

EPITAPH FOR A BUTCHER

Noo he's safely doon below,
They'll no mak puddens o Mr Snow.
For loin o pork and gigot chop
the wifies cam in croods tae shop.
A always fancied (some fowk didnae)
Sweetbreads, ox-tongue, tripe and kidney
Nane criticised his potted heid:
But *contra Mortem* nae remeid.

THE HOLT

(for Ian)

Sinuuous
from shadow

unsheathed
and silver

no pounce-work
no grudge music

words are in
the breathing ground

this uncircum-
scribable air

The title poem of *Epitaph for a Butcher* was based on a shop near the Haymarket in Edinburgh. Mr Snow hadn't actually passed away when it was written – and good health to him if he is in fact still around!

'The Holt' is a tribute to Ian Abbot, a truly fine poet and reader, killed in a car crash on Loch Ness side. Ian had a number of skills and aptitudes: silversmithing, tracking, shepherding and so on. His collection *Avoiding the Gods* was published by Chapman in 1988, and a fuller gathering ought surely to see the light of day. Ian was also the person who figures in another short piece 'The Hat' which is one of the extracts from *Sparks in the Dark*.