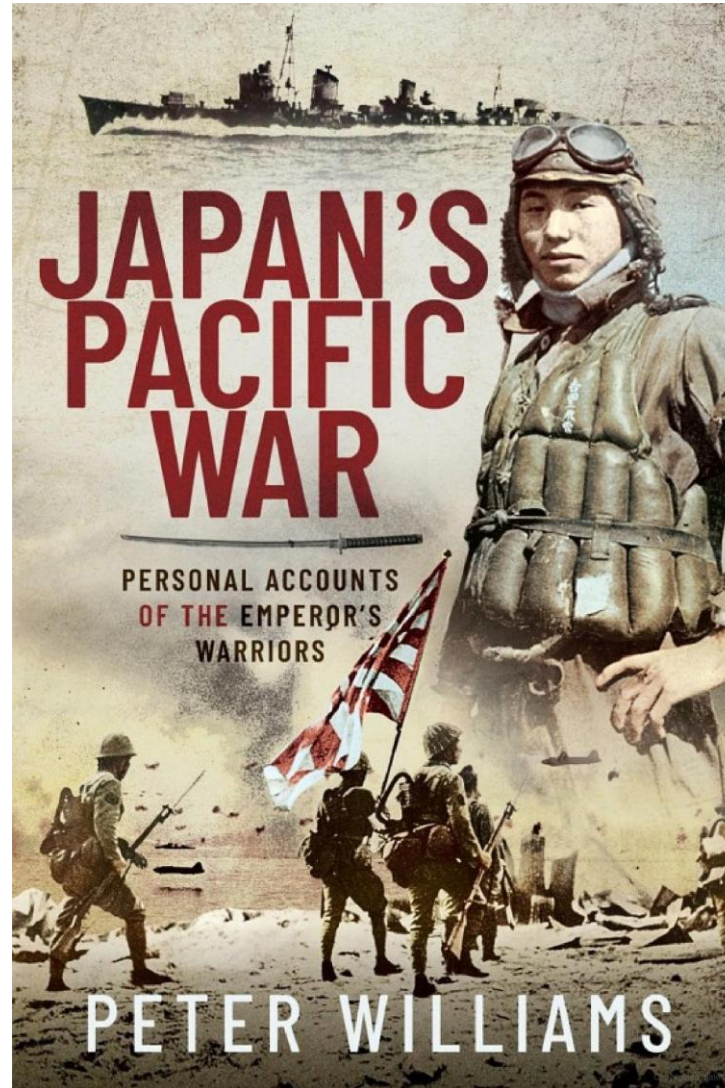


1945- The Viewpoint of Japanese Veterans

www.peterdwilliams.com



Masao Horie - died 2022, aged 106



The Japanese people would rather stand until they fall, completely vanquished. That's the spirit we had. I expect that, to you, it's a strange way of thinking.

Takahisa Okamoto

When I heard about the end of the war, I was still in New Guinea commanding what was left of my battalion. Honestly, I was relieved. The ordeal I had not asked for was over.



Kameji Hori



The leaflets said that a peace treaty had been concluded. I got the impression that we had not lost the war.

Hideo Abe

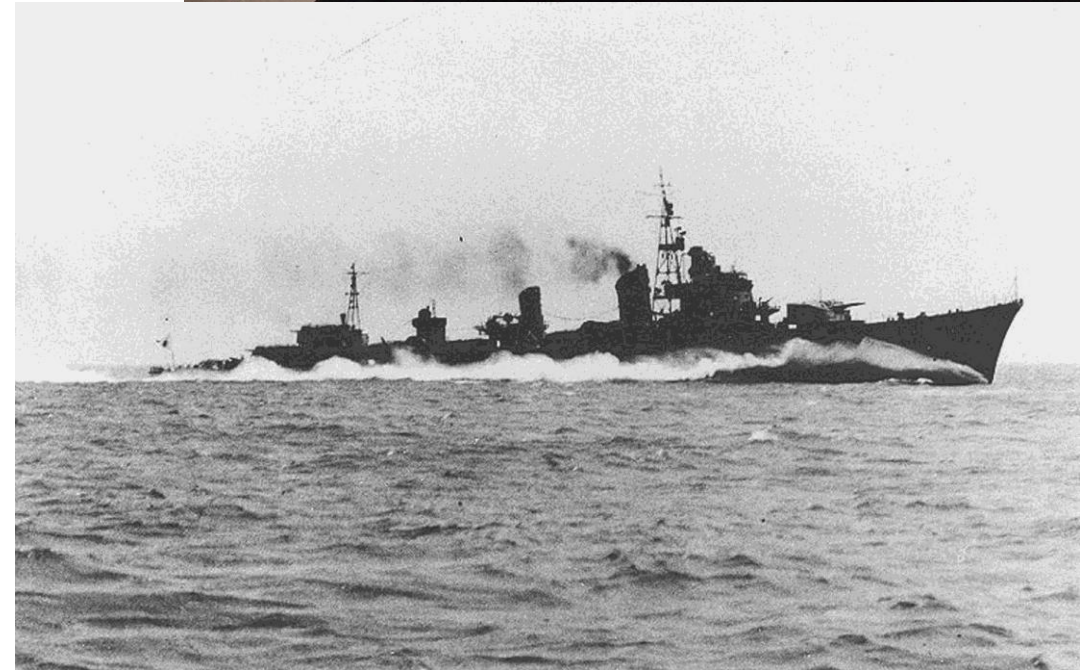
When I came back to Japan months later, it's strange to say it, but I started thinking once again that Japan might really have won the war, because I saw so much green grass on the ground. In training, we learned that we could stay alive and fight on as long as there was green grass to eat.



Yorio Ueyama



We were near Tsushima when I heard the Emperor's voice for the first time, on the radio on the ship. He was announcing that the war was over. At first I didn't believe it. But then I began to accept that it might be the truth.



Kaname Harada

The pilots were discussing the situation, saying that we will be forced to be slaves of the western nations for the rest of our lives. We won't see our families ever again and we might be taken to the South Seas as labourers. If this is the case, why not resist the enemy to the last man?



Masao Horie

We were told to march down the runway. The General led, followed by three other officers and myself. Four Australians marched with us. There were many Australian soldiers there, along the sides of the runway, and I felt it to be humiliating to attend this kind of ceremony watched by them.



Yuki Yayamitchi



The Australian soldiers on Fauro Island were mean and cruel. Many Japanese soldiers who had survived the war died there after the war was over.

Isamu Kajita

We marched in and gave up our weapons to the enemy: I was sent to the Jesselton Prisoner of War Camp, in Borneo. There I saw the Australians for the first time close up. They were big men and I was scared.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

121597

Kokichi Nishimura

The 'Bone Man of Kokoda' in
1940 and 2010

Some members of my battalion had killed Australian
prisoners in Rabaul, so the military police wanted to
question me about that.



Hirotooshi Tsukamoto



We thought the enemy were weak soldiers led by weak officers...This is what most of us veterans believe.

Yoshiaki Iwasaki

The importance of the Japanese war has been intentionally ignored, or has not been talked about, but it is true that the Japanese war brought South East Asian and other colonized countries liberation and a chance for independence from the Western countries. They now have that independence and I believe many Japanese sacrificed their lives for it.



Takuro Tsuzuku



President Roosevelt was the one who wanted Japan to fire the first shot at the USA. Roosevelt wanted to make the Japanese start the war. To provoke war, Roosevelt harassed Japan in various ways. I am still angry towards the Americans for dragging us into the war.

Kenji Ueda

The Japanese leaders made a big mistake going to war. They underestimated their enemies. Tojo was a great idiot.



Sadashige Imanishi



When I heard that some of the school teachers in Australia teach children about the war as a heroic episode, it disappointed me.