



# EXHIBITION

OF

## PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS OF NEW GUINEA

BY

CAPTAIN IVOR HELE  
OFFICIAL WAR ARTIST

•

ONE SHILLING

1945

*This collection of official war pictures is being exhibited throughout the Commonwealth under the direction of the Department of the Army.*

*The catalogue has been compiled and published by the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.*

## FOREWORD

Captain Ivor Hele is a young South Australian who had many important achievements to his credit before this war began. He won the Melrose prize three times, the South Australian Centennial prize in 1936, and the New South Wales Sesquicentennial prize in 1938.

Enlisting as a private in the A.I.F., he went to the Middle East with the 2/48th Battalion and, though trained and ready to serve as an infantryman, he cherished the hope that he would get the opportunity to work as a war artist. This opportunity was given him by General Blamey early in 1941, and, after working with the Australian Forces in North Africa, he came back to Australia at the end of that year to complete a series of paintings in which he recorded his impressions of the war in Libya.

Captain Hele arrived in New Guinea in 1943, at the time when the Australians had taken the offensive against the Japanese. After recording the tremendous feat of the Australian army engineers in the construction of the Bulldog-Wau Road, he served with an independent company and an infantry battalion operating in the Bobdubi-Salamaua area. While in New Guinea he made some sixty drawings, and six paintings in oils, and, on his return to Australia painted a series of pictures in which he sought to epitomize his impressions of these operations. The collection therefore illustrates the full range of work done by an artist during a tour of duty in the field as well as carefully considered works based on his field notes.



HEAD STUDY

## CATALOGUE

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|---|---|
| 1. MEDICAL OFFICER TREATING HEAD WOUND.<br><i>Pencil.</i> 14 x 9.   | 11. DEAD JAPS.<br><i>Pencil.</i> 14 x 10½.                                      |
| 2. ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER, A.N.G.A.U.<br><i>Pencil.</i> 13 x 9. | 12. DEAD JAP, VICKERS RIDGE.<br><i>Pen.</i> 22 x 15.                            |
| 3. IN FROM PATROL.<br><i>Pencil.</i> 22 x 15.                       | 13. DEFENSIVE POSITION, NEW GUINEA.<br><i>Carbon.</i> 24 x 15.                  |
| 4. MALARIA.<br><i>Pencil.</i> 22 x 15.                              | 14. MARARA, NATIVE CARRIER.<br><i>Crayon.</i> 22 x 15.                          |
| 5. ARM OPERATION AT A.D.S.<br><i>Carbon.</i> 24 x 15.               | 15. IMPUP OF BANKORA.<br><i>Crayon.</i> 22 x 15.                                |
| 6. MOVING THROUGH JUNGLE.<br><i>Pen and Wash.</i> 13 x 10.          | 16. KWILA OF MARL.<br><i>Crayon.</i> 22 x 15.                                   |
| 7. DEAD JAP IN FOXHOLE.<br><i>Conte.</i> 14 x 11.                   | 17. INTELLIGENCE OFFICER SEARCHING ENEMY DEAD.<br><i>Pen and Wash.</i> 7½ x 5½. |
| 8. JAP FOXHOLE.<br><i>Conte.</i> 15 x 11.                           | 18. BURIAL, TIMBERED KNOLL.<br><i>Pen and Wash.</i> 10½ x 7½.                   |
| 9. TIMBERED KNOLL. JAP FOXHOLE.<br><i>Pencil.</i> 15 x 11.          | 19. BURIAL CORTEGE.<br><i>Pen and Wash.</i> 7½ x 5½.                            |
| 10. ENEMY DEAD IN FOXHOLE.<br><i>Pencil.</i> 15 x 11.               |   |

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|---|--|
| 20. STRETCHER CASE, MISSIM TRAIL.<br><i>Pen and Wash. 10 x 9.</i> | 30. PACK TRAIN DESCENDING FROM<br>ZENAG 'DROME.<br><i>Pen and Wash. 14 x 11.</i> |
| 21. MEN RESTING, MARKHAM TRAIL.<br><i>Pen and Wash. 10 x 7.</i>   | 31. POLICE BOY WITH NATIVE SPY<br>PRISONER.<br><i>Pencil and Wash. 12 x 7.</i>   |
| 22. CROSSING WAMPIT RIVER.<br><i>Pen and Wash. 9 x 7.</i>         | 32. AMERICAN SERGEANT.<br><i>Pencil. 22 x 15.</i>                                |
| 23. STRETCHER CASE IN R.A.P.<br><i>Pen and Wash. 11 x 8.</i>      | 33. WOUNDED DRINKING COCOA.<br><i>Pen. 14 x 9.</i>                               |
| 24. SHELTERING IN NATIVE LEAN-TO.<br><i>Pen and Wash. 10 x 7.</i> | 34. COMMANDER, 15TH AUST. IN-<br>FANTRY BRIGADE.<br><i>Pencil. 17 x 13.</i>      |
| 25. WALKING WOUNDED RESTING.<br><i>Pen and Wash. 10½ x 7.</i>     | 35. DRESSING ARM WOUND.<br><i>Pencil. 13 x 10.</i>                               |
| 26. NEW GUINEA MUD.<br><i>Pen and Wash. 9½ x 6.</i>               | 36. RETURNING ALONG MISSIM TRAIL.<br><i>Pen and Wash. 11 x 7.</i>                |
| 27. PATROL ON MARKHAM TRACK.<br><i>Pen and Wash. 10 x 7½.</i>     | 37. DRYING CLOTHES, PILIMUNG, MIS-<br>SIM TRAIL.<br><i>Pen and Wash. 9½ x 8.</i> |
| 28. NEW GUINEA PACK-HORSE.<br><i>Pencil. 12 x 11.</i>             | 38. AT 2/3RD INDEPENDENT COM-<br>PANY'S R.A.P.<br><i>Conte. 14 x 10½.</i>        |
| 29. PACK-HORSE ON MARKHAM TRACK.<br><i>Pencil. 14 x 10½.</i>      | 39. WALKING WOUNDED, BRANAH<br>CREEK.<br><i>Pen and Wash. 7 x 5½.</i>            |
|   | 40. HEAD STUDY.<br><i>Oil. 22½ x 18¾.</i>  |



BURIAL CORTEGE



MARARA—NATIVE CARRIER, MARKHAM AREA

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 49. LEVERING ROCK WITH CROWBAR.<br><i>Pen and Wash.</i> 9½ x 9½.      | 53. NEAR FOX'S CAMP—BULLDOG ROAD.<br><i>Oil.</i> 23 x 19. |
| 50. WORKING ON BULLDOG ROAD.<br><i>Pen and Wash.</i> 20 x 14.         | 54. BLACK CAT MOUNTAIN.<br><i>Oil.</i> 22¾ x 18¾.         |
| 51. CUTTING BENCH ROUND SHEER<br>ROCK FACE.<br><i>Conte.</i> 22 x 15. | 55. BULOLO LANDSCAPE.<br><i>Oil.</i> 22¾ x 18¾.           |
| 52. HAND DRILLING.<br><i>Conte.</i> 18 x 13.                          | 56. BULLDOG-WAU ROAD.<br><i>Oil.</i> 22¾ x 18¾.           |
|   | 57. MOSSY FOREST.<br><i>Oil.</i> 23 x 19.                 |

#### INDEPENDENT COMPANY SERIES

From Wau to Salamaua the Japanese were driven back in a campaign as hard as any in New Guinea. Well armed, frequently reinforced, and skilled in the preparation of defensive positions on the razor-back ridges, they were hardly more formidable than the tropical jungle. The Australians were wet for weeks at a time in the steaming rain clouds; the native tracks were knee-deep in mud; malaria and other tropical diseases were a constant danger.

Fighting patrols moved between green walls which completely hid enemy activity. No one knew if the next bend concealed a sniper, an ambush party, or a booby trap, and this risk increased as our troops followed the retreating Japanese. But the Australians were quick to turn the enemy's own weapons against him. Patrols set booby traps even in the Japanese camps; raiding parties disorganised their supply lines; the swiftness and silence with which the Australian ambushes struck helped to destroy Japanese morale.

Fighting was not the only task. Supply lines had to be maintained, dropping grounds for food and ammunition prepared, and wounded and sick treated and evacuated, no easy task when men had to be carried over miles of difficult jungle tracks by native bearers, or make their own way back when they were walking wounded.

In this series of sketches, made when he was with the 2/3rd Independent Company, Captain Hele shows scenes typical of those hard days when the Australians were closing in for the final blow which was to reduce Salamaua and clear the way for the attack on Huon Gulf.

58. KILLED IN ACTION—N.C.O. OF  
2/3RD INDEPENDENT COMPANY,  
TIMBERED KNOLL.

*Conte, 22 x 15.*

59. AUSTRALIAN INFANTRYMAN.

*Pencil, 22 x 15.*

60. COMMANDO OFFICER.

*Pencil, 22 x 15.*

61. AUSTRALIAN SIGNALLER.

*Crayon, 22 x 15.*

62. COMMANDOS.

*Conte, 23 x 15.*

63. COMMANDO LEADER.

*Conte, 14 x 11.*

64. SOLDIER ON TIMBERED KNOLL.

*Pencil, 15 x 8.*

65. GUN PIT, NAMLING RIDGE.

*Pencil, 22 x 15.*

66. SNIPER CLEANING RIFLE, NAMLING  
RIDGE.

*Pencil, 22 x 15.*

67. AUSTRALIAN SOLDIER.

*Crayon, 15 x 11.*

68. COMMANDOS RESTING BEFORE NAM-  
LING RIDGE.

*Pencil, 14 x 11.*

69. ISSUING BANDOLIERS AND GREN-  
ADES, NAMLING RIDGE.

*Pen, 14 x 10.*



BATTLE BURIAL OF THREE N.C.OS.

#### ACTION SERIES

In this series of oils the artist has endeavoured to depict the sequence of events in a jungle operation against two Japanese positions, "Timbered Knoll" and "Old Vickers", in the Bobdubi area on 28th-29th July, 1943.

The first picture shows the 2/3rd Independent Company forming up behind Namling Ridge early in the morning, prior to assaulting Timbered Knoll. This is followed by two depicting early phases of the 58/59th Battalion's attack on Old Vickers. After the objectives had been gained the wounded were collected, and a member of the 58/59th is seen awaiting the arrival of stretcher-bearers.

During consolidation the enemy dead were removed from their foxholes and later in the day, as rain and evening mist were coming down, the Australian dead were brought in for burial. The final picture shows three walking wounded of the Independent Company making their painful way back to base after several days in the jungle.

70. MOVING UP ON TO NAMLING RIDGE.  
*Oil. 36 x 30.*

74. STRETCHER CASE AWAITING  
BEARERS, OLD VICKERS.  
*Oil. 36 x 30.*

71. MOVING THROUGH ARTILLERY  
SMOKE, BOBDUBI RIDGE.  
*Oil. 23 x 19.*

75. BATTLE BURIAL OF THREE N.C.OS.  
*Oil. 36 x 30.*

72. GRENADE THROWING, BOBDUBI  
RIDGE.  
*Oil. 23 x 19.*

76. CARRYING AN N.C.O. TO BURIAL.  
*Oil. 23 x 19.*

73. HAULING DEAD JAPS FROM FOX-  
HOLES.  
*Oil. 36 x 30.*

77. WALKING WOUNDED, MISSIM  
TRACK.  
*Oil. 36 x 30.*

Halstead Press Pty Limited,  
9-19 Nickson Street, Sydney