

Easy as falling off a bike.

I did my falling off in style! Straight over the handlebars, hit the wet country road with both hands, knees and finished with my face on the road. Later I hoped the film crew I'd just photographed doing a photo-shoot outside the only pub in Newcastle, County Wicklow, Ireland had spotted my audition and put me in their film!

Immediately before my incident Martin Shaw, the star of the film was outside the pub and he said "Hi" to me after finishing a scene he was in. Cycling down the windswept Sea Road afterwards I might have been star-struck or simply struck by a gust of wind that came through the hedge and blew off my floppy hat. I noticed my top false front tooth on the road but too shocked to pick it up before I rode the now-wobbly bicycle back to my daughter's home. They all gathered around and said I looked pretty; no, I mean pretty battle-scarred.

My daughter rang for an ambulance and when it didn't come, rang again when I fainted briefly. I came to and found I was encircled by four rapid response medics and a choice of transport to hospital.

If I'd had the presence of mind, I would have asked the lady ambulance driver to stop off as we passed the pub, renamed "The Rook" just for the film, where the camera shoot was probably still taking place. I couldn't see out from the back of the ambulance where I was wearing an oxygen mask and in shock, they said. I wasted the next six hours between the drive to hospital, the waiting, an X-ray, the diagnosis, bandaging and released at 11 pm with merely one sprained wrist and a bandaged knee. The tooth had to be re-ordered; it was the only false one I had.

Much earlier that day, I'd asked for information from one of the film crew; he told me the film was to be called "George Gently" and it would appear on BBC TV in July 2008. (I watched it then but I wasn't in it).

I also deduced that the film scene I'd witnessed in rural Ireland was going to appear to be set in England in the 1960's judging by the type of cars in the shot, the old English police uniforms and most significantly, a road sign on a telegraph pole saying "A1 Newcastle" There is no A1 in the Irish Republic but there is one near Newcastle in Tyneside. Their temporary sign pointed at a very rural Sea Road in Newcastle, Ireland, where my daughter and family live and where I crashed my son-in-law's bicycle.

I went home to the North a few days later leaving behind a slightly damaged bicycle and a bill for the services of four medics. My relations haven't asked me back! (The last bit's a lie but this is creative writing!)

Denis Gilpin
North Down and Ards U3A
Creative Writing Group.
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