

The music on this album spans some seventy years, from Lucy Farr's childhood in Baffinakill, County Galway, right up to 1992. For part of that time, between the mid-1930's, when she left home, until the 1950's, Lucy did not play at all because of the demands of raising a family and working as a nurse. Then, greatly encouraged by her husband, Eric, she re-discovered her musical interests and, subsequently, figured prominently in London Irish music circles from the 1960's on. (see Paddy in the Smoke' TSCD603). She has now, inevitably, forgotten more than she can recall.

Nonetheless, some of the tunes here have clear echoes of Balhnakill: her father's march, for instance (tr.24) and the Round Polka (tr.16): Sonny Comer's fling (tr.21) and the Slieve Aughty march (tr.3) got from her neighbour, Aggie Whyte. Indeed, most of the music has associations with friends and neighbours. On all tracks, the titles Lucy uses are given and alternatives provided where appropriate, and she usually names them after that particular musician from whom she got the music.

All the pieces have a characteristic stamp, a direct way of playing which yet enjoys subtlety of decoration, above all with timing and rhythm. Lucy has a strong affinity for the 'quare' tune and its wild yet plaintive streak. On these recordings she tends to play in a relaxed, 'listening' mode, often single tunes.

There are two personal notes to add, shared, no doubt, by many others. First, Lucy is generous with her tunes and her time, a self-deprecating player and an excellent teacher. She still has the ability to absorb new tunes and, in a modest way, to compose (her own reel (tr.12) was put together late in 1990). Second, it was her insistence that Howard (Marshall) and I joined her on flute and concertina, on some tracks, and we hope that all the countless musicians who might have done so will take this simply as a demonstration of the here and now, of the way in which Lucy continues to be a remarkable and inspiring musician. - Roly Brown (1992).

Lucy is joined by Roly Brown on concertina, tracks 3, 9, 17 & 24 and by Howard Marshall on flute, tracks 5 & 20. These are essentially field recordings made in 1991/92 at Lucy's flat in Thatcham, Berkshire.



Heart & Home

Irish Fiddle Music from

LUCY FARR