

58 Billesley Lane
Moreley
Birmingham 13
April 27

Dear J. Flett -

I must apologise for not thanking
you sooner for your generous response
to my query about Scottish firs. I'm
surprised you haven't seen the 3 'popular'
items from the Forbes cantos, for they
are quite extraordinary. The Trip
and Goe is absolutely English, yet as
it was particularly selected to make the
2nd. edition more 'Scottish' it must
represent Scottish song-and-dance too.
I may be crazy, but I regard it as
a possible example of a 'mounts -
fir - pantomime' dance, such as
16th century references lead me to
believe to be one from the New mounts
book. Certainly we meet the bawdy

Friar This wench - The possession
of the Lady & her Courtiers - The
maidens' ring, & other fragments.

The other 2 songs are a Christmas
carol and a plough song, i.e.
each is for a specific festival,

so I think it very likely The
Trip and Goe does represent a
May song. The plough song is
well worth examining, for it seems
to imply a complete ritual which
I have never seen described - i.e.

The slaying of an ox from the team
& the habiting of the leader of the
men in the skin flayed from the
ox.

I'm sure your researches
ought to be pushed further back

into Scottish history. There are
 surely several references to Morris
 in the reign of James IV & V -
 that most interesting one in Christ's
 Book on the Green, seems to me
 to provide one of the most important
 clues we possess to the distinctive
 character of the earliest Morris.
 Then the Perth dance is another
 monument - one I haven't done
 much about yet. The records of
 Aberdeen and Edinburgh make it
 clear that plays were a most
 regular part of the seasonal enter-
 tainments, performed on the play field
 especially, set aside; & for Aberdeen there
 are detailed accounts of processions, if
 not of actual dancing. Don't you think

one can reconstruct quite a lot
from Cockellie Law and Complaynt
of Scotland? I find people neglect
the obvious in Scotland. For instance
hardly any Scot I know has ever
heard of Robin Hood in Scotland -
when I offered to give a programme on
him on Edinburgh BBC I was told
the appeal would be too limited. I
think they're wrong! - I am a
Scot, but I never knew anything about
old Scottish customs till I studied
English customs -

I enclose my paper on Robin Hood,
I hope very much to see yours on
Tigs when it is printed -

Yours v. sincerely,

Barbara Lowe