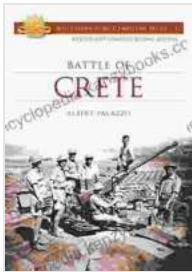


The Battle of Crete: A Pivotal Moment in the Australian Army's History

The Battle of Crete was a significant engagement in the Australian Army's history. Fought from 20 May to 1 June 1941, the battle saw Australian troops defend the island of Crete against a German invasion. Despite their valiant efforts, the Australians were eventually forced to evacuate, but their actions played a key role in delaying the German advance and giving the Allies time to prepare for future battles.



The Battle of Crete (Australian Army Campaigns Series Book 1) by Albert Palazzo

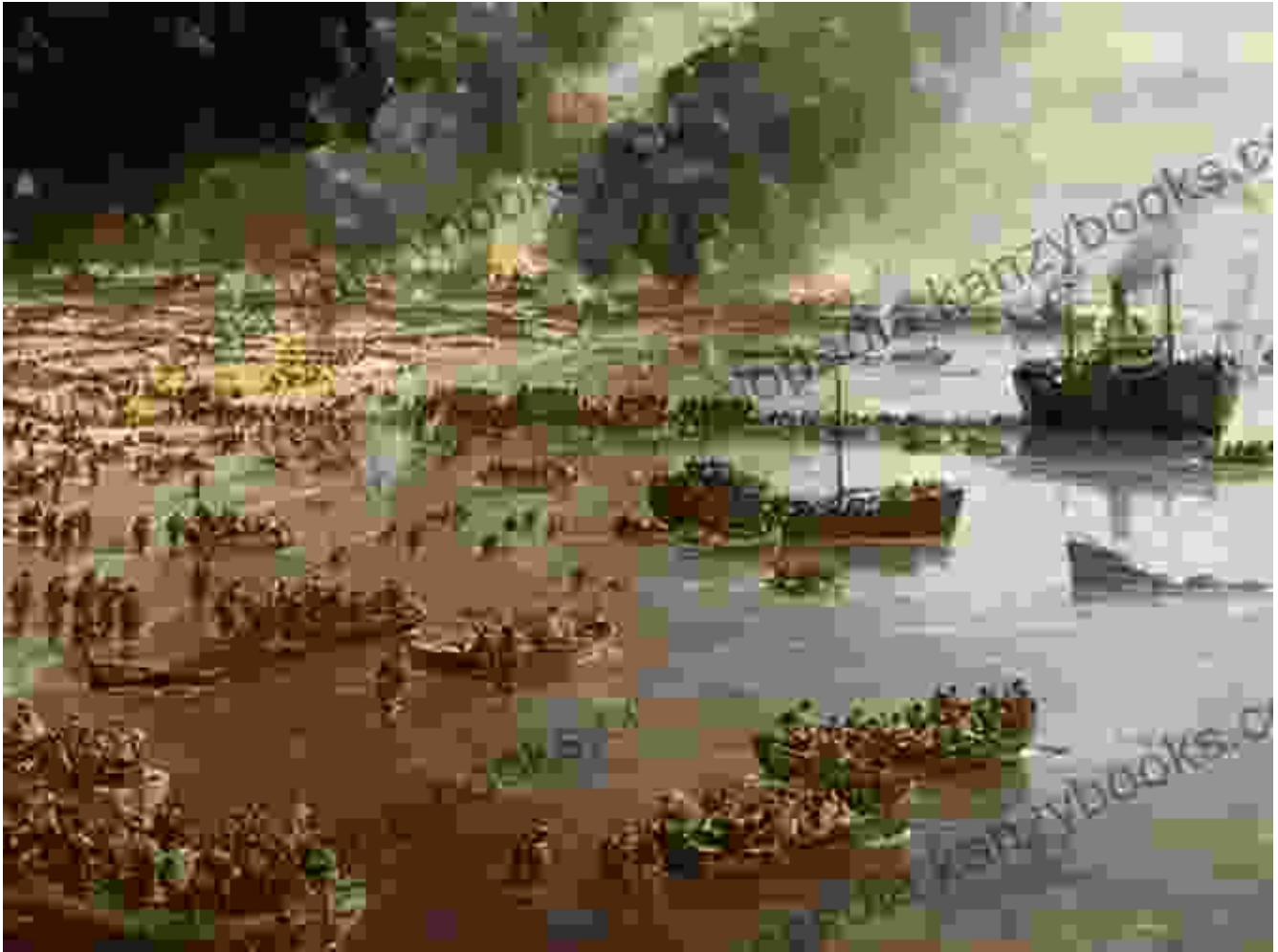
★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 10221 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting: Enabled
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Print length : 184 pages

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Australian troops in action during the Battle of Crete. (Australian War Memorial)

Prelude to War

The Battle of Crete was part of Nazi Germany's Operation Barbarossa, which aimed to conquer the Soviet Union. The Germans planned to capture Crete to use as a base for operations against the Soviets. The Allies, including Australia, were determined to prevent this and sent troops to defend the island.

The Australian contingent arrived on Crete in early April 1941. The Australian force, known as the 6th Division, comprised 18,000 men. They were joined by British, New Zealand, and Greek troops.

The Invasion

The German invasion of Crete began on 20 May 1941, with an airborne assault by paratroopers. The Australian troops were initially caught off guard but quickly rallied and fought back fiercely.



German paratroopers prepare to land on Crete. (Bundesarchiv)

The fighting was intense, and the Australians suffered heavy losses. However, they managed to hold the Germans back for several days, giving

the Allies time to evacuate their troops.

The Evacuation

On 28 May, the Allies began to evacuate their troops from Crete. The Australians were among the last to leave, and they fought a desperate rearguard action to cover the evacuation.



Australian troops board a ship during the evacuation of Crete. (Australian War Memorial)

The evacuation was successful, and the Allies managed to save over 50,000 troops. However, the Australians had paid a high price, with over 6,000 casualties.

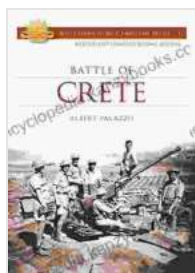
Aftermath

The Battle of Crete was a tactical defeat for the Allies, but it had a significant strategic impact. The German invasion of Crete delayed the German advance in the Soviet Union by several weeks and gave the Allies time to prepare for future battles.

The Battle of Crete also had a profound impact on the Australian Army. The Australians had fought bravely and earned the respect of their allies. The battle also helped to shape the Australian Army's identity and its role in international peacekeeping operations.

The Battle of Crete remains an important chapter in the history of the Australian Army. It is a story of courage, sacrifice, and resilience that continues to inspire Australians today.

The Battle of Crete was a pivotal moment in the Australian Army's history. The Australians fought bravely and helped to delay the German advance in the Soviet Union. The battle also had a profound impact on the Australian Army's identity and its role in international peacekeeping operations.



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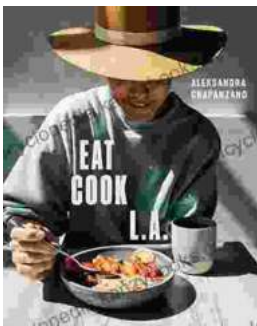
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