



**JM Editing &
Literary Agency**

NOTE: This template Editor's Report is reproduced as a sample, and certain details personal to the author have been removed as a courtesy.

Gone But Not Forgotten

By

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

Editor's Report

By Jeremy Murphy

JM Editing & Literary Agency

I enjoyed the memoir *Gone But Not Forgotten*. I found the author generous and candid when writing about his various life experiences. I particularly enjoyed the author's eagerness to pass on advice to younger people. His observation on page 171 (~~XXXXXX~~) that students should strive to discover 'mankind's needs', was representative of much of the material; wise, interesting and generously imparted advice.

I also enjoyed the numerous and varied stories and anecdotes, although I thought many of them could benefit from the application of storytelling

techniques, which I explain below. While the manuscript has a loose chronological structure, and is arranged into chapters, I feel it is a little disorganised. Within each chapter, the material feels haphazard and thrown-down. I suggest ways to mitigate this below, including breaking the various chapters into segments, which would make the material more accessible and easier to follow for the reader, as well as being more engaging.

Narrative Structure

Like many memoirs, the author tells the story of his life through anecdotes and narratives; stories involving the many people the author met during the course of his life and the many interesting situations he found himself in.

Some of the more memorable characters include XXX XXX, who takes his Guinness far too early (pg 42, *Chapter X*) XXX XXX, who has an innovative way of giving his customers the impression his company is bigger than it is (pg 65, *Chapter X*), a little story that reveals the extent of Cork people's pride (pg 142, *Chapter X*) and *Chapter XXXX*, has many examples, especially the anecdotes from Russia.

I think however the application of basic narrative techniques can enhance this material, and make the material more engaging for the reader. While the stories from XXX XXX's life are often fascinating, and often have a moral (XXX XXX's witty repartee to his ignorant dinner host on pg 153, for example, is very memorable) many of them lack a narrative structure. Some are far too short, and expanding upon the more interesting ones is therefore well worth considering; fleshing them out with more details and prolonging the suspense.

The author has a habit of telling the reader the outcome of the story at the beginning, which can remove the suspense and make the stories less engaging.

On page 86 for example, *Chapter X*, the author narrates a prank that was played on him and his wife while on honeymoon. He begins by writing, 'XX.' It would be far more effective here not to mention the confetti at the beginning, and instead reveal it at the end, after the incident takes place; this would inject a greater level of surprise into the narrative.

I would advise beginning by simply describing the arrival at the hotel, and explaining why his wife carried her bag; this builds atmosphere and suspense, as the reader will wonder what is about to happen! I would include the background and the context of the wedding and the pranking friends, but give the reader no indication of what the prank consists of. When they arrive in the bedroom, describe how the material burst out of the suitcase; and only then mention confetti. Often, it is more effective in a memoir to 'show' the scene, or 'paint the picture' for the reader, while providing the 'explanation' after the event occurs.

Similarly, from page 212, *Chapter X*, the author narrates his experiences of travelling through Russia. There are some interesting stories here and some interesting observations. I feel however that many of them would benefit from more narrative structure and storytelling techniques. On page 213, the author describe his efforts to buy tickets for the opera Pagliacci. The story is too short and, as before, I feel he tells the reader the outcome prematurely, and there isn't enough suspense as a result:

XX
XX
XX.

I feel this can be improved upon. Rather than telling the reader the outcome at the outset ('approached and offered two box tickets for five') I would build atmosphere and paint the scene. I would advise the author to describe the scene outside the Bolshi, the people and the things he saw. Then narrate how he began shouting for tickets and his wife's reaction. Also, while the interaction with the ticket-seller sounds interesting, this is narrated by the author as opposed to rendered in dialogue-form:

XX
XX

I would consider rendering this in dialogue-form. The dialogue-form may make this scene more vivid and engrossing for the reader. The following would be an example:

'Five pound; two tickets.' I remember the seller saying to me with a big, wide smile. I smiled back and handed him a five pound note.

'XXX, it's £5 each.' XXXX said to me.

I looked at the seller and he stared back. We were all a little confused, and the noise and bustle around the Bolshi was growing.

'£5 for two yes?'

He nodded at me. I looked at my wife.

'O for goodness sake XXXX, don't be so mean. Give him £10!'

This format can help bring the drama to life for the reader, and can be much more engaging. More streams of dialogue like this would enhance the book. The author may worry that it requires a certain amount of invention and re-

imagining of recollected events, but a writer has a certain amount of 'creative license' when it comes to memoirs.

In light of this, I would advise the author to consider revising swathes of the book. There are several occasions where storytelling techniques - such as dramatic dialogue, building atmosphere, and prolonging suspense - would enhance the already existing stories and anecdotes; many of which are very interesting and evocative of a time and place. Other instances where these techniques could be fruitfully applied are: Mr XXX, who the author describes meeting on page 77, strikes me as a significant person in the development of the author's career, and this section would benefit from these techniques (creating a vivid picture of the scene for the reader and including a block of dialogue); meeting XXX XXX (pg 150) was a striking event, especially as it ended with a notable observation by the author: 'Was this an early accusation of "fake news"' and it could be enhanced with narrative techniques; as would the circumstances behind the author's missed opportunity at a political career, described on pages 103 and 104; and there are countless others.

In addition to making the stories more engaging, these narrative techniques would extend many of them and make them a more substantial reading experience for the reader. Many of the stories and experiences recounted in the book are short and abbreviated; the reader gets a fleeting glimpse of the author's many interesting experiences. Applying the narrative techniques outlined above will give the reader a greater appreciation and understanding of the events described, a greater intimacy with the characters involved, and by consequence the author's life, and therefore help the book achieve its objective as a memoir.

Presentation

On some occasions, I felt the material could be presented and ordered in a more artful and engaging way. While the memoir is split into chapters, much of the material within each chapter feels a little haphazard and thrown-down, with not enough attention paid to how it is ordered and presented.

One way to improve how the material is ordered and presented, is to break the larger chapters into segments; i.e. keep the chapter structure, but break each chapter into smaller sub-chapters or segments. This will make the material more accessible and palatable to the reader. Giving these segments witty, engaging titles, will also help make the material more engaging and inviting.

The author does occasionally break the chapters into smaller segments. For example, the material beginning on page 159 is titled 'XXX XXX', and on page 160, 'XXX XXX'. This is seldom done however, and the sub-titles here are too dry and may put some general readers off.

Chapter twenty one, titled *Chapter X*, has, despite the dry title, some interesting material, and could be broke into the following segments:

The Call (pg 139 - when the author gets the initial call from XXX XXX, regarding the XXXX institute)

Hands on the Wheel (142)

The Four Corners (149)

It Takes All Types (152) from 'One of my pleasures of my involvement with the Institute was meeting so many interesting members from around the world'

Another Ship to Sail (159, replacing 'Institute of XXXX')

Taking up the Pen (160, replacing 'XXX XXX')

XXX XXX the Artist (page 163)

XXX XXX the Cook (page 166)

These suggested chapter sub-titles may not resonate with the author, but I would encourage him to consider the overall idea; it would make the material more accessible and engaging.

I would also advise re-visiting some of the chapter titles. Many of them are drab and uninspiring, and they could give the false impression that the material is equally so.

Chapter twenty one, *Chapter X*, recounts an important period in the author's life; his membership of the XXX XXX. It also contains some interesting material; I liked his reflection on why commonwealth countries were slow to open embassies in Ireland and how, even now, Australia processes visas through the High Commission in London (page 150). It also contains two very humorous anecdotes; XXX XXX's return from Australia and XXX XXX's witty repartee after completing his speech. I think this material deserves a better, more engaging title than *Chapter X*. Perhaps something resembling: *Sailing Through Chartered Waters*, with the option of a sub-title, *My Presidency of the XXXX*. This potential title may not resonate with the author, but I would advise re-visiting the chapter titles.

I also felt the material was a little predictable in terms of form. In this respect, the inclusion of the author's poetry, speeches he delivered at various dinners and functions, and the eulogies he delivered at both his mother's and his father's funeral, was welcome, and broke the monotony of the standard auto- biographical form. Some of the poetry was interesting. The poem XXX XXX; 1940s on page 34, for example, with its observations about Dublin life then. I thought this poem managed to be both personal and candidly factual. While the poetry is welcome, I think too many poems have been included, and I would advise excluding some.

Of the speeches, I found the address delivered to the XXX XXX(Appendix 3) interesting, and it provided some interesting insights into the financial sector. I would advise keeping this. The speech address reproduced in Appendix 4, the author's response to XXX XXX's toast to the XXXXX, should also be included for its joke about various European stereotypes alone, which I think many readers will find remarkable. However, the XXX XXX, welcoming the author as president of the XXXX, reproduced on pages 148 & 49, should be shortened. I understand why it is important to the author, and it should be included, but it should be shortened with the full version available as an appendix, as the less patient reader may skip.

The manuscript also includes several lists of organisation the author was a member of, distinguished colleagues, positions filled, various accomplishments and events undertaken while a member of certain organisations. I understand why this material is important to the author and essential to the success of the project, but I would, for the most part, either confine to appendices or shorten considerably. The less patient reader, interested in the story of the

author's life, may find them tedious, while the reader more interested in material of this kind can locate it in the appendices.

For example, on pages 132 and 134, the author has included non-executive directorship he held and organisations he was a member of as non-executive director. I would include this information in an appendix, but direct the reader towards the appendix in the main text; eg, include the text, 'for a full list of the non-executive directorships I was privilege to hold, see Appendix X'. This would mean the material is included, without putting the more impatient reader off. Ditto for the the list of the author's XXXXX experiences, listed on page 140.

For the main text, I would advise concentrating on telling the story behind some of these key events, while directing the reader to the appendix for the extensive list. An alternative would be to include a brief few highlights within the text itself, while consigning the full, extensive list to the appendices. The author does mention some of the highlights within the main text; the Sir Lankian TV interview, for example, is mentioned in *Chapter X*, page 211. Or, replace the lists with a sentence such as:

XX

XX

It would also be worth exploring other ways of presenting this material, rather than the predictable, chapter-by-chapter memoir form. On several occasions, the author shares valuable advice with the younger reader; his advice to 'identify mankind's needs, and then create your own employment to satisfy them' on page 171, as well as his many thoughts on changes to society in *Chapter X* are representative examples. XXX XXX's advice and thoughts on page

81 on how to succeed in business, imparted to the author when he was younger, is also interesting.

With this in mind, the author should organise and concentrate these reflections and experiences, and explore conveying them through different forms. For example, a letter addressed to younger readers, in the form of a *Letter to a Young Businessperson*, or a *Letter to a Young Person Starting off in Business*, would be a very worthwhile addition. I felt imparting advice, gained from his years of experience in high-level business and political circles, was one of the objectives of the memoir, and while there are many interesting insights and advice, I feel the letter form would be a more effective way of presenting it.

Formatting

I would advise changes to the way the manuscript is formatted. Quotations from speeches and citations within the text are italicised. I think it would be more effective from a presentation and appearance perspective to leave in standard font, and italicise block quotations instead.

There are also inconsistencies with regard to punctuation of quotations. For quotes embedded within the text, the author often left quotes that came in the end of the sentence without the final punctuation mark. In copy-editing the manuscript, I have included the final punctuation mark, and left the mark within the quote when the quotes were long and began with capitals. For shorter quotes, including short quotes embedded within the text, I have inserted the final punctuation mark outside the quotes.

With regard to presentation and appearance, I would italicise names of books etc, rather than leaving them in quotation marks and un-italicised.

I also think many of the longer quotes and citations can be converted to block-quotes; ie detached from the main text. I converted the large quote on page 48 , from the CUS annual, into a block quote.

Conclusion

If any of the observations and suggested changes above are unclear, please let me know and I will clarify. Equally so with regard to the comments and feedback contained in the edited manuscript. If I can be of any further assistance to the author, including reading subsequent drafts, reading changed parts of the manuscript, or considering other ideas and suggestion to improve the manuscript, I would be more than happy to oblige.