

## Haddon Hall - Legendary Love Story and Savoy Opera

My interest in Haddon Hall and Dorothy Vernon began with a visit during the Fifth Gilbert & Sullivan Festival in 1998. Interest soon turned to include the Sullivan / Grundy Opera, culminating in the “Haddon Hall New Libretto Edition.” This article attempts to tie together the two adventures.

The Haddon Hall Love Story of the elopement of Dorothy Vernon and John Manners may properly be called a Legend. But this word can mean either: a popular myth of recent origin OR a story handed down from early times and regarded as historical although not entirely verifiable. — It is up to each reader to come to his or her conclusion.

The story begins in 1529 when George Vernon attained his legal majority of 21, and succeeded to the ownership of an extensive collection of lands and manors in the peak district of Derbyshire. He reigned until his death in 1565 as the “King of the Peak.” It was near the end of this period that his two children — Margaret the older daughter by five years and Dorothy the younger daughter — were married. Margaret was married at age eighteen in 1558 to Sir Thomas Stanley, son of the Earl of Derby. The record of Haddon Hall Household Accounts of 1555 shows a meeting between Sir George and the Earl to discuss the marriage of their children.

The Household Accounts volume terminates in 1558, and the accounts are not resumed until 1564, within which time the marriage of Sir John Manners, second son of the Earl of Rutland, with Dorothy Vernon took place. Therefore there is no prima facie evidence as to whether the event was arranged by Sir George. Also, there is no recording of the marriage in the Haddon Hall chapel or at the Bakewell church or any other church in Derbyshire or anywhere. There is no doubt that Dorothy and John were married in 1563, and there is ample evidence that relations between Sir John and Sir George were cordial at the death of the latter.

Sir George’s will — of which Sir John was designated an executor — divided his property between co-heiresses Margaret and Dorothy, with Haddon Hall going to Dorothy. John Manners was the second son of the Earl of Rutland and therefore would not inherit the title or lands of his father. Manners, whose future was uncertain as a second son of an Earl, was now extremely wealthy as the Lord of half of George Vernon’s bounty. But when the seventh Earl of Rutland died childless in 1641, John Manners, the grandson, succeeded to the title of eighth Earl of Rutland. Since that day, Haddon Hall has remained the property of the Manners of Rutland.

The significance of that event was that the Manners family had two estates to manage, Haddon and Belvoir. In 1703 the ninth Earl of Rutland, great-grandson John Manners, was created first Duke of Rutland. Shortly thereafter the main residence of the Manners family was moved from Haddon Hall to Belvoir Castle. Members of the Manners family spent time at Haddon Hall during most of the eighteenth century though it was not the main residence. When John Manners, third Duke of Rutland, died in 1779 this marked the quitting of Haddon Hall for the Manners family. The daily care of Haddon passed to the resident caretaker and his wife. Succeeding Dukes of Rutland allowed what appears to be unfettered access for the caretaker to show Haddon to outside visitors.

As the nineteenth century began there was no hint of a Vernon / Manners elopement in the family’s past. History books merely referred to a “great inheritance” coming to the Manners family by way of a co-heiress of Sir George Vernon. Nor were there any poems, short stories or novels describing a secret romantic liaison between the two young people. It was assumed that this marriage was negotiated and arranged by the parents.

The earliest mention of an elopement is recorded in the personal journal of Absalom Watkin concerning a visit to Haddon Hall on May 30, 1817: “Among the pictures we saw that of the lady by whose marriage with Sir John Manners this house and the estates came from the family of Vernon into that of Rutland. We learnt that the gallant Sir John stole her away, and that the door through which she passed was fastened up and has never been opened since.”

This was followed by Absalom Watkin's visit to the church at Bakewell where they are buried: "The clerk showed us the Vernon and Rutland monuments. Here lie Sir George Vernon, commonly called the King of the Peak, and his lady. Here, too, are the effigies of Sir John Manners and the lady he stole from Haddon, together with their children." These extracts were first published by his great-grandson in 1920 and are not referenced in any book on Haddon Hall history.

With the Manners quitting of Haddon the stories that were sequestered within the Hall, real or made up, were ready to be released. The resident caretaker, unsupervised by the Rutland owners, was free to embellish on two hundred fifty years of speculation and gossip. The newly established freedom of access to the grounds attracted travelling writers looking for inspiration. Published references to Haddon between 1780 and 1820 emphasized the 'high turrets and rude battlements raised in gloomy pomp above the woods which half concealed it.'

Prominent authors of "Derbyshire Peak Guides" in the 1830's referred to meeting William Hage, the Haddon Hall caretaker. They uniformly reported his telling that 'the youngest of George Vernon's co-heiresses, Dorothy, married Sir John Manners; the marriage was clandestine, and the apartment from which the lovers effected their escape through the gardens was pointed out.'

The tale of the romantic liaison of Dorothy Vernon and John Manners and their elopement began in 1822. Journalist Allan Cunningham toured northern England for the monthly *London Magazine* during that year. His assignment was to collect 'traditional tales and oral poetry' and present them in the magazine. *The King of the Peak - A Derbyshire Tale*, is the first known appearance of the story of the Dorothy Vernon - John Manners elopement. Publication was in the March 1822 issue of *The London Magazine*. It would appear that William Hage created the skeleton of the tale and that Allan Cunningham provided the flesh.

The story of Dorothy Vernon, John Manners, and Haddon Hall struck a receptive chord with the British public, and in the next seventy years there appeared numerous short stories, novels and poems on the subject. There were many variations to flesh out the details lost to history. A frequent error was to have Dorothy elope on the evening of her sister's wedding. Another difficulty was to explain why Sir George Vernon was opposed to the wedding; the major reasons supposed a religious difference or the social inferiority of the Manners family compared to the Vernon family. The story which is the foundation of the legend is described in 'potted' form below. Shown underlined are those parts of the legend which cannot be independently verified.

George Vernon is the very wealthy and very autocratic father of two daughters, Margaret and Dorothy. He is known as King of the Peak, for his autocratic style and generous hospitality. Dorothy is his favorite daughter; but for reasons which are not clearly specified, he has taken a dislike to John Manners. The result is his refusal to allow John to court Dorothy and his forbidding Dorothy to see John.

Dorothy Vernon is famed for her delicate beauty, modest demeanor, and amiable persona. She is also co-heiress of her father's estates and would make her husband very wealthy. Dorothy is devoted to her father and therefore torn between the equal love she holds for him and for John Manners. John Manners is the second son of the Earl of Rutland. As second son, his fortune in the world is somewhat uncertain. Being denied entry to Haddon Hall, he disguises himself as a person of lower class, and is able to enter unnoticed. He convinces Dorothy to take advantage of the confusion during a ball held by her father; she leaves Haddon Hall and elopes with John.

The story of the elopement ends with the immediate and full reconciliation of George Vernon with his runaway daughter and his new son-in-law. The King of the Peak dies two years later. Co-heiress Dorothy inherits the part of his estates which includes Haddon; thus does Haddon Hall pass into the Manners family, where it remains today.

Dorothy Vernon - A Legend Of Haddon Hall is a poem by John Walker Lee. Written in 1874, this version of the legend demonstrates the attraction of the story for author and reader. The poem makes a common error of having Dorothy elope on the eve of her sister's wedding. But the romance of the story is retained, and that is what is believed by the reader.

Old Haddon, the home of the "King of the Peak,"  
Is illumined by evening's bright sun's parting rays;  
Surrounded by woodlands and uplands so bleak,  
Its stone-mullioned windows appear in a blaze.

The Wye, like a maiden, glides bashfully by,  
To be wedded by Derwent, who waits her below;  
She moves in her beauty, reflecting the sky:  
These rivers will mingle and gracefully flow.

The sun disappears, and the tapers of night  
Now blink through the casements around the old hall;  
Moving figures are seen by the flickering light,  
Attendants awaiting the nuptial ball.

For Margaret Vernon by Stanley is won,  
In the chapel this day she has given her vow;  
The banquet is over, the mirth has begun,  
Her father was never more lordly than now.

From the banqueting hall now the minstrels retire,  
To enliven the ball-room with notes for the dance,  
Where the guests have assembled in gorgeous attire,  
And beauty shoots arrows with every glance.

The bride's only sister, a beautiful maid,  
As fair as the moonbeams that silently steal  
On the terrace below, through the grey balustrade,  
Has a secret she would not for kingdoms reveal.

A gallant young noble of Norman descent,  
Concealed 'mid the shadowy, somber old yews,  
On a night of adventure is certainly bent;  
He will fly with this damsel nor care who pursues.

A feud had long severed their arrogant sires,  
But the lovers have mutually vowed not to part;  
Opposition but fanned their reciprocal fires,  
And she will elope with the Knight of her heart.

In an outlaw's disguise in the woods he has been —  
In the thickets around the baronial pile;  
His Forester's dress, like the branches, was green,  
And he paced through the woodlands the hours to beguile.

He knew he was watched by a beautiful bird —  
She was perched on the top of the old Eagle Tower;  
He knew they would meet ere the curfew was heard;  
Each minute at length seemed as long as an hour.

He has wooed her beneath the broad oak in the glade;  
He has wooed her beside the clear serpentine stream,  
Where even their shadows have made her afraid,  
When the moon 'midst the clouds sent a wandering beam.

He has wooed her when hawthorns embellished the park,  
He has called them her bridesmaids — attendants in white;  
He has wooed her when daylight went down with the lark;  
He has wooed her when twilight dissolved into night;

When the voice of the mastiff was heard on the hill,  
When the pheasant and partridge were calling aloud,  
When the tinkling music came down with the rill,  
When the deer through a vista moved on in a crowd;

He has wooed her when nightingales sung in the vale,  
When the landrail intoned his hoarse notes near the Wye,  
When the owl told his lonely monotonous tale;  
He has wooed her, and won her, and asked her to fly.

And she has consented, and this is the hour,  
When the voices of revelry ring through the hall,  
When echo is wakened in turret and tower  
And galleries vocal with sounds from the ball.

The harp and the spinet send forth their sweet notes,  
And the voice of the singer is loud and then low,  
To the strings of the lute, now it gracefully floats,  
Telling stories of gladness and stories of woe.

Like the flowers of the greenhouse, the ball-room is gay,  
All the hues of the rainbow trip gracefully by —  
The rainbow that arches the mountains in May,  
When its dark-colored background conceals the blue sky.

The oriel windows hear whispers of love —  
This marriage has kindled strange fires in some hearts;  
The moon in her fullness looks on from above,  
While Cupid is shooting his magical darts.

The jolly retainers are singing below,  
They are quaffing strong bumpers of old mellow beer,  
That was stored in the cellars a long time ago,  
For Haddon had always been famed for its cheer.

By the huge kitchen fire they have roasted whole beeves,  
They have netted the river for grayling and trout,  
They have hunted the woodlands beneath the green leaves,  
Till the fires of sunset have slowly gone out.

The mirth is increasing, the laughter is loud —  
It goes up the staircase, the corridors round,  
And the knightly Lord Vernon to hear it is proud,  
For e'en in the ball-room is heard the glad sound.

By the ranks of the dancers fair Dorothy glides,  
To the steps near the doorway, where Manners awaits,  
To a pillion uplifted, she timidly rides  
Until they have passed the green park's outer gates;

Then they race with the wind to be wedded next morn.  
Old Vernon and Manners were soon reconciled;  
From this marriage their noble descendants were born,  
For Margaret died without leaving a child.

The changes of centuries since have passed by,  
And have left their initials on many a stone,  
But Haddon still stands on the banks of the Wye,  
Though hoary and desolate, silent and lone.

Following is a version of the legend written by this author. It is based on the complete body of information unearthed over a period of years. All characters and their relation to one another are historically accurate. There is historical evidence that Sir George Vernon favored a match with the Sudbury Vernons, but that George Talbot interfered and directed the match to John Manners.

*Autumn 1558 at Haddon Hall.* There is a ball in progress to celebrate the coming marriage of Margaret, daughter of George Vernon, to Thomas Stanley, son of the Earl of Derby. The main venue for the ball is the Banqueting Hall with its gallery for the minstrels to play their instruments. The adjacent private Parlor and the upstairs Great Chamber have been opened to the guests for the festivities. Many guests are taking the air outside in the Lower Courtyard.

George Vernon is in the Banqueting Hall with his new and young wife Maude. He hopes to have a son by her to pass on his lands and preserve the Vernon name at Haddon. The Vernons are talking to the wealthy and powerful George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, and his wife Gertrude. Their son Gilbert (to be the next Earl of Shrewsbury) is the godson of George Vernon. Gertrude is the sister of Henry Manners, Earl of Rutland.

Taking the air in the courtyard is John Manners, the younger brother of Henry Manners and Gertrude Talbot. John Manners is an intelligent and dynamic young man in his mid-twenties, soon to be appointed Justice of the Peace in his resident county of Nottinghamshire. His estates are not large, but they are sufficient to afford him financial independence.

Thirteen year old Dorothy Vernon, sister of Margaret, is also in the courtyard. An attractive young lady with auburn hair, she spies John Manners from a distance. Though he has been a frequent visitor to the Hall, she sees him with new eyes, and is taken by his mature manner and sense of command. John, in turn, is surprised by how attractive she looks in her new ball gown.

*Winter 1558.* With Margaret married and now living away from Haddon Hall, George Vernon turns his attention to the marital prospects for his younger daughter. He gives himself three years to find a suitable husband, so that negotiations can begin at age sixteen. Hopefully by that time there will be a male heir from his new wife. The next two years will allow the negotiations to be brought to completion, in time for a wedding at age eighteen.

*1561.* There are no new heirs. Dorothy is sixteen, but George has not settled on a suitable husband. John Manners, now Justice of the Peace of Nottinghamshire, has noticeably been paying attention to Dorothy over the last months, and Dorothy seems to be encouraging his advances. Under normal circumstances this would be a desirable match and George would approach John's older brother, the present Earl of Rutland, Henry Manners. But George Vernon hesitates as he realizes there may not be a male Vernon heir.

George Vernon resolves to preserve the Vernon name at Haddon Hall. John Vernon, son of cousin Henry Vernon of Sudbury, is three years younger than Dorothy. The young John Vernon is only thirteen. George approaches Henry and enters into a verbal understanding, with the marital negotiations to begin when John is sixteen, and to culminate in a marriage between the Vernons when John is eighteen and Dorothy is twenty-one.

*1562.* Dorothy is seventeen and quite distraught. Her father has forbidden her to see John Manners except in a group setting and warned her against conversing privately with him. Vernon has not spoken directly to Manners on the matter, as he would not want to offend the brother-in-law, George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury. Nor can he bar the well regarded Manners from the Haddon grounds. John has taken to riding the Haddon grounds on hawking days in the hopes of gaining a glimpse of Dorothy. For her part, Dorothy has become adept at losing the group and encountering John for brief but intense conversations.

John Manners has occasion to mention his dilemma to the Earl of Shrewsbury. Talbot recognizes the benefits to all parties by ‘blending the boar [Vernon crest] with the peacock [Manners crest]’ and is confused at first. But after some reflection, he realizes that George Vernon means to make a match with young John Vernon of Sudbury.

The great Talbot seeks out the King of the Peak. Talbot explains the unusual advantages which would accrue to such an alliance of the two Georges’ wealth and power. Vernon is deferential, but vague and non-committal: the Sudbury Vernon is only fourteen, too young for marital negotiations to begin, and Dorothy herself need not contract a marriage for some years. George Vernon states that he believes it is most appropriate to avoid any commitments until she is more mature. Besides as she is his only remaining child to keep him company at Haddon, he would prefer a later wedding. Talbot departs, not satisfied, but confident that his arguments and influence will prevail in the end.

*1563.* Henry Vernon grows increasingly dissatisfied. Though it is not time to begin negotiations, he perceives a growing distance on his cousin’s part and senses a reluctance for the Haddon Vernon to follow through on the verbal commitment made some years earlier.

George Vernon grows increasingly upset. He cannot see the King of the Peak abrogate a contract, verbal though it is. Nor can he see himself make an enemy of the great Talbot. He hopes that a solution will make itself apparent before the next year, when John Vernon will turn sixteen.

George Talbot has been confounded but remains hopeful. Dorothy will soon turn eighteen, and he believes that his influence, combined with the attraction between ‘the peacock and the boar’ will carry the day.

John Manners tries to remain hopeful. His brother-in-law encourages, nearly directing, John to continue his wooing of Dorothy. Talbot reminds Manners that the combination of her personal beauty and great inherited wealth are prizes worth pursuing, and the obstacles placed before him matter little when compared with the goal to be achieved.

Dorothy remains determined to marry her mature lover, and to thwart any attempt her father has to steer the very young John Vernon her way. She is unaware of her father’s quandary and focuses only on her inability to have John Manners on her terms. She is truly the Princess of the Peak.

*Some Months Later.* Dorothy is now eighteen and decides to take control of the situation. She waits until her father is in London on business. Early one morning, dressed in a riding outfit, she leaves her room and exits Haddon Hall through the Parlor and out the adjacent door to the south part of the Hall [not Dorothy Vernon’s Door which will later be installed on the east side]. She heads to the southwest corner outside the Chapel, then goes toward the northwest corner just outside what is now the visitor’s entrance. She continues down the slope to the stables, where she demands her horse to be saddled.

Dorothy does not go west over the bridge, but takes the road to the east in the direction of Nottinghamshire. Her arrival at John Manners’ estate is too late to attempt a return trip the same day. Manners believes that as a Justice of the Peace, he cannot be seen to compromise the unmarried daughter of the King of the Peak. He is also concerned about rousing the wrath and enmity of the powerful George Vernon. At the very least, there could no longer be an expectation of the Vernon estates passing to the married pair.

The thoughtful and responsible John arranges for Dorothy to spend the night in a room with a female servant. He sends two messengers on errands: one to Haddon Hall to inform the family of her safe return on the morrow, and one to the Earl of Shrewsbury asking for his intercession with George Vernon. For her part, Dorothy is enraged at such non-romantic behavior by her lover and refuses all of John’s attempts at rapprochement. Especially in light of her embarking alone on a journey of such a length and possible danger.

*The Next Day at Haddon Hall.* It is evening and George Vernon has returned from London. He is seated at the dinner table with his wife Maude, Dorothy, John Manners, George Talbot and his wife Gertrude. After dinner the two Georges retire to discuss the situation. Talbot reminds Vernon that the reason for the runaway was the Vernon reluctance to yield to the choice of a young woman in love. George Vernon realizes that he is in the minority among his dinner companions in not supporting this betrothal. Only Maude is in favor of a Sudbury match, as this would relieve the pressure on her to bear a male heir.

Vernon is prepared to bow to the inevitable. But how is he to quiet the gossip of the servants and the objection of his Sudbury cousin Henry Vernon. All of a sudden he realizes that it is precisely the gossip of the servants that will overcome the objection of his cousin. He writes him a letter to inform him that, regrettably, the impetuous Dorothy has managed to elope with John Manners during George Vernon's absence, a deed which cannot be undone; a messenger will deliver the letter the next day.

Within Haddon Hall George Vernon lets it be known that the shy Dorothy did not wish to be subjected to the grand affair which marked her sister's wedding. The chivalrous and bold John Manners acceded to Dorothy's wish and swept her away to be married in a quiet ceremony. The immediate family members will assemble in the chapel that evening to receive the blessing of the Haddon Hall chaplain for the continued fortune of the Vernons, Manners and Talbots.

And so are Dorothy and John married; there is obviously no record of the non-occurring 'elopement marriage,' nor will a record be kept of the actual clandestine marriage.

*Afterward.* Young John Vernon's dream of a marriage to a beautiful wife, who brings with her wealth and power, instantly becomes a bitter memory. He will not marry until past fifty. Over the years, he and his father piece together the true story of the 'elopement' and the pivotal role played by the 'great Talbot.'

## Haddon Hall - Legendary Love Story and Savoy Opera

### HADDON HALL - LEGENDARY LOVE STORY

It is not clear in the Savoy Opera to follow which parts of the Dorothy Vernon legend could not be certified as factual. The first paragraph below is what is known to be true. *The second paragraph below in italic are those parts of the legend which cannot be independently verified.*

George Vernon is the very wealthy and very autocratic father of two daughters, Margaret and Dorothy. He is known as King of the Peak, for his autocratic style and generous hospitality. Dorothy is co-heiress of her father's estates and would make her husband very wealthy. John Manners is the second son of the Earl of Rutland. As second son, his fortune in the world is somewhat uncertain.

*Dorothy is George Vernon's favorite daughter; but for reasons which are not clearly specified, he has taken a dislike to John Manners. The result is his refusal to allow John to court Dorothy and his forbidding Dorothy to see John. Dorothy is famed for her delicate beauty, modest demeanor, and amiable persona. She is devoted to her father and therefore torn between the equal love she holds for him and for John. Being denied entry to Haddon Hall, John disguises himself as a person of lower class, and is able to enter unnoticed. He convinces Dorothy to take advantage of the confusion during a ball held by her father; she leaves Haddon Hall and elopes with John.*

### HADDON HALL - THE SAVOY OPERA

In a recent reference to Haddon Hall, it has been called "The neglected masterpiece of comic opera by Sir Arthur Sullivan." Another recent reference states that "For the next few weeks, I will be accompanying rehearsals for *Haddon Hall*, a light opera by Sydney Grundy and Arthur Sullivan. Since it has likely not been performed in the United States, no one in the group has sung the piece. I had not heard or played it." Indeed, there does not appear to be any citation of a complete staged performance with a full orchestra by any group in the United States and there have been very few in England from the middle of the twentieth century to the present. Two former outcasts, *Utopia Limited* and *The Grand Duke*, now are plentiful as tabby cats, while *Haddon Hall* music can be fully appreciated only on The Prince Consort CD.

*The Gondoliers* closed at the Savoy Theatre in mid 1891. There was no Gilbert & Sullivan opera to follow, as the two men were estranged because of the infamous Carpet Quarrel. Richard D'Oyly Carte followed *Gondoliers* with four non G&S operas until the appearance of *Utopia Limited* in late 1893. These four operas, in order of appearance, were *The Nautch Girl*, *The Vicar of Bray*, *Haddon Hall* (September 1892-April 1893), *Jane Annie*. *Haddon Hall* was the longest running at 204 performances. It also exceeded the later Sullivan Savoy operas *The Chieftain* and *The Grand Duke* and closely matched *The Rose of Persia* and *The Emerald Isle*.

Sullivan inserted the Dorothy Vernon songs "Why weep and wait" followed by "Red of the rosebud" into Act 1 shortly after the opera opened; and he deleted the John Manners song "The earth is fair" and the Dorothy / John duet "Sweetly the morn doth break." John Manners now does not make his first appearance until the Finale of Act 2. Thus arose the need for a second edition of both libretto and vocal score. The second edition vocal score and libretto include the two new songs, but do not delete the two original songs. This has caused confusion ever since; various performances handle the matter in different ways. However in this rarely heard Sullivan Without Gilbert Opera, it is quite appropriate to hear all four songs.

Another consideration is the Rupert and McCrankie duet in Act 2, which begins with "There's no one by—no prying eye." The libretto contains two lines, "Without our license, sealed and signed / For we wad dominate mankind." However the vocal score contains the erroneous "Without our license, signed and sealed / For we wad dominate mankind." Entries 2 through 5 below have the correct line. In that same duet there is another vocal score error; it is more prevalent in performance since the libretto lists the song only as a Duet. "We'd pit an end tae heat an' licht" should be sung by McCrankie and "Prescribe 'em early-closin' hours" should be sung by Rupert, not the other way around. This mistake has been corrected in Entries 3 and 5.

My collection contains the five recorded performances of *Haddon Hall* of which I am aware.

1. The Cheam Operatic Society gave four full performances with dialog, accompanied by the Southern Festival Orchestra, on May 13 through 16, 1981. Shortly after the stage production a studio recording was made. The two 33 1/3 records, "Haddon Hall by Arthur Sullivan" were released by Pearl in 1982. The recording is musically complete, but omits the dialog. It is a good performance. The two deleted songs are included, being inserted just before the Act 1 Finale. Without the modified dialog to see how the insertions are managed, it is not possible to see how well they fit in performance.
2. The Reading University Music Department gave three full performances with dialog, accompanied by an orchestra, on May 8 through 10, 1992. The recording is from the performances, with dialog included, and presented on two cassette tapes. There is criticism that due to limitations of the concert hall the recording is far from perfect; it is not very apparent to a casual listener however. But hearing the dialog shows the weakness of Grundy as a partner to Sullivan. As it is the only complete *Haddon Hall* extant, it is unfortunate not to have it available on CD.
3. The present standard of excellence is by the Prince Consort, Edinburgh. Recorded in 2000, the two CDs are musically complete without dialog. The Prince Consort has produced an outstanding performance which supersedes the others in this group. The two new Sullivan songs are presented in the proper sequence; the deleted songs are added in an "Appendix to Act 1" as the last two entries on CD1.
4. The Gilbert & Sullivan Opera of Victoria, Australia gave a concert version recorded in front of an audience on September 1 and 2, 2001. It is presented on two CDs. The story is tied together by a narrator who explains the action. This works well as the narration bands are separate from the songs and are easily skipped. Accompaniment is provided by a piano. The two deleted songs are presented in proper sequence immediately after the new ones and make a coherent whole. The singing is a treat and this performance is recommended.
5. The Northampton Gilbert & Sullivan Group with the Theatre Orchestra and Chorus gave a costumed concert version on August 12, 2007 in the Paxton Theatre during the G&S Festival. It is presented on DVD. The visual aspect adds a dimension absent in the other presentations; it shows that a staged production could be successful provided the dialog be trimmed and streamlined. As with the Victoria *Haddon Hall* the story is tied together by a narrator. Both the deleted and new Sullivan songs are presented; in this version however, the new songs come directly before the deleted ones. This is an orchestral and visual treat.

Though not available for sale on CD or DVD, the two concert performances of *Haddon Hall* by Valley Light Opera of Amherst, Massachusetts on March 15 and 17, 2012 deserve special note. It is the first and only American version performed with a full orchestra. There was a narrator to move the action along. One reviewer commented "There was a twenty-seven piece orchestra and a good-sized and good-sounding chorus as well as the principals. It was a joy and a delight to be able to hear the piece 'live' with orchestra - a first for this continent; piano vocal score reduction just can't even begin to suggest the orchestrations as anything more than a charcoal sketch of an oil painting." Perhaps some group somewhere will heed the reviewer's lament "I'd still like to see a full costumes-set-dialog presentation of this work just once to see how the whole thing runs."

#### **SULLIVAN AND GRUNDY**

Arthur Sullivan and William Gilbert produced their twelfth operetta, *The Gondoliers*, in 1889. There was then a breach between the two, which was not healed until the production of *Utopia, Limited* in 1893. During this period Arthur Sullivan wrote the grand opera *Ivanhoe*, with libretto by Julian Sturgis, and "An Original Light English Opera, in Three Acts" *Haddon Hall*, with libretto by Sydney Grundy.



The famed Sir Arthur was the senior member of this duo, and Grundy's libretto was written to meet with Sullivan's approval. After the opera's opening Sullivan revised it by omitting the only appearance by John Manners in Act 1, and adding two songs sung by Dorothy. *Haddon Hall* was successful in its time and has been kept alive since 1892 by the presence of Sullivan's music and a renewed interest in Sullivan's non-Gilbertian works.

The Sullivan - Grundy *Haddon Hall* severed the Vernon - Manners romance from the Elizabethan period and the Derbyshire locale to create a story of love and principle more universal in its telling. There followed Dorothy Vernon - Haddon Hall novels, a play and a movie, all of which also took unusual liberties with the original tale.

The Grundy Haddon Hall story is perhaps, of all versions, the most removed from historical accuracy and from authenticity of the accepted legend. It is prefaced by a "Note. — The clock of Time has been put forward a century, and other liberties have been taken with history." The protagonists are Royalists and Puritans / Roundheads. In an unusual twist, George Vernon and John Manners, as Royalists, are nominally on the same side.

Only three historical figures survive: George Vernon, Dorothy Vernon and John Manners. Lady Vernon is the first wife of George Vernon brought back to life. Dorothy's singing "Mother, dearest mother, hearken unto me" makes this clear. Also gone is Dorothy's sister Margaret, to be replaced by George Vernon's allusion to "my son—my only son—[who] died fighting for his country, on the sea." Introduced is the fictional cousin Rupert Vernon, a professed Roundhead, who supports the parliamentary and Puritan causes in opposition to the Royalists.

Rupert lays claim to the Haddon Hall estates. Sir George believes that the parliament is likely to rule for Rupert and therefore favors him as the husband for Dorothy. "This marriage puts an end to doubts and questions that have troubled me, and would be grateful [pleasing] to the parliament, which loves me none too well." The plot foundation of Grundy's *Haddon Hall* has neither historical nor legendary basis.

Present in the libretto but usually ignored in synopses of the story, is the 'principled' stance of John Manners; this serves to confuse the John - Dorothy love story. Sir George will remove his objection to John and take his chance with parliament if Manners will eschew the Royalist cause. "If he would sheath that sword—if he would only pay decent respect to parliament." But Dorothy would rather have the Vernon estates be lost than have Manners compromise his Royalist beliefs. "He were a traitor and not worth my love!" Grundy has sought to tell a story where the main theme is given by the closing song.

*Though storms uprise, And cloud the skies, And thorns where roses grew;  
Come sun, come snow, Come weal, come woe, To thine own heart be true!*

But Sullivan thought it necessary to modify the scene where Dorothy originally said to John "Oh, tell me, sweetheart, is thy love so great that thou wouldst do this [lay down his arms at her father's request] for thy true love's sake?" To which John replies "Great is my love—greater than lord or king—But there is one thing greater than my love. False to myself, I should be false to thee, and heaven would curse our love." Sullivan replaces this stressful encounter with a plaintive declaration of love sung by Dorothy, alone on the stage.

The elopement takes place at Dorothy Vernon's Door during an 'open house' held in the Long Gallery. The couple is pursued by Sir George, Rupert and the Puritans. Dorothy and John evade their pursuers and disappear into Derbyshire.

George and Lady Vernon are now alone and about to be evicted by Rupert, who has succeeded in his suit to gain title to the Haddon estates. Before the eviction can take place, news is brought to Haddon Hall that Charles II has been proclaimed King. Shortly thereafter John Manners arrives with news that he has obtained an order from King Charles to restore Haddon Hall to Sir George. Dorothy enters and the extended Vernon family is reunited.

Historically inaccurate as it is, Grundy's version possesses an insight missing in other versions of the tale, which surprisingly have not been incorporated by other authors. John Manners is shown to be an acceptable suitor, but falls victim to Sir George's need to retain the Haddon estates. This motivation is similar to Sir George's historical desire to retain Haddon under a Vernon name, whether through a second wife or through a Vernon cousin.

The Sullivan - Grundy tale of the Dorothy Vernon - John Manners romance found a willing, and also a wider, audience than those who knew the Derbyshire legend. For many it was probably the only version to which they were exposed. As William Doubleday states in his introduction to a post 1892 edition of *The Heiress of Haddon - The Romance of Haddon Hall*:

"The real romance of Haddon Hall is a sweet, old-world idyll of singular attractiveness and interest. The gems of the story have been reset by dramatists in different surroundings; but while, as in the Sullivan-Grundy opera, many of its chief incidents have been retained, many have been omitted. In the old story there are no Puritans, and not one solitary Scotchman appears upon the scene. The original drama was enacted in the pastoral days of 'Good Queen Bess,' when the Tudor Queen was still young and beautiful."

### **THE WARLOCK AND HADDON HALL**

*The Warlock* opened at Dublin's Queen's Royal Theatre in February 1892. The setting is England at the time of the Cromwell government. A Royalist lord resides in his castle with his beautiful daughter. The maid longs to be engaged to a handsome Cavalier. However Rupert, a Roundhead in Cromwell's army, is also in love with her. The Earl has no objection to the Cavalier; however the Earl would be in grave peril if the Roundhead did not succeed in his suit with the young maid. Also showing up is a traveling pedlar who introduces himself by means of a longish ditty. Thus are the main Act 1 plot points of *The Warlock*. The author of the libretto is the Irish poet from Dublin, Alfred Smythe.

The summary of the previous paragraph applies equally well to Act 1 of *Haddon Hall*, which opened in September of the same year. In both operas, the threat from Rupert is removed when Charles II is installed as King and the lord retains his possessions. With that exception, subsequent to Act 1 of both operas, the stories diverge. The music for *The Warlock* is probably lost, and the libretto is scarce. However at the time, there was a public squabble between the Dublin and London partisans.

From the *Irish Daily Independent*, Dublin, October 5, 1892: STRANGE RESEMBLANCE.

The account which has appeared in the *Independent* of the plot of the new comic opera by Mr. Sydney Grundy and Sir Arthur Sullivan, *Haddon Hall*, has given rise to much surprise amongst Dubliners who have witnessed the performance of *The Warlock* in the early part of the present year. What is quite remarkable is the strange resemblance which *Haddon Hall* bears in many respects to Messrs. Alfred Smythe and Edgar Little's highly successful work. The public attention has been so keenly attracted by the similarity of portions of the plot structure of Mr. Sydney Grundy's libretto to Mr. Alfred Smythe's book, that we think it only fair to the author of the earlier opera, which first saw the light in Dublin, and is the composition of a Dublin man, to refer to some of them.

From *The Era*, London, October 22, 1892: IMAGINARY PLAGIARISM.

It becomes a duty to defend him [Grundy]. We cannot admit any serious foundation to the charge recently made that the libretto of *Haddon Hall* is a plagiarism upon that of *The Warlock*, a romantic comedy-opera by Alfred Smythe and Edgar Little, produced at the Queen's Theatre, Dublin, on Feb. 1st last. The manner in which the accusation has been brought is interesting, as an example of the method in which these charges are trumped up. Certain non-essential points of resemblance in the two librettos have been selected, and placed side by side for comparison. The similarities are merely in unimportant details; the differences are in essentials. The libretto of *The Warlock* is a kind of fairy story, and the leading character is a magician.

The squabble died out in November and both operas went on their separate ways. Neither librettist conceded his position and neither one altered his libretto by a single word.

## THE ELOPEMENT DOOR

WILLIAM KINGSTON SAWYER

BELGRAVIA, A LONDON MAGAZINE, JULY 1869

William Kingston Sawyer was born in 1828 and died in 1882. He was a successful London poet, playwright and author. This poem, little known in its entirety, had its fourth and tenth quatrains recycled by Sydney Grundy. He has quoted them in his libretto to introduce the first and second acts of the 1892 opera *Haddon Hall*. The poem was accompanied by the illustration shown. Note that the young woman is not Dorothy Vernon. She is holding in her hands a letter from her lover. The poem has him musing over the reply and imagining her sitting by Dorothy Vernon's 'elopement door.'



THE ELOPEMENT DOOR

“I read your letter at Haddon Hall,  
On the very steps of the very door  
Whence Dorothy Vernon left the ball,  
And fled with her lover in days of yore.”

So she writes to me,—she whom I prize  
Life's pleasures and treasures all above,—  
As wandering far under summer skies  
Fond memories stir in her heart of love.

And my eager fancy pictures her,  
It conjures up vividly all the scene;  
It rises clear without mist or blur,  
The image of all as it must have been.

The green old turrets all ivy-thatch  
Above the cedars that girdle them rise,  
The pleasant glow of the sunshine catch,  
And outline sharp on the bluest of skies.

All is silent within and around;  
The ghostly house and the ghostly trees  
Sleep in the heat, with never a sound  
Of human voices or freshening breeze.

And where the elms with the long low sweep  
Of their leafy branches increase the gloom,  
The door in the turret opens deep,  
Studded and wrought like the door of a tomb.

The mossy steps from the doorway spread,  
And she, my darling, my treasure, is there;  
So dainty sweet, so rosily red,—  
A type of all happy things young and fair.

In the sunset glow her hair is dyed;  
Over summer heavens her eyelids fall;  
Only the rose in its flush and pride  
Can the wonder of lip and cheek recall.

I see her sitting dreamily staid,  
Her steadfast eyes in their musing see;  
To the haunted past her thoughts have strayed,  
And lost to all but its glamour is she.

It is a night with never a star,  
And the Hall with revelry throbs and gleams;  
There grates a hinge—the door is ajar—  
And a shaft of light on the darkness streams!

A faint sweet face, a glimmering gem,  
And then two figures steal into the light!  
A flash, and darkness has swallowed them,—  
So sudden is Dorothy Vernon's flight!

Lingering there by the little door,  
In a languorous dream of loving bliss,  
My darling cannot but ponder o'er  
A legend so tender and true as this.

And O, if love may with love be fed,  
Less fortunate omen might well befall  
Than that love's letter should thus be read  
At Dorothy's doorway at Haddon Hall!