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978-1-107-01732-0 - The Hard Slog: Australians in the Bougainville Campaign, 1944–45

Karl James

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THE HARD SLOG  
AUSTRALIANS IN THE BOUGAINVILLE  
CAMPAIGN, 1944–45

The island of Bougainville in the South Pacific was the site of one of the largest and most gruelling campaigns fought by Australian forces during the Second World War. During the offensive against the Japanese from November 1944 to August 1945, more than 500 Australians were killed and two Victoria Crosses were awarded. A veteran later described Bougainville as ‘one long bloody hard slog’. Despite this, little is known about the campaign, which was dismissed as an unnecessary and costly operation.

In the first major study of the Bougainville campaign since publication of the official history in 1963, Karl James argues that it was in fact a justifiable use of Australia’s military resources. He draws on original archival research, including wartime reports and soldiers’ letters and diaries, to illustrate the experience of Australian soldiers who fought in the campaign. James shows that it fulfilled the Australian Government’s long-standing plans for victory in the Second World War.

Generously illustrated with more than forty photographs, this important book tells the story of a campaign often overlooked or ignored in Australia’s military history.

**Karl James** is Senior Historian in the Military History Section at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

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# THE HARD SLOG

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For my grandparents Doug (N265505) and Coral James,  
Tom and Nan (W/193451) McLaughlin,  
and their generation who fought the Second World War

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AAWFA	Australians at War Film Archive
ADC	<i>aide-de-camp</i>
AIB	Allied Intelligence Bureau
AIF	Australian Imperial Force
ANGAU	Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit
ANZAC	Australian New Zealand Army Corps
Arty	artillery
Aust	Australian
AWM	Australian War Memorial
Bde	brigade
Bn	battalion
Brig	brigadier
CARO	Central Army Records Office
Comd	commander
Coy	company
CPD	Commonwealth Parliament Debates
Div	division
DSO	Distinguished Service Order
Fwd	Forward
GOC	General Officer Commanding
Inf	infantry
Lt-Col	Lieutenant-Colonel
Maj	Major
NAA	National Archives of Australia
NCO	non-commissioned officer
NGIB	New Guinea Infantry Battalion
NLA	National Library of Australia
PIB	Papuan Infantry Battalion
RNZAF	Royal New Zealand Air Force
SWPA	South West Pacific Area

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