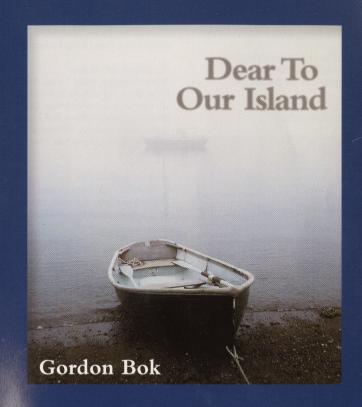


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Gordon Bok with Carol Rohl, Cindy Kallet, Anne Dodson, Will Brown, the Quasimodal Chorus, the January Men, and the Small World Orchestra

- I- Sail, O Believer 2:37
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- 17- Bless Ye Fair Maids 3:32
- 18- Against the Moon 4:05

Total time: 60:57



Recorded, engineered and mastered by Bruce Boege, Limin Music, Northport, Maine Mixed by Bruce Boege, Gordon Bok and Anne Dodson

Produced by Gordon Bok and Anne Dodson Cover photograph by Gordon Bok Other photographs by Gordon Bok and Carol Rohl

Programming by Carol Rohl Graphic design by Ken Gross



Bruce and Anne in the studio.

My singing often wanders from the original versions; we try to print the original when we can.

You may notice a difference in room-presence between some of these songs. That's because some were done in Bruce's studio in Bayside and a few are from the 'Church tapes'—recorded in the winter of 1999 in the John Street Methodist Church in Camden.

The January Men & Then Some to date: Gordon Bok, Tony Bok, Will Brown, David Dodson, Ken Gross, Jamie Huntsberger, Cindy Kallet, Carol Rohl, Forrest Sherman

The Quasimodals to date:
Marie Weferling, Holly Torsey, Matt Szostak,
Susan Shaw, Carol Rohl, Bob Richardson,
John Pincince, Carney McRae, Cindy Kallet,
Jamie Huntsberger, Mary Ann Hensel, Ken
Gross, Anne Dodson, Will Brown, Mimi
Bornstein-Doble, Tony Bok, Mary Bok,
Gordon Bok

Small World Orchestra: Gordon Bok—'cellamba; Carol Rohl—harp; Will Brown—laud; Claire de Boer—flute; Tom Judge & Susan Groce—fiddles

With:
Will Brown—laud & vocals
Anne Dodson—vocals
Cindy Kallet—vocals
Carol Rohl—harp & vocals



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#### SAIL, O BELIEVER

#### Traditional

Years back someone gave this to me written out by hand. Recently I heard it was from the Quimby family of the Georgia Sea Islands. Dick Swain found a lovely looking version in an Applewood Books 1995 reprint of Slave Songs of the United States (originally published in 1867), so it has been around a good while. I've never heard it sung.

Gordon— I 2-string guitar; Will, Cindy, Carol & Anne—vocals

> Sail, o believer sail, sail over yonder Sail, o my brother sail, sail over yonder

Oh brother bear a hand Come brother bear a hand

Come view the promised land Come view the promised land

Oh Mary, Mary weep Bow low Martha

Oh, my Lord's coming now And my Lord locks the door

Now my Lord's locked the door Carries the keys away

## SANDWOOD DOWN TO KYLE

©1970 David Goulder, Robbins Music

Sandwood is in the far northwest of Scotland, Kyle is the Kyle of Lochalsh. Dave has walked, climbed, scrambled, built and repaired dry stone walls over most of it and has certainly earned the right to his opinion.

I love the starkness of this song and tried to catch it with the bowed instrument.

Gordon-viol

On Monday morn as I went out, the wild birds for to see

I met a man along the road and asked for charity 2x

Come home with me and take your fill and comfort you shall find

And tell me why you walk the road that leaves the hills behind 2x

Oh time has spent the summer, sir, and soon the leaves will fall

And I hear the change within the wind that plays around your walls 2x

For the bird must flee the winter, sir, she cannot stay behind

To build her nest upon the snow, nor can I look for mine 2x

But if I could have a hundred homes and dwell in each a while

I'd build them all along the coast from Sandwood down to Kyle 2x

### DRIVEWAY REEL & THANXTY AL STANLEY

© Tom Judge / Gordon Bok

Tom Judge was trying to get out of my long, greasy driveway one mud season in an old Gray Ghost of a pickup truck. He made it, but as he gained the tarred road this tune delivered itself on him complete and unannounced. At the time, he called it "Drive Away the Driveway Reality Reel." The second tune is one I made in thanks to another old musical friend, Alan Stanley of Prince Edward Island for taking the time to teach me "Carolan's Concerto." (I recorded this one as a jig with Cindy Kallet on Neighbors a few years ago, if you're thinking you've heard it before . . .)

Gordon—12-string guitar

# BACHELOR'S SONG

#### Traditional

I can't remember where I ran across this, but I have a note that says it was sung by John Nicholson, Jordan Mountain, near Sussex, N.B., transcribed by Kenneth Peacock, October 1979.

All my sacred thoughts I will unfold to all young men are here

Young women they are good company to make the boys appear

Young women they are good company but I will wed with none

And if all young men were of my mind, the girls would walk alone

Oh if I were to marry a pretty girl, how happy I would be

And if I were to marry a grey old one, the boys would laugh at me

And if I were to marry a great big one she'd surely knock me down

And small women they are peevish . . . drink round, my boys, drink round

Drink round, my boys, drink round—until it comes to me

For the longer that we drink and chat the merrier we'll be

Oh here's to the faggot-maker, he sits at home at

And he goes to work at six o'clock, knocks off whenever he please

And he takes his faggot and binds it and throws it on the ground

And he takes his twine and twines it; drink round, my boys, drink round

I owe no debts, I pay no rent, I have none to repine

I have no cradle for to rock, no babies for to mind

My parents dear they need not fear, for they are

And I mean to lead a single life; drink round, my boys, drink round

Oh the girls they all do wink at me at every town and fair

But I never pay any mind to them as though they were not there\*

I mean to lead a single life wherever I may roam And there's none in life may kiss my wife when I am not at home

### CONNEMARA CRADLE SONG

Traditional—Irish from Sister Richard, Boyle, County Roscommon 1993

When my wife Carol crossed the Atlantic in a small sailing yacht, she stayed at a B&B in Boyle, County Roscommon. When she brought Tom Judge, Susan Groce and me back there, Bridie Gallagher (the proprietor) remembered her. Bridie called her friend Sister Richard (a music teacher across the street), in hopes to borrow a harp.

Alas, the harp was on loan, but Sister Richard came over to join us. We made some music anyway, and Sister gave us this lovely song.

I have rearranged the verses to sing it myself, but we print it here the way she wrote it out for me.

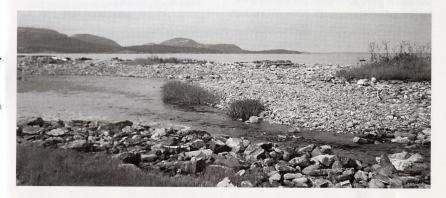
Gordon—vocal & laud; Cindy, Carol & Anne—vocals On wings of the wind, o'er the deep rolling sea Angels are coming to watch over thee Angels are coming to watch over thee So list' to the winds coming over the sea

Hear the wind blow, love, hear the wind blow Lean your head over, hear the wind blow

Oh, winds of the night, may your fury be crossed

May no one that's dear to our island be lost Blow the wind gently, calm be the foam Shine the light brightly to guide us back home

The currachs are sailing way out on the blue Laden with herring of silvery hue Silver the herring and silver the sea And soon they'll be silver for my love and me



<sup>\*</sup> this line obscured in original text

### Now I'm Easy

Eric Bogle © 1980 Banksiaman Press/Larrikin Records

Eric Bogle is said to have said (sounds like the Internet, eh?) that he got talking with a cocky in a bar one night, who sketched out this working-life's story over the course of a few hours. And what a beautiful job Eric did of sketching it for us. A cocky (or cockie) is usually a poor, small farmer.

Gordon—Spanish guitar

It's nearly sixty years I've been a Cocky
Of drought and fire and flood I've lived through
plenty

This country's dust and mud have seen my tears and blood

But it's nearly over now, and now I'm easy

I married a fine girl when I was twenty She died in giving birth when she was thirty No flying doctor then, just a gentle old black gin But it's nearly over now, and now I'm easy

She left me with two sons and a daughter
And a bone-dry farm whose soil cried out for
water

So my care was rough and ready, but they grew up fine and steady

It's nearly over now, and now I'm easy

My daughter married young and went her own way

My sons lie buried by the Burma Railway
So on this land I've made my own, I've carried on
alone

But it's nearly over now, and now I'm easy

City folk these days despise the Cocky They say with subsidies and all we've had it easy

But there's no drought or dying stock on a sewered suburban lot

But it's nearly over now, and now I'm easy

### Moran's Return

Traditional-Irish

Our friend Mary Lincoln called us in off the street to her pottery in Ardmore, County Waterford, to hear a recording of Nollaig Casey and Arty McGlynn playing this old Irish tune. It comes from the Patrick Weston Joyce Collection (written down in 1844). I sketched it down, and two nights later Carol and Tom and Susan and I played it for Mary and her husband Dick in the pub nearby.

Small World Orchestra

### SUFFERIN'

©1985 Bill Gallaher SOCAN

Mary Garvey of Vancouver, Washington introduced me to the music of this amazing Canadian songwriter. Bill says this was one of the first songs he wrote; and while he always knows whereof he writes, luckily this song did not become autobiographical.

Bill says, "Back in '72, Jaye\* said to me, 'Why don't you write a song?' I asked, 'What kind of song?' And without skipping a beat she said, 'A cowboy song.' Not knowing much of anything about cowboys, I eventually settled on the idea of 'Sufferin'' when I recalled the old gent whose groceries I used to carry home when I was a kid of 7 or 8 years old. He was well into his eighties and would regale me with tales of his life. I remember him saying he'd been a cowboy, a prospector, a railroad worker, among other things, and the addendum would always be, 'People today have it real easy. Now, when I was a young man . . . '"

\*Bill's wife

Gordon—12- string guitar

When I was young and in my prime
I had a woman and her future by my side
But the four winds blow and the grass don't
grow

'Round the feet of a man with travellin' in his hide

So I threw off all the shackles and the chains Said good-bye to what's-her-name And I suffered through the cold September

Heading back to freedom once again

Well, I tried my luck on a fiery buck In back of a ramblin' two-room ranchin' shack There ain't nothing worse than a buckskin horse

With a mind of his own and a saddle on his

For riding he just didn't seem to care
So he left me there in the dusty air
And I suffered through the insults and the
pain

Of landing on my backside once again

Well, I broke my back laying down the track
For the railroad that was making its way out west
But I had no feel for the cold hard steel
And a job that gave no time for a man to rest
So I said good-bye and headed north for
gold
Staked my claim on a salted \*vein
And I suffered through the hunger and the cold

All I found was a young man growing old

I drank my fill of the barroom swill

Danced 'til the sun was a jewel in the morning

I used my fist for a goodnight kiss
On the face of a man with evil in his eye
Then I stumbled through the morning feeling ill
Till I fell with a thud in the rain and the mud
And I suffered through a day or two in jail
Then I headed back to the freedom of the

Well, the years have flown but the times I've known

Were better than a poke in the eye with a rusty nail

If a man will try and a man don't lie to himself

Then his life can be a hell of a tale
To change my life I wouldn't give a dime
And when I go the books will show

That I suffered from my birth right through my prime

Now I'm heading back to freedom, one last time

\*somebody had spread a little "good news" around

#### HATU KHARA OLS'N (The Hard Black Rope)

Traditional

This is a song from the Khalmyk (Buryat Mongol) people who came to live in Philadelphia and New Jersey beginning in the 1950's. I learned it from my friends Sara Stepkin Goripow and Nadja Stepkin Budschalow during the winters that I worked in Philadelphia and sang with them and played in their dance-orchestra.

They told me it was "a very young song (less than 200 years old, probably) and very Russian." It came from a time when they were hauling boats up rivers—by hand. Nadja said, "You could call it our 'Volga Boat Song." Many of the words are lost to present day Khalmyk, but (loosely) it goes: "I pull the hard, black rope (and I sing) Mother / Father / my People / my Country: I do not forget you." I have the 3rd verse in Nadja's writing: "While this river runs, while you work here, don't forget your people."

Ordinarily I would never harmonize a Khalmyk song, but wherever the Stepkin sisters sang this one, they sang it in harmony.. so I gave it a Russian flavor here for the Quasimodals, and have tried to teach them the Khalmyk sounds that are not so easy to remember from all those years ago.

The Quasimodal Chorus

Hatuya khara olsigen Hakurun badje tatulav Hakurun badje tatulav Hakurun badje tatushen Harm stele edje minye sanugdna Harm stele edje minye sanugdna

Idjelinye irgede kudlagen Izhe lan biche martite Izhe lan biche martite

Idjelinye irgede kudlushen Inyegem ondzin nandan sanugdna Inyegem ondzin nandan sanugdna

### Poor Angus

Poem © Shel Silverstein Music © Gordon Bok

Shel was an astounding poet (and singer too, I am told) whose works would enrich any library, any life. I wish I had met him.

Gordon-viol

Oh what do you do, poor Angus When hunger makes you cry I fix myself an omelet, sir Of fluffy clouds and sky

Oh what do you wear, poor Angus When the winds blow down the hills I sew myself a warm cloak, sir Of hope and daffodils

And who will you love, poor Angus When Catherine's gone from the moor Ah then sir, then's the only time I think I'm really poor

#### IOCK O'HAZELDEAN

Traditional—Scots

I must have learned this in the 1960's, when I started hanging out with other folksingers. I hear it in a lowland Scots dialect, and sometimes sing it that way—I've heard it sung a number of different ways here in the States.

Gordon—laud

"Why weep ye by the tide, lady
Why weep ye by the tide?
I'll wed ye to my youngest son
And ye shall be his bride, lady
So comely to be seen"
But aye she's let the tears downfall
For Jock O' Hazeldean

"Now let this willful grief be done
And dry your cheek so pale
Young Frank is chief of Errington
And Lord of Langleydale
His step is first in peaceful hall
His sword in battle keen"
But aye she's let the tears down fall
For Jock O' Hazeldean

"A gown o' gold ye shall not lack Nor braid to bind your hair Nor mettled hound nor managed hawk Nor palfrey fresh and fair And ye the foremost of them all Shall ride, our forest queen" But aye she's let the tears down fall For lock O' Hazeldean The kirk was decked at morningtide church
The tapers glimmered fair
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride
And dame and knight are there
They've sought her both by tower and hall
The lady was not seen
She's o'er the border and awa
With lock O' Hazeldean

### Los Viejitos

Traditional—Tarascan Indian

One of the legacies my folks left was an odd collection of folk music from all over the world. My brother and I thought nothing of learning songs in other languages when we were kids; it was all around us and our relatives did it (mostly because they had lived there). I believe this one came from an early Folkways LP of Tarascan Indian music and was played on a "guitarra bajita", which I've never seen but loved the sound it. made. I couldn't imagine how a 2-legged type could make this rhythm work, until someone who had seen the dance told me it was usually performed by old men with canes who were supbosed to be somewhat less than sober, I've played it since I was a teenager and have never tired of it, nor ever been satisfied that I had it right.

Gordon—laud

#### LONG LIFE TO THE MOON

Irish poem / music by Gordon Bok A short, anonymous poem that Kate Barnes sent me. (Plenty of room for short songs in the world.)

Gordon & Carol-vocals

Ogh, long life to the moon for a fine noble creature Who serves us for lamplight each night in the dark

While the sun only shines in the day, which by nature

Needs no light at all as yez all may remark



#### SMALL ISLAND

Traditional

Another song I got about 40 years ago from a young shipmate, Harold Williams, from South Caicos. I had asked him how folks in the British Virgin Islands felt having their country owned by people so far away who never even saw it, and he said "Oh, we got a song about that." And sang this.

I can't find that I ever wrote it down, even in the logs I kept.

Gordon—Spanish guitar

Small Island, go back where you come from Small Island, go back where you come from O when you come by the one and the two and the three

You taking our food and you leaving us hungry Small Island, go back where you come from

Number one: no rice in this land Number two: no rice in this land Now when you come by the one and the two and the three

You taking our food and you mash down the jungle Small Island, go back where you come from

Winston Churchill going 'cross through this English Channel

Winston Churchill going 'cross through this English Channel

Now when you got no guns and you got no revolver\*

Bottle and stick kicking hell in Gibraltar Small Island, go back where you come from

\*Refers to a speech Churchill made during WWII

#### OH, I AM CALLING

Words ©1998 Megaera Vittum Fitch Music & Arrangement ©1999 Gordon Bok

Meg lives in Vermont on the family farm; her house is the barn they used to store extra hay in. She has been writing since the teacher in her school encouraged her in the third grade. She is a member of VIBES!, a poetry and performing group working out of Vermont.

These are two of the many poems Meg has swapped with me over the years, part of an ongoing conversation. I took them on tour with me one fall, and during a 3-day layover in New Hampshire, wrote the music to them.

Our chorus has no director; when we need one we coerce one from the ranks. My thanks to Mimi Bornstein-Doble for guiding this particular song through all the work it took to get it there.

The Quasimodal Chorus

Oh, I am calling, I am calling
 My calling cross the waters
 Cross the mighty waters
 Downfolding clouds enfold me
 Enclosing fears behold me

Oh, I am calling, I am calling
O, Nester cross the waters
Cross the mighty waters
Bring down your wings about me
To shield from them who'd rout me

Oh, I am calling, I am calling O Mother, cross the waters

Cross the mighty waters Storm between me and my fears They prickle the hills with spears

Oh, I am calling, I am calling O Flame-heart cross the waters Cross the mighty waters Circle me with fire now Enfold me in your pyre now

Oh, I am calling, I am calling O Child, come cross the waters Cross the mighty waters Dance me down the silver shore And lead me from the River's roar

Oh, I am calling, I am calling O Singer, cross the waters Cross the mighty waters Ring me round with sacred song And pull me from the darkened throng

Oh, I am calling, I am calling O I will cross the waters Cross the mighty waters Lay my feet on the flaming foam And ride my song through darkness home

II. Chickadee of the clutching toe Nuthatch of the creaking voice Blackbird of the twirling song Redtail of the longing fall Birds all of marsh and meadow

> I hear you, you Am I yours – now? yours?

Ancient tree on the mountain brow Windy curled, tough and small Dead elm in the singing swamp Summer home of bug and bird Nut bearers, seed trailers

I hear you, you Am I yours – now? yours?

Leaf meal, snake trail Crow call, fox squall Toad song, ant throng Tree quiet, peeper riot Ducks nesting, beaver tasting

I hear you, you Am I yours – now? yours?

Sudden cliff and long lake
Hard thin dirt, shaling stone
Glacial waste on northern land
Spill of meadow, stream tumble
Stone walls of lost borders

I hear you, you Am I yours – now? yours?

Running through the cold dew Hunting cows in the misty swamp Leaning on their warm sides Trailing spring, green sour sweet To summer stubble, dry and sharp

My ears loved, skin loved Eyes loved, thick skinned feet Loved their way over Farm lands, up thawed brook Through air of song and silence Do you hear me, me? Are you mine – now? mine?

Garden dust and roses bloom Grape green to misty blue Every berry of wood and pasture Split sweet on lip and tongue

Do you hear me, me? Are you mine—now? mine?

Coming here, homing here
Standing here on loved ground
The ground curves, rocks and sings
I rock and sing my home to heart
My heart to home to hope
To long, long, long hope
To wing and root and stone and stream
And sky and wind and star

And small, bright eye in naked wood Laughing, laughing, laughing

Do you hear me, me? Are you mine – now? mine?

## A PHIUTHRAG 'S A PHIUTHAR— SISTER O SISTER

Traditional—Scots (Hebrides)

I heard this song perhaps thirty years ago. The closest text to my version seems to be in Peter Kennedy's Folksongs of Britain and Ireland.

Despite kind efforts by Margaret Bennett of Edinburgh and Holly Torsey of Whitefield, I haven't located my original source, so I rely on my memory and may the Gods of Gaelic be kind on me.

I was told it was sung by one who had been stolen by the fairies. "Little sister, my love, my sister, can't you pity my grief tonight? My bothy now is low and narrow, without thatch nor rope holding the thatch, and the rain of the hills down through it like a running stream."

If you've ever had a loved one in the grip of depression or addiction or grief, you've heard this song.

Gordon-viol

#### BLESS YE FAIR MAIDS

Words © 1984 J.B. Goodenough Music © 1990 Gordon Bok

Judy sent this to me many years ago, as we were trading poems. It worked on me until I found this tune and harmony for it. I used to play the bass part on the 'cellamba and sing the upper part, but it took the January Men to give it the freedom it wanted. Cindy added the harmony on the last charus.

The January Men

The candle's at the window and the sun is in

And the baby's in the cradle and the bird is on the nest

The young man's gone a-courting but the old man's home to stay

And in the fire's falling light we heard the old man say

Bless ye the setting of the sun, the candle set at foot and head

And bless ye fair maids, every one, that never came to warm my bed

Farewell whatever salty seas I never sailed upon

Farewell whatever roads that go where I have never gone

Farewell a hundred fallow fields that never did I plow

Farewell a hundred distant hills that I shall not climb now

Farewell to every tree whose fruit I never gathered up

Farewell to every jug in town that never filled my cup

Farewell the rivers fair and far that never I have crossed

And farewell the gold I never found and the silver I have lost

# AGAINST THE MOON

©1997 Steven Sellors, Grand Bay NB, Canada From a Master of the Irreverent comes another heartwarmer and a great song to sing in life's many changes, to remind us why we hung on so long in the first place. This one, he told me, had little bits and pieces of his friends in it. For another lovely version, Anne Dodson (Esteemed Producer) has also recorded this song on Against the Moon on Beech Hill Music.

Gordon—12-string guitar

I hear the thunder, its tender noise I'm standing under the moving skies

#### Chorus:

I will not be bothered by this world when it's gone (x2)

The rain is falling on fields of stone A hunger's calling to beasts of bone

The birds are waking in time to flee
The winter taking their greening tree

The sea is rushing away too soon The tide is pushing against the moon.

The day is turning and looking back At sunset burning the sky to black

This season's dimming is nature's will The world is brimming with beauty still

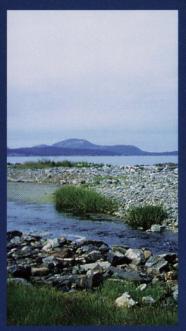
I love the thunder





For Mary and Tony, who know where it comes from.





Gordon Bok with Carol Rohl, Cindy Kallet, Anne Dodson, Will Brown, the Quasimodal Chorus, the January Men, and the Small World Orchestra

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- 15- Oh I Am Calling (Fitch/Bok) 8:42
- 16- A Phiuthrag 's A Phiuthar (Traditional) 2:25
- 17- Bless Ye Fair Maids (Goodenough/Bok) 3:32
- 18- Against the Moon (Sellors) 4:05

Total time: 60:57

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Dear To Our Island

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