

Source: Daily Mail {Main}  
 Edition:  
 Country: UK  
 Date: Friday 19, August 2016  
 Page: 57  
 Area: 211 sq. cm  
 Circulation: ABC 1551430 Daily  
 Ad data: page rate £32,508.00, scc rate £129.00  
 Phone: 020 7938 6000  
 Keyword: Bloomsbury

## MUSTREADS

Out now in paperback



**24 HOURS AT AGINCOURT**  
 by Michael Jones  
 (WH Allen £9.99)

TO VISIT the battlefield at Agincourt is to find a typically northern French scene of rural calm.

The place where Shakespeare imagined Henry V giving his great rallying speech — ‘We few, we happy few, we band of brothers...’ — is now a tree-lined ploughland, the distant landscape punctuated by poplar trees and Gothic church spires.

Yet here, on October 25, 1415, a bedraggled English army, weakened by dysentery and heavily outnumbered, cut down the flower of French chivalry.

In his hour-by-hour account of the battle, the military historian Michael Jones creates a fascinatingly detailed image of the conflict, drawing on contemporary chronicles for a vivid evocation of the terror unleashed by the English bowmen, who ‘let fly arrows into the enemy in such quantities that their density obscured the sun’.

As Shakespeare put it: ‘From this day to the ending of the world/... we in it shall be remembered.’



**THE NATURE OF SEX**  
 by Dr Carin Bondar  
 (Weidenfeld £9.99)

THE Egyptian goose apparently mates for life. A pair have set up home on the riverbank outside my window and, having read Dr Bondar’s entertaining book on animals’ mating habits, I can’t help speculating about their relationship.

According to Dr Bondar,

human sex is ‘boring’ by comparison with the goings-on in the animal world.

Certainly, there seems no shortage of variety, from the male sea slug who pierces his partner’s forehead with his phallus, to the male chimpanzee who used a frog as a sex toy and the fur seal who attempted to rape a penguin (the penguin, Bondar reports, was ‘subdued but appeared to be physically unscathed’).

Racy in tone, and full of the sort of lurid detail with which you can reduce a dinner party to silence, this is a lively read with a heavyweight scientific bibliography.



**FRANCIS BACON IN YOUR BLOOD**  
 by Michael Peppiatt  
 (Bloomsbury £9.99)

‘FRANCIS BACON became a father figure for me,’ writes Michael Peppiatt — a claim that would surely have come as a surprise to that most riotously Bohemian of artists.

Peppiatt was a Cambridge undergraduate when he first met Bacon in 1963. Hoping to interview him for a student magazine, he visited the Soho pub that Bacon and his friends frequented.

Bacon took a fancy to the young man and invited him to his studio, and a friendship began that would last for more than 30 years.

Peppiatt became Bacon’s confidant, and the assiduous recorder of his conversation, drunk and sober.

This memoir reproduces their discussions as though Peppiatt had total recall of what was said — something of a miracle, given the quantity of alcohol that fuelled Bacon’s genius.

Theirs was a strange relationship — the artist and his shadow — but this intimate portrait is essential reading for anyone interested in Bacon’s disturbing talent.

**JANE SHILLING**

