



The Unwanted: Great War Letters from the Field

John McKendrick Hughes

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Fiercely nationalistic, at times blatantly jingoistic and politically incorrect by modern-day standards, The Unwanted reflects the passions of a man who was determined to serve his country during the Great War in any capacity he could regardless of rank or pay. As it turned out, he did it best by growing potatoes! When Major John McKendrick Hughes, O.C., C Company, 151st Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force, and his unit reached Shorncliffe in late 1916, he and the other officers were bluntly informed by the British that they were "unwanted"—officers deemed "surplus to the establishment." Determined to contribute to the war effort, John became one of three Corps Agricultural Officers with the British 2nd Army, charged with growing vegetables and other foodstuffs to feed the troops. This is John's personal story, based on the letters he sent to his wife nearly every day for 2-1/2 years.



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