



# ON TARGET

The story of  
2/3rd Australian Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment



TOBRUK – CRETE – WESTERN DESERT  
SYRIA – PORT MORESBY  
MILNE BAY – LAE – BUNA – BORNEO

## "ON TARGET"

### The 2/3rd Australian Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment

Successes achieved by German dive-bombers and low-flying strafing aircraft early in W.W.II created an urgent demand for light anti-aircraft artillery to combat the menace.

The 7th, 8th, and 9th Batteries of the 2/3rd Australian Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment established in 1940 were the first such unit in the A.I.F.

The Regiment, in action, rarely functioned as a unit, but rather in Batteries with Troops scattered and individual guns often allotted separate roles acting independently. Its members, however, participated in operations in the Western Desert, Tobruk, Crete, Syria, Australia, New Guinea, the Islands and North-West Borneo.

In Crete, 7th Battery contributed to the massive losses which nearly cost the Germans their first defeat on land and casualties in that campaign exceeding in twelve days the total lost in all their actions in the war up to that time.

Using captured Italian equipment, because their own promised Bofors guns were not available, 8th Battery participated in the Siege of Tobruk helping to thwart Rommel's plans and earning the right to share the proud title "Rats of Tobruk".

Operating as a mobile force, the 9th Battery operated in support of British artillery, infantry and R.A.F. units in the Western Desert before moving to Syria. Following their return to Australia after Japan entered the war, they provided L.A.A. defence at Milne Bay, Port Moresby and Lae. In the subsequent Island campaign, they were present at the surrender of the Japanese in Borneo.

For the benefit of the members of the Regiment and the general reader, this book tells of the experiences of these men, often using inadequate equipment, of their recollections of those years, and acknowledges the debt so many of them owe to the Navy.





⊙ P.O.W. CAMPS IN GERMANY AND ITALY



MALAYA

SUMATRA

INDONESIA

BORNEO

PHILIPPINES

CELEBES

TIMOR

DARWIN

OW

BROOME

PORT HEDLAND

ONSLOW

EXMOUTH (POTSHOT)

CARNARVON

GERALDTON

PERTH

FREMANTLE

SAIGON

SINGAPORE

JAKARTA

JAVA

LABUAN

TARAKAN

GUAM

TRUK Is.

MOROTAI

NEW GUINEA

RABAUL

NEW BRITAIN

BOUGAINVILLE

FINSCHHAFEN

LAE

SALAMAUA

BUNA

PORT MORESBY

MILNE BAY

GUADALCANAL

SAMARAI

CORAL SEA

WYNDHAM

AUSTRALIA

CAIRNS

TOWNSVILLE

ALICE SPRINGS

BRISBANE

ADELAIDE

SYDNEY

MELBOURNE



Paratroop Ju 52 shot down over Heraklion, Crete, 20th May, 1940.