

**A Portfolio of Essays**

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A portfolio submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Music (Research)

The University of Sheffield

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Department of Music

February 2017

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**A Re-Evaluation of *Pacific 1860***

*Pacific 1860* premiered in London on 19 December 1946. Expectations were high, not least because it was a Noël Coward show but it was also the show that was to re-open the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane which had been badly damaged during the war. For the critics, on the whole these expectations were not met and subsequent scholarship (on which there is very little) and reference to *Pacific 1860* focuses entirely on the negatives and the flaws of the show. Whilst it is not the intention to imply that the show was in fact a monumental success, this essay will aim to reconsider the show and what it offered to audiences at the time, in an unbiased manner. As part of this re-evaluation, this essay will look at how Coward’s primary intention of promoting the British Empire was overlooked, overshadowed by the genre.

# Libretto

There are limitations in discussing the libretto in any depth because there are currently only a limited number of primary sources on the show. The only version of the libretto is the manuscript copy in the Noël Coward Archive at the University of Birmingham. In order for us to discuss the libretto, we must therefore rely on secondary literature in the form of Stephen Citron’s book *Noël and Cole: The Sophisticates* and Graham Payn in his book on *My Life With Noël Coward*. There is no reference to the sources that Citron uses to corroborate his remarks, although Coward had stated in one of his diary entries that he had had “some good, reconstructive ideas”[[1]](#footnote-1) but does not elaborate on this point any further.

Citron remarks that the revisions made to the show from earlier drafts meant that *Pacific 1860* “changed greatly”[[2]](#footnote-2) but, rather than elaborating on this point further, his focus turns to the revised ending. One reason for this may be because he is basing his information on Graham Payn’s discussion of the show in his book *My Life with Noël Coward*. Payn offers only general comments on the libretto, with the closest reference to it being about the ending, which was rewritten when Martin was cast. Whereas the manuscript copy of *Pacific 1860* that is available to us, along with the reviews, show us that there was a happy ending with Kerry and Elena reuniting, the original ending allegedly does not conform to the traditional love story. According to Citron, when Elena returns she finds that she is too late and Kerry has just married his childhood sweetheart and is about to depart on his honeymoon. The “saddened, wiser Elena”[[3]](#footnote-3) subsequently sang a “tearful aria whilst the crowd sing happy songs offstage.”[[4]](#footnote-4)

The main revision, or the “biggest hurdle”[[5]](#footnote-5) as Citron refers to it, was “adjusting the love him and lose him plot”[[6]](#footnote-6) after it became apparent that Irene Dunne was unable to star in the show. Payn provides a deeper insight into this and the repercussions when it became apparent Dunne would not be Elena. Allegedly, Coward had developed the show specifically with Dunne in mind. It was to “be an operette – a French form which Noël always preferred.”[[7]](#footnote-7)

Irene, with her rich voice, would have been marvellous as the woman *d’une certaine age* whose visit to a semi-tropical island leads to an affair with a young man many years her junior.[[8]](#footnote-8)

With Dunne no longer available and Coward opting for Martin, we can see why the finer details of the narrative would have to be revised. Martin was fifteen years younger than Dunne in 1946 (thirty-three compared to forty-eight years old) and this was a significant age gap. Coward had two options: leave the libretto as it was and cast an older actress to replace Dunne or cast Martin and re-write it. As we know, he chose the latter, much to the dismay of Payn. In his opinion, the “rough draft for *Scarlet Lady* was…much better than the eventual Martin-ised version.”[[9]](#footnote-9) He clearly felt the original ending, in particular, was more captivating:

Naturally she tears herself away, but years later she is drawn back to the island, only to find that her lover, assuming his love for her to be hopeless, is to be married that very day. Unseen by him, she watches the festivities. Left alone on stage, she sings a reprise of the show’s key song. Curtain. Not a dry handkerchief left in the house.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Early critical reception suggests Payn was right: “…a damp squib on an elaborate scale”[[11]](#footnote-11) was how one critic described it, whilst the critic for *The Daily Telegraph* believed “as the evening flowed on mildly and the tameness and triteness of his plot became gradually manifest, a sense of anti-climax took the place of eager anticipation.”[[12]](#footnote-12) The original ending would have changed the narrative and perhaps impacted differently on the critics – the scorned scarlet lady who missed out on true love may have provided the desired “eager anticipation” and lack of “damp squib.” Instead, *Pacific 1860* was deemed an old-fashioned show with a plot and characters that failed to satisfy audiences.

# An American Star

As we know, Coward opted to cast Martin after Dunne became available. Undeniably it is Mary Martin who has been categorised as the reason for the show’s lack of success, with this explanation most commonly being discussed in any literature or discussion about the show. The idea of casting an American star was arguably a very clever one on Coward’s part. Whilst supposedly opposed to the “invasion” of the West End by Broadway musicals, casting an American star as the lead in his new British musical was a compromise; his writing style would not change but there would be a strong American presence in the show. In principle it worked but in reality, Mary Martin was the wrong American.

Barry Day argues that the problems actually began when Coward persuaded himself that Martin was “a dream girl… [with] all the mercurial charm of Gertie at her best with a sweet voice and more taste.”[[13]](#footnote-13) It is highly probable that he believed what he was saying but had this not been the case, then we could be looking at a very different show. Nevertheless, after the initial problems, all seemed to be going well. Coward noted on 27 September that “They [Martin and Halliday] were absolutely sweet and so genuinely thrilled about everything…We showed them Drury Lane and then played them some of the music. They were really enthusiastic and we drove them back to the Savoy in a haze of happiness.”[[14]](#footnote-14) In what appears to be genuine admiration, he goes on to say, “Personally I think she has authentic magic. She is quite obviously an artist in the true sense. She is easy, generous and humble.”[[15]](#footnote-15) These admirable qualities though, would not make up for the fact that she “cannot sing.”[[16]](#footnote-16)

Gladys came for a drink and we came to the sad conclusion that the fundamental trouble with *Pacific* [sic] is that Mary, charming and sweet as she is, knows nothing about Elena, never has and never will, and that although she has a delicious personality, she cannot sing. She is crammed with talent but she is too ‘little’ to play sophisticated parts.”[[17]](#footnote-17)

Although Coward strongly believed that they were his best numbers, whether they were the best for his leading couple and for the show as a whole, is debatable. Mary Martin, herself, had her doubts: “I thought every song he wrote was the most divine thing in the world, but I kept wondering who was going to sing them. They certainly didn’t sound like me. Noël said they were for the trio, or for the chorus, or for Graham, or somebody.”[[18]](#footnote-18) It would be the musical number, ‘Alice Is At It Again’ that would cause turmoil in an already developing fractious relationship between Coward and Martin. Written as the stand-out number of the show, and the main one that Coward had written for her, it would be cut when Martin objected to it.

Probably this was because he had heard me sing ‘Daddy’, which was naughty. A few years older and wiser when I read the lyrics to ‘Alice’, I nearly dropped dead. Alice was really *at* it, with the birds and the bees and the beasts of the field. I thought it wasn’t right for a gal [sic] from Texas to make her London debut with this scandalous song. I also didn’t think it was right for Mme. Salvador, for her character. I knew it was funny, terribly funny, and now I know I should have sung it. It would have stopped the show every night. But I refused. Noël was very sweet and said he would write me another.[[19]](#footnote-19)

Although she went on to regret not performing the number, she does raise the valid point of whether ‘Alice Is At It Again’ would have truly fitted with the portrayal of Elena Salvador with its suggestive lyrics. It would however, have partly provided the comedy which the critics wanted. A possible replacement was the narrative song ‘Uncle Harry’.[[20]](#footnote-20) It is a simple, yet effective number – one which talks of Uncle Harry wanting to follow the family tradition and become a missionary:

Found a South Sea Isle on which to stay.

The natives greeted them kindly and invited them to dine

On yams and clams and human hams and vintage coconut wine[[21]](#footnote-21)

The comic element arises in the following verses which intimate the inappropriate behaviour of Uncle Harry:

But when she'd gone to bed he made a getaway down the stairs,

For he longed to find the answer to a few of the maiden's prayers.

Uncle Harry's not a missionary now.

Poor Uncle Harry

After a chat with dear Aunt Mary

Thought the time had come to make a row.

He lined up all the older girls in one of the local sheds

And while he was reviling them, and tearing himself to shreds

They took their Mother Hubbards off and tied them around their heads.

Uncle Harry's not a missionary now—

He's awfully happy—

But he's certainly not a missionary now![[22]](#footnote-22)

‘One, Two, Three’ was also a possible replacement. It does not possess the same quality as ‘Alice Is At It Again’ and it had a different purpose too. The musical number is the prelude to and the explanation of the dance which follows, with the Verse section presenting a short history of the origins of the dance itself:

A brand new dance

Invaded France

In April Eighteen Forty,

Through every street

The rhythm beat,

Is swept beyond

The demi-monde

And though some people hissed it

They couldn’t long resist it.[[23]](#footnote-23)

Martin’s critical reception was mediocre. Whilst none of the reviews overwhelmingly enthused about her performance, very few explicitly criticised it. In a review for *Playgoer*, the critic proclaimed that “Mary Martin makes a triumphant debut in London as the prima donna, having beauty, grace and a fine voice”[[24]](#footnote-24) whilst the *Daily Express* remarked at how Martin “walked primly on to the stage…with a tiny parasol and hardly a trace of American accent.”[[25]](#footnote-25) The more tepid reviews came from the likes of *The Observer*, “Mary Martin goes through the familiar movements prettily and acts effectively.”[[26]](#footnote-26) Nevertheless, it is perhaps the *Daily Sketch* which best summarizes Martin’s performance and leads us into not only drawing conclusions on Martin’s performance but also examining the other potential reasons for the disappointing run of *Pacific 1860*.

She is an enchanting artist, graceful, at ease and wonderfully appealing. It was only a pity that the production robbed the audience of a chance to applaud her individual numbers, though her reception at the final curtain must have assured her that we had all been longing to do so.”[[27]](#footnote-27)

Whilst it is clear that the casting of Mary Martin in the role of Elena Salvador was a fundamental mistake, the entire blame for the failure of the show cannot be attributed solely to her. The assumption that “if Mary Martin had not been a success, the trouble must have rested with the show”[[28]](#footnote-28) is partly true, but it is unquestionably not the whole story.

# Genre

Operetta as a genre, particularly British operetta, changed after World War I and Gilbert and Sullivan, largely giving way to the intimate revue. Nevertheless, Noël Coward, Ivor Novello and Vivian Ellis emerged from this period as composers of operetta. According to Richard Traubner, it “attracted its audiences principally by means of its contagious melodies – though many other factors contributed to its popularity: clever libretti, satirical jibes, romantic intrigue, mesmerizing stars, lovely chorus girls and scenic splendour.”[[29]](#footnote-29) *Pacific 1860* lacked these key components and we can see how the genre (and the show specifically) paled in comparison to the musicals that were being staged on Broadway at the same time. Coward, Ellis and Gay had all been masters of the nostalgic style of light operetta and had continued to write in this 1930s style after the war.

Coward’s association with operetta was largely conservative – he was not the social extrovert or rebel that he had dared to be in his plays (most notably *The Vortex[[30]](#footnote-30)*), but it did provide him with an opportunity to pay homage to his youth. The early to mid-1920s had seen Coward dominating the revue style, but by the end of the decade he had attempted to lead British musical theatre in a new trajectory of operetta. Gone were the witticisms – the focus now being on romance. His first venture into operetta was *Bitter-Sweet* (728 performances), providing a return to sentiment and spectacle. It tells the story of a young woman who runs off with her music teacher only to see him die at the hands of a young, jealous aristocrat.

The critical and commercial success of *Bitter-Sweet* (and for some, Coward’s finest achievement in musical theatre) arguably inspired Coward to continue with his endeavour to provide sentiment and sweeping melody, possibly with the aim of emulating the acclaim he achieved with *Bitter-Sweet* in 1929. *Conversation Piece* (1934) followed, although this can be considered more of a musical comedy with incidental songs than an operetta. Nevertheless its libretto, with its romantic theme of true love transcending social class and wealth, is reminiscent of *Bitter-Sweet*. As Barry Day notes, “reopening the *Theatre Royal* with a major theatrical statement…would revive memories”[[31]](#footnote-31) of the show. Similarly, *Operette* (1938) was an offering of a tailored romantic story which reiterated plot themes and devices included in Coward’s previous two efforts. In this instance, Coward incorporated a show-within-a-show format, thus providing him with an opportunity to pay tribute to his preferred genre (stemming from the Edwardian operettas of his youth), Florodura and its famous sextet, and the musicals of the Gaiety stage.

A pattern emerges with *Pacific 1860* following a similar trajectory to Coward’s previous operettas. Whilst he omitted the *Operette*-style homages, the romantic sentiment and sweeping melody is without doubt still evident. Despite Sheridan Morley[[32]](#footnote-32), amongst others, believing the choice of operetta highlighted how out of touch he was with the new style of American musicals,[[33]](#footnote-33) in this instance, it could be seen as a purposeful intention by Coward. As well as the genre being his preferred choice, it also enabled him to fulfil his desire to write a political piece (or even propaganda) in a subtle manner. In part, it could be argued that the young Coward of the 1920s was edging to the fore, inspired perhaps by his wartime experiences, but who ultimately decided to engage in a politically sensitive discussion whilst offering escapism to his audience.

One factor that has largely been overlooked whilst discussing *Pacific 1860*’s lack of success, is Coward’s contemporaries who were also writing musicals at the time - particularly Ivor Novello. Whilst Coward had been writing musicals since 1929, they were interspersed with his plays, whereas Novello had a sustained career in musical theatre from 1935 onwards. They had all been successful too and by 1946 (when *Pacific 1860* opened) it was Novello’s musicals that were distinctly associated with the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. Comparing Coward’s and Novello’s musicals is an entirely different discussion to be had, but it is interesting to briefly look at Novello’s musicals as it enables us to see a distinction between his works and *Pacific 1860*.

“As a commercial art form, musical theatre has reshaped itself continually over the centuries to meet ongoing changes in popular taste”[[34]](#footnote-34) according to John Kenrick, and we can see that this is something that Novello masters, whereas Coward was less inclined to. Whilst Novello enjoyed success with the same type of romantic shows that he had perfected during the Great Depression, Coward would not write another big hit post-*Oklahoma!*. Why? Novello exploited his theatre space and his quest for drama. For the first three of his four musicals at Drury Lane, Novello “fully exploited the mechanics and historical achievement” of the theatre by “incorporating sensation drama in to each production.”[[35]](#footnote-35) Wright goes on to argue that the theatre, “with its sophisticated and enduring stage machinery, was a prime exponent of the art.”[[36]](#footnote-36) Arguing its incorporation into Novello’s musicals, he lists three examples showing Novello’s awareness of several factors:

1. The place of that theatre in the history of sensation drama and the exploitation of stage machinery.
2. The ability to bring a filmic quality to theatre.
3. The importance of the set-piece.[[37]](#footnote-37)

*Pacific 1860* offers none of the above – to put it bluntly, there was no sensationalism and this is what audiences were wanting. *Glamourous Night* (1935, 243 performances) featured a shipwreck whilst *Careless Rapture* (295 performances) had a train crash. Meanwhile *Pacific 1860* was featuring fictional lands and a typical happy-ever-after romantic love story. Coming so soon after the end of the war, Coward’s plan for a work of escapism and nostalgia perhaps did not seem so ludicrous but it shows that he had not given any attention to Novello’s work to notice the difference and what audiences wanted.

Another difference between the two friendly-rivals was that Novello was the pivot in all of his musicals. Coward, whilst starring in many of his plays, did not appear in his. This is something that applies in general and not just to *Pacific 1860* but if we look at his plays, not only were they largely successful and have enjoyed many revivals since, there is an argument to be made that his musicals could have been more successful and popular if only he had chosen to star in them himself.

Whilst it is unsurprising to find musical references to earlier Coward works and operettas, such as ‘Invitation to the Waltz’ and ‘This Is A Night for Lovers’ which are both pastiches and arguably extended versions of skits found in *Bitter-Sweet*, there are also Novello-esque style numbers too. Meanwhile, there are typical Coward romantic waltzes, notably ‘Bright Was the Day’ in Act I and ‘This Is A Changing World’ in Act II. The former closes Act I and is a waltz duet aria between Kerry and Elena. The lyrics, evoking strong romanticism as they recall their first meeting and their destiny, is emphasised by the lilting melodic phrases (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Example of the lilting melodic phrases in ‘Bright Was The Day’.[[38]](#footnote-38)

Whilst Elena is deeply in love with Kerry and the audience knows of their plans to meet again the following day, ‘This Is A Changing World’ offers a reminder in this love story; love is an emotion that may not last. Rosa talks of love and how it “changes it face and its heart too often – enjoy it if you must – but enjoy it lightly.”[[39]](#footnote-39) The most striking part of the number is the simile:

Each waning moon

All dawns that rise, all suns that set

Changes like the tides that flow across the sands[[40]](#footnote-40)

It talks of changeability and becomes further atmospheric through Coward’s music, befitting of operetta (Figure 2).

Figure 2: The music reflects the changeability in the lyrics[[41]](#footnote-41)

Similarly, the romantic aria of ‘Dear Madame Salvador’ (which subsequently leads into the duet ‘My Horse Has Cast a Shoe) is typical of post-war operatic mode and is written in parlando style. This was commonly used in the recitativo of the Italian opera style, reinforcing Coward’s intended direction of musical theatre – in response to the emergence of the new style of American musicals. ‘My Horse Has Cast a Shoe’ does not have much intrinsic interest other than the rhythmic character from the steady “clip-clop” of its opening – depicting the horse which Elena conveniently falls off outside Kerry’s house (Figure 3).

Figure 3: The rhythmic 'clip-clop' depicting Elena's horse

It is this accident and Kerry’s chivalry in offering to drive her home in his wagonette that truly starts the relationship and their love for each other.

Figure 4: Kerry and Elena meeting for the first time.[[42]](#footnote-42)

Overall, we can see the pattern which emerged and how Coward followed this when he wrote *Pacific 1860*. In writing an operetta and seemingly ignoring the sensationalist aspects of Novello’s musicals, the show was, and still is, subject to criticism. Adrian Wright describes the narrative as one which “takes the audiences of Christmas 1946 from foggy, tinsel-happy London to the tropical South Pacific heat of the island of Samolo, an echo of the island of Bollamazoo sung of in *Operette*.”[[43]](#footnote-43) This is similar to the view held by Philip Hoare who argues *Pacific 1860* is just “a lavish piece of escapism”[[44]](#footnote-44) for a “war-weary public.”[[45]](#footnote-45) In both instances, there is a failure to recognise that writing in this genre was key to the political element of the show too.

# Politics

*Pacific 1860* is not the first show that Coward wrote with a political perspective and focus on imperialism. Although not necessarily explicit, his output of work implies his staunch patriotism, particularly during the war years through different mediums: 1941 saw the premiere of *Blithe Spirit*, along with the song *London Pride*, whilst 1942 saw the release of the film *In Which We Serve* which focused on national unity and social cohesion. Furthermore, *Cavalcade* (1931) brought him critical acclaim, both as a play and the subsequent film, as it charts the effects of the British Empire and imperial responsibilities on the family. Jeffrey Richards[[46]](#footnote-46) quotes a review by critic Alan Parsons for the *Daily Mail* which describes *Cavalcade* as:

A magnificent play in which the note of national pride pervading every scene and every sentence must make each one of us face the future with courage and high hopes.[[47]](#footnote-47)

Parsons’ view was one that was shared by most of the critics, with a critic for *The Observer* commenting how the film “evaded any truly constructive issues but that it was so close to the emotional memories of every British man and woman that it must sweep British audiences off their feet wherever it is shown.”[[48]](#footnote-48)

Although Coward noted in his autobiography how the irony of the war scenes was lost on the critics in the patriotic atmosphere of 1931[[49]](#footnote-49), this did not deter him from placing the theme of imperialism at the heart of *Pacific 1860*. We can assert that Coward was re-defining the Empire as he saw it – the first hints of widespread criticism of imperialism had begun to be felt as early as the 1920s but, by 1946, its fall was a distinct prospect; one that Coward did not take lightly. With this in mind, the additional effort that he went to, in order to make the colony as realistic as possible, can be seen as him engaging with the audience about this island, which was evidently so important to him – a reminder of what was at stake.

To Barry Day, Coward “had become besotted with his imaginary South Sea island of Samolo that he had first evoked in *We Were Dancing*”[[50]](#footnote-50) and whilst his diaries and Cole Lesley’s account of the process in creating does support this, it also becomes apparent that Coward was using it as a means of replicating a British colony and the genre suited this. In replicating one, Coward had a medium in which he could share his views on the topical issue of the time – the future of the British Empire. Lesley acknowledged the political element of Samolo, detailing how Coward “traced the lineage of all the characters in the musical”[[51]](#footnote-51) and how together they wrote “a Boedeker-like guide to the island.”[[52]](#footnote-52) It was of course a British Possession and of course the climate was equable with abundant sunshine and, except in June, few tropical storms.”[[53]](#footnote-53)

There are, in effect, two different stances on *Pacific 1860*. On the one hand, there are viewpoints such as those held by Adrian Wright who, in his book *Rediscovering the Post-War British Musical*, argues that there “was nothing in the least relevant or appropriate to the times in *Pacific 1860*, beyond a natural response to dreariness and uncertainty.”[[54]](#footnote-54) Meanwhile, on the other hand, Dan Rebellato disputes this sentiment in his chapter ‘Look back at empire: British theatre and imperial decline’. He, where many others before him have not, examines *Pacific 1860* from the imperialist angle.

Rebellato does not ignore the romantic notion of the show, acknowledging from the start that it is “a musical comedy set in Samolo, a fictional British colony, populated by singing natives and colonial administrators with nothing more pressing than romance and etiquette to occupy their minds”,[[55]](#footnote-55) but focuses on Samolo being a British colony. He refers to the preface that Coward wrote for the published text, which Rebellato describes as being an “imitation gazetteer describing the history”[[56]](#footnote-56) of the island. In the preface, Coward writes that “the islands became officially a British possession in 1855 during the reign of King Kefumalini II who wrote personally to Queen Victoria begging her to allow his land to have the privilege of belonging to the British Empire.”[[57]](#footnote-57) Coward is demonstrating his support for the British Empire here, and extracts from his diary entries would also support the notion of him being an Imperialist. For example, upon learning of Gandhi’s assassination, he spoke of it being a “bloody good thing which happened far too late”[[58]](#footnote-58) and on the subject of imperialism during the Suez crisis he wrote:

The good old imperialism was a bloody sight wiser and healthier than all this woolly-headed, muddled, ‘all men are equal humanitarianism… The British Empire was a great and wonderful social, economic and even spiritual experiment.[[59]](#footnote-59)

Meanwhile, in an article for *Encounter*, David Cannadine argues that it was Coward’s travels across the British Empire which started the precedence of using the Empire as a theme in his works; something which he argues, started in the 1930s. In his opinion, *Pacific 1860* was “the first sign of this growing imperial obsession”[[60]](#footnote-60) and that “it reiterated Coward’s familiar views.”[[61]](#footnote-61) This assertion is somewhat accurate with it being documented that Coward was often inspired by his travels. However, his latter statement can be disputed; *Pacific 1860* was not the first show to tackle the issue or subject of the British Empire. Cannadine quotes Cole Lesley in an attempt to support his notion of Coward being metaphorically blinded to the realisation of what life was like for the colonised. In his opinion, “there was no room in this imperial vision for power or prejudice or exploitation, for poverty, famine or not. The natures were colourful, contented and quiescent – a picturesque backdrop, but no more.”[[62]](#footnote-62)

He belonged to a time when people – and his fame placed him in that class of person – went automatically on arrival at their destination to sign the book at Government House or the British Embassy, and he delighted in the subsequent invitations, the luxury and the grandeur.[[63]](#footnote-63)

Rebellato has the view of Coward “not attempting to privilege the colonisers over the colonised in an imperialist sense.”[[64]](#footnote-64) There is a hint of the colonisers being given preferential treatment when the Stirling’s object to Elena’s presence at the party and their subsequent withdrawal of this objection happening once they learn that she is a friend of the Governor’s wife. Rebellato suggests that the “play’s real interest is in offering love as a way of transcending colonial difference”[[65]](#footnote-65) with “passion not a product of the colonial setting, but a means of escaping it.”[[66]](#footnote-66) However, there is no explicit “colonial difference” to transcend. If Kerry had fallen in love with one of the native plantation workers, for example, then the play could be perceived in this way. The fact that Elena is the friend of the Governor’s wife suggests the opposite in fact, because she is therefore likely to be a similar ilk and from the same social standing as the Governor and, to a certain extent, the Stirling family. The suggestion of her being a “scarlet woman” is only slight and one that is not explored in any great depth. The notion of passion being a “means of escaping” colonialism is similarly interesting given that neither Kerry nor Elena are trying to escape it and there is no hint of such a matter either, especially as Elena was only on the island as a visitor whilst she recuperated from a bout of ill health.

An example of Coward emphasising colonisation later in the show can be found when Elena departs and Kerry tries to reach her. As this happens, there are two groups of characters singing:

On the right: ‘a group of Samolons in full native regalia’ singing a traditional song to mark the departures end’

On the left: ‘a group of earnest missionaries with a harmonium…singing, with a certain dogged determination, a fairly cheerless hymn.’[[67]](#footnote-67)

Both groups have a voice through the medium of song and there are no subaltern voices (both Elena and Kerry have a voice, and so do the native Samolons) and so therefore the issue of colonialism is both subtle and implicit within the musical. By giving everyone a voice through the medium of song, Coward is not outwardly showing privilege and superiority to the colonisers, yet this is the message that his show conveys by having the disapproval towards Kerry and Elena’s relationship at the beginning, and similarly by pointedly having the colonisers and the colonised standing separately when Elena departs.

Musically, ‘Fumfumbalo’ is significant because of its seemingly authentic feel. It starts with the mythology of the island but it is when Kerry joins the servants in singing the verses that is interesting. Kerry has tried to translate the Samolan native song and it has become a tradition that he sings this song with the servants each year, after they taught it to him when he was a child. Whilst his family have been Colonials on the island for generations, through Kerry being born there and interacting in this way with the locals, this somewhat mitigates the argument that the Stirlings are part of a colonial establishment that has little regard for the local people. Kerry, to some extent, can be seen as the figure of compromise for Coward – he is effectively a member of the colonial establishment, yet throughout the narrative of the show, we see his disdain for any apparent snobbishness. As such, Coward is able to portray an image of the British Empire in a way which is not degrading for those being colonised. Additionally, from Coward’s perspective, with a story lacking strong emphasis on imperialism, *Pacific 1860* would potentially appeal to audiences who were tired of politics after the war.

Figure 5: Kerry (Graham Payn) performing 'Fumfumbalo' with the servants.[[68]](#footnote-68)

Overall, we can draw the conclusion that critics in 1946 were correct when they described *Pacific 1860* as an operetta but wrong in believing it was merely offering escapism entertainment. It was perceived as the stereotypical romantic plot for a “war-weary public” with “feeble” music, but we are now in a position to realise this was wrong. The show was stylised, but this arguably meant it was easier for Coward to include his political sentiment under the guise of romanticism and a traditional love story. Operetta was a genre in which Coward was accustomed to and had achieved success with but, more importantly, one which could be utilised.

# Social Status

This essay has discussed both the genre and the political elements of *Pacific 1860* and, to some extent we can see that both the setting and the political narrative are significant to the story of Kerry and Elena’s relationship. The islanders and specifically the Stirling family are wary of outsiders on the island or, as Kerry’s brother puts it, being “snobbish little Colonials.”[[69]](#footnote-69) This attitude continues through Act 1 and Act 2, when they refuse to permit Kerry to invite Elena to a party. It is clear that they are concerned about her social status and exactly who she is and where she has come from. They are only accepting of Elena when it becomes apparent that she is friends with the Governor and his wife – at which point Mrs Stirling is “thunderstruck”.[[70]](#footnote-70) Whilst Coward is writing the love story between Kerry and Elena and sharing his political views, he is also addressing, through the narrative, the issue of social standing. The Stirlings are colonials on the island – Scottish heritage, but Kerry and his father born in Samolo.

Figure 6: Elena arrives at the party with Kerry.[[71]](#footnote-71)

In only being willing to socialise with those of the same ilk, Coward reinforces the earlier flippant remark he wrote for Rollo – “snobbish little Colonials.”[[72]](#footnote-72) This all changes when the friendship between Lady Grayshott and Elena is revealed, with Mrs Stirling’s overreaction in attempting to subsequently be welcoming to Elena is a product of this behaviour. Mr Stirling also acknowledges the error: “We are a small colony, madam – secure in our traditions but not, alas, quite secure enough in our behaviour – I must ask you to pardon us.”[[73]](#footnote-73)

The story is shaped by this because we see Kerry as the outsider of his own family – his behaviour and views are the antithesis of his family’s and it is this that draws him and Elena together. The setting comes to the fore once again when Elena is forced to leave. Her companions feel Samolo is a “dead and alive place”[[74]](#footnote-74) and she has obligations to fulfil. The description of Europe:

…the smell of Paris on a May morning with all the chestnuts out – Vienna in winter, when there’s a sprinkling of snow on the ground and you can have steaming hot chocolate in that little café on the Ringatrasze – then Stockholm – do you remember - ?[[75]](#footnote-75)

is evocative and acts as a reminder of how different Samolo is and the life that Elena would potentially be willing to sacrifice. Whilst she ultimately relents, departing for Germany before Kerry is able to join her, her return at the end of Act 3 culminates in two different endings depending on the version of the script.

Figure 7: Kerry left heartbroken as Elena leaves.[[76]](#footnote-76)

Here we have seen yet another dimension to *Pacific 1860* and again, one which has previously been overlooked. Whilst it somewhat ties in with the political debate, the emphasis is on attitudes and how significant social status is. Only when Elena is found to be a friend of the Govenor’s wife, does Mrs Stirling accept her. It is only Kerry who is willing to accept her, with it surely not being a coincidence that he, yet again, is the figure of compromise for Coward.

Overall, by re-evaluating *Pacific 1860*, it is clear that scholars have simply regurgitated perceptions of the show as a failure without challenging them, partly perhaps because they too have not realised the political significances. In recent times, the focus has moved towards comparing Coward and *Pacific 1860* with Novello’s dominance of musical theatre at Drury Lane. John Kenrick for example, highlights how Novello “enjoyed unbroken success with the same kind of romantic spectaculars that he had perfected during the Great Depression”[[77]](#footnote-77), whilst Adrian Wright also draws comparisons between the two artists, but is more objective than Kenrick, who arguably fails to provide an unbiased account of the facts.

Wright states that Coward’s work in musical theatre “has mostly been discussed by those who know little of the context into which they fit”[[78]](#footnote-78) which is completely true, yet Wright, although he tries to, is unable to successfully do so himself. He notes how a “willingness to please had not deserted its author, but Coward showed that, four years after *Conversation Piece*, he had paid little regard to Novello’s outstanding successes at Drury Lane since 1935.”[[79]](#footnote-79) There is little relevance here because Drury Lane was not the intended venue – His Majesty’s Theatre was and so immediately his argument is undermined. The context is actually Coward’s previous political pieces, his war work and his patriotic beliefs and staunch believer of the British Empire.

To conclude, *Pacific 1860* is a show that has been largely misunderstood. Coward’s intended political messages are clearly there, but are absorbed into the narrative. There are no explicit references to the British Empire – none of the characters reference the debate that was happening at the time, for example. Instead, we can see how Coward opted to approach the subject from an implicit manner, perhaps with the objective of appealing to all and not dividing his audiences. However, this approach was too subtle for the critics (and scholars, with the exception of Dan Rebellato) who believed they were just watching a sentimental, stylised operetta. What they failed to understand or appreciate is that Coward used the genre as a means of contextualising his subject through the setting and overall making *Pacific 1860* less of a propaganda musical.

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*Pacific 1860* – Manuscript copy: Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham. *Noël Coward Archive*. Section A Box 12

# Archival Material Consulted

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***Noël Coward Archive* [By Section / Box Numbers]**

*A/12* : Manuscript copy of script

*D/7* : Album of cuttings

*E/5* : Photographs

*H/1* : Diary 1945

*H/1* : Diary 1946

**Theatre Collection, University of Bristol**

***Mander and Mitchenson Collection***

‘Pacific 1860’ Box

***Sail Away* as a Star Vehicle for Elaine Stritch**

Noël Coward’s first original musical since *Ace of Clubs*more than ten years earlier, *Sail Away* was written, composed and directed by the man himself. Described by Hoare as “a musical with a more chequered history than any of his previous efforts”[[80]](#footnote-80) *Sail Away* was initially going to be a film entitled *Later than Spring*; a “brittle, stylised, sophisticated, insignificant comedy” with a “fascinating *femme du monde* ([Marlene] Dietrich)” and an “equally fascinating but prettier *homme du monde* (himself) with an “articulate pair of companion secretaries (Graham Payn and Marti Stevens)”[[81]](#footnote-81) before Coward opted to transform it into a musical.

*Sail Away* and Elaine Stritch arguably go together when people think of the musical, yet she was not the first choice for the leading role and was hired only to lead the comedy sub-plot. However, by the time the show opened on Broadway, *Sail Away* had been redesigned for Stritch’s performing talents after Coward revised the show for her; even her biography in the show’s playbill claimed “Coward has tailored *Sail Away* to her unique talents.”[[82]](#footnote-82) The key question that this discussion will aim to address is: how did the (re)casting of Stritch as the lead performer shape the show? To aid answering this, attention will be given to how she was established as the star and the overall effect this had on the show: from merchandise and staging, through to the narrative and critical reception.

# Casting

The original idea for the film (and later the musical) stemmed from the song, ‘A Bar on the Piccolo Marina’ which Coward had written for Beatrice Lillie, telling of the widowed Mrs Wentworth-Brewster’s discovery of Italian lovers. Just as *Set to Music* was a vehicle for Lillie in 1939, one could arguably be forgiven for mistakenly believing that *Sail Away* was written especially for Elaine Stritch. However, at the genesis of the show, Stritch had not even been considered – for either the role of Mimi Paragon or Verity Craig (remembering that, originally, the romantic and comedic roles were separate). Instead, Coward’s diary entries suggest that Rosalind Russell[[83]](#footnote-83) was his favoured option for leading lady, although there were concerns over whether she would be able to “extricate herself from commitments.”[[84]](#footnote-84) By December, Coward had become exasperated by Russell’s non-committal stance, thereby describing her as a “tiresome bitch.”[[85]](#footnote-85) It was at this point that his attention started to focus towards Irene Dunne, stating in his diary: ““I have some strong plans about Irene Dunne who would, I think, be better.”[[86]](#footnote-86) There is no further mention of Dunne after this point, so it is unknown whether she declined a role or if Coward changed his mind. Nine months later, however, Judy Holliday was being lined up for the role of Verity Craig, although ultimately the role of Verity Craig was given to the American soprano Jean Fenn. Meanwhile, Kay Thompson was cast as Mimi Paragon.

Balancing Fenn’s operatic style against Elaine Stritch’s style was always going to be problematic and so it is little surprise that significant changes had to be made. Although Coward considered the character “a marvellous part for Kay”[[87]](#footnote-87) (it had been specifically written for her) he was certainly not without reservations: “I hope to God she plays it and doesn’t make a fathead of herself which, I fear, she is quite capable of doing.”[[88]](#footnote-88) He need not have worried, as Thompson would withdraw from the show less than two months later: “Kay came to dine on Monday and raved about everything but doesn’t want to play Mimi because she has a complex about appearing on Broadway. Two or three days later she said definitely she wouldn’t be doing it!”[[89]](#footnote-89) In reality, Thompson’s excuse could not be supported, with a biography on Thompson suggesting that “she was constitutionally unable to commit to anything unless she could rule the roost.”[[90]](#footnote-90) Not to be perturbed however, Coward set his sights on Elaine Stritch.

In a recurring theme, Stritch too would prove to be problematic, although not with her character portrayal, which would earn outstanding reviews. It was her excessive drinking which caused Coward worry. Unlike Russell and Thompson, Stritch agreed to be a part of the show without having even heard the score or read the script, just as long as her television series had been completed in time.[[91]](#footnote-91) However, Coward was still concerned: “She is wildly enthusiastic and very funny. She will, I am sure, be wonderful as Mimi, but I foresee leetle [sic] clouds in the azure sky. She is a keen drinker, an ardent Catholic and has been ‘in Analysis’ for five years! Oh dear. A girl with problems. However, I think I shall be able to manage her. If I can, all will be fine and dandy, if not, ze scenes zay [sic] will be terrible. I must engage an expert understudy.”[[92]](#footnote-92) As it transpired, no expert understudy would be required and apart from a few minor differences, Stritch and her drinking were “managed” effectively. Ultimately, it was the dynamic between Fenn and Stritch and their respective characters overall, which necessitated a radical reworking of the script. As Cole Lesley put it, “For two days Noël worked at high pressure on the scissors-and-paste job while the company, all of whom would be affected by the change, were in a state of suspended frenzy.”[[93]](#footnote-93)

# From Merchandise to Staging

Before we even start to look at the changes to the narrative as the script was revised, the playbills for Boston, Philadelphia (they are both the same) and New York are indicative of a change in focus.

Figure 1: Boston Playbill[[94]](#footnote-94)

Figure 2: New York Playbill[[95]](#footnote-95)

Although it is potentially possible to decipher Stritch from the caricature on the Boston programme (Figure 1), one would have to know that she was starring in it. Additionally, the front cover also features a caricature of James Hurst (Johnny) as well as some of the other passengers on board – the focus is not entirely on Stritch but instead, the cover reflects the general story of the show.

In comparison, the final New York Playbill (Figure 2) is clearly placing both Stritch and Coward as the central, recognisable figures of the show. It was the ‘Elaine Stritch and Noël Coward Show’ in several ways. For Stritch, it was a platform to showcase her personality and utilise her acerbic tone and for Coward, it was his comeback. *Sail Away* was to be his first musical theatre work on Broadway since *Set to Music* in 1939 and his first attempt at writing a Broadway musical. He aimed to emulate the success of American musicals in that period: “If I can really pull it off, it will mean financial security for life.”[[96]](#footnote-96) By March 1961, Coward was even more buoyant when he wrote to Lorn Lorraine[[97]](#footnote-97), “I have a strong feeling that it may be one of the best things I have ever done.” In typical Coward-style, he concludes: “If it turns out not to be – Fuck it.”[[98]](#footnote-98)

Early reviews suggested the ‘Stritch-Coward’ show would be a success: “The Coward of *Sail Away* is one we have never seen before. It is as if, in one giant step, he is attempting to crash the gap between his own well-trodden fields of leisurely romanticism and the jet age” wrote Alan Gardner for the *Daily Mail*.*[[99]](#footnote-99)* The critic for *Variety* meanwhile, wrote “Coward’s airy musical displays beaucoup pix potential, albeit thin storyline”[[100]](#footnote-100) before adding, “Full of wit, life and energy, it’s a cinch to make it on Broadway…Balmy and breezy with tuneful songs and cutting lyrics, it’s light and optimistically happy strictly on the entertainment side, a satire on life and characters aboard a cruise ship.”[[101]](#footnote-101)

Beyond the playbills however, there are further signs of the show being a vehicle for Stritch. Photographs from the New York production show her in a position of dominance – invariably she is either elevated above other characters or they have their backs to the audience. Act 1, Scene 1 is an example of this: the ship is awaiting Mimi’s arrival before she can sail (and in essence, the musical cannot really start until she has arrived). With the stewards waiting for her, her presence is felt when she enters on stage shouting “Sweet God I’ve made it…”[[102]](#footnote-102) As she charms the stewards, they lift her up on her rocking chair as they sing ‘Come to Me’ (Figure 3).

.

Figure 3: Mimi's arrival. Act 1, Scene 1.[[103]](#footnote-103)

Rather than walking alongside them or in front of them as they carry her luggage, in raising her up, her arrival and dominance is emphasised further. Whilst this reflects Stritch as the star, it is also significant for her character (Mimi) because the audience immediately witnesses a character who is going to take centre-stage and be a forceful presence. By contrast, in the following scene of the pre-Broadway script, Jean Fenn’s character (Verity) is portrayed as being weak and depressed:

“She looks strained and unhappy. She puts the small make-up case she is carrying on the dressing-table, sits on the bed, takes off her hat and lights a cigarette.”[[104]](#footnote-104)

Although Verity is supposed to be the lead character, she pales in comparison to Mimi after her flamboyant, carefree entrance.

Additional production photographs taken during the New York production (Figures 4 and 5 respectively) are further examples which illustrate *Sail Away* as a vehicle for Stritch and the determination to emphasise her position as the lead. Figure 4, for example, shows Stritch facing forwards with the children in front of her. Potentially, she could have been side-ways on the audience and therefore the children could have been too but, in her current position, the scene and the audience’s attention is focused solely on her and her mannerisms. Similarly in Figure 5, she is clearly seen above everybody else; standing on the same level as the passengers and hearing her voice was not enough – once again, emphasis is placed on the visual element.

Figure 4: Act 1, Scene 9: 'The Ship's Nursery'.[[105]](#footnote-105)

Figure 5: Act 2, Scene 5.[[106]](#footnote-106)

Stritch’s stage presence continues to be felt throughout the show, even when she is only momentarily on stage. Her demeanour and Coward’s script makes the audience engage with her, whereas there is not necessarily the same enthusiasm for Verity. Another example would be the interaction between Mimi and Sir Gerard during Act 1, Scene 4 (Appendix 6). She promises him a “great, glamourous, gorgeous adventure”[[107]](#footnote-107) before suggesting a game of Bingo. This humour is lacking in Verity’s character and so it therefore becomes easier to understand why her storyline and character seemed tedious to audiences and critics alike. The dichotomy between the two was arguably further intensified by the invariability in which Mimi and Verity’s scenes seemed to follow one another; exacerbating the contrast between the two.

Admittedly, Mimi was intended as the comedy character and Verity’s story is supposed to be sad and encourage the audience to have empathy with her after she discovers her husband has had an affair. Her stage directions, for example are “vaguely” and “without expression”[[108]](#footnote-108) particularly in Act 1 when she was supposed to be the most troubled. It is Act 1 which was seemingly the most problematic and this was the case in all three versions of the script. As the critic Thomas. R. Dash says:

The first half…is a conventional musical comedy and we kept wondering when is the author-composer-lyricist going to take advantage of the potentially rich material: human, geographic, ethnic, to show us the flashes of the urbane, the witty Noël Coward of old. Fortunately Mr Coward himself seemed aware of the above criticism, and answered it emphatically with his brilliant second half – a show unto itself and a segment that redeems the laggardness of the earlier stanzas.[[109]](#footnote-109)

This was, of course, the Act which was deemed the more serious one from the outset, and the one which predominantly starred Jean Fenn and featured her burgeoning relationship problems. As such, Fenn’s role was cut (see Appendix 7 for the timeline of Verity’s character development) and in the final Broadway script, the pace quickens with Mimi providing both the comedic and romantic role.

The two endings of *Sail Away* are indicative of the direction and focus of the show. Act 2, Scene 11 of the pre-New York script sees Mimi depart the ship after “the photographers take a number of flashlight photographs and, accompanied by a cheering group of stewards, Ski and Mimi disappear down the gangway.”[[110]](#footnote-110) Some attention is given to her, but it is Johnny and Verity who take prominence. In doing so, we can see how Coward tried to place the love triangle at the heart of the show – two men loving the same woman but ultimately, with the help of Mimi, husband and wife are reunited and Johnny is left alone. This largely sums up the two plots – although Stritch’s character had more stage appeal and Stritch impressed the critics, both she and her character were only peripheral characters and not intended to have the impact that they did.

The final script truly marks a shift in focus. By now, Stritch is integral to the show and when the curtain comes down in Act 2, Scene 8, she is the last to leave. The stage direction: “GENERAL EXIT which leaves Mimi alone on stage”[[111]](#footnote-111) is highly significant. This direction leaves no doubt that *Sail Away* has been Stritch’s show; whether she was flirting with the passengers, getting irritated by the children or trying to deny her feelings for Johnny, Mimi was always the focus with impending anticipation for her next scene. That moment alone on stage symbolises and acknowledges this. Johnny “returns up the gangplank, scoops up Adlai and takes Mimi off by the hand”[[112]](#footnote-112) which rounds off the character’s development; from the irascible hostess to one that, underneath the brash persona, was also lonely and finally now able to succumb to love.

From the playbills we begin to see a change in stance and the first signs of reshaping the show and thus enhancing Stritch’s role in *Sail Away*, and the staging continues in this vein too. Although the opening scene is the same in both versions of the script with the dialogue building the anticipation of her grand entrance, the momentum is continued in the final version through the introduction of Johnny, Alvin and Sir Gerard in the subsequent scenes before Mimi reappears. It becomes immediately apparent that these characters will be significant – either romantically or being annoyed by or annoying Mimi. Stritch’s elevation in some scenes too is indicative of Mimi being the central figure in every scene she features in. As we know, dominance was also instrumental in shaping the narrative.

# Narrative I : Changing the Approach

Problems with the book started to become apparent quite early on. According to Cole Lesley, “underneath the triumphant success [in Boston] we were suffering the first of our battle-scars; we were stricken with that age-old malady of musicals on the rod, ‘book trouble’.”[[113]](#footnote-113) We already know, by Coward’s own admission, that he had been experiencing problems on this front, but not to this extent. By the time they reached Philadelphia, it was abundantly clear that the romance between the characters of Verity and Johnny was drastically slowing the pace of the show and it was Stritch’s Mimi Paragon who the audiences, and critics alike, wanted to see more of. In a damning observation, Lesley noted, “the show sagged whenever the two singing leads came on to play their love story. They both sang Noël’s songs beautifully but – not their fault – the characters of Verity and Johnny were essentially bores.”[[114]](#footnote-114)

In an interview with Alan Farley, Donald. R. Seawell (one of the original producers of *Sail Away* on Broadway) summed up the period leading up to the show’s opening on Broadway: “During the process of opening in New York, we were out of town. We did, in fact, make a great many changes. We were forced to, because a key member of the cast, as we had originally cast it, just didn’t come through, and just before we opened on Broadway we eliminated that role entirely – which pretty much destroyed Coward’s original plot.”[[115]](#footnote-115) The elimination that Seawell is referring to was Joe Layton’s suggestion of “Why don’t we cut Verity out altogether, give the best of her songs to Stritch, and have Johnny fall in love with Mimi Paragon instead?”[[116]](#footnote-116) This was undoubtedly the right and perhaps most obvious decision. Jean Fenn was an actress that Coward had “heard of” and whom he described as a “reasonably good actress and fine singer”[[117]](#footnote-117) – hardly overwhelming sentiments and terms of endearment. As such, she was given eight weeks’ pay and dismissed.

The Verity-Johnny relationship is the biggest revision made to *Sail Away*. Intended to be the core of the show, this relationship had to be cut after Fenn’s dismissal and the script changes (Appendix 1[[118]](#footnote-118)) reflects this. We see that many of the scenes and musical numbers remained the same or with only changes to the characters, largely to accommodate the removal of the principal character. In other cases, the removal of scenes and musical numbers, such as those from *Pacific* 1860 and ‘I Am No Good At Love’ demonstrates the dramatic reworking of the show. Additionally, the altering of the running orders (Appendices 2-6) also indicates that Coward was unafraid of making drastic changes, despite having only six days between the Philadelphia tryout and opening on Broadway.

The scene description for Act 1, Scene 1 of the pre-Broadway script, immediately places Verity Craig as the principal character, especially as it is noted they enter in accordance with their “importance and not appearance.”[[119]](#footnote-119) Comparing this with the final script we can immediately see that the arrival of the guests is not greatly significant – what is, is the arrival of Mimi Paragon. It is her flamboyant entrance which arguably sets the tone for the rest of the show: arriving with a “large flowering plant” her opening speech provides the audience with a taste of what lies ahead – a “bore” she is not: “Sweet God I’ve made it…Don’t look disapproving, Joe darling. It will make deep furrows down your lovely sunburned cheeks and sad, defeated bags under your eyes. What sort of an assignment have we got this trip? Any drunks, junkies or ladies of light reputation?”[[120]](#footnote-120) We can sense a desire by Coward to immediately introduce Mimi as an unprincipled, care-free character in the later script, whereas her introduction in the earlier scripts, although much of the dialogue was the same, seems more staged. There is a distinction between the romantic and comedic roles from the outset, from Verity arriving holding hands with her husband, to Mimi’s arrival on board the ship, which is scripted as “Mimi’s Entrance.”[[121]](#footnote-121)

It is these distinctions between the roles that makes the progression in the earlier versions of the show much slower – the dichotomy simply does not work. Verity’s relationship with Johnny is briefly explored early on, and whilst it is clear that there is an instant rapport between them, the pace is slow (something which did not go unnoticed by the critics) and it is Act 1, Scene 6 (of the early scripts) before they have a proper conversation. Just as Mimi is fixated by the age difference between them, Verity also believes that age “does keep intruding”[[122]](#footnote-122) in her romance with Johnny, as well as the fact that she is married. Johnny, not put off by either issue, sings ‘Later Than Spring’ where the mood is one of wistfulness, “Later than Spring / The warmth of summer comes / The charm of autumn comes / The leaves are gold…”[[123]](#footnote-123) It is another four scenes before Verity and Johnny have another one-on-one scene together again, thus making it clear to see that, whilst we are supposed to be engaging in this relationship which is fundamentally supposed to be the core of *Sail Away*, in reality it is failing to meet the required standard for an American musical with its slow, somewhat repetitive scenes and repartee. In comparison, whilst the Broadway version does not feature the Mimi-Johnny relationship any more strongly, the comedic scenes featuring Stritch’s Mimi ensures that she is at the centre of the show and that *Sail Away* is more than just a musical about a romance between two people aboard a cruise ship.

Coward continues to strive for the emotional connectivity between the audience and Verity and Johnny. Act 1, Scene 10 is perhaps one of the most emotionally charged scenes of the entire show and yet it has the potential to feel as though it is simply providing the backdrop for the musical number ‘This Is A Night For Lovers’. For Johnny, “a great deal seems to have changed…in the last 24hrs”[[124]](#footnote-124) and he finally forces Verity to acknowledge their feelings and the connection they felt when dancing the previous night before declaring his love for her:

Johnny: “I know you’ve been unhappy and disappointed and disillusioned, but surely not enough to prevent you from ever loving anyone again- even for a little?”

Verity: “Even for a little! – A curiously practical phrase.”[[125]](#footnote-125)

As he takes her in his arms and he sings the musical number, we cannot help but notice that this atmospheric scene is supporting the number and the romantic notion that it portrays. Bearing this in mind, it is of little surprise that this scene was dropped entirely, rather than modified, from the final Broadway version – not least because stylistically it would have been out of place and uncharacteristic for Mimi to portray such outward emotion.

Similarly, ‘I Never Knew’[[126]](#footnote-126) was not used in the final Broadway script despite its inclusion in the pre-Broadway versions. One of Coward’s least known musical numbers as it has never been published outside of the *Pacific 1860* vocal score, it is another example of a number which swells the romanticism between the two lovers: “I never knew / That love could be so sweet – before / I never knew / That life was incomplete…”[[127]](#footnote-127) and so it goes on. This scene of perfection is a premise for three scenes later when the two lovers part for the final time at the end of ‘This Is A Changing World’.[[128]](#footnote-128) After witnessing her son leaving a cheap hotel with Verity, Mrs Van-Mier arranges for them to depart the cruise early despite the protestations from Verity that the relationship is already over now anyway. As he leaves, we realise that Verity did truly love Johnny after all – her voice breaking, she sings: “Love is a charming souvenir / When day is done / And night draws near / No regrets are worth a tear…”[[129]](#footnote-129)

This emotive climax ends the slow-paced development of the Verity-Johnny relationship. Whilst we probably knew the direction it was going in, this scene provides the reality; here are two troubled individuals after respective break-ups who fall in love but cannot be together. In a further twist, Coward’s decision to explore the ramifications (off-stage) conveys a darker tone to a show billed as a musical comedy. The mellower side of Mimi’s character is given a chance to shine through and in the final script we see a burgeoning of this trait as she encompasses the romantic aspect of the show.

With *Sail Away* billed as a comedy musical, dwelling on attempted suicide, potential death and divorce proceedings would have proved rather negative. Therefore, in typical Coward style, Verity and her husband’s relationship is neatly resolved after Mimi steps in and calls her husband once it becomes apparent that she overdosed on sleeping tablets. It is at this point that we see this new mellow aspect to Mimi, as she calmly takes control of the situation. We learn that she was on the “danger list”[[130]](#footnote-130) but this is no longer the case. Whilst suicide is not explicitly mentioned, Mimi intimates this, leading to Verity’s husband blaming himself for allowing her to go on the cruise alone in the first place. In a further twist, he does not condemn her after she confesses to her romance with Johnny and it seems that their marital issues are finally resolved. They both agree that they have “come a long way to prove”[[131]](#footnote-131) that it is each other that they still long for, leading Verity to sing a reprise of ‘This Is A Changing World’. To further clarify the happy ending, Verity and Lawford depart the cruise together, although it is tinged with sadness as Johnny is left behind clutching a bunch of flowers which he had bought to greet Verity from the cruise. Perhaps expecting a further twist at the end, one might have hoped for Mimi to have contacted Johnny rather than Lawford and have them leave the ship to start a life together as a couple, but it was not until Broadway that Johnny got his happy ending, this time with Mimi rather than Verity.

It is clear to see how Stritch’s role was completely subsidiary to Fenn’s with no overlap between the two. The alternation of scenes between them proves that Mimi was written as a means of providing the antithesis to Verity’s melancholy. However, whilst this was the intention, Stritch as Mimi the extrovert, flamboyant cruise hostess, outshone her co-star and as such, it was she who audiences and critics wanted to see more of. The critics were enchanted by the character and Stritch’s portrayal of her: “brassily conducting a satirical revue on the topic of the American tourist”[[132]](#footnote-132) which arguably was true – with the American tourist perhaps being an easy target.

Critics had been calling for more comedy from the first try-outs in Boston: “A transfusion of comedy is needed, that and trimming and a considerable amount of revision.[[133]](#footnote-133) As Coward listened and acted accordingly, the balance of the show which had been succinctly described by Maddocks as “a split-level sort of vessel, and herein lies its variety of strengths and its central, perhaps fatal weakness”[[134]](#footnote-134) shifted and Mimi evolved into the leading lady, placing Stritch firmly in the spotlight.

# Narrative II : Evolving the Lead Character

As we have already discussed, by the time *Sail Away* opened on Broadway, the show had evolved to a point where Stritch was combining her and Fenn’s roles, thereby enhancing her profile and creating additional dimensions to Mimi’s character, but still the focus remained on comedy:

Indeed she does go about her work with the grim good humor of the professional hostess. The relationship between Miss Stritch and the awesome variety of passengers is the happy heart of Mr. Coward’s comedy, and she makes the most of it. Apart from a couple of her romantic solos, which are bit pallid, her performance is glorious.”[[135]](#footnote-135)

The focus on comedy is likely to have been intentional. There had been problems with the book from the outset and Coward decided that Verity was a weak character whose story would be better merged with Mimi. Stritch’s vivaciousness was fundamentally at the heart of the show’s success and to burden her with too much of the romantic story in lieu of the comedy that she excelled in, would be detriment to all concerned.

It was numbers such as ‘Why Do the Wrong People Travel?’ which best suited Stritch’s personality. Coming after Mimi has chastised a little boy and his mother, her delivery style suited the acerbic lyrics perfectly:

Travel they say improves the mind,

An irritating platitude, which frankly, entrenous,

Is very far from true.

Personally I’ve yet to find that longitude and latitude

Can educate those scores of monumental bores

Who travel in groups and herds and troupes…

Her delivery of this number did not go unnoticed by the critics: “Her ‘Why Do the Wrong People Travel?’ is a bit of magnificence.”[[136]](#footnote-136) It was therefore important that Coward achieved the right balance between maintaining the irascible “edge” of Mimi’s personality and showing another side, which could be achieved by transferring some of the intended storyline (meant for Verity) to her.

Quite early on in the Broadway script, Mimi’s past is explored when she has a conversation with Mrs Van Mier (Johnny’s mother). This aids in making her more integral to the show and her relationship with Johnny, whilst also giving audiences an opportunity to learn more about why she is the way she is:

MRS VAN MIER

You certainly have chosen a most extraordinary profession. I can’t say I envy you.

MIMI

Oh, it has its points. I see the world and get well paid for it.

MRS VAN MIER

Have you been doing it for long?

MIMI

Yes…ever since I retired from the stage…owing to popular demand

MRS VAN MIER

Oh, I had no idea you were an actress

MIMI

Neither had anyone else. That’s why I ran away to sea. This is my seventh cruise in this gracious vessel. I’m beginning to feel as much a part of this ship as the funnel.[[137]](#footnote-137)

Here we see someone who is quite lonely and her role is more than just a job, but a means of having company and a purpose. Although Mimi has a similar conversation with Verity in the earlier script, the focus is on Verity as Mimi tries to support her; its purpose is not to learn about Mimi.

In adapting the show for Stritch, Coward opts to take a different approach in regards to the romantic storyline too. The conventional love story shifts from Verity and Johnny to Nancy and Barnaby, leaving the Mimi-Johnny relationship more complex. Most notably, the poignancy is removed. Although Johnny declares his love for both women, the different scripts highlight the change in mood between the first script and the final Broadway version. Whereas in Act 1, Scene 10 of the script dated 14 June, Verity is no longer able to deny her feelings for Johnny, the scene is poignant as he comments on how unhappy she looks and believes that she is not happily married:

JOHNNY

The other morning when we were talking before lunch, you said, rather reprovingly, that you were a married woman and considerably older than me.

VERITY

It’s true.

JOHNNY

I noticed that you didn’t say that you were a happily married woman.

VERITY

Johnny. Please stop.

JOHNNY

Are you – happily married?

VERITY

What makes you imagine that I’m not?

JOHNNY

The expression in your eyes - - when we were dancing last night.

VERITY

Please don’t talk like that I mean it - - I really don’t want you to.

JOHNNY

It’s true though isn’t it? Something did happen when we were dancing. You can’t deny it - - please don’t deny it.

VERITY

(Quietly, after a slight pause)

No - - I don’t deny it. I wish I could.[[138]](#footnote-138)

In contrast, Coward utilises comedy as a means of lightening the mood in the Broadway script. As a result, the scene progresses more quickly as Mimi appears unsentimental and tries to dismiss Johnny’s feelings by using jokes:

JOHNNY

Don’t go for a minute. I’ve got something very important to tell you.

MIMI

It can wait until morning can’t it?

JOHNNY

No it can’t. You know damn well it can’t.

MIMI

Extinguish your cigarettes, fasten your seat belts, we are about to land.

JOHNNY

Why do you always make jokes?

MIMI

I’m paid to make jokes. I also have a very strong sense of self-preservation. Please don’t be angry with me Johnny. I’m flattered and touched by what you want to say to me … any woman would be … but I’d so much rather you didn’t say it.[[139]](#footnote-139)

The flippancy in her line, “Extinguish your cigarettes, fasten your seat belts, we are about to land”[[140]](#footnote-140) befits Mimi’s character but also suggests that this is her way of coping with what Johnny wants to say. She knows but, in a way not too dissimilar from Verity, she is unable to acknowledge her feelings for Johnny, perhaps out of fear. The employment of humour however, means that this is not dwelled upon with the emotional tension seemingly completely over when Johnny sings ‘Go Slow, Johnny’.

As a new addition (and replacement for ‘This Is A Night for Lovers’) following the reworking of the pre-Broadway scripts, ‘Go Slow, Johnny’ feels slightly out of place with its upbeat tempo given the emotionally charged encounter that precedes it, but was a necessary replacement as it was better suited to Stritch. This is an example of how Mimi evolved as a character and *Sail Away* was adapted for Stritch. ‘This Is A Night for Lovers’ is a wistful, romantic number that was both relevant and suitable for Verity’s character, but it would not have been plausible for her to have delivered it with the same, required meaning – both because of her vocal style but also because it would have been hard to believe that Mimi would sing it. Whilst we see Mimi can be sentimental (she tells Johnny it would be better to remember the “love affair that didn’t die”[[141]](#footnote-141)), her fragility is masked and not so overt.

As the character evolved, the audience got a more rounded view of Mimi. This, in turn, meant that Stritch’s ability as an actress was also showcased as she had the opportunity to show her serious acting credentials alongside comedy. The Mimi-Johnny relationship meant there was further time on stage for Stritch, who featured in most scenes. From the changes discussed in this section, we can track how Coward tried to minimise the need for superfluous dialogue and for Mimi to be depicted as overly-sentimental, for fear of this overshadowing the comedy – the key ingredient that had never been the problem.

# Critical Reception : Stritch as the Star

**Pre-Broadway: Boston**

The critics’ reviews in Boston indicate that *Sail Away* had the potential to be a success in New York, with the general consensus among the critics being that, with a few modifications and Stritch at the helm, Coward could have the triumph he wanted:

“Full of wit, life and energy, it’s a cinch to make it on Broadway…Balmy and breezy with tuneful songs and cutting lyrics, it’s light and optimistically happy strictly on the entertainment side, a satire on life and characters aboard a cruise ship.”[[142]](#footnote-142)

Out of eighteen songs, Frankland felt “four might make the hit parade”[[143]](#footnote-143): ‘The Passenger’s Always Right’, which he described as “a rousing number”[[144]](#footnote-144); ‘Useful Phrases’ (“a catchy ditty by Miss Stritch”[[145]](#footnote-145)); ‘You’re A Long, Long Way From America’ and ‘Why Do the Wrong People Travel’. One that seems to particularly stand out for the critics is ‘Why Do the Wrong People Travel?’ Described by Eric Frankland as “perhaps the most successful of all”[[146]](#footnote-146), it “stops the show”[[147]](#footnote-147) according to Cyrus Durgin. It is an unlikely coincidence that Stritch sang three out of the four numbers that Frankland specifically notes, with the exception of ‘The Passenger’s Always Right’.

Figure 6: Mimi (Elaine Stritch) singing 'You're A Long, Long Way From America'.[[148]](#footnote-148)

We can begin to see that even from this early stage and before the revisions, albeit intentionally at this point, *Sail Away* was the ‘Elaine Stritch Show’: “It’s the bounce and verve of Stritch as chieftain of cruise entertainment that keeps the show alive every minute and establishes her as a great singing comedienne”[[149]](#footnote-149) was the critic’s view in *Variety*, whilst Edwin Tetlow for the *Daily Telegraph* wrote that Stritch was “ebullient yet appealing as the cruise ship’s hostess. She has some of the best moments of the evening.”[[150]](#footnote-150)

**Broadway**

Critics in New York reacted just as enthusiastically to Stritch as their counterparts during the try-outs: “Elaine Stritch’s performance is glorious”[[151]](#footnote-151), “Elaine Stritch emerges as a star. She’s terrific…With her in command all the way, you’re going to have a hectic, laugh-packed *Sail Away*…”[[152]](#footnote-152) and “Elaine Stritch is a handsome and gallant trouper…sings with charm, humor and skill”[[153]](#footnote-153) are just a couple of viewpoints held by the critics, with many more replicating the praise that was previously bestowed upon her in Boston. Thomas. R. Dash sums up the general consensus: “We might as well admit from the outset that *Sail Away* and Elaine Stritch are synonymous, and that without this amazing performer, Mr Coward’s show might be quite anemic…Stritch is the catalyst who has everything popping boisterously and exuberantly aboard shop and in the harbours.”[[154]](#footnote-154)

These viewpoints reinforce the perception of *Sail Away* being all about Stritch. Rightly or wrongly, as Dash points out, the two are synonymous and this is at least in part due to the revisions made to the script. The reviews from Boston tell us Stritch was the stand-out performer of the night, with the reviews from Broadway cementing this further. Dash’s perception of the show being “anemic” without her, whilst suggesting a problem with the script, only reaffirms the position of the show being a vehicle for her. A more substantial narrative would have required enhancing the Barnaby-Nancy relationship, but then this would have been to the detriment of the one by Mimi and Johnny. Similarly, if that relationship had been cut and Mimi remained purely as a comedic character, then her presence would also have been limited. In essence, Coward seemingly had a choice to make: modify the script, thereby strengthening the narrative or take heed of the reviews and write *Sail Away* as a platform for Stritch with the focus on comedy. He opted for the latter or, as Adrian Wright puts it, “characterisation is put aside to make room for wit.”[[155]](#footnote-155)

In conclusion, this discussion has charted the necessary changes for *Sail Away* to become a musical for Elaine Stritch. In a quest to ensure every possible avenue was covered, this extended through to marketing and staging. Whilst *Sail Away* might have lacked the slickness of *Guys and Dolls* and the gravitas of *West Side Story*, Coward’s 1961 musical was sold to the public as ‘Elaine Stritch’s Musical Comedy’ and his first Broadway musical. Combining the two leading roles enabled Stritch to demonstrate her calibre as an actress: Mimi is not a character who is going to be besotted by a man and become obsessed by romance – as we see during her journey she maintains that acerbic layer to her character but allows Johnny to be a part of her character. By the end, the audience is left with a feeling that maybe this acerbic layer will disseminate slightly as she allows herself to give herself more freely and to love him.

With Stritch not even originally considered for a part in the show, its genesis up to the point of her being the “star” is impressive. Significantly too, in ultimately choosing Stritch, Coward was providing an opportunity to an under-rated actress who he first saw in *Goldilocks* (1958). As one critic put it, she was “…long unheralded… [but] is finally given a whopping part in which to display her rare gifts as a comedienne and song sender...”[[156]](#footnote-156)

In establishing how Stritch became the star, the impact this had on *Sail Away* is clear. Whilst the final Broadway script may not have been perfect, it was indisputably superior to the earlier versions where the relationship between Verity and Johnny halted the progression of the show. Coward capitalised on Stritch’s talents as a comedienne to such an extent that the focus shifted towards her character and away from the overall narrative. She went from not originally being considered for a role in *Sail Away*, to leading the comedy sub-plot before ultimately Coward writing the show as a star vehicle for her – she was indeed the “catalyst”.

# Appendix 1

A table comparing the three American versions of the script for *Sail Away*. These scripts include:

* the 1961 American version,
* the pre-New York script
* the final New York production script featuring Elaine Stritch.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Act and Scene** | **‘American version’**  **14 June 1961** | **Pre-New York**  **14 June 1961** | **Final New York script** |
| Title page | Name of the show and date | Name of the show and date | Name of the show featuring the actors and production team |
| Cast List | N/A | N/A | Listing all of the cast, including understudies and production team.  Appears to be a later addition – looks like a photocopied insert taken from a review or condensed programme version. |
| Character List | Lists of all of the characters but not who plays them. | Same as previous version | N/A |
| Act 1 Scene List | 1. The Main Hall (Noon) 2. Verity’s Cabin (A few minutes later) 3. Johnny’s Cabin (A few minutes later) 4. The Sun Deck (A quarter of an hour later) 5. Nancy’s Cabin (A few minutes later) 6. The Sun Deck (Several days later. Noon) 7. The Promenade Deck (A few days later. Late afternoon) 8. The Sun Deck (Night) 9. Mimi’s Cabin (The following evening) 10. The Promenade Deck (Four AM) 11. The Sun Deck (Midnight) | Same as previous version | N/A |
| Act 1 Musical Numbers | 1. Opening Chorus – Full Company 2. ‘Come to Me’ – Mimi and Chorus 3. ‘I Am No Good At Love’ – Verity 4. ‘Sail Away’ – Johnny 5. Reprise: ‘Sail Away’ – Full Company 6. Reprise: ‘Come To Me’ – Mimi 7. ‘Where Shall I Find Him?’ – Nancy 8. ‘Beatnik Love Affair’ – Barnaby and Nancy 9. ‘Later Than Spring’ – Johnny 10. ‘The Passenger’s Always Right’ – Joe and Stewards 11. Reprise: ‘Sail Away’ – Johnny 12. Reprise: ‘Where Shall I Find Her?’ – Barnaby 13. ‘Useful Phrases’ – Mimi 14. ‘This Is A Night For Lovers’ – Verity and Johnny 15. Finale – Mimi and Full Company | Same as previous version | N/A |
| 1-1  Scene Description | ‘The Main Hall of the S.S. Carolonia’  The end of the Overture sees the passengers arriving to board the ship – “the order of their appearance must be left to the discretion of the Choreographer and the Director.” The music begins to play again as they arrive.  The principal characters are then listed (below) with a description of them and their arrival. They are in order of their importance, not appearance:  Verity Craig  Lawford Craig  Nancy Foyle  Elinor Spencer-Bollard  John Van-Mier  Mrs. Van-Mier  Barnaby Slade  Sir Gerard and Lady Nutfield  Mrs. Lush  Alvin  Mr. and Mrs. Sweeny  The Candijack family – Elmer, Maimie with their children Glen and Shirley  The noise dies down as the music fades after their arrival on the ship. | Same as the previous version. | ‘The Main Hall of the S.S. Carolonia’  The end of the Overture sees the curtain going up on the Main Hall of the ship. There are 2 stairways in the centre of the stage leading to an upper level of the Hall. There is an American Express Man and the ship’s purser, Joe. A few passengers are already on board, whilst uniformed Stewards are waiting to assist the rest of the guests as they arrive.  As the scene begins, the opening music starts and there is general movement and noise as sailing time draws near.  The guests arrive in the following order:  A woman passenger with a Little Girl  Another woman with a Little Girl  Sir Gerard and Lady Nutfield  Mr. Rawlings  Barnaby Slade  The Candijack Family – Elmer, Maimie and their children Glen and Shirley  John Van-Mier  Mrs. Van-Mier  Mr. and Mrs. Sweeney  Nancy Foyle  Elinor Spencer-Bollard  An autograph hunter  Alvin Lush  After they have all made their entrances and they exit up the stairs, the music ends. |
| 1-1 | The scene opens with the crew anxious about Mimi’s arrival and that she will miss the sailing, although the Purser points out that she has been “late for every cruise—she’s a last minute girl.” Suddenly Mimi arrives, bursting “enthusiastically from the gangway.” She is “chic and well-dressed but everything about her is a trifle exaggerated. Her vitality is inexhaustible and her humour, sharp.”  It is immediately apparent that she is a demanding character – insisting that her dog is taken for a walk and refuses to follow protocol by permitting it to go to the kennels. If it goes, she will not perform.  Admiring the Stewards, telling them that they are “wonderful” leads to them leading in to **Come To Me**. | Same as previous version. | Same as previous version.  **Come To Me** – minus the 3rd refrain:  ‘If you feel lonely and need a pal  I’m the gal  To take you in tow  If you’re pining for affection and a sympathetic friend  I’ve a large collection I can recommend  If you want something discreetly planned  On this grand  And gracious bateau  If you’re basically frustrated and a martyr to ennui  Come to me – Come to me  If you need a ‘Marijuana’ or a quiet cup of tea  Come to me - lost lamb – Come to me.’ |
| 1-2  Scene Description | ‘Verity’s Cabin’  “Verity comes in followed by Lawford. She looks strained and unhappy. She puts the small make-up case she is carrying on the dressing-table, sits on the bed, takes off her hat and lights a cigarette.” | Same as previous version. | [Mis-print – top of the page says Scene 7 and not Scene 2]  ‘Johnny Van Mier’s Cabin’  “Mrs. Van Mier is sitting in a chair by the desk. Johnny has hoisted one of his suitcases onto the bed and is unpacking it.” |
| 1-2 | Verity is about to set sail on the cruise to take a break from her husband and ahead of their proposed divorce after it transpires that he has been having an affair for the past year. Lawford has boarded with her before she sails, even though she wishes he had not and another argument is brewing as she says that she has experience with marriage as it is not her first time unlike it is for him. He has surprised her with her favourite yellow roses and suggests that she does not go after all. However, she is determined that they need time apart. He kisses her goodbye before leaving. She rises to call him back before sitting back down on the bed, leading to **I Am No Good At Love**. | Same as previous version. | Johnny and Mrs. Van-Mier are mother and son who have gone on the cruise together to mutually benefit one another. She has been unwell and he is accompanying her whilst she recuperates and Johnny is getting over a recent relationship breakdown. It transpires that his mother did not particularly like his former girlfriend and she believes that he holds her partially responsible for the ending of it; something which he denies. Telling her to return to her cabin as he does not wish to talk anymore, her parting shot is that he reminds her of his father, infuriating Johnny.  Johnny sings **Sail Away**.   * Only 1 verse “A different sky…” and 1 refrain “When the storm clouds are riding through a winter sky…” |
| 1-3  Scene Description | ‘Johnny Van-Mier’s Cabin’  Same as the Broadway version. | ‘Johnny Van-Mier’s Cabin’  Same as the Broadway version. | ‘The Sun Deck’  “The previous scene dissolves to the Sun Deck as the music to ‘Sail Away’ continues.”  The passengers are lining the rails and with a blast from the ship’s siren, it is clear that the ship has begun to move slowly out into the Hudson River.  On one side of the rails are Sir Gerard and Lady Nutfield with Mrs. Lush and Alvin, whilst the other side sees the Candijack family hanging over the rail and shrieking with excitement. |
| 1-3 | Same as the Broadway version apart from a couple of minor differences.  The final interaction of the scene between Mrs. Van Mier and Johnny (where she tells him that he reminds her of his father) has scene descriptions that the Broadway version omits:  Mrs Van-Mier: *She goes out wrapped in hurt dignity and shuts the door sharply behind her*.  *Johnny, left alone, hurls a bundle of socks he is holding onto the floor*.  Before Johnny sings ‘Sail Away’ there is the scene description, *He laughs ruefully, stoops down to pick up the socks, and begins to sing*.  **Sail Away**:  Refrain 1: ‘When the storm clouds…’  Verse: ‘A different sky…’  Refrain 2: ‘When you can’t bear the clamour…’ | Same as previous version apart from the musical number.  **Sail Away**:  Verse: ‘When a sailor goes to see…’  Refrain 1: ‘When the storm clouds are riding…’  Verse 2 (An additional insert that is marked with the instruction to be inserted between Refrain 1 and Refrain 2): ‘A different sky…’  Refrain 2: ‘When you can’t bear the clamour of the noisy town…’ | The ship is moving slowly out onto the river and Alvin is annoying Sir Gerard with his tin whistle. Commenting to Mrs. Lush about this and its annoyance, she proceeds to remove it from her son and blow it even louder herself.  As Johnny and his mother enter, Sir Gerard can be heard being derogatory about the Americans, “These Americans! Savages…every one of them, savages.”  Mimi arrives and begins to greet and introduce herself to the guests. She claims to know who Sir Gerard is “just from the way you were standing…nobody but the British can achieve quite that air of casual distinction.”  There is a clear clash of characters, which Mimi highlights after seeing his response to her invite to her little ‘Get Together’: “The idea nauseates you. I can see it in your eye. I was a mad, crazy fool ever to think of it.”  Lady Nutfield is embarrassed by the whole event.  Mimi is delighted to discover that Barnaby is on his own and not a part of a honeymoon couple, who only “think of one thing and it’s not shuffleboard.” She decides that he is going to need her company, leading him away and singing a reprise of **Come To Me*.***  Mimi introduces herself to Johnny, telling him that it’s her job to “accost anyone who looks like the teensiest weensiest bit lonely and make their life a living Hell.” Inviting him to her soiree at 6pm, she is delighted when he agrees to attend. As the ship’s whistle blows, he sings a reprise of **Sail Away** with everyone joining in on ‘Sail Away’. |
| 1-4  Scene Description | ‘The Sun Deck’  “In the darkness before the lights fade …there is a tremendous clamour” and stewards shout for all the visitors to go ashore now.  Once the lights fade, as in the Broadway version and in Act 1, Scene 1, the rails are lined with passengers as the ship moves out of shore.  “A Steward in a white coat strides along the deck striking a small chiming gong to announce lunch.” | Same as previous version. | ‘Elinor Spencer-Bollard’s Cabin’  “When the lights fade in on the scene, Elinor Spencer-Bollard is sitting on the bed reading aloud from a volume of poetry.  Nancy Foyle is on her knees on the floor unpacking a suitcase. |
| 1-4 | Same as the Broadway version until Mimi meets Barnaby. Rather than being coerced by Mimi into going to have a drink with her, he gladly goes, grinning as they go off arm-in-arm.  Mrs. Sweeny tries to make conversation with Verity but gives up after a lack of interest. Johnny enters as the orchestra beings to play ‘Sail Away’. Offering to light her cigarette for her as she produces one from her bag, they begin to talk and realise that they both want to be away from New York for a while. There is an instant rapport between the two – they smile at one another as they separate. | Same as previous version. | Nancy is unpacking whilst Elinor reads poetry aloud. They have not met before but Elinor is sure that they will get on, although she is aghast that Nancy has not read Wordsworth, calling her “a little ignoramus.”  Nancy sings **Where Shall I Find Him?**  Singing: ‘Oh, darling mother this…’  Refrain 1: ‘Where shall I find him?’  Verse 1: ‘Suddenly, suddenly, maybe we’ll meet…’  Dialogue whilst the Steward enters  Refrain 2: ‘How shall I know him?’ |
| 1-5  Scene Description | Same as the Broadway version | Same as the Broadway version | ‘The Sun Deck’  The ship has been at sea for several days. The passengers now, mostly, know one another and there is less animosity. “Cliques have been formed, incipient romances among the young have begun.”  The scene is set on the deck where there are a few passengers sunbathing in bikinis and trunks and chatting to one another amiably.  Mr and Mrs. Sweeey are on the right in deck chairs with Mrs. Lush, Alvin and Mr. Rawlings seated at the Bar Center in the middle of the stage. At the bottom of the stairs to the upper deck are the Candijacks, whilst Elinor Spencer-Bollard is in a deck chair on the left. |
| 1-5 | Same as the Broadway version except for some minor differences.  Before Nancy sings her number, the stage direction indicates that *Nancy, left alone, sinks back onto her heels and murmurs ‘Oh dear!’ rather despondently. The music starts.*  **Where Shall I Find Him**:  Singing: ‘Oh darling mother this…’  Speaking: ‘I mustn’t think of that – I really mustn’t….’  Singing: ‘It won’t be long before…’  Verse: ‘I just can’t keep out of my mind…’  Refrain: ‘Where shall I find him?...’ | Same as previous version | Elinor is trying to write her next book and is dictating to Nancy but they keep getting interrupted by people, much to Elinor’s annoyance. She subsequently offers her thoughts on them to Nancy and none of them are positive.  Mimi arrives and asks Elinor to give a talk one evening and Mimi refuses to allow her to say no – at the very least she must say nothing and consider it.  Once Mimi has gone, Elinor retires to her cabin having lost her inspiration after all the interruptions.  Barnaby, who has been eavesdropping on the conversation whilst hiding behind a newspaper, engages Nancy in conversation and starts taking pictures. He then asks her if he could “persuade her to give a brief informal talk in steel bands and sex in the engine room” but she flatly refuses telling him that he “has not only chosen the wrong girl, but the wrong cruise!” Barnaby tells her that it is all in the mind and begins to sing **Beatnik Love Affair**.  At the end of the number, they dance and then Carrington chimes his gong to announce lunch. Mrs. Van-Mier and Mimi enter.  They talk about Mimi’s career – both as a cruise hostess and how she invents answers to questions that she cannot answer and her previous career as an actress, although she concedes that no one seemed to know that she had once been on the stage.  As Mrs. Van-Mier exits, Mimi goes to sit at the bar, whilst Mrs. Lush chastises Alvin for his behaviour. As they exit, Johnny appears and enters conversation with Mimi.  Mimi has a “sneaking suspicion” that his mother doesn’t approve of her, but Johnny is unperturbed as she never approves of anyone that he likes. As she tries to leave, Johnny tells her how much he enjoyed their evening together and wants to know if she is married or not. Mimi suddenly seems to be conscious about age, telling him that she is much older than he is and that he shouldn’t be “thinking along the lines you [sic] are thinking at the moment.” Johnny sings **Later Than Spring**. Afterwards, the Crowd enters and sweeps Mimi off her feet to the exit whilst Johnny exits alone on the other side of the stage.  Sir Gerard sees Joe and continues to bemoan the Americans, particularly as it is a British ship, and he has just found a cockroach in his bathroom. He does not appreciate the impertinence of Joe’s response, “I trust it is a British cockroach” which provides the lead into **The Passenger’s Always Right** which commences after Sir Gerard has exited with his wife for lunch. |
| 1-6  Scene Description | ‘The Sun Deck’  The ship has been at sea for several days. The passengers now, mostly, know one another and there is less animosity. “Cliques have been formed, incipient romances among the young have begun.”  The scene is set on the deck of the ship, where there are many passengers relaxing. From the left, a portion of the cocktail lounge can be seen, where passengers are enjoying their pre-lunch aperitifs. Several passengers are playing board and card games.  Above the bar is where a portion of the upper deck lies, which adjoins the swimming pool and here there are further sunbathers with Elinor Spencer-Bollard on the right-hand side. Verity is in the centre reading a book, whilst the Candijackers are on the left being noisy and photographing each other. Mr and Mrs. Sweeny stop by Verity’s chair as they pass. | Same as previous version | ‘Mimi’s Cabin’  “Mimi, in robe and slippers, is sitting in her rocking chair with an Italian lesson book on her knees.” |
| 1-6 | Mrs. Sweeny once again tries to make idle conversation with Verity who is still not remotely interested. As they leave, Verity wanders to the bar whilst the Candijack children run around and up towards the pool, leaving their parents ordering Gin Fizzes loudly at the bar. The lights are concentrating on Elinor and Nancy on the right of the deck.  Elinor is dictating her book to Nancy when she firstly interrupted by Nancy enquiring about steel bands and then Mrs. Van Mier tries to ingratiate herself but no avail. Elinor finds her a “celebrity snob – literary pretensions – hard as nails.” As they are about to continue with the book, Mrs. Lush and Alvin walk past, with Alvin pointing and calling Elinor a horse.  Mimi’s arrival and conversation with Elinor followed by the latter’s departure = same as Broadway version.  Barnaby and Nancy’s scene together = same as Broadway version apart from he was hiding behind a life boat rather than a newspaper.  **Beatnik Love Affair** = same as Broadway version.  At the end of the number, they all disperse whilst Verity returns from the bar and continues to read her book. Mimi appears and asks if she can join her. They have the same conversation that Mrs. Van-Mier and Mimi have in the Broadway version.  Johnny goes over to Verity and asks her for a drink with his mother. They have the same conversation that Johnny has with Mimi in the Broadway version of the script but with minor revisions to compensate for the difference in character and the plot beforehand.  Verity tries to put an end to the romance that is beginning to unfold, telling Johnny that she is a married woman but he is not put off and *gently takes her hand and begins to sing* **Later Than Spring**.  The conversation that Sir Gerard has with Joe is also the same as the Broadway version, which again leads into **The Passenger’s Always Right**. | Same as previous version. | Mimi is trying to practice her Italian when the phone rings. It is Mrs. Sweeney asking about the shuffleboard results, what to wear that evening and the porpoises. Once off the phone, she mixes “she is a great big fabuloso cracking bore” in with her Italian.  The phone then rings again and this time it is Mrs. Lush. She is obviously complaining about an incident involving Alvin, whom Mimi has no sympathy for and blames him entirely for the incident. She then instructs Sylvia to not put any further calls through until she has learnt her Italian. Reading what the so-called useful phrases are, she throws the books away and sings **Useful Phrases**. |
| 1-7  Scene Description | ‘The Promenade Deck’  The deck stretches the width of the stage with a rail coming on half way from each side, which indicates that the auditorium and the orchestra are the sea. In the middle are 2 steamer chairs, which are being occupied by Verity and Mrs. Van-Mier. The latter is working at an embroidery frame whilst Verity is politely listening. | Same as previous version. | “Shuttleworth is closing the Bar as the scene opens. Nancy runs down the stairs Stage Right from the Upper Deck with Barnaby close behind her.” |
| 1-7 | Mrs. Van-Mier is telling Verity about Johnny’s former girlfriend before continuing to tell her about his girlfriend at Harvard who was much older than he was and kept having breakdowns. As Verity leaves, Mrs. Van-Mier watches her thoughtfully before she becomes disgusted by the site of a young man in running shorts running past her. Johnny then enters.  Johnny is irked by his mother’s interference in his life and particularly with her reference to Verity as his Mrs. Craig and that dancing well is part of her “stock in trade.” As she leaves him, Johnny is left biting his lip and looking out to sea.  The orchestra begins to play the first few bars of the refrain of ‘Sail Away’ and he, “almost dreamily” sings the last few lines.  Reprise of **Sail Away**. | Same as previous version. | Nancy and Barnaby are arguing because he has just kissed her and she was not expecting it. He tells her that she likes him too but is just scared. Her reply: “Drop dead!” and she exits the stage. |
| 1-8  Scene Description | ‘The Sun Deck’ – Night  “The deck is deserted. The bar is shuttered up and roped off. The moon is shining on the sea and there is the faint sound of the engines throbbing and the waves swishing against the side of the ship.  Mimi comes on from the left. She looks rather peculiar because she is wearing elegant pygamas [sic] and a fur stole. She is accompanied by her pug on a lead. | Same as previous version. | ‘The Promenade Deck’  “The deck is empty. It is very late. Mimi enters Downstage Right with 6 dogs.” |
| 1-8 | Mimi is walking Adlai around the ship to try and make him sleep. She threatens to “wallop the living daylights” out of him if his planning in his “evil little mind to make the smallest wee-wee on this spotless deck.” They go off.  As they go, Barnaby and Nancy come down the companion-way from the upper deck. They have the same argument as Act 1, Scene 7 in the Broadway version of the script but it ends with the additional line by Barnaby, “She loves me!” | Same as previous version. | The scene opens in the same way and with the same conversation as Act 1, Scene 8 does in the earlier versions of the script, except that Mimi is talking to all of her dogs and not just Adlai. She tells Adlai not to look at Skidder in the manner that he is doing, otherwise it will give her the wrong impression.  As she is about to leave, Johnny enters from the right and tells her that he has been looking everywhere for her. Carrington arrives and she asks him to take the dogs from her, whilst also checking that none of the children have fallen overboard and that “we mustn’t lose hope” when he says they have not.  Mimi is trying to get away from Johnny but he is infatuated by her and will not take the hint. He wants to tell her something important and she knows it, but is making jokes to try and deter him. She doesn’t want him to declare his love. She bids him goodnight and he sings **Go Slow, Johnny**. |
| 1-9  Scene Description | ‘Mimi’s Cabin’  “Mimi’s cabin, which is cabin and office combined, is in a state of considerable chaos. There is a large clump of coloured balloons in one corner. Adlai, in his basket, in another. On the bed is laid out Mimi’s evening gown together with a number of paper hats and Cotillion favours. On the dressing table is a large leather-framed photograph of SKID PARAGON wearing riding-clothes. Mimi, with some butter muslin tied round her head and an Italian lesson book on her knees is seated making up before the mirror. | Same as previous version. | ‘The Ship’s Nursery’  It is cheerfully designed for the very young, with a slide and a merry-go-round. There are children running in all directions and generally making lots of noise.  Mimi is smoking a cigarette as she sits on a piano bench. To her side is a large air-filled animal which Alvin has tied to a little girl. He borrows Mimi’s cigarette lighter and starts to set light to the little girl but Mimi looks up and spots what he is doing, just in time. After several unsuccessful attempts, she finally managers to control the clamouring scene. |
| 1-9 | As she recites her Italian in front of the mirror, Joe arrives to present her with flowers for the Captain’s dinner, saying that they “will bring out the colour in your eyes.” He invites her for a drink in his cabin before the gala and she accepts.  Just as he leaves, the phone rings. What follows is the same conversation with Mrs. Sweeny and subsequently Mrs. Lush that occurs in the Broadway version in Act 1, Scene 6. Once again it leads to the number **Useful Phrases**. | Same as previous version. | A comic scene where Mimi tells the children that she will tell them a story if they are quiet, and not the story about the honeymoon couple either.  The children do not want to hear a story and continue to try and play. She starts to sing to them and although Alvin declares that it is “a lot of crap!” she manages to engage with the others and they sing with her **The Little One’s ABC**. |
| 1-10  Scene Description | ‘The Promenade Deck’  “The deck is empty. It is about four o’clock in the morning. The noise of the sea is very loud.”  Verity approaches from one side of the stage and leans on the rail looking out to the sea, whilst Johnny approaches from deck above. He stands and looks at Verity for a moment before finally speaking. | Same as previous version. | ‘The Sun Deck’ – Night  “The Sun Deck is gaily illuminated with coloured lights. The ship’s orchestra is playing on the Upper Deck while the Lower Deck is crowded with dancing couples in evening clothes and paper hats.”  Mrs. Lush, Mr. Rawlings, Mr. and Mrs. Sweeney, the Candijack family, Sir Gerard, Lady Nutfield and Elinor Spencer-Bollard are all present. Elinor is seated upstage on the right and is “staring vacantly into space and holding a drink in her hand.”  Barnaby cuts in on Nancy and Glen. |
| 1-10 | Johnny and Verity are both on deck as they were unable to sleep. For Johnny, “a great deal seems to have changed…in the last 24hrs.” They begin to have the same conversation that Mimi and Johnny have in Act 1, Scene 8 of the Broadway version. Although there are minor refinements to the dialogue, it is very similar – instead of him asking Mimi if she is married, Johnny questions Verity on how happy she is in her marriage. Johnny forces Verity to acknowledge their feelings and the connection they felt when dancing the previous night before declaring his love for her.  Johnny: “I know you’ve been unhappy and disappointed and disillusioned, but surely not enough to prevent you from ever loving anyone again- even for a little?”  Verity: “Even for a little! – A curiously practical phrase” which leads him to taking her in his arms and into **This Is A Night For Lovers**.  At the end of the duet, he moves his hand away and stretches out to her. Whilst she initially hesitates, she then takes his hand and they walk off slowly as the final chords play out in the orchestra as the lights fade. | Same as previous version. | Barnaby and Nancy are arguing because she has been dancing with other people and not just him, even though she told him that afternoon that she would dance with no one else. He declares that she is nothing but a “heartless coquette” and will never dance with her again and leave, with her chasing after him.  Meanwhile, Mrs. Van-Mier is looking for Johnny and asks Elinor, who provides a far from direct answer to her question leaving her bemused but then Johnny arrives and they say goodnight.  Everyone is dancing when Mimi enters and declares that Europe can be seen – “A bright light shining in a bad old world!” according to Mimi. **You’re A Long, Long Way From America**. |
| 1-11  Scene Description | ‘The Sun Deck’ – Night  The description of the Sun Deck is the same as in the Broadway version of the script in Act 1, Scene 10.  Mrs. Van-Mier is with Sir Gerard and Lady Nutfield and they are seated at a table downstage drinking a liqueur and watching Johnny dancing with Verity.  On her own above, is Elinor who is scribbling notes on a pad. She “occasionally looks up with an expression of slight annoyance at Nancy who is dancing with Glen Candijack.” Barnaby watches on before interjecting. He then dances with Nancy for a while before another man interjects and she starts dancing with him, leaving Barnaby scowling at the bar.  There is the instruction that “the whole of this scene should be entirely choreographic and visual and there is no dialogue audible until Mimi suddenly rushes on excitedly from the left and holds out her arms for the music to stop. The band stops with a crash of jangling chords.” | Same as previous version. | N/A |
| 1-11 | Shorter than the Broadway version of the sketch, the scene opens with Mimi shouting loudly to everyone that they have reached Europe and everybody cheers as they rush to the railings. Mimi starts to sing **You’re A Long, Long Way From America**.  “This number is in the form of an up-beat Negro Spiritual. Singly and in groups the passengers and the stewards join in until everyone on the stage is singing full out.”  At the climax and with a signal from Joe, who is standing on the upper deck, the coloured lights are switched off and from the back, the shadowy shape of the Rock of Gibraltar “slides into view.” |  |  |
| Act 2  Scene List | 1. A Square in Tangiers (Noon) 2. The Ship’s Nursery (Afternoon. A few days later) 3. The Sun Deck (The Bay of Naples. Early evening. A few days later) 4. A Street in Taormina (Early afternoon. A few days later) 5. The Parthenon (Noon. A few days later) 6. The Parthenon (Moonlight. Late that night) 7. The Promenade Deck (An hour or so later) 8. The Sun Deck (Villefranche. Some days later. Late afternoon) 9. The Promenade Deck (A few evenings later) 10. Another part of the deck (The next evening) 11. The Main Hall (Morning) | Same as previous version. | N/A |
| Act 2  Musical Numbers | 1. ‘The Customer’s Always Right’ – Ali and Chorus 2. ‘Something Very Strange’ – Verity 3. ‘The Little One’s ABC’ – Mimi and Children 4. ‘I Never Knew’ – Verity and Johnny 5. Tourist Ballet – Company 6. ‘When You Want Me’ – Barnaby and Nancy 7. ‘Who Do The Wrong People Travel?’ – Mimi 8. ‘This Is A Changing World’ – Verity 9. ‘Bronxville Darby and Joan’ – Mr. and Mrs. Sweeny 10. Reprise: ‘Later Than Spring’ – Mimi 11. ‘Let’s Have One More Try’ – Skid and Mimi 12. Reprise: ‘This Is A Changing World’ – Verity 13. Reprise: ‘When You Want Me’ – Barnaby and Nancy 14. Finale – Full Company | Same as previous version | N/A |
| 2-1  Scene Description | ‘Tangiers’  The scene is a “Place” in Tangiers.  On the right there is a café and on the left there is a shop that is stocked with Moroccan souvenirs – most of them leather “and all of them hideous.” There are mosques and Moorish buildings of the Kasbah at the back.  As the curtain rises, there is lots of movement accompanied by Arab music in the background and people passing back and forth. After a while Ali steps out. He is described as a “disreputable looking Arab dressed as a guide.” Advancing to the centre of the stage, he blows on his whistle and immediately several suspicious characters from different backgrounds emerge from various directions and gather round him. Commanding attention, Ali stands on a small box which has been produced for him. Blowing his whistle once again, everyone falls silent and he starts to sing **The Customer’s Always Right**. | Same as previous version | ‘Tangiers’  The description of the scene (a “Place”) is the same as in the earlier versions of the scene.  At the end of the Overture, “a kind of Arab wailing begins and when the curtain rises there are several Arabian vendors in long robes and turbans darting quickly about the stage.  Ali, a disreputable looking Arab, appears.” |
| 2-1 | **The Customer’s Always Right**  Verse; Refrain 1; Refrain 2  When the vocal part of the number has finished, they all embark on a “grotesque dance” with the instruction that this “must be left to the supreme efficiency, humour and the inventiveness of the Choreographer.”  After this, Mimi enters with a group of tourists including the Candijack family, Mr. Rawlings, Mr. and Mrs. Sweeny, Mary-Belle and Lollie, Mrs. Lush and Alvin (who is dressed in a cowboy outfit).  Mimi is giving the passengers a guided tour of the area and is persistently interrupted by Alvin. As they depart towards the Kasbah, Johnny enters and crosses over to the café where Verity is sitting. He has found a beach and somewhere for them to eat lunch. It is only a couple of miles away and he has lied to his mother that he is ill and so needs to stay on the ship – preventing him from having to go to the British Legation. She agrees to go with him and he leaves to go and make arrangements to travel the few miles to the beach, suggesting in the meantime that she wears a yashmak as he doesn’t “like to think of anyone else looking at her face.”  She watches him as he goes and the orchestra begins to play. She sings **Something Very Strange**.  Verse; Refrain 1; Refrain 2. | Only very minor changes, which have little or no impact on the scene itself.  Johnny’s claim that his mother “loves Legations and Embassys [sic]” has ‘love’ underlined.  At the end of the scene, as he prepares to leave, there is a mark before the question of whether she will be alright on her own. It looks as though this is meant to be an indication for this section to be cut, but there is no further mark to indicate where the cutting of the section should end. If it applies to the end of the scene, then this would remove the reference to the yashmak, leading straight into **Something Very Strange**. | **The Customer’s Always Right**  Verse, Refrain 1; Refrain 2 – first line of the refrain, “The customer’s always right my dears” becomes “The customer’s always right my **boys**”  Rather than taking the passengers off to the Kasbah, which happens in the earlier versions, Mimi allows them to go shopping and disperse until 3pm. As she watches them go, she turns and sees Johnny at a café table.  As Mimi goes over to Johnny, he tells her that he has been watching her performances which “lacked sincerity” before getting her a drink.  As he did with Verity, he suggests they have lunch together after feigning illness to his mother, who is going to the Legation. She initially refuses to go with him, saying it is against protocol but eventually relents. He tells her to deposit “her guilty conscience at the American Express office” whilst he goes to organise the car for that afternoon.  As he goes, there is an Arab playing the flute down the road whilst others try to sell her trinkets. She smiles at them and sings **Something Very Strange**.  Verse; Refrain 1; Refrain 2 |
| 2-2  Scene Description | ‘The Ship’s Nursery’  “The ship is at sea again, steaming along the Mediterranean with Europe to port and Africa to starboard.”  The description of the nursery is the same as in the Broadway version of the script in Act 1, Scene 9.  The room is occupied by 6 children – Alvin being the eldest. The others are 4 children of varying sizes and ages – Cynthia, Irene, Lucille and Judy. There is also another little boy called Cassidy.  As the lights fade, Mimi is entertaining the children, although she is not happy about it. She is blindfolded whilst the children are running around shrieking. The games continue until Cassidy hits her – she takes off the blindfold and goes to grab him but misses. | Same as previous version. | ‘Italian Interlude’ – Ballet  “The lights come up on a square in any small town in Sicily. Far away in the background can be seen in the Coronia anchored in the harbour.”  There are a small group of Italian villagers preparing for a festive occasion. There is a young man on a ladder with a woman below, giving him instructions in her native tongue. Another man is sitting reading a magazine and drinking Coke whilst another woman sings as she kneels on the floor scrubbing some clothes in a large washtub.  Another man then enters carrying beer, which he proceeds to open and pour into a beer keg.  A third woman enters with a large tiered wedding cake, which she proudly puts on a wooden crate. A little boy goes to the cake and runs his fingers over the icing as two women shoo him away, crying “Basta Basta!” He almost immediately returns shouting excitedly and pointing offstage.  A native wedding party enters preceded by a priest and followed by the wedding party. Their arrival causes a great stir with everyone crowding round the bride and groom. A man signals for silence and begins to play a mournful rendition of ‘O Bambino’. He sings a few lines to restrained applause and then a general dance begins after shouts and laughter – gradually, everyone joins in.  Suddenly the little boy rushes on, giving a blast from his bugle he is carrying and everyone stops. They momentarily freeze and then prepare themselves for the imminent arrival of the tourists from Coronia.  The bride strips to her undergarments, whilst the little boy and flower girl are quickly dressed in rags. One of the 2 women then opens a wooden crate to produce souvenirs and postcards, whilst the wedding cake is removed and the washtub is pushed into place.  The Italians get themselves into position as the music of **You’re A Long Long Way From America** in march tempo beings and the passengers, including the Candijacks, the Sweeneys and Mrs. Lush march in, with their cameras. They turn and gaze at the spectacle in the Sqaure. |
| 2-2 | Same as the later Broadway version (Act 1, Scene 9) including the rendition of **Little One’s ABC** except the final line: in the Broadway version, it is “But after L. comes M. for Mimi” whereas here it is “But after L. comes M. for Mother” with the additional line of “And Mother’d like to slit your throats!” | Same as previous version | N/A |
| 2-3  Scene Description | ‘The Sun Deck’  “Over the rail can be seen, in the distance, the sweep of the Bay of Naples. It is late afternoon and the ship is due to sail in about an hour’s time. ‘Tenders’ are still returning from the shore loaded to the gunwales with exhausted sightseers. The ship has remained in the Bay for two and a half days in order to give the passengers enough time to explore Pompeii, Vesuvius, The Amalfi Drive, Sorrento, Capri etc.”  There are a group of people who are clustered around the bar drinking and talking whilst making a lot of noise.  Downstage, Mrs Van-Mier is sitting working on her embroidery frame. Next to her is Elinor who, as usual, as a notebook on her knees which she occasionally uses to scribble her ideas down on to. | Same as previous version. | ‘The Sun Deck – Naples’  Same scene description as the earlier versions of the script.  As opposed to there being a group of people at the bar and making the noise, in this version it is more specific – they are Mr. Rawlings and Mr. Candijack.  The Downstage setting is also the same as the earlier version. |
| 2-3 | Elinor and Mrs. Van-Mier are watching a drunk man. To Elinor, this is excitement as she claims that she is never bored because there is a story in everyone. She reckons that he is drunk because he is trying to avoid facing something – in fact, she claims, that is what everyone is doing on the ship, with the exception of herself. The drunk is Mr. Rawlings.  Mimi enters after giving her tour of Naples. Mr. Rawlings approaches and tries to accost her but is led away to his cabin by the stewards, singing ‘I’ve grown accustomed to her face’ as he goes. Mimi then leaves.  Nancy enters. She is accompanied by 3 young men. Barnaby follows, clearly unhappy.  Mrs. Van-Mier and Elinor are about to leave when Johnny and Verity arrive back. Verity asks them to dine with her that night and they all agree except Elinor who will eat in her cabin.  Verity and Johnny are then invited to cocktails by the Sweeneys. As the Sweeneys leave, Johnny is unable to understand why Verity agreed when they are so boring but she says that it was impulsive.  They begin to sing together: **I Never Knew**. | Same as previous version. | The opening part of the scene with Elinor and Mrs. Van-Mier discussing the drunk Mr. Rawlings has been cut. The scene starts with Elinor calling to Nancy but is ignored, whilst telling Mrs. Van-Mier that everyone, apart from her, is on the cruise to get away from something or someone.  Mrs. Van-Mier is displeased with Elinor’s flippancy regarding her son and her concerns for him. Elinor exit.  Mimi and Johnny enter and are greeted by his mother. After she has gone, Mimi also tries to leave but Johnny wants her to stay with him, singing **Don’t Turn Away From Love**. Suddenly, Mimi looks at Johnny (her head had been averted) and surrenders, pulling her arms round his neck and pulling his mouth down to hers. |
| 2-4  Scene Description | ‘Taormina’  On the right there is a shop covered in items that will catch the tourists’ attentions. On the left there is a café with a few tables outside.  When the lights fade in on the scene, it is early afternoon and nobody is stirring. The proprietor of the shop is asleep, whilst a waiter at the café is sat a table snoring, with his head resting on his arms.  With the sound of a klaxon, suddenly there is lots of noise and everyone jumps to their feet. ‘Carolinia’ tourists start coming through, transforming the peaceful street into a noisy chaos.  There is the stage instruction that this entire scene “should be treated choreographically.” At the end, the tourists disappear and there is nothing left in the shop and a number of empty glasses covering the café tables. “The street is littered with empty cigarette packs, bits of paper, the silver foil from film packs. The shop owner returns to the siesta he was enjoying at the beginning of the scene, the waiter does likewise. The young man with the guitar picks up a discarded copy of ‘Life’ Magazine, places his guitar gently on the ground and settles himself comfortably against the archway – as the lights fade.”  This scene is very similar to Act 2, Scene 1 in the Broadway version. | Same as previous version. | ‘The Promenade Deck’ – at sea  As the lights come up, it is the middle of a lifeboat drill.  Sir Gerard and Lady Nutfield, the Candijack family, Alvin and Mrs. Lush and the Sweeneys are all overdressed and wearing life jackets whilst listening to the voice of Captain Wilberfoce coming over the ship’s PA system. |
| 2-4 | N/A | N/A | The Captain announces the emergency procedure and what the emergency signal is. As it sounds, Lady Nutfield faints.  As the Captain asks, “Do I make myself clear?” Mr. Sweeney says “Yes, sweetheart” as there is a blackout. |
| 2-5  Scene Description | ‘Athens. The Parthenon. Day’  Elinor is seated on the ground with her back against a stone column. Nancy is beside her with a notebook in her lap. | Same as previous version. | Same as previous versions. |
| 2-5 | Elinor is dictating to Nancy when she realises that Nancy is talking out loud about Barnaby. As she continues to do so, Elinor realises that Nancy has failed to take down anything that she has been dictating for the past 1hr.  As she quizzes Nancy and Nancy declares that she is in love, she asks if anything inappropriate has happened and Nancy is disappointed to have to say no. Elinor says she will have to write to her mother and let her know, and she will buy a Dictaphone  As she goes off, Barnaby appears. He has been listening behind a pillar. Yet again Nancy starts quoting Pheidias as he tries to take more photographs of her.  Lifting her in his arms before sitting her down on the base of a column, he begins to sing **When You Want Me**. When the number is over, the dance off.  Mimi comes on, followed by her usual set of tourists. Once again, Alvin is annoying her. In the end, she snaps and tells Mrs. Lush just what she thinks of Alvin, much to the delight of the other tourists. Mrs. Lush and Alvin depart, and Mimi asks the other tourists to leave her alone for a few minutes, and they duly oblige. Mimi begins to sing **Why Do The Wrong People Travel?**  Verse 1; Refrain 1; Verse 2; Refrain 2; Refrain 3. | Same as previous version. | Similar to the earlier version but with minor revisions.  Elinor is dictating to Nancy when she realises that she is not concentrating – she keeps on asking her how to spell words which she has not dictated. The scene then proceeds in the same way as the earlier version did with Elinor leaving to say that she is going to buy a Dictaphone.  Nancy then hides behind a column.  Mimi and Johnny enter. He wants her to meet him, but she will not relent until he picks her up and threatens not to put her down until she agrees.  As Mrs. Lush and Alvin appear, the script returns to the earlier version, where Mimi shares her true feelings about Alvin to his mother. As they depart, Mimi continues on the tour with the tourists.  The section featuring Nancy and Barnaby then follows, leading again into the number **When You Want Me.** |
| 2-6  Scene Description | ‘The Parthenon. Moonlight’  Verity and Johnny are leaning against a column. She is smoking and staring into space whilst he watches her. | Same as previous version. | ‘The Sun Deck – the empty bar at night’  Mimi and Johnny are sitting at a table in front of the bar. |
| 2-6 | It transpires that Johnny and Verity slept together that afternoon after checking into a cheap hotel. Johnny cannot understand why Verity is so unhappy after having such a wonderful afternoon and he loves her, but this is exactly the problem – for her, it was not a wonderful afternoon. She tells him that she does not want them to be lovers any longer – their romance is one that will not last.  Johnny still cannot understand and she begins to sing **This Is A Changing World**.  Verse; Refrain 1; Refrain 2.  As the number ends, they embrace and his mother watches on. She then announces that there is a taxi waiting and her and Johnny will no longer be continuing on the cruise. Verity explains that their relationship is over, but Mrs. Van-Mier is still not prepared to risk the relationship continuing – she saw them come out of the hotel as she had been following them.  He is disgusted with his mother but Verity implores him to go with her and he eventually does. Left alone, she sings:  “Love is a charming souvenir  When day is done  And night draws near  No regrets are worth a tear…”  Her voice breaks as she buries her head in her hands as the last chords crash out and the lights fade. | Same as previous version | Mimi is trying to make conversation with Johnny after rebuking him. He is unhappy that he is not wanted but Mimi says that a relationship would not work and they are best to leave it as it is - they had fun whilst on holiday. With nothing more to be said, he leaves, leaving Mimi singing a reprise of **Later Than Spring**. |
| 2-7  Scene Description | ‘The Promenade Deck. Night’  “When the lights fade in on the scene, Verity, looking pale and drained, is leaning on the rail on the right, staring straight out in front of her. Her face is a mask of unhappiness.  Barnaby and Nancy come on. They are laughing at some private joke. They see Verity and come up to her.” | Same as previous version | ‘Promenade Deck. Morning’  “Mimi hurries on from Stage Left closely followed by Maimie and Glen Candijack and two other passengers.” |
| 2-7 | Barnaby and Nancy approach Verity and they all admire the view.  Barnaby and Nancy have just got engaged and will return here for their honeymoon. Verity is the first person that they have told other than Elinor. She wishes them well and they leave.  A group of people, including Mr. Rawlings come on and, as usual, he is drunk. Seeing Verity, he approaches and asks her to drink with him but she refuses. As he grabs her, he kisses her before she has time to react but, as she frees herself from him, she slaps him across the face making him stumble back, much to the annoyance of Mr. Rawlings and fear of Verity. He tells her “I’d forgotten you only like ‘em young. I’m the wrong age group! Pardon the error” before bursting into laughter and staggering away. Verity cries and runs off the stage. | Same as previous version | Mimi is being bombarded with questions and she is answering them in her usual abrasive, sarcastic and flippant manner.  When Mrs. Lush tells her that her ticket says that “half of me [sic] stays in New York and the other half goes to Philadelphia”, Mimi sarcastically replies “Hooray for Trenton!”  As the passengers get ready to disembark, Mimi asks that they all “please go to you [sic] cabins and pack a few after-thoughts, or something” much to the annoyance of Elinor who finds her very rude.  Alone now, Mimi sings **Why Do the Wrong People Travel?** |
| 2-8  Scene Description | ‘The Sun Deck. Evening’  “The ship is lying in the bay of Villefranche. In the background can be seen, in the early evening light, the spectacular outline of the Cote d’Azure. Pastel coloured houses, restaurants, apartment buildings and private villas catch the last rays of the dying sun.  At the bar, watched by Fred, the barman two men are listlessly throwing dice for drinks.” | Same as previous version | ‘The Main Hall’  “The ship has docked and the scene is the same as Act 1, Scene 1, except for the fact that everyone is leaving instead of arriving on board.”  The orchestra begins playing a reprise of **When You Want Me**, whilst on stage the staff and passengers all exchange addresses. Towards the end of the number, the slips are torn into little pieces and scattered like confetti.  They leave in the following order: the Sweeneys, Sir Gerard and Lady Nutfield, Elinor, Barnaby and Nancy, the Candijack family, Mrs. Lush and Alvin and Johnny and Mrs. Van-Mier.  At the end of the reprise, the orchestra plays **Sail Away** as the two stewards cross the deserted hall with Mimi’s luggage, plant and balloons.  Mimi appears at the top of the stairs with Adlai. Walking down on them, she looks very much alone. After a moment, Johnny appears and she is startled to see him. Taking Adlai from her, he pulls her to her feet and escorts her off the ship as the orchestra finishes playing **Sail Away**. |
| 2-8 | Sir Gerard and Lady Nutfield are arguing because he does not want to visit one of her friends on the Riviera – he finds her common.  As they go off, Joe arrives with Lawford Craig (Verity’s husband). Mimi arrives and Joe leaves him with her. It transpires that she sent for him after Verity fell ill, although she is now off the “danger list.” She had overdosed on sleeping pills. She intimates that it was a deliberate overdose and advises him to be gentle with her when he is allowed to see her.  Joe returns to say that Lawford’s cabin is ready. They leave and Lawford thanks Mimi.  Left alone, she sings a reprise of **Later Than Spring**. She goes off stage at the end of the number.  A group of tourists come on laughing and talking, whilst the Sweenys enter in silence, sitting at the table vacated by Mimi.  Mrs. Sweeny refuses to forgive her husband for losing $793 in the casino, especially as she had asked him to buy several gifts. She says she will never forgive him and they sing **Bronxville Darby and Joan**. | Same as previous version | Pat, Nancy and Ann are saying goodbye and say they will ring and keep in touch, whilst Elinor invites Mrs. Lush to “drop by and see my bulldog pup.”  Nancy, meanwhile, is giving her phone number whilst Barnaby invites everyone to their wedding.  As they all leave, Mimi is left alone on stage. Johnny returns up the gangplank, “scoops up Adlai and takes Mimi off by the hand.” |
| 2-9  Scene Description | ‘The Promenade Deck. Late afternoon’  “Verity is lying in a steamer-chair. There is an open book face-downwards on her lap and her eyes are closed. She looks pale and wan.  Marybelle and Lollie come on from the right and pass across the deck.” | Same as previous version | N/A |
| 2-9 | As Marybelle and Lollie go across the deck and off, Lawford enters and goes across to Verity’s chair. Putting his hand on hers, she opens her eyes. He explains that he flew from New York and joined the ship 4 days ago as he was worried about her, and blaming himself for allowing her to go on the cruise alone in the first place.  She clearly cannot remember what happened but he tells her not to worry. She explains that everything “suddenly became too complicated – too difficult” after making a fool of herself with a young man but Lawford doesn’t seem to care – he tells her that he will take her straight to the country when they are back in New York, he has “come a long way to prove” that he still wants her. She tells him that she has come a long way too and begins to sing **This Is A Changing World**. As the lights fade, he takes her hand and kisses it. | Same as previous version. | N/A |
| 2-10  Scene Description | ‘A Part of the deck’  “This is a cross-over scene and should be treated entirely choreographically until the end when Nancy and Barnaby sing a brief reprise of **When You Want Me**.”  There is a general atmosphere of excitement as stewards rush around carrying baggage as the ship approaches New York. There is music underlying the whole scene but no dialogue is audible.  Nancy and Barnaby run on from either side of the stage and they pose with her hand in the air waving at nobody in particular. Crouching down, he takes a photo of her. They then sing a reprise of **When You Want Me** and the lights fade. | Same as previous version. | N/A |
| 2-10 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 2-11  Scene Description | ‘The Main Hall’  The scene is the same as Act 1, Scene 1.  The ship has docked. Elinor, Nancy, Barnaby, the Sweenys, Sir Gerard and Lady Nutfield, Mr. Rawlings (still drunk), the Candijack family, Mrs. Lush and Alvin all appear before finally disappearing down the gangway.  Johnny comes on from the gangway with a large bunch of roses. He is stopped by Joe and they talk before Joe goes back to his office and Johnny stands near the foot of the staircase.  Skid bursts on accompanied by a group of reporters. Mimi, carrying Adlai, comes out of the lift and Skid rushes to her, wrapping her in his arms. The photographers taken a number of pictures and, accompanied by a large group of cheering stewards, they disappear down the gangway.  The crowd has now thinned a bit. Lawford, with Verity in his arm, come down the stairway. They stop as Johnny steps forward. He presents her with the roses. Initially startled, she then accepts them and introduces him to Lawford. No one can hear what is said but they chat for a few moments and then Lawford and Verity continue down the gangway. Johnny stands looking after them sadly. Moving slowly downstage, he sings the last phrase of **Sail Away**:  “When the wind and the weather  Blow your dreams sky high  Sail away – Sail away – Sail Away.”  A fresh influx of passengers and stewards fill the stage and Johnny moves towards the gangway as the curtain falls. | Same as previous version | N/A |

# Appendix 2

A table outlining the musical number in each scene of Act 1 of the Boston script and which character sung it

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scene** | **Setting** | **Musical Number** | **Sung by…** |
| 1 | The Main Hall | ‘Come to Me’ | Mimi and the Stewards |
| 2 | Verity’s Cabin (A few minutes later) | ‘I Am No Good At Love’ | Verity |
| 3 | Johnny’s Cabin (A few minutes later) | ‘Sail Away’ | Johnny |
| 4 | The Sun Deck (A quarter of an hour later) | Reprise: ‘Come to Me’ | Mimi |
| 5 | Nancy’s Cabin (A few minutes later) | ‘Where Shall I Find Him?’ | Nancy |
| 6 | The Sun Deck (Several days later. Noon) | ‘Beatnik Love Affair’ | Barnaby with Nancy and Passengers |
|  |  | ‘Later Than Spring’ | Johnny |
|  |  | ‘The Passenger’s Always Right’ | Joe and the Stewards |
| 7 | The Promenade Deck (A few days later. Late afternoon) | Reprise: ‘Sail Away’ | Johnny |
| 8 | The Sun Deck (Night) | Reprise: ‘Where Shall I Find Her?’ | Barnaby |
| 9 | Mimi’s Cabin (The following evening) | ‘Useful Phrases’ | Mimi |
| 10 | The Promenade Deck (Four AM) | ‘This Is A Night For Lovers’ | Verity and Johnny |
| 11 | The Sun Deck (Midnight) | ‘You’re A Long, Long Way From America’ | Mimi and the Company |

# Appendix 3

A table outlining the musical number in each scene of Act 2 of the Boston script and which character sung it

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scene** | **Setting** | **Musical Number** | **Sung by…** |
| 1 | A Square in Tangiers (Noon) | ‘The Customer’s Always Right’ | Ali and the Arabs |
|  |  | ‘Something Very Strange’ | Verity |
| 2 | The Ship’s Nursery (Afternoon. A few days later) | ‘Little One’s ABC’ | Mimi and Children |
| 3 | The Sun Deck (The Bay of Naples. Early evening. A few days later) | ‘I Never Knew’ | Verity |
| 4 | A Street in Taormina (Early afternoon. A few days later) | ‘Sicilian Interlude’ | The Company |
| 5 | The Parthenon (Noon. A few days later) | ‘When You Want Me’ | Nancy and Barnaby |
|  |  | ‘Why Do the Wrong People Travel?’ |  |
| 6 | The Parthenon (Moonlight. Late that night) | ‘This Is A Changing World’ | Mimi |
| 7 | The Promenade Deck (An hour or so later) |  |  |
| 8 | The Sun Deck (Villefranche. Some days later. Late afternoon) | ‘Later Than Spring’ | The Company |
|  |  | ‘Bronxville Darby and Joan’ | Mr and Mrs Sweeney |
| 9 | The Promenade Deck (Late Afternoon) | Reprise: ‘This Is A Changing World’ | Verity |
| 10 | Another part of the deck |  |  |
| 11 | The Main Hall (Morning) | Reprise (Last phrase): ‘Sail Away’ | Johnny |

# Appendix 4

A table outlining the musical number in each scene of Act 1 of the Broadway script and which character sung it

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scene** | **Setting** | **Musical Number** | **Sung by…** |
| 1 | The Main Hall of the S. S. Coronia | ‘Come to Me’ | Mimi and Stewards |
| 2 | Johnny Van Mier’s Cabin | ‘Sail Away’ | Johnny |
| 3 | The Sun Deck | Reprise: ‘Sail Away’ | Johnny |
| 4 | Elinor Spencer-Bollard’s Cabin | ‘Where Shall I Find Him?’ | Nancy |
| 5 | The Sun Deck | ‘Beatnik Love Affar’ | Nancy and Barnaby |
|  |  | ‘Later Than Spring’ | Johnny |
|  |  | ‘The Passenger’s Always Right’ | Joe and Stewards |
| 6 | Mimi’s Cabin | Useful Phrases | Mimi |
| 7 | The Bar |  |  |
| 8 | The Promenade Deck | ‘Go Slow, Johnny’ | Johnny |
| 9 | The Ship’s Nursery | ‘Little One’s ABC’ | Mimi |
| 10 | The Sun Deck (Night) | ‘You’re A Long, Long Way From America’ | Mimi, Nancy and Barnaby |

# Appendix 5

A table outlining the musical number in each scene of Act 2 of the Broadway script and which character sung it

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scene** | **Setting** | **Musical Number** | **Sung by…** |
| 1 | Tangiers | ‘The Customer’s Always Right’ | Ali |
|  |  | ‘Something Very Strange’ | Mimi |
| 2 | Italian Interlude | Ballet |  |
| 3 | The Sun Deck – Naples | ‘Don’t Turn Away From Love’ | Johnny |
| 4 | The Promenade Deck – At Sea |  |  |
| 5 | The Parthenon – Athens | ‘When You Want Me’ | Nancy and Barnaby |
| 6 | The Sun Deck – The Empty Bar At Night | Reprise: ‘Later Than Spring’ | Mimi |
| 7 | Promenade Deck – Morning | ‘Why Do The Wrong People Travel? | Mimi |
| 8 | The Main Hall | Finale | All |

# Appendix 6: Mimi and Sir Gerard. Act 1, Scene 4.

Mimi: I knew it. Just from the way you were standing. Nobody but the British can achieve quite that air of casual distinction. I am your cruise hostess, Mimi Paragon.

Sir Gerard (Without enthusiasm): Indeed?

Mimi: It is my duty and pleasure to see that you enjoy every fascinating moment of this great, glamorous, gorgeous adventure. Do you care for bingo?

Sir Gerard: Who is Bingo?

Mimi: (Laughing delightedly): Isn’t that wonderful? And they say the British have no sense of humour. I do hope you will all do me the honour of coming to my ‘Get Together’ cocktail party at six o’clock this evening in the Winter Garden Lounge,

Sir Gerard: ‘Get Together’ cocktail party.

(He shudders)

Heaven forbid.

Mimi: Don’t say another word. The idea nauseates you. I can see it in your eye. I was a mad, crazy fool ever to think of it. I implore you to wipe the whole sordid suggestion from your mind. If there is any teeny weeny thing I can do to make your voyage carefree, irresponsible and sheer heaven, just let me know. I can supply anything from a fourth at Bridge to an alcohol rub. Arriverdici for the momento.

(She kisses her hand gaily to them and goes off along the deck)

# Appendix 7: Timeline of Verity’s Key Character Development

**Act 1, Scene 2**

Verity arrives on the ship to get away from Lawford (her husband) who has had an affair. She tells him they are no longer in love.

**Act 1, Scene 4**

Verity is not interested in talking to anyone (other than Johnny – this is the case throughout), even when other passengers try to make conversation with her.

She meets Johnny and this is an instant attraction between them.

**Act 1, Scene 6**

The Johnny/Verity relationship has clearly developed

* Age is a significant issue for her
* She tries to dissuade Johnny from thinking romantically about her – she reminds him that she is married and older than him.

**Act 1, Scene 10**

Verity can no longer deny her feelings for Johnny

**Act 2, Scene 6**

Verity is unhappy but Johnny cannot understand why

She tells him that she does not want to be lovers anymore as she does not think that their happiness could last.

Verity is upset when Johnny’s mother appears and says she and her son are leaving the ship as she does not approve of the relationship

**Act 2, Scene 8**

Off-stage, Verity has taken an overdose in an apparent suicide attempt

Mimi has sent for Lawford and encourages him to be patient

**Act 2, Scene 9**

Lawford and Verity talk and they reconcile – they both still want each other.

**Act 2, Scene 11**

Verity disembarks with Lawford but stop when Johnny steps forward

* Johnny gives her roses and she introduces him to Lawford (the conversation is inaudible) before they go off the gangway, leaving Johnny looking forlorn as he watches them.

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**“What a joy to hear old-fashioned waltzes again”: How the Musical Numbers Shaped the Narrative of *The Girl Who Came to Supper***

By the middle of 1962, Noël Coward had been approached to be involved with two Broadway musicals, *High Spirits* (a musical version of his wartime play *Blithe Spirit*) and *The Girl Who Came to Supper*. Significantly, for the first time since 1932 and *Words and* Music, in neither instance was he to have complete artistic control. *The Girl Who Came to Supper* in 1963 was Coward’s last musical and one in which he wrote only the music and lyrics. The show was a musical version of Terence Rattigan’s play *The Sleeping Prince* (later reworked into a film starring Laurence Olivier and Marilyn Monroe, *The Prince and the Showgirl*, for which Rattigan wrote the screenplay) which had already premiered, albeit unsuccessfully, on Broadway starring Michael Redgrave as the Regent. Coward later went on to say, after seeing a performance of the play in 1968, that it was “no good and never will be, as I know to my cost”[[157]](#footnote-157) although he did not hold the same viewpoint when he agreed to collaborate on the project.

The focus of this discussion is to look at how Coward’s involvement in *The Girl Who Came to Supper* helped to shape its narrative. Archival resources, such as the early version of the libretto and the revised Act 2 (which are both held in the Herman Levin Collection at the Wisconsin Historical Society) as well as the final script as performed on Broadway (in the Noël Coward Archive, University of Birmingham), will be used to aid this. Furthermore, attention will be given to the perception that Levin was trying to emulate the monumental success of *My Fair Lady* when he chose to produce an adaptation of *The Sleeping Prince*; was this a factor in asking Coward to collaborate on this new project? Firstly however, I will briefly look at Coward’s role as a collaborator because this was arguably a backward step for him since he had been used to having full artistic control. From here, it will be possible to determine the effect this had on his role as composer and lyricist.

# Noël Coward as Collaborator

Writing in his diary, Coward recalled Herman Levin’s request to do the score and lyrics for *The Sleeping Prince* (the original name for *The Girl Who Came to Supper*): “I feel rather torn about this. At the moment I naturally feel that I don’t want to have anything to do with an American musical ever in my life again [as a result of his disappointment regarding *Sail Away*], but this, of course, will pass and I have always loved *The Sleeping Prince*.[[158]](#footnote-158) Additionally, Coward was attracted by the period of the show: “…it is a period and a perfect period, what’s more, for my music and lyrics…”[[159]](#footnote-159) This was possibly due, in part, to it being completely different to the modern, comedic *Sail Away* which he had had such high expectations for. By 27 May 1962, Coward had committed to writing the score and lyrics, whilst Harry Kurnitz was confirmed as the author of the book and Cecil Beaton (Coward hoped) was to design the décor and costumes.[[160]](#footnote-160)

From his diary entries, we are also able to determine Coward’s involvement went beyond writing the music and lyrics – he was involved in the casting process too. However, it is the issue of casting which exposes another issue. Rex Harrison and Christopher Plummer were the preferred choices to play the Regent (although Coward had reservations regarding Plummer: “I’m not *absolutely* sure that he’s right for it, but we shall see.”[[161]](#footnote-161)) but the role ultimately went to Jose Ferrer. From Coward’s perspective, he lacked the required vocal ability: “Jose Ferrer really dreadful vocally”[[162]](#footnote-162) but conceded that he was “terribly eager to improve”[[163]](#footnote-163) although this made little difference to Coward. “I do wish he wasn’t playing it, much as I like him. He is so very unattractive. However we must all press on and bolster him up…”[[164]](#footnote-164) In many ways, this statement by Coward summarises his limitations in the role of collaborator – something that he was not used to. Whilst he was able to voice his opinions and attend auditions, ultimately the casting decisions lay with Herman Levin and Joe Layton (who had directed *Sail Away*). In stark contrast to Coward, in Levin’s opinion, Ferrer had “a beautiful voice and will, we think, be magnificent in the part.”[[165]](#footnote-165) We have seen that, given the authority and opportunity, Coward would not have cast Ferrer.

The lack of authority being only a collaborator and not having full artistic control was seemingly a reoccurring issue in this show. His diaries shed light on his frustrations and his inability to be allowed to correct perceived problems. As rehearsals got underway, Coward’s frustration at his lack of authority grew. After the first week of rehearsals, he believed that the “whole atmosphere is fairly quivering”[[166]](#footnote-166) with everybody delighted by his work, which led him to think that he had “done all that was required.”[[167]](#footnote-167) However, entries begin to show a progressive feeling of dismay at the direction of the show and although he had seemingly endeavoured to take stay in the background, Coward, by his own admission, “let fly”.[[168]](#footnote-168) It is the entry at the end of October which signifies his true frustrations and, perhaps, the mistake he had made: “getting sick of *The Girl Who Came to Supper* and the frustration of not being able to put things right myself.”[[169]](#footnote-169) He ultimately concluded that “it has all been rather a gruelling and frustrating experience for me and I shall never again put myself into such a tricky position.”[[170]](#footnote-170) He never did.

When Coward agreed to work on the project, there was perhaps the expectation that his music and lyrics would be enough to convey their intended message without the need for added choreography. In his book, *Noël Coward: In His Own Words*, Barry Day asks the question, “Did Coward use the words – or did the words use him?”[[171]](#footnote-171) Developing this, he goes on to say:

You’d be hard put to name anyone in the twentieth century who employed the English language with the same precision, concision, and consistency as he did. And his range was remarkable…words were his weapons, and ‘wordsmith’ both his occupation and preoccupation.[[172]](#footnote-172)

In other words, he was confident that this “weapon” (as Day refers to this tool) would be sufficient to drive the show forward and convey the drama.

# Narrative: Shaping the Mary- Regent Relationship

There are several key musical numbers which chart the progression and development of their relationship, from Mary’s invitation to dine at the Embassy to their parting when the Regent leaves. These numbers also highlight the challenges that their relationship faces as they come from such contrasting backgrounds: Mary as a showgirl and the Prince Regent as the head of Carpathia.

‘I’ve Been Invited to a Party’ is the first big waltz of the show. From Mary’s perspective, she has just been invited to dine at the Embassy, oblivious that it will just be her and the Regent attending. Mary is beyond excited at the prospect of the event and imagines herself being admired by everyone and dancing with the Regent:

Everyone will say

“Who’s that pretty girl?”

As they see me swirl

Round the floor

And before

The night is through

I’ll be drinking champagne out of everyone’s shoe

People will murmur

“But she is charming”

What a lovely smile!

What a sense of style![[173]](#footnote-173)

She is also thinking about her dance with the Regent and dancing “cheek to cheek”[[174]](#footnote-174):

The pressure of his hand

Will make me understand

There’s really no need to speak[[175]](#footnote-175)

Cleverly however, whilst the dialogue between Northbrook and Mary and the lyrics lack any hint of impending romance, the music conveys a different story. Coward stipulates that the Refrain should be specifically *with a Viennese lilt* [[176]](#footnote-176) and the main theme centres on one five-note motif (Figure 1), which is also decorated to reflect Mary’s excitement.

Figure 1: The five-note motif

The key change and new rhythm marks the commencement of Mary’s thoughts turning towards romance before the return of the opening 16-bar phrase once again highlights and reminds us that Mary is a showgirl and an immature one. This is reiterated by the closing lyrics (Figure 2):

And when the music comes to an end

He’ll say – “Hey

You’ve found a friend!”[[177]](#footnote-177)

Figure 2: Mary is reflecting on romance before her thoughts once again return to her excitement about being invited to a party

Through this number, Coward has showcased how different Mary, the Regent and their respective lifestyles differ from each other. This issue goes full circle at the end of *The Girl Who Came to Supper* in the final scene and ‘I’ll Remember Her’. Similarly, Coward reinforces this in ‘Sir or Ma’am’. The lyrics portray Mary to be very naïve and lacking any basic common sense, so much so that she remarks to Northbrook that protocol “sounds like disinfectant.”[[178]](#footnote-178) The number also serves the purpose in establishing the restraints of socialising with royalty and how to behave when doing so – what to say and when, how to behave etc. It is clear to see that this is a situation, and a potential life, that the girl from Milwaukee would never expect to find herself in.

Once again in Act 1, Scene 4, Coward further develops the romantic story through his ‘Soliloquies’ which are expressed soon after meeting at the Embassy. The libretto merely focuses on the social pleasantries but the musical number sees them express their private thoughts on one another. In reprising the music again at the end of Act 1 after the Queen Mother invites Mary to the Coronation and decorates her, the story becomes one of sexual tension. Despite the outward appearance of the Regent being irked by Mary, it is clear that there is an attraction there and one which is mutual:

His face is strong

But I can see

Some tired little lines of dissipation

His eyes are kind and just a bid sad

I think – I’m glad

That I’m the girl who had the invitation[[179]](#footnote-179)

The music conveys this story with the slow, dreamy effect, which is very fitting for the scene and also characteristic of Coward’s style at the time (Figure 3).

Figure 3: The developing love story

We can see that Coward likes to use musical soliloquies as a means of gaining better understanding of the characters. For example, despite the following description of Mary by the Regent, the number ‘How Do You Do, Middle Age?’ is a soliloquy ballad in which he realises that he has fallen in love with her:

You got me a creature with the mentality of a retarded child, an approach to life of stomach-churning sentimentality, and furthermore, despite the fact she has the muscles of a weight-lifter, at what I will refer to briefly as the crucial moment, was rendered utterly insensible by an amount of Vodka which, in Carpathia, is normally added to the milk of four-year olds, as a mild tonic. And you call that a girl?[[180]](#footnote-180)

Figure 4: The Regent (Ferrer) during 'How Do You Do, Middle Age?'[[181]](#footnote-181)

This comes after he begins to realise that Mary, although young and immature, does mean well and he sees a different side of her character after they discuss his son Nicholas. The lyrics perfectly depict the Regent’s feelings: she infuriates him but he also views her as a “feather-brained, garrulous small-part minx, / Who never draws breath and seldom thinks.”[[182]](#footnote-182) Previously, hints have been given to the audience regarding the Regent’s philandering mentality with the musical number ‘When Foreign Princes Come to Visit Us’ but now the Regent has met Mary, he has come to a point where he does not know what to do. He questions whether middle age is changing him – he wonders if he “can still love now and then?”[[183]](#footnote-183) Mary has mellowed him and he wonders whether that means he must “permit her to twitter pure high treason.”[[184]](#footnote-184) Whilst the melody to these lyrics is not noteworthy, the rhythms employed are interesting because the emphasis is clearly placed on the key words and the ones which are most significant to the Regent – for example, age, upset, threat, but also the lyrics “twitter pure high treason” and “Can I still love now and then?” The plot is moving forward now and intensifying – the foundations have been set and the remainder of this Act is now watching how this is resolved and whether the couple get their happy ending.

Figure 5: Musical emphasis on the Regent's emotions

Coward arguably seems to be focusing his attention on showing the softer side of the Regent’s character through his music, whilst the book portrays him as an authoritarian figure who has difficulty relinquishing control or being questioned. When the Regents sings of his loneliness in ‘Lonely’ we see another dimension to his character but also to his relationship with Mary; in the space of a few scenes, she has gone from being someone for a sexual relationship to being his confidante. The emotion reflects musically through the chromatic melodic sequences (Figure 6) as the Regent reveals how he feels.

Figure 67: The Regent's emotions are reflected through the music

Although the Regent declares that love is “the enemy of all the cold hard virtues that make a ruler or a King”[[185]](#footnote-185) he does declare his love for Mary which is again done through the medium of song – ‘This Time It’s True Love’. It is a romantic ballad which sees them both declaring their love for one another and freely admitting how they feel before the scene closes with the Regent carrying Mary into the bedroom whilst the music slowly dims. This final confirmation of their relationship transforms the Regent on several levels: firstly, his relationship with his son is transformed, with Nicholas now being his “darling boy”[[186]](#footnote-186) and joint ruler of Carpathia. Secondly, he is so relaxed that he is caught singing by Northbrook, who is assigned the task of making the necessary arrangements for Mary to return to Carpathia with the Regent.

Figure 8: Mary: "I'll sure glad to be out of this dress"[[187]](#footnote-187)

As mentioned previously, ‘I’ll Remember Her’ is the final number in the show and one that provides a sense of ambiguity. It is clear that the Regent is infatuated with Mary, emphasised in the sorrowful lyrics of his fears that she will not remember him (Figure 8).

Figure 8: The Regent's sadness that Mary may not remember him

It is an ominous number and helps to capture the essence of this love story: two people from very different backgrounds and lifestyles found an unlikely connection. Although they both enjoyed it whilst it lasted, there is the feeling that they both know it could never be a long-term relationship.

Overall, Coward’s role in shaping the Mary-Regent relationship is significant which in turn affected the overall story. Through his musical numbers alone, it is possible to chart their relationship from their first meeting through to their bittersweet parting at the end. It would be possible to convey the essence of the show, even in a semi-staged performance of it, just by using Coward’s numbers. The expressive lyrics, with music to support, underpin the emotions at the right time and convey the relationship to audiences. Whereas Kurnitz’s book supports the overall structure and backdrop of this relationship, Coward’s role as collaborator has, in this instance, arguably been the driving force and dominated.

# British Entertainment

Patriotism and entertainment were two key strands of Coward’s life and they were reflected in the two main pastiche scenes of *The Girl Who Came to Supper*: ‘London’ and ‘The Coconut Girl’. The former has been considered by some, including Alan Farley and Dominic Vlasto (co-authors of the Noël Coward Music Index), as being autobiographical[[188]](#footnote-188) which is plausible. From what we already know of Coward’s staunch patriotism, the endearing lyrics about his hometown could seem reminiscent. ‘London Is A Little Bit of Alright’ is one of a handful of musical numbers which Coward wrote to reflect his pride in England, with the lyrics demonstrating this.

I was born and bred in London,

It’s the only city I know.

Tho’ it’s foggy and cold and wet,

I’d be willing to take a bet that there

Ain’t no other place I’d want to go.

Believe me,[[189]](#footnote-189)

These lyrics remind us of ‘London Pride’ – another of Coward’s patriotic songs. The jaunty rhythms of the Refrain in particular, helped to create the sense of fun that can be had in London:

Bow bells, Big Ben, up to the Heath and down again

and if you should visit the monkeys in the zoo,

bring a banana,

Feed the ducks in Battersea Park or take a trip to Kew.

It only costs a tanner there and back.[[190]](#footnote-190)

Figure 9: The dotted rhythms reflect the fun that can be had in London

For American audiences, these are lyrics that would have been easy for them to understand and would have appealed to them. Whilst Coward included “period language” such as “use your loaf”[[191]](#footnote-191) he made sure to include plenty of British landmarks and traditions, including Big Ben, Trooping of the Colour, Changing of the Guard and Belgravia[[192]](#footnote-192) (Figure 9). Coward described the number, along with three others that he had composed, as being “like old London pub songs and are funny without trying to be.”[[193]](#footnote-193) To audiences at the time, this may well have been true.

The ‘London’ sequence was the comedic highlight of Act 1 and O’Shea’s show-stopping performance, but Act 2 had Henderson (Mary) singing ‘The Coconut Girl’. Whilst ‘London’ focused on the capital city, ‘The Coconut Girl’ was a sequence of songs, which was nothing less than a miniature musical in itself. This collection of songs comprised of:

1. ‘Welcome to Pootzie con Doyle’
2. ‘(The) Coconut Girl’
3. ‘Paddy Macneil and His Automobile’
4. ‘Swing Song’
5. ‘(We’re) Six Lillies of the Valley’
6. ‘(The) Walla Walla Boola’

They were a pastiche of a theme-song from a 1911 American musical play. The musical numbers serve their purpose but are not overly notable and as such, are perhaps unlikely to be revived unless within the context of *The Girl Who Came to Supper*.

Nevertheless, although irrelevant to the overall narrative of the show, these pastiches were sequences that came out of nowhere but were memorable showstoppers. In particular, the ‘London’ sequence had such an impact which, although it only lasted eleven minutes, won Tessie O’Shea the Tony Award for Best Featured Actress in a Musical. With this short sequence, Coward had achieved two important things as a composer and, in turn, as a collaborator. Firstly, with a medley of four songs, each with their own evocative titles: ‘London Is A Little Bit of All Right’, ‘What Ho, Mrs Brisket, ‘Don’t Take Our Charlie for the Army’ and ‘Saturday Night at the Rose and Crown’, he had recaptured the English music hall sound. Although they may have sounded as though they had been written years earlier, they fitted perfectly in the setting which, as we know, was a significant factor in him accepting a role in this show.[[194]](#footnote-194) Secondly, whilst entertaining audiences, he was also introducing London and British traditions (Ada Cockle, played by O’Shea, was a Cockney who sings the medley whilst eating fish and chips) to American audiences. In essence, he was reinforcing the setting and displaying his patriotism for his country.

Peter Filichia[[195]](#footnote-195) argues that these examples of “Britishness” and a diversion from the narrative were welcome and arguably enhanced the show because one critic in particular “spent the first six of his twelve paragraphs dealing with no one else [O’Shea]”[[196]](#footnote-196) Adrian Wright meanwhile offers a more damning verdict on the two sequences, and on Coward’s music as a whole. He describes the ‘London’ sequence as Coward being “back among the lower orders he had written so patronisingly of in *This Happy Breed*”[[197]](#footnote-197) with “various references to colds on the chest, cosy East End pubs where tinkers and tailors rubbed shoulders with soldiers and sailors and portly old dears from Hackney longing to dip their toes in the briny…”[[198]](#footnote-198) ‘The Coconut Girl’ sequence is similarly described by Wright as Coward “inhabiting territory he had mapped out in *Operette* and with which he felt comfortable.”[[199]](#footnote-199)

Wright is arguably missing the intended point of the two sequences and, as such, critiques them from the perspective of Coward simply regurgitating old work and not being forward-thinking. However, as discussed, it was somewhat necessary to have a sense of nostalgia given the period in which *The Girl Who Came to Supper* is set. Coward would have been aware that they offered nothing in terms of plot development but were instead offering a light-hearted reminder of Mary’s background and “typical” London life.

# The New *My Fair Lady*?

It has been widely believed and accepted (both at the time and in subsequent literature which is predominantly a regurgitation of secondary sources and hear-say) that *The Girl Who Came to Supper* was an obvious attempt on Levin’s part to reproduce the phenomenal success of *My Fair Lady*. Philip Hoare, the author of a biography on Coward, was one who shared such a thought and notes that Coward “even tried to persuade Rex Harrison to play Prince Regent.”[[200]](#footnote-200) Whether Harrison was perceived to be the ideal candidate for the role due to his performance during the audition stages, or because of Levin’s assumed aspiration to replicate *My Fair Lady*, is a debate that can probably never be completely resolved. However, it is wrong to suggest that Coward intentionally tried to imitate the 1956 musical just because similarities could be noted.

Glenn Litton argues how the musical was “little more than a counterfeit of someone else’s idea of elegance, *My Fair Lady*…”[[201]](#footnote-201) but this is an issue about comparisons between the two books rather than the music. This is something which is reinforced when he goes on to say how “the heroine of *The Girl Who Came to Supper* may have been more glamourous and worldly than Eliza Doolittle, but she was still a commoner…”[[202]](#footnote-202) Comparisons between the two books has very little to do with Coward since Kurnitz was responsible for the book whilst it has been established that Coward’s role was as a collaborator on the music and lyrics.

It is possible that Levin asked him to be involved in this musical because Lerner and Loewe had originally intended to cast Coward as Henry Higgins for the London production of *My Fair Lady* in 1958 before he declined the role.[[203]](#footnote-203) However, Levin may have wanted a link between the two shows and believed Coward provided that. Nevertheless, this does not mean that he was complicit in imitating the book; it was, after all, Levin’s decision to adapt *The Sleeping Prince*. I believe this is one key element that is forgotten or, at the very least, largely overlooked, and so Kurnitz, to some extent, was restricted by the material that he had.

Retrospectively, *The Sleeping Prince* was arguably unsuitable for adaptation. The film adaptation, starring Marilyn Monroe after she bought the rights to the play in 1957, and re-named *The Prince and the Showgirl* enjoyed only mediocre success. Whilst it made a profit, the critics were far from impressed and Monroe herself is said to have remarked: “American audiences are not as moved by stained-glass windows as the British are, and we threaten them with boredom.”[[204]](#footnote-204) On that occasion, it was Rattigan who wrote the screenplay. Whilst this does not suggest the show was doomed to failure from the outset, it does pose a question regarding the suitability of the play for adaptation, unless radical. Leonard Hoffman referred to this comparison, but also suggested *The Sleeping Prince* was the problem: “…*My Fair Lady*, which remains the perfect musical fairy tale. If the pumpkin is not quite such a splendid coach, it is due to the fact that the Terence Rattigan plot is scarcely a match for Shaw’s *Pygmaliaon*. But then, that’s asking for utopia…”[[205]](#footnote-205)

The argument would be stronger too if Coward had played the role of the Regent himself. In her autobiography, Henderson alleges that Coward admitted to her that he should have played the role of the Regent himself and not Ferrer[[206]](#footnote-206) - a view, of course, which had been shared and voiced by his friends from the outset. If he had played the role of leading man, then that would have added another dimension to his role as collaborator in the show – particularly if his delivery of his own music influenced the critics’ thoughts. Invariably, shows starring Coward (and many of these were his own) enjoyed successful runs and were generally well-received by the critics and public alike.

Instead, however, despite the factors discussed above, it is still the music which draws comparisons. Although it is arguably almost impossible to fathom the level of influence the 1956 show had on *The Girl Who Came to Supper*, this has not stopped critics and others alike from drawing their own conclusions. Whilst Litton describes the show as a “counterfeit”, he also believed ‘London Is A Little Bit of Alright’ was “more than a chance echo of ‘With a Little Bit of Luck’.[[207]](#footnote-207) Similarly, Ethan Mordden sees similarities between Tessie O’Shea’s numbers and those sung by Stanley Holloway in *My Fair Lady*.[[208]](#footnote-208) They do exist; both talk about everyday situations and are Cockney numbers, but one has to look for them to substantiate the argument.

Perhaps the strongest similarity is between ‘I’ll Remember Her’ and ‘I’ve Grown Accustomed to Her Face’. Both are the closing numbers of the respective shows and here there are similarities in the way that Higgins in *My Fair Lady* is forlorn at losing Eliza, just as the Regent is at the prospect of losing Mary. However, that number is complex due to the plot of *My Fair Lady* and the ambiguous relationship between Higgins and Eliza, whereas ‘I’ll Remember Her’ is much simpler and clear cut. It is clear that the Regent and Mary love one another whereas with Higgins and Eliza, there is always the ambiguity of their relationship and whether or not her heart truly lies with Freddie. Both shows end ambiguously, but Eliza returns whilst Mary does not. As such, in *My Fair Lady*, the audience is left to wonder where their relationship goes from that end point just as in *The Girl Who Came to Supper*, the audience question if the Regent and Mary do reunite one day or if the Regent is right and she does forget about him and moves on.

Overall, whilst it possible to argue there are similarities, it is a tenuous argument. It is the book that bears the most resemblance to *My Fair Lady* which is perhaps where the argument that Levin was trying to emulate its success in producing *The Girl Who Came to Supper* originates, but this has very little to do with the show as a whole and particularly Coward’s music. Stylistically the musical numbers are not very alike with Coward’s songs varying from operetta to music hall and even jazz numbers. The assertion of anything different and the parallels being drawn between the two shows, both at the time and in subsequent literature, undoubtedly meant *The Girl Who Came to Supper* looked like a mere pallid imitation, thus contributing to its problems.

# “A first-rate musical comedy”[[209]](#footnote-209): Satisfying the Critics

Satisfying the critics was often a challenge for Coward when it came to his musical theatre output - as a lyricist, composer, librettist or all three. The show undertook a pre-Broadway run, which offered mixed reviews of the show. During this run, extensive revisions were made (which is normal with any Broadway show) – there are several scripts in existence, but to document and discuss these revisions here is beyond the realms of this particular subject topic. It should be highlighted, however, that some changes, for example the removal of the musical number ‘Long Live the King’, were necessitated by current affairs at the time (in this particular instance, it was the assassination of President John. F. Kennedy).

The critical reception was, overall, largely positive in both the try-outs and on Broadway. Elliot Norton from the *Boston Advertiser*, for example,believed *The Girl Who Came to Supper* was the “season’s most engaging show of the kind: Bright, melodious, amusing, well-written…”[[210]](#footnote-210) Equally, Coward’s longevity in the genre does not go unnoticed by Norton in his review for the *Boston Record*: “After quite a few years of creating words and music, you might think Noël Coward would be jaded, but he writes like a very young man with a fresh flow of invention.”[[211]](#footnote-211) Whilst some critics (and some do when the show arrives in other States) would argue that the score was dated or old-fashioned and Coward had regurgitated material from his other works, Norton views this in a positive light: “If the tone is familiar and the melodic line has the old Noël Coward quality, and if you occasionally hear lines that suggest others in former Coward shows, it doesn’t matter. There is a sense of fitness, of aptness and suitability about them all.”[[212]](#footnote-212) This is a fact of course. The first five notes of the number ‘Come Be My True Love’/ ‘This Time It’s True Love’ are the same as the opening five in ‘A Room With A View’[[213]](#footnote-213), which was used in *This Year of Grace* (1928).

Norton also enthuses about the score, elaborating how “the melodies flow and flower. The lyrics bubble and gush up out of the text, like vintage champagne from old bottles.”[[214]](#footnote-214) Others share his enthusiasm. Guy [surname is unknown] from *Legitimate* feels the score appealed to all: “The score is tuneful and bright, with plenty of hits to suit every taste, from ballads like ‘Here and Now’ to ‘London Is A Little Bit of All Right’”[[215]](#footnote-215) culminating with “Coward’s touch as a songwriter is still sure.”[[216]](#footnote-216)

The overwhelming viewpoint from Boston was that *The Girl Who Came to Supper* would enjoy a long and successful run on Broadway. Elinor Hughes, writing for the *Boston Sunday Herald*, was unsure on how long it would run in New York but believed “two or three years isn’t an unreasonable estimate.”[[217]](#footnote-217) Whilst reviews in Boston had suggested a long run on Broadway was almost without doubt, Nathan Cohen writing for *Toronto Star* was saying: “…an apathetic script by Harry Kurnitz, shop-worn music and waxwork lyrics by Noël Coward…the quality of the show rests on the stars and the quality of the music. Here things are alarmingly negative.”[[218]](#footnote-218) It is debatable as to whether Cohen reserves his harshest criticism for Coward or Ferrer.

Meanwhile, Cohen struggles to offer any praise for the score other than to say Coward “strives hard to achieve catchy rhymes and recognisable phrases.”[[219]](#footnote-219)

What is tantalizing about Mr Coward’s score is it melodic aridity. The music never insinuates itself into your consciousness: the words don’t seize tenaciously delightful hold. This is tantalizing because Mr Coward works with an extremely simple range of notes and strives hard to achieve catchy rhymes and recognisable phrases. But the techniques he uses are laborious. They don’t make contact. The trouble is not that they are applied to an earlier age, and therefore don’t fit, but that they are composed in the idiom of a previous age.[[220]](#footnote-220)

In contrast, Herbert Whittaker[[221]](#footnote-221) argues that Coward “has transformed that unlikely vehicle…into a fine, pleasing and very glossy Broadway musical… It is nice to see Mr Coward in such good fettle, and rather nice to know that his kind of witty sentiment is no longer out of date.”[[222]](#footnote-222) Critics in Philadelphia shared this same sentiment, with Jerry Gaghan for *Philadelphia News* saying: “While not necessarily reminiscent, Noël Coward could hardly deny the nearly a score of melodies or the quirks or twists of versifying so long identified with him.”[[223]](#footnote-223) The starkest contrast between the praise and negativity is summed up in one sentence by Ernest Schier for *Philadelphia Bulletin*: “Noël Coward is at the top of his form in providing the music and lyrics.”[[224]](#footnote-224)

Whilst *The Girl Who Came to Supper* was not as well received in Toronto as it was in Boston or Philadelphia and nor was it the success in New York that Boston had predicted it would be, there were still favourable reviews on the musical numbers. “What a joy to hear old-fashioned waltzes again!”[[225]](#footnote-225) is the view held by Emory Lewis from *Cue*, who also describes Coward as the “unseen star”[[226]](#footnote-226) of the show, with his music and lyrics being “inventive and melodic.”[[227]](#footnote-227) Lewis’ remarks shine a positive light on what other critics had viewed negatively. In fact, many of the observations made are along the same lines as those already mentioned – the critics were divided on their appreciation for Coward’s score, with several praising it whilst just as many lamented it. George Oppenheimer from *On Stage* praised Coward for his “witty and sophisticated”[[228]](#footnote-228) lyrics and suggested that they “seemed far better than his music”[[229]](#footnote-229):

The former has a freshness, a lilt and gaiety that I did not find, on first hearing, in his tunes, except for ‘I’ve Been Invited to a Party’ and a group of cockney songs sung and danced by Tessie O’Shea, imported from England to stop the show.[[230]](#footnote-230)

John McCarten for the *New Yorker* concurred, commenting that “… Mr Coward has invented rhyme schemes in *The Girl Who Came to Supper* that are frequently ingenious.”[[231]](#footnote-231) Similarly, Richard Watts Jr for *New York Post* emphasised the show as being a “romantic delight”[[232]](#footnote-232):

It has wit, charm and style, characteristically winning music and lyrics by Coward, an intelligently amusing libretto by Harry Kurnitz and a brilliant and attractive cast.

If pressed, I might have trouble in naming an outstanding song hit, but all of Mr Coward’s music is delightful. It is always wonderfully tuneful and refreshing and it is a particular pleasure to hear a good waltz number for a change. As for lyrics, he is still the old master. They are civilised, have a pertinence to the story and the characterisation, and are brightened by the celebrate Coward wit. The touch of sophistication is present when needed, but, when the romantic spirit is required, it is believably there too.[[233]](#footnote-233)

This is in contrast to Elliott Norton’s earlier predictions of many of the musical numbers becoming “hits”[[234]](#footnote-234) as Watts Jr acknowledged the potential problem in “naming an outstanding song hit”[[235]](#footnote-235) and so this is perhaps where one of the fundamental problems arose.

Overall, there was praise for Coward’s efforts. This was perhaps the first time, in a number of years, that he received positive notices for his music: “ ‘Girl’ [sic] has the advantage of an engaging score by Coward. Mr Coward’s songs are sentimental and comic, as the occasion requires…”[[236]](#footnote-236) noted Morehouse, whilst Hoffman commented: “Coward added delightful melodies, some of which are among the most enchanting he’s ever written since *Bitter Sweet*.”[[237]](#footnote-237) These are in addition to the comments that have already been mentioned and of which are part of a larger collection of reviews of the show. As such, it is understandable as to why Coward was aggrieved that he had used these musical numbers for *The Girl Who Came to Supper*: “When I think of all the lovely music and lyrics I wasted on *The Girl Who Came to Supper* I grind my plates with frustrated rage.”[[238]](#footnote-238)

It is true that Coward vehemently disagreed with any negativity towards his music, as Wright suggests, but it would seem there was perhaps less negativity and more praise than has previously been suggested. Coward, meanwhile, believed any negative criticism was, on this occasion, purely because the critics did not like him:

There is unquestionably a certain type of scribbling gentleman who is basically antipathetic towards me. It *cannot* be anything but personal. No one in their senses could say the lyrics and music of *The Girl Who Came to Supper* were not good. They are good. Very good indeed. As a matter of fact, this is the first time I have had – on the whole – enthusiastic notices for my music for years, if ever. Very few dramatic critics can distinguish a good tune from a bad one.[[239]](#footnote-239)

He was largely right. Although it did not run on Broadway for as long as some had predicted, Coward had enjoyed somewhat of a renaissance – although he was only a collaborator on this project, he had nevertheless been influential and the music had not paled against Kurnitz’s book. If anything, it could be said that it was the music which rejuvenated a play that was never really suitable for adaptation. In addition to composing the two show-stopping numbers, one which secured Tessie O’Shea a Tony Award, his music was also instrumental in shaping the narrative and helping to gain a deeper insight into the lives of Mary and the Regent and their relationship. It was, after all, through the emotion in Coward’s lyrics, that the audience saw a glimpse into the Regent’s insecurities and loneliness and Mary’s empathy towards him – things which were not conveyed in dialogue. With *The Girl Who Came to Supper*, Coward’s musical theatre career ended as it had started – he did not have full artistic control but he had returned to writing for a period which he favoured. *The Girl Who Came to Supper* proved to be the last show with a Noël Coward score and the only one of his musicals never produced in London – a fact which still stands today.

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**Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham**

***Noël Coward Archive* (By Section / Box Numbers)**

*A/7* : Final Broadway script of *The Girl Who Came to Supper*

*B/1* : Sheet music – ‘Come Be My True Love’

*B/3* : Sheet music – ‘Here and Now’

*B/3* : Sheet music – ‘How Do You Do, Middle Age?’

*B/3* : Sheet music – ‘I’ll Remember Her’

*B/4* : Sheet music – ‘London Is A Little Bit of All Right’

*B/4* : Sheet music – ‘Lonely’

*B/6* : Sheet music – ‘Saturday At the Rose and Crown’

*B/7* : Sheet music – ‘This Time It’s True Love’

*C/2* : Folder of corrected lyrics relating to *The Girl Who Came to Supper*

*D/11* : Album of cuttings

*E/3* : Photographs relating to *The Girl Who Came to Supper*

*H/3* : Diary – 1962

*H/4* : Diary – 1963

**British Library**

***Terence Rattigan*** ***papers***.

BL Add 74370 : Undated script of *The Girl Who Came to Supper*

**Wisconsin Historical Society**

***Herman Levin Collection* [By Box/Folder Numbers]**

*50/23* part 1: Auditions 1

*50/23* part 2: Auditions 2

*51/6* : Terence Rattigan

*51/12* : Casting

*53/10* : Music and Lyrics

*53/11* : Preview Schedule and Theater Statistics

53/15: Rehearsal Notes

*53/17* : Fragments of script

*53/18* : “The Sleeping Prince,” Typed Script, by Harry Kurnitz, undated

*53/19* : Act II Revised Typed Script, 1963

*53/20* : Mimeographed Script

1. Diary entry dated Tuesday 28 May 1946. *Noël Coward Diaries*, 58. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Stephen Citron, *Noël and Cole: The Sophisticates* (London: Sinclair Stevenson, 1992), 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid., 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid., 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ibid., 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ibid., 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Graham Payn, *My Life with Noël Coward* (USA: Applause Books, 1994), 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ibid., 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ibid., 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ibid., 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Review by unknown critic for *News Review*. Undated. *NCA D/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Review by an unknown critic for *The Daily Telegraph*. Undated. *NCA D/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Diary entry dated Thursday 14 November 1946. Noël Coward, edited by Barry Day, *Noël Coward Diaries* (Weidenfeld and Nicholson), 64. From herein, ed. Barry Day, *Noël Coward Diaries*, 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Diary entry dated Friday 27 September 1946. Ibid., 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Diary entry dated Friday 27 September 1946. Ibid., 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Diary entry dated Saturday 28 December 1946. Ibid., 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Diary entry dated Saturday 28 December 1946. Ibid., 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Mary Martin, *My Heart Belongs* (London: W. H. Allen – A Howard and Wyndham Company), 132. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Ibid., 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Coward later recorded the song himself and it became a regular feature in his cabaret performances. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Lyrics from ‘Uncle Harry’. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Lyrics from ‘Uncle Harry’. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Noël Coward, *The Lyrics of Noël Coward* (UK: Methuen Publishing Ltd, 2002), 250. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Review from *Playgoer*. Date and critic unknown. *NCA D/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Review from *Daily Express*. Date and critic unknown. *NCA D/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Review from *The Observer*. Date and critic unknown. *NCA D/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Review from *The Daily Sketch*. Date and critic unknown. *NCA D/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. The director Joshua Logan recalling his, Anita Loos and Helen Hayes’ response to Coward saying, on the subject of Martin: “She’s not very good, you know. She hasn’t much talent.”

    Ronald. L. Davis, *Mary Martin, Broadway Legend* (US: University of Oklahoma Press), 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Richard Traubner, *Operetta: A Theatrical History* (UK: St. Edmondsbury Press, 1983), ix. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. The story of a nymphomaniac socialite and her cocaine-addicted son (played by none other than Coward himself) pushed boundaries further than they had ever gone before. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Noël Coward, ed. Barry Day, *The Letters of Noël Coward* (USA: Alfred. A. Knopf, 2007), 515. From herein Noël Coward, ed. Barry Day, *The Letters of Noël Coward*, 515. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Theatre critic and Coward’s biographer [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Sheridan Morley, *Coward* (UK: Haus Publishing Ltd), 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. John Kenrick, *Musical Theatre: A History* (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc), 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Adrian Wright, *Tanner’s Worth of Tune: Rediscovering the Post-War British Musical* (UK: The Boydell Press, Woodbridge), 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Ibid., 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Ibid., 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. *NCA B/1*. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. *Pacific 1860* script, 46. *NCA* *A/12*. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Lyrics from ‘This Is A Changing World’. *Pacific 1860* script, 47. *NCA* *A/12*. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. *NCA B/6*. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. *NCA D/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Adrian Wright, *Tanner’s Worth of Tune: Rediscovering the Post-War British Musical* (UK: The Boydell Press, 2010), 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Philip Hoare, *Noël Coward: A Biography* (USA: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 364. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Ibid., 364. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Author of *Imperialism and Music: Britain 1876-1953.* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2001), 295. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Review by Alan Parsons for the *Daily Mail*. Dated 1 November 1931. Cited in: Jeffrey Richards, *Imperialism and Music: Britain 1876-1953* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2001), 295. From herein: Jeffrey Richards, *Imperialism and Music: Britain 1876-1953*. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. A review by an unknown critic for *The Observer*. Dated 19 February 1933. Cited in: Jeffrey Richards, *Imperialism and Music: Britain 1876-1953*, 297. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Noël Coward, *Present Indicative* (New York: Doubleday Doran and Co., 1937), 341. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Noël Coward, ed. Barry Day, *The Letters of Noël Coward* (USA: Alfred. A. Knopf, 2007), 520. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Cole Lesley, *The Life of Noël Coward* (UK: Jonathan Cape, 1976), 273. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Ibid., 273. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Ibid., 273. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Wright, *Tanner’s Worth of Tune: Rediscovering the Post-War British Musical*, 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Dan Rebellato, ‘Look back at empire: British theatre and imperial decline’ in *British Culture and the End of the Empire* ed. Stuart Ward (New York: Manchester University Press, 2001), 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Ibid., 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Noël Coward, *Pacific 1860* in *Play Parade V* (London: Heinemann, 1958), 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Noël Coward (ed Barry Day), *Noël Coward Diaries* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1982), 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Diary entry dated Sunday 13 January 1957. Noël Coward, edited by Barry Day, *Noël Coward Diaries*, 346. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. David Cannadine, ‘The End of a Patriotic Vision’, *Encounter* (March 1983). Accessed 10/7/2015. [www.unz.org/Pub/Encounter-1983mar-00036?View=PDF](http://www.unz.org/Pub/Encounter-1983mar-00036?View=PDF) [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Ibid. Accessed 10/7/2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Ibid. Accessed 10/7/2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Cannadine quoting Cole Lesley. ‘The End of a Patriotic Vision’, *Encounter* (March 1983). Accessed 10/7/2015. [www.unz.org/Pub/Encounter-1983mar-00036?View=PDF](http://www.unz.org/Pub/Encounter-1983mar-00036?View=PDF) [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Rebellato, ‘Look back at empire: British theatre and imperial decline’ in *British Culture and the End of the Empire* ed. Stuart Ward. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Ibid., 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Ibid., 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Noël Coward, *Pacific 1860*. *NCA A/12.* [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. *NCA E/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. *Pacific 1860* script, 17. *NCA* *A/12*. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. *Pacific 1860* script. Stage direction. 28. *NCA* *A/12*. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. *NCA E/7.* [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. *Pacific 1860* script, 17. *NCA* *A/12*. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. *Pacific 1860* script, 29. *NCA* *A/12*. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. *Pacific 1860* script, 44. *NCA* *A/12*. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. *Pacific 1860* script, 44. *NCA* *A/12*. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. *NCA E/7.* [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. John Kenrick, *Musical Theatre: A History* (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc, 2010), 261. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Wright, *Tanner’s Worth of Tune: Rediscovering the Post-War British Musical*, 49 [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Ibid., 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Philip Hoare, Noël *Coward: A Biography* (USA: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 437. From herein: Hoare, Noël *Coward: A Biography*, 437. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Ibid, 464. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. *Sail Away* Playbill. *NCA F/3*. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. American actress (1908-1876) [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Diary entry dated Sunday 19 October 1958. Noël Coward, edited by Sheridan Morley and Graham Payn, *The* Noël *Coward Diaries* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982), 388. From herein: Noël Coward, *The* Noël *Coward Diaries*, 388. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Diary entry dated Sunday 7 December 1958. Noël Coward, *The* Noël *Coward Diaries*, 391. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Ibid, 391. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Diary entry dated Saturday 7 January 1961. 1961 Diary Typescript Transcript. *NCA H/3*. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Diary entry dated Saturday 7 January 1961. 1961 diary typescript transcript. *NCA H/3*. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Diary entry dated Saturday 7 January 1961. 1961 diary typescript transcript. *NCA H/3*. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Sam Irvin, *Kay Thompson: From Funny Face to Eloise* (USA: Simon and Schuster, 2010), 314. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Letter from Coward to Lorn Lorraine dated Sunday 19 March 1961. Noël Coward, *The Letters of* Noël *Coward*, 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Diary entry dated Sunday 12 March 1961. 1961 diary typescript transcript. *NCA H/3*. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. 93 Cole Lesley, Noël *Coward* (UK: Jonathan Cape, 1978), 461. From herein: Lesley, Noël *Coward*, 461. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. *NCA F/3*. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. *NCA F/3*. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Ibid, 464. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Coward’s personal secretary [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Noël Coward, edited by Barry Day, *The Letters of* Noël *Coward* (USA: Random House, 2007), 265. From herein: Noël Coward, *The Letters of* Noël *Coward*, 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Review by Alan Gardner for *Daily Mail*. Dated 10 August 1961. *NCA D/11*. From herein: Gardner for *Daily Mail*. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Review by unknown critic for *Variety*. Dated 10 August 1961. *NCA D/11*. From herein: Unknown critic for *Variety*. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Unknown critic for *Variety*. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Final New York script. Act 1, Scene 1, Page 3. From herein this will be abbreviated to the form 1-1-3. *A/17*. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. *NCA COW/2/E/1/30/1/2*. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Pre-Broadway script. 1-2-1. *NCA A/16*. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. *NCA* *COW/2/E/1/30/1/2*. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. *NCA* *COW/2/E/1/30/1/2*. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Pre-Broadway script, 1-4-4. *NCA A/16*. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Pre-Broadway script, 1-4-4. *NCA A/16*. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Review by Thomas. R. Dash for *Women’s Wear Daily*. Dated 5 October 1961. *NYPL TN396345 Journal – Reviews for Sail Away by* Noël *Coward*. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Pre-Broadway script, 2-11-1. *NCA A/16*. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Final New York script. 2-8-36. *NCA A/17*. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Final New York script. 2-8-36. *NCA A/17*. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Cole Lesley, *Noël Coward* (UK: Jonathan Cape), 460. From herein: Lesley, *Noël Coward*, 460. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Ibid., 460. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. An interview with Donald. R. Seawell. Alan Farley, edited by Ron Lazar, *Speaking of Noël Coward: Interviews by Alan Farley* (USA: Author House), 283. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. Lesley, *Noël Coward*, 460. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Letter from Coward to Lorn Lorraine dated Sunday 19 March 1961. Noël Coward, edited by Barry Day, *The Letters of Noël Coward* (USA: Vintage Books), 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Outline of the comparison of the scripts. Also Appendices 2-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Pre-Broadway script, 1-1-1. *NCA A/17*. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Final Broadway script. 1-1-3 & 1-1-4. *NCA A/17*. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Pre-Broadway script. 1-1-6. *NCA A/16*. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. Pre-Broadway script, Act 1 Scene 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Verse from ‘Later than Spring’, Pre-Broadway script, 1-6-13. *NCA A/16*. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Pre-Broadway script. 1-10.3. *NCA A/16*. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Pre-Broadway script. 1-10-4. *NCA A/16*. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Also originating from *Pacific 1860*. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. ‘I Never Knew’, Pre-Broadway script. 2-3-7. *NCA A/16*. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Another musical number recycled from *Pacific 1860*. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. ‘This Is A Changing World’, Pre-Broadway script. 2-6-5. *NCA A/16*. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Pre-Broadway script, 2-8-5. *NCA A/16*. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Pre-Broadway script. 2-9-2. *NCA A/16*. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Review by Melvin Maddocks. *The Christian Science Monitor*. Dated 10 August 1961. *NCA* *D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Review by Cyrus Durgin, *The Boston Globe* dated 10 August 1961. *NCA* *D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Review by Maddocks. *The Christian Science Monitor*. *NCA* *D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. Review by Norman Nadel. ‘Sail Away at Broadhurst’, *New York World*. Dated Sunday 4 October 1961. *NCA* *D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. John McClain. ‘Coward’s Musical Cruises to Nowhere’, *New York Journal* dated 4 October 1961. *NCA* *D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. Final Broadway script of *Sail Away*. 1-5-25. *NCA A/17*. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. Early script of *Sail Away*. Dated 14 June 1961. 1-10-2. *NCA A/16*. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Final Broadway script of *Sail Away*. 1-8-40 & 41. *NCA A/17*. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. Final Broadway script of *Sail Away*. 1-8-41. *NCA A/17*. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Final Broadway script of *Sail Away*. 2-6-28. *NCA A/17*. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Review by unknown critic for *Variety*. Dated 10 August 1961. *NCA D/11*. From herein: Unknown critic for *Variety.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. Review by Eric Frankland for *Daily Herald*. Dated 10 August 1961. *NCA D/11*. From herein: Frankland for *Daily Herald*. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. Frankland for *Daily Herald*. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. Frankland for *Daily Herald*. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. Frankland for *Daily Herald*. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. Review by Cyrus Durgin for *The Boston Globe*. Dated 10 August 1961. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. *NCA E/8*. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Unknown critic for *Variety*. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. Review by Edwin Tetlow for *Daily Telegraph.* Dated 10 August 1961. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. Nadal for *New York World Telegram*. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. Review by Robert Coleman for *New York Daily Mirror*. Dated 5 October 1961. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. Review by John Chapman for *New York Daily News*. Dated 5 October 1961. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Review by Thomas. R. Dash for *Women’s Wear Daily*. Dated 5 October 1961. *NYPL TN396345 Journal – Reviews for Sail Away by* Noël *Coward*. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. Adrian Wright, *A Tanner’s Worth of Tune: Rediscovering the Post-War British Musical*. (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2010), 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. John McClain. ‘Coward’s Musical Cruises to Nowhere’, *New York Journal* dated 4 October 1961. *NCA* *D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Diary entry dated Sunday 9 June 1968. Noël Coward, (eds) Sheridan Morley and Graham Payn, *The Noël Coward Diaries* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1982), 665.

     From herein: Noël Coward, *The Noël Coward Diaries*. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. Diary entry dated Sunday 15 April 1962. Noël Coward, *The Noël Coward Diaries*, 503. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Diary entry dated Sunday 15 April 1962. Ibid., 503. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. Diary entry dated Sunday 27 May 1962. Ibid., 506. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. Diary entry dated Tuesday 11 December 1962. Noël Coward, *The Noël Coward Diaries*, 519. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. Diary entry dated Tuesday 22 October 1963 in London – Savoy Hotel. *NCA H/4*. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. Diary entry dated Tuesday 22 October 1963 in London – Savoy Hotel. *NCA H/4*. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. Diary entry dated Tuesday 22 October 1963 in London – Savoy Hotel. *NCA H/4*. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. Letter from Herman Levin to Walter Jokel (Carol Ann Ford’s agent) dated 6 February 1963. *Herman Levin Collection.* Box 51, Folder 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. Diary entry dated Sunday 25 August 1963. Noël Coward, *The Noël Coward Diaries*, 541. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. Diary entry dated Sunday 25 August 1963. Ibid., 541. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. Diary entry dated Sunday 22 September 1963. Noël Coward, *The Noël Coward Diaries*, 544. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. Diary entry dated Tuesday 22 October 1963. Ibid., 547. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. Diary entry dated Wednesday 11 December 1963. Ibid., 551. [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. Barry Day, *Noël Coward: In His Own Words* (London: Meuthen, 2004), xi. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. Ibid., xi. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. Script of *The Girl Who Came to Supper*. 1-2-11. *NCA A/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. Script of *The Girl Who Came to Supper*. 1-2-12. *NCA A/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. Script of *The Girl Who Came to Supper*. 1-2-12. *NCA A/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. Unpublished sheet music for ‘I’ve Been Invited To A Party’. *NCA* *B/3*. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. Script of *The Girl Who Came to Supper*. 1-2-14. *NCA A/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. Script of *The Girl Who Came to Supper*. 1-4-21. *NCA A/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. Script of *The Girl Who Came to Supper*. 1-4-25. *NCA A/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. Script of *The Girl Who Came to Supper*. *NCA A/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. *NCA E/3* [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. Lyrics from ‘How Do You Do, Middle Age?’ [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. Lyrics from ‘How Do You Do, Middle Age?’ [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. Lyrics from ‘How Do You Do, Middle Age?’ [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. Script of *The Girl Who Came to Supper*. 2-7-49. *NCA A/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. Script of *The Girl Who Came to Supper*. 2-4-26. *NCA A/7*. [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. *NCA E/3* [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. Alan Farley & Dominic Vlasto, *The Music of Noël Coward*. [http://www.Noëlcowardmusic.com/ncmi/l.html#lonalright](http://www.noelcowardmusic.com/ncmi/l.html#lonalright). Accessed 21/06/2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. Lyrics taken from the sheet music of ‘London Is A Little Bit of Alright’. *NCA B/4*. [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. ‘London Is A Little Bit of Alright’. *NCA B/4*. [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. ‘London Is A Little Bit of Alright’. *NCA B/4*. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. ‘London Is A Little Bit of Alright’. *NCA B/4*. [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. Diary entry dated Sunday 10 March 1963. Noël Coward, *The Noël Coward Diaries*, 529. [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. Diary entry dated Sunday 15 April 1962. Noël Coward, *The Noël Coward Diaries*, 503. [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. Author of *The Great Parade: Broadway’s Astonishing, Never-to-be-Forgotten 1963-1964 Season* (USA: St Martin’s Press, 2015) [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. Peter Filichia, *The Great Parade: Broadway’s Astonishing, Never-to-be-Forgotten 1963-1964 Season* (USA: St Martin’s Press, 2015), e-book. [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. Adrian Wright, *A Tanner’s Worth of Tune: Rediscovering the Post-War British Musical* (UK: Boydell Press, 2010), 65. From herein: Wright, *A Tanner’s Worth of Tune: Rediscovering the Post-War British Musical*, 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. Ibid., 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. Ibid., 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. Philip Hoare, *Noël Coward: A Biography* (USA: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 475. [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. Cecil A. Smith and Glenn Litton, *Musical Comedy in America: From the Black Crook to South Pacific, by Cecil Smith and From The King and I to Sweeney Todd, by Glenn Litton* (USA: Routledge, 2013), 256. From herein: Cecil A. Smith and Glenn Litton, *Musical Comedy in America: From the Black Crook to South Pacific, by Cecil Smith and From The King and I to Sweeney Todd, by Glenn Litton*, 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. Ibid., 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. Barry Day (ed.) *The Letters of Noël Coward* (London: Methuen, 2007), 618. [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. Pat Ryan, ‘The Prince, the Showgirl, and the Stray Strap,’ *The New York Times*, 11 November 2011. Accessed 14 April 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/13/movies/marilyn-monroes-strap-snaps-again-on-film.html?_r=0> [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. Review by Leonard Hoffman for *Hollywood Reporter* dated 10 December 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. Florence Henderson, *Life Is Not A Stage: From Broadway Baby to a Lovely Lady and Beyond*. Chapter 11, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. Cecil A. Smith and Glenn Litton, *Musical Comedy in America: From the Black Crook to South Pacific, by Cecil Smith and From The King and I to Sweeney Todd, by Glenn Litton*, 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. Ethan Mordden, *Open a New Window: The Broadway Musical in the 1960s* (USA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. Review by Elliot Norton for *Boston Advertiser* dated 6 October 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. Review by Elliot Norton for *Boston Advertiser* dated 6 October 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. Review by Elliot Norton for *Boston Record* dated 1 October 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. Review by Elliot Norton for *Boston Record* dated 1 October 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. Alan Farley & Dominic Vlasto, *The Music of Noël Coward*. [http://www.Noëlcowardmusic.com/ncmi/l.html#lonalright](http://www.noelcowardmusic.com/ncmi/l.html#lonalright). Accessed 21/06/2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. Review by Elliot Norton for *Boston Record* dated 1 October 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. Review by Guy for *Legitimate* dated 1 October 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. Review by Guy for *Legitimate* dated 1 October 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. Review by Elinor Hughes for *Boston Sunday Herald* dated 6 October 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. Review by Nathan Cohen for *Toronto Star* dated 16 October 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. Review by Nathan Cohen for *Toronto Star* dated 16 October 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. Review by Nathan Cohen for *Toronto Star* dated 16 October 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. Critic for an unknown and undated newspaper. [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. Review by Herbert Whittaker. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. Review by Jerry Gaghan for *Philadelphia News* dated 8 November 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. Review by Ernest Schier for *Philadelphia Bulletin* dated 8 November 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. Review by Emory Lewis for *Cue* dated December 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. Review by Emory Lewis for *Cue* dated December 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. Review by Emory Lewis for *Cue* dated December 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. Review by George Oppenheimer for *On Stage* undated. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. Review by George Oppenheimer for *On Stage* undated. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. Review by George Oppenheimer for *On Stage* undated. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. Review by John McCarten for *New Yorker* undated. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. Review by Richard Watts Jr for *New York Post* dated 9 December 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. Review by Richard Watts Jr for *New York Post* dated 9 December 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. Review by Elliot Norton for *Boston Advertiser* dated 6 October 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
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236. Review by Ward Morehouse for *Long Island Press* undated. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. Review by Leonard Hoffman for *Hollywood Reporter* dated 10 December 1963. *NCA D/11*. [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. Diary entry dated Sunday 9 June 1968. Noël Coward, *The Noël Coward Diaries*, 665. [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. Diary entry dated Sunday 29 December 1963. Ibid., 553. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)