

Name of memorial: Kilmichael ambush memorial

Inventory No. 1282

Place: Kilmichael

Address and map reference: Kilmichael. Co. Cork about 15kms south-west of Macroom on the R 584 → R587.

Map reference: W 271 627, Sheet 86.

Co-ordinates: N 51.8123°; W 9.0570°.

Access: at all times. **Parking:** adjacent (narrow road. **Disabled access:** yes.

Position: at roadside

Description and dimensions: Large stone monument with four panels, and a separate stone.

Height: appx. 300cms. Width: appx. 600cms. Depth: appx. 50cms.

Recorded by: Edward Bourke, 22 January 2016.

Text:

(Left outer panel)

1916 – 1966

(Claíomh Solais [Sword of Light])

**UNVEILED BY
THE V. REV. C. O'BRIEN P.P.
KILMICHAEL
10TH JULY 1966**

(Left inner panel)

**ΜΑΡ ΚΟΜΑΡΤΣΑ
ΜΟΡΑΛΑ ΑΣΥΣ ΜΟΡΜΕΑΣΑ
ΤΟΣΑΘ ΑΝ ΛΕΑΤ ΣΕΟ
Ι ΜΒΥΑΝΚΥΙΜΝΕ ΑΡ Α ΜΑΡΑΙΟΘ
ΑΡ ΑΝ ΛΑΤΑΙΡ ΣΕΟ
ΑΣ ΤΡΟΙΘ ΑΡ ΣΟΝ ΝΑ ΗΕΙΡΕΑΝΝ
ΑΣΥΣ Α ΜΥΝΤΙΡΕ
28 ΣΑΜΑΙΝ 1920
ΕΑΘΟΝ**

**Μίχεάλ ΜακΚάρτταϊς
Λεασκέανφορτ Κατλάν Όύνμαονμύι**

**Ράθραις Όείσεακ
Λειφτεαναντ Κατλάν
CILL MAC SIOMOIN ΌΡΟΙΣΕΑΘ ΝΑ ΒΑΝΘΑΝ**

SÉAMAS Ó SUILLEADÁIN
ΛΕΙΨΤΕΑΝΑΝΤ Complaácta Cnoc an Mhádra Ros Mór

In iúclainn Dé go raibó saib

(Right inner panel)

MÓRFAIÖ Δ ΜΥΙΝΤΙΡ ΙΑÖ
CUIÑNEOFAR ORÖU Ó
ġLÚIN GO CÉILE
ΔΣUS DÉARFAR ġUR
BEANNAIÖE ΙΑÖ

THEY SHALL BE SPOKEN OF
AMONG THEIR PEOPLE.
THE GENERATIONS SHALL
REMEMBER THEM
AND CALL THEM BLESSED

(Right outer panel)

OSLAIġ NA HÉIREANN

(Crossed rifles)

IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY

(Separate stone)

NO. 2
SECTION
WEST CORK
BRIGADE
FLYING COLUMN
I. R. A.

(Information panel)

AMBUSH ACTION

Tom Barry and his men assembled at the site at 8:15am in cold and wet conditions. They were fortified during the day with tea supplied by the local people. The scout at the northern end of the ambush site signalled the approach of British Auxiliaries at 4:05pm. At that moment, five armed I R A men on a horse drawn sidecar, who were totally unaware of plans for ambush, came into the ambush position and were ordered to gallop up a nearby lane, out of sight. Within fifteen seconds a lorry of Auxiliaries arrived. The driver, observing a man dressed in army uniform, (Tom Barry) standing on a wall at the Command Post, brought the Crossley Tender with its nine occupants almost to a stop within metres of the stone wall. Barry threw a Mills bomb, and automatic sounded and whistle blew, signalling the Volunteers to open fire. The tender continued with the driver dead, halting a few yards from the wall. Some Auxiliaries disembarked onto the road where hand-to-hand fighting occurred. Revolvers were used at point blank range and at times, rifle butts replaced rifle shots. In less than five minutes the occupants of this vehicle were killed.

Barry was aware of the presence of a second lorry in a stationary position about thirty metres on the Command Post side of No. 2 Section. Its occupants were trading fire with this section. Barry and his men at the Command Post decided to attack the British from the rear, by running single file, in crouched positions up the road. The Auxiliaries were heard to shout, 'we surrender'! As some Auxiliaries threw away their rifles, the surrender cry was repeated. Firing stopped, while Barry and his still unobserved men continued to advance. Suddenly three members of No. 2 Section broke cover, one crouched and two upright. The Auxiliaries began to fire again with revolvers and three I R A men were shot. When Barry saw what had happened he ordered his men to engage in rapid fire and not to stop until requested to do so.

The Auxiliaries were now trapped between Barry's men and Section No. 2 survivors. The 'we surrender' cry was heard again from the Auxiliaries, but Section No. 2 was ordered to keep firing. After a short time the 'cease fire' command was given by Barry and the sound of gunfire was replaced by an uncanny silence. Jim O'Sullivan lay dead. Michael McCarthy and Pat Deasy were wounded seriously but died later. Sixteen Auxiliaries were dead, one was wounded but survived and the driver of the second lorry had escaped, was captured, tried and shot.