

RICHARD CORRIN

By Bob Carswell RBV (2024)

Maurice Powell's list of references to Haydn Wood in the Manx Newspapers includes seven references to the lyricist, Richard Corrin, whose words were set by Haydn Wood in *(The World Holds) A Thousand Beautiful Things* (1946), *Song of a Thankful Heart* (1948) and *As I Go On My Way* (1950). In earlier days he collaborated with his brother, Lawrence, a gifted but untrained pianist, and his lyrics were also set by other musicians. The Isle of Man Times for Saturday August 01, 1954 (p.10) noted of Richard Corrin that *he had a flair for this kind of thing*, and the Ramsey Courier for Friday August 06 1954 (p.5) referred to *lyrics from his pen which always seemed to have a freshness and charm and to capture so well the joy of living*.

Under the headline, *RAMSEY BALLAD WRITER / A NEW SONG.*, the Ramsey Courier for Friday, May 22, 1925 (p.4) says:

Recently published by the well-known house of Dix Ltd., Faraday House, Charing Cross Road, W.C., "In a Sylvan Glade" is a delightful composition, the words by Richard Corrin, of Ramsey, and music by Vivien James [sic]. It is a sentimental ballad, and the melody is tuneful with a pleasing refrain, which should render it a popular number. Mr Corrin, who is the son of Mr and Mrs Corrin of Brookhill, has lately had several of his verses accepted for publication in musical numbers, and is to be congratulated on the excellence of his work.

On Wednesday, December 02, 1925 (p.4), the Mona's Herald noted that: *A new song, entitled, "May I dance with You?"—the words of which were written by Mr Richard Corrin, Brookfield, Ramsey, was featured in a recent issue of "Reynold's Illustrated News."*

A report in the Mona's Herald for Wednesday, October 01, 1930 (p.8) said that:

One of the latest song and dance "hits" is "I've got to see my 'Cutie'," written and composed by Richard and Lawrence Corrin. [sic] of Brookhill, Ramsey. This catchy [sic] number is sung by Paul England, and it is also the theme song of the British International talking film, "An Arabian Knight," which is being shown with great success all over the country. The song was published in last week's issue of "Reynold's Illustrated News," and is one of the most successful numbers featured by the London dance bands.

The Peel City Guardian for Saturday October 25, 1930 (p.1) also reported that:

Two Manx brothers, Mr Richard Corrin, of "Avon Mount," Brookhill, Ramsey, and his brother, Lawrence, have recently had published two songs written and composed by them which have made quite a hit, and one of them has been included in the British International talking film, "An Arabian Knight." This is named, "I've got to see my Cutie," and is sung by Paul England in the film. The other song, "Great stuff this Jazz !" appeared in "Reynold's Newspaper" at the week-end, and is sung by Jack Charmen, the well-known co-originator with Billy Williams, of the laughing song records, which are still very popular.

The British International Pictures film, "An Arabian Knight" with the Corrin brothers' song, "I've got to see my cutie on the Q.T." is available online - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gbXuvODzCU>, although the opening credits mention only Richard Corrin rather than him and Lawrence.

The Ramsey Courier reported on p.7 of its edition for Friday, January 25, 1935, under the headline, *RAMSEY COMPOSERS "HIT" / FEATURED BY HENRY HALL.:*

Manx readers will doubtless be interested to know that the dance number now being frequently heard on the air in the programmes of Henry Hall and his B.B.C. Dance Orchestra, and entitles "Ive [sic] got Nothing up my Sleeve," was written and composed by two Manxmen—Richard and Lawrence Corrin, of Ramsey, in collaboration with Eddie Griffiths, the well-known dance band orchestrator (late of Feldman's), who has provided an excellent orchestral arrangement. The song is obtainable through all music-dealers and the publishers, Messrs Fox, Rogers and Stroud, of 149, Fleet Street, London, E.C., have secured international copyright.

In August of that year, the Isle of Man Examiner mentions another composition by the brothers in its edition for Friday, August 09, 1935 (p.6) :

Through the courtesy of Mr. Dick Gore, the enterprising manager of the Palais-de-Danse, Douglas, a new dance " hit " entitle " Things Aren't the Same," and written and composed by Richard and Lawrence Corrin of Ramsey, has been brought to light.

Roy Fox, now delighting the ears and feet of dancers at the Palais and always open to encourage new talent, was show a splendid arrangement of band parts of this number, made by Bobbie McGee, the talented musician and orchestrator now with Eddie Carroll and his music. Roy, with his customary chivalry, immediately took the dance song in hand ; features it regularly at his Douglas performances, and it is confidently predicted that this " Manx discovery " will become one of the season's popular successes.

The Mona's Herald (Tuesday, August 06, 1945, p.1) and the Ramsey Courier (Friday, August 09, 1946, p.2) both reported on what the Ramsey Courier headline referred to as *RAMSEY SONG WRITER'S / SUCCESS*. Under the sub-heading, *WORDS SET TO MUSIC BY / FAMOUS COMPOSER*, the newspaper says:

Mr Richard Corrin, the well-known Secretary of the Manx Salt and Alkali Co., Ltd., has had a song published in collaboration with Haydn Wood, the famous composer. Called "A Thousand Beautiful Things," the words, written by Mr Corrin, have been set to music by Haydn Wood, and will be heard publicly for the first time as the Gaiety Theatre, Douglas, next Monday. Mr Corrin sent a copy of the song to Harry Korris, who gave it to Marie Lawton, one of the "Four Charladies." She tried it over, was plased [sic] with it, band parts are being prepared and the song will be played during the rest of the season.

Mr Corrin has been fortunate in having his song set to music by so famous a ballad composer as Haydn Wood, whose world-wide successes have included "Roses of Picardy," "A Brown Bird Singing," and "Manx Rhapsody."

The new song, issued in a range of keys, and already broadcast and featured by prominent artistes throughout the country, is published by Ascherberg, Hopwood and Crew, Ltd., of London, and is obtainable through music sellers.

Mr Corrin, who is married and has two children, has dabbled in song writing for years, but this is his first big success.

Harry Korris was Henry Lowe Corris (1881-1971) of Onchan who worked as a legal clerk in Douglas whilst taking part in theatre. He went on to become a successful comedian, identifying with the north-west of England, particularly with *Happidrome*, a variety show which was popular on stage, radio and was filmed.

In 1947 came what the Isle of Man Examiner wondered was a *LUCKY TUNE?* in an article on Friday, February 07, 1947 (p.5) :

The song " It's high time some luck stepped round my way," written by Richard and Lawrence Corrin of Ramsey, was featured in Lou Praeger's programme on the air last Saturday in the Write a Tune contest. The song now has a one in six chance of being in the prize list which, with royalties, runs into several thousands of pounds. In last year's competition, over 74,000 entries were received !

Unfortunately, there is no further report of success with the song.

In its edition for Friday, September 12, 1947, the Isle of Man Examiner refers to :

A new song, "Why should I Dream," by the Ramsey brothers Richard and Lawrence Corrin, who wrote both words and music, has been featured by Nancy Brown in "Happidrome" at the Gaiety Theatre this week.

The Ramsey Courier for Friday, March 05, 1948 (p.4) gave the news that: *Haydn Wood, the well-known Manx composer, has again collaborated with Richard Corrin, lyric author. [sic] of Ramsey, in a new ballad, "Song of a thankful heart." The song has just been published by Ascherberg, Hopwood and Crew, of London, and is now available at all music dealers. The new song is issued in two keys and is sure to have a popular appeal.*

Later that year, the Ramsey Courier reported on Friday, September 10, 1948 (p.7) that:

On Saturday the Three in Harmony were guest artistes of the show at the Pavilion and sang as their final number a new song written by Richard and Laurence [sic] Corrin of Ramsey, entitled "Old Times, Old Places, and Old Faces." The Corrin Brothers gave permission to Miss Quirk to harmonize the song and it proved very successful.

The Isle of Man Examiner for Friday, February 03, 1950 (p.4) tells us of *Another Success for / Wod-Corrin Team :*

A new song entitled "As I Go On My Way," the work of Haydn Wood in collaboration with lyric writer Richard Corrin, of Ramsey, has just been published.

It is a worthy addition to two excellent songs produced by the same combination. One is the now popular "Song of a Thankful Heart," which Mr Arthur E. Davies, conductor of the famous Luton Girls' Choir, has chosen in the first three of thirty British ballads for the choir's repertoire on a forthcoming tour of Canada and the U.S.A.

"As I Go On My Way" has a pleasant melody and attractive words, and is well up to the standard of its forerunners.

The edition of the Ramsey Courier for Friday, May 18, 1951 (p.4) tells us that :

The words of three new songs just published by the Excelsior Music Publishing Co.—"The salt of the earth", "All on a lovely day", and "I give my love to you", have been written by Richard Corrin and should prove very popular. They are set to music by May Isaacs and in the case of "The salt of the earth" both the composer and author are giving all profits made on this song to the R.S.P.C.A.

For the lyrics of *Salt of the Earth*, see below.

The Isle of Man Examiner for Friday, April 25, 1952 (p.4) refers to more lyrics by Richard Corrin under the headline, *MANX SONGWRITER / COMPOSES BROADCAST / SIGNATURE*, dealt with at slightly greater length in the Isle of Man Times for Saturday, April 26, 1952 (p.6):

The words of the song introducing the hospital requests in the Silver Chords programme commencing in the B.B.C.'s Light Programme on Sunday morning are by the Manx songwriter, Mr Richard Corrin, of Ramsey. Its title is "To all sick people, everywhere," and the writer's inspiration was in that wording which introduces the hospital requests. Within an hour or two the song was on its way, followed by setting and publication. The music is by Mai Jones, producer of "Welsh Rarebit" and composer of "Rhondda Rhapsody." A well-known London firm of publishers has taken up the work, which, in conjunction with a companion song, will be published under the title of "Two Songs of Consolation."

This was also the subject of a brief report in the Ramsey Courier for Friday, April 25, 1952 (p.3) under the headline, *SILVER CHORDS*.

The Mona's Herald for Tuesday, November 06, 1951 (p.2) reports on a *T.E. BROWN NIGHT AT / MANCHESTER*, held by the Manchester Manx Society, at which three singers sang songs including a piece by Richard Corrin. As a correspondent pointed out a fortnight later, the Richard Corrin piece was (*The World Has*) *A Thousand Beautiful Things*, with, as noted above, music by Haydn Wood.

Another performance reported by the Mona's Herald in its edition of Tuesday, January 19, 1954 (p.2) was when *Miss Anne Quirk* rendered "*Song of a Thankful Heart*" by Richard Corrin at the first meeting of Aeglagh Vannin for the New Year in St George's Hall, Douglas. As noted above, this was a 1948 collaboration with Haydn Wood.

There are two examples of Richard Corrin's work in the Ramsey Courier, the first for Friday, September , 1945 (p.7), in a poem or hymn written at the close of WWII, *Thanksgiving for Victory*:

Great God of Battles, let us make a cheerful noise
As Victors should, yet with Thine approbation ;
Not o'er the vanquished foe our song of jubilation,
But thankful Allies joined in great concerted voice
As tribute to the Heritage restored again
To us from hands of vile and wicked men.

Let us exult and praise Thy Name O Lord
In songs of joy—and yet in all humility—
Who through Thine early aid, and not our own ability,

Now Victors are who gain in trust a rich reward,
To God Who maketh wars to cease,
Thanks for They Blessed Gift of Peace!

We thank Thee, Lord, that when in peril's deep,
Encompassed by our enemies assailing ;
In parlous state—when help seemed unavailaing,
Thou raised our spirit like a mountain steep.
O God be thanked, it was Thy Will
That Right o'er might should triumph still.

Be praised that we when Mankind judges us lost
And brought to low estate by things material,
Yet raised in Honour to a state Imperial,
Had ranged beside us Thine Almighty Host,
Thy Gift our Courage—and a treasured name
Imperishable in the lists of fame.

Let us remember that the Flower of Youth
Who perished were Thine agents in the great emancipation ;
And, still rememb'ring, gladly make resounding proclamation :
"They fought for Freedom and the love of Truth ;
That all Earth's combat soon shall be
The strife, O Lord, to walk with Thee."

RICHARD CORRIN,
Belmont Villas,
Jurby Road, Ramsey.

The second example appeared on Friday, July 15, 1950 (p.5) the Ramsey Courier published:

SALT OF THE EARTH

Mr Richard Corrin has written a new song which he has, appropriately enough, entitled "Salt of the Earth." It runs as follows :

*Those who go forth
When the morning is grey,
Earning their bread
Thro' the toil of the day
Noble or humble of birth ;
They in the ships
That go down to the sea ;
They of the soil
On the hillside or lea ;
Those who do service of worth—*

*Nurse, doctor, surgeon,
Who counting not gain,
Lessen the load of the
World's care and pain ;
They are the salt of the earth.*

Richard Corrin was born in Ramsey in 1896, the son of Arthur Gorry Corrin, of a well-known family firm of builders in Glen Auldyn and Ramsey which were involved in developing South Ramsey but encountered financial difficulties with the collapse of Dumbell's Bank.

In his youth, Richard Corrin went to work for the Manx Salt and Alkali Company. He evidently quickly became an important member of staff. In 1917, the company applied to the Local Tribunal under the Military Services Act to exempt him from being conscripted because, as reported in the Isle of Man Examiner for Saturday, February 24, 1917 (p.7), as a 20-year old clerk, that he was *indispensable*.

The Military said they could not agree, as a youth of 20 was not indispensable, and the company should have been getting an older man trained for the work during the past two months. . . . Application refused ; the man to go.

The Ramsey Courier for Friday, March 16, 1917 (p.3) gave a follow-up to this:

John Todd, manager of the Manx Salt and Alkali Company, had appealed against a decision ordering Richard Corrin (20) for service.—A letter was now read stating that the appeal was lodged on the ground that reasonable time should be allowed to obtain another man, and as the Recruiting Officer had agreed not to call Corrin up till the 20th inst., the appeal would be withdrawn.

After his period of military service he returned to the Manx Salt and Alkali Company, going on to become secretary and manager. Later, he acted as secretary for Mr Edgar Richmond, market gardener, of West Hill.

On 26 January 1933 he married Iris Brierley Callister (1908-1990) at Maughold Church. They had two sons, John Richard born on 07 November 1941, and George Edward, born on 24 December 1944. Both of their sons were born at Belmont Villas, Jurby Road, Ramsey, but the family later moved to Meadowland, Bride Road, Lezayre.

On the evening of Friday 30 July 1954 Richard Corrin went cycling near his home along Bride Road with his nine-year old son, George Edward Corrin. After a walk on the beach they were about to return home about 9 o'clock, but on remounting his bicycle, Mr Corrin collapsed by the side of the road. The incident was chanced upon by Mr W E (Ernest) Quirk, accountant at the Isle of Man Bank Head Office, who was in his car and who went to phone the police and doctor. However, the police surgeon, Dr J G Paton, declared Mr Corrin dead at the scene.

Lawrence Corrin was the subject of a 'Time to Remember' interview for Manx Radio with David Callister, recorded on 01 December 2000, in which he refers to his experience playing the piano with a dance band, and is available at:

https://culturevannin.im/media/Oral%20History/Transcripts/Corrin_Laurence%20Mr.pdf

1925	In a Sylvan Glade	Vivien James
1925	May I Dance With You?	Lawrence Corrin?
1929	I've Got to See my Cutie on the Q.T.	Lawrence Corrin
1929	Great Stuff, This Jazz!	Lawrence Corrin
1935	I've Got Nothing Up My Sleeve	Lawrence Corrin
1935	Things Aren't the Same	Lawrence Corrin
1945	(The World Has) A Thousand Beautiful Things	Haydn Wood
1947	It's High Time Some Luck Stepped Round My Way	Lawrence Corrin
1947	Why Should I Dream?	Lawrence Corrin
1948	Song of a Thankful Heart	Haydn Wood
1948	Old Times, Old Places, and Old Faces	Lawrence Corrin
1950	As I Go On My Way	Haydn Wood
1951	The Salt of the Earth	May Isaacs
1951	All On a Lovely Day	May Isaacs
1951	I Give My Love To You	May Isaacs
1952	To All Sick People Everywhere (for the B.B.C.)	Mai Jones
1952	Song of Consolation	Mai Jones