

HAMSTEAD 4689.

2, HOLLY MOUNT,
LONDON, N.W. 3.Feb 10th 1953.

Dear Mr + Mrs Flett,

I'm sorry not to have answered your letter earlier, but I have been away in the shetlands again and have only just got back. Incidentally I have been interested in your letter in the F.F.D.S.S. magazine re the origins of Square Dancing. Over that score I hesitate to claim Ireland as its origin, but I do think there is considerable Irish influence in the style of figure that seems to be popular particularly in the Western states. However that by the way - My memory of the 1948

Festival in Edinburgh is slightly vague, but the dance I referred to was probably the Manx Wedding Dance (Manx title unknown to me) danced to the tune of Peter O'Taveg.

This tune is similar in style to a Shetland Wedding Tune, I collected, called "The Bride is a bonnie thing." Shetland has preserved so much folk-music connected with the wedding which is Norse in origin, also a dance called the Brides Reel, that I have ~~another~~ idea that most of the wedding customs, dances etc in the outer isles, right as far as the Isle of Man are probably Norse relics. The Manx Dirk Dance, I am convinced is also Norse. The tune ~~which~~ may be seen also as a lullaby of the Waterkelpie collected by Frances

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Tolmie in Skye in No 16 of the Folk-Song Society's Journal, where in a long footnote to three similar lullabies, Miss Gilchrist claims Norse origin for them. I have a strong feeling that in the music and folk-lore of the Scottish Gaelic areas, there is more of Norse origin than the ardent Celtic champions are prepared to admit. Certainly many place names are Norse there. However that again by the way. The Manx dance "Return the blow" which you mention always appears to me - at any rate in its published form with movements from Playford country dances

included - highly dubious. About further solo dances I can't be of much help.

I expect you know all about the Fad of Fiddle and Flora Macdonald, the only two unusual ones that I've seen recently. You might look through my article in E.F.D.S.S. Journal Vol V No. 10 part 4 about the dances of Shetland.

On looking upstairs in my junk room I've found a copy of my article which I enclose.

Incidentally I'm told on low good authority I don't know, that the old lady in Canada who remembered the Hebridean Weaving ^{it} was taught it by a Norwegian or a Swede!

I hope the scanty information I have given may be of some use.

Yours sincerely,
Pat Shublam-Shaw