



# Situation report – 13 March 1943

- The Allied Air Forces have won a decisive victory in the Bismark Sea and the US Navy in Blackett Strait have demonstrated that they can now confidently engage Japanese surface forces at night.
- The long and bloody battles for the Kokoda trail, Guadalcanal and the Japanese beach heads at Gona, Buna and Sanananda have been won.
- The Japanese attack on Wau has been repelled but the Japanese remain in force at Salamaua and Mubo.
- The British Indian army is mounting a campaign to capture Akyab in North West Burma and the Chindits have crossed the Chindwin on their raid into Northern Burma.
- The Allied air forces have achieved a good deal of freedom of action. They are able to supply allied ground troops and reconnoitre Japanese bases with very few losses but Japanese air forces are becoming more active once again.
- The American submarine force is becoming very effective after fixing early technical problems but Japanese submarines have also been active off the Australian coast.
- The Casablanca Conference continued the beat Hitler first strategy decided by the UK and the US early in 1941. Operations in the Pacific were to continue with the object of maintaining pressure on Japan, retaining the initiative and attaining a position of readiness for a full-scale offensive by the United Nations as soon as Germany is defeated.

# 13 March - Sea

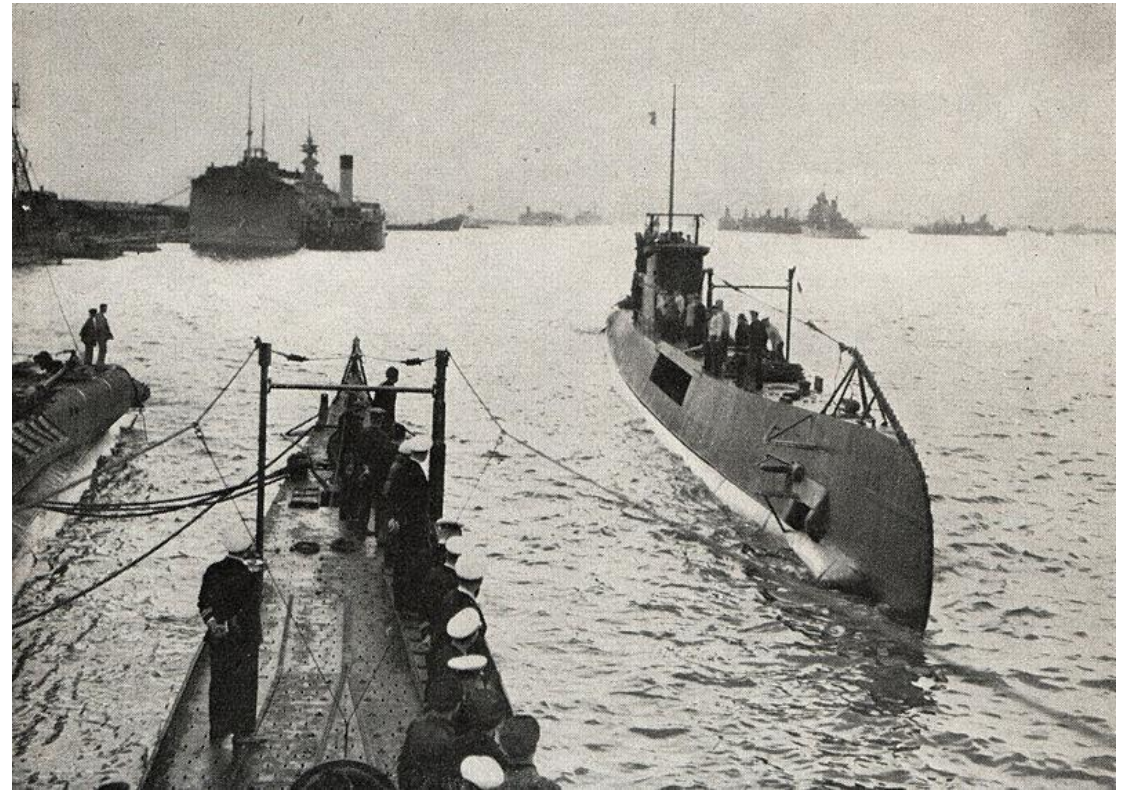
- Commander Webb, who assumed the appointment of N.O.I.C. Oro Bay on 15th March, left Milne Bay for Oro Bay on 13th March in the motor vessel Comara (751 tons) which:
- “was loaded to her marks and there was not a square foot of deck space, hatches were covered with trucks and vehicles of all descriptions and with ship's company and troops there was twice the number of men on board for whom there was lifeboat accommodation, etc.”



*(R.A.N. Historical Section)*  
Navy Office, Oro Bay, with Commander C. J. R. Webb, N.O.I.C., 1943.

## 13 March - Sea

- A Japanese transport was torpedoed and sunk in Port Blair Harbor, Andaman Islands, in the Indian Ocean (11°40'N 92°50'E) by HNLMS O 21.
- A Japanese cargo ship was torpedoed and sunk in the East China Sea by USS Sunfish.



HNLMS O 21 entering the harbor, Gibraltar 28 November 1941.

# 13 March - Air

- B-17's bomb A/F and shipping at Wewak.
- A B-17 bombs Gasmata A/F and warehouses on Wide Bay, while
- A B-24 attacks shipping off Netherlands New Guinea.
- Enemy positions Komiatum area were strafed a.m. 13/3 by three Beaufighters.
- Vila and Munda A/Fs are again attacked by B-24's in light raids. Also bombed is Faisi I.
- Vila dumps and bivouac area were attacked 1020/13 by 18 dive-bombers escorted by 23 fighters.
- 12 P-40's strike Kiska beach, camp and runway. Hits are observed on these tgts and among 14 parked airplanes.
- 8 P-38's with 8 P-40's flying top cover again take off for Kiska. Only 3 of the P-38's reach the tgt and strafe aircraft on beach. Another sights a submarine SW of Rat I.
- 4 B-24's attack and slightly damage Pazundaung bridge.



# March – Tropical Disease

- In September 1942, Blamey, on the advice of the D.G.M.S., sent a military medical mission to Washington and the United Kingdom. Colonel Fairley, Director of Medicine A.A.M.C. and Dr Albert, a research chemist were appointed.
- The objects of the mission were to
  - represent the truly serious position, particularly with regard to malaria in the South-West Pacific, and to
  - try to obtain adequate supplies of quinine, atebrin, plasmoquine and pyrethrum, and an efficient type of netting.
- The discussions in Washington and later in London had important results.
- Data collected from recent observations of the problem of malaria facing the Allied forces in the Pacific zone was welcomed by the Medical Intelligence Branch of the Surgeon-General's Office, and the D.M.S., U.S. Navy and was widely circulated.

# March – Tropical Disease

- It was clear in every way that the Allied malarial war would depend largely upon atabrin.
- Most of the production had to fall on American industry.
- It was agreed that Australia could not make atabrin without a severe tax on the chemical industry:
- to make each ton of atabrin in Australia it would be necessary to import about 20 tons of raw materials.



posted at the 363rd Station Hospital in Papua New Guinea during World War II. Otis Historical Archives of "National Museum of Health & Medicine" (OTIS Archive 1)

# March – Tropical Disease

- Important information was also gained about insect repellents. Citronella was not proving very effective in the Australian Services, and its use was unpopular because it was greasy.
- The Surgeon-General's Department in U.S.A. made available details concerning "Sta-way ", "Indalone" and Ethyl-hexane diol, all synthetics of much greater potency. Sta-way, however, had been found to cause liver and kidney damage in animals, Indalone stained clothing and was expensive; ethyl-hexane diol was effective for four hours, and could be applied as a cream, but it presented technical difficulties of manufacture in Australia.
- On enquiry it was found that recent work on dimethyl phthalate showed that, although not so effective as ethyl-hexanediol, it proved very effective for both mosquitoes and mites ("chiggers"), as well as sandflies and fleas.



# March – Tropical Disease

- Dimethyl phthalate was introduced and patented by Standard Oil, who sold a 25 per cent solution which had been found effective for some years in South America. Experiments showed that its toxicity was very low.
- This appeared to be the answer to Australia's needs, being twice as powerful as citronella, much easier to apply, and offering no difficulties in manufacture provided methanol could be obtained in quantity. Fairley and Albert aroused considerable surprise when they pointed out another virtue of this repellent which had been overlooked, its comparative cheapness.
- A strong recommendation was made that dimethyl phthalate should be adopted as the standard repellent in Australia. The importance of the South American work had attracted attention to it in Australia also at this time, and Captain Waterhouse had made some examination of dimethyl phthalate. R.N. McCulloch was thus able to start field work at an early date, and these independent studies were well advanced on Fairley's return.
- The first bulk supplies of dimethyl phthalate reached troops in New Guinea in March 1943.

# 14 March - COIC

(2) S.W.Coast Dutch New Guinea - Reconnaissance a.m. 13/3 reported the following shipping -

Babo - 1 merchant vessel (8-10,000 tons)

Bentoni Bay - (across MacCluer Gulf from Babo) - 1 merchant vessel (4-6,000 tons)

Raaf Bay (3°45'S, 133°55'E) - 4 merchant vessels (approx 4,000 tons each)

Namaripi (4°30'S, 135°15'E) - 5 small vessels

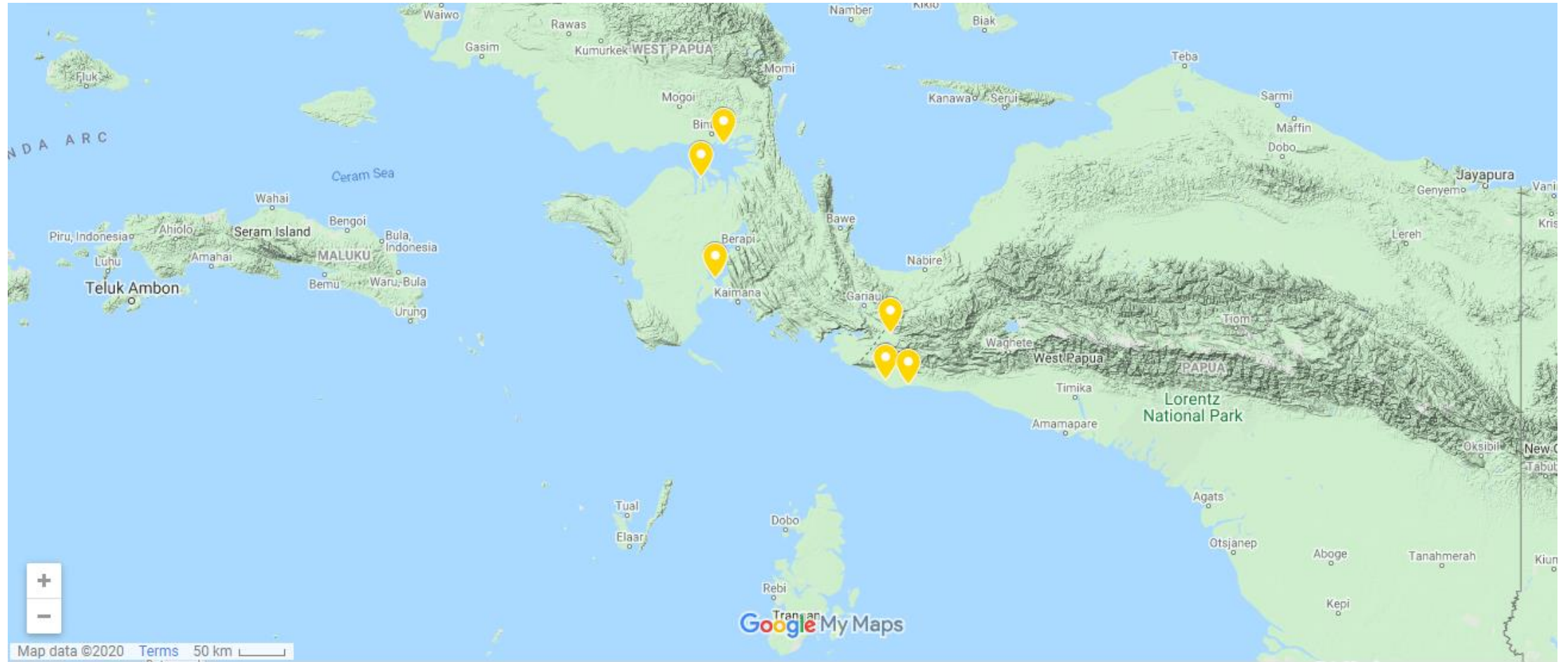
Oemara (15 miles E. of Namaripi) - 4 small cargo ships

Maimawa (4°02'S, 135°18'E) - a river ferry

The unusual shipping activity in this area together with the increased shipping at Ambon conforms with other recent intelligence indicating increased enemy activity generally in this area.

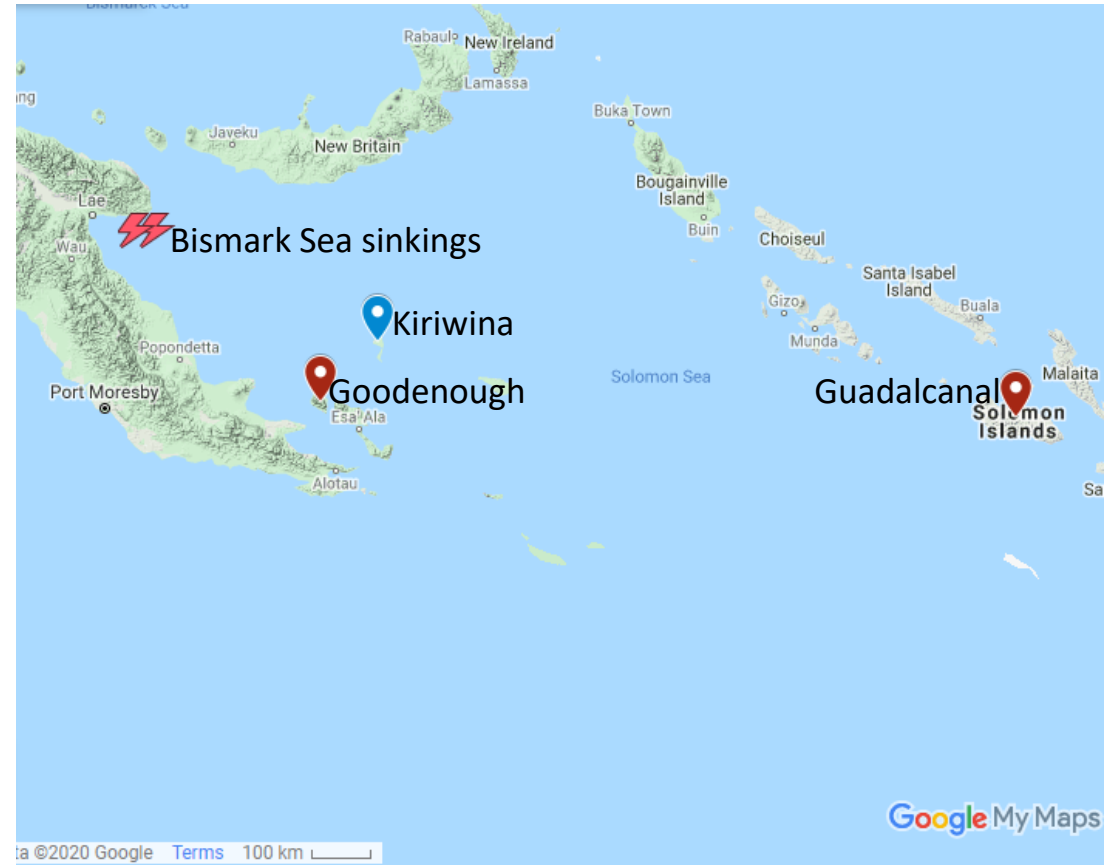
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# 14 March - COIC



# 14 March - Sea

- Between the 8th and the 14th Australian patrols of the 47<sup>th</sup> Battalion on Goodenough Island killed 72 Japanese, captured 42 and found 9 dead on a raft.
- Other survivors from the convoy were picked up on Kiriwina and even as far to the east as Guadalcanal.



# 14 March - Sea

- The enemy convoy sighted approaching Wewak at 1230/13 was shadowed until the striking force of 6 Fortresses arrived.
- At 1800/13 in a position 25 miles N. by E. of Wewak, the shadowing aircraft reported the composition of the convoy to be -
  - 2 destroyers
  - 1 transport (8,000 tons)
  - 4 cargo vessels (3-4,000 tons)
  - 1 tanker (3-4,000 tons)
- At 2025/13, 6 Fortresses attacked the convoy. Three dropped demolition bombs on the aerodrome and township and a fourth bombed the convoy from 5500-7500 ft while the remaining 2 aircraft dropped 500-lb 5-second delay bombs from 200-250 ft.
- Both these two aircraft scored hits on 7-8000 ton vessels, possibly the same ship. One such ship exploded violently and was still burning fiercely 1.5 hours later. A large destroyer was hit with one bomb also a 4,000 ton tanker which could not be found when the aircraft circled back.

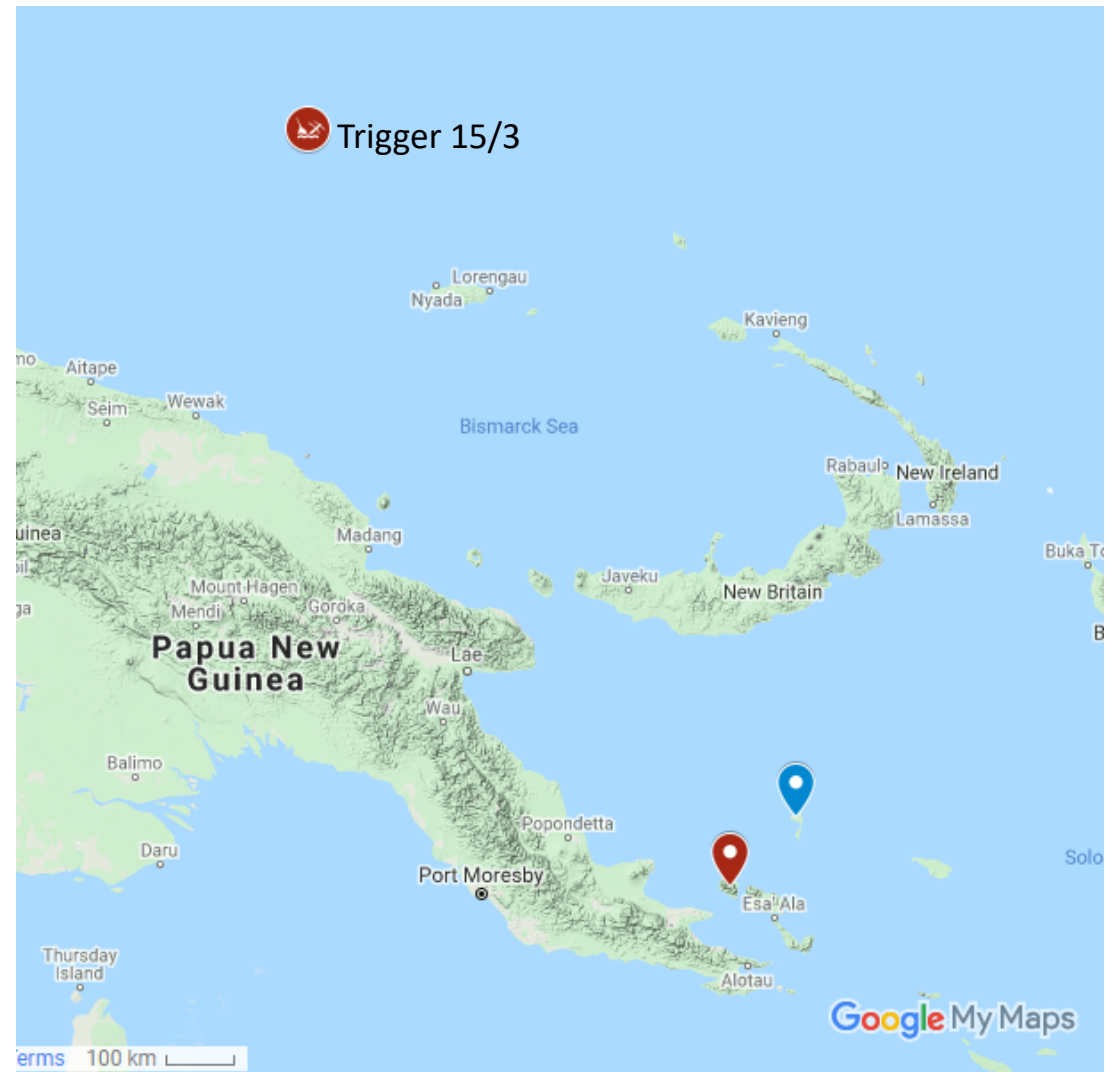
# 14 March - Air

- 15 Japanese bombers raided Oro Bay 1940/14 damaging wharves and dock Installations but causing no casualties.
- B-17's and B-24's bomb Wewak, Tring, and Madang.
- Single B-17's bomb Gasmata, and strafe vessel off Talasea, AA position at Cape Gloucester, and Finschhafen A/F.
- Two merchant vessels with one escort, possibly a destroyer, were sighted 37 miles N. by W. of Warilaoe on course 230° at 1245/15, The three merchant vessels were attacked by 3 Hudsons at 1800/15 22 miles north of Dobo. Two direct hits were scored. A further attack was made by 3 B25s 41 miles NW of Dobo, but no hits were scored.
- A lone B-24 bombs Dili.
- By mid March the Fifth Airforce had a service group, aircraft warning units and two fighter squadrons based at Dobodura but there was still no road from the airfield to Oro Bay. The First Air Task Force was set up under Col Frederick Smith to command these units.
- Buka aerodrome was attacked by 3 Catalinas 2256/13-0400/14 .
- 4 B-24's bomb Moulmein docks. 8 B-25's hit the oft-bombed Gokteik Viaduct but the structure remains serviceable.



# 15 March - Sea

- A Japanese cargo ship was torpedoed and sunk in the Pacific Ocean (00°02'S 145°05'E) by USS Trigger.
- USS PT 67 & PT 119 were destroyed by fire in a refuelling accident at Tufi, New Guinea.
- On 15 March 1943, "by a stroke of Admiral King's pen," the Southwest Pacific Force became the Seventh Fleet and its Amphibious Force became the VII Amphibious Force.



# 15 March - Air

- A B-24 bombs shipping at Dobo.
- Two merchant vessels with one escort, possibly a destroyer, were sighted 37 miles N. by W. of Warilaoe on course 230° at 1245/15, The three merchant vessels were attacked by 3 Hudsons at 1800/15 22 miles north of Dobo. Two direct hits were scored. A further attack was made by 3 B25s 41 miles NW of Dobo, but no hits were scored.
- B-17's, on singleplane flights bomb Gasmata and Cape Gloucester.
- Single B-17's hit Munda and Vila A/Fs. P-38's strafe A/F at Viru.
- 12 Dauntless escorted by 25 Wildcats attacked Munda 1710/15.
- 12 Dauntless escorted by 4 Wildcats attacked Vila 1735/15.
- 6 B-25's, with 4 P-38's flying top cover, bomb North Head, hitting Main Camp and gun emplacements.
- 6 B-24's with 4 P-38's for top cover then bomb Main Camp.
- Revetments and hangar area are strafed by the P-38's one of which is lost to AA.
- Next, 5 B-24's and 16 P-38's bomb and strafe Main Camp area and North Head.
- Main Camp is hit two more times, by 3 B-25's and by 8 P-38's.
- 8 B-25's bomb Gokteik Viaduct and 8 others attack Myitnge. Neither tgt suffers effective damage.
- 8 FBs damage bridge at Kadrangyang

# 15 March - Air

- On the 15<sup>th</sup> March a Japanese formation of 20+ bombers escorted by 25+ Zeros were intercepted by the whole spitfire wing and a general dogfight followed over Darwin harbour.
- The Spitfires claimed seven aircraft shot down and seven probably damaged.
- Flying Officer Goldsmith of No. 452 destroyed a Betty and a Hap.
- Four Spitfires were lost, with three pilots including Squadron Leader Thorold-Smith, commander of No. 452, with which he had served with distinction in its first tour of duty in Fighter Command from July 1941 to March 1942.
- Command of the squadron was taken over, after a hasty conversion from Wirraways, by Squadron Leader MacDonald who had served with No. 67 Squadron R.A.F. at Singapore, and who, before coming to No. 452, had commanded No. 12 Squadron at Batchelor.
- This had been the 53<sup>rd</sup> raid on Darwin.

# 16 March - Government

- A discussion took place between Curtin and MacArthur on 16th March 1943 because the War Cabinet, when discussing a raid by 24 medium bombers and 20 fighters on Darwin on 15th March, had referred to the threat to Australia involved in the Japanese concentrations in the islands north of the mainland.
- Curtin left the meeting to consult MacArthur by "secraphone" and, on his return, quoted MacArthur as saying that there was clear evidence that the enemy was trying to infiltrate and shove his position nearer to Torres Strait.
- MacArthur did not possess sufficient strength to meet all the enemy moves in the north-east and eastern sector and at the same time to meet all probable enemy moves in the north-west.
- The north-west sector was in process of being built up by the enemy. MacArthur did not think the enemy had sufficient forces to launch a major attack now, but that he would require from two to four months to develop the requisite forces to make a serious attack.
- In the arc of islands outside the mainland of Australia the enemy was developing 67 airfields, and when these were completed he would be able to use them to operate air forces of 1,500 to 2,000 planes.

# 16 March - Sea

- Munda and Vila were again bombarded by destroyers during the night 15-16/3.
- All barges at Vila were reported set on fire.



# 16 March - Air

- The township of Lae was successfully attacked at about 0900/16 by 6 B25s with 18 Lightnings acting as cover.
- B-17's bomb Rapopo airstrip and attack Ubili, sub off Cape Turner, town of Marienberg, and Cape Gloucester area.
- B-24's unsuccessfully attack cargo ships between Bitsjaroe Bay and Fak.
- B-17's and B-24's on harassing raids bomb Kahili, Vila, and Ballale A/Fs.
- After dawn 16/3, 19 dive-bombers escorted by 20 fighters raided Vila. Reconnaissance a.m. 16/3 reported the airfields at Munda and Vila to be "In terrible shape".



# 16 March - Air

- In a raid on 16th March on the isthmus of Salamaua by 7 Bostons, Flight Lieutenant Newton, dived in through intense anti-aircraft fire and bombed with devastating accuracy.
- A large fire followed the bomb explosions and this was increased by the bombs of the following aircraft.
- When Newton pulled out of the dive four direct hits had severely damaged both wings and one engine and punctured the fuel tanks.
- Despite the damage he succeeded in flying 180 miles back to base and in landing the aircraft.



# 16 March - Air

- 16 B-25's, 13 B-24's, 8 P-40's and 32 P-38's (cover/escort) sorties are flown to Kiska in one weather rcn and 2 attack missions from Adak, and in 3 more missions from Amchitka. Tgts hit are North Head, Main Camp area, radar sites and submarine base. On last Amchitka mission 1 enemy floatplane is shot down with 2 more probables. 4 HBs are hit and 1 B-25 does not return.
- 6 B-24's damage approaches to Pazundaung bridge.
- 8 B-25's attack Myitnge bridge, scoring at least 2 hits, but the structure remains intact.
- P-40's hit positions N of Sumprabum.
- Fourteenth AF P-40's strafe Mong Yaw storage area and docks, warehouse area, and rail-river terminal (for phosphate mines) at Lao Kay.

# 17 March - Sea

- On 30th September 1942 Manoora had arrived at Sydney from escort work, and Admiral Royle recommended that she be reconverted for use as a cargo and troop carrier.
- (The British, he told the Council, had transferred 15 armed merchant cruisers back to trade.)
- The recommendation was adopted, and Manoora paid off and went into dockyard hands in Sydney.
- The other two former Australian A.M.C.'s were also put into dockyard hands for conversion to LSIs, Westralia in December 1942 and Kanimbla in April 1943.
- At the end of the year Rear-Admiral Barbey (photo) was appointed in command of VII Amphibious Force.



# 17 March - Sea



Manooka, which recommissioned as a Landing Ship, Infantry (L.S.I.) on 2nd February 1943 was the first such ship to join the force. She carried American landing craft—20-22 L.C.V.Ps and 2-3 L.C.M's.

# 17 March - Sea

- In March 1943 the American attack transport (A.P.A.) Henry T. Allen (12,400 tons) reported at Sydney to join the force.
- On 17 March Allen was assigned as flagship, Commander Amphibious Force, Seventh Fleet.
- Barbey established his headquarters aboard the Allen on the Brisbane River.
- The VII Amphibious Force inherited the Royal Australian Navy amphibious training center HMAS Assault at Port Stephens, New South Wales and a Combined Training School at Bribie Island and nearby Toorbul Point in Queensland.



USS Henry T. Allen leaving Norfolk, Virginia on her way to Operation Torch, 1942



# 17 March - Sea

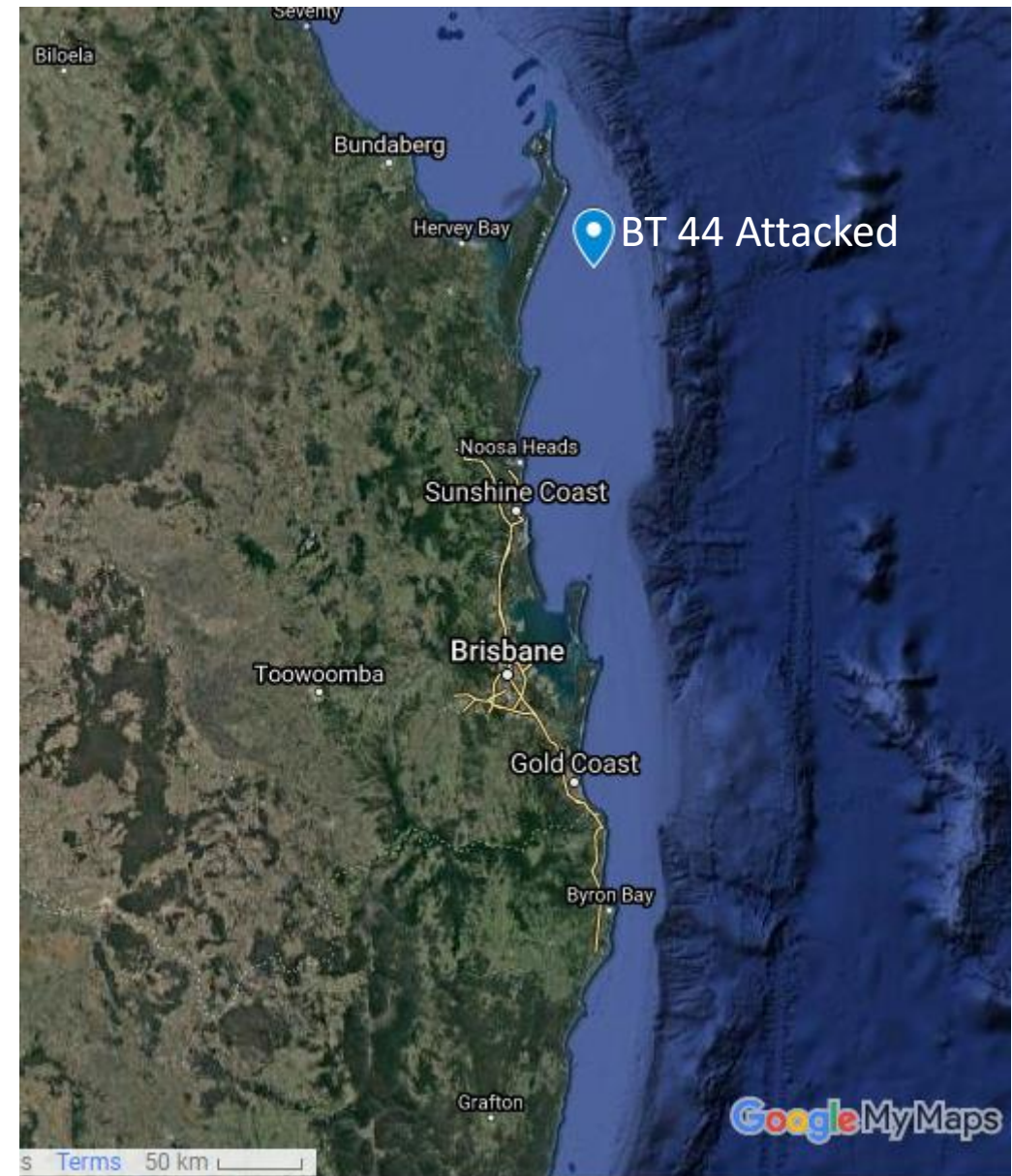
- Two of our motor torpedo boats on patrol outside Morobe Harbour encountered 6 enemy barges off Mageri Point, at mouth of Mai-ama River at 0100/17.
- The barges contained crews only and were apparently making rendezvous for supplies with an enemy submarine, for which they mistook the torpedo boats.
- The barges came right alongside and were all destroyed Including the crews.
- One member of the motor torpedo boats crew was seriously wounded.





# 17 March - Sea

- Convoy BT44 (HMAS GYMPIE escorting "CHARLES S. JONES" & "JOSEPH BOLT" - departed Brisbane 0015/17 for Townsville) was attacked by an enemy submarine at 1510/17 in position 25°41'S 153°51'E (approx 80 miles N. by E. of Cape Moreton). Two or three torpedoes were fired at "CHARLES S. JONES" but passed 20 yards astern.
- "GYMPIE" ran along the approximate torpedo track in the direction of the submarine but dropped no depth charges.
- Aircraft on a/s patrol noticed an oil patch and possible periscope feather and dropped one 250-lb a/s bomb with no apparent result.
- Further immediate search proved negative but sea markers were dropped.



# 17 March - Air

- On the 17th (March), 18 Japanese bombers with the unusually heavy escort of 32 fighters struck at Porlock Harbour at about midday causing some damage and escaping without loss.
- Vila and Munda were harassed as usual during the night 16-17/3 by Liberators.
- Kahili and Balale were harassed during the night 16-17/3 by Liberators.
- The aerodrome at Langgoer (on Klein Kai, approximately opposite Toeal) was attacked 0800/17 by 5 B25s and 3 Hudsons.
- Penfoei aerodrome was bombed by 3 Hudsons at 2200/17.

# Coffee

- As you know, to date I have focussed on telling the story as it was known to participants at the time, trying to bring out the drama of the situation facing the participants, who didn't know the strength or plans of the enemy or the outcome of the war.
- As the Allies take the initiative and improve their intelligence the character of the war is changing.
- I have now got as far as I want to go with the story for the moment. I will not pursue the detailed chronology any further except to follow operations currently in train to their outcome.
- I am then planning to spend some time going back to look at some of the things, which were not known at the time, which hopefully should help us understand why things happened as they did.
- I will also spend some time following some of the individuals in the story, looking at whence they came and where they went.

# 18 March - Shipping

- On 18<sup>th</sup> March President Roosevelt ordered Admiral King to transfer 60 Liberators from the Pacific theatre to the Atlantic to combat German U Boats.
- This was only the second direct order he had given his military commanders in the war. The other was regarding operation Torch.



# 18 March - Burma

- For the next assault on Donbaik, Lloyd planned to use the 71st Indian Brigade in a flanking move along the spine of the Mayu Range, but by this time, Irwin had lost confidence in Lloyd and his brigadiers, and laid down the plan of attack himself.
- He diverted the 71st Brigade to the Mayu Valley and ordered the British 6th Brigade, reinforced to a strength of six battalions, to make a fourth attack on a narrow front.
- The Brigade attacked on 18 March, advancing straight in the open over the dead of previous attacks, they got among and even on top of the bunkers but, in spite of heavy artillery support, they could not break in.
- They were then caught by the Japanese counter barrage and were bloodily driven back and suffered 300 casualties.
- After this repulse, Wavell and Irwin ordered the ground already taken to be held.





# 18 March - Air

- The attack on the isthmus of Salamaua on the 16<sup>th</sup> (March) had been so successful that it was repeated two days later (18 March).
- Newton again dived his aircraft low to blast a building adjacent to an anti-aircraft battery.
- As the Boston cleared the target it was seen to be severely damaged and on fire. Newton had no alternative but to ditch the aircraft in the sea close to the isthmus.
- Other Boston crews saw his aircraft go down and reported having seen two crew members swimming towards the beach. There was some hope that, having reached the shore, they might escape the attention of the enemy and perhaps be picked up by one of the A.I.F. patrols that were known to be making daring sorties along the coast.
- This hope proved vain and Newton and his crew were posted missing.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

AC0031

DOUGLAS BOSTON (A-20) AIRCRAFT OF NO. 22 SQUADRON RAAF IN SOUTH WEST PACIFIC AREA.



# 23 March - Government

- On 23 March Curtin holds a press conference in which he states he is:
- 'profoundly disappointed at the number of subscriptions so far lodged for the Third Liberty Loan'.
- He also expresses disappointment at a speech by Churchill in which he 'disposed of the Far East in a few sentences.' ... As a direct intimation to the Australian people that there was a long struggle ahead of them.
- That day he also announces the safe arrival in Australia of the Ninth Division of the AIF.



# 23 March - Government

- On 23rd March the War Cabinet had before it a series of reports showing the effect of the wastage of men by disease on the Australian capacity to maintain the strength and organisation of the forces.
- The conclusion of the reports was that if Australia wished to maintain a striking force of 95,000 for offensive operations it would probably have to eliminate two or three formations from the Order of Battle.
- The actual position was that there was already a deficiency of 79,000 on the war establishment and the monthly intake of men was only expected to be half of the 12,500 required.



War Cabinet meeting in Melbourne in 1943. Left to right: John Curtin, Sir Frederick Sheddon, Ben Chifley, 'Doc' Evatt, Norm Makin, John Dedman

# 24 March - Press

- The Sydney Morning Herald, 24 Mar 1943 reported General Blamey, describing the return of the division and quoting the deeds of the other Middle East divisions and of the militia in Papua. He then continued:
- “But I speak for the Army when I say that if we are to win, the united nation must stand behind us and give us its full support. The army is both disappointed and disgusted that while each of us is prepared to give everything, even life itself, for our country's safety, we find far too many of our people who fail to realise the serious position which confronts this nation.
- In the same paper Mr Curtin expressed himself "profoundly disappointed at the number of subscriptions so far lodged for the Third Liberty Loan", and Ministers were reported as being particularly annoyed at queues outside Melbourne picture shows at 9 a.m. They blamed "luxury spending rather than the increased taxation announced . . . for difficulties facing the loan organisation".

# 28 March - Command

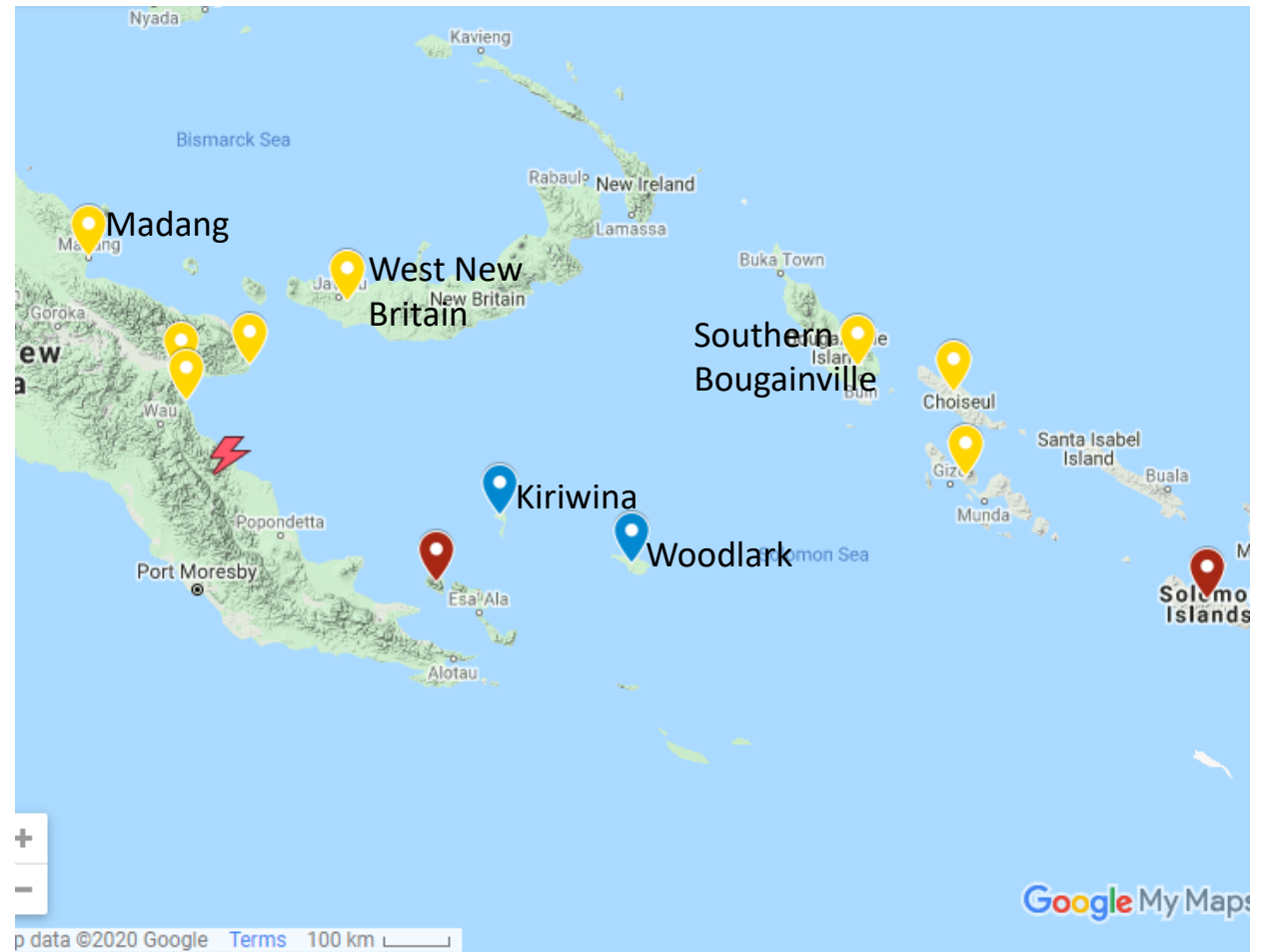
- The Joint Chiefs of Staff issued a directive of 20th March outlining the offensive operations necessary in 1943 in the Souwespac and Soupac areas.
- General Marshall issued a directive to MacArthur dated 28th March stating:
- **Command**
- The operations outlined in this Directive will be conducted under the direction of the Supreme Commander, South-West Pacific Area.
- (b) Operations in the Solomon Islands will be under the direct command of the Commander, South Pacific Area, operating under general directives of the Supreme Commander, South-West Pacific Area.
- (c) Units of the Pacific Ocean Area, other than those assigned by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to task forces engaged in these operations, will remain under the control of the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Ocean Area.



# 28 March - Strategy

- **Tasks**

- Establish airfields on Kiriwina and Woodlark Islands.
- (b) Seize Lae Salamaua Finschhafen Madang area and occupy western New Britain.
- (c) Seize and occupy the Solomon Islands to include the southern portion of Bougainville.



## 28 March - Air

- On the 28<sup>th</sup> (March) after the local fighter sector had given a raid warning prompted by a particularly large radar plot, the enemy staged an air raid by 18 bombers and 40 fighters on Oro Bay.
- Bantam, which was discharging at the wharf, received three hits from dive bombers, which also scored a hit on the wharf. The Dutch ship was badly damaged, and had to be beached.
- H.M.A.S. Bowen, Bantam's escort, which was providing anti-submarine protection, was not attacked, but the American small ship Masaya (1,174 tons), a converted First World War class destroyer, was attacked and sunk five miles east of Oro Bay.
- Thirty one American fighters intercepted and claimed 13 enemy aircraft.



## 29 March - Burma

- On 25 March, Lloyd ordered the isolated 47th Indian Brigade to fall back across the Mayu Range, despite Irwin's instructions to hold all ground until the monsoon.
- Irwin rescinded Lloyd's order and dismissed Lloyd on 29 March, taking command of the 14th Division in person until the headquarters of the Indian 26th Division, commanded by Major-General Cyril Lomax, could take over.



# 30 March - Air

- In an epic duel with two Zeros over Kaimana Bay on the 30th March a Mitchell (of no 18 NEI Squadron) shot down one Zero and probably the other.



## 3 April - Burma

- On 3 April, while one Japanese force pressed northwards up the Mayu River valley, another Japanese division crossed the Mayu Range at a point where British officers had regarded the range as impassable and cut the coastal track behind the leading British troops.



# 5 April - Sea

- USS Casablanca was launched on 5 April 1943 and commissioned on 8 July 1943.
- She was the first of a class of 50 escort carriers built by the Kaiser Shipbuilding Company's Vancouver Yard on the Columbia River in Vancouver, Washington.
- Casablanca was the first class to be designed from keel up as an escort carrier. It had a larger and more useful hangar deck than previous conversions. It also had a larger flight deck than the Bogue class but fighters were still limited to smaller and lighter aircraft such as the Grumman F4F Wildcat.
- 24 more Casablanca class carriers were launched before the end of the year.



USS Guadalcanal,



# 5 April - Burma

- The Japanese attacked on the night of 5 April and captured the village of Indin, where they also overran the headquarters of the British 6th Brigade and captured its commander, Brigadier Cavendish, his adjutant and six staff officers.
- Cavendish, some of his staff and some of their Japanese captors were killed shortly afterwards, probably by British artillery fire. (Cavendish had directed the British guns to open fire on Indin just before being overrun.)
- The 47th Indian Brigade was forced to retreat across the Mayu Range in small parties, abandoning all its equipment and ceasing to exist as a fighting force.



# 5 April - Burma

- Indian XV Corps headquarters under Lieutenant General Slim then belatedly took charge of the Arakan front.
- Although the British 6th Brigade was still formidable in spite of its recent defeats, Slim was concerned that the other troops on the front were tired and demoralised. Nevertheless, he and Lomax anticipated that the Japanese would next try to capture the Maungdaw-Buthidaung road and planned to surround and destroy them.
- While the British 6th Brigade defended the coastal plain, eight British and Indian battalions were deployed to encircle the Japanese as they neared the road at a point where two tunnels carried it through the Mayu range.





## 6 April - Air

- Up at ADVON, the evidence seemed to support the view expressed in its final report on 6 April 1943 that “an additional seven merchant vessels” had “moved into the immediate area” of the Bismark Sea Battle.
- The final figure of twenty-two ships rested then upon the assumption that other vessels had joined the convoy after the action began, an assumption which seemed to find at least partial support in certain enemy documents captured with some of the survivors immediately after the battle.
- Since no ship was seen to escape, it was assumed that all had been sunk.
- The evidence at best was tenuous, but good enough for a preliminary assessment.

# 7 April - Air

- Bougainville coastwatchers gave warning of a major attack, when 67 dive bombers and 110 fighters from Buka and Kahili in southern Bougainville, and Ballale in the Shortlands attacked ships at Tulagi and Guadalcanal on 7th April, and sank an American destroyer and tanker, and the New Zealand corvette Moa.
- Moa was refuelling from the USS Erskine M. Phelps at Tulagi Harbor when Japanese aircraft attacked. She sustained a direct hit from a 500-pound bomb and was damaged by two near misses. She sank bow first within about four minutes.
- Five crew were killed and seven were seriously wounded, including Phipps, the Captain.



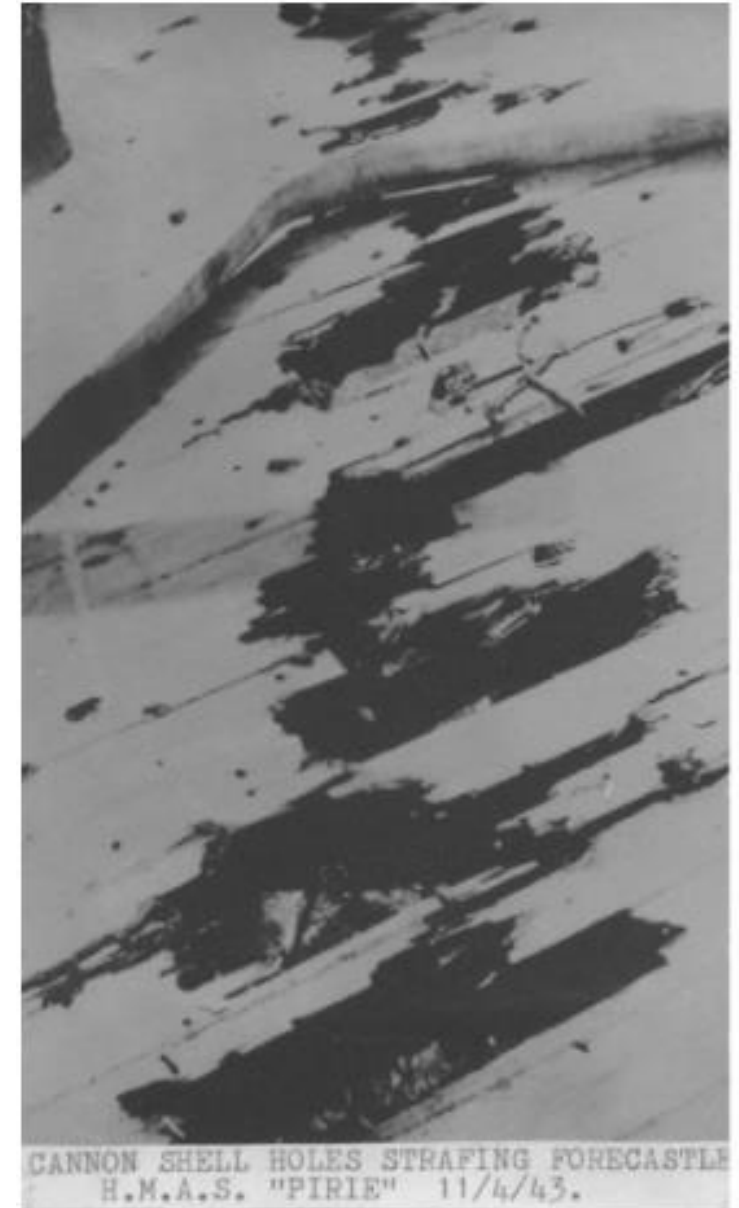
HMNZS Moa

# 11 April - Air

- On 11 April about 50 Japanese dive bombers and fighters raided Oro Bay.
- At noon H.M.A.S. Pirie, escorting the British Hanyang and Noora from Milne Bay, was approaching the port and about 12 miles distant. The raiders attacked the two ships.
- Allied radar was now proving its worth—the Japanese were attacked by 50 Lightnings and Kittyhawks scrambled from the Dobodura airfields and from Moresby.
- A mounting offshore cloud formation complicated maintaining formation and finding the enemy for the defending fighters which never the less claimed the destruction of 17 of the enemy aircraft for the loss of one Lightning crash landed.
- A direct hit by dive bombers on Hanyang penetrated the upper deck and exploded in the bunkers, disabling the steering gear.
- Noora sustained a hole in the port side from a near miss.

# 11 April - Air

- Pirie suffered two near misses, and claimed one attacking aircraft victim to her gunfire, in one attack, and in a second attack received a direct hit.
  - The bomb (apparently delayed-action fuse) struck the bridge canopy, glanced off the steering position apron and hit and killed the gunnery officer, Lieutenant Ellershaw, passed out through the fore side of the bridge, and finally exploded on the upper deck, where it killed six members of the forecastle 12-pounder gun crew, and seriously wounded the gunlayer.
  - The ship was then heavily bombarded with cannon fire which badly tore and penetrated the decking and wounded three ratings.
- Two members of Hanyang's crew and one American soldier were killed, and two crew and one soldier wounded. The attack ended at 12.53, when both ships proceeded to Oro Bay.



# April - Air

- The USAAF Heavy Bombers started to be relieved of their onerous reconnaissance tasks.
- These were increasingly taken over by PB4Y's (Navy B-24's) as they arrived in the theater, and by photo-reconnaissance P-38s, which served as an excellent search plane for the daylight run over Rabaul.



F-4 Lightning #25 at the Stock Route airfield  
via ozatwar.com

# 12 April - Air

- On 12th April the enemy made their 106th air raid on Port Moresby. Forty-three twin engine bombers and approximately 60 fighters crossed the Owen Stanleys and concentrated their attacks on the Port Moresby airfields.
- With adequate radar warning 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Sector scrambled more than 60 defenders from Moresby and Dobodura to intercept, which cost the Japanese 15 bombers and at least 9 fighters claimed for the loss of only 2 American fighters.
- The Japanese bombers did considerable damage on the ground. Four aircraft (one Beaufighter and 3 Mitchells) were destroyed and 15 others were damaged, some of them severely.
- At Ward's, Berry and Schwimmer aerodromes the runways were damaged, and at Kila several men working at a fuel dump were burned to death when enemy bombs exploded the drums.



Wards (5 Mile) Drome 1943



# 14 April - Air

- On 14th April in its twenty-fourth air raid, 40 to 50 bombers and about 60 fighters attacked Milne Bay 1216/14, and concentrated on ships in the bay.
- These included the British Gorgon, and Dutch Van Outhoorn, Van Heemskerk, and Balikpapan and three corvettes Kapunda, Whyalla and Wagga.
- Warning of the impending raid, and an intimation of its size, were given when the enemy aircraft were approaching over the Trobriands. The enemy arrived overhead about 12.15, 30 high-level bombers in close formation and 10 dive bombers, with an uncertain number of fighters.
- The high-level aircraft opened the attack by dropping a pattern of about 100 bombs right across the anchorage. This, however, had been cleared, so that no ships were lost in this attack.
- Van Outhoorn suffered damage from near misses by high level bombers, had eight killed and 20 wounded, and was succoured by Whyalla, who did a fine job with anti-aircraft fire.
- Gorgon was hit a number of times by dive bombers, and set on fire, with her engines out of action. Dixon took Kapunda alongside, ran hoses on board and helped with the fire fighting.

# 14 April - Air

- While Kapunda assisted with the fire fighting, Gorgon's chief officer, Mr James Bruce; Major Brew of the Docks Operating Company; and Able Seaman Larkin (one of the ship's D.E.M.S. gunners) removed an unexploded Japanese bomb from among the ship's cargo of ammunition in No. 5 lower hold.
- Six of her (Gorgon's) company were killed or died of wounds, and 28 were wounded.
- Van Heemskerk was hit by the dive bombers. Wagga put up a gallant fight to save the Dutch ship, going alongside and putting nine hoses and a fire party on board. But the fire had too great a hold, and Van Heemskerk finally blew up about 5 p.m. and there she remained, beached, a total loss.
- In this raid, four Allied servicemen were killed, as were 12 of the merchant ships' crews. In all—servicemen, civilians of the Small Ships Section and ships' crews—68 were wounded. Wagga and Kapunda suffered superficial damage.
- Meanwhile, overhead, a significant air battle took place during which both Australian squadrons shot down five aircraft each. Forty-four Allied fighters intercepted and the enemy lost ten bombers and three fighters.

# 14 April - Air

- Air controller Cator directed 8 P38s from Dobodura to search for a large formation sighted over Goodenough island.
- 1st Lt Richard Bong was leading one of the four aircraft flights but all the other three had to turn back for mechanical faults and Bong became separated from the other flight.
- Bong sighted the Bettys just after they had bombed, positioned himself up sun and fired on the trailing bomber, hitting its cockpit and port engine. The wounded bomber fell away and was set on by RAAF Kittyhawks before it crashed in the sea.



# 14 April - Air

- Bong was then attacked by six diving Oscars but used his P38's superior diving speed to escape and go after the bombers again.
- Bong quickly overhauled the left hand bomber and fired from close range from the left rear quarter. The port left side of the bomber's fuselage erupted in flames and it suddenly began to descend steeply.
- When he maneuvered for another pass but was attacked by two more Oscars.
- Bong was credited with a probable for the first and a victory for the second.



Bong's gun camera footage.

The victory was his tenth making Bong the first official double ace in the Pacific theatre.

# 14 April - Air

- On 29 January 1943, with her sister ship Moa, HMNZS Kiwi rammed and wrecked the Japanese submarine I-1 of Guadalcanal. The Japanese tried to blow up the submarine while abandoning it but failed to achieve total destruction.
- Immediately after the sinking, the Allies started to explore the wrecked submarine and recovered about 200,000 pages of code books, charts and manuals.
- The code books were immediately send to Station Hypo at Pearl Harbor where the code breakers used them to decrypt the Imperial Japanese Navy communication messages.



The crew of the PT-65 and embarked intelligence personnel inspect the wreck of I-1 on 11 February 1943.

# 14 April - Air

- Cdr Layton passed Nimitz an intercepted and almost completely deciphered Japanese signal from CinC Southeastern Air Fleet to an addressee believed to be the commander of the garrison at Ballale.
- “ON 16 APRIL CINC COMBINED FLEET WILL VISIT RYZ, R\_\_ AND RXP IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING SCHEDULE:
  1. DEPART RR AT 0600 IN A MEDIUM ATTACK PLANE ESCORTED BY 6 FIGHTERS ARRIVE RYZ AT 0800. PROCEED BY MINESWEEPER TO R\_\_ ARRIVING AT 0840
  2. AT EACH OF THE ABOVE PLACES THE CINC WILL MAKE A TOUR OF INSPECTION AND AT \_\_\_\_ HE WILL VISIT THE SICK AND WOUNDED BUT CURRENT OPERATIONS SHOULD CONTINUE.”
- Nimitz passed the Information on to Halsey with the order:
- IF FORCES YOU COMMAND HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO SHOOT DOWN YAMAMOTO AND STAFF YOU ARE HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO INITIATE PRELIMINARY PLANNING.



# 15 April - Sea

- "Spring of 1943, found United States naval strength in the South Pacific greater than ever before, except in fast carriers."
- Six task forces supported the Guadalcanal line:
- two were built around carriers Saratoga and Enterprise respectively;
- one of four new battleships had Washington as flagship ;
- another was of Pearl Harbour survivors Maryland and Colorado, with three escort carriers ;
- and two were each of cruiser-destroyer composition."



USS Washington

# 15 April - Air

- After consulting Washington and getting approval Nimitz signalled Halsey the go ahead for Operation Vengeance.
- To avoid detection by radar and Japanese forces in the Solomons the planners plotted an over-water flight south and west of the Solomons.
- This roundabout approach measured 600 miles, with 400 miles back. The 1,000-mile flight, with extra fuel for combat, was beyond the range of the Wildcats and Corsairs in Navy and Marine squadrons.
- So the mission was assigned to the 339th Fighter Squadron's P-38G Lightning aircraft, equipped with drop tanks, which had the range to intercept and engage.



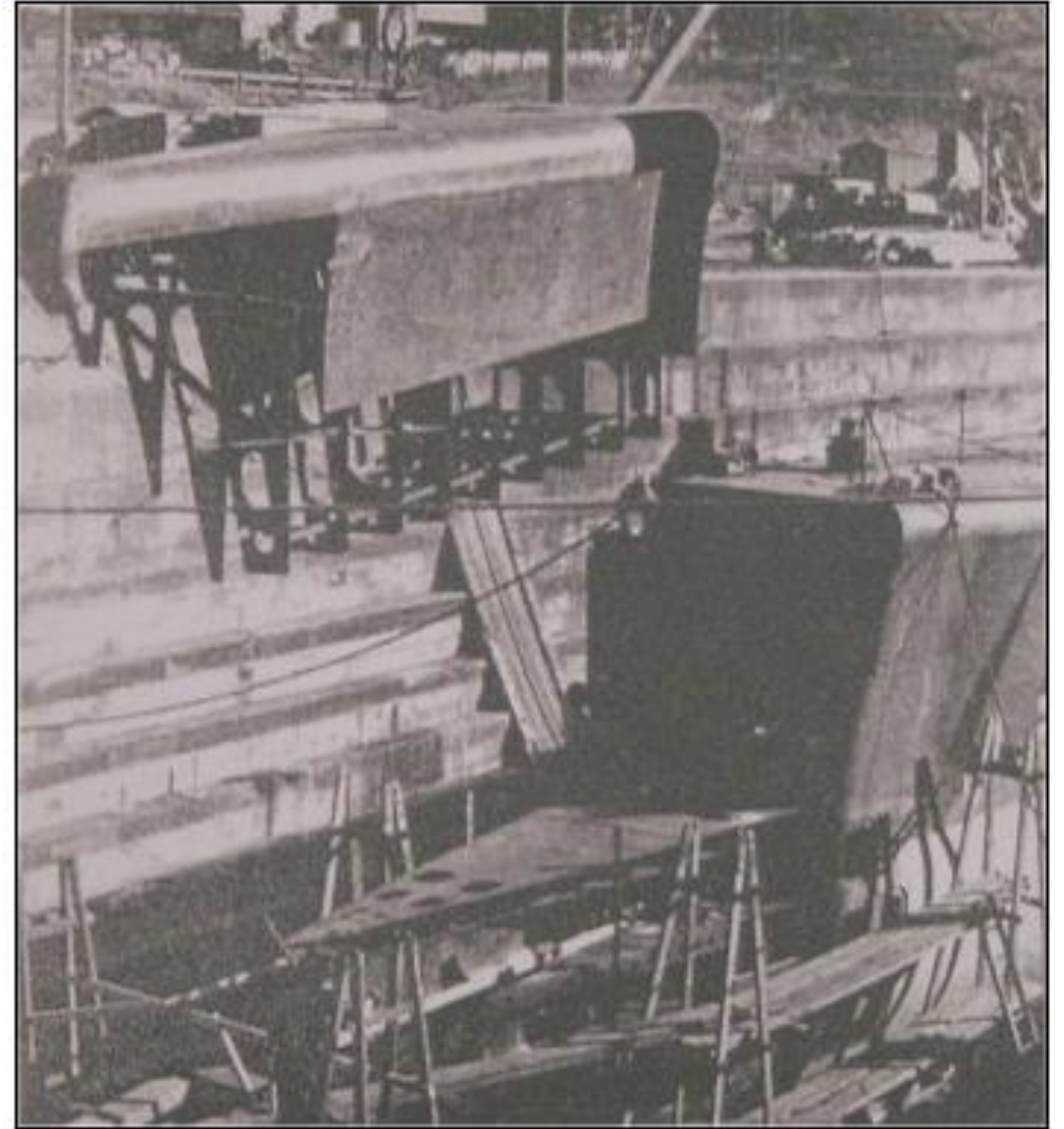
The P-38s were equipped to carry two 165-gallon drop tanks. A limited supply of 330-gallon tanks was flown up from New Guinea, sufficient to provide each Lightning with one big tank to replace one of the small tanks. The tanks were located close enough to the aircraft's center of gravity to avoid any performance problems.

# 15 April - Press

- The Melbourne Herald of 15th April, in a leading article said :
- "The extent and severity of the Japanese air raid upon Milne Bay [on April 14] fully bears out the grave warnings of the Prime Minister, General MacArthur and General Sir Thomas Blamey of the seriousness of the new menace to Australia and to the Allies, of Japan's growing air strength in the north and of its concentration in the perimeter of island bases about our coasts.
- The tendency here to overrate our own recent successes has made it difficult for the public mind both in Australia and abroad to realise the real truth of the situation."

# 15 April - Sea

- After delays while the dock completed more urgent projects Growler entered the South Brisbane Dry Dock on 15 April and the new bow was welded on in two weeks.
- Following the refit, the submarine was nicknamed the *Kangaroo Express*, as the refabricated bow had two nickel kangaroos as decorations.



via ozatwar.com

# 17 April - Command

- Halsey flew from his headquarters in Noumea to Brisbane. On Thursday 15 April he met with General MacArthur and his Chief of Staff at 2:45pm in Brisbane at GHQ, SWPA in the AMP building.
- MacArthur then held a conference at 4.00 pm with Admirals Halsey, Carpenter and Jones and his Chief of Staff followed by dinner at 7.00 pm.
- On Friday, Halsey had a conference with MacArthur at 1630 in GHQ, SWPA.
- On Saturday, Halsey made a personal visit to see MacArthur at 5.00 pm.
- Halsey left Brisbane on 19 April and made brief courtesy calls to Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney before returning to Noumea on 25 April 1943.

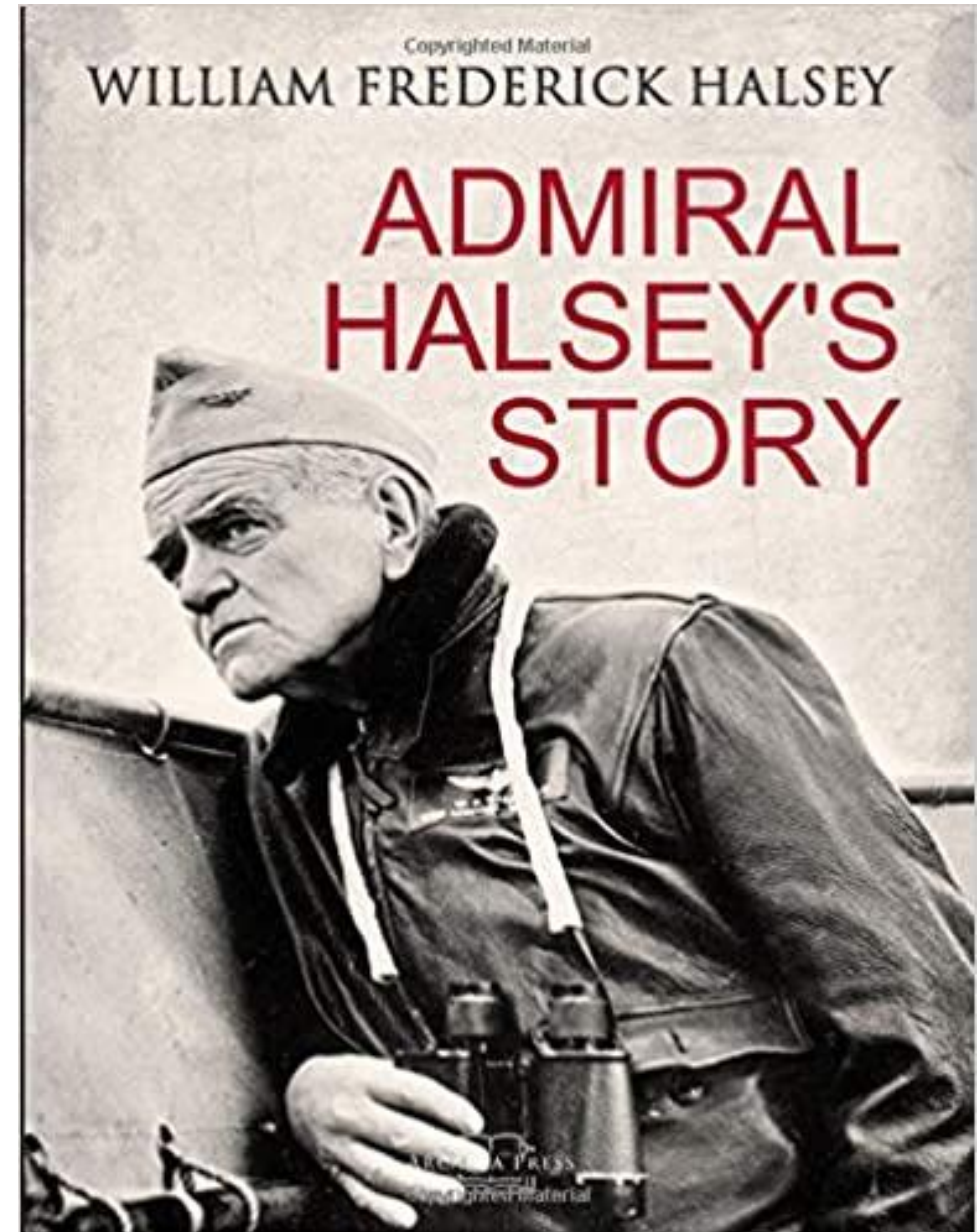
Photo # NH 95552 Vice Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr., circa 1941





# 17 April - Command

- Later, Halsey described the meeting.
- I had never met the General . . . . Five minutes after I reported, I felt as if we were lifelong friends.
- I have seldom seen a man who makes a quicker, stronger, more favorable impression. ... If he had been wearing civilian clothes, I still would have known at once that he was a soldier.
- The respect that I conceived for him that afternoon grew steadily during the war. . . . We had arguments, but they always ended pleasantly. Not once did he, my superior officer, ever force his decisions upon me. On the few occasions when I disagreed with him, I told him so, and we discussed the issue until one of us changed his mind.





# 18 April - Sea

- Eighteen P-38s were assigned the mission. One flight of four was designated as the "killer" flight, while the remainder, which included two spares, would climb to 18,000 feet (5,500 m) to act as "top cover" for the expected reaction by Japanese fighters based at Kahili.
- The P-38s took off from Kukum Field on Guadalcanal at 07:25 on April 18. Two of the Lightnings assigned to the killer flight dropped out of the mission with mechanical problems.
- The remainder headed out over the Coral Sea "wave-hopping" all the way at altitudes no greater than 50 feet and maintaining radio silence.
- The P38s arrived at the intercept point one minute early, at 09:34, just as Yamamoto's aircraft descended into view in a light haze. The P-38s jettisoned the auxiliary tanks, turned to the right to parallel the bombers, and began a full power climb to intercept them.
- The tanks on Holmes's P-38 did not detach and his element turned back toward the sea.

# 18 April - Sea

- Lanphier and Barber climbed toward the eight aircraft. The nearest escort fighters dropped their own tanks and dived toward the pair of P-38s. Lanphier turned head-on and climbed towards the escorts while Barber chased the diving bomber transports.
- Barber banked steeply to turn in behind the bombers and momentarily lost sight of them, but when he regained contact, he was immediately behind one and began firing into its right engine, rear fuselage, and empennage. When Barber hit its left engine, the bomber began to trail heavy black smoke. The Betty rolled violently to the left and Barber narrowly avoided a mid-air collision. Looking back, he saw a column of black smoke and assumed the Betty had crashed into the jungle.
- Barber headed towards the coast at treetop level, searching for the second bomber.
- Barber spotted the second bomber low over the water off Moila Point, trying to evade an attack by Holmes, whose wing tanks had finally come off.

# 18 April - Sea

- Holmes damaged the right engine of the Betty, which emitted a white vapor trail, but his closure speed carried him and his wingman Hine past the damaged bomber.
- Barber attacked the crippled bomber and his bullet strikes caused it to shed metal debris that damaged his own aircraft. The bomber descended and crash-landed in the water.
- Barber, Holmes and Hine were attacked by Zeros, Barber's P-38 receiving 104 hits. Holmes and Barber each claimed a Zero shot down during this melee.
- The top cover briefly engaged reacting Zeros without making any kills.
- Hine's P-38 had disappeared by this point, presumably crashed into the water.
- Running close to minimum fuel levels for return to base, the P-38s broke off contact, with Holmes so short of fuel that he was forced to land in the Russell Islands. Hine was the only pilot who did not return.



The last picture of Isoroku Yamamoto, taken shortly before his plane was shot down.

Yamamoto and all others in the first bomber were killed, Admiral Ugaki and two others survived the crash of the second and were later rescued.

# 19 April - Sea

- USS Canberra a Baltimore-class cruiser was launched on 19 April 1943.
- Originally to be named USS Pittsburgh, the ship was renamed before launch to honor the loss of the Australian cruiser HMAS Canberra during the Battle of Savo Island.



USS Canberra

# 19 April - Sea

- A Board was established by the US Navy, to inquire into the Disaster at Savo Island, headed by Admiral Hepburn (photo).
- The Captain of Chicago, Captain Bode, who had been senior officer of the screening force during the battle due to the absence of Admiral Crutchley, gave evidence to the inquiry on his actions and the actions of Chicago during the battle.
- Shortly after his interview with Hepburn, on 19 April 1943 Captain Bode shot himself, dying the next day.





# 30 April - Strategy

- On 30th April the War Cabinet had before it Blamey's views on army manpower.
- Blamey's report tried to reconcile the need to prepare a force of three infantry divisions for offensive operations in the South-West Pacific Area while maintaining a force sufficient to defend Australia and Australian New Guinea and provide a reserve and the need for reducing the Order of Battle (in view of recent experience under tropical conditions, the high wastage rate (The monthly wastage rate during major operations was estimated at 11,800) and the low intake of manpower into the army).



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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# 30 April - Strategy

- The minimum force required was assessed at the equivalent of nine infantry divisions, two armoured divisions, one armoured brigade and one army tank brigade with proportionate non-divisional, base and lines of communication units. Disposed as follows:
  - Queensland—Torres Strait Force (approximately one battalion group), one armoured division, and brigades in movements to and from New Guinea (in addition the offensive force of three divisions and ancillary units is en route to or in training in the Atherton area).
  - Darwin—One infantry division and ancillary units .
  - Western Australia—One infantry division, one armoured division and ancillary units.
  - New South Wales—One infantry division (mainly under-age personnel) and ancillary units, one armoured brigade and one army tank brigade .
  - Other States—Miscellaneous units but no field formations.
  - Milne Bay-Goodenough Island - One division,
  - Buna - One division,
  - Wau - Two brigades, and
  - Moresby - One brigade as a general reserve and for Moresby's defence
  - Merauke is being increased from one battalion group to a brigade group less a battalion.
  - Norfolk Island—lay in the South Pacific Area, and had been garrisoned by New Zealand troops since October 1942.

# 30 April - Strategy

- Blamey had already disbanded a motorised division and some ancillary units, reduced lines of communications units and replaced about 4,000 men of the A.M.F. by the Volunteer Defence Corps in anti-aircraft and coast artillery. The reorganisation, however, would not effect a reduction of more than 20,000 men and, in future, either the intake would have to be increased or further field formations would have to be disbanded. He expressed the view that:
- (a) Further releases of manpower from industry should be sought to make up any deficiency which exists in the numbers required for the reduced Order of Battle, reinforcement pool, and adequate reinforcements for the force on recommencement of operations.
- (b) If the releases from manpower to the extent required cannot be made and it becomes necessary to disband further field formations, then the force being prepared for offensive operations should be reduced by one infantry division (with ancillary units) for the reason that the Australian New Guinea and mainland defensive component has been reduced to the barest minimum.
- The War Cabinet decided that the Minister for Defence should discuss the matter with MacArthur; and that a force of three divisions must be maintained for major offensives .

# 30 April - Government

- By the end of April 1943 the Department of Supply was on the way to setting up the machinery for the coordination of arrangements for dealing with Pacific supply questions and for relating demands more expeditiously to capacity, and
- the Treasury, too, was thinking less of book keeping and the Budget and more of the handling of increasing demands for reciprocal aid in direct relationship to the Australian production programme



Treasurer Chifley

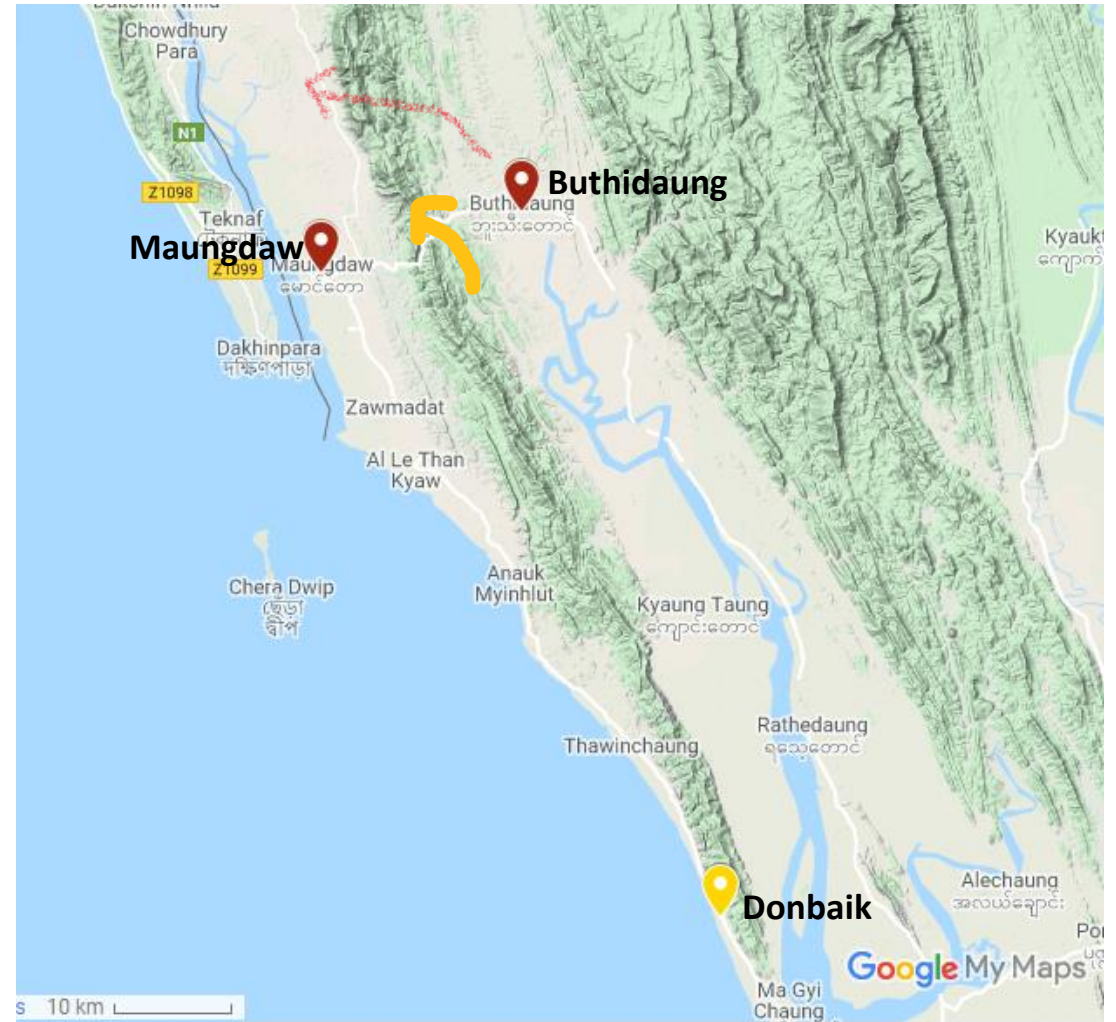
# 4 May - Dobo



- The Reverend Leonard Kentish, chairman of the Methodist Northern Australian Mission District, had been a passenger on the Patricia Cam when it was sunk by a Japanese float plane on 22<sup>nd</sup> January.
- Mr Kentish had been abducted from the wreckage of the Patricia Cam by the Japanese floatplane.
- On 4th May 1943 the Japanese executed Mr Kentish at Dobo, in the Aru Islands.

# 4 May - Burma

- In late April, the Japanese attacked northwards, as Slim and Lomax had predicted.
- They met stiff resistance on the flanks and advanced instead in the centre.
- On 4 May as Slim prepared to order two Indian battalions to surround the Japanese, a British battalion defending a hill referred to as Point 551 gave way, allowing the Japanese to cut the Maungdaw-Buthidaung road.
- Counter-attacks failed and the British and Indian troops in Buthidaung and the Kalapanzin valley were cut off.
- As there was no other route for motor vehicles across the Mayu Range, they were forced to destroy their transport before retreating north up the valley.



# 8 May - Sea

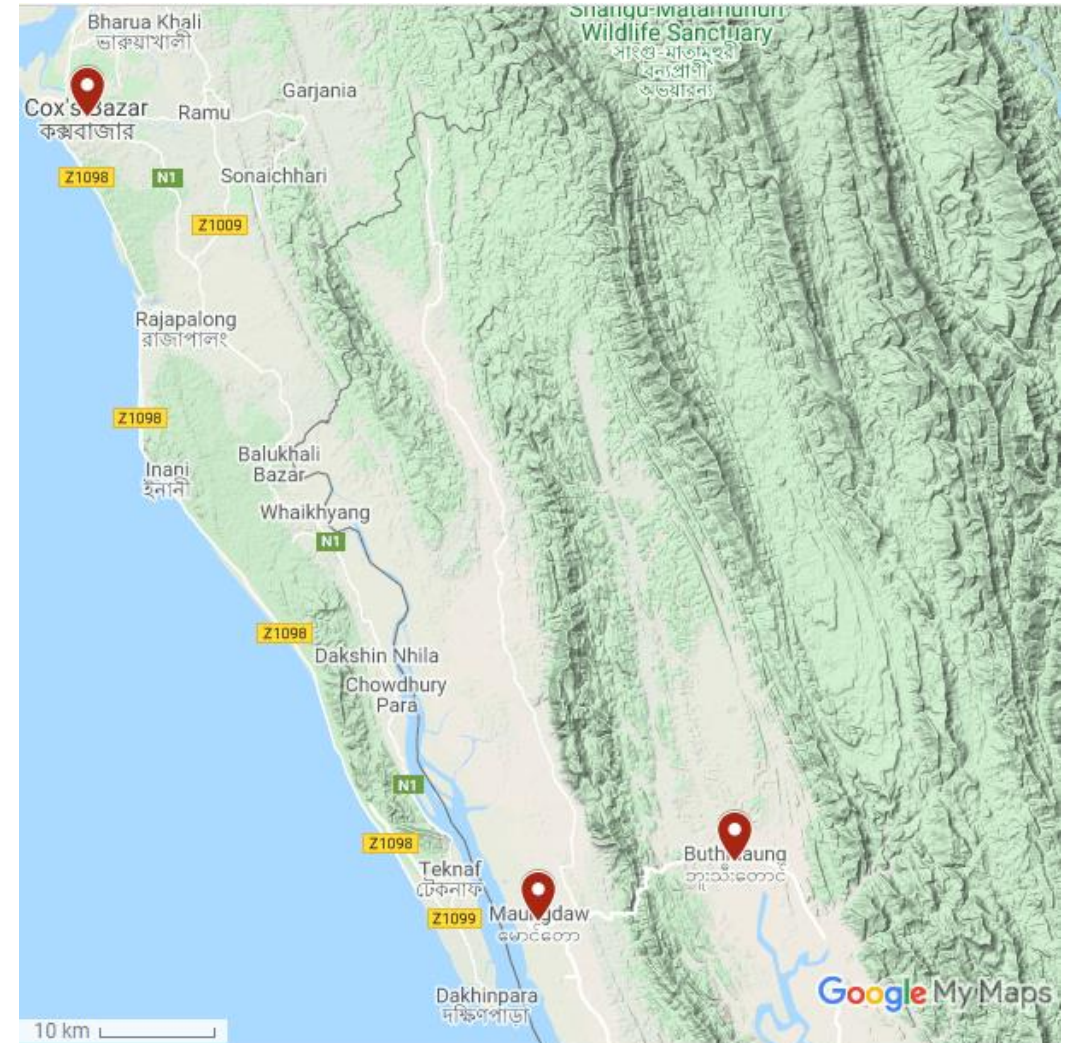
- On 20 March, the Allies had begun mining operations in the central Solomons using U.S. Navy and Marine Corps torpedo bombers to sow mines throughout the northern Solomons.
- After a month, these operations were briefly suspended in response to Japanese air attacks.
- In May, these operations resumed. On 7 May, the minelayers USS *Gamble*, *Breese*, and *Preble*, escorted by *Radford*, laid mines across Blackett Strait in an attempt to interdict Japanese ships traveling through the strait.
- The next day, three Japanese destroyers all hit mines in that area. *One* sank immediately. *The other two* sank later that day after being attacked and further damaged by U.S. aircraft from Henderson Field following a radio report from an Australian coastwatcher on Kolombangara.





# 11 May - Burma

- Irwin ordered Maungdaw at least to be held but Slim and Lomax decided that the port was not prepared for a siege and that Japanese artillery could dominate the Naf River on which the port stood, preventing reinforcements and supplies reaching it.
- They also feared that the exhausted troops could not be relied upon to defend the port resolutely.
- On 11 May, the port was abandoned and XV Corps fell back to Cox's Bazaar in India, where the open rice-growing country gave the advantage to British artillery.
- The monsoon also descended at this point (Arakan receives 200 inches per annum), dissuading the Japanese from following up.



# 31 May

- By May 1943 the corps (VAOC) had a membership of 38,000 manning 2,639 observation posts from Cairns to Ceduna and from Albany to Geraldton.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P00024.027

Two members of the Volunteer Air Observer Corps (VAOC), who like hundreds of other volunteers, maintain this duty continuously, fitting it in with their everyday work.

# 8 June - Government

- A report to the War Cabinet on reciprocal Lend-Lease administration to 30th April 1943 placed the position squarely before the Government :
- It is clear that supply and service to the United States Forces will fully tax Australian capacity. Reciprocal Lend-Lease assistance can be expected to increase in direct ratio to the numbers of United States troops who are in or based on Australia.
- The extent of any such increase will be determined by war operational planning but there seems to be little doubt that the number of United States troops who will be serviced from this area will increase as the war against Japan progresses. ...
- To date we have met reciprocal aid by placing an added strain on industry, and to some extent by diversion of goods from civil consumption. The manpower position, however, compels an over-all consideration of our capacity to meet further expansion.
- Broadly speaking, the position seems to be that if we are to continue and expand service and supply to an increasing American force it can only be done effectively either
  - (a) by the United States accepting responsibility for manning some of the facilities which are being created, e.g., engine repair workshops, shipbuilding and repair yards, etc., or
  - (b) by a reduction in the Australian forces and diversion of this manpower to production for the remaining Australian forces plus the United States forces.

# June - Washington

- At AAF Headquarters the Historical Office undertook in the (northern) summer of 1943 a study of all records of the (Bismark Sea) action including the captured enemy documents.
- These offered conclusive proof of the presence of no more than sixteen ships in the original convoy and failed to establish the assumption that additional vessels had later joined them.
- Photo intelligence had provided positive identification for only three destroyers and six merchant vessels, with five other units listed as possible destroyers for a total of fourteen.
- But GHQ SWPA, on being apprised of the conclusions of this study in Washington, declined to accept them and elected to stand on the original figures.

# 7 September - Brisbane

- MacArthur, in a message to Washington on 7 Sep 1943, suggested that action might be taken against those responsible for calling the claims made in his communique into question.



## 5 October - Air

- After examining captured enemy documents, one Japanese soldier's diary was found to contain a detailed account of the beheading of an Allied airman—"one of two members of the crew of a Douglas which was shot down by anti-aircraft [fire] on the 18th [March]".
- The author of the diary claimed that the airman was "accorded a Samurai's death". A footnote to the diary entry included the statement that "the prisoner killed today was an Air Force Tai [captain or flight lieutenant] from Port Moresby".
- Thus the date of capture, the reference to the aircraft by the maker's name, the rank of the victim and the general circumstances, all seemed to identify the Allied airman as Newton.
- On 5th October, GHQ, SWPA, released to the Allied Press this Japanese account of the execution in all its grim detail, but without identifying the airman.



# 12th October - Government

- the Director of Intelligence, Allied Air Forces informed both GHQ and RAAF HQ that since the document from which the press release on the atrocity was written was not an official Japanese document and since the evidence, though very circumstantial, did not contain conclusive proof of identity, he was not prepared to state definitely that the victim of the execution had in fact been identified .
- On 12th October 1943 the Australian Press published a statement by the Prime Minister, Mr Curtin, announcing that, because of widespread anxiety among relatives of captured or missing members of the forces which had followed the public disclosure of the execution, the relatives of the Allied airman who had been beheaded by the Japanese had been informed of his identity.



# Later – Industry

- By 1945, the United States was producing about 920,000 tons per year of synthetic rubber, 85 percent of which was GR-S rubber.
- Of that 85 percent, the four major companies, which between them managed to produce only 2,241 tons in 1942, were producing 547,500 tons per year.



The first U.S. government synthetic rubber plant to go into production, Akron, OH, April, 1942.

- Thanks for your attention.
- Next week is the last week of this term.