



PARDOE & BEYOND

1950 – 1962 – 1972

1

of three literary memoirs

GEORGE KENNEDY

PARDOE

&

BEYOND

In 2010 I made some notes towards a eulogy for my father. Three pages became three Memoirs. PARDOE & BEYOND is the first.

The Memoirs are literary in two senses. First, they refer in part to literature, of which I presume a certain knowledge in my reader. The internet is at hand in any case. Second, my writing aspires to literature's brevity and wit.

Most of the panels are entirely factual, almost all are based on fact. I do not have total recall of distant conversations.

Most persons appearing are/were real. In some cases their names are/were not. I have not invented the behaviour of real and identifiable persons.

Read the Memoirs on the Website, or in the Amazon e-books.
pardoepardoe.com

I invite your comments on the Blog.

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First Edition

Dedicated to Uma and to Maria Grist (matchless webmaster)

COVER PHOTO COURTESY DENNIS & MARTI TWIBELL



when he first heard it speak and then he couldn't stop laughing. Our fleas are on the wane. I think the DDT in the blankets we imported has done them in.

John was out spraying all today and has got more contracts and will be out again tomorrow. I've bought a bottle of anti-goitre pills and some iodised salt for cooking. Easily 98% of the population must have goitre, It is terrifying.

The China is stored on top of the kitchen cupboard and looks a noble array.

Love from Peggy

9

DEC 26 1950

THE DON: ROOM CHANGE

Where I go to sleep in one bed and wake in another.

My brother, Bryan, has arrived.

1951 PANELS: 13

10

1951

THE DON: ROMA

Where around my 4th birthday, Roma appears as I am applying Nugget to her carpet slippers.

“WHAT ARE YOU DOING?”

“I'm just polishing your slippers.”

“YOU ARE THE MOST WICKED BOY WHO EVER LIVED. GO INTO YOUR BEDROOM AND PACK YOUR SUITCASE. THE POLICE WILL TAKE YOU AWAY TO GAOL FOR EVER. YOU WILL NEVER SEE YOUR FAMILY AGAIN.”

I put toys, books, clothes into the suitcase and take them out again.

Roma, stands over me:

“Are you taking that? Hurry up.”

Left in the street, my derangement builds.

The sun sets.

Roma tells Sally that she is adopted. Her real parents will take her away some time.
Roma's dealings with me and Sally are revealed to our parents.

PARDOE & BEYOND

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1951

EAST DEVONPORT:

Where, packed up, we leave the Don and drive through West Devonport.

Across the river we attain

East Devonport

Where there is a

Primary School

to which I will go, and a

Church

and a

Beach

Up Wesley Vale Road we reach

Our House

With a field in front and a field behind.

With a big shed.

Our House

Of wood, of 2 pieces joined in a T.

Where there is a passage.

Where on one side of the passage is the bathroom and lavatory.

Where on the other side are the Nursery, bedrooms and the sitting-room, in which we will listen to the WIRELESS, becoming a radio.

Our House

Where the neighbours are the Ives's, the Applebys, Mr. Williams the ploughman and Mr. Fisher.

Our House

From which we turn right and left to find:

Pardoe

12

1951

PARDOE: ALONG THE BEACH

A bay, a bow, a beach, along which Dad drives us in the Land Rover.

Where, we can drive near the water or near the ramparts because the Land Rover has a brilliant British thing called Four-Wheel Drive.

Where we can see the rusted remains of cars which did not have 4WD.

Where past the point are other beaches – Greater Pardoe.

13

1951

PARDOE: AIR & SEA

Where the air inflates us.

Where the wind stirs us.

Where the sand is dry as dry.

Where the sea is wet as wet can be.

14

1951

PARDOE: OYSTERS

Where there are oyster shells.

Where there is no oyster.

Where there is a walrus.

15

1951

OUR HOUSE: DESPERATION

Where drivers sweat and tremble.

Where drivers say “I love that car, mate...”

Where drivers say “If you could pull it out, mate...”

Where drivers say “Here’s a tenner, mate.”

Where Mum says “They’re just taking advantage of your good nature, John.”

Where John lets them take advantage, but not for money.

16

1951

PARDOE: WHICH IS

Which is ribbed, wracked, tracked

flat, smooth, clean

white, yellow, sandy

sandy, stony.

17

1951

OUR HOUSE: NORTHDOWN

From which we drive past the entrance to Pardoe, past Wesley Vale, to see the Thomases at Northdown.

Where there is a hill called the Sugarloaf.

Where you wouldn’t want that much.

Where the Thomases host daffodils.

Where a crow is sad and loud.

Where the crow stops being sad and loud.

Where the crow adds “Or something.”

Where the first owner was speared in 1831.

Where he’d be dead now, anyway.

18

1951

PARDOE: STONES

Where I put shells in my bucket.

Where I empty my bucket.

Where I put precious stones in my bucket.

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1951

EAST DEVONPORT: LITTLE FERRY

Where the little ferry leaves.

Where the little ferry goes West.

Brave little ferry!

Where the beach is called East Devonport Beach.

Where a large hulk rusts into nothing on a small stage.

Where a breakwater of black boulders endures.

Where the breakwater goes underwater.

Where I don't.

20

1951

PARDOE: CASTLES

Where I build castles.

Where giants destroy them.

Where I build castles.

Where the sea destroys them.

Where I destroy them.

21

1951

OUR HOUSE: AROUND THE WORLD

Where I find in the garage a piece of wood shaped like the transom of a boat and I will make the other pieces and sail around the world.

22

1951

PARDOE: TIGER MOTH

Where we walk without Dad because he is doing something else.

Where we have to scatter when a Tiger Moth lands on the beach and Dad steps out.

1952 PANELS: 12

23

1952

OUR HOUSE: BATH

Where I step down into a luke-cold, second-hand bath.

Where we have a 1928 Chev which can't go on the beach.

Where I shun Shaun because he tells me that the goal-posts at Latrobe are for the pole-vault – and they aren't.

Where swallows stick mud on the eaves.

24

1952

OUR HOUSE: PTO

Where Dad drops, somewhere in the drive, a spray nozzle which has just arrived from England.

Where Kennedy & Webber is located.

Where Webber is the accountant.

Where Kennedy & Webber trades as Nimbus Spraying.

Where nimbus is a rain-cloud.

Where cumulus takes years.

Where Dad unfolds the spraying wings of the Land Rover and I wait for the Power Take-off to be engaged.

25
1952

PARDOE: WAVES (1)

Where waves roll.

Where waves roll pebbles.

Where waves run up.

Where waves run up the sand.

Not where I am.

Where waves run up the sand.

Where I was.

Where furred tongues sibilate the sand.

26
1952

OUR HOUSE: PLOVERS

Where plovers shrill at night.

Where plovers stop in the middle of a step.

Where plovers stop in the middle of the day.

Where plovers must have a nest but you can't see it.

Where plovers must have a chick but you can't see it.

27
1952

PARDOE: WHERE MUSSELS

Where mussels cluster like grapes.

Where barnacles crust.

Where Shaun eats a penguin.

Where we drink pigface juice.

Where sea-lettuce looks like land-lettuce.

Where we eat sea-lettuce.

Where sea-lettuce is poison, like land-lettuce.

28

1952

EAST DEVONPORT: ROCK-POOLS

Where's there's a beach.

Where there are rock-pools.

Where there are bullies.

Where bullies are the star fish

Where starfish are the bullies.

Where there are urchins.

Where they wade in the rock-pools.

Where there are shrimps.

Where they wade in the rock-pools.

29

1952

OUR HOUSE: THE TOP OF THE MILK

To which my mother returns, scornful, from a social leader's At Home:

“She said I must feel at home in Tasmania because it is so much like England! And another woman said ‘Mrs Kennedy likes the top of the milk.’”

She refuses or ignores further invitations, issued because they mistake her for a lady.

30

1952

OUR HOUSE: BEDROOMS

Where I am moved from one bedroom to another.

Where, through the years, we move between bedrooms – sole occupiers or sharers. In East Devonport, not West Devonport, where an aeronautical engineer lives under an upturned dinghy on the river bank.

31

1952

PARDOE: AROUND A FIRE

Where we go with the Frank and Norah Lillas family to bag cuttlefish for a petshop in Hobart. Frank and Dad know each other from the Devonport Chess Club.

The Lillas boys and I don't need money. We will live off the country. We will dam the creek to trap fish. We will make ice-cream and sandals out of kelp. We will sit around a fire.

[There will eventually be 6 Lillas boys – Michael, Matthew, Andrew, Patrick, Benjamin, Jimmy.]

The Lillases are observant Catholics. The Kennedys are occasional Anglicans, but we boys are a tribe.

32

1952

OUR HOUSE: SALLY'S TOOTH

Where Sally, for the FIRST TIME, reminds me that I broke her tooth when I was a baby.

33

1952

PARDOE: FOOD & DRINK

Where the Lillas boys and I suck something from a tin without a label into which Michael has driven his pocket-knife spike with a rock.

Where the Lillas boys and I drink tea from an old pot we have found with enamel coming off the inside.

Where I hear the Land Rover's *melancholy, long, withdrawing roar*.

34

1952

OUR HOUSE: SITTING ROOM

Where we sit in the Sitting Room.

Where rubber cushions continually slip off window seats.

Where there are French windows through which we walk.

Where the French are funny.

Where my mother's writing desk has 2 rests to pull out before lowering the lid.

Where every visiting child pulls out the rests without lowering the lid.

Where my mother addresses an envelope *Prudential Ass.*

Where the fireplace is brick, with vents on each side which are supposed to distribute warm air and don't.

Where children open and close them.

Where, on the mantelpiece are

Two polished cowrie shells.

A pewter mug containing coins, keys and paperclips.

A dark wooden Indian fakir, starving from a crack in his base.

Two solid mandalas – round, glass paperweights with coloured shapes inside.

Where one paperweight, reinforced by the shapes, bounces off the brick fireplace.

35

1952

OUR HOUSE: CHECKERS

Where Dad doesn't like Nixon.

Where I think Nixon has the right to play Checkers.

1953 PANELS: 13

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1953

OUR HOUSE: 1ST DAY

Where my lunch and I are packed off to East Devonport Primary School.

“NO, YOU CAN'T BUY YOUR LUNCH.”

Where at the first recess I hear

“There he is. Listen to this, Scotty.”

“I already heard him.”

“Speak English...Go on, mite, speak English”.