

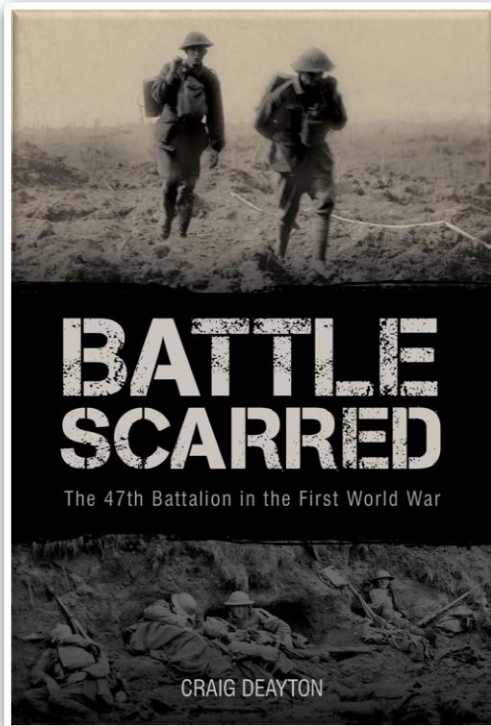


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Media Information

Battle Scarred

The 47th Battalion in the First World War Craig Deayton



"Battle Scarred is surely the finest battalion history I have ever read... an honest, critical, but still sympathetic, portrait of a run-of-the mill AIF battalion. Highly readable and richly descriptive both of the 47th's men and their actions, it helps to explain not just what the AIF did on the Western Front, but what it was like for those involved, and why the AIF's part in that terrible war remains such a profound part of Australian memory so long after."

Dr. Peter Stanley

"...this is not a book of glory and medals, but one of heartbreaking loss of Australia's youth, which is told in a way that rightfully earns it the praise it has received."

'The dead and wounded of the 47th Battalion lay everywhere underfoot'... With these words Charles Bean, Australia's Official War Historian, described the battlefield of Dernancourt on the morning of the 5th of April, 1918, strewn with the bodies of the Australian dead. It was the final tragic chapter in the story of the 47th Australian Infantry Battalion in the First World War.

Battle Scarred, The 47th Battalion in the First World War by author Craig Deayton is the story of one of the shortest lived and most battle hardened of the 1st Australian Imperial Force's battalions. Though their story is one of almost unrelieved tragedy, it is also a story of remarkable courage, endurance and heroism as the men of this battalion were called into some of the AIF's most savage and costly campaigns, including Dernancourt, Pozieres, Mouquet Farm and Somme.

This is the story of the 1st AIF itself – punished, beaten, sometimes reviled for their indiscipline, they fought on - fewer, leaner and harder - until final victory was won. And at its end, in an extraordinary gesture of mateship, the remnants of the 47th Battalion reunited. Having been scattered to other units after their disbandment, the survivors gathered in Belgium for one last photo together. Only 73 of the 850 soldiers remained.

Throughout the book the fascinating individual stories of the men who made up this battalion are used to tell the wider story. This battalion history is also unique in weaving in the stories of the people back home and giving a clear voice to the women – mothers, wives, sisters and daughters – who are so often silent in military history. *Battle Scarred* stretches beyond the war to tell the story of the soldiers, their wives and families and its impact on Australian society

About the Author

Craig Deayton was born in Hobart in 1959, one of seven children to parents who both served in the Army in World War II. He studied History at University of Tasmania and graduated as a teacher in 1983, taught in London and throughout Tasmania and has been a College Principal since 1994.

His interest in military history was sparked by his Grandfather (a WW1 veteran) from whom he inherited two volumes of Charles Bean's *Official History* at the age of 12. He is married to Tracey, has four children, lives in Hobart and is Principal of Sacred Heart College. His leisure interests are bushwalking, surfing and cycling but his passion is history and he collects history books and memorabilia.

Craig Deayton is available for interview.

For more information, cover images

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Battle Scarred Craig Deayton

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A rare photograph of the survivors of a battalion. Taken in Hastiere just after the armistice in 1918, 73 surviving members of the disbanded 47th Battalion gathered for the final time. (AWM P04541.002)

Additional Information on the 47th Battalion

The 47th was formed in Egypt in 1916 and disbanded two years later having suffered one of the highest casualty rates of any Australian unit. Dogged by command and discipline troubles and bled white by the desperate attrition battles of 1916 and 1917, they fought on against a determined and skilful enemy in battles where the fortunes of war seemed stacked against them at every turn. Not only did they have the misfortune to be called into some of the AIF's most costly campaigns, chance often found them in the worst places within those battles.

Finally, at the Battle of Dernancourt they fought in the 4th Division's titanic struggle to save Amiens from the great German offensive of 1918. It was at Dernancourt that the 47th Battalion found itself squarely in the path of the heaviest attack ever faced by Australians in this or any war. Dernancourt would be their finest hour and also it's most tragic. This elite troop, utterly exhausted and fatally weakened by their losses, and under a cloud after the formal inquiry into the battle, was broken up. For the Queenslanders and Tasmanians of the 47th Battalion, disbandment meant not only the loss of their battalion, but disgrace and heartbreak as well. Worse still, it meant the ties of comradeship and the bond to their fallen mates were severed at one stroke. In their own bitter words, they were 'thrown away'.

Book Background

In 2003 Craig came across the unpublished memoirs of a Tasmanian soldier who served in the 47th Battalion. Vividly written, they included highly interesting accounts of some of this battalion's battles and, looking for more information, he discovered that no battalion history existed for this unit.

Although they had one of the highest casualty rates of any AIF battalion and had fought in some of the bloodiest battles, very little information existed about their war. The early research gradually revealed the fascinating, untold story of a particularly ill-starred battalion which had been one of the first battalions disbanded due to heavy casualties and lack of reinforcements.

In 2007, Craig received a grant from the AAHU to conduct research in Europe and trekked the battlefields of the 47th Battalion in France and Belgium. To assist his research Craig sought contact with the families of veterans and this was especially important with the prominent members of the 47th Battalion. Usually this was with the elderly sons and daughters, those who preserved the records, letters, diaries, photos and the memories of their relatives. His new book *Battle Scarred* is the culmination of his research.





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Media Information

BEATEN DOWN BY BLOOD

The Battle of Mont St Quentin-Peronne 1918

Michele Bomford

'Beaten Down by Blood' weaves an intricate and colourful tapestry of a complex battlefield with individuals placed on it; who they were and why they were there; conditions at home and insights into family, expectations and hopes.

Beaten Down by Blood: The Battle of Mont St Quentin- Peronne 1918 is the story, often told in the words of the men themselves, of the capture of the 'unattackable' Mont and the 'invincible' fortress town of Péronne; two of the great feats of Australian forces in the First World War.

Author Michele Bomford charts an extraordinary journey from the trenches facing Mont St Quentin on 31 August 1918, through the frenetic phases of the battle until the final objectives are taken on 5 September.

Bomford places real men on the battlefield, describing their fears and their courage and their often violent deaths. The struggle for control of the battle, to site the guns, to bridge the Somme and maintain communications are portrayed in vivid detail. The story also offers a glimpse of the men's families at home, their anxiety and their life-long grief.

This work provides a carefully articulated context, describing the ground over which the battle was fought and examining the corps and the ingredients which made it 'socially and structurally homogenous'. An overview of infantry firepower, tactics, training and discipline demonstrates that there was more to the Australian soldier than daring and dash. Likewise, the Australians' German opponent, while numerically weaker and haphazardly thrown into the line, is portrayed as a worthy adversary — a determined and tenacious opponent.

Beaten Down by Blood explores the relationship between myth and history and the significance of the Anzac legend. It analyses the forces that drove the diggers forward even when they had reached the limits of their endurance. *The Battle of Mont St Quentin-Péronne* represents the Australian Corps at its very best, its diggers fighting for peace and satisfied that, 'whatever might lie ahead, at least everything was right behind them'.

About the Author

Michele Bomford is a historian with a Masters in History and Diploma in Education. History has been her passion since she was eight years old, beginning with the Ancient Egyptians and later the Classical Greeks. More recently, a growing fascination with the First World War, Australian History and Family History has led her down a different path.

Mont St Quentin first captured my imagination when I walked the trenches and attended a service at the Memorial on Anzac Day, 1993, and discovered that my grandfather's battalion was involved in the battle.

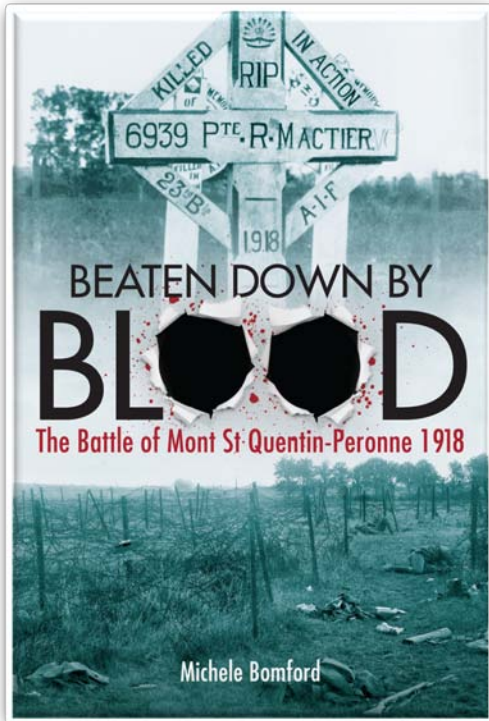
The epiphany struck in 2008, standing on Mont St Quentin after attending the inaugural Dawn Service and being blown away by the welcome Australians received in Peronne; I realised I wanted to tell this largely untold story. I came home to Australia, and have been researching and writing ever since.

Michele Bomford is available for interviews.

For more information, cover images

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Beaten Down by Blood
Michele Bomford

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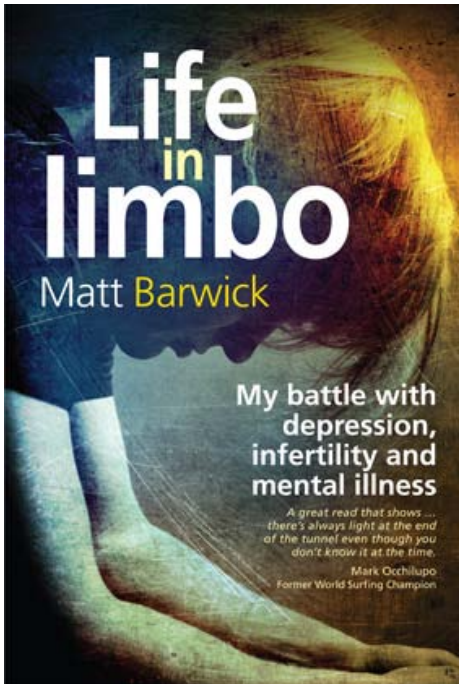
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Life in Limbo

My battle with depression, infertility and mental illness



Depression, Mental Illness, and infertility are issues that many Australian men deal with – yet few are able to openly discuss them. The stigma attached to these issues still lingers, but a new book released aims to shed light for those in need.

In *Life in Limbo*, Canberra man Matt Barwick bravely shares his personal story, from his struggles with infertility, dealing with a family suicide, to his own admission into a mental health facility where he's diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Throughout this, Matt continually battles with the demons of depression, trying to overcome the cloud of uncertainty that covers his relationships, career, and his very existence.

Told with refreshing honesty and humour, *Life in Limbo* offers a rare male perspective on these sensitive topics, providing a voice for other Australian men dealing with the same issues. While at times confronting, Matt provides readers with an inspiring message of courage and hope, proving that no matter what you're going through, you're never alone.

Statistics

- Infertility: one in six (17%) couples suffer infertility
- Mental illness: One in five (20%) aged between 16-85 in any one year
- Suicide: One in 30 (3%) aged between 16-85 have attempted suicide at some time in their life

Additional Information

- Suitable for people going through these struggles, family and friends, and healthcare professionals
- Includes endorsements from surfing champions Mark Occhilupo and Mark Richards
- Timely release with R U OK? Day 13 September, Mental Health Awareness Week runs 7-14 October 2012
- A third of the author's royalties go to Beyond Blue

Author Biography:

Matt Barwick was born and raised in Canberra and has worked for over a decade for the Australian government. He was motivated to share his unique story when he realised how few titles, from young, average Australian males, were available to help and inform those dealing with infertility, family suicide and mental illness diagnosis.

Having lived through these experiences and written about them in his daily diary when his life started becoming memorable for all the wrong reasons, he shares his story from an emotive, less clinical, sufferer's perspective. Throughout his remarkable journey, he has constantly looked for positives and focused on what makes him most happy: music, surfing and the unconditional support and love of his wife and soul-mate, Ali.

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