

# Manx Notes 105 (2008)

“MR. FARQUHAR IS STILL IN THE LAND OF THE LIVING”  
KARL ROEDER WRITES TO SOPHIA MORRISON (1907)

Cumming’s Rushen Castle 2/6 shall I get it | for you, if still unsold?

Mc. 16: 12: 07

I saw in Sat. Examiner your fine tale of the Lazy Wife which seem to be an echo of Grimm’s Stilly Kine it is a splendid find. Perhaps some day we might collect all these tales together in book form for a Manx fairy book. which however would require a dainty illustrator who can color the Manx atmosphere in his artistic rendering of the subjects. I hope you’ll continue your fine work. My dear old friend Hudson died last month in Ballafesson—he was one of the grand old Manx types. Mr. Farquhar is still in the land of the living, I send him the Examiner every week. Trust you are quite well & your eyes better, mine are not very grand & dim It is a great [ ? ]

Is the Manx language making progress amongst the young ones?

I have done a few thing for Cheshire & here & in due course will send you reprints.

Yours truly | CRoeder.

**Source:** Postcard from Karl Roeder to Sophia Morrison, 16 December 1907, MNHL, MS 09495, Sophia Morrison Papers, Box 8. The transcript is a diplomatic one.



Roeder died in 1911, and so he was never to see Sophia Morrison’s *Manx Fairy Tales*<sup>1</sup> published in November of that same year as he had already passed away in September of that year. There was no “dainty illustrator” involved—that was to come with the second (and enlarged) edition in 1928, overseen by her sister, Louisa. There it was Archibald Knox rather than a “dainty illustrator” who designed the story heads.<sup>2</sup>

“My dear old friend Hudson” was John Hudson of Ballafesson, Port Erin, who, like Edward Faragher, was one of Roeder’s folklore informants.<sup>3</sup> In 1896, Hudson wrote to Karl Roeder: “[...] we are glad to hear from you & to find that you enjoyed your vissett to the island but when you cum agane we must try and make you more

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<sup>1</sup> Sophia Morrison, *Manx Fairy Tales* (London: David Nutt, 1911).

<sup>2</sup> Sophia Morrison, *Manx Fairy Tales*, 2nd enlarged ed. (Peel: Louisa Morrison, 1929).

<sup>3</sup> Stephen Miller, “‘We write you a few lines’: Karl Roeder and the Hudsons of Ballafesson,” *Manx Notes* 35 (2004).

cumfortable then to let you stretch on A Couch.”<sup>4</sup> This is an insight into the depth of Roeder’s relationship with Hudson, not just visiting him to collect folklore, but also close enough to the family to stay overnight, and “roughing it” by sleeping on the couch. Hudson was also a correspondent with Roeder, some fourteen letters from him surviving to date.

By this date, Faragher had been forced to leave the Island to live with his son in a mining village in Derbyshire. “I send him the Examiner every week.” Again, this shows the strength of the relationship between Roeder and Faragher. In fact, Faragher was to comment on the weekly delivery of the *Isle of Man Examiner*: “I know you are yet alive by receiving the examiner every week and I am very much obliged for it.”<sup>5</sup>

STEPHEN MILLER  
VIENNA, 2008

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##### ARCHIVAL SOURCES

##### MANX NATIONAL HERITAGE LIBRARY

MS 01135 A Letter from John Hudson to Karl Roeder, 25 August 1896.

##### MANCHESTER CENTRAL LIBRARY, MANCHESTER CITY ARCHIVES

M277/12/1–141. Letter from Edward Faragher to Karl Roeder, 20 December 1907.

##### PRINTED SOURCES

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Morrison, Sophia. *Manx Fairy Tales*. London: David Nutt, 1911.

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<sup>4</sup> Letter from John Hudson to Karl Roeder, 25 August 1896, Manx National Heritage Library, MS 01135 A, undivided. The transcript is a diplomatic one.

<sup>5</sup> Letter from Edward Faragher to Karl Roeder, 20 December 1907, Manchester Central Library, Manchester City Archives, M277/12/1–141. The transcript is a diplomatic one.