



# WOOSTER SAUCE

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## A Celebration of Jeeves

by Christine Hewitt

*Editor's note: In August 1913, P. G. Wodehouse attended the Cheltenham Cricket Festival and witnessed a match in which the county team of Gloucestershire defeated Warwickshire by a massive 247 runs. That day as Murray Hedgcock told us in his article in the June issue of Wooster Sauce a bowler for the losing team caught Wodehouse's eye, and he filed the player's name, Percy Jeeves, away in his grey cells. Two years later, when he needed a name for a manservant in a story he was writing, 'Jeeves' struck just the right note and a literary legend was born. One hundred years after the match, the Gloucestershire County Cricket Club organised a celebration of that seminal event to take place during the 2013 Festival on July 17, to be exact, with more than 30 Society members in attendance. Christine reports on this very special occasion.*

At the start of a perfect summer day, the chink of coffee cups and a light rattle of busy knives and forks drifted from an elegantly furnished marquee in which around 100 deeply contented souls were getting outside an excellent brunch.

Happy conversation mingled with outside sounds of an arriving crowd and a gentle flurry of activity indicating the start of play at the Cheltenham Cricket Festival.

Following the meal, the Wodehouse and cricket fans in the marquee enjoyed some enlightening talks, preceded, appropriately and movingly, with a few moments' reflection upon the fact that the graceful, gifted, and popular Percy Jeeves was one of thousands of young men lost on the Somme battlefield. Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, Dame Janet Trotter DBE, gave us a very warm welcome, after which we heard historical detail and much more from Society Patron and author of *Wodehouse at the Wicket*, Murray Hedgcock. Our Chairman, Hilary Bruce, gave thanks to our friendly hosts, who were from



Percy Jeeves  
(1888 1916)

branches of Gloucestershire County Cricket Club, as well as to those who had created the event. They included David McLauchlan, Sir Robert Morland, and Andrew Ellis, who was the clever chap who spotted the potential for this lovely and unique occasion.

Hilary finished by reading Plum's poem 'The Umpire', as well as a message from



One of six wickets in half an hour in the match played on July 17 at Cheltenham College

Plum's godson and the current President of MCC, Mike Griffith, who would certainly have been present had he not been busy at Lord's preparing for the next day's Ashes Test Match. We raised our glasses of breakfast juice to Plum, Jeeves, and the Gloucestershire CCC.



Nigel Wodehouse,  
Plum's great nephew

Among those present were Plum's great-nephew, Nigel Wodehouse, with his family, and Sir Edward Cazalet, Plum's grandson. Author Brian Halford signed copies of his brand new and very readable biography of Percy entitled *The Real Jeeves*; and Phil Britt, curator of Warwickshire CCC, brought some memorabilia for us to see, including Jeeves's cricket cap.

On the cricket field, a four-day match began. We were glad of the marquee to shelter us from the scorching sunshine as we gazed upon the beautiful ground surrounded by trees and golden stone college buildings. Worcestershire batted first and suffered a spectacular fall of wickets in the early morning, registering 22 for 6 at one point. Nobody could read the scoreboard in the bright



The author (in glasses, left) with Ian Alexander Sinclair, other Wodehouseans, and an array of cricketing fans gathered under the marquee

sunshine, but play seemed to have settled down by the lunch interval, which saw the Band of the Royal Signals marching and playing some appropriate music. A strong recovery followed lunch, and a lengthy innings partnership reassured spectators that it was safe to potter off to the adjacent pub marquee run by the Golden Heart Inn of Nettleton Bottom, Birdlip – Wodehouse could have used that, too. The next wicket fell just after 3 p.m., and the final score for Worcestershire was 182 at 4.30 p.m. Gloucestershire then motored along nicely until a 6.15 p.m. close, when they were 83 for 0.

By then we were all more than happy to endorse the ice cream van man's opinion that Cheltenham is simply the world's best cricket festival.

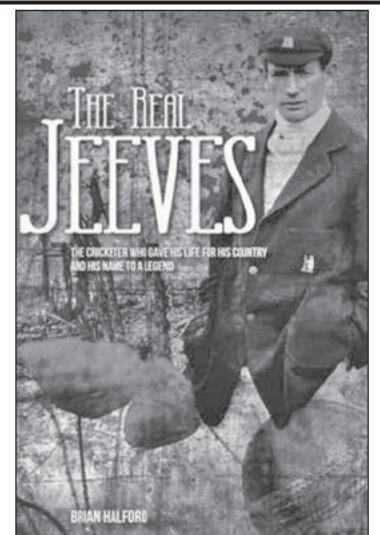


Society Patron Murray Hedgcock delivered an informative talk on Wodehouse, cricket, Percy Jeeves, and the fine art of naming characters.

## More on the Real Jeeves

As noted in Christine's article, among those present at the celebration of Jeeves in Cheltenham was Brian Halford, author of the just-published *The Real Jeeves: The Cricketer Who Gave His Life for His Country and His Name to a Legend*. This excellent book tells the story of Percy Jeeves, the Warwickshire cricketer (originally from Yorkshire) whose promising career was cut short by the outbreak of World War II; he lost his life on the Somme on July 22, 1916.

Halford researched and wrote his book over 11 years, and of course he includes the story of how Jeeves's name ended up being appropriated for a certain iconic manservant. *The Real Jeeves* is now available in bookstores and online (list price £16.99). It will be reviewed (by Murray Hedgcock, of course) in the December issue of *Wooster Sauce*.



# A Message from MCC President Mike Griffith

Read by Hilary Bruce at the Cheltenham event on July 17. Mike was Wodehouse's godson and was named after Mike Jackson.



I was so lucky to have P G Wodehouse as my godfather, and it has been a source of laughter and pleasure all my life. As this year's President of MCC, my speeches have been peppered with Wodehouse references. Except for the small matter of a Test Match against Australia starting at Lords tomorrow, I would be with you all in Cheltenham for this special brunch celebrating the sighting of Percy Jeeves by PG 100 years ago.

When my godfather saw Percy Jeeves bowling at Cheltenham, he was clearly impressed. He wrote me a letter mentioning a sequel to *The Code of the Woosters* – another Jeeves novel – which he was working on: “Lots of funny stuff, but it keeps coming out so darned SHORT.” Clearly Percy Jeeves' bowling did not suffer in the same way.

My first match as Captain of Sussex was against Gloucester. Having won the toss, I put them in to bat, and at tea Gloucester were 324 for 2. I sometimes wonder what Jeeves would have said about my decision to field. “I think, Sir, you were unduly optimistic about your bowling attack”, perhaps.

I am sure Bertie Wooster would have approved of the Cheltenham Cricket Week and worn his MCC tie, since he would surely have been a member.

Murray Hedgcock will have enlightened you all about P G Wodehouse and cricket – but don't listen to him about Australia's chances of beating England at Lords. He is right about everything Wodehouse but sometimes a fraction biased on Australian cricket!

I am sure you will have a very special occasion in Cheltenham, and as we prepare things here at Lords for an Ashes Test Match, I shall raise a glass from MCC to PG and Jeeves.

## How the Press Viewed the Centenary

The centenary of the day P G Wodehouse saw the cricketer Percy Jeeves playing at Cheltenham, as well as Brian Halford's book *The Real Jeeves*, attracted a lot of attention from the Press. Among the many articles appearing in print and online were:

*Coventry Telegraph*, June 20: ‘The Real Jeeves: Tragic Warwickshire hero immortalised by a comic genius’, by Brian Halford; see <http://bit.ly/16ujSwK>.

*Sunday Times*, July 7: ‘Jeeves's silky delivery bowls Wodehouse over’, by Godfrey Smith (a Society Patron); see <http://thetim.es/1cJiECA>.

*The Times*, July 16: ‘The Real Jeeves: gentleman and player’, by Patrick Kidd (a Society member); see <http://thetim.es/143pafJ>.

*Daily Telegraph*, July 16: ‘Celebration of cricket match that inspired P G Wodehouse's Jeeves’, by Claire Carter; see <http://bit.ly/18acGHu>.

*Gloucestershire Echo*, July 17: ‘Wodehouse lovers bowled over by Cricket Festival’, by Robin Jenkins; see <http://bit.ly/1aTQiHq>

*Glasgow Herald*, July 20: An article about the Halford book and Percy Jeeves, by Graham Young; see <http://bit.ly/17xj35v>.

*Daily Telegraph*, July 26 (online) and printed (July 27): ‘Real life story of former England and Warwickshire cricketer Percy Jeeves is most poignant of all’ (online title), by Simon Briggs; see <http://bit.ly/18abTWM>.

*Yorkshire Post*, August 5: ‘Sporting Bygones: Poignant story of the Dewsbury cricketer who was immortalised in the writings of P G Wodehouse’ (essentially a review of Halford's book), by Chris Waters; see <http://bit.ly/159XUMG>.

Additionally, on July 17, the day of the event in Cheltenham, Society Remembrancer Norman Murphy was interviewed on the BBC4 radio programme *Today* in connection with how Wodehouse came to name Jeeves as well as other characters. (Thanks to MELVIN HAGGERTY, LEILA DEAKIN, and ALAN HALL for sending news clippings.)

It must have been in 1913 that I paid a visit to my parents at Cheltenham, and went to see Warwickshire play Gloucestershire on the College ground. I suppose [Percy] Jeeves's bowling must have impressed me, for I remembered him in 1916 [*sic*], when I was in New York and started the Bertie and Jeeves saga, and it was just the name I wanted. I have always thought until lately that he was playing for Gloucestershire. (I remember admiring his action very much.)

*P G Wodehouse in a letter to Rowland Ryder, October 26, 1967*

## Society News

### *The Newbury Show*

As our long-time members know, the Society has sponsored the competition for the Berkshire Champion of Champions at the Royal County of Berkshire Show, Newbury, since 2005. This year's show will be the weekend of September 21–22, and the pig judging takes place on the Sunday morning (from around 9 a.m. onwards). Society members will be awed by the parade of magnificent Berkshire pigs, not to mention amused by the sight of our Chairman, Hilary Bruce, attempting to drape the Society's sash across the winner's greased back. Do join us for the fun, and then stay on to enjoy the rest of the show. For more information, see [www.newburyshow.co.uk](http://www.newburyshow.co.uk).

### *October AGM & Future Meeting Dates*

The Society's next meeting will take place on Tuesday, October 29, from 6 p.m. at The George, 213 Strand. It's time for our AGM, and as always we will aim to get through the business as quickly as possible in order to enjoy the pleasure of hearing our guest speaker, Society Patron Murray Hedgcock. Murray will be reprising the talk he gave at the Cheltenham Cricket Festival in July (see page 1), and we fully expect to have an entertaining – and edifying – time.

As for the dates of our meetings in 2014, these are given in Future Events on page 24, but please consider them tentative until all have been confirmed with The George. Firm dates will be provided in the December issue of *Wooster Sauce*.

### *Subscriptions Update*

Traditionally, June and July are the busiest months for those Society officers involved with subscriptions and renewals. It's the time of year when cheques arrive in gratifying numbers and our bank statements are 45 pages long, detailing members' standing order payments, all of which have to be checked and recorded.

This year has been especially interesting while we watch to see how many standing order payers have, in

fact, changed their bank instructions to pay the new sub, as we had hoped they would. And we're glad to say that a pleasingly large number of our members have done it, so many thanks to them.

However, there remain around 150 members who have not upgraded and so have not paid the full subscription. We will be contacting these people individually to remind them once again to make the change, and to ask them for their cheque for £7 to cover the balance of their sub.

The Committee has had to consider what the Society's response should be to members whose payments now don't cover the cost of their membership, and of course this has been difficult. We can't let the situation simply carry on, otherwise members paying the right amount will be subsidising those that aren't. But, equally, there will very shortly come a point when the committee feels it has done all it can to remind and encourage people to make the change. Ultimately, there has to be a sanction and, with regret, the Committee has decided that members who don't make up their subscription shortfall will receive their last *Wooster Sauce* in December.

Obviously, nobody wants this to happen, so if you think you've paid the wrong amount, please check – and resolve the problem. Thank you.

### *New Book Examiner*

After our appeal in the last *Wooster Sauce*, we were delighted to hear from several members volunteering for the position of book examiner. As you'd imagine, all were impeccably qualified in every respect, so the Society was forced to make its selection by a rather specialist process involving the phases of the moon, a bit of seaweed, and, of course, a pin and a bit of paper. And so effective was it that we can now announce the Society's new book examiner is Louis McCulloch.

A big thank you to everyone who put their hand up in response to our *cri de coeur* – and we know where to find you if, in the future, we need to!

## *Upcoming Nonsense in the West End*

Thanks to all members who have sent clippings and links regarding the new Jeeves and Wooster play, *Perfect Nonsense*, starring Matthew Macfadyen as Jeeves and Stephen Mangan as Bertie. We understand Gussie Fink-Nottle and Madeline Bassett figure in the plot, and hopes are high for a rollicking good time. Following a short regional tour, *Perfect Nonsense* will begin previews at the Duke of York Theatre from October 30. The Society has been talking to the producers about the possibility of a special night for our members, with reduced-price tickets and a Q&A session, though this was very iffy at press time. If you may be interested in attending such a performance, please let the Editor know (contact details on page 24). Meanwhile, for more information about the play, visit the website at <http://www.jeevesandwoosterplay.com/>.



# Shining in the Spotlight

## *A Report of the Society's July 9 Meeting*

The sultry summer heat did nothing to prevent around 50 intrepid Society members from gathering in the upper room of The George for yet another fun-filled evening of convivial sluicing, chattering, and entertainment. And, given that ten of those present were responsible for providing said entertainment, the enjoyment level was notched up by several degrees.

There were many new faces spotted in the crowd that night, including a couple of Americans from Oregon, to whom your Editor gravitated like a homing pigeon (it's an accent thing). Time spent in pleasurable conversation meant there was a slightly delayed start to the evening's official proceedings, but Chairman Hilary Bruce took us through the Parish Notices in brisk fashion. These included information about the then-forthcoming Jeeves Centenary at Cheltenham (see page 1); news about this year's cricket matches (see page 6); notification of the date of this year's Newbury Show, at which our Chairman will be presenting the prize for the Berkshire Champion of Champions (see page 4); an announcement of the publication of the revised edition of *A Wodehouse Handbook* (see page 12); and a reminder of The (U.S.) Wodehouse Society's convention in October (see Future Events on page 24).

But perhaps the item of greatest interest to those present was the revived suggestion that there be a new Society tie. After a favourable vote was taken to see how many were interested in purchasing such neckwear (left), ideas regarding the colour and motif were tossed about with abandon. The colour has to be plum, of course, but what of the motif – a pig with wings? a cow creamer (not modern Dutch)? the Infant Samuel at Prayer? a policeman's helmet? (Members should be advised that when the Committee met two weeks after the gathering at The George, they decided to go with the Society's typewriter logo.)

Hilary then handed the microphone over to Paul Kent, our Entertainment Impresario, who outlined what was in store for us. It was Open Mic Night: ten of our members would, in turn, regale us with a favourite short passage from a treasured Wodehouse story or novel. Paul emphasized the word *short*; with

ten readers, it was necessary to limit the time each could take, so all were under instructions not to go over five minutes. There would be a prize for the best reading, to be decided by a secret judge.

However, enthusiasm for the Master's words runs deep, and it seemed many of our readers felt five minutes were not enough to convey all that they wanted to share of their love for PGW. Thus, what should have taken under one hour took almost two, including a ten-minute break in the middle. But never mind, it was Wodehouse, and that was all that mattered. The readers, and the sources of their readings, were:

Peter Thompson: 'The Unpleasantness at Bludleigh Court'

Paddy Briggs: 'Pig-hoo-o-o-ey!'

Mark Taylor: *Ice in the Bedroom*

Simon Gordon Clark: *The Mating Season*

Mike Swaddling: *Jill the Reckless & 'The Heart of a Goof'*

Paul Kent: *The Luck of the Bodkins*

Tim Foote: *Laughing Gas*

Ellie King: 'The Clicking of Cuthbert'

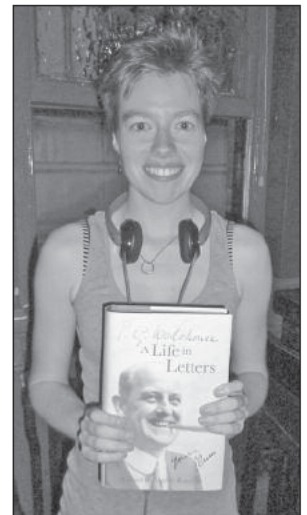
Norman Murphy: *Stiff Upper Lip, Jeeves*

Andrew Parker: *Joy in the Morning*

When the marathon was over, the audience agreed with the secret judge that Ellie King had given the best reading; she selected a copy of *P. G. Wodehouse: A Life in Letters* as her prize (right).

But this did not end the proceedings, as we had a surprise in store. Robert Bruce, CCAP (Chairman's Consort and Accompanying Person), stepped up to the microphone and announced that a fragment of a previously unknown Wodehouse story centering on cricket had been discovered in the Cazalet family archives. He went on to read some gripping pages in which Lord Emsworth proved himself a masterful cricket player, batting against a bowler with the rather intriguing name of Wodehouse. Though some may have doubted the bona fides of the alleged author, all agreed that it was a delightful way of ending what had been a very enjoyable evening of storytelling.

– Elin Murphy





*The action on the pitch at Dulwich*

## Reports from the



*Hungry players queue up for the tea.*

## A Loss at Dulwich

*Robert Bruce reports*

The English summer this year was, as sports journalists are wont to write, one of two halves. The first resembled an endless and dismal February; the second, Blandings in a heatwave. Sadly, the two main Gold Bats cricket matches fell into the first. A waterlogged outfield brought cancellation to the match against the Sherlock Holmes Society (for the third year in a row) even before the day of its playing dawned.

That left only one game, on June 14 – the annual match against the Dulwich Dusters, the team drawn from the teaching staff at Plum’s alma mater, Dulwich College, and played on their impeccable pitch. For this the weather relented. A miserable morning gave way to sunshine just as the game was due to start, and the clouds rolled in again as the match ended. In the meantime it felt blessed. And, as if to celebrate, the Gold Bats started the game at pace: they had hit 24 by the end of the second over. Richard Heard, despite pulling a muscle while stretching to hit his first boundary, raced away. At one point your correspondent, and many others in the crowd of spectators, was in danger of his life. A six-hit landed on the ground floor of the pavilion and ricocheted like a squash ball from floor to roof to floor before narrowly missing the scorer and bouncing out onto the cricket field again.

The Gold Bats captain, Julian Hill, seemed to be fielding half his extended family in the team, and one of the junior members, a young Jack Corsan, made history. He followed a fine six with a reverse sweep. The cognoscenti gathered around the boundary reckoned this was the first time a

Gold Bat had struck such a modern and unconventional stroke. Lengthy discussion as to whether this was a good thing or a bad thing ensued. Corsan was then undone by the Dusters lob bowler who had him stumped by a good couple of yards. This was a triumph for one Benchomo Gonzales, a young teacher of Spanish at the school. It was not just the first time he had bowled lobs. It was also the first time he had ever seen a cricket match, let alone played in one. “I like it but I need to improve,” he said afterwards over tea.

Frankly, the tea interval is at the heart of this event. Surrounded by wood panelling detailing the Dulwich cricket teams down the ages, including the young PGW in his fast-bowling days, the tables groan with everything you could possibly wish for in a cricketing tea. Famously, a heavy tea is a tactic to ruin the endeavours of your opponents. Instead, the Dusters raced away with some clean hitting to reach 99 for 1 in eight overs and overhaul the Gold Bats’ total with some ease. It was time to retire to the remains of the tea and the Dulwich Pavilion version of the Angler’s Rest.



*Members of the Gold Bats and the Dulwich Dusters relax following the Dusters’ triumph.*

# Gold Bats Season



Gold Bats Gabbi Hill and Bob Miller at Audley End  
(Photo by Julian Hill)

## A Win at Audley End

*Stephen Fullom reports*

This now-annual charity match at Audley End House took place on July 28. The Gold Bats batted first with an unusual opening pair: Miss Gabbi Hill, daughter of Captain Julian, opening with veteran Robert Miller – thus creating a new record, certainly for the Gold Bats, which might even qualify for a mention in *Wisden*. However, no record scores were made as two wickets were down with only ten runs on the board.

Incoming batsmen Couchman and Starr both scored freely, Couchman retiring at 28 runs and Starr out for 24. Other batsmen to reach 25 runs (the limit allowed in this game) were the captain, Julian Hill, and his son Archie; also David Griffiths and Martin Southwell. The Gold Bats total at the end of 32 overs was 180 runs, having lost six wickets. Four batsmen had retired after reaching their permitted limit of 25 runs.

Patrick Kidd opened the batting for his team (Patrick Kidd's XI) and scored 14 runs before being caught off a flighted ball from Wilcox. Next man in was Wyld, who has played on the hallowed turf at Hambledon; here he scored 25 in a stylish manner before retiring. Subsequent batsmen had difficulty reaching double figures apart from the captain, Bullock (14), and Becker (20). Wyld then continued his innings, reaching 36 not out when the innings closed at 118 after 27 overs.

Final score: the Gold Bats won by 62 runs and four wickets, and the sum of £435 was raised for the Exeter Hospice.

# We Remember

## Tom Sharpe, 1928–2013

Although I knew he had been in poor health for some time, Tom Sharpe's death on June 6, age 85, still came as a shock. He is best remembered for his savage satires on apartheid in South Africa and his *Wilt* series, which developed from his experiences as a lecturer at the Cambridgeshire College of Arts and Technology. I knew him as a Wodehouse enthusiast and was delighted when he became a Patron of our Society.



Tom was a complex character, angry at many of the abuses of the world today but a deep admirer of Wodehouse, whom he had visited in 1973. He told me once that he tried very hard to emulate Wodehouse in his style of writing, although he appreciated they saw life in very different ways. After Cambridge, Tom went to South Africa in 1950, but the production in the UK of his anti-apartheid play *The South Africans* brought the wrath of the authorities down on his head, and he was deported in 1961. In 1971 he wrote *Riotous Assembly* and never looked back.

I first met Tom around 1984, when he read *In Search of Blandings* and suggested we meet at Hunstanton Hall to photograph the Octagon. We then took a trip together to look at other Wodehouse sites in Shropshire, Gloucestershire, and Wiltshire. To my surprise, I discovered he was astonishingly shy. When we got to Sudeley Castle, he insisted I go in first and he would only come in when invited to do so by the curator. But I owe him a great debt since I am convinced it was he who persuaded Secker & Warburg to publish *In Search of Blandings* commercially.

I didn't see him again after he went to live in Spain, but he used to telephone me occasionally; our last conversation was in January, when he wanted my views on an article for the *Sunday Telegraph* on the new Blandings TV series. He was kind enough to say I had helped him clarify his thoughts and he made a point of recommending a book of mine. A kind man, a generous man; I shall miss him.

– NORMAN MURPHY

# P. G. Wodehouse Goes to Sweden

by Bengt Malmberg

In a letter to Georg Svensson, chief editor of the publishing house Bonniers, P. G. Wodehouse wrote:

I am glad of this opportunity to tell you how grateful I am to you for all the trouble you have taken to put me over with the Swedish public. I am so intensely spiritual that money means nothing to me, but I must confess that the cheques that Mr. Watt sends me for my Swedish sales do give me a gentle thrill. Whenever a book of mine is going what my publisher calls 'slowly' in the USA, I cheer up because I know that everything is going to be all right in Sweden, thanks to you.

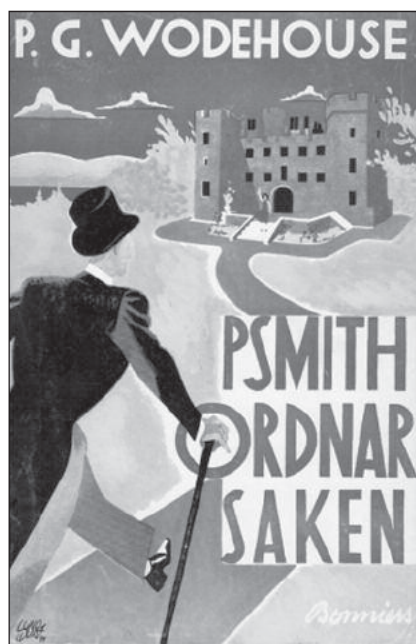
In 2012 we celebrated 100 years of Wodehouse in Swedish. In October 1912 the weekly magazine *Allers Familj-Journal* published 'Ruth in Exile' (*Strand*, July 1912) as 'Ruth i landsflykt', only three months after the original. Probably the first translated Wodehouse story in the world, it was republished in the Swedish Society yearbook *JEEVES* 2012.

In January 1913, the daily newspaper *Nerikes Allehanda* published 'Spådomen' ('Pots O' Money', *Strand*, December 1912). Up to 1940, more than 40 stories appeared in Swedish magazines. In 1920 the first novel appeared, *Piccadilly Jim*, which was followed by another five books until 1925, each the first to be translated into another language. Indeed, Sweden saw the first or second translation of 50 Wodehouse novels. Another fan and I have searched more than 4,500 magazines and many years of newspapers from 1912 onwards for translations of Wodehouse. So far we have found almost 100 short stories and four serialised novels, the first being *Jill the Reckless* (*Glada Jill*) as early as 1922.

For unknown reasons, *Young Men in Spats* never appeared in Sweden, but magazines published all 11 stories shortly after the originals appeared in *Cosmopolitan* and *Strand Magazine*. In 2010, with the permission of the Wodehouse Estate, we collected these in *Drönarhistorier* (Drones Stories), the 79th Swedish Wodehouse publication. And in 2011 another anthology, *Bland lordar och drönarare* (Among Lords and Drones), came out with 14 of PGW's short stories previously published only in Swedish magazines. In 2013 our Society brought out an anthology of Wodehouse's seven parodies of

Sherlock Holmes stories. So, up to now we have 81 books in Swedish in 193 different editions. (You can find all about Swedish translations of Wodehouse in books, magazines, articles, movies, etc., on [www.wodehousebibliografier.n.nu](http://www.wodehousebibliografier.n.nu). An English summary is included.)

Why did Sweden become the first country where Wodehouse's stories were translated? What made him so popular in Sweden as early as the 1920s, in a country with fewer than six million inhabitants and where German was the first foreign language you studied at school? Humorous stories and detective stories were very popular in Sweden a hundred years ago. Authors like Arthur Conan Doyle were well known, so editors kept an eye on what was published in England and the USA, and translations often appeared in magazines selling over 200,000 copies. By this means, Wodehouse reached many readers, more than through his published books. The combination of humour, love, and 'crime' appealed to Swedish readers.



Leave It to Psmith, translated by  
Vilgot Hammarling

In 1933 Georg Svensson became chief editor of Bonniers, Sweden's leading publisher. A Wodehouse fan, he engaged Vilgot Hammarling to translate Wodehouse. Hammarling had been the London correspondent for a Swedish newspaper, spoke English like a native, was a brilliant stylist who knew Britain inside out, and was familiar with every facet of British society. He knew clubs and pubs, and he loved Wodehouse's novels. Hammarling's translations captured the spirit of Wodehouse, and his first book, *Leave It to Psmith*, went into 12 editions! Further translations of five more novels

and several short stories ensured Wodehouse's popularity in Sweden in the 1930s.

When Hammarling became counsellor of the Swedish Embassy in London in 1938, Svensson found his successor, Birgitta Hammar, who had the same empathy with Wodehouse's style. She translated 48 Wodehouse books over 58 years; the last, in 1996, was 20 stories from *The Golf Omnibus*. Her translations were labours of love. She analysed every sentence for allegorical nuances, hidden personal allusions, and quotations from world literature.



To understand the popularity of Wodehouse in Sweden, you must appreciate the quality of the translations, and we were very lucky to have two such brilliant translators. Yet, remarkably, a lot of Swedes still prefer to read Wodehouse in English.

Wodehouse never lost his Swedish readers after the Berlin broadcasts; in Sweden he had been regarded as anti-Nazi since the 1930s. Thus, when, in September 1941, the left-oriented magazine *Folket i Bild* printed Wodehouse's article 'My War with Germany' (*Saturday Evening Post*, July 19, 1941) under the headline 'Mitt krig med Hitler' (My War with Hitler), it did so with a positive introduction. Similarly, *Money in the Bank* (1942) was published simultaneously with the first US edition, four years before the UK edition. And, just to reinforce the point, hundreds of articles about Wodehouse have appeared over the years, the latest in April 2012 in a magazine with half a million readers.

In February 1984, four students at the University of Uppsala founded Wodehouse's Friends, now the



A Damsel in Distress,  
translated by Birgitta Hammar

Swedish Wodehouse Society, four years after the US society but 13 years before the UK society. One ambition of the Society, now about 220 members, was that Wodehouse should be posthumously awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, and for many years the Society petitioned the Swedish Academy nominating him for the prize. However, he clearly did not fit their criteria since he is known, intelligible, and funny, and the Academy picked some unknown poet instead. Eventually, after many of our appeals, the Academy decided in 2011 that no author would receive a posthumous Nobel Prize in literature. Sorry, Wodehouse!

So, Wodehouse's writing came to Sweden over a century ago and has done well ever since. He is still very popular, and in Uppsala on November 1–15, 2013, there will be a new musical play, *FORE*, at the Regina Theatre, based on seven of his golf stories about golf. Wodehouse is still 'marching on' in Sweden!

## Why Engineers Don't Like Wodehouse

by Iain Anderson

More than a year and a half ago, I introduced our neighbour, Harry, a retired engineer of some 90 summers, to the books of P G Wodehouse. I confidently expected to write to *Wooster Sauce*, regaling all and sundry with the news that he promptly and enthusiastically began to work his way through my entire Wodehouse library. Sadly, and astoundingly, this was not to be the case.

Harry, who turned 90 on New Year's Eve 2011, had a holiday cottage two doors away from us and spent the majority of his time in Glasgow. Don't imagine for a moment, however, that here was a Glaswegian in any way similar to Angus McAllister; no red hair, bristling ginger whiskers, and monosyllabic, unintelligible grunts with Harry. He was a tall, white-haired specimen with a ready wit and outgoing, friendly personality. So when he told me that after 70 years of immersing himself in nothing but engineering magazines he considered it time to embark on an entirely different reading career, I thought, "What ho! – just the cove to take to the works of the Master like a duck to water."

I therefore lent him an anthology containing many of PGW's masterpieces, and urged him with word and gesture to start with 'Uncle Fred Flits By', a tale which I felt couldn't fail to grip. However (and at this point I find myself glancing nervously behind me in case anyone should be reading this heresy over my shoulder), he

didn't like it; he just didn't get it; he couldn't grasp the point of it all! Why? For what reason? I cast around wildly for an explanation. I pressed down on the mental accelerator. The old lemon throbbed fiercely.

Jeeves would no doubt find the matter susceptible of a ready explanation, but in his absence here is my view. Engineers – people who dabble in such mysteries as hydro-electric schemes and whatnot – belong when on duty to a race which is hard-headed, practical, stern, and serious, consisting largely of cold-eyed men with tight lips and sneering eyebrows. This is why so many Scotsmen are engineers. Clearly, then, stories about the younger sons of dukes tripping over door-mats are to them the eel's eyebrows and take the mottled oyster.

It would be interesting to hear the opinions of others, particularly Society members who are themselves engineers, unlikely though that scenario may seem.

There is a very sad ending to this narrative; you will have noticed that I refer to Harry in the past tense as he died quite suddenly, less than three weeks after his birthday. My spouse and helpmeet, Glenys, and I lost one of our best friends. Can I just finish by saying: Harry, taking everything into consideration, the only blot on your escutcheon is that you failed to come under the spell of my favourite writer, but that doesn't alter the fact that you were a really decent chappie and an all-round good egg.

PRINCIPALS :

John Dawson Raja Srinivasan  
Anita Avery Neil Midliff  
Ian Michoud Arthur Robinson  
Ananth Kalluram

# The Globe

AND TRAVELLER.

No. 33463.

THURSDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 4 1893. ONE PENNY.

CONSULTANTS :

Norman Murphy  
Tony Ring



## P. G. Wodehouse Reclamation Project



### John Dawson reports

Imagine you've just opened your newspaper and this headline jumps off the page:

*Amazing P. G. Wodehouse Discovery!  
Over 10,000 previously unknown  
paragraphs, poems, and jokes found in  
a newly-discovered newspaper archive!*

That headline may not be so far-fetched.

Consider this: Wodehouse worked for *The Globe* (at the time London's oldest evening paper), writing the humour column 'By The Way' occasionally from late 1901, and then regularly from August 1903 until around the end of the decade. For more than five years, he filled columns six days a week. His *Money Received for Literary Work* records that in 1902 he was paid for 54 days' worth of columns at *The Globe*, increasing to 172 columns in 1903. From August 1 of that year, when he began working full time, until February 29, 1908, when the notebook ends, he recorded about 270 working days for *The Globe* per year, meticulously entering each week's dates and salary.

'By The Way' had a distinguished pedigree. It was instituted on the front page of *The Globe* in 1881. It was first edited by E. Kay Robinson, then by Robert Dennis, who was followed by C. L. Graves. Robinson, founder of *Country-Side Magazine*, had been Rudyard Kipling's editor in Lahore on the *Civil & Military Gazette*. Graves was an Irish poet and humorist, brother of the poet Alfred Perceval Graves and uncle to Robert Graves of *I, Claudius* fame. He is mainly known today for his parodies in *Punch* with E. V. Lucas, who also was a 'By The Way' contributor.

Lucas wrote that the column "consisted of a dozen or so paragraphs, each with a joke or sting in it, bearing on the morning news". Richard Osborne noted that the column comprised "a dozen or so short snippets and a set of verses".

The most authoritative source of information about the column, however, is from Wodehouse. In the semi-autobiographical *Not George Washington*, he gives us a look at the 'On Your Way' room at the *Orb*, via his literary alter ego, the young poet and aspiring writer James Cloyster:

"We, a the work at the Orb's done between nine and e even. You must be there at nine sharp. Litera y sharp, I mean. Not ha f-past. And you'd better do some overnight stuff for the first week or so. . . . Four or five rea y good paragraphs a day and an occasiona set of verses are a he' want from you."

The source of materia was the morning papers, which were paced in a pi e on our tabe at nine o'clock. The ha fpenny papers were our principa support. . . . We attended first to the Subject of the Day. This was genera y good for two or three paragraphs of verba foo ing. There was a sort of tradition that the first ha f-dozen paragraphs shou d be topica . The rest might be topica or not, as occasion served.

Wodehouse said: "The column itself was an extraordinary affair in England. You would quote something from the morning papers and then you'd make some little comment on it. It was always the same type of joke."

'By The Way' revolved around news items from London and provincial English newspapers, as well as the politicians, sportsmen, entertainers, and newsmakers of the time. The columns are not only social history; many are also the earliest work of the 20th century's foremost humorist, written during his first years as a young journalist in London.

While collectors have identified most of PG's magazine and theatrical contributions over the years, until now there has been no known concerted effort to unearth the *Globe* material. This represents a void in Wodehouse scholarship and a chapter of his literary legacy that has yet to be enjoyed. Much of Wodehouse's early work sparkles with the genius for which he was to become famous, and the prospect of uncovering thousands of 'new' Wodehouse commentaries and poems should be of interest to fans and scholars alike.

Conservatively estimating he wrote eight paragraphs per day, six days a week, in the 79 months or so he worked for *The Globe*, Wodehouse published over 10,000 short items and poems in about 1,300 editions. It's not as though he wasn't doing anything else, either – by 1910 he had published 14 books and more than 500 short stories, articles, and poems. This remarkable trove of early Wodehouseana is

finally starting to see the light of day. In February 2013, the Wodehouse Estate approved a proposal entitled The P. G. Wodehouse Globe Reclamation Project, submitted by a group of collectors in consultancy with Tony Ring and Norman Murphy.

The principals of the group are Anita Avery, Ananth Kaitharam, Ian Michaud, Neil Midkiff, Arthur Robinson, Raja Srinivasan, and myself. To date, the project has recovered more than 300 By The

Way columns, from the recesses of both the British Library's archive of microfilmed newspapers and, thanks to Society member Karen Shotting, from a repository at UCLA in California.

For more on the Globe P. G. Wodehouse Reclamation Project, including reports of our findings and current and future plans for the 'By The Way' columns, please visit our web page: [www.madameulalie.org/articles/Globe project.html](http://www.madameulalie.org/articles/Globe_project.html).

## Armines, Armines Everywhere . . .

*Mike Swaddling recounts a crawl along a branch of the Wodehouse family tree*

My younger brother has never been as voracious a reader as I am, but a couple of years ago I was able to convert him into the faith – a copy of *Much Obligated*, Jeeves did the trick, I think.

So it was only natural that he should pull up his chair in front of the goggle-box a few weeks before Christmas 2011 to watch the illustrious Sir Terence's fine 'Wogan On Wodehouse'. And some way into the programme, the mention of Plum's brother Armine rang a bell. Not a deafening peal, you understand, more of a quiet tinkle, but a bell for all that. Such a name had figured in my brother's past.

After the programme had finished – which he and the spouse thoroughly enjoyed (the programme, not the fact that it had finished) – the source of his tinkle, in a manner of speaking devoid of any *double entendres*, thrust itself to the front of his mind. Harking back to a previous abode in their home town of Andover, there had been an Armine and Louise Wodehouse living in the house behind theirs in a village outside the town called Goodworth Clatford. My brother knew that Armine had sadly taken his place in the celestial choir a few years ago, but his widow was still in the same house. At this point he decided to contact me on the old dog and bone.

My knowledge of Plum's family tree is, I don't mind admitting to hundreds of readers, not as good as perhaps it should be, so we agreed that there could not be many people around with such an unusual name. Perhaps we had even lit upon a hitherto unknown branch of the Wodehouses, and I imagined relating it to the font of all facts pertaining to PGW, Norman Murphy, and carving my name in the annals of the Society (and mixing a few metaphors along the way).

Alas, dear reader, it was not to be.

I hightailed it to the old PC and promptly despatched one of those email thingies to Norman, but in the absence of anything remotely like salient facts, he was understandably unable to confirm or deny anything. I agreed to go back to the fraternal relation and see if there was any way we could find

out more, and the upshot was that he said he would go round and visit our Louise for this very purpose.

Life then got in his way for a few weeks, but, knowing that I was scheduled to attend my first Society evening on the 28th February 2012, and being the dashed good egg that he is, he saw a chance to heap large helpings of kudos upon his elder sibling's head by coming up with the goods on Armine. So off he went on the morning of the meeting to call upon his former neighbour.

As he related to me later that forenoon, Mrs Wodehouse graciously welcomed him in, listened to his request, and then – to his surprise – hoofed out her copy of *Burke's Peerage*. (I asked why he hadn't taken his own copy with him, and he said that it was somewhere in the van – he's a builder – and probably had a few mastic stains on the cover. I think he was being sarcastic.) And it was then he discovered that you and I may not come across too many Armines in our daily lives, but if you are a descendant of the Earl of Kimberley from the 17th century, the beginning of the Wodehouse family, the forest floor beneath your family tree is littered with them.

I passed all this and various other facts back to Norman via email, and by that evening, at the meeting, he had, naturally, produced chapter and verse.

This Armine was John Armine, born in 1936. He had been a Captain in the Royal Welch Fusiliers, and he and Louise had had four children. His line went back four generations to the third son of the fifth Baronet Wodehouse, whereas PGW's family descended from the second son. Plum was the great-great-grandson of the fifth baronet, of whom 'Andover Armine' (as he will henceforth be known) was a great-great-great-grandson. All of which means that AA and PGW were probably third cousins, once removed.

Ah, well, we reflected later – if everything had not turned out quite as oojah-cum-spiff as we had hoped, it had nonetheless been an interesting little departure from life's daily routine.

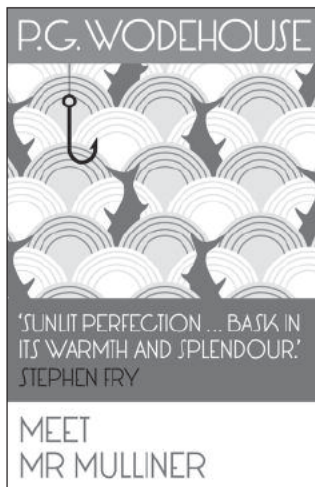
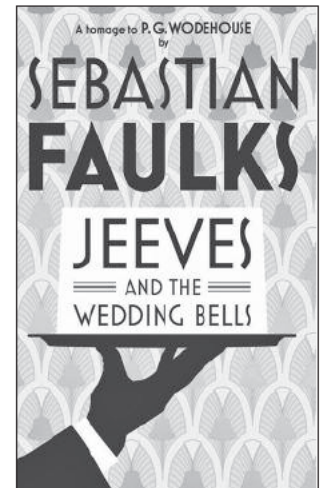
# A Plethora of New Books for Wodehouse Fans

From the Department of What Jolly Good News comes word of numerous new publications – several out now, two still to come – that will gladden the hearts of Wodehouse fans everywhere. Indeed, there is such a treasure trove of Wodehouse or Wodehouse-related books that any gift-giving problems will be solved for the next year.

## *Jeeves and the Wedding Bells*

First, but not necessarily foremost, is the news (announced earlier this year) that Sebastian Faulks has been beavering away on this original new Jeeves and Wooster story. The renowned author (*Birdsong*, *Charlotte Gray*) has admitted that Wodehouse is inimitable, so why even attempt it? Well, we fully expect that Faulks will not try to imitate Wodehouse but will certainly pay him homage (as it says on the cover), and if he succeeds in attracting new readers to the canon, then it's job done.

*Jeeves and the Wedding Bells* will be launched on November 4, but before then, on October 27 at the Guildford Book Festival, Faulks will be giving a talk about his new work at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre. For more information, see the Festival's website at <http://bit.ly/14zLYNk>.



## Eight Classic Titles Reissued

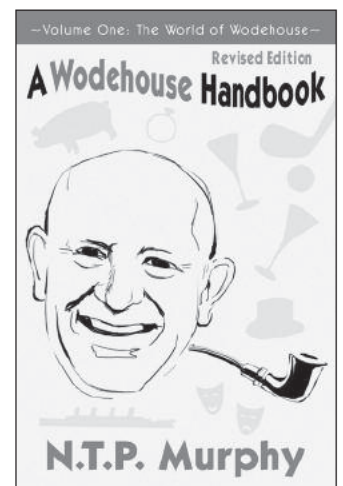
If only the real thing will suit you, then you will be delighted to learn that Hutchinson and Arrow, via the imprint of Windmill Books, have recently reissued eight Wodehouse titles in colourful, Deco-inspired covers (see example, left). The titles were chosen following a poll of Society members via our website. They are: *Carry On, Jeeves*; *Cocktail Time*; *Joy in the Morning*; *Meet Mr Mulliner*; *Right Ho, Jeeves*; *Summer Lightning*; *The Code of the Woosters*; and *Uncle Fred in the Springtime*. Each cover features a quote from a well-known Wodehouse fan; for example, Sebastian Faulks says that Wodehouse is “the best English comic novelist of the century” – and he should know, given the task he has set himself (see above). The new books are available in bookstores and online; for more information, see <http://bit.ly/1654JFJ>.

## *A Wodehouse Handbook* (Revised Edition)

We turn our attention now to *A Wodehouse Handbook*, that classic *vade mecum* to the world and words of Wodehouse published in two volumes in 2006. Seven years later, the book remains in such demand that its author, Society Remembrancer Norman Murphy, finally responded to appeals from fans to update it – helped along by an offer from the Canadian publisher Sybertooth to publish the new edition. As Norman has written for the latest issue of *Plum Lines*:

While Volume 1 (*The World of Wodehouse*) aroused very little criticism, Volume 2, dealing with the source of Wodehouse quotations and references, produced an avalanche of amendments from around the world. I published the *Handbook* in 2006, and I am still getting emails and letters from people who assure me they like it but are equally sure I would want to know that . . .

In addition to the correction of typos and the occasional laughable misunderstanding in Volume 2, Norman has taken the opportunity to add some



new material. Thus, while Volume 1 has been lightly revised and differs only a little from the original edition, Volume 2 has seen some extensive revision and should make previous nitpickers much happier.

The original edition was available only as a two-volume set, but Sybertooth has made it possible to order each volume separately. Volume 1 of the Revised Edition was published in June this year; Volume 2 has just been released. Both can be ordered online and through major bookstores. For a list of retailers selling *A Wodehouse Handbook*, see <http://www.wodehouse.ca/pg/>.

### Wodehouse in Verse at Last

There's even more good news for those of us who have been waiting feverishly for a long-overdue book of Wodehouse's poetry. The Trustees of the Wodehouse Estate have authorised the publication of a limited run of a book of Wodehouse verse by March next year, so it will be available in time for the 'Poet in the City' stage production (see next column). Considerably more extensive and wider-ranging than the 1988 book *The Parrot and Other Poems*, the book will contain 100 poems, chosen to illustrate the range of subjects on which Wodehouse wrote verse. The contextual commentary, compiled by Tony Ring and Eric Midwinter (see <http://bit.ly/13sGuMa>), highlights the many instances of the subject of the verses (mostly based on trivial news items of the day) retaining relevance to 21st-century life.

The tentative title is *What Goes Around, Comes Around: A Celebration of Wodehouse Verse*, and more details, including information on how to obtain a copy, will be given in the December issue of *Wooster Sauce*.

### Rannygazoo Too

Last, but certainly not least, Ken Clevenger – Society member and current President of The Wodehouse Society (U.S.) – has just published *Rannygazoo Too*, another collection of musings on all things Wodehousean, particularly if it has to do with the Mulliner stories. One of the essays in this book, 'Whose Library Is It?', was previously published in abridged form in *Wooster Sauce*. Two others have appeared in our sister journal, *Plum Lines*, while the remaining four essays are seeing the light of day for the first time. This book follows on Ken's two previous tomes, *Rannygazoo*, reviewed in the June 2011 issue of *Wooster Sauce*; and *A Mulliner Menagerie*, reviewed in the December 2012 issue. All of Ken's books are available in paperback on Amazon; *Rannygazoo Too* can be purchased for £4.89 (or US\$7.59).

## Further News of a Literary Nature

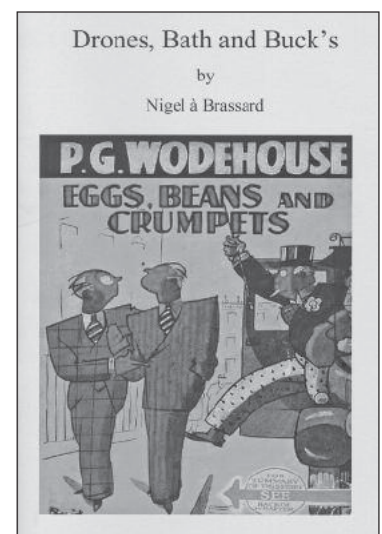
### Wodehouse in the City

We are pleased to provide preliminary information about an event to be held on the evening of April 14, 2014 (the Monday before Easter), at the 400-seat Kings Hall, Kings Place, near Kings Cross in London. The Society has joined forces with the charity Poet in the City to present an evening of Wodehouse verse. This will consist of readings of Plum's light verse and some of his songs, interspersed with contextual comment about his career. More information, including details of how to get tickets, will be given in the December issue of *Wooster Sauce*.

### Drones, Bath and Buck's

Though this concerns a privately-printed booklet, we thought it was worth a mention. Earlier this year, Nigel à Brassard, an investment banker and author, published a short history of the association that Buck's Club, of which he is a member, had with P. G. Wodehouse, who was not but knew it well. In fact, as Norman Murphy has told us often, Buck's was the primary inspiration for Wodehouse's Drones Club, with other elements taken from the Bachelors Club and Bath Club.

While Nigel has relied heavily on Norman for information regarding Wodehouse connections with these clubs, he has also done a splendid job of describing the Bath Club and Buck's as Wodehouse knew them, as well as members' activities of that time. The illustrated booklet concludes with the information that a century-old brass fender from the Bath Club (which had been destroyed during WWII) was bought by a couple of Buck's members and presented to the club. It now sits on the first-floor gallery at Buck's – as Nigel writes, "A silent and 'much appreciated' memorial to the club that, with Buck's, gave P.G. the idea for the Drones."



# Wodehouse in a Changing World

by Curtis Armstrong

*This is an abbreviated version of the talk Curtis gave at The Wodehouse Society convention in October 2011.*

P G Wodehouse has been called many things, but mysterious isn't one of them. He was a simple man whose life centered around his work. One mystery, though, according to some, is how he managed to write through two world wars, the Great Depression, internment by the Nazis, the Cold War, and the Atomic Age and yet consistently create characters who remain apparently untouched by what is happening in the world.

But Wodehouse's characters did not pass through these tempests completely unscathed. People assume that the only disruptions in the serene flow of Bertie's life is when he's forbidden access to Anatole's dinners, or with his engagements to Madeline Bassett. But there is off-stage thunder rumbling on the first page of *The Inimitable Jeeves*.

"How is the weather, Jeeves?"  
"Exceptionally cement, sir"  
"Anything in the papers?"  
"Some slight friction threatening in the Balkans, sir. Otherwise, nothing."

Bertie doesn't express much in the way of *concern* about friction in the Balkans. After all, he lives in a world without 24-hour news. There is no television at the Drones Club, and if there were it would be tuned to Test matches rather than CNN. But this doesn't mean the stories are devoid of political events. Political meetings descend into vulgar brawling, as do prize-giving ceremonies and the occasional clean, bright entertainment. Politics tend to be avoided except in aid of a joke, which is not a bad idea. If Conservative politicians tend to predominate, it's because they seem funnier when they are trapped on the roofs of summerhouses after being chivvied by swans. People like that have more to lose; A. B. Filmer, the Cabinet Minister, is a great example. So is Sir Raymond Bastable from *Cocktail Time*. The examples are legion. Class-bound people in Wodehouse who don't drink, don't smoke, don't gamble, have a lot of money and power and no sense of humor are just asking for it. They are always putting up barricades in the path of true love. But they're also the ones who worry about their youthful indiscretions coming to light. Men resembling a cartoon of Capital exist not to make political points, but to deny their nephews money to open Onion Soup Bars or marry a chorus girl.

Jeeves's awareness of friction threatening in the Balkans is just one example of the real world intruding into Wodehouse's fiction. But politicians, like headmasters, aunts, and bishops, are stock characters in Wodehouse and can be taken as read. So I will focus on the political movements that touched the lives of Wodehouse's characters: socialism and fascism.

The human (or nearly human) face of British fascism was Roderick Spode. Spode shows how Wodehouse's treatment of comic right-wing extremism differs from his depiction of left-wing extremism. Spode is the only memorable fascist in the stories. While we hear of the Black Shorts, we never see them, and by the time Spode inherits his title, he has disbanded his followers. Wodehouse's socialists are certainly memorable but have no national figurehead like Spode. The other difference is that Spode never talks of his politics, while the socialists seem to do little else.

Spode looms large in Bertie's world, but his reputation as a charismatic fascist chief is unwarranted. Spode is a thug. You can dress him up, but you can't take him anywhere. It is easier to imagine him laying into striking picketers with a club than as the mastermind of a political movement. And it is Bertie who sees Spode clearly and sees him whole:

"The trouble with you, Spode, is that just because you have succeeded in inducing a handful of half-wits to disfigure the London scene by going about in black shorts, you think you're someone. You hear them shouting 'Hei, Spode' and you imagine it's the voice of the people. That is where you make your blunder. What the voice of the people is saying is, 'Look at that frightful ass Spode swanking about in footer bags. Did you ever in your puff see such a perfect perisher?'"

*(The Code of the Woosters)*

It could almost be Victor Laszlo in *Casablanca*.

Spode's fear of exposure as a designer of ladies' undergarments is only one of his problems. This amateur dictator has been knocked unconscious by Aunt Dahlia, a cook, and a curate. In *The Code of the Woosters*, Gussie Fink-Nottle wallops him over the head with an oil painting; Bertie wraps him in a sheet, breaks a china vase over his head, and puts a cigarette out on his hand. By themselves, these could be overlooked, but together they spell a public relations disaster. When word gets out that you can't get the upper hand of a freak like Gussie Fink Nottle, your days as a Man of Destiny are numbered.

Despite this, Spode is such an overwhelming personality that it's easy to forget that fascism is addressed elsewhere in Wodehouse's writings – for example, in the Mulliner story 'Buried Treasure':

The situation in Germany had come up for discussion in the bar parour of the Anger's Rest, and it was generally agreed that Hitler was standing at the cross-roads and would soon be compelled to do something definite. His present policy, said a Whisky and Spash, was mere shi y-sha ying.

"He've to let it grow or shave it off," said the Whisky and Spash. "He can't go on sitting on the fence like this. Either a man has a moustache or he has not. There can be no middle course."

These two paragraphs simultaneously satirize both Hitler and the toppers of the Angler's Rest, whose views of Nazism apparently begin and end with a discussion of the Führer's moustache.

Moving to socialism, we find Wodehouse working with a wider, richer palette. He appears to have as little sympathy for the socialists as he does those on the right, though the socialists in the stories range from alcoholic to teetotal (just as bad) to sociopathic and, finally, murderous. Worse still, one of them has no roof to his mouth, always a red flag in Wodehouse's world.

"This here Socialism," said a Pint of Bitter thoughtfully, "you see a lot of that about nowadays. Seems to be a the go."

"Spreading a the time, Socialism is," a Light Lager agrees. "May be something in it, too. What I mean, it doesn't hardly seem right somehow that you and I should be living off the fat of the land, as the saying goes, while there's others in humbler circumstances who don't know where to turn for their next half pint."

(Archibald and the Masses')

Archibald Mulliner hears the siren call of socialism while in pursuit of love. His valet, Meadows, is a member of the League for the Dawn of Freedom, but Archibald takes a firm line: "Fun's fun, but no rot about stabbing me with a dripping knife. I won't have it, do you understand?"

Archibald's attempts to cluster round the masses are predictably catastrophic, but they don't really have anything to do with socialism, *per se*. No, to really see socialism in Wodehouse's world, we must look at Wooster and Psmith.

In *The Inimitable Jeeves*, Bingo plays Virgil to Bertie's Dante, guiding him through numerous circles of romantic hell, starting in a tea and bun shop near Piccadilly and ending with marriage to the romance novelist Rosie M. Banks. Along the way, Bertie meets Charlotte Corday Rowbotham; her father, Comrade Rowbotham; and Bingo's rival for Charlotte's affections, Comrade Butt. The three are members of The Heralds of the Red Dawn, and Old Rowbotham is described by Bingo as "A delightful chap. Wants to massacre the bourgeoisie, sack Park Lane and disembowel the hereditary aristocracy. Well," Bingo adds, "nothing could be fairer than that, what?" This tale of love and socialism features Comrade Butt exposing Bingo by de-bearding him and Bingo grabbing Butt by the neck and trying to twist his head off.

Say what you will about Spode, he never actually tried to kill Bertie and then burn his house down. Brinkley, in *Thank You, Jeeves*, does both. He returns to Bertie's cottage after a night on the tiles and decides to say it with carving knives. Brinkley is unusual, though. In *Much Obligated, Jeeves*, he has changed his name, his waistline, and his politics. Having come into a sizeable fortune, Bingley, as he is now known, is a kind of Conservative captive balloon and as obnoxious as ever.

Wodehouse's most famous socialist is Rupert Psmith, though his orthodoxy is questionable. "I've just become a Socialist," Psmith tells Mike Jackson. "It's a great scheme. You ought to be one. You work for the equal distribution of property, and start by

collaring all you can and sitting on it." But socialism doesn't seem to figure largely in Psmith's life, save as an amusing fashion accessory. In *Psmith in the City*, Wodehouse devotes three full chapters to Mike and Psmith's adventures in socialism. Psmith discovers his and Mike's supervisor, Waller, is a staunch socialist, and they are invited to hear Waller speak at Clapham Common. They arrive just in time to hear Comrades Wotherspoon and Prebble addressing the masses.

Comrade Wotherspoon was a tall, thin man with side-whiskers and a high voice. He scattered his aitches as a fountain its sprays in a strong wind. He was very earnest. Comrade Prebble was earnest, too. Perhaps even more so than Comrade Wotherspoon. He was handicapped to some extent, however, by not having a palate. This gave his profoundest thoughts a certain weirdness, as if they had been uttered in an unknown tongue. The crowd was thickest around his platform. The grown-up section painfully regarded him as a comedian, pure and simple, and roared with happy laughter when he urged them to march upon Park Lane and loot the same without mercy or scruple.

But once Waller goes to his other pet passion, temperance, the crowd turns ugly and our heroes barely escape in one piece.

Change in the world of Wodehouse doesn't have to be of the epoch-defining variety. 'Bingo Bans the Bomb' could only have been written during the nuclear disarmament protests of the 1960s. In *Cocktail Time*, Sir Raymond Bastable writes a scathing novel on the current Lost Generation. The book becomes a cause célèbre since sex features rather largely. While Wodehouse spares us the details, the book was daring enough to be railed against from pulpits and condemned in editorials across the country.

Remarkably, Wodehouse's work appeared regularly during three quarters of a century of upheaval. Throughout that time and since, he has continually brought a moment of escape to people the world over. Social and political upheaval were not unknown in Wodehouse's world. They were just seen through the same genially warped looking-glass.

When the Nazis swept into Le Touquet, it was a "real world" incursion: Wodehouse was told he had ten minutes to pack before being sent off to internment. The only book he took with him was the complete works of Shakespeare. Not Agatha Christie or Erle Stanley Gardner. Shakespeare. I suspect he knew he was facing an unknown future and reached for a book that would sustain him, cheer him; a book by a writer who could take him out of the nightmare in which he found himself.

I am, of course, not comparing Wodehouse to Shakespeare, which would be unfair to Shakespeare. But in a world in which it sometimes seems the Spodes are winning, I recommend a similar palliative. Turn often and with gratitude to the works of P. G. Wodehouse.



Curtis at the convention in Dearborn, Michigan

# On First Looking into Wodehouse's *Very Good, Jeeves*

by Jim Hudson

I am sure many Wodehouse fans have, like me, spent many an idle yet pleasant moment picturing the various characters that make up Plum's world in their mind's eye. In doing so, I have always been all too aware of the unavoidable influence that portrayals I have encountered, be they moving image or still, have had upon my interpretation of the dramatis personae. Jeeves, for example, will likely have something of the Stephen Fry about him to those of my generation.

Of all the influences on the way I picture the denizens of *monde Wodehouse*, Ionicus has probably been the greatest. Each of the splendid tableaux that adorn the covers of the Penguin editions of his era has its own special place in my heart – though I have to confess to some perplexity on occasion as to the selection of the scenes being depicted. The cover of *Summer Moonshine* must serve as an example here: of all the multitude of scenes at his disposal, I find it curious that Ionicus should have selected that of Bulpitt bleeding profusely in the car. Clearly he was given free rein in his choice – and not a small dose of whimsy entered into the equation.

I am similarly enamoured of the illustrations that adorn the covers of the Herbert Jenkins editions of the books. Whilst I am not lucky enough to sport many dust-jacketed copies in my library, I do not feel any the poorer for it. Lurking beneath the somewhat droll dust jacket of *The Adventures of Sally* is, to my mind at least, a much more entertaining representation of Ginger wading in to sort out the pouches that feature so prevalently in Chapter 2. Some, but not all, of the HJ editions seem to have these little vignettes – so I urge all those proud possessors of better appointed libraries than mine to break with convention and remove their dust jackets to hunt for hidden glories beneath. Beneath the jacket of Ukridge, for example, you will find another hidden

gem – but I won't spoil your fun by describing it here.

Each of these illustrations has added a little to the readership's perceptions of Wodehouse's characters. Recently, however, I was lucky enough to have a much more intimate encounter with the "mind's eye" of a fellow Wodehouse fan. It came about when I purchased a second impression of *Very Good Jeeves* in its Herbert Jenkins livery. My local book dealer, a lovely chap whose shop nestles in the cobbled by-ways of Norwich supplied me with the tome, and I began reading the book that same evening.



To my delight, as I opened it up I found that it had been most beautifully defaced: a previous owner (identified by his pencil signature as one W. E. Redmayne-Walker) had sketched some lovely pencil drawings of the book's characters inside the frontispiece (top photo).



Here were the imaginings of a time before Ionicus and Fry, and wonderfully executed they were, too. Further inside the book was another drawing – of the famous hot water bottle and pin – and some final sketches were uncovered inside the back cover. Who they are meant to represent I shall leave to your own interpretation (I know who I think they are each meant to be!), though I presume that the bewigged judge of stern visage (bottom photo) can be fairly easily identified!

Of course, ever willing to grasp the proverbial gift horse and lead it to the bank, I had a quick check to see if Mr. Redmayne-Walker was a famous personage, but I have to confess that I was quite relieved to discover that he wasn't (so far as I could tell). I wonder if any other Society member has ever come across such daubs in their readings, perhaps by the great Landseer himself (he of *Pig at Bay* – not the famous relative, of course)?



# A Jeeves at Bart's

by James Hogg

Last year at a gathering of the Friends (and friends of Friends) of the Great Hall at Bart's Hospital in London, I was pleasantly surprised to meet a young man called Jeeves Wijesuriya.

More of Jeeves later, but first a word about the Friends, a charitable group who valiantly raise funds for two historic treasures in the custodianship of Bart's. The first is the Great Hall itself, a Queen Anne masterpiece by James Gibbs where for over 300 years medical students have taken their exams, governors have convened on hospital business, and the social life of an ancient London medical institution (founded in 1123) has been carried on.

The second gem can be seen on the staircase leading up to the Great Hall and comprises two magnificent mural paintings by William Hogarth. Hogarth may be thought of as a biting satirist whose depictions of decadence in series such as *Marriage à-la-Mode* gave 18th-century sex lives a going-over. But as well as being a social critic, Hogarth was also a governor of St. Bartholomew's Hospital (to give it its proper name). And there in 1736–37 he painted the murals of Biblical scenes appropriate to a charitable foundation: Christ healing the sick at the Pool of Bethesda, and the Good Samaritan.

Financial pressures oblige those who run Bart's to channel their funds into patient care, and the Friends have stepped in to try to conserve the Great Hall and the Hogarth murals. Hence the fund-raising gathering to hear a lecture by a leading authority on Hogarth.

But where does Jeeves Wijesuriya come in, I hear you ask. Easily answered: when I met him, he was the Bart's medical students' representative on the Friends committee.

And your second question? Well, it's all the fault of a former Chief of Police in Sri Lanka.

"He's my grandfather Zerney Wijesuriya," Jeeves explained. "When I was six or seven he thought I was a bit of a smart-aleck who knew all the answers. So being a great Wodehouse fan he changed my real name, Rajiv, to Jeeves, which sounds quite similar. Then later, when I became a keen computer buff, I would help other members of the family with technical problems and they adopted the name as well.

"Eventually it spread to school – my parents had moved to England when I was quite young – and now everybody's followed suit. I've even ended up having to use it in most of my correspondence or no one will know who I am."

At 26 Jeeves is a keen Wodehouse fan (how could he not be?). Since I met him he has qualified and is now a junior doctor at Northampton General Hospital. How reassuring for his patients to know there's a Jeeves in charge of their case!

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## The Word Around the Clubs

### *Truth, They Say, Is Stranger Than Fiction*

When the novelist Iain Banks died in early June, at least two obituaries mentioned an incident from his career that must surely tickle the fancy of Wodehouse lovers.

It seems that Banks had liked to use the middle name 'Menzies', even though it had not been recorded at his birth. He wanted to publish his first book, *The Wasp Factory*, under the name Iain M. Banks, but an editor at his publishing house nixed this idea. Not only was it too 'fussy' to have a middle initial, but the feeling was – you guessed it – that he might be confused with the fictional Rosie M. Banks!

Banks did eventually use the 'M.' for his science fiction books, but there is no word as to whether he ever essayed romantic novels.

### *A Record Price*

MARCO FARRUGIA has alerted us to an auction at Bloomsbury in May at which a first edition of *The Globe By The Way Book* was put under the hammer. The catalogue described the book as "A legendarily scarce piece of Wodehouseiana" [sic] and the price achieved

reflected this. Though estimated at £2,500–3,500, it sold for a whopping £22,000. Marco says: "That must surely be a record for a Wodehouse book." He's quite right – it is.

### *Remembering Richard Usborne*

CAROLINE FRANKLYN writes: Having read Norman Murphy's piece about his meeting Richard Usborne in 1973 (*Wooster Sauce*, June 2013), I thought you might like to know that I also met him. This was in the late 70s and possibly early 80s, when I took part in several concerts at Fenton House, Hampstead, which housed a unique collection of harpsichords and early keyboard instruments. Richard Usborne was the Custodian, and I believe he lived there in a flat, provided by the National Trust. I remember him well, a calm, relaxed man, very helpful and kind, and popping his head round the door now and then when we were rehearsing. I also knew, at the time, that he was a PGW authority, and I was by then an avid PGW reader – but I was too young and shy, and too much in awe to ask him about that!

# Gussie Fink-Nottle comes back to jape our man in Montserrat

*Writes Tom Regan*

I arrived in Montserrat in June 2010, my first overseas posting as a member of the Diplomatic Service. Montserrat had had a troubling time in recent years – at one time, it was the place to be in the Caribbean, with Paul McCartney, Eric Clapton, and Sting regular visitors to Sir George Martin’s Air Studios. But nature shocked tiny, beautiful Montserrat twice. In 1989 Hurricane Hugo damaged 90% of the buildings in Montserrat, and in 1995 the island’s very dormant volcano became very active. As a result, the capital city was destroyed and 75% of its residents left.

But, slowly and resolutely, Montserrat rebuilt in the subsequent years; a new airport was built, a ferry was introduced, and a new capital is in the process of being built. But for all that, Montserrat was lacking in one thing – a P G Wodehouse society. I resigned myself that I’d spend the next three years regaling my fiancée with tales of Stinker Pinker and Aunt Dahlia. But I was in luck – an English scientist based at the Volcano Observatory nodded conspiratorially when a conversation turned with inevitability to Wodehouse. However, his interest in Wodehouse came with conditions: he roped me into organising the annual Volcano Half Marathon, a gruelling slog around Montserrat’s mountainous terrain.

Organising a half marathon is not as much fun as running one (and running one is not fun). After weeks of trying to persuade local businesses to give me some money, we’d scraped together enough money to organise the event. But my enthusiasm was waning. I found myself heading to the studio to raise publicity, prepared to regurgitate the same lines I’d used during countless radio interviews – “We’d like to thank x, we couldn’t have done it without y.”

I felt jaded. To stave off my own boredom, I knew there was one place to retreat – Wodehouse. I decided to try and slip a couple of references into the interview without drawing attention to them. My plan was set.

Halfway through the interview, I spot my chance to sneak Wodehouse in.

“... the race. Although we couldn’t have the Half Marathon if it wasn’t for the support of our generous sponsors – The Governor, Montserrat Tourist Board, Sports Department, Gussie Fink-Nottle, Cable & Wireless, and United Insurance. I’d...”

Rose, breakfast show host, seasoned radio interviewer, and all-round good egg, isn’t going to let that one slip.

“Sorry, Tom – who was that before Cable & Wireless?”

“Oh . . . um, Gussie Fink-Nottle.”

“Could you spell that for me?”

“G-U-S-S-I-E F-I-N-K N-O-T-T-L-E”

“Wow – what an amazing name. Is that a local sponsor?”

In a heartbeat, I have to decide whether to compound my untruth with another untruth. But in my desperate hour (and for the first time in Montserrat’s broadcasting history), the studio phone rings during our interview. I pray to whoever will listen that a random caller has given me a reprieve. Suitably more relaxed, I shift comfortably towards the back of my swivel chair. Rose answers the phone.

“You’re through to the Breakfast show, you’re live on air, caller.”

“Hello, Rose. This is Maureen from St Peters. I am a fan of P G Wodehouse—”

Blast. My senses prickle, and I suppress a desire to leap from the chair and run from the studio. My heart is beating loud and fast. I am about to be stitched up, betrayed by a fellow Wodehousian. The caller continues:

“—and Gussie Fink-Nottle is the name of Bertie Wooster’s friend. So I wanted to know how a fictional character has donated money to the Running Club?”

It is a fair question. It is a fair question, for which I do not have an answer. I realise that we have now entered a period of dead air. Rose looks across to me, and reiterates the question:

“Tom – interesting – can you answer the caller’s question?”

“Well . . . yes . . . yes, I can. I am a fan of P G Wodehouse and one of my friends donated money to the Montserrat Running Club but used a pseudonym because they know that fundraising is sometimes not much fun, and so they used Gussie Fink-Nottle (curse that man!) in order to keep my pecker up.”

I am safe. The lie is believable. I believe it as I say it. And then—

“Keep your what up?”

Excellent. I have retreated from the relative safety of financial impropriety and embezzlement and am now on the more familiar territory of using euphemisms for a male member live on a national radio station in a moderately conservative country.

“Oh . . .” (cheeks blushing) “. . . keep your, um . . . spirits up.”

Rose is determined-  
 “So what is a pecker?”

I am waiting for the phone to ring again. No doubt I will now discover that Joan in Lookout is a fan of comedic names for the male member. Phone doesn't ring.

“It's a . . .” (Am I going to make this worse? Can I make this worse? I concede defeat) “. . . part of the body.”

I look across at Rose and try to give a look which conveys to a kindly Montserratian woman that a pecker is a John Thomas, a todger, without using any words or gestures. My eyes convey, I suspect, embarrassment, pleading, and most probably tears. She can see, I think, that I am a broken man and that she is now perilously close to a reluctant obscenity.

“Okay. Great. Well that's all we have time for this week. My thanks to Tom and everyone at the Montserrat Running Club, and until next week . . .”

I leave the studio, walk to the car, sit at the wheel, and laugh so much I cry for the second time in ten minutes.

*Tom Regan*

*Diplomat, writer, and half marathon organiser*

## Little Nuggets

### *Wodehouse in Persian*

Wodehouse has been translated into numerous languages, some of them surprising. Who would have thought that Iranians might appreciate Wodehouse stories? And yet it appears that ‘The Crime Wave at Blandings’ has just been issued by the Iranian publisher Rozegar. It has been translated into Persian by Ali Mansouri, who has also translated ‘Jeeves and the Impending Doom’. Will Persian Monarchs become Shuffling Shahs?

### *Some Gardening Guidance*

It had to happen one day. Following the onetime success of the Ask Jeeves search engine, GEOFF MILLWARD informs us that a range of gardening power tools (mowers, hedge trimmers, etc.), available at B&Q stores, are being sold under the brand name of . . . Mac Allister [*sic*]. You can see for yourself at [www.diy.com/macallister](http://www.diy.com/macallister).



*Alex Connolly, a dedicated Wodehouse reader almost from the cradle, celebrated his 21st birthday earlier this year, and his family presented him with this oolah-cum-spiff cake, complete with cow creamer. Now, that's the way to celebrate a birthday!*

## Mastermind Quiz 8: The Drones Stories

by David Buckle

1. On which London thoroughfare is The Drones Club located?
2. In ‘Fate’, who does Freddie Widgeon fall in love with whilst aboard ship on the way to New York?
3. Who was known as the ‘Drones Club Millionaire’?
4. In ‘The Masked Troubadour’, in order to win the heart of Dora Pinfold, who does Freddie Widgeon enlist as his musical accompanist for the Amateur Night contest?
5. Why does Wally Judd offer Bingo Little twenty pounds so that he can paint Bingo's son Algernon in ‘Leave It to Algy’?
6. In ‘Uncle Fred Flits By’, what is the profession of Wilberforce Robinson?
7. Who is acknowledged as the club Darts Champion in ‘The Shadow Passes’?
8. In ‘Sonny Boy’, what drink does Bingo Little order for his infant son Algernon in the Drones' smoking room?
9. Who does Aldolphus ‘Stiffy’ Stiffham marry in ‘The Luck of the Stiffhams’?
10. In ‘Goodbye to All Cats’, what is the very appropriate name of Sir Mortimer Prenderbury's ancestral home?

*Answers are on page 21.*

# The Bibliographic Corner by Nick Townend

## Happy Birthday, Colonel Murphy

On 14 October 1960, the *New York Times* contained a two-column spread entitled ‘Happy Birthday, Mr Wodehouse’. Signed by 80 leading literary figures, it read:

Whereas PG Wodehouse is tomorrow entering his 80th year and Whereas none of us has come of age without having read anywhere from one to eighty of his books with profit and delight and Whereas PG Wodehouse is an inimitable international institution and master humorist: We the undersigned salute him with thanks and affection.

Wodehouse’s American publishers had arranged the spread to celebrate what they thought would be his 80th birthday, but found they were some 12 months early.

This *Corner* is intended to celebrate the 80th birthday of another “inimitable international institution” in the world of Wodehouse scholarship, namely Lt. Col. Norman Murphy, and to summarise his works about Wodehouse. Whereas Wodehouse’s publishers were early, this *Corner* is (at the time of writing) some three months late, as it was only from a passing reference in ‘Letter from England’ in the Summer 2013 issue of *Plum Lines* by a certain Elin Woodger that I became aware that Norman had turned 80 earlier this year (in May, to be precise).

As Norman revealed in *Wooster Sauce* in June 2013, his literary career began following his giving of a talk on the Pink ’Uns and Pelicans at a Wodehouse weekend organised by Richard Usborne in 1973. At Usborne’s suggestion, Norman submitted the talk to *Blackwood’s Magazine*, where it was published as ‘The Real Drones Club’ in volume 318 for the period from July to December 1975 (H194).

This was followed by Norman’s first book, *In Search of Blandings* (H31), privately published in 1981 in a paperback edition of 500 numbered copies. A related magazine article, ‘Blandings Revisited: the Topography of P G Wodehouse’, appeared in *Country Life* on 25 October 1984 (H193). This perhaps facilitated the 1986 publication by Secker and Warburg of a hardback edition with dustwrapper of *In Search of Blandings*, with a preface by Tom Sharpe. This was followed by a paperback edition from Penguin in 1987.

The publication of *In Search of Blandings* resulted in Norman leading a tour of US Society enthusiasts to sites of Wodehouse interest. Breaking for the benefit of posterity with the adage that “what goes on tour, stays on tour”, Norman wrote up the proceedings in *A True and Faithful Account of the Amazing Adventures of The Wodehouse Society on Their Pilgrimage July 1989*, which was published in a hardback edition (no dustwrapper) by Heineman in 1990.

Norman’s next book project saw him acting as editor of *The Reminiscences of the Hon. Galahad Threepwood*, which was published by Porpoise Books in 1993 in a hardback edition with dustwrapper. A Porpoise paperback edition appeared in 1995.

Norman’s most extensive work appeared in 2006, namely *A Wodehouse Handbook: The World and Words of PG Wodehouse*, published by Popgood & Groolley in two paperback volumes covering 1,038 pages. Revised editions of each volume were published by Sybertooth this year (see p. 12 for details).

A rather slimmer Popgood & Groolley paperback (only 90 pages) appeared in 2009, entitled *Three Wodehouse Walks*, being the bringing to book of Norman’s long-running walks (if I can describe them thus). The walks are titled ‘Bertie Wooster’s West End’, ‘The London of Gally Threepwood and Stanley Ukridge’, and ‘Valley Fields: A Wodehouse Walk in Dulwich’. As Hilary Bruce explains in her foreword: “[Norman] conducts his walks at a smart clip, with a remarkable quick-fire vocal delivery. No one ever forgets their first Wodehouse Walk.”

The most recent publication from Norman is an even slimmer 36-page pamphlet: *A Guide to P G Wodehouse’s New York City and Long Island*, co-authored with Amy Plofker, was published in 2011.

The above survey covers only that portion of Norman’s output which has appeared either in commercial magazines or in books with his name on the spine. He has also contributed extensively to both *Plum Lines* and *Wooster Sauce*, has written the introduction to Volume 5 of *The Great Sermon Handicap* (B59a1) in the six-volume series in numerous languages published by Heineman from 1989 to 1994, and has contributed essays titled ‘Blandings’ and ‘The Empress of Blandings’ to the Penguin edition of *Sunset at Blandings* published in 2000 (AAan100). He has even appeared in a Japanese manga (see illustration).



From ‘Bun in London’, © Bun Katsuta

# Tally Ho, Pip Pip and Bernard's Your Uncle!

by Jem Roberts

As a native Salopian who had devoured 90% of Wodehouse's oeuvre before I was out of my teens, and who has subsequently found myself professionally writing down words and having them commercially presented via woodpulp or electronic packages, it has always been a sincere intent of mine to publish something on the Master, one day. Right now, however, two books down, I have a number of passions to work out of my system before my career has reached the stage where I can snap my fingers and say "Plum next!"

That said, my second book, *The True History of the Black Adder* (published last year), of course allowed me to touch on the work of Wodehouse in numerous ways that could have eventually slithered their way into the back pages of *Wooster Sauce*. It was far from easy to squeeze the careers of Lloyd, Atkinson, Curtis, Robinson, McInnery, Elton, Richardson, Fry, and Laurie into one volume, but in doing so it was a pleasure to provide an all-too-potted examination of the creation of Granada's peerless *Jeeves & Wooster* adaptation, besides an acknowledgement of how much *Blackadder* in general owed to Wodehouse's way with words.

The most obvious debt owed to the Master would surely be the relationship between the butler Mr B and Laurie's cerebellum-free Prince Regent in *Blackadder The Third*, but many of the 'Adder team have other specific ties to the world of Wodehouse, with Elton, Curtis, Laurie, and Fry all regular names on the covers of latter-day Wodehouse publications, sharing their love for his prose. Laurie credits the discovery of Blandings as a teenager with his transformation from a sullen adolescent into the bringer of sweetness and light the world loves today, while his erstwhile colleague Fry was so devoted to Plum that he still treasures the signed photograph he received from the author in his own teenage years.

Above all, though, no situation comedy could ever claim to have been so precisely and painstakingly exacting in its verbiage than *Blackadder*, and as anyone on the team would tell you, this is due in no small way to Wodehouse's own weighing, selecting, arranging, and pruning of every sentence in his priceless body of work.

*The True History of The Black Adder* will be published in paperback by Arrow in October. Jem's third book, *The Frod – A 35th Anniversary Celebration of Douglas Adams' H2G2*, will follow in 2014. See [jemroberts.com](http://jemroberts.com).

## Poet's Corner

### Autumn

Oh, bright is the sun, and oh! blue are the skies,  
And balmy the air, that once froze, is;  
And it's pleasant to watch the thermometer rise,  
And we feel there's a chance for our roses.

No longer we gaze on sky overcast,  
No longer in overcoats shiver.  
The Autumn is here, and the Summer is past,  
So sing hey! for a trip on the river.

How pleasant it is to be warm, and how nice  
To be quit of the wind and its raw gust.  
How pleasant once more to appreciate ice –  
We couldn't have done it in August.

In blazer and flannels we go on our way,  
And gaily our best Panama don.  
The Summer is over at last, so sing hey!  
For afternoon tea in the garden.

The Autumn has come, and the pavements are  
dry,  
The streets not disgracefully sloppy.  
And I notice the gnats are beginning to fly.  
It is glorious. (Summer, please copy.)

So let everyone gratefully think of the store  
Of blessings September has brought 'em,  
Let us trust they will last, and sing hey!  
(as before),  
And drink to the health of the Autumn.

From *Daily Chronicle*, 10 September 1902

## Answers to Mastermind Quiz

(Page 19)

1. Dover Street in Mayfair
2. Mavis Peasemarsch, daughter of the fifth Earl of Bodsham
3. Alexander 'Oofy' Prosser
4. Jos. Waterbury
5. To feature his likeness as a 'Creature of the Underworld' in a comic strip
6. An 'eel jellier'
7. Horace Pendlebury-Davenport
8. A milk straight
9. Geraldine Spettisbury
10. Matcham Scratchings

The aunt made a hobby of collecting dry seaweed, which she pressed and pasted in an album. One sometimes thinks that aunts live entirely for pleasure.

(From 'The Rough Stuff', 1920)

# Recent Press Comment

*The Glasgow Herald*, April 15 (from Melvyn Haggarty)  
The personality who was the subject of the weekly interview was retired footballer Pat Nevin, whose favourite book was the slightly obscure *Collected Works of P G Wodehouse*.

*Funny Times* (Cleveland, Ohio), May (from Alvin Cohen)  
A column entitled 'Curmudgeon' featured a list of funny observational quotations from people such as Winston Churchill, Mark Twain, and Oscar Wilde. The collection included two quotes from Wodehouse.

*The Hindu*, May 7  
Bincy Mathew reported that the first Sunday in May is World Laughter Day: "It's not strange to be cheerful all the time. . . . Laughter can compensate for a bad day. . . . At the end of the day try watching a nice comedy or pick up a P G Wodehouse."

*Wall Street Journal*, May 18-19 (from Beth Carroll)  
In a column on 'Books for the Anglomaniac', Raymond Sokolov listed as number 1 PGW's *Joy in the Morning*.

*Sydney Morning Herald*, May 25  
Published a pastiche article by Richard Glover concerning the new Jeeves & Wooster book by Sebastian Faulks (see page 12.)

*Daily Telegraph*, May 29 (from Carolyn De La Plain)  
Max Davidson's article about the Duchess of Cornwall's French speech reminded readers that "The Duchess is following in a great tradition. The nervous Brit venturing into the minefield of spoken French is a comic stereotype going back to P G Wodehouse."

*The Manchester Genealogist*, Summer Quarter (from Arthur Davenport)  
The Oldham & District section of this magazine included an item referring to the *Blandings* TV series, which put the writer in mind of a PGW quote in 'The Go-Getter': "He was a fine dog, though of uncertain breed. His mother had been a local Belle with a good deal of sex-appeal, and the question of his paternity was one that would have set a Genealogical College pursing its lips perplexedly."

*Bibliophile*, May, June, and July  
The monthly book-remainders mail order catalogue continues to use plenty of PGW quotations to introduce some of its categories. There were six in May (when there were also eight bargain price PGW paperbacks for sale), 12 in June, and 16 in July!

*Daily Telegraph*, June 1 (from Christopher Bellew)  
Charles Crawford wrote of a speech by David Cameron: "The immediate magnificent effect is to leave Labour and the Liberal Democrats gazing at the Conservative

position on Europe like ostriches goggling at a brass doorknob (as P.G. Wodehouse would have put it)."

*The Spectator*, June 1 (from Christopher Bellew)  
Marcus Berkmann's review of *The Wit and Wisdom of Boris Johnson*, edited by Harry Mount, included the comment that "Boris has learned from P G Wodehouse: mix it all up (Latinate and Anglo-Saxon, formal English and schoolboy slang), bung it all in and see what happens."

*The Write Stuff*, BBC Radio 4, June 2  
One of the questions to the panel was: "Who did Dorothy Parker succeed as Dramatic Critic of *Vanity Fair* in 1917?" The answer – PGW, of course – was given correctly.

*The Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, and others, June 3  
Multiple articles and announcements regarding the production of a new play featuring Bertie and Jeeves. (See page 4.)

*The Times*, June 4  
In a letter to the editor, Tony Ring set matters straight regarding the misinformation that *Perfect Nonsense* would be the West End debut for the works of PGW.

*TLS*, June 7 (from Barry Chapman)  
In the crossword by Tantalus, clue 11 Across was: "Bertie's titular gratitude to the help (5, 3)." Answer: Thank you [Jeeves].

*The Guardian*, June 7 (from Terry Taylor)  
The obituary of the late author Tom Sharpe (see page 7) noted that he had made bad taste an art form,

"like P G Wodehouse on acid". The article also commented on the influence Wodehouse and Evelyn Waugh had on Sharpe, who "was very pleased later to learn that Wodehouse was a fan of his".

*The Lady*, June 14 (from Caroline Franklyn)  
An article about PGW started off with a reference to the upcoming stage production, *Perfect Nonsense*, and went on to describe what made Wodehouse such a great writer.

*Daily Telegraph*, June 18 (from Carolyn De La Plain)  
Judith Woods's introduction to her interview with Jacob Rees-Mogg, MP, included the following comment:

. . . there is something of the Bertie Wooster about Rees-Mogg, the elected representative for North East Somerset. The 44-year-old . . . is the sort of unabashed patrician that most of us thought extinct, a long with p us fours and the passenger pigeon.

*The Guardian*, June 19 (from Terry Taylor)  
Simon Hoggart's report on the members of the House of Lords noted that there were still a few who would fit straight into a Wodehouse novel.

## *The Guardian* Crossword Blog, May 9

The Guardian Crossword blog continued its attempt to solve the crossword clues given in *Something Fishy* for which no answers were provided, with two final articles on May 16 and 30. On May 9, it offered something different – a clue from a letter Wodehouse wrote to Denis Mackail in February 1945, with a ten-lettered answer that Wodehouse could not work out. The clue was: "Exclaim when twine gives out."

If you wish to trace the whole series of blogs (and find out the solution to the 1945 Mackail clue), go to <http://bit.ly/16u4a4I>.

**Weekend Breakfast (ABC Classic FM), June 23**

(from Barry Chapman)

On this Australian radio programme, host Colin Fox spoke of PGW's collaboration with Jerome Kern and played recordings of 'Bill' and 'Spring Time'.

**The Spectator, June 29** (from Christopher Bellew)

Martin Vander Weyer, the paper's business editor, recommended *Ukridge* for summer reading.

**The Mail on Sunday, June 30** (from Pauline Grant)

The TV Guide section had two tributes to PGW: one from Rachel Johnson, who wrote that she always takes Wodehouse on holiday, but she was banned from reading him in bed "as I laugh out loud several times a page"; and the other from Alexander Armstrong, who described his "first true love" as *The Inimitable Jeeves* and specifically 'The Great Sermon Handicap'. "I took it everywhere from the age of 11 and still have my battered Penguin edition."

**India Today, July 1** (from Dilip Joshi)

Writing on the Indian postal department's decision to do away with the telegraph after 160 years, Jug Suraiya wrote: "E.M. Forster had a character in 'Howard's End' deplore the world of 'telegraph and anger'. Bertie Wooster, on the other hand, throwing thrift to the winds, always ended his telegraphic communication with a prodigal 'Toodle-oo and pip-pip'. After all, noblesse oblige and all that."

**The Daily Telegraph, July 3** (from Carolyn De La Plain)

A review by Jane Shilling of singer-songwriter Rufus Wainwright's appearance on Radio 4's *Private Passions* suggested that it was like PGW's immortal line about "aunt calling to aunt like mastodons bellowing across primeval swamps", only with music . . .

**The Daily Mail, July 10** (from Terry Taylor)

An article on the 50th anniversary of the strip cartoon *Fred Bassett* noted that it had been syndicated to 200 newspapers around the world and that when, in 1968, the strip was dropped from *The Long Island Press*, P. G. Wodehouse successfully campaigned to have it reinstated.

**The Times, July 15**

In Simon Barnes's description of the tense last day of the first match in the Ashes series, when the Australians were making a valiant effort to achieve an improbable victory, he referred to the England captain, Alastair Cook, as looking like "Bertie Wooster, deprived of Jeeves, determined to sort out the muddle himself but knowing he was only going to make things worse".

**The Times, July 18**

A letter from Charles Hennessey followed up Patrick Kidd's report (July 16) on the origin of PGW's 'Jeeves' by mentioning Wooster Street, near the hotel Wodehouse stayed at in Washington Square during his early visits to New York, as the source of his employer's name.

**An Open Book, Radio 4, July 25**

Mariella Frostrup's programme on *Summer in Literature*

opened with the fourth sentence of *Summer Lightning*: "It was that gracious hour of a summer afternoon, midway between luncheon and tea, when Nature seems to unbutton its waistcoat and put its feet up." Later the programme contained the classic reference to a laurel bush, which had not previously spoken, saying "Psst!" to Beach.

**The Times, July 29**

An article by Jack Malvern started with the words: "Apart from providing relief to Jeeves as a holiday destination in P G Wodehouse's *Jeeves and Wooster* novels, the seaside resort of Herne Bay has modest claims to be a cultural crucible."

**The Times, July 30** (from Keith Alsop, June Arnold, and Christopher Bellew)

Several members drew attention to the clue for 26 Across in the Cryptic Crossword: "A biblical city seen by a Wodehouse aunt (6)." The answer is Agatha, Gath having been the home town of Goliath.

**The Times, August 3**

Caitlin Moran wrote an entertaining article defending 'Hipsters', whom she described as one of the most reviled sub-species in the Western world. At the end of the article, she concluded by asking: "How can we – P G Wodehouse fans – love Bertie Wooster, but not a hipster?"

**The Sunday Times, August 4**

In an article about the failings of hotel rooms worldwide, Roland White seems to have taken mistaken objection to the Corby trouser-press, and, rather than express Jeeves's views on the trouser-crease, claims that "P G Wodehouse suggested that any man who has his trousers pressed is a 'social gangster'."

**With Great Pleasure, BBC Radio 4, August 5**

(from Alexander Dainty)

Barry Cryer concluded his selection of favourite writings which gave him great pleasure by a reading from Wodehouse, and chose a page or so from the first chapter of *Right Ho, Jeeves*, with Barry reading the Bertie Wooster part and Bernard Cribbens the Jeeves.

**The Times, August 6**

The daily back-page quiz in the second part of the paper, which is set by Olav Bjortomt, had the question: "Who introduced *Ukridge* in his first adult novel *Love Among the Chickens* (1906)?"

**BBC News Magazine (online), August 7**

(from Jeremy Neville)

A video report on the Cabmen's Shelters in London opens with a quotation from *The Intrusion of Jimmy*. To view the report, go to <http://bbc.in/11M19x2>.

**Mumbai Mirror (online), August 8**

Eunice de Souza wrote of a book of essays she had come across, including one in which the writer wondered whether Jeeves, Wooster, and other Wodehouse characters were really British; she concluded that they were not real at all (a point of view with which we disagree!).

Aberdeen terriers, possibly owing to their heavy eyebrows, always seem to look at you as if they were in the pulpit of the church of some particularly strict Scottish sect and you were a parishioner of dubious reputation in the front row of the stalls.

(From *Stiff Upper Lip*, Jeeves, 1963)

# Future Events for Your Diary

**September 21-22, 2013**

## **Royal County of Berkshire Show**

On Sunday the 22nd, Chairman Hilary Bruce will again face the challenge of draping the Society's sash across the greased back of the Berkshire Champion of Champions.

## **October 5, 2013 Wodehouse Events at the Cheltenham Literature Festival**

There will be two events of interest to Wodehouseans on this day at the Festival. At 2 p.m., there will be a discussion entitled 'P G Wodehouse: In Words and Music', with Sebastian Faulks, Sir Terry Wogan, and Hal Cazalet participating and Hugo Rifkind in the chair. Then, from 8.30 to 10 p.m., Martin Jarvis will read two Jeeves short stories.

**October 11-19, 2013**

## **P G Wodehouse Festival in Emsworth**

The Brookfield Hotel in Emsworth is putting on this festival, featuring performances of *Anything Goes*, readings from *Thank You, Jeeves*, and a talk by local historian Linda Newell.

**October 18-20, 2013 TWS Convention in Chicago**

The Wodehouse Society's 17th biennial convention will be held at the Union League Club of Chicago, Illinois.

**October 27, 2013**

## **Sebastian Faulks at the Guildford Book Festival**

There will be a preview of the new book *Jeeves and the Wedding Bells* with a talk by its author, Sebastian Faulks. See also page 12.

**October 29, 2013 Society AGM**

In addition to the ever-popular AGM, we will enjoy having Murray Hedgcock reprise the talk he gave at the Cheltenham Cricket Festival in July. We gather from 6 p.m. onwards in the upper room of The George, London.

**From October 30, 2013**

## **Perfect Nonsense at the Duke of York Theatre**

The new Jeeves & Wooster play begins previews on this date. For more information, see page 4.

**February 18, 2014 Winter Meeting at The George**

**July 15, 2014 Summer Meeting at The George**

**November 18, 2014 Autumn Meeting at The George**

These are the tentative dates for our 2014 meetings, all to be confirmed in the next issue of *Wooster Sauce*.

**April 14, 2014 Poet in the City Readings, Kings Hall**

A special treat for Wodehouse poetry lovers as the Society teams up with Poet in the City for an evening of Wodehouse verse. See page 13.

**October 16, 2014 Dinner at Gray's Inn**

The date of our biennial dinner has now been fixed. Details will be provided in a future issue, but do mark your calendar now!

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