

# Australia's War: 80 years ago this week

## 1 October 1941



**HAPPY DAYS!**

THE QUEENSLAND LOTTERY is now open for sale. Tickets are available at all newsagents and public houses. Prizes range from £100 to £10,000. The next draw is on Friday, October 10, 1941. Tickets for the next draw are on sale now.

FORECAST: Fine. Map, Page 8.



No. 2520

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# The Courier-Mail

BRISBANE, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1941.

GREATEST DAILY SALES IN QUEENSLAND



12 PAGES—2d

Blackout, Dampout and Anti-Muggout

**MILITARY WATERPROOF**

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5/5

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## TANKS ASSAULT CRIMEA

### London Awaits News: Moscow Silent

THE Germans have launched a great tank offensive against the Perekop Isthmus, gateway to the Crimea, and are expected to follow it up with an airborne invasion, according to Stockholm reports.

London is anxiously awaiting news of the blitzkrieg on the Crimea. Moscow is silent. A neutral source states that the Russians will defend the Crimea to the death to keep it open for a possible British landing.

Stockholm correspondent of the London Daily Telegraph reports that the German attack on the Crimea has assumed "tremendous dimensions," with 250,000 men being hurled against the Perekop Isthmus and bombers attacking the defenders without pause.

The Russians revealed yesterday that General Guderen, German tank commander, had driven to within 50 miles of the important railway and industrial city of Sevastopol in recent weeks, but had been defeated and driven back with heavy losses. They said that Guderen was still retreating.

Stockholm correspondent of the London Daily Telegraph reports that the Russian attack on the Crimea has assumed "tremendous dimensions," with 250,000 men being hurled against the Perekop Isthmus and bombers attacking the defenders without pause.

The Germans launched their attack on the Crimea on September 28. They have taken the city of Sevastopol and the Perekop Isthmus. The Russians have been driven back to the Perekop Isthmus. The Germans have taken the city of Sevastopol and the Perekop Isthmus.

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### Crimea Drive Costly

### Rocklea Plant Takes Shape



## LABOUR BID TO UPSET FADDEN ON BUDGET-DAY

From Our Canberra Correspondent

WITH the overwhelming approval of the Labour Caucus, the Opposition Leader (Mr. Curtin) will launch a frontal attack on the Budget to-day, with the object of defeating the Fadden Government.

Government members do not conceal that a critical test is to be faced, but they believe that the Government will gain the victory of Mr. Wilson (Ind. C.P.) V.

After a discussion lasting about two and a half hours the Federal Labour Caucus agreed yesterday that when Mr. Curtin begins the debate on the motion for the adoption of the first item in the Estimates to-day he should move the following amendment:

That with a view to the... (text continues)

### SMOKESCREENS FOIL NAZI AIR ATTACKS

LONDON, September 30.—Smokescreens are used to protect Britain's most vital industrial centres from air attack.

It is estimated that already there have been over 100,000 tons of smoke produced in the last few weeks.

The smoke-producing units, which belong to the Royal Air Force, are used to create a thick screen of smoke over the industrial areas.

The smoke is produced by burning oil and is blown up by large fans.

The smoke is used to protect the industrial areas from air attack.

### Duff Cooper Worrying Japanese

London, September 30.—The Japanese Cabinet spokesman (Mr. Ishii) said to Tokyo yesterday that Japan was greatly concerned about the activities of the British Minister of State in the Far East, Mr. Duff Cooper.

Mr. Ishii said that the Japanese were worried by Mr. Cooper's activities in the Far East.

Mr. Cooper is the British Minister of State in the Far East.

Mr. Cooper is worried by the Japanese.

### FUND COMMISSION TO START FRIDAY

BRISBANE, Tuesday.—The Federal Minister (Mr. Fadden) announced today that a commission to inquire into the distribution of war funds will start its work on Friday.

The commission will be headed by Mr. Fadden.

The commission will inquire into the distribution of war funds.

## Terror In Bulgaria & Czecho-slovakia

A NEW reign of terror in Bulgaria and a report that Benito Mussolini, recently resigned protector of Germany's Czech provinces of Bohemia and Moravia, had been arrested were highlights of yesterday's aspects of disorder in Nazi-controlled Europe.

An Associated Press correspondent from Moscow reports that a New York Times reporter, who was in Prague, reported that the Czech provinces of Bohemia and Moravia, had been arrested.

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LATE CITY: WAR NEWS

# 1 October 1941 - Brisbane

★ **FIRST PICTURES** of the growth of the Rocklea Munitions Factory. At left: Section of one of the many big factory buildings, in which acres of concrete flooring are being put down. Below: One of the mess huts to seat 1000 workers. Employees will bring their own meals, but will be supplied with hot water and other facilities. ★



## **D.F.C. FOR AUSTRALIAN**

*Courier-Mail Special Service*

Squadron-Leader W. R. Bungey, Australia's first Spitfire Squadron-Commander and leader of the R.A.A.F. Fighter Squadron which had the highest enemy aircraft bag for August, has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

He led the Australian squadron in outstanding fashion during its initial two months.

The Australian Minister for Air (Mr. McEwen) said yesterday that while on active service Squadron-Leader Bungey had displayed gallant and efficient leadership.

He has been almost continually engaged on operations against the enemy since the outbreak of the war. During



# 1 October 1941 - COIC

C in C N.E.I.  
0803Z/30/9

Most secret  
sources

WS/16 : 8

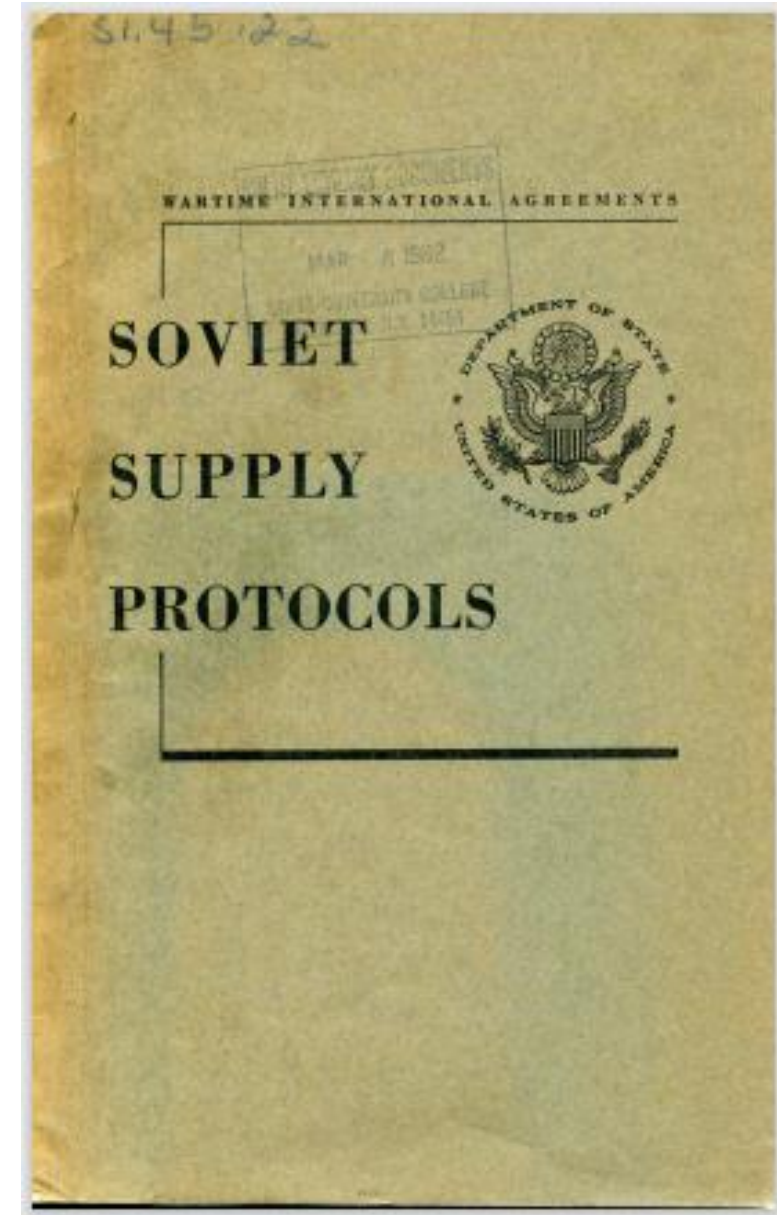
1. Suspicious Japanese Auxiliary Operating in N.E.I. Waters -  
In reply to a signal from A.C.N.B. to C.Z.M. on 29/9 giving the positions of a Japanese naval auxiliary operating in the vicinity of Halmahera on 26th and 28th September, it is reported that an N.E.I. reconnaissance plane sighted a Japanese motorship in 002°10'S, 126°54'E at 0545Z/28. She is described as of 4,000 tons, name unknown, black hull, light blue superstructure, two masts. She was not further identified on account of nightfall.

Comment - The position is 120 miles N.N.W. of Ambon and coincides with most secret intelligence of a Japanese unit operating in approximately that position at noon on 28/9. This unit has since 24/9 proceeded from a position north of the N.W. tip of New Guinea, past Halmahera and then north of Ceram.

A unit using the same call-sign was previously fixed in the first and last week of July and again early in August operating north of Helen Reef. Between 18th and 28th August it was again fixed in the Celebes Sea.

# 1 October 1941 - Moscow

- The Anglo-American mission, proceeding to Moscow, met with Stalin and his staff. On 1 October 1941, the first Soviet protocol was signed by Mr. W.A. Harriman, Lord Beaverbrook, and Foreign Commissar Vyacheslav Molotov.
- The United States and Great Britain each agreed to furnish the Soviet Air Force, in the period ending 30 June 1942, with 1,800 aircraft.



## 2 October 1941 - France

- On 2 October Kenley Wing took off for an evening Circus operation.
- The bombers were recalled because of unfavourable weather soon after making rendezvous, but the fighter wings made an offensive sweep.
- Enemy attacks began over France and a running fight continued several miles out to sea.
- Finucane's leading section was continuously engaged, he himself (photo) claiming one victim, and his No. 2, Sergeant Cowan, another.



## 2 October 1941 – English Channel

- Paddy Finucane left a vivid commentary on the personal experience and feelings of fighter pilots when he said at this time:
  - Our chaps sometimes find that they can't sleep. What happens is this. You come back from a show and find it very hard to remember what happened. Maybe you have a clear impression of three or four incidents, which stand out like illuminated lantern slides in the mind's eye.
  - Perhaps a picture of two Me-109's belting down on your tail from out of the sun and already within firing range. Perhaps another picture of your cannon shells striking at the belly of an Me. and the aircraft spraying debris around.
  - But for the life of you, you can't remember what you did.
  - Later, when you have turned in and sleep is stealing over you, some tiny link in the forgotten chain of events comes back. Instantly you are fully awake, and then the whole story of the operation pieces itself together and you lie there, sleep driven away, re-living the combat, congratulating yourself for this thing, blaming yourself for that.
  - The reason for this is simply that everything happens so quickly in the air that you crowd a tremendous amount of thinking, action and emotion into a very short space of time, and you suffer afterwards from mental indigestion.



**DEAFNESS**  
HERE IS A HINT  
BUT NO MORE

FORECAST: Fine. Map, Page 8.



No. 2522

Published by J. J. O'Brien at Times Building, 41, Market St., Brisbane.

# The Courier-Mail

GREATEST DAILY SALES IN QUEENSLAND

**LATE CITY**

BRISBANE, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1941.

10 PAGES—2d

**Wallace Bishop's**  
Presentation  
Gifts  
to  
MEN OF THE  
FIGHTING SERVICES  
KING GEORGE SQUARE, BRISBANE

## LENINGRAD'S TANKS IN



## BIG DRIVE Worried Nazis Rush Up Men

LENINGRAD'S defenders have launched, in falling snow, a smashing tank drive which has forced the Germans back near Kolpino, 10 miles south-west of the city.

The Russian threat in this sector is so serious that the German High Command is rushing reinforcements to the Leningrad front.

The Russian counter-offensive was led by hundreds of the heaviest tanks, followed by picked stormtroops armed with flamethrowers and automatic rifles.

Finnish reports say that Marshal Voroshilov's armoured forces are deep in the German lines, which in the Kolpino sector straddle the Leningrad-Moscow railway.

The Germans had established a double line of machine gun nests, and had laid extensive minefields on the marshy plains round Kolpino.

These lines were broken after seven hours of desperate fighting. The Russians are now trying to force the breakthrough.

The great battle for the Crimea is still raging in the Peninsula "bottleneck" connecting the Crimea with the mainland.

Moscow correspondence of the New York Times (London Edition) reports that the Red Army expelled a sudden German thrust on the central front, where Field Marshal von Reck, using the new German 288th division, attempted to cross a river, but was beaten back, leaving 2,000 dead.

The Russian attack, however, has been reported, but having been repulsed, the German forces are now reported to be in a state of confusion.

At Sevastopol, however, the situation is still very serious, and the Russian forces are reported to be in a state of confusion.

British forces were dropped at Sevastopol, and the Russian forces are reported to be in a state of confusion.

It is reported that the Russian forces are in a state of confusion.

## MAJOR-GENERAL DURRANT MEETS TOBRUK HERO



Major-General J. M. A. Durrant, G.O.C., Northern Command, met a soldier from Tobruk who he saluted the day Wilson's Commonwealth House at Chelsea yesterday.

The soldier, who was a member of the 1st Australian Tank Battalion, was decorated for his gallantry during the fighting at Tobruk.

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## TEST ON BUDGET NEXT WEEK: FADDEN FIRM

CANBERRA, Thursday.—The House of Representatives vote on the Budget probably will not be taken now until next Wednesday.

That was the indication when the House adjourned at 10.45 to-night until to-morrow morning after having debated the Budget all afternoon and evening.

Highlight of the speeches was a trenchant reply by the Prime Minister (Mr. Fadden) to Leabor's no-confidence motion and criticism. Mr. Fadden said that the Opposition Leader (Mr. Curtin) had not brought down one alternative or suggestion that would make the Budget easier or more equitable.

Meanwhile Mr. Wilson (Ind. C.P.), who led the Government's case, has not spoken. He is following his usual policy and is not expected to do so until he is asked to do so.

The belief is growing that Leabor's no-confidence motion will fail, and that the Budget will be passed.

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## Nazi Terrorism Is Sign of Frustration

Continued from page 1.

LONDON, October 2.—German terrorism continues in occupied countries, but the diplomatic correspondent of The Times suggests that the reason goes far deeper than reprisals for sabotage and anti-Nazi violence.

"Hitler," he says, "seems to be more obsessed by the Russian front, but he cannot take any from the occupied countries unless reprisals are met there."

The correspondent is referring to the fact that the German High Command is rushing reinforcements to the Leningrad front.

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## MOLOTOV SAYS: AID MEANS VICTORY FOR RUSSIA

Continued from page 1.

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## R.A.F. BOMBS BATTER STUTTART

Continued from page 1.

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3 October 1941 - Brisbane

## **WOOLLEN GOODS FIXED AT PRESENT PRICES**

**CANBERRA.** Thursday.—Woollen piece goods, knitted woollen underwear, and knitted woollen outerwear for men and boys were brought under price control by an order published in to-day's Commonwealth Gazette.

The reason for the declaration is that there is likely to be a shortage of civilian requirements of these goods because of the needs of the defence forces. An order will be issued fixing the prices at those ruling to-day.

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## **JAPANESE “VICTORY” NOW ROUT**

Japan's simultaneous offensives in the Hunan and Kwangtung provinces of South China have collapsed, and the Japanese troops who tried to take Changsha, capital of Hunan, are virtually fleeing north.

Thus China's invaders have no progress to show for two years of fighting.

Only a few days ago the Japanese Press acclaimed the fall of Changsha—which the Chinese still deny—as a great victory, which would be fatal to Marshal Chiang Kai-shek's prospects of resistance.

Changsha is strategically situated on the Canton-Hankow railway and has been one of China's supply bases.

# 3 October 1941 - Brisbane

## **MOLOTOV SAYS: AID MEANS VICTORY FOR RUSSIA**

*Courier-Mail Special Service and  
Australian Associated Press*

The Russian Foreign Minister (M. Molotov), speaking in Moscow yesterday after the Three-Power Conference had ended, said that the co-ordination of the British, American, and Russian war efforts guaranteed victory against Hitlerite Fascism.

Britain and the U.S. have agreed to supply Russia with practically everything she needs to carry on the war.

The heads of the British and U.S. delegations, Lord Beaverbrook and Mr. Averell Harriman respectively, announced this in Moscow yesterday.

A Soviet Government communique said that the conference worked in an atmosphere of good will and perfect understanding.

In his speech M. Molotov praised the determination of Lord Beaverbrook and Mr. Harriman to secure "the success of the conference."

"However much the Hitlerite bandits may rob our own people and the countries they have subjected," he said, "it will not give them enough resources to continue the war."

"Our conference will go down in history as connected with the glorious destruction of Hitlerism. It is not sufficient to hate all these Goerings, Hitlers, and Ribbentrops."

"It is necessary to beat and crush this criminal band of enslavers and annexationists, at the head of which stands the curse of mankind."

# 3 October 1941 - COIC

C.Z.M.  
0745Z/2

## NORTH of Australia Station

1. Suspicious Japanese Vessel operating in N.E.I. waters -  
A Japanese ship which is considered to be probably the suspicious auxiliary that has been sighted several times in N.E.I. waters recently was searched by the Dutch destroyer "PIET HEIN" at 1030/2 in position 4°26'S, 125°09'E. It was identified as the "YOKO MARU" of 1050 tons gross with a crew of 49 which left Paladan (unable to identify but probably in Palew Is.) on 23/9 and will be staying in the Banda Sea for fishing research until 13/10 when it will return to Palao. The description given is "black hull, blue grey superstructure, 2 masts, one goalpost before bridge, raked stem, cruiser stern, short forecastle, ship seems to be equipped for hydrographic survey". The vessel departed steering 015° speed 10 knots.

Comment - This latest position is approx 180 miles S.W. from the position of sighting on the 28th and approx 180 miles west of Ambon.



# 3 October 1941 - Melbourne

- Alexander Wilson was a Victorian wheat farmer and federal politician.
- Wilson was a prominent leader of Victorian wheat growers who successfully stood as a candidate at the 1937 Australian election for the House of Representatives seat of Wimmera against the sitting Country Party member Hugh McClelland. Wilson and the Victorian state branch of the Country Party were opposed to the Coalition with the United Australia Party.
- Wilson easily retained his seat at the 1940 Australian election and Wilson and fellow cross-bencher Arthur Coles held the balance of power in the House of Representatives.



# 3 October 1941 - Melbourne

- Arthur William "A.W." Coles was a prominent Australian businessman and member of parliament.
- With two brothers and an uncle he opened a variety store in Collingwood. The business grew rapidly. The family opened a series of new Coles Variety Stores around the country, Arthur moving to Sydney in 1928 to open and manage the first one in New South Wales.
- In 1931, at the height of the Great Depression, he returned to Melbourne to become managing director, a post he held until 1944. G. J. Coles & Co became the largest retailer in Australia.
- Coles became Lord Mayor of Melbourne in 1938, remaining in that position until 1940, when he resigned to stand for the federal seat of Henty as an independent candidate.
- Coles was one of the two independents (the other was Alexander Wilson), who held the balance of power through the early years of the Second World War.



# 3 October 1941 - Canberra

- Shortly after four o'clock on 3 October after the debate on Fadden's budget Curtin's amendment, to reduce the first item by £1, was put and passed by 36 votes to 33, and the House immediately adjourned so that the Government could consider its position.



House Of Representatives Chamber



# October 1941 - Australia

- The Australian war effort had not yet brought about any marked reduction in standards of living. Indeed, for a considerable proportion of the people of Australia, war had meant the enjoyment of a "boom". When the war came unemployment fell rapidly and the spending power of the people rose.
- Daily average sales at the principal retail stores in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane in June 1941 were 47 per cent higher than in June 1939, and in August were 38 per cent above August 1939. Even after allowance had been made for the increase of 10 per cent in average retail prices and, particularly, an increase of 35 per cent in clothing prices since the beginning of the war, this indicated a marked increase in real standards of living.
- Although it was obvious that the increased demand for civilian supplies and the increasing employment for non-essential civilian purposes was setting up a rival claim to the war effort, the Government hesitated over any restriction of spending power, or compulsory diversion of manpower and resources, and deferred proposals for a comprehensive system of rationing, although its economic advisers were urging that such measures were necessary. The reduction of spending power by increased taxation on lower incomes, which the Government's advisers reported was the "best and simplest way", was found politically impossible by the Menzies and Fadden Governments.
- The resulting half-measures were evidence both of the strength of the sectional pressures and the lack of resolution of the sponsors. The motor trade was against the rationing of petrol; manufacturing interests were against the prohibition or reduction of imports of materials used in their factories; newspapers were against newsprint rationing; wheat farmers were against restriction of acreage sown; the wage earner was against any variation of his customary industrial conditions, a section of Labour was against any form of control over manpower; the wage earner, enjoying the best conditions he had known after ten lean years, claimed the right to spend his money for his own satisfaction.

# 3 October 1941 - Canberra

- The two independents had voted with Labour.
- Coles recounted that when Menzies was "being removed" he had told those Ministers who had approached him that he "would not stand for it", and yet Fadden had informed the Governor-General that he could form a government with the support of a majority in the lower House. Coles had told Fadden frankly that he could not count on him as a Government supporter. Fadden angrily interjected to the effect that Coles had tried to bargain for a place in the Cabinet. Coles, whose bearing was calm and unmoved, replied that the statement was a lie. His exact words to Fadden had been that his support could not be counted on "unless I am satisfied with the policy of your government and the membership of your Cabinet. I am not seeking any preferment for myself ". After glancing at the Budget he said his last words on the subject: "I desire to see responsible and stable government at this crucial time".
- The member for Wimmera had announced that he, too, would vote against the Budget and support the Leader of the Opposition. He had never had much enthusiasm for the policy of the Government. He objected to the methods by which the Government proposed to raise money for the war and liked the ideas of the Opposition.

## 3 October 1941 - Canberra

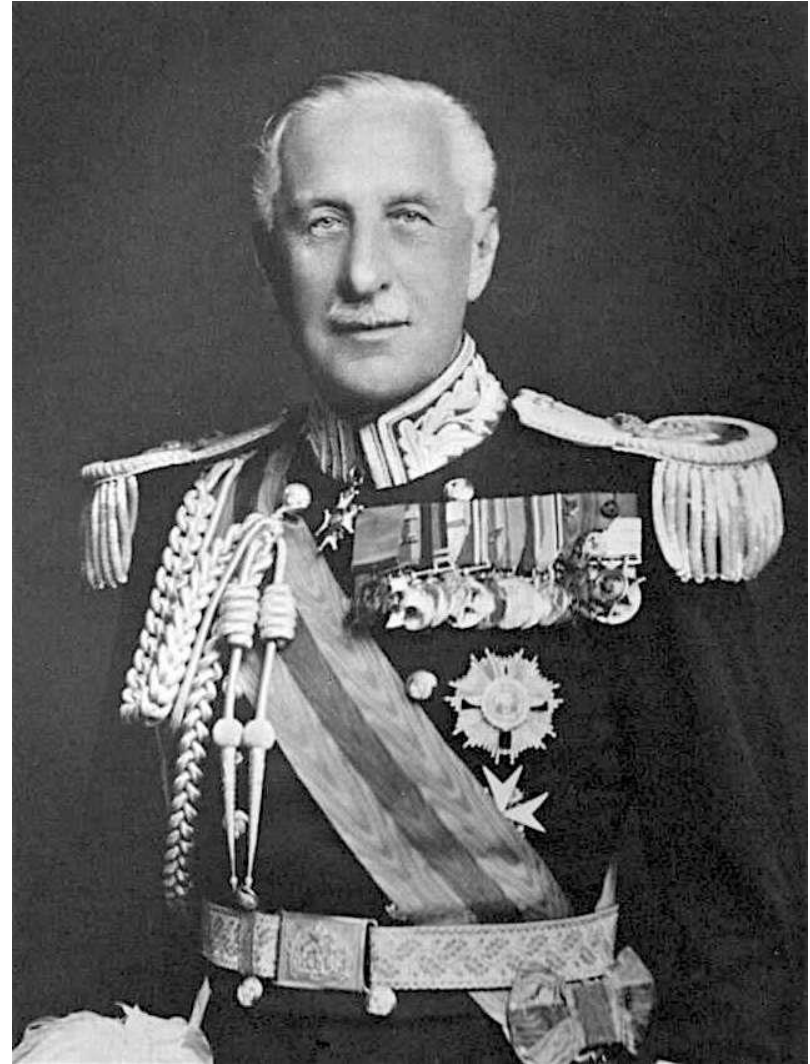
- Later in the day Fadden tendered his resignation to the Governor-General.
- The two independants had crossed the floor to remove the hapless UAP-Country Party government of Arthur Fadden and to install John Curtin (photo), of the Australian Labour Party, as Prime Minister of Australia.
- The Speaker, Mr Nairn, a member of the U.A.P., consented to retain the Chair thus giving Labour the prospect of a clear majority on the Floor of the House.





# 3 October 1941 - Canberra

- On the night of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lord Gowrie (photo) the Governor-General sent for Curtin. Both leaders made public statements which reassured the people that the political crisis was already over.
- "I am ready to form a government," said Curtin. "I am confident it will be a stable government and I know it will devote itself with singleness of purpose to what is the undoubted desire of the Australian people—concentration on the prosecution of the war, and the distribution of the inevitable burdens of war over the whole community."



# 3 October 1941 - Canberra

- Fadden (photo) said: "The parties which I lead will give to the new Government general support towards the implementation of a vigorous war effort".
- Members of the new Cabinet were elected by the parliamentary Labour Party it being left to the Prime Minister to allot portfolios among those chosen.
- As it was nearly ten years since a Labour Ministry had held office it had no large body of members with ministerial experience. Fifteen out of the nineteen Ministers chosen, including the Prime Minister himself, had never held office before.



# 3 October 1941 - Canberra

- Curtin himself took the portfolio of Defence Coordination and Forde became Minister for the Army, Chifley Treasurer, Evatt (photo) Attorney-General and Minister for External Affairs, Beasley Minister for Supply and Development, and Makin Minister for the Navy and Minister for Munitions. The third Service Minister was Drakeford, a former railwayman and trade union official who had been in the House since 1934 and who became Minister for Air and Civil Aviation.
- Labour and National Service, with its responsibility for better industrial relations, was given to Ward.
- Another chance was taken in allocating War Organisation of Industry, recently-formed and yet not fully organised, to Dedman.
- Curtin was sworn in as prime minister on 7 October, aged 56.



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# The Courier-Mail

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## CURTIN TO FORM MINISTRY: FADDEN OUT

### New Government To Meet House Next Wednesday SURPRISE WIN

**A**USTRALIA is to have a Labour Government. The Leader of the Federal Labour Party (Mr. Curtin) will form a Ministry next Tuesday and will face the House on Wednesday.

This follows the dramatic defeat of the Fadden Ministry in the House of Representatives by 36 votes to 33 yesterday on Labour's censure motion arising from the Fadden Budget.

The defeated Prime Minister (Mr. Fadden) waited on the Governor-General (Lord Gowrie) last night, tendered his resignation, and recommended that Mr. Curtin be sent for. Lord Gowrie immediately commissioned Mr. Curtin to form a Government.

When the House meets next Wednesday Mr. Curtin will ask it to vote Supply probably for eight weeks, and he will then ask an adjournment of Parliament for a month to enable the new Labour Government to prepare a policy.

Mr. Curtin played his party last night to proceed with the utmost vigour and determination in the prosecution of the war.

Mr. Fadden has told Mr. Curtin that the present Government parties as an Opposition will give a Labour Government general support on matters relating to the war.

The War Advisory Council will be continued as a council of consultation between the Labour Government and the Opposition parties.

Mr. Curtin announced that he has asked a meeting of the Council to be held tomorrow to discuss the war. The meeting will be held at the Government House at 10 o'clock tomorrow. Mr. Curtin will be the guest of the Governor-General. The meeting will be held at the Government House at 10 o'clock tomorrow. Mr. Curtin will be the guest of the Governor-General. The meeting will be held at the Government House at 10 o'clock tomorrow. Mr. Curtin will be the guest of the Governor-General.



MR. CURTIN  
New Prime Minister

MR. FADDEN  
Defeated

MR. COLES  
Faced against the Government

MR. WILSON

### Queenslander Likely Treasurer



Mr. Fadden

Mr. Coles

Mr. Wilson

Mr. Stann

### TUMULT AND STORMY CLASHES MARK FINAL SESSION OF THE FADDEN GOVERNMENT

*By Our Special Representative*  
[CANBERRA, Friday.—Tumult, stormy scenes, and clashes between Ministerial and Opposition members marked the final session of the Fadden Government in the House of Representatives to-day.

The defeat of the Government by 36 votes to 33, with Mr. Coles (Ind. A.P.), V.I. and Mr. Wilson (Ind. C.P., V.I.) voting with the Opposition, was the first time a Government had been beaten in the House on a vital motion since the fall of the Scullin Labour Ministry in 1931.

Efforts during the morning gave way to the afternoon first to a vote on Mr. Coles' motion of no confidence in the Government. The motion was carried by 36 votes to 33. Mr. Fadden's Government was defeated. The motion was carried by 36 votes to 33. Mr. Fadden's Government was defeated. The motion was carried by 36 votes to 33. Mr. Fadden's Government was defeated.

### "Labour Will Get On With Winning the War"

**SAYS A.L.P. PRESIDENT**  
LABOUR as a Government would get on with the only task that mattered—the winning of the war—said the Federal president of the Labour Party (Mr. C. G. Fallon) last night.

"No section of the people is more concerned with the desperate need to step up the tempo of the war effort," he said. "While Labour is doing this it will translate talk of equality of sacrifice into action."

Mr. Fallon said that in recent months he had visited a number of States and had received enthusiastic support in every case. All parties indicated that an early election would be inevitable.

"No Government, which was responsible for the war, can be expected to do the job," he said. "The Labour Party will do it."

The President of the Government, Mr. Fadden, was said to be in a state of shock. He was said to be in a state of shock. He was said to be in a state of shock. He was said to be in a state of shock.

"The Budget has been the only opportunity for the Government to show its hand," he said. "It has failed."

"The Government has been in a state of confusion since the Budget," he said. "It has been in a state of confusion since the Budget. It has been in a state of confusion since the Budget."

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"The Government has been in a state of confusion since the Budget," he said. "It has been in a state of confusion since the Budget. It has been in a state of confusion since the Budget."

### 5 Hectic Weeks At Canberra

In five hectic weeks as Prime Minister, Mr. Fadden had to face two crucial motions. He survived the first, but was defeated on the second.

The time-table shows the chequered career of his short-lived Ministry.

August 28: Mr. Fadden resigns. August 29: Mr. Fadden commissioned to form a Government. September 1: Mr. Fadden forms a Government. September 15: Mr. Fadden's Government is defeated. September 16: Mr. Fadden resigns.

September 26: Mr. Fadden's Government is defeated. September 27: Mr. Fadden resigns. September 28: Mr. Fadden is defeated. September 29: Mr. Fadden is defeated.

October 1: Mr. Fadden is defeated. October 2: Mr. Fadden is defeated. October 3: Mr. Fadden is defeated. October 4: Mr. Fadden is defeated.

October 5: Mr. Fadden is defeated. October 6: Mr. Fadden is defeated. October 7: Mr. Fadden is defeated. October 8: Mr. Fadden is defeated.

October 9: Mr. Fadden is defeated. October 10: Mr. Fadden is defeated. October 11: Mr. Fadden is defeated. October 12: Mr. Fadden is defeated.

October 13: Mr. Fadden is defeated. October 14: Mr. Fadden is defeated. October 15: Mr. Fadden is defeated. October 16: Mr. Fadden is defeated.

### ON WAR FRONTS

News from the war fronts of Europe yesterday was:

**RUSSIA**  
The main operations are in progress on the Moscow front. The main operations are in progress on the Moscow front. The main operations are in progress on the Moscow front.

Cable and Late City



# 3 October 1941 - Washington

- In February 1941 the US War Department had no plans for the movement of long-range aircraft to the Far East, and declared that it could see no need for them, and that it regarded as inadvisable the establishment of air bases in the Pacific islands which might possibly fall into the hands of the enemy.
- But within six months the situation was reversed. Not only did the War Department approve AAF plans for a South Pacific air route, but the project received top priority among those agencies charged with its development. After investigation of several possible routes, the AAF on 3 October forwarded its recommendations to the Chief of Staff, who immediately approved them and issued the necessary orders. The commanding general of the Hawaiian Department was placed in charge of the project, and the Navy and State departments pledged their aid in rapid completion of the undertaking.
- Funds were promptly made available from defense aid appropriations, after a presidential letter of 3 October authorized the Secretary of War to “deliver aircraft to any territory subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, to any territory within the Western Hemisphere, to the Netherlands East Indies and Australia” and to construct the facilities needed for effecting such delivery.
- The commanding general of the Hawaiian Department was given responsibility for implementing the project.

# 3 October 1941 - Hawaii

- The Army immediately set about constructing the airfields required.
- In Hawaii, after receipt of the War Department directive, General Short (photo) conferred with the commandant of the Fourteenth Naval District regarding the possibility of using fields under construction by the Navy at Palmyra and Samoa.
- Upon learning that the necessary facilities would not be completed at Samoa prior to 1 May or at Palmyra prior to 1 August 1942, General Short dispatched survey parties to investigate the possibility of providing minimum facilities on Christmas and Canton islands, as well as in the Fiji Islands, New Caledonia, and Australia, by 15 January 1942.
- It developed that the Navy could not offer assistance in construction until after completion of its own projects; the Hawaiian Department therefore was dependent upon whatever shipping and construction forces the Army could provide.



# 3 October 1941 - Pacific

Investigations showed that at least one 5,000-foot runway in the direction of the prevailing wind could be prepared by 15 January 1942 at four sites: Christmas, Canton, Suva in the Fiji Islands, and Townsville.



## 3 October 1941 - Washington

- The State Department opened negotiations with the governments of the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, the Netherlands, and the Free French in order to secure authority for the use of territory under their jurisdiction in the South Pacific.
- In New Caledonia, representatives of the Hawaiian Department negotiated for improvement of airfields which could be used on the South Pacific route.



# 29 September 1941 - Britain

- On the same day (29 September), Churchill telegraphed Auchinleck (photo):
- It may well be that you will be granted by the enemy the time you have asked. But every day's delay is dearly purchased in the wider sphere. . . . I hope to persuade the Australian Government not to hamper you by pulling out their last two brigades in the October moonless period.
- Churchill reopened the question with Fadden in a telegram sent on 30th September.
- He mentioned that he and the Minister of State had with difficulty prevented Auchinleck from resigning because of the Australian Government's want of confidence: had their decision been based on political grounds, Auchinleck would not have felt the want of confidence implied. He trusted that all troops in Tobruk would be relieved in the great impending operation. The withdrawal of the Australians in October would certainly handicap the air force in their fight for air superiority; every day's delay in delivering the attack would make the task more difficult. The probable date of the offensive was early November and the period during which the two Australian brigades would be involved was very short.



4 October 1941 - Brisbane

## More A.I.F. Men At Singapore

**More strong reinforcements of Australian troops have arrived at Singapore.**

In the same convoy they brought with them a mass of up-to-date war equipment.

A new batch of New Zealand airmen also has reached the base.

Rear-Admiral T. B. Drew, who has supervised the fortifications of Singapore's naval base during the last two years, has arrived in San Francisco from the Far East en route to London.

"Singapore is now a match for anybody," he told interviewers. "In strengthening Singapore we accomplished seven years' work in two years. Malaya is not dependent on the rest of the world for raw materials. It has goods sufficient to maintain its existence."

## MORE PLANES FROM U.S.A.

*Courier-Mail Special Service and  
Australian Associated Press*

**NEW YORK, October 5.**—During September military aircraft manufacturers delivered 1914 planes. This is a record for any month, and brings the year's total to date to 12,650.

Officials point out that 1914 planes monthly is a rate of nearly 23,000 yearly, or 46 per cent of President Roosevelt's goal of 50,000 planes yearly.

Defence expenditures this fiscal

# 4 October 1941 - Canberra

- Churchill's message was received in Australia on the day on which the Fadden Government was overthrown.
- While Mr Curtin, the leader of the Labour Party and new Prime Minister, was forming his Government, a reply was sent on 4th October over Mr Fadden's signature; it was, however, discussed with Curtin before it was sent.
- Fadden denied the imputation of want of confidence in Auchinleck's military judgment and the implication that the Australian Government thought Australian troops had borne an undue burden but, after "most full and careful further consideration", maintained the request that the withdrawal should continue.
- Churchill informed Auchinleck on 5th October that he could get no helpful response from the late Australian Government. He had not yet made contact with the new Australian Government but trusted that there would be no postponement of CRUSADER.



# 4 October 1941 - Atlantic

- On the 4th October 1941 the trawler H.M.S. Lady Shirley (472 tons 1937) (photo), commanded by Lieut-Commander Callaway RANVR, encountered a surfaced submarine south-west of the Canary Islands.
- The submarine submerged, was forced to the surface by depth charges, and then engaged by gun fire. The gunfire prevented the Germans manning their own gun (though they did bring a machine-gun into action) and within a few minutes three of the submarine's officers, including the captain, and five ratings were killed.
- The surviving senior officer surrendered and gave orders to abandon and scuttle the Uboat.
- Lady Shirley picked up the forty-five survivors, one of whom died. The submarine had a total complement of 53; the Lady Shirley, whose gunlayer was killed in the action, had little more than half that number.
- Lady Shirley's victim was the type IXB submarine U-111.
- Lt-Cdr A.H. Callaway, DSO; RANVR. HMAS Yarra 1939-40; HM Ships Badger Feb-Mar 1941, Paragon Mar-Jun 1941. B. Sydney, 3 Apr 1906.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P07618.002

LtCdr Arthur Callaway RANVR reading out a signal of congratulations sent by the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill to the ship's company of HM Trawler Lady Shirley.



# 6 October 1941 - Manila

- On his way through Manila Page was assured by General MacArthur that after five years of intermittent war in China, Japan had become over extended, and needed a long period of recuperation before she could undertake another major struggle.
- She had gone to the limit of her southward expansion if she wished to avoid it, and under present conditions further expansion could be successfully resisted. During the present lull defences should be increased but not at the expense of more active fronts.
- Date is a guess Page previously had discussions in Singapore dated 29 September.



Page in 1924 as acting prime minister signing the first cabinet document prepared in Canberra.

# 7-8 October 1941 – North Africa

- The 2/7th Field Regiment was to be left a little longer in the desert and made good use of some fleeting opportunities to engage the enemy.
- Captain Huggett's troop took over duty with Little Brother on 6th October and carried out a predicted shoot on the night of 7th-8th October.
- The target was a night leaguer for enemy vehicles to the south of the strongpoint at Point 207.
- The regiment's diarist reported rather vaguely that "the result of the shoot indicated that rounds fell in the area".



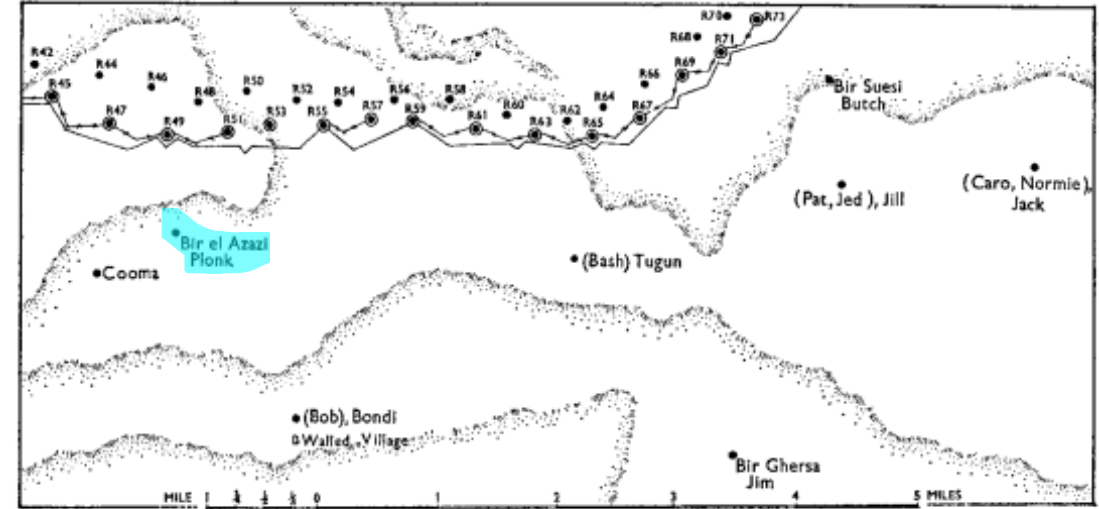
AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

023083

Cairo, Egypt. 1942-01. ONE OF A SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN AT THE REQUEST OF SCULPTOR LIEUTENANT LYNDON DADSWELL OF AN ARTILLERY SHOOT BY THE 2/7TH AUSTRALIAN FIELD REGIMENT. THEY WERE USED TO ASSIST HIM IN THE MODELLING OF A 25-POUNDER GUN TEAM IN ACTION.

# 8 October 1941 – North Africa

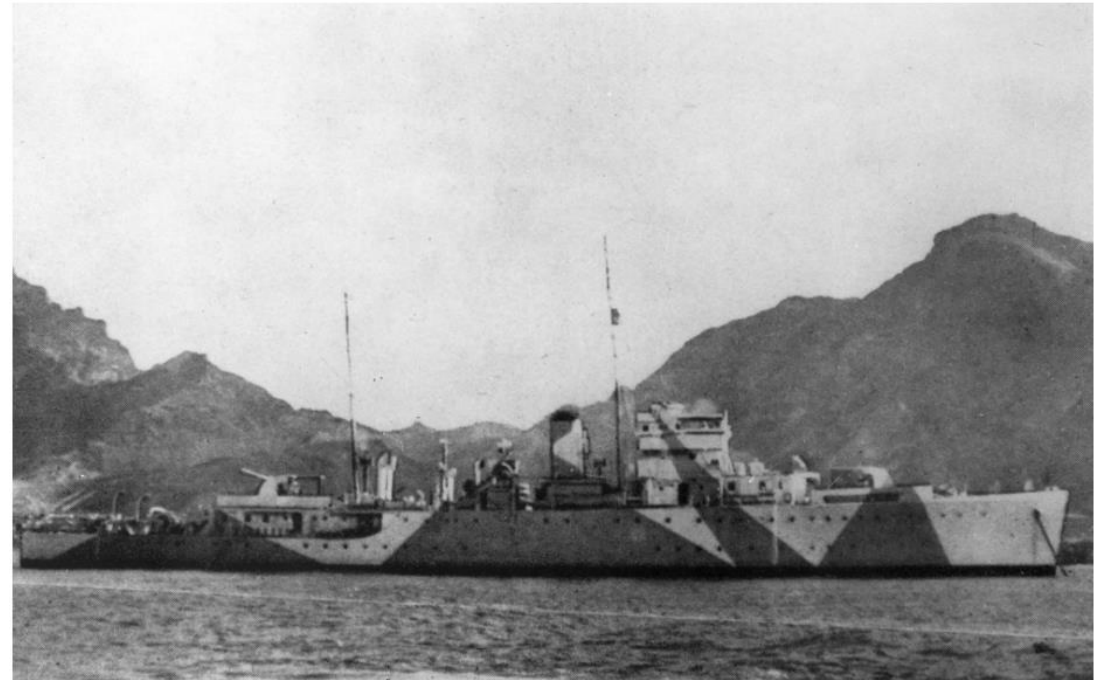
- On the night of the 7th-8th the occupants of outpost Plonk reported five tanks advancing from the south at 12.25 a.m.
- Plonk consisted of three alternative posts, one of which was normally occupied by seven men of the 2/17th Battalion, with a non-commissioned officer in charge.
- The Plonk standing patrol was normally relieved nightly, but this time was withdrawn without a relief.
- In the evening Brigadier Murray instructed Colonel Crawford to reoccupy Plonk.
- A patrol then set out to occupy the post. The post was entered and a garrison of eight men was left in occupation. Groups of tanks were again reported moving about throughout the night, in one instance accompanied by infantry.



Tobruk outposts, eastern sector

# 8 October 1941 – Middle East

- The British cargo ship Rosalie Moller(3,963 GRT, 1910) was bombed and sunk in the Suez Canal by Luftwaffe He 111 aircraft with the loss of two crew.
- Survivors were rescued by HMAS Parramatta ( Royal Australian Navy).



HMAS Parramatta wearing her wartime disruptive camouflage pattern paint.



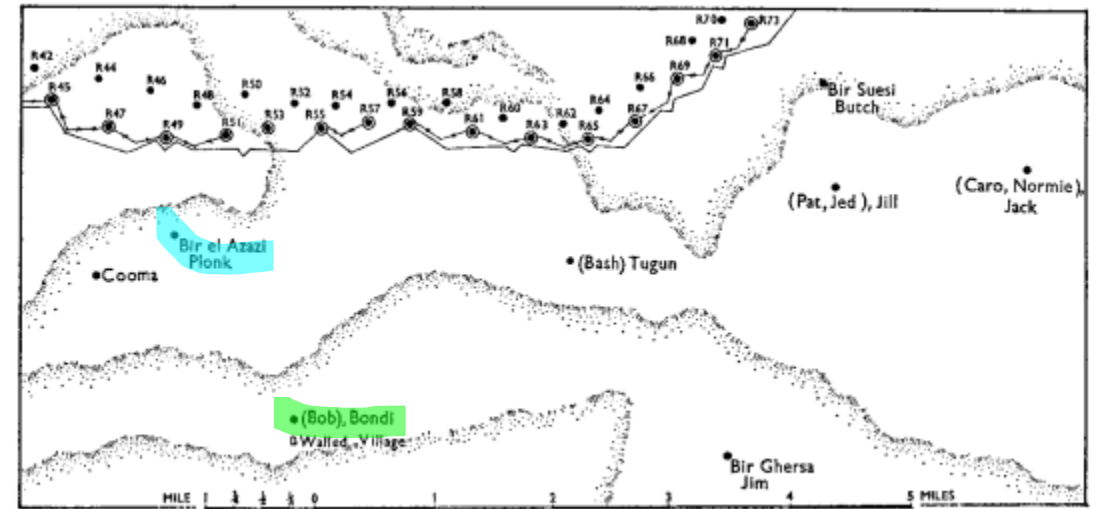
# 9 October 1941 – North Africa

- Next morning (9<sup>th</sup>) Plonk was heavily bombarded by enemy guns.
- It was decided to send out a squadron of 16 infantry tanks and 2 light tanks to Plonk at 9.45 p.m. under orders "to engage and defeat any enemy tanks met with".
- The 2/17th Battalion and an engineer party had the task of lifting the anti-tank minefield at Plonk and also the mines laid on the preceding night to trap enemy tanks.
- In addition two gaps were to be made in the perimeter minefield and to be protected by anti-tank guns.
- Elaborate precautions were taken to identify returning tanks. The identification password was "Welsh Washerwoman", apparently chosen as difficult for Germans to pronounce.



# 9 October 1941 – North Africa

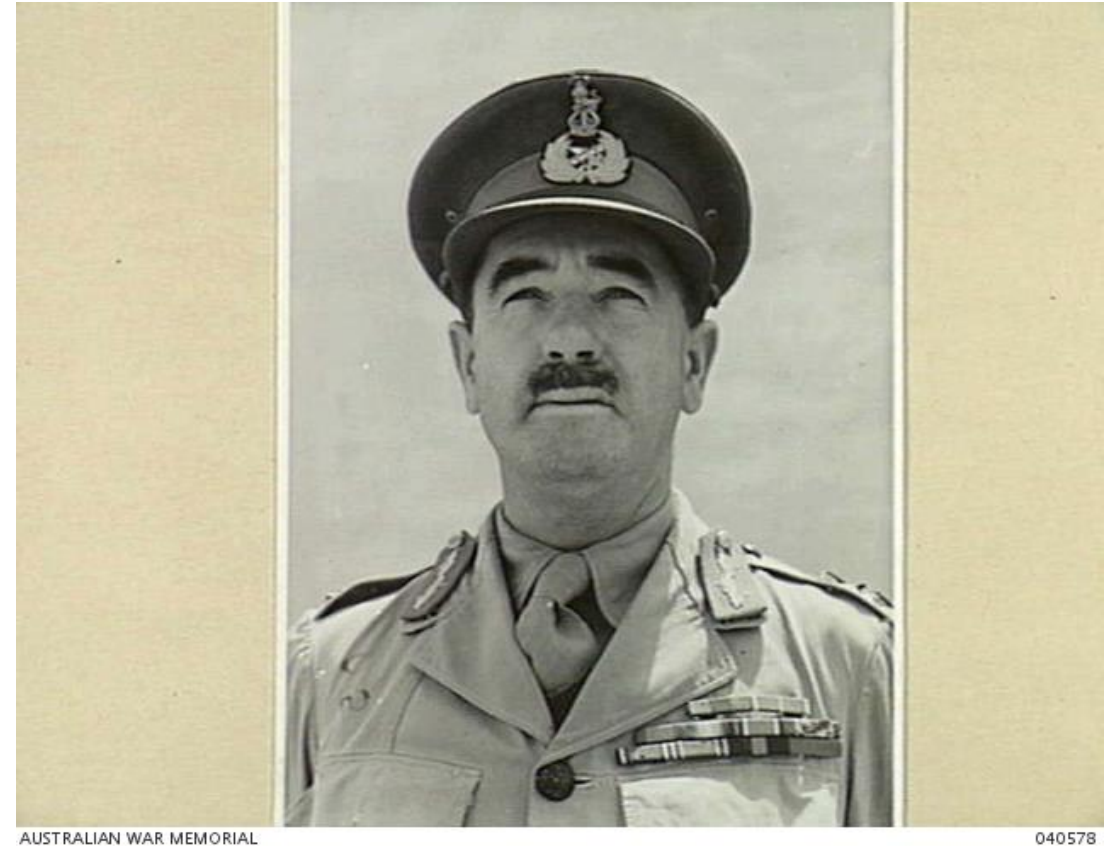
- Just after dark engine-noises were heard in the region of Bondi, to the south-east. Defensive fire was put down around the post. Enemy tanks twice approached it before 9 p.m. but withdrew in face of defensive fire.
- Soon after 10 p.m. two men from Bondi came into Plonk with the news that the garrison of nine men of the 2/Queens had been overrun by German infantry and more than 30 tanks.
- A close-range tank-battle then developed around Plonk; the British squadron commander was wounded and his tank disabled. After 15 minutes the German tanks made off and the British followed, but the Matildas were soon outdistanced.
- One of the British tanks, remaining at Plonk with mechanical trouble fought off five German tanks approaching from another direction.



Tobruk outposts, eastern sector

# 10 October 1941 – North Africa

- On 10th October Morshead (photo) directed that the 2/17th Battalion was to hold the Plonk area and to defend it.
- The brigade orders laid down that the outpost was to be held by two sections of infantrymen under command of an officer, and a section of anti-tank guns from the 20th Anti-Tank Company.
- Whether further protection should be afforded by additional fighting patrols or other methods was left to Crawford's discretion.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

040578

# 10 October 1941 – North Africa

- A standing patrol and working parties, accompanied by the anti-tank guns four light machine-guns and two mortars, went out at last light to hold Plonk and reinforce the defences.
- Captain Windeyer was in command,.
- By 7.50 p.m. Windeyer had reached Plonk but at 8.40 p.m. the enemy began to shell the area heavily. The bombardment continued for more than half an hour. Several men were hit. Some were sent back by stretcher to the perimeter. Windeyer himself was wounded but remained in active command.
- Windeyer attempted to resume the work under shell fire. Dust caused by the shelling reduced visibility to five yards. The ground was stony. Little progress was made.
- About 9.20 p.m. the shelling was still continuing, German tanks were reported to the north, the 2/Queen's reported that tanks were pushing in their patrols. Both of the trucks carrying the anti-tank guns had been hit on the way to Plonk.
- At 10.50 p.m. Crawford reported to Brigadier Murray that his patrols had been driven back from Plonk by very heavy machine-gun and artillery fire. As they had withdrawn the enemy artillery fire had crept after them until they were almost back to the perimeter.
- There were 11 large enemy tanks and five carriers or troop carriers on the Plonk position. Parties were digging on a front of approximately 300 to 400 yards.
- About 3 a.m. the enemy opened a heavy bombardment of the 2/17th Battalion's forward companies; it was estimated that more than 2,000 shells fell in the next four hours.
- In the night's operations two men had been killed and nine seriously wounded by shell fire. Captain Windeyer was mortally wounded.
- Capt H. F. Windeyer, NX12224; 2/17 Bn. Solicitor; of Sydney ; b. Hunter's Hill, NSW, 31 Mar 1914. Died of wounds 17 Oct 1941 .



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

020793

TOBRUK, LIBYA. 1941-09-11. A GROUP OF OFFICERS  
OF THE 2/17TH INFANTRY BATTALION.

Captain Windeyer Lt Col Crawford.



# 10 October 1941 – North Africa

- The 2/7<sup>th</sup> and 2/8<sup>th</sup> Field Regiments were informed at the beginning of October that their regiments were to be withdrawn from the desert to rejoin 1 Australian Corps in Palestine.
- Before they reached Palestine, they were to put into effect the prescribed reorganisation into regiments of three batteries: the 2/7<sup>th</sup> would in future comprise the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> Batteries, the 2/8<sup>th</sup> the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 58<sup>th</sup> Batteries.
- The regiments were irked at the news. They had lost their chance of action when the 9<sup>th</sup> Division had been prematurely committed, because the policy of employing Australian forces in complete formations had been broken.
- Because that policy had been reimposed they were being denied the opportunity of further action.
- The 2/8<sup>th</sup> was first to leave. It set off in a south-easterly direction in desert formation on 10<sup>th</sup> October, the first time in its history that the regiment had moved in its entirety on wheels.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

023090

CAIRO, EGYPT. 1942-01. TAKEN FOR SCULPTOR LYNDON DADSWELL OF A SHOOT BY THE 2/7TH FIELD REGIMENT TO ASSIST HIM IN MODELLING A 25-POUNDER GUN TEAM IN ACTION.



NOV 26 1944

## WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Excess heading not required)

Army Form C 714  
(adapted)

Unit 8 Aust. Pz. Bgt.

Date and Time--From 1 Oct., 1941. To 31 Oct., 1941.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
In the field	Oct. 1		C.O. attended at 4 Ind. Div., R.A.A., and was informed that Regt. would be relieved at an early date and would move back to Palestine.	
	Oct. 3		Lieut. Jillett from C.E. course Al Masa British Tomahawk shot down near R.H.Q. area - Pilot baled out - chute failed to open.	
	Oct. 4		R.Q. 16 Bty. truck burnt. Received cipher warning of move about 8th. Visit of Brig. Ramsay & S.M. & S.C. 9 Aust. Div. C.O. met party at R.A., 4 Ind. Div., and met S.R.A. 13 Corps and S.R.A. Eighth Army. C.R.A. spent evening on Regtl. area. C.O. conferred with C.R.A. admin. matters discussed, and C.O. instructed to organise 56 Bty. and same to come into existence on arrival in Palestine.	
	Oct. 5		Y.M.C.A. men to area - Sub-Unit Commanders advised of relief received - instructions to make preparations for early move by road to Palestine.	
	Oct. 6		Cipher received - mode of movement - 2 groups - fast & slow.	
	Oct. 7		Order to Btys. - re-organisation for 3 Bty.	
	Oct. 8		Move by R.H.Q. C.O. visits H.Q., R.A., 1 Ind. Div. C.R.A. wished that his appreciation be expressed to 16 Bty. for the work done in preparation of position, etc. Regt. moved 12 miles RV - R.H.Q. arrived at 1520 hrs. 16 Bty. arrived at 1700 hrs. 16 Bty. S.H.Q. and advance parties at 1600 hrs. - Movement Order No. 2 issued. Relief of 16 Bty. completed by 0001. B Trp. 7 Pz. Regt. took over responsibility of Nth. Point at 1800 hrs.	

# WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required)

Army Form C.2118  
(adapted.)

1

Unit: 8 Aust. Pd. Regt.

Date and Time—From Oct. 1, 1941. To Oct. 31, 1941.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
In the field	Oct. 9		Guns of 16 Bty. arrived from 0230 to 0345 hrs. At this time it marked the first occasion 8 Aust. Pd. Regt. was in bivouac on wheels.	
		0900	Recco party went forward to recon bivouac area for night & at same time the Regt. moved in desert formation and with 20 min. halts in each 2 hrs. & 1 hr. for lunch the Regt. moved 70 miles across the desert on a bearing of 110 degrees to within 6 miles of the Siwa Rd. Bivouac area was reached at 1715 hrs. C.O., Major Johnston & Capt. Macky went forward to Matruh to recon new areas there for 12 & 13 Oct. C.O. to endeavour to obtain orders for further moves. The Regt. handed over to 1st Regt. R.A. this day & moved to a bivouac area near junction of N.S. & E.W. telephone line. R.H.Q. moved at 1300 hrs., travelled 12 miles to the area. The handing over to the incoming Regiment was completed by 0001 hrs. 10 Oct., 41. B troop of 2/7 Pd. Regt. took over responsibility of North Point at 1800 hrs. R.H.Q. arrived at the bivouac area at 1520 hrs., 16 Bty. B.M.Q. advance parties 1600 hrs., 15 Bty. 1700 hrs., 16 Bty. guns 0345 hrs.	
	Oct. 10		Memorably day as although Regt. had been formed since May, '40, it was the first time it had moved in its entirety on wheels. Recon parties went forward at 0900 hrs. & the Regt. moved at the same time in desert formation on a bearing of 110 degrees with 20 min. halts in each two hours & one hour for lunch. Gazelles & species of desert rabbit were seen. 70 miles were covered this day & bivouac was reached at 1715 hrs. - area being within 6 miles of Siwa Rd. The C.O., Major Johnston & Capt. Macky went forward to Mersa Matruh to recon bivouac area for the following night also to contact 9 Aust.	





# 11 October 1941 - COIC

B.B.1204Z/10  
C.W.R.10/10

3. CHESTERFIELD REEF - D/F Bearings of Enemy Mobile Unit -  
Third class D/F bearings from Awarua, Waipakauri and Auckland, New Zealand indicate the possibility of a German mobile unit at 0736Z/10 within ~~at~~ 300 miles of position 20°S 160°E.

Comment - This position is just off Chesterfield Reef, about 300 miles west of New Caledonia.

In view of Admiralty's recent signal confirming N.Z.N.B.'s previous D/F's of 5/10 as probably being in the Pacific it would appear likely that this is the same unit which has moved north probably from the Southern Tasman.

## B. ADJACENT AREAS

### EAST of Australia Station

- "Le Triomphant" 4. SUVA - "LE TRIOMPHANT" - The Free French Light Cruiser  
1720M/9 "LE TRIOMPHANT" is expected to arrive in Suva at 0600M/15/10.



# 11 October 1941 - COIC

5.  
Admt. 2053A/7/10

Admt. 1857A/30/9

INDIAN OCEAN - Possible Raider Activity - The Greek cargo vessel, "STAMATIOS G. EMBIRICOS" (3,900 tons) which is overdue at Colombo since 28/9, may possibly have made the series of R's intercepted by Trincomalee at 1549(corrupt)Z/26/9. She should then have been in the vicinity of the Maldiva Islands.

Comment - There has been no other intelligence (apart from Geraldton aircraft report of 11/9) since the 1/8 to suggest the presence of a raider in the Indian Ocean. The "Silvaplane" raider could not have been responsible. If the "EMBIRICOS" has been attacked the raider could have been off Fremantle

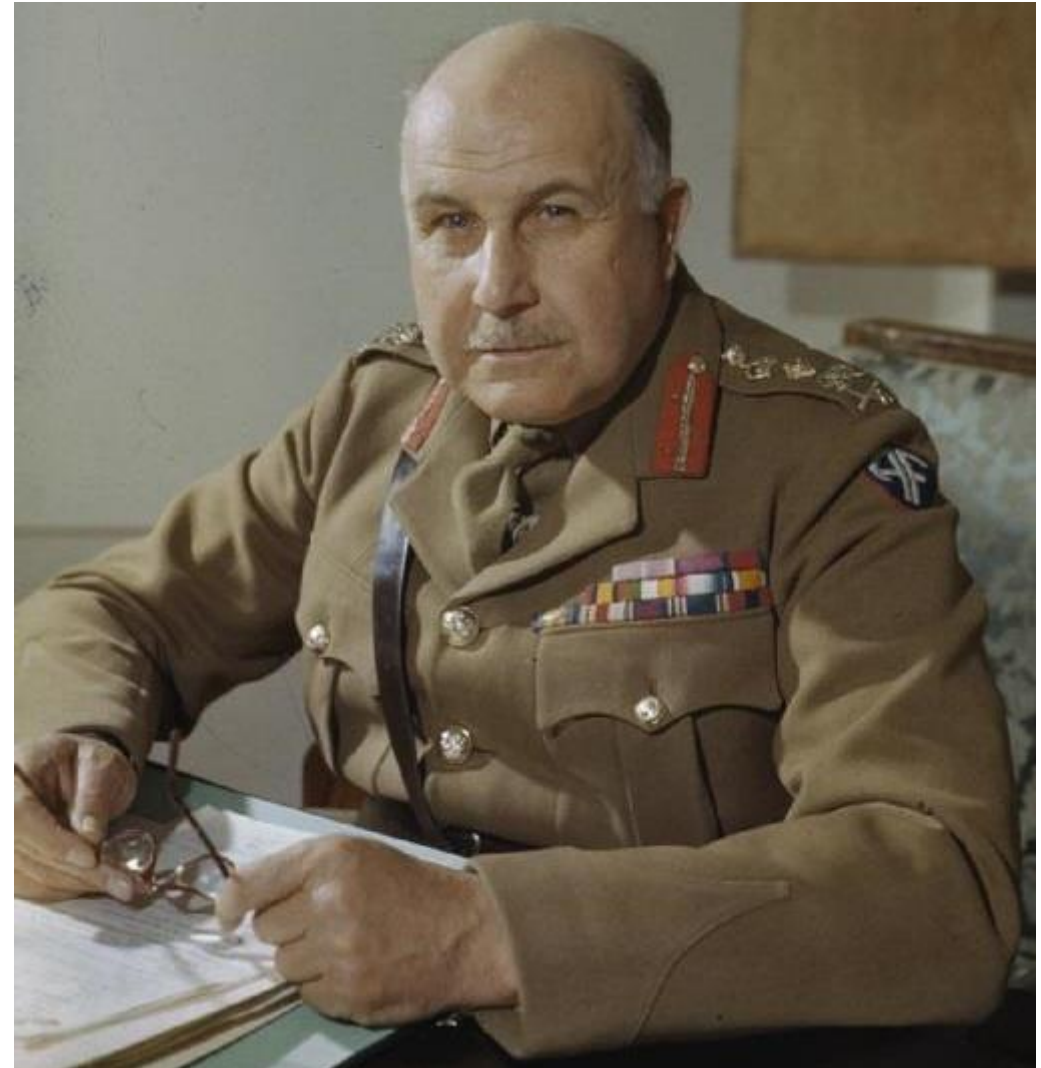
- 2 -

by 5/10 at 15 knots.



# 11 October 1941 - Syria

- On 11th October General Wilson (photo) wrote to General Blamey:
- I regret to say that I have had many cases brought to me recently of brutal assaults by Australian soldiers, either against other soldiers (British or French), police (military or civil) or civilians.
- I am taking this up with your Commanders as I feel that exemplary punishments will have to be given to put a stop to it, and I am asking your Commanders to let it be known that in future all cases of assault must be tried by General Court Martial.
- Perhaps if they get a whack of penal servitude with the first two years to be done in the Middle East it might have a deterrent effect.
- I will not bother you with the details, but in some cases it has been due to neglect of picquets accompanying leave parties. Trouble has, however, occurred in Beirut, Damascus and Jerusalem. I thought you had better be aware of what is happening, and would be very glad of any advice you can give me as to how to deal with it.



# 11 October 1941 - Syria

- Blamey (photo) replied recalling how earlier accusations against Australians had been proved baseless adding:
- "It is a very convenient form of excuse for any happening to lay it on to broad Australian shoulders. But when it is not in accordance with fact it does an immense amount of harm to the relations between the various Empire forces."
- He concluded: "I am afraid that the question of discipline of the A.I.F. is entirely one for my action"; and enclosed relevant passages from his instructions from the Government.
- In reply Wilson sent Blamey a list of two cases of fracas in cafes in Jerusalem, one involving two and the other seven Australians, and a note of a charge pending against an Australian who on 29th Sept had allegedly attacked a Lt-col and a nursing sister as they were leaving a hotel in Damascus.
- A report which Blamey obtained from Corps headquarters stated that since the end of the operations in Syria, two months before, the following charges had been made against men of the Corps and its two divisions: assaults on other troops, 17; on police, 4; on civilians, 27. In 15 cases the guilt of an Australian had been established; 33 cases were awaiting investigation or decision.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

107532

# 11 October 1941 - Egypt

- No. 451 Squadron had been formed as an army cooperation unit at Bankstown, New South Wales in February 1941. As one of Australia's Article XV squadrons it was intended that the squadron would serve overseas as part of the Royal Air Force (RAF).
- The squadron's personnel departed Sydney on 9 April and arrived in Egypt on 5 May.
- It had been planned that the squadron would be issued with aircraft from British stocks on its arrival in Egypt but the difficult situation facing Allied forces in the region meant that all available aircraft were needed by the experienced squadrons engaged in combat and none could be spared.
- It was not until 1 July 1941 that No. 451 Squadron took over No. 6 Squadron RAF's Hawker Hurricane fighters and other equipment at Qasaba.
- The squadron began flying operational missions on 1 July 1941.
- As an army cooperation unit its main duties were photographic and tactical reconnaissance and artillery spotting.
- From 13 September No. 451 Squadron maintained a detachment of two pilots and two aircraft in Tobruk to support the Allied garrison.
- No. 451 based at Sidi Barrani (LG-75) began its programme of reconnaissance specifically connected with the Eighth Army's requirements on 11th October.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P00869.035

IDKU, EGYPT, 1943. A HAWKER HURRICANE IIC  
AIRCRAFT OF 451 SQUADRON RAAF ON THE  
AIRFIELD.

# 11 October 1941 – North Africa

- Next night, the 11th-12th, Morshead ordered the 20th Brigade to attack and recapture Plonk, and to establish a new outpost in the Plonk area, but not at the site of the old outpost because it was appreciated that the previously held positions were registered by the enemy artillery.
- The divisional report stated:
- “Any place in that vicinity offered as good observation as any other—the main object was to keep the upper hand and to put a stop to the enemy pushing our posts back and advancing his position. The site chosen for the new post, to be called Cooma, was 1,500 yards south-west of Plonk.
- The attack was mounted by two platoons of 2/17<sup>th</sup> and a squadron of 4 RTR supported by a regimental bombardment by the 107th R.H.A.
- After a delay caused by the late arrival of the tanks the bombardment was repeated and the attack restarted.
- A tank action began just before 1 a.m. when the British tanks discerned enemy tanks about 100 yards ahead and opened fire. The battle was brisk and noisy. Fiery projectiles ricocheted in every direction as though from a carelessly ignited box of fireworks. Enemy tanks were found both in front and to the east and west of Bir el Azazi but the British tanks, though fired on wildly (but, in the darkness, not accurately) from ahead and right and left, advanced steadily onto the objective. The German tanks, still engaging, withdrew in front of the British.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

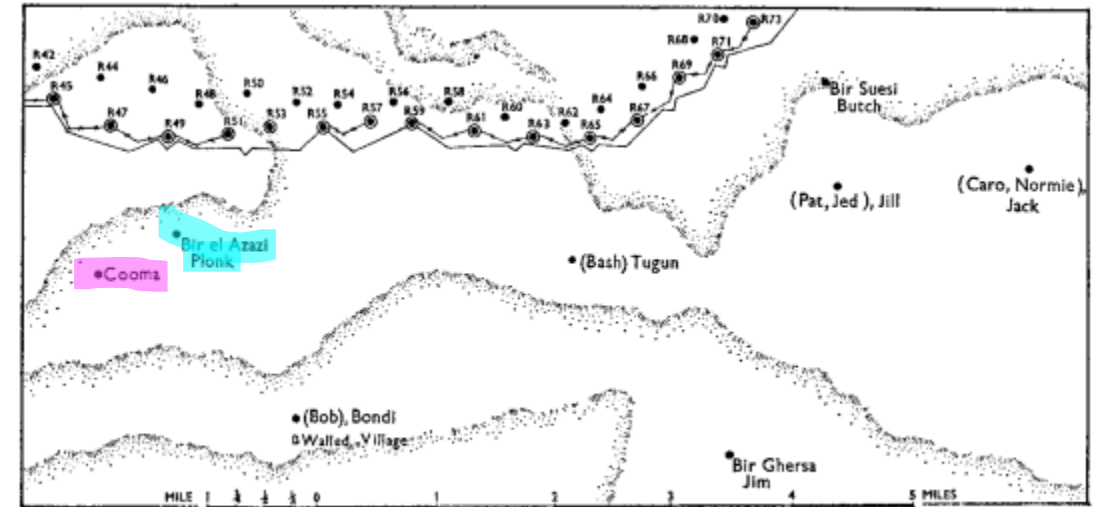
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NX8 Major General Morshead (Left) and NX365 Brigadier Murray leaving Advanced Headquarter, 9th Division, Tobruk.



# 11 October 1941 – North Africa

- The firing ceased at 1.25 a.m., by which time the enemy had gone from Plonk, and for a brief interval no-man's land was quiet.
- Then one or two gun flickers were seen in the enemy territory and in a moment numerous guns were flashing in a wide semi-circle from west to south to east, their fire converging on Plonk.
- Never before at Tobruk had such an intensive bombardment been seen; the impressive artillery display struck the watching infantry with awe.
- While shells were rapidly pounding Plonk, another group of German tanks approached from the west. Again the British tanks drove them off.
- While each side in turn had been pounding this small patch of desert the work of establishing the new outpost at Cooma had been proceeding. After overrunning Plonk the Matildas had come across to Cooma to protect the infantry and had shielded them from a group of enemy tanks; but at 5.17 Crawford withdrew the tanks to the forward assembly area.



Tobruk outposts, eastern sector



# 12 October 1941 – North Africa

- On 12th October "C" Troop, supporting the cruiser tanks, took part in a raid across the frontier wire south of Sidi Omar as part of a mixed mobile column, the object of which was to capture "prisoners, tanks, armoured cars and guns". "Guns" in the regimental diarist's concise language meant a battery of 105-mm guns at Bir Sheferzen, which "C" Troop was to silence should they attempt to fire.
- A heavy mist enveloped the region at first light when the strike was made.
- When the mist cleared, no tanks or guns were seen: only five armoured cars.
- The surrender of one armoured car was enforced, ammunition and fuel dumps were destroyed and four prisoners taken .



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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WESTERN DESERT. A CAPTURED GERMAN 8-WHEELED ARMoured CAR.

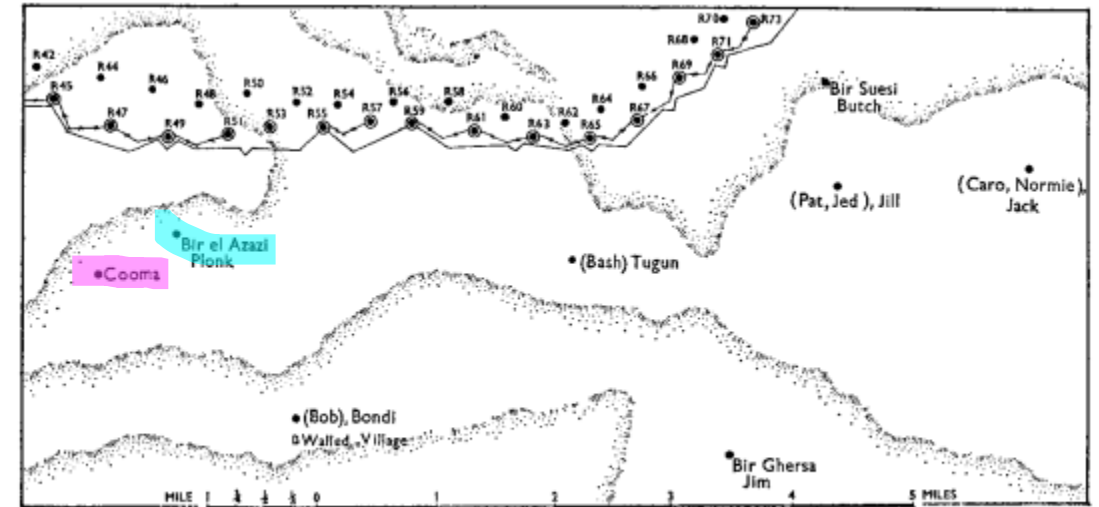
# 12 October 1941 – North Africa

- The Tobruk convoy on the night of the 12th-13th brought in the 1/Durham Light Infantry and took away, among others, advanced parties of the 26th Brigade Group. During the next three days the Durham Light Infantry relieved the 2/43rd Battalion, taking over the whole of its equipment.
- The troops brought out from Tobruk in the minelayers and destroyers of the relief convoys disembarked at Alexandria, stayed for about 24 hours at Amiriya and then entrained for the A.I.F. Base Area in Palestine. The 24th Brigade and other units, including the 2/12th Field Regiment, the 2/3rd Anti-Tank Regiment and the 2/1st Pioneer Battalion, arrived in Palestine during the last week in September; the brigade went to camp Kilo 89.
- The 26th Brigade, followed closely by the 20th Brigade arrived a month later; both settled in at Julis.



# 12 October 1941 – North Africa

- At sunrise on the 12th 19 German tanks and about half a dozen other vehicles were within view on the front of the 2/17th, mostly near **Plonk**, which the enemy had again reoccupied.
- Orders were now given that until further notice a squadron of tanks was to provide protection each night for the **Cooma** outpost, leaving the perimeter at dusk, remaining in close proximity to the post all night, and returning at dawn. In addition two troops of tanks were to be kept at hand throughout the day in a state of instant preparedness to go to the assistance of Cooma.
- About an hour after sunset but before the tanks to protect Cooma had left the perimeter, nine German tanks were perceived 90 yards west of Cooma. Crawford withdrew the Cooma patrol. It came in at 7.30 p.m. For some hours enemy tanks patrolled round Plonk and Cooma and in front of the 2/17th, one or two approaching the perimeter wire.
- Infantry tank-hunting patrols were organised but failed to make contact.
- At 1 a.m. the British tank squadron went out. They also failed to make contact with the enemy tanks, but for an hour shot up his working parties.
- In the succeeding days, and for the rest of the time that Murray's brigade held the southern sector, Cooma continued to be occupied by the 2/17th and Plonk by the enemy. Each night the squadron of tanks went out to protect Cooma.



Tobruk outposts, eastern sector



# 12 October 1941 - France

- On 12th October a special Circus operation was flown, twenty-three Blenheims effectively bombing the docks at Boulogne.
- No. 452 flew in one of the two wings provided for target support and many individual dog-fights resulted.
- Truscott damaged two aircraft and Finucane shot down one but Chisholm (photo, circled) failed to return.
- Chisholm parachuted into the sea near Berck-sur-Mer, was picked up by a German launch, and sent to a prisoner-of-war camp at Lamsdorf. Here he met Stuart who had been shot down on 18th September and during the winter they prepared a plan to escape.
- In June 1942 they escaped and walked to Brno in Czechoslovakia but were recaptured and returned to Lamsdorf.
- On 11th August 1942 he and three others escaped from the Gleiwitz working camp through a boiler room to which they had made a skeleton key. After marching east for six nights they reached Poland. Chisholm contrived to remain at large in Poland until March 1944 and then succeeded in traveling to Paris.
- On 10th May 1944 he reached Paris. Chisholm stayed with the family of a French policeman until the outbreak of hostilities in Paris between the French Forces of the Interior (Underground Army) and the Germans. He joined the F.F.I. and fought in the streets until Allied forces occupied the city, when he was at last able to return to England on 30th August 1944.



*(Associated Press, London)*  
Pilots of No. 452 Squadron on return from a fighter sweep over France in September 1941.  
Facing the camera, left to right: F-Lt B. E. Finucane, Sgt K. B. Chisholm, Sqn Ldr R. W. Bungey. Finucane's Spitfire (bearing shamrock) is in the background.

# 12 October 1941 - France

- On 13th October 452 flew as close escort to four Blenheims in an early afternoon raid against Arques.
- Five miles from the target a very determined attack was made on the bombers by enemy aircraft and No. 452 received permission to break formation to beat off these attackers.
- This was done, but as soon as the squadron resumed escort, further attacks developed and the Australians were quickly involved in individual dog-fights during which six Messerschmitts were claimed destroyed and one probably destroyed in addition to three damaged.
- Truscott and Finucane (each two), Thorold-Smith and Sergeant Emery were the successful pilots, while Sergeant Schrader claimed the probable.
- The squadron lost one pilot killed in this action, and in addition Elphick's Spitfire was hit and he had to bale out near the English coast.
- Thorold-Smith and Truscott circled over him so that the exact position could be determined by ground radar stations, and he was soon afterwards picked up by an air-sea rescue launch.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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400213 Squadron Leader Keith 'Bluey' Truscott (left),  
41276 Sqn Ldr Brendan Eamonn Fergus "Paddy"  
Finucane RAF (centre) and 402144 Sqn Ldr Raymond  
Edward Thorold-Smith of No 452 Squadron RAAF.



- [Tobruk, 30th July to 22nd October | Australian War Memorial \(awm.gov.au\)](https://www.awm.gov.au/tobruk/)
- Tobruk, 30th July to 22nd October
- 29 min 41 sec

- Thanks for your attention.