

Madrigal Dinner Script, 2014

I. The Characters

Lord Philip of Nottingham — Brett Rodgers
Lady Barbara of Nottingham — Laura Allan

Lord Cumberland — Corey Fedorowich
Lady Cumberland — Alexis Wolfer

Lord Westmorland — Michael Zimmermann
Lady Westmorland — Pritika Ramesh

Lord Berkshire — Ted Swanson
Lady Berkshire — Victoria Tielebein

Lord Somerset — Doug McCaskey
Lady Somerset — Elizabeth Brayman

Lord Blaine — Joshua Cohen
Lady Blaine — Demi Ferker

Lord Cheshire — Chris Doblovosky
Lady Cheshire — Olivia Cipriano

Laird McGregor — Jonathan Shoup
Lady McGregor — Lauren Smith

Lord Vandenhooven — Matthew Prusinski
Lady Vandenhooven — Emily Barth

II. The Outline

Guests will enter the dining room between 7:10 and 7:30 to harpsichord or string music.

At 7:30 we should have a fanfare to announce the arrival of the Lords and Ladies (that's you, folks). Lords and Ladies process in to harpsichord music. Go to the head table, gentlemen helping their ladies to the chairs. The Lord and Lady of Nottingham are the hosts, and should be seated in the center.

Welcoming dialogue. Entrance of the McGregors and Vandenhoovens.

Pouring of the Wassail (sing *Gloucestershire Wassail*). A Little more dialogue.

The Boar's Head is presented to the head table for inspection and approval. Dr. P. will present the Boar's Head and sing the first verse. Lord Philip of Nottingham sings the second verse, and Lord Cumberland sings the third verse. Upon approval of the main dish, the dinner will be served to the guests.

During the Dinner all soloists will perform throughout the room (we'll set the order at the dress rehearsal on Thursday).

Following the dinner will be some dialogue, some dancing, some lute playing, some juggling, some storytelling, and the concert portion of the evening. Eventually, everyone will get tired and go home.

Today's date is February 22, 1584
You are in the castle of the Lord and Lady of Nottingham

[At about 7:30 the singers will enter the Great Court down the staircase from the second floor, (we'll lock valuables in the closet in the Main Auditorium). After a trumpet fanfare to announce the host's entry, the singers process in as couples (Lady Blaine enters with the Cheshires). The following dialogue occurs while the singers are still standing at their places at the head table]

Lord Philip of Nottingham:

Lords, Ladies, and honored guests, I bid you welcome to the home of the Lady Barbara and myself. We are met tonight, as always, by the grace of God, and under the protection of our glorious Queen Elizabeth. I thank you all for coming, and trust you will enjoy this evening's festivities. Please, be seated.

[Gentlemen seat the ladies, and sit down themselves]

Lady Barbara of Nottingham:

[looks around] It appears you've brought a handsome group to our affair this year.

Lord Philip of Nottingham:

I always say, "Good food, good music and good company will attract the right sort of people."

Lady Cumberland:

Then why did your party last month just attract 6 peasants and a goat?

Lady Barbara of Nottingham:

We didn't include Philip's family crest on this invitation.

Lady Cumberland:

His family crest?

Lord Cumberland:

It's a picture of Philip's aged father, caught in a compromised position. [makes big, weird face to audience]

[Lord Blaine enters, moving quickly]

Lord Blaine:

My Lords, there is a dead body in the horse stable.

Lord Somerset:

Did you recognize him?

Lord Blaine:

No my Lord, it is a stranger to me.

Lady Cumberland:

[looks around] Where did that lazy Court Musician get off to? We'll need to have him notify the constable.

Lady Blaine:

[suspiciously] Just what were you doing out by the stable?

Lord Blaine:

[rubbing off the lipstick on his downstage cheek] I was...checking to make sure that our carriage horses had been serviced.

Lady Berkshire:

Yes, we can see that someone has been serviced.

Lord Westmorland:

[obviously trying to change the subject] I understand the Queen's own juggler will be entertaining us this evening.

Lady Barbara of Nottingham:

Indeed he shall—we invited Glorianna Herself, but she is unable to attend.

Lady Westmorland:

Why, here is the juggler now!

[trumpet fanfare for the juggler—not too good] [In walks the Court Musician]

Lady Cumberland:

[not pleased] We were expecting the Queen's juggler.

Court Musician:

I bring sad news concerning the juggler my lady. Earlier this week he defected to Spain and yesterday, while doing a simple routine, he dropped a pin on King Philip's head. He has been executed.

Lady Barbara of Nottingham:

Does this mean we'll be stuck with one of your insipid stories later this evening?

Court Musician:

I'm afraid so, my Lady. You might want to have an extra glass of ale with your meal this evening.

Lord Berkshire:

[holds up his flask] I say, have two!

[there's a knocking on the outside door]

Lady Barbara of Nottingham:

[to court musician] Well, don't just stand there looking artistic, go answer the door. And then fetch someone from the local constabulary.

[Lord and Lady McGregor enter; Lord Philip comes around the table to meet them]

Lord Philip of Nottingham:

Good evening, my Lord. How can we help you?

Laird McGregor:

My wife and I are here to represent the crown this evening.

Lady McGregor:

[walks to Philip and hands over a scroll] Here is our introduction.

Lord Philip of Nottingham:

[unrolls the scroll and reads] Then you are Lord...Mcgegroar?

Lord McGregor:

McGregor, my Lord. McGregor! [to his wife] What can you expect from ale drinkers?

Lord Cumberland:

[to Philip] May I see the introduction, my Lord? [Philip tosses it to him, but it falls in front of the table] [the dialog continues as Cumberland walks around the table to pick it up]

Lady McGregor:

[looks at Lady Cheshire] You looked distressed, my Lady, as we entered. Is anything wrong?

Lady Cheshire:

A man was just found dead outside, near the stable.

Lady McGregor:

[to her husband] Another senseless ale tragedy.

Lady Cumberland:

He didn't just die; he was murdered and left stiff as a board.

Lady McGregor:

[to her husband] So his English demeanor hasn't changed at all.

[Cumberland has made it to the front of the table]

Lady Barbara of Nottingham:

[to Lord Cumberland] As you're there already, please escort our visitors to their seats.

Lord Cumberland:

[to the McGregors] Walk this way. [he bends down to pick up the scroll, takes two steps, dropping and picking up the scroll, and walks to the corner]

[The McGregor's look at each other and follow, bending down to pick up an imaginary paper every two steps]

[they all stop when there is another knock on the outside door; Lord Vandenhooven and his wife enters, moving to the center of the room]

Lord Vandenhooven:

I am Lord Vandenhooven of the Dutch republic, and this is my wife. We would ask to dine with you this evening.

Lord Philip of Nottingham:

Any enemy of the Spaniards is welcome here.

Lady Westmorland:

Indeed, we thank you for kicking King Philips' Catholic arse.

Laird McGregor:

Here now—watch what you say about Catholics.

Lady Somerset:

Why should we? There's a reason Elizabeth has declared it illegal to practice Catholicism.

Lady Vandenhooven:

As we will someday in a Dutch Republic; we've been fighting for our freedom from the Catholic Spaniards for 20 years.

Lord Berkshire:

[who is not entirely sober] You tell them, Lady Vanderhoopen.

Lord Vandenhooven:

That's Vandenhooven.

Lord Berkshire:

Right you are, Lady Vandervinhooper.

Lady McGregor:

Are you mocking them?

Lord Berkshire:

[to the audience] Not on purpose.

Lord Cumberland:

[coming around the table] Let's all stay calm here; I'm sure Lord Berkshire isn't being deliberately provocative.

Laird McGregor:

What did he say?

Lady Vandenhooven:

He said scotch is a drink for sissies.

Laird McGregor:

You English are a vile lot. [He pulls out his sword and heads toward Lord Philip]

[Lord Vandenhooven, insulted, draws his sword and makes for Lord Cumberland; swordfight]

Lady Barbara of Nottingham:

I think that's enough. Now, why don't you sit down and join us for a glass of ale.

Laird McGregor:

You have no scotch?

Lady Cumberland:

This is England, my Lord. We drink *ale*.

Lord Berkshire:

Personally, I could use a glass of wassail.

Lord Somerset:

By all means, some ale!

Lady Westmorland:

Don't get your hopes up—there is no alcohol in wassail.

Lord Berkshire:

[holding up “Lord Ralph’s Magic Elixir”] Maybe not in yours. . .

[trumpet fanfare. Servers bring in the wassail, head table first. At cue from director, the group begins singing. *Gloucestershire Wassail*. Verses 1, 2, 7, 8]

Lord Philip of Nottingham:

[standing, with glass held high, to audience] To our good and gracious Queen—Long may she live.

[singers ad. lib. assents][Lord Berkshire pours “Lord Ralph’s” into his cup]

[the male singer sitting stage right walks briefly offstage and returns with a scroll]

Lord Cheshire:

My Lord, I have been handed a message from the constable. It seems the dead man had been sent by the Queen to deliver a letter of support to our Dutch guests.

Lady Westmorland:

Was that letter still on his person?

Lord Cheshire:

No, my Lady, it was not.

Lady Berkshire:

Then there may be a foreign operative in our midst. [singers turn to look away from spouse and then toward spouse, deliberately]

[Lord Berkshire stands, looking afraid]

Lady Berkshire:

Sit down. I'm your wife.

Lord Berkshire:

[to audience] Why do you think I looked so scared?

Lady Barbara:

We've dealt with spies at our table before. I'm sure we'll figure this out before the end of the dinner.

Lady Vandenhooven:

I certainly hope so—that letter could make all the difference in our bid for freedom.

Lord Vandenhooven:

A meal at this alleged dinner would be helpful, as well. Swordfighting works up an appetite.

Lord Westmorland:

I'm sure the food will be along shortly.

Lady Cumberland:

Besides, how much of an appetite could you develop the way you handle a sword?

[Trumpet fanfare. Court musician enters, holding the boar's head, singing the first verse of the Boar's Head Carol] [Singers all stand. Verse 2 is sung by Lord Philip; verse 3 by Lord Cumberland] [the Head is shown to all the members of the audience for approval]

Lord Philip of Nottingham:

Let the feast begin!

[the singers sit down. harpsichord music is played. after a reasonable number of people have been served, the singers begin going around to tables, serenading the diners.] [We'll determine the exact order of the music at the dress rehearsal]

munch, munch, chomp, chomp, scarf, scarf.



Lord Philip of Nottingham:

[stepping out in front of the head table, but talking to the singers at the table]
Gentlemen, step forward. I need to clear away the cobwebs—who would like to sing the first catch?

[the singers all come around to the front of the table]

Lord Somerset:

I have one you may enjoy, if two of you will join me.

[*Tom Kisses the Book*—Ted, Jonathan, Doug]

Lord Blaine:

[to Lord Somerset] I didn't realize you were spying on our neighbor Tom, my Lord.

Lady Cheshire:

Don't encourage him, my Lord. That song was boring—we have one that is far more interesting.

[*Roll me over*—Tori, Olivia, Laura]

Lord Westmorland:

[smiling] Well now, that was very well done.

Lord Blaine:

You've obviously had too much ale, my Lord. Gentlemen, Lady Cheshire thought our last catch was too prim. Can we have another?

[*Juliet is Pretty*—Josh, Brett, Matt]

Lady Cumberland:

[to Lord Berkshire] Well now; her "commodity"—that's pretty rude. [to the women] Surely we have something that will actually amuse our audience.

Lady Blaine:

We have one here that should be more to your liking, my lady.

[*Caviar*—Liz, Emily, Demi, Lauren]

Laird McGregor:

A virgin sturgeon—sounds like an *English* fish to me.

Lord Cumberland:

Ah, just what we needed; another droll line from a Scotsman with a speech impediment.

Lord Westmorland:

I have another catch to take our minds off of him, my Lord.

[*Clarinda was jocose*—Chris, Corey, Michael]

Lady Barbara:

[to Lord Westmorland] Well thank you for sharing the dreams of a drunken male. Do we know any songs from the real world?

Lady Somerset:

I have, in fact, a true tale of an event that happened to an Irish Noblewoman. I'm sure it will entertain our visitors.

[*Chastity Belt*—Liz, Alexis, Pritika]

Court Musician:

If the Lords and Ladies would like, perhaps we could sing some newly published music.

Lord Berkshire:

[who is somewhat inebriated; looks over toward Lady Barbara] I'd rather hear some more dirty songs.

Lady Berkshire:

Oh no, you wouldn't. [lifts her husband out of his chair by the ear]

[singers stand— sing:]

Mon coeur, se recommande á vous

Now is the month of maying

Matona, mia cara

Come away, sweet love

Lord Philip of Nottingham:

Well sung, everyone.

[singers return to their seats, gentlemen seating the women.]

Laird McGregor:

As much as I enjoy the music, I understood that you were going to have some additional entertainment this evening.

Lady Barbara:

Well, we had expected the Queen's juggler, but it seems he has been dispatched to his just reward. So I'm afraid we will have to settle for one of the Court Musicians' stories; let's hope it doesn't include one his dreadful Shakespearian puns.

[enter the Court Musician; tells *The Tale of the Magic Harp*] [exits]

Lady Westmorland:

This frivolity is all well and good, but we still have the problem of a hidden spy in our midst.

Lord Cumberland:

We need to approach this question logically.

Lord Berkshire:

[stands up] I know who did it.

Lady Westmorland:

Really? How did you figure it out?

Lord Berkshire:

It's always the people who talk funny.

Lord Westmorland:

So you're saying it's...

Lord Berkshire:

It's Lord Vandervinhooper. No one talks funnier than him.

Lord Vandenhooven:

I did not kill that man.

Lord Philip of Nottingham:

Tell me, Lord Vandenhooven: who won the 1583 Antwerp clogging challenge match?

Lord Vandenhooven:

Alida Heiman.

Lord Philip of Nottingham:

Only a Dutchman would know something like that. He's not the killer. [Lord Philip exchanges a look with Lord Cumberland and both stand up. Philip moves behind the other singers while drawing his sword while Cumberland moves offstage left. Lord Berkshire sits down.]

Lady Barbara:

All right. How many of you came to this dinner party in a carriage?

[everyone raises their hands except the Blaines and the Cheshires]

Lady Cumberland:

So, tell me Lord Cheshire, why did you leave your carriage at home?

Lord Cheshire:

My wife and I are staying in the Nottingham's guest room while our castle is being renovated.

Lady Barbara:

I can vouch for that. And Lord Blaine, how did you get here?

Lord Blaine:

We came with the Somersets, in their carriage.

Lady Berkshire:

If you had no horse, why were you out in the stables earlier this evening when the murder took place?

Lord Cumberland:

[appears stage left, with his sword pointed at the violist] Because he was meeting with the violist and the two of them conspired to kill the Queen's messenger. I found this tin of lipstick in her back pack. And the hole in the dead man's back matched the shape of the violist's bow.

Lord Philip of Nottingham:

[holding Blaine at the end of his sword] A Spanish spy and a turncoat violist. The world has truly gone mad.

Lord Vandenhooven:

What are you going to do with them, my Lord?

Lady Barbara:

We hang spies in England, my Lord.

Court Musician:

Excuse me, my Lady, but could we sing one final set of madrigals before you hang them?

Lady Berkshire:

[to Lord Philip] My Lord?

Lord Philip of Nottingham:

Oh, very well, if we must.

[The singers move into sections and perform:

*Come shepherds, follow me
O tenebroso giorno
Let go, why do you stay me
Hard by a crystal fountain
Lady, the silly flea]*

[exit]