



March to the Sound of the Guns

Ray Grover

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Acclaimed novel about New Zealand at the Western Front in World War One. During World War I New Zealand shipped one hundred thousand young men halfway round the world to fight at Gallipoli and the Western Front. Eighteen thousand were killed - a death rate of nearly one in five. Thousands more were maimed physically and emotionally. The men had gone with the encouragement of their families and the blessings of their churches. In *March to the Sound of the Guns* five people tell us the story of their war: the oldest is Colonel Malone, one of the very few who knows what war is about and who trains his men hard but, on going into action, is faced with incompetence at the highest levels. The other four are nineteen-year-olds who volunteer for reasons that derive from the raw colonial society in which they have been born and raised: Harry, the Christian sniper; Jim, the leftwing activist; Frank, the intellectual. Each has no alternative but to endure fear, sickness, wounds, and the imminent prospect of death under the foulest of conditions. Then there is Nelle, the nurse, patching up the remnants of men who have 'survived'. Sharing much with *Band of Brothers* and Pat Barker's *Regeneration* trilogy, *March to the Sound of the Guns* has been drawn from over twenty years of research into soldiers' diaries, letters and memoirs, along with close inspection of the battlefields and study of authoritative historians. It is a searing, searching account, by an award-winning writer, of a generation of New Zealanders who went to a war and were changed forever.



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