

Soldier Boys

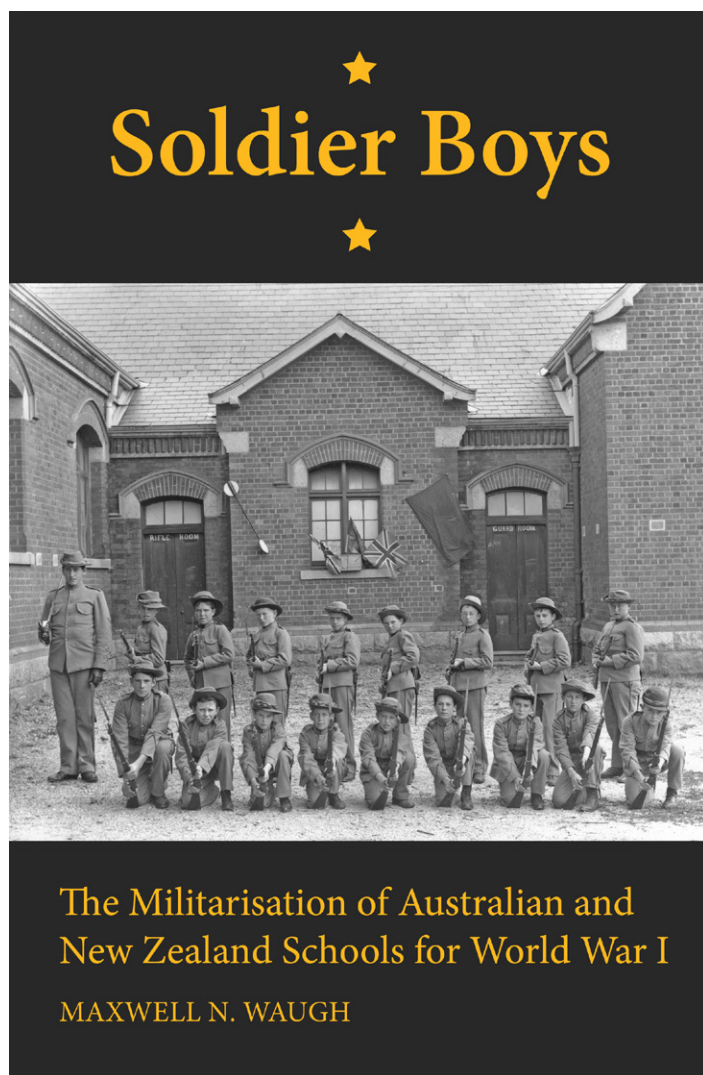
The Militarisation of Australian and New Zealand Schools for World War I

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While 'voluntary' cadet training was a feature of Australian and New Zealand schools during the mid-nineteenth century, a form of 'compulsory' cadet training became the norm from 1910 through to the 1920s, in both government and non-government schools. In this respect, Australia was 'more British than the British', as there was no compulsory military training in the schools of Great Britain, or in any other British Empire countries during this period.

A large proportion of the over half a million Anzacs who served in the Great War did so willingly, because they had been trained for war in the schools of both countries. They soon found themselves serving as cannon fodder in the fields of Gallipoli and on the Western Front. Many of these former cadets were survivors who wrestled with their personal demons for the rest of their lives.

This research shows how our schools were used by the respective governments to help prepare a ready-made army of well-trained, disciplined and patriotic young lads, glad to risk their lives in the terrifying, bloody and mindless conflict that was World War I.



The Author

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