



## Jennings and Darbshire

*Anthony Buckeridge*

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## **Jennings and Darbshire** Anthony Buckeridge

Prehistoric clodpoll! 'What did you want to go and make a frantic bish like that for' Rule number nine million and forty-seven: Any boy beetling into class with twelve slippery raw fish shall hereby be liable to be detained during Mr Wilkins' pleasure.? Jennings turns journalist when he receives a printing kit for his birthday, and dubs himself Editor of the Form Three Times. Enlisting faithful Darbi as his assistant hack, Jennings sets off to the cove, where a French fishing vessel is moored, for their first story. But when their dreadful French ends in the unwelcome gift of a parcel of raw fish, the worse place they could hide it is in Mr Wilkins chimney! Frantic hoo-hah! Teething troubles fail to deter the tenacious Jennings, and his next scoop involves digging into Mr Wilkins past – what will he uncover this time? Super-wacko wheeze!

## **Jennings and Darbshire Details**

Date : Published January 12th 2008 by House of Stratus (first published 1952)

ISBN : 9780755101535

Author : Anthony Buckeridge

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## From Reader Review Jennings and Darbshire for online ebook

### A.E. Shaw says

Part of revisiting the books I loved when I was young. I'm so pleased to find I still enjoy these boys' boarding school stories so much. The daftness, the fun, the simultaneously archaic and imaginative language...and they still make me laugh. I'm glad I've the whole series to reread.

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### Melusine Parry says

I think this is probably the most wizard of the series, with the completely surrealistic fish in the chimney episode.

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### Jake Collins says

This is certainly one of the most consistently funny Jennings books, with every story arc providing laughs and intrigue.

Highlight: Mr Wilkins and his sister exchange information with Jennings and Darbshire.

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### David Evans says

Try printing a letter to your aunt, thanking her for the printing press she gave you for your 11th birthday and requesting some replacement letter 'e's that have been lost without recourse to the letter 'e'. Then go fishing down a chimney.

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### Roberta says

Lots of chuckles when reading whole passages out loud to my husband even though I never attended an all-boy British boarding school and neither did he. I imagine that this might have been the result if P. G. Wodehouse had written books using children as characters instead of writing about Jeeves and Wooster.

I was told that I should have read #1 in the series Jennings Goes To School first and I certainly intend to go back and read it now.

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### Youssef Alaoui says

Pretty exquisite as a first read. Hadchi zine, l'khir o l'baraka !

Plutôt destiné pour les enfants, n'empêche, il est plutôt correct et so british.

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## **Jen Pritchard says**

Lots of laugh out loud moments abound - my favourite being when Jennings and Darbshire stealthily join their own search party.

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## **David Rain says**

There was a time (I was aged eight or nine) when nothing was more important to me than the Jennings books. Back then I used to get up at five o'clock in the morning in order to read as much Jennings as possible before breakfast, and I still have tremendous affection for Anthony Buckeridge's charming, hilarious chronicles of his eleven-year old hero and his absurd misadventures at Linbury Court Preparatory School. If I choose Jennings and Darbshire (Darbshire being Jennings' bespectacled sidekick) as my particular favourite, there's a reason. This is the one in which Aunt Angela sends Jennings "The Ideal Junior Printing Outfit" for his birthday, and Jennings starts his own newspaper, the "Form Three Times." To say that one was inspired in one's literary career by the barely-literate Jennings may be an odd claim, but it was because of this book that I started the first of a succession of school newspapers of my own.

Jennings, who originated on the BBC radio "Children's Hour" in 1948, before graduating to book form in 1950, had a tremendous run in the fifties and sixties. By the seventies his days were numbered, and the last books are, alas, lamentable in their attempts at modernity (notably Jennings at Large, in which eccentric Aunt Angela has been transformed into a social worker, living in a tower block in south London, and Jennings spends much of the book not only away from school but in the company of a girl). The Jennings books, at their best, are a species of pastoral, evoking a very English, idealised world of boyhood innocence. What was Buckeridge to do next? Send Jennings to a comprehensive school? Jennings couldn't keep up with the times, and Collins, the original publishers, dropped the series in the late seventies. Towards the end of Buckeridge's life there was a revival, but it's difficult to feel happy about the unattractive latterday paperbacks with their ugly covers, bland illustrations, and, worst of all, crudely "modernised" texts. For the real Jennings experience, seek out the old Collins hardbacks, preferably with dustjackets intact.

(In case the reference to modernised texts sets off alarm bells in some, let me explain. There is no racism or overt snobbery in the Jennings books. Buckeridge, who seems to have been remarkably liberal for a children's writer, is a world away from Blyton or Captain W. E. Johns; there's no need for the silent surgery I have seen in one 1912 children's classic in which a black horse that once had a six-letter name starting with "N" has now been renamed "Ebony." In Jennings, it's a case of purportedly dated elements being removed, such as references to old British currency, and up-to-date references substituted; evidently, modern children could not be expected to tolerate the elitist implications of the term "Preparatory School," so the boys now just go to "Linbury Court School." As a child, I found the whole idea of a "Preparatory School" quite magical, even though I was never going to get any closer to one in real life than Mount Gambier East Primary.)

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## **K.V. Johansen says**

Long before I discovered Wodehouse, there was Buckeridge. This is my favourite of all the Jennings books. (My sister pinched my copy for the nephews, grr, so I had to buy one of the annoying "modernized" reprints with Binns minor and Bromwich major having lost their cognomens, all the shillings changed to pounds, and for some particularly peculiar reason, the doughnuts in the stuck-in-the-teashop chapter changed to flapjacks. (Mind you, it did make me look up an English flapjack recipe and make some, but how could even a ten-year-old boy eat a plate of super-heavy solid-rolled-oat-and-sugar squares?)) The fish up the chimney was, at that point in my life, the funniest thing I had ever read, and I still can't read it without laughing. The long chain of events that leads to the fish up the chimney begins with Aunt Angela sending Jennings a printing kit; each step between that and the fish in the chimney is, to the boys, utterly obvious and logical. Brilliant.

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