

A Potted Biography of P G Wodehouse, with Milestones

Compiled by Tony Ring, June 2000

Date	Event
1877 Feb 3	Marriage of Plum's parents, Eleanor (née Deane) and Henry Ernest
1877 Sept 26	Birth of his eldest brother Philip Peveril
1879 May 11	Birth of his second eldest brother Ernest Armine
1881 Oct 15	Birth of Pelham Grenville Wodehouse at 1 Vale Place, Guildford, Surrey
1885 May 23	Birth of Ethel Newton, the future Lady Wodehouse, in Kings Lynn, Norfolk
1886	PGW attended Dame School in Croydon, Surrey
1889	PGW was transferred to Elizabeth College, in Guernsey
1891	PGW moved to Malvern House, a preparatory school in Kearsney, Kent
1892 May 30	Birth of his younger brother Richard Lancelot Deane
1894 to 1900	PGW attended Dulwich College
1900	Received his first payment for writing: from <i>Public School</i> Magazine for an article entitled "Some Aspects of Game-Captaincy"
1900 Sept	Started work at the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, London and took rooms in Markham Square, Chelsea
1901 June	Caught mumps
1901 July	First real short story published in <i>Public School</i> Magazine, entitled "The Prize Poem"
1901 Aug 16	First contribution to <i>Globe</i> newspaper
1902 Sept 9	Resigned from the Bank

- 1902
Sept 17 First article for *Punch*, entitled “An Unfinished Collection”
- 1902
Sept 19 First book published, *The Pothunters*
- 1902 Moved to Walpole Street, Chelsea
- 1903 Stayed at Emsworth House School, Hampshire
- 1903
Aug Joined the “By the Way” column of *The Globe* on a permanent basis
- 1904
April 16 First visit to the USA
- 1904
Aug Appointed Editor of the “By The Way” column at *The Globe*
- 1904
Dec 10 First lyric – Put Me In My Little Cell – sung in *Sergeant Brue* at the Strand Theatre
- 1905
July First contribution to the *Strand*, entitled “The Wirepullers”
- 1906
March 6 Employed by Seymour Hicks as the resident lyricist at the Aldwych Theatre, working on *The Beauty of Bath*
- 1906
March 19 First met Jerome Kern, also working on *The Beauty of Bath*
- 1906
Aug First novel for adults, entitled *Love Among the Chickens*, published by George Newnes Ltd. There is confusion over the date, the second edition giving July as the date of the first printing and Newnes themselves claiming June. The first edition is silent on the matter.
- 1907 Moved to the Hicks Theatre, still writing lyrics for Seymour Hicks
- 1907
Dec 6 Joined Gaiety Theatre as lyricist
- 1909 Second visit to USA, where he sold short stories to *Colliers* and *Cosmopolitan*, and from where he resigned his job at *The Globe*
- 1909
May 11 First book, *Love Among the Chickens*, published in USA
- 1911
Aug 24 First play, *A Gentleman of Leisure*, opened in New York
- 1913
April 8 First play in London, *Brother Alfred*, flopped

1914
Jan London First substantial contribution to a musical production, *Nuts and Wine*, which also flopped in London

1914
Aug 2 Returned to New York

1914
Aug 3 Met Ethel Rowley, née Newton, an English widow, at a New York party

1914
Sept 30 Married Ethel Rowley at The Little Church Round The Corner, off Madison Square on East 29th Street, and inherited her daughter Leonora

1915
March Appointed drama critic of *Vanity Fair*

1915
June 26 First appearance of Lord Emsworth and Blandings Castle in the serialisation of *Something New* (*Something Fresh* is UK title) in *Saturday Evening Post*

1915
Sept 18 Jeeves (and, possibly, Bertie Wooster) made a first appearance, in *Extricating Young Gussie*, published in *Saturday Evening Post*

1916
Sept 25 First Bolton, Wodehouse, Kern musical comedy, entitled *Miss Springtime* appeared in New York and was successful

1919
June 7 First Oldest Member story, “A Woman is Only a Woman”, published in *Saturday Evening Post*

1923
April First Ukridge short story, “Ukridge’s Dog College”, appeared in *Cosmopolitan*

1926
PGW elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature

1926
July First Mr Mulliner story, entitled “The Truth About George”, appeared in the *Strand*

1927
April 1 Took lease of 17 Norfolk Street (now Dunraven Street) in London

1929
May 27 Death of PGW’s father Ernest

1930
June 1 Started first contract with MGM in Hollywood

1931
June 7 Interview with a reporter from the *Los Angeles Times* published, which caused a furore in Hollywood as PGW complained about being paid so much for doing so little

1932

Dec 12 Leonora married Peter Cazalet

1933

Aug First instalment of the first Jeeves and Bertie Wooster novel, *Thank You Jeeves*, published in the *Strand*

1934

Jan 19 Successfully challenged in court the UK Inland Revenue's attempts to claim more income tax on his earnings

1934

March 31 Birth of Leonora and Peter Cazalet's daughter, Sheran

1934

June Settled in Le Touquet

1935

June 3 Bought Low Wood in Le Touquet

1936

April 26 Birth of Leonora and Peter Cazalet's son, Edward

1936

June 26 Awarded medallion by International Mark Twain Society

1936

Oct 9 Death of PGW's brother Armine

1936

Oct 10 Started second contract with MGM in Hollywood

1937

Nov 4 Returned to Le Touquet

1939

June 21 Invested as D Litt at Oxford University

1939

July 8 Visited Dulwich College for last time, writing a report on a cricket match against St Paul's which was published in *The Alleynian*

1940

May 21 PGW, Ethel and animals tried to leave Le Touquet in the light of the German advance, but their car twice broke down

1940

July 21 Start of PGW internment by Germans in camps successively at Loos Prison (Lille), Liege, Huy and Tost (Upper Silesia)

1941

June 21 PGW released from internment and taken to Berlin

1941

June 26 PGW made the first of five radio broadcasts for fans in neutral USA

1941

July 15 Cassandra's radio broadcast of a vituperative attack on PGW, the BBC only allowing it on the direction of Duff Cooper

1941 Death of PGW's mother Eleanor

1943

Sept 11 PGW transferred to Paris

1944

May 16 Death of PGW's step-daughter Leonora

1947

April 27 PGW and Ethel arrived in US on SS America

1948

Sept 2 PGW used the pseudonym Stephen Powys for a play jointly written with Guy Bolton which was successful in London

1949

June PGW's challenge to the US tax authorities ended in the Supreme Court with some decisions going in his favour and others against

1952

March Ethel bought a house in Basket Neck Lane, Remsenburg, Long Island, New York, close to Guy Bolton's home

1953

July 15 PGW resumed contributing fortnightly articles to *Punch*

1955

May 1 They gave up their New York apartment

1955

Dec 16 PGW became an American citizen

1960

Jan 27 PGW elected to the *Punch* table

1961

July 15 BBC broadcast *An Act of Homage and Reparation* by Evelyn Waugh

1965

May 27 BBC TV series *The World of Wooster* commenced

1967

Feb 16 BBC TV series *Blandings Castle* commenced

1967

Nov P G Wodehouse Animal Shelter opened in Remsenburg

1974

Nov PGW's last complete novel, entitled *Aunts Aren't Gentlemen*, published in the UK and immediately topped the list of best-sellers

1975

Jan 1 PGW knighted by Queen Elizabeth II, his wife Ethel taking the title Lady Wodehouse

1975

Feb 14 PGW died in hospital

1977

Oct 15 Formal opening of the PGW Memorial Corner of the Dulwich College Library

1978

Sept 19 *Sunset at Blandings*, a partially completed book, published posthumously with notes by Richard Usborne

1984

Oct Lady Wodehouse died

Thanks to the many PGW biographies for help in compiling this Information Sheet, especially:

Frances Donaldson *P G Wodehouse*

Norman Murphy *In Search of Blandings*

Barry Phelps *P G Wodehouse*