



BY THE WAY

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Wodehouse's Police Officers – Part II Police Constables and Officers of Unknown Rank

This is the second in a series about PGW's police officers. In principle the order followed will be Senior Officers (above PC level), followed by PCs and Officers of unknown rank in the UK, and finally Overseas Policemen of all ranks.

Bodger, P C

Was down to do imitations of footlight favourites at the annual concert in aid of the Policemen's Orphanage.

(*Ice in the Bedroom*)

Booker, P C

Was plugged in the eye by a Right Reverend Bishop during a raid at the Home from Home.

(*'Gala Night'* in *Mulliner Nights*)

Bryce, Constable Robert

Fourteen stone of bone and muscle, he stopped the fight between Shute and Welsh.

(*'When Doctors Disagree'* in *The Man Upstairs*)

Bunce, P C

The officer who discovered the body in Adrian Mulliner's account of a Sherlock Holmes story.

(*'From a Detective's Notebook'* in *Punch* 1959)

Butt, Alfred, PC

Of the town force at Wrykyn, Shropshire, he was the straw at which a drowning townee from Wrykyn clutched after being thrown into the pond. The Constable's consequent bathe whilst on duty was excusable as he had been "subduing a frakkus, your worships".

(*Mike*)

Cheesewright, P C d'Arcy 'Stilton'

A beefy but humourless bird with a head like a solid concrete pumpkin (or the dome of St Paul's), he had been captain of Boats at Eton before rowing four years for Oxford and completing his education at Hendon Police Training College. He became the police presence at Steeple Bumbleigh, and though only one of the Old Florentians, he uniquely (ignoring the claims of the reluctant Bertie Wooster) achieved the feat of becoming engaged to Florence Craye on three separate occasions. He was a very impressionable man, being converted at speed to such beliefs as Buddhism and, at a turn of a wonderful profile, being willing to read Marx and *Types of Ethical Theory*. After he lost his policeman's uniform while bathing

in the river, he resigned from the force because the local JP refused to sign a warrant for Bertie's arrest on a charge of its theft.

(*Joy in the Morning* and *Jeeves and the Feudal Spirit*)

Cobb, PC

Of Millbourne, Hampshire, he was verbally routed by the cockney batteries of Sally Preston when informing her that her puppy had no collar, contrary to regulations. Nevertheless, he had the last word.

(*'Something to Worry About'* in *The Man Upstairs*)

Dobbs, PC Ernest

The village policeman at King's Deverill, Hants, whose height would only just do, but whose moustache was of twirlable length and whose breadth would enable him to understudy the village blacksmith. He had a brusque, abrupt manner, even with his fiancée Queenie. A practising atheist, he lost no opportunity of annoying the Vicar, Rev Sidney Potter-Pirbright, by popping out at him from side streets and making offensive cracks about Jonah and his whale. He also annoyed Corky Potter-Pirbright by arresting her dog Sam Goldwyn. Believing he had trapped Gussie Fink-Nottle by the simple expedient of standing under a tree, he lost both his prisoner and his atheistic beliefs in a flash when he was struck by a thunderbolt from above.

(*The Mating Season*)

Dobson, PC

The lean and stringy junior branch of the law at Chuffnell Regis, and nephew of its senior branch, Sergeant Voules. He was a little over-anxious to make arrests, especially of such marauders as Bertie Wooster and Sir Roderick Glossop.

(*Thank You, Jeeves*)

Evans, P C

Stationed at Market Blandings, but like most rural constables he suffered from a lack of spirit and initiative by the local criminal classes:

[A] man like New York's Officer Garroway has always more dope pushers and heist guys and

Fiends With Hatchet Slaying Six than he knows what to do with, but in Market Blandings you were lucky if you got an occasional dog without a collar or a Saturday night drunk and disorderly.

Although the constable achieved a hat trick of sorts by catching out three successive generations of Wellbeloveds, he laid himself open to criticism with his peremptory arrest of Beach and Jerry Vail at the whim of a mere Parsloe. His attempts to retrieve his reputation with Beach – by befriending him, telling him risqué stories, and trying to arrest Sam Bagshott – do not impress.

(*Pigs Have Wings, Galahad at Blandings, and 'Pig-Hoo-o-o-o-ey' in Blandings Castle*)

Fotheringay-Phipps, PC George

After joining the police and completing his education at Hendon Police Training College, he started his official career auspiciously by showing no favour to relatives, particularly his elder brother Barmy.

(*Joy in the Morning*)

Garroway – assumed to be a PC

Known to Gally Threepwood some years ago but now dead, and assumed by Clarence to have thus been a different policeman from the one he had met in New York.

(*Galahad at Blandings*)

Gooch, PC

Held on to Meggs's arm while listening to the explanation for his apparent attack on Miss Pillenger.

(*'A Sea of Troubles' in The Man Upstairs*)

Grogan, PC

A genial giant who was a terror to the riotous element of the Southampton waterfront but nervous in the presence of death, as personified by Captain Gunner.

(*'Death at the Excelsior' in Pearson's Magazine*)

'Johnson', PC

Long and lean, armed with a notebook and a name attributed to him by Mr Burns, he, along with his colleague (see 'Inspector Bones'), had been called to Sansted House after the attempt by Buck McGinnis's gang to kidnap the Little Nugget.

(Part 2 of *The Little Nugget*)

Jukes, PC

Expected to render imitations at the annual concert of the Policeman's Orphanage.

(*Sam the Sudden*)

Keating, PC

A conscientious man who weighed in at almost 14 stone, he arrested 'Spider' Buffin when finding him in a violent argument with Mr Kelly. Later, after also arresting 'Porky' Binns, the gallant officer was

undergoing a physical assault by Otto the Sausage and Rabbit Butler, members of the Frith Street Gang under the direction of Sid Marks, when he was rescued from serious damage by the intervention of the same Spider.

(*'Misunderstood' in Nash's Magazine*)

Readers may look forward to an entry relating to Officer Kelly in By The Way for June 2021, in which very similar descriptive text will appear, in relation to a contemporary version of the story which appeared in The Burr McIntosh Monthly, an American magazine.

Lipton, Sir Thomas

The 5th Earl of Ickenham circulated a totally false story about Sir Thomas Lipton's early life as a policeman, suggesting that after falling under the influence of the lorgnette of the Earl's Aunt Brenda, Sir Thomas was never the same again and drifted into the grocery business.

(*Uncle Fred in the Springtime*)

McMurdo, Constable Cyril

The possibly short-sighted fiancé of Nannie Bruce was the policeman at Dovetail Hammer who had won £500 on a football pool. He displayed the extent of his education when he sought to have Ecclesiastes arrested for assaulting Peasemarch.

(*Cocktail Time*)

Morgan, PC

Called in by PC Evans to assist in the detention of Sam Bagshott in an outbuilding at Blandings Castle, he was observed to resemble PC Evans closely in physical terms, except for the absence of a black eye.

(*Galahad at Blandings*)

Mould, PC

He was one of the slowest-witted of men in even Rudge-in-the-Vale, with eyes like brown puddles filmed over with scum and little idea about how to make use of a clue.

(*Money for Nothing*)

Murgatroyd, PC

His attempt to execute his duties was resisted by Ronnie Fish, or, as he liked to be known in public, Edwin Jones of 7 Nasturtium Villas, Cricklewood.

(*Summer Lightning*)

Murphy, Constable Claude

A quart of beer from the brewing Ovens of the Emsworth Arms was sufficient to cause George Cyril Wellbeloved to reveal to this officer a number of personal secrets he would have preferred to have remained confidential.

(*Service with a Smile*)