

PATTER AND COMEDY ROUTINES (Unpublished)

This section comprises patter and comedy routines, comedy monologues and stump speeches etc that were possibly never published in magazines, books or newspapers during the life of the writers/artists. All are held in manuscript collections at various libraries, archives or performing arts museums.



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"Drink's a Curse"

(Will Whitburn)

The following is from the Will Whitburn Collection, "Original Handwritten Manuscript of Jokes, Patter and Sketches," held by the Performing Arts Museum, Melbourne.

We've been reading a good deal in the papers recently about local options and Prohibition. Reformers claim that whiskey has killed more men than bullet. [pause]. Naturally any man would rather be full of whiskey than full of bullets. In other words whilst no-one wants to be shot, thousands are willing to be half shot....

... Well, why do people drink anyhow? I'll tell you, its to drown their sorrows, but the trouble with most people is that their sorrows are expert swimmers. No as a rule, Ministers of the Gospel avoid liquor in every shape or form. Yet it is not every preacher who is a total abstainer. No, not by a jug-full. I once met a very dignified minister who was asked if he'd care to take a drop of whiskey to keep out the cold. "No sir," replied the Minister emphatically. "No whiskey for me for three reasons - firstly I am chairman of the sons and daughters of temperance, secondly I am just about to enter a church to preach and thirdly... [pause] I've just had one.

Now my wife says that drink is one of my failings; it isn't; it's one of my successes. It's the best thing I do. As an instance the other night my wife gave me permission to go out with a few old phoneys... er, cronies... but after I met the boys, I didn't exactly remember whether my wife said I was to have two drinks and be home by twelve, or twelve drinks and be home by two. So I gave myself the benefit of the doubt and I got home just as the clock struck two. Yes the clock struck two and my wife struck one. [pause] I was the one.

Goodness knows, I do try to restrain my thirst for alcoholic stimulants. Whenever I stand in front of an open door of a hotel and feel tempted to enter, I say "Get thee behind me Satan! [paused] Then Satan gets behind me and kicks me in.

"Stiffy the Steward"
A Nautical Comedy in One Spasm

(Nat Phillips)

The following comic routine is held in the Nat Phillips Archive, Fryer Library, University of Queensland. See Appendix G - Box 2. The text indicates it was completed in Adelaide on 30 May 1916. While the second page of the text indicates it is to be played out in "3" spasms, the third page proposes "1" spasm.

[*Exterior in 3. Wicker furniture and cushion. Enter Lady with letter to music - Sailors' Hornpipe*]

LADY: Well here's a nice state of affairs. Here have I invited a party of friends to join me in my yachting cruise and I have just received this note telling me that he is unable to join the ship. Well the "Maysail" can't go out without a steward. But where am I to get one that is the question?

[*Stiffy off stage shouting "Rabbits"*]

STIFFY: Rabbits, wild rabbits! Want and rabbits lady?

LADY: Not today thank you.

STIFFY: Are you sure? Positive? Not today? No? Good morning.

LADY: Good morning, and shut the gate.

STIFFY: Blow the gate. Get up Pansy. Rabbits! [*He exits continuing to call rabbits. Re-enters*] Ah, look lady, I got some nice rabbits out there. Some are a Zac, some are ninepence, some are eighteen dinea and some are two bob.

LADY: I don't care what they are, I don't want any.

STIFFY: All right, don't do your nut. I'll do 'em to somebody else. [*Starts to exit*]

LADY: Oh here, I say my man.

STIFFY: Oh you do want some rabbits. No? Then what do you want to call me back for. A man ought to stoush yer.

LADY: Now look don't lose your temper. Do you want work?

STIFFY: Piccadilly, not if I can get anything else to do.

LADY: No what I mean is I have work to offer you.

STIFFY: Have you. Well keep it and offer it to someone else.

LADY: Do you mean to tell me you never work?

STIFFY: Certainly you don't remember what Nelson said when he spoke at the dock meeting at [*insert name of local hotel.*] Who? Nel, the bloke with one mince pie.

LADY: I suppose you refer to Lord Nelson. No I don't remember what he said. What did Lord Nelson say?

STIFFY: When the men said "what about work," what did Nelson say. He said: "when you see it coming duck." And I've been ducking because you might get it.

LADY: Now look I'm in need of a steward for the "Maysail." It's sailing next week.

STIFFY: The who sail... the Maysail... Who's that?

LADY: My yacht, the Maysail.

STIFFY: Oh your yacht the Maysail... [*Aside*] The may sink.

LADY: Now will you accept the position?

STIFFY: What's in it... £5... a month... well lend us a tray till the war is over.

LADY: No, we'll talk about terms later on. Now you are a seafaring man?

STIFFY: A who faring man?

LADY: Are you a sailor?

STIFFY: No Mrs. I'm a rabbit seller. I don't remember being a sailor.

LADY: Of course you're a sailor and you've been to sea.

STIFFY: See who? I just come in to see you about some rabbits.

LADY: You know what a sailor is don't you?

STIFFY: Yes, one of those fellows that say runs up the rigging and throws the main deck into the sea. Am I one of them? Yes... that's funny I don't remember being one of them.

LADY: Of course you're a sailor and you've been wrecked.

STIFFY: No Mrs, you've got the wrong bloke. I don't remember being wrecked.

LADY: Yes, you were wrecked but you were saved.

STIFFY: must have joined the army. I don't remember it just the same.

LADY: Yes of course, don't you remember. You were down below when she struck.

STIFFY: What did she strike for more work and less pay? I don't remember it.

LADY: No. Don't you remember? You were down below when you felt the bottom reel.

STIFFY: I don't remember it.

LADY: Don't you remember. The lights went out. The ship was in darkness. Now what did you do?

STIFFY: Put a penny in the slot.

LADY: No, you were on board a ship. You were not in a house.

STIFFY: I don't remember it.

LADY: Well to resume. The captain shouted all hands on deck. Now what did you do?

STIFFY: I put my hand down and some big mug stood on it.

LADY: No. The captain shouted all hands on deck and you rushed up on deck in your pyjamas.

STIFFY: No, I don't wear bananas.

LADY: You must have had something on.

STIFFY: I don't remember.

LADY: Well the captain shouted all hands on deck, she's turning over.

STIFFY: Hey who is she. A ship!.. Oh a ship.

LADY: All ships are called she.

STIFFY: No he ships. No. Well what about mail boats?

LADY: The captain shouted all hands on deck. You rushed up on deck. You found everything in confusion. Men rushing about madly, women huddled together, most of them only in their dishabille.

STIFFY: In their what bill?

LADY: In their dishabille, their night attire.

STIFFY: In their little nighties... yes... I see that... yes... I wish I could remember that.

LADY: Then you went down into the saloon. You found most of the passengers congregated there. Corrugated? No, congregated. Now those passengers were singing. Can you remember what those passengers were singing... yes. Well what were they singing?

STIFFY: You've got to go under. Get out or go under.

LADY: No, they were singing hymns. And then the Chaplin...

STIFFY: Good boy Charlie.

LADY: I say, this is not a moving picture.

STIFFY: Well you said Chaplin.

LADY: The minister, he prayed. He said "she had gone on the bar and nothing could save her." Now what did you do?

STIFFY: I went to the other one and had a pot of beer.

LADY: You can't get a beer on a sand bar.

STIFFY: Why had they sold out?

LADY: They don't sell beer on a sand bar.

STIFFY: Well I had a drink or I wasn't there. I'll bet you a dinea either way.

LADY: You couldn't get a drink, you were on the rocks.

STIFFY: Somebody must have chatted yer. Well I'm still on em. I wish somebody would push me off em...

LADY: Next you were sent down below to the sleeping compartment. Now tell me what you saw in the sleeping compartment.

STIFFY: That's something I got on me own.

LADY: I insist on knowing what you saw in the sleeping compartment.

STIFFY: Tell you... yes. Oh no, you're not old enough.

LADY: Well after that, what happened?

STIFFY: I woke up.

LADY: Now it's plain to be seen that you don't know anything about the sea. But you'll have to. Now besides this, I want you to engage a stewardess for me. You know what a stewardess is don't you? Yes... well what is it?

STIFFY: A female Irish stew?

LADY: No a stewardess is a lady who looks after the lady passengers.

STIFFY: Leave that to me, I'll look after the ladies.

LADY: Now let me see how you would engage one. You sit over there and I'll be the lady looking for the position [*Bis with cushion*] Good morning, Sir. I don't think so... I'm the stewardess.

STIFFY: Oh yes of course. Have you a go there?

LADY: Excuse me, is this the shipping office?

STIFFY: No, this is the racecourse.

LADY: This is the shipping office, alright. Are you in want of a stewardess?

STIFFY: Are you a stewardess?

LADY: A young one.

STIFFY: Sit down. [*Bis*] Are you married? No. Engaged? No. heard of anything? Sit down. Come amongst us. Have you ever been to sea before?

LADY: Oh many times.

STIFFY: Are your stays long, pardon. Did you stay long?

LADY: Do you know I've often been away for six months at a time.

STIFFY: Second division or hard labour. [*Bis*] Now what is your father?

LADY: My father is a manufacturer.

STIFFY: Any brothers or sisters.

LADY: Yes, there are five sisters and ten brothers.

STIFFY: What's your father?

LADY: A manufacturer.

STIFFY: Of course.

LADY: Now, besides all this you may have to help entertain the passengers. What's that? Why sing them nautical songs. Not naughty songs... nautical songs. Well can you dance? Yes. Well let me see you dance the hornpipe.

STIFFY: Alright, let her go.

[Hornpipe and finish]

"Sock Gags"

(Nat Phillips)

The following gags are held in the Nat Phillips Archive, Fryer Library, The University of Queensland. See Appendix G, Box 3. Both are variations on the same joke

"Sock and Beer Bit"

[*Straight man enters to make speech. Comic walks across in front of him with an empty glass jug*]

- S. MAN: Here, where are you going?
- COMIC: I'm going to get some beer
- S. MAN: Well get me some.
- COMIC: Good oh. Give us the money.
- S. MAN: Money! What for?
- COMIC: To get the beer with.
- S. MAN: Money to get the beer. Anyone can get beer with money. To get it without money, now that's clever.
- COMIC: I'll have a go. [*He exits and re-enters a few moments later with the jug empty*] Here you are.
- S. MAN: [*Goes to drink*] Here, where's the beer. I can't drink this, there is none in it.
- COMIC: Oh anyone can drink it when there's beer in it. To drink it when there's none, now that's clever.
- S. MAN: I might have known you were clever by the way you dress.
- COMIC: You like my clothes don't you. Yes you do. I heard you say nice suit.
- S. MAN: I say what wonderful socks
- COMIC: [*Shows sock*] You wouldn't find another sock like that in the world.
- S. MAN: I know where there is another sock like that
- COMIC: Where?
- S. MAN: On your other foot. [*Enter second comic. Sock biz is repeated. They bet the 1st Comic has a different coloured sock on the other foot.. B.O.*]

"Sock Gag"

[*Straight man and Comic enter arm in arm*]

- COMIC: I say that was a sad affair
- S. MAN: What's that?
- COMIC: Haven't you heard?
- S. MAN: Heard what?
- COMIC: My word.
- S. MAN: What is it?
- COMIC: So sudden too.

S. MAN: What are you getting at?

COMIC: Ask me.

S. MAN: I am asking you.

COMIC: Certainly.

S. MAN: What are you talking about?

COMIC: Nelson's dead!

S. MAN: Look here, Nelson's dead so let him rest.

COMIC: I'm not touching him.

S. MAN: You keep digging him up every two or three minutes.

COMIC: Well don't shout, you'll wake the man up.

S. MAN: Look here, Lord Nelson's been dead for over a hundred years.

COMIC: My word how time flies. Oh I say I am surprised at you. One of the smartest in the company and look at those cheap socks you have on.

S. MAN: Excuse me, but I am very particular with my socks. As it happens these cost me 8/6 a pair. I bought the last ones.

COMIC: I saw some exactly the same at the local dor 6½.

S. MAN: Look here I'll give you to understand sir that there is not another sock like this in the country. [*He pulls up a trouser leg*]

COMIC: Oh yes there is.

S. MAN: Now tell me where I can find another sock like that!

COMIC: Why the other foot of course [*He pulls up the other trouser leg. They exit*]

[*3rd Man enters. S. Man tells him off about his clothes, pulls up a trouser leg and remarks how common the sock is. Same biz as above. S. Man exits. Comic returns in a smart suit and tells 3rd Man he ought to be ashamed of himself. Comic pulls up his trouser leg and shows a comedy sock, remarking how loud it is*]

COMIC: I always wear loud socks. They keep the feet from going to sleep.

3RD MAN: I should think they are the cheapest socks one could wear.

COMIC: Cheap! I like that. They cost me two guineas. I had them made special for me. They are my own design.

3RD MAN: But I know where you can get four pair for a 1/-

COMIC: No, you've made a mistake. I'll bet anyone in the world that there is not another sock like this in the world.

3RD MAN: I'll bet a pound there is. [*They make a bet*]

COMIC: Well go on tell me where there is another sock like this!

3RD MAN: [*In the process of picking up the money*] Why on the other foot.

COMIC: Hey wait a minute. I wear odd socks! [*He pulls up both trouser legs and shows the two odd socks. He picks up the money and walks off*]

"Reincarnation"

(Nat Phillips)

The following text is held in the Nat Phillips Collection, Fryer Library, University of Queensland. See Appendix G, Box 3.

- Stiffy: Hello, come here I want you. Do you believe in reincarnation?
- Mo: What's that, a new kind of drink?
- Stiffy: No, do you believe that when you die you come back on this earth on some other shape or form?
- Mo: That's a bit too deep for me.
- Stiffy: I wonder what I'd come back as.
- Mo: A dog, a beautiful Alsatian dog.
- Stiffy: You know I should imagine Mo that you would come back as a beautiful white rose.
- Mo: Me a rose?
- Stiffy: Yes a pure white rose. I can see you now lying in a bed of black soil.
- Mo: Yes I know, with manure all over the top of me.
- Stiffy: A pure white rose, then a beautiful lady comes along, gets down from her car, takes a pair of scissors from her bag, bends down and snips your stalk.
- Mo: Snips my what?
- Stiffy: Snips your stalk.
- Mo: Am I still a rose?
- Stiffy: Yes you're still a rose. Then she plucks your petals one by one.
- Mo: Plucks my what?
- Stiffy: Plucks your petals one by one.
- Mo: Am I still a rose?
- Stiffy: Then she carries you to her lips, pressing a passionate kiss upon you.
- Mo: Am I still a rose?
- Stiffy: The she puts you down into her bosom.
- Mo: Into her bosom... am I still a rose?
- Stiffy: Then she takes you home, goes into her bedroom, prepares for bed, puts you into a vase and leaves you on the dressing table all night.
- Mo: I knew there was a catch to it.
- Stiffy: In the morning.
- Mo: In the morning.
- Stiffy: n the morning.

Mo: In the morning.

Stiffy: You are withered and drooping.

Mo: Am I still a rose?

Stiffy: Then she throws you out of the window into the garbage tin below.

Mo: God blimey, I knew I would finish up in the dirt box [*He begins to exit*]

Stiffy: Where are you going?

Mo: I was just going down to the Irish Club to make a speech to a few of the boys, but I don't know what to say to the boys down there.

Stiffy: You're going to the Irish Club to make a speech. You want me to help you? [*Mo nods*] Very well. Follow me. Follow me. [*Coughing Bis*] Follow me in my speech and my mannerisms.

Mo: Oh.

Stiffy: Ladies and gentlemen on this glorious anniversary of our Patron Irish Saint.

Mo: Do I say that?

Stiffy: Yes.

Mo: On this glorious anniversary of Pat Redman the Irish giant.

Stiffy: Irish Saint. We have assembled here to pay the reverence we owe to those Ante Deluvian heroes.

Mo: Blimey that's a mouthful. All right, we have assembled here to pay the ten cents we owe to Handy Hooligan the Irish dago.

Stiffy: Who ever heard of an Irish dago. Who fought, bled and died for patrimony and the love of Erin's land.

Mo: He fought, bled and died for bad Maloney who loved his beer in cans.

Stiffy: Who said anything about cans?

Mo: Well that's how I like mine.

Stiffy: Ireland has produced more odd characters than any other nation on earth.

Mo: God blimey they all know that.

Stiffy: Well go and tell them.

Mo: Ireland has produced more Hod Carriers than any other nation on earth.

Stiffy: Not Hod Carriers... odd characters. Get this right - and their ancestors were often the butts of queer anecdotes.

Mo: If I say that I will get pinched.

Stiffy: Go on and say it.

Mo: And their aunt's sisters were butted in the rear by nanny goats.

"Prisoner's Song Gag"

(Nat Phillips)

The following text is held in the Nat Phillips Archive, Fryer Library, University of Queensland. See Appendix G, Box 3

Characters:

Comic, Man, Baritone, Vocalist, Frenchman

[Worked on Tabs or Front Cloth. Man enters and sings first few lines of "Prisoner's Song"]

COMIC: *[Interrupting the man]* Hi. hi.

MAN: *[Stops singing]* What's the matter?

COMIC: Cut that out. Sing anything you like but not that.

MAN: What's the matter with it?

COMIC: They put him to death months ago.

MAN: But this is a fine song.

COMIC: You ought to be fined for singing it. Why can't you let the poor fellow rest?

MAN: I want to sing it.

COMIC: If you sing that, you'll find yourself where the fellow in the song was. Besides, it isn't a song.

MAN: What do you mean it isn't a song?

COMIC: It's a dance.

MAN: Now you are talking silly.

COMIC: I'm doing nothing of the sort. I say this is a dance. I ought to know. I've been in prison enough myself. Just you watch *[To the conductor]* Just let a few bars of the "Prison Cell" lose will you.

[Orchestra plays double time, Comic dances and falls]

MAN: Now what have you done?

COMIC: My leg irons tripped me.

MAN: I knew it was a song.

COMIC: It's a dance. It's a dance.

MAN: It's a song.

[Loud argument ensues. Enter Baritone]

B.TONE: What is the trouble here?

COMIC: He says the "Prisoner's Song" is a song and I say it's a dance.

B.TONE: Well you are both wrong.

COMIC: Eh!

B.TONE: Yes this song was never written for a comical object.

COMIC: *[Pulling coat back]* Who's a comical object?

B.TONE: This song should be sung with pathos and feeling.

COMIC: I haven't got any.
B.TONE: Got any what?
COMIC: Potatoes and peeling.
B.TONE: I mean this song should be sung with vim and temperament.
COMIC: They don't give you any of that in prison.
B.TONE: Don't give you what?
COMIC: Gin and peppermint.
B.TONE: This is a crying song.
COMIC: I call it a crying shame.
B.TONE: Listen.
COMIC: You want to arrest our attention.
B. TONE: Exactly.
COMIC: Go ahead, unbolt the doors.

[*Frenchman enters*]

F.MAN: Messieurs and Madams. I have been requested to sing ze pretty leetle song. Messieurs and Le Gendarme, Vous le couis open ze door of ze Bastille sivouisplais.
COMIC: Hi cut that out old man.
F.MAN: Compre? Oh oui.
COMIC: Not we! You.
F.MAN: A gentleman he say to me, Alphonso, Alphonso.
COMIC: Froggy, Froggy.
F.MAN: Alphonso, Alphonso.
COMIC: Froggy, Froggy.
F.MAN: Ah... [*Bis. running and kissing him*]
COMIC: I thought so.
F.MAN: I sing ze song.
COMIC: Here, would you mind going outside and destroying yourself.
F.MAN: I sing ze song, "Ma Cheri." I alone will wait in the dungeon.
COMIC: What do you know about prisons?
F.MAN: I do ze hard lobour and nearly became wedded to Madam Guillotine.
COMIC: We don't want to know anything about her.
F.MAN: About who?
COMIC: Madam Gelatine.
F.MAN: No, no monami.
COMIC: Here, my name's not Ami. Keep that for your own friends.

F.MAN: Ze guillotine, ze guillotine, ze knife on ze napper [*Bis*]

COMIC: [*To Baritone*] Why don't you take him away and drown him.

F.MAN: Zis gentlemen is a French song. Viola. [*Sings to melody of Finucila*]

I wish I had zefille make ze armour
La la, Oui, oui.
La la, Oui, uoi
In ze Bastille I wait all alone for you
Ze guillotine, ze guillotine
Monte Cristo make ze dive and 'oppit
He get right back inside ze sack
If poor Alphonse, he try ze same he coppit
Ze knife go plonk, off come his conk

Cheri. Cheri, I snedze Billet Douis
Cheri, Cheri, ze tale I tell to you
If I have ze wings to fly to you
And set ze prisoner free
Meet me in the moonlight
Ooh la la, Oui, oui.

[*Repeat chorus for dance. All exit or black out*]

"A Matter of Time"

(Nat Phillips)

The following text is held in the Nat Phillips Archive, Fryer Library, University of Queensland. See Appendix G, Box 3

Characters:

Jack, Jimmy, Ethel

[Scene: A tube station. A large clock points to five minutes to one. Jack, a man-about-town is fidgeting about, waiting for someone. Jimmy enters. Also a man-about-town, but slightly older. He greets Jack]

- JACK: Well, if it isn't Jimmy!
- JIMMY: Jack my dear boy old pal, how are you?
- JACK: Fit as a fiddle, thanks. *[They shake hands]*
- JIMMY: That's fine. I haven't seen you for an age. Come and have a drink.
- JACK: Sorry, old man. Fact is I'm waiting for someone.
- JIMMY: Which one?
- JACK: I don't think you know her.
- JIMMY: Another one? You're incorrigible. You're getting a big boy now, you know. You ought to get married and settle down.
- JACK: That's good from you! Why don't you practice what you preach. You're nearly twice my age. What are you doing here, by the way?
- JIMMY: I'm here for a definite object. Jack, do you know the one thing that's kept me out of marriage all these years.
- JACK: No, but I'd be glad of the tip.
- JIMMY: My passion for punctuality. I've quarrelled with every woman I've loved because she's kept me waiting. I've often sworn that if I could find a woman who could be on time for an appointment I'd marry her without a qualm.
- JACK: You're safe.
- JIMMY: You don't think I'll ever find such a woman.
- JACK: Not an earthly.
- JIMMY: My experience so far this morning seems to prove you're right; but there's one more chance. I shall know in two minutes.
- JACK: How do you mean?
- JIMMY: It's like this. I've been thinking of getting married for some time - in fact, I'd finally decided to. Then, naturally the question cropped up - "who?" It was very difficult. At last I reduced it to three, but weight them as I would I couldn't find anything to choose among the three. Then I had the inspiration of applying the punctuality test. Last night I wired to the three of them, making an appointment with each at different times and places this morning; and I took a solemn vow that if any one of them turned up in time for the her appointment I should propose to her on the spot.
- JACK: And what happened?
- JIMMY: Number one was twelve and a half minutes late. Number two was seventeen.
- JACK: And number three.

JIMMY: Number three is due here at one o'clock.

JACK: [*Mock-heroically*] Poor girl. She little knows here fate hangs on such a slender thread.

JIMMY: Something tells me she will not fail me!

JACK: [*Taking Jimmy's hand*] Goodbye, old friend! I feel I shouldn't intrude at such a crisis time in your life. I'm going to the other entrance to look for mine.

JIMMY: Goodbye.

JACK: If the worst happens, let me know what you want for a wedding present. [*Jack exits*]

[The clock hands are within a few seconds of one o'clock. Jimmy looks up anxiously. As the hand teaches the hour, Ethel enters hurriedly]

JIMMY: [rapturously] Ethel!

ETHEL: Hullo!

JIMMY: [*Gratefully*] I knew you'd do it.

ETHEL: Do what?

JIMMY: Never mind. I'm the happiest man in the world. At least you can make me so.

ETHEL: How?

JIMMY: You must have seen how I've always admired you. I had hesitated to speak before, but this moment has decided me. Ethel will you share my name and fortune?

ETHEL: Oh, Jimmy, you know I adore you.

JIMMY: Then you'll marry me?

ETHEL: Rather! You haven't sold your car, have you?

JIMMY: No.

ETHEL: Oh, Jimmy, you darling.

JIMMY: Where shall we lunch?

ETHEL: I'm awfully sorry Jimmy but I can't lunch.

JIMMY: Can't? Why not?

ETHEL: If I'd known...

JIMMY: But why did you imagine I asked you to meet me here at one o'clock?

ETHEL: I don't understand...

JIMMY: Didn't you get my wire?

ETHEL: Wire? No!

[Jack enters and goes straight up to Ethel]

JIMMY: [*Reproachfully*] There you are! Where on earth have you been to? I've been waiting here since half-past twelve.

ETHEL: Oh Jack, I'm sorry, but you know I can never be on time for anything. [*Turns to Jimmy*]

JIMMY: You will excuse me, won't you Jimmy. I'll look you up at tea time. So long!

[Jack and Ethel exit. Jimmy looks after them and then as the clock. Black out]

[untitled sketch]

The following sketch is from an incomplete manuscript held in the Nat Phillips Collection. [Box 3; UT.30] The pages located are 2 -5. Missing is page 1. The character speaking the first passage of dialogue is not identified in the manuscript but more than likely is that of Baboo.

Although no date for the sketch is given, it is possibly a Stiffy sketch from 1914-1916 which was staged prior to Nat Phillips' partnership with Roy Rene (aka Stiffy and Mo). The scene appears to be set in an Indian court.

The characters are: Detective Stiffy, Judge, Warton (defendant's lawyer), BabooBannerjee(Prosecutor), Miss Juliet Lovemore¹ (plaintiff), Rita, Stella, Vera, Leighton

- Baboo: Marriage was made in the romantic shade of the coal truck in Ballygunge – and under section 14 - Subsection B. of the Railway Act [of] 1827 in the reign of George IV of glorious memory – that is a place within the meaning of the act.
- Warton: Does my learned friend intend to produce the coal truck?
- Baboo: My Lud – I refuse to be brow beaten by the multifarious and diverse diversions of my worthy friend [picks up wrong brief]. But I stand under the foot of my female client and under your lordship's most radiant and beaming countenance and my only hope is to place the bone of contention clearly in your Lud's eye. My Lud will be pleased to observe that my client is a poor forlorn and friendless female widow and her sole possession is one small post-mortem son...
- Judge: No, no, Mr Bannerjee.
- Baboo: I beg your Lud's pardon. In a moment of aberration I had picked up the wrong brief.
- Warton: Or in other words had broken down under the exuberance of his own verbosity.²
- Baboo: My learned colleague's efforts to distract my argument are important – I will now lead your Lordship back to the coal truck.
- Judge: I don't see where the coal truck comes in.
- Baboo: My Lud, under section 41 of the Land Trespass Act – it is clearly laid down – that to be found loitering near a coal truck without any visible means of subsistence is a punishable offence and in this predicament I say the defendant now stands. My Lud again look at the sequence. The coal truck was black. The night was black, and we know that this villain's heart was black.
- Judge: Very well proceed.
- Baboo: [To Plaintiff] What did the defendant say to you on this lovely night in June.
- Juliet: [To the Judge] Need I answer that my Lud?
- Judge: You may write it down if you would prefer.
- [Plaintiff writes]
- Baboo: Thank you my Lud – I see your Lordship has a melting heart.
- [Stiffy takes written note from Plaintiff, reads, laughs, hands to Judge who reads the note and hands it back to Stiffy. Stiffy begins to take it to the Rita.]
- Stiffy: No, I think you're too young [Hands it to Stella – all read. Loud giggling] Silence in the court. [Stiffy passes note to Warton. Digs him in the ribs – does comedy walk back to box.]
- Baboo: I think the evidence I have produced needs no conglomeration. I leave my client in your Lordship's bosom. [Sits]

¹ Juliet's name is spelt Julit in the script directions.

² Spelt "verlosity"

Warton: *[Rising]* Now Miss Juliet Lovemore you have told your extraordinary story of the mysterious coal truck in Ballygunge, but I ask you are you speaking the truth?

Juliet: Yes

Warton: Are you speaking the truth?

Juliet: Yes... yes.

Warton: Are you speaking the whole truth?

[Juliet bursts into tears – Scene in court]

Baboo: My Lud I object to the bullying of my client in this unseemly way. I appeal for your Lordship's protection

[Bis. Judge giving chocolates etc. Plaintiff is carried from Witness Box and given a chair near Bannerjee]

Baboo: We shall now call Detective Stiffy *[Stiffy enters Witness Box]* You are Detective Stiffy of the Bentinck St Agency?

Stiffy: Yes... Divorces arranged on the shortest notice. Breach of promise guaranteed. Alibis proved...

Judge: Yes, yes, that's quite enough.

Baboo: Mr Stiffy kindly tell your story.

Stiffy: From the information I received from Fluffy down there.

Judge: I beg your pardon?

Baboo: Mr Stiffy has playfully alluded to my client as Fluffy

Judge: Proceed.

Stiffy: I watched the defendant. He left the Gaiety Theatre a little after midnight and after several drinks at Casty's

Judge: Casty's – where's that? I have never heard of this place.

Baboo: Castellazzo's my Lud. A place where Europeans take their rice.

Judge: Proceed.

Stiffy: The defendant – that bloke over there with the raspberry tart.

Judge: I beg your pardon.

Baboo: My Lud, a Calcutta colloquialism.

Judge: Proceed.

Stiffy: Well he jumps into a taxi. I jumps into another. He goes up Chowringhee – me after him. He turns down Park Street. I follow and when he gets to Circular Road he turns to the right.

Baboo: And what then.

Stiffy: He turns to the left.

Judge: One moment Mr Bannerjee. Do you allege that the defendant took the wrong turning?

Baboo: That is my case my Lud. Your worship has hit the nail on the bread basket.

Judge: Proceed.

Stiffy: Well I am after him. Oh he couldn't lose me in a month of Sundays. Well he meets Fluffy here - he gets down and I follow. He puts his arms around her and I gets close and listens.

Judge: What was he saying?

Stiffy: Get your 'air cut.

Judge: And what did she say?

Stiffy: [*Sings*] I'm afraid to go home in the dark.

Judge: Mr Bannerjee. To what do you attribute this sudden change in the defendant?

Baboo: The cause is before you [*He points to Vera*]

Stiffy: Yes that's it. The raspberry tart.

Judge: I see. Proceed.

[*Baboo sits. A plate of curry is brought into the court*]

Warton: Now Mr Stiffy...

Stiffy: [*Aside to Baboo*] You see me bamboozle him.

Warton: Mr Stiffy, when you've quite finished.

Stiffy: Oh all right, keep your 'air on. [*To Plaintiff*] That's a nasty one for him ain't it.

Warton: My Lud I really cannot go on with my case while my learned friend is stuffing his face with rice in this horrible way.

Baboo: My Lud I object. [*Blows rice over Warton*] I must keep body and soul together with a little sustenance.

[*Jury are all talking very loudly about hats. Leighton and Vera join in general uproar*]

Judge: Order. I really must have order. [*Stiffy calls order*] Any other questions Mr Warton?

Warton: No my Lud.

Judge: [*To Stiffy*] You may sit down, and I must compliment you on your evidence. Does that complete your case Mr Bannerjee?

Baboo: Yes my Lud except that I tender this photo taken by Detective Stiffy [*Hands the Judge the photograph*]

Judge: Now Mr Warton.

Warton: My Lud I submit I have no case to answer. There is not one tittle of evidence in support. As for the coal truck, it is purely the invention of my learned friend's addled brain.

Baboo: My Lud I object. I never invented a coal truck.

Warton: The whole case is trumped up by the muddling asinine soi-disant³ detective.

Stiffy: [*Walks over to Warton*] Look 'ere, are you alluding to me because if you are you'll get a splash in the gazooch.

[*Jury all start talking – general uproar. Stiffy calls order, and each time he does so he hits Warton. Warton protests.*]

Judge: Order! Order! Really I must have order. Have you finished Mr Warton?

[*Stiffy threatens Warton*]

Warton: Yes my Lud.

Judge: Mr Bannerjee.

³ No suggestion as to the intention or meaning here.

Baboo: My Lud. I leave the case to the jury in the full assurance that they will right the wrongs of this unfortunate member of their sex, and with these brief words I will as Shakespeare says...

Stiffy: Shut up. [*Baboo sits*]

Judge: What is your verdict?

Stella: [*Gently*] Damages one lac⁴ of rupees.

Baboo: I appeal for immediate execution.

Warton: I appeal for time.

Judge: The judgement is one lac of rupees and costs payable – two annas per week.

Curtain

⁴ No suggestion as to the intention or meaning here.