



Our War: Ireland and the Great War (The 2008 Thomas Davis Lecture Series)


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"...you went into [a casualty-clearing station] young and light-hearted. You came out older than any span of years could make you." - Catherine Black, Ramelton Co. Donegal, describing her work as a nurse in France during the Great War * "[He] kept me an hour talking of his dead boy. He read his letters aloud but broke down. At this rate everybody in a year will be mourning. I can think of half a dozen already." - Shane Leslie, Glaslough Co. Monaghan; 12 November 1914 * "One fellow's brains were shot into my mouth as I was shouting for them to jump for it. I dived into the sea. Then came the job to swim ashore and one leg useless, where I had been shot. I pulled out a knife and cut the straps and swam ashore. All the time bullets were nipping around me." - Sergeant J. McColgan, describing the assault on Gallipoli, 25 April 1915 * "I was waiting for a barm brack & they did not get them in. I am just sending a cake & butter, but shall send cake & bacon on Friday...I never prayed as fervently. asking the Little Infant Jesus to bring you home safe and unhurt to me." - Mary Moynihan, Tralee Co. Kerry, in a letter to her son Michael, 3 June 1918 (Michael was reported dead on 18 June 1918) * "...you will be alright and you might to [sic] be satisfied now and give over your wild ways." - Roseanne Mooney, Thomas St. Dublin, in a letter to her wounded husband John, c. 1916-17 *** Our War: Ireland and the Great War, written by some of Ireland's leading historians, provides an Irish perspective on the Great War which saw over 200,000 Irish soldiers fighting and up to 50,000 dying. The book relays the experiences of ordinary Irish people during the war and it chronicles the effect this war had, and still has, on Irish society. The lives and deaths of soldiers in the trenches, nurses, politicians, and the workforce are all examined. Archival letters, diaries, wills, and illustrations are reproduced which document the pride, fear, anxiety, and sorrow felt by sweethearts, families, and friends. The book accompanies Ireland's RTE Radio 1 series Our War: Ireland and the Great War, which was broadcast in 2008, from late October to late December.

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