

## FOREWORD

This is the second Pevsner Architectural Guide dedicated solely to an island in the British Isles (the Isle of Wight got in first, in 2006), but the first for anywhere outside the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland. As first the English counties were completed, and indeed revised, and then Scotland, Wales and parts of Ireland were written up, the Isle of Man became a more and more noticeable lacuna. It has been my great privilege, as one who has known its buildings all his life, to rectify that omission. The Island has long had a chip on its shoulder that it has little architecture of interest and could not compete with areas like the Cotswolds. I hope this book will persuade both residents and visitors that there is in fact much of interest, and not just Baillie Scott and seaside architecture; indeed, it includes, in the form of the sculptor Gautr, probably the earliest person to appear in the index of artists in any Pevsner volume.

The format of the Buildings of England is of gazetteer entries for each place. This is easier to do in areas of nucleated settlement than in more dispersed areas such as the Isle of Man. The traditional Manx way is to organize everything by parish, and order them clockwise from Patrick; it is a total mystery to the uninitiated. Choosing which places should have gazetteer entries has not been easy, and it is hoped that they make sense; the reader who is in doubt should consult the map at the front of this volume and after that the index of places.

Some Manx place-names have more than one form. In this book the policy has been generally to use the form given in J.J. Kneen's *Place Names of the Isle of Man* (Douglas, 1925). The reader will be glad to know that Manx words are written more phonetically (to the Anglophone ear, anyway) than other Celtic languages.

The visitor to the Isle of Man may well enquire whether there is any system of Listing historic buildings (or may well not ask as it seems self-evident there is not). In fact since 1984 the Manx government has Registered (the expression used) a number of buildings (and sometimes de-Registered them when demolition is sought). No full first survey has been completed, and generally only the most recently Registered have anything approaching a usable List entry. A most pernicious current practice of the Insular planning authorities is to allow large new houses on farmstead sites but only if, as a planning condition, the old farmhouse is demolished. It seems that soon there will be few intact farms left.

A word is also in order about plastic windows. In most volumes of the Buildings of England, a building has to be particularly interesting or important to be included if its windows have been replaced by plastic. If such a policy were to have been adopted in the present volume, it would be very slim indeed. The replacement-window merchants have been busy over the last half-century, and it is a cause of rejoicing to see an old building still with its correct windows. It can only be hoped that eventually local pride and environmental concerns will reverse the tide.