

2011 - IRELAND

6 June 2011



Glendalough

We passed through Roundwood today and were surprised by the sign "highest village in Ireland."

We rose with the sunshine
To the north we up and away
But as soon as we got on B roads
Hedges got in the way

We read about this fine country
Beautiful inland or on the bay
But unfortunately we saw neither
Hedges get in the way

We traveled past Wicklow
To Glendalough on the way
But we saw bugga all in between
Hedges got in the way

We spent more than 30 minutes
Not finding a place to stay
Glendalough's full of bloody Irish
Cars got in the way

We kept on driving further
And came upon a dray
We'd love to tell you more about it but
Hedges got in the way

We drove the Wicklow highlands
More basalt and heather than clay
Reminded us of Scotland where
No hedges got in the way

But hedges have advantages
It's where birds are apt to stay
So without really realising it
Hedges have made our day



High hedges line B roads everywhere



Our little limo



Dray on the road

The Wicklow Way is one of Ireland's most popular long-distance walking trails because of its remarkable scenery and walking options.





Derelict church near Avoca



Avoca woolen mills

AVOCA

We were keen to see the Wicklow Mountains to the north of Wexford. The area was described as reasonably desolate with lovely uplands scenery. Just outside Avoca we came across an interesting ruined church and spent some time wandering around its precinct taking photos and reading grave stones, some as old as 1798. It was then on to Avoca and the mountains.



Much to our surprise Avoca was part of the film set for the TV series Ballykissangel. We briefly walked around the village and happened to come across the woolen mills where we had lunch and were enlightened about the manufacturing process. The

colors of the material was vibrant and the items on sale were of very high quality.



GLENDALOUGH

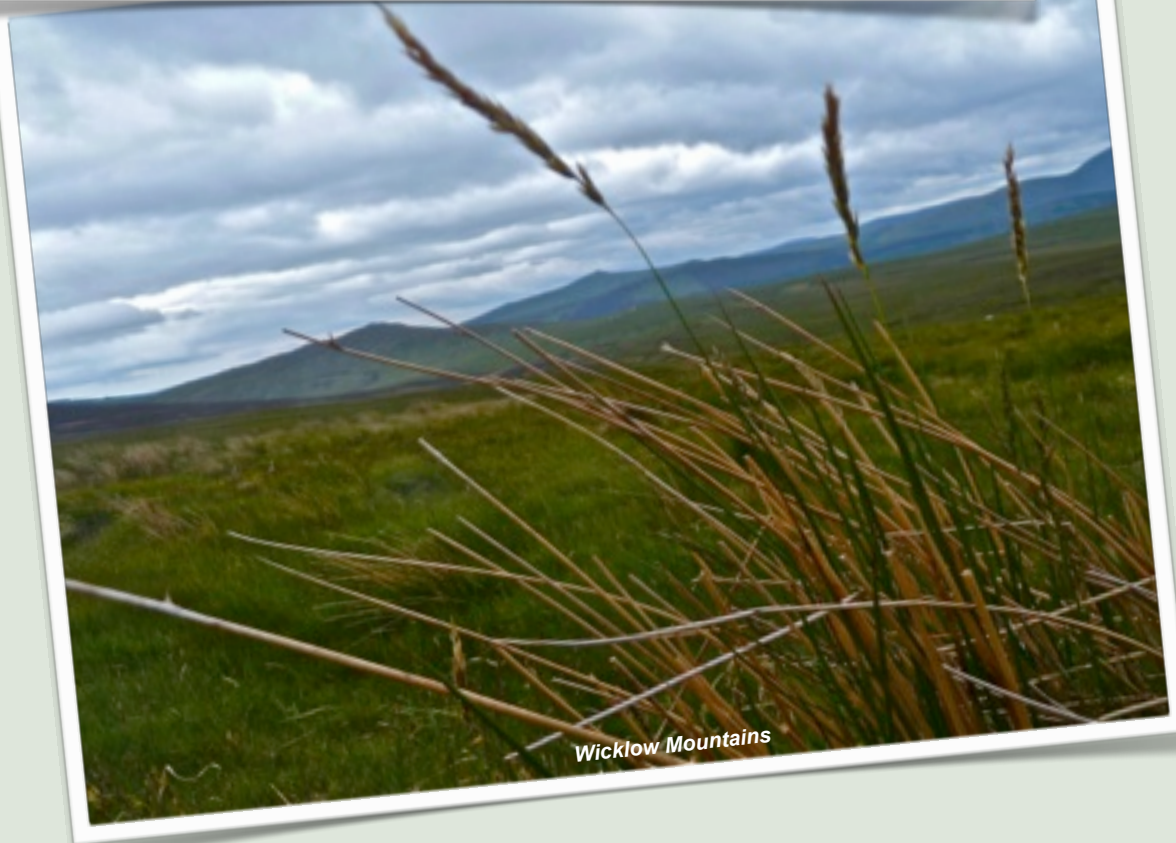
We were told to be careful of bank holidays - the Irish know how to take a break. Well we now know the reality. The approach road to Glendalough was very narrow and was completely filled with cars. We spent over 30 minutes trying to find a spare parking spot with no success so we drove on and over the mountain road. We intended to come back later in the day to see what all the fuss was about. It amazed us how quickly the

scenery changed from green rolling paddocks to rocky outcrops, no trees and lots of peat and heather. The temperature also plummeted.

We drove a wide arc around the national park stopping many times to enjoy the experience and take some snaps of this rugged place. We got as far as Sallygap. We then drove down through Roundwood and back to Glendalough where we found a place to park despite the car park still brim full with cars. The visitor centre was not open, so we explored on our own. Plaques pronounced a tall tower and a ruined church as national monuments, but we were bemused because to the uninitiated (like us), there was nothing to say what they were and why. We found out later that Big Kev is a legend. He was a total recluse in 498 AD with only the birds and bees for company but was eventually joined by "party poopers" who were keen to emulate him. A huge monastery site eventually developed on this site so "St Kevins's" legend lives on today and Glendalough is part of his and Irish legacy.



Lough Tay



Wicklow Mountains