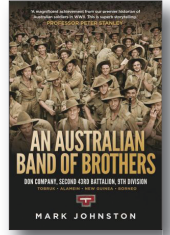


## BOOK REVIEW:

# *An Australian band of brothers: Don Company, Second 43<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 9<sup>th</sup> Division: Tobruk, Alamein, New Guinea, Borneo*



by Mark Johnston

*NewSouth Publishing: Sydney; 2018; 464 pp.; ISBN 9781742235721 (paperback); RRP \$34.99*

Inspired by American historian S. E. Ambrose's book, *Band of Brothers* (Simon & Schuster, 1992), about the United States Army's Easy Company, 506<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, in World War II, in this book, Mark Johnston, an expert on the Australian Army in World War II, gives an Australian rifle company the same treatment.

The book follows, in particular, three Australian front-line soldiers from their enlistment in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Imperial Force in 1940 to the end of World War II. All three were posted to Don Company, 2/43<sup>rd</sup> Battalion (a South Australian battalion), 24<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 9<sup>th</sup> Australian Division. They fought in the defence of Tobruk (1941), the battle of

El Alamein (1942), the liberation of Australian New Guinea (1943), and the re-capture of Labuan, British North Borneo (1945).

The book uses letters, diaries and memoirs of the three infantrymen to develop an account of their war, including: night patrols at Tobruk; advancing steadily through German barrages at El Alamein; charging enemy machine guns in New Guinea; and repelling Japanese counter-attacks on Borneo. It is an entertaining read which would appeal to new or experienced readers of Australian military history.

**Marcus Fielding**