

THE GOON SHOW:
THE SINKING OF WESTMINSTER PIER

First broadcast on February 15, 1955. Script by Spike Milligan and Eric Sykes. Produced by Peter Eton. Announced by Wallace Greenslade. The orchestra was conducted by Wally Stott. Transcribed by anon, corrections by Kurt Adkins and Peter Olausson.

Greenslade:

This is the BBC Home Service.

Orchestra:

[Fanfare]

Greenslade:

Clear the floor for the East Acton Working Man's Club Crazy Cabaret.

Seagoon:

Act number one is the highly esteemed Goon Show!

Orchestra:

[Fanfare]

Seagoon:

Now, Mr. Greenslade, put down that Radio Times, cast off that bamboo kilt and give the listeners the old posh chat there. Do the old wireless talk, Wal, go on Wal, right up you, Wal...

Greenslade:

Ladies and gentlemen, this week, as stated in the Radio Times, we give you the Six Ingots of Leadenhall Street.

Seagoon:

Sorry, Greens, we're not doing that, Wallace.

Greenslade:

Oh, yes we are!

Seagoon:

Not this week, no.

Greenslade:

We are, you see on page 24 of my Radio Times it states quite clearly "The Six Ingots Of Leadenhall Street".

Seagoon:

I know, but we changed it, you see...

Greenslade:

But the Radio Times never lies!

Sellers (Announcer):

Tonight we give you the story of the port of London authorities valuable hand-carved oil-painted valuable floating pier...

Orchestra:

[Lone wailing violin over speech]

Sellers (exaggerated narrator/poet):

Ooooooh, 'twas the month of February in 1955, when the valuable floating pier at Westminster suddenly took a dive. On board the sinking pier Fred Harding was having his tea, when the icy waters closed over his head and he screamed... *[Violin stops]*

Seagoon (strained voice, unemotional):

Oh deary me!

Orchestra:

[Violin starts again]

Sellers:

But 600 Westminster firemen with hook and ladder and line, worked with tigerish courage sank the whole lot before 9! And ooooooh!

Grams:

[Bubbling of drowning object]

Orchestra:

[Dramatic descending chords]

FX:

[Three hits of a gavel]

Council Leader:

Attention, Westminster Councillors! Enquiry in to the sinking of the valuable Westminster Pier on the 7th of Feb 1955 is now in the old session, there! Chairman Mr. Ned Seagoon, and a right charley he looks in that cardboard trilby over there!

Seagoon:

[Clears throat] Gentlemen, for the Port of London Authority I must state the day before the valuable Westminster Pier sank it was inspected and certified river-worthy.

Councillor:

Who was the man who inspected it?

Council Leader:

It was none other than...

Seagoon:

I resign!

Council Leader:

Resignation accepted on the grounds of incompetence, anyone else want the old job, there?

Seagoon:

I'll take it on.

Council Leader:

Right, name?

Seagoon:

Ned Seagoon.

Council Leader:

Same as the last bloke, all right carry on.

Seagoon:

Now did anybody actually see the Pier sink?

William:

Yes mate, Jim Tula.

Seagoon:

Then why isn't he here?

William:

He went down with it, mate.

Seagoon:

I see. Right... Lunch!

Grams:

[Stampede]

Council Leader:

Here wait minute! Wait! Wait! Wait a minute! We've got some more witnesses yet!

Seagoon:

Oh, very well. Throat?

Throat:

Yes?

Seagoon:

Postpone lunch.

Throat:

Right.

Seagoon:

Good.

Throat:

Right.

Council Leader:

Next witness!

FX:

[Very slow footsteps gradually getting closer and then walking away, door slams]

Seagoon:

Right, next witness! What? No one else? Right - lunch!

Grams:

[Stampede]

Eccles:

Stop! *[Silence]* Hallo!

Seagoon:

Who are you, you ragged idiot?

Eccles:

I'm the famous Eccles.

Seagoon:

Famous? I've never heard of you!

Eccles:

What? You've heard of Clapham Common!?

Seagoon:

Yes.

Eccles:

Well you mind what you say!

Seagoon:

What? Now look here let's get down to the important question, what caused a valuable Westminster Pier to sink?

William:

As a member of the police, may I make a suggestion, mate?

Seagoon:

Police? You're not Fagin of the yard.

William:

No, I can't act for toffee, I can't.

Seagoon:

Neither can he. Now, do you suspect sabotage?

William:

No, he's in the clear.

Seagoon:

Then whom do you suspect?

William:

Russian frogmen dunnit, mate.

Seagoon:

What is their motive?

William:

Oo, I don't in to their private affairs, mate, I just accuses 'em, that's all I do.

Seagoon:

Are you sure the Russians did it?

William:

Well I 'aint, mate, but it looks good on the report sheet, dunnit?

Seagoon:

Hmmmmm - right, lunch!

Grams:

[Stampede, pigs snorting]

Greenslade:

Meantime, on a fish train, travelling from Leeds to Salisbury.

Max Geldray:

[Musical interlude: Brazil]

Seagoon:

For a week we tried to raise the valuable sunken Westminster Pier, but failed miserably. Then yesterday a professor offered me a service.

Henry Crun:

Good morning.

Seagoon:

Good morning, sir.

Minnie Bannister:

Good morning, buddy.

Seagoon (laughing to himself):

Good morning buddy, yes. So -- so you think you can raise the pier, ey?

Minnie and Henry Crun:

Oh yes, yes! We can! We've done it many times!

Seagoon:

Splendid. Now, what is your profession?

Minnie and Henry Crun:

Ooooh!

Minnie Bannister:

We're oyster sexers.

Seagoon:

Oyster sexers?

Minnie Bannister:

Yes, we can tell the difference, you know...

Seagoon:

At your age that must be quite a revelation. I'm sorry, but I'm not interested in oyster sexing.

Henry Crun:

Ah, but you're not an oyster, are you?

Seagoon:

Mr. Crun...

Henry Crun:

What what what?

Seagoon:

If I was an oyster I wouldn't be here. Can't have an oyster as chairman of the Westminster Pier Salvage Committee can you?

Henry Crun:

Why not, ey? Why not? It's a free country isn't it? Why shouldn't an oyster be chairman?

Seagoon:

Because an oyster can't talk.

Henry Crun:

Have you ever spoken to one?

Seagoon:

Hhhmmmm, no!

Minnie and Henry Crun:

Aaaah!

Henry Crun:

Then you don't know, do you?

Minnie Bannister:

No.

Henry Crun:

No, no. Now look, we've got an oyster here.

Minnie Bannister:

Fred.

Henry Crun:

Yes, put it on the desk, there you are Min...

FX:

[Shell (coconut) on desk]

Henry Crun:

There, go on, speak to it!

Seagoon:

Speak to it? This is absurd, I, I can't...

Minnie Bannister:

No, go on buddy, yakaboo! Speak to it, speak to it!

Seagoon:

No no, I refuse, I can't...

Henry Crun:

Yes you can, try. Then you can find out if it can speak.

Minnie Bannister:

Yes!

Seagoon:

[Clears throat] Um... Good morning! Ha-ha! This is madness! You can't...

Henry Crun:

You'll have to speak louder he can't hear you.

Seagoon:

Of course not, the oyster's closed!

Henry Crun:

Closed? Wednesday! Of course, it's early closing!

Minnie and Henry Crun:

Shout loud to it! Shout loud to it!

Seagoon:

[Louder] Good morning, I see that it's early closing for oysters!

Grams (Fred The Oyster):

[Shell scrapes as it turns, creaks open, donkey eee-aughs twice, raspberry, creaks shut, shell closes]

Seagoon:

How dare he do that to me, give me that oyster here! *[gulps]* There, that's the last you'll hear of him *[belches]* Pardon!

Minnie Bannister:

Ooooooh! You naughty man, you've eaten Fred our oyster!

Henry Crun:

We'll call the police constable!

Seagoon:

[Over their shouts] Get out of here! You can't...

FX:

[While the three argue door is taken off hinges, fade away, door slammed shut]

Seagoon:

Good heavens! Is there no one who can salvage the highly valuable Westminster Pier? I'd pay anything!

Grams:

[Whoosh!]

Moriarty:

Oooooh! Pardon me, my ami, mon card.

Seagoon:

Thank you -- but there's nothing on it!

Moriarty:

Look on the other side!

Seagoon:

Oh, that's a silly place to have it printed... On the back! Now what's this? "Messrs Fred Moriarty Ltd. - Sunken Westminster Floating Pier Salvage Expert"? Gad! Just the man we want!

Moriarty:

Sapristi! You mean the Westminster floating Pier has sunk?

Seagoon:

Yes!

Moriarty:

At last... Employment! All these years I've waited!

Seagoon:

Well tell me, how do we raise the pier?

Moriarty:

Oh, don't raise the pier!

Seagoon:

What then?

Moriarty:

Lower the river!

Seagoon:

Gad! Genius! Absolute genius! But can you do it?

Moriarty:

Sapristi yacka-backakas of course I can. My partner, the Honourable Grytpype-Thynne is the greatest water remover in the world! Follow me!

Grams:

[Whoosh! Whoosh!]

FX:

[Knocking on door]

Grytpype-Thynne:

Come in!

FX:

[Door opens]

Grams:

[Swimming through water over speech]

Seagoon:

I entered a room 4 foot deep in water. Up to his neck in it Grytpype-Thynne was sitting on a rubber dinghy, smoking a Jim-filled hookah.

Grytpype-Thynne:

Ah Neddy! Have a glass of water.

Seagoon:

[Gulps] Thank you.

Grytpype-Thynne:

Have another. Drink as much as you can.

Seagoon:

Why?

Grytpype-Thynne:

The basement's flooded.

Seagoon:

But I thought you were an expert water remover!

Grytpype-Thynne:

Oh I am, it's my day off.

Seagoon:

I see.

Grytpype-Thynne:

So you want us to lower the level of the Thames?

Seagoon:

Yes.

Grytpype-Thynne:

Yes, well that will be 30 bob a day for the hire of the pumps.

Seagoon:

Pumps?

Grytpype-Thynne:

Yes, I always wear them, they don't draw the feet, you know? I hate having my feet drawn, except by Graham Sutherland. Then for the work, well the work shall we say 10 pounds for every hours pumping?

Seagoon:

10 pounds for every hour?

Grytpype-Thynne:

I accept! Sign here please. And here! And here!

FX:

[Scratching of pen nib on paper]

Grytpype-Thynne:

And here! And on this cheque. Now this one. And here! This small cheque here. Bank guarantee, mortgage, pawn ticket, here's your insurance policy, just there! This contract! Indemnity clause... here! Watch, chain, thank you! Now have a glass of water.

Seagoon:

[Gulps] Thank you.

Grytpype-Thynne:

Splendid. I want you to drink as much as you can.

Seagoon:

Why, is it good for me?

Grytpype-Thynne:

No, good for my grandmother.

Seagoon:

Why?

Grytpype-Thynne:

She's under all this lot. Righto, Neddy, we'll be there in the morning and I take it you'll have the money ready, hmm?

Seagoon:

Yes. Hurrah! Then tomorrow my name will be famous. Neddy Seagoon - the man who raised the Westminster Sunken floating Pier and the good old Port of London Authorities flag will fly once more and the crowd will sing - *[Singing]* For he's a jolly good Seagoon! For he's a jolly good Seagoon! For he's a jolly good Seeagooooooooon and so say all of us!

Grytpype-Thynne:

You silly twisted boy.

Seagoon:

Thank you. Then you'll start pumping out the river tomorrow, ey?

Grytpype-Thynne:

Yes, 'til tomorrow then, Neddy.

Seagoon:

A demain!

FX:

[Door slams]

Grytpype-Thynne:

Moriarty!? We shall make a fortune out of this charley. But first let us hear Gladys Ellington and her lean Water Baby.

Ray Ellington and his Quartet:

[Musical interlude: "My Lean Lady"]

Greenslade:

And now, the Six Ingots of Leadenhall Street part 3, in which Ned Seagoon is attacked by a drink crazed Peruvian trombonist with rumpled feet and then...

Seagoon:

Greens, we're not doing that this week.

Greenslade:

But page 24 of my Radio Time says...

Seagoon:

I don't care what your Radio Times says, Wallace, we're not doing it!

Greenslade:

But the Editor is a friend of mine and the Radio Times never lies!

Seagoon:

I don't care! We're not doing it Wallace *[fades out]*

Sellers (exaggerated theatrical narrator):

Ooooooh!

Orchestra:

[Lone violin over speech]

Sellers:

So Moriarty and Grytpype-Thyne started to pump the river, and as the weather was very cold sometimes they were both were want for to shiver. They pumped and pumped but the River Thames didn't get any lower, but this didn't worry Grytpype-Thyne as he was being paid by the hour. And ooooooh, the pump fiend did pump and roar...

Grams:

[Heavy machinery pumping over speech]

Moriarty (singing):

April in Paris, chestnuts in blossom...

Grytpype-Thynne:

How much does he owe us no, Moriarty?

Moriarty:

Er, we've pumped 60,000 gallons - that's 3 million pounds!

Grytpype-Thynne:

Lovely, lovely.

Grytpype-Thynne and Moriarty (singing):

April in Paris, chestnuts in blossom, her comes a charley!

Seagoon:

I say! I say, Grytpype!?

Grytpype-Thynne:

Ah Neddy, have a glass of water.

Seagoon:

[Gulps] Thanks.

Grytpype-Thynne:

Every little helps, you know?

Seagoon:

That's just it. You've been pumping for 8 weeks now and the river hasn't gone down one inch!

Grytpype-Thynne:

Well you can't rush these things, laddie. You've come to pay us the old...

Seagoon:

Yes, yes, yes, here it is, 3 million pounds.

FX:

[Cash register]

Grytpype-Thynne:

Thank you.

Seagoon:

But that's the last of it, you know? Treasury's nearly broke!

Grytpype-Thynne:

Nonsense. Have a glass of water.

Seagoon:

[Gulps] Thank you. Now listen, if in the next 24 hours the river is still full of water the government is going to step in!

Grytpype-Thynne:

Good riddance to them! Now let's see, we've got 3 million...

Grytpype-Thynne and Moriarty:

[Goes off singing "April in Paris"]

Seagoon:

Wait! I say, wait! Where were they pumping all the water to? It was then I noticed a long pipe. I followed it, along the Embankment, past Vauxhall, Chelsea Bridge, Putney Bridge, Barnsbridge, Mortlake Brewery - hmm! Mortlake Brewery!

FX:

[Door handle turned, slams door, long pause, door handle turned]

Seagoon (drunk, singing):

April in Paris, Aaaaaapri... *[hiccup]*

Grams:

[Man falling in water, splashing in water]

Seagoon (distant):

Heeeelp! Heeeelp! I'm drowning, and I'm with the dreaded alcohol!

Bloodnok (over splashing and calls):

Thund me cringing nurglers, is it? Gad, but no! Where's me old photographs? Gad it is! It's me old bat man Neddy Seagoon having a swim in mid-February, the naughty man! I say there Seagoon, it's me!

Seagoon:

Heeeeelp!

Bloodnok:

Me, Major Bloodnok, of the Third Regular Army Deserters. I say, Seagoon, remember that day in Poona at the Muratari's Restaurant? Oh, she was a boutique biddy, oh yes!

Seagoon:

I'm drowning!

Bloodnok:

Don't interrupt, please. I took her to Grant road and - what? Drowning, you say? Surely not drowning!

Seagoon:

Heeeeelp!

Bloodnok:

Not Neddy Seagoon drowning, not my old bat man, not drowning! Why you were the plunging and trudgeon stroke champion of Turkey weren't you? Let me see, it must have been 1903 I think...

Seagoon (gurgling water):

Help me!

Bloodnok:

No it was 1904, I remember now. Save you, lad? I can't swim, lad. But wait a moment, I know a fellow at Hackney who's an excellent swimmer. I'll go and get him. Lend me the cab fare, lad.

Seagoon:

Get me out!

Bloodnok:

What? Give us your hand then.

Grams:

[Struggling to get man out of water]

Seagoon (closer):

Thanks, now here, here's five shillings...

FX:

[Coins jangling]

Seagoon:

Now hurry up and get him before I drown!

Bloodnok:

Right. No no, wait! You're soaking wet! Laddie, let we wring out your wallet, and that watch! That gold hunter, they mustn't be dropped in water these hunters you know!? It'll get ruined in that water. Oh you naughty man you! I'll preserve it for you, lad. Now take off that damp money belt you have on, rheumatics, my goodness you mustn't have those sort of things. That's right, lad. Now off with those wet clothes, coat and trousers, vest and underpants, shoes and - *[under breath]* Oh we'll flog this lot - Good Heavens man! What? You can't stand there naked, get back in the water, there!

Seagoon:

Right! Hup!

Grams:

[Huge splash]

Seagoon (distant):

Heeeeelp!

Bloodnok:

I say, wait there, don't go away!

Grams:

[Running footsteps speeding up into distance]

Seagoon:

I never saw him again. I dragged myself ashore on a pipe. A pipe that I discovered - so this was Grytpype's game, ey? He'd been pumping water out of the Thames at Westminster and back again to the river at Mortlake. The crook! That night I decided to revenge myself on Grytpype, and to destroy the pump for and on behalf of the Port of London Authority.

Grams:

[Big Ben chimes over speech]

Seagoon (whisper):

Shhh! This way! Got the dynamite?

Bluebottle:

I have got the dynamite, my Captain. Enter Bluebottle, pauses for light audience sausinges, thank you! Moves forward under gas light as done by George Raft in "I am the Law". Thinks: I have moved forward under the gas light as done by George Raft in "I am the Law"!

Seagoon:

Shhh! Eccles?

Eccles:

Eccles? Oh, that's me!

Seagoon:

Help little Bluebottle arrange the dynamite.

Eccles:

Okay. You ready to start, Bluebottle?

Bluebottle:

Yes, I'm ready. Pulls out cardboard cut-out sword.

Eccles:

Ooh! Mind what you're doing!

Bluebottle:

Long live the Port of London Authorintins. I will not rest until the forces of evil are swattedged! And the valuable Westminster Pier is raised! Thinks: I will not rest until the forces of evil...

Seagoon:

Shut up!

Eccles:

Shut up!

Seagoon:

Shut up Eccles!

Eccles:

Shut up Eccles!

Seagoon:

Come on, get the rest of the dynamite off Ellington's head.

Eccles:

Come on now!

Ray Ellington:

Me carry dynamite! Me strong!

Bluebottle:

Are you strong Ellingta?

Ray Ellington:

Me strong!

Bluebottle:

Ooh! Are you strong, Eccles?

Eccles:

No, I 'aint strong, are you?

Bluebottle:

No, but Ellinga's strong.

Eccles:

I 'aint strong.

Bluebottle:

He is!

Ray Ellington:

Me strong!

Greenslade:

While our heroes are deciding who is strong we take you now in to Mr. Seagoon's stomach to hear how the oyster has fared.

Grams:

[Bubbling and wailing voices]

David Attenborough:

And here along the great Duodenal Tract of the great Seagoon intestine I see approaching the boiled spuds he had at breakfast, followed closely by that foul meatloaf salad he noshed at the BBC canteen. There's no sign yet of the oyster, but yes! Here now comes a dirty great dollop of steam duff and three quarts of mild that he woofed down during the rehearsals. And yes! Here comes four pounds of mixed chocolate and eights pints of tea, soup, licquorice allsorts and lastly the oyster!

Grams:

[Adolphus Spriggs crooning "I'm Only A Lonely Round Vagabond, For Good Night...", donkey eee-aughs twice, march music and marching footsteps very fast, attack trumpet, screams of battle and trumpets and bangs]

Seagoon:

Now to arrange for a new Westminster floating Pier.

Grams:

[Whoosh!]

Moriarty:

Ah, there's no need for that. Look, we have a new one already made for you!

Seagoon:

Good Heavens! By Jupiter! Etcetera Etcetera! And I thought you were both villains!

Moriarty:

Waaugh! Listen, you go aboard and examine it at once!

Seagoon:

By Jove, I'll do just that!

Grytpype-Thynne:

Have you bored holes in the bottom, Moriarty?

Moriarty:

Yes, it will sink in ten minutes *[Sings]* April in Paris!

Bluebottle:

Oh, Captain! I've lit the dynamite under the pump... Oh! Hee-hee! You're not my captain! You are Morinartins, the forces of Evils!

Moriarty:

You're going to blow up our pump? You run right back and put that dynamite out!

Bluebottle:

But it's burning!

Moriarty:

Get back at once!

Bluebottle:

All right!

Grams:

[Whoosh!]

Bluebottle (far away):

It hasn't burnt down quite yet, so I'll...

Grams:

[Great explosion, followed by bricks and metal bars hitting the ground]

Bluebottle:

You rotten swine, you! I'm fed up with being deaded every week. Eccles never gets deaded, why doesn't Eccles ever get dead...

Grams:

[Boom!]

Eccles (distant):

Your rotten swine, Bluebottle!

Bluebottle:

Tee-hee! That's better! Tee-hee! Exits left, much happier. Picks up loose bonce, shins and spare feet.

Seagoon:

Ah! There you are, Grytpype.

Grytpype-Thynne:

So I am.

Seagoon:

I must say that this new pier you provided is absolutely perfect. I'll buy it!

Grytpype-Thynne:

Right, sign here...

FX:

[Pen scratching paper]

Grytpype-Thynne:

...Here, this cheque, bank guarantee, credit note, postal orders, travellers cheques and finally sign this will. There, good lad! Moriarty?

Grytpype-Thynne and Moriarty:

One, two, hup...

Grams:

[Big splash]

Seagoon (distant):

Heeelp!

Moriarty:

Taxi? Gatwick Airport please.

Grams:

[Whoosh Whoosh!]

Seagoon (distant):

Heeeelp!

Bloodnok:

Thud me cringing nurglers, is it? It can't be! Where's me old photographs?

Seagoon (distant):

Heeeelp!

Bloodnok:

It's my old bat man Neddy Seagoon!

Seagoon (distant):

Oh no, go away...

Bloodnok:

I've got a money belt...

Seagoon:

Go away! *[Fades out with the two screaming at each other]*

Greenslade:

Ladies, according to page 24 of my Radio Times, you should have been hearing the Six Ingots of Leadenhall Street, but I fear the Goons have lied to the Editor and not carried out the intended story. It's a disgrace -- Goodnight!

Orchestra:

[End theme tune]

Greenslade:

That was the Goon Show, a recorded programme featuring Peter Sellers, Harry Secombe and Spike Milligan with the Ray Ellington Quartet and Max Geldray. The orchestra was conducted by Wally Stott, script by Spike Milligan and Eric Sykes, announcer Wallace Greenslade, the programme produced by Peter Eton.

Bloodnok:

Gad, it's the old wireless star Greenslade, oh yes!

Orchestra:

[End theme tune]

Orchestra:

['Crazy Rhythm' outro]