

THE GOON SHOW:  
**THE HASTINGS FLYER - ROBBED**

First broadcast on December 27, 1955. Script by Spike Milligan. Produced by Peter Eton. Announced by Wallace Greenslade. Orchestra conducted by Wally Stott. Transcribed by Kurt Adkins, corrections by Peter Olausson.

Greenslade:

This is the BBC Home Service. I would like to -

Grams:

*[Short sharp train whistle. Train chugs off at cartoon speed.]*

Secombe:

Well that got rid of him! In the meantime here is - THEGS! Yes, THEGS. That's the short way of saying the Highly Esteemed Goon Show. THEGS!

Grams:

*[Solo chinesewoman singing high-pitched wailing song - speed it up to get a high vibrato.]*

Sellers:

Gad - how our Gracie has changed.

Milligan:

Well silence - I tell you all - that Isle of Capri is a sinful place.

Secombe:

Shut up, Tom.

Milligan:

Silence, Dick.

Sellers:

I should think so too, Jim.

Secombe:

Don't interrupt, Ned. Rest your bumps on this razor blade and listen to the story of 'The Hastings Flyer - Robbed'!

Orchestra:

*[Great building tympany roll. Anti-climaxed by demi-semi-quaver chord.]*

Secombe:

Thank you and good bye. Here to open the tale of the great drama is Poet and Tragedian - William J. MacGoonagle!

Orchestra:

*[Macgoonagle Theme (played very softly)]*

Sellers:

Ooooooooo - 'Twas in the month of December In the year of eighteen eighty-two. The railways lines near Pevensey Bay Were buried under the snoo.

Eccles:

Ooo!

Sellers:

All thro' the night the blizzard fiend Did like a lion roar, The snow rose up from inches three To inches three foot four... And ooooo the snowwww....

Grams:

*[Wind up and out]*

Seagoon:

My name is Neddie Seagoon, engine driver extraordinary. On the night of the great English blizzard I was dragged from a warm seat in Leicester Square and taken before the director of the famed Filthmuck and Scrampson Railway.

Lew:

Neddie - little tittle Neddie, sit down - here, have a chopped liver cigarette.

Seagoon:

No thanks, I always chop my own.

Lew:

Good luck. Listen, Schlapper - the line between Hastings and Pevensey Bay station, are under twenty feet of Schnow. Neddie ol Neddie, we want you to drive a snow-plough and clear the line before midnight.

Seagoon:

But that would be a dangerous task.

Lew:

It iss, it iss.

Seagoon:

I'll do it.

Lew:

Good Schlapper - here's a kosher wine gum. Off you go!

Seagoon:

Oh - thanks very much!

Fx:

*[Door closes]*

Seagoon:

My duty was obvious - clear the line at Pevensey Bay before midnight, leaving it clear for the Hastings Flyer to come clear through. Having given the listeners the plot, I made my way towards Euston Station.

Moriarty:

Pardon me, little low suit-type man.

Seagoon:

The stranger had stepped out of a dark overcoat - another man stood on his shoulders.

Gryttype:

Have you a match?

Seagoon:

Only my own private one.

Gryttype:

Don't look so worried, my friend and I here are only MPs.

Seagoon:

If you're politicians, why are you begging in the gutter?

Grytpype:

Liberals.

Seagoon:

I understand. Can I help?

Moriarty:

Sapristi nuckles yes! Are you walking Euston station way?

Seagoon:

Sapristi nuckles yes!

Moriarty:

Could you - could you give us a lift?

Seagoon:

I've just had my dinner.

Moriarty:

Then you're full up.

Seagoon:

Needle nardle noo.

Grytpype:

Any room in the boot?

Seagoon:

Sorry, there's a foot in it.

Grytpype:

Curse, we'll have to run alongside you.

Seagoon:

I'll go slow.

Grytpype:

Thank you, Nurke - have a gorilla.

Seagoon:

No thanks - this street is non smoker.

Grytpype:

I see. Neddie - little Neddie - my heavily-oiled friend here and I are rather anxious to get to Pevensy Bay station tonight.

Seagoon:

You'll never do it - there are no trains.

Grytpype:

We know, we know - perhaps a lift on your snow-plough?

Seagoon:

Out of the question - it's against the rules.

Grytpype:

We have money.

Seagoon:

Money?

Gryttype:

Yes, to prove we're not lying, here's a photograph of a shilling.

Seagoon:

*[gasp]* What wealth!

Gryttype:

And there are more photographs where that came from.

Seagoon:

Aside: Gad, with that treasure horde I could buy another match! No! I will not be tempted.

Gryttype:

Very well, Moriarty? Plan two - I'll play the violin.

Orchestra:

*[Violin - 'Hearts and Flowers']*

Moriarty:

Neddie, have a heart, lad - we must get to Pevensey Bay tonight. You see, Neddie, at midnight the Hastings Flyer is coming through - all we want to do is hold it up, blow open the mail van and take the gold bullion inside. That's all Neddie. I swear.

Seagoon:

Stop! You're breaking my heart - I cannot refuse so simple a request - be at platform three in ten minutes or platform ten in three minutes, whichever suits you best - but remember, remember - bring me my photographs of the money.

Orchestra:

*[Macgoonagle Theme]*

Sellers:

Ooooooooo - Thro' the night the blizzard raged It covered Pevensey Bay station But inside the ticket office there The staff were in charge of the situation. Oooooo.

Grams:

*[Wind]*

Minnie Bannister:

Bim born biddle deee seventeen a hundred and seventeen bim born I do dee...

Henry Crun:

Minnie? Minnie? What's the - stop - no, you stop that sinful singing, Min you...

Minnie Bannister:

It's the modern-style singing, buddy.

Henry Crun:

I'm not interested in the modern style, Min - I'm more worried why we haven't sold any tickets today.

Minnie Bannister:

I can't understand it.

Henry Crun:

Neither can I dear - it's the peak of our winter tourists' season too.

Minnie Bannister:

Mmm - what's the weather like out?

Henry Crun:

I can't see for all this snow coming down.

Minnie Bannister:

I think we'd better lock up for the night, Hen.

Henry Crun:

Yes - only an idiot would come out on a night like this.

Fx:

*[Knocks]*

Henry Crun:

Ohhh -

Fx:

*[Door opens - Gale - Wind Up]*

Eccles:

Hallooooo! I'm the famous Eccles.

Henry Crun:

Oh.

Eccles:

Well, I better be getting along now. Good day!

Henry Crun:

Goodnight.

Fx:

*[Door closes. Wind down.]*

Henry Crun:

What a nice man to come a-visiting on such a night.

Minnie Bannister:

What a nice man to come a-visiting...

Henry Crun:

Did you see that lovely brown paper suit he was wearing?

Minnie Bannister:

I did, Henry - there's lots of money around these days... Sinful, sinful.

Henry Crun:

Ahh. Well off to bed you go, Min - I'll keep the ticket office open a little longer, you never know, there might be a sudden rush from the Continent.

Minnie Bannister:

Ooo - I think we . . . (Fading self off).

Grams:

*[Winds up and under]*

Sellers:

Ooooooooo - And thro' the night, the snow-plough train was racing down the line A lonely spectator who saw it pass Looked up and said...

Eccles:

Fine, fine.

Sellers:

Oooooo...

Grams:

*[Old train chugging along. Fade under:]*

Seagoon:

Gad - race on, steel juggernaut - It's a wonder men can live at this speed.

Grytpype:

Can't we go any faster?

Seagoon:

Faster? Ha ha, you fool, you mad fool, we're doing eight miles an hour now!

Grytpype:

Come on - be a devil.

Seagoon:

All right. Stoker?

Ray Ellington:

Yes?

Seagoon:

Take another twig out of the safe and hurl it on the furnace!

Ray Ellington:

Right.

Seagoon:

Well said - now, what's the steam boiler pressure?

Ray Ellington:

Ninety eight degrees.

Seagoon:

Right - run my bath.

Moriarty:

Don't be a fool, Neddie - this is no time to take a bath, it's getting late.

Seagoon:

Nonsense - plenty of time - according to the hairs on my wrist it's only half past ten.

Grytpype:

(disbelief) The hairs on your wrist say half past ten?

Seagoon:

Yes.

Grytpype:

You must be mad.

Seagoon:

Why?

Grytpype:

The hairs on my wrist say eleven-thirty.

Moriarty:

I can vouchsafe for that, he set them right by the hairs on Big Ben this morning!

Seagoon:

Still time for a bath and Max Geldray!

Max Geldray and Orchestra:

*[Musical interlude: "One Two Button My Shoe"]*

Orchestra:

*[Return to story link]*

Grams:

*[Train chugging through the driving blizzard]*

Seagoon:

As I sat having my bath in the back of the snow-plough - a foul trick was played!

Grytpype:

Hands up, Neddie! Moriarty, tie his hands - then hide them where he can't find them.

Seagoon:

What a fiendish move - you naughty men - I'll write to The Times about this -

Fx:

*[Furious pen scratching on vellum or paper]*

Seagoon:

Dear Sir - I wish to complain about an outbreak of hand-tying on snow-ploughs whilst taking hip baths.

Grytpype:

(furious) Give me that letter - you'll not send that, lad - now.

Fx:

*[Furious writing]*

Grytpype:

Dear sir - today I heard the first cuckoo - there, sign that -

Fx:

*[Pen]*

Seagoon:

No! - You fiendish swine!

Grytpype:

Good - Moriarty, post it - that'll put them off the track.

Moriarty:

I'll just tie his hands again - ahhh - there.

Grytpype:

Good - now cut the knot off so he can't untie it.

Moriarty:

Right - put it in your pocket. Now, together - one! two!

Seagoon:

No, don't throw me out!

Moriarty:

Three!

Seagoon:

Heeeelllp! (going off)

Grams:

*[Upward rush of train - Steam - Roar of the wheels going into distance (pause) then just the howl of the blizzard.]*

Seagoon:

I lay gasping on the railway bank - with the knot of my bonds in Grytpype-Thynne's pocket - it looked pretty hopeless for me -

Orchestra:

*[(Approaching) Big drum beating in march time.]*

Bloodnok:

Ooo - I say - Um - have you seen a band go this way?

Seagoon:

No, I'm sorry, I've only just arrived here.

Bloodnok:

Have you? Oh, I must find them, you know - they might be playing a different tune from me by now. Wait a minute - I know you - aren't you Neddie Seagoon, the singing dwarf and current number one with the Grades?

Seagoon:

If you put it that way - I am. And you, aren't you the blaggard embezzler, no-good soak and layabout, Denis Bloodnok?

Bloodnok:

If you put it that way - I am. And what are you doing here?

Seagoon:

I've just been thrown off a train.

Bloodnok:

Any decent driver would have done the same!

Seagoon:

If my hands weren't tied I'd strike you down with my mackerel pie and thunder straw.

Bloodnok:

Your hands are tied?

Seagoon:

Yes.

Bloodnok:

Ooo.

Seagoon:

Bloodnok, take your hands off my wallet!



Bloodnok:

(going off) Three pound ten - four pound, four pounds -

Seagoon:

Come back with my wallet, you - the devil, he's gone - thank heaven he didn't find my money belt.

Grams:

*[Approaching whoosh]*

Bloodnok:

Aeioughh.

Seagoon:

Take your hands off my money belt!

Bloodnok:

Ten. (going off fast) eleven pound twelve - Merry Christmas. (Goes off)

Seagoon:

The devil - taken all the money I stole from the kiddies' bank - but time was wasting - I had to warn the approaching Hastings Flyer of the plot to rob her. So thinking, I stumbled forwards through the blizzard... I made a pair of snow shoes but the heat of my feet melted them. Suddenly, from a nearby frozen pool I heard...

Grams:

*[Splash. Man swimming on back, kicking legs.]*

Eccles:

(Off) In the good old summer timeee - in the good old summer timeee...

Seagoon:

I say, you - don't you feel cold in there?

Eccles:

Nope - I got my overcoat on.

Seagoon:

Listen, you with the concrete west, listen - I've got to get to Pevensey Bay Station as soon as possible.

Eccles:

Oww - I'm the famous Eccles. In the good ol' summertime - and I'm the famous Eccles in the wintertime as well -

Seagoon:

Now then - hey! That tricycle against the wall - whose is it?

Eccles:

Mine - a present from an admirer.

Seagoon:

Could you drive me to town on it?

Eccles:

Oh, the tricycle ain't mine - the wall was the present.

Seagoon:

Well, drive me there on that -

Eccles:

Right - get on the wall and hold tight.

Grams:

*[Series of mad sounds played at speed to sound like some kind of combustion engine]*

Greenslade:

The sound you are hearing is Neddie and Eccles driving a wall at speed. We thought you ought to know. Meantime, at Pevensey Bay station.

Fx:

*[Phone rings. Phone off hook.]*

Henry Crun:

Hello, Pevensey Bay station here.

Sellers:

*[Distort-gram recording: long mad unintelligible speech]*

Henry Crun:

I'm sorry, he's not in.

Fx:

*[Phone down. Door bursts open. Blizzard up. Door closes. Blizzard out.]*

Seagoon:

(gasping) Mr. Crun - Mr. Crun - Has the snow-plough been through here yet?

Henry Crun:

No, no, I've had all the doors locked you see...

Seagoon:

Thank yuckakabakkas, we're still in time - first I must get these bonds untied - have you got a knot?

Henry Crun:

Yes, yes.

Seagoon:

Quick, glue one onto my bonds and then untie them.

Greenslade:

Listeners, as knot-glueing and untying has no audible sound we suggest you make your own - within reason, that is.

Grams:

*[Fred the Oyster]*

Seagoon:

(dry) I knew someone would spoil it now - thank you Fred the Oyster, but now my hands were free - now for action!

Henry Crun:

Yes, yes, but what is all this about -

Seagoon:

Shhh, listen - what's that noise?

Grams:

*[Very obvious train pulling up at station.]*

Seagoon:

It's a train!!!

Grams:

*[Storms of applause]*

Seagoon:

Thank you, Seagoon fans, it was nothing.

Henry Crun:

Mr. Seacrune - it's the snow-plough come to clear the line - hooray!!

Seagoon:

No, no, the two men on that snow-plough are train robbers! We must stop them.

Henry Crun:

Oh, don't worry - the moment they step through that door I'll let them have it with this leather blunderbuss.

Fx:

*[Knock on door]*

Seagoon:

(whisper) It's them - (aloud) Ahem - come in, nice men.

Fx:

*[Door opens - Roar of blunderbuss]*

Bluebottle:

You rotten swines you!!! What are you doing to Blunebottle - I was walking along collecting numbers like a happy boy train spotter when - blange - there was a blinding flash - I reeled backwards clutching my forehead - I looked down and my knees had gone and certain other vital things - you swines you!

Seagoon:

Little cross-eyed hairless pipe-cleaner - were you followed up the platform by two men?

Bluebottle:

I'm not going to tell you - shooting at me like that.

Seagoon:

Come, come, little two-stone Hercules - tell me if you saw two men and you can have this quarter of dolly mixture.

Bluebottle:

Cor, dolly mixture - thinks - with those-type sweets I could influence certain girls at playtime - that Brenda Pugh might be another Rita Hayworth.

Seagoon:

Then you'll tell me?

Bluebottle:

Yes - I saw the two nice men walking up the line towards the signal box - yes.

Seagoon:

We must stop them at once - but we'll pause first to hear Ray Ellington.

Bluebottle:

Ooooo - smashin'.

Ray Ellington Quartet:

*[Musical Interlude: "I Want You To Be My Baby"]*

Greenslade:

Thank you, Ray Ellington. I'm sure you mean well - We rejoin 'The Hasting Flyer - Robbed' inside the signal box west of Pevensey Bay station. Which will play a vitally unimportant part in the story.

Grams:

*[Wind]*

Willium:

*Zzzzzzz* mate.

Fx:

*[Phone bell rings]*

Willium:

Oh strufe cor blimestone a crow - *zzzzzzz* mate.

Fx:

*[Phone bell rings]*

Willium:

Ow ow ow ow - wahszat mate?

Fx:

*[Phone rings]*

Willium:

Oh, it's the torking telephone ringing mate.

Fx:

*[Phone rings]*

Willium:

There it goes again mate.

Fx:

*[Phone rings]*

Willium:

And again - and unless I'm mistaken it's going to go -

Fx:

*[Phone rings]*

Willium:

- again mate.

Fx:

*[Phone off hook]*

Willium:

Hello, Pevensey Bay signal box man here mate.

Seagoon:

Listen mate, put the signals to danger - stop the Hasting Flyer.

William:

Oh - I'll do that -

Fx:

[Wallop on head.

Seagoon:

(distort) Hello, hello mate?

Fx:

*[Phone is dropped into place on hook]*

Grytpype:

(very cold) All very nicely done, Moriarty mate. Now let's have a look, there's a bridge to the right - good, take these sticks of dynamite, place them in the centre of the span and run the wires back here. When the Hastings Flyer comes across - we press the plunger.

Moriarty:

Ha he ho har har - then the money from the bullion van - ho ho har, moolah - April in Paris...  
Thanks to a Charlie...

Fx:

*[Rattling of phone hook]*

Seagoon:

Hello, signal box - hello - he's hung up, mate.

Eccles:

We'd better go and cut him down, mate.

Seagoon:

You're right - Eccles, get your wall started.

Bluebottle:

What about me, Captain - can't I come in the game?

Seagoon:

Yes - only an idiot would leave you behind.

Eccles:

Leave him behind.

Seagoon:

Silence, the famous Eccles.

Eccles:

Silence, the famous Eccies.

Seagoon:

Bluebottle - take this photograph of a red flag, go and stand on the bridge near the signal box - if the Hastings Flyer approaches - stop it at all costs!

Bluebottle:

I will - I will - I will be a hero! - My picture will be in the East Finchley Chronic - 'Boy hero Bluebottle' - he he - thinks - that will make that Muriel Bates run after me - but I will play hard to get - 'I'm sorry Miss Bates - I am a busy boy hero - I have got certain matters to attend to - I have to be photographed with Sabrina' - yesss, that's what I'll say - thinks - here (awe) that Sabrina a fine big girl. Heee.

Bluebottle:

Yes - he he - thinks - I better start wearin' long trousers soon.

Minnie Bannister:

Oh dear. Mr. Secrune - don't leave us alone with those two train robbers about - we'll be murdered in our ticket offices.

Seagoon:

Don't worry, Miss Bannister - here, take this copy of the Nursing Mother - if you're attacked - don't hesitate to use it.

Minnie Bannister:

Safe at last. Oooooo.

Seagoon:

My dear madam, with your face, you'd be safe in Portsmouth on pay night.

Minnie Bannister:

Oooo.

Seagoon:

Come men, we must hurry - the hairs on my wrist say it's quarter to needle nardle noo.

Bluebottle:

Yes, forward to the bridge.

Orchestra:

Very tatty boys' Brigade March. Fade out.

Grams:

*[Fade up blizzard and down]*

William:

Ow ow ow - you hit me on me head and tied me up mates.

Moriarty:

Shut up mate - Sapristi nuckoes yuk yuk kuk kuk - Grytpype - the hairs on my wrist say it's midnight o'clock - and there's no sign of the Hastings Flyer!

Grytpype:

Steady, frog-eater, steady - obviously the blizzard's delayed the train.

Moriarty:

(cracks up) I'm not going to wait any longer - my nerves are strained to breaking point!

Fx:

*[Boingg!]*

Moriarty:

There goes one now - ohh, I can't stand the strain...

Grytpype:

Shut up! Open your mouth.

Moriarty:

Ahhh -

Grytpype:

Close it.

Grams:

*[Grenade explodes in mouth. Mouth full of teeth fall on the floor.]*

Moriarty:

You swine - you put a grenade in my mouth - all my choppers have gone - my teeth!

Grytpype:

Let that be a lesson to you - now control yourself.

Grams:

*[Sound of Bloodnok bearing his bass drum.]*

Grytpype:

Great goose hooks - look, it's a military gentleman walking up the line - and he's banging a drum.

Moriarty:

You English are so musical.

Grytpype:

Yes, the woods are full of them. Now let's sit quietly and wait for the Hastings Flyer.

Grams:

*[Blizzard up. Then under:]*

Bluebottle:

Captain, captain, look what I found in the bridge.

Seagoon:

Dynamite - thank heaven you found it.

Bluebottle:

Thank you, heaven.

Seagoon:

Good. Now put it somewhere for safety.

Bluebottle:

Yes - moves right - puts dreaded dynamite under signal box for safety - does not notice dreaded wires leading to plunger up in signal cabin. Thinks. I'm for the dreaded deading alright this week.

Seagoon:

Men - our two train robbers are up in that signal cabin. Eccles, you go up the line and try to stop the Hastings Flyer - I'll try and put the signals to danger.

Eccles:

O.K.

Seagoon:

Bluebottle, you keep me covered with this photograph of a gun. Right - let's go in -

Fx:

*[Door kicked]*

Seagoon:

Hands up!

Moriarty:

Sapristi, look: Sabrina.

Seagoon:

Wrong, it's me with my arms folded!

Gryttype:

So, Neddie, you managed to get your hands free.

Seagoon:

Yes - they never cost me a penny, thanks to National Health!

Grams:

*[Distant toot of train approaching]*

Moriarty:

It's the Hastings Flyer - with all that money on board - ohh, foiled!

Seagoon:

Yes - I've got to stop it or it'll crash into the snow plough at Pevensey Bay station.

Gryttype:

(Idea) Oh - er - you can easily stop it - just press that little plunger with the wires leading out the window.

Seagoon:

Right - ugh!

Gryttype:

(Aside) Here goes the bridge, Mori...

Grams:

*[Tremendous cracking explosion. Little bits and pieces hit the deck (not spot).]*

Bluebottle:

You rotten swines, I told you I'd be deaded.

Greenslade:

Yes, they're all deaded, but who got the money from the bullion van in the Hastings Flyer?

Grams:

*[Drums]*

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 and Max Geidray. The orchestra was conducted by Wally Stott. Script by Spike Milligan. Announcer: Wallace Greenslade. The programme was produced by Peter Eton.

Orchestra:

*[Outro]*