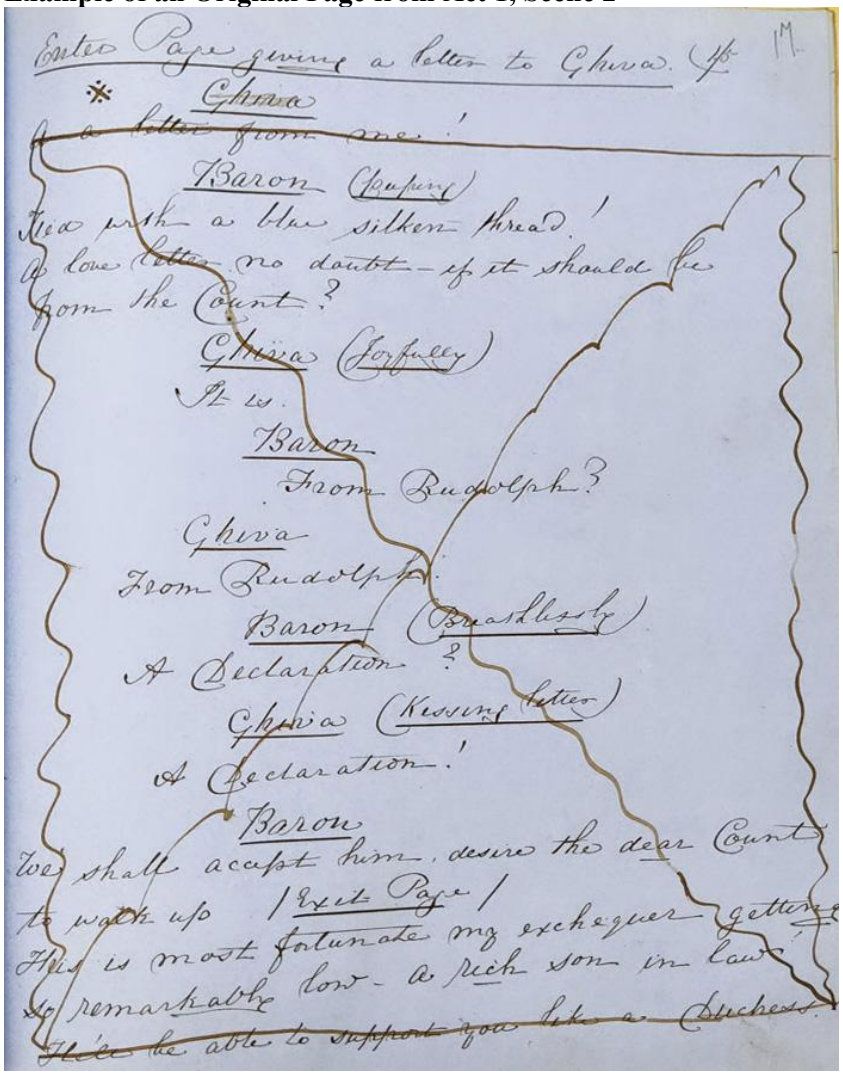
Dialogue and Recitative in Wallace's *Lurline*

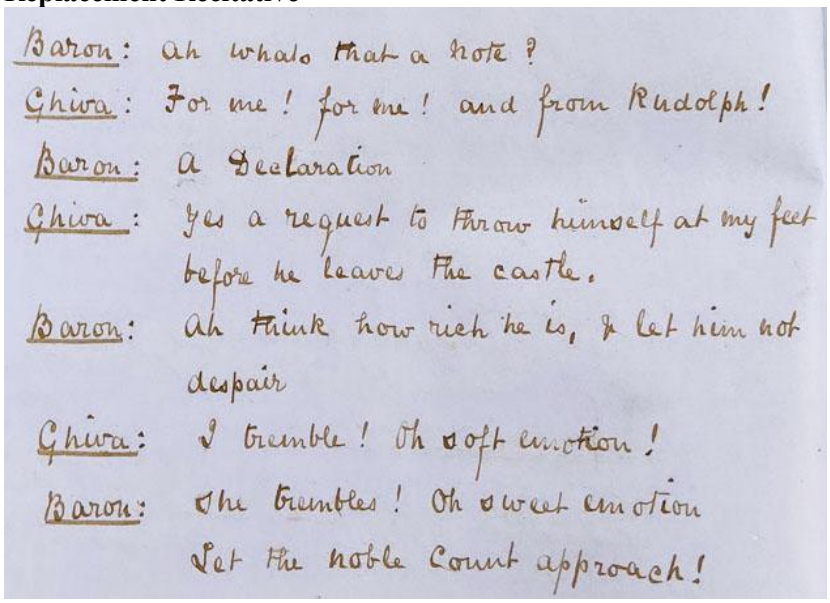
Russell Burdekin, January 2026

The *Lurline* manuscript libretto (British Library Add MS 52990 C) deposited with the Lord Chamberlain shows dialogue being crossed out and replaced by recitative written on the page opposite.

Example of an Original Page from Act 1, Scene 2



Replacement Recitative



Below are the recitative sections and the dialogues that they replaced. The first set of page numbers are from the first edition of the printed libretto and the second set are from the manuscript libretto.

Act 1, Scene 2 (pp.13-14, pp. 13-15).
Autograph Score Number 5 ½

Ghiva's *apartment.* Ghiva *richly attired, with her attendants.*

Printed Libretto

GHI Bring me the mirror. [*Affectedly.*
Mirror brought in. She admires herself.
I'm handsome, truly.

CHORUS.
LADIES. That cannot be denied. [*Ladies assenting.*

GHI (*taking a few steps before the glass*)
I dance divinely!

LAD. That's certain. [*Ladies assenting.*

GHI. Yet made no conquest at the ball, alas!
Away, away, too flattering glass!
Like all the rest thou'rt false!

CHO. No, no!

GHI I'm ugly.

CHO. Ah, no!

GHI Yes, yes.

CHO. *No, n*o, no.
Enter BARON, *hastily,* L.

BAR. What ails my darling

GHI. (*pettishly)* Nothing. nothing.

BAR. Our guests depart, say kind good night,
[*To Ladies*, *who retire a little*
While I these sad looks make more bright;
Whence this cloud on my Ghiva's brow?

GHI. I'm weary of the dance.

BAR. You! the belle on every side admir'd.
Count Rudolph, too—so rich, so handsome.

GHI More than once, to-night, I hoped he would
Declare his love—but, oh! provoking,
Still remained he silent

BAR. Oh, heart of adamant!
Duet

Manuscript libretto

GHI Bring me the mirror (*affectedly*)
(*Mirror brought in. She admires herself*)
I'm handsome truly

LADY That cannot be denied (*Ladies assenting*)

GHI (*taking a few steps before the glass*)
I dance divinely!

LADY That's certain. [*Ladies assenting.*

GHI Yet made I no conquest at the Ball
(*Pettishly*) Away with that flattering glass
I'm very ugly

LADIES (*reprovingly*) Oh, No!

Enter BARON, *hastily,* L.

BAR What's the matter? What ails my darling?
Something has vex'd my precious – leave me
to assuage the storm (?)
(*Ladies curtsey and retire R*)
Whence this cloud on my sweet child's brow

GHI The truth is Papa, I'm weary of residing in
this dreary old Castle. How am I ever to become
a bride if I never see anything but the rooks and
you?

BAR You forget our youthful neighbour Count
Rudolph so handsome and as reports say
so rich

GHI| No I do not, but he is so reserved, so proud.
Tonight at the ball, when we were dancing
I put on my blandest smiles, his eye brightened
and his lips moved. I really thought he was
going to say something tender, when the
words died away and he look'd as distant
and defying as ever – vexatious!

BAR Hadn't the courage to declare, awed by your
beauty, too timid, sure sign of love. I was the
same at his age. But everybody admires my
darling

GHI Everybody is not Count Rudolph. He dresses so well

BAR And would no doubt be proud to adorn a young and lovely bride like my Ghiva with equal splendour

GHI No doubt diamonds, then I should be a Countess, charming my lady Countess. Heigh ho! I'm shockingly in love with Rudolph

Count Rudolph (*strutting*)

Duetto

Act 1, Scene 2 (p.15, pp. 17-18)
Autograph Score Number 6 ½

Enter PAGE, *giving* a letter to GHIVA.

Printed Libretto

BAR. Ah! what's that—a note

GHI For me! for me! *(Snatching* it)
And from Rudolph.

BAR. A declaration?

GHI Yes! a request to throw himself at my feet before he leaves the castle.

BAR. Ah! think how rich he is, and let him not despair.

CHI I tremble! Oh, soft emotion!

BAR. She trembles! Oh, sweet emotion, Let the noble Count approach.

Enter Count Rudolph L.B. richly dressed

Manuscript Libretto

GHI A letter for[1] me!

BAR (*peeping*) Tied with a blue silken thread!
A love letter no doubt if it should be
from the Count?

GHI (*joyfully*) It is

BAR From Rudolph?

GHI From Rudolph!

BAR (*breathlessly*) A declaration?

GHI (*kissing letter*) A declaration!

BAR We shall accept him. Desire the dear Count to walk up (*Exit page*)
This is most fortunate my exchequer getting so remarkably low. A rich son in law.
He'll be able to support you like a Duchess!

GHI Diamonds! A coach and six.

BAR A handsome settlement

GHI Here he comes! How my heart beats – dear Count (*sighing*) Heigh ho!

Enter Rudolph L.B. richly dressed

[1] The manuscript has "from" but this was clearly an error

Act 1, Scene 3 (p. 18, pp. 21-23)
Autograph Score Number 9

Enter Rudolph at back in a skiff with sails. They run and bring the barque to shore

Printed Libretto

WIL Here's Lord Rudolph,

CHO. Huzza, Huzza**!**

RUD. Yes I am here, and spurn'd!

WIL How spurn'd ?

RUD. Proud Ghiva cares not for me;
Her father's gold will not my house restore -
Hope flies from me.

WIL Never heed—Rudolph, never heed.

CHO. Never heed.

RUD Thanks, brave comrades, thanks.
By my birth a nobleman, I could not
wrong a lady;
So I told her my poverty: the end was
sharp and sudden
The Baron bow'd me out, as she dismissed me.

WIL & CHO Ah, dismiss'd you

RUD. Ah, with scorn!

WIL. & CHO. (*angrily*)
With scorn dismiss'd you.
Rudolph, our captain, scorn'd - our
leader scorn'd!
Vengeance, say I - Vengeance, say I-
'Tis an affront to all of us**!**
Our leader scorned - revenge! revenge!
Our captain stoned - revenge! revenge!

RUD. Never The gallant hearts around me shall
Not seek vengeance on bright eyes
and sunny locks.
She is a woman, therefore I forgive her -
A woman - therefore worth a Rhenish bumper.
So hence with anger - give me wine.

WIL & CHO Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

RUD. Our vaults have still a welcome store
of rich old wine,
We'll soon win more to cheer us**.**

CHO Hurrah! Hurrah!

Manuscript Libretto

WIL Count Rudolph!

RUD (*landing*) Yes, Count Rudolph rejected by the Baron's daughter

ALL Rejected?

RUD (*laughing*) Ha! Ha! It was a mistake on both sides. She loved me for the fortune she imagin'd I possessed and I her for the fortune which in marrying her I hoped would replenish our ruined finances. Neither the lady nor myself are likely to die of broken hearts (*laughs*)

WIL And how knew the Baron that you were
otherwise than wealthy?

RUD From my own lips. I could not deceive a Lady

WIL 'Tis an affront, which we will somehow
punish (?)

RUD (?) On whom? Not on Ghiva surely? She is a woman; and a pretty one therefore I forgive her. It is not for gallant manly hearts to cherish resentments towards the other sex. No, we have still some rich old wine in our cellars; therefore we'll drink Ghiva's health in a bumper and wish her well married to as good a husband as I should have made her. Thet done, we'll to our barque and once more seek gold upon the Spanish Main. Wine there! Fill all to Ghiva (*drinks*)

ALL (*drinking*) Ghiva! Hurrah!

RUD Another! And as it may be our last day for some time in the old Castle, be merry gallant hearts and I'll sing you an ancient legend of our native Rhine about Lurline.

ALL The song, the song!

Romanza

RUD. Gold may be gather'd on the ocean wave;

CHO We have our galley still.

RUD Sharp swords, strong arms, shall reap
the azure fields,
'Tis our last night 'neath these old towers.
Let's drink and drown unpleasant memories -
Bring wine, bring wine!

CHO Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

RUD I'll sing you a legend of our lovely
stream, the Rhine -
The story of the Water-Sprite, who with her song
At midnight hour allures brave hearts
beneath yon waves.

CHO Ah! woe betides the man that listens;
Ah! cold bridal bed awaits him in the flood.
The song! the song! the song!

Romanza

Act 2, Scene 1 (pp 27-28, pp. 36-37)
Autograph Score Number 15 ½

In this instance the dialogue is very close to the recitative, so the main point of writing the recitative on the opposite page might have been to show that it still needed to be set.

Liba & Nym Ha! ha!

GNO Open! open!

Liba & Nym The captive *asks* in vain.

RUD 'Mid this enchantment, a captive!

LUR Tis a Gnome, would play the spy on thee.

RUD. For me no dungeon dark must he endure.

LUR Dungeon dark! all around beams resplendent gold.

RUD Gold! gold!

LUR. Yes! there are all the treasures of the mighty Rhine. Behold the key!

GNO. Fury! vengeance!

RUD Must he remain a captive! Pardon! pardon! if I set him free?

LUR Gen'rous heart! as thou wilt.

RUD Gnome, come forth! Amazement! (*Opening door and gazing at gold*

Act 2, Scene 2 (p.30, p.41)
Autograph Score Number 17 ½

Enter Ghiva

Printed Libretto

RECITATIVE—Ghiva
Ah, me! Ah, me! How dismal is the Castle!
My heart is still with Rudolph,
Even in misfortune. Though no longer
Wealthy, still so handsome! Oh that
'Neath my lattice (*sic*)! I could hear his
Voice sweetly sing of love and fame!
A gentle troubadour.

Manuscript Libretto

The gloom of the castle seems every day to increase. One grows weary of admiring one's features, however handsome, in the looking glass and nobody else in the shape of a handsome young man to admire them. I'm sorry I sent away Count Rudolph with a broken heart. I hope, however, he'll summon all his chivalry one of these clear moonlight evenings. How romantic it would be if, finding himself rejected as a count, he were to assume some disguise to steal into my heart: as a troubadour, for instance. Oh! That would be enchanting. Heigho! Charming troubadour!

Act 2, Scene 2 (p.31, pp. 42-43)
Autograph Score Number 18 ½

Enter Baron hastily

Printed Libretto

BAR. Oh, sweet daughter! (*Disconcerted*)

GHI. Thou bringst ill tidings.

BAR. Rudolph! Rudolph is drowned!
(*Affecting tears*)

GHI Drown'd himself! No doubt for love
of me. Oh, horror!

BAR. Oh droop not thus, poor blighted flower.

GHI. I'm going to faint. Oh! Oh!

BAR. Hark! Hark! I hear the hunters this
way coming, to invite us to the chase.

GHI. Oh, sounds reviving!

BAR. You requested are to share the sports,
and of merit award the prize.

GHI I'm somewhat better; I cannot disoblige these brave young foresters. My hat and feathers! My javelin also. I'll stifle sorrow in the joyous hunter's cry.

BAR. Noble impulse! Behold our friends.
Enter Hunters L.

Manuscript Libretto

BAR Oh! My sweet daughter ! Oh my sensitive child. Such a disaster.

GHI Dear me. What has happened?

BAR Your discarded suitor. Count Rudolph

GHI Not got married to someone else I hope

BAR Oh dear no. Quite the contrary. Gone and drown'd himself in the Rhine, entirely out of compliment to you no doubt.

GHI No doubt. Still I'm very sorry. It makes me quite hysterical. I'm fainting.

BAR (*running (?) for a chair*) My child. No fault of yours that (?) beauty drives men out of their senses.

GHI (*sinking into chair*) O….h!
(*pretends to swoon*)

BAR (*fanning her with a feather fan which she wears by her side*) What exquisite sensibility. I've killed my darling with of this sad disclosure (fans) Revive! Darling revive!
(*Hunter's horn sounds*)

GHI (abruptly) What's that?

BAR The Hunters coming towards the castle. My precious forgets that she promised with her fair

hand to distribute the prizes of the day. Poor fellows! They will be so disappointed and you not able to attend

GHI I'll try. I must not allow my grief to compromise the happiness of others

BAR What sweet philosophy. She's a perfect heroine

GHI (*apart*) The there's my new hat and feather to be worn on the occasion. I'll exert myself

BAR Do dearest. What noble fortitude. Here are the Hunters. The day is truly inviting

Hunters enter L

Act 3, Scene 1 (p.39, p.54)
Autograph Score Number 23 ½

Printed Libretto	**Manuscript Libretto**
Recitative - *Baron and Ghiva*	*Enter Baron and Ghiva, Right hastily*
BAR. Heavens I what a fearful storm! We must shelter find.	**BAR** What a pelting shower we've had. These sudden storms are really very annoying
GHI See, there, a friendly bower! Hark! a footstep.	**GHI** See! Here's a bower of vines. Its broad leaves will protect us.
BARON *(frightened)* Should it be a robber! Thought alarming.	**BAR** Stay, till I explore it (*enters*)
	GHI (*calling out frightened*) O-h! O-h!
GHI Let's away	**BAR** (*hurrying out*) What is the matter!
BAR No rather let us 'neath these spreading trees conceal ourselves.	**GHI** I thought I saw a great boar in the bower
	BAR You don't call me a bore I hope child
(*They hurry into the bower. Enter Rudolph*)	**GHI** (*embracing him with her face to the castle*) Oh no dear papa! Why, there's a castle. Whose is it.
	BAR (*wiping his eyes*) It was poor Rudolph's. I wonder who the new heir is? And whether he'll invite us frequently to dinner.
	GHI And whether he's young and single? Listen! I thought I heard a footstep. If it should (?) be a wolfe (?) or a robber come to steal me
	BAR Or me. Let's conceal ourselves
	(*They hurry into the bower. Enter Rudolph along the bank of the river. R. surveying the Castle as he advances*)

Act 3, Scene 1 (p.40/41, pp. 54-56)
Autograph Score Number 24 ½

Printed Libretto

Recitative – Rudolph, Baron, Ghiva and Chorus

BAR. That voice! 'tis Rudolph's!

GHI Not drown'd for love of me! (*with chagrin*)

BAR. Hard-hearted monster!

GHI Let's avoid him!

BAR. Yes, he is poor!

GHI. And not so handsome as I thought!

BAR. He comes—retire!

Enter Chorus

RUD. Ah, my friends!

CHO Rudolph! alive!

RUD The same, but poorer still than ever!

CHO. More welcome to our hearts,
we thought you drown'd.

RUD. Saved by this charmed ring.

CHO. A ring!

RUD. Comrades, I deceived you but to try your truth.
I'm rich—behold !
(*Gold brought in by Gnome and Attendants)*

BARON **(** *peeping through leaves.)*

GHI. I've lost him and his gold. Oh, provoking!
Oh, tormenting!

BAR. Look there! Behold how vast his store of gold!
Oh, tormenting!

CHO Oh, what wealth! See here! How vast
his store of gold!
Long live Rudolph.

RUD. A cup of wine to pledge the pilot
Of these mighty treasures.
Chorus – Ensemble

Manuscript Libretto

(*Baron peeping through the leaves*)

BAR That voice! By all that's astounding, Rudolph!

GHI Alive! Then he has not drown'd himself for my sake (*with chagrin*)

BAR Stupid fellow! Let's keep out of his way as he's so poor he'd be wanting to borrow money perhaps.

GHI He's grown remarkably plain

BAR Most necessitious persons are so in my opinion. He's coming (*They retire*)

Enter from Castle, Wilhelm and followers
*****[2]

RUD Ah! Here come my followers! Now I'll pretend poverty, just to try their affection, although I doubt it not, brave fellows!

ALL (*running to him*) Rudolph, Count Rudolph!

RUD Yes my friends, returned, as poor as when we parted

WIL A prize we gain, at all events, for Rudolph[3] drowned , Rudolph alive and well. Welcome noble Master, welcome.

ALL Welcome! Hurrah!

WIL But tell us how you escaped

RUD Another time. I have better news. I deceived you but to try you my brave and faithful friends. I am rich

ALL Rich?

RUD Yes, a golden shower has fallen into my lap, which you shall share, most welcomely, as a reward for your fidelity.

The skiff enters with the gold etc which, directed by the Gnome, is carried into the Castle

See! (*pointing B[ack]*)
*****

[2] The page between the ***** was not crossed out but this must have been an oversight as the page was not used
[3] The manuscript has Rupert

WIL Is this a dream?

RUD Convince yourselves! Behold!

As they turn up to survey the treasures,
Baron and Ghiva appear.
***[4]

BAR What wealth! Amazing! He's rich! We've made a slight mistake!

GHI Don't say we, say I . It's all your doing I've lost him

BAR Nay, nay not yet. Trust to the sagacity of your papa. Let's reflect.

As Rudolph etc return, they retire. The gnome comes down and makes obeisance

RUD Wine there, quickly, to pledge the pilot of these ingots (*wine brought in*)

Ensemble

Act 3, Scene 1 (p.42, pp. 59-60)
Autograph Score Number 25 ½

Printed Libretto

Recitative – Ghiva, Rudolph and Baron

BAR. We've made a slight mistake.

GHI (pettishly) Don't say me, say *you.*

BAR. Hist, here he comes. Oh, what a noble presence!

GHI How handsome!

BAR We greet you, noble count!

RUD The Lady Ghiva at poor Rudolph's door.

BAR. Woman's heart is feeble. Fond child,
she loves but you.

RUD. (*aside*) And I love but Lurline!

BAR. (*aside to Ghiva***)** Why don't you faint

GHI My feelings overcome me!

BAR. My child! she faints! she faints!

Manuscript Libretto

BAR We must put on a good face over this matter child. Pretend it was all a mistake. Here comes the noble Count

GHI Better looking than ever!

BAR Hush now, you said plain. That was a similar mistake to you taking me for a wild boar (they laugh)

Rudolph returning

BAR Here's to the gallant Count, Count,
your servant (?)

RUD Is it possible, the proud Baron of Truenfels and the haughty Lady Ghiva at poor Rudolph's door

BAR We come to share our fortune with you (*apart*) Having next to nothing to share

GHI You are surprised to see me here, dear Count, but women's hearts, you ought to know, are always susceptible of the saddest impressions (?). I come to sympathise

[4] The next two lines from the Baron and Ghiva are reflected in the recitative following

GHI Oh support me!

BAR I haste for aid.

[Exit BARON

Duetto

BAR Yes, we come to sympathise. To throw ourselves into your arms

RUD Excuse me, Baron, but the Lady –

GHI This is too much I'm fainting. Oh! (*falls in Rudolph's arms*)

BAR Dear, susceptible child! What is to be done? Help there

Exit into Castle

Duetto