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**‘A Most Creditable Production’: *Chronicles of the
N.Z.E.F. (New Zealand Expeditionary Force), 1916-
1919: Their Publication and Utility for Historical
Research***

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the *Chronicles of the N.Z.E.F.* (New Zealand Expeditionary Force) that were published during World War I from August 1916 until January 1919, and their usefulness for historical research. The thesis explores how they were published, their purpose and the role of the editor Clutha Mackenzie. The content for a sample of issues that cover New Zealand's participation in the First Battle of the Somme (1916) and the Third Battle of Ypres (1917), also known as Passchendaele, is analysed and the contributors and correspondents identified. The same sample of issues are studied in detail and compared and contrasted to ascertain how these battles are written about in the *Chronicles* and how useful this material might be for historical research.

The thesis finds that the *Chronicles* mostly succeeded in meeting its three aims. These were to be a means of communicating with the New Zealand troops in all theatres of the war and in the United Kingdom as well as with the people back in New Zealand, to provide a record of how the money raised in New Zealand to support the troops was being spent, and to be a medium for the literary efforts of the troops. Assisted by some influential supporters, both civilian and to a lesser extent the military authorities, the editor played a key role in starting the *Chronicles* and in all aspects of their production, including funding, content and distribution, which ensured their continuous publication for more than two years.

As a source for historical research the thesis finds that they do not add to the existing battle narratives about the New Zealanders' part in the Somme and Passchendaele. However the variety of detail on army organisation and everyday life at the front provides a rich and largely under-utilised source of material for social and cultural studies. They also offer a window through which to view the thoughts and feelings of the New Zealand soldier in the First World War.

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ABBREVIATIONS

H.C.N.Z.	High Commissioner for New Zealand
N.Z.E.	New Zealand Engineers
N.Z.E.F.	New Zealand Expeditionary Force
N.Z.F.A.	New Zealand Field Artillery
N.Z.R.B.	New Zealand Rifle Brigade
N.Z.W.C.A.	New Zealand War Contingent Association
O.I.R.	Otago Infantry Regiment
R.S.A.	Returned Soldiers' Association
V.A.D.	Voluntary Aid Detachment
Y.M.C.A.	Young Men's Christian Association