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Letters to the Editor

Manoeuvre Theory

Dear Editor,

Lieutenant Colonel J.D. Kelly’s letter (ADFJ May/June 1995) in response to the discussion paper on Manoeuvre Theory suffered from the very lack of sophistication he claims to identify in the article by the Army Doctrine Centre. Surely it was possible to debate the issues raised in the paper without attacking and denigrating the Army Doctrine Centre, and by implication, its staff and Director. Lieutenant Colonel Kelly’s letter contained much of concern, but I wish to concentrate on two issues raised in the letter.

While accusing the Army Doctrine Centre of fudging the issue by attempting to provide a definition, Lieutenant Colonel Kelly was certainly not backward in providing his own, sweeping definition of Manoeuvre Theory. And what a definition it was. Manoeuvre Theory we are told, is an intellectual filter that provides a guide for all combatants from the individual soldier fighting on the front line to the national leaders behind the lines. More than this Manoeuvre Theory will cut through the chaotic nature of war like Mr Sheen through dust, and promises, (note promises, not just makes it likely) that creative individuals using manoeuvre theory will defeat less creative opponents.

How is it possible for one theory or style of war to be all things to all people? How can Manoeuvre Theory provide this infallible guideline when even its main supporters cannot agree on a simple definition of what constitutes Manoeuvre Theory? The idea that creative individuals will always defeat their less creative opponents is also fallible. Surely logistics and doctrine play some role on the battlefield. Most historians agree that Rommel was a more creative commander than the cautious Montgomery. Indeed, supporters of Manoeuvre Theory claim Rommel as one of their greatest heroes. Yet the creative and bold Rommel was decisively defeated by the staid, cautious, but very well supplied Montgomery.

By far the most alarming part of Lieutenant Colonel Kelly’s letter was his flippant dismissal of the principles of war. According to him Manoeuvre Theory has replaced the principles of war which “have little use beyond filling the first instructional period of any tactics course” and are an “anglophone infatuation”. The notion that field commanders can dump basic principles as soon as they reach the battlefield is a recipe for disaster. The principles of war are part of Australian Army doctrine and are detailed in the keystone document The Fundamentals of Land Warfare. They, and not the ill-defined notion of Manoeuvre Theory, provide the fundamental guidelines for a commander in action. As The Fundamentals of Land Warfare makes clear the principles of war guide the planning and conduct of all operations by the ADF and to disregard any one of the principles involves risk and a strong possibility of failure. The principles of war are part of ADF doctrine, Manoeuvre Theory is not. The nation that confines its essential doctrine to the classroom is certain to be defeated on the battlefield.

One last point. There are many examples in military history of battles won by the use of what we now call Manoeuvre Theory. German military history does not provide the best examples, as stated by Lieutenant Colonel Kelly, only the most obvious for the tactical level of war.

While it was heartening to see a response to the Army Doctrine Centre’s discussion paper, the first article on Manoeuvre Theory to appear in an Australian professional journal, its content was disappointing. Lieutenant Colonel Kelly is right when he states that we are starting from a very low base when it comes to developing new and difficult doctrine such as Manoeuvre Theory; particularly when it has to reflect the Australian approach to war.

G.J. Harper
Captain, S02 Research
Army Doctrine Centre
Australia Remembers 1945-1995

Australia Remembers 1945-1995 is a special program commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of the World War II.

Launched nationally by the Prime Minister and the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs on 14 August 1994 Australia Remembers gives every Australian the opportunity to remember those who served in the armed forces; those who lost their lives or the lives of loved ones; and those who worked so hard on the home front to sustain the war effort.

Planning committees established across the nation enable all Australians to be part of the Australia Remembers Program. A wide range of commemorative and celebratory activities are taking place, including memorial services, re-enactments, victory parades, church services, concerts, victory balls, reunions and local festivals.

Australia Remembers national events and activities will climax in Brisbane on VP Day, 15 August 1995, the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II.

This issue of the Australian Defence Force Journal is dedicated to all Australians who served in World War II and to all who contributed to winning the war and making the peace.
From Both Ends of the Siam-Burma Railway

By Lieutenant Colonel T. R. Beaton RAEME

This is not another story recounting the horrors of the "Siam-Burma railway". Instead, it is an attempt by someone born after the war to convey the awe and mystery that surrounds the primitive construction of their incredible engineering feat.

Introduction

On a sweat soaked morning on 25 April 1991, an Anzac Day ceremony of remembrance was being conducted at the war cemetery in Rangoon by the Australian Ambassador to Burma, H.E. Mr Geoff Allen. For the local diplomatic and ex-pat community, the service was more significant as the Australian and New Zealand Defence Forces were being represented after some time by the presence of an Australian Army officer. For that officer, the service had a more personal meaning. It was the culmination in a two year long fascination with the "Death Railway" and enabled him to finally commemorate those who had died, from the Burmese end of the infamous line.

Although most of the POWs who died in Burma were interred at the beautifully maintained war cemetery at Thanbyuzayat, unrest in southern Burma had prohibited access to this area for the service.

The Beginning

The whole venture for the Siam-Burma railway began when Japan invaded French Indo-China in October 1941. The subsequent attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941 was designed to eliminate any major form of American intervention against the planned invasion into South East Asia.

Why did Japan invade SE Asia? One major factor was oil! Japan suffered from a total lack of raw materials. Seizure of the rich oil fields in the Dutch East Indies would have enabled Japan to become virtually self-sufficient.

Collaboration

When the Siamese Government of Field Marshal Phibul Songkran capitulated after token resistance and allowed the Japanese access to the Gulf of Siam, a succession of rapid victories were achieved by the Japanese Imperial Army. Singapore fell on 15 February 1942 and the Dutch East Indies were conquered by April 1942. Although production of the captured oilfields could be maintained, the ability to transport the oil to Japan or elsewhere became severely restricted due to an increasing shortage of oil tankers.

Efficient use of shipping became a high priority and every possibility of relieving their total dependence on sea lanes of communication was carefully scrutinised by the Daihon’ei (Imperial General HQ in Tokyo).

Although the Japanese completed their occupation of Burma by 20 May 1942, the advance into India was halted by the onslaught of the wet season. This four-five month reprieve allowed the British Forces in India to re-organise and re-equip, thereby escalating the threat to the Japanese sea line of communication.

Line of Communication

The only line of communication with Burma lay through the China Sea, around the Malay Peninsula and then up the Malacca Strait to Rangoon. It was calculated that a saving of 1200 miles could be made if Bangkok could replace Rangoon as the shipping terminus for further operations. It would also reduce the vulnerability of Japanese shipping to interdiction by regrouped Allied forces.

At this time, there existed a state railway system linking Singapore to Bangkok and a railway line running south of Rangoon to Ye, but there was no rail link connecting these two systems.

Feasibility Studies

During the 1920s and 1930s the British in Burma had investigated the viability of building such a link, but had discounted the proposal as being too expen-
sive and uneconomical. The extreme nature of the terrain and the high rainfall in the wet season also made it impractical to construct and use a viable road connection.

As part of its pre-war planning, the Daihon’ei had also initiated a feasibility study of building the rail link. It had been undertaken during 1939 and 1940 by a civilian consultant named Kuwabara. He reported that:

“a route following the river Kwae Noi as far as Three Pagodas Pass and thence to Thanbyuzayat could be built by two railway regiments in about a year”

Encouraged by the easy conquest of Burma and the belief that it could be used as a base for the later invasion of India, it was proposed to construct a 415 km link between Nong Pladuk in Siam and Thanbyuzayat in Burma to enable the forward movement of up to 3000 tons of supplies per day.

Although Japanese military engineers agreed that Kuwabara’s plan could be implemented, they estimated that it would take five or six years to complete the link as Japan’s engineering resources were already fully stretched and that the proposed work lay in an area where there was little local labour available.

**Right of Way**

As the Siamese Government was sympathetic to the Japanese aims, the “right of way” for the rail link required mutual agreement by both governing bodies. Following protracted discussions, Phibul’s Government signed a Treaty of Alliance with the Japanese on 12 Dec 1942. Under the terms of this alliance, Field Marshal Phibul declared war on the US and the UK; however the Ambassador in Washington, Mr Seni Pramoj, refused to deliver this declaration. The Siamese Government also agreed to form a committee to evaluate the construction of a rail link with Burma. The Siamese participation in the railway would involve the provision of the necessary land and certain quantities of supplies, plus assisting with the construction of a road running parallel to it.

Originally the Daihon ei wanted the railway to be completed by November 1943, but later advanced the completion deadline to August 1943, following several Allied victories in the East Asian theatre of operations. To save time it was therefore decided to simultaneously build the rail link from both ends.

Major Sykes and 600 British POWs from Changi became the first troops to arrive at Nong Pladuk on 24 June 1942, to begin construction of the base workshops and stores facilities. This force was built up to 3000 POWs by August 1942. At the other end, some 3000 Australian POWs under Brigadier A.L. Varley, known as “A Force”, were re-directed to Thanbyuzayat during September 1942. This group then formed the nucleus of what became No 3 POW Branch and was given the responsibility for building the line from Thanbyuzayat to the Burma border. Its size was progressively supplemented with the inclusion of many Dutchmen and the arrival of No 5 POW Branch in January 1943.

The maximum number of POWs who eventually worked on the railway was over 61,000 men. This figure is less than 1/3 of the number of native labourers who were duped by the Japanese with promises of good wages. It is estimated that over 200,000 Tamils, Burmese, Malays and Chinese also worked on the railway and that as many as 100,000 may have died during it’s construction. Regrettably, this fact is often forgotten. As recently as November 1990, a mass grave of over 400 Asian bodies, who reportedly had died of cholera, was found in Karnchanaburi.

**Use of POWs**

Generally considered to be an ambitious undertaking, the one significant factor that ultimately convinced the Daihon’ei of the viability of the rail link was the huge labour resource that had virtually fallen into their hands. With the capitulation of Singapore and the fall of the Dutch East Indies, the Japanese forces had captured almost 300,000 prisoners of various nationalities.

Although Japan were not a signatory to the Geneva Convention of 1929, they had ratified the Hague Convention of 1907 and therefore were prohibited from using POWs to undertake work that would be beneficial to their own war effort. However the rail link provided the Japanese with a partial solution to a major logistic problem — what do you do with 300,000 POWs. It was therefore decided to make the POWs earn their keep.

The formal decision to proceed with the construction of the railway was not taken by the Daihon’ei until 20 June 1942. As early as March 1942 however, the commander of the Southern Field Railway Group in Saigon, Field Marshall Terauchi, had ordered the commencement of preliminary preparations. These included negotiating the “right of way” with the Siamese landowners and the physical movement of materials and manpower.
Japanese members of a maintenance party passing Australian graves in the cemetery. More than 10,000 Australians worked on the railway, and about 2,000 died there or as a result of working there. (Australian War Memorial)

The Japanese also employed 15,000 of their own personnel to deal with the technical aspects of the construction and to control the unskilled labour. Many of the engineers were civilians, whilst a majority of the guards were Korean. In September 1942, the 5th Railway Regiment were transferred from operating the line between Rangoon and Mandalay and sent to Thanbyuzayat. Whilst the 9th Railway Regiment was moved from repairing the line north of Mandalay to Ban Pong in August 1942. The total number of people that worked on the railway can therefore be estimated to be over 276,000 men. This figure does not take into consideration the labour forced provided by the local Siamese authorities.

a. it was already an established river port with direct access to the Gulf of Siam down the Mae Klaung;
b. it was connected to Ban Pong, and thence to Bangkok, by a road suitable for heavy traffic; and
c. it was a chief marketing centre — therefore rice, vegetables and fruit were always in plentiful supply.

**Bridge Across the River Kwae – The Controversy**

Now we come to a major controversy that still surrounds this infamous railway and that is — “where exactly should the railway have crossed the Mae Klaung/Kwae Yai river?”.

The existing steel and concrete bridge crosses the river at a place called Tamarkan. Some POWs considered that Futamatsu had made a major navigational error when he selected this site. They argue that confusion over the use of Siamese names had caused survey maps to be incorrectly marked. Their argument is centred mainly around the name used for the POW campsite, which has since become a war cemetery, namely – Chung Kai.

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Planned the Route

The Japanese engineer responsible for surveying the railway trace in Siam was a civilian consultant named Yoshihiko Futamatsu. His orders were to implement Kuwabara’s recommendations. This required the survey for a track through flat country to Kanchanaburi, then a route that followed the valley of the river Kwae Noi and crossed at the border at Three Pagoda Pass. “Karn” was very important to the proceedings because:
These POWs believe that the railway should have crossed the river at Lat Ya, some 3 km north of the Tamarkan site and which today is the location for a solid concrete bridge for the road that leads to Sangklaburi and Three Pagodas Pass. The basis for their argument is as follows:

a. the hill close to Lat Ya is called Khao Chong Kai, the hill in the area of the camp is called Khao Poon, not Chung Kai;
b. the river at Lat Ya is only 100m wide — thereby allowing for an easier, quicker and smaller bridge construction. Whereas at Tamarkan the width of the river varies between 100 and 200m depending on season and the bridge had to be 220m long; and
c. a route from Lat Ya to Wang Yai would have been 20km shorter, across flat ground. Whereas the route from Tamarkan not only was longer, but went through difficult terrain that forced the construction of the infamous Chung Kai Cuttings and the Wampo Double Viaduct. Both of which not only claimed many lives, but also significantly delayed completion of the line in this area.

After the war Futamatsu in his defence against the allegations answered his critics by stating that:

a. originally he wanted to cross at the township of Kamchanaburi itself, but the swampiness of the west bank would have made it too difficult;
b. the route through Lat Ya was in fact the direction taken by an existing jungle track; which the Phibul Government was supposed to upgrade to take truck traffic. By June 1942, no progress had been made on the road. It’s use as a vital supply route was therefore not viable;
c. there was no detailed maps of the area for him to consult; and
d. he had placed great importance on using the Kwae Noi as a supply route.

Analysis of both arguments leads to the opinion that Futamatsu did not make a navigational error. Instead he made a poor engineering decision, prompted by the restricted timeframe allocated to complete the initial survey and the subsequent importance he placed on the river Kwae Noi as a supply route. This belief is supported by observation of the route he choose after crossing the river. He could have taken a more logical northwesterly route directly across the flat country, which would have been shorter and avoided the need to construct Chung Kai Cuttings and Wampo Viaduct. Instead he heads south west to meet and follow the river Kwae Noi as quickly as possible.

Consequently, putting aside the emotional issue attached to the loss of life that resulted from the Chung Kai Cuttings and Wampo, it is considered that Futamatsu probably made the best practical and logistically sound decision at the time. Speed was of the essence, as verified by the infamous “speedo period”
that claimed an enormous loss of life, and the river provided the only reliable supply route for the movement of large quantities of heavy supplies and construction materials to the numerous camps upriver, all year round.

Although preparations began in June 1942, with the arrival of the first POWs at Thanbyuzayat and Nong Pladuk, construction did not begin until September 1942. The link was built from both ends and joined 13 months later on 17 October 1943 at Konkuita in Siam, 36km south of the border crossing at Three Pagoda Pass. The crews working from Burma had built 152km of track, whilst 263km had been constructed in Siam. This event was marked by a special ceremony at which medallions, which had been made at the railway workshops in Nong Pladuk, were presented to senior Japanese officers and key Japanese engineers.

The railway supplied vital war materials and reinforcements to Burma over a period of 17 months before it was finally put out of commission. Although originally required to have the capacity to move 3000 tons per day, use of unseasoned timber, poor quality rolling stock from Japan and interdiction by Allied aircraft reduced the capacity to only 500 tons per day.

After the War

Tragically after the Japanese surrender, the British Army made the decision to dismantle 3.95km of the line around Three Pagoda Pass. Post-war engineers had assessed that the line was not capable of supporting commercial traffic, due to poor construction and use of inferior materials. The Siamese Government, having signed a Treaty of Alliance with the Japanese, subsequently sold the 303.95km of track in Siam for 50 million baht (£1.25m) and the proceeds were distributed to the surviving POWs in compensation.

The Siamese authorities decided to re-lay 130km of line to the village of Tha Sao (now called Namtok station). The 50km of line from Nong Pladuk to Kanchanaburi was re-opened on 24 June 1949. Four years later the 64 km section to Wampo, which included both the bridge and the viaduct, was completed on 14 April 1952. The final section of 16km to Namtok was not opened until 1 July 1957.

The remaining 167km of line was not considered economically viable due to the small population in the area. It was then dismantled over a number of years. The Burmese side of the line was never used again after the war and left to slowly deteriorate. In the words of Mr Alan Tilley, an ex-POW who worked on the Wampo Viaduct, "the loss of life was an enormous waste — not so much due to the suffering inflicted, but more to the fact that the railway was blindly ripped up and not used for the benefit of the local people". At least a small section of the line is still benefiting the Thai people. What a real waste it would have been if the whole rail link had either been dismantled or just allowed to rot.

Re-establishment of the link

Any present worries about the re-use of the old rail link, are unwarranted. Even if it was mutually desired by both countries, the lake that was created by the construction of the Khao Laem Dam, has effectively flooded about 30 km of the old embankment. Also in many areas, extensive amounts of the embankment has been levelled by farmers and the timber from the wooden bridges have long since been used elsewhere by the locals. Any new rail link would therefore have to use a different and more cost effective route that would service the communities that have since been established around the existing roads.

The Exploration

So much for the background. Now what is so fascinating about exploring the railway. Simply — the aura that it still exudes; especially when you have sweated and pushed through the undergrowth to discover the mysteries surrounding an abandoned cutting, the remnants of a once huge timber bridge or maybe even the site of a railway station.

The railway even has its own folklore. For example, many people have spent years searching for the site of the "Pack of Cards Bridge" in the Hintok area. So called because it reportedly was made of green timber and kept falling down like a pack of cards. Discussions recently with an ex-POW who had actually worked on the bridge, has however revealed that the wooden bridge was only ever meant to be temporary and was built quickly to allow passage of materials to work sites further up the track. It only fell down once because the Tamil workers who built it, had never side braced it in the first place. Australian POWs then had to work hard to rapidly re-erect the temporary structure. Later, a more permanent rock embankment was constructed around the bridge. That huge rock embankment still exists.
Remarkably many ex-POWs, despite their advancing years, continue to return to the railway and even venture into the countryside in search of such places or just to remember those mates that they had left behind. Sir Edward “Weary” Dunlop and a large group of ex-POWs from Australia attended the dawn service in “Hellfire Pass” and an Anzac Day commemoration service at the Kanchanaburi War Cemetery on 25 April 1991.

Features Still In Use

Three famous features are still being used today, years after they were originally built. The “Bridge over the River Kwae” still stands majestically like a preserved dinosaur and is extensively used by foot and motorcycle traffic, as well as by the regular train service. Unfortunately the movie of the same name is not based on fact, but it was largely responsible for both rekindling lost memory and boosting tourism in Thailand. The train also still passes daily through the infamous Chung Kai Cuttings which claimed so many lives during their excavation.

Far more impressive than both of these features through, is the 600m long timber trestle bridge known as “the Wampo Viaduct”. This is an impressive double trestle that was precariously erected into the dug out cliff face above the edge of the River Kwai Noi. Although many of the timber supports have been replaced and the old concrete footings are slowly being encased in thick concrete, original timbers can still be identified by the adze cuts left when the round tree trunks were chipped into angular section. Across the viaduct the old rails are still being used as safety rails, to prevent de-railment. The oldest rail found to date was made by Barrow Steel in 1892 and was more than likely removed from Malaya.

It is an envigorating experience leaning out of the window as you ride across the viaduct, viewing the floating raftel on the river directly below and the uncut cliff face hanging menacingly only inches from the top of the train. Even more exhilarating is standing under the viaduct, listening to timbers creak and steel rails screech as a modern diesel train carrying hundreds of tourists passes cautiously overhead. Care however should be taken to prevent being ‘christened’ by desperate tourists using the train’s conveniences. Some people have been caught. At the northern end of the viaduct, surrounding the small station’s
wooden platform, the existence of four 500lb bomb holes stand as a grim reminder that this was once a vital supply line for the Japanese Army. Despite attempts, Allied bombers never disabled the viaduct due to the protection afforded by the high overhanging cliffs.

The Two Bridges Over The River Kwae Yai

During the war there were in fact two bridges over the River Kwae Yai at Tha Makham (Tamarkam). One was built of steel and concrete, while the other was a timber bridge located 200m, “downstream”. The eleven 21m prefabricated spans for the steel bridge had been shipped from a location in occupied Dutch Java and dumped by the river at Kanchanaburi in September 1942.

In October 1942 construction started on a timber by-pass bridge, so that stores could be sent to the northern work camps. The timber bridge was completed in 4 months and crossed by the first train in February 1943. The more permanent steel bridge was not completed until May 1943.

To add to the bridge’s intrigue, it has been said by some ex-POWs that the body of a Japanese sergeant, who was a real bastard, still exists in one of the midstream bridge piers. The other guards had already gone for lunch and he was “bumped” during a concrete pour. Apparently he was not missed because desertion was not uncommon amongst the Korean and Japanese guards, especially if they had local girlfriends.

The twin bridges became priority targets for the Allies, but Japanese supplies were not seriously disrupted for 17 months until early February 1945 when both bridges were finally hit. POWs were forced to repair the wooden bridge in just over a month. Although damaged again during a raid by US B-24 bombers on 2 April 1945, both bridges became operational two months later. Finally on 24 June 1945, RAF bombers inflicted sufficient damage to both bridges to put the railway out of commission for the remainder of the war.

The remnants of the damaged timber bridge were dismantled after the war to ease water traffic congestion. The steel bridge was repaired as part of the line re-construction to Namtok. Ironically, replacement of the three bombed section by two 32m box-shaped spans was carried out by a Japanese company as war
reparation. Repairwork to bomb splinter damage is still evident on the original concrete piers. Some time ago, whilst noting the size difference between the modern and old rail at Wampo Viaduct, I wondered what had happened to the other 300 km of old rail sold to the Thais. An overnight train trip to Nong Khai in NE Thailand has provided the answer. For along this line there are several stations which have metal shelters over the platforms which use old rail as the uprights. At Nong Khai station, one particular upright is a rail made by Barrow Steel in 1892. The similarity with the rail found at Wampo is too high for it to be coincidental. I have since noticed old rails being used all over Thailand, even Bangkok railway station uses old rails as uprights for the overhead shelters on the platforms.

### Hellfire Pass

On the abandoned section, many incredible sites can also be found. One notorious site 80km NW of Kanchanaburi, called “Hellfire Pass”, has now become an official memorial to those who died on the railway. Conceived by Australian ex-POW Mr Tom Morris and funded as a Bi-Centennial Project, volunteers associated with the Australian-Thai Chamber of Commerce worked hard to clear and provide access to the site. It was officially commemorated on 27 April 1987 in the presence of an esteemed group of ex-POWs from Australia, which included Sir Edward “Weary” Dunlop and Mr Morris.

Officially known as Konyu Cutting, it is 110m long and up to 17m deep. The majority of the cutting was dug through solid rock by hand, using crude implements. Work on “the pass” started on Anzac Day 1943, during the wettest monsoon season in many years. Yet it took about 1000 Australian and British POWs just over 12 weeks to excavate it and a series of smaller cuttings within the Konyu area. Forced to work 16-18 hours per day and tired beyond belief, the men would look down into the cutting at night and think that the illumination lamps resembled the fires from hell.

During excavation, the sound of the sledge hammers bashing against the steel taps would reverberate around the cutting — hence some ex-POWs know it as “Hammer and Tap” cutting. This laborious method of slowing chipping through solid rock was used to drill the 2” by 1m deep hole into which explosive was later packed and detonated to prize the hard rock from the ground. This task alone was hazardous. Firstly, injury could be sustained if the tap was not hit squarely either by splitting a skull or removing the odd finger of the holder’s hands. Also care had to be taken not to feather the end of the tap, otherwise these would fly off like bullets and bury themselves deep into any exposed bodies. Blasting was usually done around lunch-time, sometimes without much warning which resulted in showers of rock raining down on unprotected bodies. Apparently it was safer to be in the open during blasting, if you couldn’t be under cover, because you had more chance of watching out for the falling debris and side stepping it at the last moment. If caught in the tree line, you only had the sound of breaking branches above you to warn you of incoming projectiles.

Later when the cutting fell well behind schedule, the Japanese brought in a compressor and three jack hammers. Throughout the cutting the rockface is scarred by the marks left by the drill holes. Even a broken compressor bit can be found in the eastern wall, still where it may have been deliberately jammed half a century ago.

Forty eight years later, 30 Infantry soldiers from C Company 3 RAR became the first body of Australian troops to work in the cutting site since 1945. Using rudimentary handtools and similar techniques to those used by the POWs, the soldiers worked hard to re-lay a section of rail and clean up “the pass” for Anzac Day 1989. Since then groups of sailors from HMAS Perth, Swan and Tobruk have benefited from the experience of contributing sweat towards the continual maintenance of this memorial. The visit by the former ship’s personnel was especially significant, as survivors from the cruiser HMAS Perth, which was sunk in the Sumatra Straits with the cruiser USS Houston, worked on the Burmese section of the line.

### Sai Yok Yai National Park

During the war this was a main terminus for activities and had several sidings and shunting spur lines. As you leave the park’s toll gate the main railway station is to the left. In this area there appeared to have been up to five lines, judging by the re-positioned sleepers and the sets of ballast. A coal dump also still exists from the war. This was the site of a large POW camp and some cooking stoves can be found still in existence. Unfortunately some fake stoves have also appeared to foster support for the growing tourist industry.

A large timber bridge was built south east of the camp and the impressive footings and other remnants still can be easily found. South of the bridge site is a
Members of C Company at work in Hellfire Pass.

700m long section of embankment that in some places is over five metres high. Considering that all the tonnage of earth and/or rock used to create the embankments all along the line had to be dug out of the surrounding area and then manually hauled up the slope using a bag stretcher like device called a “Tanka”, carried between two men, generates a feeling of respect and absolute amazement at their achievement. Each man had to make his daily quota of one cubic metre per day. So each pair had to shift at least two cubic metres per day. A standard 6 x 4 trailer load is equivalent to approximately half a cubic metre.

At the end of this incredible embankment is a railway cutting that is over 200m long and up to 12m deep. In many ways this cutting is far more impressive than “Hellfire Pass”.

Hin Dat Hot Springs

There is a sign, but not in English, marking the turn-off. After the hairpin turn, the road then actually uses the railway embankment as you head to the carpark. The baths were built by the POWs for the Japanese officers. The smallest bath was the personal bath of the Area Commander, who was reportedly bathed each day by five beautiful Siamese women. The baths have become a major tourists attraction for the Thais as well as foreigners. Bathing in the two larger pools is permitted, but the general’s bath is now only used as a source of medicinal drinking water. The temperature of this bath is significantly hotter than the two larger baths. On the hillside are the remains of a double stove base used to accommodate the “kwales” or huge metal cauldrons used for cooking.

Three Pagodas Pass

At the border, the only evidence of the railway is on the Burmese side. It is now used as a road by the locals. It has also become a border between the lands of the Mon and the Karen hilltribes following a battle in early 1990, which resulted in the total destruction of the old village and some 500 people dead or injured. The Three Pagodas themselves are a let down, but standing on the railway embankment you
will see that the railway would have passed within 50m of them.

In numerous locations Buddhist temples, called “Wats”, have been built close to the railway and the abandoned embankment is used by the monks as a “Priest’s Walk” for reciting their Buddhist Sutras. At one Wat near the River Kwai Village Hotel, the monks have built three huts and laid concrete sleepers to make it look like a station.

Japanese Mysteries Surrounding the Railway

Firstly in March 1944, the Japanese Army erected a controversial memorial at Tha Makham and held a commemoration service to honour the POWs and labourers who had died constructing the railway. That memorial still exists and in 1978 the Japanese Association of Thailand erected a sign proclaiming that:

“This monument was erected by the Japanese Army during World War II in memory of the personnel of the Allied Forces and the nationals of the many countries who helped construction of the Thailand-Burma railway and had died through illness during the course of the construction”.

Once a year in March, the Japanese residents in Thailand assemble here in a ceremony to commemorate this memorial.

Why did the Japanese Army erect the memorial at all? Was it through a genuine feeling of remorse for the atrocities committed and the huge loss of life or was it simply a ploy in an attempt to appease feelings, at a time when Japan was undoubtedly losing the war in the Pacific.

Finally in June 1991, a trip aimed at finding the remains of a bombed train believed to be located north of a village called Purang Kasi, resulted in the discovery of a recent mysterious incident. A Dutch ex-POW had advised that he was on a train passing through Purang Kasi station late in the war, when it was attacked and destroyed by Allied bombers. He wished to know whether the wreck still could be found.

Having fixed the site of the train station, it was disappointing to hear that the wreck had been cut-up and sold for scrap some years ago by the local villagers. However, subsequent discussions with the locals disclosed an unusual incident that had occurred in the area. Apparently a group of Japanese men had come armed with old photographs and inquired about the location of the station and the train wreck. Having confirmed the location, they had spent the next five days blowing open the side of a small hill situated alongside the site of the station. After five days work, they left leaving a large opening in the side of the hill. Inspection of the opening revealed a number of small arterial cave like formations, which raise the speculation that a large cave may have existed previously in the hillside. It also raises the question about whether such a cave could have been used to hide some of the fortune that the Japanese are reported to have hidden in Thailand towards the end of the war.

Such are some of the fascinating sites and mysteries that still surround this amazing truly man-made feature.

NOTES


2. In reality, the Japanese had commenced construction of the rail link four months before the formation of this committee. In addition, the formal approval was received by the Japanese only two months before both ends were joined south of three Pagoda’s Pass on 17 October 1943.

3. It appears that the POWs may also have been confused by place names, because the concrete road bridge referred to at this point does not in fact cross the river at Lat Ya. The Bridge on the road to Sangklaburi crosses the river three km north of “Tamarkan” but at a place which would have been virtually uninhabited in 1942. Lat Ya itself and Khao Chong Kai are located over 13 km north of “Karn”. A visit to this area in 1991 discovered the existence of a new concrete bridge and a road under construction that travelled north into the River Kwai Yai valley, not the River Kwai Noi Valley. A large range of mountains would have also blocked access to the River Kwai Noi from this site.

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Davies, P.N., The Man Behind The Bridge – Colonel Toosey and The River Kwai, The Athlone Press Ltd.


Parkin, R.E., Into The Smoother.


Born to a British Army SNCO seconded to the Malayan Army, Lieutenant Colonel Beaton graduated with a B Eng(Civil) from RMC in 1974. Commissioned into RAEME, he later completed a MSc at RMCS, Shrivenham, in the UK. Lieutenant Colonel Beaton provided engineering assistance to the Royal Thai Armed Forces under a Defence Cooperation Project.
Significant Dates

Survey of rail link by British Commerce 1920-30
Pre-war survey of rail link by Kuwabara 1939-40
Japanese forces land in French Indochina October 1941
Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor (US enters war) 7 December 1941
Siam Government under Phibui allows Japanese access Gulf of Siam: December 1941

Fall of Siam 15 February 1942
Fall of Singapore 20 May 1942
Fall of Burma June-October 1942
Wet Season June 1942
Survey of line under Futamatsu 19 June 1942
First POWs entrain at Singapore for Ban Pong September 1942
3000 Australian POWs sent to Thanbyuzayat September 1942
*Construction starts on line*
Building starts on both 220m bridges — R. Kwai Yai October 1942
Phibui Government signs Treaty of Alliance 12 December 1942
— Phibui then declared war on US & UK —
but Ambassador to US refused to deliver declaration.

First train across timber bridge February 1943
Complete steel bridge May 1943
Cholera breaks out in camps April 1943
Start work on Konyu Cutting — “Hellfire Pass” 25 April 1943
Worst wet season in many years commence June-October 1943
Konyu cutting completed August 1943
*Rails joined near Konkuita, Thailand 17 October 1943
Official ceremony of celebration 25 October 1943

Both bridges finally hit — after 17 months use February 1945
POW at Nong Pladuk advised Germany defeated 12 May 1945
RAF destroy both bridges — use of line ceases 24 June 1945
Japan surrenders 15 August 1945
British dismantle line at border 1946

Siam changes its name to Thailand 1949
Nong Pladuk to Kanchanaburi line re-opened 24 June 1949
Kanchanaburi to Wampo section completed 14 April 1952
Line completed to Tha Sao (Namtok) 1 July 1957

Commemoration of Memorial at Hellfire Pass 26 April 1987
First body of soldiers to work at Konyu 20-25 April 1989
Worldwide fury over plans for show at bridge 10 March 1990
Inaugural Dawn Service at Hellfire Pass 25 April 1990
Sailors from HMAS PERTH work at Konyu 13 June 1990
Mass grave of 400+ Asians found at “Karn” 18 November 1990
“Weary” and 30 Australian ex-POWs return — Konyu 25 April 1991

Cost — (90,000+ Asians, 12,900 Allied POWs and 1000+ Japanese and Koreans) — 103,900 lives.
## Construction of the Railway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>415km total. 153km built by Burma Group, whilst 263km was constructed in Siam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced</td>
<td>Preparations – June 1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actual Construction – September 1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joined</td>
<td>On 17 October 1943 near Konkuita 37km south of the border. (Roughly 13 months after building began)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gauge</td>
<td>1 metre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min radius of curvature</td>
<td>200 metres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max gradient</td>
<td>2.5 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Around border it was 2.9 and needed 2 locos)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridges</td>
<td>Total distance – 14km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Steel construction – 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Timber construction – 680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(timber bridges built mainly using softwood. Durability and strength sacrificed for speed which softwoods could be cut and fabricated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total number – 688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rails</td>
<td>30 ft lengths weighing 600lb each – from Malaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30-39ft lengths weighting 600-750lbs each – from Burma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lengths of German manufactured rail (Krupp) – Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lengths to over come shortage – from Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base Workshops</td>
<td>Located at Nong Pladuk, consisted: 3 x forges, 3 x engine shops, a foundry, 3 x power stn, a sawmill and installation for refining crude oil. (all stolen from Malayan Tin mines, or railway workshops in Kuala Lumpur, Java and Sumatra)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rail Capacity</td>
<td>Planned – 3000 tons/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Estimated (after railway completed) – 1000 tons/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average Achieved – 500 tons/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manpower</td>
<td>POW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>British – 30,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dutch – 18,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Australian – 13,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NZ, Canadian, Indian, Malays – No Account</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Americans – 700 +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Labourers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asian Labourers – 200,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japanese Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japanese and Korean – 12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total – 275,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>Attap huts built by POWs, often after an exhausting march through the jungle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Hours</td>
<td>Light till dark – sometimes 20-30 hours continuous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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The Role of Maritime Power in the New Guinea Campaign 1942-43

By D.M. Stevens, Department of Defence

"The function of maritime power is to win and keep control of the seas for one's own use, and to deny such control to one's adversaries."

S.W. Roskill

Introduction

When the battles fought for possession of New Guinea during World War II are recalled, it is the activities of the Australian Army that most readily spring to mind. It was, after all, the infantryman who fought, lived and slept in the most atrocious conditions of swamps and jungle, who first stopped the Japanese advance at Kokoda and Milne Bay, and then gradually drove the enemy back. The result has been an Australian tradition, which almost exclusively extols the skill, bravery and devotion of the 'digger'. Victory in New Guinea achieved only through hard action on the ground, in the face of the dogged fanaticism of the Japanese soldier.

While perfectly understandable, selective memories of this type unfortunately tend to brush over the role of other elements in the Australian armed forces. Roles that, while not as well-remembered, were arguably just as important.

The aim of this article is to highlight just one of these neglected aspects. Allied maritime forces were not simply concerned with the defeat of the Imperial Japanese Navy at sea. Though often taken for granted, the sustained and successful involvement of maritime power had a direct influence on operations ashore. There may not have been a single decisive battle for command, but there was a continuous struggle by both the Allies and Japanese to keep the sea for their own use while denying it to their adversary.

Early Manoeuvres

When General Douglas MacArthur arrived in Australia from the Philippines in March 1942, combined operations by the Japanese had seen them triumphant on all fronts. Australia itself seemed likely to be the next objective. On assuming supreme command of the South West Pacific Area (SWPA), MacArthur found he had very few resources available for defence. As a member of MacArthur's staff was later to write: "The Japanese held the initiative and their command of the sea enabled them to concentrate on a particular objective and overwhelm the defenders with superior forces."

The Japanese, however, had already rejected the actual invasion of Australia as being beyond their ability. Instead, before the United States could muster a significant response, the Japanese aimed to occupy Port Moresby and the southern Solomons, followed by Fiji, Samoa and New Caledonia. These operations would shore up the Japanese defensive perimeter while simultaneously cutting Australia's vital communications with America. Isolated from her allies, Australia would be prevented from acting as a staging area for manpower and materiel. Subsequently, Australia would either be forced out of the war, or rendered harmless until a Japanese invasion could proceed at a more favourable time in the future.

Assisted by an efficient intelligence system, MacArthur had an accurate understanding of Japanese intentions, and soon made it clear that he considered Australia's security lay in Port Moresby rather than on the mainland. Unfortunately, garrison forces at Port Moresby amounted to only one militia brigade group and reinforcement would not be easy. New Guinea had virtually no land routes of communication. Airfields, were few and small, and there was no intermediate air base closer than Townsville. Port Moresby (and New Guinea as a whole) was solely dependent upon sea lines of communication and their control by friendly air and naval forces.

The Japanese Port Moresby Attack Force carrying some 6000 troops and supported by aircraft carriers, cruisers and destroyers, sailed from Rabaul on 4 May. Forewarned by decryption of Japanese signals, a combined naval force from the South and South-West Pacific Areas sailed to meet them. The Battle of the Coral Sea, which extended over 7-8 May, was inconclusive and resulted in one aircraft carrier lost and another damaged on each side. Nevertheless, the Japanese had failed to establish control of the Coral Sea, and with the covering force depleted and air cover reduced, the Port Moresby operation was postponed.
In the breathing space provided, MacArthur reinforced the troops in New Guinea and ordered the construction of additional air bases at the south eastern tip of New Guinea and on the Cape York Peninsula. The Imperial Japanese Navy meanwhile, turned its attention to the Midway operation; this time there were no doubts about the outcome. For the Japanese, the Battle of Midway was a major naval disaster. Four fleet carriers were sunk and the Japanese lost not only their capacity to contest command of the sea, but also the strategic initiative for the remainder of the Pacific War.

Though Japanese ambitions had been checked, they had not been curbed, and the occupation of Port Moresby was still a priority. However, a direct amphibious assault on Moresby was still impractical so the Japanese instead accelerated studies for an overland advance from their bases on the northern New Guinea coast. The operation commenced in July and soon led to the prolonged and vicious fighting along the length of the Kokoda Trail. In August, the struggle expanded to include Milne Bay where the Allies were attempting to establish an air base.

For the remainder of 1942 the pattern of fighting in New Guinea was characterised by a series of slow and costly engagements ashore, and there were few incentives for the Allies to commit major naval forces. Ships of all types were scarce and with the profusion of reefs, and lack of accurate hydrographic information, operations close to land were inherently unsafe. The proximity of Japanese air bases and the lack of Allied air superiority added further difficulties to surface operations. Thus, for the initial stages of the campaign and at least till the capture of Buna, direct naval assistance was limited to that provided by motor torpedo boats and corvettes.

For the antagonists, the prime focus of offensive naval activity had instead moved to the area around the Solomon Islands. Here the struggle over Guadalcanal was waged as both the Japanese and Allies attempted to establish forward air bases. However, though for the public New Guinea had become a land campaign, and major offensive action by naval forces was not contemplated, maritime activity had not ceased. The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) had already begun the massive task of surveying uncharted areas, while operations in support of, or against sea communications, were soon commenced by both sides.

The Allied View

Once the land campaign in New Guinea was underway, shipping movements along the East Australian coast and up to the forward areas increased rapidly. After Coral Sea, the Japanese no longer risked surface ships south of New Guinea and without command of the sea, Japanese attempts to disrupt communications were generally limited to what could be achieved by aircraft and submarines.

The first serious Japanese offensive to disrupt shipping began in June 1942 with a sortie by five fleet submarines and the midget submarine attack on Sydney. A Japanese campaign against the sea lanes was not unexpected, but Australian reactions were initially hampered by a lack of suitable assets. Protection of military shipping, and troop convoys in particular, took priority. For example, on 3 June the Australian Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Sir Guy Royle, explained to the Advisory War Council that air reconnaissance to seaward was not being made at the time of the midget submarine attack because: "aircraft had been disposed to provide air cover for troop convoys proceeding to Port Moresby".

In the period to August 1942, the Japanese sank seven merchant ships and damaged another six off the east coast. A few of these vessels were carrying purely commercial cargoes, but many were also carrying military equipment, the loss of which could be ill-afforded. The Greek steamer G S Livanos, torpedoed on 20 July was carrying among other stores, 87 army motor vehicles. SS William Dawes, sunk two days later, had a cargo manifest that included:

- 82 1½ ton jeeps
- 33 ½ ton CSR
- 72 ½ ton pickups
- 60 1 ton trailers
- 2 1½ ton cargo trucks
- 12 2½ ton cargo trucks
- 12 ambulances
- 13 half-track vehicles

Explosives and other sundry army stores in William Dawes brought the total service cargo to 5576 tons.

Ship losses were comparatively small on a worldwide scale but were magnified by the dependence of Australian trade on shipping, the increasing supply needs of Allied Forces in New Guinea, and the severe shortage of ships everywhere. The sea lanes after all, were interconnecting and even events in the Atlantic had repercussions in Australia. At a meeting with the State Premiers on 10 August 1942, Prime Minister John Curtin noted: "One aspect of the shipping position affecting Australia was that the increasing efficiency of the anti-submarine measures on the East Coast of America drove the enemy further south. This resulted in increased attacks on ships bound for Australia through the Panama Canal, and some valuable cargoes of war materials were lost."
Escort and convoy arrangements for shipping from the mainland to New Guinea had begun in an ad hoc manner but, as the land campaign continued, such arrangements could not be sustained. In December 1942, regular routine convoys from the mainland (ex Townsville) to New Guinea began. Designated TN.NT, these convoys continued to operate until 23 March 1944. Over 15 months, 1148 merchant vessels made this journey without loss. These figures though, do not represent all New Guinea convoys, for there were also many special and troop convoys. Records are imprecise but the following figures provide some idea of the equipment successfully shipped to New Guinea in Australian vessels:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Vehicles</th>
<th>Guns</th>
<th>Surface Craft</th>
<th>Tons Stores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>3033</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943 (Jan-Sep)</td>
<td>4228</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>388 917</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By early 1943, there existed a complete system of convoys stretching from Melbourne to advanced New Guinea bases and Darwin. The system was the responsibility of the Australian Chief of Naval Staff who, as Commander Southwest Pacific Sea Frontiers (CSWPSF), was charged with the safe conduct and routing of all coastal shipping, shipping to and from contiguous areas, and routine shipping in support of military operations.

The safe transport of troops to and from the New Guinea area received particular attention and special escort cover was always arranged by CSWPSF. No troop ships were ever lost off Australia and between 1941 and 1943, 189 128 Australian personnel were safely transported to New Guinea.1 There were, however, some close escapes. On 23 August 1942, MV Malaita reached Port Moresby with a load of troops and supplies. On sailing for Cairns six days later, Malaita was torpedoed outside the entrance to Moresby by the Japanese submarine RO 33.2

The Japanese continued their campaigns of disruption in 1943. Aircraft maintained frequent attacks against the supply lines around New Guinea and across northern Australia while submarines tended to operate further south. With fighting concentrated along the north coast of New Guinea, the northern supply line and in particular, the run from Milne Bay to Oro Bay, assumed the greatest importance. Insufficient friendly aircraft were available to cover all ships on this passage and most of the escort burden was shouldered by RAN corvettes. Between December 1942 and June 1943, 60,000 tons of supplies and 3,802 troops were safely transported to Oro Bay.3 Losses during air attack amounted to two merchant ships sunk and two
Japanese RO-33 torpedoed Malaita off Port Moresby and was herself sunk by HMAS Arunta.

badly damaged, while several corvettes also sustained damage and casualties. Hampered by their own warfare doctrine, the Japanese never gave their submarine campaign off the east Australian coast the priority it deserved. The number of submarines allocated was always too small for the area involved. Nevertheless, the existence of a threat forced the provision of countermeasures, and the submarines did achieve some successes. SS Starr King, for example, was designated by Allied authorities as a ‘Special Ship’, and when torpedoed and sunk off Sydney on 10 February 1943, was loaded with 7000 tons of army supplies. SS Lydia M Child, sunk off Newcastle in April, carried a cargo of tanks.

Backed by American industrial might, these losses were not great enough to stop the Allied buildup, nevertheless, the requirement to protect shipping continued to place a heavy strain on air and naval resources. In May 1943, Royle noted that the main naval activity in the SWPA was the provision of escort for convoys, and shipping carrying troops, stores and equipment to New Guinea ports. By the end of 1943, over 60 vessels had been allocated for escort duties (See Chart 1). These vessels included Australian and Allied destroyers, corvettes and a wide assortment of smaller anti-submarine vessels. Despite these forces, the scale of enemy submarine attacks in May forced the number of convoy sailings to be reduced by half and the number of escort vessels allocated to each convoy doubled. The Japanese, though, were also feeling the strain and could not maintain even a minimum effort. By the end of June, all submarines had been withdrawn for defensive operations closer to home. Strangely, however, it was the final attack of the campaign that was to be the most effective. On 16 June, with two torpedoes, the submarine I-174 sank the US Army Transport Portmar, fully loaded with fuel and ammunition, and severely damaged a tank landing ship (LST). The LST belonged to MacArthur’s Seventh Amphibious Force, which having only been formed in January, was still short of ships. Loss of the vessel forced last minute eliminations of troops and cargo from the assault convoy destined for the SWPA’s first amphibious operation at Kiriwina-Woodlark.

The establishment of the Seventh Amphibious Force heralded a return to the offensive by Allied naval forces in New Guinea. Supported by ever increasing strength at sea and in the air, Allied troops were for the first time able to take full advantage of amphibious mobility and naval gunfire support. The first opposed amphibious landing by Australian
troops took place at Lae at the beginning of September 1943. It was followed by a successful assault on Finschhafen a few weeks later.

In contrast to the earlier overland advances, amphibious operations reduced losses and increased the speed of advance. Troops no longer had to make frontal assaults against prepared enemy positions. By relying on amphibious movement, strongly garrisoned points could be bypassed and troops landed on lightly or undefended beaches. The example set at Lae was subsequently repeated many times as MacArthur’s forces ‘coast hopped’ up New Guinea.

The Allies, the Japanese admitted, had at Lae: “inflicted an annihilating blow on us without engaging in direct combat.”

The Japanese View

Japanese Forces, and the Imperial Navy in particular, had been designed around the need to maximise battle strength. The problem of maintaining and protecting supply services was paid only minimal attention. Japan could not match US shipbuilding capacity, and an initial shortage of suitable transports and cargo vessels, combined with wartime attrition, soon caused major breakdowns in Japanese logistics. To compensate, sea movement by warships rapidly became the norm for men and equipment.

Despite these limitations, the Japanese in New Guinea could rely on adequate reinforcement by surface transport for most of 1942, and in general were able to maintain an offensive posture. However, by the end of the year, faced by Allied victories at Milne Bay, Kokoda, and Buna, Japanese attention was turned towards strengthening and consolidating their position along the northern coast of New Guinea. Hampering this objective, Allied air and submarine attacks on their poorly defended convoys were becoming increasingly effective. Heavy equipment, food and ammunition were soon in short supply, and difficulty in maintaining an adequate supply of spare parts severely reduced Japanese air strength. Meanwhile, the Japanese Combined Fleet, reflecting the strategic change in Japanese policy to the defensive, had by mid-November 1942, suspended all offensive operations and ordered its light forces to operate chiefly in fulfilling the constant requirement for supplies.

The Allies, continued to improve their interdiction and maritime strike capability. In January 1943, the US submarine Wahoo reported that after a ten-hour running battle off New Guinea, an entire convoy of two Japanese freighters, one transport and one tanker, had been sunk. In early March, in what was to be their last major resupply operation, the Japanese attempted to run a large reinforcement convoy from Rabaul to Lae. Good intelligence allowed the Allies to mount a massive air attack, and in what became known as the Battle of the Bismarck Sea, the Japanese lost all eight transports, four out of eight destroyers, and at least a third of their troops. Smaller convoys were sometimes seen after this time but the Japanese now recognised that losses by surface transport could no longer be sustained. Hope of further offensive operations on land was abandoned and isolated areas became almost totally reliant on submarines and small barges for resupply.

While air and submarine attack harassed the Japanese supply lines during the day, motor torpedo boats took over at sunset. The torpedo boats only caught the occasional submarine but, well suited to the coastal conditions, they wreaked havoc on the poorly defended supply barges. Sinkings were so frequent that one Japanese diarist at Finschhafen wrote thankfully on 29 August 1943 that he had made the only trip in July or August: “when barges were not attacked by torpedo boats.” His barge was sunk on its return passage.

Japanese submarines had begun supply missions to New Guinea in December 1942 and, with the attrition of other transport assets, it was soon usual for most of the Japanese submarine service to be dedicated to transport. Though safer than other methods, supply by submarine was hardly more efficient. Stripped of all unnecessary equipment, submarines were then incapable of offensive operations and still only able to transport a very small load. Even the largest 2000 ton submarines were estimated to have a cargo capacity of only 20 tons below decks and another 40 tons above, or alternatively 50 troops and 15 tons of cargo. The usual load however, was much less and nearly half the early missions failed after the submarine was unable to establish communications with forces ashore. Despite the introduction of several ingenious devices to increase cargo capacity and reduce unloading time, such measures could not make up for the lack of a fully functional transport service.

In May 1943, 400 tons of supplies were taken by supply submarines from Rabaul to the Huon Gulf area. In July the Japanese managed to mount seven submarine transport missions that landed 195 men and 238 tons of supplies. The following month, seven submarines made a total of 18 trips to Lae. According to a Japanese submarine commander who took part, submarines carried out 95 trips to New Guinea between December 1942 and September
New Guinea Supply Lines 1942-43

1943, in all transporting 3,500 tons of cargo. In contrast, in June alone, the Allies moved 55,305 tons from Milne Bay and Port Moresby to forward areas, increasing to 200,246 tons in September.

Despite often possessing the advantages of position and preparedness, the majority of Japanese troops in New Guinea were never to come to grips with Allied forces. Subjected to what was in effect, an extremely effective blockade, the troops suffered terribly from illness and malnutrition. Claims have been made that deaths in combat account for only 3 per cent of the 100,000 Japanese who died in New Guinea. The Japanese on the ground were under no illusions. One of the few survivors of Buna was later to state: “We lost . . . because we could not supply our troops, and because our navy and air force could not disrupt the enemy supply line.”

Conclusion

To say that Allied maritime forces supported the actions of land forces in New Guinea would be an understatement. Though, maritime power could not ultimately decide the issue, or remove the Japanese from New Guinea, it did directly affect the course and outcome of events ashore. Throughout the operations, the protection and maintenance of the sea lines of communication were vital to the successful progression of the campaign. The simultaneous denial to the enemy of their own supply lines meant that the Japanese had no hope of competing with Allied: “troopers, beans and bullets in greater and greater numbers.” Later, when the Allies had clearly established the capability to establish local superiority on the sea and in the air, it was possible to exploit this command for combined operations. Compared to overland assault, power could now be projected at times and places chosen by the Allies.

In direct contrast, the Japanese consistently failed to allocate sufficient priority to either a concentrated offensive against Allied shipping, or protection of their own lines of communication. Once they had lost control of the sea and air off their coastline, any Japanese local superiority could never be effectively applied. Starved of reinforcements and supplies, Japanese
strong points were consistently neutralised, and either disposed of piece meal or left to waste away. Once the Allies could apply a maritime strategy that combined the functions of command, denial, and power projection, the campaign was completed with remarkable speed and economy. Though often ignored, maritime power deserves to be placed in its correct perspective, and recognised as the ‘enabling factor’ in the eventual defeat of the Japanese in New Guinea.

NOTES

3. The results of the battle are normally recorded as a tactical victory for the Japanese and a strategic victory for the Allies.
5. Japanese warships carried out some bombardments of Allied shipping in Milne Bay and in September 1942 sank the supply ship Anshun.
6. Advisory War Council Meeting Minutes of 3 June 1942. A(ACT) file A2682/1 Vol VIII. Similarly, on 11 June Royle noted that anti-submarine vessels were not available to hunt submarines because they “were being used for the escort of troops to Port Moresby”.
7. A(VIC) file MP1587/1/0 155A.
8. Prime Minister’s War Conference Agenda 6/42 in A(ACT) file A 5954/1 Box 669.
9. Figures from papers of G Herman Gill, AWM 69 No. 82.
10. Review of RAN War Effort, on A(ACT) file IT 296B.
11. Ibid.
12. The escorting warship, HMAS Arunta, subsequently destroyed the submarine.
13. Tonnage of stores and equipment carried to Oro Bay by sea during the buildup to attack Buna, was seven times greater than that carried by air. See Naval Historical Section Canberra, file 69.

David Stevens is the Director of Naval Historical Studies in the Maritime Studies Program. Prior to this appointment he had served for 20 years with the RAN, including time as the anti-submarine warfare officer onboard HMA Ships Yarra and Hobart and on exchange in HMS Hermione. Other postings included attachment to the Staff of the Commander of the RAN Task Group during the 1990-1991 Gulf War and three years in HQADF Development Division. In 1992 he graduated from the ANU with a Masters Degree in Strategic Studies.
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Before the ceremony at which Japan surrendered, Air Vice Marshal W.D. Bostock (left), Commodore J.A. Collins, Rear Admiral G.D. Moore and General Sir Thomas Blamey gather on board USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

(AWM 121267)
The Victory Year 1945

By John Buckley

Introduction

The year 1945 will go down in history as the time in which the Allies gained supremacy over the enemies in Europe and Asia. The major surrender operations took place during that year. There had, however, been one surrender in 1941 when the Australians had a major part to play, namely the Syrian Campaign, which received little publicity, because the British, Australian, Free French and Indians were fighting against the Vichy French Forces holding Syria and Lebanon. At that time the excuse was made that we should not be highlighting the fact that we were fighting against our previous ally.

The 7th Australian Division performed magnificently during the Campaign. It has never received the credit for its performance and I intend therefore to give details of the surrender at Acre in July 1941. There were more Australians fighting in Syria than all of the other Allied Forces put together.

This article is not to be regarded as all embracing, because there were so many surrenders, down even to Battalion level, in Asia, the Pacific and Europe. A few of the more important ones only are dealt with in this monograph.

In the European Campaign, some details will be given of the surrenders of the Germans at Reims, Berlin and Luneberg, whilst in Asia and the Pacific, Tokyo, Singapore, Morotai and Rabaul will be covered.

At this stage, I would like to mention that Australian Navy, Army and Air Force personnel served in all theatres covered by the above-mentioned surrenders. It is not generally known that many thousands of RAAF personnel fought over Europe for the duration of the war. For this reason I am including two photographs of the RAAF personnel at Luneberg and Reims. Likewise, the RAN was conspicuous in all operational theatres of the globe.

The AIF at Brigade strength was in Britain for the Battle of Britain and some officers were in important positions during the invasion of Europe, and were still serving at the end of the war in Europe until May 1945. I was at Luneberg two days after Montgomery signed the Surrender Document in a canvas tent especially erected for the purpose. I had gone there from London at the direction of Allied Land Forces HQ Australia to seek key specialist officers from HQ 79th Armoured Division which had spearheaded the "D Day" invasion forces with their special assault and swimming armoured tanks and had subsequently played an important role in the river crossings in France, Holland, Belgium and Germany.

The 79th Armoured Division was commanded by General Sir Percy Hobart, brother-in-law of Field Marshal Montgomery. Hobart is regarded by the late Liddell Hart as the best tank man of all time. It is intended to commence details of the Surrenders by first mentioning the Vichy French surrender at Acre in July 1941.

Battle for Syria

The battle for Syria and Iraq was made necessary by the rising influence of the Germans in both countries, during, and at the conclusion of the Greece and Crete Campaigns. It was feared that German occupation of both countries would enable them to obtain the important oil supplies from Iraq, and the occupation of Syria would enable them to mount a pincer attack on Palestine and the Suez Canal.

In April and May, 1941, German Air Force aircraft were observed using Vichy French aerodromes in Syria and Lebanon. It was feared that a German airborne attack was imminent.

Wavell, Commander-in-Chief Middle East, was directed to mount an invasion of Syria as early as possible, not later than early June, 1941. At this time Greece and Crete had just fallen. Rommel was having success in the Western Desert and the Iraqis were about to rebel. The Allied Forces had lost most of their fighting equipment in Greece, Crete and the Desert.

The general war situation in the Middle East was on a knife edge. The 7th Australian Division was to be the major force in the invasion of Syria, supplemented by smaller numbers of British, Free French and other troops including the Arab Legion (under Glubb), Indian troops and the Trans Jordan Frontier Force.

Churchill and the War Office thought that the invasion of Syria would be a 'pushover', but it turned out to be a strongly fought battle lasting over 6 weeks. Full details of the campaign are given in Recollections of the Roving Staff Officer, published by the Department of Defence; also, Largely a Gamble, published by the Army.
The Allied Force was commanded by General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson (later Field Marshal Lord Wilson). Lieutenant General Sir John Lavarack was General Officer Commanding 1 Australian Corps, and Major General ‘Tubby’ Allen was General Officer Commanding 7th Australian Division. The British 6th Division was commanded by Major General John Evetts (later General Sir John) who was to become Assistant Chief of the Imperial General Staff, and who later selected Woomera as the site for British missile trials. Major General Slim was General Officer Commanding 10 Indian Division.

From the outset of the battle, 7 Australian Division made rapid progress on the coastal section, in particular the 21st Brigade under Brigadier Jackie Stevens (later Major General Sir Jack), and the 25th Brigade under Brigadier Baxter-Cox, who was replaced on medical grounds by Brigadier E.C. (Pegus) Plant. The 17th Brigade under Brigadier Stan Savige (later Lieutenant General Sir Stanley Savige).

The 6th British Division, the Indians, Free French and others combined well with the Australians to overcome a better equipped Vichy French Force which had superior air cover and were fighting on their own ground which consisted of easy to defend mountainous country and fast flowing rivers. The French Foreign Legion played an important part in the Syrian defence. By 11 July 1941, the AIF troops were ready to attack Beirut and it became clear that the Vichy French were defeated.

Later, 1 Australian Corps HQ advised the 7th Australian Division and 6th British Division that fighting would stop in Lebanon and Syria one minute after midnight. At 0800 hours General de Verdilhac, the leader of the French envoy on the coast, drove to 7th Australian Division HQ. The Vichy French Commander-in-Chief, General Dentz had tried to prevent the Free French leader, General Catroux, from playing any part in the surrender, saying that he would deal only with British High Command. Lavarack advised Wilson to inform Dentz that the British authorities would accept no reservation about the envoys attending the Armistice. At the same time, Wilson informed Dentz that unless his plenipotentiaries appeared (carrying a white flag) at the road block on the Beirut/Haifa Road at 0900 hours on 12 July or before, the battle would resume.

Wilson and Lavarack were suspicious of Dentz and thought that he could be playing for time. They were relieved when the French envoys arrived. General de Verdilhac was leader. They were taken to Acre by General Allen and Brigadier Stevens. General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson chaired the meeting, which included Lieutenant General Lavarack, Brigadiers Rowell and Bridgeford (representing Australia), representatives of the Navy and
Air Force and General Catroux representing the Free French.

Wilson opened the meeting with a roaring attack on General de Verdilhac for not observing the ceasefire and threatened to reopen hostilities. The Vichy French General told Wilson that he had difficulties with communications in the forward areas. At this stage, Brigadier Rowell passed a note to General Wilson saying that during the later stages of the battle, the Australians were paying the local Arabs one Piaster for each telephone post they destroyed. As the French relied on civil telephone facilities, it was not surprising that they had difficulty in getting information to forward posts.

Interest in the surrender ceremony was heightened by several unusual, if not comical occurrences.

1. General Allen and Brigadier Stevens (although they had brought de Verdilhac to the conference) were not allowed inside the chamber. Stevens decided to look through the window but was accosted by a British Officer Military Policeman. In true Jackie Stevens' form, the MP was given the biggest dressing down he had ever received. He departed from the scene in great haste. Jackie continued to watch the surrender through the window. We don't know what 'Tubby' Allen was doing at this time, but he wasn't inside where all the action was.

2. When the signing of the document was to take place, the Press were allowed in with their floodlights to take photographs of the surrender. According to a book later written by Field Marshal Lord Wilson, an Australian photographer, who had had too much to drink, got himself tied up in an electric flex and fused all the lights within a three mile radius. The scene was enacted by light from hurricane lamps and a motorcycle headlight specially wheeled into the room. Note: There is some doubt that the 'villain' was an Australian. Wilson blamed the AIF for any trouble; and

3. The real climax came when General Catroux found someone had pinched his gold-leafed cap from his motor car. Obviously, the Australians got the blame, but Catroux was fairly decent about the incident. He had been told that once the Australians souvenired anything that it was lost for all time. He understood this because he said that his Foreign Legionnaires were just the same. I wonder if any Australian still has the cap?

It will be clear from the foregoing that the Australians contributed to making the surrender ceremony an occasion to be remembered; in spite of the overbearing Wilson and his aura of superiority, the Australian humour dominated proceedings. General Wilson was a friend of Churchill. It is clear that the credit for the Lebanon/Syrian victory belonged in the
The author in Damascus, Syria — 1941.
main to Australian participation in the same way as
the first Western Desert victory. Likewise, the battle
for Greece and Crete gave honour to the excellent
performance of the AIF. The Australian Forces were
in everything up to this stage of the war in the Middle
East. But they got little publicity. They were to get
even less in the South Western Pacific when they
served under MacArthur.

The surrender terms included the following:
1. The territory north of Beirut-Damascus was to be
controlled by the 1st Australian Corps which
moved its HQ from Safad to Aley;
2. The 7th Australian Division would control the
coastal area and western slopes;
3. The Free French, east of the Anti-Lebanon range,
including Damascus and Nebek;
4. The 6th British Division, the valleys between the
Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanons and the desert out
to Palmyra;
5. HABFORCE, north eastern Syria west of the
Euphrates; and
6. The 10th Indian Division, the area beyond the
Euphrates in the far north east of Syria (a desolate
and dreary area).

The Vichy French were most difficult about meet­
ing the terms of the Armistice and at one stage
General Dentz was taken into custody to make certain
the AIF prisoners of war were returned from France.

The victory in Syria was a great morale boost to
the Allies - no longer could the Germans control the
vital oil supplies from Iraq, nor could they use Syria
as a springboard for an attack on the Suez Canal. The
AIF had made a very substantial contribution towards
this victory.

Note: The author was a Liaison Officer between Army HQ in
Jerusalem and the British, French, Indian, Australian and
Arab Legion formations in operations in Syria and Iraq.

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**German Surrender at Luneberg**

**1820 hours, 4 May, 1945.**

Once the Allies had crossed the Rhine, it was clear
to some of the German Generals that further resis­
tance was hopeless. However, Hitler was determined
to fight on to the inevitable conclusion.

A few of his Generals were already putting out
feelers behind his back with the hope of making a
separate peace with the Western Allies, whilst still
fighting the Russians in the East. A major motive was
to try and divide the British, Americans and the
Russians.

Meanwhile, through Stockholm, had come the
news that Field Marshal von Busch was willing to
come to terms with the British. However, it was not a
straightforward matter. Field Marshal von Busch was
hoping to rescue his forces from the Soviet armies
advancing rapidly towards their rear from the east. He
let it be known that he would surrender, but not until
the Allies had reached the Baltic, where he would be
cut off from the Russians and also, from the possibili­
ity of SS reinforcements which might insist on the
continuation of hostilities.

In fact, the Germans fell into two categories: those,
like Hitler himself, who refused to consider giving up
fighting at all, and those like Himmler and von Busch
who hoped to do a deal which would divide the Allies.

Following the Second Army’s assault across the
Elbe on 29 April, Wolz, the German Commander in
Hamburg, made contact with Major-General Lyne,
commanding 7th Armoured Division. On 2 May he
had agreed to the local surrender of the city, which
had been almost completely destroyed, when it
became known that his own superior Commander,
General Blumentritt, wished to surrender to the
Second Army.

It was agreed that Blumentritt’s delegation should
come to General Dempsey’s Tactical Headquarters
next morning.

By now the situation was quite beyond German
control. Hitler was dead, and Grand-Admiral
Doenitz was trying to exercise command in his
stead. He was prepared to end the war, but not to
surrender to the Russians. He therefore ordered the
armies retreating before the Russians to surrender to
the Anglo/Americans. In the narrowing belt between
the eastern and western fronts the confusion was
most remarkable.

There was chaos on every road. Even several days
after the surrender there were thousands of German
soldiers and civilians crossing the Elbe into Western
Germany and they had difficulty in moving along the
roads near Luneberg, Hamburg and adjacent areas.

German willingness to surrender developed rapidly
as the situation worsened, and instead of
Blumentritt’s delegation arriving at General
Dempsey’s Headquarters, there appeared a much
stronger team led by General-Admiral von
Friedeberg, who was Doenitz’s emissary, accompa­
nied by General Kinzel, von Busch’s Chief of Staff.
The delegation was empowered to discuss the surren­
der of the entire enemy forces in the North.

Accordingly, they were sent on to Montgomery’s
Tactical Headquarters on Luneberg Heath. Wolz,
who had accompanied them, stayed behind to sign the
surrender of Hamburg to Second Army. (Dempsey).
When von Friedeberg arrived he told Montgomery
that the German High Command wished to surrender
the forces in the northern sectors.
He wished to save his soldiers from the Russians and asked permission that civilian refugees should be allowed to pass through our lines into Schleswig-Holstein. Montgomery refused to accept the surrender of the German forces opposing the Russians, and explained that their capitulation should be negotiated with the Russian Allies.

As far as the enemy on 21 Army Group front was concerned, it was made clear that it would only discuss the unconditional surrender of all forces – land, sea and air – still resisting in Holland, the Friesian Islands, Heligoland, Schleswig-Holstein, Denmark, and those parts of Germany west of the Elbe still in German possession.

Unless Montgomery received their unconditional surrender he would order fighting to recommence. He then showed von Friedeberg a map of the current operational situation, of which he was apparently not properly aware, and this helped to convince him of the hopelessness of the German position.

The delegation then explained that they had no power to agree to Montgomery’s demands; they were prepared, however, to recommend their acceptance to Field Marshal Keitel. Two members of the delegation left immediately by car to return to Keitel’s Headquarters, while the others remained at Tactical Headquarters on Luneberg Heath.

At 1800 hours on 4 May, von Friedeberg returned to the Tactical HQ 21 Army Group with instructions from Keitel and Doenitz. Montgomery went straight to the point: ‘Yes’ or ‘No’? The answer was ‘Yes’, so the party then moved to a small tent specially set up for the purpose.

It is of interest that the only War Correspondent inside the tent was an Australian, Chester Wilmot, who was an outstanding BBC announcer. Chester later wrote the classic Struggle for Europe, one of the outstanding stories of the battle for Europe 1944/45. He was killed later in an aircraft explosion over the Mediterranean.

The capitulation was to become effective at 0800 hours on 5 May. By its terms, the German Command agreed that all the forces under their control in Holland, north-west Germany (including the Friesian Islands, Heligoland and all the other islands), Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark would lay down their arms and surrender unconditionally. The German Command would then carry out at once, and without argument or comment, any further orders which might be issued by the Allied Powers on any subject; and the decision of these Powers would be final were any question of interpretation of the terms to arise.

It was understood that the Instrument signed at
Tactical HQ was to be superseded by any General Instrument of Surrender subsequently to be imposed relating to Germany and the German armed forces as a whole.

It was not long to wait for the final act, for by now the disintegration of the German ability to resist further had spread throughout all sectors of the fronts. The enemy had abandoned the struggle in Italy on 2 May, whilst the First and Nineteenth Armies, facing the Allied Sixth Army Group in Southern Germany and Austria, accepted the terms of capitulation on 5 May, 'ceasefire' being ordered on the following day.

Following on the surrender at Luneberg Heath, a suitable plaque was built by the 21 Army Group and the 79th Armoured Division Workshop. It was set up on the site of the tent. One of the officers involved was Lieutenant Colonel Jim Rhys-Jones, who was a senior General Staff Officer with the Division. After the war Jim came to Australia and now lives in Sydney. He is aged 87. Jim played a most important part in the navigation of tanks at the Rhine and Elbe crossings.

On a recent visit to Australia, General Sir Edward Burgess, the President of the Royal British Legion told me that the Germans had knocked the plaque over several times, and that he had taken it back to England for safe keeping. It now stands in the grounds of Sandhurst Military College.

The terms of the surrender were as follows:

Instrument of Surrender of All German Armed Forces in Holland, in northwest Germany including all islands, and in Denmark.

1. The German Command agrees to the surrender of all German armed forces in Holland, in northwest Germany including the Friesian Islands and Heligoland and all other islands, in Schleswig-Holstein, and in Denmark, to the C-in-C, 21 Army Group. This to include all naval ships in these areas. These forces to lay down their arms and to surrender unconditionally.

2. All hostilities on land, on sea, or in the air by German forces in the above areas to cease at 0800 hrs. British Double Summer Time on Saturday 5 May 1945.
3. The German command to carry out at once, and without argument or comment, all further orders that will be issued by the Allied Powers on any subject.

4. Disobedience of orders, or failure to comply with them, will be regarded as a breach of these surrender terms and will be dealt with by the Allied Powers in accordance with the accepted laws and usages of war.

5. This instrument of surrender is independent of, without prejudice to, and will be superseded by any general instrument of surrender imposed by or on behalf of the Allied Powers and applicable to Germany and the German armed forces as a whole.

6. This instrument of surrender is written in English and in German. The English version is the authentic text.

7. The decision of the Allied Powers will be final if any doubt or dispute arises as to the meaning or interpretation of the surrender terms.

The Instrument of Surrender was signed by the following Germans: General Admiral von Friedeberg, Commander-in-Chief of the German Navy. (Later, he poisoned himself.)

General Kinzel, Chief of Staff to Field Marshal von Busch. (Later, he shot himself.)

Rear Admiral Wagner. (Admiral Wagner became a senior official in the West German Ministry of Defence.)

Major Freidel. (Later, he was killed in a motor car accident.)

Montgomery will go down in history as a great field force commander. Like all great leaders he has a few detractors who have trouble balancing a few weaknesses against great talents.

**Surrender at Reims – 0241 hours, 6 May, 1945**

Immediately after von Friedeberg signed the surrender to Montgomery at Luneberg, Doenitz sent him to Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force at Reims, with the instruction to arrange the surrender of the rest of the German forces facing the Western Allies. Eisenhower refused to see von Friedeberg, or any other German, until the unconditional surrender had been signed. He instructed Bedell Smith (his Chief of Staff) to tell Friedeberg that there would be no compromise and to order him to sign the surrender document. Von Friedeberg stated that he had no power to sign, so Bedell Smith showed him the SHAEF maps which illustrated the impossible German position. With this information, von Friedeberg sent a message to Doenitz requesting permission to sign.

All of this time, Eisenhower was impatiently resting on a couch in his office reading a favourite Western cowboy novel, or walking up and down, chain smoking. He had little sleep for two nights. At first Doenitz did not give approval for von Friedeberg to sign, but instead sent General Alfred Jodl, the Chief of the General Staff, to Reims. (Major General Sir Francis de Guingand, Chief of Staff to Montgomery, took Jodl from Luneberg to Reims in his own aeroplane.)

Doenitz hoped that Eisenhower would agree for a surrender in the West only. Jodl still made strong attempts to convince Bedell Smith to accept surrender in the West, but not to the Russians. It was patently clear that the Germans were petrified as to what would happen if they surrendered to the Russians.

Bedell Smith relayed all of the German representations to Eisenhower who decided that he “would break off all negotiations and seal the Western Front and prevent by force any further westward movement of German soldiers and civilians,” unless Jodl signed the document. Eisenhower could be really tough when necessary.

However, Eisenhower did grant a 48 hours delay before announcing the surrender. Jodl sent the ultimatum to Doenitz who became extremely upset, and described Eisenhower’s demands as ‘extortion’. However, he had no other choice than to accept the conditions and empowered Jodl to sign the surrender document. It was surrender or chaos!

The Russian representative at SHAEF was kept informed of all negotiations – the Russians were very sticky about the whole of the negotiations, as they were about the subsequent negotiations in the Pacific. Bedell Smith was assisted in the discussions with Jodl by Major General Strong (SHAEF Chief of Intelligence) who spoke fluent German, having been a Military Attache in Berlin before the war. At 0200 hours on 7 May, the Allied representatives including Bedell Smith (leader), Morgan, Bull, Spaatz, Tedder (Deputy Supreme Commander SHAEF), a French representative and the Russian representative (Susloparoff) met on the second floor of the Technical School in Reims, which was the SHAEF War Room. The signing took about 40 minutes, then Bedell Smith took Jodl into Eisenhower’s office.

Jodl said that he understood the terms of the surrender and undertook to execute them. General Eisenhower then warned Jodl that he would be held responsible if the terms were violated. Jodl bowed stiffly and left.
Reims, France. 1945-05-10. The Supreme Allied Commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower and the Deputy Supreme Commander Air Chief Marshal Arthur W. Tedder and the Acting Chief of Air Staff, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) Air Vice Marshal Carr pause on the steps of the Air Staff Club of Supreme Headquarters to have their photograph taken with four RAAF members present at the Victory dinner of Air Staff SHAEF. Australians are, left to right: Flight Lieutenant R.S. Godfrey, of Armidale, NSW; Flying Officer R.W. Halliday, of Melbourne, Vic; Flying Officer Tom Carmody, of Mungindi, NSW, all of RAF Transport Command; and Squadron Leader Bill Worth, of Perth, WA, RAAF member of Air Staff Supreme Headquarters. (AWM UK 02869)

The Russians insisted that there should also be a Surrender Document signed in Berlin. On 9 May, Field Marshal Keitel for the German forces signed the formal ratification of the surrender in the ruins of Berlin. Air Chief Marshal Tedder signed on behalf of Eisenhower; Marshal Zhukov for the Russians and Field Marshal Keitel for Germany.

The war in Europe was over – or was it?

General Eisenhower was to receive adulation in every Allied country. He became a hero and accepted all the great honours and awards with modesty and humility. In spite of some minor criticism, he had performed as Allied Supreme Commander with great distinction and ability. One of his great strengths was to integrate representatives of Allied Forces in a strong team — he set a splendid example to other Supreme Commanders. A great military leader who earned his place in military history. His difficult decision set the Allied invasion of Europe to its ultimate victory.

Surrender of the Japanese Forces
2 September, 1945, on board USS Missouri – Tokyo Bay

Throughout July and August, 1945, the British and Australian Governments discussed the part that the British Commonwealth should play in the invasion of Japan. It will be recalled that during these months, Prime Minister John Curtin had died and had been replaced by Ben Chifley. In the United Kingdom, Churchill had lost the General Election and had been replaced by Clement Attlee. There was disagreement about the composition and command, but the surrender of the Japanese brought this to a halt.

General Douglas MacArthur was appointed as Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, a very wise selection. On 15 August the US State Department notified the Japanese Government of MacArthur's appointment, and in the terms of General Order No. 1 instructed that:
General Order No. 1 to General D. MacArthur
15 August 1945
(Issued by the President of the United States of America on behalf of the Allied Powers)

1. The Japanese Imperial General Headquarters by direction of the Emperor and pursuant to the surrender to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers of all Japanese armed forces by the Emperor, hereby orders all of its Commanders in Japan and abroad to cause the Japanese armed forces under their command to cease hostilities at once, to lay down their arms, to remain in their present locations and to surrender unconditionally to Commanders acting on behalf of the United States, the Republic of China, the United Kingdom and the British Empire and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, as indicated hereafter or as may be further directed by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. Immediate contact will be made with indicated Commanders or their designated representatives, subject to any change in detail prescribed by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, and their instructions will be completely and immediately carried out.

(a) The senior Japanese Commander and all ground, sea, air and auxiliary forces within China (excluding Manchuria), Formosa and French Indo-China north of 16 degrees north latitude shall surrender to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek.
(b) The senior Japanese Commander and all ground, sea, air and auxiliary forces within Manchuria, Korea north of 38 degrees north latitude and Karafuto shall surrender to the Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Union forces in the Far East.
(c) The senior Japanese Commander and all ground, sea, air and auxiliary forces within the Andamans, the Nicobars, Burma, Thailand (Siam), French Indo-China south of 16 degrees north latitude, Malaya, Borneo, the Netherlands Indies, New Guinea, the Bismarcks and the Solomon Islands shall surrender to the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia Command, or Commanding General, Australian Forces, - the exact breakdown between Mountbatten and Australia to be arranged between them. Details of this paragraph will then be prepared by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers.
(d) The senior Japanese Commander and all ground, sea, air and auxiliary forces in the Japanese mandated islands, the Ryuku Islands, the Bonins and other Pacific Islands shall surrender to the Commander-in-Chief, United States Pacific Fleet.
(e) The Japanese Imperial General Headquarters, its Senior Commanders and all ground, sea, air and auxiliary forces in the main islands of Japan, the minor islands adjacent thereto, Korea south of 38 degrees north latitude and the Philippine Islands shall surrender to the Commander-in-Chief, United States Army Forces in the Pacific.
(f) The above indicated Commanders are the only representatives of the Allied Powers empowered to accept surrenders and all surrenders of Japanese forces shall be made only to them or to their representatives.

The Japanese Imperial General Headquarters further orders its Commanders in Japan and abroad to disarm completely all forces of Japan or under Japanese control wherever they may be situated and to deliver intact and in safe and good condition all weapons and equipment at such time and at such place as may be prescribed by the Allied Commanders indicated above. (Pending further instructions the Japanese Police force in the main island of Japan will be exempt from this disarmament provisionally. The police force will remain at their posts and shall be held responsible for the preservation of law and order. The strength and arms of such a police force will be prescribed.)

2. The Japanese Imperial General Headquarters shall furnish to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers within (time limit) of receipt of this order complete information with respect to Japan and all areas under Japanese control as follows:
(a) Lists of all land, air and anti-aircraft units showing locations and strengths in officers and men.
(b) Lists of all aircraft, military, naval and civil, giving complete information as to the number, type, location and condition of such aircraft.
(c) Lists of all Japanese and Japanese-controlled naval vessels, surface and submarine and auxiliary naval craft, in or out of commission, and under construction, giving their position, condition and movements.
(d) Lists of all Japanese and Japanese-controlled merchant ships of over 100 gross tons, in or out of commission, and under construction, including merchant ships formerly belonging to any of the United Nations which are now in Japanese hands, giving their position, condition and movement.
(e) Complete and detailed information, accompanied by maps, showing locations and layouts of all mines, minefields, and other obstacles to movements by land, sea or air, and safety lanes in connection therewith.
(f) Locations and descriptions of all military installations and establishments, including
airfields, seaplane bases, anti-aircraft defences, ports and naval jiggers, storage depots, M.R.P.T. (sic) depots, permanent and temporary land and coast fortifications, fortresses and other fortified areas.

(g) Location of all camps and other places of detention of United Nations P.O.W. and civilian internees.

3. Japanese armed forces and civil aviation authorities will ensure that all Japanese military, naval and civil aircraft remain on the ground, on the water or aboard ships until further notification of the disposition to be made of them.

4. Japanese or Japanese-controlled naval or merchant vessels of all types will be maintained without damage and will undertake no movements pending instructions from the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. Vessels at sea will immediately render harmless and throw overboard explosives of all types. Vessels not at sea will immediately remove explosives of all types to safe storage ashore.

5. All Japanese or Japanese-controlled military or civil authorities will ensure that:
   
   (a) All Japanese mines, minefields and other obstacles to movements by land, sea and air, wherever located, be removed according to the instructions of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. Vessels at sea will immediately render harmless and throw overboard explosives of all types. Vessels not at sea will immediately remove explosives of all types to safe storage ashore.

6. Responsible Japanese and Japanese-controlled military and civil authorities will hold intact and in good condition pending further instructions from the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers the following:
   
   (a) All arms, ammunition, explosives, military equipment, stores and supplies and other implements of war of all kinds and all other war materials (except as specifically prescribed in Section 4 of this order).
   
   (b) All land, water and air transportation and communication facilities and equipment.
   
   (c) All military installations and establishments, including airfields, seaplane bases, anti-aircraft defences, ports and naval bases, storage depots, permanent and temporary land and coast fortifications, fortresses and other fortified areas together with plans and drawings of all such fortifications, installations and establishments.
   
   (d) All factories, steel plants, shops, research institutions, laboratories, testing stations, technical data, patents, plans, drawings and inventions designed or of local produce or to facilitate the production of use of all implements of war and other material, and property used by or intended for use by any military or para-military organisation in connection with its operations.

7. The Japanese Imperial General Headquarters shall furnish to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, within (time limit) of receipt of this order, complete lists of all the items specified in paragraphs (a), (b) and (d) of Section 6 above, indicating the number, type and locations of each.

8. The manufacture and distribution of all arms, ammunition and implements of war will cease forthwith.

9. With respect to United Nations P.O.W. and civilian internees in the hands of Japanese or Japanese-controlled authorities:
   
   (a) The safety and well-being of all United Nations P.O.W. and civilian internees will be scrupulously preserved, to include the administrative and supply service essential to provide adequate food, shelter, clothes and medical care until such responsibility is undertaken by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers.
   
   (b) Each camp or other place of detention of United Nations P.O.W. and civilian internees, together with its equipment, stores, base records, arms and ammunition will be delivered immediately to the command of the senior officer or the designated representative of P.O.W. and civilian internees.
   
   (c) As directed by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, P.O.W. and civilian internees will be transported to places of safety where they can be accepted by the Allied authorities.
   
   (d) The Japanese Imperial General Headquarters will furnish to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, within (time limit) of receipt of this order, complete lists of all United Nations P.O.W. and civilian internees, including their locations.

10. All Japanese and Japanese-controlled military and civilian authorities shall aid and assist the occupation of Japan and Japanese-controlled areas by the forces of the Allied Powers.

11. The Japanese Imperial General Headquarters and appropriate Japanese officials shall be prepared, on instructions from the Allied occupational Combat Commanders, to collect and deliver all arms in possession of the Japanese civilian population.

12. This and all subsequent instructions issued by the Commander for the Allied Forces or other Allied Military Authorities will be scrupulously and promptly obeyed by Japanese and Japanese-controlled military and civil officials and private persons. Any delay or failure to comply with the provision of this or subsequent orders, and any action which the Supreme Commander for the Allied
Powers determines to be detrimental to the Allied Powers, will incur drastic and summary punishment at the hands of the Allied Military Authorities and the Japanese Government.

It was arranged that the Instrument of Surrender would be signed on 31 August aboard the US Battleship Missouri in Tokyo Bay. Because of a typhoon the date had to be changed to 2 September. At 0830 hours the Allied delegates were drawn up on the quarter deck where, in the open, a table covered with green baize was set up. The Japanese had eleven representatives, five civilians and six officers in uniform. Mr Shigemitsu, the Japanese Foreign Minister, signed first, followed by the Chief of the General Staff, General Umezu – he was most unhappy. General MacArthur then called to his side General Wainwright (who had surrendered on Luzon in 1942) and General Percival (who had surrendered in Singapore in 1942). In their presence, MacArthur signed as Supreme Allied Commander.

The order of signing was as follows:

United States  Admiral Chester Nimitz
China  General Hsu Yung-Chang
United Kingdom  Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser
USSR  Lieut Gen K.N. Derevyanko
Australia  General Sir Thomas Blamey
Canada  Colonel L Moore Cosgrave
France  General Jacques Le Clerc
Netherlands  Admiral Conrad Helfrich
New Zealand  Air Vice Marshal L.M. Isitt

The Australian Delegation on the Missouri, in addition to General Blamey, was Lieutenant General Berryman, Air Vice Marshals Jones and Bostock, Rear Admiral Moore, Lieutenant Colonel Dan Dwyer (Blamey’s P.A.) and Captain Balfour (Historical Officer).

MacArthur made a short speech and the ceremony was over. Later, MacArthur stated that he had received no instructions or briefing as to what to say or what to do. “I was on my own, standing on the quarter deck with only God and my conscience to guide me”. Of all the officers on the quarter deck, MacArthur was the only one without medals. One US sailor whispered to his mate: “Look at Mac, ain’t he got no medals?” The reply was: “There’s no room on his uniform to put them all.”

The terms of the Surrender are as follows:

**The Instrument of Surrender Signed at Tokyo on the 2nd September 1945**

We, acting by command of and on behalf of the Emperor of Japan, the Japanese Government and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters, hereby accept the provisions set forth in the declaration issued by the Heads of the Governments of the United States, China and Great Britain on 26 July 1945, at Potsdam, and subsequently adhered to by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which four powers are hereafter referred to as the Allied Powers.

We hereby proclaim the unconditional surrender to the Allied Powers of the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters and all Japanese armed forces and all armed forces under Japanese control wherever situated.

We hereby command all Japanese forces wherever situated and the Japanese people to cease hostilities forthwith, to preserve and save from damage all ships, aircraft, and military and civil property and to comply with all requirements which may be imposed by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers or by agencies of the Japanese Government at his directions.

We hereby command the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters to issue at once orders to the Commanders of all Japanese forces and all forces under Japanese control wherever situated to surrender unconditionally themselves and all forces under their control.

We hereby command all civil, military and naval officials to obey and enforce all proclamations, orders and directives deemed by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers to be proper to effectuate this surrender and issued by him or under his authority and we direct all such officials to remain at their posts and to continue to perform their non-combatant duties unless specifically relieved by him or under his authority.

We hereby undertake for the Emperor, the Japanese Government and their successors, to carry out the provisions of the Potsdam Declaration in good faith, and to issue whatever orders and take whatever action may be required by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers or by any other designated representative of the Allied Powers, for the purpose of giving effect to that Declaration.

We hereby command the Japanese Imperial Government and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters at once to liberate all allied prisoners of war and civilian internees now under Japanese control and to provide for their protection, care, maintenance and immediate transportation to places as directed.

The authority of the Emperor and the Japanese Government to rule the state shall be subject to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers who will take such steps as he deems proper to effectuate these terms of surrender.
Surrender in Tokyo Bay. Mr. Mamoru Shigenitsu, the Japanese Foreign Minister, seated at the table, signs the surrender document on behalf of the Emperor of Japan and the Japanese Government, while facing him across the table are General Macarthur (at microphone) and the representatives of the Allied nations. The signing took place on board U.S.S. Missouri in Tokyo Bay. (AWM 019128)
When the others had signed, MacArthur pulled five pens from his pocket and signed his own signature with them. The first was handed to Wainwright, the second to Percival, the third was given to West Point Academy; the fourth was given to Annapolis Academy, and the fifth to be kept for his son, young Arthur.

After the signing of the Instrument of Surrender, the Emperor promulgated the following direction:

**The Imperial Rescript Issued by the Japanese Emperor after the Signature of the Instrument of Surrender**

Accepting the terms set forth in the Declaration issued by the heads of the Governments of the United States, Great Britain and China on July 26th, 1945 at Potsdam and subsequently adhered to by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, We have commanded the Japanese Imperial Government and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters to sign on Our behalf the Instrument of Surrender presented by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers and to issue General Orders to the Military and Naval Forces in accordance with the direction of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, We command all Our people forthwith to cease hostilities, to lay down their arms and faithfully to carry out all the provisions of the Instrument of Surrender and the General Orders Issued by the Japanese Imperial Government and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters hereunder.

MacArthur had issued directions, as the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, that no separate surrender was to be taken by subordinate formations, until after the signing on the **Missouri**. There was still hesitation with some Japanese Commanders to enter into any surrender negotiations until they received direct instructions from Tokyo.

There were, also, negotiations to be entered into with regard to Dutch, Portuguese and other Colonial powers about surrender and occupation in various territories. This took some time and was a difficult operation in a few instances.

MacArthur had received commendation for the
Morotai, 9 September 1945, General Sir Thomas A. Blamey, Commander-in-Chief, Allied Land Forces, South West Pacific Area, accepted the surrender of II Japanese Army from its commander, Lieutenant General F. Teshima in a special surrender ceremony held at 1st Australian Corps sports ground. The ceremony was attended by representatives of all Australian services, and token forces of US, Netherlands, East Indies and India. Shown, Lieutenant General Teshima signing the instrument of surrender watched by General Blamey and Lieutenant General F.H. Berryman, Chief of Staff. (AWM 115645)

way in which he had planned, organised and conducted the surrender ceremony on board Missouri. The intricate procedures were dealt with expeditiously and with outstanding efficiency. He had displayed a marked ‘aura’ of command with great dignity. Only MacArthur could have performed such a perfect ceremony. He was a great leader.

Surrender to General Blamey at Morotai – 9 September, 1945

On 16 August, General MacArthur had sent a signal to his subordinates informing them that a message had been received from the Japanese Government, which said:

1. His Majesty the Emperor issued an Imperial Order at 1600 hours on August Sixteenth to the entire armed forces to cease hostilities immediately.

2. It is presumed that the said Imperial Order will reach the front line and produce full effect after the following lapse of time:

- (a) In Japan proper – forty-eight hours.
- (b) In China, Manchuria, Korea and Southern Regions except Bougainville, New Guinea and the Philippines – six days.
- (c) In Bougainville – eight days.
- (d) In New Guinea and the Philippines and in the case of various local headquarters – twelve days, but whether and when the order will be received by the first line units is difficult to foresee.

3. With a view to making the august wish of His Majesty regarding the terminating of the war and the abovementioned Imperial Order thoroughly known to all concerned, members of the Imperial family will be dispatched as personal representatives of His Majesty to the Headquarters of the Kwantung Army, Expeditionary Forces in China and the forces in the southern regions respectively. The itinerary, type of aircraft, markings, etc., will be communicated later. It is accordingly requested that safe conduct for the above be granted.
4. As regards the request to dispatch a competent representative, accompanied by Service advisers, to the Headquarters of General MacArthur in Manila leaving Satu Misaki in Kyushu on August Seventeenth we feel greatly embarrassed as it is impossible for us to arrange for the flight of our representatives on August Seventeenth due to the scarcity of time allowed us. We will, however, proceed at once with necessary preparations and notify General MacArthur as to the date of the flight of such a representative which will take place as soon as possible.

5. It is proposed to make the communications with the Supreme Commander of the Allied powers in the following manner:
(a) Sender and receiver on the Japanese side of the General Headquarters of the Government.
(b) Radio stations on the Japanese side — Tokyo station. Call sign JNP, frequency 13740 kcs.
(c) Means of Communication — radiograph.
(d) Language — English.

6. We fail to understand the type of airplane described in the communication received from General MacArthur. We request, therefore, that the message be repeated dealing upon the type fully and clearly...

A following order set out which Japanese Commanders should surrender to which Allied Commanders. It was left to Mountbatten and Blamey to decide on any borderline cases in their respective Commands.

After some discussion Blamey and Mountbatten agreed that the Australian area of responsibility should include all the Netherlands Indies east of and exclusive of Lombok, plus Borneo, New Guinea, New Britain, New Ireland, Nauru and Ocean Islands, Bougainville and adjacent islands. The British and Australian Governments confirmed this arrangement. It was agreed that the British would progressively extend the area under their control in the Indies until the responsibility of Australia was limited to Timor and western New Guinea. It was hoped to hand over to the British or Dutch not later than the end of October. In Dutch New Guinea Australian control would for all practical purposes be confined to Hollandia and Biak.

It soon became evident that each Japanese army commander intended punctiliously to await orders from above before surrendering. It was 7th September, after several messages had been exchanged, before the commander of the II Army, Lieutenant-General Fusataro Teshima, signalled that he had been ordered, from Saigon, to negotiate matters personally with the Australian commander.

I will be waiting at Pinrang aerodrome at 11 a.m. on the 8th] accompanied by persons designated by your order [6 officers, interpreter, 2 clerks and not more than 4 servants]. I shall be grateful if you will send one plane for our passage. I have only one heavy bomber here sufficient for carrying seven persons.

The surrender ceremony took place at Morotai on the 1st Corps sports ground at the sides of which troops were lined up seven ranks deep. At 10.50 a.m. on 9th September the troops and the Japanese party were in position, the Japanese standing about 10 yards from a table. At 10.58 the parade was called to attention. At 11 o'clock General Blamey arrived at the table and a guard gave the general salute. General Blamey then read the terms of surrender. General Teshima moved forward to the table and signed the document of surrender.

Then Blamey signed the document and read the address which follows the Instrument of Surrender, below:

From the foregoing, it is clear that General Sir Thomas Blamey had extremely strong feelings about the Japanese treacherous behaviour and the atrocities inflicted on our Prisoners of War, in an attempt to reduce them to slavery.

The ceremony was attended by Lieutenant General F.H. Berryman (later Sir Frank) and Major General W. Bridgeford (later Sir William), General Officer Commanding 3rd Australian Division. Also there were representatives from the Australian Services and token forces of US, NEI, British, Indian and New Zealand forces. Some Indian former POWs were on parade. Blamey delegated to Lieutenant General Vernon Sturdee the task of accepting the surrender of the Japanese 1st Army Area of Command, in New Britain, New Ireland, The Solomons, New Guinea, Ocean Island and Nauru. Major General Wootten accepted the surrender in British Borneo, General Milford in Dutch Borneo, Brigadier Dyke in Timor and Major General Robertson at Wewak.

For Blamey, it ended a most illustrious performance in two World Wars. In World War I, as Chief of Staff to Sir John Monash, and in World War II as Commander of the AIF from the beginning in 1939 to the end in 1945. He was the only Allied leader to serve from start to finish in the top job. Australia owes Blamey a very deep debt of gratitude — yet some not so distinguished journalists and historians seem to get pleasure in magnifying his few weaknesses and ignoring his great talents — a great Australian who served his country with great ability and distinction — our only Field Marshal.

“Lest We Forget” Sir Thomas Blamey.
SURRENDER OF JAPANESE FORCES

Address Delivered by

COMMANDER -in - CHIEF, AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES
GENERAL SIR THOMAS BLAMEY

to

Lt-General Teshima, Commander Second Japanese Army

On the occasion of the signing of their Surrender

MOROTAI, 9th SEPTEMBER, 1945

LIEUT.-GENERAL TESHIMA, COMMANDER, SECOND JAPANESE ARMY:

"The Japanese Navy has been destroyed. The Japanese Merchant Fleet has been reduced to a mere fraction. The Japanese Air Force has been driven from the sky. The Japanese armies have been defeated everywhere and all that remained for them was to await their inevitable total destruction. Japanese cities lie in waste and Japanese industry has been destroyed. Never before in history has so numerous a nation been so completely destroyed.

"To escape the complete destruction of the nation, the Emperor of Japan has yielded to the Allied Forces and an instrument of total surrender has been signed in his name. He has charged you to obey the orders which I shall give you.

"In carrying out these orders, the Japanese Army and Navy organisation will be retained for convenience. Instructions will be issued by the designated Australian Commanders to the Commanders of the respective Japanese Forces, placing upon you and your subordinate Commanders the responsibility for carrying out your Emperor's direction to obey all orders given to you by me.

"You will ensure that all Allied personnel, prisoners of war or internees in Japanese hands are safeguarded and nourished and delivered over to the Allied Commanders.

"You will collect, lay down and safeguard all arms, ammunition and instruments of war until such time as they are taken over by the designated Commanders. You will be given adequate time to carry this out. An official date will be named and any Japanese found in possession after that date of any arms, ammunition or instrument of war of any kind will be dealt with summarily by the Australian Commander on the spot.

"Orders will be given for these and other matters as I consider necessary and you will ensure the obedience to all such orders without delay.

"In receiving your surrender I do not recognise you as an honourable and gallant foe, but you will be treated with due but severe courtesy in all matters.

"I recall the treacherous attack upon our ally, China, in 1938. I recall the treacherous attack made upon the British Empire and upon the United States of America in December, 1941, at a time when your authorities were making the pretence of ensuring peace.

"I recall the atrocities inflicted upon the persons of our nationals as prisoners of war and internees, designed to reduce them by punishment and starvation to slavery.

"In the light of these evils, I will enforce most rigorously all orders issued to you, so let there be no delay or hesitation in their fulfilment at your peril."
At sea off Rabaul, New Britain. 1945-09-04. Pre-surrender discussions aboard HMAS Vendetta at a sea rendezvous off Rabaul between representatives of Lieutenant General V.A.H. Sturdee, General Officer Commanding First Army, and General H. Imamura, Commander Eighth Area Army. Colonel Takahasi, Imperial Japanese Army (1) and Captain Sanagi, Japanese Navy (2), with Brigadier E.L. Sheenan, Brigadier General Staff First Army (4) and Captain F.B. Morris, Royal Australian Navy (5). (AWM 95708)

Surrender of Japanese Forces to 1st Australian Army to Lieutenant General Sir Vernon Sturdee – 6 September, 1945

As has been stated elsewhere, General Sir Thomas Blamey delegated his authority to General Sturdee to accept this surrender, and for Generals Wootten, Milford, Savige, Robertson and Brigadier Dyke to accept surrenders in their operational areas. There were several other like delegations, in some areas down to Battalion level. Details can be found in The Final Campaigns by Gavin Long. (AWM) It was found that there were over 150,000 Japanese troops in Sturdee’s command including those on Ocean and Nauru Islands. Sturdee was informed that he was to take the surrender of the Japanese on board the British Aircraft Carrier HMS Glory off Rabaul, on 6 September. He arranged for his Chief of Staff, Brigadier E.L. (Tiger) Sheehan to advise General Imamura and Vice-Admiral Kusaka on the time and place of the ceremony.

Thus Imamura – "short and stubby, hard faced, with heavy lips and generous girth" – surrendered to General Sturdee on the Glory on 6th September. Other ships in the convoy were the British sloops Hart and Amethyst, and the Australian ships Vendetta, Dubbo, Townsville, Lithgow and Kiama. At 10.40 a.m. the Glory’s complement was mustered on the flight deck in a hollow box formation. General Sturdee’s party took up positions behind a small table in the centre. General Imamura and Vice-Admiral Kusaka (the senior naval officer at Rabaul) were brought to the flight deck where Imamura placed his sword on the table. When General Sturdee read the instrument of surrender and instructed Imamura to sign, Imamura protested that he could sign only for the army; only Kusaka could surrender for naval forces. After a discussion between the Japanese commanders, Kusaka agreed that, although the instrument was made out only for army forces, he would accept it as including the navy provided he was allowed to sign. Imamura, Kusaka, and Sturdee then signed. Staff discussions about the administration of the surrender followed.

Sturdee was very impressed with the arrangements made by Captain A.E. Buzzard DSO, OBE, RN to mount the ceremony which went off with dignity and efficiency.

Sturdee had started the war as a Lieutenant
General Imamura presents his sword to General Sturdee on the flight deck of HMS Glory during the surrender ceremony of the Japanese Forces at Rabaul, 1945-09-06. (AWM 44269)

General Sturdee discusses Japanese troop dispositions with General Imamura and Vice Admiral Kusaka after the surrender of Japanese forces at Rabaul on board HMS Glory, 1945-09-06. (AWM 044271)
General, GOC Eastern Command, but dropped rank to Major General to become the first GOC 8 Australian Division AIF. He handed over this appointment to Major General Gordon Bennett on becoming Chief of the General Staff in October, 1940. Later, after service in the United States, he was appointed GOC 1st Australian Army with Headquarters in Lae. He succeeded Sir Thomas Blamey as Acting Commander-in-Chief AMF in December 1945, and later was CGS again on the reinstitution of the Military Board. He died in May 1966, aged 76.

General Sturdee used his father’s sword at the surrender ceremony. That sword plus the two Japanese swords were donated to the Australian War Memorial by Lady Sturdee and her daughter, Mrs John Buckley.

Imamura’s sword was a personal gift to him from the Emperor of Japan. The second sword was of 13th century origin.

General Sturdee’s copy of the Instrument of Surrender was gifted to the Naval and Military Club in Melbourne, together with a copy of the official war artist painting by Dennis Adam.

General Sturdee had the final decision as to the punishment of Japanese convicted war criminals in the Australia area of responsibility re execution or gaol. This was a long and involved responsibility for several years.

Japanese Surrender at Singapore
12 September, 1945 to Admiral Mountbatten, Supreme Commander SEAC

Due to General MacArthur’s direction that no subordinate surrender should take place before the surrender on the USS Missouri, there was an appreciable delay. For example, Mountbatten was not able to undertake the surrender for SEAC until 12 September – he was very unhappy about the delay.

However, on 12 September, at a ceremony held in the Municipal Buildings of Singapore City, Admiral Mountbatten accepted the surrender of all Japanese forces in South-East Asia. A picture of King George VI and the Royal Arms, which had been found hidden in the museum, had been replaced in the Council chambers and the flags of all of the Allies had been hung in the hall. Local Chinese guerillas under their British Officers were drawn up in the vestibule, and at each of the eight main pillars stood an armed guard representing the Allied Nations.

In the middle of the Council chamber were two long tables six feet apart, one for the Allied delegates and one for the Japanese. In the centre of the former was a raised dais for the Supreme Commander.

Mountbatten, accompanied by the Deputy Supreme Commander (Wheeler), was driven to the ceremony in an open car through streets lined by Sailors and Marines from the East Indies Fleet, and was received at the Municipal Buildings by his three Commanders-in-Chief and all of the high-ranking Allied officers in Singapore.

He then inspected the four guards of honour drawn up in front of the Municipal buildings and mounted by the Royal Navy, the Royal Air Force, Australian paratroops and the Indian Army. It was a most impressive parade.

Admiral Power, General Slim and Air Chief Marshal Park, General Wheeler (representing the USA), General Le Clerc (Representing France), Brigadier K.S. Thimayya (representing India), Air Vice Marshal A.T. Cole (representing Australia), Major General Feng Yee (representing China), Colonel D.C. Boorman van Vredon (representing the Netherlands), and Major General W.R.C. Penney (Director of Intelligence) took their place at the Allied table. Behind them sat the senior naval, military and air force commanders, senior officers of Supreme Headquarters, Generals Carton de Wiart and Gairdner (the representatives of the Prime Minister and Mountbatten in Chungking and at General MacArthur’s headquarters respectively), and Sir Archibald Rowlands (representing the Government of India).

When all there were in position, the Japanese delegates – General Itagaki (7th Area Army), General Kimura (Burma Area Army), Lieutenant General A. Nakamura (18th Area Army), Lieutenant General H. Kinoshiba (3rd Air Army), Vice-Admiral Fukudome (1st Southern Expeditionary Fleet), Vice-Admiral Shibata (2nd Southern Expeditionary Fleet) and Lieutenant General Numata (Chief of Staff to Field Marshal Terauchi, Commander-in-Chief Southern Army) entered in silence and took their places. Behind each was an armed officer of the appropriate service as his escort.

The whole assembly rose and Mountbatten, followed by four ADCs representing the three Services and the Indian Army, entered the chamber and moved to the dais, from where he addressed the assembly:

“I have come here today to receive the formal surrender of all the Japanese forces within the South-East Asia Command. I have received the following telegram from the Supreme Commander of the Japanese forces concerned, Field Marshal Count Terauchi:

‘The most important occasion of the formal surrender signing at Singapore draws near, the signif-
Singapore, 1945-09-12. Supreme Allied Commander, Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, South-East Asia Command, reading his order of the day to the parade, from the steps of the Municipal Building, Singapore, on the 1945-09-12, after General Itagaki, signed for the surrender of all Japanese Forces in South-East Asia. (AWM 42488)
The Instrument of Surrender of Japanese Forces under the Command or Control of the Supreme Commander, Japanese Expeditionary Forces, Southern Region, Within the Operational Theatre of the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia, Signed at Singapore on the 12th September 1945

1. In pursuance of and in compliance with:
   (a) The Instrument of Surrender signed by the Japanese plenipotentiaries by command and on behalf of the Emperor of Japan, the Japanese Government, and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters at Tokyo on 2nd September, 1945;
   (b) General Order No. 1, promulgated at the same place and on the same date;
   (c) The Local Agreement made by the Supreme Commander, Japanese Expeditionary Forces, Southern Regions, with the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia at Rangoon on 27th August, 1945;

to all of which Instrument of Surrender, General Order and Local Agreement this present Instrument is complementary and which it in no way supersedes, the Supreme Commander, Japanese Expeditionary Forces, Southern Regions (Field-Marshal Count Terauchi) does hereby surrender unconditionally to the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia (Admiral the Lord Louis Mountbatten) himself and all Japanese sea, ground, air and auxiliary forces under his command or control and within the operational theatre of the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia.

2. The Supreme Commander, Japanese Expeditionary Forces, Southern Regions, undertakes to ensure that all orders and instructions that may be issued from
time to time by the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia, or by any of his subordinate Naval, Military or Air Force Commanders of whatever rank acting in his name, are scrupulously and promptly obeyed by all Japanese sea, ground, air and auxiliary forces under the command or control of the Supreme Commander, Japanese Expeditionary Forces, Southern Regions, and within the operational theatre of the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia.

3. Any disobedience of, or delay or failure to comply with, orders or instructions issued by the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia, or issued on his behalf by any of his subordinate Naval, Military or Air Force Commanders of whatever rank, and any action which the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia, or his subordinate Commanders, acting on his behalf, may determine to be detrimental to the Allied Powers, will be dealt with as the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia, may decide.

4. This Instrument takes effect from the time and date of signing.

5. This Instrument is drawn up in the English language, which is the only authentic version. In any case of doubt as to intention or meaning, the decision of the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia, is final. It is the responsibility of the Supreme Commander, Japanese Expeditionary Forces, Southern Regions, to make such translation into Japanese as he may required.

Signed at Singapore at 0341 hours (G.M.T.) on 12th September 1945. (Sd.) SHEISHIRO ITAGAKI for Supreme Commander,
Japanese Expeditionary Forces,
Southern Regions.
Field-Marshal Count Terauchi’s Seal.
(Sd.) LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN
Supreme Allied Commander,
South-East Asia.

Conclusion

On the 50th Anniversaries of VE and VP Days let us remember the great events which took place on those days in 1945. After six years of darkness, horrors, brutality, tragedy, sorrow and destruction the “Lights came on again in the World”. Let us honour those who gave their lives for their country and those service men and women who were maimed, and in many cases, disabled for life.

Also let us commemorate our great wartime leader John Curtin whose early death was due to his ceaseless work for Australia.

Finally, let us take pride in Australia and the major contribution it has made in international conflicts for a century, to fight tyranny wherever it has raised its ugly head. I know of no country which has surpassed our effort – do you?

Authors note: It was a great honour to be asked to write Australia's Perilous Year 1942 for the Bicentenary in 1988 for the Australian Defence Force Journal special edition. Likewise it is a great honour at age 82, to be asked to write The Victory Year 1945.

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John Buckley, OBE served in the AIF in the Middle East, New Guinea, France and Germany. As well as his AIF service he served attachments with the British Army in Syria, Lebanon and Iraq in 1941 and in North West Europe in 1944-45, finally at Luneberg (Germany) in 1945. In 1949 he resigned from the Army to become an Assistant Secretary in the Department of Defence and later as First Assistant Secretary. John Buckley has had several articles published in the Australian Defence Force Journal including Australia's Perilous Year. He is the author of Recollections of the Roving Staff Officer.
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Battlefield Interdiction and Close Air Support: The RAAF Over Kelantan, December 1941.

By Dr Laurie Barber, University of Waikato

On 8 December 1941 (Malayan time), the first air battle of Japan's Pacific War was fought over the coastal approaches and beaches of the Malayan state of Kelantan. Ninety-five minutes before the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor the first assault wave, of the Japanese 25th Army's "Takumi Detachment" hit the beaches of Malaya: its target - the capture of Kelantan's three military aerodromes and the neutralising of the defence's air force.

Not only did the Pacific War begin with a Japanese attack aimed at the airbase of No 1 (B) Squadron, RAAF; but the first shots recorded in the war were fired by a Japanese cruiser at a reconnaissance Hudson of No. 8 Squadron, RAAF at 1545 hours on 7 December 1941 - over eight hours before Pearl Harbor. From 0200 hours, 8 December, until 1500 hours the same day, the Lockheed Hudson bombers of No 1 (B) Squadron, based at Kota Bharu's military aerodrome, were in action against the transports, cruiser and destroyer screen, landing barges and landed troops of Major General Takumi's augmented Brigade Group. From dawn the squadron was reinforced, albeit with little effective result, by the obsolete Vildebeeste torpedo planes of No 36 Squadron, RAF, based at the nearby Gong Kedah aerodrome. Only when the original 12 operational Hudsons were reduced to five, with a land battle tide turning against the defenders; and with Japanese Navy fighters from acquired Vichy airbases in French Indo-China, and captured airstrips harassing their landings and refuelling, was No 1 Squadron ordered to evacuate Kelantan, to the dubious security of Kuantan base station, 370 kilometres to the south.

During the course of the Battle for Kelantan, No 1 Squadron, RAAF, inflicted heavy casualties on the invaders: destroying two and damaging another of the three troop transports, sinking the Japanese Brigade Headquarters, affecting the destruction of most of the invasion barges, and killing large numbers of Japanese assault troops and their horses on the beaches. From 0200 hours until dawn, the RAAF held undisturbed command of the air over Kelantan, and the Japanese casualty list of 1,900 can, to a large measure, be attributed to the Squadron's repeated and determined attacks.

This article is written to ensure that the RAAF's role in the Battle for Kelantan receives its proper credit, and to answer the calumny, still rife in some less than well researched historical works, that the RAAF abandoned Kota Bharu's military aerodrome prematurely.

How did an RAAF Squadron happen to be in Kota Bharu in December 1941? From 1940, Air Headquarters Far East, based in Singapore, had little doubt that with the Japanese occupation of French Indo-China of July 1941, and the weekly diminution of goodwill between the United States and Japan, war would erupt in South-East Asia. There was a forlorn hope that Japanese troop transports might leave Malaya untouched as they sailed south in their search for oil to continue the China War. But even blind Freddy saw this as a delusion, and the RAF with only a fraction of the 22 squadrons needed for an effective defence of Malaya, was glad to accept the Australian and New Zealand Governments offer of air support. On the day before the Japanese landings, 16 Buffalo fighters of No. 453 Squadron, RAAF, were based at Singapore's Sembawang aerodrome, together with four No 8 Squadron, RAAF, reconnaissance Hudsons. At the north-west Malaya air base at Sungei Patani, 12 Buffalo fighters of No 21 Squadron, RAAF, stood ready. Kota Bharu's ten operational Hudsons of No 1 Squadron have already been noted as have been the eight Hudsons of No 8 Squadron based at Kelantan's Gong Kedah aerodrome. The New Zealanders of No 488 Squadron, RNZAF, awaited development at Singapore's Kallang airfield with 30 Buffalo fighters. Thus of the 164 operational front-line air craft fit for battle at the out-break of the Pacific War, eighty-two were ANZAC warplanes.

No 1 (B) Squadron RAAF, formed in 1925 and initially used in Australia for survey, convoy escort, and anti-submarine patrol, had been moved to Singapore in 1940 after being rearmed with Hudsons. Under the command of Wing Commander R.H. Davis, the squadron was moved to Kota Bharu in mid-1941 and was closely involved, with Wing Commander Wright's No 8 Squadron, in air reconnaissance over the Gulf of Siam, from whence any Japanese Fleet must approach. D. Gillison notes that "The purpose was to provide sufficient time to send out striking forces to attack in daylight in the hope that the enemy would be either destroyed or turned back." There was in reality little chance of an opportune pre-emptive strike, given the unwillingness of the Singapore
command to fire the first shots in an inevitable war. This strategy also assumed a capability for air success against convoys likely to be protected by Japanese Navy fighter cover. It was thoroughly unrealistic. Even so, Headquarters Far East Air Command had few options, and this was the best they could do given their limited air resources.

Wing Commander R.M. Davis' Report on Initial Reconnaissance Sighting, Invasion of Kelantan by Japanese and Action carried out by No 1 Squadron, RAAF, was completed in late December 1941 and secreted by the Wing Commander during his captivity following the fall of Singapore. In the beginning of the report he clarifies that RAAF reconnaissance sightings of 6 December 1941 (local time) indicate the approach of an invasion fleet, with cruiser and destroyer escorts. A further search was made on 7 December (local time): "Aircraft searching Sector 1 reported at approximately 1848 hours four large vessels steering 180°T approximately 60 nautical miles North of Patani. Since it was just after dusk and the cloud base was about 500 feet, the pilot was unable to give clear description of the ships but thought that the force consisted of 1 Cr [cruiser] and 3 M.V's [motor vessels]. Aircraft searching Sector 4 reported 1 Cr and 1 M.V on a bearing of 009°T, from Kota Bahru, distance 112 nautical miles steering on a course of 270°T."

To win this intelligence Davis' squadron had taken off on a runway that would, given the extreme conditions, have normally been closed as unusable. Monsoon conditions forced pilots to fly 200 feet above the sea for the first fifty miles of their approach to their home airfield.

Air Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, the Commander-in-Chief Far East, refused to order a pre-emptive strike but he did order first degree readiness in his command. At Kota Bharu Davis fuelled and bombed-up six of his Hudsons, and had them on stand by. It is fair to ask why Brooke-Popham failed to appreciate that the intelligence that the Japanese Fleet possessed a strong naval escort was the give-away as to its target? An escort would not have been needed for an invasion of Thailand. Davis' conviction that the invasion Fleet was on its way was confirmed by the appearance at the 8th Indian Infantry Brigade Headquarters near the Kota Bharu aerodrome of a British agent, Bill Bangs, who reported Japanese agent storing of aviation fuel at the Thai Singora airstrip and the boasting of a Japanese agent who had celebrated prematurely the Japanese landing, and had informed Bangs of the target and place. Small vessel movement off the coast of Kota Bharu was reported at 0230 hours on 7 December (local time).

Wing Commander Davis' account of the outbreak of hostilities is succinct and informative: "8.12.41. Sometime between 0030 and 0100 hours, heard firing coming from the beach and reported by green line to AHQ, FE. I then called W/Cdr Noble [The RAF Station Commander] who came over to the Operations Room. I then asked his permission to call out the station and to return to my squadron. Those aircraft which were not already bombed-up were fitted up immediately [four] and I stood by for instructions to send them off. When permission came to attack seven aircraft were sent off at approximately two minute intervals but in view of the low cloud base at sea and the close proximity of the vessels to the coast all pilots were instructed to carry out individual attacks on army troop ships and to report on what forces they could see."

Air Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham had vacillated over the launching of Operation Matador, a pre-emptive strike into Thailand to deny the Thai airstrips to the Japanese. As Chairman of the ADA Conference (Anglo-Dutch-Australian) of April 1941, he agreed to a provision whereby any movement of Japanese naval vessels south of latitude 6° north should be considered an act of war. Given that decision, No. 1 (B) Squadron, RAAF should have been delegated authority to act on the sight of the Japanese Fleet. It had not, and was bound by Singapore made standing-orders to report and await instructions. The delay between the reporting of the first “Takumi Detachment” landings near 0100 hours and the launching of the first No. 1 Squadron strike at 0200 hours was slight and in part occasioned by a delay in permission from Singapore, where Brooke-Popham held a hurried conference with Air Vice Marshal Pulford – but more so by weather conditions that eclipsed the moon until a little before 0200 hours. When No. 1 Squadron launched its attack, weather conditions were marginal, the runway should have been closed as unserviceable, and given the low cloud base, there was no opportunity for squadron size attacks.

Wing Commander Davis' report on the attack by Sortie 1, commanded by Flight Lieutenant J.A. Lockwood, immediately indicates the attack tactics used and the nature of the Japanese anti-aircraft defence:

"0208 hours took-off. Flew over convoy of 3 MVs at 2000 feet. Dived to 50° and released 2 bombs on northern most MV. A/A fire started so took avoiding action and approached again to release 2 - 250lb S.A.P. bombs from 200 feet. A/A fire now
very heavy. Flight Lieutenant FC Ramshaw in another aircraft confirmed direct hits by these latter bombs amidships. Front guns U/S. Saw no troops landing on the beach. Appeared to be at least two cruisers and other ships about five miles out. Four barges seen between convoy and beach. Returned to base 0230 hours and re-armed."

No 1 (B) Squadron, RAAF, could throw ten Hudson bombers into the fray. Crews and ground crews were in action for 14½ hours, and for the two days prior to the battle most of the pilots had been on reconnaissance operations. Japanese anti-aircraft fire, from the accompanying cruisers and destroyers as well as from transports and landing barges, was intense, and caused the loss of two Hudsons with crews. Sortie 4, took off at 0218 hours and was not heard from again. Attacks on landing craft were pressed home at low level, so much so that rarely could aircraft be seen by officers looking seawards from the aerodrome. Sortie 11, took off at 0320 hours and was also a casualty to anti-aircraft fire. Hudsons returned to the aerodrome damaged, to have parts from unserviceable Hudsons used for replacements. Two Hudsons were landed with flat tyres.

Davis' tactics were straightforward and effective. Attacks on the transports and barges were classical battlefield interdiction aimed at confining the numbers of the enemy in conflict. These attacks were highly successful. Colonel Masanobu Tsuji, the Chief of Operations and Planning for the Japanese 25th Army, was impressed:

"Before long, enemy planes in formations of two or three began to attack our transports, which soon became enveloped in flame and smoke from the bursting bombs and from shells fired by the shore batteries. The Awagisan Maru after two direct hits caught fire; later the Ayatosan Maru did likewise after six hits... As the fires burst through the decks of the ships the soldiers still on board holding their rifles jumped over the side. Kept afloat by the lifejackets with which they had been equipped, some managed with difficulty to get into boats, while others swam towards the shore. For these men it was a grim introduction to war".

Tsuji's second-hand account is in places inaccurate but at this point he is exact. The Japanese official report on the landing confirms that out of twelve landing craft, two-thirds were sunk and only three of the five landing craft that survived, landed where they should have. While Japanese casualties must be shared by the RAAF, Dutch submarines, and the 8th Indian Army Infantry Brigade, the fighting potential of the NASU regiment after landing, indicates heavy losses. Two battalion commanders were severely wounded, four company commanders were killed, and all, companies were reduced to 54 per cent of the embarkation rolls. From 0200 hours until 0900 hours, No 1 Squadron (B) RAAF, reinforced by ineffective torpedo bombers from Gong Kedah, were the undisputed masters of the sky over Kelantan. Colonel Tsuji's master plan for the invasion had been unable to provide fighter cover in monsoonal conditions for the first night assault by the "Takumi Detachment". The assault timing was dictated by the Japanese Imperial General Staff, to coincide as closely as possible with the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and no latitude for local conditions off Malaya and Thailand were allowed. However, shortly after 0900 hours, 8 December (local time), formations of from five to nine Japanese Navy bombers and 97 fighters, from French Indo-China bases, began attacks on the Kelantan military aerodromes. These formations were later reinforced by planes from captured Thai airstrips. These attacks coincided with RAAF re-fuelling stops, landings and launchings, and appear to have been timed to fit Japanese agent reports. The eight attacks on the Kota Bharu aerodrome rendered repairs to damaged aircraft by the ground crews dangerous and difficult and reduced the original ten Hudsons to seven by noon, 8 December, (local time). Two more No 1 Squadron bombers were put out of action by the last Japanese air raid of the afternoon, at 1700 hours. Such was the intensity of the Japanese air raids that two aircraft requiring wheel only repairs could not be serviced.

The initial "Most Secret" cipher telegram from the C-in-C, Far East, to the War Office in London, gave a misleading summary of the situation. Telegram 422/6 cipher 8/12 reports the situation at 0930 hours (local time) on 8 December. It states:

"By 0800 hours all surface craft retiring course 33°. Mopping up operations in progress on shore. Air attacks at night claim hits on two ships which were left on fire... Gong Kedah and Machang aerodromes in Kelantan bombed this morning. No damage reported. Machang unoccupied. Light scale air raid on Singapore Island at 0415 hours 8/12 concentrated mainly on Seletar and Tengah aerodromes. No appreciable damage reported."

This report fails to acknowledge that 8th Indian Infantry Brigade were hard pressed on the beaches and that the RAAF and RAF no longer controlled the skies. It also fails to address the fact that Japanese bombers were able to penetrate Singapore's air defences. This report parallels propaganda in the press and on the wireless at the time. There is a minimising of the danger to Malaya and Singapore posed...
by Japanese landings and Japanese air superiority.

The Japanese fighters over Kelantan were surprised at the opposition they encountered in the air from the Australian bombers. Flight Lieutenant G.T. Hitchcock’s Hudson of No 8 Squadron RAAF, engaged the first enemy fighter to attack an RAAF bomber over Kelantan, and destroyed it. But from noon, 8 December (local time), Wing Commander Davis faced a new problem. Ground crew were now aware of rifle fire from Japanese snipers close to the airfield perimeter. Movement to and from the barracks and the disposal area became dangerous. As the battle grew closer to the aerodrome, the Station officers became jittery. Wing Commander Davis is quite clear that the order for the aerodrome’s evacuation did not come from No 1 Squadron, nor did any request for the same:

“Prior to the last attack on the aerodrome [1700 hours] by enemy fighters the order to evacuate the aircraft to Kuantan was ordered but as the authority could not be ascertained the Squadron Commander ordered the engines be stopped and informed the Captains to form into groups by their aircraft... The Squadron Equipment Officer then gave each aircraft its boxes of consumable stores and spares which were sufficient for six weeks operations away from base. Several months before this, a Squadron Movement Order designed to operate at an advanced base for six months had been prepared in considerable detail...”

But Davis’ instructions and planning were interfered with by panicking RAF Station officers. The ground situation around the airfield was still controllable and a phone call to Air Command in Singapore was made without reference to the Squadron Commander. The Operations Room was prematurely set on fire. The Squadron Equipment Officer is scathing in his condemnation of a further RAF order.

“Shortly after the last air attack at 1700 hours whilst the Squadron Commander was busy on the aerodrome despatching the serviceable aircraft to Kuantan, some officer or officers from Station Headquarters set all personnel in flight to the main gate without any clear instructions. This was most unfortunate because all airmen knew their orders...and further the order was given without the Squadron Commander’s permission.”

This evacuation, later stopped and made to conform to the Squadron plan, left the Squadron Commander and a small party of pilots, to tend those aircraft that could not be flown off. Four No 1 Squadron Hudsons were burnt, but the party, under fire, could not reach the crashed No 8 Squadron planes. By 1815 hours, the ground crew had been located and re-directed to enter trucks for the rail head at Krai. Later, following Davis’ phone call to Air Headquarters, Far East, 60 airmen were sent by bus to Kuantan, but the Kuantan aerodrome was abandoned before their arrival. In all, five No 1 (B) Squadron Hudsons were flown off to Kuantan. Flight Lieutenant T.K. Douglas daringly flew a Hudson with a damaged hydraulic system, with wheels down, and with flaps tied by wire in the “up” position. He wired the flaps under enemy ground fire. Even as they arrived at Kuantan, the aerodrome was under Japanese air attack and one of the five No 1 Squadron Hudsons was destroyed on the ground. The remaining four were soon after flown to Sembawang, in Singapore. Thereafter, until the Squadron’s evacuation to Sumatra at the close of January 1942, No 1 Squadron, RAAF, was involved in convoy protection, patrolling, and attacks on enemy shipping.

Davis’ No 1 (B) Squadron, RAAF, could have done no more than it did in the defence of Singapore. For the first five and one half hours of the battle the Squadron inflicted casualties sufficient to stall the landings, and allow the 8th Indian Infantry Brigade, in their well prepared beach defences, to exact a heavy toll, that came close to making Sabak Beach another Gallipoli. Davis’ battlefield interdiction and close air support for the ground defences cannot be faulted. But he had neither sufficient planes nor the naval or ground resources to allow for a successful defence. Brigadier Key’s 8th India Infantry Brigade were too few to man the thirty-eight kilometres of Kota Bharu’s beaches in depth, and HMS Prince of Wales and Repulse might well have been at Scapa Flow for all the use they were against the Japanese Fleet movements south, and then came to east Malaya’s coast fatally late. The fall of Kelantan was brought about by the persistence of the Japanese assault troops, despite their decimation, and by Britain’s failure during the 1930s to build up in Malaya modern air squadrons, and infantry formations with armour and training in jungle fighting, commensurate with a threat Britain knew existed.

NOTES
1. The attacks on Kota Bharu, Pearl Harbor, the Philippines, Guam, Hong Kong, and Wake Island, were launched in that order, over a period of seven hours. As Pearl Harbor lies to the east of the International Date Line, the attack there took place on the morning of 7 December (local time). On the west of the International Date Line (Kelantan) the date was 8 December.
2. This is the first attested shooting. Lionel Wigmore, The Japanese Thrust, Canberra, 1957, p. 124. An RAF Catalina disappeared earlier, and was probably shot down.
3. Wing Commander R.H. Davis Report on British
Reconnaissance Sighting, Invasion of Kelantan by Japanese and Action Carried out by No 1 Squadron, RAAF repeatedly refers to the destruction of Japanese troops and horses.


5. Major-General S. Woodburn-Kirby, Singapore: The Chain of Disaster, London, 1971. "Calculations by the Chiefs of Staff showed that to defend Malaya properly without the fleet at least 22 air squadrons, with a total of 336 first-line modern aircraft were needed.


8. Wing Commander R.M. Davis (later Group Captain Davis, OBE) was RAAF IO, AHQ, RAF Far East, 1940-41, before his appointment to Command 1 Squadron, RAAF.


10. The neutrality of Thailand (pro-Japanese and neo-fascist in government since the early 1930s) and unwillingness to strike the first blow, led to timidity in Singapore, and an over-reliance on London decision making.


13. Ibid.


18. Ibid., pp. 9-10. Dutch submarines were based at Singapore. K12 sank five Japanese transports from 12-13 December, and may have contributed to the sinking of a transport on 8 December.


24. Ibid., p. 15.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse were sunk, off Kuantan, by Japanese squadrons despatched from Indo-China on 10 December 1941. Winston Churchill later wrote: "The distance from the Saigon airfields to Kuantan was four hundred miles, and at this date no attack by torpedo bombers had been attempted at anything approaching this range." Winston S. Churchill The Second World War: The War Alliance, Vol III, London, 150, P. 551.

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The Sixth Division's 2/3 Field Artillery Regiment in Martin Place, 4 January 1940.
Random Reflections During War

Emeritus Professor W.E.H. Stanner, CMG was one of our great Australians. He died on 8 October 1981. Seven years later, in 1988, his great work to change our attitudes to our Aborigines was honoured by his inclusion in the Bicentennial “Heritage 200 Programme” which named 200 Australians who had made significant contributions to our nation.

In early 1942, Stanner was appointed Major to raise and command the 2/1st North Australian Observer Unit. In October 1943, he was appointed Assistant Director of Research (Territories Administration) and promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. From 1943 to 1945 he served in New Guinea, England, Europe, the USA, and finally, finished the war as Senior Civil Affairs Officer with the 24th Brigade, 9th Division, in British North Borneo.

In 1944, when the Commander-in-Chief, General Blarney, attended the Prime Ministers’ Conference in England, Stanner accompanied him as one of his two aides, (the other was Lieutenant Colonel John Kerr). At Blarney’s direction, Stanner stayed on in Europe. In January 1945, in London he wrote the following essay whilst a member of the Australian Army Staff.

There is no indication that it was intended for publication. The essay has not been edited and has not been previously published. The original is in the possession of Mrs Patricia Stanner, who has given permission for its publication. Although written so long ago, the essay contains some particular thoughts which may be, or indeed are still relevant today.

Stanner’s biography was included in “Metaphors of Interpretation” by D. Barwick, J. Beckett and M. Reay, as editors (Australian National University Press 1985), and his efforts in the Northern Territory in 1942-43 was described in an article in Defence Force Journal, Issue No. 14, Jan/Feb 1979, - “The Surveillance of Northern Australia: its history; the story of Stanner’s Bush Commando 1942” by Captain A. Vane.

By Lieutenant Colonel W.E.H. Stanner, London, January 1945. (With an introduction by Captain A. Vane)

Random Reflections During War

Many psychologists and psychiatrists, but few sociologists or anthropologists, have served in the armed forces of the United Nations. In due course some very valuable records of the experience of the first two groups should emerge, but evidently we are not going to get a great deal in the way of purely sociological record. This will be a serious loss, for the majority of scientists now serving would probably agree, that in spite of failures and difficulties, the military command has made extremely intelligent use of the non-military experts for whom employment has been found, and has given them wide opportunities of observation and service.

One difficulty from the sociological viewpoint is that the scientists actually in the services have been (rightly) employed along the general lines of their peace-time specialisms. Only a few have been able to gain experience as regimental or staff officers. The scientist serving in an advisory or specialist capacity is concerned mainly with introducing to the services unfamiliar viewpoints or improved techniques, and only secondarily, usually not at all, with studying the social organisation of the services themselves. The regimental or staff officer has a better opportunity and much more encouragement to turn his attention to

army organisation and functions as such. My own experiences at the regimental and staff level have been very stimulating and instructive, and form the basis of these occasional notes.

There could scarcely be a more authentic field for sociological study. Army life is group-life par excellence. Why sociologists seem to have shown so little interest in the army is difficult to say. Academicians, of course, have their fashions. Apparently we are now to undergo a vogue of national-income studies in the colonial field, for example. Peace-time attitudes towards military organisation and service in the past were also a serious academic handicap, and no doubt we still suffer from a hang-over. Those of us who were students in the 1920s and early 1930s, and were exposed to the influence of the anti-war and anti-militarist feeling of the period at its full-tide, well remember the impacts made on our impressionable minds by the intellectual and emotional revulsion from 1914-1918. Almost all of us, and most of our teachers, in all the fields of social study, would have been out of sympathy with a thorough going study of wars and armies as two of social man’s most ancient institutions. Yet army organisation and war-experience are the repositories of much practical social insight, could it but be properly assessed. It would be both convenient and valuable if we would develop a vogue of military studies from the sociological aspect over the next few years. It was a serious defect of the intellectual life of the 1919-39 period, for which we subsequently paid a heavy penalty, that militarism did not receive scientific rather than moral scrutiny. One cannot hold the sociologists alone
responsible for the tendency to encourage people to seek moral and intellectual integration through idealisms which were rooted in aspiration, rather than in well-assessed worldly experience, but certainly this tendency took on added strength in the shelter of scientific pre-occupation with other things.

Most of us who are prepared to be honest about the views we held, especially in 1925-1935, would have to admit that we were profoundly mistaken in two important respects: we did not properly identify, or measure accurately, the social forces at work in the period, and we miscalculated the extent to which we could organise effectively against war in the ruling international situation. The second is perhaps only a corollary of the first. One contributing reason was that we were averse from or incapable of a dispassionate appraisal of war, war-experience, and the institutions of war. The common attitude to war and its associated institutions was neurasthenic rather than rational or philosophical, a fact which makes for sombre reflection upon the evil potential in transient concepts of the good, as well as upon the instability of scholarship.

War has something in common with birth, puberty, marriage, parenthood and death. It is one of the recurrent crises through which the personal and social life of man passes, and the attitudes mankind takes towards war as a personal and social crisis bear strong resemblances to the attitudes taken towards the other crises. Apparently men the world over, in all civilisations, and in all historic epochs known to us, seem to shrink from the direct shock of these brutal and disconcerting personal crises which come upon them. The result is that they face such crisis obliquely rather than straightforwardly. They surround each crisis with shock-absorbing buffers of prescribed ritual and social ceremony, legend, mythology, and other conventional forms of behaviour. No doubt it is only by such devices, which are usually traditional rather than rational, men so far have found it possible to absorb the heavy impact of living and dying in a world which often seems stonily indifferent whether men live or die at all.

The cycle of birth, puberty, parenthood, death, and the corruption of the body, is a phenomenon which mankind universally, it would seem, has refused to regard objectively. Apparently man has never been able to live a life which has only biological meaning. Anthropologists have never discovered a tribe, however, primitive, which does not surround the social process of life with a protective, rationalising cloak of custom, law, belief and ritual, through which the ugly facts inseparable from life and death are rendered tolerable to those who are affected by them.

The purely rational or planned elements of mankind’s attitude to the crises of life are still but a fragment of the whole. Birth is less mysterious; death is more controllable; marriage, parenthood and war are being stripped of more and more of the sacred, religious, or emotional quality they once bore; but much of our attitude still flows from the unmeasured springs of antiquity. There may be a nimbus of rationalism, but the core is non-rational. The traditions of man are still so powerful that we are capable only of a limited realism towards life. It seems that we cannot live a meaningless life and still want to live. Life takes on meaning only from the culture with which man has surrounded it. Some cultures have been less effective than others in sustaining the life of man. We are still unable adequately to explain why some societies (the integration of men and their cultures) have vanished and why others have perpetuated; why the peculiar twists and configurations which distinguish one society from another have developed; why the dynamic co-efficients are more numerous and more active in this society than in that. There are some societies (the Australian aborigines) with a pronounced static bias. There are others (the Germans) with a restless dynamism. An effective explanation in biological, ethnological, or sociological terms still eludes us. We know much more of the what and how of human society, than of the why, and all too little of the what and how. Man still does not understand himself, as man, or as man in society, and there are deep-seated resistances within him to prevent him from doing so. The tragedies imagined by Freud to explain mythological man’s discovery of his real nature, his appetites and his conflicts, and the ingenious alibis by which he thereafter concealed himself from himself, have more than speculative interest. The culture of modern man certainly fights very strongly to screen man from realism towards those forces of his ancient tradition and inheritance which still strike through from the depth to the surface. In no respect is this so noticeable as in our attitude to war. We practice war as a secular activity, but our attitude towards it is more neurasthenic than realistic. The components of horror, disgust, and make-believe in our attitude tend us off from a practical appraisal of its place and value in social life.

In making these random jottings in the leisure moments of active service, all one hopes to do is to record some of the sociological thoughts, light as well as grave, induced by Army life. In years to come we shall, of course, be deluged with memoirs and reminiscences, with exposes of tactics and strategy, with records of the glorious and the dismal in the war’s manifold operations in the three elements, and by that
time, those of us who are not wearied by surfeit will have forgotten, or be trying to forget, our own thoughts during war. But war, and all the institutions associated with it, are much too important to leave only to the researches of the professional soldier, the politician's apologia, the poet and the novelist, or the war correspondent. Perhaps it would not be going too far to suggest that we should provide for every student of the humanitarian disciplines in years to come a course in the philosophy of war, with special emphasis, say, on the structural organisation of armies and the art of military appreciation. The one, for example, is worthy of close study as representing human powers of deliberated social organisation at possibly the highest level of success so far attained, and the other as one very effective working model of a method of applying thought and experience to complex social situations in order to attain defined objectives with limited resources.

There is a tendency to regard Army organisation, for example, as hurried and rather loosely improvised. It is certainly often empirical, but always around a hard core of tactical and logistical tradition. The wealth of well-appraised historic experience behind battalion and divisional structure, of what men can and cannot do, quite possibly outweighs that behind any other social institution, except Parliament and the judiciary, and one has some doubt even of these. It may also be worth pointing out to those to whom the "Army mind" is the very archetype of reactionary conservatism that, despite its venerable tradition, the roots of which go centuries deep into history, Army organisation is easier to alter when functional and contextual changes have required it to alter than in the case of other institutions. Compare, for example, the speed with which the traditional divisional organisation and its equipment were altered to produce the "stream-lined" or "jungle" division required by the campaign in New Guinea, with the protracted tussle involved in an alteration of the Federal Constitution. It is not an unfair comparison.

The scale of organisation involved in even so small an Army as the AIF alone makes it of interest to the sociologist. The AIF Order of Battle (the formed units comprising the Army) would in all probability show a total of several thousand separate components. In an Army such as the Soviet Army, with reputedly upward of 500 divisions, the total number of formed units would, by comparison, be almost astronomical. Each such unit (e.g. an artillery regiment, or motor transport company) is designed with a definite function in view. Each has its own internal organisation, its own equipment, stands in a defined and orderly relationship with all associated units, and on a full war-footing, is provided with everything necessary, or the means to obtain everything which is necessary, to maintain itself, move, and fight under all reasonably-foreseeable conditions. To the serious student of the principles or social structures and functions the division (the largest formation of the field army which is permanent in composition) in operation is a thing of beauty and precision.

The more one regards the orderly intricacy and flexibility of divisional organisation, the constants and variables of its composition, the more one wonders whether sociologists can afford to ignore a closer study of this highly operative institution, in which several score of constituent units, with widely-varying functions, exclusive mentality, and often conflicting interests, are compactly integrated through the chain of command into a body which can live, move and fight as one. The principles by which divisions and other components are grouped and operated into corps, armies and army groups in the field, offer the sociologist data of very great comparative value. It is interesting to speculate, for example, upon the conflict of principle represented by military experience on the one hand, which has laid down for generations that a commander is not able effectively to deal directly and continuously with more than three or four principal subordinates, and political tradition on the other, which requires the Prime Minister to cope with a dozen Ministers. The emergence in two major wars of a small War Cabinet is a significant displacement of political practice towards the logic of military experience. Is it that we are overlooking in Army organisation one of the best-stored treasuries of human experience?

One suggestive reason why we should give this possibility more serious thought is contained in the earlier reference to the value of wider employment of the art of military appreciation. Is it a valuable experience to compare the way in which an intelligent officer cuts through the fog and tangle of a serious field or administrative problem by a rigorous application of the text-book principles of appreciation, with the methods by which many Governmental issues are faced and solved. Even allowing for the difference of context, my experience has been that the comparison is not unfavourable to the Services. If, in the case of an operational appreciation, an officer follows the traditional drill, and begins by being clear about his object, lists the courses of action open to the enemy and to his own side, makes the correct deductions from both sets of factors, examines his deductions carefully, with nice regard to the resources at his disposal, on the one hand, and to his object on the other, it is only in unusually difficult circumstances that he
will be unable to form a plan of action and a method of carrying it out giving reasonable prospects of success. If the process is honestly followed through, even a dullard can usually reach a surprisingly good solution of the ordinary run of problems. It may be another matter altogether to carry the plan out, but as a method of clarifying issues, indicating economic solutions, and maximising the possibility of success in a wide range of human situations, the model military appreciation can be followed or adapted with quite remarkable results. The method can be applied with practical gain to any problem which requires action and in which it is possible to state a realisable object. If we taught the elements of simple situation-appreciation in our schools and universities, it would probably pay useful social dividends over a fairly short period. No doubt we should all have some awkward moments with over-zealous Midshipmen Easy, but when one ponders the immense gain to Ministers of the Crown, departmental heads, business executives, and administrators generally, that would follow from an improvement in the general level of thinking-on-paper, in which objects and alternatives would be more clearly defined, determining factors more fairly stated, and conclusions more logically drawn perhaps we could endure a bit of zeal. Probably in no other social institution is the method of realistic, logical appraisal so well developed or more widely dispersed than in the Services.

The two-way pull of forces making for consolidation and disintegration has been demonstrated of many forms of social organisation. It would be particularly interesting to apply to army life, for example, some of the institutional concepts expounded by Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown, especially to that amusing but intensely irritating phenomenon of Army life — the emotional life of the echelon. One is sometimes tempted to think that we should include it in the list of identified neuroses. It is axiomatic that Platoon HQ think Company HQ unreasonable, Coy HQ think Battalion or Regt HQ unrealistic, Bn or Regt HQ consider Brigade HQ interfering busybodies, while Brigade HQ usually speak of Division HQ only with extreme coldness. The observations passed on Corps at Division, on Army at Corps, and on Army Group or GHQ at Army, are usually very rude. It was therefore entirely without surprise that on one visit to the European war theatre I heard at HQ Army Group an estimate of SHAEF which could only be compared for rankling annoyance with the views held at SHAEF about the British War Office and the US War Department. At those lofty altitudes one notes an interesting change. At this point the objects of attack are "the politicians", or the Departments of State (notably the Treasury) who in their turn tend to close the circle by re-directing their irritation and frustration towards "the soldiers". It is very interesting and (on the whole) a healthy device for the discharge of the resentments and frustrations provoked by the conflicts of authority and the limitations on freedom arising between exclusive groups ranged in a hierarchy. It is not by any means a recent phenomenon. Wellington's dispatches from the Peninsula contain some pungent references to the Whitehall "pen-pushers" of the day. Only in exceptional instances, and these tend to be in non-operational areas, or when particularly incompatible personalities are involved, does this folie d'echelon become actually harmful. In one Division of which I had some personal knowledge relationships between the respective GIs and GIs at the Main and Rear HQs were so bad that for many months they avoided even having meals together. Fortunately it was a quiet area, so that the nonsense did no substantial harm, although it made difficulties for lower echelons which depended upon the Divisional Staff for guidance and maintenance.

The personalities of the Commander or his Chief of Staff are well known to be extremely important in controlling this tendency. The arrival of a powerful or dynamic personality, as Commander or Chief of Staff can send an electric shock through an entire formation in a matter of days. The Army is, in fact, one of the most sensitive of all human groups to alterations of emotional tone. A flabby personality at the head of a unit can be felt even in the ranks or the cook-house. With vigorous leadership folie d'echelon can be kept in check without great difficulty. Is this echelon-attitude a form of neurasthenia, or is it a "normal" concomitant of group life? It is a sociological axiom that a degree of tension between groups is a normal and necessary condition of groups' existence as separate identities. It is probably the factor of hierarchical authority which tends to raise to a dangerous point the "normal" state of tension between echelons of the same field formation. The clashes between incompatible officers at different echelon levels seem to be the occasion rather than the cause of conflict. It would be very misleading to imagine that the normal emotional condition of a division is that in which it is supposed to go, and often does go, into battle, with all personal discords and unit echelons frictions swept away, and each component directing all its energies towards attaining the Commander's object. The normal attitude is one of which it could more accurately be said that limited hostility between the component units and echelons is the rule. The axis of echelon feeling is always vertical. It should be distinguished from the lateral jealousies and frictions between units of the
same formation, which is usually little more than an overflow of regimental or unit spirit, and a symptom of self-esteem rather than of frustration and subordination. It is possible, however, for squadron, company or battalion pride to develop into echelon antagonism, and battalion or brigade commanders are often involved in serious difficulty in preventing the *esprit de corps* of a sub-unit from getting out of hand.

There is, on the other hand, a closer analogy between echelon-feeling and the emotionally-toned attitude which Staff Branch officers tend characteristically to develop towards officers of the Service Branches. Every soldier is familiar with the "G-snob" who conducts himself towards "A" and "Q" officers as though he were a Brahmin among a slightly lower caste, and towards the Service officers (Ordnance, RASC and so on) almost as though they were untouchables. Any commander who observed this feeling existing or developing would, if he were wise, squash it with a heavy hand, but it often flourishes unknown because of the social space which separates the commander from his officers, and insulates him from the inner life of his command. Often it is due to the attitude of the Commander himself, who confides only in his G staff.

Cliquism is, of course, inseparable from any institution, and the cliques which multiply in Army life draw added sustenance from the over-riding responsibilities attached to the G-staff in the British staff system. They are higher in the hierarchy, they issue orders for the Commander, they share information not necessarily known to the other Staff Branches and the Services, and can sometimes act arbitrarily and without explanation of their intentions. Unless they are well-balanced and experienced, the power and privilege of their position can generate resentments and personal bitterness among other officers. The inner life of a HQ or a unit is a fascinating small society in which many elements of conflict are present, and all serving officers probably have experience of HQs or Units in which explosive tensions are just held in check by the formal conventions and etiquette of the staff system.
SALUTE THE BRAVE, A Pictorial Review of Queensland War Memorials. By Shirley and Trevor McIvor. Published by USQ Press

Reviewed by John Buckley

The release of this most excellent book coincides with Australia Remembers Program.

The quality of the narrative, the many hundred of coloured photographs and sketches is first class. The war memorials in Queensland are indeed most striking, every small hamlet has one — no town is a town without its memorial to those who gave their life for the Nation.

This is community pride and patriotism of the highest order which is brought into focus by Shirley and Trevor.

Australians have played a most important part in international conflicts for a century, to fight tyranny wherever is has saved its ugly head. I know of no country which has done more to play its part! Do you?

War memorials have a vital role to play in our heritage and traditions. Also they remind us of the tragedy, so new and destruction of war.

This book is a wonderful reminder of the sacrifice made by Australians in far distant lands, in the air and across the oceans. The younger generation are taught very little Australian history. It's a great weakness in our Education system at all levels. The book should be in every school and university library.

I hope the RSL and other organisations in Queensland promote this book widely through the community. I note this book is proudly sponsored by the Queensland RSL.

It is good that the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Con Sciacca recognises the importance of Salute the Brave. He is making a very important effort to ensure the success of "Australia Remembers" all over Australia. He has written a fine introduction to the book.

Whilst the story is mainly geared to Queensland Memorials, it has a general theme Australia wide. Something has been done Victoria.

Reference to the book tells us of our achievements. It's an excellent record — we should not be ashamed to say so!!

I congratulate Shirley and Trevor on their dedication and patriotism in the tremendous effort in producing Salute the Brave.

It is with great pride and honour that I have reviewed this book.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MONASH: Jews in the Australian Armed Forces in World War II.

Exhibition presented by the Jewish Museum of Australia: 3 September – December 1995

An exhibition surveying World War II through the private accounts of Jewish men and women who served under the Australian flag.

This exhibition recounts personal stories and absorbing anecdotes of wartime experience. It also displays the personal memorabilia, the trinkets and keepsakes which sustained these men and women through the hardship of war. Trophies and decorations record their feats of bravery and service as a reminder of their courage and fortitude.

The exhibition also records the stubborn persistence of religious observance which sustained them in the face of adversity.

Jews from Eastern and Western Europe and the Middle East, as well as those born in Australia served in every theatre of the war, including the home front and in the employment companies.

In the Footsteps of Monash is part of the world wide jubilee commemoration of the end of World War II and salutes those Jews who volunteered to fight the German and Japanese Forces in the years from 1939-1945.

These forces follow proudly in the footsteps of General Sir John Monash, Commander of the Australian Army Corps and one of the greatest soldiers in the Allied Armies in the First World War.

The Jewish Museum of Australia thanks ex-serviceman, Lance Corporal Harry Levy for his contribution to this exhibition.
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