

M Robert Bre

1 September 79

Dear M Bre,

I expect I'll be able to read your translation of my book, but I shan't be able to give you an opinion on it: sadly, my French is not good enough. I can just about read Nice-Matin.

p75 Yes, mutton hearts, or more probably lambs' hearts.

p79 son chapeau a la Humphrey Bogart is exactly what I meant.

p85 les Allies is fine, and thankyou for the correction.

p86 Yes, Corsican.

p88 sod is mildly obscene, short for Sodomite, i.e. an inhabitant of the Biblical city of Sodom, i.e. one who indulges in buggery. It is a term of abuse, but here it is being used in a friendly way.

p123 Yes, Air Raid Patrol.

p141 The Oxford Union is a debating society for students. Yes, the Tatler is the society magazine. The Lord Lieutenants of the English counties no longer have a real function. At one time I believe they were responsible for mustering soldiers from among the peasants, but nowadays the title is little more than an honour. A by-election occurs when a Member of Parliament dies or resigns, and it is so called to distinguish it from a general election when they all have to stand again.

p148 Donkey jacket: a short coat of heavy blue serge worn by workmen.

p149 Corn store: a shop selling seed for farmers, and usually many other items of agricultural material. There used to be one in every small town. The Morris Cowley was a series of small cars made between the wars. The 'Bullnose' - a nickname - was the most famous of these, and had a bulbous bonnet.

Please don't apologise for being a perfectionist. Nothing could please me more.