



# BY THE WAY

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## Wodehouse's Police Officers Part I: Senior Ranks

Having provided information about Wodehouse's Crooks in the last four June issues, it now behoves us to treat equally the guardians of the law. In this first instalment, we consider officers who were promoted from mere PC status; in future years we shall look at the lower ranked officers, and then those who worked overseas.

### **Banks, Sergeant**

Was scheduled to sing 'Asleep in the Deep' at the annual concert in aid of the Policemen's Orphanage.  
(*Ice in the Bedroom*)

### **'Bones', Inspector**

Stout member of the force who investigated the hold-up at Sanstead House with his junior colleague, PC Johnson.  
(*The Little Nugget, Part 2*)

### **Brewster, Sergeant Herbert**

A swarthy bicycling member of the Wellingford constabulary who captained the village cricket team and was walking out with Ivy.  
(*Do Butlers Burgle Banks?*)

**Chisholm, Assistant Commissioner Sir Wilberforce**  
Of Scotland Yard, the father of Wilfred Chisholm.  
(*Pearls, Girls and Monty Bodkin*)

### **Dolby, Superintendent (Ret'd)**

On retirement from Scotland Yard, he had set up the Eagle Eye Detective Agency, and trained his daughter Daphne to manage it while he went off to the Channel Islands to grow tomatoes.  
(*Bachelors Anonymous*)

### **Drew, Inspector**

Retired in mysterious circumstances.  
(*The Swoop, Part 1*)

### **Finbow, Sergeant**

Had progressed from the position of mere Police Constable to the gentlemanly custodian of the peace from Birmingham who kept one eye on Mulberry Grove, Valley Fields, and another on Hannah Wisdom.  
(*Big Money*)

### **Fotheringay, Sergeant**

When Bertie Wooster was prevented from returning Mrs L. G. Trotter's pearl necklace to the safe, he had a vision of being interviewed by an unusually

unpleasant-looking Sergeant Fotheringay and his grave superior of Inspector rank.  
(*Jeeves and the Feudal Spirit*)

### **Gregson, Inspector**

Already a fictional Inspector from the works of Mr Conan Doyle, Adrian Mulliner was convinced that in reality he and Inspector Lestrade were actors hired to impersonate the law and deceive Dr Watson, part of the smokescreen Holmes had created to disguise the fact that he was in fact Moriarty.  
(*From a Detective's Notebook*  
in *Punch and Escapade*)

### **Jarvis, Inspector**

In Jerry Vail's imagination, the policeman who visited him at Sunnybrae could have been an excellent model of the Scotland Yard Inspector whom he planned to set on the trail of Lavender Joe in his next toe-curler.  
(*Pigs Have Wings*)

### **Jarvis, Inspector**

Of Scotland Yard, he was advised by Waterall, an American reporter, to pick up Benyon, a wanted American bank robber who had come to London to see a ball game.  
(*'One Touch of Nature'*  
in *The Man with Two Left Feet*)

### **Jervis, Inspector**

A fictional character to which his creator, Johnny Pearce, was addicted.  
(*Cocktail Time*)

### **Jervis, Inspector**

Lord Ickenham, Johnny Pearce's godfather, gratefully adopted the pseudonym as a way of spreading sweetness and light and, intervening in a discussion between Sir Raymond Bastable and Oily Carlisle, persuaded the latter to turn out his pockets and concede the concealed letter.  
(*Cocktail Time*)

**Jessop, Superintendent**

Of the Wellingford constabulary; he was the brother-in-law of Sergeant Claude Potter, who was apt to cause resentment by calling him a 'country copper'. If the truth were told, the Superintendent was no Sherlock Holmes. When advised by Potter to visit Bond's Bank, he found the Appleby gang pretending to be bank auditors and was upset shortly afterwards to find that a burglary had taken place there, after all.

(*Do Butlers Burgle Banks?*)

**Keene, Inspector**

Another fictional Inspector, this time in Bingo Little's mystery thriller, who was searching for the murderer of Sir Rollo Murgatroyd after he had been bumped off in his library with a blunt instrument.

(*'The Shadow Passes'* in *Nothing Serious*)

**'Lestrade, Inspector'**

No more than the nickname given to Sergeant Potter by Jill Willard when she learned that he had visited Bond's Bank the previous night.

(*Do Butlers Burgle Banks?*)

**Mould, Detective Inspector**

A fictional character from the toe-curler *Strychnine in the Soup*, who looked through a half-open cellar door and, drawing in his breath with a sharp hissing sound, recoiled in horror.

(*'Strychnine in the Soup'* in *Mulliner Nights*)

**Murchison, E. B., Sergeant**

Appointed by Special Branch to act as bodyguard to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir James Piper, he accompanied him wherever he went, and even though he did not have a snow-white fleece, he nevertheless made Sir James feel like the Mary of popular culture. The responsibility of performing his daily duties conscientiously gave him the heebie-jeebies and did not leave him adequate time to pursue wooing the love of his own life, Marilyn Poole.

(*Sunset at Blandings*)

**Oakshott, Inspector**

Was due to perform conjuring tricks at the annual concert of the Policeman's Orphanage.

(*Sam the Sudden*)

**Potter, Sergeant Claude**

A young man with sleek, fair hair, a moustache and intelligent eyes who had been educated at Oxford and trained at Hendon Police College before joining Scotland Yard. He travelled to Wellingford to see his brother-in-law, Superintendent Jessop, to whom he regarded himself as superior and adopted a patronising attitude, even when it came to chess. He was smart enough to suspect a conspiracy surrounding the

Bond's Bank's affairs, but failed to heed a warning from Mike Bond and was shot for his pains.

(*Do Butlers Burgle Banks?*)

**Purvis, Inspector**

Yet another fictional Inspector, the hero of Jeff Miller's books, who was smart enough to have seen through the crust of respectability offered by the Molloys before his creator did.

(*Money in the Bank*)

**Roberts, Detective Inspector**

Of New Scotland Yard, he arrived by bike to look into the theft of the stolen challenge cups at St Austin's School. He had a scar on the cheekbone, inflicted by an armed burglar.

(*The Pothunters*)

**Voules, Sergeant Edward**

Of the Somerset County Constabulary, he was stationed at Chuffnell Regis with his nephew, PC Dobson, in premises adjoining the cottage taken by Bertie Wooster. Built rather on the lines of the Albert Hall, round in the middle and not much above, he held strong views on shackling the rural police in their ceaseless war against the wrongdoer, but received no sympathy from the persecuted Bertie. In his spare time he played the harmonium and sold eggs, worthy activities both, but he deviated from the strict honesty we are entitled to expect from our constabulary when he deposed that he once took on 96 spiders at one go in India.

(*Thank You, Jeeves*)

**Witherspoon, Chief Inspector**

This imposing impostor of New Scotland Yard, played without rehearsal by Reginald Jeeves, promised Major Plank that he would fling the prisoner Alpine Joe into a cell with dripping walls and would see that he was well gnawed by rats. He later told Plank where he could find a local prop forward to strengthen his rugby football team. When Plank thought he spotted him some time later in Maiden Eggesford, he rebutted the accusation with a classic illustration of the value of blank denial.

(*Stiff Upper Lip, Jeeves and Aunts Aren't Gentlemen*)

**Wyvern, Chief Constable Col. Aubrey**

The Chief Constable of Southmoltonshire was the father of the attractive half-portion Jill, living at Wyvern Hall, near Southmolton. He looked like a retired member of Sanger's troupe of midgets who had been doing himself too well on starchy foods. When he went to horsewhip Bill Rowcester for trolloping, he found his own weapon was at the menders and that he would have to borrow that of his intended victim.

(*Ring for Jeeves*)