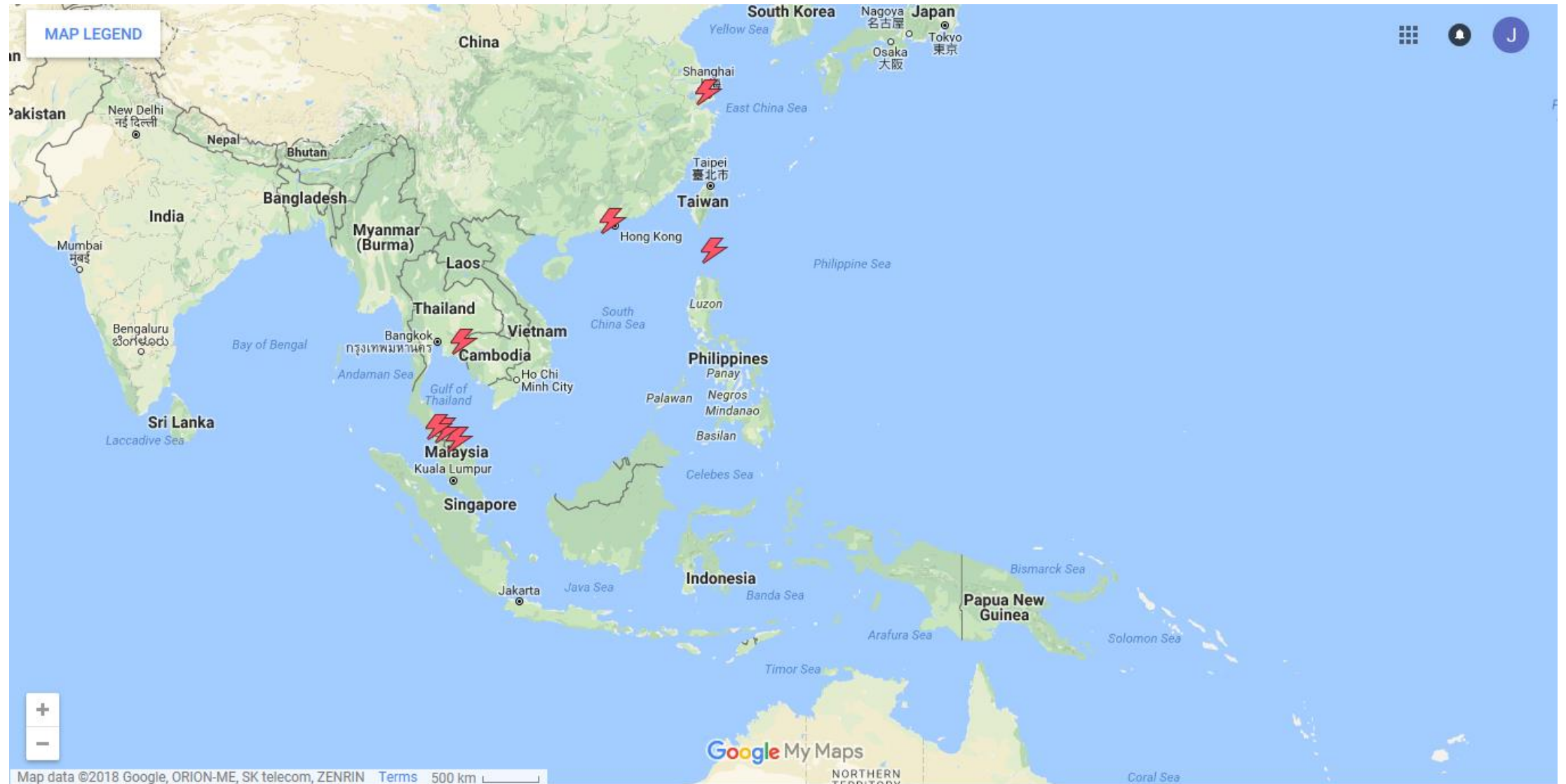




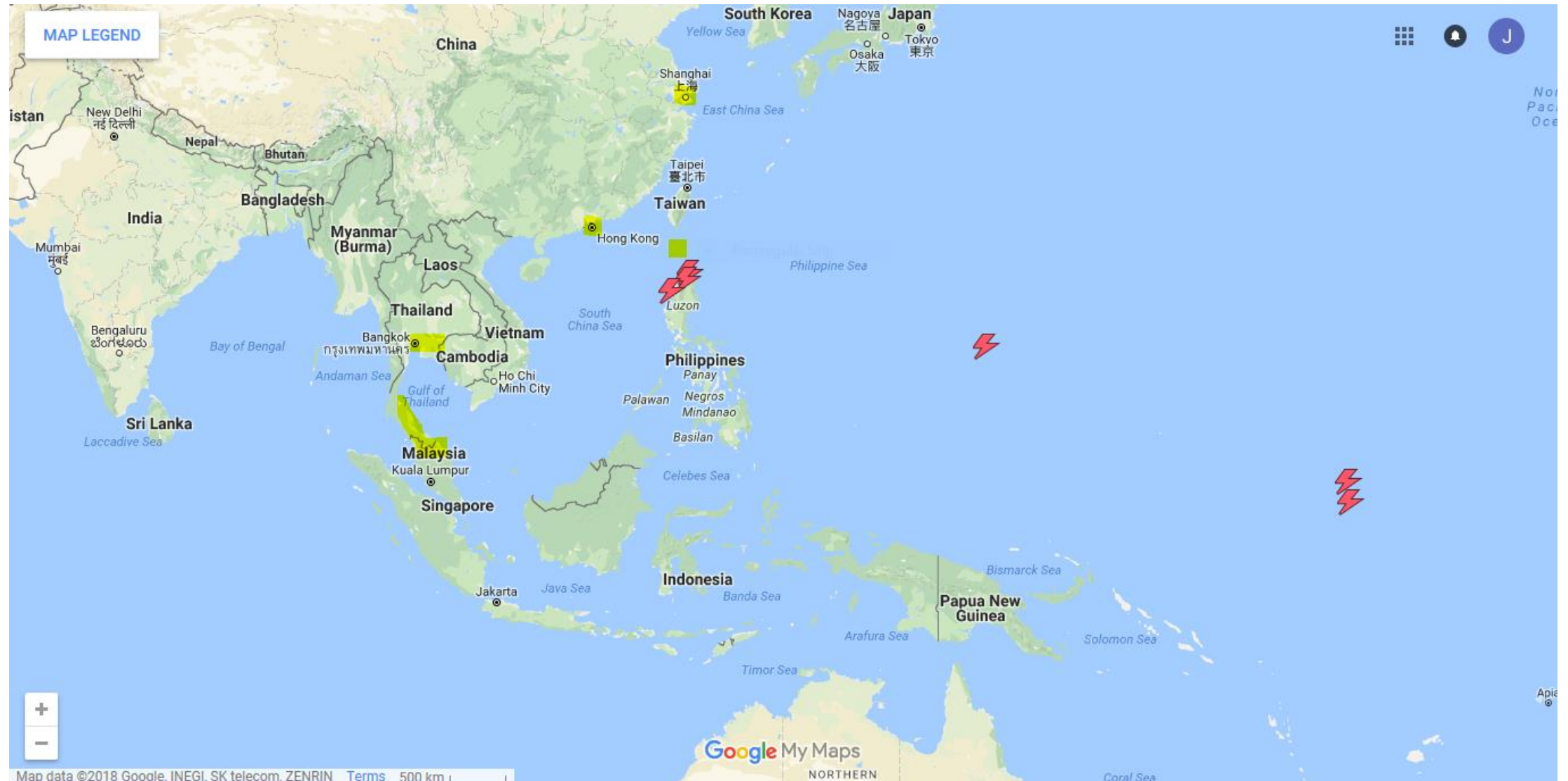
Background to the War in the Pacific

- On 8th December 1941 (Australian time) the Empire of Japan attacked the US fleet at Pearl Harbour and invaded the Shanghai International Settlement, Hong Kong, The Philippines, Thailand and Malaya.
- With extraordinary energy and skill they overran all the western empires in Asia in five months.

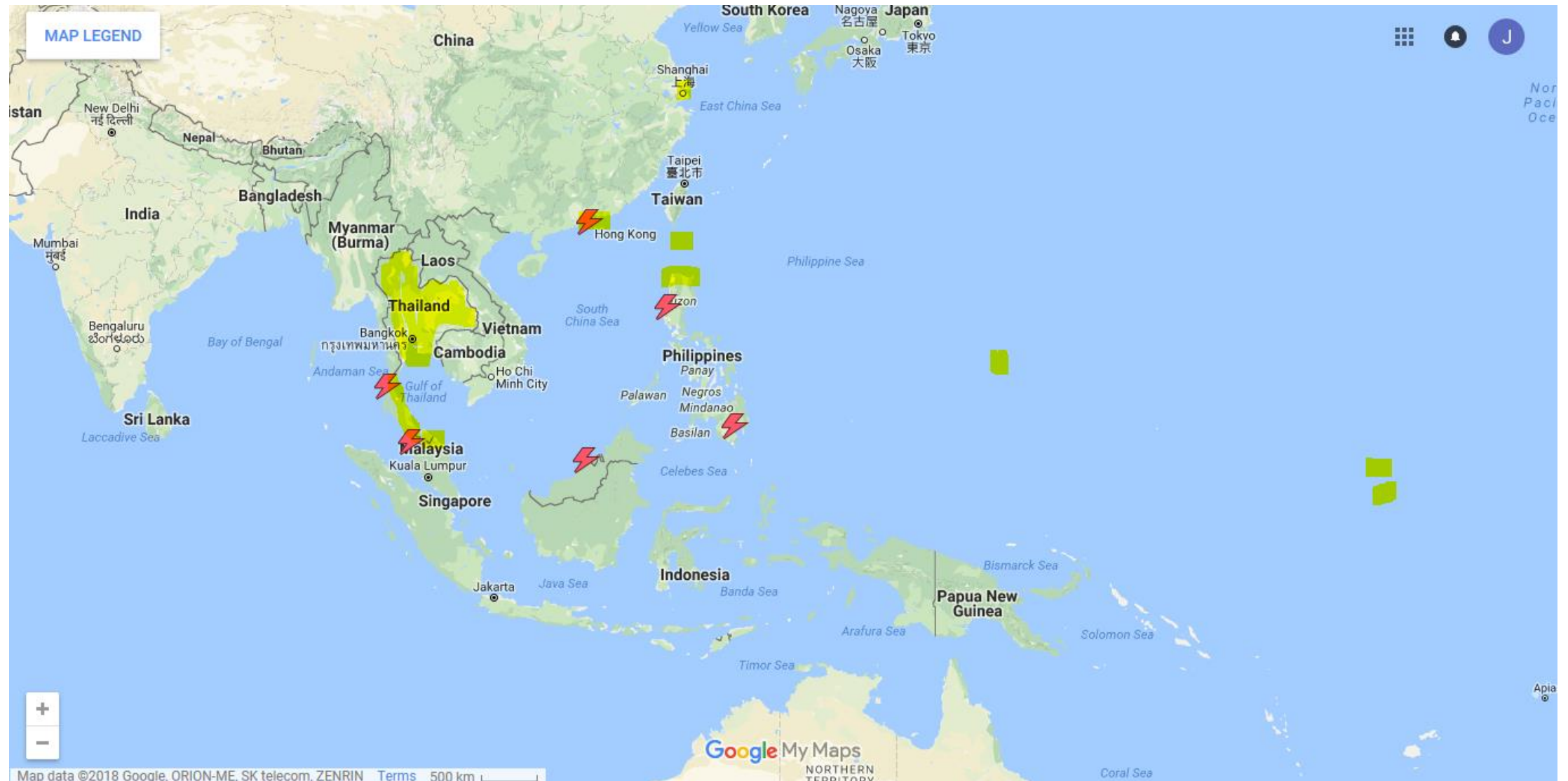
8 December 1941 – The Wave Breaks



9 to 13 December 1941



15 to 22 December 1941



23 to 31 December 1941



25th December

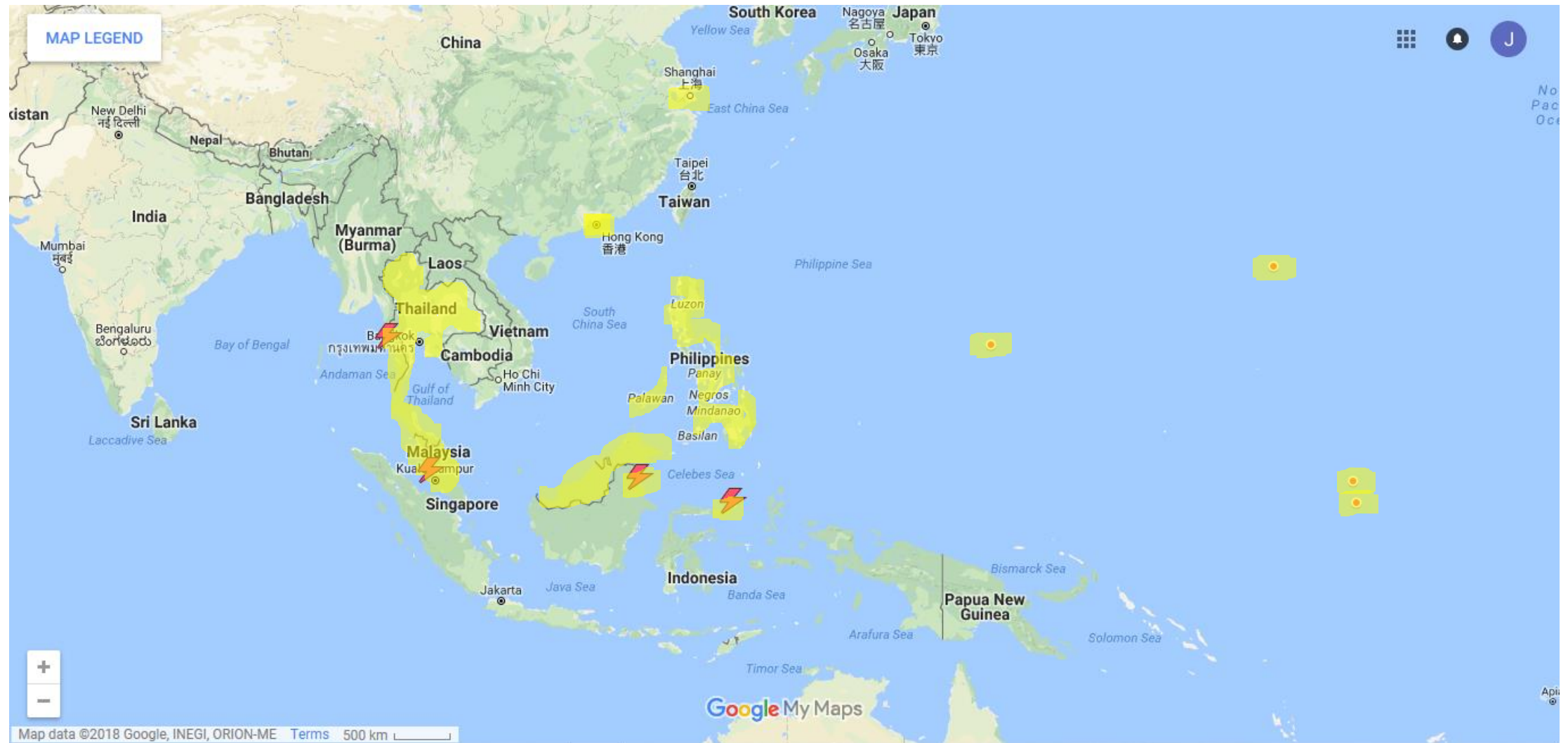
- **Malaya**

- Captain Spencer Chapman crossed the Perak on Christmas Day intending to meet Roseforce at a rendezvous and guide it to suitable targets. The rendezvous failed, but he lay by a roadside and watched the enemy. He saw:
- “hundreds and hundreds of them, pouring eastwards towards the Perak River. The majority of them were on bicycles in parties of forty or fifty, riding three or four abreast and talking and laughing just as if they were going to a football match. Indeed, some of them were actually wearing football jerseys; they seemed to have no standard uniform or equipment and were travelling as light as they possibly could. Some wore green, others grey, khaki or even dirty white. The majority had trousers hanging loose and enclosed in high boots or puttees; some had tight breeches and others shorts and rubber boots or gym shoes. ...
- Their equipment and armament were equally varied and were slung over themselves and their bicycles with no apparent method. . . . The general impression was one of extraordinary determination: they had been ordered to go to the bridgehead, and in their thousands they were going, though their equipment was second-rate and motley and much of it had obviously been commandeered in Malaya. This was certainly true of their means of transport, for we saw several parties of soldiers on foot who were systematically searching the roadside kampongs for bicycles and most of the cars and lorries bore local number plates. . . .”
- “All this was in very marked contrast to our own front-line soldiers, who were at this time equipped like Christmas trees with heavy boots, web equipment, packs, haversacks, water-bottles, blankets, ground-sheets, and even great-coats and respirators, so that they could hardly walk, much less fight.”



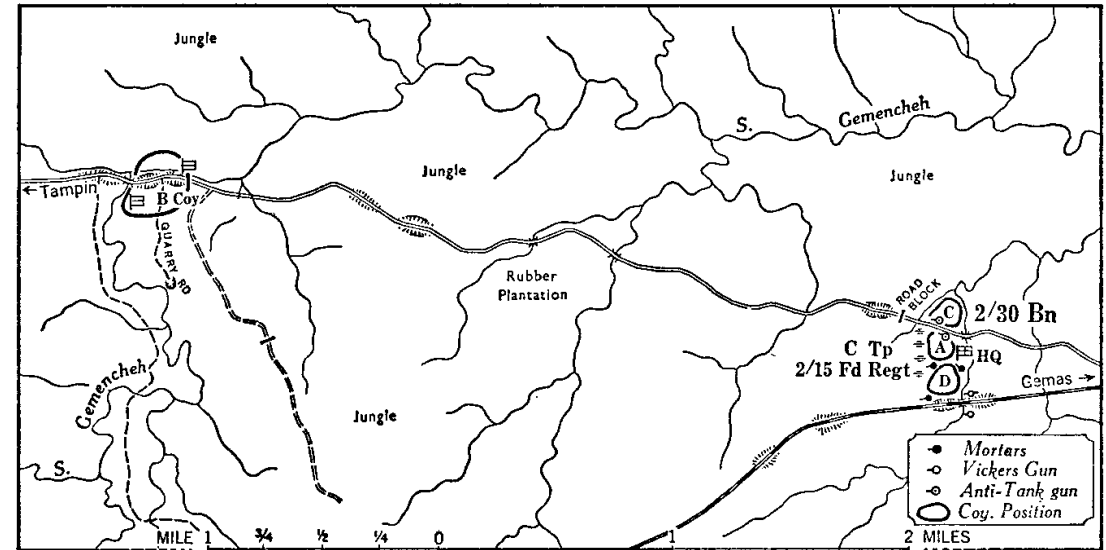
Chapman had trained Australian forces in guerrilla warfare and organised parties to stay behind in Japanese occupied areas.

1 to 15 January 1942



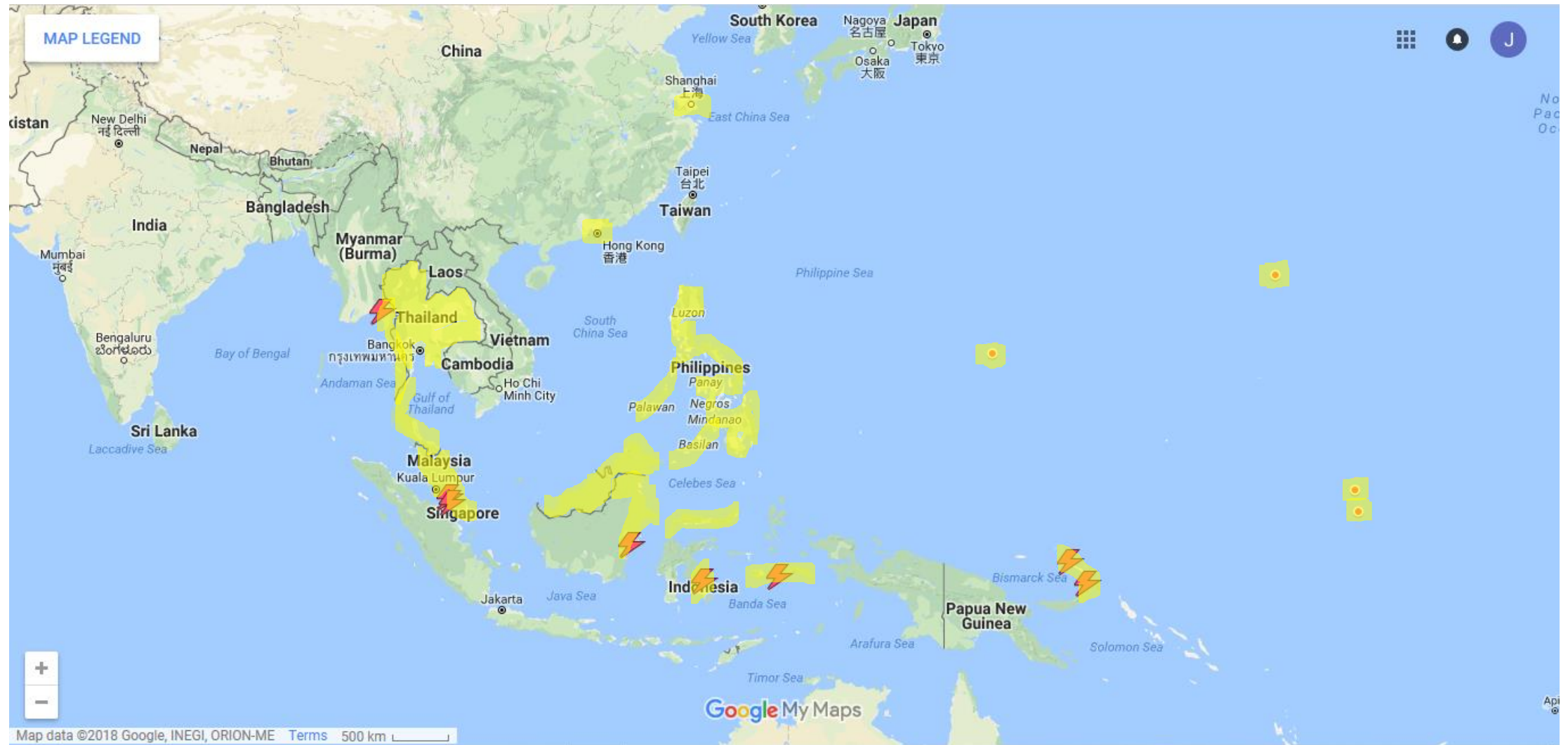
14th January - Gemas

- In the first action by Australian troops in Malaya, shortly before 4 p.m., a few Japanese on bicycles rounded the bend near the Gemencheh bridge. Soon a column of blithely chattering Japanese push cyclists, riding five or six abreast, was streaming over the bridge. They resembled a picnic party rather than part of an advancing army, except that they carried arms.
- Sounds along the road forward of his position suggested that motor transport, with perhaps the main body of the enemy convoy, was following. He therefore let from 200 to 300 of the cyclists pass, to be dealt with by troops in the rear.
- Only three motor cyclists appeared, followed by several hundred more cyclists. When these were tightly packed into the ambush, and on the bridge Duffy gave the order for the bridge to be blown.
- The charge hurled timber, bicycles and bodies skyward.
- Duffy's three platoons hurled grenades among the enemy and swept them with fire from Bren guns, Tommy guns and rifles.
- In twenty minutes it was all over. Of the sight across the river, Duffy related: "... the entire 300 yards of road was thickly covered with dead and dying men—the result of blast when the bridge was blown up and the deadly fire of our Bren guns."

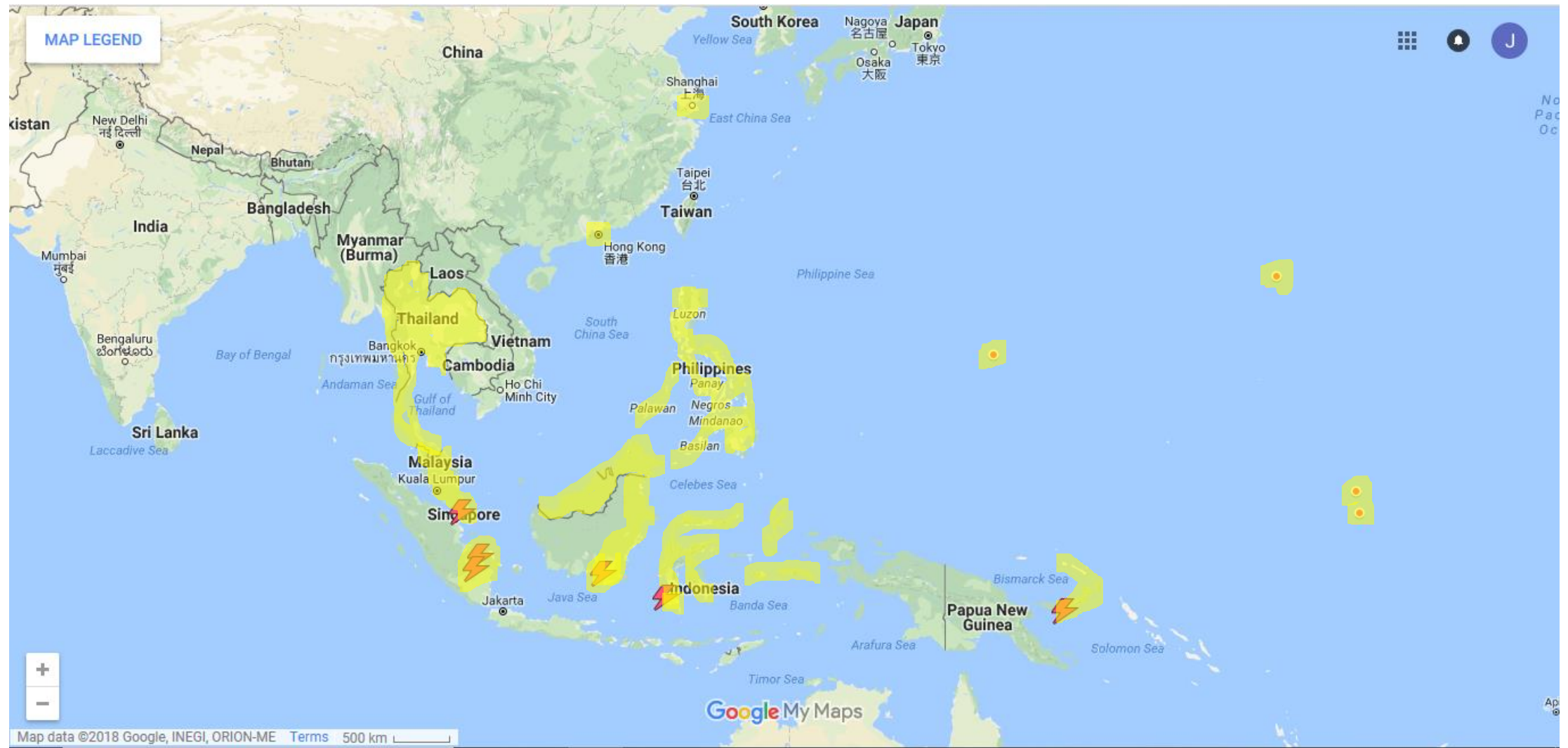


Within hours the Japanese were in control of the Gemencheh ambush area (where they restored the bridge for traffic within six hours of its having been blown up) and were advancing in force, with tanks, towards the battalion's main position.

16 to 31 January 1942

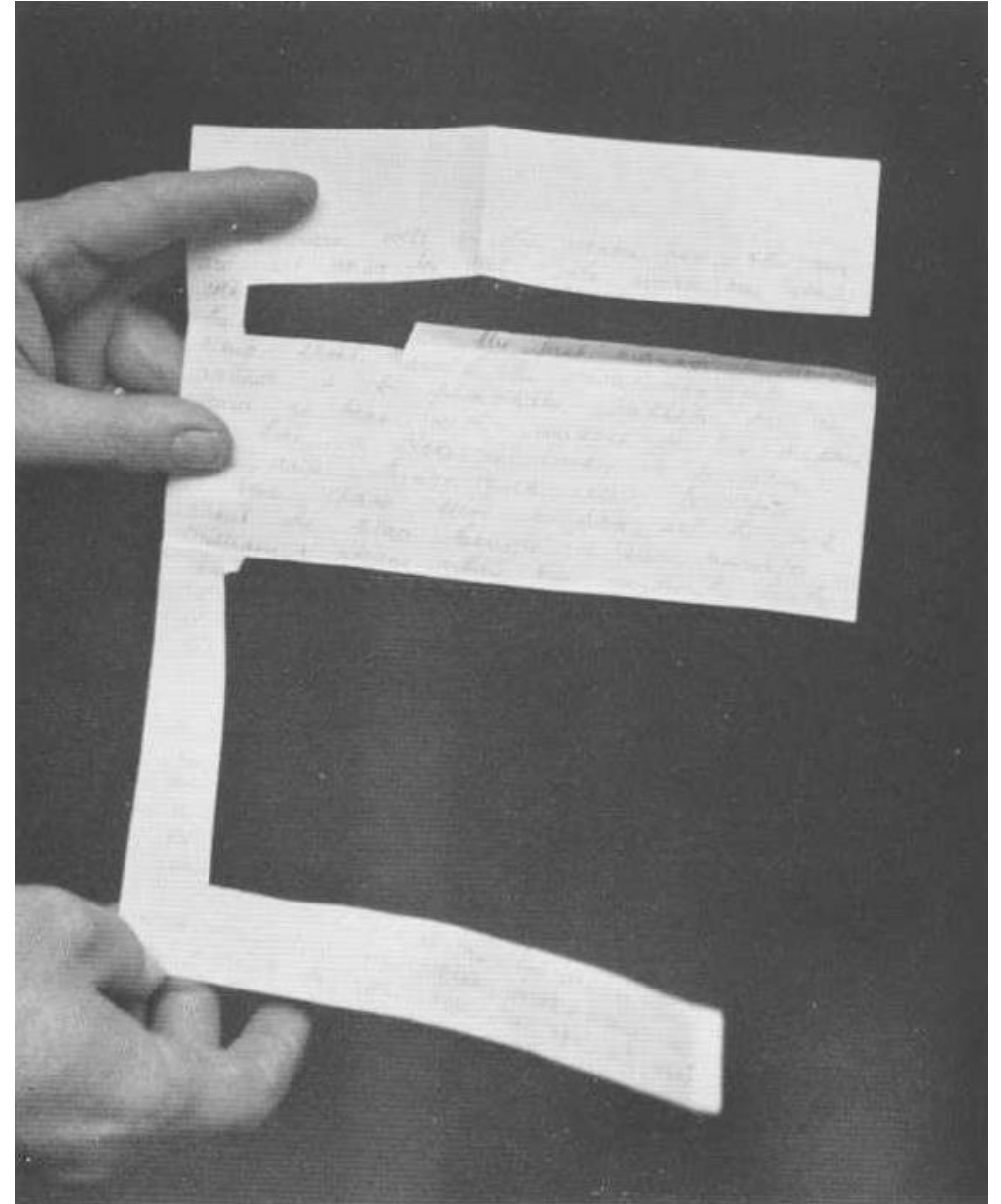


1 to 15 February 1942

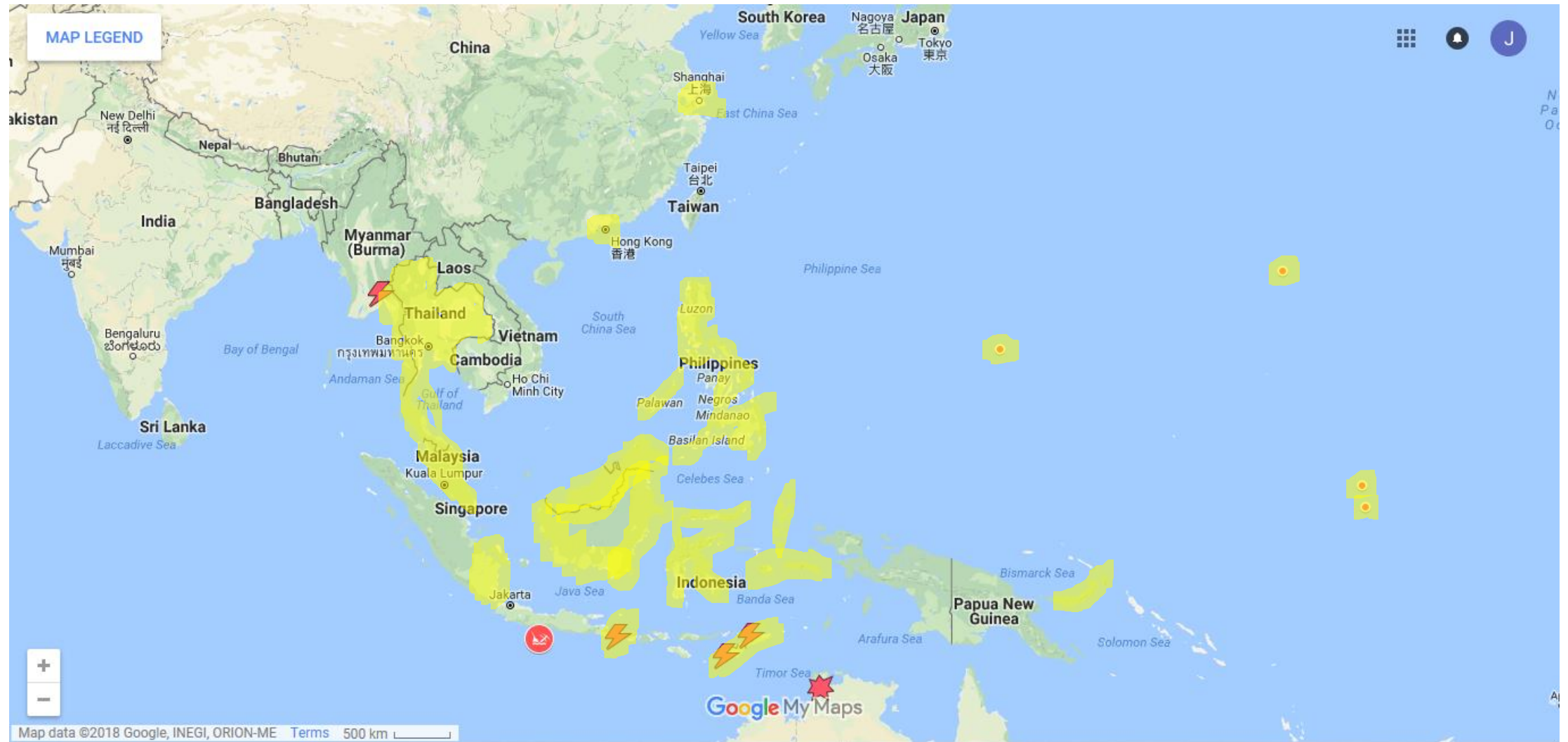


16th February - Australia

- On 16th February, the Censor reported:
- "An outstanding feature of letters written in recent weeks is a growing volume of criticism of those in high places, who are held responsible for the reverses in the Pacific."
- Much of this comment is extremely bitter, and its intensity is increasing with the closer approach of the war to Australian shores. The letters are written by all classes of the community."
- "Quite a number of civilian letters, by their own contents, do reflect panic and an expectation of defeat among Australians."



16 to 28 February 1942



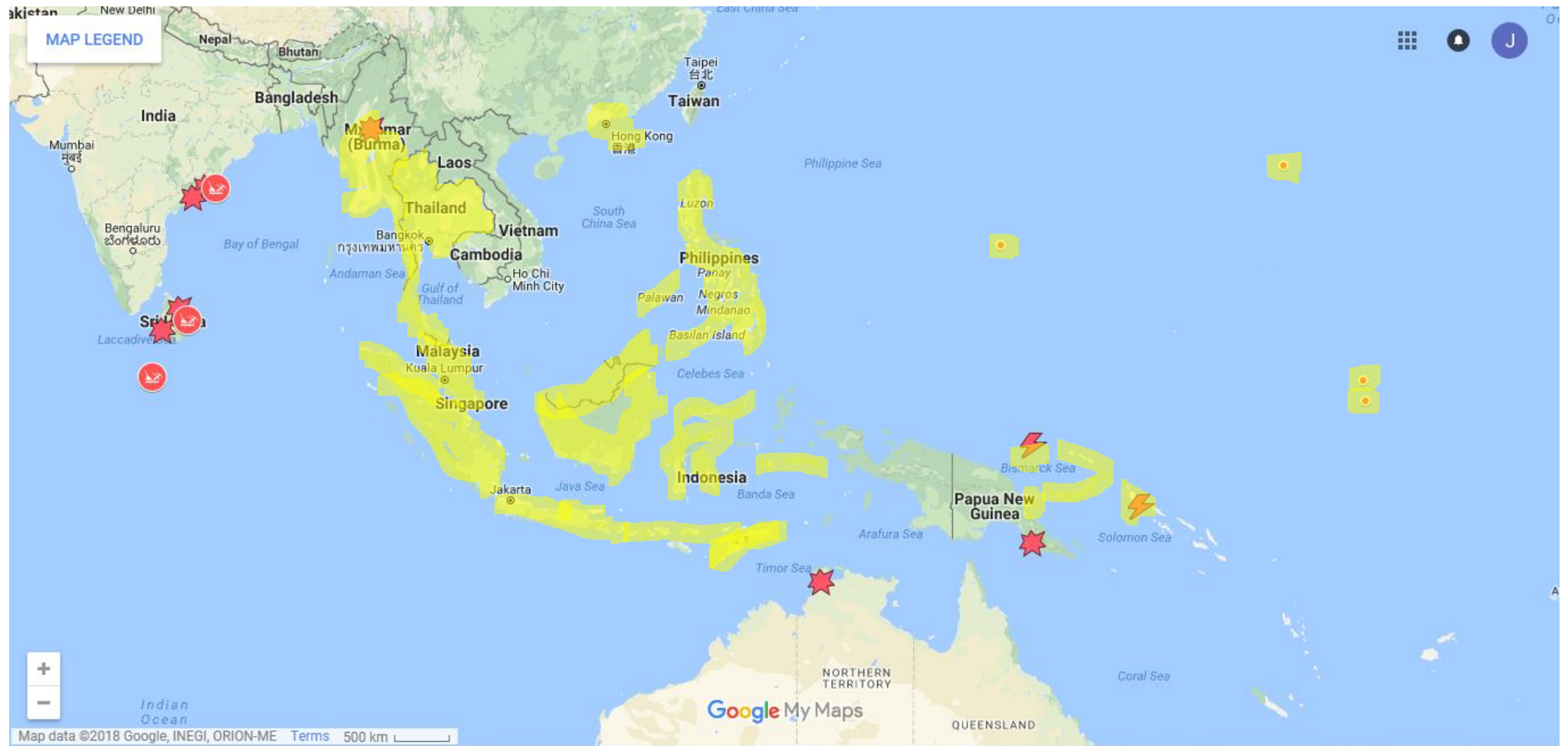
1 to 15 March 1942



16 to 31 March 1942



1 to 15 April 1942



16 to 30 April



27 April

- **Government**
- In a report on public morale on 27th April the Censor said that MacArthur and the Americans had made the "outlook brighter". The Censor found that the appointment of General MacArthur had met with "unanimous approval"

1 to 15 May 1942



What became of the Australians?

- About 20,000 Australian troops have been caught up in this avalanche.
- The two Brigades of the 8th Division AIF and divisional troops, which were defending Malaya and the units of the 7th Division AIF, which were disembarked in Java just before it was invaded, about equivalent to another Brigade in strength, surrendered when the British and Dutch Commands surrendered.
- The three Australian Battalions defending Rabaul, Ambon and Timor have been overrun.
 - Most are prisoners of war,
 - hundreds have been massacred by the Japanese,
 - some died in the jungle of tropical diseases and malnutrition and
 - some escaped and have now reached safety along informal routes.
- Australian crews of sunken navy ships, airmen, nurses and civilians have also been caught up in the disaster, with similarly varied outcomes.
- The fate of the population in the conquered areas was also very grim. Estimates of the number of Singapore Chinese massacred are around 50,000.

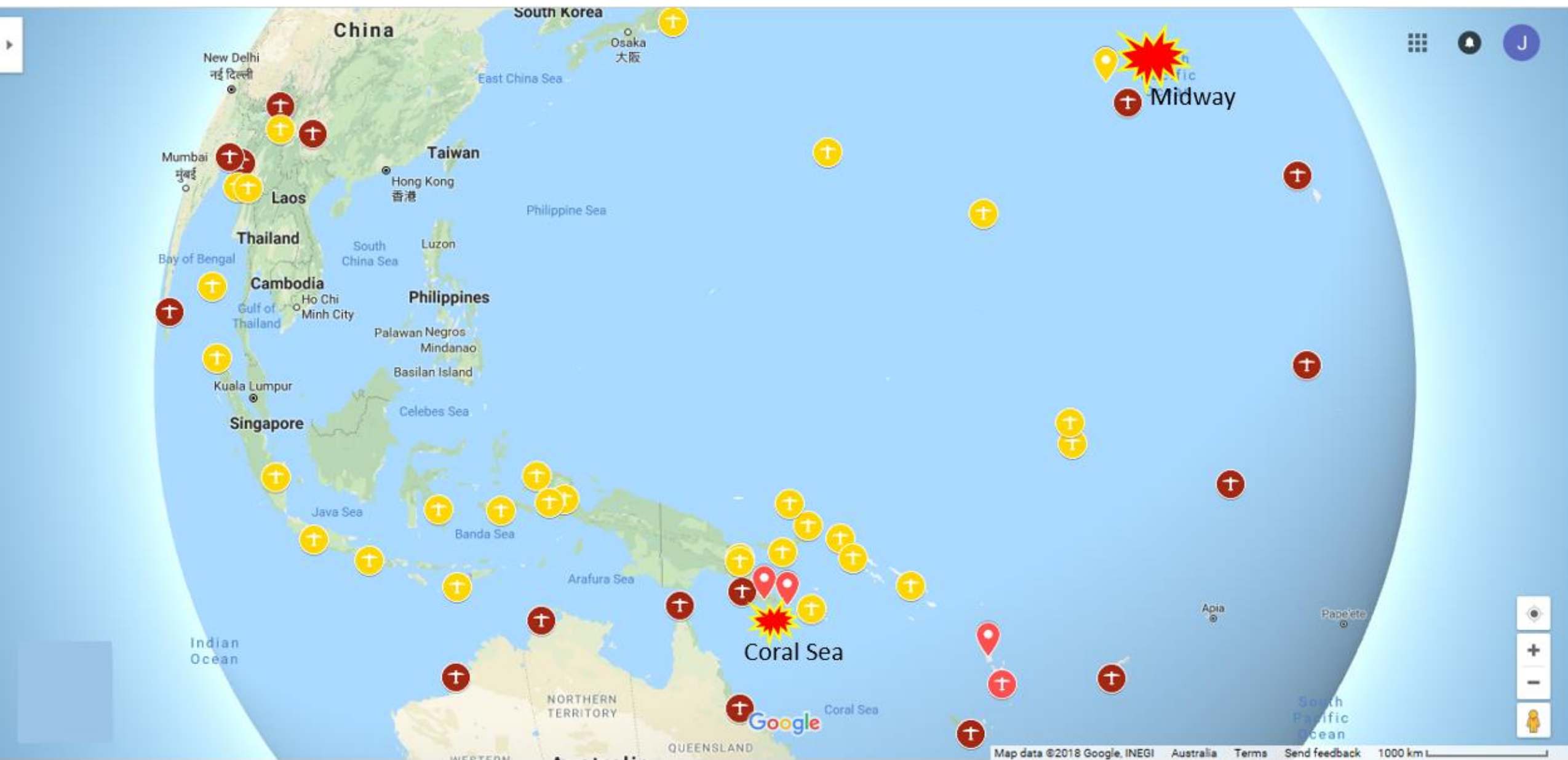


Matron Drummond of the 2/13th Australian General Hospital (right) was machine gunned to death together with nineteen other nurses on a beach on Banka Island on 16 February 1942.

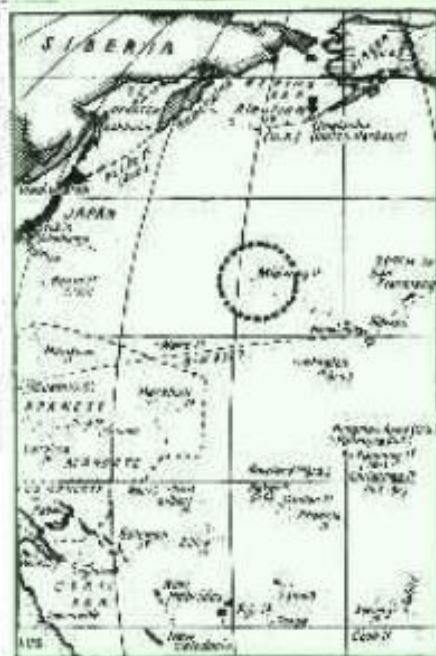
Of 64 nurses, who left Singapore on the same ship, two were killed when the ship was bombed, nine were last seen drifting on a raft, twenty were massacred and the remainder became prisoners, one after surviving the machine gunning.

May June 1942

- After 6 months of defeat and disaster and the destruction of the Western Empires in South East Asia the US Navy has fought a drawn battle in the Coral Sea to defend Port Moresby and won a great victory off Midway Island.
- The victory would not have been won without an American intelligence break into Japanese codes. The code book has now been changed and the American code breakers are back at square one.
- The extent of the victory is not entirely clear but it seems probable that Japanese losses have reduced their strength in large fast aircraft carriers to approximate parity with the Americans.
- The Japanese continue to outnumber the Allies in all other classes of ship.
- The extent of the Midway victory conceals the fact that it was a very close run thing and there were a number of American tactical disasters and material losses.
- Japanese land forces and navy surface forces have everywhere been tactically superior to the allies.



SYDNEY SHELLED FROM THE SEA



BATTLE AREA: Grid indicates the approximate location of the Allied naval and air forces off Midway Island, to which the Japanese have now moved heavy losses in ships and aircraft. (From Japan Times)

ENEMY SUB DRIVE OFF AUSTRALIA: 7 CERTAIN LOSSES

To Our Special Representatives at Allied Headquarters in
Southwest Pacific.

JAPAN has launched a submarine offensive in Australian waters. Allied forces have destroyed seven, and probably eight, enemy submarines within a week, the latest success having been scored by an Allied bomber on patrol off the eastern coast.

Battle Score

Hits In Bondi, Rose Bay

LATE CITY: WAR NEWS

SYDNEY was shelled from the sea early this morning.

Large calibre shells passed over the Eastern suburbs.

One shell exploded in Rose Bay, and another fell in Simpson Street, Bondi.

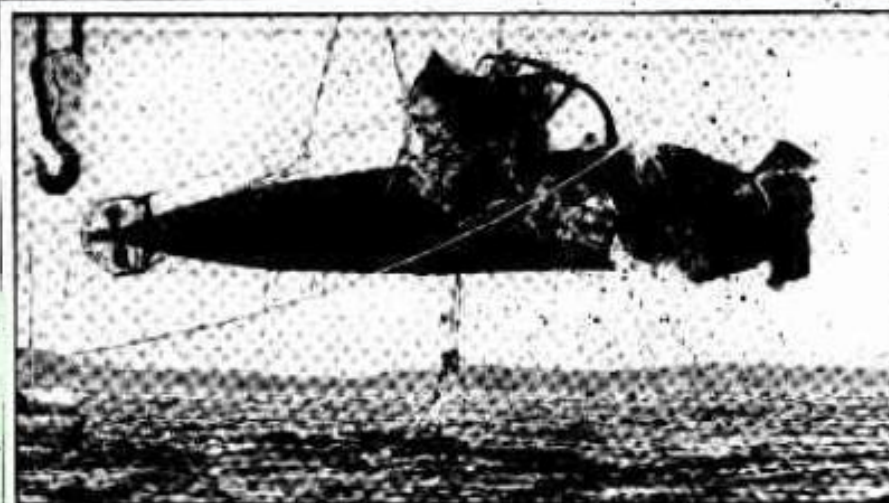
An alert was sounded soon after midnight, but thousands of residents of Randwick, Bondi, Bellevue Hill, Rose Bay, and other suburbs were in their shelters before the sirens sounded. They had heard shells whistling overhead, they said.

It appeared that coastal defence guns opened fire in reply. No planes have been reported.

The opinion is held that the shelling was a hit-run raid. The oil-cleer was scoured about three-quarters of an hour after the alert.

BIG JAP FLEET SMASHED OFF MIDWAY ISLAND

TWO Japanese aircraft carriers and three transports were sunk and 10 other warships were damaged by United States' naval and air forces in a big sea battle off Midway Island, north-west of Honolulu.

[illegible]

SHATTERED: Cut into two by shell line and depth changes, this was all that was left of the second Japanese midsize submarine when it was raised from Sydney Harbour. The feet of the forward section of the vessel had been wrapped around the sinking tower like paper by the explosion.

**ALLIED ARMoured UNITS
PRESS ON IN
WESTERN DESERT**

PIERCE fighting continued in the "Battle of David's Cauldron," east of the gap Marshal Kessel tore in the Allied minefields in Uden.

Allied armored units participating in General Ritchie's counter-attack are reported to have reached the headquarters of the 21st Panzer Division.

The Government is aware of the fact that the health of the population is a matter of great importance and that the health of the population is a matter of great importance and that the health of the population is a matter of great importance.

Cunningham Defiant

The article on the situation in the United States was written by the author of the article on the situation in the United States.

Axis Locks Supplies
 This page is the website of the Axis Locks, which are the most popular locks in the world. The website is a great resource for anyone looking for information on locks, and it's also a great place to buy locks. The website is a great resource for anyone looking for information on locks, and it's also a great place to buy locks.

U.S. Man To Wed By Cable

SOMEWHERE IN AUSTRIA. FIA, Munich: "Many persons have—in this area—a young American lieutenant who is waiting for his bride, half a world away, to say: 'I will.'"

The something that he felt in the United States some months ago decided to rather cynically that they would not meet until he had helped who the war to be assured." This argument is in essential to solve.

being undertaken in close with hand-working scientists, the designers in the team, the designers and engineers normally spend his entire day in the "lab". When the girls could be spotted working in these days, the company will be limited to the girls.

U.S. SERVICE PAY
WASHINGTON, June 5.—Here House and Senate Committee members today announced approval of an increase in pay for active members of the House of Representatives from \$14,000 to \$15,000 a year. The House vote was 387-1.

EMDEN BOMBED

LONDON, June 7.—Kaiser's yacht base and shipping port in north-west Germany, was raided by British bombers last night.

As for Monday, extensive snowfall in the Valley of Mexico followed by rain in the south. Large fires were in progress.

[illegible]

The British northern railroads in the central corridor have been increasing and strengthening their connections with the rest of the world.

Axis Locks Supplier

Despite gaps in the mid-19th-century data, the Andes forests are believed to be losing all the species

Scale 1: Soma

Here is the score in the second battle of Midway:

17 June - Strategy

- In a discussion with the Advisory War Council on 17th June MacArthur said that since his previous meeting with the council in March there had been a complete transformation of the war situation as affecting Australia.
- The Coral Sea action was the most crucial incident of the war for Australia. Had the enemy been successful, Australia would have been placed on the defensive indefinitely, or even worse
- The results of Coral Sea and the successes gained at Midway Island had assured the defensive position of Australia.



10 July - Guadalcanal

- Tulagi, the administrative centre of the Solomon Islands, was the southernmost point reached by the Japanese avalanche.
- After Midway The Joint Chiefs of Staff ordered its recovery.
- Ghormley and MacArthur, the theatre commanders, objected that they didn't have sufficient forces and it was too risky.
- Admiral King overruled their objections and insisted that "the Japanese drive south must be Stopped Now".
- Intelligence that the Japanese were building an airfield on Guadalcanal switched attention from Tulagi to Guadalcanal, codename Cactus.



21 July - Buna

- About 2.40 p.m. on 21st July a float-plane machine-gunned the government station at Buna.
- Two and a half hours later a Japanese convoy, reported to consist of 1 cruiser, 2 destroyers and 2 transports, appeared off the coast near Gona.
- The Japanese warships fired a few salvos into the foreshores east of Gona.
- The convoy was attacked by one Flying Fortress without result and then by five medium bombers which claimed to have scored a direct hit on one of the transports.
- Another formation of 5 medium bombers followed, but it was then too dark for them to find the ships.
- At 5.30 p.m. on the 21st, Japanese landing forces went on shore at Giruwa, three miles north-west of Buna



Kokoda

26 July - Templeton's two platoons and the remnants of the Papuans were surrounded by the Japanese at Oivi. Greatly outnumbered and approaching a state of exhaustion, Watson, commanding after the death of Templeton, led the whole group out to the south where the fewest Japanese were thought to be. He intended to circle back across the Kokoda path and re-engage at daylight. But there was no track. It was very dark and heavy rain was falling. The men struggled towards Deniki (as easier to reach than Kokoda).

27 July - Owen, waiting with only Lt Garland's platoon at Kokoda, heard from scouts about 2 a.m. on the 27th that Oivi had been surrounded and cut off. He decided that, failing more news from Oivi by 11 a.m. he would leave for Deniki. At 11 a.m. they set out for Deniki leaving the houses burning. When they reached Deniki, they found that Watson and most of his men had arrived there an hour or two before.



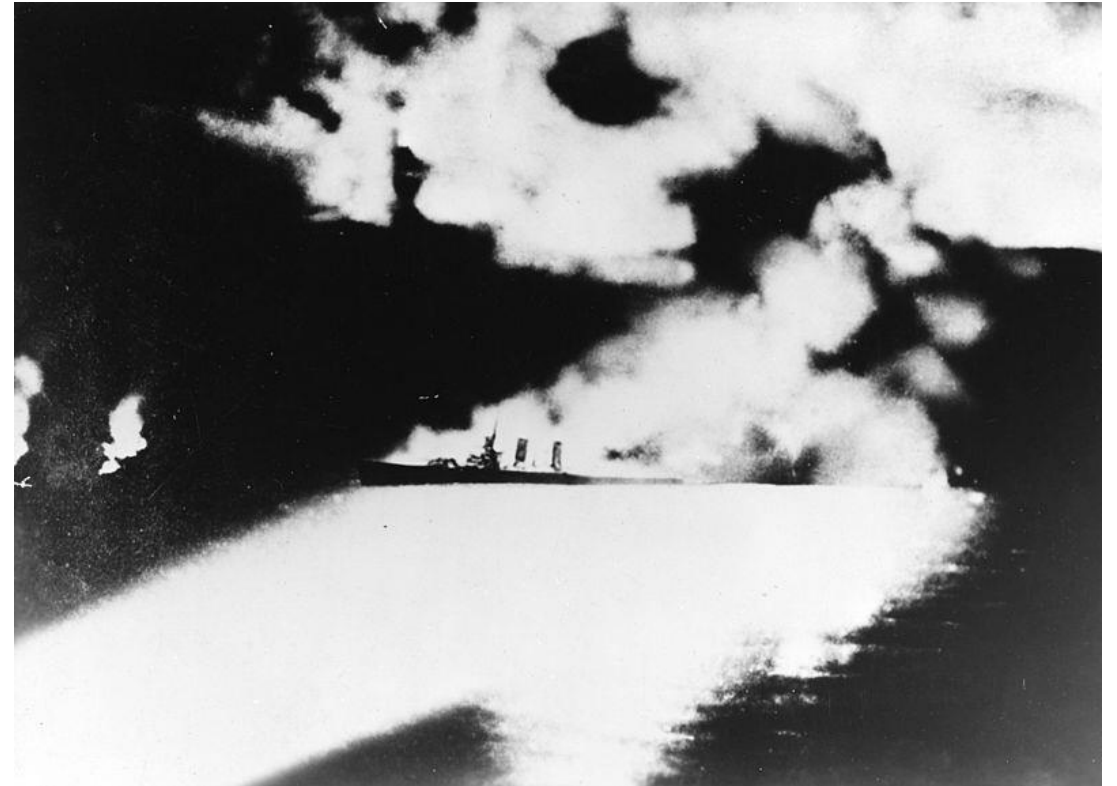
7 August - Guadalcanal

- The 1st Marine Division landed on Tulagi and Guadalcanal.
- The landing on Guadalcanal was unopposed. Apparently there had only been construction troops on the island.
- The landing on Tulagi was violently opposed.
- The opposition was overcome in three days. Of the 800 Japanese defenders 70 escaped to Florida Island, 23 were captured and the rest were killed.



8/9 August - Sea

- At 01.40/9 Japanese surface ships surprised the allied defensive screen off Guadalcanal and sank four cruisers and severely damaged another. 1023 men were killed and 763 wounded.
- The Japanese then withdrew and did not attack the transports.
- Following the destruction of the screen and withdrawal of the carriers the transports and remaining escorts withdrew at 19.00/9 with many supplies and much heavy equipment still on board.

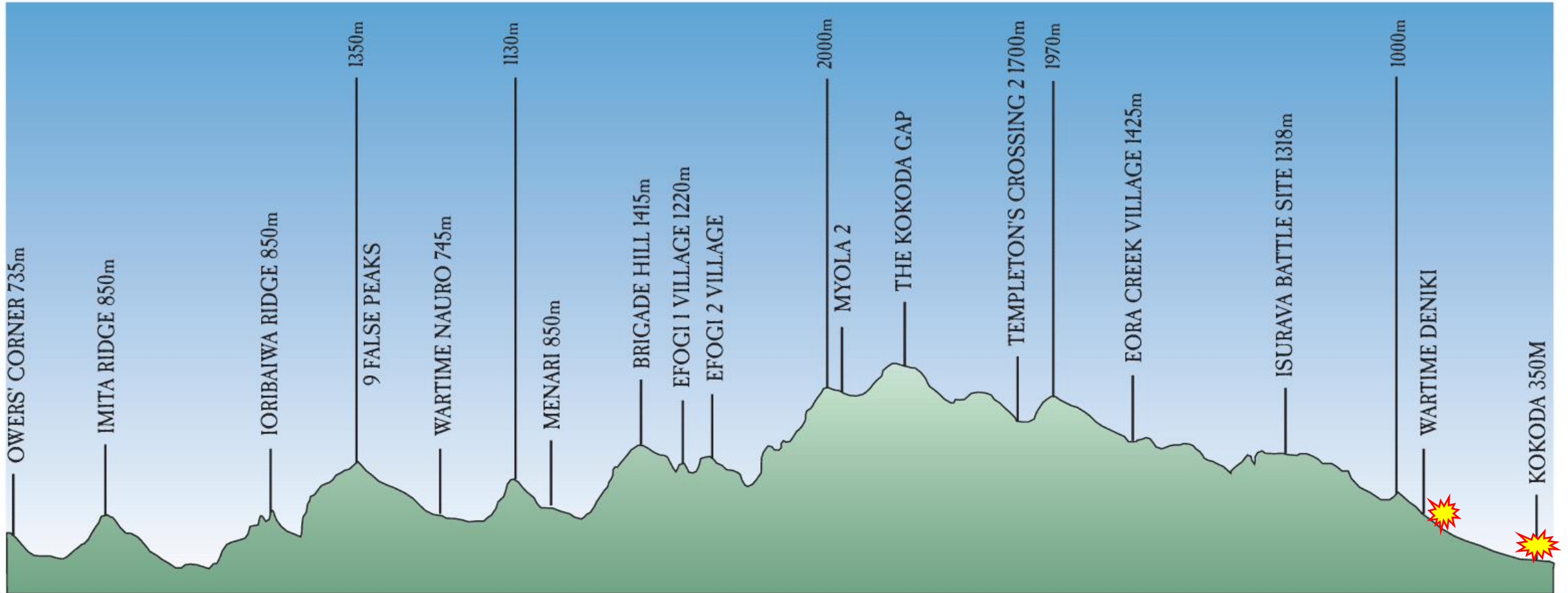


Quincy caught in Japanese searchlights, moments before sinking off Savo Island, on 9 August 1942

Situation - 9 August

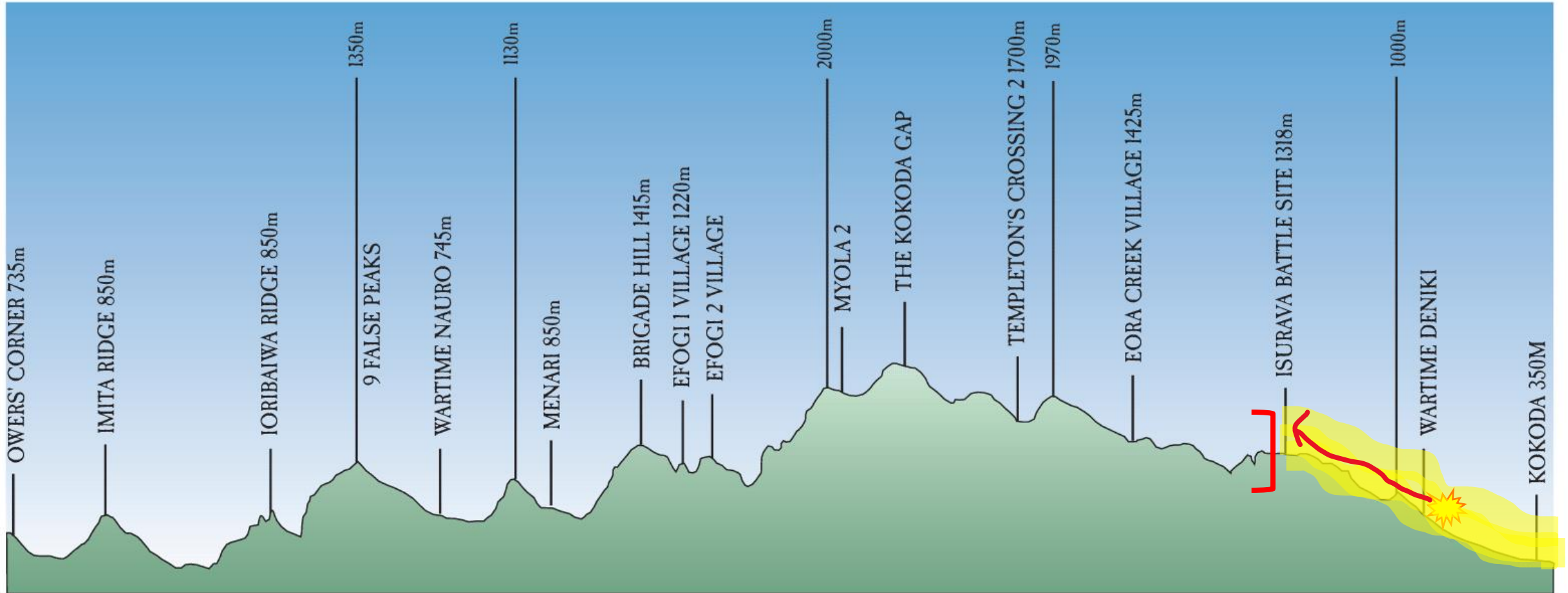


9 August – Kokoda



OWEN STANLEY RANGE - KOKODA TRACK

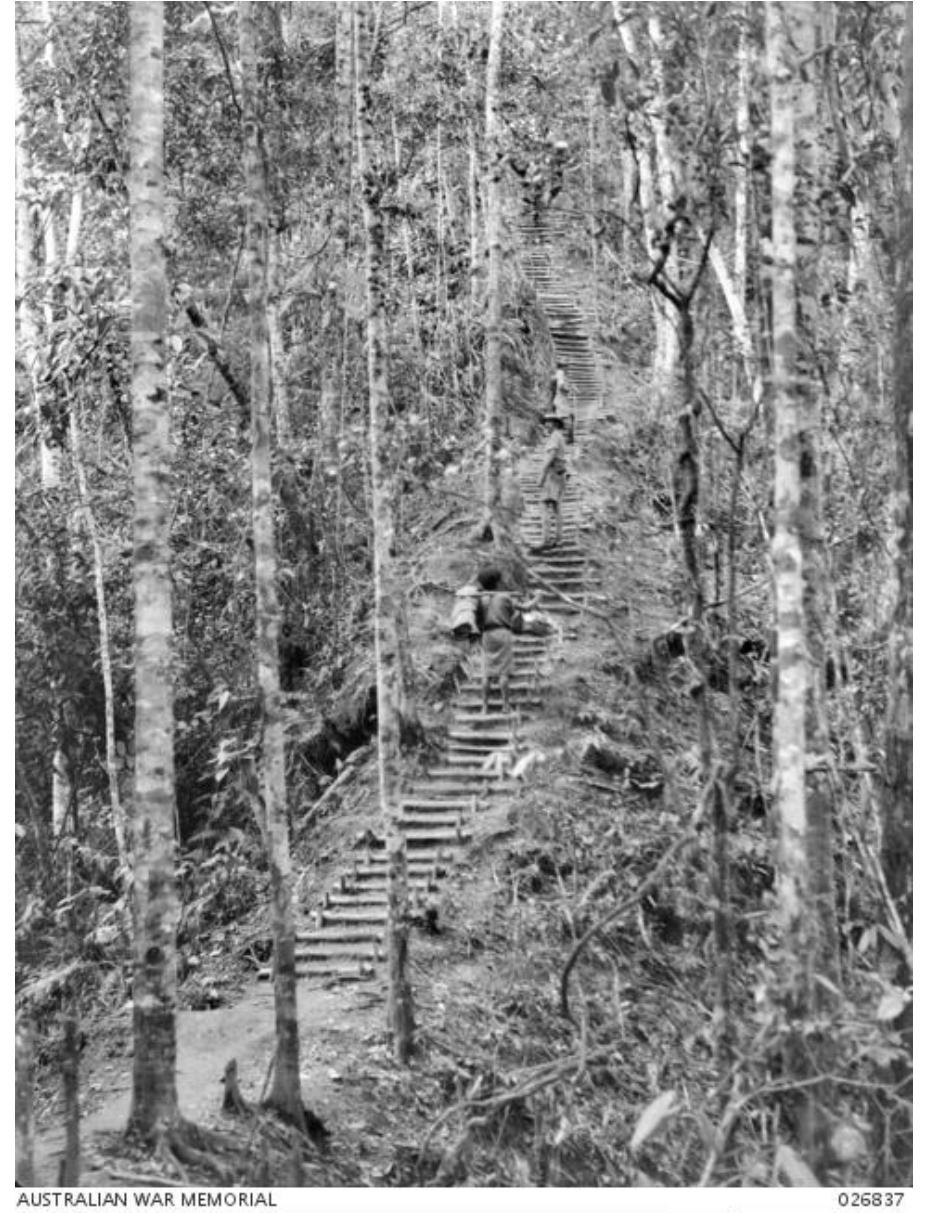
14 August – Kokoda



OWEN STANLEY RANGE - KOKODA TRACK

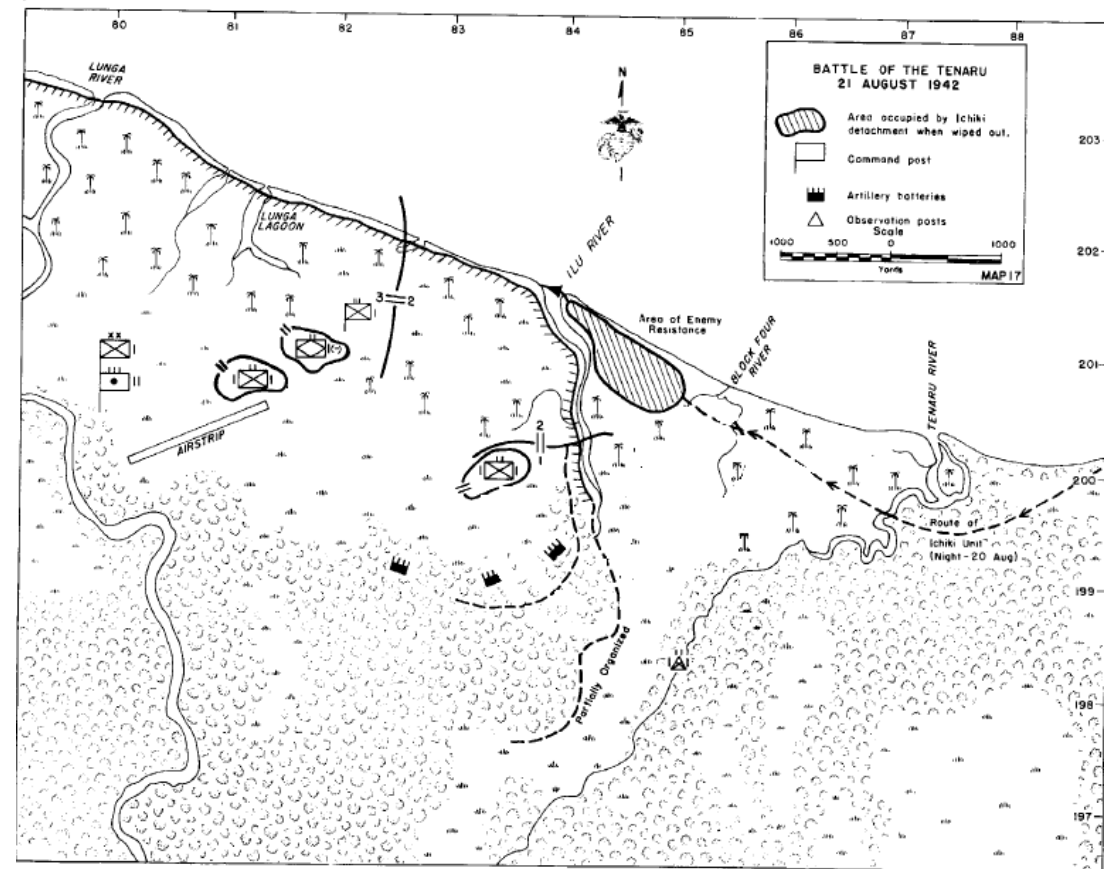
New Guinea

- 16 August - The 2/14th Battalion the first of the 21st Brigade started across the Kokoda Track.
- 17 August - Allied Air Headquarters, SWPA issued orders to all combat elements to prepare for a maximum effort between the 22nd and the 27th.
 - This enemy effort, the orders stated, might be directed against the American forces in Guadalcanal, but
 - it was essential that the Allied forces concerned should be ready for attempted enemy landings at Goodenough Bay, Milne Bay or Port Moresby.
- The Americans had lost their source of precise intelligence after changes to the Japanese navy code book.



21 August - Guadalcanal

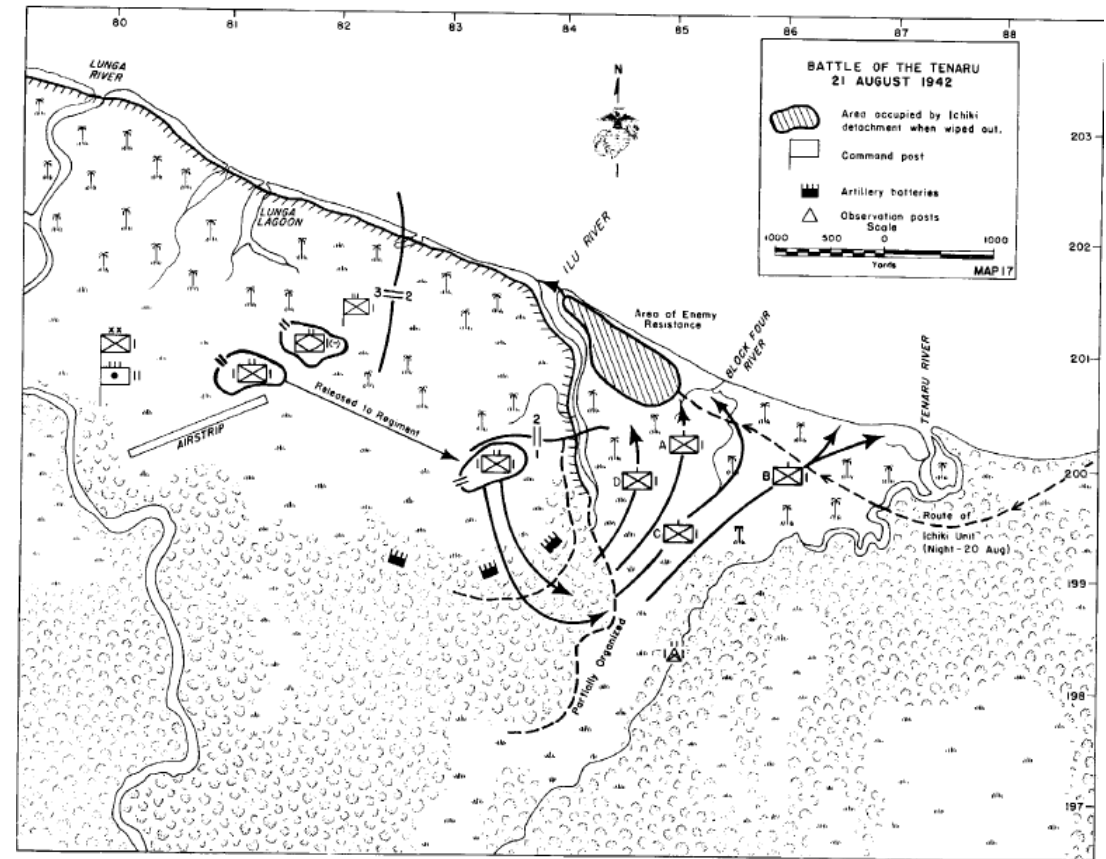
- An American patrol and a Solomon islander coastwatcher, Sergeant Major Vouza, gave some warning of an attack.
- At 0310 a column of some 200 Japanese rushed the exposed sandspit at the river mouth.
 - Most of them were stopped by Marine small arms fire and by a canister-firing 37mm antitank gun.
 - The weight of the rushing attack got a few enemy soldiers into the American lines where they captured some emplacements.
 - The remainder of the line held, however, and fire from these secure positions kept the penetration in check until the battalion reserve launched a counterattack that wiped out the Japanese or drove them back across the river.
- The Japanese now opened up with a barrage of mortar and artillery fire.
- A second enemy company had circled the river mouth and when the fire lifted it charged splashing through the surf against the 2d Battalion's beach positions.
- The Marines opened up with everything they had. Machine-gun fire sliced along the beach as the enemy sloshed ashore, canister from the 37mm ripped gaping holes in the attack, and 75mm pack howitzers of the 3d Battalion, 11th Marines chewed into the enemy.



Again the attack broke up, and daylight revealed a sandy battlefield littered with the bodies of the Japanese troops who had launched the first counter attack against the Marines.

21 August - Guadalcanal

- In the morning the division reserve battalion crossed the river upstream to surround the Japanese then turned north toward them.
- The Japanese reacted with what the Marines reported as the “customary bayonet charge”. The Marines broke the attack with fire then closed in to kill the survivors.
- A tank platoon joined in the hunt through the coconut plantation. Nearly 800 Japanese were killed and 15 were taken prisoner, only two of whom were unwounded, while only a few escaped into the jungle. The action cost the Marines 34 dead and 75 wounded.
- Around Midday thirteen marauding Zeros were intercepted by the CAP of 4 Wildcats led by Captain John L Smith. All the Wildcats were damaged, two never flew again. One Zero was claimed destroyed. The reputation of the Zero was so formidable that the mere survival of these four pilots boosted the morale of the squadron.



A Marine, being congratulated for staying at his post and holding the line, shrugged and said “Where would you go?”

21 August - Guadalcanal

- When the tanks returned to the west bank, Vandegrift wrote, "the rear of the tanks looked like meat grinders."
- The action cost the Marines 34 dead and 75 wounded.
- A search of the battlefield gleaned the division ten heavy and 20 light machine guns, 20 grenade throwers, 700 rifles, 20 pistols, numerous swords and grenades and three 70mm guns.
- A number of Japanese chose to use their last breath to take an American with them. One Japanese sergeant startled Lt Cols Twining, Pollock and Cresswell by discharging an automatic pistol in their faces-without effect-and then blowing off the top of his own head.
- Vandegrift wrote to Holcomb, the Commandant of the Corps, a few days later:
 - "General, I have never heard or read of this kind of fighting. These people refuse to surrender. The wounded wait until men come up to examine them . . . and blow themselves and the other fellow to pieces with a hand grenade.
- Vandegrift awarded Sergeant Major Vouza the silver star and conferred a rarer honour by appointing him a Sergeant Major in the United States Marine Corps.



Vouza on Guadalcanal in August 1942

24 August - Sea

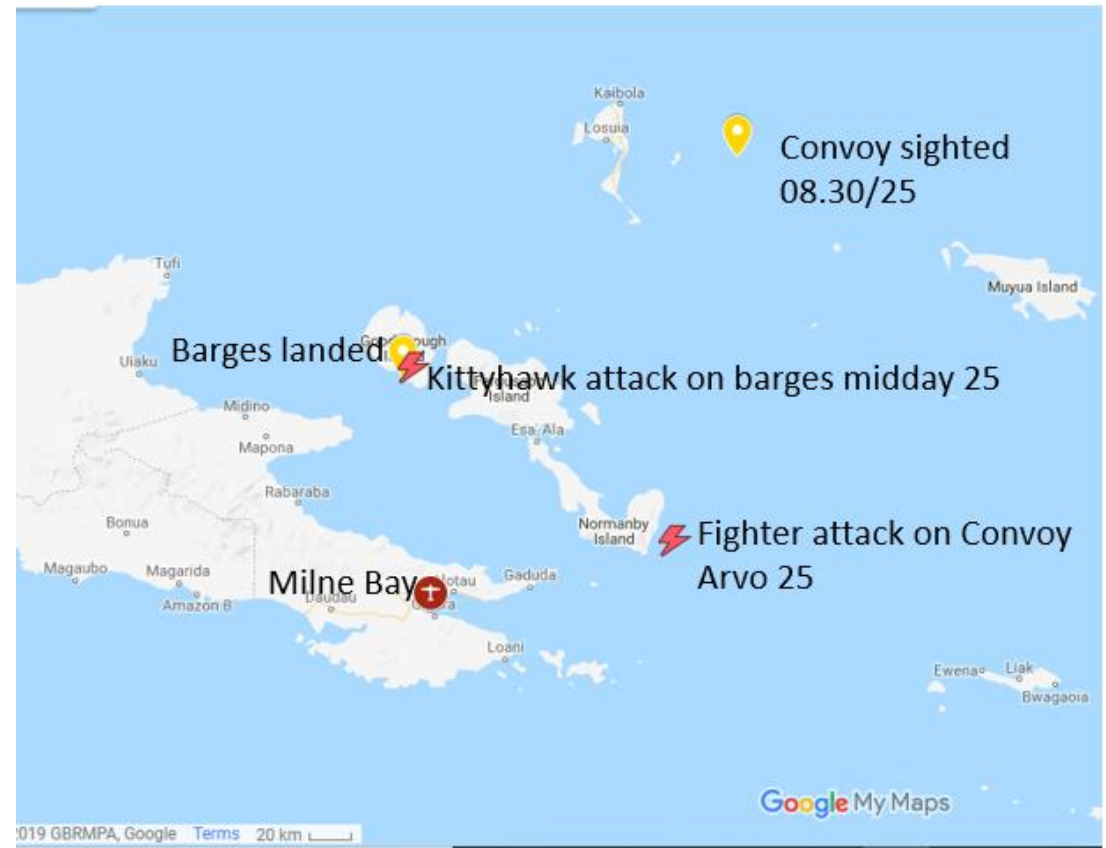
- The two carrier forces clashed in a naval battle off the Eastern Solomons.
- The Americans sighted but, due to failures in communications, failed to attack the Japanese big carriers but did score hits on a light carrier.
- The Japanese found and seriously damaged Enterprise.
- Fighter Direction was again ineffective but the AA guns claimed many Japanese aircraft.



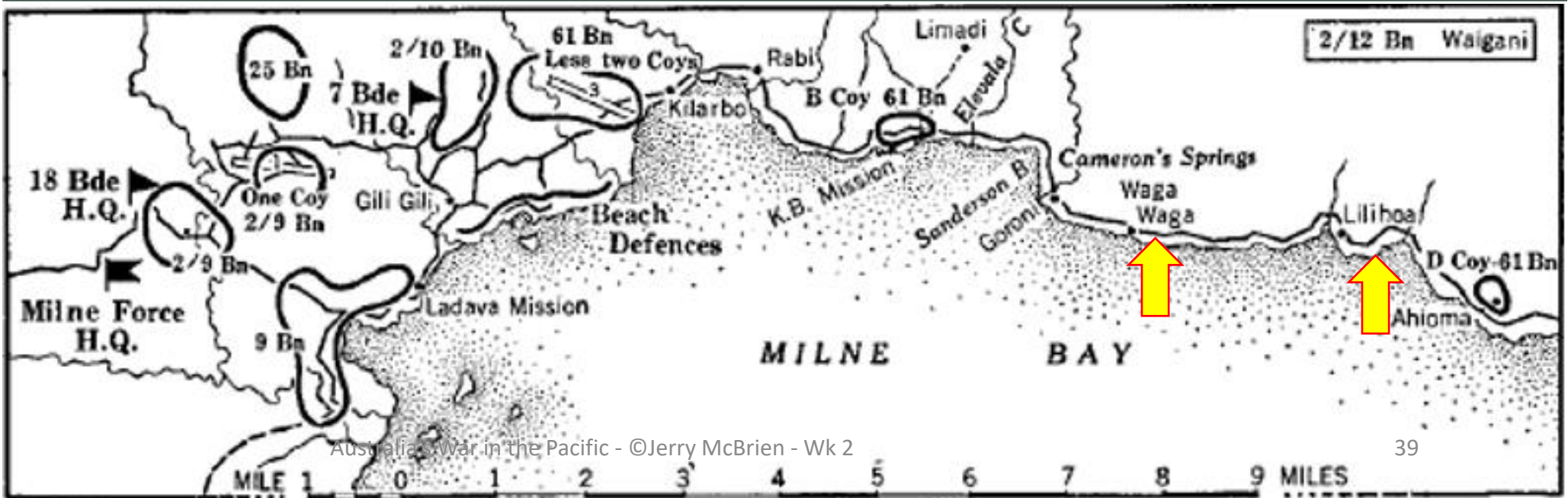
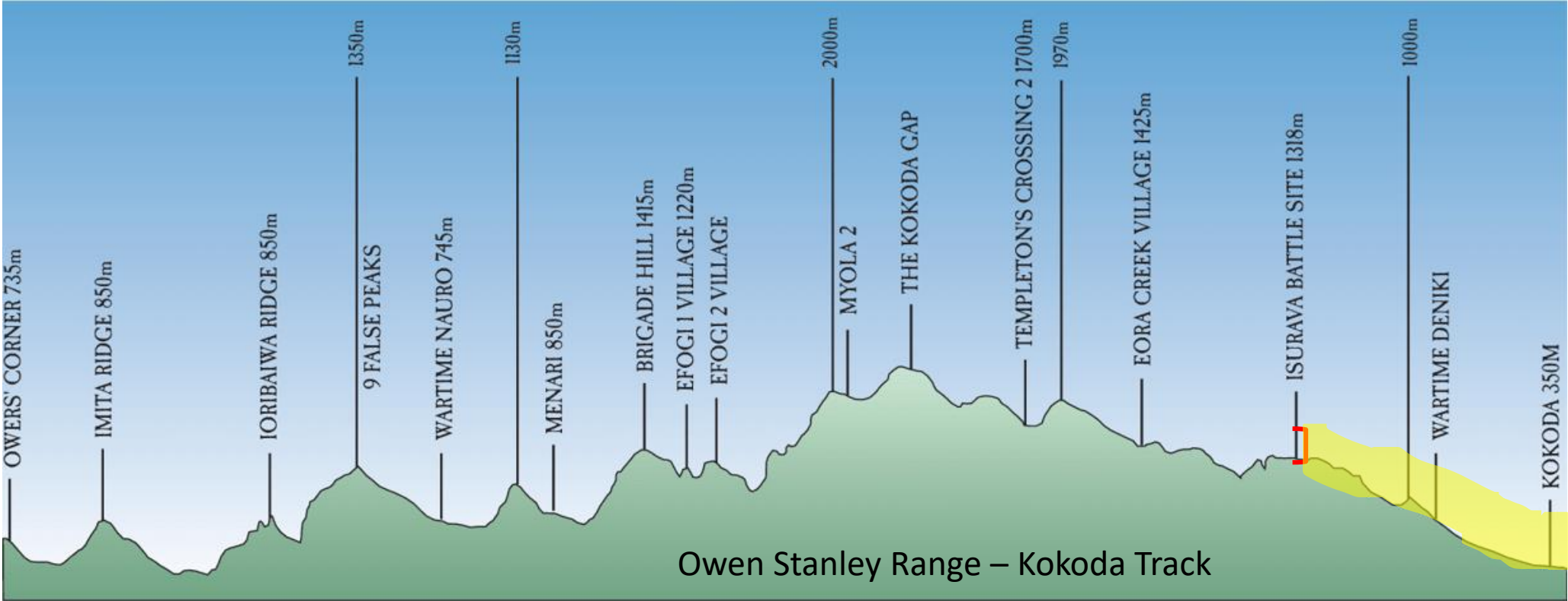
U.S. carriers *Wasp* (foreground), *Saratoga*, and *Enterprise* (background) operating in the Pacific south of Guadalcanal in August 1942.

25 August – Milne Bay

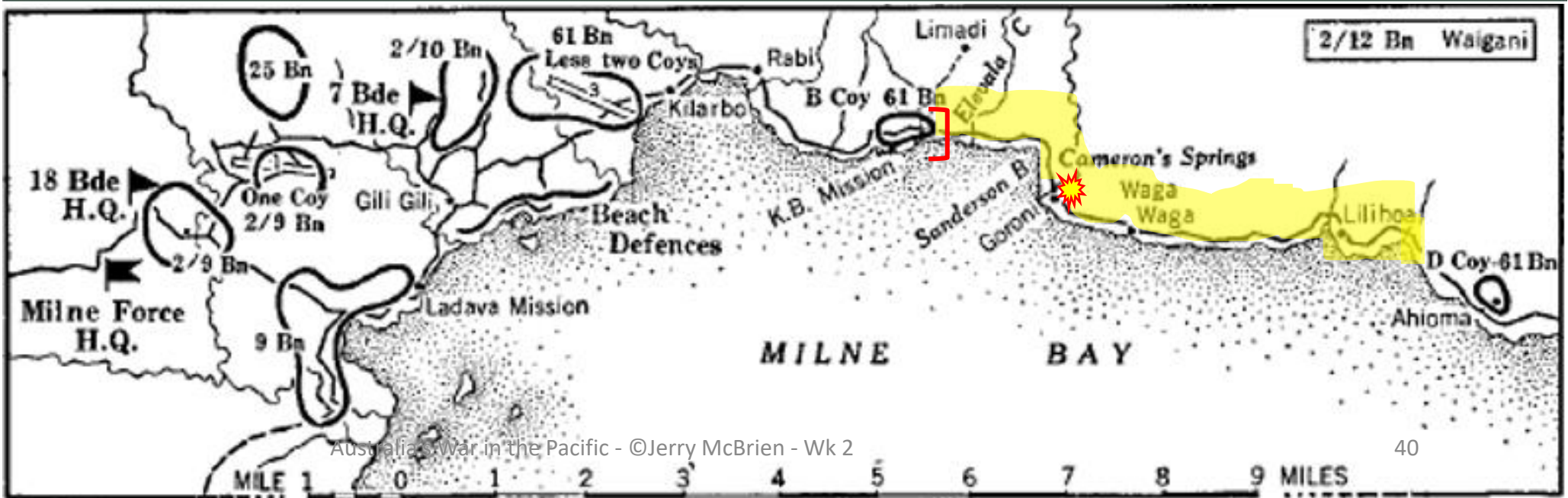
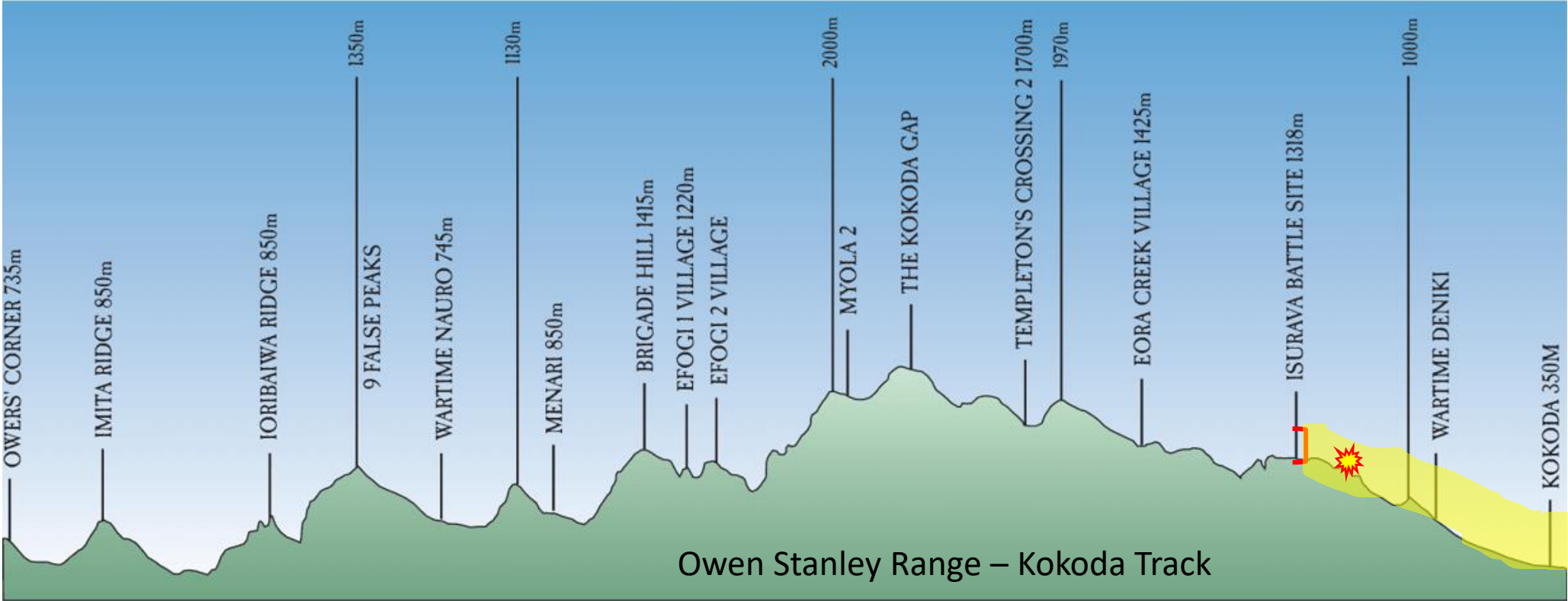
- The barges sighted at Porlock Harbour apparently crossed over to Goodenough Island during the night and landed their troops there. The barges were reported by a coastwatcher at Cape Varieta, on Goodenough Island.
- A force of two transports and seven escorts was sighted by a reconnaissance aircraft at 8.30 a.m. some 100 miles N.N.E. of Milne Bay and was also reported by a coastwatcher on Kitava.
- The RAAF Kittyhawks from Milne Bay attacked the barges and destroyed them all.
- Though shadowed through a large part of the day, and its destination clearly established, bad weather prevented any decisive air attack on the convoy.



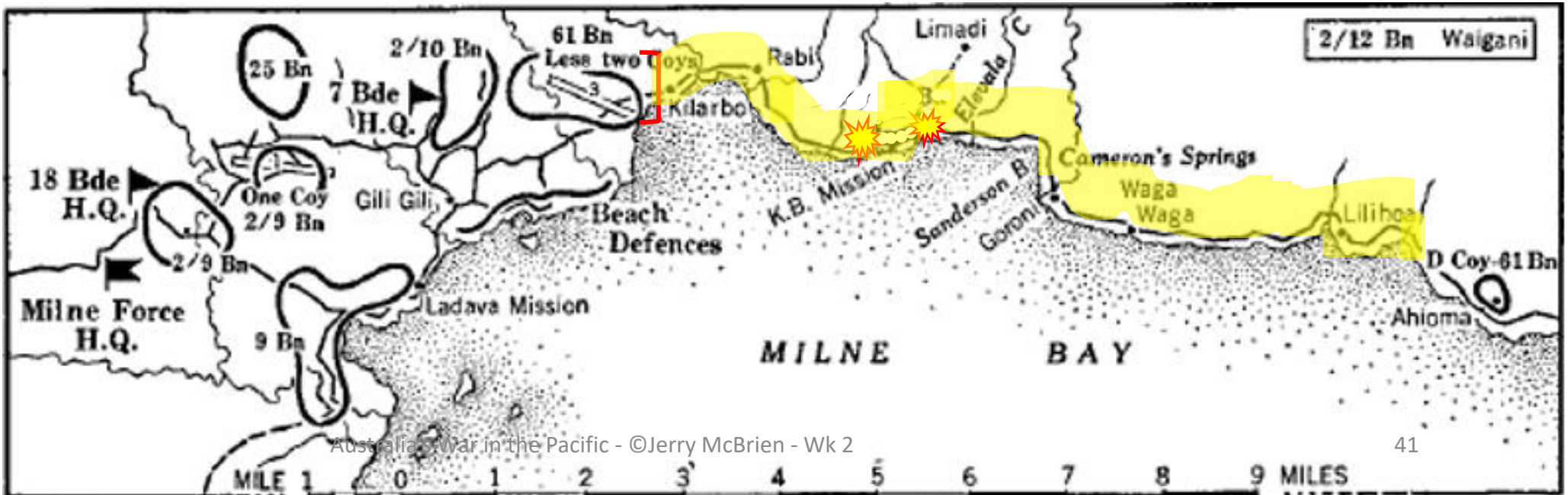
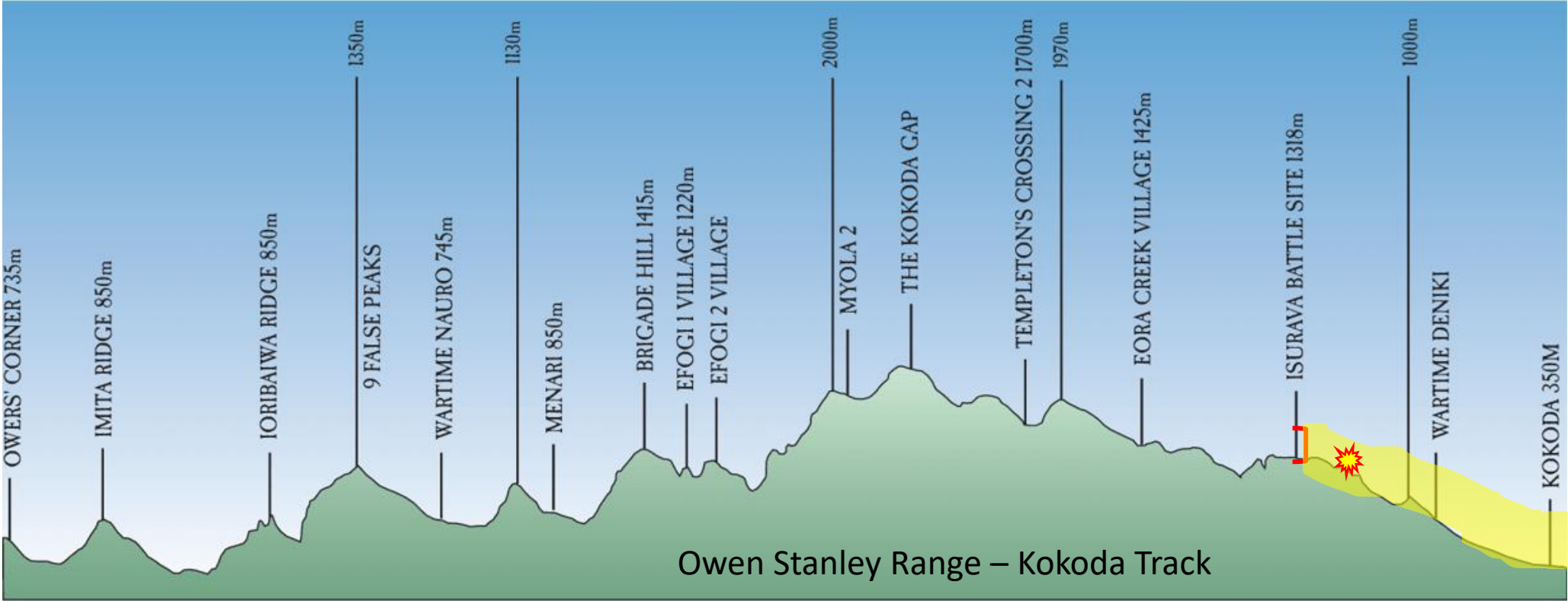
25 August



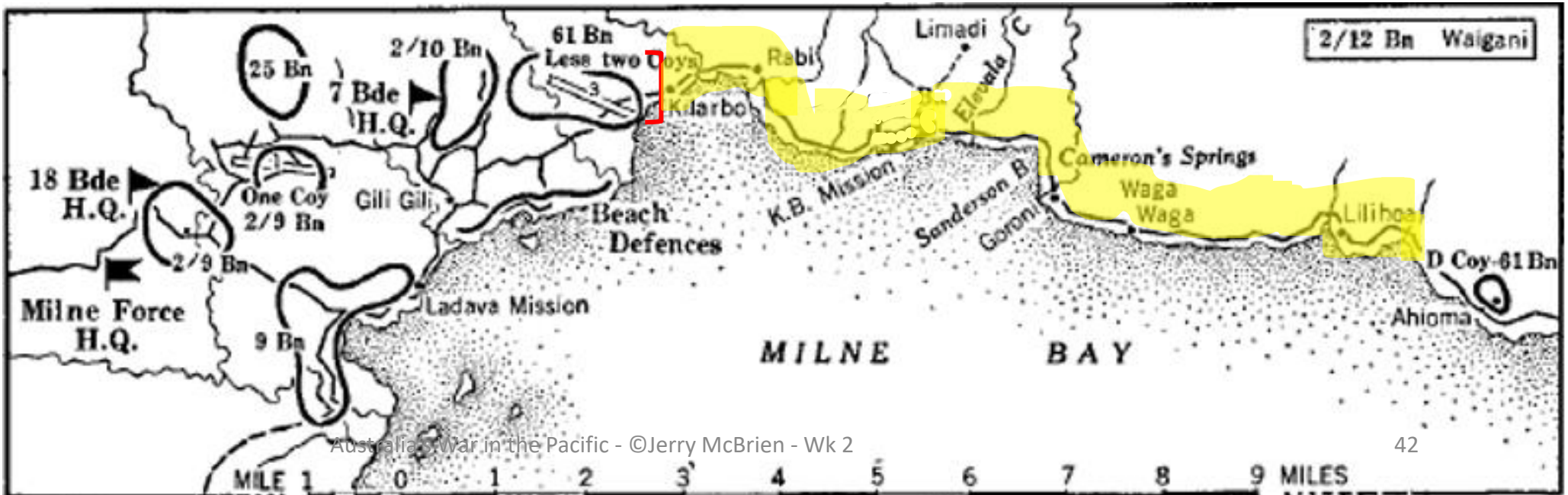
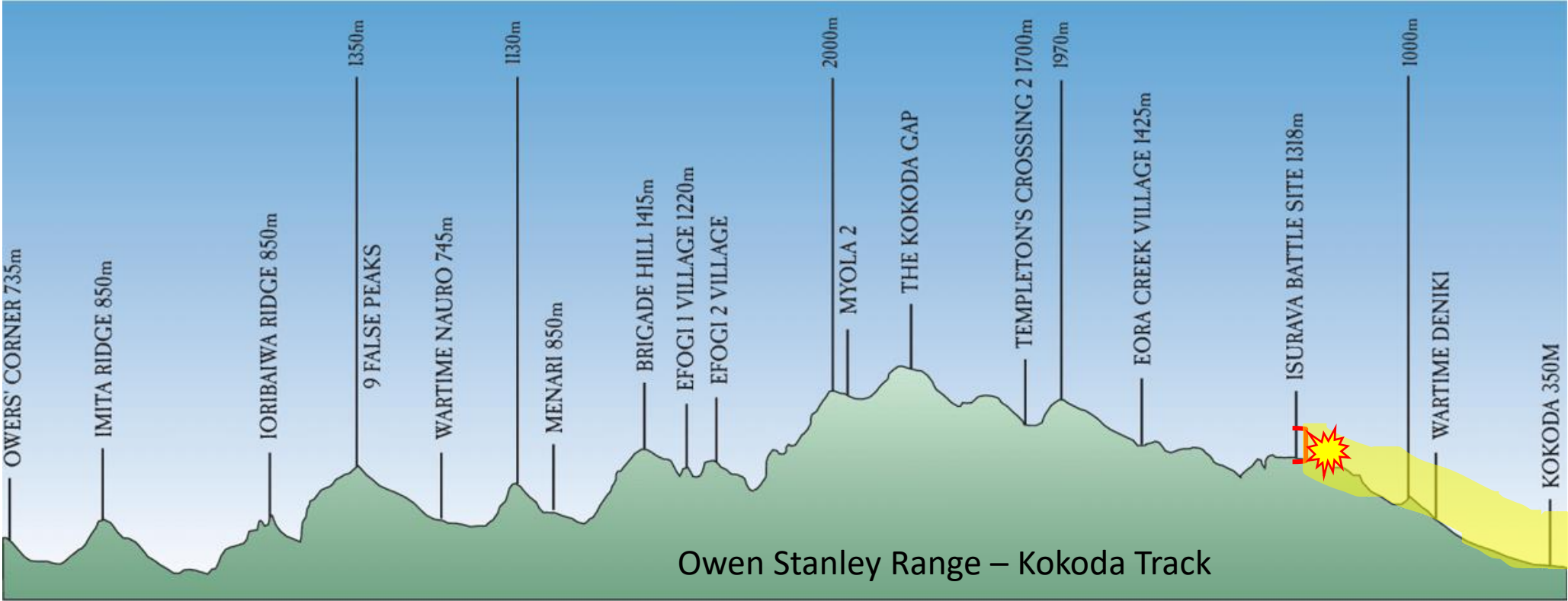
26 August



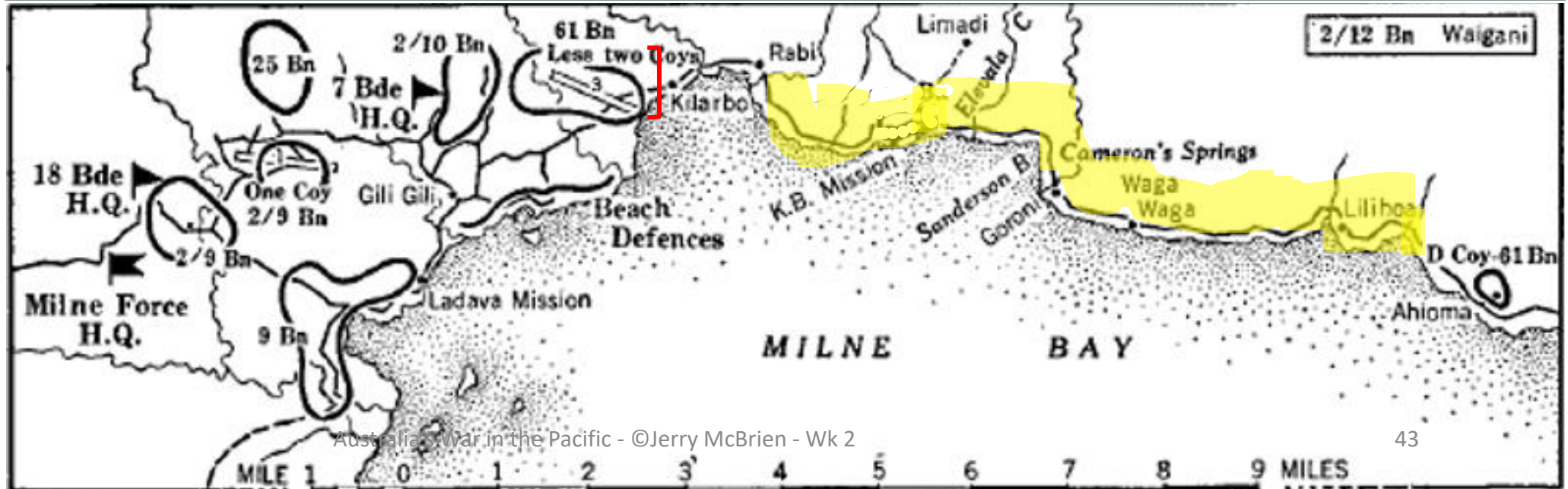
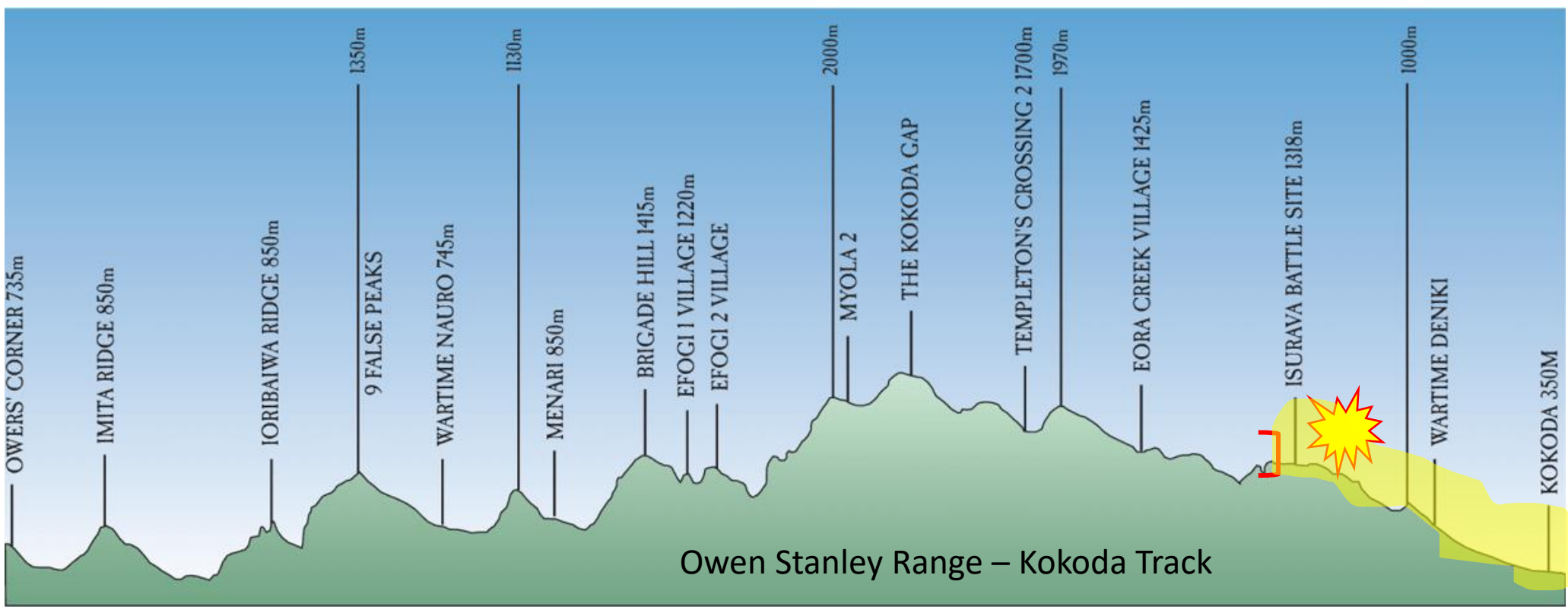
27 August



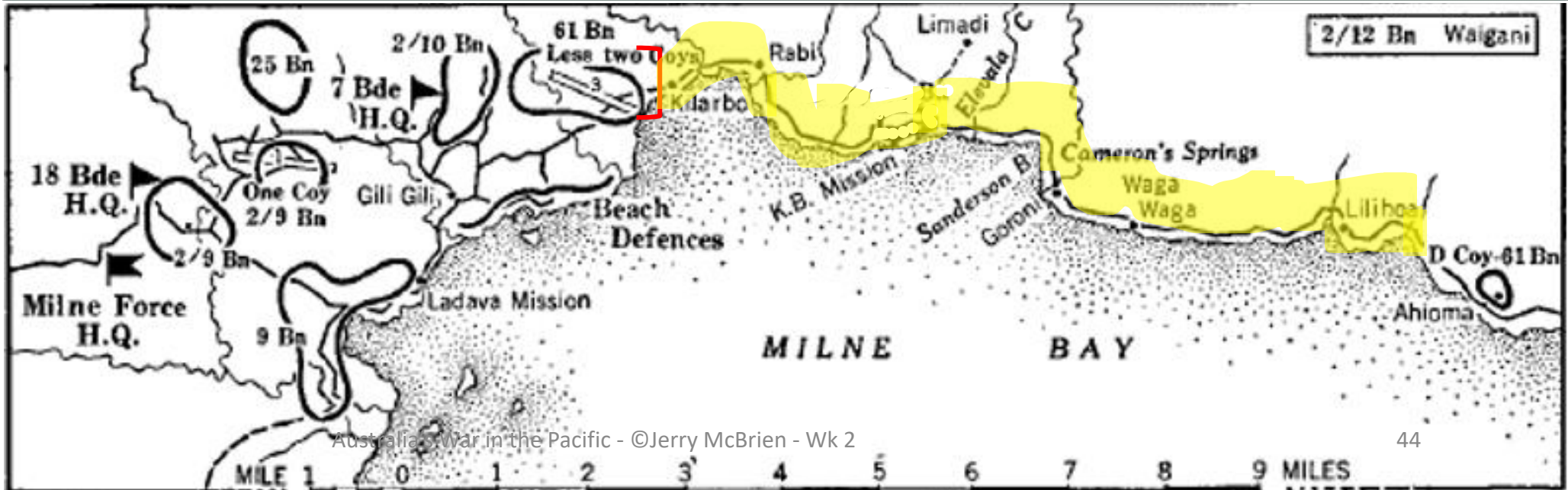
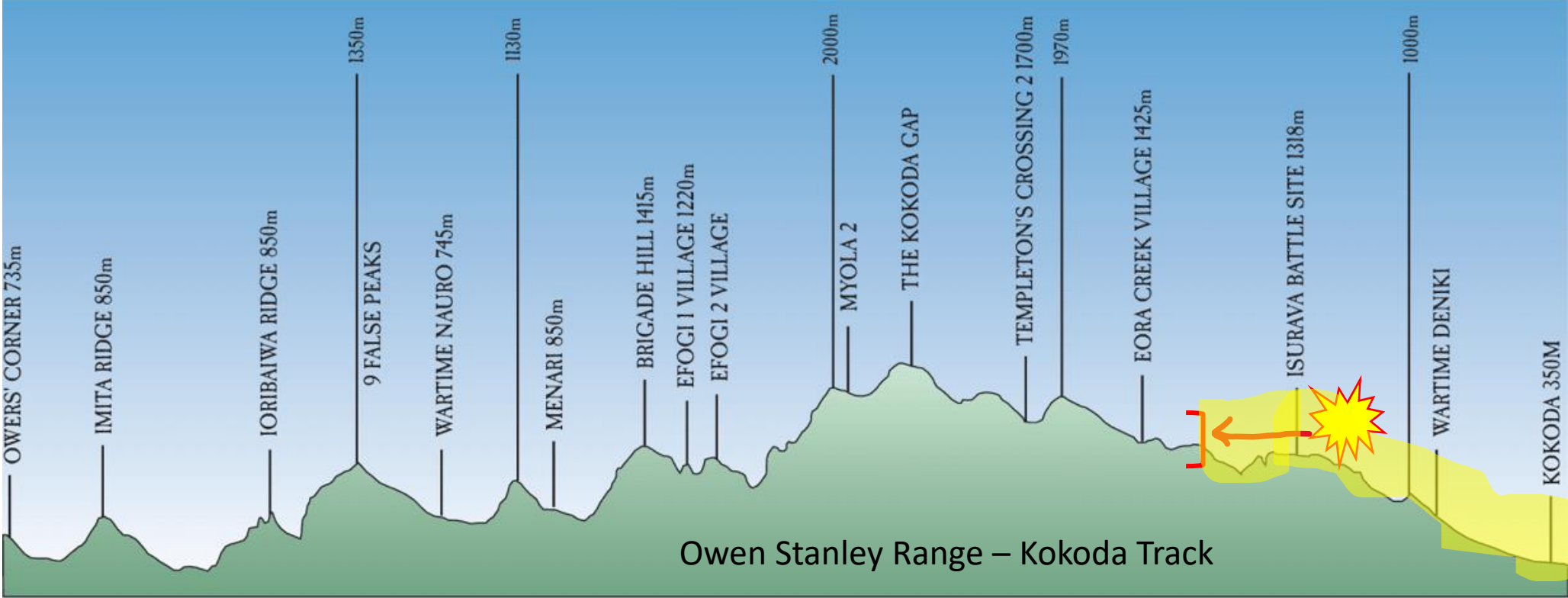
28 August



29 August

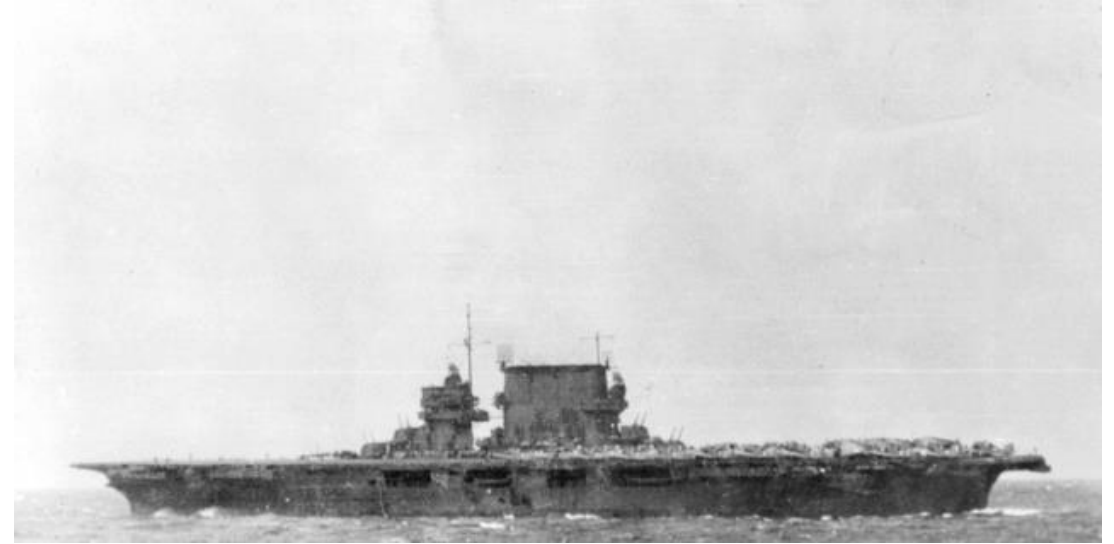


30 August



31 August - Sea

- After Enterprise was damaged at the Eastern Solomons Hornet had come south to give ComSoPac 3 carrier task forces again.
- At 7.44 a.m. McDonough, one of Saratoga's screening destroyers, made a sound contact dead ahead and close aboard, quickly followed by a periscope sighting barely 30 feet from her bow.
- She hoisted the submarine warning signal and dropped two depth charges,
- Captain Ramsey on Saratoga called for hard right rudder and rang for full speed.
- There were two tense minutes of waiting as the big ship slowly turned towards the torpedo wakes.
- At 7.48, 260 miles south of Guadalcanal, a plume of water and oil erupted from the carrier's starboard side abreast the island. It was the second time she had been torpedoed in 1942.

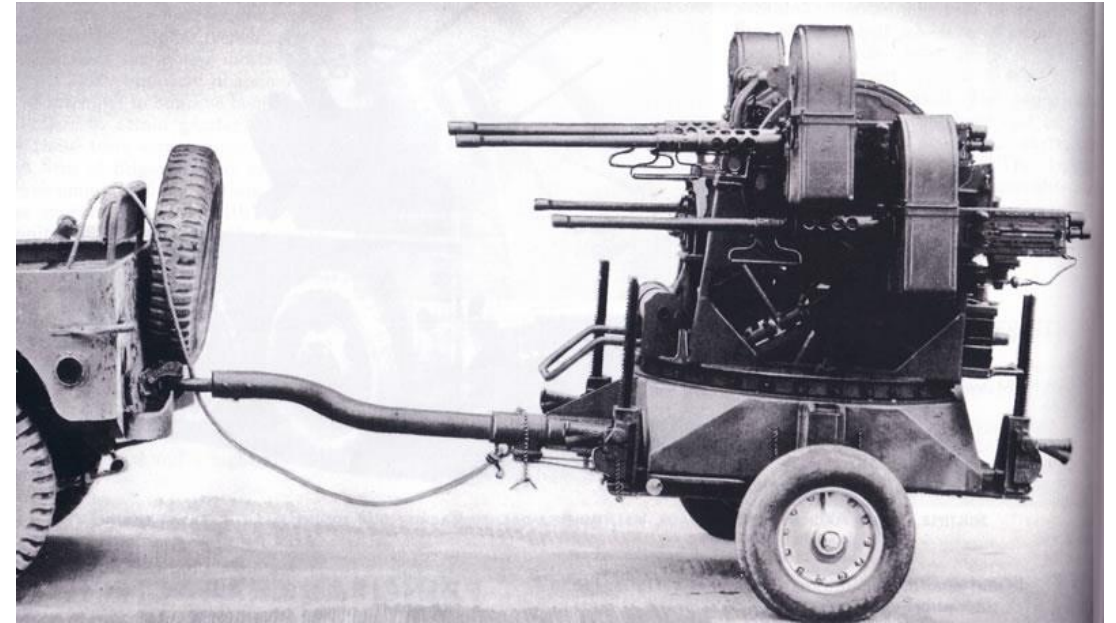


USS Saratoga CV3 off Guadalcanal

- Physical damage was not too bad but consequential damage to her electric propulsion units was extensive and it was late in the afternoon before the engineers could give Ramsey 12 knots.
- The planes went up to Henderson Field, Saratoga went back to the West Coast for repairs.

31 August – Milne Bay

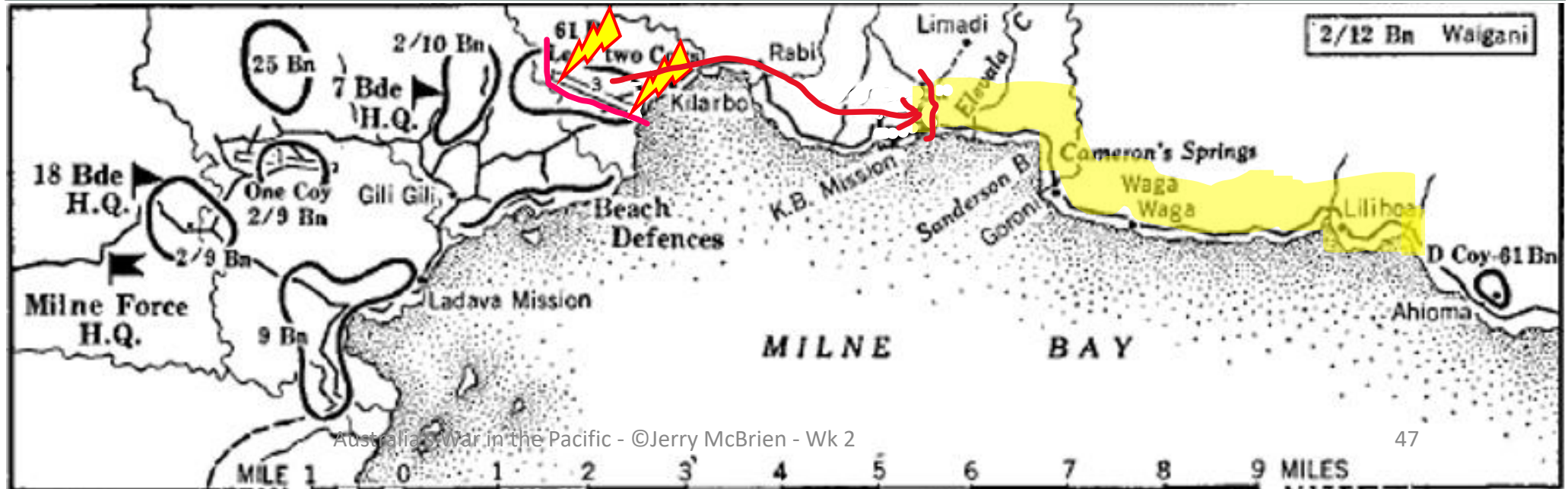
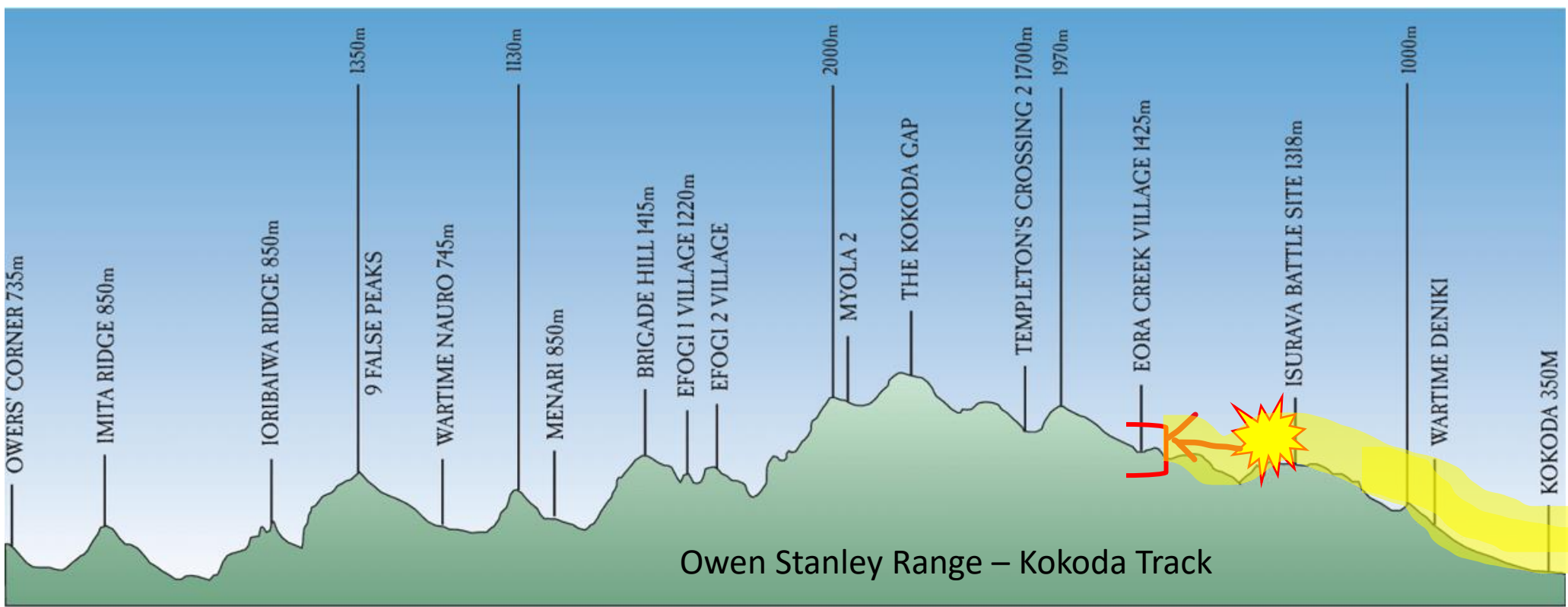
- The defenders were covering the western side of No. 3 Strip.
- The .50-caliber machine guns of the 709th Antiaircraft Battery were sited at both ends of the line.
- The .50-caliber machine guns and 37mm. antitank guns of Companies D and F of the 43d Engineers were in the center of the line,
- flanked on either side by the riflemen and mortarmen of the 25th and 61st Battalions.
- The 25 pounders, about half a mile to the rear, lent their support.
- About 3 a.m. the silence was broken by the sound of a heavy "clang". Flares revealed attacking forces grouped on the eastern side of No. 3 Strip at the seaward end.
- Defensive fire crashed among them. The Japanese bunched in groups and shouted loudly. Three times they formed up and attacked and three times fell before the hail of fire which caught them.



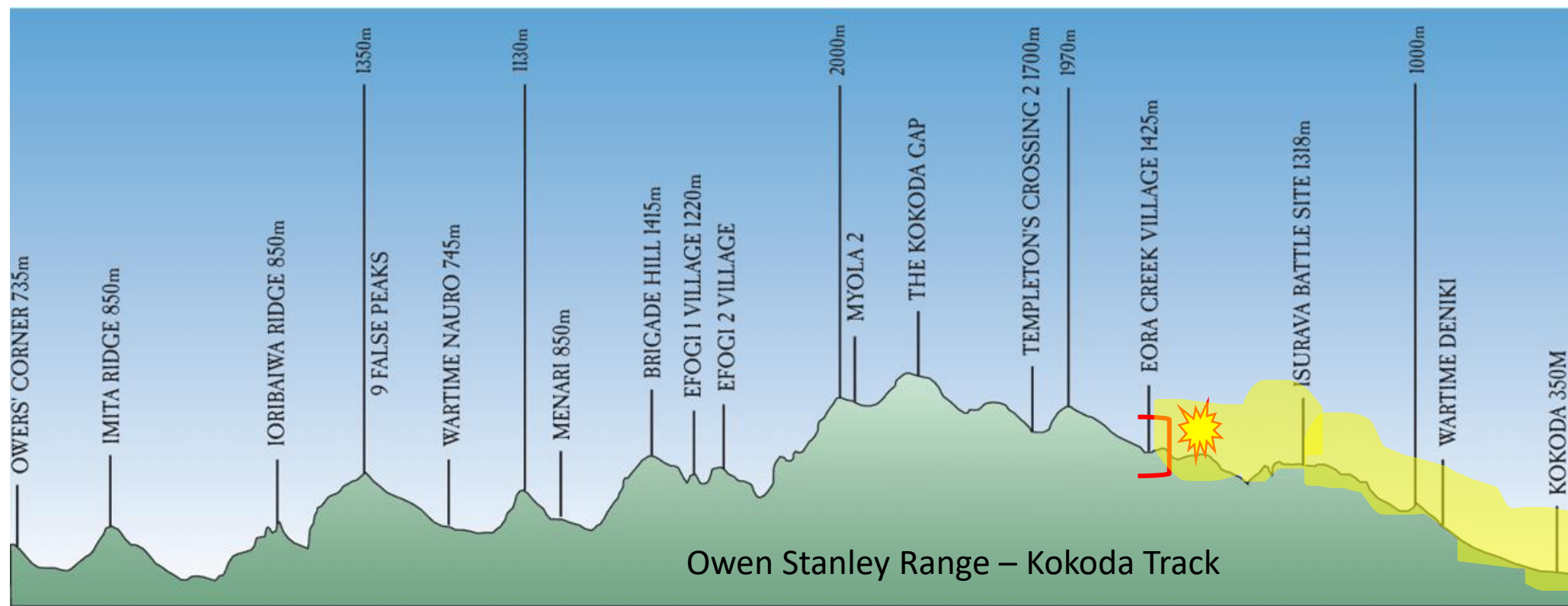
M45 Quadmount .50 anti aircraft system.

- They re-formed once more in the shelter of Poin Creek from which they made their way towards the strip's north - western end—and tried their strength there.
- Such intense fire had hit the Japanese that not one man was able to cross the strip alive. They withdrew at first light, leaving 160 dead behind.

31 August



1 September

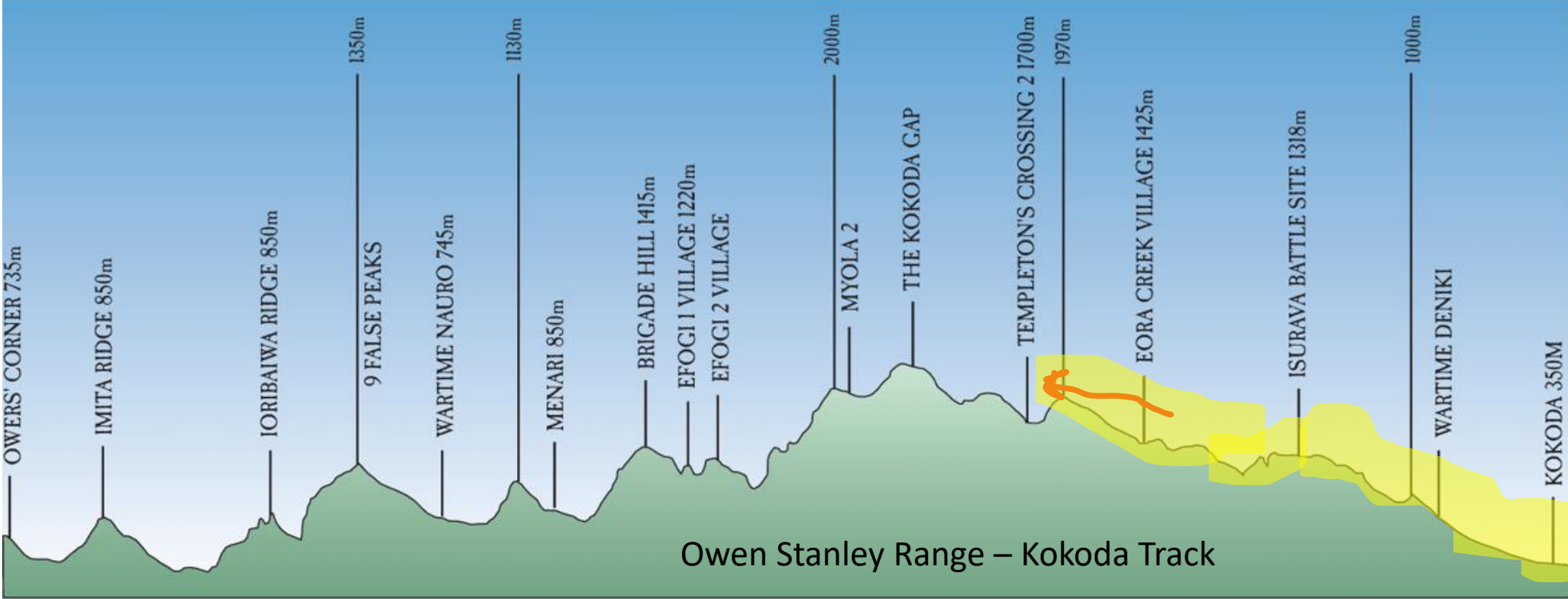


2 September - Kokoda

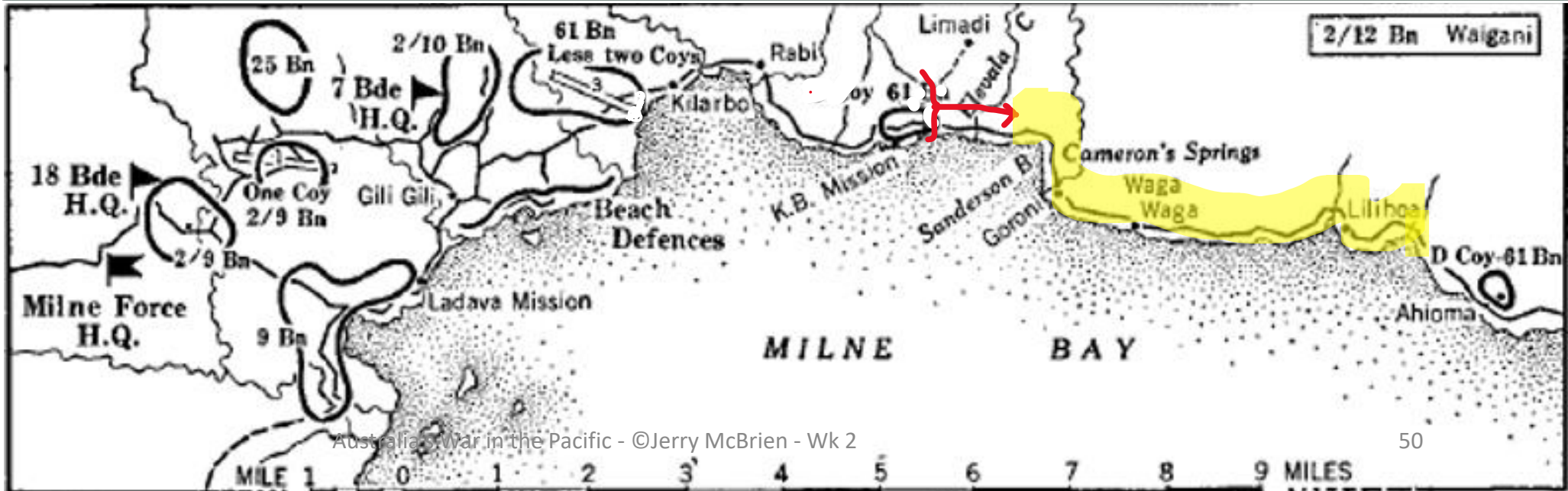
- At this stage Potts' brigade was pathetically depleted. They had had nearly a week of constant fighting and during that time most of them had been unable even to brew themselves a mug of tea and certainly had not had a hot meal.
- Now, shelterless, their feet pulpy and shrivelled from the constant wet, they were soaked by continuous rain. They were worn out by fighting in a country where movement alone for even unencumbered men was hardship.
- They were burdened by their own wounded; desertions by carriers aggravated that difficulty and the supply problem. Potts felt that he could not hold any position for long unless he was heavily reinforced and until the Japanese lines of communication and supply were so extended as seriously to embarrass them.
- He told Allen this and of his intention to withdraw to Templeton's Crossing. He felt that he must soon establish a firm base from which he could hold and considered that a position half-way between Myola and Efogi, with the Kagi track junction held, was the most suitable.
- Accordingly, at dawn on the 2nd, the move to Templeton's Crossing began.



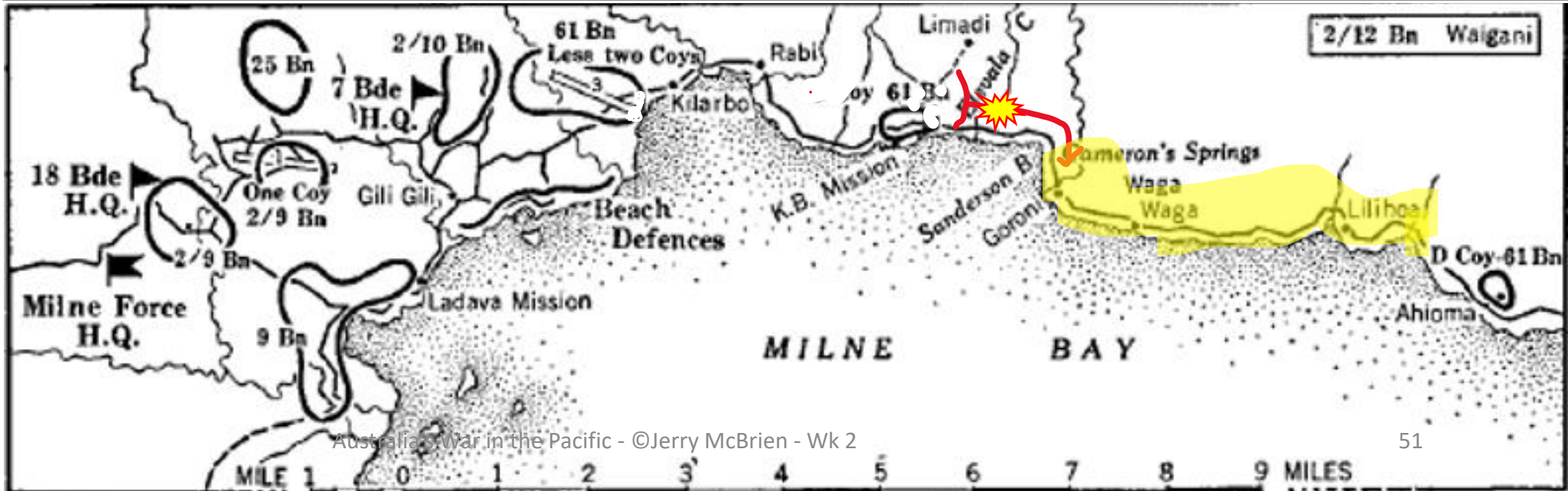
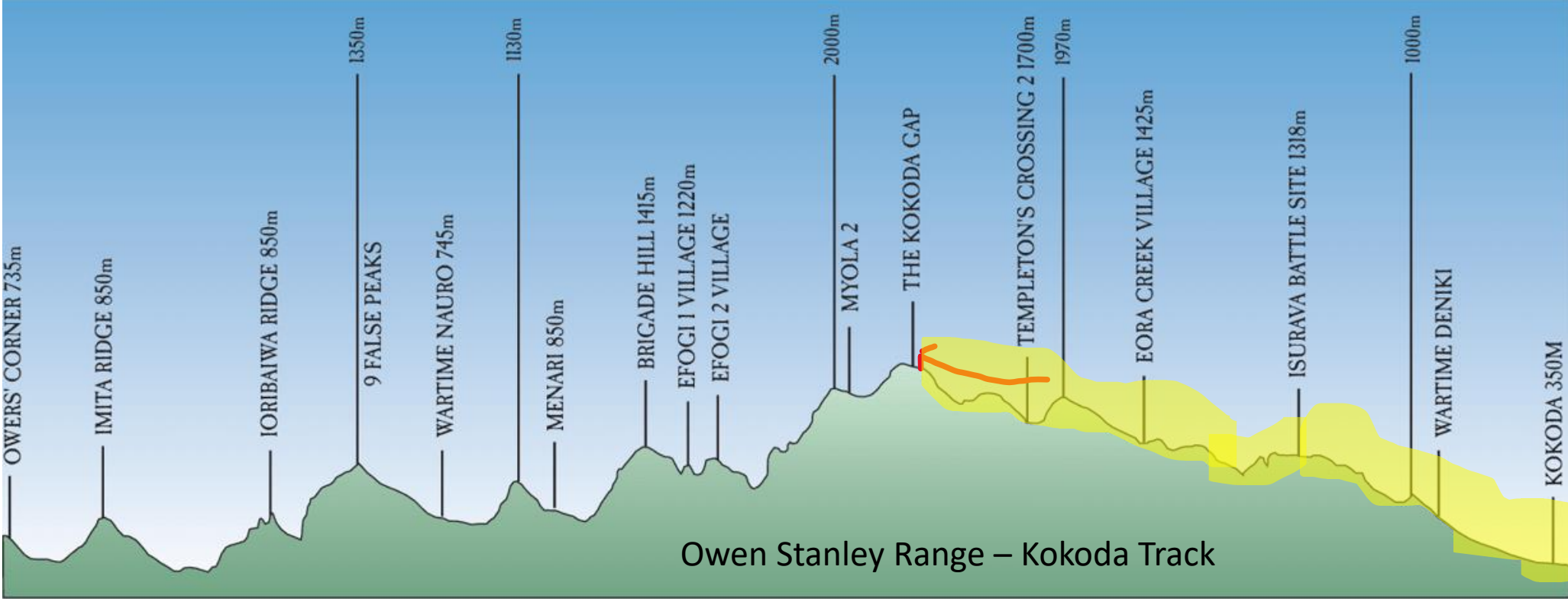
2 September



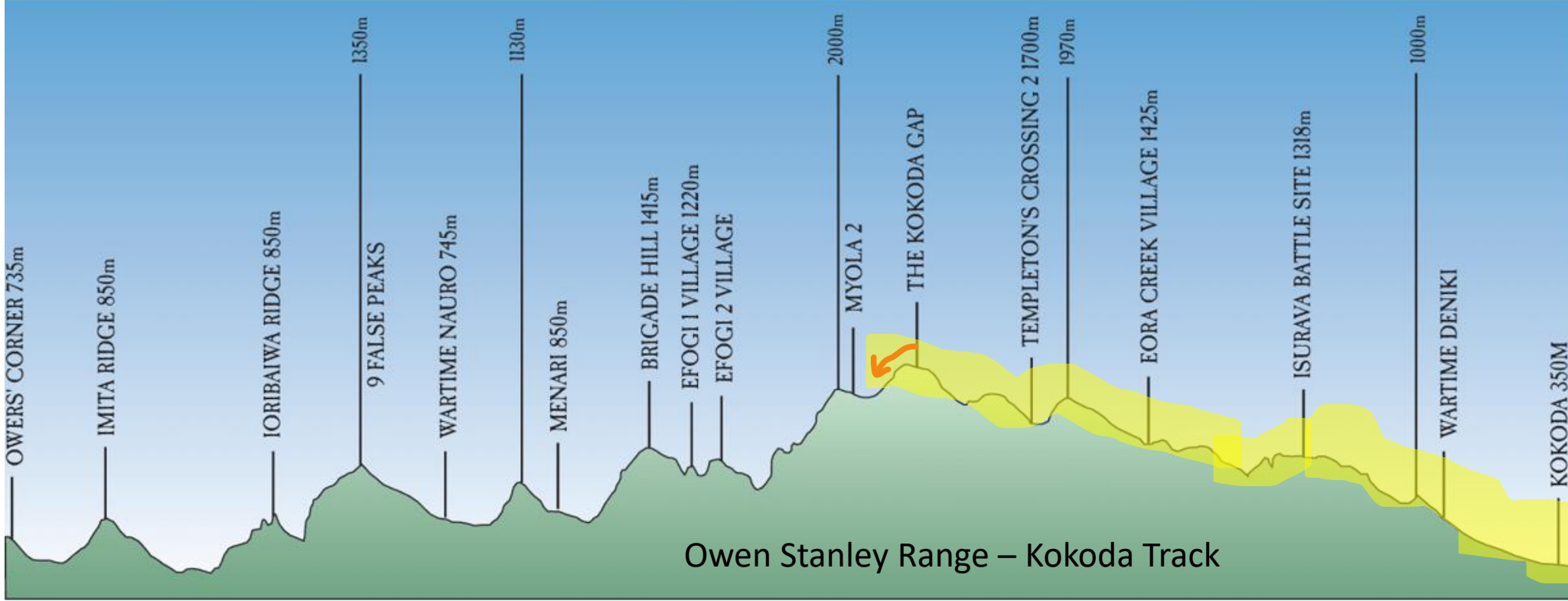
Owen Stanley Range – Kokoda Track



3 September



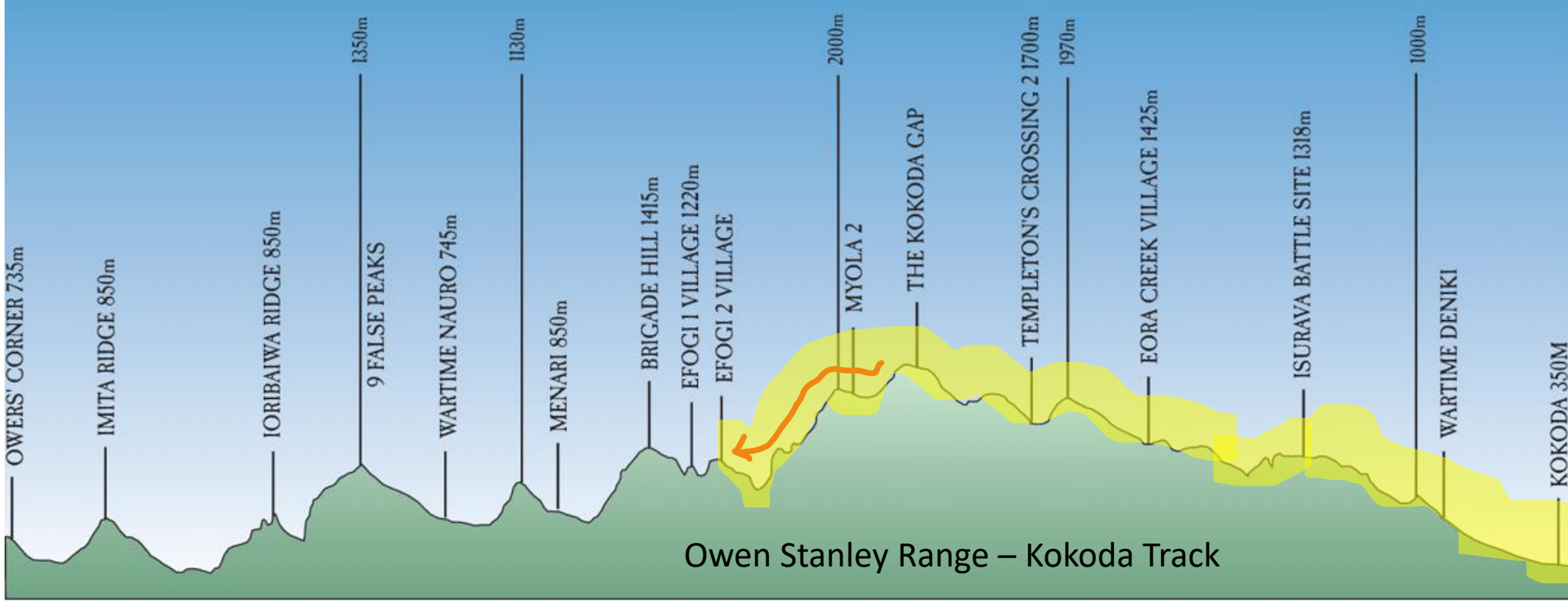
4 September



Owen Stanley Range – Kokoda Track



5 September



Owen Stanley Range – Kokoda Track



6 September – Milne Bay

- On the 6th the 2/9th fought isolated skirmishes. They were now in the middle of what was obviously the Japanese main base area. Dumps and base installations and all the scattered paraphernalia of a broken force marked the area. Patrols went as far as Ahioma without hindrance.
- The defence of Milne Bay cost the Australians 373 battle casualties, 161 men were killed or missing. The Americans had lost one soldier of the 43rd Engineers killed and two wounded in the ground actions.
- Of the Japanese casualties Clowes reported: "It is conservatively and reliably estimated . . . that enemy killed amount to at least 700.
- MacArthur made the following comments in his message to Marshall:
- "The enemy's defeat at Milne Bay must not be accepted as a measure of relative fighting capacity of the troops involved. The decisive factor was the complete surprise obtained over him by our preliminary concentration of superior forces." and
- "The Australians have proven themselves unable to match the enemy in jungle fighting. Aggressive leadership is lacking."



6 - 8 September - Kokoda

- At 7 a.m. on the 6th Lieutenant Bell took a patrol to the junction of the Kagi-Myola tracks. He counted seven Japanese platoons moving down the Myola-Efogi track. The column which Bell had seen moved on to occupy Efogi.
- From 9 p.m. on the 6th to 5 a.m. on the 7th a procession of lights moving down the track from Myola and Kagi indicated that a stream of Japanese was flowing to a concentration in front of the Australians.
- The Japanese probed and felt for the Australians as the morning went on, and subjected them to fire from what Potts' men thought was a long-range mortar or a field piece.
- The expected Japanese attacks came in the dead hours before dawn on the 8th and continued with the morning. The main strength was estimated to be five companies. Captain Sims' company beat the attackers back with rifle fire and grenades but the Japanese drove in again and again.

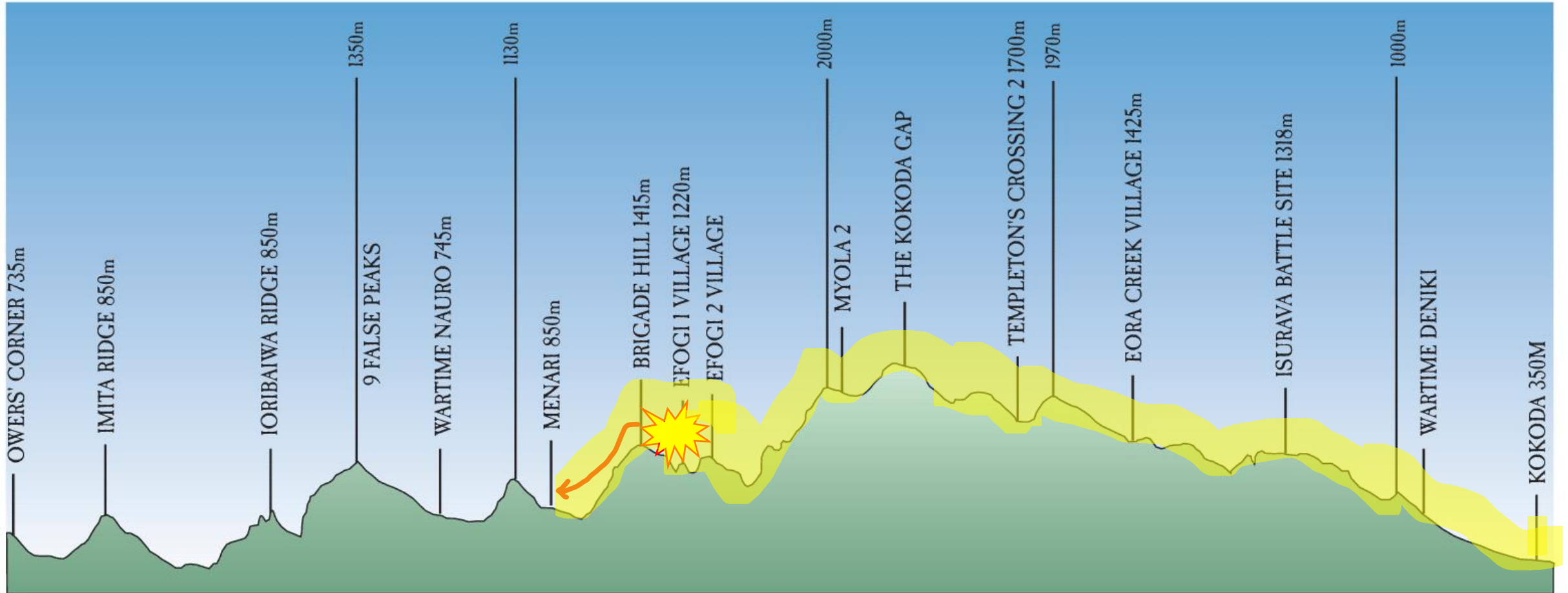


6 - 8 September - Kokoda

- Each time fire tore the attacks apart. But the assaulting troops were very determined. Six of Sims' Brens were knocked out. The company had gone into action with 1,200 grenades and with each man carrying 100 rounds of ammunition. The men used this entire supply, the whole battalion reserve, and much of the reserve companies' stocks. Finally the attackers withdrew.
- While they had been charging the front with such determination the Japanese had been following their usual practice of working round the flanks.
- Soon after dawn they were assailing brigade headquarters and Langridge's company of the 2/16th which was guarding the brigade's rear and the supply dumps there.
- As darkness was falling Potts, the brigade commander, was able to disengage and move back to Menari, having been told by men of the attacking force who had got through from Caro of the battalions' plans to make for that point by a circuitous route if the Japanese could not be forced from the main track.

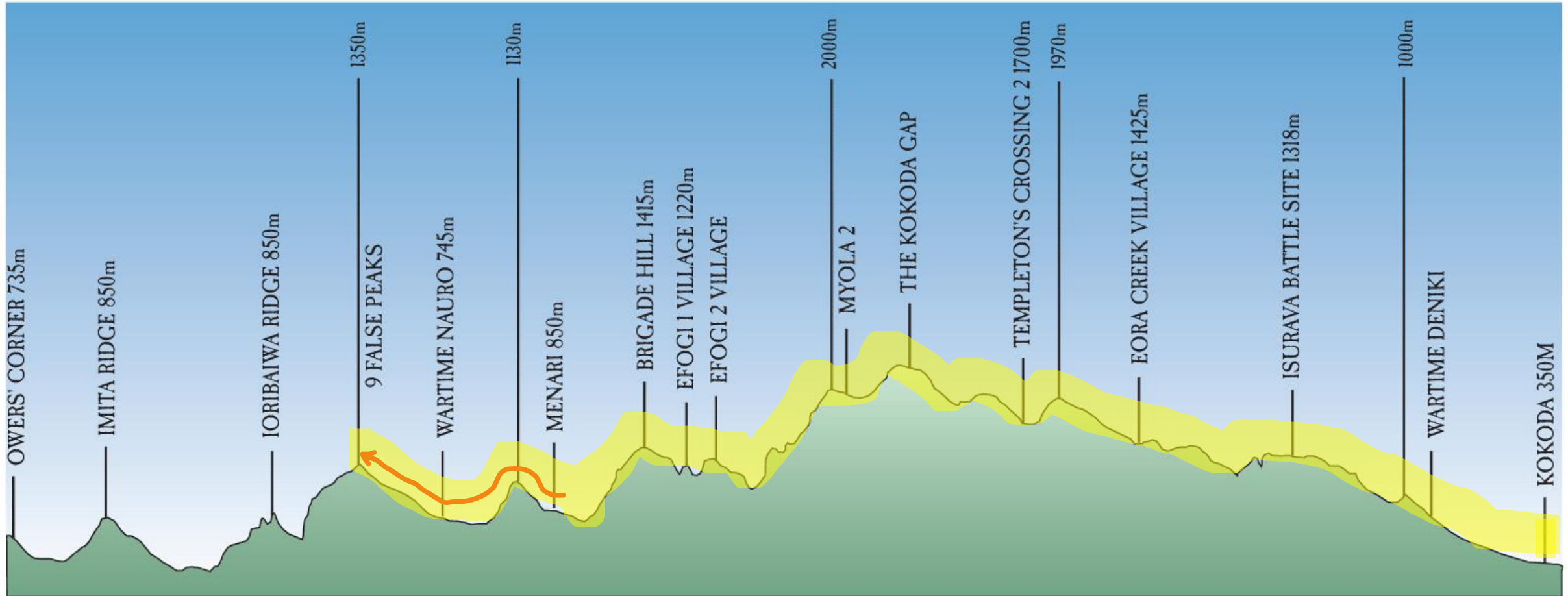


8 September – Kokoda



OWEN STANLEY RANGE - KOKODA TRACK

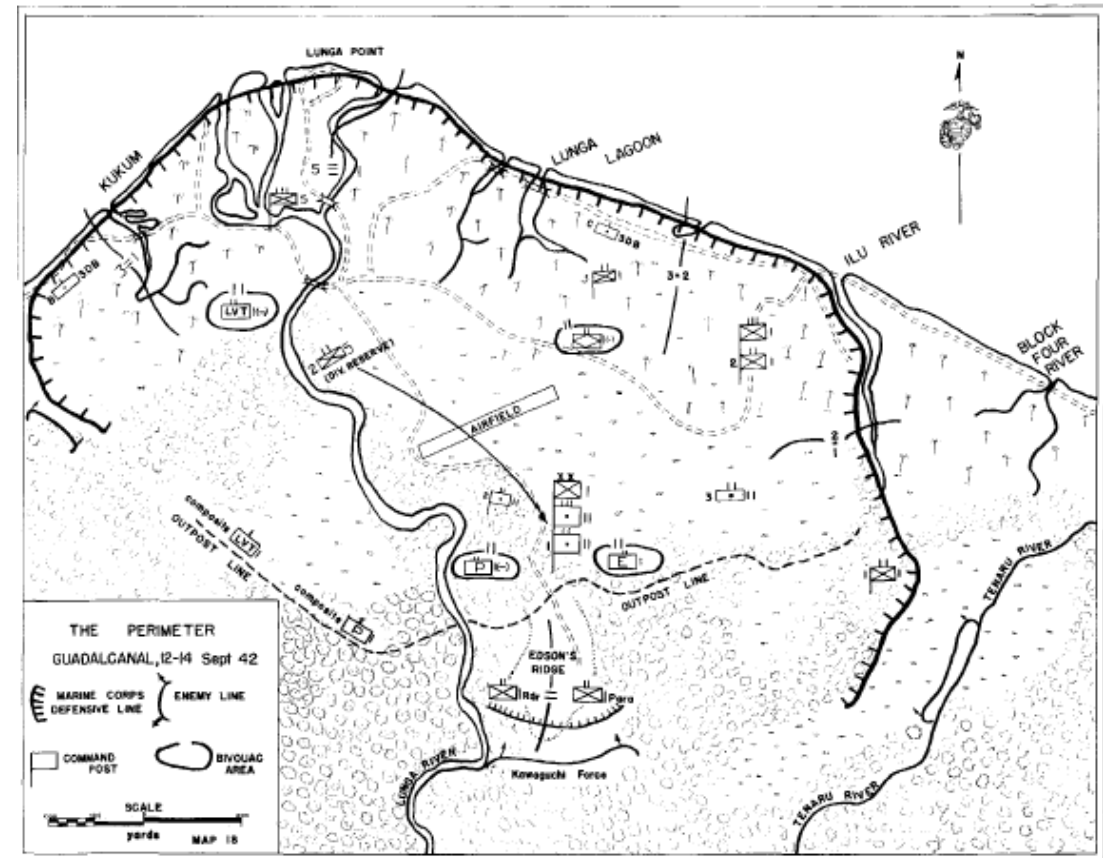
10 September – Kokoda



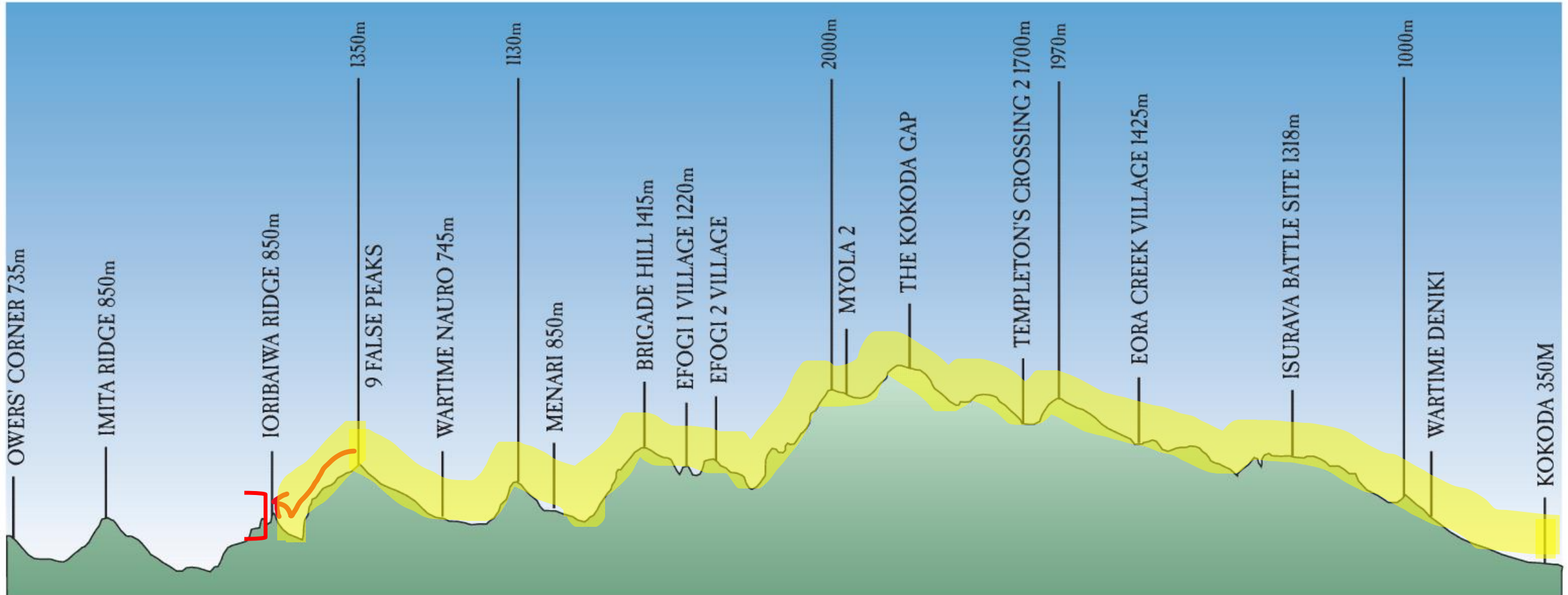
OWEN STANLEY RANGE - KOKODA TRACK

10 September - Guadalcanal

- Marine patrols began to encounter frequent opposition east and southeast of the perimeter.
- Native scouts brought word of large bodies of troops that clearly were not wandering remnants of the last attack. The troops had an air of purpose and direction apparent even to the local natives.
- By 10 September native reports indicated that the enemy was less than five miles east of the perimeter and that he was cutting a road to the south.
- The space inland between these flanks still posed a serious problem, but it had been partially solved by the establishment of well-prepared strong points and outposts.
- General Vandegrift had ordered the raiders and parachutists out of division reserve to augment, this line by preparing positions on a long low ridge that extended south of Henderson Field and parallel to the Lunga River.



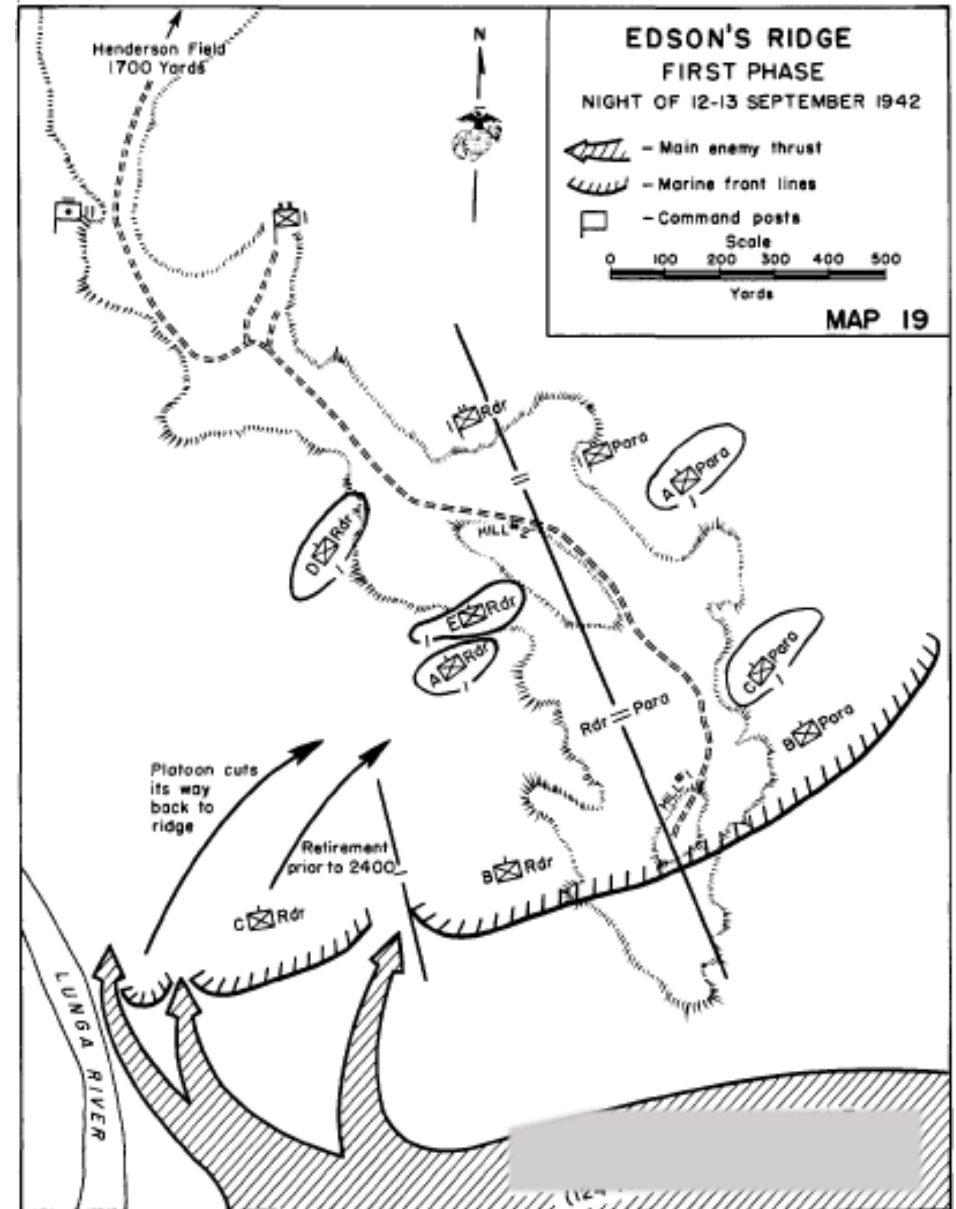
11 September – Kokoda



OWEN STANLEY RANGE - KOKODA TRACK

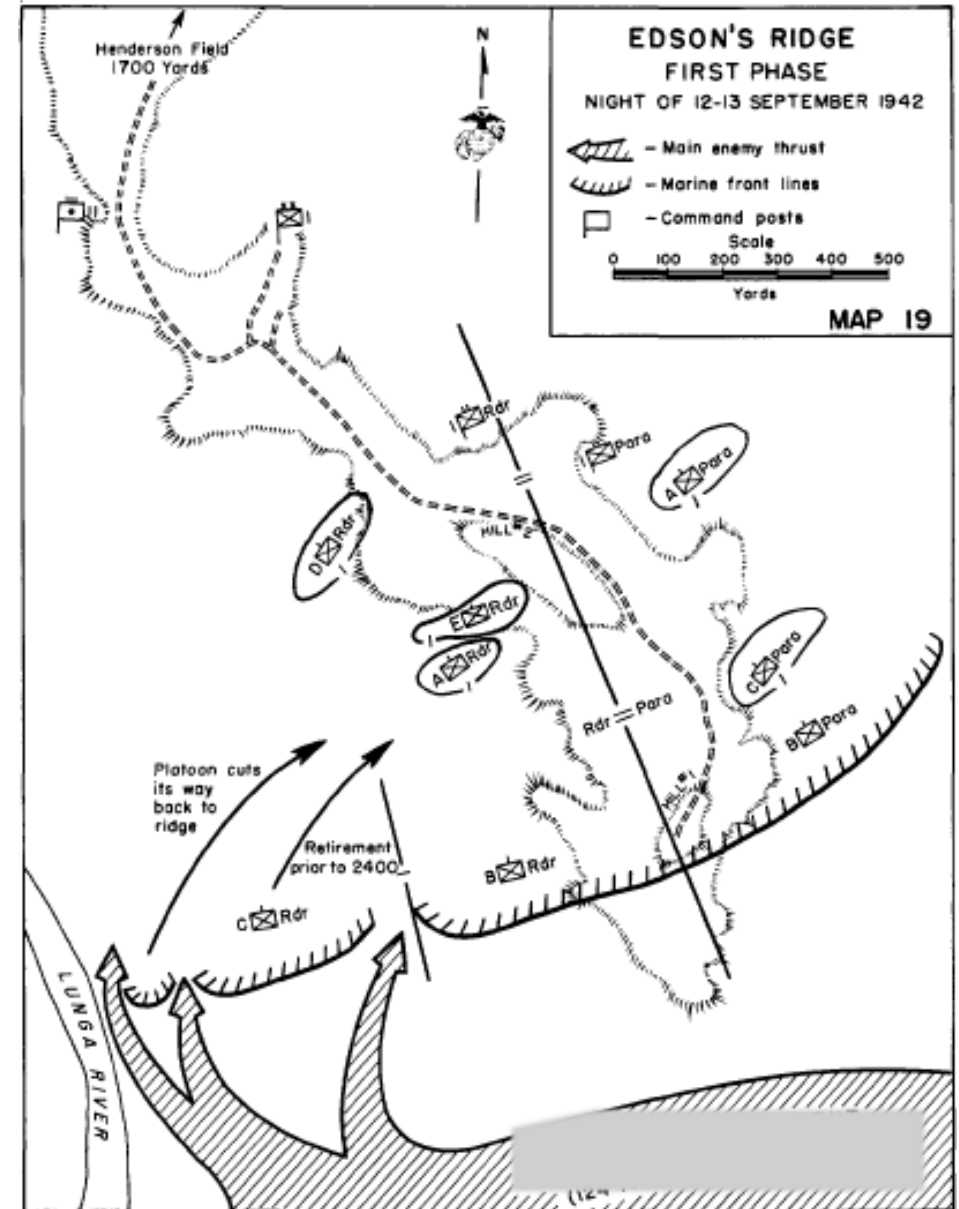
13 Sept - Guadalcanal

- In the first hours of darkness, Louie the Louse, or Washing-Machine Charley chugged over to drop his inconsistent scattering of bombs. About 2100 he let go a flare that hung over the field as a registration point for the destroyers that now opened up from Sealark Channel.
- As if in answer, a flare went up from the troops south of Edson, and without artillery preparation the Japanese drove a two column attack against the center and right of the raider-parachute line.
- Company B's central sector on the high knoll caught most of this first assault and turned it back, but the other attack column found an opening to the west and came through to cut off and envelop Company B's right platoon.



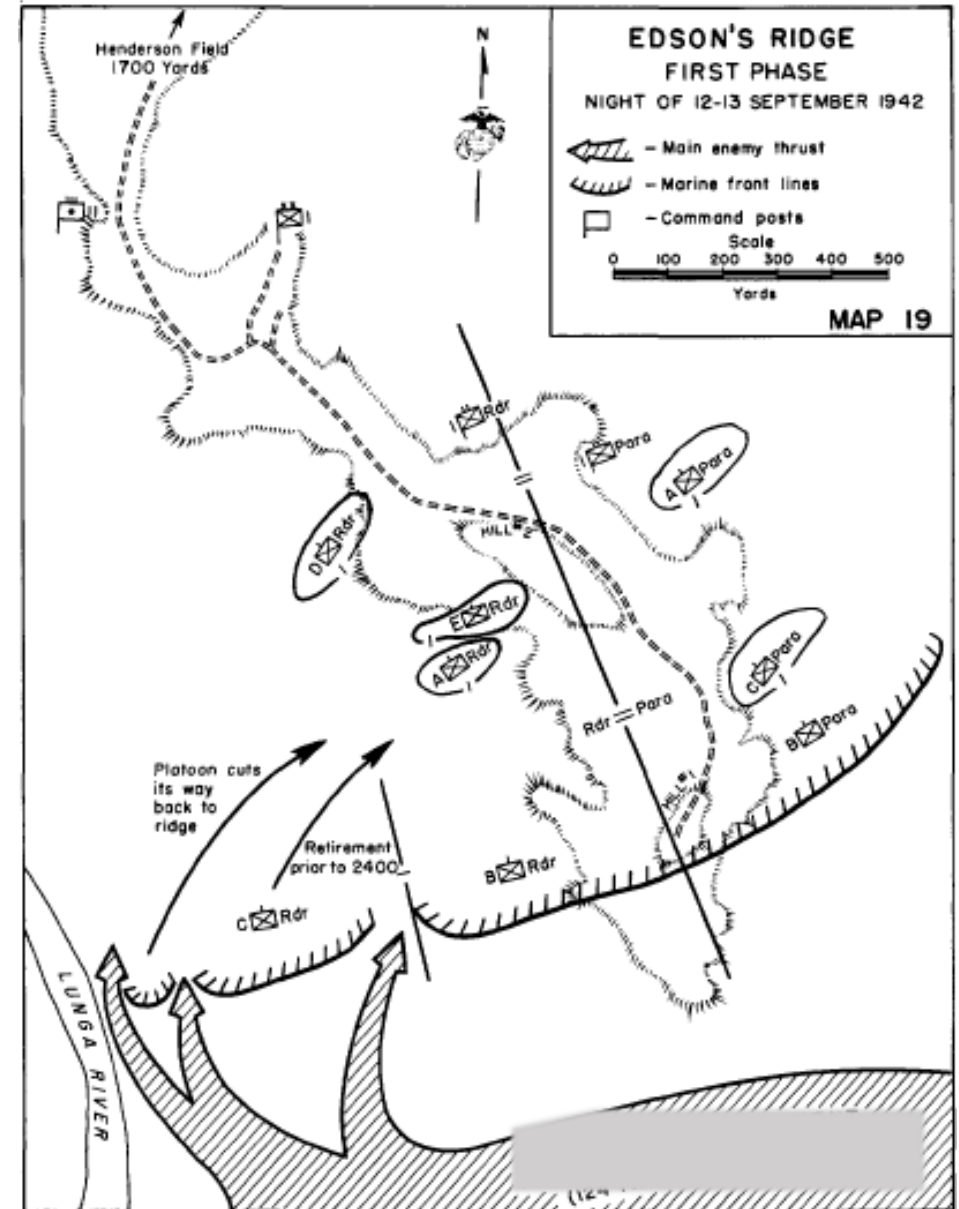
13 Sept - Guadalcanal

- While the Japanese drove through this gap between Companies A and B, the isolated platoon fought its way back along 250 yards of the ridge to join Company C on the knoll to the north. Still engaged and nearly overpowered, Company B refused its right flank along the ridge's west slopes.
- Edson had been calling in fire from 5/11's howitzers since the beginning of the attack, and as the attacks continued the colonel directed the artillery closer and closer until it was falling within 200 yards of the Company B lines.
- But still the Japanese came on, and by 2200 Edson estimated that the two understrength parachute companies and Company B were opposed by at least two enemy battalions attacking in full force.



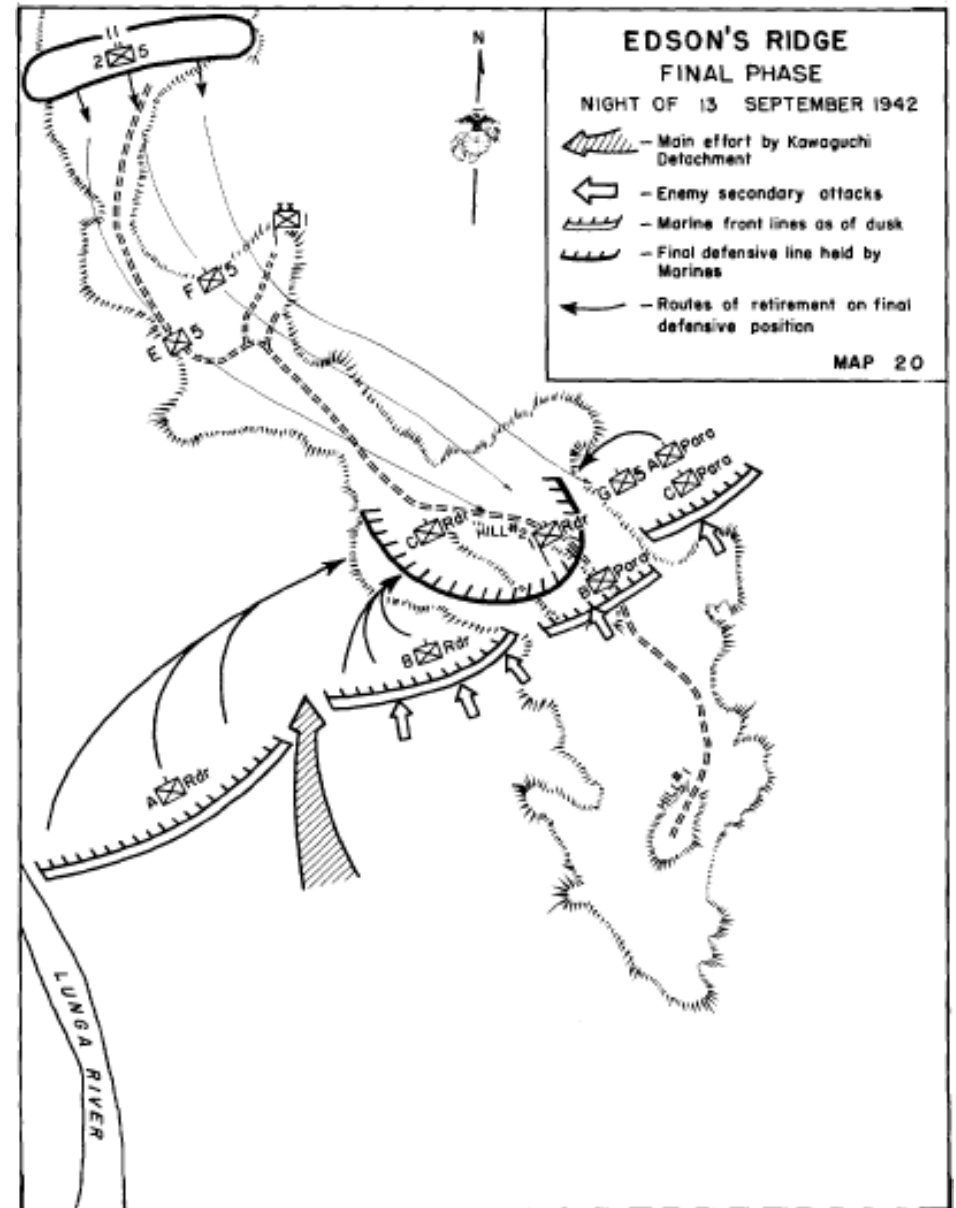
13 Sept - Guadalcanal

- Japanese infiltration parties were taking over some of the Company B foxholes, communication lines were cut throughout the area, and the Japanese now began to drum the ridge with heavy mortar fire. Following a violent barrage at 2230, the Japanese attack shifted to the east where it struck the thin flank held by the parachute troops.
- Screaming in English, "Gas attack! Gas attack!", the Japanese came out of the jungle through a smoke screen and drove the parachutists back along the ridge to expose the left flank of Company B.
- This left the B company raiders, now reduced to approximately 60 men, exposed on both flanks as well as their front, and Edson called for them to pull back to a last-ditch stand with Company C. Company A would join the force there, and Edson ordered his men to hold at all costs.



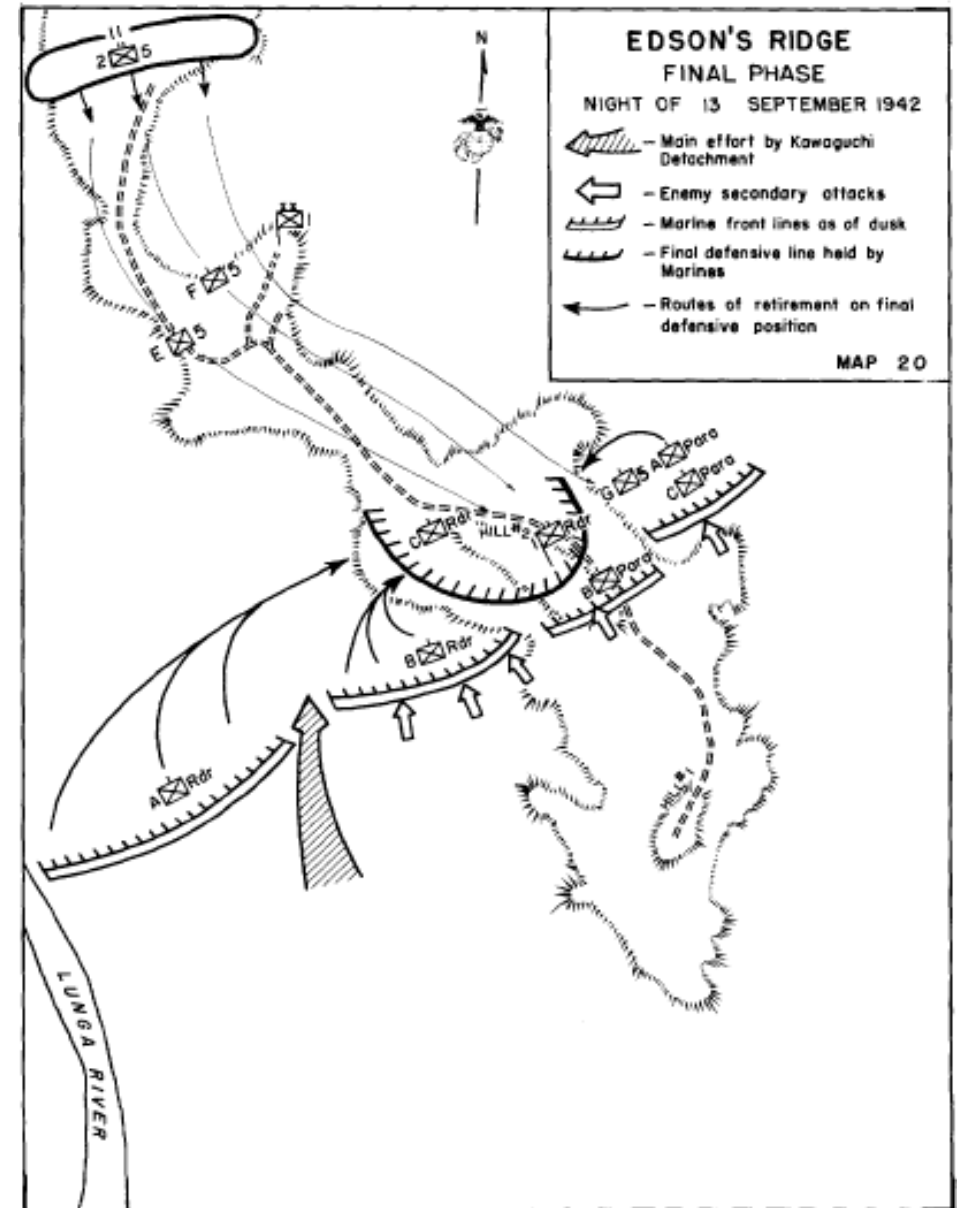
13 Sept - Guadalcanal

- It was the last dominating terrain feature south of the airfield. Edson collected his men as they filtered back and built them up into a line strong enough to make the final stand.
- The colonel and his officers ironed out the confusion of setting in the new defense in darkness and under fire while holding off repeated Japanese assaults.
- When the withdrawal of the exhausted Raiders threatened to turn into a rout the commanding figure and vivid language of Major Kenneth Bailey brought them up short.
- The enemy attacked more than a dozen times grinding themselves into the fire from Marine artillery, mortars, machine guns and rifles in vain attempts to dislodge Edson from his Ridge.



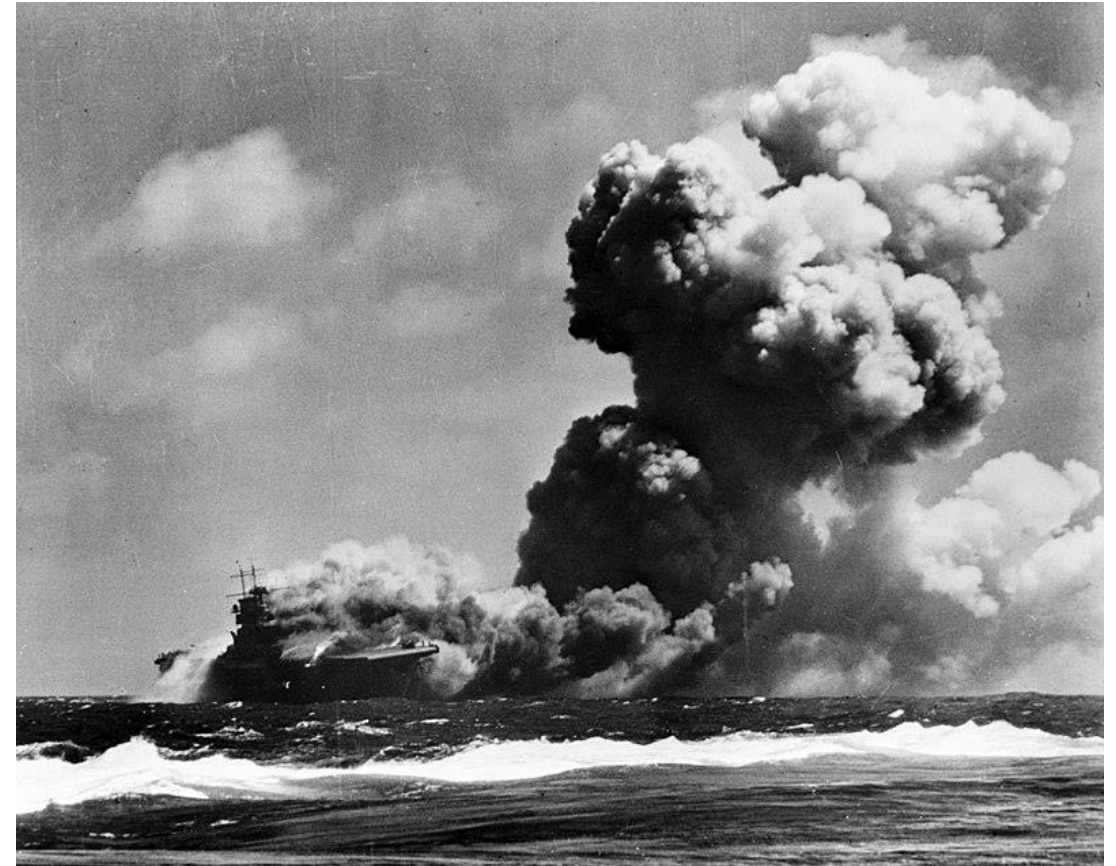
13 Sept - Guadalcanal

- Japanese flares "telegraphed" each attack, providing the 11th Marines gunners with reference points for their firing in which they expended 1,992 rounds of 105mm, some at ranges as short as 1,600 yards.
- Correspondent Tregaskis heard an observer call back: "Drop it five zero and walk it back and forth across the ridge"
- Merrit Edson, a scant 10 or 20 yards behind the firing line, with his uniform ripped by bullets at the collar and waist, controlled the battle with his rasping voice, exhorting the steadfast and excoriating those few who wavered: "Go back where you came from. The only thing they've got that you haven't is guts"
- At 0400, with the Japanese attacks still in progress the reserve battalion 2/5 began to move singly into positions from which they aided in standing off the final Japanese thrusts.



15 September - Sea

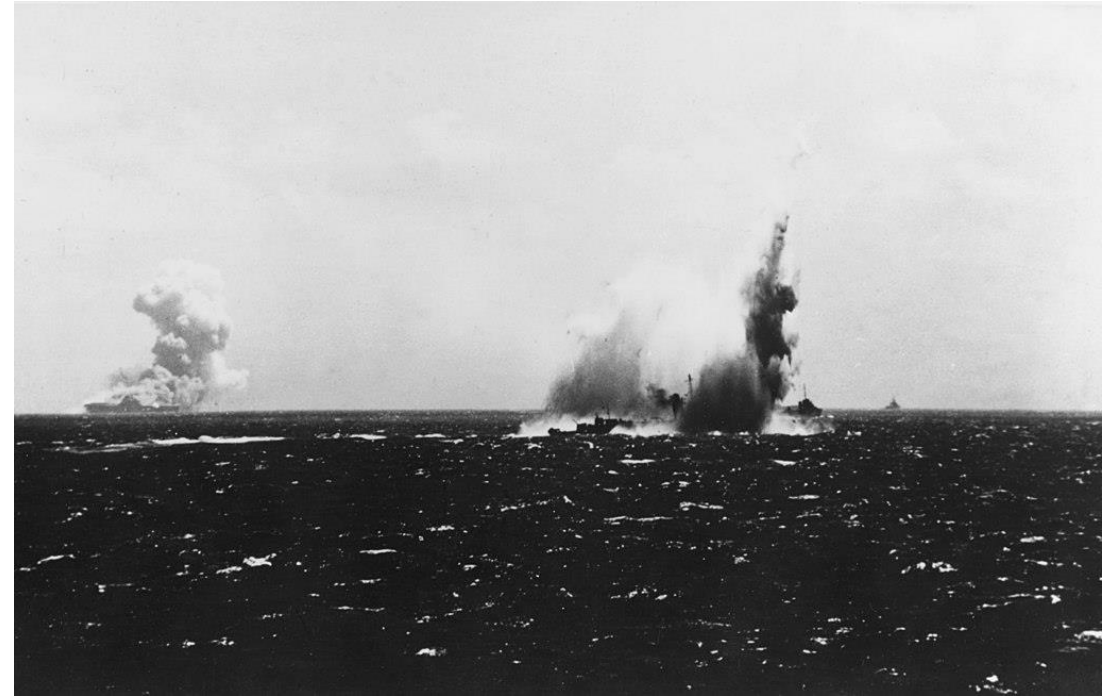
- A Japanese flying boat found the convoy taking the 7th Marines to Guadalcanal, at 11.00 on 15th. Turner decided to withdraw to await a more favourable opportunity.
- In support to the south were carriers Wasp and Hornet, the only flattops operational in the Pacific (*Saratoga* and *Enterprise* were under repair), with their escorting task force.
- In the early pm of the 15th, Wasp was turning back onto her base course after flying off aircraft.
- Ensign Durr pointed out speeding torpedo wakes to Admiral Noyes and declared: "Those have got us."
- Wasp was struck by two torpedoes.
- The torpedoes smashed Wasp's gasoline storage tanks and threatened the bomb magazine. They damaged aircraft in the hanger sending rivers of high octane fuel through the ship. Flames reared up on the hanger deck setting off bombs, depth charges and ready use ammunition.



Wasp on fire shortly after being torpedoed.

15 September - Sea

- Shortly afterwards a torpedo struck the battle ship North Carolina, and another blew a gaping hole in the bow of destroyer O'Brien.
- At 15.05 a huge gasoline vapor explosion jetted burning gases up on three sides of Wasp's island, burning Admiral Noyes about the hair and ears. Rear Admiral Scott on San Francisco assumed Noyes was lost.
- With the fire water system destroyed by explosions and flames enveloping the forward half of the ship Captain Sherman ordered abandon ship at 15.20.
- All but 173 of the crew of 2,247 were saved, though 400 were wounded. 45 planes went down with the ship.



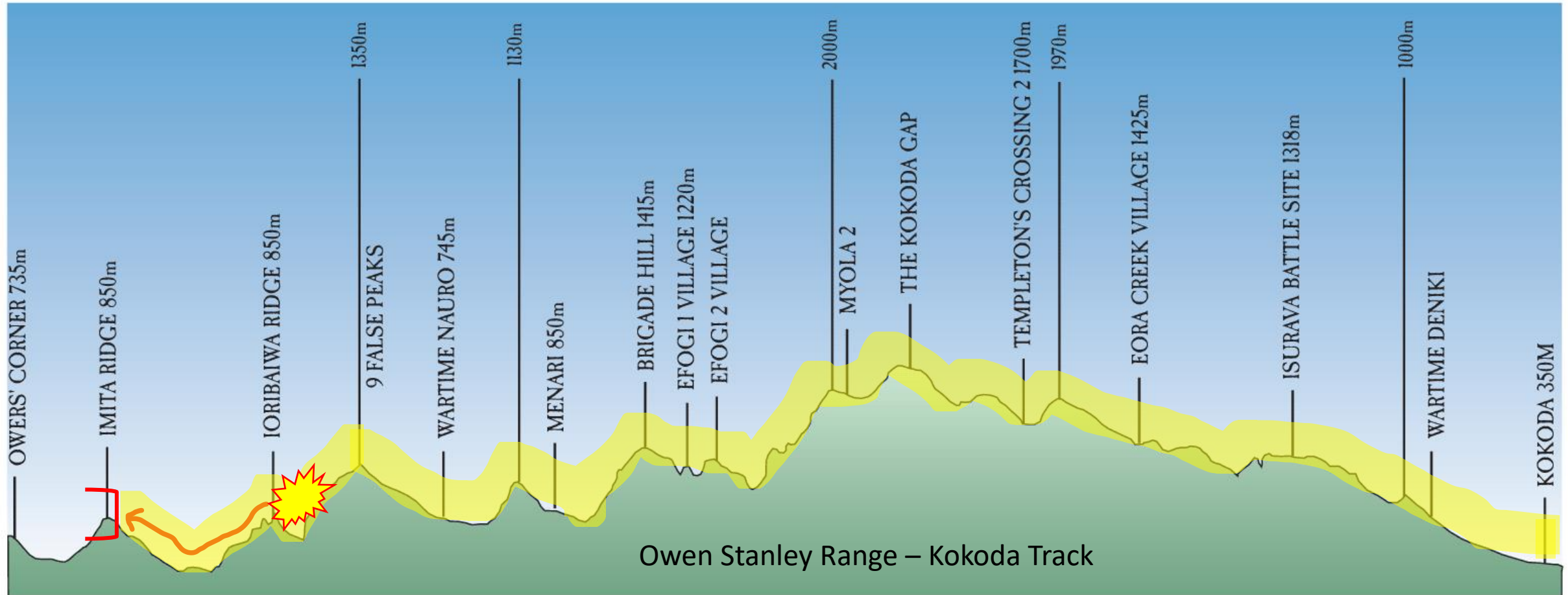
Torpedo hits *O'Brien*. USS *Wasp* can be seen burning in the background.

The US Navy was left with only a single carrier in the Pacific to face six operational Japanese carriers.

16 September - Kokoda

- In a telephone conversation with Allen, which followed at 9.30 a.m., he said that he had no indication of the enemy strength but it was greater than he had anticipated; nor could he give any accurate indications either of his own or the Japanese casualties.
- He said that the Japanese were moving round his flanks and he did not think that he could hold them at Ioribaiwa but would do so if possible.
- He asked Allen whether he felt that if he could not hold at Ioribaiwa he might withdraw to Imita Ridge?
- Allen replied that he must keep on the offensive and must hold the enemy as long as possible. He impressed on Eather the importance of retaining Ioribaiwa but left to him the final decision whether he should withdraw or not.
- Eather then decided to move back, reasoning
 - that if he continued to hold the Ioribaiwa position he would soon have committed all his force to defensive tasks and would have lost any freedom of movement to adopt the offensive;
 - that, as he was obliged to cover Port Moresby, he must keep his force intact;
 - that his supply position was precarious, dependent upon native carriers who would be dispersed by any threat to his lines of communication ;
 - that a withdrawal to the line of Imita Ridge would give him time to establish patrols well forward with a view to advancing again as soon as he had established a firm base.

16 September – Kokoda



General Rowell, in turn, underlined those instructions in a message to Allen which read:

“... We are now so far back that any further withdrawal is out of question and Eather must fight it out at all costs. ...”

17 September - Government

- On the evening of 17 September Curtin Receives telephone call from General MacArthur warning that 'Moresby might be lost' and requesting that General Blamey be sent there to take 'personal control of the battle.
- MacArthur said that he considered that the real reason for the unsatisfactory position there was the lack of efficiency of the Australian troops; that he was convinced that the Australians were in superior numbers to the Japanese in the Owen Stanleys, but despite that, were, as at the beginning of the campaign, still withdrawing;
- that the Japanese, for their part, must be having similar difficulties to the Australians but they were not withdrawing.
- MacArthur felt that, if the Japanese penetration continued, the Allies in New Guinea would be forced into such a defensive concentration as would duplicate the conditions of Malaya.
- The invaders, he said, had not pushed across the mountains with a serious force and the fact that a small force could press such a situation on the defenders was causing him serious unease.



17 September - Government

- MacArthur was at pains to point out that his view of the matter was not the view of the Australian military leaders. They were confident of their ability to meet the situation.
- But so far was he from sharing that confidence that he proposed to send American troops to the area by air or sea in order to do everything possible to stem the attack.
- Within a week he expected to have 40,000 men in New Guinea and, if they fought, they should have no trouble in meeting the situation.
- If they would not fight, he said, 100,000 there would be no good. MacArthur's most immediate point was that General Blamey should go at once to New Guinea, personally take command there and "energize the situation".
- He was affected by the American position in the Solomons which he thought was not favourable. ... He considered, his problem was reduced to one of fending off the Japanese for some months, and the fight to this end must be made in New Guinea.
- MacArthur said he would speak to Blamey in these terms. He asked if the Prime Minister would follow by speaking to the Australian general himself.



Mr Curtin said that he would tell General Blamey that he considered he should go to New Guinea and take command there. This he did by phone that day. Blamey agreed.

17 September - Government

- **Austerity Campaign**
- The first government action in the austerity campaign was against racing. The purpose was both to check the orgy of betting that had come with the increased circulation of money and to cut down the claims of the racing industry on men, supplies and transport.
- The State Governments were asked to use the power given to them by the Commonwealth to restrict further the number of race meetings. None of the States did so.
- The Commonwealth then brought in restrictions by regulation on 17 September.
- The final decision was to have races only on Saturdays, to have one raceless Saturday each month, to limit the number of events on a race programme, and to restrict the publication of form, comments and tips. The big holiday and carnival meetings in each State were exempted from the regulations.



September – North Africa – 3 German divisions

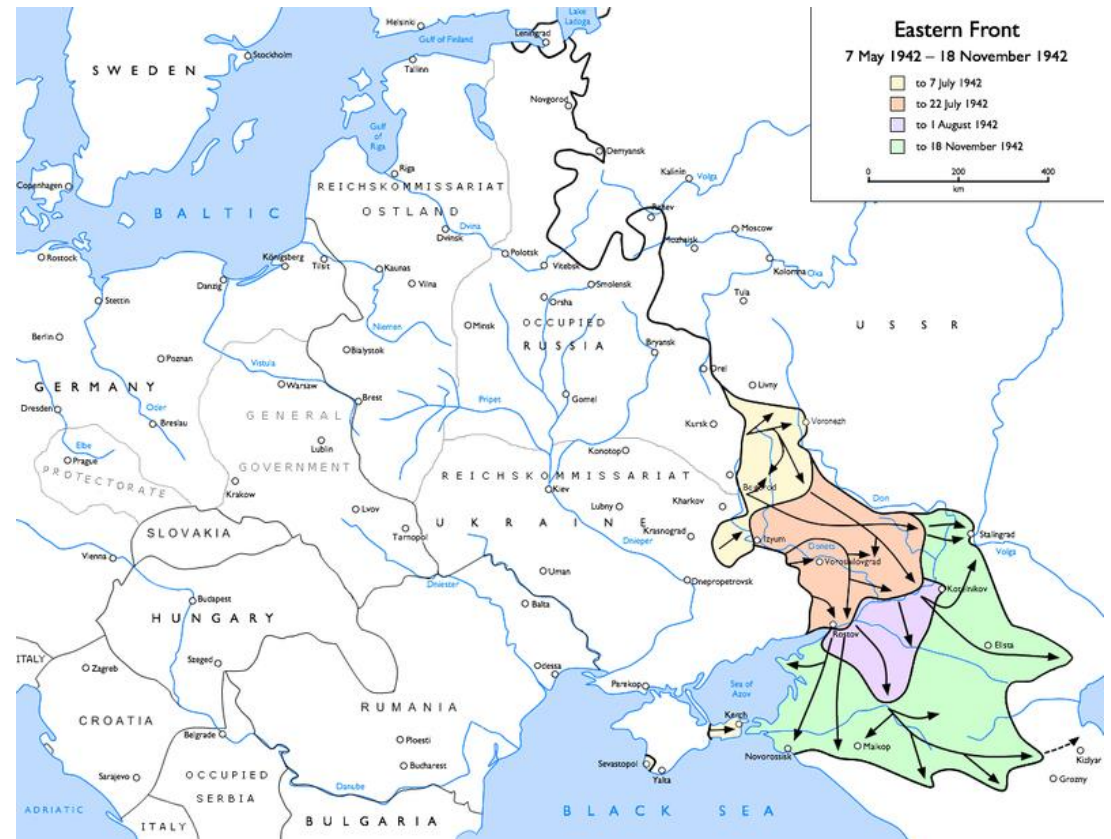
- Retreat from El Agheila 21 Jan
- Retreat from Gazala 17 June
- Tobruk surrendered 21 June
 - 35,000 allied troops surrendered with their equipment and supplies.
- Mersa Matruh 27 June
- Battle of Alamein 1 July
- Battle of Alam Halfa 30 Aug to 5 Sept



September – Russian front – 153 German divisions



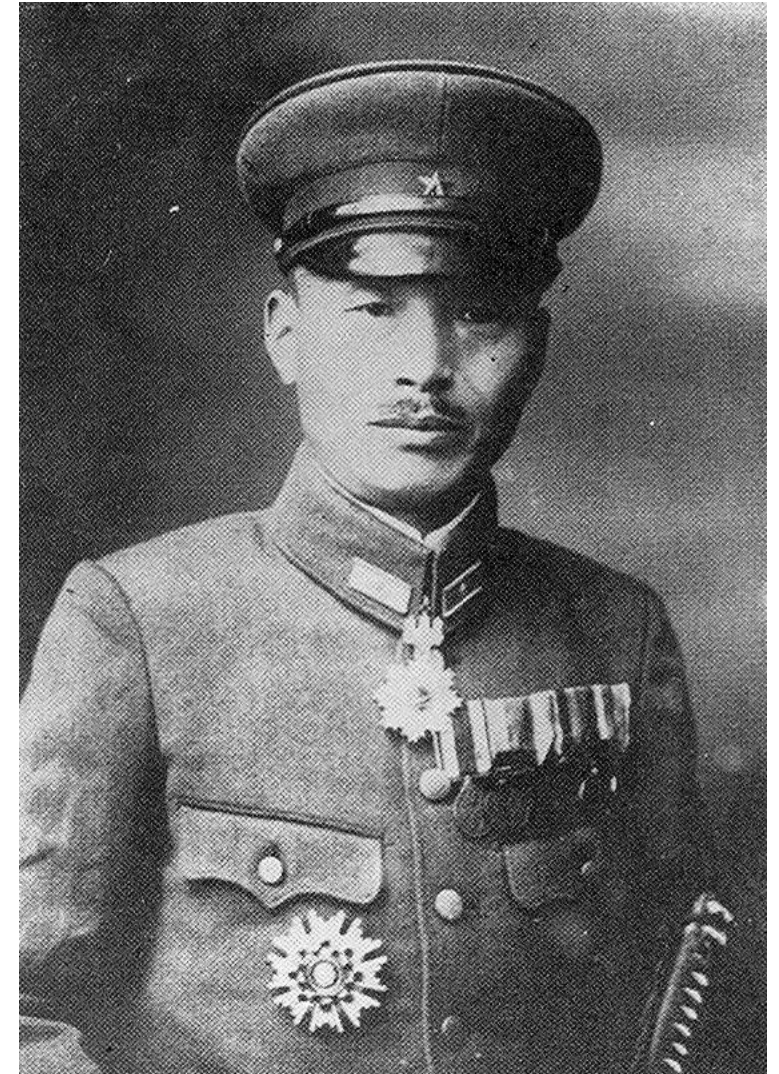
Operation Barbarossa: the German invasion of the Soviet Union, 21 June 1941 to 5 December 1941



German advances from 7 May 1942 to end September 1942

Lae & Salamaua

- The invasion of Lae and Salamaua had been carried out by a combined navy-army group totalling about 3,000 men.
- These gathered in Rabaul, left there with a strong naval escort and, as they approached their destination on 7th March, divided into two groups.
- A strong battalion group of Major-General Tomitaro Horii's (photo) South Seas Force landed at Salamaua. Naval troops occupied Lae.
- As soon as it was clear that the land defence of the two points was secure Horii's men withdrew from Salamaua leaving about 1,500 naval troops in the whole Lae-Salamaua area to build up and defend the Lae air base which was their chief concern.



Kokoda

- On 14th June General Hyakutake, commander of the XVII Army, whose headquarters were then at Davao, had been ordered to prepare an overland attack on Port Moresby. He was not to launch this, however, until he was satisfied that the track from the Buna-Gona coast via Kokoda was passable for a sufficient force.
- If the attack were finally judged feasible it was to be carried out by Major-General Horii's South Seas, Force.



LT GEN HYAKUTAKE, from his HQ at Rabaul, commanded Japanese forces in New Guinea and Guadalcanal

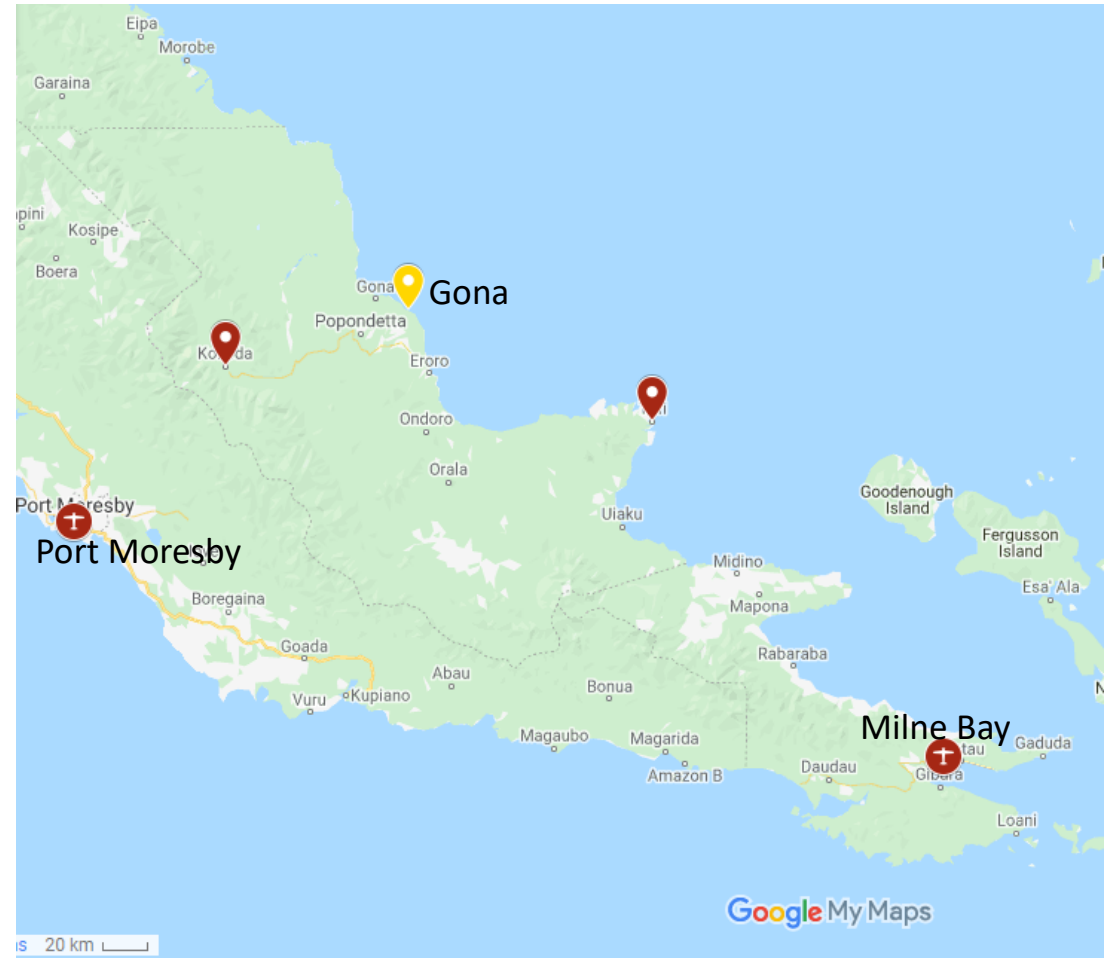
Kokoda

- The initial examination of the Kokoda Track was allotted to Colonel Yokoyama who arrived at Rabaul about 14th July with the 15th Independent Engineer Regiment. His report was to reach Horii early in August and on that report would depend whether or not the main movement was put in train.
- Yokoyama was ordered to land near Gona, advance rapidly to the "mountain pass south of Kokoda" and examine the track leading to Port Moresby.
- He was to prepare the coastal section of the track for motor traffic and make the mountain sections passable for pack horses at least.
- Even if he found it was not practicable to advance beyond Kokoda he was to hold the area between the coast and the ranges.
- He landed at Buna on 21 July.



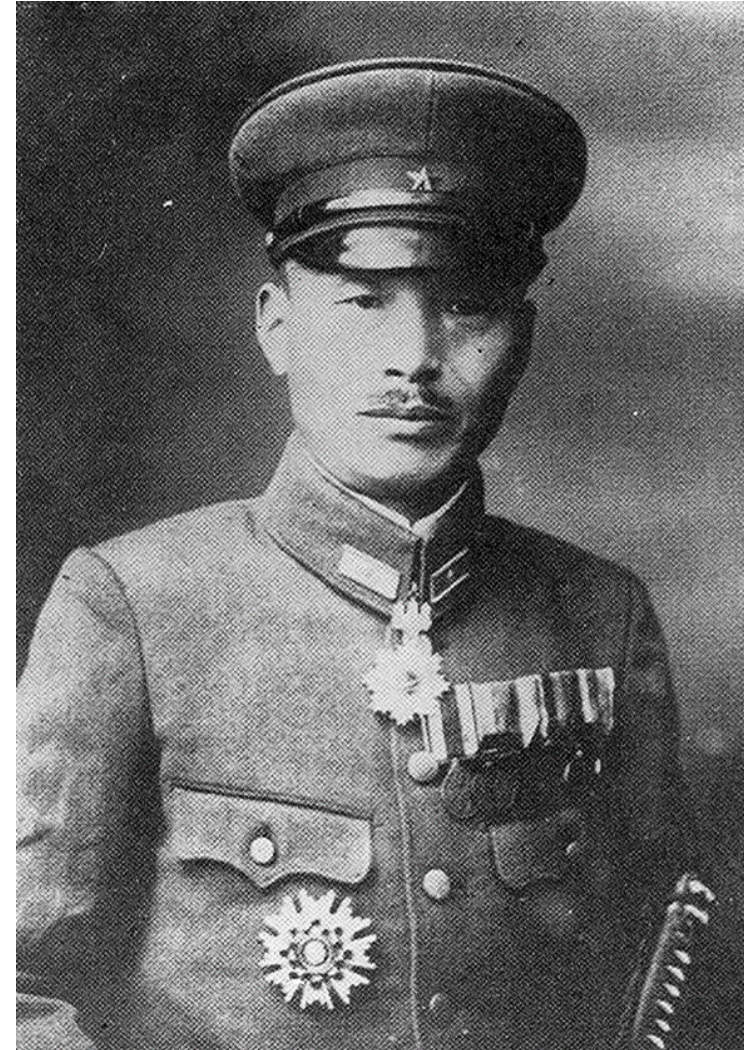
Kokoda

- Soon after Hyakutake arrived at Rabaul from the Philippines on 24th July he found that Yokoyama was sending most hopeful reports to Horii.
- On the strength of these Tokyo ordered Hyakutake on the 28th to put the main plan into effect.
- The Yazawa Force would join Horii and the combined forces would cross the mountains to Port Moresby.
- The Eighth Fleet and the Kawaguchi Force would take Milne Bay and then coordinate a landing at Port Moresby with Horii's debouchment down from the mountains.
- The naval troops at Lae and Salamaua would sally against the local defenders in a diversionary role as the main movement overland and against Milne Bay got under way.



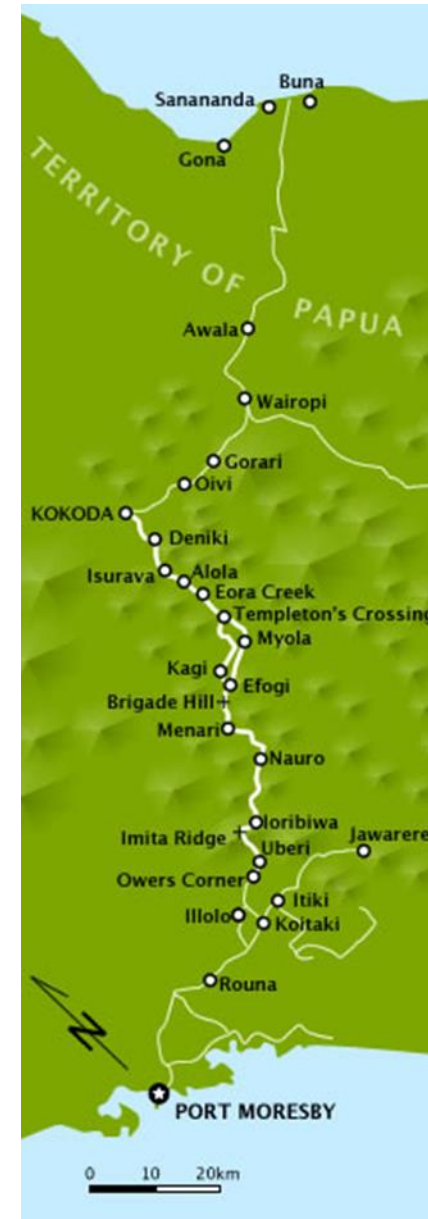
Kokoda

- When he opened his offensive on 26 August, Horii's objective had been Port Moresby.
- The deterioration of the situation at Milne Bay, and the difficulty of getting troops ashore at Guadalcanal in the face of Allied naval and air forces operating in the Solomons area, caused General Hyakutake on 29 August to instruct Horii to halt as soon as he had reached the southern foothills of the Owen Stanley Range.
- The advance was not to be resumed until such time as Milne Bay had been taken and the Guadalcanal operation was progressing satisfactorily. Imperial General Headquarters concurred in these orders and two days later (31 August) directed that General Horii go on the defensive as soon as he had crossed the Owen Stanley Range.



Kokoda

- On receipt of these instructions, Horii had pressed through the Gap, looking for a defensible position on the other side of the range which he could hold until he was ordered to resume the advance. His first choice had been Nauro, but after sending out a reconnaissance party forward he chose Ioribaiwa as the place to make his stand.
- The day after its seizure the troops holding it were told that they were to wait there until the middle of the following month, when it was expected that the final push against Port Moresby would be undertaken.
- On **20 September** General Horii called together his commanders at a hill near his headquarters at Nauro and told them how things stood. He praised them for the way in which they and their men had succeeded in crossing "the so-called impregnable Stanley Range," and explained that the reason for the halt was to regain their fighting strength, so as to be able, at the proper time, "to strike a crushing blow at the enemy's positions at Port Moresby."



Imperial Headquarters

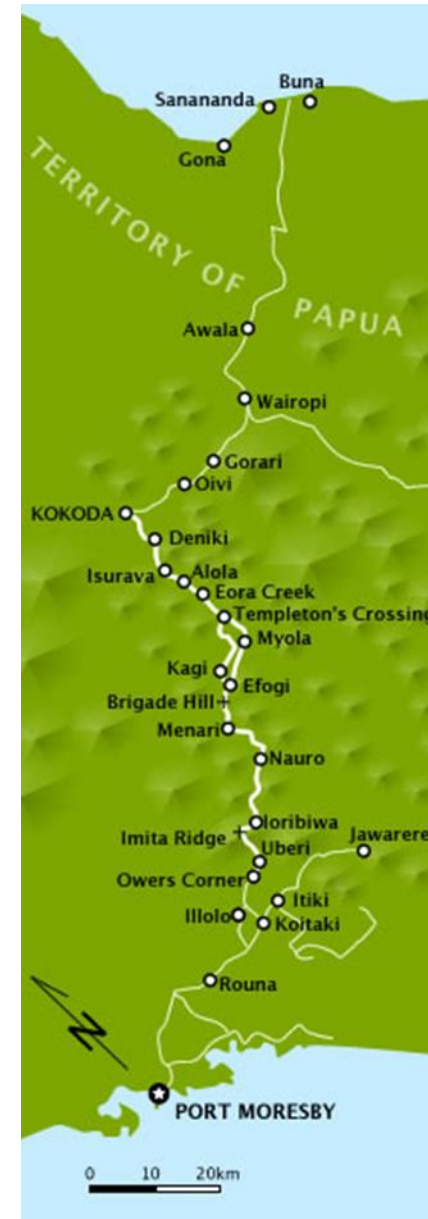
- Following the destruction of the Kawaguchi Detachment on the night of 13-14 September, in the Battle of Edson's Ridge. Imperial General Headquarters felt impelled once again to revise its operational plan for Port Moresby.
- On 18 September new orders were issued which emphasized that everything was to be subordinated to the retaking of Guadalcanal.
- Existing positions in New Guinea were to be held as long as possible, but the South Seas Detachment was to be absolved of the responsibility of maintaining itself indefinitely in the southern foothills of the Owen Stanley Range.
- Instead, it was to begin preparations at once for the defense of the Buna-Gona beachhead, which it was to hold as its primary defensive position until again ordered to advance.



General Sugiyama, army chief of staff, seen here inspecting Japanese landing sites in Shanghai, 1938

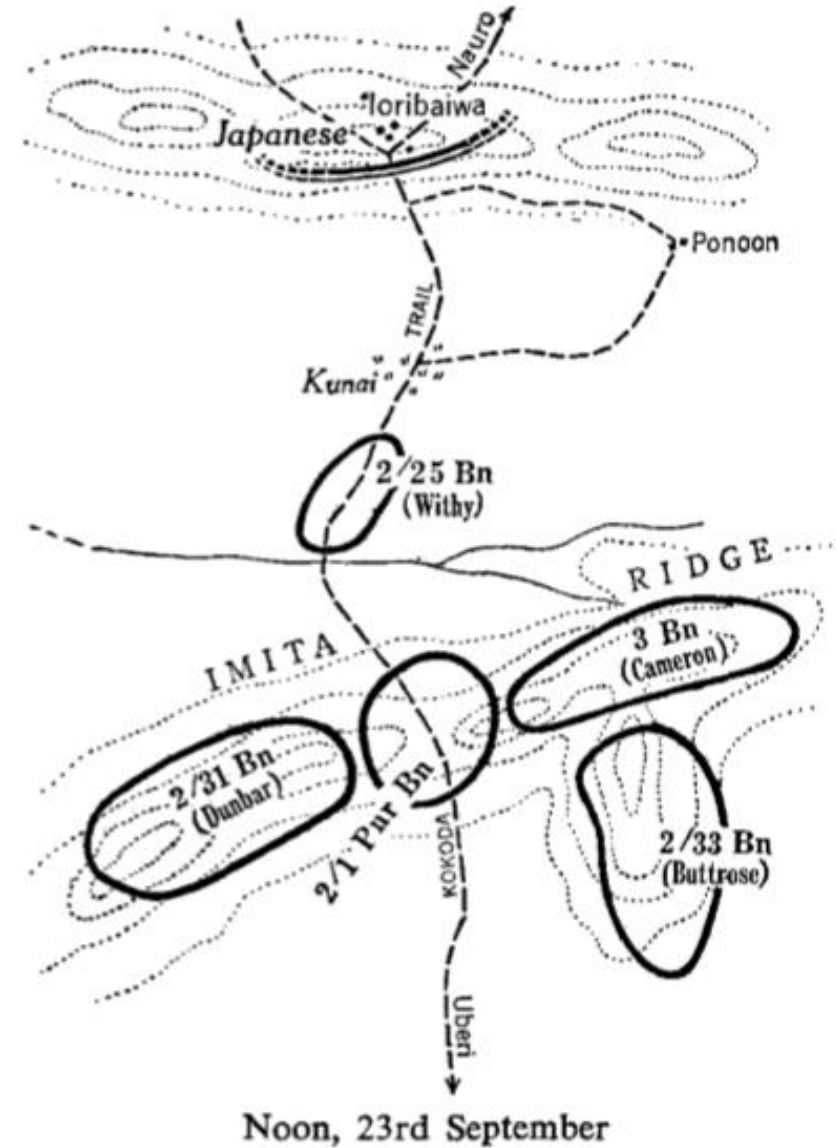
Kokoda

- To implement this plan Horii allotted the rearguard role to Colonel Kusunose's 144th Regiment, which prepared to hold at Ioribaiwa with two battalions and some supporting troops while the rest of the force fell back.
- The main body of the 41st Regiment (less elements which were given a role along the track) were to fall right back to the coast to make firm there the positions to which the rest of the troops could retire.
- In accordance with this plan Colonel Yazawa moved swiftly and was already back at Giruwa when the Australians struck their main blow at Ioribaiwa on 28th September. By that time also the units of the 144th Regiment had left their rearguard positions at Ioribaiwa and were intent on keeping as far ahead of the advancing Australians as possible.

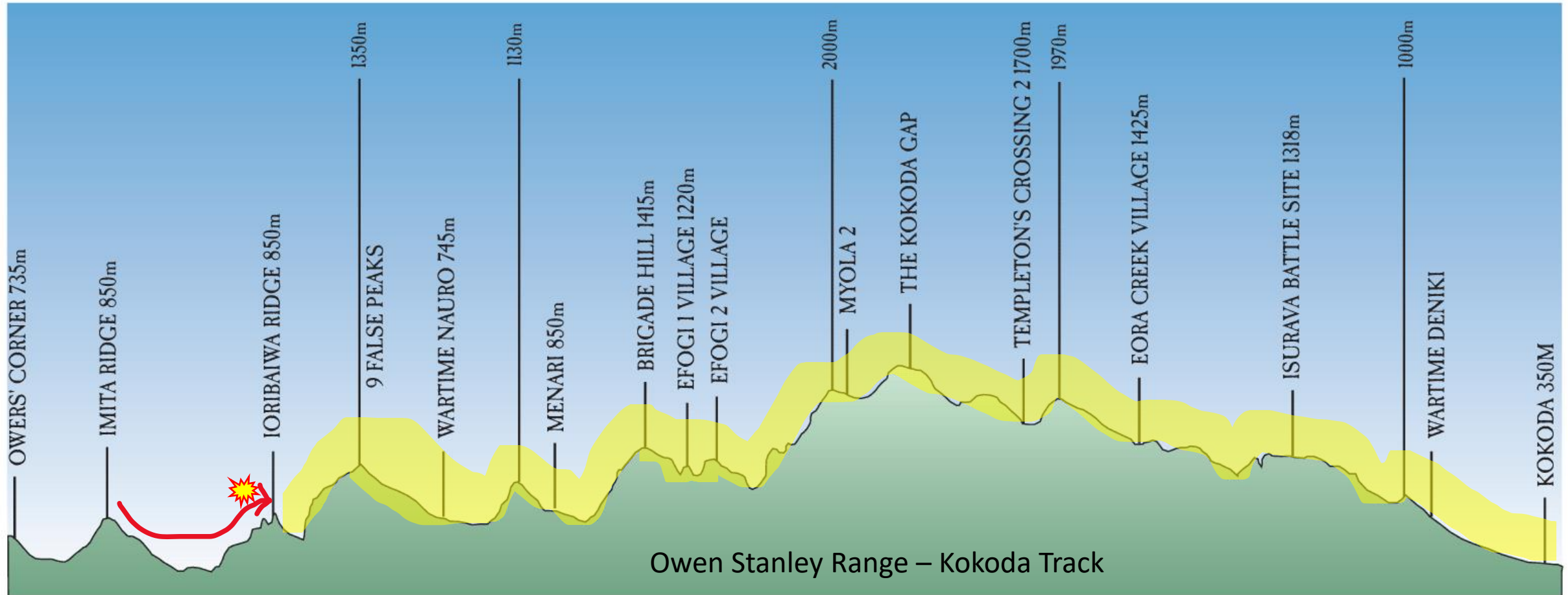


28 Sept – New Guinea

- By nightfall on the 27th, with the Japanese positions under artillery bombardment, Buttrose and Dunbar were closing in on Ioribaiwa from the flanks while
- Withy's men, who had pressed slowly forward, had penetrated barriers and defence works which blocked the track and were in fleeting touch.
- Eather proposed to launch his men at the Ioribaiwa positions next day.
- On the 28th the attack went forward as planned but there was no opposition. The Japanese had abandoned their positions and much equipment. By the end of the day the three battalions were in occupation of the Ioribaiwa area.



28 September – Kokoda



29 September - Kokoda

- **Land**

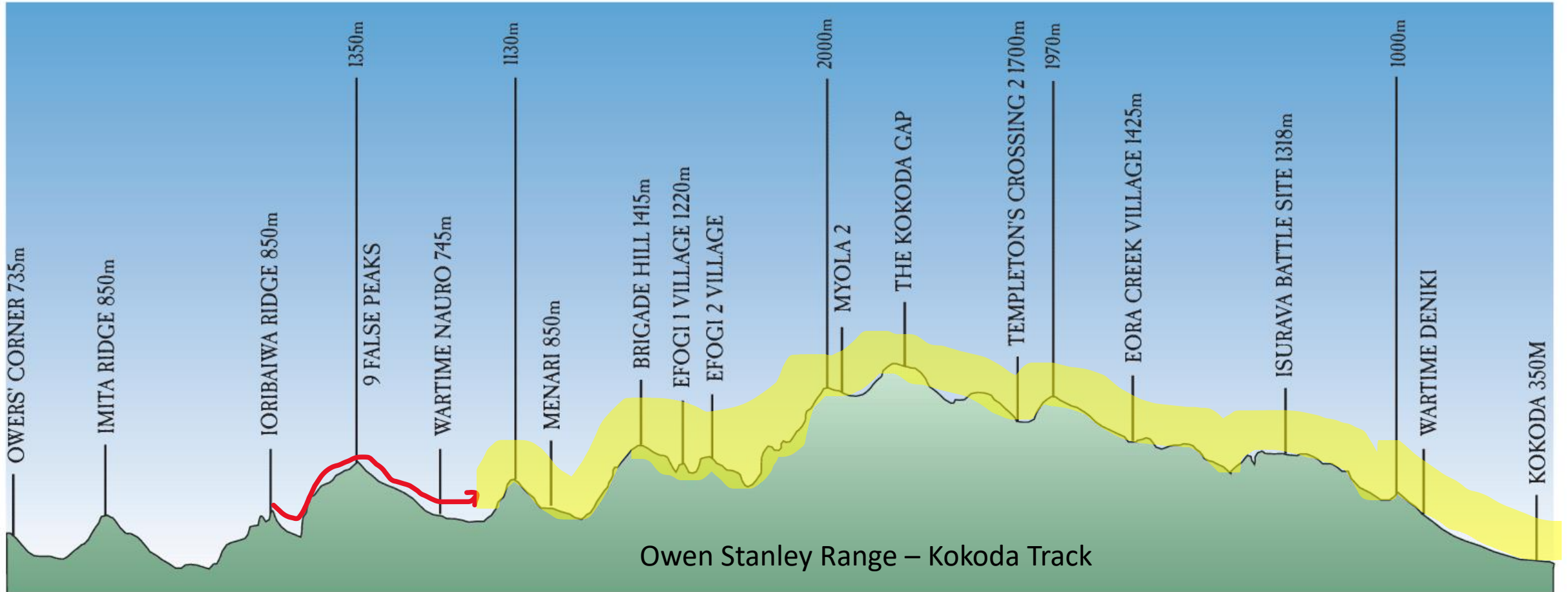
- At Ioribaiwa the 3rd Battalion joined them on the 29th.
- By that time offensive patrols were already pushing forward towards Nauro where one of them, under Captain Andrew of the 2/25th, arrived on the 30th to find that it too had been abandoned.

- **Air**

- 2 B-17's bomb barges and AA positions at Buna 18.15/29 destroying 6 barges and one AA position.
- 1 B17 bombs A/F at Salamaua 11.48/29. Results not observed.
- A single A-20 bombs enemy camps Menari area 0805/29. Results not observed.



1 October – Kokoda



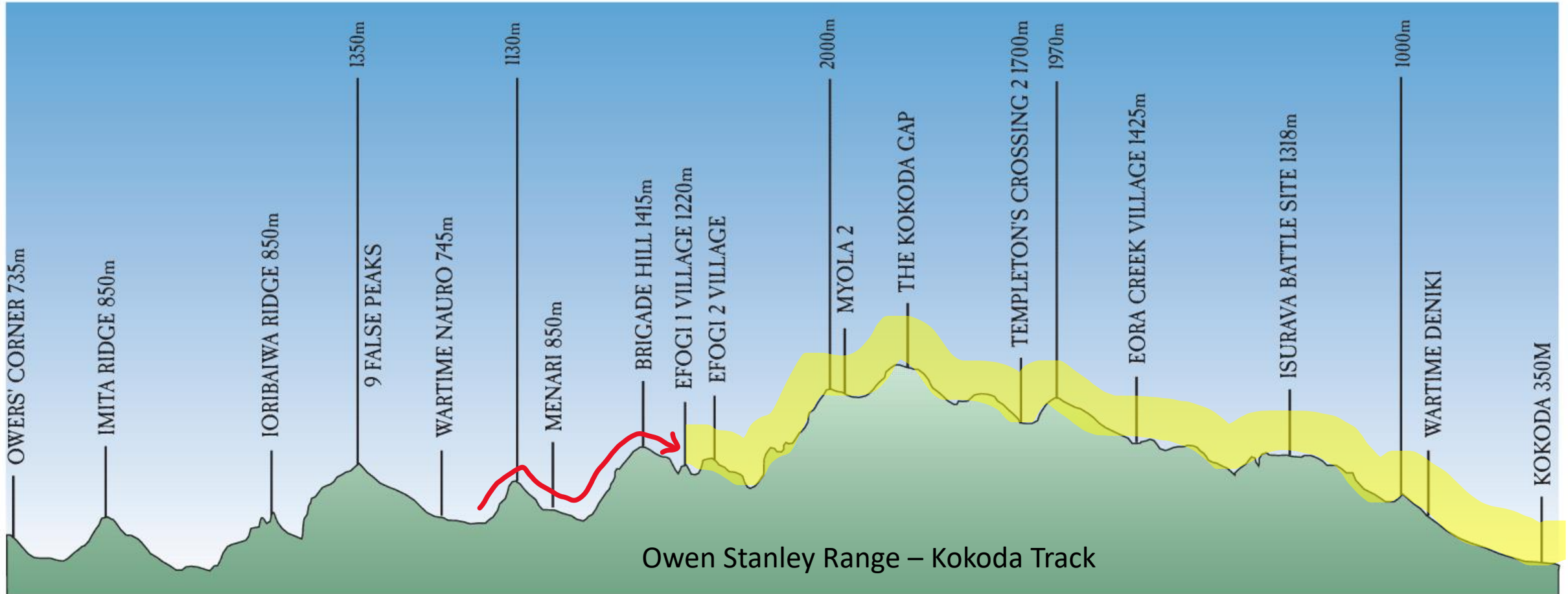
Patrols had already found Nauro unoccupied and had gone on toward Menari. The 3rd Battalion led the advance.

2 October – New Guinea

- The 3rd Battalion found evidence of hasty Japanese withdrawal:
- bodies and equipment lay along the track.
- By the early afternoon of the 2nd the leading company was at Menari and was continuing towards Efogi without opposition.
- Colonel Cameron reported that the area between Loribaiwa and Nauro seemed to have been occupied by some 2,000 men;
- that his troops had buried twelve Japanese on whom there were no signs of wounds;
- that there was evidence that the invaders had been reduced to eating wood, grass, roots and fruits which were known to be inedible, and that dysentery was rife among them.
- He found the bodies of two Australians, one bound to a tree, one decapitated.
- Behind the 3rd Battalion the 2/25th moved out from Loribaiwa on the 2nd October. The other two battalions were to follow on.



4 October – Kokoda



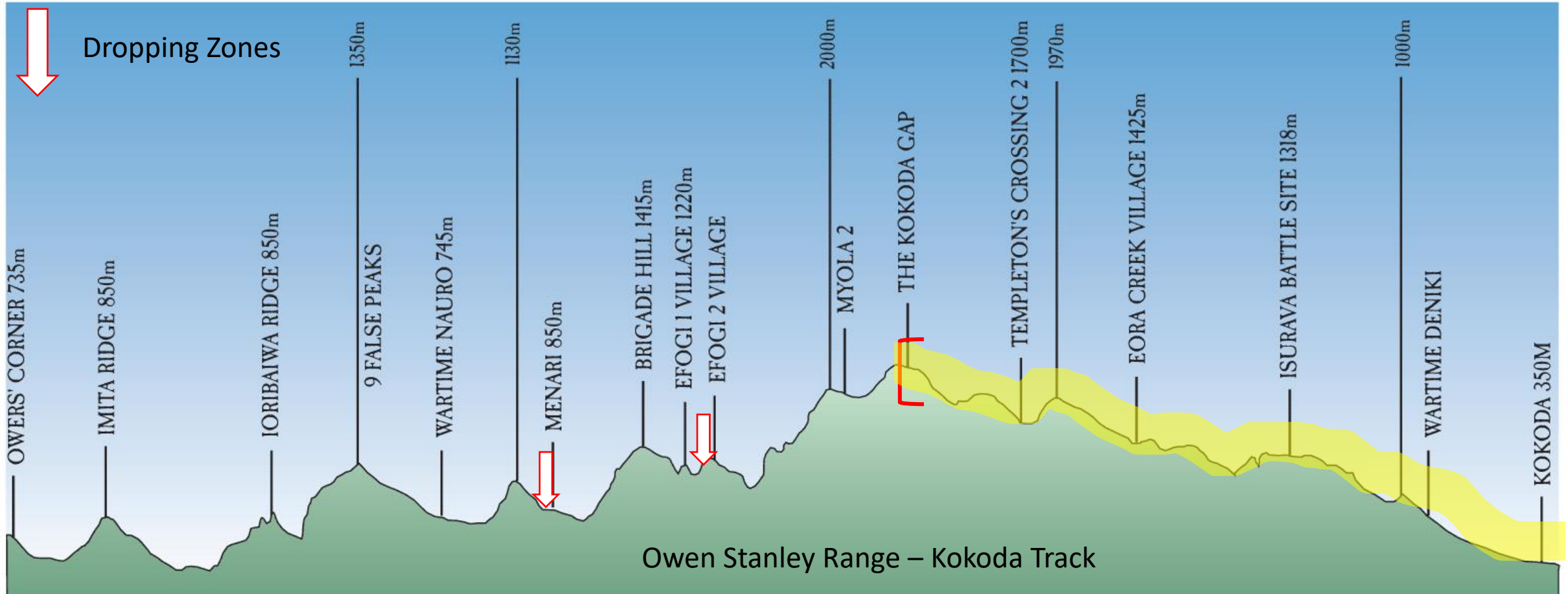
On the afternoon of the 4th October Boag reached Efofi and reported it clear.

7 October - Kokoda

- The men of the 2/33rd Battalion, moving behind Marson and Cameron, were clearing distressing evidence of the fighting which had taken place between Menari and Efogi nearly a month before.
- On the 7th (October) they buried there the bodies of some 55 Australians as well as many Japanese dead;
- next day they buried 20 more.

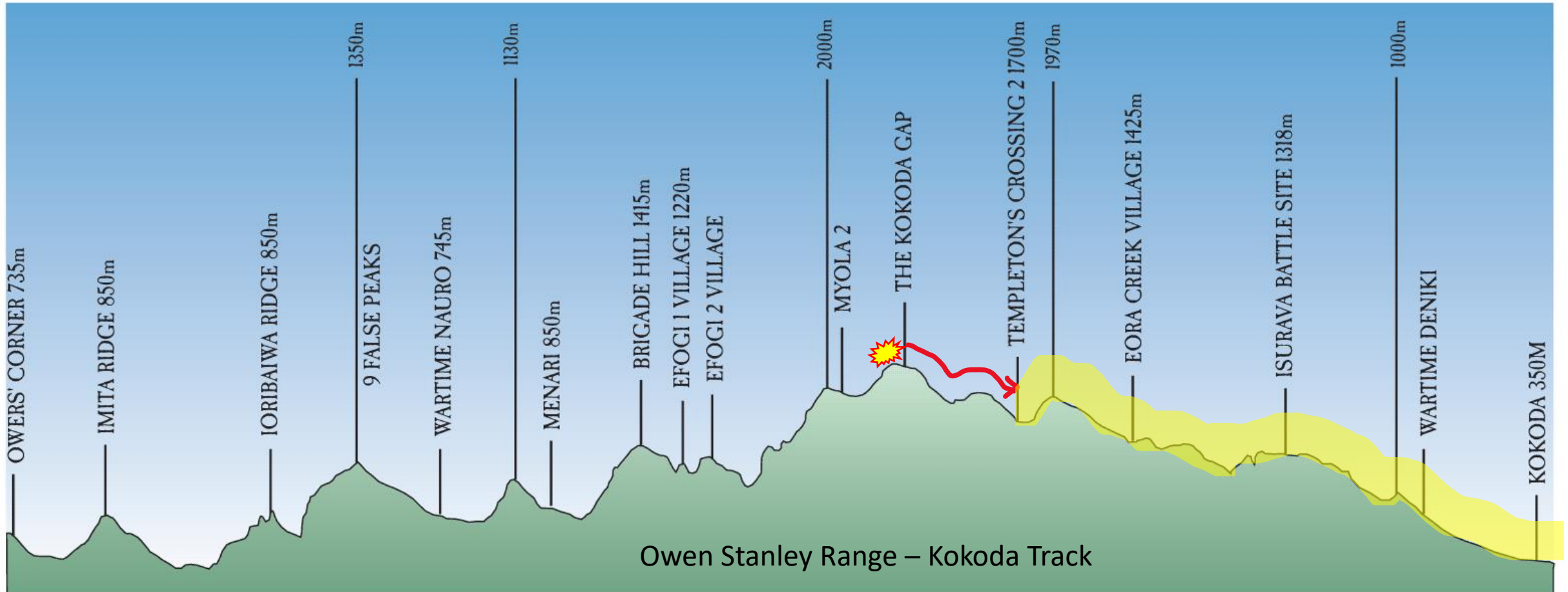


8 October – Kokoda



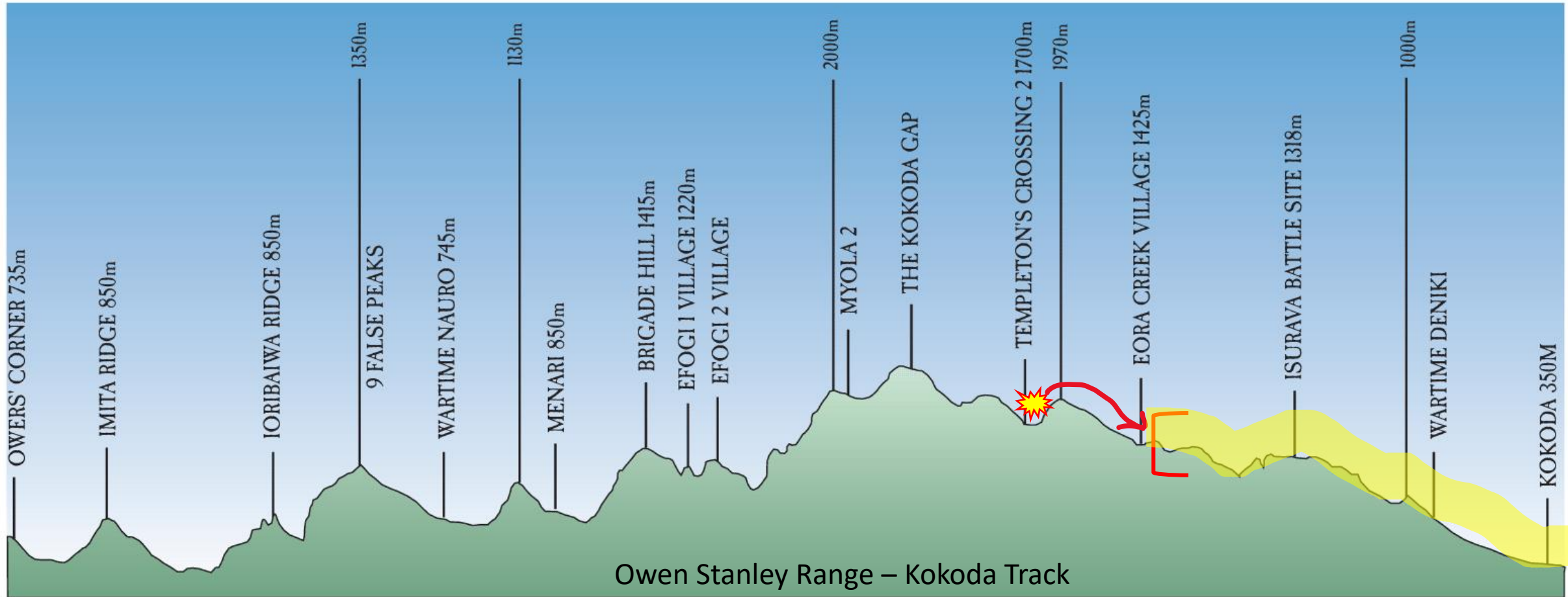
On the 8th it seemed that the Australians had overtaken the Japanese rearguard between Myola and Templeton's Crossing. Menari was in use as a dropping ground and one of Cameron's companies had already prepared an area at EfoGI for the same purpose.

12 - 16 October – Kokoda



After three days of attacks in Platoon and Company strength, on the main track on the 15th the 3rd Battalion swung round the left of the 2/33rd as planned, but only the hot ashes of recent fires remained in the Japanese positions. On moving into attack in the morning of 16th Marson also found that the opposition had melted away.

20 – 22 October – Kokoda



On the 20th 16 Brigade took up the attack. As we dug in for the night (after a day attacking) a desolate scene was presented: our own and enemy dead lying in grotesque positions, bullet-scarred trees with the peeled bark showing ghostlike, our own lads digging silently. And with the coming of darkness came the rain, persistent and cold, and in this atmosphere we settled in our weapon pits for the night. At night we could hear the Jap chattering and moving about.

Guadalcanal

- Between 1 and 17 October, the Japanese delivered 15,000 troops to Guadalcanal, giving 20,000 total troops to employ for the planned offensive.
- Hyakutake decided that the main thrust of his planned attack would be from south of Henderson Field. His 2nd Division (augmented by troops from the 38th Division), under Maruyama and comprising 7,000 soldiers in three infantry regiments of three battalions each was ordered to march through the jungle and attack the American defenses from the south near the east bank of the Lunga River.
- The date of the attack was set for 22 October, then changed to 23 October.
- To distract the Americans from the planned attack from the south, Hyakutake's heavy artillery plus five battalions of infantry (about 2,900 men) under Major General Tadashi Sumiyoshi were to attack the American defenses from the west along the coastal corridor.



Maj Gen Maruyama, sent his 2d (Sendai) Division into their costly October attacks.

Guadalcanal

- On 12 October, a company of Japanese engineers began to break a trail, called the "Maruyama Road", from the Matanikau towards the southern portion of the U.S. Lunga perimeter. The 15-mile-long trail traversed some of the most difficult terrain on Guadalcanal, including numerous rivers and streams, deep, muddy ravines, steep ridges, and dense jungle.
- Between 16 and 18 October, the 2nd Division began their march along the Maruyama Road.
- By 23 October, Maruyama's forces still struggled through the jungle to reach the American lines. That evening, after learning that his forces had yet to reach their attack positions, Hyakutake postponed the attack to 19:00 on 24 October.
- Sumiyoshi was informed of the postponement to 24 October, but was unable to contact his troops to inform them of the delay. Thus, at dusk on 23 October, two battalions of the 4th Infantry Regiment and the nine tanks of the 1st Independent Tank Company launched attacks on the U.S. Marine defenses at the mouth of the Matanikau. U.S. Marine artillery, cannon, and small arms fire repulsed the attacks, destroying all the tanks and killing many of the Japanese soldiers while suffering only light casualties.
- Finally, late on 24 October Maruyama's forces reached the U.S. Lunga perimeter.

Guadalcanal

- The disruptive effects of the exhaustion, induced by the long jungle approach march, and then the rain and darkness now enveloped the second division's assault in dense confusion.
- In theory the Sendai Division's two wings both composed of three rifle battalions were hewing trails side-by-side towards the American line. Behind them came another 3 rifle battalions of the division reserve.
- In reality near chaos totally obscured this scheme. The evidence strongly suggests that Shoji's right wing strayed out onto a north easterly course tangential to the American perimeter.
- Whether Shoji ever contacted the perimeter remains unclear. Although the right wing made no impression on the American perimeter, about 2200 the second division headquarters received a report that the right wing had overrun the defence lines and was moving into the grass clearing east of the airfield.

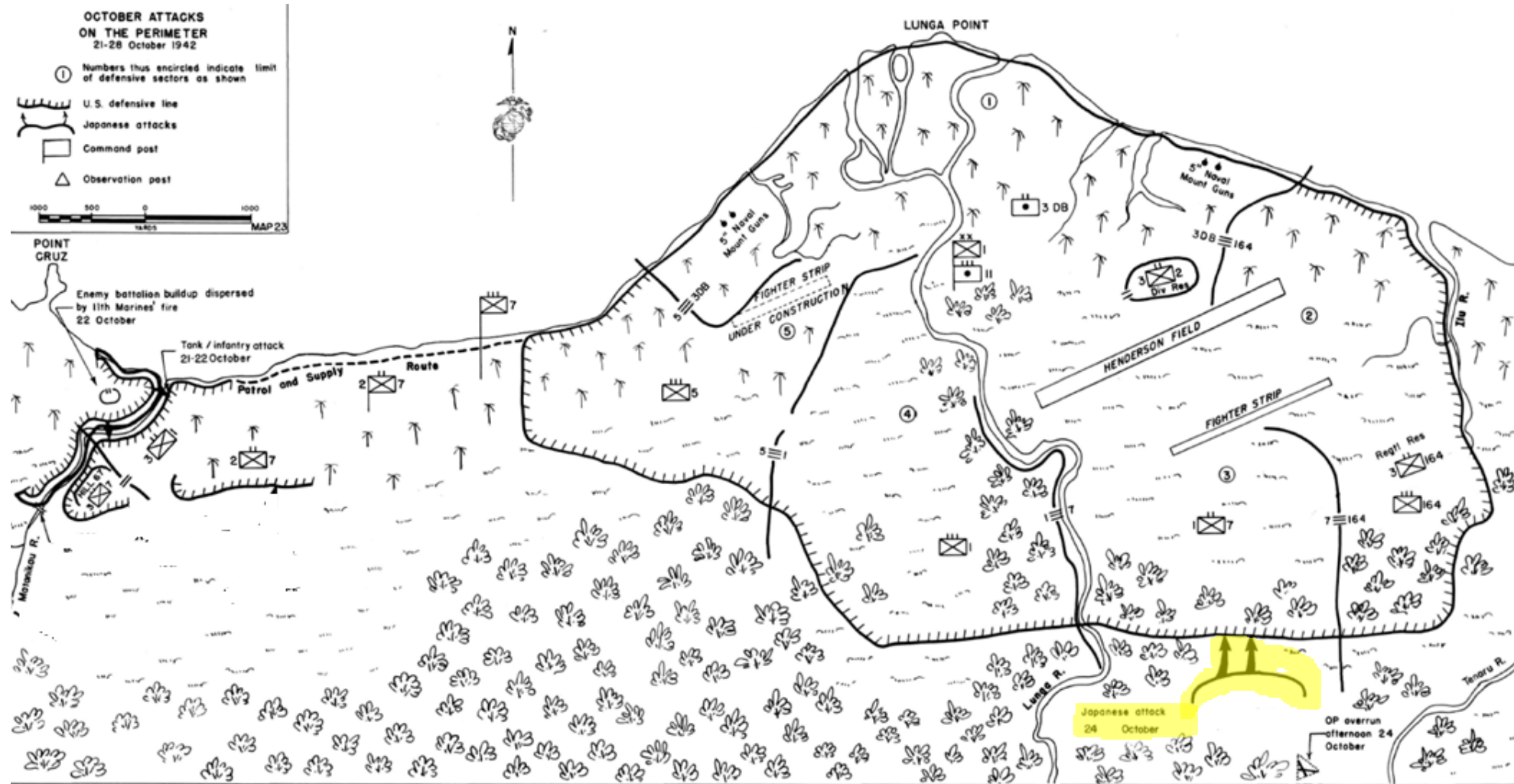


Members of the 2nd Infantry division at Guadalcanal

Guadalcanal

- the damp and anxious staff of the 17th army became ecstatic when Colonel Matsumoto, operations officer of the second division, called to inform them that the airfield was in Japanese hands. Matsumoto's report may well have been the product of a literally fevered misinterpretation of news reaching him, for he had a bad case of malaria but at 0050 October 25 17th army signalled "2300 Banzai- a little before 2300 the Right Wing captured the airfield"
- During the night of 25/26 the casualty list of the left wing multiplied but the Sendai Division again fought like a boxer with only his left fist, for the right wing again missed the action for reasons that remain hard to understand.
- By 08:00 on 26 October, Hyakutake called off any further attacks and ordered his forces to retreat. Leading elements of Maruyama's 2nd Division reached the 17th Army headquarters area at Kokumbona, west of the Matanikau on 4 November.
- Devastated by battle deaths, combat injuries, malnutrition, and tropical diseases, the 2nd Division was incapable of further offensive action.
- In total, the Japanese lost 2,200–3,000 troops in the battle while the Americans lost around 80 killed.

25 October - Guadalcanal



27 October -Guadalcanal

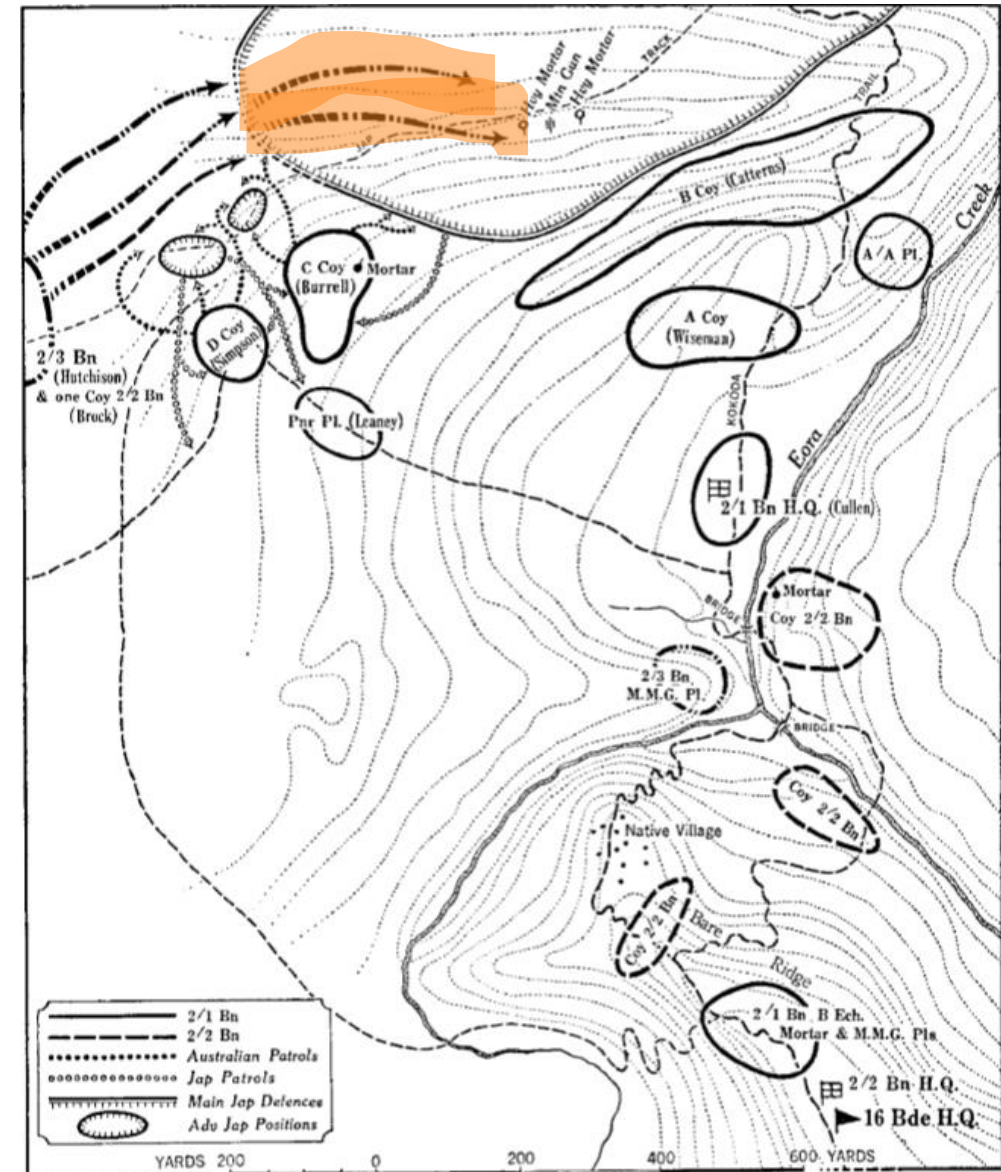
- In his diary Lt. Minegishi wrote:
- October 27 - I never dreamed of retreating over the same mountainous trail through the jungle we crossed with such enthusiasm ... we haven't eaten for three days and even walking is difficult. On the uphill my body swayed around unable to walk. I can't imagine how the soldiers carrying the artillery are doing. I must take a rest every two metres. It is quite disheartening to have only one tiny teaspoon of salt per day and a palm full of rice porridge.

28 October - Guadalcanal

- American patrols continued mopping up inside and outside the perimeter on the 28th.
- American losses in the October battles were probably around 300 dead and wounded, including those hit by shelling and bombing.
- The 164th infantry buried 975 Japanese on its front, we don't have a count from the 1/7 marines burials but the 2/7th Marines counted 98 dead on their ridge and there must have been twice as many down in the gully below. The 1st Marine Division estimated 2,200 Japanese killed in action.
- Col Furimiya, commanding the Japanese 29th Infantry Regiment, evidently penetrated into the perimeter during the night of 25/6 and remained at large in the perimeter with a small group for several days. His diary was recovered when his body was found.
- Before the final entry, recording his decision to end his own life, he had noted
 - “The Imperial Staff must reconsider the matter of firepower”.

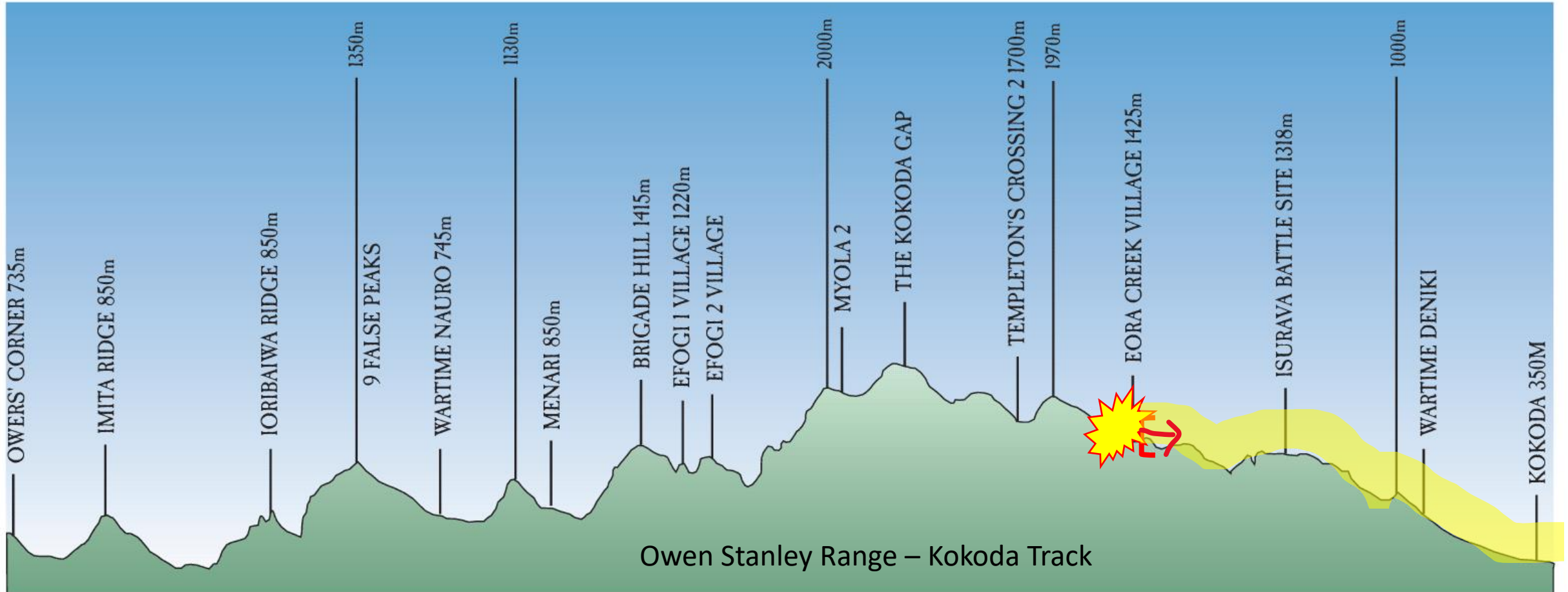
28 October - Kokoda

- The Japanese made a determined stand at Eora Creek.
- On the 28th after six days bitter fighting in an appalling landscape and hideous conditions the 2/3rd managed to get above the Japanese positions and sailed into them firing from the hip.
- The forward scouts were knocked out, but the men went on steadily, advancing from tree to tree until we were right through their outlying posts and into the central position.
- Suddenly the Japanese began to run out. They dropped their weapons and stumbled through the thick bush down the slope.
- In a minute or two the survivors had disappeared into the bush.

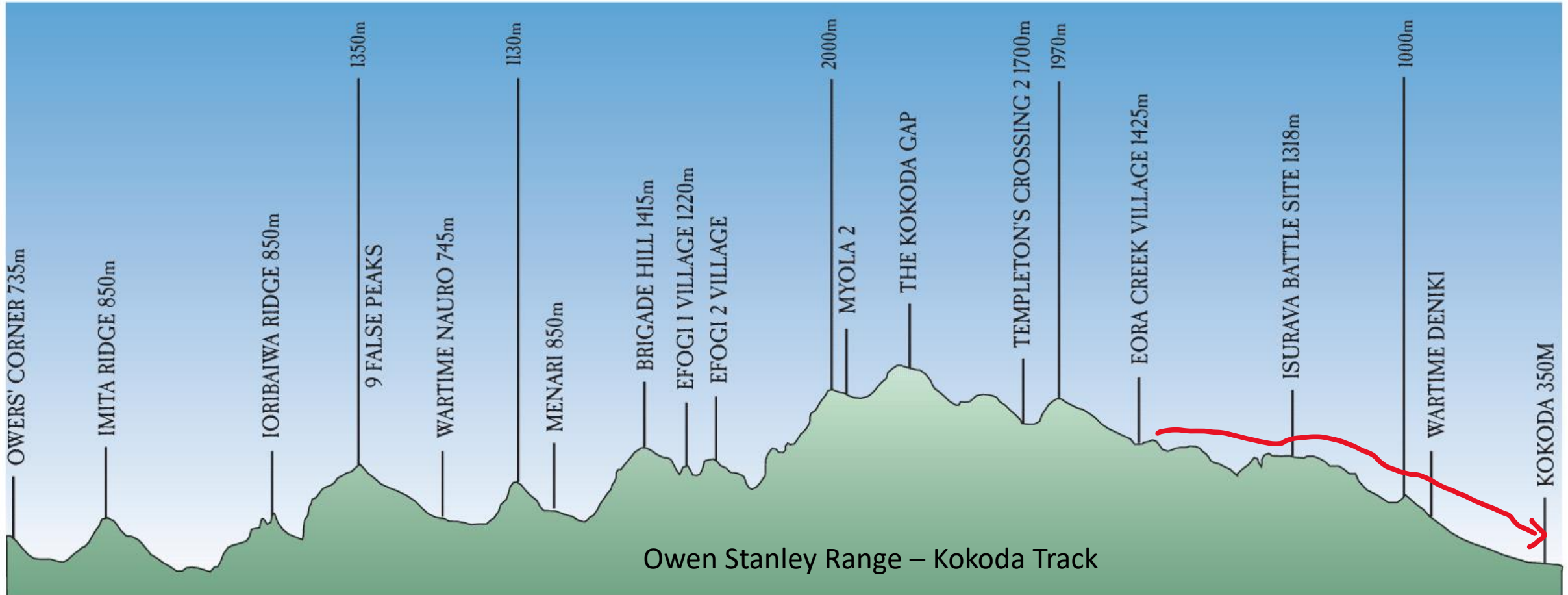


Eora Creek, 27th-28th October

24 - 28 October – Kokoda



28 October – 2 November – Kokoda



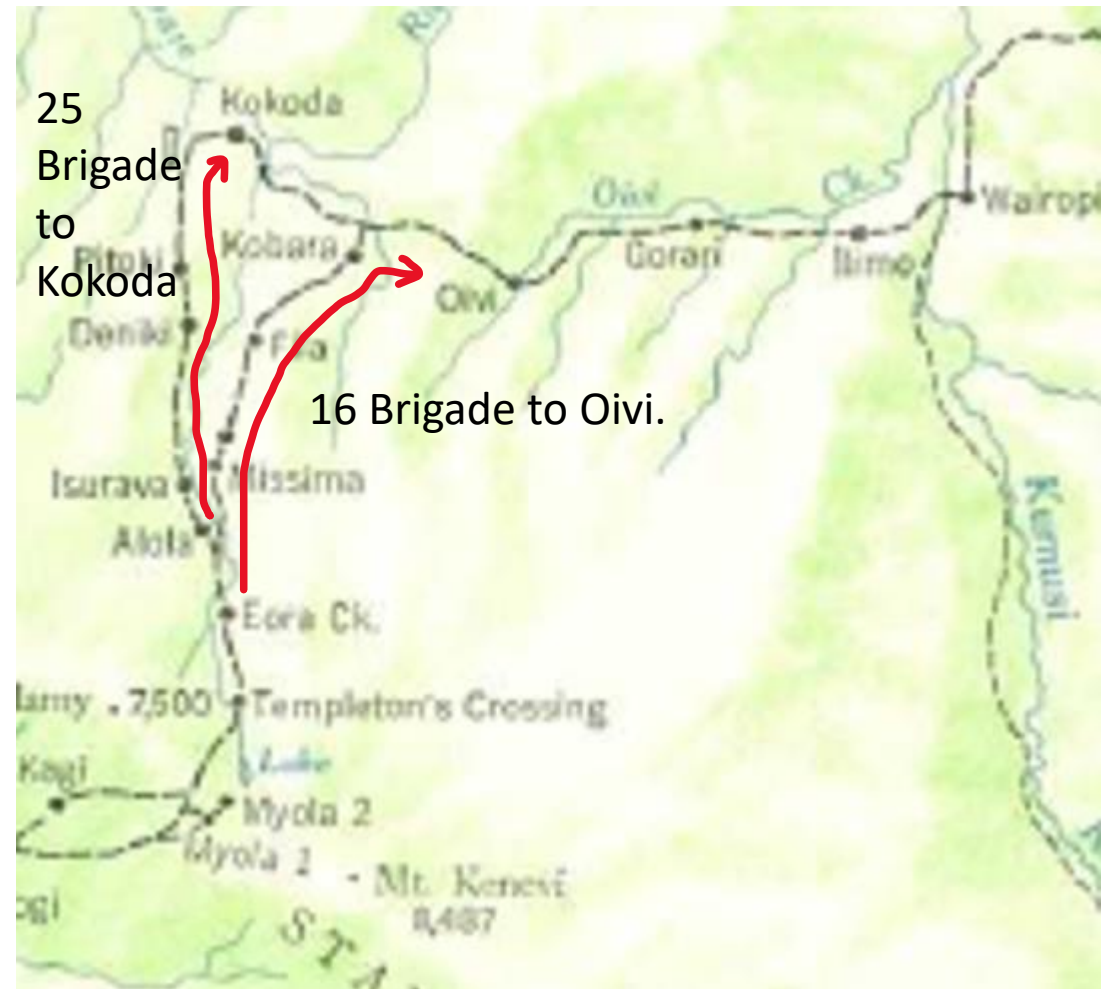
Buna/Gona

- Two ships ran in at the **beginning of November** with fresh troops and supplies and another convoy landed a formidable group in the middle of the month consisting mainly of the III Battalion, 229th Regiment, and about 300 reinforcements for the 144th Regiment.
- These newcomers were added to the Cape Endaiadere-Giropa Point sector.



2 November – New Guinea

- In the morning of 2 November a patrol of the 2/31st under Lieutenant Black, entered Kokoda and found that the Japanese had been gone two days.
- Engineer reconnaissance suggested that aircraft would be able to land after two days work on the strip and dropping could go on from dawn of the 3rd.
- Vasey signalled Lloyd: I wish to see you moving towards Oivi in full strength at earliest. I feel your HQ and 2/1 Bn too far back.



10 November - Kokoda

- Eather claimed 150 Japanese for the day's killing but the cost was beginning to worry him.
- From 8th November to 6 p.m. on the 10th,
- the 2/25th Battalion had lost 16 men killed, 31 wounded;
- the 2/31st had lost 17 men killed (with 4 others probably killed and 1 missing) and 44 wounded ;
- the 2/33rd had lost 5 men killed and 27 wounded ;
- the 2/1st had lost 6 men killed and 21 wounded.



(Australian War Memorial)

The Kokoda-Wairopi track, near Oivi.

- The final beachhead phase of operations in Papua was one in which for two and a half months Allied troops suffered heavy casualties while being hastily pressed forward in hideous conditions in repeated attacks on, carefully designed, extensively fortified and well manned enemy positions with little more in the way of weapons than their rifles, machine guns, mortars, and hand grenades.
- Intelligence had failed to predict or detect the existence or recent reinforcement of these fortified bases.
- Command failed to notice the change in the nature of operations from a pursuit to a siege.
- Allied troops got to the start line at best after exhausting approach marches and many after long battles with high casualties in hideous conditions.
- The start lines and approaches were both in swamps.
- Command pressed for immediate attacks, showed no curiosity about conditions and ignored requests for effective weapons with which to attack fortifications.
- Out of their total strength in the combat zone of 10,825, the three combat teams of the US 32d Division suffered 9,688 casualties, including 7,125 sick, a casualty rate of almost 90 percent. Battle casualties included 707 dead, 62 missing, 1,680 WiA, 211 shellshock and 287 battlefield injuries.
- The Australians suffered similar or worse casualties.

Imperial Headquarters

- At Imperial Headquarters in Tokyo the last **five days of October** witnessed the first true strategic consensus on Guadalcanal. Only now did the army section fully accept the view, held for some time by the Navy section, that the fighting in the Solomons was developing into the decisive battle between Japan and the United States.
- Imperial Headquarters prepared confidently for another offensive for two reasons:
- First, Staffs in Tokyo believed the destruction of four American carriers and a battleship at the battle of the Santa Cruz islands had tilted the balance of naval power decisively in Japan's favour,
- Second, these same officers perceived that the October attack had teetered on the very edge of success. This conviction stemmed in part from Japanese reports but much more important, Tokyo eagerly consumed American news accounts acknowledging that penetrations of the defensive lines had been restored only by counterattack, exaggerating the number of Japanese troops on Guadalcanal and emphasising the fatigued state of the American forces on Guadalcanal, particularly the pilots.

Imperial Headquarters

- In **mid October** Imperial headquarters pledged to the government to transfer 220,000 tonnes of shipping back to duty supporting Japan's war economy upon completion of the Solomons operations.
- After the failed October attack Imperial headquarters registered bids for more merchantmen and the loss of nearly 70,000 tonnes of high quality vessels in the abortive November convoy aggravated the situation.
- To meet the logistical requirements in the mid November central agreement Imperial general headquarters requested an extra 620,000 tonnes of shipping over and above that already under its control.
- In response to this petition on **November the 20th** the cabinet meeting sanctioned the transfer of another 290,000 tonnes to the army and Navy.
- On **November the 21st** at a liaison meeting with Imperial headquarters Prime Minister Tojo lectured that Japan's minimum steel production requirements for 1943 were 3.5 million tonnes.
- The diversion of the 290,000 tonnes of cargo capacity authorised the day before would reduce that output to 3 million tonnes.
- If the government surrendered the full amount requested by Imperial headquarters Japanese steel production for 1943 would fall to a disastrous 2 million tonnes.

Imperial Headquarters

- Despite Tojo's warning, on December the 5th the Army section clamoured for more shipping, precipitating a crisis.
- In the face of demand for a further 165 thousand tonnes of shipping for the first quarter of 1943 the government buckled to the extent of parting with another 85,000 tonnes, but Tojo insisted that this was the absolute limit.
- The following night, General Shinichi Tanaka (photo), chief of the operations division, confronted Tojo in a heated face to face argument in which Tanaka importuned for reconsideration of the decision on shipping.
- For this insubordinate and ill mannered conduct Tanaka paid with his job, but he purchased his objective.
- On December the 10th the 8th area army was notified that the government had consented to release of an additional 115,000 tonnes of shipping by December the 20th, over and above that already pledged, as well as a further amount to be determined in January and thereafter.



Imperial Headquarters

- On **December the 17th** Colonel Sanada, a newly appointed assistant to General Ayabe, the replacement for the recently dismissed Tanaka, was ordered to discuss future plans with the 8th area army at Rabaul.
- Sanada reached Rabaul on **December the 19th**. There he learned that recent local wargaming disclosed that allied aircraft would destroy the reinforcement convoys before completion of any of the necessary logistics preparations.
- During his return trip Sanada formulated a report. It's gist was that the current plans to restart an attack on Guadalcanal offered no prospect of success. Correspondingly almost no confidence existed in this venture among local Army and Navy leaders.
- He advocated giving priority to New Guinea. It was essential to avoid further attrition of aircraft and ships of the Imperial Navy. He urged an immediate withdrawal from Guadalcanal.
- Sanada reached Tokyo on **December the 25th** and immediately unveiled his report. Somewhat to his surprise the proposal to withdraw elicited no objections, Sugiyama looked rather relieved. The following day Sanada made the same presentation to the Navy section. Here he preached to the converted, for his audience had restudied the proposed operations during Sanada's travels and concluded they offered zero chance of success.

Imperial Headquarters

- On **December the 26th** Imperial General Headquarters agreed on withdrawal.
- Between **December 27th and 29th** staff officers drafted the new plan. The Imperial Army extracted from the reluctant Imperial Navy a pledge to utilise the maximum feasible number of warships for the evacuation, including destroyers rather than just barges and small craft.
- The Imperial Army envisaged abandoning everything below the Northern Solomons but the Imperial Navy insisted on protecting the mid Solomons to keep the allies, particularly their aircraft, at a distance from Rabaul.
- The ultimate agreement on this point was what often passed as a compromise at Imperial Headquarters, each service promised to do as it wished. The Navy accepted responsibility for defence of the new Georgia Santa Isabel area and the Imperial Army would hold the Northern Solomons.
- At an audience with the emperor on **December the 28th** Gen Sugiyama and Admiral Nagano divulged the intent of Imperial Headquarters to order a withdrawal from Guadalcanal and proposed to return on **January the 4th** to present the finished plans.



The Emperor as head of the Imperial General Headquarters

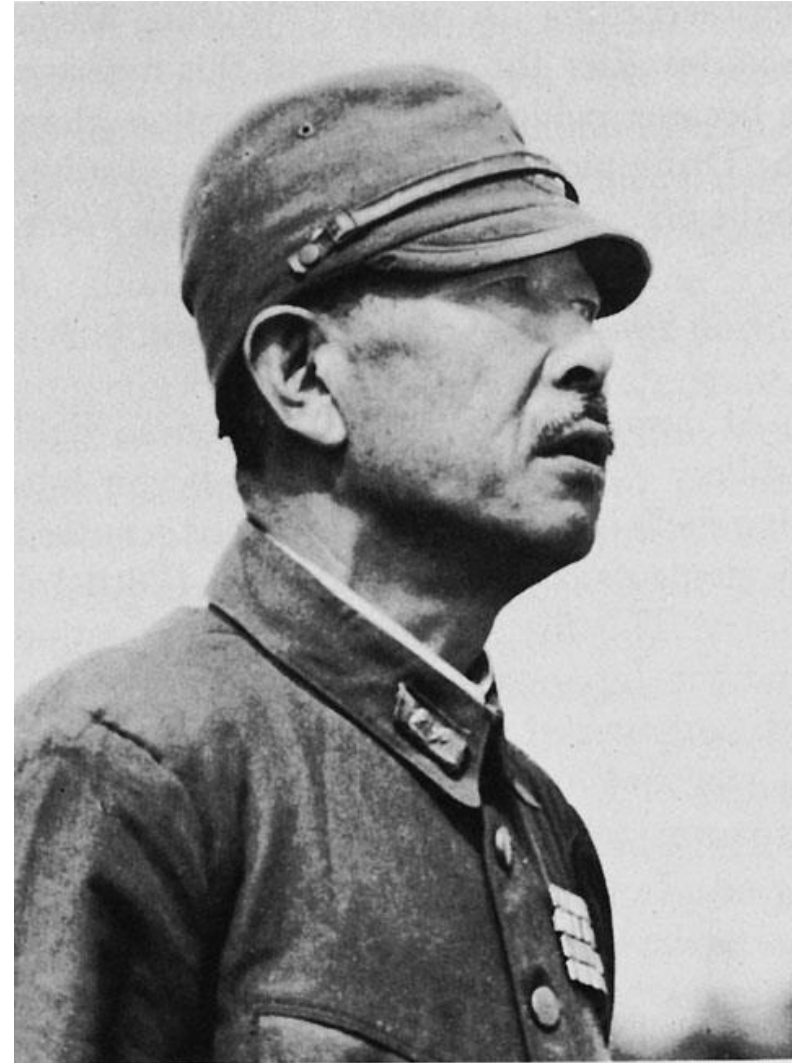
Imperial Headquarters

- Imperial General Headquarters decided on 4 January that, because of a critical lack of shipping and the virtual impossibility of supplying either Guadalcanal or Buna effectively, all thoughts of recapturing the one or holding the other would have to be abandoned.
- It gave orders that the forces on Guadalcanal would evacuate the island gradually by night and take up defensive positions in the northern Solomons.
- The troops at Sanananda and Giruwa, in turn, would be evacuated to Lae and Salamaua after fresh troops from Rabaul reinforced the latter two points.



Buna/Gona

- The orders of 4 January were immediately transmitted to the 8th Area Army at Rabaul. Its commander, General Imamura, left the timing and the manner of withdrawal at Buna to General Adachi, commander of the 18th Army.
- A 51st Division unit, the 102d Infantry, Reinforced, was already on board ship waiting to move to Lae, and General Adachi (photo) ordered it forward at once.
- The ships left Rabaul the next day and, despite determined attempts by the air force to stop them, reached Lae safely on the 7th.



Buna/Gona

- Five days went by without orders from General Adachi. On 12 January, the day that the broken remnants of the troops began evacuating the track junction, General Oda, from his headquarters at Sanananda Village, sent the chief of staff of the 18th Army an urgent message.
- “Most of the men are stricken with dysentery. Those not . . . in bed with illness are without food and too weak for hand-to-hand fighting. . . . Starvation is taking many lives, and it is weakening our already extended lines. We are doomed.
- In several days, we are bound to meet the same fate that overtook Basabua and Buna. . . . Our duty will have been accomplished if we fight and lay down our lives here on the field. However, this would mean that our foothold in New Guinea would be lost and the sacrifices of our fellow soldiers during the past six months will have been in vain . . . urge that reinforcements be landed near Gona at once.”



Buna/Gona

- The next day (13 January) General Adachi finally gave General Yamagata permission to begin evacuating Sanananda and Giruwa.
- According to a plan drawn by Adachi himself, the troops would withdraw to the mouths of the Kumusi and Mambare Rivers, and from there they would either march or be taken by sea to Lae and Salamaua.
- As many of the troops as possible would be evacuated in motor launches, but the rest would have to make their way westward to the Japanese-held area on the other side of Gona by slipping through the Allied lines.
- Evacuation by launch of the sick and wounded would begin at once and would continue nightly until all were evacuated.
- Because of the favorable moon, the attempt to reach the area west of Gona overland would begin on 25 January and be completed by the 29th.
- How Sanananda and Giruwa were to be held until the 25th in the desperate circumstances outlined by Oda on the 12th was not made clear.

Buna/Gona

- By the 18th General Yamagata, with the Sanananda front collapsing about his ears, had seen enough to convince him that his troops could not wait until the 25th to abandon their positions and try to make their way through the Allied lines as General Adachi had ordered.
- He therefore drew up orders at noon on the 18th which advanced the withdrawal five days: from 25th to 20th January. After slipping through the Allied lines, his troops were to assemble near Bakumbari, a point about seven miles north of Gona, where boats would be waiting to take them to safety.

Reasons for Japanese Success in Malaya.

- The Japanese commanders seized the initiative and retained it by an energetic offensive.
- Command of the air and sea helped.
- Their equipment was appropriate to the environment and their planning got equipment such as the collapsible boats forward when required.
- Chapman reports that their forces were adept at living and equipping themselves off the country and also evidences energy and diligence.
- Success at night attacks like the landings on Hong Kong and Singapore Islands could not have been possible without a significant level of unconstrained initiative in the lower ranks.
- But it seems to me that a significant factor in their success was that both Japanese commanders and Japanese troops were prepared to accept a higher level of casualties before stopping their attacks than the allied forces were prepared to accept before withdrawing.

In New Guinea and the Solomons

- Admiral King took the initiative and the Japanese never managed to recover it.
- Command of the air and sea was disputed and ultimately taken by the Allies.
- The Japanese skill at living off and equipping themselves from rice growing Asian economies did not work in the Solomons and New Guinea where there was no rice, no bicycles and no roads to ride on.
- Absent command of the sea and air and absent the initiative, Japanese logistics capacity was very limited.
- Preparedness to accept casualties makes your attack more powerful but if the attack nevertheless fails it makes defeat much more expensive.
- It was proved that fire power matters.
- Japanese military and air commanders seem to have been very strategically aggressive but the navy failed to make full use of its strength at a number of points in the battle.

- Where did we get to?
- 13 March 1943.
- We will go on from there next week.
- Thanks for your attention.