

Manx Notes 26 (2004)

“THOS CRELLIN (THE MATE) PEEL”

THOMAS CRELLIN AS SINGER

Thomas Crellin acquired his nickname of “The Mate” from working as a mariner. He lived in the fishing port of Peel on the Island’s west coast. The 1891 census found him aged 67 residing at 3 Christian Street together with his wife Ann who was 65, and Lydia Leece, 14 years old and their servant.¹ Crellin contributed to the folk song collections of both the Gill brothers and A.W. Moore.

The Gills were active in 1895 and 1898, making two collecting tours in 1895, and one in 1898.² They visited Crellin on each trip and on more than one occasion.³

1895

FIRST TRIP

SATURDAY, 13 APRIL 1895

“Juan y Jaggad Keear” (“John with the Grey Jacket”), MusBk, 103/1 (O.7);

“Yn Stroieder,” (“The Wastral” (sic)), MusBk, 103/2 (O.8);

“The Farmer’s Daughter,” MusBk, 103/3 (O.9).

TUESDAY, 16 APRIL 1895

“Jacob’s Ladder,” (“Aarey Yacob”) MusBk, 106/2 (O.22).

SECOND TRIP

27 JULY 1895

“Spinning Wheel Song,” MusBk, 116/1 (O.38).

1898

THIRD TRIP

30 SEPTEMBER 1898

“Yn Shenn Dolphin,” MusBk, 43/2 (O.72);

“Juan y Jaggad Keear,” MusBk, 45/1 (O.79).

¹ *Census Enumerators’ Book* for Peel, 1891, RG I2/4683, f.7.

² “THE ORIGINAL COLLECTION | OF | MANX FOLK MUSIC | [rule] | MADE BY | HIS HONOUR THE DEEMSTER GILL | MR W.H. GILL & DR. CLAGUE | COMPLETED IN 1895 & 1896,” bound up by Mrs J.F. Gill in 1912, Manx National Heritage Library (MNHL), MS 09702, Box 2. This will be referred to simply as the “Music Book,” abbreviated hereafter as “MusBk.” Reference in the body is by page number and order of appearance of the tune. This is followed in parentheses by the reference given by W.H. Gill. The Gills noted down only tunes.

³ As regards the 30 September 1898 visit, it is difficult to see if they visited him once or twice the same day. In general, the entries for 1898 are confused.

SUMMARY

“The Farmer’s Daughter,”
 “Jacob’s Ladder,”
 “Juan y Jaggad Keear,” (x2)
 “Yn Shenn Dolphin,”
 “Spinning Wheel Song,”
 “Yn Stroieder.”



A.W. Moore on the other hand did not go into the field. He had a network of intermediaries who he called upon to collect tunes which later appeared in 1896 in *Manx Ballads and Music*.⁴ Harry Bridson was the major collector, noting down 29 tunes.⁵ By comparison, the other five collectors were responsible for only 7 tunes, and in the case of Mrs Ferrier she collected her 2 tunes from herself so she did have far to travel. It is not certain if Bridson collected from Crellin or not but it is likely to be the case.⁶ Moore provides no dates whatsoever for when collecting took place but it is likely that he started work in 1891.⁷ Crellin provided 7 tunes and also 2 sets of words for Moore.

TUNES

“Graih my Chree,”
 “Inneenyn Eirinee,”
 “Juan y Jaggad Keear,”
 “Mannin Veg Veen,”
 “Marrinys yn Tiger,”
 “Snieu Wheeyl Snieu,”
 “Ushtey Millish.”

WORDS

“Graih my Chree,”
 “My Callin Veg Dhone.”

⁴ A.W. Moore, *Manx Ballads and Music* (Douglas: G. & R. Johnson, 1896) xxxiii–xxxiv.

⁵ Harry Bridson also collected 3 tunes with himself as source.

⁶ Moore listed the collectors of tunes and the numbers they collected. He also listed the names of those who were collected from and the number of tunes obtained. But you cannot match for certain the collectors and the singers.

⁷ That year Moore sought to obtain a loan of a copy of *Mona Melodies* from the Manx bibliophile G.W. Wood. A.W. Moore to G.W. Wood, 8 June 1891, MNHL, MS 1397 A, undivided. *Mona Melodies* contains the first notations of Manx traditional tunes to appear. J[ohn] Barrow, *The Mona Melodies* (London: Mitchell’s Musical Library & Instrument Warehouses, n.d. [but 1820]).

“THOS CRELLIN (THE MATE) PEEL”



In overview, the material collected from Crellin by the Gills and for Moore can be seen so:

GILLS	MOORE
“The Farmer’s Daughter”	“Graih my Chree” “Inneenyn Eirinee”
“Jacob’s Ladder”	
“Juan y Jaggad Keear” (x2)	“Juan y Jaggad Keear” “Mannin Veg Veen” “Marrinys yn Tiger”
“Yn Shenn Dolphin”	“My Callin Veg Dhone”
“Spinning Wheel Song”	“Snieu Wheeyl Snieu”
“Yn Stroieder”	“Ushtey Millish”

Crellin provided the Gills with 6 tunes (with one variant) and Moore with 7 tunes. They only overlap twice. As regards the 2 sets of words supplied by Crellin, as the tune for “Graih my Chree” was taken down as well as the text it is reasonable to assume that the tune for “My Callin Veg Dhone” was also collected. In the case of “Graih my Chree” Crellin’s tune appeared, for “My Callin Veg Dhone” the tune was taken from *Mona Melodies* (1820).

STEPHEN MILLER
VIENNA, 2004

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

MANX NATIONAL HERITAGE LIBRARY

MS 1397 A Letter from A.W. Moore to G.W. Wood, 8 June 1891.

MS 09702 Deemster J.F. Gill Papers, Box 2 (unlisted)
“THE ORIGINAL COLLECTION | OF | MANX FOLK MUSIC | [rule] | MADE
BY | HIS HONOUR THE DEEMSTER GILL | MR W.H. GILL & DR. CLAGUE |
COMPLETED IN 1895 & 1896,” bound up by Mrs J.F. Gill in 1912.

PRINTED SOURCES

Barrow, J[ohn]. *The Mona Melodies*. London: Mitchell's Musical Library & Instrument Warehouses, n.d. [but 1820].

Moore, A.W. *Manx Ballads and Music*. Douglas: G. & R. Johnson, 1896.

