

Australia's War in the Pacific 1943



18 April - Air

- Vitiaz Strait - A twin-engined single seater fighter intercepted a reconnaissance Liberator over Rooke Island at 1200/18 and was shot down in flames.
- Munda - 4 Liberators attacked Munda night 18/4 scoring hits — on runway and blast pens and causing a large explosion.

18 April - Air

- On 18 April thirteen Hudsons of No. 2 Squadron and nine Mitchells of No. 18 attacked the Penfui airfield on Timor.
- On 15th April 38 aircraft had been seen on Timor airfields.
- The Hudsons, which had shorter range than the Mitchells, had to stage through Drysdale, the advanced base in Western Australia.
- It was a night attack and it was hoped that the airfield would stand out clearly in the moonlight.
- The Mitchells attacked just after midnight from 3,500 feet. They were met by heavy anti-aircraft fire over the target but none was hit.
- The first Hudson left Drysdale at 12.30 a.m. but half an hour out his engines failed and then recovered again. There was continued engine trouble so the pilot decided to return to Drysdale where he found water in his fuel tanks. This fuel had been taken on at Drysdale. He took off later, but, because of cloud, could not find the target and finally jettisoned his bombs.
- The other twelve Hudsons reached Penfui and bombed in the face of heavy anti-aircraft fire.
- To protect the Hudsons while they refuelled at Drysdale three Beaufighters of No. 31 Squadron were sent to the base but no enemy attack developed.
- The bombing of Penfui appeared to be successful and all aircraft returned to base without damage.



19 April - Sea

- A cargo ship, Banshu Maru No. 5, was torpedoed and sunk in the Pacific Ocean by USS Seawolf.
- Cape Orford - At 0645/19 an enemy submarine was sighted proceeding on a northerly course past Cape Orford. Since 15/4, five sightings of submarines have been made in this area, two proceeding south and three north. This most recent sighting is probably further evidence of an almost daily submarine supply run, probably to Lae.



19 April - Sea

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



USS Canberra, a Baltimore class heavy cruiser with 9 eight inch guns, was later converted to guided missiles being the second ship in the USN so equipped.

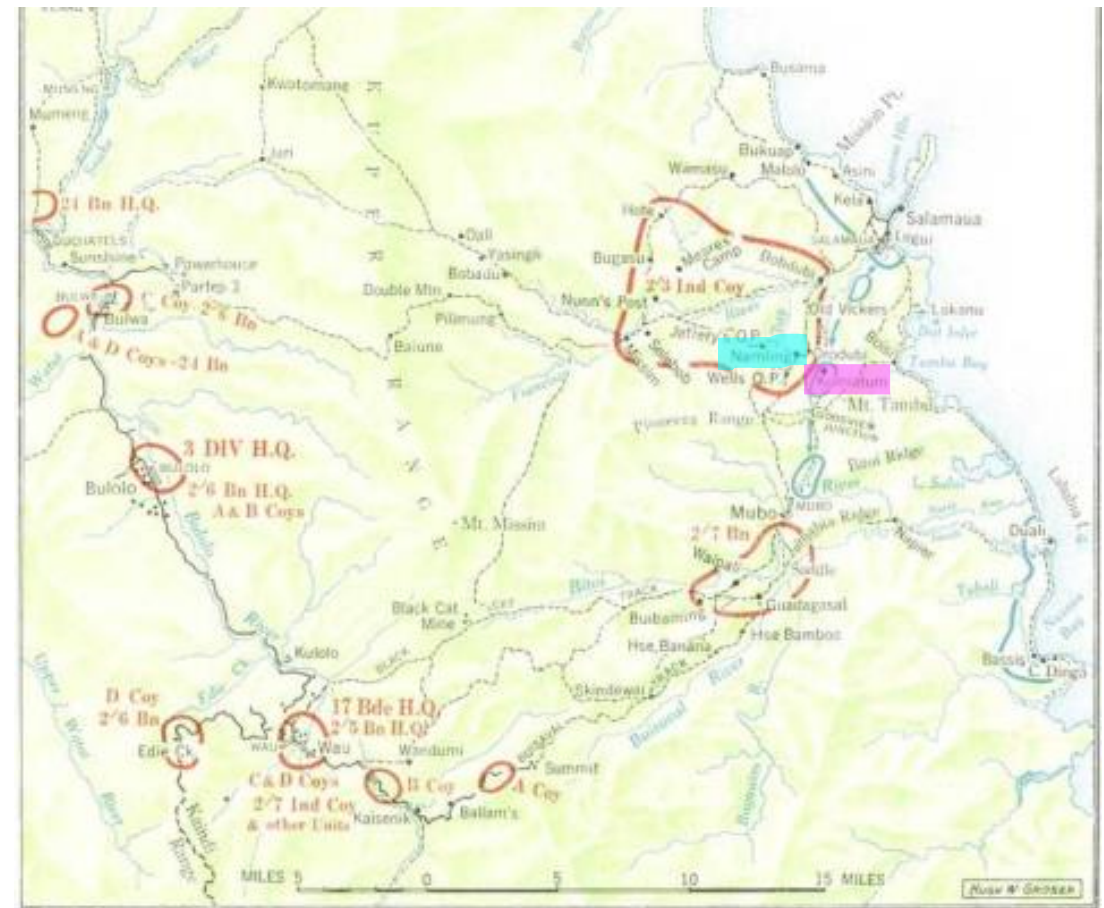
19 April - Sea

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



19 April - Wau

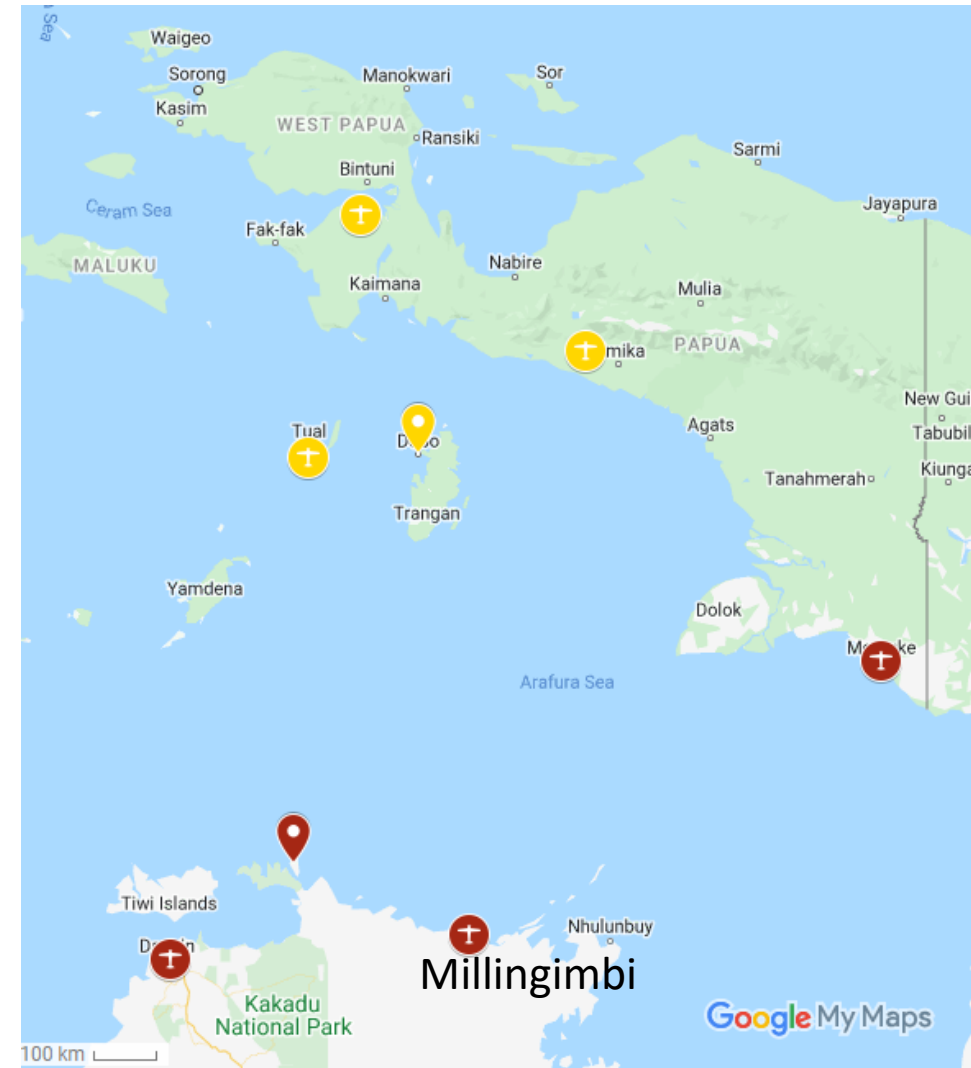
- Warfe's 2/3rd Independent Company planned to reconnoitre the Komiatum area in preparation for a platoon raid on what was thought to be the village.
- The plan miscarried on the 14th when they got the wrong village and on 17th when the raiders reported that they had not been able to cut their way through the bush to Komiatum.
- Warfe then ordered Lieutenant Stephens' section to ration at Base 3 and proceed thence via Namling against Komiatum.
- Stephens had moved his men to the track near Komiatum on the night 19th-20th and then lay in ambush. But no Japanese walked into the trap.



Australian and Japanese dispositions Wau-Salamaua-Lae area, 30th April 1943

19 April - Air

- On 19th April two Hudsons of No. 2 Squadron failed to return from a mission to bomb Timuka in Dutch New Guinea and although wreckage of the two aircraft was found the cause of their loss could not be explained.
- The Hudsons were to stage through the base at Millingimbi before leaving the Australian coast, and they took off within four minutes of each other early in the morning.
- Soon afterwards several loud explosions were heard and it was considered probable that the aircraft, which were to fly in formation, had collided in the air.



19 April - Air

- During the fighter sweep over Kahili area by Lightnings at about 0930/18 3 enemy bombers and 3 Zero's were shot down. One of our fighters was lost.
- **COIC report 19/4**
- Shortlands. - 10 Avengers attacked Kahili aerodrome 2030/19.
- At 2330/19, 7 Avengers attacked shipping scoring a direct hit on a cargo vessel N.W. of Pupukuna Point and several near misses on another cargo vessel near Ovau Island.
- Kieta - 7 Fortresses attacked Kieta 2030/19.



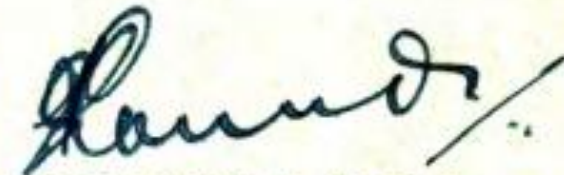
20 April COIC

ENEMY'S PROBABLE NEXT MOVE

- (1) Strong consolidation advanced positions S.W.P.A. particularly Central and Northern Solomons - North coast New Guinea - S.W. Coast Dutch New Guinea - Timor/Arafura Sea Islands.
- (2) Heavy air offensive against Southern Solomons and possibly against New Guinea.
- (3) Increased offensive submarine activity.

This item removed from the report on 20 April.

For


DIRECTOR C.O.I.C.
G.H.Q., S.W.P.A.

19/4/43

20 April - Government

- Evatt commenced negotiations during April, asking for 474 aeroplanes to equip the additional squadrons. One of the arguments he met was that, because of manpower difficulties, Australia would not be able to man the additional squadrons.
- On 20 April Curtin (photo) instructed Evatt that there was no question of the ability of the RAAF to man 73 squadrons and that the rate of development depended only on due notice of when aircraft would be available.
- He also volunteered the assurance that they would be assigned unreservedly for employment under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, South-West Pacific Area.



20 April - Government

- The more serious difficulty was that in pressing for 73 squadrons Australia was virtually trying to obtain a revision of the decisions so recently taken by the conference of United States Commanders in the Pacific — decisions which had already considerably increased the air strength of the South-West Pacific Area.
- While increasing the American force, they had consciously limited the R.A.A.F. to 45 squadrons.
- To the British and American Chiefs it appeared that the Australian claim was an indirect way of increasing the total allocation of aircraft to the South-West Pacific Area.
- The British in fact offered the suggestion that the R.A.A.F. might be increased at the cost of a corresponding reduction of the United States Air Forces in the area. Evatt (photo left) rejected the suggestion out of hand.



20 April - Sea

- The Japanese auxiliary gunboat, Meiji Maru No. 1, was torpedoed and sunk in the Pacific Ocean off Honshu, Japan (37°10'N 141°25'E) by USS Scorpion with the loss of 9 crewmen.
- Wewak - Two B.17s attacked a 5,000 ton vessel described as an oiler or cargo vessel between 0225-0234/20. Several hits were scored. One small unidentified vessel was also reported to have been hit.

20 April - Air

- Munda - At 0740/20 8 Avengers and 12 Dauntless attacked Munda knocking out gun positions and starting a fire.
- Bougainville Island - 5 Liberators attacked the Numa Numa area 1840-1900/20

20 April - Wau

- Mackay (Acting GOC New Guinea Force during Herring's absence on leave) on 20th April directed General Savige to keep the enemy away from the airfields at Wau, Bulolo, Bulwa and Zenag; to prevent them from entering the Wau-Bulolo-Partep 2 area from the east, north and west; and to deny them a secure base for developing operations south of the Markham River particularly in the Wampit and Watut River Valleys.
- He also made Savige responsible for developing the Wau-Bulolo area into "an active operational zone for mobile defence in such a manner as to facilitate offensive operations".
- Mackay finally warned Savige that "Salamaua is a strongly defended area and no attempt is to be made at present to capture it by siege tactics".



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

001389/11

Brigadier S G Savige (I), Lieutenant General Sir Thomas Blamey and Major General I Mackay (R) on board the troopship carrying the 6th Division to the Middle East.

20 April – New Guinea

- Mackay's Intelligence staff estimated that enemy strengths in New Guinea included between 9,000 and 11,000 men at Wewak, between 6,000 and 8,000 at Madang, about 5,500 in the Lae-Salamaua area, with smaller detachments at Vanimo, Aitape, Bogia, Saidor and Finschhafen.
- Mackay thought that the Japanese were determined to strengthen their grip on the north-east coast of New Guinea by using the divisions stationed in the Wewak, Madang and Lae-Salamaua areas, and by preparing airfields for bombers at Wewak and for fighters at Madang and Saidor.
- He believed that they would now try to build up the Lae-Salamaua area by developing the old coastal route from Wewak to Lae with barge staging points between the main areas, and that, when their communications and airfields improved, they would attack in the area south of the Markham or against the Australians' forward positions in the Mubo and Missim areas.



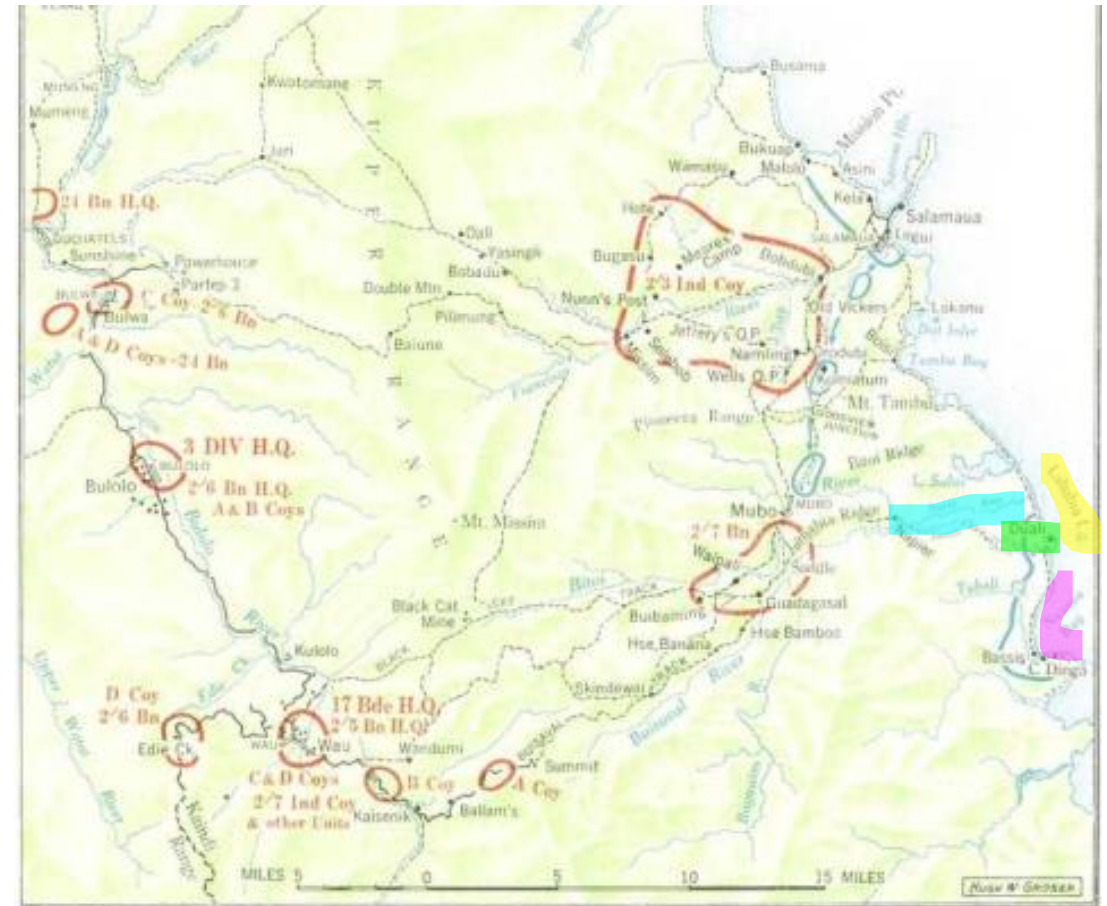
21 April - Sea

- The Tambor-class submarine, USS Grenadier sighted two merchantmen in the Strait of Malacca off Penang, Malaya and closed in for the attack. Running on the surface at dawn 21 April, Grenadier spotted, and was simultaneously spotted by, a Japanese plane. The submarine dived, and as it passed 130 feet (40 m) her executive officer commented, "We ought to be safe now." Just then, explosions rocked Grenadier and heeled her over 15 to 20 degrees. Power and lights failed completely and the ship settled to the bottom at 270 feet (82 m).
- She tried to make repairs, while a fierce fire blazed in the maneuvering room.
- After 13 hours of sweating it out on the bottom Grenadier, managed to surface after dark to clear the boat of smoke and inspect damage. The damage to her propulsion system was irreparable.
- As dawn broke on 22 April, Grenadier's weary crew sighted two Japanese ships heading for them. The skipper "didn't think it advisable to make a stationary dive in 280 feet of water without power," and the crew began burning confidential documents prior to abandoning ship.
- She was scuttled by her crew at 6°30'N 97°40'E. All 76 crew were taken as prisoners of war.



21 April - Wau

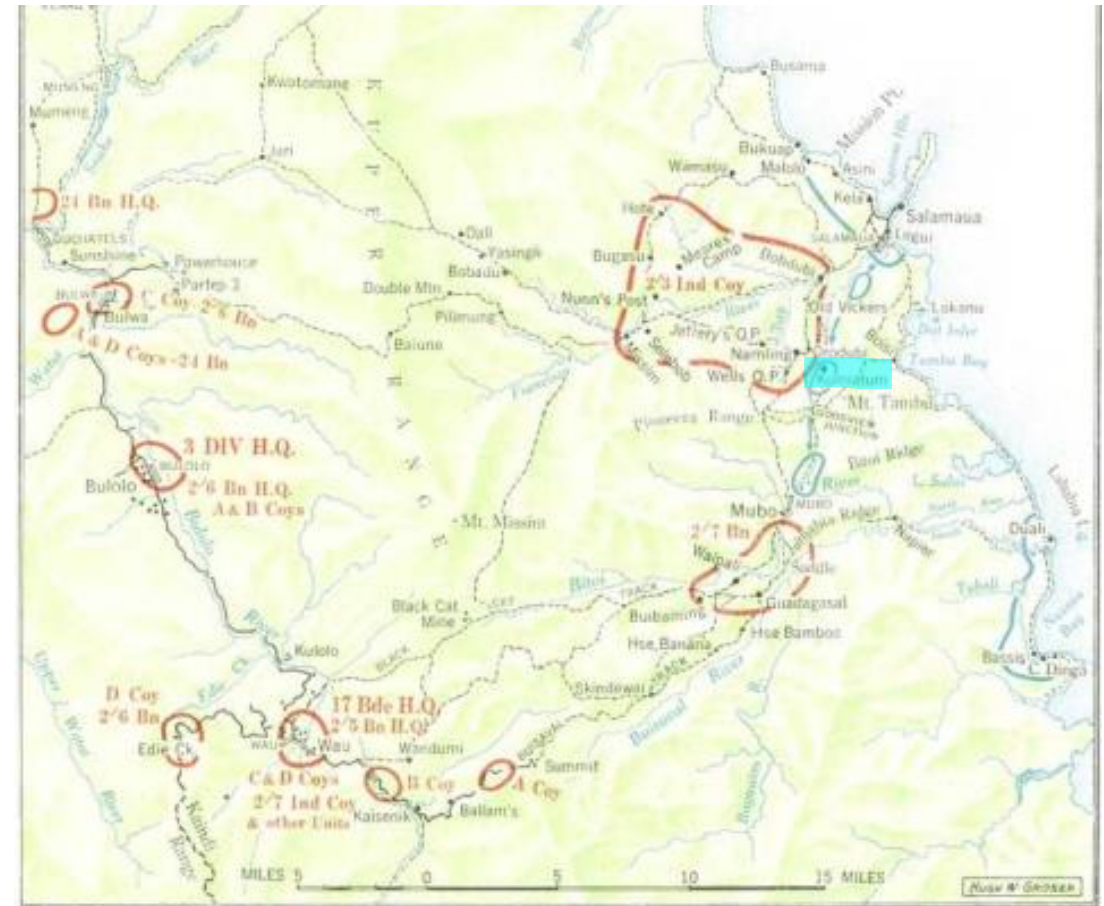
- Guinn, C.O. of the 2/7th, planned a raid on the villages from the mouth of the Bitoi River south to Nassau Bay. There, on Lababia Island and at the village of Duali, just north of the Bitoi mouth, long range patrols and native talk had indicated the presence of Japanese. Bradley's company of the 2/5th had been left with Guinn to carry it out.
- At 6 p.m. on the 20th, they began their approach march to the coast from the junction of the Bitoi and Buyawim Rivers (due east of Mubo and about 7 miles from the sea). They ran into Japanese opposition about half a mile from the coast, fell into confusion and withdrew to the north-east slopes of the Lababia feature where they took up a defensive position for the night 21st-22nd.
- Guinn then sent Major Nelson out to take command and the company was ordered not to return until they had completed their coastal task but it turned out that there was no significant Japanese presence in the area.



Australian and Japanese dispositions Wau-Salamaua-Lae area, 30th April 1943.

21 April - Wau

- On the night of the 21st-22nd Stephens' men again lay hidden in the still, dark bush. Five or six Japanese passed through but they let these go, hoping for a bigger bag.
- Shortly before 9 p.m. a line of some 60 Japanese approached. The commandos held their fire until the leading enemy soldier was only about 4 feet from the muzzle of the Bren.
- Then all their weapons blazed. Many Japanese fell. Later native reports suggested that 20 were killed and about 15 wounded. The Australians suffered no casualties.
- Stephens then led his men back to Base 3.
- Also on the 21st the leading elements of the 24th Battalion arrived at Bulolo and prepared to relieve the forward troops at Wampit. As more 24th Battalion men came in they would relieve the balance of the 2/5th Independent Company and allow these tired men to return to Australia for a rest after almost a year of continuous service in the forward areas.



Australian and Japanese dispositions Wau-Salamaua-Lae area, 30th April 1943

21 April - Air

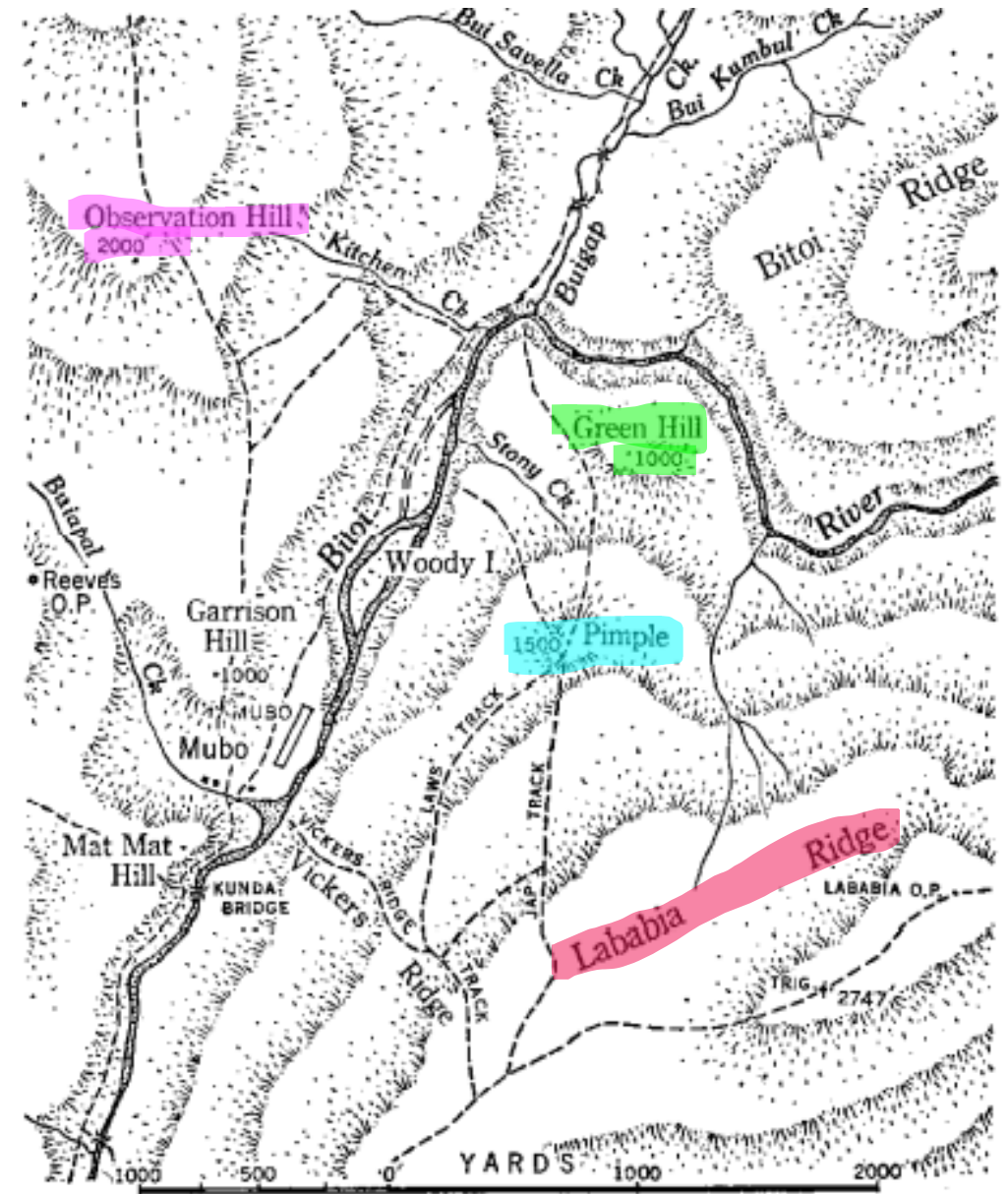
- Shortlands - 2 Avengers attacked one cargo vessel 2115/21. The report states that it was believed that hits were obtained but interception by two enemy night fighters made observation impossible.
- Shortlands - 8 Fortresses 4 Liberators 7 Avengers attacked Poporang Island night 21/4 starting numerous fires.

22 April - Sea

- A cargo ship, Yamazatu Maru, was torpedoed and sunk in the Strait of Malacca by HNLMS O 21.

22 April - Wau

- Since their retreat from Wau the Japanese had dug themselves in well on the Pimple, Green Hill and Observation Hill, but otherwise they were quiet.
- On 22nd April Moten informed Guinn of the 2/7th that his plan was approved.
- "You will attack and consolidate Green Hill," Guinn ordered Captain Pringle, the company commander on Lababia Ridge.



22 April - Air

- Munda - Enemy positions were attacked 1600/22 and a/a positions were silenced. Corsairs strafed the area one hour later destroying three grounded aircraft.
- Vila - Corsairs strafed the area afternoon 22/4, setting fire to a motor transport on the strip.

23 April - COIC

(5) Cape Orford - There is a further report of a submarine sighting in this area at 1524/22. The submarine was proceeding on a southerly course past Cape Orford.

(9) Salamaua - It is reliably reported that the Japanese at Salamaua are starving and suffering from dysentery and that Japanese marines have been withdrawn.

ENEMY'S PROBABLE NEXT MOVE

(1) Strong consolidation advanced positions S.W.P.A. particularly Central and Northern Solomons - North coast New Guinea - S.W. coast Dutch New Guinea - Timor/Arafura Sea Islands.

(2) Increased offensive submarine activity.


For DIRECTOR C.O.I.C.
G.H.Q., S.W.P.A.

23/4/43

23 April - Wau

- Coastwatcher Bridge had remained in the Morobe area after the Japanese withdrawal on the collapse of Buna.
- Bridge led an American intelligence party towards Salamaua. They crept up to within 20 miles of the Japanese base establishing that the farthest-out Japanese outposts, lightly held, were at Nassau Bay.
- The party returned without casualties, the Americans to their division which was to attack Nassau Bay, and Bridge to Morobe to keep watch for any further Japanese movement on that coast.

23 April - Wau

- On 23rd April General Savige moved with his 3rd division headquarters to Bulolo. On the same day he took command of all troops in the area and Kanga Force ceased to exist.
- The 2/5th and the 2/7th Independent Companies were on their way out of the Wau/Bulolo area and the first battalion of the 15th Brigade, the 24th (from Victoria), was on its way in towards the end of April.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

055642

GOODVIEW, NEW GUINEA. 1943-08-10. VX13 MAJOR-GENERAL S. G. SAVIGE CB CBE DSO MC ED, INSPECTING THE AREAS OF THE 17TH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE, THE 15TH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE AND THE 2/3RD AUSTRALIAN INDEPENDENT COMPANY.

23 April - Sea

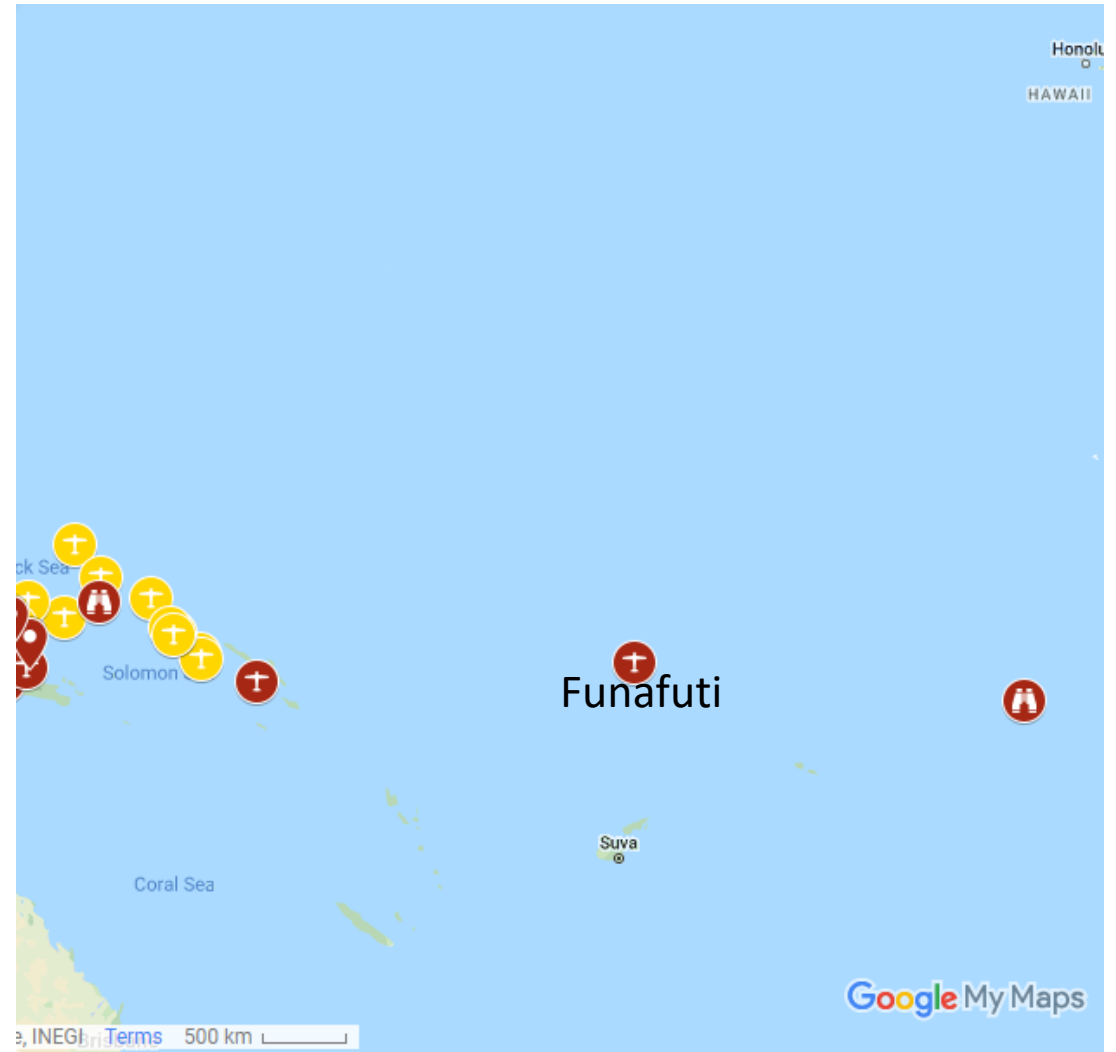
- The No.31-class patrol boat, PB-39, was torpedoed and sunk in the East China Sea off Yonaguni Island (23°48'N 122°42'E) by USS Seawolf.
- The yard patrol craft, USS YP-422, ran aground and sank on the Tumbo Reef, 3 nautical miles (5.6 km) south east of the North Bulari Passage, New Caledonia.

23 April - Air

- Kavieng - A 7,000 ton cargo vessel, the largest in a convoy of 2 medium and 1 small merchantmen escorted by 2 probable destroyers 30 miles 3E of Byaul Is. on course 120, was attacked at 1100/23 by a Liberator on armed reconnaissance.
- Six 500-lb bombs were dropped and photos show a train of 5 bomb disturbance rings of which the last is alongside the vessel: the sixth bomb is claimed as a direct hit amidships resulting in smoke rising to 3,000 feet.
- The ship was left in a sinking condition and is considered probably to have sunk.

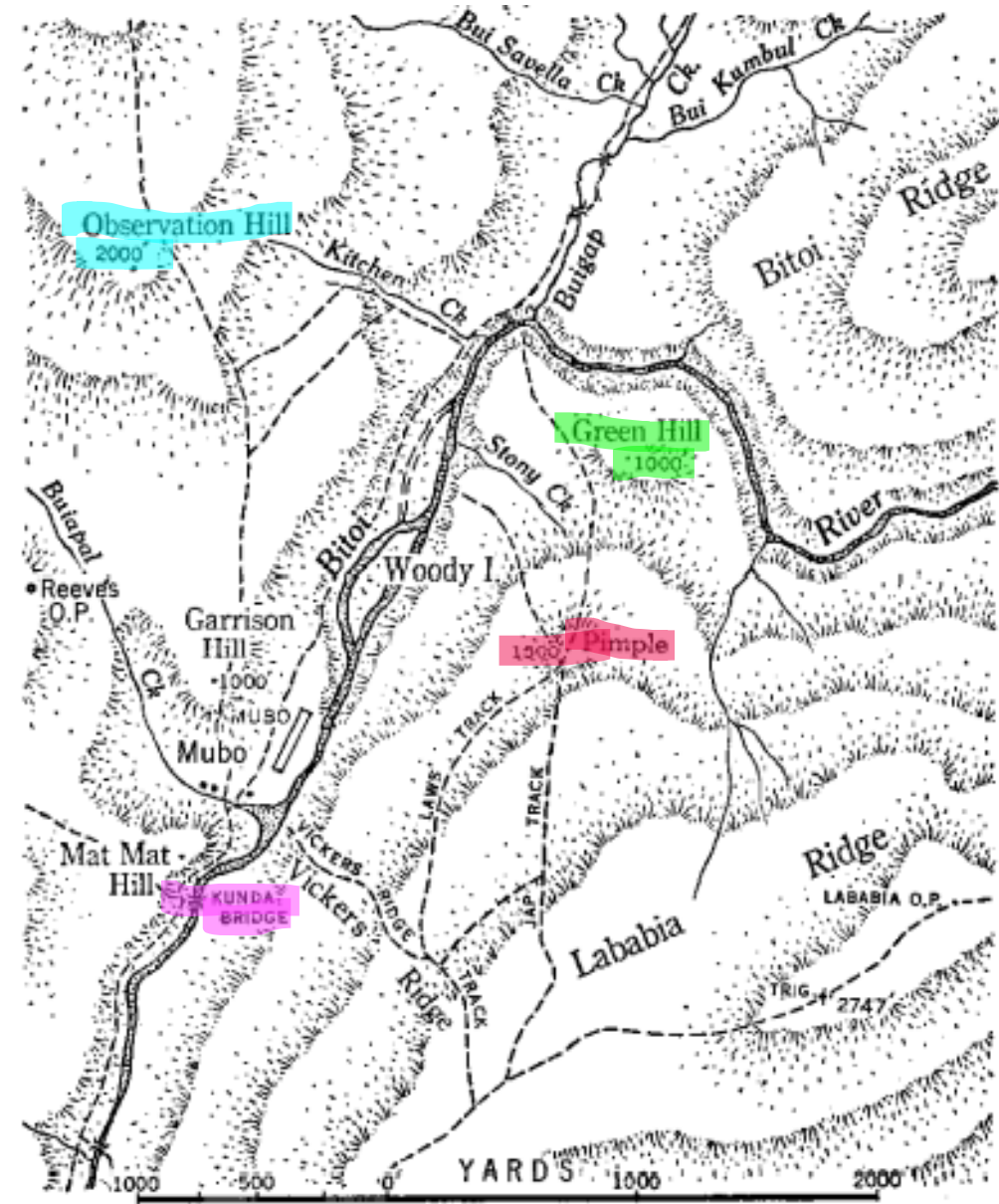
23 April - Air

- Kahili: Three Liberators attacked Kahili at 0200/23.
- Rekata Bay - Twelve Dauntless escorted by fourteen Corsairs bombed and strafed Rekata Bay Area 0745/23.
- **Ellice Is.** - Two waves probably of five and six enemy aircraft attacked — Funafuti before dawn 23rd. Two grounded Liberators were destroyed, the radio station was moderately damaged and two personnel casualties caused. Funafuti is 1,300 miles from Kahili & Balale.



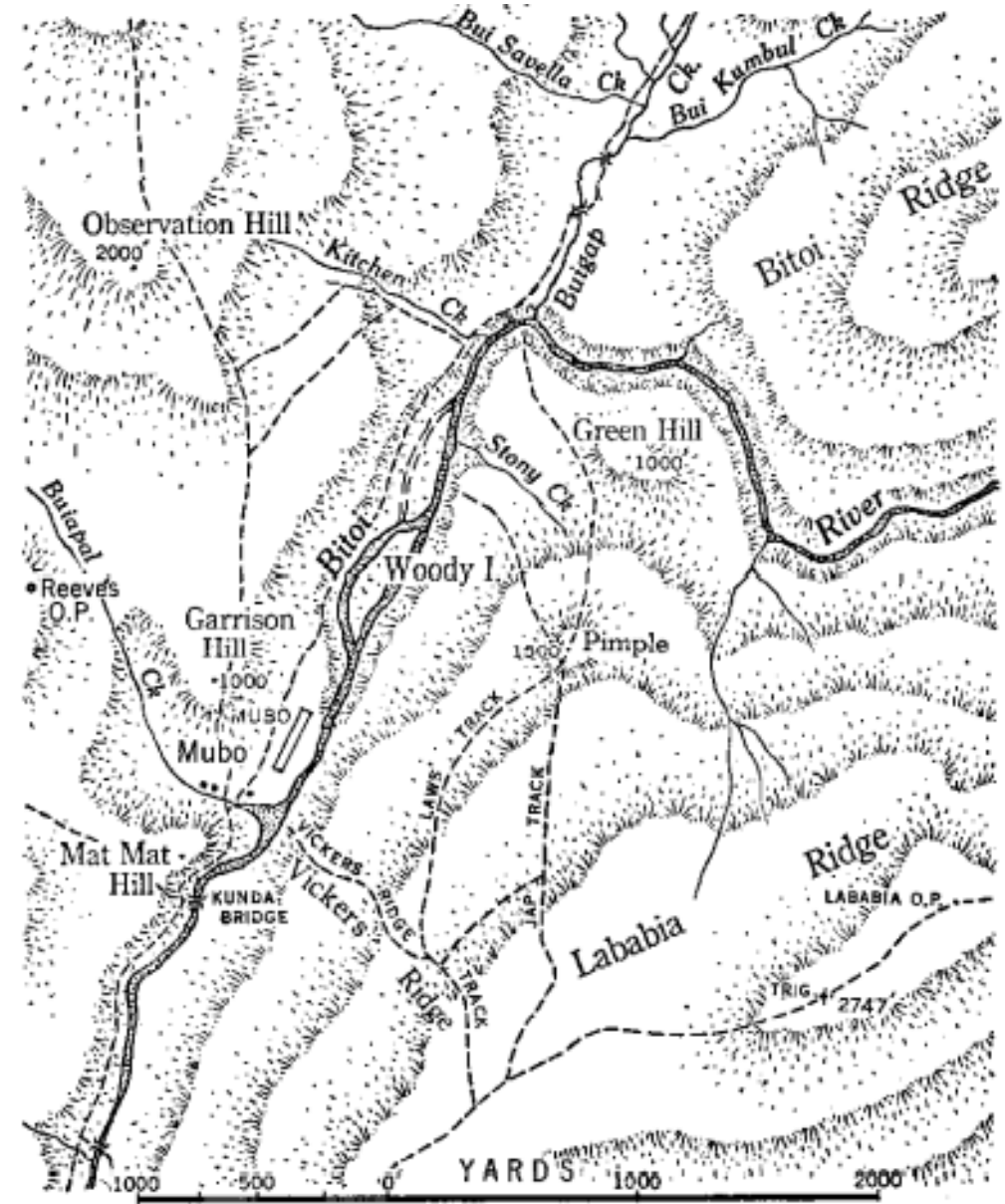
24 April - Wau

- At 10.30 a.m. on 24th April four Boston aircraft began a twenty minutes' attack on Green Hill, Stony Creek, Observation Hill and Kitchen Creek. At the same time patrols from Captain Tatterson's company at Mat Mat began a move designed to deceive the enemy by crossing and recrossing the kunda bridge.
- After the air strike the two columns of Captain Pringle's company set off to attack the Pimple and Green Hill covered by sporadic mortar fire, and with the signalmen keeping up the telephone line along the Jap Track.
- By 1 p.m. all concerned realised that the steep and precipitous Pimple was a natural fortress which could be held by a few good troops.
- The forward platoon under Lieutenant Worle, after advancing to within 100 yards of the Pimple and firing twelve grenades from a discharger, was pinned down by the enemy's machine - guns in front. These were guarded on the flanks by light machine-guns which were in turn guarded on their flanks by snipers.
- Worle's right section was out of contact and nothing was seen or heard of Pringle. Lt Col. Guinn then sent Major Nelson along the Jap Track with an extra platoon at 1.40 p.m. Nelson reported that he thought the situation was under control.
- As there was still no news of the left column, however, the adjutant, Captain Dixon, went forward and at 3.25 p.m. he found it pinned down about 400 yards from Dinsmore's position and west of the northern end of the Pimple.



24 April - Wau

- At 4.30 p.m. Guinn ordered an "all in show" to drive out the enemy. Nelson reported half an hour later that Pringle was still held but that the remainder of the force was making good progress towards surrounding the Japanese machine-gun positions; he decided to attack with one platoon along the track and one on each flank.
- Unfortunately the platoon in the centre broke into two columns, both of which swung too far to the right and left where they joined up with the flanking platoons.
- As darkness was coming on Dinsmore, who had suffered some casualties, reported the confusion to Nelson who ordered him to hold the ground he had gained until next morning. The situation report for that day described the Japanese ambush position as being 400 yards in depth with the enemy well dug in. Seven Australians had been wounded



24 April - Sea

- The Japanese Navy cargo ship, Kasuga Maru, was torpedoed and sunk in the Tsugaru Strait, between Honshu and Hokkaido at (41°42'N 141°20'E) by USS Flying Fish with the loss of 27 lives. This was the 4th ship sunk by Flying Fish on this patrol.
- The Australian cargo ship, Kowarra (2,125 tons), sailing independently from Bowen to Brisbane with a cargo of sugar, was torpedoed and sunk 35 nautical miles (65 km) north east of Sandy Cape, Fraser Island at (24°26'S 153°44'E) by a Japanese submarine. Torpedoed at 7 p.m. on the 24th, she sank almost immediately.
- Eleven survivors were rescued by USS SC-747, an SC-497 class submarine chaser at about 6.30 p.m. on the 25th.
- SC-747 was one of two submarine chasers escorting convoy "BT54", of five ships which had left Moreton Bay for Townsville on 24th.
- Goulburn was ordered to proceed to the position to search for the missing 24 members of, the crew, but had no success. Twenty one, including the master, Captain Donald MacPherson, and the D.E.M.S. gunner, Able Seaman Hair, R.A.N.R., were lost.
- Survivors reported seeing two large submarines surface, one on each side, about half an hour after "KOWARRA" sank.

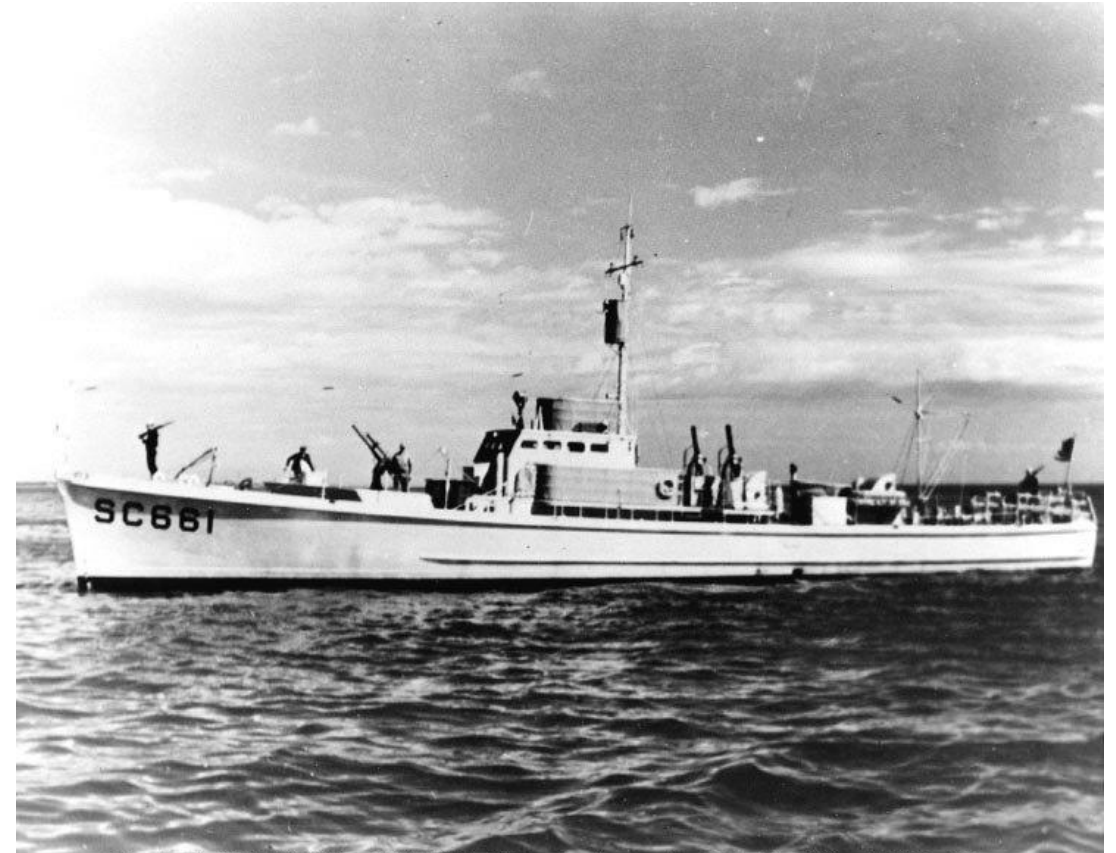
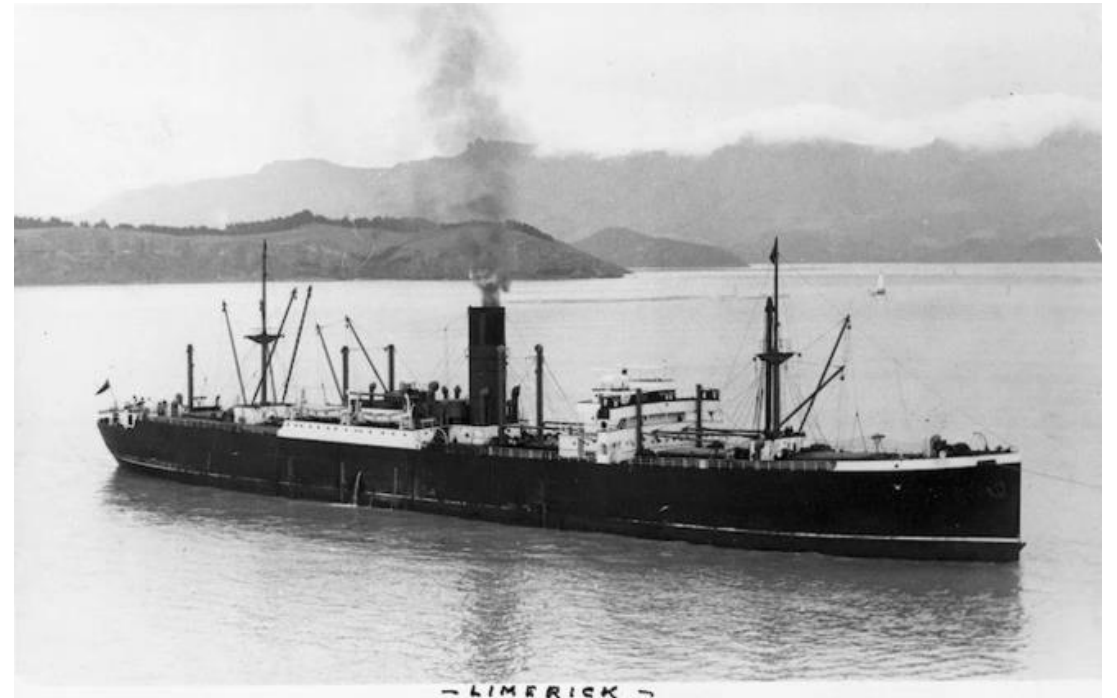


Photo # NH 85415 USS SC-661, photographed during World War II

USS SC-661, an SC-497-class submarine chaser, 110 foot, wooden hulled, diesel engined, submarine warfare vessels. 438 of this class were completed.

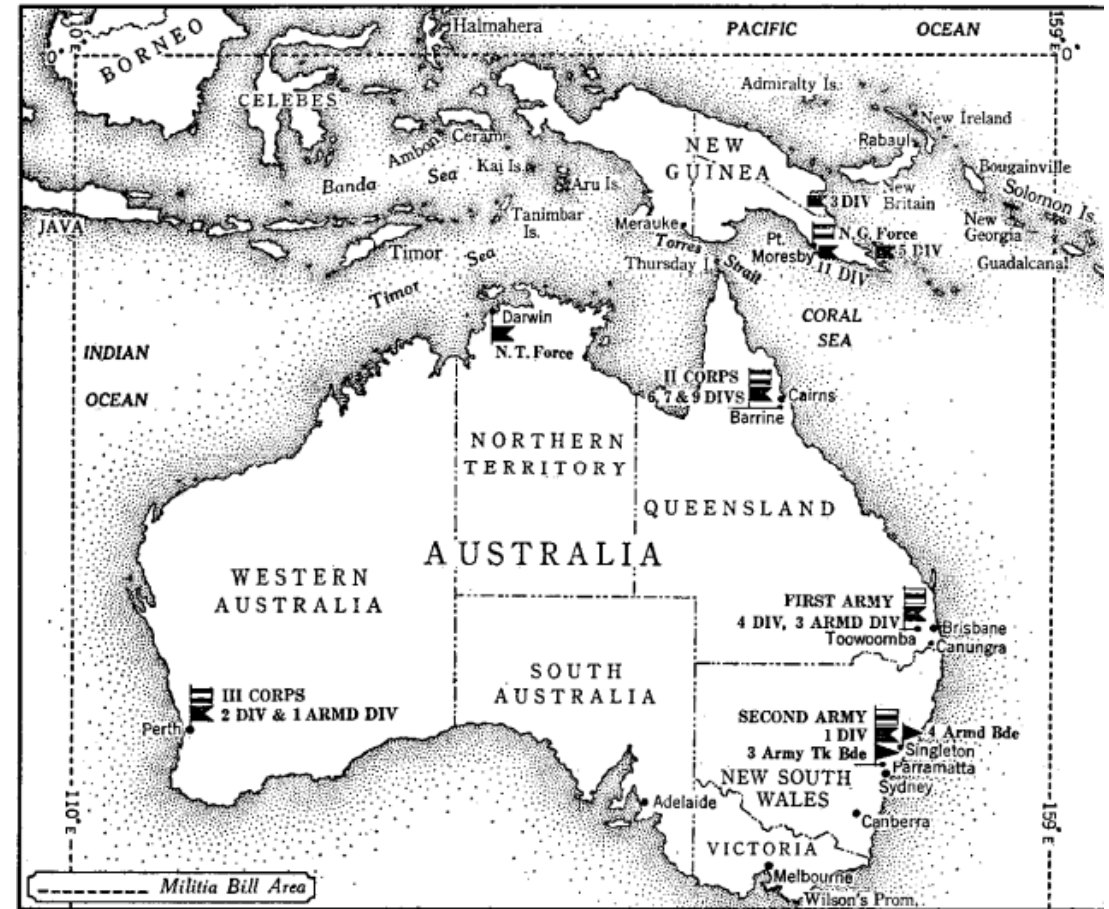
24 April - Sea

- Convoy "GP48" , of five ships escorted by Colac (S.O.E.) and Ballarat left Sydney on the 24th. The five ships were steaming three in line abreast, with the other two, Limerick (photo) (8,724 tons) and Reijnst, astern respectively of port and centre leaders Colac and Ballarat were respectively to port and starboard of the convoy.
- No contacts resulted from constant Asdic sweeps. Limerick, owing to an engine defect was unable to proceed at less than 10 knots, which meant that she had to zigzag from time to time to keep station.



24 April – Australian Military Forces

- On 24th April the A.M.F. actually numbered 466,901 men of whom 285,931 were in the A.I.F., including 125,912 who had enlisted in that force from the militia. On the same date there were 128,197 members of the R.A.A.F., including 16,746 serving overseas; and 30,658 members of the R.A.N. including 17,199 afloat.
- Militia units as a whole could now become part of the A.I.F. if 75 per cent of the unit's actual strength or 65 per cent of the authorised "war establishment" had volunteered to join the A.I.F.
- The role of the militia in future operations had been finally decided by the passing on 19th February 1943 of the Militia Bill. (see map)
- Only one A.I.F. brigade (the 17th) and four militia brigades (4th, 29th, 7th, 15th) were currently in New Guinea.
- American forces in New Guinea at this time included the 158th Regiment attached to the 11th Division in Port Moresby and the 41st Division (162nd, 163rd and 186th Regiments) in the Oro Bay area.
- Back in Rockhampton Lieut-General Eichelberger's I American Corps controlled only one division—the 32nd (126th, 127th, 128th Regiments) at Brisbane.
- The US First Marine Division was rehabilitating in Victoria after their long battle in Guadalcanal.



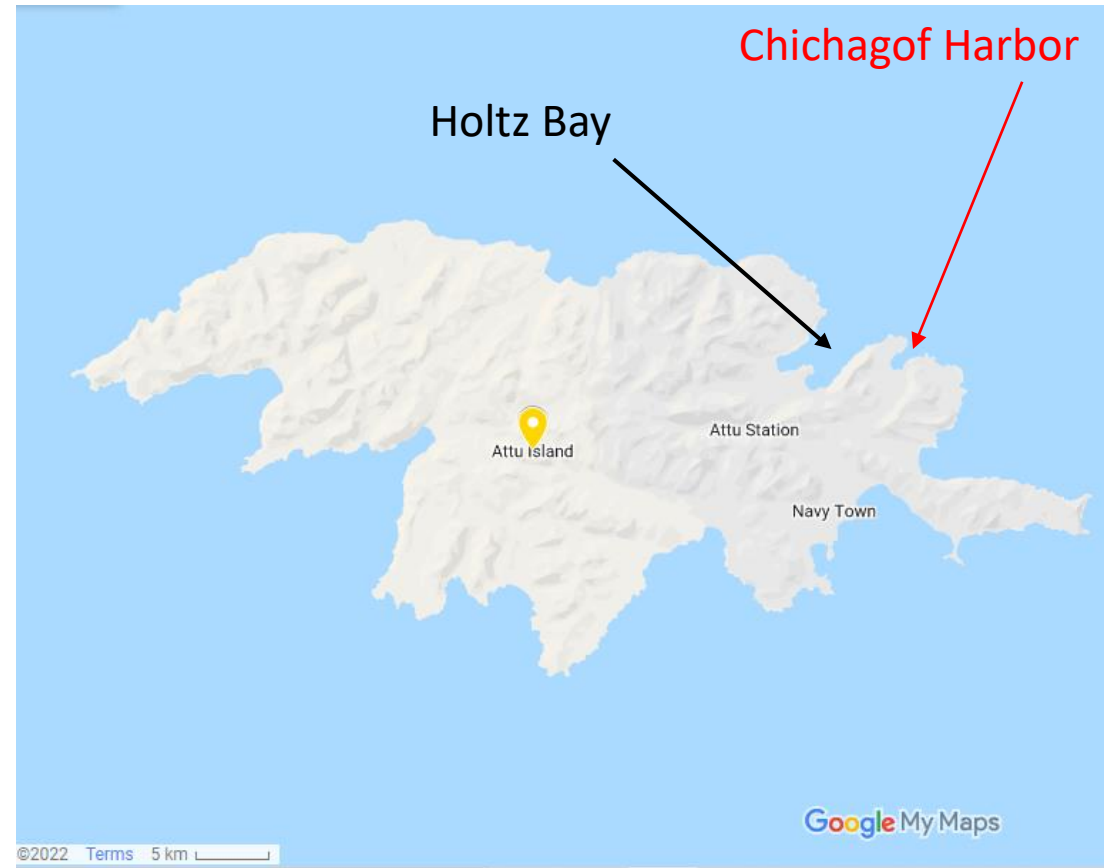
24 April - Air

- Munda -A.A, positions, the runway and revetments at Munda were attacked 1346/24 by 12 dive-bombers, 12 torpedo bombers covered by 16 fighters. A large fire followed a hit on an A.A. position near the strip: 2 buildings were also destroyed.
- Vila -Also on 24/4 Ringi Cove (west of Vila) was strafed by 7 Corsairs for possible barges in the area.
- Wewak - 0920/24 The reconnaissance Liberator was intercepted by 10 to 12 Zero's of which 5 were destroyed.
- Mubo - Enemy positions at Green's Hill (1.5 miles NE Mubo) were attacked 1030/24 by 4 Bostons.
- On 24th April nine American Liberators flew to Celebes attacked aircraft on the airfield and aircraft installations at Kendari at 1745/24 .
 - Their bombs fell on the workshop area causing fires which could be seen at a distance of 75 miles, and it appeared they had also destroyed at least four twin engined aircraft.
 - Enemy fighters engaged them as they completed the bombing but inflicted only slight damage on the Liberators.
- Kai Is. - 2 camouflaged vessels, of which one was possibly a W/T ship, were attacked by 3 Hudsons 1720/24 off Haar Village (N.E. tip Groot Kai). The larger vessel was sunk and the smaller probably damaged.
- Dilli - Penfoei aerodrome was attacked 0300/24 by 7 B.25s. Fires were started including one large blaze possibly from a fuel dump.



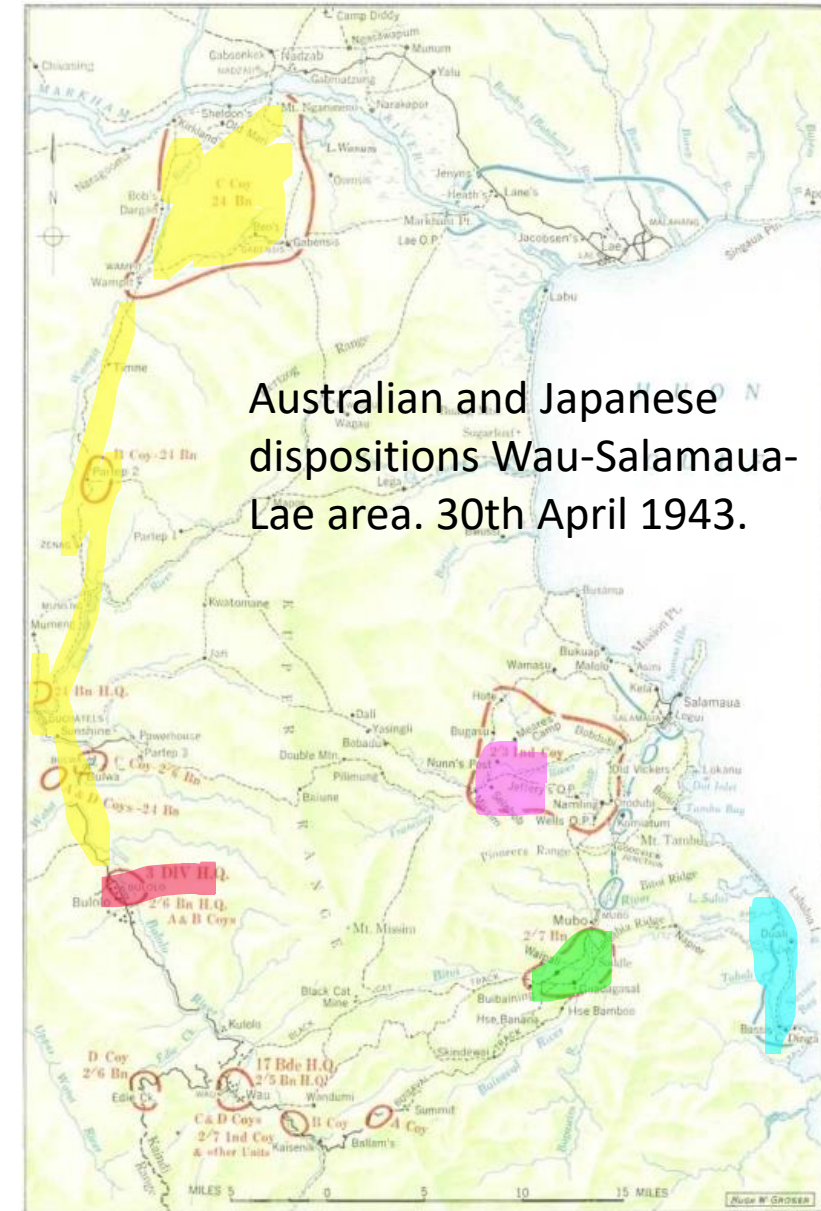
25 April - Aleutians

- Task Group Mike was conducting its usual patrol on the afternoon of 25 April when it received a dispatch from Admiral Kinkaid directing the bombardment of Holtz Bay and Chichagof Harbor shortly after daylight the next day.
- About 0530 (26 April) Attu was sighted to the southeastward. Visibility was poor, with fog patches and snow squalls in many directions. An hour later the weather was still unpromising. Wind and sea had picked up so much that the contemplated launching of aircraft was cancelled, since recovery would have been most hazardous.
- The weather began to clear slightly at 0800. Fifteen minutes later signal to commence firing was executed. The order of ships was Caldwell, Bancroft, Coghlan, Richmond, Santa Fe, Detroit, Frazier, Gansevoort, and Edwards. To avoid interfering with each other's fire, ships were, for the most part, to fire in succession.
- The Caldwell began the action. The Santa Fe then joined in, and after several minutes a mass of black, smoke was observed in the east arm of Holtz Bay, near the airfield. At 0830 a small fog patch drifted across the harbor entrance and prevented firing for a short interval. When the guns resumed, various conflagrations and explosions were noted, but none of any great importance. By 0840 signal was made to cease firing, since allotted ammunition had been expended, and the headlands were closing off all targets.
- The task group commander believed that the bombardment had been much more effective than the previous one of 18 February. Fire control was generally satisfactory.



25 April - Wau

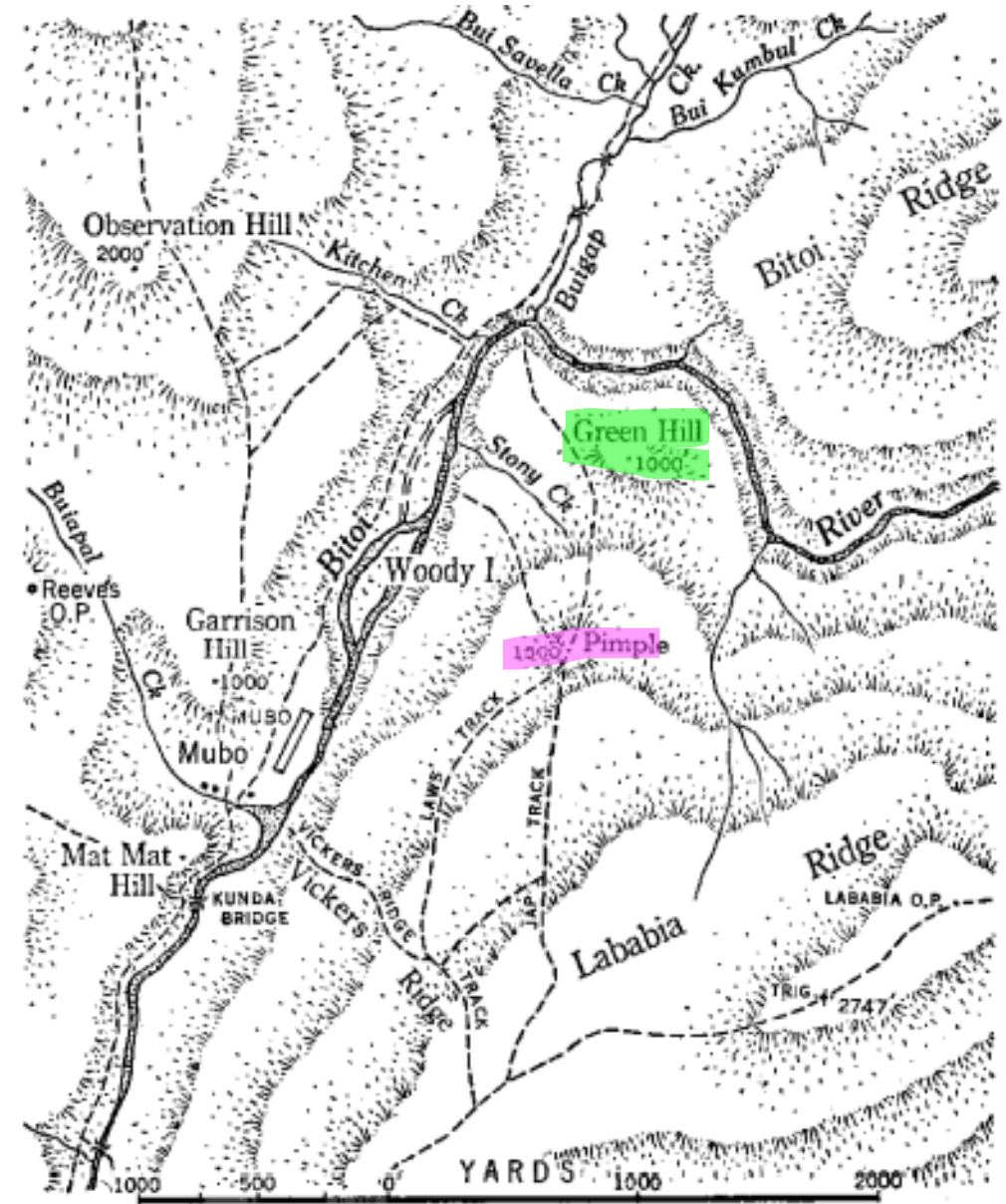
- On 25th April Savige issued his first operation instruction from his headquarters at Bulolo.
- He instructed the 17th Brigade to prevent the Japanese from entering the Bulolo Valley from the Mubo area, secure the Mubo-Guadagasal-Waipali area, and gain control of the coastal area immediately south of the Bitoi River.
- The 2/3rd Independent Company (Major G. R. Warfe) was to prevent the Japanese from entering the Bulolo Valley through the Missim area, and secure the Missim-Pilimung area.
- Lieut-Colonel Wood's group (2/6th and 24th Battalions) was to prevent the Japanese from entering the Bulolo Valley through the Markham and Partep 2 areas, establish a close defence of the Bulolo and Bulwa airfields, and patrol forward to the Markham.



Australian and Japanese dispositions Wau-Salamaua-Lae area. 30th April 1943.

25 April - Wau

- On the morning of 25th April Guinn, who had come forward to Lababia, advised Pringle to make more use of artillery and mortars.
- In the morning three Bostons again strafed and bombed Green Hill, and at 12.45 p.m. the mountain battery fired on the Pimple. Artillery support was necessarily limited, as Moten had been forced, because of scarcity of ammunition, to limit the artillery support to 50 rounds a gun.
- The forward observation officer, Lieutenant Colless, directed the firing of 74 shells into the Pimple area during the day. Taking a telephone almost up to the Pimple he remained ahead of the infantry directing fire for an hour, while the enemy was firing in his direction and he was in grave danger from his own shells.
- The situation report at midday said that "owing to strong enemy defences and dense undergrowth in ambush area impossible to dislodge enemy with company weapons".
- Lieutenant Tyres had seen Japanese moving towards the Pimple from Green Hill at first light.
- Tyres was forced to withdraw when he ran low in ammunition after about 60 Japanese from Green Hill had attacked and tried to encircle his position.
- He fought a delaying action and then reported to Pringle that the Japanese in the Pimple area were being reinforced.
- By 6 p.m. it was obvious that the attack had failed simply because the difficulties in attacking a position such as the Pimple had been underestimated.
- Australian casualties were 7 killed and 11 wounded, while it was possible to claim only 3 Japanese killed for certain.



25 April - Wau

- Lieutenant Menzies leading a patrol on 25th April headed north from **Namling** (the opposite direction from that which Lieutenant Stephens had taken) and boldly followed the remains of an old graded track reputed to have been cut in the days of the German occupation (the Bench Cut Track).
- Reaching the river flats near the **junction of the Francisco River and Buirali Creek** he found the enemy's supply line and began to lay an ambush.
- It was successful and he reported that he had killed 18 of a Japanese party of about 60.

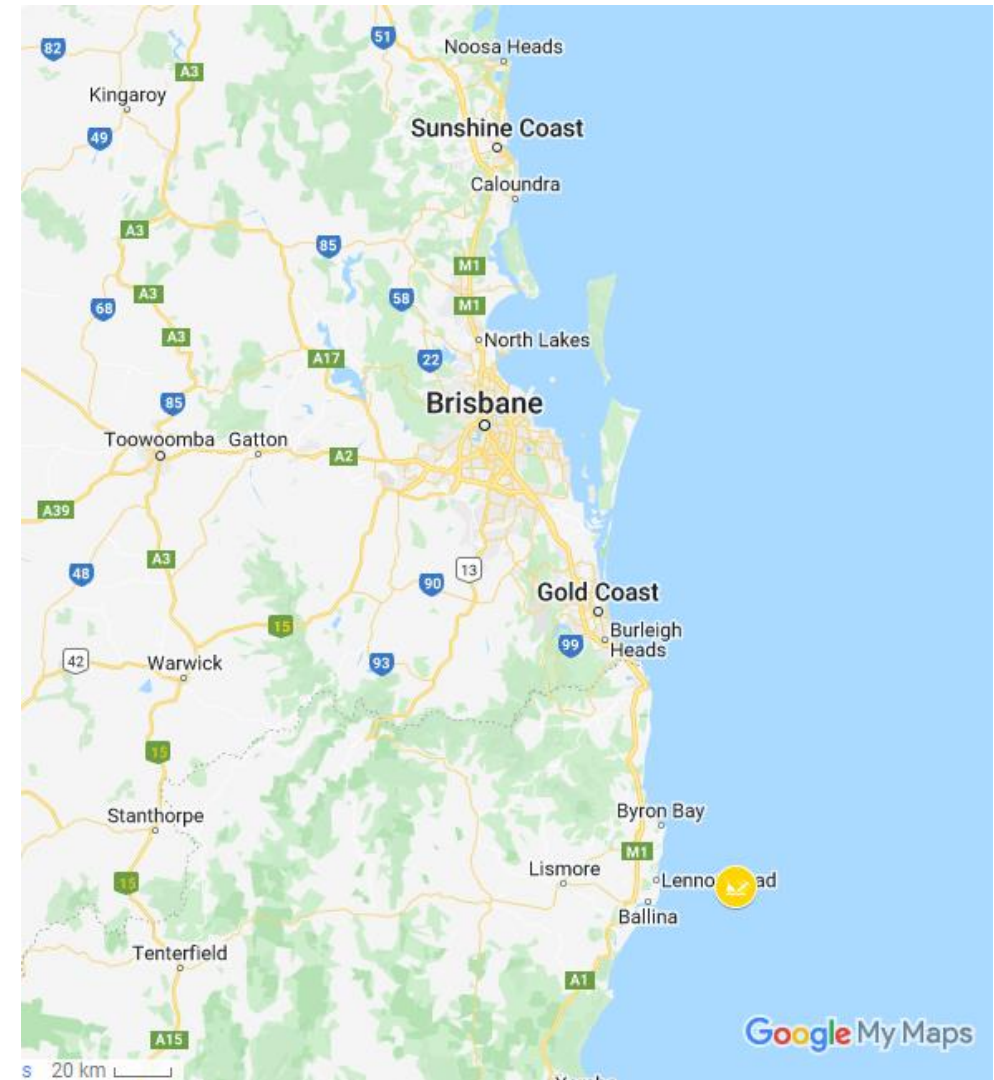


25 April - Air

- Wewak - The main Wewak aerodrome was attacked 0245-0310/25 by four Fortresses.
- Wau - Targets on Greens Hill (1.5 miles N.E. Mubo) were attacked 0900/25 by 3 Bostons.
- **Russell Is.** - At 1215/25 10 enemy bombers with 20 fighters were intercepted by 4 Corsairs over Buraku Is. (or Murray Is, - about 20 miles west of Russell Group) headed S.E. The Corsairs were returning from a strafing mission at Kolombangara but attacked the enemy formation and shot down 5 Zeros the remainder reversed course and were later seen over Vella Lavella heading for Bougainville. Two of the Corsairs are missing.

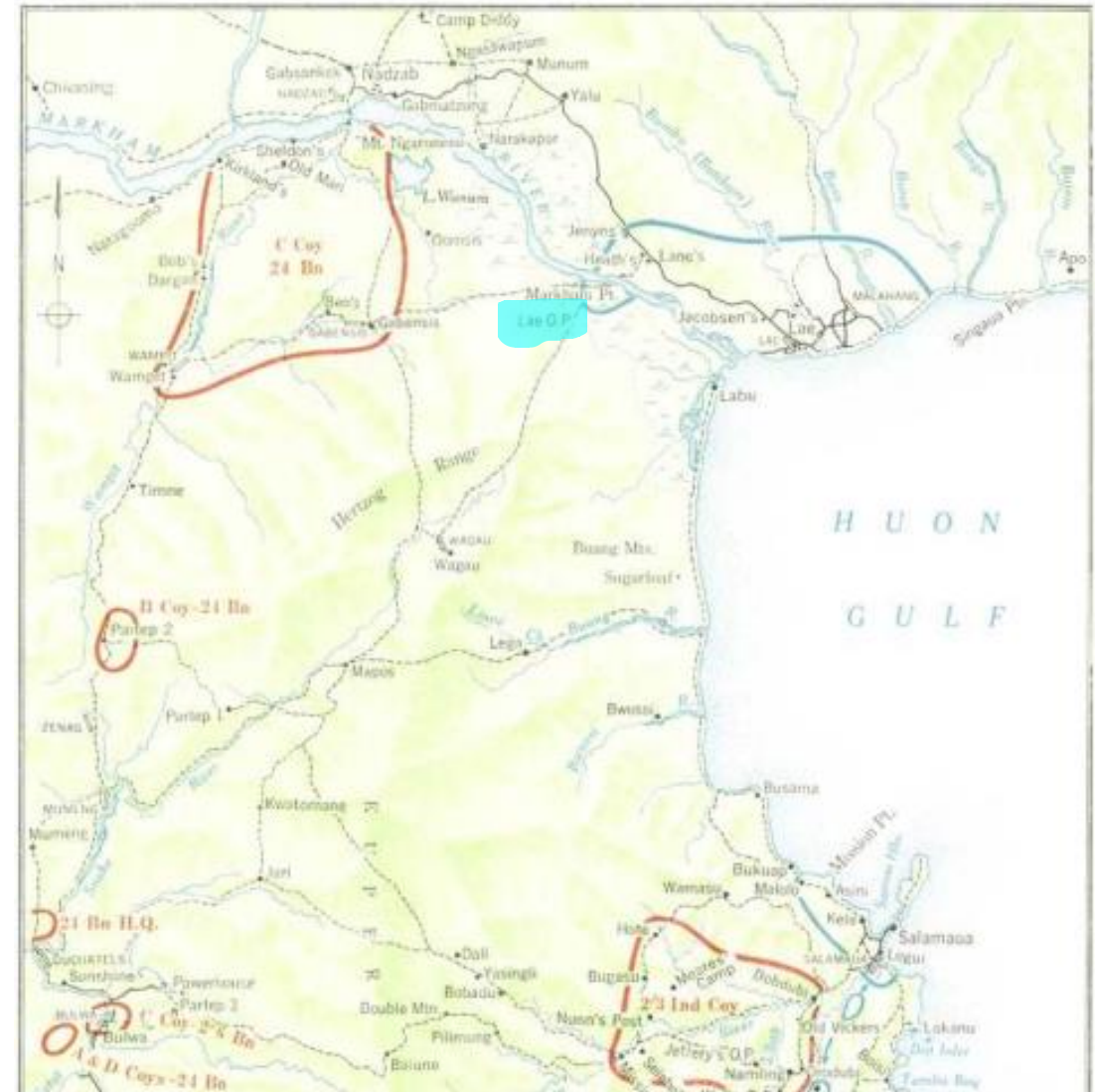
26 April - Sea

- At 1.4 a.m. on 26th April, when “GP48” was about 20 miles south-east of Cape Byron, a torpedo, from abaft the beam, struck Limerick amidships on the port side. Its track was seen from the bridge just before it hit.
- Limerick's master, Captain Jaunay, was below at the time, and when he reached the deck he found the ship had a heavy list to port and "most of the crew had jumped or were jumping overboard".
- Colac got no contact which could be classified as submarine, but dropped two depth-charges to keep the attacker down, and closed Limerick where Jaunay and a few of the crew who remained on board tried to put out a fire at No. 4 hatch.
- Throughout the night (while Ballarat proceeded with the convoy), Colac picked up from the sea survivors from Limerick and, at first light, tried to pass lines to take the torpedoed ship in tow.
- The sea was rising and lines could not be passed, and at 6.3 a.m. Limerick sank. Captain Jaunay jumped overboard as she went, and was picked up by Colac.
- From then until 9.25 a.m., when the search was abandoned, Colac "proceeded to pick up survivors who were mostly clinging to dunnage and scattered over a wide area". Of Limerick's complement of 72, Colac took 70 on board. The third officer and fourth engineer were lost.



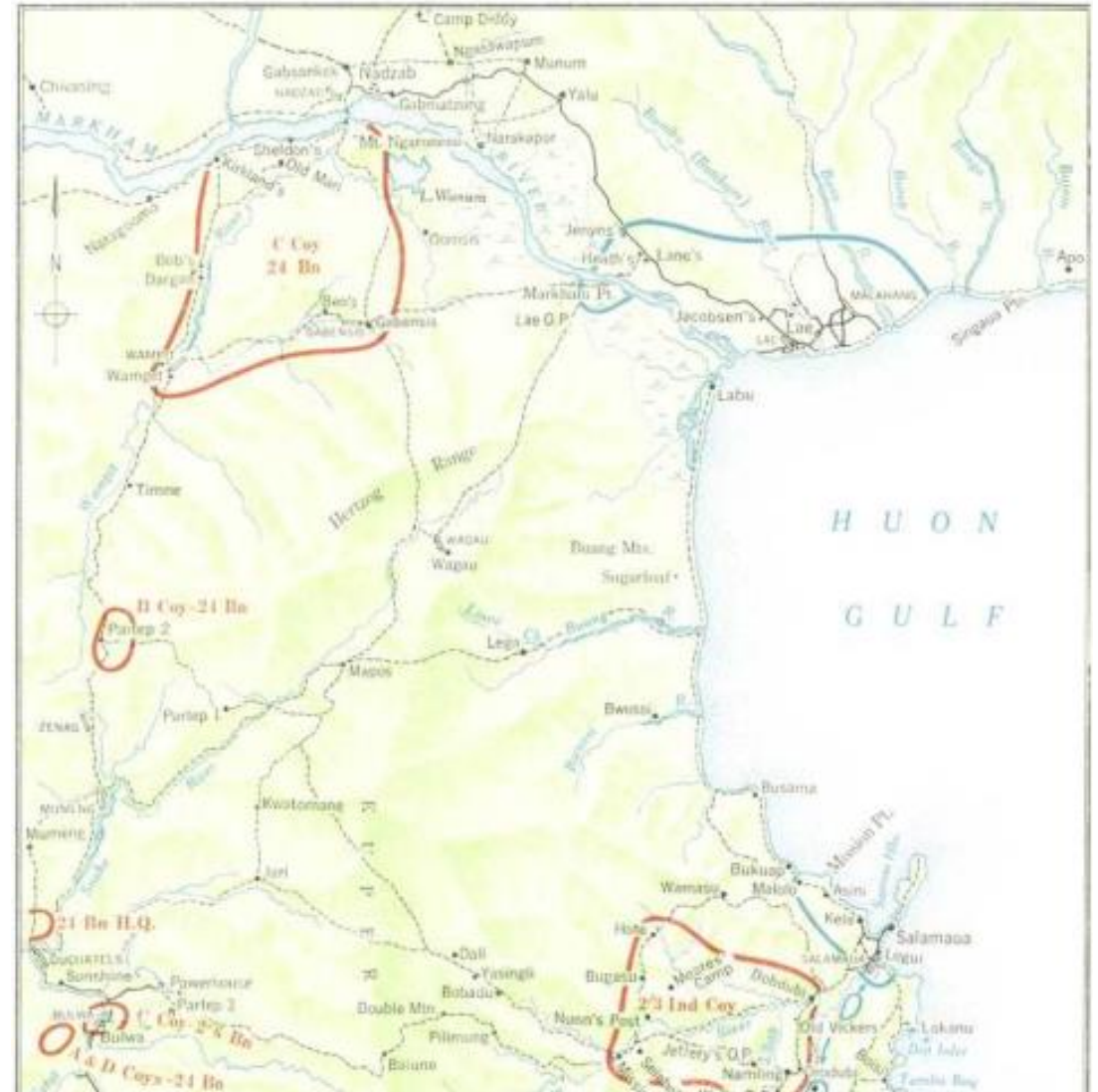
26 April - Wau

- The **Lae observation post**, known as "Tojo", was situated on a spur of the Hertzog Range about 6 miles west of Lae. The observation post had been established by the NGVR and manned in succession by the NGVR, 2/5th Independent Company and 24th Battalion, with the aid of signallers of the New Guinea Air Wireless Warning Unit and Angau police and cook boys.
- The view of Lae was excellent, the only obstruction being mist or fog rolling in over the Labu swamps from the Huon Gulf and Mount Lunaman which obscured the buildings of Chinatown.
- One of the main worries was the noise made by the battery charger (for the wireless) and charging was therefore done when the wind was strong enough to drown the noise. The wireless room was prepared for instant demolition and was linked to the actual observation post 120 yards away where a 24 hours' watch was kept.
- Fires could not be lit by day, and care had to be taken not to let the sun glint on the binoculars and naval telescope used by the spotters who were ever ready to summon the air force to attack enemy aircraft, barges or troops in the Lae area.



26 April - Wau

- At the beginning of March privates Snow Evans and Albert Duck of the Independent Company were ordered to take supplies to the Lae OP. With a group of native carriers they took food, petrol for the generator engine and other supplies to the watchers. This trek took about four or five days. Led by native guides they walked from Wau through Bulolo, Bulwa, Sunshine and Mumeng along a well worn track to Wampit. From there, they headed across country along more difficult terrain to Gabensis. The last part of the journey involved climbing over a range through very rough country along a secret track that led to the lookout
- Snow and Albert remained to help at this base for a few weeks, either observing or manning the radio.
- While Snow was there a small group of Americans arrived at the base to have a look in preparation for the recapture of Lae. These men had walked in from Wau, the same way that Snow had. They were looking for an area to land paratroopers in the anticipated attack and after only about a day there they moved back. Apparently the site they thought from the plane reconnaissance photographs would be suitable near to Lae turned out to be far from ideal.



26 April - Air

- No. 15 Fighter Squadron RNZAF equipped with P40s reached Guadalcanal on 26 April.
- The shipping allocated to carry the ground staff and equipment from Tonga was repeatedly diverted to other urgent tasks, so they did not reach Guadalcanal until the flying echelon had practically completed its tour of operations.
- The aircraft were maintained by the overworked groundstaff of No. 3 Squadron (Hudsons), assisted by US fighter squadrons on the island.
- At this stage of the Solomons campaign the role of Allied fighters on Guadalcanal was:
 - (a) Fighter patrols over American base areas at the Russell Islands and Guadalcanal.
 - (b) Fighter cover for American convoys in the area.
 - (c) Strafing of enemy land targets and ships.
 - (d) Fighter escort for American bombers attacking enemy bases, airfields, and shipping.
 - (e) Offensive fighter sweeps over enemy bases in the northern Solomons in attempts to entice the outnumbered enemy fighters into large-scale actions.
 - (f) Interception of enemy air attacks against the American bases on Russell and Guadalcanal and against American shipping in the area.



RNZAF P-40M's operated by No. 14 (Fighter) Squadron at Kukum Field, Guadalcanal. 1943.

26 April - Air

- Kahili - 3 Liberators attacked Kahili 0145-0315/26 starting fires.
- On 26th April a Beaufighter of No. 31 Squadron disappeared in bad weather during a sortie to the Aru islands.

27 April COIC

ENEMY'S PROBABLE NEXT MOVE

- (1) Strong consolidation advanced positions S.W.P.A. particularly Central and Northern Solomons - North coast New Guinea - S.W. coast Dutch New Guinea - Timor/Arafura Sea Islands.
- (2) Increased submarine activity including transportation, reconnaissance and offensive operations, in all theatres.

Words highlighted were added for the first time on 27/4/43.

B. Cowen
For DIRECTOR C.O.I.C.
G.H.Q., S.W.P.A.

27/4/43

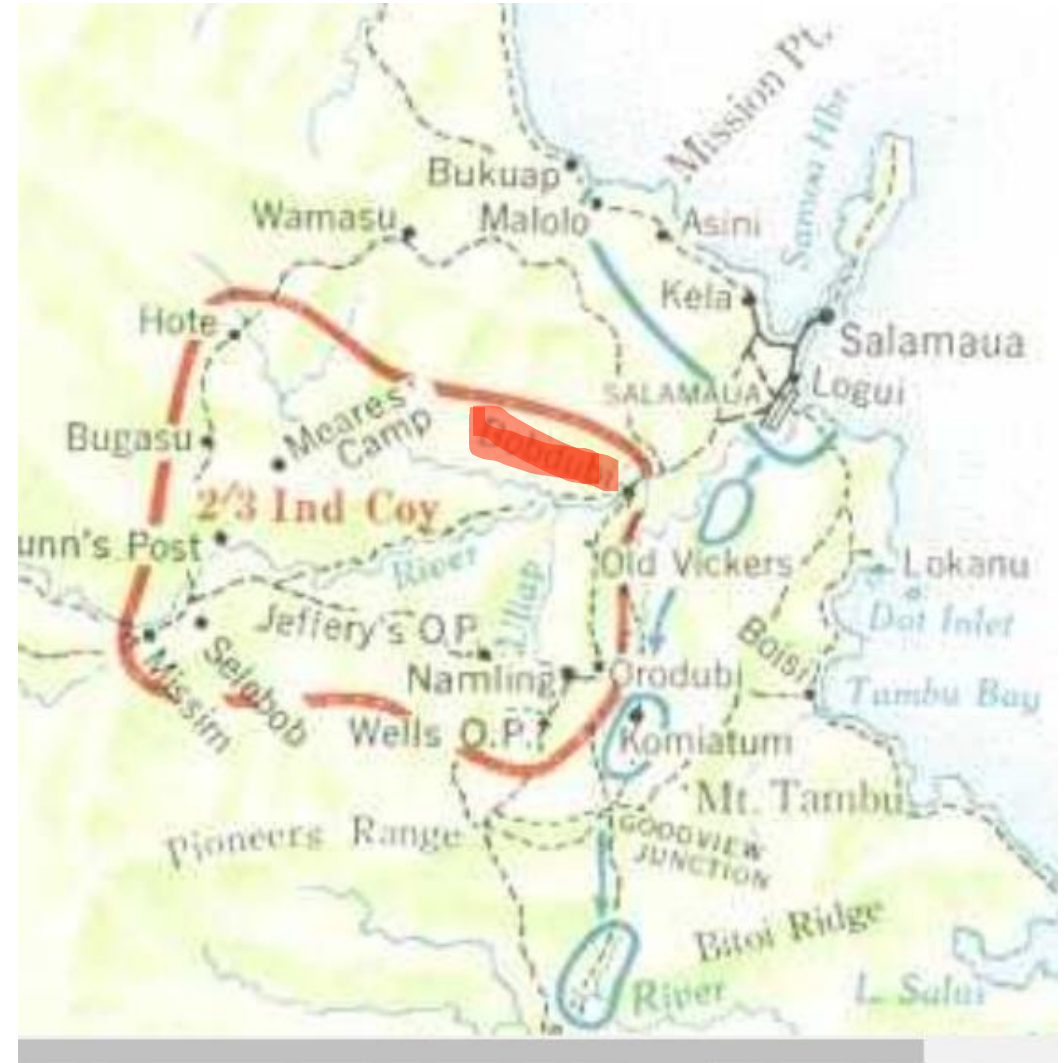
27 April - Sea

- The American Liberty ship, Lydia M. Childs, was torpedoed and sunk in the Pacific Ocean 100 nautical miles (190 km) off Port Stephens, New South Wales, (33°08'S 153°24'E) by a Japanese submarine. She sank within 15 minutes of being hit, but her entire complement of 62 got away in five boats and some rafts, and were subsequently rescued by H.M.A. Ships Warrnambool and Deloraine.
- Lydia M. Childs was on her maiden voyage, and Lieut-Commander Read, Warrnambool's commanding officer, remarked in his report that "her boats were very well found and had a number of modern appliances which were completely new to me".
- The Japanese cargo liner, Yuzan Maru, was torpedoed and sunk in the Pacific by USS Scorpion.



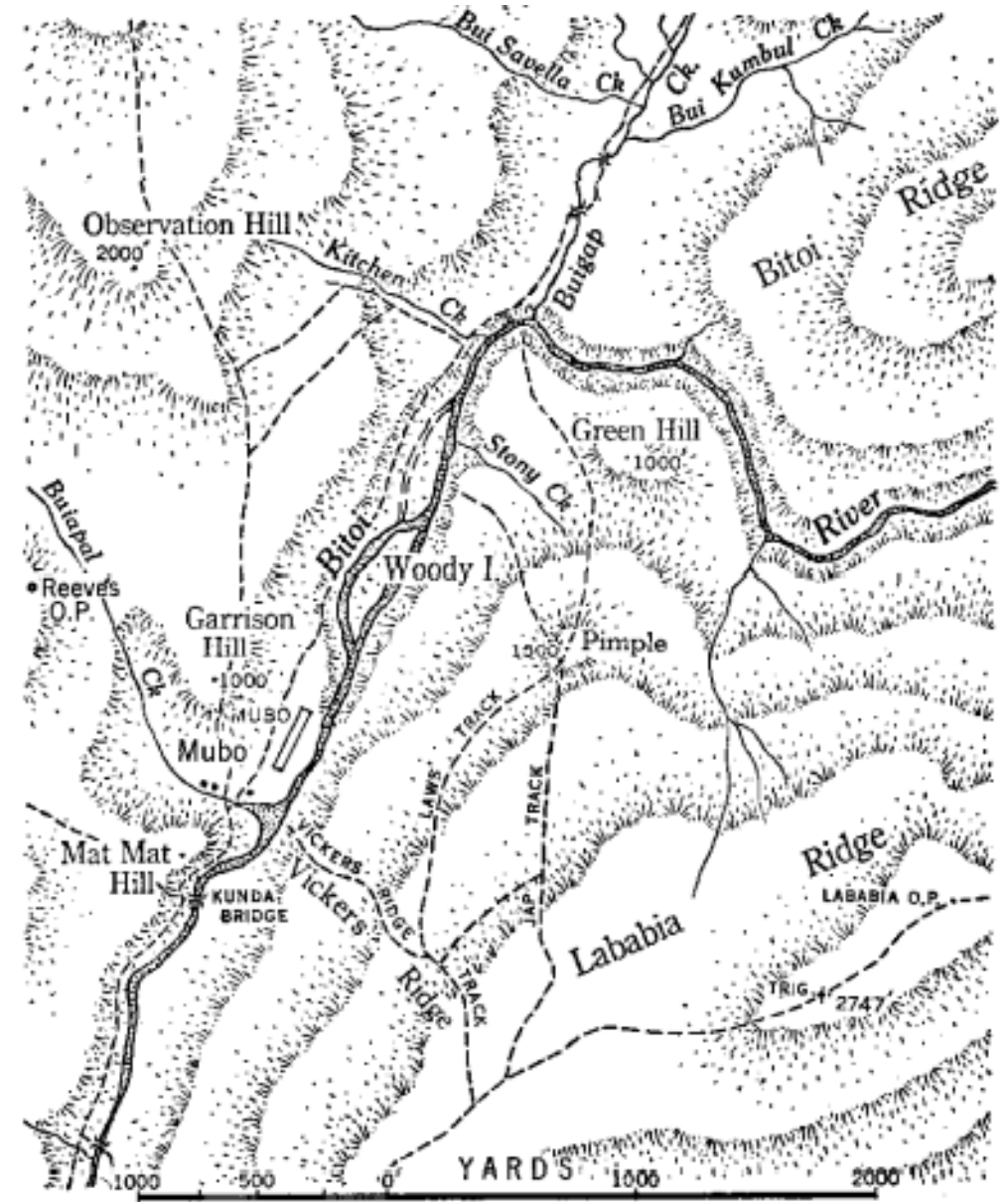
27 April - Wau

- Warfe of the Independent Company had realised that the force holding **Bobdubi Ridge** virtually controlled the Salamaua-Komiatum-Mubo track from the west during daylight.
- Information from his reconnaissance patrols and from natives led him to believe that Bobdubi Ridge was held only lightly by the enemy.
- On 27th April he obtained permission to "Attack Bobdubi" in order to protect his lines of communication.
- Savage was aware of the great effect that the capture of Bobdubi Ridge would have on the Japanese, and eventually granted the request, but forbade heavy casualties and stated that not more than one platoon must be used at a time.



27 April - Wau

- On 27th April, a stick of bombs from Allied planes fell on the forward company, now commanded by Lieutenant Dinsmore, and killed one and wounded five.

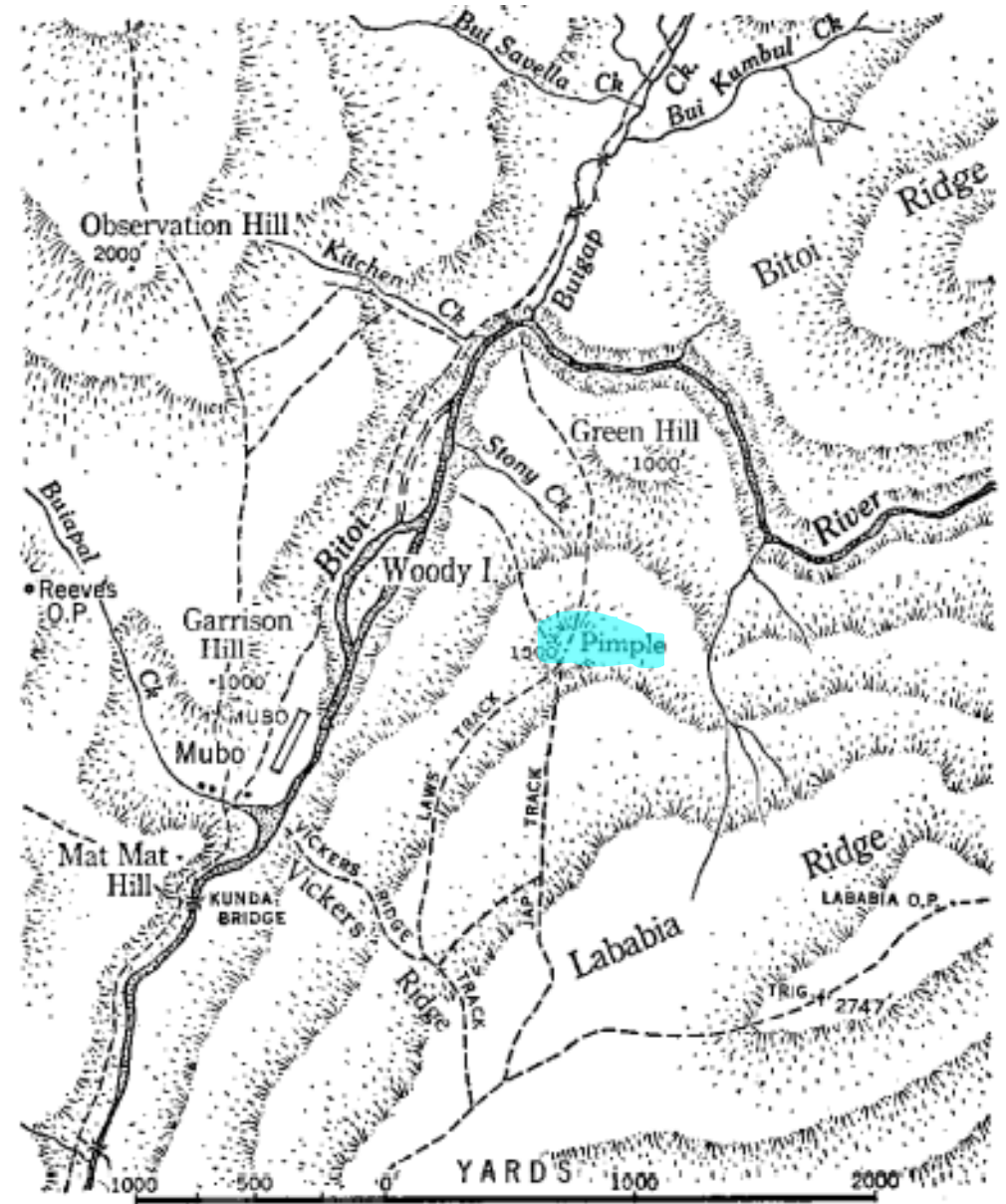


27 April – Air

- Shortlands - Kahili and Ballale were heavily attacked during the early hours 27/4 by 5 Fortresses and 12 Liberators.
- Lae - Labu Lagoon was searched and strafed for possible barges concealed on the shore by 6 Beaufighters 0905-0920/27.
- Mubo - Enemy positions on Greens Hill were bombed and strafed 1000-1015/27 by 3 Bostons.
- Kai Is. - At 1025/27 2 cargo ships of 3-4,000 tons each were sighted and attacked 50 miles N.W. by N of Dobo course 145° apparently heading for Dobo. A direct hit was scored on the larger vessel and also a near miss.
- Mitchells of No. 18 Squadron on a search for enemy shipping on the Timor coast were intercepted by enemy fighters on 27th.
- They jettisoned their bombs on a village and although the enemy fighters fired a number of bursts at them, they failed to score a hit and the Mitchells returned safely to Darwin.

28 April - Wau

- In the Mubo area on the morning of 28th April an Australian patrol found the Japanese positions on the Pimple unoccupied and moved in, at the same time sending a runner back with the information.
- Unfortunately the Japanese returned in strength and forced the patrol to withdraw but not before some of the patrol reached the top of the Pimple and observed the location of weapon-pits and machine-gun positions and the accuracy of the bombing, shelling and strafing.
- Guinn deduced from this episode that the Japanese must have anticipated an air strike at the usual time and withdrawn, returning when they realised that no strike was to be made.



28 April - Sea

- The Japanese troopship, Kamakura Maru, was torpedoed and sunk in the Pacific by USS Gudgeon with the loss of 2,035 of the 2,500 people on board.
- Probably the same ships attacked on the 27th were attacked again at 0818/28 by 4 B25s in position 90 miles N.W. by N. of Dobo on course 320° speed 4-5 knots. A direct hit and a near miss were scored on the larger vessel and two near misses on the smaller vessel which was also strafed. One B25 was shot down by A.A. fire from the ships.

29 April - Sea

- The Australian freighter, Wollongbar (2,239 tons) sailed from Byron Bay for Newcastle, in the evening of 28th April.
- At 10.40 a.m. on the 29th, she was torpedoed and sunk in the Pacific 55 nautical miles (102 km) east south east of Smokey Cape, NSW (31°17'S 153°07'E) by a Japanese submarine.
- Thirty-two crewmen were killed including the master, Captain Charles Benson, and the D.E.M.S. gunner, Able Seaman White, R.A.N.R.. Five survivors were rescued by trawler X.L.C.R. (Australia).



The XLCR at Port Macquarie (Image B Duncan)

29 April - Wau

- A divisional instruction of 29th April informed the men what they were to wear and carry, they were the result of the pooling of ideas and experiences by the various units which had fought in the jungle against the Japanese.
- The term "tropical scale" meant to the troops that they wore their jungle green uniform (boots, socks, gaiters, underpants, trousers, shirt), also "hat fur felt" as the famous Australian hat^o was officially known, clasp knife, identification discs, webbing equipment, field dressing in the right hip pocket and a tin of emergency rations in the left, water-bottle on the right-hand side, haversack on the left-hand side and pack.
- The haversack contained one tin of emergency rations, one field operation ration, one day's ordinary ration (usually bully beef and biscuits), mess gear, towel, anti-mosquito cream, toilet gear including shaving gear, and six atabrin tablets.
- The pack held a spare pair of boots, two pairs of socks, one singlet, one shirt, one pair of underpants, one pair of trousers and a mosquito net. One blanket in a groundsheet was wrapped outside and over the top of the pack and a steel helmet was strapped on to the pack.
- Fifty rounds were carried by each rifleman, 100 rounds in magazines by each Tommygunner, and 100 rounds in magazines for each Bren gun. Eighteen bombs of high explosive and six bombs of smoke were carried for the 2-inch mortar. Six No. 36 grenades with 7-seconds fuses were carried for the grenade discharger while all ranks carried one No. 36 grenade with a 4-seconds fuse (usually carried hooked on the webbing belt by the lever).
- Anti-tank rifles and Bren tripods were not carried unless ordered.

29 April - Air

- Targets on New Georgia were attacked by 22 dive bombers, 18 torpedo bombers and 9 Corsairs covered by 44 fighters on the 29th.
- Ambon - Halong seaplane base was attacked 0830/29 by 6 Liberators causing a large explosion and fire in the Barracks and fires in hangars. 12-15 enemy fighters were encountered and two were probably destroyed and another damaged.
- Timor - Koepang was attacked 0225/29 by 4 B25s.

30 April - Sea

- The American Liberty ship, Phoebe A. Hearst, was torpedoed and sunk in the Pacific south of Fiji at (20°07'S 177°33'E) by a Japanese submarine. All hands were rescued; eight by a Consolidated PBY Catalina on 1 May, 23 by USS YMS-89 on 5 May, and 25 by USS Dash on 14 May.



USS YMS-89

28 April - COIC

N.S.W. Coast - At 0435/27 enemy submarine activity was evidenced in position $36^{\circ}20'S$ $150^{\circ}31'E$ (54 miles NE by N. of Twofold Bay) when an unsuccessful torpedo attack was reported by "MILDURA" on a convoy in this position.

At 1845/27 "LYDIA M.CHILD" was torpedoed in position $33^{\circ}08'S$ $153^{\circ}24'E$ (approx 83 miles E. by S. of Newcastle) - see Naval Incidents.

Submarine sightings in the vicinity of the attack on "LYDIA M.CHILD" were reported by aircraft as follows:-

0152/27 - $33^{\circ}31'S$ $152^{\circ}59'E$ (70 miles bearing 120° from Newcastle)

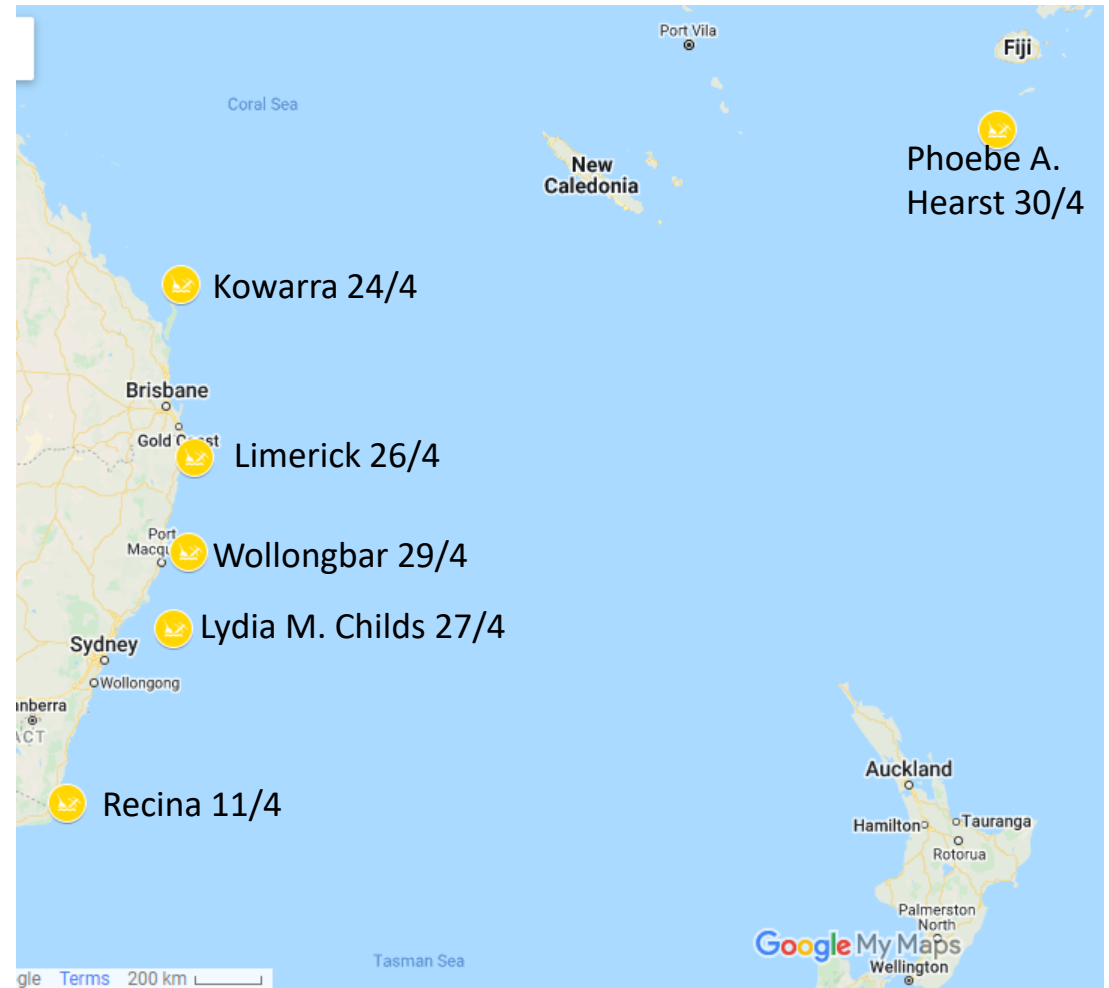
2026/27 - $33^{\circ}25'S$ $153^{\circ}10'E$ (75 miles bearing 115° from Newcastle)

0112/28 - $32^{\circ}41'S$ $153^{\circ}22'E$ (80 miles bearing 80° from Newcastle).

Relating these reports with the attacks on shipping on 24th & 26th April in the area, it would appear likely that one or two submarines are operating between Brisbane and Capricorn Channel, another one or two between Sydney and Brisbane and yet another south of Sydney.

Four of these ships were sailing independently but two were in escorted convoys, each with two escorting corvettes.

Apparently the escorts failed to detect the submarines either before or after the attacks.



30 April - Strategy

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



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

107532

30 April - Strategy

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

30 April - Strategy

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

30 April - Government

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



Treasurer Chifley

30 April - Air

- Hampshire led another six Bostons against the same target (the Pimple) four days later (30 April), and, after dropping bombs, the Bostons made twenty-five strafing runs. Again army smoke signals were used to mark the enemy positions but the crews were unable to see whether their efforts were successful.

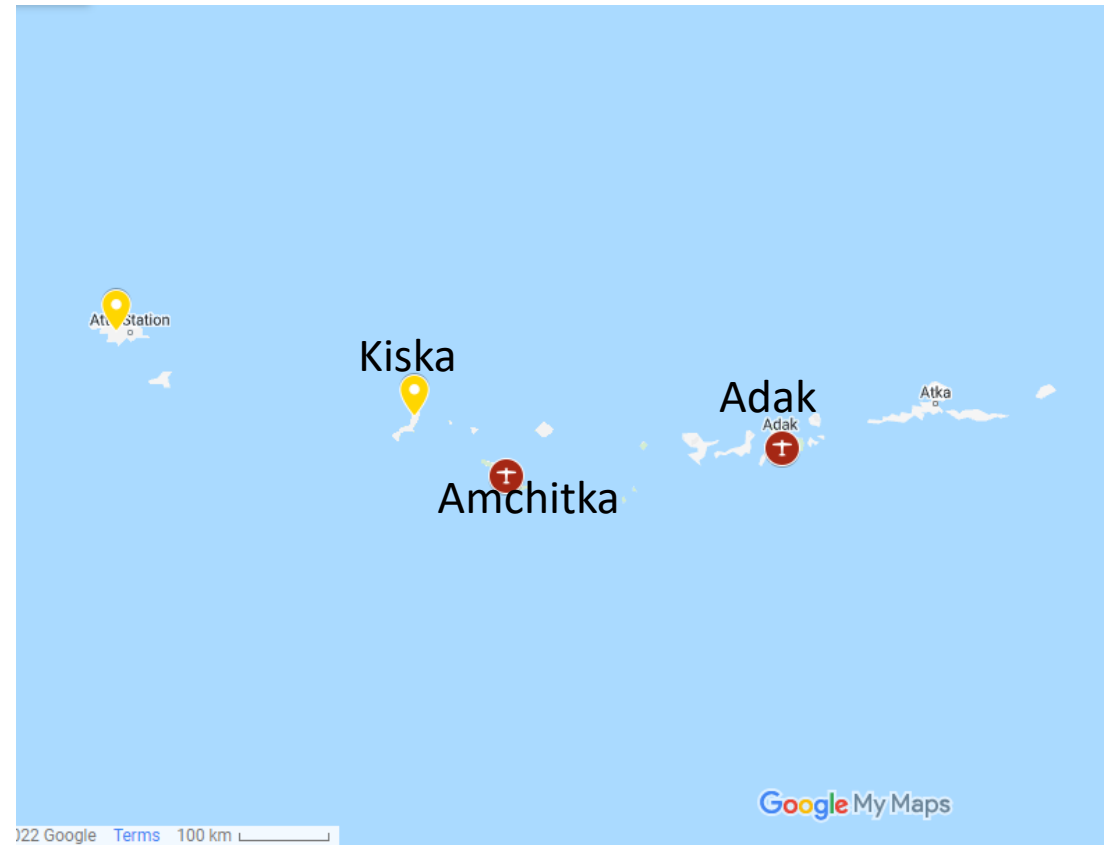


April - North West Area

- No. 13 Squadron, equipped with obsolescent Hudsons, flew only six sorties in April, after which it moved south to Canberra to rest and re-form after having been continuously on service since December 1941. The 380th (American) Bombardment Group, then arriving in Australia, had been assigned to reinforce the North Western Area and would considerably strengthen the bombing effort of the area when it moved to Fenton and began operations.
- Out 12 Hudsons – 214 knots, range 850 nmi with 1,400 lb bomb load.
- In 32 B24s – 258 knots, range 1,340 nmi with 2,700 lbs bomb load.

April - Aleutians

- During March our air operations had been stepped up to an extent which permitted 39 raids to be made on Kiska during the month.
- In early April, however, a spell of stormy weather with winds up to 108 m.p.h. grounded all planes for five days.
- Nevertheless, by the 21st Kiska had been attacked 83 times, and by the end of the month 640 tons of bombs had been dropped.



April - Aleutians

- Admiral McMorris' striking group had lost the services of the Salt Lake City, Bailey, Dale, and Monaghan, but had been strengthened by the assignment of the Santa Fe, Detroit, Bancroft, Caldwell, Edwards, Frazier, and Gansevoort.
- During April it operated westward and north westward of Attu, to prevent supplies and reinforcements reaching the western islands. The last ship known to have reached Attu was the Kankyo Maru (3,200 tons) which arrived and departed on 25 March.
- It is believed that after the Battle of the Komandorskis no enemy ships, except submarines, ran the blockade, but there was the continuing threat that the attempt would be made.



The U.S. Navy light cruiser USS Santa Fe (CL-60) at sea during the Philippines campaign, 12 December 1944. A Cleveland class “light cruiser” with 12 six inch guns but a bigger ship than the “heavy cruiser” Salt Lake City with 10 eight inch guns.

April - Air

- After their first engagements in February and March, in April there had been a lull for the Spitfire squadrons.
- No. 457 Squadron's report for April said:
- "This month has been a heavy strain on the patience of both air and ground crews. Lack of action and days of monotonous routine and hot weather tend to make the squadron personnel a little restless ... Aeroplane serviceability is high."



No. 457 Squadron ground crew push a Spitfire into its dispersal bay at Livingstone Airfield during February 1943

1 May COIC

(11) ENEMY FORCES

- (1) Gilberts Area - Phosphate industrial installations on Nauru were attacked shortly before noon 21/4 by 22 Liberators. Extensive damage was inflicted. Enemy fighters were encountered: 5 Zero's were shot down and 7 possibly destroyed. Washington announces that on Friday 23/4, army bombers attacked Tarawa in the Gilberts. Other sources state that Liberators inflicted severe damage to the aerodrome area at Tarawa.
- It is thought that Tarawa was the base from which enemy bombers conducted the previously reported attack on Funafuti before dawn 23/4.

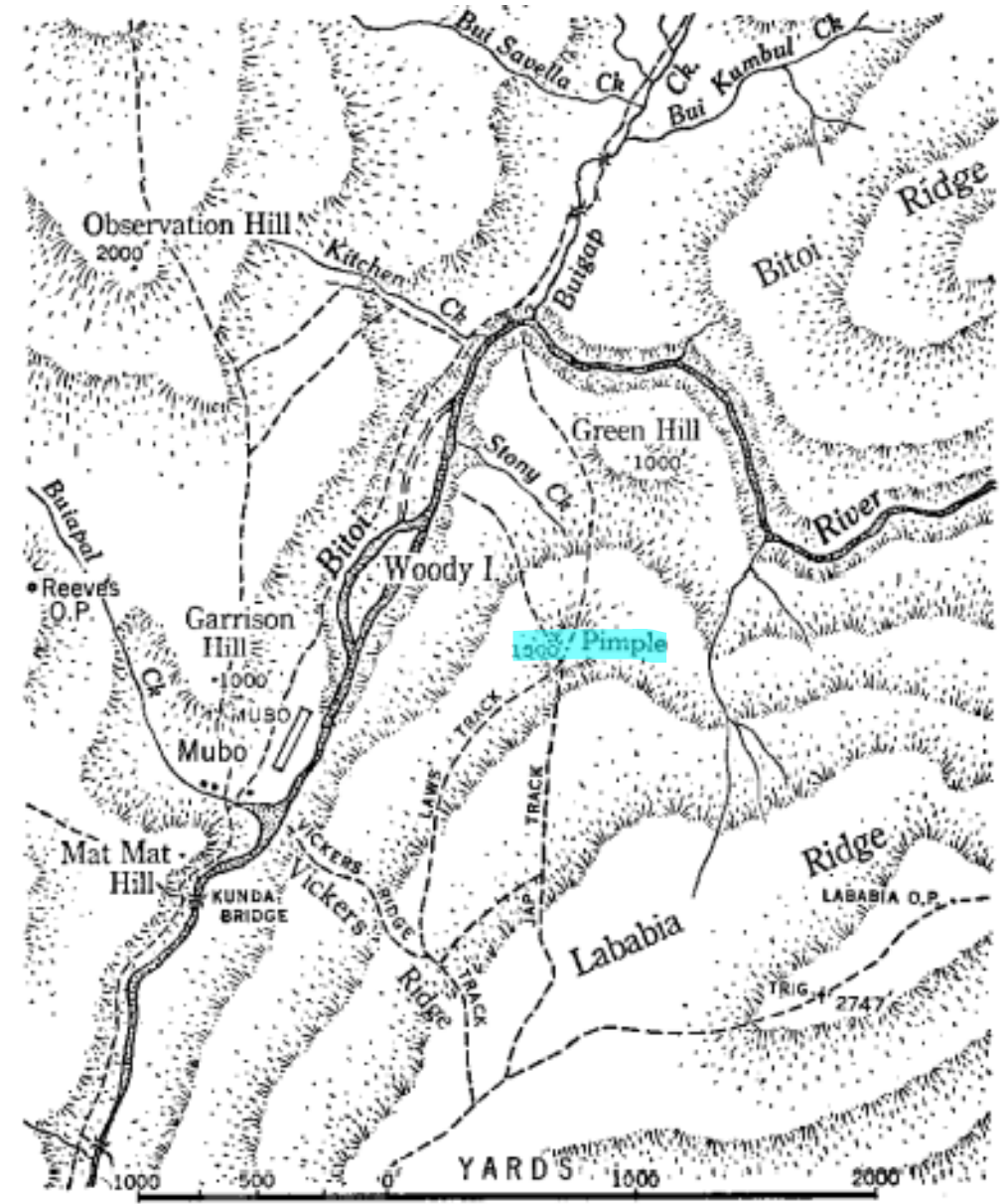
1 May

- The auxiliary gunboat, Keishin Maru, was sunk in the Pacific Ocean off Iwaki (37°04'N 140°06'E) by USS Pogy with the loss of one crewman.



1 May

- By 30th April Captain Tatterson's company had relieved Dinsmore's, in front of the Pimple.
- On 1st May Guinn gave Tatterson's company an opportunity to dispose of the Pimple when he ordered it to "attack and consolidate Pimple area".
- Guinn estimated that there were 40 Japanese there with at least three machine-guns. A plan for air support was carefully worked out whereby aircraft would bomb the Pimple every day until 2nd May when, instead of bombing the Pimple, they would make deceptive passes over it, dropping bombs on Green Hill well ahead of the attacking infantry.
- The mountain battery would complete the deception by firing smoke concentration on the Pimple each day. It was hoped that the Japanese would have vacated the Pimple on 2nd May just as they had done on 27th April.



2 May COIC

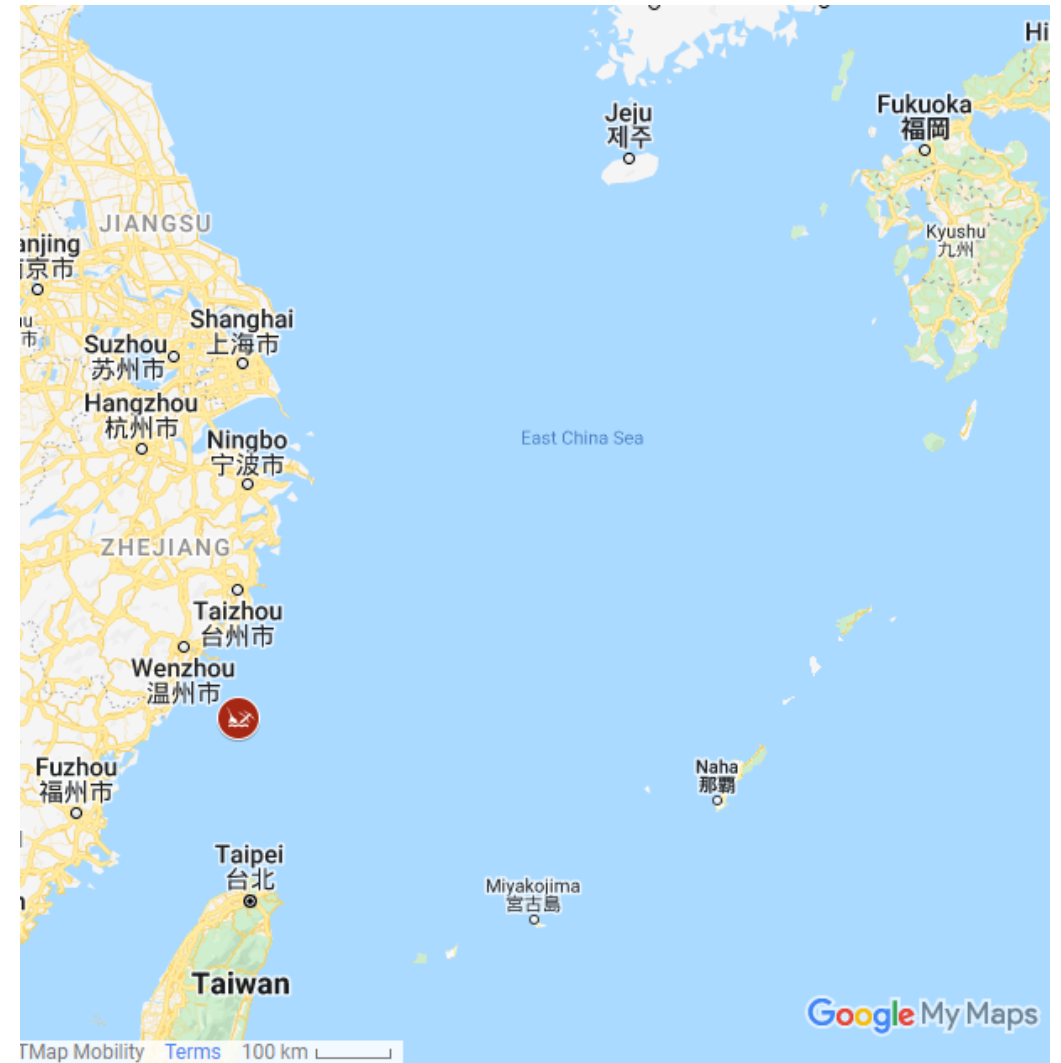
- (1) Tonga Group - There were indications of an enemy unit in position 20°S 178°9' E. (170-230 miles W.N.W. of Tonga Tabu) at 2004/30, and again at 1944/1. This is in the same vicinity in which an unsuccessful torpedo attack was reported on allied shipping at 1744/30.

NAVAL INCIDENTS

Brisbane - A Catalina conducting A/S patrol for "WILLARD A. HOLBROOK" escorted by USS. "BAGLEY" for Brisbane, sighted a possible submarine at 2111/1 in position 26°57'S. 157°17'E. (approximately 170 miles E. by N. of Brisbane). Two depth charges were dropped, but no further evidence of the submarine has been reported.

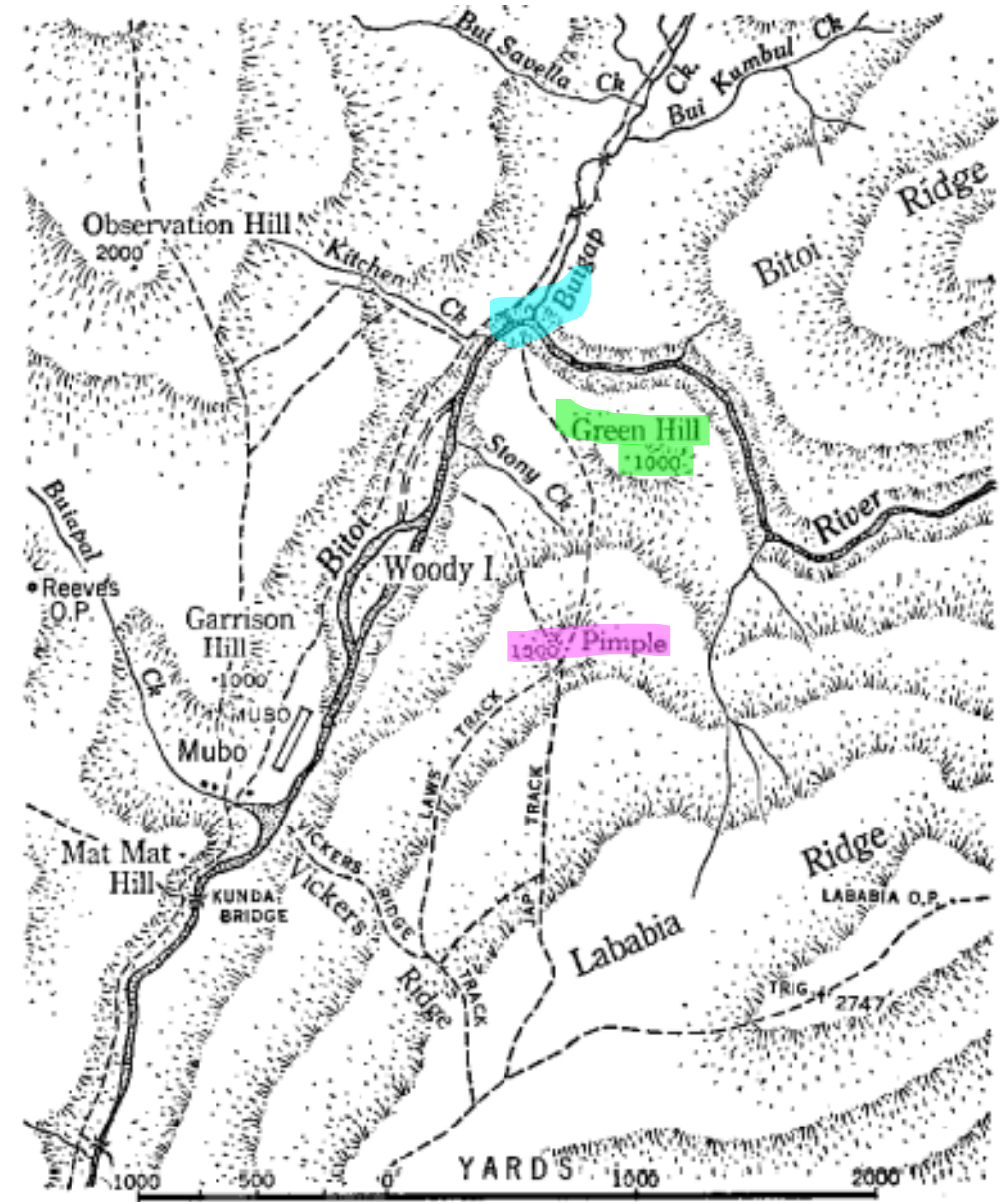
2 May

- The Japanese Navy transport, Tamon Maru, was torpedoed and sunk in the Pacific Ocean (27°18'N 121°38'E) by USS Stingray. Eighty-one crewmen were killed.



2 May

- At 10.25 on the morning of the 2nd six Bostons strafed Green Hill and the junction of the Bitoi and Buigap Creek and, as a further deception and a signal for Tatterson to advance, the mountain battery fired four rounds on to the Pimple area.
- Tatterson's company left its start-line but soon afterwards the right-hand platoon was fired on.
- It became apparent that the Japanese had indeed vacated the Pimple during the air strike, but had moved not back but forward on to the southern slopes.
- The men were forced to withdraw after two had been killed and three wounded.



- Thanks for your attention.

Anti War Movements

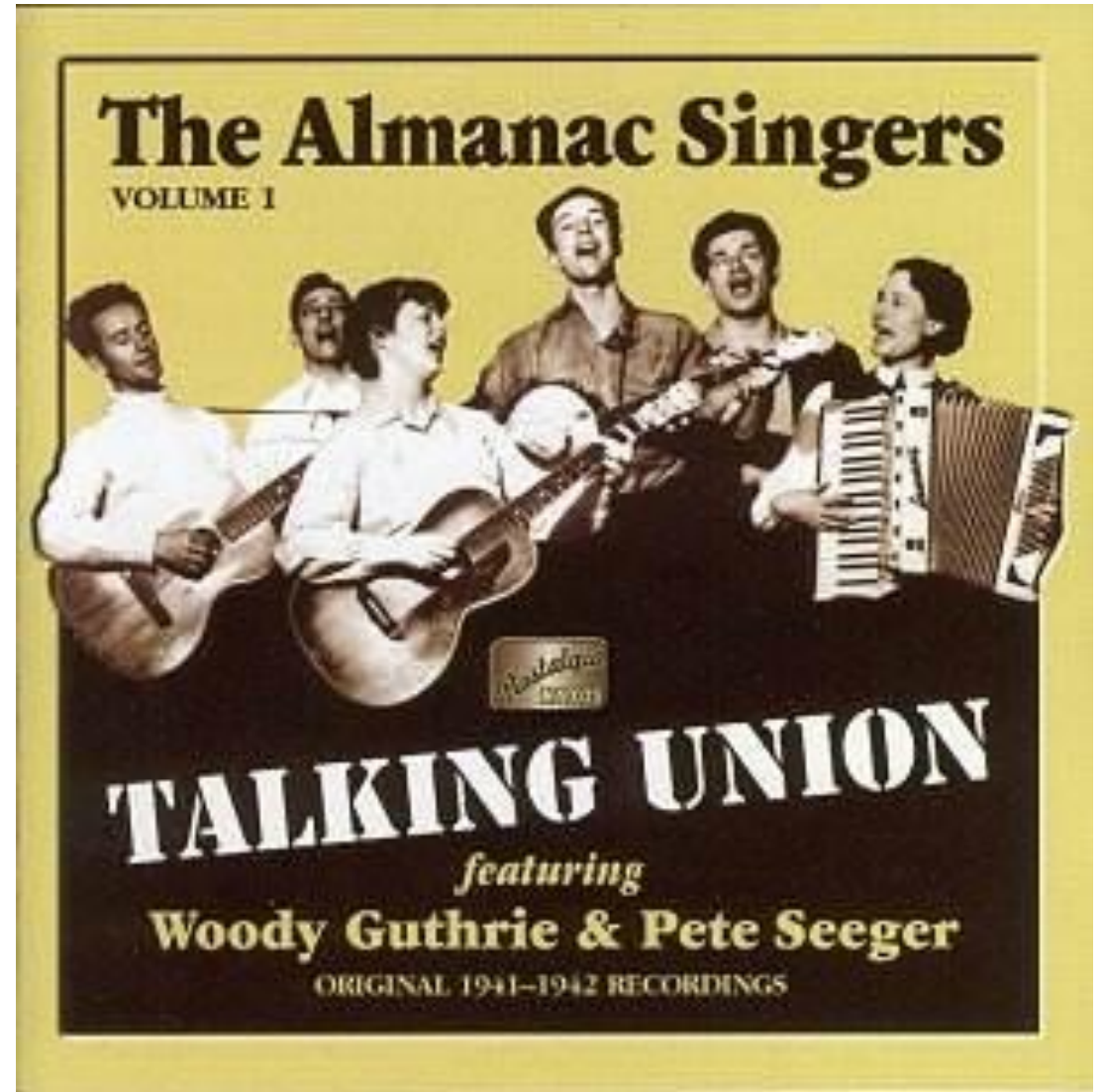
Anti War Movements

- Antiwar campaigns are often fronted and possibly led by popular celebrities like musicians.
- Like Pete Seeger
- [Down By The Riverside Pete Seeger 7 24 1963 – YouTube](#)
- There you have it. Pete's a lovely feller, great entertainer and doesn't want to study war no more.
- Its worth going through Pete's back catalogue to see how he got to his current 1963 position.



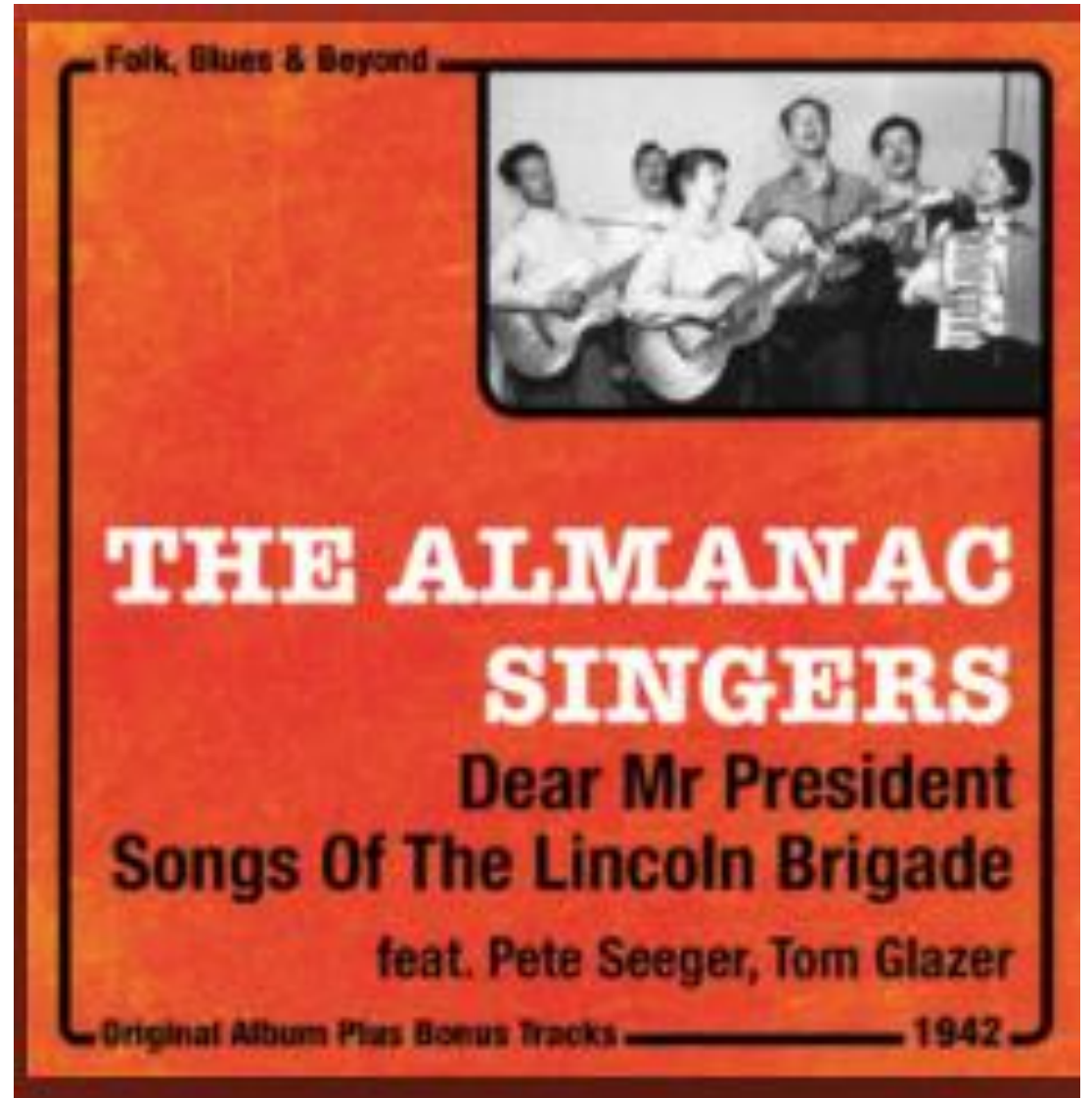
Anti War Movements

- In 1940 and 1941 Pete was a member of the Almanac singers.
- You can see him there in the middle of the picture and you can hear his banjo in the middle of the track.
- Track 3. Ballad of October 16th.
- [The Almanac Singers - Ballad Of October 16th – YouTube](#)
- Roosevelt's original conscription law passed on 16th October 1940.



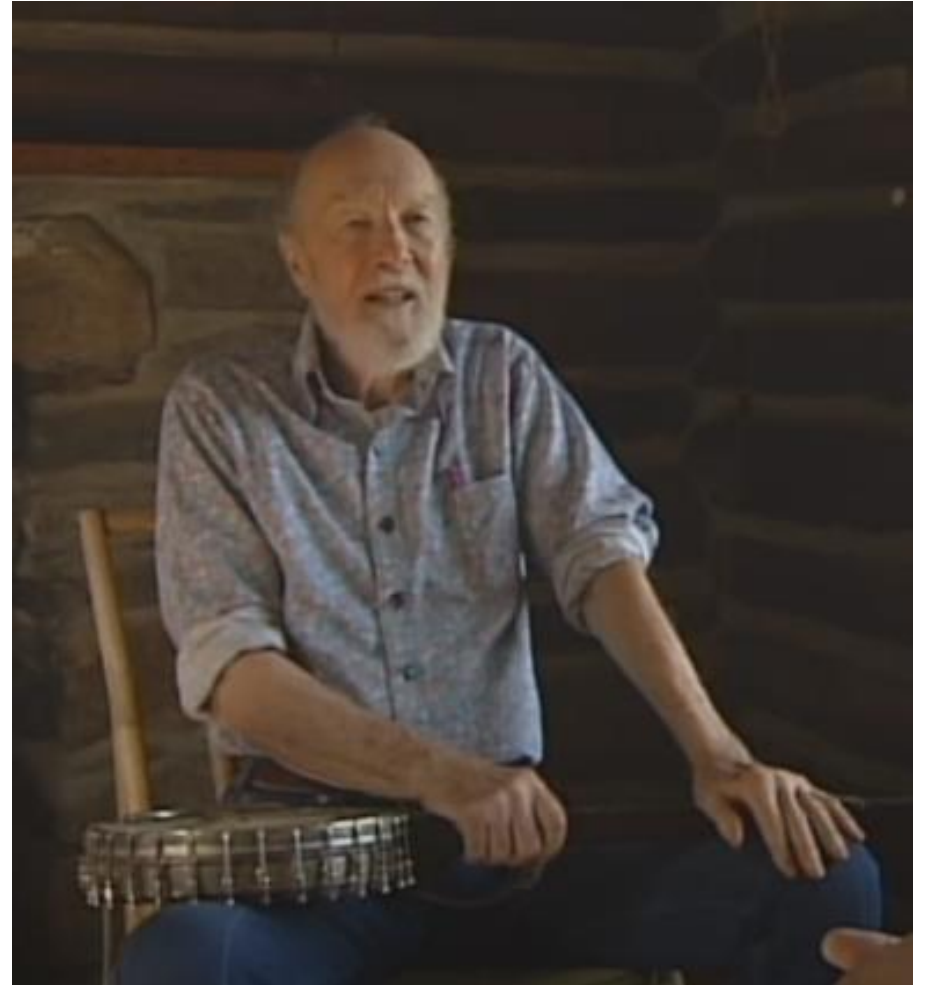
Anti War Movements

- On this album dated 1942 Pete has significantly changed his tune about the President's actions to protect the Union.
- Track 1. Dear Mr President
- [Dear Mr. President \(feat. Pete Seeger\) - YouTube](#)



Anti War Movements

- You might assume that this change of tune was related to the fact that Japan had attacked the United States.
- Pete will explain.
- [Pete Seeger talks about The Almanac Singers, etc. \(2006\) – YouTube](#)
- So there you have it.
- The antiwar movement is not against all wars.
- Wars against their enemies are good and necessary.
- My view is that it wasn't Churchill who flipfopped in 1941 it was Stalin.
- I still enjoy the music.



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