

Manx Notes 39 (2005)

“BOTH TIMES HE WAS OUT”

SOPHIA MORRISON AND EDWARD FARAGHER

Athol-street | Peel | Isle of Man | 16: 6: 1908

Dear Mr Roeder

I read in Saturday’s ‘Times’ a short memoir of Mr Ed Faragher. I am indeed grieved to learn of his death. I much regret that I never had the pleasure of knowing him personally—I have called twice to see him in my rare visits to Port Erin, but I am sorry to say that both times he was out. I hope that whatever Manx writings he may have left will not be lost to us—but doubtless you will see to that. Do you not think that it would be well now to publish another sheaf of his Manx “Skealyn Aesop”?¹ You said in your introduction to the 25 Fables which have been published that he had turned the whole set (313) into Manx, and it seems a pity that they should not be printed. I am returning a poem of his—a very good one, I think—which you sent to me some time ago, perhaps if you sent it to the Examiner² people they might care to print it—I did send it to them about two years ago, but it never appeared in the paper.

Source: Letter from Sophia Morrison to Karl Roeder, 16 June 1908, Manchester Central Library, Manchester City Archives, M277/12/1-141.



Edward Faragher of Cregneash (1831–1908) was Karl Roeder’s main informant, a relationship which went far beyond collector and informant, developing into a close, personal friendship, broken only upon Faragher’s death.³ Sophia Morrison came into Roeder’s orbit and she later developed into the leading Manx figure in the Celtic

¹ Charles Roeder, ed., *Skealyn Aesop*, (Douglas: S.K. Broadbent, 1901).

² The *Isle of Man Examiner* was a newspaper sympathetic to the Manx Celtic Revival.

³ For other material about Edward Faragher already presented here, see Stephen Miller, “I composed some verses about them the other day in Manx’: Edward Faragher and his ‘Song about Covetous Farmers’ (1899),” *Manx Notes* 23 (2004), “‘The odium is cast on my old friend Mr Ed. Faragher’: Karl Roeder and the Perils of Publication (1902),” *Manx Notes* 30 (2004), “‘This true son of the soil’: Hall Caine and Edward Faragher (1889),” *Manx Notes* 31 (2004), “‘My father passed away very peacefully’: The Death of Edward Faragher (1908),” *Manx Notes* 32 (2004), “‘I have written a little scitch of my life’: Edward Faragher’s ‘A Sketch of Cregneish’,” *Manx Notes* 33 (2004). See too, George Broderick, “Manx Stories and Reminiscences of Ned Beg Hom Ruy,” *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 38 (1981), “Manx Stories and Reminiscences of Ned Beg Hom Ruy: Translation and Notes,” *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 39 (1982).

Revival.⁴ She mentions here a poem written by Faragher that Roeder had sent her. This was typical of this circle of collectors and revivalists, the circulation of various manuscript items among themselves from figures such as Faragher. Often they made copies of this material, the only way in which they could “acquire” this material themselves. By doing so, they have preserved manuscripts now lost.⁵ Morrison went a stage further, actually seeking Faragher out himself whilst visiting J.J. Kneen at Port Erin, but to no avail.

STEPHEN MILLER
VIENNA, 2005

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⁴ Breesha Maddrell, “Morrison, Sophia (1859-1917)” [online source].

⁵ See, Miller, “‘I have written a little scitch of my life’: Edward Faragher’s ‘A Sketch of Cregneish’.”