

BY THE WAY



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GOOCH? WHO'S GOOCH?

One object of the *By The Way* series is to provide amusement and cheer to, amongst others, those who are not enjoying the best of fortune. So this issue is dedicated to the England cricket selector and Ashes tour manager Graham Gooch, to let him know that others are thinking of him.

Whereas Percy Jeeves, a competent but unproven cricketer, gave his name to one of the greatest fictional creations of the century, so Wodehouse introduced around twenty different characters named Gooch, who all gave their names to one of England's greatest post-war batsmen.

The notes of all the Gooches appearing below have been adapted from entries in the *Millennium Wodehouse Concordance* by Tony Ring and Geoffrey Jaggard (Porpoise Books, 1994-2001), the first five volumes of which have been published and the final three are in preparation. Source references are to the British book publication where possible, alternatively the American book or the first magazine appearance.

GOOCH: a youth who fagged for Fry, the head of West's House at Wrykyn. (*Educating Aubrey*, *London Magazine*, May 1911)

GOOCH: a sad-looking, gesticulating man, this Sheep's Cray grocer, who would have been cheered up appreciably by a bit on account of his outstanding debt of £6 3s 1d. (*Ukridge's Dog College* in *Ukridge*)

GOOCH: the junior partner in the firm of literary agents, McKinnon & Gooch, of Chancery Lane, who correctly divined that James Rodman was under the influence of strong mental excitement. (*Honeysuckle Cottage*, in *Meet Mr Mulliner*)

GOOCH: when Lancelot Mulliner agreed to play a role as his legal representative to get to Widdrington Manor, the Bishop of Bongo-Bongo expressed his disappointment that Lancelot had not selected a pseudonym such as Gooch or Polkinghorne or Withers, which were more legal-sounding than Mulliner. (*Cats Will Be Cats*, in *Mulliner Nights*)

GOOCH: the first thought which came to Lord Emsworth when trying to remember Howard Chesney's name. (*A Pelican at Blandings*, chapter 1)

GOOCH, Brewster: the husband of Pearl, brother of Ellabelle and father of Elmer, he ran the Always Open Garage half way along Main Street, Franklin, and did a little bootlegging on the side. He was a long, skinny, freckled individual with a lantern-shaped jaw, big feet and a poor record of accuracy with a gun. (*Back to the Garage*, *Strand*, July 1929)

GOOCH, Ellabelle: the unreliable sister of Brewster who was suspected of preaching vegetarianism and possibly Christian Science all the time she was baby-sitting for Elmer. (*Back to the Garage*, *Strand*, July 1929)

GOOCH, Elmer: the three-year-son of Brewster and Pearl, who needed to be smart to avoid being indoctrinated by the dangerous views of his Aunt Ellabelle, for he already had a tendency to break out in pink spots and hiccup. (*Back to the Garage*, *Strand*, July 1929)

GOOCH, Gloria: was fortunately situated in the matter of paying visits to libertines, since her scholarly husband spent nearly all his time in a library a hundred yards long. (*The Purification of Rodney Spelvin*, in *The Heart of a Goof*)

- GOOCH, Gloria: the star of *A Girl Against the World*. (*The Adventures of Sally*, chapter 14)
- GOOCH, J G: a second-class passenger on board the *Atlantic* who claimed the right to sing *The Yeoman's Wedding Song* at the second-class concert, not only to the considerable concern of Albert Peasemarch, but also to the equally considerable discomfort of Monty Bodkin. (*The Luck of the Bodkins* [US edition], chapter 19)
- GOOCH, John: a writer of mystery stories and eighteen-handicap golfer who was required by Agnes Flack to play a match against Frederick Pilcher for her hand. She had not realised that his interest in her was solely, but not souly, in the possibility of using the psychology of her personality in a series of stories entitled *Madeline Monk, Murderess*. (*Those in Peril on the Tee*, in *Mr Mulliner Speaking*)
- GOOCH, Mabelle: starred in *Lepers of the Great White Way*. (*The Spring Suit*, in *Saturday Evening Post*, 12 July, 1919)
- GOOCH, Mortimer: a pusillanimous golfer who scratched in the semi-final of the President's Cup for the fantastic reason that he had sprained an ankle. (*Excelsior*, in *Nothing Serious*)
- GOOCH, Mr: a small, pale-faced man whose protruding eyes and teeth caused him to resemble a rabbit. He was the representative of the mystery owner of the tenements in Pleasant Street, New York, whose duty was to collect rents, and to eject tenants who proved undesirable by not paying their rents. When Spider Reilly, Jack Repetto and other gangsters approached, he was persuaded on to the roof of the building by Psmith and Billy Windsor and invited to disclose all he knew. (*Psmith Journalist*, chapter 20)
- GOOCH, Mr: a remarkably similar man, with an equally pale face and equally protruding eyes and teeth, he also had a curious red mark on the right cheek. He proved to have been one of the the secretaries of Benjamin Scobell, step-father of Betty Silver. This Mr
- Gooch's job also entailed the collection of rents from the tenants at Pleasant Street, but he found himself up against John Maude, not Psmith. (*The Prince and Betty* [US edition], chapter 27)
- GOOCH, Mrs: the cook at Ashenden Manor, the home belonging to Bill Oakshott which Sir Aylmer Bostock and his Lady had more or less requisitioned. (*Uncle Dynamite*, chapter 5)
- GOOCH, Pearl: the married name of Pearl Delahay, who was in the chorus of *Ask Dad* when it opened, but was transferred to the second company when it was ready to go on tour. When the show reached her home town of Franklin, she was given the chance to play a bigger part but she merely proved in public that she would have been better off at home with her husband Brewster and young son Elmer. (*Back to the Garage*, in *Strand*, July 1929)
- GOOCH, Police Constable: having chased and caught Mr Meggs, he held on to his arm while listening to varying explanations of his sudden desire for Miss Pillenger's company. When Miss Pillenger, his former secretary, accused Meggs of wanting to murder her, he replied that he was merely trying to recover letters that he had decided he did not want to post after all, so the need for any discussion of his intended suicide was obviated. (*A Sea of Troubles*, in *The Man with Two Left Feet*)
- GOOCH, the Rev Sidney: the Vicar of Rising Mattock, Hants who, although he was a fine upstanding specimen of muscular Christianity, was slightly deficient in tact. Over Saturday suppers with his curate, Anselm Mulliner, he tended to harp a good deal on the subject of the morrow's sermon to his assistant's distress, until one week, after receiving a solid buffeting from a burglar, he had to withdraw from the event. (*Anselm Gets His Chance*, in *Eggs, Beans and Crumpets*)
- GOOCH & GORDON: the shirtmakers of Regent Street, London, who secured the Duke of Dunstable's custom by using better material for their product while charging a lower price. (*A Pelican at Blandings*, ch9)