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Michael Palin, Terry Jones
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Michael Palin, Terry Jones : Ripping Yarns before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ripping Yarns:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Tompkinson?By James P. ZaworskiThis was just fantastic, by far the best of the Ripping Yarns!1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Comedic Glow of the Setting Imperial SunBy Captain CookMichael Palin is what is called a 'national institution' in Britain. An ex-Python man, he is also renowned for the simple charm of a series of travel programmes -- Around the World in 80 Days, etc. -- where his good manners, stiff upper lip, and self-deprecating humour are his true passport.Ripping Yarns was a series of 30-minute comical tales filmed for the BBC, written with the help of fellow Pythoneer Terry Jones. The name evokes the old fashioned qualities of endurance, bravery, and heroism that you might find in an old book for boys from the period of the British Empire, and, indeed, most of the tales are set in the past and start out as mock heroic tales.Although these yarns from the late 1970s actually make fun of the virtues on which the British Empire was supposedly based, there is clearly a lot of affection for that lost World as well.In episode one, 'Tompkinson's Schooldays,' Palin playing an unhappy student makes fun of the brutality of the English public school sytem. One reviewer said this wasn't your typical English public school because the headmaster gets caned, the students are made to fight with a grizzly bear or are nailed to a wall as punishment, and the most important person at the school is the school bully who apparently occupies some kind of official position. In a strange way, however, this range of comic devises captures the sado-masochistic essence of what an old-fashioned English public school was like. It was this kind of institution that built up the self-control, hierarchy, discipline, and genial brutality necessary to build up and adminster a great empire as

well as two World Wars. Speaking of World War, episode 2 - 'Escape from Stalag Luft 112B' - takes aim at POW movies, portraying the rigid habits and stiff upper lip so essential to the self-worth of British officers. The lifestyle of the officers and the pointless meanderings of the escape committee, which exists more as a gentleman's club than an effective escape committee, is ridiculed. Palin plays a prisoner who arrives at Stalag Luft 112B not quite knowing the social rules of the prisoner officer class and tries to escape without going through the proper channels. In an odd way this seems to be criticising the inefficiency of British industry in the 1970s, which, entangled with old-fashioned procedures and official red-tape, was in a steep relative decline. This story also reflects some of the class tension that Palin probably felt in real life when he left his working class background in Yorkshire to mix with upper class types at Oxford. The third episode on the tape, 'Golden Gordon,' reflects this working class culture with Palin playing Gordon Ottershaw, a dedicated fan of the local and very unsuccessful football team, Barnestoneworth United. The plot is reminiscent of the Magnificent Seven with Gordon cycling all over the Yorkshire dales to reassemble a team of old great players to fend off an attempt to sell the team and its stadium to a scrap dealer. These tales are not only endearing and heart-warming, they are almost historical documents of a Britain that is fast disappearing -- losing its culture to America and its economy to Europe.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. **MICHAEL PALIN AND TERRY JONES WRITE A WINNER!** By A Customer

If you like Michael Palin and Terry Jones in Monty Python, then you will like this video. This is the first of the Ripping Yarn series and I guarantee you will want to add the other two series as well to your video collection.

Episode 1-Tomkinsons School Days (1913): Beating the headmaster, fighting with a grizzly bear, and being nailed to the school wall. This isn't your typical English public school, but then you have never attended Graybridge. Michael Palin has two roles. He plays the main character Tomkinson, a young school boy who will do anything to escape from school. Michael also plays the head schoolmaster. Every school has a bully, and Grayson is not only mean, but very well dressed. My favorite scene is where Tomkinson is in the school sanatorium (hospital), and his mom comes to visit. He begs his mother to let him come home and he looks and sounds so innocent. Terry Jones appears in this only episode as one of the teachers and the guest speaker. Later on Tomkinson gets into big trouble and is punished by doing the 30 mile hop. This is my favorite episode and has plenty of laughs.

Episode 2- Escape from Stalag Luft 112B (1917): In this episode the narrator tells us the story of Major Edwin Phipps. Major Phipps played by Michael Palin has attempted over 500 escapes. Now in real life if you escaped from prison and was caught, you either would be shot or punished. Instead, Major Phipps is sent to Stalag Luft 112B, a prison camp for the privilege British officers. It's kind of a summer camp except with guards. The guards are funny characters, and so is the General. Michael also has a small role as a blond hair solidier who cries because his ex-wife got remarried. One thing I like about this episode is Major Phipps determination and how he makes an airplane out of toilet roll holders.

Episode 3- Golden Gordon (1935): Michael Palin plays Gordon Ottershaw. Gordon is a very avid fan of his favorite English football team Barnestoneworth United. English football is soccer for us Americans. His son is even named Barnestoneworth. He comes home after his team loses and begins to throw things. He then takes off and begins to throw things at the pub. He is very depressed and to make things worse the team is being sold to a scrap company. Now what to do? He pedals his bike all over the English countryside to bring the old team back. It's an episode that is fun and Gordon's behavior reminds me when my favorite hockey team loses, but I don't go to the extreme of throwing things. If you watch carefully, you may even spot an ex-Python. See the credits if you don't know who it is.