

Manx Notes 161 (2013)

J.J. KNEEN WRITES TO KARL ROEDER (1901)

20 Melbourne St. | Douglas
March 23/1901

Dear Sir

Many thanks for your kind letter. I received hope that the publication of Mr Farquher's Manx Tales will prove a success. I take a great interest in matters relating the survival of Manx Language, and anything I can to forward the movement gives me the greatest pleasure. I wish that Manx People were more enthusiastic about the revival of their mother tongue, but they seem utterly indifferent and apathetic in the matter. I am very pleased to know that you take an interest in our language, and hope that you will use your influence to make others follow your example.

Yours Faithfully | JJKneen

Source: Letter from J.J. Kneen to Karl Roeder, 23 March 1901, MNHL, MS 09495, Sophia Morrison Papers, Box 5.



This letter surfaced in a final sorting of the papers of Sophia Morrison and shows that there was a correspondence between Kneen and Roeder, once hitherto unsuspected. Whether it was the odd letter here and there is of course unclear. “Mr Farquher’s Manx Tales” is a reference to *Skeeaelyn Æsop* (Douglas: S.K. Broadbent, 1901), and “Mr Farquher” is Edward Faragher of Cregneash. Roeder indeed had “an interest in our language” and his tutor in Manx was John Hudson of Ballafesson, though his grandson doubted just how effective he had been as a tutor: “The late Charles Roëder took lessons in Manx from my grandfather about the year 1896. M^r Roëder spent a lot of time with him. How much M^r Roëder benefitted I do not know!”¹ It was to be a two-way process, as amongst Roeder’s papers in the MNHL is a notebook titled on the inside cover, “1896 | Phonological Renderings | from Manx Bible | South of I. o Man | Ballafesson” (MNHL, MS 09447). That person must be Hudson.

STEPHEN MILLER
VIENNA, 2013

¹ Letter (fragment) from J.H. Hudson to Sophia Morrison, undated MNHL, MS 09495, Sophia Morrison Papers, Box 5.