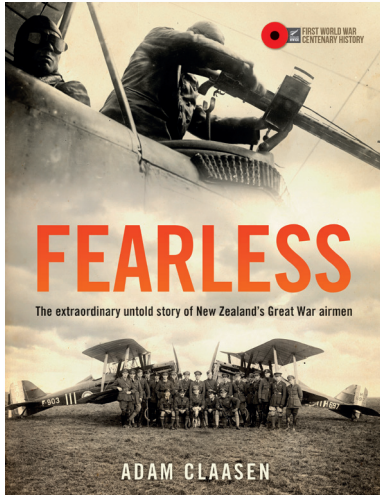




Fearless

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

LONGLISTED FOR THE 2018 OCKHAM NEW ZEALAND BOOK AWARDS

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

'It's a wonderful book — one that risks inducing a Peter Jackson-sized enthusiasm for the biplane era' — Russell Baillie, NZ Listener

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-and-wire 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 Claasen 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

- A gripping and compelling narrative, peopled with terrific personalities
- Based on deep historical research but written in a lively and accessible style
- Highly illustrated, with over 170 outstanding photographs and other images

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