



WOOSTER SAUCE

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A Very Wodehousean Autumn

Who cares about summer being over when there is so much Wodehouse in the autumn? First, we have already enjoyed the documentary Wogan on Wodehouse, with one of our national treasures, Sir Terry Wogan, looking at the life and works of You Know Who; below, the producer, Tom Webber, tells us how this programme, which aired on BBC2, came to be. Second, late October will see the publication of the long-awaited new edition of P. G. Wodehouse's letters, edited by Sophie Ratcliffe. Her editor at Hutchinson, Tony Whittome, tells eager Wodehouseans all about it on pages 3–4. (Note the book can be pre-ordered on Amazon.co.uk at a reduced price.)

Making Wogan on Wodehouse

by Tom Webber

In *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, Wodehouse enthusiast Douglas Adams imagined a terrifying punishment for malefactors: the Total Perspective Vortex, wherein miscreants would see themselves in relation to the entirety of Creation and come face to face with their utter insignificance.

In some respects, making the television programme *Wogan on Wodehouse* for broadcast on BBC Two has been a not dissimilar experience. Having read Wodehouse for more than 30 years, I thought I had a reasonable grasp of the subject. Spending the last three months acknowledging the extent of my own ignorance has therefore been a slightly chastening experience . . .

As we know from the highest authority, there are times when fate can hit you on the back of the beazer with the lead piping – though, it transpires, not always in a bad way. After the success of his series *Terry Wogan's Ireland* on BBC One earlier this year, I dropped a line to Sir Terry Wogan – a mentor of long standing – to ask if he'd be interested in making a programme on P. G. Wodehouse, whom I knew to be his literary hero. When he duly gave me the thumbs up, I dashed off a treatment and emailed it to a contact in Arts Commissioning at the BBC on the last day of February. This was geared to a production for BBC One.

There was an immediate flicker of interest, but over the coming weeks it transpired that funding and slots were much more likely to be available on BBC Two. This is not my own natural habitat, but with Robert McCrum onboard and Sir Edward Cazalet and the Wodehouse Estate generously giving their fiat, and after a rewrite of the treatment (make that several rewrites of the treatment), we were in production at the beginning of June – still top-speed decision-making in television terms. Transmission was initially pencilled for mid-August, so the skates were most definitely on.

Filming threw up many insights. The erudition and enthusiasm of Stephen Fry. The forensic observations of Griff Rhys Jones. The warmth and



Sir Terry Wogan confers with Tom Webber, left, before the filming of a scene. (Photo by Brian J. Ritchie; published with the kind permission of Hotsauce TV)



Filming took place in early June. Here, Sir Terry prepares for a scene under the direction of Hans Petch, far right.

(Photo by Brian J. Ritchie, courtesy of Hotsauce TV)



Norman Murphy and Sir Terry discuss the Drones Club in front of its inspiration, Buck's Club. (Photo By Elin Woodger Murphy)

enthusiasm of Kate Mosse, Joanna Lumley, and so many more. The personal recollections of Sir Edward. The extraordinary scholarship of Tony Ring. The fascination of the items held at Dulwich College and so kindly displayed for us by Calista Lucy and her colleagues. Not forgetting Terry's own, personal Wodehouse Walk under the guidance of Norman Murphy.

A small mountain of information was amassed in a short space of time. As well as the specially recorded interviews, we were fortunate to come across a rarely seen interview with Wodehouse broadcast in Canada in the early '60s and at least one 'lost' adaptation. Then came the matter of processing all this information gathered in a short space of time and trying to make sense of it ahead of the edit. As I write, the programme is a few days from formal completion, but, happily, the BBC are very happy with what they've been seen and feel that the programme treats Wodehouse's writing seriously within the biographical framework.

I'm not saying that opinion is correct; I'm just relieved the powers that be at Television Centre feel that way. And forgive me if I stop writing now, but there's a lead piping-induced lump on the back of my head that could do with a bit of a rub . . .

Wogan on Wodehouse was broadcast on BBC Two on Friday, 2 September, while this issue was in press. We hope our U.K. members managed to see the programme; we welcome any reviews.

The bar of the Drones Club was packed to bursting point. The word had gone round that Pongo Twistleton was standing free drinks, and a man who does that at the Drones can always rely on a full house and the sympathy of the audience. Eggs jostled Crumpets, Crumpets elbowed Beans, and the air was vibrant with the agonized cries of strong men who see their cocktails in danger of being upset.

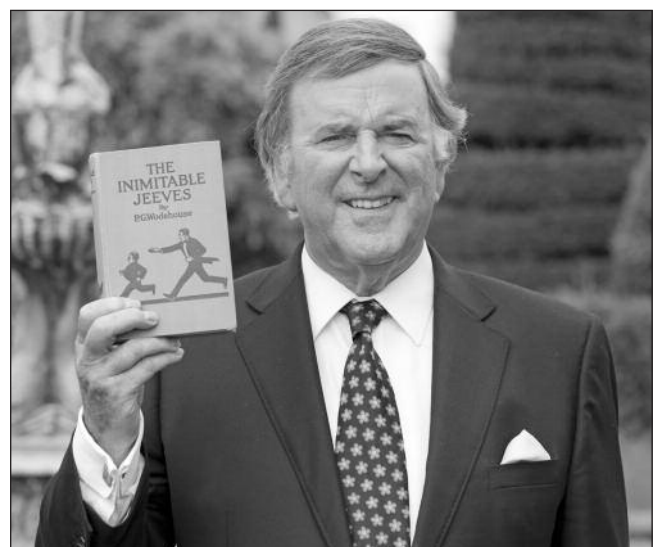
(From 'The Luck of the Stiffhams', 1933)

A Message from Sir Terry

It was my pleasure to trawl the London haunts of Wooster and the hell-holes of Aunts, Eggs, Beans, and Crumpets with the master himself, Norman Murphy, as my guide. What a treasure-trove of hitherto hidden delights Norman revealed to an uninitiated goof such as myself! It will be a vital contribution to *Wogan on Wodehouse*, a hopefully fragrant nosegay in tribute to the greatest humorous writer in the language, at whose altar I have worshipped since a slip of a lad.

I can only hope that the uncounted millions of my fellow worshippers will look at my offering with a kindly eye, rather than one that could "open an oyster at sixty paces".

Pip,pip,
Terry Wogan



The inimitable Sir Terry Wogan

(Photo by Brian J. Ritchie, courtesy of Hotsauce TV)

At Last – Wodehouse's Life in Letters

by Tony Whittome

The Wodehouse Society (US) Convention celebrating Plum's birthday may be taking place in the USA, but on this side of the Atlantic, October 2011 heralds a feast for us all, which has been long in the planning: a huge new book, full of generous helpings of previously unpublished Wodehouse, is to be published in hardback by Hutchinson.

This is surely the only occasion in our lifetime when such a cornucopia of new writings by the Master will become available. Of course, these are letters, not novels or short stories – but what letters! They capture Plum in full flight, from the beginning of his career to the end: impulsive, unguarded, imaginative, and revealing about his own work; sometimes bewildered by events; vulnerable but full of life and generous-hearted toward others.

Wodehouse was a prolific letter writer. His letters shed a remarkable light on the gestation of individual books and characters, on his inimitable style, on his evolution as a writer, and on his thoughts and feelings at dramatic moments in his life. The range of correspondents is wide: letters to 'old familiars' such as Guy Bolton and Bill Townend are shown as they were written, not as they were later published. Fellow writers who corresponded with him include Arthur Conan Doyle, Evelyn Waugh, Compton Mackenzie, George Orwell, Ira Gershwin, and, perhaps most surprisingly, Lawrence Durrell, who received a fascinating, previously unpublished letter on the genesis of Jeeves. Letters to Denis Mackail about Herbert Westbrook (one of the inspirations for Ukridge) are equally revealing, as is a cache of previously unknown correspondence with Leslie Havergal Bradshaw, to whom *Psmith in the City* is dedicated.

The day-to-day life of an increasingly successful writer – cheerful exchanges and skirmishes with literary agents, publishers, Hollywood moguls, and theatrical collaborators – are captured on the wing in these letters. At the

heart of them is his work, but equally important is the family correspondence – with his adored stepdaughter Leonora (Snorky) and her children, Sheran and Edward; and especially with his wife, Ethel, to whom he wrote some previously unpublished letters at the end of her life which are almost unbearably moving.

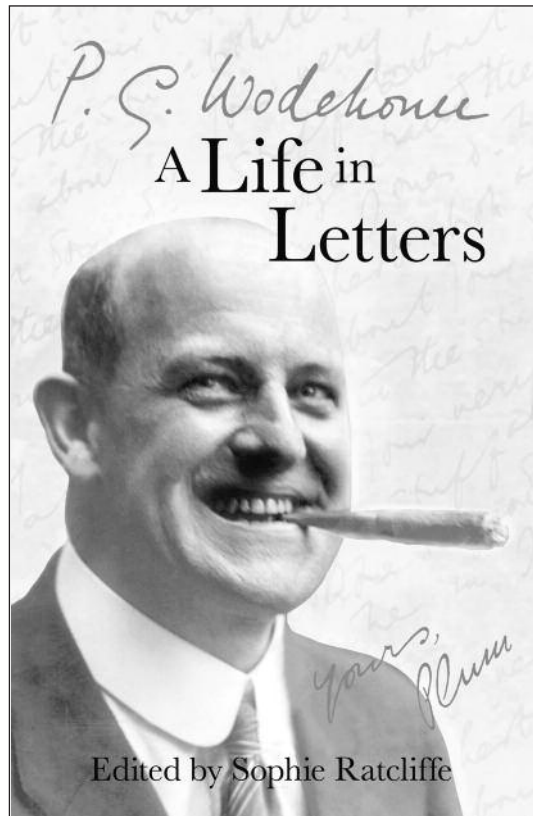
Fresh light is also shed on the central public drama of Wodehouse's life: his internment by the Nazis and the broadcasts he was persuaded to make on German radio. As Sophie Ratcliffe writes, "These letters, many of which have never been seen before, offer an unprecedented insight into the ways Wodehouse negotiated, or failed to negotiate, the complexities of wartime Berlin and occupied Paris – and his deep fear of losing his public as a result of his error of judgement." His post-war letters on the subject to Malcolm Muggeridge are particularly heartfelt and revealing.

But in the main, these letters trace the evolution of a comic genius. It is not widely known that early in his writing life Wodehouse was employed as an agony uncle for *Tit-Bits*. It was to be a short-lived role. Wodehouse had trouble taking such a post as adviser-to-the-stricken seriously, as his contemporary parody of the genre, published in *Punch*, reveals:

Sir, – Your correspondent might derive consolation from the history of the Israelite kings. King SOLOMON was in all probability jilted – perhaps frequently – in his salad days. Yet in the end, by persevering and not giving way, he amassed the substantial total of one thousand (1,000) wives. Without counselling him actually to go and do likewise, I should like to point out to your correspondent that *this is the right spirit*.

Yours, &c., THEOLOGIAN

P. G. Wodehouse: A Life in Letters has been edited by Sophie Ratcliffe, a Fellow in English of



Christ Church, Oxford, and a great admirer of his work. Her researches seem to me to display an ideal combination of scholarly rigour, passion in the hunt for revealing unpublished material, and extraordinary insight into her subject. But above all she has edited a book which is fun to read and gives us new insights both into characters we all love and into the man who created them.

I'd like to end with one of Sophie's most affecting stories, as told in her introduction:

A particularly intriguing history surrounds one of the critical letters in this book – a note that was written by Wodehouse when under prison guard in Paris. The letter was an affectionate and cheerful one, intended to reassure Ethel of his safety and to raise her spirits in the frightening atmosphere of newly-liberated Paris. Wodehouse gave the letter to a messenger – but it was in fact never delivered as intended. Instead, some forty-seven years later, an envelope arrived in Remsenburg, Long Island, addressed to Lady Wodehouse. The Frenchman who had been charged with its delivery had, for some reason, been unable to carry out his mission, and the document only came to light after his death.



Dr Sophie Ratcliffe, editor of the new book of letters

Wodehouse himself had died just two years earlier – but the delivery of this love letter from beyond the grave seems a small material tribute to his fictional world where all, in the end, comes right. As Wodehouse's Ginger Kemp puts it, 'such is the magic of a letter from the right person.'

Society News

November Meeting

On 1 November, we will be gathering once again at The George, 213 Strand, to hobnob, sluice, and otherwise enjoy ourselves. There will be some business to attend to, and your committee is determined that this year's AGM will be quicker than of yore, though we doubt we'll ever beat the seven-minute record set several years ago! Following the AGM, we will have a short break and then the great pleasure of hearing from our guest speaker, the popular journalist, critic, and author Marcus Berkman. A man of many talents, Marcus is known, among other things, for his columns and books on cricket, including *Rain Men* (1995) and *Zimmer Men* (2005). He describes himself as a "Wodehouse obsessive", so do come along to hear the truth of that statement!

The Newbury Show

There is just enough time left to make plans to attend the Royal County of Berkshire Show on 17 & 18 September at the Newbury Showground in Berkshire. The specific time to aim for is 9.00 a.m. on Sunday the 18th, when the judging for the Berkshire Pig Champion of Champions takes place. The Society is proud to sponsor the competition in honour of our own beloved Empress of Blandings, and it's always worth going to watch our Chairman award the prize and skilfully drape a sash over the elusive porcine winner. Society members who attend then have the rest of the day to enjoy the Show, which is always a great day out.

Where Did All the Cricket Go?

This year, for the first time in the Society's history, both our primary cricket matches – against the Dulwich Dusters and the Sherlock Holmes Society – were cancelled due to a very rainy June. To say this was most disappointing would be understating the matter in a very Jeevesian way. Let's hope next year will see a brighter, sunnier June with sparkling Gold Bats cricket. Some of our players took part in other matches this summer, including one against the Mount Cricket Club at Thorpe Bay on 3 July. Team captain Bob Miller reports that the Gold Bats won by 174 runs, and he notes that it was "a wonderful day, in convivial company and played in genuine 'Plum' spirit". See also page 13 for Patrick Kidd's account of the Gold Bats annual charity match at Audley End.

Help Wanted: Website Editor

After three years that included a major redesign of the Society's website, Jamie Jarrett has stood down from the position of Website Editor.

A Historical Marker for Remsenburg

We have received word from across the pond that The Wodehouse Society (TWS) has a movement afoot to raise funds for the erection of a historical marker for P G Wodehouse in Remsenburg, New York. That Long Island village is, of course, where the Wodehouses lived out their final years; both are buried in the graveyard of the Remsenburg Community Church. It was while on a pilgrimage there that Bob Rains and Andrea Jacobsen (*aka* Oily and Sweetie Carlisle) discovered to their horror that, as they wrote in the Summer 2011 issue of *Plum Lines*, “there was no historical marker to inform the wayfarer that he or she had arrived at a sacred spot”.

Bob and Andrea quickly set about to rectify this heinous oversight and, with the backing of TWS’s officers, put in the preliminary spadework to discover whether a marker could be erected – it could, with the Community Church’s blessing – and what was entailed in getting the deed done. TWS’s board set a goal of \$5,000 for a proper marker with all the right trimmings and then promptly kicked in \$500 to start off the fund. As of mid-August, the TWS Historical Marker Fund was halfway toward its

goal, but more funds are needed, and UK Society members are herewith invited to do their bit.

There are three ways you can contribute to this worthy cause: (1) Send an international money order, payable to The Wodehouse Society, to Kris Fowler, 1388 Wellesley Avenue, Saint Paul MN 55015; be sure to note that your money order is for the Historical Marker Fund. (2) Use PayPal to ‘Send Money’ (in U.S. dollars) for ‘Services’ to: twstreasurer@wodehouse.org; again, please specify that the money you are sending is for the Historical Marker Fund. (3) Send a cheque in British pounds sterling to Elin Woodger Murphy, 9 Winton Avenue, London N11 2AS; make your cheque payable to Elin, and she will send TWS the equivalent amount in dollars for you.

If you happen to also be a TWS member, then your next issue of *Plum Lines* will inform you of a special contest, the aim of which is to determine the wording that will go on the Remsenburg marker. All in all, this is a cause Wodehouseans everywhere can and should support – so please don’t delay. Send your contribution now!

A Weekend with Wodehouse: The Norfolk Connection

Just the other day, your committee was thinking back to the fun we had on the Society’s Millennium Tour in 2000, and on the Week With Wodehouse in 2007, when we explored Wodehouse locations in London and set off in search of Blandings. And then, pausing only to note our strangely itchy feet, we wondered whether there were Wodehousean parts of the country as yet unexplored by charabancs of Society members.

Of course there is one area: Norfolk, where there are Wodehouse connections going back centuries, tangible now in a commemorative window and an ancestral home, as well as a house where Wodehouse was a frequent guest and whose architectural and topographical features starred in his work for years afterwards. In short, we have at the very least Norwich Cathedral, Kimberley Hall, Hunstanton Hall, and the lovely Norfolk coast whose place-names gave Wodehouse the names of so many characters. We concluded that

Norfolk appears to offer enough to keep us happy for a long weekend.

And so, we’re considering running a Friday–Sunday coach trip, probably in May 2012, starting and finishing in London and with an option to join the group in East Anglia. We don’t have a



Hunstanton Hall, which Wodehouse visited frequently

price yet, but when we do it will include transport, entrances, accommodation, meals and what-have-you, and the Society will train its keen eye on the costs, to keep the price firmly in its place.

All we need is a bit of encouragement. If enough of you call or drop us an email to say

you’re interested, or might be interested, in coming on such a weekend, then we’ll work up the plans and set out our stall in the November/December issue of *Wooster Sauce*.

Our Masterly Quiz Winners

With Answers to June's Quiz

It is a pleasure to report that our first PGW Mastermind quiz in the last issue was an unqualified success. Correct answers came rolling in by email and post, and some were even personally delivered through the editor's mail slot. There was only one wrong answer in the lot, and the error was easily forgiven. It should be noted that Barry Chapman questioned the editor's use of 'brainy coves' in the heading for the quiz, adding, "I presume that the brainy ladies would not be disqualified if they entered their answers too." Well, of course not – we're all in this together, are we not? Mind you, the first three past the post were all men, but we'll call that a momentary aberration. The winners, in order of receipt of correct answers, are:

1. Alex Connolly & Ian Isherwood (a familial team)
2. Brian Porter
3. Martin Russell

For their triumph, these gents have received an audiobook recording of *Blandings Castle*, read by Jonathan Cecil and kindly donated by AudioGO. Runners-up, in alphabetical order, are:

Ian Alexander-Sinclair	Geoff Hales
Maggie Brockbank	Alan Hall
Patrick Carroll	Paul Large
Barry Chapman	John Looijestijn
Graeme W I Davidson	Dagny Naes Marschall
John Durston	Karen Shotting
Elisa Foppa	David Thomas
Giles Frampton	Peter Thompson
Ian Galloway	Nick Townend
Stephen Griffiths	

Congratulations to all! And congratulations and thanks to our Quiz Master, David Buckle, who has provided a new quiz this month – see page 7.

Answers to the June Mastermind Quiz:

1. Rupert Baxter is the bespectacled secretary who throws flowerpots at Lord Emsworth's bedroom window.
2. Freddie Threepwood returns to England to sell Donaldson's Dog Joy. (Also accepted as correct: dog biscuits)
3. Beach's first name is Sebastian.
4. The nerve specialist whom Uncle Fred impersonates is Sir Roderick Glossop.
5. Monica Simmons is Lord Emsworth's pig girl. (One respondent described her as a pig breeder, which is not quite right but was accepted anyway. Kudos to Peter Thompson, who noted that Monica's job was "caring for 'the piggy wiggy' Empress of Blandings". I also liked John Looijestijn's description of Monica as the Empress of Blandings's "personal attendant".)
6. Sir Gregory Parsloe-Parsloe purchases a supply of 'Slimmo' on Lady Constance's advice.
7. Lord Emsworth unwittingly steals an Egyptian scarab from J Preston Peters. (Those who correctly called it a Cheops of the Fourth Dynasty probably deserve extra points.)
8. You can purchase G Ovens's homebrewed beer at the Emsworth Arms.
9. Hugo Carmody becomes Lord Emsworth's secretary following the failure of his nightclub, The Hot Spot.
10. To marry Gertrude Butterwick, Monty Bodkin has to hold down a job for 12 months.

A Clutch of Clerihews

Bingo Little In love again? It'll Be a while before <i>his</i> heart Resists Cupid's dart. – Jonathan Bacchus	Aubrey Upjohn M.A. Has plenty to say On the trials and the joys Of teaching young boys. – Geoff Millward	Psmith has a silent P Says he. At least he ought to If he stands up to his waist in the water. – Lennart Andersson
Sir Roderick's a doctor of loonies So it's a surprise that eftsoon he's Assuming the moniker Swordfish To buttle for Bertie – that's oddish! – Fred Schroeder	The perfect wife for Bertie Could be a Madeline or Gertie, But I think the joker In the pack is Emerald Stoker. – Norman Murphy	Gloria Salt's latest betrothed Is almost universally loathed. She'd be more likely to prosper With Orlo, Lord Vosper. – Jenny & Susan Inglis

(For two more clerihews, see page 17.)

The menacing way in which the policeman hopped on his bicycle and pedalled off spoke louder than words. I don't think I have ever seen anyone pedal with a more sinister touch to the ankle work.

(From *Joy in the Morning*, 1947)

Mastermind Quiz #2: The Golf Stories

by David Buckle

This set of questions was inspired when, this summer, David became a Mastermind contestant for the second time and chose Wodehouse's golf stories as his specialist subject. (Filming took place in July, and the show will be aired sometime this autumn.) All things being as equal as we can make it, the winners – who, as before, will receive a Wodehouse audiobook thanks to the generosity of AudioGO – will be the first three to submit correct answers, barring anybody who has already won an audiobook (though all correct answers are welcome, of course).

1. Wodehouse wrote over 30 golf stories. Who narrates most of them?
2. 'The First Grave Digger', 'Old Father Time', 'The Man with the Hoe' and 'Consul – the Almost Human' are collectively known as what?
3. Rodney Spelvin appears in four golfing stories, the last being 'Rodney Has a Relapse'. What is Rodney's relapse?
4. How long is the Long Hole in 'The Long Hole'?
5. Who gives a bishop an exploding cigar, yodels at Swiss waiters, plays a water trick on Jack Prescott (a four-handicapper). and puts roller skates on a sleeping Angus McTavish?
6. What breed of dog does Agnes Flack own? (The answer to this must be exact.)
7. Bradbury Fisher's (and beforehand the Duke of Bootle's) butler Vosper shares what first name with Drones member Tuppy Glossop?
8. Who has "the ability to switch a cigar from one side of his mouth to the other without wiggling his ears" and is prevented from winning the Amateur Championship by the interference of his three ex-wives?
9. In 'A Mixed Threesome', while Eddie Denton is chatting to Betty Weston under the moonlight, what is Betty's fiancé, Mortimer Sturgis, doing?
10. What striking golf-related garment does Wallace Chesney buy from the Cohen Brothers' second-hand clothing emporium?

Answers n the December ssue.

Follow Wodehouse to Emsworth: Book Now

by Amanda Thomas

Plans are well advanced for merriment and jollification at the Brookfield Hotel, from where we will follow The Great Man's footsteps in October. Tony Ring and Norman Murphy are sharpening their quills to exercise your brains in a gentle manner, while the staff of Emsworth Museum are preparing their exhibition about Emsworth in 1911.

Emsworth town centre is a bustling place with shops and views evoking the times of P. G. Wodehouse. A walk around the area can be arranged, either with a guide or a leaflet, while the Museum will have its collection of Wodehouse's letters to his housekeeper, Lillian, available for you to see. The small exhibition is comprehensive and contains donations from local people, as well as a recently compiled collection of memories from old pupils of the Emsworth House School.



The Brookfield Hotel (above), a country house hotel on the outskirts of Emsworth, is renowned locally for its comfort and the excellence of its food and wines. There are easy links into the centre of the town by bus, taxi, or car, or you can walk the mile, travelling via the main road or along the shoreline path, which leads directly to the site of Wodehouse's description of Belper in chapter 7 of *Damsel in Distress*.

The cost of the weekend break includes dinner on Friday, with suitable entertainment provided by Tony and Norman; a talk on Saturday morning; admission to the Emsworth Museum; either a guided or a self-guided walk around Emsworth; and a seven-course gala dinner in the evening with entertainment. Sunday morning, we will try to chase some elusive references before departing after brunch. The cost is £295 for the two-night, all-inclusive break; Society members receive a discount of £20.

My First Wadehouse Experience

by Ken Falconer

My parents were English teachers of the old school with strong views. I was allowed Beatrix Potter and A. A. Milne, and the Rev W. Audrey was tolerated, but certainly not Enid Blyton. I was nine when they sat me down with a volume of Dickens, whom they highly esteemed. I may have glanced at it for a few moments, but it failed to grip. I preferred books on mathematics; on one occasion I asked my mother to explain algebra, but to no avail. My parents seemed unable to comprehend that I could find the internal organs of a wireless set more interesting than Victorian London.

I was next offered Hardy, Orwell, Scott, and Thackeray – also books which I could not put down since, like *BW* and *Spindrift*, I never got around to picking them up. Then, probably in desperation, my mother brought home *The Inimitable Jeeves*. I flicked through the pages, and one heading, ‘The Great Sermon Handicap’, caught my eye. Half an hour later, I had finished the chapter, and next Sunday, before Matins, I was taking bets from my fellow choristers on the length of the sermon we were about to endure.

I dipped into the other chapters in *The Inimitable Jeeves*, followed by those in *Carry On, Jeeves*, and soon embarked on the longer stories. My first, *The Code of the Woosters*, I found great fun; indeed, some self-restraint was needed to stop myself going out to collect a policeman’s helmet. After finishing all the Jeeves books, I made the acquaintance of Lord Emsworth and, eventually, Mr Mulliner and the Oldest Member.

At 16 I met my first sweetheart. I would visit her home, where we would adjourn to a small, secluded study. It was sparsely furnished, but there was a serviceable couch and a glass-fronted bookcase with titles that caught my eye: *Sam the Sudden*, *Do Butlers Burgle Banks?*, *Aunts Aren’t Gentlemen* . . . a virtually complete collection. Had there not been more immediate attractions, I would doubtless have investigated them. Indeed, they might have provided an excuse for my presence in the event of a surprise visit from her father, though, like Sir Watkyn Bassett,

he might well have enquired why I was undertaking my literary researches in the dark.

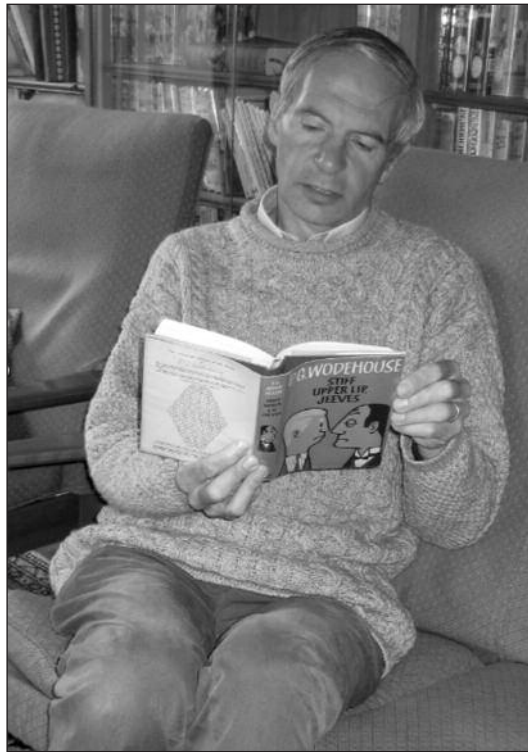
Meanwhile, others had succeeded where my mother had failed, and thus I arrived at The University to study mathematics, which I did with some success. At the end of my first year I received a prize: a book token for £30. With Penguins at 30p, most of the paperback PGW titles soon graced my shelves.

I continued to be distracted by the fair s. One of my friends compared me to Bingo Little, and perhaps

he had a point. Most of my lady acquaintances were from Girton, alma mater of Honoria Glossop, though only one compared to Honoria in stature and braininess, and she rapidly concluded that I was too frivolous. I confess there were occasions when I could have been found at that establishment after the approved hour, but a convenient window allowed me to depart without the mutual embarrassment of encountering the authorities, in the manner adopted by Bertram when avoiding Honoria’s even brainier cousin, Heloise Pringle.

Now, many years later, I am inculcating mathematics in the young, in a town on the Fife coast noted for its golf. Recalling the Oldest Member’s assertion that the golf of Scottish University professors rates somewhat below that of the ossified men, I have resisted the temptation to take up the game myself. Nevertheless, I am always ready to share my knowledge, gleaned from *The Clicking of Cuthbert* and *The Heart of a Goof*, with colleagues who do play. They listen in awe to my advice on the use of the niblick and mashie and have even watched me demonstrate, with the aid of a fork and two peas, how to stymie one’s opponent.

And so, throughout my life, PGW has been a constant companion, and I continue to discover subtleties of wit or language unnoticed on previous readings. After the expense of acquiring a wife, a house, and children, I eventually managed to save a little for my own self-indulgence. Thus, my study now boasts a glass-fronted bookcase containing most of the Great Works, including many first editions acquired in the early days of eBay when bargains were to be had. And my 30p paperbacks? They are still much in use for reading in the bath!





Letters to the Editor

Reactions, Questions, and Thoughts from Our Readers

From Alex Connolly

I very much liked your article 'Some Advice for the Married Couple'. However, I couldn't help noticing that a couple of the quotes came from the golfing tales of PGW. I wonder whether these were more metaphors for the characters' love of the game, rather than for that of their partners.

Perhaps it was a subtle simile offering some advice on how to deal with an errant wife rather than a stray shot. Keep your cool, let the ball fly its course, and try not to collect a penalty shot when playing out of a hazard.

From Christopher Bellew

I think Lord Henley was being too modest in not claiming kinship to Lord Emsworth. Lord Henley is the double gold winner of the 2011 Marmalade Awards (jars made up to his receipt may be purchased at Fortnum & Mason) and only this week was on national television advising on how cucumbers should be eaten. Lord Emsworth, too, started in the vegetable kingdom, and I think we should keep an eye on Lord Henley's future endeavours. Incidentally, like your correspondent Miss Meredith, he has a small but varied collection of poultry at his castle in Cumbria.

From Jonathan Bacchus

Reading the very splendid *Complete Lyrics of PG Wodehouse* recently made me wonder why there is not, at least so far as I know, any collection of PGW's verse, of which he clearly wrote a great deal. A look on the Internet produced nothing more than *The Parrot and Other Poems*, published 1988; I have never seen a copy,

but with only 64 pages it can hardly be anything like comprehensive, and apparently some of the poems in the 'Parrot' series weren't actually written by Wodehouse at all. Light verse anthologies tend to include one or two of the same old favourites, such as 'Good Gnus'.

I particularly enjoy the regular *Wooster Sauce* 'Poet's Corner' poems, with their footnotes giving details of the contemporary events that prompted their composition. I would happily pay for a collection of the best of them, though it may be that some are now rather dated. There are collections of the Mulliner stories, the Blandings stories, the Jeeves stories and the Golf stories, so why no collection of the verses? Could it be that, because many of them were originally published in *Punch* and other magazines, copyright is the problem?

From Dr Dilip Joshi

It is a well-known fact that Agatha Christie and Wodehouse were mutual admirers. I was recently reading a Christie's book called *Partners in Crime* – a collection of short stories about the criminal detection adventures of brother and sister Tommy Beresford and Tuppence Cowley. In one story, entitled 'The Adventures of the Sinister Strangers', there is this line: "Bertram, I regret to say, is of quite different character – wild, extravagant and persistently idle." This description fits our beloved Bertie Wooster like a glove! There is also a Bingo in another story in the same volume. Is this a mere coincidence or a left-handed compliment to the Master? Or a return shot for Aunt Agatha?

We Remember

We were saddened to learn of the death of longtime member Nicholas Aldridge in April. Nicholas had been headmaster at Summer Fields in Oxford for many years, and he was a dedicated Wodehousean. The Society extends its sympathy to his family.

We were also sorry to hear of the death of Rob Kooy, age 70, on 6 August. *Norman Murphy writes:* Rob was one of several from the Dutch Wodehouse Society who joined members of the U.S. Society on the famous 1989 Pilgrimage to England. I remember him as an enthusiastic Wodehousean who asked questions constantly and thoroughly enjoyed every moment of that momentous week.

The BBC sent a TV team along to accompany us, and I will never forget the moment when, at Sudeley Castle, the director asked about the Berlin broadcasts. As I wrote afterwards, Rob – to the huge delight of

those listening – dealt him an answer, metaphorically speaking, straight between the eyes. In a few sentences he showed clearly how inappropriate and petty such a question was, and finished by pointing out how Wodehouse's broadcast had shown patience and courage. He had belittled the hardships he had undergone and showed forbearance and understanding with those who had made him suffer.

I remember Rob kindly for another, personal, reason. During the Pilgrimage, he made a comment that I have never forgotten. He said one evening how much he envied me because, unless one was a native-born English speaker, one missed 90 per cent of Wodehouse's references. That started me thinking, and I realised how right he was. The result was the 20-year project which became *A Wodehouse Handbook*. I shall always be grateful to Rob for putting that thought in my head. He will be missed.

Double Bill at The George

Peter Read reports on our meeting of July 12

Another mirth-filled first for The P G Wodehouse Society (UK) at our July meeting, beginning with distinguished News International cricket journalist Murray Hedgcock declaiming he would not be censored in his latest exposé. Research for this had begun in 1973 following a meeting with a young Army major, Norman Murphy, who convinced him that every journalist has a book in him. However, Murray finally eschewed sensationalism for PGW, to whom he had been introduced in the 1940s through the *Great Book of Humour*, featuring ‘The Ordeal of Young Tuppy’. A second creative angel, Tony Ring (when was the last time he was called that?), appeared on the scene, and *Wodehouse at the Wicket* was finally launched in 1997 – a fascinating blend of Hedgcock and Wodehouse, enjoyable even to cricketophobes like myself.

Amidst a feast of anecdotes, Murray calmly informed us that one bookseller had advertised a copy at £357 but did not reveal if it had been sold, although I now gaze on my edition with even greater affection. One fine memento was passed round, prepared by the publishers, of a unique edition bound in a leather facsimile cricket bat. Of course, for those in the know, all this was leading up to the great sales pitch of The New Edition (in paperback), with Murray at the ready with his sharpened signing pen. He told us proudly of its exalted place in the Amazon best-seller list, although this has now sadly slipped to place number 28,602. Don't let this scandal continue – go buy your copy before booksellers force the price into the stratosphere again!

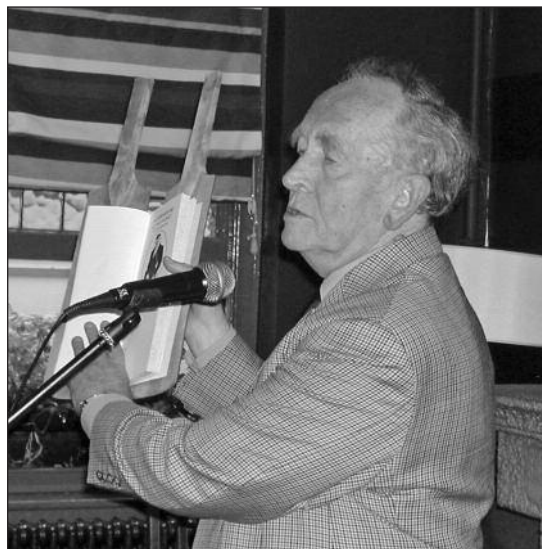
By now, though, the excitement was almost unrestrained, and we moved from delight to delight as the first international Plum quiz of the Society beckoned; we had an erudite Dutch team competing. Committee member Paul Kent, our question master,



The Cabinet celebrate their win in the Society's first pub quiz.

gave us 25 quick-fire questions ranging from the proverbially sublime to the ridiculous, but followed the best quiz master maxim of enabling everyone to think they had performed well (until the scores revealed others had done better!). I am sure he was not (well, hardly at all) intimidated by having Norman and Tony riding shotgun as the answers were revealed. My team, ‘The Guildford Six’ – named after question 1 (you have the answer, now find the question!) – thought we had performed fairly well with a score of 23, temporarily forgetting Paul's cunning use of bonuses for such gems as naming the ingredients of Jeeves's hangover cure. No, we didn't know that Lord Emsworth had five pig men, although of course there were aspersions cast on whether Monica Simmonds counted; and yes, we failed to count all the noble Earl's sisters, finding it difficult to believe there were ten!

The winners, entitled ‘The Cabinet’, perhaps demonstrating more brain power per square inch than others with the same title, romped home with revelations such as knowing which Mulliner invented Buck-U-Uppo (it was Wilfred), although there was no evidence that any of those present needed such a tonic. Indeed, it was apparent that joining us at The George at a future event will soon make such remedies redundant.



Murray shows off his first-edition book/cricket bat.

Sergeant-Major Flannery's moustache was long and blonde and bushy, and it shot heavenwards into two glorious needle-point ends, a shining zareba of hair quite beyond the scope of any mere civilian. Non-army men may grow moustaches and wax them and brood over them and be fond and proud of them, but to obtain a waxed moustache in the deepest and holiest sense of the words, you have to be a Sergeant-Major.

(From *Money for Nothing*, 1928)

Did He or Didn't He?

or, The First Imposter in Wodehouse?

On 17 July, the *Daily Telegraph* reported that the world (well, the important part of it anyway) was ringing with the news that a letter written by Wodehouse to the *New York Tribune* in 1920 had just come to light. Stuart Y. Silverstein was trawling through newspaper microfiche records looking for material on Dorothy Parker and the Algonquin set when he came across it. For those who do not recognise the name of Grantland Rice (1880–1954), he was a famous sportswriter, perhaps best remembered today for coining the term ‘The Four Horsemen’ for the 1924 Notre Dame backfield.

Herewith the letter as it appeared in the paper.

My Dear Old Soul:

I hate to bother you and all that sort of thing, but if you've a spare moment I wish you'd toddle down the passage and speak to Grantland Rice. I mean to say, all that stuff he wrote in yesterday's jolly old issue about chappies being “chopped into pink ribbons” and the blighter with the “red grin that bubbled gore.” What I mean is, he doesn't seem to realize that we lads who take *The Tribune* read it at breakfast, and, believe me, dear old son, when Jeeves, my man, slipped a couple of fried eggs in front of me just at what you might call the psychological moment, it was a near thing, laddie, a very near thing. Jolly old Rice, I've no doubt, is one of those healthy, hearty fellows who skip out of bed like two-year-olds and feel perfectly topping before breakfast, but in my case—well, you know how it is. I'm never much of a lad until after the morning meal. And, when it comes to having to breakfast on red grins and bubbling gore, well, I mean to say, what! I mean, you know what I mean, I mean!

Well, that's all. Cheerio and all that sort of rot! Good-bye-ee!

BERTIE WOOSTER.

(per pro P. G. Wodehouse, Secy.)

The question that is rapidly setting brother against brother and, presumably, sister against sister is – did Wodehouse write it?

Mr Silverstein, who discovered the letter, has no doubts. He points out that Wodehouse had boxed

when he was young and followed the sport later. He also points out that Jeeves and Wooster “were virtually unknown then, just a few short stories in magazines here, no books, so they were hardly good candidates for parody”. Mr Silverstein's views cannot be readily dismissed. He has some status in this matter and contributed to the *Oxford English Dictionary* on American usage in the early 20th century. A Los Angeles lawyer, he is the author of *Not Much Fun: The Lost Poems of Dorothy Parker*.

That opens the case for the defence. The novelist, critic, and Wodehouse enthusiast Philip Hensher supports Mr Silverstein's view and believes that the Wodehouse authorship is “quite likely”.

But now we turn to the prosecution, where one point made was that Wodehouse would never have spelled ‘realize’ with a ‘z’. We have to point out from our editorial chair that he might well have done. Wikipedia states bluntly that: “Perhaps as a reaction to the ascendancy of American spelling, the *-ize* spelling is often incorrectly viewed in Britain as an Americanism, and *-ise* is more commonly used in the UK mass media and newspapers, including *The Times* [and] *The Daily Telegraph*, . . . Meanwhile, *-ize* is used in many British-based academic publications, such as *Nature*, the *Biochemical Journal*, and the *Times Literary Supplement*.” And while we would never rely on Wikipedia as an authority, many sources agree with it, as does our edition of *Fowler's Modern English Usage*.

But let's read through the letter again. Is it not just *too* Woosterish? Are there not just too many forced Bertie mannerisms? And look at the last two sentences. Would Wodehouse ever have added the second, repetitious and unnecessary, “I mean, you know what I mean, I mean!”? It is on that basis and more that certain Wodehouse authorities – who shall remain nameless – have concluded that the letter was not written by Wodehouse. One authority has even suggested that the letter's author was a member of the famed Algonquin Round Table, trying to show he or she could write in the Wodehouse manner.

If all that is fairest and best of the Wodehouse world – i.e., *Wooster Sauce* readers – cannot decide, then nobody can. Your views, please. And, if it wasn't Wodehouse, who was it? And why?

Another in Our Ongoing Series 'You Better Believe It' – from *The Times* of March 17

Church News – The Rev. Canon John Edward Holbrook, rector, Wimborne Minster St. Cuthberga, and priest-in-charge, Witchampton, Stanbridge and Long Crichel with Moor Cricket St. Mary and priest-in-charge, Horton Chalbury, Hinton Martel and Holt St. James, and rural dean Wimborne Deanery, and chaplain, South and East Dorset Primary Care Trust (Salisbury), to be Bishop of Brixworth (Peterborough).

(Thanks to MURRAY HEDGCOCK)

Neville Cardus and PGW

by Cyril P. Hershon

In his literary biography of PGW, Benny Green described how Mike, “out in the harsh world of economic expediency”, comes to Acacia Road, Dulwich (where else?), and the landlady who opens the door to him is so glum-looking that Wodehouse designates her as a member of the Wilkie Baird rather than the George Robey school. In his footnote on these two “dame” impersonators, Green points out that “one of Wodehouse’s contemporaries, Sir Neville Cardus, shared with him an idolatry of Baird and Robey”.

Now, no one is going to claim that PGW had a great musical knowledge anywhere near to our possibly most distinguished music critic, but he was much involved with the music stage and worked closely with Jerome Kern, who described him as the best lyricist of the age, even if he could not read music and had to compose his lyric to a rhythm (dum-dum-da-dum). On the other hand, what they had in common was cricket. Apart from being one of our most distinguished cricket writers, Neville Cardus was a professional: from 1912 to 1916 he was cricket coach at Shrewsbury School. Who wrote more realistically and enthusiastically about the game than PGW, who actually appeared six times at Lords as a player?¹ Moreover, do we not owe the name of Jeeves to Percy Jeeves, the Warwickshire professional, who was killed in France in 1916?

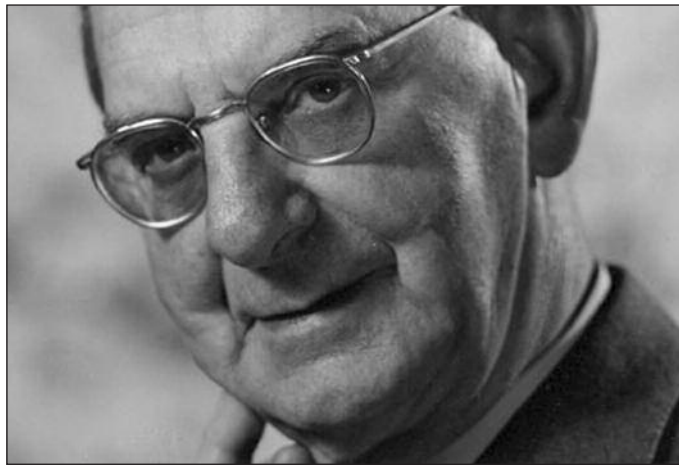
I suppose that I shall have to confess that the two writers who most influenced my life from an early age were Wodehouse and Sir Neville Cardus. In his latter days, Cardus admitted that he was very intellectual when he was 35: “I used to sniff at P. G. Wodehouse. I read him now, because I have worked through the Goethes, the Dantes, the Checkhovs and Ibsens, and I have become younger.” Members of our Society will rejoice to see our idol numbered among such distinguished company. Were he alive today, Cardus would be horrified, as some of us are, at the puerile content of many examination boards’ syllabus of English Literature. He had distinct encouragement for youngsters:

If a youngster of 12 or 13 wants to be a writer, let him read as many good books as he can get hold of. Not just high-faluting highbrow

books. I don’t want him to spend all his time reading Sophocles and Shakespeare. He should read the world’s best literature – from Aristophanes to Dostoevsky to P. G. Wodehouse – and the bigger the range the better.

How many of us share Cardus’s philosophy of reading – “I will no longer read anything that isn’t witty or written with charm. I will not read anything that doesn’t entertain me. I must have wit.” Need I

say more? And incidentally, it was Norman Murphy who reminded us that Wodehouse’s favourite Greek playwright was Aristophanes² because the Greek gave his audiences local and topical references that they loved. The problem is, what was topical in his day is not necessarily understood by today’s readers. Norman has also pointed out that



Neville Cardus, 1888–1975

Wodehouse quoted from more sources than any other writer³; “Rem acu,” as Jeeves would have said and Plautus certainly did, “tetigisti”, and I shed a silent tear for those of you who were unfortunate enough never to have learned Latin. Cardus was, of course, so well read that little would have been wasted on him. He certainly had all the touches that a humorous writer needed, and one could well have expected the following from the pen of the master; describing an unbelievably dull Roses match, Cardus wrote:

Saturday’s play sometimes compelled a watcher here and there to emulate the Frenchmen at the Court of Frederick the Great and conjugate the verb *s’ennuyer*.⁴

Or again:

Today the English innings for a time groaned and moaned like the dreadful music in Saint-Saëns opera where Samson turns the millstone round.⁵

Cardus railed against snobbishness in the arts and said that few people – even cultured literary men – would scoff if he admitted that he read not only Balzac, Tolstoy, and Proust, but that he also had a tremendous amount of pleasure from P. G.

Wodehouse. When he complained that too much radio and television were cheapening music, it was because “all the arts, except music, are more or less made out of the materials of everyday life. Literature, from Shakespeare to P. G. Wodehouse, is made out of words.” This led him at a later date to place the latter among the great producers of master works:

The ultimates in life are the creative achievements of the human spirit. No wars, no brutality, can nullify the eternally-existing masterpieces: the works of Michaelangelo, Beethoven and Chopin; the G minor symphony, the songs of Schubert, the boisterous and idiotic humour of Bertie Wooster.

We started by comparing the love of the two writers for cricket, but in a BBC interview in 1975, Wodehouse confessed: “My game now is baseball. Oh, I’m crazy about it. I’d much rather watch a

baseball game than a cricket match.” Whereas when Cardus, towards the end of his life, was asked why his love of music had outlived his love of cricket, he replied: “Whatever I may have said about cricket, and the human characteristics it can reveal, it is only a game. And I hope to goodness it will remain a game and not be made into a Saturday-afternoon entertainment.”

Note: All quotations, unless otherwise stated, come from Robin Daniels’s *Conversations with Cardus*, London, Gollancz, 1976.

¹ For details of PGW and cricket, see Murray Hedgcock’s *Wodehouse at the Wicket*, London, 1997; republished by Arrow Books, 2011.

² *A Wodehouse Handbook*, vol. 1, 2006: 76.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, introduction: 1.

⁴ *Play Resumed with Cardus*, London, 1979: 36.

⁵ *Ibid.*: 52.

News from the World of Cricket

A Very Charitable Match

PATRICK KIDD writes: A stately home, a moat, picnics, Bob Miller in blazer and cravat, and a ridiculously shaped cricket bat. Yes, all the essential ingredients were there for the fifth annual charity match between the Gold Bats, representing the PGW Society, and the Kirby Strollers, a team captained in the very loosest sense by yours truly.

Again, Audley End House near Saffron Walden was the venue for the match, which has raised more than £3,000 since 2007 for charity from the kind donations of players and spectators. This year, the beneficiaries were Bart’s Hospital’s appeal for a ‘Cyber Knife’, a laser used for treating tricky cancers, and the Helen Rollason Cancer Charity in Chelmsford, supported by Bob since the Gold Bats captain is receiving treatment for prostate cancer.

We play special rules to ensure that everyone enjoys themselves (and thus donates more). Batsmen retire at 25, so everyone gets a bat; bowlers get only five overs each; and, crucially, you cannot be out first ball, which this year had to be faced with ‘The Mongoose’, a special bat with a double-length handle and a smaller but more meaty blade.

Glen Walker, opening for the Gold Bats, hit the first ball of the match over the square-leg boundary, across the road and towards Cambridge, but he was the only man to hit a six. The Gold Bats made 166 for 9, but the Strollers, with their first six men all passing 20, won by eight wickets.

A rematch was played the next day at Fenner’s, in Cambridge, with some Gold Bats representing Bob’s Gents of Essex CID team, while the Strollers were supplemented by Rosalie Birch, the Ashes-winning former England women’s cricketer. Birch made 35, but the Strollers lost by 70 runs.

Wodehouse Number 1 in Cricket

In the *Daily Telegraph* of 13 August, as a sidebar to an article about England’s current test cricket team, James McCall provided a list of his “All-time amateur XI”. At number 1 was our very own P. G. Wodehouse: “‘Plum’ opened the batting for Dulwich College and was the first secretary of the Hollywood Cricket Club. At its peak the club contained a wealth of expat thespians including Cary Grant, Basil Rathbone and Errol Flynn.” Following Plum in the batting order of best amateur cricketers are The Duke of Wellington, former prime minister Sir John Major, actor Boris Karloff, playwright Harold Pinter, author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, actor Russell Crowe, hairdresser Siegfried Sassoon, actor David Niven, author (and founder of the Allahakbarries) J. M. Barrie, and musician Eric Clapton.

Pigs, Cricket and Woodhouses

TONY RING writes: No, it’s not one of those annoying spelling mistakes. Michael Atherton, former England cricket captain, wrote in the *Times* on 11 August about Woodhouses Cricket Club in Lancashire, for which he played as a teenager before joining Lancashire. The club has made it to the final of the National Village Knockout, played at Lord’s on 4 September.

Atherton writes that in past years the village of Woodhouses was said to house more pig farms per square mile than any other village in the country, although now many have been converted to stabling horses or even sold off as building land.

Wouldn’t Plum have a big grin on his face at the concatenation of circumstances which is providing a national link between a derivation of his family name and two of his favourite subjects?

The ‘Little World’ of Giovannino Guareschi

Brief history of a great Italian writer

by Rodolfo Montecuccoli

I was studying at the university in Genoa, my native city, when I read one of P. G. Wodehouse’s books for the first time. It was *Mulliner Nights*, a book that I bought at a little bookshop inside the local railway station. In the middle of the shop there was a big table with piles of old books all over it. Books were also lying all over the floor, with only a little path allowing customers to reach the cash register in the corner.

Before that day, I had never heard of the Master or his great characters. Although it is not easy to find Wodehouse’s books in Italy, I now have a shelf full of his works. Well, you know all about PGW, so I don’t need to tell you how funny his books are and how much I appreciate his mastery of the English language.

However, I’d like to tell you something about an Italian author, Giovannino Guareschi, whose wit, strong personality, and humour remind me of the great English writer. Guareschi was born at the beginning of the 20th century in a little village near Parma, a few kilometres away from Giuseppe Verdi’s birthplace. As a journalist and a humorist, he was in charge of a bellicose little paper, *Candido* (The Naïve), which became a leader in the battle against the Communist Party during the 1948 Italian general election campaign. These elections, won by the Catholic Party (Democrazia Cristiana), signalled a very important point in the Italian history.

Guareschi was not only a great writer but also a brave man. During the Second World War, he spent a long time in a German concentration camp as an officer of the Italian army, an experience that he humorously described in one of his books, *Diario Clandestino* (My Secret Diary). Guareschi is also considered the father of Italian cartoons – that is, drawings in newspapers or magazines that make a strong, amusing political criticism. Some of his drawings are very famous in our country, and many of his witty remarks are even used by common people today. Like Wodehouse, Guareschi had problems with the authorities and with some

important politicians as a result of his strong political satires. For example, he spent more than one year in jail as a consequence of a drawing published in the *Candido* that was considered offensive to the Italian president. Nevertheless, he never gave up his ideas, and many Italian satirical writers and artists have to thank him for the freedom they enjoy today in their work.

Guareschi is known all over the world for his ‘Don Camillo and Peppone’ books, also called ‘Mondo Piccolo’ (‘small world’), which tell the story of a combative priest, Don Camillo, and his political counterpart, Peppone (Big Joe), the village’s communist mayor. Don Camillo is the parish priest of Brescello, a village near Parma in the Po River valley. The little town is ruled by the Communist Party and Peppone, who often uses devious methods in the struggle between the farm labourers and the landowners. Don Camillo is the only one brave and clever enough to oppose Peppone, who is an uneducated car mechanic elected mayor at the end of the war in a region that has long been a stronghold of the Communist Party. Although Peppone and Don Camillo often solve their differences with a volley of blows, they secretly appreciate and respect each other. The two men undergo many adventures, including driving an abandoned German tank through the night.

The third protagonist of the story is the Christ crucified on the high altar of Don Camillo’s church. In fact, it is a speaking Crucifix, whose words only Camillo can hear. It is his conscience persuading him to love and understand other people and their problems.

In that part of Italy, called Emilia-Romagna, many neighbouring families are in constant dispute over past incidents such as a hen killed by a cart on a nearby path, a pear tree grown on the border between their properties or an opposed marriage. These arguments can be settled only by Peppone and Don Camillo with the help of Jesus from the high altar. However, the stories I like best are the ones in



This illustration is a self-portrait by Guareschi

which the two protagonists work together to help the local community. For example, during a long strike called by the Communist Party, our two heroes spend the whole night secretly milking and feeding hundreds of cows to



Rodolfo, preparing to enjoy another Guareschi - or should he read another Wodehouse?

prevent them from starving. This is the true spirit of the stories: two friends divided by politics who can't live without each other and their native land, the so-called Bassa (low land), through which the river Po flows.

Wodehouse created for us a magic world that probably never existed, in England or anywhere else, where we can take refuge for a couple of hours, knowing that a happy ending is assured. In Guareschi's books, one can find humour and fun but also some melancholy for a society that has disappeared, a part of our history dead and buried, living again only in our hearts.

If you want to know something more about the Italian way of life during the 1950s, Giovannino Guareschi is the right author. You will be able to appreciate the countryside and the poor and simple life of our grandparents, described with humour and biting wit. Wodehouse and Guareschi spent their lives practically in the same era, marked by two terrible wars and by poverty. I think that if you like the English Master, you will also appreciate the Italian humorist as I do. I would especially recommend *The Little World of Don Camillo* and *Don Camillo and His Flock*.

The blighter Sir Greg of Matchingham
Loved fat pigs so much he tried snatching 'em.
However, the Empress of Blandings
Stayed top of the porcine standings.

– Richard Heller

Percy Frobisher Pilbeam
Is on to a lucrative scheme
If before it goes to press
He can find Gally's m.s.

– Jenny & Susan Inglis

News About Wodehouse's 'Money Received for Literary Work' Notebook

by John Dawson

Earlier this year, I sought and received permission from Sir Edward Cazalet to receive the first-ever scans of the famous Wodehouse 'Money Received' notebook, which resides at Dulwich College. Others have been permitted to view and copy portions of the 108-page journal, but according to Calista Lucy, the Dulwich archivist, this is the first time the Wodehouse Estate has authorized the release of the entire notebook for study.

The journal consists of Wodehouse's handwritten notations of his sales from February 1900 to February 1908, listing titles, publications, and payments received, in addition to noting his Globe salary every week and payments he received for his earliest theatre work. The notebook has yielded a number of insights into Wodehouse's early London years and enabled my writing partner, Terry Mordue, and me to identify and locate several previously unfound Wodehouse pieces and to correct and supplement a number of McIlvaine entries. There are also a number of extraneous comments that have provided us much joy and head-scratching!

The first part of our work is an exact transcription of the notebook. This has proven to be painstaking, as much of Wodehouse's handwriting and accounting methodology has been difficult to decipher at times. But that part is essentially finished and formatted, and it presents a more complete view of Wodehouse's London years than we have seen before.

The main focus of the project is to annotate more than 700 entries, covering Wodehouse's earliest articles, poems, stories, and books as well as the personalities he wrote about and the publications he wrote for. There will be much information for the Wodehouse enthusiast! One thing that immediately stands out for me is that without this notebook, many of Wodehouse's early pieces would have been lost forever, as many were published without a byline or were published in long-forgotten, un-indexed periodicals and newspapers. Only the survival of this 111-year-old document has enabled bibliographers, biographers, and collectors to know of his earliest, non-book work. We hope to enhance Wodehouse scholarship by researching and writing about every entry in the journal. We are trying to locate every previously unpublished item listed in the notebook, and with the help of numerous Wodehouseans all over the globe, we've narrowed our search down to a few elusive items!

It will be up to the Estate to govern what we can release to the public, but I expect that Sir Edward will be receptive to making our research available to members of the UK and US societies. We expect to have a finished product by Spring 2012.

Further Details Will Be Provided

by Tony Ring

3 – When Is a Mulliner Story Not a Mulliner Story?

Another complication which we faced in the construction of the Society's recent publication *A Simplified Chronology of P G Wodehouse Fiction* concerned the treatment of stories which were not necessarily narrated by Mr Mulliner in all their published formats, i.e., magazines and book collections in both the UK and America. Believe it or not, there were eight examples of stories which were only narrated by Mr Mulliner when published in book form in both the UK and the US, another which only became a Mulliner story in the US book version, and two more which were narrated by Mr Mulliner in each format *except* in the American magazine! This note provides details for which the *Chronology* had no space.

Three of the stories were first published even before Mr Mulliner made his first appearance in 1926 in the July issue of the UK *Strand* magazine and the 3 July issue of *Liberty* in America. Two of these were the first adventures of the delightful Bobbie Wickham, whose family relationship to Mr Mulliner was not disclosed until the appearance of the collection *Mr Mulliner Speaking* in 1929, by which time she had also been drawn into the purview of Bertie Wooster in 'Jeeves and the Yuletide Spirit'.

And then there were two further post-war stories with a Mulliner variation which had even more complex bibliographical histories.

The following notes briefly summarise the changes made in the relevant stories.

* * * * *

'Something Squishy' (*Saturday Evening Post* 20 December 1924; *Strand* January 1925)

The new introduction to the story in *Mr Mulliner Speaking*, in which Mr Mulliner tells his friends at the Anglers' Rest of a visit he had paid to his cousin Lady Wickham, discloses that her major concern was that her daughter Roberta did not get married. This serves to provide a frame for the story, which otherwise is more or less unchanged from its earlier magazine version.

'Honeysuckle Cottage' (*Saturday Evening Post* 24 January 1925; *Strand* February 1925)

The narrator of the original version was anonymous but had heard the tale, like Mr Mulliner, from James Rodman. It was an eerie and stormy night when Rodman asked that narrator if he believed in ghosts, whereas in *Meet Mr Mulliner* (where, unsubtly, it was the last story in the book), Mr Mulliner himself

asked the same question of his assembled coterie at the Anglers' Rest. But after the first page or two, both versions merged into one.

'The Awful Gladness of the Mater' (*Saturday Evening Post* 21 March 1925; *Strand* May 1925)

Pausing only to refresh his glass, Mr Mulliner narrated this story in *Mr Mulliner Speaking* immediately after his first tale about Bobbie Wickham. To enable him to do so, Wodehouse only had to amend about a page of text to make the original scene-setting appropriate to the new narrator.

'Those in Peril on the Tee' (*Liberty* 21 May 1927; *Strand* June 1927)

In its magazine versions, it was a story related by the Oldest Member, and there was no Mulliner relation within three niblick shots. It was included in the collection *Mr Mulliner Speaking* in both the UK and USA.

'The Passing of Ambrose' (*Strand* July 1928; *Cosmopolitan* August 1928)

This story was converted into a Mulliner narrative by the simple expedient of adding '... (said Mr Mulliner) ...' into the text of the first paragraph of narrative! Quite obviously the publishers were anxious to complete the selection of nine stories for *Mr Mulliner Speaking*, and they used the most rudimentary adaptation possible to convert another non-Mulliner tale into something usable.

'Best Seller' (*Cosmopolitan* June 1930; *Strand* July 1930)

The magazine version of this story published in America did not have the Mulliner frame which was then used for the *Strand* version – but it was the *Strand* version that found its way into *Mulliner Nights* on each side of the Atlantic. *Cosmopolitan* evidently preferred an Americanised text, so the British Egbert Mulliner was renamed George Gossett, the location of his rest cure changed from Burwash Bay to Wissapehawkit Bay, and the publisher used by Evangeline was Mainprice and Schwartz in the USA rather than the more British-sounding Mainprice and Peabody.

'Quest' (*Cosmopolitan* April 1931; *Strand* July 1931), which became 'The Knightly Quest of Mervyn' in *Mulliner Nights*

Both magazine versions of this story were told at the Drones Club about Freddie Widgeon, rather than at the Anglers' Rest about Mervyn Mulliner.

‘The Rise of Minna Nordstrom’ (*American March* 1933)

As with ‘Best Seller’, the American magazine version ignored the possibilities of Mr Mulliner’s narrative style. Admittedly, the Mulliner narrative provided less detail than usual about the involvement of his relations in the plot, as he merely referred to the fact that “I have relatives and connections in Hollywood, as you know, and I learn much of the inner history of the studio world through these channels.” He never claimed that Minna Nordstrom, née Vera Prebble, was an actual relation.

‘Romance at Droitgate Spa’ (*Saturday Evening Post* 20 February 1937; *Strand* August 1937)

Not generally regarded as a Mulliner story, this tale of Frederick Fitch-Fitch became one only when Mr

Mulliner claimed him as ‘a distant connection’ for the somewhat individual American collection *The Crime Wave at Blandings*. The meat of the story is the same as in the UK book version (in *Eggs, Beans and Crumpets*) and the two magazine versions.

‘Big Business’ (*Colliers* 13 December 1952; *Lilliput March* 1953)

A full analysis of the changes in this story will be provided in the next *Wooster Sauce*.

‘The Right Approach’ (*Lilliput* September 1958; *Playboy*, January 1959)

Again, a full analysis of the complicated history of this story will be provided in the fifth *Wooster Sauce* article in this series.

Handkerchief Etiquette

For *Wooster Sauce* readers who do not reside in the United States, a brief explanation: Miss Manners, aka Judith Martin, is an American agony aunt who specialises in issues regarding proper behaviour. This past June, THOMAS YOUNG shared with the denizens of PGWnet the following snippet from her column:

Dear Miss Manners,

Is it appropriate for men’s handkerchiefs to be monogrammed? Jeeves of P. G. Wodehouse fame informs me that it is not, but I do know it was acceptable practice in earlier periods of English history. I am fortunate to have the men in my life use handkerchiefs, and want to know acceptable practice for the time when they need replacement (the articles of clothing, not the men).

Gentle Reader,

Jeeves may have forgotten that such initials serve a practical function. A gentleman always carries an extra handkerchief, in order to be able to hand a fresh one to a lady who is crying, especially if he is the one who made her cry.

Surely, she will want to launder it and return it, or perhaps keep it to remind her of him. For that reason, it is considered improper to buy handkerchiefs with one initial only; one must order them embroidered with two, preferably three, initials. After all, the lady may have been upset by more than one “B” or “W.”

This is all well and good, but some of us were left wondering about the source of Gentle Reader’s information that Jeeves considers monograms inappropriate. It turns out that that, according to LUCIAN ENDICOTT, it is not from Plum himself but from the TV series *Jeeves and Wooster*, season 2, episode 2. So are we really to believe it? You decide.

Little Nuggets

The Hong Kong Connection

In the *Sunday Morning Post* (Hong Kong) of 15 May, Jason Wordie writes of PGW’s initial career working for the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, and singles out Sir Thomas Jackson, Wodehouse’s boss, as being “an important footnote in literary history, as he was the person that impelled world-renowned author P. G. Wodehouse into a literary career”. Wordie concludes that even though Wodehouse never went there, perhaps the city provided some inspiration: “For many years certain long-established trading companies provided a natural haven for clones of Bertie Wooster-ish public school types, the Hong Kong Club was The Oldest Member’s natural habitat, and both the Helena May and Ladies Recreation Club have numbered more than a few formidable Aunt Agatha types among their ranks down the decades.” (Thanks to JULIE CALLAN)

A Word a Day: Jeeves

Subscribers to the website Wordsmith.org receive a daily message celebrating “The Magic of Words”. The last week in June featured “fictional men and women who have walked off the pages of their books and entered the dictionary”, with Monday’s entry looking at ‘Jeeves’. Meaning: “A personal servant, especially one who is resourceful and reliable.” Etymology: “After Reginald Jeeves, a valet in the stories by P. G. Wodehouse. Jeeves first made his appearance in a short story in 1915. Earliest documented example of the word used allusively: 1952.” (Thanks to CAROLINE FRANKLYN and SUSAN COLLICOTT)

The village hall was one of those mid-Victorian jobs in glazed red brick which always seem to bob up in these olde-worlde hamlets and do so much to encourage the drift to towns. Its interior, like those of all the joints of this kind I’ve ever come across, was dingy and fuggy and smelled in about equal proportions of apples, chalk, damp plaster, Boy Scouts and the sturdy English peasantry.

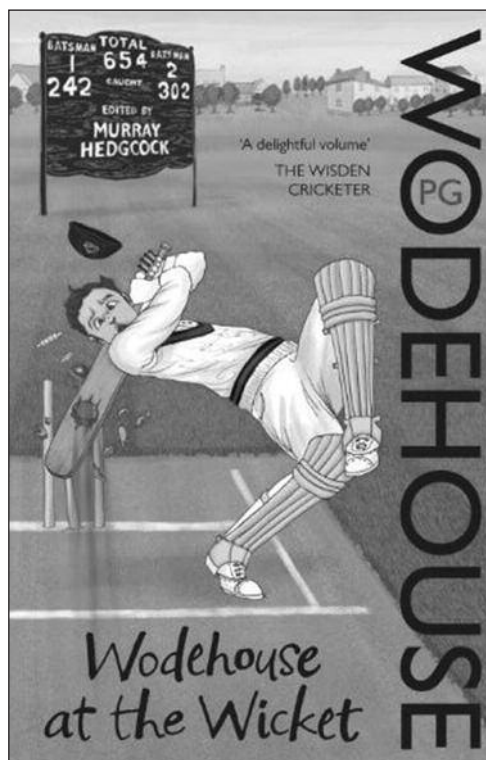
(From *The Mating Season*, 1949)

A Classic Work Now in Paperback

Robert Bruce reviews *Wodehouse at the Wicket*

Turn to page 79 of this book and start to read an extract from *Psmith in the City*: “There are few more restful places, if one wishes to think, than the upper balconies of Lord’s pavilion.” And I happen to know that this is also where the editor of this wonderful book can often be found – that is, when he is not on his even loftier perch in the press box. Murray Hedgcock – cricket journalist, historian, and Wodehousean in good and long standing – has devoted much thought to this, the definitive compendium of Wodehouse and cricket. The result is that the book hardly touches the sides as it goes down. Everything Wodehouse wrote – prose, poetry, doggerel, and quips about cricket – is here, even a column he ghosted for the *Daily Mail* for an old school bowling chum a few weeks before he made his England debut. And, of course, there is a lengthy section by Hedgcock himself in which he puts it all into context, provides the biographical insights, analyzes the Wodehouse cricketing career (some excellent research here), and generally sorts out everything you could possibly wish to know.

Murray talks of the schooldays of fast bowling; the days of games for the Authors vs Actors, with Conan Doyle as captain; games for J. M. Barrie’s eccentric team; games down in Emsworth and, eventually, at the Hollywood Cricket Club. And, of



Wodehouse at the Wicket, edited by Murray Hedgcock, published by Arrow Books

course, he analyzes the sections of the books where cricket takes its place in the plot. The account of Mike’s innings at Lord’s is still a very fine study of what it must be like to work your way towards a century (and then celebrate at Simpsons, “at liberty to eat till you were helpless”). And it also becomes clear that, much as we might have wished otherwise, cricket (what we would give for an account of a midsummer game at Blandings) could not have much space within the works if the main source of income was the *Saturday Evening Post* and an American market.

This being the paperback version of the now rare and sought-after hardback of 1997, it also includes much new research and, of course, a short section on the Society’s own cricket team, the Gold Bats.

In an ideal world, we would all sit atop Lord’s pavilion reading this book on an afternoon of idyllic delight. But as you learn from one story, this may not be possible. A dispute about whether wasps are harassing snoozing spectators in the pavilion takes place. “A man in a walrus moustache is drawn into the debate: he insists there are no wasps around – ‘Not in the pavilion at Lord’s. You can’t get in unless you are a member.’” But whether allowed in or not, you could open this book at anytime, anywhere, and feel you were up there on your own personal, and equally sunlit, balcony.

Press Attention for *Wodehouse at the Wicket*

From the *Sunday Times*, 19 June 2011:

Here’s a surprise: Bertie Wooster was a cricketer. P. G. Wodehouse, interviewed in 1971, was asked about the inspiration for his character: “Bertie was an absolutely recognisable type when I started writing about him. How jolly life was in those days! I was thinking of the country house cricket matches. I played in a lot of them. Everyone seemed to have a reasonable amount of money. I mean, the Berties never had to work.”

What’s more, “Catsmeat” Potter-Pirbright, another Wodehouse character, was based on a cricketer called Basil Foster, who worked as an actor so he could play first-class cricket. He made 100 for Actors against Authors at Lord’s in 1907 (high time that fixture was revived at headquarters) before being out caught A. A. Milne bowled Wodehouse; caught Pooh bowled Bertie, I suppose.

This is from the freshly paperbacked *Wodehouse at the Wicket*, edited by Murray Hedgcock. It makes you look forward to rain delays.

(Thanks to CHRIS MIDDLETON, who spotted this item)

Two New Audio Recordings Reviewed

by Tony Ring

Regular readers are aware that there are two principal publishers of Wodehouse books in audio form: CSA Word Ltd, which concentrates on moderately abridged versions of the novels read by Martin Jarvis; and Chivers Audiobooks, with unabridged readings by Jonathan Cecil. Chivers, now owned by AudioGO, recently brought out *Big Money*, while CSA's latest publication is *Something Fresh*.

If you are not familiar with these books – which probably don't come in the first 10 or 20 titles that most Wodehouse readers experience – then these recordings are a very good way to receive an introduction. Both have a cast of mixed British and American origin; both feature earls (a sixth and a ninth), though they are of very different personalities; and both require the voices appropriate to feisty females. Jonathan Cecil and Martin Jarvis approach their challenges with their usual thoroughness and unruffled calm.

Big Money is perhaps an underrated novel and, having been written in 1931, is from Wodehouse's purple patch between the wars. It is the second novel to have been partly set in Valley Fields, Wodehouse's fictional name for Dulwich, and there are almost a dozen important characters for Jonathan Cecil to keep distinguished for his readers throughout.

I had read the book two or three times in years past, but until listening to the recording it had never occurred to me just how similar to Ukridge in character is Lord Biskerton, one of the principals in the story. Cecil's presentation of the personality of 'the Biscuit', as he is called, brought the idea to the fore, and it was more-or-less confirmed just two or three minutes from the end of the book, when the Biscuit presented his friend Berry with a cheque for £2,000, payable to Berry, which the Biscuit had obtained under very false pretences. His part in the following short exchange of dialogue could have come from Ukridge's mouth:

Berry regarded [the cheque], astounded.
 "How did you get this?"
 "Never mind. I have my methods."

"It's signed by Frisby's lawyer."

"Never mind who it's signed by, so long as he's good for the stuff. Endorse it, and lend me half. A vast fortune stares us in the eye, laddie."

Something Fresh was the first of the novels set in Blandings Castle, but it does not carry the frenetic air of farce common to *Summer Lightning* and the later

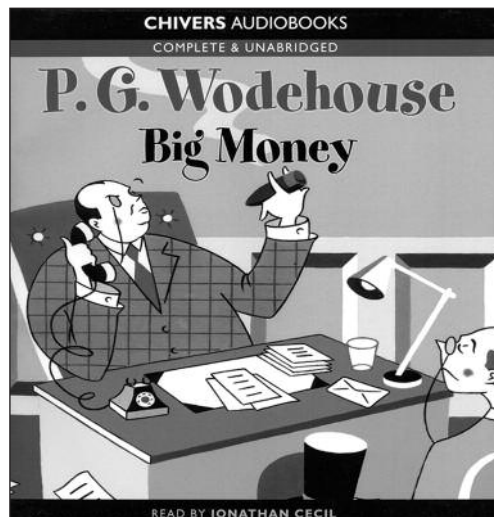
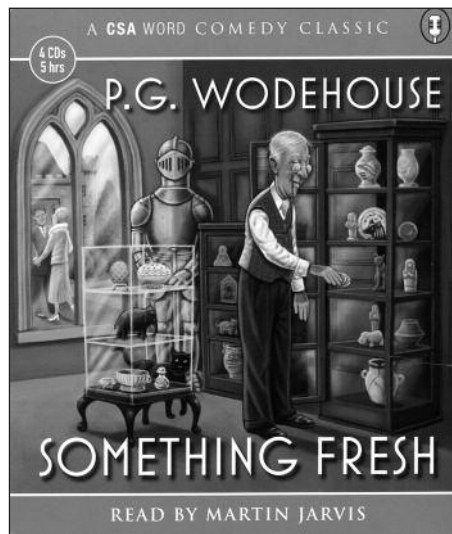
novels. Martin Jarvis is not concerned with either the Empress, Galahad Threepwood or Uncle Fred, but he still has the plot lines of multiple imposters, the theft of a scarab, threatened blackmail, two loving couples, Baxter, and other familiar elements of a Blandings story to worry about. The personalities of Freddie Threepwood, Lord Emsworth,

Baxter, and Beach, all of whom play significant roles in this book, change to some extent by the time of the later novels, but Jarvis knows his characters inside out, and the listener is never in doubt as to who is speaking.

When the book appeared in America as *Something New*, it included an extremely funny scene transposed directly from the school story *Mike and Psmith*. When Jarvis directed a recording of *Something Fresh* for BBC Radio 4 in 2009, the scene, which involves the humiliation of Rupert Baxter, was included, and its successful reception encouraged him to repeat the experiment in this recording. Even if there were no other reason for acquiring the audiobook, the scene's appearance on Disc 4 means that the purchase would represent money well spent.

Big Money, read by Jonathan Cecil
 Chivers Audiobook CCD2522
 (8 CDs, playing time of 8 hrs 10 min)
 Tel: 01225 878000 / www.audiogo.co.uk

Something Fresh, read by Martin Jarvis
 CSA Word Comedy Classic TT4CD 260
 (4 CDs, playing time 5 hrs)
 Tel: 020 7467 0842 / www.csaword.co.uk



The Word Around the Clubs

Jane Austen Said It First

BARRY CHAPMAN recently wrote to point out the following passage found in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*:

The solemn procession, headed by Baddeley [the butler], of tea-board, urn, and cake-bearers, made its appearance . . .

Compare this to the scene in Chapter 1 of *Summer Lightning*:

[A] small but noteworthy procession filed out of the house and made its way across the sunbathed lawn . . . It was headed by James, a footman, bearing a laden tray. Following him came Thomas, another footman, with a gateleg table. The rear was brought up by Beach, who carried nothing, but merely lent a tone.

Well, all right, Jane Austen may have said it first, but as is often the case, P. G. Wodehouse said it better.

A Crossword Conundrum

We all remember Aunt Dahlia's irritation with cryptic crossword puzzle clues such as "Measured tread of saint round St Paul's" (answer: pedometer, as Ma McCorkadale could tell you). Well, in a recent discussion thread on PGWnet, SUSHMITA SEN GUPTA drew attention to a crossword from the London *Times* that had been published in the *Hindustan Times* on July 4. The clue: "I've split the atom – smashed to make this novel form (5,2,2,6)."

The answer (which can be found on page 21) provoked fierce debate among the cognoscenti after some arrived at the answer quickly, while others were left, like Aunt Dahlia, frustrated. For those still puzzling it out, here's a hint: the word *smashed* is a clue. Think 'anagram' and you just might get it.

Super Sad True Bollinger Prize

This year's Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize was awarded in May to Gary Shteyngart for his novel *Super Sad True Love Story*. He is the first American to win the prize, which is given to a book that captures "the comic spirit of P. G. Wodehouse". In addition to a jeroboam of champagne and set of Everyman Wodehouse books, the winner is presented with a Gloucester Old Spot pig that is named after his book and sent to live with a herd of the pigs of past winners (such as Salmon Fishing in the Yemen and All Fun and Games Until Somebody Loses an Eye).

According to the *Guardian*, Shteyngart's book is "set in a dystopian, near-future America". The *Guardian* also made note of Wodehouse's American citizenship and commented on the fact that he had set many of his Jeeves & Wooster tales in that country. But it was the *Jewish Chronicle* that had the last word on Shteyngart's win, pointing out that

"Lenny Abramov [its hero] . . . is not a name you'd expect to find within the world of Jeeves and Wooster". (Thanks to STEPHEN GRIFFITHS)

Pursued by Wolves

Harking back to when we were consumed with trying to track down the painting of wolves pursuing a Russian sleigh, TOM HOOKER writes: "Since the time of Czars (*Something Fresh*, 1915), Wodehouse has told of the plight of the Russian wolf: peasant in sight but no meal to follow. A recent clipping from Rostov-on-Don indicates not much has changed in the steppes for nearly 100 years. Despite use of wolf pack tactics: no meal to follow. Urbanized Moscow wolves get their meals in supermarket parking lots."

This message was accompanied by a news clipping regarding a Russian police officer who had stopped a car on a motorway but then had to jump into it to escape a pack of marauding wolves. In a separate incident, grey wolves entered a supermarket car park and found easy pickings in the bags dropped by frightened shoppers. One wonders how Wodehouse would have incorporated such events into his narratives!

A Man and His Caddie

An article by sportswriter Alan Tyers in the *Daily Telegraph* of 12 August examined the relationships between golfers and their caddies. Tyers's conclusion was that caddies are no more than servants to their masters, though rather unique ones at that: they are the "gentleman's personal gentlemen" of the sports world, their give and take with their employers like that of Jeeves and Bertie Wooster. "Be it an irascible aunt or heavy rough," writes Tyers, "the threat of a pasting from Roderick Spode or a noisy spectator snapping photos during a backswing, the employer's Man Friday must have an answer to everything. Jeeves's only point of pushback was in his disapproval of Mr Wooster's predilection for garish, grotesque or ghastly clothing: in the world of golf, everybody dresses horrifically, so this must be borne manfully." To read the full article, see <http://bit.ly/q1AwbD>.

Oops

PETER BORCHERDS has helpfully pointed out a faux pas in the photo caption on page 1 of the last *Wooster Sauce*. As Ian Hay was a man, it should have read '*né* John Hay Beith', not *née*. Blame it on your editor, who comes from an uncivilised land where *née* is used regardless of sex. Peter was understandably confused at first: "Does the caption for the photograph of Major General John Hay Beith C.B.E., M.C. in the article 'The Various Guises of A Damsel in Distress' contain a misprint, or is it relevant to the title of the article?"

Poet's Corner

The Ballade of August

The asphalt bubbles in the sun,
Our canine pets become insane,
Stout gentlemen refuse to run
Even to catch the early train:
There seems some hitch inside my brain,
Some subtle flaw, – I can't tell what
It's useless trying to explain,
I only know I'm very hot.

The streets I rigorously shun,
There's not a sign of cooling rain;
Within my club, when work is done,
A tankard, iced, I slowly drain,
Then send it to be filled again:
It's dangerous to drink a lot,
MDs are careful to explain
I only know I'm very hot.

I scan the papers one by one,
And whisper words that are profane,
I'm tired before I've well begun,
It's much too warm for such a strain:
What's this? A speech by Chamberlain?
Three hundred Warsaw workmen shot?
The Russian army crushed again?
I only know I'm very hot.

An infant poisoned with a bun?
Should Board School masters use the cane?
How much does radium cost a ton?
Well-known bull-fighter killed in Spain?
The Silly Season's come, it's plain,
To me it matters not a jot
The only knowledge I retain
Is this – I know I'm very hot.

From *Books of Today and
Books of Tomorrow*, August 1905.

*(As the summer of 2011 was particularly hot in
many parts of the world, we thought our members
would appreciate this Wodehousean complaint.)*

A Wodehouse Limerick

by Ewart Johns

Bertie was often the dupe
When Stiffy would cunningly stoop
To some dastardly scheme
That would certainly mean
He'd be up to his neck in the soup.

Answer to A Crossword Conundrum (p.20):
Leave It to Psmith

Cosy Moments

Unnatural Death, by Dorothy L. Sayers (1927)
(from Barry Chapman)

Sayers and Wodehouse were mutual admirers, as we learned from Ken Clevenger's article in the March 2010 *Wooster Sauce*. So it is probably no surprise to find this sly (and undoubtedly appropriate) reference in Sayers's book, in a scene where Lord Peter Wimsey is about to ring for his valet, Bunter: "Lord Peter paused, in the very act of ringing the bell. His jaw slackened, giving his long, narrow face a faintly foolish and hesitant look, reminiscent of the heroes of Mr P. G. Wodehouse."

Corduroy Mansions, by Alexander McCall Smith (2011)
(from Angie Meyer)

This book begins a new series by McCall Smith, and on the back cover he is credited with this tribute from the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*: "McCall Smith is the P. G. Wodehouse of our time."

Summer at Fairacre, by Miss Read (1984)
(from Beth Carroll)

In chapter 14 we find the following:

Over my supper of scrambled eggs I had pored over the television programmes for the evening. I was offered a nice half-hour or so of open heart surgery, in glorious technicolour, no doubt, an interview with survivors from a pit disaster, a discussion by drug addicts about their problems, or another on the subject of abortions.

"Well, Tibby," I had said, putting aside the paper, "I think we'll play that old record of Jack Buchanan's, and get on with the P. G. Wodehouse book from the library."

All in all, we had a splendid evening.

Streets Ahead, by Keith Waterhouse (1995)
(from Ian Alexander-Sinclair)

A passage in the second volume of Mr Waterhouse's memoirs, referring to rehearsals for his play *Help Stamp Out Marriage* (cowritten with Willis Hall), includes the comment: "Rehearsing on Broadway was a blissful experience in the mid East Coast fall, rather like being inside one of P. G. Wodehouse's New York novels such as *Jill the Reckless*."

The Deceivers: Allied Military Deception in the Second World War, by Thaddeus Holt (Folio Society, 2008)

(from Barry Chapman)

A surprising Wodehousean reference is found in volume 2 of Mr Holt's work, wherein is described two secret operations during the war that were codenamed UKRIDGE and BLANDINGS. Both were part of a larger operation of deception against the Japanese in the Far East during the war. Barry notes: "Presumably there were Wodehouse fans in the planning staff on the Allied side. Given the number of impostors staying at Blandings Castle over the years, it seems appropriate that it should give its name to a deception plan."

Recent Press Comment

The Times, May 14

In the 'Literary Quiz', Philip Howard asked whose headmaster was the Rev. Aubrey Upjohn, MA. The obvious answer could perhaps be criticised for brevity in view of the several available candidates.

Philadelphia Enquirer, May 21

Its recommendation of four books to read "before time runs out" included *The Code of the Woosters*. (The other three were *War of the Worlds*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *The Boy Scout Handbook*.)

Washington Post, May 24

One of many newspapers to report the first success of an American, Gary Shteyngart, in the annual competition for the Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize for Comic Fiction (see page 20).

Wall Street Journal, May 28

(from Beth Carroll and Tom Smith)

Eric Felten wrote about the Everyman Library Collection's collection of golf stories (PGW contribution: 'The Salvation of George Mackintosh'), which includes works by a plethora of authors, but says that only James Bond's encounter with Auric Goldfinger can rival any of the Wodehouse golf stories.

Radio Station WXXI (Rochester, New York), early June

(from Lynn Vesley-Gross)

Its programme *Fascinating Rhythm* devoted the whole hour to lyrics of Wodehouse.

Belfast Telegraph, June 2

The first to announce Sir Terry Wogan's documentary *Wogan on Wodehouse* for transmission on BBC2 (see p. 1).

The Times, June 2 (from Keith Alsop)

The third leader commented: "A film, a play, a novel, a TV series or a career that does not recognise its natural, pleasing full stop reminds you of the woman P. G. Wodehouse described as looking 'as if she had been poured into her clothes and had forgotten to say "When"'"

Washington Examiner, June 6

One of a number of favourable reports on a production of *By Jeeves* by First Stage at McLean, near Washington, D.C.

The Times, June 6

The clue for 24 across in the crossword was "Man about town goes courting, yet remains eligible bachelor at the end". (Answer: Wooster)

Daily Telegraph, June 10 (from Carolyn de la Plain)

A third leader concerning a proposed curfew on cats in Sydney said, "At night cats, like Falstaff or Bertie Wooster, enjoy going out on the tiles – or up trees, which is where the unsuspecting possums live."

Sun Chronicle, June 12

Journalist Kathy Hickman invited far-flung siblings and their spouses to recommend one book each for summer reading. Her older sister, said that for fun you could not beat PGW, naming *Cocktail Time* and the Blandings Castle series as being without peer.

The Times, June 14 (from Iain Anderson, Christopher Bellew, and Maggie Brockbank)

The 2 down crossword clue was "Wodehouse pens one for the Empress of Blandings (3)". (Answer: pig)

New York Times, June 17 (from Hilary Bruce)

A leader concerning lists of summer beach reading lists noted: "They include books that are fat and credential-building, books that are fat and breezy, and books that Bertie Wooster would be reading if he were going to the South of France."

Daily Telegraph, June 18

(from Larissa Saxby-Bridger and Iain Anderson)

In an article about estate agents and investigations into homes with a history, it was reported that a researcher into PGW's former house in Dunraven Street (formerly Norfolk Street), Mayfair, found reports of "a most un-Jeeves-and-Wooster-like murder that had taken place nearby, where a butler had cut his master's throat".

Daily Telegraph, June 18

(from Iain Anderson and Carolyn de la Plain)

A simple question in the 'Pub Quiz' was: "To whom was Reginald Jeeves a manservant?"

The Times, June 18

In the 'Literary Quiz', Philip Howard asked whose aunts included Augusta (*sic*), Dahlia, and Emily.

The Times, June 20

Simon Barnes provided two snippets from Murray Hedgcock's *Wodehouse at the Wicket*, about Bertie Wooster and Catsmeat Potter-Pirbright.

The Star, June 21

Reported that charity workers at the Chesterfield Oxfam store had discovered early PGW books worth hundreds of pounds in a box of donated books, including a first edition of *Psmith in the City*.

Deccan Chronicle, June 24

Author Mukul Deva wrote that he was a reading addict – for at least an hour a day – and noted his favourites were J. D. Salinger's *Raise High the Roof Beam*, Horace McCoy's *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?*, Bhagwati Charan Verma's *Chitalekha* and "the entire Wodehouse collection".

The Lady, June 28 (from David Salter)

Victoria Murden wrote about the emergence of ladies infiltrating a traditionally male profession in an article entitled 'Much Obligated, Ms Jeeves'. David Salter's letter to the editor pointing out that Jeeves was not a butler was published two weeks later.

Metro, June 29 (from Carolyn de la Plain & Mark Taylor)

Author Tom Holt named Bertie Wooster as his favourite fictional figure. "One of these days I'll write an alternative ending for *The Lord of the Rings* where it's Bertie and Jeeves rather than Frodo and Sam who share that conversation on the slopes of Mount Doom (after Gussie Fink-Nottle snatches the Ring and has fallen into the Fire)."

Sunday Telegraph, July 3

A leader concerned the Bishop of Lichfield's suggestion that vicars should limit the length of their sermons to eight minutes; this, it added, will be depressing news for churchgoers with a fondness for PGW's views expressed in 'The Great Sermon Handicap'.

Sunday Telegraph, July 3 (from David Salter)

Terry Wogan described the joys and problems of reading a concentrated dose of Wodehouse and recollected his all-time favourite PGW bon mot: "There's some raw work done at the baptismal font, Jeeves."

Islington Gazette, July 7,

L. C. Tyler, who writes an Agatha Christie-inspired series of crime novels, said that his principal influences were writers like Wodehouse and Evelyn Waugh.

The Times, July 8

Philip Howard's 'Word Watch' included a question as to whether the word 'Wooster' meant (a) a type of china, (b) a cock, or (c) to behave like an upper-class nitwit. He gave the solution as (c) – to behave like Bertie Wooster.

Daily Telegraph, July 9 (from Chris Middleton)

Reporting on Paul Lawrie's round of 64 in the Scottish Open, which equalled the course record, Alasdair Reid noted that "he only had to look at a putt for his ball to drop obediently into the hole. The consequence was a sight that would have confounded P G Wodehouse: a Scotsman with a grievance who could be mistaken for a ray of sunshine."

Democrat Herald, July 14

Previewed a production of Wodehouse's *The Play's the Thing* at the Majestic Theatre in Corvallis, Oregon.

New Yorker, July 15

Reported very positively on the five Jeeves titles newly reissued by Norton in the USA.

Vancouver Sun, ca July 15 (from Ian Michaud)

One of three very enthusiastic reviews of a new production of *Anything Goes* at the 'Theatre Under the Stars' in Stanley Park, Vancouver.

Telegraph Magazine, July 16

(from Jamie Jarrett and Larissa Saxby-Bridger)

A two-page article concerning broadcaster and Society Patron Henry Blofeld OBE included a section on Henry's favourite author – PGW.

Quote, Unquote, Radio 4, July 18

In a round on sentences the panellist would like to have written, Martin Jarvis identified the Jeeves-Wooster exchange from *The Code of the Woosters*: "There are moments, Jeeves, when one asks oneself 'Do trousers matter?'" "The mood will pass, sir."

Wall Street Journal, July 21

An article asking whether modern technology has been good for the game of golf quoted Wodehouse: "Men capable of governing empires fail to control a small white ball, which presents no difficulties whatever to others with one ounce more brain than a cuckoo clock. I wish to goodness I knew the man who invented this infernal game. I'd strangle him."

Church of England Newspaper, July 22

(from Keith Alsop)

Referring to a radio broadcast that got to the root of a problem it was addressing, a correspondent said that it made him recall "Jeeves complimenting Bertie Wooster with 'rem acu tetigisti' (you have touched the thing with a needle)".

The Times, July 23

Philip Howard's 'Literary Quiz' asked, "Where is the Drones Club?" (Answer given: 1 Dover Street, Mayfair)

Jamaica-Gleaner, July 27

Included a 'shaggy-dog' story in the form of "a conversation between [a Jamaican immigrant lady in England in 1991] and a pedantic, young desk sergeant [which] could easily have been lifted from a P. G. Wodehouse novel".

Columbia Tribune, July 28

Bill Clark described a group to which he belongs named 'Logophobia', to meetings of which members bring examples of unusual words and describe their origins. A professor at Lincoln University had picked three from Wodehouse: *rannygazoo*, *tantivy*, and *volplane*.

Classic Rock Magazine, Summer 2011

Its review of Hugh Laurie's blues recording *Let Them Talk* made reference to his role as Bertie Wooster.

Bibliophile, August 2011

Included another three PGW quotations to introduce their sale offers for Gardening, Humour, and Sport.

The Times, August 1, 2011

(From Keith Alsop and Murray Hedgcock)

In the 'Times Book Club' series, racing correspondent (and onetime cricket writer) Alan Lee enthused about his "beloved Wodehouse" – he has "95 Wodehouse books on their dedicated shelves around my home" – and singled out *The Code of the Woosters* as a favourite.

Fry's English Delight on Radio 4, August 1

(from Larissa Saxby-Bridger)

During a discussion on accents, manners, and breeding, Stephen Fry referred to the *Jeeves and Wooster* characters.

BBC Breakfast on BBC1, August 2

(from Larissa Saxby-Bridger)

Journalist Harry Phibbs also referred to Wodehouse, Jeeves, and Wooster in a discussion about class.

The Guardian, August 4

Writing about the rebranding of BBC Radio 7 as Radio 4 Extra, Elizabeth Mahoney commended one of the early programme choices – a re-broadcast of the Richard Briers/Michael Hordern dramatisation of *What Ho! Jeeves: Joy in the Morning*. She concluded that "as a start to the day, it was effervescent and welcoming, like all the best radio".

Daily Mail, August 9 (from Edward Cazalet)

An article on reading choices mentioned the books that British spy Kim Philby ordered in the 1980s from his exile in Moscow, including works by Wodehouse.

Washington Post, August 10

Alexandra Petri argued that despite the London riots, it was still a good time to be an Anglophile: "There's a lot to like about the English: P. G. Wodehouse, etc, etc".

New Yorker.com/online/blogs/backissues, August 12

Vicky Robb posted a substantial article on 'The Many Names of P G Wodehouse', including references to the pseudonyms he used when writing several articles in each issue of *Vanity Fair* in the mid-1910s.

Financial Times, August 13

An article described the 7th Marquess of Salisbury's enthusiasm for pig breeding and plans to relocate his herd of Tamworths from Dorset to Hatfield House. He received a birthday present of a pregnant Tamworth sow some 25 years ago and, in honour of Wodehouse's star Berkshire, called her 'Empress of Cranborne'.

Future Events for Your Diary

August 25–September 25, 2011

Jeeves in the Morning at Stage West

Stage West Theatre in Houston, Texas, is producing this Wodehouse adaptation written by Mark Richards. For further information, see their website at <http://www.stagewest.org/>. (Note the change of date from what was in the March issue.)

September 17–18, 2011 Newbury Show

The Royal County of Berkshire Show takes place at the Newbury Showground, Berkshire, this weekend. Judging for the Berkshire Pig Champion of Champions, sponsored by the Society, will be held the morning of Sunday the 18th. Come along and join the fun! For further information, see the Show's website at <http://www.newburyshow.co.uk/>.

October 13–16, 2011 The Wodehouse Society Convention, Dearborn, Michigan

The Wodehouse Society will be celebrating P G Wodehouse's 130th birthday at its 16th biennial binge, to be held in Dearborn, Michigan, and hosted by TWS's Pickering Motor Company chapter.

October 28–30, 2011 Follow Wodehouse to Emsworth

With a bit of help from Tony Ring and Norman Murphy, the Brookfield Hotel in Emsworth has put together a wonderful program of events to commemorate PGW's 130th birthday. See the latest information on page 7.

November 1, 2011 Society Meeting and AGM

We will be meeting again at The George, 213 Strand, from 6 p.m. in the upstairs room. We hope to get through our AGM in record time in order to enjoy our guest speaker, the author and journalist Marcus Berkman. See page 4 for details.

February 21, July 10, and November 13, 2012 Society Meetings

We will meet in the upstairs room of The George, 213 Strand, from 6 p.m.; speakers for each meeting to be announced in future issues of *Wooster Sauce*.

October 25, 2012 Dinner at Gray's Inn

Advance notice of the Society's biennial dinner at Gray's Inn. Applications forms and full details will be supplied in the June 2012 edition of *Wooster Sauce*.

Note: Norman Murphy will be conducting three Wodehouse Walks in 2012; dates will be announced in December.

Egbert and Percy, the two swans, had turned in for the night. Each was floating with its head tucked under the left wing; and if there is a spectacle more devoid of dramatic interest than a swan with its head tucked under its wing, it is two swans in that position.

(From *Big Money*, 1931)

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