

# Manx Notes 615 (2023)

“DEAR MR HALL CAINE” \*

(1900)

Dear Mr Hall Caine,

Our common Nationality must plead my excuse for sending for this little sheaf of Wild Oats—chiefly Manx—in the hope that (despite Dr Johnson’s depreciation of porridge) you may possibly find, among the chaff of it, a grain or two of wholesome food.

Yours faithfully

W.H. Gill

Abingdon on Thames.

Septr 15. 1900.

This inscription is to be found in a copy of W.H. Gill’s *A Manx Wedding and Other Songs* ([1900]) offered for sale in September 2023.\* “Oats. A grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people,” was the entry in Johnson’s *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755). Whilst W.H. Gill was being somewhat obsequious in his approach to Caine and was likely angling for a suitable quote for a future publication, it shows the afterlife of publications with authors circulating copies to others to bring their work to attention.

Stephen Miller, RBV

\* I am grateful to Dr Chloë Woolley for bringing this item to my attention.

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\* Originally published as Stephen Miller, “Dear Mr Hall Caine’ (1900),” *Kiaull Manninagh Jiu* October (2023), [14].