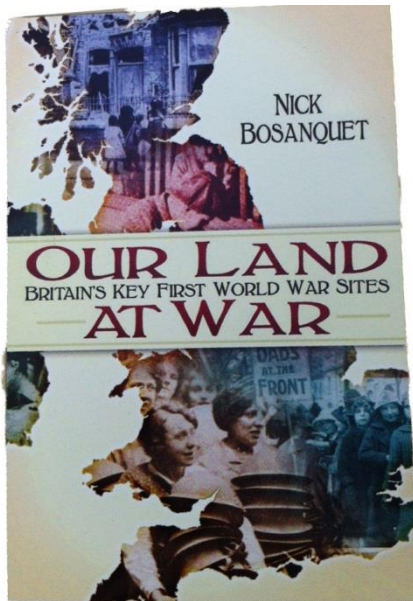


Our Land at War

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There is a compelling, unavoidable image of World War 1 - soldiers in mud on the Western Front across Belgium and France: but this image is only one part of the story. Even for the Army on the Western Front by 1918 only 450,000 of 2.2. m serving there were infantry and even these infantry were no longer in fixed trench lines. Many more were in artillery, supplies and the Royal Air Force in a new kind of machine war. Further back from the trenches the war created a war zone which took in most of the UK. This was the wider western front. Every town and every street was linked to the front line through service and through contribution to the war of the guns. The War mobilized not just soldiers but women workers, teenagers and even school children who contributed their pennies to the war loans, picked fruit in summer and pushed

sacks of coal in winter. Much of WW2 was fought a long way from home. WW1 was very close to home a shadow on every coast and in the skies over the UK.

In this book we trace the main sites for this wider war effort - most in the UK but to these have to be added as hubs, Queenstown (Cobh) in Ireland and Calais. For a generation it was an unavoidable challenge which turned into a 'test to destruction'. Along with sorrow for calamity there must surely be pride at how the people of Britain faced up to it. In the centenary we remember not just the leaders and the millions who served but the courage of small crews who faced a powerful, ruthless enemy alone. The signs of this effort and often of the sacrifice are there in your town. In this book we set out the main sites and how to get to them: but I hope this will help you to set out on your personal quest to find this generation and to honour them.

By Nick Bosanquet