

YES WE DON'T

A Tabloid Musical Comedy Revue in One Act

Aka THE BELLBOYS

Text/Lyrics: Nat Phillips

Original Music: Nat Phillips

Edited by Clay Djubal, 2005

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CHARACTERS

Stiffy:	A plumber
Mo Lazarus:	A plumber
Colonel Pinetree:	A jealous husband
Mrs Pinetree:	His wife
Capt. George Senate:	Also jealous
Mrs Senate:	His wife
Violet Senate:	Just married
Frank Denvers:	Just married
Dot:	{
Clarice:	{
Lillian:	{ Bridesmaids
Lorrimar:	{
Daphne:	{
Georgia:	{

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although staged under the title *Yes We Don't* during the debut Stiffy and Mo season, this revusical was billed from 1917 onwards under its more well known name, *The Plumbers* (or invariably "Stiffy and Mo as *Plumbers*"). The show premiered on 13 October 1916 during the final weeks of the company's extended season. Phillips had initially been given a six weeks engagement but the troupe's unprecedented popularity forced the theatre's lessees Harry Sadler and Jack Kearns to keep them on until the end of October). This situation in turn forced Phillips to write several new productions in order to provide audiences with new material during the second six-week period. Evidence of this comes from the Nat Phillips Collection manuscript (under *Yes We Don't*) which indicates on the cover that it was completed on 13 August 1916, some four weeks after the premiere production, *What Oh Tonight*. This suggests that *Yes We Don't/The Plumbers* may be the first Stiffy and Mo revusical to have been written by Phillips with Mo's character developed in response to Roy Rene's portrayal (each of the first six shows were most likely written prior to the company coming together). Interestingly, Mo still receives much less dialogue in the text than Stiffy. There appears, however, to be greater opportunity given to him within the improvised scenes.

The 1922 production included such songs as: "The Party" (bridesmaids and friends), "A Toast to the Bride" (company), "Grieving for You" (Paul and girls), "Scotch Highball" (Paul, Rene and Phillips), "You Never Can Tell" (Davis and girls), "Blue Diamonds" (Connors), "Lucky" (Davis), "The Older We Get" (Connolly), "Tuck Me to Sleep in My Tucky Home" (Connors and Paul), "Good-Bye Girls" (Connolly and girls) and the finale "The Plumbers" (company).

1916: Princess Theatre (Syd); 13-19 Oct. [as *Yes We Don't*]

- **Dir.** Nat Phillips; **Prod/Lse.** Harry Sadler and Jack Kearns; **Prop.** Fullers' Theatres Ltd.

- **Troupe:** Nat Phillips' Tabloid Musical Comedy Revue Company.

- **Cast** incl. Nat Phillips (Stiffy), Roy Rene (Mo), Daisy Merritt (an old shrew), Maisie Pollard, Peter Brooks, Horace Mann (Mr Quimbell, a juvenile lover).

1917: Bijou Theatre (Melb); 8-14 Sept. [return season: 24-30 Nov.]

- **Dir.** Nat Phillips; **Prod.** Fullers' Theatres Ltd.

- **Troupe:** Nat Phillips' Stiffy and Mo Company.

- **Cast** incl. Nat Phillips, Roy Rene, Daisy Merritt, Caddy Franks, Horace Mann, Dan M. Dunbar, Peter Brooks, Belle Pollard, Walter Jackson [aka Walter Whyte], Cliff O'Keefe, Vince Courtney; with the Panama Six (incl. Rosie Bowie, Dot O'Dea, Phyllis Whisken and Gwen Brandon).

- NB: Nellie Kolle made a guest appearance during the return season.

1918: Empire Theatre (Bris); 23 Feb. - 1 Mar. [return season: 1-7 June]

- **Dir.** Nat Phillips; **Prod.** Fullers' Theatres Ltd.

- **Troupe:** Nat Phillips' Stiffy and Mo Company.
- **Cast** incl. Nat Phillips, Roy Rene, Daisy Merritt, Caddy Franks, Horace Mann, Dan M. Dunbar, Peter Brooks, Belle Pollard, Walter Jackson [aka Walter White], Vince Courtney, Cliff O'Keefe.
- 1919:** Fullers Theatre (Syd); 24-30 May [return season: 6-12 Sept]
 - **Dir.** Nat Phillips; **S Mngr.** Dan M. Dunbar; **M Dir.** W. Hamilton Webber; **Prod.** Fullers' Theatres Ltd.
 - **Troupe:** Nat Phillips' Stiffy and Mo Company.
 - **Cast** incl. Nat Phillips, Roy Rene, Daisy Merritt, Caddy Franks, Horace Mann, Amy Rochelle, Walter Jackson [aka Walter Whyte], Chester Harris, Dan M. Dunbar, Peter Brooks, Maisie Posner, Jack Dennis.
- 1920:** Bijou Theatre (Melb); 20-26 Apr. [return season: 26 June - 2 July]
 - **Dir.** Nat Phillips; **Prod.** Fullers' Theatres Ltd.
 - **Cast** incl. Nat Phillips, Roy Rene, Amy Rochelle, Daisy Merritt, Caddy Franks, Horace Mann, Dan Dunbar, Will Liddle, Lou Harris.
- 1921:** Empire Theatre (Bris); 30 July - 5 Aug.
 - **Dir.** Nat Phillips; **Prod.** Fullers' Theatres Ltd.
 - **Troupe:** Nat Phillips' Stiffy and Mo Company.
 - **Cast** incl. Nat Phillips, Roy Rene, Daisy Merritt, Dan M. Dunbar, Lola Hunt, Belle Pollard, Gerald Cashman, Walter Jackson [aka Walter Whyte], Dot O'Dea.
- 1922:** Fullers' Theatre (Syd); 10-16 June
 - **Dir.** Nat Phillips; **Prod.** Fullers' Theatres Ltd; **M Dir.** Charles Ryder; **Chor.** Rosie Bowie; **B Mngr.** George C. Audley; **Cost.** Ethel Moar; **S Mngr.** Dan M. Dunbar.
 - **Troupe:** Nat Phillips' Stiffy and Mo Company.
 - **Cast** incl. Nat Phillips, Roy Rene, Dan M. Dunbar (Mr Pinetree), Gladys Shaw (Mrs Pinetree), Mike Connors (Mr Senate), Queenie Paul (Mrs Senate), Keith Connolly (Mr Scudder), Dot Davis [aka Mrs Roy Rene] (Mrs Scudder), with Gwen Brandon, Rosie Bowie, Thelma Duff, Flo Wilson, Marie McLaughlin, Phyllis Whisken (bridesmaids and friends).
- 1924:** Fullers' Theatre (Syd); 11-17 Oct.
 - **Dir.** Nat Phillips; **Prod.** Fullers' Theatres Ltd.
 - **Cast** incl. Nat Phillips, Roy Rene, Mike Connors, Queenie Paul, Peter Brooks, Dan M. Dunbar, Dot Davis aka Mrs Roy Rene], Gladys Shaw, the Six Radio Girls.
- 1925:** Bijou Theatre (Melb); 25 Apr. - 1 May
 - **Dir.** Nat Phillips; **Prod.** Fullers' Theatres Ltd; **Chor.** Rosie Bowie.
 - **Troupe:** Nat Phillips' Stiffy and Mo Company.
 - **Cast** incl. Nat Phillips, Roy Rene, Dan M. Dunbar, Queenie Paul, Mike Connors, Dot Davis [aka Mrs Roy Rene], Gladys Shaw, Keith Connolly, Rene Albert, David Lyle; and the Dandy Six.

THE TEXT

Throughout script Mo has been spelt, Moe. This edited version retains the more well-known spelling. Also, while the manuscript's "Caste List" [sic] indicates the characters Captain Senate and Colonel Pinetree, the text refers to them both as "Mr." The military titles have been retained for this version.

There are several instances in the original manuscript where the actual characters playing out a particular scene are unclear. In the fourth scene, for example, the text has Stiffy and Mo entering with Mrs S. While the first and third lines of dialogue in this scene are attributed to Mrs Senate all subsequent lines played out by the only woman present are then identified as Mrs P (Pinetree). Although it is uncertain as to what Mrs Pinetree's position is in relation to the Senate household (she seems to have some authority), and why she also seems to be having problems with a jealous husband (the subject of an earlier scene between the Senates), the storyline would appear to work later only if this scene is played out by Mrs Pinetree and not Mrs Senate. This edited version has therefore deleted Mrs Senate's name and replaced it with Mrs Pinetree.

The Nat Phillips Collection manuscript also differs somewhat from the October 1916 production (as reviewed) in that one of the characters Mr Quimbell (originally played by Horace Mann) is not mentioned in the original script. It is possible that Quimbell and Frank Denvers are the same character, just with different names.

The character parts held in the Nat Phillips Collection (Fryer Library) under the title *The Plumbers*, are those of Keith and The Husband. While there is no mention in any text or review of a character called Keith, it is the name of one of the troupe members from ca. 1925 - Keith Connolly (many of the character parts in the collection include the name of the actor playing role, sometimes at the exclusion of the character's name). It is also possible that one of the characters had his name changed over the years.

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SONG: OPENING CHORUS

*Music is entrancing, music is for dancing
And tonight's a night for play
Hop into your joy clothes, every boy and girl knows
This is where we all get gay
If there's any sorrow, let it all be tomorrow
Never on a wedding day
So we'll spring at the chance
And we'll sing and we'll dance
'Till our holiday is passed away*

[Girls dance. They then exit, leaving Frank Denvers and Violet Senate
centre]

FRANK: And now ladies and gentlemen. I want to thank you for your kind wishes on behalf of my bride who is on my right covered with blushes. You are blushing aren't you dear?

VIOLET: Now Frank, don't make the poor child feel uncomfortable.

FRANK: And may I say ladies and gentlemen, that an actor in his life plays many parts. But I can safely say that this is my first part of a bridegroom up to now.

VIOLET: And your last I hope!

FRANK: Now ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to charge your glasses and drink the health of the bride.

SONG:
Frank

*A message it brings us glee, clink, clink
To you, clink clink, and me, clink clink
It shimmers like liquid gold, clink clink
As it whispers of joy untold
Then let every heart be light, clink clink
And bright, clink clink, tonight, clink clink
For laughter and joy and life combine
In the heart of the flowing wine*

Chorus

*Your voices in chorus raise, clink clink
Always, clink clink, in praise, clink clink
We sing of the wine that cheers so well
With charm of its wondrous spell*

7. Add: "Never on a Holiday."
8. Del: The line "And we'll spring at the chance" was to be initially repeated, but the repeat line has been deleted.
10. Del: "Till the Holiday is passed away.."
17. Del: "And may I say ladies and gentlemen, that this is my an Actor in his life plays many parts."

38

[All exit except Captain and Mrs Senate]

39

CAPT. SENATE: And now madam perhaps you will be kind enough to explain
40 your conduct.

41

MRS SENATE: My conduct? What do you mean?

42

CAPT. SENATE: What do I mean! I mean, madam, your dancing seven
consecutive dances with the one man.

43

MRS SENATE: Ah, but he was so nice.

44

CAPT. SENATE: I dare say.

45

MRS SENATE: And his name is?

46

CAPT. SENATE: I don't want to know his name.

47

MRS SENATE: But I insist on you knowing his name. His name is Colonel
48 Catchup.

49

CAPT. SENATE: I wouldn't care if it was Mushroom Catchup. I am going to bed.
50 Good night!

51

MRS SENATE: George Dear, haven't you forgotten something?

52

CAPT. SENATE: Yes, more than you ever knew. Good night! [*He exits*]

53

MRS SENATE: I can't understand what can be making him so jealous. I wish I
54 could find a way to cure him of it. I'll find a way, and I'll get the girls to
55 help me.

56

SONG:

57

Mrs Senate and Girls

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[*They exit. Enter Stiffy and Mo to "Hurry Music"*]

59

MO: Vell, here ve are. Now vhat are ve going to do?

60

STIFFY: We're in... how are we going to get out. You got us into the bother. You
61 get us out. Look out here comes a sheila. Perhaps we can mag her.

62

[*Enter Mrs Pinetree. She sees Stiffy and Mo and promptly falls on her
63 knees*]

64

MRS PINETREE: Oh Mr burglars, kill me but spare my life.

65

STIFFY: Spare your life?

49 Ex: "And now I am going to bed."

65 Ex: ""kill me but spare me life."

66 MO: Spare me days... eh, Mrs Voman, ve ain't burglars.
67 STIFFY: Not burglars. Then who are you?
68 MO/STIFFY: We're the plumbers.
69 MRS PINETREE: Oh the plumbers. And I took you for burglars. But you can't
70 work here tonight because there is a party being given for the daughter of
71 the house who was married today.

72 STIFFY: Eh, can't you put us in?

73 MRS PINETREE: Well it may be possible. Can you sing?

74 MO: Yes, we're lovely singers.

75 STIFFY: Yes. A couple of sowing machines.

76 **SONG and DANCE:**
77 **Stiffy, Mo and Mrs Pinetree**

78 [*They exit. Enter Captain Senate and Violet*]

79 CAPT. SENATE: So now my girl, you are a married woman. It only seems like
80 yesterday that you were a child.

81 **SONG:**
82 **Captain Senate and Violet**

83 [*Exit Captain Senate and Violet. Enter Stiffy, Mo and Mrs Pinetree*]

84 MRS PINETREE: Now look here, I tell you what I want. You see my husband is
85 very jealous and I want to cure him of it Now how would you like to work
86 for me. I can find you both a billet. [*To Stiffy*] You can have a situation as a
87 butler.

88 STIFFY: What have I got to do?

89 MRS PINETREE: Not much. First of all you get up in the morning. You clean the
90 master's bicycle. My bicycle. Clean the front door step. Clean the knocker,
91 the knob, water the garden, help the cook, mow the lawn, do the messages...
92 [*Bis*]

93 STIFFY: [*On the floor*] Stop counting, I'm out. Eh, you haven't any clay in your
94 back yard have you?

95 MRS PINETREE: What do you want clay for?

79/80 Ex: "It only seems like yesterday. since you were a child."

81 The directions in the manuscript indicate either "Song or Duet."

83 As indicated in the introductory section " the original manuscript initially indicates that the part of the woman in this scene is that of Mrs Senate (the lines of dialogue beginning 84 and 89 indicate this). The lines in the original manuscript, corresponding to line 95 onwards, however, are attributed to Mrs Pinetree.

91 Ex: "Go the messages."

96 STIFFY: I thought I might be able to make you some bricks in my spare time.

97 MRS PINETREE: You won't have any spare time. Have you had any breakfast?

98 STIFFY: I had a set of smalls.

99 MRS PINETREE: For heaven's sake what's that?

100 STIFFY: What's a set of smalls, Mo?

101 MO: A set of smalls is a ting vhere dey hide two pies under six peas and bet you
102 a zack you can't find the pies.

103 MRS PINETREE: Well you go down to the cook and she will get you something
104 to eat.

105 MO: Eh, what kind of tart's the cook.

106 MRS PINETREE: The cook's a woman and not a piece of pastry. And now you go
107 down to the kitchen. [*Exit Stiffy. Mrs Pinetree turns to Mo*] And now I
108 want you to do a different kind of work. As I told you before, my husband is
109 very jealous and I want to cure him. Now do you think you could make love
110 to me. [*Bis*]

111 MO: Vne hand kneeling.

112 MRS SENATE: Well you can't make love to me in those clothes. Now come with me
113 and I will show you where you will get some other clothes. And I must
114 give you a name. I will call you Colonel Catchup.

115 MO: I don't think I vill.

116 MRS PINETREE: You don't think you will what?

117 MO: Catch up.

118 MRS PINETREE: No, not catch up. Catchup. That is your name. Now come with
119 me.

120 [*Exit Mo and Mrs Pinetree. Enter Girls*]

121 **SONG:**
122 **Girls**

123 [*Exit Girls. Enter Colonel Pinetree*]

124 COL. PINETREE: Now I wonder where the devil my wife is. If I find that she is
125 false to me I will have the life of her and her wretched paramour. Well it's
126 no good of looking for bother. So I may as well be happy.

102 *Sp:* "Sach." Obsolete Australian slang for sixpence, properly spelt "zack."

120 *Add:* The typed text does not indicate who is to sing this number. A handwritten direction is entered. The first word is unreadable (possibly one of the troupe members), with the second word indicating "Girls."

127
128

SONG:
Colonel Pinetree

129 Hello, this looks like my wife coming this way. Somebody with her too. I'll
130 wait and see who it is. [*Bis*]

131 [*Enter Mo and Mrs Pinetree*]

132 MRS PINETREE: And now show me how you can make love to me.

133 MO: [*On one knee*] Beloved, being here on my bended knee, I ask you to become
134 my wife and fly with me. You are the only thing I live for. Let us fly.

135 [*While Mo is giving his speech Colonel Pinetree comes up from behind the*
136 *pair. He turns first to his wife and then to Mo*]

137 MO: Now look here, it ain't no use you going crook on me. I ain't got your job.
138 You see Stiffy, he's got your job.

139 COL. PINETREE: I know you Colonel Catchup. You cannot escape me.

140 MO: [*To himself*] He knows me name. [*To Colonel Pinetree*] Go on nick off,
141 I'm busy.

142 COL. PINETREE: [*To his wife*] As for you madam, from this day forth you are no
143 longer my wife. [*He turns to Mo*] And as for you Colonel Catchup,
144 follow me into the garden. [*He exits muttering*] Blood. Blood. Buckets full
145 of blood.

146 MO: [*Bis*] Voman, from dis day forth you are no longer my husband. Follow
147 me into de garden among de vorms. Blood. Blood. Buckets of bleed. [*He*
148 *exits*]

149 MRS PINETREE: Oh what have I done. I have gone too far. I must stop this
150 slaughter.

151 [*Exit Mrs Pinetree. Enter Captain Senate and Mrs Senate*]

152
153

SONG:
Captain and Mrs Senate

154 MRS SENATE: George, George. Come here. Whatever will I do? Look at this!

155 CAPT. SENATE: What the devil are you running about for?

156 MRS SENATE: Run about... can't you see what it is. It's a telegram. George I told
157 you before that I have a silly brother. In fact he's more than silly. He is mad.
158 Stark, staring mad.

134 Ex: "During speech Mr P comes down C to [unreadable] turns Mrs P R. Moe goes L. Goes to Moe."
152 Add: While the original typed text does not indicate a song spot here, a handwritten direction "Song" has been added.

190 MRS SENATE: [*Bis*] Is that you Willie?

191 STIFFY: No I'm the lunatic Mum.

192 MRS SENATE: Are you really my little brother, Willie. Ah how I have longed
193 for the sight of you. It is years since we last met, is it not.

194 STIFFY: It is... not. And if I get out of here you'll never see me again.

195 MRS SENATE: [*She sits down and puts the revolver on the table*] Won't you sit
196 down, Willie. Would you like something to eat?

197 STIFFY: Well something's got to be done. Blood. Blood. Bullock's blood. [*Bis. He*
198 *then takes the revolver and threatens Mrs Senate*] And now I want two
199 hundred quid. Come on, give me two hundred quid.

200 MRS SENATE: [*Taking the money from a stocking*] Oh yes, Willie, take it, take
201 it. [*Stiffy grabs the money. Mrs Senate exits*]

202 STIFFY: This will do for me. I wonder where Mo is? Now for a pint.

203 [*He begins to exit, but stops when Captain Senate enters*]

204 CAPT. SENATE: Well, how did you get on? Did you get it?

205 STIFFY: [*"Being Silly" Bis*]

206 CAPT. SENATE: Here Stiffy. Come on, she's gone. Now you can stop. Now come on.
207 Give me that two hundred pounds. Stiffy!

208 STIFFY: I ain't Stiffy.

209 CAPT. SENATE: Not Stiffy? Then who are you?

210 STIFFY: I'm silly Willie.

211 CAPT SENATE: Oh so that's your little game is it? Well I'll soon put a stop to
212 that. Help! Help! I say help!

192 This line begins "with revolver. Are you really my little brother..." "with revolver" would appear to be a direction, and has therefore been entered as such in Mrs Senate's entrance directions.

194 *Ex:* "It is „Not."

196 *Ex:* "And what would you like to eat."

197-8 *Ex:* Stage directions (unclear as to what is meant) "Goes through Bisas shown By MrS.Take Revolver and threatens Mrs S."

201 *Dlt:* "Exits" has been deleted from Mrs Senate's stage direction. The dialogue which follows suggests, however, that she is not present after this point.

202 *Dlt:* Following Stiffy's line a stage direction indicates "Exit." A handwritten stage direction "going" is entered beside "Exit." The following lines may possibly have been originally intended to be spoken as he exited. "She might have some more. I'll tell her a tale and get the lot. Ah anistacia. How I have longed for the sight of you. Come to my arms dear. Enter Mr S." A handwritten direction which follows this passage notes "Exit Mrs S."

205 *Ex:* "Bis of being silly."

213 [Enter Colonel Pinetree from one direction and Mo from another]

214 COL. PINETREE: What is the meaning of this?

215 CAPT. SENATE: I caught this scoundrel making love to my wife.

216 COL. PINETREE: And I caught this brute making love to mine. Let's take them
217 outside and shoot them.

218 STIFFY: Nick off Mo! [They exit quickly, followed by Colonel Pinetree and
219 Captain Senate. Frank enters during the mad exit]

220 FRANK: Well, let them have their troubles to themselves.

221 **SONG: "TROUBLES TO THEMSELVES"**
222 **Frank and Girls**

223 [Enter Violet, Mrs Pinetree and Mrs Senate]

224 VIOLET: Why, what's all the excitement?

225 FRANK: Nothing girly. Your father and Colonel Pinetree are just putting out a
226 couple of intruders. They will be back in a moment, so take that worried
227 look off your face and let me see you happy again.

228 **SONG:**
229 **Violet**

230 [The Girls dance during the second verse and chorus. Colonel Pinetree
231 and Captain Senate enter after song.]

232 MRS PINETREE: What have you done?

233 MRS SENATE: Yes, what have you done?

234 CAPT. SENATE/COL. PINETREE: [Swelling up] We have killed the two intruders.

235 [Stiffy and Mo appear]

236 STIFFY/MO: Oh yes you have.

237 MO: Oh yes, you don't.

238 [Bis. Colonel Pinetree, Captain Senate and wives]

239 COL. PINETREE: What does all this mean?

213 Mo's entrance is not indicated in the original manuscript, and indeed he does not speak during the scene. Mr Pinetree's reference to "them" (line 221), Stiffy's line "Nick off Moe" (223) and the stage directions "Mr S&P Chase them" indicates that he is present, however.

240 MRS PINETREE: Well dear, I will confess. I engaged this man to make love to me
241 so as to make you jealous.

242 COL. PINETREE: [*Pointing to Stiffy*] Yes, but who is this?

243 STIFFY: I'm silly Willie.

244 FRANK: Well I don't care who you are, you are all invited to spend a jolly night
245 with us.

246 **FINALE and CHORUS**

247 **Cast**

248 *Let's make a night of it tonight*
249 *Let's make a night of it tonight*
250 *We're all up so let's be gay*
251 *We'll sing, we'll dance*
252 *We'll drive dull care away*
253 *Let's make a night of it tonight*
254 *Stop up till day is dawning*
255 *We'll wine, we'll dine*
256 *We'll have a jolly time*
257 *And go back to bed, tomorrow morning.*

258 **CURTAIN**

239-45 *Add:* An additional page (with ten lines of handwritten dialogue) accompanies the original typed text. There is no indication in the typed text as to where these lines should were meant to be spoken, although the final lines (Frank's) suggests they be inserted as is presented.