

WOOSTER SAUCE



The Quarterly Journal of The P G Wodehouse Society (UK)

Number 9

March 1999

Plans for the Anthology Gather Pace

Members who took part in the Ballot regarding stories to be included in the Anthology which will be published in February next year will be pleased to hear that it has been a resounding success.

A formidable document, detailing the findings from the ballots run by Societies in the UK, US, Belgium, Holland, Sweden and India was presented to the publishers, Hutchinson, in late January, and at a meeting last month Tony Whittome, their Editorial Director, expressed his delight at the initiative:

“Hats off to all members of all Societies for the hard work put into making their selections, although I know it would have been a lot of fun. We, Hutchinson, are building on this and I hope you will all be

pleasantly surprised to find many of your choices included in the final book.

The constructive suggestions which were made for items other than short stories have given us food for thought which we are still digesting, but we certainly expect to include a number of extracts from novels and to use several of the other ideas proposed.

And I think there will be one or two pleasant surprises, including unpublished material.”

Uncle Fred Flits By was selected as overall favourite by Societies in Belgium and the USA as well as by our members. A number of other stories which we chose also appeared at or close to the top of other lists.

Thank you to all who took part.

HOW THE UK VOTING WENT

Overall Favourite

Jeeves and Wooster (UK)

Jeeves and Wooster (US)

Blandings Castle

Ukridge

The Oldest Member

Mr Mulliner (UK)

Mr Mulliner (US)

Drones - Bingo Little

Drones - Freddie Widgeon

Drones - Other

Other

Uncle Fred Flits By

The Great Sermon Handicap

The Aunt and the Sluggard

Lord Emsworth and the Girl Friend

Ukridge's Accident Syndicate

The Clicking of Cuthbert

Mulliner's Buck-U-Uppo

The Rise of Minna Nordstrom

Bingo and the Peke Crisis

Goodbye to All Cats

The Amazing Hat Mystery

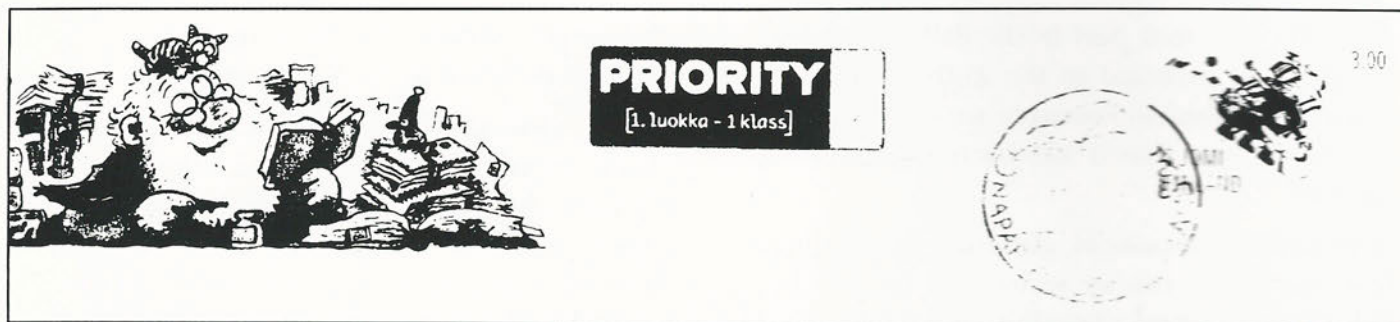
Mr Potter's Rest Cure

Sir Roderick Glossop's Last Letter Found

Wooster Sauce's dedicated staff, anxious to further their careers with breathtaking scoops, have unearthed an extraordinary letter sent by Sir Roderick Glossop from, of all places, Lapland!

The letter is reproduced opposite. It was found complete with envelope, which it has only been possible to reproduce in part below, but was evidently written following the party mentioned at the end of *Jeeves and the Greasy Bird* (in *Plum Pie*, 1966) when Sir Roderick was invited to dress up as Father Christmas.

If any readers have seen or heard of Sir Roderick since January 1967, please contact the Editor.



In following up this story, we contacted Kenneth Gregory of Bath, who offers an identification of the real-life model for Sir Roderick Glossop which coincidentally links this feature with Norman Murphy's contribution concerning Middlewick on page 5.

Kenneth tells us that when Plum was staying at Cheney Court, the only doctor within five miles was Dr Henry MacBryan, who would have been called in whenever there were ailments which needed treating. Dr MacBryan, a man with an enormous bald head and beetling eyebrows who died in 1944, ran a private mental home at Box, less than a mile from Cheney Court, and adjacent to Ditteridge.

Kenneth suggests that should additional justification be required for Dr MacBryan being the source for Sir Roderick, the fact that Sir Roderick's home in *The Pride of the Woosters is Wounded* (from *The Inimitable Jeeves*) is at Ditteredge in Hampshire, just one letter and one county away from the next village to Dr MacBryan's, is well-nigh conclusive.

It All Happens at the Savage Club!

There have been two meetings of the Society at the Savage Club since the last issue of *Wooster Sauce* went to press, on November 17 and February 16. In November, more than 30 members were droning, sluicing and drinking quite happily when in rushed a member carrying a policeman's helmet, which he thrust into the hands of a startled Eddie Grabham before hiding behind a pillar. Shortly afterwards, in lumbered the aggrieved Constable Edward Wheen, and finding a resident magistrate in the shape of Robert Rhodes QC, related an amazing story in stilted prose.

He forthrightly accused the said Grabham of pinching his helmet (which the latter still carried) and, when told that the evidence was against him in that he (the Grabham) had been talking to him (the Rhodes) at the very time the theft took place and that he (the Grabham) thus had an unbreakable alibi, he

(the Wheen) quoted from the *Daily Mail* about the consequences of shackling the police and stomped off with a disgruntled gait.

It was all very reminiscent of a Wodehouse story.

The same Grabham entertained 40 members at the meeting in February. Eddie is a radio presenter with Radio Northampton and Three Counties Radio, and has a particular interest in films and musicals. He introduced recordings of six Wodehouse songs from different shows, including Helen Morgan's original version of *Bill; Honeymoon Inn* from the revival of *Very Good, Eddie; Worries* from *Sitting Pretty* and Lorna Dallas's recent *London, Dear Old London*.

The Savage Club meetings always have a most convivial air, and we plan to continue to hold three a year. See page 20 for the next two dates to put in your diary.



MY DEAR DAHLIA,

20 JAN 67

Extraordinary happenings since I was at Brinkley handing round presents at your kids' Christmas party. But my mind is blank for a lot of the time. I remember being relieved that none of your small guests sought fit to stroke my outfit with chocolate, or to set fire to my beard. By the way, I hope the silver cow-creamer and amber statuette for the older children were acceptable!



I also remember having foolishly omitted to provide myself with a change of clothing, so that when I accepted the kind invitation to dine with you and Mr Travers I was still in my Santa Claus things. But after that it's almost a blank. Whether it was due to something Anatole put in the *Nonettes de poulet Agnes Soreil* or the whisky which you kept pouring I could not say, but I was unwell and you showed me to a room where I could lie down.

Dahlia, the next thing I remember is a dream, that I was flying somewhere in the dark, and could hear animal noises and what seemed to be sleighbells. When I woke up, I was here in Lapland, which is apparently the headquarters for Santa Claus. You're not going to believe this, but they say that I misappropriated two of the presents and I have to stay here until they are found and returned!

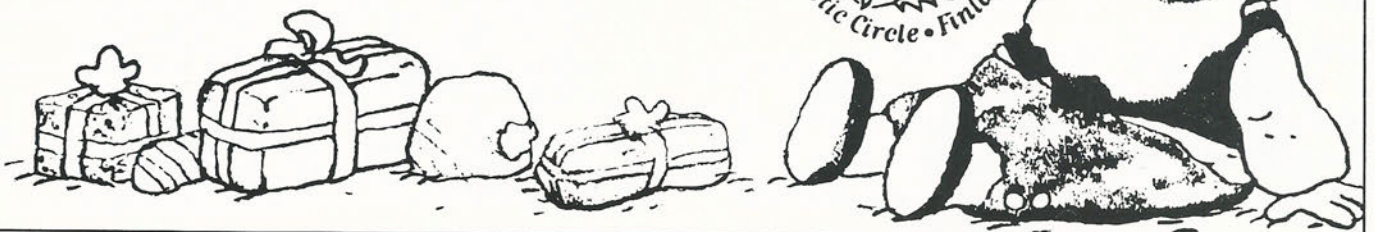
Please help. The parcels must have fallen out of the sack while I was asleep, because I know there were some over. Will you please search the room and send the packages here as soon as possible. And Dahlia, under no circumstances say a word to anybody, particularly your nephew Bertie. I have no wish to retire for some years, but if this story should get around I would lose all my clients. Be certified myself, I shouldn't wonder. If I saw this letter, I'd give evidence against myself like a shot!

Hoping to hear from you very soon, and wishing you the best possible New Year

Yours

Roderick Bassop

Bertie
Read this!
The man finally gone loopy
of course I haven't replied.
Aunt D



Percy Jeeves's Cricketing Exploits

James Hogg found a number of interesting items in a 'Jeeves Scrapbook', and Wisden for 1914, in the cricket collection of his friend David Frith

WARWICKSHIRE v. YORKSHIRE.

Played at BIRMINGHAM, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, August 7, 8, 9.— In this match which had to be left drawn, rain limiting play on Saturday to two hours and a quarter, E. R. Wilson, the Cambridger captain of 1902, reappeared in the Yorkshire eleven after an interval of eleven years. With neither Hirst nor Haigh able to bowl, and Booth much below his best, Yorkshire, in dismissing Warwickshire for 336, owed much to the old Cantab. Quaife batted admirably for the home side, and Jeeves hit in brilliant style, making his runs in an hour and three-quarters. For Yorkshire HIRST and Haigh put on 115 for the second wicket, the latter playing especially well. On Saturday Foster hit up 58 in fifty-five minutes, and when Yorkshire went in with 110 to make in just over an hour he took two wickets in his first over.

WARWICKSHIRE.		YORKSHIRE.	
E. J. Smith lbw, b Drake	14	c Kilner b Drake	11
J. H. Parsons c Birtles b E. R. Wilson	36	not out	2
C. Charlesworth c Birtles b E. R. Wilson	35	b Booth	8
W. G. Quaife b Booth	75	c Dolphin b Booth	16
C. S. Baker c B. B. Wilson b E. R. Wilson	46	c White b Haigh	45
Mr. F. R. Foster b Drake	2	not out	58
Mr. G. W. Stephens c Dolphin b E. R. Wilson	0	c Hirst b Drake	0
Mr. E. B. Crockford lbw, b E. R. Wilson	0		
P. Jeeves not out	86		
Mr. C. K. Langley b Drake	19		
H. Howell b E. R. Wilson	4		
B 10, l-b 7, w 1, n-b 1	19	L-b	3
	336		*142

*Innings declared closed.

WARWICKSHIRE.		YORKSHIRE.	
W. Rhodes c Foster b Jeeves	50	not out	37
B. H. Wilson b Foster	25	b Foster	0
S. Haigh st Smith b Quaife	92	b Foster	2
E. Kilner hit wkt., b Quaife	50	not out	21
O. H. Hirst b Foster	30		
A. Drake b Foster	0		
M. W. Booth c Langley b Quaife	30		
Mr. E. R. Wilson lbw, b Quaife	31		
Sir A. W. White c Smith b Quaife	23		
T. J. Birtles b Quaife	11		
A. Dolphin not out	8		
B 15, l-b 9	24	B 3, n-b 1	4
	369		64

YORKSHIRE BOWLING.				WARWICKSHIRE BOWLING.			
Overs	Mdns.	Runs	Wkts.	Overs	Mdns.	Runs	Wkts.
Booth	23	1	104	1	15	2	45
Drake	23	5	64	3	19	6	35
E. R. Wilson	35.2	9	89	6	2	0	8
Rhodes	19	4	69	0	4	0	18
Kilner	2	1	1	0			
			Haigh	10	0	38	1
Foster	38	11	101	3	11	4	18
Langley	8	1	42	0	6	1	26
Howell	15	1	43	0	4	0	16
Jeeves	31	10	81	1			
Quaife	25.5	8	78	6			

Umpires: W. Phillips and E. G. Barlow.

WARWICKSHIRE v. SURREY.

Played at BIRMINGHAM, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, August 18, 19, 20.— Surrey managed to secure a narrow lead on the first innings, but the honours of the game rested with Warwickshire whose bowlers in the second innings of Surrey kept the visitors largely on the defensive for five hours, and whose batsmen, when set 253 to make in two hours, hit up 179 in an hour and three quarters. Hobbs played a masterly innings on Monday. Warwickshire began by losing three wickets for 15, but Charlesworth and Quaife added 188. Quaife, batting without a mistake, put together his third successive hundred against Surrey. Charlesworth, like Quaife at Kennington Oval earlier in the season, made two separate hundreds. On Wednesday he reached three figures in seventy minutes, but latterly he was given plenty of balls to hit.

WARWICKSHIRE.		SURREY.	
T. Hayward b Jeeves	20	c Parsons b Field	17
J. D. Hobbs c Charlesworth b Jeeves	122	run out	49
E. G. Hayes b Howell	40	lbw, b Howell	48
H. S. Harrison c Smith b Quaife	47	not out	79
Mr. D. J. Knight c Smith b Quaife	6	b Field	35
Mr. D. H. Butcher not out	41	c Parsons b Langley	1
E. G. Goatly b Howell	4	b Langley	9
A. W. Spring c Smith b Jeeves	39	c and b Field	1
H. Strudwick b Jeeves	0	b Jeeves	12
W. Hitch c Foster b Jeeves	14	c Howell b Field	1
T. Rushby st Smith b Foster	0	not out	14
B 11, l-b 9, n-b 1	21	B 11, l-b 5, w 1, n-b 2	19
	324		*240

*Innings declared closed.

WARWICKSHIRE.		SURREY.	
E. J. Smith c Butcher b Hitch	9	c Knight b Hitch	13
J. H. Parsons b Hitch	0	b Hayes	21
C. Charlesworth c Spring b Hayes	100	not out	101
F. E. Field b Rushby	0		
W. G. Quaife c Harrison b Spring	105	not out	5
Mr. F. R. Foster c Harrison b Rushby	30	b Hitch	25
C. S. Baker not out	18		
P. Jeeves c Spring b Hitch	11	b Spring	0
Mr. E. B. Crockford b Hitch	6		
Mr. C. K. Langley run out	16	b Hayes	11
H. Howell b Hitch	0		
B 8, l-b 2, w 6, n-b 2	17	L-b 2, n-b 1	3
	312		179

WARWICKSHIRE BOWLING.				SURREY BOWLING.			
Overs	Mdns.	Runs	Wkts.	Overs	Mdns.	Runs	Wkts.
Foster	22.5	4	63	1	20	10	30
Field	16	4	26	0	27	9	58
Jeeves	22	5	60	5	19	8	80
Langley	10	1	39	0	16	2	45
Howell	22	8	55	2	9	6	11
Quaife	18	2	62	2	14	4	29
			Charlesworth	4	1	8	0
Hitch	26.4	4	96	5	7	0	34
Rushby	33	4	107	2	8	0	35
Spring	18	4	39	1	8	0	51
Hayes	14	1	31	1	9	0	51
Goatly	8	0	22	0	2	1	5

Umpires: A. J. Atfield and G. P. Harrison.

When writer David Frith showed me his collection of cricketana recently, I mentioned to him my campaign to get Percy Jeeves into *Wisden*. For years Percy had been scandalously denied a place in the cricketers' bible, despite being the source of the fictional Jeeves's name. (Wodehouse remembered having seen him bowl for Warwickshire before the First World War.)

"If you're interested in Percy Jeeves," said David, "I've got his scrap-book here. His brother gave it to me."

And sure enough there it was, a yellowing exercise book into which the promising young cricketer had pasted his cuttings. On the cover he had written *P. JEEVES. SCRAP BOOK*, poignant evidence of his hopes for the future. Alas, they were to be cruelly dashed - in 1916 Percy Jeeves was killed in action at the Somme.

Early efforts to have him memorialised in the section of *Wisden* devoted to the births and deaths of cricketers were fruitless. When I pointed out to the then editor, Graeme Wright, that shortage of space was a poor reason for keeping out a man who had

given his name to the English language, Graeme told me that he could not find the word *Jeeves* in his dictionary, and anyway he preferred Waugh to Wodehouse. My riposte that the Oxford English Dictionary listed Evelyn Waugh as the first writer to use *Jeeves* as a noun fell on deaf ears.

ALEXANDRA STREET BOARD SCHOOL

The boys of the above school have had a most successful season, due in no small degree to the teachers, and especially to Mr. Appleyard and Mr. Westoby. Out of twelve matches, ten have been won and two lost, and these defeats were inflicted by much bigger lads - the Church Lads' Brigade and Goolse Grammar School. The wickets, for the most part, have been very rough, and the greatest difficulty has been experienced in obtaining fields at all for the schools. In batting, P. Jeeves has been marvellously consistent, twice having succeeded in passing the half century, and getting into double figures nine times. For twelve innings he has scored 223 runs, an average of 18.5. Strickland and Thorpe average 0.8 and 0.8 respectively, while Graves, E. Walker and H. Yorke have made useful scores at times. The bowling figures are excellent, and are worth producing in their entirety.

	O.	M.	R.	W.	Avg.
H. Pidd	22.2	12	26	16	1.6
H. Thorpe	69.4	22	88	41	2.1
P. Jeeves	55.1	19	73	33	2.2
M. Graves	11	2	33	7	4.7

Wodehouse and Weston Park

Jimmy Moxon continues his series of three articles. At the end of the first, he had explained why Plum and his brother Armine would have received invitations for social weekends at Weston Park.

Assuming then that Armine and Plum had been invited for the weekend at Weston Park not long after their arrival at Stableford, to inject a little jollity (ie Armine!) into an otherwise staid house-party, what would be the household that welcomed them?

Their official host is Orlando George Charles Bridgeman, the 3rd Earl of Bradford, a 77-year-old widower whose late wife had been Selina, a noted beauty and one of the daughters of neighbouring peer, Lord Forester of Willey Park, Bridgnorth. To the young Wodehouses he must have seemed a withdrawn and distant figure, pottering between his library and his superb flower-gardens which he had – over the years – done so much to establish.

But in his heyday he had been one of the most notable figures in the land. Before ever succeeding to the peerage in his mid-forties he had established his own racing stables at Newport Lodge in Leicestershire where he regularly rode to hounds (Quorn and Pytchley country) and was a noted breeder and trainer of race horses – though it was not until well after his seventieth birthday that his entry – Sir Hugo – won the Derby. Master of the Horse – responsible for much of the Queen's ceremonial arrangements – he rose to the top post of Lord Chamberlain. Meanwhile his lovely Countess, Selina, had become a great society figure and the archives at Weston Park contain over 1,000 letters written (at a time when this was considered an art) by Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli to Selina on every imaginable social and political topic.

Blessed with considerable wealth, the 3rd Earl had done much to refashion the interior of Weston Park and add to its exterior amenities to take its place as one of the great 19th century stately homes. Such things were still possible before the emergence of heavy death-duties.

The elderly widower's hostess at Weston Park, who would no doubt have issued the invitations, is daughter-in-law Ida, wife of the 51-year-old son and heir, George Cecil Orlando, Lord Newport. Ida herself is a daughter of the Earl of Scarborough. They have seven children – three boys and four girls whose ages range between 10 and 22, and the eldest of whom, Orlando Bridgeman (Orlo to the family), who has just completed his education at Harrow and Trinity Cambridge, is on holiday from No 10, Downing Street, where he is now Assistant Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, the Marquess of Salisbury.

Both Pelham and Armine would find themselves guests of a splendidly aristocratic English family. Plum's later fictional references to Lady Constance as "the daughter of a hundred earls" was wholly in the spirit of the tradition. If it had been a Christmas party – with the house full of young people (as well as the Aunts and Uncles) – Armine's prowess on the piano (likened by Plum to that of Gershwin) would have been a tremendous asset and he would have been on easy terms with grandson Orlo, three or four years his senior. But self effacing Pelham – though lapping up the atmosphere and detail like a sponge – might not well have clicked with his own age group (the "Do you hunt?" and Albrighton Point-to-Point set). It could well be that he made friends more easily beyond the green baize door whence he derived his unrivalled knowledge of 'below-stairs' etiquette.

In their third year at Stableford the 3rd Earl – then approaching 80, having been born four years after Waterloo – had taken to his bed with a chill and been called to his fathers. He was succeeded as 4th Earl by George Cecil, now in comfortable middle age at 53. Grandson Orlo of Downing Street became Lord Newport and after two years in South Africa, having volunteered for service in the Boer War, he returned to No 10 as Private Secretary to Arthur Balfour, Lord Salisbury's brilliant nephew and his successor as Prime Minister. And after a fashionable wedding to Margaret, daughter of Lord Aberdare, there Orlo Newport remained until the Tories gave way to the Liberals in the Free Trade landslide of 1906.

By this time the Wodehouse family had moved on to Cheltenham, and shy young Pelham, with his first New York visit behind him, was a published author with seven novels and many short stories to his credit. But the flood of inspiration that his seven boyhood years in Shropshire had incubated was not to be stemmed and burst its banks as early as 1910 in his experimental Shropshire novel *A Gentleman of Leisure* in which Dreever Castle served as a kind of curtain-raiser to Blandings.

Five years later Blandings itself was born, with *Something Fresh* and, over a period of sixty years, it developed and grew gracefully until – as Plum's final offering – it bowed out with its *Sunset* appearance. And it had all sprung from that crystal-clear flying start of 1915.

Plum in Swiss Role

Many thanks are due to Jan Looijestijn, our member resident in Portugal, who was visiting Zurich last autumn and attended an exhibition at the Galerie Le Point, sponsored by Credit Suisse and featuring Golf. He sent in a catalogue from the exhibition, which was in German, and kindly provided a translation of extensive sections discussing Wodehouse.

An extract from the text, which seems to slightly confuse the real characters of two of those involved in the first story referred to, reads as follows:

Numerous authors have characterised golf as a perfect test for an honourable and honest disposition and give as reasons the values golf has always held good. Especially in the work of P G Wodehouse the reader finds stories which celebrate golf for exactly these reasons. So, for instance, *The Coming of Gowf* relates the story of Merrolchazzar, a sovereign, who a long time ago reigned over the fictional kingdom of Oom. The monarch, once a tyrant, comes under the influence of a game which is practised by a captured Scotchman. Due to the spirit of the game, his malice and his selfishness wear away.

Besides this Wodehouse praises the game of golf for the lectures it imparts to humanity. Golf he alleges is the great equaliser. A game in which the captains of industry are beaten by small clerks

and presumptuous people lose to the gentle and humble.

Quotations are given from *The Coming of Gowf*, *The Clicking of Cuthbert* and *The Magic Plus-Fours*. And another, the first paragraph from *The Heart of a Goof* is introduced as follows:

“One of the most memorable passages in the works of Wodehouse has nothing to do with the rather strange personality of a passionate golfer. If one author really succeeded in catching the very special atmosphere of a golf course on a warm morning in springtime, then it is Wodehouse with the unforgettable lines with which he starts *The Heart of a Goof*.”

And so say all of us. If the sun is shining now, go and get your copy, and you'll see what he meant.

I SAY!

Favourite Exchanges – 9

“Barker!” [Freddie Rooke’s] voice had a ring of pain.

“Sir?”

“What’s this?”

“Poached egg, sir.”

Freddie averted his eyes with a silent shudder.

“It looks just like an old aunt of mine,” he said.

Jill The Reckless, 1921

THE SMILE THAT WINS

Favourite Nifties – 6

For, like so many substantial citizens of his native country, he had married young and kept on marrying, springing from blonde to blonde like the chamois of the Alps leaping from crag to crag.

Summer Moonshine, 1937

Wodehouse and Weston Park (continued)

So how did the Blandings scenario emerge for the setting of a dozen novels and half as many short stories? It could only have been the rich recollection in Plum’s most retentive memory of what he and brother Armine (and perhaps occasionally the whole Wodehouse family) had been invited to share almost twenty years previously.

At first sight there would be the view from the Weston Park terraces – of the lake, the park and the

distant Wrekin. The house itself – a substantial, Jacobean mansion – would have had no place in Plum’s calculations, as the Blandings of his vision was to be a Castle, and what he had in mind would be grafted on to its own fictional specifications. The denizens of Blandings however, had to be, in Plum’s philosophy, the real McCoy and why should he have looked further, for they were already there.

This short series will be concluded in June.

A Writer After Plum's Heart

by Murray Hedgcock

A browse at my local secondhand book shop having revealed nothing more Wodehousean than a dozen reprints I wondered about a rather nice-looking volume down by the floor at the end of the literature section. Not Plum, certainly, but with very distinct PGW links and overtones.

This was a T N Foulis 1914 first edition of Ian Hay's *The Lighter Side of School Life*, a book which in a much later edition I had discovered in Australia during World War Two. Its pleasant touch in explaining the workings of an English public school made such an impact that I began writing my own first book: *The Lighter Side of Australian School Life*, intended to explain in Hay style, and with references to his account, the very differing world in which we colonials were schooled.

I got as far as three pages handwritten in an exercise book before losing enthusiasm (I was about ten years old) but the original did give me an idea of the unique lifestyle of an English school, prompting further study of a string of specialists in the genre, notably Gunby Hadath, and, eventually, Plum with Wrykyn and the rest. So finding a first edition of the book that had set me on my way long ago was a real pleasure – not least as it included a dozen charming reproductions from pastel drawings by Lewis Baumer, recording the schoolboy and master at various stage of ambition, activity or achievement.

The tenor of the book ties in with Wodehouse's boys and masters, classrooms and houses, studies and playing fields, to the point that you wonder how far Hay – a friend for many years – was inspired by PGW's distinctive school stories published between 1902 and 1907.

Plum's accounts of the ragging of hapless or pompous masters (such as Mike's schoolmates' activities at Sedleigh) are mirrored by Hay, although with a hint that the world of the Wodehouse schoolboy was perhaps already passé in some respects.

Ian Hay records (very much à la PGW) how a mischievous class would torment an earnest German master, using the diversionary tactic of inviting him to reminisce on military experiences, going on to comment that "the race has perished, and their place is occupied by muscular young Britons, who have no reminiscences and whose pronunciation, both of English and German, is easier to understand".

Pupil-master relationships and the manner in which boys treat one another are spelled out by Hay much

in the PGW mode, including the character tests facing prefects who must grit their teeth and face unpopularity by tackling unrest – a serious note that recurs in Wodehouse.

An author's note comments that the sketches making up *The Lighter Side of School Life* originally appeared in Blackwood's Magazine – one of the few British magazines of its type and vintage to which busy Plum did not contribute.

It is unclear when Hay first met Plum, but they were to enjoy a brief but productive stage partnership, and to remain friends until Hay died in 1952.

Real name Major-General John Hay Beith, he was five years Plum's senior. Educated at Fettes before going up to Cambridge, he taught at Durham School and Fettes before going to war, winning the MC, but being deeply affected by his time in the trenches.

He wrote light romances before and after the war, and had a further career adapting his own and other novels for the stage. Books such as *Pip*, *A Safety Match*, *Happy-Go-Lucky* and *A Knight on Wheels* were much enjoyed: forgotten now, they were set in almost a straighter, milder version of Wodehouse's inimitable world. More substantial was Hay's moving account of the first months of World War One: *The First Hundred Thousand*, and a sequel: *Following on After The First Hundred Thousand*.

Best known is his farce, *The Middle Watch*, written with ex-naval officer Stephen King-Hall, and dealing with misadventures on a warship in port when two girls stay on board after a dance. A between-wars favourite with amateur dramatic companies, it was filmed in 1930, with a 1939 version starring Jack Buchanan, and a colour update in 1958 under the title *Girls at Sea*, with: Guy Rolfe, Ronald Shiner and Michael Hordern.

Those who watch old movies late on cable TV may catch *Housemaster*, the 1938 film from Hay's play *Bachelor Born*, in which a veteran schoolmaster sees off a harsh new head, the plot complicated by the presence of his nubile nieces who spark romantic mayhem with pupils and masters alike.

It was 70 years last August 14 since the opening at London's New Theatre of the stage show, *A Damsel in Distress*, written by Hay and PGW from the splendid Wodehouse novel, the management (Hay, PGW, and A A Milne) each putting in £500 for the necessary capital.

European Engagements

Three members of the Committee have recently been honoured by invitations to speak to the Belgian Drones Club at their delightful premises, Millfleet Hall, near Brussels. At a function attended by their Patron (the UK Ambassador to Belgium, David Colvin CMG) and his wife, Norman and Helen Murphy both joined the Club for its Armistice Day weekend to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Great War. The main speaker was Guido Latre, an English Literature professor from Leuven University, who spoke about the English perception of the countryside and how this had informed the poetry of Brooke, Owen and others, an idyllic pastoral world, a sort of Blandings.

Norman Murphy spoke about the reasons, medical and otherwise, for Plum's lack of involvement in that war, explaining how difficult it was to cross the Atlantic once the war had started, and that he had a limited circle of those in England at the time to whom he felt an emotional attachment.

Helen spoke more generally on the influence of the Great War on popular literature, from Sherlock Holmes onwards.

In February Tony Ring gave a talk at Millfleet Hall which his hosts sensibly asked to be split into three short helpings, covering aspects of the school stories. Aided by his wife Elaine, who read most of the quotations, he introduced the subject by analysing the influence of Dulwich College on Wodehouse's early writings, continued by drawing on those influences to illustrate the plots of some of the short stories and novels, and concluded by explaining why he thought that the appearances of Psmith were of fundamental importance in the development of Wodehouse's style from 1908 to 1923.

A group of Belgian Drones are planning to visit the UK on May 23 and 24. If anyone would like details of when and where to meet them, please contact the Editor.

A Writer After Plum's Heart (continued)

Plum later commented that Hay "hogged all the writing", but they got on well enough to take a Scottish golfing holiday after the show, which, with a cast including a youthful Ann Todd and the late Joan Hickson (Miss Marple of recent vintage), recorded a reasonable 242 performance.

"It was awfully nice. Ian and I had a lot of interests in common. We were both keen on golf, and public schools. I read all his stuff and liked it enormously. I liked collaborating with Ian – he liked doing all the stuff himself, and I was just to contribute the book. We talked it all over and got our scenario and the characters and everything, and then he wrote it", Plum reported.

Eight months later, *Baa Baa Black Sheep* opened at the same theatre, the pair adapting a Hay short story, while he was also the producer. It managed just 115 performances. Leonora Wodehouse in an article *P.G. Wodehouse at Home* in *The Strand* in January 1929 reported Hay staying with the family for three or four days, saying that gales of laughter came through the study door as they worked.

"At lunchtime they will say what a hard morning it has been, and then go off and play golf, having finished work for the day. The funny part of it all is that in those three hours, they really have done a very hard day's work."

The third and last of the PGW-Hay farces was *Leave it to Psmith*, written by the rather awkward expedient of exchanging letters – Plum being then in New York. The show opened at the Shaftesbury Theatre on September 17, 1930, running for 156 performances.

In 1952; Hay wrote from London to Plum: "I have just been reading *Weekend Wodehouse* which has recently been issued here, and with intense enjoyment. Most of the stories, of course, are old friends, especially *Lord Emsworth and the Girl Friend*, which Rudyard Kipling once told me was one of the most perfect short stories he had read."

There is an intriguing extra PGW association with my Ian Hay acquisition, on the page dedicating it to schoolmasters: "To the members of the most responsible, the least advertised, the worst paid and the most richly rewarded profession in the world." In rather shaky lettering is printed the name – Owen Seaman.

Wodehouse buffs know that Seaman, the classicist who edited *Punch* from 1906 to 1932, had been responsible as assistant editor for encouraging young Wodehouse to contribute from 1902 onwards, and made sure the old Dulwich First XI cap was on hand when *Punch* cricket teams were selected.

Was this Seaman's copy? It's a nice Wodehousean thought.

KIPLING AND WODEHOUSE

by Harshawardhan M Nimkhedkar

Mr Nimkhedkar, who lives in Nagpur, India, became a member after he was contacted following sight of a letter he had published in the Kipling Journal.

I'm an unabashed Wodehouse devotee. I also love Rudyard Kipling. Having noticed a definite link between the two, I keep wondering about the influence of the latter on the former.

A letter in the recent issue of the *Kipling Journal* (published quarterly by the Kipling Society, London), drawing the editor's attention to the references to Kipling in Wodehouse's letters, collected in *Yours, Plum* by Frances Donaldson, has finally prompted me to write this short piece. It is my contention that Wodehouse was definitely influenced by Kipling. The exact extent of it however remains to be studied.

Yours, Plum was of course preceded by a similar book, *Performing Flea* (edited by William Townend), which also contains many references to Kipling (three of which are included in *Yours Plum*.) Six letters, dated 28 September 1928, 29 April 1946, 27 August 1946, 1 November 1946 and 13 December 1949 and especially one dated 20 January 1936, together with Townend's editorial footnote, may help in proving my point. Here, Plum has commented upon the "stunned feeling" induced by Kipling's death (on 18 January 1936). Here we also learn that they were good friends, wrote to each other regularly and were members of the Beefsteak Club.

The authorised biography of P G Wodehouse was written by Frances Donaldson in 1982 (Weidenfeld & Nicolson). She has given a list of those who in her opinion might have influenced Plum; somehow, this list does not contain Kipling's name. However, she has given some other useful information, from which it can be surmised that Plum owed a lot to the elder writer in many ways.

For example, we are told that Plum was known to be addicted to reading Kipling all his life. Despite this, she says his school stories were surprisingly free from moralising. Lady Donaldson also comments upon the similarities and differences between the childhood experiences of the two writers such as separation from parents. And according to Donaldson, Kipling thought Plum's *Lord Emsworth and The Girl Friend* one of the best humorous short stories in the English language.

It wouldn't be fair to either Master to analyse this point at length within the narrow confines of the

present write-up. It requires an elaborate and scholarly treatment and perhaps, some Richard Osborne among your readers may investigate this more authoritatively. However, I would like to hazard some conjectures of my own:

- 1 Many of Kipling's immortal lines such as *Toad beneath the harrow*, *A woman is only a woman* and *The female of the species* find a place in one or other of the many Wodehouse books.
- 2 Moreover, not only are these lines quoted aptly to bring about the desired effect in the narrative, but one can see that they have given Plum germs or ideas for some of his great plots. To take an example at random, the connection between the Mulliner story *The Man Who Gave Up Smoking* (from *Mr Mulliner Speaking*) and the Kipling aphorism *A woman is only a woman, but a good cigar is a smoke* (from the poem *The Betrothed*, 1885) is clearly discernible.
- 3 Plum's *Sam the Sudden*, which I consider to be his best book, was published in 1925. To me, the episode in which Sam journeys with the sozzled Braddock through the long London streets to Valley Fields late at night is reminiscent of the narrator's similar experience with Kipling's Brugglesmith in the short story of that name (1891) collected in *Many Inventions* (1893).
- 4 Despite solidly padding the start his legendary short story *Mrs Bathurst*, (see Wodehouse's letter dated 28 Sept 1928 to Townend), Kipling was a firm believer in cutting his own stuff. We know from Plum's letters and other material that he too followed this advice faithfully and was ruthless about pruning his original draft, so that the end-product could always be dazzling in all respects. And that's why we all adore him.

There could be numerous other instances, reflecting such faint or sharp echoes of Kipling, to prove that Plum was vastly indebted to Kipling. I look forward to reading the views of other members in forthcoming issues of *Wooster Sauce*.

Editor's Note: There are still copies of *Yours, Plum* available for sale to members at the (UK) post-free price of £5. Please send cheques and requests to the Editor.

ALBERT ROUX ANIMATES ANATOLE!

M Albert Roux, one of the foremost chefs of his generation, has most generously taken up the challenge of recreating recipes for four of Anatole's most frequently remembered dishes. We are very proud, therefore, to be able to present the first of the series, Mignonette de Poulet Petit Duc, which was mentioned reverently in four of the novels.

M Roux founded Le Gavroche in 1967 with his brother Michel and is now in partnership with his son Michel Jr. Le Gavroche is one of the great restaurants in England, being the first UK restaurant to achieve the coveted 3 rosettes from Michelin.

Mignonette de Poulet Petit Duc

by Albert Roux

Ingredients for 4 servings

4 breasts of chicken, skin removed
 200 grams of butter
 2 large shallots, finely chopped
 1 deciliter of madeira
 300 milliliters of veal stock, reduced
 300 grams of fresh morrels, preferably small, black and with stalks removed
 1 small bunch of asparagus, tips only
 1 small truffle
 salt and pepper, to taste

The Chicken

Slice each breast into thin slices to form some little scollop. Gently pound them on a flat surface. Keep refrigerated.

The Morrels

Split the morrel in half and wash thoroughly in cold water. Drain and dry the morrel on a tea-towel.

The Asparagus

Peel the asparagus up to the head, leaving the tips as they are. Cut the stalk away and keep for another use. Blanch the asparagus tip in boiling, salted water. Drain and refresh.

To Cook and Assemble the Dish

In a large sauté pan, heat up 80gm of butter until just bubbling.

Season the pieces of chicken and cook a little at a time to a light brown colour, 1 to 2 minutes on each side. Repeat the process until all the pieces are cooked. Keep the chicken warm.

Reduce the heat and add the chopped shallots to the pan. Cook for a few minutes.

Deglaze the pan with the madeira and reduce by two-thirds.

Add the reduced veal stock, bring to a simmer and cook until the sauce is slightly syrupy. Strain the sauce through a fine seive and return to a pan.

Meanwhile, sauté the morrels with butter.

Add the morrels to the sauce with the sliced truffles.

Gently, bring the sauce to a simmer, add a little knob of butter to the sauce and mix well.

Add the mignonettes of chicken to the sauce with the asparagus tips.

Heat up for a few seconds and check seasoning.

To Present

Arrange the mignonettes of chicken on to each plate, and spoon the sauce over. Serve with fresh pasta.

In *Jeeves in the Offing* the mere thought of this dish was sufficient to offset the qualms Bertie Wooster had about visiting Brinkley Court whilst his old headmaster, Aubrey Upjohn, was present. It was L P Runkle who demonstrated his appreciation in *Much Obligated, Jeeves*, by tucking into it like a tapeworm. We might even lay part of the blame for Gussie Fink-Nottle's final parting from Madeline Bassett on the dish, for when she made him become a vegetarian in *Stiff Upper Lip, Jeeves* he had to forego the pleasure of eating Mignonettes two nights in a row. Dahlia Travers thought she was going to have to do the same, but for ever, when L G Trotter sought to turn the tables and blackmail her in *Jeeves and the Feudal Spirit*.

We would be glad to hear from any readers who feel similar emotions after trying it.

Was P G W descended from Henry VIII?

Simon A May of Kingston-upon-Thames has an interest in genealogy, and applied his thoughts to the distant ancestry of the Wodehouse family.

It is common knowledge that P G Wodehouse's family is descended from Mary Boleyn, sister of the luckless Queen Anne Boleyn. An article in a recent number of the *Genealogists' Magazine* (March 1997, author Anthony Hoskins) offers compelling evidence that Mary Boleyn's son Henry Carey (later Lord Hunsdon), through whom PGW descends, was not the son of William Carey, Esquire of the Body to Henry VIII, but of the monarch himself.

Hoskins points out that Henry made several grants of land to William Carey, the last of which occurred twelve days before Henry Carey's birth in March 1525/1526, and suggests that such munificence was both the price of husbandly complaisance and provision for the unacknowledged child. He further argues that Henry Carey's place in the king's household by May 1545 is inexplicable (for a nephew of the disgraced Anne Boleyn) unless it was a tacit recognition by the king.

Elizabeth I later showed favour to her cousin/half-brother when in 1562 she thought she was dying and commended Lord Hunsdon to the care of her Council. When Hunsdon died in 1596 the Queen paid for his tomb, whose size and splendour indicate that Elizabeth too wished to make some acknowledgement.

If this theory is true there are many descendants of Henry VIII alive today, including not only the present Queen but the Wodehouse family. One wonders whether this would have impressed PG. Perhaps not. Frances Donaldson, absolving him from any charge of snobbery, says on page 40 of her biography that she could only find a single reference by Plum in his letters and papers to his ancestors. Whatever the truth, the sumptuous memorial to Henry Carey in Westminster Abbey, with its amazing proximity to Queen Elizabeth's own resting-place, surely justifies Wodehouse's elegant phrase: a nifty tomb.

Offers For Sale

Members may offer items for sale without charge if space permits

Pauline C Graeber of Leavenworth, Kansas, a long-time collector of Wodehouse books, wishes to sell her collection as a single lot. Consisting of some 250 books (US and UK editions) plus examples of sheet music and magazines, she is interested in offers in excess of \$6,000. Well over half of the books are first editions, many with jackets, some of these being later collections of stories first published during his lifetime.

The Editor has a complete list of the collection, prepared by Pauline, which he will send to anyone who applies and includes £1 towards copying and postage. (Postage stamps to that value will be fine.)

Further information would then be obtained from Pauline directly, and offers made to her. Shipping costs would be for the buyer's account, and those interested should not overlook the complications of import procedures.

Highlights include:

- The Adventures of Sally* (1922) (English)
- The Intrusion of Jimmy* (1910) (US)
- The Little Nugget* (1914) (US)
- Love Among the Chickens* (1909) (US)

Mrs M Fielding is offering for sale at £20 each the following eight first editions, each complete with a dust-wrapper:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <i>The World of Jeeves</i> | <i>Wodehouse at Work to the End</i> by Richard Usborne |
| <i>Much Obligated Jeeves</i> | |
| <i>Do Butlers Burgle Banks</i> | |
| <i>Thank You, Wodehouse</i> by J H C Morris | <i>Jeeves: a Gentleman's Personal Gentleman</i> by C Northcote Parkinson |
| <i>Wooster's World</i> by Geoffrey Jaggard | <i>Aunts Aren't Gentlemen</i> |

Mr George Holtz of Whitby is offering for sale an original vocal score of *The Cabaret Girl*, a musical with score by Jerome Kern and lyrics by Wodehouse. Dating from 1922, it consists of the lyrics with piano accompaniment.



PROFILE OF A PATRON

Lucy Tregear is an actress with a degree in English from Oxford University. It may not be surprising, therefore, that she has played a number of Shakespearean productions, such as *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Winter's Tale*, but she has also taken part in an ACTER tour of the USA as Isabella in *Measure for Measure*.

Her role as Honoria Glossop in *By Jeeves* at Scarborough and in the West End was not her first theatrical encounter with Wodehouse: she played Sue Brown in Giles Havergal's adaptation of *Summer Lightning* at Harrogate. Lucy stepped in at the last moment to sing at the Society's dinner at the Inner Temple last October.

Radio listeners will know her as Patricia in the three series of *Patricia's Progress*. Lucy is now in the middle of a rep season of six plays with the Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond.

Letters to the Editor

From Mr Murray Hedgcock of Barnes:

Sub-editors are revolting – at your scurrilous definition of “the sub-editors’ creed: Mislead all the people all the time” (*Wooster Sauce – December 1998*). As a sub from way back, I call in support my favourite Wodehouse character, Psmith. Addressing contributors to that popular journal *Cosy Moments*, he declares not in shame but with understandable pride: “I am acting sub-editor. ... The work is not light. But I stagger on. I do not repine.” These noble words are our inspiration as we sub-editors seek to lead, never to mislead.

PS: Forgive the enquiry, but is not the editor of *Wooster Sauce* also its sub-editor?

Editor's comment: Are you volunteering?

From Mr Jeffrey Preston of Richmond:

I wonder if any of your readers would know who Betty Ross was. She was obviously a friend of PGW. I ask because I have a rather battered US first edition of *Thank You Jeeves* signed by the author at Quaglino's Restaurant. The date is slightly before the English edition came out, so it was obviously a personal gift.

Editor's comment: Can any reader help with this identification, please?

From David Mackie of Raynes Park

My copy of *The Man With Two Left Feet*, 17th edition, 1948, published by Methuen has an error of pagination. Pages 75 to 90 have been moved forward and appear after 1 to 58, being then followed by 59 to 74 and 91 to 215. What happens when the publishers are told of such an error? Do they try to haul back unsold copies?

Editor's comment: Do other readers have copies of books with this type of error? And please can any professional publisher advise as to what would happen today if such an event occurred.

OUR PRINTERS

In the two years since *Wooster Sauce* has been published, many readers have mentioned to members of the Committee how much they appreciate the quality of production of the journal and naturally we are delighted to hear that this is the case.

It is high time, therefore, that we said “Thank you” to our printers, Baines Design and Print, of Barley House, Sopers Road, Cuffley, Herts EN6 4RY, and in particular to Stuart Bennett.

My First Wodehouse Experience

All members are invited in their welcome packs to contribute a few sentences on how they became interested in Wodehouse. Whether enough items will be submitted for this to be a regular feature will be in the lap of the gods, but we reproduce below the contributions from two members:

From Simon Frazer of Herefordshire:

I sometimes speculate on what the family's first edition of *Mike* would fetch on the open market. A recent catalogue from well-known dealer in London gives a price of £950 for a first edition (*sans* dustwrapper).

The family edition has all its pages of text but lacks three plates. However over the years it appears to have been attacked by a starving platoon of mice who fortunately stopped short of chewing the actual text. The mice have also helped in detaching at least a third of the pages from the spine although the spine is holding together – just.

My father purchased *Mike* second-hand sometime before October 1915 when he joined the Army. The original owner has inscribed his name in ink and regrettably has also inscribed *passim* the letter 'P' in front of 'Smith' where Mr Downing omitted it in conversation with Psmith.

So *Mike* was my introduction to Wodehouse and for some years was the only Wodehouse I read.

There were two other Wodehouse on the family bookshelves – *Leave It To Psmith* and *Something Fresh* – both of which I thought to be poor stuff compared with *Mike*. Later in my schooldays I read the other school stories, particularly enjoying *The Head of Kay's* and *The White Feather*, then on to *Psmith in the City*, et seq.

Mike remains my favourite Wodehouse; much used as a source book for quotations squeezed into conversation amongst the male members of the family at every opportunity, not always apposite, eg: "This has been a frightful fag to write".

From Susan Spencer of Dorset:

My first encounter with Bertie Wooster and Jeeves was as a child, when I have hazy recollections of watching, with my parents, Ian Carmichael and Dennis Price on the television, with much enjoyment.

This must have stuck in my mind because when, in the spring of 1990, there was a dramatisation on television of *Jeeves and Wooster* starring Stephen Fry and Hugh Laurie, my husband and I spent several enjoyable Sunday evenings laughing (sometimes crying with laughter), whilst cuddling our new baby, over Bertie, Jeeves, Gussie (is it Fitz-Bottle?), Madeline Bassett, Cyril Bassington-Bassington, Florence Craye and so many more characters who have left a lasting impression.

A happy find of an old copy of *Carry On, Jeeves*, followed by another of *Very Good Jeeves* and I was hooked. The Wodehouse Collection in our house is up to forty well-read, much-loved books, including one first edition which I treasure. Up on our bathroom wall are Bertie Wooster's meditations on the calming effects to the bruised spirit of "a good go at the soap and water", which never fail to cheer me up.

Another lucky discovery: one day in our local library I discovered the audio-cassettes of *Right Ho, Jeeves* read by Jonathan Cecil, and *Heavy Weather*, by the late Jeremy Sinden, and have a strong memory, two summers ago, of trying to put up tiles in our bathroom whilst listening to the account of Gussie presenting the prizes at Market Snodsbury Grammar School in an "inflamed cerebral state", and being barely able to carry on, I was laughing so much.

A SITE FOR SORE EYES

A reminder for the technically minded that the Society's website can provide up to date information about forthcoming events so you do not need to wait for the next issue of Wooster Sauce to put them in your diary. It can be found on:

<http://www.eclipse.co.uk/wodehouse>

We are aware of many other Wodehouse-related sites. Some can be accessed from links from our site, but we understand a current list of all such sites can be obtained by accessing *PGW Related Internet Resources* within a Newsgroup site:

alt.fan.wodehouse

Review of Wodehouse at Blandings Castle

Eminent Sunday Times columnist Godfrey Smith casts his eye over Volume 5 of the Millennium Wodehouse Concordance, by Tony Ring and Geoffrey Jaggard

Asked the other day to give my favourite line of all from the Master's mighty oeuvre, I had no difficulty:

“At this moment, the laurel bush, which had not hitherto spoken, said ‘Psst’”.

Frankly, though, after all these years, I'd forgotten it was a laurel. Nor could I remember that the inspired words came from *Summer Lightning*. These defects were at once remedied by turning up the entry entitled *Obiter Dicta* in this magisterial new fifth volume of the mighty eight-part Wodehouse *Concordance* so heroically begun by the late Geoffrey Jaggard and now being seen through triumphantly by Tony Ring.

Volume 5 came in handy again just the other day when I was sent a new scholarly book on *The English Pig*. It's a solid piece of work, but it woefully falls from grace by unfeelingly dismissing the Empress of Blandings in just one sentence. Now as every devotee of the Master knows, that noble animal deserves a chapter to herself. All I had to do was turn her up and there were nearly two pages of condensed wisdom on the superlative creature. I could relate in my review, with offhand authority, how she'd endured kidnapping and recapture, imprisonment in a gamekeeper's cottage, in a rival's sty, in an admiral's kitchen, in a duke's bathroom, in a floosie's bedroom and in a secretary's caravan. Such instant omniscience is seldom achieved so easily.

One of the main aims of this great labour of love is to send us back to the books. To do that it must echo the Master with loving verisimilitude. It does just that. We need read no further than the entry for *Ambrosia Chiffon Pie* on page 9 than we will recall with a frisson of the purest pleasure how Sir Gregory Parsloe-Parsloe finally broke free from the iron regime laid down by his fiancée and tasted the forbidden dish once more. (The entire banquet, in which the pie plays only a supporting role, is conscientiously listed under *Diner, Le.*) The same attention to fine detail can be seen in the painstaking list of trains to and from Blandings, beginning with the 08.30 from Paddington and ending with the 17.05 (one must, after all, reach the place in time for dinner – and there are three learned pages on the stately pile to be digested before we get there; not to mention the heaven-sent list of impostors at the castle, complete with real names and aliases).

There are delicious sections under headings like *I Wish I'd Said That* (“... the tone of voice which Schopenhauer would have used when announcing the discovery of a caterpillar in his salad.”) But by now you should be safely transported to those magic battlements from which Lord Emsworth saw the Severn gleam like an unsheathed sword or, on another day, through his new telescope, his younger son engaged in pre-connubial fondlings with an utterly strange young woman in the shrubbery. Read on!

Wodehouse at Blandings Castle is published by Porpoise Books at £20. Its ISBN number is 1 870 304 18 7

Review of Service With A Smile Audio-book

The most recent release of an unabridged reading by Chivers in the Audio Book Collection is *Service With a Smile*, read by Nigel Lambert. Chivers readings of Wodehouse tend to be of such a consistently high standard that it can sometimes be difficult for a reviewer to say more than “Go and buy one”. If you should do so, you have an especial treat in store towards the end of the fourth out of twelve sides, when Nigel reads the second part of chapter 5, and his words in the *persona* of George Cyril Wellbeloved make one feel as though, aroma and all, he were in the room with you.

This audiobook can be obtained from *Audio Book Collection, Freepost (BA 1686/1) Bath BA2 3AX; Freephone 0800 136 919*

Members may care to note that Chivers Audio's plans for 1999 include the release of two more unabridged books by Wodehouse:

Psmith, Journalist, read by Jonathan Cecil, will be available in April

A Pelican at Blandings, read by Nigel Lambert, will be available in August.

DETAILS OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Society's programme is so full that we need a page to tell you about it.

June 5: Visit to Emsworth

We plan to arrive at Emsworth Museum, 10B North Street, Emsworth at around 11.30 to look at the exhibition and have a cup of coffee. Ordnance Survey map sheet 197 will be on display, with a number of Wodehousean names on it. Some members may care to see how many they can find in advance of the visit.

Lunch will be held at a local pub. Initially, the booking will be for limited numbers, so please let the Editor know as soon as possible if you plan to come. This will be followed by two talks: one by Strahan Soames (Vice-President of the Museum Trust, and an Old Boy of Emsworth House School) and the other by Norman Murphy.

Finally, museum members will lead our members by car on a short tour of local places of Wodehousean interest, including the house, *Threepwood*, where he lived. We expect the tour to finish by about 4.30.

June 18: Dulwich

Cricket

Dulwich College is the scene of three events on June 18. The tradition of a Society cricket match against the staffroom, started last year, will be continued, with a hope that we can obtain revenge for last year's defeat. The match takes the form of a 20-over game starting at 4.30pm, and players will receive a £10 reduction in the price of their dinner tickets!. If you wish to play, Bob Miller is anxious to hear from you as soon as possible

Younger Members and Children of Members

Our Membership Secretary Helen Murphy is planning a simultaneous event for younger members and members' children, which may include a brief look at the cricket, a talk about the Shackleton exhibits (such as sledges) and refreshment. To assist Helen, please contact her on _____ if you are planning to come.

Dinner

You will find an application form for the dinner enclosed with this issue. We are delighted to announce that *Jeeves of Belgravia* have kindly agreed to assist with the dinner, and we hope this will be the beginning of a long and fruitful association.

The reception will be from 7.30 until 8.00, and we understand that the Wodehouse Library will be open for members to visit beforehand.

We are delighted that two members of the Test Match Special team, our Patron Henry Blofeld and Old Alleynian Trevor Bailey, have agreed to speak.

The price of the tickets will be £35 to members, £40 to non-members and £25 to those playing in the cricket match. Dress will be lounge suits.

October 25 to 30: Guildford

The Museum at Guildford, Surrey, Wodehouse's birthplace, is planning an exhibition in honour of Plum which will run for three weeks, ending during their book festival week. During this week it is hoped that there will be Wodehouse-related events on the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings, for which tickets will be required. Full details and an application form will be sent out with the June issue of *Wooster Sauce*.

International events

Sweden

The Swedish Society is arranging a *Bravo Jeeves* exhibition at Sigtuna Museum, Greater Stockholm, from May 8th to June 6th. Each Saturday will feature a separate event starting at 3pm. Details may be obtained from Sven Sahlin,

The Netherlands

The Dutch Society are planning to hold a meeting to coincide with the World Cup cricket match in Amsterdam between South Africa and Kenya. For full details, including availability of tickets for the match, contact George de Ceunick van Capelle,

Canada (from Francine Swift)

Last summer the Shaw Theatre at Niagara on the Lake, near Toronto, had a sell-out season of a musical version of *A Foggy Day*, based on *A Damsel in Distress*. It is being given another run, from April 29 to October 31, and we understand the story has been revised to include rather more of the original Wodehouse book than last year. (This is a commercial, not a Society, event.) Contact: The Shaw Festival, Box 774, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Canada L0S 1J0; Tel: 001 905 468 2172; Fax: 001 905 468 3804; Website: <http://shawfest.sympatico.ca>.

Subscriptions

The Committee has decided to leave the annual subscription unchanged for the year to May 31, 2000 at £ 15. Most members should receive a separate invitation to renew their subscription by the end of May with this issue of *Wooster Sauce*, although members who have already paid, who have signed a Bankers' Order, or who have joined recently on a subscription which provided membership until May 2000, should not have done so. If you need a form, and have not been sent one, please contact the Membership Secretary at the address on page 20.

Annual General Meeting

This year's annual General Meeting will be held during the Society's gathering at the Savage Club on July 13. Any member wishing to nominate someone for the Committee or as an Officer, or to raise a matter for discussion, should let the Chairman know as soon as possible.

Other Journals

Membership of the Society has reached over 450 in the two years of its existence. Each mention which we receive in another place seems to add one or two new names, and we are most grateful to members such as David Thirlby (*Vintage Sports Car Club Bulletin*, Tel: 01606 42279) in this respect.

Late News

Just as the finishing touches were being added to this issue, news came in of two further items in which members may be interested.

First, *Radio 4* will shortly be broadcasting a new dramatisation of *Full Moon*, which has been recorded in Edinburgh by *Radio Scotland*. (We attempted to contact all Scottish members at *Radio Scotland's* invitation to invite them to the recording.) We are not aware of the date of transmission.

Secondly, the *BBC Radio Collection* has produced a double cassette, running for 3 hours 20 minutes, and containing dramatisations of stories from *The Inimitable Jeeves* (ISBN 0 - 563 - 55861 - X). These were recorded in 1973 and feature Richard Briers as Bertie and Michael Hordern as Jeeves, as well as Jonathan Cecil, Ronald Fraser, David Jason, Miriam Margolyes and others.

This cassette, available from April 6th, represents the seventh Wodehouse title in the current list, the others being full cast dramatisations of four Jeeves novels and two collections of dramatised golf stories.

POETS' CORNER

Mixed Hockey

You came down the field like a shaft from a bow;
The vision remains with me yet.
I hastened to check you: the sequence you know:
Alas! We unluckily met.
You rushed at the ball, whirled your stick like a flail,
And you hit with the vigour of two:
A knight in his armour had surely turned pale,
If he had played hockey with you.

They gathered me up, and they took me to bed;
They called for a doctor and lint:
With ice in a bag they enveloped my head;
My arm they enclosed in a splint.
My ankles are swelled to a terrible size;
My shins are a wonderful blue;
I have lain here a cripple, unable to rise,
Since the day I played hockey with you.

Yet still, in the cloud hanging o'er me so black,
A silvery lining I spy:
A man who's unhappily laid on his back
Can yet have a solace. May I?
An angel is woman in moments of pain,
Sang Scott: clever poet, he knew:
It may, I perceive, be distinctly a gain
To have fallen at hockey with you.

For if you'll but nurse me (Come quickly, come now)
If you'll but administer balm,
And press at my bidding my feverish brow
With a cool but affectionate palm:
If you'll sit by my side, it is possible, quite,
That I may be induced to review
With a feeling more nearly akin to delight
That day I played hockey with you.

This poem first appeared in Punch on December 2nd, 1903.

Did You Know?

Publishing Errors – 9

The extract from an autograph manuscript of a Wodehouse novel, below, proves that to date NO publisher, of book or serial, has used the correct name for one of its characters. In the next issue, a short article will identify the book, and offer a few more gems omitted from the published versions.

... of perturbation. new
J. Fittiken witherflow,
... about to leave

Recent Press Comment

Guardian, 24 October (from Murray Hedgcock)

In a review of Terry Pratchett's *Carpe Jugulum*, Elizabeth Young wrote about the need for a situation-specific fictional world in comic literature, and used the 'ludicrously exaggerated aristocratic world of Bertie Wooster' as an example.

Sunday Times, 25 October

One of its extracts from the *Woodrow Wyatt Diaries* mentioned that he had attended the unveiling of the plaque to PGW at Dunraven Street by Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother on 3 June, 1988. He noted that Sir Nicholas Henderson had found Wodehouse useful while he had been Ambassador in the USA as Americans seemed to think that Englishmen were a cross between Bertie and Jeeves. He also attributed to Sir Nicholas a suggestion that the then President, Ronald Reagan, would have been a natural member of the Drones Club.

Daily Mail, 29 October (from Murray Hedgcock)

Jane Kelly reported on the background to the publication of the Wyatt Diaries and wrote about Woodrow's fourth wife, Verushka, to whom he was married for 31 years. She was quoted as saying "We laughed at different things. I could never understand why he was amused by P G Wodehouse."

This lack of understanding seems to have been inherited by their daughter Petronella, who wrote an article in *The Spectator* on 30 January about the representation of the British *persona* in films. She claimed that the blame for the British being "the court jesters to the American Empire and Asia, cultivated tutors in the arts, but absolutely useless at anything that might be of any use" as due to one thing only: "the 'invention' of P G Wodehouse. I say the invention because I suspect that Wodehouse wasn't really an individual at all. Rather he was a left-wing plot to demoralise the British and strip us of any residual backbone."

Editor's comment: we impatiently await an application for membership from Petronella Wyatt

Sunday Telegraph, 1 November (from Bernadette Reddy)

A feature on Billy Connolly pointed out that he was "passionately fond" of Wodehouse, and described how he giggled happily whilst he recalled "all those comen posing as Anglican missionaries in English country houses". Billy Connolly's early love of Wodehouse soon got him into trouble: when he made his maiden speech at a trade union meeting on Clydeside he used the phrase:

"In the scheme of things, it matters not a jot."

Evening Standard, 4 November (from Murray Hedgcock)

In a travel feature, Max Hastings reported that a fellow guest at the Mango Bay Hotel, Antigua, had "breathed life into the great P G Wodehouse image of the woman with a laugh like a hyena."

Times, 10 November

The Diary related the tale of a grey Berkshire pig, playing Napoleon in a new film adaptation of *Animal Farm*, whose feed had been mixed with Guinness, the result being a drunken pig and an interruption to filming. In the morning the animal had showed no signs of a hangover.

Editor's Comment: another example of real life imitating Wodehouse. See *Galahad at Blandings*, chapter 8.

Observer, 15 November (from James Hogg)

Will Buckley, reporting Dulwich Hamlet's unsuccessful attempt to beat Southport in the FA Cup, pointed out that with Dulwich College just down the road, the crowd owed allegiance to both Wodehouse and Raymond Chandler.

"There were plenty of old coves wearing long, pink and blue woollen scarves, who looked as if they'd come from lunch at the Drones with Bertie Wooster and Gussie Fink-Bottle (sic)."

Observer, 15 November (from Murray Hedgcock)

In an interview with the 91-year-old E W Swanton, Robert McCrum reported that

"He speaks, of course, like the Edwardian he is, and as if he'd just stepped from the pages of a P G Wodehouse cricketing story."

Evening Standard, 19 November (from Norman Murphy)

Mentioned a Christie's sale the following day at which 119 Wodehouse books would be sold.

Daily Telegraph, 23 November (from Norman Murphy)

The Diary pointed out that Delia Smith was not the only TV personality with influence. It referred to Ben Elton's appearance on *Booked*, the Channel 4 programme, in which he announced that one of his favourite books, *Eggs, Beans and Crumpets*, was out of print, and noted that Penguin had added the title to their list of forthcoming reprints.

Times, 24 November

The Diary mentioned the decision by Penguin, advised by the Society, not to depict Bertie Wooster with an eyeglass on the covers of their new editions. This resulted in letters from Mr D Lessman and Mr B Stroude (both of whom have since joined the Society) on 27 November, and a reply from your Editor on 30 November putting the Society's point of view.

Recent Press Comment, continued

Sunday Times, 29 November

Sheridan Morley reviewed *The Penguin Book of Hollywood* which included observations from Wodehouse.

Daily Mail, 30 November

Keith Waterhouse bemoaned the loss of the trading name *Midland Bank*, saying that the Hong Kong and Shanghai bank was only noteworthy because it briefly employed the youthful Wodehouse as a clerk.

Sunday Times, November

Chrissy Iley reported in a rare interview with William Hurt that, after he had bought her a book of PGW short stories, he started reading his favourite, *Monkey Business*, to her out loud.

“He does all the different voices. People walking past double-take. You can see their faces thinking, that man with the big cigar doing all the funny accents, reading from that book, he looks like William Hurt. Oh, it *is* William Hurt. He almost draws a small crowd but carries on oblivious.”

Sunday Times, 6 December

Godfrey Smith, reviewing what he had thought had been a duff year, managed to come up with some highspots.

“In October, as alert readers will recall, the P G Wodehouse Society joyfully raised a glass to one of their keenest members, the Queen Mother, who in turn sent wishes for a glorious what-ho; . . .”

Times, 7 December

The Diary referred to Henry Dent-Brocklehurst’s new-found awareness that his home, Sudeley Castle, was one of the models for Blandings, and speculated on the possibility of a Society event being held there. This was followed up in a number of papers, including the *Sunday Times* (20 December, in an interview with Henry D-B), the *Gloucestershire Echo* (22 December, from David Herboldt), and the *Birmingham Post* (2 January, from Vic Bolwell).

Times, 15 December (from Adrian Vincent)

The obituary of the Most Rev Henry McAdoo, one of the most distinguished scholars of his generation in the Church of Ireland, stated that:

“For relaxation he loved to get away to Donegal, climb into a boat and go fly-fishing. At other times he would sit in a comfortable chair and read Wodehouse, an author to whose works he was utterly devoted. With pipe in mouth he could detach himself from the world in much the same way as he did in prayer.”

Adnews, 17 December (from Nick Townend)

This Holmes Chapel local paper reported a spate of bogus charity collectors, evidently imitating Ukridge’s *Buttercup Day* scam.

Kipling Journal, December (from Helen Murphy)

Carried a summary of a letter from Helen responding to one in a previous issue by Mr H M Nimkhedkar of India, and which has led to the article on page 10.

Wisden Cricket Monthly, December (from Murray Hedgcock)

Mentioned the Society’s attempt to arrange local meetings to coincide with World Cup cricket matches.

Editor’s Note: Unfortunately no members have volunteered to organise any events, with the exception of the Dutch Society (see page 16)

Oldie, January

Expressed delight that their mention of the Society (in December 1997) had led to a number of new members including Ann Higgins, Plum’s niece.

Times (Weekend), 2 January

Valerie Grove queried whether parents really wanted teenagers just to read *Trainspotting* or *Junk* and asked whether they wouldn’t rather “my boy” identified himself with the problems of *Jude the Obscure* or diverted himself with P G Wodehouse.

Sunday Times, 31 January

Daily Telegraph, January (from Peter Cannon)

Godfrey Smith and W F Deedes both lamented the measly one throwaway line devoted to the Empress in their reviews of *The English Pig* by Robert Malcolmson and Stephanos Mastoris.

Daily Telegraph, January (from Peter Cannon)

Elizabeth Weston wrote in to correct the columnist Mandrake’s assertion that Jeeves was a butler.

Sunday Times, January

In an article about the making of *Shakespeare in Love*, Dylan Jones said:

“Gossip and trivia assume Himalayan importance on movie sets, and for three months the set was a Wodehousean pantomime, something exacerbated by the fact that the cast had begun to think of themselves as a genuine theatrical troupe.”

Luton News, 10 February (from Eddie Grabham)

Previewed Eddie’s presentation to members at the Savage Club on 16 February.

Hello, 20 February (from John Baesch)

Contained a six page fashion spread about the new collection at *Bertie Wooster*, the London store.

FUTURE EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

April 10 – Murphy’s Wodehouse Walk

May 8 – Murphy’s Wodehouse Walk

Join the Chairman on one of his famous walks round Wodehouse’s London. Please call Norman on _____ to register your interest and confirm where and when to meet in central London.

May 8 to June 6 – Exhibition at Sigtuna, Stockholm

See page 16 for details of this event.

May 26 – Dutch Society meeting at World Cup Cricket match in Amsterdam

A number of members of the Dutch Society are planning to attend the match between South Africa and Kenya being held in Amsterdam. See page 16.

June 5 – Society visit to Emsworth

This will be our first visit as a Society to Emsworth in Hampshire, where they have a permanent exhibition in PGW’s honour. See page 16 for details of the planned programme, and please register your interest with the Editor.

June 18 – Cricket Match against The Dusters

If you wish to play for the Society, please contact _____

June 18 – Younger members meeting at Dulwich

See page 16 for details of the planned event.

June 18 – Society dinner at Dulwich

The Society’s major event of the year, at Dulwich College. Full details may be found on page 16. We recommend early booking on the enclosed form.

July 13 – Informal meeting at the Savage Club

Join other members from 6pm. More details in June.

August 7 – Murphy’s Wodehouse Walk

See above.

October 22 to 24 – TWS Convention in Houston

Full details can be obtained from _____

<http://www.halcyon.com/roscoe/wodtex.html>

October 25 to 30 – Exhibition and related events at Guildford Museum

For preliminary details, including three possible evening events, please see page 16.

November 16 – Informal meeting at the Savage Club

Join other members from 6pm. More details later.

EDITOR’S TAILPIECES

Members are rushing to join the Society from all parts. Walden Porter, our most northerly member, reports that in his town Jensuu, (45 minutes by air north of Helsinki), the public library has some 60 Wodehouse books in English. He has given two lectures on Plum to local Universities. We congratulate him on the arrival of his Youngest Member, grandnephew Viktor Karlsson.

Meanwhile ever-vigilant Marilyn MacGregor from California has told me that in *London Magazine* for January, the estate agents John D Wood & Co were advertising in Dunraven St London:

Bright 2nd floor flat in a period building once the residence of P G Wodehouse. The building is close to park Lane and Marble Arch. Two bedrooms, two bathrooms, reception room, kitchen and lift. The lease is to 2048. £ 325,000.

Will the member who buys it please allow us to hold at least one meeting there?

In preparation for the American Society (‘TWS’) convention in Houston in October, where one of the optional events is a game of cricket under unique TWSCC rules, the cricketers have established a special website, which can be accessed at:

In December, there was a compilation edition of *Have I Got News For You*. One sketch, featuring Magnus Magnusson, had him as a contestant playing a spoof game of *Mastermind* with that as his specialist subject and the first question:

What question in 1977 led to a viewer complaining that you had mistakenly given Christ’s first name as Reginald?

It was a very reasonable complaint to make. It was a question in a specialised subject on The Life and Works of P G Wodehouse and the question was “What was Jeeves’s Christian name?”

Absolutely correct.