



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS  
General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level

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**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**8693/13**

Paper 1 Passages for Comment

**October/November 2011**

**2 hours**

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **two** questions.

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.



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This document consists of **7** printed pages and **1** blank page.



**Answer two questions.**

- 1 The following article describes the writer's visit to Fordlandia, in a remote part of Brazil. Fordlandia was a car production plant paid for by Henry Ford, at the time the owner of one of the largest car companies in the world.
- (a) Comment on the style and language of the passage. [15]
- (b) Later the writer publishes another magazine article which describes another unusual experience in another remote part of the world. Write the opening of the article (between 120–150 words). Base your answer closely on the style and language of the original extract. [10]

“So, where do you want to go?” the best guide in Santarem inquired with a yawn.

Gil's phone rang constantly. He arranged tour schedules on his coaster.\* He wanted to refer me to colleagues, but they were busy.

“You interested in cars?” His remark threw me. I said my cousin Paul built a Model T from an abandoned chassis in his backyard. But what had that to do with the jungle? 5

“Great!” His eyes lit up as though hitting the jackpot. “Pack your stuff. You're heading to Fordlandia.”

So now I was going to a place deemed “a tropical ghost town”. When Seringue bought my ticket, a local asked why in the world I wanted to visit such a forlorn place as Fordlandia. 10

“All they do is fish, drink and live on government handouts!” he snorted. I had no idea, but the irony appealed to me. You could only get to Fordlandia by boat.

A three hundred kilometres journey southwest of Santarem would take approximately twelve hours. 15

“Slightly longer,” Gil shouted portside, “if it sinks.” He drove away towards wealthy tourists disgorging from a cruise ship that had docked overnight.

On the boat I met Bruno, a research student at an Amazonian Institute on his way to Itaituba to research the impact of mining. When I mentioned Fordlandia, Bruno didn't find the notion of a car production plant in the middle of the jungle surreal. “Volkswagen and Xerox have done the same. They've bought huge tracts of land. I mean huge!” 20

I quickly learnt that international investors were lured into the Amazon, aided by subsidised loans, tax credits and write-offs. 25

The morning mist scattered to reveal Fordlandia as I disembarked onto a long wooden pier. A group of dark gauchos shaded by cowboy hats stood idly by and muttered among themselves. Tourism was up. My arrival had doubled the year's intake.

I took out my camera and began to focus. Most buildings had broken windows. No one bothered to smash those still intact; the dust that accrued over the years repelled even the hardest stones. Processing ramps criss-crossed at useless angles. I zoomed closer. Even snails had given up on them midway. Tufts of grass tumbled out of the hoods of skeletal Fords lying in fields whilst hydrants “Made in Michigan” poked their red heads above weeds starved of fire. 30 35

I grabbed a coffee at the dockside canteen and was directed to the Ford production plant behind the schoolyard. At the end of a gravel driveway, a gate was

tightly wound with heavy chains and clamped with an enormous lock. I managed to crawl beneath the honeycomb fencing and scramble over barbed wire that blocked the path to the main entrance. I felt as though I was trespassing. If this were a museum, I would have it all to myself. 40

The doors were barred. I entered the main building through a broken window. The interior was vast and practically empty. From what I could tell from holes drilled in the floor, machines had been unbolted and sold as scrap iron. What remained were large green turbines next to electricity meters with dangling wires. I swiped a layer of dust off the metal casing and sneezed over the words "Wesson of Chicago". Dials and switchboards with burnt fuses in squeaky boxes were the last vestiges of a lost world. A hoist in a corner was surely where the chassis were once welded. In another corner, bric-a-brac piled together: a wheelchair, a pram, a filing cabinet. The Ford factory was a resting home for aged metal. 45 50

An iron plaque inscribed Fordlandia's origins. It had been inaugurated in 1928 with equipment shipped from Detroit, where the Ford Motor Car Company created an alliance with Harvey Firestone. (Ford produced the carriage, Firestone the tyres.) Fordlandia was an ambitious plan to construct sawmills, a hospital, a radio station, employee housing and even an 18-hole golf course. A workforce of single men, mainly from Brazil's north-east, was lured there with the prospect of gold. 55

A car can be broken up into constituent parts: iron for the chassis, electricity for internal wiring, rubber for tyres, petrol and oil for energy, aluminium for wipers, chrome for fenders, glass for mirrors and windows. And so Ford bought up big in Brazil: ships, ports, railways, steel mills, hydro-electric plants, iron and coal mines, even the river for water supply and to discharge refuse. But with overheads like this, how was Henry Ford ever going to turn a profit? 60

So where did it all go wrong? Fordlandia was an experiment that tried to modify human nature by replacing nature: workers were woken by bells and whistles instead of birdsong. They read clocks instead of the sun. The punched card at the entrance signalled the siesta they had lost. 65

\* *coaster*: boat

2 The following passage describes the writer's experience of the First World War (1914–1918).

- (a) Comment on the style and language of the passage. [15]
- (b) The writer is later wounded in battle and describes this later in his account. Write the opening section of the account (between 120–150 words). Base your answer closely on the style and language of the original extract. [10]

Turmoil and confusion are everywhere. Troops, baggage, and all the litter of war, lumbers up every available space. Officers are here, there, and everywhere. They sort us out, guide, and lead us to our trains. We file in.

Where are we going? No one knows. Where's the 8th? Where's the 7th? Where's the 6th? Where is any regiment? 5

We move. It is night. We travel all night, and are joining or rejoining, new troops or casualties returning to our units.

Sergeant S. is with me. He already has the D.C.M.<sup>1</sup> This is his third lot. He does not relish it, none of us do. This will probably finish him; he realizes it. We all do. That is, the men. But what of the others? Boys, boys, boys – always boys. They have no right here. They are brave enough now, but, in a few hours, shells, gas, machine gun, and rifle will play hell with them. 10

Daylight comes. Nesle slips by, and Ham, and right on to rail-head we go. There the track ends, and we detrain.

Officers claim us, and the troops break up, going each to their corps reinforcements. Here we spend a day or two. There are parades, and instruction. We drill the boys; they hate it – so do we. 15

Then they give me a map, point out my direction, put me in charge of a party, and off we go.

Autreville is our headquarters, and I have to shepherd these lads safely to their destination, which, according to my map, is about seven miles away. 20

The going is heavy. Loaded like pack-mules, some of the lads soon crack up, so I rest them a bit, and take the opportunity to make adjustments to the equipment of one or two, in order that a better fit will make it easier for them. We go on; aircraft, flying high, are being shelled; it gives the boys their first experience of shell-fire. They do not mind, it is so far away. 25

A transport wagon overtakes us, it belongs to the 8th, our unit. I hail the driver. He says that we have three miles to go yet, and suggests relieving some of the boys of their equipment.

I agree. I know that it is wrong to do so, but I chance it. You have to chance everything in this war; and if you get caught, well, it does not matter much. He loads the equipment into his wagon, and goes on. The lads keep their rifles, and the going is easier for some. 30

We reach Autreville. Of course, we have our rations – at least, we did. A bag of tea, one of sugar, and milk in tins. No, they're gone? Dumped somewhere, no one knows. I don't mind very much. The quartermaster<sup>2</sup> fumes and curses, but I know perfectly well that he will have to provide more. 35

The boys, however, are appalled. They think that they will have to go short.

We lounge here for a day, and then I take my party up the line. As I have only three miles to go this time, they give me a guide. He leads. I am instructed to take the rear, and keep an eye on stragglers. He sends me no word back. 40

We pass a guard; we don't salute, because I do not see them until we have

almost passed them. Further on, we pass a general with his aide, both on foot. We do not salute; we take no notice. He looks surprised, but passes on without a word. Wise old man!

45

At last, we reach the battalion. We are divided up, and go to various companies. I go to "B" Company. The first man I meet is Alf K., V.C.<sup>3</sup> "Oh!" he cries. "Here's a bit of luck; we've got a sergeant." That means that he, and his N.C.O.s,<sup>4</sup> will be a little less overworked.

My officer is away on leave; his place is taken by Lieutenant S., whom I do not like, and consider a bit of a fool. I see him in the dark just removing a rifle from beside a sleeping boy. He is handing it back to his runner, and has not seen me as he is half-turned away.

50

I decide to give him a fright; so as he turns again, he finds the point of my bayonet<sup>5</sup> an inch from his throat. He hears my fierce whisper of "Who are you?" and replies hurriedly, "*Rum!*" the password for the night.

55

I tell him that he is lucky, as I thought of thrusting first and enquiring afterwards. I tell him that I view the disarming of one of my sentries very seriously.

For the sake of the boy, we patch it up, and say nothing about it.

<sup>1</sup>*D.C.M.*: Distinguished Conduct Medal

<sup>2</sup>*quartermaster*: an officer in charge of supplies

<sup>3</sup>*V.C.*: the Victoria Cross – the highest medal for bravery

<sup>4</sup>*N.C.O.s*: non-commissioned officers

<sup>5</sup>*bayonet*: blade on the front of a rifle

3 In the passage below the writer describes her memories of her father.

- (a) Comment on the style and language of the passage. [15]
- (b) After leaving home, the writer discovers a diary her mother has kept. In it her mother records her thoughts and feelings about family life. Write a section from this diary (between 120–150 words). Base your answer closely on the material of the original extract. [10]

Unlike many of my peers, I grew up watching one parent progressively succumb to the siren call of alcoholism and the secret weighed me down like a sandbag. My father died in 1990 at the age of 50.

My memories of him are complex, multi-stranded, and perhaps unreliable with the passing of time. I see him at parties (lots of parties), smiling, roaring, kissing the cheeks of women, slapping the backs of men; I see him gently snoring on the vinyl sun lounger in our back garden, roasting to a deep chestnut brown, a single white crease running across his midriff like a scar. And then he's there, shuffling and prematurely aged, a plastic bag of bottles clinking against his shabby legs. I stifle a small cry when he passes me on the street, his glassy eyes meeting mine without recognition. I scream raucously as he hugs the eight-year-old me, tickling my ribs until I can laugh no more; and I curse as he banishes me from his study so he can pour another furtive drink. I seethe when he tells me I'm beautiful; I rage when he says I'm possessed. I'm a smart cookie, I'm a disgrace. He loves me, he hates me. 5

A few years later I proudly watch him deliver a lecture to a room full of students, but I almost die when my friend and I bump into him in the hallway at midnight, a cold-sweat space in time when we are teenagers and he is undressed and unapologetic. Oh, how we laughed, our backs pressed against my closed bedroom door, the friend clutching her belly in spasms of hysteria. I joined in too, ha-ha-ha, tears of mirth spilling down my face. But inside, I wanted to end it all there and then. 10

Oh. My. God. 15

I remember a lot of laughter when I was growing up. As a family we loved the absurd. My father took as much pleasure in watching comedy shows as he did in reading serious books. His sharp wit was infectious and at his best he was irreverent and playful. But his temper could be brutal, unexpected and crushing. It was a world of not knowing what would come next, not knowing what is normal and what is not. 25

For our family, an alcohol-fuelled weekend might conclude with Dad taking himself off for a few hours, plunging the household into uncommunicative inertia. We would all disappear to our own corners of the house, avoiding eye contact with one another, petulant. But for each of us the same questions spiralled around. Where's Dad? Out. Where's out? Don't know. Who's he with? Was that his key in the front door? How will he be? Remorseful and affectionate? Brittle and antagonistic? Was that his key in the front door? 30

His accelerated journey towards the precipice was preceded by these ever-increasing absences. I came to anticipate these episodes, but never grew used to them. Did it damage me? I like to think not. Did it shape me? Immeasurably. I'm sure my lack of spontaneity, my aversion to noise and my impatience all stem from those formative years, when the unexpected was the norm, when the noise levels in our home rose from silence to fever pitch in seconds and the wait for something to happen was painful. The quiet tension of a Sunday afternoon was vast, and the ghost of it troubles me even today. 35

When my father died, twenty years ago, I was nineteen. The family, as we 40

knew it, had disintegrated two years earlier, not long after his early retirement from teaching. His drinking bouts were no longer punctuated by periods of moderation, but had joined together into one unbearable binge of round-the-clock consumption. 45

His body stopped recognising when it was day and night, and he would roam from room to room at all hours, looking for the answers. If you happened to be in that room, he would wake you to discuss whatever was on his mind. My brother had already left home. Having survived for several months on tiny sleep rations, my mother, sister and I eventually, abruptly left. It was a Sunday. Just after dessert was served. Mum put down her rubber gloves, looked at me and asked me to step into the garden. "We're leaving," she said, calmly. And we went. 50

For the next two years, Sundays were fractured by a new disquiet: the anticipation of Dad's phone calls. His heartbroken fury was something that none of us could cope with and for six months or so I tried to sever all contact. Then, suddenly, my role changed. His erratic behaviour had alienated all family and friends and his sudden isolation presented new concerns. From being his fiercest sparring partner, I became his reluctant 18-year-old care visitor. 55

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*Copyright Acknowledgements:*

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Question 3 © Isabel Ashdown; The Guardian, [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk); 17 October 2009.

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