

**Valuable Book Group, LLC**  
**Specialists in Rare and Antiquarian Golf Books**  
**Newsletter and Book Review for the Serious Collector**

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## **World Renowned Writers on Golf – P.G. Wodehouse First Editions**

When a household name takes up golf it is worth noticing. Among the more famous authors to write about golf, three stand out: Agatha Christie, P.G. Wodehouse and Ian Fleming. This month we offer three articles, one covering each of these famous authors. Before we proceed let us explain in more detail a book term you may be unfamiliar with called a *point*. A point is any peculiarity in a book whose presence in or absence from a particular copy serves to distinguish it from other copies not so marked.<sup>i</sup> A point is a useful tool used to distinguish one edition from another, most often to properly identify a true first edition, first printing of book. While those that collect golf books are familiar with points, those that collect these more popular authors have taken the art of point identification to a new level. As you will see, since these books are so popular and collectible, great pains have been taken by collectors and dealers over the years to properly distinguish editions and identify the first. The most collectible of these volumes is the first edition, first printing. Since the value of such volumes are so high, it is no wonder so much attention is paid to make sure it is a true first.

### **P.G. Wodehouse**

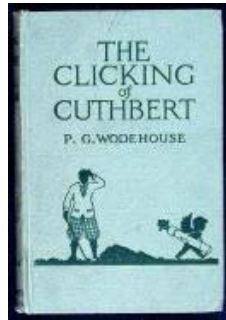
“Golf...is the infallible test. The man who can go into a patch of rough alone, with the knowledge that only God is watching him, and play his ball where it lies, is the man who will serve you faithfully and well.” --- P.G. Wodehouse

P.G. Wodehouse (Sir Pelham Grenville Wodehouse) was most famous for his books containing the character “Jeeves.” His most famous golfing title, *The Clicking of Cuthbert* is a collection of 10 golf stories narrated by The Oldest Member. The title story features the golfing character of Cuthbert Banks playing at the Wood Hills links. Wodehouse’s prose has a well deserved reputation for excellence, especially his wit. Wodehouse was a golfer himself, with a handicap reportedly never below the mid-teens.<sup>ii</sup> He played golf around the world and was a member of The Addington in England, Great Neck on Long Island in New York and Le Touquet in France.<sup>iii</sup>

*The Clicking of Cuthbert* was published as a first edition in 1922 by Herbert Jenkins, London and is 256 pages. The cover is green pebbled cloth lettered and decorated in dark green. To identify the first edition, first printing, the following points should be met:<sup>iv</sup>

- The title date should be “MCMXXII”
- The publisher is Herbert Jenkins, not A.L. Burt
- The publisher's monogram and '-A-' appear on the copyright page (2nd printing lacks the monogram)

- The list of titles on the verso of the half-title pages must be eight in number, the last being *The Girl on the Boat*
- Dust jacket is for the first edition, first printing if the book list on the back flap shows eight books, starting with 'Treve' and ending with 'Wife of the Centaur'. Front flap advertisement is for Herbert Jenkins Wireless.
- The dust jacket price is 3/6 net (3 shillings, 6 pence)



*The Clicking of Cuthbert* was published in the United States as *Golf Without Tears* in 1924 by George H. Doran. This edition is 330 pages and was done in green cloth and dark green lettering. To identify the first edition of this volume, the copyright page should be dated “1919,1920,1921,1922,1924” and the publisher’s monogram should appear beneath the copyright notice. The dust jacket should have a price of \$2.50. The book is slightly different from *The Clicking of Cuthbert*; basically it is Americanized with the names of golfers, places and shops altered in some of the stories.

Those editions published by A.L. Burt are reprint editions although they are printed with a publication date of 1924. A.L. Burt was a publisher that specialized in reprints. They simply reprinted books in their entirety, without printing a new date so they are easy to confuse with the first editions. Also, when you see an item for sale with the description “fdj” it stands for facsimile dust jacket and it indicates a later re-print dust jacket and not an original.

### **The Heart of a Goof**

*The Heart of a Goof*, published in 1926 by Herbert Jenkins, London was also done in green cloth with black lettering and a golfing scene. It contains 314 pages. To identify the first edition, the title page date should be MCMXXVI and there should be 14 titles listed on the verso of the half-title page, the last being *The Coming of Bill*. The dust jacket price should be 7/6. The book is Wodehouse’s second collection of short stories narrated by The Oldest Member.

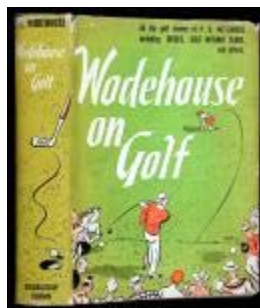
The American edition of *The Heart of a Goof* was published as *Divots*, published by George H. Doran in 1927, is 316 pages, printed in orange pictorial cloth with black lettering. It contains identical content as the British edition. To identify a first edition the following points should be noted:

- Copyright dates: 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, & 1927
- The publisher's colophon (Doran) at the center of the copyright page.
- "Divots --B-- Printed in the United States of America" should be present
- Dust jacket priced at \$2.50

The book was also reprinted by A.L. Burt showing a date of 1927 and is also 316 pages. A Canadian edition was also produced by McClelland & Steward, published in Toronto. This version of the book is a reprint from the August, 1927 second printing and was done with green linen pictorial cloth with black and is 314 pages.

### Other Wodehouse Golf Titles

*Wodehouse on Golf* was published in 1940 by Doubleday Doran & Co. Unusual for a Wodehouse title, this book was published only in the United States. It is 844 pages and is green cloth with a vignette on the spine and cover. The jacket is illustrated below. This collection includes the entire contents of *Golf Without Tears*, *Divots* and three additional stories. As with all Wodehouse titles, many reprints were done in subsequent years.



Two compendium volumes capture Wodehouse golf stories: *The Golf Omnibus*, first published in 1973 and; *Fore! The Best of Wodehouse on Golf*, published in 1983. Many Wodehouse titles were compilations of various short stories. The titles listed here contain at least one story related to golf with the first edition date in parenthesis: *Love Among the Chickens* (1906); *The Man Upstairs* (1914); *Mr. Mulliner Speaking* (1927); *Doctor Sally* (1932); *Young Men in Spats* (1936); *The Crime Wave at Blandings* (1937); *Week-End Wodehouse* (1939); *Eggs, Beans and Crumpets* (1940 US edition); *Nothing Serious* (1950); *A Few Quick Ones* (1959); and *Plum Pie* (1966).

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<sup>i</sup> From John Carter. *ABC for Book Collectors*

<sup>ii</sup> The Journal of The PG Wodehouse Society (UK), October 1999

<sup>iii</sup> Tony Ring, Editor, Journal of P.G. Wodehouse Society (U.K.)

<sup>iv</sup> Portions from David A. Jasen, *A Bibliography and Readers Guide to the First Editions of P.G. Wodehouse*, 1970 and part excerpted from [pgwodehousebooks.com](http://pgwodehousebooks.com).