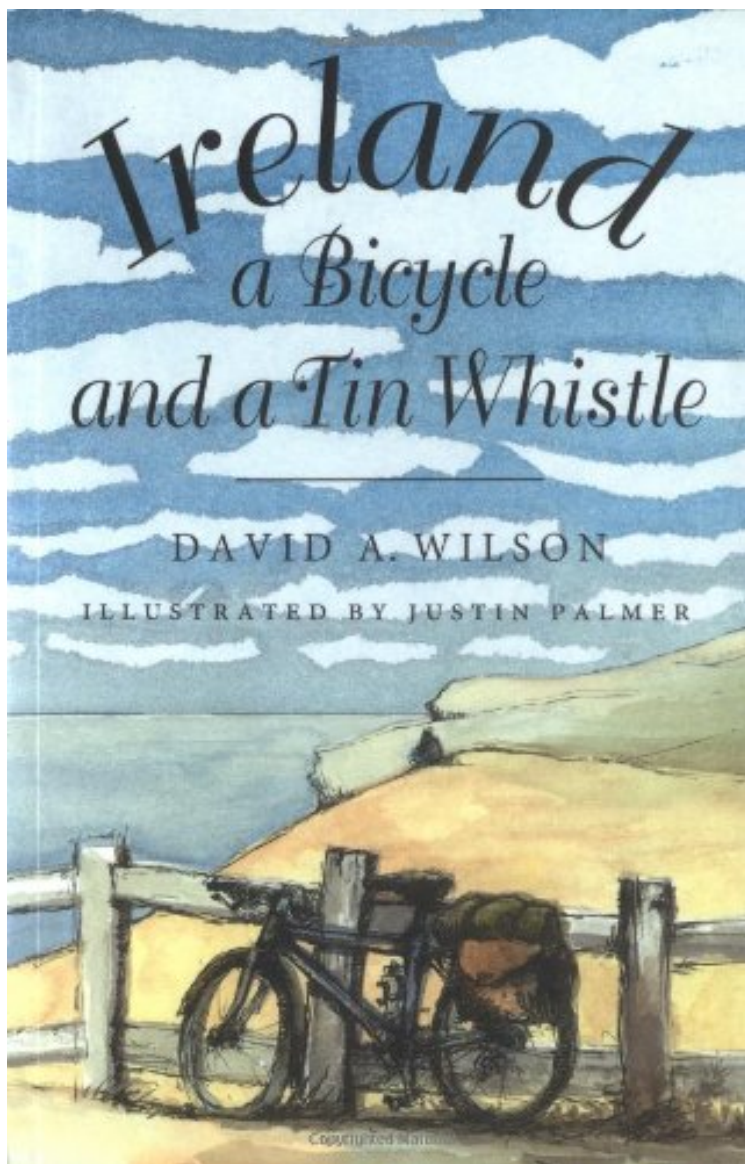


[PDF] Ireland, a Bicycle, and a Tin Whistle

Ireland, a Bicycle, and a Tin Whistle

David A. Wilson

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David A. Wilson : Ireland, a Bicycle, and a Tin Whistle before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ireland, a Bicycle, and a Tin Whistle:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful book for armchair traveler By William D. Cowan This book was recommended to me by one of my friends at a Irish session. It's well written, entertaining, and educational. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. trip through Ireland By Upton A. Savoie I suppose it's unusual to read

something by an Orangeman who has no animus against the Catholics in his country, but Wilson tries to stay neutral. The music crosses borders, and his bicycle trip around and through Eire has many references to the endemic music. References to the tunes are sprinkled throughout, with anecdotes about the people he encounters. A pleasant read. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. See Ireland through Wilson's eyes By Tom Knapp There are plenty of books out there which will tell you where to go and stay in Ireland. But if you want to know the country, its people and customs as well as you possibly can without actually going there, a good bet is reading David A. Wilson's *Ireland, a Bicycle a Tin Whistle*. As the title suggests, the book is Wilson's recollection of his circumnavigation by two-wheeler of Ireland's rolling green hills and smoky pubs. Along the way, he shares a lot of insight into the Irish mind, its poetry and passion for music, and the political and religious divisions which still keep the island from achieving true unity. (His observations in Northern Ireland, which comprise the first and final sections of the book, are especially poignant, but matter-of-fact; he never becomes maudlin or preachy.) Wilson, a native of Whitehead in Northern Ireland's northeastern tip, transplanted with his parents first to England and then to Ontario, Canada (where he became a professor of Celtic studies at the University of Toronto), before returning to his homeland for this excursion. And he couldn't have picked a better way to see and experience as much as possible at a purely personal level. *Ireland, a Bicycle a Tin Whistle* is part travelogue, part social commentary, with a bit of history, a lot of Irish character and a strong thread of music running throughout. Wilson's colorful, descriptive prose at times approaches poetry in its style. Read this book for a real slice of Irish culture; it will sharpen your desire to see Ireland and its people for yourself, or it will bring your own memories of Ireland into distinct and vivid focus. by Tom Knapp, the Rambles.NET guy

As he travels through the North, Wilson gets beneath the political surface to portray both the tragedy and comedy of everyday life in the Protestant and Catholic communities. Aware of the polarized image that each side has of the other, he emphasizes the importance of finding common ground and of asserting the middle against the extremes. Just as traditional Irish music is characterized by ornamentations and elaborations on a melodic theme, *Ireland, a Bicycle, and a Tin Whistle* is full of variations and wanderings on the theme of the trip itself. And just as traditional Irish musicians will follow a sad slow air with a lively foot-tapping reel, Wilson's mood ranges from the nostalgic and reflective to the irreverent and mischievous. If there is a lament in one ear, there is a song in the other.

From Publishers Weekly Wilson, who was born in Ireland and is now an assistant professor of Celtic studies at St. Michael's College, University of Toronto, starts his ramble near the old Belfast homestead armed only with his bicycle and tin whistle in order "to be closer to the spirit of the place... [and] the piece." His venture with music turns rough as drunken Orangemen with a bent for John Denver music insist he must know "Country Road." It's on to Cushendall and Johnny Joe's Pub where the session is jammed and only the magic of his tin whistle gains him entrance through a side window. As he wheels into Donegal, he begins to suffer from the dreaded "Penile Numbness Syndrome," a disease well-known to the avid male cyclist. Here Wilson supplies a basic, albeit hilarious, Gaelic lesson on finding the right bathroom (fir for men; mna for women). A life full of BBs leaves him immune to the Ulster Fry--"a veritable festival of cholesterol"--and he survives food poisoning and flat tires on his swing through the southwest. The author's comments on Irish music are delightful and erudite. Unfortunately, the book is marred by the litany of hangovers (he admits he "travelled from Cork to Dublin in an alcoholic fog, remembering nothing") and his incessant comments on Irish politics--particularly his sanitized version of the famine--which are simplistic with a definitive Orange bias. Copyright 1995 Cahners Business Information, Inc. "Wilson writes of Ireland and its people with wit, humour, imagination, and empathy and in a style that reveals the Irish love and understanding of language." Max Ferguson, host of The Max Ferguson Show, CBC Stereo Network.