



Plum Lines

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**TWS 2022
convention
articles on
pages 16 & 17!**

All His World's a Stage

BY NEIL MIDKIFF

Neil presented this talk at the 2019 TWS convention in Cincinnati. Such a long time ago, it seems. While we'll reconvene in San Diego in October 2022, Neil's article helps us relive the halcyon days of humor before the world changed in 2020. More days of humor are to come!

IF YOU'RE WONDERING why my photo in the program looks different from my everyday appearance, it's because the theater has been a significant part of my life. The picture shows me 24 years ago as Wilfred Shadbolt in Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Yeomen of the Guard*. As a part-time performer, conductor, and producer myself, I've found it fascinating to observe how much Wodehouse was influenced by the stage all his life.

Even as a schoolboy, Plum was drawn to the performing arts as well as to his studies and sports. We think of him in later life as a shy fellow in a crowd, but Jan Piggott's book *Wodehouse's School Days* reveals that he sang solos at school concerts and had "a large repertoire of comic songs" for less formal gatherings. He performed in plays both classical and modern, including playing the role of Guildenstern in W. S. Gilbert's *Hamlet* parody *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*.

He had a great love for Gilbert & Sullivan's comic operas. This could easily be the subject of an entire talk, and one that's close to my heart, but I'll just mention that one of his first published essays, "Work," from 1900, begins with an epigraph from Gilbert (see page 8), and that his first school novel, *The Pothunters*, from 1902, mentions that Charteris played extracts from Gilbert & Sullivan on his banjo. Arthur Robinson has assembled a web page listing 370 other quotations and allusions to Gilbert in Wodehouse's works.



Neil Midkiff channels his inner Wilfred Shadbolt.

His school curriculum of course included Shakespeare, and his reading clearly went far beyond the one or two plays which would have been studied each term. Diego Segui has put together a web page showing well over a thousand of Wodehouse's quotations and allusions to hundreds of different passages from Shakespeare. Once again, that subject alone could take up many talks like this, so we must move ahead.

It is not surprising that the schoolboys that Wodehouse depicts in his early stories also have the same interests. In *The Gold Bat*, we hear of a student who owns nineteen different photos of one actress. Plum himself had several photos of Ethel Haydon of the Gaiety Theatre in his Dulwich scrapbook.



Ethel Haydon

Wodehouse's students take absence without leave to see plays, as in "Author!"; can we doubt that Plum had done the same? And in writing for a student audience, he assumes that they will catch his references to stage talk. In "An Affair of Boats," one student who answers a roll call for another who is taking an afternoon out on the river is called an "understudy."

As Thomas Shearne leaves for school in "The Guardian," some of the good-byes come from a "Chorus of aunts and other supers"—that is, supernumeraries, a stage term for extras who help fill out a crowd scene.

So far, the backstage jargon is mostly in the narration. The arrival of Psmith changes this. Psmith uses stage talk as naturally as he does everything else. In the dormitory fight in *Mike and Psmith*, he signals that one of the other students should really be elsewhere by saying "this is not Comrade Jellicoe's scene at all"; when Mr. Downing wants to break open a locked cabinet, Psmith tells him that housemaster Mr. Outwood "is the sole lessee and proprietor of that cupboard. I am only the acting manager." These terms would be familiar from theatrical posters.

By the time these later school stories appeared, Plum had already begun writing lyrics for the theater. Even before beginning his work for the stage, in his light verse written for newspapers he had published parody lyrics for well-known songs from musical comedies.

BACK TO HIS NATIVE STRAND.

Punch, May 27, 1903

[“Sherlock Holmes” is to reappear in the “Strand” Magazine.]

AIR—“Archie” in the “Toreador.”

OH, SHERLOCK HOLMES lay hidden more than half a dozen years.
He left his loving London in a whirl of doubts and fears.
For we thought a wicked party
Of the name of MORIARTY
Had dispatched him (in a manner fit to freeze one).
They grappled on a cliff-top, on a ledge six inches wide;
We deemed his chances flimsy when he vanished o’er the side.
But the very latest news is
That he merely got some bruises.
If there is a man who’s hard to kill, why he’s one.
Oh SHERLOCK, SHERLOCK, he’s in town again,
That prince of perspicacity, that monument of brain.
It seems he wasn’t hurt at all
By tumbling down the waterfall.
That sort of thing is *fun* to SHERLOCK.

One such poem is “Back to His Native Strand,” written for *Punch* in 1903 to celebrate the announcement that new Sherlock Holmes stories would be appearing in the *Strand* magazine later that year. Unlike most of his earlier light verse, the poetic meter and the rhyme scheme seem complex and unusual, but that is explained by a note that it is to be sung to the tune of “Archie,” a song from the recent musical comedy *The Toreador*. On the Madame Eulalie website, you can check out “Back to His Native Strand”; I’ve created new sheet music putting Plum’s words into the music by Lionel Monckton as well as a recording of the music so you can listen along and appreciate how his new

Back to His Native Strand

P. G. Wodehouse (1903)
after "Archie"
by George Grossmith Jr.

[Sherlock Holmes is to reappear in the *Strand* Magazine.]

Lionel Monckton
from *The Toreador* (1901)

Allegro

Oh, Sher - lock Holmes lay hid - den more than
When Sher - lock left his na - tive Strand, such
The bur - glar groans and lays a - side his

lyric is perfectly crafted to match the existing melody. The point is that Wodehouse, whether on purpose or just for fun, was essentially auditioning for the jobs he actually got in the next years, writing topical lyrics and additional verses for the Edwardian theater. In the second decade of his career, in New York, he became even more active, collaborating with Guy Bolton on the books of musical comedies and working as a dramatic critic for *Vanity Fair*.

Naturally his backstage experience overflowed into his fiction. In *The Swoop!*, his spoof of sensational novels of military invasion, he notes that:

At the time of the great invasion the music-halls dominated England. Every town and every suburb had its Hall, most of them more than one. . . . It was not till the middle of September that anyone conceived what one would have thought the obvious idea of offering music-hall engagements to the invading generals.

Wodehouse uses the details of contracts, tours, and backstage rivalries to pit the foreign commanders against each other and reduce them to the status of vaudeville artistes. One general visited an agent and



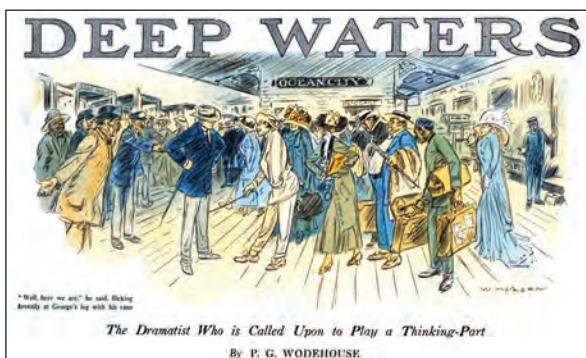
"had been kept waiting in the ante-room for two hours in the midst of a bevy of Sparkling Comediennes of pronounced peroxidity, and blue-chinned men in dusty bowler-hats. . . . On the following day, deeply offended, he had withdrawn his troops from the country."

Wodehouse's 1910 novel *A Gentleman of Leisure*, also called *The Intrusion of Jimmy*, is closely linked to the stage. It opens at a New York City club for actors, after the opening night of a play about a gentleman burglar. Jimmy Pitt's boast to the star actor of that play that anyone could break into a house, even he himself, results in a bet which sets up the action of the novel. Later in the book, at a country house in England, we meet Charteris again as an organizer of amateur theatricals:

All he knew or cared about was that the local nobility and gentry were due to arrive at the castle a week from that day, and that very few of the company even knew their lines. . . . He conducted rehearsals with a vigour which occasionally almost welded the rabble he was coaching into something approaching coherency. He painted scenery and left it about—wet—and people sat on it.

Details of casting, of rehearsal, of rewriting, of prompting, all carry the echo of real-life experience at this sort of thing. A short story from the same year of 1910, "Deep Waters," is set amidst the out-of-town opening of a new play:

When he had left New York, thoroughly disgusted with the entire theatrical world in general and the company which was rehearsing



"Fate's Footballs" in particular, rehearsals had just reached that stage of brisk delirium when the author toys with his bottle of poison and the stage-manager becomes icily polite. The "Pigskins," as Arthur Mifflin, the leading juvenile in the great play, insisted on calling it, much to George's disapproval, was his first piece. Never before had he been in one of those kitchens where many cooks prepare, and sometimes spoil, the theatrical broth. Consequently, the chaos seemed to him unique. Had he been a more experienced dramatist he would have said to himself, "'Twas ever thus."

One of the stories in the series *A Man of Means* puts Roland Bleke into the thick of a theatrical venture. Becoming fascinated with an actress, he is talked into purchasing a decrepit London theater and commissioning the writing of a new revue:

There did apparently exist a handful of artistes to whom Miss Verepoint had no objection, and these—a scrubby but confident lot—were promptly engaged. Sallow Americans sprang from nowhere with songs, dances, and ideas for effects. Tousle-haired scenic artists wandered in with model scenes under their arms. A great crowd of chorus ladies settled upon the theatre like flies.



We get a glimpse of the gory details of the preparation of a revue: patching up old scripts with new topical insertions; stealing effects that "wowed them in New York last fall"; rewriting to suit a bossy star, who wants to be the one to deliver any of the few good comic lines in the show.

Even our first encounter with Bertie has a theatrical setting: his cousin Gussie Mannering-Phipps is entangled with a New York vaudeville artiste who "does a single on the big time": in other words, has a

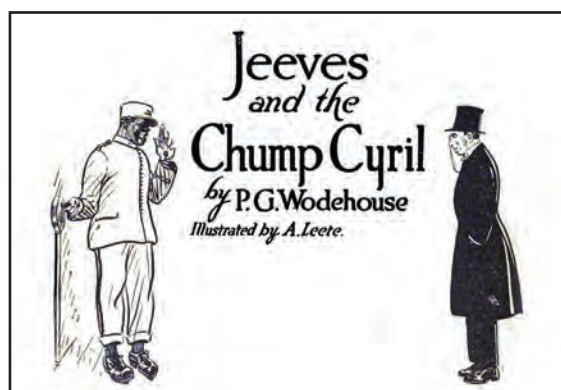
solo act in the largest and best touring circuit. Aunt Agatha sends Bertie over to prevent him from marrying a performer, but of course Gussie himself ends up on the stage. We see his debut at a “rummy sort of place uptown where they had moving pictures some of the time and, in between, one or two vaudeville acts.” Yes, by 1915, movies were starting to become big business, and we could devote another entire talk to the subject of Wodehouse and the movies, if we had the time.

Bertie has another failed assignment to keep another man off the stage, in “Jeeves and the Chump Cyril.” He has already introduced Cyril Bassington-Bassington to his chum George Caffyn, a playwright, by the time he gets a cable from Aunt Agatha warning him against introducing Cyril into theatrical circles:

A preliminary dress-rehearsal, old George explained, was the same as a regular dress-rehearsal inasmuch as it was apt to look like nothing on earth and last into the small hours, but more exciting because they wouldn't be timing the piece and consequently all the blighters who on these occasions let their angry passions rise would have plenty of scope for interruptions, with the result that a pleasant time would be had by all.

The thing was billed to start at eight o'clock, so I rolled up at ten-fifteen, so as not to have too long to wait before they began.

Anyone with experience in the theater will recognize that as true today as it was a century ago.



I hope you are familiar with the novels with explicitly theatrical settings and characters; we can give them only a glance here. Recall, for instance, how musical-comedy composer George Bevan and chorus girl Billie Dore become involved with Lady Maud Marsh and Lord Marshmoreton in *A Damsel in Distress*.

Jill Marriner (*The Little Warrior* / *Jill the Reckless*) makes friends with Nelly Bryant, an American chorus

girl stranded in London with her parrot. Back in New York, Jill takes a job in the ensemble of *The Rose of America*, and Freddie Rooke joins the cast, too, in order to keep an eye on her. We learn about rehearsals, rewrites, recasting, revising on the out-of-town tour while the show is put into shape for its Broadway opening. We're told that “Every town on the road has its special character. Some are good show towns, others are bad. Nobody knows why. Detroit will take anything. So will Washington. Whereas Cincinnati wants something very special.”

The Adventures of Sally also takes us behind the scenes of a production in progress. Sally's inheritance takes her from a theatrical boardinghouse to a silent partnership in her brother's production company, purchasing a play called *The Primrose Way* written by the man she thinks she loves at first.

If you don't know these three books, you should read them not only for the humor and romance, but for the realistic look at what goes on behind the scenes of producing a musical comedy. All three can be read at Madame Eulalie in their magazine serializations.

These are valuable glimpses of the artistic, business, and technical side of the theater. But it's not just the backstage stories that are freshened by Plum's own theatrical experience.

Wodehouse is famous for describing his novels, in a letter to Bill Townend included in *Performing Flea*, as “a sort of musical comedy without music.” It's not just the tone and the light approach that he meant. He relies on well-proven stage techniques of construction and casting to give each of his plots the continuity of a well-made play. He gives good advice to Townend:

In writing a novel, I always imagine I am writing for a cast of actors. Some actors are natural minor actors and some are natural major ones. It is a matter of personality. Same in a book. Psmith, for instance, is a major character. If I am going to have Psmith in a story, he must be in the big situations.

The principle always to go on in writing a long story is to think of the character in terms of actors in a play. I say to myself, when I invent a good character for an early scene, “If this were a musical comedy we should have to get somebody like Leslie Henson to play this part, and if he found that all he had was a short scene in act one, he would walk out. How, therefore, can I twist the story so as to give him more to do and keep him alive till the fall of the curtain?” This generally works well and

improves the story. A good instance of this was Baxter in *Leave It to Psmith*. It became plain to me as I constructed the story that Baxter was such an important character that he simply had to have a good scene somewhere in what would correspond to the latter part of act two, so I bunged in that flower-pot sequence.

Throughout Wodehouse's stories, even those with no obvious theatrical setting, the references to stage terms keep on coming. Reggie Pepper tells the readers as he narrates the conclusion of "Concealed Art" that

She rushed into his arms like someone charging in for a bowl of soup at a railway station buffet. And I drifted out. It seemed to me that this was a scene in which I was not on.

Mrs. Lora Delane Porter, in *The Coming of Bill*, considers that "In the drama of which she was the self-appointed stage-director, Kirk was a mere super supporting the infant star." In *Sam the Sudden*, Chimp Twist has a plan for Dolly Molloy: "Then she starts in vamping this guy all she can. If she hasn't lost her pep since she last tried that sort of thing, the guy ought to be in pretty good shape for Act Two by the time the curtain rings up." In the short story "Farewell to Legs," Angus McTavish sees his girl fascinated by a practical joker "till he began to feel like a super standing in the wings watching Romeo and Juliet play their balcony scene."

Sometimes Wodehouse even gives us a drama lesson in his narration, as in *The Butler Did It / Something Fishy*:

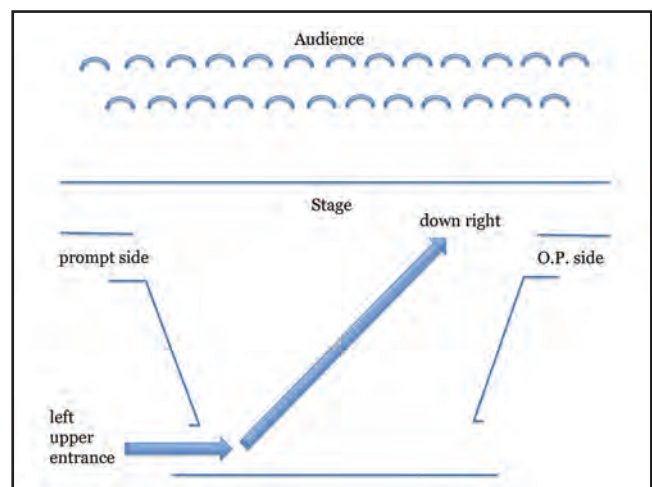
In the actual line "Will you ask the headwaiter to come here, please" there is nothing, one would say, calculated to stun the senses and cause the hearer to stiffen in every limb. It is the sort of throw-away line a dramatist would give to one of his minor characters at the beginning of the Act Three supper scene to cover the noise of the customers stumbling back into the auditorium after the intermission and tripping over other people's feet. It misses the Aristotelian ideal of pity and terror by a wide margin.

The character, of course, who seems most at home using theatrical jargon is Bertie Wooster. In "Jeeves and the Impending Doom," Aunt Agatha orders Bertie to "kindly exclude from your conversation all that is suggestive of the bar, the billiard-room, and the

stage door. Mr. Filmer will judge you largely by your conversation."

Bertie's conversation delights us, of course, all the more when we understand the background of the stage terms he uses so naturally. He tells us in "Scoring Off Jeeves" that

Years ago, at a country-house party, I had been roped in to play the part of a butler in some amateur theatricals in aid of some ghastly charity or other; and I had had to open the proceedings by walking across the empty stage from left upper entrance and shoving a tray on a table down right.



When pretending to Bingo's uncle that he is the author of the Rosie M. Banks novels, he sees one of them open on the table:

"But who are you to pit yourself against the decrees of Fate?" I said, taking a look at the prompt book out of the corner of my eye.

The prompt book is the script held offstage in case an actor forgets a line. In British theaters, the tradition is to have the prompter on stage left, the "prompt side," and so stage right is often called "opposite prompt" or "O.P." This explains Bertie's description of Lady Malvern as "a hearty, happy, healthy, overpowering sort of dashed female, not so very tall but making up for it by measuring about six feet from the O. P. to the Prompt Side."

Bingo takes over the Christmas entertainment at Twing in "The Metropolitan Touch"; Jeeves is dubious:

"I think Mr. Little would have done better to follow my advice and confine himself to good works about the village."

"You think the thing will be a frost?"
"I could not hazard a conjecture, sir."

Here Bertie is using "frost" in its true theatrical sense: a chilly reception by an audience. But he applies it in everyday life to something that doesn't come off quite as planned. He asks Jeeves about the checked suit he wears in "Jeeves Takes Charge": "Is it really a frost?" The scheme to earn money for Bicky by charging admission for tourists to meet the hard-boiled egg, his uncle the Duke, "might turn out a frost."

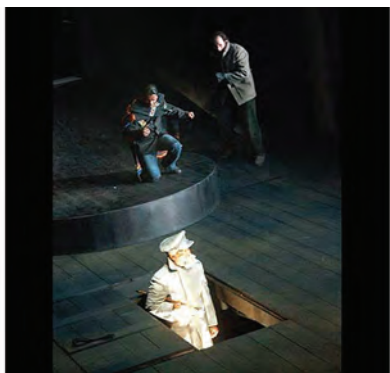
After Steggles drops a beetle down the neck of Harold's choir robe in "The Purity of the Turf," Bertie tells us: "They disappeared into the vestry and I grabbed my hat and legged it round to the stage door, full of apprehension and what not." Of course, the vestry, or robing room, is the clerical equivalent of the dressing rooms which are reached from the stage door of a theater, so Bertie's substitution is a natural one for him.

When Jeeves takes a holiday and arranges for a substitute valet, Bertie refers to the new man as an "understudy"—someone who has learned a part in order to be able to play it if the main actor isn't available.

In *Thank You, Jeeves*, the tense situation when Chuffy finds Pauline Stoker in Bertie's pajamas is ended when Chuffy leaves: "With the departure of the male half of the sketch a certain strain seemed to have gone out of the atmosphere." "Sketch" here means a short dramatic scene for just a few actors, one of several items in a vaudeville program or revue.

Later in the book, Pauline is startled by suddenly seeing Bertie in blackface; Chuffy hears her cry and gathers her in his arms. "They couldn't have done it more neatly if they had been rehearsing for weeks."

Bertie describes his surprise at hearing that Tuppy and Angela have had a quarrel in *Right Ho, Jeeves*: "And now this wholly unforeseen severing of diplomatic relations had popped up through a trap." A trap door was an effective device for the sudden entrance of a character, such as the ghost of Hamlet's father, popping up into the center of a stage.



"Sounds well,
but doesn't mean anything":



Shakespeare Quotations and Allusions in the works of J. G. Wodehouse

Diego Segui's web page of Wodehouse's use of Shakespeare
(<https://www.madameulalie.org/annots/pgwsqa.html>)

Brinkley Court's guests all seem to have romantic troubles; Bertie calls it "standing room only as regarded tortured souls." When all the seats in a theater have been sold, more spectators can be admitted if they are willing to stand at the back. Brinkley is similarly full up.

Bertie gives Gussie Fink-Nottle clues about how to express his love for Madeline Bassett, refreshing his mind that the stars are God's daisy chain and so forth; afterward, Bertie is "confident that he had grasped the scenario." This word for a brief outline of the plot of a play or book was borrowed from the Italian back in the eighteenth century, and Bertie uses it here and many times later to refer to the way his little plots and plans are expected to turn out, not too far from its theatrical meaning. In other sagas, Wodehouse also uses it in a figurative sense, even making it into the Oxford English Dictionary with his description of Percy Pilbeam in *Bill the Conqueror* as "a small young man with close-set eyes and the scenario of a moustache." In other words, the moustache is at present a preliminary sketch, an outline to be filled in later.

As Bertie begins softening up Madeline for Gussie's entrance, he tells us that "It had been all very well for me to promise Gussie that I would cut loose to this girl about aching hearts, but you want a cue for that sort of thing." To an actor, a cue is usually the last few words of another actor's preceding line, the signal for you to start speaking your own lines. In a later book, Bertie boasts that "whatever you may say of Bertram Wooster, you cannot say that he does not know a cue when he hears one. Throw him the line, and he will do the rest."

After Gussie muffs his chance, talking to Madeline about newts instead of love, Bertie complains to Jeeves that "He knew exactly what he had to do. I had coached him thoroughly in lines and business." Lines are what an actor speaks; business is the term for the specific action that accompanies each line.

Bertie describes Tuppy as "staring before him rather like a strong, silent man in a novel when he's just been given the bird by the girl." Here, of course, "the bird" is a brush-off, being turned away; nothing to do with the rude gesture more recently called by the same name. But it turns out that this has a stage origin, too: when

a nineteenth-century audience hissed an incompetent performer off the stage, making a noise like a goose, it was called “giving the big bird,” later shortened to just “the bird.” Wodehouse also gets an OED citation for using this sense of the word in *Money for Nothing*: “Would a Rudge audience have given me the bird a few years ago?”

When Jeeves’s scheme for bringing tangled hearts together by ringing the fire alarm bell proves a bust, Bertie challenges him: “Didn’t I tell you it would be a flop?” This word for a theatrical failure seems common to us, but the OED can trace it (in print) back only to a 1927 London newspaper review, so it was fairly fresh slang in this 1934 novel.

The 1954 novel *Jeeves and the Feudal Spirit* has more allusions to the stage than any other I’ve found. Bertie describes a short pause while Jeeves reads a letter as “a stage wait of about a minute and a half”; a telephone operator signaling “three minutes” is referred to as “a female voice off-stage”; he speaks of Aunt Dahlia’s face as “her dial lighting up like a stage moon”; “Florence clapped a hand to her throat, a thing I didn’t know anybody ever did off the stage”; “I, with something of the emotions of Daniel passing out of the stage door of the lions’ den, went to my room”; Aunt Dahlia “during the slice of dialogue had been waiting in the wings, chafing a bit at being withheld from taking the stage”; Ma Trotter’s “bosom heaved like a stage sea.”

Summarizing his understanding of Aunt Dahlia’s story, he speaks as in the stage directions of a play script: “Scene, your room. Discovered sitting, you. Enter Uncle Tom, pottering.” “Discovered” here means that an actor is already onstage when the curtain rises.

In *Jeeves in the Offing* / *How Right You Are*, *Jeeves*, Bertie comes across Wilbert Cream reading poetry to Phyllis Mills, and once again Wilbert is called “the male half of the sketch.” Bertie engages Phyllis in conversation for a time about Kipper Herring, and “this duologue had, of course, left Wilbert Cream a bit out of it, just painted on the backdrop as you might say.” Usually, of course, the backdrop is painted with landscape or other scenery, not any characters; could there be a more effective way of describing Wilbert’s feeling left out of the action?

Making plans to push Aubrey Upjohn into the lake, Bertie “was standing there running over the stage directions in my mind to see that I had got them all clear.”

In Bertie’s narration of “Jeeves and the Greasy Bird,” he confides in us: “A thing that always bothers me when compiling these memoirs of mine is the problem of what steps to take when I bring on the



Aristophanes, *The Frogs*

PGW at 16



stage a dramatis persona, as I believe the expression is, who has already appeared in some earlier installment.” When he needs to convince Honoria Glossop that he’s engaged elsewhere, “if you wanted a girl to exhibit as your fiancée, a theatrical agent was the very man to help you out. Such a bloke would be in an admirable position to supply some resting artiste who would be glad to sit in on an innocent deception in return for a moderate fee.” Notice that Bertie is conversant with the professional term “resting” for an actor who is at liberty, that is, unemployed. When the agent stages the deception: “Anticipating the entrance of the female star and observing coming on left center a character who wasn’t a member of the cast at all, he was pardonably disconcerted. No impresario likes that sort of thing.”

If Bertie really had wanted to obey Aunt Agatha and exclude from his conversation all that suggests the stage door, he would hardly have been able to speak at all.

Here’s a web address with links to the online resources and book and story titles I’ve mentioned: <https://tinyurl.com/pgw-stage>.



Madame Eulalie’s Rare Plums

Devoted to the early works of P. G. Wodehouse



WORK

by
P. G. Wodehouse

With a pleasure that's emphatic
We retire to our attic
With the satisfying feeling that our duty has been done,
Oh! philosophers may sing
Of the troubles of a king
But of pleasures there are many and of troubles there are none,
And the culminating pleasure
Which we treasure beyond measure
Is the satisfying feeling that our duty has been done.
W. S. GILBERT.

A Masterwork from John Dawson

BY ELIN WOODGER

THREE CHEERS TO John Dawson for his long-awaited *P. G. Wodehouse's Early Years: His Life and Work 1881–1908*. Originally published last year, this exhaustively researched, detailed, and fascinating examination of Wodehouse's first 27 years is about to be issued in a mildly revised edition, with a few corrections and emendations. Dawson's masterwork has already created a sensation among Wodehouseans worldwide as it sheds new light on previously misunderstood or neglected aspects of Plum's first three decades, leading to a new appreciation of our hero's character and career.

The richly illustrated book begins with a statement from Edward Cazalet and a foreword by Tony Ring, followed by Dawson's introduction and an excellent chronology covering the years 1877–1908. It then divides into three parts. The first is an in-depth portrait of Wodehouse's childhood and young adulthood, up to the time he became a journalist. Here we learn of his family background, his parents' marriage in Hong Kong, the circumstances of his birth, the relatives and others who looked after Plum and his brothers while their parents were abroad, the schools he attended, his choices of reading material while growing up, the life he lived at Dulwich, and the influences on his development as a writer. At 140 pages, this is a far more extensive examination of this period of Wodehouse's life than any other biographer has ever given it.

Wodehouse's many biographers have tended to tread briefly and a bit heavily over the author's boyhood and earliest years as a writer. This is partly because they had to rely mainly on his interviews with Richard Osborne and David Jasen in the 1960s and 1970s for memories that had become hazy in his elderly mind, and partly because the internet—which yielded basketloads of new information for Dawson—was not yet available to them. It is therefore unsurprising that those earlier chroniclers employed, shall we say, active imaginations in depicting Wodehouse's formative years, making some drastic assumptions about what his childhood must have been like. The result has been commonly accepted portraits of a boy abandoned by his parents, shunted about between schools and relatives, bedevilled by a slew of maiden aunts, and (according to some interpretations) permanently scarred by the experience.

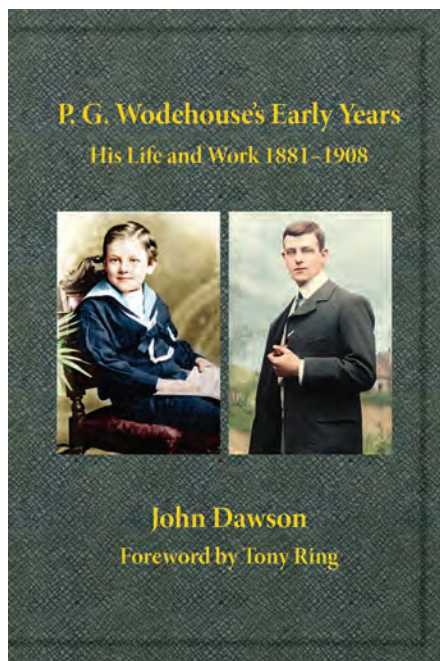
How, then, to explain Wodehouse's statement to Osborne that his childhood “went like a breeze” and his insistence in interviews that he had been perfectly

happy as a boy? Are we really to believe that he was in a state of denial about how badly he had been treated? That his whimsical world of men about town and savant valets, of perpetually perky women and potty peers, of pignapping skulduggery and the purloining of cow creamers, was his way of escaping from the misery that had been his life as a boy?

Well . . . no. For as Dawson tells us, “There is no evidence that Plum was ever traumatized by the events of his childhood, that he was ever mistreated or deprived, or that he felt unloved or rejected by his parents.” Dawson then provides mounds of evidence that shows the opposite to be true. In an age when it was common for couples to leave their children to be raised in England while they were posted to India, Hong Kong, or other reaches of the Empire, Wodehouse's parents, Ernest and Eleanor, took the greatest care to ensure that their sons were well looked after, placing them with people and in schools where they could be happy and thrive. Additionally, Eleanor returned to England to be with them far more often than previous biographers knew. (Her affection for her children is clearly evident in the drawings from her sketchbook that adorn Part I.)

At that time, leaving one's children in the care of others for long periods was a conventional upbringing, and apparently Plum took well to it. Not for him the misery and loneliness that contemporaries such as Kipling and H. H. Munro (Saki) suffered, nor the long-term psychological scarring. As Dawson points out, when Wodehouse said he had a happy childhood, we should believe him. This, however, has not been the view taken by most of Plum's other biographers, particularly Frances Donaldson and Robert McCrum, of whom Dawson is highly critical, sometimes sarcastically so. The revised edition shows that he has toned down his harsh comments while still making effective arguments against these other biographers' contention that Wodehouse was a damaged soul.

In Part II, Dawson moves on to Wodehouse's life as a journalist between 1901 and 1908. Month by month, he details the work the author produced in his relentless pursuit of a stable—and financially rewarding—writing career. It is particularly interesting to see the vast number and wide variety of articles Plum turned out while working at the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, when he was “writing for his life” (as Norman Murphy liked to put it). During the seven-plus years covered in this section, Wodehouse produced over 500 articles,



poems, and stories, as well as nine books. Dawson draws on Wodehouse's *Money Received for Literary Work* (MRFLW) journal to identify and describe his prolific output, with Wodehouse's own observations present via quotes adapted from MRFLW or taken from his personal journals. Dawson also provides commentaries that touch on Wodehouse's life and the people with whom he worked. Not surprisingly, this section takes up the bulk of the book, some 270 pages.

Finally, Part III presents us with MRFLW itself, a transcription so exact that each entry is presented on the printed page to show exactly how it appears in the journal. (Kudos galore to Neil Midkiff, who did the layout work, in addition to providing extensive editorial assistance.) There are also pictures of actual pages from MRFLW, in which Plum meticulously recorded the articles, stories, poems, books, and lyrics he had written and the money he had received for them, along with occasional comments, including two noteworthy ones tucked into the top left and right corners of one page: *This month starts my journalistic career. P.G.W. / Chucked Bank Sept 9.1902*

The book ends with a financial audit clarifying and sometimes correcting Plum's entries in MRFLW; there is also an invaluable index. Dawson has dedicated his work "to the memory of Ernest and Eleanor Deane Wodehouse and Norman (N.T.P.) Murphy". He often quotes Murphy from their correspondence over many years, and I have no doubt Norman would have loved this book.

With *P. G. Wodehouse's Early Years*, John Dawson has created an invaluable resource for Wodehouse scholars and a pippin of a good read for fans. Part I

deserves reading in full, beginning to end, while Parts II and III are ripe for dipping into and savoring in doses both large and small. This is a groundbreaking addition to the canon of works about P. G. Wodehouse, and without question it is the goods. Wodehouseans everywhere are well advised to add this book to their collections.

This is a slightly revised version of the review that was published in Wooster Sauce, June 2021. John's book can be ordered from lulu.com at a cost of \$35 softcover, \$45 hardback. It is shipped from presses in six countries; buyers in most countries are able to pay in their own currency. For ordering information, go to: www.madameulalie.org/jdawson/wey.html.

We were very pleased to gain permission from John to print some excerpts in earlier issues of Plum Lines in 2018 and 2019. In the Summer 2021 issue, we announced the publication of the book, and I'm very happy to have a copy in my "favored" reading stack.—OM

Rivals of P. G. Wodehouse: Newman Levy

BY BOB RAINS

"The lawyers thought I was a great writer and the writers thought I was a great lawyer."

IN HIS BOOK *One Summer: America, 1927* (2013), Bill Bryson lists a number of highly successful authors of the 1920s, such as Harold Bell Wright, Cosmo Hamilton, and Thyra Samter Winslow, whose names have long since slipped into obscurity. While not on Bryson's list, Newman Levy has seemingly suffered the same fate.

The multitalented Newman Levy was a lawyer and writer, akin to John Mortimer. (One of my favorite stories about Mortimer is that after he lost a criminal trial, his disgruntled client reportedly said to him, "Your Mr. Rumpole would have gotten me off." But I digress.)

Newman Levy, born in 1888, was the son of prominent New York trial lawyer Abraham Levy, a leader of the bar who liked to socialize (drink) with reporters, writers, and editors, the literary set of the day. Years later, Newman reported, "I still have a novel at home called *Love Among the Chickens* with an inscription in it from the author to Father and a note which reads, 'Dear Abe, Tell your friends to buy this book because I need the money. P. G. Wodehouse.'" (Throughout his memoir *My Double Life: Adventures in*

Law and Letters [1952], Newman (henceforth “Levy”) always capitalizes “Father.” Methinks that loony-doctor Sir Roderick Glossop might have a few choice remarks to make about this.)

Levy chose NYU over Columbia, despite the fact that Columbia had a better football team, because Columbia “unpleasantly insisted upon entrance examinations” whereas all that NYU required was a high school diploma. While an undergrad, he acted in plays; wrote songs for a show called *The Undergraduates*; contributed verse and prose to the university literary magazine, *The Colonnade*; and was elected literary editor of the college yearbook, *The Violet*.

Despite his remarkable talent for writing and music, Levy was destined to follow in his father’s career; he felt that he had no choice in the matter. “I had had enough of college at the end of my junior year so I decided, or perhaps Father decided for me, that I would combine my last year of college with my first year at New York University Law School.” But there was a potential glitch:

Unfortunately, to be eligible to enter law school I had to be free of all conditions. I had taken a half year of Spanish under the mistaken impression that it was easy, and I had flunked the final examination. I went to the Spanish teacher and explained my plight. “So if you don’t pass you won’t be able to enter law school this fall,” he said. “That’s so,” I replied. He thought for a moment. “It would be a pity to lose a whole year for the sake of a little thing like Spanish,” he said sympathetically. “I guess I’ll have to give you a passing mark.” And so I became a Bachelor of Arts.

Prior to entering law school, Levy had taken private lessons in musical composition, but law school put an end to that. A cousin named Richard Rodgers also showed some musical talent. Before Rodgers was able to transcribe his own musical compositions, Levy transcribed them for him. With apparent regret, Levy records in *My Double Life*, “Some years later when I was becoming known as a writer, he (Rodgers) and his young collaborator, Larry Hart, suggested rather diffidently that we might do a show or something together. At that time, I was hitting the leading magazines with flattering regularity, so I said to myself, ‘These guys better get out and get a reputation.’ They did.”

After an apprenticeship at a private law firm, Levy went into practice with his father, mostly doing criminal defense work. His father told Levy two rules for practicing criminal law. “The first is, always get your fee

in advance, and the second is, remember that you don’t have to serve the sentence yourself.” He also opined that “One of the advantages of practicing criminal law is that you don’t have to meet your clients socially.”

Levy “managed to carry on an active flirtation with the Arts while laying the foundation of my career as a Leader of the Bar.” As an undergraduate he had discovered a column in the *New York Evening Mail* called “Always in Good Humor” signed with the initials F.P.A. (Franklin Pierce Adams). Newman started contributing epigrams, verse, etc., to that column. Adams annually awarded a coveted gold watch for the best contribution of the year, and Newman won two of them. This was a significant accomplishment. Indeed, when he met Edna Ferber on a steamer coming home from Europe in 1914 and introduced himself, she replied, “I don’t believe it. Let me see your watch.” (Later, he and Ferber wrote a play together called *Twelve Hundred a Year*. It flopped.)

As the United States prepared to enter the Great War, Levy wanted to do his patriotic bit. Wishing to avoid the trenches and especially the rats which were known to congregate therein, he enlisted as a cadet in the Army Air Corps. Although he was not particularly adept at aviation, he managed to learn to fly. But he was not very good at it and almost caused a multi-plane collision. Finally, a kindly major explained to him that while he might finish his training and get a commission, he wouldn’t last five minutes in combat. “If you got killed that would be too bad. But what concerns me most is that every time a flyer crashes, we lose a plane, and, as you know, there’s a shortage of planes. We just can’t afford to waste them.” Levy accepted a discharge.

F.P.A. moved from the *Mail* to the *Tribune* and changed the name of his column to “The Conning Tower.” Levy was among such illustrious contributors as Dorothy Parker, Ira Gershwin, and Ogden Nash.

In the early 1920s, a friend began to edit a column called “The Sun Dial” which had recently been vacated by Don Marquis. On request, Levy submitted several pieces, including a retelling of the opera *Carmen* in light verse. Levy’s “Carmen” was an instant success and for years was reprinted in anthologies. It is a masterpiece:

In Spain, where the courtly Castilian hidalgo
twangs lightly each night his romantic
guitar,
Where the castanets clink on the gay piazetta,
and strains of fandangoes are heard from
afar,
There lived, I am told, a bold hussy named
Carmen, a pampered young vamp full of
devil and guile.

Cigarette and cigar men were smitten with
Carmen; from near and from far men were
caught with her smile.

Now one day it happened she got in a scrap and
proceeded to beat up a girl in the shop,

Till someone suggested they have her arrested,
and though she protested they called in a
cop.

In command of the guard was a shavetail named
José, a valiant young don with a weakness
for janes,

And so great was her beauty this bold second
loot he could not do his duty and put her
in chains.

"I'm sorry, my dear, to appear to arrest you—at
best you are hardly much more than a kid.

If I let you go, say, there'll be some exposé. But
beat it," said José. And beat it she did.

(And so on and so forth. The full poem, which is in
the public domain, is available at: <https://tinyurl.com/levy-carmen>)

Based on the success of his "Carmen," Levy
continued to write burlesque stories of famous operas,
some of which were published in *Harper's* and the
Saturday Evening Post. In 1923 he collected several of



Rea Irvin's cover art to Levy's "Carmen"



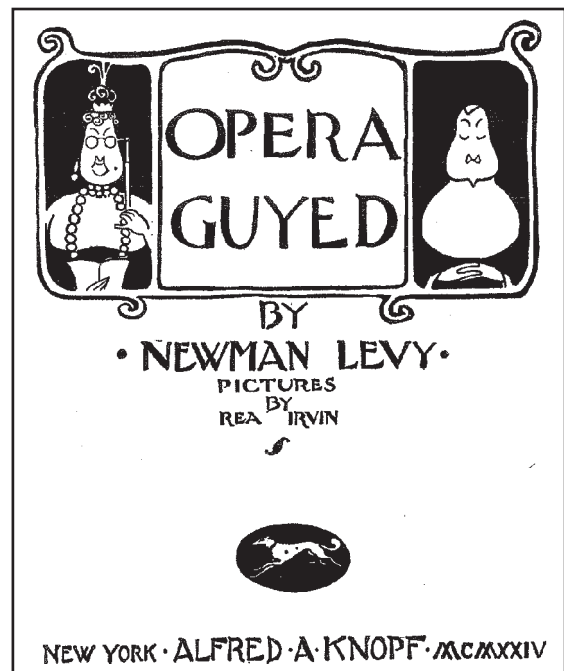
In Spain, where the courtly Castilian hidalgo
twangs lightly each night his romantic guitar,
Where the castanets clink on the gay piazzetta, and
strains of fandangoes are heard from afar,
There lived, I am told, a hold hussy named Carmen, a
pampered young vamp full of devil and guile.
Cigarette and cigar men were smitten with Carmen;
from near and from far men were caught with her
smile.

Now one day it happened she got in a scrap and proceeded
to beat up a girl in the shop,
Till someone suggested they have her arrested, and though
she protested they called in a cop.

In command of the guard was a shavetail named José, a val-
iant young don with a weakness for janes,
And so great was her beauty this bold second loot he could not
do his duty and put her in chains.

Beginning of published version of
Levy's "Carmen," with Rea Irvin's illustration

these satirical gems in a collection titled *Opera Guyed*,
published by Knopf. *Opera Guyed* was greatly successful
and went through many editions over a number of years.
One notable fan of the book was Clarence Darrow.



Levy brought out three more collections of verse.
The first was *Gay But Wistful* (1925), a full compendium
with many gems. It was followed by *Saturday to Monday*
(1930), verses about weekend in the country. Finally
came *Theatre Guyed* (1933), a similar format to *Opera*

Guyed but based on theatrical plays, not opera. Like *Opera Guyed*, *Theatre Guyed* received lavish critical praise, and sales were initially strong.

At some point, a guy named Harold Ross was trying to save a failing comic magazine called *Judge*. He hired Levy to write movie reviews, a job Levy enjoyed, especially after he discovered that it was unnecessary to actually sit through the movies in order to review them. Ross told Levy of his plans to launch a new magazine called the *New Yorker*. Levy tried to talk Ross out of it, arguing that it wouldn't have broad appeal. But Ross persisted, and Levy became an early and frequent contributor. Levy wrote both prose and verse for the *New Yorker*, as well as many other magazines. Many of Levy's writings pertain to matters of no contemporary interest, but the verse almost always sparkles.

One morning Levy woke up with four lines of verse rattling around in his brain:

Jack Spink was fond of drink,
His wife, she liked to eat.
For eats is eats and wets is wet,
And never the twain shall meet.

He didn't think much of it, but the editor of *Life* paid five dollars for it.

Another verse on the subject of drink (likely written during Prohibition), "If You Stick a Stock of Liquor," better demonstrates Levy's verbal adroitness:

If you stick a stock of liquor in your locker,
It is slick to stick a lock upon your stock,
Or some joker who is slicker's going to trick you
of your liquor;
Though you snicker you'll feel sicker from the
shock.
Be a piker though your clubmates mock and
bicker,
For like brokers round a ticker they will flock
To your locker full of liquor, and your stock will
vanish quicker
If you fail to lock your liquor with a lock.

While Levy was producing a large output of prose and verse, as well as skits for various Broadway revues, he continued his increasingly prominent legal career. Sometimes there was overlap between his world of law and his world of the arts. For instance, in 1932 George S. Kaufman and Morris Ryskind's show *Of Thee I Sing*, with songs and lyrics by George and Ira Gershwin, was produced on Broadway and became an enormous success. An unknown American expat named

Lowenfels brought suit claiming that *Of Thee I Sing* was plagiarized from his privately printed play, *U.S.A. with Lyrics*. Levy and his partner appeared for Ryskind, and the suit was dismissed, the presiding judge describing it as "obscurity . . . taking a long shot at success."

Another example of Levy combining law and lit is his nonfiction book *The Nan Patterson Case*, explaining the three sensational trials in 1904 and 1905 of the *Florodora* "pretty maiden" Nan Patterson for the murder of her wealthy but married lover, the gambler and bookie known as Caesar Young. This eminently readable narrative is all the more interesting because the chorus girl's lead counsel was none other than Abraham Levy.

Like Wodehouse and so many other writers of his day, Levy eventually gave in to Hollywood's siren call. And although he and his wife Eva and their daughter Margaret did enjoy themselves in Hollywood, like so many other writers, he found it to be a professionally frustrating experience. He hired Gummo Marx as his agent. "I soon discovered that I had all the Marx Brothers working for me." Nevertheless, he often had no actual assignments or had them mysteriously pulled out from under him as scripts were either reassigned or simply abandoned. He really wanted to write for the motion pictures, and the head of RKO, Pan Berman, thought that Levy could do a "grand job" writing the script for an upcoming movie based on the book *The Wizard of Oz*. But there was a hitch. As Berman explained to Gummo, "This is going to be a very expensive picture and our budget calls for a high-priced writer. Newman doesn't get enough to put him on the job." Levy's "reluctant" offer to accept a raise was declined. Next Levy tried to write for an old friend who produced low-budget B-pictures, but his salary was too high.

Levy's friend Gus Kahn assured him, "You can have a successful career out here and make a lot of money as long as you don't make the mistake of writing something." Levy had thought that with financial security and little or nothing to do, he would turn out "novels and plays and all sorts of things." But it was not to be. "Perhaps the enervating semi-tropical climate has something to do with it, but, whatever the reason, the place is destructive to creative efforts. . . . I can truthfully say that my principal occupations were drawing my salary and improving my game of tennis."

Levy happily returned to New York and his former dual lives in law and literature in 1938. In the run-up to World War II, he became very concerned about the anti-Semitic propaganda being spewed forth by the likes of Father Coughlin. He became counsel to the American Jewish Committee and, among other efforts, wrote a

debunking pamphlet called *Father Coughlin, His "Facts" and Arguments*. Over 300,000 copies were distributed. When the United States entered the war, Levy was too old for active duty. He did serve as an appeal agent for a draft board and wrote "reams of verses" for the Writers' War Board. His verses helped our war effort in another way as well. Sales of his collections *Saturday to Monday* and *Theatre Guyed* had dropped off. Knopf wrote Levy to inform him that plates of books whose sales had fallen off were being turned over to the government to be melted into bullets. Levy readily agreed: "I don't think that my verses ever served a better purpose."

In addition to his private practice, Levy was very involved with the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, where he not only worked on judicial reform and ethics but also wrote the script for a show called *May It Please the Court*, performed at the Hotel Astor before an audience of more than twelve hundred.

Levy died in March 1966, and his papers repose in NYU's Fales Library. His books of verse, sadly out of print, remain well worth a visit to a physical or online used book emporium.

Postscript and Warning: *Some of Levy's verses would definitely not pass today's "PC" standards.*

Wall Street Wodehouse

BETH CARROLL found a couple of nuggets in the *Wall Street Journal*. In the March 5–6 issue, Max Byrd writes about the five best books on houses. The fifth house on the list was Blandings Castle, as described in *Pigs Have Wings*. Max says, "We reach Blandings Castle by means of a long drive through rolling parkland. . . . [W]e encounter the stone gates, the gravel soil and the gray battlements of the castle. . . . Blandings is an upside-down Mansfield Park, a place where grave propriety is a daily casualty of inspired goofiness."

Then, in the March 12–13 issue, in Alexandra Mullen's review of Anne Hall's *Angela Thirkell: A Writer's Life*:

Like many of Thirkell's readers, P. G. Wodehouse was a tad embarrassed to confess his "furtive fondness" for her novels, but by now we can see that furtiveness is not required. She is right up there with E. F. Benson, Barbara Pym, and Nancy Mitford—and within nodding distance of Wodehouse himself.

Beth says she's familiar with the others, but suggested that she "might have to give Thirkell a read."

Treasurer's Reports for 2020 & 2021

BY INDU RAVI

Balance as of December 31, 2019	\$14,231.50
Income:	
Membership dues	\$11,570.00
Drones Club Ties	\$2,194.90
Interest	\$1.10
Total Income	\$13,766.00

Expenses:	
<i>Plum Lines</i>	
production and mailing	\$12,218.66
2021 convention	
general expenses / refund	(\$6,000.00)
PayPal fees	\$285.39
Total Expenses	\$6,504.05

Total Balance	
as of December 31, 2020:	\$21,493.45

Balance as of December 31, 2020	\$21,493.45
Income:	
Membership dues	\$13,825.00
Convention 2022 income	\$6,095.00
Interest	\$1.74
Total Income	\$19,921.74

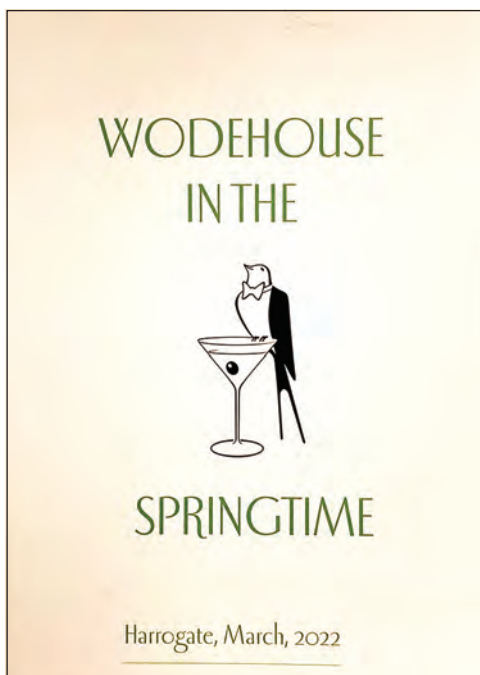
Expenses:	
<i>Plum Lines</i>	
production and mailing	\$13,685.29
2022 convention	
general expenses	\$5,038.44
PayPal fees	\$279.35
Correspondence	
supplies, other	\$27.04
Total Expenses	\$18,980.12

Total Balance	
as of December 31, 2021:	\$22,435.07

Wodehouse and Harrogate in Life and Literature

BY PETER NIEUWENHUIZEN

THE PG WODEHOUSE SOCIETY (UK) arranged an event billed as **Wodehouse in the Springtime**, based in the town of Harrogate at the beautiful Hotel Majestic, on March 26, 2022. In addition to the reference to actual springtime, it echoes the short story “Jeeves in the Springtime” (1921) and the book title *Uncle Fred in the Springtime* (1939). But why was Harrogate chosen for this event? What is the link to Wodehouse?



The program for the U.K. springtime event

Harrogate is a town in North Yorkshire that was already known for its special waters in the sixteenth century. The medicinal iron- and sulfur-bearing waters apparently worked well for ailments such as gout and lumbago. Drinking this water was also believed to have a positive effect on general health. The Royal Pump Room (built in 1842) was where one would walk before breakfast in the morning to drink a glass of sulfurous water. For the poor, a tap was attached to the outer wall where you could get your water for free. Besides drinking the water, you could also take medicinal mud baths in Harrogate. Visitors could choose to seek treatment at the Turkish bath, the Royal Baths, and several others besides. The large influx of interested parties contributed to the growth of the city's prosperity. Other well-known English spas were Droitwich Spa and Malvern Spa (both in Worcestershire), Bath Spa

(Somerset), and Royal Tunbridge Wells (Kent). After World War I, interest in these treatments declined.

Droitwich Spa

IN 1920, P. G. Wodehouse and his wife, Ethel, visited the Chateau Impney in the town of Droitwich, where one could undergo a cure by bathing in the brine water. Wodehouse would order a floating tray, held up by the denseness of the salty water, on which he could work on a manuscript for an hour during his bath. Droitwich would later be referenced and renamed by Plum in the story “Romance at Droitgate Spa” (1937). In that story, Major-General Sir Aylmer Bastable stays at Droitgate Spa to get his daily medicinal water to help ease attacks of gout.

Wodehouse returned to Droitwich in March 1927 and wrote to his friend Bill Townend that the brine baths were becoming him very well. He was working on *Summer Lightning*, so the waters must not have done him any harm.

Harrogate and Health

WODEHOUSE certainly knew the reputation of this type of spa. In his letters, we find that in 1924 he traveled from Great Neck, Long Island, to Harrogate to taste the health-giving water. He stayed there at the Grand Hotel from September 1 until October 1, 1924. It took him some time to get used to the smell of the sulfurous water. On September 12, Wodehouse wrote to his daughter Leonora:

Harrogate isn't such a bad old spot. I played golf today for the first time and feel fine. The waters taste quite ordinary now, though the first two times I took them it was too awful for words. Exactly like rotten eggs.

Wodehouse worked steadily in Harrogate while also working on his health. On the occasion of this visit, he wrote to Bill Townend again:

Talking of getting better, there was no earthly need for us to come to Harrogate at all. Ethel did not drink the waters, and only had massage treatment which she could have got equally well in London. I, on the other hand, who thought I had nothing the matter with me, was ordered sulfur water twice a day.



The majestic Majestic Hotel in Harrogate

According to Norman Murphy in his *Wodehouse Handbook*, the prescribed routine in Harrogate for a serious cure was:

- 07.00–07.30 Rise, walk and take first drink at the Pump Room.
- 07.30–08.15 Gentle walk and take another glass at the Pump Room.
- 08.15–09.00 Listen to the music band. Possibly a third glass of water.
- 09.00 Walk back to the Grand Hotel for breakfast.
- 10.00 Reading the morning papers or writing letters.
- 11.00 Sherry.
- 11.30 Second visit to the Pump Room, another glass of water.
- 12.00 Gentle walk round the gardens, possibly a glass of water.
- 13.00 Walk to the hotel for lunch.
- 14.00 Rest, followed by walking, golf or drive in countryside.

References to Harrogate

GIVEN HIS PERSONAL experiences with spas in Harrogate and Droitwich, it is not surprising that Wodehouse refers to these spas in his literary work—sometimes positively, sometimes not so. An early reference can be found in the story “The Delayed Exit of Claude and Eustace” (1922). Bertie Wooster is asked by Aunt Agatha to accompany his uncle George Wooster to Harrogate to get his nervous system in order. Bertie doesn’t like the idea, but in the end Jeeves saves him the trouble. In the story “Clustering Round Young Bingo” (1925), which was written by Wodehouse shortly after his stay at Harrogate, Bertie Wooster wants a change of scene and decides to leave for Harrogate to stay with Uncle George Travers, who is also there to take a cure. George is not allowed to drink alcohol there, and he had

to walk down the hill every morning at 8:30 AM to the Royal Pump Room “and imbibe twelve ounces of warm crescent saline and magnesia. It doesn’t sound much, put that way, but I gather from contemporary accounts that it’s practically equivalent to getting outside a couple of little old last year’s eggs beaten up in sea-water.” Bertie’s uncles’ liver ailments and stays in Harrogate are also noted in “Jeeves and the Old School Chum” and in “Indian Summer of an Uncle” (both 1930).

In the story “Ukridge and the Old Stepper” (1928), Ukridge reports that his neighbor Colonel Philip Bayliss had also left for Harrogate because of liver complaints. Eustace Mulliner has a beloved and wealthy aunt Georgiana, Lady Beazley-Beazley, who visits Eustace for a tea break in London on her way to Harrogate.

Fleeing and Disapproving

WODEHOUSE ALSO uses Harrogate as a place to hide or avoid. In “Jeeves and the Kid Clementina” (1930), Bertie asks Jeeves to tell Aunt Agatha that he will be taking a cure in Harrogate in a week. Gally Threepwood is portrayed in *Full Moon* (1947) as the type who doesn’t waste his time in Harrogate like many gout-suffering peers. Lord Shortlands is forced by his daughter Adela to go to Harrogate in *Spring Fever* (1948) because of his son-in-law Desborough’s lumbago. He makes it clear that it is not his favorite place: “Adela made me go with her to Harrogate, of all loathsome holes.” The 1960 book *Jeeves in the Offing* begins with an exchange between Bertie and Aunt Dahlia about her husband, Tom Travers:

“Tom’s not there. He’s gone to Harrogate with Cream.”

“You mean lumbago.”

“I don’t mean lumbago. I mean Cream. Homer Cream. Big American tycoon, who is visiting these shores. He suffers from ulcers, and his medicine man has ordered him to take the waters at Harrogate. Tom has gone with him to hold his hand and listen to him of an evening while he tells him how filthy the stuff tastes.”

Conclusions

WODEHOUSE WORKED ON and completed other works while at Harrogate, including “Honeysuckle Cottage” (1925). All in all, it seems conclusive that Harrogate, despite his protestations and those of his characters, was a refuge for Wodehouse, a location where he could get some wonderful work done, while perhaps improving his health. Harrogate inspired and infused his writings as a place where his

characters could improve their health or live as excessive bon vivants. It was a hiding place, a resting place, or a place to avoid forever. The choice of Harrogate for **Wodehouse in the Springtime** was a very suitable one, as that location resonates through a goodly number of his stories.

References available upon request

Stay tuned for a full report of the Wodehouse in the Springtime event in our Autumn issue.—OM

Riveting Talk(er)s at the 2022 Convention

We were able to procure a list of the projected speakers to be heard at the upcoming (October 2022) TWS convention in San Diego. The excitement builds and the anticipation is fierce!

Wodehouse in the Western Comic Tradition
Daniel Lowenstein

Villains in the Jeeves & Wooster Saga
David Warren

It Takes a Thief
Elin Woodger

**“If this is Upper Silesia,
what must Lower Silesia be like?”:
In Search of Wodehouse’s Wartime Prison**
Tim Richards

Wodehouse’s Greatest Novel
Elliott Milstein

TWS Conventions I Have Known . . . Since 1993!
Debbie Bellew

**Pelham Grenville Wodehouse
& Wladziu Valentino Liberace**
Bob Rains

**What the Well-Dressed Man Is Swearing:
A Close Look at Wodehousian Insults**
Ninad Wagle

My First (Convention) Time BY JOHN G. KAREORES WITH JOHN K. FAHEY

IT WAS PURE CHANCE that brought us to our first TWS convention. It was late summer of 1991 when, happening on a copy of *Victoria* magazine, the word “Wodehouse” caught my eye in the letters to the editor. The letter in question was from the secretary of The Wodehouse Society, Marilyn MacGregor, referencing an upcoming Wodehouse convention in New York City. It was the work of a moment for me to contact John Fahey and immediately make plans to attend.

Not too much later, we loaded up the two-seater (a Subaru wagon, actually) and, with my trusty schoolmate/navigator by my side, headed to NYC on Thursday afternoon. My eccentric Aunt Cleo (also a PGW fan) let us stay at her apartment in the West Village as she was out of town.

Friday morning we dressed and ambled down to the Sheraton Park Avenue Hotel, not knowing what to expect. That perhaps is the understatement of the entire convention. Once we arrived at the hotel, we were immediately taken under the wing of Marilyn MacGregor herself, a diminutive powerhouse of a lady, who served as our hostess and guide through the entire convention. She quickly shuttled us onto a waiting bus, which whisked us off to Remsenburg to visit the Wodehouses’ old home. I’ll let young Fahey explain the bedlam in his own words:

The bus pulled up unannounced in front of what had been Wodehouse’s home, on a road too small to accommodate a tour bus. The current owners weren’t home but evidently arrangements had been made with them to let us into the house. There was a parrot in a cage and Elliott Milstein remarked, “We have come to clip the parrot’s claws.” That was just for openers.

After a tour of the house (including the room in which so many wonderful books were written), the next event took us both by surprise. I will let John continue:

We went to the Bideawee Memorial Park, a pet cemetery nearby. No prior arrangements had been made with Bideawee; the bus just pulled up and disgorged the multitude who wanted to know where the Wodehouse dogs were buried. The Bideawee office had no idea, so people broke

up into teams going off in multiple directions in search of the graves. Fifteen minutes later a howl was heard in the distance. A team had located the graves.

The staff just stood around in a somewhat dazed fashion as the Plummy horde ran around, took pictures of the gravesite, and then got back on the bus and disappeared.

Once back from the day's adventure, we headed back to my aunt's, changed clothes, and were off to the Friday night reception of browsing and sluicing at the open bar. Here we met and talked and laughed with other attendees.

Saturday morning began a rousing and eclectic selection of Riveting Talks, which ranged from entertaining to enlightening to utterly hysterical. The highlight of the morning was Charles Gould's talk, which, in tongue-in-cheek fashion, placed PGW among the great Russian authors, based on his novel *If I Were You*. During the lunch break (according to John),

we went with Marilyn to the Strand Bookstore where we saw an unforgettable book display. Upon our arrival at the Strand, we found a large table of Plum's books next to, you guessed it, the great Russian authors. Someone obviously knew what the great Gould's talk was going to be about!

The afternoon session was as wonderful as the morning's, after which we prepared for the big banquet.

At the banquet, we sat with Marilyn and several of her distinguished friends from London. All appeared quite prim and proper until John and I realized that people were taking and hiding—not eating—bread rolls. Then, much to our amazement, they requested more rolls. This was happening all around the dining room. Dinner progressed, during which time we learned how to balance spoons on our noses. The room was filled with laughter.

Then it happened: A beautiful young woman with striking red hair and dress stood and strolled across the room. Gasps went out and within seconds an artillery bombardment of bread rolls was targeted in her direction. It was relentless and the poor woman ran for her life. Rolls were flying everywhere and I decided to try my hand and gently tossed a few at the next table. I was chastised by one of Marilyn's English friends that, since I had grown up playing baseball, I could not possibly understand the proper trajectory of a bread roll. He picked a target and adroitly tossed it down the front of the dress of a woman sitting at the next table.

He explained that he played cricket and therefore had developed this skill.

The banquet concluded with two skits, written by Norman Murphy. I found out later that this was the first time a skit was performed at a convention, and they have since become a regular feature. They're always entertaining. Some have even been written by proper playwrights. On occasion they've been performed by professional actors.

The night finished up with more cheer. A fellow sat down at a piano in the hotel lobby and played while a chorus of happy conventioners sang "Sonny Boy," along with other favorite tunes, before the evening ended.

Sunday morning was a quick round of goodbyes and traded addresses. Before we all parted ways, Len Lawson grabbed John and me and introduced us to Elizabeth Hamilton and Maria Sensale, who also lived in the Boston area. During the Friday bus ride we met Carolyn Pokrivchak, mother of Max, who gave us his address. Suddenly a group of strangers with a common interest in Wodehouse were now scheduling a meeting in December of that year. And thus the original version of the NEWTS chapter was formed. We are now celebrating our thirtieth year as a chapter and continue to welcome new members into our group. All this because a few brave souls went to their first TWS convention.

John and I had an amazing experience and met some of the legends of TWS: Marilyn MacGregor, Tony Ring, Phil Ayers, Charles Gould, Doug and Margaret Stow, Len Lawson, and of course the unforgettable Norman Murphy. We made friends during that weekend, and some of those friendships remain intact to this day.

Some of the traditions stay strong even at our most recent conventions: the Riveting Talks, the Saturday banquet, and more. We should make note that, after the 1999 Houston convention, the tradition of throwing bread rolls came to an end, by popular demand of waiters and waitresses everywhere.

So don't be shy. Come meet us in San Diego this year on October 20–22. Not only will your memories last a lifetime but quite possibly some new and long-lasting friendships will be formed as well!

I realized for the first time in my life the full meaning of that exquisite phrase of Coleridge: "Clothing the palpable and familiar / With golden exhalations of the dawn," for in the pellucid air everything seemed weirdly beautiful, even Otis Jukes's heather-mixture knickerbockers.

"The Long Hole" (1922)

Chapters Corner

WHAT IS YOUR chapter up to these days? Please send all news to Gary Hall (see back page). Note that webmaster Noel Merrill keeps chapter items posted on the society website. It's good to send advance info about upcoming events to Noel; his contact information is on the last page of this issue.

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Blandings Castle Chapter

(Greater San Francisco Bay area)

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WHAT HO, What Ho! Ski season has ended, but only because the resorts closed for the season in mid-April. Somehow Mother Nature missed that memo as we had over three feet of snow the next week here on Donner Summit. And we were forecast eight to ten inches for Mother's Day (May 8).

"I don't get your drift."
"I will continue snowing."
Summer Lightning

That said, regardless of weather, it is springtime in Blandings. Spring flowers, green parks, and wonderful seasonal foods—a joyous time for reading Wodehouse.

Our virtual chapter meetings continue to draw Wodehouse fans both domestically—across all the U.S. time zones—and from around the globe. At our most recent meeting, I was able to share an update from Paul Kent's publisher—Tobias Steed of Can of Worms Enterprises—as to the then-pending U.S. arrival of Volume 3 of Paul's Wodehouse study, along with some other lovelies. My copy arrived a few days after our Zoom, and I am very happily reading away. Other members have reported with equal enthusiasm that their copies have arrived as well. Members make comments like "Fantastic stuff!" or "A must have!"

Rowena Southard gave us a firsthand report about the Wodehouse plaque in Westminster Abbey (picture in next column). Robert Bruce was also there recently,

so a lively discussion of all of our members' experiences of or wishes for visiting the memorial ensued.



Robert also shared with us the obituary in *Wisden Cricketers' Almanack* for Murray Hedgcock, a wonderful man many of us knew. Robert, Noel, and others shared some classic Murray tales. Finally, with Covid protocols fairly lifted in California, cricket has returned and we are thinking of a Blandings journey to the Marin Cricket Club or some other cricket pitch for an out-of-doors picnic later in the summer.

We do discuss Wodehouse. Neil Midkiff and Lynn Vesley-Gross do a fantastic job of bringing us back to the Wodehouse canon. We hope to discuss Paul Kent's book, get an update on the upcoming convention, and continue our tradition of lively, undirected discussion, which leads to our common thoughts on Wodehouse.

We'd love to have you join us on the last Sunday of the month at 1 PM Pacific Time—which in months when we change to Daylight Savings on one continent but not the other has caused some rannygazoo. Please contact Lord Emsworth at sfblandingscastle@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

—Bill Franklin

The Broadway Special

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Capital! Capital!

(Washington, D.C., and vicinity)

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Chapter One

(Greater Philadelphia area)

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A SMALL BUT eager group of Chapter One members gathered by Zoom on April 13, 2022, to discuss Wodehouse's only children's book, *William Tell Told Again* (1904). The publisher, A. & C. Black, was in possession of color illustrations of the William Tell legend and needed a text. They selected Wodehouse, a contributor to their *Public School Magazine*.

Our chapter had a variety of editions of the book, but most contained Philip Dadd's wonderful illustrations and the short verses (by John W. Houghton) that accompanied them. In the prose, His Excellency Hermann Gessler is going to imprison William Tell for the rest of his life. In the verse, the governor plans to hang Tell. Both punishments go unrealized, as both accounts give our hero a happy ending.

We turned to our bookshelves and e-devices to see what historical events were the basis of the William Tell legend, when they occurred (apparently 1307), and when the tale was first recorded in manuscript form (late 1400s). Though Gessler was a real figure, Tell himself was as fictional as the Austrian soldiers Freisshardt and Leuthold, borrowed by Wodehouse from Friedrich Schiller's play *Wilhelm Tell*.

Discussion then ranged over a number of topics, including how the satirical book could refer to tyranny of any era, including today. For most of us the lasting impression was of Wodehouse's English references and humor. Unlike our group, William Tell did not meet his compatriots on Zoom, but rather at his favorite pub called the Glass and Glacier.

Our next meeting is scheduled for June 14, 2022, when we will be discussing the first two episodes from Season 2 of *Jeeves and Wooster*.

—Rebecca Reber

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THE CLIENTS are planning a Senior Bloodstain in conjunction with the TWS Convention in San Diego. Details will be forthcoming.

—Elaine Coppola

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IN 2021 THE Mottled Oysters got together mostly in a virtual format. After the April meeting at the library's outdoor patio resulted in a disastrous outcome (one of our members fell and broke her hip), we Zoomed. In August, at the library, we shared the regular meeting room with a knitting club who clicked through the

Wodehousean chortling. We then returned to virtual meetings. This past March, during a stretch of warm weather, for which our fair city is known, we gathered for a picnic at a park to talk about *Psmith, Journalist*. Under leafy live oaks, it was BYOC (bring your own comestibles). Clouds and sun played hide-and-seek to spare us sunburn. In researching *Psmith, Journalist* since our last reading, we found that the BBC had included it in its 2019 list of the 100 Most Influential Novels (in the Rule Breakers category). That gave us additional talking points. The glib Psmith, who smooths ruffled feathers throughout New York's underworld, would do well in diplomatic circles today. Maybe.

For those of you tracking our readings in 2022, mark this on your score sheet: three runs, three hits, no errors. For January, we read and discussed *Uneasy Money*. February was *Company for Henry* (aka *The Purloined Paperweight*). The members will be cruising with *The Girl on the Boat* (aka *Three Men and a Maid*) and teasing out *Nothing Serious* the next couple of months before checking out Plum's poetry. Jan Ford will provide the rhymes for that in June. Midsummer, things heat up with *Jeeves and the Feudal Spirit*, then *The Prince and Betty* (wherein we get a little repeat of *Psmith, Journalist*, what?).

The Mottled Oysters/Jellied Eels of south Texas meet monthly on the first Saturday, at 2 PM, usually at the John Igo Branch Library, 13330 Kyle Seale Parkway. If you are a Wodehouse fan living in or near San Antonio, or just passing through, please stop in. We can venture out for nourishment and tissue-restorers before or afterwards.

—Liz Davenport

The New England Wodehouse Thingummy Society (NEWTS)

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The Northwodes

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COVID HAS FORCED the Northwodes to adapt. We used to meet every three or four months in our favorite haunts. Then March 2020 came, and it suddenly became too risky to meet in person to discuss Plum. Technology was the answer. Now we meet almost once

a month in cyberspace. A couple of our members have Zoom accounts; because they host our Zoom meetings, there's no limit on meeting length or the number of participants. We use Google Groups to communicate details of our next book and our agendas to everyone—a very handy tool. With a single email a few days before our meeting, we share our agenda, consisting of time and date; the publishing history of our book; and a list of major characters' bios gleaned from Madame Eulalie, Wikipedia, *Who's Who in Wodehouse*, and the Russian Wodehouse Society's website.

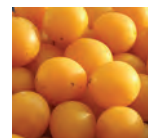
During the meeting we discuss plot details, story structure, and narrative style; favorite passages; and Plum's references to works of literature, history, the Bible, politics, current events, and famous people spun into the story. Next, we talk about unusual words, puns, usages, allusions, and the voice on the page of various characters, followed by our favorite similes and sentence structures. Zoom also fosters creativity—participants can choose to have a virtual background related to the book. Moderating a meeting is the art of embracing your meekest inner middle-child, quelling one's ego to facilitate a polite and lively wide-ranging conversation, monitoring the meeting itself, and making sure the topics you noticed (or completely missed) in the book are discussed by other people. It's easy. Just listen and ask and notice when someone wants to make a point.

We discussed our 55th Wodehouse book, *Uncle Fred in the Springtime*, on April 9. Our next book, chosen in compliance with the 8:54 PM rule, is *Over Seventy: An Autobiography with Digressions*, to be discussed in person on June 6. Wish us luck!

—Mike Engstrom

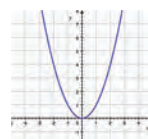
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THE SPRING our attention was drawn to the **Wodehouse in the Springtime** event at the Hotel Majestic in Harrogate (England) in March. One of the Knights was honored to give one of the seven talks at this U.K. Wodehouse society conference. [For more about the town of Harrogate, see Peter's article on page 21.—Ed.]

On April 9, the Fourth Wodehouse Film Festival was presented by the Knights. Many Wodehouse fans gathered in the Perdu Theater in Amsterdam to enjoy several movie adaptations of the Wodehouse stories and novels. Five different movies were projected on screen: a golf movie, two about Jeeves & Wooster, one Mulliner, and one Blandings. *The Long Hole* (1924) is a story in which Ralph Bingham and Arthur Jukes try to win the love of Amanda Trivett by playing golf. In *Big Business* (1978), John Alderton plays Reginald Mulliner, the nephew of Mr. Mulliner, who is in love with Amanda Biffen (Maggie Henderson). After singing "Ol' Man River," he has courage enough to face Amanda's uncle and guardian, Sir Jasper Todd, who has sold him a worthless pile of oil stock. No film festival



Items that were part of the Knights' Fourth Wodehouse Film Festival, including *The Long Hole* (top right) and an episode from the Blandings series (above right)

should be without Jeeves & Wooster; thus, we had an old one (*Thank You, Jeeves*, 1934) and a recent one (*Will Anatole Return to Brinkley Court? / Right Ho, Jeeves*, 1990). The latter portrayed Gussie Fink-Nottle in the amusing episode of his Market Snodsbury Grammar School speech. The Blandings Castle adaptation, more or less a parody, was "Sticky Wicket at Blandings" (2014): Freddie Threepwood had to deal with a dog that was pinched by Valerie Fanshawe.

Finally, a new addendum was added to the Dutch society website: *Le Mot Juste*, devoted to the use of French in the Wodehouse stories (<https://tinyurl.com/le-mot-juste>). Almost 450 entries have been made available at the moment by Ken Clevenger (US) and Ole van Luyn (NL).

—Peter Nieuwenhuizen

Rugby in All Its Niceties

(Rugby, Tennessee Region)

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The Size 14 Hat Club

(Halifax, Nova Scotia)

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From One Anselm to Another

BY TAD BOEHMER

IN MY ROLE as Curator of Rare Books at the Michigan State University Libraries' Stephen O. Murray & Keelung Hong Special Collections, I do a good deal of teaching with primary sources. While leading an undergraduate session on the modern fine press movement, I trotted out a copy of Anselm Hollo's *no complaints* (West Branch, Iowa: The Toothpaste Press, May 1983). To my amazement, the first words I saw upon opening the book were "P. G. Wodehouse." The poem I had come across is printed in full in the right column of this article.

Hollo (1934–2013) was a Finnish-born poet, translator, and teacher who lived in the United States from 1967 until his death. His father was an eminent translator in his own right, passing his love of literature on to Anselm. Before moving across the Atlantic, Hollo lived in London while working for the Finnish section of the BBC World Service. He would later teach at the Iowa Writers' Workshop, SUNY Buffalo, and the University of Colorado at Boulder. Heavily influenced by the beat poets, he published upwards of forty volumes of poetry, and edited and translated numerous other titles.

His widow, Jane Dalrymple-Hollo, told me that Anselm was a voracious reader of Wodehouse—though any hopes that the poet was named by his literary father after Plum's character Anselm Mulliner are dashed when one recalls that "Anselm Gets His Chance" first appeared in 1937.

To me this is just another welcome reminder that Wodehouse—and connections to his world—is everywhere. And that one might stumble across a hidden treasure at any time. Collectors are advised that only 1,075 copies of *no complaints* were printed.

The poem's title is taken from the famous dedication of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* to Ezra Pound, itself lifted from Dante's *Purgatorio*, and can be translated as "the better craftsman." Paul Blackburn (1926–1971) was a poet and translator of, among other things, the Provençal troubadours of the High Middle Ages, who wrote in Old Occitan. This tradition also influenced Pound, who published his own translations. In the notes at the end of the volume, Hollo writes that "much of the input derives from wodehouse's lovely short story, 'anselm gets his chance.'"

Sincere thanks to Jane Dalrymple-Hollo for permission to reprint this piece.

il miglior fabbro

to paul blackburn & p.g. wodehouse, over yonder

who said you differ from
my cousin rupert's younger son
anselm who got his chance
in the canzone titled
"anselm gets his chance"
who dreamt of myrtle jellaby
because he loved her yet
did not dare inform her uncle
due to meager stipend
feared the wrath of
millionaire philatelist
he lacked the courage & pursued instead
the cautious policy of lying low & hoping for
the best
but one bright summer day at breakfast time
found anselm dancing round the table
& so on a brick in the short ribs
a generous snort of that incredible tonic
"buck-u-uppo" & so forth
She was one of those tall dark girls
Who tend to a certain extent to draw
themselves to their full
height & let their male
vis-à-vis
have it
squarely in the neck
don't you know what ho
cheer up old onion don't lose hope
after all you are
a graduate of the silent films
as was dear mr. wodehouse the last great poet
in the occitan tradition

Estate of Anselm Hollo

Homer's life had been singularly free from beautiful girls. He did not go out in the evening very much, almost never to parties where such fauna abound, and during office hours a corporation lawyer's chances of seeing anything in the Helen of Troy class are limited.

The Girl in Blue (1970)

The P. G. Wodehouse Collection at Vanderbilt University

BY ANITA AVERY

The collection, which we believe to be the premier American accumulation of Wodehouse's works and Wodehouse-related items, came into existence in 2019. Thanks to the vision of several members of TWS, and to Anita's tireless oversight, the collection continues to grow and prosper.

IT IS WITH GREAT pleasure and gratitude that we announce the first acquisition of translations in the P. G. Wodehouse Collection at Vanderbilt University, made possible by a generous donation of 143 items—121 from the collection of Peter Nieuwenhuizen and 22 from eight members of the P. G. Wodehouse Society (NL), as well as the society archive. Two-thirds of the titles are first editions of first Dutch translations of Wodehouse works—novels, omnibuses, collections of short stories, including six books compiled from newspaper serializations, three comic books, two plays, and one song. Several contain introductions or epilogues by Peter Nieuwenhuizen. Note that, in Dutch, it's common that only the first word of a book title is capitalized.

Capping off this treasure trove is a new bibliography, *P. G. Wodehouse Translations in Dutch* (2021), by Peter Nieuwenhuizen, published by the Plum Press in Utrecht and documenting Wodehouse works published in The Netherlands and Belgium. This was published in honor of the fortieth anniversary of the Dutch Wodehouse Society and as a reference work to complement the donation of translations to the collection, the latter being the reason for its publication in English.

Highlights of this impressive contribution include: *Sam en zijn schat* (1927), literally translated as *Sam and His Darling* or *Sam and His Treasure*, compiled from 46 installments of a translation of *Sam in the Suburbs* / *Sam the Sudden* (the second Wodehouse book translated into Dutch), which appeared in the daily newspaper *Algemeen Handelsblad* from May to July 1926; and *Drie om een* (*Three for One*) (1998), compiled from a translation of *The Girl on the Boat* published in 34 installments in the same newspaper from December 1927 to January 1928.

Veulens in galop (*Foals at a Gallop*) (1950), one of six donated titles from the “Lach U gezond met Wodehouse” (“Laugh Yourself Healthy with Wodehouse”) series,



contains translations of nine stories from *Young Men in Spats*. *Phips is de man!* (*Phipps is the Man!*), a 1953 translation of *The Old Reliable*, has a colorful dust jacket illustrated by the famous Belgian cartoonist, Willy Vandersteen.

Amor in het kippenhok (*Love in the Chicken Coop*), a 1963 translation of *Love Among the Chickens*, could be had for free in The Netherlands by saving five coupons from Turkstra Biscuit. Especially worthy of note are the translations of all 23 Wodehouse paperback editions from 1976 to 1989 with cover illustrations by Dutch cartoonist Peter van Straaten, published by Spectrum of Utrecht and Antwerpen. A particularly jaunty one is *Liefdesperikelen op Blandings Castle* (*Love Troubles* [or *Love Adventures*] *at Blandings Castle*) (1983), translated from *Galahad at Blandings* / *The Brinkmanship of Galahad Threepwood*.

Leave It to Psmith / *Laat 't maar aan Psmith over!* (2007), sporting a dual English and Dutch title and balloon texts in Dutch, was compiled from one hundred



three- or four-panel comic strips drawn by the Dutch cartoonist Georges Mazure. The comic strips appeared in the daily newspaper *Rotterdams Nieuwsblad* from June 15 to October 12, 1961. Peter Nieuwenhuizen received the drawings from Mazure's daughter in 2006 and, with a publisher, compiled this comic-book rarity on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Dutch Wodehouse Society.

Four rather unique items are: "Het mondharmónica mysterie" (2003), a translation of "The Harmonica Mystery," described as Wodehouse's only true detective story; *Now talking about cricket* (2005), one of the few English-language Wodehouse books published in The Netherlands, from *Tales of St. Austin's*; "Jeeves en de ongenode gast," a 2014 comic book, based on "Jeeves and the Unbidden Guest," illustrated with LEGO figures; and, from 2014, the song "Bill" from *Oh, Lady! Lady!*, entered in a Dutch translation contest.

We hope that you've enjoyed this tour of our Dutch translations. Many thanks to Dutch society president Peter Nieuwenhuizen for his wealth of knowledge and photographs, and for his help with translations in the preparation of this article. Our sincere thanks to all who have so generously contributed to this project. To see the current collection, consult our online database at <http://www.wodehouse.org/PGWCVCU>. Click on the gold navigation bar for links to all sections. For further information, contact anitaavery@verizon.net.

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We appreciate your articles, research, Quick Ones, and other observations. Send them to Gary Hall via e-mail or snail mail at the addresses above. Deadlines are February 1, May 1, August 1, November 1.

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