



Plum Lines

A Quarterly Publication of The Wodehouse Society

Vol 9. No. 2

May 1988

WCY + 7

T.W.S. Trip to Dulwich in 1989!



At our 1987 convention in San Francisco, someone suggested our 1989 convention should be a trip to Wodehouse's England. The idea was received with enthusiasm, a committee was appointed, and its members have made tentative plans and some initial contacts in England. Our present plan is to begin our pilgrimage by gathering in London and spending a day or so at Dulwich College and its P. G. Wodehouse Library. We understand the College can give us meals and possibly lodging in August, when school is not in session. Before or after Dulwich, we might tour Wodehouse's London. We hope to see a PGW plaque in Westminster Abbey by that time. Perhaps we can arrange a theater party and a trip to Mitching Hill, which Uncle Fred left a better and brighter foul hole.

Outside London we want to visit a number of places associated with Wodehouse, but have no settled plans yet. I am permitted to reveal, however, that there is considerable backstage activity.

Of course we hope our Canadian, English, and continental members can join us in all the fun.

Sorry we can't give you more definite information yet. All we can do at the moment is let you know we are working on plans, ask for your expressions of interest, and give you time to save your pennies. (Several of our members have already been observed pawning their grandmother's wedding rings.)

We have secured the services of a travel agent in San Francisco, David Donlon, who is versed in British matters and can help us with special arrangements and reduced air fares from various points.

Late news flash! Col. N. T. P. Murphy, author of *In Search of Blandings*, has graciously consented to guide us on a tour of Wodehouse sites in England. No details yet.

Any man under thirty years of age who tells you he is not afraid of an English butler lies.

"The Good Angel"

A Few Quick Ones

A new production of the one-man show "Jeeves Takes Charge" opens August 4 and closes September 24 at The Old Globe Theater in San Diego, California. I understand Edward Duke may have arranged for another actor to take his place in this production. Its casting had not been announced by the middle of May. Call The Old Globe box office, (619) 239-2255, for more information.

Two small proofs that it's a good world: Alexander Cockburn of *The Wall Street Journal* has published a collection of his columns that cast a cold eye on a great many things, but according to a review his "best piece is on P. G. Wodehouse, where Mr. Cockburn lets an enthusiasm show." As well he should! Bill Horn passed that along, with the further news that "Sally", the Jerome Kern musical of 1920, was revived by the New Amsterdam Theater Company in January of this year. The show includes two lyrics by PGW, and one of these, "The Church 'Round the Corner", commemorates the place where he was married.

Len Lawson, Doug Stow, and Charles Bishop of our San Francisco coven drew attention to Our Hero recently with Wodehouse displays in their local libraries. Charles appealed to the grosser appetites by offering tea with his display. Back in October Cathy Howe of the

nearby Lafayette Library arranged a birthday display entitled "Tickle Your Funny Bone with P. G. Wodehouse." Library displays are probably our best means of reaching new readers.

I've been getting lots and lots of mail, all of it interesting and nearly all of it fun. A sample from the Hon R. G. Plunkett, henceforth to be known as Mr. R. G. Plunkett:

"I thought I'd persuaded the Bloods last year to remove the title Hon from my name as listed on your roll. I see I was unsuccessful. Please do what you can. I am a shy man, and try to discourage people I don't know well from calling me Honey."

You can see why I look forward to the mail every day. Please keep writing - I hope my writing is even half as much fun to read as yours! (Besides, if you stop sending material I'll write my own. Then you'll be sorry!)

I regret to tell you we've lost the most exotic address on our mailing list: Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia, until recently the home of Mr. and Mrs. David Blood. I looked it up and found it was a provincial capital on the coast of Borneo. I was happy for three weeks after that discovery, while visions of head-hunters danced in my head. Then the blow fell. I received a change-of-address card announcing the Bloods had moved to a suburb of Dallas. Nice town, I suppose. But no head-hunters.

Pig

Rob Kooy points out another possibility about the Archbishop of Canterbury's prize-winning pigs, mentioned in the last issue: Surely no pig could defeat the Empress in snout-to-snout competition, and it's equally certain some extraordinary force was behind that ecclesiastic triumph. Can it be that the Empress has retired and Lord Emsworth has become the Archbishop of Canterbury's pig man?

Acknowledgement

The text of the P.G. Wodehouse radio talk published in the February 1988 issue of *Plum Lines* was transcribed from the Dulwich College Wodehouse Library PGW Archive by permission of the literary executor, E. S. Cazalet Q.C.



"The Duke is tough. He nails his collar to the back of his neck to save buying studs."

Uncle Fred in the Springtime

Our President Speaks

When, during our recent banquet in San Francisco, I confessed that I am not a golfer, a shock wave visibly passed through the crowd of revelers. The indignation factor registered at least 90 on a scale of 0 to 100, if not higher. "Why has he been calling himself "The Oldest Member" when every Plummy knows that The Oldest Member was a retired golfer?"

Truth is, I adopted the title for editorial purposes, and shortly after that I wrote that it should be passed on to succeeding editors of *Plum Lines* to promote a semblance of continuity. I'm glad we settled this so easily.

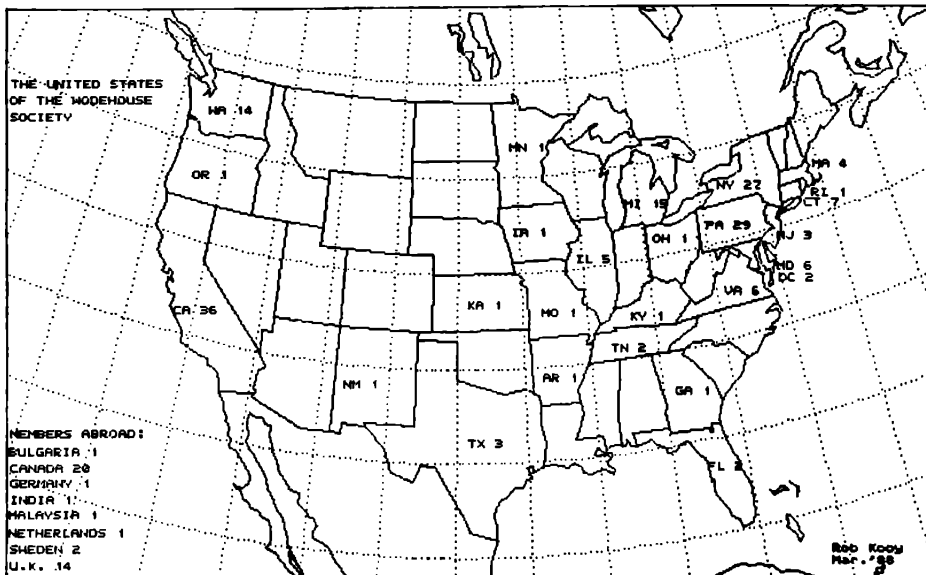
They moved off slowly with bowed heads, like a couple of pallbearers who have forgotten their coffin and had to go back for it.

The Mating Season

Mapping It Out

The map below, by Rob Kooy, shows the distribution of TWS members in the United States. We're lumpy - California has more than its share of members, the midwest and northeast are doing well, and there are great trackless wastes where nobody lives.

Well, maybe somebody lives there, but nobody who Belongs. We need a lot of missionary work in cowboy country and even in such genteel districts as the Carolinas and the deep south. Any ideas on how we can spread the word in these desolate areas?



Something New

Len Lawson

David Jasen, who has done so much to inform us about P. G. Wodehouse and his work, writes to say that his revised and expanded 2nd edition of A Bibliography and Reader's Guide to the First Editions of P. G. Wodehouse is still available from Greenhill Books, 1 Russell Gardens, London NW11 9NN, England, at a price of 25 pounds. This is much more than a bibliography. Mr. Jasen has done painstaking research to produce this book: He lists all the first editions and briefly describes how to identify them, he lists all the people, places, and things in each of the stories, and points out differences between the English and American editions when they exist. Virtually everything is in one index or another of this book.

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The last two Barnes and Noble catalogs list the following Wodehouse items:

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|---------|---|--------|
| 1332485 | The World of Mr. Mulliner | \$7.95 |
| 190222 | P. G. Wodehouse: 5 complete novels (Return of Jeeves, Bertie Wooster Sees It Through, Spring Fever, Butler Dd It, Old Reliable) | 8.98 |
| 1397900 | A Wodehouse Bestiary | 7.95 |
| 1397199 | Fore!: The Best of Wodehouse on Golf pb | 7.95 |
| 1436898 | The Pothunters and Other School Stories (A Prefect's Uncle and Tales of St. Austin's) | 5.95 |
| 1465103 | The Gold Bat: and Other School Stories (Head of Kay's and The White Feather) | 6.95 |

These books are at remainder prices and orders are probably subject to stock on hand, so order soon and order often. Barnes and Noble charge \$3 per order for postage and insurance, and charge sales tax to residents MA, NJ, NY, and PA. Barnes and Noble, 126 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 10011.



Recorded Books, Inc., 270 Skipjack Road, Prince Frederick MD 20678, has put together six cassette tapes of Jeeves stories. Four are collections of short stories, the other two are *Thank You, Jeeves* and *Right Ho, Jeeves*. The toll free number is 1-(800)-638-1304. They rent, they sell, and they take plastic. If anyone knows of cassettes available elsewhere, please let me know.

Catalogs Received

Wodehouse specialists: (This type of dealer generally carries a full range of material from reading copies to rare first editions.)

Bertie Books, P.O. Box 8874, Lowell MA 01853

Charles Gould, Kent School, Kent CT 06757

Modern 1st editions including PGW: (These dealers generally carry a wide selection of authors but usually only in first editions or rare items.)

Limestone Hills Book Shop, P.O. Box 1125, Glen Rose TX 76043

Pepper and Stern, P.O. Box 2711, Santa Barbara CA 93120

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Florence Cunningham has discovered "The Romance of a Bulb Squeezer" in the February issue of Northwest, the magazine of Northwest Airlines. Does anyone know how we can get copies?

My wife - she stands alone - discovered "Jeeves and the Love that Purifies" in the July 1987 issue of Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine.

OM passes along the following information from Col. Murphy. The article about the Col. entitled "The Wodehouse Man" appeared in the April 16, 1986 issue of Punch and was written by Tom Sharpe. Col. Murphy has written two articles for Country Life: "Blandings Revisited", October 25, 1984, and "Bertie Wooster's London", September 15, 1983. If I still don't have this right please don't tell OM or he will subject me to one of his stories.

Plummy Quotes

Charles Bishop

I've been wondering about quotes and PGW for some time. Shortly after I made the momentous discovery that there was a writer as talented as Wodehouse, it occurred to me that he must be quoted. Were I an editor of Bartlett's, say, I would not have been able to choose; this phrase, that metaphor or simile? Curious, I sought a Bartlett's and found

"He spoke with a certain what-is-it in his voice, and I could see that, if not actually disgruntled, he was far from being grunted."

A solitary quote was all I found. Obviously the editors of Bartlett's hadn't consulted me. "This fellow Bishop," they might have said, "is sound on Wodehouse. Let's ask him what to include." Ah, but they didn't, and Bartlett's is the poorer for it.

A second solution occurred to me. I would ask friends, acquaintances, and even strangers for their favorite PGW quotes, and publish the results in a pamphlet, book, or 10-volume collection, as appropriate. I would also include a paragraph or two about how each person first came across PGW. Everyone who sent in a response would get a copy.

Golden Treasure

Katy Kilgore, our courteous and erudite treasurer, informs me that Sidney Williams, one of our new members, has sent her a check for \$100. \$10 of this golden treasure is dues, the rest a donation to the Society. This is the sort of thing I want to encourage by word and gesture. A hearty thank you from all of us, Sidney. If our acceptance of this donation raises eyebrows, I want to make it clear that The Wodehouse Society has a firm and unswerving policy of accepting all donations, no matter how large.



Bronzed Pig

Yes, you too can have a bronzed pig without putting the animal through the intermediate stage of tanning. The man who can do the job is a Dutch designer of medallions. His Empress of Blandings medallion displays the head of the noble animal, laughing, with "P. G. Wodehouse Society" on the reverse. If a bronzed man is what you're after, his Mr. Mulliner medallion depicts the seated gentleman full length, with "Said Mr. Mulliner" on the reverse. The first medallion is about 3", and the second about 2", in diameter. Both are in bronze with a bronze or green patina. The photocopy illustrations I received are not clear, but the medallions do look interesting.

"Yes, sir," said Jeeves in a low, cold voice, as if he had been bitten in the leg by a personal friend.

"Clustering Round Young Bingo"

Letter to the Editor

Dear Ed,

I'm writing with a thought you might want to publish in *Plum Lines* so we can get feed-back from our far-flung membership. It's about this convention in England next summer. Margaret and I would love to go to England. But I wonder if we will be able to. When the idea was first mentioned at the S.F. convention I was under the influence of Plum-wonderful euphoria. The magical spell of the people at that gathering had an intoxicating effect on me and for the longest time I felt that a convention in England would be just the thing. But I would much rather have a convention that I would surely be able to attend than one in England I might have to skip. Perhaps this is selfish, but I would like to propose that we have the convention here in the United States and also have a Society-sponsored Tour of Wodehouse's England which could follow or precede the convention.

I think it's important that we gather with fellow Wodehouseians at least bi-annually. I like these people. I'd hate to wait four more years to see them. I also feel that an American convention might bring out a few of the heavyweights like David Jasen, Charles Gould,

Jimmy Heineman and others like Daniel Garrison who we enjoyed so much at last summer's convention. What I'm saying is I wonder if only a few people are going to be able to go to England, and yet I want to have a convention. What are we going to do?

I'd like to convey to the membership that the convention last summer was really one of the most wonderful meetings I have ever attended. I don't want to miss the next one and I'm afraid I will if it's in England.

Perhaps you could publish this as a letter to the editor in the next *Plum Lines*. Let's see what the others have to say.

Regards,

Doug Stow

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I think Doug has a point. What do you think? Let me hear from you!

Doug runs a letterpress printing shop in a little town on the edge of a great big ocean whose name I refuse to reveal. OM