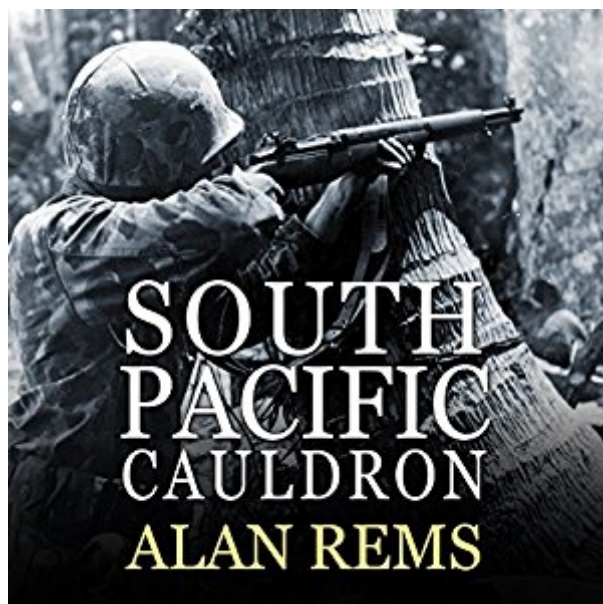


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South Pacific Cauldron: World War II's Great Forgotten Battlegrounds



Synopsis

South Pacific Cauldron is the first complete history embracing all land, sea, and air operations in the Pacific War. Unlike most other World War II accounts, this work covers the South Pacific operations in detail. The audiobook includes many now-forgotten operations that deserve to be well remembered. Significantly, the official Australian history of World War II correctly observed that Australia's part in the Pacific war is barely mentioned in American histories. This volume finally brings the major Australian contribution to the fore. The dramatis personae could hardly be improved upon, including brilliant and imperious General Douglas MacArthur, audacious and profane Admiral William "Bull" Halsey, and bibulous and indelicate Australian General Thomas Blamey. As for the fighting men, many of their stories are captured in accounts of the actions for which they were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, Victoria Cross, and other decorations for valor.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

For the most part this is an excellent introduction to one of the bloodiest, yet least remembered, theaters of World War II. If there is any criticism, it is that Rems tried to cover too much - after all, there are books about PORTIONS of the Guadalcanal campaign, whereas it's only one chapter here. But there are no knocks on Rems's prose, as it is clear, informative, and insightful. The personalities, and how they interacted, are also colorful, as might be expected of a colonial backwater - Halsey, MacArthur, and the ANZAC commanders tapdance around each other in

struggles over strategy and superiority, and not always to good end. It is the fighting men, though, who are the true stars - an astonishing number of CMH's and VC's were handed out, often for acts of supreme sacrifice - and yet I dare anyone outside of professional geographers to even remember the many places where they fought and died. And sometime for reasons that are very much less than clear.

This book about one of the more obscure campaigns in WWII reads smoothly and quickly as we follow the campaign to drive the Japanese out of the South Pacific. The author's style and inclusion of sufficient detail permits the reader to feel involved in the progress even though the end is not in doubt after the first chapter. Highly recommended.

If you like military histories, I think you will like this book. The author writes clearly about the various phases of the South Pacific campaigns. He has a very good sense of command issues (split commands, commands of another nation's troops and "force command" problems) and how objectives were set in this theater. The author's evaluations of the high commanders (e.g., MacArthur, Nimitz, and the Australian General Blimey) confirmed what I had long suspected. Overall, a very good summary of this part of World War II.

A most impressive book; exceptionally well written. There are several things that stand out among all great books, which I think this is. It has good flow, taking in all key points: Accounts of good guys and bad guys; successes and failures at the micro and macro, details of screw ups, then equally of brilliance in decisiveness and of leadership. One thing that really stands out is your economy of wording, which makes the writing succinct, allowing the reader to get to the point with a quick understanding of issues. A second stand-out feature in the book was presentation in an understandable manner, thus untangling the many complicated military-political squabbles and struggles for supremacy among the allied leaders, along with illuminations of plain mule-headedness. This account surfaces important events that somehow slipped into the dust bin of history. Additionally, it adds spice and perspective to the story by including the many instances of exaggeration and misinformation in after-action reporting.

Great insight into the areas of the War I the Pacific that weren't headline grabbers. Intricacies of allies working or not working together. Good read for history buffs!

I'm still reading this book. I love it. It has history I have never heard of. It also explains some of the political in fighting at the higher ranks. I never liked Douglas Mac Arthur and this book proved to me I was right. I have a neighbor who served in the USMC on Bougainville (wrong spelling) now I know why at 95 years he is so tough. Semper Fi

The book has a lot of good information in it related to the military units that fought in the Southwest Pacific Command area. The problem I had with it was that there was not the detail I expected. Wrong thought by me as to what I expected. The book was pretty good as to what went on with the fighting and the islands where the different units fought and some of the naval action. The author did a good job writing the book, as it has been 70 years since these military campaigns were fought. Overall, it was a good read but not as good as I had hoped.

Alan Rems has added a significant contribution to the recorded history of World War II with this study of the joint and combined campaigns in a region mostly ignored by military history. His work is extensively researched and well written. It focuses heavily on the naval aspects as one might expect from a naval historian, and provides insights into the conflicts among commanders of naval, ground and air forces, as well as allied commanders--primarily Australian. Having praised the book and recommending it to readers, I must point out where I was disappointed. I hoped to find more about the pilots in the cockpits of the Cactus Air Force and the army and marine grunts in the most adverse conditions. I hoped to see more of the order of battle for US forces. And most of all I wanted to read the details of the end of the South Pacific Campaign with the battles for the Philippines. Mostly, the Philippines received only lip service, completely ignoring the guerrilla forces that fought to hang on for four years until MacArthur's return. To me that is the most glaring deficiency.

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