

# WOOSTER SAUCE



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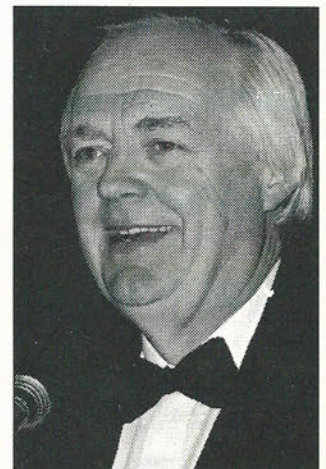
## *A Right Royal Knees-Up!*

*A Lincoln's Inn Revel with Wine, Woman & Song*



*Lara Cazalet  
awaiting a cue*

*Tim Rice about to  
deliver it*



*HRH The Duke of Kent  
at the reception*

### *A Message from Richard Briers*

No one is sadder than I am that I cannot be with you this evening.

One of the problems of my profession is that, while we are no longer universally regarded as rogues and vagabonds, some of us still have to do the vagabond bit, wandering the earth looking for someone to give us a job.

The upshot is that I shall be many miles away, earning an honest crust while you are enjoying yourselves at Lincoln's Inn, where the only crust is on the bread roll which you are sorely tempted to throw at someone on another table.

As President of the Society, I am delighted that you are dining in a setting made immortal by Dickens in *Bleak House*. My best wishes to you all.

Richard



*Eliza Lumley in  
good voice*



*Taking a bow:*

*Lara Cazalet, Hal  
Cazalet, Stephen  
Higgins, Eliza Lumley,  
and Tim Rice*



# Oh, Ye of Little Faith (None at all, actually)

by Murray Hedgcock

The Public Record Office grandly – and rashly – invited the world to search its 1901 Census details when they went on line back in February. The world responded in overwhelming force, the system crashed thanks to massive overload – and the Census site went into hibernation, or hiding, or rehabilitation, or whatever applies to websites.

After the inevitable joshing, it was logical that the PRO should keep it quiet when in August it cautiously began trial runs on the revamped site, offering virtually no publicity. But we who scout the globe for Wodehousean news on behalf of *Wooster Sauce* are not to be put off, and when it was learned that the Census was operating on a limited basis, we leaped into action.

We typed in the hallowed name Wodehouse, suggested he lived in Chelsea (as he mostly did during his time with the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank from 1900 to 1902) – and waited. After due consideration, the screen spluttered into life. There ain't no sich animal, it declared firmly.

This was a worry, but one of my children (always smart in cyberspace) found a more effective route. Simply entering 'Wodehouse' – no initials, no place of residence – brought up all of 167 matches, starting with '...Wodehouse' (no Christian name), a 35-year-old resident of Waltham St Lawrence, to seven William Wodehouses, all over the shop. And there – hooray – was Pelham Wodehouse, aged 19, born at Guildford in Surrey, living in the civil parish of Worfield in the county of Shropshire, his occupation given as Assistant.

Revealing to Mr PRO my credit card detail, I was able to get a fuller entry, confirming that the said Pelham Wodehouse was single, male, and his address was Stableford Old House. But what was this initial entry: 'Full Transcription Details for Pelham Faith Wodehouse'.

Faith?

FAITH?

A juvenile Wodehousean gag? Surely not. Society members of advanced Wodehouse knowledge were advised immediately. Very odd, they agreed. An attempt to locate and download the 'image' – a copy of the actual census page – fell to bits in the complexities of one of the most tortuous websites I have ever encountered.

So I went to sleep, and uneasy dreams of a world in which we would have to adjust all our Plummish beliefs. For a cricketer, the complication was that from thinking PGW, we should have to think PFW – and that of course cuts across the long-established identity of the first Plum, Pelham Francis Warner, the England cricket captain our Plum mentions in his autobiography, quite pleased to share the nickname. Fantasies ensued: was it possible that the two Plums were one and the same? Plum the Test cricketer was officially eight years older than our Plum, being born in 1873 – but that seemed no major barrier.

And memory stirred about Stephen Potter's claim of whispers in Victorian England that cricketer W G Grace and statesman W E Gladstone were one and the same person. Apart from the similarly luxuriant beards, he offered as a clincher the point that they were never seen together – which must surely prove it.

I have no record that the two Plums were ever seen together, which seemed equally conclusive. But such midnight imaginings fade in the cosy light of an autumn morning, and it was time to try the PRO site again. More fun and games, more obfuscation and lack of serendipity, more baffling instructions – and then suddenly a beckoning line invited me to download the Wodehouse Census sheet (at a further charge) even if I couldn't see it on screen. It came – slowly, hesitantly, but remorselessly.

And there in the Administrative County of Salop, Civil Parish of Worfield, Ecclesiastical Parish of Worfield St Peter, Rural District of Bridgnorth, Parliamentary Division of Ludlow, Village of Stableford, were the decisive lines under the entry for Stableford Old House:

Henry Ernest Wodehouse...Eleanor do...Ernest Armine do...Pelham Grenville do, bank assistant (plus a cook and a housemaid).

The 'Grenville', although nicely penned, did at first sight look something like Faith, and you can understand a tired clerk, or a tired computer, picking the easier version to send to the world. But what a relief. Pelham Grenville Wodehouse lives on – and for once, we are justified in losing Faith in him.

*FOOTNOTE:* Of course, I could have inspected the actual Census document by walking just 15 minutes down the road to the PRO from Chez Hedgcock – but that would have taken all the fun out of the quest.



# The AGM, the Annual Accounts and Kid Brady

## The PG Wodehouse Society (UK)

Income and Expenditure  
Year ended 31 May, 2002

Subscriptions	£ 10,920
Sales of publications, <i>et al</i>	338
Bank interest	60
Annual dinner	155
Donations and sundry	259
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Total income	£ 11,732
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Printing costs	£ 4,717
Postage, copying and stationery	3,052
Insurance	157
Room hire and sundry	381
Bank charges	12
	<hr/>
Total expenditure	£ 8,319
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SURPLUS FOR YEAR	£ 3,413
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The AGM was held on November 12 at the Savage Club, in accordance with the agenda sent out with the September *Wooster Sauce*. Since this edition went to the printer before the meeting, a report of proceedings will be included in the March issue.

On the left, however, you will find an extract from the income and expenditure statement of the Society, from which you will see that we have again been successful in generating a surplus. This is entirely due to the number of our members, as the surplus would disappear with as little commotion as Jeeves leaving a room if numbers dropped quickly. We would soon have to increase subscription rates.

So a big thank you to all members. If you have been with us a while you should find your next *Kid Brady* story enclosed with this issue (Number 5 has been printed for the first time this year), while new members can look forward to next December when, in appreciation of those who renew their membership, they will receive our printing of the first of the elusive *Kid Brady* stories from the American *Pearson's* magazine of 1905 to 1907.

## Another Dinner of Legend and Song

Following the very successful dinner offering the dishes of Anatole put on by the Montcalm Hotel in London last May, which was reported in September's *Wooster Sauce*, the Hotel has decided to repeat the event on February 26th, 2003. Jonathan Orr-Ewing, General Manager, said "The Chef and I enjoyed the challenge of creating these dishes, and we hope that this menu will attract even more diners."

The following menu has been chosen for *A Dinner of Legend and Song - 2*:

Consommé Pâté d'Italie  
Sylphides à la crème d'écrivisses  
Le Trou Normand  
Nonettes de Poulet Agnès Sorel  
Coupe Petit Duc  
Café et Petits Fours

The dinner, at 7pm for 7.30, is one of a themed series that the Montcalm Hotel holds which are open to the public – it is not an official Society function. Bookings should be made as soon as possible, by post to Pauline Hobbs at The Montcalm Hotel, Great Cumberland Place, London W1H 7TW or by phone (020 7402 4288). Cheques should be made payable to 'The Montcalm Hotel'.

The price, which includes a champagne reception and appropriate wines with the meal, remains at £58 per head.

## My Man Jeeves Dustwrapper

David Braybrooke asked for help in identifying his copy of the elusive Newnes title, *My Man Jeeves*. Printed by Butler and Tanner, and measuring 4.375" x 6.875", it is evidently a first edition, but his query concerned the jacket.

*McIlvaine* notes that the spine should show 1/9d and that the rear panel should list forty books, whereas David's copy shows a price of 2/- and the rear panel is entirely occupied by an advertisement for the *Strand*. *McIlvaine's* first mention of a 2/- price is on a July 1920 reprint by Hazell, Watson and Viney in a slightly larger size.

*My Man Jeeves* in a first edition jacket is worth a king's ransom, and although David's copy does not reach those peaks, it is evidently a rare and valuable item in its own right.

### I SAY!

### Favourite Exchanges - 24

"I don't want any more temporizing, Reggie!"

"No, no! Absolutely not!" said Reggie dutifully, wishing he knew what the word meant.

From *A Damsel in Distress*, 1919



# PGW and J B Priestley

by Alan Day

The June 1999 issue of *By The Way* reproduced a list of 36 authors, and a selection of their titles, that P G Wodehouse fans might find enjoyable. Based on research conducted at Loughborough University it was first published in *A Reader's Guide to Fiction Authors* in 1985. My own conclusion is that the names put forward reflect a particular generation of readers rather than a close affinity with Wodehouse. For me one name stood out.

J B Priestley (1894-1984), and Wodehouse (1881-1975) were close contemporaries; they both experienced a long writing apprenticeship before making their mark, but their social background, outlook on life, literary range, and their English prose styles, were oceans apart. Nevertheless their paths crossed in print on several occasions.

Up to the 1930s best-selling authors were frequently given a weekly new books feature in the popular press. Their influence was vast in that they might easily make a difference between good, moderate, or poor sales. As an experienced literary reviewer, and later with the runaway success of *The Good Companions* behind him, Priestley was given a column first in the *Evening News* (October 1928 to September 1929) and then in the *Evening Standard* (December 1931 to January 1933). In both papers he managed to upset Wodehouse.

Writing in *Yours, Plum*, Frances Donaldson remarks that PGW seems to have been unduly touchy about Priestley's reviews of *Mr. Mulliner Speaking* and *Hot Water*. In general these were favourable but perhaps he objected to specific observations:

The Wodehouse characters, with their monocles and ability to imitate a hen laying an egg . . . are funny enough but they are nearly always the same in every story. (*Evening News*, May 31, 1929)

And:

There are only about twenty people in this Wodehouse world and we all know them well. The henpecked little man, the masterful woman, the rough American crook, the smooth American crook, the female American crook disguised as an authoress or maid, the absent-minded Duke, the monocled members of the Drones Club, the great Jeeves . . . In nearly every story these go through the same comic evolutions. . . . (*Evening Standard*, August 18, 1932)



No author likes it laid about that he has only one plot and one set of characters even if he extracts a lot of mileage out of them.

Whatever umbrage Wodehouse may have taken, this in no way prevented him from continuing to read Priestley. Letters to William Townend are sprinkled with appreciative comments. For example,

What did Sheila Kaye Smith object to in *Angel Pavement*? I thought it was a corking book. Curious method of writing Priestley has, though. Have you noticed it? A lot of characters with practically no connection with one another. (October 28, 1930)

Curious the method might have been but Wodehouse recommended it for Townend to adopt in his own writing.

A step further:

I am at last reading *The Good Companions* after two false starts. I love it. That's the sort of book I would like to write. (January 16, 1931)

Even diehard Wodehouse readers would be forced to admit that anything less suited to his talents and prose style than a 600-page picaresque novel would be difficult to imagine.

Fifteen years later he asked Townend:

When you say you liked Priestley's book, do you mean *Bright Day*? I read that and liked it, and I also liked *Daylight on Saturday* . . . Yes, I think he is a bit pompous, but he writes very well and is always readable. (August 30, 1946)



# Enter Our Christmas Competition

Granada have donated two copies of the recent video *The Best of Jeeves and Wooster*, starring Stephen Fry and Hugh Lawrie, as prizes in a Christmas competition.

The task is quite simple: merely make a list of as many of the fictional proprietary branded goods as you can find in P G Wodehouse's fiction, and send it to the Editor

To start you off, there is *Slimmo* (from *Figs Have Wings*) and *Briggs's Breakfast Pickles* (from *Came the Dawn in Meet Mr Mulliner*)

The winners will be the two entries with the longest lists of recognised products, so if you care to add information about your sources, especially from lesser-known books, that may be most helpful to the judges!

## PGW and J B Priestley, continued

In contrast to this (for him) heady praise, he complains to Denis Mackail

'I am still seething with fury because I spent fifteen cents taking that new book of Priestley's (*Festival at Farbridge*) out of the library. Of all the lousy efforts. I couldn't get through it.' (May 24, 1951)

In *English Humour*, published in 1976, Priestley devotes two pages to Wodehouse. He takes issue with *Everyman's Dictionary of Literary Biography* when it names Wodehouse the greatest humorous novelist of our time. If, Priestley argues, the *Dictionary* was effectively saying Wodehouse was a great humorist, he contends Wodehouse was not a humorist at all on the grounds that he does not possess the irony, affection, or the close contact with reality, displayed in the work of the true humorists like Fielding, Sterne, Charles Lamb, and Dickens. No doubt Priestley presents a good case for his definition of humour but it is not one that thousands of Wodehouse readers would necessarily share. He attributes PGW's success to his being 'a brilliant super-de-luxe schoolboy', a phrase that undoubtedly reads well but which really does not signify all that much.

To be fair, Priestley acknowledges Wodehouse's huge success, describing him as the king of our funny men in fiction who, over an astonishing long period of time, has made us laugh:

... even when his invention has not been fruitful, when we have met the same sort of characters in the same kind of situations, his narrative, studded with ludicrous metaphors all in good crisp prose, has kept us merrily attentive.

But it is hard to avoid the feeling that he is slightly dismissive of Wodehouse who:

... did very well as he was, but to become one of the great humorists he would have had to grow up.

There remains another alleged link between Wodehouse and Priestley that urgently needs investigation. The entry for Priestley in *Readers Companion To Twentieth-Century Writers* (1995) reads:

In wartime, Priestley's fame as a patriotic radio broadcaster was secondary only to Churchill's although his pursuit of P G Wodehouse through the medium aroused criticism in dissenting quarters.

My best guess is that the editor of the *Companion* has confused Priestley with William Connor ('Cassandra') of the *Daily Mirror*. In Iain Sproat's *Wodehouse At War*, the definitive account of the whole sorry episode of the Berlin broadcasts, there is emphatically no mention of Priestley enlisting in the Duff Cooper clique, on the radio, or anywhere else.

Reverting to the original question of what other books Wodehouse fans would enjoy, my choice would be *Festival At Farbridge* despite PGW's own forcibly expressed comments. Similar to *The Good Companions* in length and technique, it contains one character, Commodore Horace Tribe, who has never received the accolades he surely deserves. When we meet him first he is sitting on the upper floor of a converted barn, inventing editorial notes for the next issue of the monthly journal, *Mostly Foreign Affairs*, concerning the Kremlin's decision to double the construction of long-range submarines. Perhaps PGW gave up before he reached Horace Tribe. If so, he should have persevered.

*Alan Day is Publications Officer of The J.B. Priestley Society.*



# Puddings for Plum

by Charles E Gould, Jnr

In 1989, my friend Aubyn Kendall, who with her husband, Harris, owned the Limestone Hills Bookshop in Texas, asked me to write a Wodehousean verse that they could print as a *Christmas Keepsake*, with an illustration by their friend Sally Graves Jackson. I produced a Christmassy sonnet about Mr Mulliner that, with an illustration derived from *The Strand*, began a tradition that lasted three or four years until Harris and Aubyn died, just a few months apart.

They paid me – and Sally Graves Jackson – the compliment of copywriting these things, so you won't see them here; and they gave me the idea of doing something similar on my own. My Wodehouse bookselling enterprise, at its best, does not afford the Internal Revenue Service much excitement; but it occurred to me that if my Christmas Card featured Wodehouse, I could send it to my Customers and claim its printing and mailing costs as deductible. Brilliant! Money is the Muse – as Dr. Johnson said.

This one owes a nod to Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849).

After Goodwood's over, and Bingo's raised the price  
On summer's day of bookie's pay,  
Yule's on us in a trice.

And then, we all are happy: P G Wodehouse only loafed  
Before age five (he said) and live  
At ninety only Gowfed.

So, if after a bad Goodwooding  
Your Golf's not up to scratch  
And life contrives to give you hives  
On the eve of your Big Match,  
You need only some Plum Pudding  
To make your Yuletide nice.  
Golfers and others near now cheer,  
For here's *another slice*.

Once upon the Feast of Stephen, whilst I ponder'd, weak and weavin'  
O'er a Scotch and quaint and curious text I thought I'd never seen before,  
Whilst I nodded, badly flutter'd by the words this author'd utter'd,  
As one who'd in his study putter'd striving still for something more,  
Suddenly, my Mem'ry mutter'd, and my brain became unclutter'd:  
I had written all this grisly ghastly stuff in days of yore...  
Only I, and no one more.

'Ere the thought had time to vanish, I my spirits did replenish  
With a draught far warmer than the draught that drew beneath my door  
And thought, this is a warm and good house, partly warm'd and built by Wodehouse,  
A sensible, hence understood house, despite the draughts across the floor,  
Despite occasional tick or wood-louse in the cellar or the wood-house,  
Warmed by witty, maybe wise, and wondrous words he wrote of yore...  
Only he, and no one more.

Then, my spirits well advancing, little thus my verse enhancing,  
I saw all more clearly than I'd ever seen it all before:  
Christmas Eve, or even Stephen's, sets aside our gall and grievin's  
Beyond all rational retrievin's, though we've succor'd them of yore;  
Christmastide and P G Wodehouse make reindeer-shed or sty a good house  
As a baby made a Manger many hundred years before.  
There it is. There's nothing more.



## More Plum Pudding

And this one owes a nod to Clement Moore (1779-1863).

'Twas the night before Christmas, and throughout the hall  
 Stirred the creatures and features of Matchingam's Ball:  
 Like a limp stocking hung on the sty-rail with care  
 Was Lord Emsworth, in White Hope that he wasn't there  
 With young Edwin and Bonzo, each snug in his bed  
 Not knowing they're visions in Wodehouse's head.  
 Aunt Dahlia in kerchief and Voules in his cap  
 Were yearning alike for a long winter's nap,  
 While Galahad Threepwood, who never had gone  
 To his bed before midnight, awaited the dawn.  
 Full Moon on the crest of Big Money below  
 Shed the lustre of Joy in the Morning on snow.

As Galahad's sheaves once surmounted the sty  
 Dry leaves now before the wild hurricane fly,  
 And George Cyril Wellbeloved buttons his coat,  
 Aloof and alone like the Girl on the Boat.  
 Bobbie Wickham – a stitch, whether knit-wit or pearl –  
 Is ready with needle, and Oh! What a girl!  
 Sir Roderick Glossop, a man who can think,  
 Embellishes thoughtfulness duly with drink  
 And dares not his juniors unduly demolish  
 Made-up, as he is once again, in shoe polish  
 Over there is Lord Uffenham, funny old elf –  
 And Chimp Twist and Soapy Molloy for the pelf.

Mr Mulliner gets a few nods, though he's dressed  
 In the tweeds and the sweater of the Angler's Rest,  
 Next to Pilbeam the Pustule, whose agents sublime  
 Are still Schwed and Meredith, both in their prime,  
 When what to our wondering eyes must appear  
 But Ukridge, aside, in his foul ginger-beer-  
 Wired spectacles, gazing at Bertie and Jeeves.  
 Suddenly Gregory Parsloe believes –  
 As the host upon whom almost everyone fawns –  
 That he sees in the sky a sleigh pulled by eight prawns.  
 And we heard him exclaim, as he fell out of sight,  
 "Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good Knight."

*Charles Gould teaches English at Kent School in Kent, Connecticut, and has been a leading member of the Wodehouse fellowship for many decades. We are particularly pleased that he has allowed the Society to associate itself with these verses and we join him in wishing all members a very Happy Christmas and New Year.*

## The Savage Club

The Society holds three evening meetings each year at the Savage Club in London, in February, July and the autumn (see page 24 for the date of the next meeting). An occasional enquiry is made as to why the club is so called.

Peter Jackson, of *The Ephemeral Society*, which also holds meetings there, went into print recently with this explanation:

The Club was founded in 1857 as a Literary Club and the original members decided that it should be named after a famous literary figure of the past. All the names suggested were rejected as being too pretentious until someone put forward the name of Richard Savage. This shady, satirical poet with a very chequered career proved an ideal choice for the Bohemian gathering and so, according to their first historian, '... in a frolicsome humour, our little society was christened the *Savage Club*.'

## The Junior Ganymede

In August, *The International Herald Tribune* reviewed an exhibition entitled *The Myth of Ganymede: Before and After Michelangelo* at Casa Buonarroti, in Florence. It explained that according to Greek mythology, Ganymede was an exceedingly handsome aristocratic young Trojan, abducted by Zeus to become his cup-bearer. Transforming himself into an eagle, the Mighty Thunderer swooped to earth and carried the boy off to Mount Olympus, where his services were rewarded by immortality. Michaelangelo's painting, referred to in the title, was created in 1532 as a gift for Tommaso de Cavalieri, the son of a Roman nobleman, with whom he enjoyed a lifelong friendship.

Jan Norbye, a member from Les Issambres, France, who saw the review in the *Tribune*, suggests that the legend goes some way towards explaining Wodehouse's selection of the name 'Junior Ganymede' for the club of Gentlemen's Gentlemen of which Jeeves was a member.



# Book Collecting Terminology Clarified

by Nigel Williams

Books a thousand pages long have been written on how to identify a first edition. An article a thousand words long cannot come close to covering all the anomalies. Publishers rarely consider the needs of first edition collectors, and are often slapdash and careless of the sensibilities of future bibliographers.

Wodehouse is particularly complicated – witness the size of *McIlvaine's Bibliography*, the recent *Addendum* and the new information constantly being unearthed in Nick Townend's column in this very journal. At any rate – here goes . . .

A 'First Edition' must be exactly that, the first appearance in book form. It may be preceded by appearances in a magazine, and these constitute the first publication. Anything that says second (or later) printing, impression, edition, cheap edition, reissue, etc is a reprint. Some booksellers have been known to describe books as, say, 'First edition, third printing'. This is merely an attempt to fool the uninitiated into thinking the book still counts as a first edition. It doesn't – it's a reprint.

A 'First edition thus' (meaning a new introduction, with new pictures etc) is also a reprint. A 'First separate printing' could be a short story which has appeared in a collection, and is then issued on its own (*The Great Sermon Handicap* was first published in *The Inimitable Jeeves*, then re-issued separately in 1933). This is more attractive to the collector than a straight reprinting, but is still a reprint!

Several books by Wodehouse were published in the USA before they came out in the UK. In these cases the US version is the true first edition, and the UK version is the first British/English edition (and vice versa). In practice (perhaps because of his nationality, perhaps because they like the books on their shelves to have a fairly uniform look or style) many UK collectors collect the first British edition.

That's the easy bit. Now we get to 'states' and 'issue points'. The first 'issue'/'state' of a first edition is the very first version produced by the publisher/printer. There may be later states of a first edition, with perhaps inserted advertisement pages (*The Prince And Betty* was apparently published first without, then later with, an advertisement supplement inserted at the rear). Sometimes, a mistake is spotted in the text during the printing process, and the relevant word or phrase is corrected so that some copies contain the mistake ('first state') and some the correction ('second state').

'Later issue' means copies that have been issued later than the first group, in a different binding or with some physical difference. These must consist of text blocks produced during the first edition print run. Several of Plum's books (particularly in the 1930s) were issued in different coloured bindings. *Uncle Fred In The Springtime* (UK edition) was bound first in dark red cloth, then later in orange and in turquoise – these two are properly described as 'first edition, later issue'. *The Clicking Of Cuthbert* (UK edition) was first issued in a smooth binding, then later in a slightly 'pebbled' cloth.

As you will gather from the above, 'state' and 'issue' are to some extent interchangeable terms. At any rate, a later issue or state will always be of less interest to a collector than a first edition, first state, first issue. Later state bindings are sometimes called 'variant' bindings.

The same sort of problem applies to dust-jackets/dust-wrappers (also interchangeable terms). The 'first state dust-wrapper' is the one which was issued with the first copies of a book to hit the shelves. Plum's publisher in the UK was Herbert Jenkins, later Barrie & Jenkins, from 1918 until his death. They were essentially publishers of popular novels in great quantity. During the twenties and thirties especially, they reprinted dust-wrappers to change the price (if they still had unsold copies of the first edition) or to alter the information on the flaps (the parts that fold inside the book).

Thus one can find first issue books that were issued in a second state dust-wrapper (priced at 3/6- rather than 7/6-), later issue books that came in a first state dust-wrapper, or any combination of the above! Sometimes one can even find reprints in first edition dust-wrappers, as the publisher used up some spares that were lying around. Then there is the problem of dust-wrappers which started life on one book, only to end up on a different one (in bookselling jargon, 'supplied dust-wrapper'). Confused? I'm not surprised.

In general, if a book says 'first published', 'first printing' or 'first edition' and nothing else, it is probably a first edition. This is not always true, however. Jenkins (bless them) reprinted several Wodehouse novels in the twenties, and didn't bother to say so in the books. *The Adventures Of Sally* was first published with nine other novels by Plum listed opposite the title page. It was later reprinted in



## More from Plum's Emsworth letters

As mentioned in previous issues, Emsworth Museum was recently given a batch of letters written by Plum to Lily, his housekeeper at Emsworth. The Museum has agreed that brief extracts from the correspondence may be reproduced in *Wooster Sauce*, and we acknowledge their permission with thanks.

This extract, from a letter of 2nd December, 1914, describes some of the unforeseen problems caused by the arrival of the movie in relation to contractual arrangements for libretti and lyrics for live theatre. Similar difficulties still arise when any new medium becomes popular (eg radio, TV, audiotape and video).

Moving pictures have only just become into popularity. When we drew up a theatre contract no-one thought about cinema rights so they weren't mentioned in the contract. The consequence is that it has not been decided yet whether a theatrical contract covers the moving picture productions. The way it affects me is this. This man Stapleton dramatised *A Gentleman of Leisure* and got two-thirds of the authors' money. Well now that managers are clamouring to make a moving picture play of it I tell them to make one out of the book, Stapleton says "No, if there is to be a film version it must be based on the play." In other words, the question is: "Am I to get all the authors' royalties or only a third of them?"

The silly part is that there seems to be no law to decide it. Meanwhile Stapleton has gone ahead and sold the film rights to a firm named Lasky and now Brady, who produced the play, is going to law to stop Lasky, because he claims that as producer of the play he has first claim on the film rights. Isn't it enough to drive one mad, especially as the film rights are now very valuable. The author gets five per cent of whatever the manager sells the film play for to the various cinema houses and that in the case of anything like *A Gentleman of Leisure* which was quite a success as a play in New York generally comes to £20,000.

In other words, the author reckons on getting between eight hundred and a thousand pounds as his share! Naturally, there is a certain amount of excitement!

*Emsworth Museum is closed to the public during the winter months, but will reopen next spring. However, private openings may be arranged through the Secretary on 01243-373780.*

### New Society Patrons

The Society is pleased to announce that Jaqueline Powell, who was secretary to Ethel Wodehouse in Le Touquet in the late 1930s, and Boris Johnson, MP and Editor of *The Spectator*, have accepted invitations to become Patrons of the Society.

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## Book Collecting Terminology Clarified, continued

virtually identical format, but listing 12 other novels. The first edition is worth perhaps a few hundred pounds, the reprint a few pounds. Yet without a bibliography (or a trusted bookseller) there is no way of knowing which is which.

The American editions present different problems. Any which are published by A L Burt (except *The Man With Two Left Feet*, which is an American first) are reprints, for example, although there is nothing to suggest that in the book. They were often published soon after the first, and in very similar format. Then, some should say 'first printing' or 'first edition', some should not. Some should have a particular letter on the reverse of the title page (for example, the first US edition of *Leave It To Psmith* has the publisher's monogram, the second printing does not, but is otherwise identical).

I hope the above has not been too dull, and that a little light has been thrown on the often ambiguous and convoluted world of book collecting terminology. After all, the whole point of collecting is the pleasure received when one comes across a pristine first edition in dust-wrapper from the twenties or thirties, or a rarity such as *The Globe By The Way Book*. Buy a copy of the bibliography, read Nick regularly, find a bookseller you can trust, and collecting Wodehouse first editions can be one of the most satisfying hobbies of all.



# Precious Nonsense: More Wodehouse Borrowings from W S Gilbert

by David Mackie

In his articles *A Sauce of Misquotation* (*Wooster Sauce* nos 21 and 22, March and June 2002), Nigel Rees suggested that PGW may well have found many of his quotations and allusions in the pages of *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* – probably the ninth edition – and quoted The Master himself by way of justification:

... give me my *Bartlett* and I will slay you.

Certainly, with so many quotations and allusions from so many sources, one questions whether anyone could ever have read so much; easier, perhaps, just to dip into a compendium such as *Bartlett*.

But even if this is true there would still be authors – perhaps Shakespeare or Dickens – whose work PGW knew well, for he was, as Nigel Rees said, ‘undoubtedly well-read’. I believe that the work of W S Gilbert (1836-1911) – particularly the *Savoy* operas and the *Bab Ballads* – was well-known to PGW. I have touched on this subject in a previous article (*The Influence of W S Gilbert on P G Wodehouse*; *Wooster Sauce* no 5, March 1998) and will explore it further in this two-part article.

In many of his WSG quotes, PGW actually refers to the source. One such – to *The Grand Duke* (1896) – occurs in *Tales of St Austin's* (*The Tom Brown Question*) which appeared in 1903 when *The Grand Duke* was just seven years old and WSG was still alive:

“I am young, says one of Gilbert’s characters, the Grand Duke, I think, but, he adds, I am not so young as that.”

PGW is nearly right; it is Rudolph, the eponymous Grand Duke, who delivers the line, the exact quotation being:

“I am very young, but not as young as that; ...”

Clearly, then, this was a source that he knew. But how did he know it? Although it was the most recent (and actually the last) of the G&S collaborations it was perhaps the least successful and to this day remains the least well-known (with the exception of *Thespis* (1871), whose music is lost). It had the shortest run of all the *Savoy* operas, playing for just 123 performances between March 7 and July 10, 1896. Could the fifteen-year-old PGW have seen one of these? – and purchased a libretto?

The libretto was later published in book form in *Eight Original Comic Operas – Second Series* but it is not clear when this first appeared. (My own copy contains references to the revival of *The Yeomen of the Guard* in 1906 and *The Gondoliers* in 1907.)

But know it he obviously did. There is, in fact, an even earlier reference to the work in *The Pothunters* (1902) with the line:

“Keep that fact steadily before you.”

and a later one in *The White Feather* (1907) with

“Cut the satisfying sandwich.”

Also, in an article *On the Writing of Lyrics* from *Vanity Fair* (1917), reprinted in *The Uncollected Wodehouse* (Seabury Press, 1976), he wrote:

Gilbert had the advantage of being a genius, but he had the additional advantage of writing for a public which permitted him to use his full vocabulary, and even to drop into foreign languages, even Latin and a little Greek when he felt like it. (I allude to that song in *The Grand Duke*).

The song he alluded to comes at the beginning of Act II:

At the outset I may mention it’s my sovereign intention

To revive the classic memories of Athens at its best.

As well as the ‘Latin and a little Greek’ it contains the typically Gilbertian:

In the period Socratic every dining-room was Attic (Which suggests an architecture of a topsy-turvy kind).

No budding author could fail to be impressed by such consummate word-play.

In *Meet Mr Mulliner* (1927) (the alliteration would have appealed to Gilbert) the third story, *Mulliner's Buck-U-Uppo*, begins with a reference to *The Sorcerer* (1877) which, again, is not one of the better-known operas, although it had been revived at the Savoy with *Trial by Jury* (1875) between September and December 1898. PGW might well have seen them both. The opening sentence takes us right into it:

The village Choral Society had been giving a performance of Gilbert and Sullivan’s *Sorcerer* in



# My First Wodehouse Experience

by Stephanie Garlick, on Becoming a Teenager

When I was quite young (about seven) I used to hear, sometimes, my mother laughing in her bedroom in the early morning. I would come in, to find out what was so funny to make her giggle like that, and see her propped up in bed with her Walkman headphones on.

As always I would ask her what she was laughing about and, as always, I would hear the well-worn cliché, "I'll tell you when you're older!"

This carried on every now and then until the following October, when, due to an unforeseen malfunction, I was unable to use my own Walkman for the long journey for which we were preparing. (Destination Chester to see my Great Aunt Celia. You see, there's an Aunt in every story!)

My mother, being the charitable kind, offered me the use of hers.

As we backed out of the drive, I reached for the Walkman and sought to fit the *Thomas the Tank Engine* story tape I owned into the slot. It was obstructed by a tape called *Jeeves and the something Spirit*. I didn't recognise the fourth word but it began with an F and had a complicated arrangement of e's, u's and other letters.

At this point, I'm sure I must have had one of those moments where you can see a person's brain

working and can imagine vividly the cogs turning, but unfortunately, no-one saw it on the A329(M) so, of course, I can't be sure.

Anyway, I knew that this must be the thing that my mother thought so amusing. Also, I knew that if I listened to it I would be listening to grown-up things, which would automatically make me a grown-up, too.

So that is how I came to hear *Jeeves and the Feudal Spirit* and met Bertram Wilberforce Wooster (played by my favourite actor, Richard Briers) and the inimitable Jeeves. I am sure that the memory of that first listen will be with me forever.

Since then, I have made a collection of fifteen Wodehouse books (two first editions), nine tapes and a complete set of Jeeves and Wooster videos and been on the terrific Wodehouse walk with Mr Murphy as well as to the first

Cricket match at Dulwich, where I saw the great man's desk and typewriter.

In 1998, on the back of one of my tapes, I saw an address for a 'P G Wodehouse Society' and decided to write for more information. I received not only a membership form but also a very warm welcome. Shortly thereafter I became the 'Youngest Member' of this most spiffing club and changed my nickname to 'Stiffy'.



Stephanie, pictured with the first editions she bought from David Holt's sale in Wooster Sauce earlier this year.

## Wodehouse and Gilbert, cont

aid of the Church Organ Fund. . . . Snatches of song floated to our ears. . . .

"Ah me! I was a pa-ale you-oung curate then!" chanted Mr Mulliner.

This is Dr Daly's song *Time was when love and I were well acquainted*, which has as its last line:

Ah me! I was a pale young curate then!

PGW's way of writing this ('pa-ale you-oung') shows that he knew not only the lyric but the way that Sullivan had set it, with two notes to each syllable.

© David Mackie, September 2002

## The Smile That Wins

### Favourite Nifties - 21

He was a red-headed chap, and my experience of the red-headed is that you can always expect high blood-pressure from them in times of stress. The first Queen Elizabeth had red hair, and look what she did to Mary, Queen of Scots.

From *Aunts Aren't Gentlemen* (1974)



# Lincoln's Inn Vibrates to the Sound

Teenager Thea Crapper was at her first Society dinner . . .

After a rather anxious taxi ride through unrelenting London traffic, my mother and I were relieved as well as excited to arrive at Lincoln's Inn with all of four minutes to spare. The historic reception room positively reverberated with a clamour of voices as we were greeted with glasses of white wine. All very pleasant, you might think, but the sight of a rather serious-looking lot in lounge suits, where we had been promised DJs, prompted us to discover that we were sipping to the health of Sir Thomas More! Mortified, we abandoned our glasses and fled the Great Hall.

But, laughing across the quad, in ridiculous heels, on such a beautiful night (after a wonderfully Wodehousean mix-up) any trace of awkwardness had disappeared by the time we reached the Old Hall Crypt and the *champagne* reception which far exceeded that in the Great Hall in warmth and conviviality.

The Old Hall itself looked stunning; candelabras graced each of the twelve tables and chandeliers hung from the rafters illuminating portraits of the great

so friendly and so knowledgeable, such dedicated enthusiasts – this was perhaps illustrated most spectacularly by the three members who had travelled from Alaska, putting our journey to the capital from Yorkshire very definitely in the shade.

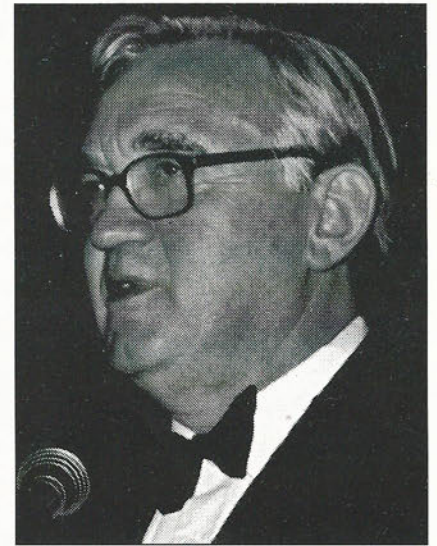
The food was delicious and I'm sure that had Bertie, used as he is to Anatole's meals, sampled the perfect menu set before the Society that night, he could not but have been impressed.

Coffee and entertainment followed; Sir Tim Rice led us through some of PG's writings on the fairer sex, read brilliantly by Lara Cazalet, whose 'Madeline Bassett' will be long remembered. Hal Cazalet and Eliza Lumley sang a selection of Wodehouse lyrics on the same theme. Miss Cazalet, accompanied by Stephen Higgins, gave a brilliant impromptu performance of *Bill* that perfectly rounded off a most elegant evening of sumptuous food, delightful conversation and agreeable, enchanting entertainment.

Thank you, Plum; you leave Sir Thomas More standing!



Thea Crapper (above)  
Hal Cazalet (left)  
Sir Edward Cazalet (right), and  
Lord Scott (below)



and the good on the beautiful panelled walls.

After a short but highly relevant reading by Lord Scott from the first chapter of *Bleak House*, which is set in the Old Hall, our Chairman said the Society Grace, and we were seated. Everyone was



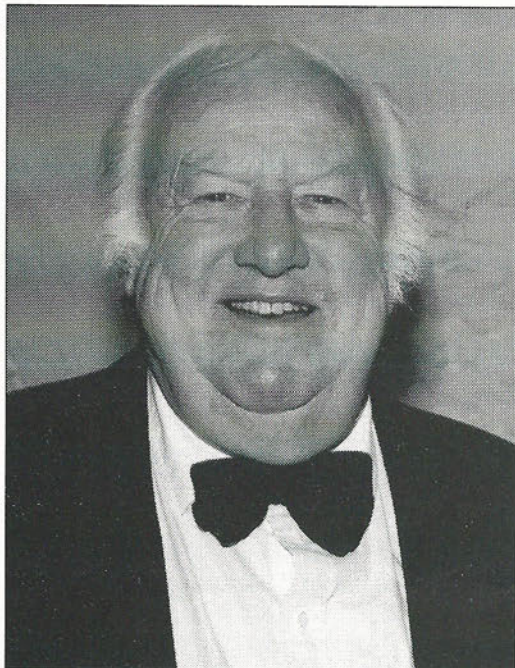
Photographs on pages 1, 12 and 13 (except Lord Scott) by Ginni Beard. A selection will be available for viewing and purchase at the Savage Club meeting on February 11, or contact the Editor to make separate arrangements.



# *of the Society in Celebrating Mood*

*... while Patron Godfrey Smith retains his enthusiasm*

It was hardly surprising that there was a waiting list for our Centenary Dinner in the Old Hall at Lincoln's Inn on October 17th. Ambience, company, food, drink, speeches and entertainment fitted seamlessly together to give us a night to remember – and we've had a few already. It was billed as a centenary dinner for the very good reason that it was just a hundred years ago that Plum published his first book, *The Pothunters*. He wrote it while working as a clerk at the Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank and it was published only nine days after he resigned.



He was always grateful that the bank had supported him during his prentice days as a writer in return for what, as the menu noted, was at best a negligible contribution to its fortunes. Both the bank and its clerk went on to make their mark in the world, and it was sporting of HSBC to celebrate their joint triumph by sponsoring the dinner. And what a good dinner it was by the way; even Anatole could hardly have failed to give it the thumbs up.

Sir Edward Cazalet proposed the bank's health in a graceful speech and then Sir Tim Rice proposed the health of the Society in a suitably light-hearted one before we moved on to *My God! What a Sex*. This the menu described as a light entertainment offering alternative visions of the delicately nurtured. Tim and Lara Cazalet read from the Master's oeuvre on men, women and love, while Lara's brother Hal – who was just about to open as Albert Herring in the opera at Glyndebourne – sang Plum's songs with the

enchanting Eliza Lumley to the piano accompaniment of Stephen Higgins. Finally, in response to calls for an encore, Lara sang *Bill* for us. By the end of that, there was hardly a dry eye in the ancient candlelit hall.



*A Lincoln's Inn place setting (above),  
Godfrey Smith (left), and  
A table of members studying their menus  
(below)*



It was a delight to be seated among so many kindred spirits – in my case next to every Pom's favourite Aussie, Murray Hedgcock. It was good to see the Duke of Kent clearly enjoying himself, Tony Ring proving a seasoned MC, and Norman Murphy presiding benignly over the cheerful shenanigans.

And it was reassuring to know that Robert McCrum, though deeply enmeshed in his biography of the Master, was there too. Perhaps our revels will even rate a line or two in it.



# Something Fresh on Navigation

by Christopher Larkin

New member Christopher Larkin writes:

Having recently earned my degree in English from Carleton College and made the Psmithian move to working in the city (Minneapolis), I joined the Society and was extremely impressed and pleasantly surprised by the quality and contents of *Wooster Sauce*. My experience as literature editor of a weekly arts paper should, I hope, give some weight to my thorough approval.

In August, Chris wrote an article for the Northfield News, Minnesota, entitled *Navigating Yourself around a Bookstore*, in which he explored three approaches to any visit. The first he described as 'Active Browsing', essentially dipping into any book which catches your eye. The second is 'The Mission', which you adopt when you have a particular title in mind.

The third he referred to as 'The Sinking Ship'. Chris went on:

The process of performing 'The Sinking Ship' is simple. Upon entering a bookstore, you are presented with a sea of texts which you must navigate, yet you have nothing to hold on to. You do what you can to stay afloat, namely, grab the nearest familiar object that will keep you above water. You nonchalantly wander over to the shelf where the last book you read should be located.

Whether or not the store has it, you acknowledge the fact that you must move on. You look to the left and right in search of similar titles but follow this faulty logic and from the stodgy and ethically sound foundation of Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* you may find yourself blushing at

the neo-ribaldry of Joanne Harris's *Chocolat*. Not a lateral move at all.

The exception is when you focus on a particularly fecund author. I discovered Wodehouse while grasping from my lifejacket of Robert McLiam Wilson, which I discovered from my lifejacket of Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. So now Wodehouse is my Mission, and I don't want to use it as a floating device and reach out for something new. I want to dwell there forever. I long for the days when young men wore spats, the days when all problems and pants can be ironed out by Jeeves. What now? What if I don't want to spread myself and my reading interests wider, but I do want to keep reading?

Go deeper. I joined The P G Wodehouse Society (UK). It lends a dubious quality to my interest, and crosses an unspoken boundary between readership and discipleship. Members in 20 countries across the globe read a glorious two-page spread in June's *Wooster Sauce* comparing an eighteenth century cow-creamer to a modern Dutch imitation. I'm sure a fair share of them re-read the pertinent Wodehouse works pertaining to small silver animal-shaped milk jugs. Is this the bookish equivalent of internet role-playing games and creative anachronism reenactments?

Are literary societies reading too much into reading? NO. They are harmless creative outlets that . . . well, I'll finish that later. The Wodehouse Society has their annual cricket match versus The Sherlock Holmes Society of London and I must make sure I've packed my spats.

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## The Late Benny Green's First PGW Experience

Benny Green was a Patron of the Society and a longstanding fan of PGW. In his biography of his father, *Benny Green – Words and Music* (London House 2000 ISBN 1 902809 39 4), Dominic Green recorded the occasion on which Wodehouse first made a serious impression on the young Benny:

As a seventeen year old in North London, Benny Green was on the way to a football match in 1944. This report came from *The Fitzroy*, March 1944:

One Saturday morning, travelling to Camden Town station to join up with the rest of my

school's First XI for an away match, I was knocked down by a number 24 bus, and spent the next six weeks lying on my back while the ligament in my right knee fell back into place. During that period, which I whiled away by studying the philosophic works of P G Wodehouse, a man called from London Transport and offered me the sum of £ 10 as compensation for having been bashed into by several tons of London bus, a gesture of such reckless generosity that it unhinged the family reason and obliged us to accept.



# Life Imitates Wodehouse

## More submissions from Members

*David McDonough found this true-life parody of Angus McAllister in a US newspaper.*

### DEPRESSED MAN DIAGNOSED AS “SCOTTISH”

Alistair McGregor, an expatriate Scottish man living in America, was recently diagnosed as clinically depressed, tanked up on anti-depressants and scheduled for controversial Shock Therapy when doctors realized he wasn't depressed at all, only Scottish.

Mr McGregor, a Scottish man whose characteristic pessimism and gloomy perspective were interpreted as serious clinical depression, was led on a nightmare journey through the American psychiatric system. Doctors described McGregor as suffering from Pervasive Negative Anticipation – a belief that everything will turn out for the worst, whether it's trains arriving late, Scotland's chances at winning any international sports event or even his own prospects to get ahead in life and achieve his dreams.

“The satisfaction Mr McGregor seemed to get from his pessimism seemed particularly pathological,” reported the doctors.

“They put me on everything – Lithium, Prozac, St John's Wort, Ginseng”, said Mr McGregor. “They even told me to sit in front of a big light for an hour a day or I'd become suicidal. I kept telling them this was all pointless and they said that it was exactly that sort of attitude that got me here in the first place.”

Running out of ideas, his doctors finally resorted to a course of ‘weapons grade MDMA’, the only noticeable effect of which was six hours of speedy repetitions of the phrases ‘mustn't grumble’ and ‘not too bad really’. It was then that Mr McGregor was referred to a psychotherapist.

“Suicidal?” Dr Isaac Horney explored Mr McGregor's family history and couldn't believe his ears. “His story of a childhood growing up in the drab back streets of a windswept grey town with treeless streets of identical run-down houses where it rained every day, passionately backing a football team who never won, seemed to be an idealized depressive memory – I thought all that was a myth. Mr McGregor had six months of therapy but seemed to mainly want to talk about the weather – how miserable and cold it was in winter and later how difficult and wet it was in summer. I felt he wasn't

responding to therapy at all and so I recommended drastic action – namely ECT or shock treatment.”

“I was all strapped down on the table and they were about to put the rubber bit in my mouth when the psychiatric nurse picked up on my accent,” said Mr McGregor. “I remember her saying ‘Oh my God, I think we're making a terrible mistake’.”

Nurse Alice Sheen was a big fan of Scottish comedy giving her an understanding of the Scottish psyche. “Classic comedy characters like Chick Murray, Will Fife and The Crankies, all hopeless cases with no chance of ever doing well or escaping their circumstances,” she explained to the baffled US medics. “In Scotland, being depressed to the point of suicidal is considered the norm and is not seen as pathological at all.”

Identifying Mr McGregor as Scottish changed his diagnosis from ‘clinical depression’ to ‘rather quaint and charming’ and he was immediately discharged from hospital, with a selection of brightly colored leaflets and an *I Love New York* T-shirt.

*John Baesch spotted something Emsworthian in the Daily Telegraph obituary of Lord Oranmore and Browne (1902-2002)*

Lord Oranmore and Browne was the longest-serving member of the House of Lords (1927 to 1999) during which he earned the unspoken admiration of many by never speaking in the chamber.

For much of his life he farmed at Castle MacGarrett, which was well known for its shooting and fishing. In 1961, he could no longer afford to live there, and in a last ditch attempt to hang on, he conceived a scheme of ‘armchair’ farming which involved moving pigs into the castle and rearing them in drawing rooms and boudoirs. The idea was that a sow reared in such a setting would make a profit of about £55.

He also had unfulfilled high hopes that the scheme would attract swarms of American pig owners to the castle to inspect developments.

*Thomas Smith* attended Western Washington fair in August, at which there were three pig races, as foreseen by the Duke of Dunstable. On hearing of this, *Ian Michaud* added that at the Pacific National Exhibition, an annual agricultural fair in Vancouver, pig races were held five times daily.



# Celebrating Plum's 121st Birthday

*Sven Sahlin came from Sweden to join in*

Great Missenden is a wonderful little town north of London, some forty minutes along the Chiltern line. The region is known around the world – at least in the world of P G Wodehouse – for its precious Wodehouseana, i.e. Tony Ring's outstanding collection of various items.

But Great Missenden also has a nice little town library. On October 15th, Plum's 121st birthday, a horde of Wodehouse enthusiasts gathered expectantly to listen to a speech on the life of P G Wodehouse delivered by Tony. The event had attracted not only local residents, but Society members from the USA, Germany and Sweden.

The library had an interesting window exhibition also showing bits and pieces of Wodehouse's long life. A prize competition was also featured. Inside, visitors to the library found leaflets on the Society and on the *Pothunters* hundred years anniversary.

Tony spoke to a nice set of pictures – sometimes assisted by fair Elaine when quotes were needed – and the audience was visibly spellbound until the very end (around an hour later). Questions were invited and many interesting topics, such as the age of the readership were discussed.

A big, appreciative applause from the audience and a good-looking bottle from the Library ended the formal part of a very enjoyable evening.

*Tony Ring adds:*

The competition simply invited people to list their favourite four PGW books, the winners being those who most nearly chose the same as members of our Committee. When I say that the ten members of the Committee included 24 different titles in their selection, it is clear there was plenty of scope.

Making such a selection is not easy. I have always felt a preference for the Blandings books over the Jeeves and Wooster, but found it difficult to disagree wholeheartedly with the Committee's choice of *Right Ho, Jeeves*, *The Mating Season*, *The Code of the Woosters* and *Joy in the Morning* as the overall favourites. I realised that it is the *entire Blandings world*, not necessarily the individual books comprising it, that I prefer to the Wooster world, and that is why I don't fight too hard on behalf of such titles as *Heavy Weather* and *Summer Lightning*. But my overall favourite remains *Leave It To Psmith*.

Congratulations to Jeff Wasel and the runners-up Sven Sahlin, Toni Rudersdorf and Claudia Rocks.

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## Audio-recording of Reggie Pepper by Martin Jarvis!

Rather unexpectedly, this month (November) Reggie Pepper is making what is probably his first appearance on audiotape, courtesy of a production entitled *My Man Jeeves*, from the American 'Audiopartners' company. Information about purchasing the recording, which costs \$21.95 for the cassette version or \$25.95 for the CD, may be found on their website

[www.audiopartners.com](http://www.audiopartners.com)

They say that (US) domestic orders received by December 15 will be despatched in time for Christmas. Potential non-US buyers should be aware of proportionately high shipping charges.

The recording consists of unabridged readings of five stories by Martin Jarvis, three about Reggie Pepper from *My Man Jeeves*, and two about Bertie and Jeeves from *Carry On, Jeeves*. Martin was very aware that most listeners would not know much about Reggie Pepper, so he developed a novel approach. By inserting a series of short dialogues

between Jeeves and Bertie to introduce each story, he was able to place Reggie Pepper in context by showing him to be an old pal of Bertie.

He also had to overcome the challenge of a distinctive narrative voice for Reggie. This is how Martin describes his approach to this task:

What was interesting about characterising the narrative voice of Reggie is that, clearly, he can't just sound like a Bertie clone. There's a feeling from the Reggie stories that he's recalling these tales as if they occurred a while ago. So I make him older, and a little more blimpish than Bertie. He's a rather lonely figure. He doesn't in any case exhibit that 'blitheness' that Bertie so wonderfully possesses. So he is a totally original character with his own 'sound'. But the stories he has to tell are remarkable and, of course, packed with classic Wodehouse construction and comedy.

The next issue of *Wooster Sauce* will carry a review of the recording.



# A Sauce of Misquotation

by Nigel Rees

While it has been good to be reminded of the substantial number of PGW citations for *individual words* in the *OED*, I have been giving a great deal of thought lately to his *word clusters*. Embarked as I am upon a major dictionary of phraseology for Collins, I have been wallowing not so much in the joyful, apparently spontaneous and invented idioms for which Wodehouse is justly celebrated, but in the way he makes playful use of existing phrases and turns them towards his own ends.

In this I have been prompted on many occasions by the Amsterdam-based linguist, Jaap Engelsman, who like so many of his countrymen has a dazzling familiarity with the English language and absolutely no difficulty in appreciating the sort of merry that PGW made with it. About five years ago, he asked me about a passage from *Uncle Fred In the Springtime*, Chap 7 (1939):

“Tell me the whole story in your own words . . . omitting no detail, however slight.”

Jaap commented: ‘The first part of this sentence appears to be a deliberately used cliché phrase, which is familiar in Dutch as well. I wonder how old it might be?’

John Fletcher joined in, showing that in 1902, PGW wrote: ‘He would frequently observe, like the lamented Sherlock Holmes, the vital necessity of taking notice of trifles. But Conan Doyle never exactly put it like that: Sherlock was inspiration but seems never to have used exactly the words Wodehouse homed in on between 1902 and 1934.’

Marilyn MacGregor exclaimed: ‘What genius of PGW not only to come up with something original but to do it so convincingly that many of us have been ready to swear he was quoting. Talk about absorbing the essence of Sherlock!’

More recently, Jaap again spotted a phrase recurring in PGW that I had taken for granted, namely, from *Full Moon*, Chap 9 (1947):

“Gosh! I’d hate to meet that bird down a lonely alley on a dark night.”

His researches into this catchphrase/cliché unearthed a use from *Guerilla Warfare* in the much earlier *Psmith Journalist*, Chap 17 (1915):

“I know few men I would not rather meet in a lonely road than Comrade Repetto. He is one of Nature’s sand-baggers. Probably the thing crept upon him slowly. He started, possibly, in a merely tentative way by slugging one of the family circle.”

Thank you, Jaap, for bringing a fresh eye and ear to the glories of Wodehousean phraseology.

## Editor’s Note:

Nigel Rees masterminds the *Quote . . . Unquote* website which provides information about the radio programme of that name (which returned for a new series on September 9), and lists many of the unsolved queries submitted to it.

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## News of New Publications and Productions

There seems to be no end to the stream of Wodehouse-related publications and theatrical productions.

The Ebury Press have published *Plum Sauce*, by Richard Osborne, which incorporates much of his much-loved *A Wodehouse Companion*. This will be reviewed in the March issue; meanwhile it is in the bookshops, ISBN 0-091-88512-4, at £14.99.

The National Film Theatre is holding an Ian Carmichael season, and on December 6 (18.20) and 10 (20.40) is showing the one remaining complete episode from the 1960s BBC TV series *The World of Wooster*. Tickets from the box office, in person or by telephone to 020 7928 3232.

Chivers have published the unabridged recording by Jonathan Cecil of *Hot Water*, and Jonathan tells us that he has also recorded *A Damsel in Distress* for release next year.

Penguin Audio have published the abridged audiotape *Aunts Aren’t Gentlemen*, read as usual by Simon Callow.

The National Theatre is staging a new production of *Anything Goes*, directed by Trevor Nunn. Previews are from December 11, with the opening night December 18. Box office telephone: 020 7452 3000; or their website:

[www.nationaltheatre.org.uk](http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk)



## Summer Lightning at Clevedon

Alexander Dainty reviews the Princes Theatre production

As soon as an amply filled out Beach (Ian Ramsay), strolled onto the stage on October 12th to begin his dialogue, and Hugo Carmody (Andy Davies), suddenly sprang from behind a nearby bush, one began to feel that the Clevedon Players were about to provide a treat of pure Wodehouse in their short run of three performances of Giles Havergal's adaptation of *Summer Lightning*.

As the play progressed, it was obvious that Felicity Peries, the producer and a member of the P G Wodehouse Society, had both done her research and cast the play extremely well. The two leading ladies Millicent Threepwood (Jessica Mair) and Sue Brown (Linda Wring) portrayed their characters like the typical young things so often found in Plum's books, with that necessary air of innocence and naivety and the general tendency to fall in love with the first man that appeared on the scene.

Lord Emsworth (John Upward) was eccentricity itself combined with a general air of woolliness, while Galahad (Roger Hockerday) was the typical boulevardier so well described in the Blandings saga. Lady Constance Keeble (Judith Robinson) was just as one imagined Lady Constance Keeble to be.

Both young men, Hugo Carmody and Ronnie Fish (Nigel Jeffries) acted well and totally in character, with Ronnie relying quite a bit on his training at Eton and Cambridge.

All the other supporting characters added their weight to the performance on a simple but good set combined with a good use of lighting and unobtrusive set changes. There were some excellent sound effects to represent the proximity of the Empress



(Back) Linda Wring as Sue Brown, Nigel Jeffries as Ronald Fish; (front) Andy Davies as Hugo Carmody, Jessica Mair as Millicent Threepwood.

Photograph: Maurice Allen

of Blandings, whose absence was the one regret, and of Ronnie Fish's two-seater. The ladies were also beautifully costumed in the perfect style of 1929.

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## Book Now for the Joys of the Toronto Convention

The next convention of The Wodehouse Society (our sister Society based in North America) is being organised by the Detroit chapter, so naturally it is being held in Toronto, Canada. Its events will be held at two sites a quarter of a mile apart: St Michael's College and Sutton Place Hotel, with the Friday cricket match at Trinity Field, close to St Mike's.

The dates are Friday 8th to Sunday 10th August, and there will be the usual variety of events: a cocktail evening, banquet, Sunday brunch, cricket match and cricket tea, a programme of talks on a variety of Wodehousean topics, illustrated in many different ways, the opportunity to discuss topics in small

groups, the presence of a few book dealers with relevant merchandise, and so on. Accommodation has been reserved for delegates at both the Sutton Place at C\$ 179 per room per night (approx £ 80) and the College

at C\$ 45 (approx £ 20) per person per night, in each case plus tax at 5%. Those interested should book rooms early, preferably before April 1st next year, and mention 'The Wodehouse Society'.

To obtain further information or a registration form, please contact



# The Bibliographic Corner by Nick Townend

## Some Early Titles, 1904-22

Due to their scarcity, the bibliographic details of some of Wodehouse's early titles can be unclear.

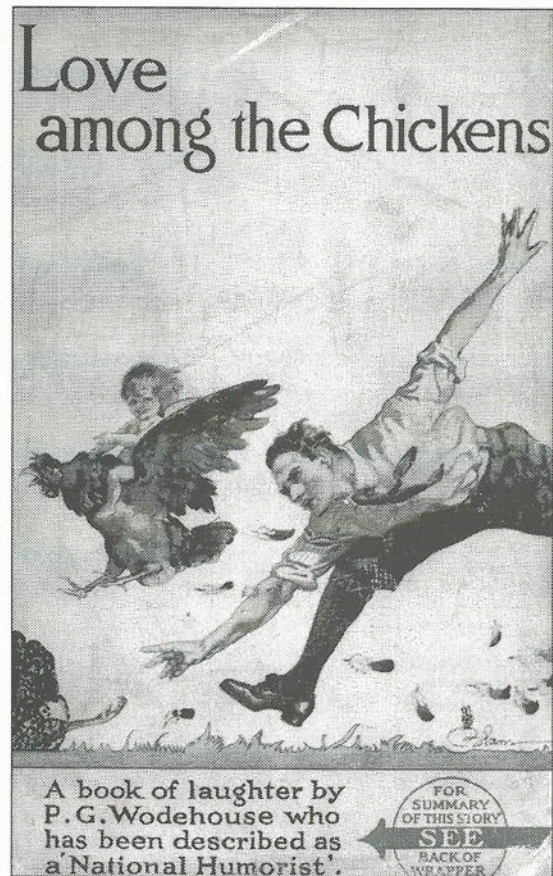
The first edition of *William Tell Told Again* (1904) had several issues, often in slightly different coloured bindings, making this a potential minefield for the collector. *McIlvaine* describes the cloth of the first issue (A5a1) as 'off-white (ie stone-coloured)', and the cloth of the third issue (A5a3) as 'tan or light brown'. In all other respects the third issue is identical to the first, except that the lettering on the front cover is black, rather than gold. As book-dealers often advertise the first edition as having 'beige' covers, it is difficult to be certain which issue they are selling, unless one checks the details of the front cover lettering.

*McIlvaine* omits some details of the dust-wrapper accompanying the first issue: it is priced '6/- Net' on the spine, the front flap has a one paragraph summary, the rear flap is blank, and the back cover lists 25 titles under the heading *A Selection of Black's Beautiful Books for Boys and Girls*. Finally, *McIlvaine's* transcription of the title page, giving one of Wodehouse's earlier books as *The Golden Bat*, is incorrect; the first issue does in fact correctly record the title as *The Gold Bat*.

*Love Among The Chickens* (1906) was substantially rewritten by Wodehouse and published in a new edition in 1921. *McIlvaine* records two issues of the new first edition, stating that the one with green boards (A7c) listed six other Wodehouse titles, ending with *Jill the Reckless*, and that the second (A7c2), which had blue boards, also listed six, ending with *Indiscretions of Archie*. In fact, *Indiscretions of Archie* was sixth and last on the list in both issues. Charles E Gould Jr believes that A7c2 is the true first issue.

*McIlvaine* then records that the printers were changed and the book reset. In fact, before this happened a third issue of the first edition, printed by Love and Malcomson, the original printers, was published by Herbert Jenkins in 1922. This exists bound in both in green and red cloth, but eight Wodehouse titles are listed in it, rather than six as in the earlier issues. The dust-wrapper is identical to that of the first issue, except for some minor changes. The price of 2/6 is the same as the first issue; the *Addendum to McIlvaine* wrongly states that the price of the first issue was 3/6.

*The Swoop!* of 1909 is one of Wodehouse's rarest books. Even rarer is a contemporary postcard promoting the book, captioned as follows:



The 1921 Herbert Jenkins dust-wrapper

"THE SWOOP! or HOW CLARENCE SAVED ENGLAND – A TALE OF THE GREAT INVASION" by PG WODEHOUSE – Illustrated by C. HARRISON. – THE FUNNY BOOK OF THE YEAR SHOULD FIND A PLACE IN EVERY ENGLISHMAN'S HOME

To the left of the foregoing text is a sketch of Harry Lauder, captioned

### WHY HARRY LAUDER LEFT ENGLAND

For *The Prince and Betty*, *McIlvaine* records the true first edition as being issued without an advertising supplement (A15b), followed by a reissue with a 32-page advertising supplement (A15b2). The noted Wodehousean book-dealer Charles Gould has taken issue with *McIlvaine* over this, stating that the presence or absence of the advertising supplement is not an issue point, as it is possible that the *McIlvaine* reference copy (ie James Heineman's own copy) was simply lacking the inserted supplement. Gould adduces as evidence for this his own copy of A15b2, which is inscribed by Wodehouse to his parents in May 1912, the month of publication.



# At Last! Wodehouse Playhouse on Video

## Special Offer to Members, giving pre-Christmas delivery

P G Wodehouse fans have cause to celebrate the news that videos of the 1970s *Wodehouse Playhouse* television programmes are being commercially released.

The three series of *Wodehouse Playhouse* are based on the Golf stories (3), the Drones Club (3) and Mr Mulliner (14). Two series have seven episodes, and one just has six. John Alderton and Pauline Collins starred in each programme in series 1, and although Pauline Collins did not appear in all the later episodes, John Alderton did.

Mr Mulliner does not actually narrate these television adaptations. The viewer is taken straight to the heart of the story – or stories, for in some episodes more than one original story has been combined. It is very heartening to see that the introductions to the first series, which were narrated by P G Wodehouse himself, have been retained on the video. This is one of the last recordings of him that was made, and represents an affectionate tribute to his memory.

The first series gets off to a cracking start with a brilliant rendition of *Unpleasantness at Bludleigh Court*. It includes that oft-quoted poem *Good Gnu*, undoubtedly one of Wodehouse's top half-dozen and how Pauline Collins managed to keep a straight face as she read it, only she could tell us. The sight of Sir Francis Pashley-Drake, wearing nothing but a bathing costume, running amok through a garden party to escape the attentions of Charlotte Mulliner and her airgun, provides an excellent mix of visual humour and Wodehouse verbal wit.

By way of contrast, the second episode features *The Rise of Minna Nordstrom* with the different challenges of a Hollywood setting. The quality of both picture and sound on the video seems to be extremely good.

Acorn Media UK are publishing the three series during the first three months of next year, 2003, price £16.99 each. By a special arrangement, Acorn are offering them to Society members in the UK at a discounted post-free price of £15.99 each *and members placing orders with Acorn before December 9 can expect to receive them before Christmas*. Acorn add that “we will do our best to get all of the orders received prior to December 16 out and into the hands of the Post Office”.

This is a superb opportunity to acquire at the earliest possible date examples of what many consider to be the best Wodehouse adaptations on television, and incidentally to provide good family entertainment over the Christmas and New Year break. *To order, call 020 8879 7000 during normal office hours, quote the reference code WPI, and give your address and credit card number. Alternatively write, quoting the same code and enclosing a cheque made payable to Acorn Media UK, to ‘Wodehouse Playhouse Offer’, Acorn Media UK, 10 Smith’s Yard, London SW18 4HR.*

Acorn in the UK do not have access to US-format videos, which will be published by their associate company in the USA. Work is also proceeding on the development of DVD versions which it is hoped will be available later next year.

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## Australian Prejudice: Further Thoughts from Murray Hedgcock

One further telling instance of PGW's inexplicable prejudice against Australia has come to light since I spoke on that sad topic to the Society's Savage Club meeting in July. In *Aunts Aren't Gentlemen*, Bertie W, on the advice of Harley Street specialist E Jimpson Murgatroyd, took up temporary residence in the health-giving atmosphere of Maiden Eggesford, but found time hanging heavy on his hands. At the post office-cum-general store-cum-lending library, he hesitated for reading matter between *By Order of the Czar* and *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab*, later telling Jeeves he took out the tale of old Russia.

This is significant indeed. *By Order of the Czar* was written in 1890, as every schoolboy knows, by one Joseph Hatton, author of historical romances and adventure stories barely worth consideration. But *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab*, rejected by BW, was the first and perhaps only great Australian mystery story, written by Fergus Hume in 1886 and set in magnificent Melbourne. Hume, an impecunious New Zealand-born lawyer, handed over UK and US rights for £50, and saw hundreds of thousands of copies sold as the book made a huge impact abroad. Unfortunately his book appeared the same year as the first Sherlock Holmes tale, *A Study in Scarlet*, and Conan Doyle's Sherlock soon dominated the new market for detective fiction while Hume was overlooked.

As *Aunts Aren't Gentleman* was published as late as 1974, I feel PGW had ample time to absorb the importance of *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab* – but he chose to ignore it. I rest my case.



# Examples of Plum's Correspondence

*John Starr sent these from Western Australia*

John is a long-standing fan of PGW with copies of some letters from Plum which have been in his family for a while. Two of them are illustrated here.

James Glennon was an author and former Australian Broadcasting Corporation programme director. Plum's letter to him, written in 1934, makes an interesting observation about his relative liking for Jeeves and Mulliner stories. At the time, he had just written his first two Jeeves novels, *Thank You, Jeeves* and *Right Ho, Jeeves*, and would only ever write two more Jeeves short stories.

His most productive days with Mr Mulliner as narrator were also behind him. He had just finished the Mulliners in Hollywood batch, and he wrote a further five in the next three years, but as the entire market for short stories declined, so did PGW's output of the genre, and of course Mr Mulliner and the Anglers' Rest was not an appropriate voice or setting through which to narrate a novel.

Lex Wood  
Le Touquet  
France

Nov 10. 1934

Dear Mr Glennon.

Thank you so much for your letter. I am delighted that you have enjoyed my books.

I am particularly glad that you like Mr Mulliner. I would always rather write a Mulliner story than anything else, even a Jeeves.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

*P. G. Wodehouse*

P. G. WODEHOUSE  
REMSENBURG  
NEW YORK

Jan 16. 1964

Dear Mr Starr.

Thank you so much for your letter.

I am so glad you have enjoyed my books.

The trouble with those television interviews is that one never sees them oneself.

I am glad you think it was o.k.

My name is pronounced Wood-house, though I have never discovered why. Just one of those English Cholmondeley Marjoribanks things!

Yours sincerely

*P. G. Wodehouse*

This letter to Mr Starr himself, in which he confirms the pronunciation of his name, demonstrates again how systematically he replied to all his correspondents.

He received much fan mail over the years, and replied to it all with great good humour, however formulaic the replies became. This is an excellent example.

## Review of The Swoop!

Browsing old cricket papers recently, Murray Hedgcock came across a review of PGW's 1909 paperback *The Swoop*. It was in *Cricket: A Weekly Review of the Game*, for June 10, 1909, and the editor, after mentioning that the author was an old Dulwich cricketer, drew attention to a few relevant incidents in the book. Including:

Those cricketers who were playing during the latter part of last week will be able thoroughly to appreciate the remark concerning the 'usual severity' of the English summer.



## Recent Press Comment

*Car Magazine* (published in South Africa), April (from Jan Norbye)

A review of the latest sporting Bentley started by asking the reader to visualise a grown-up Bertie Wooster, successfully wooed by Florence Craye after all, and now with two teenage offspring. It went on to explain why the Bentley Arnage T would admirably fit Bertie's requirements for a new car.

*Independent Magazine*, August 17 (from Murray Hedgcock)

Christopher Hirst (The Weasel) explained how to deal with the pushy bank cashier who at his or her manager's request wants you to switch to an inappropriate bank account. A friend's father announces a ringing "No, thank you!" accompanied by a glare which, like that of Roderick Spode in *The Code of the Woosters*, could open an oyster at sixty paces.

*Spectator*, August 24 (from Murray Hedgcock)

Simon Carr believes Martin Amis has turned from brilliant stylist in the 1970's to 'ludicrous *moral poseur*'. In his view Amis's prose was the funniest in England in the 1970s, and he added 'Even P G Wodehouse couldn't have been more innovative'.

*Guardian*, August 27 (from Peter Whiteman)

Nancy Banks-Smith quoted PGW's 'ray of sunshine' nifty without attribution, but was taken to task in the letters column on August 30 by Professor Bruce from Aberdeen for failing to give credit to the author. Bob Jones of Worcester rushed to her defence on September 2 by pointing out that 'there is no need to acknowledge the source of a Plum-quote: we all recognise it instantly.'

*Wisden Cricket Monthly*, September (from Robert Bruce)

All-rounder Robin Martin-Jenkins of Sussex wrote in the column *Dressing Room Read*: 'If I had to pick a favourite book it would be anything by P G Wodehouse.'

*The Times*, September 5

Richard Lambert contributed *The Early Genius of P G Wodehouse*, the first of several articles celebrating the centenary of publication of *The Pothunters*.

*Guardian*, September 11 (from Murray Hedgcock)

Ian Aitken conceded in a review of a biography of Willie Whitelaw that he had been in error when, on first meeting him in 1962, he had concluded that Willie was, if not an outright imbecile, a prize ass straight out of the Drones Club.

*Times*, September 14

In the *Modern Times* column Philip Howard was asked how to handle a good friend who cheats at golf. His reply, which included the wise advice not to play for money, incorporated the suggestion of reading *The Clicking of Cuthbert*.

*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (published in Germany), September 17 (from Thomas Schlachter)

Heavyweight literary critic Felicitas von Lovenberg wrote a wide-ranging full page appreciation of Plum.

*Economic Times* (published in India), September 18 (from Raja Srinivasan)

Dr Vikram also wrote at length about the centenary and reminded readers of PGW's consistently steady sales on the sub-continent.

*Times Literary Supplement*, September 20 (from John Fletcher)

Carried a positive review of the eight volumes of *The Millennium Wodehouse Concordance*.

*The Times*, September 28 (from Nick Townend)

Simon Barnes's explanation of the poor form of Tiger Woods on the first day of the Ryder Cup just finished:

He added to his mood of misery by smacking his tee-shot into a bunker and then barking furiously at a photographer whose fault the whole thing obviously was. I heard nothing myself, and I was practically sitting on his golf-bag at the time. It was one of those din-of-the-butterflies-in-nearby-meadows situations: everything puts you off when you are in a mood to be put off, and vice versa.

*Daily Telegraph*, September (from Murray Hedgcock)

John Simpson wrote that the three things he would always take on holiday were Laphroaig whisky, his wife Dee and Plum: they soothe all travel problems.

*Daily Telegraph*, September 30 (from Murray Hedgcock)

The first Editorial commentary on Edwina Currie's disclosure of her affair with John Major recalled how Bertie disclosed to Spode that he knew his guilty secret. It added that the disclosure of Major's secret would have ruined him more comprehensively than the disclosure of Eulalie would have done for Spode.

*Saga Magazine*, October

Michael Brunson's *Westminster View* included comment on the agonies which the Labour Party had gone through in the early 1970s in deciding whether to knight PGW. He then disclosed that he had personally interviewed Plum at Remsenburg in January 1975, following the announcement of the honour.

*Observer*, October 6 (from Murray Hedgcock)

Rachel Redford enthusiastically reviewed Simon Callow's recording of *The Code of the Woosters* for Penguin Audio, and concluded by advising listeners to 'Follow Bertie's example, take a snootful of whisky, loose it down the hatch, and relax'.

*Sunday Times*, October 6

Godfrey Smith remarked that 'Misquotations quickly make Alzheimer cases of us all. Sherlock Holmes, for



## Press Comment, continued

example, never said “Elementary, my dear Watson”. It was PGW who wrote this in his novel *Psmith, Journalist?*

*Independent*, October 8

Philip Hensher’s article *Praise to the man who baffles the foreigner* was a very positive tribute to Plum and welcomed the Everyman Collectors’ Series.

*Daily Telegraph*, October 11 (from Murray Hedgcock)

Featured an interview with the 1970s heavy metal rock star Lemmy, of Motörhead. The banner headline read:

Motörhead’s Lemmy, heavy metal pioneer, was famed for drinking and womanising. Now, he tells Oliver Poole, he prefers reading P G Wodehouse.

*The Times*, October 15

The *Births* section on the Anniversaries page carried 21 lines recalling Plum’s birth in 1881 and events since, and just ten lines covering the births of five others including Virgil and Nietzsche.

*The Times*, October 18

In the *Dinners* section on the Court page, the previous night’s Society dinner at Lincoln’s Inn was the first of seven reported dinners.

*Sunday Times*, October 20

Godfrey Smith used half his regular column to extol the virtues of the Society, *Wooster Sauce* and the Dinner at Lincoln’s Inn.

*Sunday Times*, October 20

Alan Titchmarsh included *Heavy Weather* in the list of books he had on his bedside table:

I always have a P G Wodehouse on the go. I prefer the Blandings novels to the Jeeves and Wooster lot, though in a dreary airport I’d happily settle for anything by him.

*The Times*, October 21

In the *Human Jungle* column, Peter Ellwood, Chief Executive of Lloyds-TSB listed ‘PGW, history, business books, nothing too heavy’ as the type of book he read before turning in.

*Radio 4*, October 26

In *Letter from America* Alistair Cooke was talking about bedside books and said he was never without a Wodehouse to help him off to sleep.

*BBC1*, October 27

In *Antiques Roadshow* from Chichester Cathedral, Alastair Dickinson was shown an English silver cow-creamer dating from 1901. He referred to the PGW pedigree for cow-creamers in literature, and confirmed that although neither Old English nor Modern Dutch, the one on display was still worth around £3,000.

## Poets’ Corner

### To an Amazon

Bedelia, ’neath your tiny boot  
My throbbing heart I throw:  
Oh, deign to smile upon my suit –  
Presumptuous, I know.  
My income is not large, it’s true,  
Of wealth I’m quite bereft:  
But still – this must appeal to you –  
I’ve such a pretty left.

I never read romantic books,  
No verse can I recite;  
I only know the jabs and hooks  
That go to win a fight:  
I cannot sing nor dance with grace,  
But oh! I know the punch  
That takes the victim on the place  
Where he has stowed his lunch.

I’ve loved you ever since the night  
(Which I remember still!)  
When I put up that eight-round fight  
With Colorado Bill.  
How well I recollect, my own,  
The soothing words you said,  
“Leave the gazebo’s wind alone,  
And swat him on the head!”

I’m but a worm compared to you,  
But still, I beg to state,  
I’ve licked the world at ten stone two,  
Which is my fighting weight.  
And if you will but marry me,  
Bedelia, then perhaps  
My second I will let you be  
In all my future ‘scraps’.

This poem first appeared in *Punch*,  
17 August, 1904

(Commenting on the fact that at a recent glove-fight between Bob Fitzsimmons and Jack O’Brien, at Philadelphia, the greater and more enthusiastic part of the audience was composed of women.)

#### Editor’s Comment

Bearing in mind Murray Hedgcock’s article in June *Sauce*, could the word ‘gazebo’ in the third versa be a typo for ‘gazeka’? The *OED* has no definition of ‘gazebo’ that would fit (but then, the word ‘gazeka’ does not appear in the dictionary or its supplements at all).



## FUTURE EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

### February 11, 2003 – The Savage Club

The Savage Club is in the premises of The National Liberal Club, 1 Whitehall Place, London, close to Charing Cross Station, and members gather from around 6pm. Tim Andrew will speak about *Plum and The Psychology of the Individual*.

### February 26, 2003 – The Montcalm Hotel

The Montcalm Hotel is holding another dinner with a menu based on Anatole's dishes. (This is a public rather than Society event.) See page 3 for details.

### April 12, 2003 – Murphy's Wodehouse Walk

Join the Chairman on one of his famous walks round Wodehouse's London. Call Norman Murphy to book a place, and to find out where and when to meet.

### May 10 to 17, 2003 – The Little Theatre, Bolton

The theatre (01204 524269) plans to stage a production of *Good Morning, Bill*. More details in the next *Wooster Sauce*.

### June 7, 2003 – Murphy's Wodehouse Walk

Join the Chairman on one of his famous walks round Wodehouse's London. Call Norman Murphy to book a place, and to find out where and when to meet.

### June 20, 2003 – Cricket at Dulwich

The annual match between the Gold Bats and the Dulwich Dusters. Now is the time to contact

if you are interested in playing.

It is expected that there will be a further match against the Sherlock Holmes Society of London team, but no date or venue has yet been confirmed. Again, contact Bob Miller to register your interest.

### July 8, 2003 – The Savage Club

The summer meeting at the Savage Club at 1 Whitehall Place, London, from around 6pm.

### August 8 to 10, 2003 – TWS Convention, Toronto

The next convention of The (American) Wodehouse Society will be held in Toronto. See page 18 for more information.

### September 6, 2003 – Murphy's Wodehouse Walk

Join the Chairman on one of his famous walks round Wodehouse's London. Call Norman Murphy to book a place, and to find out where and when to meet.

### October 14, 2003 – The Savage Club

The PGW birthday meeting at the Savage Club at 1 Whitehall Place, London, from around 6pm.

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## EDITOR'S TAILPIECES

Elliott Milstein reported two interesting snippets from *The Economist*.

First, its description of the 'The Romance Writers of America':

This is a body founded in 1980 by three dozen authors who, oppressed by the gritty greyness of the realist school of novel-writing, set out determinedly to recreate the world of P G Wodehouse's *Honeysuckle Cottage*.

Elliott added that he would have himself selected Rosie M Banks as a model, 'but the writer probably considered that one too obvious'.

Then in a review of *Dr Tatiana's Sex Advice to All Creation* he noted the following:

Dr Tatiana has all the bossy heartiness of Bertie Wooster's Aunt Dahlia.

Elliott comments that it is unexpected to find PGW being invoked in a review of a book about sex.

Pieter Boogard from Eindhoven drew our attention to a book of cartoons by Peter von Straaten entitled *This Literary Life (ISBN 1 072180 37 X)*, which includes one featuring PGW. Peter von Straaten was the artist responsible for all the line-drawings of PGW's characters which appeared throughout *McIlvaine*.

Stu Schiffman from Seattle noted that Raymond Chandler was not the only mystery writer with a link to Dulwich College. Ngaio Marsh's father was also an Old Alleynian, and she wrote in an essay that that was the reason behind the choice of surname, Alleyn, for her principal detective.

The foot of the last page of any journal is the least obtrusive place for an Editor to hang his head in shame. Thanks to those members who pointed out the error in the last issue concerning Patrick Moore, described as an 'astrologist' (the word does exist!) instead of 'astronomer'. Sorry.