

Manx Notes 156 (2013)

“NEAT BOOK PRIZE TO A SCHOLAR”

SOPHIA MORRISON AND FLORENCE QUINE OF SANTAN

(1)

THE WHITE LADY

Once upon a time a young man was coming home from Derbyhaven. He was staying in Glashen, and was coming up back Ballahick, when he heard great singing and dancing in the barn, so he went in and saw white ladies dancing. He was a man that was very fond of dancing, so he went and danced with them; and he danced until the sweat came out on him; then he took hold of the lady's apron he was dancing with, and wiped the sweat off his face. And ever after that the white lady followed him, to the day of his death, and she got so common that she was even under the table when he was getting his food.

F. QUINE,
Ballakelly.

This story gained the Editor's prize for Folk-Tales in the Santon school.

(2)

20 May 1915

Dear Miss Morrison.

On behalf of my scholars, and for myself too, I beg to thank you very much for your kind letter, and neat book prize to a scholar, encouraging interest in “Folk Lore,” and rendering valuable educational aid.

It will be an inspiration to know *(added at start of line it)* has been sent by the “Authoress,” so gifted so indefatigable so indispensable to the Manx Language Society & all that concerns the preservation of all links in our History, racial, Linguistic, legal, ecclesiastic, mythological, Botanical, &c &c.

Yours very gratefully | Richard Lace.

(3)

Ballakelly, | Santon | I o Man, | 10 June 1916.

Dear Miss Morrison,

you will be glad to hear I have won a Scholarship to the Higher Grade School Douglas.

I am so sorry to hear you have been in Hospital I hope you will soon be quite well again for the schoolmaster Mr Lace tells us scholars how much you have done for the Manx Language and there is no one to do this work so well[.]

With all my Sympa^rthy¹ | I remain | Yours | Florence Quine

Sources: (1) F[lorence] Quine, “[Folk-Lore Notes] The White Lady,” *Mannin* 6 (1915), 336. (2) Letter from Richard Lace to Sophia Morrison, 20 May 1916, MNHL, MS 09495, Sophia Morrison Papers, Box 5. (3) Letter from Florence Quine to Sophia Morrison, 10 June 1916, MNHL, MS 09495, Sophia Morrison Papers, Box 5.



In *Mannin* 6 (1915), edited by Sophia Morrison, the following appeared in the “Notes” section (371–74, on 373):

An entertainment given in Santon Board School lately is especially interesting in view of the present day movement for the revival of story-telling. The evening was arranged by members of the Manx Society, and the new experiment fully justified itself. The entertainment included Manx songs and recitations as well as story telling. The prize for the best folk-story, which appears in our Folklore notes, was won by Florence Quine, aged 10, of Ballakelly, Santon.

As seen, the prize for “Best Folk-Story” was won by Florence Quine of Ballakelly, Santon and the “Editor’s Prize” was, as stated in the letter from Richard Lace, the schoolmaster at Santon, “a neat book prize.” It is clear that what Florence was sent was a copy of Morrison’s *Manx Fairy Tales* published in 1911. The following year, 1916, Morrison was in hospital and received a rather touching and charming letter from Florence. Lace was fulsome in praise for Morrison and this he evidently passed on to his pupils. He was not alone in this, as J.J Kneen, a fellow stalwart in the Pan Celtic cause, commented in a letter to William Cubbon in 1915: “If we had not Miss Morrison at the wheel, I am afraid our ship would have foundered long ago. I only hope that she may be long spared to carry on her labour of love.”¹ She was not to be spared long after this letter, dying as she did in 1917.

STEPHEN MILLER
VIENNA, 2013



¹ Letter from J.J. Kneen to William Cubbon, 9 November 1915, MNHL, MS 09913, William Cubbon Papers, in Box labelled “WC: Correspondence.”