

THOMAS BARRY

FROM 1916 TO 1923

This is a little about the life of Thomas Barry, I learned about him from studying several articles about him on www.Wikipedia.com , www.guerilladays.com

EARLY LIFE

Thomas Barry the son of a Royal Irish constabulary policeman was born in County Kerry. At the age of 4 he moved to Rosscarbery West Cork. He attended school in Limerick for a short time. He ran away a year later and never finished school. At this early age he is already showing signs of rebellion

HIS TIME DURING WORLD WAR 1

In 1915 Ireland joined world war 1. Thomas wanted to be a soldier so he tried out at the Royal Field Artillery in Cork and got to be a soldier for the British Army. He fought in Mesopotamia and Turkey. He was promoted to corporal but did not hold that rank long. He showed signs of his rebellious nature after he heard of the easter rising in Dublin and the British reaction to it and dropped back to rank of gunner for the rest of the war. He did end his time in the army with a

good reference even though he did get into trouble from time to time.

WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

After WW1 in 1920 Thomas went back to Cork. He joined the 3rd Cork Brigade of the IRA. They were involved in the Irish war of Independence. He had many jobs in the brigade. He attended the brigade council meetings, he was a brigade-training officer and a flying column commander. He gave advice to IRA GHQ. He was one of the men that started IRA First Southern Division. The west cork brigade was very famous and very brave. Thomas Barry became known for being the best and most efficient commander of the war.

On 28 November 1920, Thomas Barry's squad surprised and killed nearly a whole unit of British soldiers in County Cork. In March 1921 also in Co Cork, Thomas Barry and 104 men, who were in 7 different units were able to defeat 1,200 British soldiers from the Essex Regiment. There were 12,500 British army troops around Cork during the fight. Thomas Barry only had 310 men versus 12,500 British soldiers. He was such a good commander of his unit that he made West Cork impossible for the British to rule them. The British soldiers lost most of their confidence after they lost the Kilmichael Ambush. That is why the Ambush of Kilmichael was such a big turning point in the war.

The British and Irish leaders came to a truce that ended the war. The British wanted the Irish leaders to hand over Thomas Barry to be sent to prison. But Michael Collins refused to hand him over. Thomas was against the Anglo-Irish agreement. He fought on the republican side in the Irish civil war and was sent to prison in 1922 by the Irish Free State after the Battle of Dublin.

In September of 1922, he escaped from a prison camp in Dublin and started to travel south. He took charge of a society named the anti-Treaty IRA Second Southern Division. In November 1922, he led his men to win back 5 towns from the British. He captured a lot of towns including Carrick on Suir, Thomastown and Mullinavat. He took the Free State garrison there prisoner. He couldn't keep hold of them because he didn't have enough supplies. He had to leave them before the Army could get there. At this point he became very angry with Liam Lynch who was the Republican commander in chief because they had a disagreement about the Civil War should be brought to an end as there was no hope of victory. In March Thomas Barry suggested to the IRA Army executive that they should end the war, but unfortunately he was outvoted 6 to 5 votes. The anti-Treaty society was called off by Frank Aiken in May, after Liam Lynch was killed. Thomas Barry was arrested before Frank Aiken's order to "dump arms", on 24 of May 1923

He continued to strive for an independent Ireland he lived a long life and he died in 1980.