

Manx Notes 311 (2018)

“MR THOMAS CRELLIN REMINISCENT SOME MANX YARNS” (1906)

We have been favoured with a visit from our octogenarian friend, Mr Thomas Crellin, formerly of Peel and now of St John's. Mr Crellin was in anecdotal mood, and told us a few of his illimitable stock of Manx yarns. We have reproduced some of these below:

Juan Yower worked on Close Chairn for the late Mr Carran. One dark winter's morning Juan turned to work rather late, and was brought to task by his master, who said, "The days are very short now." "Well," said Juan, "if they are short they are as thick as ever they'll be." Said Mr Carran, "If you will give me any more of thy impudence, thou will get change of porridge." "Thank God for that," said Juan, "it was middiin' thin yesterday."

Sil Philip, one of the worthies living in Peel many years ago, was engaged in setting potatoes in a field adjoining the highroad. This was in the days when it was the fashion to change the kind of potatoes planted very often. "What sort of potatoes are you setting f asked an inquisitive neighbour. "Raw ones," replied Phil.

The Mr Carran aforementioned bought an Irish horse. Juan Yower, as soon as he had taken charge of the animal, commenced speaking to it in Manx. Mr Carran said to Juan, "Speak English to the horse man—the horse doesn't understand you." "I only know two or three words of English without going to waste them on a horse," was the quick retort of Juan.

Sammy Coffey who was found dead in a field, is well remembered in the town yet. Sammy was one day on the Patrick-road spinning me a yarn. Dr Bullock passed and called out "Is Sammy telling you stories." "Nobody," said Sammy, "can tell stories equal to doctors, but I think very little of doctors, none of them'll beat the field doctors." Dr. Bullock turned away huffed. The doctor met Sammy on the Quay next day. Sammy was busy telling yarns. Said the doctor to the listening crowd, "I wonder at you spending your time with that 'know-nothing.'" "I know something that you don't know," said Sammy. "What's that," asked Dr. Bullock. "I know young Bullocks are fond of sweet milk."

The Rev. Henry Dening was very kind to Sammy, and one day give him a piece of cheese full of maggots. Sammy did not appreciate the "high" condition of the cheese and threw it away as soon as he got outside. Mr Dening brought Sammy to book for his wastefulness, and said, "What did you throw it away for?" "Well," was the reply of Sammy, "I looked at it and saw it was alive, and so I put it by the hedge, because I thought it could find its way home by itself."

Bishop Hill's daughters paid a visit one Sunday morning to St. Peter's Church. After the service somebody pointed out the ladies to Sammy. "I am only sorry," said he, "that I am gone a bit in age or else I would be offering marriage to them."

Sammy got an invitation to Mr Corrin's Mhelliiah at Knockaloe. Mr Corrin, with a eye to fun, introduced Sammy to two lady visitors, and enquired which of the two ladies he would prefer to marry. "I would like to know their fortunes first," said he. Says Mr Corrin, "They'll have two thousand pounds each at the very least." "If that's the case," says Sammy, "I'll take the two of them."

"Mr Thomas Crellin Reminiscent: Some Manx Yarns." *Peel City Guardian*
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Stephen Miller, 2018

