

The War of Independence

SERVICE MEDAL



The medal was presented in a green box; with a note from the President.

My Great-Grandfather Patrick Hurley received a service medal from the President of Ireland for his great work during the War of Independence to create a free state.

There were 2 companies formed in our local area, to fight with the I.R.A. There were 140 people from Derrinacohara, Togher and surrounding areas involved in these companies, my Great Grandfather was one of these people. Local men Tim Hurley and Jimmy Burke were captains of these companies.



The main jobs the I.R.A did in this area was block roads, cut down trees and knock bridges, for example Inch'ureagh bridge was knocked to make it impossible for the black and tans to travel with their vehicles (mostly tenders).

Kilronan bridge was also knocked to stop the black and tans getting from Dunmanway to Drinagh. Ter and Ellen Hurley who lived near this bridge were often frequented by the black and tans who demanded food and drink from them.



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There were barracks situated in Shanacrane, Cousane and Coolkelure. If the R.I.C. or the black and tans suspected anyone was involved with the I.R.A they would be arrested and taken to these barracks. People were taken from Togher church by the R.I.C one morning while Mass was being said.



One day in 1960 my Gran - aunts husband, Jim Fehily, was ploughing a field in Ballineen, he found a "bandileer" that was used by the I.R.A., it was the field Tom Barry used to train his men in.

Jim Fehily also recalls how a man called Dinny Coanley called to Fr. O Connell the night before the Kilmichael ambush to ask him to hear confessions and give Communion to all the men of the column. The Priest arrived by horse and met all the men in a private house.



So, I am very proud to have a medal belong to my Great-Grand-father, there is so much history associated with it and it is so meaningful.

By Laura Kingston,
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