



A POCKET GUIDE TO NEW GUINEA

1943

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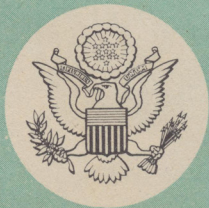
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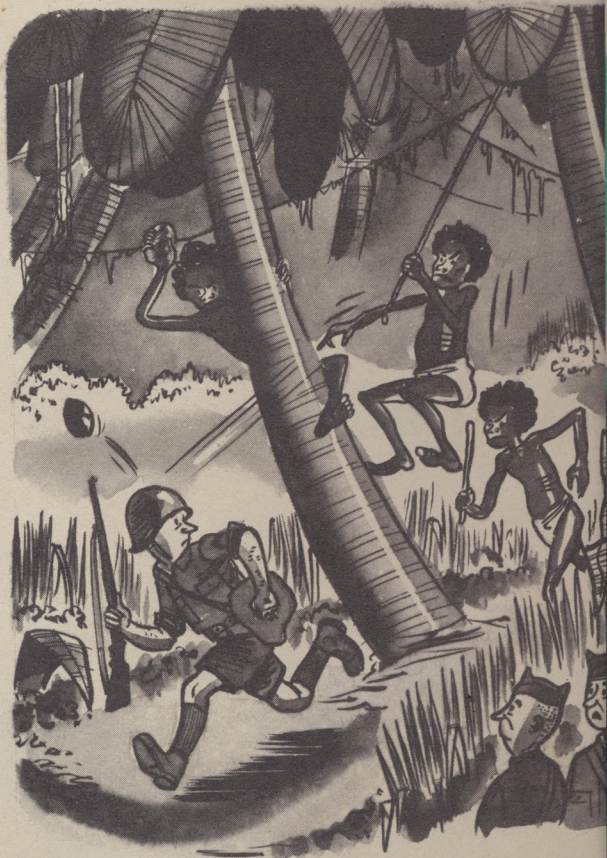
AND THE

SOLOMONS



WAR AND NAVY DEPARTMENTS

WASHINGTON, D. C.

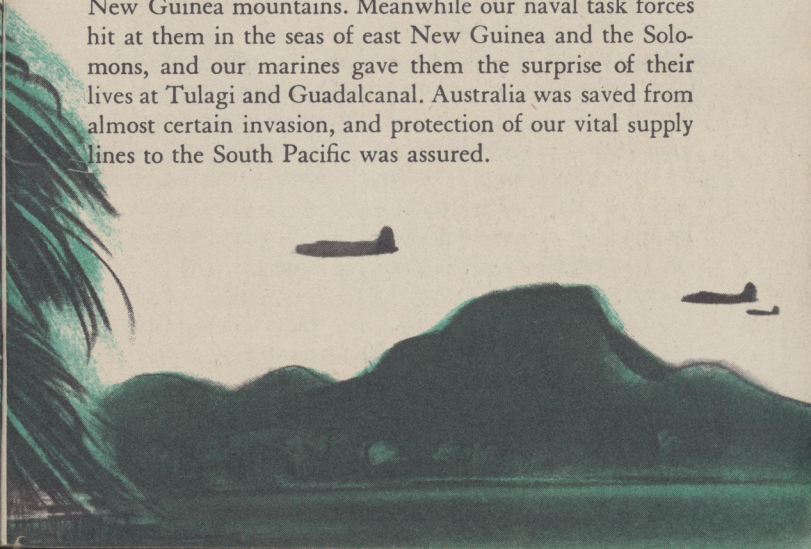


“I told him to read his Pocket Guide, but he said
knew how to make friends!”

INTRODUCTION

ON this job some of the hardest fighting over some of the worst terrain in the world is going on. We don't need to tell you about that nor is a long lecture needed to prove that New Guinea and the Solomon Islands are of the greatest strategic importance to the United Nations.

Everyone remembers only too well the grim days when the Japs spread out like a swarm of locusts over the peaceful Philippines and East Indies toward Australia, and eastward into the Pacific Islands. Determined Australian jungle fighters slowed and finally stopped them in the New Guinea mountains. Meanwhile our naval task forces hit at them in the seas of east New Guinea and the Solomons, and our marines gave them the surprise of their lives at Tulagi and Guadalcanal. Australia was saved from almost certain invasion, and protection of our vital supply lines to the South Pacific was assured.



President Roosevelt has labelled what happened at the earlier stages of these actions "defensive attrition." What's cooking now has the Japs trying to do the defending. These islands are going to serve as important offensive bases from which to push the Japs back to where they came from.

Though the main importance of these islands is strategic, they are also rich in resources. There are hundreds of plantations scattered through the area while in many places there are important deposits of gold and other valuable minerals largely untouched. The existence of these minerals is one of the main reasons why Japan has coveted the islands for years.

On this job, you'll know the South Seas a lot better than when you looked at Dotty Lamour's sarong in the movies back home. Some things are as you expected—coral reefs and coconut palms, green jungles and natives whose clothing doesn't cost much. Some things you won't find, for they never really existed at all outside the imagination of novelists and movie directors. Others the movies never showed—including diseases, smells, and bites.

You don't need to be told that campaigning in these islands is no picnic—you're often steamy and sweaty and muddy; in fact conditions are about as bad as on any

battlefront in the world. But the islands are not all bad by any means.

People are inclined to exaggerate the difficulties of living in such places, even in jungles and swamps. Remember that Government officials, gold and oil prospectors, and others have lived for months at a time in some of the worst parts of New Guinea, and have come out feeling fine and with their heads still on their necks. You too will do a good job of pulling through, and the reason for this guide is to make a tough job a little easier by helping you to feel as much at home as possible in a strange land.

An important part of your military assignment in these islands is to get along well with the local people. Nothing would please the Japs more than to find trouble breaking out between us and our British allies or between us and the native islanders. But we Americans generally have a knack for making friends and respecting other people's ideas and feelings.

The native islanders, too, are just as anxious as you are to have the Japs thrown out. Bombs and guns have wrecked their houses and gardens, killed their relatives, and made many exiles from their homes. So long as we do nothing to shake their confidence in us, they should give us every help possible. Although a large part of this guide deals with the natives and their customs, there