An Easter Rising Memoir

Introduction

The Dore family had a long standing tradition of patriotism and opposition to English rule. In the late 1500s the Earl of Desmond appointed James Dore 'at the head of all the carpenters and masons' with instructions to destroy castles. In 1600, Tadhg Dore and his brother were both slain by English soldiers as they defended Glin Castle.

The Dore family were prominent during the ill-fated Fenian Rising and in 1884 James Dore of Glin was charged with having subversive posters in his possession.

Eamonn Dore (de hOir) was born in Glin, County Limerick in 1886. His parents were Edward and Bridget Dore (nee Sheehan). Edward was a relieving officer, draper and publican. Some of Eamonn's older siblings had attended boarding school, so Eamonn attended Roe College during the years 1912, 1913 and 1914. He was initiated into the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) while attending this college. In 1914, he went to UCD as a medical student and when he was transferred to the Dublin branch of the IRB he met Tom Clarke and Sean MacDiarmada. He became courier for the Supreme Council of the IRB and when the Rising was planned in 1915 he was appointed bodyguard to MacDiarmada.

Before Eamonn left Dublin on his Easter holidays he arranged with MacDiarmada to send him a message to his home in Glin, if the Rising was to go ahead. The agreed wording for the wired message was 'grind commences on 24th'. Once he arrived back in Glin he commenced drill instruction with the Glin Volunteers on the Friday prior to Easter. Eamonn was deliberately vague when he hinted to those in attendance that they "might be called on at short notice to answer the summons for duty." When one of the Glin Volunteers learned about the Rising, he rushed to the village to be told that his drill instructor had "left for Dublin to answer an urgent call."

The 1916 recollections of Eamonn Dore:

"My work as a courier took me to the West where I met Liam Mellows, then organising in that region. In the north my contact was Denis McCullough, President of the Supreme Council. In January, 1916, I together with Frank Daly was sent to accompany Commandant Ned Daly, when it was decided by the Military Council to have a 'heart to heart' talk with Connolly.

On Holy Thursday of 1916 I was notified to go that evening to Newcastle West Railway Station to meet Con Collins, who would be travelling from Dublin to Tralee, and that I would receive orders from him. I went to the station but did not meet Collins. I went to the station again on Good Friday, hoping that he might show up. I learned subsequently that Collins had travelled to Tralee via Mallow and had been arrested together with Austin Stack on Friday morning in Tralee.

From January 1915, I was attached to the Headquarters of the IRB and worked directly under Sean McDermott and Tom Clarke. From then up to and including Easter Week as courier I visited venues in Dublin City and also places in the West, North and South, much to the detriment of my studies. I met and worked with Liam Mellows, Dick Murphy and Larry Lardner in the Athlone, Oonmore area and had an important interview with George Nichols of Galway. Nichols was then coroner for his district and a senior officer in the movement. I also met in Galway a brother of Frank McCabe's, like myself a student, attending Galway University. I had to give them orders about saving 'stuff' that his brother, who was in Mountjoy Prison awaiting trial, thought could be traced by the authorities, from notes found on him at his arrest. While in Galway Nichols got suspicious of me, as my introduction from Sean McDermott was written late at night and was not on Irish paper. He refused to carry out my orders and eventually took me to the Central Post Office where he sent a long wire to Seamus O'Connor, solicitor, Dame St and now Dublin Registrar, for a description of Eamonn T Dore, medical student, National University. O'Connor, so he later told me, never
got this wire, though I saw it handed in and paid for. Afterwards this action of Nichols had very serious consequences for me. I had to stand and see this act being done while I was in Galway doing a very serious job. Later I was to know that Nichols was not quite sober at the time. However, I got my work done and later that week travelled back to Dublin with Liam Mellows. Between us a friendship grew that only ended with his murder in Mountjoy in 1923.

I did much work in the Belfast City area where I was well known to Denis McCullough, then of 7 Howard St. and the Falls Road. Miss Una Ryan of St. Mary's Training College staff, now McCullagh's wife, Cathal O'Shannon, who met me under dramatic circumstances, the night I arrived with the document stating Ireland's case at the small nations Conference in Switzerland, in Berne or Geneva, I cannot remember which, Joe Connolly now of Dublin who may remember the visitor from Dublin who got faint almost outside his door on a Sunday, a fortnight before Easter Sunday 1916. That was the last of my many visits to Belfast. I also came in contact with Roisin Breathnach, now librarian for Dublin, during my visits to Belfast.

I also met in the Northern capital Herbert Moore-Paine or Newman. He put me in an awkward corner once. I had or was supposed to have been followed from Dublin and McDermott sent word that I was to do my work but not bring anything incriminating back, fearing a search either at Belfast station or at Amiens St. Paine had some hundreds of rounds of Howth Rifle ammunition he wanted to get rid of and by more or less hinting that I seemed to be afraid, he got me to take them back to Dublin. He packed them in 'Sagar' note-boxes and said that no one would imagine I was carrying anything but note-paper. As if anyone with three of those boxes filled with ammunition could make believe that he was only carrying note-paper. To make matters worse, I had to take them to the house where I was staying in Belfast – McCullaghs. I always stayed with the best friend a boy could have, Denny's mother. Denny was then very much suspect and was only out after doing a term in prison. I got the 'stuff' to Dublin alright and later delivered it to Bulmer Hobson, at Volunteer Headquarters, after getting a typical lecture from McDermott about doing what I was told in future.

The Rising

As my participation in the Rising was rather unique, I think it is right that I should state briefly the facts.

At the last or second last meeting of the IRB circles in Dublin before Easter of '16, orders were given by the Supreme Council that no members were to leave Dublin for the coming Easter Holidays. Sean McDermott, our head centre, corroborated the statement and when told by me as spokesmen of the University Students if the necessities were supplied to us, we could stay in town, he asked how long our holidays were. I said we would have two weeks before and almost two weeks after Easter. Before Sean could reply O'Shea, a member of the IDA association, in a sneering manner said, 'Where there's a will there's a way'. I turned on him and said, 'O'Shea, if anything happens we will be in it but I doubt if you will'. Sean then interrupted and said our case was more difficult than that of the usual week-end members and that those of us not living in Dublin could go to our homes. This accounts for many students not being in the city and therefore not being able to take part in the Rising and not as some said that they deliberately left town to avoid taking part.

A fortnight before Easter Sean McDermott and Tom Clarke sent me to Belfast with messages to Denis McCullough. I may state here that for two years I was attached to, as the modern phrase goes, the 'staff' of Sean McDermott. I returned to Dublin on Sunday and reported the success of my mission to Sean at his digs in Russell Square. He asked when I was going on holidays and when coming back. I replied, 'I am going home tomorrow and I will get back Easter Monday though I shall still have ten days more holidays. You will be late', said he.

We agreed then that if things were definite Sean was to send the following telegram: 'Zoology grind starts (giving day of proposed Rising)', and signing it Joe Doyle, the name of the Zoology lecturer in the University. This wire was not sent but I understand from Gearoid O'Sullivan that Sean actually did write the wire and hand it to him to send but called him back and said, 'Never mind. Leave Emma in at home. One more or less will not make any difference'.

At home I had organised and captained and drilled a goodly company of Volunteers – many of whom afterwards gave a good account of themselves from 1919 to 1923. We had no arms except a few shot guns but had arrangements made that if everything worked out according to plan we would get some from the local Police Barracks. We were also in touch with two men. Holly Fitzgerald of Tarbert, who knew where some rifles were stored. Holly was a brother-in-law of Con Colbert, afterwards executed, and Fitzgerald was an ex-medical student. Colbert and I were friends and had tried to organise districts in Co Limerick. Except in Glin, my native place, we had no great or lasting success. Addressing them on Easter Sunday after parade I told them I was leaving next morning for Dublin and that if anything happened to create a diversion at least by clearing the RIC out of the surrounding barracks. Rumour from a neighbour's son in Tralee Post Office said that a man called Casement was arrested and an arms' ship captured near Tralee. So wire or no wire I got ready and started back to Dublin on Easter Monday at 9 am.

I left Limerick city at 3.55 pm and with other passengers was stopped at Nenagh, twenty miles on the Dublin line from Limerick. Here we were told that no train would travel to Dublin, by order, and with a few exceptions most passengers returned to Limerick, but I remained on the platform until the station was locked at 9 pm. The station master told me a train might run at 7 am next morning, so I adjourned to the nearest hotel where the owner, Miss Ryan, on hearing I was a draper's assistant returning to my job, said, 'You are no draper's assistant, but never mind I will get you up in time for that train'. True to her word she called me at 6 am, and though I hurried to the dining room she had a breakfast ready for me and though I never met her
before nor did she know my name even so she did not want to charge me for
my stay. Leaving her, she wished me a safe journey and luck. The train did pass
at 7 am and with two other passengers.

I got to Ballybrophy where again this time by military order we were returned to
Limerick. I, thinking by this time that Limerick was in the Rising, had no qualms about returning and had agreed with myself that, failing Limerick, I would carry on to Kerry where I actually was convinced fighting would take place.

However, as I left Limerick station to make inquiries I saw a rail-porter writing ‘usual five to four train for Dublin this evening’. I rushed to have something to eat and again got on board the train. This time I decided whatever it stopped I would keep travelling Dublinwards. The carriage I got into was soon full and two young ladies were sitting opposite me whom I did not know but thought they were very like Mrs Tom Clarke, whom I knew well, and so concluded they were the Misses Daly, her sisters. We all got talking and I related my previous efforts at reaching Dublin without in anyway stating why and nearing Ballybrophy, I said if this rail journey finishes here I am carrying on up the line and those two Miss Dalsys, Laura and Nora, for such they were, offered to accompany me and a Mrs McCarry of Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin, who had been in Limerick from headquarters the previous day, Easter Monday, with a message to Limerick Volunteers to go into action, also said she would join us.

There was no necessity as the train very slowly wended its way to Dublin terminus, Kingsbridge. Fearing a search, I destroyed all identification marks, as the police at my home town, Glin, Co Limerick, saw me leaving and knowing my activities I feared their wiriting Dublin. I also spoke personally to the Miss Dalsys, telling them I knew their sister Mrs Clarke and that if they trusted me I would try to get them to her home. They did take me on trust but then the times were strange. With a passenger, P ODonovan and his sister-in-law, Miss Adams, who knew the north city well, the former being a clerk in Kingsbridge, we went by Arbour Hill and the North Circular Road, got to Dorset St and by way of Clonliffe Road, to Fairview, where Mrs Clarke lived, along with her maid, her husband, Tom, being in the GPO.

Here we learnt of the fighting and that by Ballyloch and Pearse St we could reach the headquarters of the Volunteers in the GPO. We proceeded there and saw many strange happenings. Many were behaving as if death did not stalk fully armed just a hundred yards round the nearest corner. Neighbours were even inviting one another to ‘hoolies’, to eat the food taken from nearby shops and even some were wheeling a piano up the highway of Great George’s St. Coming into O’Connell St we saw the tricolour flying over the GPO and crossing towards that side of the street we saw the dead horses of the British regiment of Lancers and stretching from Purcell’s tobacco shop was a strand of barbed wire breast high, to prevent horses passing. When we reached this a sentry under the pillars in front summoned us to halt. I told him, ‘Tell Sean McDermott Dore is outside’. He returned immediately to tell me ’go right in’.

With my lady companions we went in and gave Sean all the news from the country and I, seeing Jim Ryan, final year medical student, how Dr Ryan of the Free State Government, went to talk to him while Sean went with my erstwhile companions to a room to meet the other members of the headquarters of the GPO. A few minutes after talking to Ryan I went to sleep, sitting on the table beside him, and was hardly unconscious when I was again shaken and recovering my senses I was told Sean McDermott wanted me to go out again. I was taken to a room. With Sean with Tom Clarke, Patrick and William Pearse, Joe Plunkett and James Connolly. Here I was told that they were going to send the Miss Dalsys out of the city if possible with messages, one to Cork to Terry McSweeney and the other to Limerick to try and get them to help, as far as they had not done so. I was to try and get them out of the city and humour had it that passenger trains would run from Kingsbridge at 6 am to take excursionists back to their homes. I might be able to avail of this train if I could get the Miss Dalsys to it. I demurred about going out again as I was asleep on my feet and did not feel able but Sean said I was the only one with any acquaintance with the British military positions and that nobody else would succeed. I agreed to have a try but said not to blame me if I failed to return but that if at all possible I would be back.

Miss Laura Daly again turned to Sean and said what will we say to those in command in Limerick and in Cork and he said, ‘Tell Terry McSweeney we are in action and that we know he will follow. Tell Limerick to go to hell. If they don’t fight for Ireland this week they will have to fight for their skins later’. He came to the entrance gate with us, shook hands and bade us good-bye and good luck and then calling me said, ‘Eamonn, if you succeed, don’t come back. You have done enough and you know everything is over and you can do no good here’. I said alright, for Sean always had consideration for his friends and started on the midnight adventure, for it was now past 12 o’clock.

We went to Clarke’s in Fairview from where we had come a few hours before and there I lay on a bed to rest a while, giving orders that nothing but a liberal sprinkling of cold water would wake me. I was dreaming very pleasantly of home when the cold water brought me to realise that not all dreams are true. The time was 3.30 am and this gave us two and a half hours to get to Kingsbridge and as we had to walk and not by the shortest way but whatever way was possible we required all this time and probably more to get there. As it happened we only just reached the station in time.

We started out as dawn was breaking and the distant gunfire brought us back to the reality of things. Those miles of empty streets were only inhabited by stray cats and an occasional dog scavenging. Once more up the long length of Clonliffe Road we went to Drumcondra and the North Circular Road. Here we had our first experience of war for now the British troops were everywhere from Mountjoy to Kingsbridge. We were halted near the prison entrance and I was taken before an officer who was more sleepy than myself. Here I was questioned as to my business but not even asked my name, fortunately, for I had forgotten to agree with the ladies, left un molested in the street, as to a name. I made this correction immediately on my return to them which I was permitted to do after explaining that I was only trying to get my sisters out of the city by a train, from Kingsbridge at 6 am. He told me to hurry or I would miss it. I thanked him and walked off with the sergeant major who was in charge of me. Again joining my friends we decided, owing
to Commandant Ned Daly being in charge of the Republican forces in the Four Courts area, to take the name of Dore and to be brother and sisters. This was no sooner fixed than we were again halted at Blackfriars Bridge and the same procedure gone through. Again I returned to my companions after being questioned but at Phibsborough Church I was again taken away, this time to an officer in Cabra Road just round the corner. He was decidedly the worse for drink and being quite affable I tried to get a pass from him as time was getting short but failed, he saying, ‘No pass, just take your chance’. I did and was not again questioned, though we passed Arbour Hill where all was activity, until we got to the bridge crossing the Liffey at Kingsbridge. Here the officer was almost asleep, sitting on the pavement and he scarcely heard my answers to the Sergeant’s questions.

And so we were at the station on time and rounding the turn to the departure entrance, I saw standing in the distance just near the door Detective Officer Hoey, since killed by a mutual friend, for helping to incriminate Sean McDermott and thus ensure his execution. Hoey I had to avoid if I were to return, as we had already met too often. I asked Miss Laura Daly to go to the station and ask if a train was going south. She did so and returned almost immediately to say ‘Yes, but only ticket holders admitted.’ Fortunately we had two return tickets to Limerick and if they got on board one would have to take the chance of being passed on. This is what actually did happen as I later lived to learn. I told them I could not hang around too long owing to Hoey and so we said good-bye and when I saw them enter the station door I knew all was as well as I could make it and I started back on my long, lonely, nerve-wracking walk to the city and the GPO.

Now I had no sisters and only a very second-rate excuse for rambling into and out of the war zone at such an hour. Now I had to rely on the excuse that I was only after leaving my sisters at the train for home and had already passed this way after getting permission to do so. I decided to go back exactly as I had come until I reached Dorset St. The hails were far more numerous than on my way to Kingsbridge and the military were not so affable. Every train car standing idly on the tracks had its quota of soldiers resting against it and as I passed each, after being questioned, I had a very creepy feeling in my spine, waiting for that shot in the back, which never really came. And so after almost two hours I again got into the city and immediately went to my digs at 7 Upper Gardiner St, where I had left my rifle and ammunition before going on holidays. I decided to pick up the rifle and get it where it belonged. On enquiring, I found that Con Colbert and Diarmuid O’Hegarty, who also had their guns in my room for safety (they being government officials) had taken it, fearing I would not get back in time, and had given it to a Volunteer called McKenna who failed to turn out. Here was a disappointment, as most of my pocket money, given to me by my sister Bride, had gone to its purchase.

However, while waiting for the landlady, Miss Brooks, to make enquiries I stood near a press in the kitchen and while standing went to sleep, to wake to see my boots polished. They were white with dust when I came to the house. I slept standing through the polishing. I said good-bye to Miss Brooks and started on the last and far most dangerous part of my journey. Another twenty minutes should see me completely successful or and I did not think of the alternative. I went from Gardiner St to Denmark St and along that until it joined Parnell Square at Findlater’s Church with my brother. Here the military had a barricade and were letting nobody down from Frederick St, but I came into Parnell Square from the south of the barricade and proceeded, trying to act completely unconcerned, down towards O’Connell St. At the bank at the corner of Parnell Square I stopped to get my bearings and heard English voices from over my head in the bank premises and saw what looked like soldiers on the flat roof of the Rotunda across the road. Furthermore I could see the rifle flashes from the other side of O’Connell Bridge and heard a heavy bombardment which seemed rather close. In the distance, at Purcell’s tobacco shop just next to the GPO one lone civilian was leaning. Towards this refuge I walked quite slowly, my mind in a daze, for I really did not expect to live and yet failed to pray. My mind was in too much of a whirl to concentrate on prayer.

Much to my amazement I reached the civilian alive and asked him what place was being shelled. He, in a decidedly English accent, or so it sounded, said, ‘It’s on the Quays’. I hardly waited for his answer but eluded under the strand of wire and dashed for the entrance gate. While running, the idea came to me that the only safe part of the gate, while waiting for it to open, was the exact centre, as the pillars at the end would save me from rifle fire. This thought undoubtlessly saved my life, for while waiting I could hear the whistle of the bullets but none reached me. Standing at the gate before it opened seemed hours but at last it opened and I, being as I was tightly pressed against it, fell into the arms of the sentry. The next I can remember is the exclamation from Tom Clarke, just passing as I steadied myself, ‘Farnonn, so you got back’.

Tom and I got into conversation about the general position outside and I explained how the military were closing in but I believed it was still possible to fight our way out and prolong the Rising. I said that a number of Volunteers could get out and by concentrated firing from the rear of the present British positions, they could force their command to withdraw their troops and leave an opening through which the main body could get out of the encircling movement. I expected that something like this might be done or otherwise we had only a few days before the pincers closed.

I told Tom I would try to get a rifle and he took me to a counter on the ground floor at which were Brian O’Higgins and Michael Staines, in charge of whatever military stores were to be had. Tom told them to give me whatever I wanted and so I got a Martin Henry rifle and thirty rounds of ammunition. Tom left, I presume to repeat the information I had brought back and in a short while James Connolly was to go outside into the street. I had only just left. He had scarcely been out when he was back very seriously wounded but yet he carried on to the end. Even when in terrible suffering he never grumbled.

I having procured my gun went in search of Sean McDermott and found him talking to Miss Min Ryan, now Mrs Mulcahy, and Miss Phyllis Ryan, now Mrs Sean T O’Kelly. The Miss Ryans left the Post Office shortly afterwards and I again repeated to him what I had told Tom Clarke. He sent me to the Princess St door of the Metropole to get some messages and to stay there until
some system of communication that had broken down was repaired. After some hours I was sent for and helped Tom Clarke with work he was doing — searching presses and finding stores and moving material from one floor to another. Later on Wednesday night there was an hour of general attack by the British from the Moore St - Parnell St direction and so I went to a room on the ground floor where Tom Traynor, if I remember rightly, afterwards executed in 1920 in Mountjoy, Joe Dunne, a man called Twamley and a young boy, who seemed to have a deformed or short leg, were. I can see Traynor’s calm even when attack was to come at any moment. I really cannot imagine him being excited. Joe Dunne’s infectious laugh and Twamley’s wise-cracks helped me also to at least look calm. The boy behaved as if he was at some street game.

All that night and well into Thursday we waited for the attack that did not develop. At midday on Thursday, being both really hungry and agonisingly tired, I went looking for something to eat and rambled into a room on the upper floors where I got tea with sour milk. Even the hunger did not make me eat this fare and so munching a few biscuits I got from a box I rambled again to the ground floor where for a while I helped Jim Ryan with a badly wounded Volunteer. When finished I lay on the floor and must have fainted for I suddenly opened my eyes to see Jim Ryan’s worried face bending over me and going to give me a stimulant. My senses completely recovered at the sight of the brandy bottle in his hand, for I had a horror of intoxicants. I asked Jim to promise not to put it to my lips and he kept that promise, and it was many hours afterwards before I again regained consciousness. When I did Fr O’Regan was bending over me with the girls of Cumann na mBan who expected that I would never recover. It was a case of sheer exhaustion and want of food. The fires in O’Connell St were well ignited when I again was able to move, and the waiting for the fire that was to consume our building was not over pleasant. Again all was calm and men stood to their posts like veterans.

I met Sean McDermott and said the food was terrible and he told me he would be going for something to eat in a while and to come with him. So on Friday evening I went to eat with Sean, Tom Clarke, Diarmuid Lynch and through to William’s and Wood’s factory in Parnell St. I asked Paddy Murray would he come with them and he agreeing we volunteered for this job which may have been possible on Wednesday when I hinted such but now was hopeless.

However, we lined up in Henry St despite crossfire from the ruins on the other side of O’Connell St and were addressed by Pearse and spoke to us about dying for the flag and someone beside me said that was ‘bull’. O’Rahilly gave the order to move off, he leading and turning into Moore St we tried to get to our new quarters, but failed. So we were with O’Rahilly when he and about eight or ten of our comrades were killed, including Harry Coyne and Shorten from Ballybunion. Murray was very seriously injured but recovered, T.G. I received a slight wound below the ankle of my right foot. We never succeeded in breaking through to Williams and Woods despite two attempts and spent Friday night in a house of Moore St. Despite the noise and row and conflagration in the surrounding streets we slept the sleep of the just in an old empty room and were roused from our sleep by our own bombs left behind in the Post Office.

Diarmuid Lynch

Sean McGarry and tasted meat which was sweeter than ever before and heard McGarry jokingly ask Fr O’Flanagan if he, McGarry, would go to hell if he ate meat on a Friday and to the priest’s, ‘Why, Sean,’ he replied, ‘I’ll chance it, father’, and we all laughed. Tom Clarke opened a tin of pears with a bayonet when Fitzgerald, who was in charge of the group, had left the room.

Just then word was brought that the GPO was on fire. Each looked at the other and continued to eat to the end, then went down stairs to find nearly all the men lined up in the large ground floor. The crackling heat of this raging fire was all round. Diarmuid Lynch was trying to get bombs shifted from one danger point to another less so in the basement and I went to help him. Pat Wexler, since dead, was there, amongst others. I can still see Diarmuid, apparently calm, pipe in mouth, back to one wall of the underground passage, playing a fire-hose to keep the fire from burning us as we posed with our death-dealing load. Each of us carried the bombs as if they were sods of turf. We had only a short time to work in any case as the fire was getting all too near. Here my hat caught fire, but though it was destroyed I escaped.

Finishing in the basement, we came up again to the ground floor where now all were collected awaiting orders. Sean McDermott sent Paddy Murray and myself to hold a door at the Henry St side of the GPO and after a time a number of men with O’Rahilly filed out there. I asked one of them, Sean Reynolds, where they were going. He said to drive the British off the top of Moore St and to try and break a way

The O’Rahilly, who fought with Eamonn Dore in the GPO and died on Moore Street, after leaving the burning building.
We came down stairs to find the flames trying to get a hold in the front of the house we occupied and by means of a few empty biscuit tins filled from a small water tap and a chain of six or seven men we spent most of Saturday morning trying to control the fire. We succeeded more by prayer than anything. Having no food we found a box of raisins not too clean and together with water we made a meal of them that almost poisoned us. Pat Weafer, Cassidy, John Reynolds, J.S. Reilly, Denis Daly were there amongst other whose names I cannot remember. We had one badly wounded man with us. I did not know his name. He was in great pain all night.

When news of the general surrender came to us next evening we evacuated the place carrying with us two of our comrades who were wounded. We marched up Moore St to the Parnell monument where we were kept separated from the main body standing on the right hand side of O'Connell St as you looked towards the bridge. We fell into the hands of a man called Lee Wilson, Captain of the Staffordshire Regiment. We were lined up and got orders to ground our arms. We laid them down and were told to step two paces to the rear and we did. When we had laid down our arms Lee Wilson went round bullying us, he lifted his whip, his riding crop, to beat me up. I happened to be out two or three times during the Rising on messages and they gave me a yellow band to put on my arm so that they would recognise me coming back and this yellow band was still on my arm so he thought I was in charge of the prisoners and he lifted his crop to beat me and I forgot myself and I went for him. But before anything happened General Lowe came on the scene with his aide-de-camp Wheeler, Major Wheeler I think he was.

Everything calmed down then and we were marched over into O'Connell St and put standing at Parnell Square end of O'Connell St looking down towards the bridge. The whole place was on fire. It was a lovely evening but there was nobody around. We saw our comrades who had been with us in the Post Office lined up on the right-hand side. They had already been brought there about an hour before us. We looked round the street, wondering what was going to be the end of it all. Out of Abbey St came the 1st Battalion with Ned Daly, the Commandant in charge of it. Daly was walking, to all appearance, quite calmly, with slow, firm step at the head of his men, followed by his officers Shouldice, O'Callaghan, Lynch and Hegarty. The men were walking as if they were going home. They came to a halt at the Gresham Hotel on that side of the street on the orders of Ned.

De Courcy-Wheeler, aide-de-camp to General Lowe who was in charge of that area on the British side, ordered Ned to line up his men two deep on that side of the street. Daly did as he was ordered, just as he had done nearly once a fortnight in Parnell Square, when we were drilling after a route march or anything else. His voice boomed out again and the men obeyed every command as if they were professional soldiers. So impressed was de Courcy-Wheeler when the arms were laid down and Daly stepped forward and saluted, having carried out the orders given, that de Courcy Wheeler also saluted him. General Lowe in a furious voice cried, 'My God, saluting a rebel officer'. Then we all stood there like the two arms of the letter E, on crooked from the Gresham looking across the street to the GPO side and we, the fifteen or sixteen who had survived the O'Rahilly charge in Moore St, as it is now called, looking down.

Just before dusk while there was still light, we were moved to join the main body near the GPO on that side of the street and the military command rang out from the British, 'Keep two paces away from those men and if any of them tries to move, shoot'. But while that was going on, a soldier behind me, belonging apparently to a North of Ireland regiment, asked me if I was thirsty and I replied 'No thanks'. He said, 'I've tea here. Don't mind taking any notice of these people' – referring to the officer who gave the order – though he was serving under him. Gradually we were all brought together – the crowd on the Gresham side and ourselves on the GPO side – and we were marched inside the railings of the Rotunda Hospital where there was a small grass plot and we were all crowded into that grass plot for the night. And as we stayed there we were told to lie down. We had to lie on top of one another. They wouldn't allow any of us to do anything else.

During the night Captain Lee Wilson tried to incite the troops, i.e. the guard of British soldiers who were minding us and holding us as prisoners, against us. Later Frank Henderson, still alive, knelt up to stretch himself and Wilson snapped a rifle from a soldier nearby and hit him across the head, knocking him unconscious. During the night the British military sometimes went outside the railing and the Dublin Metropolitan Police came inside. This exchange happened two or three times until eventually the soldiers took full control which meant that the civil and military authorities were fighting for our bodies during the night.

When the military took control in the morning for the last time and kept it. Wilson took Tom Clarke. Ned Daly and my friend Sean McDermott, they were all my friends but particularly Sean, and stripped them to the skin, down to their boots, shirt and all and eventually searched them. Tom's arm, which had been wounded at the elbow, had stiffened and in order to get his coat off and his clothes, Wilson tore that arm open again. So cruel was his behaviour that a comrade of mine sitting alongside me said, 'If that sound-so comes through this war, we'll get him wherever he is and we'll kill him'. At the time I did think this was just talk but three years afterwards practically to the day, he was executed in the town of Gorey in Wexford, as he was coming out of church. It wasn't a murder, it was an execution for savagery shown during the whole night and the climax of it was when he tore Clarke's wounded arm open to take off his coat.

Later we were taken from there and Sean McDermott, who had a lame leg due to an attack of polio contracted from overwork in the 1912–13 period, always had to take a stick in order to walk, as his left leg was almost useless. They took the stick from him and they made him march from the Rotunda up to Richmond barracks, which was very close to the present Kingsbridge railway station. Young Fitzsimon who was walking on the outside of me in the groups of four asked me at one stage as we were going up James's St if we were downhearted and I said 'no', and a soldier with a bayonet lunged at him and stuck the bayonet a couple of inches up his back.

We eventually, on that Summer's morning, got to Richmond gate and were lined up four deep in the yard of Richmond British military barracks...
and then taken in groups of four to be searched and, we thought, executed. While we were standing there, the men, some of whom had been without water for nearly twenty-four hours and who had not been a lavatory of any kind during that time were fainting from sickness and pain in the yard. Eventually some of us were marched off. My file was ready to go. J.R. Reynolds, already mentioned, said to me that it looked as if we were going to be executed in files of four and that we would want to say a few prayers before that happened to us. I must confess that I couldn’t say one prayer while walking up that 20 or 30 [yards] to the turn round which the others had gone, though we thought we heard a volley fired. Whether it was a volley or not, it sounded like one. But I certainly couldn’t pray and then realised how futile it was to wait for the last moment to say your prayers. If you hadn’t them said before that you would never say them then.

Actually when we got up there we were searched and marched into the gymnasium of the barracks. I remember a corporal taking two silver cigarette cases from me, seven or eight shillings and nervous as I was, as we all were, I protested and the officer in charge turned round and said, ‘What are you complaining about?’ This man has taken two silver cigarette cases and money from me’, I answered. He ordered the corporal to hand back what he had taken. I found afterwards that he was a Captain Barton, one of the British Army then, and later the man who signed the treaty in London with Collins, Griffith and the others. He was a relative of Childers who was executed by the Free State Government. We were put in rooms in the barracks – fifty in each room, and we were still without any lavatory facilities, though we were now more than twenty-five hours without them. They brought us water and other things.

They kept us there until late that evening. They handed each of us a tin of bully beef and two dog biscuits. Afterwards we were marched out into the barrack square and paraded. Then we were put into sections of sixteen with a soldier in charge of each section and were marched out the gate. Before we went out, a soldier alongside me said, ‘Well, they are taking you out and will put you on board ships and they will sink you in the Channel on the way to Holyhead and then they will say it was the Germans that did it’. When we got to the North Wall that night, through the dark city, no lights were to be seen except that coming from the fires still burning in O’Connell St and the area around it, we were put down in the hold of the boats. The soldiers were ordered to get lifebelts and put them on. No such precaution was taken in our case. We were locked into the hold of the boats so naturally, particularly owing to the remarks made by the soldier, we expected that we were going to be torpedoed and that they were going to finish us off that way. Brian O’Higgins started saying the Rosary. Dr Jim Ryan and myself – he was not a doctor then, only a medical student like myself – put our arms round one another as we lay against the bulkhead and went to sleep. All we heard of the Rosary was the Creed and when we woke we were in Holyhead.

From there we were taken down through England. We didn’t know where we were going. Eventually some of us arrived in Stafford. When we got out at the station there was a howling mob outside the station waiting to attack us and the British soldiers, while scoffing at us, had to form a cordon across the square to save us. We marched into the city of Stafford to the prison, crowded into a yard, one of the exercise yards, and a soldier stood up to call out our names. We couldn’t understand what he was saying. He couldn’t pronounce our names anyway. Even if he could it would have been useless because he had the wrong list. He had the list of those who had gone to Knutsford. We were put upstairs. Each of the warders had a baron with him because the governor, who was a Scotchman, a thin spiteful man, said we were dangerous men and that if we were to mutiny or to try anything else they were to club us. We didn’t do any fighting then. We were very quiet and very tired because some of us hadn’t slept for days. Some of us hadn’t washed since the previous Monday, and as it was by now either Sunday or Monday again that meant for a full week. We were rather dishevelled as a result. My hair had been burnt when shifting the bombs with Dermot Lynch. My hat had disappeared in the same fire. We were locked into cells. I fell asleep and when I woke I found myself between Mick Collins, afterwards famous in the Tan War, and Jim Ryan, now Minister of State. Jim and I had been medical students together.

Here I would like to recall an interesting incident that took place before we left Richmond Barracks. At that time we didn’t know how many university students were actually in the Rising. As we came out the door of the barracks, however, our names and fingerprints were taken and opposite each fingerprint our names and particulars about us were entered. I can remember Jim Ryan going out and when asked what he was he said that he was a medical student and when asked said, ‘In UCD’. I came next and on being asked the same two questions, answered ‘a medical student’ to the first and to the latter, ‘University College Dublin’. Next came Frank Burke, a past-pupil of St Enda’s and afterwards Head-Master of the same school. I didn’t know him at the time. He said he was an Arts student

Eamonn Dore (extreme right) with Michael Collins (5th from the right) and other internees in Stafford Jail before Frongoch. (Courtesy of Máiread Dore)
at University College Dublin. Then came Joe Sweeney who was also an Arts student at UCD. At this stage the officer asking the questions lost his temper and said, "What the hell is this place that has got you all out here?" But he never realised that there were only twelve of us altogether, out of the seven or eight hundred who were in the Rising, but we all happened by pure coincidence to walk out together and our names were down in the book together. As a result, I think he was under the impression that we were all university students.

In Stafford, as I already said, Ryan and I found ourselves in cells next door to one another and next to me on the other side was Mick Collins, the revolutionary of the Tan War, who afterwards signed the Treaty and became Commander in Chief of the Free State Army. He was killed in his native Cork during the Civil War. The other medical students were downstairs with Frank Burke, all of whom had been St. Enda’s boys under Pearse. When Frank became Headmaster of St. Enda’s he adapted as it were the mantle of Pearse and if ever there was a man fit to follow in Pearse’s footsteps Frank Burke was the man. Pearse himself called him the modern Cuchulainn. Frank is the same today as he was then; for him there is no compromise. He has raised one of the best families that I know of anywhere. He and I are still the friends we were and I hope will remain so. He has more medals for All-Ireland football and hurling than any man living or dead ever had. I think he was born in America.

While we were at Stafford, when we were allowed visitors, which was after a couple of months, Irish girls teaching in Birmingham used to come down to visit us now and again. Amongst those that used to visit us was Angela Curran, who eventually married Frank Burke. He and she are still my dear friends.

Most of the men who were with me are dead now. Fintan Murphy is dead, as is also one of the McGirnes, Eamonn Biffin is still alive as are Brian Joyce and Desmond Ryan, the author – all St. Enda’s boys. Eamonn Biffin is a son of the man who wrote ‘Rambles in Erin’.

When we were a month or two in Stafford the men from Ennisnorthy and Wexford who had fought in the Rising arrived. They were the most upstanding individuals that we met after the Rising.

Of all the countryside men who were with us in Stafford the Wexford men stood out on their own. They were born revolutionaries. They had gone through ’98 and fought the British to a standstill for a part of that period. They acted on their arrival in Stafford as the sons and descendants of men who had already trodken the hard way – John Murphy, Tom Synott, Phil Murphy, to name but a few.

Frank Shouldice was also in Stafford. He was an All-Ireland footballer. His brother Jack was in Portland prison, and Berrie in Knutsford. Their sister Ena was arrested but later released. The four of them had been employed in the British Civil Service and as a result of their action they all lost their jobs. The prisoners in Portland had been tried and sentenced; we in Stafford were the untried prisoners.

Some of us about whom the authorities had doubts were released after a few months and those of us that remained were brought to Frongoch. We were the last crowd to be brought to Frongoch. An epidemic had broken out amongst the thirty or so of us who remained in Stafford Prison and we were kept until it was cleared up. One morning before we left Stafford as we were coming back from exercise Murt O’Connell shouted at us as we arrived at our cell doors to turn round and he took a photograph of us. Though the prison was searched by the warders for that camera, they never found it. When we got to the outer gate as we were leaving for Frongoch we were searched even though we had already been searched at the inner gate. We were asked by the soldiers on guard if we had anything to hide. Murt still had the camera. He threw it to a lady who was standing outside the gate, which was now open. She caught it and ran down the street. So, years afterwards we were all presented with a copy of that photograph. The lady was the wife of Daniel Figgis, who later (the wife) died tragically. I don’t know if he married again, but there was something peculiar attached to his later life.

Lists of our names were sent to London from time to time and enquiries were made as to whether we should be released or not. So later on, about the end of August or the beginning of September a few of us were asked to sign papers saying we wanted to be tried. We refused to do so but whether or not we were taken before judges in London. There were six or eight of us in all. We were the last crowd to go there. We were locked into a room in Wormwood Scrubs prison in London and we were brought one morning for this enquiry. Somebody appointed a chap called McDonnell to look after our interests. He sat in a room near the entrance gate and told us when we went into him to tell us everything we knew.

This was what he told me, anyway. I told him that I didn’t want to go to London and that I didn’t want anyone to enquire into my case. I said I went into the Rising with my eyes open, that I had no regrets and that I was not going to tell him anything. I told him that I hadn’t asked for him to give me advice and that I didn’t want advice from him or anyone else.

Then I was taken into another room where there were three judges, one a Mooney of Mooney Brothers, the publicans in Dublin. There was a judge called Sinkey. He became chancellor or something like that in the McDonald government afterwards in England. I don’t remember the name of the third judge. He was able to tell me all about myself, wherever he got the information. He asked me if I knew what I was doing when I went into the Rising and I said I did. I had travelled a hundred and fifty miles to take part in it. I took two days to do that. I was taken back to my cell and two or three days afterwards I was brought back to Frongoch and left there. The others that came with me received like treatment. They released roughly three or four hundred of the prisoners and kept about 190 of us in Frongoch, where things went from bad to worse. Eventually, about two months before we were released, we went on hunger strike for some days, or at least some eighty or ninety of us did. When the strike was over we were reunited once more with those of our comrades who hadn’t taken part in the strike. There was another enquiry, followed by another hunger strike. My lung got affected and I was put into hospital and finally released on a stretcher.

Conclusion

Eamonn was very ill when he came back from Frongoch. One lung was damaged and he lost the other one. He received a warm welcome from the people of Glin when he arrived home from England. Fellow members of the Glin
Division of the AOH\(^5\) and others with an improvised band led a torchlight procession to his father's house in Main Street, Glin. Eamonn was accompanied by an attendant, owing to his precarious health and the parade ended without incident.\(^9\) While he was recuperating he went to stay with his sister Bride, who was married, at Balliston, near Shanagolden.\(^10\) He never fully recovered from his ordeal in prison and was not well enough to resume his studies.

In 1918 he had recovered sufficiently to marry Nora Daly, sister of Edward (Ned) Daly and sister-in-law of Thomas Clarke, both executed for their part in leading the Rebellion. They had three children, one son and two daughters and the family ran a bakery shop in William Street, Limerick which traded until 1956, when it closed.\(^11\) The family lived on the North Circular Road, where Eamonn named the house 'An Gleann' in tribute to his native home.

Eamonn was honorary secretary to the committee established with a brief to erect a suitable 1916 monument on Sarsfield Bridge. The committee began organising and fund raising in 1931 and due to lack of funds unveiled the new monument in 1956, twenty five years later.\(^12\)

He was a regular visitor to his native home, especially at Easter time. In 1966 he was guest speaker at the 1916 commemoration in Glin when he gave 'an inspiring account of his experiences.' Canon Ryan said he was pleased to introduce 'a Glin man who had been active in the Rising.'\(^13\)

Eamonn died on 17 June 1972 when he was 76 years old. Canon Ryan, who welcomed him to Glin six years previously, gave his family a plot at the back of the Roman Catholic Church in Glin, where Eamonn is buried.

Endnote:

Eamonn Dore mentioned that Major-General W. H. M. Lowe who assumed command of British forces in Dublin, accepted his surrender. His son John Lowe, who was also a British Army officer, assisted his father in the suppression of the Rising and subsequently became a Hollywood actor under the screen name John Loder.

References

2. Irish Times and Freeman's Journal 7 June, 1884.
3. Eamonn, like his father, used the English form of his name as a boy. He changed to the Gaelic form as he grew older. He also signed his name as Eamon.
4. Edward was succeeded as Relieving Officer by his daughter Mary. In 1922 (Irish Times 13 April 1922).
5. NAI Census returns 1901 and 1911 at: http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie
7. Information received from Eamonn's daughters Nore and Mairead Dore.
8. The Ancient Order of Hibernians.
10. Bride had attended the FCA Convant in Bruff, County Limerick, as a boarder and shortly after the left school she married her first cousin Michael J. Dore, when she was 20 years old.
11. The confectioner in the William Street bakery was Frank Murphy, a member of a family well known in the baking trade and uncle to the late Frank Prendergast, former Mayor of Limerick.
12. Information received from William O'Neill of Limerick Archives.