# ACT Walk 2015 - Chilham

## Playlets

### "Beastly carriers"

1 man, 1 woman

[Carriers drive across the field and along the track, blocking Alison on the cart]

**Alison:** What’s the idea? Frightening my horse!

**Peter:** I suppose you weren't scared?

**Alison:** Why don't you keep your beastly carriers off the pilgrim's road?

**Peter:** I know that voice. Hey Alison, this is Peter Gibbs. I thought you didn't get that job. Who'd you steal this cart from?

**Alison:** I'm working for Mrs Foster - and if you don't take your carriers out of the road at once I'll tell her what happened and she'll report you to your C.O.

**Peter:** [laughing] It was the C.O.'s idea. I didn't know who was in the cart. I didn't know it was a girl. You're just an objective.

**Alison:** I don't believe a word. And I'm in a hurry

### "Pow-wow hill"

1 man and 2 boys

[After the river battle]

**Bob:** Looks like this isn't the first time this place has seen a battle

**Terry & Leslie:**  No

**Bob:** Now see here, you've heard about the Glue Man haven't you?

Don't be scared

**Terry:** I'm not scared

**Leslie:** Nor am I

**Bob:** Good, because I'm on his trail.

**Terry:** The Glue Man?

**Bob:** Yes

**Leslie:** You want to catch him

**Bob:** That's the idea. Now, if this was the States, every kid in the village would lend a hand to get him

**Terry:** How?

**Bob:** I'll tell you. I want you to help me check some things. Are you game?

**Terry:** Yes

**Bob:** First, I want to know how many drug stores there are in Chillingbourne

**Leslie:** *What* stores?

**Bob:** Drug stores, where you buy soap and razor blades and ice cream.

**Terry:** You mean the grocer's

**Bob:** Call it what you like. Now, if you wanted to stick something together and needed the stuff to stick it with, where would you buy it?

**Terry:**  At the grocer's

**Bob:** Is there only one?

**Leslie:** Only one

**Bob:** Next, I want to find out who's been buying sticky stuff at the grocer's. Is he a friendly sort of guy?

**Leslie:** Mr Holmes?

**Bob:** If that's his name. Is he human?

**Leslie:** [points to Terry] He's his father

[Boys laugh]

### Chillingbourne Square

2 women

[Bus drives into the square]

**Alison:** Excuse me. Can you tell me …

**Polly:** Ask at the office, they'll tell you

**Alison:** Oh no, it isn't bus information I want. It's about … about the glue man

**Polly:** What about him? Who are you?

**Alison:** You are Polly Finn aren't you?

**Polly:** Yes, what if I am?

Alison then goes on to meet with Gladwys Swinton in the signal box and Dorothy Bird, post woman. Note how, because of the war, women are doing jobs previously done by men.

### A roll in the grass

1 man, 1 woman

**Colpeper:** Glorious, isn't it?

**Alison:** Anybody there?

**Colpeper:** It's a real voice you heard, you're not dreaming.

**Alison:** D'you know… just now… I… I heard… sounds.

**Colpeper:** What sounds did you hear?

**Alison:** Horses hooves, voices, and a lute… or an instrument like a lute. Did you hear anything?

**Colpeper:** Those sounds come from inside, not outside. And only when you're concentrating, when you believe strongly in something. Just now I was concentrating on who was coming up the hill to disturb me.

**Alison:** Disturb you? At what?

**Colpeper:** Breathing the air, smelling the earth, watching the clouds. Why don't you sit down.

[They sit down]

**Colpeper:** You know, I was very mistaken about you. I'm sorry.

**Alison:** I was mistaken about you too. We have to dig to find out about people as well as roads. Do you know why I wanted to stay so much? I wanted to be here again.

**Colpeper:** You've been here before?

**Alison:** D'you see that clump of trees? I spent 13 perfect days there in a caravan.

**Colpeper:** Your caravan?

**Alison:** It belongs to me now.

**Colpeper:** The owner?

**Alison:** If there's such a thing as a soul, he must be here somewhere. He loved this hill so much.

**Colpeper:** I love it too. May I ask, were you engaged?

**Alison:** 3 years

**Colpeper:** Long time

**Alison:** His father was the trouble

**Colpeper:** Did you ever meet each other?

**Alison:** Oh yes, we didn't dislike each other. They were a very good family. He thought his son should marry someone better than a shop girl.

**Colpeper: "**Good family", "shop girl". Rather dilapidated phrases for wartime.

**Alison:** Not for Geoffrey's father. It would have taken an earthquake.

**Colpeper:** We're having one.

**Alison:** Too late for me. [sighs] There are a lot of funny things in the world.

**Colpeper:** What for instance?

**Alison:** For instance, why should people who love the country have to live in big cities? Something's wrong.

**Colpeper:** Miracles still happen you know.

**Alison:** Do you believe in miracles?

**Colpeper:** When I was your age I didn't believe in anything. Now I believe in miracles.

**Alison:** For shop girls?

**Colpeper:** For everybody. You know, I think a shop girl has a bigger chance of a miracle than a millionaire.

**Alison:** I can see you've never been a shop girl.

**Colpeper:** Nor a millionaire

[They smile]

**Colpeper:** See those clouds forming? It'll be a warm day tomorrow.

### Colpeper's Speech

1 man (Steve)

Well there are more ways than one of getting close to your ancestors. Follow the old road and as you walk, think of them, and the old England. They climbed Chillingbourne Hill, just as you did, they sweated and paused for breath, just as you did today. And when you see the bluebells in the spring and the wild thyme, the broom and the heather, you're only seeing what their eyes saw. Ford the same rivers, the same birds are singing. When you lie flat on your back, and rest, and watch the clouds sailing as I often do, you're so close to those other people, that you can hear the thrumming of the hoofs of their horses, the sound of the wheels on the road, and their laughter, and talk, and the music of the instruments they carried. And when I turn the bend in the road, where they too, saw the towers of Canterbury, I feel I've only to turn my head, to see them on the road behind me.