

WOOSTER SAUCE



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'EVERYMAN' A WINNER – TWICE

Tony Whittome reports on the launch of the new edition

As a species Wodehouseans are not averse to a spot of browsing and sluicing, and on the evening of May 3rd they could be observed doing both to the full in the impressive art-deco surroundings of the Sheraton Park Lane Hotel. The occasion was the launch of the Everyman Wodehouse, an ambitious new uniform hardback edition which plugs what Ukridge would surely call "a gap in the market, laddie". Present on parade were elegant new editions of *The Code of the Woosters*, *Right Ho, Jeeves*, *Figs Have Wings* and Ukridge himself, but these are merely an Anatolean *amuse-gueule* for the complete works, a long-term project on such a scale that only Park Lane and the best champagne could do it justice.

We also learnt about a new Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize for Comic Writing, to be awarded annually at the Hay-on-Wye Festival. This year's judges are Stephen Fry, Craig Brown, Sebastian Faulks and Jo Brand, and the results of their deliberations can be found in the column alongside.

There were, of course, a couple of short, pithy, witty and soigne speeches to grace the event. Our host, David Campbell of Everyman, congratulated Bollinger for providing the fizz (widespread whoops of "Hear! Hear!" or in one case "Here! Here!") and shared his delight in the new project, tempered only by a quiver of a quail at the fact that the launch was in the room used as the ballroom in the film *Titanic*.

Stephen Fry spoke brilliantly and warmly as always of Plum as the greatest humorist and one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century. All the best humour such as Wodehouse's, he said, deals with the actual, not the pretentiously theoretical – and to back this up, he told Lord Franks's story of the diplomats who were asked by a journalist what they wanted most for Christmas. The establishment of world peace, said the French ambassador; the elimination of poverty, said the German. The British ambassador? He wanted a box of crystallized fruits.

Letitia Dunne watched the award of the Everyman prize at Hay

Awash with sunlight on a May Bank Holiday Monday, a large audience (many intellectually sharpened by Spinoza's latest) sat listening to a panel of authors discussing their passion for reading at the Sunday Times Hay Festival.

The panel consisted of Susan Hill (chairwoman), Jonathan Bates, Joanna Trollope and our Patron, the ever-delightful Stephen Fry. They discussed their favourite books and named Hugh Walpole, Dornford Yates and Hazlitt (especially his *Essays*) as writers much read in their day who were now less well-known but well worth a read, along with Barbara Kingsiller and Penelope Fitzgerald.

Susan Hill, an ardent PGW fan, said "The world is divided into those who see P G Wodehouse as the greatest of all comic writers and those who simply do not see his point." Stephen Fry made it clear that he thought that Plum was in a class of his own.

We then stood outside for the first award of "The Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Annual Prize" for comic writing, presented by Stephen Fry. An ebullient Town Crier started the proceedings and would have stolen the show, had it not been for an enormous Gloucester Old Spot pig that lay, like this review, penned in hay. With the sagacity of Jeeves himself, Mr Fry summed up the short-listed contestants:

The Edge of Passion by Helen Fielding;
Playing the Moldovans at Tennis by Tony Hawks;
The Mighty Walzer by Howard Jacobson;
The Book of Obituaries by Hugh Massingberd; and
Adrian Mole: The Capuccino Years by Sue Townsend

before announcing that the winner, by a pig's trotter, was *The Mighty Walzer*. Howard Jacobson said in a touching speech of thanks how much he appreciated a serious award for comic writing. The award had been the inspiration of David Campbell, Chairman of the Everyman Library, whose foresight and personal commitment to the project must be hugely commended.

Saved from the Impending Doom

Alekh Bhurke (the 'h's are silent) explains how

I had a very spiritual experience in February this year from which I was saved only because I read my Wodehouse religiously.

I was in South Carolina for a convention. One of those swanky rural retreats with ponds and cottages and ducks and swans. And when I say swans I mean big, black swans looking like they'd just returned from a visit to their hair stylist and were rather haughty about it.

To get from point A in this place to another point, say B, one needs to cross little wooden foot bridges. And as one day I went for a stroll there stood a swan in my way, guarding the bridge. I thought nothing of it as I quietly edged past and all was well. The next day I found myself in the vicinity of the same bridge with a Wodehouse in my pocket and the sun shining brightly. Not being of a particularly nimble mind, I took off the jacket, plopped down on the lawns and started on the book *Louder and Funnier*. An enjoyable hour passed, the ducks waddled, the swans floated, all was right with the world. And then suddenly, through the corner of my eye, I spied what looked like a big black hissing garden hose on a collision course with me at 60 miles an hour. Further observation proved it to be one swan: wings spread, about sixteen feet of neck unrolled, hissing like a leaky gas-pipe and its temper shortening by the stride. In another two seconds the menace would be upon me!

The first thought was to look for strategically located little octagonal summer houses to climb upon. A quick survey of the landscape revealed the futility of such an endeavour. And then, quick as a flash, it came to me. I popped up, picked my jacket off the ground and opening it up wide, thrust it upon the head of the swan who was now conveniently located a couple of feet away from me.

I SAY!

Favourite Exchanges – 14

"Don't talk rot, old Tom Travers."

"I am not accustomed to talk rot," he said.

"Then, for a beginner," I said, "you do it dashed well."

From *Right Ho, Jeeves*, 1935



The familiar Ionicus cover for a Penguin edition of *Very Good, Jeeves*

The poor dumb chum was so startled he staggered back. I took the opp to leg it to a nearby balcony, leaving behind everything but my shoes. After fifteen minutes of what looked like a war-dance, the swan wandered off in search of other prey and I was able to pick up the remains of my attire and my much-humbled ego. I shudder to think what would have happened if I hadn't read my Wodehouse and put theory into practice.

There is a lesson in this for all of us.

The Smile That Wins

Favourite Nifties – 11

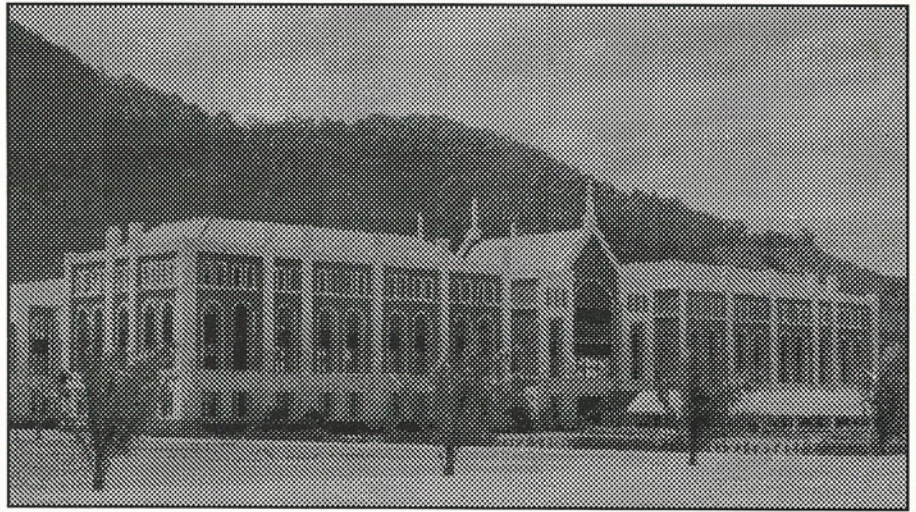
"It is very comforting to reflect, Ferdie, that nowadays with the security regulations so laxly observed by the prison authorities you can always leave if the place doesn't suit you."

From *Do Butlers Burgle Banks*, 1969

Dulwich and the Thais That Bind

by Graham Able, MA, MA, Master of Dulwich College

Some thirty-five years after P G Wodehouse left Dulwich, the College welcomed its first Thai border. This began a tradition of Thais sending their sons to Dulwich which continues to this day. Although the number of these boys present at the College at any one time has never been large, many have gone on to important positions in Thailand, and Alley Club Dinners in Bangkok continue to be well attended. To date Dulwich can only claim to have educated one Prime Minister: this is Anand Panyarachun who has twice headed his country's government.



Dulwich International College

In 1993 the mother of a Thai OA approached my predecessor with the idea of funding an international school on Thailand which would bear the College's name and be monitored by us to maintain the high standards of a Dulwich education. This began the path towards the opening of Dulwich International College. The lady concerned was bought out by her business partner, Dr Arthit Ourairat, and his company negotiated with Tony Verity, on behalf of the College Governors, a franchise arrangement for the creation of the new Dulwich in Southern Thailand.

The planning of the curriculum was undertaken by senior members of the College staff and there was considerable Dulwich input during the design phase. Dulwich International was built on a virgin site in the middle of Phuket Island and there are echoes in its design of our great buildings designed by Charles Barry Junior. From the start, all of the buildings were constructed to very high standards and the facilities of the new school were excellent when it opened under the headship of Michael Haywood (once himself on the staff of Dulwich, London) in 1995.

The school is mainly boarding and, unlike us here at the College, co-educational. One feels that Psmith and others might have had a view on this! From reasonably modest beginnings in its first year, Dulwich International College has now grown to over four hundred, including the Junior School opened a year ago. It has its first embryonic sixth form this year, and will probably reach eight hundred pupils over the next three to four years.

Academic standards are very good, and there is now an established exchange programme at Year 9 (traditionally our third form level) whereby our boys (and girls from the schools on the joint foundation) spend four weeks in Phuket, bringing their exchange partners back to South East London for a similar period. We also have the first in a series of one-term teacher exchanges taking place as I write this article. The current headmaster of the International College, appointed on our recommendation after interview, comes to London twice annually to interview prospective staff and we assist in the administration of the process. Similarly, I visit Phuket on an annual basis to inspect standards and report on progress to Dr Arthit and his Directors as well as to the College Governors here in London.

It is a remarkable experience to turn into the entrance drive and see a modern interpretation of the Barry buildings against a jungle backdrop. It is equally impressive to experience a Dulwich-type curriculum in an environment where air-conditioning, rather than heating, is *de rigeur* in all the classrooms.

Given that so much of what we stand for in Dulwich is reflected in the ethos and achievements of our off-shoot in southern Thailand, I very much hope that PG would have approved of this venture. I am sure that it would have afforded him the opportunity to write with his customary wit and humour about school life in South-East Asia. One could only speculate as to how he would have portrayed the Thai equivalents of Psmith and his friends.

Plum and the Comic Strips – 1

Stu Shiffman, a member from Washington State, USA, starts a series of articles on this neglected topic

In his introduction to *The Jeeves Omnibus* P G Wodehouse wrote:

In recent years I have had lucrative offers for his services from theatrical managers, motion picture magnates, the proprietors of one or two widely advertised commodities, and even the editor of the comic supplement of an American newspaper, who wanted him for a 'comic strip'. But, tempting though the terms were, it only needed Jeeves's deprecating cough and his murmured "I would scarcely advocate it, sir," to put the jack under my better nature.

One can't always be tooling around Long Island or England in search of the sources of the Nile, or Wodehouse characters and locations. Sometimes, if one is very fortunate, one can sit quietly at home within reach of one's computer and kitchen and do some meaningful research.

It was while perusing the latest volumes of the *Millennium Wodehouse Concordance* that I noticed some references to American newspaper comic strips (and in some cases their creators) that seemed familiar to me. However, I suspect that many modern readers of the golden words of Wodehouse miss the real-life connections. Like every other writer I know, everything in the world is grist for his mill, for his brainbox to re-edit and disgorge years later. Some of the references go back almost a century.

Start Spreading the News

New York: Where everyone mutinies but no one deserts.

(Harry Hershfield (1885-1974))

Psmith Journalist (published as a book in 1915 but first serialised in 1909), that peerless and gritty chronicle of New York's gangland, includes a few minor references to the world of the newspaper comics. After Psmith and Bill Windsor of *Cosy Moments* have angered the grey eminence behind certain slum tenements, they are assaulted and their enemies troll lures before them. After one of the lamer role-playing attempts (the plausible ruffian



'Tad' Dorgan's Silk Hat Harry and Associates, c1911

affects to have known Bill's father back in Missouri), Bill says: "What do they take us for, I wonder? Farmers? Playing off a comic-supplement bluff like that on us!"

By this time the Sunday comic sections had become well established in the New York papers, and artists were fought over by Hearst and other publishers. Later in the novel, it is noted that their championing of the fighter Kid Brady has led to his being taken up by other periodicals, including having his picture drawn by Tad of the *Journal*. This was Thomas Aloysius 'Tad' Dorgan (1877-1929) of Hearst's *New York Evening Journal*, then best known for Silk Hat Harry and his slangy sports cartoons and later for his *Indoor Sports & Outdoor Sports* panels. I know of no connection between Silk Hat Harry and the 'Fifth Avenue Silks' spoken of in *Bill the Conqueror*.

Tad coined or popularized a lot of slang, including 'windbag', 'four-flusher' and 'drugstore cowboy'. Among his many other neologisms, Tad is credited with contributing the name 'hot dog' to the language. The term first appeared in print in the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1900. Supposedly, Dorgan called the 'dachshund' sausages in his cartoon 'hot dogs' instead because he couldn't spell 'dachshund'. In *The Small Bachelor* (Methuen, 1927), Mullett is picked on by Hamilton Beamish for using this slang phrase as an expletive.)

The Society's New Information Sheets

How often do you see a reference in the press, or in a tribute to PGW, which claims that he wrote a particular number of books, novels or stories, and so on, and wondered why the commentator selected that figure? No two reports ever seem to agree, and in a way that is not too surprising, as the nature of his work does offer plenty of scope for disagreement.

We have also had several enquiries from visitors to our website asking for complete lists of Wodehouse books.

The Society has decided to try to create a factual basis from which members and writers can draw their own conclusions, and will be issuing a series of *Information Sheets* about different aspects of his life and work. The first batch, see below, may already be seen on our website at www.eclipse.co.uk/wodehouse.

Any member who would like a hard copy of any or all of the *Information Sheets* is invited to contact the Editor, enclosing a contribution to copying and posting of 20p per page (minimum of 50p; for payments under £2 postage stamps are acceptable). The number of pages in each Sheet is given below:

Number	Topic	Pages
1	Books by P G Wodehouse	7
2	Plays written by P G Wodehouse	3
3	Libretti written by P G Wodehouse	2
4	Novels by P G Wodehouse appearing in magazines	4
5	Musical Comedies with Lyrics written by P G Wodehouse	3
6	Translations of books by P G Wodehouse	2

The list will be extended from time to time. Topics on which work is proceeding at present are:

7	Magazine Appearances of P G Wodehouse	3
8	P G Wodehouse: potted biography	3
9	The order in which families of short stories appeared	7
10	Wodehouse's actions during the war: put in context	7

Plum and the Comic Strips, continued

Again in *The Small Bachelor*, Molly Waddington is impressed by George Finch's penetration of her parents' home in search of her:

As she realized that this young man thought so highly of her that, despite his painful shyness, he was prepared to worm his way into her house on an excuse that even he must have recognized as pure banana-oil, her heart warmed to him.

'Banana oil' is a 1920s slang term taken from one of the comic strips of Milt Gross (1895-1953). Gross started out in cartooning as an assistant to Tad Dorgan before landing his first strip. He is best known for such Yinglish (Anglo-Yiddish) dialect works as *Nize Baby* (George H Doran, 1926) and *Hiawatta wiff no odder poems* (Doran, 1926), *The Feittlebaum Family*, *Dave's Delicatessen* and *That's My Pop* as well as the wordless graphic novel *He Done Her Wrong* (Doubleday, Doran, 1930).

Those of us who are fans of *Mulliner's Buck-U-Uppo* might find another early strip of interest.

Pazaza by Arthur 'Pop' Momand (later to do *Keeping Up With The Joneses*, 1913-1945) was a one-note strip that followed the effect of a super patent elixir, like Buck-U-Uppo, on the lives of assorted characters.

The Mating Season (1949) has a reference to Gussie Fink-Nottle as 'an undersized gargoye who looked like Lester De Pester in that comic strip in one of the New York papers'. Poor Gussie! Lester was a principal character in *Betty* (1920-1943) by Charles A Voight (1887-1947), which appeared in the *New York Tribune* and was syndicated nationally by the Herald-Tribune Syndicate. The eponymous Betty Thompson was a stylish and beautiful upper-class flapper with, alas, all the brains of Madeline Bassett. Lester De Pester was the main source of humor in the feature, a hapless unrequited suitor for Betty's hand. He has been described as having a parakeet nose, bulging eyes and shrimpish appearance. The poor chinless, charmless goop was the butt of most of the gags.

Was Plum's The Swoop the Last

Asks Tom Smith,

P G Wodehouse's 1909 short story *The Swoop! or How Clarence Saved England: A Tale of the Great Invasion* shows that at an early age, Wodehouse could turn his perceptive gaze on the political as well as the social scene, and that his world was not a product of pure fancy. This story satirizes a certain genre of fiction, the 'Invasion of England' sub-genre of War fiction.

The first of these invasion stories was *The Battle of Dorking* by Sir George Chesney, but his idea was repeatedly copied after 1880. T A Guthrie used the invasion premise in his *The Seizure of the Channel Tunnel* in 1882 and H G Lester in 1888 for *The Taking of Dover*; while an anonymous writer had the French Army invading England in *The Sacking of London in the Great French War* of 1901. The invasion story, according to historian Lawrence James was "a well-established and highly popular literary genre by 1900", which between 1900 and 1914 would find even greater popularity.



of 1910. The latter story was serialized in the *Daily Mail* in 1906, and was financed by the paper's owner, the noted Germanophobe Lord Northcliffe. (He and Captain Kell repeatedly complained to the government about the lack of any form of even an internal spy-catching organisation, and the pressure resulted in the establishment of both MI5 and MI6 in 1909.)

One impact of the le Queux stories was a convulsion of "spasmodic bouts of spy mania with rumours of an underground army of German secret agents and equally ridiculous reports of nocturnal Zeppelin flights over Yorkshire". The invasion stories were merely the literary manifestation and careful exploitation of what James calls "that intense, irrational fear of sudden

invasion which had long been imbedded in the national psyche". But was this fear all that irrational? From 1870 onwards, Britain was finding itself an Empire besieged, confronted by the growing empires of Russia in Central Asia; France in Africa; the United States in the Pacific, Caribbean, and Atlantic; and Germany on the Continent, in the Middle East, and at sea. Of all the Great Powers, Britain had the most to lose from the growth of any of the other Great Powers and the most to gain from the weakening of any of them.

In addition to the threat presented to Britain's Empire by the growth of other Powers, it had other problems. By 1900, Britain was the world's largest empire with 12 million square miles and a quarter of the world's population, but was in decline, as was its commercial and industrial strength. Britain's industrial growth rate had fallen from four per cent per year during the early 1800s to less than one and a half per cent by 1894 and the country had dropped to third place behind Germany and the United States in industrial output.

In response to fears of decline, Britain took some steps to restore the power of the Empire. Robert Haldane was appointed to reorganize the Army, and he introduced the Officer Training Corps in Public Schools and Universities to train officers for future emergencies. The introduction of the OTC and the nature of the Public School were responsible for developing what William H McNeill describes as a 'Cult of Heroism' which would lead Britain to war. As part of this Cult, Empire Day, instituted in 1904 to celebrate the achievements of the Empire, along with new school texts to extol its virtues, were intended to promote Imperial and military spirit among Britain's youth.

In addition, a number of paramilitary organizations emerged to help stop social decline and instil military and imperial spirit. They included the Church Lads' Brigade, Lord Rodney's Cadets, the Navy League, the Knights of King Arthur, the Church Army, the Boys' Brigade, and the Lads' Drill Association. Even the Salvation Army used military rank and organization to assist in restoring Edwardian Society.

But most influential of the organizations in preparing Britain for war was Lord Baden-Powell's Boy Scouts. The Scouting movement had a major impact on the thinking of British society. Between 1908 and 1910, over 100,000 boys joined the Boy Scouts, and it was an organization concerned with the possible invasion of England. The cover of Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys* shows a boy lying down, his Scout staff and broad-brimmed hat on the ground beside him and peering round a rock, intently watching men landing from a mysterious ship. The illustration, by itself, bore the

Word in Invasion Literature?

a member from Seattle

message that Britain was besieged, but one wonders, could this boy have been Clarence Chugwater?

So Wodehouse's *The Swoop* was not just lampooning a literary sub-genre, but also the attitudes of a society preparing for war:

Clarence, on this sultry August afternoon, was tensely occupied tracking the family cat across the dining-room carpet by its foot-prints. Glancing up for a moment, he caught sight of the other members of the family. "England, my England!" he moaned. It was indeed a sight to extract tears of blood from any Boy Scout. The table had been moved back against the wall, and in the cleared space Mr Chugwater, whose duty it was to have set an example to his children, was playing diabolio. Beside him, engrossed in cup and ball, was his wife. Reggie Chugwater, the eldest son, the heir, the hope of the house, was reading the cricket news in an early edition of the evening paper. Horace, his brother, was playing pop-in-taw with his sister Grace and Grace's fiancé, Ralph Peabody. Alice, the other Miss Chugwater, was mending a Badminton racquet. Not a single member of that family was practising with the rifle, or drilling, or learning to make bandages. Clarence groaned.

faced in the invasion novels. But Wodehouse doesn't leave it there. In the invasion troops from China invade Wales; the Mad Mullah captures Portsmouth; and Raisuli's Moroccans land at Brighton. Though British troops never faced them, Raisuli's actions did have an adverse impact on Anglo-French relations.

Finally, Wodehouse takes on the leaders of England and lampoons them as well:

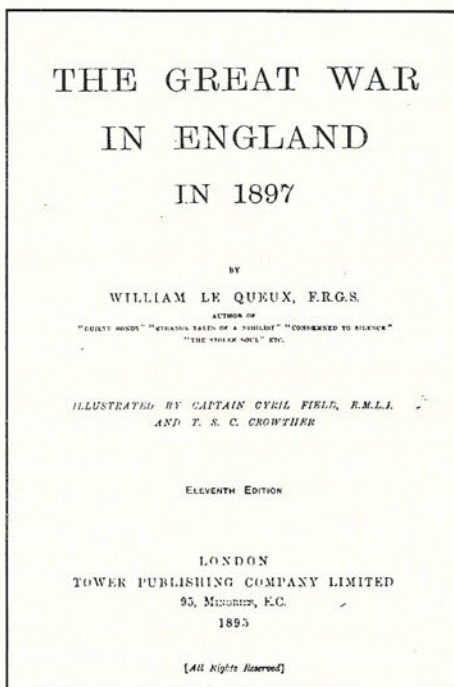
The foe had taken full advantage of . . . the fact that, owing to a fit of absent-mindedness on the part of the Government, England had no ships afloat which were not entirely obsolete. Interviewed on the subject by representatives of the daily papers, the Government handsomely admitted that it was perhaps in some ways a silly thing to have done; but, they urged, you could not think of everything. Besides, they were on the point of laying down a *Dreadnought*, which would be ready in a very few years. Meanwhile, the best thing the public could do was to sleep quietly in their beds. It was Fisher's tip; and Fisher was a smart man.

In this short paragraph, Wodehouse packs a lot. The reference here is to the reform of the Royal Navy under the First Sea Lord, Admiral Lord Fisher. Under Fisher, the Royal Navy scrapped 150 smaller vessels in favor of Fisher's *Dreadnought* class of battleships. The *Dreadnoughts* were the largest ships afloat and took over a year to build, although one had been built in a record eleven months. Wodehouse wasn't just lampooning the decision to build *Dreadnoughts*, but Fisher as well. Fisher had suggested that Britain launch a preemptive strike against Germany in 1904 and 1908, to which Edward VII responded "My God, Fisher, you must be mad." This suggestion and Edward's response made the press in England and Germany.

It is obvious that Wodehouse was well aware of these events and Fisher's opinion of himself. *The Swoop*, then, is not the product of a man who is politically naïve or out of touch with the world around him. It is instead the work of a man who has made astute, broad-ranging observations of his society taking on literature, social and political opinion, and current events.

Note: a longer version of this article can be found on the Society's website, or in the Spring issue of Plum Lines, the journal of the American 'The Wodehouse Society'.

The Swoop was published by Alston Rivers in 1909, and reprinted in facsimile in 1993. Rewritten to tell of a comparable invasion of America, it can be found in two parts in Vanity Fair for July and August 1915 as The Military Invasion of America.



It is clear that Wodehouse was aware of Baden-Powell's 1904 warning to subscribers of *Union Jack* and *Marvel* that they must learn about military drill and marksmanship and of his request to soccer and cricket team captains to write him if their teams wanted to learn to fight.

If this isn't sufficient to show that Wodehouse has his finger on the pulse of a nation worried about the fate of the Empire in the World, we can look at the list of enemies that invade England in *The Swoop!* Not only do the Germans invade, but Russia as well, both countries that the leaders of the Empire expected to face in future wars. And these were frequently the rivals England

The Mystery of the Missing Meal

by Joe Harkins

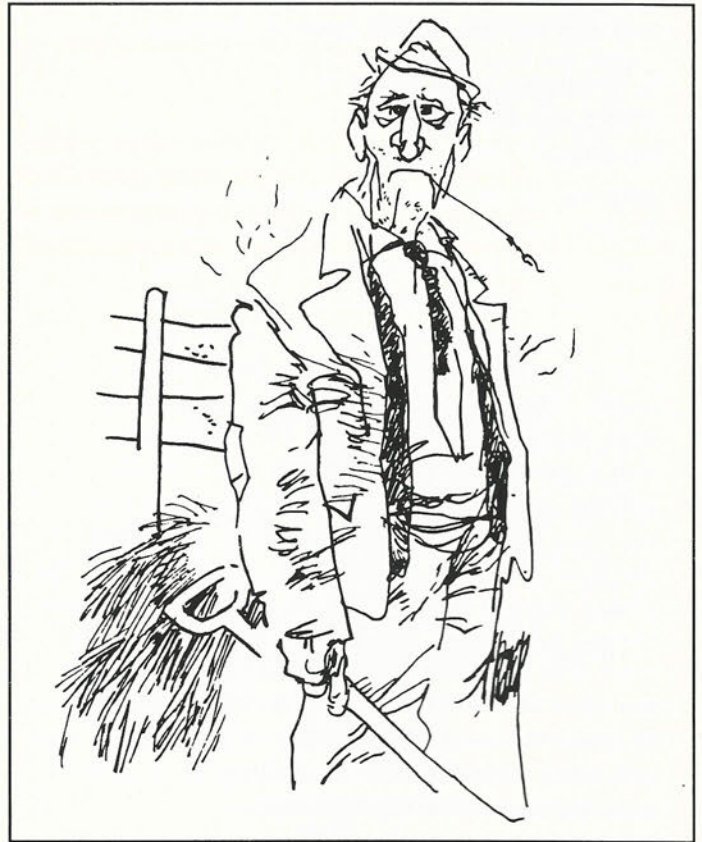
In matters of suilline sophistication and porcine perfection, to all Wodehouseans one name stands snout and blade above all others. Not for us the cute, chubby chops of Pinky and Perky, the sickly sentiment of Babe or even the spirited Trail of Tears of the Tamworth Two. Our undying affections rest solely with that superlative swine . . . the Empress of Blandings.

As the triple Silver Medal winner in the Fat Pigs class of the 87th, 88th and 89th Shropshire County Agricultural Society Annual Shows, we are not the only ones who consider her the Supreme Sow. These agricultural johnnies know a good thing when they see it. I am sure I am not alone in converting to Theosophy in the hope of being reincarnated as a male Berkshire – if that is the term I am looking for – and taking my place as a suitor at the bottom of the meadow (a bag of acorns in my back pocket – romantic old fool that I am). The Empress has all the qualities one could ever want in the female of the species – a fantastic figure and a sweet gentle nature.

If ever anyone lived up to their motto it is the Empress. *Nil Admirari* – to wonder at nothing. Only such a disposition would be able to cope with the traumas which have been visited on her fulsome frame. Kidnapping, imprisonment (x6), taken for midnight assignments in an assortment of jalopies and even woken up with a Bertie Wooster head – with no prospect of a Jeeves reviver in sight! Is it any wonder we revere her so much?

“Yes, yes, yes!!! All very well and good.” you may be saying to yourself, or to each other should you be relaxing in your club with a generous W&S. “What is this blithering idiot’s point?” My point, if you will indulge me a bit further, is that fantastic figure we were talking about earlier. As I’m sure we all know, in Augustus Whiffle’s excellent tome (*On The Care of the Pig* (Popgood & Grooly 35/-) he cites the Wolff-Lehmann Feeding Standard which states that a pig “in order to achieve and maintain its full perfection, must consume daily 57,800 calories, to consist of barley meal, maize meal, linseed meal, potatoes and separated buttermilk, in all amounting to proteins 4lbs 5ozs, and carbohydrates 25lbs.”

Throughout all of her suilline servants, from George Cyril Wellbeloved to Jas Pirbright, from Edwin Pott to Monica Simmons (she of the large feet and the annoying habit of referring to our heroine as ‘piggy wiggy’) the Empress has enjoyed her 57,800 each



Cyril Wellbeloved

Illustrated by Peter van Straaten for McIlvaine’s Bibliography


and every day. Making allowance for Galahad’s *Reminiscences*, Lord Emsworth’s dropped cigar, a mouthful or two of Pirbright’s Sunday hat (“UR, NURI!” we can hear him exclaim), the contents of a whisky flask and the occasional treat of acorns, the Empress has not deviated from her 57,800 c’s per day.

Not, that is, till we come to the first page of Chapter 5 of *Service With a Smile*. I’ll wait till you all thumb through the pages . . . ready? At the end of the second paragraph what do we see? Fifty seven thousand . . . FIVE hundred calories!!!! And there’s more! Or, actually, less.

In *A Pelican at Blandings* (Chap 1) it has gone down to 57,000 and it gets worse! In *Galahad at Blandings* (Chap 12) and *Sunset at Blandings* (Chap 12) . . . come on, come on . . . hurry up . . . the figure has further reduced to 5,700 calories! Yes, 5,700 calories!!! That’s hardly enough to keep Lord E going, never mind the Empress. Is it any wonder she took a bite of Huxley Winkworth? The poor girl was obviously ravenous!

Plum's 'Thank You' for his Oxford Lodgings

A letter of appreciation for a fine bedroom and geyser that worked

<p style="text-align: center;">  June 23. 1939 Hotel Splendide Green Park Restaurant 105 Piccadilly, London, W.1 <small>TELEGRAMS: LUISHOTEL, AUDELEY, LONDON TELEPHONE: GROSVENOR 3441</small> </p> <p>Dear Mrs Gordon.</p> <p>I wonder if anybody has ever enjoyed a visit to the President's Lodging as much as I did. Henry the Seventh, possibly, but nobody else. I shall never forget how kind you all were to me. It was wonderful of you to give me such a good time.</p> <p>My only complaint is that that bedroom has spoiled me for the sort of thing I shall have to put up with for the rest of my life. I shall feel like a sardine in the one I have at Le Touquet.</p>	<p>I forgot to tell you that I achieved a complete triumph over the geyser. I had it eating out of my hand before I left.</p> <p>I hope you are not feeling too tired after your Eucosmia sections. I thought the Garden Party was a tremendous success.</p> <p>With best wishes Yours truly P. S. Woodhouse</p> <p>P.S. Love to Simon. (the sig)</p>
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The Mystery of the Missing Meal (Cont)

The cry has gone up "Who is behind this scandal???" Stinker Pyke? Alaric, Duke of Dunstable?? NO!! It will not surprise you to know that the common factor in all of this is none other than George Cyril Wellbeloved.

Now I know that some of you may say that the Empress doted on this man. You may point out that the only time she went off her vitamins was when GCW was arrested by PC Evans in the taproom of the Goat and Feathers for being drunk and disorderly. May I point out that it was this incarceration for two weeks that almost cost the Empress her first Silver Medal in the Fat Pigs class at the 87th Shropshire Agricultural Show. Were it not for the timely intervention of one James Bartholomew Belford and his experiences in Nebraska, the Empress could have entered the Greyhound Derby and possibly won the thing without needing a dope test at the other end of it.

"Fine greyhound you have there, Emsworth, old chap" would be the after-race opinion.

May I also point out that this was George Cyril's second coming to Blandings. Much troubled water has raged under his somewhat shaky bridge since then. The man is a mercenary, by Jove! It would not surprise me if he had spent the interim flitting between the jungles of Angola and assisting the Sandanista rebels in . . . wherever it was they were in. An incorrigible bounder, he is!

Now I know that you may be stunned by these allegations. Some of you may even harbour a grudging admiration for the roguish charm of this twice-hired pigman, but it is my intention to lay before you the facts as I see them and let you judge for yourself.

In Part Two of *The Mystery of the Missing Meal* all will be revealed.

Wodehouse and the Pickwick Papers

by John Ashman

P G Wodehouse read Dickens in his early days, and always disclaimed any influence, but very probably he read *Pickwick Papers*, and there are a number of similarities between *Pickwick* and some of PGW's early stories which I have found intriguing.

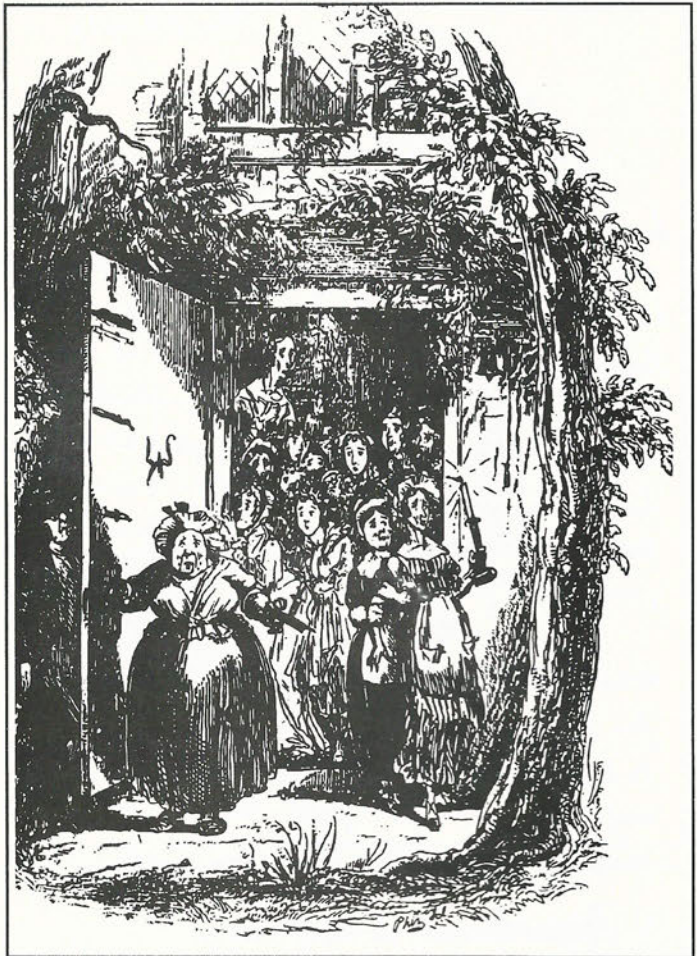
In *Pickwick*, friends of Mr Weller senior ply the Rev Stiggins, Deputy Shepherd of the Brick Lane Branch of the United Grand Junction Ebenezer Temperance Association, with Rum and Water before the Association's monthly meeting, then push him through the door to the platform in a drunken state, where he appears 'staring with a wild eye and a fixed smile at the extreme tip of the wick of a candle on the table'. Called on to speak, he snubs the chairman, accuses the audience (mostly ladies) of being drunk, knocks the chairman down the stairs, and the meeting ends in chaos.

Perhaps something stirred in PGW's memory when in *Right Ho, Jeeves*, Gussie Fink-Nottle, drunk on laced orange juice provided by Bertie and Jeeves, appeared on the platform 'staring before him with a smile so fixed and pebble-beached . . .' to present the prizes at the Grammar School, Market Snodsbury. Called upon to speak, he snubs the Headmaster, leaving Dickens in gales of hilarity, to reduce the occasion to chaos.

Mishaps in the grounds of a girls' school at night also occur. In *Very Good, Jeeves*, Bertie Wooster runs into Bobbie Wickham's cousin Clementina playing truant from her school (run by his Aunt Agatha's great friend, Miss Mapleton) and tries to return her by hiding in the grounds at night, and spirit her through the back door. It all goes horribly wrong, he is caught by the local constable, and Jeeves inimitably saves the day.

Pickwick has a similar adventure. He is duped into believing that Jingle is going to elope with a rich young heiress from a Young Ladies' Seminary. He hides in the garden at night to scotch the elopement. It all goes horribly wrong, and Sam Weller saves the day.

Dickens and Wodehouse both made fun out of the foreign guests who mangle the English language at ladies' literary luncheons. Mrs Leo Hunter invites Pickwick to meet Count Smorltork, the famous Russian in England for two weeks gathering material for his great work on England. In *The Clicking of Cuthbert*, Mrs Smethurst of Wood Hills Literary and Debating Society introduces their local hero,



The Unexpected 'Breaking-Up' of The Seminary for Young Ladies

Raymond Parsloe Devine, to Vladimir Brusiloff, a visiting Russian novelist who proceeds to demolish his reputation when he also meets the local golf star Cuthbert Banks.

Pickwick, stopping at the Old Royal Hotel, could have encountered an ancestor or prototype of Jeeves in a waiter who 'imperceptibly melted away. Waiters never walk or run. They have a peculiar and mysterious power of skimming out of rooms which other mortals possess not.' Any reader of Jeeves stories will recognise the sentiment. And then, of course, after all his adventures, Pickwick retires to his idyllic retreat at Dulwich in 1837, where PGW would spend blissful years at school.

Wodehouse may have used ideas very like those in *Pickwick*, but he transformed them with his unique comic genius, producing a consistent level of hilarity that Dickens had not sought to achieve. "It's all in the treatment," he said.

A Wodehouse Lookalike Remembers

Gordon Smith enjoys himself at the Drones Club Dinner

Dear Sir

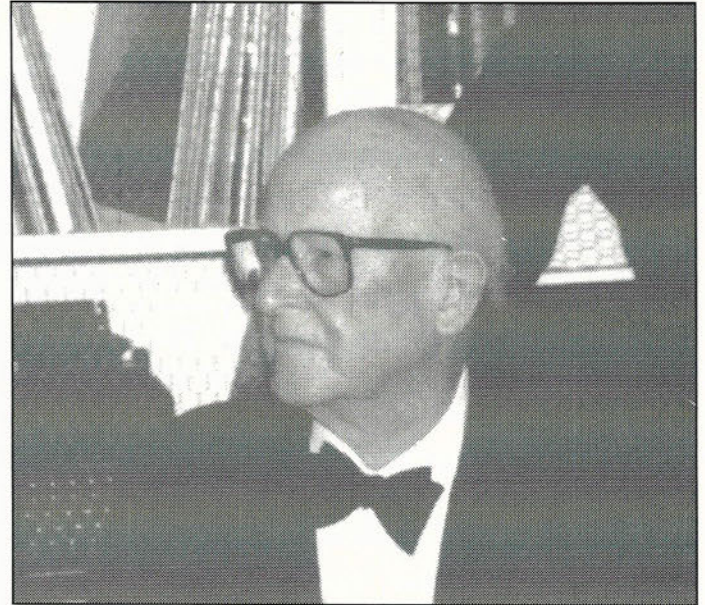
The proudest day of my life, so far, has been 6th November 1999, when, with the Belgian & Dutch P G Wodehouse Societies, I enjoyed a superb dinner, worthy of the culinary genius of Aunt Dahlia's temperamental cook, Monsieur Anatole. The guests were suddenly startled by a squeal and a finger pointed at me. "There he is! Mr Wodehouse himself, or his GHOST!" The resemblance, bald head, round face, large ears, was welcome (I was in my 90th year at the time) and as the photographers jockeyed for position, I posed like Abraham Lincoln at a Press Conference after the Battle of Gettysburg.

Jeeves first appeared in 1917, and never strayed from that wonderful pre-war world of Totleigh Towers, Blandings Castle and the Drones Club, Bertie and the other Eggs, Beans and Crumpets, not one of whom ever did a day's work. As one born in the reign of King Edward VII, I was too young to remember the life in detail, but Aunt Agatha and the formidable Florence Craye still frighten me. Ukridge, of the big broad flexible approach, was 'colourful', and therefore today an obvious candidate for Mayor of London.

"But why are you using a false name?"

"Ordinary political precaution, of course. And by the way, Corky, old man, I've told the election johnnies that you will be paying my expenses. I'm rather strapped for cash at the moment."

The Master has put on record for the 21st Century, long-forgotten frolics like horse-whipping on the steps of Clubs, or the expert pelting of vegetables at VIPs at village meetings. The first Boat Race was rowed in 1829, and 400 million people in 160 countries now watch it on television, but a national occasion, now forgotten, used to be 'Boat Race Night', or as the Boshier Street magistrate described it, when sentencing Old Sippy to six weeks without the option, 'the annual aquatic contest between the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge'. In the Drones Club, Oofy Prosser bet a cautious £10 out of his millions on Oxford in 1931, and he has never forgiven me for the pain of losing his tenner, attributing at least one length, of the 2½ lengths by which Cambridge won that year, to my inclusion at No 2 in the Oxford VIII. In later years, still grieving, Oofy increased his attribution of blame to two lengths.



The expression 'Absolute Zero' is said (if anybody ever says so) to be both unobtainable and inexplicable, something to do with nought to the power of nought being one. Jeeves was ready to explain it in a few hundred well-chosen words, but a raised hand stopped him. One can only take so much. There is a Club and place for everything, and what may be cheerful gossip in the Athenæum, would quickly empty the smoking room at the Junior Ganymede.

The words are relevant, however, to Boat Race night in 1931. Activity on the part of the crews and their supporters, in the traditional form of pinching policemen's helmets, was absolute zero, but the occasion was not wasted, as there was a most exasperating traffic jam. Cars and taxis poured into the streets round Piccadilly Circus, filled with citizens hoping to see some activity, and already primed to voice disappointment, whatever happened, that Boat Race Night was not what it used to be. They were ready with "Silly young fools! That's not in the least funny!" but found no one to complain to. We had gone home to bed long before the crowd could irascibly sort themselves out, with all the traffic facing in towards Piccadilly Circus. The Master's version of Boat Race Night is funnier than George Orwell's, but both wrote of a bygone era.

Herbert Asquith, former Prime Minister defeated by Lloyd George, and finally ending his political career by losing his own seat in parliament, settled in the train home from his lost constituency. He produced from his briefcase the latest Wodehouse novel, with a smile. "Ah, well. There is always PG."

The Gardens of Blandings Castle

by Sir Simon Hornby, President, Royal Horticultural Society

Lord Emsworth's love of pigs is legendary; the Empress of Blandings being almost certainly the best known pig in English literature and quite certainly the best loved individual in Lord Emsworth's circle. It is easy to fall into the trap of thinking that pigs were his only source of real pleasure. To think this would be to wrong him. Pigs came first without doubt but flowers were a close second and Angus McAllister, Head Gardener, was an employee of whom Lord Emsworth was more or less in constant awe.

In *Leave It To Psmith*, when reminded by the efficient Baxter that he had to go to London to give Mr McTodd lunch at his Club, Lord Emsworth gasped:

“Go to London! In weather like this? With a thousand things to attend to in the garden.”

Later, when reunited with his spectacles at the end of his lunch at the Senior Conservative Club with Mr McTodd,

... he perceived for the first time that among the row of shops on the opposite side of the road was a jaunty new flower shop. Any flower shop, however small, was a magnet to the Earl of Emsworth.

Within seconds McTodd had witnessed his host whizzing across the road and vanishing into the florist's shop. This event came at the end of a lunch at which, unlike Mr McTodd, Lord Emsworth had been enjoying himself very much. He had liked Mr McTodd's silent but obvious interest in flowers, his tacit but warm sympathy in the matter of Angus McAllister.

In *The Custody of the Pumpkin*, to recover from the shock of Freddie Threepwood's sudden marriage he found 'a compulsion for flowers and green trees', and took a cab to Kensington Gardens where, rapturously halting before a glowing carpet of tulips he entered a 'sort of trance', for there is that about a well-set-out bed of flowers which acts on men who love their gardens like a drug.

From these references the evidence is clear. Lord Emsworth got endless pleasure from gardens and flowers and one can infer that his knowledge wasn't bad either. He found the florist opposite his club thoroughly sound on the hollyhock question and informative in the matter of delphiniums, coreopsis,



His creator takes a leaf out of Lord Emsworth's book

eryngiums, geums, lupins, bergamot and early phloxes – a curious mixture to be sure, but one which absorbed Lord Emsworth so that he could not bring himself to leave and didn't do so until he had remembered to say something about the stronger growing clematis.

The knowledge of his father was not inherited by his younger son, the Hon Frederick Threepwood, who instructed Psmith to wear a chrysanthemum in his button-hole as a means of recognition, and after berating Psmith for being late said:

“I asked you to wear a pink chrysanthemum so that I could recognise you, you know.”

“I am wearing a pink chrysanthemum. I should have thought that that was a fact the most casual could hardly have overlooked.”

“That thing? I thought it was some kind of cabbage. I meant one of those little what-d'you-may-call-its people do wear in their button-holes.”

Beyond A Joke: a new play about Plum

Anton Rodgers and Angela Thorne have been booked to appear in Roger Milner's new play *Beyond a Joke*, directed by Christopher Morahan, at eight venues in England from August to October.

The setting of the play is Paris, in 1944, as Plum and Ethel and their Pekinese dog Wonder, are waiting for the end of the war – in their own peerless comic style. When the Wodehouses are visited by a young MI5 investigator, Malcolm Muggeridge, everything is thrown open to question, and their lives may never be the same again.

The play pits the light against the dark, and reflects upon our irrepressible instinct to keep smiling.

The dates and venues are as follows, all except the first being for one week only:

Weeks of 28 August & 4 September: Guildford Yvonne Arnaud Theatre (01483 440000)

11 September Richmond Theatre (020 8940 0088)

18 September Bath Theatre Royal (01225 448844)

25 September Norwich Theatre Royal (01603 630000)

2 October Poole Arts Centre (01202 685222)

9 October Bromley Churchill Theatre (020 8460 6677)

16 October Cambridge Arts Theatre (01223 503333)

23 October Chichester Festival Theatre (01243 781312)

30 October Malvern Festival Theatre (01684 892277)

The Gardens of Blandings Castle, continued

“Carnation, possibly?”

“Carnation! That’s right.”

Lord Emsworth’s love of gardening was at times marred by disputes with the dour Glaswegian Angus McAllister, whose eyebrows would have fitted a bigger forehead and whose feet resembled a violin-case. When noting that the florist was sound on the hollyhock question he had been referring to a long-running battle with McAllister over the correct form of hollyhock. Angus clung to ‘Head-Gardeneresque standards of beauty and form’, holding that the flower must be very tight and very round ‘like the uniform of a Major-General’, while his employer liked his hollyhocks floppy with its wide outer petals showing a ‘slightly waved’ surface and gently frilled edge’. The matter ended in defeat for His Lordship.

Defeat came again when McAllister, goaded by Lord Emsworth in *The Custody of the Pumpkin*, resigned and left for 11 Buxton Crescent, London. Although a winner at the Shrewsbury show for roses, tulips and spring onions, no Earl of Emsworth had ever won First Prize for pumpkins and, after failing to find a replacement with adequate pumpkin-growing skills he had to take McAllister back.

Lord Emsworth did not always have to give second-best to McAllister, though. A battle lasting longer than the hollyhock war concerned McAllister’s wish for a gravel path through the yew walk which was now covered by a soft green moss. Lord Emsworth had stood firm but defeat was looming. Then came a crime for which no punishment would suffice. Lord Emsworth encouraged Gladys, his new 13-year-old cockney girlfriend to pick some flowers. “Take as many as you want,” he said.

The enraged McAllister roared after the velveteen-clad girl who sought shelter behind Lord Emsworth, clutching the tails of his morning-coat. Suddenly her hot hand in his brought courage to the shaking Earl.

“This young lady has my full permission to pick all the flowers she wants, McAllister.”

A long moment followed in which nature stood still, breathless. The achillea stood still. So did the bignonia radicans and all the other flowers including the vinca and the yucca. McAllister made his decision: better to cease to be a Napoleon than be a Napoleon in exile. So he accepted defeat and Lord Emsworth, stirred on by victory, pressed on with the matter of the gravel path.

“Try to remember, McAllister, as you work in the gardens of Blandings Castle, that you are not back in Glasgow, laying out recreation grounds.”

I think, although he never let on, that the Earl of Emsworth must have been on the Council of the Royal Horticultural Society.

WODEHOUSE’S BIRTHPLACE FOR SALE

As *Wooster Sauce* was about to go to press the news came in that the top flat at 59 Epsom Road, Guildford, the birthplace of P G Wodehouse, is for sale.

Who will volunteer to buy it and establish it as a place where members of the Society can be assured of a warm welcome?

The Basis for the Everyman Wodehouse

Series editor Peter Washington outlines the rationale

When the Everyman Library was relaunched in 1991, the aim was to produce a hardback collection of world classics in English based on the old Library (founded in 1906) but updated to include twentieth century writers or earlier writers rediscovered and revalued in our time. To most people, I suppose, the word 'classic' suggests something weighty and serious: *The Oresteia*, *King Lear*, *War and Peace*. In fact, many of the greatest literary works are comic: *Don Quixote*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Tristram Shandy*, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Alice in Wonderland* are just as valuable as their darker siblings – and, I suspect, more often and more fondly read.

As the Italian novelist Calvino pointed out, it so happens that the English have produced a disproportionate number of comic masterpieces. He attributes this to our temperament, which he holds to be unique among European peoples, and he is not alone in his belief. (Curiously, that other great Italian novelist, Lampedusa, was also a fan of English comic writers, his favourite book being one of Wodehouse's own sources, *Pickwick Papers*). So it is entirely appropriate that Everyman should now celebrate the Englishman many believe to be the greatest comic writer of our time, thereby confirming his reputation (if such confirmation be needed) as a classic. Starting this spring, we hope to publish over the next decade a complete edition of his stories and novels in a carefully edited and authoritative text.

Editing Wodehouse is fraught with surprising difficulties. First, one has to make the decision about whether to include commentary and textual variants. As all his attentive readers will know, Wodehouse was a frequent reviser and adaptor who changed his stories to suit particular occasions and cannibalised his own work, providing in the process plenty of material for eager PhD students and editors to work on. For the Everyman edition, however, we have decided to forgo scholarly apparatus. Our purpose is to present readers with a good text, not to distract – or even confuse – them with all possible variations. (As the man charged with this project, I am also conscious that anyone who embarks on a solemn academic edition of Wodehouse's works is likely to find himself satirised by the author's ghost.)

That said, how is a good text established? By what principles is it to be assessed? What should be done, for example, about the changes of spelling and

P.G. WODEHOUSE

UKRIDGE



punctuation which can be found from book to book, and even within books? We have taken the view that the best benchmark for Wodehouse editions should normally be the first UK edition, with reference to serial publication where there are obvious errors or inconsistencies, these errors to be corrected only when there is a clear mandate for doing so.

The majority of mistakes are simply misprints or mistranscriptions. Because Wodehouse's books have usually been thought of as light entertainment, these have crept easily into their many reprints and few readers have thought to question them, even when they make nonsense of the text – as when, for example, phrases or whole lines are omitted. We hope to rectify this situation with the help of Wodehouse Society members, many of whom have already offered the fruits of their own close reading to supplement the editor's. Though the first four novels to appear were prepared without this advantage, I would be glad to hear from anyone who finds subsisting errors in our texts, so that we can correct them in later reprints. With this generous assistance it will be possible for us to produce a complete edition worthy of Wodehouse.

Interesting Recent and Forthcoming Publications

Elizabeth Langford of Lasne, Belgium, a professional violinist and pioneer of the use of the Alexander Technique in musical education, has published *Mind and Muscle: An Owners Handbook* (Garant Publishers, ISBN 90-5350-883-X). In this invaluable handbook on how best to treat your own body, Elizabeth managed to find five suitable quotations from PGW with which to introduce chapters.

Pieter Boogart of Venray, Netherlands, has shown his true credentials as a European by publishing *A272, An Ode to a Road* (Pallas Athene, ISBN 1-873429-29-0), on page 127 of which he refers both to PGW's connections with Rogate Lodge and to the Society.

Porpoise Books are pleased to announce that *Volume 7* of the *Millennium Wodehouse Concordance* is scheduled for publication at the end of October 2000, price £22. As was the case last year, members who do not have a standing order, but place an order with payment before the end of September may benefit from a discounted price of £20 post-free.

Volume 7, entitled *Wodehouse Among Old Friends*, is the first of two volumes dealing with novels and short stories which do not fall neatly into the series considered to date. Amongst the groups of stories reviewed in this part are those involving Drones Club members and Kid Brady.

Volumes 1 to 6 remain in print. Details may be obtained from, and orders for all volumes sent to,

The Audio Book Collection has published *Lord Emsworth and Others* as the latest in its series of unabridged readings of Wodehouse books. This one is read by Nigel Lambert, and can be obtained from Chivers (Tel: Freephone 0800 136919 or in North America, 1-800-621-0182; fax: 01225 448005 or e-mail: info@audiobookcollection.com)

BBC Radio Collection has published *Right Ho, Jeeves*, starring Richard Briers, from the popular radio dramatisation of the 1970s. It can also be obtained from the Audio Book Collection at the above numbers.

Visit the British Library Exhibition Chapter & Verse

The British Library has mounted a quite superb exhibition entitled *Chapter & Verse*, which will be open until October. The exhibition brings together literary classics and contemporary authors in an array of 1,000 years of English Literature. It explores 'the eternal themes of literature: Love and Loss, Time and Place, Humour and Imagination, Faith and Identity, Belonging and Conflict'. In the display can be found works of poetry, prose, drama, letters and autobiography, from the Anglo-Saxons to the 20th century.

Included in the exhibition is a page of notes for *Galahad at Blandings*, accompanied by the first typed page of the book (extensively annotated with alterations by PGW) and the essay drawing of Wodehouse's head by Low, which is owned by Dulwich College and was part of the preliminary work which culminated in the famous cartoon drawing. (For details of opening times, etc, call

Blandings Castle in focus

Andrew Bishop of Oxford has written in with what may be a 'first', for he enclosed a copy of Section A from *English Paper 1: Comprehension* from the Winchester College Entrance Exam for May 2000. The lucky candidates were asked to answer several questions about the opening passage of *The Custody of the Pumpkin* from *Blandings Castle*. We must congratulate the Examiners for showing such commendable good taste, and offer the candidates our best wishes for the results.

Whence Lord Clumber?

Dan and Susan Cohen of New England were intrigued to see the reference to Lord and Lady Clumber in *Help Yourself*, the notes for an unpublished PGW story which appeared on pages 280 to 285 of *What Ho!*, the anthology published earlier this year. They explain that the Clumber Spaniel was once a breed favoured by the Royal family, especially King Edward VII, which has now become quite rare. The name comes from Clumber Park, the home of the Duke of Newcastle. The Cohens have owned several Clumber Spaniels and wonder where Plum picked up the idea of using the name.

Over to you, Mr Chairman.

A European Wodehouse Pot-Pourri

reports John Looijestijn, a member from Lagoa, Portugal

I would like to tell you about a surprising and pleasant incident.

It was after a nice game of golf that some members of the Carvoeiro and District Golf Society were sitting on the verandah of the Palmares Golf Club (in my home town) discussing the strange things that golf balls did on the various holes during the game we had just finished. The sun was shining, on 16th February, and all the noises which the Master so well describes, bees droning and so on, were happening during this beautiful day.

About two tables away from us a lady was reading a book and my wife pointed out to me that she was reading Wodehouse. So I got up and asked her, in English, if she was also a fan and if she was enjoying herself with the story in hand. She nodded with a pleasant laugh on her face. I remarked from my side how much I enjoy reading Wodehouse and returned to my friends.

As we left, the lady was still there, and as an after-thought it came to my mind to ask her which book she was reading. She looked up at me, now with an expression on her face which clearly indicated that she did not understand me. That was strange after what happened before. I saw that her book had in big letters *P G Wodehouse* on it but the title was in a language which I was not able to recognise. I asked her if she did speak English and to my great surprise she said "No". With a little bit of hand, eye and body movement we then established that she could speak a little German. I discovered that she was reading a translation of *Carry On, Jeeves* in Hungarian, of all languages, and she informed me that apparently the spirit and fun of the master were fully available in the translated text.

There you have it. A Dutchman and a Hungarian lady talking about Wodehouse in German, on the grounds of a Portuguese golf club. It was a lovely encounter.

Lorna Dallas wows New York with her Cabaret

Member Lorna Dallas gave a series of cabaret performances in New York in March under the title *Glamorous Night: Lorna Dallas Sings the Music of Kern and Novello*, a reprise of an earlier London production. A review by David Roberts expressed appreciation not only of her voice, but her sheer energy and personality. After also praising the other members of the creative musical team, Christopher Denny, Barry Kleinbort and Bob Renino, he added:

Lorna Dallas's *Bill* from *Show Boat* (1927) and *Left All Alone Again Blues/The 'Have You Forgotten Me?' Blues* secure her place as a master of interpretation and song styling, and as a fine actor. In *Bill*, her subtle movement from doubt to certainty is convincing. And her choice of the Novello/Wodehouse collaboration *Nuts In May* from *The Golden Moth* (1921) gives the audience an opportunity to experience Lorna Dallas as a skilled comic actor as well.

We hope that another opportunity will arise soon for Society members in the UK to see Lorna perform some of her repertoire of Wodehouse lyrics.

Prestigious Prize for Plum's War

Congratulations to John Taylor of the Fiction Factory and writer Michael Butt, whose play, *Plum's War*, broadcast in July 1999, won the Best Play award from more than 500 candidates at the Sony Radio 2000 Award presentation held on May 2nd at the Grosvenor House Hotel. Runners-up were *Hearing Sense*, by Richard Monk and an episode from the science-fiction serial *Voyage*.

The judges said of *Plum's War*:

An intriguing portrait of an unexpected connection between P G Wodehouse and George Orwell. Tantalisingly told with style and economy and graced with compelling central performances, this entry was a *tour de force* of drama writing, acting and directing.

Many Wodehouseans find the theme of the play somewhat tedious, believing that all that could be said has been said, many times over. But this play did attempt to be a fair portrayal of the problems which faced the Wodehouses and others, and clearly many independent listeners found it compelling.



PROFILE OF A PATRON

Sir Nicholas Henderson, GCMG, KCVO has been a PGW fan since he arrived at Summer Fields, aged 10, and Dick Osborne, an Old Summer Fieldian, fired him with enthusiasm for the Master.

He has been involved in three official roles connected with PG. When British Ambassador to the USA he was invited to attend a dinner in his honour in New York at which he sat next to PG's widow and made "a few banal, but I hope, flattering" remarks about the celebrant.

On another occasion he called on the Dean of Westminster to support the appeal for PG to be honoured in Poets' Corner. The mission was a failure, and Sir Nicholas was left wondering whether perhaps the Dean had read *The Great Sermon Handicap* and found it lacking in spirituality.

His third involvement was his attendance at a lunch to mark the installation of a plaque in a house in London where PG had lived. The Queen Mother was the Guest of Honour. Sir Nicholas arrived late, having had to speak at a reception in the City for President Reagan. At the lunch he suggested Ronald Reagan was ideally suited to be a member of the Drones Club and proposed that a motion be passed to inform him that he had been elected as an Honorary Member. The motion was passed unanimously.

New Committee Members

The Society is delighted to announce the co-option of two new members of the Committee, who will be standing for re-election at the Annual General Meeting on June 20. Nick Townend has been appointed Treasurer, and Tim Andrew will help specifically with social events.

Nick Townend, a chartered accountant, has been an active member of the Society since its inception. He has frequently contributed to *Wooster Sauce* and is the contributor of *The Bibliographic Corner*. He has spoken on the St Austin's stories at Birmingham, organised a visit to *Anything Goes* at Crewe, and assisted in the preparation, based on members' suggestions, of the proposal to Hutchinson for the *What Ho!* anthology.

Tim Andrew is Headmaster of Chesham High School, Bucks, has also been a member of the Society since its inception, and has attended the last three Conventions of the American society. He began reading Wodehouse in the 1960s at the prompting of a French master who gave a huge number of PGW's books to the school library and whose comments to his pupils were peppered with Ukridgeisms.

University of the Third Age

Membership of the University of the Third Age is open to all persons over 50 who wish to meet, on a regional or town basis, to discuss subjects or pursue activities of mutual interest. There is a national network of individually organised chapters which are loosely coordinated. It is essentially aimed at retired members of the community or those who are otherwise not in full-time employment.

A new chapter was formed recently in the Chiltern district and Tony Ring was asked to present a paper on *The Wider Wodehouse: A Man of Verse and Prose* at the monthly general meeting held in June. He chose to concentrate on aspects of Wodehouse's life and work beyond the best-known fictional characters, of whom most of the 120 or so present would be aware. He also added thought-provoking suggestions about the development of Wodehouse's literary style which deviated in part from the more orthodox view.

As the title suggests, he illustrated the talk with snatches of a number of songs and poems which were generally appreciated, and spoke to several prospective new members of the Society.

My First Wodehouse Experience

by John Pinhorn

The old mind is not as alert as it once was.

Nevertheless, I have just realised that it is sixty years since I first set eyes on PGW's works. I had just left school and was in a YMCA hostel in Uttoxeter, Staffs, doing a bit of farm work prior to taking exams with a view to going to Agricultural College. There were only about a dozen of us there. I found the evenings a bit boring.

There was *Monopoly*, draughts and cards to pass away the time, and I looked round for something to read. There appeared to be only two hard-back books in the place, and they were doing sterling work holding the black-out curtains together on the window-sill. The one on top was a largish copy of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* and underneath was, yes, *Right Ho, Jeeves*.

To think, first crack out of the box one of the master's finest. I don't know who owned it, but I still have it in my collection. I spent the following Saturday in Derby searching the second-hand bookshops, and picked up *The Little Nugget* and *Bill the*

Conqueror, though I must say that had the latter been on the window-sill, I probably would not have pursued my collection of all things Wodehouse. I managed to collect a dozen or so in the first year.

I feel, like the author, that Jeeves's place is between the pages of a book. A good fifty per cent of the great wit and humour of Wodehouse is in Bertie's descriptions of characters, his observations on life and his general style of writing. His idiosyncrasies, if that's the word I want. This is not brought out in sketches, where one only gets the dialogue. It's like ham without the eggs, or strawberries without the cream.

With my 60 glorious years of study of the great man's works, I just want to record my appreciation of their genius.

Editor's note: I would welcome further contributions suitable for inclusion in this series. How about it, newer members? The younger generation? Members whose first language is not English?

At Dinner: Served By Jeeves

JH Millar of Vence, France, recalls a memorable meal

I first met Plum, Ethel and Leonora in about 1926 or 1927 through the Lonsdales. We had met Freddy Lonsdale and his two daughters through the du Mauriers, who also lived in Regent's Park. We knew them well, in fact Angela was my contemporary, and Daphne my sister's, and they remained lifelong friends. The youngest du Maurier daughter, Jeanne, was quite a little personality – in fact, they all were quite remarkable.

Plum had been, I think, in America working with Guy Bolton, but came to London and rented a furnished house in Green Street, Park Lane, and it was there, when invited to dine (for me always tail-coat and white tie), that I met Guy Bolton. At dinner in the dining-room, Plum sat at the head of the table, I was on his right and Leonora on my right. On Plum's left was Guy Bolton, and next to him was Ethel.

The butler's name was Robinson, and when he left the dining-room after serving the first course, Guy

Bolton turned to Plum and asked him if he wasn't putting on a lot of 'dog' having a butler? Plum replied that the butler was an author's model and said to Guy, "He's a walking *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Ask him any question you like and he'll give you the answer."

When Robinson returned to the dining-room, Plum turned to him and said, "Oh, Robinson, Mr Bolton would like to ask you a question." "Certainly, sir," replied the butler, whereupon Guy turned to Robinson and said, "What do you know about the sex life of the African spider?"

Robinson's answer was that it was hardly a subject for polite society, and went on to explain that, after choosing a fellow mate, the female spider had him for dinner. In a flash, Plum turned to Guy and said, "Nothing formal, you understand, Guy. Just black tie." Of course, we collapsed with laughter. Dining with Plum, Ethel and Leonora was as good as a play.

The Bibliographic Corner

Nick Townend starts a new series of articles

It seems appropriate to start *The Bibliographic Corner* with Wodehouse's first book, *The Pothunters*, first published by A&C Black in September 1902. The first edition (McIlvaine A1a) has blue boards, with a picture of a silver cup on both front cover and spine. The second state of the first edition also has blue pictorial boards, but depicts two runners on both front cover and spine. The second state was first issued (A1a2) with no advertising supplement, but was issued again (A1a3) with an advertising supplement. The latest Wodehouse book advertised in this supplement is *Mike*, published in 1909. The sheets used in these second state issues were the same as those of the first edition, and therefore the title pages are identical to those of the first edition, bearing a date of 1902.

In 1924 the book was re-set and re-issued (A1a4). The publishing history in the re-issue states that the book was first published in 1902, reprinted in 1915, and published in the new edition in 1924. Arguing from this publishing history, McIlvaine claims that the two second state issues (A1a2 and A1a3) were published in 1915. However, this is not necessarily true. There was actually a reprint of 1915, again with pictorial boards depicting two runners, which does indeed state the 1915 date on the title page (see illustration). Although not listed in McIlvaine, this edition obviously must be the 1915 reprint referred to by the 1924 re-issue. Thus, McIlvaine's dating of the second state issues to 1915 is questionable, as there is nothing to prevent them from being much earlier. If the title page date is to be taken at face value, the first issue of the second state (A1a2) could in fact be a variant first edition of 1902, and the second issue of the second state (A1a3) could be a re-issue of this variant first, to be dated, on the evidence of the advertising supplement, between 1909 and 1915.

The Pothunters was serialised in *The Public School Magazine* from January to March 1902, before publication in book form. However, as the *PSM* ceased publication with the March 1902 issue, Wodehouse had to condense the plot of the last eight chapters of the story into a three paragraph letter from one character to another. Therefore, the complete text of *The Pothunters* did not appear until its publication in book form. Wodehouse's other school novels, from *The Gold Bat* onwards, were serialised in *The Captain*, except *The Luck Stone*, which appeared in *Chums*.

THE POTHUNTERS

BY
P. G. WODEHOUSE

CONTAINING TEN FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS
BY R. NOEL POCOCK

A. & C. BLACK, LTD.
4, 5, AND 6 SOHO SQUARE, LONDON, W.
1915

*Title page of the 1915 reprint of The Pothunters,
kindly supplied by Nigel Williams Rare Books*

However, Wodehouse's second novel, *A Prefect's Uncle*, seems, for reasons unknown, not to have been serialised before publication in book form. My own theory, admittedly highly conjectural, as to why this was so, is that the *PSM* accepted the novel for serialisation, but ceased publication before the story could appear. One passage in *A Prefect's Uncle* does support my theory, and seems to show Wodehouse's irritation at the sudden demise of the *PSM*. In chapter 1, one of the characters, who rarely succeeded in finishing an anecdote, "resembled those serial stories which appear in papers destined at a moderate price to fill an obvious void, and which break off abruptly at the end of the third chapter, owing to the premature decease of the said periodicals."

Any readers who have comments on any matter raised by Nick are invited to contact him directly at

Christopher Owen on Tour as Lord Emsworth

The adjacent flyer is for a show to be presented by member Christopher Owen at village halls round the country over the next few months. Lord Emsworth is to address the Parva Village Literary Society on the subject of his family's biographer, and to sing some of the Kern and Novello songs for which the biographer wrote the lyrics.

Bookings notified to date, including the relevant telephone numbers for the booking offices, are as follows:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| June 10 | Hammerwood Village Hall,
(near East Grinstead, Surrey
0132 850506) |
| June 16 | Drill Hall, Chepstow
(01291 628552) |
| July 6 | Insole Court, Llandaff, Cardiff
(Tickets from Town & Country
shop, Llandaff) |
| July 7 | St Illtyds, Abertillery (01495
214700 or 01495 321055) |
| September 1 | Gordon Craig Theatre,
Stevenage (08700 1311030) |
| Sept 18 week | Villages in Lincolnshire, |
| Sept 25 week | Villages in Devon/Somerset |
| October 7 | Riverhouse Barn Theatre
Walton-on-Thames, Surrey
(01932 253354) |
| Oct 9 week | Villages in Nottinghamshire |
| Oct 16 week | Villages in Cumbria |
| October 19 | Bowness/Windermere festival
Old Laundry Theatre, Bowness
(01539 488444) |
| Oct 23 week | Villages in North Yorkshire |

**Right Ho,
Wodehouse!**

A comedy based on the
writings of PG Wodehouse
Devised and performed by
CHRISTOPHER OWEN

Lord Emsworth
of Blandings Castle
to address the Parva
Village Literary
Society on the life of
PG Wodehouse!

Enquiries
Christopher Owen (Gaffer Productions)
Tel: 020 - 8888 1751

- | | |
|------------|--|
| December 5 | Hurlingham Club, London
(Dinner/show 020 7736 8411) |
|------------|--|

Would members who go and support Christopher please write to the Editor with their observations.

Drones Club to visit Huy

The Drones Club, our sister society in Belgium, is planning a trip to the Citadel of Huy on 9th September, to mark the 60th anniversary of Plum's internment there. Wodehouse arrived at Huy on August 3rd, 1940 and left on September 8th for Tost, in Upper Silesia.

It is understood that there will be ceremony at which the Mayor of Huy will accept a plaque to be attached to the walls of the fortress, which is now a museum. Guided visits are available which visit the cells and interrogation room. See: www.huy.be

Huy is on the River Meuse, just beyond Namur towards Liège on the edge of the Ardennes and about 180 miles from Calais. The Society and British Embassy will be represented at the ceremony, and any member who wishes to attend will be most welcome.

The ceremony will start at 2pm, and will include speeches in English and French. Members who would like to know more should contact Tim Andrew

Book Now for the Society Dinner

With this issue of *Wooster Sauce* you will find a booking form for the Society's annual dinner, to be held this year as a black-tie event at Gray's Inn, on Thursday October 19th.

Those who attended our first formal dinner at the Inner Temple will not want to miss this one, and as our membership is now three times as large, we expect this event to be very heavily subscribed. The hall at Gray's Inn is slightly larger than that at the Inner Temple and can accommodate about 120.

A high quality programme of entertainment and speeches is anticipated, and although the cost per ticket, £ 40, is higher than last time, it is nevertheless substantially subsidised by private sponsors.

Please note that a proportion of the tickets will be held back for allocation to overseas members until August 15 but in general places will be provided on a first-come, first-serve basis. Only if places remain unfilled at the end of August will tickets be available for non-members, at the higher price of £ 50.

First Meeting in Glasgow

Joe Harkins

is arranging the first Glasgow meeting of the Society at the Rabbin Burns pub in Waterloo Street, Glasgow, on Saturday 2nd September.

The formal part of the meeting will commence at 1.30pm, but those attending are invited to arrive from noon for lunch at the pub. A varied programme is planned including a talk on the life of Wodehouse illustrated by the material displayed at Guildford Museum last autumn, a short and friendly quiz, recordings of songs with PGW lyrics, a talk on Wodehouse school stories and the reading of a few of Plum's poems. The meeting is scheduled to finish around 5pm.

There will be no charge for attendance, though lunch and afternoon refreshment is at your own expense. Non-members are welcome, and they will have an opportunity to join the Society if they so wish. Contact Joe Harkins on the above numbers for additional information.

First Meeting in Cambridge

Geoff Hales

is arranging the first East Anglian meeting of the Society in or near Cambridge, on Saturday October 28th. The planned venue has now been sold and will not be available, so more details will be given in the September issue of *Wooster Sauce*. It is intended that the meeting will commence at 2pm and finish around 5 pm, and will include two talks, a reading and a short video extract.

Contact Geoff Hales on the above telephone number for additional information.

Payment of TWS Dues

UK-based members of TWS who wish to pay their TWS dues in sterling are invited either to pay Neil Midkiff in cash on the Millennium Tour or to send a cheque for £14, made out to

before July 15. John will acknowledge it and arrange to settle with Neil in July.

Forthcoming Auction of Wodehouse books

Tony Rudman has arranged to sell his collection of 140 PGW books by auction on July 11. Auctioneers are Capes, Dunn & Co, 38 Charles Street, Manchester

The catalogue is expected to be available one week before the sale.

Tony tells me that about 70% of the collection consists of first editions, many (including some pre-war titles) having dust jackets. The majority, he adds, are in very good condition, with some even better but some showing greater signs of wear and tear.

Additional information may be found on our website, including an illustrative list of items included in the sale.

And Danny, at or e-mail: thearchive@ndirect.co.uk is offering a beautifully rebound complete score of the Wodehouse/Kern/Grossmith musical comedy *The Beauty Prize* at £150. Contact Danny for more details or to make an offer.

Recent Press Comment

The Author, January (from Alison Lindsay)

Carried an interview with Paul Cox, the illustrator of over 500 sketches for the *Folio Society* series of *Jeeves and Wooster* books.

Evening Moscow, January 6 (from Maria Lebedeva)

Carried a long article about PGW, with two photographs of Fry and Laurie from the TV series.

Independent, February 23 (from Helen Murphy)

Christopher Hawtree quoted PGW's 'fellow whom fate has called upon to be the Patsy, the Squidge or, putting it another way, the man who has been left holding the baby' in explaining Frank Dobson's use of the term 'patsy' in his mayoral campaign.

Attaché, February (from David Landman)

In an article '*How to watch Golf*' Robert Sullivan recalled standing on the 14th green in the Ryder Cup as Davis Love III lingered on the green after beating Jean van der Velde 'shaking the Frenchman's hand warmly, saying something earnest and encouraging – a bucko uppo, as Wodehouse would term it'.

Times, March 6

An article on the alleged disclosure of the Prime minister's family secrets by a former nanny pointed out that Jeeves would never have disclosed Bertie's personal secrets beyond the tight circle of other gentlemen's gentlemen at the Junior Ganymede Club.

Telegraph, March 6 (from James Wood)

In an article seeking support for pig-farmers, the Rt Rev Lord Robert Runcie, former Archbishop of Canterbury, concluded:

The key figure in that wonderful classic by P G Wodehouse, *Pig-hoo-o-o-ey* was Lord Emsworth's long-standing pigman. His name is Wellbeloved. When he, the dedicated stockman, went missing, things went downhill. It is a parable from another world. Contented, well cared for, regularly inspected pigs will alone produce the goods. The villains or cowboys of factory farming will not. Now is the time to rally round the Wellbeloved's in our pig world.

Times, March 10

Philip Howard's article on Ken Livingston in the mayoral contest consisted of a Sherlock Holmes/Doctor Watson pastiche about the 'Great Newt of Brent East', during which there was the following exchange:

"No doubt you recall the case of Gussie Fink-Nottle and the newts in the bath?"

"Great heavens, Holmes. The Sinister Affair of the Cow-Creamer at Totleigh Towers, where you put Sergeant Jeeves on the right track."

Times, March 10

Reported that PGW had been placed 48th in the national poll for World Book Day, 2 places above Shakespeare!

Times, March 24

Philip Howard, now commenting on Frank Dobson's prospects in the mayoral contest, recalled 'Beaver', a silly game of the 1920s, the object of which was to spot men wearing beards more quickly than other contestants. He quoted from *Laughing Gas*:

I had fallen among a band of criminals who were not wilful beavers, but had merely assumed the fungus for the purpose of disguise.

Spectator, March 25

Martin Hammond, Headmaster of Tonbridge School, wrote about his new translation of *The Odyssey*. His article was accompanied by his version, in Homeric hexameters, of a passage from *The Reverent Wooing of Archibald*.

Observer, March 26 (from Peter Viggers)

A review by Adam Marr-Jones of *Trimalchio* by F Scott Fitzgerald comments that

There are moments of jaunty drollery that bring the book oddly close to P G Wodehouse territory ...

Australian, 25th March (from Murray Hedgcock)

One of a number of articles commenting on the resurgence of 'Jeeves' in modern form, employed by the super-rich as 'residential lifestyle managers'.

Antarnad Marathi Monthly, February (from Harshawardhan Nimkedkhar)

A Mumbai magazine, written entirely in the local dialect, containing a very long article by member Harshawardhan Nimkedkhar, celebrating PGW's 25th anniversary.

Express, April 25 (from Murray Hedgcock)

Harpers and Queen, June

Both carried interviews with Lara Cazalet, star of the TV series *Bad Girls*, which mentioned that PGW was her great-grandfather, and asking for comments on what he might have thought of her role.

Recent Press Comment

Spectator, April 22 (from Murray Hedgcock)

Christopher Fildes, reminding readers that stock market momentum can work both ways, drew the comparison with Aunt Dahlia's views on blackmail ("Good old blackmail. You can't beat it.") until, when on the receiving end, she felt differently. He pointed out that all depended on whether you met the blackmail (or the stock market) coming or going.

Telegraph, April 29

Leaked the news that Robert McCrum had been approached to write a new P G Wodehouse biography. (As arrangements for this book have not yet been finalised, an article about Robert McCrum's project has been deferred until the September issue of *Wooster Sauce*.)

New York Times, May 7 (from Jan Kaufman)

Referred to an advertising campaign by Ask Jeeves consisting of fresh fruit labels on which were printed questions about the relevant fruit.

Everyman Wodehouse launch

Substantial articles appeared in the *Scotsman* (late April), *Standard* (May 3), *Times* (May 4) *Express* (May 5), *Independent* (May 6) and *Sunday Times*, (May 28), with many others carrying references.

Daily Mail, May 18

In an article entitled *Why I'm so proud to be a spinster*, Clarissa Dickson Wright pointed out that while marrying and settling down to raise a family is a worthy objective, it is not one which has ever appealed to her. She adds:

By choice –and in distinguished company down the centuries – I fully intend to enter my dotage as I have lived, my own woman.

I know that old maids are often figures of fun and objects of pity. But anyone who has studied the works of that sublime social commentator P G Wodehouse will know the authority wielded by those formidable creatures.

Of course, some of them were built like Stalin's tanks and clearly had little but contempt for the male of the species, but others were dangerous seductresses given to long cigarette holders. Wicked!

Sunday Times, May 21

An article about Ben Elton mentioned that *Eggs, Beans and Crumpets* started his compulsive reading habit.

POETS' CORNER

The Pessimist

They tell me that the weather's fair,
The day serene and balmy;
No more for rain need I prepare –
No chilly blast shall harm me.
The prate of 'warmth', of gentle glows,
They rave of how sublime it is;
I shake my head, as one who knows
Just what the British climate is.

They say the trees are growing green,
That flowers are in bloom,
That bees and butterflies are seen;
They bid me quit my room.
My hat and boots to me they bear.
They tell me what a crime it is
To stay indoors; but I'm aware
Just what the British climate is.

The tale they tell is just the same
They told in days of yore.
I know the weather's deadly game –
I've seen it played before.
I call it deadly: Well, to those
By nature such as I'm it is,
One suffers much before one knows
Just what the British climate is.

This is my fixed resolve – to keep
Thick clothing always handy,
Add extra blankets when I sleep,
And not run short of brandy.
I wager we'll be having snow
Before mid-summer-time it is.
I'll take no risks. I chance to know
Just what the British climate is.

This poem first appeared in *The Daily Chronicle*, on 16 February, 1903

An Unimpeachable Philosophy

PGW in reflective mode

Coming down to first causes, the only reason why collisions of any kind occur is because two bodies defy Nature's law that a given spot on a given plane shall at a given moment of time be occupied by only one body.

From *Something Fresh*, 1915

FUTURE EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

From July 6 – *Right Ho, Wodehouse!*

Christopher Owen starts touring with his one-man show. For details and booking opportunities see page 20.

July 17 to 23 – Wodehouse Society Millennium Tour

All events are fully subscribed except the welcome party for our tourists at the Plaza on Hyde Park Hotel. All members are welcome. 6pm, cash bar.

From August 28 – *Beyond a Joke*

This new play about Plum opens at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford, and tours the country until the end of October. For full details, including itinerary, see page 13

August 26 – Murphy's Wodehouse Walk

Please contact Norman Murphy on for more information and to reserve a place

September 2 – Meeting in Glasgow

There will be a meeting at the Rabbie Burns Pub in the centre of Glasgow to which all are invited. For full details see page 21.

September 9 – Huy

The Drones Club are presenting a plaque to the Mayor of Huy. For full details, see page 20.

October 19 – Society Dinner at Gray's Inn

The Society's formal (black tie) dinner will be held at Gray's Inn. For full details see page 21. As we expect this event to be fully subscribed very quickly, we recommend that the enclosed booking form is returned as soon as possible.

October 28 – Meeting in Cambridge

A meeting is planned to be held in or near Cambridge to which all are invited. For more detail and a contact number see page 21.

November 14 – Informal meeting at the Savage Club

Advance notice of our regular evening meeting at the Club of which Plum was once a member.

Oct 12 to 14, 2001 – TWS Convention, Philadelphia

Advance notice of the dates of the next convention of the American-based Society, to be held at the Sheraton Society Hill Hotel.

EDITOR'S TAILPIECES

During a recent holiday in the Himalayan state of Bhutan (which stands 8,000 feet above sea level), Edward Cazalet, High Court Judge and PGW's grandson, met the country's Chief Justice, Lyompo Sonam Tobgye. Edward instantly recognised a fellow Wodehouse *aficionado*, and as he happened to have with him a copy of the new anthology *What Ho!*, he immediately presented it to the Chief Justice. He was amused, his officials bemused, as the volume was opened and favourite stories recognised, while prolonged silences reigned as familiar passages were read. Edward's departure was accompanied by an outbreak of "What Ho's" and "Pip-pips" rather than the traditional diplomatic jargon, and the prospect of a lasting international friendship was sealed by the promise of an honorary membership of The P G Wodehouse Society (UK).

Overlook Press, is distributing the new Everyman books in the USA under their own imprint. They will match Everyman's 25% discount for Wodehouse Society members worldwide. They can be contacted at Overlook Press, 2568 Route 212, Woodstock, NY 12498 or by telephone on 1-800-473-1312.

May we add our congratulations to the many which Richard Osborne, the leading Wodehouse scholar, has received on reaching his 90th birthday.

In *Quote Unquote* on 24 April, the panellists were asked where the dedication "To Herbert Westbrook, without whose never failing advice, help, and encouragement this book would have been finished in half the time." originated. Nobody identified it correctly as Wodehouse, let alone as being from the 1910 first edition of *A Gentleman of Leisure* although when let into the secret one member did refer to a similar dedication to Leonora in *The Heart of a Goof* from 1926.

Geoff Hales is offering performances of his one-man show *An Evening with P G Wodehouse* (as reviewed in March's *Wooster Sauce*) to members for private functions. At home after dinner, perhaps, or at a golf club meeting? The show, which lasts around an hour, requires no significant space. Of his fee (from £50 + travel expenses) he will make a donation to the PGW Society. Contact Geoff