

Denis / Dorgan Kiely by Meadhbh Kiely

My ^{great} grandfather Denis or Dorgan Kiely was born in 1893. He had an older brother named Thomas. He was born on a farm in Derrynagasha, Innishannon, near Kinsale. His mother died when he was 2 years old.

In his early teens he got involved in the old I.R.A. He became a despatch rider from Innishannon to Ballinhassig. His job was to carry secret messages. When he would get to Ballinhassig, someone else would carry the message from there to the city. If the British army caught him with the message he would be executed on the spot.

Prior to Toureen ambush the Hales brothers from Ballinadee, Daniel McCarthy from Ballinadee, The Crowleys and O'Sullivan from Dsumkeon met my great-grandfather and his brother Thomas at Skeugh cross about a mile from my house.

They walked to Toureen which would be about 3 miles from Skeugh cross.

At Toureen they met the British Army and held them up at gun point.

They surrendered all their guns to them, 19 in total. There was no casualty.

The British Army walked back to Cork. My great-grandfather and some of the men hid the guns on a small island in the middle of Annaghmore bogs. At the time, Persival's Column were patrolling the area, following the ambush, trying to locate the guns.

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They went into Annaghmore bogs on horse back. Their horses sank and died in the swampy bogs and they failed to locate the guns. The 19 guns were later used in the Crossbarry ambush to defeat the British Army.

Shortly after Toureen ambush my great-grandfather and all the people that met at Skeugh Cross were arrested and taken to jail by boat to Ballykindlar in County Down and Frongach in Wales.

My great-grandfather spent the next couple of years in Ballykindlar Internment camp.

Eventually being released after Michael Collins signed the treaty agreement with Britain. During his time in Ballykindlar he witnessed people being executed and being severely beaten. My great-grandfather and others had their fingernails removed as forms of torture. Following his release he gathered the money he had hidden on the day of his ~~release~~ arrest and on February 4 1922 he purchased the farm that my dad owns and where I live.

Dorgan Kiely

