

WHISTLE STOP BARBERSHOP

a Harmony College Show

“WHISTLE STOP BARBERSHOP”

PRODUCTION NOTES

GENERAL

WHISTLE STOP BARBERSHOP represents a challenging and therefore a potentially rewarding (for audience and performers), production.

It is a two-act theme show with two guest quartets worked into the story line. The show was designed so any chapter would be capable of performing it. Every chorus member can feel he is an integral part of the show and thus his enjoyment of his hobby will be heightened.

As you read through the script you will see that WHISTLE STOP BARBERSHOP is a fun and lighthearted little story. While it has a touching moment or two, the general feel is one of broad humor and yes, even a little corniness – a style with which Barbershoppers are often associated. Audiences expect this from us and, if we do it well, we will fill an entertainment need most performers shy away from in this day and age.

As with any production, your chapter should use all the theatrical elements you have at your disposal to make WHISTLE STOP BARBERSHOP the most exciting and interesting production possible for your audience. These elements include scenery, props, costuming, lighting, chorus-stage presence, supplemental choreography, vignettes, pantomimes, or just about any other entertainment device you can imagine.

Following these general remarks, we have given you some more specific thoughts on the show and some production ideas. There are many more ideas that you can and should come up with on your own.

One good idea-producing process that can be used is brainstorming. Divide the chapter into groups. Assign each group an entire scene. Let the group write down as many ideas as they can on how to stage their scene. Tell them to use all the theatrical elements they can think of and not to throw out any idea because it is impractical. The group which comes up with the longest list can be awarded a prize or some type of special recognition. Once the lists are complete, the show committee can take them, extract the good ideas and use those which work with the total show in mind.

Suggestions have been indicated in the script on who should perform each song: chorus or quartet. These are only suggestions; flip these around to suit your own situation. Remember, however, that mixing chorus and quartet performances offers variety for your audience, gives a brief respite to the performers and provides opportunities to encourage quartet participation within the chapter. Also, do not overlook the possibility of using solo voices with chorus “loos” in the background. Double quartets are another form of variety.

The Society published a Show Production Handbook. This is a comprehensive guide that outlines both on and off stage show procedures from A to Z. It offers additional production tips. Every member of your show committee should have one of these excellent handbooks.

Remember, the audiences at your show could stay home and *listen* to barbershop records. They have come to witness a theatrical experience which includes both sound and sight; don't cheat them. Feature our unique product – barbershop harmony – and complement it with a solid visual performance.

STAGING

At the beginning of most scenes the script gives two staging options. For chapters who feel they really must sing from traditional risers, the suggestion is made to have the risers resemble a reviewing stand or bleachers. This will help carry the effect of the political rally.

A preferred method of staging is to scatter the chorus in a more natural manner about the stage. To create a more interesting stage picture and help the singers see the director, levels can be created on stage with choral platforms of various heights or other set pieces designed to look like natural elements within the scene.

Natural movement of the chorus members on stage at times when it will not be distracting to singing or dialogue will also help create a natural look to a scene.

The movements of the main two characters, Henry K. Holiday and Fast Eddy, will need to be blocked (pre-determined and rehearsed). There are some indications of these already written in the script. Other chorus members delivering lines must also be positioned so they can be seen and heard and logically interact with any other character(s) indicated in the script.

Similarly, quartets need to be blocked to interact within the scene and to locate them within the pick up pattern of a microphone so their song can be best presented.

Each scene begins with a theatrical freeze. This is an effect created by all the members on stage taking a pose or stance suggesting action and holding that position absolutely still until a cue to release the pose. For a freeze to be effective the pose must be somewhat exaggerated, the break from the freeze must be executed by everyone at the same instant and the ensuing action must be continuous. Practice the freezes and releases until they are stageworthy.

One more suggestion is to get some planned movement by the chorus into as many of the songs they perform as possible (certainly on all up-tunes and easy-beat numbers). This accomplishes two goals. It relieves the static glee club look and provides some visual entertainment for your audience. It also loosens up your singers and helps them get inside the song a little better. Remember, moves and choreography are not stage presence within themselves. Every chorus member must still work to understand the message or theme of the song and visually reflect that with face, body, spirit and soul.

Don't overlook outside help when preparing your show. A local dance school may be thrilled to help choreograph and supply dancers for a specialty number. Likewise, the local little theater group may be able to supply actors or provide technical ideas and help. You can return the favor to these groups by providing some good barbershop entertainment for *their* show or annual banquet. (This is a good way to spread the word about barbershopping to fellow performers).

There is one last, but very important point about staging a show of this type. Timing and pacing are critical. There can be no dead spots or the production will slow down and become dull. **EACH SONG MUST BEGIN IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE DIALOGUE WHICH SETS IT UP.** Pitches must be blown unobtrusively and tune ups should be hummed quietly under dialogue. You may even find that tune ups are not necessary if all the singers concentrate on the pitch being blown. In any case, the director should give the down beat as soon as the set-up dialogue is delivered.

ACTING

This show was written keeping in mind that Barbershoppers are singers and not necessarily actors. There are only two roles, Henry K. Holiday and Fast Eddy which require any sustained acting. Even these two roles are light and fun parts which can be played broadly and do not require Shakespearean actors.

The chances are pretty good that you can find two men in your chapter with some acting experience or ability who can handle these roles quite well. You may want to have an open reading to determine this. Also cast men for the smaller roles that you are sure can handle the short lines with the right delivery and enthusiasm. You may wish to have certain men double up on some of the shorter roles and play for example, Man 1 and Man 7.

If your chorus has absolutely no one who can adequately play Holiday or Eddy look to your community for amateur actors. These men are like Barbershoppers – they love to be on stage.

Here's a thumb-nail sketch of the two main characters:

HENRY K. HOLIDAY: Henry has somewhat a split personality. When he tries to be a politician, he becomes both pompous and blustering much like the radio character, Senator Claghorn. When he lets his guard down, however, he is warm and likeable, handing out good advice even though he is unaware he is doing it. He is really a likeable character.

FAST EDDY: Eddy is a snake-oil salesman and a bit of a con man. He is the one who tries to make Holiday something he is not. Eddy is in this for Eddy's benefit. Although Fast Eddy is the villain in our play, he is rather a likeable villain.

Every man on stage, whether he is speaking a line or not, is an actor and must do his part at all times. To make the show fun and believable, there must be REACTIONS to the main action going on. This means that everyone should fully understand the story line well in advance of showtime and be given plenty of opportunity to rehearse their reactions. There should be a director who can watch those reactions and help shape them into a meaningful unit.

A minimum rehearsal schedule for the acting portion of the show would include: a line read through after all parts are cast; a complete show blocking to tell everyone where they should be on stage at all times; as many run throughs as the schedule will permit (at least three), a technical rehearsal to work out sound and lighting cues and a dress rehearsal. All of these, except the read through and blocking rehearsals, should include singing the songs or at least starting and ending the songs to establish the correct pacing and timing: chorus members should be present at every run through and should be rehearsing their reactions. Remember: practice makes permanent.

Here are a few acting odds and ends. A "beat" means a slight break (a second or two) in dialogue. Quartets within the show must deliver their lines believably and react to the action. Quartet song timing is just as important as the chorus song timing. Henry and Eddy will want to drift away from the focal points during the songs. Upstaging is not to be tolerated.

GUEST QUARTETS

The script has been written so that two guest quartets appear as an integral part of the story, yet are permitted to perform their normal package with little or no alteration.

However, remarks from the quartet such as, “we’d like to thank the Mid Valley Chapter for having us on the show,” or “It’s great to be in Florida” while the script says they are in Illinois, can damage the believability of the show. Send the guest quartets a script well in advance with their spot marked. Also, send them these paragraphs you have just read that explain the importance of their cooperation.

COSTUMES

Chorus costume changes between scenes are possible but must be made in two to three minutes. A lot can be done with hats, neckerchiefs, jackets and other accessories that suggest a locale.

Your audience realizes that they are seeing the same group of fellows each scene — this is part of the fun. Let your costumes also be part of this fun, but don’t spend all your time and effort on this aspect.

SETS

Suggestions have been made in the script for each set. You may wish to use these suggestions and brainstorm to help develop sets that are easy to make and easy to put in place and get off quickly.

Again, set pieces can be simple yet suggest a locale. Hanging backdrops that can be quickly lowered and raised can be rented or made. These may serve as the basis for the scene with some set pieces fleshing out the scene and giving it dimension.

LIGHTING

Lighting will differ with every stage and with the equipment that is available. To give you just one idea, here is a description of the lighting that was used when WHISTLE STOP BARBERSHOP was first presented at the 1984 Harmony College.

Lekos (ellipsoidal reflector spotlights) were used to light the downstage area from the apron to just upstage of the curtain line. There were also two rows of striplights. The downstage row consisted of two six foot units. The upstage row consisted of three six foot units. Each unit could be circuited to provide for three separate banks of lights, i.e. red, green, blue. These strips were used to light the center and upstage areas. There was one bank of red lights to two banks of white lights per strip. The red was used as a highlight and to add some tint on the uptunes. Fresnels could be used to light the center and upstage areas if strips were not readily available. The gels recommended for the lekos are as follows: No Color Pink, (Roscolene No. 825, or Roscolux No. 33) and a No Color Straw, (Roscolene No. 804, or Roscolux No. 6).

The general mood of the show is one of excitement and this can be reflected in the intensity of the lights. There are few moments when the intensity of the lights is less than 90%. The general focus of the lights was designed to highlight the stage into three distinct areas, stage left, center, and stage right. This allowed for even stage lighting when all the instruments were used but also provided a means of isolation. Isolation could be achieved between the downstage area (covered by the lekos) and the upstage area (covered by the strips) by increasing or decreasing the intensity of either the strips or the lekos. Separation was provided by using any one or a combination of the three pools of light available, i.e. stage right and center, center and stage left or center only, or full general lighting that lit stage left, center, and stage right.

One or two follow spot lights could be used nicely for the quartets — both the scripted quartets and the two guest quartets. The guest quartets may have their own lighting instructions. If they do, make sure the lighting director has them before the technical rehearsal. He can review the cues even though the guest quartets will most likely not be at the technical rehearsal.

SOUND

As with the lighting, the sound reinforcement will differ with stages and available equipment. Generally, several omni directional microphones properly hung over the main stage areas and several more at the front edge of the stage should do a pretty fair job.

These front microphones would ideally be PZM microphones but if these are not available, use a microphone in a foam “mouse” or put the microphones in stands which are set on the floor and angled just over the edge of the stage. This will eliminate obvious microphone stands on stage where they can destroy the scenic illusion. Even the guest quartets should be able to work around a floor mike.

Have someone knowledgeable set the microphones, adjust them during the technical rehearsal and “ride gain” on the microphones during the show. You will find two excellent articles on sound reinforcement at the back of the Show Production Handbook.

The only sound effect called for in the show is a train whistle which occurs two times. Sound effects records or tapes can be purchased which contain this effect. A record would be best transferred to tape for easier cuing and use. Other sound effects to create atmosphere can be added. But remember, the more cues, the more you need a sharp sound man to cue and play them.

The vamp that starts each scene change can be pre-recorded and played as a sound cue. This is the most reliable way to handle the vamp. If this is unfeasible, have a quartet on a back stage microphone sing the vamp, live.

PROGRAM COVER

Enclosed with this package of materials you will find camera-ready artwork for your program cover.

This artwork was prepared by the Graphics Department at Missouri Western State College for the 1984 Harmony College presentation of the show. They graciously permitted the Society to use it for chapter shows (program covers and/or advertising). We thank Missouri Western State College for this kindness.

WRAP UP

We have purposely left out cues for: lighting, sound, and pin rails on the enclosed script since these will vary with each production. We have provided the space for these, however, and they are an excellent way to smoothly “call” a show.

The Show Production Handbook explains how to use cue sheets as well as describing many more show production aspects, both on and off stage. The Handbook is Society Catalog No. 4081. Each chapter should have at least a half-dozen copies in its library.

The end of the show should be run as scripted, without the singing of “We Sing That They Shall Speak” or “Keep The Whole World Singing.” While both are beautiful and moving songs, they are not in context with the show and would lose their meaning as well as distract from the show.

Similarly, announcements before or after the show or during the intermission should be eliminated. Let your show program be your message board.

Curtain calls should be kept to a minimum and include at the most the two main characters and the two guest quartets. The chorus may wish to sing a short reprise of “Henry K. Holiday” (No. 7681) or “We’re Behind You All the Way” (No. 7682) as a background to the curtain calls.

In conclusion, have fun with this show. It is a good vehicle to involve your chapter members in a positive entertainment experience. Putting the show together was a labor of love, now it is yours to enjoy.

CREDITS

There are a lot of people that deserve thanks for making WHISTLE STOP BARBERSHOP happen. Their extra involvement deserves special recognition.

DAVE LABAR AND THE WILMINGTON, DELAWARE CHAPTER for the idea for the show.

JOE LILES for his support of the concept, constant encouragement, and for writing “Henry K. Holiday.”

DAVE STEVENS for help with musical selection and just for being “Snev.”

BURT SZABO for writing “We’re Behind You All The Way” and co-directing the first “Whistle Stop” chorus.

BOB MUCHA for co-directing the first “Whistle Stop” chorus and adding his musical comedy savvy.

HUGH INGRAHAM for script input.

ROBB OLLETT for script input.

THE 1984 HARMONY COLLEGE, SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE, CHORUSES for being the first.

THE 1984 HARMONY COLLEGE STAGE CREW for venturing into the unknown.

JOE WHITE for his stage expertise.

DENNIS ZOBEL for his costume magic.

DENNIS BURCHER for his sound wizardry and quiet but reassuring companionship.

CARL PETERSEN for being the first Fast Eddy.

DENNIS SORGE for his immense input on the script, sets and lighting.

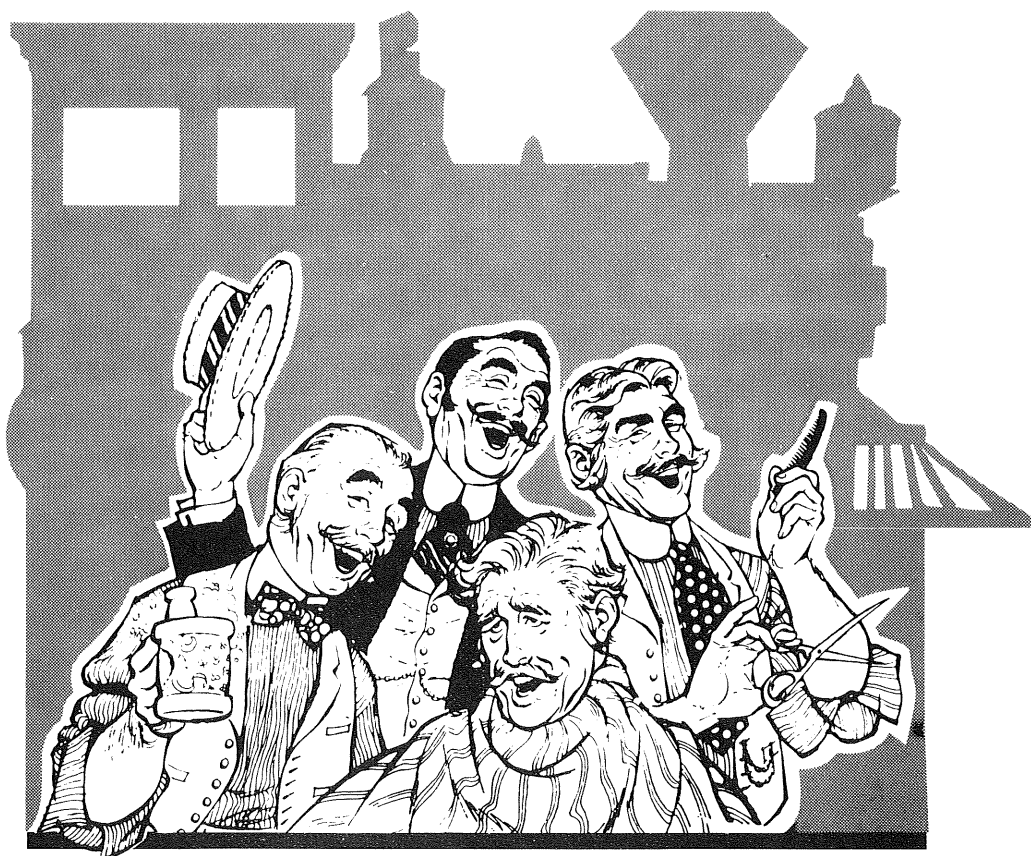
BILL RASHLEIGH for input and expertise on just about everything; and for being a fine teacher.

JOE PALMQUIST for being the first Henry K. Holiday, for his input on the script, for his professionalism and most of all for being one of the greatest pals a guy could have.

GARY STAMM

Audio Visual Services Manager

Whistle-stop Barbershop



A Barbershop Harmony Production
In two acts

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(ACT I)

(CURTAIN OPENS AND STAGE LIGHTS COME UP FULL ON SCENE WHICH HAS BEEN FROZEN IN MID-MOTION. A FLAT DESIGNED TO LOOK LIKE THE BACK VIEW OF A TRAIN OBSERVATION CAR IS SET UP, RIGHT-CENTER. HENRY K. HOLIDAY, THE MAIN CHARACTER, STANDS DOWN CENTER, HIS HAND RAISED IN GREETING. RIGHT CENTER ARE THE RISERS, DECKED OUT IN BUNTING AND LOOKING LIKE BLEACHERS OR A REVIEWING STAND. PIECES OF PAPER, POPCORN BOXES, AND STREAMERS COULD BE ON THE GROUND TO INDICATE THIS WAS THE END OF AN ENTHUSIASTIC RALLY. MOST OF THE CHORUS IS STANDING ON THE RISERS, SOME ARE WAVING TO HENRY, OTHERS ARE TURNED TO EACH OTHER, STILL OTHERS ARE STANDING BY HENRY AND A COUPLE ARE OVER BY THE TRAIN. AFTER THE LIGHTS COME UP WE HEAR 2 BLASTS FROM A TRAIN WHISTLE, ON SECOND BLAST, CHORUS RELEASES FREEZE. AD LIB A FEW "GOODBYES," ETC. THEN:)

(MAN 1)

(CLAPS HIS HANDS TO GET ATTENTION) **Come on fellas, the train's almost set to pull out. How about Henry's send-off.** (CHORUS GROUPS SLIGHTLY AND LAUNCHES INTO NUMBER.)

HENRY K. HOLIDAY (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7681)

(ON TRAIN VAMP, STARTING AT MEASURE 39, INDIVIDUAL CHORUS MEMBERS SHOUT OUT): **"We know you can do it! Good luck Henry! We're behind you all the way! Take it to the people — You can't go wrong! Don't forget your old buddies, Henry."** (THESE LINES ARE THROWN OUT ENTHUSIASTICALLY AND OFF THE CUFF. THEY MAY EVEN OVERLAP SOMEWHAT. VISUALLY, A STEAM LOCOMOTIVE EFFECT COULD BE CREATED BY THE CHORUS. THE FRONT ROW TURNS SIDEWAYS, PUTS THEIR OUTSIDE ARMS UP AND ROTATES THEM IN SYNCHRONIZATION LIKE A LOCOMOTIVE'S DRIVING RODS. THE BACK ROW PULLS THE STEAM WHISTLE CORD. SONG SEGUES RIGHT INTO NEXT SONG.)

WE'RE BEHIND YOU ALL THE WAY (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7682)

(AFTER SONG, CHORUS TURNS TO HOLIDAY AND APPLAUDS AND CHEERS ENTHUSIASTICALLY.)

(REPORTER 1)

(SHOUTS OUT TO HOLIDAY OVER HUBBUB) **Tell us your plans, Holiday.**

(HENRY)

Well, as most of my friends here know, I'm taking my presidential campaign to the people. Gonna make a whistle-stop tour. I wanna rub elbows with the folks out there (HE GESTURES GRANDLY) **and win their vote the old-fashioned way.**

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(REPORTER 2)

But what are you going to talk about? We've never heard you take a stand on any issue. What's your platform?

(HENRY)

(OBVIOUSLY FLUSTERED) Platform?! Uh, yes, my platform. Did I mention that my first stop was going to be in that great state of California? Yes sir, I can feel that warm ocean breeze now, and that sun shinin' down on those sandy beaches. It's a far cry from the cold weather that's sneakin' up on us here.

(REPORTER 1)

I know what you're talking about. I just transferred in from California. *(CHORUS RIGHT INTO SONG)*

CALIFORNIA HERE I COME (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7022)

(HENRY)

(AFTER APPLAUSE) Thank you all for coming down today. Now if you'll excuse me, I've got some last minute details to attend to. I'll see you when I return. *(HE WAVES AND GOES INTO DOOR IN CABOOSE FLAT. CHORUS QUICKLY DISPERSES IN VARIOUS DIRECTIONS OFF STAGE AD LIBBING FAREWELLS AS THEY GO. FINALLY, HENRY PEEKS OUT OF DOOR AND COMES OUT WHEN HE'S SURE EVERYONE IS GONE.)*

(HENRY)

(TO HIMSELF AS HE PACES TO DOWN CENTER) Oh boy! Am I in a jam. I have nothing prepared to say to the people out there. What am I going to do? *(JUST AT THIS MOMENT ANOTHER MAN BURSTS ON THE SCENE EXCITEDLY, AND RUNS UP TO HENRY.)*

(FAST EDDY)

Well Henry, my boy. Are you all set?

(HENRY)

It's about time you showed up! I'm ready to leave on the whistle-stop tour you've arranged and I haven't seen you all day. Some campaign manager you are.

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(EDDY)

Hey, would Fast Eddy let you down? I've got the answers to all your problems right here. *(HE HOLDS UP PAPERS.)*

(HENRY)

What is it?

(EDDY)

It's a handy-dandy, all-purpose, can't-go-wrong, campaign speech.

(HENRY)

What?

(EDDY)

This is a speech that will fit in anywhere you go. It doesn't say a thing, but it'll leave the people smiling. All you do is fill in the blanks to fit wherever you are.

(HENRY)

(SKEPTICAL) Gee, I don't know.

(EDDY)

Have you got something better?

(HENRY)

Well . . . no.

(TRAIN WHISTLE)

(EDDY)

Then you better take it. Come on we've got an election to win. *(HENRY TAKES THE SPEECH AND THEY BOTH HEAD FOR THE TRAIN.)*

(HENRY)

I hope you're right. I really do.

(LIGHTS DIM AND MAIN CURTAIN COMES DOWN. ON EITHER A PRE-RECORDED TAPE OR FROM AN OFFSTAGE MIKE WE HEAR A QUARTET SING MEASURES 37-48 FROM HENRY K. HOLIDAY, NO. 7681. THIS TRAVELING VAMP WILL BE USED AT EACH SCENE CHANGE. IT SHOULD TRAIL OFF UNDER OPENING OF NEW SCENE. AS IT DOES, HENRY AND EDDY ENTER FROM STAGE RIGHT AND A QUARTET ENTERS FROM STAGE LEFT AND MEET CENTER.)

(EDDY)

You fellas must be the welcoming committee. This is Henry K. Holiday and on behalf of the candidate let me say it's good to be in California. Now, if you'll lead us to the gathering, Mr. Holiday's got a little speech prepared.

(QUARTET MAN 1)

Sure. But first we need some help. Mr. Holiday, being a politician you must be good at helping people. *(HENRY GETS PANICKED LOOK)* Even though our problem isn't a national issue, we thought you'd give us a listen. *(QUARTET RIGHT INTO SONG)*

WEDDING BELLS ARE BREAKING UP THAT OLD GANG OF MINE
(SOCIETY CAT. NO. 7189)

(HENRY)

(AFTER APPLAUSE) Why! This country was built around the family unit. Find some nice girls and settle down yourselves . . . Now, where is that crowd — I've got this speech.

(QUARTET MAN 1)

(QUARTET IS LOOKING TO ONE ANOTHER, VERY PLEASED AT HENRY'S SUGGESTION.) They're right this way, and thanks a lot. *(HENRY DOESN'T SEEM TO HEAR.)*

(CURTAIN RISES ON CALIFORNIA SCENE. THE SET INCLUDES A "HOLLYWOOD" SIGN IN THE MOUNTAINS OR OTHER WEST-COAST DROP, A PALM TREE OR TWO AND ANY OTHER SIMPLE SET DRESSINGS THAT WILL GIVE A CALIFORNIA FEEL. AGAIN, THE SCENE IS FROZEN. SOME MEN ARE SCATTERED ABOUT THE STAGE, SOME ARE SITTING ON THE RISERS ALA REVIEWING STAND OR STAGED ON OTHER SIMPLE LEVELS. AS HENRY AND EDDY WALK BACK INTO THE SCENE, EDDY BEGINS CLAPPING WHICH IS THE SIGNAL TO BREAK THE FREEZE AND REACT. DURING THE FOLLOWING SPEECH EDDY TRIES TO LEAD THE PROPER CROWD RESPONSES.)

(HENRY)

(CLEARS HIS THROAT AS HE PULLS SPEECH OUT OF POCKET, THEN BEGINS DIGNIFIED DELIVERY.) Dear friends from *(HESITATES SLIGHTLY TO INDICATE THIS IS A BLANK TO BE FILLED. HE ALSO PUTS ON A PAIR OF SUNGLASSES AND LOOSENS HIS TIE.)* uh . . . California. I'm proud to be in this land known for its tall *(HESITATES BEAT)* redwoods and its beautiful *(BEAT)* starletts. As your great compatriot *(BEAT)* Cecil B. DeMille said, "The people from the land of *(BEAT)* palm trees and *(BEAT)* beaches are the finest anywhere." Why what would this country be without *(BEAT)* sports cars and *(BEAT)* alfalfa sprouts? If you elect me as your next president I will solve domestic problems at home . . .

(MAN 2)

(INTERRUPTING) Great! I've got some domestic problems right in my own home. How can I patch up a quarrel between my wife and I.

(HENRY)

(NERVOUSLY) That's a bit out of my field. I guess you could try thanking her for all the good things she does *(REGAINING MOCK COMPOSURE)*. But now back to my speech . . .

(MAN 3)

(INTERRUPTING HENRY AND SPEAKING TO MAN 2) Say that's a good idea. How about something like this?

THANK YOU (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7545)

(DURING APPLAUSE MAN 2 THANKS CHORUS IN GESTURES AS THEY LOOK TO HIM. AS APPLAUSE ENDS ANOTHER CHORUS MEMBER SPEAKS UP.)

(FRED)

Say Holiday, what are you going to do about the senior citizens? I'm not getting any younger and I'm pretty concerned about reaching those twilight years.

(HENRY)

(WARMLY) Try not to worry so much, you should look forward to your later years as a time of enjoyment. *(BACK TO BUSINESS)* Now, if I can continue with my speech.

(MAN 3)

He's right. Listen up, Fred.

I'M STILL HAVIN' FUN (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7185)

(AFTER SONG, CHORUS STARTS DISPERSING QUICKLY, CHATTING HAPPILY AS THEY GO. EDDY TRIES DESPERATELY TO TRY AND KEEP THEM THERE BUT FAILS. HENRY, FOLLOWED BY EDDY, WALKS FORLORNLY TO DOWN CENTER STAGE AS CURTAIN DROPS BEHIND HIM. QUARTET COMES OUT FROM WINGS AND WALKS UP TO HENRY. ONE MAN IS SLIGHTLY AHEAD OF THE REST.)

(QUARTET MAN 2)

Say, I heard you talking and I was wondering if you could help me out. I've got this girl, see, and I can't seem to get to second base with her.

(EDDY)

(SARCASTICALLY AND CUTTING) I'd have called you out at first. Maybe you out to go down to the minor leagues for some more training. *(SARCASTIC LAUGH)*

(HENRY)

(SHOOTS EDDY A DISAPPROVING LOOK, THEN ADDRESSES QUARTET MAN, COMFORTINGLY.) Don't pay any attention to him. If I were you, I would take her down to a secluded beach, pull her close, whisper in her ear, and let nature take its course. *(BREAKS MOOD)* Well, I have to be going. Gotta speech to make in Illinois. *(THEY EXIT. QUARTET LOOKS AT EACH OTHER IN HAPPY APPROVAL AND LAUNCHES INTO SONG.)*

CUDDLE UP A LITTLE CLOSER (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 8083)

(AFTER QUARTET FINISHES AND AS SOON AS THEY EXIT WE HEAR TRAVEL VAMP AGAIN. AFTER VAMP, HENRY AND EDDY ENTER FROM OPPOSITE SIDE. STILL IN FRONT OF CURTAIN, EDDY SPEAKS TO HENRY.)

(EDDY)

I sure hope that long train ride across the country wasn't for nothing. If we're lucky, these farmers will let you give your speech and won't have any questions for you.

(CURTAIN HAS BEGUN TO FLY ON END OF LINE AND NOW REVEALS NEW SCENE. THE BACKDROP IS A FARM LANDSCAPE AND IN FRONT OF THE DROP IS A BARN FACADE, HAY BALES OR OTHER ITEMS WHICH SUGGEST A FARM SCENE. THE CHORUS IS WEARING STRAW HATS AND NECKERCHIEFS. AGAIN, THE RISERS CAN REPRESENT A GRANDSTAND OR CAN BE ELIMINATED AND REPLACED WITH PLATFORMS TO CREATE LEVELS. THE SCENE IS FROZEN WITH THE CHORUS STAGED IN VARIOUS ACTION POSES. AS HENRY AND EDDY STEP INTO SCENE, THE CHORUS DIRECTOR GIVES THE SIGNAL TO BREAK THE FREEZE AND CHORUS GOES RIGHT INTO SONG. HENRY AND EDDY DRIFT TO SIDE, OUT OF FOCAL POINT.)

HOW YA GONNA KEEP 'EM DOWN ON THE FARM (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7190)

(DURING THE SONG, HENRY HAS BEEN OFF TO THE SIDE LISTENING AND FRETTERING. AFTER THE APPLAUSE HE STEPS UP AND SPEAKS. EDDY TRIES TO ELICIT PROPER CROWD RESPONSES.)

(HENRY)

I suppose the farm girls will just have to take a lesson or two from the mademoiselles. *(HE LAUGHS NERVOUSLY.)* That should keep the boys on the farm. *(CHORUS NODS APPROVINGLY TO ONE ANOTHER.)* But let's get to the matter at hand. *(HE CLEARS HIS THROAT, SLIPS ON A STRAW HAT,*

PULLS OUT HIS SPEECH AND BEGINS.) Dear friends from Illinois, I'm proud to be here today in this land known for its tall *(BEAT)* corn and beautiful *(BEAT)* hogs. *(CHORUS AND EDDY REACT UNSURE)* As your great compatriot *(BEAT)* Abe Lincoln said, "the people from the land of *(BEAT)* fertile plains and *(BEAT)* uh . . . *(IN DESPERATION)* manure piles *(CHORUS AND EDDY REACT)* are the finest anywhere. Why, what would this country be without *(BEAT)* combines and *(BEAT)* pork chops? If you elect me as your next president, I . . . *(QUARTET HAS STEPPED FORWARD AND NOW INTERRUPTS.)*

(QUARTET MAN 3)

Say you do a pretty good job of preaching! You're just the man to help us. We've been sent as a committee from our church. Our pastor needs some advice.

(HENRY)

Well, I'm afraid I'm not prepared to . . .

(QUARTET MAN 2)

(HE CONTINUES, UNPHASED BY HENRY'S ANSWER.) Good. We'll just 'splain the problem to you. *(RIGHT INTO SONG)*

EVERYBODY WANTS TO GO TO HEAVEN (SOCIETY
CATALOG NO. 7669)

(CHORUS CAN SIT DOWN WHILE QUARTET SINGS, STAGE IS DARKENED AND QUARTET SPOTLIGHTED. AFTER SONG, STAGE LIGHTS COME BACK UP AND HENRY TRIES TO REGAIN CONTROL.)

(HENRY)

(CONFIDENT) Well that's a problem that even my worthy opponents couldn't solve. But now, back to my prepared remarks. *(ANOTHER QUARTET HAS COME UP AND NOW TAKES THEIR SHOT.)*

(QUARTET MAN 4)

Pardon me, Mr. Holiday. You're good at persuasion. I can't seem to cheer up my girl. Would you listen to what I whispered to my Little Sue Ann on the back porch last night?

(EDDY)

(SARCASTICALLY) Maybe some other time . . . *(HE IS STOPPED BY THE QUARTET'S SONG.)*

MY MELANCHOLY BABY (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7056)

(AGAIN THE CHORUS CAN STAY SEATED WITH THE STAGE DARKENED AND THE QUARTET SPOTLIGHTED. AFTER SONG, HENRY COMES BACK UP TO QUARTET.)

(HENRY)

Well if it was me, I'd give her some flowers. That should light up her face with a great big cheerful grin. You know what I mean?

(MAN 4)

We sure do! *(RIGHT INTO SONG)*

SUNNY SIDE UP (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7191)

(HENRY)

(RIGHT AFTER APPLAUSE) **Yes sir, that's what I like to see, a happy crowd. Now if you'll all gather around** *(EDDY GESTURES FOR THEM TO ASSEMBLE. AT THAT MOMENT MAN 5 RUNS ON STAGE.)*

(MAN 5)

(EXCITEDLY) **They're here and they're ready to start the show!** *(CHORUS EXITS QUICKLY AND ENTHUSIASTICALLY.)*

(EDDY)

(PERPLEXED) **Hey, where's everybody going?**

(MAN 5)

Down to the opry house. There's a group of entertainers just hit town. They're gonna put on a show in Henry's honor. *(THEY STEP DOWN STAGE AS CURTAIN DROPS BEHIND THEM.)*

(HENRY)

But my speech! What about my speech?

(MAN 5)

Don't worry. Nobody around here votes anyway. *(HE TAKES HENRY BY THE ARM AND PULLS HIM OFF STAGE DURING LINE. EDDY FOLLOWS.)*
Come on! Take a little time away from your busy schedule and enjoy *(NAME OF QUARTET).*

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(THIS IS QUARTET'S ENTRANCE ANNOUNCEMENT. THEY WORK IN FRONT OF THE CURTAIN. GUEST QUARTET SHOULD PERFORM FOR 20-25 MINUTES. WHILE THE SHOW'S FORMAT IS SUCH THAT THE QUARTET CAN DO THEIR NORMAL ACT AND NOT WORRY ABOUT THE THEME PER SE, THEY SHOULD RECEIVE A SCRIPT WELL IN ADVANCE OF THE SHOW. ASK THEM TO ELIMINATE COMMENTS ABOUT LOCAL PLACES OR CURRENT HAPPENINGS TO HELP MAINTAIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE SHOW.)

GUEST QUARTET

END OF ACT I

ACT II

(HOUSE LIGHTS DIM AND WE AGAIN HEAR TRAVELING VAMP. AFTER VAMP FINISHES, SPOT COMES UP ON CABOOSE FLAT IN FRONT OF MAIN CURTAIN. HENRY, EDDY AND QUARTET ARE ABOARD. QUARTET STARTS SONG AS LIGHTS ARE COMING UP. IF A DOOR IS BUILT INTO THE FLAT, HENRY AND EDDY CAN EXIT INTO IT AND LEAVE THE QUARTET PERFORMING.)

ALABAMY BOUND (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7184)

(QUARTET SINGS THROUGH MEASURE 30. A QUICK CURTAIN RISE OCCURS AT ABOUT MEASURE 77 ALLOWING THE CHORUS ON STAGE TO COME OUT OF A FREEZE AND TAKE THE SONG OVER AND FINISH IT. THE NEW SCENE IS ALABAMA. A BACKDROP OF A MOSS DRAPED SOUTHERN SCENE SHOULD BE USED. SET PIECES IN FRONT OF THE DROP COULD INCLUDE A MANSION FACADE; A WEEPING WILLOW, COTTON BALES, ETC. CHORUS IS AGAIN ON RISERS, REVIEWING STAND, OR ON PLATFORM-CREATED LEVELS. HENRY AND EDDY WALK INTO THE SCENE AT THE APPLAUSE.)

(EDDY)

It is my privilege to present Mr. Henry K. Holiday. (APPLAUSE)

(HENRY)

(STEPPING UP TO SPEAK, HE PUTS ON "KENTUCKY COLONEL" HAT AND PULLS OUT SPEECH.) **Dear friends from (BEAT) Dixie. I'm proud to be here today in this land known for its tall women and its beautiful sugar cane.**

(CHORUS REACTS AND EDDY SIGNALS FRANTICALLY. HENRY SMILES SHEEPISHLY.) **Excuse me, it's tall sugar cane and beautiful women. CHORUS REACTS HAPPILY) As your great compatriot Abe Lincoln (AT ADVERSE CROWD REACTION, HENRY LOOKS AT EDDY'S PANIC AND REALIZES MISTAKE.) Uh, Jefferson Davis said, (CROWD MURMERS APPROVAL) "The people from the land of (BEAT) weeping willows and (BEAT) mint juleps are the finest anywhere. Why, what would this country be without (BEAT) hush-my-mouth and (BEAT) sandy grits (QUICK RECOVERY) uh, hominy grits? If you elect . . .**

(MAN 6)

(WITH SOUTHERN ACCENT) **"Scuse me, suh. I've got a peculiar problem. In this land supposedly abounding with Southern hospitality, I'm afraid I'm terribly lonely.**

(EDDY)

What in the world are you talking about?

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MAN 6

Well, it's like this. (*CHORUS RIGHT INTO SONG.*)

GEE BUT I HATE TO GO HOME ALONE (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7173)

(HENRY)

(*AFTER SONG, TO MAN 6*) You'll be all right. All you need is a little companionship.

(*QUARTET HAS STEPPED UP BESIDE HENRY AND MAN 6 AND NOW QUARTET MAN SPEAKS.*)

(QUARTET MAN 5)

He's right. Find yourself a girl.

(MAN 6)

A girl?

(QUARTET MAN 5)

Sure. (*RIGHT INTO SONG*)

ANY LITTLE GIRL CAN MAKE A BAD MAN GOOD
(SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7183)

(*CHORUS CAN SIT DOWN IN DARKENED BACKGROUND WHILE SPOT LIGHTED QUARTET PERFORMS. AT APPLAUSE, HENRY COMES BACK FORWARD.*)

(HENRY)

Now, I did have a little more speech left.

(EDDY)

It's time to catch your train. (*HENRY REACTS FRUSTRATED.*)

(MAN 7)

Where's your next stop?

(HENRY)

Next? Oh, uh, I'm going up to the Big Apple. New York City.

(MAN 7)

(EXCITED) Really?! Say, I haven't been up there in years. Would you do me a favor and pass along a greeting?

(HENRY)

(PUZZLED) A greeting? To whom? *(CHORUS GOES RIGHT INTO SONG.)*

GIVE MY REGARDS TO BROADWAY (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 8084)

(AT THE END OF NUMBER, THE MAIN CURTAIN DROPS AND THE TRAVELING VAMP IS AGAIN HEARD. AS IT FADES, HENRY AND EDDY WALK OUT FROM WING. THEN FROM OTHER WING QUARTET WALKS ON IN THOUGHTFUL, SOMBER MOOD.)

(HENRY)

Say, this is supposed to be happy and carefree Broadway. Why the long faces?

(QUARTET MAN 6)

I'm afraid we just saw a sad scene that wasn't in one of the theaters.

(EDDY)

(SARCASTICALLY) Now what? *(QUARTET GOES RIGHT INTO SONG AND IS SPOTLIGHTED. HENRY AND EDDY EXIT.)*

BROADWAY ROSE (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7049)

(ON APPLAUSE, HENRY AND EDDY COME BACK UP TO QUARTET.)

(HENRY)

Maybe that little lady just needs some fellows like you to talk to her and be her friend. *(QUARTET BREAKS INTO HAPPY MOOD AND EXITS, HURRIEDLY.)* Well, if I'm gonna win any votes I've got to find a group bigger than four to deliver my speech to. *(ANOTHER QUARTET ENTERS FROM OPPOSITE WING. THEY, TOO, ARE IN SAD MOOD.)*

(EDDY)

Oh no! Here comes more trouble.

(HENRY)

(TO QUARTET, WHO HAVE NOW REACHED HIM.) **Excuse me, fellas, is something troublin' you?** *(QUARTET GOES RIGHT INTO SONG AND ARE SPOTLIGHTED. HENRY AND EDDY EXIT.)*

SOMEBODY STOLE MY GAL (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7030)

(HENRY)

(BACK UP TO QUARTET) **Boys, I say fight fire with fire. Go out there and steal her right back.** *(QUARTET EXITS, QUICKLY.)*

(EDDY)

Hey, we've got to find a crowd. *(CURTAIN OPENS QUICKLY BEHIND THEM.)* **After all, this is Broadway; there's bound to be somebody around. If I could only find . . .** *(HE LOOKS BEHIND HIM AND DOES A DOUBLE TAKE.)* **I knew they must be around here, somewhere.**

(HENRY AND EDDY WALK BACK INTO NEW YORK SCENE. THE BACK-DROP IS A BROADWAY OUTDOOR SCENE, OR A NEW YORK SKYLINE. SET PIECES IN FRONT CAN BE A LAMP POST, STREET SIGN, ETC. AGAIN, THE SCENE IS FROZEN WITH THE CHORUS HERE AND THERE. SOME ARE ON RISERS, OR BETTER YET, FOR THIS SCENE, ON LEVELS CREATED WITH PLATFORMS. WHEN EDDY SPEAKS, CHORUS BREAKS FREEZE AND MINGLES AS HENRY APPROACHES.)

(EDDY)

May we have your attention?

(HENRY)

(HE PULLS OUT SPEECH AND PUTS ON A POP OPEN SILK HAT, CLEARS HIS THROAT AND BEGINS.) **Dear friends from New York. I'm proud to be here today in this land known for its tall buildings and its beautiful skyline. As your great compatriot George M. Cohan said, "The people from the land of footlights and grease paint are the finest anywhere." Why, what would this country be without taxi cabs and . . . uh . . . ticket scalpers. If you elect . . .** *(HE STOPS BECAUSE CHORUS BEGINS DISPERSING.)* **. . . if you elect! . . . wait a minute, where's everybody going?**

(MAN 8)

(EVERYBODY STOPS AND TURNS TO HENRY.) **Why it's time for rush hour.**

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(EDDY)

There's no traffic, now. How can it be rush hour?

(MAN 8)

(HE LAUGHS) Not traffic. We mean the rush hour for pretty girls. The rehearsal for the Radio City Rockettes just let out. Would you stay and listen to a speech? *(THE CHORUS GOES RIGHT INTO SONG.)*

THE STREETS OF NEW YORK (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 8082)

(AFTER THE SONG, THE CROWD HEADS OFF STAGE. EDDY CATCHES THE MAN BEFORE HE CAN LEAVE.)

(EDDY)

What about his speech?

(MAN 8)

Maybe the pigeons would like it.

(EDDY)

(TO HIMSELF) Never trust an actor, they're more slippery than a . . . campaign manager.

(MAN 8)

(COMPASSIONATELY) Say, why don't you go inside *(HE LEADS HENRY AND EDDY DOWNSTAGE AS CURTAIN DROPS BEHIND THEM)* and catch a show.

(HENRY)

Maybe I will. Then I'm gonna head home to my friends. What's playing tonight? *(THEY BEGIN HEADING TO WINGS.)*

(MAN 8)

Why, it's a great act called, *(NAME OF GUEST QUARTET)*.

(THIS IS SECOND GUEST QUARTET'S ENTRANCE ANNOUNCEMENT. THEY WORK IN FRONT OF CURTAIN. PERFORMANCE SHOULD RUN 20-25 MINUTES. AGAIN, SEND THE QUARTET A COPY OF THE SCRIPT AND ASK THEM TO TAILOR THEIR REMARKS ACCORDINGLY.)

SECOND GUEST QUARTET

(AT END OF PERFORMANCE, QUARTET EXITS AND WE HEAR TRAVELING VAMP. AS VAMP FADES THE CURTAIN RISES ON "HOME" SET AS IN THE FIRST SCENE. THERE IS NO ONE ON STAGE AS HENRY WALKS ON, SUITCASE IN HAND. HE IS HAPPY AND SMILING AS HE BRISKLY WALKS ON STAGE, BUT SLOWS DOWN AND DROPS HIS SMILE WHEN HE FINDS NO ONE THERE. HE LOOKS AROUND, SETS SUITCASE DOWN AND BEGINS SOLILOQUY.)

(HENRY)

(VERY REFLECTIVE) I guess I really shouldn't have expected anyone to greet me. After all, I'm just a big phony. Why did I think a canned speech would please the people? They want real help; honest answers to honest problems. The only thing I did right was to finally get rid of that phony campaign manager. I guess this is what I deserve — to be all by myself — but still it hurts to be alone. (HE SITS ON SUITCASE. THE STAGE DARKENS LEAVING HOLIDAY IN A SPOT LIGHT. A QUARTET COMES UP ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE STAGE AND IS ALSO SPOTTED. THEY SING THE NEXT SONG AS HENRY'S ALTER EGO.)

WHERE HAVE MY OLD FRIENDS GONE (SOCIETY CATALOG
NO. 7186)

(ON THE APPLAUSE HENRY GETS UP SLOWLY AND BEGINS TO EXIT. AS HE DOES, CHORUS ENTERS QUICKLY FROM THE OPPOSITE SIDE, BUT QUIETLY, GIVING EACH OTHER THE QUIET SIGN, ETC., THEY FORM AND GO INTO SONG.)

WE'RE BEHIND YOU ALL THE WAY (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7682)

(SING INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND REFRAIN, INCLUDE CHORUS SPEAKING PART, THE SECOND REFRAIN AND THE ENDING FOR THE SECOND REFRAIN.)

(HENRY IS PUZZLED BUT HAPPY DURING THE SONG. AT THE END OF THE NUMBER, THE CHORUS GATHERS AROUND HIM AND CHEERS.)

(HENRY)

What a great surprise (HE LOSES HIS JOY). But, fellas, I'm afraid I don't deserve this. I'm a failure — a fraud. I didn't accomplish anything on my trip.

(MAN 1)

Are you kidding? (HE PULLS A HANDFUL OF LETTERS INTO VIEW.) Letters have been pouring in from all over on how you've been solving problems left and right. Listen. (HE READS PARTS OF LETTERS.) 'A voter from California writes, "My wife and I have never been so happy, all I had to do was thank her," Another fella says, "You're right; old age is the golden age — I'm still havin' fun." This one from Illinois says, "The boys are still down on the farm thanks to your hint." And this fella from New York says, "Thanks for the advice. Now, nobody steals my gal." The letters go on and on like this.

You've made a lot of new friends. Henry, maybe you won't win the election, but you are what this country stands for — people helping people.

(HENRY)

Maybe I knew that all along. That's America! (*CHORUS GOES RIGHT INTO SONG.*)

GOD BLESS AMERICA (SOCIETY CATALOG NO. 7641)

(MAIN CURTAIN DROPS — CURTAIN CALLS, ETC.)

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