

Manx Notes 84 (2007)

“RE THE TEACHING OF MANX IN OUR SCHOOLS”
MR POTTS’ REPLY TO SOPHIA MORRISON (1902)

CLOTHWORKERS’ SCHOOLS, | PEEL, ISLE OF MAN. | May 17th 1902 | Miss S.Morrison | Hon.Sec.Manx Language Society

Dear Madam,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter re the teaching of Manx in our schools, which I shall lay before my Committee at the earliest opportunity. It will however facilitate their decision if I can place before them more particulars as to how the matter can be carried out.

Our curriculum is a fairly wide one and I do not see how the Time Table can be modified to include two hours instruction per week in all classes in a new subject. Exclusive of the Infants we have at least twelve classes of considerable size and not one of our 14 Manx teachers can talk a single sentence in the Manx language, and therefore could render no assistance whatever in the teaching thereof. To make the study of any use whatever, I presume you would require to begin the instruction with the younger children and give two hours a week to the subject. The managers would hardly be in a position to pay a separate teacher for the instruction and the question they will probably raise is, “Will the Society be prepared to provide a teacher for at least 20 hours per week throughout the year, until such time as the ordinary staff is fitted for such work?”

Awaiting the favour of your reply which I shall submit to the Managers,

I am, Dear Madam, | Your faithfully | W. Potts.

Source: Letter from W. Potts to Sophia Morrison, 17 May 1902, in bound volume of correspondence to Sophia Morrison, Manx National Heritage Library, MS 5495 A.



A letter similar to the one Sophia Morrison received from Richard Lace of Santan school and again raising the issue of the need for a peripatetic teacher, and one who would have to be paid for by the Manx Language Society itself. This was to be the problem that faced the Society, that the only willing candidate for the post was J.J. Kneen, and there was, of course, no possibility for him to cover the entire Island.

STEPHEN MILLER
Vienna, 2007

