

Ye Olde Plum News

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FICTIVE MOVIESTARS

MINNA NORDSTROM

Miss Postlethwaite at The Angler's Rest was very moved by Minna Nordstrom's acting when she saw her latest movie in the village cinema. Miss Nordstrom's real name was Vera Prebble. She got her star contract by black-mailing three managing directors for the gigantic film company Perfecto-Zizzbaum Corporation. She threatened to reveal their illegal store of alcoholic liquors for the police and locked in the inspecting policemen in a coal cellar. "One moment," she said. "Just one moment. Before you go, I have drawn up a little letter, covering our recent agreement. Perhaps you will all three just sign it." Mr Schnellenhamer clicked his tongue impatiently. "No time for that now. Come to my office tomorrow. Where are you going?" he asked, as the girl started to withdraw. "Just to the coalcellar," said Vera Prebble. "I think those fellows may want to come out." Mr Schnellenhamer sighed. It had been worth trying, of course, but he had never really had much hope. "Gimme," he said resignedly. (The Rise of Minna Nordstrom, 1933)

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### HORTENSIA BURWASH

In every studio you will find at least one gifted artiste, the mere mention of whose name causes the strongest to tremble like aspens. At the Perfecto-Zizzbaum this position was held by Hortensia Burwash, the Empress of Molten passion... Every Hortensia Burwash picture grossed five million, but in the making of them she was extremely apt, if thwarted in some whim, to run amok, sparing neither age nor sex. She rushed into Snellenhamer's office with a sword. Her bad temper was caused by starvation. She had a weight clause in her contract and had been on a diet of only orange-juice for fourteen days. Wilmot Mulliner managed to calm her and helped her to get a new contract, without weight clause. (The Juice of an Orange, 1933)

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CYRIL WADDESLEY-DAVENPORT

Played gorilla at the Perfecto-Zizzbaum studio. Dressed as gorilla he was frightening. Montrose Mulliner met him and was surprised when the gorilla addressed him. "You speak very good English for a gorilla." Was all he could find to say. And indeed, the animal's diction had been

remarkable for its purity. The gorilla waved the compliment aside modestly. "Oh, well, Balliol, you know. Dear old Balliol. One never quite forgets the lessons one learned at Alma Mater, don't you think? You are not an Oxford man, by any chance?" "No." ... "Then you're not a real gorilla?" "No. no. Synthetic merely." ... "Pleased to meet you, Mr..." "Waddesley-Davenport. Cyril Waddesley-Davenport." (Monkey Business, 1932)

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### LITTLE JOHNNY BINGLEY

He was Perfecto-Zizzbaum's celebrated child star, for instance in the movie "Baby Boy". Wilmot Mulliner met him at a bar and said "Hullo". "Hullo," replied the child. "Listen," he went on, placing a cube of ice in his tumbler, "don't tell Schnellenhamer you saw me here. There's a morality clause in my contract." Johnny Bingley was in reality not a child but a midget, dressed as a child and acting a child. To keep Wilfred from revealing Johnny Bingley's secret he got an executive position in the company. (The Nodder, 1933)

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PAULINE PETITE

Freddie Threepwood and his father Lord Emsworth are talking: "Good heavens, guv'nor!" Freddie stared amazed. "You don't mean to sit there and tell me you've never heard of Pauline Petite! The movie star. Didn't you see 'Passion's slaves'?" "I did not." "Nor 'Silken Fetters'?" "Never." "Nor 'Purple passion'? Nor 'Bonds of gold'? Nor 'Seduction'? Great Scott, guv'nor, you haven't lived!" Freddie had a secret dinner with Pauline Petite to get her support for a scenario which he wanted to sell to a Film Company. (Lord Emsworth Acts for the Best, 1926)

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### LOTUS "LOTTIE" BLOSSOM

In private life, Lottie Blossom tended to substitute for wistfulness and pathos a sort of "Passed-For-Adults-Only" joviality which expressed itself outwardly in a brilliant and challenging smile, and inwardly and spiritually in her practise of keeping alligators in wickerwork baskets and asking unsuspecting strangers to lift the lid. But

principally, as we say, it was her hair that caused the eye of the beholder to swivel in its socket and his breath to come in irregular pants. Seeming on the screen to have merely a decent pallor, it revealed itself when she made a personal appearance a vivid and soul-shattering red. She looked as if she had been dipping her head in a sunset. Among her films were "Lovers in Brooklyn", "Storm over Flatbush" and "Bozo the Ape man." She said: "I think a girl's right to put a stick of dynamite underneath the loved one every now and then... This makes the third time I've done it. Broken the engagement, I mean. The first was forty-three seconds after I'd said I would marry him." (The Luck of the Bodkins, 1941)

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CORA STARR

Her real name was Cora "Corky" Potter-Pirbright. She flirted with Gussie, and enchanted him. He forgot Madeline Bassett, which made Bertie horrified. Corky had no deeper feelings for Gussie but for Sir Esmond Haddock. In the end she won Esmond's heart and Gussie was returned to Madeline. (The Mating Season, 1949)

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### ADELA SHANNON CORK

A silent movie star. "I've heard Bill speak of her. Bill didn't seem to like her much." ... "You aren't thinking of strolling in on Aunt Adela?" "I might." "I wouldn't." "She can't eat me." "I don't know so much. She's not a vegetarian." ... There was nothing of the poltroon about Adela Shannon Cork. Any one of a dozen silent picture directors could have told you that, and so could each of her three late husbands. (The Old Reliable, 1951)

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PHIPPS

He was an English butler, who served in Hollywood. Mr Glutz (Medulla-Oblongata-Glutz) was impressed by his butting and gave him a contract to play butler in coming movies. (The Old Reliable, 1951)

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