

ADVANCE INFORMATION

From Messines to Carrick Hill: Writing Home from the Great War

Thomas Burke

ISBN: 978 1 78117 484 5

Format: Paperback

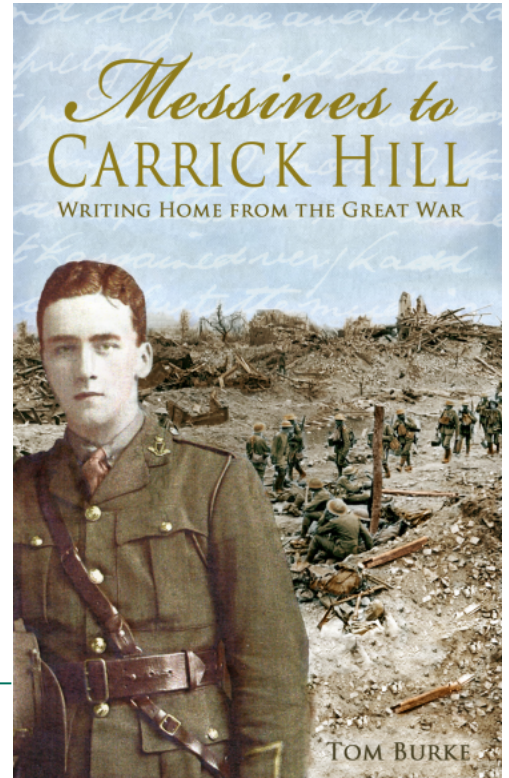
Price: €19.99 / £16.99

Size: 215mm x 135mm

Extent: 352pp

Publication Date: May 2017

Category: Irish History



Key Note

Told through the letters of a young Irish officer, this is the story of the largest engagement of Irish soldiers in the First World War: the capture of the Flemish village of Wijtschate on the Messines ridge, just south of Ypres in June 1917.

Selling Points

- Documents the changing attitudes of Irish soldiers in the British Army towards the 1916 Rising.
- Insight into the relationship between unionist and nationalist soldiers fighting in the British Army prior to 7 June 1917.
- Author has worked extensively with many prominent journalists in the national media.

Description

The book is structured around a collection of letters written by a nineteen year old Irish officer in the 6th Royal Irish Regiment, 2nd Lieutenant Michael Wall from Carrick Hill, near Malahide in north Co. Dublin. Michael was educated by the Christian Brothers in Dublin and destined to study science at UCD before being seduced by the allusion of adventure through war. By contextualising and expanding the content of Wall's letters and setting them within the entrenched battle zone of the Messines Ridge, Burke offers a unique insight into the trench life this young Irish man experienced, his disillusionment with war and his desire to get home. Burke also presents an account of the origin, preparations and successful execution of the battle to take Wijtschate on 7 June 1917 in which the 16th (Irish) and 36th (Ulster) Divisions played a pivotal role. In conclusion Burke offers an insight into the contentious subject of remembrance of the First World War in Ireland in the late 1920s

Author Information

Tom Burke was a member of the committee behind the Island of Ireland Peace Park in Messines opened in 1998. In August 2004, Tom was awarded an MBE for his contribution to the Northern Ireland peace process. He has contributed to several publications on Ireland and the First World War. He was a consultant on several television and radio documentaries on Ireland's participation in the First World War presented by RTE, BBC (NI) and UTV. He is a member of the WW1 advisory committee to the National Library and National Museum of Ireland.

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