

# The never-ending chapter on war

*Gallipoli: The End of the Myth*  
by Robin Prior, UNSW Press, \$39.95

**E**ACH year, unlike the thinning ranks of returned soldiers, books concerning war continue to enlist our attention. While many offer personal reflections and are anecdotal, others are historical in their focus. *Gallipoli: The End of the Myth* is such a book.

It is refreshing that Robin Prior, a well-respected military historian, moves beyond the legend and mateship registers associated with Gallipoli. He argues that this was a poorly thought-through campaign, notwithstanding the herculean feats of the Australian and allied troops. Prior contends that, even if the allies had won, the battle was of minimal relevance and would not have shortened the war by one day.

*Shattered Anzacs: Living with the Scars of War*  
by Marina Larsson, UNSW Press, \$39.95

**T**HE tragedy of Gallipoli is well covered in *Shattered Anzacs: Living with the Scars of War*. This is an immeasurably important book which tells the story of the thousands of Australian families that welcomed home soldiers disabled from World War I. These were the “damaged” men. The book details their suffering up to the 1930s Depression. The stories are those of the wives and mothers who nursed ailing ex-servicemen.

*Dangerous Days: A Digger's Great Escape*  
by Ernest Brough, HarperCollins, \$35

**A** STORY of unalloyed heroism can be found in *Dangerous Days: A Digger's Great Escape*. Ernest Brough fought, and was wounded, at Tobruk and El Alamein. He was captured in 1942. On Good Friday 1944, he along with two others, escaped from a POW camp in Austria and travelled through Slovenia and Croatia to Bosnia in pursuit of freedom.

*Aussie Soldier: Prisoners of War*  
edited by Denny Neave and Craig Smith,  
Big Sky Publishing, \$34.95

**A** *USSIE Soldier: Prisoners of War* brings to readers the stories of the men and women who were incarcerated during World War

II. These are intensely felt and told personal accounts. What shines through is the sense of mateship and mutual support. Even so, the memories of those who died behind the wire linger.

*Payne VC: The Story of Australia's most decorated soldier of the Vietnam War*  
by Mike Colman, ABC Books, \$35

**A** MORE contemporary account of men under fire is *Payne VC: The Story of Australia's most decorated soldier of the Vietnam War*. In May 1969, after a heavy engagement with North Vietnamese regular soldiers, Warrant Officer Second Class Keith Payne, was leading a company when it was overrun. Although Payne was wounded, he returned to the battlefield three times and

rescued 40 men. This is a story of unfathomable courage.

*A Stout Pair of Boots: A Guide to Exploring Australia's Battlefields*  
by Peter Stanley, Allen & Unwin, \$24.95

**A** MORE Australian tourists head off to past battlefields as a way of pilgrimage. *A Stout Pair of Boots: A Guide to Exploring Australia's Battlefields* is a mandatory aid.

What is important about this book is its practical focus. While there are many anecdotes and diverting historical facts here, the book offers such necessary details as what to take, when to go, how to avoid getting blown up and how to avoid getting sick while overseas.

