

# FREE SINGAPORE BURNING: HEROISM AND SURRENDER IN WORLD WAR II PDF



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## **The 20 Most Important Battles of World War II**

Though outnumbered by the British defenders, the Japanese concentrated their forces and utilized combined arms skills learned in earlier campaigns to repeatedly flank and drive back the enemy.

Utilizing light tanks and bicycles, the Japanese swiftly moved through the Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II jungles.

Though reinforced, Lieutenant General Arthur Percival's command was unable to halt the Japanese and on January 31 withdrew from the peninsula to the island of Singapore.

Destroying the causeway between the island and Johore, he prepared to repel the anticipated Japanese landings. Considered a bastion of British strength in the Far East it was anticipated that Singapore could hold or Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II least offer protracted resistance to the Japanese. To defend Singapore, Percival deployed three brigades of Major General Gordon Bennett's 8th Australian division to hold the western part of the island.

Advancing to Johore, Yamashita established his headquarters at the Sultan of Johore's palace. Though a prominent target, he correctly anticipated that the British would not attack it for fear of angering the sultan. Utilizing aerial reconnaissance and intelligence gathered from agents that infiltrated the island, he began to form a clear picture of Percival's defensive positions.

On February 3, Japanese artillery began hammering targets on Singapore and air attacks against the garrison intensified. British guns, including the city's heavy coastal guns, responded but in the latter case, their armor-piercing rounds proved largely ineffective.

On February 8, the first Japanese landings began on Singapore's northwest coast. Elements of the Japanese 5th and 18th Divisions came ashore at Sarimbun Beach and met Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II resistance from Australian troops.

By midnight, they had overwhelmed the Australians and forced them to retreat. Believing that future Japanese landings would come in the northeast, Percival elected not to reinforce the battered Australians.

Widening the battle, Yamashita conducted landings in the southwest on February 9. Encountering the 44th Indian Brigade, the Japanese were able to drive them back. Retreating east, Bennett formed a defensive line just east of Tengah airfield at Belem. To the north, Brigadier Duncan Maxwell's 27th Australian Brigade inflicted heavy losses on Japanese forces as they attempted to land west of the causeway.

Maintaining control of the situation, they held the enemy to a small beachhead. Unable to communicate with the Australian 22nd Brigade on his left and concerned about encirclement, Maxwell ordered his troops to fall back from their defensive positions on the coast. This withdrawal allowed the Japanese to begin landing armored units on the island.

Pressing south, they outflanked Bennett's "Jurong Line" and pushed towards the city. Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II of the deteriorating situation, but knowing that the defenders outnumbered the attackers, Prime Minister Winston Churchill cabled General Archibald Wavell, Commander-in-Chief, India, that Singapore was to hold out at all costs and should not surrender.

This message was forwarded to Percival with orders that the latter should fight to the end. On February 11, Japanese forces captured the area around Bukit Timah as well as much of Percival's ammunition and fuel reserves.

The area also gave Yamashita control of the bulk of the island's water supply. Though his campaign had been successful to date, the Japanese commander Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II desperately short of supplies and sought to bluff Percival into ending "this meaningless and desperate resistance. Slowly being pushed back on February 13, Percival was asked by his senior officers about surrendering.

Rebuffing their request, he continued the fight. The next day, Japanese troops secured Alexandra Hospital and massacred around patients and staff. Early on the morning of February 15, the Japanese succeeded in breaking through Percival's lines. This coupled with the exhaustion of the garrison's anti-aircraft ammunition led Percival to meet with his commanders at Fort Canning.

During the meeting, Percival proposed two options: an immediate strike at Bukit Timah to regain the supplies and water or surrendering.

Informed by his senior officers that no counterattack was possible, Percival saw little choice other than surrender. Dispatching a messenger to Yamashita, Percival met with the Japanese commander at the Ford Motor Factory later that day to discuss terms. The formal surrender was completed shortly after that evening. The worst defeat in the history of British arms, the Battle of Singapore and the preceding Malayan Campaign saw Percival's command suffer around 7, killed, 10, wounded, and captured.

Japanese losses in the fighting for Singapore numbered around 1, killed and 2, wounded. While some of the British and Australian prisoners were kept at Singapore, thousands more were shipped to Southeast Asia for use as forced labor on projects such as the Siam—Burma Death Railway and Sandakan airfield in North Borneo. Singapore would remain under Japanese occupation for the remainder of the war. During this period, the Japanese massacred elements of the city's Chinese population as well as others who opposed their rule.

Immediately after the surrender, Bennett turned over command of the 8th Division and escaped to Sumatra with several of his staff officers. Successfully reaching Australia, he was initially regarded as a hero but was later criticized for leaving his men. Though blamed for the disaster at Singapore, Percival's command was badly under-equipped for the duration of the campaign and lacked both tanks and sufficient aircraft to achieve victory on the Malay Peninsula.

That being said, his dispositions prior to the battle, his unwillingness to fortify Johore or the north shore of Singapore, and command errors during the fighting accelerated the British defeat. Remaining a prisoner until the end of the war, Percival was present at the Japanese surrender in September Share Flipboard Email.

Kennedy Hickman. Military and Naval History Expert. Kennedy Hickman is a historian, museum director, and curator who specializes in military and naval history. He has appeared on The History Channel as a featured expert. Facebook Facebook. Updated March 27, ThoughtCo uses cookies to provide you with a great user experience. By using ThoughtCo, you accept our.

## World War II |

After the horrors of World War I, no one wanted Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II. However, when Germany attacked Poland on September 1, other European countries felt they had to act. Learn more about what led to Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II aggression and how other countries reacted. Adolf Hitler wanted more land, to expand Germany according to the Nazi policy of "lebensraum"—a German word meaning roughly "living space," and lebensraum served as Hitler's justification for expanding his empire eastward.

Hitler used the harsh limitations that had been set against Germany after World War I in the Versailles Treaty as a pretext for Germany's right to acquire land where German-speaking people lived. Germany successfully used this reasoning to envelop two entire countries without starting a war. Many people have wondered why Germany was allowed to take over Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II Austria and Czechoslovakia without a fight. Britain and France believed, wrongly as it turned out, they could avoid another world war by appeasing Hitler with a few concessions such as Austria and Czechoslovakia.

At this time, Great Britain and France did not understand that Hitler's hunger for land acquisition was much, much more ambitious than any one country could slake.

After having gained both Austria and Czechoslovakia, Hitler was confident that he could again move east, this time acquiring Poland without having to fight Britain or France. So that Germany did not officially seem the aggressor which it was Hitler needed an excuse for attacking Poland.

It was Heinrich Himmler who came up with the idea; thus the plan was code-named Operation Himmler. On the night of August 31, Nazis took an unknown prisoner from one of their concentration camps, dressed him in a Polish uniform, took him to the town of Gleiwitz on the border of Poland and Germany and then shot him.

The staged scene with the dead prisoner dressed in Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II Polish uniform was supposed to appear as a Polish attack against a German radio station.

Hitler used this staged attack as the excuse to invade Poland. At on the morning of September 1, the morning following the staged attack German troops entered Poland. The sudden, immense attack by the Germans was called a Blitzkrieg "lightning war". The German air attack hit so quickly that most of Poland's air force was destroyed while still on the ground.

To hinder Polish mobilization, the Germans bombed bridges and roads. Groups of marching soldiers were machine-gunned from the air. But the Germans did not just aim for soldiers; they also shot at civilians. Groups of fleeing civilians often found themselves under attack. The more confusion and chaos the Germans could create, the slower Poland could mobilize its forces.

Using 62 divisions, six of which were armored and ten mechanized, the Germans invaded Poland by land. Poland was not defenseless, but they could not compete with Germany's motorized army. With only 40 divisions, none of which were armored, and with nearly their entire air force demolished, the Poles were at a severe disadvantage. The Polish cavalry was no match for German tanks. On September 1, the beginning of the German attack, Great Britain, and France sent Adolf Hitler an ultimatum: Germany must either withdraw his forces from Poland, or Great Britain and France would go to war against him.

World War II had begun. Share Flipboard Email. Jennifer Rosenberg. History Expert. Jennifer Rosenberg is a historian and writer who specializes in 20th-century history. Updated March 23, ThoughtCo uses cookies to provide you with a great user experience. By using ThoughtCo, you accept our.

## World War II Planes | HowStuffWorks

World War II was one of the greatest conflicts in history and was carried out on a scale almost impossible to grasp. In many ways it was the first modern war, in which airpower played a vital role both on land and at sea, but many actions were ultimately won by the determination and grit of the foot soldier. Here's the whole vast panoramic epic of the Second World War presented in several of its most significant battles.

The battle consisted of two phases: the Battle for Narva Bridgehead and the Battle of Tannenberg Line; the USSR—Stalin in particular—wanted to take control of Estonia and use strategic locations in the country to attack Finland and Prussia via sea and air. Both sides lost more than soldiers combined. The Soviet government had its citizenry work on building fortifications throughout the city although the area was almost entirely encircled by invading forces by November.

The siege claimed more than Soviet lives Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II a single year alone due to starvation, disease, and Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II. One of the most audacious operations in the German conquest of Europe was the air assault on the Greek island of Crete, the first action in which paratroopers were dropped in large numbers.

Crete was defended by British and Greek forces who had some success against Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II lightly armed German soldiers jumping out of the sky. However, delays and communication failures between Allies allowed the Germans to capture the vital airfield at Maleme and fly in reinforcements. Once the Nazis gained air superiority, landings by sea followed. The Allies surrendered after two weeks of fighting. The Battle of Iwo Jima is an iconic event, thanks largely due to Joe Rosenthal's photograph of the American flag being Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II.

But military analysts still argue whether the island's limited strategic value justified the costly action. Twenty thousand Japanese defenders were dug

in to an elaborate system of bunkers, caves, and tunnels.

The attack was preceded by a massive naval and air bombardment lasting several days covering the entire island. Although outnumbered five to one and with no prospect of victory, the Japanese put up strong resistance and virtually none surrendered.

Many positions could be cleared only out by hand grenades and flamethrowers, including the fearsome M4A3R3 Sherman "Zippo" flamethrower tanks. The Allies invaded Italy in but by had progressed only as far as the Gustav Line south of Rome.

So the Allies staged a massive amphibious operation to force the defenders to split their forces or be surrounded, but quick success depended on a rapid break-out from the beachhead. Some 36, men landed to the enemy's considerable surprise, but while the Allies consolidated, the Germans surrounded the area with equivalent forces and dug defensive positions. After heavy fighting and failed advances, in February the Allies were pushed back almost to the beachhead. It took more than more reinforcements and five months of fighting to finally break out of Anzio.

After Anzio, the Germans occupied defensive positions known as the Winter Line, consisting of bunkers, barbed wire, minefields and ditches. The four successive Allied assaults on these positions became known as the Battle of Monte Cassino. The fight resembled a WW1 battle, with artillery bombardments preceding bloody infantry assaults on fixed positions. Success was bought at the cost of more than 50, casualties on the Allied side.

Today, the battle is mainly remembered for the destruction of the abbey of Monte Cassino which was sheltering civilians by more than a hundred B Flying Fortresses, when the Allies mistakenly believed the abbey to be a German artillery observation position. Hitler aimed to halt them by a surprise Blitzkrieg. Several armored divisions massed in the Ardennes with the goal of breaking through Allied lines.

American forces held on stubbornly in spite of heavy casualties— more than 19, died. The Germans had limited supplies and could only fight for few days to before fuel and ammunition ran out, so the offensive soon ran out of steam. Allied lines bulged but did not break, and hundreds of thousands of reinforcements poured into the area.

Afterwards Germany lacked resources for another offensive and the end was inevitable. When Britain and France declared war on Germany following the Nazi invasion of Poland, many expected that war to be a retread of the infantry tactics actions of WWI. That line of thinking clearly led to the French strategy of constructing the heavy concrete fortifications of the Maginot Line. Those expectations were shattered in May when the Germans launched a fast-paced "Blitzkrieg" "lightning war" spearheaded by Panzer tanks.

Lacking heavy artillery, the Germans attacked French positions at Sedan with massed Stuka dive bombers. The intense air assault quickly demoralized the defenders and the German forces easily broke through. France fell soon afterwards. By Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II Britain faced the threat of a German invasion, but the incursion would succeed only with air superiority.

What followed was the first major campaign fought by opposing air forces. For four months the German Luftwaffe carried out attacks on British airfields, radar stations, and aircraft factories, and bombed British cities, too. But the Stukas proved too vulnerable to being intercepted and the Germans couldn't mass enough planes to defeat the fighter pilots of the Royal Air Force in their Hurricanes and Spitfires.

Heavy casualties forced the Luftwaffe to scale down operations. Hitler's invasion plans were put on Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II indefinitely. Hitler's plan to attack Soviet Russia was called Operation Barbarossa, and it sure looked insane on paper given the Russian numerical superiority and the ignominious history of enemy forces invading Russia. Hitler, however, believed the Blitzkrieg was unstoppable, and the Battle of Brody in western Ukraine would prove him right—for a time.

Seven hundred and fifty German panzers faced four times as many Russian tanks. But the Russian air force had been annihilated on the ground and the German Stukas were able to dominate the area.

In addition to destroying tanks, they targeted Russian fuel and ammunition supplies and disrupted communications. The confused Russian forces were completely out manoeuvred and their numerical superiority made no difference.

The largest naval battle in history, the Battle of Leyte Gulf off the Philippines was another step in the U. All available Japanese forces were thrown into the area but the separate units failed to unite, resulting in several actions scattered over a wide area. All four Japanese light carriers were sunk, as were three battleships. Lo was sunk after a Japanese kamikaze carrying a bomb deliberately crashed on its deck. Merchant ships took to sailing in large convoys, protected by screens of destroyers and corvettes armed with depth charges and sonar.

Daring U-Boat commanders carried out torpedo attacks within the defensive screen, and when several submarines attacked at once, the defenders had little chance of striking back.

In the end, the Battle of the Atlantic was eventually won by technology. Radar to detect U-Boats from the surface, radio interception, and code-breaking all played a part. By the end of the war more than 3, merchant ships had been sunk, as well as almost U-Boats. This produced the first naval battle fought at long range between aircraft carriers. Dive bombers and torpedo bombers attacked ships protected by screens of fighters.

It was a novel and confusing form of warfare, with both sides struggling to find the enemy and unclear about what ships they had seen and engaged. The fight forced Japan Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II call off its invasion plans.

Stalin aimed to drive back the invading German armies with an offensive that included more than a thousand tanks backed by aircraft. But Germany blunted the attack by Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II power when it flew more than planes into the area. The Germans Singapore Burning: Heroism and Surrender in World War II went on the attack and encircled the Russian forces with several Panzer divisions.

Trapped, surrounded, and with German bombers raining explosives down on them, Russian soldiers surrendered in large numbers. More than a quarter of a million Russian soldiers were killed, injured, or captured, 10 times the number of German casualties. Luzon, the largest of the Philippine islands, fell to Japan in General Douglas MacArthur had famously vowed to return to the Philippines, which he saw as strategically vital, and commanded the invasion force in The Allied landings were unopposed, but further inland there was heavy fighting against scattered enclaves of Japanese troops.

Some of them withdrew to the mountains and continued fighting long after the end of the war. Japanese suffered extreme losses, with more than killed compared to 10, Americans, making it the bloodiest action involving U.S. A Japanese force including five large fleet carriers and four light carriers, plus some land-based aircraft, fought seven U.S. ships. This disparity led to the action being nicknamed "the Great Marianas Turkey Shoot," with about four times as many Japanese planes downed as American.

To those in the West, the Battle of Berlin may seem like an afterthought, the death throes of a war already decided. In fact it was a massive and extreme bloody action as three quarters of a million German troops, under the personal command of Hitler, fought a desperate final defense against the encroaching Red Army.

The Russians had the advantage in tanks, but armored vehicles were vulnerable to new portable anti-tank rockets that destroyed 2, of them. Like Stalingrad, the Battle of Berlin was an infantry action fought at close quarters; artillery demolished defensive strongpoints in a city already devastated by heavy bombing.

Casualties were heavy, including thousands of civilians. On the 30th of April Hitler killed himself rather than surrender, effectively ending the war in Europe. Operation Citadel was the final German offensive on the Eastern front, and Kursk is considered the greatest tank battle of the war. At Kursk, the Nazis aimed to repeat their earlier successes by surrounding and destroying Russian forces. Thanks to Allied codebreakers, though, the Russians got advance warning and built up defensive lines of ditches and minefields to absorb the German attack.

In the air, Stukas armed with 37mm gun pods faced Russian armored Sturmoviks dropping dozens of anti-tank bombs. As the German offensive stalled, Marshal Zhukov launched his counterattack and drove the Germans back with heavy losses. More than a million German troops were thrown into the attack on Moscow as Hitler ordered that the city should be razed to the ground rather than captured.

At first the German progress was rapid; by November 15 they had fought to within 18 miles of the city. Then they were slowed by the Russian resistance, and an early winter set in, with temperatures dropping well below zero Fahrenheit. The German supply chain failed and Russian marshal Zhukov threw his reserve of Siberian divisions into a counterattack.

The Germans were pushed back by more than miles by January. Russian casualties were heavy, but the German momentum was broken. The largest amphibious operation in history involved more than 5,000 ships landing Allied troops on a heavily-defended mile stretch of Normandy coastline, while thousands more took part in an airborne assault.

A major deception operation fooled the Germans into thinking that the landings were a feint, and resistance was light at four out of five landing sites. On the fifth, Omaha Beach, U.S. The Germans failed to organize rapidly to meet the threat.