



John Atkinson, our resident correspondent on the Isle of Man, regales us with news about Dr. Alexander Cannon, who we met in [this article](#) . I had asked John to look into the reference I'd found about an amateur magician on the Isle who'd come up with some documentary material about Cannon, who - it turns out - "retired" in 1936 after his woo-woo involvement with King Edward VIII became known to Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin. He moved to the Isle of Man in 1939. This change of location was - let's say - not voluntary... The MI5 investigation of Cannon came to the conclusion that he was not a spy, though he had several Nazi sympathizers as patients, but only "a quack and compulsive liar." That does not seem sufficient cause to thus isolate him, but it perhaps spared the rest of England from being further bored...

Cannon, upon taking up residence on the Isle, had all the money he'd ever need, and apparently attempted to entertain his neighbors with amateur magic performances, just to keep busy. He represented himself as "His Excellency Sir Alexander Cannon," but John puts that claim in its proper place, and also reports on the noble lord's conjuring qualifications. I have an inquiry in to the UK Magic Circle to determine whether he ever became a member of that august group...

Says John:

This morning I walked down to the Manx Museum and had a word with Roger Sims [an archivist at the museum] who provided me with an article he'd written for a book on local notables. The "documents" involved are actually a collection of tape recordings made by Cannon on alternative medicine topics, and Roger told me that they arrived in his possession via a circuitous route which did not involve an amateur magician at any point. I asked about the knighthood and was told that it was bogus, having been bought in the Far East along with a whole raft of other bogus "qualifications" and "honors," although Cannon did qualify as a medical doctor and psychiatrist, having been a medical orderly in WWI. I hear his magic shows

## More Cannon Fodder

Written by James Randi

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were very amateurish, and if you listen to the recording you'll hear the incident where he asked the audience how long he should be sealed in the "Death Coffin" and someone shouted out, "For ever!"

As you might imagine, I've asked John to inquire of Mr. Sims about the availability of a copy of that tape...