

BLOOMSBURY



QUIDDITCH

THROUGH THE AGES

KENILWORTHY WHISP



J.K. ROWLING



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PRAISE FOR
QUIDDITCH
THROUGH THE AGES

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Bathilda Bagshot, author, *A History of Magic*



‘Whisp has produced a thoroughly enjoyable book; Quidditch fans are sure to find it both instructive and entertaining.’

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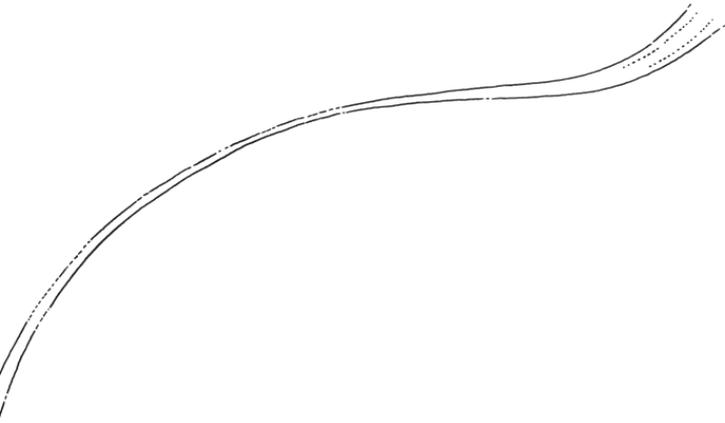


‘I’ve read worse.’

Rita Skeeter, *Daily Prophet*

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Comic Relief (UK) was set up in 1985 by a group of British comedians to raise funds for projects promoting social justice and helping to tackle poverty. Money from worldwide sales of this book will go to help people living incredibly tough lives across the UK and in some of the world's poorest communities.

Comic Relief (UK) is a registered charity:
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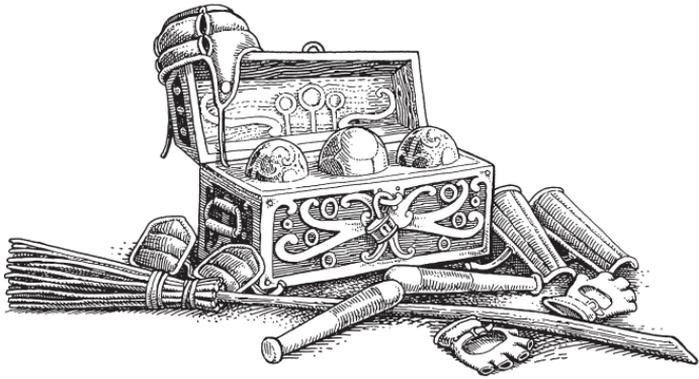
*With thanks to J.K. Rowling for creating
this book and so generously giving all her
royalties to Comic Relief*





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FOREWORD

QUIDDITCH THROUGH THE AGES is one of the most popular titles in the Hogwarts school library. Madam Pince, our librarian, tells me that it is ‘pawed about, dribbled on and generally maltreated’ nearly every day – a high compliment for any book. Anyone who plays or watches Quidditch regularly will relish Mr Whisp’s book, as do those of us interested in wider wizarding history. As we have developed the game of Quidditch, so it has developed us; Quidditch unites witches and wizards from all walks of life, bringing us together to share moments of exhilaration, triumph and (for those who support the Chudley Cannons) despair.



It was with some difficulty, I must own, that I persuaded Madam Pince to part with one of her books so that it might be copied for wider consumption. Indeed, when I told her it was to be made available to Muggles, she was rendered temporarily speechless and neither moved nor blinked for several minutes. When she came to herself she was thoughtful enough to ask whether I had taken leave of my senses. I was pleased to reassure her on that point and went on to explain why I had taken this unprecedented decision.

Muggle readers will need no introduction to the work of Comic Relief, so I now repeat my explanation to Madam Pince for the benefit of witches and wizards who have purchased this book. Comic Relief uses laughter to fight poverty and injustice. Widespread amusement is converted into large quantities of money (over one billion pounds since they started in 1985). By buying this book – and I would advise you to buy it, because if you read it for too long without handing over money you will find yourself the object of a Thief’s Curse – you too will be contributing to this magical mission.



I would be deceiving my readers if I said that this explanation made Madam Pince happy about handing over a library book to Muggles. She suggested several alternatives, such as telling the people from Comic Relief that the library had burned down, or simply pretending that I had dropped dead without leaving instructions. When I told her that on the whole I preferred my original plan, she reluctantly agreed to hand over the book, though at the point when it came to let go of it, her nerve failed her and I was forced to prise her fingers individually from the spine.

Although I have removed the usual library-book spells from this volume, I cannot promise that every trace has gone. Madam Pince has been known to add unusual jinxes to the books in her care. I myself doodled absent-mindedly on a copy of *Theories of Transubstantial Transfiguration* last year and next moment found the book beating me fiercely around the head. Please be careful how you treat this book. Do not rip out the pages. Do not drop it in the bath. I cannot promise that Madam Pince will not



QUIDDITCH THROUGH THE AGES

swoop down on you, wherever you are, and demand a heavy fine.

All that remains is for me to thank you for supporting Comic Relief and to beg Muggles not to try Quidditch at home; it is, of course, an entirely fictional sport and nobody really plays it. May I also take this opportunity to wish Puddlemere United the best of luck next season.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Albus Dumbledore". The signature is written in a highly stylized, cursive script with large, sweeping loops and flourishes, particularly in the initial 'A' and the final 'e'.



THE EVOLUTION OF THE
FLYING BROOMSTICK



NO SPELL YET DEvised enables wizards to fly unaided in human form. Those few Animagi who transform into winged creatures may enjoy flight, but they are a rarity. The witch or wizard who finds him- or herself Transfigured into a bat may take to the air, but, having a bat's brain, they are sure to forget where they want to go the moment they take flight. Levitation is commonplace, but our ancestors were not content with hovering five feet from the ground. They wanted more. They wanted to fly like birds, but without the inconvenience of growing feathers.

We are so accustomed these days to the fact that



every wizarding household in Britain owns at least one flying broomstick that we rarely stop to ask ourselves why. Why should the humble broom have become the one object legally allowed as a means of wizarding transport? Why did we in the West not adopt the carpet so beloved of our Eastern brethren? Why didn't we choose to produce flying barrels, flying armchairs, flying bathtubs – why brooms?

Shrewd enough to see that their Muggle neighbours would seek to exploit their powers if they knew their full extent, witches and wizards kept themselves to themselves long before the International Statute of Wizarding Secrecy came into effect. If they were to keep a means of flight in their houses, it would necessarily be something discreet, something easy to hide. The broomstick was ideal for this purpose; it required no explanation, no excuse if found by Muggles, it was easily portable and inexpensive. Nevertheless, the first brooms bewitched for flying purposes had their drawbacks.

Records show that witches and wizards in Europe were using flying broomsticks as early as AD 962.



A German illuminated manuscript of this period shows three warlocks dismounting from their brooms with looks of exquisite discomfort on their faces. Guthrie Lochrin, a Scottish wizard writing in 1107, spoke of the ‘splinter-filled buttocks and bulging piles’ he suffered after a short broom ride from Montrose to Arbroath.

A medieval broomstick on display in the Museum of Quidditch in London gives us an insight into Lochrin’s discomfort (see Fig. A). A thick knotty handle of unvarnished ash, with hazel twigs bound crudely to one end, it is neither comfortable nor aerodynamic. The charms placed upon it are similarly basic: it will only move forwards at one speed; it will go up, down and stop.

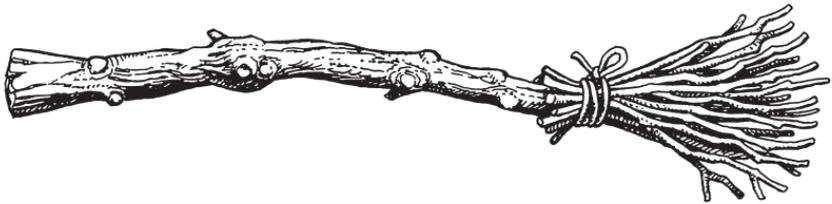


Fig. A



QUIDDITCH THROUGH THE AGES

As wizarding families in those days made their own brooms, there was enormous variation in the speed, comfort and handling of the transport available to them. By the twelfth century, however, wizards had learned to barter services, so that a skilled maker of brooms could exchange them for the potions his neighbour might make better than himself. Once broomsticks became more comfortable, they were flown for pleasure rather than merely used as a means of getting from point A to point B.

COMIC RELIEF^{UK}

As Dumbledore writes in his introduction, money raised from the sale of this very special book will go to the UK charity Comic Relief to help people living incredibly tough lives across the UK and in some of the world's poorest communities.

Since 2001, the books that J.K. Rowling kindly wrote especially for Comic Relief, *Quidditch Through the Ages* and *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, have raised nearly £20 million – a magic amount of money that is already hard at work changing lives.

Money raised through the sale of this new edition will be invested in children and young people around the world, preparing them to be

ready for the future – to be safe, healthy, educated and empowered. We are particularly interested in helping those children who start their lives in the most difficult circumstances, where there is conflict, violence, neglect or abuse. We will be able to help hundreds of thousands of children in institutions around the world regain their right to a family and receive a decent education to help them achieve their potential and build a brighter, better future.

Thank you for your support. To find out more about Comic Relief go to comicrelief.com, follow us on Twitter (@comicrelief) or like us on Facebook!

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