Diary of a Limerick soldier in the Irish Republican struggle

Donal O'Regan

MANY BOOKS have been written by historians about the Irish Republican struggle in Limerick but very few by people who took part in it.

This is what makes The Irish Republican Struggle in Limerick: personal recollections of Captain Joe Graham so unique, says editor Michael Hayes.

"It's very unusual to come across a diary. It is the memories of Captain Joe Graham, Lismore from the period 1917 to 1921.

"What I found interesting is that nothing much happened after the rising in 1916 until the British threatened conscription on the Irish and that binded them together. I never knew what happened in 1917, 1918 and 1919.

"They sent in the Black and Tans to quiet the Irish and I think it would have worked if they had not combined it with a threat of conscription. The people were disjointed at the time and this threat of conscription seemed to bind the people together and that seems to have brought about independence, said Mr Hayes, who lives in Lismore - up the road from Lismore.

"This is just one of the many insights it gave Mr Hayes, author of many books, and will give to readers.

It is written in the first person perspective of Captain Graham, who became a soldier in the Republican movement aged 16 with the Ahane company,