

# **COX AND BOX**

OR

**THE LONG LOST BROTHERS**

*TRIUMVIRETTA IN ONE ACT*

**ADAPTED TO THE LYRIC STAGE FROM  
J. MADDISON MORTON'S FARCE**

OF

**“BOX AND COX”**

BY

**F. C. BURNAND**

THE MUSIC BY

**ARTHUR S. SULLIVAN**

*(SAVOY VERSION)*

## Dramatis Personæ

JAMES JOHN COX..... A Journeyman Hatter. ....*Baritone*  
JOHN JAMES BOX.....A Journeyman Printer. .... *Tenor*  
SERGEANT BOUNCER..... A Lodging House Keeper .....*Baritone*  
Late of the Dampshire Yeomanry, with Military Reminiscences.

### NOTE

Lines enclosed in brackets, [ ], are often omitted in performance.  
Text which is underlined is traditionally included in performance but is often omitted from libretti.

# COX AND BOX

## No. 1. Overture

**SCENE:** — *A room; a bed with curtains closed; three doors; a window; a fireplace; table and chairs.*

**COX,** *dressed, with the exception of his coat, is looking at himself in a small looking-glass, which he holds in his hand.*

**COX:** Eight o'clock! (*knock at door*) Come in!

*Enter* SERGEANT BOUNCER.

**BOUNCER:** Good morning, Colonel Cox. Why, you've had your hair cut!

**COX:** Cut! It strikes me I've had it mowed! I look as if I'd been cropped for the Army!

**BOUNCER:** The Army! I recollect when I was in the Militia...

**COX:** Ah! now he's off on his hobby. (*exit*)

**BOUNCER:** Yes, we were mounted on chargers.

## No. 2. SONG — BOUNCER

### “Rataplan”

**BOUNCER:**

We sounded the trumpet, we beat the drum,  
Somehow the enemy didn't come.  
So I gave up my horse  
In Her Majesty's force  
As there wasn't a foeman  
To meet with the yeoman;  
And so no invasion  
Threatened the nation.  
There wasn't a man  
In the rear or the van,  
Who found an occasion to sing Rataplan!  
Rataplan! Rataplan!  
Rataplan plan, plan, plan!

*Enter* COX.

**COX:** This comes of having one's hair cut. None of my hats will fit me. By-the-bye, Bouncer, I wish to know how it is that I frequently find my apartment full of smoke?

**BOUNCER:** Why—I suppose the chimney —

**COX:** The chimney doesn't smoke tobacco. I'm speaking of tobacco smoke.

**BOUNCER:** Why, the gentleman who has got the attics is hardly ever without a pipe in his mouth.

**COX:** Ah! then you mean to say that this gentleman's smoke, instead of emulating the example of all other sorts of smoke, and going up the chimney, thinks proper to affect a singularity by taking the contrary direction?

**BOUNCER:** Why —

**COX:** Then I suppose the gentleman you are speaking of is the individual that I invariably meet coming up stairs when I'm going down, and going down when I'm coming up?

**BOUNCER:** Why — yes — I

**COX:** I should set him down as a gentleman connected with the printing interest.

**BOUNCER:** Yes sir. Good morning. (*Going.*)

**No. 3. DUET — COX AND BOUNCER**  
**“Stay, Bouncer Stay”**

**COX:** (*recit.*)                    Stay, Bouncer, stay! To me it has occurred  
That now's the time with you to have a word.

**BOUNCER:** (*aside*)            What can he mean?  
I tremble — Ah! I tremble!

**COX:**                                Listen!

**BOUNCER:**                        With pleasure.

**COX:**                                Now, coals is coals, as sure as eggs is eggs,  
Coals haven't souls, no more than they have legs;  
But, as you will admit, the case is so,  
Legs or no legs, my coals contrive to go!

**BOUNCER:**                        Well, I should say — or as it seems to me —

**COX:**                                Exactly.

**BOUNCER:**                        Quite so.

**COX:**                                Then we both agree.

**BOUNCER:**                        As we agree, good-day.

**COX:**                                I've something *more* to say.

**BOUNCER:**                        Mister Cox, Mister Cox,  
My feelings overpower me,  
That his lodger, his friendly lodger,  
  
Should once suspect that Bouncer is

- COX:** A dodger.
- BOUNCER:** As to who takes your coals, wood, and all that,  
It must have been —
- COX:** No! No! 'Twas not the cat!
- BOUNCER:** Rataplan, Rataplan, I'm a military man,  
Rough, honest, I hope, though unpolished,  
And I'll bet you a hat, that as to the cat,  
The cat in the Army's abolished!
- COX:** Rataplan, Rataplan, you're a military man,  
Honest, I hope, though it doesn't appear,  
And as to the cat, the treacherous cat,  
If it isn't in the Army, don't have it here.
- BOTH:** Rataplan, Rataplan, etc. (*Exit COX.*)

**BOUNCER:** He's gone at last! I was in fear Mr. Box should come in before Mr. Cox went out. Luckily they've never met yet; for Mr. Box is hard at work at a newspaper office all night, and doesn't come home till morning, and Mr. Cox is busy making hats all day long, and doesn't come home till night; so that I'm getting double rent for my room, and neither of my lodgers is any the wiser for it. Now, let me put Mr. Cox's things out of Mr. Box's way.

**BOX:** (*without*) Pooh — pooh! Why don't you keep your own side of the staircase, sir? (*Enters — puts his head out of door again, shouting*) It was as much your fault as mine, sir! I say, sir. It was as much your fault as mine, sir!

**BOUNCER:** Dear, dear, Mr. Box! What a temper you are in to be sure! I declare, you are quite *pale*.

**BOX:** What colour would you have a man to be who has been setting up long leaders for a daily paper all night?

**BOUNCER:** Oh, certainly, Mr. Box! (*Going.*)

**BOX:** Stop! Can you inform me who the individual is that I invariably encounter going down stairs when I'm coming up, and coming up stairs when I'm going down?

**BOUNCER:** (*confused*) Oh—yes—the gentleman in the attic, sir.

**BOX:** Oh! There's nothing particularly remarkable about him, except his hats. I meet him in all sorts of hats — white hats and black hats — hats with broad brims, and hats with narrow brims; in short, I have come to the conclusion that he must be associated with the hatting interest.

**BOUNCER:** Yes, sir! And they tell me that's why he took the *hattics*!

*Exit BOUNCER.*

**BOX:** Now, let me see — I've got a rasher of bacon somewhere — (*feeling in his pockets*) Oh, here it is — (*produces it, wrapped in paper, and places it on the table*) And a penny roll. The next thing is to light the fire. (*looking on mantelpiece and taking match box, opens it*) Now, 'pon my life, this is too bad of Bouncer! I had a whole box full three days ago,

and now there's only one! (*lights the fire, then takes down gridiron*) Bouncer has been using my gridiron! The last article of consumption that I cooked upon it was a pork chop, and now it is powerfully impregnated with the odour of red herrings! (*places gridiron on fire, and then, with a fork, lays rasher of bacon on the gridiron*) How sleepy I am, to be sure!

**No. 4. SONG —BOX**  
**“A Lullaby”**

**BOX:** Hushed is the bacon on the grid,  
I'll take a nap and close my eye.  
Soon shall I be nodding, nodding, nid,  
Nid, nodding, nodding, nodding, nodding.  
Singing lullaby, lullaby, lullaby,  
Lulla, lulla, lulla, lulla, lullaby.  
Hush-a-bye, bacon, on the coal top.  
Till I awaken, there you will stop,  
Lullaby, lullaby. (*He falls asleep.*)

*Enter COX. Delight is depicted on his expressive countenance; he dances joyously while singing.*

**No. 5. SONG — COX**  
**“My Master Is Punctual”**

**COX:** My master is punctual always in *business*,  
Unpunctuality, even slight, *is in his*  
Eyes such a crime that on showing my *phiz in his*  
Shop, I thought there'd be the devil to pay.

*Dances with renewed delight.*

My aged employer, with his physiognomy  
Shining from soap like a star in astronomy,  
Said “Mister Cox, you'll oblige me and honour  
If you will take this as your holiday.”

*Dances with increased delight and satisfaction.*

Visions of Brighton and back and of *Rosherville*,  
Cheap fare excursions, already the *squash I feel*,  
Fearing the rain, put on my *Mackintosh I vill*

Now for my breakfast, my light *de-jeu-nay*.

**COX:** I bought a mutton chop. (*puts chop on table*) Good gracious! I've forgot the bread. Hallo! What's this? A roll, I declare. Come, that's lucky! Now then to light the fire.

Hallo! (*seeing the lucifer box on table*) Why, it's empty! I left one in it — I take my oath I did. Why, the fire *is* lighted. Where's the gridiron? *On* the fire, I declare. And what's that on it? Bacon? Bacon it is! Well, now, 'pon my life, there is a quiet coolness about Bouncer's proceedings that's almost amusing. He takes my last lucifer — my coals—and my gridiron, to cook his breakfast by! No, no — I can't stand this! Come out of that. (*pokes fork into bacon, and puts it on a plate on the table, then places his chop on the gridiron, which he puts on the fire*) Now then, for my things. (*opens door, and goes out, slamming the door after him*)

**BOX:** (*suddenly showing his head from behind curtains*) Come in—come in! I wonder how long I've been asleep! (*suddenly recollecting*) Goodness gracious! my bacon. (*leaps off bed and runs to the fireplace*) Hallo, what's this? A chop? Whose chop? Bouncer's, I'll be bound. He thought to cook his breakfast while I was asleep — with *my* coals too — and my gridiron. Ha, ha! But where's my bacon? (*seeing it on table*) Here it is! Well, 'pon my life! And shall I curb my indignation? Shall I falter in my vengeance? No! (*digs the fork into the chop and throws chop out the window*)

**VOICE OUTSIDE:** What do you think you're doing up there?

**BOX:** I'm sorry, sir, it was an accident. (*with fork he puts the bacon on the gridiron again*) I may as well lay my breakfast things. (*opens door and exits, slamming door after him*)

**COX:** Come in — come in! (*opens door and enters with a small tray, on which are tea-things, etc., which he places on table, and suddenly recollects*) Oh, goodness! My chop! (*running to fireplace*) Hallo! What's this? The bacon again! Confound it — dash it — damn it — I can't stand this! (*pokes fork into bacon and flings it out of window*)

**VOICE OUTSIDE:** That's that second time you've done that.

**COX:** You'll excuse me, sir, that is not the second time I've done that. (*he returns for tea-things, encounters BOX with his tea-things*)

**No. 6. TRIO**  
**“Who Are You, Sir”**

**COX:** Who are you, sir? Tell me who?

**BOX:** If it comes to that, sir, who are you?

**COX:** Who are you, sir?

**BOX:** What's that to you, sir?

**COX:** What's that to who, sir?

**BOX:** Who, sir? You, sir?

**COX:**  
Yes, 'tis the printer

Printer, printer, take a hinter,  
Leave my room, or else shall I  
Vainly struggle with the fire,

**BOX:**  
Yes 'tis the hatter!

Hatter, hatter, cease your clatter,  
Leave my room, or else shall I  
Vainly struggle with the fire,

*Both sing together with suppressed fury.*

With the raging fierce desire,  
To do you an injury.

With the raging fierce desire,  
To do you an injury.

**BOX:** *(spoken)*                    What are you doing in my room?

**COX:**                                Your room! If on that you're bent,  
Here is my receipt for rent.

**BOX:**                                Your receipt is very fine;  
If you come to that, sir,  
Here is mine!

**COX:**                                Thieves!

**BOX:**                                Murder!

**BOTH:**                              Bouncer!  
He can settle the printer/hatter!  
Turn out the man!  
Bouncer! Bouncer!

*Enter BOUNCER.*

**BOUNCER:**                        Rataplan, Rataplan, Rataplan, Rataplan!

**ALL:**                                Rataplan, Rataplan, etc.

**BOX:** Instantly remove that hatter!

**COX:** Immediately turn out that printer!

**BOUNCER:** Well — but, gentlemen —

**COX:** Explain! *(pulling him around)*

**BOX:** Explain! *(pulling him around)* Whose room is this?

**COX:** Yes, whose room is this?

**BOX:** Doesn't it belong to me?

**BOUNCER:** No!

**COX:** There! You hear, sir, it belongs to me!

**BOUNCER:** No, it belongs to both of you!

**COX AND BOX:** *(together)* Both of us!

**BOUNCER:** Gents, don't be angry. But you see, this gentleman, *(pointing to BOX)* only being at home in the day time, and that gentleman *(pointing to COX)* at night, I thought I might venture, until my little back second floor room was ready —

**COX AND BOX:** When will your little back second floor room be ready?

**BOUNCER:** Why, tomorrow.

**COX:** I'll take it!

**BOX:** So will I!

**BOUNCER:** Excuse me, but if you both take it, you may just as well stop where you are.

**COX AND BOX:** True.

**BOUNCER:** Now don't quarrel, gentlemen. I'll see if I can't get the other room ready this very day. (*exit*)

**COX:** What a disgusting position!

**BOX:** Will you allow me to observe, if you have not had any exercise today, you'd better go out and take it?

**COX:** I shall not do anything of the sort, sir.

**BOX:** Very well, sir.

**COX:** Very well, sir. However, don't let me prevent *you* from going out.

**BOX:** Don't flatter yourself, sir. I shall retire to my pillow.

**COX:** I beg your pardon, sir. I cannot allow any one to rumple my bed.

**BOX:** *Your* bed! Hark ye, sir, can you fight?

**COX:** No, sir.

**BOX:** No? Then come on.

**COX:** Sit down, sir, or I'll instantly call "Police!"

**BOX:** I say, sir –

**COX:** Well, sir?

**BOX:** Although we are doomed to occupy the same room for a few hours longer, I don't see any necessity for our cutting each other's throat, sir.

**COX:** Not at all. It's an operation that I should decidedly object to.

**BOX:** And, after all, I've no violent animosity against you, sir.

**COX:** Nor have I any rooted antipathy to you, sir.

**BOX:** Besides, it was all Bouncer's fault, sir.

**COX:** Entirely, sir.

**BOX:** Very well, sir!

**COX:** Very well, sir!

**BOX:** Do you sing, sir?

**COX:** I sometimes dabble in a serenade.

**BOX:** Then dabble away.

### **No. 7. DUET SERENADE**

#### **"The Buttercup"**

**COX:**                               The buttercup dwells on the lowly mead,  
  The daisy is bright to see;  
  But brighter far are the eyes that read  
  The thoughts in the heart of me.

I come by night, I come by day,  
I come in the morn to sing my lay;  
I know my notes, I count each bar,

**BOX:** I play on the concertina too.

**COX:** Fiddle-iddle-dum,

**BOX:** Fiddle-iddle-dum,

**COX:** Fiddle-iddle, iddle, iddle, iddle-dum,

|  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>BOX:</b>                                | <b>COX:</b>                       |
| I come by night, I come by day,            | Fiddle-iddle-dum, etc.,           |
| I come in the morn to sing my lay;         |                                   |
| I know my notes, I count each bar,         |                                   |
| And I've learn't a tune on the gay guitar. | Fiddle-iddle-dum, la, la, la etc. |

**BOX:** Have you read this month's Bradshaw, sir?

**COX:** No, sir. My wife wouldn't let me.

**BOX:** Your *wife*!

**COX:** That is, my *intended* wife.

**BOX:** Well, that's the same thing! I congratulate you.

**COX:** Thank you. You needn't disturb yourself, sir. She won't come here. My intended wife, happens to be the proprietor of a considerable number of bathing machines —

**BOX:** Ha! Where?

**COX:** At a favourite watering place. How curious you are!

**BOX:** Not at all. Well?

**COX:** Consequently, in the bathing season — which, luckily, is rather a long one, we see but little of each other. Are *you* married?

**BOX:** Me? Why, not exactly!

**COX:** Ah! A happy bachelor?

**BOX:** Why, not precisely!

**COX:** Oh! A widower?

**BOX:** No. Not absolutely!

**COX:** You'll excuse me, sir — but, at present, I don't exactly understand how you can help being one of the three.

**BOX:** Not help it?

**COX:** No, sir. Not you, nor any other man alive!

**BOX:** Ah, that may be. But I'm not alive!

**COX:** You'll excuse me, sir — but I don't like joking upon such subjects.

**BOX:** But I am perfectly serious, sir. I've been defunct for the last three years.

**COX:** Will you be quiet, sir!

**BOX:** If you won't believe me, I'll refer you to a very large, numerous, and respectable circle of disconsolate friends.

**COX:** My dear sir — my *very* dear sir — if there does exist any ingenious contrivance whereby a man, on the eve of committing matrimony, can leave this world, and yet stop in it, I shouldn't be sorry to know it.

**BOX:** Then there's nothing more easy. Do as I did.

**COX:** I will! What is it?

**BOX:** Drown yourself!

**COX:** Will you be quiet sir!

**BOX:** Listen.

### No. 8. ROMANCE

#### “Not Long Ago”

**BOX:** Not long ago it was my fate  
To captivate a widow  
At Ramsgate;

**COX:** I, 'tis odd to state,  
The same at Margate did, oh!

**BOX:** By her not liking to be kiss'd  
I thought I'd better try to  
In the Life Guards or Blues enlist —

**COX:** How odd! And so did I too.

**BOX:** I was not tall enough, they said.

**COX:** Too short they said, of me.

**BOX:** The infantry I entered.

**COX:** And I the *infantree*.

**BOX:** My widow offer'd to purchase  
My discharge from the marching line, oh!

**COX:** That's odd, coincidentally,  
The very same did mine, oh!

**BOX:** I hesitated to consent,  
For my consent she waited,  
I gave it.

**COX:** Ah! With mine I went,  
And never hesitated.

**BOX:** The happy day came near at length,  
We hoped it would be sunny,  
I found I needed all my strength  
To face the ceremony.  
I suddenly found out I was  
Unworthy to possess her.  
I told her so at once because  
I fear'd it might distress her.  
Before the words were out of my mouth,  
There came from the North and flew to the South,  
A something that came unpleasantly near,  
Clattering, spattering, battering, shattering,  
Dashing, clashing, smashing, flashing, slashing  
Crashing, missing, but whizzing right past my ear.  
It shattered itself on the mantelpiece *whop!*

**COX:** What was it?

**BOX:** Ah! Tremble! The basin call'd *Slop*.  
It fell at my feet, it would have put the  
Back of a man who was ever so meek up,  
So being thus baited,  
I retaliated,  
And hurl'd at my widow a crockery teacup.

**COX:** (*recit.*) Between you, then, there was a fraction.

**BOX:** And I was threatened with an action.

**COX:** O ciel! Proceed.

**BOX:** One morn, when I had finished my ablution,  
I took

**COX:** A walk?

**BOX:** No, sir, a resolution.  
[Friends or foes,  
None suppose,  
Nobody knows  
What I does.]  
I tie up my clothes,  
My shirt and my hose,  
My socks for my toes,

My linen for nose,  
I think of my woes,  
And under the rose  
I pack up my bundle, and off I goes.

**COX:** *(spoken)*

Aha! I see you left in a tiff!

**BOX:**

Listen: I solemnly walked to the cliff.  
And singing a sort of a dulcet dirge,  
Put down my bundle upon the verge,  
Heard the wild seagulls mournful cry,  
Looked all around, there was nobody nigh,  
None but I on the cliff so high,  
And all save the sea was bare and dry,  
And I took one look on the wave below,  
And I raised my hands in an agony throe,  
And I stood on the edge of the rock so steep,  
And I gazed like a maniac on the deep...  
I cried: "Farewell, farewell to earth,  
Farewell, farewell to the land of my birth,  
Farewell, farewell to my only love,  
To the sea below, and the sky above."  
With a glance at the sea of wild despair,  
I cried, "I come." My bundle lay there.

**COX:** *(spoken)*

Just there?

**BOX:**

At the edge, where the coastguard's way was chalked,  
Then away in the opposite way I walked.

**COX:**

What a clever man! What a capital plan!  
I've listened with attention,  
I think that I should like to try  
Your wonderful invention.

**BOTH:**

What a clever man, etc.

**COX:** Ingenious creature! You disappeared — the suit of clothes was found —

**BOX:** Exactly! And in one of the pockets of the coat there was also found a piece of paper, with these affecting farewell words: "This is thy work, oh, Penelope Ann!"

**COX:** Penelope Ann! Penelope Ann?

**BOX:** Penelope Ann!

**COX:** Originally widow of William Wiggins?

**BOX:** Widow of William Wiggins!

**COX:** Proprietor of bathing machines?

**BOX:** Proprietor of bathing machines!

**COX:** At Margate?

**BOX:** And Ramsgate!

**COX:** It must be she! And you, sir, you are Box, the lamented, long lost Box!

**BOX:** I am!

**COX:** And I was about to marry the interesting creature you so cruelly deceived.

**BOX:** Ah! Then you are Cox!

**COX:** I am!

**BOX:** I congratulate you. I give you joy! And now, I think I'll go and take a stroll.*(going)*

**COX:** No you don't. I'll not lose sight of you till I've restored you to the arms of your intended.

**BOX:** My intended! You mean your intended.

**COX:** No, sir — yours!

**BOX:** How can she be my intended, now that I am drowned?

**COX:** You're no such thing, sir! And I prefer presenting you to Penelope Ann. Permit me, then, to follow the generous impulse of my nature; I give her up to you.

**BOX:** Benevolent being! I wouldn't rob you for the world! *(going)* Good morning, sir!

**COX:** *(seizing him)* Stop!

**BOX:** Unhand me, hatter! Or I shall cast off the lamb and assume the lion!

**COX:** Pooh! *(snapping his fingers in BOX's face)*

**BOX:** An insult! You know the consequences, sir! Instant satisfaction, sir!

**COX:** With all my heart, sir! *(They begin ringing bells violently.)*

**BOTH:** Bouncer! Bouncer!

*BOUNCER runs in.*

**BOUNCER:** What is it, gentlemen?

**BOX:** Pistols for two!

**BOUNCER:** Yes, sir. *(going)*

**COX:** Stop! You don't mean to say that you keep loaded firearms in the house?

**BOUNCER:** Oh, no, they're not loaded.

**COX:** Then produce the murderous weapons instantly. *(exit BOUNCER)*

**BOX:** Hark ye! Why do you object to marry Penelope Ann?

**COX:** Because, I can't abide her. You'll be happy with her.

**BOX:** Happy? Don't be absurd, sir.

**COX:** Then don't you be ridiculous, sir.

*Enter BOUNCER.*

**BOUNCER:** I can't find the pistols, but I have brought you a letter. It came by the General Post yesterday. I am sure I don't know how I came to forget it, for I put it carefully in my pocket.

**COX:** And you've kept it carefully in your pocket. *(exit BOUNCER.)*

**COX:** *(looking at letter)* "Margate." Penelope Ann!

**BOX:** (*reading*) “Dear Mr. Cox. Pardon my candour.”

**COX:** (*looking over and reading*) “But being convinced that our feelings, like our ages, do not reciprocate —”

**BOX:** “I hasten to apprise you of my immediate union —”

**COX:** “With Mr. Knox.”

**BOX:** Hurrah!

**COX:** Three cheers for Knox!

**BOUNCER:** (*putting his head in at the door*) The little back second floor room is quite ready!

**COX:** I don’t want it.

**BOX:** No more do I!

**COX:** What shall part us?

**BOX:** What shall tear us asunder!

**COX:** Box!

**BOX:** Cox! (*About to embrace. BOX stops.*) You’ll excuse the apparent insanity of the remark, but the more I gaze on your features, the more I’m convinced that you’re my long lost brother.

**COX:** The very observation I was going to make to you!

**BOX:** Ah! Tell me, in mercy tell me, have you such a thing as a strawberry mark on your left arm?

**COX:** No!

**BOX:** Then it is he! (*They rush into each other’s arms.*)

*Enter BOUNCER*

### No. 9. FINALE

**BOX:** My hand upon it, join but yours;  
Agree the house will hold us.

**COX:** And two good lodgers Bouncer gets,  
He’ll in his arms enfold us.

**ALL:** Rataplan, Rataplan, plan, plan, plan, plan,  
For Rataplan, Penelope Ann,  
Has married another respectable man,  
Three cheers for Knox,  
Who lives at the docks,  
And may he live happily if he can.  
Rataplan, Rataplan, Rataplan, etc.

**THE END**