

Ye Olde Plum News

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WODEHOUSE AND PARROTS

PARROT POEMS

(*The Parrot and other poems, 1988*) Daily Express Sept 30 –Nov 15 1903, six days a week published a new poem by Wodehouse: "The Parrot". Every verse ends with the parrot saying "Your food will cost you more."



Where the Cobden Club relaxes into grief
at 'stomach taxes'
A parrot perches daily just above the
entrance door.
He doesn't mind what's said to him, or
sung to him, or read to him,
For he can answer nothing but: 'Your food
will cost you more.'

UNLAWFUL THREAT

(*The man who disliked cats, 1912*) A man has fled from his hotel room awakened by a voice repeating: "Move or I shoot!" A parrot, on leave from its owner later walked out after him.

WODEHOUSES TO USA

(*Letter to Bill Townend, February 28, Ratcliffe: A Life in letters*) "We sail on the Adriatic on April 24, as follows: - Ethel carrying black kitten, followed by self, with parrot in cage..."

PARROT CAUSES RIOT

(*Jill the Reckless, 1921*) A parrot annoyed men and dogs by addressing them: "Who cares?" "Good-bye, boy!" and "Woof-woof-woof!" and it also bit a man in his finger. A policeman arrested two persons, not the parrot.

SEEN IN THE CROWD

(*The Girl on the Boat 1922*) Mr Bream Mortimer attracted attention visiting a restaurant. He looks much more like a parrot than most parrots do. Strangers were shocked seeing him eating roast beef, having the feeling that he would have preferred sunflower seeds.

PARROT WARNING

(*Ukridge's Dog College, 1924*) Mr James Corkoran warns Mr George Tupper not to visit Mr Ukridge's aunt Julia. "She will probably set the parrot on to you."

BIRD-NAPPING

(*Ukridge rounds a nasty corner, 1923*) Lady Lakenheath's parrot was birdnapped and fed with bread soaked in a mixture called Peppo 'to brace him up'. Her ladyship tells: "...when I came down poor Leonard was leaning against the side of his cage in an attitude of complete exhaustion, and all he would say was 'Have a nut!' He repeated this several times in a low voice, and then closed his eyes and tumbled off his perch. I was up half the night with him, but now he seems mercifully to have turned the corner. This afternoon he is almost his old bright self again, and has been talking in Swahili, always a sign that he is feeling cheerful."

BIRD WITH A MISSION

(*The story of Webster, 1932*) A parrot has "a way of putting its head on one side, making a noise like someone drawing a cork from a bottle, and asking my friend if he was saved,"

INTOXICATED PARROT

(*Right Ho, Jeeves, 1934*) Lord Brancaster fed his parrot with seed cake soaked in port. His valet Jeeves tells: "Having bitten his lordship in the thumb and sung part of a sea-chanty, it fell to the bottom of the cage and remained there for a considerable period of time with its legs in the air, unable to move."



Lord Brancaster and His Parrot

UNEXPECTED VISIT

(*Uncle Fred Flits By, 1935*) In need of shelter from the rain Lord Ickenham and Pongo Twistleton impersonated a veterinarian and his assistant who visited a parrot they saw in a window. Pongo tried to look like examining the bird while uncle Fred entertained visitors. The parrot was OK when they left.

ENTERTAINING PARROT

(*Yours Plum, 1945*) In a letter to Dennis Mackail August 7 Wodehouse tells that when they in a hurry left Le Touquet they had to leave a parrot to the Germans. The parrot could sing 'God save the King' and became very popular with the German soldiers.

WANTED

(*Joy in the Morning, 1947*) The author Boko Fittleworth is disappeared somewhere in the countryside. He has the face of an intellectual parrot and looks like a cross between a comedy juggler and a parrot that has been dragged through a hedge backwards.