

“The poor beleaguered fellow,” Reg continued, “George the Third, I mean, was, as you may know, obsessed with time. Filled the palace with clocks. Wound them incessantly. Sometimes would get up in the middle of the night and prowl round the palace in his nightshirt winding clocks. He was very concerned that time continued to go forward, you see. So many terrible things had occurred in his life that he was terrified that any of them might happen again if time were ever allowed to slip backwards even for a moment. A very understandable fear, especially if you’re barking mad, as I’m afraid to say, with the very greatest sympathy for the poor fellow, he undoubtedly was. He appointed me, or rather I should say, my office, this professorship, you understand, the

DOUGLAS ADAMS

post that I am now privileged to hold to—where was I? Oh yes. He instituted this, er, Chair of Chronology to see if there was any particular reason why one thing happened after another and if there was any way of stopping it. Since the answers to the three questions were, I knew immediately, yes, no, and maybe, I realized I could then take the rest of my career off.”