

MONA DOUGLAS



QUOCUNQUE JECERIS STABIT.

WORKING GUIDE (1)

THE 1930 EFDS VACATION SCHOOL



CHIOLLAGH BOOKS
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Vers. 1

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§1 INTRODUCTION

In 1934, Mona Douglas in the course of a lecture, later published in the *Ramsey Courier* under the title of “Manx Dance Revival,” recalled:

I did not, however, think of an actual revival of the Manx dances until in 1929, I was asked to lecture (on Manx folk song—nobody thought there were any Manx dances preserved!) to the English Folk Dance Society at Douglas. [*Ramsey Courier* 26 October 1934: 7b & c.]

The correct date is 1930, but Douglas went on in subsequent publications to constantly refer to 1929 as the year, namely, 1937, 1941, and 1949 and then much later in 1981 (but here it is 1928), and 1983. Whilst allowing for recycling material from earlier published work, it is a curious error.

The relevant references are:

1937 “When the English Folk Dance Society held an Easter Vacation School at Douglas in 1929 [...]” “Manx Folk Dances: their Notation and Revival,” *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society*, iii.2 (1937), 110–16.

1941 “[...] lecture that I was giving to a Vacation School of the English Folk Dance Society held in Douglas in 1929.” “The Traditional Dances of Mann,” *Journal of the Manx Museum*, v.64 (1941), 3–7.

1949 “When the English Folk Dance Society held an Easter Vacation School at Douglas in 1929 [...]” “Folk Song and Dance in Mann with Some Notes on Collection and Revival of the Dances,” *Proceedings of the Scottish Anthropological and Folklore Society*, iv.1 (1949), 51–60.

1981 “Away back in 1928 the English Folk Dance Society decided to hold a vacation school in Douglas the following Easter (1929) [...]” “Introduction,” *The Leighton Stowell Book of Manx Dances* (Manx Folk Dance Society, 1981), 4–5.

1983 “I organised the first demonstration of the revived traditional Manx dances for the Easter Vacation School of the English Folk Dance Society held in Douglas in 1929 [...]” “Introduction,” *Rinkaghyn Vannin: Dances of Mann* (Sleih gyn Thie, n.d. [1983]), 7.

THE EFDS EASTER VACATION SCHOOL OF 1930

The Easter Vacation School of the English Folk Dance Society was held during Easter Week in Douglas between 21–25 April, with the participants crossing on Saturday, 19 April, and returning the following weekend on the 26th. The lecture by Douglas, “Manx Folk Songs and Dances,” was given at the Douglas High School for Boys on the evening of Monday, 21 April, with a number of Manx songs and dances

being sung and performed. No copy of the lecture has yet been found amongst her personal papers now in the MNHL but a summary of its content appeared in the *Isle of Man Examiner* for 25 April 1930.

§2 INSULAR NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS

A CHECKLIST OF MANX NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS

1. "Folk Dance Schools: Interesting Easter Visitors: Music Festival Judge's Interest in the Isle of Man." *Mona's Herald* 26 February 1930: 2b.
2. "Folk Dancing in Douglas: Vacation School for Easter Week." *Isle of Man Examiner* 4 April 1930: 3f.
3. "Folk Dancers' Programme." *Mona's Herald* 16 April 1930: 5c.
4. "Folk Dancers' Visit." *Ramsey Courier* 17 April 1930: 4b.
5. "Folk Dancing School at Douglas." *Peel City Guardian* 19 April 1930: 6d.
6. "[Advert] [EFDS Easter Vacation School]." *Mona's Herald* 23 April 1930: 4a–b.
7. "Visit of English Folk Dancers: Easter Vacation School: Civic Reception at the Villa Marina." *Mona's Herald* 23 April 1930: 4e.
8. "Manx Songs and Folk Dances." *Mona's Herald* 23 April 1930: 5f.
9. "Visit of English Folk Dancers: Easter Vacation School Held at Douglas: Miss Mona Douglas on Folk Songs of the Isle of Man: Civic Reception to Welcome Visitors." *Isle of Man Examiner* 25 April 1930: 5a–c.
10. "English Folk Dance Society: Vacation School at Douglas." *Ramsey Courier* 25 April 1930: 4f.
11. "Ramsey School Children Perform at Folk Dancing Conference." *Ramsey Courier* 25 April 1930: 7d.
12. "During the week" *Peel City Guardian* 26 April 1930: 5d.
13. A.I. Caine, [signed as "A.I.C."]. "Some Impressions of the Folk Dance School." *Mona's Herald* 30 April 1930: 4d.

2.1 MONA'S HERALD (26 FEBRUARY 1930)

[2a] It is expected that 200 persons of both sexes interested in the art, will attend the English Folk Dance Society's vacation schools to be held in Douglas in Easter week. Apparently these schools are arranged periodically, so that enthusiasts can gather together, with the object of learning and imparting learning to the general advancement of the art or pastime of folk dancing. They come, not so much to compete, as dancers ready to compare notes, to approve, to criticise and to: admire. The very welcome visit of these schools, which, for Easter, Douglas shares with Bridport and Brighton, where similar ones are to be held, is directly attributed to a

visit of Miss Holbrow, of Liverpool, to the Manx Music Festival two years ago, in the capacity of judge of the children's dancing competitions. Miss Holbrow returned to the mainland with a good impression of the Island and its people, and of its possibilities for development in folk-dancing. She determined on holding a vacation school here, and for some time past has been engaged perfecting the arrangements. It is understood that she will be in charge of a demonstration class, and the whole will be under the direction of Mr Douglas Kennedy, one of the leading exponents of folk dancing. Miss Holbrow has secured the co-operation of the Douglas Corporation and the IOM Education Authority. Classes will be held in Villa Marina, and public demonstrations also at the High Schools, the Gymnasium, the Demesne and Tynwald Street schools. There will be a reception by the Mayor and Corporation in Villa Marina on Saturday, 19th April (the Saturday following Good Friday). The Corporation has also extended the free use of the Noble's swimming bath to the students, and other baths at reduced charges. Specially conducted tours are also being arranged at moderate charges on the IOM Railway and the Manx Electric Railway. The Official Publicity Board has done its utmost to help towards the success of the schools. Some 3,000 special circulars were distributed at the Christmas schools held at Chelsea, among those likely to attend the vacation schools at Douglas, and over 1,000 booklets concerning the history, antiquities, and folk-lore of "the world's smallest nation" were also posted to members of the Society in the Northern area. There is a branch of the English Folk Dance Society in the Island. It is hoped that the Easter schools will kindle a keener interest in folk dancing in the Island.

The current number of the magazine of the Society, *EFDS News*, contains an announcement of the holding of the schools, and the following extracts from an article by Mr W.A. Clague:

"When it is considered that over half a million people invade it every summer, and Isle of Man must make a strong appeal. I have listened for a number of years to people singing its praises, and am still as far as ever from discovering what it is that appeals most. Many refer to its natural beauties, and go into raptures over its glens and quiet coastal walks. Others, and they are many, like the general atmosphere of friendliness, which reminded one famous writer of a jolly company aboard a yacht. Even the most blase have been struck by the scene of Douglas by night, when at a magic touch the waters of the bay become mirrored with thousands of dancing lights. Most people, of course, like the gaiety and crowds. A few find their greatest delight in plying the streams or hooking conger far out to sea, behind Bradda Head, or one of the many other diversions which the Island offers. It takes all kinds of people into its embrace, and finds them something to do under conditions which only a small hospitable island, conveniently situated beyond the horizon of the Industrial world, can hope to offer. The smallness of the Manx nation has not prevented the growth within it of many interesting and peculiar features. Rather has the reverse been the case. Though the inspiration has been drawn from outside

sources, its traditions, language, customs, folk-lore and songs, are stamped with a marked individuality. The Manx language is now spoken by a mere handful of people, but in this superstitious age, there are more than will admit, who still believe in some or other of the many bits of strange lore which have been preserved for posterity by the late Mr A.W. Moore. I imagine the clergyman whom the Prime Minister brought into the limelight the other day; could find no better place than the Isle of Man to browse about in for out-of-the way [2f] information. And not only he, but many, others continually find delight in digging out for themselves knowledge about old customs attaching to such curious appointments as Admiral of the Herring Fleet, which still survive. There are many rich seams for those who seek them, and the best time to seek is in the early part of the year, before the tourist invasion has begun. In his preface to Mr William Radcliffe little's guide to the Isle of Man, Sir Hall Caine says you must take this volume with you if you are visiting Ellan Vannin, and wish to understand its history and its people; all others may be left behind. But you would do better, in my opinion, to have, also, something more than a nodding acquaintance with the earlier of the Manx Novelist's works, with Moore's "Folklore," and perhaps above all, with T.E Browns character studies. And then if you get away into the country, as George Borrow was wont to do, you may with him obtain a glimpse into the heart and mind of a remarkable race.

"Folk Dance Schools: Interesting Easter Visitors: Music Festival Judge's Interest in the Isle of Man." *Mona's Herald* 26 February 1930: 2b.

2.2 ISLE OF MAN EXAMINER (4 APRIL 1930)

The founding of an Isle of Man branch of the English Folk Dance Society about two years ago, has given a great fillip to the delightful art of folk dancing in the Island, and membership of the local branch has increased to such a satisfactory number that Douglas has been considered a centre, of sufficient importance to justify the holding of a vacation school of folk song and dance in the town during Easter week.

The very welcome event is chiefly being brought about through the efforts of Miss Clarice Holbrow, organising secretary of the English Folk Dance Society for Liverpool and District. Since her first visit to the Island as adjudicating in the folk dance classes at the Manx Music Festival, Miss Holbrow has done much, in a variety of ways, to stimulate interest in folk dancing, and a number of school teachers throughout the Island have voluntarily taken up the work of advancing the popularity of the art.

The object of the vacation school is to enable enthusiasts to confer as to how best the pursuit of the art can be encouraged, and it is estimated that about 200 devotees, of folk dancing will attend the school in Douglas to compare notes, and to criticise and admire the dancing Miss Holbrow will be in charge of a demonstration class, and the whole will be under the direction of Mr Douglas Kennedy, one of the leading exponents of folk dancing. Miss Holbrow has secured the co-operation of the

Douglas Corporation and the IOM Education Authority. Classes will be held in Villa Marina, and public demonstrations also at the High Schools, the Gymnasium, the Demesne and Tynwald Street schools. There will be a reception by the Mayor and Corporation in the Villa Marina on Saturday, 10th April (the Saturday following Good Friday)! The Corporation has also extended the free use of Noble's swimming bath to the students, and other baths at reduced charges. Specially conducted tours are also being arranged at moderate charges on the IOM Railway and the Manx Electric Railway. The Official Publicity Board has done its utmost to help towards the success of the schools. Some 1,000 special circulars were distributed at the Christmas schools, held at Chelsea, among those likely to attend the vacation schools at Douglas, and 1,000 booklets concerning the history, antiquities, and folk-lore of "the world's smallest nation" were also posted to members of the Society in the Northern area.

In the current issue of the *EFDS News*, the official magazine of the English Folk Dance Society, the holding of the vacation school at Douglas is announced, and extracts from an article by Mr W.A. Clague are published for the interest and information of those who hope to attend the school.

On Tuesday evening, March 18th, a public performance of English folk dances and madrigals was given at the Friends' House, Euston Road, London, in aid of the Cecil Sharp Fund. (Cecil Sharp was the founder of the Society). The madrigals, ballets and folk-songs by the English Madrigal Choir were under the personal direction of Mr Arnold Foster, who has collaborated with Miss Mona Douglas in arranging two volumes of Manx songs. Mr Foster will also conduct the folk-singing at the Douglas Easter School.

The detailed syllabus has come to hand since the foregoing was written, and it sets out in detail the arrangements for the week. The school, will open on Saturday evening, April 19th, and close on Friday evening, April 25th.

Classes in folk-singing and folk-dancing and lectures upon the theory, history and artistic significance of the songs and dances, will be held daily throughout the week, and the classes will be graded to meet all requirements. A special course in country dancing and sword dancing will, if practical, be organised for the benefit of those who do not wish to dance the Morris. Special Morris classes will be held for men during the afternoon sessions, and this item offers a unique opportunity for scoutmasters, leaders of Boys' brigades, and all those who wish to learn for their own pleasure, to acquire a knowledge of this fine physical exercise. An examination will be held for those who wish to take the Society's Certificate on Friday afternoon, April 25th.

"Folk Dancing in Douglas: Vacation School for Easter Week." *Isle of Man Examiner* 4 April 1930: 3f.

2.3 MONA'S HERALD (16 APRIL 1930)

Following the arrival of the members of the English Folk Dance Society, on Saturday next, there will be a civic reception at Villa Marina at 8.30 p.m. Classes will be given from Easter Monday to the following Friday in the Boys' High School, the Gymnasium, the Girls' High School, and Villa Marina. Lessons will be given in folk dancing by Mr Arnold Foster, who, in collaboration with Miss Mona Douglas, has recently published arrangements of Manx folksongs. Examinations will be held on Friday. There will be a free demonstration in Villa Marina on Thursday, and a country dance party on Friday. On Monday evening, a lecture is to be given by Miss Mona Douglas on "Manx Folk Songs and Dances."

"Folk Dancers' Programme." *Mona's Herald* 16 April 1930: 5c.

2.4 RAMSEY COURIER (17 APRIL 1930)

Representatives of various branches of the English Folk Dance Society to the number of about 150 are to visit Douglas during Easter for the purpose of holding a vacation school. Three such schools are to be held under the auspices of the English Folk Dance Society, one being at Bridport (Dorset) and the other at Brighton. Mr Douglas Kennedy is to be the director at Douglas. The dancers will cross to the Island on Saturday, and will be officially welcomed at Villa Marina by the Mayor of Douglas and the Town Council. Evening classes will be given from Easter Monday till the following Friday, and there will be lessons in Morris, sword and country dancing, and folk singing, under the direction of Mr Arnold Foster, who has recently published some beautiful pianoforte and choral arrangements of the folk songs of the Isle of Man.

"Folk Dancers' Visit." *Ramsey Courier* 17 April 1930: 4b.

2.5 PEEL CITY GUARDIAN (19 APRIL 1930)

About one hundred and fifty members of various branches of the English Folk Dance Society are to visit Douglas this Easter, in order to take part in the vacation school. Three such schools are to be held this Easter, at Bridport (Dorset), Brighton and Douglas and are to be directed by several eminent leaders in the folk dance movement. The director at Douglas is to be Mr Douglas Kennedy. The members will cross on Saturday, and will be officially received by the Mayor and Town Council at Villa Marina at 8-30 that evening. Classes will be given from Easter Monday till the following Friday some in the Boys' High School, some in the Gymnasium of the Girls' High School and some in the Villa Marina. There will be lessons in Morris dances, sword dances, country dances, and folk singing, under the direction of Mr Arnold Foster, who has recently published some beautiful pianoforte and choral arrangements of the folk songs of the Isle of Man, and so on; and certificate examinations will be held on Friday. The public will be admitted upon a

small payment but they are especially entitled to a free public demonstration at Villa Marina on Thursday afternoon. There will be a country dance party on Friday evening. On Monday evening a lecture is to be given by Miss Mona Douglas upon "Manx Folk Songs and Dances." Charabanc excursions are arranged for Tuesday and Wednesday.

"Folk Dancing School at Douglas." *Peel City Guardian* 19 April 1930: 6d.

2.6 MONA'S HERALD (23 APRIL 1930)

VILLA MARINA.

TO-MORROW (THURSDAY), AFTERNOON,
APRIL 24th, at 3 o'clock.

UNDER DISTINGUISHED PATRONAGE.

VISIT OF ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY MEMBERS OF
The ENGLISH FOLK-DANCE SOCIETY
(Founded by Cecil J. Sharp),

who will give a PUBLIC **DEMONSTRATION**
of Morris, Sword, & Country Dances.

**THURSDAY
AFTERNOON,
APRIL 24th,
at 3 o'clock.**

A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY OF BECOMING ACQUAINTED
WITH THE TRADITIONAL DANCES OF THE COUNTRY.

ADMISSION _____ **1/-** and **2/-** (Reserved. Limited number).
Seats (at 2s.) may be Reserved, Free of Charge, at Villa Marina, or at
Blakemore's, Victoria Street. Daily, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

DOORS OPEN at **2.15 p.m.** _____ **To commence** at **3 o'clock.**

"[Advert] [EFDS Easter Vacation School]." *Mona's Herald* 23 April 1930: 4a-b.

2.7 MONA'S HERALD (23 APRIL 1930)

For the first time the English Folk Dance Society, founded by Mr Cecil J. Sharp, is holding a Vacation School of folk songs and dances at Douglas during the present week. This society is under the presidency of Lady Ampthill, CIGBE, and the director is Mr Douglas Kennedy, who is at present on the Island. The secretary is Commander H.B. Worsley, DSO, RN, and the hon. treasurer is Mr W.C. Bradbury. The Board of Artistic control consists of the following: Miss Maud Karpeles, Douglas Kennedy, R. Vaughan Williams, Mus. Doc. The folk singing is under the direction of Mr Arnold Foster, the well-known composer.

The ideals of the Society consist of the teaching of folk dancing of all kinds and folk singing. Both these, activities have an immense educational value as they carry a great deal of romantic folk lore, which doubles the interest of learning. These vacation schools are at the three vacations during the year, at some place in England. This is the first time the members of the Society have crossed the Irish Sea. About 120 members have crossed, mostly from the Lancashire districts.

The Isle of Man Branch has only a membership of about thirty, but according to reports they are progressing very favourably.

On Saturday evening the Society was welcomed at the civic reception by the Mayor and Corporation at Villa Marina. Members of the Education Authority and other public bodies, and numerous persons interested in folk dancing were also present.

The Mayor (Councillor Wm. Quirk, JP), in a brief speech of welcome, said that he was glad the members of the Society had crossed the rather rough sea to visit the shores of the Island. He thought they would be well compensated when they had explored the beauties of the Island. (Applause.) He sincerely hoped that they would all enjoy themselves while on the Island. He hoped also that they would progress in their dancing, and try and teach some of those present in a few minutes what had taken them perhaps years. (Laughter.)

Mr Kennedy said that they appreciated immensely all that the authorities on the Island had done in giving them such a splendid welcome. Every opportunity had been given to them to do their very best. He hoped all would enjoy their efforts. He referred to the programme, mentioning the Thursday afternoon public demonstration at the Villa Marina at 3 o'clock and the country dance ball at the Villa Marina on the following Friday evening. Today (Wednesday), tours will be made round the Island. The vacation classes are being held at the Boys' High School and the Reading Room at Villa Marina.

In an interview with Mr Kennedy, our representative gleaned some interesting facts as to the work of this Society. The Society during the last six years has become well known and has flourished considerably. Through this wider circle of recognition the ideals of the Society had been borne to far away countries. To illustrate this Mr Kennedy told of a young priest who visited Africa. The priest was keenly interested in English folk dancing, and during his sojourn by Lake Nyassa he taught black natives, who were soon gaily dancing English folk dances. The Society had travelled extensively, only last Christmas, eighteen members returned from Canada after a visit right over as far as the Pacific coast. Accompanying and helping Mr Kennedy are Miss M. Blair, of Liverpool, and Miss Gladys Holbrow, who has adjudicated at our Guild competitions; along with Miss Kathleen Jaques, who is to judge at this year's competitions. The officials on the Island had been very kind to them, and everything possible had been done to ensure their comfort.

The country dancing and sword dancing classes are being held at the Villa Marina and the advanced classes are held at the Boys' High School.

Visitors are admitted to the morning and afternoon sessions of the school for 1s. per session.—The members of the Society leave the Island on Saturday morning next.

“Visit of English Folk Dancers: Easter Vacation School: Civic Reception at the Villa Marina.” *Mona's Herald* 23 April 1930: 4e.

2.8 MONA'S HERALD (23 APRIL 1930)

Miss Mona Douglas gave a short lecture on Manx folk songs and dances in the Douglas High School for Boys on Monday evening. There was a large attendance, which included the members of the English Folk Dance Society. Mr Douglas Kennedy, the director of the Society, occupied the chair. The lecture was illustrated by songs by Mr J.Q. Killey, of Ramsey, by Miss Douglas herself, and by four little girls from Ramsey, under the leadership of Eileen Sayle. A number of dances were given by members of the Ramsey Grammar School, and a Manx sword dance was executed by master Billy Cain, also of Ramsey Grammar School.

“Manx Songs and Folk Dances.” *Mona's Herald* 23 April 1930: 5f.

2.9 ISLE OF MAN EXAMINER (25 APRIL 1930)

VISIT OF ENGLISH FOLK DANCERS
EASTER VACATION SCHOOL HELD AT DOUGLAS
MISS MONA DOUGLAS ON FOLK SONGS OF THE ISLE OF MAN
CIVIC RECEPTION TO WELCOME VISITORS

[5a] Abundant success has attended the English Folk Dance Society's Easter Vacation School which has been held in Douglas this week. The 120 students who braved the boisterous sea on Saturday afternoon found themselves well re-paid for their courage. The classes, held daily from Easter Monday morning at the Villa Marina Reading Boom and at the Boys' High School, have been characterised by that happy spirit which is the very essence of folk dances and folk songs which have been the subject of the various student courses. And a more fascinating study it would be difficult to imagine for these dances and songs which have come down through the years, are the wholesome expression of the spontaneous joy and natural artistry of the people of our own fair countryside. Anything more remote from the dreary dances of recent years can be scarcely conceived. It is encouraging to learn that, steady progress has been made in the study of folk dancing in the Isle of Man since a branch of the English Folk Dance Society was formed here three years ago, and judging by the interest taken in the classes, particularly by the teachers in the Manx schools, it is safe to predict that an immediate result of the holding of the Vacation School in our midst this Easter will see a rapid growth in the number of Manx students of the

subject and a great increase in the enthusiasm of those who have already come under its spell.

The Douglas Vacation School was under the direction of Mr Douglas Kennedy, the Director of the EFDS. Mr Kennedy, who succeeded Mr Cecil J. Sharp (the founder of the Society) in the position of director, and who is one of the three members of the Board of Artistic Control—the other member being Miss Maud Karples and Dr R. Vaughan Williams—told our representative that the folk dance movement has grown tremendously in the last five or six years. It has spread, he said, into every part of the world where English people congregate. It has shown itself in the most unlikely places. Not long ago one of the Cambridge members went on a mission into the middle of Africa, and to his amazement he found that natives in the neighbourhood of Lake Nyassa were actually performing English folk dances!

The secret of it was that an English priest, himself a student of the art, had gone out there, and such was his zeal that he did not rest content until he had instructed his coloured flock into its simple pleasures. Last autumn a “team” of 18 Folk dancers from England took part in a “missionary” tour right across Canada and the United States of America. The Canadian Pacific Railway placed a special coach at their disposal and in this they lived during the five weeks they were on the tour. They stopped at all kinds of stations; gave demonstrations, lectures and talks, and then hitched on to the next tram and went on their way. Ten days were spent in the United States or America. Excellent reports have since been received of the progress made by those who were inspired with an interest in English folk dancing.

The decision to visit Douglas this Easter was largely the result of the efforts of Miss Clarice Holbrow, organising secretary of the Society for Liverpool and district. It will be remembered that Miss Holbrow was the adjudicator of the folk dance classes at the Manx Music Festival last year. She acted as secretary for the Vacation School. Another interesting visitor was Miss Kathleen Jaques, who is judging the dancing at the Guild this year. She is one of the staff of the EFDS. The classes in Folk singing were under the direction of Mr Arnold Foster, director of the Morley College School of Music, London. It was Mr Foster who was responsible for the arrangement of Miss Mona Douglas' volumes of Manx folk songs. Mr Ronald Heath, one of His Majesty's Inspectors, was also able to attend. It was he who arranged the folk dance conference at Douglas last September. Among the teachers was Miss Nancy Blair, who had previously visited the Island in connection with the Folk Dance movement and who found many friends to greet her.

On Saturday evening, the students, teachers and organisers were accorded a civic reception at Villa Marina. In addition to the visitors the guests included members of the Town Council, members of the IOM Education Authority, members of the Douglas branch of the EFDS and representatives of the public life of the town. The guests were received in the cafe at Villa Marina by the Mayor and Mayoress (Coun. Wm Quirk, JP, and Mrs Quirk), and the Town Clerk. Mr A. Robertson, OBE, and

Mrs Robertson, Mr G.F. Clucas, SHK, Chairman of the Council of Education, was present. The company numbered over 200.

The Mayor cordially welcomed the visitors and expressed the hope that they would have a very enjoyable stay in the Island and that their mission would be very successful.

Mr Douglas Kennedy, in responding, said they felt very grateful for everything the authorities in the Island had done to make the school in Douglas possible. Some of them had been there long enough to realise that the Manx were a very hospitable people, and they hoped to see much of the Island and its people during their stay.

After supper the majority of the company joined in a series of country and folk dances. Mrs Axford was the pianist.

There was a full day on Easter Monday with Morris dance, sword dance, and country dance courses at Villa Marina, and a folk singing class at the Boys' High School where there was also a short demonstration by members of the staff of the Society. Tuesday and Wednesday mornings were devoted to studies, and in the afternoon there were charabanc tours round the Island.

DELIGHTFUL LECTURE BY MISS MONA DOUGLAS

CLEVER DEMONSTRATION BY RAMSEY CHILDREN

“An artistic triumph.”—That was the verdict of the large gathering of students of Folk Song and Dance, who listened to the lecture on “Manx Folk Songs and Dances” which was given by Miss Mona Douglas, the Manx poetess, at the High School for Boys on the evening of Easter Monday. Miss Douglas is one of the small band of indefatigable students who are seeking to wrest from the obliterating hand of Time those fragments of ancient lore which become the more precious with the passing years. It is no exaggeration to say that Miss Douglas captivated her audience. With stories [5b] in Manx dialect interspersed by snatches of song; with descriptions of old customs; word pictures of the people of a bye-gone age, and by the reconstruction of the old Manx folk dances rescued from oblivion by patient research she succeeded in making the past live again and revealed to her country-folk and the visitors alike, a charming picture, simple art of the Manx people of long ago. It was done with a delicacy of touch that bespoke the true artist. She created the right atmosphere for the appreciation of our folk songs, by asking her hearers to think not of the concert hall, but of the folk-singer in a dark little house on the hills or by the shore, singing to a few kinsfolk and neighbours gathered together in the light of the peat fire. And to think, too, of the land from which these songs sprang—a land of cloudy hills and deep mysterious glens and grim, dangerous coast; of devastating storms and cold, clinging mist, followed swiftly by wonderfully translucent and vivid colouring of sea and land, and to remember the hard, simple life of the farmers and fishermen and their womankind; a life that was one long struggle with the elements, overshadowed continually by the joy and terror of the sea, but relieved by human

kindliness and humour, a strong religious instinct and a constant sense of adventurous contact with the fairy world of folklore.

SMALLEST NATION

She reminded them too, that the Isle of Man was probably the smallest of all countries that claim a national folk-music. Its history went back until it was in mythology and from the earliest records down to the present day, that history read like a romance. The Island had known many invasions of both kings and races; it had always been a battle-ground and a land of forlorn hopes in historical time and yet through all the tumult of events, its people remained an entity, a nation, having their own constitution, language, customs, lore and music. The first collection of Manx Songs was printed in 1820 but little was known at that date of the technique of folk-song collecting and it appeared to have been far from satisfactory. Later in the 19th century three further volumes were published: *Manx National Songs* (a number of airs set for piano and voice by W.H. Gill to English words by various authors); *Manx National Music* (a much larger collection set for piano by W.H. Gill, without words), and *Manx Ballads [and Music]* (45 airs and a large collection of song words, with airs and without, collected by A.W. Moore). No further Manx songs were published, with the exception of a very few printed in the Manx Society's magazine, *Mannin*, until 1925, when the English Folk Song Society undertook the editing and publication in their journal of all of the Manx airs of any value still to be found in the manuscript.

From the mass of material many beautiful and characteristic songs emerged. The Manx songs, said Miss Douglas, have an affinity with the Hebridean music and with certain Breton airs, and a few are somewhat Scandinavian in character; but in spite of these resemblances, they remain an individual and charming body of music. The songs divide up more or less into groups. There are invocations, charms, and fairy songs; songs of occupation, dance tunes, mocking songs, love songs, ballads, songs connected with special customs, laments, religious songs, lullabies and songs of greeting and farewell.

INVOCATIONS AND CHARMS

The oldest songs were probably the invocations and charms, and Miss Douglas illustrated these by singing in Manx an invocation to Manxman fisherman who asked the sea god's blessing on men and boats.

Passing on to Songs of Occupation, Miss Douglas said in the old days every Manx housewife used to card and spin the wool from her own sheep, for there was scarcely a cottager without his cow and pig and a few sheep grazed by the roadside or on the common lands, if he possessed no fields of his own, and the country weavers used to make regular journeys calling on all the women of the district and collecting their stock of wool balls to take home and weave into the stout cloth of which most outer garments were made. So it was important to have all one's yarn spun in time for the weaver's visit.

She explained that in the "Spinning Wheel Song" ('Arrane Queeyl-Nieuee'), the good wife, hurrying to finish her spinning before the weaver arrives, calls on various natural agencies to help her. The song in English, in Mr Arnold Foster's arrangement, was sung by Vera Mullineux, of Ramsey, a charming young singer, one of the group of school children from Ramsey, who assisted Miss Douglas in illustrating both songs and dances. After this came the Grinding Song in which the singer voices his suspicion that the old miller's wife will take from his barley, a double portion of the "folieu" meal, allowed her husband as payment.

Next Miss Douglas told a quaint Manx yarn of how a fiddler managed to get hold of one of the fairy tunes. It was described with real humour, and pointed by a recurring fragment of the tune.

A LUCKY WITCH

A song about Berrey Dhone, a famous Manx witch, was effectively sung by Eileen Sayle and Edna Oates, Sally Radcliffe, and Vera Mullineux. The song relates how:

"They sent her to the gallows
But her tongue saved her throat;
And back she came by Mullagh Ouyr,
Leading home a goat!"

The old Manx May Day, said Miss Douglas was celebrated by a mock battle between the hosts of Summer and Winter. The two Queens, besides their attendant maidens, each had a band of Knights, whose duty it was to fight the Knights of the rival Queen. The Queen of May or Summer was, of course, always victorious in the end, when Winter and her attendants did homage to the Queen of Summer, and the whole company joined in songs and dances. "Tappaghyn Jiargey" or 'Red Top Knots,' a song of greeting to the May Queen used in connection with this customs was pleasingly sung by Eileen Sayle, with three other girls joining in the chorus.

MOCKING SONGS

One of the tit-bits of the evening was the illustration of the Manx Mocking Songs. Miss Douglas described these as very curious and characteristic and said she believed there used to be a considerable number of them in use for it was once the practice among Manx country folk to make a public mock of anyone who offended the local code of behaviour and even to stone them. How a "cry baby" was mocked was cleverly illustrated by Charlie Quirk and a group of "tormenting" girls, who sang Juan-y-Jaggard [5c] Keear, in a manner which merited the hearty encore.

Mr J.Q. Killey, headmaster of the Albert Road Schools, Ramsey, gave a splendid rendering, in traditional manner of the old man's lament "Once when I was young," the evergreen ballads "Mylecharane" and "Ny Kirree fo Niaghtey" ('The Sheep Under the Snow'). While Miss Douglas illustrated another phase of Manx folk music by singing the strange old lullaby, "Ushag Vey Ruy" ('Little Red Bird').

Turning to Manx dances, Miss Douglas said it was growing more difficult every year to find people who could demonstrate or even describe them, for the old people

who knew them are passing away year by year. Her great grandfather, Philip Quayle, of Glentrammon, Lezayre, was in his day something of a local authority in the old songs and dances and his daughter, her grandmother, passed on to her some valuable airs and descriptions of dances that she had from him. Some dances and parts of dances had been demonstrated to her (the lecturer), by certain old fishermen who had been excellent dancers in their youth. One of them, Mr Kermode of Port Moor, gave her the only traditional demonstration of the Manx Sword dance which she had been able to secure. The most elaborate Manx dance she had come across was the stick dance called variously the "Mylecharane's March," "Roie Pherick" ('Run Patrick!'), and "Cutting Off the Fiddlers Head." She had seen portions of it danced by two old fishermen and had taken down descriptions from several people.

Mr L. Stowell, of Ramsey, and boys from his school, had helped Miss Douglas to translate her notes into the actual movements and these were demonstrated by the boys—Gordon Bryan, Percy Starkey, John Robertson, Charlie Quirk, Billy Caine and Jim Knight. The audience was intensely interested and the dance was repeated. The fiddler was Mr Frank Douglas, the lecturer's father. In the last movement the boys circle round the fiddler with their sticks crossed above him as he kneels. Then they strike the sticks together sharply and the fiddler rolls over figuratively decapitated.

Billy Caine gave what Mr Douglas Kennedy, the chairman, afterwards described as "a really artistic and inspired performance" of the Manx Sword or Dirk Dance, and the lecture closed with the dance called "Hyndaa yn Bwoailley" ('Exchange the Blow'), a country dance which is also known as "The Courting Dance," because, although the lassies smite the laddies on the cheek in one movement, they are kissed by their partners. This gallantry was, however, omitted in deference to the views of those who hold that school children should not be taught to kiss. This dance, too, aroused the keenest interest and as in the other cases a repeat performance was insisted on. The young dancers, taking part were:—Edna Oates, Eileen Sayle, Sally Radcliffe, Vera Mullineux, Horace Garrett, Hodgson Stewart, Gordon Fowlis and Percy Starkey. The girls wore sunbonnets and shawls and the boys sported blue "ganseys." The courting dance was preceded by a processional reconstructed by Mr L. Stowell, from the description given to him by an old man in Jurby. Miss Douglas mentioned that the other dances of the jog and reel type have been recorded and she hopes to obtain still more, notably one known as the "Salmon Leap."

Mr Arnold Foster accompanied Miss Douglas' songs on the piano and for the other songs and dances Miss Norah Crellin was the pianist.

YESTERDAY'S PUBLIC PERFORMANCE

An excellent and enjoyable exhibition of folk dancing was given in Villa Marina yesterday afternoon, and the staff of the Society, who provided almost the whole programme, are to be congratulated on their performance. The event drew a commendably large audience, which included the Mayor and Mayoress of Douglas

(Councillor and Mrs W. Quirk), Mr and Mrs W.C. Cubbon, Mr R. Cain, M.H.K., and Mrs Cain, Mrs E.H. Cunningham, OBE, Mrs W. Cunningham and Dr R. Marshall, and for considerably over an hour, the public was treated to a rare display of the poetry of motion. Not the least enjoyable part of the performance was the exquisite oldtime music which accompanied the various dances, and which was provided by Miss Imogen Holst (daughter of Mr Gustav Holst), at the piano, and Miss Yvonne Decoppett (violinist).

At the outset of the performance, Mr Douglas Kennedy, the director of the Vacation School, referred to Miss Mona Douglas' lecture last Monday, and said how much the members of the School had appreciated her talk on Manx songs and dances, and he hoped that the Isle of Man would value them at what he considered their true worth.

The members of the School opened the programme with the country dances "Christchurch Bells" and "Gathering Peascods," after which Messrs D. Kennedy, Roland Heath, J. La Touche, W. Rice, F. Shaw, T. Moore and F. Callaghan and Misses A. Stoddart, K. Jaques, C. Bower, M. Dixon-Brown, V. Pearson and E. Angel, members of the staff of the Society, demonstrated the following dances: "The Old Mole" (country dance); "Highland Mary" and "Rodney" (Morris dances); "Kirkby Malzeard" (sword dance); "Haste to the Wedding," "Oaken Leaves" and "Argeers" (encored) country dances; "Flowers of Edinburgh" and "Lads of Buchan" (Morris dances); "The Triumph" and "Step Stately" (country dances); "I'll go and enlist for a sailor" (Morris jig); "The Running Set" (a country dance discovered by the late Cecil Sharpe in Kentucky, USA), and "How d'ye do sir," "Step Back" and "Green Garters" (Morris dances). W. Caine, J. Robertson, P. Starkey, G. Bryan, E. Lord and J. Knight, pupils of the Albert Road Board School, Ramsey, repeated, at the request of Mr Kennedy, the "Stick Dance" which they gave during the lecture last Monday. Their contribution to the programme was exceedingly well received, and Billy Cain was encored for his "Dirk Dance," the sword dance of the Kings of Mann. The performance of all the boys reflected the greatest credit on their tutors, Messrs J.Q. Killey, LRAM, and L. Stowell.

Towards the close of the programme, Miss Douglas briefly spoke on the two Manx dances, and also referred to the "Good night song" (Arrane Oie-Vie), which, she said, the members of the School had learned to sing in Manx in one lesson! She added that the song had been supplanted in the Isle of Man "by that Scotch thing, Auld Lang Syne"—a remark which caused some consternation among the few Scottish members of the audience, not forgetting Mr Kennedy himself! The Manx song was then rendered by the members of the School, and the performance closed with the last three-named country dances.

An examination is being held this (Friday) afternoon, and to-night, the members will hold a farewell social gathering in Villa Marina.

“Visit of English Folk Dancers: Easter Vacation School Held at Douglas: Miss Mona Douglas on Folk Songs of the Isle of Man: Civic Reception to Welcome Visitors.” *Isle of Man Examiner* 25 April 1930: 5a–c.

2.10 RAMSEY COURIER (25 APRIL 1930)

This week about one hundred and fifty members of the EFDS are assembled in Douglas for one of three Vacation Schools, which are being held this Easter. On Saturday evening they were welcomed at an official reception, held in the Villa Marina, by Mrs Quirk and the Mayor, whose happy speech was replied to by Mr Douglas Kennedy, director of the Society and of this School.

During the week, the routine of working at country, Morris and sword dances has been varied by folk singing, under Mr Arnold Foster, every morning, and on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, by short talks from Mr Kennedy. In the first, the director emphasised the innate sincerity of folk-song and dance and urged those who taught them to bear this in mind and to add nothing which was affected or artificial. Mr Kennedy also sang three simple but charming songs, from the enormous number collected by Mr Cecil Sharp, among the peasants of the Appalachian Mountains who, in the 20th century, have preserved the songs and dances of Stuart England. In his second talk, Mr Kennedy dealt with the traces of sun worship which are found in the legends, customs and dances of most countries from Egypt to Scandinavia. Then he went on to speculate upon the origins of the sword dances, and of the far more ancient Morris dances, once thought to be connected with the Moors, but now supposed to have their beginnings in pre-historic times

On Monday night, Miss Mona Douglas thrilled a large audience with a lecture on “Manx Folk Songs and Dances.” She herself sang some songs, the most effective of which perhaps was one formerly sung by the women to help them, when grinding their corn. Some Ramsey girls and boys gave further illustrations and their song mocking a “cry baby,” was so full of meaning, though sung in Manx, that it was encored. Mr Killey also sang. Mr Leighton Stowell and the boys and girls of Albert Road School danced a Manx country dance and an intricate stick dance, which had obvious connections with the English sword dances. As Mr Kennedy remarked later, this was easily explained as in England the sword dance tradition was linked up with Danish place-names. Most wonderful of all was a dirk dance of the Sea Kings of Mann, performed to a haunting tune by Billy Cain. “An inspired performance,” was Mr Kennedy’s well-deserved eulogy.

On Thursday morning Miss Mona Douglas, accompanied by Mr Foster, sang some more Manx songs to the School.

It is to be regretted that a larger number did not take this opportunity to see the selection of country, Morris and sword dances performed by Mr Kennedy and members of the staff of the EFDS. Of those present, some preferred the Morris dances, such as “How d’ye do, sir?” and others the strenuous Morris jig, “I’ll go enlist

to be a sailor,” danced by Mr Kennedy and Mr La Touche, while others favoured the graceful country dances, “The Triumph,” “Argeers,” or “Haste to the Wedding”—but all were lost in admiration of the dancing (and the ladies’ frocks) and were inspired to persevere with their own imperfect efforts.

Mr White and Miss Spencer accompanied a party of children from the Ramsey Grammar School to the demonstration, and a few members of the Ramsey Country Dance Class are attending the country dance party in the Villa Marina this (Friday) evening, which concludes a short but successful course.

“English Folk Dance Society: Vacation School at Douglas.” *Ramsey Courier* 25 April 1930: 4f.

2.II RAMSEY COURIER (25 APRIL 1930)

In connection with the Easter School of the English Folk Dance Society, at Douglas, on Monday evening, a party of fifteen boys and girls of the Albert Road Schools, Ramsey, visited Douglas, and under their headmaster and Mr Leighton their headmaster (Mr J.Q. Killey) and Mr Stowell, gave a demonstration of Manx songs and dances, illustrating a portion of the lecture given by Miss Mona Douglas to the Society on “Manx Folk Songs and Dances.” The girls sang in the Manx language, and the boys gave a dance from Mylechraine’s March. The pieces sang by the girls were Berrey Dhone, Kirree fo Niaghey. Eileen Sayle sang Tappagyn Jiargyn, and Vera Mullineux sang Shieu wheel snieu. Mr J.Q. Killey sang Mylechraine and Keyorr va mee Aeg (“Once I was young”). The performance of the Ramsey children evoked such delight among the members of the Society that Mr Kennedy specially requested the party to repeat the demonstration at a public exhibition on Thursday at Villa Marina.

“Ramsey School Children Perform at Folk Dancing Conference.” *Ramsey Courier* 25 April 1930: 7d.

2.I2 PEEL CITY GUARDIAN (26 APRIL 1930)

During the week a vacation school organised by the English Folk Dance Society, was held in Villa Marina, Douglas. About 150 members of the school came to the Island and on Saturday they were officially received by the Mayor of Douglas and members of the Town Council and the Education Authority. Refreshments were served, and the Mayor offered a hearty welcome to his guests, to which Mr Douglas Kennedy suitably replied. Subsequently two or three dances were given. On Monday evening, Miss Mona Douglas gave a lecture on Mans folk songs and dances illustrated by songs by Miss Mona Douglas and Vera Mullineaux, Eileen Sale and Mr J.Q. Killey of Ramsey. Morris dances were given by boys and girls from Ramsey, trained by Mr P.L. Stowell. A demonstration of Morris, sword and country dancing; was given at

Villa Marina on Thursday evening which included two dances collected by Miss Mona Douglas.

“During the week” *Peel City Guardian* 26 April 1930: 5d.

2.13 MONA’S HERALD (30 APRIL 1930)

“Where Dreams Come True,” was the fascinating title of the film made, by the Board of Advertising some two or three years ago. You remember, of course, that it ended with song and dance and a “rale Manx wedding.” Now, another dream has come true—(we commend it to the notice of the Board of Advertising)—a Vacation School of the English Folk Dance Society has been held in the Isle of Man. The writer will never forget the thrill of her first school; intoxication of delight, followed by a fever of enthusiasm. Surely, the EFDS might be persuaded to come to the Island! Could we not share the honour with Scarborough, Norwich, Lowestoft, Cheltenham, Keswick, Chester and other favoured places? Easter, 1930, saw three vacation schools arranged—at Brighton, Bridport, and Douglas. This splitting-up caused our numbers to be rather smaller than we anticipated. Perhaps the fear of sea-sickness had something to do with it, too! However, those who braved the crossing seem to have decided it was well worth while, and Douglas school will certainly be remembered in the annals of the EFDS as one of the happiest, with never a dull nor empty moment.

The delightful cordiality of the Mayor and Corporation put everyone in a merry humour, a feeling which pervaded the whole school, and found its last expression in the hearty send-off at the Pier. The week sped all too quickly, and Saturday morning’s leave-taking heard many promises of coming visits. A folk-dance school is a very busy affair, so our friends had not much leisure in which to explore the Island. The IOM Railway, however, arranged two exceedingly good, and cheap, excursions by bus, and these were thoroughly enjoyed.

Naturally, a school held in the Isle of Man must have something unique about it—something “rale” Manx. Miss Mona Douglas provided it to perfection. The English Folk Dance Society can always be relied upon to provide suitable mental fare, as well as physical training, and among the lecturers whom the writer has been privileged to hear are such eminent people as Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, Plunkett Greene and Samuel Little, Geoffrey Shaw, Hugh McKay, Miss Winifred Holloway, Miss Evelyn Sharp, and a host of others; but it is no exaggeration to speak of Miss Douglas’ lecture on “Manx Song and Dance” as an artistic triumph. She held the audience spellbound, whilst the Ramsey children who assisted her were admirable. We felt proud to be Manx.

The students became ready learners, and sang several of our folk-songs with keen enjoyment, “Berry Dhone” being a special favourite. Another tune which “caught

on” was “The Widow’s House,” and the dance was vociferously encored at the final party.

We are sure that no other vacation school has ever witnessed the auctioneering of a Manx kitten! By a lucky chance, Miss Blair, whom we regard almost as one of ourselves, became its proud possessor. (The money thus obtained—£2 12s 6d—went towards the furnishing of the Cecil Sharp Memorial Hall.)

We must not forget to mention among our diversions—diversions are very necessary when one works so hard at Morris, sword, and country dancing—a delightful skit on a traditional dance, performed by the Liverpool branch. It takes a wise person to play the fool—and Miss Holbrow showed that she possesses a comic genius as well as an absolute mastery of organisation. We, in the Isle of Man, owe much to her; without her enthusiasm and determination, our dream would never have become a reality.

A. I. C.

A.I. Caine [signed as “A. I. C.”]. “Some Impressions of the Folk Dance School.” *Mona’s Herald* 30 April 1930: 4d.

14. ISLE OF MAN EXAMINER (30 MAY 1930)

Billy Caine, a Ramsey schoolboy, has been specially invited to give a demonstration of old Manx dances at the forthcoming Celtic Congress in London. Billy was one of the Ramsey boys who danced before the Easter School of the English Folk Dance Society at Douglas, and the visitors were greatly impressed with his performance.

“[Ramsey] Billy Caine” *Isle of Man Examiner* 30 May 1930: 9c.

15. MONA’S HERALD (4 JUNE 1930)

Billy Caine, a schoolboy attending the Albert Road School, Ramsey, has been specially invited to give a demonstration of old Manx dances before the forthcoming Celtic Congress in London. Billy was one of the party of Ramsey boys who gave demonstrations of old dances before the Easter School of the English Folk Dance Society, at Douglas, and the visiting dancers were greatly impressed with his performance.

“[Ramsey] Billy Caine” *Mona’s Herald* 4 June 1930: 4c.

§3 MONA DOUGLAS, “MANX FOLK SONGS AND DANCES” (21 APRIL 1930)

DELIGHTFUL LECTURE BY MISS MONA DOUGLAS

CLEVER DEMONSTRATION BY RAMSEY CHILDREN

[5a] “An artistic triumph.”—That was the verdict of the large gathering of students of Folk Song and Dance, who listened to the lecture on “Manx Folk Songs and Dances” which was given by Miss Mona Douglas, the Manx poetess, at the High

School for Boys on the evening of Easter Monday. Miss Douglas is one of the small band of indefatigable students who are seeking to wrest from the obliterating hand of Time those fragments of ancient lore which become the more precious with the passing years. It is no exaggeration to say that Miss Douglas captivated her audience. With stories [5b] in Manx dialect interspersed by snatches of song; with descriptions of old customs; word pictures of the people of a bye-gone age, and by the reconstruction of the old Manx folk dances rescued from oblivion by patient research she succeeded in making the past live again and revealed to her country-folk and the visitors alike, a charming picture, simple art of the Manx people of long ago. It was done with a delicacy of touch that bespoke the true artist. She created the right atmosphere for the appreciation of our folk songs, by asking her hearers to think not of the concert hall, but of the folk-singer in a dark little house on the hills or by the shore, singing to a few kinsfolk and neighbours gathered together in the light of the peat fire. And to think, too, of the land from which these songs sprang—a land of cloudy hills and deep mysterious glens and grim, dangerous coast; of devastating storms and cold, clinging mist, followed swiftly by wonderfully translucent and vivid colouring of sea and land, and to remember the hard, simple life of the farmers and fishermen and their womankind; a life that was one long struggle with the elements, overshadowed continually by the joy and terror of the sea, but relieved by human kindness and humour, a strong religious instinct and a constant sense of adventurous contact with the fairy world of folklore.

SMALLEST NATION

She reminded them too, that the Isle of Man was probably the smallest of all countries that claim a national folk-music. Its history went back until it was in mythology and from the earliest records down to the present day, that history read like a romance. The Island had known many invasions of both kings and races; it had always been a battle-ground and a land of forlorn hopes in historical time and yet through all the tumult of events, its people remained an entity, a nation, having their own constitution, language, customs, lore and music. The first collection of Manx Songs was printed in 1820 but little was known at that date of the technique of folk-song collecting and it appeared to have been far from satisfactory. Later in the 19th century three further volumes were published: *Manx National Songs* (a number of airs set for piano and voice by W.H. Gill to English words by various authors); *Manx National Music* (a much larger collection set for piano by W.H. Gill, without words), and *Manx Ballads [and Music]* (45 airs and a large collection of song words, with airs and without, collected by A.W. Moore). No further Manx songs were published, with the exception of a very few printed in the Manx Society's magazine, *Mannin*, until 1925, when the English Folk Song Society undertook the editing and publication in their journal of all of the Manx airs of any value still to be found in the manuscript.

From the mass of material many beautiful and characteristic songs emerged. The Manx songs, said Miss Douglas, have an affinity with the Hebridean music and with certain Breton airs, and a few are somewhat Scandinavian in character; but in spite of these resemblances, they remain an individual and charming body of music. The songs divide up more or less into groups. There are invocations, charms, and fairy songs; songs of occupation, dance tunes, mocking songs, love songs, ballads, songs connected with special customs, laments, religious songs, lullabies and songs of greeting and farewell.

INVOCATIONS AND CHARMS

The oldest songs were probably the invocations and charms, and Miss Douglas illustrated these by singing in Manx an invocation to Manxman fisherman who asked the sea god's blessing on men and boats.

Passing on to Songs of Occupation, Miss Douglas said in the old days every Manx housewife used to card and spin the wool from her own sheep, for there was scarcely a cottager without his cow and pig and a few sheep grazed by the roadside or on the common lands, if he possessed no fields of his own, and the country weavers used to make regular journeys calling on all the women of the district and collecting their stock of wool balls to take home and weave into the stout cloth of which most outer garments were made. So it was important to have all one's yarn spun in time for the weaver's visit.

She explained that in the "Spinning Wheel Song" ('Arrane Queeyl-Nieuee'), the good wife, hurrying to finish her spinning before the weaver arrives, calls on various natural agencies to help her. The song in English, in Mr Arnold Foster's arrangement, was sung by Vera Mullineux, of Ramsey, a charming young singer, one of the group of school children from Ramsey, who assisted Miss Douglas in illustrating both songs and dances. After this came the Grinding Song in which the singer voices his suspicion that the old miller's wife will take from his barley, a double portion of the "folieu" meal, allowed her husband as payment.

Next Miss Douglas told a quaint Manx yarn of how a fiddler managed to get hold of one of the fairy tunes. It was described with real humour, and pointed by a recurring fragment of the tune.

A LUCKY WITCH

A song about Berrey Dhone, a famous Manx witch, was effectively sung by Eileen Sayle and Edna Oates, Sally Radcliffe, and Vera Mullineux. The song relates how:

"They sent her to the gallows
But her tongue saved her throat;
And back she came by Mullagh Ouyr,
Leading home a goat!"

The old Manx May Day, said Miss Douglas was celebrated by a mock battle between the hosts of Summer and Winter. The two Queens, besides their attendant maidens, each had a band of Knights, whose duty it was to fight the Knights of the

rival Queen. The Queen of May or Summer was, of course, always victorious in the end, when Winter and her attendants did homage to the Queen of Summer, and the whole company joined in songs and dances. "Tappaghyn Jiargey" or 'Red Top Knots,' a song of greeting to the May Queen used in connection with this customs was pleasingly sung by Eileen Sayle, with three other girls joining in the chorus.

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Mr L. Stowell, of Ramsey, and boys from his school, had helped Miss Douglas to translate her notes into the actual movements and these were demonstrated by the boys—Gordon Bryan, Percy Starkey, John Robertson, Charlie Quirk, Billy Caine and Jim Knight. The audience was intensely interested and the dance was repeated. The fiddler was Mr Frank Douglas, the lecturer's father. In the last movement the boys circle round the fiddler with their sticks crossed above him as he kneels. Then they strike the sticks together sharply and the fiddler rolls over figuratively decapitated.

Billy Caine gave what Mr Douglas Kennedy, the chairman, afterwards described as "a really artistic and inspired performance" of the Manx Sword or Dirk Dance, and

the lecture closed with the dance called “Hyndaa yn Bwoailley” (‘Exchange the Blow’), a country dance which is also known as “The Courting Dance,” because, although the lassies smite the laddies on the cheek in one movement, they are kissed by their partners. This gallantry was, however, omitted in deference to the views of those who hold that school children should not be taught to kiss. This dance, too, aroused the keenest interest and as in the other cases a repeat performance was insisted on. The young dancers, taking part were:—Edna Oates, Eileen Sayle, Sally Radcliffe, Vera Mullineux, Horace Garrett, Hodgson Stewart, Gordon Fowlis and Percy Starkey. The girls wore sunbonnets and shawls and the boys sported blue “ganseys.” The courting dance was preceded by a processional reconstructed by Mr L. Stowell, from the description given to him by an old man in Jurby. Miss Douglas mentioned that the other dances of the jog and reel type have been recorded and she hopes to obtain still more, notably one known as the “Salmon Leap.”

Mr Arnold Foster accompanied Miss Douglas’ songs on the piano and for the other songs and dances Miss Norah Crellin was the pianist.

“Visit of English Folk Dancers: Easter Vacation School Held at Douglas: Miss Mona Douglas on Folk Songs of the Isle of Man: Civic Reception to Welcome Visitors.” *Isle of Man Examiner* 25 April 1930: 5a–c.

§4 LECTURE “MANX FOLK SONGS AND DANCES” (21 APRIL 1930)

4.1 DANCES

PERFORMED (4)

Dirk Dance	<i>or</i> Manx Sword Dance
[Processional dance] *	
Hyndaa yn Bwoailley	<i>or</i> The Courting Dance
Mylecharane’s March	<i>or</i> Roie Pherick (‘Run Patrick!’)
	<i>or</i> Cutting off the Fiddler’s Head

* Collected by Leighton Stowell.

MENTIONED

Salmon Leap

4.2 MENTIONS OF THE DANCES

THE DIRK DANCE

Some dances and parts of dances had been demonstrated to her (the lecturer), by certain old fishermen who had been excellent dancers in their youth. One of them, Mr Kermode of Port Moor, gave her the only traditional demonstration of the Manx Sword dance which she had been able to secure. [...] Billy Caine gave what Mr Douglas Kennedy, the chairman, afterwards described as “a really artistic and inspired performance” of the Manx Sword or Dirk Dance [...].

[PROCESSIONAL DANCE]

The courting dance was preceded by a processional reconstructed by Mr L. Stowell, from the description given to him by an old man in Jurby.

HYNDAA YN BWOAILLEY

[...] the lecture closed with the dance called “Hyndaa yn Bwoailley” (‘Exchange the Blow’), a country dance which is also known as “The Courting Dance,” because, although the lassies smite the laddies on the cheek in one movement, they are kissed by their partners. This gallantry was, however, omitted in deference to the views of those who hold that school children should not be taught to kiss. [...]

MYLECHARANE’S MARCH

The most elaborate Manx dance she had come across was the stick dance called variously the “Mylecharane’s March,” “Roie Pherick” (‘Run Patrick!’), and “Cutting off the Fiddler’s Head.” She had seen portions of it danced by two old fishermen and had taken down descriptions from several people. [...] In the last movement the boys circle round the fiddler with their sticks crossed above him as he kneels. Then they strike the sticks together sharply and the fiddler rolls over figuratively decapitated.

THE SALMON LEAP

Miss Douglas mentioned that the other dances of the jig and reel type have been recorded and she hopes to obtain still more, notably one known as the “Salmon Leap.”

4.3 SONGS MENTIONED

Berrey Dhone		
The Grinding Song		
Juan-y-Jaggard Kear		
Keyorr [<i>sic</i>] va mee Aeg	[<i>ie</i> , Keayrt va mee aeg]	Once when I was young
The Manannan Song		
Mylechraine		
Ny Kirree fo Niaghtey	The Sheep Under the Snow	
Spinning Wheel Song	Arrane Queeyl-Nieuee	Shieu wheel snieu
Tappaghyn Jiargey	Red Top Knots	
Ushag Vey Ruy	Little Red Bird	

4.4 SONGS AND SINGERS

Berrey Dhone	Eileen Sayle
	Edna Oates
	Vera Mullineux
	Sally Radcliffe

THE 1930 EFDS VACATION SCHOOL

Keayrt va mee aeg	J.Q. Killey
Mylechraine	J.Q. Killey
Ny Kirree fo Niaghtey	J.Q. Killey
Spinning Wheel Song	Vera Mullineux
Tappaghyn Jiargey	Eileen Sayle
Ushag Vey Ruy	Mona Douglas

This list is compiled from the reports in the *Isle of Man Examiner* and *Ramsey Courier* for 25 April 1930. The *Ramsey Courier* has Ny Kirree fo Niaghtey being sung by Sayle and the others whilst the *Examiner* credits Killey.

§5 NAMES

5.1 THE DANCERS

Gordon Bryan
W[illiam], or 'Billy' Caine [Dirk Dancer]
Gordon Fowlis
Horace Garrett
Jim Knight
E[dward?] Lord
Vera Mullineux
Edna Oates
Charles 'Charlie' Quirk
Sally Radcliffe
John Robertson
Eileen Sayle
Percy Starkey
Hodgson Stewart

The *Ramsey Courier* for 25 April 1930 refers to "a party of fifteen boys and girls" but just fourteen names can be found.

5.2 OTHERS FROM ALBERT ROAD SCHOOL

J.Q. Killey (Headteacher)
Philip Leighton Stowell (Teacher)

5.3 OTHERS

Annie I. Caine (Headteacher, Laxey Infants School)
Miss Norah Crellin (pianist)
Frank Douglas (fiddler)
Arnold Foster (pianist for performances by Mona Douglas)

5.4 DANCE INFORMANTS

NAMED (2)

— Kermode ["Mr Kermode of Port Moor"]

Philip Quayle ["Her great grandfather, —, of Glentrammon, Lezayre"]

UNKNOWN NAMES (2)

Not given ["certain old fishermen"]

["an old man in Jurby" LS]

§6 MENTIONS OF MANX FOLK DANCES BY MONA DOUGLAS TO 1930

EFDS VACATION SCHOOL	1926	1927	1928	[1928]	1930
Dirk Dance			D		P
Hyndaa yn Bwoailley	N	P	D	P	P
Mylecharane's March					P
Processional dance [LS]					P
Salmon Leap			H		H
OTHER DANCES					
Car y Phoosee		P			
Frog Dance	R		D		
Hie Mee Stiagh		P			
White Boys Dance			H		

Key: D = Description of a dance. H = Dance referred to as heard of, but not known. LS = Leighton Stowell. N = Notation. P = Performed. R = Reference to the dance.

References: 1926 = A.G. Gilchrist, "Songs from the Isle of Man (Part iii)." *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* vii.30 (1926): v–viii & 281–342; 1927 = *Programme* for "The Master of Raby." Written by Mona Douglas and first performed by The Laxey Players at the Gaiety Theatre on 17 March 1927; 1928 = Mona Douglas, "Ceremonial Folk-Song, Mumming, and Dance in the Isle of Man." *Journal of the English Folk Dance Society* (2nd Series) 2 (1928): 17–20; [1928] = A.I. Caine, "The Manx Folk-Dance Society: Our Beginnings." *Yn Lioran* 1 (1954): 2–3; 1930 [EFDS] = "Visit of English Folk Dancers: Easter Vacation School Held at Douglas: Miss Mona Douglas on Folk Songs of the Isle of Man: Civic Reception to Welcome Visitors." *Isle of Man Examiner* 25 April 1930: 5a–c.

§7 LETTER FROM DOUGLAS KENNEDY TO MONA DOUGLAS (7 MAY 1930)

[*On headed notepaper of THE ENGLISH FOLK DANCE SOCIETY*]

[*Typescript with signature*]

K/Q

7th May, 1930.

Dear Miss Douglas,

I have not had a moment to sit down and thank you for your delightful lecture to the Douglas School, and for helping us to capture something at least of the Manx atmosphere during our visit to the Island. It was a most happy experience for all of us, and sooner or later some of us will find our way back again. When you are in London, I hope you will come and call on me at our new headquarters, and let me show you round.

You won't forget that we should like to have the Sword dancers described in the Journal? As I said at the time, you reserve all your rights, and it is a way of getting the dances widely known.

Yours very sincerely, | Douglas Kennedy
Director.

Miss Mona Douglas, | Thie-ny-Garee, | Douglas, | Isle of Man.

