

## WRITING ABOUT THE TRIP TO ENGLAND

### ROCHESTER

#### The rough tale of “Rochester Castle.”

In 1215. King John was the ruler of England but his way to rule the Kingdom was heartless; his subjects had to pay very high taxes, he provoked the Kingdom of France, lost many times in war and spent a lot of money from the treasury on worthless stuff, and then became excommunicated by the Pope. His worst mistake was to harass England’s powerful nobles. They decided to start the First Barons’ war against the king when he came back to England after his defeat in France.

The King was forced to sign the “Magna Carta” , which decreased his power and his influence on his subjects. A few months and negotiations later, furious to have been forced to sign this charter, the king decided to begin war against his barons in order to reconquer the “whole” kingdom. In this war, both sides suffered, but there was an important place to conquer, indicating who would win: it was a stronghold called Rochester Castle, held by archbishops, until that time. The barons persuaded them to concede the castle, in order to defeat the tyrant. At the same time, King John, his army and his Danish mercenaries began the conquest of England, plundering villages, killing barons’ supporters and burning traitors.

The siege of Rochester Castle began 2 months after these events; a garrison of 100 courageous warriors was holding the fortress, in front of 500 men. Six weeks later, after eating their own horses, burning their dead and smelling the same stink, the morale was low, the stock was empty and only a few men were keeping the walls. The besiegers were forced to fight against new rebels, but managed to maintain pressure on the defenders.

The King’s army was losing too many men in this battle, and the king decided to launch the final assault. The rattling sound of blades and axes lasted 6 hours. Screaming, smashing, crashing, brawling, even the most loyal soldier couldn’t survive this madness. The battle was over, a fog overhung dead bodies, a blood river was flowing down the ground, and crows were flying around the wounded.

The king entered the castle courtyard, plugging his nose, contemplating “his” victory. He had succeeded in conquering the castle, but at what price? He underestimated his enemy and lost so many men that he wasn’t able to defend the castle against the French army who conquered the castle after this. Louis VIII of France decided to behead the former leader of England and the barons concluded to set up a new king: Henry III.



Hugo Dauphin

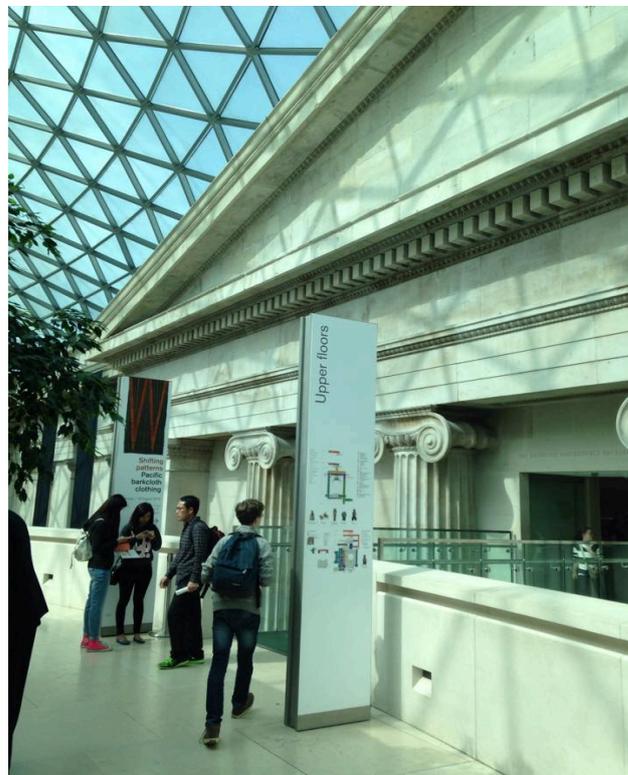
I never believed in magic until the day I had to deal with it. Let me tell you about it ... Three days ago, I was on my way to meet Matt, a friend of mine, because we were supposed to head to the Tate Modern together. Matt was running late, as usual, so I was waiting for him on the Millennium Bridge. Unfortunately it was a rainy day and I had forgotten my umbrella. So here I was, waiting in the rain, soaked to the skin, getting more upset as the minutes passed. I decided to check my phone to finish my Harry Potter book, and saw that I had got a text from Matt which said "Sorry mate, I'll be there in 5 minutes". I was about to answer him when I felt someone bump into me. I turned around and yelled "What the heck mate?" but no one was there. Then I felt the same thing bump into me. I looked around me but saw nothing. I looked up and I couldn't believe what I was seeing, my mouth fell agape. A bunch of people were flying. I took a few steps forward to see more clearly, and those people were not flying, no, they were riding on magic brooms and casting spells to each other which is not that common either. I could tell there were two teams fighting against each other. The team on my right looked like death eaters, just like in my book. Weird. Man, I was freaking out! I panicked and ran all over the bridge not knowing where I was going. I tripped on a stick and fell to the ground. I looked down and realized that it was not just a stick, it was a wand!

Sonia and Nina



## “My name is”

I spent this rainy Saturday afternoon with my wife; she wanted to see the new exhibition about the Maya colonies. Of course there were a lot of people, like every time. My wife is a literature teacher so she absolutely wanted to see it. I don't like Maya culture so I decided to go to the Roman culture room. I was walking in the museum like a teenager who is not interested in culture. And then I saw a room that attracted me. It was the Roman culture exhibition. So I went inside and it was like a film to me, you see, as if objects were talking to me, telling their stories, and suddenly I was alone in the museum, first I didn't understand what was happening to me. I strolled in the museum to see other rooms and it became weirder and weirder, people reappearing but in another clothes style, in fact they were dressed like Roman people. I decided to get out of the museum. The city I saw wasn't the city in which I used to live. There were no buildings, only poor houses and people acting in a strange way, the language they were speaking wasn't English, it was Latin! People were waving at me as if I was a really famous person. I walked all around this strange city. Then a really pretty woman came to me. She was well dressed and looked like a princess; she said « Ave Caesar, you have to declare war to Vercingetorix ». I didn't understand, I mean my name is Thomas and not Caesar. She took me “home”, it was a sumptuous palace, all was made of gold, and slaves were there to welcome me. After a few weeks I understood that I was Julius Caesar, the great one. But as soon as I understood that, I went back to London, the current London. I realized that I was born to do great things, so I left my wife and I became an international famous singer. My name is John Lennon.



# Daily life of a Mummy



Xin Lao Chang was in London for the first time in 2015, as a simple Chinese tourist. During his trip across all the United Kingdom, he decided, to visit the capital city of the UK on the 16<sup>th</sup> of April and the British Museum in particular. He started to visit the Assyrian Gallery but, step by step, he got to the Egyptian room. The masterpiece of the exhibition was the Rosetta stone found in 1799 by French soldiers. The several writings on the stele interested him; he knew how to read hieroglyphs because he was a professor, a specialist of Antiquity and of Ancient Egypt. He translated the hieroglyphs with the Chinese phonetics and a deep noise resounded in the Museum. Everybody thought about a technical issue but nothing really happened. Xin Lao Chang continued his visit and went back to his hotel. He flew back to China on the 19th April of 2015.

During the night of the 16th April, in the British Museum, an ancient Egyptian mummy woke up. He was quite tall and his body was all covered with old white ribbons like mummies in cinema. Only his face wasn't covered by the strange paper. His name was unknown even by himself he was hungry and lost. So, he walked around the museum and finally found a little Hot-dog shop where he was able to steal some food. A few moments later, he managed to exit the museum. He walked in London's streets and finally found a little garden, with some clothes, drying on a clothes line. He was cold in his old ribbons and even if he wasn't able to take them off, he wore the clothes he had found and the only ribbon that could be seen was on his hand. He decided to keep wearing gloves not to let people discover his secret, and when someone saw the ribbon he lied and talked about a skin disease. He lived with no place to sleep for one week, and finally met Peter-Kevin who accepted to engage him, in his gas station, in the heart of London. Our mummy pretended to be Harry Stark and applied for official documents to become an official Londoner.

Seven years later, "Harry Stark" was at the head of the "Mummy Gas Company", and was in charge of more than 2000 gas stations, all around Europe. He was converted to Catholicism, had a wife and two children and was one of the richest people in the UK. One day, Xin Lao Chang received a check and was the new, happy and incredulous, owner of £100,000. A little message was with the check; it said "Thank you, you made me feel alive". He didn't know who had sent it but he lived comfortably for 2 years. The mummy took part in the political life of the UK and was elected Prime Minister, after the election of 2020.

Timothée and Victor

### **A new element in the Golden Hinde's study**

« The famous galleon of Francis Drake has seen these days an important growth of its media attention. Why? Because the scientists in charge of the restoration of the ship have found the secret diary of John Butler, a cabin boy who boarded on the Golden Hinde with Francis Drake, nearly four and a half centuries ago, in 1577. Below, an extract of his diary that gives us precious information about life on the boat.»

“Eighth week

It's been so long since I last ate fresh meat, I can't even remember how it tastes, and God knows I could use it! This week has been exhausting, the weather was so bad. A tornado took place. It was so strong! I had never seen something like that before. During this terrible plight, a sailor died: Tom... I'm going to miss him; Tom was like a brother to me... He had just got engaged with Fanny and was so in love, he talked about her every single day... She's going to be so sad... I survived but I'm very lucky by nature, I guess that's what saved me. I miss my family so much... my mother especially, and her cooking, her carrot cake! The food here is really disgusting. But I've got to say, what I miss the most from home is my bed, my best friend. I'm being so nostalgic. It is ridiculous I know, I'm a full grown man now, I shouldn't be so attached to an object. But here sleeping is so difficult, two hours every six hours, it's not a life!

When I boarded I thought it was going to be discoveries all the time, new lands to explore, to conquer... but it's just a long and dangerous voyage during which I'm losing my friends, my health and wasting my time. I hope we will at least be well paid at the end.

Ninth week

Yesterday, we landed in Mogador on the African coast. We bought food, rum and water; at last we're going to eat fresh meat! And we had the night free in the city; it was so good to walk on land, in streets, to see other people than the sailors. And women... Oh damn, women! I spent my night in an inn with a delicious (and expensive) creature named Emma. Loved that night!

We also engaged a new cabin boy to replace Tom, he is named Evan. He looks pretty young, I'd say 14 years old and not very hefty, but well, he was the only one foolish enough to enlist. I talked with him on the deck in the afternoon, he is very nice, a bit crazy, but in a good way.

Tenth week

Oh my god! EVAN IS A WOMAN! He, she, I don't know how to call him, her anymore! She told me early this morning while we were on the deck! She said that was too big a secret and that she couldn't carry it on her own anymore. I like her, she is really kind and I don't know what to do... She trusts me and I don't want her to be killed but everybody knows woman on a ship is bad luck. Well, for the moment, I will keep it for myself.

Eleventh week

I think I've made a mistake. A big one. Yesterday I drank a bit too much rum and I think I told Big Adam that Evan, or rather Eva since that's her real name, is a woman! God... Wish he will forget or at least, that he will keep it for himself.”

That's how the diary of John Butler ends but, Big Adam, a lieutenant on the Golden Hinde relates in his own diary (found five years ago) how a sailor named John tragically died :

“Eleventh week

Today I learnt that the new cabin boy, Evan, is a woman. This stupid John Butler told me while we were drunk. I immediately decided to tell the crew the truth. They were all very angry but the angriest one was Evan or Eva. She became completely crazy when she learnt that she had been betrayed. She pursued him to beat him. He ran away but he couldn't escape from this monster! They came under the deck. She had nearly caught him when he knocked his head against a beam and died”

That's how our big hero who had survived a tornado died. We can now understand why women are said to bring bad luck on board.

*Marianne & Mathilde.*

# **CAMBRIDGE**

## **NEAR THE RIVER**

Crying and thinking about this magic place,  
A lot of memories result from this breathing space.  
Maybe you could stay there forever?  
Be the one, who will always remember,  
Remember that Cambridge has been alive for years  
If we say that this city has helped us to fight against our fears  
Do you believe in our words?  
Go there and meet the knowledge keeper  
Emotion will be rife  
Remember that this town is dazzlin'  
Imagine you were the one who floated along the river  
Vibrating at the sight which made you shiver  
Escaping from the noise and  
Realizing that Cambridge is your Paradise



## DAWN

The city wakes up,  
The moon slowly falls asleep.  
The river starts its melodious song.  
The morning breeze blows slightly,  
The weeping willows start dancing,  
The rowers start rowing,  
The cyclists start cycling,  
The students start giggling,  
And you were there standing ;  
What are you ?  
A nest of knowledge ?  
Science ?  
Literature ?  
Is it there or is it everywhere?  
How I felt I should belong there,  
Strolling on your cobbled streets,  
Admiring your majestic buildings,  
Walking on your green lawns...  
May your rays never fade,  
May your flowers never wither,  
Dazzle us until the end of time.

Marie Hugny

### Interview of a punter

*After a nice boat trip along the Cam, we decided to ask a few questions to the punter that had led us throughout this historical journey into Cambridge.*

**Hi, nice to meet you, what's your name?**

Matt! (Smiling)

**So you're a punter, what prompted you to do this job?**

You know, after my graduation I moved here because I'm actually a fan of history and I had heard a lot about Cambridge. Being a punter is a nice and easy way to get money and share my historical passion with everyone.

**What do you think about tourists?**

Well, I was kind of a tourist when I came up here but then after a while I feel like a proper inhabitant of Cambridge. And you know, in a way tourists make my month, but I mean, I understand the fact that everybody wants to discover new places but I don't really like them.

**So where are you from?**

I'm from south England, from a town called Wickham, between Portsmouth and Southampton. I heard you speaking in French!

**Yes! We're from Bordeaux!**

Really? I lived there 3 years ago because I played for the Union Rugby Bordeaux Bègle's youth team.

**Oh so do you speak French? And did you enjoy your time in France?**

Yes I used to speak French but then I kind of forgot. And yes, I did enjoy my time in France, that's where my historical passion began; I loved visiting all the châteaux like "La Capelle" with its vineyards and its fabulous red wine (laughing). I also found a new passion for red wine, when I say red wine I mean French red wine because the French are the only one to make good wine.

**Back to Cambridge, have you met Cambridge students?**

Oh the students are often working in their rooms but last year I was invited at a prom party thanks to a guy I met in a Sainsbury, but it's a pretty long story.

**Do you find the people here in Cambridge nice with you?**

Yes they are very nice on the whole, but you know how prom parties end... (Sarcastic)

**What do you mean?**

People get drunk very easily; you know a prom party always ends with fights, drunk people and broken chairs... (Laughing)

**Do you get the opportunity to go out at night in Cambridge?**

Yeah, I'm kind of a night guy (smiling)

**Could you recommend a nice place to go out like a pub or something?**

Yeah the best pub in town is called The Anchor, but it's quite expensive so I don't get there that often. But the one that has the best value for money is The Duke's Arms, 1.50 £ for a pint you can't miss that.

**Okay thanks for this interview, before you go can you say a few word in French?**

Um, yes Um, "je suis avec un croissant" that's the only thing I can say, really, as I told you before, I have kind of forgotten.



Antoine and Thomas

## On the flow of the river

On the flow of the river,  
The boat was gliding over the water.  
Over a blooming landscape  
The sun was shining, hotter and hotter  
The boat was gliding over the water.  
It would be our escape  
Our hour  
The boat was gliding over the water.  
In the centre of the city  
The buildings were singing a mediaeval ditty,  
The breeze was sweet  
Our happiness couldn't be smaller  
The boat was gliding over the water.  
It would be our break  
The punting tour was over,  
It didn't matter  
The boat was gliding over the water.

Joseph Hussenot

## CANTERBURY

### Tragedy in the House of God: Church of Serbia lost one of its most important dignitaries

Last Sunday, the police found a body in the cathedral of Canterbury in Kent. It is the present priest of the Cathedral, *the Reverend Robert Willis*, who discovered the corpse at 8.23 A.M. The victim has been identified thanks to his identity card and to the deposition of the Reverend: he is a sexagenarian named Bojan Petrovic. He was an important person of the Catholic Community in Serbia, the archbishop of the [Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Belgrade](#). He had come to west Europe for a pilgrimage: he first stopped in Rome and the Vatican, then went to Santiago de Compostela and was finally in England to pray on the shrine of Thomas Beckett. He was a fervent Catholic who had an absolute trust in God and refused to be escorted by body guards, which explains how such an important character of the Serbian Catholic Church could have been murdered. His close relatives, deeply affected by his death, describe him as a very godly, generous and tolerant person, very close to the catholic believers who came to his church.



Credit : Volkanyasarlar

According to the police and the deposition of the Reverend Robert Willis, Bojan Petrovic had arrived in the Cathedral very early in the morning, at 7.30 A.M, to be alone and without any visitors. The forensic scientists think that he was brutally stabbed at about 8 o'clock. The identity of the murderer is still unknown, because there were no witnesses and nothing seems unusual (no broken door...), but the detective in charge of the investigation, Marcus McQueen, is very confident. Indeed, the murder weapon, a dagger, was found in the big garden behind the Cathedral, and it seems that there are fingerprints on it.



This cathedral, one of the most ancient ones in England, is famous all around the world for a similar case that occurred on 29<sup>th</sup> December, 1170. The archbishop Thomas Becket, who was opposed to Henry II because he disagreed with him about the rights of the Church in England, was murdered by four knights. These knights heard the King shouting “Will no one rid me of this turbulent priest?”, and took it for orders. Becket was then canonized by Pope Alexander III and a shrine was erected at the exact place he fell under the blows. And it is here that 900 years later a high dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church in Serbia was killed.

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Loïc OGER and Etienne BOUHIER

## New development in the Canterbury murder: The certitudes of Scotland Yard went up in smoke

The police had many hopes in the analysis of the dagger found in the garden of the Cathedral. But Marcus McQueen, the detective in charge of the investigation, made new revelations: according to the recent discoveries, the dagger is not the murder weapon: it is too small for the severe and lethal injuries of Bojan Petrovic. Moreover, the blood on it does not belong to the archbishop, and seems to be more ancient. This new important information is disastrous for Scotland Yard, who have to start their investigation again, and are now faced with another mystery: whose blood is it, and who left this weapon in the garden?



This dagger is the same type as the one found in the garden

By Sam Dalton, [SamDalton@TheTimes.co.uk](mailto:SamDalton@TheTimes.co.uk)

Loïc OGER and Etienne BOUHIER

