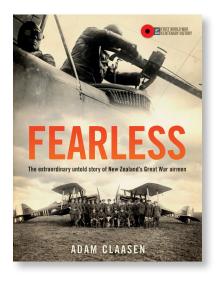


## **Fearless**

## The extraordinary untold story of New Zealand's Great War airmen

**ADAM CLAASEN** 



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# THE FASCINATING AND LITTLE-KNOWN STORY OF NEW ZEALAND'S DARING MILITARY AVIATION PIONEERS

'Thank God for this book' — Jim Mora, RNZ

During the Great War New Zealanders were keen participants in the new field of military aviation. Close to 850 men, and a small number of women, from the Empire's southernmost dominion sought positions in the British and Australian air services.

Drawing on extensive archival material from New Zealand, Australia and Britain, historian Dr Adam Claasen explores New Zealand's reluctance to embrace military aviation, the challenges facing the establishment of local flying schools and the journey undertaken by the New Zealanders from their antipodean farms and towns to the battlefields of the Great War. In spite of their modest numbers, the New Zealanders' wartime experiences were incredibly varied. Across the conflict, New Zealand aviators could be found flying above the sands of the Middle East and Mesopotamia, the grey waters of the North Sea, the jungles of East Africa, the sprawling metropolis of London and the rolling hills of northern France and Belgium. Flying in open-cockpit wood-andwire biplanes, New Zealanders undertook reconnaissance sorties, carried out bombing raids, photographed enemy entrenchments, defended England from German airships, strafed artillery emplacements and engaged enemy fighters. By the time the war ended many had been killed, others highly decorated, some elevated to 'ace' status and a handful occupied positions of considerable command. This book tells their unique and extraordinary untold story.

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

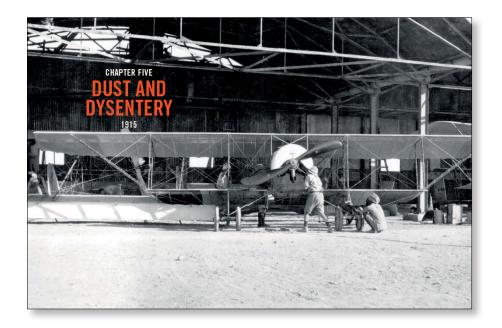
Adam Classen is a senior lecturer in history at Massey University's Albany campus. His teaching and research is focused on the New Zealand military experience, German history, the Second World War in Europe and the relationship between film and history. He has received a Smithsonian Institution Fellowship, was the Fulbright Visiting Lecturer in New Zealand Studies at Georgetown University, and has been presented with a Vice-Chancellor's Award for Sustained Excellence in Teaching. His doctoral thesis was published as Hitler's Northern War: the Luftwaffe's Ill-fated Campaign, 1940-1945 (Kansas UP, 2001). More recently he has written on the part played by New Zealand and Australian airmen in the Battle of Britain: Dogfight: the Battle of Britain (Exisle, 2011). He has presented conference papers and published articles in scholarly journals on military intelligence, the Luftwaffe, general airpower and geo-strategy in war.

#### **SALES POINTS**

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- Another in the landmark Centenary History Programme series of books

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'Fearless details the New
Zealanders' amazing exploits
over the period from 1916 to
1918. Their experiences were
often extraordinary — but also,
all too frequently, terminally
short. This is their story.'
— ADAM CLAASEN

Heads looked up as he careered over the British troops. It was an impossible sight. Was the plots flying on the using? The max-loower areas bedoned—the gree of immunemble mens. He was led for the last moment and, in the hearthest between flying and c asking, loop. He list the genomal consensational a rise states and, to the surprise the list the genomal consensational a rise state, the surprise of the chemistic warching informs minnly most of  $p \rightarrow 1$  Medically land consistentially be noting the extent of his injustes — shook off the dirt, and walked to the recent restricted his second of a talephane.

oth Ciddwell was an eigh-year-old Auckland schoolboy when the Weight teothers addressed the world's first controlled and instanting bowered rights on the Conseller spot, at the first new event haviny registered with the world's newspapers, he widn's the space of it space right and copress intermedical tangestates. Men and women were soon considering how powered flight relight to be titled, not only in the delivery of terms, mordes and human passengers how also in mattern of worlders. Politicism, general and flatteries wondered how this technological marel might be applied.

Like Texture of America, Californy existent, met verticens and particular active and active act

The story, subsequently published in book from as The War in the Air, does on German advances in airship construction and the rapid development of heavier-than-air machines as pioneered by the Weight brothers in the early 1900s. Why had the Americans and the British been ought so fise-footed by the German attacks

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Another Wellingtonian, Roy Kean, found the winters so cold be requested a transfer to a warmer climate, perhaps Egopt, India or even Mesopotamia. Peior to the war he lived always in New Zealand, 'would his commanding officer,' in winter he suffers constantly from

Ill bealth. "Kanin efforts were unaccorded.

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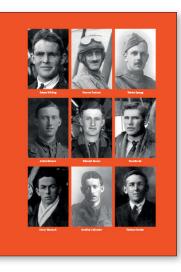
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#### **Massey University Press**

Albany Campus, Private Bag 102904, North Shore 0745, Auckland, New Zealand Email editor@massey.ac.nz
Phone +64 9 213 6886
www.masseypress.ac.nz

#### Media contact

Sarah Thornton, Thornton Communications

Email sarah.thornton@prcomms.com

Phone (09) 479 8763 or 021 753744