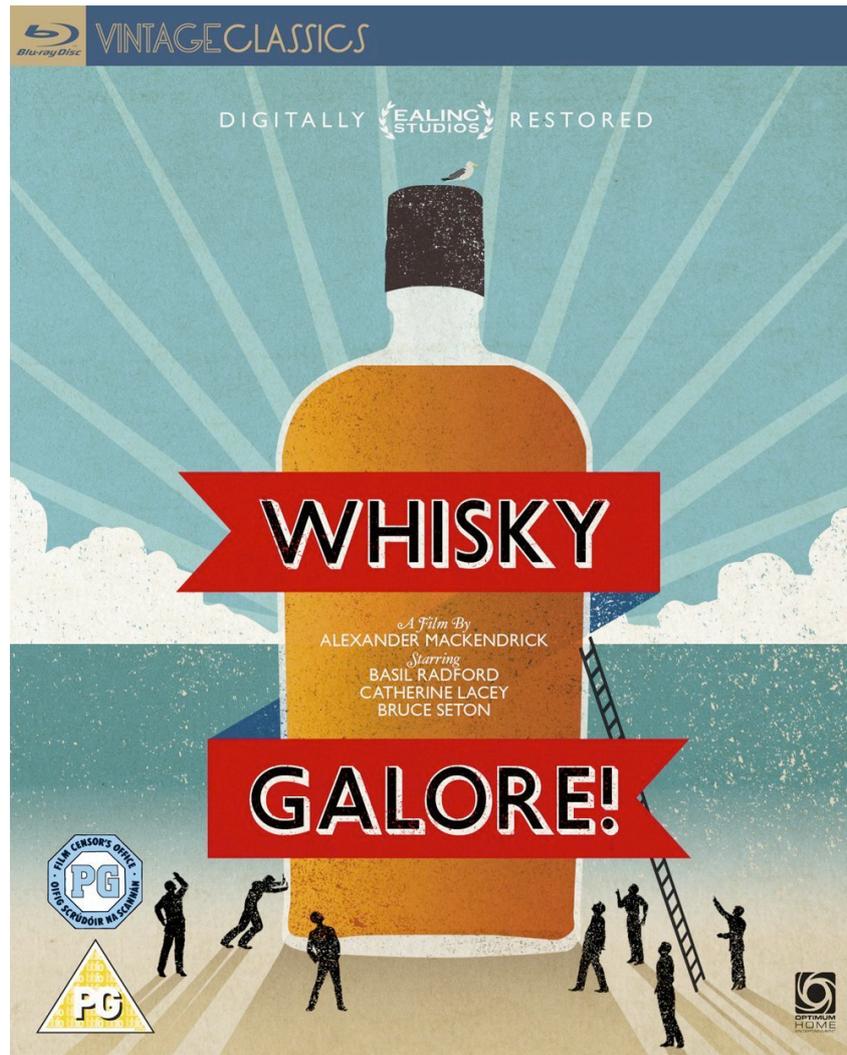


Whisky Galore!

(Comedy) (1949)

82 minutes

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NOTE: FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY!

Whisky Galore!

(Comedy) (1949)

Major Characters

Captain Paul Waggett.....Basil Radford

A stuffy English commander of the local Home Guard

Dolly WaggettCatherine Lacey

English, demure, obedient, and long-suffering wife of Captain Waggett

Joseph Macroon.....Wylie Watson

Owner of the local Post Office and shop. Father of Peggy and Catriona.

Catriona Macroon.....Gabrielle Blunt

Joseph's daughter. She's just got engaged to meek schoolteacher George Campbell

Peggy Macroon.....Joan Greenwood

Joseph second daughter. She helps run the Post Office and shop

Sergeant Odd.....Bruce Seton

A soldier. He has been away for two years fighting the war in Africa. Returns on leave to court Peggy

George Campbell.....Gordon Jackson

Quiet local schoolteacher

Mrs. Campbell.....Jean Cadell

George's mother. She refuses to approve the marriage of George and Catriona

Dr. Maclaren.....James Robertson Justice

The Biffer.....Morland Graham

He rows out to investigate a ship in trouble and is ecstatic to learn from its departing crew that the cargo consists of 50,000 cases of whisky

Sammy MacCodrun.....John Gregson

Helps Biffer to unload the whiskey

Whisky Galore!

(Comedy) (1949)

Whisky Galore! is a 1949 Ealing comedy film from the novel *Whisky Galore* by Compton MacKenzie. Both the film and the novel are based on the real-life 1941 shipwreck of the SS *Politician* near the island of Eriskay and the unauthorised taking of its cargo of whisky. The plot deals with the attempts of Scottish islanders to take advantage of an unexpected windfall, despite opposition from British authorities. It starred Basil Radford, Bruce Seton, Joan Greenwood and Gordon Jackson. This was the first film directed by Alexander Mackendrick. © Wikipedia

Plot

During World War II, a cargo vessel (S.S. *Cabinet Minister*) is wrecked off a remote fictional Scottish island group — Great Todday and Little Todday — with fifty thousand cases of whisky aboard. Due to wartime rationing, the thirsty islanders had nearly run out of the "water of life" and see this as an unexpected godsend. They manage to salvage several hundred cases before the ship sinks. But it is not all clear sailing. They must thwart the efforts of the authorities to confiscate the liquor, particularly in the shape of misguided, pompous English Home Guard Captain Paul Waggett. A cat-and-mouse battle of wits ensues. © Wikipedia

The following dialogue was transcribed using the screenplay and/or viewings of the film Whisky Galore!

Dialogue

Scottish Hebridean Islands. World War II

By a strange co-incidence, the SS Cabinet Minister was wrecked off Little Todday two years after the SS Politician with a similar cargo was wrecked off Eriskay, but the coincidence stops there, for the rest is pure fiction.

[first lines]

Narrator: Northwest of Scotland on the broad expanse of the Atlantic lie the lovely islands of the Outer Hebrides. Small scattered patches of sand and rock rising out of the ocean. To the west there is nothing, except America. The inhabitants scrape a frugal living from the sea, the sand and the low lying hills of coarse grass and peat bog. A happy people with few and simple pleasures. The little island of Todday is a completely isolated community, a hundred miles from the mainland. A hundred miles from the nearest cinema or dancehall. Oh, but the islanders know how to enjoy themselves. They have all that they need. But in 1943, disaster overwhelmed this little island. Not famine nor pestilence, nor Hitler's bombs, or the hordes of an invading army. But something far, far, worse! There is no whisky! Whisky - Uisge Beatha. In Gaelic they call it "The Water of Life." And, to a true islander, life without it is not worth living. From that day every man went into mourning. Mourning for a departed spirit.

John: Do you think Winston Churchill will be knowing that the government has run out of whisky?

Sammy: I don't believe he will

John: It is a pity he will not be saying something about it on the wireless.

Joseph: Aye. It's a terrible war, right enough. Do you remember the Sabbath, the day the war started? Nobody on the island could mind such a storm of rain. It was a sign. A sign of what was coming to us. Water. Just nothing but water. Ah well. I must be going. I could have done with a dram myself this evening. I've had a terrible shock.

John: What was that?

Joseph: You'd better be asking George here

Sammy: What have you been doing to Joseph?

George: I asked Catriona to marry me.

Sammy: What did she say?

George: She said "yes"

The "Island Queen" mailboat arrives from the mainland

Sgt. Ode: Well how's yourself Mr. Macroon?

Joseph: None too well, Sergeant, none too well.

Sgt. Ode: Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. Nothing wrong with the family I hope? Peggy and Catriona I mean.

Joseph: And what would be wrong with them? They're fine, just fine. Both of them smoking away like two chimneys. One of them thinks she's going to marry herself.

Sgt. Ode: [*worried*] Peggy?

Joseph: I believe it will be.

Sammy: What are you saying Joseph? It's Catriona that is going to marry George Campbell.

Joseph: Aye, Maybe it is. Aye.

Sgt. Ode: [*delighted*] Well, that's great news. Something like that is.

Captain Waggett in discussion with Captain MacKechnie

Captain MacKechnie: Amn't I after telling you a dozen times, Mr Waggett, that I cannot accept explosives on this ship.

Captain Waggett: Captain MacKechnie, it is my duty to see that I am in a state of full defence. How can I defend myself if my cartridges do not fit my rifles?

Constable Macrae: It would be a bit awkward, right enough.

Captain Waggett: Awkward? It's more than awkward! This kind of thing lead to the full of France.

Captain MacKechnie: A rule is a rule and a regulation is a regulation.

Captain Waggett: The ammunition arrived on the Island Queen.

Constable Macrae: Yes, yes, but Captain MacKechnie did not know then that they was explosives.

Captain MacKechnie: If I had known I'd have never have brought them.

Captain Waggett: Don't you understand that I cannot get any .300 ammunition from ordinance until this. 303 gets back?

Schoolteacher, George Campbell, with his mother

George: Is there anything the matter, mother?

Mrs Campbell: To think that I should be hearing from others that my own son is going to be married. George Campbell, is this true?

George: Well, I only knew myself yesterday evening that Catriona was...

Mrs Campbell: You mean to stand there that and tell me that you'd not been thinking of that girl until yesterday evening?

George: Oh, I'd been thinking about her, yes.

Mrs Campbell: Then why was I kept in the dark about your thoughts?

George: By the time I'd got back you'd gone to bed.

Mrs Campbell: The bed I have made for myself and on which I must lie. This comes of spoiling my only child.

George: Spoiling me?

Mrs Campbell: Spare the rod.....

George: You never did.

Mrs Campbell:.. and spoil the child.

George: Now look mother what would have been the use of upsetting you and...

Mrs Campbell: So you knew that it would upset me. You knew it. But you went on all the same thinking only of yourself. You've always thought only of yourself. How many times as a child have I caught you in the black currants, when you knew perfectly well that I wanted all the black currants for my own jam.

George: Mother, if I bring Catriona to tea, will you be nice to her?

Mrs Campbell: The day you bring Catriona Macroon into this house, I walk out. I'll go and live with your aunt in Glasgow

George: But you hate Glasgow.

Mrs Campbell: Never mind. "The Lord Chastiseth them that he loveth" And who am I to set myself up against the Lord?

Captain Waggett, on patrol with the Home Guard

Dr. Maclaren: What on earth is all this nonsense?

The Biffer: It is a roadblock, doctor.

Dr. Maclaren: Open it up and let me through.

The Biffer: Och, We can't do that doctor. Waggett says you are a German tank.

Dr. Maclaren: Look here, Waggett, what are you playing at?

Captain Waggett: Playing? I'm not playing at anything.

Dr. Maclaren: Then what's all this?

Captain Waggett: It's a Home Guard exercise. I should have thought that was obvious.

Dr. Maclaren: Well I've been up all night delivering Mrs. MacKinnon of twins, and I want to get home. So I'll be obliged if you move all this junk and let me through.

The Biffer: Twins?

Sammy: Yes, two girls it was.

The Biffer: Och, the poor soul. Two girls? What a calamity. And Jim safe away at sea.

Captain Waggett: Doctor MacLaren? I am responsible for the defence of this island. I think a man of your position should back me up instead of taking an obstructive attitude.

Dr. Maclaren: My obstructive attitude. Did I build this idiotic roadblock?

Captain Waggett: [*with reservation*] Open the roadblock, Sergeant.

Sgt. Ode: Right men, once again. Move. [*soldiers sighing*]

Dr. Maclaren with old Hector

Dr. Maclaren: I brought you some tobacco.

Hector: Thank you, doctor. My pipe is gone, fell to pieces on me. And not a pipe to be bought. I don't believe the world has been in such a terrible mess since the flood.

Dr. Maclaren: We can't have you giving up smoking as well as everything else. Here's a pipe of mine.

Hector: I couldn't be robbing you of your own pipe, doctor. You're too kind altogether.

Dr. Maclaren: Doctor's orders. I have another one. I only wish I could have brought you a dram to go with it.

Hector: I'd have liked fine to have just one more really good dram, before I join the old woman.

Dr. Maclaren: You've many years to live yet.

Hector: I know better, doctor. But I mean no disrespect to you by that. I'm looking at life just as I'm looking at my croft just now. And seeing the fog coming creeping in from the sea. And covering it up and turning it into just nothing at all.

Saturday evening. Heavy fog descends on the islands

Biffer: [*hears something*] Shh! Listen. She's stopped.

Sammy: It is queer, right enough. [*someone approaching*] Is that you, Joseph?

Joseph: Aye.Aye. I've just been through to the Coastguard hut. They say they caught a glimpse of her a few hours ago when the fog lifted.

Biffer: What size of a ship was she?

Joseph: 4,000 ton.

Biffer: [*looking at Sammy*] I have a mind to go out to her. It's not so thick now. She'll be needing a pilot.

Sammy: Will I come with you Biffer?

Biffer: Aye, come on.

Sgt. Ode: Isn't that asking for trouble?

Captain MacKechnie: Ach. The Biffer knows every rock in Todday by it's name. And it will be a big feather in his cap if he can put them on their course again.

Joseph: Aye, and a big feather in his pocket too.

Biffer and Sammy in a rowing boat. Heavy fog

Biffer: Ahoy!

Ship's Captain: [*in a lifeboat*] Ahoy there.! What island is this?

Biffer: The island of Todday.

Ship's Captain: Where's that?

Biffer: Och well, they're ignorant right enough. What is your ship?

Ship's Captain: SS Cabinet Minister. She's a total wreck. Can you take us into harbour?

Biffer: I'll show you the way. [*turns the rowing boat*] What was your cargo?

Man: 50,000 cases of whisky.

Biffer and Sammy lead the ship's crew ashore

Biffer: They want to get to the Mainland tonight.

Captain MacKechnie: Tonight? They can't be sailing tonight.

Biffer: But captain, we can't go out while they are still here.

Sammy: Can't you see that captain?

Captain MacKechnie: Aye, but there's still some fog outside

Joseph: Donald, we've known each other for many years. Will you not take them away?

Biffer: If you fail us now you'll not have a friend in the whole of Todday

Joseph: The ship might sink.

Biffer: With all that whisky.

Captain MacKechnie: Tell them to go aboard. I will sail in half an hour

Sunday. SS Cabinet Minister is hulled and listing

Captain Waggett: Extraordinary, my dear. Quite extraordinary.

Mrs Waggett: What is it dear?

Captain Waggett: It appears the crew has abandoned the ship. The coastguard says the salvage people won't touch her.

Mrs Waggett: Why?

Captain Waggett: Too risky if you please. Meanwhile she's lying out there unguarded.

Mrs Waggett: Should it be guarded dear?

Captain Waggett: She has a very valuable cargo onboard. Several thousand cases of whisky. Anything might happen. You can't trust these people.

Mrs Waggett: It's Sunday Paul. No-one in Today would break the Sabbath.

Captain Waggett: Yes darling, but the Sabbath ends at midnight. No darling, there's only one thing for it. The Home Guard must accept the responsibility.

Captain Waggett gathering his men to guard the wreck of SS Cabinet Minister

Mrs Campbell: Yes Mr. Waggett?

Captain Waggett: Captain Waggett if you don't mind. I want to speak to George.

Mrs Campbell: George is in his bedroom.

Captain Waggett: Oh. Not ill I hope.

Mrs Campbell: He's locked in his bedroom with his bible and some bread and cheese and he'll not be let out until tomorrow morning.

Captain Waggett: I never heard anything so preposterous.

Mrs Campbell: Have you never heard of the Fourth Commandment? Remember the Sabb...

Captain Waggett: You need not repeat it. I learned the Commandments years ago.

Mrs Campbell: More shame to you then, that you should lead my son away from righteousness.

Captain Waggett: Mrs Campbell, at this very moment, our troops are fighting in North Africa. The Germans don't stop fighting on Sunday, so how can we?

Mrs Campbell: What the Germans do, Mr Waggett, is on their own conscience, and Today is not in North Africa. So there's no need to bring the heathens into it. I've been told there are cannibals in Africa. But no-one is going to persuade my son to eat human flesh..... You can go down on your bended knees and I'll not let you speak to George

Captain Waggett: I shall certainly not do that. [*back in the car*] They don't seem to realise at Headquarters what I'm up against here. What would my colonel say if you knew that my second in command had been locked in his bedroom by his mother?

Sunday Night. Sgt. Ode with Joseph Macroon. Almost midnight

Sgt. Ode: What with all the excitement Mr. Macroon, I haven't had the chance of having a word with you yet. It's about Peggy and me. We want to get married. I'm hoping you are going to say yes. So we can fix a date.

Joseph: [*unsettled*] Marriage is a serious step. We better be talking about it in the morning.

Sgt. Ode: Of course, I know it's a bit sudden. After me only being here a couple of days.

Joseph: It's getting late, Sergeant. It's a big subject to be talking about tonight. [*knock at the door*] Now who can that be?

Captain Waggett: Oh good evening, I'm sorry to break in on you like this.

Captain Waggett orders Sgt. Ode to guard the ship, and its cargo

Sgt. Ode: Well, that's torn it.

Joseph: [*turning on the radio*] Did you ever hear tell of a "réiteach", Sergeant?

Sgt. Ode: A what?

Joseph: It's an old custom we have in the Highlands. When a man wants to marry himself he must ask the girl's father for her hand at the réiteach Oh. It's a great set-up. Everybody comes.

Sgt. Ode: You mean me and Peggy ought to have one?

Joseph: Oh, aye,aye. And you'll always have a seven gallon jar of whisky.

Sgt. Ode: Now look here Mr Macroon. This is blackmail.

Joseph: You can't have a wedding without a réiteach, and you can't have a réiteach without the whisky.

Narrator: When the dawn rose on that memorable morning, it found a changed island. A sea that sparkled more brightly than before. Grass that seem greener. Whiter Sands. Today was hardly recognisable.

Monday morning. George in Joseph Macroon's shop

George: I'm going to tell my mother this morning that I'm going to be married when Peggy and the Sergeant get married. That is, if Catriona will have me.

Dr Maclaren: How many have had, George?

George: Four.

Catriona: Four whiskies and the man's a giant.

George: I may have had too much to drink. I don't really know,. I've never had too much to drink in my life.

Dr Maclaren: How do you feel George?

George: I feel fine

Dr Maclaren: Is your head swimming?

George: No

Dr Maclaren: You look steady enough on your pins anyhow. But speaking as one with considerable experience in these matters, I must warn you to be aware of the reaction. So we'll just prime you with one more dram and bring you into the ring in the peak of condition.

Catriona: You'll not become a drinker if it's me you're going to marry.

George: I may have to until we are safely married. So the sooner we get married, the better.

Catriona: Will you listen to the man. What's come over him?

George with his mother

George: [*confidently*] Oh, it's not your fault. You've been spoilt. Spoilt by me. I've let you have your way for far too long. No more of that now. Catriona and I are getting married next month. I've told you my terms. If you don't like them, you can go to... you can go to Glasgow.

Mrs Campbell: George Campbell, Satan himself is in you. You come drunken, debauched, and shameless. Bringing that water creature to my very door. To think that your father's son would... [*George drowns her out with bagpipes*]

Captain Waggett finds the large haul of whisky in a cave

Captain Waggett:[*on the phone to Colonel Lindsay Wolsey*] I'll catch the boat tomorrow and be with you the following morning. I wanted to put you in the picture

Mrs Waggett: Paul, all the way to Obaig just for a talk with Colonel Lindsay Wolsey?

Captain Waggett: No, I'm not going anywhere near the mainland. I'm going to the excise people at Nobast

Captain Waggett with Mr. Farquharson from Customs and Excise

Captain Waggett: I still think, Mr Farquharson, our best course would be to go straight to the cave.

Farquharson: The cave won't run away, Mr Waggett. I shall take advantage of our little expedition to make a house-to-house search.

Captain Waggett: The local constable has already done that and found nothing.

Farquharson: My men our experts

Captain Waggett: So are the Todday men at hiding whisky.

Farquharson: We'll see.

Captain Waggett: Well I suppose you know your own business best.

Farquharson: I do indeed,Mr Waggett. As soon as I've made my little haul,you can drive me to this little cave of yours

Mr. Farquharson and his team find nothing

Farquharson: We failed to find anything because they were ready for us. I see to reason to tell them what we are going to do next. How far is it to this cave of yours?

Captain Waggett: Driving carefully, as I always do, about 15 minutes.

Joseph: Farquharson's not going to the pier.

Roderick: You think he'll be knowing about the cave?

Sammy: Waggett? No.

Roderick: What makes you so sure?

Dr Maclaren: I'd like to lay my hands on that may Waggett.

Catriona: Just for a bit of whisky to go to prison. Men. Sitting there doing nothing at all. Could you not do something to stop Waggett?

George: How can we?

Catriona: Soldiers. Helpless as newborn babies.

Peggy: [*sarcastically*] Aye, I can see them stopping the Germans.

Dr Maclaren: That stupid stuffed-up Sassenach, playing at being a laird. A tinpot general with his Home Guard and his roadblocks. Roadblocks, a fat lot of use..... Roadblocks!

Mr. Farquharson in Captain Waggett's house

Farquharson: [*on the phone*] Yes, speaking. Indeed? Most interesting. Yes I'll ask him.

Captain Waggett: What was it?

Farquharson: They'd welcome the opportunity to interview you at the customs at Obaig.

Captain Waggett: Why?

Farquharson: You sent two cases of ammunition to the mainland with a note to say you were personally responsible.

Captain Waggett: I did.

Farquharson: One of them contained six bottles of whisky. For export only

Captain Waggett: Oh, but that's impossible. Utterly impossible.

[last lines]

Narrator: Whisky Galore. Even after our private store was exhausted, there were stocks of legitimate whisky. But the price went up, and then it went up again, until nobody on Today could afford even a dram. So they all lived unhappily ever after. Oh, except for Sergeant Odd and his Peggy, for they were not whisky drinkers. And if that is not a moral story, what is?

assault *a roadblock* *to deliver(5)* *to dribble* *obstructive* *ammunition*
Jerry *stale* *to wean* *galore* *deliberate* *discouraging* *to spoil*

1. Something that is _____ has been said or done too many times before and is no longer interesting or exciting
2. _____ is in abundance; large quantities of something
3. _____ is a supply or quantity of bullets and shells, to be fired from guns
4. _____ is to give a child everything that they ask for and not enough discipline in a way that has a bad effect on their character and behaviour
5. _____ is a barrier put across the road by the police or army so that they can stop and search vehicles
6. _____ is making you feel less confident or enthusiastic about doing something
7. _____ is an offensive word for a person from Germany, used especially during the First and Second World Wars
8. _____ is to move a ball by repeatedly tapping it with the hand, foot, or stick
9. _____ is done on purpose rather than by accident
10. _____ is the crime of attacking somebody physically
11. _____ is trying to prevent somebody / something from making progress
12. _____ is to help a woman to give birth to a baby
13. _____ is to gradually stop feeding a baby or young animal with its mother's milk and start feeding it with solid food

salvage to loot a dram legitimate frugal to overwhelm
glib a regulation slack a wreck a glimpse to mourn a laird

1. _____ is a small amount of an alcoholic drink, especially whisky
2. _____ is a look at somebody / something for a very short time, when you do not see the person or thing completely
3. _____ is using words that are clever, but are not sincere, and do not show much thought (*of speakers and speech*)
4. _____ is to steal things from shops / stores or buildings after a riot, fire, etc.
5. _____ is a person who owns a large area of land (in Scotland)
6. _____ is allowed and acceptable according to the law; legal
7. _____ is to have such a strong emotional effect on somebody that it is difficult for them to resist or know how to react
8. _____ is to feel and show sadness because somebody has died; to feel sad because something no longer exists or is no longer the same
9. _____ is an official rule made by a government or some other authority
10. _____ is not putting enough care, attention or energy into something and so not doing it well enough (*disapproving*)
11. _____ is a ship that has sunk or that has been very badly damaged
12. _____ is the act of saving things that have been, or are likely to be, damaged or lost, especially in a disaster or an accident
13. _____ is using only as much money or food as is necessary

Match the following idioms/phrases with their meaning on page 19

1. that's torn it.....*Well that's torn it.*
2. what is somebody playing at?.....*Look here, Waggett, what are you playing at?*
3. keep something dark.....*Then why was I kept in the dark about your thoughts?*
4. stone the crows..... *Well stone the crows! 50,000 cases of whisky.*
5. make a bed for yourself..... *The bed I've made for myself and on which I must lie*
6. the Home Guard.....*This is Captain Waggett, Today, Home Guard*
7. excise duty.....*I'm going to visit the excise people at Novast.*
8. spare the rod and spoil the child (proverb)
9. stuck up.....*Because they are so stuck up.*
10. a feather in your cap.....*it will be a big feather in his cap if he can help them*
11. point out.....*You should have pointed that out to me before, Mr. Campbell.*
12. smoke like a chimney.....*Both of them smoking away like two chimneys.*
13. put someone in the picture..... *I'd like to put you in the picture*
14. to set against.....*And who am I to set myself up against the Lord?*
15. to tamper with something.....*The cargo might be tampered with.*
16. the long arm of the law.....*You know: "the long arm of the law"*
17. keep/put something in hand.....*Put that in hand - Yes sir.*

- a. an army created during World War II to defend Britain at home in case the enemy invaded the country. It consisted of men who were too old or young for the regular army. Disbanded in 1957.
- b. to make changes to something without permission, especially in order to damage it
- c. an action that you can be proud of
- d. used to express surprise, shock, anger, etc.
- e. a government tax on goods and commodities made, sold or used within a country
- f. used to say that something has happened to spoil your plans
- g. to mention something in order to give somebody information about it or make them notice it
- h. to have something (a job, etc.) _____ means you are dealing with or in control of it
- i. to give somebody the information they need in order to understand a situation
- j. used to ask in an angry way about what somebody is doing
- k. if children are not physically punished when they do wrong, their personal development will suffer.
- l. to make somebody oppose a friend, relative, etc.
- m. you must accept the results of your actions
- n. to keep something secret and not tell people about it
- o. the power of the police and legal system, used for saying that they will usually catch people who commit a crime
- p. to smoke tobacco incessantly.
- q. thinking that you are more important than other people and behaving in an unfriendly way towards them

Background

The London Merchant and the SS Politician

In 1923 the Furness Shipbuilding Company Ltd at Haverton-hill on Teeside built *the London Merchant*. In 1935, Thomas & James Harrison Shipping Line (Liverpool) purchased the ship and renamed her *the S.S. Politician*. (the Polly)



Following the outbreak of war in 1939, Harrison's were obliged to put the Polly at the service of the Admiralty between September 1939 and the new year of 1941. During this time Polly made 11 successful return voyages across the Atlantic between Liverpool / Manchester to New Orleans and the West Indies.

On the 3rd February 1941, the S.S. Politician set sail from Liverpool bound for New Orleans and Kingston, Jamaica under Captain Beaconsfield Worthington. On the night of 4th/5th February, during gale force wind, she ran aground off the Island of Eriskay in the Outer Hebrides and later broke in two near the islet of Calvay. The islanders rescued the Polly's crew members and there were no casualties. It quickly became apparent that the ship was carrying an important cargo. She has run aground with 25,000 cases of blended Scottish whisky on board in hold number 5. In addition to the whisky, the ship was also carrying eight cases of currency bound for Jamaica. In all there were nearly 290,000 ten-shilling notes.

During the next six months, many islanders 'liberated' quantities of whisky and other items from the wrecked vessel, and Jamaican currency turned up in various towns and travel agents. Bottles of whisky were stashed all over the island – under floorboards, buried in gardens, hidden in lochs and even in rabbit holes. © Wikipedia

Alexander Mackendrick

1912 – 1993

Alexander Mackendrick was an American born Scottish director and teacher. He was born in Boston, Massachusetts and later moved to Scotland. He began making television commercials before moving into post-production editing and directing films, most notably for Ealing Studios where his films include *Whisky Galore!* (1949), *The Man in the White Suit* (1951), and *The Ladykillers* (1955).



After his first American film *Sweet Smell of Success* (1957), his career as a director declined and he became a teacher of film making at CalArts in California. He was the cousin of the Scottish writer Roger MacDougall.

He was the only child of Francis and Martha Mackendrick who had emigrated to the United States from Glasgow in 1911. His father was a ship builder and a civil engineer. When Mackendrick was six, his father died of influenza as a result of an pandemic that swept the world just after World War I. His mother, in desperate need of work, decided to be a dress designer. In order to pursue that decision, it was necessary for Martha MacKendrick to hand her only son over to his grandfather, who took young MacKendrick back to Scotland when he was seven years old. Mackendrick never saw or heard from his mother again.

He attended Hillhead High School from 1919 to 1926 and then went on to spend three years at the Glasgow School of Art. In the early 1930s, MacKendrick moved to London to work as an art director for the advertising firm J. Walter Thompson. Between 1936 and 1938, Mackendrick scripted five cinema commercials. He later reflected that his work in the advertising industry was invaluable, in spite of his extreme dislike of the industry itself. MacKendrick wrote his first film script with his cousin and close friend, Roger MacDougall. It was bought by Associated British and later released, after script revisions, as *Midnight Menace* (1937).

At the start of the Second World War, Mackendrick was employed by the Minister of Information making British propaganda films. In 1942 he went to Algiers and then to Italy, working with the Psychological Warfare Division. He then shot newsreels, documentaries, made leaflets, and did radio news. In 1943, he became the director of the film unit and approved the production of Roberto Rossellini's early neorealist film, *Rome, Open City* (1945).

After the war, Mackendrick and Roger MacDougall set up Merlin Productions, where they produced documentaries for the Ministry of Information. Merlin Productions soon proved financially unviable. In 1946 Mackendrick joined Ealing Studios, originally as a scriptwriter and production designer, where he worked for nine years and directed five films made at Ealing; *Whisky Galore!*, *The Man in the White Suit* (1951), *Mandy* (1952), *The Maggie* and *The Ladykillers* (1955), the first two and the last being among the best known of Ealing's films. © Wikipedia

Web Links

Television documentary about Alexander (Sandy) Mackendrick (1986)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfeLZYVIGsY> part 1/6 8 mins

<https://youtu.be/iIMmVpJJ3ko?list=PL6F28624F5AA81CD8> part 2 8 mins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pe0zM5r6GqE> part 3 8 mins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dwMGnNhGRfE> part 4 9 mins

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAqz-s_21qk part 5 9 mins

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6V_Y7T019Y part 6 5 mins

The History of Ealing Studio

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jJNMhV_50s 50s 9 mins

BBC documentary on the Hebrides. Narrated by Ewan Mc Gregor 50 minutes

<https://youtu.be/pyQr7cBt1VM>