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"Kip".

**Major General Sir Howard Kippenberger,
KBE, CB, DSO and Bar, ED: A Study of
Command**

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Certificate

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification.

I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.

Glyn Herfer

Abstract

This study examines the career of Major General Sir Howard Kippenberger who is often stated to have been the outstanding New Zealand civilian commander of the Second World War. It tests that assertion and asks what made him stand out amongst the other New Zealand commanders.

The heart of the study is the campaign chapters where Kippenberger's military leadership is closely assessed. Kippenberger's performance as a battalion commander is examined in the Greece, Crete and Crusader chapters, while his performance as a brigadier is assessed in the Minqar Qaim, Ruweisat, El Alamein, Left Hooks, Takrouna and Italian campaign chapters. Chapter 12 deals with Cassino, his only battle as a divisional commander.

Kippenberger became an outstanding military commander able to combine efficiency and professional competence with obvious concern and compassion for those serving under him. The campaign chapters demonstrate that Kippenberger possessed all the essential qualities for successful command identified by the great writers on military matters: moral and physical courage, robustness, intelligence, the determination to succeed and the ability to command loyalty and affection. Kippenberger's style of command, as is demonstrated in this thesis, was ideally suited to the ways of the New Zealand Army in which he served.

Two things set Kippenberger apart from other New Zealand commanders of the day. The first was his seminal experience as a private soldier on the Somme in 1916 during which Kippenberger experienced the crushing burdens under which the ordinary private soldier laboured and witnessed first-hand the terrible price of military incompetence. The second factor was Kippenberger's thorough preparation for command; especially his methodical and detailed study of military history which became an all-consuming passion. That this study was undertaken as preparation for command in a war Kippenberger believed to be inevitable is indeed remarkable.

All of the above attributes and command qualities, thorough preparation and obvious concern for the welfare of those serving under him made Kippenberger an outstanding military commander. More than this it made Kippenberger that rarity in military history: a revered commanding officer.

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Major General Sir Howard Kippenberger KBE, CB, DSO & Bar, ED
(Eric Townley)

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Maps

Key




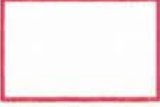








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KEY TO MAPS

 high ground	 built-up area	 Road or track
 depression	 artillery barrage	 Railway
 minefield	 lake	 Wadi
 wood	 swamp	 Watercourse
 inundation		 Friendly objective
		 Enemy defensive line
		 Formation boundary
		 Anti-tank ditch
		 Minefield breach

I	Company	AS	Australian	US	United States
II	Battalion	FR	French		
III	Regiment	HL	Highland		
X	Brigade	IN	Indian		
XX	Division	NZ	New Zealand		
XXX	Corps	SA	South African		
XXXX	Army	UK	United Kingdom		

 Friendly Unit	 Infantry	 Paratroops
 Enemy Unit	 Motorised Infantry	 Headquarters
 Recon.	 Armoured Recon.	 Defensive Position
 Armour	 Mountain Troops	 Position to be occupied later

*What doth the Lord require of thee but
to do justly and to love mercy and to
walk humbly with thy God*

Micah 6-8
Kippenberger's creed.

Glossary

AA	Anti-aircraft
ACV	Armoured Command Vehicle
ADC	<i>aide-de camp</i>
ADS	Advanced Dressing Station
A Echelon	Transport usually taken into battle
AFV	Armoured Fighting Vehicle (tank or armoured car)
AIF	Australian Imperial Force
AK	see DAK
<i>Alam</i>	Cairn; isolated hillock (<i>Alamein</i> twin cairns)
AP	Armour piercing (usually artillery shell)
armd	armoured
armoured brigade	formation containing fast cruiser tanks
army tank brigade	formation containing slow infantry (I) tanks
Arty	artillery
ASC	Army Service Corps
Λ tk	
Λ Tk	
ΛTK	
Λ/Tk	anti-tank
Λ-Tk	
a-tk	
ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington
<i>Auftragstaktik</i>	"mission tactics", a decentralised style of command
Aust	Australian
ΛWM	Australian War Memorial, Canberra

B24	Liberator bomber (US)
B25	Mitchell bomber (US)
<i>Bab</i>	a pass
Barrage	a line of artillery fire
Bdc	Brigade. British or Allied formation, usually with three infantry battalions, or tank regiments or battalions and commanded by a brigadier.
B Echelon	Transport sometimes dispensed with in battle
BFC	British Free Corps, also known as the British Legion (BL). An anti-communist Nazi front organisation for Allied servicemen.
<i>Bir</i>	well or cistern
B.H.S.	Boys' High School, Christchurch
'Blighty'	a minor wound that offered a chance of escape from the battlefield. They became highly desired during The Great War.
BM	Brigade Major, the chief staff officer at brigade level.
Bn/bn	Battalion. A self contained fighting unit of tanks, infantry or machine gunners. An infantry battalion usually contains four rifle companies plus HQ company. Usually commanded by a lieutenant colonel.
Bofors	Automatic 40-mm light anti-aircraft gun of Swedish design.
Box	All-round defensive position for battalion, brigade or division in static operations
Breda	Italian heavy machine gun or light automatic cannon.
Bren	British standard light machine gun
Bren carrier	light armoured tracked vehicle intended to mount Bren guns, but also used for reconnaissance, carrying ammunition, ferrying wounded and so on.
Brig	Brigadier
Bs Gen Hosp	Base General Hospital

BTE	British Troops in Egypt excluding Eighth Army
Bty	battery, a sub-unit of artillery of two-four troops of guns
'Buckshee'	see 'Blighty'
<i>Burg</i>	a hill
carrier	see Bren
Capt	Captain
Cav	Cavalry (light tanks, armoured cars, carriers although one cavalry unit, Cheshire Yeomanry, were still using horses in 1941)
CB	Companion of the Order of the Bath
CCS	Casualty Clearing Station
CGS	Chief of the General Staff
CIGS	Chief of the Imperial General Staff
C-in-C	Commander-in-Chief
CO	Commanding Officer (usually of a unit)
Col	Colonel
Comd/Cdr	Commander
concentration	a pattern of artillery fire
Corps	grouping of a number of divisions usually commanded by a lieutenant general.
<i>corps de chasse</i>	mobile pursuit force
Coy	Company. A Sub-unit usually commanded by a major
CRA	Commander, Royal Artillery (of a division)
CRE	Commander, Royal Engineers (of a division)
CSM	Company Sergeant Major
DAF	Desert Air Force (RAF)
<i>DAK</i>	<i>Deutsches Afrikakorps</i> (German Africa Corps)

DCM	Distinguished Conduct Medal
<i>Deir</i>	Depression
det(s)	detachment(s)
DF	defensive (artillery) fire
Div	Division, Divisional. A formation of a number of brigades usually commanded by a major general.
Div Arty	Divisional Artillery
Div Cav	Divisional Cavalry
Docs/docs	Documents
DSO	Distinguished Service Order
Ech/Echelon	First, Second, Third, three main components of 2 NZEF in order of embarkation, chiefly comprising 4,5 and 6 Brigades respectively
ED	Efficiency Decoration
fd	field
FD Amb	Field Ambulance (medical unit)
FDL(s)	Forward defended locality (ies)
Fd Regt	Field Regiment (artillery unit)
FF	Free French, Fighting French from Oct 1942
flail tank	see Scorpion
FM	Field Marshal, the highest rank attainable in the British Army. New Zealand has not had an officer of this rank; Australia has had just the one, Field Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey
fwd	forward

G Branch/staff	Staff of a division or higher dealing with operations
<i>Gebel</i>	Hill or high ground
GHQ	General Headquarters
Gk	Greek
GMDS	German Military Documents Section, Washington
GOC	General Officer Commanding
Gp	Group (Battalion or Brigade) force of all arms
Grant	American heavy tank with 75 mm gun
Greys	The Royal Scots Greys
GSO (I,II,III)	General Staff Officer (Grade I,II,III)

51 (H) Div	51 (Highland) Division
HE	high explosive ammunition
H.K.K.	Kippenberger's initials (Howard Karl)
Honey	nickname for Stuart tank (US M3)
HQ	headquarters
hrs	hours
hy	heavy

Int	Intelligence (of enemy)
2i/c	Second in-command
Ind	Indian
I/inf	infantry
IO	Intelligence Officer

KBE	Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire
KDG	King's Dragoon Guards (a reconnaissance unit)
K/kilo/km	kilometre
Kip/Kipp	universal nickname for Major General Sir Howard Kippenberger. Diminutive of Kippenberger
KC	Kippenberger Collection. Kippenberger's book collection, now housed at Waiouru
KP	Kippenberger Papers. Kippenberger's correspondence from 1946-57. Housed in the National Archives as Internal Affairs 77
laager	defensive disposition of unit or formation halted in mobile operations
LO	Liaison Officer
LOB	Left out of battle
L of C	Line(s) of communication
LRDG	Long Range Desert Group
Lt	Lieutenant; light
2Lt	Second-Lieutenant
LtCol	Lieutenant Colonel, usual rank for a CO
<i>Luftwaffe</i>	German Air Force
MA	Master of Arts degree
<i>mana</i>	Maori term for high honour or prestige
Mark (I,II,III etc)	designation of production type, especially tanks
<i>Marsa, mersa</i>	port, anchorage
Matilda	British infantry support tank

MC	Military Cross
MDS	Main Dressing Station (medical unit)
MEF	Middle East Forces
m.i.d.	Mentioned in Despatches
Mk	see Mark
MM	Military Medal
mm	millimetre, as in 88-mm gun
MO	Medical Officer
Mot	Motorised
MP	Military Police
MT	motor transport
'Murder'	massed artillery fire on a single target

NCO	non-commissioned officer
n.d.	no date available
Notts Yeo	Nottinghamshire Yeomanry
50 (N) Div	50 (Northumbrian) Division
NZ	New Zealand
NZA	New Zealand Artillery
NZASC	New Zealand Army Service Corps
NZEF	New Zealand Expeditionary Force
NZMC	New Zealand Medical Corps
NZMF	New Zealand Military Forces
NZNA	New Zealand National Archives, Wellington

OC	Officer Commanding (company, battery, squadron)
offr(s)	officer(s)
OP	Observation Post
Ops	Operations; staff branch dealing with same

ORs	other ranks (not officers)
PA	Personal Assistant to GOC
<i>Panzer/Pz</i>	German tank; armoured unit or formation
para	paragraph
pl	platoon
PM	Prime Minister
Point / Pt	Height marked on map, usually in metres above sea level
POL	Petrol, oil and lubricants
pr	pounder
posn	position
provost	military police
POWs	prisoner(s) of war
<i>Qaret</i>	low hill
QM	Quartermaster
RA	Royal Artillery
RAC	Royal Armoured Corps
RAMC	Royal Army Medical Corps
RASC	Royal Army Service Corps
rd	road
RE	Royal Engineers
recce	reconnaissance; reconnoitre
Regt	Regiment; unit of tanks, reconnaissance troops or artillery.

Reinforcements (4th,5th etc)	Successive contingents of 2 NZEF after the Third Echelon
RF	Regular Force, as opposed to Territorial Force (see TF)
RMT	Reserve Mechanical Transport
Royals	The Royal Dragoons (reconnaissance unit)
rpt	repeat message
RSA	Returned Servicemen's Association
RSM	Regimental Sergeant Major, the senior NCO of a unit
R/T	radio/telephone, wireless transmission of speech
RTR	Royal Tank Regiment
runner	a tank in working order
SA	South African
sangar	rocks piled up for protection in lieu of a slit trench. Used when the ground is too hard to dig
Scorpion	tank fitted with a flail device for clearing a path through a minefield
Sherman	US heavy tank with 75 mm gun
<i>Sidi</i>	saint
Sigs	Signals
sitrep	situation report
slit trench	one or two man trench; a "foxhole"
'S' mine	German anti-personnel mine
SP	self-propelled gun
spandau	nickname for standard German light and medium machine gun
sqn	squadron
<i>.SS</i>	<i>.Schutz Staffeln</i> , originally Hitler's bodyguards but transformed by Heinrich Himmler into a handpicked Nazi <i>corps d'elite</i>

Staffs Yeo	Staffordshire Yeomanry
'Stonk'	A quick defensive artillery concentration according to a prearranged pattern
Stuart	US M3 light cruiser tank
Stuka	Junkers 87 dive bomber
Tac HQ	Tactical Headquarters
tank-buster	Hurricane aircraft fitted with anti-tank cannon
<i>Tell</i>	high ground, small hill
TF	Territorial Force; Reserve Force in Australia
Tk	tank
Tommy gun	Thompson sub-machine gun
Trg	Training
Trig	see point
<i>Trigh</i>	track
Valentine	British infantry support tank
VC	Victoria cross
<i>wadi</i>	watercourse, usually dry
wastage	reduction of manpower
WD	Western Desert; War Diary
<i>Wehrmacht</i>	German Armed Forces
Wilts	Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry
WT	Wireless telegraphy
WWI	World War I, The Great War

yds

yards (.914 of a metre)

Zero (hour)

zeroing

time given for the start of an operation

checking gun sights etc for accuracy