

# Manx Notes 540 (2021)

## “DEATH OF MR WILLIAM HARRISON” (1884)

(1)

A large section of the Manx public will hear with regret of the death of Mr William Harrison, which took place at his residence, Rock Mount, German. As a member of the House of Keys, and a Justice of the Peace, he for many years rendered good service to the public. For a long time he was a very active member of the Council of the Manx Society, and edited several of its publications. He has been in indifferent health for some months, and passed away on Saturday last, at the ripe age of 82. His remains were interred in Peel Cemetery on Wednesday.

“Death of Mr William Harrison.” *Isle of Man Times* 29 November 1884: 5d.

(2)

The following obituary notice of Mr William Harrison has appeared in *Notes and Queries*, to which he had long been an esteemed contributor:

“We regret to announce the death of William Harrison, an old and valued contributor to ‘N. & Q.’ He died on the 22nd ult. at Rock Mount, in the Isle of Man, in the eighty-third year of his age. He had been a member of the Insular Legislature for eleven years, having sat in the House of Keys from March, 1856, until the general election in 1867. Mr Harrison was well versed in the folk-lore of the Island. Few possessed so much knowledge of rare and curious books. He was a member of the council of the Manx Society from its origin until the period of his death. During the last twenty-five years he edited fourteen volumes of its publications, one of which, his *Bibliotheca Monensis*, is a work of great labour and research. His industry was marvellous. Up to within the last few years, when his health began to fail, he wrote for eleven hours a day. Mr Harrison was appointed a justice of the peace in 1872.”—*Notes and Queries*, 6th S.X., December 13th, 1884.

Those of our readers to whom Mr Harrison and his works were known, will acknowledge the justness of this brief tribute to his memory. To him, indeed, the public is deeply indebted for the restoration and preservation of the folk-lore of his adopted Isle; of its quaint and interesting legends and poetry; and of its many curious historical treatises.

Mr Harrison had an extensive acquaintance with Manx antiquities and pre-historic remains. In 1876, he was appointed a member of the Insular Archæological Commission, and compiled for it many valuable notes on antiquarian subjects. It was intended that those notes should appear in its second report—a report which, it is to be regretted, owing to the flagging of the late Governor’s interest in the Commission,

has not been made. In private life, Mr Harrison was hospitable, kind, and genial. He delighted to entertain, and converse with, those whose taste and reading were in accordance with his own. The friendship which existed between him and the late lamented Mr Moore, High-Bailiff of Peel, led to an interchange between them of evening visits. Few men had a better knowledge of the ancient history of the Isle, and of the customs, habits, and idiosyncrasies of its people than Mr Moore. On topics such as these Mr Harrison loved to converse, and such, indeed, were often the objects of an evening's discussion between himself and Mr Moore. The interval between the deaths of these two firmly attached friends was very short, and they now occupy graves, not far from each other, in the same peaceful cemetery.

Mr Harrison was in every sense a bibliophile, and possessed, perhaps, the finest and most valuable general library in the Island. His modesty and humility was remarkable, and it was, therefore, only those who knew him well, or were conversant with his publications, who were able to discover and appreciate his vast bibliographical knowledge and attainment.

“The Late William Harrison, J.P.” *Manx Sun* 20 December 1884: 4c.

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