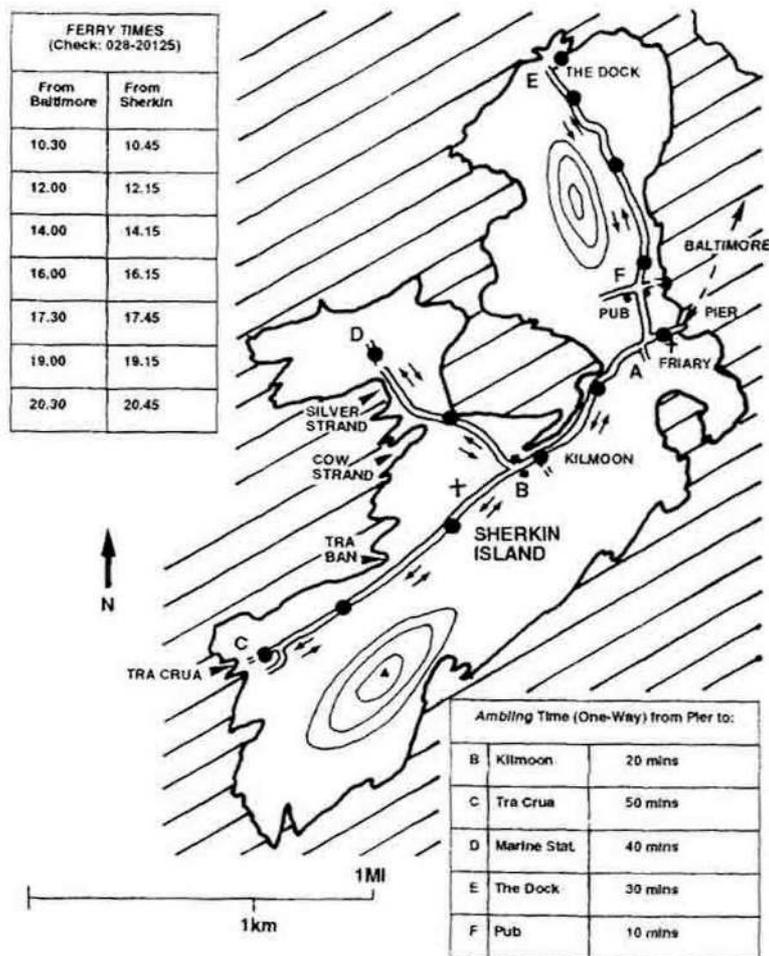


WALK NO. 8. SHERKIN ISLAND



Distance: 12Km
 Time: 3.5Hrs
 Terrain: Narrow, Level, Island lanes, Ideal Walking

Start and Finish: At the pier on Sherkin Island. To get there involves a 20 mile drive to Baltimore, and a 15 minute ferry crossing to that pier. In season the ferry operates regularly, but if in doubt, check with the telephone no. shown in the map inset. Preferably make the earliest sailing from Baltimore.

Comment: Once you land on this small, inhabited island, the clock slows down, and so can you. This is for ambling, for savouring the feel of the island life, for a relaxed pint in the little pub before the ferry home.

This is really lovely and interesting walking, well worth making a day's outing. I describe it as one combined walk, but you can pick and choose bits from it, according to your time and inclination,

Walk: A short steep hill takes you up from the pier, past the 500 year old Franciscan Friary, now being refurbished, to a little crossroads (A). Go straight through this, past the little PO, and your lane soon hugs the shore of Kinnish Harbour - note the

setting of the National School. You pass a nice tree-lined section at Kilmoon, and then keep straight on at the next fork (B), which brings you up past the Church (the only semi-detached Church I know!). Later you pass the attractive Tra Ban (White Strand) below on your right, and there are marvelous views forward to Cape Clear, and over right to Mount Gabriel and well beyond. There are good views, too, back Northward to the hills on the mainland. As you approach Tra Crua, the road swings left up to a few houses, but you continue on a grassy track (can be muddy) past a cottage for a few hundred meters more, to reach the stony cove. A nice spot for a breather, overlooking the Gascannane Sound and Cape Clear, before you head back. But when you reach that fork (B) again, this time swing left, to follow the sign for Silver Strand. This is a very peaceful stretch, bringing you past the back of Cow Strand first and then Silver Strand, both gleamingly washed by the Atlantic tides. Continue for another few hundred meters to where the road ends, if only to get a good view over towards Hare Island. Now walk back to Fork (B) again, where you keep left to retrace your steps towards the Friary. At crossroads (A), turn left up the short hill. The ruin of Dunalong Castle comes into view down to the right, and the little pub is up to your left 200m later. Continue past this if you can, and the 20 minute walk from here out through Farnacoush to the end at The Dock is in a really quiet pastoral setting, quite different from the Tra Crua end. The views across Baltimore Harbour are very attractive, too. (Out at the end, you can go over the stile at the gate, to go 200m to the little jetty at the Dock) From the Dock, return towards the Friary and now you might find, as I did, that the little pub is the obvious vantage point to keep watch for your ferry coming from Baltimore to bring you home - the pier is less than 10 minutes from here