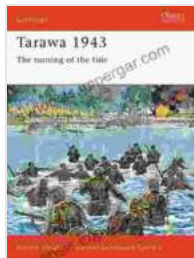


# Tarawa 1943: The Turning of the Tide Campaign



## Tarawa 1943: The turning of the tide (Campaign)

by Derrick Wright

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 59590 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 96 pages



The Battle of Tarawa, fought from November 20 to 23, 1943, was a pivotal conflict in the Pacific Campaign of World War II. The amphibious invasion of the heavily fortified atoll of Tarawa by US Marines marked a turning point in the war, demonstrating the growing strength and determination of American forces and foreshadowing the eventual defeat of Imperial Japan.

## Background

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States entered World War II and began a campaign to regain control of the Pacific islands captured by Japan. The Central Pacific Campaign, led by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, aimed to isolate Japan from its southern territories and eventually invade the Japanese home islands.

Tarawa, a small atoll in the Gilbert Islands, was strategically located on the main supply route between the United States and Australia. Its capture would provide a vital forward base for American operations in the Central Pacific.

## **The Battle**

The US Marines, under the command of Major General Julian C. Smith, landed on Tarawa on November 20, 1943. They faced fierce resistance from the Japanese garrison, which had constructed elaborate defenses and bunkers throughout the atoll.

The Marines encountered heavy machine gun fire, artillery, and mortar attacks as they fought their way inland. The fighting was intense and bloody, with both sides suffering heavy casualties. The Marines slowly advanced, using flamethrowers and tanks to clear the Japanese positions.

On November 23, the Marines finally secured the atoll. The battle had resulted in the deaths of approximately 1,000 Americans and over 4,500 Japanese soldiers.

## **Significance**

The Battle of Tarawa was a significant turning point in the Pacific Campaign. It demonstrated the growing strength and determination of American forces and foreshadowed the eventual defeat of Imperial Japan.

The battle also highlighted the importance of amphibious warfare and the need for specialized tactics and equipment for such operations. The lessons learned at Tarawa would be applied in subsequent amphibious landings throughout the war.

## **Legacy**

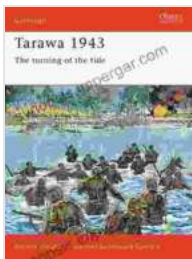
The Battle of Tarawa remains an iconic conflict in American military history. It is remembered for its intense fighting, the bravery of the Marines, and its strategic significance.

The battle is commemorated by a number of memorials and monuments, including the Tarawa War Memorial in Honolulu, Hawaii, and the Tarawa National Cemetery on the atoll itself.

The Battle of Tarawa 1943 was a pivotal conflict that transformed the course of World War II in the Pacific. It demonstrated the growing strength and determination of American forces and foreshadowed the eventual defeat of Imperial Japan. The battle remains a testament to the bravery and sacrifice of the Marines who fought and died on the beaches of Tarawa.

## **Additional Resources**

- [Battle of Tarawa - HISTORY](#)
- [The Battle of Tarawa - The National WWII Museum](#)
- [Historical Analysis of the Battle of Tarawa - US Marines](#)



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