

# Manx Notes 612 (2023)

“REALLY, I AM THOROUGHLY TIRED  
OF THE WHOLE BUSINESS”

MONA DOUGLAS WRITES TO ARNOLD FOSTER \*  
(1936)

Thie-ny-Garee, | Laxey, | Isle of Man.

5th September, 1936.

Dear Arnold,

Annie Caine was in the library on Wednesday, and gave me your message about the dance volume but I'm afraid I am still feeling very unsatisfied about the whole thing! The letter that Mr. Howard sent me seemed to me rather evasive on the main issue, so on June 25th I wrote him a letter of which the enclosure is a copy. He has not replied, so I take it that he cannot, or does not wish to, give the required permission for my suggested “notice” to be printed on the volumes.

Really, I am thoroughly tired of the whole business, and if you agree I should like now to vest my collector's copyright in the E.F.D.S. and Manx Museum jointly, and let them make their own arrangements for publication, with the proviso that your arrangements should be used and an adequate royalty paid you. This ought to give you the same security that you would have under the ordinary agreement with Stainer & Bell; it would mean that final control of the copyright would not pass entirely out of the Island, as it would if I were to vest the rights in the E.F.D.S. alone; and although I know I should get nothing at all, I think this would be preferable to continuing the P.R. discussion and postponing publication until the dances have been forgotten again, or, alternatively, having no security as to their complete freedom for dancers in the future. As to Stainer & Bell, while I should like to consider them as far as possible, I feel that their failure to answer my last letter and give the required assurance does rather set me free from any further real obligation to them.

Let me know if you will agree to this course, and when I hear from you I will do what may be necessary to put it into operation. I have already sounded the Curator of the Manx Museum, and he is quite willing to co-operate with us, but does not wish to have the dances tied up to any particular publisher. I think Kennedy would probably take the same attitude, though he has not actually said so.

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I hoped that Paddy would have been over last month to get on with the rest of the notations, but have not heard from her since I was out in March. Have you seen her? Perhaps I ought to have written, but I've been fearfully busy.

Love to Bobbie, and all the best to yourself.

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Collecting and recording dances was one thing, teaching and performing them another. And then to be added to the mix was the issue of the copyright of those arrangements over which many a letter was written.

Stephen Miller, RBV

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