



THIS CD celebrates an institution that contributed mightily to the development and vitality of folk music—the café, and its Irish cousin, the pub. Our best recollections are of late nights spent in these venues, “sessioning” with old musicians and listening to the lore of the buskers (street performers).

We invite you into our café where music—old and new, Celtic and continental—brought together a Belgian and an American Irish musician who fell in love.

Karen & Paul

Karen Ashbrook & Paul Oorts play an enticing blend of hammered dulcimer, wooden flute, fretted strings and accordion. In this unique partnership a new sound is created, with a shared repertoire based in Irish music, American contra dance, classical repertoire and Paul's native Flemish and French music. Paul lays a driving and exotic foundation to Karen's lilting and ornamented melodies. Karen is the author of the respected tutorial book/tape set *Playing the Hammered Dulcimer in the Irish Tradition* on Oak Publications. Karen and Paul have recorded extensively, and tour and teach at folk festivals throughout the U.S. They also play in the avant garde contra dance band, *Cabaret Sauvignon*.

"Karen has long been something of a heroine to me...Her style is at times traditional, then moves surprisingly at a tangent, making it more interesting in an unexpected way. And her whistle playing is excellent."

— IRISH EDITION, Philadelphia





The Celtic Ireland Café in Belgium.

neighborhoods of Paris in the final decades of the nineteenth century. The wave of Italian immigrants introduced the accordion into dancehalls, rendering the old musettes obsolete, and engendering a new musical genre.

IRISH REEL SET (5-6):

5. **Hong Herald** (Karen Abbrook) 2:17
6. **Bear Island/Séan sa Cheo/Hong Herald** 4:19
Karen's "Hong Herald" is dedicated to her son's cherished 5th grade teacher, Ms. Hong. The second reel is composed by accordionist Finbar Dwyer to honor a place at the head of Bantry Bay in County Cork. "Séan sa Cheo" is Irish for "John in the Fog."

THE CELT GOES SOUTH

7. **Behind the Bush in the Garden/Sgt. Early's Dream/Lady Anne Montgomery** 3:19
Traditional tunes that travel to sunny climes include a Reggae jig, some pseudo-African guitar riffs, and a reel that swings, Texas-style.

1. **Breton Dance/Star of Munster** 4:29
A continental Celtic air paired with a classic Irish reel.

IRISH MAIDENS SET (2-3):

2. **Máirín de Barra air** 2:15
3. **Siobhán O'Donnell's/Handsome Young Maidens** (C.Lennon ©LHRO) 3:39
In this traditional air, a rejected lover sings to Máirín: "Happy and thankful are the blankets that warm you, and how happy the bridegroom who'll stand beside you at the altar" (trans. Brian O'Rourke). "O'Donnell's" was composed by John Brady and "Maidens" by Charlie Lennon for his Island Wedding Suite.

4. **Style Musette** (Aubrey Verbaaren; arr. Paul Oporto) 2:30

A classic of the French *musette* genre. The combination of the (Italian) mandolin and the (Irish) pipes as lead instruments is actually not as surprising as you may think. "Musette," originally meant "bagpipe," the principal instrument in working class neigh-

BELGIAN JIG SET

8. **Colonne la Gavre/Sabotière de Nonceveux/La Marchande** 3:45

The *Colonne* (row dance) and *Sabotière* (clog dance) are from the playing of Belgium's eminent folk orchestra, Het Brabantse Volksorkest. These jigs are commonly played in Wallonia, the southern, French-speaking part of Belgium. This *sabotière* also found its way into the Irish tradition and can be found as a *gan áitinn* (nameless tune) in Brendan Breathnach's *Ceol Rince na bÉireann*, Vol. IV. "La Marchande" dates from the days of the 18th century Austrian occupation of Belgium and was published in *Ceol Contredances en rond* by D'Aubart St. Flour, a dancemaster from Ghent.

9. **Valse Petit Déjeuner** 3:35

Composed by French diatonic accordion player Jean-Christophe Lequerré, this tune conjures up for us the sweetness of a honeymoon breakfast despite its later title, "La mal-aimable" (The Hard-to-Love Woman).

FLEMISH CARILLON SET

10. **Wel Island/Chimes of Dunkirk/Air #38**

(arr. Paul Oporto) 3:11

Island is West Flemish for Iceland, where fishermen would spend long months on small boats in frightful weather to bring back barrels of pickled codfish. Many sailors lost their lives in those treacherous waters. This lament was collected in the mid-1800's from a woman

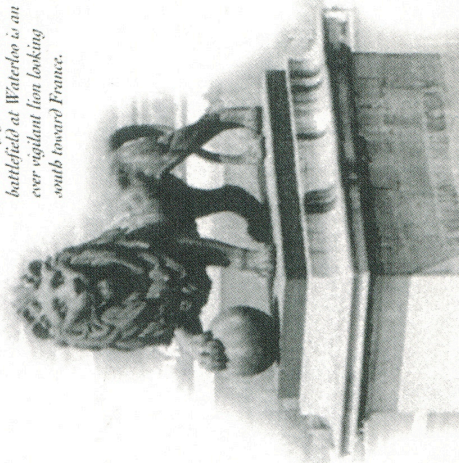
whose son was a regular *islandvaarder*: "Iceland, you cruel coast, you distress the maidens in sad summer times without their pleasant lovers..." Next is a welcoming tune which sailors might have heard from Dunkirk's carillon as they sailed into the harbor. It is from a 1746 manuscript collected by Antwerp's carillonneur, Johannes de Gruyters. To celebrate a warm return from the icy seas, we add a happy air from the same source.

11. **Paspie Menuet/Mr. Waller**

(Turkish O'Carolan, arr. Dave Weiler) 3:11

Paul learned the first piece from 't Kliekske, a pioneering Flemish folk group. We couldn't resist the addition of French horns on the Irish harp minuet, *Mr. Waller*.

Standing guard over the battlefield at Waterloo is an ever-vigilant lion looking south toward France.



NAPOLEON SUITE (12-19)

The battle that took place in 1815 in Waterloo, a little town just south of Brussels, like many of the pan-European conflicts of the last centuries, engaged armies filled with conscripts from the outposts of the clashing empires. These armies traveled with professional musicians who played them into battle, and these migrating instrumentalists carried their arsenals of folk tunes across borders, allowing musical traditions to cross-pollinate. Such momentous battles also inspired the creation of commemorative tunes and songs. A Scottish folk song collector wrote: "The twenty years that ended with Waterloo have left more traces on our popular minstrelsy than any other period of our history." Napoleon's defeat there dashed the dreams of the Irish hoping France would help liberate them from the British. It also led to the creation of Belgium as a buffer country between surrounding European powers.

—BEFORE THE BATTLE (12-15):

12. Gathering at Waterloo (Bobby Read) 1-47 Will You Go to Flanders

Flanders stretches along the North Sea from the northern tip of France over the northern half of Belgium to the southwestern edge of the Netherlands. This small but wealthy area was both centrally located and relatively defenseless, so the crowned heads of Europe found it a convenient place to have their armies settle their quarrels. The Scottish

song opens with a lighthearted invitation to go to one of those excursions: "Will you go to Flanders, my Maddy-O? There we'll get wine and brandy, sack and sugar-candy" —but then acknowledges their brutal reality: "You'll see the bullets fly and the whizzers how they die and the ladies lonely cry, my Maddy-O."

—THE GENERALS' JIGS (13-14):

13. Wellington's Coming 1-112

This 9/8 march is originally from *O'Farrell's Collection* (ca 1810). Arthur Wellesley, first Duke of Wellington, born in Dublin, won a lifelong seat in England's House of Lords by leading the British troops at Waterloo to victory. Later he earned the affection of the Irish by pushing through the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829.

14. The Victor's Return 1-47

This jig is from *O'Neill's Music of Ireland*. We take it to apply to Napoleon's glorious 100-day return from exile which ended in defeat at Waterloo.

15. Waterloo Hornpipe 1-52

We got this, via Robin Williamson, from a collection called the *Caledonian Depository* (1829).

—THE BATTLE (16-17): (arr. Bobby Read)

16. Bonaparte's Defeat 1-54

A hornpipe from *O'Neill's*.

17. Battlefire/ Bonaparte's Retreat 2-51

This set dance, also from *O'Neill's*, portrays the eerie lull after battle.

—THE AFTERMATH (18-19):

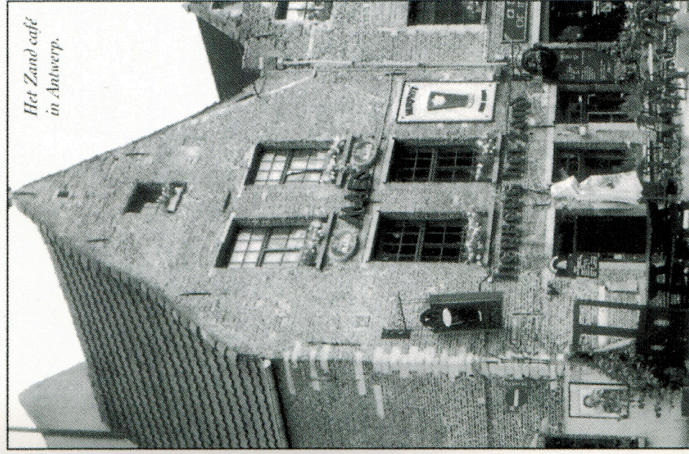
18. Lamentation for the Fallen Heroes

of Waterloo (arr. Paul Oorts) 3-24

From Part Four of the *Complete Repository of Original Scots Slow Strathspeys and Dances*, by Niel Gow & Sons.

19. The 78th's Farewell to Belgium 2-41

From *Scottish Tunes for Piano* (Ossian Pub.), adapted by Bonnie Rideout.



PRODUCTION: PRODUCED, RECORDED, MIXED AND MASTERED BY BOB READ AT BOB READ STUDIOS, NORTH GARDEN, VA

PHOTOGRAPHS: MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS — DICK BOND; ARTIST AND CAFÉ PHOTOS — BART VERMEULEN.

GRAPHICS: CHARLIE GLENDINNING

HAMMERED DULCIMER WITH PEDAL DAMPERS BY NICHOLAS BLANTON.

WOODEN FLUTE BY PATRICK OJWELL.

WHISTLES BY JOHN SINDT (1,3,15) AND PAT O'RIORDAN (4).

SPECIAL THANKS to Patricia Ashbrook, Dave Wiesler, Julie MacRae, Christine Brennan, Jim and Suchada Langley, Eleanor Holsopple, Bob and Colleen Engelman, Bob Bedard, Maggie Sansone, Richard Crenshaw, Connie McKenna, Philippe Varlet, Dirk Peeraer, Norbert Oorts, Charlie Glendinning, Church of the Ascension (handbells), Deborah Brower, Bart Vermeulen, Dan Blum, Sara Read, our producer Bobby and all the musicians!

CAFÉ NOTE: The cover of the CD is adapted from a photo of "Celtic Ireland," a pub in Antwerp, Belgium. The picture on the disc itself (which we found on a poster above the fireplace in that pub) shows what the establishment looked like in the early part of the last century. It was called "Café d'Anvers," and it offered Guinness imported directly from Dublin — it's been a Celtic Café all along! Het Zand (photo at left) and Molly Bloom's (back cover) are other cafés in Antwerp where a pint of stout or the local Belgian brew can be sampled in a Celtic continental atmosphere. *Sláinte & santé!* to these establishments!

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Knock on the Door



Hills of Erin



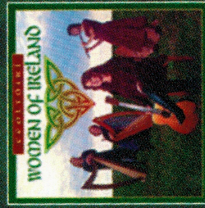
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