

Manx Notes 155 (2013)

“THEY ARE JOLLY DECENT”

SOPHIA MORRISON’S MANX FAIRY TALES (1911)

Emigration has long been a feature of Manx life, but the nineteenth century saw emigration in large numbers from the Island to America, and Australia and New Zealand as well as South Africa. The founding of Manx Societies was a feature of these new Manx communities. One such was established in Wellington, New Zealand where T.E. Corkhill was for many years its Secretary. In 1912, he wrote to Sophia Morrison, the well-known Pan Celtic enthusiast, about the recent publication of her *Manx Fairy Tales* in 1911. His reaction, or rather the reaction of a youngster to whom he was reading them, he recorded in a letter to Morrison which can be read below.

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Oriental Bay | Wellington, 6th October 1912.

Dear Madam,

As I am writing to you in acknowledgement of the Manx Language Society’s greetings to their kin beyond sea, I should like to take the opportunity of enclosing this note from myself to you yourself to express my appreciation of your “Manx Fairy Tales,” which I have just been reading. You deserve thanks for this popularizing, and saving from oblivion, these old tales.

A small half-Manx girl, to whom I have been reading them, has just pronounced judgment [*sic*], which I pass on, in the hope that you will appreciate it. She says “they are jolly decent.”

Yours very truly | T.E. Corkhill

Miss S. Morrison | Peel

Source: Letter from T.E. Corkhill to Sophia Morrison, 6 October 1912, MNHL, MS 09495, Sophia Morrison Papers, Box 5.

STEPHEN MILLER
VIENNA, 2013

