

Isle of Canna,  
Scotland.

5th May 1953.

Dear Mr. Flett,

I was very interested to get your letter.  
Fr. Allan's original manuscript belongs to Bishop  
Grant, the Cathedral, Oban, so his consent will be  
necessary : I am agreeable, on condition that Fr.  
Allan is credited.

Yours faithfully,

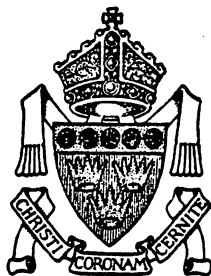
J. L. Campbell

T. M. Flett, Esq.,  
Department of Pure Mathematics,  
University, Liverpool.

Acknowledged. 12/5/53.

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DIOCESE OF ARGYLL AND THE ISLES



BISHOP'S HOUSE,  
ESPLANADE,  
OBAN, ARGYLL.  
TELEPHONE: OBAN 2123

4th. June, 1953.

Dear Mr. Flett,

Your letter of the 12th. May has had to remain unanswered until now, because I left home for Nova Scotia on the 13th. May.

By a strange coincidence one of the things I made up my mind to do this Winter was to look for some work on Scottish Dancing. We saw so much of it throughout Cape Breton Island among the old descendants of people from our Highlands, and heard many views on the subject.

I have pleasure in consenting to your use of the material from Fr. Allan's MSS. put at your disposal by Fr. MacCormick and agreed to by Mr Campbell. You may publish any of that material as you wish, making appropriate acknowledgement.

Yours sincerely,

+ Kenneth Grant.

T.M. Flett, Esq.  
Department of Pure Mathematics,  
University, Liverpool.



21st May, 1953.

Mrs. J. F. Flett,  
11 Stourcliffe Road,  
Wallasey,  
Cheshire.

Dear Madam,

I have your letter of 17th May, 1953.

I shall be willing for you to use the song<sup>†</sup>  
and the reference in the manuscript\* provided, of  
course, that you make the usual acknowledgements.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'L. W. Sharp'.

L. W. Sharp  
Librarian.

† Caithness or Duddon.

\* Alexander Campbell. See p.

ANNIE G. GILCHRIST. In Vol. 7 of the Folk-Song Journal, Miss Gilchrist referred to "hinkum booby, a Scottish dance of uncouth movements". In reply to our enquiry, she wrote:

January 9 19  
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Dear Mr Flett,

At the age of 89, my sight is very far gone and I write 'wi' difficulty (as the Scot is said to joke). But I can tell you that "Hinkum booby" is a degraded version of "Here we dance lubin, lubin", for we dance lubin light; "Here we dance lubin, lubin, every Saturday night." in a Lubin was a Scottish action-dance, clasping hands, ~~in a~~ ring, but separating to perform the various actions, ~~and~~ to the tune, e.g. "Put your right hand in,  
Put your right hand out,  
Shake it a little and shake it a little,  
And then turn round about!"

D.C. Here we dance lubin, lubin, etc.

The ring dances 'lubin' between each successive action (which may continue ~~with~~ at the initiative of any of the leaders) - "left <sup>hand, right foot</sup> foot" etc. "rises in, and rises out, shake it a little" etc. "Looby loo" is a variant of the name - "and shake it a little, and then turn round about!"

Chambers, in his Popular Rhymes of Scotland, p. 137, describes a less graceful form under the name Hinkum Booby, which <sup>latter</sup> was sung to the tune of "Lilliwhurlee".

I do not remember ever seeing the tune here since in my collection. The 9/8 rhythm here is distinctive. A.G. Gilchrist.

ANNIE G. GILCHRIST. In Vol. 7 of the Folk-Song Journal, Miss Gilchrist referred to 'hinkum booby', a Scottish dance of uncouth movements. In reply to our enquiry, she wrote:

2. In regard to the tunes, in enclosure, I think you would do well to send them to my friend Miss Ethel Bassin, whose Edinburgh address, when at home, is 66, Falcon Avenue, Edinburgh, <sup>10</sup> from which this letter and enclosure would be forwarded, as I have, for the moment, forgotten her sphere of labour further north (in the Hebrides?). She knows the Gaelic & can speak and teach it. <sup>collection (of folk music)</sup> Miss Frances Tolmie, <sup>editor</sup> of the E. F. & S. Society, this are evidences of a gapped scale, with modes partially filled at a later period. In this collection there are songs of labour such as accompany the regular ~~business~~ <sup>forward</sup> a back-ward movement <sup>of</sup> ~~across~~ a web of cloth <sup>across</sup> on a table or board in the process of thickening (felling) the cloth. I cannot write more, but if you would care to enclose this letter with your own in response to Miss Bassin's, together with the tunes, I am very willing. I am wonder-struck at the beauty of your music script! It is hard to believe it is 'manuscript'. Lastly, Miss Bassin's address is, when at home, 66 Falcon Avenue, Edinburgh, 10, but her sphere of teaching and research is further north, and I have at present forgotten it. But a letter would undoubtedly be forwarded. My sight fails almost daily, and I am writing by faith rather than sight. Let me give you the reference in Chambers' 'Popular Rhymes of Scotland', p. 137, to 'Hinkum Booby'. I suspect that Chambers didn't know a note of music!

PS. Please excuse delay in reply. I not  
look daylight which has been in short sup-  
ply since you wrote Agg

Please excuse the sloppy script. I live  
alone but for the mails - rather being a 'scholar' and depend upon  
my nephew Philip & Edmund's visits (happy to live near me)  
for help and information and communication with outside  
world.

Agg (O.B.E., F.S.A., if you care to know)

I enclose your letter in case it may be useful to you.

Active dance in my form, say by Scottish children at parties in Manchester in the 1870's.

Looby  
or  
Lubin  
loo.

Left hand  
Right foot  
left foot,  
back,  
noes/les  
in for  
thumb etc.

I have not seen this in any printed form  
It is a form of Hinkum looby, but more elegant!

Here we dance looby, looby. Here we dance looby, looby, every Saturday night! elegant!

Put your right hand in; put your right hand out; take it a little, and shake it a little and then turn round a-bunt!

rhythm rather shaky here!

We wrote to Miss Bassin, enclosing the list of old Gaelic dances which we had assembled in books, and also the tune for the H. W. L. & the Highland Dance from Morris time Festival. She replied as follows.

Permanent address:-  
66 Falcon Avenue,  
Edinburgh, 10

Address until Easter:-  
Ben Wyvis Hotel,  
Strathpeffer, Ross-shire

6 February 1953.

Dear Mr. Flett,

Thank you for your most interesting letter. I do not know that I can help you very much, but perhaps I can suggest one or two people who know more about Highland dancing than I do.

You probably are in touch with Miss Jean Milligan of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, though I take it that the dances you are interested in are display rather than social dances. A South Uist man - from Iochdar (English spelling Eochar) in that island is now in Glasgow and is rather knowledgeable about old Hebridean dances. I do not know his address but you might address your letter:-

Mr. John MacLeod (of Iochdar, South Uist).  
c/o The Uist and Barra Association,  
The Highlanders' Institute,  
Elmbank Street, GLASGOW, C.3

Did you let Miss Gilchrist see Mrs. MacNab's tune? I feel doubtful about the Scottishness of the first part. With that melodic minor 4th bar it cannot be very old. John MacLeod might know something about it. If you like to write direct to Mrs. MacNab her address is:-

2195 Pender Street East,  
Vancouver, B.C., Canada

You might also try Mr. D. G. MacLennan,  
3 Jeffrey Road,  
Blackhall, Edinburgh, 4.

You probably know of him - a retired dancing master, well-known - and the author of a book on Highland dancing.

The second tune I am sorry I do not know. About the song titles - several of which are names of animals - the only one I am sure of is Dannelsadh na Tunnaig, "The Duck Dance". The children's nursery song, "I saw a ship a-sailing" often has the sub-title, "The Duck Dance." You will find something about such dances in a little book in solfa called "Puirt-a-beul" ("Mouth Music) by K. N. MacDonald, published by Alex. MacLaren, 222 Gaelic Bookseller, 268 Argyle Street, Glasgow, originally published in 1900, reprinted in 1940. (I think my dates are right, but I have not a copy here.)

Miss Annie Johnston, The Glen, Castlebay, Isle of Barra, might be able to help you if you sent her the list of titles. Many years ago I noted from her the Dannelsadh na Tunnaig, of which I enclose a copy.

Referring to your second tune, I might say that a number of Gaelic Puirt-a-beul consist of nonsensical words fitted to well-known Lowland tunes. I have, for instance, Gaelic words for "Over the Hills and Far Away" which was demonstrated to me<sup>23</sup> a dance by an old lady of 85 in



The 1st. Stage (but she hailed from Kinnis) in

the year 1925. (If only I had had the gumption to write down particulars of the steps as well as the words!)

I am sorry that I personally cannot help you further but I hope that you and Mrs. Flett may get more satisfaction from some of those I have named. You may mention me in writing them.

I am interested to know that Miss Gilchrist has been able to write for her she is pretty frail nowadays and her sight is very poor.

With best wishes to you and your wife in your researches, and do ask me anything else that you think I might know! -

Yours sincerely,

Edith Nesbit

T. M. Flett, Esq.,  
11 Stoureliffe Road,  
WALLASEY, Cheshire

P.S. I wonder if Mrs. MacVab's tune has been transcribed as heard.

I return four times along with a phonetic transcript and translation of the "black cock".

RUIDLEADH NA COILICH DAUBHA

RUIDH-LEADH NA COIL-ICH DAUBH-A, 'S DHANN-THANN TUNN-AH-AN.  
RUIDH-LEADH NA COIL-ICH DAUBH-A, AIR A' BHRU-ACH VER-AD UD.  
AIR A' BHRU-ACH, AIR A' BHRU-ACH, AIR A' BHRU-ACH VER-AD UD.  
AIR A' BHRU-ACH, AIR A' BHRU-ACH, AIR A' BHRU-ACH VER-AD UD.  
Again thing'

Translation

"Reeled" the black cocks  
And danced the ducks,  
Reeled the black cocks,  
On the bank up there,

On the bank, or above there  
" " " " up there,