

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS; OR, THE DUKE, THE EARL, THE WITCH, THE WHY AND THE WHEREFORE: [burlesque] Txt. W. M. Akhurst; Mus. [n/e]

R. Bell, 1869

A historical burlesque in seven scenes on the theme of the Norman invasion, most of the events in *The Battle of Hastings* take place in Kent, England, on May Day 1052. The *Argus* theatre critic notes, however, that the piece was "full of apposite allusions to recent political events." Concerning the story the same critic writes: "There is less coherency... than is customary to find in modern burlesques, but as this class of dramatic composition is supposed to appeal more to the visual than any other sense, this is possibly no defect" ("Theatre Royal," 6).

The scenes presented were: Sc 1. A Kentish Meadow (with a distant view of an ancient Roman Villa, restored in the Anglo-Saxon style); Sc 2. Picturesque Ruins of a Roman Temple; Sc 3. Banqueting Hall in Duke William's Palace at Rouen; Sc 4. Exterior of the Abbey Church of St Peter, Thorney Isle; Sc 5. The English Channel and Coast of Sussex, Anglo Saxon Exultation at the Victory over Tastig the Witch, The Invasion of England, and Duke William's Fleet; Sc 6. Outposts of the Norman Camp by Moonlight; and Sc 7. The Field of Battle.

The music styles incorporated into the production were both operatic and popular. "New and sparkling music [was] selected" from: *Crequefer* and *Quadrille* (Offenbach), *Genevieve de Brabant*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *La Trompette*, *Operetta de Chanson*, *L'Hirondelle*, *Elixir of Love*, *Le Prophete*, *La Valse des Adieux*, *The Lover and the Bird* and *The Lancashire Lass*. The songs parodies included: "Smother the Men," "Ten Little Niggers," "Rollicking Rams," "Naughty Mary Anne," "Buy a Baby Bunting," "Good Bye John," "Fast Old Gals," "My Father was a Viking," "Bonnie Blue Flag," "My Mary Land" and "The Immortal Tommy Dodd."

1869: Theatre Royal, Melbourne; 29 Mar. - 9 Apr.

- **Prod/Lse.** Henry R. Harwood, Richard Stewart, John Hennings, George Coppin; **M Arr.** Frederick Coppin; **S Art.** John Hennings, Alfred Clint and Richard Little; **S Mngr/Dir.** J. R. Greville; **Cost.** Mde Jager.

- **Troupe:** Royal Star Burlesque Company.

- **Cast** incl. G. H. Rogers (William Duke of Normandy), Anna Ford (Edith), Con Warde (Edward the Confessor), Richard Stewart (Taillefer), J. R. Greville (Hilda), Miss Chester (Mallet de Graville), Docy Stewart (Harold), Maggie Stewart (Gurth), Mrs Woolridge (Matilda), Emma Rogers (An Usher), Master Trotter (Tallboys), H. Power (Smulf), Mr Lewis (Eggot), Mr Forde (Egbad), Mr Lowman (Bulf), Miss Blanche (John de Smith), Miss Bray (Bill de Jones), Miss L. Coppin (Jim de Brown), Miss Bennison (Bob de Buggins), Miss Lester (Jeff de Wilkins), Miss L. Collins (Mo d'Abraham), Miss Crawford (Richard de Boshe), Miss Forde (Phil de Figgins), Miss Howard (Mont de Piete), Miss Carey, Miss Newman, Miss Graham, Miss J. Collins.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. [Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869](#). (1995), v. pags.

"[Theatre Royal](#)." *Argus* 30 Mar. (1869), 6. [see also advert. - 29 Mar. 1869, 8]

"[Theatre Royal](#)." *Age* 30 Mar. (1869), 3.

T H E A T R E R O Y A L
 Managers—Messrs. Harwood, Stewart, Hennings,
 and Coppin.
 Stage Manager—Mr. J. R. Greville.
UNPRECEDENTED ATTRACTION
 For the
EASTER HOLIDAYS.
THIS EVENING,
 And Every Night Until Further Notice.
Mr. C O P P I N,
 As Mawworm,
 In the celebrated comedy of
T H E H Y P O C R I T E
 After which
Mr. B A R R Y O ' N E I L,
 Will sing an entirely new comic song, written expressly
 for him, entitled
V A C C I N A T I O N
 And
 The Topics of the Day.
 To conclude with the new and original burlesque-
 extravaganza, written expressly for the management
 by Mr. W. M. Akhurst, author of "King Arthur,"
 the "Siege of Troy," "Robinson Crusoe," &c.,
 entitled the
BATTLE of HASTINGS,
 Or,
The Duke, the Earl, the Witch, the Why, and the
Wherefore.
 Supported by the
ROYAL STAR BURLESQUE COMPANY.

Argus 29 Mar. (1869), 8.

CROSSING THE LINE: [burlesque] Txt. Lieut. Poore; Mus. [n/e]

Purchased by Walter Montgomery from Lieut. Poore of HMS Galatea, the 17 May production was advertised as being performed for the first time before a public audience. There had been various performances on the Galatea during the Duke of Edinburgh's visit to Sydney, however. The Duke arranged and conducted the overture and music for the Sydney production.

1869: Prince of Wales Opera House, Sydney; 17, 19-25 May

- **M Dir.** His Royal Highness, The Duke of Edinburgh.

- **Cast** incl. Kate Corcoran, Eleanor Carey, Miss Morgan, Miss Dixon, Charles Young, Mr Andrews, George Leopold, George Darrell, Mr Welsh, J. Tasker, Mr Leatham.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. [Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869](#). (1995), v. pags.

KING BILLY; OR, THE LAST OF HIS RACE: [burlesque] Txt/Mus. [n/e]

Described as a burlesque in the *Hobart Mercury* ("Theatre Royal," 3). *King Billy's* narrative is based on an aboriginal theme and story.

1869: Theatre Royal, Hobart; 24 May

Kelly, Veronica, ed. [Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869](#). (1995), v. pags.

"[Theatre Royal](#)." *Mercury* (Hobart) 25 May 1869, 3.

THE CUDGEGONG DIAMOND: [burlesque sketch] **Txt/Mus.** [n/e]

Advertised in the *Argus* as a "negroic burlesque" (11 Aug. 1869, 8). The story spoofs the discovery of an "immense" diamond near the town of Armidale (in the Northern Tablelands New South Wales) in early August 1869. It wasn't a diamond, however, but merely a piece of quartz. Interestingly, Cudgegong was not the area near Armidale but rather the name of the river near Mudgee (central New South Wales) where real diamonds had been found in early July the same year.

Written by one or more members of Weston and Hussey's Minstrels, *The Cudgegong Diamond* included a musical accompaniment for dances and at least one ballad. The storyline reportedly introduced the search for the gems and precious stones, the discovery on the Cudgegong River, unearthing the "Koh-i-noor," the great joy, its transit to Sydney under special constabulary escort, and the "Surprise Party" etc (*Argus* 11 Aug. 1869, 8).

NB: The first advertisement for the sketch billed it as "The Cudgeong Diamond" (without a second "g").

The music element included and at least one ballad.

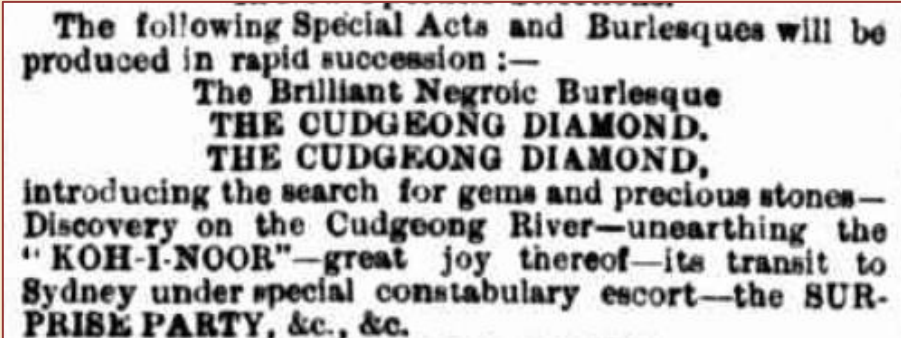
1869: Weston's Opera House, Melbourne; 11-21 Aug. [10 pfms]

- **Prod.** Frank Weston; **Dir.** Frank Hussey.

- **Troupe:** Weston and Hussey's Minstrels.

- **Cast:** Frank Hussey (Bill Slocum), Harry Kelly (Jim Brown), Frank Weston (Simon Stean), T. Cambell (John Smith), H. Ackland.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. [Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869](#). (1995), v. pags.
Argus 11 Aug. (1869), 8. Advert.



The following Special Acts and Burlesques will be produced in rapid succession :-
The Brilliant Negroic Burlesque
THE CUDGEGONG DIAMOND.
THE CUDGEGONG DIAMOND,
introducing the search for gems and precious stones—
Discovery on the Cudgeong River—unearthing the
"KOH-I-NOOR"—great joy thereof—its transit to
Sydney under special constabulary escort—the SUR-
PRISE PARTY, &c., &c.

Argus 11 Aug. (1869), 8.

FORMOSA: [burlesque] **Txt Adapt.** W. Read; **Mus.** [n/e]

Adapted from Dion Boucicault's play 1869 *Formosa* (which had been playing at the Prince of Wales Theatre), it was presented "for the first time in this colony" and "written expressly for this hall" (*Evening News* 2 Dec. 1869, 4). The settings were: Act 1. The Old Swan - Distant view of the Thames; Act 2. Sc 1. Roadside; Sc 2. Interior of Mr Doremus's House; Act 3. Sc 1. Street in London; Sc 2. Apartment in Formosa's House; Act 4. Banks of the Thames - the race.

1869: Scandinavian Hall, Sydney; 6-22 Dec. [11 pfms]

- **Dir.** W. H. Ford.

- **Cast** incl. W. Murray (Mr Doreman), Miss Laurine (Tom Burroughs), Madlle Ducrow (Lord Eden), W. Turner (Compton Kerr), Mr Letville (Major Jorum), Mr Clare (Bob Sanders), Mr Milne Spooner, Mr Tipper Welch, the Policeman, Mrs Sam Bennett (Mrs Boker), W. H. Ford (Jenno, or Formosa), H. Vincent (Nelly, in love with Tome).

Evening News (Sydney) 2 Dec. (1869), 4. **Advert.**

Kelly, Veronica, ed. [Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869](#). (1995), v. pags.

LOVE'S SILVER DREAM; OR, THE KING, THE GODDESS AND THE FAYS OF FAIRYLAND, OR HARLEQUIN PYGMALION AND THE GOLDEN DEMON OF THE YAWNING CHASM: [pantomime] **Lib Adapt.** Garnet Walch; **Mus.** Andrew Moore

Adapted and localised by Walch this pantomime contained references to the Duke of Edinburgh. The transformation scene was of the Flying Squadron entering Sydney Heads.

1869: Adelphi Theatre, Sydney; 24 Dec. 1869 - 3 Feb. 1870 [33 pfms]

- **Dir.** Rosa Cooper; **Lse.** Lionel Harding; **Ast Mngr.** W. J. Wilson; **M Arr.** Andrew Moore; **S Art.** W. J. Wilson and Alexander Habbe; **Cost.** Miss Barrett; **Chor.** G. Browne.

- **Cast** incl. Miss L. Novello, Eleanor Carey, Mrs Moore, Rosa Cooper, Mrs J. P. West, George Brown, J. E. Taylor, W. P. Morrison, Mr Flintoff, Charles Young, Mr Leonard, J. P. West.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. [Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869](#). (1995), v. pags.

HARLEQUIN MAZEPPA; OR, THE WILD ROCKING HORSE OF TARTARY, AND THE LITTLE FAIRY OF THE ENCHANTED SUGAR GROVES OF NORTH

AUSTRALIA: [pantomime] **Lib Adapt.** H. Hay Davis; **Mus.** [n/e]

ROYAL ALEXANDRA THEATRE.
Proprietor **MR. JAMES DINSDALE.**

Fourth week of those Celebrated Artistes **Mr. C. H. BURFORD** and **Miss CLARA STEPHENSON** (the Celeste of Australia).

ON BOXING NIGHT, will be produced a Grand **CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME, HARLEQUIN MAZEPPA**; or, the Wild Rocking Horse of Tartary, and the Little Fairy of the Enchanted Sugar Groves of North Australia. **Miss CLARA STEPHENSON**, as Mazeppa à la Ada Menkin; **Clown, Mr. HARRY FLYNN**; **Harlequin, Mr. TOM LACY**; **Columbine, Miss E. MURPHY**; **Pantaloon, Mr. JOE TOLANO**. This Extravaganza will be placed on the stage at an outlay of exceeding £150, and will be equal to the merits of any theatre in the Australian Colonies. The scenery by **William Kinchela**; machinery, by **Herbert Winning**. **Mr. Dinsdale** is compelled to advance the prices of admission to gallery, 1s.; pit, 1s. 6d.; stalls and chairs as before, in consequence of the great expense attending this production. **5711**

Possibly adapted from H. J. Byron's burlesque *Mazourka; Or, The Stick, the Pole and the Tartar* (1864), *Harlequin Mazeppa* was, according to the *Brisbane Courier* localised by H. Hay Davis (23 Dec. 1869, 1).

1869: Royal Alexandra Theatre, Brisbane; 27 Dec. 1869 - 4 Jan. 1870

- **S Mngr.** C. H. Burford; **S Art.** William Kinchela.

- **Cast** incl. Miss E. Murphy, Harry Flynn, Tom Lacy, Joe Tolano, Master L. Tolano, Mons. Leotard (acrobat).

1870: Royal Alexandra Theatre, Brisbane; 5 Jan.

- **S Mngr.** C. H. Burford; **S Art.** William Kinchela.

- **Cast** incl. Joe Tolano, Master I. Tolano, Tom Lacy, Harry Flynn, Miss E. Murphy, Clara Stephenson, Mons Leotard.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. **Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869.** (1995), v. pags.

Brisbane Courier 23 Dec. (1869), 1. **Advert.**

Editorial. *Brisbane Courier* 28 Dec. (1869), 2.

Brisbane Courier 25 Dec. (1869), 1.

HARLEQUIN JACK SHEPPARD; OR, THE DISREPUTABLE DETECTIVE, THE CLEVER KLEPTOMANIAC, AND THE PLOT OF THE PIEBALD GOBLIN: [pantomime]

Lib Adapt. W. M. Akhurst; **Mus.** [n/e]

Abbott and Co, 1869

Containing local allusions and harlequinade, it was adapted by Akhurst from the Harrison Ainsworth novel *Jack Sheppard* (1839), and possibly influenced by John Thurmond's 1724 pantomime of the same name. The narrative concerns the villainous Sir Roland, uncle of two apprentices, Jack and Thomas, both of whom work in Wood's shop. Induced by Sir Roland, to frame them, the detective Jonathon Wild dresses as a barmaid in order to arrest them. Although they are later released, when Mrs Wood is murdered, Wild again arrests them (staging a parody of *The Corsican Brothers*). Jack escapes from Newgate and Wild's house is burnt down in revenge. When Wild reappears on stage from the orchestra pit, the Fairy introduces the transformation scene in order to prevent further arrests.

1869: Duke of Edinburgh Theatre, Melbourne; 27 Dec. 1869 - 22 Jan. 1870 [20 pfms]

- **Dir.** J. R. Greville; **M Arr.** Charles Eigenschank; **S Art.** William Pitt, Mr Clark, Mr Douglas; **Cost.** Mrs Hancock; **Chor.** Mons. Massartic.

- **Troupe:** Theatre Royal Company.

- **Cast** incl. Frances Bentley [aka Florence Bentley], Mrs Greville, Florence Norman, Margie Chester, Miss Bennison, Sally Lloyd, J. R. Greville, G. H. Rogers, Mr Claremont, Charles Coutts, Mr Humphrey's, T. Andrews, Mr Maynard, Mons. Massartic, Boleno Brown, George Claremont.

- The Duke of Edinburgh Theatre, previously known as the Haymarket Theatre, was afforded a 'Grand Reopening' with this production.

"**Duke of Edinburgh Theatre**," *Argus* 28 Dec. (1869), 6.

"**Entertainments: The Theatres.**" *Australasian* (Melbourne) 1 Jan. (1870), 18.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. **Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869.** (1995), v. pags.

"**Pantomime at the Haymarket, The.**" *Age* 28 Dec. (1869), 3.

Williams, Margaret. *Australia on the Popular Stage.* (1983), 79.

THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT; OR, HARLEQUIN PROGRESS AND THE LOVES, LAUGHS, LAMENTS AND LABOURS OF JACK MELBOURNE AND LITTLE

VICTORIA: [pantomime] **Lib.** W. M. Akhurst; **Mus.** [n/e]

Cordell, 1869

Fotheringham, Richard. *Australian Plays for the Colonial Stage 1834-1899* (2006)

A pantomime with many topical references to well-known personalities, recent events and Victorian politics (notably allegations of land fraud involving several members of parliament) and towards which the author directs much light-hearted satire. Theatre historian Richard Fotheringham writes in this respect: "Since before 1820 the 'House that Jack Built' story had been used for political commentary. Akhurst follows this tradition in making his hero Jack Melbourne and Little Victoria represent the hopes and fears for the future of that colony and his villain Orognome some of its current vices, particularly unscrupulous and fraudulent manipulation of mining stocks and share trading 'Under the Verandah'" (*Australian Plays*, 220-1).

The story concerns Jack Melbourne who has been raised and educated by the Fairy Queen Diamantina in an attempt to foil the evil plans of Orognome (the Gold Sovereign). Some years previous Orognome kidnapped Little Victoria in order to prevent

her from bringing to fruition a prophecy made at her birth which foretells that she would "rule half the earth." Diamantina's plan is that Jack will improve the land upon which 'his lot has been cast' thereby countering Orognome's intentions. However, being both mortal and a young man just on eighteen, Jack begins exhibiting desires to move beyond the fairy cave he has lived in almost all his life. He digs a hole that eventually leads him to Orognome's home where he meets and falls in love with Little Victoria. The Gold Sovereign drugs Jack and leaves "him in a critical position on the line over which the gold trucks pass." He is saved from being crushed (in a burlesque of Dion Boucicault's *After Dark*) by Joey, "a marsupial attendant upon Little Australia and who possesses "largely cultivated instincts." With the aid of Diamantina, Jack and Little Victoria make their way to the surface where Jack is required to build a house and make history in order to defeat Orognome. Although he succeeds in erecting his house (it turns out to be the House of Parliament) and presenting a panorama of Melbourne's history from 1835 to the present day, Jack does not prosper from his handiwork. He is later to be found outside the house where Orognome, disguised as a stockbroker (an "under the Verandah Man"), swindles him through bogus land and mining speculation. Jack is once again saved by Diamantina, however, before being conveyed, along with Little Victoria and Joey, to the "Golden Conservatory and Temple of Gems" where the transformation scene takes place (ctd. *Age* 28 Dec 1869, 3; *Australasian* 1 Jan. 1870, 18; and *Sydney Mail* 30 Dec. 1871, 1395).

The scenes presented were: Sc 1. The Haunted Dell of Diamonds with Fairy Castle in the Air; Sc 2. The Superficial Deposits and Stratified Rocks Leading to the Great Suburb of Horrifferousquartzton; Sc 3. Palatial Caverns of Orognome; Sc 4. The Dell of Diamonds (Revisited) and the House that Jack Built; Sc 5. An Aboriginal Wood in Australia Felix with Salt Lagoon - Panorama: The 'Enterprise' Schooner Landing the First Melbourne Settlers; Collins Street 1838; A Sheep Station, 1848; Departure of Burke and Wills; and Melbourne 1869; Sc 6. Exterior of the Houses of Parliament.

The musical element, selected and arranged by Frederick Coppin, contains both operatic and popular styles. The *Age* theatre critic notes, however, that while many of the songs contained melodies that had become popular in England, most were still unknown to Melbourne audiences (27 Dec. 1869, 3). Songs incorporated into this production included: "Where is my Nancy," "Dada" (solo and chorus) "Popsy Wopsy" (duet), "Wind Up Galop" (duet and chorus), "God Save the Queen," "The Style to Which It's Done" (topical song), "Rollicking Rams" (chorus), "Chickaleary Bloke" and "Ring the Bell, Watchman," "See at Your Feet" (trio), "Fair Land of Poland" (solo), "Through the World" (trio), "Meet Me in the Lane," "Cruel Jane Jemima," "J'aime les Militaires," "Cork Leg," "Mary Holder," "Burlington Arcade" (duet) and "Hot Coddilins."

[NB: An adaptation of this production was staged in Sydney in 1871 under the title *The House that Jack Built; Or, Harlequin Jack Sydney, Little Australia and the Gnome of the Gold Mine, and the Australian Fernery in the Golden Conservatory, the Home of Diamantina*. Some seven years later another version was staged in Brisbane, this time under the title *The House that Jack Built; Or, Harlequin Jack Brisbane and Pretty Little Queensland*. See 1871 and 1878 files for further details.]

1869: Theatre Royal, Melbourne; 27 Dec. 1869 - 3 Feb. 1870 [32 pfms]

- **Prod/Lse.** Henry R. Harwood, Richard Stewart, John Henning and, George Coppin; **M Arr.** Frederick Coppin; **S Art.** John Hennings, Mr Freyberger, Richard Little and Mr Douglas; **Cost.** Mde Jager; **Chor.** Rosalie and Heloise Duvalli (Grand Ballet), J. H. Flexmore (Juvenile Flying Squadron).

- **Troupe:** Royal Burlesque Company.

- **Cast** incl. Henry R. Harwood (Jack), Maggie Stewart (Little Victoria), Richard Stewart (Orognome), Docy Stewart (Diamantina), J. H. Flexmore (Joey), Harry Sefton (Bill Ragboys), C. Wyatt (Gaffer Melbourne, Jack's father), Tom Lewis (Dame Melbourne, Jack's mother), Minnie Lester (Dolly Melbourne, Jack's sister), Rosali and Heloise Duvalli, Nellie Stewart.

"Boxing Day." *Age* 27 Dec. (1869), 3.

"Boxing Day: Royal Pantomime, The." *Argus* 28 Dec. (1869), 6.

Daily Telegraph-Mirror (Sydney) 28 Dec. (1869), 3.

"Entertainments: The Theatres." *Australasian* 1 Jan. (1870), 18.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. **Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869.** (1995), v. pags.

"Pantomimes, The." *Humbug* 29 Dec. (1869), 6.

"Royal Pantomime, The." *Age* 28 Dec. (1869), 3.

"Theatrical and Amusements." *Sydney Mail* 30 Dec. 1871, 1395. [re: *Harlequin Jack Sydney*]

Williams, Margaret. *Australia on the Popular Stage.* (1983), 66-7.

SAMBODOM AND POMPEDOM'S DREAM; OR, THE NYMPHS OF THE YARRA BEND:

[burlesque] **Text Adapt.** Frank Hussey; **Mus.** [n/e]

Advertised as an adaptation of W. M. Akhurst's *Jack Sheppard* pantomime (1869).

1869: Weston's Opera House, Melbourne; 31 Dec. 1869 - 10 Jan. 1870

- **Mngr.** Frank Weston and Frank Hussey.

- **Troupe:** Weston and Hussey's Minstrels.

- **Cast** incl. Frank Hussey, Frank Weston, H. Ackland.

Kelly, Veronica, ed. **Annotated Calendar of Plays Premiered in Australia: 1850-1869.** (1995), v. pags.

Last updated: 17/05/2016

Expanded and updated from Clay Djubal, "What Oh Tonight" (Appendix C), Ph D Diss (2005) U of Qld.

NB: The URL for this PDF will change each time it is updated. If you wish to cite or link to this record please use the following:

Australian Variety Theatre Archive • <http://ozvta.com/1860s/>