

# Will Charming Muriel Astor Link <sup>Two</sup> of Britain's Noblest Titles?

Lord Rosebery's Son and Lady Ribblesdale's Daughter, It Is Being Whispered Among the Bloods, Are About to "Jolly Well Hit It Off Together"



Coat of Arms of the Proud House of Rosebery (To the Left). Armorial Bearings of Baron Ribblesdale (To the Right). Crest of Viscount Astor (Below).



Muriel Astor, Pictured, As Always, a Charming and Unassuming Girl.

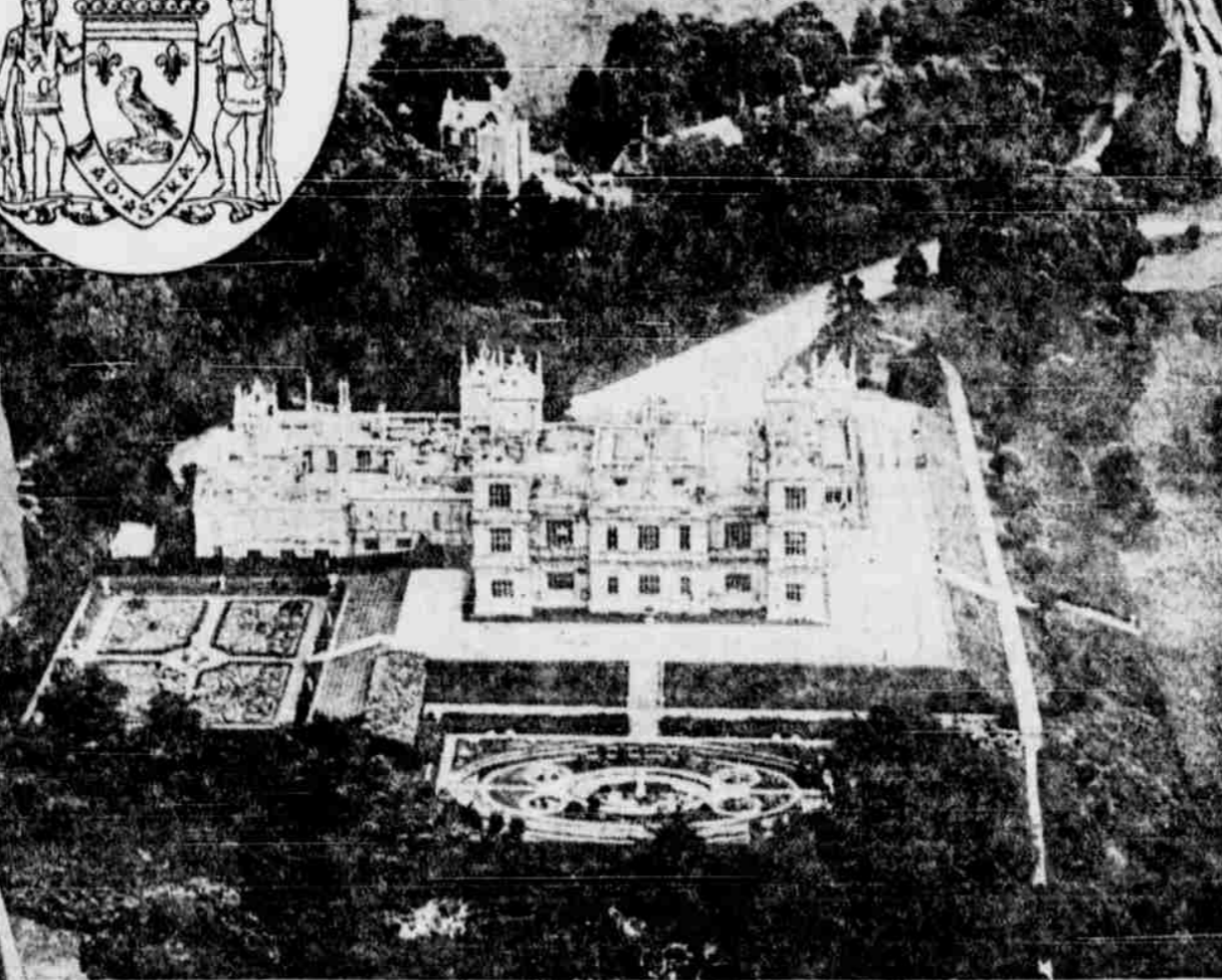


Photo by Wide World.

An Airplane View of Mentmore Towers, the Rosebery Seat in Bucks, which the Earl of Rosebery Has Given to His Son and Heir, Lord Dalmeny. Magnificent As It Is, Earl Rosebery Has Four Other Historic Country Seats.

IS the rumored engagement of a simple, untitled American "miss" in London destined to link by marriage two of Britain's oldest and noblest houses? Both Mayfair and Fifth Avenue are wondering. The girl in question is charming Alice Muriel Astor, daughter of the late John Jacob Astor. The engagement, if engaged there he, is with Albert Edward Archibald, Lord Dalmeny, polo star, war hero and son of the distinguished Earl of Rosebery and Midlothian. The two noble families whose interests would be linked by the marriage are the Rosebery earldom and the Ribblesdale baronage—for although Muriel is simple "Miss Astor," her mother is now Lady Ribblesdale and her stepfather is the famous Lord Ribblesdale, whom the late King Edward VII called "the most perfect gentleman of England." Indirectly, too, a third noble house would be interested in the marriage, for Muriel is a cousin of Viscount Astor, who bears the

only American coat of arms in the whole British peerage. Muriel Astor, daughter of the late Colonel John Jacob Astor and the former Ava Willing, of Philadelphia (now Lady Ribblesdale), is remembered by American society as an altogether charming and very shy young miss who wore her hair down her back, and for whom delightful children's parties were given in the Astor mansion on Fifth Avenue. Muriel's mother, after her divorce from Colonel Astor and subsequent to his death in the Titanic disaster, married Lord Ribblesdale, and Muriel was transplanted into the upper British aristocracy, with which she was already allied through the Astor side of the house. Lady Ribblesdale, the former Ava Willing, celebrated both for brains and beauty, has become one of the leaders of the innermost circles of English society. Her house in London is a gathering place for the mightiest of the mighty in the English peerage. It is only recently, however, that British society has begun to guess that the charming but rather retiring Muriel might, in her turn, become a famous beauty and social leader. That young lady now, it is said, has begun to blossom out as one of the most popular and active of the younger exclusive social set in London—and it is whispered that the magic charm that has awakened this "sleeping beauty" may be discovered in the ardent attention paid her by Lord Dalmeny. A new impetus has just been given to

the friendly gossip by the announcement that Lord Rosebery has presented to his son the magnificent country estate and castle of Mentmore Towers, which has been one of the chief seats of the family for generations. "What use can a polo-playing bachelor have for an enormous country house containing more than a hundred rooms," the dowagers of Mayfair and Berkeley Square are asking, "unless he intends to get married?" And while no definite announcement has been forthcoming, either formal or informal, society is inclined to believe that it will indeed be "a match." While Muriel Astor—because of her own charm, because of the share she will inherit of the great American Astor fortune, and because of her mother's social leadership—is regarded as one of the most eligible girls of her exalted circle, Lord Dalmeny also has long been frankly viewed by the matchmaking society mothers of the whole United Kingdom as a most desirable party. Handsome and very rich (his mother, the late Lady Rosebery, was Hannah Rothschild, greatest of all the Rothschild heiresses), Lord Dalmeny's standing is by no means entirely due to his fortune or to the fact that he is the son of a former Premier and Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal. While still in Eton he distinguished himself in football and cricket, later became an internationally famous polo player, and when the war came he won even greater honors on the battlefield than he had gained in sport. He fought gal-

## A Recent Study of the Dolly Sisters, Who Danced Right Into a Romantic Engagement Rumor Concerning Lord Dalmeny—and Who Danced Right Out Again.

lantly as a lieutenant-colonel of the Grenadier Guards, was mentioned in dispatches, wounded, and won the Military Cross, the Legion of Honor and the D. S. O. In 1910 he married Dorothy Grosvenor, daughter of Lord Henry Grosvenor and cousin of the Duke of Westminster. They were later divorced. No scandal attached to the separation, which was granted on technical grounds of the wife's desertion. The London newspapers said that the real trouble was over money matters, because of the tight hold Lord Dalmeny had kept on the purse-strings, for rumor has it that he has one fault—a great love of money and a disinclination to part with any more of it than he can help. A short time ago romantic but indefinite whisperings were heard to the effect that Lord Dalmeny might be engaged to one of the beautiful dancing Dolly Sisters. When the Dolly Sisters first made their triumphant appearance in London there was a great deal of international newspaper cabling about the supposed mysterious engagement of one of them to an immensely rich young British peer. Fuel was added to the fire by the divorce from their respective husbands of both the Dolly Sisters during the period of their gay London triumph. Yancey was divorced from Harry Fox, the actor; Rozika was divorced from Jean Schwartz, the composer. The mysterious rumor persisted that one of them was to marry a famous nobleman. It followed them to Deauville and the continent. Neither sister would commit herself definitely on the subject. Which sister was it, and what nobleman, if any, was she going to marry? Nobody knew. It was a story that wouldn't silence and yet couldn't be pinned down. Gradually, in the gossip over the tea-cups of Mayfair and the wine glasses of London's exclusive night clubs, the wisecracks, rather by process of elimination than by any definite knowledge, narrowed the rumor down to an explicitness that seemed to point to Lord Rosebery's son. The fiancee of one of the Dolly Sisters—was it Yancey or Rozika, nobody knew—was reported to be a polo player, a war hero, a divorced husband, heir to an earldom and a very rich young man. "Who, then, could it be, if not Lord Dalmeny?" gossip asked, and from this they were soon saying, "It must be Lord Dalmeny." Now, however, they are saying, "It must not be Lord Dalmeny, for his devoted attention to the lovely young American, Muriel Astor, can scarcely forecast less than a formal declaration—if, indeed, the declaration has not already been made." Additional credence is given to the possibility of this engagement by the announced visit of Muriel's brother, Vincent Astor, to England. Lady Ribblesdale, Muriel's mother, auto-

Lord Dalmeny, Heir to the Earldoms of Rosebery and Midlothian, Famous Polo Player and Soldier.



matically relinquished her American citizenship when she married the British peer, and Vincent Astor was placed in charge of his sister's property in the United States—which includes many valuable real estate holdings, stocks, bonds and other wealth inherited from her late father's share of the Astor millions. When two such immense family fortunes as the Rosebery and Astor estates are involved, marriage settlements, or, at least, definite pre-nuptial agreements, are a necessary part of the contract. And while Vincent Astor, in his trip to Europe, may be partly concerned with possible domestic difficulties (his wife is living in Paris and he has been living in New York for some time), it is believed that the affairs of his sister Muriel may also count for something in his journey to Europe at this particular time. For these various reasons, British society, discussing the marked attention of Lord Dalmeny to lovely Muriel Astor, is asking, "Shall they jolly well hit it off?" and is answering its own question with affirmative approval by saying, "We jolly well think they shall."