

Tracing Tony's Tree

(see link on website for photo gallery)

Friday 25th May

Journey to Pembroke

We start out on our journey with the long trip along the M4 to the far side of Wales. It has been many years since we last did this, when Rob was a small six month old baby, and we took Mum & Dad with us in the dented old blue camper van (1986). I recall then driving through a detour into Swansea (I think) just as pubs were turning out (not a good time - I'm never quite sure how English cars are accepted here). Last time we went from Fishguard and I also recall waiting for ages as they searched the cars coming off (it was in the days of IRA bombs).

This time the journey is fast but still long.

We arrive just in time but boat is late. When it arrives it dominates the harbour - it is enormous - more like a floating hotel. I think this is a recent improvement - when we booked I am sure the photo of the boat was of the more traditional kind. Some things haven't changed - despite the feeling you are in a posh hotel lounge, polished chrome and mirrors everywhere, the Irish still sleep on floor wherever there is a space - sleeping bags, pillows, blankets all dragged from boots as we park on the deck. As we move around the ship, more and more sleeping bodies appear but as there is plenty of room they are fairly easy to dodge around. The atmosphere is warm and relaxed, but possibly less than I remember previously.

We sit opposite the breakfast bar for a time and amuse ourselves watching the bar activities. Despite the bar having clearly closed and with staff busily tidying up and cleaning surfaces down, a steady flow of people make their way to collect food or coffee. To do this they either have to move barriers put in their way or reach over them. On other boats staff would object or refuse to serve - here little (if any) fuss is made and sometimes even money not charged. A wonderful laid back approach to begin our holiday.

Saturday 26th May

We dock. It was a quiet crossing but it is now dull and foggy. Because of the foot & mouth problems in England we are sprayed several times, and at a food check as we come off the boat we are asked about dairy or meat products from England. So we have to throw away milk for tea and the sandwiches we had made for the day ahead. We plan on taking breakfast on the road nearby but it is a long drive before we find it. Most places advertising it seem to be houses, but then this would be the Irish way. However we are not quite ready for such informality just yet.

Eventually we find a Country Club/Restaurant, more like a small hotel. The dining room is filling rapidly, so we stopped just at right time.

Refreshed we press on and at Waterford we having to slow down as the Milk Race flies past.

Arrive in Cork early pm. We head off to get supplies. Town packed with shoppers - the shops are variations on English shops - Dunnes, Primark (Priddy's). Quite upmarket some of them - stocking Karen Miller jackets at £200.

We search for fresh pasta for an evening meal. Nothing in the shops in Cork so we bet on finding a larger store en route to Cobh. No such luck.

Arriving in Cobh we find The Belfry without too many problems. We are shown our flat by the site manager, Geraldine. There is a steep slope to park right outside. After unloading we go down hill to Cobh harbour. We find a small supermarket and pick up more groceries, but no fresh pasta. The rain gets heavier so we don't stay out long. We check times of Mass tomorrow in St. Colman's Cathedral. It dominates our view of the harbour as we are just uphill from it. Very impressive and we take a brief glimpse inside. It reminds me of the typical church in Hollywood films, I half expect Bing Crosby and Barry Fitzgerald to walk down the aisle.

Tired by journey, early-ish to bed after game of Rummikub.

Sunday 27th May

Mass at 10.00 am - rain has stopped but still hangs in the air. We join a large group entering just after 10.00 but inside it is quite full.

After Mass it is home for coffee and to finish breakfast. Back to Cork - see what it looks like less crowded. But as we arrive we see large groups of football fans - either in red and white or green and white. It turns out

to be an important hurling match - Cork v Limerick! The atmosphere is superb, noisy, bustling but green and red easily mingle, whether families passing car on way to game or where the crowds spill onto pavements from bars. No sign of discord or violence - just eager pre-match anticipation.

We spend pm exploring Cork. Weather is changeable, sometimes sunny and bright, but mostly overcast and blustery - but no rain. The town is a lot quieter than yesterday, but only away from hurling crowds. Many shops are open - a significant crowd waits for Priddy's to open at 2.00 - this was the busiest shop yesterday too.

We find more shops and a better supermarket. We decide to buy lunch as the breads look superb and the deli counter has a wide range of meats.

We walk along by the river, trying to find somewhere for lunch. Unfortunately, the tide is turning and the strong smell of seaweed wafts up. We eventually find a bench with a view up Parade. A heron is perched in the middle of the river, occasionally moving its head. A film crew appear opposite in the square and spend ages setting up.

Monday 28th May

The day does not look promising - no rain but still leaden skies. No hurry to go out, we have a relaxed start and leave by about 12.00.

The weather is now brightening quickly and there are prolonged bursts of sunshine before clouds cross.

We set out first to explore different ways off Cobh. The roads below us are quite narrow and it takes time to pick up a coast road round. Slightly hampered by the fact that our map only shows half of Cobh, we still manage to work out that the absence of traffic or significant road heading to where the map shows a ferry seems to indicate it is only a foot ferry.

We start heading for the main road and after a few wrong turns are eventually heading down the East Cork peninsula. Lunch beckons, so we head straight for Inch Strand. The road narrows and we are grateful nothing approaches from the opposite direction.

The road drops down more steeply, we appear to be following the path of a stream, judging by the marshy vegetation to our left, a valley bottom

several times wider than the road, but obviously the stream meanders quite a bit as far as we can see. The map shows a car park - is it this turning circle we have just stopped in? To one side a Coke/Hot Dog stand remains closed - waiting for a busier day.

We have arrived at the beach. The stream runs under a small footbridge, then spreads out onto the beach. The beach is in a small cove, low cliffs rising either side. The beach is sandy after a few pebbles (larger stones about the size of small round loaves).

The wind is blustery and the waves crash onto the beach some way out. There are lines of rocks either side, and surf is thrown up as the waves meet these. Not really a swimming beach, but probably good for surfing.

We are all alone. After exploring the beach, we bring lunch across to some shelter close to the cliff. There is a road the other side of the beach as well, with a couple of houses and some static caravans. Another car arrives and a family settles around the corner from us. Over the next half hour, only another family arrive and a large yellow digger hurtles across the beach - prongs out front as if jousting with another imaginary digger. It reaches our car park, now out of sight, but returns immediately and disappears back where it came from.

Lunch over, we remove the bikes from the car and head across the beach. We follow the other road up the valley to Inch. Sheep graze in the fields, wild flowers line the road - all is very rural and peaceful.

A short climb brings us to Inch Church. The graveyard looks old and crowded - is it likely to reveal any relatives? Sadly, the Church is no longer in use and the grass is overgrown, apart from a narrow path. We find graves for Sisk's and Cashman's and Smyth's, but most are from the last 50 years. Few older stones can be read and most are covered in foot-high grass so not worth checking.

Ballykenefick is only a short way up the hill. We set off slowly, passing a couple of gateways with warnings about foot and mouth. It all turns out to be a bit disappointing as suddenly we are at the next crossroads - so we have been through Ballykenefick. All we saw were a couple of non-descript houses and one old farm. No road sign or indication anywhere where the boundaries are. Even the houses look relatively recent, although the farm may be older than last century.

The sun is now hot overhead and only wisps of cloud remain. We decide to carry on to the next cove, where a wide sandy beach is shown on the map. The road takes us up and down, but is quiet, with only occasional cars passing. Houses are sporadic and the view is superb, glimpses of sea to our right, past green fields with grazing cattle or sheep.

We turn right and again descend quickly to the beach. A few cars are in the car park but the beach stretches for some distance and only a few people are around. The sea is some way out and we feel safe leaving the bikes propped up against groins by the sea wall and we hop between islands of seaweed covered rocks to reach the sandy patches leading to the sea.

Looking back, the hill behind rises steeply from the low cliff, cattle grazing. A few houses stand out against the green, the light bouncing back from their bright yellow or white. It is hard to imagine a more perfect view.

We head back up the same route. We pass even more slowly where Ballykenefick should be - still no other sign other than some old gateposts just to the side of one of the houses. The car park where we left the car is now quite full with another 3 or 4 cars.

We head back towards the main N25 but decide to check out the other "Kenefick" area - shown on the map as Garranekinnefeake. We follow a straight road for some distance. Again no road sign or place name. We reach the summit of a hill, a track leads off to another farm - could this be it? The road we are on is hardly even worthy of the name road - grass sprouts thickly down the middle where a white line would be found on wider roads.

Suddenly we are descending and joining the road that runs along the water's edge - we have reached the gap between the mainland and the other side of Great Island. This is the opposite point where the ferry we were seeking earlier lands.

Serendipity!!! Alongside the road, cars are parked, their owners nearby with glasses in hand. A bar, with sun soaked beer terrace, offers the perfect opportunity to sample our first pints of Irish stout.

Daria opts for Guinness, while I test the Murphy's. Beamish is another option. We sit on the terrace comparing the merits of both. Guinness wins

- much richer and creamier. The evening sunshine and view make us lazy - we order bar food. The afternoon has now become a glorious evening and daylight continues much longer here.

I decide on another drink and while waiting for the Murphy's to draw, I spot the licensee's details above the bar - Garranekinnefeake, East Ferry, Middleton. I ask the lady serving how to pronounce the middle line. "Gawn-a-Kenefick".

"I am interested because my name is Kenefeck". She doesn't see much significance in this, but I persist. "How big an area does that cover?"

"All around here, down to Jamestown (a name on the map the other side of the hill). I don't know what it means - just a name for here."

I could see we were not going to get further here, so switched conversation back to the normal "it is lovely here" as we walked back to the table outside - she offered to help as she was going that way.

It was still light when we return to the apartments - about 9.00 pm. So we head on down to Cobh to take a closer look at the harbour.

Steep, narrow roads are reminiscent of Cornwall. Houses are all different colours, some bright and vibrant, others muted and pastel. All are UPVC double-glazed - which rather spoils the "quaintness" but probably more practical. The harbour front is full of people strolling - not too many obvious tourists though - mainly local folk as they seem to know each other. A couple of rigged boats are in harbour - one a visiting US Coastguard tall ship, probably a training vessel.

We return to the apartment via the off-licence - Daria is seeking a box of wine to last us through the week. Everywhere so far seems to only sell a few bottles of wine and they are quite expensive. The Irish don't seem to go much on wine with meals, judging by the small selection on offer everywhere. Even the off-licence doesn't stock boxes, so we buy just another bottle.

Tuesday 29th May

After yesterday's gloriously sunny finish, we wake to another dull skyline. It takes a while to rouse everyone and some look redder than others from yesterday's exposure to the sun. Sunscreen lotion is a priority!

We decide to explore the other side of Cork today. First we need to stop for supplies. We saw what appeared to be a large supermarket on Sunday when we wandered around the outskirts of Cork. Trying to find it again is more complicated than we thought, so a lot of time is spent driving around.

Eventually we are on our way to Kinsale. It is now mid-afternoon and we still have to eat lunch. But the weather is improving all the time.

We stop in Kinsale by an inlet. The tide is out and we eat lunch in the car, watching another heron poking around in the mud for his.

We walk back into Kinsale. Lots of small tourist-orientated shops, but the variety of colours of the houses again made it a "bright" place to visit. Shops explored and maps purchased, we headed along the quayside. Unusual sculptures and water features distract us briefly; otherwise our attention is taken by observing life on the boats bobbing in the harbour.

I am a little way in front and realise that the others have stopped. Looking back, I see Daria apparently giving directions to people in a parked car. I turn back and realise she is having a conversation with a family from St. Margaret Mary Church, Park Gate! What a small world! They are also in Ireland for half term and are touring from place to place. It makes it even more amazing that we should bump into them today.

This was the highlight today really. We carried on our walk and then drove up and looked out over the bay from a vantage point. We were looking for a bar to sit outside, to enjoy the sun and sip our Guinness. All we could find was a restaurant, so we headed home and found one just before Cobh, with a fine view across to Monkstown.

The bad news for me when we get back to the apartment is that it was agreed that Natalie and I do the meal tonight - Natalie has chosen toad-in-the-hole. Natalie helps a little, Daria adds some direction, but the batter takes longer than expected, so it is quite late before we finish.

Wednesday 30th May

I am determined we will achieve more today, but weather wise things are not improving. We walk down into Cobh to visit the Queenstown Story Exhibition.

We enter through the doors of the old Railway Station. Inside is the restaurant area and Gift Shop. It is hard to imagine that a hundred years ago, hundreds of thousands of Irish people left through this small station.

We find the exhibition at the far end. Not quite as much to it as the publicity suggests. Some life-sized figures and a sound track to make it seem as if it is full of people all about to depart their country for the last time. The statistics are more impressive, flashed up as part of a multi-media display. It shows the dramatic increase in emigrants in the latter half of the 19th century. This is unlikely to include Kenefeck's as we believe these left in the first half of the century.

Even so, you still feel the sense of loss and devastation that people must have felt. The population had been rising, with the potato a significant reason for this. Cheap and easy to grow, a field of potatoes fed a family for a year. Two years of bad harvests reduced the population by a quarter - either through death or emigration.

The exhibition also shows the background to the sinking of the Lusitania, and details of the last visit to a port for Titanic. A plaque on a wall commemorates the few hundred (mainly third class) passengers who left Cobh for a new life in America, only to perish on the way - several entire families.

Back up the hill for lunch, dodging the rain showers. The weather wasn't clearing all that fast, so we didn't hurry out immediately. We stopped in Middleton, the town in the centre of East Cork. We had originally intended to visit the Jameson's Whiskey distillery, but as the weather had now brightened and time was disappearing, we opted for a quick visit to the local library. The local history section had hardly anything in it, but Daria was shown some 1935 maps of the area when she enquired.

These threw a slightly different light on Ballykenefick. Instead of it being a village, it is a townland - an area covering a wider range than we had thought. It appeared that the fields that we had cycled around on Monday were all part of it. Also, the map showed a Ballykenefick House - presumably more like a manor house that gave its name to the area. This would mean that more information would exist in records going back - including occupants in previous centuries.

We would have to go back and see if we could find this large house - the map showed it on the first road we had cycled up, even before we started looking for Ballykenefick.

We headed next for the beach at Guileen, where we had first thought of staying. This was not as good as it had looked on the pictures we had seen - dominated by static caravan parks. We parked in a car park on the beach which ran behind the beach for some way, very reminiscent of Hayling Island. We planned to cycle around the roads behind the beach, but realised these ran right through the caravan park.

We veered off onto the beach and had an exhilarating ride along the beach before turning up to Shannagarry. This had been listed as a place to visit - home of William Penn (of Pennsylvania fame) and now where a well-known pottery is. However, all we found was a collection of bungalows spread along the road, so we headed back along the beach again. The sun was out constantly now and the sea was a tranquil deep blue, with Ballycotton Island just offshore, looking like something from a Famous Five book.

Unable to find a suitable bar by the beach, we wandered back along back roads, cross-country, trying to find a community large enough to have a bar, with a beer garden. No such luck - we just succeeded in finding one road that had been blocked off by a boulder.

Thursday 31st May

Robert's birthday - although that didn't seem to encourage him to rise any earlier. We promised to take him for an adventure day at Trabolgan Holiday Village.

We arrived at lunchtime, paid our £5.00 day entry fee and proceeded to the Sports Centre. Here we are told that there is no need to book a slot for any of the activities but none start until 4.30 pm - except the pool.

We carry on down to the pool to check out what this looks like. Smaller than I'd imagined, there are no restrictions on us using it, so we head back to the car. On the way, we pass the Crazy Golf and Natalie is keen to play. We pay our money and start on the course. Only a handful of people are on it already, so it should be easy to go round.

We have just finished the first hole when we are invaded by a swarm of yellow and maroon 10-year old boys. Groups of 3 or 4 descend on all the

holes at once, even if we are still playing. Daria fails to scare them off and total confusion reigns as we are not sure which balls are ours and which are theirs.

We let them play through but the stream is never-ending. Only 1 teacher appears to be with the group and she seems oblivious to the chaos her charges are causing. The children are not malicious in any way, or even rude - just natural high spirits. I don't think they realise they should do anything different - one boy even enquires if we have lost our ball and directs us to one he saw earlier. After watching several groups go past, some who I am sure had already played the hole, we abandon our attempt. The man in the kiosk is understanding in a "no problem" sort of way and takes a note of our name, so that we can continue our round later.

We decide to leave the complex and have a picnic lunch, on the cliff top, with Roche's Point just visible to our left and Cobh straight ahead.

On our return to Trabolgan, we head straight for the Crazy Golf to resume our game. Again, all seems quiet. We collect our clubs and balls and start again. Within seconds, another swarm of gold and maroon strikes, this time possibly a year older. Fortunately there are not so many but any chance of score keeping is a joke and it becomes more about memorable shots. Robert has gone from chipping shots over the obstacle (and the subsequent high score as his ball ricochets back, bounces to the next hole, collides with another obstacle and returns 2 feet behind where he started) to achieving a hole-in-one on one hole.

We move on to the swimming pool. The wave machine is in action as we arrive and we all agree the scene inside is reminiscent of that seen through the window, waves crashing on the shore. We sit on the "shoreline", buffeted by pounding waves - until someone turns the waves off. Behind us, people lounge on the "beach" - a tiled area with chairs. Still everyone seems to belong to a family and we are spared an onslaught from the gold and maroons.

We stay in the pool for a further 2 wave sessions - well Robert and Natalie do. Daria and I discover a jacuzzi at the far end and spend our third wave session in there, having our own personal buffeting by the foaming water.

With the rest of the family having finished sampling the flumes, we change and head for the other activities. I return to the car and swap a bag of damp swimming gear for the cameras.

I return to find the rest at the back of a long queue for quad biking. I calculate that there must be at least an hour's wait before their turn, but the abseiling looks less crowded. We move to this and Daria and Robert take two turns each, both showing great confidence. Unfortunately, I discover problems with both the video and the camera, so we may never have much proof of this. Natalie and I decided it was more important for us to safeguard the valuables on the ground - one of the requirements was that all jewellery was removed, including wedding rings. I threatened to lose this - then realised that this was not necessarily to my advantage. As it was, even Robert noticed that the French instructor seemed to spend a lot of time directing Daria, who is already an experienced abseiler.

We returned to the quad biking queue to discover that we had dropped back a few places, but not too far - unfortunately we still faced an hour long wait. The team of three running it were all young, with a good sense of humour. The minimum age to use the quad bikes was 8, and as we arrived, one overweight but honest lad was admitting to being 7. I looked along the queue - 50% were shorter than him. The father of the next two boys stepped in and assured the organiser that the boy had previously said he was almost 8 - I don't think he had probably ever spoken to the boy previously. His own sons were hardly any bigger and one even looked as though he had worn his brother's clothes in case Dermiad (the organiser) looked at the labels. No one was going to be turned away after queuing that long. Organisation is to the Irish what Margaret Thatcher is to compassion - but everyone shrugs a shoulder and is so friendly it doesn't seem to matter.

If all in the queue who professed to be 8 were telling the truth, Ireland must have had serious problems in maternity wards in Spring 1993! But, in fairness, most of these smaller bikers were more competent than older counterparts.

Robert and Natalie were the last to go and it was 8.30 pm by the time we had finished our day trip to Trabolgan. Apparently Thursday was the last night there for many, and 200 schoolboys had been on a visit (we knew that!). Unfortunately, the weather was the coldest and dullest on an evening we experienced, and we left chilled through.

Plans for a meal at home were abandoned (the shops shut at 6.00 pm and we had expected to pick up supplies on our way home). We rushed home and quickly changed.

We decided that Cork offered our best chance of cheap restaurants open late. But it was almost 10.30 pm as we were lapping Cork on our second circuit, still seeking an elusive parking space. We seemed to approach the centre from every direction, but were constantly thwarted, following the one-way system out again. Very similar to Pisa in Italy last year, with the river dominating traffic flow.

Cork at night is a lively place - well, certainly Thursday nights. The streets were full of student-aged youngsters (I think they were that old). Groups of girls noisily waving mobile phones at each other, redirecting others to a new nightspot.

Suddenly, we spotted a space, right in front of a restaurant. Having parked, we spotted it stopped serving at 10.00 pm. We walked round to the main streets and spotted a pizza restaurant, very much alive, across the road. We had had pizzas the previous night - the frozen supermarket kind.

These pizzas bore no similarity. Called Pi (TT), the restaurant was very stylish and the pizzas no exception. Very thin and crusty, with delicious fresh toppings, they were very different from anything we had had before.

Tempted by the atmosphere, we went for desserts. These were even more stylish, with additional fresh fruit and cream served as a decoration. Daria had *panforte* - expecting the dried Christmas treat we usually pick up in Chianti service area. This was their own adaptation - dried figs etc. in whole chunks, topped with pastry topping and cream. Not quite what Daria had imagined.

We left after midnight, much fuller and poorer. But it had produced a memorable birthday meal for Rob (I hope).

Friday 1st June

Needless to say, I struggled more than usual the next day to get the others moving. Rob had wanted to visit Blarney Castle, especially when he heard that kissing the Stone meant leaning backwards from the battlements to reach it, held by your ankles, 83 metres from the ground

below. I could only ponder at the original purpose of the stone and I had already concluded that the gift of eloquent and persuasive speech was not something I desperately needed.

After stopping for more supplies at the shopping centre, which we still struggled to find, we arrived at Blarney at about 2.00 pm. A single tower with a room on each level, the approach is very pleasant, through grassy grounds. We started to explore a cave, presumably named Badgers' Cave after a rock formation that looked like a giant badger paw. We never fully explored the cave, lacking a torch, and no one else seemed interested, most going straight for the Stone. We followed the throng, heading up the spiral staircase to the top.

The levels are all marked, but the whole structure is now open to the elements, inside and out. The battlements consist of uneven slabs of stone, worn down more by the weather, I would think, than the patrolling guards of the past or the present stream of modern tourists.

First Daria, then Rob, lay down and were guided to handholds by the guide. Heads thrust backwards and outwards, they gave the stone a brief peck while a photographer captured their moment. All around the battlements, similar gaps were present, but obviously lacking the all-important stone. I think Blarney is still working his magic, eloquently persuading thousands of tourists there is some merit in kissing a stone in a gap intended for allowing boiling oil to be poured down on attackers below. At least, I think that was what the gaps were intended for, although the level marked bathroom was conspicuous by its absence elsewhere in the building!

We returned to the ground via an even narrower stairway and then carried on to explore the grounds. At first, these seemed to be naturally wild, with the exotic plants and rock formations reminding me of a holiday in Tavistock as a child. On further exploration, some plants looked too exotic even for an Ireland full of flowering fuchsias and swaying palms. A natural spring and waterfall that produced a mossy bog below turned out to be the result of water feeding from a large rubber hose when we explored closer. Blarney indeed.

We had postponed lunch till after our visit to Blarney - a wise decision in hindsight. As we returned from the "wilds", we realised many more tourists were evident. We followed a group of Spaniards to the front gate, where the car park had disappeared under tourists disembarking

from coaches. We passed the Italian contingent trying to organise themselves, and found our car.

We had lunch late, driving to Garranekinnefeake. We found a bit of land jutting into the inlet and looked along the bank to the pub from Monday night. We ate in the car but had only been there for a few minutes when a large car transporter stopped and started to reverse in behind us. The road along the coast is probably just wide enough for two cars passing slowly, so this was a very unexpected sight. We could only presume that the driver lived nearby and was finishing his shift, intending to park his rig and about a dozen cars there until he had rested. The few other men who had been around seemed to know him and, once parked, they all disappeared off together.

The original plan had been to ride along the coast road for a closer look at Garranekeneffeake. Daria's back was troubling her (hardly surprising after abseiling and stone kissing), so she dropped the three of us off and went on ahead.

We followed the road around the inlet - very quiet, little cottages to our left and mudflats with herons to our right. Not much further learnt about Garranekeneffeake except that it covered the area that was a large promontory jutting out into the inlet - a noticeable, rounded hill.

Daria passed by a couple of times and then turned on to the main road, going on to our rendezvous point at a picnic area. We were to follow a path through woods on the other bank of the river to Garranekeneffeake. The only problem was that, having cycled along the path some way, it came to a dead end. In front, a field of cows. Probably passable most times, in the light of numerous foot and mouth precautions (even shops in Cork had mats outside to disinfect shoes), we decided we wouldn't try. The alternative was to head through woods to the riverbank, but the undergrowth was too thick. We tried to contact Daria, but her phone wouldn't transmit calls, only receive them (due to roaming restrictions). As she had mine in the car, I was using hers. We retraced our route and returned to the main road. Unfortunately, the next part of the route was uphill and the road heavy with traffic, so we pushed the bikes.

Eventually, we met up, but much later than expected. We found a church yard in Aghada, where I believed a Kenefeck was buried, but again it was heavily overgrown and the stones badly weathered. After checking a few,

we gave up and headed for a bar by the river. Our final Guinness in Ireland.

It was another bright and sunny evening, and although late (8.30 pm), it was still very light. We drove across to Inch to see if we could find more on Bally K., now that we knew where the house was. Rob and I followed a pathway where we believed the house would have been and found the farm we had spotted the other day. Old buildings were now farm outhouses, but surely these would not have merited the description "house" in 1935?

We drove up the other road to Bally K. Next to the farm entrance that side was a large house. Could this be it? No sign on the gate and it wasn't quite where we expected it to be, but it seemed now to be the only option.

Saturday 2nd June

The final day and, thankfully, we didn't have to be out until 12.00. Even so, we only just made it with seconds to spare, although Geraldine (the manager) didn't seem too concerned.

We headed for Youghal, to look around and present buy. Smaller than we expected, it was still a nice enough place and the other apartments we had considered offered superb views, right on the quay side.

Some presents purchased, we still needed more and, with plenty of time to spare, headed for Waterford. A lot of walking around before we found what we were looking for in a shop 100 yards away from our parking space. On the way, Daria did her good turn for the day. I was following the rest, when a man with parking discs stopped to ask me some questions about them. I tried to explain that I was a tourist, but he didn't seem to understand. I recognised the accent and asked him what language he spoke. "Italian" he answered, looking puzzled. "Excellent - my wife is Italian". His eyes lit up and we headed off to catch the others. He and Daria soon resolved his parking problem and left him much happier but puzzled as to why an Italian living in England had solved his parking problem in Ireland - good job we kept Daria's nationality that simple.

A smooth drive to Rosslare, a short wait before boarding. We found seats easier to come by, camping in the "Irish pub". Comfortable seats, unfortunately next to the only chain smokers on the deck. But the

journey soon passes and it is strange to leave Ireland as the sun set in the West, only to drive back towards the sun rising as we go through Wales and home.