

Vintage E08 - The Mustard and Cress Shortage

Transcribed by unknown. Final corrections by Helen.

ORCHESTRA:

OPENING TUNE

OMNES:

HI!

GREENSLADE:

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Sir Malcolm Sergent. The solo violin part was played by Jack Benny on the drums. Guy Lombardo's 'Book of Party Games' is now on sale, price two shillings at all good drug stores.

MILLIGAN:

Listeners are possibly wondering what this is all about. Well, we shall see, folks. Ahahahah...

SELLERS:

Yes, we shall see. As we presont...

SEAGOON:

The Collapse of the British Railway Sandwich System. Or...

ORCHESTRA:

RISING CHORDS

MILLIGAN:

I was General Wolf's Chiropodist, by John Bunion. Or...

SEAGOON:

The Collapse of General Wolf's Saxophone System on the Manitoba Sandwich Railway. Or...

FX:

RATCHET RATTLE, PING, POP, SCALE, POP, RATTLE, HORN, BELL,

MILLIGAN:

We shall see.

GRAMS:

EASTERN MUSIC (AND SINGING) SETTING.

HERN:

[SELLERS]

Story opens in the hell. The hell that drives many a normal person sane. The hell that we Londoners know as... Victoria Station Tea Buffet.

SECOMBE:

Ahhhhhh! (FADES)

MILLIGAN:

Into this den of vice strode a man. Ragged, tattered, forlorn. His appearance told us that he was Middle-class Englishman.

GREENSLADE:

With a pounding heart...

MILLIGAN:

Toonnggg

GREENSLADE:

...he approaches the counter and speaks.

PASSENGER:

(YORKSHIRE ACCENT) Cup of tea, please.

SELLERS:

There was courage for you.

PASSENGER:

I say, Miss, did you 'ear?

WAITRESS:

[SELLERS]

Just a minute. Can't you see I've only got one pair of fingers?

PASSENGER:

But I've got a train to catch.

FX:

BANGING SOMETHING ON COUNTER

PASSENGER:

Oy, Miss. Ay! Did you 'ear me, can I have a cup of tea? I say!

WAITRESS:

Do you want to buy a sausage roll?

PASSENGER:

No.

WAITRESS:

Well stop bangin' it on the counter then.

PASSENGER:

I want to complain about this sandwich. It tastes like muck.

WAITRESS:

Well, of course, it's a muck sandwich.

PASSENGER:

I wanted a mustard and cress.

WAITRESS:

Alright, I'll get you one. Ohh! Cheeky, you are. I say, someone's pinched all the mustard and cress out of the sandwiches and (SHRIEKS) ohhh!

ORCHESTRA:

SUSPENSEFUL CHORDS

WAITRESS:

Someone's pinched all the mustard and cress out of the sandwiches.

GREENSLADE:

And that was the first sign of the great mustard and cress shortage that was to cause havoc to British Railways.

SELLERS:

Investigations were commenced by your favourite midget, Captain Gladys Seagoon, sometimes called by the same name.

SEAGOON:

Yes, Captain Seagoon. Oxford university, Kings College, Cambridge, Trinity College, Dublin. Ah, ha, I know where they all are. To investigate the mustard and cress disappearances I called at several station buffets.

GRAMS:

TRAVELLING TRAINS NOISES, FAR OFF WHISTLE

ELLINGTON:

I was with him.

SEAGOON:

The Man in Black. Together we approached the counter.

WAITRESS:

Yes, Constables?

SEAGOON:

I'm no Constable, I'm Seagoon, plain clothes man.

WAITRESS:

Then what you dressed like a policeman for?

SEAGOON:

I'm in disguise.

ELLINGTON:

Me, too.

WAITRESS:

Yes. I can see you're well disguised, you are. Now, what d'you want?

SEAGOON:

Mustard and cress sandwich.

WAITRESS:

You want bread with it?

SEAGOON:

No, I don't like luxuries.

WAITRESS:

Oh well, you've 'ad it, we ain't got no mustard and cress.

SEAGOON:

How much will that be?

WAITRESS:

Well now, let's see. Mustard and cress sandwich with no bread. No bread with no mustard and cress. So, one and a tanner.

SEAGOON:

One and six for nothing?

WAITRESS:

Yes.

SEAGOON:

That's very cheap. Have you change of a hundred pound note?

WAITRESS:

Yes.

SEAGOON:

Marry me!

WAITRESS:

Who to?

SEAGOON:

Ellington, this waitress, I'm suspicious of her.

ELLINGTON:

Man, you're right. Her moustache has just fallen off.

SEAGOON:

Yes. It was a false. She isn't a woman, she's, erm... erm, what's the other sex?

ELLINGTON:

Man.

SEAGOON:

That's it, man, yes. You, madam. You're an imposter. You're not a woman.

BLUEBOTTLE:

You're right. 'Tis I, Bluebottule. Arch criminule. And master of Roy Rogers Junior Disguise Kit. Price two shillings at all good drug stores.

SEAGOON:

You fiend incarnate!

BLUEBOTTLE: Ay!

SEAGOON:

What's your part in the mustard and cress shortage?

BLUEBOTTLE:

I play the part of Bluebottle. A-hee-hee! I've destroyed every mustard and cress place in the world. Aha hai. Moves dramatically up to counter, strikes pose.

FX:

BOWL STRUCK.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Also strike cheese dish.

SEAGOON:

Bluebottle... Bluebottle, I arrest you in the lim of the law. The... the... the nim of the lee. I arrest you in the lum hundred and four.

GREENSLADE:

Look, may I help?

SEAGOON:

Thank you.

GREENSLADE:

He arrests you in the lom of the knee.

SEAGOON:

Thank you.

SEAGOON:

Now, Bluebottle, are you going to come quietly or do I have to use earplugs?

BLUEBOTTLE:

You shall not capture me. Hands up, feet down.

SEAGOON:

Look out, Ellington! He's got a Flash Gordon cardboard ray gun. Price two shillings, obtainable at all good drug stores.

BLUEBOTTLE:

You will not take me alive!

SEAGOON:

I'm perfectly willing to agree to that arrangement.

ELLINGTON:

Boss! That's a *real* gun.

SEAGOON:

Don't panic. Ha, ha. Get behind me.

ELLINGTON:

Where *you* going?

SEAGOON:

Behind you.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Rather than capture, I will shoot myself through the lapels of my suit. Bang, bang. Curse, I missed me. Ahoi! A new lease of life. Exits left to join skiffle group. (CHIFF A CHIFF A NOISES AND SINGING TO HIMSELF)

SEAGOON:

Curse! He's escaped in a pair of boots.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Ee!

SEAGOON:

We'll report this. England must be told that British Railways mustard and cress is no more.

MILLIGAN:

(OLD) But first, let's hear Max Geldray and his old Dutch conk. Oh-ho-ho!

SECOMBE:

Curse! Exit Seagoon to the wings and the brandy! Ha-ha-haaaaa.... (FADES)

MAX GELDRAI:

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

GREENSLADE:

Now the play part two. In which Neddie Seagoon visits a certain man for information.

GRAMS:

CHICKENS CLUCKING CONTINUES UNDER:

CRUN:

(OVER) Ah. Min, Min, Min. Minnie. Min, Min, Min, Min, Min. Min.

MINNIE:

Stop... stop calling that chicken 'Minnie', I'm Minnie. What... what's the matter with you?

CRUN:

I think the rooster's sick, Min.

MINNIE:

Oh... oh, dear, dear, dear. Why?

CRUN:

He's just laid an egg.

MINNIE:

Ahhh, he's an imposter, I tell you.

CRUN:

Yes.

MINNIE:

He's just a naughty imposter.

CRUN: Ohhh...

MINNIE:

Lots of them doing it these days, you know.

CRUN:

Oh.

MINNIE:

Oh, dear. Well, I suppose I... I must get on with my saxophone practice.

CRUN:

Yes.

ORCHESTRA:

SAXOPHONE PLAYING 'DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEXAS' CONTINUES UNDER:

FX:

KNOCKING ON DOOR IN TIME WITH MUSIC

CRUN:

Someone at the door, Min. I can hear someone at the door.

FX:

KNOCKING ON DOOR IN TIME WITH MUSIC

CRUN:

There's someone at the door.

FX:

DOOR OPENED.

ORCHESTRA:

SAXOPHONE STOPS

FX:

KNOCKING STOPS

MINNIE:

Please would you knock in time with my playing.

FX:

DOOR CLOSED.

MINNIE:

One, two, three.

ORCHESTRA:

SAXOPHONE RESUMES:

FX:

KNOCKING ON DOOR, A BIT MORE RAGGED

FX:

DOOR OPENED

ORCHESTRA:

SAXOPHONE STOPS

FX:

KNOCKING STOPS

MINNIE:

What are you doing out there, man?

SEAGOON:

I was knocking.

CRUN:

Ah, you must be a theatrical agent. But you weren't knocking in rhythm.

SEAGOON:

I was playing a different tune, it was Waltzes From Vienna Stakes.

CRUN:

Well, what do you want, sir?

SEAGOON:

It's regarding the Mustard and Cress shortage.

CRUN:

Ohhh!

MINNIE:

Ohhh!

CRUN:

Ohhh!

MINNIE:

Ohhh!

SEAGOON:

You're a farmer, yes?

CRUN:

Indeed I am, I can grow anything.

SEAGOON:

Got green fingers, eh?

CRUN:

And green toes. I'm going mouldy all over. I've got those Bernard Miles.

MINNIE:

Yababuba...

SEAGOON:

You're just the man the British Railways need.

MINNIE:

Ohhh! (SINGS) I love that old British Railway Waltz!

CRUN:

Stop that, Min.

MINNIE:

(SINGS) I've been passed around the night[?] together...

CRUN:

Stop it, Min.

MINNIE:

(SINGS) In a non-smoker we can play poker...

CRUN:

Min!

MINNIE:

(SINGS) Over the tracks with you...

CRUN:

Modern Min!

MINNIE:

Ooooooh-eeeeee...

CRUN:

Ohhhh, youuuu....

MINNIE:

What's that matter you?

CRUN:

You sinful branch line melody woman.

MINNIE:

Well, I've got - must practice, Henry, Buddy.

CRUN:

What?

MINNIE:

My day will come. Ohhhh. (SINGS NONSENSE)

SEAGOON:

Now may I come in?

CRUN:

As you are already lying on the couch, yes.

SEAGOON:

Mr Crun, the British Railways want you to grow them six thousand acres of mustard and cress in the Amazon.

CRUN:

Very well, I'll get my hat. (CALLS) Min?

MINNIE:

What did you say?

CRUN:

I'm just going to the Amazon.

MINNIE:

Well, we careful.

CRUN:

I shall be away for six years, Min.

MINNIE:

I'll put your dinner in the oven, Henry.

CRUN:

Goodbye, modern Min.

MINNIE:

Goodbye, Henry. (STARTS SINGING NONSENSE AGAIN). Merry Christmas, Henry.

ORCHESTRA:

MUSIC LINK

GRAMS:

FROGS, ETC. FOREST NOISES

GREENSLADE:

Meanwhile in the Amazon, the British Ambassador is going about his duties.

ORCHESTRA:

BLOODNOK THEME

BLOODNOK:

Ohhhh! Oh, me ows, me ows. Oh, no more Christmas pudding for me. Oh, dear.

SPRIGGS:

Major, Major, Major.

BLOODNOK: What?

SPRIGGS: Not in the Amazon, please. (SINGS) Not in the Amazon, puh-leeeeease.

BLOODNOK:

Nonsense, nobody will notice.

SPRIGGS:

I tell you, no fishing is allowed, Jim, in the Amazon. (SINGS) In the Amazonnnnnn.

BLOODNOK:

I tell you I was not fishing for fish.

SPRIGGS:

Ohh? Ohhh. Then what are you fishing for, Jim?

BLOODNOK:

I was fishing for water.

SPRIGGS:

Ohh. Oh, why?

BLOODNOK:

The river's full of it. Why I caught a piece of water that long, I tell you.

SPRIGGS:

Ahh, Jim I must have – should have seen the one that got away.

BLOODNOK:

It took me all day to dry it out, I tell you. Now, hand me my tin of spon cleaner.

SPRIGGS:

Spon cleaner? Why the spon cleaner, Ji-immmm?

BLOODNOK:

Shall I tell you why?

SPRIGGS:

Tell me, Ji-immmm.

BLOODNOK:

Because I want to scour the horizon! A-ha, ha, ha, ha,ha, hohhh. Jungle Dennis, you're in form today. No chord from the band, please. Humble, tumble, tingle, too.

ELLINGTON:

Yes, mate.

BLOODNOK:

Any signs of that dreaded river steamer?

ELLINGTON:

No, no sign, mate.

BLOODNOK:

Ohh. Fifty-three years in this plastic grass hut and no milk or papers delivered from England.

ECCLES:

Oh.

BLOODNOK:

Do you think Gladstone's forgotten us?

ECCLES:

That's one question that i can't answer.

BLOODNOK:

Why not?

ECCLES:

That's another question I can't answer.

BLOODNOK:

Spoken like an idiot.

ECCLES:

My speciality.

BLOODNOK:

So I have noticed.

ECCLES:

Ha, ha, ha-ha, hooo.

BLOODNOK:

Well. No milk, so we'll make tea without it.

ECCLES:

But we ain't got any tea.

BLOODNOK:

Very well, then, we'll make it without tea as well.

ECCLES:

But you can't make tea without milk.

BLOODNOK:

Then - and I quote - "We'll make milk without tea".

ECCLES:

Milk without tea? Tea without milk? (QUIETLY) I think the Major's mad.

BLOODNOK:

(ASIDE) Little does he know that I am perfectly sane, and it is Mad Dan Eccles who is mad.

ECCLES:

Ahh, Major. He must be loony. He wants tea without milk or tea or milk.

BLOODNOK:

(ASIDE) Little does he know that if he calls me loony just once more, I shall let him have it with me old gun, here.

ECCLES:

(ASIDE) little does he know that I unloaded his gun, because I know he was mad.

FX:

SHOT.

ECCLES:

How many sugars, Major? A-ha-ho!

BLOODNOK:

None! I never take sugar with no tea or no milk.

SPRIGGS:

Jim! Jim! Ji-iiim!

BLOODNOK:

What?

SPRIGGS:

Ther was a man and his legs just come out of that bush.

BLOODNOK:

It's a shepherd.

ECCLES:

It must be Shepherd's Bush! (LAUGHS)

FX:

SHOT

ECCLES:

Sugar?

ELLINGTON:

Don't... don't shoot! Me Ellinga. River boat coming.

BLOODNOK:

Then play 'em a melody in well-known three-four time... while I get the old brandy! Ohhhh....! (FADE)

FX:

STAMPEDE OF FEET

RAY ELLINGTON QUARTET:

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

BLOODNOK:

Well played, Ellington, well played. Handel's Largo never sounded so good. Now pardon me while I retire and change into my Crun outfit, price two shillings from all good drug stores.

ELLINGTON:

Wait! Here comes Captain Seagoon... (CORPSES)

SECOMBE:

(OFF) 'Wait', he says!

ELLINGTON:

As I was saying, wait, here comes Captain Seagoon with the expedition.

BLOODNOK:

Gad, yes, he's a sight for sore eyes. It's a pity I haven't got a pair handy.

SEAGOON:

Ahhhhhhh, good day, Mr Bloodnok.

BLOODNOK:

Pleased to meet you, Captain Seagoon. Welcome to... where are we?

SEAGOON:

South America.

BLOODNOK:

Welcome to that. And to you. And by gad, you must have walked all the way.

SEAGOON:

What makes you think so?

BLOODNOK:

Well, you're so short.

SEAGOON:

There's a very good reason for that.

BLOODNOK:

What?

SEAGOON:

I can't stand heights.

BLOODNOK:

Spoken like a pygmy. And talking of pygmies, have you any brandy with you?

SEAGOON:

Crates of it.

BLOODNOK:

(EXCITED) Ohhhh! Welcome to South America.

SEAGOON:

You said that before.

BLOODNOK:

I know, but this time I *mean* it. Now, let's waltz and get you settled.

SEAGOON:

Yes. Ellington?

ELLINGTON:

Boss?

SEAGOON:

We camp here for the night. But as a safety precaution we must light large bonfires all round the camp.

ELLINGTON:

What for?

SEAGOON:

Lions.

ELLINGTON:

Man, if the lions want fires, let 'em light 'em themselves.

SEAGOON:

That night we slept safely in the trees as the lions warmed themselves by our fires. Then at dawn, Eccles awoke.

ECCLES:

(FALLING)ooooooooOOOOOOWWWW!

FX:

BODY FALLS TO GROUND

ECCLES:

I forgot I was in a tree.

BLOODNOK:

Get up, man, and stand on your own three feet, will you.

SEAGOON:

Are we ready to move off, Major?

BLOODNOK:

Yes, we've got to head inland. The first danger will be crossing the dreaded River Carpa-tee. And that's very cold.

SEAGOON:

Yes, there's nothing worse than a cold carpa-tee!

BLOODNOK:

(OFF) Oh, yes!

MILLIGAN:

Now available in volumes, folks.

BLOODNOK:

A chestnut in every scene. Right, pick up your luggage and sideways to the wind. Phish-too. Forward!

FX:

GRUNTING OF MANY LARGE ANIMALS, TRAMP OF BOOTS

ECCLES:

Dum-ba-la-dum. Marchin' along. Marchin' [UNCLEAR], marchin' along. Left, right, left, right, middle, left, right, left. Hey, Ellington, it's getting hot.

ELLINGTON:

Yeah, are you tired already?

ECCLES:

Yeah, I ain't very strong, you know.

ELLINGTON:

Okay. I'll take some of your load. Now, er, give me one of your pianos.

ECCLES:

Oh, thanks. (STRAINING) Didn't know you were musical. Ah! There! There, that's better. Thank you, Ellington.

ELLINGTON:

That's okay. I'm not too heavy for you, am I?

ECCLES:

No. I'll put you down when I'm tired.

BLOODNOK:

Keep up there, you lazy devils. I say, I'm not too heavy for you, am I Ellington?

ELLINGTON:

No.

SEAGOON:

Major! Major! I'm not too heavy for you, am I, Major?

BLOODNOK:

No, no, no.

ECCLES:

I'm not too heavy for you am I, Captain Seagoon?

GREENSLADE:

(PAUSE) We pause here to give listeners at home and in the street a recap of the situation. If you remember, Eccles was supporting Ellington, Bloodnok and Seagoon on his head. Suddenly, Mr. Eccles has appeared on top of Captain Seagoon, thus leaving all of them suspended in mid-air.

SELLERS:

Listeners, write down on a piece of paper what *you* think will happen. (PAUSE) Have you done that? Good. Now listen to what actually happened.

GRAMS:

EXPLOSION, BAGPIPE MELODY, WHISTLE, GALLOPING HORSES, SKIDDING VEHICLE, GLASS BREAKING, BLUE DANUBE WALTZ, STEAM TRAIN WHISTLE, TRAIN PASSING, LOGS FALLING, SEIG HEIL CHANT, ROCKET WHOOSH, PHISH-TOO, SPLASH

LITTLE JIM:

He's fallen in the wa-tah.

SELLERS:

Yes, you guessed it. They all fell in the wata. Now read on.

SEAGOON:

That night, for safety, we slept standing up. Some slept standing down, which is standing up sideways. Priced two shillings at all good drug stores. Then... as the sun came up it started to get light. Before me lay a vast, arid waste.

BLOODNOK:

It was me.

ELLINGTON:

(APPROACHING) Boss. Boss. There's a tribe of savage natives approachin'.

BLOODNOK:

Oh, ho, ho, ohhhh! What? Which way are they approaching?

ELLINGTON:

Towards us.

BLOODNOK:

Then we must approach away from them. Leave them to me. Savage natives, are they? I'll show them. Hand me the white flag, will you. Where's my batwoman?

SEAGOON:

You mean batman.

BLOODNOK:

Those days are gone for ever, lad. Ah, here she comes now, Miss Plunger.

THROAT:

Yes, Major.

BLOODNOK:

Remember when we were sinking in the Atlantic and there was no room in the lifeboats. I said 'women and children first', remember?

THROAT:

Yes, I do.

BLOODNOK:

Well, remember what you did?

THROAT:

Yes. Made you up as a woman.

BLOODNOK:

Stand by to do the same again.

SEAGOON:

Bloodnok, I think you're nervous.

BLOODNOK:

What? Say that again.

SEAGOON:

You're a yellow-livered coward.

BLOODNOK:

That's much better.

SEAGOON:

I knew you'd like it.

BLOODNOK:

Anyone for tennis? Oh, what am I saying??

ECCLES:

Hey!

BLOODNOK:

Oh, oh!

ECCLES:

Ellington's goin' after dem natives with his gun.

SEAGOON:

Splendid, Ellington's a dead shot.

ECCLES:

He is now, somebody shot 'im.

BLOODNOK:

What's that? I'll not stand here and see my men slaughtered. Eccles?

ECCLES:

Eccle... ow, yer?

BLOODNOK:

What time's the next train out of here?

SEAGOON:

No, Bloodnok, you must stay here and fight.

BLOODNOK:

Very well, your example has made me stay.

SEAGOON:

Splendid. Eccles?

ECCLES:

Yer?

SEAGOON:

What time's the next train out?

BLOODNOK:

I heard that!

ELLINGTON:

Hey! If you're runnin' away, I'm comin', too.

BLOODNOK:

Ellington, are you turning yellow?

ELLINGTON:

Man, does it look like it?

SEAGOON:

Oi, Ellington, you were shot. You're dead.

ELLINGTON:

I am, but I don't want to stay out and get killed.

CRUN:

Gentlemen, what about the mustard and cress shortage?

MINNIE:

What about the modern shortage?

CRUN:

I'm not waiting all night, you know.

MINNIE:

He's not waiting...

GRAMS:

GUNFIRE, RICOCHETS, NATIVE WAR CRIES

MINNIE:

Ohhhh!

CRUN:

Ohhhh!

MINNIE:

We'll all be murdered in our beds!

BLOODNOK:

(OVER) The natives are attacking on gramophone records.

SEAGOON:

Right. Everyone into this wooden hut.

BLOODNOK:

We haven't got one.

SEAGOON:

Start building.

FX:

SPED UP HAMMERING

SEAGOON:

Hup! All in.

FX:

THUD OF DOOR CLOSING

BLOODNOK:

Safe inside.

FX:

PHONE RINGS.

NURKE:

[SECOMBE]

(ON PHONE) Hello, have you any rooms to let?

BLOODNOK:

No.

NURKE:

Oh, [UNCLEAR].

FX:

PHONE DOWN.

BLOODNOK:

Surrounded by victims of the Rent Act.

SEAGOON:

Never fear. Eccles?

ECCLES:

Yeah?

SEAGOON:

How many rounds of ammunition have we got left?

FX:

SIX PISTOL SHOTS

ECCLES:

Six!

SEAGOON:

Good. And they sounded alright, too.

ECCLES:

Yah.

CRUN:

Gentlemen, I... what's this! My dinner's in the oven, I tell you.

MINNIE:

Phish-too.

CRUN:

Fish, too. I came here to grow fish and too and mustard and cress and ..

SEAGOON:

Look out! There's a native at the window! Duck!

GRAMS:

MACHINE-GUN FIRE

ECCLES:

Ooh.

BLOODNOK:

Gad, that native was clever.

SEAGOON:

Why?

BLOODNOK:

He only had a spear.

SEAGOON:

What a brilliant impressionist he was. Ask him if he can do an impression of the end of the Goon Show.

BLOODNOK:

I'll ask him. Kala munga dinga walla tunga lalla coo.

NATIVE:

[MILLIGAN]

Ayalla. Umba calla dunga doo. (SINGS) oolooloo dooolulu... (CONTINUES UNDER)

GREENSLADE:

(OVER) You've been listening to a native doing an impression of the Goon Show signing off tune. I'll say they're jolly clever. Goodbye.

ORCHESTRA:

SIGNATURE 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. Announcer: Wallace Greenslade. The program produced by Tom Ronald. Listeners will ask, what happened to the great mustard and cress shortage. Nothing. Next time you're in a railway buffet... oh, well for what!

ORCHESTRA:

SIGNATURE TUNE CONTINUES