
MS. WILKINSON CALLED ME NEPHEW
BLADEFREGA

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It is a warm Sunday, August 23, 2026, much like many others.

A quick lunch is not a concession but a ritual. A brief afternoon rest is an exception, granted only to allow the unusually high levels of morning dopamine production to return to normal after an unexpected event: today, Bing placed one of my pages in first position on the web for a query connected to my mother, Gillette.

From second place, my grandfather watches, and smiles.

He does not seem angry.

Today I also discovered that King Camp Gillette left this world on July 9, 1932.

The moment I read the date, I almost jumped from my chair.

My own project, gillettenarrative.com, was born on June 9, 2026.

Ninety-four years after his death.

And, according to the agreements I have made with myself, thirty-three years before my own planned departure in 2058.

When dates begin to converge, when they start fitting together with unexpected

precision, one is tempted to believe there may be another algorithm at work—one whose appearance bears little resemblance to those to which we have become accustomed.

As always in moments such as these, I am accompanied by English-language jazz.

It is the only music my mind receives naturally now that the guitars and mandolins of my family have fallen silent through the ordinary laws of nature.

Then I open my email.

A sharp blow arrives directly at the heart.

Samantha writes from London.

She is the granddaughter of Ms. Wilkinson.

My Aunt Maggy.

The lady of the crossed swords.

The woman who, not long ago and in front of her entire family, called me nephew.

Her message is simple.

Ms. Maggy Wilkinson has passed away.

By her own request, knowing me well enough to anticipate my reaction, the news was delivered only after the burial had taken place.

We are English.

A tear finds its place.

Death is never a beautiful thing.

It is simply something you never quite expect.

Among all the women I have met in my life, this acquired aunt occupied only a brief chapter.

Yet her role was essential.

She helped me understand that aristocracy is not found exclusively in titles, coats of arms, or inherited privileges.

It exists in manners.

It exists in behaviour.

It exists in that quality English speakers often call *aplomb*.

There is a simpler word for it.

Class.

I am writing this letter to her.

For her family.

For myself.

For every reader who may one day arrive here.

And I begin with a single sentence remembered by heart:

We are what we are because of the people we meet, and nobody can take that away from us.

Medical literature often abuses an authority willingly granted by patients who need certainty.

It frequently tells us what is convenient.

Less often what is important.

They say that children between birth and five years of age do not possess memories.

That they cannot retain them because the necessary cognitive structures have not yet developed.

According to that theory, each of us should carry five years of darkness.

Yet I remember the slaps from my mother.

I remember the slaps from my kindergarten teachers.

I do not remember the numbers.

They began even and never ended odd.

The blows we receive as adults work in much the same way.

Nobody counts them.

Memory does not archive them as statistics.

It deposits them quietly within the soul.

And years later, it withdraws them as writing.

Goodbye, Aunt Maggy.

May you be welcomed wherever your journey now continues.

The swords remain crossed until the day you pass beneath them.

Farewell.

Your Nephew.

Nando The Scribe