

Ye Olde Plum News

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WODEHOUSE vs HITLER

HITLER SEIZES POWER

(Berlin, 1934) Adolf Hitler has proclaimed himself to be the Führer of Germany.

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### WODEHOUSES MOVE TO FRANCE

(Cannes, 1935) Ethel and P.G. Wodehouse have bought a house in Le Touquet, France and are leaving England.

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HITLER AT CROSSROADS

(London, 1936) The short story Buried Treasure was published in Strand. "... it was generally agreed that Hitler was standing at the crossroads and would soon be compelled to do something definite... 'He'll have to let it grow or shave it off,' said the Whisky and Splash. 'He can't go on sitting on a fence like this. Either a man has a moustache or not.'"

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### A BRITISH "FÜHRER"

(London, 1938) In his new novel "The Code of the Woosters" Wodehouse lets us meet Mr Roderick Spode, leader of the Fascist organization The Black Shorts. As usual, Wodehouse based his fictional persons on real persons, in this case a mixture between the British fascist leader Oswald Mosley and Adolf Hitler. Spode's general appearance is described as though Nature had intended to make a gorilla and changed its mind in the last minute. But Plum gave him a small moustache and other characteristics from Hitler. Plum speaks through Bertie: "You hear them shouting 'Heil Spode!' and you imagine it is the Voice of the People. That is where you make your bloomer. What the Voice of the



Spode, by "Moje" in the Swedish magazine Vecko-Revyn 1939.

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HITLER INVADES FRANCE

(Le Touquet, May 1939) The Wodehouses were caught behind the enemy lines. Ethel burns Plum's "anti-German" articles and notes.

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### WODEHOUSE WAR PRISONER

(Le Touquet, May 1939) The German army has imprisoned Wodehouse and sent him via Liege and Huy to Tost in Upper Silesia. Plum keeps stiff upper lip, keeps a humorist's perspective on everything and keep on writing and taking notes. "Tost is no beauty spot ... If this is Upper Silesia, what must Lower Silesia be like?"

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HITLER PARODIES

(London, 1939) Punch prints "The Big Push", a parody by Wodehouse on a meeting in the German Head Quarter. Hitler, Goebbels and Göring are described as stupid.

(London, 1940) Punch prints "The Shock Dogs", another parody in which Mr. Mulliner says about the Führer: "If you thwart him he flies into a tantrum and flings himself on the floor and eats pieces out of the carpet."

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### BROADCASTS FROM BERLIN

(Berlin, 1941) Wodehouse, soon 60 years, is released from Tost and taken to Berlin. United States is still a neutral country where he has many friends who are concerned about his welfare. The Germans trick him to record five short talks about his life as an internee, to be broadcasted to his friends in USA. However, the Germans sent the talks also to Britain which caused a rage he hadn't anticipated. In Britain he was called a nazi collaborator, not for what he said in the talks, but for the fact that they were made by German Radio. He was furiously attacked by the Government and BBC, was accused to be a traitor who should be prosecuted. He was also wrongly accused of having bargained with the Nazis to get released, and of getting payed by the Nazis. Among the critics is his former friend A. A. Milne. One of his few defenders is George Orwell.

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My war with Hitler in Swedish translation was published in the FIB magazine, Sept 1941.

MY WAR WITH HITLER

(New York, 1941) In Saturday Evening Post, July 19th an article by Wodehouse is published. A visiting American journalist at Tost brought it to USA. Wodehouse kept the humoristic perspective: "There is a good deal to be said for internment. It keeps you out of the saloon and helps you to keep up with your reading. The chief trouble is that it means you are away from home for a long time. When I join my wife I had better take along a letter of introduction to be on the safe side."

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### LIMITED FREEDOM

(Degenershausen, 1941) Wodehouse is released from prison, but not allowed to leave Germany. He was invited by German pre-war friends to stay in the country-side, to be able to write undisturbed.

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BACK IN FRANCE

(Paris, 1943) P. G. and Ethel Wodehouse have gone to Paris in the still occupied France. They will stay there for the rest of the war.

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### TO USA

(New York, 1947) Wodehouse didn't feel welcome in England after the broadcasts and moves instead to Remsenburg, New York, USA, where he will live for the rest of his life.

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INVESTIGATION

(London, 1947) The allegations are investigated by British authorities (MI5, Maj Cussen) which conclude that Wodehouse is *not* a traitor. "Mr Wodehouse made the celebrated broadcasts in all innocence and without any evil intent." He was *not* a Nazi sympathizer, neither payed by the Nazis nor bargained with them. Despite this, ignorant people, without proof, still make these unfair allegations.

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### REHABILITATION OF HONOUR

(London, 1975) A short time before his death, Wodehouse receives knighthood for services to English Literature.

(London, 2019) A memorial plaque is placed in Westminster Abbey, London among other great British authors.



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