

**The Wodehouse Society
Gone to Texas
1999 Convention**



**Program, Guide
& Songbook**

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The Drone Rangers
Welcome You
to the 1999
Wodehouse Society
Gone to Texas
Convention!



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Gone to Texas!

Gone to Texas was chosen for the name of this convention as a nod toward Texas' interesting and colorful history. For several generations Texas constituted the frontier in the American southwest. It had cities and culture, but it also had open places without much of anything. It was a place to go to get away from a sheriff, a creditor, ...or perhaps an aunt.

It was common in those days for those accused of some slight misunderstanding of the fine points of the law, or folks who had maxed out their account with the local dry goods store in Tennessee or some other fine state to see Texas as just the place to be, and quick! The sheriff or court clerk figured that folks who seemed to have forgotten a court date or couldn't be found for a summons (or by the aforementioned aunt) must have "gone to Texas." It was common enough that it usually just got shortened to g t t.

Well, some of our early settlers did indeed come from such circumstances. Most were just glad to be here, figured out how to get along and enjoy the scenery and their neighbors – their descendants you see all around. A few of them never did quite get the knack of keeping within the law, but you probably won't see them around much. They either got sent to jail or to Congress; either way, we got rid of them.

So now, you've "Gone to Texas" and we're glad that you're here. It's an interesting place, with friendly people. We hope you have a good time at the convention, and invite you to stay a bit longer and look around.

Thanks to Drone Ranger Helen Murphy (of London) for suggesting Gone to Texas as the name of our convention. Sorry you couldn't make it, Helen.

— The Drone Rangers



THE WARWICK



Our pied-à-terre in Houston

The Warwick has been a Houston landmark since 1924. A major restoration program is now done, putting the hotel in its original grand form. It is located in the Museum District, right in the middle of our activities.

The people at the Warwick have been looking forward to our visit for almost two years, and are ready to make it everything it can be.

Thursday

For early arrivals the Warwick has many fine amenities. Several styles of dining are no further than the ground floor. The Warwick is in the Museum District, within a short distance of Hermann Park, the Rose Garden, the Zoo, Rice University, the Texas Medical Center and Montrose Boulevard, where many excellent restaurants are located. Nearby also is University Village (fine shopping and dining). And of course, museums: the Fine Arts, Modern Art and Natural History museums as well as the Museum of Medical History, the Children's Museum and the Holocaust Museum are all but a few blocks' distance.

Terry Kitchen will be performing at the No Tsu Oh Coffee House, 314 Main St., from 9–12 p.m.; a group of twsers will go see him Thursday night.

The Warwick will provide a courtesy car to take you to any of the above. The concierge will be glad to help you find a restaurant (or anything else.)

Friday

Cricket 10 'til 4 – **The Reginald Jeeves Memorial Match:** Cricket *à la Wodehouse* in the Hermann Park Rose Garden. You may play or watch. There will be catered food and beverages, including beer and wine coolers. Food and beverages are available by having paid in advance; beer and wine coolers are available by subscription membership. Just ask.

Special Field Trips:

9 a.m.: San Jacinto Battleground & Bayou Bend

10 a.m.: Space Center Houston & nasa

Games 10 'til 4 – Gawlf, played on the amazing Lowsley Links, Egg & Spoon Races, Pot the Top Hat with a Hazel Nut and Fozzle Ball. In the Presidential Suite.

Booksellers & Chapters Tables – 10 'til 4 – (Individuals may bring books to sell.) Wodehouse videos will be shown. In the Director's Room.

Sr. Bloodstain: 5 – 6 p.m. – **The Clients of Adrian Mulliner** will meet in the Terrace Café for a Senior Bloodstain (as they call a meeting of Wodehouse & Doyle fans). *You are invited to attend.*

Party 6 – 7:30 p.m. Cocktail Party & the **Good Gnus Challenge**. *Costumes are encouraged.* In the Murrat.

Play 8 p.m. Main Street Theater at Chelsea Market presents "Oh, Kay!" by P.G. Wodehouse (opening night!). Shuttle busses will be available for transport. It's a nice walk down Montrose if the weather's fine.

Notes on Saturday's activities:

All of the convention activities Saturday will take place on the top floor of the Warwick in the various rooms & suites.

Saturday — *Continental breakfast from 8 a.m.; Talks begin at 9:30*

- Tony Ring** Limp Lavender Leather
Elin Woodger Lady Constance's Lover: *Sex and Romance à la Wodehouse*
Michael Skupin *A Damsel in Distress: The 1937 Movie from a 1999 Perspective*

Coffee break: 15 minutes or so

- Michael Skupin** New music composed for selections from *The Parrot*
Norman Murphy Wodehouse Among the Animals

Break for lunch: 12 – 1:30 [newts practice – *private*]

- Business Meeting** Electing a new prez, this 'n' that
Chapter One *Have something to say*
John Fletcher The UK Website & the UK Wodehouse Quiz
Norman Murphy The Millenium Tour – London, July 2000
Tony Ring The New Anthology, cd & Lyrics Book

Winners of contest awards will be presented

- Dan Cohen** Wodehouse at the Bar, a lecture-demonstration of drinking in Wodehouse stories
Wendy Westfaul Medicinal Marvels in Wodehouse

Coffee break: 15 minutes or so

- NEWTS** Skit: "Bertie and the Bum Steer"

Wrap-up: 4–4:30 p.m.

Saturday Evening – Party Time

- Party:* 6:30 p.m. *Costumes are encouraged*
Grand Banquet: 8 'til 11 – Browsing & sluicing done right. Awards for various splendid feats, Blandings Castle West presents "The Story of William" *and* we have Bob Kuldell and his Windsong Band all evening, to boot!

Sunday Morning — Breakfast 8–10 a.m. in the Ballroom (ground floor)

Cricket: The Reginald Jeeves Memorial Match



The Rose Garden at Hermann Park

From 10ish a.m. – 3:30ish p.m. Friday

"...here, as in other parts of our Empire, it was our enlightened policy to prepare the inhabitants for self-government by teaching them to play cricket..."

— S. Caudwell

Cricket is not that well known in the us, although we owe it much. We owe it, for example, a bit of the credit for our winning independence from our British cousins. A long story, really, but the future George iii *wasn't* the future George iii until a cricket ball beaned his father (the heir to the throne), who didn't exactly recover. The new George iii had what was called a weak constitution – in the end the us constitution got written. There is more too it, but that's the bit where cricket comes in to play. Further info under Washington, George (*q.v.*).

This match commemorates Reginald Jeeves, a prominent cricketer from the *other* turn of the century, who lent his name to pgw's best-known character.

Ken (no nom de Plum yet) Rolston, Anne (Lady Constance) Bianchi, Shamim (Pongo) Mohamed, and Alek (Gussie) Burkh organized this year's rjmm; Tony (Bill, just Bill) Ring has consented to umpire it. We wish to proclaim our deeply felt gratitude to these good eggs for their efforts in making this unusual form of cricket available to us all.

The reason *this* cricket is unlike any other is that even if one knew not the first thing about cricket, had never played and didn't know a wicket from a wicker basket, one could still stroll out on the field and get after that ball. Further, even if one were a spavined octogenarian or a delicately nurtured female, this game would be still present an option for viewing or for joining in.

The rjmm will take place at the Rose Garden in Hermann Park. To reach the pitch, stroll by the Museum of Natural History, take a left through the Rose Garden. It's right by the first pagoda... or just take the '28 Essex Limo. Once there, you are encouraged to join in and play, or (having prepaid) elbow your way to the front of the line and put on the feedbag. Our caterer, Charles Earley, is Texas' version of Anatole – his foodstuffs are not to be missed.



Field Trips

Friday at 9 and 10 a.m. 'til mid-afternoon

For those adventurous souls who would rather take to the road than to the cricket field, there is a choice of two Field Trips. You need reservations. They are mostly filled up, but if interested, *ask*.

San Jacinto Field Trip
Begins at 9 a.m.



San Jacinto is the site of the battle which secured Texas independence during its struggle with Mexico. The museum at the base of the San Jacinto Monument has an auditorium where we will see a presentation about the early history of Texas and its revolution. We will be joined by a historian and descendant of a veteran of this Battle for some frontier education.

After lunch, we will head to Bayou Bend, the historic Hogg family mansion, now a museum of mid- to late-19th century Texas life.

Space Center Houston [nasa] Field Trip
Begins at 10 a.m.



Space Center Houston is part of an interpretative, educational and entertainment complex on the grounds of nasa's Johnson Space Center near Houston. This site is the location from which all manned space flights have been directed. Space Center Houston is designed for adults and children, with many types of exhibits, displays and presentations about manned space exploration. We will be joined by Dr. Patricia Robertson, an astronaut, for a cook's tour of the joint.



Sellers of Books

Presidential Suite, 12th floor

Do drop by and see what wares are to be had from sellers of books and things. The Mystery Bookshop will be with us, bringing a nice selection of pgw books. Rebecca Joiner, of Barnes & Noble Booksellers has provided us with a goodly number of *Jeeves Omnibuses* and *Golf Omnibuses* and newly minted tapes for purchase. In addition, we will have available for sale items kindly donated by Dan Garrison from the estate of the late Jimmy Heinemann.



Good Gnus Competition

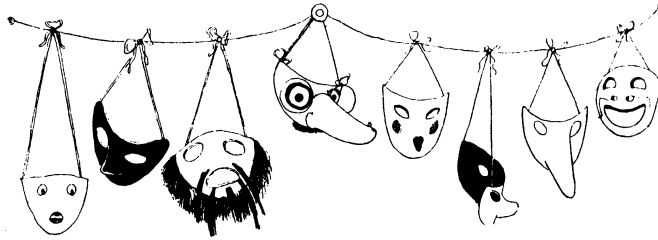
It all began... we can't quite remember where or when, but it started when pgw's "Good Gnus" (from *The Parrot*, a collection of his verse) was set to a tune (a rondo, no less) by the Drone Rangers' own Michael Skupin, a composer, director, polyglot and all that.

We soon discovered that it was receiving the treatment from our Swedish tws cousin, Eyvind Hallnäs (who probably started first, anyway). Mr Hallnäs can't make it to our convention, but Sven Sahlin (to the rescue!) is taking it on the road with his Swedish Voodhaus Mixed Choir, to make sure we don't miss a beat. The svmc will lead it all off. (Okay, okay, the svmc is just Sven; the Drone Rangers will sing along to keep him company and maybe throw off his pitch).

The Drone Rangers will then be singing out their take on "Good Gnus," followed by the newts' hearty and original effort.

To top it all off, tws all-rounder Neil Midkiff had thrown his baton in the ring: "Good Gnus" as theme and variations of well known and much lifted works. The crowd is sure to go wild.

Later, Maestro Skupin has a quiver full of other *Parrot* pieces, one soon to sweep the cricket world, another a tango; but I digress. *Let the competition begin!*



Oh, Kay!

Main Street Theater at Chelsea Street Market
Friday at 8:00p.m.

We talked the Main Street Theater at Chelsea Market into putting on pgw's "Oh, Kay!" – which was easily done after their success last year with pgw's "Leave it to Jane."

"Oh, Kay!" is a spiffy play by Wodehouse, Bolton & the Gershwins. It opened in New York City November 8th 1926 and ran for 256 performances, then went to London where it opened at His Majesty's Theatre September 21, 1927 for 214 performances. It then had a short run in London at the Century Theater January 2, 1927. In April, 1960 it played in New York City at the East 74th Street Theatre for 89 performances.

"Oh, Kay," was adapted to the silver screen in August, 1928 (7 reels), silent. Stars: Colleen Moore and Lawrence Gray.

And now, here for you in Houston, at the turn of the century...

Senior Bloodstain

The Terrace (off the main lobby)
5 – 6 p.m. Friday



The Clients of Adrian Mulliner, a group of disparate Sherlockian Wodehousians and Wodehousian Sherlockians, and all interested parties will have a get-together, which they call by the quaint, if not descriptive, name of a Senior Bloodstain. *The game is afoot!*



The Games

Presidential Suite from 10ish to 3:30ish

The Coming of Gowlf game, played on the newly designed Lowsley Links, the Pot the Top Hat with a Slingshot and the Egg-and-Spoon Races! Our games impresario, Brad Frank will guide you through the intricacies of these games, without which a pgw convention just would not be.

Eateries

Our hosts, the Warwick, have all the dining you might need on the ground floor of this, our lovely *pied-à-terre*. For the more adventurous, a walk across the street to the Museum of Fine Arts will get you to the bistro inside – Café Express – and some pretty artsy environs. In the other direction is the Museum of Natural History, which has the nicest McDonalds's in town, and a captive Starbucks to boot, if the dinosaurs haven't gotten to it first. And, if your stay permits, check out the imax. For further info, ask the concierge.

If you would venture down Montrose Boulevard (the street on the far side of the Museum of Fine Arts) you will find a long series of eateries on either side of the street, starting in about ½ mile (just before the overpass) where Main Street Theater at Chelsea Market is (and where we go to see "Oh, Kay!"). *Bon appétit!*

Museums & Such

We're in the Museum District, and they're thick as, well... museums! From the Warwick, one could hardly throw a cricket ball without hitting a museum – but best to visit them instead. Most of the ten museums and museumish spots are within a 5–10 minutes walk; a couple are over a mile away.

A Map of the Museum District is with your material. It is specially annotated with notes for this convention. Let it be your guide to theater, dining, arts and fun in the area.



Breadiquette

"To be or not to be" is nothing compared to "To throw or not to throw." Bread just makes your fingers itchy, doesn't it? Want to give ol' whatshisname a bonk with a piece of bread? Nature usually wins these arguments, and so we have a bread throwing and a non-bread throwing section at Saturday night's banquet. Choose your side, and go to (or forgo) it.



The Drone Rangers

The Drone Rangers, the Texas Chapter of tws (and your humble hosts for this convention), was organized in 1993. We gather every other month at the Barnes & Noble in Sakowitz Center to celebrate the pleasure found in each other's company and recount with enthusiastic lips the chosen scrap of laughter gleaned from our latest reading of Plum's creations. So many great men and women have discovered laughter by reading Wodehouse, that we feel we laugh on the shoulders of giants.

We may be taken for mere pleasure seekers, but our purpose is noble. It is the best within a person that responds to innocent humor, therefore, the leaves of pgw's books are ennobling and we, improved by sharing his stories with each other.

The Drone Rangers owe a debt of gratitude to Rebecca Joiner, the b&n manager who has made this meeting place available to us. If great kings add a pearl to their crown when they encourage letters, then Rebecca and b&n are also worthy of pearls (not that we have them to give, alas) for continuing to extend hospitality to us over the years.

Between these meetings, we have an evening out at a local eatery. This is a very popular thing to do with the d-r's and we have become famous among the restaurants of Houston for our elegant deportment, our witty manner and our affable apologies as we leave.

Beside all this fun, we publish DroneStar, our official journal. Many of our articles have been republished in other Wodehousian journals far and wide. But did you know about our field trips?

Top of the list is the *Great 1996 London & Thereabouts Pilgrimage*, a jaunt a couple of dozen strong who had the pleasure of enjoying the hospitality of Sir Edward Cazalet, pgw's grandson, at Shaw Farm. The browsing and sluicing was outstanding, and the tour of the archives alone was worth the ticket. But wait, there's more! Those scholars among us know that the best collection of pgw manuscripts outside of the uk is in... *Texas*. Yes, it is a special collection the Library of The University of Texas at Austin, and the d-r's made arrangements with the curators to spend a long day surveying and studying the trove there. Of course, we make regular theater soirées here and there, and pursue our individual pgw scholarship.

No matter where you slice a d-r you will find a devotion to laughter, a virtuous if somewhat mischievous nature, and a good will that distinguishes us above other Texans. A d-r is a cheery, straightforward person ready with a pat on the back or a gin and tonic, or both, as needed. In brief, a D-Ranger combines high intellectual and emotional excellence with a lambent and sublimated embolism more thrilling than a painted alligator.*

Fireworks!

We have arranged for the largest combined use of music, fireworks, lasers and lighting ever held anywhere in the world to be set off in the final hour of our Banquet. Be assured that your registration dollar has *never* gone further. We are able to do this by generous underwriting from local corporations, picking up *all* of the multi-million dollar budget. It starts about 10:30 p.m., and can be viewed from the north-facing windows.

* We don't know what that last phrase means, either. We lifted it because, well, because we liked it and hope you'll like it too.

Who's Who and Thank-You's

Who's Who [our prez and veep]

Dan Garrison began reading Wodehouse in his 40s while recovering from an aggravated hangover. Nothing else would do. Following an argument with a colleague at Northwestern about names in Wodehouse, he began work on what became the first edition of *Who's Who in Wodehouse*, released on the opening day of the Society's San Francisco meeting, August 15, 1987. A second edition, including characters in the uncollected stories, was published by International Polygonics in 1989. Dan organized the 1997 tws meeting in Chicago and served as president of tws from 1997 to 1999.

Elin Woodger is a freelance writer and editor whose introduction to the works of Wodehouse took place very early in life – she believes, in fact, that she was still in the womb at the time. Having grown up prattling the Master's words at the drop of a hat, she proceeded to search for like-minded individuals who would not be bored by unabated Wodehousian quotes, and found them (to her everlasting delight) in The Wodehouse Society. She quickly pushed her way through the ranks, organizing the 1995 Boston convention with her comrades in the New England Wodehouse Thingummy Society [newts], and, in 1996 becoming co-editor of Plum Lines. For the past two years she has also served as tws vice president and rumor has it that thanks to lax electoral procedures she will become the next president, in which post she hopes to live up to the standards set by distinguished presidents past.

Thank You's

This convention was planned almost two years ago, and has gone smoothly only because of the vast amount of help we have had from many people. We'll cite as many as we can and hope that the others don't feel left out just because we were addled when we made the list.

Convention Planning Committee:

Sylvia Bernicchi	Anne Bianchi	Jane Cherry
Brad Frank	John Hannah	Toni & Bill Rudersdorf

Good Gnus Competition

Swedish Voodhouse Mixed Choir

Director: Sven Sahlin

Chorus: Sven Sahlin

Soloists: Sven Sahlin [Note: It's a somewhat smallish choir, so Drone Rangers will be joining in. Maybe Sven won't notice.]

Drone Rangers Singers

Director: Michael Skupin

Chorus:

Sylvia Bernicchi	Jane Cherry	Thomas Glidden
Becky Momburg	Karl Schleicher	Marjorie Thompson
Cary Tynan		

Soloists:

Toni Rudersdorf	Karl Schleicher
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Instrumentalists:

Toni Rudersdorf	Michael Skupin	Elizabeth Wells
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The NEWTS

They're from Boston & thereabouts, you know, and they've been conspiring for this moment for the longest time. Should be good.

From California, *something completely different:*

Neil Midkiff has been working on a syncretic composition, drawing on the many sources well known to music borrowers.

Logo Design

Katie Wells – the graphic artist without whom our logo would still be a mere idea.

Cricket

Anne (Lady Constance Keeble) Bianchi – *organizer*

Ken Rolston and the Houston Cricket League – *for the loan of all that equipment!*

Shamim (Pongo) Mohamed – *for showing us how to hold the bat*

Alek (Gussie) Burkh – *for showing us how to run and fall on the ball*

Special thanks to Tony (Bill, just Bill) Ring – *the Umpire!*

Wodehouse Videos

Brad Frank – most of the videos are from his astounding collection.

Cybernautics

Stu Shiffman – our official webmaster – fluent in English *and* html :-]

Games

Brad Frank and John Lowsley are builders, designers, organizers and operators of Gowlf, &c., better known to all as the Lowsley Links. Brad is also the designer of the Drone Ranger's Logo's Boots.

Colleen O'Brien – Brad's helper

Bill Brenza – Colleen's helper

Registration

Jane Cherry

Anne Cotton

Gloria Robertson

Marjorie Thompson

Shiree Lee Willson

Drivers to San Jacinto and nasa:

Bill Rudersdorf

Lee Willson

Special Mention

Charles Early, *a.k.a. Anatole*, our caterer & his sidekick James Willson

Nick Polydoros, caricature artist

A certain 1928 Essex, cricket transport extraordinaire

Special Thanks

Special thanks for Dr. Patty Robertson, for offering her valuable time from a hectic schedule to help share astronomical knowledge.

And special thanks to Beverly Maurice for suggesting our historian/reenactor at San Jacinto; thanks also for finding Bob Kulson's Big Band for the Saturday Banquet.

The Wodehouse Society
Gone to Texas
1999 Convention

Songbook

Good Gnus – *A Vignette in Verse*

By Charlotte Mulliner

When cares attack and life seems black,
How sweet it is to pot a yak,
Or puncture hares and grizzly bears,
And others I could mention:
But in my Animals 'Who's Who'
No name stands higher than the Gnu;
And each new gnu that comes in view
Receives my prompt attention.

When Afric's sun is sinking low,
And shadows wander to and fro,
And everywhere there's in the air
A hush that's deep and solemn;
Then is the time good men and true
With View Halloo pursue the gnu:
(The safest spot to put your shot
Is through the spinal column.)

To take the creature by surprise
We must adopt some rude disguise,
Although deceit is never sweet,
And falsehoods don't attract us:
So, as with gun in hand you wait,
Remember to impersonate
A tuft of grass, a mountain-pass,
A kopje or a cactus.

A brief suspense, and then at last
The waiting's o'er, the vigil past:
A careful aim. A spurt of flame.
It's done. You've pulled the trigger,
And one more gnu, so fair and frail,
Has handed in its dinner-pail:
(The females all are rather small,
The males are somewhat bigger).

From *Mr. Mulliner Speaking*, "Unpleasantness at Bludleigh Court" (1929). Charlotte Mulliner, ensourceled by the safari atmosphere of Bludleigh Court, writes the above verse and finds to her great surprise that the *Animal-Lover's Gazette* rejects it. She later recovers her finer sentiments.

for Toni Rudersdorf
 with admiration and affection
The Ballade of August

P. G. Wodehouse (1905)

Michael Skupin (1998)

The asphalt bubbles in the sun, Our canine pets become in -
 sane, Stout gen - tle - men re - fuse to run, E - ven to catch the ear - ly
 train: There seems some hitch in - side my brain Some sub - tle flaw, I can't tell
 what. It's use - less try - ing to ex - plain; I on - ly know I'm ve - ry hot.

The streets I rigorously shun,
 There's not a sign of cooling rain;
 Within my club, when work is done,
 A tankard, iced, I slowly drain,
 Then send it to be filled again:
 It's dangerous to drink a lot,
 MDs are careful to explain –
I only know I'm very hot.

An infant poisoned by a bun?
 Should Board School masters use the cane?
 How much does radium cost a ton?
 Well-know bull-fighter killed in Spain?
 The Silly Season's come, it's plain;
 To me it matters not a jot,
 The only knowledge I retain
 Is this – *I know I'm very hot.*

I scan the papers one by one,
 And whisper words that are profane;
 I'm tired before I've well begun,
 It's much too warm for such a strain:
 What's this? A speech by Chamberlain?
 Three hundred Warsaw workmen shot?
 The Russian army crushed again?
I only know I'm very hot.

for Norman Murphy
qui studia nostra illuminavit

The Umpire

P. G. Wodehouse (1905)

Michael Skupin (1998)

I'm mon-arch of all I sur - vey; There is-n't a rul-er to-

day, Not a Sul-tan or Tsar of a coun - try a-far, Who can boast of a sim-i-lar

sway. There's al-ways a some-thing that checks them No mat-ter how great they may

be. They've got ar-mies and such, But their pow-er's not much if you

rit. *a tempo*

on - ly com-pare 'em with me. For I'm the in fal - li - ble

um - pire, The strict, in-dis-pen-sa-ble um - pire. And you're got to a-bide by

Andante

what I de-cide; It is-n't a mat-ter for doubt. If you're peer or you're pea-sant, You've



For I'm the infallible umpire,
 The strict, indispensable umpire.
 And you've got to abide
 By what I decide;
 It isn't a matter of doubt.
 If you're peer or you're peasant,
 You've got to look pleasant
 And go when I tell you you're out!
 Out!
 How's that? Run along, sir, you're out.

There once was a time when I played;
 But those days won't return, I'm afraid,
 For alas, I must own
 That I reached eighteen stone
 And a quarter when last I was weighed.
 I was once good at saving the single,
 My limbs were so lissom and free,
 But when bulkiness came
 I abandoned the game
 As little too active for me.

The swell from the swaggerest club,
 The 'rabbit', who's there as a sub.,
 The veteran grey
 (Who was good in his day),
 The wholly incompetent cub,
 The man who thinks cricket a business,
 And the fellow who thinks it a spree,
 I handle the lot,
 And I show 'em what's what;
 They all knuckle under to me.

And now I am simply the umpire,
 The massive and dignified umpire,
 My eyes are as keen
 As they ever have been,
 For your sight doesn't fail though you're stout.
 If you're leg before wicket,
 Or caught when you snick it,
 I see it, and tell you you're out.
 Out!
 How's that? Off you go, sir, you're out!

For I'm the inflexible umpire,
 The stern, incorruptible umpire;
 I add to the woes
 Of the bowler who throws,
 When 'No ball!' I incessantly shout.
 And batsmen pursue me
 With looks that are gloomy,
 When I beg to inform 'em they're out.
 Out!
 How's that? Run along, sir, you're out.

The Cricketer in Winter

P. G. Wodehouse (1903)

Michael Skupin (1999)

1
The days are grow - ing short and cold; Ap -

4
proach - es Au-tumn ay and chill Yule: The lat - est bowl - er now has

7
bowled his lat - est de - vas - tat - ing pil - ule. Gone are the

10
creas - es gone the 'pegs'; The bun - gling fields - man now no

13
more errs By let - ting balls go through his legs And

16
giv - ing bats - men need - less four - ers. Things of the past are drive and cut, With

22
which erst - while we would as - tound men. The gay pa - vil - lion's

27
doors are shut; The turf is giv - en up to grounds - men.



Now, as incessantly it pours,
 And each succeeding day seems bleaker,
 The cricketer remains indoors,
 And quaffs mayhap the warming beaker.
 Without, the scrummage heaves and slips;
 Not his to play the muddied oaf. A
 Well-seasoned pip between his lips,
 He reads his *Wisden* on the sofa.

Or, if in vein for gentle toil,
 Before he seeks a well-earned pillow,
 He takes a flask of linseed oil
 And tends his much-enduring willow,
 Feeling the while, what time he drops
 The luscious fluid by degrees on,
 Given half-volleys and long-hops,
 How nobly it will drive next season!

Then to his couch, to dream till day
 Of fifties when the pitch was sticky,
 Of bowling crisply 'put away',
 Though it was manifestly tricky,
 Of umpires, confident appeals,
 Hot shots at point, mid-off, and cover,
 Of cricket-lunches (perfect meals!): –
 Such dreams attend the cricket-lover.

And, though the streets be deep in snow,
 Though slippery pavements make him stumble,
 Though rain descends, though blizzards blow,
 It matters not: he scorns to grumble.
 What if it lightens, thunders, hails,
 And common men grow daily glummer,
 In him contentment never fails;
 To such a man it's always Summer.

The Rhyme of the Sitter-Out

P. G. Wodehouse (1903)

Michael Skupin (1998)

1
Joan, with an air of set-tled gloom Up-on my mo-bile face,

5
I eye you dan-cing round the room, A mi-ra-cle of grace.

9
I note your part-ner smile with glee, While whirl-ing you a-bout.

13
A-las, such joys are not for me, For I'm a sit-ter - out.

17
I might have learned in days gone by

21
The waltz its grace-ful swing, Had I con-sent-ed but to

25
try. But did I? No such thing. Ex-tra-neous aid, though

29
kind - ly lent, Con-sis-tent-ly I'd flout, And mark the dread-ful

33
pun - ish - ment, I'm now a sit - ter out.

The scales have fallen from my eyes,
 I see the vivid truth;
 Fully at last I realize
 The folly of my youth.
 I might have learned when young and slim,
 And now I'm old and stout,
 I'm only fit in wind and limb
 To be a sitter-out.

To watch my fellow-men and feel
 That they're enjoying life
 Should be enough the wound to heal
 And blunt Remorse's knife.
 I ought to be content, I know;
 I should be soothed, no doubt;
 But still at times one finds it slow
 To be a sitter-out.

Oh, spare, I beg, a single glance,
 Devotion's only fee;
 Eschew for once the mazy dance,
 And come and talk to me.
 Ah, shun me not; turn not away
 With irritated pout,
 But comfort for a space, I pray,
 A luckless sitter-out.

Whatever subject's to your mind
 I'll probe it with a will;
 Yea, even, if you feel inclined,
 Talk Education Bill.
 I'll range from China to Peru,
 I'll skim from golf to gout;
 My brain shall be ransacked for you
 When we are sitting-out.

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