

Island Hopping: 3rd (NZ) Division Operations in the Pacific during the Second World War, 1943- 1944

12 December 2024
LTCOL DR Peter Wood



2 NZEF IP

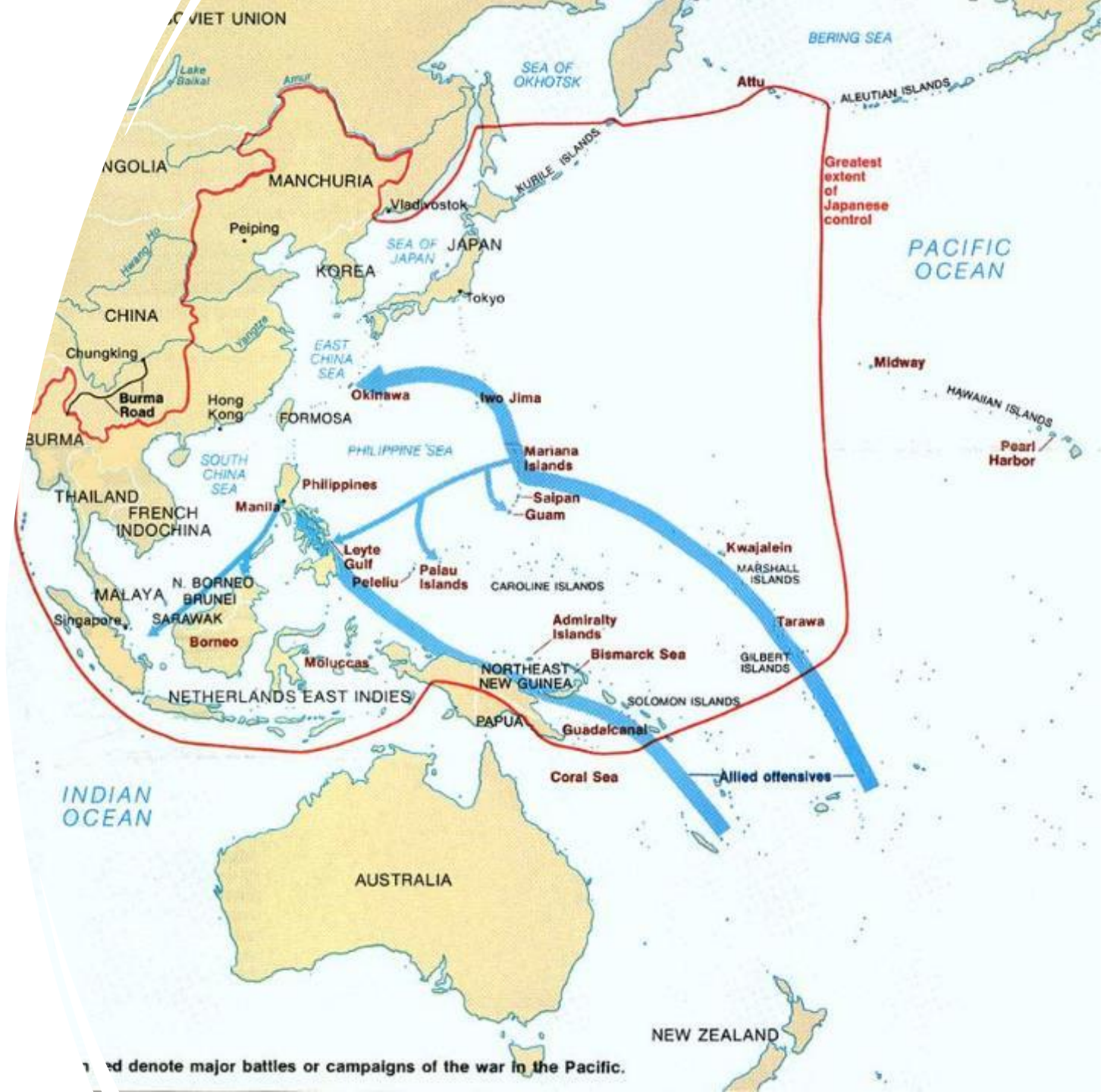
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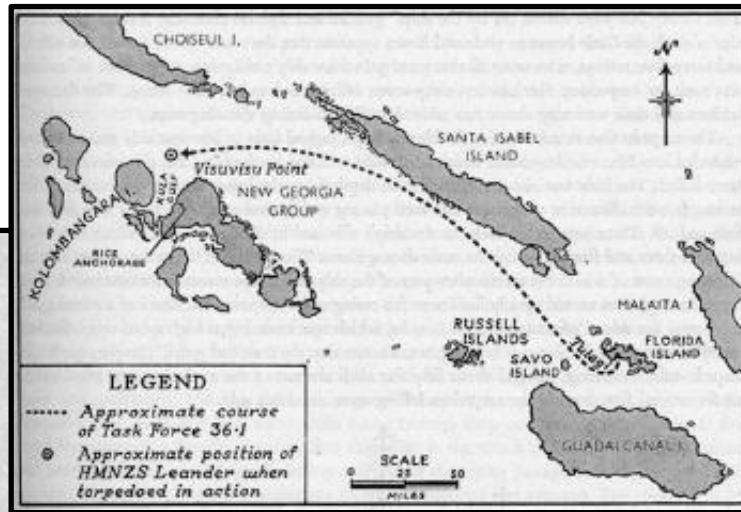
Peter Fraser
NZ's Prime Minister
27 Mar 1940- 13 Dec 1949

Background



Map:
https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/wapa/extContent/wapa/brochure/map3.jpg

RNZN in the Pacific Campaign



Burial-at-sea ceremonies were held as *Leander* limped to Tulagi after the action at Kolombangara in July 1943. In the traditional manner, each body was sewn into a hammock which had a shot of lead placed at the foot of it to make it sink. Burial at sea after Kolombangara, URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/burial-sea-after-kolombangara>, (Manatū Taonga — Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 28-May-2024. HMNZS Leander: 27 KIA, 15 WIA at battle of Kolombangara 13 Jul 1943

“Night action off Guadalcanal- HMNZS Kiwi attacks Japanese submarine J-1 night 29 January 1943. HMNZS *Kiwi* attacking submarine, URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/hmnzs-kiwi-attacking-submarine>, (Manatū Taonga — Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 20-Dec-2012

RNZAF in the Pacific Campaign



RNZAF Camp



RNZAF Corsairs over Guadalcanal, 1944, URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/rnzaf-corsairs-over-guadalcanal-1944>, (Manatū Taonga — Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 20-Dec-2012



1 SQUADRON

AND AIR FORCE
 FORMED 11 JAN 1941 DISBANDED 11 OCT 1946 REFORMED 1 NOV 1948
 REFORMED 11 DEC 1984, DISBANDED 13 DEC 2001
HONOURS
 1943-1945 RABOUL 1943-1945

DATE	COMMANDING OFFICER	LOCATION	AIRCRAFT
1943	SQUADRON LEADER J. HENNING	ORAKA	SKYHAWK
1943	SQUADRON LEADER J. COPE	ORAKA	SKYHAWK
1943	SQUADRON LEADER E. LAUREN	ORAKA NOWRA	SKYHAWK
1943	SQUADRON LEADER J. MATHEWS	NOWRA	SKYHAWK
1943	SQUADRON LEADER J. OSBORN	NOWRA	SKYHAWK
1943	SQUADRON LEADER W. NELSON	NOWRA	SKYHAWK
1943	SQUADRON LEADER J. EASTHOPE	NOWRA	SKYHAWK

DATE	SQUADRON	COX
MAY 1940	SQUADRON	N.E. CHA
DEC 1941	SQUADRON	W.L. HA
APR 1941	SQUADRON	C.L. MA WILKINSON, RAN
MAY 1942	SQUADRON	A.W. HA

1943 SQUADRON LEADER J. HENNING ORAKA SKYHAWK

Special Forces (Z Special Unit) and Coastwatchers in the Pacific Campaign

Major D. J. (Donald) Stott, SOE agent in Greece during World War II, shown on a ship in the Mediterranean. Taken in the period 1942-1944 by an unidentified photographer. MIA (presumed drowned) leading a Force Z night landing off Balikpapan in Borneo on 20 March 1945



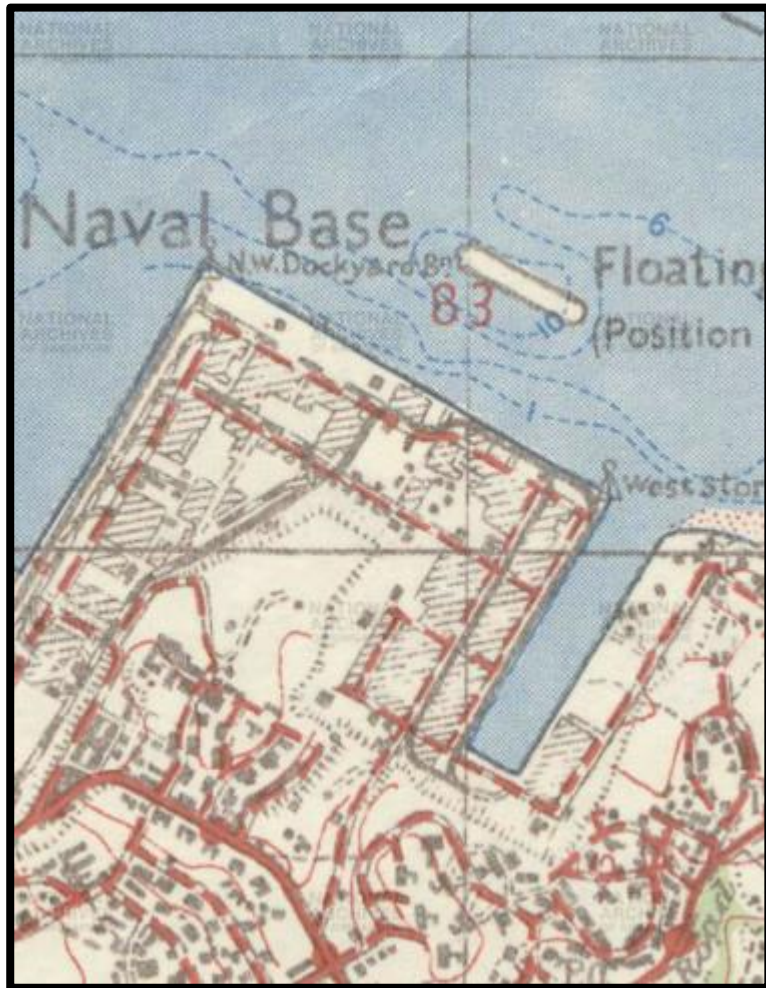
A screenshot of the Online Cenotaph website. The page features a navigation menu at the top with links for Home, War Memorial, Online Cenotaph, and Browse section. On the left, there are search and navigation options like 'Person search', 'Browse', 'Support Us', 'Popular searches', and 'Custom search'. The main content area displays the profile for George Edward Carpenter, who died on 29 September 2010. A table lists his service details: Service Number N702260, Armed Forces / Branch Navy, Last Rank Telegraphist, and War World War II, 1939-1945. There is a circular logo for '25 Years Online Cenotaph' and a 'Support Our Work' button. A placeholder for a photo is visible with the text 'Add a photo'.



The Distinguished Service Medal (DSM)

The Distinguished Service Medal (DSM) was instituted in 1914 for senior and junior ratings of the Navy. It was awarded for acts of bravery in the face of the enemy for which the award of the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal was not considered appropriate. It was replaced in 1999 by the New Zealand Gallantry Decoration. The ribbon has three equal stripes: dark blue, white and dark blue with a thin dark blue stripe down the centre of the white stripe.

Pre-War: War Plans and Status of Forces

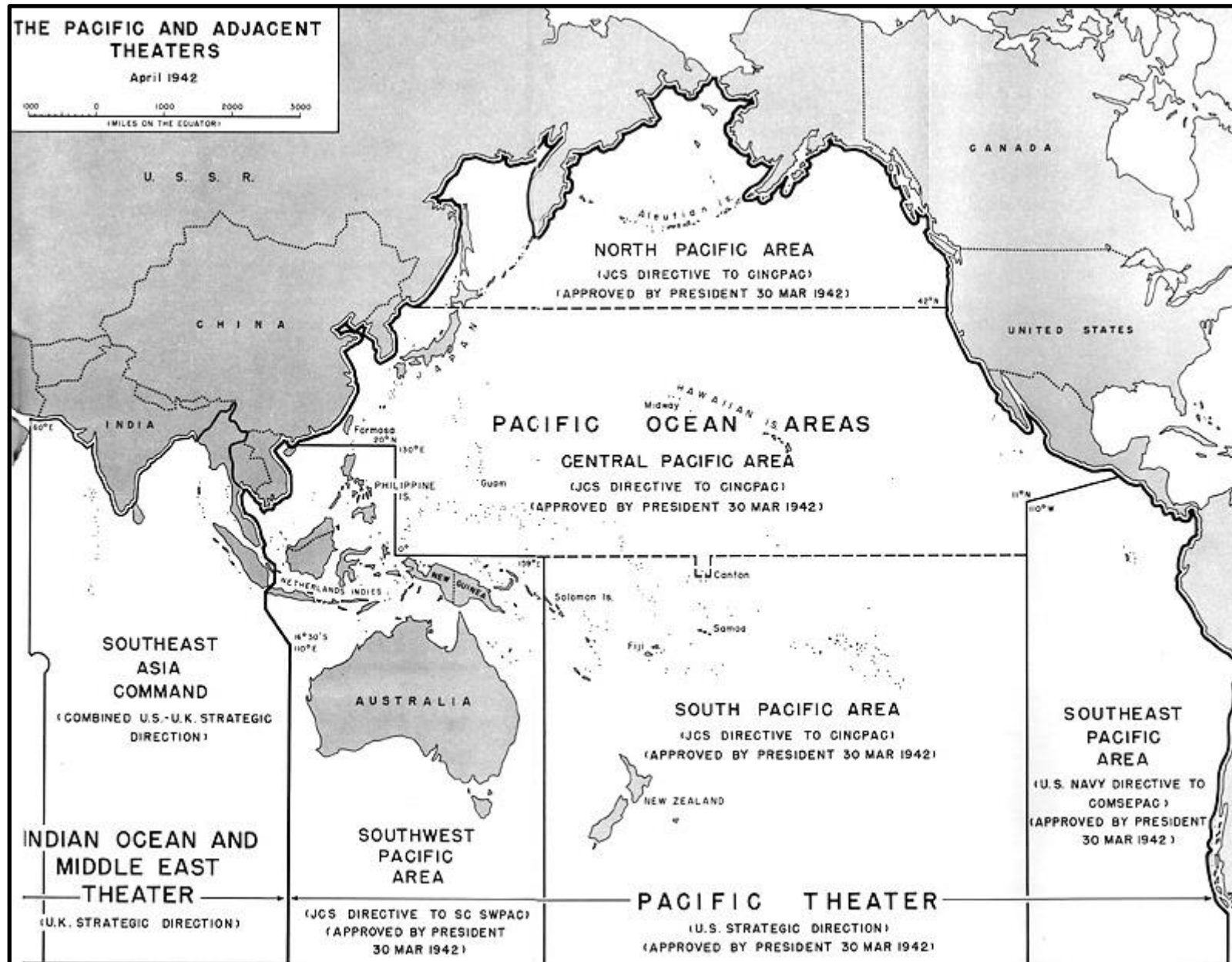


War Plans

- **Red/Crimson (Britain/Canada)**
- **Gray (Azores Islands)**
- **Brown (Philippines)**
- **Tan (Cuba)**
- **Yellow (China)**
- Indigo (Iceland)
- **Purple (A South American republic)**
- **Violet (Latin America)**
- **White (Domestic U.S.)**
- **Orange (Japan)**
- **Black (Germany)**
- **Gold (France)**
- **Green (Mexico)**



How the Americans divided up the Pacific



Genesis of 2 NZEF- IP



WW2 NZ Censored airmail from 46627 Driver D.K. Dowling: <https://mikewhiteuk.com/stamps/1941-fiji-new-zealandww2-censored-airmail-20895/>



[30th Battalion at lunch while on manoeuvres, Western Fiji]. Capewell, E H/Hendry, K A :World War 1939-1945 photographs. Ref: PAColl-5645-014. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. </records/23087815>

Leadership: MAJGEN H.E. (Harold) Barrowclough, DSO and Bar, MC



Major-general H E Barrowclough, General Officer Commanding, watching New Zealanders on an exercise in the Pacific, during World War II. New Zealand. Department of Internal Affairs. War History Branch. Ref: WH-0739-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. </records/23219271>



Major-General H E Barrowclough (left) and United States Military Attache in New Zealand, Colonel John H Nankivell, in New Caledonia during World War II. Ref: WH-0745-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. </records/23073748>

- Divisional Headquarters
- 8 Infantry Brigade
 - 29 Battalion
 - 34 Battalion
 - 36 Battalion
- 14 Infantry Brigade
 - 30 Battalion
 - 35 Battalion
 - 37 Battalion
- Divisional Artillery
 - 17 Field Regiment
 - 33 Heavy Coast Regiment
 - 28 Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment
 - 29 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment
 - 144 Independent Battery
 - 53 Anti-Tank Battery
 - 54 Anti-Tank Battery
- Divisional Engineers
 - 20 Field Company
 - 23 Field Company
 - 37 Field Park
- No. 1 Signals Company
- Army Service Corps
 - 4 ASC Company
 - 16 ASC Company
 - 10 Reserve Mechanical Transport Company
- Medical
 - 7 Field Ambulance
 - 22 Field Ambulance
 - 4 General Hospital

ORBAT: 3rd (NZ) Division



3 NZ DIV

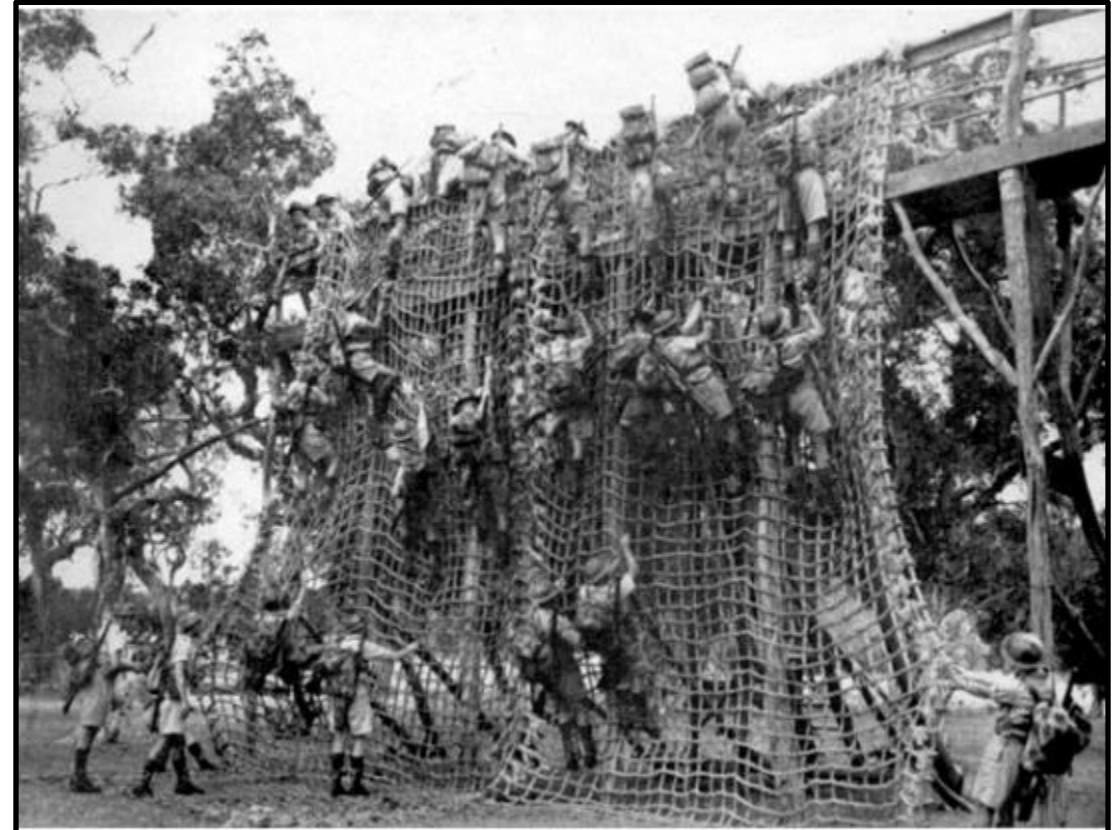


New Zealand soldiers during amphibious training, Pacific area, during World War II. New Zealand. Ref: WH-0724-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. [/records/22777107](https://records.alexanderturnbull.govt.nz/records/22777107)

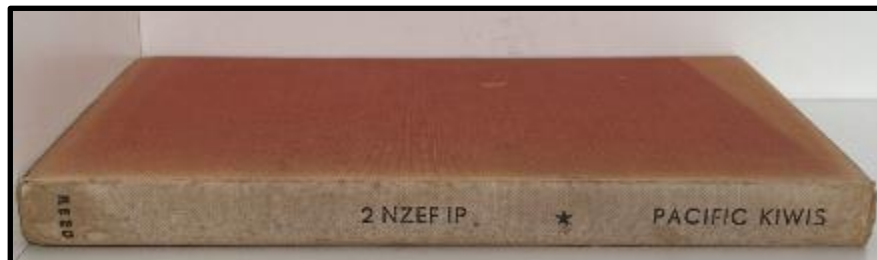
Training (NZ) and initial deployment (to New Caledonia)



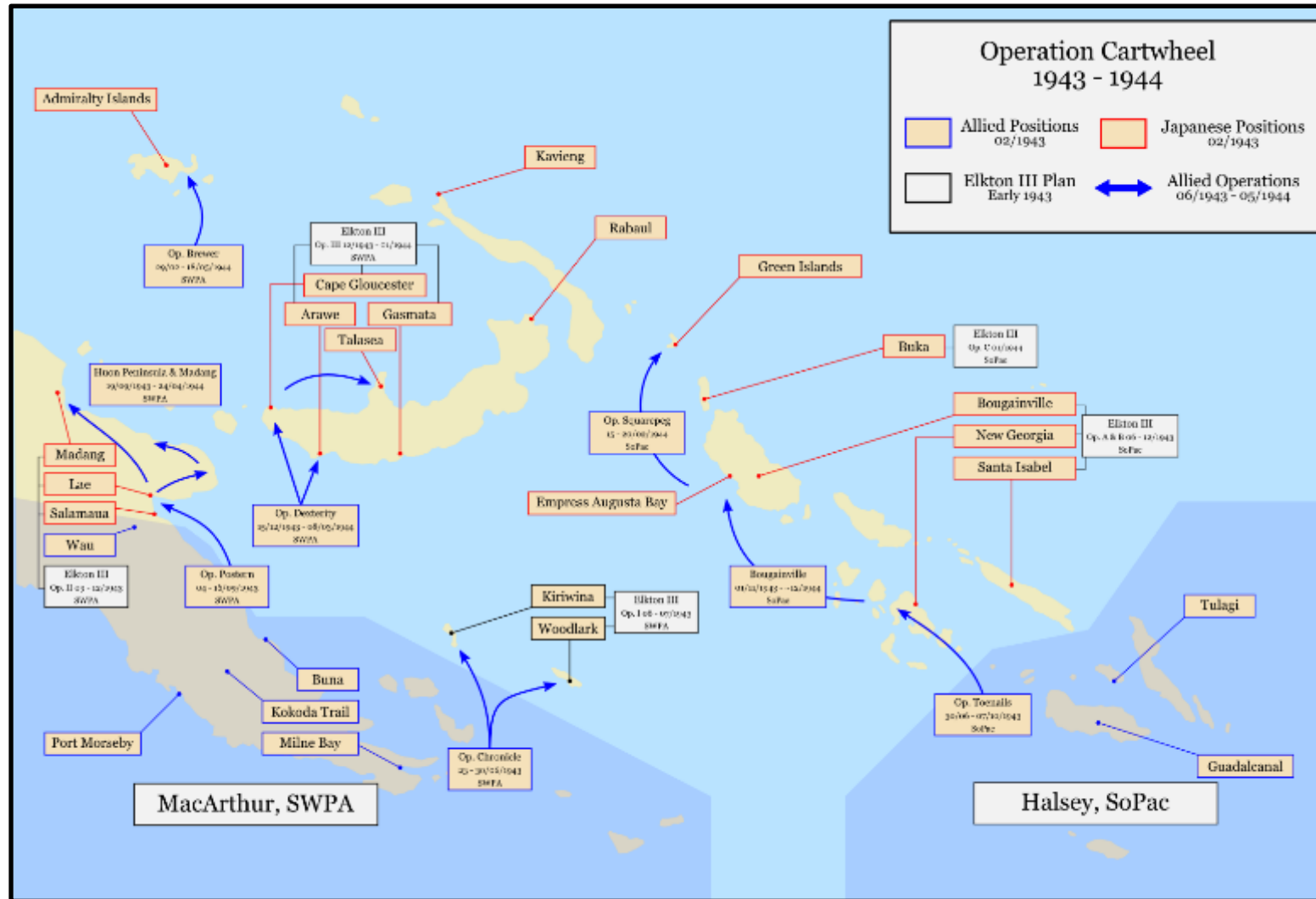
THIRD DIVISION MANOEUVRES IN NEW ZEALAND
Mud in the Kaimai Ranges



EMBARKATION PRACTICE ON HMS NIAOULI
EMBARKATION PRACTICE ON HMS NIAOULI



Operation Cartwheel 1943-44



Vella Lavella: 15 August- 6 October 1943



READY FOR EMBARKATION AT KUKUM BEACH, GUADALCANAL
before sailing for Vella Lavella. In the background is a Landing Ship (Tank)

Vella Lavella: 21 September 1943



The heavily wooded island of Vella Lavella, scene of 3 Division's first action in the Solomons. Flat-bottomed landing craft carried units of 14 Brigade from bay to bay round the coast

Troops of 3 (NZ) Division on Vella Lavella Island, Solomon Islands. New Zealand.
Ref: WH-0213-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. [/records/22905390](https://records/22905390)

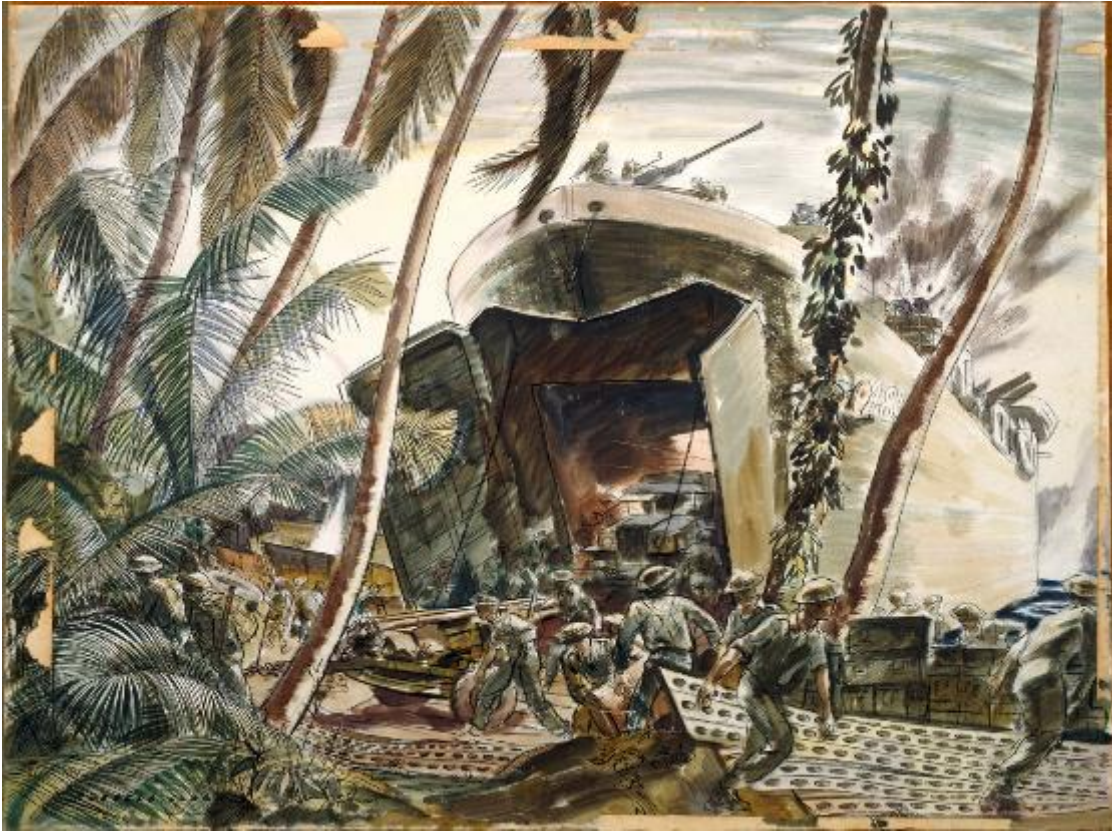
14 Brigade: 47 KIA, 36 WIA

Treasury Islands; 27 October – 12 November 1943 (Operation GOODTIME)



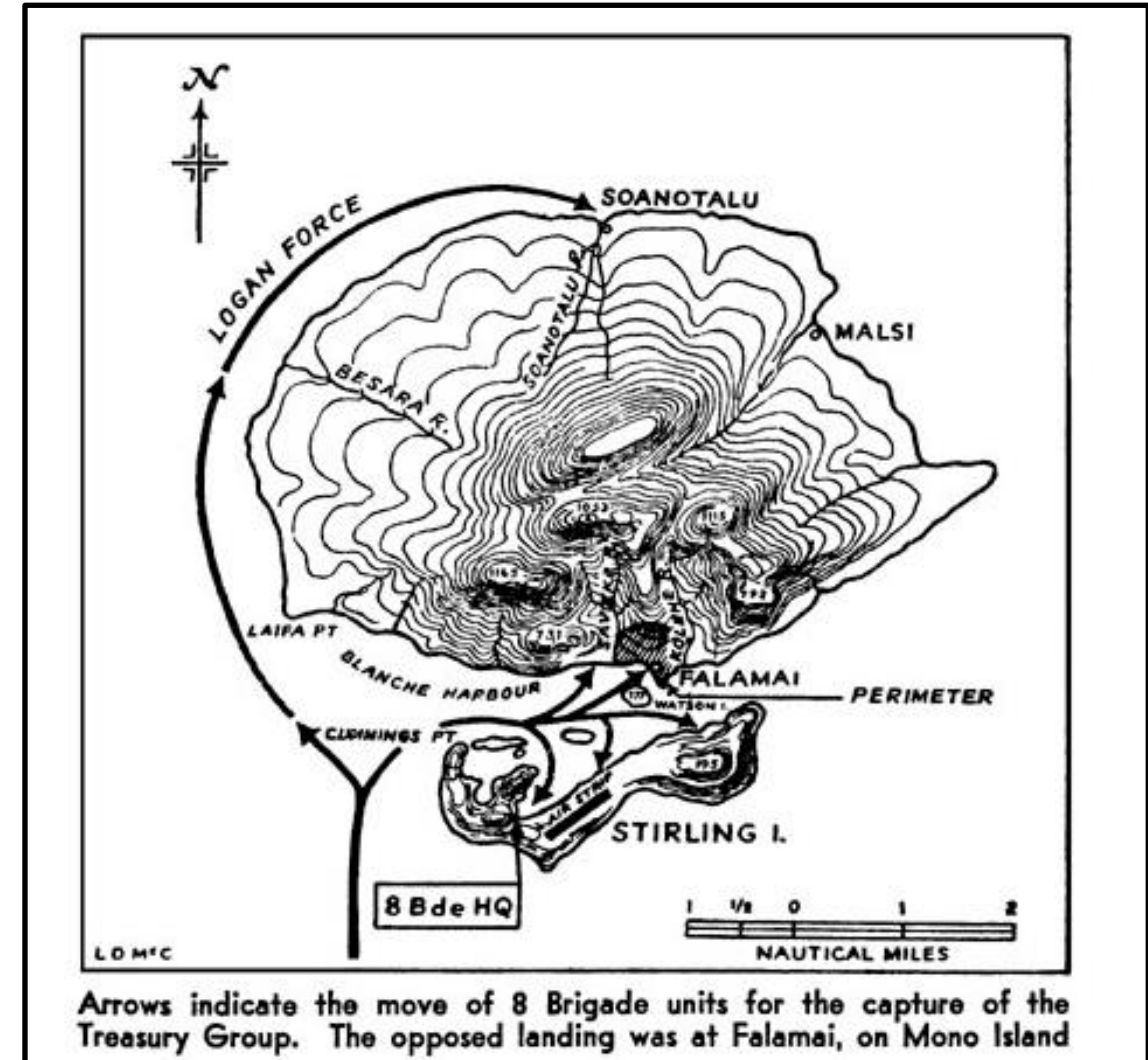
LANDING CRAFT (INFANTRY) OF THE INVASION CONVOY AT
GUADALCANAL loading for the attack on Treasury Islands

Treasury Islands; 27 October- 12 November 1943



Landing ships under fire, Treasury Island (3rd NZ Division), 27 October 1943 painted by Russell Clark

30 KIA (21 NZ, 9 US) 85 WIA (70 NZ, 15 US)

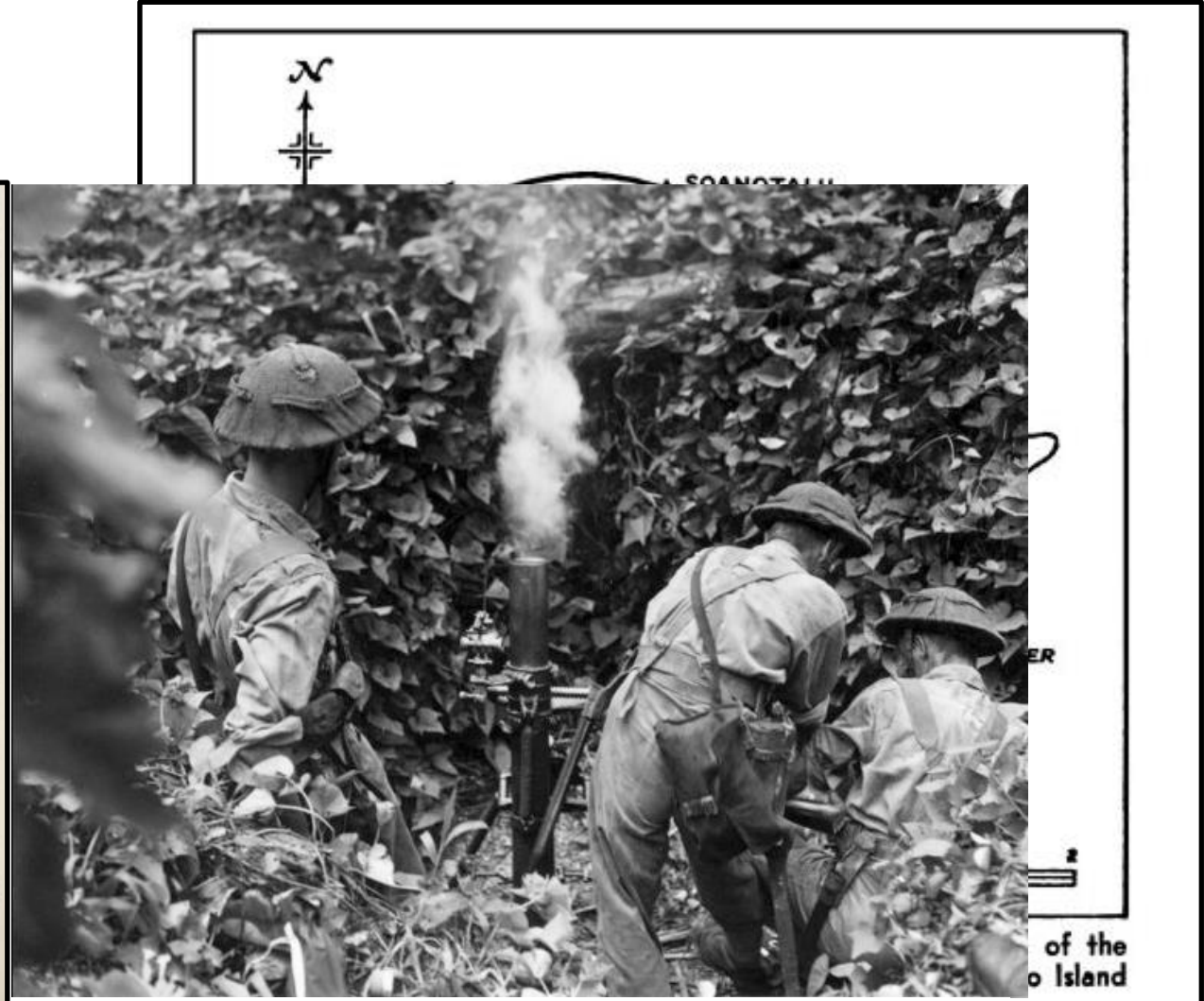


Treasury Islands; 27 October- 12 November 1943



The 8 NZ Brigade group lands on one of the Treasury Islands, 27 October 1943. Note the LCI on the beach between Orange 1 and Orange 2, Mono Island, in the background. The 29 NZ Battalion prepares to attack Japanese positions ashore. A dead New Zealand soldier lies in the foreground. War Photo Collection, Wellington, New Zealand. (New Zealand War Photo Library, Wellington, F-41854-1/2).

30 KIA (21 NZ, 9 US) 85 WIA (70 NZ, 15 US)



NZ Mortars in action Mono Island

Nissan (Green) Islands: recon/raid - 30/31 January 1944

Troops from the 30th Battalion, 3rd New Zealand Division paint their faces black as they prepare on an American warship for a raid into Japanese held Nissan Island (Green Island) on 30 January 1944.



LANDING CRAFT (INFANTRY) OF THE INVASION CONVOY AT GUADALCANAL loading for the attack on Treasury Islands



Photo from the Alexander Turnbull Library.
Colourised by Daniel Rarity.

https://www.reddit.com/r/newzealand/comments/mbo_bkc/kiwi_troops_from_the_30th_battalion_3rd_new/

Nissan (Green) Islands: recon/raid - 30/31 January 1944

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Nissan/ Green Islands (Operation SQUAREPEG)



Off the Green Islands, U.S. Navy gunners fire at Japanese aircraft as one of the enemy planes splashes down nearby, in a painting by New Zealand combat artist Allan Barns-Graham. In an early D-Day strike, 15 Japanese dive bombers attacked Operation Squarepeg's invasion convoy, scoring no serious hits while losing six aircraft.

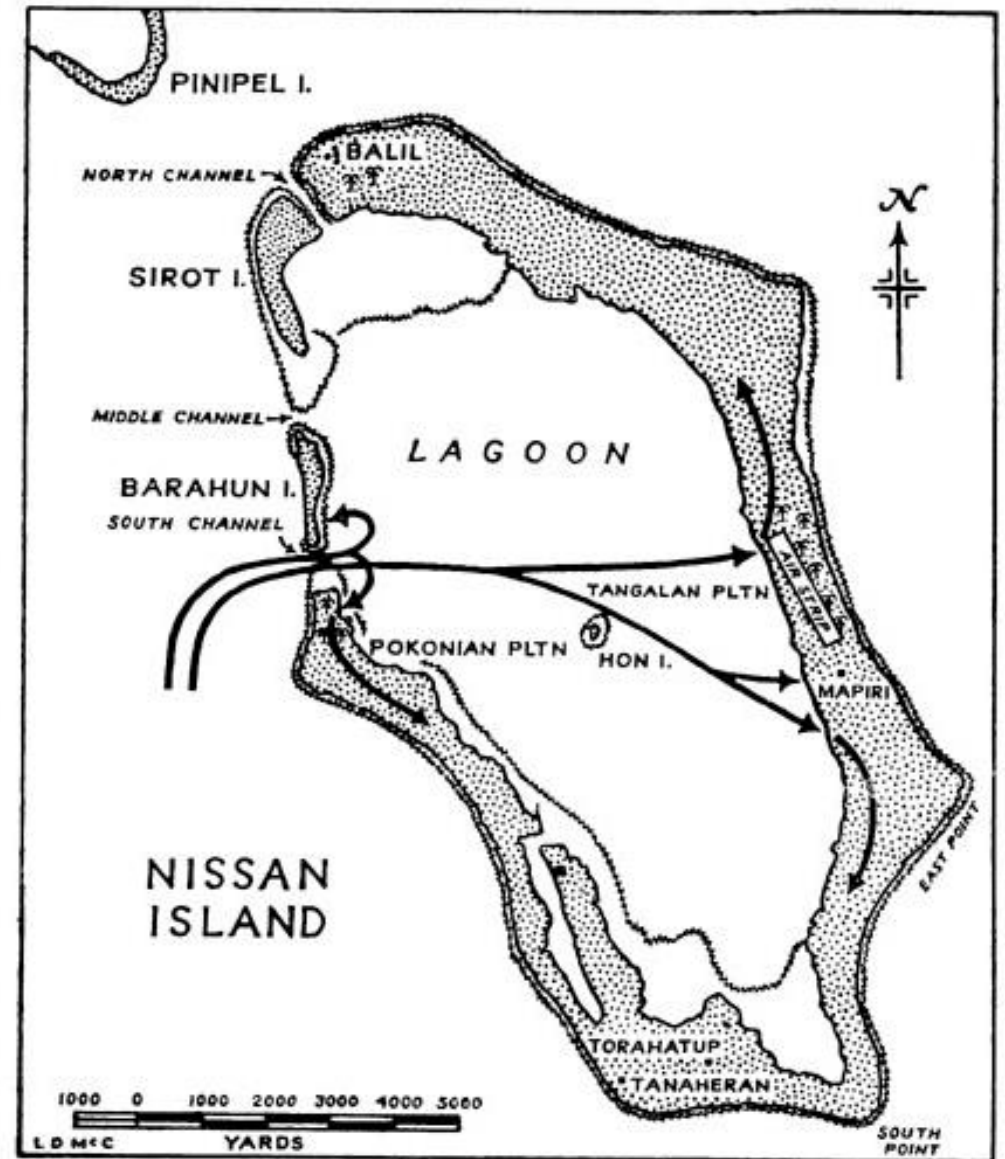
ARCHIVES NEW ZEALAND

Nissan Islands- landing- 15 Feb 44



LANDING CRAFT FILLED WITH ASSAULT TROOPS ENTERING THE LAGOON AT NISSAN ISLAND. Barrage balloons on heavy landing craft prevent attack by Japanese aircraft

Landing craft filled with assault troops entering the lagoon at Nissan Island. Barrage balloons on heavy landing craft prevent attack by Japanese aircraft



Nissan Island, largest of the Green Islands Group, was an oval of solid coral. Arrows indicate the movement of 14 Brigade battalions. Divisional Headquarters opened in Pokonian Plantation and then moved to the small bay above Torahatup

Nissan Islands- landing- 15 Feb 44

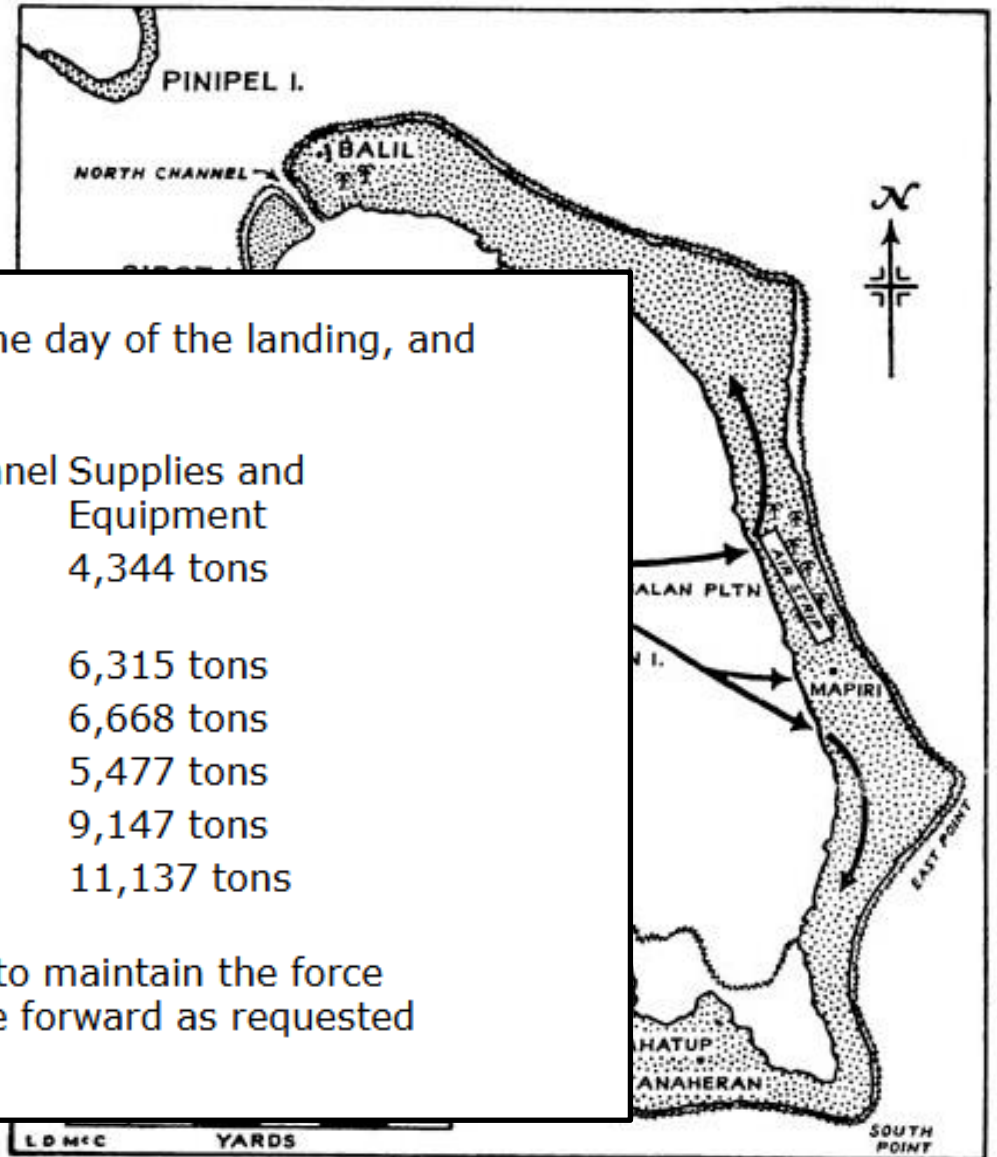


Landing craft filled with assault troops entering the lagoon at Nissan Island. Barrage balloons on heavy landing craft prevent attack by Japanese aircraft

¹ The force was built up between 15 Feb. the day of the landing, and 17 Mar in echelons as under:

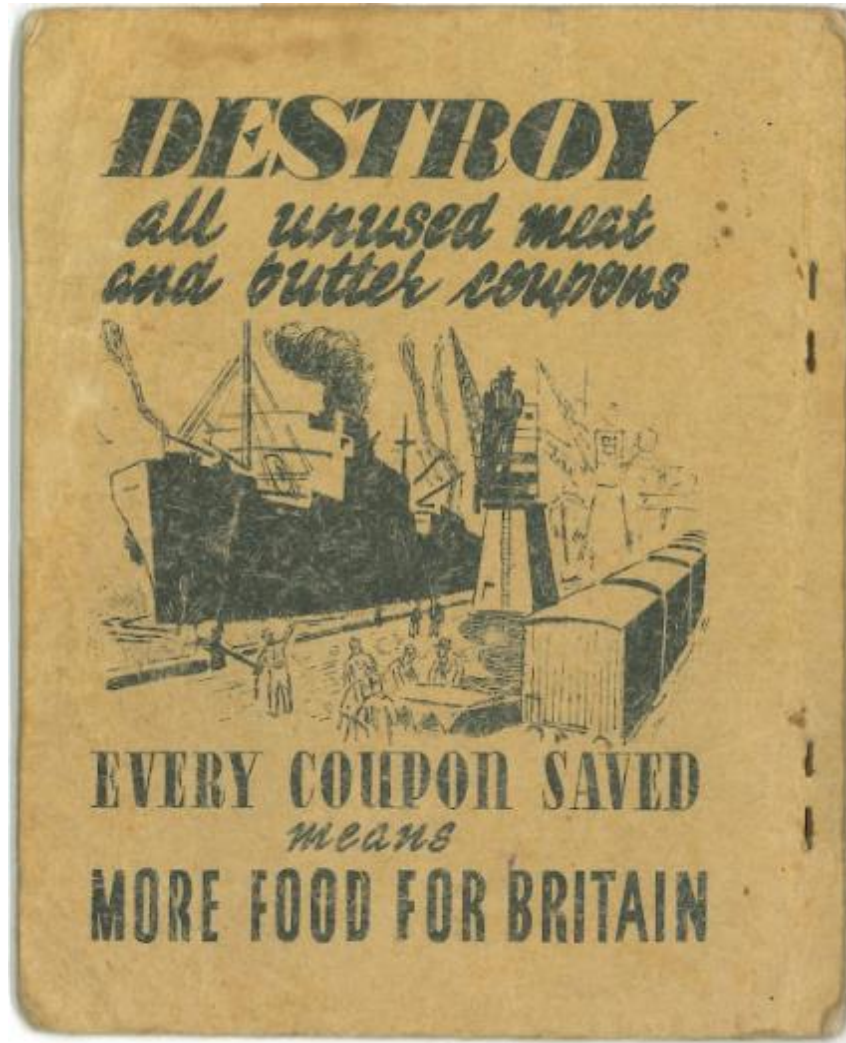
Echelon	Landing Craft	Personnel	Supplies and Equipment
First	8 APDs, 13 LCIs, 7 LSTs, 6 LCTs	5,806	4,344 tons
Second	8 APDs, 2 LCIs, 11 LSTs	4,715	6,315 tons
Third	10 LSTs, 3 LCIs	2,577	6,668 tons
Fourth	10 LSTs, 1 LCI	1,048	5,477 tons
Fifth	10 LSTs, 1 Cargo	1,127	9,147 tons
Sixth	5 LSTs, 3 Cargo	1,175	11,137 tons
Seventh			

These echelons brought sufficient supplies to maintain the force over a stated period, after which they came forward as requested but not at regular intervals.



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New Zealand domestic challenges, priorities and decisions



Ration book, World War Two. 1940s. Ephemera Collection.



The division is disbanded

- Withdrawn to New Caledonia in June 1944
- Returned to New Zealand August 1944
- Formally disbanded 20 October 1944
 - Some 4,000 veterans transferred to 2 (NZ) Division in Italy



3 DIV trucks and armoured vehicles at main Ordnance Depot, Mangere on their return from the Pacific in 1944. ATL image.

<https://rnzaoc.com/2024/09/05/bringing-the-3rd-new-zealand-division-home-the-unheralded-triumph-of-new-zealands-greatest-military-reverse-logistics-operation/>

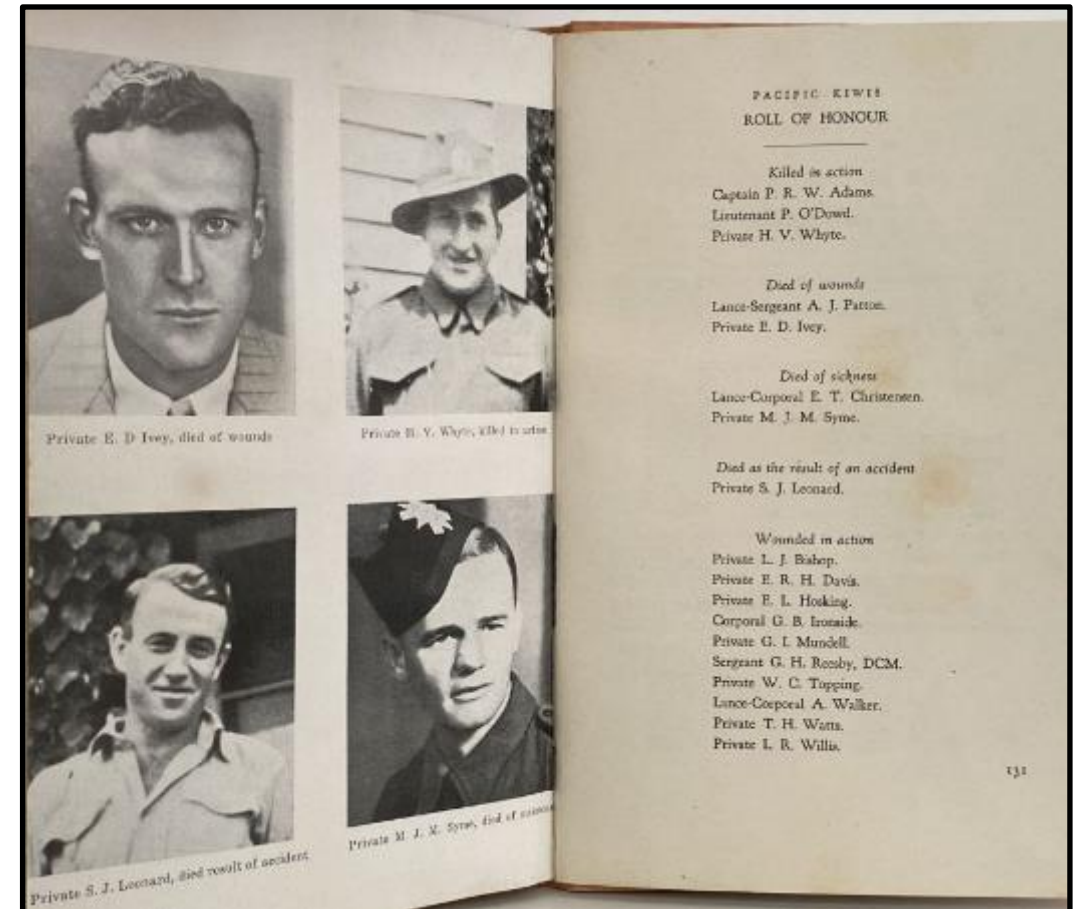
3 (NZ) Division Casualties



Bourail cemetery, New Caledonia

3 (NZ) Div: 97 KIA and 189 WIA. Also 34 fatal NBCAS, including 16 from tropical diseases.

- Reg Newell, *Pacific Star: 3 NZ Division in the South Pacific in World War II*, 2015, p. 195

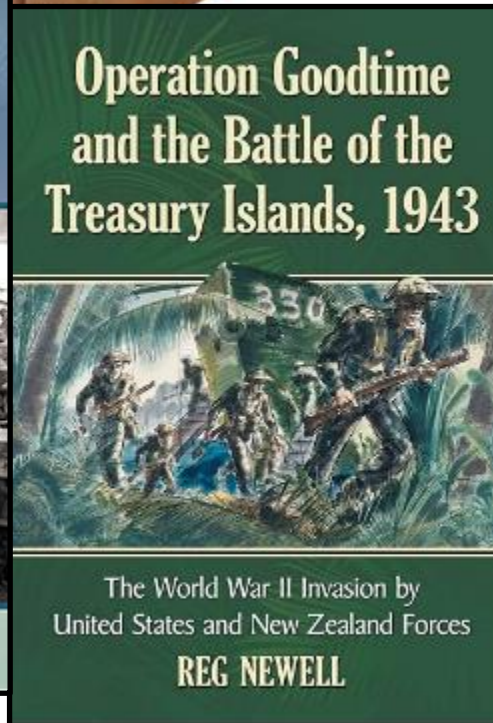
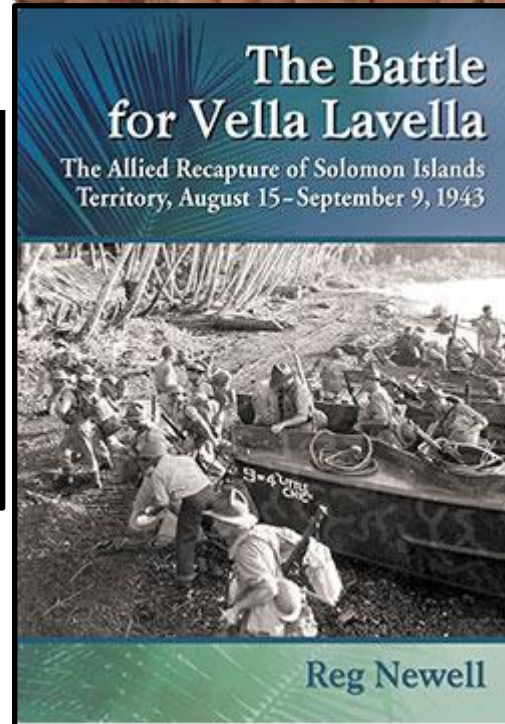
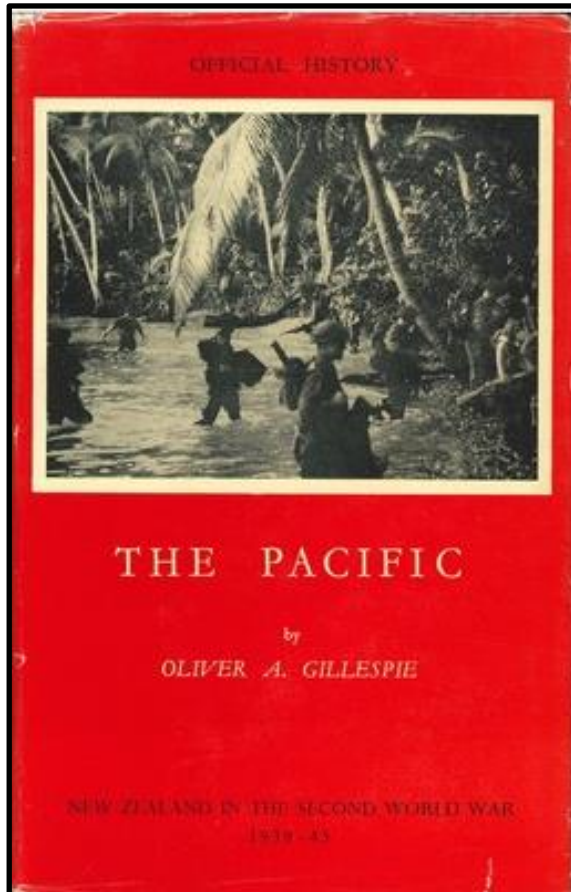


Observations



Brigade training on Treasury Island, Solomon Islands. Major John Marshall (a future NZ Prime Minister) pointing something out to the rest of the group. Taken by an unidentified photographer, circa 1943. World War 1914-1918, World War 1939-1945, occupation of Japan, Korean War, and Malayan Emergency. Ref: WH-0558. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. </records/22718613>

Remembering the Pacific Campaign



Questions?

