

Wodehouse-isms and Snippets

by Margaret Rogers

Dedications:

“To my daughter Leonora, without whose never failing sympathy and encouragement this book would have been finished in half the time.”

To dear Buddy (Baldwin King-Hall, Headmaster of Emsworth School)

“We have been friends for 18 years. A considerable proportion of my books were written under your hospitable roof. What will be the verdict of Posterity on that? The fact is, I have become rather superstitious about dedications. No sooner do you label a book with the legend: TO MY BEST FRIEND than X cuts you in Piccadilly, or you bring a lawsuit against him. There is a fatality about it. However, I can't imagine anyone quarrelling with you, and I am getting more attractive all the time, so let's take a chance.”

Writing about himself working for the Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank:

“I was just a plain dumb brick. I proved to be the most inefficient clerk whose trouser seat ever polished the surface of a high stool. I was all right as long as they kept me in the postal department, where I had nothing to do but stamp and post letters, a task for which my abilities well fitted me, but when they took me out of there and put me into Fixed Deposits, the whisper went round Lombard Street, ‘Wodehouse is at a loss. He cannot cope’. If there was a moment in the course of my banking career where I had the foggiest notion of what it was all about I am unable to recall it. From Fixed Deposits I drifted to Inward Bills – no use asking me what Inward Bills are, I never found out – and then to Outward Bills and to Cash, always with a weak apologetic smile on my face and hoping that suavity of manner would see me through ...”