

Three Men in a boat

16/4/96 abbreviation, 3 pages and counting

An exceedingly silly sketch based on Jerome K Jerome's original story... Sorry Jerome

Cast

George Ian
Harris Brian
Narrator, J Steve

After introduction of SP, he starts to read the following paragraph. G&H enter with hamper, position it between trees. Hamper open (stays open here), G hangs the sun, both sit, take newspapers. They have until "positively seedy" to settle down.

"I was never blest with the gift of good health. From an early age, my liver has disposed me towards" a general disinclination to work of any kind", a condition for which my two colleagues George and Harris showed not one jot of sympathy.

Thus it was, that one golden morning of a sunny day, when we found ourselves in an idyllic, poetic landscape: alas and alack, my dratted liver would not leave my thoughts.."
(Narrator puts book under arm & becomes J)

SUN HAS GOT HIS HAT ON...

J D'you know, chaps, I've not been feeling myself lately. In fact, I've been feeling positively seedy, run down and exhausted.

The others synchronise lowering of newspapers, grunt, H raises newspaper.

George (PAUSE) Its the pace of life old boy, hectic, positively hectic (UP).

Harris (PAUSE, DOWN) What we need is a change (UP)

George (PAUSE, DOWN) and a complete break (UP)

Harris (PAUSE, DOWN) I say chaps! I've just been reading 101 days in the Samarkand Desert with the Duchess of Kent by Captain Gladys Stoaatpamphlet. That sounds like a bit of a wheeze...

George Far too extravagant old boy... How about something watery?

J Yes, something with a little less desert in it.

George I'll tell you what, let's go for a row up the river. The fresh air and the exercise will do us a power of good.

Harris (DELIGHTED) And the hard work will give us an appetite - I say, that would suit me to a "T."

J What, actually, is a 'T', Harris?

Harris I don't know old boy, except it seems to suit everybody. But we can't think of going without Montmorency, THE DOG.

ENTER DOG

"DADDY WOULDN'T BUY ME A

BOW WOW"

George Not that flea-bitten old mongrel!

All Well, to the river then! (Row, Row, Row the boat starts immediately, G&H collect hamper & follow J who has collected Monty. Level with front of hidden boat (irrespective of progress of song), J strains his back.

J Hold on, hold on!

The song peters out, the others freeze, stare at J.

J Does it have to be rowing? [TO AUDIENCE: What about my back?--err, I mean liver? What about my love child in Newcastle-under-Lyme?] No, I was thinking of something entirely more serene. A cruise,perhaps...(Everyone strikes Biggles poses to a man)... DOWN THE RIVER .

J advances behind boat & pulls it to its full length, then moves to front & strikes "intrepid explorer" pose, to tune of "Cruising down the river on a Sunday afternoon". Tune is interrupted by :

Harris (moves to boat) Have you got the rowlocks?

Narrator No, I always stand like this. *end of "my old da diddy do"*

ALL EMBARK, G & H DOZE OFF IMMEDIATELY

Narrator And early one morning at Kingston, we embarked on our cruise...gliding pleasantly across the shimmering water...taking in the (yawn).... Sights & sounds..... SLOW RENDERING OFF :

George Until lunchtime!!!

"CRUISING DOWN THE RIVER..."

All perk up

Narrator And so We hove to the river bank.

G & H return to tree-trunks, replace hamper & remove lunch.

Narrator & set about our lunch. We tackled the cold beef, the potatoes, the brussel sprouts....

("BOILED BEEF & CARROTS...")

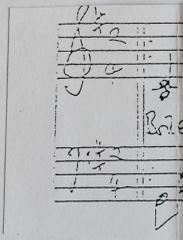
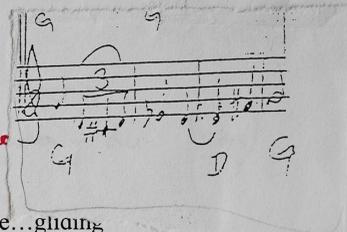
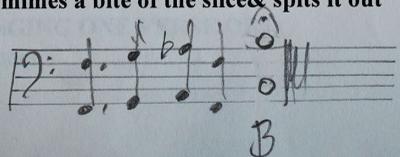
George & Harris (Throw sprouts at back of J's head, take out Watermelon) er yuck!

Narrator (Furious, advances on M/C) Look here my man! I was promised professionals for this presentation! This is inexcusable!! (Returns)

Narrator The watermelon.... (NO BREAK IN THIS SENTENCE !)

H passes Watermelon to G, H takes mustard out, G mimes a bite of the slice & spits it out backwards. G puts watermelon into hamper, .

Narrator and of course the MUSTARD!!!!



PIANO dum de dum dum duuuuuuum!

Harris (STAND DURING PIANO PHRASE) I say old boy, there doesn't seem to be any mustard.

George Don't be such a complete duffer Harris! There must be some Mustard, there's always SOME MUSTARD!!!

G & H FREEZE

Narrator THERE WAS REGRETTABLY - NO MUSTARD!!! (Charles Gray voice)

All unfreeze - with some despondency (HATS OFF)

"LITTLE WAIF" MUSIC

Harris I'd give worlds for a spoonful of mustard right now, worlds actually...

Narrator It cast a gloom over the boat, there being no mustard. We ate our beef in silence, (HATS ON, REMOVE APPLE TART DISMALLY) existence seemed hollow and uninteresting..... We brightened up, however, over the apple tart, and we felt that life was worth living after all.



(ALL PACKABLE PROPS TO HAMPER..)

George Where exactly did we visit, J?

Narrator We went to.....
Chertsey, Putney, Barnes, Chiswick, Shepperton, Brentford & Teddington Lock

George (MOVE TO FRONT RIGHT) Twickenham, Waltham, Maidenhead and Walton

Harris (MOVE TO FRONT MIDDLE) Henley, Pangbourne, Abingdon, & Didcot?

G & J Yes he did...

George Gorham, Cholsey, Oxford & Fairford

J Molsey, Weybridge, Addlestone & Barnes

G & H We've said Barnes !!

Narrator Sorry ! (Stand front) But when it all was said & done,

H (Joins N. Stands front) We all agreed our greatest fun,

G (Joins N&H. Stands front) Was sitting lounging on one's bum

All Discussing all the things we'd done.

ALL TURN TO CENTRE STAGE, MOVE OFF SINGING ONE VERSE OFF:

"Cruising down the river on a Sunday afternoon"

CURTAIN

OFF WENT THE
WITH THE HOME PACK
IT"
"NARR: Er, Excuse me: I said tart,
not cant!"
"Cruising
down
the
river."