

2011 - IRELAND

5 June 2011



Enniscorthy

We love the Irish signs, we love the Irish food, we even love the lyrical Irish brogue but we hate the dull Irish weather.

THE ROAD TO ENNISCORTHY

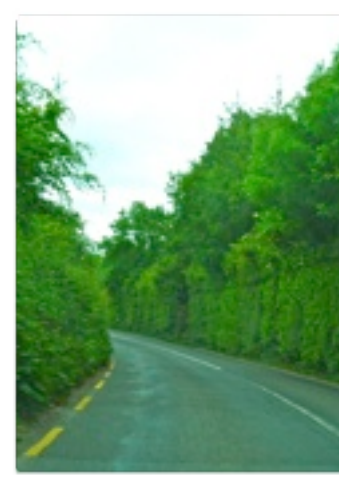
We woke to dull weather again. The expectant long sunny stretch the TV weather channel predicted did not eventuate. Bugga. The road to Enniscorthy was long and winding because there are few main roads going east to west. We like taking the back roads but find the height of the hedges really frustrating because we cannot see much of the country side. We planned to visit the Rebellion Centre in Enniscorthy to learn more about the Irish and their rebellious ways. We also wanted to go to an attraction that was out of the cold.

We arrived in the centre only to find that it opened later than normal due to today being a bank holiday weekend. We drove in to the centre of the town, parked and strolled around. The threatening rain held off. The place was devoid of people (and cars) so we had the place to ourselves. We walked along its warren of steep streets descending from Augustus Pugin's Cathedral down to the castle and finally to the River Slaney. The castle was built by the Normans, ransacked by Cromwell and then used as a prison during the Irish uprising. Heather particularly wanted to collect business names -- "Signs of Ireland" -- she insisted they be called. Obviously, the "Doyles" are prominent here.





Enniscorthy Castle now a museum



Typical view from our car

NATIONAL 1798 REBELLION CENTRE

This centre traces the rebellion of 1798 in County Wexford together with the events as they happened in Europe, and USA. We spent an enthralling couple of hours listening and reading the fascinating story of how and why the Irish rose to fight against their English oppressors and how their fight was influenced by other revolutions around the world. We do know that the Irish can be an "irritable" lot, but now better understand the reasons for this. The visit made us think of parallels with Polish history and the current push for democracy in countries such as Libya.

CRAIGEUNAMANAGH

We decided to travel a little further west towards a place we were having trouble pronouncing. We read that it was the start of a canal and had an old 6 arch bridge. Graigue, as it is known more simply by the locals, was a lovely place. It's the sort of place you could easily linger longer in. We walked along the canal admiring the canal house boats and other water craft and then strolled through the town itself, again bereft of people. The bridge was a highlight, It was similar to a number of other bridges we saw yesterday near Thomastown and Inistioge.

*"The past is dead.
Nothing, for good or ill, can change it;
nothing can revive it.
Yet there is a sense in which the past lives on:
in works of human hands and minds,
in beliefs, institutions, and values,
and in us all, who are its living extensions."*

Of the Wicklow coast.....

"it's largely unassuming towns and small coastal resorts have a subtle kind of charm that isn't immediately apparent and virtually disappears on a RAINY day".

Lonely Planet.



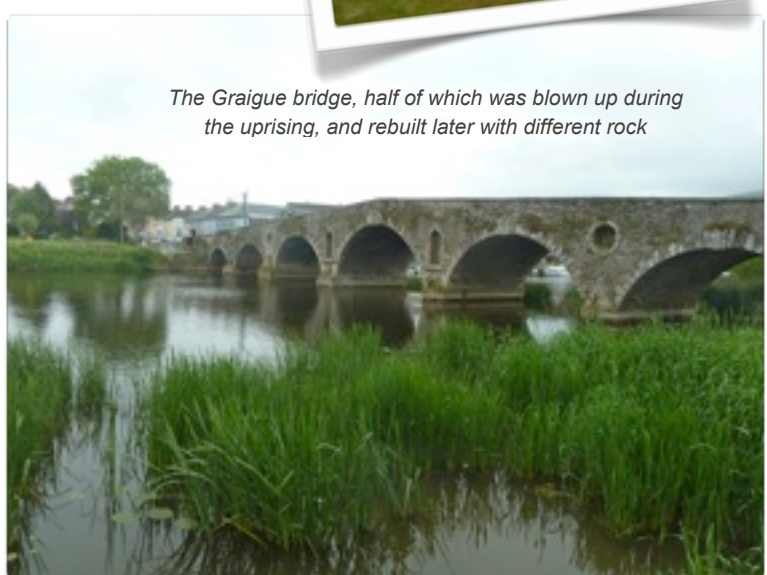
Canal houseboats



Enniscorthy Cathedral



The Graigue bridge, half of which was blown up during the uprising, and rebuilt later with different rock



A blunderbus