

ITMA sketch for VE Day "jolly" May 6th 1995

Tommy Hanley Roger Barrett

Funf Pam Barrett

Flying Officer Kite Stella Abbey

Colonel Chinstrap Philip Kershaw

Mrs Mop Pam Barrett

Ali-baba Lisa Bowditch

Elsie Stella Abbey

Doris Jean Peacock

Poppy-poopah Jean Peacock

Voice of Valentine Dyall Philip Kershaw

ITMA SKETCH

Introduction There was no television in wartime: radio was the essential medium, both for news and entertainment. Those of us who are old enough to remember avidly tuning in to a valve-powered "wireless" set to hear the latest war bulletin or thankfully relax to a comedy programme. The most famous of these was ITMA (it's that man again). Here is our own short version of ITMA, combined with another very popular radio programme - Workers' Playtime.

RADIO STUDIO: microphone, actors with scripts, telephone.

TOMMY HANLEY The BBC building in London is having a re-furbishment after the last air-raid, so we've been evacuated to a secret location somewhere in Somerset.

(Picks up phone) Hallo, yes? Who's that?

FUNF This is Funf speaking.

TOMMY Hallo. Can you tell us where we're going?

FUNF Careless talk costs lives.

TOMMY I know. But the war's over now. Can't you give us a clue?

FUNF The grid reference is 372069. Toodle-oo.

TOMMY Toodle-oo? He must be relaxing. Now, who would know where this place is? I know: Flying Officer Kite. (Picks up phone) Flying Officer Kite?

Just check a map reference for me, would you? 372069.

FLYING OK Wacko. No problem. It's Winsham, in Somerset. Bang on target, eh?

TOMMY Thanks, Flying Officer Kite.

FLYING OK Jolly good show, Tommy. Wizard prang. Over and out.

TOMMY Now, what shall we need to take? I gather milk comes out of cows in the country and eggs come out of hens. Don't like the sound of that. Better take our own food and drink.

COLONEL CHINSTRAP Drink? I don't mind if I do.

TOMMY Ah, Colonel Chinstrap, you're used to military manouvres. Perhaps you can arrange the transport.

COL.CHIN. Transport? Port? Don't mind if I do.
TOMMY Oh, he's hopeless. MMM, bit of a mess in here after that last doodle-bug landed up the street. There's dust everywhere. I'd better get it cleaned up.

MRS MOP Can I do ya now sir?
TOMMY Ah, Mrs Mop, just the woman I need. Could you give this room a clean-up before we move out?

MRS MOP Anything for you sir. You know I love doing for you sir.
TOMMY All right, not now, Mrs Mop. Got your mop and duster?

MRS MOP Right here sir. (Brandishes feather duster)
TOMMY We're moving down to the country, Mrs Mop. Does that tickle your fancy?

MRS MOP Ooh, sir, I'll tickle your fancy any time.
TOMMY And when you've finished, make us a nice cup of tea? The cup that cheers, eh?

COL.CHIN. Cheers? I don't mind if I do.
TOMMY Colonel! I was talking about tea. Now, please get on and arrange that transport - at the ~~double~~ double!

COL.CHIN. Double? Delighted. I don't mind if I do.
ALI-BABA PSST! Hey, mister. Want to meet my sister?
TOMMY Oh no, it's that sleazy fella, the postcard seller. What have you got there?

ALI-BABA You are right. Naughty postcards. Words are witty, pictures pretty.
TOMMY Come on, none of that. We're going to a respectable place in the country called Winsham. See if you can find some pictures of that.

ALI-BABA Oh sir. Country views - no news. Rain is pouring-very boring.
TOMMY Never mind. Try and find some.
ALI-BABA Okay. I go - I come back
TOMMY That's got rid of him. His merchandise always sounded a bit rum to me.

COL.CHIN. Did someone mention rum? I don't mind if I do

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ITMA 13

TOMMY

Colonel, if you're not going to help, just go and have a snooze.

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COL.CHIN.

Booze? That's what I thought you said.

I don't mind if I...

TOMMY

Not now, Colonel! Who can help me with this programme?...I know, what about Elsie and Doris Waters? Everyone listens to Workers' Playtime at half past twelve, so they should be finished by now.

ELSIE

Hallo, Gert. Do you know, yesterday I joined a queue half a mile long.

DORIS

Did you Daisie? What was the queue for?

ELSIE

I was told it was for flour.

DORIS

Going to make a cake, were you?

ELSIE

Yes. I'd got my dried egg, my two ounces of sugar left over from my ration, some prunes instead of currants, and some dried milk powder.

DORIS

Sounds lovely. And did you get the flour?

ELSIE

Yes, but not what I expected. This was it! (produces a flower from behind her back) Look, one carnation!

DORIS

Never mind. Better luck next time, eh?

ELSIE

Yes, keep smiling. There was fish pie on the menu in the canteen today. Did you notice?

DORIS

Yes, whale meat and sardine.

ELSIE

I tried it. It was one whale to one sardine! Doris, you're limping. Have you hurt your foot?

DORIS

No. I went to buy some new shoes last week.

ELSIE

But you've only got one shoe on.

DORIS

so

That's right. I didn't have enough coupons, so I only bought the left shoe. I'll get the right one next week.

ELSIE

Never mind, that one looks lovely, dear. Chin up, eh? keep smiling!

TOMMY

Thank you, Gert and Daisie. Now let's think. Now let's think. How can we entertain the locals down in Somerset? Who's this?

ITMA 4

VOICE OF VALENTINE DYALL I am the man in black.

TOMMY Ooh, sounds a bit scary to me.

VAL. DYALL Sit back in your arm-chair, turn down the lamp and listen to my tale. tale of mystery and horror. On a dark and moonless night...

TOMMY Ooh, you're giving me goose pimples. Not my Taste in stories at all. Colonel, what's yours?

COLONEL Now you're talking. I'll have a double Scotch.

TOMMY and I know: I don't mind if I do.

COLONEL I don't mind if I do.

ALI-BABA PSST, mister. Look, nylon stocking...very shocking.

TOMMY No tahnks. All the girls have learnt how to draw draw a line up the back of their legs. It's cheaper cheaper.

ALI-BABA Very sorry - back off back of lorry. I go, I come back.

Wh TOMMY What I really need is someone who knows about the country.

POPPY POOPAH Ooo-hoo. Hallo, Tommy darling.

TOMMY Well, well, it's Poppy Poopah. I see you've joined the Land Army.

POPPY That's right. I thought we all ought to do our bit. Even little me.

TOMMY And of course, you know all about farming. Your parents have a lot of land.

POPPY Oh yes, Tommy darling, we've got acres and acres. But it's not quite the same when you're doing the work yourself.

TOMMY On the posters the Land Army girls look lovely.

POPPY I know, blonde and pretty, carrying buckets of milk to sweet little calves, and standing about in golden cornfields.

TOMMY But it wasn't like that?

POPPY No! (she begins to sob) Do you know, I had to clean out ditches and sweep up muck. And the hay had thistles in it!

TOMMY Poor little Poppy!

POPPY I've scratched my arm and broken a nail. And I'll never get into my dainty sandals after wearing those wellington boots!

TOMMY Of course you will, Poppy. The war's over now. And you look wonderful!

POPPY (dewy-eyed) Do I really, Tommy?

ITMA 5

TOMMY Yes. Come with us and help do a programme in Somerset. All right, team, are you ready to hit the road?

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COL.CHIN. One for the road? I don't mind if I do.

TOMMY Mrs Mop! Time to muster. Got your duster?

MRS MOP. Ooh, of course, sir. Can I do ya now sir?

TOMMY Flying Officer Kite, are you ready to leave?

FLYING OK Take-off time is it? Good show. Woizard prang.

TOMMY Ali, have you got those postcards yet?

ALI-BABA Oh yes, mister. Cows and sheep - very cheap.

TOMMY I'm sure you can better them Off you go.

ALI-BABA If you say so, I go. I come back.

(Poppy begins to cry)

TOMMY Don't cry, Poppy. Remember our motto?

EVERYONE Yes, Tommy. IT'S BEING SO CHEERFUL AS KEEPS US GOING!

(Theme muic)

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