

# Manx Notes 692 (2024)

## THE PHYNNODDEREE HELPS OUT AT ST OLAVE'S (1958)

(1)

The new boiler was transported to the church boiler cellar, which was all ready to receive it, with a new concrete floor all hardened and dry, and a new brick wall to retain the coke, on December 17th, exactly a month to the day on which the old boiler gave out (writes Canon Taylor, Vicar of St Olave's). This was good going. The new boiler was in action, and had the church nicely heated for the following Sunday, December 20. Again that was good going, and had I known when I had to make up my mind about the midnight service on Christmas Eve that the church was going to be heated, I should have held the service, but I was not going to risk an innovation in a cold church. Everyone appreciated the warmth on Christmas Day, and are grateful to those who achieved it.

Here is a queer thing. On the morning of December 26th, St Stephen's Day, when I went into the Church for the Communion at 11. I noticed that the great stone, flanking the steps on the right side had been moved some four inches out of its position. How and when it happened no one can suggest, for on Christmas Day most people passed it in the dark or dim light. Several explanations were possible, and I began to think about getting it put right.

Now the next day, St John's Day, while I was saying the service in Church, between 10 and 10-30. I heard bumpings and bangings, real but weird, and when I came out of church, Lo, the stone was back in position. Who done it? We don't know. I mentioned this to a Manx lady and she said. "It must have been the bugganes, but, no not them, more likely the phynoderee." Well, the good Manx people know more about all this than I do, and I am content just to say, "Thank you kindly little people. Thank you very much," and just leave it at that.

But if the kind fairy should happen to be passing this way again soon with a bit of mortar or cement, and with a trowel in his hand, and might think of slipping a bit of the cement or mortar into the chinks round the stone, he'd make a real good job of it, and in the days to come at Christmastime, our children and grandchildren will tell of this good fairy.

"Were the Bugganes at Work?" *Ramsey Courier* 3 January 1958: 5d.

(2)

Are there any "good fairies" about in Ramsey? If so, there is a job of work which is in need of attention, according to the vicar of St Olave's, Canon T.W. Taylor, who writes:

Here is a queer thing. On the morning of December 26th, St Stephen's Day, when I went into the Church for the Communion at 11, I noticed that the great stone, flanking the steps on the right side, had been moved some four inches out of its position. How and when it happened no one can suggest, for on Christmas Day most people passed it in the dark or dim light. Several explanations were possible, and I began to think about getting it put right.

Now, the next day, St John's Day, while I was saying the service in Church, between 10 and 10.30, I heard bumpings and bangings, real but weird, and when I came out of church, lo, the stone was back in position. Who done it? We don't know. I mentioned this to a Manx lady and she said, "It must have been the bugganes, but, no not them, more likely the phynoderee." Well, the good Manx people know more about all this than I do, and I am content just to say, "Thank you kindly little people. Thank you very much," and just leave it at that.

But if the kind fairy should happen to be passing this way again soon with a bit of mortar or cement, and with a trowel in his hand, and might think of slipping a bit of the cement or mortar into the chinks round the stone, he'd make a real good job of it, and in the days to come at Christmastime, our children and grandchildren will tell of this good fairy.

"Any Good Fairy in Ramsey? There's Work to Be Done There." *Mona's Herald* 7 January 1958: 5d.

(3)

Last week under the above heading there was published in the Courier an account of the mysterious manner in which a heavy block of stone, fifty inches long, eighteen inches wide and fourteen inches thick had been moved some four inches out of its position about Christmas time, having no tell-tale marks on it to suggest how or why it should have been moved. Then between ten and ten-thirty on the morning of December 27, while I was saying the service in church, the sound of mysterious blows as of wood on wood were heard outside the church, and after the service the stone was found perfectly back in position; no one knows how or by whom. A Manx lady suggested it must have been the bugganes or the phynoderee. I said in that case I would be content to say "Thank you kindly little people," and leave it at that. And I suggested that if the same good fairy should be passing this way again, with a little mortar or cement, and with a trowel in his hand, and might think of slipping a bit of it into the chinks round the stone, he would make a real good job of it, and be remembered in the days to come.

Well, whoever he is, he had been and done it. When I went into the church for the 8 a.m. service on Sunday morning (January 5th) there it was, the smooth, grey straight line of the cement in the chinks between this stone and those adjoining it.

Who did it, no he knows. He came unseen, did his good deed, and went unseen. Who? Why? How? No one knows.

Be he fairy or human you can argue as long as you like. But about the word “good” applied to him there can be no doubt or argument. If some one had come silently and unknown and robbed or damaged the church it would have been news and been published in all the papers. This is nicer and better news, and more worth publishing.

And now in the years to come the story can be told, from generation to generation, of how at Christmas, 1957, the big stone to the right of the front steps as you go in to St Olave’s Church was mysteriously moved of its position and as mysteriously replaced and cemented up, and of how we said, “Thank you kindly, little people,” not knowing really whom to thank as we would like to

T.W. TAYLOR.

T.W. Taylor, “Were the Bugganes at Work?” *Ramsey Courier* 10 January 1958: 5d.

(4)

Ramsey’s “Good Fairy” has been at it again, and Canon T.W. Taylor, vicar of St Olave’s Church, is very grateful to him!

An account was published last week of how Canon Taylor noted, when he entered the church, that the great stone flanking the steps on the right side, had been moved some four inches out of its position. The next day, St John’s Day, while he was saying the service, he heard bumpings and bangings, real but weird, and when he came out the stone was back in position.

When he mentioned it to a Manx lady, she remarked: “It must have been the bugganes, but, not them, more likely the phynoderee.”

Then Canon Taylor commented that should the kind fairy happen to be passing again with a trowel in his hand, he might slip a bit of mortar into the chinks around the stone and make a real job of it.

There has been a speedy development, and Canon Taylor now writes:

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If someone had come silently and unknown and robbed damaged the church it would have been news and been published in all the papers. This is nicer and better news, and more worth publishing.

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"Good Fairy at Ramsey." *Mona's Herald* 14 January 1958: 7d.

Stephen Miller RBV

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