easily. We ran along an oak trunk and mucked about in the branches. An odd sensation for a dog to be in the bird's nest department of a tree. A stranger asked if Bengy was a Squox, half squirrel half fox. What a dope and what a stupid question. Anyone can see he's a dachshund, not such a good specimen as myself of course. Mrs P said 'He is a short haired dachshund. Rather a special one. He is going to be put to a pedigree bitch for puppies soon'. 'Special indeed'! That came as quite a shock. And to tell family business to a stranger first. Why him? Why not me? I'm really good looking and my tail doesn't have the nasty bend that his has (all Rupert's fault for slamming the car door on it years ago). None the less, I cannot help feeling a bit jealous. Then, to prove he is a far better dog in every way, he did a spectacular leap out of the branches, hung suspended in midair for a moment then landed on all fours on the ground to loud applause from the human element. I grudgingly admit a most nimble pawed dog.

### **November, London**

Went shopping in the Fulham Road. Passed a ginger cat rummaging round dust-bins outside a restaurant. We strained at our tri-lead, barking like mad. Mother was half demented trying to get at it. The insolent creature just smirked and continued chewing on a fish bone. Within the confines of these pages they do freak me out

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

somewhat. It's not that I don't enjoy a good cat chase, far from it, but I nearly always seem to come off worst. I've been scratched and bitten by the jolly things, banged into trees, fallen off walls, rolled down banks in the pursuit of as it were, and it's all beginning to catch up with me. I suffer in silence – but then I'm not the sort to worry my fellow dogs or humans.

### **November, London**

Watched a tremendous row outside our house. A man said he would kill another man, because the other man had put a parking ticket on his windscreen. I will not sully the pages of this journal, but the situation became much worse when the weird woman interfered, and both men ended up shouting at her. On the whole we dogs are much nicer to each other than humans are (to each other that is).

### **November, London**

Walked to the library through the Boltons. A tree has fallen across the front garden of a posh house. We were sniffing round it, when the front door opened and a man wearing a long white robe with a red and white scarf that looked like a tea towel on his head, emerged and scrambled through the branches along the trunk on all fours. He was making good progress when his robe caught in the roots of the tree and held him fast. He became extremely angry, shouting something in a foreign tongue. Some men clearing branches up the road ran to the rescue. They unhitched his robe and lifted him onto the pavement. He bowed to every one including us, fished out a little leather bag from his pocket and gave the men and Mrs P twenty quid each. Was she in a good mood all day? I'll say so.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **November, London**

William and his friend James filmed us for a video. I'm not sure what it's all about. They got us to do tricks, like begging for biscuits and snapping letters through the letter box and eating doggy chocs, sitting among Susie's teddy bears, who had flags tied to their paws. James played his guitar and the boys sang Happy Birthday and Hey Jude. Daft I call it.

### **November, London**

There is talk of the family moving to the country for good. I hope not. I like town life, there's so much for a chap to see and smell. I am, after all, a Royal Borough puppy, born within a bone's throw of the Natural History Museum, which no doubt accounts for my love of nature, and the call of the wild, but in moderation. In any case variety is the spice of life and I am happy as we are.

### **November, London**

A dramatic end to our morning walk near Putney. Mother and I charged at a border collie carrying a long stick. He held onto it in spite of our demands. His owner said he was a gentle fellow and not given to attacking other dogs when he had his stick in his mouth, but let any dog of any size try to take his stick, and well, they had better watch out. The humans babbled on and we dogs circled each other. Frankly I couldn't make this dog out. I think he suffers from 'only dog' syndrome. The babbling suddenly stopped and hands were waved towards the river. 'Oh, My Heaven, there's someone drowning! I can see a head bobbing about!' The collie owner exclaimed. It looked like a head all right, but more like a dog's head. My fur stands on end just thinking about it! Boats passed to and fro, we could see the occupants staring, then

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

a police launch drew alongside and pulled the thing out of the water. "It's not a human head" Mrs P said. It wasn't. Or a dog's head either. 'It looks like a polystyrene head with a wig on'. It was.

### **November, London**

To Richmond Park with Mum and Mrs P. It's not the same without Bengy. Odd, because I don't like him much when he's around, but I miss him when he's gone. The days are so short now. A chap has hardly got up, lifted a leg, done post duty, had a biscuit, dinner, and it's night time again. Lay on the sofa all afternoon. Mrs P cuddled me and did tickle tums. Then for some unknown reason both Mum and I were dunked in an insecticide bath after tea. It's winter, all the fleas have gone now. I only had a quick scratch, my eczema has come back. I think it's due to depression. Slept on Mrs P's bed. Cosy, but disturbed by her snoring.

### **November, London**

The Council men are burning branches again. The tree in the Boltons is still blocking the posh house. It doesn't matter – the owner seems to have gone away. We enjoyed our sniff around, but shot off when interrupted by the Security.

### **November, London**

Spoken to by a gentleman in the Fulham Road. He was very friendly to us. He had just the one leg, and knew our breed. He had a nice voice and smelt of booze. Mrs P asked him if we were making a nuisance of our selves. Why do humans assume we are being a nuisance when we are just being friendly? At times like this it's the bigger dogs I feel really sorry for. I have witnessed them being pulled, smacked and ticked off, for sticking their noses

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

into people's bums, when they are only giving the normal canine greeting. Anyway, our new admirer said we were all God's creatures and if we wanted to sniff his shoe we could. But the man asked her whether she would like to hear how he lost his leg. Mrs P said she was in a hurry but said Yes. He took her at her word and launched in with the dread words "'o cut a long story short' which we dogs know from bitter experience precede a long drawn out usually very boring tale. When the man finished he asked Mrs P if she would give him money for a cup of tea, as talking made him thirsty. She did, and he swung into the King's Head with a cheery wave of his crutch.

### **November, London**

A disappointing dinner of dog biscuits soaked in watery beef soup (Mrs P's up to her little tricks again, no doubt she wants to buy something, or is on a diet) so we all have to suffer. Anyway, thinking it was Friday, I jumped into the car. To my surprise I was ordered out. Well I wasn't having any of that, so I wriggled under the driver's seat. Dear me, how they wheedled and coaxed, but I didn't budge. Mr B, who is back gardening after his head injury (the Citizen's Advice Bureau had advised him not to claim from the Estate Agents as it was unwise of him to ride a bike in such a high wind and at his age too) said 'Come on, wee laddy'. Wee laddy, indeed. 'Should I away and get the rake and poke him out?' He is a bit too fond of his rake is our Mr B. 'No, Mr B'. 'Just as you please' said he, fumbling under the seat. 'I wouldn't put your hand there, Mr B, not while he's in this mood'. I snapped. He yelped. 'I thought it unwise', said Mrs P in her I told you so smug voice. Even her departing footsteps had a smug click to them. A large sausage dropped quite suddenly onto the floor in front of the back seat. This time I fell for the wheeze, grabbed the sausage, was nabbed by the scruff of the neck and ousted in a most undignified manner.



## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

### **November, London**

We haven't been to the Cottage for weeks. I could do with a good run through the woods. I need the country smells. It's the shooting season. Although I am not a gun dog, and, confidentially, I think I might be gun shy, I envy those Labbies and Springers belting around while I am stuck here without my brother to frisk with. Variety is essential to my sensitive inner self. All town and no country make Jeremy a very dull dog indeed.

### **November, London**

Mr P says Mum smells. She will have to go on breath cleaning pills. He also objects to Mum's resentful glances when he cuddles Mrs P. If he thinks she looks resentful when he cuddles her, he should see Mum's face when Mr Mountford is around! I often wonder why humans don't groom each other. Having one's ears licked is so comforting. Perhaps if they did, there would be fewer rows.

### **November, London**

Bengy returned from Battersea and fought with me at once. He's in the most awful mood, snarling and growling. Leaping in and out of his basket, glaring at us. He actually growled at Mum, right in her face. I don't know how long I can put up with his top dog syndrome.



## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **December, London**

William is moving back home before he goes to France. He says he can't afford his flat. This is good news. He and his friend with the motorbike dumped some pongy black plastic bags in the hall which incurred parental wrath. We are in trouble too, for pulling socks and underpants out of them. Doubles of rich tea biscuits at breakfast. That's William's way, he is a generous chap, however Mum snapped at him. Personally, I am of the opinion that it is unwise to bite the hand that feeds, but Wills didn't seem to mind. He just stroked her and soothed her ruffled fur. We all spent the night on his Futon. I've said it before and I'll say it again, that boy is a good sport.

### **December, London**

Walked down to the Embankment early with Mrs P. Got our tri-lead caught round a tiny box on wheels. A man wearing rubber boots was fiddling with it by a parking meter near Chelsea Bridge. He explained that the box was burglar proof, sucked coins from parking meters rather like a Hoover, and 'Bob's yer uncle' he said with a flourish. I do not recall either us or Mrs P having an Uncle Bob.

### **December, London**

A quiet day, cold and dreary. The happy pair out for the evening. Lucy came round smelling of flowers. She and William fidgeted about on the sofa. This sort of behaviour always makes us restless so we barked until they took us for a walk.

The misty streets were alive with cats, scurrying along, slipping in and out of patches of lamplight. I saw the posh Siamese emerge from a dingy basement area and slink along the wall to hang

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

around with some of his pals, in Hollywood Road waiting for the restaurant rubbish to be put out. It is a sad and sorry fact and pains me to note that, with the exception of Uncle Lambton, the roamer, cats have a lot more freedom than dogs.

### **December, Country**

At last we're back in the country. The village Church is having a carol service. We dogs are not allowed to attend. Bob Brine said he wouldn't be caught dead in a Church. That is the only thing, apart from moles, badgers and Mrs Cole, that he and Roland Ridge agree on. Mr and Mrs P enjoyed the service, in spite of the heaters packing up. Bob Brine said that the heaters hadn't packed up at all and that the Vicar's as mean as charity. And Roland Ridge would agree with that too.

Mr Mountford came round when Mr P was out. He brought Mrs P even more pheasants. She has so many she can't catch up with the plucking so they get flung in the freezer, feathers and all. She gets silly when he's around. So does he. He told her she could have as much holly as she wanted. And if they went now while it was still light she could choose a Christmas tree. They both gave off friendly odours and went out in a merry mood. 'Stay!' said Mr Mountford as we scampered to join them. When he sounds authoritative, we dogs do not disobey.

### **December, Country**

Left early to pick holly. Too late. Both bushes by the track had been stripped clean. We were just leaving in disgust when the sound of voices and crashing branches came from the direction of the marshy ground where the king cups grow in spring time. Mrs P beckoned to us, pointing to fresh tyre marks on the frosty

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

track. We crept through the trees trying not to make a noise, which wasn't easy with frozen leaves crunching under paw. Some way from the marshy ground we saw them, two men beneath the biggest holly tree in Mountford Woods. They were cutting and bundling branches into a yellow van. They didn't notice us until we ran at them barking. Both fellows jumped like a couple of startled rabbits showing the odour of fear we bring out in wrong doers. Mrs P stepped out of the trees looking pretty fierce. She stood in front of the men who shifted about uneasily as she questioned them.

One of them muttered something about Cedric Brine giving permission. Mrs P told the fellow in no uncertain terms that Cedric Brine had no cutting rights at all over the Wood or indeed over any tree on Mountford land. Suddenly the holly tree began to shake and a voice yelled 'Mind yer 'eads'. An enormous branch fell to the ground, holly berries shooting off in all directions like gun shot. A little wizened brown face with a pair of the sharpest blue eyes I've ever seen peeped out of the tree. 'Who's that?' Mrs P demanded. 'The wife's brother' replied one of the men. 'Tell him to come down at once'. 'Come down at once' both men shouted. The man scrambled down the centre of the tree, bringing a shower of dried holly leaves with him and landed at Mrs P's feet.

'And just what do you think you're doing?' 'Cuttin' holly' he replied, picking leaves off his clothes and flicking them to the ground with a click of his fingers. 'Stop it immediately!' 'I 'ave'. 'Don't be impertinent!' Mrs P sounded extremely stern. 'I'm going to check this out. You wait here'. 'Right ho!' the wife's brother said obligingly. Mrs P rang Mr Mountford. He said he had enough of free loaders on his land and would ring the Police. Mrs P fetched Cedric Brine. When she came back, the men and the holly seemed

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

to have vanished. Cedric said he had seen a yellow van shoot past his yard at a good lick some 10 minutes or so ago. Some holly may have been sticking out at the back, but he couldn't be certain. When the Police finally turned up, they explained they had trouble finding us but, fortunately, some men in a yellow van had pulled over in the lane to let them pass and had been most helpful. Cedric Brine laughed so much he farted.

### **December, Country**

Roland Ridge wants to give us a kitten for Christmas. He says he knows plenty of homes where dogs and cats live happily together. And that a cat will solve our mouse problem. I was not aware we had a mouse problem any more. Mr P not in favour. He reminded Mrs P of the Kent Episode. Had my recurring dream, that the larder was empty, but this time it was overrun by cats who had eaten all the grub.

### **December, London**

Our Christmas tree has arrived. Henry, Mr Mountford's new gamekeeper brought it this morning. He has never been to London and got completely lost, driving round and round oneway streets getting shouted at by other drivers. When he arrived he was in such a state he couldn't carry the tree into the house. Rupert, Mrs P's gay friend, whirled down our front steps in his usual bossy way brushing Henry aside, telling him to 'Leave it to me!' Well, in spite of our encouragement he couldn't manage on his own either, so both struggled inside and upstairs with Rupert barking out instructions to mind the walls, the pictures, the carpet, etc. How he bangs on and this is not even his home, though you'd wonder at times. They wedged the tree into its holder, Henry cut

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

the bailer twine and the branches sprang out filling the room with a lovely pine woody smell which reminded me of many happy rabbit chasing afternoons.

Naturally Rupert disapproved of our running round the room. He sure knows how to upset our canine composure and had quite a tantrum over the step ladder. ‘How am I supposed to reach the top with these gnome’s steps?’ he asked with a sweep of his arm as if he was in the middle of a wood instead of our sitting room. ‘There’s a longer ladder in the shed’ Mrs P replied sorting ornaments into little groups on the carpet, which we enjoyed jumping over.

‘Oh No! Not Plastic Icicles! Give me a break!’ Rupert shrieked returning with the longer ladder. ‘And just what’ he demanded rudely ‘are those motheaten mutants?’ ‘Robins, elves, Father Christmases’, Mrs P’s voice became dangerously controlled. ‘Robins? Elves? Father Christmases?’ his voice rose higher and higher. ‘No! No! You must be joking! They’ll ruin my concept. This is a theme tree!’. We thought it was a Christmas tree.

Bending down Rupert took two stuffed white birds out of a shiny bag. ‘The doves of peace!’ he declared, holding them aloft and glowering down at us. ‘This tree is a symbol of goodwill and peace to all.’ The gamekeeper gawped in amazement at the carry on, said he’d best be off and asked if we had a toilet. Mrs P gave him mince pies a mug of tea and an envelope which brought a smile to his face. He seemed very pleased to be leaving and almost sprinted out of the front door. Rupert complained that it was impossible to do anything with only two sets of fairy lights, but all was calm until a nasty little scene over the doves of peace. Their position being finally agreed, they were wired into place among the tinsel and glittery stuff. Quite without warning we came in

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

for some flack. 'Shoo! Shoo! Dirty filthy little beasts!' Rupert shot down the ladder like a squirrel running down a tree trunk. I've never seen a human move so fast, or three dogs ejected so quickly from a room. A dog has to do what a dog has to do. 'What are trees for?'

### **December, London**

Little Miss V came round with her new best friend, Annabel. Rather posh, but nice. I believe she's quarreled with Lally – something to do with a Barbie doll. I went off that child at Easter. It is nearly Christmas and I see no reason to change my mind. Annabel is a real sport and a genuine dog lover. She has a pony and a donkey and four big brothers. She wouldn't care if a dog chewed the head off her doll. Her granny breeds dachshunds. They win prizes all over the country. I would like to win more prizes. Maybe one day. . .

### **December, London**

Mr and Mrs S came for drinks. They love dogs, especially Bengy. He was petted and fed three good meals a day and choccy treats, his every whim catered for. But this might explain his extraordinary conduct, he did not do his duty. There will be no puppies after Christmas.

### **December, Country**

Down to the pond to see ducks at dusk. Mrs P wrapped Mum in a blanket and put her in the bicycle basket. Bengy and I ran along beside them. The faster Mrs P pedalled the faster we ran. Arrived at the village puffed out. Pond covered with ducks. Scrambled about in the stream. Cold but invigorating. On the way home, Mum

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

suddenly sat bolt upright in the basket twitching her nostrils, sniffing loudly. Badgers! Being at a higher level, she smelt them on the top of the blackberry bank. The smell was strongest by the gap in Bob Brine's hedge. They have made a new run. They'll be for it, I thought. If there's one thing Bob Brine dislikes more than Mrs Cole, it's badgers. He has a lot to say about them being protected, and even more about the people who think they should be. He calls them 'iggerant townies who should keep their traps shut about country ways they know nothing about'. Spent evening in front of the sitting room fire. Let out for last run.

### **December, London**

Walked to King's Road on tri-lead. The houses and shop windows are sparkling with decorations and fairy lights. We three admired by carol singers in Sloane Square. Traffic everywhere at a standstill. Only bike riders got through. Toast bits and fruit cake at tea time. Watched the six o'clock news. The man said the world was suffering from the 'greenhouse effect' and it's all due to aerosols. So Mrs P was right to throw them out. To basket early.

### **December, London**

People have been coming and going all day, delivering boxes and flowers, and rearranging the furniture. My throat is sore from barking. Mum was in trouble over the usual 'men in jeans syndrome'. Anyway one could hardly call it a bite, more of a nip and such a big fellow to make a fuss. Bengy just smarms round everyone. He can be a real creep at times.

A party was going on while I was shut in Susie's bedroom for hours without being missed. I felt unusually thirsty – I think it was the salmon dip. It was so rich I only managed a few licks, leaving



## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

plenty left for the guests. Luckily the pot plant holders were full of water, otherwise I might have died of thirst. Flopped under the bed wondering where Mum and Bengy were, and if they were having a good time. I felt very alone, neglected and the teensy-weensiest bit of self-doubt reared its ugly head. Suppose no one likes me, or misses me or thinks I am good looking? These unworthy thoughts were turning in my mind, when the door burst open and James, William's friend, stumbled in with a girl I haven't smelt before. A lot of fidgeting followed so I crawled out and jumped onto the bed, goodness me how that girl screamed!

### **December, London**

Mrs P's best friend and her new husband stayed the night. They are real dog lovers. We can do no wrong. She said dogs should be understood, we are man's best friend, after all. I wish more humans would think like that. Lots of scraps lying around the house, nibbled unseen till I was full, then slept on their bed. I hope they come again soon. Or maybe I could go and stay with them.

### **December, London**

What joy! Out down the Fulham Road to the butcher's shop to collect our turkey. This is quite my favourite shop. They give us marrow bones and never complain if we poke our nose in the door. And to this day I have not heard one remark about sausage dogs. They are true gentlemen there.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **December, London**

A bright morning. Post gathered up before I could get my paws on it. Mr P is on holiday. I enjoy having him at home. It's good to have another male about the house. He took us for a really long walk to Battersea Park. We haven't been there for a long time. I noticed a lot more Labradors. Myself, I am of the opinion that they are better off in the country. It is unfair to keep big dogs in town. At home, the smells as we ran through the front door nearly drove us to distraction, so headed straight to the kitchen, and took up my best grub catching position under the table. It is amazing what falls our way. My dream of being locked in the larder as yet unfulfilled

### **December, London**

Another beautiful day. The streets are so quiet, everybody seems to have left London. Went up to Hyde Park after dinner – turkey giblets and Bonios. Yummy! Hardly a human in sight – only birds, ducks and squirrels. Ditto to dogs. It felt as if the place belonged to us. I wish it didn't get dark so early. I lost my paw hold and nearly slipped into the Serpentine again. Lay in front of the fire at tea time. Sneaked crumpets, well crumpet bits to be precise. I would have preferred chocolate fingers, but none came our way. Our Christmas tree is sparkling. I grudgingly admit that Rupert has made a good job of the decorations, although a dove of peace has toppled from its perch and is hanging upside down by its feet. On closer inspection this keen observer of life noticed that the banished Father Christmas's are now nestling among the branches. Too many parcels to get near the trunk for a legs up. To basket late. The happy pair went to church in the middle of the night. Daft.

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

### **December, London**

Friends came for Christmas dinner. Nibbled the nibbles at drinks time and did the usual smarm around with my relations, then popped unseen into the dining room and sat under the table. The trick is to avoid Mr P's attention when he is carving as he turns us out. Why humans have to spoil a slap-up meal by pulling those cracker things, beats me. The noise has a disastrous effect on the canine digestive system. And how silly they look wearing paper hats. In spite of these distractions managed to polish off an amazing amount. I enjoyed the slices of turkey handed to me by the poet, a thoughtful guest, but left the sprouts. Judging by his generosity he really likes us in spite of being a cat man, but I will not cloud happy times with dark thoughts. Ate so much we could hardly move. Slept like a log.

### **December, London**

Boxing day. No boxes to be seen. A relaxing morning. Long walk in Richmond Park after dinner. Deer wandering about. Plenty of dogs and children riding new bikes. Cosy evening.

### **December, Country**

Came down here this morning. How damp and gloomy the countryside is at this time of year. And so noisy after the city. What with birds tweeting and hopping about among the bare branches from dawn to dusk and cows mooing fit to bust in Mountford's field. Crow scarers exploding every five minutes unnerve us, but don't seem to scare the crows, who simply fly up and return between bangs to peck as they please.

Night time is no quieter with constant pitter pats behind the skirting boards. Sets us off barking with the usual human over

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

reaction. I am a domestic animal. I will not share my home with field mice. Nor will I be terrified by some rabbit screaming up in the wood, caught by a fox or stoat no doubt. And those owls can shut up as well. Give me the quiet of the city at Christmas time and an irritation free zone any day.

### **December, Country**

William telephoned from France. Mum, Bengy and I became very excited, running round the sofa barking. William barked back. Proper woofs and wolf howls down the telephone. Then he and some friends sang a song and shouted Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and Mrs P became rather sniffy. Lay in front of fire till basket time.



### **January, Country**

First day of the New Year and very boring. Mr and Mrs P sleepy – partying all night without a thought for us. Lay in front of the Rayburn. Most unsatisfactory – warm front, draughty back, so we huddled together in one basket. Bengy and Mum seem to feel the cold more than me, I’m glad I have a long coat. Not so good in summer, but it sure comes into its own in winter.

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

### **January, Country**

Bitterly cold. The happy pair have spent the morning making draught excluders. They shove newspapers into long roll things Mrs P makes from old sleeves and trouser legs. I feel an economy drive coming on. I'll be our food next. Walked down to the village. Pond frozen over. Ducks slithering about all over the ice, and very silly they look too. Ground freezing under paw. Rooks making a tremendous racket in the trees behind the Church. Ran all the way home. Slept on Mrs P's bed. She calls me her hot water bottle.

### **January, Country**

Friends came to supper. Some wore furry boots, one gentleman took his boots and socks off. Haven't smelt him before, seems a nice enough fellow. I noticed that his toe nails were so long they looked like claws. Anyway, his feet smelt super and he didn't complain when we sniffed them just wriggled his toes and giggled. Every so often a hand appeared under the table and slipped us some food. Of course, we are not supposed to eat between meals, but managed to buck the system, as usual. There was a lot of food talk, which this writer notes, happens when humans are eating. The better the meal that they are having, the more they talk about the meals they have had. The poet said Christmas depressed him, he hated crackers and did not like turkey or stuffing. Far too rich. No doubt that accounted for his generosity to us.

### **January, Country**

Bleak and cold. Ground still frozen. The deer have become very bold in their search for food, coming right up to the back door. They have eaten all the bread and lumpy porridge Mrs P put out for the birds. When we ran into the garden, they jumped over the

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

fence and bounded up to Mountford Woods. These are hard times for the outdoor brigade. I suppose we domestic dogs are rather dependent – but better well fed than wild and hungry.

### **January, Country**

Mr P went shooting. Gun shots echo all round. I'm no coward, but they scare me stiff. Don't like guns, never have, and at this moment I feel too unnerved to care about our famous military connections. Those silly Labradors, Carlie and Sheba, think guns are great. They are both champion gun dogs, but Mum, Bengy and I think they are off their chumps. Anyway, chump or champ it's all the same to me. Chaque chien a son gout. Returned late. Sat on Mrs P's lap for the whole journey. Really cosy. I think I like being a hot water bottle.

### **January, London**

Met a man digging up our road. He was so friendly we didn't mind him calling us sausage dogs. 'Acouse I'm a Yorky man meself, got two of them ...one's got a broken leg'. He then told a terrible tale. Apparently, this huge tom cat, a sort of king of cats round his way, spotted the Yorky who barked at the cat. This was a grave mistake. The tom took exception, swiped the dog, knocked him over, bit him, bashed him and broke his leg. Two years later the Yorkie still walks with a limp. What is the world is coming to with cats biting dogs. Cat liberation movement very worrying.

### **January, Country**

Well gobble a bone backwards! Now there's freezing snow. The lowest temperature in over 40 years. Mum couldn't remember being so cold even in her puppy days when winters were winter.

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

Went for a short brisk walk, barked at strange dogs in the lane. That young tabby from Kitten Cottage has grown into a full-sized cat. He gave me a filthy look and jumped on to his window sill. Bengy barked the loudest. I try not to care. What is 'cat flack' after all?

### **January, London**

Quick walk round the block as a person was coming from the television to be photographed with us. She likes dogs and calls me her little prince. We hardly barked at all and did our best to be nice. She had a lovely slightly horsey country smell and wore a pair of suede shoes. It feels good to be appreciated. To basket late. Dreamt I was a Hush Puppy, but I suppose I'm too old. Still there's always the Dulux ad – it's about time they used a dachshund. I would be ideal.

### **January, Country**

Drove the other side of Salisbury Plain. I bagged the front seat and dozed off. Woke to find we were parked in a layby off the Warminster Road. Mrs P thought we had a flat tyre. We did not. She was doing the usual flap about when we spotted one of the best smelling people I have ever smelt. Mother explained that it's rare to find such smells nowadays. He hobbled along the grass verge towards us. We barked of course, but in friendly greeting, I would challenge any dog to feel aggressive to such a scrummy person. 'What's up, Lady?' he asked. 'There seems to be a branch jammed under the car' Mrs P replied. 'Then it wants to be coming out' said the man coming up close to Mrs P whose face took on an extraordinary expression. 'If we pull together we'll do it' said he moving even closer. And do it they did, nearly falling backwards in

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

the process. Mrs P thanked the man, and gave him some money. He smelt pleased and said it was not often a knight of the road could help a lady in distress. 'Filthy disgusting old tramp. I nearly fainted.' Mrs P muttered grumpily slamming the car door when he left. Well, within the privacy of these pages I am appalled at her lack of appreciation. Frankly, there are times I do not understand her at all.

### **January, Country**

What a dirty trick! The kennels in winter. I'm feeling traumatised and trying to forget that unfortunate interlude.

### **January, London**

Well, well, the happy pair are pleased to see each other. Lots of hugs for us too although Mrs P seemed keener to talk about other animals than give us her full attention. She was in India while we were stuck in the kennels. She is an expert on the place, talks about it on the radio. Cows can go anywhere. Lucky old them is this writer's comment, and what about dogs? India's full of them, she said. Mangey strays who scavenge for grub. They have sores and ticks. I'll never complain about fleas or exzema again, it's sad to think there are dogs worse off than us. They don't even have bowls or collars, although Mrs P said she saw two dogs wearing collars. One was a big black Doberman in a Palace, who sniffed round her and liked the smell so much he put his paws on her knee. When he was called off he sulked like a baby. He rolled over and over and stretched out on a blue silk, SILK, carpet. It took three servants and one Prince to remove him.

The other dog she met was Zero, a black and tan smoothy dachshund – born in Buckinghamshire at Park House – but now



## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

living in India. Although he's a Royal dog these days he is not stuck up or sissyish. He zooms round the Palace courtyard terrorising unsuspecting visitors and chasing mongoose. He gets treated for ticks without flinching, goes bird watching, scrambling over rough terrain and accompanies his master, the Maharajah, to all important meetings.

At night the Maharajah's servant sleeps on a mat by the bedroom door, but Zero sleeps on the Royal bed, burrowing under the blankets just like we ordinary dachshunds. He was most friendly to Mrs P and wagged his tail nineteen to the dozen when he sniffed her, he was a real sport and knew a decent dachy smell. It makes my fur tingle to think dogs so far away know about us. It's nice to have her back. To basket for us boys, Mum upstairs to sleep. These Royal habits are catching. I wonder where the Corgis sleep?

### **January, London**

A new moon tonight. Mrs P told us never ever to look at it first through glass. Bad luck she says. She carried each of us in turn onto the back balcony, bowing and turning round, most peculiar. Then she became grumpy when she saw Mr Pillyard's shoddy work. Mr P said he wanted it to be a surprise. She said it was – and stomped inside. Still, we got an extra biscuit at basket time.

### **January, London**

A brisk walk down the New King's Road on our tri-lead. Nippy little wind. Mum dragged us back a bit. Bengy and I popped our legs up on some bits of old furniture outside a shop. A man rushed out shouting. I do wish people humans wouldn't raise their voices, but on reflection it was helpful of him to tell us where to

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

go, although, for reasons beyond me, he became enraged when Mrs P told him to go there as well.



### **February, London**

Bengy went to stay with Little Miss Victoria. Our years together seem to count for nothing with my brother. I think he prefers Miss V and her family to ours. They spoil him rotten. Of course, with my brother it is not so much the hand that feeds, as the hand that treats.

### **February, London**

The happy pair went somewhere pretty posh this evening. People wearing shiny shoes and high heels came for drinks. Most of the guests smelt yucky. Rupert's designer pal poned like a 'poodle's boudoir' but he's at least he's friendly. Everything was going swimmingly, we three on best behaviour, generally smarming about between the trouser legs and rustly skirts and nibbling grub, when a lady stopped short in mid-sentence and boomed 'They're the ones! They broke my Mitzi's leg!' The entire company fell silent and stared down at us. 'Impossible' said Mrs P. Her feet twitched uneasily, something I note yet again humans often do when in a jam. 'They always go out on a lead'. Too true

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

unfortunately. 'It was them' the lady insisted, explaining the horrific story in her high squeaky voice. Apparently her dog, Mitzi, had been set upon near Sloane Square, by three dogs in a terrible frenzied attack, grappling her to the ground and biting her left hind leg. That being bad enough, the whole unfortunate episode was made worse by the fact that Mitzi only had three legs to start with. 'Three dachshunds, with saliva dripping from their jaws, pulled themselves out of a man's hand and flew at Mitzi like a gang on her first day out after her amputation. She is still traumatised and cannot bear the sight of dachshunds'. She rounded on me 'It was the long haired one who did it! Him!' she said pointing accusingly at me. I slunk under a chair utterly bewildered 'There! That proves his guilt!' her voice was triumphant.

Mr P broke the uneasy silence by telling everyone to drink up as the taxis had arrived. It's so unfair. I have never met Mitzi, her smell is quite unfamiliar to me, and I'm not in the habit of attacking other dogs. And I have never had saliva dripping from my jaws. Well, maybe just once in Kent, a long time ago. And I suppose there was that squirrel in Wardour Woods, but they don't really count. As if to add insult to injury when I emerged Mum and Bengy had finished off the grub. Clearly my sweet nature and sensitivity are inherited from my father's side of the family. Feeling very dejected, I turned in early. Woken at dawn by merry voices. Mrs P took me upstairs and cuddled me all night. She understands.

### **February, London**

Still smarting over that accusation. Almost, but not quite off my food. Mother should know my conscience is clear. Oh dear, even as I write the incident of the Kent guinea pig returns uncomfortably

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

to mind. Ah, well, what's done is done, it's no good looking back. After all he was old and couldn't run very fast.

### **February, Country**

Have been in agony all day and night. Mrs P wrapped me in a blanket and lay me in front of the fire, then burst into tears. She's very sensitive. Through the mists of pain, I heard her tell Mr P she couldn't live if I died. That sure put the wind up me! Even Mr P seemed fussed. He offered her a glass of whisky. She said she preferred a cup of sweet tea – I'm partial to that myself when well. In fact, for many years, without anyone realising, I've managed to lap up tea from mugs and cups. I think the shape of our noses is particularly suited to mugs. 'Got to look after you old fellow' Mr P spoke softly and stroked my head. He consoled himself with a large dram or two for himself. They really love me.

### **February, Country**

Tummy in torment. I can hardly bring myself to write. After all what is my personal suffering compared with this great work? Bengy was wonderful. He let me lie in my own basket without growling at me. Mum licked me all over and moaned. I love her so much. I'll say one thing for this family, they are great in a crisis. It's the little things that cause the flack.

### **February, Country**

As to my ordeal at the vets – what he did to my little botty was so painful I bit him! There I was weak and in agony, held down on the examination table by Mrs P when she suddenly started puffing, turned an unpleasant shade of green and began to sway, almost throttling what little life I had left out of me. 'A chair, get a chair.

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

Quickly, she's going to faint' barked the vet who had his finger up my AHUM. As Mr Mountford moved forward to grab her (not for the first time, this writer observes) I seized my opportunity, rounded on the vet. Vet got his own back, with a needle.

### **February, Country**

I feel like a lot better today. Managed to wobble into our wood this morning. I have never seen so many snowdrops and such big ones too. Under the trees, peeping through last year's leaves, they have even spread to the marshy ground the other side of the stream. Well, I've bumped into many things in my life, but who would ever think a chap could bump into a snowdrop? Bengy and I did. And very tickly on the nose they were too. Appetite has returned. Ate an excellent meal, tinned spam and special bran mix. Bonios for all. There's nothing wrong with my jaws.

### **February, Country**

CATS CATS CATS. I'm sick and tired of this cat talk. Just when a chap feels secure and loved, the subject of cats rears its head. I find it most unsettling. Humans give cats too much attention – why they pander to them is beyond me – even to name Pussy Willow. And now my back is hurting. All the fault of a cat of course. Provocative beast, swanking through our garden. We gave him a run for his money, through the flower beds into the wood, but who trips on a twig and lands in the lane? Mum feels it might be exhilarating having an enemy living under the same roof. All I know is that if a cat comes to live in this house, I go.

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **February, London**

Weather very cold. Spent most of the day on Mrs P's bed. She has a touch of flu. Any way there we were just the two of us when the doorbell rang, so I leapt off the bed before she could stop me and rushed down stairs to join Mum and Bengy who were barking round a small fat man standing in the hall. He's a Professor, I remember him well, although he gave off a slightly different pong this morning. I learned that he had just returned from a wild life conference in New Zealand. Why go there? I ask myself, we have plenty of wild life in this country. He handed over a big bunch of flowers and a wonderful smelling wicker basket to Mrs E the housekeeper 'I'm too ill to see anyone' Mrs P called out in a croaky voice. 'And I look hideous'. This writer agrees whole heartedly. 'You could never look anything but beautiful, my dear' smarmed the Professor calling up the stairs. That's what you think, mate. We dogs see some awful sights, but are far too loyal to spill the Bonios. Besides I am not the sort of dog to desert a person because they are having an 'off day'. There is more to people than looks alone. All this yuk talk rather bored us, so we went to our baskets and cuddled up.

### **February, London**

We were about to make our daily dash across the lawn this morning, when this keen observer of life saw that the garden had turned completely white. Everything is covered with snow. The dachshund statue has completely disappeared. There's not a snowdrop, laurel leaf or blade of grass to be seen. The garden looks like an enormous bed. The bushes are snowy pillows, the lawn is a duvet! I feel another poem coming on. But if the powers that be think I am going out, they are mistaken. This dog is no

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

mug. I will contain myself, there is always the umbrella stand if I can get to it without being seen. Bengy doesn't seem to mind, but sensitivity and my brother have never exactly gone paw in glove. He rushed outside, burrowed his nose in the snow then sneezed it off over me and Mum. She slunk back into the boiler room and huddled by the hot tank. I'm worried about Mum. She feels the cold so much, but will not wear the little coat Mrs P made her from an old school jumper. Poor old Mum. I snuggled up and felt very warm and contented until Mrs E shoved us both outside with a 'Don't come back 'till you've been good dogs'. I'll give em 'Good dogs' when their legs are only six inches high and sunk in snow!

### **February, London**

To Richmond Park with the happy couple to ski. We had tremendous fun chasing them down the hill and completely forgot about the cold under our paws. There were a lot of people skiing and tobogganing and plenty of dogs frolicking about barking. Humans seem full of glee when skiing. Personally, the thought of strapping two planks of metal onto ones paws and slithering about does not stir the inner dog. Lumps of snow from our coats melted onto the car floor so had an uncomfortable ride home. Rubbed with warm towels. Slept like a log.

### **February, London**

Brief walk on tri-lead, then shut in boiler room all day. Mrs P was frank in her explanation. Her friend did not like us (this hurt my feelings quite considerably). Apparently she had not liked us much in the first place and in the second, well...I don't know if it was me, Mum or Bengy. Anyway, she won't have us in her house any more. She was nice enough to me when I was a puppy before

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

Bengy was born – it was Jeremy this and Jeremy that and Jeremy tickle tums, then when he came along she ignored me to play with the new puppy. I know those types, all keen on puppies, but a dog doesn't count once he's an adult. The only consolation is, I think she has gone off Bengy now that he's grown up too.

### **February, London**

Rupert and his designer assistant came round. They smelt very sad. Mrs P burst into tears and they all clung together in the hall. Rupert didn't even tell us to get lost when we sniffed round his shoes. They were quite extraordinary with holes through the heels and laces winding round his ankles. 'Garth loved these shoes. I'm wearing them for him. We've put him in his Gaultier suit', he whispered, blowing into his hanky. 'Can I bring her in? She's in a bad state. Keeps whining and wouldn't leave Garth's bedroom, I had to prize her away'. Oh gobble a bone, something awful is up, I thought. He carried Candy into the kitchen. Poor little poodle she really was upset. So sad and mopey. We clustered round licking her. She seemed to get some comfort from us. Of course, Bengy smarmed all over her, then the two of them cuddled up together in his basket. Mrs P and the boys left and we four dozed off. London household very subdued.





### February, Country

Sounds of sawing early this morning alerted us to the fact that Cedric Brine was at it again, sawing hawthorn and hazel. 'My goodness! He's cut down another damson tree!' screamed Mrs P in a right old rage. We all charged across the field to confront him. He stood by the hedge, bow saw in hand, surrounded by sawn off branches. His face was unusually red. We could see right up his nostrils. He pushed his cap back, pulled out a blue spotted hanky from his overall pocket and mopped his brow making a hissing whistling sound.

To Mrs P's inquiry as to what he (Cedric) thought he was up to cutting down the damson tree, he replied that he was of the opinion that trees were for woods not hedges. To Mrs P's question as to where birds could build their nests in spring and find little hedge insects to eat, he replied that he had counted twenty-five magpies and even more jackdaws that very morning and that he didn't give a toss for no birds. Anyway, he continued, he was also of the opinion that the birds were all leaving the countryside for the towns. To her other question about the RSPB, Cedric added he didn't give a toss for them either, poking about the countryside. While they were carrying on, we sniffed round his boots. They smelt of cow slurry, definitely on my favourite smell list. An under smell of garden manure added to the delightful aroma. There was a lot of arm waving and picking up and putting down of branches, so we left them to it and ran into the woods.



## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

### **March, Country**

The chimney smoked and filled the house. After much flapping and poking around it appeared that jackdaws had nested there. Mrs P said that Bob Brine was so right about birds but I did not think it was in a complimentary way. She called in the chimney sweep who, after much pushing, soot and shoving, righted the problem. Mrs P, still not amused, took to poetry again:

‘Some jackdaws or thingamies  
Made nests in my chiminies  
And mice made nests in my roof  
Bother the birds and the vermin  
It cost me a fortune forsooth.’

She will be Poet Laur-iette someday. She actually used another word for ‘Bother’.

### **March, London**

To the vet for annual teeth cleaning. The waiting room was packed with pets and their owners, sitting in silence, only turning their heads now and again as new patients came in. It did not take long, however, to liven things up. Bengy tried to make friends with a budgerigar. He whimpered so loudly the entire room looked disapproving, especially the owner who whisked the cage off the floor with such a jerk the budgie was nearly decapitated by his own perch. Millet seed and water spilled over the man on the next chair who took it quite well considering the mess on his suit. Then he sneezed and couldn’t stop, so the woman sitting next to him moved, dragging her dog with her. He and I had been wagging tails. We turned our attention to a cat in a basket, straining to get

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

near him. Apparently this is called bad behaviour and we were in disgrace as usual. A nurse took me away and I don't remember anything until I was collected later.

As Mrs P and Little Miss Victoria carried us out, an old lady with a large mongrel came in 'Aahh' she crooned 'Ain't they loverlee? Been done 'ave they? My Marshall's being done, ain't yer boy?' Her Marshall wagged his tail enthusiastically. 'Teeth?' inquired Mrs P. "No dear, balls." Little Miss V let out a gasp like a steam kettle right in my ear 'He's being...you know?' The lady leant towards us, and whispered 'Castrated! Ain't yer boy?' Marshall wagged his tail enthusiastically. You poor fool, I thought. I am extremely sensitive about that subject. A restless night.

### **March, London**

Bit a hole in our beany bag. My clean teeth slid through the cover with the greatest ease and the stuffing burst all over the floor. It's a long time since I've seen Mrs E so grumpy.

### **March, Country**

Woke to bright sunshine. Scampered down the lane. The ground is drying out although the culverts are blocked with twigs and leaves again. Those new kittens at Kitten Cottage are growing up wild and rude. They hissed and spat at us. No doubt they have been encouraged by their mother, a spiteful old cat, with no respect for dogs. Mr P upset about moles. He counted sixty-five mole hills before breakfast, and two more after breakfast. Cannot understand what the fuss is about, I like them myself, they break up the flatness of the lawn and make for convenient "legs up".

**March, Country**

The happy pair have decided to become even more ecological and save the planet. Mrs P is going to cut up used envelopes, for note pads. To conserve water, Mr P says he will in future pee in the woods. This is nothing new. We all know he has done that for years! Newspapers and magazines have been put into piles – a spot of bother there. How was I to know? Bottles are going to a bottle bank, but and I find this most peculiar. Why do they throw our old bones away? Nothing is tastier than a freshly dug up bone, that makes ecological sense to me. But I'm only a dog and not supposed to have an opinion.

Long walk in the woods after dinner. Chopped chicken leftovers and bran mix. Less than thrilled to see pussy willow out. Everything seems to refer to cats at this time of year. Catkins, cat mint, catoniasta, cat this, cat that. All I can think of that is doggy is the dog rose, but we have to wait till June for them to flower.

**March, Country**

Bob Brine is 100 years old today. He is not so young as he used to be, that's for sure. We went to give him a bottle of scrumpy and a birthday card. He told us the Queen was a great friend of his. He knew her very well, and unlike some he could name, but wouldn't, had not forgotten his birthday. And if we didn't believe him, he had proof right there on his mantelpiece. He had. It was a tele-message from the Queen with a picture of Windsor Castle on it. Not a sign of the Corgis. He showed Mrs P the thermal socks Cedric gave him. 'They'll see me out' he said. They chatted on while we sniffed round the empty cow sheds and pig sties. Then, quite without warning, Bob Brine shuffled over and tried to whack us with his walking stick. 'Daang dawgs!' he bellowed 'Ort to be

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

shot!' 'Quite, right' Mrs P agreed, much to our surprise, 'but happy birthday, anyway'.

### **March, London**

Boring day. Felt sleepy, flopped about. Dinner was awful, a sort of bran mix, I think Mrs P has been reading a health book, she always does when her sister comes round with the latest vegetarian rubbish for a healthy life.

### **March, London**

Walked to Old Brompton Road with William back from guiding skiers over the mountains. He said St Bernard dogs with their strong sense of smell rush about rescuing people lost in the snow. I wish I could do that too, but with my little short legs I would probably get buried!

### **March, London**

The tailless tabby has palled up with a posh black cat from the Court Grove flats. I saw them darting to and fro along our back wall. Did my best to rout them, but they showed a bold streak, refusing to leave, and if cats can laugh at a dog, laugh they did. Bengy was really nice to a Sealyham tied up outside Patel's shop. Goodness was she friendly back! I just do not understand what they see in him.

### **March, London**

Out on tri-lead to the King's Road. A gang of punks were hanging around at the top of Royal Avenue. Passers by gave them filthy looks and sent out extremely aggressive smells, but they seemed a friendly enough lot to us. In fact, one of them said his Gran

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

had a dachshund. We sniffed their thick soled shoes and noted on looking up that most of them wore nose and ear rings. ‘Better keep clear of magnets,’ yelled a lorry driver, the punks boomed and waved their fists. Mrs P loves their hair. She chatted with them about keeping the style in shape. I once saw a poodle whose coat was cut in a punky sort of way, with a little pointy star burst on top of his head. He looked terrific.

### **March, Berkshire**

Stayed with Lottie, the Doberman cross in Cookham with Mrs P’s sister. She is still limping from her fall on Mull – a lot of dogs seem to have had misfortunes there. Lottie and Mum went to a horse show while Bengy and I were locked in the kitchen. But not for long. We got out through the cat flap, in spite of its associations, a most useful invention for the smaller dog. Enjoyed ourselves mucking about in the lane. Explored neighbouring dustbins, garden sheds and compost heaps till well after dark. We hopped into an open and empty car parked by some bushes and fell fast asleep with exhaustion. Woken by the engine we had a sort of anxiety fight. The car skidded to a halt. A voice said ‘Good, God alive, Jack, there’s two dogs in the back!’ ‘Better take them down the Station, George’ a different voice replied. That is how Bengy and I spent yet another night and day in prison.

Eventually Mrs P’s sister turned up, very worried and fidgety footed. She explained that she would prefer it if Mrs P didn’t find out about us, as she had once lost Mrs P’s pet gerbil when they were children and her sister always brought the subject up when they had an argument. For a moment I thought it was Mrs P. You can smell that they’re sisters, the family likeness is unmistakable. The Police Sergeant told her that in over thirty years as a policeman,

nothing like that had ever happened to either him or his driver. Released on payment of two pounds and returned to London.

### **March, London**

Mrs P now wants a wirehaired dachshund puppy. I feel uneasy. On one paw, it would be jolly to have a new pal to play with, but on the other, it's hard to get attention sometimes. Besides, there is little enough lap space as it is. I know we are all loved, but I can't help noticing that the single household dog does much better in every way – like that Jintzy, the third most northerly Pekinese in the British Isles. He is top dog. He has anything he wants. More love, more lap space, more choccies, and never, ever snatching or fights. And I don't suppose he gets dragged out in the pouring rain like we did this morning. Up and down a mews trying to find the wirehaired puppy house. When Mrs P asked a man if he knew of any puppies in the mews he replied that he only knew of a Scottie living on the top floor of a house, who made far too much noise. Mrs P rang the wire-haired puppy person. All puppies sold. What a relief!

### **March, London**

To Hyde Park early. Miserably cold, pouring with rain. Even the ducks looked fed up. Hardly anyone around, except a few other dopes like us, splodging about in the mud. We all got absolutely covered in the stuff, paws and tummies caked. We were put into Mrs P's latest invention, the DOGGY BAG, for the drive home. She's very pleased with herself, because she says they are ecological. She used William's old school towels to make them. We have one each. She shoves us in and pulls a tape thing which closes round our necks like little ruffs. We stay in them till we dry

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

out. This undignified operation did not go unnoticed and seemed to cause amusement to people in the car park. I found it all a bit humiliating.

### **March, London**

Sunny and bright. Day got off to a good start! Excelled myself on post duty this morning. Sat as usual on the top hall step. At about 8am the gate squeaked (it's done that for a few days) followed by footsteps, then envelopes appeared as usual through the letterbox. What is odd about that? I ask myself. Well today, alert and quivering with expectation I made a mighty leap and caught the lot in mid-air! The letterbox snapped shut and the postman fled. I believe he really does think I am an Alsatian.

Life is not all bad. Susie is coming home. It is something to do with a telephone call. I overheard. A chap can't help being in on private conversations some times. Mrs P shut the kitchen door and had a decidedly shifty air about her. She kept repeating that Daddy would pay. Not to worry, of course he would pay, he wouldn't be cross and could she get all the duty-free stuff, and a brown leather handbag like the drawing in her last letter and, perhaps it would be best not to say anything to Daddy about this. Just get back home as soon as possible and ask him for a cheque. When I scratched the door, Mrs P nearly jumped out of her skin. 'Oh thank goodness it's only you, Jeremy' she said.

### **March, London**

It is all hustle and bustle here today. Mrs P has baked a cake, a rare and fraught operation, but can have advantages for us, so I sat in my best scrap catching position at her feet. Mum and Bengy hung around under the kitchen table and we all did rather well. Rupert



## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

came to ice the cake. He's an expert at this as well, but such a fusspot. There is absolutely nothing wrong with burnt bits.

Flowers were delivered. Susie's best friend came with a bunch of daffodils. A long furry coat was left in the hall. Just before basket time, Bengy and I dragged it into the boiler room and enjoyed playing with it. It was still dark when we were woken and let out into the cold. Very confusing. After all dark is for sleeping and light is for waking, with an occasional nap for good measure. The happy pair flapped about, the excitement catching. 'Where's the coat? How did it get in there? I'm sure I left it in the hall'.

Just after daybreak, Mr P staggered into the hall carrying two large suitcases followed by Susie. She wore funny little lace up booties and put on the fur coat. It was so wonderful to sniff her again, I almost wagged my tail off with joy. I had forgotten I love her so much. Mum and Bengy were wagging their tails nineteen to the dozen and all was happiness and delight until Mrs P's gimlet eye noticed the coat was not quite as it had been last night. 'What are those?' she was pointing at pieces of fur which had blown around the hall when the front door was opened. She picked some up and placed them in the gaps on the coat. They fitted like pieces in a jig saw puzzle. Her reaction was instantaneous and unpleasant and somewhat dampened the happy moment. 'Nothing has changed round here' Susie said. 'Come on Jeremy, I'm going to my room'. I ran through the dog gate after her.

### **March, Country**

Spent the weekend looking at country houses. We three feel uneasy. Mum has become quite melancholy. After all, as she rightly pointed out, she was born and bred in London hardly a bone's throw from the Natural History Museum, which as she

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

explained probably accounts for her love of nature. But to live in the country all the time would be quite a different matter. It can be dull. Hardly anyone to bark at. The milkman only comes three times a week and the postman once a day if that. It is also dangerous. Mum reminded us of Great Uncle Lambton, the roamer and terror of Hyde Park, who lived many years in London. In spite of being an indulged dog, he would get out through the cat flap and wander all round town, gobbling up bits of old rubbish and having a really good time. His people retired to the country and Lambton was dead within the week – run over by a car, squashed flat as he chased a rabbit across the Winchester Bypass. They buried him under a rowan tree. The rabbit got away. Talk about tooth and claw. That's the country way. No animal is safe, there is always some other animal after it.

### **March, London**

Worm powder mixed into our food. They think we don't notice but we do. I don't mind. Its quite palatable. Anyway, I always feel tremendous after a good worming. An excellent sleep.

### **March, London**

To the pet shop in the New King's Road. I like it there. Everyone is so friendly, including the parrot, a jolly red and green bird. He bounces up and down on his perch squawking 'Good Morning' when the customers come in. Mrs P bought us new tartan collars and leads. One has to keep up appearances In London. We wore them home. I caught a glimpse of myself in a shop window. Without a shred of vanity, I looked by far the best.

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

### **March, London**

Susie has a new friend. He's nice enough to us but I don't trust him. He smelled shifty. The happy pair were away for the night and he was in like a snake, smarming round Susie and helping himself to Mr P's whisky when he thought he was alone in the room. He saw me watching him from behind the sofa, and had the cheek to wink at me and put his finger to his lips and say 'Shush'. What a nerve! If he thinks that I am the sort of dog who betrays my family with strangers he is in for a surprise.

### **March, Country**

Roland Ridge was burgled yesterday. He was out on his bike when he saw two suspicious men hanging about by the cattle grid. He saw another man up in the bracken waving his arms like mad. Mrs P said for sure the man in the bracken was warning the men by the cattle grid that Roland Ridge was coming along the lane on his bicycle. When he entered his cottage he saw at once that it had been burgled. Every drawer of his Granny's chest was smashed open and clothes and things scattered on the lino. They had broken a little box which looked like a book and forced the table drawer, stealing his savings of over one hundred pounds. It was the little box and the moustache and blacked out teeth someone had drawn on his picture of the Archbishop of Canterbury that upset him most. Mrs P said the world was a wicked place, and people so often thought country folk were easy pickings and stupid. Roland Ridge said he had found that too, but as his old granny used to say ...if you want to find a fool in the country, you had best bring one with you. They both cheered up. Mrs P gave him the last slice of Christmas cake. He gave her an onion.

We bounded about by the lawnmower and tools cars. He has

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

fixed wire netting round the yellow Mini as he caught a fox trying to open one of the doors the other evening, terrifying his new batch of baby rabbits. He took Mrs P to see two of his Easter cockerels. They were locked in a special little house for two reasons. One to keep them safe from the fox, and two to stop them fighting the old cockerel who is cock of the roost round the chicken run. The baby bantam he has reared in his coat pocket can now sing like a thrush.

He showed us his four little kittens, trained to go through the cat flap (which they kindly demonstrated when we ran at them). They will, he assured Mrs P, make excellent mousers. ‘Yuk!’ Mrs P squealed, startling us all, ‘what’s that?’ ‘Oh deary deary, Kitty has killed a baby bird.’ ‘Its got no head!’ she squealed again. Mum remarked that there are an awful lot of headless animals at Roland Ridge’s place – so what if the odd bird gets its head bitten off. That’s nature. Mrs P’s squeamishness gets on my nerves, but it has saved us from having to live with a cat.

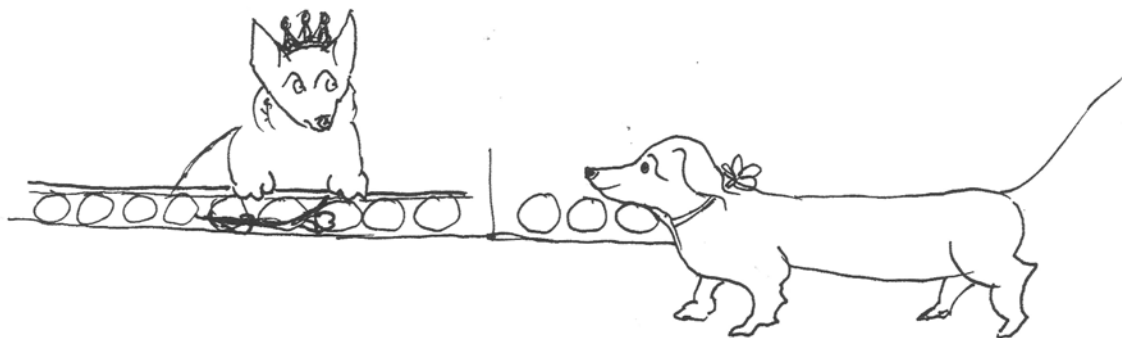
### **March, London**

Strolled about later sniffing cat smells and investigating dustbins along the pavement. The dust bin men seem to think we are funny. They bark and go woof-woof at us as if they were dogs themselves. Personally, I find this singularly unamusing. People should not take advantage of our size. I may be a small dog, but I feel big inside, and I do not have a small outlook on life. This is my street, my home and as I was born in the Royal Borough, my town. I bet they wouldn’t bark if we were Dobermans – or Royal Corgis for that matter.

## JEREMY'S JOURNAL

### March, London

L M Victoria is getting over the mumps and came with us on our morning walk to Hyde Park. She loves us so much – a most discerning child. She was thrilled to see ‘the shining men’ – her name for those Household Cavalry Brigade chaps from Hyde Park Barracks. They came trotting along Rotten Row on their horses, all a jingle jangle, with the sun shining on their helmets. What a splendid lot they are. I feel proud to be a British dog.





# **Cornucopia**

**In the Clear for Once**

**Drawing – self portrait**

**Fashion drawings**

**Auckland Drawing Group Model**

**Auckland Drawing Group Sketches**

**Mini Paintings**

**Lampoon**

**Taking Sides**

**Maggie – acting and drawing**

**Painting**

**The Last Dachshund (Monsieur at Akarana)**

## **In The Clear For Once**

**From the Beak and Broiler Monthly**

### **HEN HOUSE HORROR**

**Pullet pulled from jaws of death  
Heart rending squawks wake invalid pensioner  
Foul Play Suspected**

Inhabitants of Compton are coming to terms with a vicious mystery intruder. Hundreds of hens at Farm Close poultry farm were found maimed and slaughtered.

In an exclusive interview, pensioner, Miss Evie Beckwith (84) told how she was woken at dawn by sounds of squawking from neighbouring Farm Close. Stopping only to put on gumboots and a patched dressing gown, the former war time ambulance driver climbed over a barbed wire fence and battled through stinging nettles to the hen houses.

Without a thought for her own safety and half choked by feathers, she managed to pull the sole survivor, a young pullet, from the jaws of 'a horrid furry thing', about the size of a springer spaniel which ran off into the hedge after Miss Beckwith hit it repeatedly with her walking stick.



## CORNUCOPIA

At an emergency meeting, a spokesperson from The Fur and Feather Humane Commission asked villagers to keep calm and be on the lookout for any unusual animals, warning them to lock up their chickens and keep small children indoors.

The Poultry Liberation Front has denied any involvement. It was felt that the carnage could be the work of more than one person or animal. The spokesperson urged anyone sighting a black and white animal about the size of a springer spaniel not to approach but to contact the Commission on a freephone number.

A counselling service has been set up. 'This is the sort of incident which can rock rural communities to their very foundations', commented Islington based trauma psychologist Dr Dave Wade.

**From the Wessex Awakener**

### **POLICE CALLED TO COMPTON AGAIN**

**Further disruption to quiet village  
Assault and battery  
Egg customer intervenes**

'Police were called to the village of Compton for the second time this week' our Countryside columnist reports. Agricultural trauma psychologist from Islington, Dr Dave Wade, 38, is recovering from head wounds allegedly inflicted on him by 84-year-old Pensioner Miss Evie Beckwith.

The bespectacled, slightly built Doctor Wade, was counselling Miss Beckwith who became uncontrollably violent as she

## MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

recounted her discovery of the slaughtered chickens. ‘She ran across the kitchen at an alarming speed’, the psychologist stated ‘waving her walking stick shouting “I hit him, like this and this and this, the horrid furry thing! I hit him hard just like I’m hitting you”.’

Dr Wade recounted how Beckwith continued dealing blows to his head until an egg customer, an attractive blonde who would not give her age, but about 40 years old, a writer with her three long haired dachshunds, arrived. ‘It weren’t them’, Beckwith said ‘they’re nice little fellows, it was a horrid furry thing!’

The egg customer, who did not give her name either, told the writer ‘I heard noises coming from the back of the house. I approached cautiously, and peeped through an open window. There was a funny looking little man crouched in a corner of the kitchen with his hands flaying the air. Miss Beckwith appeared to be defending herself with her walking stick, so I dialled 999. Well there have been some odd people around lately’.

‘It was a Nodal Experience for Evie’, Dr Wade, commented ‘when reliving a trauma, patients can become violent, but this is vital to the recovery process. If it helps a patient come to terms with their problem by controlled confrontation of the inner self, I am satisfied. Although she is extraordinarily strong for a person her age, she is clearly suffering from post traumatic poultry shock syndrome possibly related to early childhood abuse’.

Dr Wade was treated for lacerations to the head and says he will not be pressing charges.

CORNUCOPIA



Self Portrait

MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



Fashion Drawings

CORNUCOPIA



Auckland Drawing Group Model

MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



Auckland Drawing Group Sketches

CORNUCOPIA



Arras



After Klimpt

Mini Paintings



MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES



Lampoon



CORNUCOPIA

**E.T.S.**  
Productions

Stuart, Texas  
Coe Ellington Harlowe & Annie Starr



**TAKING SAID E**  
by Ronald Harwood

Season  
**2000**

directed by  
**Sam Winer**

---

**CAST**

*Major Steve Arnold*  
**BARRY SPRING**

*Ensign Stranbe*  
**MAGGY POSTLETHWAITE**

*Tamara Sachs*  
**ANNESHEFIELD**

*Helmuth Koode*  
**GIUS DE KOSTER**

*Lieutenant David Wills*  
**DARRYL SHORT**

*Wilhelm Farnswangler*  
**KENNETH PORTER**

*Director*  
**SAM WINER**

**STAGE CREW**

*Stage Manager* ...CHRISTINE HODKINSON  
*Production Assistant* ...MERRIN ALEXANDER  
*Rehearsal Prompt* ...EVELYN ROPPEL  
*Set Design & Construction*  
 Students of the  
**WHITECLIFFE COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN**  
*with*  
 ...BERT PHILLIPS  
 ...JOHN BEST  
 ...DAVID FITCHEW  
 ...STEPHEN PRYOR  
 ...MALCOLM SEYMOUR  
 ...JOHN BEST  
 ...STEVE BUCKLEY  
 ...COLIN HODKINSON  
 ...CHRIS BYRNE  
 ...JANET CUTTING  
 ...JUDY REDWARD  
 ...IRENE LODER  
 ...JAN COSSLETT  
 ...WHITECLIFFE COLLEGE

*Lighting Design*  
*Rigging & Operating*  
 ...STEVE BUCKLEY  
 ...COLIN HODKINSON  
 ...CHRIS BYRNE  
 ...JANET CUTTING  
 ...JUDY REDWARD  
 ...IRENE LODER  
 ...JAN COSSLETT  
 ...WHITECLIFFE COLLEGE

*Sound Design*  
*Sound Operation*  
 ...STEVE BUCKLEY  
 ...COLIN HODKINSON  
 ...CHRIS BYRNE  
 ...JANET CUTTING  
 ...JUDY REDWARD  
 ...IRENE LODER  
 ...JAN COSSLETT  
 ...WHITECLIFFE COLLEGE

*Props*  
*Wardrobe*  
 ...STEVE BUCKLEY  
 ...COLIN HODKINSON  
 ...CHRIS BYRNE  
 ...JANET CUTTING  
 ...JUDY REDWARD  
 ...IRENE LODER  
 ...JAN COSSLETT  
 ...WHITECLIFFE COLLEGE

*Front of House*  
*Publicity Material*  
 ...STEVE BUCKLEY  
 ...COLIN HODKINSON  
 ...CHRIS BYRNE  
 ...JANET CUTTING  
 ...JUDY REDWARD  
 ...IRENE LODER  
 ...JAN COSSLETT  
 ...WHITECLIFFE COLLEGE

**OUR NEXT PRODUCTION**

**A TOMB WITH A VIEW**  
 by Norman Robbins  
 directed by Kevin Murray  
 Wednesday 20 September to Saturday 30 September  
 Auditions: Sunday 9 July  
 Enquires & Bookings Phone 525 3336









# TAKING SIDES

By RONALD HARWOOD

Directed by SAM WINNER

Ronald Harwood's play about the persecution of the eminent orchestral conductor, Wilhelm Furtwängler, because of the suspicions of certain (mainly) Americans in the U.S. Army and elsewhere of the extent of his association with the Nazi regime, premiered in London under the direction of Harold Pinter in 1995. It has also been staged on Broadway, New York City, and in Krakow, Poland (a city some 30 miles distant from the most notorious of the Nazi extermination camps, Auschwitz). This production at the Stables Theatre under the auspices of the Ellerslie Theatrical Society is the NEW ZEALAND PREMIERE.

"Taking Sides" is based on the true story of the "de-nazification" proceedings against Wilhelm Furtwängler (1886 - 1954), the outstanding conductor of his generation, who was at the height of his powers when Adolf Hitler became chancellor of Germany in 1933. The action of the play passes in 1946, in the immediate aftermath of the pivotal event of the 20th century, World War II.

The action takes place in Major Arnold's office in the American Zone (i.e. Sector) of occupied Berlin, 1946.

## ACT ONE

February Morning

## ACT TWO

Scene 1: April/Night

Scene 2: July/Morning

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



**SHORT TERM RENTAL COMPANY**  
For their generous support with the video projection equipment.  
**BUDGET**  
Televisions, Videos, Projectors, Screens, Karaoke, etc.  
PHONE 577251

## PLYTECH THE PLYWOOD SPECIALISTS

471 MANNING ROAD, WELINGTON PHONE 0800 900605



**WARD DEMOLITION**  
346 CHURCH STREET  
PENROSE  
PHONE 570 4925

Alacie Import Co. Ltd  
471 Manning Road, Epsom, Auckland Phone: 638 9550

## CAST

### BARRY SPRING Major Steve Arnold

Barry has been involved in Auckland Theatre since the mid sixties. Most of his roles have been for Dolphin Theatre, where he has appeared in 23 plays, winning seven acting cups. In the eighties and nineties he has concentrated mainly on directing. Four of his seventeen plays have won Best Production Awards and his production of "On Golden Pond" for Howick Little Theatre took all three awards in the NZ Drama Federation contest (Best Actor, Best Actress and Best Production). Barry's wife Shirley has also won awards as his Set Decorator.

"Taking Sides" is the ninth time he has worked with director Sam Winer but his first appearance for the Stables. Hopefully it will not be his last.

### MAGGY POSTLETHWAITE Emmi Straube

Maggie has transported to this country a vast amount of performing experience and expertise, from ballet to art to TV commercials to fashion modelling and designing and acting in children's plays - and that isn't the half of it. She has appeared as the Baroness in "Mary Ward", a German-British co-production by Hermes Films. By way of contrast, she also recently appeared as a witch (yes, really!) in a production of "M... ..", or, the Scottish play, for Tiringo Drama.

### ANNE SHEFFIELD Tamara Sachs

This is Anne's second play at the Stables (the first was quite some years ago), and also the second to be directed by Sam Winer. She has been acting in plays in Auckland since 1975, mainly for the old-established Dolphin Theatre, for which she has been a committee member since 1992. Favourite roles have been in "Sweet Magnolias", "I Love Hamlet", and "Rumours". Devoted as she is to the Dolphin, she appreciates and enjoys the camaraderie of acting at the Stables.

### GIUS DE KOSTER Helmhuth Rode

Gius is of Indo-Dutch descent, and has been involved with community and professional theatre, TV and film work since the age of 16. For ten years, since 1985, he produced Dutch Theatre in Auckland. He has written and directed seven light operas/musicals and straight drama/comedy and fondly remembers Tovey (in "Fiddler on the Roof" for Howick Little Theatre, North Shore Operatic and Auckland Music Theatre) and Zorba (the Greek - at Howick Little Theatre) in his favourite roles. His last role was that of the Romanian Greek "George" for Howick Little Theatre in 1999.

### DARRYL SHORT Lieutenant David Wills

Darryl returns to the stage after a 7 year break. He has appeared in two previous community theatre productions in the U.S. - "Broadway Bound" and "Death of a Salesman". His university and high school stage credits include roles in "Blood Wedding", "The Three Sisters", "Dutchman" and "Fiddler on the Roof". Darryl is originally from St. Louis, Missouri, and has lived in Auckland for 5 years. He has trained as a professional chef and currently works in software development.

### KENNETH PORTER Wilhelm Furtwängler

Ken's experience with theatre goes back more than half a century - back, indeed, to 1946, which happens to be the year of the action of this play, "Taking Sides". As far as ETS is concerned, however, Ken's experience at the Stables over the past years embraces acting ("Present Laughter", "An Imposter Calls", "The Dresser"), and directing ("I am a Camera", "Old Times", "Brief Lives") and arranging and performing in various play readings ("Suddenly Last Summer", "Arms and the Man") and the entertainment for two society supper evenings, 1998's "Candlelight Supper" and 1999's "Welcome Spring".

### SAM WINNER (Director)

In 1961 Sam joined Grifflon Theatre which started his acting career of between 3-5 plays a year, from carrying spurs to lead roles. He also worked for Central Theatre, WEA, New Independent Theatre, Dolphin Theatre, Western Players, Howick Theatre, and Palmir Productions. Plays include "Shilling Heart", "Dunry of Anne Frank", "Harvey", "The Wooden Dish", "Sleeping Prince", "Barefoot in the Park", "Day in the Death of Joe Egg", "One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest", "Of Mice and Men", "Tribute", "Prisoner of 2nd Avenue", "The Hoosier", "Fridays", "Judgement at Nuremberg", "12 Angry Men", "Ghosts", "Florence (musical)", "Mr. Wilberforce MP", "Sentenced to Life", and at the Herald Theatre, "Rough Justice". He also studied Shakespearean direction at Massey University under the tutelage of the late Nola Miller. "Taking Sides" is his first production for the Stables Theatre.

CORNUCOPIA



Acting and Drawing



MAGGIE – SOME MEMORIES

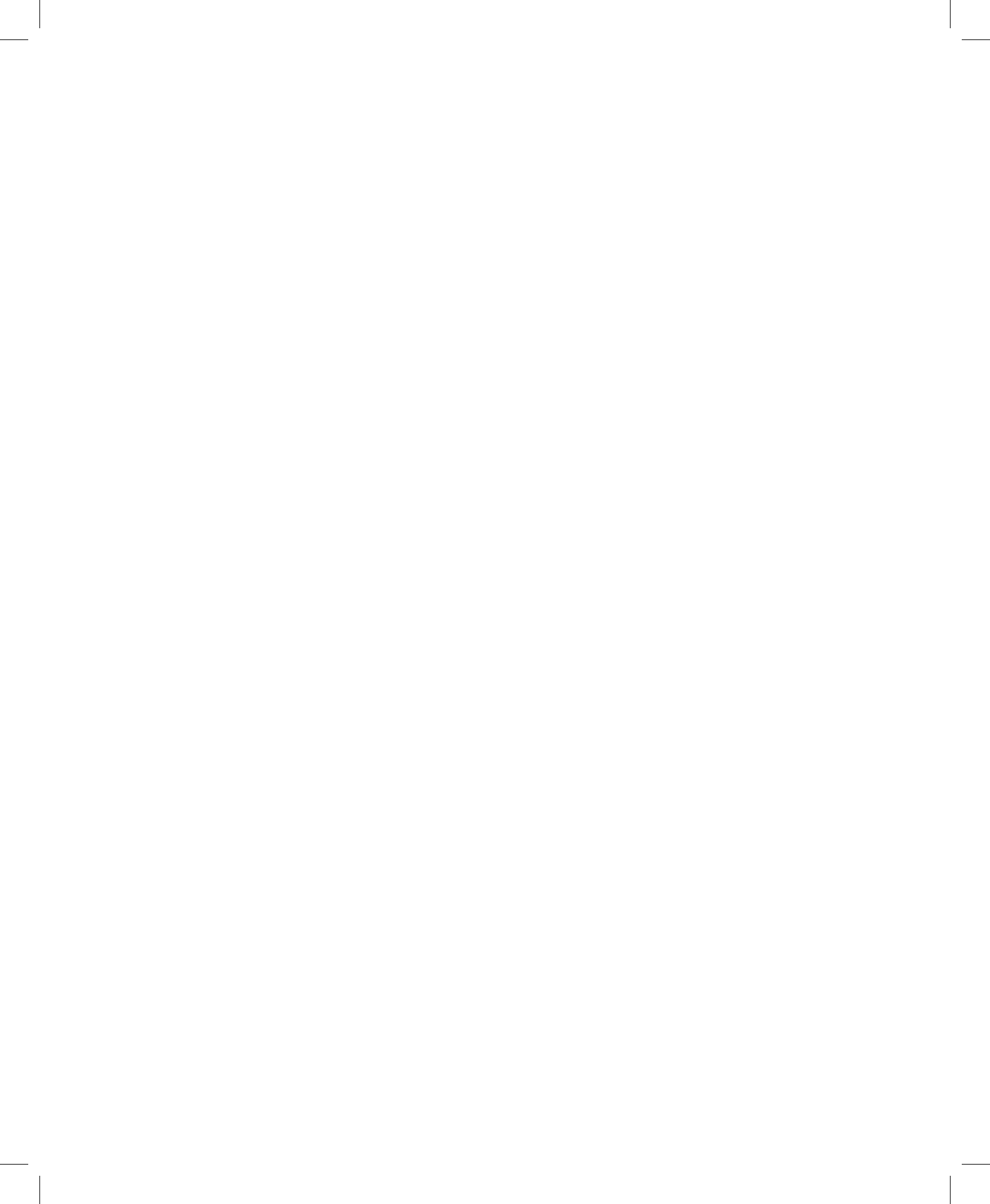


Painting

CORNUCOPIA



The last dachshund (Monsieur at Akarana)



# Photographs

**Maggie**

**As a model**

**Gypsy model**

**Mother and Children, and Dachshunds**

**Maggie and John before meeting**

**Representing New Zealand**

**In England – on duty**

**Reunion Photo (in New Zealand) and Engagement**

**Maggie – at leisure (Piha, Milford Track, Waitemata  
Harbour and Home)**

**Maggie – with assorted Prime Ministers**

**Wedding at Frog Pond Farm**

**Bride and Groom**

**Forty Years On, and Fifty Years On**

**University College Oxford Ball and Punting on the  
Cherwell**

**Frog Pond Farm and Akarana**

**Memorial**



Maggie





Model



Gypsy



ABOVE: Mother and Children. BELOW: Dachshunds





Maggie at Ascot and St Tropez



John – as High Commissioner and at Oxford University



New Zealand High Commissioner Mr John Collinge and Mrs Margaret Postlewaite



Representing New Zealand



On duty in England





Reunion in New Zealand and Engagement



Maggie at leisure – Piha, Milford Track, Waitemata Harbour and home





Maggie – with assorted Prime Ministers



Wedding at Frog Pond Farm



Bride and Groom





Forty years on, and fifty years on



University College Ball and Punting on the Cherwell



Frog Pond Farm





Akarana



Memorial