

**Vietnam**  
**By Mrs Norma Sim**

I watched you march in line today, part of the Anzac Day parade,  
You fought the foe in Vietnam, and in sickness you've been paid,  
As I watched you pass on the long march, I began to think,  
That you are keeping up, faltering, without a walking stick.

Thoughts returned of years long passed, an energetic rebel.  
Always strong and independent and at times a "little devil",  
But I always admired your spirit, you never ever quit,  
As you ran and played daily, without that walking stick.

Energy was always part of you, and now it's put to the test,  
As you battle your illness daily, calling it a "blasted pest",  
But today my heart is breaking, and I know it isn't a trick,  
Because I feel so sad for you, when I see that walking stick.

I remember well in 1940, when your father went off to war,  
He hoped all conflicts would disappear and wars would be no more,  
But as the world grows older, maybe all countries should think.  
War has never solved problems, but can give youth a walking stick.

I know this only a parent's pleas, just another mother,  
And maybe people at the top, don't want to listen or bother,  
But a son is a son forever, and as long as Big Ben will tick,  
Don't let the youth of our country, rely on a walking stick.

I used to watch my second son doing the things boys do,  
Athletics of any kind, but football best of sure,  
Now he watches his mates playing, desperate for a kick,  
But he spurs them on applauding, using his walking stick.

Oh! Vietnam you clearly stole, my son's teen years, his youth,  
Also his health and his wealth, but of that there is no proof,  
Once a carefree eighteen year old, he thought he knew every trick,  
But now he is older, and wiser, as he shares life with a walking stick.