

= Arthur Sullivan =

Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan MVO ( 13 May 1842 ? 22 November 1900 ) was an English composer . He is best known for his series of 14 operatic collaborations with the dramatist W. S. Gilbert , including H.M.S. Pinafore , The Pirates of Penzance and The Mikado . His works comprise 23 operas , 13 major orchestral works , eight choral works and oratorios , two ballets , incidental music to several plays , and numerous hymns and other church pieces , songs , and piano and chamber pieces . The best known of his hymns and songs include " Onward Christian Soldiers " and " The Lost Chord " .

The son of a military bandmaster , Sullivan composed his first anthem at age eight . He was selected as soloist in the boys ' choir of the Chapel Royal . In 1856 , the Royal Academy of Music awarded the first Mendelssohn Scholarship to the 14 @-@ year @-@ old Sullivan , allowing him to study first at the Academy and then in Germany , at the Leipzig Conservatoire . His graduation piece was a suite of incidental music to Shakespeare 's The Tempest . When it was performed in London in 1862 , it was an immediate sensation . Sullivan began his composing career with a series of ambitious works , interspersed with hymns , parlour ballads and other light pieces . Among his best received early pieces were a ballet , L 'Île Enchantée ( 1864 ) , and his Irish Symphony , Cello Concerto and Overture in C ( In Memoriam ) ( all in 1866 ) . From 1861 to 1872 , he supplemented his income by working as a church organist and music teacher , and writing hymns and songs .

In 1866 , Sullivan composed a one @-@ act comic opera , Cox and Box , which is still widely performed . His most successful orchestral work , the Overture di Ballo , premiered in 1870 . Sullivan 's talent and native charm earned him many friends in musical and social circles , including Queen Victoria 's son Alfred , Duke of Edinburgh . In 1871 , Sullivan wrote his first opera with W. S. Gilbert , Thespis . Sullivan then produced his Festival Te Deum ( 1872 ) , an oratorio , The Light of the World ( 1873 ) , and incidental music for West End productions of several Shakespeare plays . He also had conducting and academic appointments . In 1875 , producer Richard D 'Oyly Carte reunited Gilbert and Sullivan to create a one @-@ act piece , Trial by Jury , which was a surprise hit . Their 1878 opera H.M.S. Pinafore became an international sensation , as did The Pirates of Penzance ( 1879 ) and Patience ( 1881 ) . Sullivan never married but had a long love affair with an American socialite , Fanny Ronalds . After the death of his brother Fred in 1877 , Sullivan supported Fred 's large family financially for the rest of his life , effectively adopting his nephew Bertie .

Carte used his profits from the Gilbert and Sullivan partnership to build the Savoy Theatre in 1881 , and their joint works then became known as the Savoy operas . Later hits in the series were Iolanthe ( 1882 ) , The Mikado ( 1885 ) , The Yeomen of the Guard ( 1888 ) and The Gondoliers ( 1889 ) . Sullivan was knighted for his contributions to music in 1883 . His infrequent serious pieces during the 1880s included two cantatas , The Martyr of Antioch ( 1880 ) and The Golden Legend ( 1886 ) , his most popular choral work . Sullivan 's only serious opera , Ivanhoe , though initially successful in 1891 , was little @-@ heard after that . Gilbert broke from Sullivan and Carte in 1890 , quarrelling over expenses at the Savoy . They reunited in the 1890s for two more operas , but those did not achieve the popularity of their earlier works . Sullivan continued to compose comic operas with other librettists and wrote a number of other major and minor works throughout the decade . He died at the age of 58 , regarded as Britain 's foremost composer . His comic opera style served as a model for the generations of musical theatre composers that followed , and his music is still frequently performed , recorded and pastiched .

= = Life and career = =

= = = Beginnings = = =

Sullivan was born in Lambeth , London . His parents were Thomas Sullivan ( 1805 ? 1866 ) , a military bandmaster , clarinettist and music teacher born in Ireland and raised in Chelsea , London , and Mary Clementina ( née Coghlan , 1811 ? 1882 ) , English born , of Irish and Italian descent .

Thomas Sullivan was based from 1845 to 1857 at the Royal Military College , Sandhurst , where he was the bandmaster and taught music privately to supplement his income . Young Sullivan became proficient with many of the instruments in the band and had composed an anthem , " By the waters of Babylon " , by the age of eight . He later recalled :

I was intensely interested in all that the band did , and learned to play every wind instrument , with which I formed not merely a passing acquaintance , but a real , life @-@ long , intimate friendship . I gradually learned the peculiarities of each ... what it could do and what it was unable to do . I learned in the best possible way how to write for an orchestra .

While recognising the boy 's obvious musical talent , his father knew the insecurity of a musical career and discouraged him from pursuing it . While studying at a private school in Bayswater , Sullivan , then aged 11 , persuaded his parents and the headmaster to allow him to apply for membership in the choir of the Chapel Royal . Despite concerns that Sullivan at nearly 12 years of age was too old to give much service as a treble before his voice broke , he was accepted and soon became a soloist and , by 1856 , was promoted to " first boy " . Even at this age , Sullivan 's health was delicate , and he was easily fatigued .

Sullivan flourished under the training of the Reverend Thomas Helmore , master of the choristers , and began to compose anthems and songs . Helmore encouraged the young Sullivan 's composing talent and arranged for one of his pieces , " O Israel " , to be published in 1855 , Sullivan 's first published work . Helmore also enlisted Sullivan 's assistance in creating harmonisations for a volume of The Hymnal Noted and arranged for Sullivan 's compositions to be performed ; one of the boy 's anthems was given at the Chapel Royal in St James 's Palace under the direction of Sir George Smart .

= = = Mendelssohn scholar = = =

In 1856 , the Royal Academy of Music awarded the first Mendelssohn Scholarship to the 14 @-@ year @-@ old Sullivan , granting him a year 's training at the academy . His principal teacher there was John Goss , whose own teacher , Thomas Attwood , had been a pupil of Mozart . He studied piano with the head of the academy , William Sterndale Bennett , and with Arthur O 'Leary . During this year at the Royal Academy , Sullivan continued to sing solos with the Chapel Royal , which provided a small amount of spending money .

Sullivan 's scholarship was extended to a second year , and in 1858 in what the biographer Arthur Jacobs calls an " extraordinary gesture of confidence " the scholarship committee extended his grant for a third year so that he could study in Germany , at the Leipzig Conservatoire . While there , Sullivan studied composition with Julius Rietz and Carl Reinecke , counterpoint with Moritz Hauptmann and Ernst Richter and the piano with Louis Plaidy and Ignaz Moscheles . He was trained in Mendelssohn 's ideas and techniques but was also exposed to a variety of musical styles , including Schubert , Verdi , Bach , and Wagner . Visiting a synagogue , he was so struck by some of the cadences and progressions of the music that thirty years later he could recall them for use in his serious opera , Ivanhoe .

Though the scholarship was extended to permit Sullivan to spend one year in Leipzig , he stayed for three years . There , he became friendly with the impresario Carl Rosa and the violinist Joseph Joachim . For his last year at Leipzig , his father scraped together the money for living expenses , and the conservatoire assisted by waiving its fees . Sullivan credited his Leipzig period with tremendous musical growth . His graduation piece , completed in 1861 , was a set of incidental music to Shakespeare 's The Tempest . Revised and expanded , it was performed at the Crystal Palace in 1862 , a year after his return to London , and was an immediate sensation . He began building a reputation as England 's most promising young composer .

= = = Rising composer = = =

Sullivan embarked on his composing career with a series of ambitious works , interspersed with hymns , parlour songs and other light pieces in a more commercial vein . His compositions were not

enough to support him financially , and from 1861 to 1872 he supplemented his income by working as a church organist , which he enjoyed , and as a music teacher , sometimes at the Crystal Palace School , which he hated and gave up as soon as he could . Sullivan had an early chance to compose several pieces for royalty in connection with the wedding of the Prince of Wales in 1863 .

Sullivan 's association with works for voice and orchestra began with *The Masque at Kenilworth* ( Birmingham Festival , 1864 ) . During a spell as organist at Covent Garden , he composed his first ballet , *L'Île Enchantée* ( 1864 ) . In 1866 , he premiered his *Irish Symphony* and *Cello Concerto* , his only works in each such genre . In the same year , his *Overture in C ( In Memoriam )* , commemorating the recent death of his father , was a commission from the Norwich Festival . During his lifetime , it achieved considerable popularity . In 1867 , his overture *Marmion* was premiered by the Philharmonic Society . The Times called it " another step in advance on the part of the only composer of any remarkable promise that just at present we can boast . " In the autumn of 1867 , Sullivan travelled with George Grove to Vienna in search of neglected manuscript scores by Schubert . They found and copied several and were particularly excited about their final discovery , the score to *Rosamunde* .

Sullivan 's first attempt at opera , *The Sapphire Necklace* ( 1863 ? 64 ) to a libretto by Henry F. Chorley , was not produced and is now lost , except for the overture and two songs from the work , which were separately published . His first surviving opera , *Cox and Box* ( 1866 ) , was written for a private performance . It then received charity performances in London and Manchester , and was later produced at the Gallery of Illustration , where it ran for an extraordinary 264 performances . W. S. Gilbert , writing in *Fun* magazine , pronounced the score superior to F. C. Burnand 's libretto . Sullivan and Burnand were soon commissioned by Thomas German Reed for a two @-@ act opera , *The Contrabandista* ( 1867 ; revised and expanded as *The Chieftain* in 1894 ) , but it did not do as well . Sullivan wrote a group of seven part songs in 1868 , the best @-@ known of which is " *The Long Day Closes* " . Sullivan 's last major work of the 1860s was a short oratorio , *The Prodigal Son* , premiered in Worcester Cathedral as part of the 1869 Three Choirs Festival to much praise .

= = = 1870s ; first collaborations with Gilbert = = =

Sullivan 's most enduring orchestral work , the *Overture di Ballo* , was composed for the Birmingham Festival in 1870 . Also in 1870 , Sullivan met Gilbert . 1871 was a busy year for Sullivan . He published his only song cycle , *The Window ; or , The Songs of the Wrens* , to words by Tennyson , and he wrote the first of a series of suites of incidental music for West End productions of Shakespeare plays . Still in 1871 , Sullivan composed a dramatic cantata , *On Shore and Sea* , for the opening of the London International Exhibition , and the hymn *Onward , Christian Soldiers* , with words by Sabine Baring @-@ Gould . The Salvation Army adopted the latter as its favoured processional , and it became Sullivan 's most enduring hymn .

At the end of 1871 , the impresario John Hollingshead commissioned Sullivan to work with W. S. Gilbert to create the burlesque @-@ style comic opera *Thespis* for the Gaiety Theatre . Played as a Christmas entertainment , it ran through to Easter 1872 , a good run for such a piece . After *Thespis* , Gilbert and Sullivan went their separate ways until they collaborated on three parlour ballads in late 1874 and early 1875 .

Sullivan 's large @-@ scale works of the early 1870s were the *Festival Te Deum* ( Crystal Palace , 1872 ) ; and the oratorio , *The Light of the World* ( Birmingham Festival , 1873 ) . He provided suites of incidental music for productions of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at the Gaiety in 1874 and *Henry VIII* at the Theatre Royal , Manchester in 1877 . He continued to compose hymns throughout the decade . In 1873 , Sullivan contributed songs to Burnand 's Christmas " drawing room extravaganza " , *The Miller and His Man* .

In 1875 , the manager of the Royalty Theatre , Richard D 'Oyly Carte , needed a short piece to fill out a bill with Offenbach 's *La Périochole* . Carte had conducted Sullivan 's *Cox and Box* . Remembering that Gilbert had suggested a libretto to him , Carte reunited Gilbert and Sullivan , and the result was the one @-@ act comic opera *Trial by Jury* . *Trial* , starring Sullivan 's brother Fred as the Learned Judge , became a surprise hit , earning glowing praise from the critics and playing for

300 performances over its first few seasons . The Daily Telegraph commented that the piece illustrated the composer 's " great capacity for dramatic writing of the lighter class " , and other reviews emphasised the felicitous combination of Gilbert 's words and Sullivan 's music . One wrote , " it seems , as in the great Wagnerian operas , as though poem and music had proceeded simultaneously from one and the same brain . " Soon after the opening of Trial , Sullivan wrote The Zoo , another one @-@ act comic opera , with a libretto by B. C. Stephenson . But the latter work had only a few short runs , and for the next 15 years Sullivan 's sole operatic collaborator was Gilbert ; the two created an additional 12 operas together .

Sullivan also turned out more than 80 popular songs and parlour ballads , most of them written before the end of the 1870s . His first popular song was " Orpheus with his Lute " ( 1866 ) , and a well @-@ received part song was " Oh ! hush thee , my babie " ( 1867 ) . The best known of his songs is " The Lost Chord " ( 1877 , lyrics by Adelaide Anne Procter ) , written in sorrow at the death of his brother Frederic . The sheet music for his best received songs sold in large numbers and were an important part of his income ; many of them were adapted as dance pieces .

In this decade , Sullivan 's conducting appointments included the Glasgow Choral Union concerts ( 1875 ? 77 ) and the Royal Aquarium , London ( 1876 ) . In addition to his appointment as Professor of Composition at the Royal Academy of Music , of which he was a Fellow , he was appointed as the first Principal of the National Training School for Music in 1876 . He accepted the latter post reluctantly , fearing that discharging the duties thoroughly would leave too little time for composing . In this he was correct , as his successor Hubert Parry also discovered . Sullivan was not effective in the post , and he resigned in 1881 .

Sullivan 's next collaboration with Gilbert , The Sorcerer ( 1877 ) , ran for 178 performances , a success by the standards of the day , but H.M.S. Pinafore ( 1878 ) , which followed it , turned Gilbert and Sullivan into an international phenomenon . The bright and cheerful music of Pinafore was composed during a time when Sullivan suffered from excruciating pain from a kidney stone . Pinafore ran for 571 performances in London , the then @-@ second @-@ longest theatrical run in history , and more than 150 unauthorised productions were quickly mounted in America alone . Among other favourable reviews , The Times noted that the opera was an early attempt at the establishment of a " national musical stage " ... free from risqué French " improprieties " and without the " aid " of Italian and German musical models . The Times and several of the other papers agreed , however , that while the piece was entertaining , Sullivan was capable of higher art , and frivolous light opera would hold him back . This criticism would follow Sullivan throughout his career .

In 1879 , Sullivan suggested to a reporter from The New York Times the secret of his success with Gilbert : " His ideas are as suggestive for music as they are quaint and laughable . His numbers ... always give me musical ideas . " Pinafore was followed by The Pirates of Penzance in 1879 , another international success , which opened in New York and then ran in London for 363 performances .

= = = Early 1880s = = =

In 1880 , Sullivan was appointed director of the triennial Leeds Music Festival . For his first festival he was commissioned to write a sacred choral work . He chose Henry Hart Milman 's 1822 dramatic poem based on the life and death of Saint Margaret the Virgin for its basis . Gilbert adapted the libretto for Sullivan . The Martyr of Antioch premiered in October 1880 . Sullivan was not a showy conductor , and some thought him dull and old fashioned on the podium , but his composition had an enthusiastic reception and was frequently revived . A grateful Sullivan presented his collaborator with an engraved silver cup inscribed " W.S. Gilbert from his friend Arthur Sullivan . "

After the run of The Pirates of Penzance , Carte opened the next Gilbert and Sullivan piece , Patience , in April 1881 at London 's Opera Comique , where their past three operas had played . In October , Patience transferred to the new , larger , state @-@ of @-@ the @-@ art Savoy Theatre , built with the profits of the previous Gilbert and Sullivan works . The rest of the partnership 's collaborations were produced at the Savoy , as a result of which they are widely known as the " Savoy Operas " . Iolanthe ( 1882 ) , Gilbert and Sullivan 's fourth hit in a row , was the first of the

operas to premiere at the new theatre . Sullivan , despite the financial security of writing for the Savoy , increasingly viewed his work with Gilbert as unimportant , beneath his skills , and also repetitious . After *Iolanthe* , Sullivan had not intended to write a new work with Gilbert , but he suffered a serious financial loss when his broker went bankrupt in November 1882 . Therefore , he concluded that his financial needs required him to continue writing Savoy operas . In February 1883 , he and Gilbert signed a five @-@ year agreement with Carte , requiring them to produce a new comic opera on six months ' notice .

On 22 May 1883 , Sullivan was knighted by Queen Victoria for his " services ... rendered to the promotion of the art of music " in Britain . The musical establishment , and many critics , believed that this should put an end to his career as a composer of comic opera ? that a musical knight should not stoop below oratorio or grand opera . Having just signed the five @-@ year agreement , Sullivan suddenly felt trapped . In mid @-@ December , he bade farewell to his sister @-@ in @-@ law Charlotte , Fred 's widow , who emigrated with her young family to America . Sullivan 's oldest nephew , Herbert , stayed behind in England as his uncle 's ward . The next opera , *Princess Ida* ( 1884 , the duo 's only three @-@ act , blank verse work ) , had a noticeably shorter run than its four predecessors , although Sullivan 's score was praised . With box office receipts lagging in March 1884 , Carte gave the six months ' notice , under the partnership contract , requiring a new opera . Sullivan 's close friend , the composer Frederic Clay , had suffered a serious stroke in early December 1883 that effectively ended his career at the age of 45 . Sullivan , reflecting on this , on his own longstanding kidney problems , and on his desire to devote himself to more serious music , replied to Carte , " [ I ] t is impossible for me to do another piece of the character of those already written by Gilbert and myself . "

Gilbert had already started work on a new opera involving a plot in which people fell in love against their wills after taking a magic lozenge . The composer wrote , on 1 April 1884 that he had " come to the end of my tether " with the operas : " I have been continually keeping down the music in order that not one [ syllable ] should be lost . ... I should like to set a story of human interest & probability where the humorous words would come in a humorous ( not serious ) situation , & where , if the situation were a tender or dramatic one the words would be of similar character . " In a lengthy exchange of correspondence , Sullivan pronounced Gilbert 's plot sketch ( particularly the " lozenge " element ) unacceptably mechanical , and too similar in both its grotesque " elements of topsyturveydom " and in actual plot to their earlier work , especially *The Sorcerer* , and repeatedly requested that Gilbert find a new subject . The impasse was finally resolved on 8 May when Gilbert proposed a plot that did not depend on any supernatural device . The result was Gilbert and Sullivan 's most successful work , *The Mikado* ( 1885 ) . The piece ran for 672 performances , which was the second @-@ longest run for any work of musical theatre , and one of the longest runs of any theatre piece , up to that time .

= = = Later 1880s = = =

In 1886 , Sullivan composed his second and last large @-@ scale choral work of the decade . It was a cantata for the Leeds Festival , *The Golden Legend* , based on Longfellow 's poem of the same name . Apart from the comic operas , this proved to be Sullivan 's best received full @-@ length work . It was given hundreds of performances during his lifetime , and at one point he declared a moratorium on its presentation , fearing that it would become over @-@ exposed . Only Handel 's *Messiah* was performed more often in Britain in the 1880s and 90s . It remained in the repertory until about the 1920s , but since then it has been seldom performed , although it received its first professional recording in 2001 . The musical scholar and conductor David Russell Hulme writes that the work influenced Elgar and Walton .

Ruddigore followed *The Mikado* at the Savoy in 1887 . It was profitable , but its nine @-@ month run was disappointing compared with most of the earlier Savoy operas . For their next piece , Gilbert submitted another version of the magic lozenge plot ; Sullivan immediately rejected it . Gilbert finally proposed a comparatively serious opera , to which Sullivan agreed . Although it was not a grand opera , *The Yeomen of the Guard* ( 1888 ) provided him with the opportunity to compose his most

ambitious stage work to date . As early as 1883 , Sullivan had been under pressure from the musical establishment to write a grand opera . In 1885 , he told an interviewer , " " The opera of the future is a compromise [ among the French , German and Italian schools ] ? a sort of eclectic school , a selection of the merits of each one . I myself will make an attempt to produce a grand opera of this new school . ... Yes , it will be an historical work , and it is the dream of my life . " After *The Yeomen of the Guard* opened , Sullivan turned once again to Shakespeare , composing incidental music for Henry Irving 's production of *Macbeth* ( 1888 ) .

Sullivan wished to produce further serious works with Gilbert . He had collaborated with no other librettist since 1875 . But Gilbert felt that the reaction to *The Yeomen of the Guard* had " not been so convincing as to warrant us in assuming that the public want something more earnest still . " He proposed instead that Sullivan should go ahead with his plan to write a grand opera , but should continue also to compose comic works for the Savoy . Sullivan was not immediately persuaded . He replied , " I have lost the liking for writing comic opera , and entertain very grave doubts as to my power of doing it . " Nevertheless , Sullivan soon commissioned a grand opera libretto from Julian Sturgis ( who was recommended by Gilbert ) , while suggesting to Gilbert that he revive an old idea for an opera set in colourful Venice . The comic opera was completed first : *The Gondoliers* ( 1889 ) was a piece described by Gervase Hughes as a pinnacle of Sullivan 's achievement . It was the last great Gilbert and Sullivan success .

== = 1890s == =

The relationship between Gilbert and Sullivan suffered its most serious breach in April 1890 , during the run of *The Gondoliers* , when Gilbert objected to Carte 's financial accounts for the production , including a charge to the partnership for the cost of new carpeting for the Savoy Theatre lobby . Gilbert believed that this was a maintenance expense that should be charged to Carte alone . Carte was building a new theatre to present Sullivan 's forthcoming grand opera , and Sullivan sided with Carte , going so far as to testify erroneously as to certain old debts . Gilbert took legal action against Carte and Sullivan and vowed to write no more for the Savoy , and so the partnership came to an acrimonious end . Sullivan wrote to Gilbert in September 1890 that he was " physically and mentally ill over this wretched business . I have not yet got over the shock of seeing our names coupled ... in hostile antagonism over a few miserable pounds " .

Sullivan 's only grand opera , *Ivanhoe* , based on Walter Scott 's novel , opened at Carte 's new Royal English Opera House on 31 January 1891 . Sullivan completed the score too late to meet Carte 's planned production date , and costs mounted ; Sullivan was required to pay Carte a contractual penalty of £ 3 @, @ 000 for his delay . The production lasted for 155 consecutive performances , an unprecedented run for a serious opera , and earned good notices for its music . Afterwards , Carte was unable to fill the new opera house with other opera productions , however , and *Ivanhoe* was blamed for the failure of the opera house . The opera passed into obscurity after a touring revival in 1894 ? 95 . The episode was , as the critic Herman Klein observed , " the strangest comingling of success and failure ever chronicled in the history of British lyric enterprise ! " Sullivan did not seriously consider writing grand opera again . Later in 1891 , Sullivan composed music for Tennyson 's *The Foresters* , which ran well at Daly 's Theatre in New York in 1892 , but failed in London the following year .

Sullivan returned to comic opera , but because of the fracture with Gilbert , he and Carte sought other collaborators . Sullivan 's next piece was *Haddon Hall* ( 1892 ) , with a libretto by Sydney Grundy based loosely on the historical elopement of Dorothy Vernon with John Manners . Although still comic , the tone and style of the work was considerably more serious and romantic than most of the operas with Gilbert . It enjoyed a modest popularity , running for 204 performances , and earned critical praise . In 1895 , Sullivan once more provided incidental music for the Lyceum , this time for J. Comyns Carr 's *King Arthur* .

The partnership with Gilbert had been so profitable that Carte and his wife sought to reunite the author and composer , eventually succeeding with the help of Tom Chappell , their music publisher . Their next opera , *Utopia Limited* ( 1893 ) , ran for 245 performances , barely covering the expenses

of the lavish production , although it was the longest run at the Savoy in the 1890s . Sullivan came to disapprove of the leading lady , Nancy McIntosh , and refused to write another piece featuring her , while Gilbert insisted that she must appear in his next opera . Instead , Sullivan teamed up again with his old partner , F. C. Burnand . The Chieftain ( 1894 ) , a heavily @-@ revised version of their earlier two @-@ act opera , The Contrabandista , flopped . Gilbert and Sullivan reunited one more time , after McIntosh announced her retirement from the stage , for The Grand Duke ( 1896 ) . This also failed , and Sullivan never worked with Gilbert again , although their operas continued to be revived with success at the Savoy .

In May 1897 , Sullivan 's full @-@ length ballet , Victoria and Merrie England , opened at the Alhambra Theatre to celebrate the Queen 's Diamond Jubilee . The work 's seven scenes celebrate English history and culture , with the Victorian period as the grand finale . Its six @-@ month run was considered a great achievement . The Beauty Stone ( 1898 ) , with a libretto by Arthur Wing Pinero and J. Comyns Carr was based on mediaeval morality plays . The collaboration did not go particularly well : Sullivan wrote that Pinero and Comyns Carr were " gifted and brilliant men , with no experience in writing for music " , and , when he asked for alterations to improve the structure , they refused . Sullivan 's score , moreover , was too serious for the Savoy audiences ' tastes . The opera was a critical failure and did not attract a following , running for only seven weeks .

In 1899 , to benefit " the wives and children of soldiers and sailors " on active service in the Boer War , Sullivan composed the music of a jingoistic song , " The Absent @-@ Minded Beggar " , to a text by Rudyard Kipling , which became an instant sensation and raised an unprecedented £ 250 @,@ 000 from performances and the sale of sheet music and related merchandise . In The Rose of Persia ( 1899 ) , Sullivan returned to his comic roots , writing to a libretto by Basil Hood that combined an exotic Arabian Nights setting with plot elements of The Mikado . Sullivan 's tuneful score was well received , and the opera proved to be his most successful full @-@ length collaboration apart from those with Gilbert . Another opera with Hood , The Emerald Isle , quickly went into preparation , but Sullivan died before it could be completed .

= = = Death , honours and legacy = = =

Having suffered from long @-@ standing recurrent kidney disease that made it necessary , from the 1880s , for him to conduct sitting down , Sullivan died of heart failure , following an attack of bronchitis , at his flat in London on 22 November 1900 . His unfinished opera , The Emerald Isle , was completed by Edward German and produced in 1901 . His Te Deum Laudamus , written to commemorate the end of the Boer War , was performed posthumously .

A monument in the composer 's memory featuring a weeping Muse was erected in the Victoria Embankment Gardens in London and is inscribed with Gilbert 's words from The Yeomen of the Guard : " Is life a boon ? If so , it must befall that Death , whene 'er he call , must call too soon " . Sullivan wished to be buried in Brompton Cemetery with his parents and brother , but by order of the Queen he was buried in St. Paul 's Cathedral . In addition to his knighthood , honours awarded to Sullivan in his lifetime included Doctor in Music , honoris causa , by the universities of Cambridge ( 1876 ) and Oxford ( 1879 ) ; Chevalier , Légion d 'honneur , France ( 1878 ) ; The Order of the Medjidieh conferred by the Sultan of Turkey ( 1888 ) ; and appointment as a Member of the Fourth Class of the Royal Victorian Order ( MVO ) in 1897 .

In all , Sullivan 's artistic output included 23 operas , 13 major orchestral works , eight choral works and oratorios , two ballets , one song cycle , incidental music to several plays , numerous hymns and other church pieces , and a large body of songs , parlour ballads , part songs , carols , and piano and chamber pieces . Sullivan 's operas have often been adapted , first in the 19th century as dance pieces and in foreign adaptations of the operas themselves . Since then , his music has been made into ballets ( Pineapple Poll ( 1951 ) and Pirates of Penzance - The Ballet ! ( 1991 ) ) and musicals ( The Swing Mikado ( 1938 ) , The Hot Mikado ( 1939 ) and Hot Mikado ( 1986 ) , Hollywood Pinafore ( 1945 ) , The Black Mikado ( 1975 ) , etc . ) . His operas are not only frequently performed , but also frequently parodied , pastiched , quoted and imitated in comedy routines , advertising , law , film , television , and other popular media . His legacy , apart from writing the

Savoy operas and his other works , is felt perhaps most strongly today through his influence on the American and British musical theatre . The innovations in content and form of the works that he and Gilbert developed directly influenced the development of the modern musical throughout the 20th century . In addition , biographies and scholarly articles and analyses continue to be written about Sullivan 's life and work .

= = Personal life = =

= = = Romantic life = = =

Sullivan never married , but he had serious love affairs with several women . The first was with Rachel Scott Russell ( 1845 ? 1882 ) , the daughter of the engineer John Scott Russell . Sullivan was a frequent visitor at the Scott Russell home in the mid @-@ 1860s , and by 1865 the affair was in full bloom . Rachel 's parents did not approve of a possible union with a young composer with uncertain financial prospects , but the two continued to see each other covertly . At some point in 1868 , Sullivan started a simultaneous ( and secret ) affair with Rachel 's sister Louise ( 1841 ? 1878 ) . Both relationships had ceased by early 1869 .

Sullivan 's longest love affair was with the American socialite , Fanny Ronalds , a woman three years his senior , who had two children . He met her in Paris around 1867 , and the affair began in earnest soon after she moved to London permanently in 1871 . A contemporary account described Fanny Ronalds this way : " Her face was perfectly divine in its loveliness , her features small and exquisitely regular . Her hair was a dark shade of brown ? châtain foncé [ deep chestnut ] ? and very abundant ... a lovely woman , with the most generous smile one could possibly imagine , and the most beautiful teeth . " Sullivan called her " the best amateur singer in London " . She often performed Sullivan 's songs at her famous Sunday soirees . She became particularly associated with " The Lost Chord " , singing it both in private and in public , often with Sullivan accompanying her . When Sullivan died , he left her the autograph manuscript of that song , along with other bequests .

Ronalds was separated from her American husband , but they never divorced . Social conventions of the time compelled Sullivan and Ronalds to keep their relationship private . In his diary , he would refer to her as " Mrs. Ronalds " when he saw her in a public setting , but " L. W. " ( for " Little Woman " ) or " D. H. " ( possibly " Dear Heart " ) when they were alone together , often with a number in parentheses indicating the number of sexual acts completed . Ronalds was apparently pregnant on at least two occasions and procured abortions in 1882 and 1884 . Sullivan had a roving eye , and his diary records the occasional quarrel when Ronalds discovered his other liaisons , but he always returned to her . She was a constant companion up to the time of Sullivan 's death , but around 1889 or 1890 , the sexual relationship seems to have ended . He started to refer to her in the diary as " Auntie " , and the tick marks indicating sexual activity were no longer there , although similar notation continued to be used for his relationships with other women who have not been identified , and who were always referred to by their initials .

In 1896 , the 54 @-@ year @-@ old Sullivan proposed marriage to the 22 @-@ year @-@ old Violet Beddington ( 1874 ? 1962 ) , but she refused him .

= = = Leisure and family life = = =

Sullivan loved to spend time in France ( both in Paris and the south of France ) , where his friends ranged from European royalty to the composer Claude Debussy , and where the casinos enabled him to indulge his passion for gambling . He enjoyed hosting private dinners and entertainments at his home , often featuring famous singers and well @-@ known actors . In 1865 he was initiated into Freemasonry and was Grand Organist of the United Grand Lodge of England in 1887 during Queen Victoria 's Golden Jubilee . Sullivan 's talent and native charm gained him the friendship of many not only in the musical establishment , such as Grove , Chorley , and Herman Klein , but also in society



circles , such as Alfred , Duke of Edinburgh . Sullivan enjoyed playing tennis although , according to George Grossmith , " I have seen some bad lawn @-@ tennis players in my time , but I never saw anyone so bad as Arthur Sullivan " .

Sullivan was devoted to his parents , particularly his mother , with whom he corresponded regularly , when away from London , until her death in 1882 . Henry Lytton wrote , " I believe there was never a more affectionate tie than that which existed between [ Sullivan ] and his mother , a very witty old lady , and one who took an exceptional pride in her son 's accomplishments . Sullivan was also very fond of his brother Fred , whose acting career he assisted whenever possible , and of Fred 's children . When Fred died at the age of 39 , he left his pregnant wife , Charlotte , with seven children under the age of 14 . After Fred 's death , Arthur visited the family often and became guardian to all of the children .

In late 1883 , Charlotte and six of her children emigrated to Los Angeles , California , leaving the oldest boy , " Bertie " , in Sullivan 's sole care . Despite his reservations about the move to America , Sullivan paid all the costs and gave substantial financial support to the family . Only a year later , in January 1885 , Charlotte died , leaving the six children to be raised mostly by her brother and the older girls . From June to August 1885 , after *The Mikado* premiered , Sullivan visited the family in Los Angeles and took them on a sightseeing trip of the American west . Throughout the rest of his life , and in his will , he contributed financially to Fred 's children , continuing to correspond with them and to be concerned with their education , marriages and financial affairs . Bertie stayed with his uncle Arthur for the rest of the composer 's life .

Three of Sullivan 's cousins , the daughters of his uncle John Thomas Sullivan , performed with D 'Oyly Carte : Rose , Jane ( " Jennie " ) and Kate Sullivan , the first two of whom used the stage surname Hervey . Kate was a chorister who defected to the Comedy Opera Company 's rival production of *H.M.S. Pinafore* , where she had the opportunity to play Josephine in 1879 . Jennie was a D 'Oyly Carte chorister for fourteen years . Rose took principal roles in many of the companion pieces that played with the Savoy operas .

= = Music = =

= = Method of composition and text setting = = =

Sullivan told an interviewer , Arthur Lawrence , " I don 't use the piano in composition ? that would limit me terribly " . Sullivan explained that his process was not to wait for inspiration , but " to dig for it . ... I decide on [ the rhythm ] before I come to the question of melody . ... I mark out the metre in dots and dashes , and not until I have quite settled on the rhythm do I proceed to actual notation . " Sullivan 's text setting , compared with that of his 19th century English predecessors or his European contemporaries , was " vastly more sensitive . ... Sullivan 's operatic style attempts to create for itself a uniquely English text @-@ music synthesis " , and , in addition , by adopting a conservative musical style , he was able to achieve " the clarity to match Gilbert 's finely honed wit with musical wit of his own . "

In composing the Savoy operas , Sullivan wrote the vocal lines of the musical numbers first , and these were given to the actors . He , or an assistant , improvised a piano accompaniment at the early rehearsals ; he wrote the orchestrations later , after he had seen what Gilbert 's stage business would be . He left the overtures until last and often delegated their composition , based on his outlines , to his assistants , often adding his suggestions or corrections . Those Sullivan wrote himself include *Thespis* , *Iolanthe* , *Princess Ida* , *The Yeomen of the Guard* , *The Gondoliers* , *The Grand Duke* and probably *Utopia Limited* . Most of the overtures are structured as a potpourri of tunes from the operas in three sections : fast , slow and fast . Those for *Iolanthe* and *The Yeomen of the Guard* are written in a modified sonata form . The overtures from the Gilbert and Sullivan operas remain popular , and there are many recordings of them . Sullivan invariably conducted the operas on their opening nights .

In 1957 , a review in *The Times* gave this rationale for " the continued vitality of the Savoy operas " :

" [ T ] hey were never really contemporary in their idiom . ... Gilbert and Sullivan 's [ world was ] an artificial world , with a neatly controlled and shapely precision . ... For this , each partner has his share of credit . The neat articulation of incredibilities in Gilbert 's plots is perfectly matched by his language . ... [ Of ] equal importance ... Gilbert 's lyrics almost invariably take on extra point and sparkle when set to Sullivan 's music . ... Sullivan 's tunes , in these operas , also exist in a make @-@ believe world of their own . ... [ He is ] a delicate wit , whose airs have a precision , a neatness , a grace , and a flowing melody " .

= = = Melody and rhythm = = =

The Musical Times noted that Sullivan 's tunes , at least in the comic operas , appeal to the professional as much as to the layman : his continental contemporaries such as Debussy , Leoncavallo and Saint @-@ Saëns held the Savoy operas in high regard . Hughes writes , " When Sullivan wrote what we call ' a good tune ' it was nearly always ' good music ' as well . Outside the ranks of the giants there are few other composers of whom the same could be said . " Although his melodies sprang from rhythm , some of his themes may have been prompted by his chosen instrumentation or his harmonic techniques .

In the comic operas , where many numbers were in verse @-@ plus @-@ refrain form , Sullivan frequently produced two climaxes in the melodic line . Hughes instances " If you go in " ( Iolanthe ) as a good example . In Hughes 's view , though most of the tunes in the Savoy operas are good ones , Sullivan rarely reached the same class of excellence elsewhere when he had no librettist to feed his imagination . Even so , on those occasions when Gilbert wrote in unvaried metre , Sullivan often followed suit and produced phrases of simple repetition , such as " Love is a plaintive song " ( Patience ) and " A man who would woo a fair maid " ( The Yeomen of the Guard ) .

Sullivan 's deliberate echoes of other composers are covered below under " Musical Quotations " , but other echoes may not have been conscious : Hughes cites the concluding bars of " Tell a tale of cock and bull " from The Yeomen of the Guard as an example of Handel 's influence , and another critic , Edward Greenfield , found a theme in the slow movement of the Irish Symphony " an outrageous crib " from Schubert 's Unfinished Symphony .

= = = Harmony and counterpoint = = =

### Harmony

Sullivan was trained in the classical style , and contemporary music did not greatly attract him . Harmonically his early works used the conventional formulae of Auber , Donizetti , Balfe and Schubert . Later he drew on Gounod and Bizet . Mendelssohn 's influence , conspicuous in early works , appears intermittently in later ones . As a contemporary writer observed , Sullivan draws on these various influences while remaining recognisably himself . Yet , in the field of harmony , Hughes writes , Sullivan remained an eclectic : " He had easily recognisable habits but his style never achieved individuality " .

In general , Sullivan preferred to write in major keys . In the Savoy operas , there are only eleven substantial numbers wholly in a minor key ( less than 5 % of the musical numbers ) , and even in his serious works the major prevails . Examples of Sullivan 's rare excursions into minor keys include the long E minor melody in the first movement of the Irish Symphony , " Go away , madam " in the Act I finale of Iolanthe ( echoing Verdi and Beethoven ) and the funeral march in the Act I finale of The Yeomen of the Guard . Sullivan was happy on occasion to use chords traditionally considered technically incorrect . When reproached for using consecutive fifths in Cox and Box , he replied " if 5ths turn up it doesn 't matter , so long as there is no offence to the ear . " Hughes comments that harmonic contrast in the Savoy works is enhanced by Sullivan 's characteristic modulation between keys , as in " Expressive glances " ( Princess Ida ) , where he smoothly negotiates E major , C sharp minor and C major , or " Then one of us will be a queen " ( The Gondoliers ) , where he writes in F major , D flat major and D minor .

Both Hughes and Jacobs in Grove 's Dictionary of Music and Musicians comment adversely on Sullivan 's over @-@ use of tonic pedals , usually in the bass , which Hughes attributes to " lack of enterprise or even downright laziness " . Another Sullivan trademark criticised by Hughes is the repeated use of the chord of the augmented fourth at moments of pathos . In his serious works , Sullivan attempted to avoid harmonic devices associated with the Savoy operas , with the result , according to Hughes , that The Golden Legend is a " hotch @-@ potch of harmonic styles " .

#### Counterpoint

Despite his thorough contrapuntal training in London and Leipzig , as well as his experience as a church organist , Sullivan rarely composed fugues . Hughes cites examples from the Epilogue to The Golden Legend and Victoria and Merrie England . In the Savoy operas , fugal style is reserved for making fun of legal solemnity in Trial by Jury and Iolanthe ( e.g. , the Lord Chancellor 's leitmotif in the latter ) . Less formal counterpoint is employed in numbers such as " Brightly Dawns our Wedding Day " ( The Mikado ) and " When the Buds are Blossoming " ( Ruddigore ) .

Sullivan 's best known contrapuntal device was " the simultaneous presentation of two or more distinct melodies previously heard independently " . He was not the first composer to combine themes in this way , but it became a characteristic feature of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas . Sometimes the melodies were for solo voices , as in " Once more the face I loved so well " ( The Zoo ) , and " I am so proud " ( The Mikado ) , which combines three melodic lines ; other examples are in choruses , where typically a graceful tune for the ladies is combined with a robust one for the men . Examples include " When the Foeman bares his steel " ( The Pirates of Penzance ) , " In a doleful train " ( Patience ) and " Welcome , gentry " ( Ruddigore ) . At other times , notably in " How beautifully blue the sky " ( The Pirates of Penzance ) , one theme is given to the chorus and the other to solo voices .

#### = = = Orchestration = = =

Gervase Hughes concludes his chapter on Sullivan 's orchestration : " [ I ] n this vitally important sector of the composer 's art he deserves to rank as a master . " Sullivan was a competent player of at least four orchestral instruments ( flute , clarinet , trumpet and trombone ) and a technically highly skilled orchestrator . Though sometimes inclined to indulge in grandiosity when writing for a full symphony orchestra , he was adept in using smaller forces to the maximum effect . Percy Young writes that orchestral players generally like playing Sullivan 's music : " Sullivan never asked his players to do what was either uncongenial or impracticable . "

Sullivan 's orchestra for the Savoy Operas was typical of any other pit orchestra of his era : 2 flutes ( + piccolo ) , oboe , 2 clarinets , bassoon , 2 horns , 2 cornets , 2 trombones , timpani , percussion and strings . According to Geoffrey Toye , the number of players in the Savoy orchestra was originally 31 . Sullivan argued hard for an increase in the pit orchestra 's size , and starting with The Yeomen of the Guard , the orchestra was augmented with a second bassoon and a bass trombone . Sullivan generally orchestrated each score at almost the last moment , noting that the accompaniment for an opera had to wait until he saw the staging , so that he could judge how heavily or lightly to orchestrate each part of the music . For his large @-@ scale orchestral pieces , Sullivan added a second oboe part , sometimes double bassoon and bass clarinet , more horns , trumpets , tuba , and sometimes an organ and / or a harp . Many of these pieces used very large orchestras .

One of the most recognisable features in Sullivan 's orchestration is his woodwind scoring . Hughes especially notes Sullivan 's clarinet writing , exploiting all registers and colours of the instrument , and his particular fondness for oboe solos . For instance , the Irish Symphony contains two long solo oboe passages in succession , and in the Savoy operas there are many shorter examples . In the operas , and also in concert works , another characteristic Sullivan touch is his fondness for pizzicato passages for all the string sections . Most of the operas have at least one number that Hughes calls " virtually a pizzicato ostinato " ; he instances " Kind sir , you cannot have the heart " ( The Gondoliers ) , " Free from his fetters grim " ( The Yeomen of the Guard ) and " In vain to us you plead " ( Iolanthe ) .

= = = Musical quotations and parodies = = =

Sullivan often quoted or imitated famous themes and passages from well @-@ known tunes or parodied the styles of famous composers . He also liked to evoke familiar musical styles , such as his madrigals in *The Mikado* , *Ruddigore* and *The Yeomen of the Guard* , glees in *H.M.S. Pinafore* and *The Mikado* and gavottes in *Ruddigore* and *The Gondoliers* . In *The Sorcerer* , there is a country dance in " If you 'll marry me " . In *Ruddigore* , the sailor character dances a hornpipe , while in *The Mikado* , Sullivan quotes a Japanese war song in " Miya Sama " . Sullivan 's 1882 trip to Egypt inspired musical styles in his later opera , *The Rose of Persia* . Of the sextette " I hear the soft note " in *Patience* , Sullivan said to the singers , " I think you will like this . It is Dr. Arne and Purcell at their best . "

In early pieces , he imitated Mendelssohn ( for example in his incidental music for *The Tempest* ) , Auber in his *Henry VIII* music and Gounod in *The Light of the World* . In his comic operas , Sullivan followed Offenbach 's lead in parodying the idioms of French and Italian opera , such as those of Donizetti , Bellini and Verdi . His music also shows the influence of Handel , Schubert and , conspicuously in the fairy music in *Iolanthe* , Mendelssohn . The then @-@ popular composer Michael Balfe is parodied in *The Sorcerer* and *The Pirates of Penzance* , and " Twenty Love Sick Maidens " imitates William Vincent Wallace 's " Alas Those Chimes " from *Maritana* . The sextet " A Nice Dilemma " in *Trial by Jury* parodies " D 'un pensiero " in Bellini 's *La sonnambula* .

Other examples of opera parody include Mabel 's aria " Poor Wand 'ring One " in *The Pirates of Penzance* and the duet " Who are you , sir ? " from *Cox and Box* . In *H.M.S. Pinafore* , the whispered plans for elopement in " This very night " parody the conspirators ' choruses in Verdi 's *Il trovatore* and *Rigoletto* , and the octet , " Farewell , my own , " evokes the ensemble " Mag der Himmel euch vergeben " in Flotow 's *Martha* and such concerted numbers as the sextet in Donizetti 's *Lucia di Lammermoor* . The mock @-@ jingoistic " He is an Englishman " in *H.M.S. Pinafore* and choral passages in *The Zoo* satirise patriotic British tunes such as Arne 's " Rule , Britannia ! " . The chorus " With catlike tread " from *Pirates* is an imitation of Verdi 's " Anvil Chorus " from *Il trovatore* .

In *Princess Ida* , there is a strong Handelian flavour to Arac 's song in Act III ( " This helmet , I suppose " ) , and the Act II quartet " The world is but a broken toy " has been called " Gounodesque " . Florian 's statement in " Gently , Gently " : " In this college , useful knowledge / Everywhere one finds " is a quotation from Chopin 's *Waltz No. 5 in A @-@ flat Major ( Op. 42 )* . In *The Gondoliers* , there are the Spanish *cachucha* , the Italian *saltarello* and *tarantella* , and the Venetian *barcarolle* . Hughes compares " Here is a case unprecedented " from *The Gondoliers* to the Act II quintet from Bizet 's *Carmen* . In " A more humane Mikado " , when the Mikado mentions " Bach interwoven with Spohr and Beethoven " , the clarinet and bassoon quote the fugue subject of Bach 's *Fantasia and Fugue in G minor* . *The Golden Legend* shows the influence of Liszt and Wagner .

Sullivan frequently gives groups or locations their own characters and motifs . Hughes points to the striking difference between the male chorus of rustics in *The Sorcerer* and the eponymous *gondoliers* , and between the fairies in *Iolanthe* and the undergraduates in *Princess Ida* . *H.M.S. Pinafore* retains " a nautical tang throughout " , and in *The Yeomen of the Guard* the Tower of London is evoked continually by its own motif . A distinctive four @-@ note theme is associated with the character *Iolanthe* , and the Fairy Queen 's music parodies that of Wagnerian heroines such as *Brünnhilde* . This use of Wagnerian leitmotif technique is repeated and developed further in *Ivanhoe* .

= = Reputation and criticism = =

= = = Early reception = = =

Sullivan 's critical reputation has undergone extreme changes since he first came to prominence in the 1860s . At first , critics were struck by his potential , and he was hailed as the long @-@ awaited

great English composer . His incidental music to The Tempest received an acclaimed premiere at the Crystal Palace just before Sullivan 's 20th birthday in April 1862 . The Athenaeum wrote :

It ... may mark an epoch in English music , or we shall be greatly disappointed . Years on years have elapsed since we have heard a work by so young an artist so full of promise , so full of fancy , showing so much conscientiousness , so much skill , and so few references to any model elect .

His Irish Symphony of 1866 won similarly enthusiastic praise , but as Arthur Jacobs notes , " The first rapturous outburst of enthusiasm for Sullivan as an orchestral composer did not last . " A comment typical of those that followed him throughout his career was that " Sullivan 's unquestionable talent should make him doubly careful not to mistake popular applause for artistic appreciation . "

When Sullivan turned to comic opera with Gilbert , the serious critics began to express disapproval . Peter Gammond writes of " misapprehensions and prejudices , delivered to our door by the Victorian firm Musical Snobs Ltd . ... frivolity and high spirits were sincerely seen as elements that could not be exhibited by anyone who was to be admitted to the sanctified society of Art . " As early as 1877 The Figaro wrote that Sullivan " has all the ability to make him a great composer , but he wilfully throws his opportunity away . ... He possesses all the natural ability to have given us an English opera , and , instead , he affords us a little more @-@ or @-@ less excellent fooling . " Few critics denied the excellence of Sullivan 's theatre scores . The Theatre wrote that " Iolanthe sustains Dr Sullivan 's reputation as the most spontaneous , fertile , and scholarly composer of comic opera this country has ever produced . " However , comic opera , no matter how skilfully crafted , was viewed as an intrinsically lower form of art than oratorio . The Athenaeum 's review of The Martyr of Antioch declared : " [ I ] t is an advantage to have the composer of H.M.S. Pinafore occupying himself with a worthier form of art . "

= = = Knighthood and later years = = =

Sullivan 's knighthood in 1883 gave the serious music critics further ammunition . The Musical Review of that year wrote :

[ S ] ome things that Mr. Arthur Sullivan may do , Sir Arthur ought not to do . In other words , it will look rather more than odd to see announced in the papers that a new comic opera is in preparation , the book by Mr. W. S. Gilbert and the music by Sir Arthur Sullivan . A musical knight can hardly write shop ballads either ; he must not dare to soil his hands with anything less than an anthem or a madrigal ; oratorio , in which he has so conspicuously shone , and symphony , must now be his line . Here is not only an opportunity , but a positive obligation for him to return to the sphere from which he has too long descended [ and ] do battle for the honour of English art ... against all foreign rivals , and arouse us thoroughly from our present half @-@ torpid condition .

Even Sullivan 's friend George Grove wrote : " Surely the time has come when so able and experienced a master of voice , orchestra , and stage effect ? master , too , of so much genuine sentiment ? may apply his gifts to a serious opera on some subject of abiding human or natural interest . " Sullivan finally redeemed himself in critical eyes with The Golden Legend in 1886 . The Observer hailed it as a " triumph of English art " . The World called it " one of the greatest creations we have had for many years . Original , bold , inspired , grand in conception , in execution , in treatment , it is a composition which will make an " epoch " and which will carry the name of its composer higher on the wings of fame and glory . ... The effect of the public performance was unprecedented . "

Hopes for a new departure were evident in the Daily Telegraph 's review of The Yeomen of the Guard ( 1888 ) , Sullivan 's most serious opera to that point : " [ T ] he music follows the book to a higher plane , and we have a genuine English opera , forerunner of many others , let us hope , and possibly significant of an advance towards a national lyric stage . " Sullivan 's only wholly serious opera , Ivanhoe ( 1891 ) , received generally favourable reviews , although J. A. Fuller Maitland , in The Times , expressed reservations , writing that the opera 's " best portions rise so far above anything else that Sir Arthur Sullivan has given to the world , and have such force and dignity , that it is not difficult to forget the drawbacks which may be found in the want of interest in much of the

choral writing , and the brevity of the concerted solo parts . " Sullivan 's 1898 ballet Victoria and Merrie England was one of several late pieces that won praise from most critics :

Sir Arthur Sullivan 's music is music for the people . There is no attempt made to force on the public the dullness of academic experience . The melodies are all as fresh as last year 's wine , and as exhilarating as sparkling champagne . There is not one tune which tires the hearing , and in the matter of orchestration our only humorist has let himself run riot , not being handicapped with libretto , and the gain is enormous . ... All through we have orchestration of infinite delicacy , tunes of alarming simplicity , but never a tinge of vulgarity .

Although the more solemn members of the musical establishment could not forgive Sullivan for writing music that was both comic and accessible , he was , nevertheless , " the nation 's de facto composer laureate " .

= = = Posthumous reputation = = =

In the decade after his death , Sullivan 's reputation sank considerably . In 1901 , Fuller Maitland took issue with the generally laudatory tone of most of the obituaries : " Is there anywhere a case quite parallel to that of Sir Arthur Sullivan , who began his career with a work which at once stamped him as a genius , and to the height of which he only rarely attained throughout life ? ... It is because such great natural gifts ? gifts greater , perhaps , than fell to any English musician since ... Purcell ? were so very seldom employed in work worthy of them . " Edward Elgar , to whom Sullivan had been particularly kind , rose to Sullivan 's defence , branding Fuller Maitland 's obituary " the shady side of musical criticism ... that foul unforgettable episode . "

Fuller Maitland 's followers , including Ernest Walker , also dismissed Sullivan as " merely the idle singer of an empty evening " . As late as 1966 , Frank Howes , music critic of The Times condemned Sullivan for a " lack of sustained effort ... a fundamental lack of seriousness towards his art [ and ] inability to perceive the smugness , the sentimentality and banality of the Mendelssohnian detritus ... to remain content with the flattest and most obvious rhythms , this yielding to a fatal facility , that excludes Sullivan from the ranks of the good composers . "

Thomas F. Dunhill wrote in 1928 that Sullivan 's " music has suffered in an extraordinary degree from the vigorous attacks which have been made upon it in professional circles . These attacks have succeeded in surrounding the composer with a kind of barricade of prejudice which must be swept away before justice can be done to his genius . " Sir Henry Wood continued to perform Sullivan 's serious music . In 1942 , Wood presented a Sullivan centenary concert at the Royal Albert Hall , but it was not until the 1960s that Sullivan 's music other than the Savoy operas began to be widely revived and reassessed . In 1960 Hughes published the first full @-@ length book about Sullivan 's music " which , while taking note of his weaknesses ( which are many ) and not hesitating to castigate his lapses from good taste ( which were comparatively rare ) [ attempted ] to view them in perspective against the wider background of his sound musicianship . " The work of the Sir Arthur Sullivan Society , founded in 1977 , books about Sullivan by musicians such as Young ( 1971 ) and Jacobs ( 1986 ) , and a growing number of recordings have contributed to the re @-@ evaluation of Sullivan 's serious music .

The Symphony in E had its first professional recording in 1968 , and a considerable number of Sullivan 's non @-@ Gilbert works have since been recorded . Scholarly critical editions of a growing number of Sullivan 's works have been published . In a 2000 article in The Musical Times , Nigel Burton wrote :

[ Sullivan ] spoke naturally to all people , for all time , of the passions , sorrows and joys which are forever rooted in the human consciousness . He believed ... that the human being 's prime duty in life is to serve humanity . It is his artistic consistency in this respect which obliges us to pronounce him our greatest Victorian composer . Time has now sufficiently dispersed the mists of criticism for us to be able to see the truth , to enjoy all his music , and to rejoice in the rich diversity of its panoply . ... [ L ] et us resolve to set aside the " One @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half @-@ hurrahs " syndrome once and for all , and , in its place , raise THREE LOUD CHEERS .

= = Recordings = =

On 14 August 1888 , George Gouraud introduced Thomas Edison 's phonograph to London in a press conference , including the playing of a piano and cornet recording of Sullivan 's " The Lost Chord " , one of the first recordings of music ever made . Sullivan was invited to a party on 5 October 1888 given to demonstrate the technology . After dinner , he recorded a speech to be sent to Edison , saying , in part :

I can only say that I am astonished and somewhat terrified at the result of this evening 's experiments : astonished at the wonderful power you have developed , and terrified at the thought that so much hideous and bad music may be put on record forever . But all the same I think it is the most wonderful thing that I have ever experienced , and I congratulate you with all my heart on this wonderful discovery .

These recordings were discovered in the Edison Library in New Jersey in the 1950s :

The first commercial recordings of Sullivan 's music , beginning in 1898 , were of individual numbers from the Savoy operas . In 1917 , the Gramophone Company ( also known as HMV ) produced the first album of a complete musical score of a Gilbert and Sullivan opera , The Mikado , followed by recordings of eight more of the operas . Electrical recordings of the complete musical scores of most of the operas were then issued by the Gramophone Company and Victor Talking Machine Company beginning in the late 1920s . These recordings were supervised by Rupert D 'Oyly Carte . The D 'Oyly Carte Opera Company continued to produce recordings until 1979 . Between 1988 and 2003 , after the company was revived , it recorded seven of the operas .

Other recordings have been made by opera companies such as Gilbert and Sullivan for All , and Australian Opera , among many others . Ad hoc companies of operatic singers conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent in the 1950s and 60s and Sir Charles Mackerras in the 1990s have made audio sets of several Savoy operas , and in the 1980s Alexander Faris conducted video recordings of most of the operas with casts including show @-@ business stars as well as professional singers . The long @-@ running Broadway production of The Pirates of Penzance presented by Joseph Papp , re @-@ orchestrated with synthesisers replacing the strings , was put on record in 1981 . Since 1994 , the International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival has released numerous professional and amateur CDs and videos of its productions and other Sullivan recordings .

Sullivan 's non @-@ Savoy works were infrequently recorded until the 1960s . A few of his songs were put on disc in the early years of the 20th century , including versions of " The Lost Chord " by Enrico Caruso and Clara Butt . The first of many recordings of the Overture di Ballo was made in the 1940s . Sullivan 's Irish Symphony was first recorded in 1968 under Sir Charles Groves . Since then , much of Sullivan 's serious music and his operas without Gilbert have been recorded . Some highlights include the cello concerto by Julian Lloyd Webber ( 1986 ) , The Golden Legend under Ronald Corp ( 2001 ) and Ivanhoe , under the conductor David Lloyd @-@ Jones ( 2009 ) . Mackerras 's Sullivan ballet score , Pineapple Poll , has received many recordings since its premiere in 1951 , four of them conducted by Mackerras .