

Manx Notes 302 (2017)

THE HYMN TUNE “BALLAVARKISH” * (1900)

The concluding services in connection with the opening of the Ballabeg New Chapel, were held on Sunday last. The Rev. E. Gill, of Kansas, occupied the pulpit; the choir rendered special music, including a new tune, “Ballavarkish,” composed by Mr R. Lawson, in collaboration with some Castletown friends; and the young ladies connected with the chapel received the offertories of the congregation. There was a goodly gathering in the afternoon, and in the evening the new chapel and the greater part of the old were crowded. The sum of £28 2s 6d was collected during the day, making about £60 raised by the opening services.

“[Arbory] The concluding services” *Isle of Man Examiner* 20 October 1900: 5c.

Looking at the 1901 census, the likely match is Robert Lawson, aged 48, a shoemaker, living with his family at 22 Arbory Street, Castletown (*Census Enumerators’ Book* for Castletown for 1901, RG 13/5308, fol. 100, sch. 30). Here we have a celebration of locality with the composition of a hymn especially for the occasion and an awareness of the Manx diaspora in the shape of the Rev. E. Gill visiting from Kansas.

STEPHEN MILLER, 2017



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