

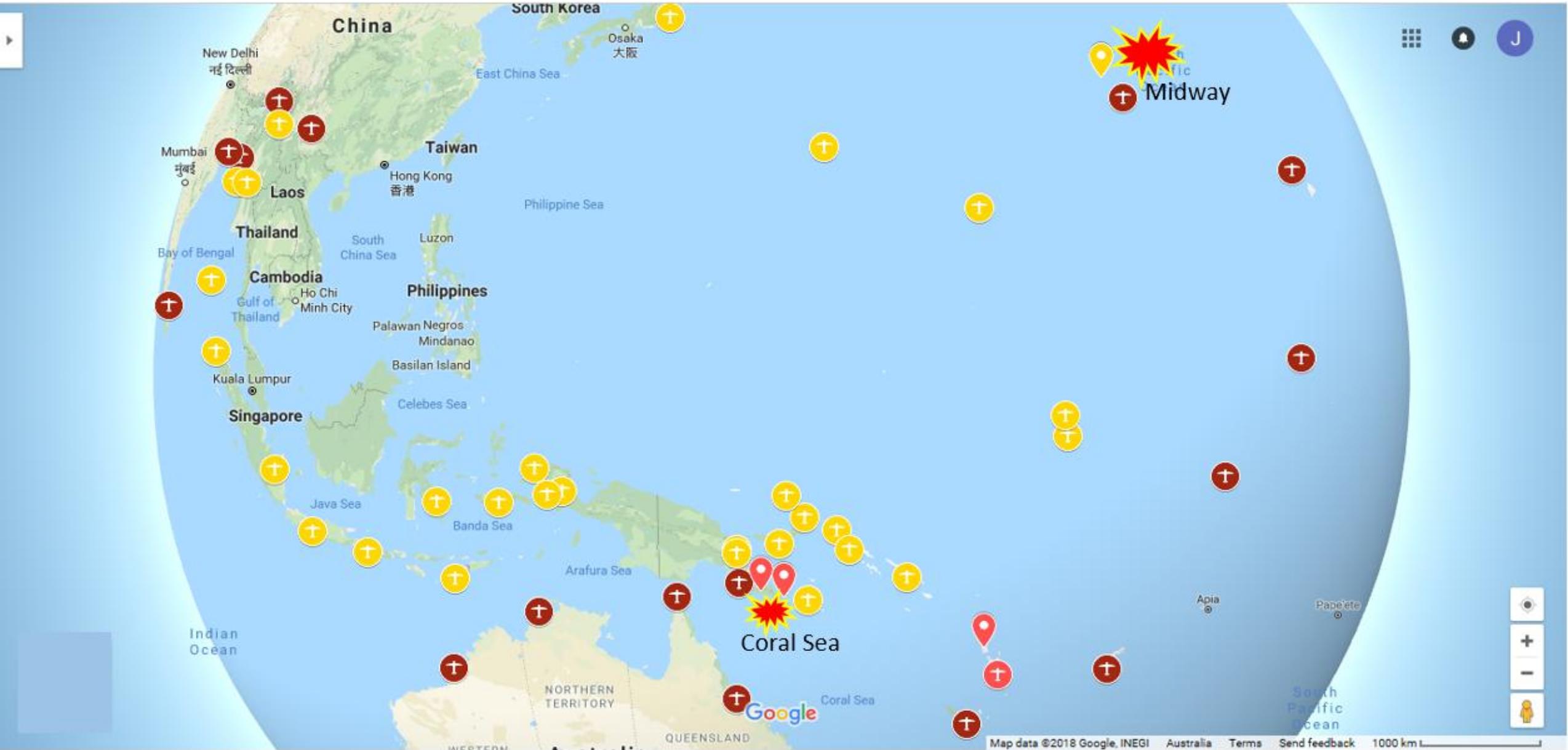
The War in the Pacific 3

From Lae to Tokyo Bay

2 Background

The Critical Campaigns





10 July 1942 - 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 1942 - 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



26/7 July 1942 -Kokoda

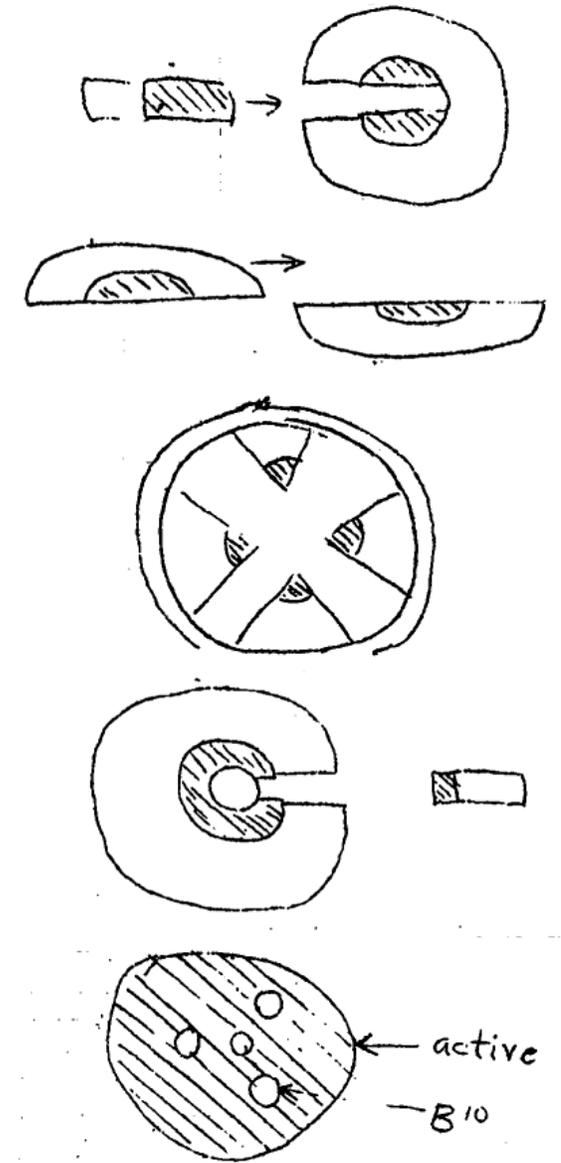
26 July - Templeton's two platoons and the remnants of the Papuans were surrounded by the Japanese at Oivi. Greatly outnumbered and approaching a state of exhaustion, Watson, commanding after the death of Templeton, led the whole group out to the south where the fewest Japanese were thought to be. He 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.



July 1942 - Manhattan Project

- July: Physicist Robert Oppenheimer convenes a summer conference at the University of California, Berkeley to discuss the design of a fission bomb.
- The properties of pure uranium-235 were relatively unknown, as were those of plutonium, which had only been isolated by Glenn Seaborg and his team in February 1941. The scientists at the July 1942 conference envisioned creating plutonium in nuclear reactors where uranium-238 atoms absorbed neutrons that had been emitted from fissioning uranium-235.
- At this point no reactor had been built, and only tiny quantities of plutonium were available from cyclotrons. Even by December 1943, only two milligrams had been produced.
- Edward Teller brings up the possibility of a hydrogen bomb as a major point of discussion.
- Photo: Different fission bomb assembly methods explored during the July 1942 conference (sketches created in 1943 by Robert Serber)



July 1942 - Manhattan Project

- The raw ore was dissolved in nitric acid to produce uranyl nitrate, which was processed into uranium trioxide, which was reduced to highly pure uranium dioxide.
- By July 1942, Mallinckrodt was producing a ton of highly pure oxide a day, but turning this into uranium metal initially proved more difficult.
- Production was too slow and quality was unacceptably low.
- A branch of the Metallurgical Laboratory was established at Iowa State College in Ames, Iowa, under Frank Spedding (photo), a renowned expert on rare earth elements, to investigate alternatives. This became known as the Ames Project.



3 August 1942 - Manhattan Project

- Marshall and Nichols discovered that the electromagnetic isotope separation process would require 5,000 tons of copper, which was in desperately short supply.
- However, silver could be substituted, in an 11:10 copper to silver ratio.
- On 3 August 1942, Nichols met with Under Secretary of the Treasury Daniel W. Bell and asked for the transfer of 6,000 tons of silver bullion from the West Point Bullion Depository. Ultimately 14,700 tons were used.
- The 31 kg silver bars were cast into cylindrical billets, extruded into strips, and wound onto magnetic coils.



Calutron silver coils prior to their being melted down and returned to the US Treasury.

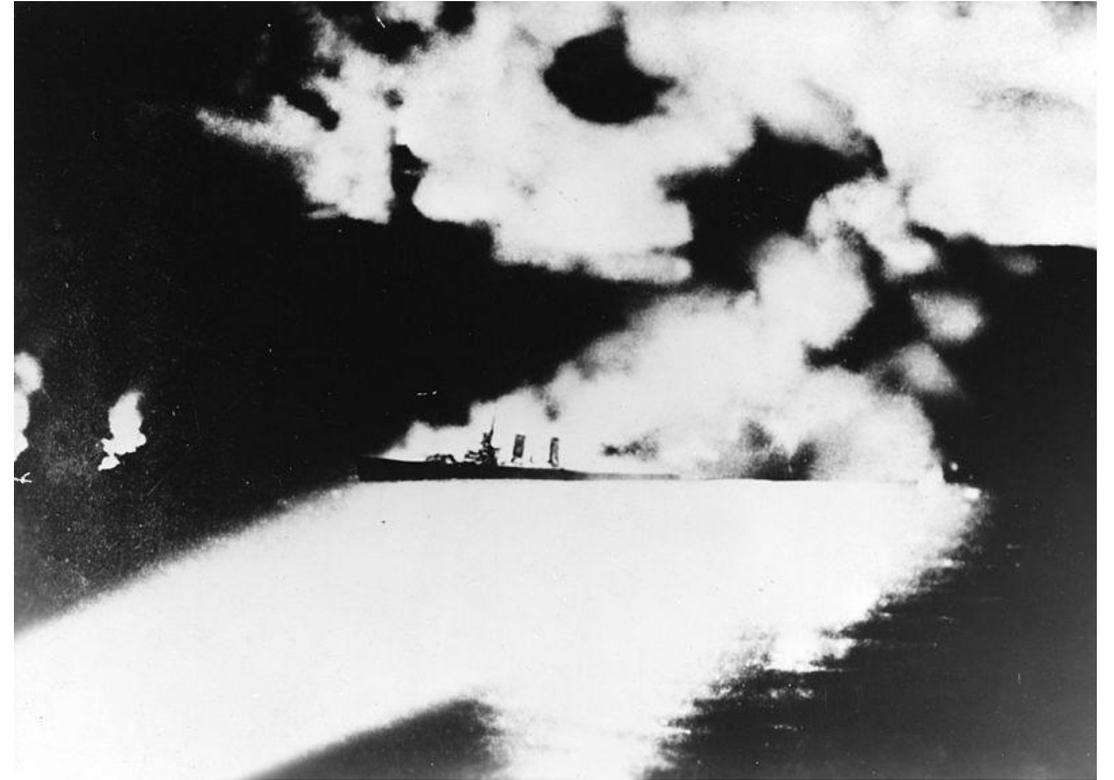
7 August 1942 - Guadalcanal

- 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 1942 - 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.

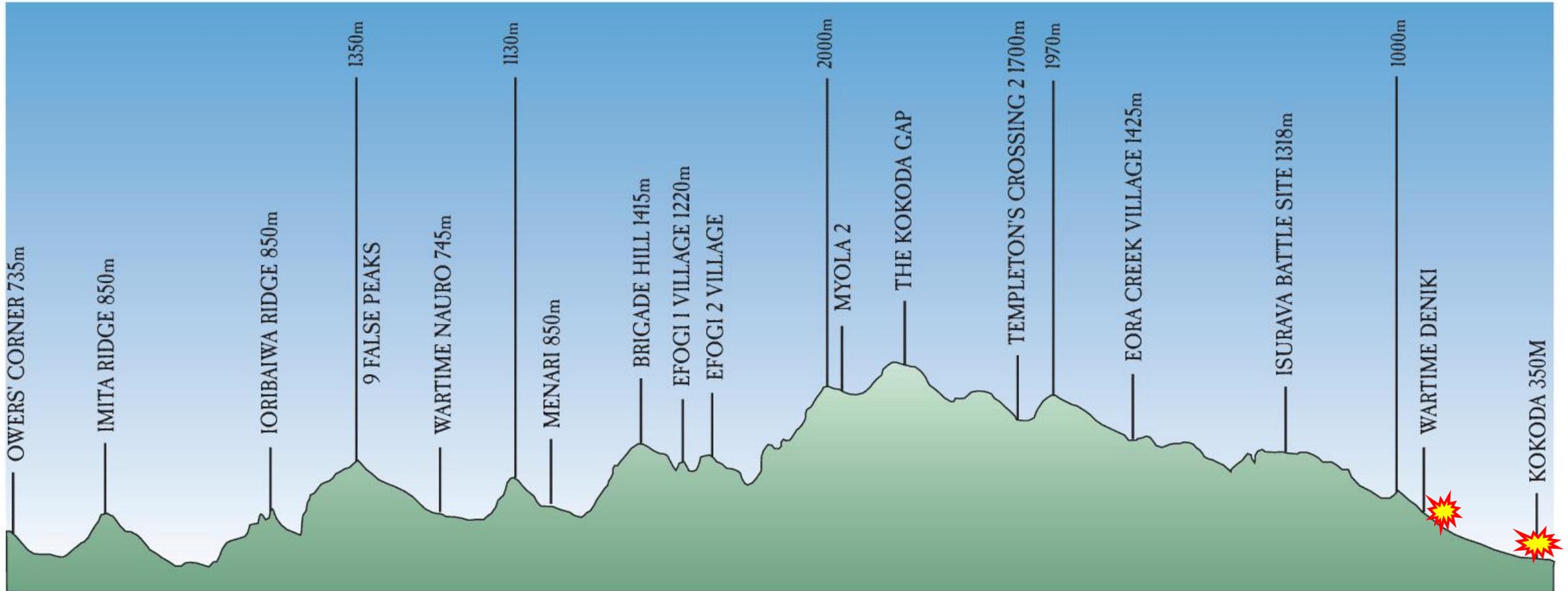


Quincy caught in Japanese searchlights, moments before sinking off Savo Island, on 9 August 1942

Situation - 9 August



9 August – Kokoda



OWEN STANLEY RANGE - KOKODA TRACK

12 August 1942 – Air Defence

- In the US the National Defense Research Committee focused on radio fuzes for use with anti-aircraft artillery, where acceleration was up to 20,000 g as opposed to about 100 g for rockets. In addition to extreme acceleration, artillery shells were spun by the rifling of the gun barrels to close to 30,000 rpm, creating immense centrifugal force.
- The NDRC assigned the task to the physicist Merle Tuve at the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism. Work on the radio shell fuze was completed by Tuve's group, known as Section T, at The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab.
- Working with Western Electric Company and Raytheon, miniature hearing-aid tubes were modified to withstand this extreme stress.
- A simulated battle conditions test was started on 12 August 1942. USS Cleveland tested proximity-fuzed ammunition against radio-controlled drone aircraft targets over Chesapeake Bay.
- The tests were to be conducted over two days, but the testing stopped when all the drones were destroyed early on the first day. The three drones were destroyed with just four projectiles.

12 August 1942 – Air Defence

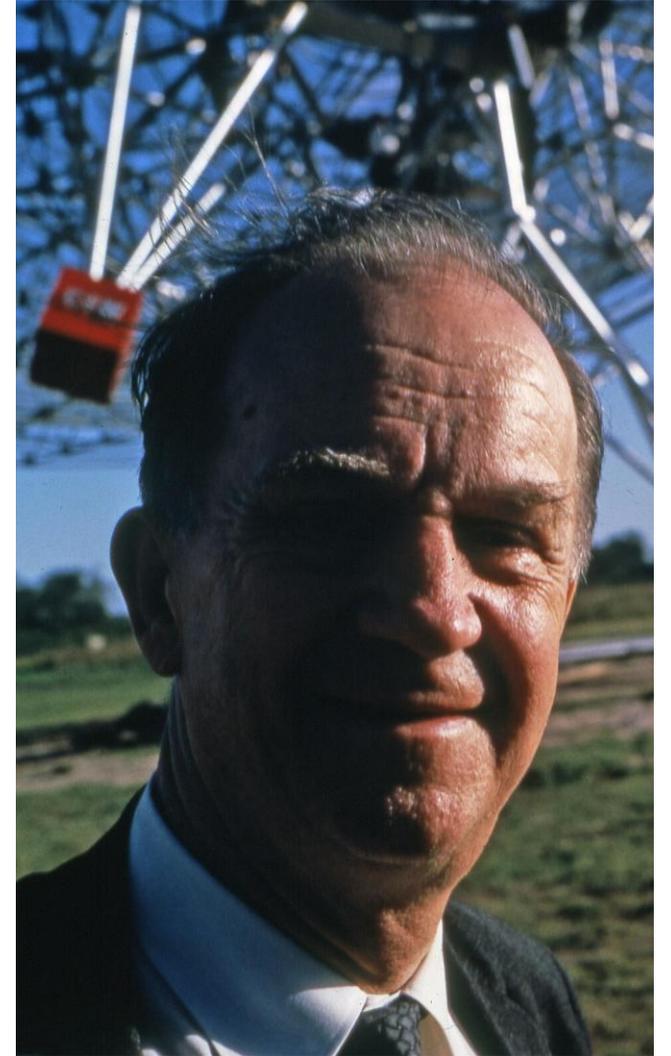
- Defence committed to spending \$60 million for VT fuzes in 1942,
- The first large scale production of tubes for the new fuzes was at a General Electric plant in Cleveland, Ohio formerly used for making Christmas-tree lamps. Fuze assembly was completed at General Electric plants in Schenectady, New York and Bridgeport, Connecticut.
- Over 100 American companies were mobilized to build some 20 million shell fuzes.
- Production of Naval fuzes was contracted to the Wurlitzer company at their barrel organ factory in Tonawanda, New York.



Merry-go-round organ by Wurlitzer, 1890-1900

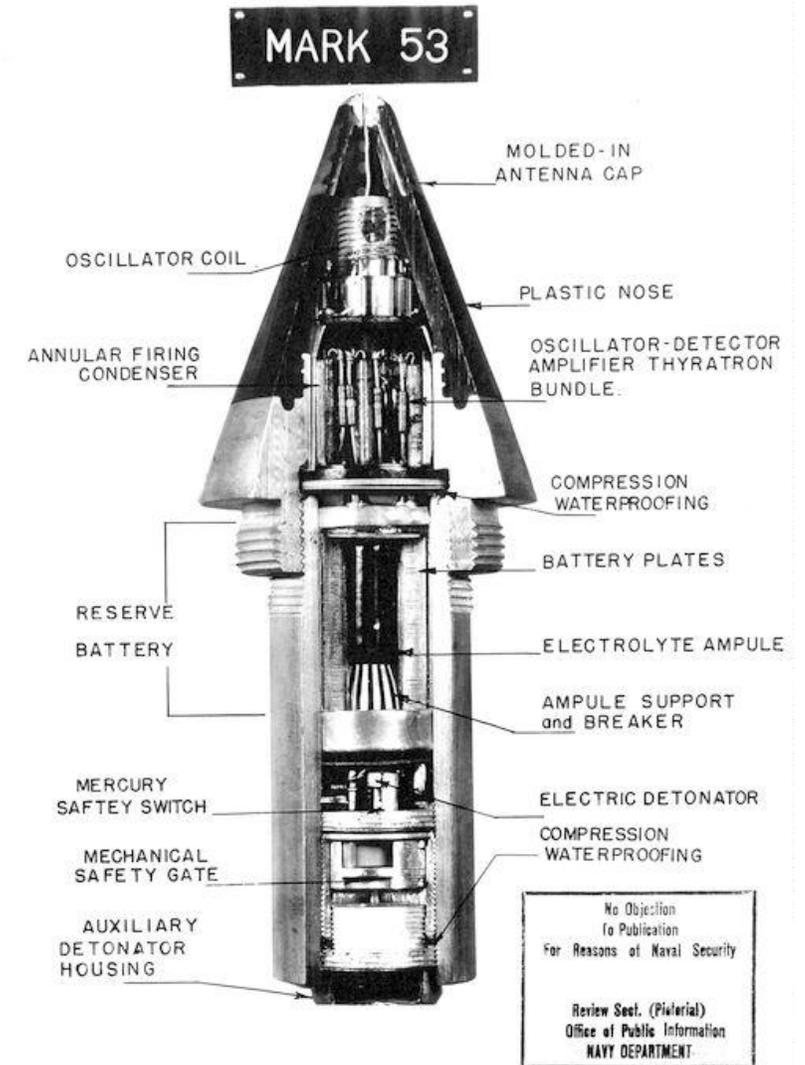
12 August 1942 – Air Defence

- Merle Antony Tuve (June 27, 1901 – May 20, 1982) was an American geophysicist who was the Chairman of Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD) Section T, created in August 1940.
- In his words, "The one outstanding characteristic in this situation is the fact that success of this type of fuze is not dependent on a basic technical idea – all of the ideas are simple and well known everywhere." The critical work of adapting the fuze for anti-aircraft shells was done in the United States, not in England. The fuze design delivered by the Tizard Mission was "not the one we made to work!".



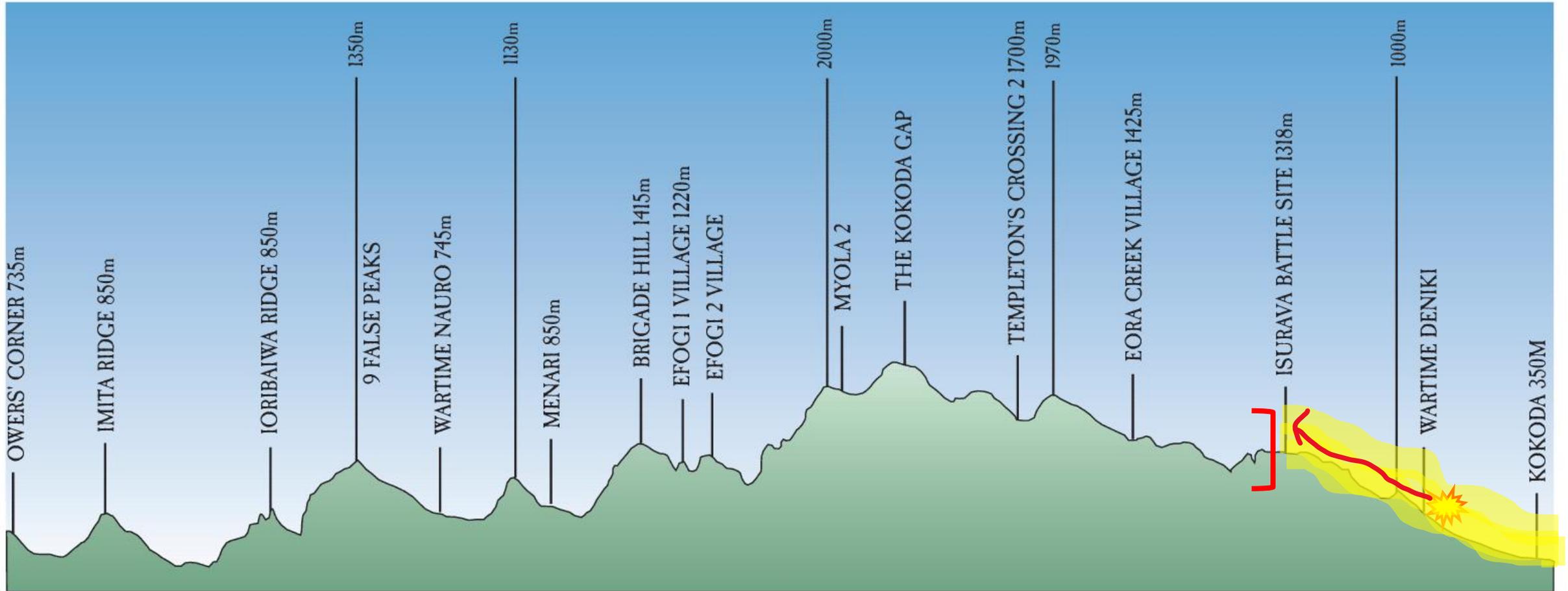
12 August 1942 – Air Defence

- The proximity fuze was one of the most important technological innovations of the War.
- It was so important that it was a secret guarded to a similar level as the atom bomb research, some of which was also taken to America by the Tizard mission.
- The Pentagon refused to allow the use of the fuzes anywhere they might fall into the hands of the Germans.



Proximity fuze MK53 removed from shell. Circa 1950s.

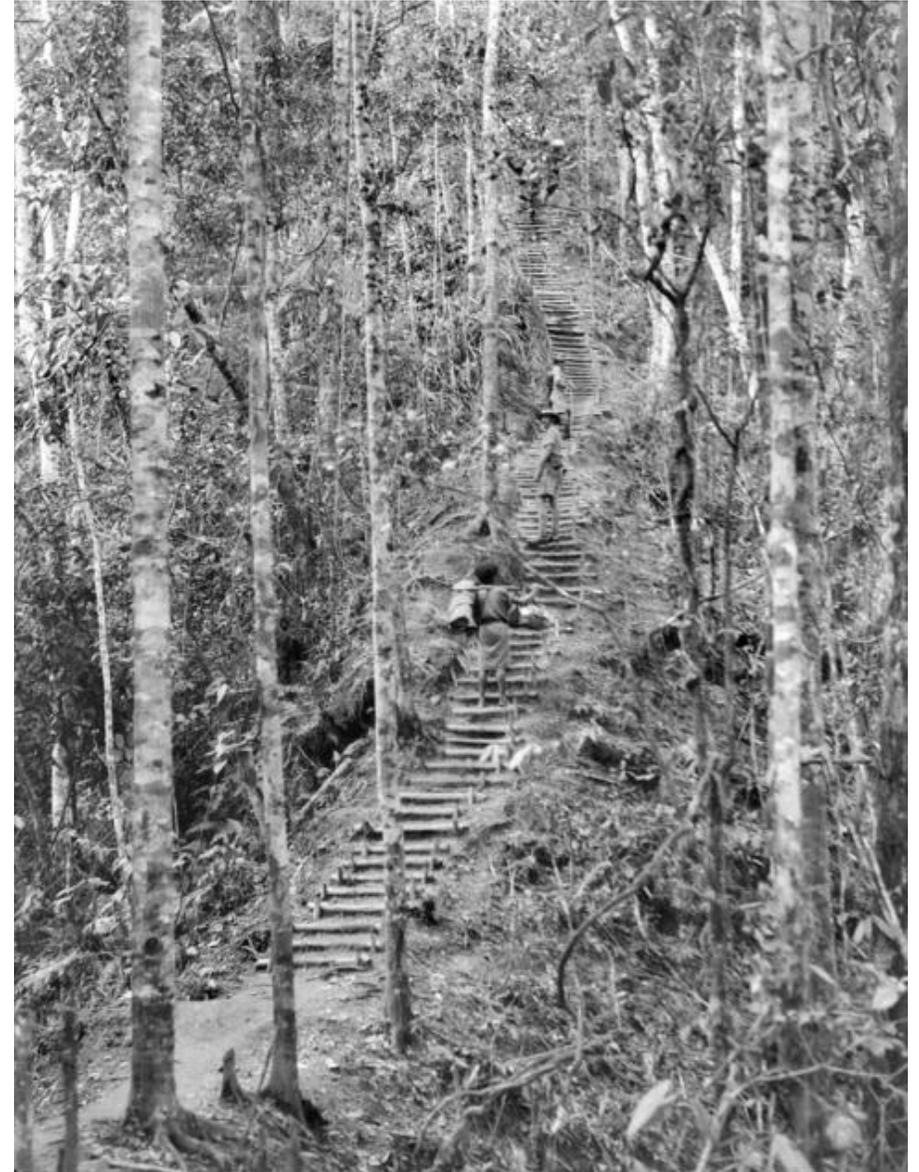
14 August – Kokoda



OWEN STANLEY RANGE - KOKODA TRACK

16 August 1942 - 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.

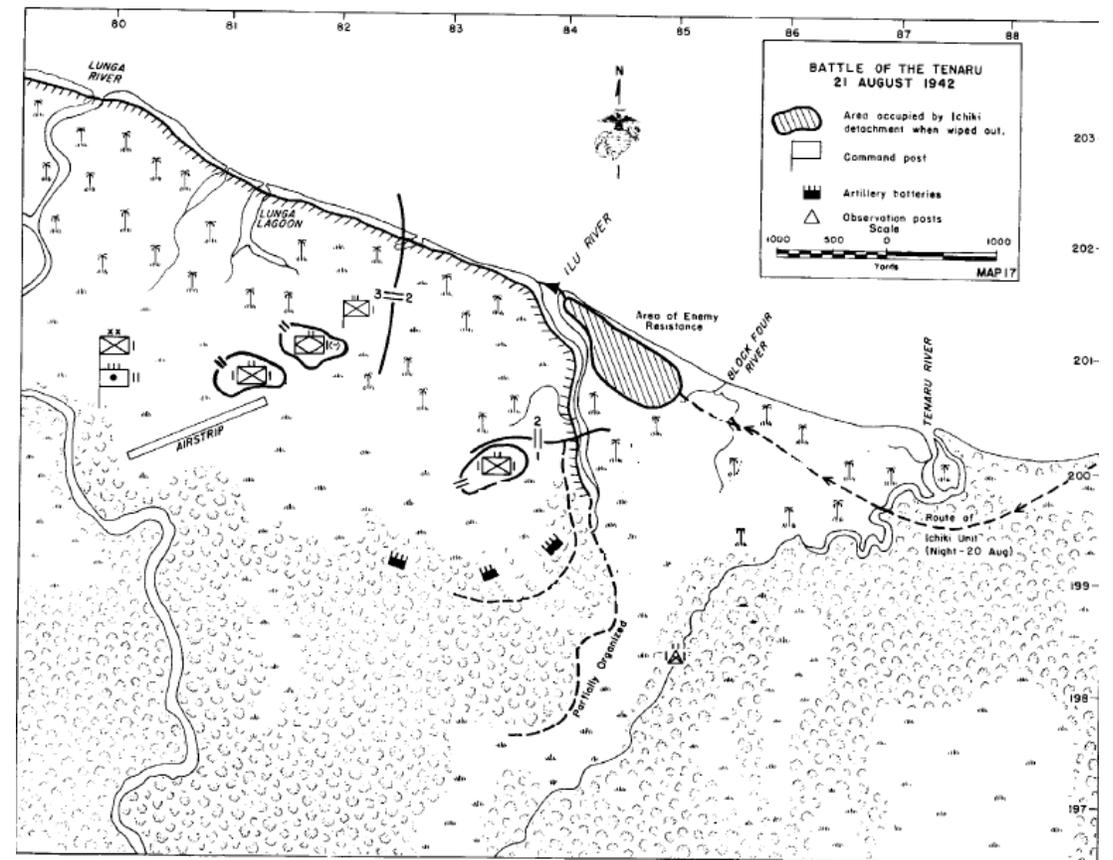


AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

026837

21 August 1942 - Guadalcanal

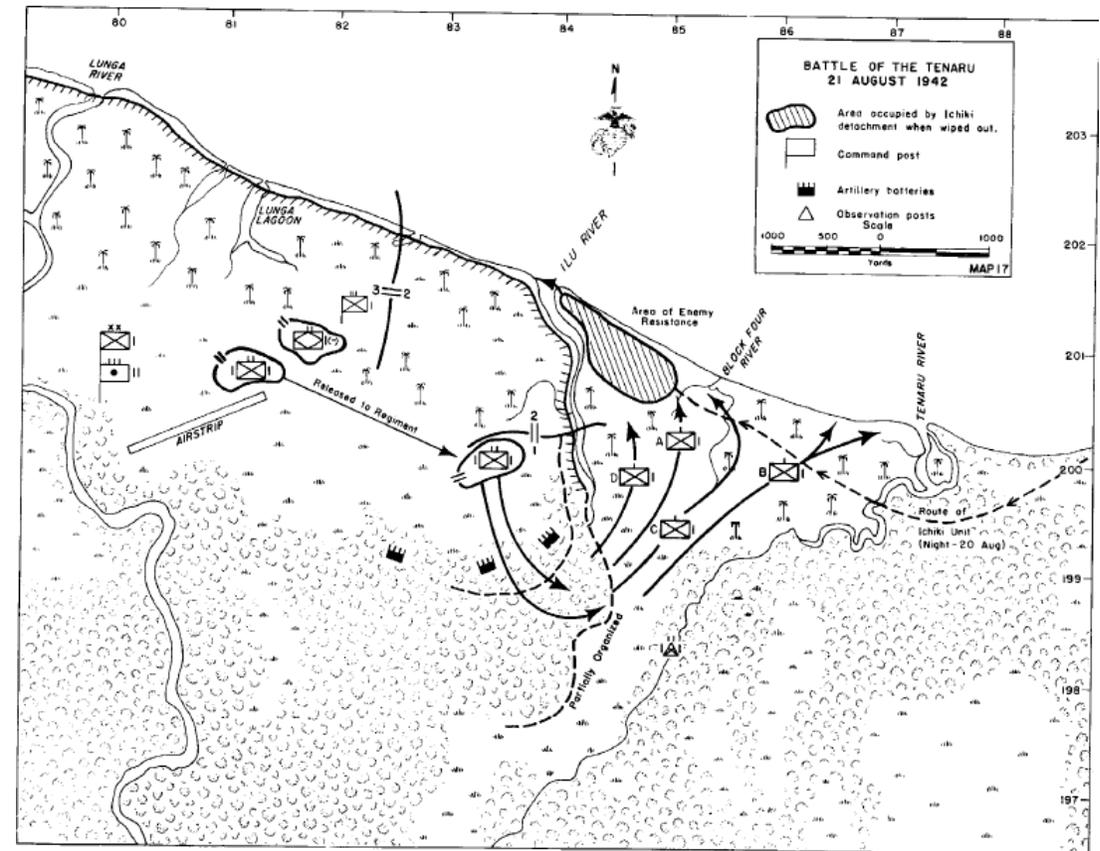
- An American patrol and a Solomon islander coastwatcher, Sergeant Major Vouza, gave some warning of an attack.
- At 0310 a column of some 200 Japanese rushed the exposed sandspit at the river mouth.
 - Most of them were stopped by Marine small arms fire and by a canister-firing 37mm antitank gun.
 - 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 1942 - 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

- 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 1942 - Sea

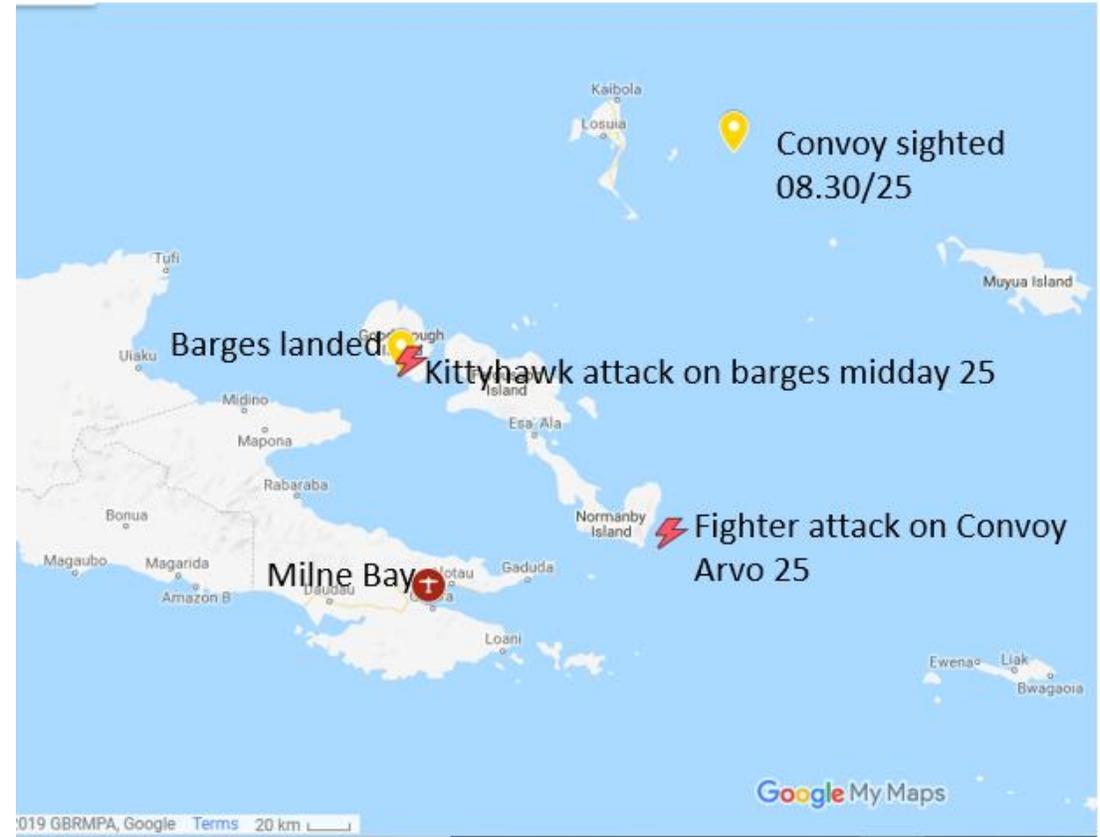
- The two carrier forces clashed in a naval battle off the Eastern Solomons.
- The Americans sighted but, due to failures in communications, failed to attack the Japanese big carriers but did score hits on a light carrier.
- The Japanese found and seriously damaged Enterprise.
- Fighter Direction was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



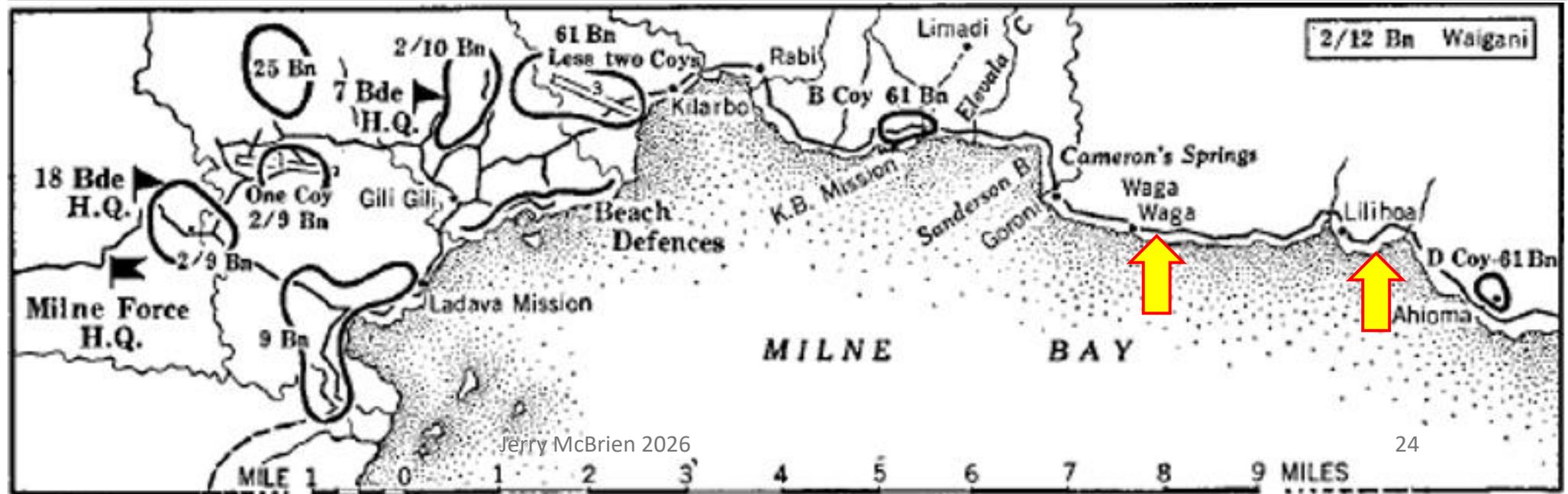
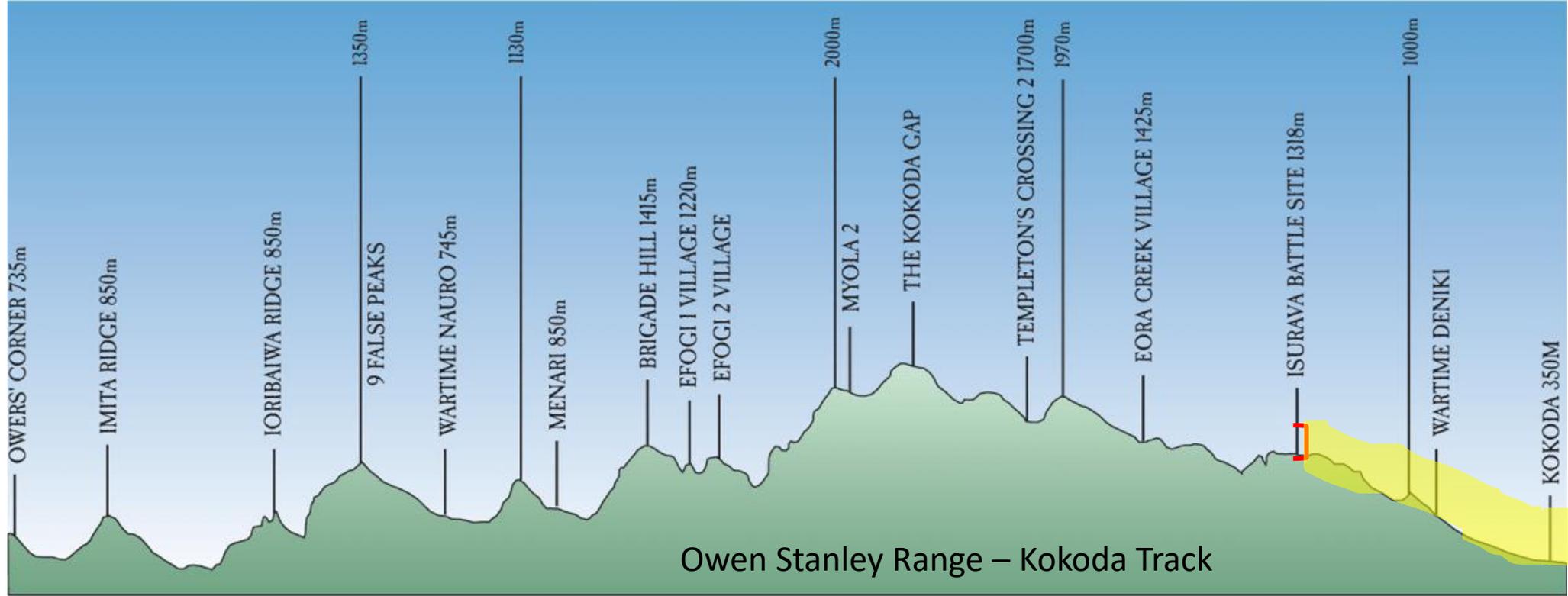
U.S. carriers *Wasp* (foreground), *Saratoga*, and *Enterprise* (background) operating in the Pacific south of Guadalcanal in August 1942.

25 August – Milne Bay

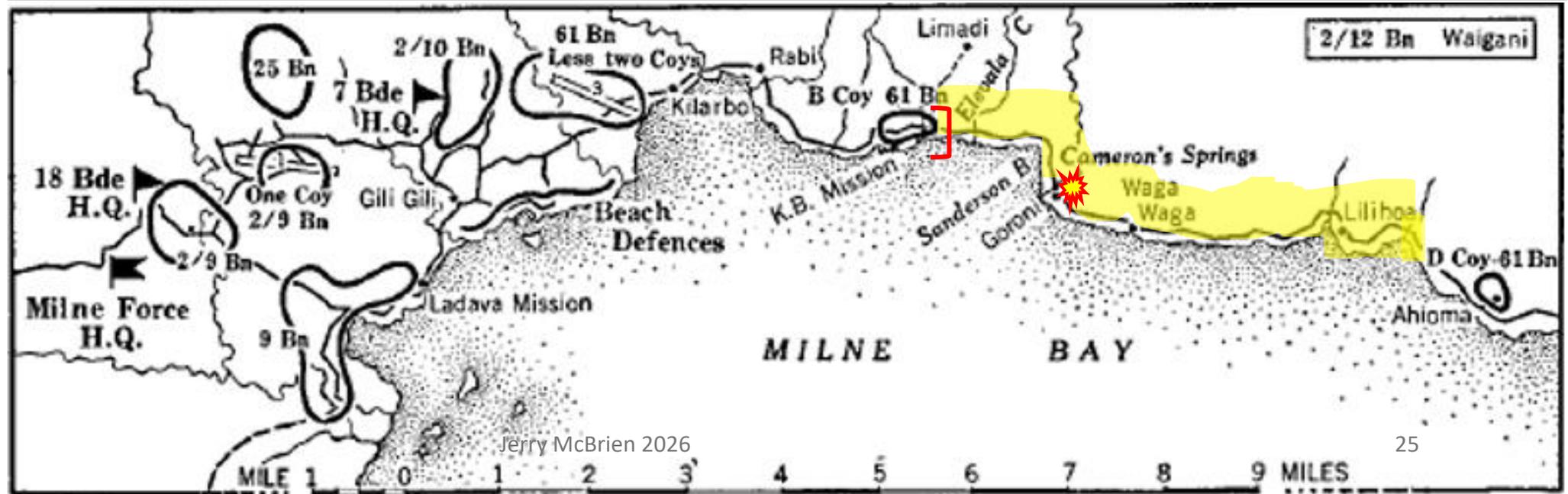
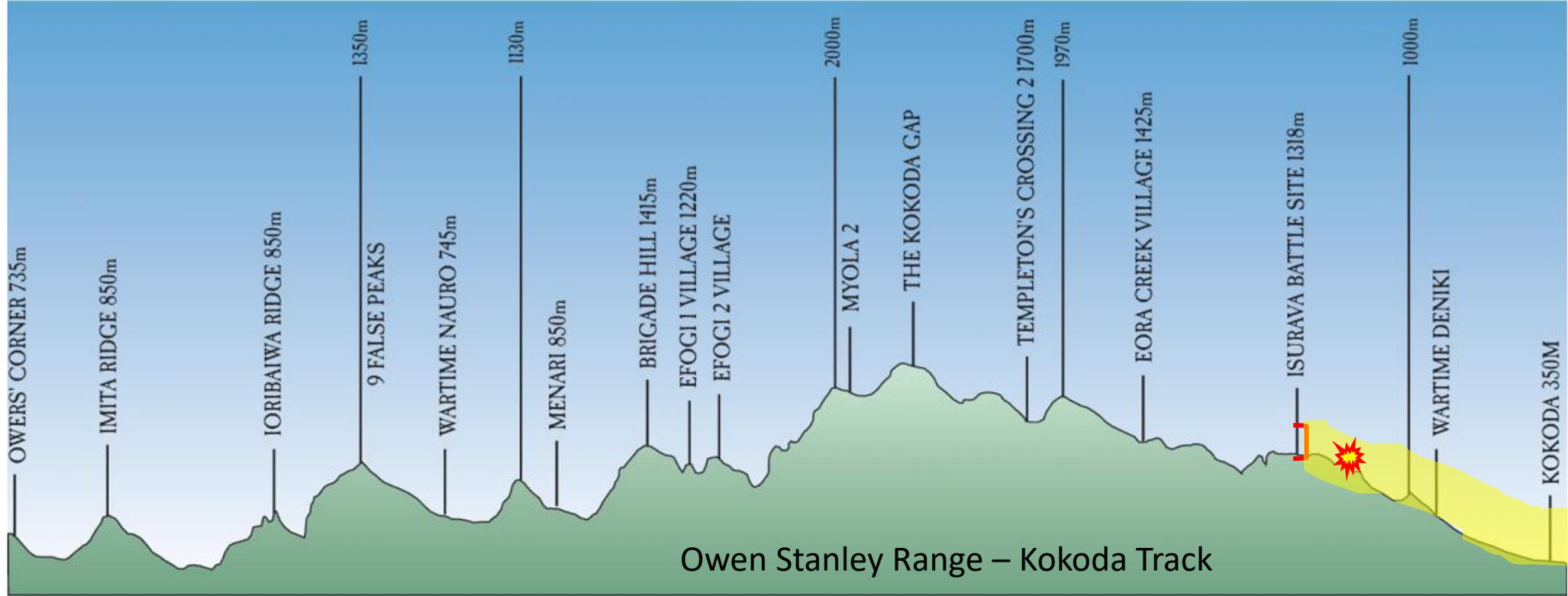
- Barges sighted at Porlock Harbour apparently crossed over to Goodenough Island during the night and landed their troops there. The barges were reported by a coastwatcher at Cape Varieta, on Goodenough Island.
- A force of two transports and seven escorts was sighted by a reconnaissance aircraft at 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.



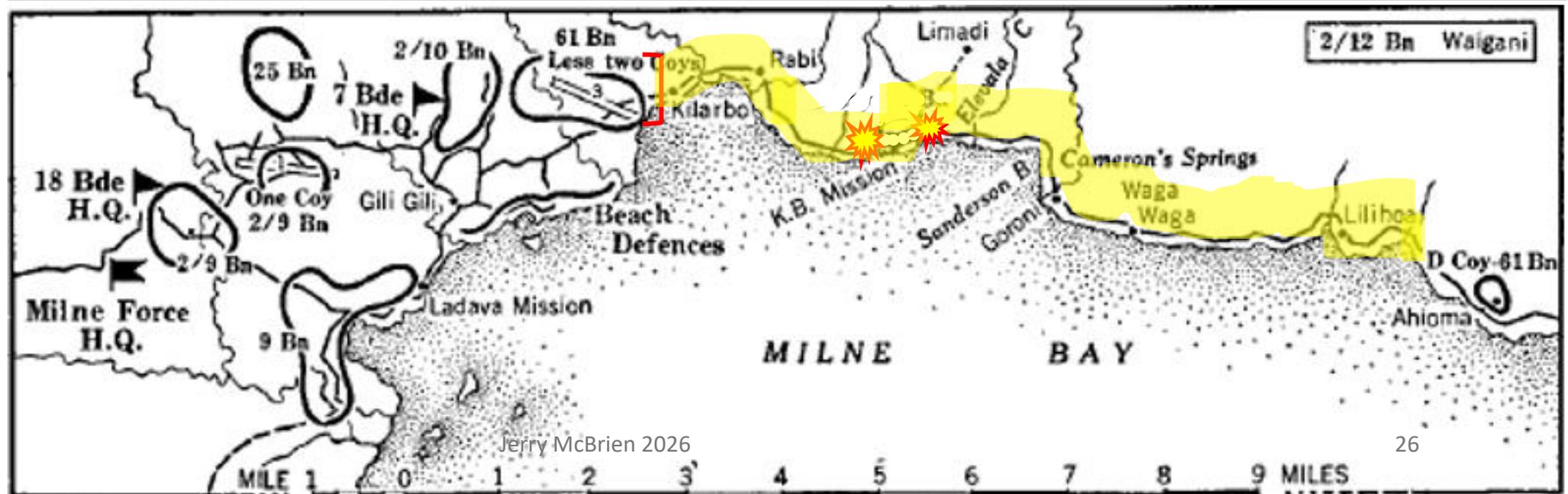
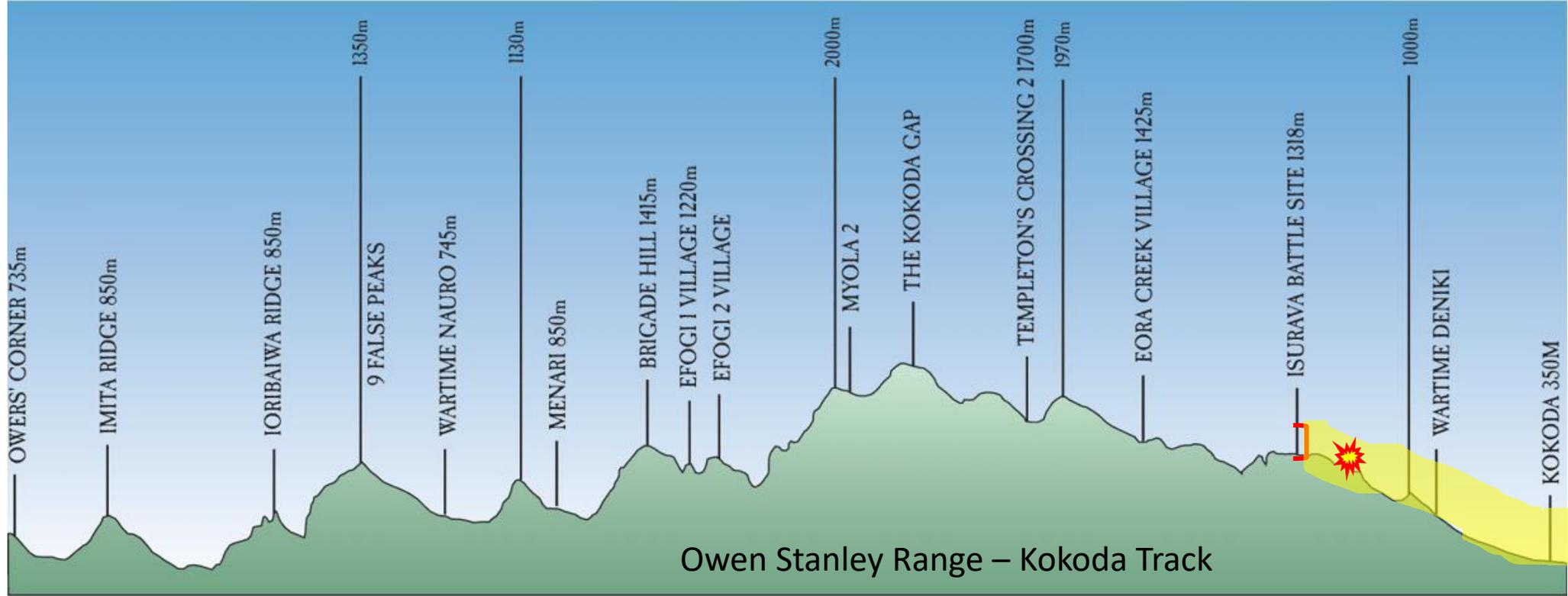
25 August



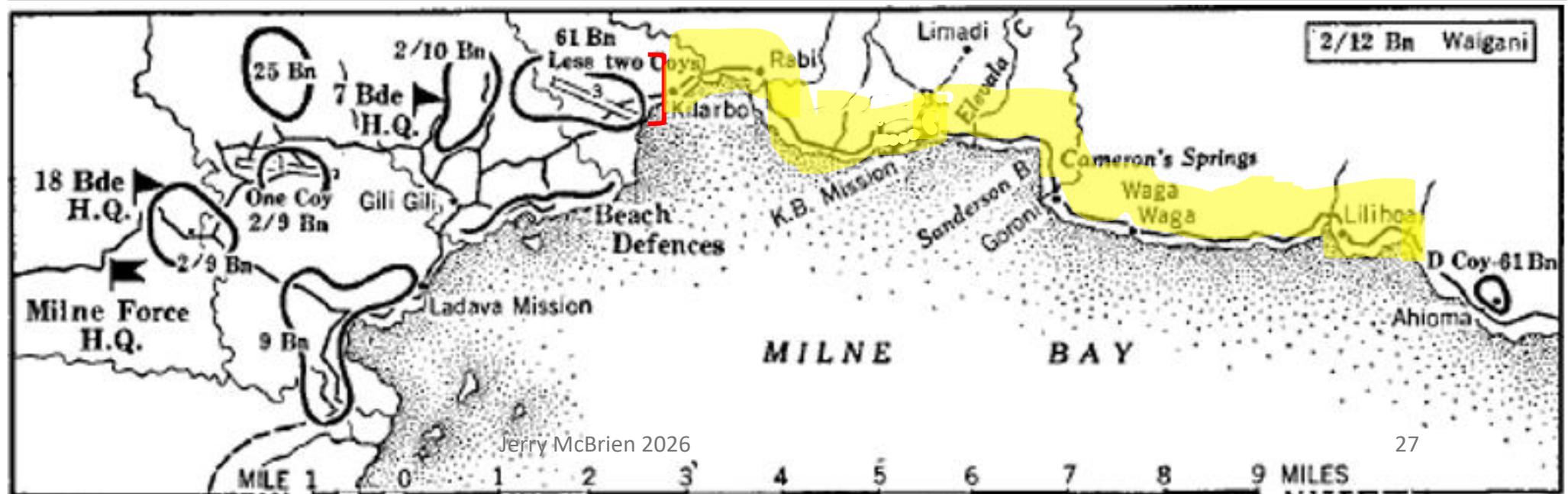
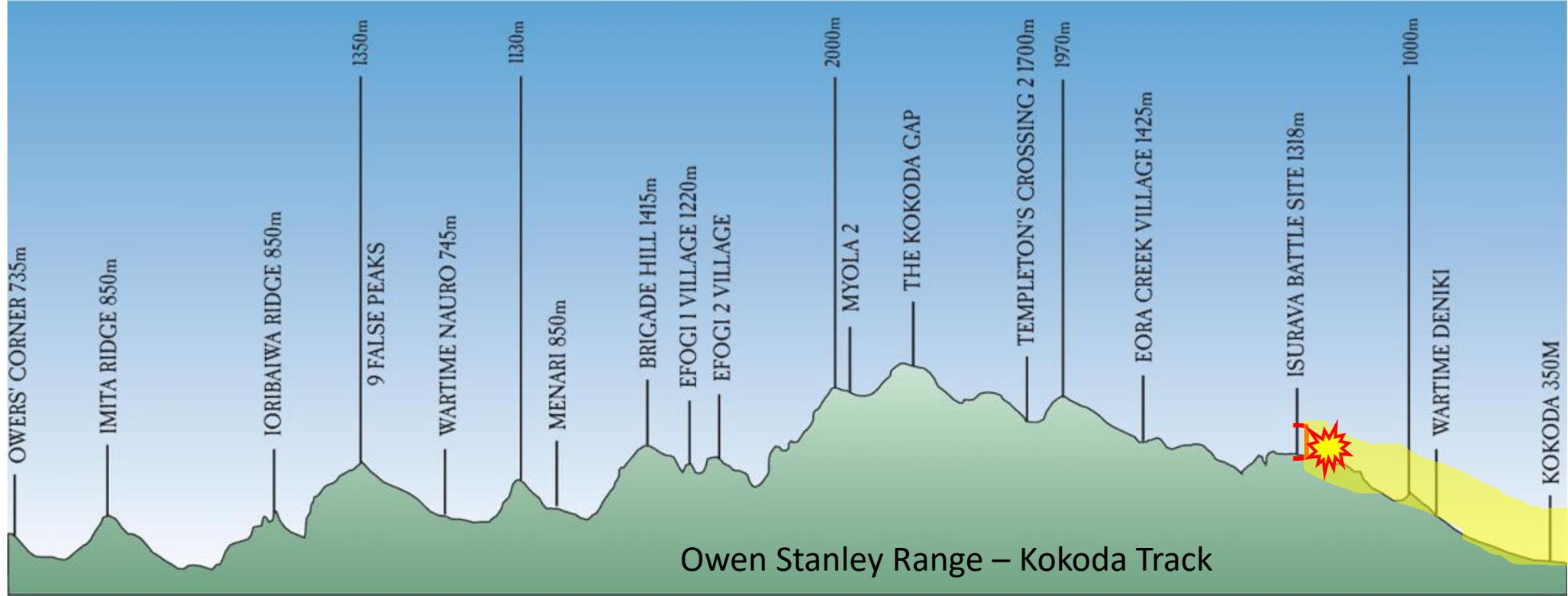
26 August



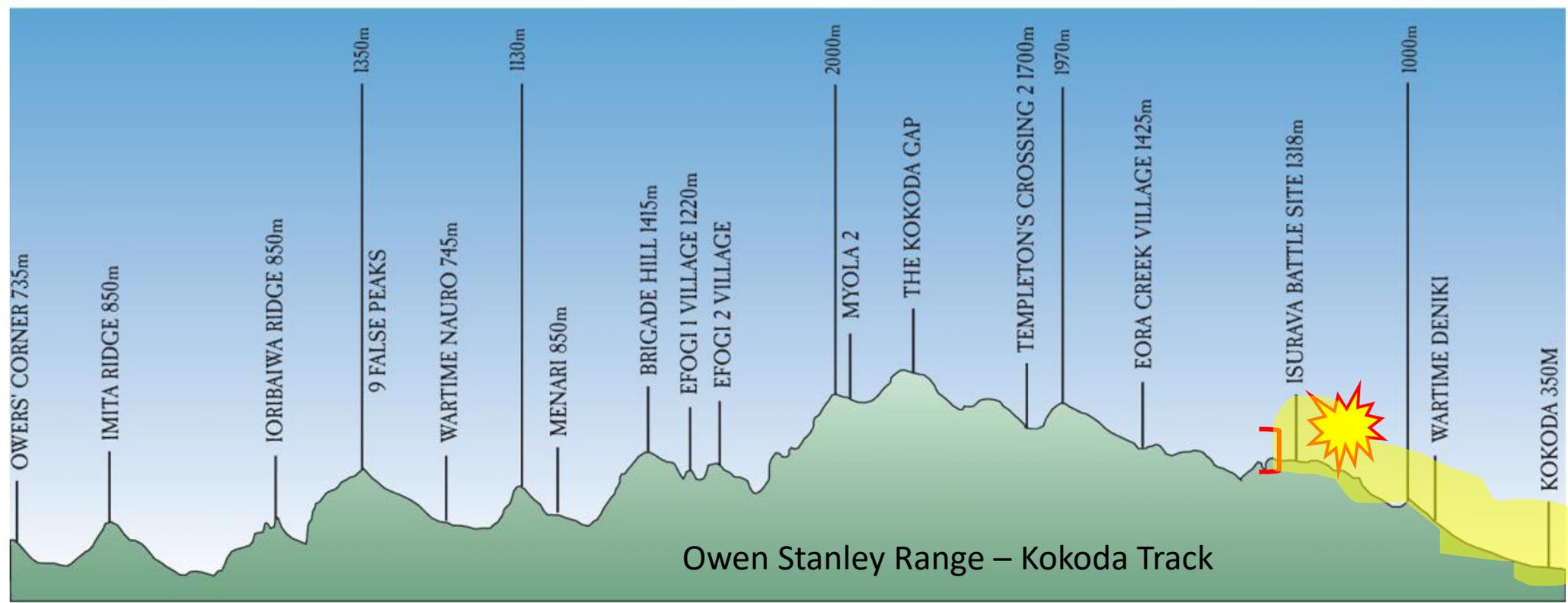
27 August



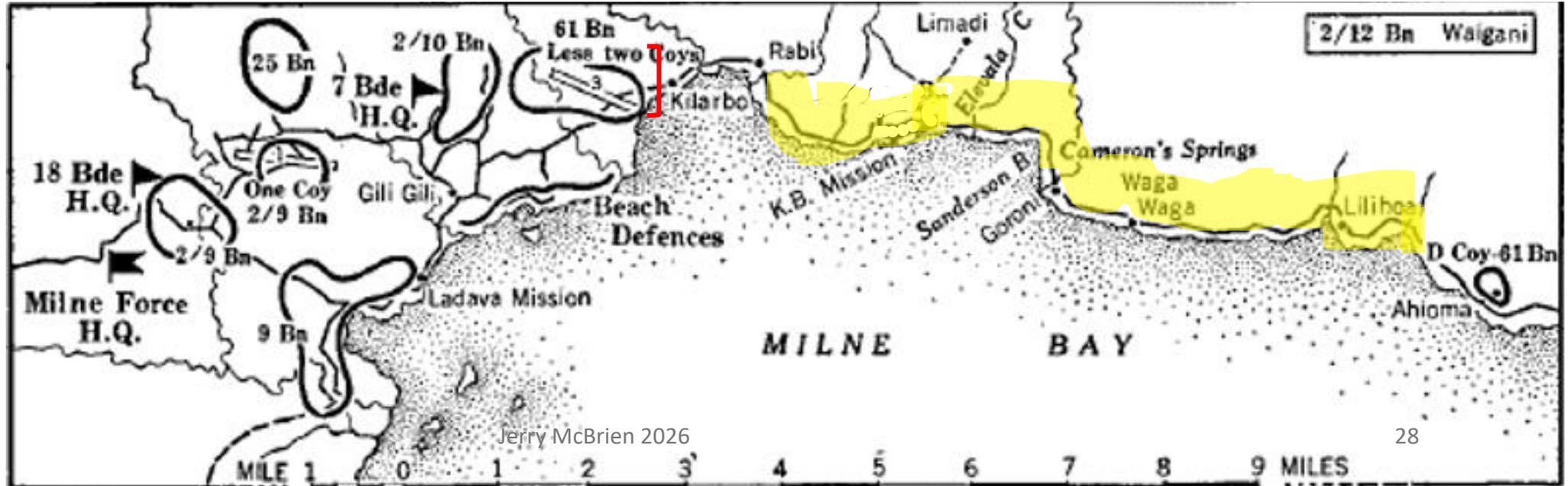
28 August



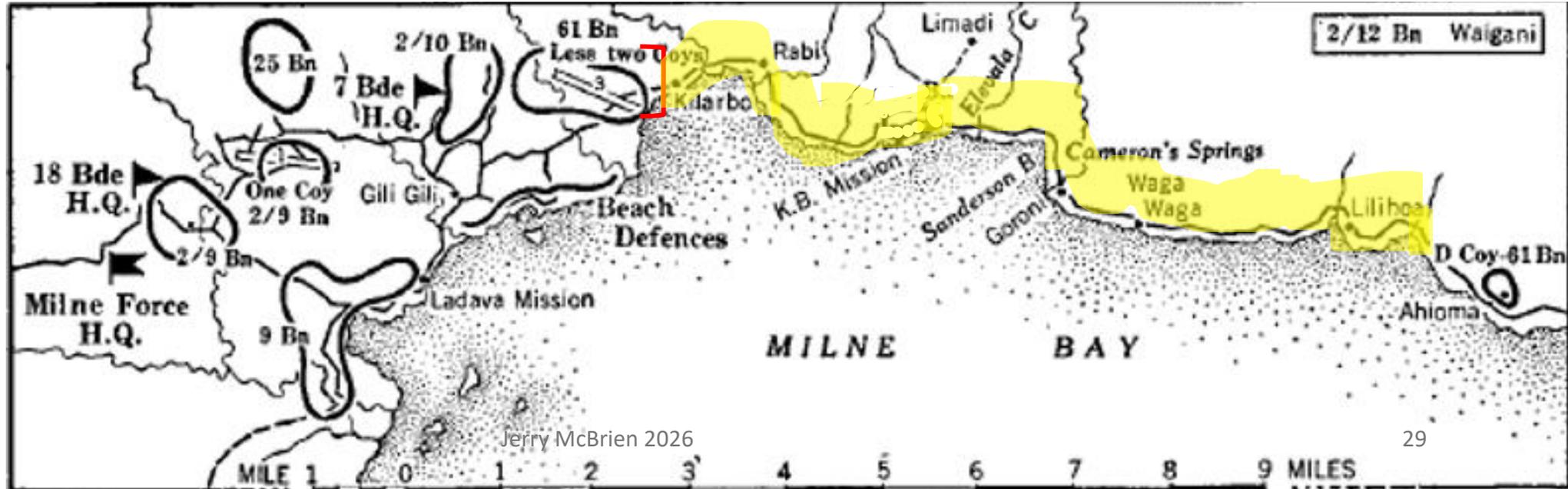
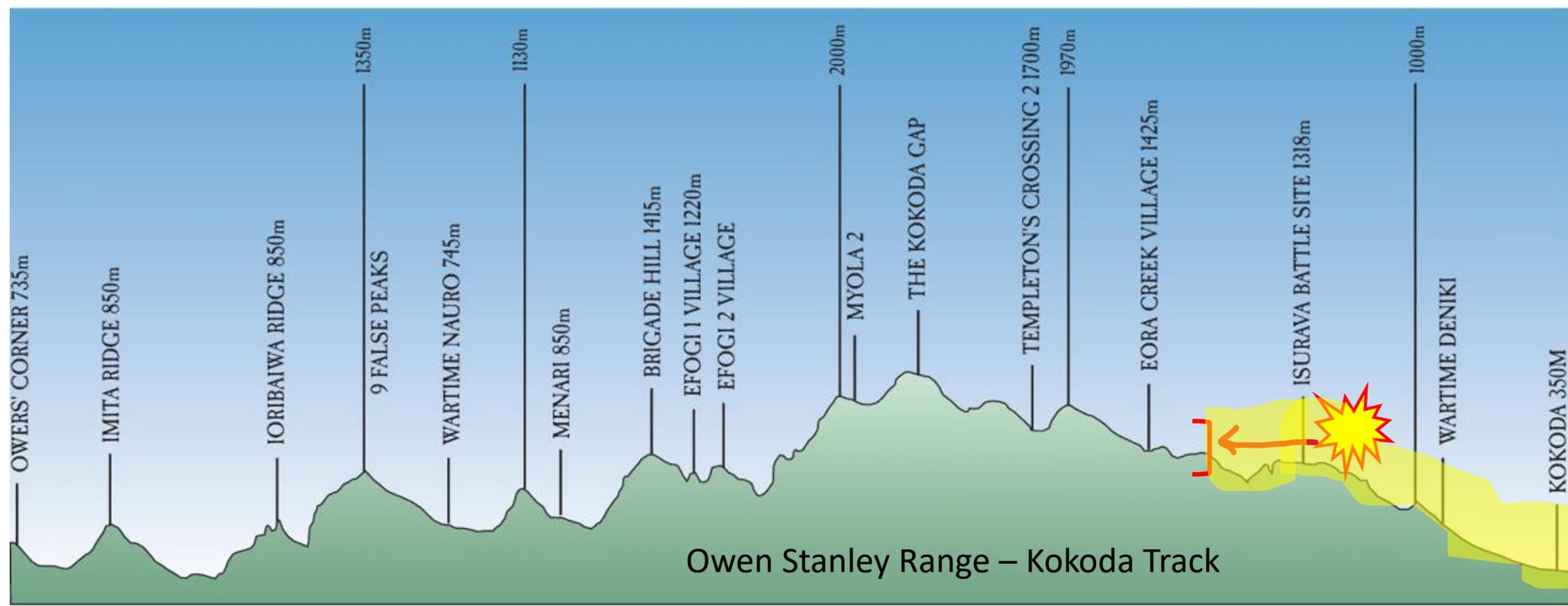
29 August



Owen Stanley Range – Kokoda Track



30 August



31 August 1942 - 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.

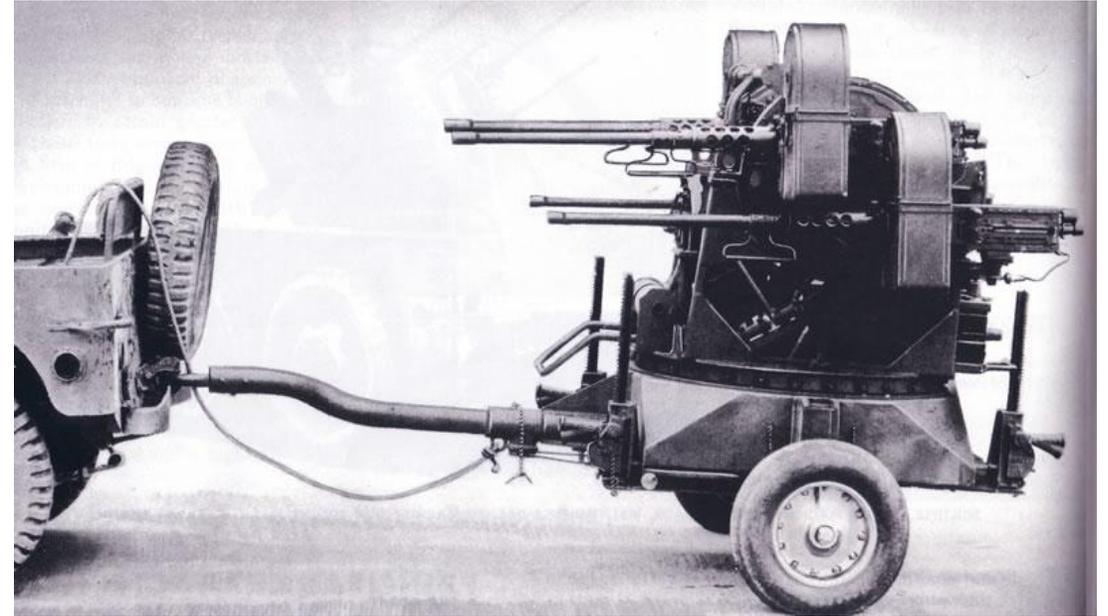


USS Saratoga CV3 off Guadalcanal

- 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

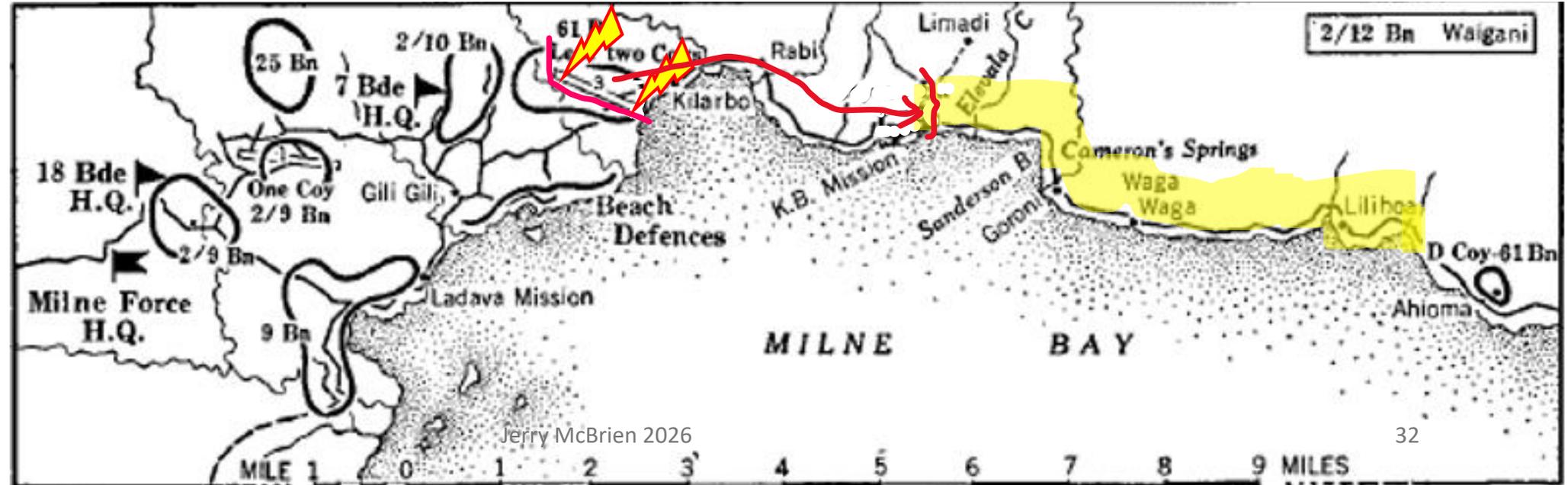
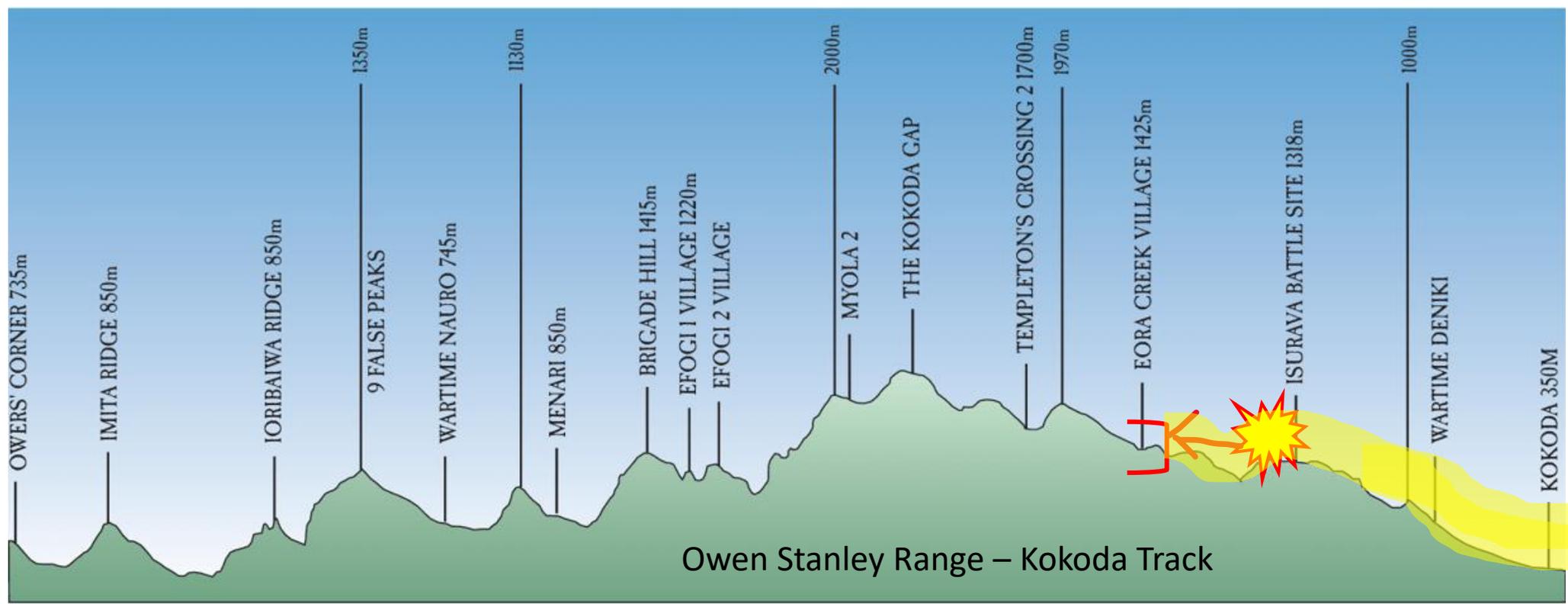
- The defenders were covering the western side of No. 3 Strip.
- The .50-caliber machine guns of the 709th Antiaircraft Battery were sited at both ends of the line.
- The .50-caliber machine guns and 37mm. antitank guns of Companies D and F of the 43d Engineers were in the center of the line,
- flanked 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 .5 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



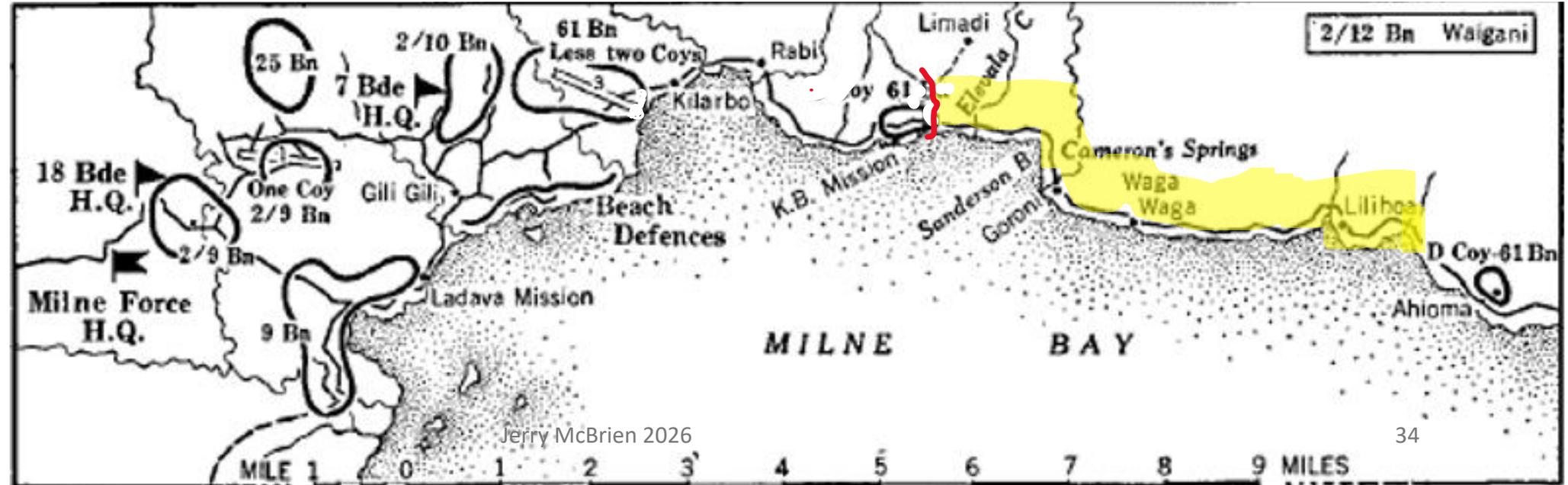
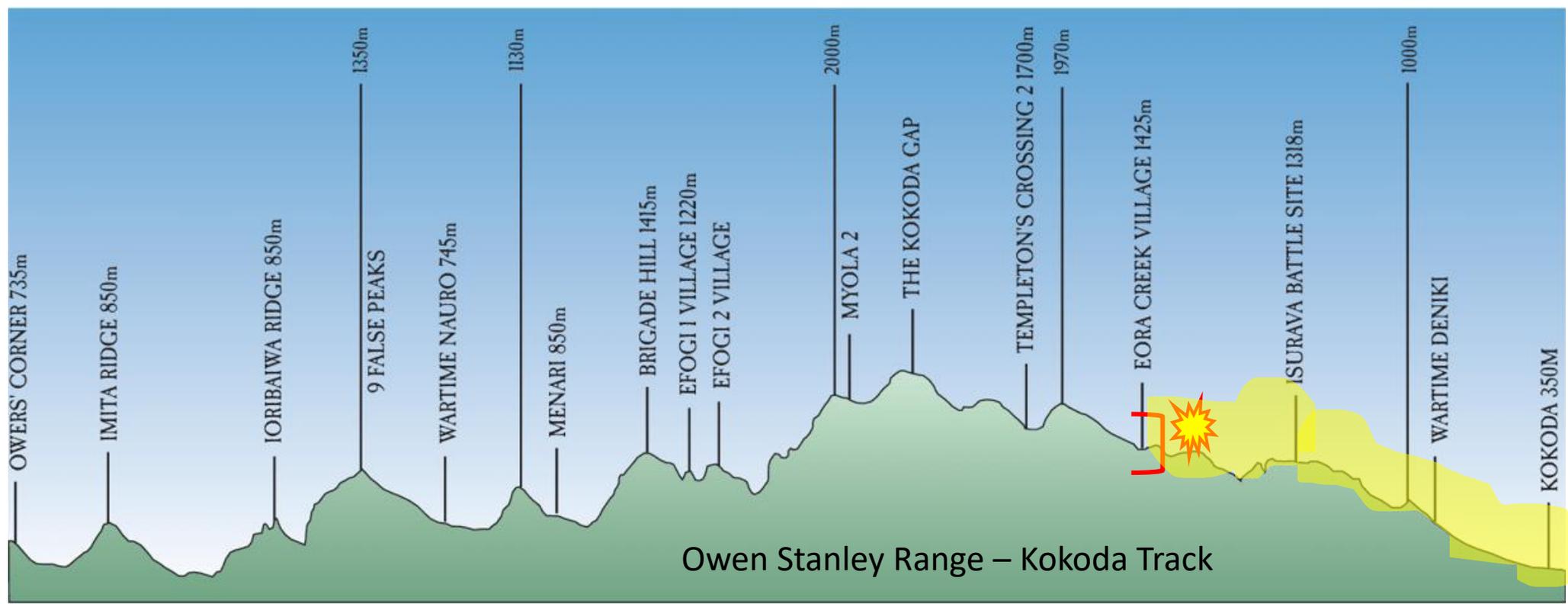
August 1942

- In August 1942 Arnold had the AWPDP revise its estimates.
- AWPDP/42 resulted, calling for 75,000 aircraft and 2.7 million men, an increase of 15,000 aircraft and 600,000 men over AWPDP/1 and increased the production of aircraft for use by other allies.
- AWPDP/42 reaffirmed earlier strategic priorities:
 - defense of the Western Hemisphere,
 - an initial defensive strategy against Japan,
 - a strategic air offensive against Germany,
 - and a later strategic air offensive against Japan in prelude of invasion.
- It also directed that the B-29 bomber not be employed in Europe because of delays in its development, but instead that the B-29 program's deployment be concentrated in the Far East to destroy Japanese military power and combustible cities.



General Arnold, Chief of Army Air Forces, Mrs. Doolittle, and Chief of Staff, General Marshall look on as President Roosevelt presents the Medal of Honor to Brigadier General James H. Doolittle for leading the raid on Tokyo. 19 May 1942.

1 September

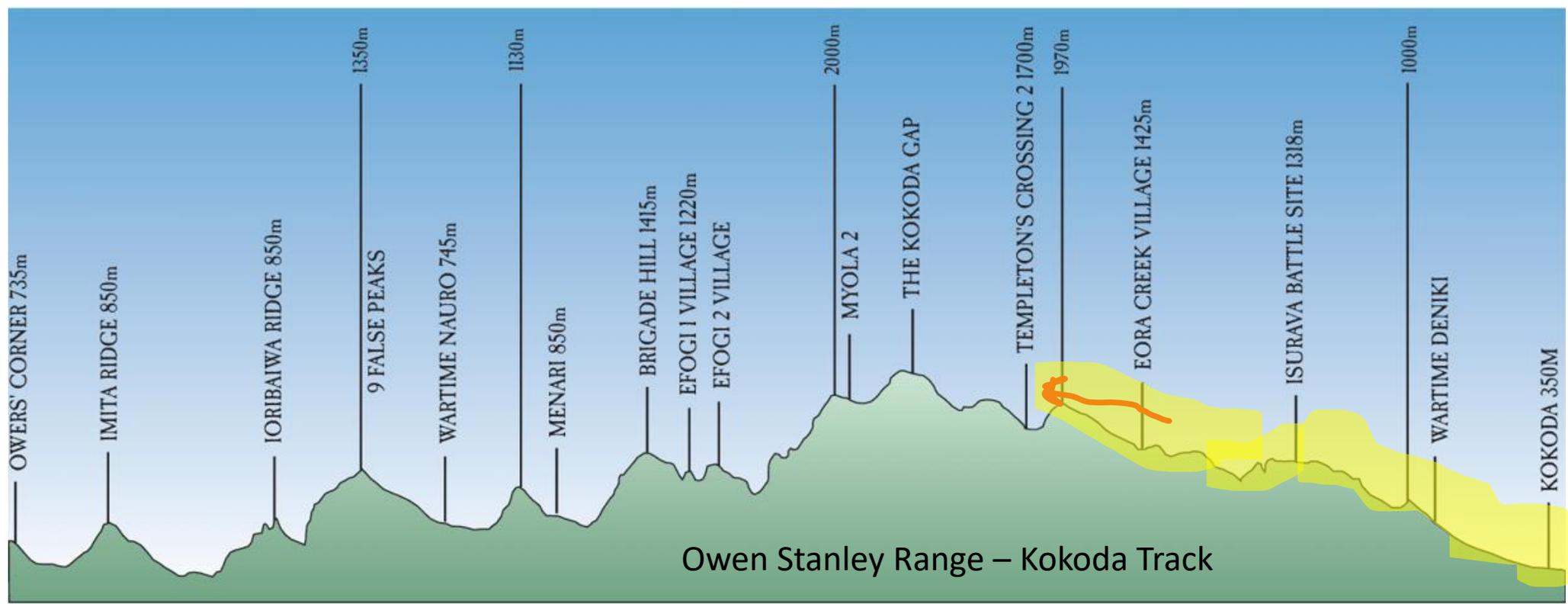


2 September - Kokoda

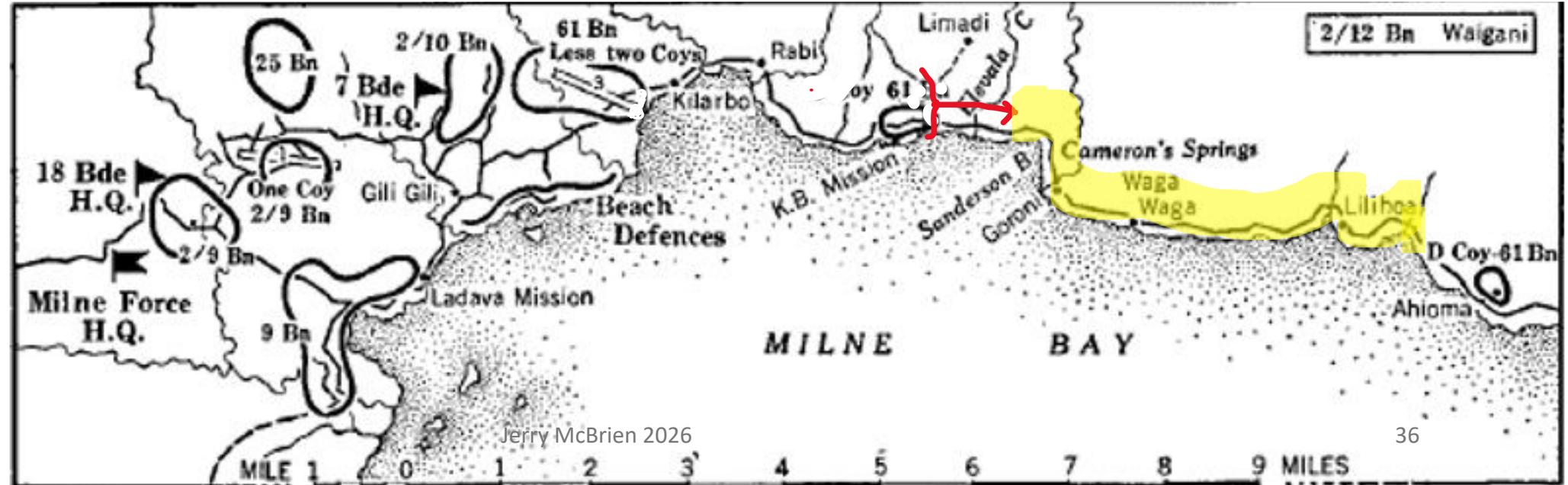
- At this stage Potts' brigade was pathetically depleted. They had had nearly a week of constant fighting and during that time most of them had been unable even to brew themselves a mug of tea and certainly had not had a hot meal.
- Now, shelterless, their feet pulpy and shrivelled from the constant 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.



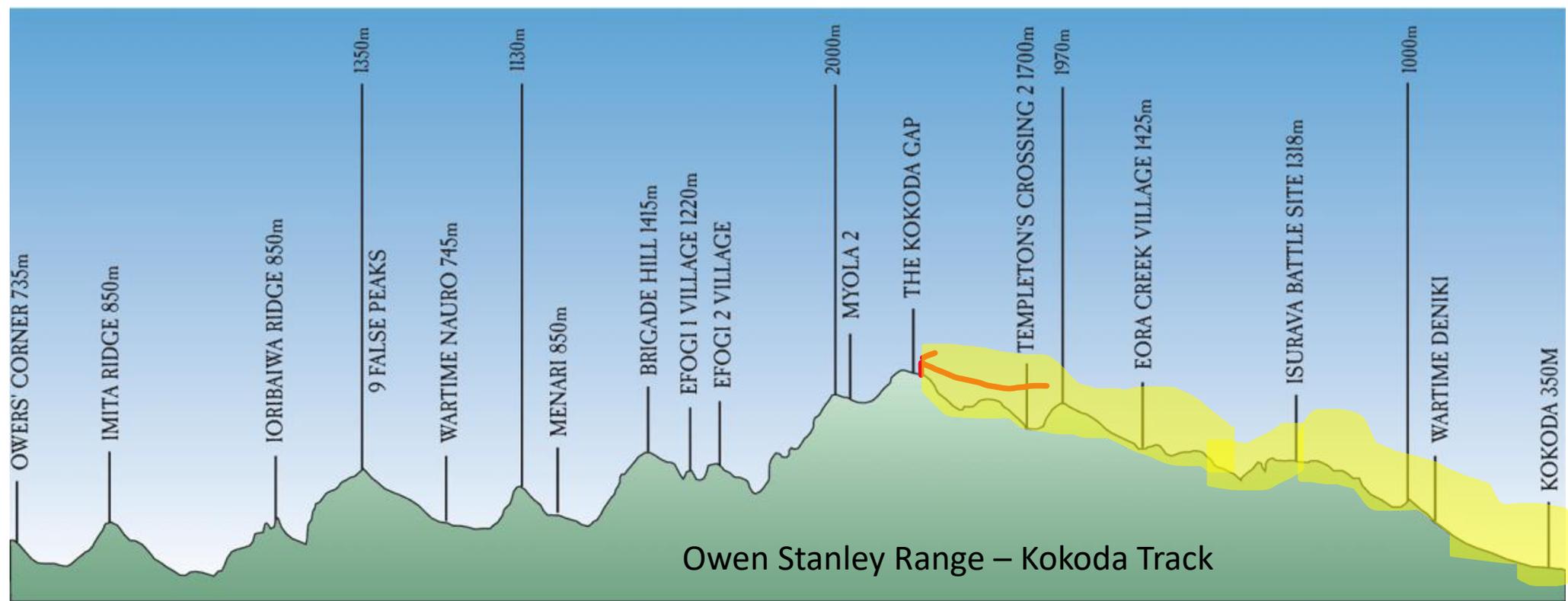
2 September



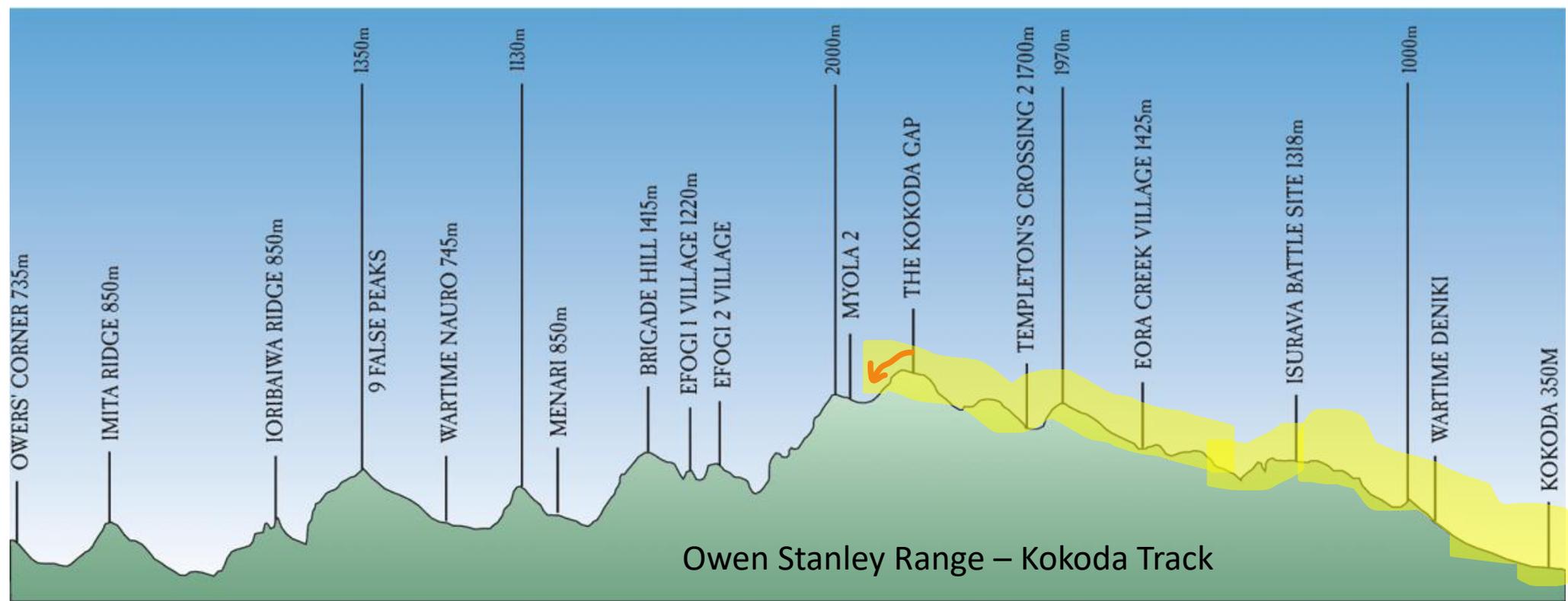
Owen Stanley Range – Kokoda Track



3 September



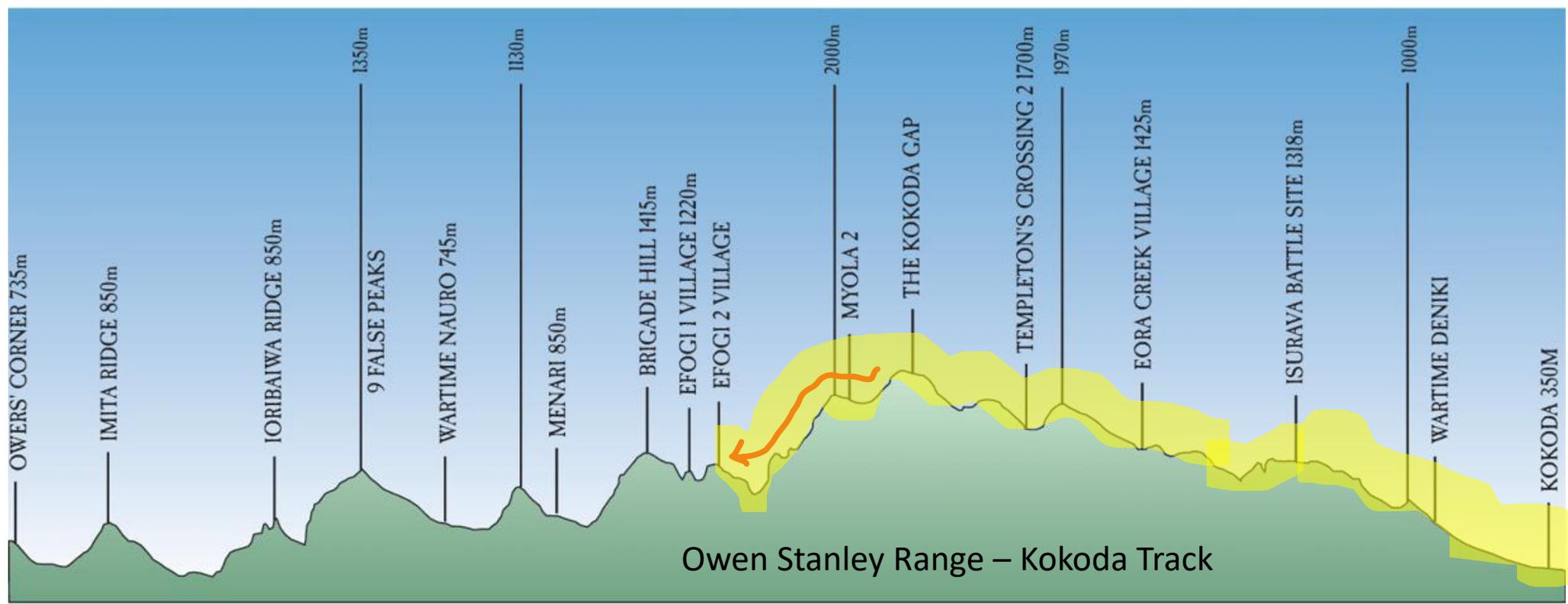
4 September



Owen Stanley Range – Kokoda Track



5 September



Owen Stanley Range – Kokoda Track



6 September 1942 – 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 Ahima 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.

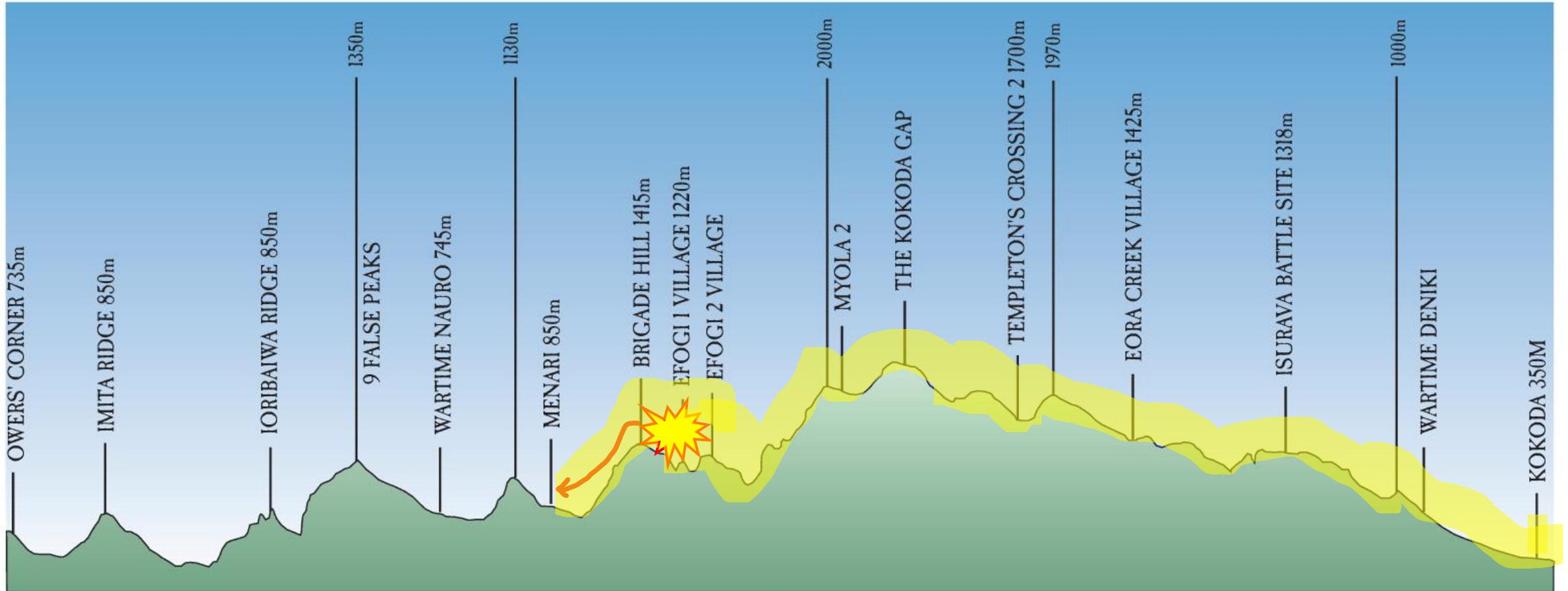


6 - 8 September - Kokoda

- 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.

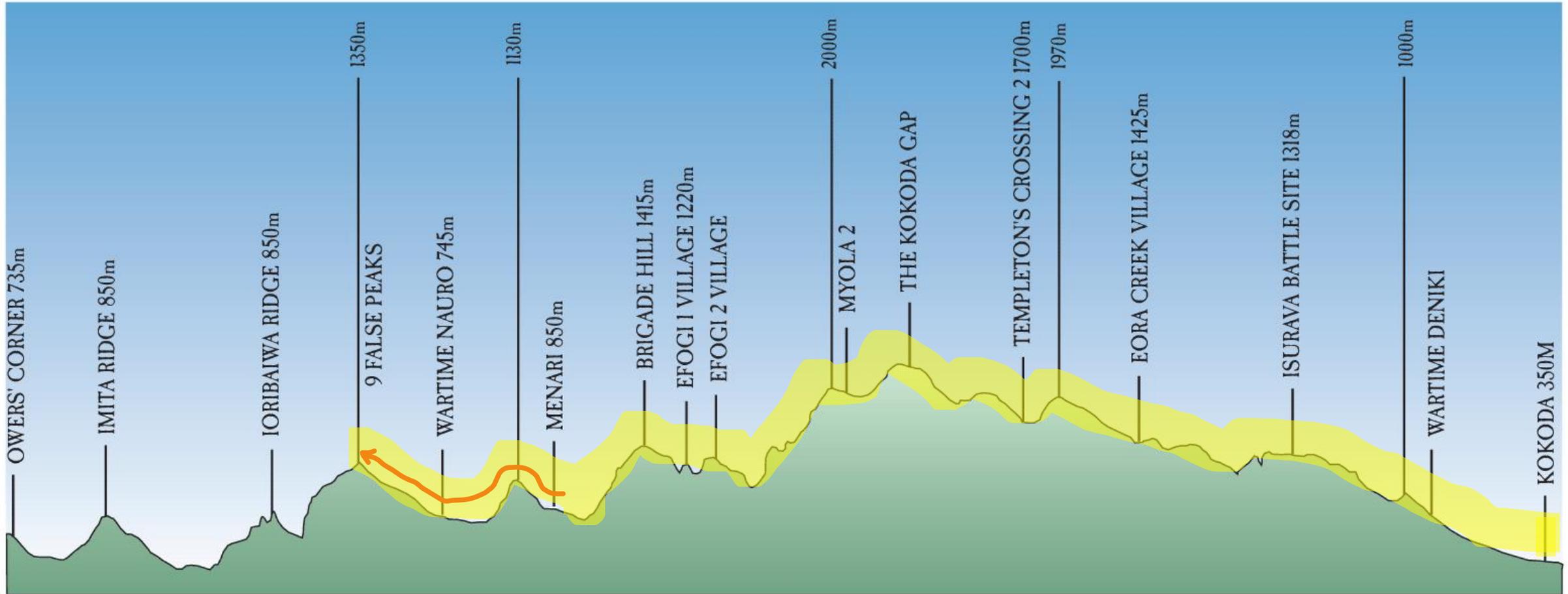


8 September – Kokoda



OWEN STANLEY RANGE - KOKODA TRACK

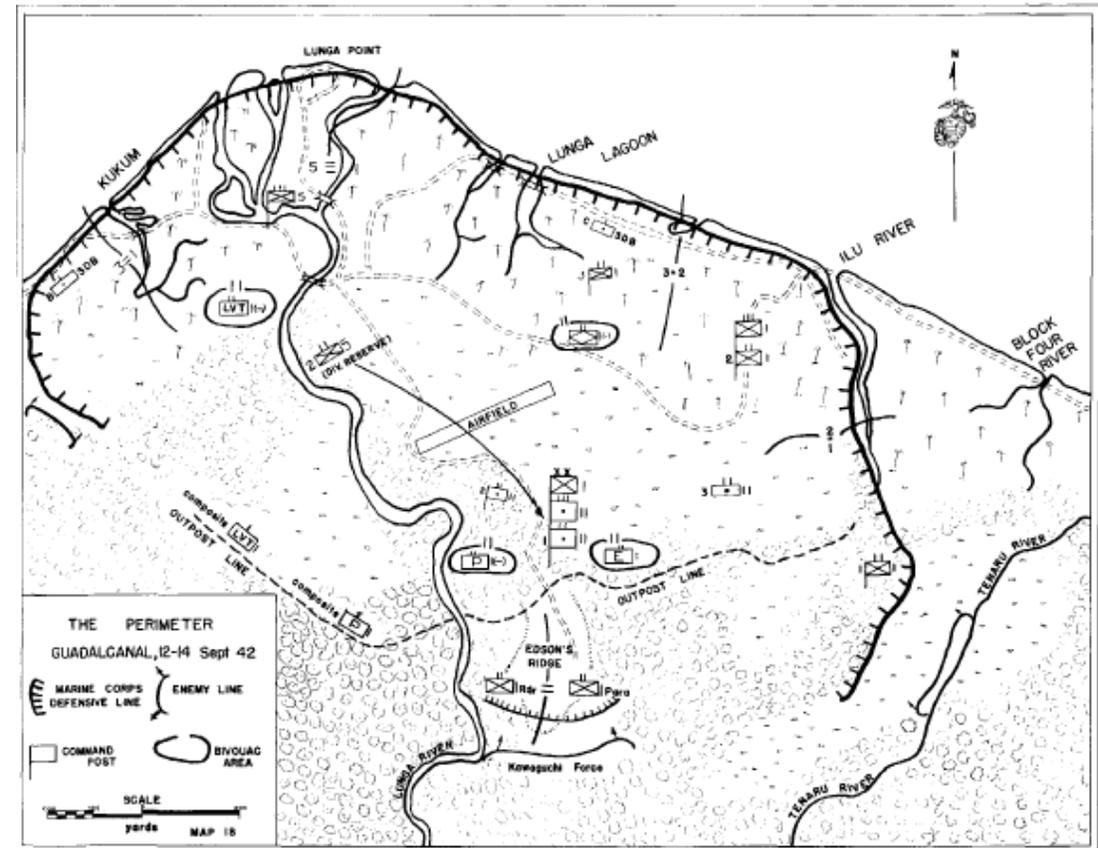
10 September – Kokoda



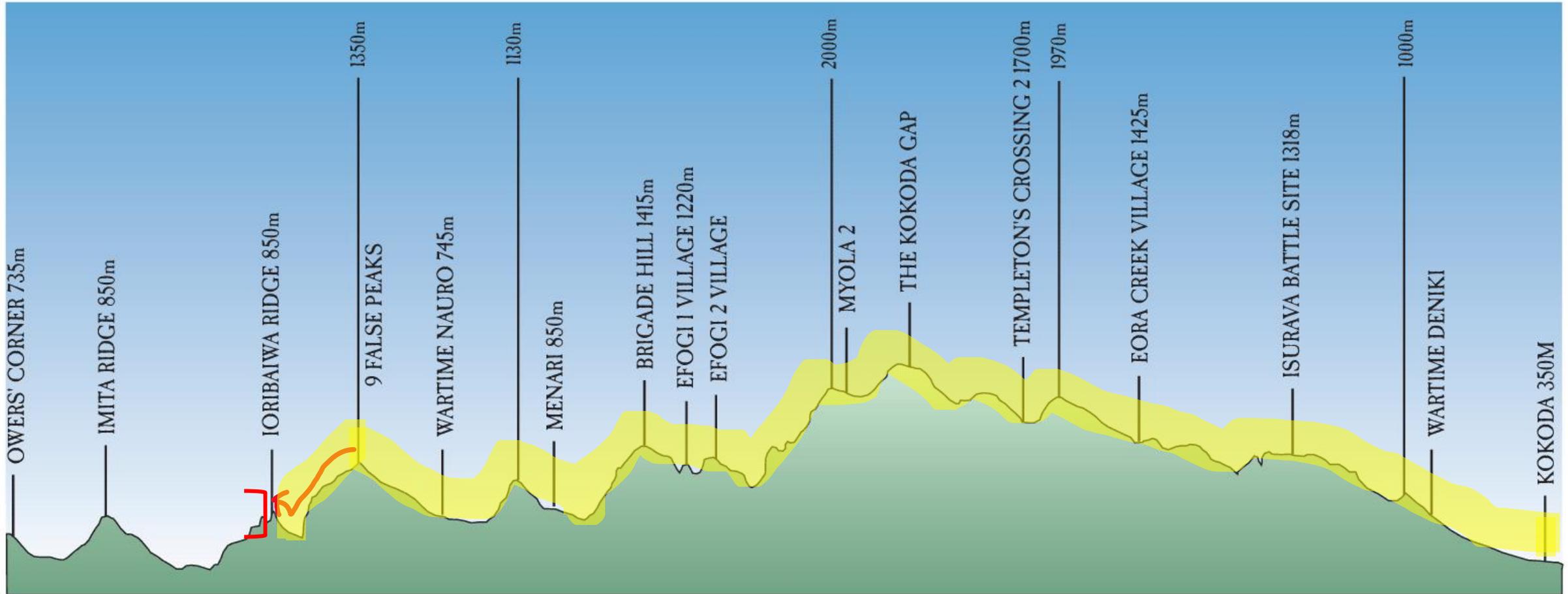
OWEN STANLEY RANGE - KOKODA TRACK

10 September 1942 - 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.



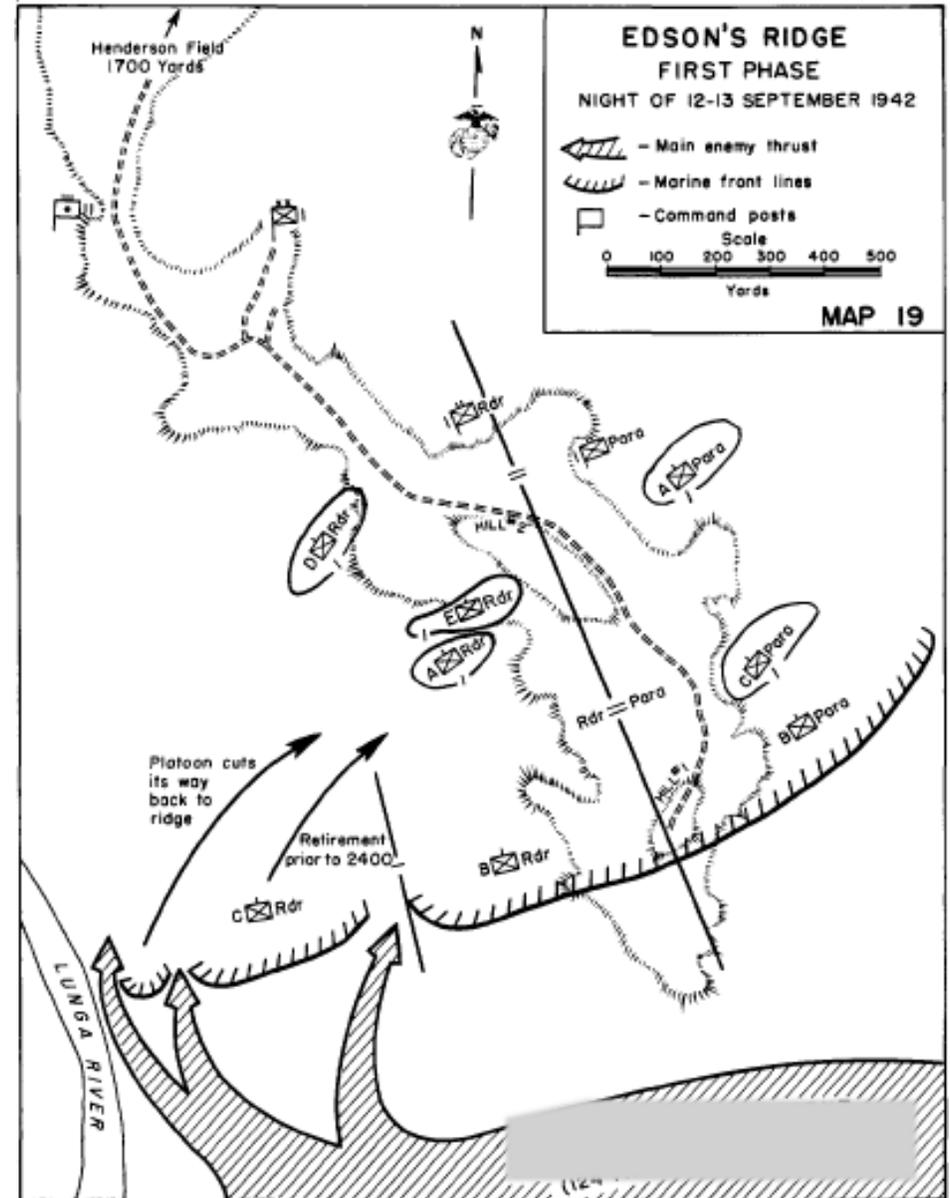
11 September – Kokoda



OWEN STANLEY RANGE - KOKODA TRACK

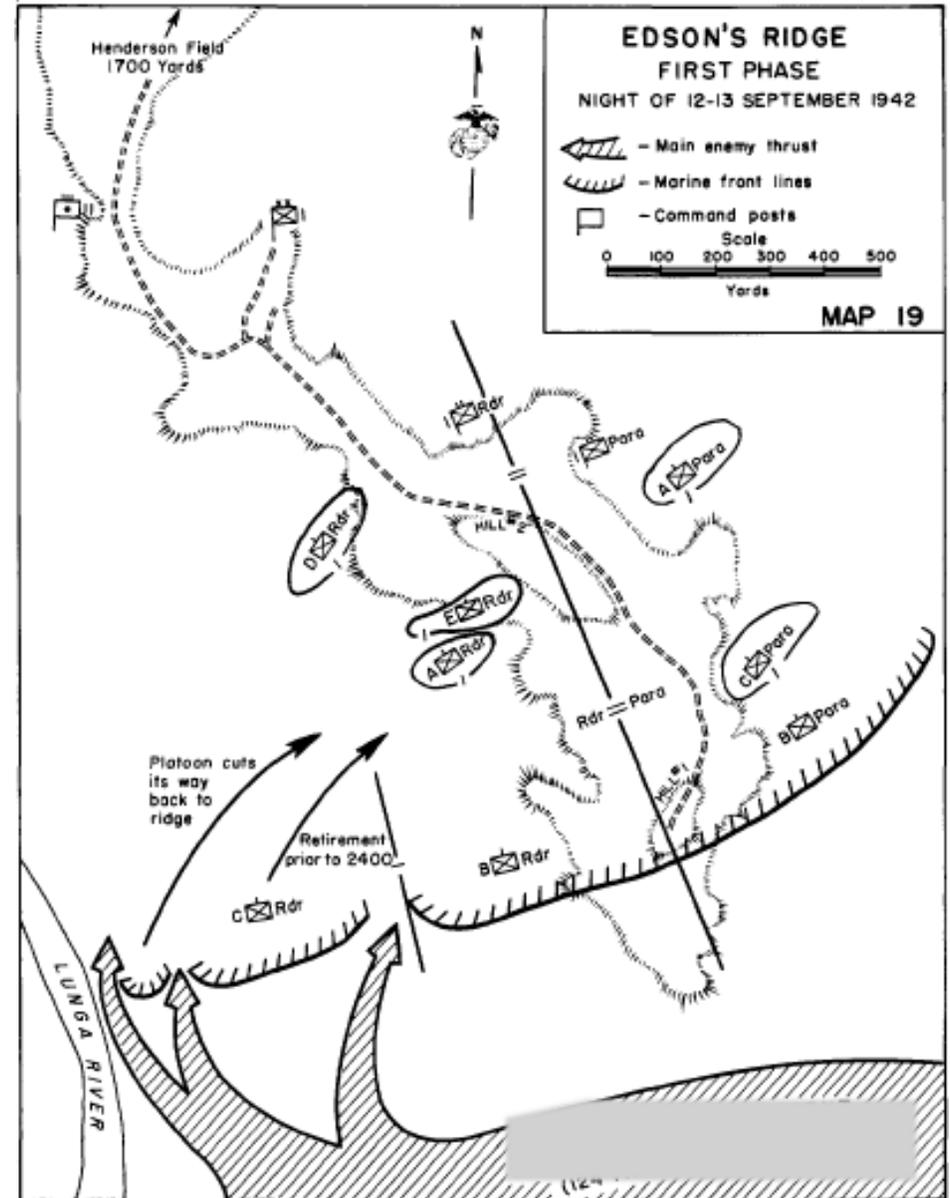
13 Sept 1942 - Guadalcanal

- 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.



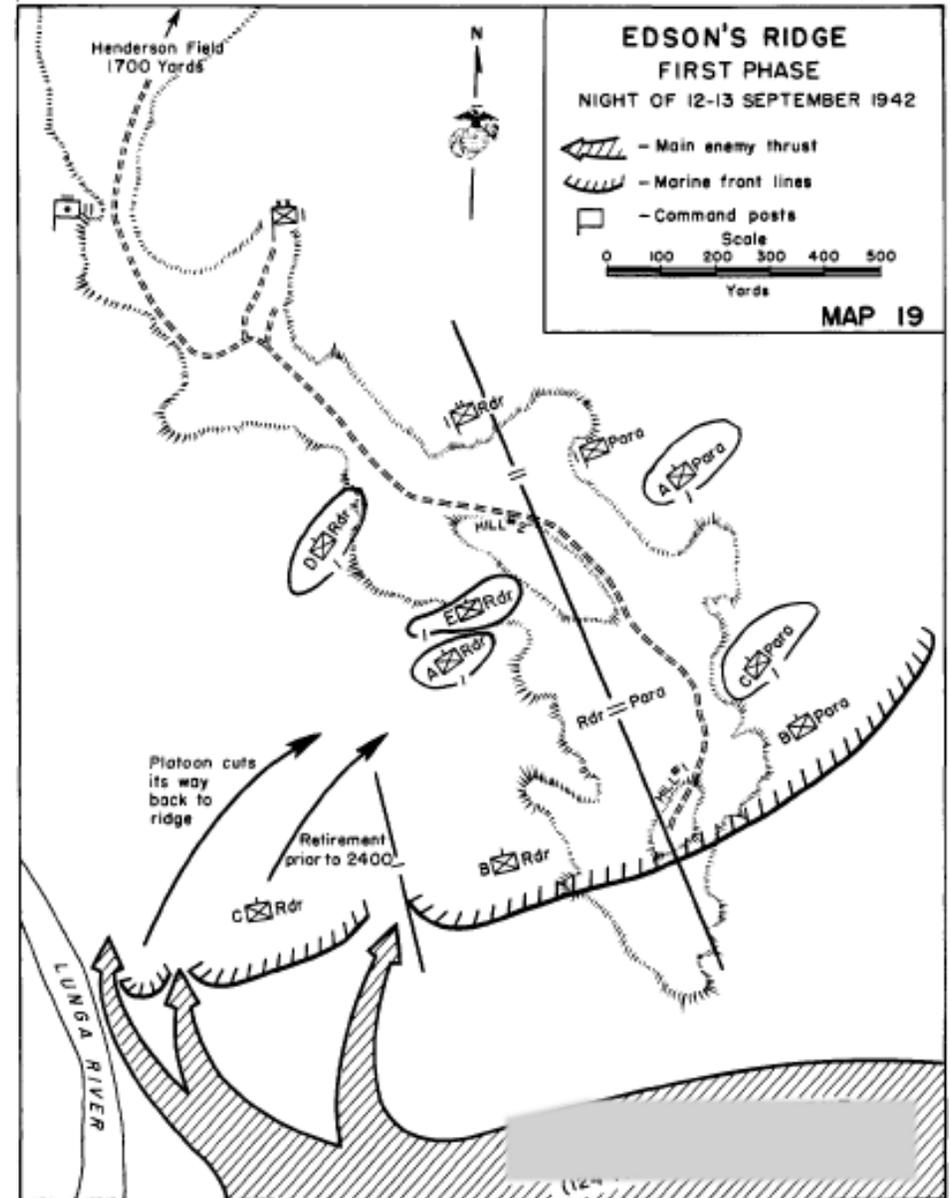
13 Sept 1942 - Guadalcanal

- 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.



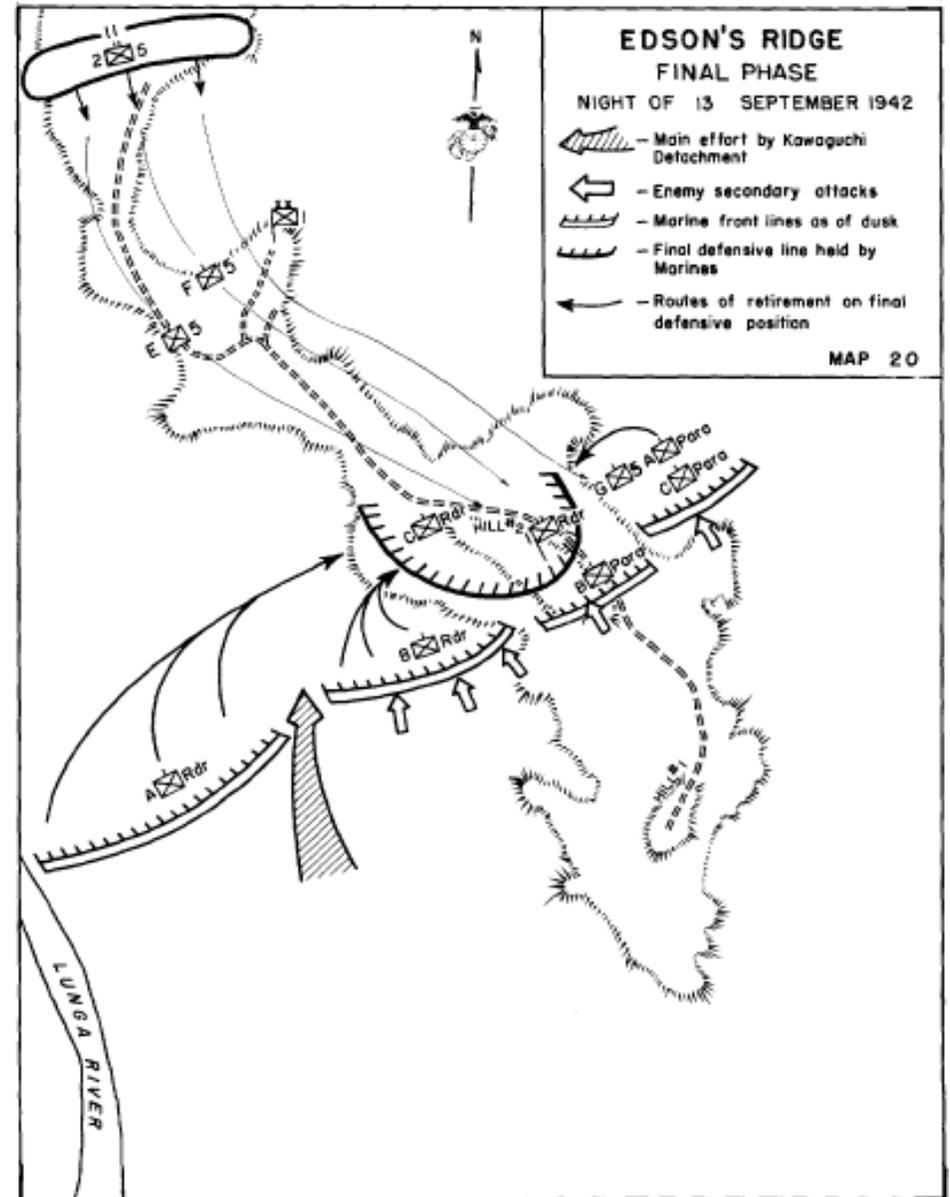
13 Sept 1942 - Guadalcanal

- 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.



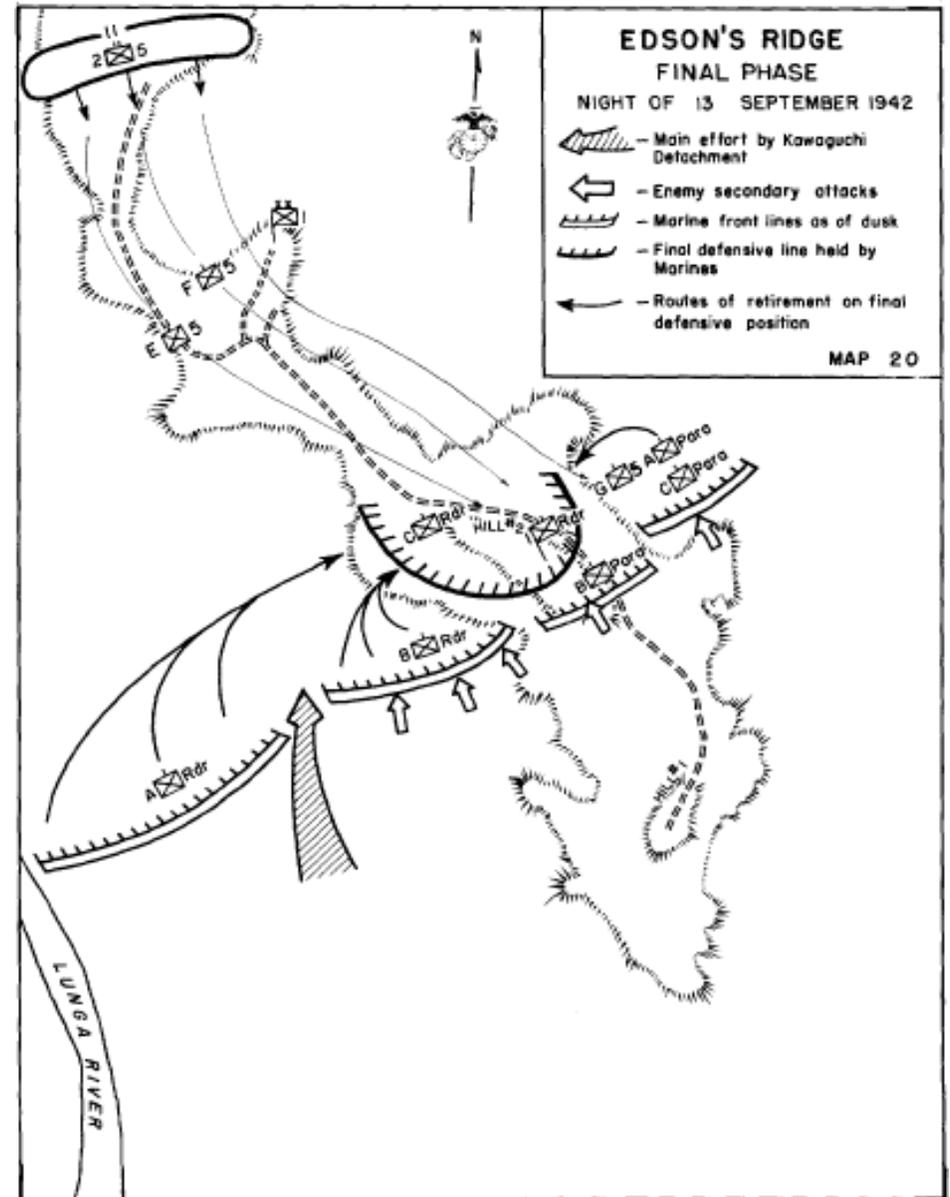
13 Sept 1942 - Guadalcanal

- 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.



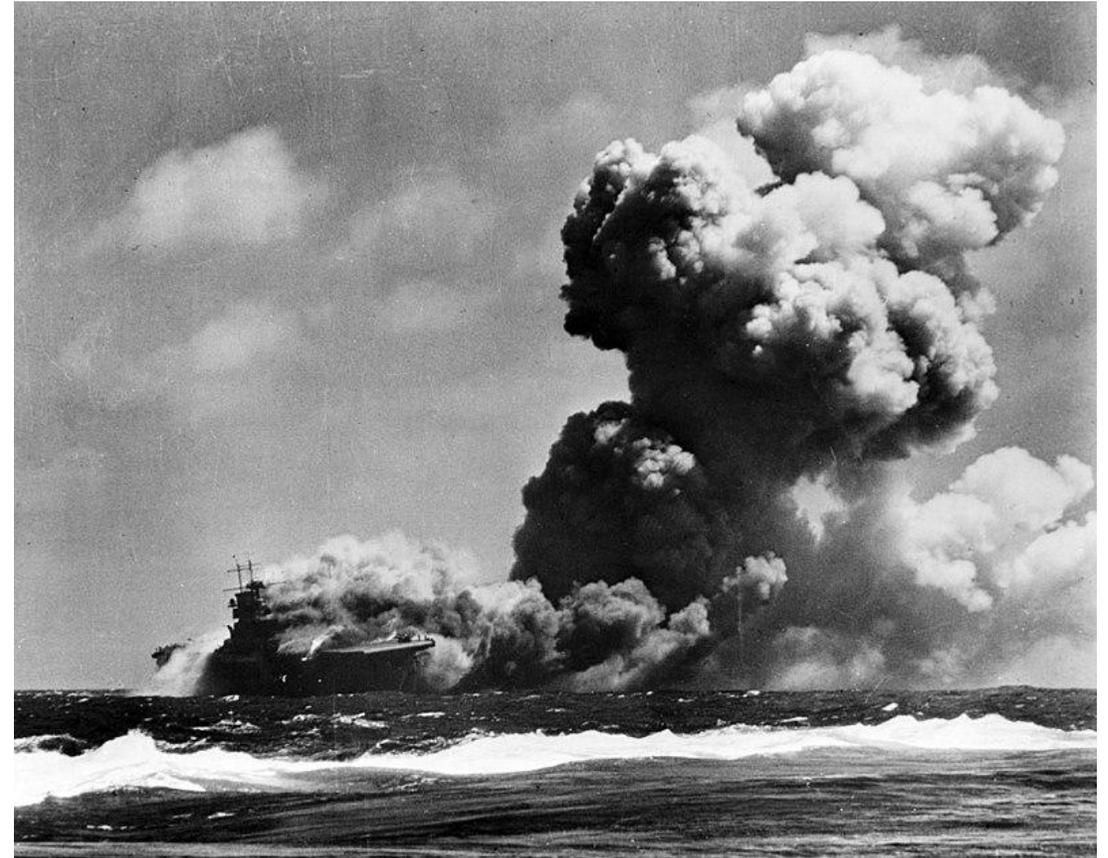
13 Sept 1942 - Guadalcanal

- 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 1942 - Sea

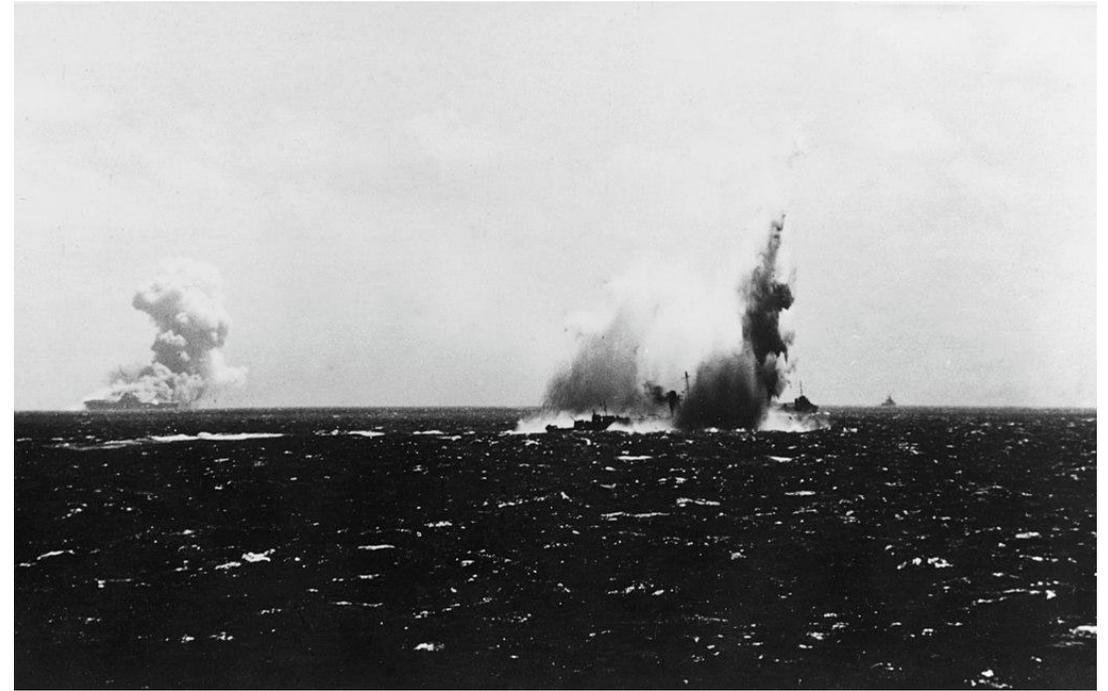
- A Japanese flying boat found the convoy taking the 7th Marines to Guadalcanal, at 11.00 on 15th. Turner decided to withdraw to await a more favourable opportunity.
- In support to the south were carriers *Wasp* and *Hornet*, the only flattops operational in the Pacific (*Saratoga* and *Enterprise* 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 1942 - Sea

- Shortly afterwards a torpedo struck the battleship *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.



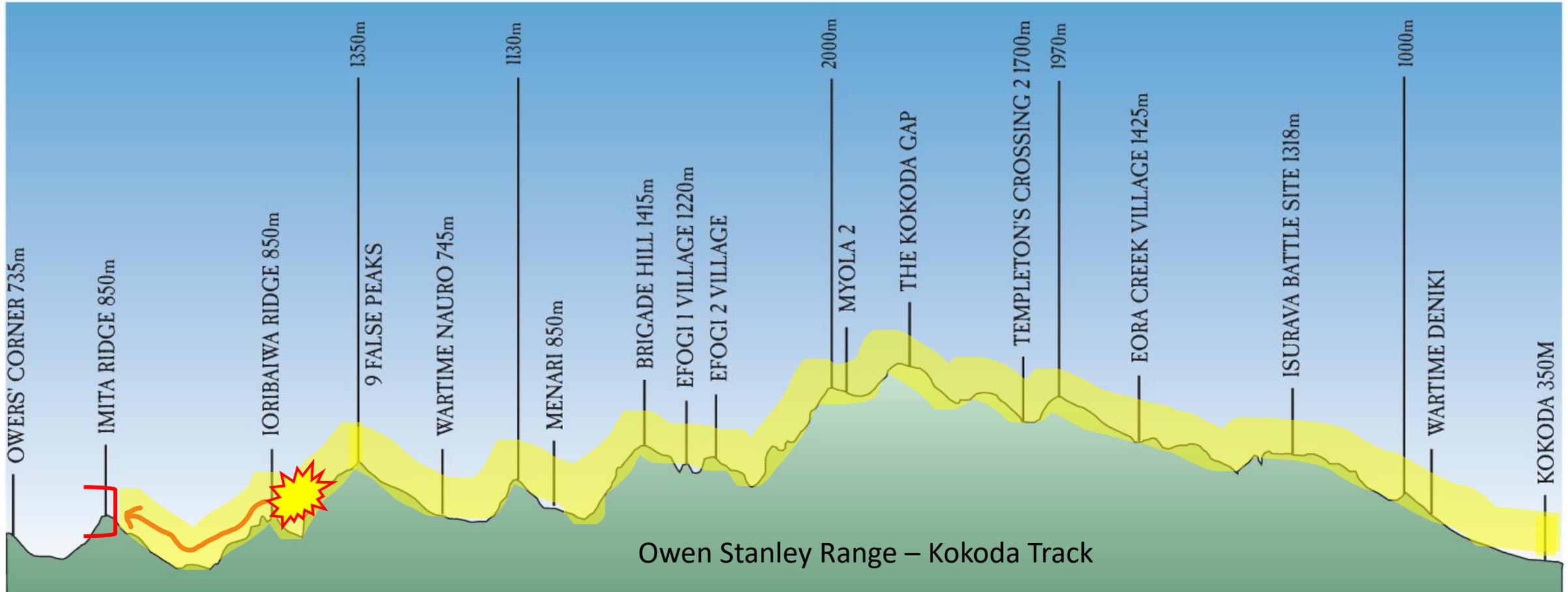
Torpedo hits *O'Brien*. *USS Wasp* can be seen burning in the background.

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

16 September 1942 - 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. ...”

September 1942 – Africa – 3 German divisions

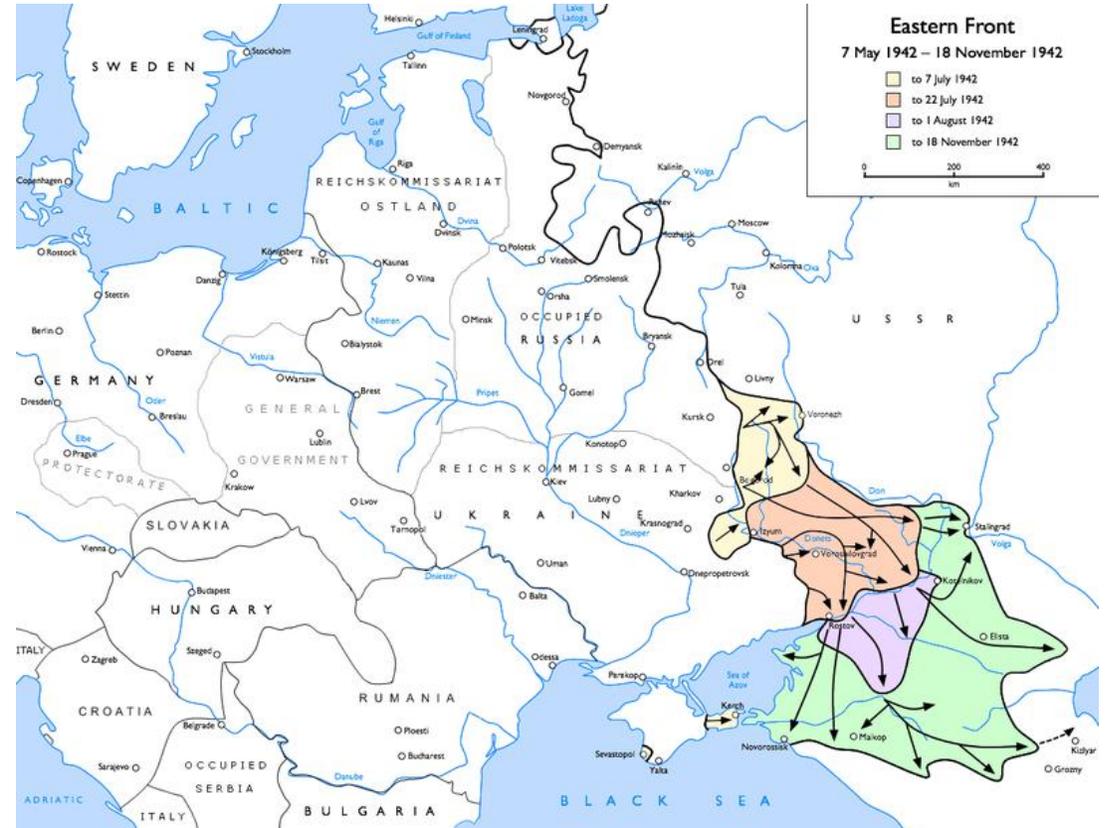
- Retreat from El Agheila 21 Jan
- Retreat from Gazala 17 June
- Tobruk surrendered 21 June
 - 35,000 allied troops surrendered with their equipment and supplies.
- Mersa Matruh 27 June
- Battle of Alamein 1 July
- Battle of Alam Halfa 30 Aug to 5 Sept



September 1942 – 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

17 September 1942 - Government

- On the evening of 17 September Curtin Receives a 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 1942 - 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.

21 September 1942 – B29

- The first unarmed prototype of the B 29 made its maiden flight from Boeing Field, Seattle, on 21 September 1942.



23 September 1942 – Manhattan Project

- August 13: The Manhattan Engineering District with James C. Marshall as District Engineer is established by the Chief of the United States Army Corps of Engineers.
- Colonel Leslie Groves is ordered to take over the project.
- On 19 August 1941, Groves had been put in charge of building the Pentagon, a 5.1 million sq ft building with office accommodation for 40,000. He was required to have half a million sq ft available by 1 March 1942. At peak 13,000 people were working on the project. By the end of April, the first occupants were moving in and 1,000,000 square feet of space was ready by the end of May.
- September 23: Groves is promoted to brigadier general and becomes director of the project.
- The Military Policy Committee, consisting of Bush (with Conant as his alternative), Styer and Rear Admiral William R. Purnell is created to oversee the project.
- Photo: Groves (left) and Robert Oppenheimer



23 September 1942 – Strategy and Command

- **Solomons**
- On September 23 General Arnold, on a visit to the South Pacific, reached Noumea, where he conferred with Ghormley and was appalled by the waste of shipping and obvious mismanagement of logistics.
- Noumea was a logistical bottle neck. It lacked berthing space, storage space, unloading equipment and adequate numbers of skilled or unskilled longshoremen. Each Service competed at Noumea for use of each ingredient of logistical support.
- Shipping, the scarcest strategic resource of the allies, was tied up waiting to be unloaded or even being used as storage in the absence of storage space on land.



General Arnold, Commanding General, US Army Air Forces

JIC 23 September 42 – The War at Sea

Gross Tonnage in 1,000's of Register Tons					
Period	Losses from -			New Tonnage Completed	Net Gain (G) or Loss (L)
	Belligerent Action	Other Causes	All Causes		
Before Jan. 1, 1942	<u>8,944</u>	<u>770</u>	<u>9,714</u>	<u>3,413</u>	<u>6,301 L</u>
Jan. 1942	416	84	500	226	275 L
February	670	30	700	257	443 L
March	775	33	808	314	494 L
April	642	30	672	427	245 L
May	714	14	728	575	153 L
June	844	5	849	634	215 L
July	613	1	614	677	63 G
August	<u>654</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>682</u>	<u>680</u>	<u>2 L</u>
First 8 mo. of 1942	<u>5,328</u>	<u>225</u>	<u>5,553</u>	<u>3,789</u>	<u>1,764 L</u>
Total to 8/31/42	<u>14,272</u>	<u>996</u>	<u>15,267</u>	<u>7,202</u>	<u>8,065 L</u>
<u>Monthly Averages</u>					
Before 1/1/42	319	26	347	122	225 L
First 8 mo. of '42	666	28	694	474	220 L

DECLASSIFIED
 JCS memo, 1-4-74
 By RHP, KLR, Date MAR 11 1974

23 September 1942 - Industry

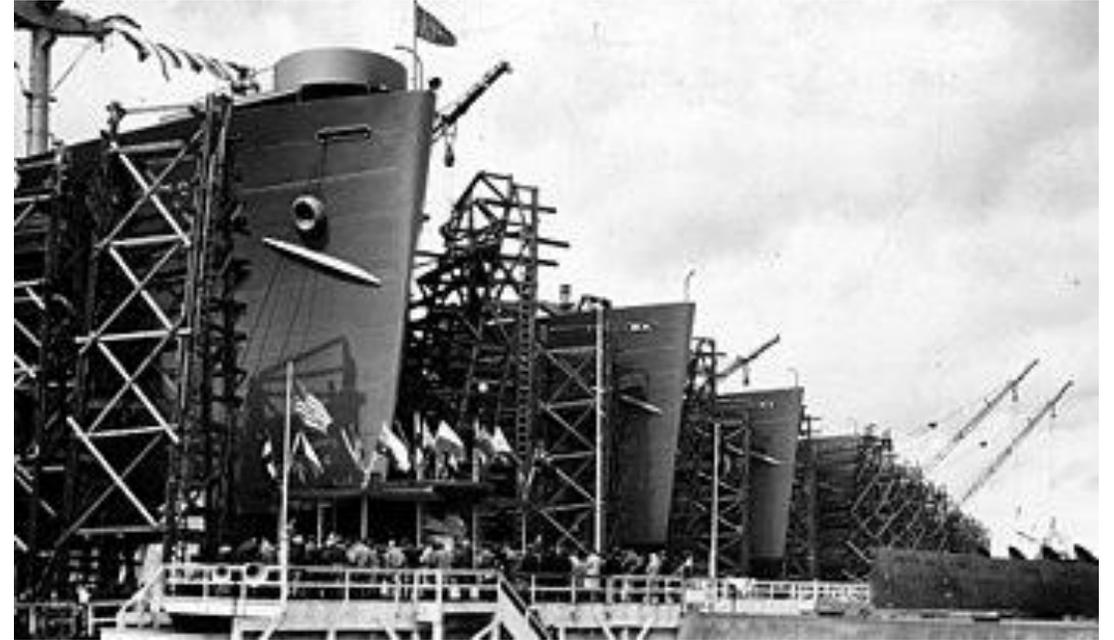
- In his state of the union message in January President Roosevelt had promised to build 6 million tonnes of shipping in 1942 and 10 million tonnes in 1943 compared with about 1 million in 1941.
- By the 2nd half of 1942 the yards contracted in the first waves of shipbuilding expansion were fully built.
- The time for building the ships fell dramatically as experience was gained by workers and by management.
- A major contribution to getting the productivity so high was the use of welding and the prefabrication of large sections of each ship off the building ways and moving them into position only when the assemblers were ready.
- Wendy the Welder joined Rosie the Riveter as a key contributor to the American war effort.



A "Wendy the Welder" at the Richmond Shipyards

23 September 1942 - Industry

- At the most productive yards on the West Coast, Oregon Ship and Richmond #2, the time a single vessel spent on the ways before launching was only a little more than two weeks.
- On September 23 1942 the Liberty ship SS Joseph N. Teal was launched by Oregon Shipbuilding ten and a half days after keel laying.
- President Roosevelt visited to watch it slide down the ways.
- The ship was delivered fourteen days after keel laying.



Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation, one of the eighteen shipyards building Victory ships.

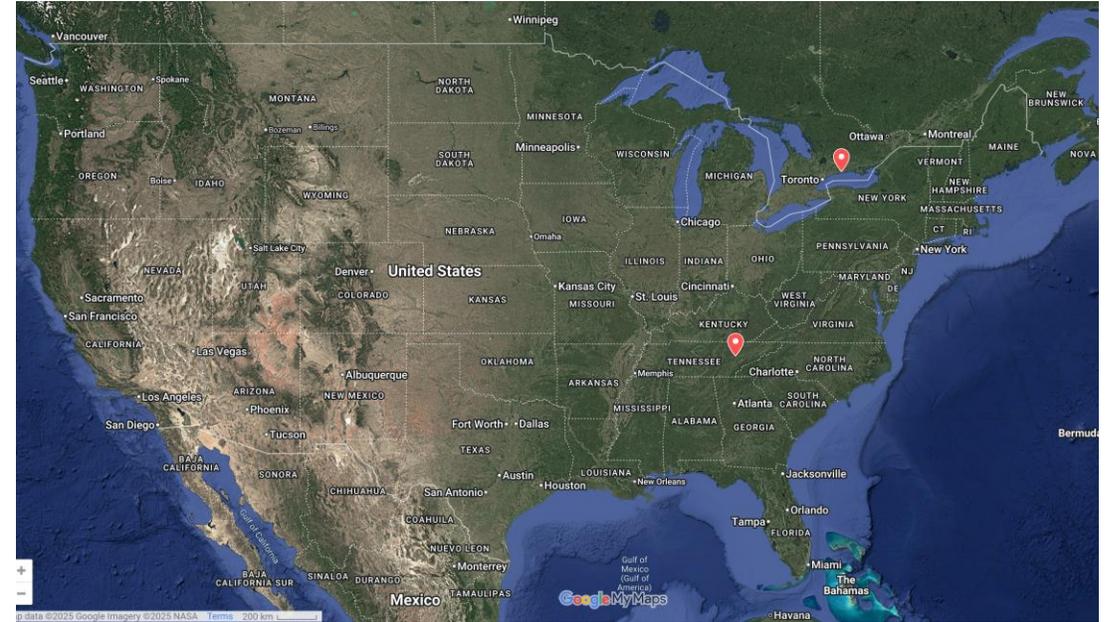
September 1942 - Manhattan Project

- September - Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth Nichols meets Edgar Sengier (photo) in the New York offices of Union Minière.
- Nichols has been ordered by General Groves to find uranium. Sengier's answer has become history: "You can have the ore now. It is in New York, a thousand tons of it. I was waiting for your visit."
- Nichols reaches an agreement with Sengier that an average of 400 tons of uranium oxide will begin shipping to the US from Shinkolobwe each month.



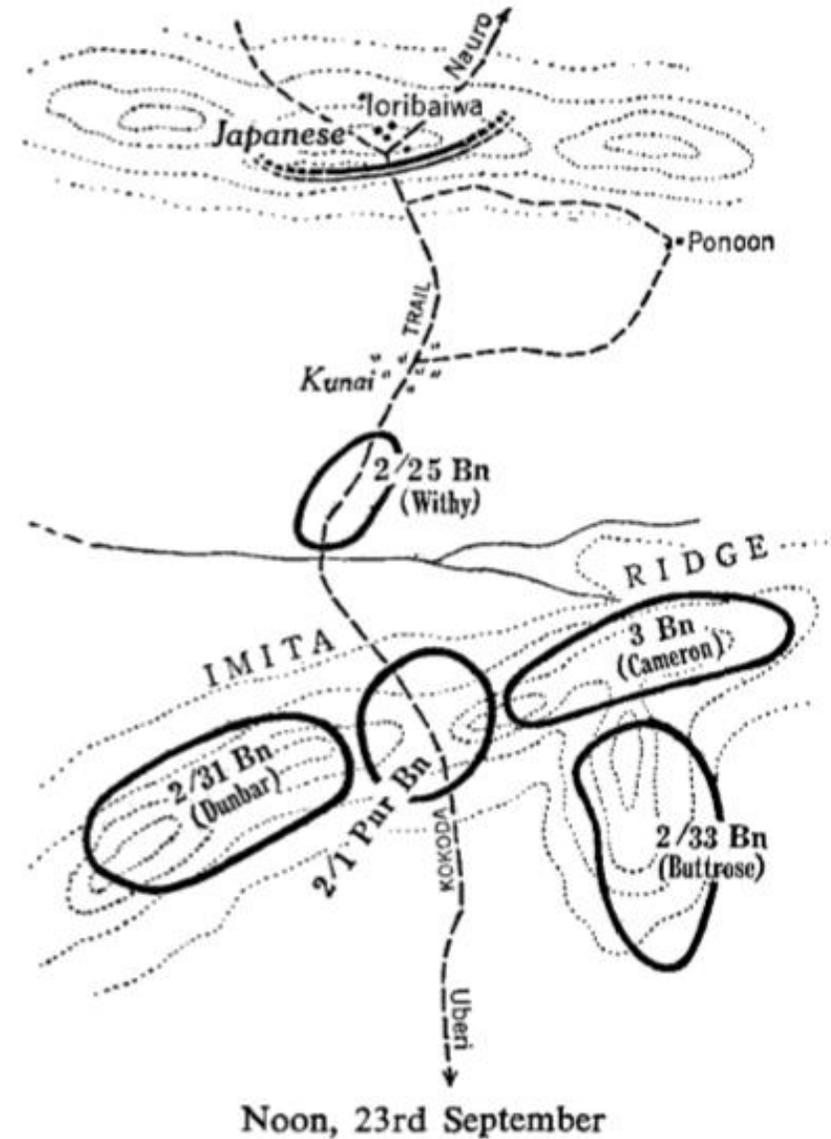
September 1942 - Manhattan Project

- September 26: The Manhattan Project is given permission to use the highest wartime priority rating by the War Production Board.
- September 29: Under Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson authorizes the Corps of Engineers to acquire 56,000 acres of land in Tennessee by eminent domain at a cost of \$3.5 million for Site X, which will become the Oak Ridge, Tennessee, laboratory and production site.
- October - 100 tons of Sengier's uranium ore is sent to Canada for refining by Eldorado Mining and Refining in Port Hope, Ontario.

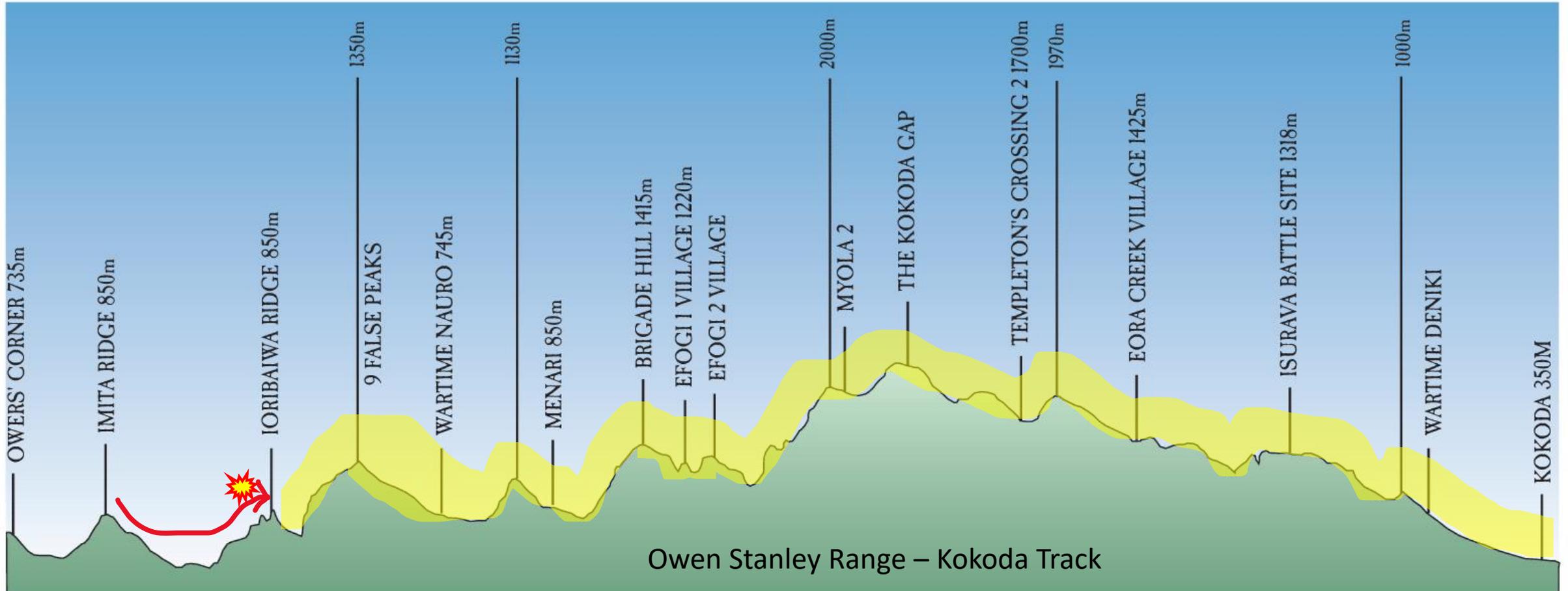


28 Sept 1942 – New Guinea

- 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

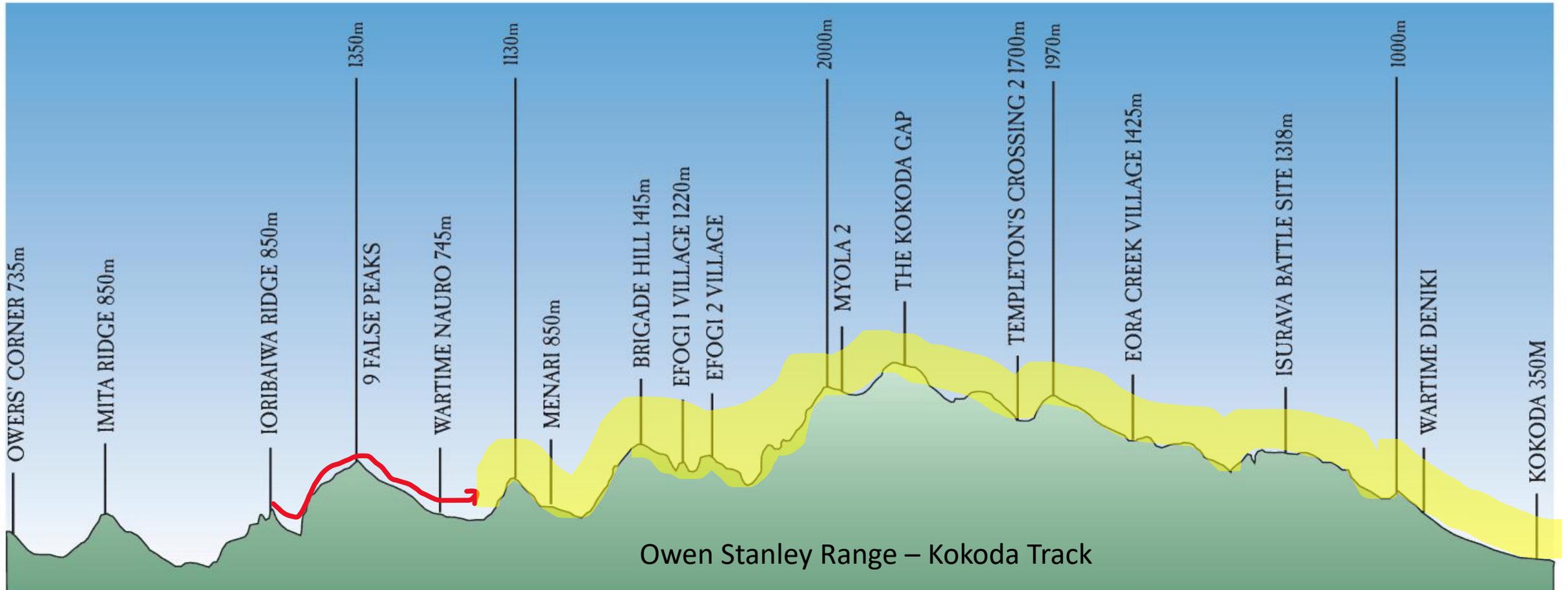


29 September 1942 - Kokoda

- 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.



1 October – Kokoda



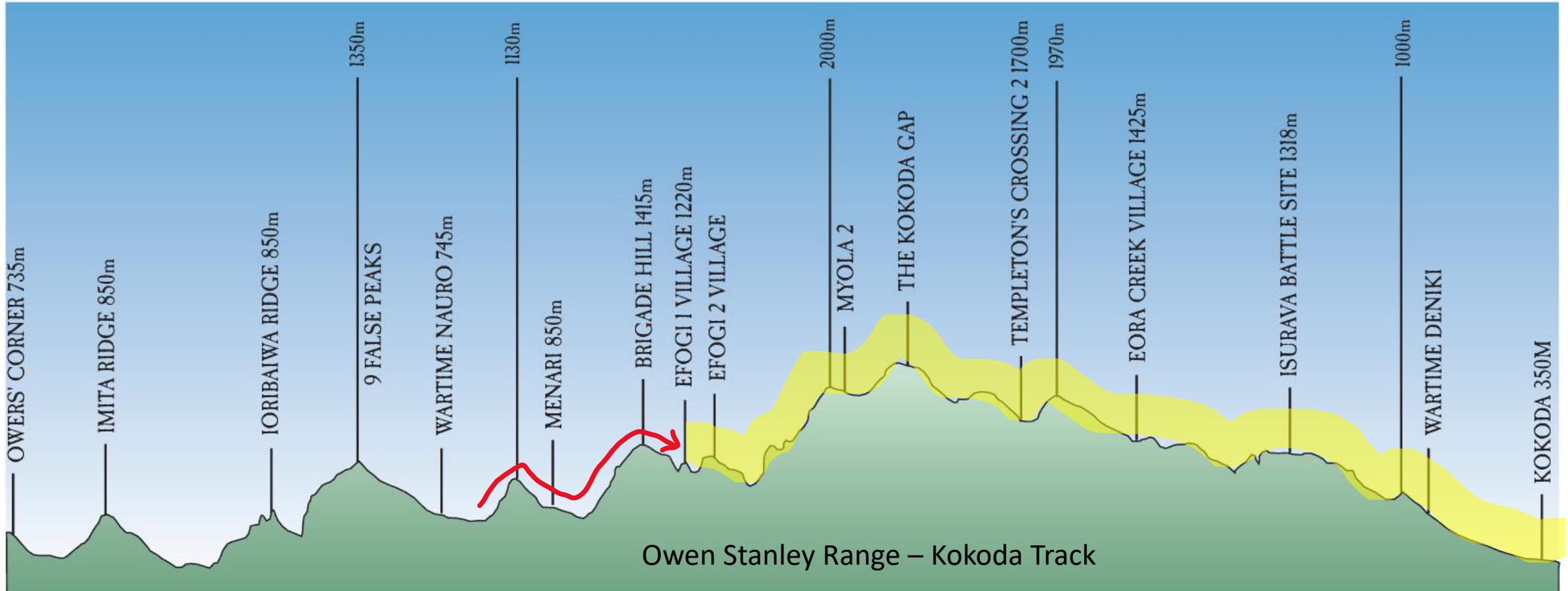
Patrols had already found Nauro unoccupied and had gone on toward Menari. The 3rd Battalion led the advance.

2 October 1942 – 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 Ioribaiwa 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.



4 October – Kokoda



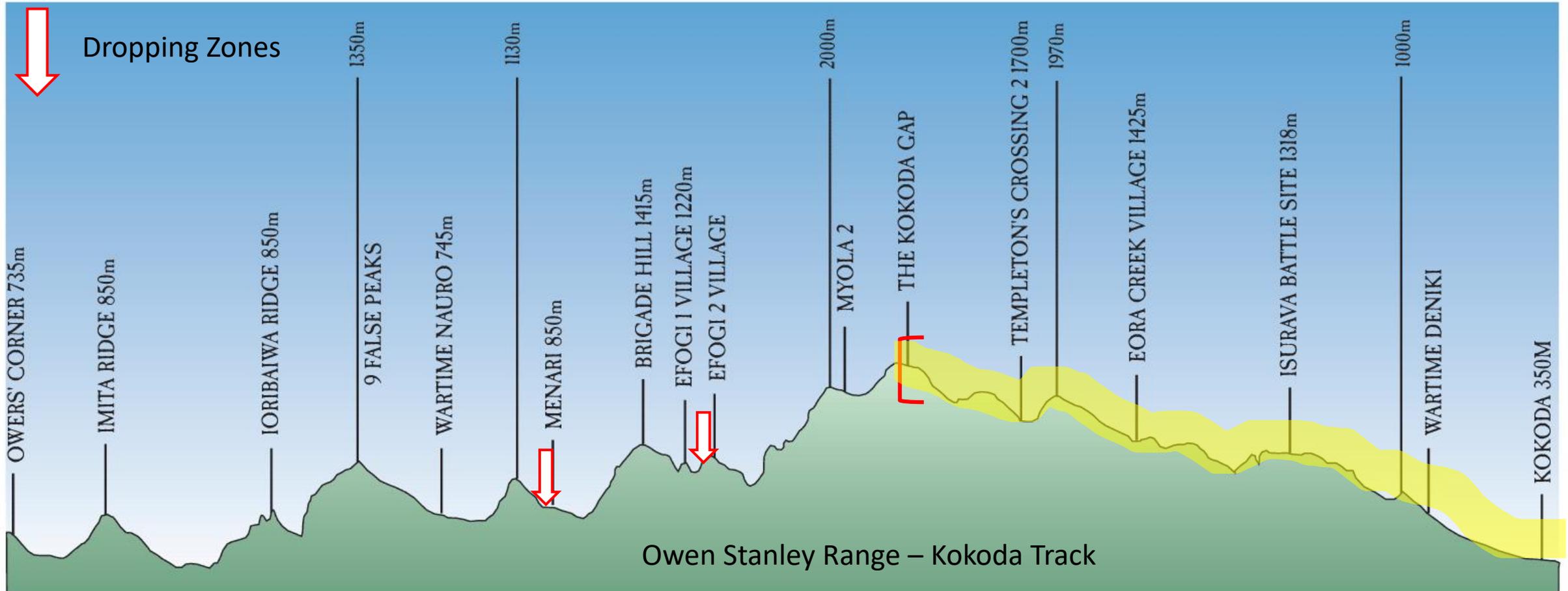
On the afternoon of the 4th October Boag reached Efoqi and reported it clear.

7 October 1942 - 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 Efoqi for the same purpose.

11 October 1942 - Sea

- On 11 October Admiral Scott learned from aerial recon that two Japanese cruisers and six destroyers were bearing down the Slot towards Guadalcanal.
- In the Battle of Cape Esperance cruisers Boise and Salt Lake City and destroyer Farenholt were damaged and destroyer Duncan was sunk. A Japanese destroyer was sunk and other Japanese ships were possibly damaged.
- The Japanese resupply mission was turned back.
- The disappointing results achieved by the superior USN force was mainly due to Scott's failure to use the new, greatly improved SG radar carried by Helena and Boise.
- However this was the best USN result yet in a surface to surface action against the Japanese.

Photo # NH 102454 Rear Admiral Norman Scott, USN



Rear Admiral Norman Scott

14 October 1942 - Guadalcanal

- Two battle ships had fired 973 shells into the perimeter in about 60 minutes. About two 8 shell broadsides per minute.
- 973 14 inch shells, each weighing 1,500 lbs amounted to 700 tons of projectiles into the perimeter in an hour.
- By comparison the biggest bombing raid on Rabaul to date spread 60 tons of bombs over two airfields and the harbour.
- Then, as the ships ceased fire and withdrew east of Savo Island, the planes came back. Night bombers continued their strikes intermittently until daybreak.
- At 05.30 Pistol Pete resumed lobbing shells onto Henderson Field.



The huge crater at the edge of the Henderson Field runway was made by a 14-inch shell fired by a Japanese battleship during the night of 13/14 October.

About a hundred of the shells were type 3 AA rounds which each burst to disburse 470 incendiary sub munitions over a wide swath.

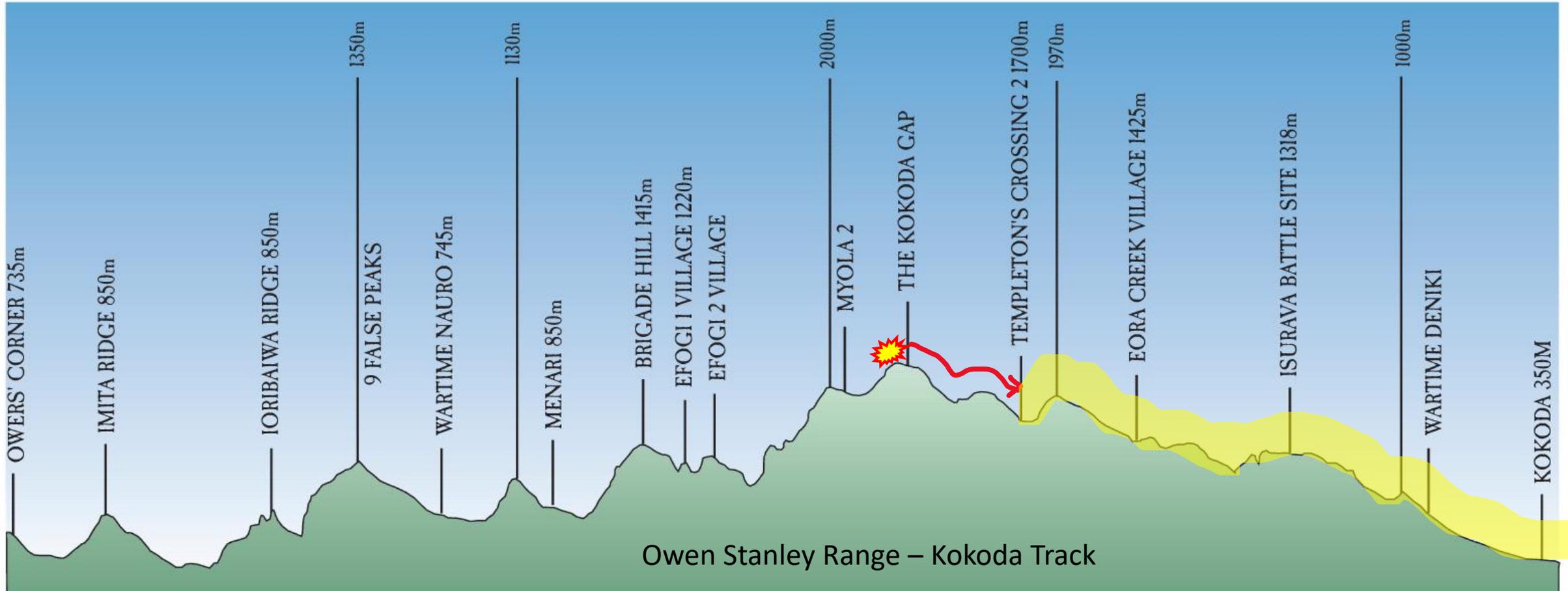
14 October 1942 - Guadalcanal

- One near-miss had flung Vandegrift to the floor in his vulnerable dugout in a heap “without hurt except in dignity”
- “A man comes close to himself at such times” the general later reflected,
 - ... and until someone has experienced naval or artillery shelling or aerial bombardment, he cannot easily grasp a sensation compounded of frustration, helplessness, fear and, in the case of close hits, shock ...
- The bombardment was a withering baptism of fire for the 164th infantry, who had only come ashore yesterday, but they only sustained three fatalities.



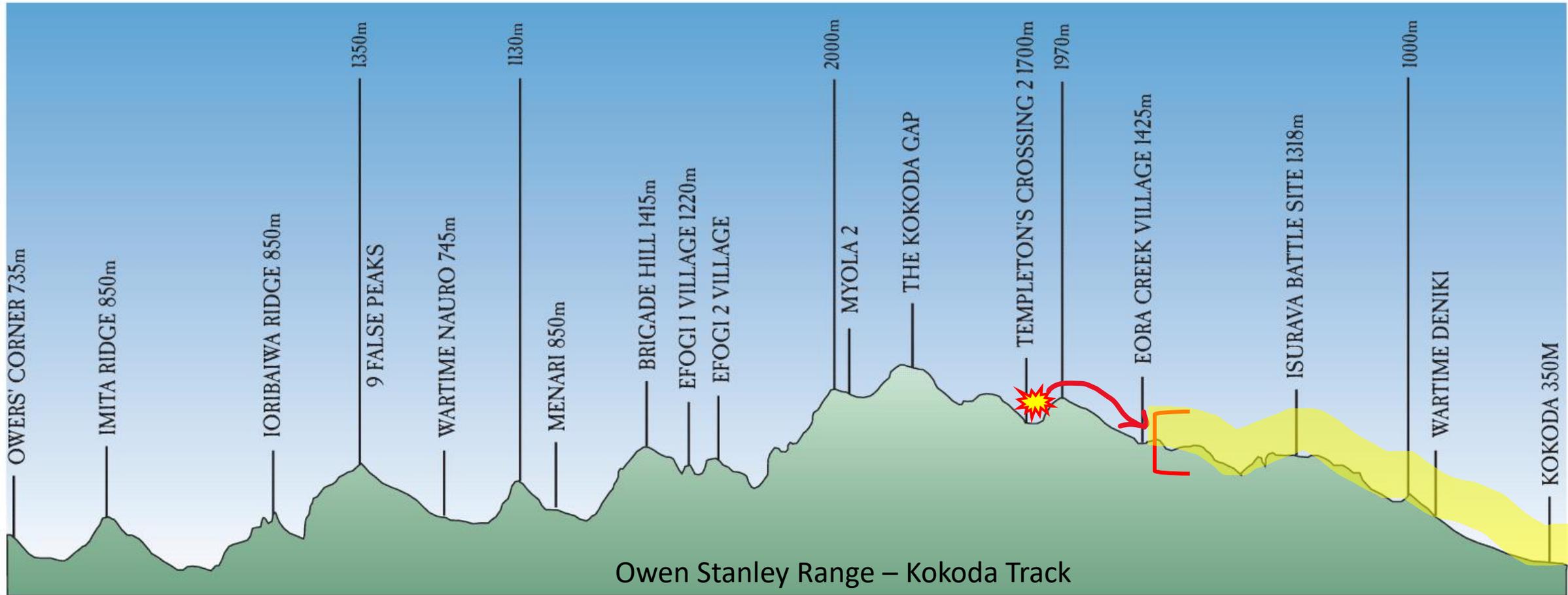
General Vandegrift

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's 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.

24 October 1942 - Washington

- In a memorandum to the joint chiefs on 24th October the President wrote:
- “My anxiety about the Southwest Pacific is to make sure that every possible weapon gets into that area to hold Guadalcanal, and that having held it in this crisis that munitions and planes and crews are on the way to take advantage of our success.
- We will soon find ourselves engaged on two active fronts and we must have adequate air support in both places even though it means delay in our other commitments, particularly to England. ...
- I wish therefore, you would canvass over the week-end every possible temporary diversion of munitions which you will require for our active fronts and let me know what they are.”



25 October 1942 - Guadalcanal

- Puller's men strained to hear the approaching enemy above the sound of drumming rain which lashed the night.
- At 00.30 the Japanese came out of the jungle screaming banzais, throwing grenades, and firing rifles and machine guns to strike the left center of 1/7's line with an assault in depth on a narrow front.
- Puller called in mortar and artillery concentrations, his riflemen took up a steady fire, and the machine guns rattled almost endless bursts down their final protective lines.
- From Puller's left, the 2d Battalion, 164th Infantry added their fire to that of the Marines, but still the Japanese assaulted, trying to rush across the fields of fire toward the Ridge. The attack kept up for 10 or 15 minutes but finally ground itself to a halt against the combined arms of the US. force.
- Then there was a lull, the Japanese regrouped and came back again, trying to clear a penetration with their grenades and small arms.
- The Marine commander assessed that his men were standing off the main attack of Rabaul's big counteroffensive: and that the force in the jungle to his front obviously was strong enough to keep such attacks going most of the night.
- He called for reinforcements, and division ordered Lt Col Robert Hall to take his 3rd Battalion of the 164th Infantry down the Ridge to bolster Puller's thin line.

25 October 1942 - Guadalcanal

- The fighting was too brisk and the night too rainy for any reshuffling of lines. By 03.30 the reinforcement was complete, and the Japanese attacks were becoming less intense. Each new assault was made with fewer and fewer men.
- The Japanese struck at the Marines again and again throughout the night. The Bushido spirit was unswerving, but the flesh could not endure the concentrated fire from the combined US infantry battalions, the artillery, and 37mms from the neighbouring 2d Battalion, 164th infantry.
- By dawn the attacks ceased, and Puller and Hall began to reorganize their battalions and readjust their lines.
- The Japanese returned to the attack but were beaten off again on the night of the 26th.
- 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”.

26th October 1942 - Sea

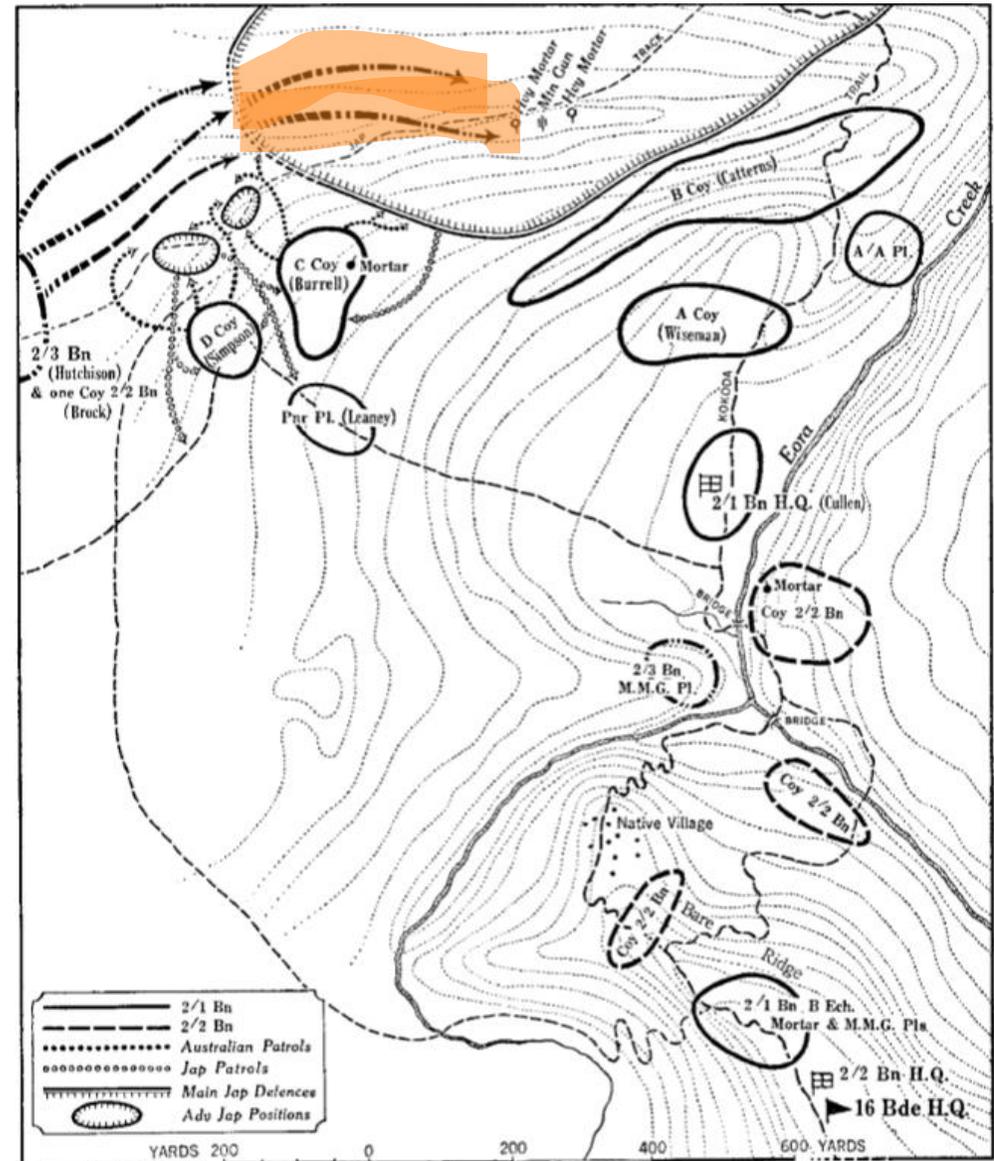
- In the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands the carrier Hornet was sunk and the carrier Enterprise was severely damaged.
- Interception of the Japanese strike aircraft largely failed because the carrier's CXAM radars gave no information about a target's height and detected incoming threats at only half the expected range.
- The usual problems of too many people on one radio circuit and not all the defenders having IFF also applied.
- The US strike force caused two damaging hits on each of a large and a light carrier.
- Some aircraft did not attack because they didn't find the targets, in some cases because they did not hear radio messages.
- Airborne radar at this point was only in a few Catalina patrol aircraft.



Hornet, sinking and abandoned

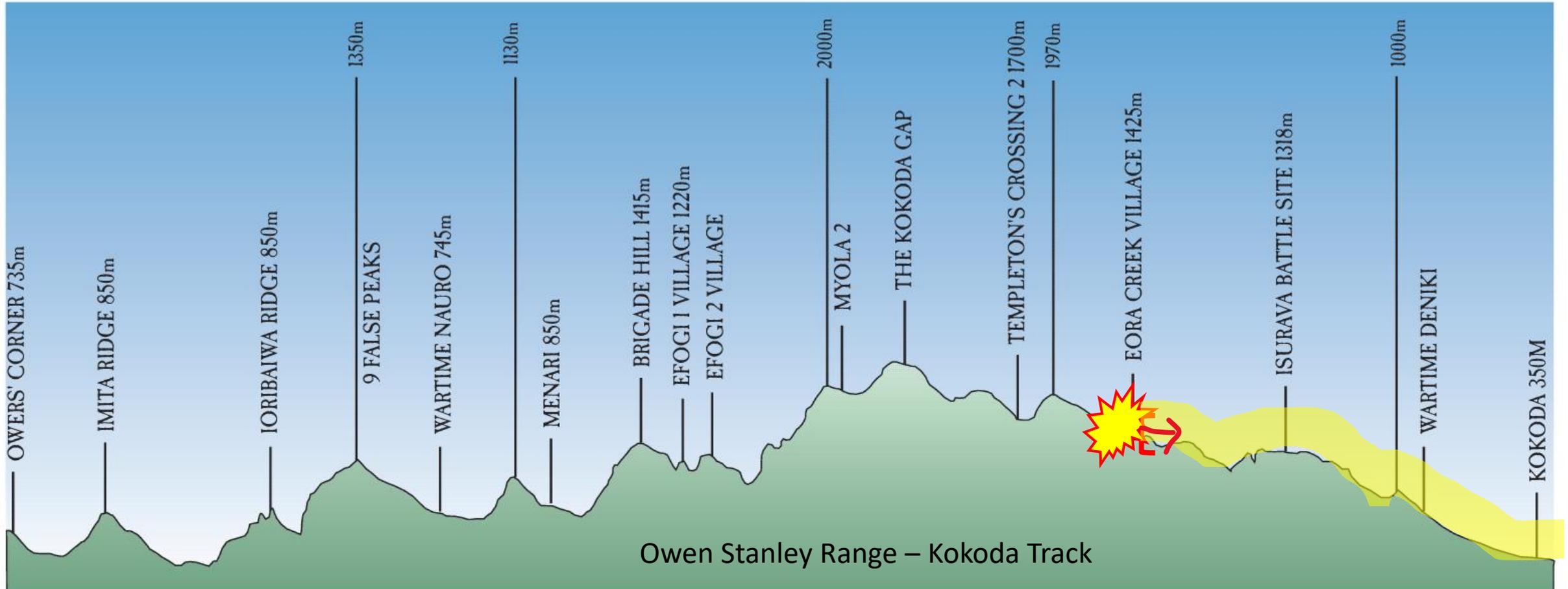
28 October 1942 - Kokoda

- 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



24th October 1942 - Strategy

- In a letter to General Arnold on 24th October General Kenney wrote:
- “Tanks and heavy artillery can be reserved for the battlefields of Europe and Africa. They have no place in jungle warfare.
- The artillery in this theatre flies, the light mortar and machine-guns, the rifle, tommygun, grenade and knife are the weapons carried by men who fly to war, jump in parachutes, are carried in gliders and who land from air transports on ground which air engineers have prepared. ...
- In the Pacific theatre we have a number of islands garrisoned by small forces.
- These islands are nothing more or less than aerodromes, or aerodrome areas from which modern fire-power is launched.
- Sometimes they are true islands like Wake or Midway, sometimes they are localities on large land masses. Port Moresby, Lae and Buna are all on the island of New Guinea, but the only practical way to get from one to the other is by air or by water: they are all islands as far as warfare is concerned.
- Each is garrisoned by a small force and each can be taken by a small force once local air control is secured. Every time one of these islands is taken the rear is better secured and the emplacements for the flying artillery are advanced closer and closer to Japan itself.”



October 1942 - Manhattan Project

- October - A special detachment from United States Army Corps of Engineers arrives in the Belgian Congo to reopen the Shinkolobwe mine. Work involves draining water from flooded workings, upgrading the plant machinery and constructing transportation facilities.
- October 15: after a meeting in Chicago on the Manhattan Project General Leslie Groves invited J. Robert Oppenheimer to join himself, James C. Marshall and Kenneth Nichols on their return trip to New York on the 20th Century Limited.
- After dinner on the train they discussed the project while squeezed into Nichol's one-person roomette (of about 40" by 80").
- October 19: Groves appoints Oppenheimer to coordinate the scientific research of the project at the Site Y laboratory.



Photo of the 20th Century Limited leaving Chicago's LaSalle Street station on a trial run June 9, 1938. The train was put into service on June 15, 1938.

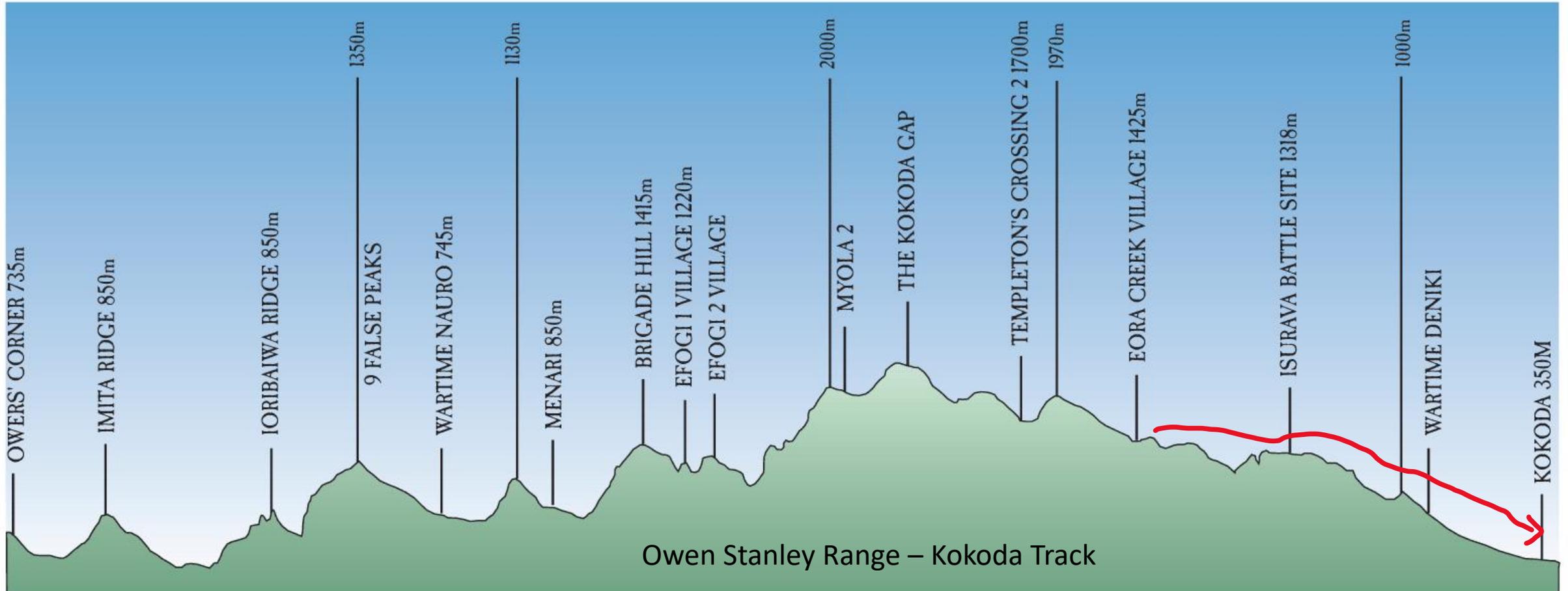
October 1942 – War Economy

- America's prodigious war production programs created enormous demands for labour at a time when millions of men had been recruited into the forces. This was creating serious wage inflation.
- The Emergency Stabilization Act was passed in October 1942, which placed wages and agricultural prices under control.
- There were immediate wage restrictions.
- In order to attract labor, employers started offering a range of fringe benefits such as pensions, medical insurance, paid holidays, and vacations.
- Because these benefits are not paid out in cash, they do not violate the wage ceiling.



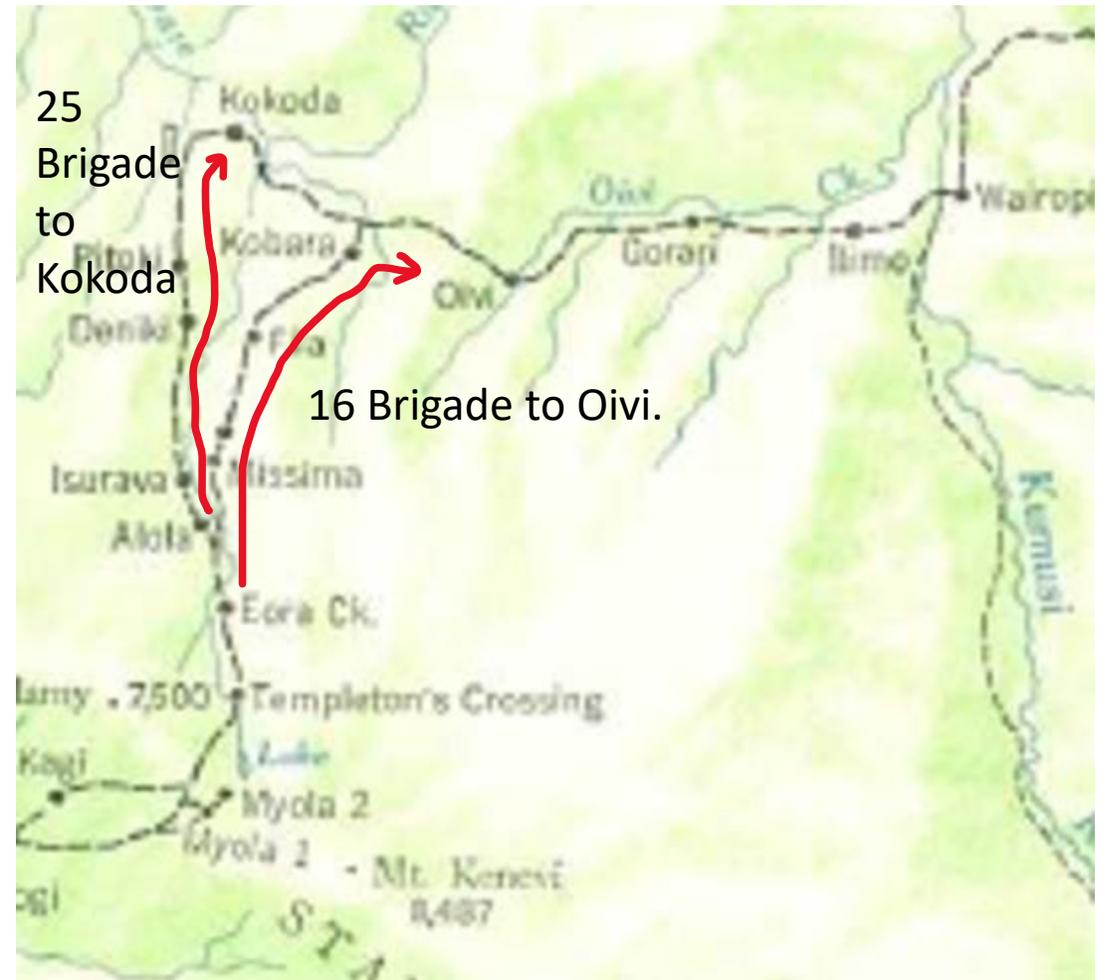
Women at work on a bomber, Douglas Aircraft Company, Long Beach, California (1942)

28 October – 2 November – Kokoda



2 November 1942 – 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 1942 - 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.

12 November 1942 – Sea, Guadalcanal

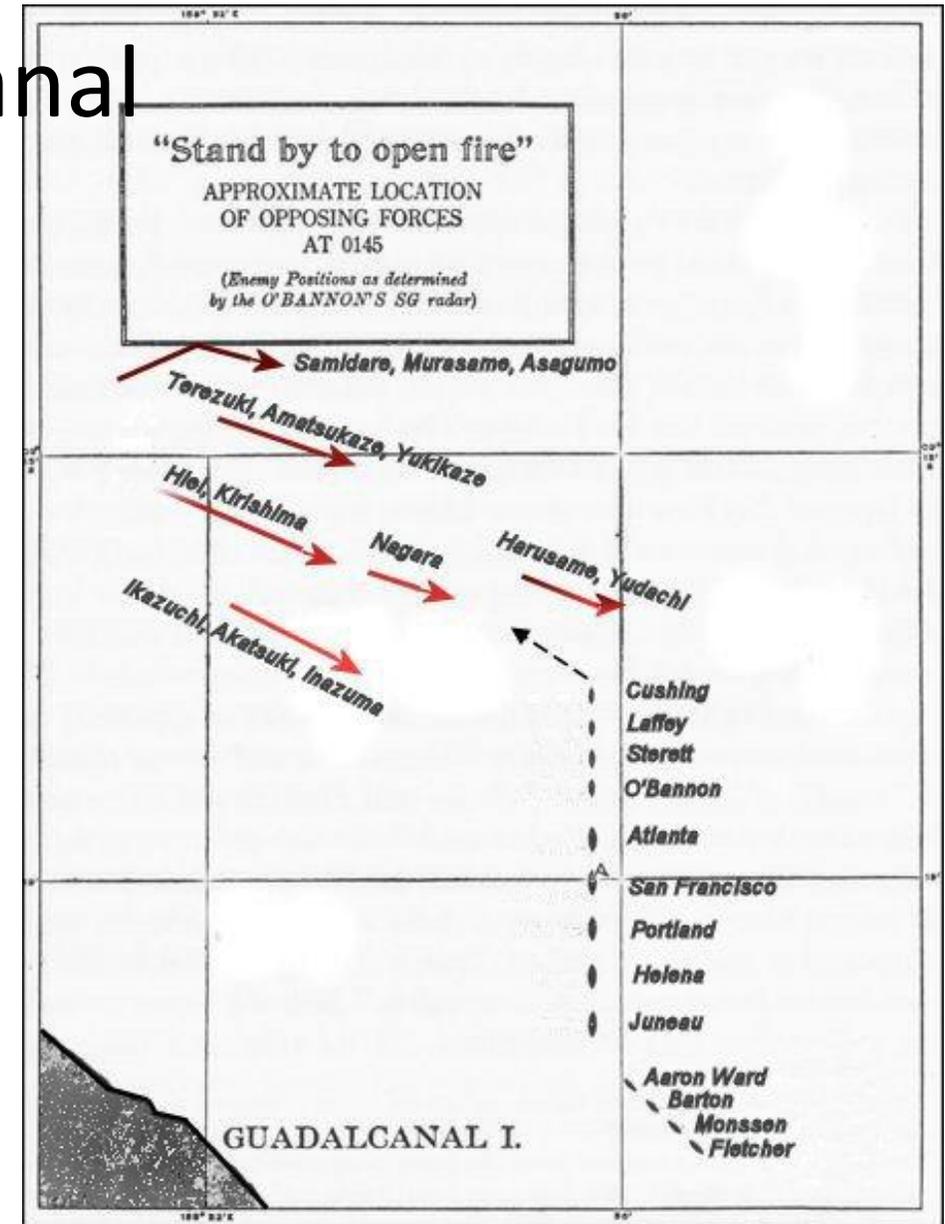
- American patrol planes had spotted large Japanese forces heading towards Guadalcanal
- The scratch group under Rear-Admiral Callaghan (photo)—shepherded the unloaded transports to open water and turned back to oppose the Japanese.
- Five of Callaghan's ships had the new, far-superior SG radar, but Callaghan's deployment put none of them in the forward part of the column, nor did he choose one for his flagship. Neither of the destroyer squadron commanders took an SG ship for their flagship either.
- At 01.24, in near-complete darkness due to the bad weather and dark moon, Helena raised the Japanese in radar blips at a range of 27,000 yards and warned the flagship that the enemy was approaching.



Admiral Callaghan commanded due to 15 days seniority over Scott. He had only 12 days experience at sea as an Admiral. Scott had six months sea time as a flag officer and had won the battle of Cape Esperance.

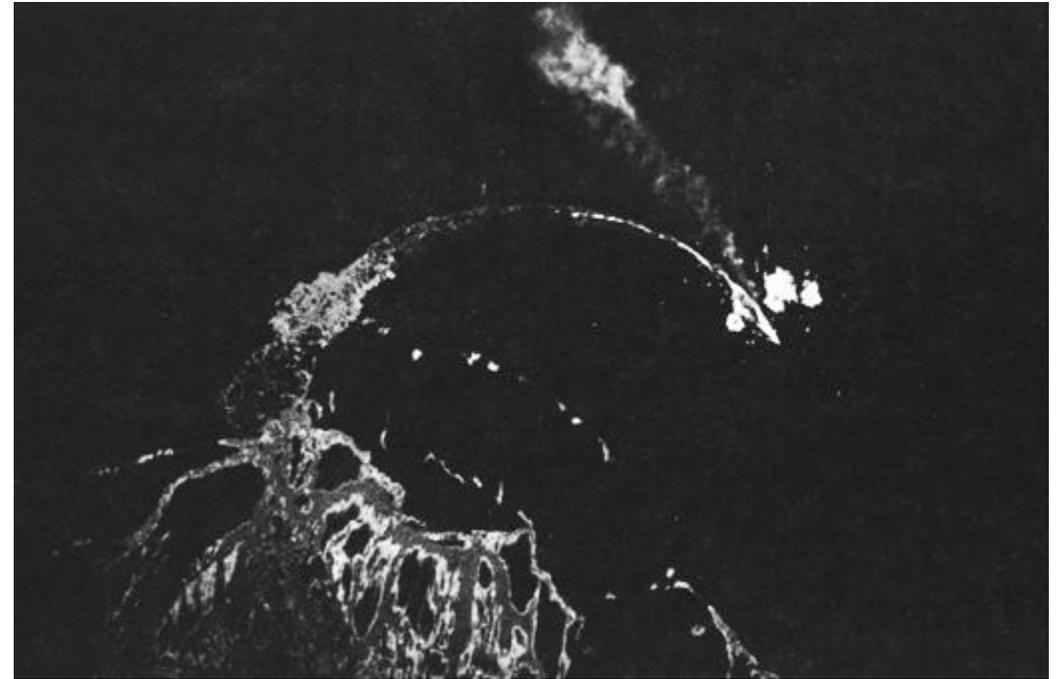
13 Nov 1942 – Sea, Guadalcanal

- Radar on San Francisco was inadequate, and Callaghan could not determine the exact positions of his own or the enemy ships. The admiral, trying to coordinate the battle visually from the bridge delayed action until he was sure of the situation at 01.45.
- By that time the range had closed to about 2,500 yards, and the van destroyer of the American force was nearly within the Japanese formation.
- When they maneuvered to launch torpedoes, the American ships disorganized their formation, and they took up independent firing.
- At that moment Admiral Callaghan ordered “Cease Firing own ships” and was killed soon after.
- Captain Hoover of Helena, senior surviving US officer ordered the US force to disengage at 02.26.



13 November 1942 – Sea

- Planes from Henderson Field took off at first light, on 13 November to nip the heels of the retiring Japanese ships. They found the crippled battleship Hiei afire near Savo.
- 70 bomb and torpedo sorties were flown against Hiei that day despite the occasional presence of 35 Zeros sent to defend her.
- American code breakers had now again broken into Japanese navy codes well enough to read traffic from the crippled battleship Hiei in real time.
- Late in the day the valves were opened to scuttle her and she sank sometime during the night.
- The Americans had lost five destroyers and two cruisers sunk with all surviving ships damaged, some severely, with 1,439 killed including two Admirals. But they had prevented the bombardment of the airstrip and its defences.



Hiei, trailing oil, is bombed by U.S. B-17 bombers from high altitude north of Savo Island on 13 November 1942.

14 November 1942 – New Guinea

- Dawn on the 13th showed that the Japanese had slipped out of their positions in the darkness and the 2/31st Battalion headed the Australian pursuit through the littered evidence of hasty retreat.
- In the early afternoon they reached the site of the bridge over the Kumusi River at Wairopi.
- Aircraft dropped steel-wire rope and tools on a dropping ground the 2/25th had secured.
- Buttrose's swimmers then got a steel cable across the water.
- The 2/5th and 2/6th Field Companies had two flying-foxes ready for use by the early afternoon, and a small suspension footbridge ready by nightfall.



(Australian War Memorial)
Crossing the Kumusi River at Wairopi on a makeshift bridge constructed by Australian engineers. November 1942.

14 November 1942 – Sea, Guadalcanal

- 11 troop transports steamed on down the Slot until by about 1130 they were north of the Russells.
- A first light attack by *Enterprise* fliers had inflicted little damage to the convoy, but at 1150 seven torpedo bombers and 18 dive bombers from Henderson were refueled, rearmed and boring in for an attack. This strike hulled several of the transports.
- About an hour later 17 fighter-escorted dive bombers delivered the second concentrated American attack on the transports and sank one of them.
- Next turn went to 15 B-17's that had left Espiritu Santo at 1018. They struck at 1430 from an altitude of 16,000 feet and scored one hit and several near misses with their 15 tons of explosives.
- At Henderson staff officers huddled with aircrews from three services to absorb the latest intelligence on the convoys progress and contrive new efforts for its destruction. Bomber pilots found their wingman for the next sortie were frequently from a different squadron and, often as not a different service. News of the size of the convoy and its obvious implications charged the atmosphere at every American position.

14 November 1942 – Sea, Guadalcanal

- Low on undamaged ships, Admiral Halsey, had detached the new battleships Washington and South Dakota with four destroyers, as TF 64 under Admiral Willis Lee to defend Guadalcanal and Henderson Field.
- Lee's was a scratch force; the battleships had operated together for only a few days, and their four escorts were from four different divisions—chosen simply because, of the available destroyers, they had the most fuel.
- Many officers at ComSoPac headquarters "doubted the wisdom of committing two new 16-inch battleships to waters so restricted as those around Savo Island.
- But Halsey felt he must throw in everything at this crisis. And he granted Lee complete freedom of action upon reaching Guadalcanal."



USS Washington a 16 inch gun battleship commissioned May 1941. South Dakota was a similar ship commissioned in 1942.

14 November 1942 – Sea, Guadalcanal

- Willis Lee was a gunnery specialist who was about guns and shooting to an unusual extent.
- He held the record for the most Olympic medals won by an individual in a single games having won 5 gold, 1 silver and 1 bronze in shooting events at Antwerp in 1920.
- Washington had an SG radar and Lee, "knew more about radar than the radar operators".
- Intelligence led Lee to expect to meet a bombardment group and the supply convoy and its escort. Total strength might be as high as 3 battleships, 8 to 10 cruisers and a dozen or more destroyers.
- He arrived in Iron Bottom Sound in the evening of 14 November.



Rear Admiral Willis Augustus
"Ching" Lee

14 November 1942 – Sea, Guadalcanal

- Despite the early loss of all four US destroyers and the almost complete failure of all South Dakota's electrical systems, including Radar and radio Washington's SG Radar allowed Lee to keep control of the battle and sink the Japanese battleship.
- Once again the Japanese had been turned back from bombarding the airfield.
- The Navy lost 242 killed and 142 wounded in the naval battle on the night of 14/15 November.
- Japanese radio admitted the loss of a battleship but claimed a great victory with four cruisers sunk and two battleships heavily damaged. South Dakota had to go back to the States for repairs.



Washington fires 16 inch guns during the battle on 15 November.

15 November 1942 – Sea, Guadalcanal

- As the sun came up on (15th November) it revealed four Japanese transports beached along the coast near Tassafaronga but no Japanese warships.
- Planes from Henderson Field, guns of the 244th Coast Artillery Battalion and the 3rd Defense Battalion, the American destroyer Meade and planes from Espiritu Santo attacked and the Japanese transports were reduced to useless hulks engulfed in flames.
- Meade then moved out into the sound to start rescuing the survivors from the American destroyers.



19 November 1942 - The Japanese Beach heads

- After the desperate fighting over the mountains and along the track from Kokoda the allies now encountered carefully designed extensively fortified and well manned defences of the Japanese beach heads 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.



19 November 1942 – The Japanese Beach heads

- 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 were unable to respond to requests for effective weapons with which to attack fortifications.



LT. COL. HERBERT A. SMITH *leading troops across a river on the way to Embogo.*
128th

23 November - JIC

Russian Front. The situation in CAUCASIA remains relatively unchanged.

The Russians claim to have gone over to the offensive on the approaches to STALINGRAD and to have cut the railroad leading south from STALINGRAD to the CAUCASUS at ABGANEROVO (about 45 miles southwest of STALINGRAD) and the STALINGRAD-LIKHAYA railroad at KRIVOMUZGINSKAYA, about 35 miles west of STALINGRAD. KALACH (on the east bank of the DON northwest of KRIVOMUZGINSKAYA) is also reported in Russian hands. Substantial Soviet gains are also claimed northwest of STALINGRAD, but information concerning that fighting, apparently in the YELANSK-KLYETSKAYA area, is less specific. German dispatches mention heavy fighting in the areas described above, but make no clear statement regarding its progress.

And in Libya the Eighth Army had captured:

Prisoners actually at base, 18 November, numbered 31,236 (7,972 Germans, including 195 officers; 23,264 Italians, including 1,272 officers).

