

THE GOON SHOW:  
THE KIPPERED HERRING GANG

First broadcast on February 2, 1954; broadcast as a vintage show on December 1, 1957. Script by Spike Milligan and Eric Sykes. Produced by Roy Speer. Announced by Wallace Greenslade. Orchestra conducted by Wally Stott. Transcribed by Christopher Thomas, corrections by Kurt Adkins and Peter Olausson.

Greenslade:

The BBC presents Vintage Goons. Another in the series of programmes first broadcast to British listeners in 1954.

Orchestra:

*[Drum roll]*

Seagoon:

Somewhere between the Andes Mountains and Berlin is a place called London!

Bloodnok:

And it's hell there!

Orchestra:

*[Comic fanfare]*

Greenslade:

That brief story was for those who've other things to do. Now our topic for tonight.

Sellers:

Crime does not pay.

Seagoon:

You're right, folks, crime does not pay. Just look at the lousy wages politicians get.

Sellers:

But crime is on the increase, listen to these headlines: "Gang robs lumberjack's house and escapes with valuable fur tree. Worse still, gang robs prime minister's house and escapes with pawn tickets and second hand dress suit."

Greenslade:

But of all these gangs, one has baffled the police for nearly four hundred years, here then, is specially broadcast from the top of a bus is...

Seagoon:

The Kippered Herring Gang!

Orchestra:

*[Dramatic chord]*

Greenslade:

Now, The Kippered Herring Gang, Part Two.

Sellers:

This gang were mean men. They would stop at nothing, not even a hotel. Gangsters who when cornered, went underground, one of London's best means of transport.

Greenslade:

Into this complex world of crime, of move, and counter move, stepped a man of great ingenuity, daring, resource, and brains.

Eccles:

Ain't me folks.

Seagoon:

No, it was me folks. Hello folks! Heeeelloooooo foLLLLkkkss! It's me! the frenzied Neddy Seagoon folks. The world's greatest authority on Mrs. Neddy Seagoon. (Mind you can never be sure!) At the time of the Dreaded Kipper Gang crimes folks, I was the world's highest paid idiot. When this became known, I was asked to join the Big Five, of whom, only seven was still alive. It was at Skitland Yard...

Grams:

*[Bagpipes being speeded up]*

Bloodnok:

...Ahhhh, ahhhh, ooohh that's, that's enough lads, that's enough, ooohh, the wind in the pipes, ooohh dear. Now. Ahh, you Henry Hall laughers you... Last week... Last week this gang robbed the ra-ha-lahum.

Secombe:

*[Hysterical laugh]*

Bloodnok:

Last week this gang robbed the Duke of Accrington's mansion, stole the night's takings and left behind... Guess what?

Seagoon:

What?

Bloodnok:

Thank you. They left behind, a kippered herring!

Omnes:

*["No!" -- various moans of disbelief]*

Bloodnok:

The week before, they robbed the Bank of England, every safe left empty. Exactly as they found them. Once again they left behind... A kippered herring!

Omnes:

*["No!" -- more disbelief moanings]*

Bloodnok:

May well muttery the laugh murmurs. But this gang is a menace I tell you.

Seagoon:

I trust Inspector Bloodnok, you have retained these two kippered herrings?

Bloodnok:

Indeed yes, oh yes, indeed I have! In fact they are at this very moment, going through an examination.

Seagoon:

I hope they pass.

Bloodnok:

Pass!

Cast:

*[Numerous goon-type noises]*

Seagoon:

Inspector Bloodnok, you say after each crime, this gang left behind a single kipper?

Bloodnok:

I think they were single. They may have been married, you can never tell. You never know with fish, you know.

Greenslade:

If I may, please, if I may interpose...

Bloodnok:

What? How dare you.

Greenslade:

I fail to see of what import it is whether the kippers are married or single.

Bloodnok:

There is a great deal of importance. Think of their children! -- Ahhh, just the man. Seagoon, this is our forensic expert.

Seagoon:

How do you do?

Eccles:

Ahh, oh, oh ahh. Haaallo, Neddy!

Seagoon:

Er, tell us, what have you discovered about these kippered herrings?

Eccles:

They're dead.

Seagoon:

Dead? This makes it murder!

Orchestra:

*[Trumpet]*

Seagoon:

Were there any fingerprints on these kippers?

Eccles:

No.

Seagoon:

So the criminals must have handled them with gloves on. That, or they never wore gloves but didn't handle them! That or they wore gloves and didn't handle them as well...

Eccles:

I'm going home.

Seagoon:

Ahh! No ad-libbing now Eccles. Bloodnok! Are these kippers the common type?

Bloodnok:

Only one, the others went to Eton, you know.

Seagoon:

Ohh, socially misguided fools. Eccles! Have you got the two kippers on you?

Eccles:

No.

Seagoon:

Then it's time you had a bath.

Eccles:

What? What? What? What?

Orchestra:

*[Dramatic chord]*

Greenslade:

Dispite investingations, and investigootions, the Kipperred Herring Gang, struck again, and again, three times.

Bloodnok:

I tell you Seagoon, this gang is making us laughing stocks.

Seagoon:

Well, make me one.

Bloodnok:

Do you know what happened to me this morning?

Seagoon:

Yes! I don't know.

Bloodnok:

A scruffy little urchin threw a kippered herring at me. He threw it at me!

Seagoon:

Did you close with him?

Bloodnok:

Of course I didn't, he was only a kid, I mean, he doesn't know any better. Wasn't meaning any harm, well I mean I'd done it myself when I was young. He was only having fun.

Seagoon:

Yes but, what did you do?

Bloodnok:

I threw him under a steam roller!

Seagoon:

Ahh you sentimental fool!

Bloodnok:

Yes! I say, you um, you wouldn't care for a rather unique book marker would you?

Seagoon:

No thanks. Allow me to play a piano chord to denote the end of this bit.

Orchestra:

*[Piano arpeggio]*

Bloodnok:

*[Over piano] Divine, oh divine!*

Greenslade:

With that er, princely melody being slugged out, we move to part three, in that order.

FX:

*[Buzz, buzz, ding ding dong dong, knock knock knock knock knock]*

Jim Spriggs:

Come in Jim, come iiiiiiiin!

Seagoon:

Ahh Inspector Spriggs, I've made a great discovery, and in that order.

Jim Spriggs:

What is it Seagoon?

Seagoon:

This dossier police file, prove that one of the Kipperred Herring Gang is a criminal!

Jim Spriggs:

You mean this man has a record?

Seagoon:

And a gramophone!

Bloodnok:

What a lethal combination.

Seagoon:

As far as we know this man's name is... Fred.

Jim Spriggs:

Fred? Not Fred the mad Houdini?

Seagoon:

The same, and, in that order.

Bloodnok:

Spon!

Seagoon:

Splim!

Jim Spriggs:

Splin! Plong! Fssht-too! That man's escaped from every prison in the country. Look, here's a photo of him.

Bloodnok:

There's nothing on it!

Jim Spriggs:

What? He's escaped again! He was on that photograph this morning, on the photograph this morniiiiiiiiing!

Seagoon:

Never mind... What matters now... *[gurgling noise]* What matters is we know now the name of one of the Kipper Herring Gang!

Orchestra:

*[Dramatic chord]*

FX:

*[Dogs howling]*

Greenslade:

*[Over howls]* Police dogs are put on the scent, but failed.

Sellers:

They were replaced by Police Cats, who were soon hot on the kipper scent.

FX:

*[Cats meowing]*

Sellers:

Many toms strayed from their duty.

Seagoon:

But the main herd of Police Cats, finally led us to... Billingsgate.

FX:

*[More cats]*

Seagoon:

Another group of cats led us to Covent Garden Fruit Market.

Eccles:

They were vegetarians.

Seagoon:

Covent Garden? Could it be that the gang were opera singers? As I approached the building, I could hear the music of a lone musician, playing, outside.

Max Geldray and orchestra:

*[Musical interlude]*

Seagoon:

I questioned this mouth organ player, and after three hours I forced him to admit that he played the mouth organ. However, we were still no nearer tracing the Kipper Gang.

Greenslade:

But, late that night, in Seagoons office...

FX:

*[Phone rings]*

Seagoon:

Hello?

Operator:

Hello are you Whitehall one two one two?

Seagoon:

No I'm Hercules Seagoon. Oh I see! Yes. Yes, yes I am yes.

Operator:

Well there's a call for you, go ahead, you're through dear...

Gunman:

Hello!?

Seagoon:

Yes?

Gunman:

Is that Inspector Seagoon?

Seagoon:

Er, yes.

Gunman:

Insticuk... Instiktur... Inspector Hercules Seagoon?

Seagoon:

Yes.

Gunman:

Hands up!

Seagoon:

Hands up?

Gunman:

Yes, I've got a gun!

Seagoon:

A gun? Don't shoot! I - I'm not very well...

Gunman:

I'm not taking any excuses, I'm gonna kill you!

Seagoon:

You do and I'll, I, I'll reverse the charges.

Operator:

Hello, have you two finished your...

Gunman:

Get of the line woman!

Operator:

Oooh!

Seagoon:

Look out he's got a gun!

FX:

*[Bang bang bang]*

Operator:

Owww!

Seagoon:

Fool! You shot the operator!

Gunman:

Right! And now I'll get you, take that!

FX:

*[Phone being slammed down]*

Gunman:

Oh me finger!

Seagoon:

Before he could shoot again, I hung up. Very was a near thing. So the Kipperred Herring Gang were after me, eh? Bloodnok? Herrington? Eccles?

Cast:

*[Moans]*

Seagoon:

Gentlemen, the gang just tried to shoot me.

Bloodnok:

Did they have any luck?

Seagoon:

No, they missed.

Bloodnok:

Curse! Such a big target too...

Eccles:

...And getting bigger all the time!

Bloodnok:

Yes...

Seagoon:

Men! I have the answer to the gang. You know that after each robbery they leave behind a kippered herring? Well the answer is simple. We must cut off their source of supply.

Bloodnok:

Shutter me donger and thud me crimik! You're right! No kippers, no crimes. That'll beatem in, naughty boys!

Seagoon:

Wait! I've just thought, if we cut off their source of kipper herrings, they might revert to more drastic measures.

Bloodnok:

You mean...

Seagoon:

They might even use... Grade Three Salmon!

Bloodnok:

Mashie me mogler with a thin crippler! We shall have to take a chance, that's all, and in that order!

Orchestra:

*[Piano arpeggio]*

Bloodnok:

*[Over piano]* Ahhhhh, beautiful, beautiful...

Greenslade:

And so, the plan went into operation. All kippers in the United Kingdom were confiscated.

Newsreader:

From Yarmouth, Lowerstoft, Milford Haven, Grimsby and Aberdeen, convoys of lorries, heavily guarded by armed police, rolled toward London. Each lorry loaded with kippered herring. These herrings were stacked inside Scotland Yard. An amazing sight, as one policeman remarked:

Policeman:

Ooooh.

Orchestra:

*[Dramatic chord]*

Greenslade:

Yet, despite these precautions, the robberies continued. At the scene of each crime, they still left a kippered herring.

Seagoon:

Obviously they have a secret source of supply.

Herrington:

Where do these kippers come from? *[garbled garbled garbled, audience laugh, garbled]*

Henry Crun:

Steady Min!

Minnie Bannister:

Oooooo...

FX:

*[Slap]*

Minnie Bannister:

Oooooohhh!

Henry Crun:

Mutter mumble...

Minnie Bannister:

Mumble mutter...

Henry Crun:

Set it up again, Min...

Minnie Bannister:

Naughty...

Henry Crun:

Now, Min, add the Indian Brandy!

Minnie Bannister:

What about the thing?

Henry Crun:

Put 'em in Min. Put in the thing. The preserve. Now!

FX:

*[Slap]*

Minnie Bannister:

Oowww! Right in the plun.

Henry Crun:

You must pull your finger away Min.

Minnie Bannister:

You didn't give the warning, I was...

FX:

*[Slap]*

Minnie Bannister:

Oooowww!

Seagoon:

What's going on in there?

Henry Crun:

We're flattening fish, sir. And Min keeps forgetting to let go.

Seagoon:

Never mind about this fish flattening, have you examined those kippers?

Henry Crun:

Oh yes, yes.

Seagoon:

Did you manage to trace where they came from?

Henry Crun:

Yes, the sea.

Seagoon:

The sea? Are you sure?

Henry Crun:

Yes, that's why the kippers are dead.

Seagoon:

What do you mean?

Henry Crun:

They must have drowned.

Seagoon:

Curse!

Henry Crun:

I noticed this special species were all stamped on the tail with the word "Property of Angus MacDonald's Nosh Bar, Brighton."

Seagoon:

So that's where they get them eh? Bloodnok? How long to drive down to Brighton?

Bloodnok:

Drive you there before you could say "Jack Robinson" in Chinese.

Seagoon:

I can't say it in Chinese.

Bloodnok:

Curse! Then we're going to be held up.

Seagoon:

Steady man. Bloodnok, I'll learn to say it in Chinese, ju-ju-just give me time!

Bloodnok:

Right, six months hard labour. Take him away will you!

Greenslade:

Six months later...

Seagoon:

Yung se ma te wun, ha ma tung.

Bloodnok:

What's that?

Seagoon:

"Jack Robinson" in Chinese.

Bloodnok:

Splendid! While you were saying that, I drove you to Brighton.

FX:

*[Car screeching to a halt, doors opening and closing]*

Seagoon:

Right men, this is the place, MacDonald's Nosh Bar, Brighton's highest basement. Bloodnok, Plin - wait in the car.

Plin:

Oooo, ahh.

Seagoon:

Eccles? You've been watching this joint?

Eccles:

Ahhh, woa, I think there's something funny going on in there.

Seagoon:

Why?

Eccles:

I can hear people laughing. *[aside]* That's the first time tonight!

Greenslade:

Seagoon and Eccles, prepare to enter...

Eccles:

That's right.

Greenslade:

*[Over Eccles]*...But took the elementary precaution of disguising themselves *[Eccles keeps talking]* so as not to arouse suspicion - Shut up Eccles!

Eccles:

Woa- Shut up! Shut up!

Greenslade:

Shut up Eccles!

Eccles:

Awwwooaooow. I got my aaaahh...

Greenslade:

Shut up Eccles!

Eccles:

...Aaaahh.

Greenslade:

And so in the subtle disguise of Eskimos wearing kilts, they'd knocked on the door.

FX:

*[Knock knock knock knock knock]*

Seagoon:

They'll never recognize us in these get-ups!

Eccles:

No no no.

FX:

*[Door opens]*

Grytpype:

I'm sorry, no coppers allowed in here.

Seagoon:

What? We ain't coppers! We're policemen in disguise.

Grytpype:

Come in policemen in disguise. Come in out of the cold street, into my freezing club. Now what would you like?

Seagoon:

Could we have a table?

Grytpype:

Table? Have you come here to eat, or buy furniture?

Eccles:

We'll have, I'll ooww ahhh, my good man, I'll have a drink.

Grytpype:

A drink? Are you a member?

Eccles:

Of what?

Grytpype:

The human race.

Eccles:

No, but I'm willing to join.

Seagoon:

With that fiendish remark...

Eccles:

Any body else here want a drink?

Seagoon:

...You shall hear Ray Ellington below the knee!

Eccles:

What? He's gonna join too?

Ray Ellington and His Quartet:

*[Musical interlude]*

Eccles:

Hoooww hoyy ahh ooow aaahhh, well I enjoyed that dance, did you see everybody watching me as I went round the floor?

Seagoon:

Yes.

Eccles:

I wonder why?

Seagoon:

It's customary to have a partner.

Eccles:

Ooooh!

Grytpype:

Gentlemen, here we are, two double arsenics on the house.

Eccles:

Oh, goody goody! Well, here's health.

Seagoon:

Wait! How do we know this arsenic isn't poisoned?

Grytpype:

Dear fellow, that's pure arsenic, as drunk by all ex-husbands.

Seagoon:

I smell a rat!

Grytpype:

So can I, the place is alive with them. Would you like to meet one?

Seagoon:

Candidly and suspicious, and in that order.

Grytpype:

What were you inferring, little suit inflator?

Seagoon:

I don't like the way you're acting.

Grytpype:

I am a waiter, not Laurence Olivier! Mr Bolding.

Seagoon:

Thank you Mr Bolding. Answer me one question. Do you serve kippered herrings?

Grytpype:

Sit down, we serve anybody.

Orchestra:

*[Fanfare]*

Grytpype:

Thankyou, I thankyou.

Eccles:

They've heard it before!

Seagoon:

On this menu it says: "Kipperred Herrings". Where do you get them?

Eccles:

Don't tell him, Grytpype. Nah wrong voice, ahhhh!

Moriarty:

Don't tell him, Grytpype, if he finds out, we're sunk!

Grytpype:

Sunk? Nonsense!

Moriarty:

Ooowwwwaaawwawaoooo woooooo...

Grytpype:

Ahem! It so happens inspector, a man on the end of the pier, sold them to us.

FX:

*[Splash]*

Moriarty:

I told you I'd be sunk. Helllllp!

Seagoon:

Come men, we have a date with a certain man at the end of the pier, and in that order!

Orchestra:

*[Waltz type music]*

Greenslade:

And so our heroes waltzed to the pier, where even now, dear listener, we picked them up, with the miracle called, the microphone. Long live Marconi, and his miracle wireless invention.

Grams:

*[Strong wind]*

Seagoon:

Shhhh. Quiet men! Don't make a noise...

Eccles:

DON'T MAKE... Ahem, don't make what kind of noise?

Seagoon:

Don't make noises like...

FX:

*[Various loud noises, explosions etc.]*

Seagoon:

Like that!

Eccles:

Ooooh.

Bloodnok:

Look on the end of the pier!

Seagoon:

Gad! A mysterious hunched figure with a fishing rod.

Bloodnok:

That must be a member of the Kipperred Herring Gang!

Seagoon:

Yes. It must also be a mysterious hunched figure with a fishing rod, and in that order!

Bloodnok:

How can we creep up without him seeing us?

Ray Ellington:

We know the way!

Bloodnok:

Thank heavens! A native guide who happened to be casually strolling by!

Ray Ellington:

Are you kidding?

Seagoon:

You certain you know the way Ellinga?

Ray Ellington:

Follow me!

Seagoon:

Lead on!

FX:

*[Splash]*

[Pause]

Little Jim:

He's fallen in da water!

Seagoon:

Curse! Foiled by naughty water! Follow me men, keep close behind me.

Bloodnok:

Seagoon!

Seagoon:

Shuush! Shussh! What?

Bloodnok:

We're being followed, and fillowed. There is, there's someone behind us.

Seagoon:

Right! Let him have it!

Cast:

*[Bashing/smacking noises with groans and moans]*

Seagoon:

Erk! Ooo. That's got you! Now you swine, what's your name?

Eccles:

Eccles.

Bloodnok:

Fling me mottles overboard!

Seagoon:

Shluk! The mysterious figure is coming this way!

Bloodnok:

Wait for it...

Seagoon:

Heads up!

Bluebottle:

I heard you say it, I heard you say "heads up". Thank you club members. And therefore my hands I have upped! I can see your pistols gleaming dull in the night light. Stands still, tries to look brave, but knees shake and fall down.

Seagoon:

What are you doing with that fishing rod and basket?

Bluebottle:

I don't care!

Seagoon:

Just as I thought! Herrings! Herrings, and what's this book inside? "How to kipper herrings".  
Ooooh, you are Fred the mad Houdini! Supplier to the Kipperred Herring Gang.

Bluebottle:

I shall not speak! No words shall pass my lips! Beat me! Torture me! Burn me with red hot  
irons! I will not speak! Until it hurts... Moves left, strikes Rod Stieger pose with methods -  
unfortunately, trousers fall down. Ahh.

Seagoon:

Lead us to this gang, if you try to fool us, you'll be sentenced to live in England for the rest of  
your life!

Moriarty:

With the British Government?

Bluebottle:

Slavery!

Orchestra:

*[Fanfare]*

Grams:

*[Footsteps]*

Seagoon:

*[Over footsteps]* Now then. Which house is the gangs hideout?

Bluebottle:

Ooh! Woe is me! To think that I should guide a policeman to my unsuspecting comrades! Uhh  
the agony! I have brought dishon-ou-ur to the fair name of crime. They will take away my Roy  
Rogers badge! And I will never be allowed to join again, no matter how many box tops I save.  
Pulls out dirty handkerchief, wipes nose.

Seagoon:

Is that the house?

Bluebottle:

I won't speak, I tell you! Torture me, burn me, in that order! Ere, what you doing with that red  
hot poker?

Seagoon:

I'm going to...

Bluebottle:

Yaaahhhh! That's the one! That's the house, there! That's it! I love all policemen! Long live the  
law! Hooray for the police, I say! That's the house. Runs over, marks door with chalk mark, so  
they won't miss it.

Seagoon:

Right men, this is it.

FX:

*[Knocking]*

Seagoon:

*[Over knocking]* Open in the name of the law!

Milligan:

*[Over knocking]* What's the name of the law?

Seagoon:

Fred!

Milligan:

I shaln't open it darling!

Seagoon:

It's a woman.

Milligan:

Go away my darling.

Seagoon:

Break down this door, I'll open my fist!

FX:

*[Lorry screeching to a halt]*

Seagoon:

Wait! A furniture lorry.

Sellers:

Yeah. We've come to collect the wardrobe mate.

Seagoon:

Madam! There's a man here to collect your wardrobe.

FX:

*[Door opening]*

Milligan:

Arhhhh! Well said mate, well, you can come in, but no police darling!

Sellers:

Right Ma'am.

Seagoon:

We'll wait here. We'll wait here 'till he brings the cupboard out. When he does, we'll rush in and arrest the gang, and that'll be the end of the show. Patiently, quietly.

Bluebottle:

I'll get my hat then?

Seagoon:

Yes, good.

Bluebottle:

Oooh. Eccles, why did you not take to the life of crime like what I have done?

Eccles:

Oooh, well I can't, I can't afford the life of the crime.

Bluebottle:

Why not?

Eccles:

Well in the, in the back of my book, it says "Crime does not..." [*grunt*] My boo... My book says "Crime - does not - pay!"

Bluebottle:

That is a lie! That is a lie! It does pay! That crime does! You know, I stole certain bits of underwear from Eileen Crill, and I sold them for thruppence!

Eccles:

Ooooh... That was an ad-lib.

Bluebottle:

Ohh!

Eccles:

I thought of that myself, ohhh.

Bluebottle:

Yes.

Eccles:

Well well, ahem, you got thrupence?

Bluebottle:

Yes.

Eccles:

All in one lump?

Bluebottle:

No, not in a lump, in ones!

Eccles:

Oooh.

Bluebottle:

And there's more where that came from! With that kind of money, you can dazzle the opposite sex you know.

Eccles:

Op-opposite sex?

Bluebottle:

Yes.

Eccles:

What's them?

Bluebottle:

Girls.

Eccles:

Gu-urrls?

Bluebottle:

Yes. They're the, they're the ones that go backwards when you're dancing.

Eccles:

Oooh. But, but I always go backwards when we're dancing!

Bluebottle:

Oooh, Eccles! You must be a very sick man! If Major Bloodnok see you...

Eccles:

The doctor said, I was a normal, healthy idiot.

William:

Ere! Gissa hand with this wardrobe mate! Out onto me own mate...

Seagoon:

Certainly mate! Hup, arhh oww ahhh... I say it's heavy.

William:

Try not lifting it, it's lighter that way.

Seagoon:

Oh yes, yes.

FX:

*[Car pulling away]*

Seagoon:

Now for the gang! Right madam, let us in! We know you're all in there! [pause] If you don't come out, we'll come in, and in that order! Right! Inside men.

Eccles:

*[Mutters/mumbles]*

FX:

*[Door opens]*

Eccles:

Mumble, mutter, mutter mutter, mutter mutter

Seagoon:

The place is empty! The van... The gang were all in that wardrobe, and... I helped him with it.

Eccles:

Oh never mind. Look what I found...

Seagoon:

A kippered herring... Hahaha! Hahaha!

Eccles:

Ahahaha!

Orchestra:

*[Theme tune]*

Greenslade:

That was the Goon Show. A BBC recorded programme featuring Peter Sellers, Harry Secombe, and Spike Milligan. With the Ray Ellington Quartet, Max Geldray, and the Orchestra conducted by Wally Stott. Script by Spike Milligan, announcer Wallace Greenslade. The programme produced by Roy Speer.

Orchestra:

*['Crazy Rhythm' outro]*