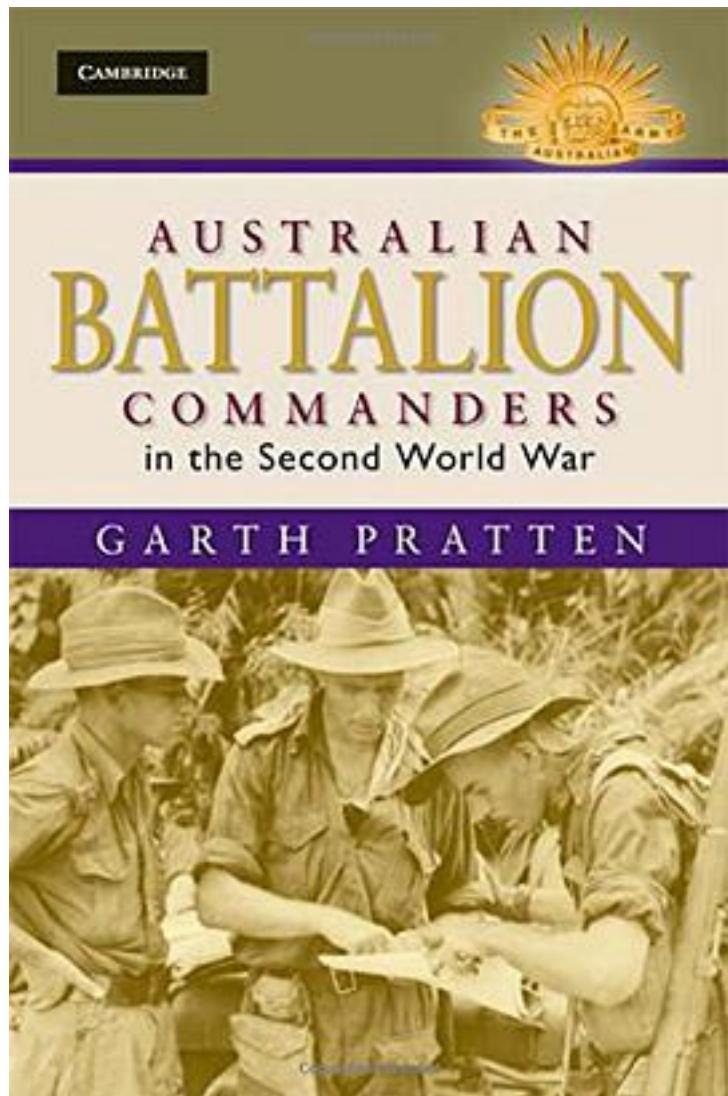


Australian Battalion Commanders in the Second World War



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In Australian Battalion Commanders in the Second World War, Garth Pratten explores, for the first time, the background, role and conduct of the commanding officers of Australian infantry battalions in World War II. Despite their vital role as the lynchpins of the battlefield, uniting the senior officers with the soldiers who fought, the battalion commanders have previously received scant attention in contemporary military history. This book redresses the balance, providing a gripping, meticulously researched and insightful account that charts the development of Australia's infantry commanding officers from part-time, ill-prepared, amateurs to seasoned veterans who, although still not professional soldiers, deserved the title of professional men of war. Drawing on extensive and original archival material, Pratten recreates battle scenes and brings to light many diverse personalities. It is a story of men confronting the timeless challenges of military leadership - mastering their own fear and discomfort - in order to motivate and inspire their troops to endure the maelstrom of war.

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