

U.S. Army Military History Institute
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Australia

U.S. ARMY IN AUSTRALIA, WWII

A Working Bibliography of MHI Sources

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Lists WWII US bases in Australia.

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Describes major US commands in Australia.

U.S. War Dept. Adjutant General's Office. Directory and Station List..., 1942-45. Overseas edition. UA26.A1.S72.

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Pt I: WWII Operation. Series B: Pacific Theater. Microfilm by UPA, 1993. 24 reels.
D769.25.U552Microfilm.

Includes published guide. See especially. Reel 1.

U.S. Service of Supply. Special Service Division. A Pocket Guide to Australia. Wash, DC: US War &
Navy Departments, 1942. 48 p. U113.3.A8.P62.

And of 1943 & 1944 editions.

See also:

Personal papers (Arch) of Leslie Anders (concerning General E.F. Harding); Harry Baird, Stephen J. Chamberlin; William Gill; Hargis Westerfield (41st Infantry Division); Charles Willoughby (key MacArthur staffer); and Bibliographies on WWII-SWPA and MacArthur; also WWII Veterans Survey holdings on the 32nd & 41st Infantry Divisions.

NOTE: U.S. INFLUENCE ON AUSTRALIAN ARMY, WWII

US Army doctrine of the World War II-era appears in field manuals on the use of cavalry, field artillery, and infantry, as well as those on the individual soldier, basic weapons, jungle warfare, field service regulations, and staff officers. See List and Index of War Department Publications: Field Manual 21-6, 10 Oct 1946 and particularly the Oct 1939, May 1941 and Jun 1944 editions of FM 100-5, Field Service Regulations: Operations.

Conventional wisdom would lead one to believe that tactics were influenced by pre-war Pacific strategy, which itself was largely a naval responsibility. The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps led the U.S. Army in the development of both amphibious and guerrilla warfare doctrine. The key documents are probably these:

U.S. Marine Corps. Small Wars Manual, United States Marine Corps, 1940. Wash, DC: GPO, 1940. 15 chap. U24.U6.

U.S. Navy. Landing-Force Manual, United States Navy, 1938. Wash, DC: GPO, 1941. 19 chaps. VD16.A4.

For the background of the US Army's strategy in the Pacific, see Louis Morton's Strategy and Command: The First Two Years (Wash, DC: CMH, 1962; D763.A533v.2pt.10). He discusses the General Staff's plan for "an offensive war, primary naval," against Japan, known as Plan ORANGE (p. 29).

One would need to carefully read the above-cited Field Service Regulations to find any consideration given to the unique character of future war in the Pacific. (Note, however, that the 1941 edition included 6 paragraphs on jungle operations that were not covered in the earlier 1939 ed.) Apparently aware of such doctrinal deficiency, the Army published the following booklet in 1943, so that the unique Pacific experience could be considered when commanders consulted FM 100-5. See:

U.S. War Dept. Notes for Task Force Commands in Pacific Theaters. Wash, DC: GPO, 6 Feb 1943. 100 p. U165.U68.

Clearly delineates changes in tactics when fighting Japanese.

One may wish to consider a Japanese perspective, which would allow a comparison of Australians and Americans. As a launching point for this, see:

U.S. Dept of Army. OCMH. Guide to Japanese Monographs and Japanese Studies on Manchuria, 1945-60. Wash, DC, n.d. 282 p. D767.2.J36

Includes many studies of Japanese operations in the Southwest Pacific, with numerous references to American & Australian units. See index.

American observer board reports should be reviewed for comments on Australian Army training and operations. As an example of one pertinent report, see:

Epling, Fenton G. "Report on Australian Training Center, Jungle Warfare." Mimeo, U.S. Army Ground Forces Board, Southwest Pacific Area, 12 Dec 1943. 8 p. D767.U5-1942/45v.1, B-9.

Such items lead one to suspect the tide of influence may have been flowing from the Australians to the Americans as much as the reverse.

Finally, published histories and retired records of US units are excellent sources on tactics actually employed. For example, a brief comparison of American and Australian tactics is found in William F. McCartney's The Jungleers: A History of the 41st Infantry Division (Wash, DC: Infantry Journal Press, 1948; #05-41.1948). The McCartney quote appears on p. 321 of David Dexter's New Guinea Offensives (Canberra: War Memorial, 1961; D767.95.D4).