



# Irishmen in the Great War: Reports from the Front 1915

*Tom Burnell*

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## **Irishmen in the Great War: Reports from the Front 1915** Tom Burnell

In a quest to discover the forgotten Irishmen in twenty-seven Irish newspapers, many of which are now obsolete, the author uncovered unbelievable and forgotten newspaper articles, cast aside since the 1920s – until now.

Following the success of the first book in the series covering 1914, *Irishmen in the Great War: Reports from the Front 1915* is a labour of love from author Tom Burnell, containing over 150 hand-picked news stories taken from a selection of twenty-seven Irish newspapers throughout the course of the year. These rare and untapped stories, many of which have not seen the light of day since the 1920s, give a unique insight into life on the front line and on the home front during the First World War.

These are the accounts of local men at the front, letters sent home from soldiers in the trenches at Flanders, graphic narratives from allied gun turrets, Irish nuns at Ypres, Irish POWs held in Germany, troops coming under fire on Christmas morning and many more.

We are presented with articles explaining the logistical side of supporting the army, from how the men at the front were fed to combating ailments brought about by living in the trenches. A letter from a surgeon of the King's Country Infirmary explains the graphic experiences of everyday life on the front line and the newspapers present feature articles on the use of torpedos, hand grenades, warplanes and more.

Translated German letters pay tribute to the courage, stamina and shooting skill shown by the British and letters from British troops remark on the deadly accuracy of the German snipers. We also hear of a Kilkennyman who survived the sinking of the *Lusitania* and how the attack strengthened the resolve of Irish soldiers on the front.

We see letters from lieutenants in the Leinsters, privates in the Munsters at Egypt, the Connaughts at Turkey, a fifteen-year-old soldier of the 18th London Irish Rifles, a Kilmoganny soldier writing to the Kilkenny People during a lull in the fighting, letters explaining how the 2nd Royal Irish Rifles fought at Neuve Chapelle and an officer's harrowing description of a gas attack at Hill 60.

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