(not used on album – not all songs included)

ARREST THESE MERRY GEMTLEMEN Sid Kipper explains: “This was all to do with the Puritans, who was held bent on stopping anyone enjoying themselves. They had these Constables of the Watch – which is where the saying ‘If you want. to know the time ask a policeman’ come from. Ours was called Constable Joy. and he was a miserable bugger. They had a saying about him too. They said ‘There will be no more joy until there is no more Joy. That was their idea of a joke in them days. Well, the Puritans wouldn’t let you have anything funnier than that in case you enjoyed it!”

THANKS A LOT, GOD Derek Bream writes: “I just know that you are going to like this little song of mine because it is all about things that are jolly nice. I think we have quite enough songs about nasty things, don’t you? So this is a sort of unprotest. song, all about the lovely things that He has given us. I think he would approve, don’t you?”

NORTHREPPS TWELFTH NIGHT SONG Twelfth Night was the end of Christmas in times gone by, and therefore something of a bitter-sweet celebration. Or, as Sid has it, sweet and sour. Hence it is sometimes referred to as the Chinese New Year.

THE AWFUL TALE OF BLACK SHAG This story, handed down by the aural tradition, is a ghost story of the highest order. It may be the origin of the term ‘shaggy dog story’. Henry performed it for us in the traditional fashion, with all the telling little gestures and facial expressions. We told him there was no point, but he took no notice.

OH LITTLE TOWN OP GIMINGHAM “Oh hark. the carol singers come; no more gloomy, no more glum”. Thus wrote Augustus Swineherd in his epic poem Childe Percy. And perhaps this is the very carol to which he refers. For who could be gloomy and glum when the talents of Sid and Henry Kipper, Annie Kipper and the Trunch Recorder Consort combine like this? Or, indeed, like that?

THE ROOTS OF THE BLUES This, the first of George Kipper’s pennings for this album, may well be the song that started the English Country Blues boom. With Sid rising to new heights of performance, and Henry sinking to old depths of instrumental prowess, it must be considered a genuine tour-de-farce.

ANNA IMGRAM’S SISTER The Bell brothers. Bill and Ben, were the very best of

friends until the arrival in St Just-near-Trunch of Anna Ingram's sister, Gloria. She came for Christmas one year, and they both fell for her, and out with each other. This carol tells the story of their passion and their disappointment.

RING OUT WILD JINGLE BELLS The second offering from the biro of George Kipper, this charming little Christmas song was written especially for the Handbell Ringers. George calls it his 'hangover song', as it was written one Christmas following one pint of Old Nasty too many (i.e. one pint of Old Nasty). The Trunch Trumpet claimed that:
"The bell motif of the lyrics captures the tintinnabulation of campanologists in action. Kipper bends the notes into bell-shaped curves, in order to challenge our under standing of the essence of bellness."
George Kipper's response is not recorded,

AWAYDAY This song comes originally from the singing of the Monks of St. Just – the so-called 'Mystery Monks'. They are, if they still exist, an extremely secretive order. The total isolation which they crave seems to have led to them developing their own dialect of Latin, so we have been quite unable to get a translation of this song of theirs. Scholars of the highest renown have puzzled over the exact meaning of such phrases as 'Cosa Nostradamus', and ' Hari Belafonty'. The song fits well. then, into the current trend for World Music, where listeners are untroubled by the actual meaning of the songs they hear.

I KNOW WHAT I BELIEVE Derek Bream writes: "Oh, is it me again? Well, this little song really speaks for itself. Or rather, it really sings for itself. Not that I don't have. to sing it, you understand. Indeed, I have to have help from Sidney and Henry, who do some with-it backing things. I'm very grateful to them for their ooh-ahs, their doo-whats. and most of all for their bums".

THAT WAS CHRISTMAS EVE Diligent research has failed to unearth the origins of this odd little monologue. It is quite specifically local – so much so that it is of little interest to those who do not live in the area, as listeners will soon discover. It has been suggested that it was part. of Jimmy 'Am I Boring You' Kipper's pantomime act. He certainly did appear in panto at the Trunch Empire on a number of occasions. He played the title roles in Mother's Goose, Puss In Boots (set in a chemist's shop), and Aladdin's Wonderful Lump.

UNDERWOOD'S MILK This piece by Augustus Swineherd is heavily influenced by his close friend, Thomas Dylan. It is known that Dylan stayed in St Just-near-Trunch one

Christmas in the 1950s, but nobody can remember him drinking milk! In this reading Rev Derek Bream plays the parts of both voices – or it may be the voices of both parts, For some reason he adapts a Pakistani accent.

WE WISH YOU A MERRY XMAS This song goes back to pagan times, when the Iceni lived in Norfolk. They had a god for just about everything. There was Bale, the god of harvest; Pan, the god of cooking; Vesta, the god of Italian underwear; Juno, the goddess of rambling out beneath the moon-oh, etc. Their greatest fear was that they might have missed a god out, a god who might wreak revenge for their lack of worship. So they invented ‘X’, the unknown god. Over the years X became a very popular god, as he or she never appeared to demand tributes or to carry off virgins. Eventually the festival of the winter solstice was dedicated to .X, and became known as Xmas. Hence this song.

(supplied to us by Chris Sugden)

See the album: Arrest These Merry Gentlemen