

Manx Notes 442 (2020)

“THE CORONATION—A PROTEST”

(1953)

(1)

To the Editor,

We, as loyal subjects of the Queen, desire to express our regret that no steps appear to have been taken adequately to express the loyalty of the Manx people to Her Majesty in connection with the Coronation.

We have noticed that in the Coronation Souvenir Programme there is on the title page the arms of the various countries constituting the British Empire. The arms of the Isle of Man are not included. Neither do we find any mention of the Isle of Man in any part of the programme.

In the second place we regret that no steps were taken to arrange for the presentation to Her Majesty of two falcons by the people of the Isle of Man in accordance with the traditional right which had its origin in the grant of the Isle of Man by Henry IV to Sir John Stanley in 1406.

In the third place we regret that there is to be no reference, so far as we are aware, in the Coronation ceremony to Her Majesty's title as Lord of Mann. Her Majesty's title as successor of the Lords of Mann is an older title than her title as successor of the Kings of England.

We are confident that there is no part of the British Empire where the people are more loyal to Her Majesty than the Isle of Man and we should like to express the hope that in the broadcast programmes or in some other way arrangements will be made for the inclusion of the Isle of Man as a separate part of the British Empire and for the announcement of the fact that to the Manx people the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth is her Coronation as the successor of the Kings of Mann and the Isles.

ERIC W. FARGHER

J. ARTHUR CAIN

R.T. WETHERILL

C.J. KNEEN

BILL KENNAUGH

BRIAN G. CRINGLE

A. HUGH WATSON

T.H. COLEBOURN

C.R. DUCKER

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A.J. DAVIDSON

EDWARD CORTEEN

A.O. CAINE

T.L. VONDY

R.K. EASON.

Eric W. Fargher, *et al.*, “[The Editor’s Postbag] The Coronation—A Protest,” *Isle of Man Weekly Times* 23 May 1953, 5c.

(2)

To the Editor,

[5c] For some time it has been puzzling a lot of people in the Isle of Man as to why it is that when the Manx people desire to express their loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen, and on such other State occasions as it is necessary to show one's loyalty, the Manx Flag is struck on all public places in the Island and the Union Jack is hoisted to the mast-head.

This, apparently, is done in accordance with some instruction issued by a Lieutenant-Governor of the Island, and goodness knows under what authority such [5d] order was ever made it will be remembered by those who are possibly getting a little long in the tooth, that for over 100 years the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company flew a Red Duster on the stern of all their vessels with a large three legs in yellow in the red portion of the flag. During the Munich period in 1938, when everyone's attention was focused on the possibility of a World War, realising that possibly within 12 months war would break out, Government Office, apparently instructed by the Home Office, took umbrage at the desecration of the Red Duster and ordered the Three Legs should be immediately removed from the flag, with the result that patched Red Dusters appeared on the Isle of Man Steam Packet vessels for a year or so after.

Application was then made for a Manx flag similar in design to the Red Duster showing the Union Jack in one corner, and it was found that the Isle of Man had a very ancient flag, namely, a yellow three legs on a red background, and this flag is the flag of the Manx nation.

I appreciate it is no use approaching our Legislature with regard to this matter and feel that possibly public opinion might be aroused as to our rights and privileges.

Firstly, we are a very loyal race of people, and that is exemplified in the result of the call to arms in both the First and Second World Wars it is appreciated that a number were left behind and made a lot of money out of the sacrifice of our young men.

Secondly, we are not a conquered race, the rights of the Lord of Mann having been sold by the Stanley, to the Imperial Crown, and goodness knows we have paid enough over the years as the result of this treatment, *vide, Mona's Herald* 100 years ago, and the fight for freedom and the squalor in the Isle of Man owing to the attitude of the English Government in collaring the whole of the proceeds of taxation after paying for what is now known as the Reserved Services, namely, the Governor, his household staff, Government Office, Military and Police.

Thirdly, the Isle of Man is not part of the Union represented in the flag, it being the union between Scotland and Ireland, now only a part of Ireland.

If it is the wish of the Government of the Isle of Man, on instructions received from the Home Office, to fly the Union Jack, then it is only flown in a complimentary position, and when the flags of two nations are flown together, the older flag is the senior, and is flown at the mast-head with the complimentary flag, if it is the junior flying beneath it. This is the position in the Isle of Man, and I hope that when the flags of the Isle of Man are flown in honour of the Queen on her Coronation, the Manx Government will, as a demonstration of loyalty on that very, very important occasion, fly both the flag of the Isle of [5e] Man and the flag of Great Britain upon Government buildings and all other buildings in accordance with the rules laid down by the Royal Colleges dealing with the matters.

This is a matter which should receive very urgent consideration.

ERIC FARGHER.

[Editorial comment on page 6.]

Eric W. Fargher, “[The Editor’s Postbag] The Manx Flag,” *Isle of Man Weekly Times* 23 May 1953, 5c–e.

(3)

[6d] We print a letter from Mr Eric Fargher on the subject of flying the Manx flag, the flag with the Three Legs on it, from public buildings and private houses and shops during the time of the Coronation. We do not agree with all of it, but we agree so strongly with parts of it that we take the letter as a text.

The Coronation is an event of Imperial significance; Her Majesty is Queen of the Commonwealth; and the appropriate flag is the emblem of the Commonwealth, the Union Jack. But the Isle of Man is a nation, a country with its own government and its own history, and the Queen is Lord of Mann. Therefore the Manx flag is also appropriate.

As Mr Fargher reminds the public, it was settled a number of years ago that the Manx flag, the Three Legs in yellow on a red background, with nothing else in the picture, was proper for certain occasions. It was proper for all occasions except the commemorations of events of Imperial consequence, such for instance as the Sovereign’s birthday. (Mr Fargher disagrees with this.) It is flown now wherever the Tynwald Court is in session or any of the divisions of the High Court; and many people use it privately. After this decision the flag came to be manufactured, and for 20 years or so our shops have had it constantly in stock. One retailer tells he has sold 50 in the last few weeks. But stock s cannot be renewed just now; the manufacturers are too busy on general Coronation orders. Prices vary; the larger flags are decidedly expensive, but the cost of a smaller flag is not amiss.

We urge every patriotic Manx person who possesses a Manx flag, or finds himself still able to obtain one, to fly it at Coronation time, together with the Union Jack, and testify his devotion to his country and to the great Commonwealth to which his country belongs.

Mr Fargher joins with a number of influential gentlemen in complaining that the Isle of Man is not mentioned in the official booklet of the Coronation. At first this complaint seemed very just; it did seem that the producers of this booklet had ignored the Island, and that our own authorities had overlooked the job of sending an early reminder. It seemed a repetition of what was done in the booklet of the Festival of Britain. But the Coronation booklet makes no reference, either, to Northern Ireland or the Channel Islands. It has a page giving the emblems of the seven Dominions, and then of all the British possessions and protectorates. The Isle of Man has not been omitted contemptuously if it did not come within the scope of the chosen scheme. Nevertheless we don't understand why the scheme should not have included Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man. Does not the Queen reign over them also? Are they not interested in her crowning?

THE PAIR OF FALCONS

Mr Fargher and his friends would revive the old custom by which the Isle of Man presented to the Sovereign at the time of his or her coronation, a pair of falcons. The last time the falcons were presented was the coronation of George IV, in 1821. And the circumstances were different. The falcons were not given by the Manx people, but by the Earl of Derby or the Duke of Atholl. They were homage due to a superior from an inferior king. The English King declared that he had conquered the Isle of Man and was granting it to an English nobleman, who was to be king so long as he recognised his overlord. The [6e] Dukes of Atholl ceased to be sovereigns in 1765; they continued to possess manorial rights until 1827, and it is doubtful whether in 1821 they had any more right to render this antique homage—for rendering it was a distinction greatly prized—than any other lord of the manor. The King of Great Britain is now the King of Man, and a king does not pay homage to himself.

Editorial, "Fly Both Flags!" *Isle of Man Weekly Times* 23 May 1953, 6d–e.

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There is much to be teased out and mulled over in these exchanges: loyal to the British Crown, yet Manx and proud of being so, and as ever the Three Legs of Man flag being brought into focus and debate over when and how it can—or should to Eric Fargher—be flown.

STEPHEN MILLER, RBV

