

HADDON HALL'S
DOROTHY VERNON

THE STORY OF THE LEGEND

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INTRODUCTION

This is the story of the creation and development of the legend of Dorothy Vernon. According to tradition, Dorothy eloped with John Manners from her home at Haddon Hall and from her father the 'King of the Peak.'

The story is appropriately called a legend. But 'legend' may be defined in two ways: a popular myth OR a story regarded as true although not entirely verifiable. That the imperious George Vernon lived and ruled Haddon with its surroundings, that Dorothy and John were married and inherited Sir George's lands, there can be no doubt. However there are no surviving household accounts of pre-nuptial meetings to indicate a planned marriage. Nor are there church records to indicate a runaway wedding performed at a distance from Haddon. 'Legend' as used within these pages may be interpreted, according to the inclination of the reader, to fall within either definition OR as the author has found, to denote a shifting state of conviction as historical claims are seized upon or discounted.

There has been claimed to be an 'oral tradition' telling the tale of a runaway Vernon - Manners marriage. Unfortunately, no one has transcribed such a story without embellishment and the introduction of obvious artifices. It would be expected that the legend would have found its way into one of the many Derbyshire ballads which have been transcribed, but this is not so. The content of the tale of oral tradition has been lost. One suspects that the oral versions of the tale were vague and imprecise as Allan Cunningham's *Rhyme of Dora Vernon* (p22) and that much was read into them after visits to Haddon Hall and Bakewell Church (where the Vernon and Manners are entombed). However, as in most aspects of the romantic legend, each reader will arrive at his or her own conclusion.

George Vernon, the King of the Peak, held sway over the Haddon lands and their wealth from about 1529, when he became of age, until his death in 1565. It was near the end of this period that his daughters Margaret and Dorothy were married. For the next two hundred plus years, Dorothy became known as the coheirress who brought Haddon Hall and its lands to the Manners family. There was never a reference to a marriage under exceptional circumstances.

The foundation for the legend was formed in the period approximately from 1790 into the 1820s. The Manners family had quitted Haddon Hall and it lay empty and sparsely furnished. The only residents were the caretaker and his wife, who resided outside the walls in a cottage down the hill from the northwest entrance. Visitors were allowed inside the walls and the caretakers conducted personal tours of the entire castellated mansion. Many sightseers were taken by the medieval atmosphere and perceived similarity

to the desolate settings of contemporary gothic novels. Newly written guide books would assert that novelists received inspiration and even wrote large portions of books within the Haddon walls. Thus began the interweaving of Haddon Hall's history with the pages of the novel.

The creation of the legend took place over a short two year span in the early 1820s. By creation is meant bringing to light a two hundred year old Derbyshire tale OR alternately manufacturing an elopement out of whole cloth. The story is the same in either instance, and by the end of the century became recognized as one of the renowned courtships of England. The Vernon - Manners romance was told by two authors within two separate works, both coincidentally entitled, *The King of the Peak*. The tales were told from the viewpoint of Sir George Vernon and the world within Haddon Hall. Dorothy Vernon would not take the title of the story for almost forty years.

The legend was nurtured and grew over the next thirty years. No new fictional works were produced in this period. Instead respected scholars and journalists visited Derbyshire and were guided around Haddon Hall. As part of their description of the structure and interior, they uniformly described a 'tradition' associated with Haddon. Thus did the elopement leap from the pages of fancy and conjecture into the pages of history.

In the future, nearly all factual accounts of Haddon Hall would include the elopement legend, whether by disparaging the tale or concurring in its truth. Novels built on the legend would maintain the historical personae of Haddon Hall, Sir George, Dorothy and John; the stories would differ in the paths taken to the same romantic ending.

The legend became fully developed and reached its final form in the fifty years between 1860 and 1910. A short story *The Love Steps of Dorothy Vernon* was published in 1860. It was the first story to place Dorothy as the central character within Haddon Hall and its details defined what became to be regarded as the standard form of the legend. Historical inaccuracies contained therein could be attributed to a lack of knowledge concerning the particulars of Haddon and its inhabitants. These would be discovered in later years; but the tale continued to follow *The Love Steps of Dorothy Vernon* and those who believed in the romance shrugged off these concerns.

Stories and novels, an operetta and a play were written. Scholars unearthed specific dates to reflect when the weddings of Sir George's daughters really did occur AND when the various architectural features of the Hall came into being. Fact and fancy were made available in abundance. But the legend of Dorothy Vernon remained unchanged into the twentieth century.

This book provides the details of how the story of Dorothy Vernon originated and grew. It also contains this author's story of what may have really occurred to create such a romantic legend. In so doing, it presents Dorothy as a worthy adversary of the imperious King of the Peak, and not just the meek and amiable young woman of earlier stories.

This author was introduced to Haddon Hall through an interest in the works of William Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan. As such the book would not be complete without a section on Sydney Grundy's libretto for the 1892 operetta *Haddon Hall* with music by Arthur Sullivan. The analysis concerns itself with the fidelity, or lack thereof, of how Grundy adhered to historical accuracy and accepted norms. It does not attempt to address the dramatic or musical merits of the operetta.

The Bibliography section contains more than fifty entries from 1586 to 2005 which relate to Haddon Hall and Dorothy Vernon.

Following the Bibliography are the three short stories of Dorothy Vernon which provided the basis for future writers to fashion their own versions of this romantic tale. To quote Muddock in his introduction to *The Story of Dorothy Vernon*, "Haddon Hall is not so much a mausoleum of the past as a love story in castellated form."

The Love Steps of Dorothy Vernon (1860) is presented complete and unedited. *The King of the Peak, A Derbyshire Tale* (1822) and *The Story of Dorothy Vernon* (1878) have been edited to remove introductory material and extraneous comments by characters 'telling' the tales. The editor has not, however, changed any of the original words.

The book ends with *Dorothy Vernon's Flight* (1887), a poem penned by an American. This completes the transition of a local Derbyshire legend to the outside world.

Legend: A popular myth of current or recent origin.

Legend: A story handed down from early times and popularly regarded as historical although not entirely verifiable.

The marriage of Dorothy Vernon and John Manners took place in the latter half of the sixteenth century. The household records which would have indicated that it was or was not a planned event have been lost. There are no accounts to indicate a negotiation of dowry or allocation of lands, nor are there records of expenditures for a wedding celebration. In addition no records of the ceremony exist in any church registry in the region. It is therefore not possible to tell if they were married in the chapel at Haddon Hall or at nearby Bakewell, or instead at some distant church as part of an elopement.

The first stories of the elopement appeared over two hundred fifty years later in the early part of the nineteenth century. Since that time there has been much controversy as to whether the elopement legend belongs to the category of nineteenth century myth, or is a sixteenth century historical event whose story had been kept within Haddon Hall and released outside its walls two hundred fifty years later.

The story which is the foundation of the legend is described below. It does not contain the elaborations of later authors. They introduced blatant historical inaccuracies or ridiculous characters or events which later research showed had not yet occurred. Shown in italics are those parts of the legend which cannot be independently verified.

There are four major and three minor characters which define the basic story. 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 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 minor characters are the close female relatives of George Vernon besides Dorothy. His first wife Margaret has died five years earlier. She is the mother of daughters Margaret and Dorothy. *She was beloved by all, servants and family alike, and is sorely missed by Dorothy.*

His daughter Margaret is Dorothy's sister, older than Dorothy by five years. Margaret had been married for some years and was living away from Haddon at the time of Dorothy's marriage. This was apparently not known to early authors and many have depicted *Margaret as engaged and living at Haddon in the days prior to the elopement. This allows the ball to be a pre-wedding celebration at the discretion of the author.*

Maude was George's second wife. She was about thirty at the time of her marriage shortly after his first wife's death. It is guessed that this liaison came about because of a desire of George to have a male heir to keep the Haddon lands in the Vernon name. When the character of Maude is fleshed out, *she is depicted as unhappy in her marriage and vengeful towards Dorothy.*

So far, the three minor characters and three of the four major characters have been accounted for. The last of these is Haddon Hall itself. The King of the Peak and his family exist today only in short stories, novels, a play, an operetta and fragments of old Derbyshire ballads. But Haddon Hall is still in place, two miles from the town of Bakewell, and still carries its fifteenth and sixteenth and seventeenth century charms. In place are the eleven stone steps and the narrow footbridge which Dorothy may or may not have traversed on her way to meet John Manners. In place is the doorway near the oriel window in the downstairs parlour, which would have been the most likely exit. In place is the Eagle Tower where she would have gone to get a glimpse of John as he skulked about the estate. It is Dorothy Vernon which separates Haddon Hall from the other castellated estates of England and it is Haddon Hall which keeps alive the story of Dorothy Vernon. From the mid-nineteenth century there is scarcely a factual or fictional account of one which does not refer to the other.

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.

There is an addendum to this book which contains three early versions of

the legend written over a period of fifty years. They show the story in its original form and how it was shaped by the addition of further detail. There are obvious artifices in the two later tales, but none approach the extravagances of other versions of the tale. The three stories are: *The King of the Peak* by Allan Cunningham (1822), *The Love Steps of Dorothy Vernon* by Eliza Meteyard (1860), *The Story of Dorothy Vernon* by James Edward Muddock (1878).

HADDON HALL

Thy walls and thy turrets are sacred to view;
I admire e'en thy ruins, and homage them too;
Far beyond modern masses of brick and of
stone,
Neither favouring the present, nor days that are
gone.
How thy walls 'midst the foliage enveloping
peep!
And make thee appear like some proud donjon
keep,
With every support and appurtenance found,
To hold head aloft, and to threaten around;
Whilst the trees that encompass, and still higher
soar,
Add beauty to grandeur, still grander of yore,
When doubtless their number was greater than
now,
And accursed the axe that laid even one low.
* * * * *
These scenes are gone by—such will never
return!
Thy fires that blazed brightly, will never more
burn;
For those who partook in the comfort they gave,
Have crumbled to dust, ages gone in the grave;

Thy walls that re-echoed with footsteps of yore,
Shall hold solemn silence, and echo no more.
All around thee is still, deserted, and drear,
And a chilling sensation connected with fear,
Awakes, as the thought passes quick through
the head,
That all who dwelt in thee, are sealed with the
dead;
E'en the couple who lingered to show off thy
state, [caretakers who showed visitors
around]
Have answered in turn, when death knocked at
the gate.
And we for the lack of their records may moan,
Whilst others their history may tell with thine
own.
Thy banquets are over, thy guests are all gone,
Thou left in thy grandeur of ruin alone;
The clouds darken round thee, thy sky's
overcast,
No days of the future will equal the past.
And he who bewails what no times will renew,
Now bids thee, lone Haddon, a saddened adieu.

Benjamin Fenton, 1841.

HADDON HALL

Haddon Hall is located in the Peak District of the county of Derbyshire. Construction of the Hall was begun in the late twelfth century. Additions were made in stages, the last being in the seventeenth century by John Manners, husband of Dorothy Vernon, and his successors.

Of particular interest are the additions made after the marriage of Dorothy and John, since they represent configurations of the Hall which could not have existed at the time of the elopement. The Long Gallery was added after the marriage; the now wealthy John Manners wanted more space for his guests than was provided by the Banqueting Hall. What are now known as Dorothy Vernon's Door and the eleven stone steps near the east end of the Long Gallery, Dorothy Vernon's Steps, are believed to have been added by his grandson. There is no mention of construction of Dorothy Vernon's Footbridge; this small bridge crossing the Wye river appears to have been in place at the time of the marriage.

John Manners had been the second son of the Earl of Rutland and therefore did not inherit the title or lands associated with them. 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.

J. Charles Cox in *The Little Guides - Derbyshire* (c1900) summarizes the sources of the importance and romance of Haddon Hall:

- "1. Though capable of defence, it was never intended to be an actual castle or fortress, and was never subject to any definite siege.
- "2. It was continuously occupied by families capable of supporting when funds were needed for its gradual development and repair.
- "3. Though abandoned in favour of Belvoir as a chief residence, and stripped of most of its furniture in the early part of the eighteenth century, it has always been kept watertight, and by this very abandonment has been saved from additions and alterations of the vulgarising Georgian, or depressing Victorian eras."

G. Le Blanc-Smith adds in *Haddon - The Manor, The Hall, Its Lords and Traditions* (1906):

"This last reason is the one which must at once strike any intelligent visitor, for, look where one will, everything seems to have suddenly stopped in the

middle of the sixteenth century, like in the old fairy tale of the Sleeping Beauty.

“One of the fascinations of Haddon Hall is the connection with the fabled tale of Dorothy Vernon and her runaway marriage, and as long as Haddon stands one stone upon another, so long will that story of the beautiful daughter be the first thought at the mention of the word Haddon.”

[It should be noted that he did not believe in the truth of the tale.]

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.

The stories that were sequestered within the Hall were ready to be released. Two requirements remained: a caretaker who would unlock the tales and an audience who would disseminate what he told. First, however, we will examine to what extent the story of Dorothy Vernon was known prior to the 1822 publication of Allan Cunningham’s *The King of the Peak*. To do this we will review a number of books relating to Derbyshire which were written prior to 1830.

William Camden: *Britannia* (1586) William Camden (1551-1623) was an English scholar and historian of Elizabethan times. He was a contemporary of Dorothy Vernon and John Manners. His book *Britannia* was a topographical and historical survey of all of Britain, and is a county by county description of the land. He traveled through Britain and looked at documents and sites for himself. His section on Derbyshire includes a passage on Haddon Hall and George Vernon. The information provided by Camden forms the basis for future historical commentary and fictional embellishment about Haddon and the last of the Vernons.

“We meet with never another place worth the remembrance, unless it be Haddon by the river Wye, the seat for many years together of the Vernons, who as they were very ancient, so they became no less renowned in these parts in so much as Sir George Vernon knight, who lived in our time, for his magnificent port that he carried, the open house that he kept, and his commendable hospitality, that the name among the multitude of a Petty King in the peak. By his daughters and heirs a goodly and great inheritance was transferred unto Sir John Manners son of Thomas Earl of Rutland, and to Sir Thomas Stanley son of Edward of Derby.”

Edward King: *Observations on Ancient Castles* (1782) The detailed description of Haddon Hall's interior contained in King's book may be the first by an outside visitor. He appears to have visited every room, an experience which is denied to today's tourist. It is unlikely that the charismatic caretaker who held sway from about 1790 to 1840 would have shown King around since his observations are devoid of any anecdotal reference. The portion referring to Dorothy and John does not contain an elopement:

"It was formerly the seat of the Vernons who were not only an ancient, but a very famous family in those parts; insomuch that Sir George Vernon for his magnificence, for his kind reception of all good men, and for his great hospitality, gained the name of King of Peak, among the vulgar. By his second daughter, Dorothy, married in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, to Sir John Manners, second son of Thomas the first Earl of Rutland, the great inheritance of this family came into that of Manners; and, in 1641, was at last united with the [Manners] Earldom."

King describes the steps of Dorothy Vernon, but appears unaware of any further story associated with them:

"From this gallery, towards the further end, is a short passage, leading to what might be called, my lord's parlour; from whence is a passage to a flight of stone steps, that lead down to the chief terraces in the garden."

David Peter Davies: *View of Derbyshire* (1811) Davies writes that "Most of the places described, the author has himself visited." Haddon Hall appears to be one of them, but the attention and time spent by Davies must be suspect. He continually refers to other sources as the basis of his information, and there is no reference to a caretaker showing him around, nor are there anecdotal stories of Haddon. Davies states that George Vernon was the son of Henry Vernon, which is an error repeated in later histories. George was the son of Richard (died 1517) who was the son of Henry (died 1515).

"Sir George, the son of Henry Vernon, was so much distinguished for his magnificent port and hospitality, that he acquired the name of King of the Peak. On his death, in the seventh year of Queen Elizabeth [1565], his possessions, which amounted to thirty manors, descended to his two daughters, Margaret and Dorothy: the former was married to Sir Thomas Stanley, knight, second son of the Earl of Derby, and the latter to Sir John Manners, knight, second son to Thomas, first Earl of Rutland. By this marriage, Haddon Hall, with several manors in Derbyshire, became the property of the Manners; and have regularly descended to the present Duke of Rutland."

Davies has the distinction of being the first to commit what may be termed an ‘author anomaly’ — giving two different dates of death for George Vernon on different pages. In addition to the 1565 reference, he states — “In the other of these chancels [in Bakewell Church] are the tombs of Sir George Vernon, who died in 1561, and his two ladies [wives].”

Some early historians report, or repeat the report, that George Vernon’s tomb has the date of 1561 inscribed upon it. The date of 1561, however, does not support Vernon family history. It is also contradicted in later accounts of Bakewell Church, as in W. A. Carrington’s *Family and Record History of Haddon* in the 1900 edition of *The Journal of the British Archaeological Association* — “Sir George died August 31st, 1565, when Margaret the wife of Sir Thomas Stanley, and Dorothy, the wife of John Manners, Esq., were found from Inquisitions to be his heirs, Margaret being aged twenty-five years and Dorothy twenty years. Sir George Vernon was buried in Bakewell Church, under a large altar-tomb, upon which are the recumbent effigies of him and his two wives, with an inscription, which has not been completed, the dates of the deaths being left blank.”

There are three dates, 1561 or 1565 or 1567, attached to Sir George’s death. The ‘author anomaly’ of giving two different dates of death in the same document has been common and persistent over the years. The most widely accepted date, and that used by this author, is 1565.

TRANSITION

The guide books and novels which follow still have no mention of the Dorothy Vernon - John Manners elopement. What they have in common is that they were instrumental in changing the perception of Haddon Hall from a castle (or manor house) of architectural interest within a group of old English buildings to that of a unique source of legend, romance and mystery.

Ann Radcliffe: The Mysteries of Udolpho (1794) *The Mysteries of Udolpho* was widely assumed to be set in Haddon Hall, though the name is not mentioned in the book, nor is the claim made by the author. Ann Ward Radcliffe is acknowledged as the creator of the romantic gothic novel. Written in the 1790's, her stories featured innocent young ladies, gallant young lovers, evil older men and mysterious castles. The books were best sellers and much admired by readers and other authors. She fell out of fashion in the mid 1800's and little is heard of her today.

The Mysteries of Udolpho is her best and most popular work, and remains in print. The story takes place in 1584 making it of the same period as Dorothy Vernon and John Manners, though Radcliffe places the tale in Italy. Over time, readers identified the Castle of Udolpho with Haddon Hall. Although Radcliffe was familiar with Derbyshire and may have seen Haddon from the outside, it is improbable that she visited the Hall prior to or during the writing of her book, nor does she claim to have done so. The interior detail of Udolpho does not match Haddon; readers were influenced by the exterior description of Udolpho and knowledge of a deserted interior at Haddon Hall. The introduction to Udolpho is given thus:

“The Gothic greatness of its features, and its mouldering walls of dark grey stone, rendered it a gloomy and sublime object. What furniture there was seemed to be almost as old as the rooms.”

The descriptions of Udolpho are reminiscent of the deserted Haddon Hall and a visitor may have thought he had seen what Radcliffe described, but such could not have been the case:

“The door opened into a suite of spacious rooms and ancient apartments, some of which were hung with tapestry, and others wainscoted with cedar and black larch wood.”

“She observed with wonder the vast strength of the wall, now somewhat decayed and the pillars of solid marble that rose from the hall and supported the roof.”

Rooms in Haddon Hall were not wainscoted with cedar and black larch wood, nor are there pillars of marble.

Elizabeth Isabella Spence: *Summer Excursions Through Parts of Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Staffordshire, Herefordshire, Derbyshire and South Wales* (1809) On a late summer excursion through Derbyshire, Elizabeth Spence spied Haddon Hall and was so taken by its exterior appearance, that she immediately associated it with Ann Radcliffe's Castle of Udolpho.

“About two miles from Bakewell an antique mansion seated on a bold eminence (of a single mass of limestone, insulated by strata of a different kind) attracted my notice, from the ruinous desolation that surrounded it. High turrets, rude battlements, raised in gloomy pomp above the woods which half concealed it; and we longed to explore the vast solitude of this deserted place.”

She would have been shown around by the resident caretaker. It is possible the caretaker related to her a local rumor concerning the Hall, but it is more likely Spence communicated a perceived resemblance to the caretaker. In 1809, the Castle of Udolpho and Haddon Hall and Ann Radcliffe became entwined and remained so for three decades.

“Haddon Hall, an ancient mansion previously described, exclusive of its being one of the finest specimens of antiquity this country produces, is the place Mrs. Radcliffe has made the subject of her pen in describing the Castle of Udolpho. This circumstance alone would render it highly interesting to the admirers of her writings, and worthy of particular description.”

Ebenezer Rhodes: *Peak Scenery or The Derbyshire Tourist* (1819) Rhodes published a series of four books (1818 - 1823) detailing his travels in Derbyshire. The second book, containing Haddon Hall, was published in 1819 and includes the details of his personal visit. He describes the John Manners - Dorothy Vernon marriage with the consequence of passing Haddon to the Rutlands, but there is no mention of an elopement. He does, however, describe Ann Radcliffe and places her at Haddon Hall. The story, by 1819, would commonly be told to visitors and appears to have acquired some embellishment. The caretaker and his wife are providing Haddon Hall with a new allure, perhaps in hopes of increasing the traffic of visitors and the gratuities to be received for showing the building and grounds.

“Mrs. Ann Radcliffe, who was a native of Derbyshire, often visited Haddon Hall, for the purpose of storing her imagination with those romantic ideas, and impressing upon it those sublime and awful pictures which she so much delighted to portray: some of the most gloomy scenery of her *Mysteries of Udolpho* was studied within the walls of this ancient structure.”

“On the wainscot we observed an iron fastening large enough to admit the wrist of a man's hand, and which we were informed had been placed

there for the purpose of punishing trivial offences. It had likewise another use, and served to enforce the laws and regulations adopted amongst the servants of this establishment. The man who refused to take his horn of ale, or neglected to perform the duties of his office, had his hand locked to the wainscot somewhat higher than his head, by this iron fastening, and cold water was poured down the sleeve of his doublet as a punishment for his offence. One of the old servants of the family, who attended upon strangers when I first visited Haddon, while pointing out the uses to which this curious relique of former times was applied, facetiously remarked 'that it grew rusty for want of use.'"

The tale of the manacle is retold over the next two centuries in novels and histories of the Hall. It is, however, simplified to what is reported in the present Haddon Hall Guide: "Attached to the screen you can see an iron manacle and lock. Supposedly, if a guest 'did not drink fayre' - that is, too little or too much, his punishment was to have his wrist secured in the manacle while the remainder of his drink was poured down his sleeve!" The fuller explanation of the caretaker carries an authority which indicates the possession of an insider's knowledge of the history of Haddon Hall.

Excerpts from the *Diaries of Anne Lister, 1824 - 1826 (1825)* Anne Lister came into a small inheritance of land in Halifax, whose income allowed her to travel in France and England. In the summer of 1825, she spent time in Buxton to take advantage of the spa waters there. She made the short trip from Buxton to Bakewell, the town nearest to Haddon Hall.

"Bakewell much improved of late. Belongs almost entirely to the Duke of Rutland, who has built an excellent new inn—the Rutland Arms—a very nice house to dine or stay at night at. Found on the table at the inn (in a very nice small parlour with a lodging opening into it), among several other books, Rhodes's Peak Scenery, in four, I think, thin volumes with plates. Read there the account of Bakewell church, Haddon Hall, etc. Mrs. Radcliffe fond of the latter. [She was] Much there and there imagined much of the finest scenery in her *Mysteries of Udolpho*."

The anecdotes of the caretaker of Haddon Hall must have met with the approval of the master of Haddon Hall, the Duke of Rutland. It may be supposed that emboldened by this support, the caretaker continued to embellish the story of the Hall, and began to interleave its history with the lives of its inhabitants.

Rev. Richard Ward: *A Guide to the Peak of Derbyshire (1827)* Ward has attempted to be complete in the range of coverage of his subjects, but is intentionally concise in their descriptions. He has visited Haddon Hall and

has a personal understanding of it, but his description is rewritten from those of previously published versions, none of which refer to the Vernon - Manners elopement.

“The author’s design was to give plain concise accounts of the various remarkable places and objects; and having repeatedly visited them, as well as consulted different authors who have written concerning them, he has not hesitated in several instances to adopt accounts which had been previously given, when they appeared just and suitable to his purpose.”

Ann Radcliffe is considered noteworthy enough to be included in Ward’s account of Haddon Hall:

“The gloomy apartments and general appearance of this antique edifice are said to have suggested to Mrs. Radcliffe some of the traits she has introduced in the terrific descriptions of castles in the *Mysteries of Udolpho*.”

Sir Walter Scott: *Peveiril of the Peak* (first edition 1822, revision 1831)
Martindale Castle is the residence of Sir Geoffrey Peveiril. The story takes place in the latter half of the seventeenth century, a century after Dorothy Vernon. Martindale Castle is located in Derbyshire, but its location does not recall recollections of Haddon Hall. However it appears to have been Scott’s intent that at least some of the interior of Martindale be patterned on Haddon.

There was “another apartment, which was peculiarly dedicated to the use of the mistress of the mansion—having, on the one side, access to the family bedroom, and, on the other, to the still-room which communicated with the garden. There was also a small door, which, ascending a few steps, led to a balcony that overhung the kitchen; and the same passage, by a separate door, admitted to the principal gallery in the chapel; so that the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Castle were placed almost at once within the reach of the same regulating and directing eye.”

It is possible to relate each of the parts of the above description to a part of Haddon Hall; but as a complete entity, there is no perceptible relation. That Scott did intend to recreate his memory of visits to the Hall is demonstrated by a note inserted into the 1831 edition:

“This peculiar collocation of apartments may be seen at Haddon Hall, Derbyshire, once a seat of the Vernons, where in the lady’s pew in the chapel, there is a sort of scuttle [small opening], which opens into the kitchen, so that the good lady could ever and anon, without much interruption of her religious duties, give an eye that the roast-meat was not permitted to burn, and that the turnbroche did his duty.”

F. H. Cheetham remarks in his 1904 *Haddon Hall*, "The note has been the excuse for inserting in some of the illustrated editions a picture of Haddon Hall as representing Martindale castle ... Such an experience at Haddon Hall is simply impossible, for the chapel is in the south-west corner and the kitchen far away on the north side. It is high time this note in *Peveril of the Peak* was withdrawn."

During the early nineteenth century Haddon Hall had become firmly entrenched as an architectural and cultural landmark of Derbyshire. It now remained for the caretaker to release from the Hall the most romantic true love story in England. Some say it didn't really happen that way, but if it didn't, it should have.

WILLIAM HAGE

William Hage (or Heage) was born in 1754 and died May 9, 1840. He and his wife were the caretakers at Haddon Hall during the period when it was empty of the Manners family and host to curious visitors. His death is listed in the *Sheffield Iris* of Tuesday May 26, 1840 and repeated in the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* of May 30, 1840. — "On the 9th instant [in the present month], at Haddon Hall, Mr. William Heage, in his 86th year. For upwards of half a century, he had conducted visitors over Haddon Hall."

William Hage was caretaker from at least 1790; with the possible exception of Edward King (*Observations on Ancient Castles*), either he or his wife would have been the guide to those visitors whose books have been previously described. He is recalled by others who have written about their visits to Haddon.

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 [from William Hage] 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 a visit by Absalom Watkin to the church at Bakewell where the Vernons and Manners 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.

Stephen Glover in *The Peak Guide* (1830) notes that — “The youngest of George Vernon’s co-heiresses, Dorothy married Sir John Manners; report says that the marriage was clandestine, and the apartment from which the lovers effected their escape through the gardens is pointed out by the person who shows the hall.”

Samuel Rayner in *History and Antiquities of Haddon Hall* (1836) provides this brief biographical sketch, provided by Hage himself during Rayner’s visit. — “This mansion has been so long deserted by its owners, that the recollections of the knights and nobles of the succeeding family of Manners, who dwelt here, are become obscure; and but little can now be gleaned from tradition concerning them. In this dearth of intelligence we can only present the reader with a brief extract from the reminiscences of the old guide. This person, William Hage, is a descendant of John Ward, who in 1527 was deer keeper to the lord of Haddon [George Vernon at age 19], and of whom there is a portrait hanging in the Banqueting Hall, or Old Dining Apartment. According to the statement of Hage, his ancestor was ‘turned out of the family six times for drinking too much, and at length died drunk.’ His son, however, succeeded him in his office; and his posterity in the female line have continued in the service of the proprietors of Haddon Hall even to the present time; the father of William Hage having been groom to the Marquis of Granby [John, who was the son of the 3rd Duke of Rutland, and who died before his father in 1770], and he himself having long had the care of the house and gardens here, and the office of guide to the visitors.”

The circumstances of the Vernon - Manners marriage would have been known to the Ward family and passed down to William Hage. Hage either shared with visitors a story known to be true OR repeated a tale offered by a previous visitor OR embellished a real story of marital conflict, but which stopped short of elopement.

William Adam in *Gem of the Peak* (1838) remarks on his visit to Haddon Hall — “Our attention was first directed to the hoop of the old mash-tub, of no common dimensions, which seemed to inspire the old man, Hage, who glories to tell of the hospitable doings at Haddon Hall – ‘that none were sent empty away who visited it’ – right good English doings certainly.” When Adam revisited the Hall some years later, he noted that “The old man [Hage] who showed the house for many years is dead some time ago, and it is now shown by Mrs. Bath, whose Cottage below is beautifully fitted up in the olden style. Mr. Bath has carved much of this himself, as well as other things for Belvoir Castle.” Travis Bath, 1792-1861, and his wife Mary Ann Bath, 1805-1879, were caretakers after William Hage. They are buried in the Bakewell Municipal Cemetery.

Benjamin Fenton in a footnote to his 1841 poem *Haddon Hall* (p9) states that — “An aged couple had for many years resided in Haddon, and showed it to strangers, with its Halls and Chambers, recording the history of its ancient possessors. A few years ago, one of this couple was called away [Hage’s wife], and the other shortly followed [Hage]. Younger parties who live in a cottage near, are become the recorders, but fail in exciting the interest awakened by their predecessors.”

Thus is seen the important personal role played by William Hage in bringing the story of Dorothy Vernon and John Manners to the general public. By 1820, two conditions necessary for the legend to spread had been satisfied: an abandoned, accessible Haddon Hall AND a clever, energetic guide. The third would soon appear: the literary sightseer.

It is noted that from its first appearance in 1809 through 1840, the relationship of Ann Radcliffe and Udolpho with Haddon Hall was faithfully recorded in the various guide books.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM

Allan Cunningham, born 7 December 1784 and died 30 October 1842, was a Scottish poet and author. His biography notes that one of his first assignments was in 1809 to collect indigenous Scottish songs and ballads for publication. However many of the items were created by Cunningham himself; the editor published them, though he was probably aware of their doubtful origin.

In 1810 Cunningham moved to London to pursue a career as a journalist and poet. In 1822, he toured Scotland and northern England for the monthly London Magazine. He was to collect ‘traditional tales and oral poetry’ and present them in the magazine. The third tale in the series was *The King of the Peak, A Derbyshire Tale*, and 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*.

The series of twelve items was later republished as part of *Traditional Tales of the English and Scottish Peasantry* (1822). The book’s Preface identifies Cunningham’s understanding of the underlying basis of the tales he is telling —

“It may be expected that something should be said concerning a series of stories for which the title-page appears to claim an oral origin. Traditional tales, interspersed with oral poetry, have been long popular among our northern peasantry...

“The stories were varied, according to the taste or talent of the reciter: every year brought a change in plot or the succession of incidents; matters of local interest found their way into the venerable narratives...

“To these humble and wandering novelists I owe the origin of many of the stories which are inserted in this collection. I am more the collector and embellisher, than the creator of these tales; and such as are not immediately copied from recitation are founded upon traditions or stories prevalent in the north...

“There is an air of reality about truth with which fiction can never invest herself...”

How is this first appearance of the Dorothy Vernon - John Manners elopement to be evaluated? To what extent is Allan Cunningham collector or embellisher or perhaps, creator as he was in past endeavors; and to what extent does the story possess the ‘air of reality’ of truth?

The formats of most of the Traditional Tales are similar. There is an introductory poetical quote; this may be of Cunningham’s creation or it may carry an attribution to a famous poet or to an anonymous source.

For The King of the Peak, the introductory quote is attributed to an

“Old Derbyshire Rhyme of Dora Vernon

*What time the bird wakes in its bower,
He stood, and look'd on Haddon tower;
High rose it o'er the woodland height,
With portals strong, and turrets bright,
And gardens green; with swirl and sweep,
Round rush'd the Wye, both broad and deep.
Leaping and looking for the sun,
He saw the red-deer and the dun;
The warders with their weapons sheen,
The watchers with their mantles green;
The deer-hounds at their feet were flung,
The red blood at their dew-laps hung.
Adown he leap'd, and awhile he stood,
With a downcast look, and pondering mood;
Then made a step, and his bright sword drew,
And cleft a stone at a stroke in two—
So shall the heads of my foemen be,
Who seek to sunder my love from me.”*

The meaning of the Rhyme is not complete without the title to link it to Dorothy Vernon. With this connection, it is clear that ‘He’ is John Manners, who looks on Haddon tower to get a glimpse of Dorothy. The ‘foemen’ would be the retainers of George Vernon, King of the Peak. This is a forbidden romance, but John is resolved to win his beloved.

Cunningham tells the story of the imperious King of the Peak and how his daughter out-maneuvers him to marry the man of her choice. It is this part of the story that contains the ‘air of reality’ and is what William Hage would have communicated to him. The elopement may be an embellishment used by Cunningham to connect the oral tradition of a forbidden romance with the historical fact of a famous marriage. But it is very reasonable to assume that the Dorothy Vernon - John Manners marriage was not an ordinary arrangement of the time, in which George Vernon would choose his daughter’s husband. Additional evidence to support this last point has been discovered and will be provided in a later chapter.

Cunningham proceeds with his tale. It is a tale within a tale, with the narrators being an ‘old husbandman’ and an ‘ancient portress’ (counterparts of William Hage and his wife). Woven within the story is a ballad (p72) which might have been written two centuries past, but is clearly a recent

creation by the poet Cunningham. This general format is carried through his other stories.

The King of the Peak has two introductions, one suited to its place within a monthly magazine — “Now, why stays the tale, and what stops the ballad?” said the impatient proprietor of Lyddalcross.” Cunningham has stopped at an inn where the tale is told by a fellow traveller. And one considered more suited to a place within a book — “It happened once in a northern county, that I found myself at a farmer’s fireside.” It is here he meets the story teller. It may be supposed that neither represents how Cunningham came across the idea for his story.

Most likely Allan Cunningham and William Hage came across each other as Cunningham was visiting Haddon Hall to gather material for his articles. Hage, being drawn out at some length, volunteered that over two centuries ago, the demure Dorothy and her lover were able to bend the iron will of the King of the Peak. Perhaps Cunningham seized the moment and articulated to Hage the local tradition that the only way Dorothy and John could effectuate their marriage was by eloping; once they were married, there was little George Vernon could do.

The elopement version, with its implication that a Manners son was not appropriate for a Vernon daughter, would not be expected to be very welcome within Haddon Hall. From the Manners family’s point of view, it was most likely untrue. George Vernon would have been happy to accept Dorothy’s choice, and would not have attempted to arrange a different marriage.

However, William Hage realized that with this addition, he had a compelling story to tell of the romance of Haddon Hall. Embellishments would be added to further entwine the tale and the Hall.

William Camden in his *Britannia* characterized “Sir George Vernon knight, who ... for his magnificent port that he carried, the open house that he kept, and his commendable hospitality” as a “King in the peak. By his daughters and heirs a goodly and great inheritance was transferred unto Sir John Manners ... and to Sir Thomas Stanley.”

Allan Cunningham begins his story of “the mode of alliance between the houses of Haddon and Rutland” by embellishing upon Camden’s statement “The last of the name of Vernon [George Vernon] was renowned far and wide for the hospitality and magnificence of his house, for the splendour of his retinue, and more for the beauty of his daughters, Margaret and Dorothy.” Dorothy Vernon is being brought out of the background to be made a major character in her own right.

The title of the tale, *The King of the Peak*, indicates that Cunningham thought the main interest of the story to be the ambience of Haddon Hall coupled with the larger-than-life persona of Sir George Vernon, and how John Manners successfully confronted and overcame the will of the King of the Peak. It is not until nearly forty years later, in 1860, that Dorothy Vernon will possess the title of the story.

The external fabric in which Cunningham places his story has an 'air of reality' which is missing in later authors' tales. This is most likely due to his decade of experience in visiting and writing about older landmarks for periodicals. Cunningham knew how to closely question the caretaker, Hage, and elicit information to place his story in a correct historical context.

"It happened in the fifth year of the reign of his young and sovereign mistress, that a great hunting festival was held at Haddon, where all the beauty and high blood of Derbyshire assembled." The fifth year of the reign of Elizabeth is 1563, which correctly places Dorothy at age eighteen for her marriage to John Manners. The "hunting festival" avoids a common error of later authors who place the elopement during Margaret's wedding celebration. Dorothy's sister, older by five years, was also married at age eighteen, in the year 1558. Cunningham correctly does not include her in the story; Margaret would be on the Isle of Man with her husband, Sir Thomas Stanley.

Nor does Cunningham mention Dorothy's step-mother, Maude. It is unlikely that she would play a role in an actual George Vernon - John Manners conflict. When she does appear in later stories, Maude Vernon is portrayed as an evil step-mother bent on thwarting Dorothy's romantic inclinations, a role for which there is no historical basis.

Cunningham specifies the chamber "of Dora Vernon, was nigh [near] the cross-bow room, and had a window which looked out on the terraced garden, and the extensive chase towards the hill of Haddon." This would place her chamber on the eastern side of the Hall, between the Eagle Tower and where Dorothy Vernon's Door would be. There would be a relatively easy exit from the window to a deserted part of the grounds, and an escape without using the then non-existent eleven stone steps.

There is not universal agreement as to the specific objection George Vernon could have to John Manners as a son-in-law. Cunningham does not speculate, but instead has Sir George relate to a friend of Manners, "Sir Knight, thou art the sworn friend of John Manners, and well thou knowest what his presumption dares at [marriage to his daughter], and what are the letts [lets; obstacles] between him and me." 'Letts' implies an impediment as opposed to a personal dislike to his daughter's lover.

Later authors would permit historical inaccuracies to intrude upon their stories. Late nineteenth century critics would use these inaccuracies to cast doubt on the premise that there was really an elopement. But an argument on this basis can only prove the carelessness of the author or the author's desire to sacrifice historical accuracy to achieve dramatic effect.

Allan Cunningham creates a fictional framework for the story which is generally followed by later authors. The elopement takes place during an open house celebration where strangers are free to come and go. Cunningham had a post-hunting festival; other authors might have a pre-marriage ball for Margaret or a masked ball affair.

John Manners disguises himself as a person of lower class to gain access to Dorothy; this may be as Cunningham's minstrel or as another author's forester. The galleries above the Banqueting Hall, and the nobles' raised floor within the hall, may be seen by tourists today, though the feasting table is made of elm planks instead of Cunningham's white sycamore.

Cunningham creates the attendant who through inattention allows Dorothy to leave her chamber and depart with Manners. In later stories, the attendant will purposely defy the orders of George Vernon to help the two young lovers. Finally, in order to bring the tale back to historical fact, there is reconciliation among the main characters, though Cunningham acknowledges that it will not occur instantly — "the ancestors of the present family of Rutland sought shelter, for a time, in a distant land, from the wrath of the King of the Peak."

WILLIAM BENNET

William Bennet (or Bennett) was born in 1796 and died in 1879. He was the author of four novels between 1821 and 1827. He did not appear to make a success of these endeavors, and became a solicitor in Chapel-en-le-Frith, a town of Derbyshire. Bennet's third book, published in April 1823 in a run of 750 copies, was entitled *The King of the Peak - A Romance*. Bennet wrote the three volume work under the name of Lee Gibbons. There is no evidence that Bennet knew anything of Allan Cunningham's *The King of the Peak*, nor is there any similarity between the two tales. It was not until October 1832 that all 750 copies had found buyers.

Bennet's publisher tried to persuade him to choose a different title since it was thought to be too similar to Walter Scott's 1822 *Peveril of the Peak*; but Bennet retained the title. His little known novel has been kept alive for almost two centuries by researchers of Haddon Hall, as it is considered one of the sources of the Dorothy Vernon legend.

Bennet's 'Dedication' to his novel includes events leading to its writing and provides interesting background to the story. "I have leaned over the battlements of Haddon tower, I have seen the Wye sparkle beneath ... I have walked amid the silent and deserted courts of Haddon, until my mind's eye has peopled them with the badged domestics of the King of the Peak, until hall and bower, gallery and office have swarmed with population, until I have heard or seemed to hear the notes of the minstrel, and the loud uproar of the revellers. Again is the feast spread in the hall; solitude gives way to life and bustle; the Vernon rises from his marble tomb in Bakewell Church, and is once more at the head of the genial board, surrounded by his two hundred retainers. I pass the old portal of the mansion, and again do I hear the baying of the stag-hounds, and the shouts and horns of the hunters. Again does the lovely Margaret Vernon bound past me on her courser, fleet at the wind, her hood thrown back, her rein loose, her cheek fiery red, her eyes bright as the sun."

Haddon Hall is personified by George Vernon and the world he has created. Dorothy will elope, but this is not a major plot of the story. It is the 'fiery' Margaret who has multiple suitors, not the 'mild and retiring' Dorothy.

Bennet continues with a curious account of his activities. "In February 1822, having a mind to fix upon some work of this kind, I visited Haddon and the adjacent country, to lay in a stock of materials, and returned to my cottage [in Chapel-en-le-Frith] with a tolerable budget full of particulars. On entering my study, I found on the table the London Magazine for that month, which, as I then thought, unfortunately, contained an article, a poem, and a

very fine one, called *The Seven Foresters of Chatsworth*, which embraced my very subject. I found on perusing it ... that the author had forestalled part of my tale, that he had visited and beautifully described my scenery, drawn some of my characters, and altogether had written a much finer ballad than any which had appeared in modern times.”

Both *The Seven Foresters of Chatsworth* in the February 1822 *London Magazine* and *The King of the Peak* in the March 1822 *London Magazine* did not have an attributed author. However it was Alan Cunningham who wrote both pieces. Cunningham did not wish to associate Dorothy Vernon with the Seven Foresters ballad. He named his heroine Julia Vernon, a non-existent person in the history of Haddon Hall, rather than Dora Vernon as in his short story.

Bennet apparently never became aware of the March 1822 *King of the Peak* and read more into Cunningham’s ballad than was intended.

The Seven Foresters of Chatsworth consists of a lengthy introduction followed by a ballad of eighty verses of four lines each (quatrains). The ballad is the tale of seven foresters employed on the Chatsworth estate and their encounter with an outlaw who has poached a deer. That Bennet considers this had ‘forestalled part of my tale’ serves to indicate how far his tale would wander from Haddon Hall and the Vernons. Bennet associates the outlaw with John Manners, though he acknowledges “The Outlaw was there, it is true; but he confesses himself to be a poor devil: whilst my Outlaw, the real one of tradition, was a man of quality.”

The quatrains which Bennet interprets to contain a germ of the John Manners - Dorothy Vernon romance are shown below.

<p>The Outlaw stood upon Chatsworth rock, Looking o’er the vale so narrow And his voice flew fleet as away from the string Starts off the thirsty arrow.</p> <p>And loudly it rung in Haddon-wood, Where the deer in pairs were deman[concealed] And loudly it rung in Haddon-Hall, And up rose Julia Vernon.</p> <p>If ever I heard my true love’s voice, Tis now through my bowers ringing; His voice is sweet as the wild bird’s note, When the buds bloom to its singing.</p> <p>For well I know my true love’s voice, It sounds so gay and clearly; An angel’s voice in a maiden’s ear Would ne’er drop down so dearly.</p>	<p>She took her green robe in a hand White as the opening lily, And the morning sun and the lovely maid Look’d down on Chatsworth valley.</p> <p>She gave one look on the broad green land, And back her tresses sheddin’ With her snowy neck, and her bonnie blue eyes, Came down from the hill of Haddon.</p> <p>She saw the wild dove start from its bower, And heard the green-boughs crashing, And saw the wild deer leap from its lair, And heard the deep stream dashing.</p> <p>And then she saw her own true love Bound past by bush and hollow, And after him seven armed men With many a shout and hollo.</p>
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Oh! had I but thy bow, my love,
And seven good arrows by me,
I'd make the fiercest of thy foes
Bleed ere they could come nigh thee.

On high she held her white hands
In wild and deep devotion,
And lock and lips, and lith [joint] and limb,
Were shivering with emotion.

Nay stay the chase, said a forester then,
For when the lion's roaring
The hound may hide,—May the raven catch
The eagle in his soaring?

Farewell my bow that could send a shaft,
As the levin [lightning] leaves the thunder;
A lady looks down from Haddon height
Has snapt thy strength asunder.

The bank was steep,—down the Outlaw sprung,
The greenwood wide resounded;
The wall was high,—like a hunted hart
O'er it he fleetly bounded.

And when he saw his love he sunk
His dark glance in obeisance:
Comes my love forth to charm the morn,
And bless it with her presence?

How sweet is Haddon hill to me,
Where silver streams are twining!
My love excels the morning star,
And shines while the sun is shining.

Now farewell Chatsworth's woodlands green,
Where fallow-deer are deman,
For dearer than the world to me
Is my love, Julia Vernon.

Bennet finally reasons that “Julia was all a fiction; Sir George’s daughters were called Margaret and Dorothy, two famous old names; but perhaps not so poetical as Julia; at all events they did not so well meet the ear of our poet. I now revived, and began my romance with fresh spirits, and although it has met with many delays, yet at length it is brought to a conclusion.”

Bennet provides evidence that there has been an oral tradition pertaining to the elopement. “That the ancestor of his Grace the Duke of Rutland did gain his bride in the manner described in the following sheets [elopement], the whole neighbourhood of Haddon will bear me out, at least if tradition be regarded as any evidence.”

The main character of *The King of the Peak* is Edward Stanley, the younger brother of Thomas Stanley, and who is characterized in the story as irresponsible and wild and impetuous. The Catholic Sir Edward is involved in a conspiracy to dethrone Queen Elizabeth in favor of Mary, Queen of Scots. In the first of the three volumes, he travels from the Stanley household near Liverpool to Haddon Hall in Derbyshire. Edward Stanley hopes to woo Margaret from her fiance, Thomas; failing that he hopes to improve his fortunes by making a match with the as yet unseen Dorothy. Finally he hopes to win George Vernon over to his revolutionary plot. The end result in Bennet’s novel, however, is as history records it.

Bennet has the distinction of being the first to call Dorothy by the now familiar ‘Doll’. “‘The wench is distraught [distracted] with her books,’ cried Sir George. ‘Why prithee Doll! Dorothy Vernon! come hither.’”

Bennet, speaking through Margaret, is the first to specify reasons for George Vernon to forbid the Vernon - Manners marriage. "He [John Manners] is of noble blood, but difference of sect [religious group] and ancient feud mar all cordiality between our houses." The two reasons, a Catholic - Protestant religious difference AND an undefined 'ancient feud' will be used by later authors as the foundation for the clandestine affair. These reasons are not acknowledged by any of the actual Manners' successors, nor is there historical documentation to this effect.

Bennet makes a notable error, as he twice misstates the relative ages of the Vernon sisters. "My brother Sir Thomas Stanley, is even now at Haddon, paying his court to Sir George's younger daughter, the Lady Margaret Vernon." AND "A man of gentle blood, though his name be unknown [John Manners], often plays the outlaw in Haddon and Chatsworth woods. The rumour was, that he wooed the elder daughter of the Vernon [Dorothy]; and that Knight [Sir George] has charged his keepers with the capture of this gay cavalier."

Bennet also makes the error of having the pre-wedding ball take place in the not-yet-built Long Gallery. "This room above one hundred feet in length and nearly twenty broad, afforded ample space enough for the evening's revel."

The ball is to celebrate the coming wedding of George Vernon's daughters. He has arranged that Margaret will marry Sir Thomas, a match favored by both daughter and prospective husband; and on the same day Dorothy is to marry Sir Edward, whose "desire for Margaret was by no means abated, and the thought that his loss of her was about to be sealed forever rankled venomously in his heart." Clearly Dorothy Vernon has not yet become the centerpiece of Haddon Hall.

What in later tales is to become Dorothy Vernon's Door "which led from the upper end of the gallery into the garden, was thrown open, and lighted with sconces" is described, but not associated with her, and has no role in the elopement sequence.

The ball was a masked affair, allowing John Manners to enter and mingle with impunity. The 'elopement' is better described as a surprise created by Manners to whisk away his Dorothy: "a small door leading from the avenue into the park [Haddon Hall gardens] was broke open, and a number of men armed and masked rushed upon them ... She [Dorothy] then kissed her sister, and bidding all farewell, passed the gate with the outlaw [John]."

Dorothy and John return, unmarried, the same evening. They enter through the garden and up what will become Dorothy Vernon's Steps and through the famous door into the gallery. They encounter Sir George, who

immediately forgives them. The next day Sir George presides over his daughters' double wedding as planned, though one of the grooms has been changed.

“Such, gentle readers, is the end of our eventful history. If it please not all, yet will it please some, and those particularly who either live near or are familiarised with the woods of Haddon, and the ancient residence of the King of the Peak.”

William Bennet visited Haddon Hall and encountered William Hage a short time after Allan Cunningham. It is supposed that Hage offered some version of the elopement tale; Bennet combined it with the Hall as it was presented, and incorporated it into his sweeping story comprising three volumes with a total of eleven hundred pages.

JOHN HOLLAND

John Holland, born 14 March 1794 and died 28 December 1872, was a Sheffield poet and author. He was not a novelist, but wrote poetry and non-fiction as reported in his biography *The Life of John Holland of Sheffield Park* by William Hudson, 1874 “His works are theological, antiquarian, historical, biographical, scientific, critical, poetical ... He was, distinctly, a poet. His verses were so incessantly appearing in the local papers, that they did not always receive the attention due to them.”

Holland was a thoughtful observer, not an embellisher, whose goal was to organize and express what he saw “in pleasing similes and finely-tuned phrases ... As a biographer he stated facts as they appeared to himself and without embellishment ... His acquaintance with the history and the antiquities of his native town and district became very intimate.”

Holland’s ‘poetical sketch’ of Haddon Hall of 12 July 1823, contains the third recorded reference to the Vernon - Manners elopement, coming after the two stories entitled *The King of the Peak*. Unlike the previous stories, *Haddon Hall* may be considered to be a true and unembellished account of Holland’s visit.

Haddon Hall is “A Poetical Sketch In Two Parts.” The first part is a description of a walk from Bakewell to Haddon Hall [two miles] taken by Holland and three of his friends. The three friends, two men and a young lady, are named in his biography and give further credence to the descriptive accuracy of the poem. The second part is the visit to Haddon Hall.

<p style="text-align: center;">HADDON HALL PART II THE MANSION</p> <p>Won by those vague, traditionary themes, On which imagination builds romance; Or led by love or architectural lore, To read and study the baronial styles; Or to indulge, with a luxurious treat, The poet’s fancy or the painter’s eye,— How oft the traveller of the Peak hath sped To feast his genius, and indulge his task, At Haddon’s antient mansion, tree-embower’d! And what, though all be solitude around, And nought but empty silence reigns within; Imagination peoples every space, And sees, advancing as in days of yore, The servile train, or gorgeous retinue, Or solitary knight. We cross’d the Wye, And quickly on the bonny greensward stood,</p>	<p>Within the precincts of old Haddon’s chase, The path before us, while the turrets high Cast their long shadows almost to our feet. Hard by the mansion, on the northern side, As if a vassal of the nobler pile, A cottage stands—a humble tenement, And rear’d in later days; its little court, With many a rose-bush most profusely flower’d, Was thickly set about; with rich festoons A luscious woodbine wreath’d the window-sills, And hung its drapery round the rustic door; Here dwells the portress [Mrs. Hage] of the antient hall— Herself, as well beseems one in her station, A true antique; in manner, face, and speech, You might suspect she claim’d her lineage from The noble owners of the edifice, Nor thought herself a blot in their escutcheon. Ere yet we reach’d her little garden-wicket,</p>
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<p>She welcomed our approach, dress'd for her duty; Her gown was such as my great grandam wore, Florid in pattern, opulent in cut, And well her goodly presence it beseem'd: Her bonnet, too, told of departed days, Casting its broad penumbra o'er a face, That, maugre [in spite of] its acquaintance with the sun, And fourscore winters [more likely seventy] of rough argument, Persisted still that it had dignity; A bunch of keys, the emblems of her trust, And to unlock the secrets of the place, She bore. "Come, friends, and let us mount the hill; How thick the yellow flowering stone-crop grows, Here carpeting, as with a cloth of gold, The limestone rock! Lean on my arm, Elizabeth: This gray-hair'd chronicler of eighty years Seems stronger than ourselves; she climbs with ease." Scarce had I spoken ere the ascent was gain'd, And we were standing at the entrance door. "Look there," exclaim'd the ancient cicerone, Pointing her wither'd finger towards the roof; "That tucked boar's head is the Vernon's crest; He built this noble portion of the hall." "Look here," she said, and, pointing to the ground, Shew'd where a thousand and a thousand feet Had deeply worn into the threshold stone. Now entering by a little hatch, at once we gain'd The court quadrangular. Alas for pomp! How desolate, how silent, and how changed This court appears, since he, who whilome [formerly] named KING OF THE PEAK, made this his residence! Fair dames, and noble knights, yeomen and squires, Have paced this ample space; and many a scene Of pride and bustle has been witness'd here, In those renown'd and hospitable times When seven score servants waited VERNON'S beck.</p>	<p>Those times are past,—and of that numerous train Survives not one to chronicle their names! War-horse nor lady's palfry here are seen; And where the dust once rose round prancing hoofs, Rank moss encumbers the damp pavement stone, And grass springs from the fissures. The proud walls Stand unimpair'd in spite of storms and time; The chapel-turret holds its antient place,— Not so the chapel bell: degraded now, The faithful herald of the time of prayer, (No longer needed and no longer rung,) Lay prone and dumb;—I, with collected strength, Heaved the sonorous metal from the ground, And swung it lustily; the empty halls Echoed the sound, the self-same sound once heard, At Sabbath worship time, through Haddon vale; Now, by the wall return'd, methought the din Seem'd to affront the silence of the place,— To chide me for that loud and wanton peal, That insult to a bell, which, legends say, Hath of its own accord, at midnight's hour, Rung the sure presage of each Rutland's death. Now entering by the porch, an ample room, "This," said our prompt conductress, "was the hall; There sat the master at his dinner board, On either hand his friends,—that lower space His falconer, and his huntsman, and his dogs, With other menials fill'd: Yes, at this board, Though sadly drill'd and eaten by the worms, At this same table Sir George Vernon sat When he was lord of Haddon. Every Christmas, With state and ceremony here was placed A garnish'd boar's head on a pewter dish; The pewter yet remains;—now come this way." The buttery-bench display'd the massy platters; They lay like specimens of coin, once current In a substantial age; and still they bribe The unwilling judgement to believe as true, Old Haddon's tales of hospitality. Upstairs we went, and stroll'd through many a room,</p>
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Damp, cold, and comfortless; the walls time-
 stain'd,
 Or hung with tatter'd arras; here and there
 A picture perishing as nothing worth,
 The cumbrous heir-looms of forgotten years.
 "This was the dancing gallery," said the dame;
 "Its length is eighty feet; and this fair floor
 Was sawn entirely from a single tree;
 And from its roots those steps;—look how
 around,
 High on the pannels, the united crests
 Of Vernon and of Manners are display'd,
 The peacock and the boar's head."
 "Elizabeth,"
 Said I, "thou hast a dainty dancer's foot,
 Form'd on the model of Terpsichore's,—
 Come, let us trip it once along this floor,
 Where many a courtly couple have erewhile
 Made these boards echo to the music's sound."
 Emerging from the mansion, by a door
 Massy and huge, we sought the garden-walks;
 Damp, gloomy avenues of cloistering trees,
 Coeval with the pile; here terrace above terrace,
 Rising with flights of steps and stout stone
 ballustrades,
 Gave to the whole a formal antique air.
 Sole sign of life in this sequester'd spot,
 A solitary peacock stalked along,
 And he appear'd its fit inhabitant:
 In herald's blazon this proud bird of Juno
 Is aye a gorgeous and resplendent subject!
 It seem'd, indeed, as if from the carved frieze
 The crest of Manners, at this noon-tide hour
 Falling, had quickly become animate.

"This was the bower of Lady Dorothy,
 And these her private walks." The portress
 thus;
 But Lady Dorothy no longer walks
 Beneath these trees, nor on that leaf-strown
 path;
 Nor walks her spirit here; this solitude
 Feels like a cumbrous burden on each sense,
 The day-light here seems prisoner of the gloom;
 The very air smells of antiquity,
 As if it here four centuries had been pent,
 While, round, the decomposing leaves exhaled
 This clammy, earthy, odour of decay.
 "Look up there, at that door, now bolted fast,
 And ever hath been since the stern Sir George
 Vow'd in his wrath it ne'er should open more,—
 'Twas thence the gallant heir of Rutland stole
 The heiress of the Vernons; that elopement
 Achieved the union of these noble names,
 And o'er the boar's-head spread the peacock's
 plumage."
 Thus far the garrulous dame. Those days are
 gone;
 And that romantic and true-loving pair,
 Ah what and where are they? They only live
 In gossip-tale, in legendary lore;
 They moulder in their ancestral vaults;
 In alabaster effigies they kneel,
 Niched in the chancel-wall; thus they exist
 In dust, in stone, and in tradition vague;
 And e'en the children pause in Bakewell church,
 Point to their monuments, and quaintly tell
 In homely praise the legend of their loves.
Bakewell, July 12, 1823.

The "portress ... a true antique" would have been Mrs. Hage, about seventy at the time. It is no surprise that Holland, at twenty-nine, would over-estimate her age. That Dorothy Vernon's Door would be "bolted fast" agrees with an account in the 10 April 1841 *Edinburgh Journal*. "The conductress [Mrs. Bath] unlocks a pair of folding doors, which open by a flight of stone steps on the outside into the upper esplanade in the garden, taking care to inform us at the same time that it was by this private postern and flight of steps that the beautiful (and, we should say, indiscreet) Dorothy Vernon eloped with Sir John Manners, on the occasion of a festal meeting in the adjoining ball-room."

The door referred to by Holland through which “emerging from the mansion...we sought the garden-walls” would be the doorway near the oriel window in the downstairs parlour. This door is centrally located at the south and older part of the Hall. [Dorothy Vernon's Door is located at the east and newer part of the Hall.]

This poem contains the first instance of Dorothy exiting by Dorothy Vernon's Door and Steps. This would be an embellishment (historically incorrect) added by the Hages, which represents a marked improvement over Cunningham's window egress. It is doubtful that 'local tradition' would contain this detail, which would not be readily available to someone outside the Hall. Unfortunately, this 'embellishment' has been used by some critics to discount the entire story.

The visitors of 1822-1823, Allan Cunningham and William Bennet and John Holland, each imply the existence of a local tradition pointing to a Dorothy Vernon - John Manners elopement. This would tend to refute the arguments of those who believe that the basic story was created by early authors. Rather, these early authors provided the means by which Haddon Hall guides could feel free to retell and embellish the tale for new sightseers.

THE LEGEND BEGINS

The period from 1830 to the mid 1840's represents the movement of the story of the Dorothy Vernon elopement to the pages of Derbyshire guide books and historical accounts of Haddon Hall. The caretakers have succeeded in weaving the legend into the fabric of the Hall. From 1830 on, there is scarcely an account of a Haddon Hall visit which does not include mention of the unusual Dorothy Vernon - John Manners romance. It is usually prefaced with a statement to the effect "There is a tradition associated with Haddon Hall ..."

Stephen Glover: *The Peak Guide* (1830) Glover's "Topographical, Statistical and General History" contains a word for word reprise of Richard Ward's association of Haddon Hall with Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*, though without citing the source. Ward made no mention of the elopement; Glover, however, presents its first inclusion in a book of historical accuracy. "The youngest of his [George Vernon] co-heiresses, Dorothy, married Sir John Manners, second son of Thomas, the first Earl of Rutland: report says that the marriage was clandestine, and the apartment from which the lovers effected their escape through the gardens is pointed out by the person who shows the hall."

Agreeing with John Holland's description of the couple's escape, it appears that the Hages are established as the creators of Dorothy Vernon's Steps and Dorothy Vernon's Door. This anachronism is first noted by Henry Duesbury in the 1852 volume of the *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, in an article *Haddon Hall*. "In the first place it is difficult to imagine where the ball could have been held; in the next, it is not clear that the doorway and the steps leading to it existed, because Sir John Manners finished the long gallery, and the rooms adjoining; and in the third place, such a proceeding was quite unnecessary, as Sir John Manners was in every way an eligible match, and there is not the slightest hint of any quarrel between him and his father-in-law."

The third part of this wide-ranging rejection of the elopement tale is easily discounted by recalling the Catholic Vernon - Protestant Manners difference. The first part can be debated, as the size of the ball could have been constrained to fit within the Banqueting Hall and adjacent rooms. That the doorway and steps were not yet in place is, however, accepted as historical fact.

The Duesbury article appears to have lain unnoticed for nearly forty years, as elopement by way of Dorothy Vernon's Door and Steps becomes the normative version of the legend. It is not until 1890, and continuing through 1906, that a number of 'historical' booklets and books are

published which reprise Duesbury's positions. Specifically, the non-existence of the door and steps at the time of Dorothy's marriage is firmly established, and this leads to a polarization of positions as to the elopement, which has not yet been settled.

Samuel Rayner: *History and Antiquities of Haddon Hall* (1836) This is the first book devoted completely to the subject of Haddon Hall. It features thirty-two excellent drawings of the interior and exterior features of Haddon. Rayner provides important historical background on George Vernon and his family. "Sir Henry Vernon (died 1515) married the Lady Ann Talbot, daughter of John, the second of his name and family who bore the title of Earl of Shrewsbury. His eldest son, Sir Richard Vernon (died 1517) succeeded him at Haddon."

"Sir George (1508-1565) was but nine years old at the time of his father's decease. He was twice married: first to Margaret, daughter of Sir Gilbert Talbois; and after her death to Matilda [or Maude], daughter of Sir Ralph Longford, of Longford, in the county of Derby. The second survived him, and took for her second husband Sir Francis Hastings, of North Cadbury, in Somersetshire."

"Sir George Vernon left two daughters, his co-heiresses, Margaret and Dorothy. These ladies were both married at the time of his decease: Margaret, the elder, aged twenty-six, being then the wife of Sir Thomas Stanley, second son of Edward, Earl of Derby; and Dorothy, aged twenty-one, the wife of Sir John Manners, second son of Thomas Baron Roos, and Earl of Rutland (died 1543), the first of his name and family who held that earldom."

As Glover did before him, Rayner brings the legend of Dorothy Vernon into the mainstream of historical studies — "It may be proper to notice a romantic tradition, still current in the vicinity of Haddon, relative to the courtship and marriage of Mr. Manners with the younger co-heiress of Vernon."

It is clear from the section on William Hage that he and Rayner were in close contact, and that Hage would have noted there was a 'romantic tradition.' Rayner, however, does not credit Hage with telling the details of the elopement, nor is there any mention of Dorothy Vernon's Door and Steps. Instead he reprises the particulars from William Bennet's story. "The lover, who was perhaps thirty years of age, having conceived an attachment for Miss Vernon, a beautiful girl of eighteen, dwelt for some time in the woods of Haddon, as an outlaw, or rather in the dress of a game-keeper, (probably with the popular reputation of being an outlawed man,) for the purpose of concealment, and in order to facilitate secret interviews with his

mistress; and he at length succeeded in persuading the young lady to elope with him, during the festivities of a masked ball, given by Sir George Vernon, in honour of the marriage of his elder daughter, Margaret, with Sir Thomas Stanley, a younger son of the Earl of Derby. The author of a Romance in three volumes entitled *The King of the Peak*, published in 1823, has adopted this tradition as the basis of his tale.” But how much of the ‘tradition’ was Bennet’s creation?

Rayner has begun the process of interweaving Haddon Hall history, fiction, and tradition in such a way that it is difficult, if not impossible to ever separate them again. Thus begins the legend of Haddon Hall’s Dorothy Vernon: either a popular myth of recent origin OR a historical story handed down from early times.

William Adam: *The Gem of the Peak* (1838) Adam’s “Guide to Matlock Bath and its Vicinity” was published in six editions from 1838 through 1857. Moorland Publishing Company reprinted the fifth edition in 1973 — “Gem of the Peak: The most celebrated guide book to the Peak of Derbyshire and surrounding areas in Victorian times.”

Adam completes the task of incorporating the romance of Dorothy Vernon into the history of Haddon Hall. His sections on Bakewell Church and Haddon Hall display a detailed knowledge of the previously cited publications coupled with a personal visit to the Hall and a detailed interview with William Hage. Adam quotes from Davies: *View of Derbyshire*, Glover: *The Peak Guide*, Rayner: *History and Antiquities of Haddon Hall* among others. One consequence of this extensive quoting is stating two dates for George Vernon’s death, as reported by Davies.

Adam recalls the Ann Radcliffe association. “The sun was fast declining in the far west when we attained the eminence near Haddon ... [Haddon Hall] a structure which assisted the imagination of Mrs. Radcliffe in its wildest flights, when writing *Mysteries of Udolpho*.” His later reaction is strong and personal. “We cannot be surprised on passing through this house that Mrs. Radcliffe (as already noticed) should have obtained her most powerful impression here. Its corridors, fretted cornices, tattered arras, low dark-looking rooms and passages, thick walls and great extent are highly calculated to inspire such scenes as she has depicted in her work. A strange work it is; but life is more strange; no human pen can depict it.” Unfortunately, much of what he has described is not available to today’s visitor.

Adam successfully brings together his personal experience of Haddon with the published associations of previous authors. This ability works to establish the ‘factual’ basis of what had been conjecture. His description of

the elopement through Dorothy Vernon's door defines the 'truth' of the lovers' story. "We were let out by a pair of clumsy folding doors, in the Ante-room, to the upper Terrace. Out of these doors, it is said, the beautiful Dorothy Vernon eloped with Sir John Manners, on one of Haddon's bridal and festive nights, when the ball-room was crowded with gay and joyous guests, listening to the sweet strains of music, or tripping it in the mazy [giddy] and exhilarating dance."

For the author of an authentic guide book, Adam takes an unusual liberty in the following description. "Of interest to the lovers of romantic love stories is her [Dorothy Vernon] study, with an oriel window and lattice, which it is said she opened to converse with her lover, who approached it unobserved from the wood on this [north] side, and gave her intimation of his presence by the sweet and gentle strains of his lute." This thought is taken from William Bennet's book where under Dorothy's window — "A sweet and melodious tune was once or twice played over, upon an instrument, a guitar or lute; and then a voice, denoted by its round and full tenor to be a man's, though blended with great sweetness."

By 1860 six editions of *The Gem of the Peak* had been published over a twenty year period. Dorothy Vernon's Legend as a 'story handed down from early times and popularly regarded as historical' had been firmly established. This was the product of non-critical 'historians' who incorporated the fancies of fictional novelists into their narratives.

It would not be until the end of the century that serious questions would be raised, anachronisms noted and heated debates arise. By then it would be too late: the story would be accepted by the public as fundamentally true, regardless of questionable details associated with it.

From 1860 through 1910, short stories, novels, an operetta and a play were created, and they would continue to spread the tale.

PRINCESS OF THE PEAK

Eight references between 1820 and 1860 have been cited that have noted the Dorothy Vernon - John Manners elopement:

1822—Allan Cunningham, <i>King of the Peak</i>	1836—Samuel Rayner, <i>History of Haddon Hall</i>
1823—William Bennet, <i>King of the Peak</i>	1838—William Adam, <i>Gem of the Peak</i>
1823—John Holland, <i>Haddon Hall</i> (poem)	1841— <i>Edinburgh Journal</i> , <i>Haddon Hall</i>
1830—Stephen Glover, <i>The Peak Guide</i>	1852—Henry Duesbury, <i>Haddon Hall</i>

This thread of the legend tends to be forgotten, and is supplanted by Eliza Meteyard in 1860 with *The Love Steps of Dorothy Vernon*. G. Le Blanc-Smith in *Haddon - The Manor, The Hall, Its Lords and Traditions* (1906) makes the error of stating “The tale [elopement] was first concocted by a lady who wrote under the euphonious non de plume of Silverpen [Eliza Meteyard].” This error has tended to obscure the existence of earlier references and helped Meteyard’s story to become the definition of the legend. The problem is that she has taken Cunningham’s sparse tale and embellished it with anachronisms and other issues which allow Le Blanc-Smith and other critics to easily discount its truthfulness. However, as Le Blanc-Smith admits, “The romantic tale was immediately given credence, and it is impossible to eradicate it from present-day people.”

Eliza Meteyard, born 21 June 1816 and died 4 April 1879, supported herself throughout her life as a writer of novels, articles for weekly journals, short stories and biography. She was given the pen name ‘Silverpen’ when she wrote an editorial for a ‘radical’ weekly newspaper.

Llewellynn Jewitt, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, published the first issue of *The Reliquary* in July 1860. It was intended to be “A Depository of Precious Relics - Legendary, Biographical, and Historical, Illustrative of the Habits, Customs, and Pursuits, of our Forefathers.”

Contributions by Meteyard and William Bennet (*King of the Peak*) appear in this eclectic publication. Jewitt is also the author of the 1871 book *Illustrated Guide to Haddon Hall*. It is not surprising that Jewitt states in this book “It is said, and no doubt with truth, that it was through this [Dorothy Vernon’s] doorway and down these steps that the lovely Dorothy Vernon passed on the night of her elopement ... Very sweetly has the tradition of love and elopement of this noble pair been worked up by the imagination in a story *The Love Steps of Dorothy Vernon*, by a popular writer in the *Reliquary*.”

Eliza Meteyard’s *The Love Steps of Dorothy Vernon* appears in the October 1860 second issue of *The Reliquary*. This is the first story in which Dorothy Vernon appears in the title and is clearly the central person. The story opens in early December, when preparations are being made for a

grand Haddon Hall Christmas open house to celebrate Margaret's impending marriage to Sir Thomas Stanley. The evidence which discounts the placing of the two marriages on the same evening, one by arrangement and one by elopement, is not yet known. But regardless of future evidence to the contrary, Meteyard has established the part of the legend that Dorothy's elopement is on the evening of her sister's scheduled wedding.

W. A. Carrington in the June 1900 issue of *The Journal of the British Archaeological Association* notes "That the betrothal and marriage of Margaret had no element of romance, whatever may have been the case with regard to her sister Dorothy, is abundantly evident from the entries in an early volume of Household Accounts [of Haddon Hall]:

1555 - Spent by my Mr. [George Vernon] at Newcastle-under-Lyme upon Thursday the fifth of September at the talks of the marriage between Sir Thomas Stanley and Miss Margaret [age 15], five shillings.

1556 - At London, paid for the copying of the articles between the Earl of Derby and my Mr. for the marriage that should be had between the said Earl's son and his daughter, three shillings, four pence."

"The marriage of Sir Thomas Stanley with Margaret Vernon took place between January and May 1558, when Margaret was about eighteen years of age." This is the first reference that places the Vernon - Stanley marriage in 1558, making it unlikely that Dorothy, at thirteen, would elope at the same time. There are no indications that household accounts were preserved for the period leading up to the Vernon - Manners marriage in 1563.

Meteyard would appear to correctly place Dorothy's room within the Hall, on the north side, midway between the visitor's entrance and the Eagle Tower. John Manners is correctly stated to be "years far older than her." The date of his birth is not known, but he is at least ten years older than Dorothy. Or should we say 'Doll' for Meteyard uses the term whenever Dorothy is affectionately addressed. Doll was first used by Bennet; Meteyard succeeds in making it an appropriate reference for the princess of the peak.

Meteyard correctly identifies Maude as Dorothy's step-mother. Maude was only about eight years older than Dorothy, and it would seem that George Vernon married her in the hope of producing a male heir. Maude is described as a "vigilant Dame" who "strictly guarded" Dorothy and was continually looking for an excuse to dole out punishment to her. The 'evil step-mother' theme was created by Meteyard; later authors would seize on this idea to create additional conflict and uncertainty in the story. There is no historical evidence of this being true; it seems to be solely a dramatic

creation of Meteyard. Cunningham and Bennet, authors of the same-named *King of the Peak*, do not mention Maude Vernon.

John Manners has lived “in the common rough hose and jerkin of a forester” for nearly three months “in these savage woods” in order to exchange a few words at odd intervals with his beloved Doll. He finally induces her to overcome her devotion to Sir George, and to elope during the celebration ball. This part of the story, or a slight variation thereof, is common to all versions; it demonstrates their attachment and depth of love for each other.

Meteyard creates Dorothy’s nursemaid, who has cared for the “sweet lady-bird” since her infancy. The nursemaid, Luce, is devoted to Dorothy and serves as the go-between to pass messages and plans for elopement to John Manners. There is the baker, Tom Dawes, who is the contact for John. Messages are passed in the sequence John–Dawes–Luce–Dorothy and back again, as George Vernon’s wishes and orders are defied.

Dawes and Luce appear by different names and in different roles in the stories which will follow. He is usually cast as a game-keeper and is Manners’ protector within the Haddon forest. The secret tasks performed by these fictional characters have no historical basis, and it must be questioned as to whether real servants would choose to defy the King of the Peak. There is no version in which George Vernon’s suspicion is aroused after the elopement, and where the Luce or Dawes characters are punished or even questioned. Thus continues the romance of the tale.

Margaret Vernon is described as a “proud beauty” in contrast to the “sweet Doll.” This is reminiscent of Bennet’s characterizations in his novel. Meteyard brings Dorothy’s sister into the tale as another sympathetic ear for Dorothy to confide in.

The location of the bakehouse “in the upper court, Luce crossed to its north side, near King John’s [or Eagle] Tower” is correctly placed. However Dorothy’s escape “through corridor and chamber, by the northern tower to the west front, and at last reached safely the garden parlour ... made eleven small prints upon the eleven stone steps” is confusing; the door and steps are on the east, not west, part of the Hall.

Eliza Meteyard thus completes her defining tale of Dorothy Vernon and John Manners with an escape through Dorothy Vernon’s Door and down Dorothy Vernon’s Steps.

Another tale of the 1860s to include the Dorothy Vernon - John Manners romance is entitled *Haddon Hall*; it is contained in the two volume *Anecdotes of the Upper Ten Thousand - Their Legends and Their Lives* by Grantley F. Berkeley, and was published in 1867. Berkeley brought together

a number of oral legends of the Vernons and Haddon Hall, and wove them into a single tale culminating in the famous elopement. Berkeley recalls a visit to Haddon Hall four years earlier. "In an inn of the best sort [Peacock at Rowsley], I found myself in the bright month of July 1863." Mrs. Bath, who became caretaker after William Hage's death in 1840, was still there. "I entered the neatly-kept lodge of the housekeeper, Mrs. Bath, which domicile used to be the stable to the establishment ... There was not a room [in Haddon Hall] that was not as well aired as any in an inhabited mansion."

Berkeley does not draw from Meteyard's tale; his story was composed too early to include the Meteyard influence. His fictionalized account includes the obviously incorrect "It was in the latter years of Queen Mary [prior to 1558] that the eldest daughter of Sir George Vernon died, and thus placed Dorothy, his surviving child, as sole apparent heiress of his wealth and wide domains, and mistress of his ancient Hall." Missing from this tale are Margaret Vernon, Thomas Stanley, and George Vernon's second wife. Berkeley appears to have used Bennet's *King of the Peak* as the source of much of his story. He chose a masked ball during the Christmas season as the vehicle to allow Manners to enter the Vernon grounds and spirit Dorothy away.

Berkeley has the distinction of being the first, if not only, author to make a *manners / Manners* pun, as George Vernon says to Dorothy "See, each carving of the boar's head has the mistletoe attached. Well I know not who is to salute thee as my daughter and as thy suitor; it would *not be manners*—Heyday! what makes thee blush so, child? Hast thou a suitor, then? But, as I was saying, it would *not be manners* for any man, to touch thy cheek so familiarly."

DOROTHY VERNON MUDDOCK

James Edward Muddock, born 28 May 1843 and died 23 January 1934, was a prolific writer and a staunch believer of the Dorothy Vernon - John Manners elopement story. He also wrote under the pseudonyms of Joyce Emmerson Muddock and Dick Donovan.

Muddock was drawn to the romantic Haddon Hall story. His first effort was a short story for the October 1878 issue of *Temple Bar, A London Magazine, For Town and Country Readers*. There is no attributed author, but the characters, wording and details are identical to Muddock's later efforts.

Muddock draws heavily on the preceding stories of Dorothy Vernon. The main thread of *The Story of Dorothy Vernon* is based on Meteyard's *The Love Steps of Dorothy Vernon*. Many details of Meteyard's story show up; Dorothy's devoted nursemaid Luce reappears, as does Lady Maude as the "scheming scornful step-mother," and Dorothy once more runs down the eleven steps to her elopement during her sister's wedding celebration.

Muddock was familiar with the other early stories of the romance. He incorporated William Bennet's inclusion of Sir Thomas Stanley's younger brother as the favored suitor for Dorothy's hand. He incorporated Grantley Berkeley's game keeper spying upon John's and Dorothy's clandestine meeting.

The tale was erroneously set in 1567 (instead of 1563). Dorothy would be beyond the age of "budding womanhood" in 1567. There is also the mistake of having Margaret deace before Sir George; all histories mention the inheritances of the "co-heiresses of Haddon," and Dorothy would not be a sole heiress as stated by Muddock. Perhaps he was influenced by Berkeley's erroneous statement of Margaret's early death. Records show that Margaret Vernon Stanley outlived both husband Thomas and sister Dorothy, dying in 1596.

Muddock makes important additions to the Dorothy Vernon - John Manners romance. He originates their elopement flight toward the Manners properties in Leicester, and their marriage at Aylestone (of which there is no record). He places on firm ground the bribery by Manners of the head forester to allow Manners to skulk around the grounds, and on firmer ground the familiar name of "Doll" Vernon.

Muddock's second effort is the slim volume *DOLL: A Dream of Haddon Hall, Being the Story of Dorothy Vernon's Wooing and Flight*. This book was first published in 1880 and became a best seller. The Fifth Edition was published in 1892 and is specified as representing a run to that date of Fifty Thousand.

All editions of the book include the portrait of a lady and the notation — “Dorothy Vernon — This portrait is an authentic likeness of Dorothy when a girl. It is copied by permission from an old oil Painting in possession of his Grace the Duke of Rutland.” In the later edition, Muddock adds the note — “For a number of years it hung on the wall of the parlour in the little cottage occupied then by the widow of Travis Bath [died 1861], the caretaker of the Hall. During one of my many visits to Haddon, Mrs. Bath told me that the picture had come out of the Hall with a lot of ‘other rubbish.’ With Mrs. Bath’s permission I subsequently took the picture down, carried it into the sunshine, and sponged it with soap and water, the result being that I brought to light a sweet womanly face, which, from all I had heard of Dorothy Vernon, struck me as being that of the celebrated beauty. I at once communicated with the late Duke of Rutland, asking his permission to photograph it [from which the print was made]. Subsequently, I learned that His Grace the Duke of Rutland, being convinced of the authenticity of the oil painting, had it restored, and I understand it now hangs on the walls of Belvoir Castle.”



The cover of the fifth edition contains the notation "A Souvenir, Price 1/-" which implies that for one shilling, the book could be purchased at Haddon Hall as a souvenir of one's visit. Also printed on the cover is a facsimile of Muddock's signature. On page 93 is the advertisement

"Savoy Theatre,
Every Evening at 8.15, and every Saturday Afternoon at 2.30,
HADDON HALL, An Original Light English Opera,
by Sydney Grundy and Arthur Sullivan.
Box-Office Open from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.
R. D'Oyly Carte, Proprietor and Manager."

Muddock presents an elongated version, with more detail of character, of his original *The Story of Dorothy Vernon*. The tale is again set in 1567 and is specified to be in the period leading up to Margaret Vernon's wedding ball [which historically occurred in 1558]. He repeats his error of having Margaret decease within a year of her marriage. The story is similar to his first effort as Dorothy once again runs down the eleven stone steps to join her husband-to-be.

It is obvious that Muddock is intrigued by the story of the Dorothy Vernon romance. His next effort, original in concept, occurs in September 1882, when he names his new daughter Dorothy Vernon Muddock. Muddock now had his own Princess of the Peak: In 1900, Dorothy married Herbert Greenhough-Smith, the editor of the Strand magazine. As Dorothy Greenhough-Smith, she won a bronze medal for Figure Skating in the 1908 Olympics. Dorothy also won two British Figure Skating Championships, in 1908 and 1911.

Muddock's full length novel, *Sweet Doll of Haddon Hall*, appears in 1903. It was probably meant to take advantage of the renewed interest created by the popular *The Heiress of Haddon OR The Romance of Haddon Hall* by William Elliott Doubleday (1889, reprinted through 1917) and the best-selling *Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall* by Charles Major (1902, reprinted through 1924). These novels share the observation included with the 'sample copy' of the Charles Major book that "The plot is fiction, of course, but based on a romantic story of love and elopement, long current among the personal annals of Elizabethan history."

The existence of two identical novels, copyright 1902, should be noted. They are *Dorothy Vernon OR The Beauty of Haddon Hall* (anonymous) and *Mistress Dorothy of Haddon Hall* by the unknown Henry Hastings. These American published books are either plagiarized from Muddock's novel or written anonymously by Muddock himself.

Sweet Doll of Haddon Hall is unique in that Muddock precedes it with a Proem, an introduction, where he presents his understanding of the historical truth of the legend and his defense of its actual occurrence. Muddock must have studied historical texts on Haddon Hall in the intervening years; he backtracks on previous assertions which could easily be disputed. "Of the many love stories that have thrown a halo around some decaying ruin, not one has appealed so strongly to the sympathies and imagination of the general public as that of Dorothy Vernon, co-heiress of the once proud, defiant and all-powerful 'King of the Peak Country,' Sir George Vernon, who passed away in 1565." Muddock has the correct year of George Vernon's death and no longer insists upon Margaret Vernon's early death.

It is apparent that he believes that there may have been an older version of Dorothy Vernon's Door and Steps in place before the present ones were built; also that it may have been a very young Dorothy who eloped with John Manners. "On the very night of the wedding, when a ball was in progress, the beautiful and youthful Dorothy slipped from the ballroom, and, aided by an old and faithful nurse, she quickly donned some warmer clothing, ran lightly down the flight of stone steps that lead from what is now known as Dorothy Vernon's Porch, and, joining her waiting and anxious lover, John Manners, rode with him all through that fateful night." Muddock believes the elopement did take place and in the manner just described. He weaves his tale about that reality, but as to the introduction of obviously fictional events and characters, states "In submitting this work, based upon the story of Dorothy Vernon's wooing and flight, I make no claim whatever that it is an historical novel. It is a romance of a romantic and picturesque period."

James Edward Muddock turns out to be the most staunch and uncompromising defender of the Dorothy Vernon story in all its romantic particulars. His final effort on the subject is the little known book published in 1907, *Did Dorothy Vernon Elope? - A Rejoinder* [to G. Le Blanc-Smith].

DID DOROTHY VERNON ELOPE

G. Le Blanc-Smith, in *Haddon - The Manor, The Hall, Its Lords and Traditions* (1906), states with strong conviction and a condescending attitude his opinion of the Dorothy Vernon legend. This is the normative argument against elopement: Its appeals are to the illogic of the supposition that an elopement is needed, to anachronisms present in the 'standard' story, and to the lack of objective evidence to support an elopement. Following are some quotes from this work.

"We now turn to Dorothy Vernon, celebrated the world over as a high-born heroine of a runaway love-affair. Unfortunately, the grounds on which this story is based are, to all intents and purposes, non-existent.

"Over the subject of her marriage much ink has been spilled by novelists, by whom she has been dubbed 'the Heiress of Haddon,' and even—it makes one shudder and sets one's teeth on edge—'Sweet Doll of Haddon.'

"The point which the romantically inclined fall foul over is as to whether the marriage of Dorothy Vernon with John Manners was runaway and romantic or was peaceable and prosaic. Why should a young man of such good family, son of an Earl, be considered no suitable husband to a second daughter of a country squire, important though he was, and possessed of fine estates?

"This is the state of affairs which the disciples of romance would have us believe; but in their ardour to lend an air of fact to their tale, they have gone too far, and given away the imposture. The tale was first concocted [Le Blanc-Smith makes a notable error] by a lady who wrote under the euphonious nom de plume of Silverpen. The romantic tale was immediately given credence, and it is impossible to eradicate it from present-day people, who receive such tales with open ears and hearts, but close them to dry, historical facts; for the tale is daily repeated by the custodians of the Hall. Every day, are the steps down which Dorothy is said to have fled to her lover, and the very room in which she is said to have been dancing at the ball in her sister's honour, shown to these visitors, the former under the title of 'Dorothy Vernon's Steps.'

"It is also stated that Dorothy, whose love for John Manners was known, was kept a virtual prisoner and was always under close observation. The object of her affections, Manners, was therefore denied the house; so, with true inventive genius, he disguised himself as a forester, and thus hung about the Hall unrecognised.

"The strict watch over Dorothy seems to have been for a time relaxed during a ball given in honour of the marriage or engagement of her sister Margaret, which was held in the beautiful Long Gallery. Dorothy had

apparently apprised her lover of her intention to escape during the festivities for the purpose of contracting a hasty and clandestine marriage. She therefore left the ballroom, entered the anteroom adjoining, and left by the steps now named after her. She mounted one of the horses which John Manners had in readiness, and fled with him to his father's estates.

"The amount of truth contained in this undoubtedly pretty tale may be gauged from the fact that the very room in which she was supposed to have been dancing, and the actual steps down which she is said to have fled were built by her husband, John Manners, when he duly married her and became possessed of the Haddon estates!

"There is not one particle of historical or documentary evidence to support the tale of elopement. Sir John Manners was buried with Dorothy his wife in the Vernon Chapel of Bakewell Church.

"The tomb is ornamented with the effigies of Sir John and Dorothy kneeling. The figure of Sir John is said to be, as regard [the shape of] his face, remarkably like the body removed from beneath it in 1841. This being the case, we may easily suppose that the likeness of the real Dorothy to her effigy was as great. She was not beautiful, judging from this portrait (if portrait it is), but of a homely caste of countenance."



Other Derbyshire notables had weighed in with opinions against an elopement, though in a more gentle manner than did Le Blanc-Smith.

J. Alfred Gotch in *A Short Account of Haddon Hall* (1889), tells the details of the elopement, and sums up with “Who has not pictured these things to himself?—all in happy oblivion that Dorothy was a Vernon, and that the ball-room, and her own particular steps were all made by the Rutlands, and most likely by the very Sir John who carried her off.”

Janetta Rutland, Duchess of Rutland, in *Haddon Hall - Being Notes On Its History* (1890) states “The well-known and romantic story of the elopement of Dorothy with John Manners will hardly bear the test of criticism, at all events in its details, though it may have some historical foundation.” The Duchess of Rutland makes her skepticism clear by repeating Henry Duesbury’s observation that “Sir John Manners was in every way an eligible match.” (See section ‘The Legend Begins – Stephen Glover’ for Duesbury’s complete statement.)

Other authors of that time can be cited, but they have little of original thought to contribute on the subject. It should be apparent to the reader that there is NEITHER objective evidence pointing to an elopement, which would be in the form of a marriage registry in a church near the Manners’ estates NOR objective evidence pointing to a planned marriage, which would be in the form of household records relating to marital negotiations or celebratory expenses. It is noted that no records have been found concerning the Vernon - Manners marriage, nor any events relating to it.

The critics of the elopement have managed to frame the argument not as elopement, but as elopement in accordance with the ‘standard’ story of it occurring at the time of Margaret’s wedding, during a celebration in the Long Gallery, culminating with an escape down the eleven stone steps. Muddock has nibbled at this bait, and much of his defense consists of convoluted ‘proofs’ that a real elopement would have occurred in the same manner as in his and Meteyard’s stories.

Enraged by Le Blanc-Smith’s polemics, Muddock published the ninety-three page pamphlet *Did Dorothy Vernon Elope?* in 1907. This is probably the only extensive publication examining all possible arguments and reaching the conclusion that “Dorothy Vernon did elope!”

Muddock begins by dressing down Le Blanc-Smith. “He accuses a very well known and distinguished historical writer, Miss Eliza Meteyard ‘Silver Pen’ of having invented the story. This remarkable error is in keeping with other errors which appear in Mr. Le Blanc-Smith’s book, and they seem to indicate that he is unreliable as an historian ... It is the very essence of absurdity to suppose that any writer would have invented such a story about

two great families, unless there had been the *suggestion of tradition*, and all traditions have some foundation.”

Muddock writes on the subject of The Wooing. “How did the young couple manage to communicate? ... The houses of rich people were isolated, and carefully guarded by retainers against marauders and undesirable visitors ... It may therefore be assumed that if John Manners was a *persona ingrata* to Sir Vernon and his lady, he would have little chance of wooing Dorothy unless it was by stratagem ... As to how Dorothy and John first met, must necessarily be the merest conjecture ... One account says John assumed the character of an outlaw, a rather vague term; another that he took service as a woodman under her father's chief forester ... Hawking parties, as we know from old records and prints, were invariably attended by ladies; it was a sport that appealed to ladies. It is in the highest degree probable, therefore, that Dorothy was the frequent companion of her father when he was hawking ... Assuming that John was playing the role of a woodman, it is quite conceivable that Doll would have opportunity of occasionally meeting the bold young man who was running such risks on her account.

“They would have to depend a good deal on a go-between. The ‘tip’ and bribe were as much a force then as in our own dull prosaic times. As the final stage of the wooing was reached, and John had exacted a promise from the fair Dorothy that she would fly with him, to that end some trusted servitor would be instructed to have a horse or horses ready at a given spot at the time fixed upon.

“The popular version of the story is that Dorothy eloped on the night of the very day on which Margaret was joined in the bonds of holy matrimony to Sir Thomas Stanley. There are reasons, however, for rejecting that theory, but it is highly probable an evening was selected when some revels were going on. At such a time the usual vigilance would be to a certain extent relaxed.”

Muddock writes on the subject of Dorothy's Age and Appearance. “There is one point which on the first blush seems to support the contention that Dorothy did not elope at the time stated [1558], and that is her age. Sir George Vernon died in August 1565. Both his daughters were then married, and a post-mortem Inquisition was held to prove the heirship of Margaret and Dorothy to their father's immense property. Margaret was 25 years old, and Dorothy 20 years. It is known that Margaret was married to Sir Thomas Stanley about May of 1558, when she would be 18 years of age. If Dorothy was 20 when her father died, she could only have been thirteen when she eloped [at her sister's wedding ball]. These old Inquisitions often erred, however, with regard to the ages of people concerned in them ... At the time

of her marriage she would be between 14 and 15 years of age. Although so youthful she would not have been considered an unmarriageable age at that period." Muddock still insists on Dorothy's elopement at the time of her sister's wedding, even though he moves the date to 1558 from the 1567 of his earlier stories. The actual date of her planned marriage or elopement is 1563, when she was 18.

"I am now going to suggest another reason why it is in the highest degree probable that it was a runaway match. John Manners at the time of his marriage was probably twice the age of his wife [John's birth date is not known, but it is believed he is about ten years older than Dorothy] ... With a large family of brothers [four] and sisters [six] to be provided for, he [John] hadn't much to look forward to ... If the religious difficulty is set aside [Catholic Vernon versus Protestant Manners], there is still the theory that John was objected to: on the score of his age AND on his lack of fortune.

"In his [Le Blanc-Smith] anger with those who refer to a ball having been given in the Long gallery or ball-room to celebrate Margaret's marriage, he declares that it was impossible because the room was built by John Manners *after* he came into possession of the Haddon estates. In contradiction to this, a well-informed gentleman well versed in antiquarian lore, and who had charge of the structure of Haddon Hall for something like ten years, says the '*very latest date that can be given for the building of the Long gallery or ball-room is the time of Sir George Vernon.*' [This assertion is not made anywhere else in print.] He also suggests the possibility of there having been a window where Dorothy Vernon's porch now is, and it was through that window she got when she escaped from the house to join her lover. It is difficult to believe that there was neither window nor door at that particular part of the building. The accounts showing the charges for the doorway and steps, which were built in 1650, speak, I believe of 'making a new doorway.' Might that not mean, making a new doorway where an old one had previously been."

Muddock addresses the comments by Le Blanc-Smith on Dorothy's effigy in Bakewell Church. "Visitors to Bakewell Church will remember that over the tomb where John Manners and his wife sleep are carved effigies of John Manners and his wife Dorothy. The latter is a hideous caricature, and if it is a likeness of Dorothy as Mr. Le Blanc-Smith asserts it is, then the renowned Dorothy Vernon, whose beauty is extolled by the novelists, was ugly indeed. But this crude and clumsily carved effigy is no more a likeness of Dorothy than is any one of the gargoyles at Haddon Hall ... About the year 1846, the church, or portion of it, was being rebuilt, and it was found necessary to disturb the tomb of the Manners. For some purpose or other the

coffins containing the bodies of Dorothy and her husband were opened ... The head of Sir John was a withered, fleshless skull, but was said to resemble the effigy [in having an uncommon shape]. On this [evidence] Mr. Le Blanc-Smith declares that the effigy [of Dorothy] over the tomb was undoubtedly a likeness, and on that bit of sophism he justifies himself when he tries to prove that poor Dorothy Vernon, the heroine of one of the most romantic love stories in the English language was as ugly as a gargoyle."

It is left to the reader to decide the merits of the assertions of Messrs. G. Le Blanc-Smith and J. E. Muddock.

CHRONICLE OF JOHN HARESTAFFE

The *Rhymed Chronicle of John Harestaffe* was written over a twenty year period from 1615 through 1635. It covers the forty-four years starting from 1591, during which time Harestaffe was the “faithful agent and confidential clerk” of the Vernon family of Sudbury.

J. Charles Cox brought the manuscript to light and published it in the February 1888 issue of the *Journal of the Derbyshire Archaeological Society*. “One of the most interesting manuscripts in the valuable library of Sudbury Hall is a volume of rhymed annals of the family of Vernon ... The present Lord Vernon has given generous permission for the whole of Harestaffe’s poetry to be copied for the benefit and instruction of the members of the Derbyshire Archaeological Society.” Harestaffe was the servant to John Vernon, then to the widow Mary Vernon, then to the heir Edward Vernon.

Sir Henry Vernon (1441-1515) of Haddon had five sons. The first son was Sir Richard Vernon of Haddon, the father of George Vernon ‘King of the Peak’, and the grandfather of Dorothy Vernon. The fourth son was Sir John Vernon of Sudbury, the father of the younger Henry Vernon, and the grandfather of the younger John Vernon who was the master of John Harestaffe. (The older John Vernon had married Ellen Montgomery, and by this marriage was conveyed the manor of Sudbury.)

The relevant relationships are that the older John Vernon is the uncle of George Vernon, and the younger John Vernon is about the same age as his cousin Dorothy Vernon.

When George Vernon inherited Haddon at the age of nine, in 1517, the crown appointed his uncle as guardian. J. Charles Cox relates the event to the *Chronicle of John Harestaffe*. “The opening pages of this chronicle give an interesting and hitherto unrecorded account of Hazelbadge Hall, and its connection with the Vernons. The manor of Hazelbadge first came to the Vernons in the reign of Henry V. Whilst Sir George Vernon, the celebrated ‘King of the Peak,’ was in his minority, his uncle, Sir John Vernon, acted, by appointment of the crown, as his guardian; and after he came of age, as is testified by Harestaffe, was of considerable service to his nephew. Sir George granted to his uncle a lease of Hazelbadge for eighty years, at a nominal rental of 1d., though worth £140 per annum. Sir John’s son, Henry Vernon, for the most part resided at Hazelbadge.” It would appear that during Sir George’s lifetime, there was a close relationship between the Haddon and the Sudbury Vernons.

*Sir George I say of whom yet many speak
(For great housekeeping termed King of the Peak)*

*Was much directed in his younger years,
 In all his causes and his great affairs,
 By his uncle Sir John Vernon's good advise,
 Who was a learned man, discreet and wise:
 Wherefore Sir George to show that he was kind,
 And to his uncle bear a thankful mind,
 Of Hazelbadge he granted then a Lease,
 To him and his assignees which should not cease,
 Until the term of fourscore years were spent,
 Reserving thereupon a penny rent.
 Sir John until his death [1545] possessed the same:
 And afterwards this Farm to Henry came.
 This Henry Vernon was of great esteem
 A man both wise and learned (as may seem)
 Who in his Country also bore great sway,
 And kept a worthy house, as old men say,
 Who often talk of him even to this day.*

Cox recounts a specific instance of Sir John fulfilling his role as guardian of his nephew's estates. "The following call upon Sir John Vernon to furnish a Derbyshire force of armed soldiers from his nephew's Derbyshire tenantry, to proceed to Dover, in the summer of 1522, is taken from the Sudbury 'Vernoniana'"

"Henry the VIII by the grace of God King of England & France defender of the Faith & Lord of Ireland. To our trusty & well beloved John Vernon Squire and steward of the lands belonging to the inheritance of young Vernon our ward, and to all & singular the Bailiffs Officers Farmers & tenants of the same lands and to every of them this our letters hearing or seeing greeting." It continues at some length to ask for "one hundred persons to be taken of the Farmers and tenants of the said lands."

John Harestaffe in his long service with the Sudbury Vernons was taken into their confidence and naturally became aware of the affairs of the Haddon Vernons insofar as they impinged upon the affairs of the Sudbury Vernons. The following excerpts from the chronicle attest to the involvement of 'great Talbott' and to a connection to Henry Vernon and his son, the younger John Vernon, with the marriage of Dorothy Vernon.

*Sir George who of the Vernons was the last
 That held those goodly lands, from whom they past
 By two coheirs out of the Vernon's name
 (For which great Talbott was the more to blame).*

(These lines come immediately before the portion previously quoted.)

“Sir George who of the Vernons was the last.” The younger John Vernon married his only wife Mary, widow of one Walter Vernon, when he was past fifty. Mary had nine children by her first husband, of which five were still living. The following quotation attests to the importance of maintaining the family name in passing down Vernon lands.

*Her [Mary's] eldest son whom he did most respect,
Called Edward Vernon then he did elect
As heir to all those Lands and Manors fair
Which unto her for life appointed were,
To him and his issue male he then entailed
Appointing further if such issue failed
(For that to keep in the name he did intend)
That then to Thomas Vernon they descend,
Her second son and to his issue male,
Whereof if he likewise should happen to fail,
Then unto Walter youngest of the three,
And his male issue; but in case that he
Should thereof fail, Then willed he yet they might
Descend unto Sir Robert Vernon Knight,
And his heir fail and in default of those,
To the heirs of Edward doth these lands dispose.*

John Vernon was three years younger than Dorothy Vernon. The King of the Peak would be aware that there was no certainty that his second wife would produce a male heir. But an eighteen year old John Vernon, grandson of his trusted guardian, would be suitable for a twenty-one year old Dorothy. This would ensure the Haddon lands remaining in the Vernon name. Such a resolve on George Vernon's part addresses a number of issues relating to Dorothy's marriage.

John Vernon would be considered the preferred match for his daughter. There need not be any other reason to reject John Manners, who can be considered as suitable an in-law as was Thomas Stanley (for Margaret). That there was no lasting ill will (if ever there was any) between George Vernon and John Manners, is shown by having Vernon choose Manners as one of the executors of his will. *From The History of Parliament - The House of Commons*: “His [George Vernon's] wife, his son-in-law John Manners, his brother-in-law Nicholas Longford and his ‘loving neighbours and faithful friends’ Thomas Sutton and Richard Wennesley were each to receive £20 for their services as executors.”

At the time of Margaret Vernon's marriage, Dorothy was thirteen and John Vernon was ten. During the ensuing years, George would have been discussing the possibilities with his cousin Henry Vernon, father of young John. Formal agreements would not be entered into until John was at least sixteen, in time for a wedding at age eighteen. However, when John was sixteen, Dorothy was already married to John Manners. This would account for the absence of pre-marital household records.

As for Dorothy's preference, she would undoubtedly choose the accomplished late-twenties John Manners, over the young teenager being talked about by her father. Manners was a Justice of the Peace for Nottinghamshire during the time of his romance with Dorothy, and owned estates in that county. He would have known George Vernon, and it would not be unusual to suppose he was a visitor to Haddon and knew Dorothy as well.

"For which great Talbott was the more to blame." George Talbot was the 6th Earl of Shrewsbury. He was one of the wealthiest peers in England, possessing vast estates in Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. His son Gilbert, who would become the 7th Earl of Shrewsbury in 1590, was the godson of George Vernon. The relationship between George Talbot and George Vernon must have always been cordial, since in his will Vernon "included among numerous bequests the provision of one gold chain worth £20 to the godson, Gilbert Talbot, the future Earl of Shrewsbury, 'as a remembrance of my good will towards him.'"

More importantly Gertrude Manners, John Manners' older sister, was the mother of Gilbert and wife of George Talbot. Talbot would want to see his brother-in-law married to the daughter of the King of the Peak. (George Talbot would marry Bess of Hardwick in 1567, after Gertrude's death.) In later years when Manners was residing at Haddon Hall, "Manners was supported in the county by his brother-in-law and close friend, George, 6th Earl of Shrewsbury, who appointed Manners a deputy when he became lord lieutenant of Derbyshire in 1585." As Dorothy was turning eighteen, the autocratic King of the Peak was probably encountering strong resistance to his plans for her marriage.

What follows is this author's conjecture of what may have happened at Haddon Hall during the period from Margaret Vernon's marriage in 1558 to Dorothy Vernon's marriage in 1563. It provides a solution to George Vernon's conundrum and tells the tale of how an 'elopement' may have occurred. This is done without the introduction of anachronisms, disguises, outlaws or disloyal servants.

THE STORY

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 Parlour (completed by George Vernon in 1545) and the upstairs Great Chamber (remodeled by Henry Vernon in 1500) 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 and Gertrude. 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 and grandson of George's past guardian also named John Vernon, is three years younger than Dorothy. George had a close relationship with his guardian. Henry is even now residing at Hazelbadge Hall which George had leased to the Sudbury family for the nominal rent of 1 penny per annum.

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 rides through Haddon, though fruitful in conversation, appear to bear little else. 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 Parlour 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. Dorothy times her arrival at John Manners' estate to be 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 perfect 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.'

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. Explanations of the causes behind the breach have been the subject of many scholarly articles, and will not be attempted here. 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, the dialogue and duet between John and Dorothy being replaced by a solo 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 interest here, however, is in Sydney Grundy’s libretto and how it relates to Dorothy Vernon’s story. The original libretto will be used in what follows. Sullivan’s revision eliminates important stated points of the story and assumes that the audience will ‘pick up’ on them from less direct hints.

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 other 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. In an unusual twist, George Vernon and John Manners, as Royalists, are nominally on the same side. It is notable that none of the women are associated with a faction, possibly a Victorian belief that the woman receives her political identity from the man.

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 is seen to have no 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 Arthur 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 are 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,

"When all the world was young, lad
And all the trees were green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen."

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THE KING OF THE PEAK, A DERBYSHIRE TALE
ALLAN CUNNINGHAM, 1822

Dora Vernon was a lovely lass, and as proud as she was lovely; she bore her head high; and well she might, for she was a gallant Knight's daughter; and lords and dukes, and what not, have descended from her. But, for all that, I cannot forget that she ran away in the middle of a moonlight night, with young Lord John Manners, and no other attendant than her own sweet self. She tied up her berry brown locks in a menial's cap, and ran away in a mantle of Bakewell brown, three yards for a groat. Instead of going out regularly by the door, she leapt out of a window; more by token she left one of her silver heeled slippers fastened in the grating, and the place has ever since been called the Lady's Leap.

I will tell thee the story in my own and my father's way. The last of the name of Vernon was renowned far and wide for the hospitality and magnificence of his house, for the splendour of his retinue, and more for the beauty of his daughters, Margaret and Dorothy. He was much given to hunting and hawking, and jousting, with lances either blunt or sharp; and though a harquebuss generally was found in the hand of the gallant hunters of that time, the year of grace 1560, Sir George Vernon despised that foreign weapon; and well he might, for he bent the strongest bow, and shot the surest shaft, of any man in England. His chase-dogs too were all of the most expert and famous kinds—his falcons had the fairest and most certain flight; and though he had seen foreign lands, he chiefly prided himself in maintaining unimpaired the old baronial grandeur of his house. I have heard my grandsire say, how his great grandsire told him, that the like of the knight of Haddon, for a stately form, and a noble, free, and natural grace of manner, was not to be seen in court or camp. He was hailed, in common tale, and in minstrel song, by the name of the KING OF THE PEAK; and it is said, his handsome person and witchery of tongue chiefly prevented his mistress, good Queen Bess, from abridging his provincial designation with the headsman's axe.

It happened in the fifth year of the reign [1563] of his young and sovereign mistress, that a great hunting festival was held at Haddon, where all the beauty and high blood of Derbyshire assembled. Lords of distant counties came; for to bend a bow, or brittle the deer, under the eye of Sir George Vernon, was an honour sought for by many. Over the chase of Haddon, over the hill of Stanton, over Bakewell-edge, over Chatsworth hill and Hardwicke plain, and beneath the ancient castle of Bolsover, as far as the edge of the forest of old Sherwood, were the sounds of harquebuss and

bowstring heard, and the cry of dogs and the cheering of men. The brown-mouthed and white-footed dogs of Derbyshire were there among the foremost; the snow-white hound and the coal-black, from the Scottish border and bonny Westmoreland, preserved or augmented their ancient fame; nor were the dappled hounds of Bakewell bank, far from the throat of the red deer when they turned at bay, and gored horses and riders. The great hall floor of Haddon was soon covered with the produce of wood and wild.

Nor were the preparations for feasting this noble hunting party unworthy the reputation for solid hospitality which characterised the ancient King of the Peak. Minstrels had come from distant parts, as far even as the Scottish border; bold, free-spoken, rude, rough witted men. But in the larder the skill of man was chiefly employed, and a thousand rarities were prepared for pleasing the eye and appeasing the appetite. In the kitchen, with its huge chimneys and prodigious spits, the menial maidens were flooded nigh ankle deep in the richness of roasted oxen and deer; and along the passage, communicating with the hall of state, men might have slid along, because of the fat droppings of that prodigious feast, like a slider on the frozen Wye. The kitchen tables, of solid plank, groaned and yielded beneath the roasted beeves and the spitted deer; while a stream of rich smoke, massy, and slow, and savoury, sallied out at the grated windows, and sailed round the mansion, like a mist exhaled by the influence of the moon. I call those the golden days of old England.

But I wish you had seen the hall prepared for this princely feast. The floor, of hard and solid stone, was strewn deep with rushes and fern; and there lay the dogs of the chase in couples, their mouths still red with the blood of stags, and panting yet from the fervour and length of their pursuit. At the lower end of the hall, where the floor subsided a step, was spread a table for the stewards and other chiefs over the menials. There sat the keeper of the bows, the warder of the chase, and the head falconer, together with many others of lower degree, but mighty men among the retainers of the noble name of Vernon. Over their heads were hung the horns of stags, the tusks of boars, and the foreheads of foxes. Nor were there wanting trophies, where the contest had been more bloody and obstinate—banners and shields, and helmets, won in the Civil, and Scottish, and Crusading wars, together with many strange weapons of annoyance or defence, borne in the Norwegian and Saxon broils. Beside them were hung rude paintings of the most renowned of these rustic heroes, all in the picturesque habiliments of the times. Horns, and arquebusses, and swords, and bows, and buff coats, and caps, were thrown in negligent groups all about the floor, while their owners sat in expectation of an immediate and ample feast,

which they hoped to wash down with floods of that salutary beverage, the brown blood of barley.

At the upper end of the hall, where the floor was elevated exactly as much in respect, as it was lowered in submission at the other, there the table for feasting the nobles stood; and well was it worthy of its station. It was one solid plank of white sycamore, shaped from the entire shaft of an enormous tree, and supported on squat columns of oak, ornamented with the arms of the Vernons, and grooved into the stone floor, beyond all chance of being upset by human powers. Benches of wood, curiously carved, and covered, in times of more than ordinary ceremony, with cushions of embroidered velvet, surrounded this ample table;—while in the recess behind appeared a curious work in arras, consisting of festivals and processions, and bridals, executed from the ancient poets; and for the more staid and grave, a more devout hand had wrought some scenes from the controversial fathers and the monkish legends of the ancient church. The former employed the white hands of Dora Vernon herself; while the latter were the labours of her sister Margaret, who was of a serious turn, and never happened to be so far in love as to leap from a window.

And now I will describe the Knight of Haddon, with his fair daughters and principal guests. Suppose the table filled about with the gallants of the chase and many fair ladies, while at the head sat the King of the Peak himself, his beard descending to his broad girdle, his own natural hair of dark brown—blessings on the head that keeps God's own covering on it, and scorns the curled inventions of man—falling in thick masses on his broad manly shoulders. Nor silver, nor gold, wore he; the natural nobleness of his looks maintained his rank and pre-eminence among men; the step of Sir George Vernon was one that many imitated, but few could attain—at once manly and graceful. I have heard it said, that he carried privately in his bosom a small rosary of precious metal, in which his favourite daughter Dora had entwined one of her mother's tresses. The ewer-bearers entered with silver basins full of water; the element came pure and returned red; for the hands of the guests were stained with the blood of the chase. The attendant minstrels vowed, that no hands so shapely, nor fingers so taper, and long, and white, and round, as those of the Knight of Haddon, were that day dipped in water.

There is wondrous little pleasure in describing a feast of which we have not partaken; so we pass on to the time when the fair dames retired, and the red wine in cups of gold, and the ale in silver flagons, shone and sparkled as they passed from hand to lip beneath the blaze of seven massy lamps. The knights toasted their mistresses, the retainers told their exploits, and the

minstrels with harp and tongue made music and song abound. The gentles struck their drinking vessels on the table till they rang again; the menials stamped with the heels of their ponderous boots on the solid floor; while the hounds, imagining they heard the call to the chase, leaped up, and bayed in hoarse but appropriate chorus.

The ladies now re-appeared, in the side galleries, and overlooked the scene of festivity below. The loveliest of many counties were there; but the fairest was a young maid of middle size, in a dress disencumbered of ornament, and possessed of one of those free and graceful forms which may be met with in other counties, but for which our own Derbyshire alone is famous. Those who admired the grace of her person were no less charmed with her simplicity and natural meekness of deportment. Nature did much for her, and art strove in vain to rival her with others; while health, that handmaid of beauty, supplied her eye and her cheek with the purest light and the freshest roses. Her short and rosy upper-lip was slightly curled, with as much of maiden sanctity, perhaps, as pride; her white high forehead was shaded with locks of sunny brown, while her large and dark hazel eyes beamed with free and unaffected modesty. Those who observed her close, might see her eyes, as she glanced about, sparkling for a moment with other lights, but scarce less holy, than those of devotion and awe. Of all the knights present, it was impossible to say, who inspired her with those love-fits of flushing joy and delirious agitation; each hoped himself the happy person; for none could look on Dora Vernon without awe and love. She leaned her white bosom, shining through the veil which shaded it, near one of the minstrel's harps; and looking round on the presence, her eyes grew brighter as she looked; at least, so vowed the knights, and so sang the minstrels.

All the knights arose when Dora Vernon appeared. "Fill all your wine-cups, knights," said Sir Lucas Peverel.

"Fill them to the brim," said Sir Henry Avenel.

"And drain them out, were they deeper than the Wye," said Sir Godfrey Gernon.

"To the health of the Princess of the Peak," said Sir Ralph Cavendish.

"To the health of Dora Vernon," said Sir Hugh De Wodensley, "beauty is above titles, she is the loveliest maiden a knight ever looked on, with the sweetest name too."

"And yet, Sir Knight," said Peverel, filling his cup, "I know one who thinks so humbly of the fair name of Vernon, as to wish it charmed into that of De Wodensley."

"He is not master of a spell so profound," said Avenel.

“And yet he is master of his sword,” answered De Wodensley, with a darkening brow.

“I counsel him to keep it in its sheath,” said Cavendish, “lest it prove a wayward servant.”

“I will prove its service on thy bosom where and when thou wilt, Lord of Chatsworth,” said De Wodensley.

“Lord of Darley,” answered Cavendish, “it is a tempting moonlight, but there is a charm over Haddon to-night it would be unseemly to dispel. To-morrow, I meet Lord John Manners to try whose hawk has the fairer flight, and whose love the whiter hand. That can be soon seen; for who has so fair a hand as the love of young Rutland? I shall be found by Durwood-Tor when the sun is three hours up, with my sword drawn—there’s my hand on’t, De Wodensley;” and he wrung the knight’s hand till the blood seemed starting from beneath his finger nails.

“By the saints, Sir Knights,” said Sir Godfrey Gernon, “you may as well beard one another about the love of ‘some bright particular star and think to wed it,’ as the wild wizard of Warwick says, as quarrel about this unattainable love. Harken, minstrels: while we drain our cups to this beauteous lass, sing some of you a kindly love strain, wondrously mirthful and melancholy. Here’s a cup of Rhenish, and a good gold Harry in the bottom on’t, for the minstrel who pleases me.” The minstrels laid their hands on the strings, and a sound was heard like the swarming of bees before summer thunder.

“Sir Knight,” said one, “I will sing ye, Cannie Johnie Armstrong with all the seventeen variations.”

“He was hanged for cattle stealing,” answered the knight. “I’ll have none of him.”

“What say you to Dick of the Cow, or the Harper of Lochmaben?” said another, with something of a tone of diffidence.

“What! you northern knaves, can you sing of nothing but thievery and jail-breaking?”

“Perhaps your knightship,” humbly suggested a third, “may have a turn for the supernatural, and I’m thinking the Fairy Legend of young Tamlane is just the thing that suits your fancy.”

“I like the naïveté of the young lady very much,” answered the knight, “but the fair dames of Derbyshire prize the charms of lovers with flesh and blood, before the gayest Elfin-knight that ever ran a course from Carlisle to Caerlaverock.”

“What would your worship say to William of Cloudesley?” said a Cumberland minstrel, “or to the Friar of Orders Grey?” said a harper from

the halls of the Percys.

“Minstrels,” said Sir Ralph Cavendish, “the invention of sweet and gentle poesy is dead among you. Every churl in the Peak can chaunt us these beautiful but common ditties. Have you nothing new for the honour of the sacred calling of verse, and the beauty of Dora Vernon? Fellow—harper,—what’s your name? you with the long hair and the green mantle,” said the knight, beckoning to a young minstrel who sat with his harp held before him, and his face half buried in his mantle’s fold: “come, touch your strings and sing; I’ll wager my gold-hilted sword against that pheasant feather in thy cap, that thou hast a new and a gallant strain; for I have seen thee measure more than once the form of fair Dora Vernon with a ballad-maker’s eye.—Sing, man, sing.”

The young minstrel, as he bowed his head to this singular mode of request, blushed from brow to bosom; nor were the face and neck of Dora Vernon without an acknowledgment of how deeply she sympathized in his embarrassment. A finer instrument, a truer hand, or a more sweet and manly voice, hardly ever united to lend grace to rhyme.

THE MINSTREL’S SONG

Last night a proud page came to me;
 Sir Knight, he said, I greet you free;
 The moon is up at midnight hour,
 All mute and lonely is the bower:
 To rouse the deer, my lord is gone,
 And his fair daughter’s all alone,
 As lily fair, and as sweet to see,—
 Arise, Sir Knight, and follow me.

The stars stream’d out, the new-woke moon
 O’er Chatsworth hill gleam’d brightly down,
 And my love’s cheeks, half-seen, half-hid,
 With love and joy blush’d deeply red:
 Short was our time, and chaste our bliss,
 A whisper’d vow and a gentle kiss;
 And one of those long looks, which earth
 With all its glory is not worth.

The stars beam’d lovelier from the sky,
 The smiling brook flow’d gentlier by;
 Life, fly thou on; I’ll mind that hour
 Of sacred love in greenwood bower;
 Let seas between us swell and sound,

Still at her name my heart shall bound;
 Her name—which like a spell I'll keep,
 To soothe me and to charm my sleep.

“Fellow,” said Sir Ralph Cavendish, “thou hast not shamed my belief of thy skill; keep that piece of gold, and drink thy cup of wine in quiet, to the health of the lass who inspired thy strain, be she lordly, or be she low.” The minstrel seated himself, and the interrupted mirth re-commenced, which was not long to continue. When the minstrel began to sing, the King of the Peak fixed his large and searching eyes on his person, with a scrutiny from which nothing could escape, and which called a flush of apprehension to the face of his daughter Dora. Something like a cloud came upon his brow at the first verse, which, darkening down through the second, became as dark as a December night at the close of the third, when rising, and motioning Sir Ralph Cavendish to follow, he retired into the recess of the southern window.

“Sir Knight,” said the lord of Haddon, “thou art the sworn friend of John Manners, and well thou knowest what his presumption dares at, and what are the letts between him and me. *Cavendo tutus!* [*Safety through caution!*] ponder on thy own motto well.—‘Let seas between us swell and sound:’—let his song be prophetic, for Derbyshire,—for England has no river deep enough and broad enough to preserve him from a father’s sword, whose peace he seeks to wound.”

“Knight of Haddon,” said Sir Ralph, “John Manners is indeed my friend; and the friend of a Cavendish can be no mean person; a braver and a better spirit never aspired after beauty.”

“Sir Knight,” said the King of the Peak, “I court no man’s counsel; hearken to my words. Look at the moon’s shadow on Haddon-dial; there it is beside the casement; the shadow falls short of twelve. If it darkens the midnight hour, and John Manners be found here, he shall be cast fettered, neck and heel, into the deepest dungeon of Haddon.”

All this passed not unobserved of Dora Vernon, whose fears and affections divined immediate mischief from the calm speech and darkened brow of her father. Her heart sank within her when he beckoned her to withdraw; she followed him into the great tapestried room. “My daughter,—my love Dora,” said the not idle fears of a father, “wine has done more than its usual good office with the wits of our guests to-night; they look on thee with bolder eyes, and speak of thee with a bolder tongue, than a father can wish. Retire, therefore, to thy chamber. One of thy wisest attendants shall be thy companion.—Adieu, my love, till sunrise!” He kissed her white

temples and white brow; and Dora clung to his neck, and sobbed in his bosom;—while the secret of her heart rose near her lips. He returned to his guests, and mirth and music, and the march of the wine-cup, recommenced with a vigour which promised reparation for the late intermission.

The chamber, or rather temporary prison, of Dora Vernon, was nigh the cross-bow room, and had a window which looked out on the terraced garden, and the extensive chase towards the hill of Haddon. All that side of the hill lay in deep shadow, and the moon, sunk to the very summit of the western heath, threw a level and a farewell beam over river and tower. The young lady of Haddon seated herself in the recessed window, and lent her ear to every sound, and her eye to every shadow that flitted over the garden and chase. Her attendant maiden—shrewd, demure, and suspicious, of the ripe age of thirty—yet of a merry pleasant look, which had its admirers—sat watching every motion with the eye of an owl.

It was past midnight, when a foot came gliding along the passage, and a finger gave three slight scratches on the door of the chamber. The maid went out, and after a brief conference suddenly returned, red with blushes from ear to ear. “Oh, my lady!” said the trusty maiden,—“oh, my sweet young lady,—here’s that poor young lad—ye know his name—who gave me three yards of crimson ribbon, to trim my peach-bloom mantle, last Bakewell fair.—An honest or a kinder heart never kept a promise; and yet I may not give him the meeting. Oh, my young lady, my sweet young lady, my beautiful young lady, could you not stay here for half an hour by yourself?” Ere her young mistress could answer, the notice of the lover’s presence was renewed.—The maiden again went—whispers were heard—and the audible salutation of lips; she returned again more resolute than ever to oblige her lover.—“Oh, my lady—my young lady; if ye ever hope to prosper in true love yourself—spare me but one half hour with this harmless kind lad.—He has come seven long miles to see my fair face, he says;—and, oh, my lady, he has a handsome face of his own.—Oh, never let it be said that Dora Vernon sundered true lovers!—but I see consent written in your own lovely face—so I shall run—and, oh, my lady, take care of your own sweet handsome self, when your faithful Nan’s away.” And the maiden retired with her lover.

It was half an hour after midnight, when one of the keepers of the chase, as he lay beneath a holly bush listening, with a prolonged groan, to the audible voice of revelry in the hall, from which his duty had lately excluded him, happened to observe two forms approaching; one of low stature, a light step, and muffled in a common mantle:—the other with the air, and in the dress, of a forester—a sword at his side, and pistols in his belt. The ale and

the wine had invaded the keeper's brain, and impaired his sight; yet he roused himself up with a hiccup and a "hilloah," and "where go ye, my masters?"—The lesser form whispered to the other—who immediately said, "Jasper Jugg, is this you? Heaven be praised I have found you so soon;—here's that north country pedlar, with his beads and blue ribbon—he has come and whistled out pretty Nan Malkin, the lady's favourite, and the lord's trusty maid.—I left them under the terrace, and came to tell you."

The enraged keeper scarce heard the account of the faithlessness of his love to an end,—he started off with the swiftness of one of the deer which he watched, making the boughs crash, as he forced his way through bush and glade direct for the hall, vowing desertion to the girl, and destruction to the pedlar. "Let us hasten our steps, my love," said the lesser figure, in a sweet voice; and unmantling as she spoke, turned back to the towers of Haddon the fairest face that ever left them—the face of Dora Vernon herself. "My men and my horses are nigh, my love," said the taller figure; and taking a silver call from his pocket, he imitated the sharp shrill cry of the plover; then turning round he stood and gazed towards Haddon, scarcely darkened by the setting of the moon, for the festal lights flashed from turret and casement, and the sound of mirth and revelry rang with augmenting din. "Ah, fair and stately Haddon," said Lord John Manners, "little dost thou know, thou hast lost thy jewel from thy brow—else thy lights would be dimmed, thy mirth would turn to wailing, and swords would be flashing from thy portals in all the haste of hot pursuit. Farewell, for a while, fair tower, farewell for a while.—I shall return, and bless the time I harped among thy menials and sang of my love—and charmed her out of thy little chamber window." Several armed men now came suddenly down from the hill of Haddon, horses richly caparisoned were brought from among the trees of the chase, and the ancestors of the present family of Rutland sought shelter, for a time, in a distant land, from the wrath of the King of the Peak.

THE LOVE STEPS OF DOROTHY VERNON
ELIZA METEYARD, 1860

Three centuries are nearly past and gone, three hundred gilded summers have waned into russet autumns—and autumns brought their winters rough and cold—and yet no drear oblivion has fallen on a sweet old story: it is as new as though of yesterday, and hallows Haddon Hall.

On the left side of the flagged hall or passage which leads from the lower to the upper court of Haddon Hall, in Derbyshire, and directly opposite the screen which separates it from the banqueting hall, are four large doorways with high pointed arches. The first of these, still retaining its massive oaken door, has clearly been the pantler's room, as the little shutter within the door still shows that through this were doled the different sorts of bread then in use; the next leads by a dark, descending passage to the still finely preserved baronial kitchen; the third into a sort of vintory or wine room; and the fourth, with an iron girded door, opens up to a great steep staircase, quite distinct from the grand staircase of the house, on to a large landing, still containing a huge linen press or cupboard of very rude workmanship, and from thence to the right to a wilderness of chambers, more remarkable for their extraordinary number, than for size or ventilation; whilst to the left and front of this landing lie two chambers possessing much interest. The one the old nursery of the "proud" Vernons and the belted Manners; and the other the reputed bed-chamber of her who, blending the royal *or* of the boar's head with the blazonry of the peacock, brought such a regal dowry to grace the Earldom of Rutland.

According to the authority of Camden, for the varied dates given in these pedigrees are difficult to reconcile, it was somewhere late in the autumn of one of the early years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, or between 1558 and 1564, or 1567, that preparations were begun already to be made for the hospitality of Christmas-tide, for before its holy days were passed, Margaret Vernon, the elder daughter, and co-heiress of Sir George Vernon, of Haddon, was to be married with much pomp and ceremony in the chapel of the ancient hall, to Sir Thomas Stanley, a younger son of the ducal and royal house of Derby.

More than the usual number of steers were fattening in the stalls to supply the huge salting trough; the rustic water mills of Nether and Upper Haddon already turned their dripping wheels solely in the "lord's service;" orders were already out in twelve of the twenty-eight Derbyshire manors, for a fair supply of venison by St. Thomas's day [December 21]; two wains had already toiled across the moorlands from Derby laden with condiments and

spices for the confectioner and cooks; and scouts were already outlying on the wilderness of the East Moors, for the better preservation of black-cock and ptarmigan for the "lord's table."

It was on an evening in this late, yet fair and sweet season, that a young girl crossed the banqueting hall from the "lord's parlour," and ascending the staircase we have already spoken of, entered the low tapestried chamber which faced the landing. A fire of wood burnt cheerfully on the wide old hearth, and its light flickered up and down the many-coloured tapestry; but though the hour was close upon that for retiring to rest, the young girl neither called her tire-woman, nor summoned other assistance, but crouching down upon a stool beside the iron fire-dogs, buried her face in her hands upon her knees, and sat a long while in silence. At length aroused by the sound of her tire-woman's voice in an adjoining room, and the heavy closing of doors in the courts below, she summoned Joan, and after making her unpin her stomacher, her hanging sleeves, and remove the kerchief from her flowing hair, lay fresh fuel on the dogs, and set the night lamp on the silken toilet cover, she dismissed her for the night, and then slipping on a sort of loose nightgown of Tournay velvet, stole from the room and sought with gentle foot the ancient nursery. Though no tiny feet pattered now up and down its oaken floor, though no little new-born limbs were cherished by its glowing hearth, though no little faces peered with curious gaze through the diamond-paned casements into the lower court below, all the signs of its olden use were still preserved; and the go-carts, the rocking-chairs, the canvas-lined cradles, and the pewter pap-boats, with a world of curious toys, showed that some ancient crone venerated and preserved the insignia of her office. And this did Luce, the nurse, for her young "madam's" weaning-days, and teething-days, and birth-days, were, with the addition of Candlemas [February 2] and Christmas, the white days of her calendar.

A pewter cup of "lamb's wool," furnished nightly by the vintner at my "lord's request," stood with its creamy top on the hearth, whilst Luce sat drowsily beside it as the young girl entered, and moving to-and-fro in the old rocking-chair, was mumbling over some reckoning appertaining to her ancient service.

"I was reckoning how many weeks to thy birth-night, Mistress Doll—and how many nights to Mistress Margery's wedding, for—"

But here she stopped with consternation and alarm, for the young girl had already knelt beside her, and now with buried face upon the nurse's lap was weeping.

"Why lady, sweet-heart, child, nest-bird," spoke Luce, thus running over her nursery alphabet, "what is the matter. Has my lady been cross, or made

thee call her madam with a double curtsey, or Nance not yellow starched thy double ruffles trimly; eh—be quick, my lamb—”

“Oh! Luce, it’s *he*, it is John, it is Master Manners come again. My lord has been holding talk in the hall with Will Shaw of Upper Haddon, so that I know he’s come again, so round to a hair was his description.”

“Cheer up, sweet lady-bird,” spoke Luce, just sipping as she did so her nightly cup, “the true hawk never tires when on wing for his quarry; though now I bethink me well, Tom Dawes said something liken this when I fetched my sippets from the bakery this evening, and that some knavelings who could no longer steal my Lord of Leicester’s venison in Charnwood, for the hue and cry was loud upon them, had crossed the moors to fly a shaft in Haddon. But I could tell thee featly, pretty one, for Tom Dawes’an by this time stirred barm into the morning’s dough, and would tell me across the bakery hatch, where the hind sleeps that came in from the moors with Will. Perhaps there is a love token, pretty one, for love is not nice to messengers.”

“Go, go, go,” was repeated twenty times before the ancient nurse had ended, “and I will wait thee here. Be quick—by blessed St. Agnes, be quick, the minutes will be hours, and time the slowest clock till thy return.”

So saying, Dorothy Vernon crouched down in the low chair, from which the ancient nurse now uprose, to put on her “sad wimple,” lest my “lady’s eye might spy her” from her chamber casement; for this second wife of Sir George Vernon, the Lady Maude, kept strict watch over her household.

Bidding her “bird be still,” as she drew aside the tapestry, and opened as softly she could the rough hewn door, the ancient nurse crept down the staircase to the wide passage by the hall-screen. Here she encountered the grave chamberlain, in his furred doublet and woollen cap, going round, on his nightly duty, with a massive bunch of keys strung on his girdle-hook. But Luce had a ready wit.

“I want to say a word,” she said, “across the bakery hatch, by thy leave, master chamberlain, if thou wilt have courtesy to draw the bolts and turn the key.”

“Over late, over late, mistress nurse; and my lady’s orders be strict concerning bolt and bar after the night meal.”

“Gramercy, ay, well-a-day,” replied Luce; “when my lady comes to count as many Lenten-tides as I, she’ll fain say a word about softer sippets. Ay, well-a-day, in dame Margery’s time no house-bolt in Haddon would have been drawn upon its nursery crone.”

The chamberlain had loved the Lady Margery, and he knew that Luce was privileged in many things besides sippets and “lamb’s-wool;” so undrawing bolt and bar, he held open the door for the nurse to pass through,

bidding her as he did so be back speedily, ere he made his night's last round. Thus in the upper court, Luce crossed to its north side, near King John's Tower, and descending two or three steps, leant over the lower hatch of a rude door, and peered into the huge chamber, used as the bakery. Some of the smouldering embers, swept out before the baking of the last batch of bread, yet twinkled on the hearths of the two huge ovens; whilst in the space between, some long faggots, reared end-wise up the chimney, glowed brightly, and before these sat the head baker and two of his assistants, reckoning up the bakery tallies, and occasionally relieving this abstract work, by inroads, on the contents of a black-jack of "one month's" beer. Luce called Tom Dawes, who quickly came; and then there was much whispering of a confidential kind. Then, as a cover to what they had talked of, lest the chamberlain might be near, the baker said loudly, "Ay, dame, it's well thou remindest me, for between my knaves heating the over o'er fiercely, and my forgetting that the brood hen can lose a feather, thy sippets have been over crisp, but they shall be as soft as a full-ripe plum. Now let me guide thy steps." So saying, Tom unlatched the hatch, and coming forth, took the nurse's arm; but as soon as they were in the shadow thrown from this northern angle of the court, he pushed open a half-latched door and went in, where, on straw, and with no better covering than a sort of horse-rug, some ten or twelve of the lower menials had already lain down for the night. After stooping and examining the faces of several, the baker at last shook one who heavily slept, and whose unkempt hair and half-savage features bespoke a man from the hills. But after some few minutes had dissipated his soddened drowsiness, he answered the questioner, leaning over him, briefly to the purpose, and then turned his head round to sleep, leaving Dawes to hurry to the nurse in the shadow of the buttress, and there to whisper "Yes, 'tis master Manners, and the hawk will fly round Haddon three hours after curfew."

"By St. Agnes, then, Master Manners loveth rarely, and the young bird's heart will flutter; but there be Smith, the chamberlain." So saying, the nurse bid her friend be secret, and hurrying to the ponderous doorway, gained the staircase just as the chamberlain passed into the passage by the hall-screen from the nether court.

"Oh! what a while, oh! what a while," spoke Dorothy trembling, and a-cold, as she stood by the tapestry of the doorway, and caught the nurse's hand. "What news, Luce, of Master Manners? Quick, oh quick! You are so slow of tongue—be quick, be quick."

"The hawk will fly round Haddon three hours past curfew," spoke the crone, with a smile.

“Ay! well! now!” spoke the girl, half incoherently; “it’s late, it’s cold, it’s time you were a-rest, Luce. I must to my chamber. I—I—”

“But oh! be careful of the creaking casement, lady-bird,” half wept the nurse, as she fondled her darling’s hands; Dame Maude is so watchful, and my Lord so wrathful against all that be of her Highness’s religion. Sweet heart, sweet heart, take heed.”

But no other answer than a half-kiss on the beldam’s hands, and Dorothy was gone.

A woman’s first thought is to dress for her lover, and this was so with Dorothy Vernon; but when she looked into the ebon mirror, and saw that the loose gown of Tournay did sit so winsomely, when her beautiful fair hair fell down and looked so richly without pin or coif, even *she* was satisfied, and unwilling to unset the setting of her beauty. She therefore blew out the flickering lamp-flame, and dropping one of the faggots by the door, so as to grate the floor and warn her if opened, she went into a sort of little oriel, or closet, lighted by a very large three-sided casement, set in one of the gables of the northern front of Haddon Hall.

The night was lighted by the richest moon, which glimmered over trees and fern, and sloping bank of sward; for here the banks close in upon the Hall, and the off-skirts of the braken clothes them. As the night-clouds crept across the edges of the moon, and lengthened out the shadows of the trees, her watching gaze fell more intently still, her ear grew quicker than a hiding fawn’s, and her heart beat to-and-fro as a hurried larum bell.

At last, from the lengthened shadow of a bosky elm, a man stole forth to view; in years far older than her he wooed, and habited in no courtly or gallant’s dress, but in the common rough hose and jerkin of a forester. But scarcely had he bared his head, or gazed once upon the beautiful, though half-hand-veiled, face of the girl, before the noise of quickly opened doors, and the glimmer of an approaching light along the corridor, met his quick ear and sight, and so risking all for the instant, he said loudly, “to-morrow at seven of the clock, by the third elm of the avenue,” and then waving his hand, plunged back into the braken of the Park. Dorothy knew by this that there was approaching danger; so hardly had she hurried to her chamber, closed the door between that and her closet, put on her night coif over her hair, and lain down in bed, before the chamber door was opened, and Dame Maude, her step-mother, came in, and up to the hanging-curtains of the bed.

“What, not a-bed,” she asked.

“Yes, Madam,” replied Dorothy, as calmly as she was able.

“But why are open casements; I know there is such by the draught, and why a fastened door?”

“Joan is somewhat careless, Madam,” replied Dorothy, crouching down into the bed, in order to hide the day-dress she still wore.

But the vigilant dame would not be satisfied till she had stepped in the half-oriel, half-closet, and closed the casement, and returning, examined whether that which had slightly obstructed her hasty entry at the door was really so harmless a thing as a brand-faggot. Thus far satisfied, she once more opened the curtain, and saying, with the severity of an Abbess, “I shalt expect thee, Mistress Dorothy, by eight of the morning clock to three hours of tenter-stitch, and an hour to the virginal, in my lady’s parlour,” departed with a stately step.

But there was one more humane and more motherly, whose breast had fed her and whose heart well loved her, who soon stole in to hear the sweet confession of her “lady-bird,” to administer some soothing drink she bore with her in a taper drinking-glass, and to croon and nestle to her rest the young and gentle beauty; still yet, and yet for aye, a nursling to her heart!

The morrow’s tunes upon the virginal were strummed, the stitch-work done; and now the last and brightest of October’s suns descended on the terraces of Haddon Hall, and trailed its golden length across the moors.

The horn for supper was not yet blown, though it was nigh unto seven; but all were safe, as Dorothy Vernon stole up the terrace steps, for Sir George was snugly closeted with a Franciscan, who bore a mission from the Earl of Derby; my lady was superintending the distillation of some infallible cosmetic; and Margaret, the prouder beauty than sweet Doll, was reading, by the light of her own chamber hearth, Sir Thomas Stanley’s new-come letter.

Within the shadow of the third elm was he who loved her, and Dorothy no sooner stood there than Master Manners took her hand, and drew her out of the lingering strips of sunlight into the shadows of the trees, and here he urged his suit, and bid her flee with him.

“You know my Lord will never yield his fair word for our troth, my lady sweet, for he holds too ill her Highness’s laws against Papists to brook for a son one who is at favour at her court. Nay, listen,—the peacock and the boar are proud and lordly, lady-heart, but their blood will mingle gently.”

“Nay, Master Manners, I love thee, and am a-cold at the risk thou runnest; but—but—my Lord is somewhat—old—and when Meg be gone across the Irish sea to Man, with brave Sir Thomas Stanley, he would miss his Doll, at hawking, and on the virginal, and up and down the broad walk of his bowling-green.”

Perhaps Master Manners would not have, even now, pleaded in vain, but the horn sounded for supper, and lights glided to-and-fro along the western and southern fronts of Haddon, so a hasty farewell had to be made; but not

before sweet Doll had half consented to think of what Master Manners had spoken.

But the lovers,—even with the secret help of Luce, and missives sent more than once by the connivance of Tom Dawes, who loved not over well my Lady Maude, for finding fault with his manchet bread,—were unlucky, partly because Sir George had heard, from more than one verderer, that the gossip about outlaws was a mere feint of some Manners, or some Eyre, or some Foljambe, who wanted to sprite away the beauty and the gold of his youngest and his sweetest heiress. So strictly guarded by Lady Maude, Dorothy Vernon for days heard little of her lover, or but few of his sweet words, except the moon was dull, and her casement-springet not rusty with the winter's rain.

But the web that was thought to keep the bird, was the one which moved it to flee; for worn by the harsh custody of her step-mother, the haughty airs of proud Margaret, and won by the perils of Master Manners, lurking for her sake with the coarse hinds of the forests round, her heart had now well consented before this St. Thomas's eve, when she contrived, accompanied by Luce, to meet Master Manners on the shadowy terrace of the ancient bowling-green. It was a still and lonesome spot now in winter time, and yet not unfitted to the epithalamium, or nuptial song of two wedded hearts; for the moonlight fell upon the twisted roots of the dark and hoary trees, so that they seemed to vein the earth with silver cords.

Fiercely, more resolute, more determined, he took the young maid's hands. She wept at his fierceness, at his wild strange manner; so much so, that Luce drew nigh.

“Gramercy, Master Manners, recollect that when thou askest a maid to be a wife, thou askest a drooping violet o' th' spring to turn a full face to th' sun. Nay! Master Manners, be gentle with my lady-bird, for her cradle is not old, and her swathing bands yet sweet i' th' lavender of her first baby flower month.”

“But I do not ask her to be the mate of a churl; the peacock can show as many blazons as the boar, and as I've sworn to thee once by the Holy Rood, the knight's sore chafing will soon calm down when he learneth that his wail is bootless, and that the mingled current can run smoothly. Yet, Mistress Doll must say the yea or nay; for I've lived in these savage woods from Michaelmas [September 29] to now St. Thomas's day [December 21], on the chance of being struck down with a shaft-yard, like a sleepy raven on the umbles of a deer, so if Mistress Doll will not say yea, I go; the peacock must not trail his last plume in the dust.”

But man never won woman by a threat, much more a haughty Vernon,

proud of Norman blood; and so Dorothy looked up proudly, though her eyes were blind with tears, for she was true to this touch of nature in her sex. But when she saw Master Manners, proud and haughty too, move with a quickened step to the shadow of the braken, all that was pure, and true, and human in her woman's love, made her half fly forward, like a lapwing to its hidden nest, and clasping Master Manners by the arm, cry "I will, I will, will."

All was now said; and like the lion and the lamb couchant side by side, the PEACOCK [Manners] and the BOAR [Vernon] blazoned their arms in one. So clasping her to his heart, there she rested, whilst he, the loving gallant, prayed out a fraction of his love, and partly whispered to the beldam his plan of flight. But this must be an after thing, for time was passing quickly; so when he had willed that they should fly the night of Margaret Vernon and Sir Thomas Stanley's wedding, he embraced his happy mistress once and once again, and suffered her to descend with Luce the downward pathway to the hall. And here they luckily entered beneath the northern tower into the upper court, in the wake of some horsemen riding in; and favoured by the shadows of the walls, and the turmoil and hurry and preparations going on, Dorothy and Luce, gained the nursery, where safe the youngest of the Vernons listened to the beldam's repetition of Master Manners' words with an untiring and a greedy ear! So true is it, that loving words can feast without satiety the ear which listens!

Thus the Christmas of this year of Queen Elizabeth wore on with such wonderful hospitality of open house, in hall, in buttery, and in my "lord's chamber," as to be noised abroad by travellers over many an English shire. Seven score retainers sat in hall each day, two hundred guests feasted at my lord's table, and their five-score retainers in the hall and buttery with the rest; and the multitude that came and went, tasted ale and pastry and chine, at will, whilst a dole of mighty fragments was served daily at the gate.

And now was come the day of Margaret's wedding, to be solemnized that eve in the chapel of the Vernons, with as much nearness to the Popish ritual as her Highness's penal acts against Catholics would permit.

After the long-protracted dinner-hour of noon, Dorothy repaired to Margaret's chamber, where the tire-women, some half score in number, had already commenced their office; for before a large oval mirror, sent as a present by the Earl of Derby, sat the proud beauty, whilst around was strewn a world of fashionable gear.

"Well Doll, well chit, well child," spoke the beauty, with a malice prepense that ill suited the hour, "thou wouldst like to be a bride, eh? thou wouldst like the minstrels in hall to troll thy nuptial song? thou wouldst like

to give garters and scarfs pricked with the boar's head, and have back the marriage presents; but nay, thou art such a callow fledgeling Doll, that it be well I leave thee to old silly Luce's toy-strings, to Madam's virginal, and my Lord's walk."

"Nay, Meg, be not o'er saucy and o'er proud," pleaded Dorothy, hiding her tremulous hands with the laced kerchief she had just lifted up.

"I laugh, but do not chide. Laugh, that gallants should play the mumming of an outlaw, when my lady designs thee to strum at prick-song, instead of holding a bridal posy. La! to make thee hold thy quavers, instead of a Christmas rose." And as she laughed, the beauty took up a sprig of white flowered hellebore, which blows at Christmas, from off the garnished toilet.

But when she saw Doll's tears, Meg relented, and bidding one of the tire-women open a cabinet drawer, bring forth two veils of Flanders point, alike, and very costly, which, when they came to hand, Meg separated, and drawing Doll towards her, threw one around her face.

"Nay, see," she said, relenting in her raillery, "I mean but this, that thou wearest this on thy bridal Doll, for though Madam bid the chapman bring but one, in her order for London mercery, I bid him secretly bring two, even if my own lord pays for it. Now, one thank, my pretty one, then hie thee to thy chamber, and mind, if Joan doth not her office well, I'll rate the wench soundly."

And now Doll's tears flowed fleet and fast, for her heart reproached her; yet still beyond all other things was Master Manners to her. But this relenting on the part of Meg changed Dorothy's resolve to flee without a word; so now ascending to the nursery, or rather to the turret closet just beyond it, where Luce was secretly packing a small mail for her mistress's use, she charged her with a message to the bride, praying her to soften the old man's wrath with gentle speech, and to tell him that Master Manners was no churl, but of the house of Rutland.

So the day wore on, so evening came, and the long train of gallants and ladies went forth across the nether court, strewed with carpets, to the chapel, where by Popish ritual, barely concealed, the nuptial knot was tied, and the elder co-heiress of the Vernons became a daughter of the Stanleys. And now the minstrels played, and the steward clad in a robe, and adorned with a gilt chain, bore in, with the flourish of trumpets, the huge boar's head; so huge, that the wildest forest of the northern shires could alone produce its like. And when this feasting was over in my "Lord's chamber" and the hall, the latter was cleared of benches and tressel-boards, and chairs of state set for the high company on the dais; which, when assembled, the bride and

bridegroom gave garters and scarfs, embroidered with the devices of their respective houses; and then it came to the guests' turn to give marriage presents, and costly ones they were, of divers kinds.

Thus the time wore on, till it was an hour beyond the curfew's toll; and the younger guests began to give the presents.

"And might I hie me to my chamber, Madam?" asked Dorothy, standing up reverently before Dame Maude's chair of state.

"Sit thee still, the menials can wait."

"Nay, do not over chide, my lady," said Sir George, drawing his beautiful daughter towards him with a loving caress. "Doll must not be an over-mewed hawk, now she'll be her dad's sole comfort. So hie thee, my pretty, to hall or bower, or where thou wilt—only come back again, for thy sweet face is my jewel."

Doll stooped and kissed the old man, for the merry junketings amused the other guests, and then hurried across the hall, up the staircase into the nursery. Here, as it was the hour, and the signal already given to Luce that all was ready, Dorothy Vernon hastily changed her dress for one of coarse materials and sad colour, and hiding the veil in her bosom, and accompanied by Luce, bearing the mail, she tremblingly crept through corridor and chamber, by the northern tower to the west [east] front, and at last reached safely the garden parlour. And now, withdrawing bolt and bar, she kissed the weeping beldam; and like a frightened bird upon the wing, made eleven small prints upon the eleven stone steps, light as snow upon a flower, as dew upon a rose, and the prize was caught as a leaflet by the wintry wind, and borne away!

THE STORY OF DOROTHY VERNON
JAMES EDWARD MUDDOCK, 1878

What would become of Haddon Hall were it not for Dorothy Vernon. It is difficult to mention the old baronial castle without thinking of the heroine of the Rutland family. Haddon Hall without Dorothy would resemble the proverbial play of 'Hamlet' in which the part of Hamlet was omitted. Her midnight elopement with Sir John Manners adds to the hoary edifice that "one touch of nature which makes the whole world kin." It awakens that sentimental interest in the mediaeval mansion which its historical associations and feudal relics would fail to arouse. Haddon Hall is not so much a mausoleum of the past as a love-story in castellated form, an anecdote in architecture, a memory in masonry, a ballad in battlements, a romance wrought on rock, the tradition of a great ducal house inscribed on time-stained towers:

"The solemn arches breathe in stone;
Windows and walls have lips to tell."

Every nook and corner of the poetic old pile in the Peak is eloquent of Dorothy. Her smile greets you as you wander through the echoing courts and corridors; her dulcet eyes gaze at you from the ivied oriel windows; her supple figure flits along the moss-grown terraces. She haunts and hallows the place. The story of her runaway ride is the one tradition to which all others give way.

The pages of the Book of Time must be turned back till the old and faded leaves of 1567 are found. Elizabeth had succeeded Mary [1558]. Elizabeth was Queen of England; but Sir George Vernon was King of the Peak. Haddon Hall was his palace. He was lord of thirty manors. No feudatory chieftain had so regal a retinue of servants. A brave, bountiful man this Sir George, of princely wealth, and princely hospitality. His first wife, the lady Margaret, was dead. She had left him two daughters. His second wife, Dame Maude, had several sons, but they had not survived their infancy. The elder daughter, Margaret, was about to be married to a son of the Earl of Derby. The younger, Dorothy, was the old man's darling. He called her "Doll." She was a Princess of the Peak, whose beauty made many a young squire's heart beat faster than the excitement of the chase; a coheiress whose richly dowered hand was well worth the winning.

Sir George doted upon Dorothy. But the elder sister was the favorite of the scheming, scornful step-mother. Dorothy, although endowed with all the graces of budding womanhood, was still treated as a child. She still slept in the old nursery. Each day had its allotted tasks in embroidery, tent-stitch,

and tapestry. Her only companion was Luce, her old nurse. Her only companion? Here I err, for the imprisoned maiden had a proscribed lover, whose admiration she returned with all the interest of her innocent heart. Luce was made a confidante. She entered into Cupid's conspiracy, and favoured the clandestine meetings of Dorothy and her adorer. Attended by the ancient nurse, the Derbyshire Juliet, morning after morning, took early rambles in the wooded walks around Haddon Hall, and met her Romeo amid the sheltering foliage. On her return no one suspected that the rich red flush on her cheek was referable to any cause other than that of the may-dew, which cosmetic could only be gathered at day-dawn. During the day these meetings were impossible. But when the sun had sunk behind the masses of moorland height, and the purple darkness rose from the valley, the oriel window of the old nursery, near the north entrance in King John's Tower, would open, and Juliet, whose fair young face was rendered saintly by an aureole of silvery moonlight, would hold a sweet but silent interview with Romeo, crouching under the canopy of the leafy elm that spread a carpet of thick shadow across the pathway. The language of love was oft but a whispered word, a wave of the hand, a murmured blessing; and, after these blissful brevities, the pale and beautiful face would fade from the oriel casement, and a quaint melody elicited by her fingers from the virginals would render the silent night musical. If any attendant noticed Romeo he escaped suspicion. Even Sir George himself would brush past him, taking the rough-bearded fellow for a forest churl. Romeo's disguise was complete. It defeated the most discerning eye. Under that coarse garb, the rough-leather jerkin and slouch hat and big boots of untanned hide, only a lover's eyes could have recognised the courtly John Manners.

He first met her at a hawking-party. As she sat on her pawing palfrey, with her liquid eyes flashing beneath her pretty hawking-hat, his heart was enchained by the fairy falconer. He fell fathoms deep in love with the Princess of the Peak. They met again. He had a handsome presence to recommend him, and Dorothy reciprocated his attachment. He determined to win her for his wife. But there were lions in love's path. Influenced by the Dame Maude, Sir George objected to the suit of Master Manners. His daughters would inherit his enormous wealth; their step-mother was proud and ambitious; the elder sister, Margaret, would become a countess. So it was ordained that Dorothy should mate higher than with Master Manners, a man of good family, it is true, but the younger son of a younger son, and a mere soldier of fortune. Romeo had no chances with the old Lord Capulet, who already saw a Count Paris for Juliet in another son of the same house of Stanley into which Margaret was about to marry. But the parental

opposition only strengthened the young Montague's love. There was no world for him out of Verona's walls, no existence out of the soft sunshine of Juliet's love. Socially excommunicated, how was he to meet Dorothy? Luckily love, like necessity, is the mother of invention, and although Master Manners had lost his heart, he retained his head. He took counsel with Will Dawson, the head forester of Haddon, who for certain considerations entered into a compact to employ the proscribed lover as a woodman, and dressed him in a disguise that deceived the most scrutinising eye. Some of the forest hinds, with whom Manners was obliged to associate, and whose bed of straw he must perforce share, were of the opinion that the new yokel was not "worth his salt," for though he carried an axe he wasted his time in mooning about, and Dawson never rated *him* for his idleness. A park-keeper named Ben Shaw, whose affection for a pretty serving-maiden rendered his faculties a little keener than those of his fellows, came to the conclusion that either the stranger was after the deer, or, as they remained unmolested, after a woman. Fired with the jealous suspicion that his own sweet Cicely might be the attraction, he watched his movements. He concealed himself in the branches of a spreading oak, and was an unseen witness of a meeting between Dorothy and John. Ben went boldly to Manners, confessing what he had seen, and offering to bear messages to his grandmother Luce, the nurse. Thus a ready means of communication was established between the lovers, and Romeo had in Dawson and Shaw a trusted Benvolio and Mercutio. Day after day the dilettante forester caught the telegraphic glance of Dorothy's eye as she rode on her palfrey at her father's side, or attended the Dame and Margaret in their walks: the unconscious sweetness, the tender, tremulous, sensitive loveliness of her young face contrasting with the more mature and vigorous beauty of the elder sister; and there were the more precious moments still when Manners and his beloved stood alone in the soothing shadow of the woods, while Luce kept watch and ward against all intruders. No true-hearted maiden could resist such devotion; and Dorothy confessed, if not in words, in blushes, in tears, and in smiles, her love for the man who ran such risks for her sake. In the old nurse's opinion Manners was "a marvellously proper man," and Dorothy "the sweetest lady-bird that ever was wooed and won."

The sunny summer sobered into autumn. Margaret's nuptials with Sir Thomas Stanley, second son of Edward, third Earl of Derby, were to be celebrated at the end of October. Sir George Vernon had promised Dorothy's hand to a younger son of the same powerful house. Great preparations were now being made at Haddon for the performance of the ceremony. It was to be celebrated with semi-royal splendour, and with the

observance of that large-hearted hospitality which was synonymous with the word Vernon. The whole household were too occupied with other matters now to look after Dorothy and her wanderings. Emboldened by impunity, she met Manners at the back of the old shaded pleasaunce. There he pleaded his love with all the eloquence of his impassioned heart; urged her to go away with him and become his wife, arguing that Sir George would soon become reconciled when once the decisive step to happiness was taken.

“Leave my father without his consent—oh no! I cannot think of it,” sobbed Dorothy, with downcast head, and hands that were entwined in his. “It would be a disgrace upon the family, it would—”

“Bear with me, Doll, let us speak heart to heart. I can wait no longer. The day has come when you must make your final choice, when you must decide between a marriage with a man for whom you care not at all, or with the one who loves you, oh! so dearly. Either promise to go with me on your sister’s wedding night, when the bustle of the merry-making will give you a rare chance to escape unseen—or—or—never more look upon my face.”

The strong man’s voice quivered with emotion. He controlled his feelings and continued:

“I shall hie me to the wars and find death there, for you, Doll, my darling, are all that is worth living for. And you will forget me; ay, you must forget me. It is best that you should forget the man who, as well-born as yourself, has herded all these months with the forest hinds for your sake. The game is played out. Go and please your father. Go, sell your heavenly heart for earthly gold. Farewell, Dorothy, farewell!”

He turned away with a bursting heart. Dorothy sobbed, stood for a moment hesitatingly, and then, with resolution writ strong on her face, called him back.

“Oh, don’t leave me! Don’t go to the wars, John,” she said in a voice of earnest entreaty. “I love my father, and would not earn his censure, he is so good to me; but I love you even more, John, and I—I—will consent.”

She turned her wet, wistful, worshipping eyes into his wild love-stricken face. He kissed away the tears, and in that touch of lips an eternal compact was sealed.

It was the night of Margaret’s marriage. The bridal rites had been conducted in the castle chapel with as much resemblance to the Romish ritual as Elizabeth’s Papal penalties would allow. And now the hours of unlimited festivity had arrived. Open house was being kept in the old style. Seven score retainers sat in the great hall; there were two hundred guests, and their retainers, from the neighbouring shires; beggars were fed at the outer gates. The great salting trough was too small for the fatted stirks; and

even the gigantic gastronomical capabilities of the two huge fireplaces were unequal to the demand. There was a prodigious abundance of fish and flesh and fowl. The long, oaken board groaned under the weight of boars' heads, and barons of beef, and haunches of venison. The wassail-cup circulated. In the wainscoting of the banqueting hall the roysterers had fixed an iron ring for the wrists of teetotalers, while the potent liquor these abstainers objected to drink was poured down their sleeves, *nolentes volentes* [*unwillingly or willingly*]. Musicians were stationed in the gallery; and while unrestrained revelry was at its height among the vassals in the great hall, the scene in the grand ball-room was no less animated. The long oaken chamber blazed with light. Music drowned the sound of glancing feet and the *frou-frou* of brocaded dresses. High-born dowagers and rich old knights sat in the oriel recesses, and garrulously gossiped over their wine, while fair daughters and young squires swept by in the quick dance. Dorothy in her light bright dress was a picture—a picture whose beauty attracted many a man's admiring eye, and was followed by the most handsome women in the gay gallery with envious gaze. She was unusually winsome and playful that night, her eyes sparkled with animation, her face rippled with smiles. But when the revelry had reached its maddest, merriest stage, when the gossips were the most garrulous, when the minstrels were playing their loudest, when the dance was at its height, Dorothy, excusing herself from her partner for a moment, stole out of the room. She crept along the stony corridors, that echoed the reckless revelry, until she gained the old nursery. Luce was there to throw a thick, coarse cloak over the ball-dress, and place a sober hood over the wedding-wreath and tresses of silken hair. Dorothy glanced at her disguise in the old mirror. If that glass could only have permanently photographed the glance Dorothy gave it, as she stood and surveyed her runaway attire, it would have yielded to no picture in human interest. Luce gave her "nursling" a cordial in a taper drinking-glass, and then, kissing her old nurse, Dorothy passed out at the historic doorway, and down the eleven worn stone steps, into the night.

The trees dropped a carpet of soft leaves across her path to silence the patter of her footfall, and they whispered to each other in a moan of sadness: "Dorothy, dear Dorothy is running away from us, is running away with brave Master Manners, and we may never see her anymore." And the rustling reeds by the river whispered in a voice of mournful cadence, "Poor Dorothy is leaving Haddon Hall, is leaving her cruel step-mother; John Manners is taking her away, and we may never see her more."

It was past midnight and quite dark, save where the blaze from the castle windows sent broad pathways of yellow light through the gloom. Luna

herself had watched the nightly meeting of the lovers, when no other eye had looked upon them, and now she hid herself behind a big black bank of cloud until Dorothy had passed through the pleasaunce, had crossed the river bridge, and the elastic arms of Manners had lifted her—as if a feather—into a pillion-saddle, and the sound of retreating hoofs was echoing in the mystery of night. And now she came from her hiding-place, suffusing a sheen of silver through the drifting clouds, and shedding her white wan light on the rough grass-grown roads and moorland paths of the Peak. On sped the sure-footed steed. People from miles round were feasting at Haddon, so no one noticed the flight of the fugitives.

Along the romantic Matlock Valley rode the runaways. The great grey, grim High Tor looked ghostly in the wintry moonlight, the wooded heights of Masson threw a shadow across the road. Through forest glade they rode. At Allestree, on the outskirts of Derby, they paused. Gold procured refreshment, two fresh horses, and a side-saddle, and a respectable riding-habit for Dorothy. The morning mists were lifting as they passed through Derby. All day they sped southwards. On the evening of the second day they reached Aylstone in Leicester Forest, where the fugitive lovers were joined together in holy wedlock.

When the feasting at Haddon was nearly over, when guest and retainer were alike surfeited with enjoyment, when the dancers had grown weary, when the merriment was subsiding, when the wintry sunlight was streaming through the windows, and laughing at the waning wax-light, Sir George discovered his loss. Dorothy was not to be found. Search was made for her in vain. The old nurse concealed her knowledge of the elopement by tearful lamentations for her lost darling. Sir George was in a gale of passion—a ten-knot gale, that swept in its rage everything and everybody out of its way. He upbraided the Lady Maude for her harsh treatment of his child. The drunken grooms were sobered by the tempestuous knight. They were despatched in search, north, south, east, and west. Two of these couriers hunted down a man and a woman who had ridden through Bakewell; but their quarry turned out to be an honest farmer and his wife who were proceeding to the christening of their grandchild. A few days passed. The newly married Margaret had left with her husband, for the residence of the Derbys at the Isle of Man, when a mounted messenger arrived at Haddon. He bore letters from Dorothy and John—letters explaining their flight, and entreating forgiveness. Dame Maude was obdurate; but Sir George's magnanimous heart—softened by the absence of his elder daughter across the Irish sea—could not withhold his pardon, and soon the runaway couple were welcomed back to the Peak. In less than a year, startling intelligence

came from the Isle of Man. Margaret had died of a fever at Castle Rushen. Dorothy then became her father's sole heiress, and great was the dowry she brought to the Rutland family. Thus the two noble houses were linked together, and the boar's head blended with the blazonry of the peacock on the knightly shield.

In 1584 Dorothy died. Her husband was created a knight by James I in 1603, and survived his wife twenty-seven years. The King of the Peak and his two wives sleep together in the Vernon Chapel of Bakewell Church, and beside them are "Sir John Manners of Haddon, knight," and "Dorothie his wife."

DOROTHY VERNON'S FLIGHT
ALICE BROTHERTON, 1887

Alice Williams Brotherton (1848-1930) was born in the United States. She never traveled abroad and never visited Haddon Hall. Mrs. Brotherton wrote her poetry while tending to her home and family. *Dorothy Vernon's Flight* is contained in her book *The Sailing of King Olaf and Other Poems*.

Her poem leans heavily on Muddock's *The Story of Dorothy Vernon*. Muddock's tale was reprinted in the January 1879 issue of *The Eclectic Magazine of Foreign Literature*, an American publication. It is supposed that Mrs. Brotherton was a reader of this magazine.

Dorothy Vernon's Flight is the only 'Haddon Hall' poem of the period to fully tell the story of the elopement, rather than merely mention it as a footnote to the history of Haddon Hall.

There was dancing and revelry and feasting,
On yonder night in stately Haddon Hall,
For the gentles, who had trooped to the bridal
From every side, made merry at the ball;
The blaring horns and fiddles shrill were going,
And the jests rose high above them all.

And no smile was merrier or brighter,
No laugh rippled blither on the air,
Than that of the blooming little maiden,
Fair Dorothy, so gaily dancing there.
And her sire forgot to frown, laughing lightly:
"So, girl, you have ceased my will to dare!"

The prim stepmother, smiling grimly,
Told herself how the plotting had been wise
That kept the wild cadet of yonder castle
From bearing off so beautiful a prize:
"Since after all it cost," quoth my lady,
"Only tears and a dozen paltry sighs."

The bride cried: "Methought you had been rueing
Your lost love John Manners; and so soon
Have you quite, Doll, forgot his fervent wooing?"
But she whirled away, swinging to the tune
Of "The wind that shakes the Barley," further parley
Lost and drowned in the blare of the bassoon.

And no step was lighter or was freer
Than Dorothy's, upon that merry night;
The roses in her cheek glowed like fire,
Her eyes mocked the jewels with their light.
The smile about her mouth, coming, going,
Made each face the brighter for the sight.

The dance-notes were ringing blithe and joyous,
The light forms swinging down the floor,
And the wax-lights a brighter sheen were flinging
Over merriment that grew from more to more;
Till none could hear, across the noisy revel,
The opening and shutting of a door.

A foot paused a moment on the threshold,
A face shone an instant in the stream
Of light, ere the portal, softly closing,
Shut in again the taper's yellow gleam;
A cloaked and hooded form across the terrace
Sped silent as a figure in a dream.

A shimmer of white damask in the moonlight,
A hurried backward glance of alarm,
And the maiden gains the shadow of the yew-trees
And the shelter of her lover's clasping arm,—
There was low laugh that trembled into weeping,
And the light touch of kisses soft and warm.

And light the sturdy knight swung the lady
To the saddle of the ready-waiting bay,—
One glance at lighted hall and dusky forest,
Then foot in the stirrup and away!
In the white moon-light across the moorland
Riding on till the dawning of the day.

The mad merry measure of the music
Sounded on, and the revel gaily sped—
Or ever grim Sir George and his lady
Had learned that their prisoner had fled,
With priest, and ring, and book, upon the morrow
John Manners and fair Dorothy were wed.

THE MUSHROOM EARL AND THE IMPOVERISHED EARL

Sir Thomas Manners (1492 - 1543), was created 1st Earl of Rutland by King Henry VIII of England in 1525. He was the father of John Manners, who was half of the famous Dorothy Vernon - John Manners love affair. The father of Dorothy Vernon was George Vernon, known as the King of the Peak.

Some on-line sources imply a dislike of John Manners by Sir George, and quote supposed statements by Sir George, that John was "the second son of an impoverished earl" or "that nobody, the second son of a mushroom earl." The on-line origin of these "quotes" appears to come from TudorPlace.com. Their biography of Sir George refers to the "impoverished earl" and their biography of John Manners refers to the "mushroom earl."

The web site claims that "The details in this biography come from the History of Parliament, a biographical dictionary of Members of the House of Commons." However the History of Parliament does not contain these characterizations. A query to the web site in 2005 elicited a friendly response with an apology that it was not known from whence the comments came.

If such statements were made by Sir George, then they would support the theory of a marriage forced upon Sir George by his daughter Dorothy Vernon. Since no historical document has been found that contains the supposed statements, it is most probable that the "son of a mushroom earl" is a writer's creation; and that it morphed into the "son of an impoverished earl" to clarify the story line of the legend.

In 2012, this author became aware of the 1924 book *Ayleston Manor and Church* by Marcus Paul Dare. This book is "Being a History of the Parish of Ayleston, Leicestershire, and its connection with the Families of Pembrugge, Vernon, and Manners, and an Account of the Parish Church and its Rectors." It should be noted that Mr. Dare uses Ayleston throughout his book rather than the accepted spelling of Aylestone.

Mr. Dare devotes a chapter to The Legend of Dorothy Vernon. He concludes that the marriage took place at Ayleston, without benefit of elopement, imagining that “Sir George, after much haggling, ultimately says, ‘All right, you can marry him, but the wedding shall not take place here. I won’t have Haddon scandalized, and I shall not attend or have anything to do with it. You can be married at my obscure church of Ayleston; it is far enough away.’”

Mr. Dare, with copious footnotes throughout his book, annotates his sources of information. Missing however is any reference to a source to what he claims is a quote of Sir George: “In his eyes [Sir George in 1563], the Manners, who had been newly raised to the peerage, were upstarts, who had married money. And he said as much, referring somewhat opprobriously to John Manners as ‘that Nobody, the second son of a mushroom Earl.’”

This unsourced "quote" by Sir George appears to be its first appearance anywhere in print. It is not credible that these words were uttered by Sir George in 1563. Rather it represents the conclusion of Mr. Dare after he reviewed the evidence he had gathered on the possible elopement. It is purely Mr. Dare’s speculation as to what transpired during the successful wooing of Dorothy Vernon by John Manners.