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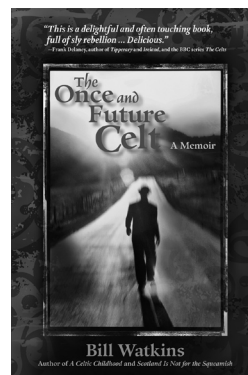
The Once and Future Celt, by Bill Watkins (Scarletta, \$16.95)

It's certain that this memoir takes some liberties with the facts, but who wants to quibble with the details of a good story? And not just one good story, but several.

Pulled by a kind of reverse wanderlust, Bill Watkins sets off from Scotland to his hometown of Birmingham, England, to see his parents on his upcoming 21st birthday. Along the way, he injures himself, is taken in and healed by gypsies, falls in love, learns to accept the unattainable, stumbles through a couple more fleeting romances, learns a lot about life, love, and friendship, and discovers a new appreciation for the wisdom of his gleefully quarrelsome parents.

And he finds his calling, which is to share the history and folklore of the Celtic people. He does so artfully here, taking the reader on many entertaining and informative side trips. His knack for storytelling is the equal of any Irish bard, and he knits together fact and legend like a finely crafted Celtic knot. ☉

—SP



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