**Hector Hugh Munro** (1870-1916), better known by the pen name Saki and also frequently as H. H. Munro was a British author whose stories are characterised by wit, and are pitiless and hard-edged, constantly poking fun at the pretensions of the middle and upper classes.

Some of his stories such as ‘Tobermory’, about a cat that learns to talk and can’t be made to shut up, or ‘The Music on the Hill’, about a woman who offends the god Pan and suffers the consequences.

Or ‘The Hounds of Fate’, about a man who thinks he has outwitted his destiny only to find it closing in on him from an unexpected direction clearly showcase his cruel and hard outlook as a writer.

His mother was killed by a cow when he was a child. That probably explains why he turned into a writer with a morbid fascination with, and deep-seated fear of the natural world. Done to death by the very emblem of placidity and plenty; nothing could ever seem safe or homely again.

He was raised by his strict, dour aunts and grandmother and died in his 40s in the first world war.

He was a very popular short-story writer. He wrote satirical stories about aristocrats, strange adults, children, talking animals, wicked jokes, exploding eggs, and cruel destiny. And all these strange stories are told with that particular dry English sense of humour.

Most of Saki’s stories describe the customs and manners of the English upper class during the reign of Edward VII (1901-1910) with precision and irony.

He was born in Burma (now known as Myanmar) and his father was a senior official of the Burma police. Hector was an unhealthy child and he was educated at home, but he was able to survive this horrible life with Tom and Augusta with the help of his fantastic imagination.

He often came up with fables and short stories which he illustrated himself. His sister tells of one particular illustration that Hector made of lions eating some missionaries. These particular missionaries looked suspiciously like his aunts.