



HISTORY OF THE
SECOND WORLD WAR

*The War
against Japan*

Volume V

MAJOR-GENERAL S. WOODBURN KIRBY,
C.B., C.M.G., C.I.E., O.B.E., M.C.

with

BRIGADIER M. R. ROBERTS, D.S.O.
COLONEL G. T. WARDS, C.M.G., O.B.E.
AIR VICE-MARSHAL N. L. DESOER, C.B.E.

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THE WAR AGAINST JAPAN

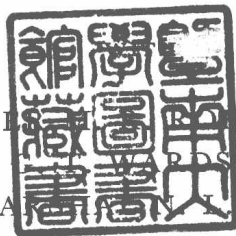
VOLUME V

The Surrender of Japan

BY

MAJOR-GENERAL S. WOODBURN KIRBY

C.B., C.M.G., C.I.E., O.B.E., M.C.



BRIGADIER-GENERAL ROBERTS, D.S.O.

COLONEL  C.M.G., O.B.E.

AIR VICE-MARSHAL H. DESOER, C.B.E.

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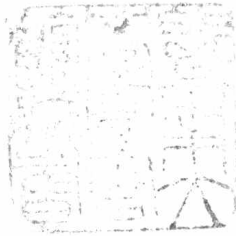
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HISTORY OF
THE SECOND WORLD WAR
UNITED KINGDOM MILITARY SERIES

Edited by SIR JAMES BUTLER



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

USED IN THE TEXT

A.C.S.E.A.	Air Command, South-East Asia.
A.F.N.E.I.	Allied Forces, Netherlands East Indies.
A.F.O.	Anti-Fascist Organization (in Burma).
A.F.P.F.L.	Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League (formerly A.F.O.).
A.F.V.	Armoured fighting vehicle.
Air O.P.	Air observation post (an army light aircraft used to spot for artillery).
A.L.F.S.E.A.	Allied Land Forces, South-East Asia.
B.N.A.	Burma National Army (Japanese-sponsored Burmese military organization).
C.A.S.(B.)	Civil Affairs Service (Burma).
C.C.A.O.	Chief Civil Affairs Officer.
C.I.G.S.	Chief of the Imperial General Staff.
D.U.K.W.	A wheeled amphibious vehicle.
E.A.	East African.
F.A.M.O.	Forward airfield maintenance organization.
F.M.A.	Field maintenance area.
I.M.B.	Independent mixed brigade (a Japanese formation equivalent to a British brigade group).
I.N.A.	Indian National Army (Japanese-sponsored military organization recruited from Indian nationals in Japanese-occupied territory).
I.W.T.	Inland Water Transport.
J.S.P.	Japanese surrendered personnel.
K.N.I.L.	Koninklijk Nederlands Indische Leger (Royal Netherlands Indian Army).
L.C.A.	Landing craft, assault.
L.C.G.(L.)	Landing craft, gun (large).
L.C.I.(L.)	Landing craft, infantry (large).
L.C.M.	Landing craft, mechanized.
L.C.S.	Landing craft, support.
L.C.T.	Landing craft, tank.
L.C.T.(R.)	Landing craft, tank (rocket).
L.M.G.	Light machine-gun.
L. of C.	Line of communication.
L.S.I.(M.)	Landing ship, infantry (medium).
L.S.M.	Landing ship, medium.
L.S.T.	Landing ship, tank
L.V.T.	Landing vehicle, tracked.
M.M.G.	Medium machine-gun.
N.C.A.C.	Northern Combat Area Command.

N.I.C.A.	Netherlands Indies Civil Affairs (Organization).
P.B.F.	Patriotic Burmese Forces (formerly B.N.A.).
P.O.L.	Petrol, oil and lubricants.
R.A.A.F.	Royal Australian Air Force.
R.A.M.O.	Rear airfield maintenance organization.
R.A.P.W.I.	Recovery of Allied Prisoners-of-War and Internees.
R.A.S.C.	Royal Army Service Corps.
S.A.C.S.E.A.	Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia.
S.E.A.C.	South-East Asia Command.
S.P.	Self-propelled (artillery on tank mountings).
T.R.I.	Tentera Repoeblik Indonesia (Indonesian Republican Army).
U.S.A.A.F.	United States Army Air Force.
V.C.P.	Visual control post (accompanied forward army units to direct aircraft in the air on to targets by ground-to-air radio-telephone).
W.A.	West African.

INTRODUCTION

THIS fifth and last volume of the history of *The War against Japan* is written in four parts. The first covers the operations in the South-East Asia Theatre from the reoccupation of Rangoon in the first week of May 1945 until the Japanese surrender on the 15th August. During this period the Japanese *28th Army* became isolated in the Pegu Yomas and made its dramatic effort to break out, aided by *33rd Army* on the Sittang River. South-East Asia Command's plans for the invasion of Malaya are given in some detail since this was to have been the only large-scale amphibious operation undertaken by the command. These plans are, too, of particular interest to students of war since the problems involved were intricate, distances were great and the resources available barely adequate. The Japanese plans for the defence of Malaya and Singapore are also given so that the reader can come to his own conclusion on the probable course of the operation had it been opposed.

The second part covers the operations in the Pacific from March 1945 till the Japanese surrender in August. It outlines the Japanese plan for the defence of the inner ring, which included Formosa, the Ryukyu Islands, China, Korea, Manchuria and the Japanese mainland, and then goes on to describe in detail the battle for Okinawa in which the Japanese garrison fought to the death while *Kamikaze* aircraft made an all-out attempt to force the huge concentration of Allied shipping standing off the island to withdraw. Two chapters are then devoted to operations in the South-West Pacific and Borneo, and to the events which brought the China 'Incident' to an end. These are followed by chapters dealing with the American plan for the invasion of Kyushu (the most southerly of the main islands forming the Japanese homeland) and the Japanese plan for its defence, the intensified air attacks on Japanese cities, the mining of ports and exits from the Inland Sea and the close blockade by the American and British Pacific Fleets, which led to almost complete economic chaos in Japan.

Succeeding chapters describe the efforts of the Japanese peace party to persuade the national leaders to conclude a negotiated peace, and those of the President of the United States to bring the war to an end without undertaking a costly invasion of Japan. The Potsdam Conference, held after the defeat of Germany, is described insofar as it affected the Far East and it is shown how the Potsdam

Declaration defining unconditional surrender in relation to Japan came to be drawn up and issued. The Russian invasion of Manchuria and the Kurile Islands is then described, as are the events leading up to the signature on the 14th August 1945 of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between the Chinese Nationalist and Russian Governments, a treaty which Russia was soon to violate. The second part of the volume is brought to its end by a chapter discussing the effects of the receipt of the Potsdam Declaration in Tokyo, of the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and of the Russian declaration of war, the three events which finally broke the power of the members of the military clique who had brought Japan into the war and led to her acceptance of the Allied terms, her surrender and the end of the Second World War.

The third part deals with post-war operations in South-East Asia and the problems that arose with the sudden addition of about 1½ million square miles of territory with some 128 million inhabitants to Mountbatten's already large operational area, and successive chapters describe the rescue of Allied prisoners-of-war and internees, the occupation of south-eastern Burma, Malaya, Hong Kong, Siam, Indo-China, Java, Sumatra, Borneo and Celebes and their eventual handover to the appropriate civil governments or foreign military authorities. It ends with the winding-up of South-East Asia Command, which was completed in November 1946.

The fourth part is a review of the five volumes of the series with an analysis of the causes of the war and of the early disasters, and of the steps taken which eventually led to the overwhelming Allied victory.

We are indebted to Admiral of the Fleet The Earl Mountbatten of Burma, Field-Marshal Viscount Slim, General Sir Montagu Stopford, General Sir Philip Christison, General Sir Robert Mansergh and many other officers too numerous to mention by name who have been good enough to read our drafts and send us their comments. We are grateful to Colonel S. Nishiura and his colleagues, War History Office, Defence Agency, Tokyo, for information from Japanese sources and for photographs and research carried out on our behalf in Japan. We have had the advantage of using the Admiralty Staff History of the War against Japan written by Major G. S. Goldingham, R.M., the Administrative Narratives written by Brigadier M. Henry of the Cabinet Office Historical Section, and the narratives prepared by Squadron-Leader W. M. Gould and Mr. D. Craik of the Air Historical Branch, Air Ministry. The quotations from *Blackwood's Magazine* and the *Journal of the Royal Artillery* are reproduced by the kind permission of *Blackwood's Magazine* and the Secretary, Royal Artillery Institution, Woolwich.

Our thanks are due to the Cabinet Office Mapping Section under

Colonel T. M. M. Penney, in particular to Mr. A. E. Kelleway who drew the excellent maps and sketches for this volume and a major proportion of those in the preceding volumes, and to Mrs. S. M. Harris for her secretarial assistance.

Finally we wish to put on record our great appreciation of the outstanding work, including meticulous research, of Miss M. M. Baird M.A. in connection with all the five volumes of this series.

S.W.K.

M.R.R.

G.T.W.

N.L.D.

Note by the Editor

Major-General S. Woodburn Kirby died, after a long illness, on the 19th July 1968. He had looked forward eagerly to seeing the public appearance of this volume, the completion of the work on which he had been engaged for eighteen strenuous years. That, unfortunately, was not to be; but he had at least the satisfaction of receiving a copy of the volume in book proof a few days before his death.

J.R.M.B.

THE WAR AGAINST JAPAN

Volume IV

CORRECTIONS

Page 70, lines 2-3:

For '1st October 1st Australian Corps (Lieut.-General Sir Leslie Morshead)' read '2nd October 1st Australian Army (Lieut.-General V. A. H. Sturdee)'.

Page 70, para. 2, line 12:

For 'Australian' read 'American'.

Page 70, para. 2, line 16:

For 'another heavy' read a 'a light'.

Page 139, line 3 from bottom:

For '2nd' read '1st'.

Page 140, line 1:

For '1st' read '2nd'.

Page 140, line 6 from bottom:

For '2nd' read '1st'.

Page 152, para. 2, line 4:

After 'Dimlo' insert³.

Page 152, para. 2, line 6:

Delete ³.

Page 152, fn. 3, line 2:

For '1/1st' read '2/1st'.

Page 211, fn. 4:

For 'three cruisers' read 'four cruisers'.

Page 212, para. 2, line 5:

For 'twenty-four' read 'twenty-six'.

Page 212, para. 3, line 9:

For 'four cruisers and eight destroyers' read 'three cruisers and five destroyers'.

Page 217, line 8:

For '(Brigadier H. Gibbons)' read '(Ricketts)'.

Page 228, para. 3, line 1:

For 'also formed' read 'ordered'.

Page 270, para. 3, line 3:

After 'battalion' insert³, and add footnote '3 Naik Fazal Din, 7/10th Baluch Regiment, won the Victoria Cross during this action'.

Page 270, last line:

Change ³ to ⁴.

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