

# The War in the Pacific 3 From Lae to Tokyo Bay

9

## Arawe & Cape Gloucester Shaggy Ridge



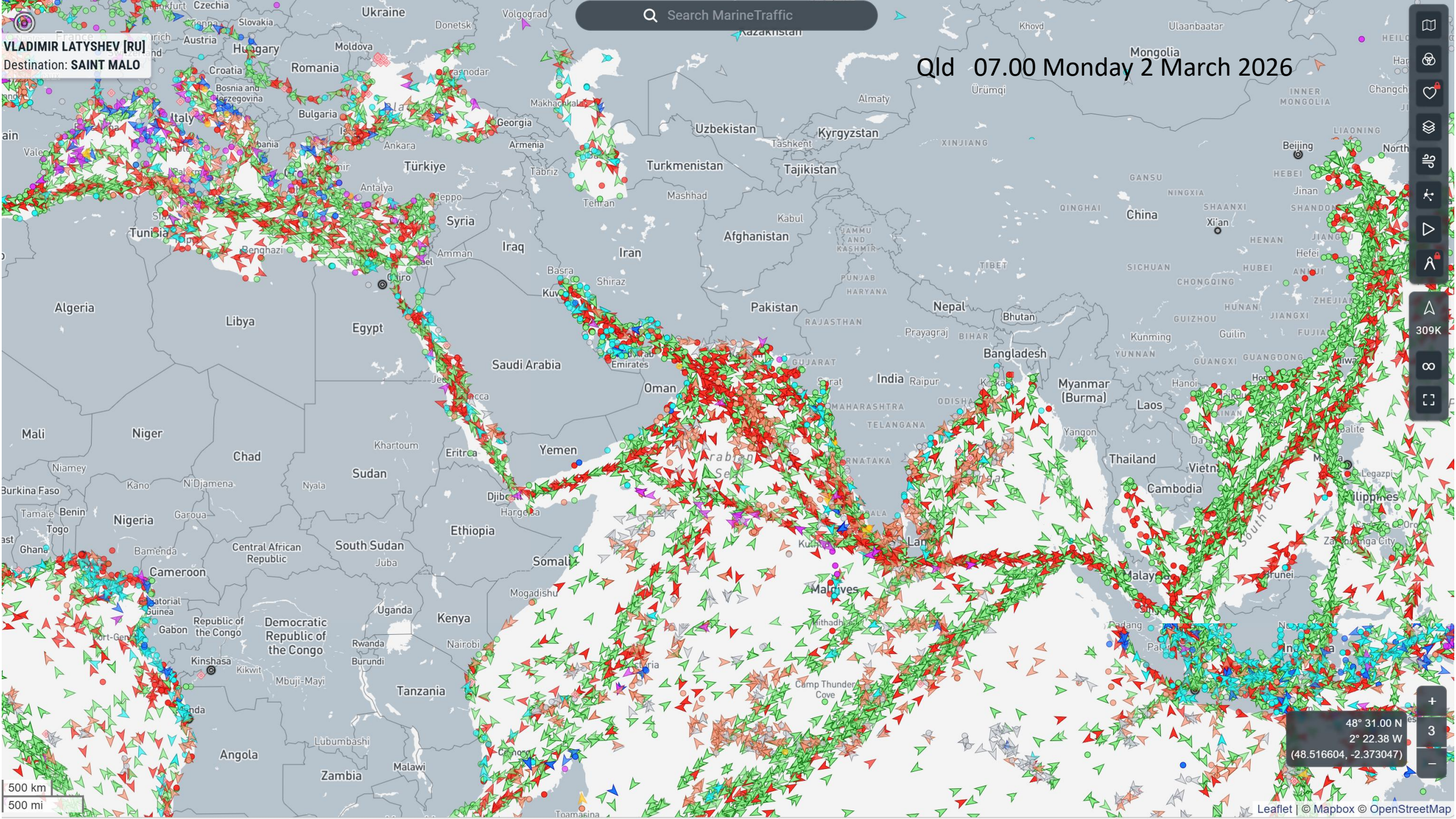


Jerry McBrien 2026

**VLADIMIR LATYSHEV [RU]**  
Destination: SAINT MALO

Search MarineTraffic

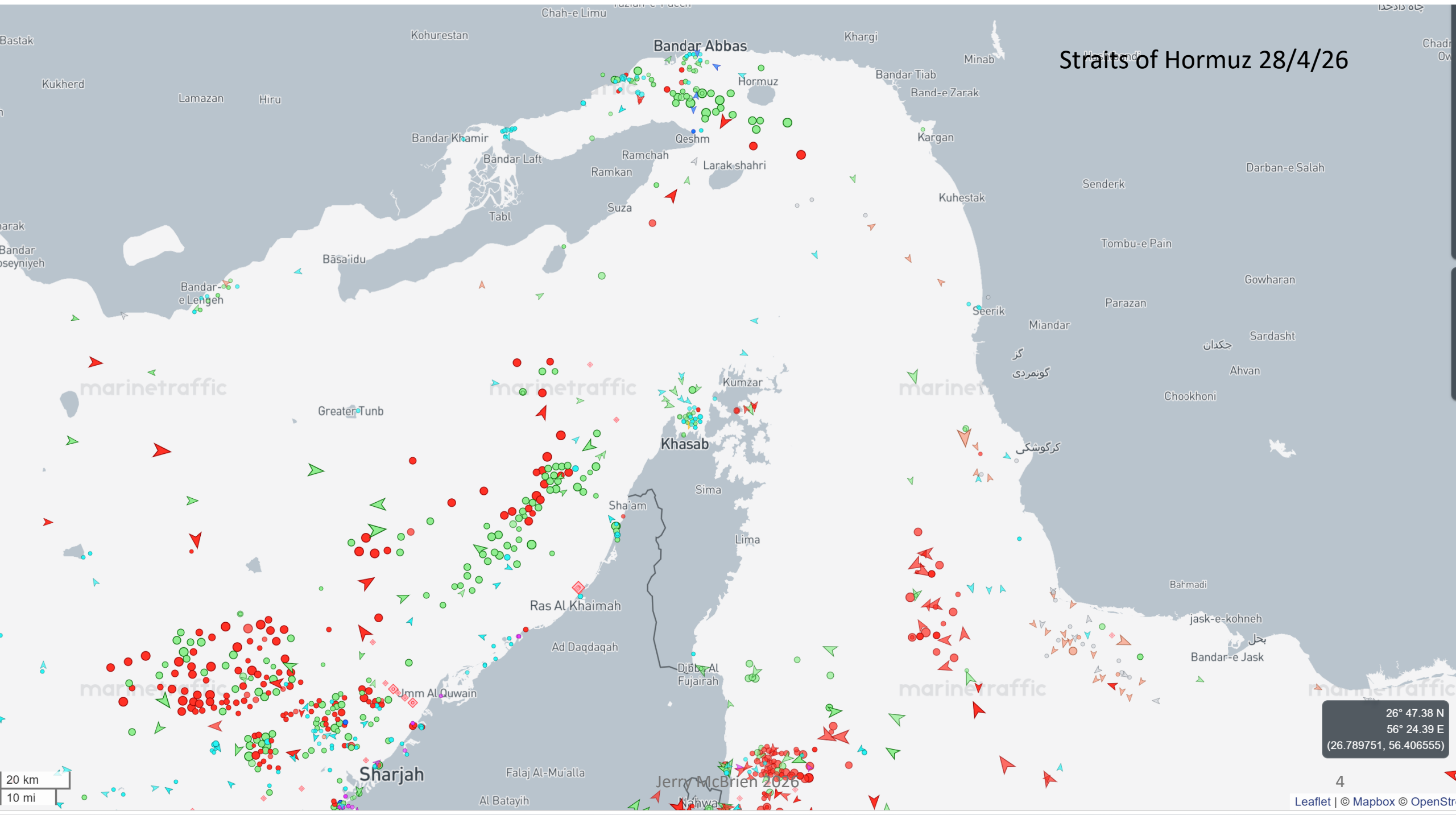
Qld 07.00 Monday 2 March 2026



500 km  
500 mi

48° 31.00 N  
2° 22.38 W  
(48.516604, -2.373047)

# Straits of Hormuz 28/4/26



26° 47.38 N  
56° 24.39 E  
(26.789751, 56.406555)

# Effect of Current War on Oil Prices



# Effect of War on Wheat Prices

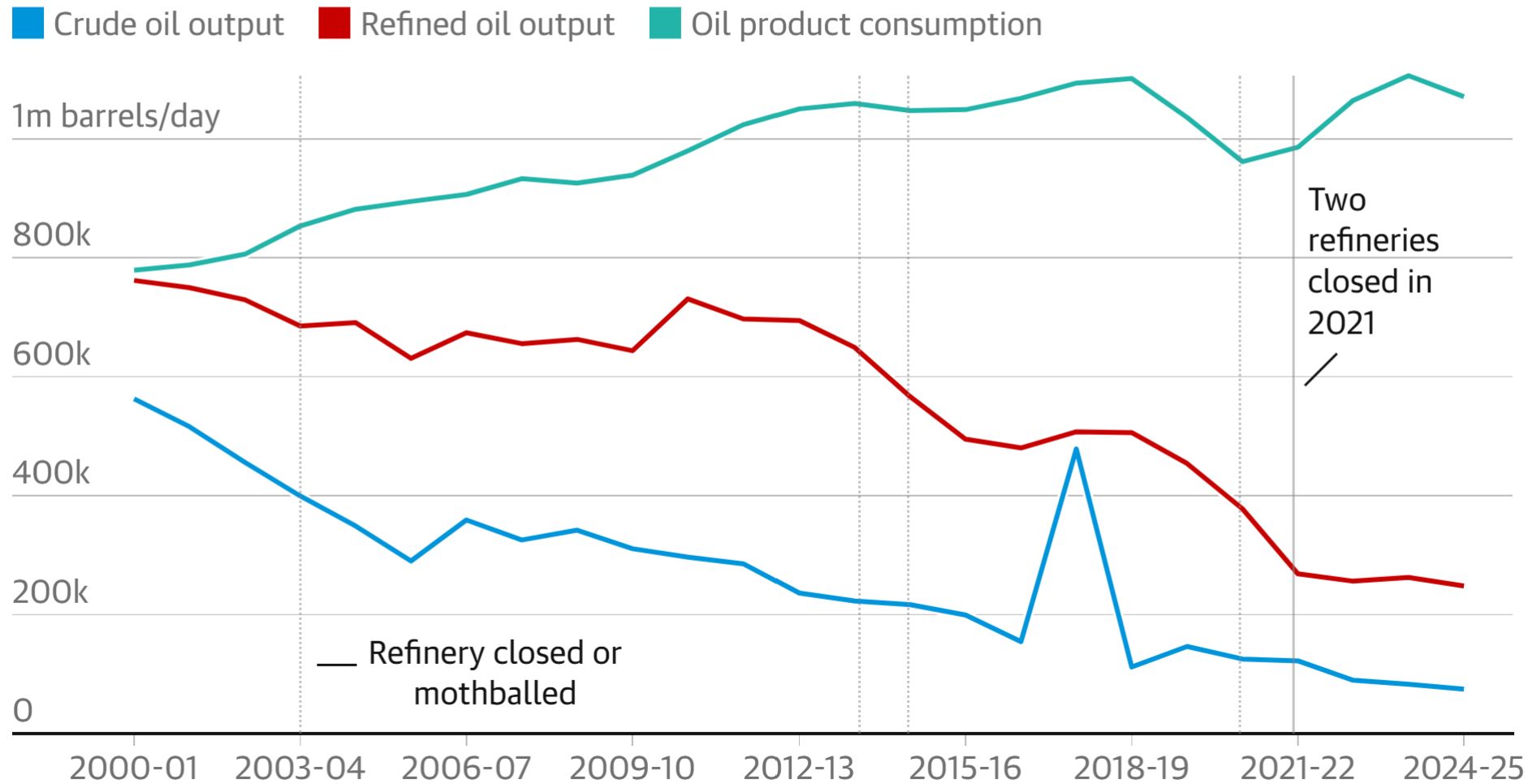


- Trump's blockade of Iran has further reduced the flow of fuel & other products out of the gulf.
- As a result fuel prices continue close to the highest they have been since the start of the war.
- Trump has elections coming in November. He needs to get gas prices down quickly.
- Trump has to achieve a result from his war which is better than the result Obama achieved by negotiation.
- The Israelis are complicating Trumps negotiations with their ongoing invasion and occupation of Lebanon.
- Trump could reduce the price of gas in the States by banning the export of oil and oil products but his oil industry donors would not like it.

- Iran demands the U.S. remove all operational blockades on ports as a condition for continuing talks.
- Iran is demanding substantial concessions, including guarantees against future military action, compensation for wartime losses, and full, formal control over the Strait of Hormuz.
- Iran is demanding substantial concessions, including guarantees against future military action, compensation for wartime losses, and full, formal control over the Strait of Hormuz.
- Iran thinks they can out suffer the Trump administration.

# Over-exposed

Australia's oil and fuel production has dwindled

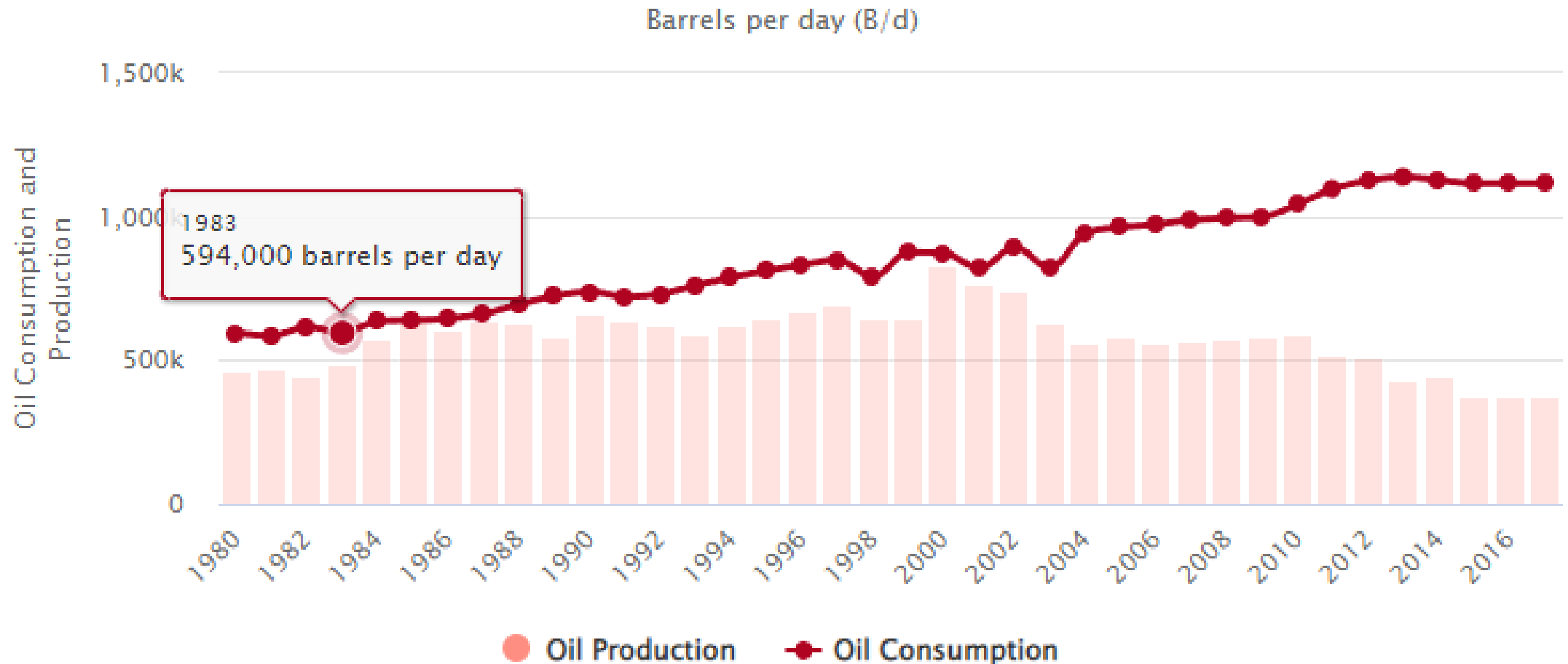


Guardian graphic. Source: Ieefa, Guardian Australia

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# Contrast Australia's position.

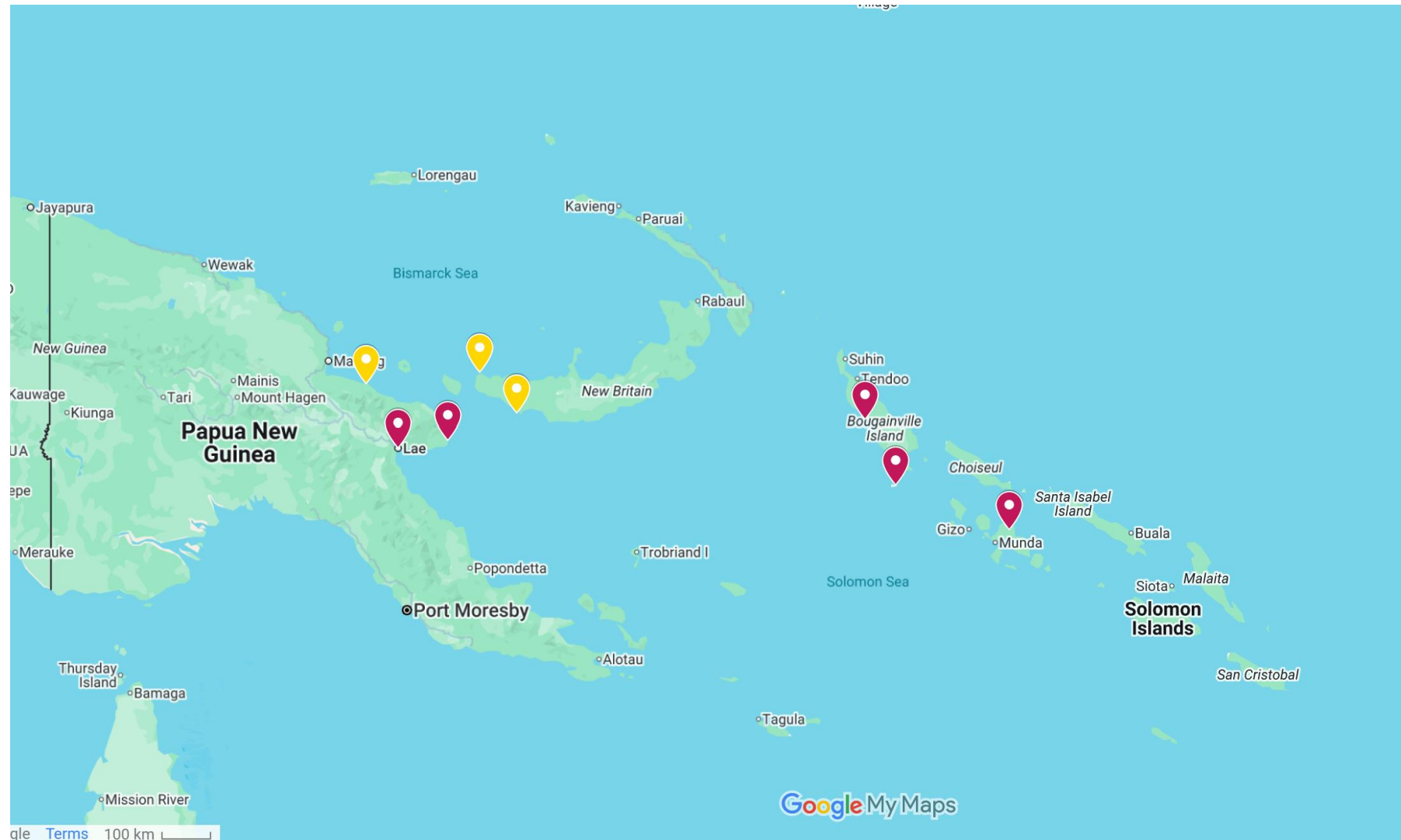
## Australia Oil Consumption and Production (barrels per day)



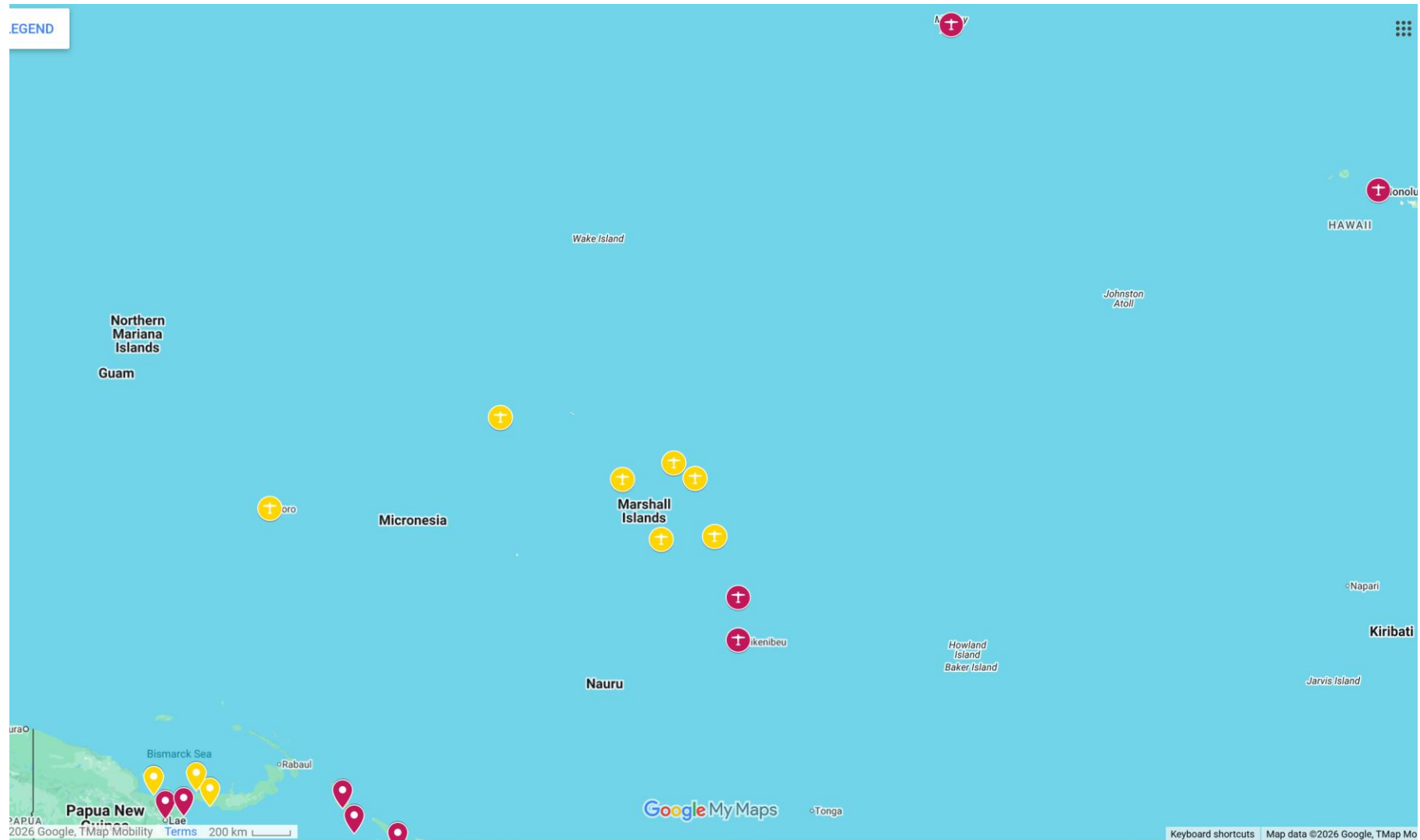


# To Return to History

# Situation Nov 43 – SW Pacific



# Situation Nov 43 – Pacific



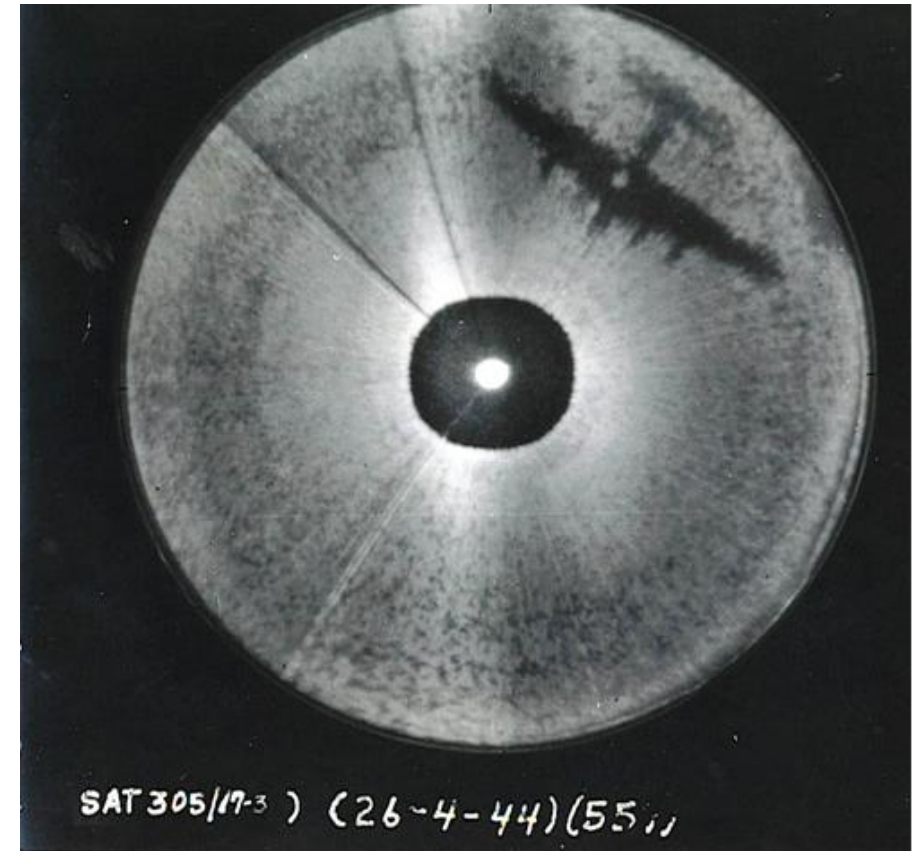
# 31 October 1943 – Solomons, Air Defence

- Six pilots and aircraft and 11 enlisted men were detached from Project Affirm, the crash project to build the Navy's night fighter capability and sent to the South Pacific on 1 August 1943.
- This group, still under Commander William J. Widhelm, retained the VF(N)-75 designation and went into combat as a shore-based unit in the Solomons.
- Their primary mission was to clear the skies of "Washing Machine Charlie," and they were successful in short order.
- Lieutenant Hugh D. O'Neil, USNR, flying out of Munda, New Georgia, was vectored to the Japanese Betty bomber, which was promptly dispatched off Vella Lavella on Halloween night.
- Photo: William J. "Gus" Widhelm. Widhelm had been shot down during the Battle of Santa Cruz. He successfully ditched the aircraft, and he and his rear gunner, were able to get into their life raft before the plane sank but were nearly run down by a Japanese destroyer. After three days adrift in mid Pacific they were rescued by a PBY patrol plane.



# 3 November 1943 – Strategic Bombing B29s

- H2X, eventually designated as the AN/APS-15, was an American ground scanning radar system used for blind bombing.
- It was developed at the MIT Radiation Laboratory under direction of Dr. George E. Valley Jr. as an evolution of the original British H2S radar, the first ground mapping radar to be used in combat.
- H2X was also known as the "Mickey set" and "BTO" for "bombing through the overcast" radar.
- H2X differed from the original H2S primarily in its 3-cm wavelength X band rather than H2S' 10-cm S band.
- This shorter wavelength gave H2X higher resolution than early marks of H2S, allowing it to provide usable images over large cities which appeared as a single blob on the H2S display.
- The first H2X-equipped B-17's were first used in combat on 3 November 1943 when the USAAF VIII Bomber Command attacked the port of Wilhelmshaven.
- The H2X on later B-24 Liberators also replaced the ball turret, being made retractable as the ball turret was for landing on the Liberator.



The H2X's resolution was enough to produce good images of other aircraft, in this case, another B-17 Flying Fortress flying below the radar-carrying aircraft.

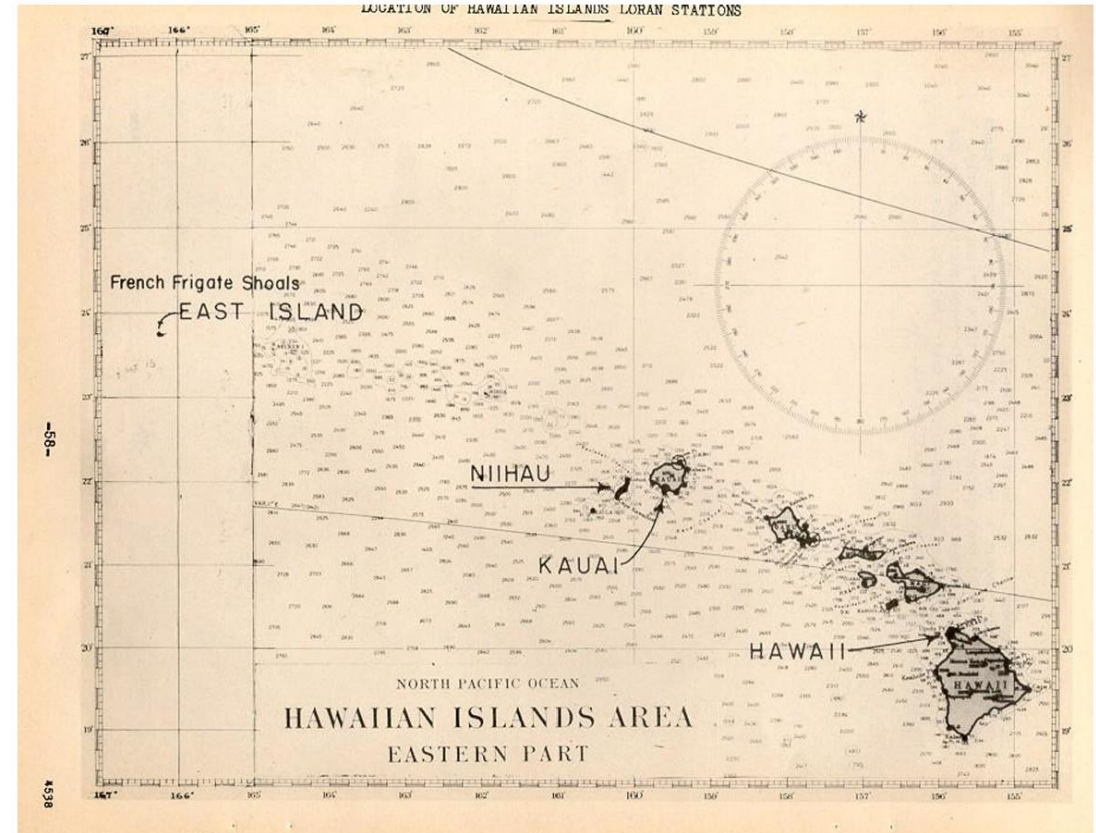
# 12 November 1943 – LORAN B29s

- LORAN (LONg RANGE Navigation) is a terrestrial hyperbolic radio navigation system developed during WWII that allows ships and aircraft to determine their position. It uses pulsed radio signals from fixed, ground-based transmitters, offering a range of up to 1,500 miles. It is similar in principle but has a longer range than, the GEE system developed to enable Bomber Command to find targets in Germany.
- The system was developed by the Radiation Laboratory at MIT.
- LORAN was declared operational in the Atlantic in early 1943.
- In the summer of 1943, the USCG completed the first independent installation of loran transmitting stations in the Aleutian Islands.
- On 12 November the Joint Loran Planning Committee of the Joint Chiefs of Staff decided that Loran coverage should be provided in the area southwest of the Hawaiian Islands.
- Photo: A typical USCG Loran-A station in the SW Pacific.



# 12 November 1943 – LORAN B29s

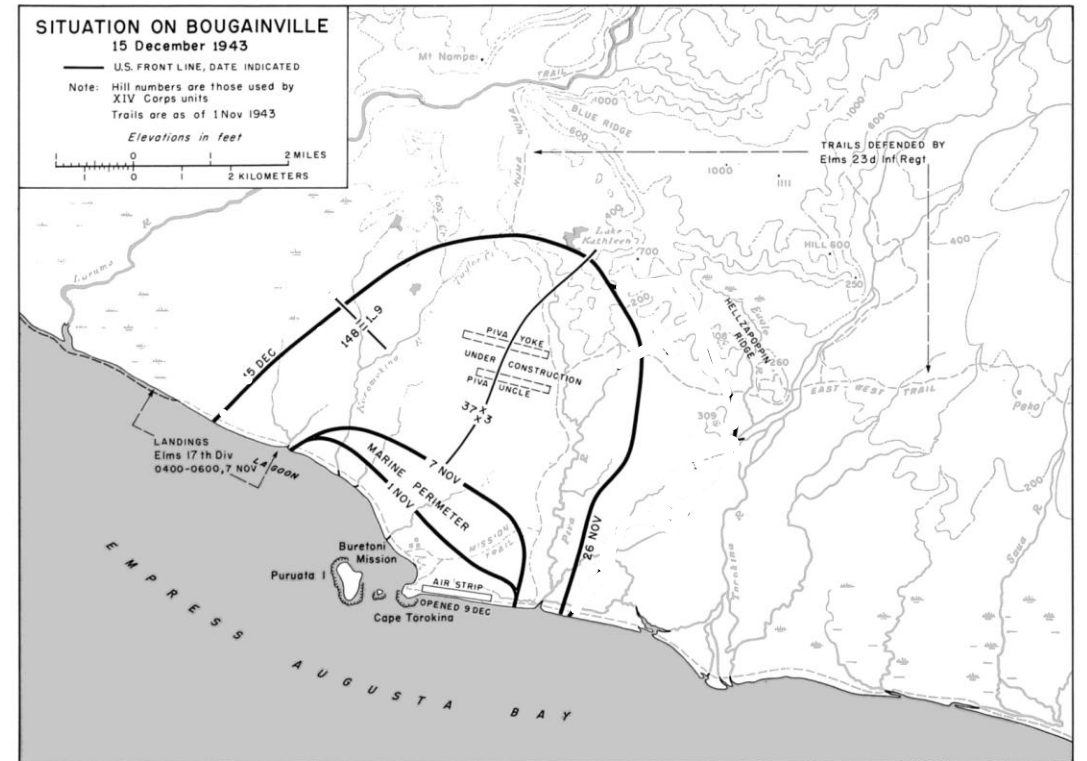
- The enormous distances and lack of useful navigation points in the Pacific Ocean made LORAN particularly useful for both ships and aircraft in the Pacific.
- Navigation by celestial observations is possible only when weather permits and, moreover, it requires a highly trained man who does little on the plane except navigate. Because of the lengthy training required, celestial navigators, particularly on Army Air Corps planes, were extremely scarce.
- In particular, the accuracy offered by LORAN allowed aircraft to reduce the amount of extra fuel they would otherwise have to carry to ensure they could find their base after a long mission. This reduced fuel load allowed the bombload to be increased.
- The US Coast Guard started construction of, and prepared to man, the Hawaiian LORAN chain



LOCATION OF HAWAIIAN ISLANDS LORAN STATIONS

# 26 November 1943 - Solomons

- Geiger decided to move his whole front forward in the latter part of November. The 3d Division would advance on the east (right), the 37th Division on the west. Five artillery battalions, would provide support, as would Aircraft, Northern Solomons,.
- The 37th Division met no fighting in its advance but the 3d Marine Division continued to meet opposition from the Japanese along the trails, especially on the Numa Numa Trail north of the airfield site and in the region northeast of that site where the East-West Trail crossed several tributary forks of the Piva River.
- Here, between 20 and 24 November, the Japanese resisted vigorously but vainly.
- By 26 November the 3d Marine Division, maintaining contact on the left with the 37th Division, had extended its lines as far north as the south shore of Lake Kathleen, about 7,500 yards north of the Piva's mouth. In the fighting in the Piva forks the 3d Marines took the first high ground in the beachhead.
- Along the shore line the Corps held the beach from a point 6,000 yards northwest of Cape Torokina to a point 3,500 east of the cape. The inland lines of the perimeter were about 19,500 yards long.



# 26 November 1943 - Tarawa

- On June 19, 1942, Butch O'Hare assumed command of VF-3, relieving Lt Cmdr Thach. He was relocated to Maui, Hawaii, to instruct other pilots in combat tactics.
- Equipped with the new Grumman F6F-3 Hellcat the highly successful follow-on to the Wildcat, two-thirds of Butch O'Hare's command, now renumbered VF-6, (twenty-four F6F-3s) embarked on the light carrier USS Independence on August 22, 1943.
- For his actions in battles near Marcus Island on August 31, 1943, O'Hare was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.
- For his actions in subsequent missions near Wake Island on October 5, 1943, O'Hare was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of a second Distinguished Flying Cross.
- On September 17, 1943, O'Hare was appointed Commander Air Group (CAG) Six, embarked on the USS Enterprise, commanding the entire Enterprise air group.



A two-plane section of F6F-3 Hellcats in tri-color camouflage scheme, wearing the red-outlined national insignia (January 21, 1943).

# 26 November 1943 - Tarawa

- Faced with U.S. daylight air superiority, the Japanese developed tactics to send torpedo-armed Mitsubishi G4M Betty bombers on night missions from their bases in the Marianas against the U.S. aircraft carriers.
- Lieutenant Commander Edward "Butch" O'Hare was Commander Air Group (CAG) Six, embarked on the USS Enterprise, commanding the entire Enterprise air group.
- In late November the Japanese launched these low-altitude strikes almost nightly to get at Enterprise and other American ships, so Admiral Radford, O'Hare and Commander Tom Hamilton, CV-6 Air Officer, were deeply involved in developing counter-tactics, the first carrier-based night fighter operations of the U.S. Navy.
- O'Hare's plan required the Carrier's (FDO) to spot incoming formations at a distance and send a Bat Team section consisting of a radar equipped Avenger torpedo bomber and two Hellcat fighters toward the Japanese intruders.



TBF Avenger ready for catapult launch.

# 26 November 1943 - Tarawa

- The radar-equipped Avenger would lead the Hellcats into position behind the incoming bombers, close enough for the F6F pilots to spot the blue exhaust flames of the Japanese bombers. The Hellcats would then close in and shoot down the torpedo-carrying bombers.
- Enterprise introduced this experiment in the co-operative control of Avengers and Hellcats for night fighting, on the night of November 26, 1943. O'Hare volunteered to lead this mission.
- The night fighter unit consisting of 1 VT and 2 VF was catapulted between 17:58 and 18:01.
- The Hellcats had trouble finding the Avenger and the FDO had difficulty guiding any of them on the targets but O'Hare and his wingman in their Hellcats finally got into position behind the Avenger.
- Just then the turret gunner of the TBF noticed a Betty above and almost directly behind O'Hare's 6 o'clock position. He opened fire with the TBF's .50-cal. machine gun in the dorsal turret and a Japanese gunner fired back. Butch O'Hare's F6F Hellcat apparently was caught in a crossfire. Butch's F6F slid out of formation to port, pushing slightly ahead at about 160 knots and vanished in the dark.
- After dawn, a three-plane search was made, but no trace of O'Hare or his aircraft was found.



O'Hare as Air Group Six Commander in the cockpit of a Grumman F6F-3 (1943).

# 26 November 1943 - Tarawa

- During Lexington's attempted raid on Rabaul on 20 February 1942 in the early days of the war the FDO was caught with only two fighters to defend against a squadron of bombers.
- O'Hare was credited with shooting down five bombers, very possibly saving the ship and became the first naval aviator to be awarded the Medal of Honor. Since returning to combat in August 1943, he had twice been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.
- On September 19, 1949, the Chicago-area Orchard Depot Airport was renamed O'Hare International Airport.
- An F4F Wildcat in a livery identical to the aircraft flown by O'Hare, ("White F-15") is currently on display in Terminal 2. The display was opened on 20 February 2017 on the Seventy-fifth anniversary of his Medal of Honor flight.
- Butch's father "Easy Eddie O'Hare" was a lawyer who worked closely with Al Capone.
- During Capone's tax evasion trial in 1931 and 1932, O'Hare's father provided incriminating evidence which helped finally put Capone away.
- In November 1939, Easy Eddy was shot and killed, most likely by Capone's gunmen.



Note the carrier deck of the Butch O'Hare Exhibit—  
photo by Joseph May/Travel for Aircraft

# 26 November 1943 - SEAC

- The Americans were just as anxious as hitherto to support the Chinese war effort by a British offensive in the Indian Ocean and Burma.
- In accordance with his directive, Mountbatten planned an amphibious assault on the Andaman Islands (operation BUCCANEER) in March 1944.
- This was supported by the Americans, and Roosevelt gave the Chinese the promise of a considerable amphibious operation across the Bay of Bengal within the next few months.
- But any such amphibious assaults in the Indian Ocean were opposed by the British on the grounds that they would demand landing craft urgently required in European waters, for the assaults on Italy and Normandy, and discussions became heated, with King and Brooke in the leading roles.
- Brooke, as spokesman for the British Chiefs of Staff, strongly opposed discussing South-East Asia before agreeing on plans for the assault on Europe and the over-all strategy of the war against Japan, and maintained that only when these had been settled would it be practicable to allocate assault shipping for BUCCANEER.
- General Stilwell who was at the discussion recorded that: "Brooke got nasty and King got good and sore. King almost climbed over the table at Brooke. God he was mad. I wish he had socked him."
- The question was still unresolved when the first Cairo Conference ended on 26th November.



The Combined Chiefs in session. King extreme left. Brooke extreme right.

# 28 November 1943 – Tarawa

- For the next several days the 2nd Battalion, 6th Marines moved up through the remaining islands in the atoll and cleared the area of Japanese, completing this on 28 November.
- Of the 3,636 Japanese in the garrison, only seventeen survived. Of the 1,200 Korean laborers brought to Tarawa to construct the defenses, only 129 survived.
- All told, 4,690 of the island's defenders were killed.
- The 2nd Marine Division suffered 894 killed in action, while an additional 84 died of wounds. 2,188 were wounded.
- Of the roughly 12,000 2nd Marine Division Marines on Tarawa, 3166 or 26% became casualties.
- Photo: Chaplain Francis W. Kelly and an assistant performing burial rites at Tarawa



# 28 November 1943 – Tarawa

- The heavy casualties suffered by the United States at Tarawa sparked public protest, where headline reports of the high losses could not be understood for such a small and seemingly unimportant island.
- The public reaction was aggravated by the unguardedly frank comments of some of the Marine Corps command.
- General Holland Smith aka “Howlin Mad Smith”, commander of the V Amphibious Corps who had toured the beaches after the battle, likened the losses to Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg.
- Admiral Chester Nimitz (photo) was inundated with angry letters from families of men killed on the island.
- Back in Washington, newly appointed Marine Corps Commandant Alexander Vandegrift, the widely respected and highly decorated veteran of Guadalcanal, reassured Congress, pointing out that "Tarawa was an assault from beginning to end."
- A New York Times editorial on 27 December 1943 praised the Marines for overcoming Tarawa's rugged defenses and fanatical garrison and warned that future assaults in the Marshalls might well result in heavier losses. "We must steel ourselves now to pay that price."



# 28 November 1943 - Solomons

- With the Torokina landings safely accomplished, Murray's coast watching team reported
- "Enemy shipping and plane movements now negligible this area. All enemy positions and information of relative value reported. Suggest withdrawal"
- The team was extracted by PT Boats on 27<sup>th</sup> November and landed at Torokina on 28<sup>th</sup>.
- This was the furthest north that the Solomons PT Boats had ventured to this point.



*The New Ireland party after their arrival back at Torokina. Kneeling from the left, Bill Dolby, Harry Murray, Percy Cream and Snow.*

# 29 November 1943 – New Britain

- Instead of an occupation of Gasmata, a naval bombardment of targets in the Gasmata, Lindenhafen area was planned.
- The destroyers of TF74 left Milne Bay at 7.30 a.m. on the 29<sup>th</sup> and bombarded the targets for about 20 minutes at midnight on 29th November.
- Admiral Crutchley reported: “The operation . . . was made possible entirely due to SG radar. A comparatively featureless and poorly charted coast was approached at 27 knots on a very dark night . . . . Comdesron 4 reports that at 15 miles the coast in the vicinity of Gasmata was showing clearly on the PPI of his SG radar and his navigational position was soon established . . . . The selected targets were soon identified on the SG PPI, ships were led accurately on to the pre-determined bombardment lines and the ships opened up within five seconds of scheduled time of commencement. Salute to the SG radar!”
- Photo: REAR ADMIRAL SIR VICTOR CRUTCHLEY VC DSC RN, REAR ADMIRAL COMMANDING AUSTRALIAN SQUADRON, 1942-06-13 TO 1944-06-13.



# November 1943 – Solomons, Air Defence

- Air attacks did not jeopardize the security of the beachhead but they were a costly nuisance.
- Of ninety air alerts in November, twenty-two resulted in bombings and strafings that killed twenty-four men and wounded ninety-six.
- In addition to the anti-aircraft guns a few PV-1 night fighters from New Georgia defended against Japanese fliers.
- Though their losses were lighter than in daylight attacks, the Japanese lost several planes to the night fighters and the anti-aircraft batteries.



A U.S. Marine Corps Lockheed PV-1 Ventura night fighter of Marine night fighter squadron VMF(N)-531 in the Southwest Pacific in 1943. A few PV-1 patrol planes had been modified with AI Mk IV air-search radar for interim use as night fighters.

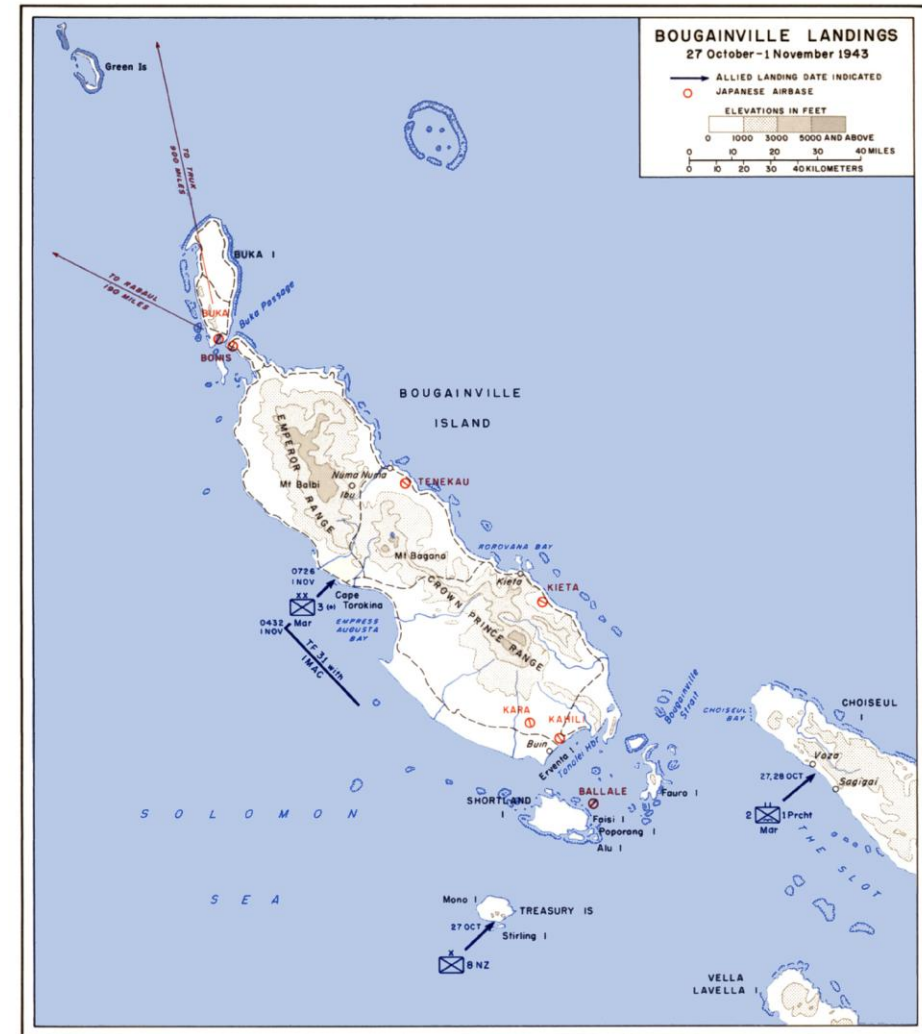
# Late November 1943 – New Britain

- Air attacks, which had been under way against New Britain since October, began on a large scale in late November.
- Cape Gloucester and Gasmata were the main targets. Arawe was avoided until 14 December in order to keep from warning the Japanese.
- As General Whitehead said, Cape Gloucester was "tailor made" for air operations. The target area lay along the beach and was long and narrow.
- The chief targets were Tuluvu airfield, anti-aircraft guns, supply dumps, and the barge staging points. The airfield was knocked out of action early in the operation and stayed that way.



# November 1943 – Air Defence

- The destroyer Sauffley, in November 1943, had an embarked fighter direction team aboard to support the Bougainville landing. The commanding officer, in his action report noted that the team had experienced problems with his older SC radar:
- Because of the marked difference in the performance of the various types of search radars, it is recommended that Fighter Director units be assigned to ships with SC-2 radar.
- This recommendation is based on the fact that SC-2 radar is the only one having directional IFF, which permits quicker discrimination between friendly and enemy units.



# November 1943 – Air Defence

- Sometimes there was friction between embarked FD teams and skippers.
- On destroyer Pringle (photo) supporting the Bougainville landing the FDO had twice requested the CO to use the ship's radio to request advance information regarding expected tactics and strength of the Japanese forces, plans of Allied surface and aviation forces, and specific information on the air squadrons with whom he would be working.
- Even though the ship was equipped with a new line of sight VHF radio, the skipper refused to break radio silence.
- The fighter director would not be permitted to transmit until he had a definite bogey on his radar. The FDO wrote in his action report.
- Much valuable time... is lost in checking with his cover, finding out their calls, their positions and their angels (altitude). The fighter director should have all this information at his fingertips prior to the appearance of the bogey so that an immediate vector for proper intercept can be given.



The U.S. Navy destroyer USS Pringle (DD-477) underway sometime in December 1942, location unknown. Note that she is fitted with a catapult and derrick, these were removed before her Pacific service. Note that the forward turrets have their top hatches open.

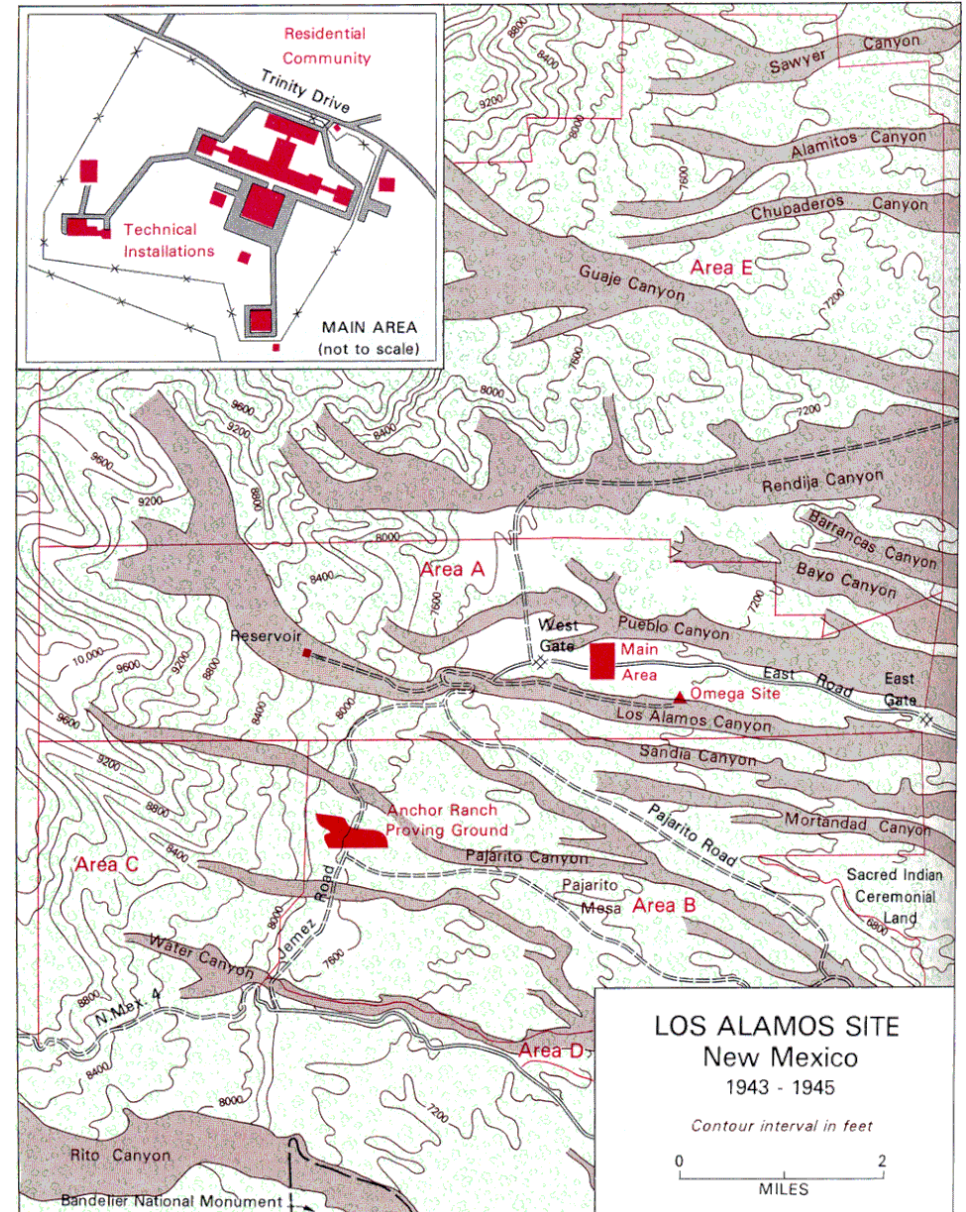
# November 1943 - Manhattan Project

- In November 1943 after the British Tube Alloys effort was merged with the American Manhattan Project by the Quebec Agreement, Mark Oliphant (photo) left in a B-24 Liberator for the United States as part of the British Mission.
- He was one of the scientists whose services the Americans were most eager to secure.
- Oppenheimer, who was now the director of the Los Alamos Laboratory attempted to persuade him to join the team there, but Oliphant preferred to head a team assisting his friend Lawrence at the Radiation Laboratory in Berkeley to develop the electromagnetic uranium enrichment process—a vital but less overtly military part of the project.
- Oliphant became Lawrence's de facto deputy and was in charge of the Berkeley Radiation Laboratory when Lawrence was absent.
- Although based in Berkeley, he often visited Oak Ridge, Tennessee, where the separation plant was, and was an occasional visitor to Los Alamos



# 30 November 1943 – Manhattan Project

- During the war, Los Alamos was referred to as "Site Y" or "the Hill".
- Initially it was to have been a military laboratory with Oppenheimer and other researchers commissioned into the Army, but Robert Bacher and Isidor Rabi balked at the idea and convinced Oppenheimer that other scientists would object.
- Conant, Groves, and Oppenheimer then devised a compromise whereby the laboratory was operated by the University of California under contract to the War Department.
- Groves initially allocated \$300,000 for construction, three times Oppenheimer's estimate, but by the time Sundt finished on 30 November 1943, over \$7 million had been spent.



# November 1943 - Manhattan Project

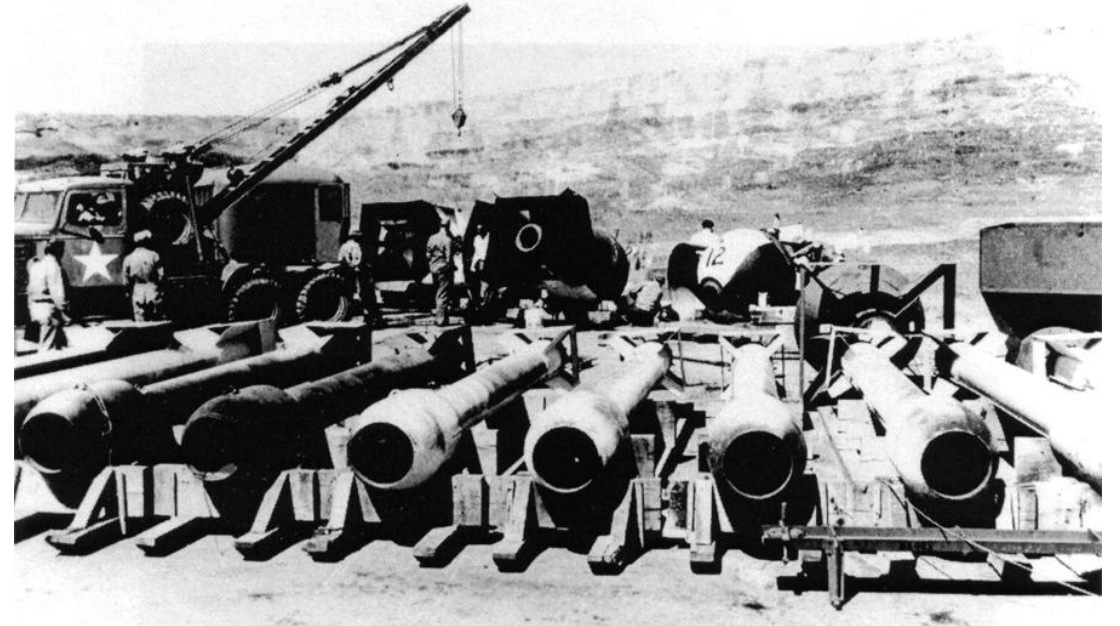
- The Army Air Forces Materiel Command at Wright Field, Ohio, began Silverplate, the codename for the modification of the B-29 to drop atom bombs, in November 1943.



Silverplate B-29 Straight Flush. The tail code of the 444th Bombardment Group is for security reasons.

# November 1943 - Manhattan Project

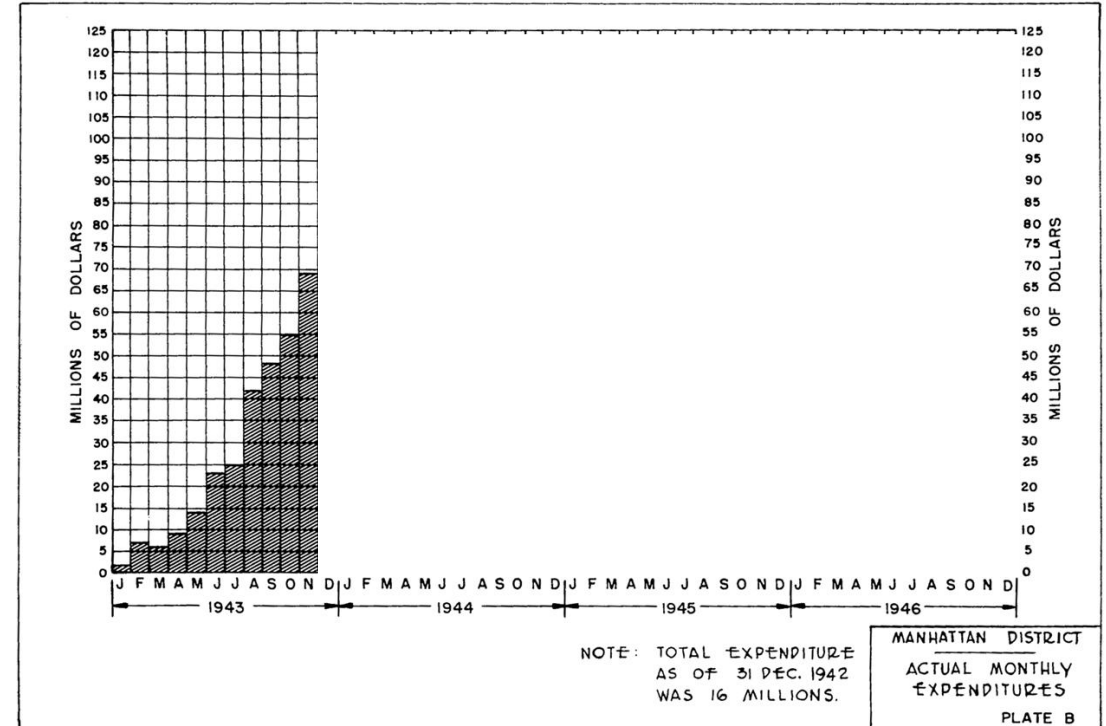
- Test drops were carried out at Muroc Army Air Field and the Naval Ordnance Test Station in California with Thin Man and Fat Man pumpkin bombs to test their ballistic, fuzing and stability characteristics.



Thin Man bomb casings can be seen here during Manhattan Project testing.

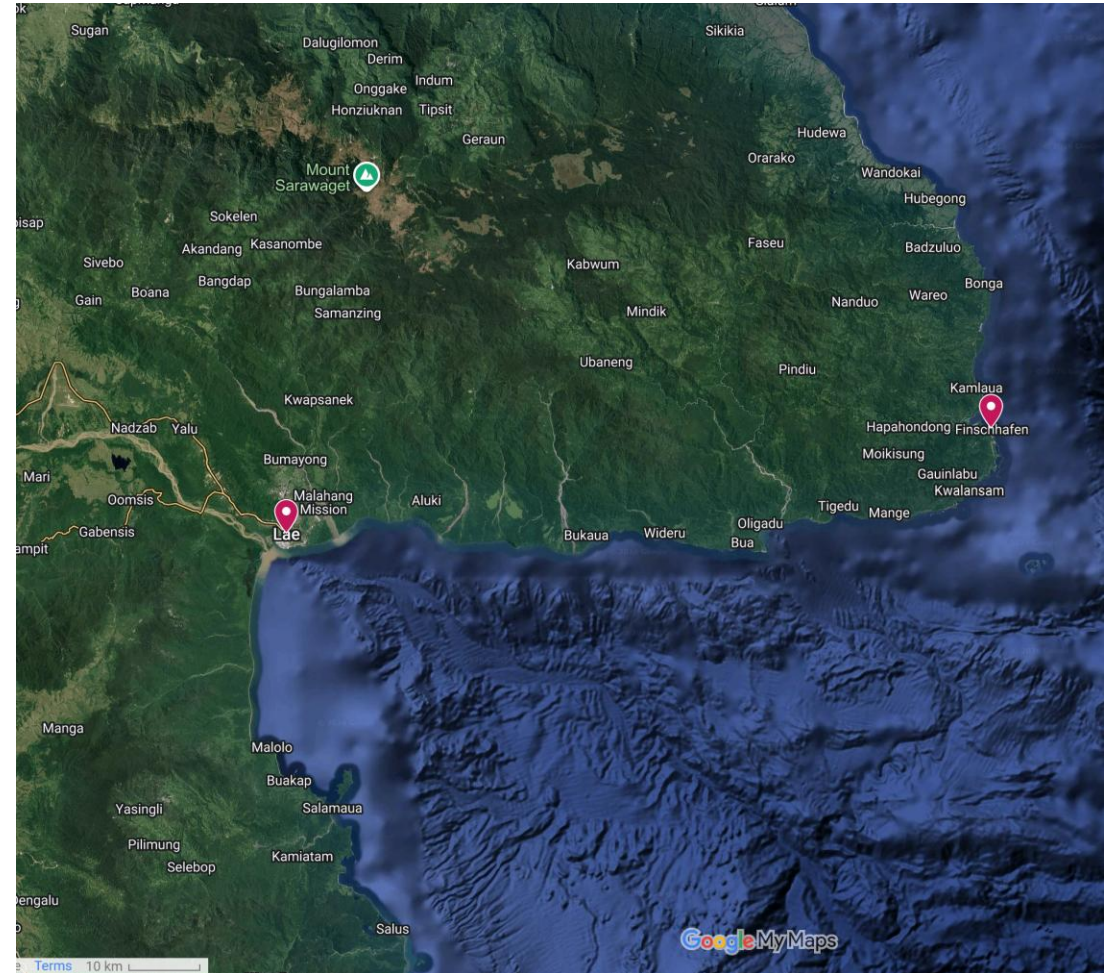
# November 1943 - Manhattan Project

- Initial funding for the project was through the general budget of the Office of Scientific Research and Development.
- As plans were made to turn the work over to the Army Corps of Engineers, Bush wrote to Roosevelt in late 1942 that "it would be ruinous to the essential secrecy to have to defend before an appropriations committee any request for funds for this project."
- Instead, initial funding was done through discretionary funds to which Roosevelt had access.
- As it grew in size and cost, Congress was deliberately kept ignorant of the project, because of concerns that Congressmen were prone to leaking information, and because it was feared that the project would appear to be a boondoggle.
- Appropriations requests were quietly slipped into other bills.



# November 1943 – New Britain

- The Finschhafen airstrip would not be completed until about 5 December. Construction of the Lae-Nadzab road had fallen behind schedule and it could not take heavy vehicles and machinery before 1 December; consequently the three airstrips in the lower Markham Valley would not be in shape to maintain air operations before 15 December.
- It was estimated that from 135,000 to 150,000 more tons of supplies would have to be sent to Lae, 60,000 to 70,000 more to Finschhafen, in order to support air operations covering the Cape Gloucester operations.
- Shipments to Nadzab were slowed by the lack of enough men and docks at Lae, and movement of supplies to Finschhafen was slowed by the fact that until the airfield was finished the naval commanders would not risk sending heavy ships there.
- MacArthur agreed to another postponement and eventually set Z Day for Arawe at 15 December, D Day for Gloucester at 26 December.



# November 1943

- In November 1943, Admiral Kinkaid replaced Carpenter as Commander Allied Naval Forces, Southwest Pacific Area, and the Seventh Fleet, known as "MacArthur's Navy".
- MacArthur had twice requested Carpenter's relief, and Kinkaid's record working with the Army in Alaska made him a logical choice.
- Australian newspapers hailed the appointment of a "fighting admiral", but neither MacArthur nor the Australian government had been consulted about the appointment, which was made by CominCh, Admiral Ernest King. This was a violation of the international agreement that had established the Southwest Pacific Area.
- The Navy Department then announced that the replacement of Carpenter with Kinkaid was merely a proposal, and MacArthur and the Prime Minister of Australia, John Curtin, were asked if Kinkaid was acceptable. They agreed that he was.
- Kinkaid was not the most senior naval officer in the theater, for the Royal Navy's Admiral Sir Guy Royle and the Royal Netherlands Navy's Admiral Conrad Helfrich were both senior to him.



Kinkaid (right) with Rear Admiral Daniel E. Barbey (left)

# 3 December 1943 - Manhattan Project

- December 3: The British Mission, 15 scientists including Rudolf Peierls, Franz Simon and Klaus Fuchs, arrives at Newport News, Virginia.



James Chadwick (Nobel Physics 1935 discovery of the Neutron) (left), the head of the British Mission, confers with Major General Leslie R. Groves Jr. (right), the director of the Manhattan Project.

# 4 December 1943 - Marshalls

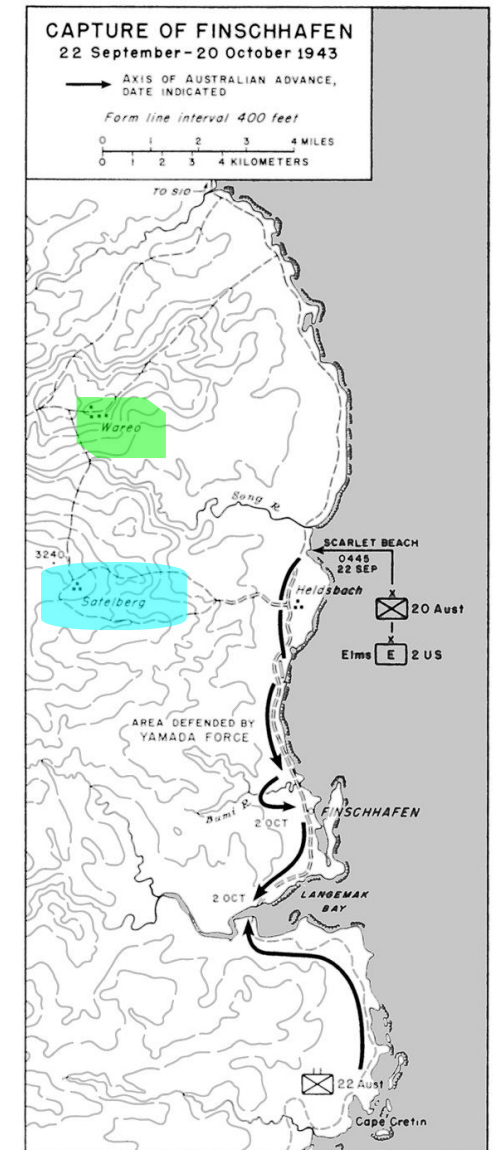
- Task Force 50 (Rear Admiral Pownall) with four large carriers, Enterprise, Essex, Lexington and Yorktown, two light carriers, Belleau Wood and Cowpens, with supporting combatant ships and 386 aircraft, was ordered to make raids on Kwajalein and Wotje on its way home to Pearl from GALVANIC.
- The Task Force approach was made from the northeast of Kwajalein with initial launch for the 4 December attack near Rongerik Atoll.
- Numerous photographic missions were flown, and 246 aircraft participated in the operation. Japanese air reaction was heavy and sustained.
- Bombing success was modest, although 85.5 tons of bombs were dropped on Kwajalein Atoll and 11.0 tons on Wotje Atoll. Taroa Island in Maloelap Atoll was not hit at all and a second planned strike on the other objectives was not carried through.
- The Lexington picked up a torpedo in her stern quarter during a night Japanese torpedo attack, pushed through while the task group was hightailing it for Pearl Harbor.



Chart room on board Lexington as the ship maneuvers during a strike on the Gilbert and Marshall Islands, December 1943

# 8 Dec 1943 – New Guinea

- Following the capture of **Sattelberg** on 25 November, the 26th Brigade continued to advance to the north. Further fighting ensued as they pushed on over difficult terrain to **Wareo**, where they arrived on 8 December.
- The 9<sup>th</sup> Division was then ready to pursue the retreating Japanese up the coast to Sio.

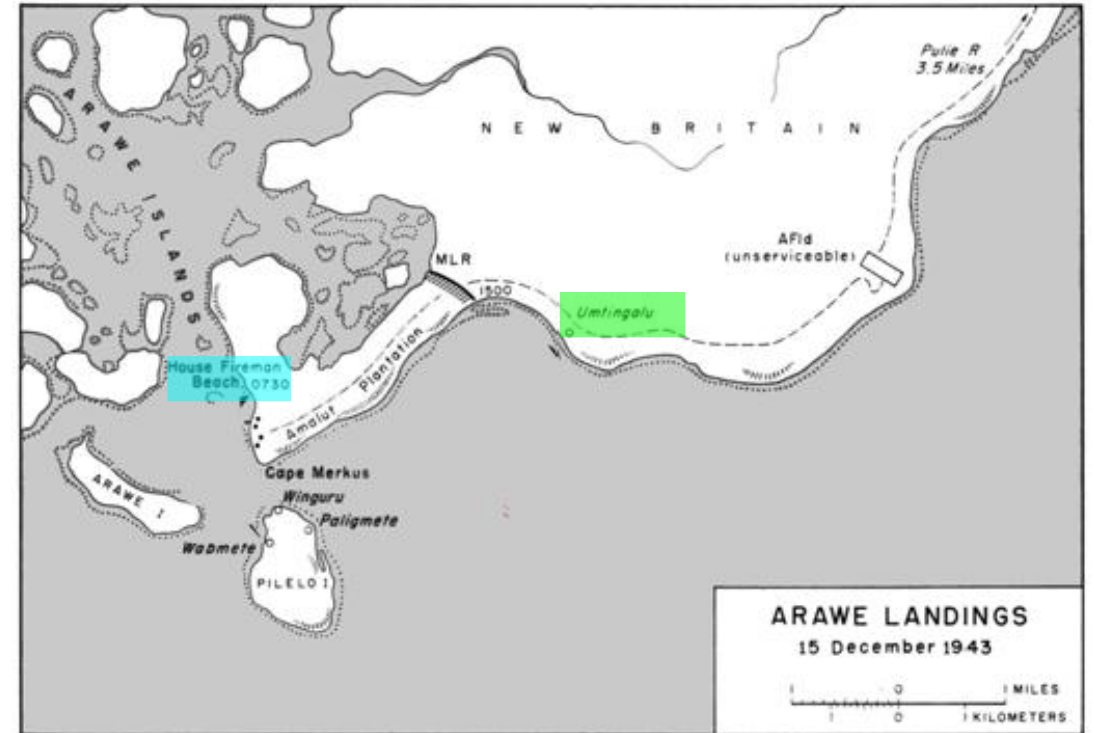


MAP 14



# 15 December 1943 – New Britain

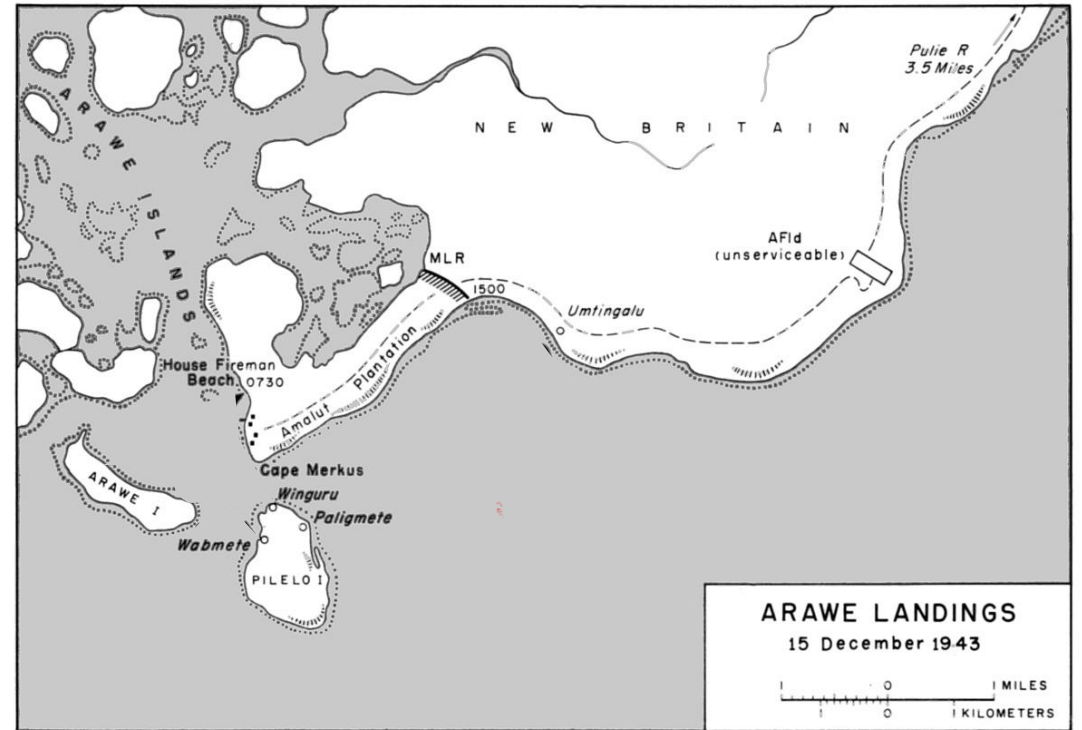
- The 112th Cavalry, shipped aboard LST's, reached Goodenough Island from Woodlark on 1 and 2 December.
- There were several beaches at Arawe that landing craft could use, of which the two best were House Fireman on the west coast of the boot-shaped Arawe peninsula and the village of Umtingalu on the mainland, seventeen hundred yards east of the peninsula's base.
- The rest of the coast line consisted of stone cliffs about two hundred feet high, interspersed with low ground that was covered by mangrove swamp. Reefs fringed all the beaches, and it was clear that LCVP's could not get to the shore until detailed reconnaissance for passages was made.
- General Krueger arranged for one company of the 1st Marine Amphibian Tractor Battalion to be attached to the DIRECTOR Task Force to take the assault waves ashore.
- Krueger also attached part of the 592d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment, 2d Engineer Special Brigade, with 17 LCVP's, 9 LCM's, 2 rocket-firing DUKW's, and 1 repair and salvage boat, to Task Force 76 for the landings.



MAP 17

# 15 December 1943 – New Britain

- The DIRECTOR Task Force boarded the LSD Carter Hall, HMAS Westralia, and the APD's Sands and Humphreys on the afternoon of 13 December.
- At midnight the ships departed for Buna.
- The voyage to the target, which included a feint toward Finschhafen, was uneventful except for seas rough enough to cause the passenger troops some discomfort.
- Admiral Crutchley's cruisers and destroyers covered the move to the east while PT boats patrolled the straits to the westward.
- Shortly after 0300, 15 December, the troop ships hove to in the transport area about five miles east of Arawe.
- By 0450 the Carter Hall had launched thirty-nine loaded amphibian tractors bearing the assault waves and the two rocket DUKW's out of her well deck.

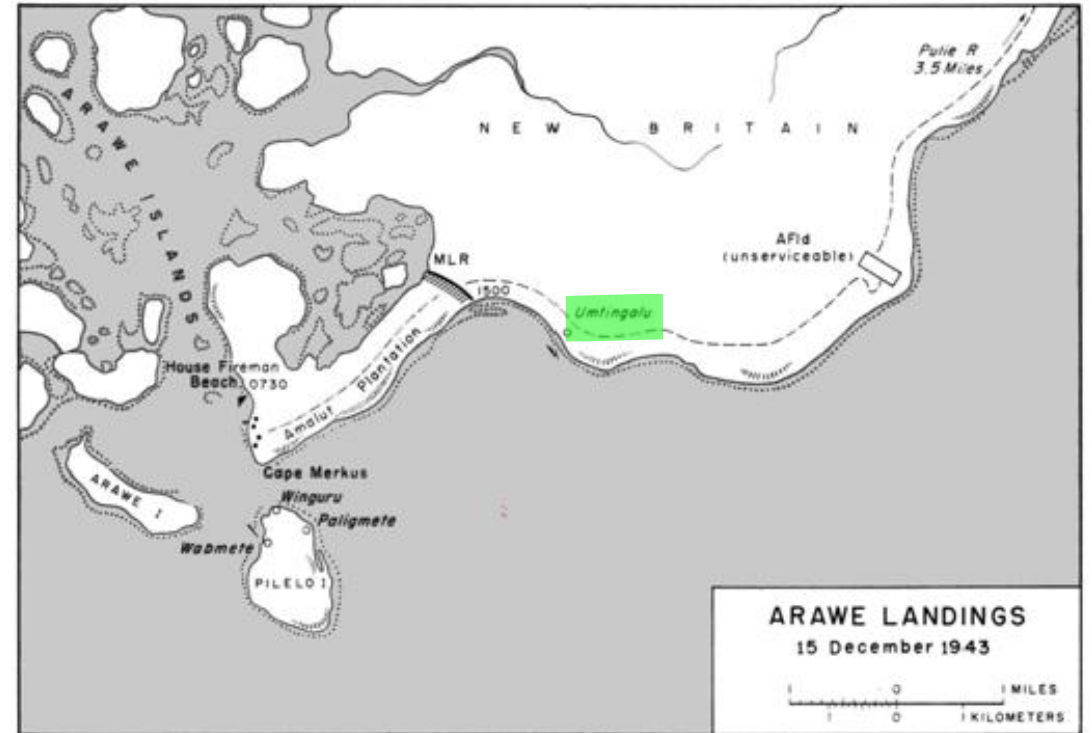


MAP 17

F. Temple

# 15 December 1943 – New Britain

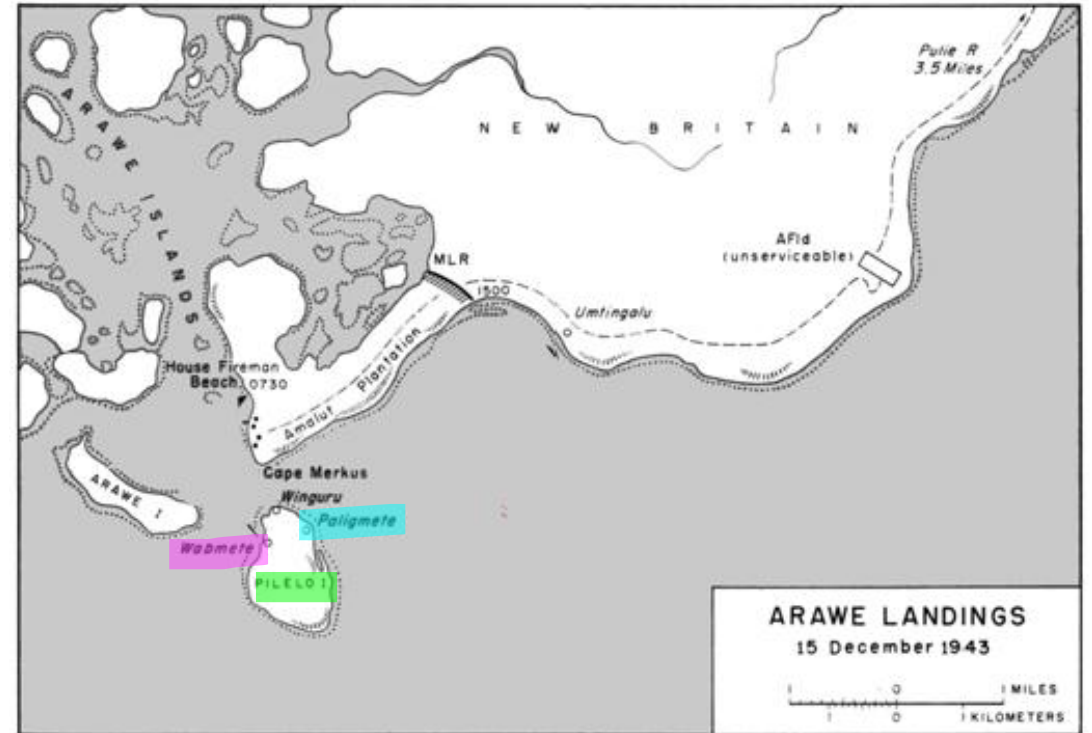
- Dawn was still one hour away when 150 men of A Troop, 112th, who had been aboard the APD Sands, started for the beach at Umingalu in fifteen rubber boats.
- They had been ordered to make a surprise landing in darkness at H minus 1 hour and block the coastal trail that was the Japanese escape and reinforcement route to the east.
- About 0525, when the boats were nearing shore and in the moonlight were probably visible from the shore, they came under fire from machine guns, rifles, and a 25mm. dual purpose gun, which promptly sank all but three of the rubber boats.
- The fire continued while the troops floundered in the water divesting themselves of their light combat packs and outer clothing.
- The destroyer Shaw then opened fire and quickly silenced the enemy.
- Small boats picked up the survivors of A Troop, who later landed without arms and almost naked at House Fireman Beach. Twelve men were killed, four missing, and seventeen wounded in this repulse.



MAP 17

# 15 December 1943 – New Britain

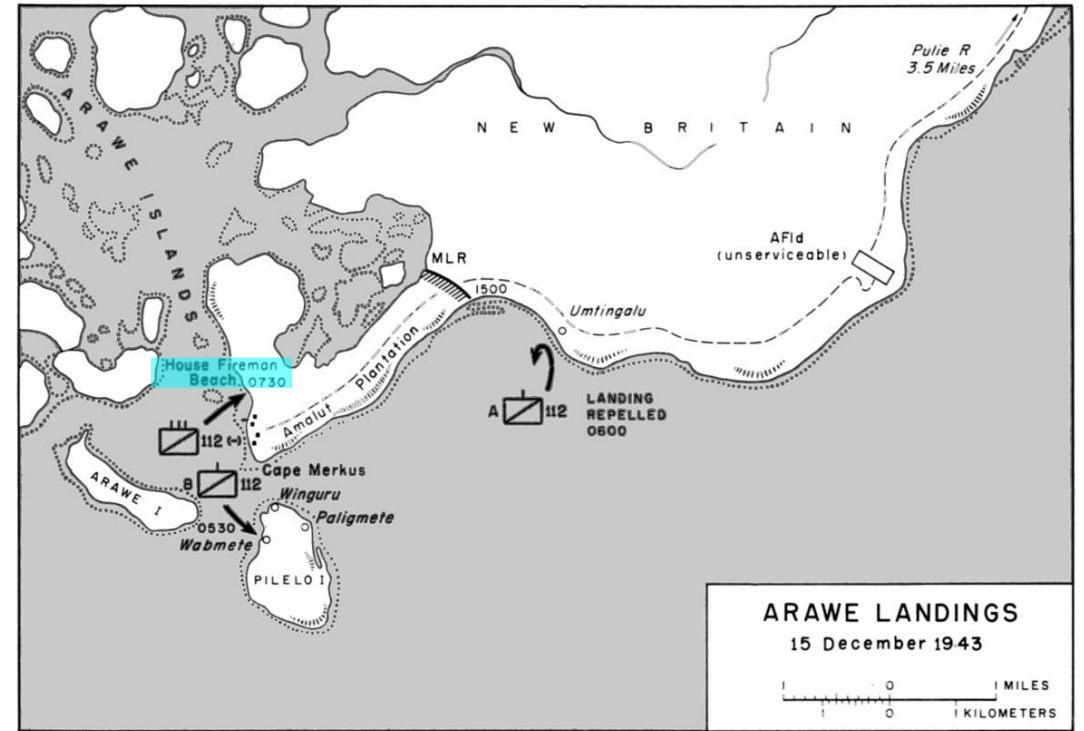
- B Troop were ordered to land at H minus 1 on **Pilelo island** its men were to silence a radio station reported at the village of Paligmete.
- They left the APD Humphreys on fifteen rubber boats at the same time that A Troop left the Sands.
- **B Troop** had planned to surprise the enemy by landing at **Paligmete** village, but when the Japanese started firing on A Troop it was obvious that surprise was lost.
- B Troop landed at **Wabmete** instead and started on foot for Winguru. The leading platoon reached Winguru at 0615 and met fire from Japanese in two caves on the rising ground south of the village.
- Leaving one squad to contain these Japanese, B Troop pushed on to Paligmete, found neither Japanese nor radio, and returned to Winguru to mop up.
- Bazooka fire closed one cave but the other was faced with logs which proved impervious to rockets and machine guns. Finally a flame thrower team, covered by machine gun fire, edged to within fifteen yards of the cave and let loose a blast of flame. B Troop moved in, tossed grenades, and the action was over.
- One American soldier was killed. Seven dead enemy were found. The action ended about 1130.



MAP 17

# 15 December 1943 – New Britain

- The main landing at **House Fireman Beach** was accomplished successfully if not flawlessly.
- The assault waves came from Lt. Col. Clyde E. Grant's 2d Squadron, 112th Cavalry, organized into five landing waves: ten LVT(A)(2)'s (Buffaloes), carrying E and F Troops, in the first; eight LVT(1)'s (Alligators) each in the second, third, and fourth waves; and five Alligators in the fifth.
- The waves were scheduled to land at five-minute intervals. H Hour was set for 0630, after the conclusion of the air and naval bombardments.
- One and a half hours were allowed for the amphibian tractors to proceed from the ships to the beach, a move which would take place in poor light. Since dawn came at 0624 and sunrise at 0646, the landing itself would take place in daylight.
- But someone along the line had become confused. Once boated, the first wave started directly for the shore in the dark.
- Brig. Gen. Heavey, commanding the 2d Engineer Special Brigade, who had come along as an observer aboard the landing wave control craft, SC 742, saw the boats dimly about 0500.
- When radio communication with the flagship unaccountably failed, the subchaser's captain and Heavey headed off the errant amphibian tractors. There was much confusion and milling about in the darkness, and it was 0600 or later before the tractors regained their formation.



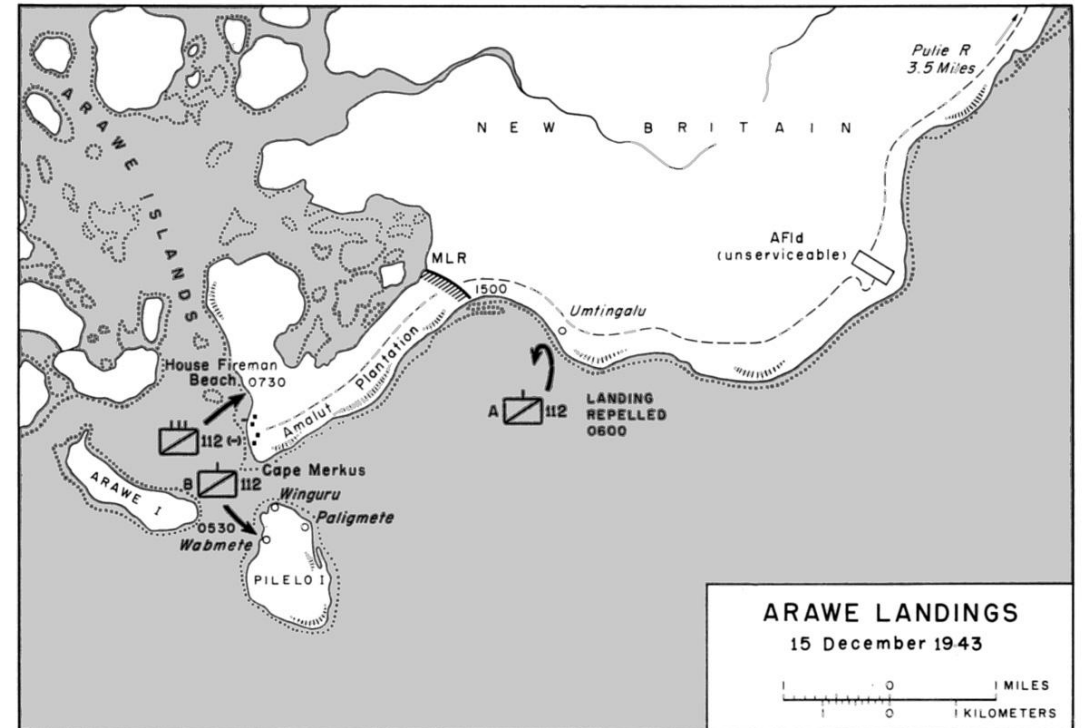
# 15 December 1943 – New Britain

- Destroyers bombarded House Fireman Beach with 1,800 5-inch rounds from 0610 to 0625, when B-25's took over. Three squadrons had been assigned to Arawe under control of an air liaison party aboard the Conyngham, and the first of these bombed and strafed the peninsula and the beach.
- The interval between the lifting of support bombardment and the landing of troops should only be long enough to prevent the troops from being hit by their own support fire, but the lead wave of tractors had been slowed by the confusion and by a stiff current in Pilelo passage. It did not land until after 0700.
- On the way in, the wave met machine gun fire that was quickly silenced by 4.5-inch rockets from the control craft and the two rocket DUKW's on the flanks. Otherwise there was no opposition.
- The 2d Squadron, once landed, reorganized, sent patrols to the toe of the peninsula, and pushed northwestward toward the base against slight opposition from scattered riflemen and rear guards.
- E Troop located twenty or more Japanese in caves in the cliff on the east side of the peninsula, killed several, and passed on. When others came out of their caves to snipe and harass, the 112th Cavalry Headquarters L Troop sent out a patrol which disposed of them.



# 15 December 1943 – New Britain

- Operations at the beach were not smooth. The detachments forming the shore party had never worked together before, and although the beach was a good one it soon became congested. There was only room for two LCT's at one time; so unloading of beaching craft continued all day.
- The first fighter cover, in the form of 8 P-38's, took station overhead at 0715. This cover was subsequently increased and was maintained all day but it was not able to prevent an air attack by 20 or 30 planes at 0900.
- The Westralia and Carter Hall, unloaded before dawn, had departed at 0500 to avoid air attack.
- The rest of Task Force 76, with the exception of craft actually at the beach and the flagship, which remained to direct operations, sought the cover of clouds and rain squalls.
- The Japanese bombed and strafed the beached LCT's, the Conyngham, and the troops for about five minutes, scored no hits, and left with P-38's in pursuit.



MAP 17

# 16 December 1943 – New Britain

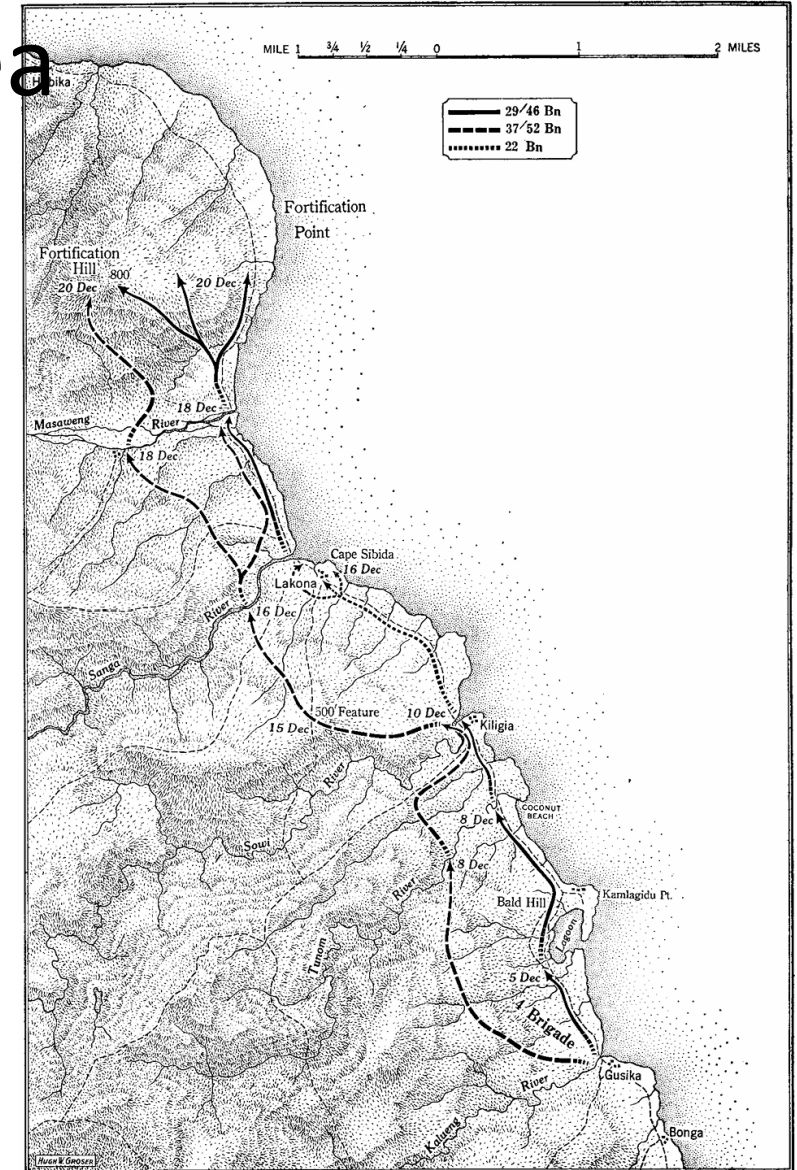
- There was no ground contact with the Japanese at Arawe, but in the air the enemy reacted with violence.
- LCT's at Arawe on 16 December suffered almost continuous air attack.
- Resupply convoys lost one coastal transport (USS APc-21), sunk and another damaged, plus one minesweeper and six LST's damaged. Damage ashore was fortunately light.



USS APc-46, underway a US Navy APc-1-class Small Coastal Transport. This was the same class as Apc-21.

# 20 December 1943 – New Guinea

- On 5th December Lieut-Colonel Cusworth's 29th/46th Battalion, supported by a troop of tanks, two platoons of machine-gunners from the 2/2nd Machine Gun Battalion, the 56th Battery, and engineers from the 2/7th Field Company led the advance on the first stage along the coast from Gusika.
- For flank protection a company from the 37th/52nd Battalion assisted by a platoon of the ubiquitous Papuans moved along the foothills parallel with the main advance. The brigade's intention was to "clear coast to high ground area Fortification Point".
- The Japanese rear guard's orders were to "carry out successive resistance to try to delay enemy advance""while avoiding any decisive engagement".
- Progress was slow but the tanks and artillery pushed the infantry through each Japanese position and fortification point was taken on 20<sup>th</sup> December.



Advance to Fortification Point, 5th-20th December

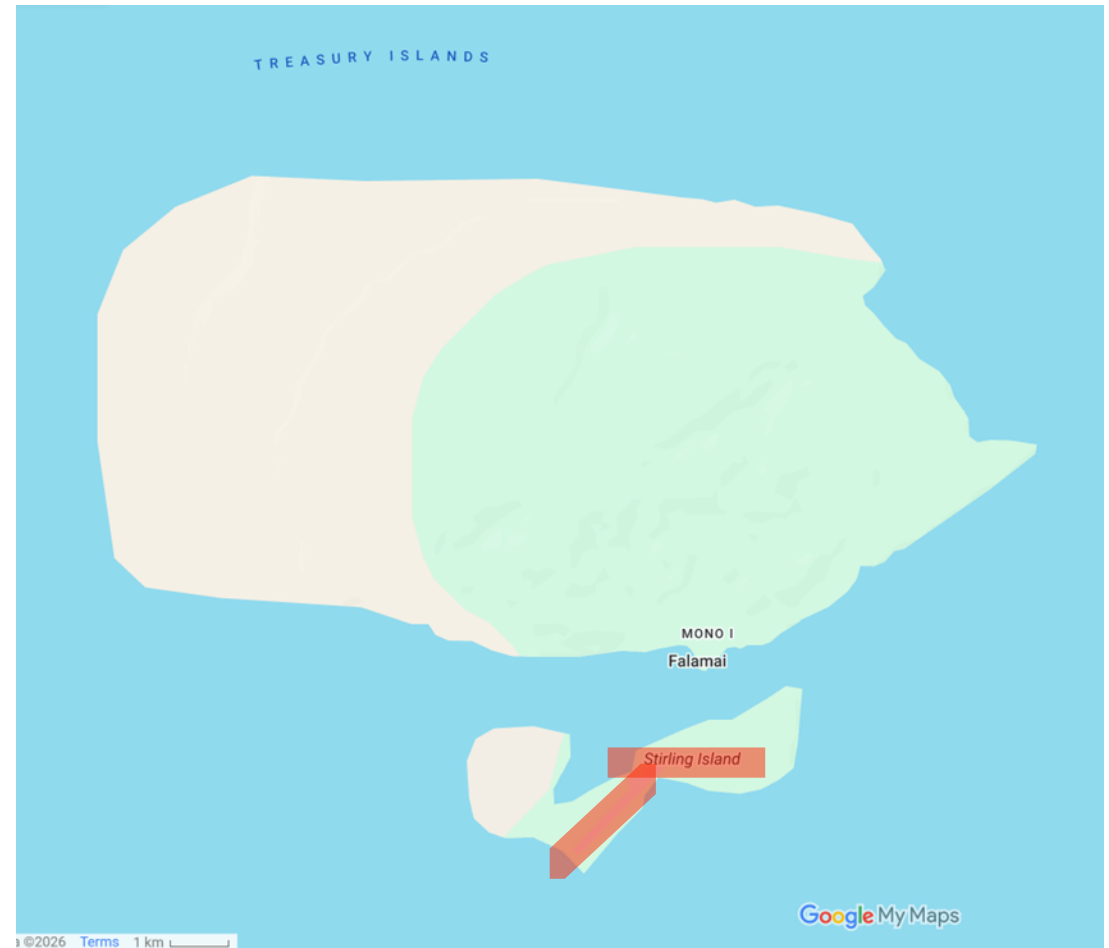
# 20 December 1943 – New Guinea

- The official historian refers to “the ubiquitous Papuans”
- 5 Platoon, A Company PIB on patrol, Hansa Bay 1944
- AWM Caption: HANSA BAY, NEW GUINEA. 1944-07-08. NO. 5 PLATOON, A COMPANY, 1ST PAPUAN INFANTRY BATTALION, ESCORTED BY SERGEANT R.H. BARKER, ON PATROL. THE LEADING BOY IS INANDUA, WHO HAS 25 JAPANESE TO HIS CREDIT. HE IS FOLLOWED BY POYAGET, WHO HAS 21 JAPANESE TO HIS CREDIT.



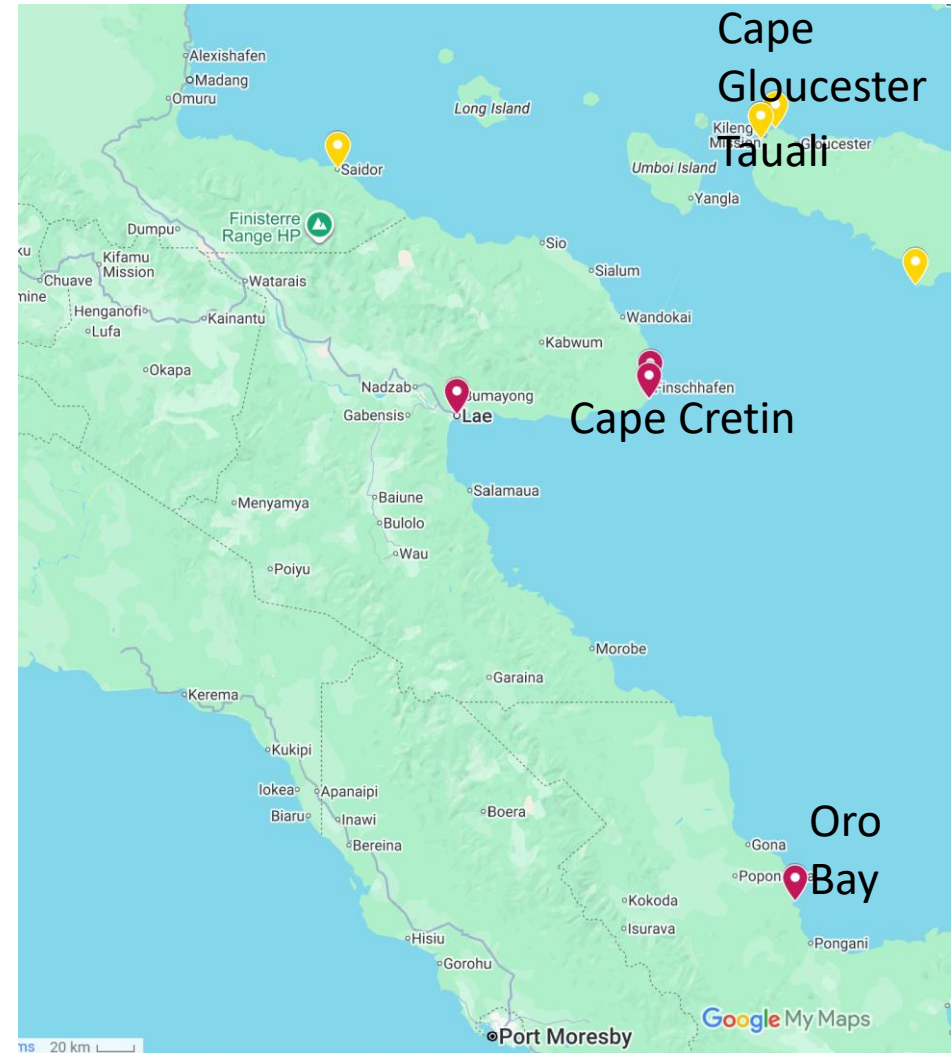
# 25 December 1943 - Solomons

- From 1 November 1943 through 15 January 1944 the boat pool, an advanced naval base, and radars were established; these supported the main operation at Empress Augusta Bay.
- Seabees of the U.S. Navy built a 5,600-foot-long airstrip on **Stirling Island** that was ready to receive fighter planes on Christmas Day.



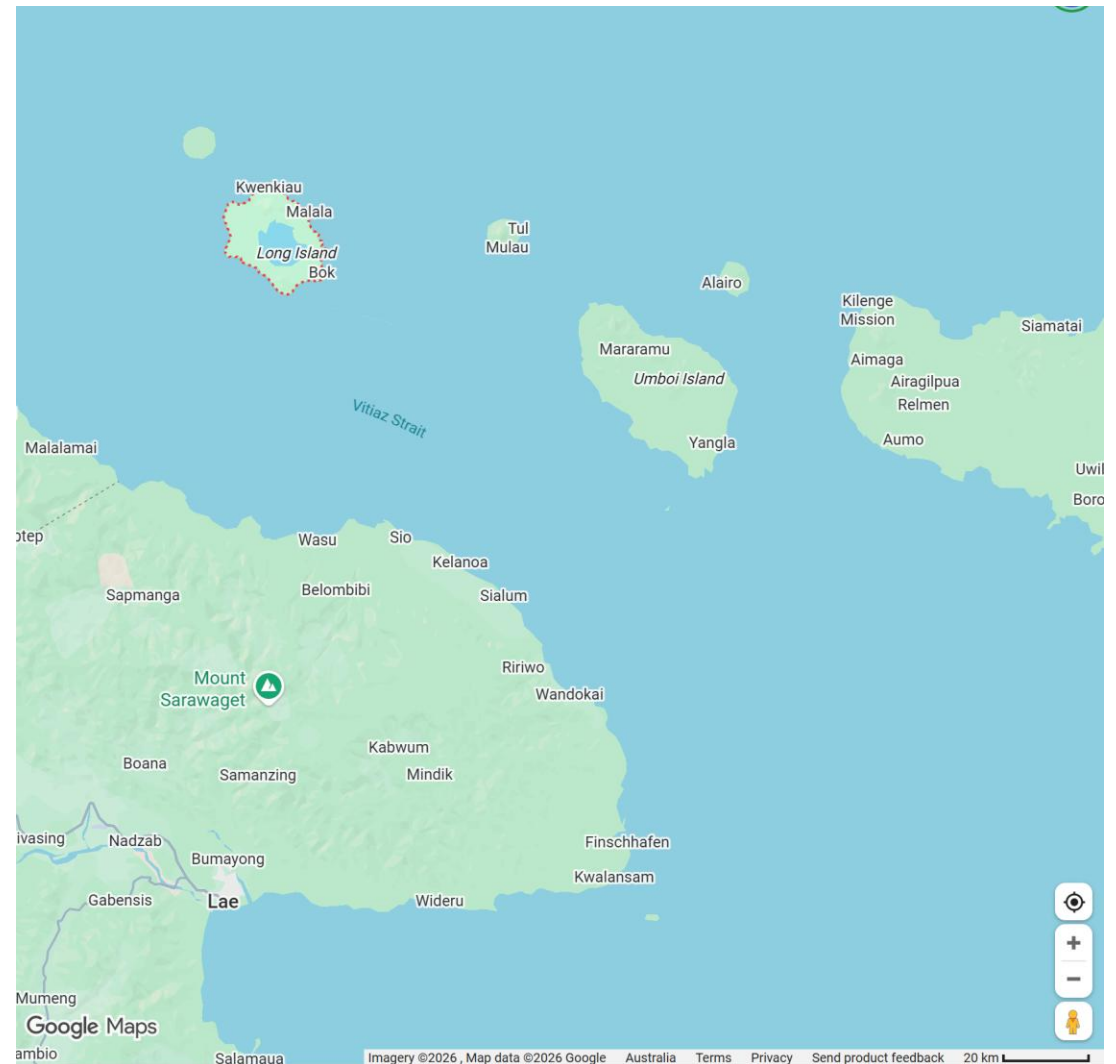
# Christmas morning 1943 – New Britain

- The heavily reinforced 7th Marines boarded ship at Oro Bay and departed at 0600 on Christmas morning.
- En route ships carrying the reinforced 1st Marines (less one battalion landing team) from Cape Cretin joined up.
- The convoy then made its way peacefully through Vitiaz Strait, sailed between Rooke and Sakar Islands, and approached Cape Gloucester.
- The 2d Battalion Landing Team, 1st Marines, embarked at Cape Cretin and steamed through Dampier Strait for Tauali.
- Admiral Crutchley's Task Force 74--the American cruisers Phoenix and Nashville, HMAS Australia and HMAS Shropshire, and eight destroyers--escorted Task Force 76 while PT boats patrolled the northern and western entrances to the straits.



# 26 December 1943 – New Guinea

- On the night of 26th December a company from the boat battalion of the 592nd EBSR with an Australian radar detachment landed from PT Boats on Long Island at the head of Vitiaz Strait—an excellent place for a radar and lookout station.
- Three days before a patrol had reconnoitred the island and found no trace of enemy occupation.
- The Japanese had never garrisoned the Island but it had been used as a staging point for Japanese barges from Rabaul to Wewak.
- Seizure of Long Island stopped this traffic.
- Resupply was difficult. Several LCM convoys carrying supplies came through rough seas to Long Island in the next few weeks and PT boats frequently left supplies, but mostly the detachment was left entirely alone.
- "The men did not mind this a bit, for although life was somewhat boring, the natives were friendly, the island with its twin mountain peaks and large volcanic lake was beautiful, fishing was good—and there were no Japs. The detachment remained on Long Island almost two months during which time they set up the radar station and constructed a cub airstrip."



# 26 December 1943 – New Britain

- At 6 a.m. on 26th December Australia, Shropshire, Warramunga and Arunta opened fire on targets in the airstrip vicinity.
- The bombardment continued until 7.20 a.m., with the expenditure of over 700 rounds of 8-inch, nearly 900 of 4.7-inch, and nearly 100 rounds of 4-inch high explosive.
- During an hour from 6.25 a.m., Nashville and Phoenix, in the vicinity of Yellow Beaches, fired over 1,600 rounds of 6-inch. These ships each mounted 15 6 inch guns each capable of firing 10 rounds per minute.
- The destroyers also bombarded in the Borgen Bay area, while Reid and Smith prepared the way for the Green Beach landing with a similar bombardment.
- The naval bombardments were followed by heavy bombing attacks at all beaches.



Invasion of Sicily, July 1943: Empty shell cases litter the deck near the forward 6"/47 gun turrets of the light cruiser USS Brooklyn (CL-40), after she had bombarded Licata, Sicily, during the early hours of the invasion, 10 July 1943.

# 26 December 1943 – New Britain

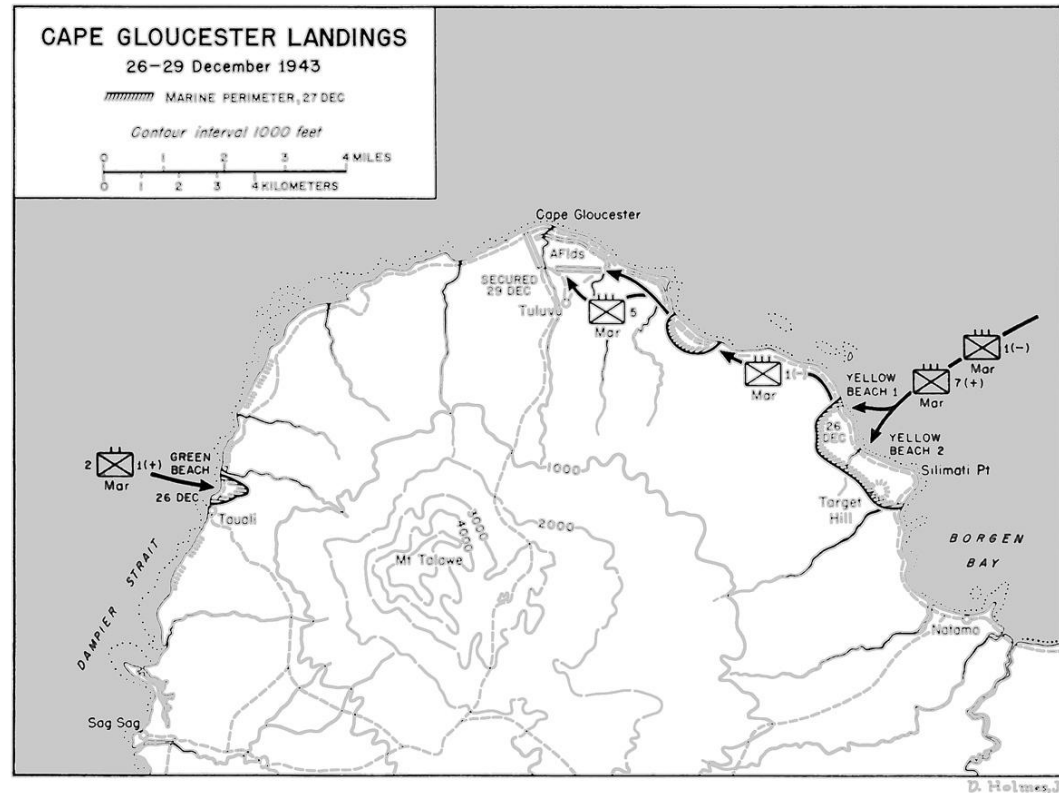
- Two new LCI's equipped with 4.5-inch rockets took station on the flanks as guide and fire support craft.
- After threading their way through a difficult channel, APD's, in the lead, lowered landing craft full of troops while behind them LCI's and LST's awaited their turns at the beaches.
- The first support bombers arrived from Dobodura about 0700 and B-24's, B-25's, and A-20's bombed and strafed the beaches and the airdrome.
- B-25's dropped smoke bombs on Target Hill, the 450-foot ridge just west of Silimati Point that gave clear observation of the beaches and airfields.
- A-20's strafed the landing beaches until the leading wave of landing craft was five hundred yards from shore. At that time the naval gunfire was moved inland and to the flanks.



EARLY MORNING BOMBARDMENT of landing beaches east of Cape Gloucester, 26 December 1943.

# 26 December 1943 – New Britain

- An errant breeze blew so much smoke from Target Hill that some of the leading waves landing craft carrying the 7th Marines could not easily identify the beaches.
- There was no opposition at the proper beaches, where most of two battalions of 7th landed, but a detachment which wandered three hundred yards too far we had a brisk fire fight on shore.
- The 7th Marines found that the landing beaches were good but very shallow.
- And as the assault waves crossed the beach they were brought up sharply by jungle so dense they had to start hacking to get inland.
- Immediately behind the beach was a narrow shelf of relatively dry ground.
- Behind the shelf was a swamp which made anything like rapid movement or maneuver completely impossible.



MAP 18

# 26 December 1943 – New Britain

- Wiedemann, who landed at Beach Green in the second wave, testified to the efficiency of the naval bombardment:
- “We landed. The naval bombardment at Gloucester itself did a wonderful job. On Beach Yellow, 1 and 2, practically everything in the way of timber was mown to the ground for the distance of about 400 yards inland. Hardly a thing standing. The bombing did not effect that a great deal, mostly the naval gunfire.”
- At this bombardment Shropshire established the reputation she was to maintain for the excellence of her radar and its operation. The American naval historian recorded of the bombardment:
- “The Aussies turned in a better radar performance than our ships. H.M.A.S. Shropshire had a radar with a tilting antenna and two "hot" operators who could pick up planes against a land background.”



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

301310

HMAS Shropshire 1944

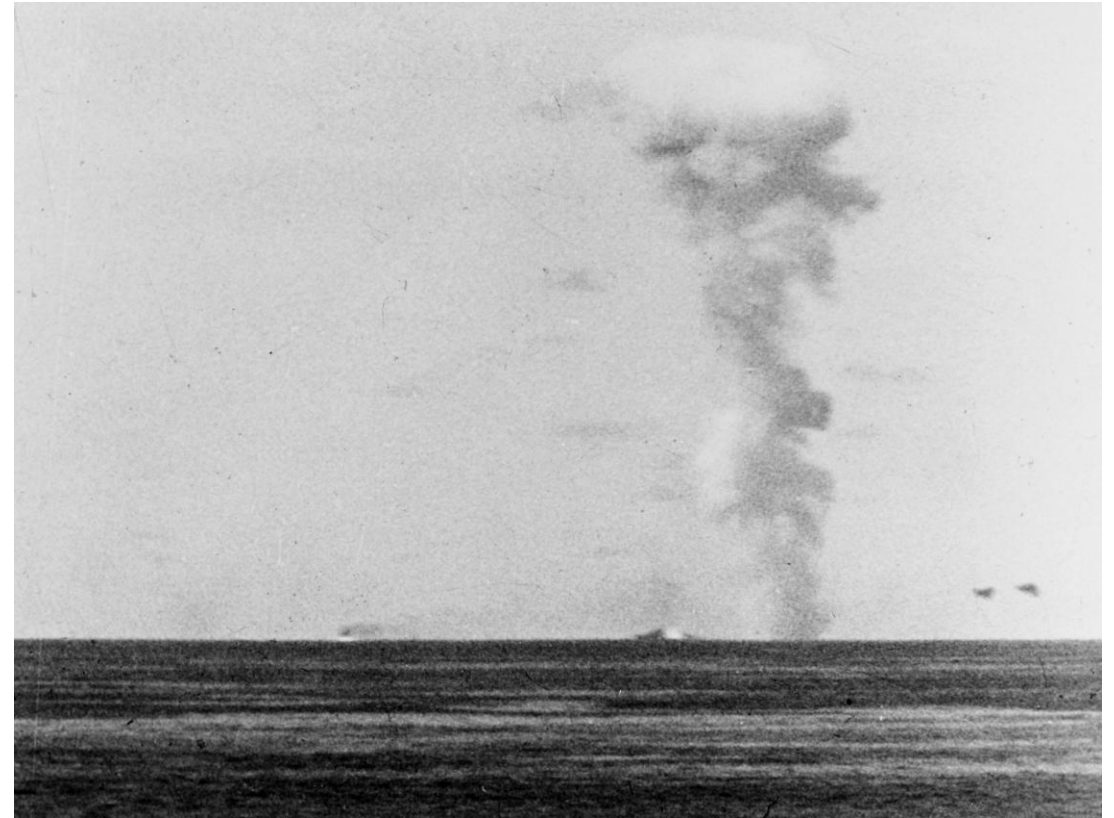
# 26 December 1943 – New Britain

- Men floundered through the mud, slipping into sinkholes up to their waists and even their armpits.
- And in the swamp giant trees, rotted by water and weakened by bombs and shells, toppled over easily. The first marine fatality on Cape Gloucester was caused by a falling tree.
- The narrow beach and the swampy jungle behind it caused a good deal of congestion, especially when the LST's began discharging their cargo.
- By the day's end the 7th Marines held the beachhead. The 11th Marines had landed and emplaced their howitzers. The 1st Marines had come ashore, passed through the 7th, and begun the advance west toward the airdrome.
- The regiment first attempted to advance with battalions echeloned to the left rear, but the swamp forced movement in a long column with a narrow front along the coastal trail.



# 26 December 1943 – New Britain

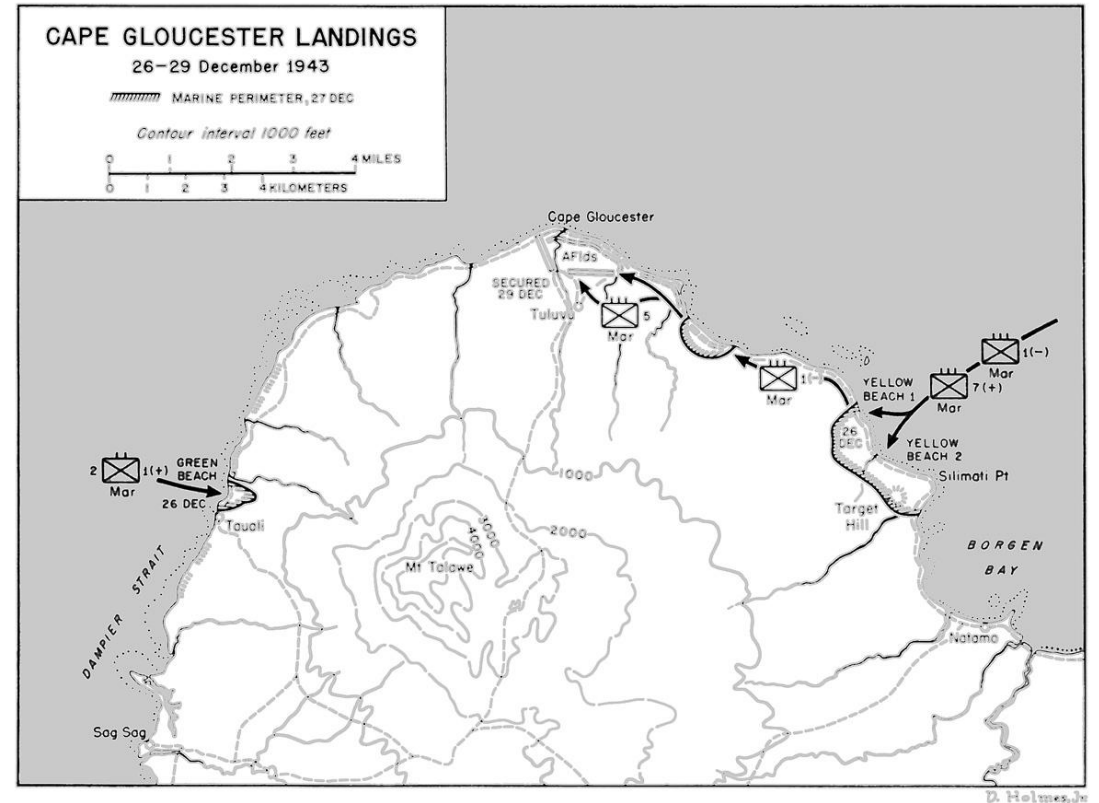
- As expected, Japanese planes from Rabaul attacked the ships and the beach during the day, although their first attacks were directed against Arawe at about 09.00.
- At about 2.30 p.m. 20 dive bombers and 50 or 60 fighters attacked. Defending fighters intercepted, but about 10 enemy dive bombers got through and attacked American destroyers off Cape Gloucester.
- U.S.S. Brownson was hit by two bombs from a Japanese Aichi D3A Type 99 carrier dive bomber. The bombs struck to starboard of the centerline, near number two stack. A tremendous explosion followed, and the entire structure above the main deck as well as the deck plating, was gone. The ship listed 10 to 15 degrees to starboard and settled rapidly amidships with the bow and stern canted upward. There was a single ripple like a depth charge explosion and the ship sank at 14:59 with the loss of 108 of her crew.
- The bombers seriously damaged two more, and scored hits on two others, as well as on two LST's.
- A second air attack developed at 5.15 p.m. when 10 torpedo bombers attacked a returning convoy of L.S.T's.
- "Every bomber in this group was shot down by the air cover before closing the ships. In all, the enemy had 64 aircraft destroyed on D-day."



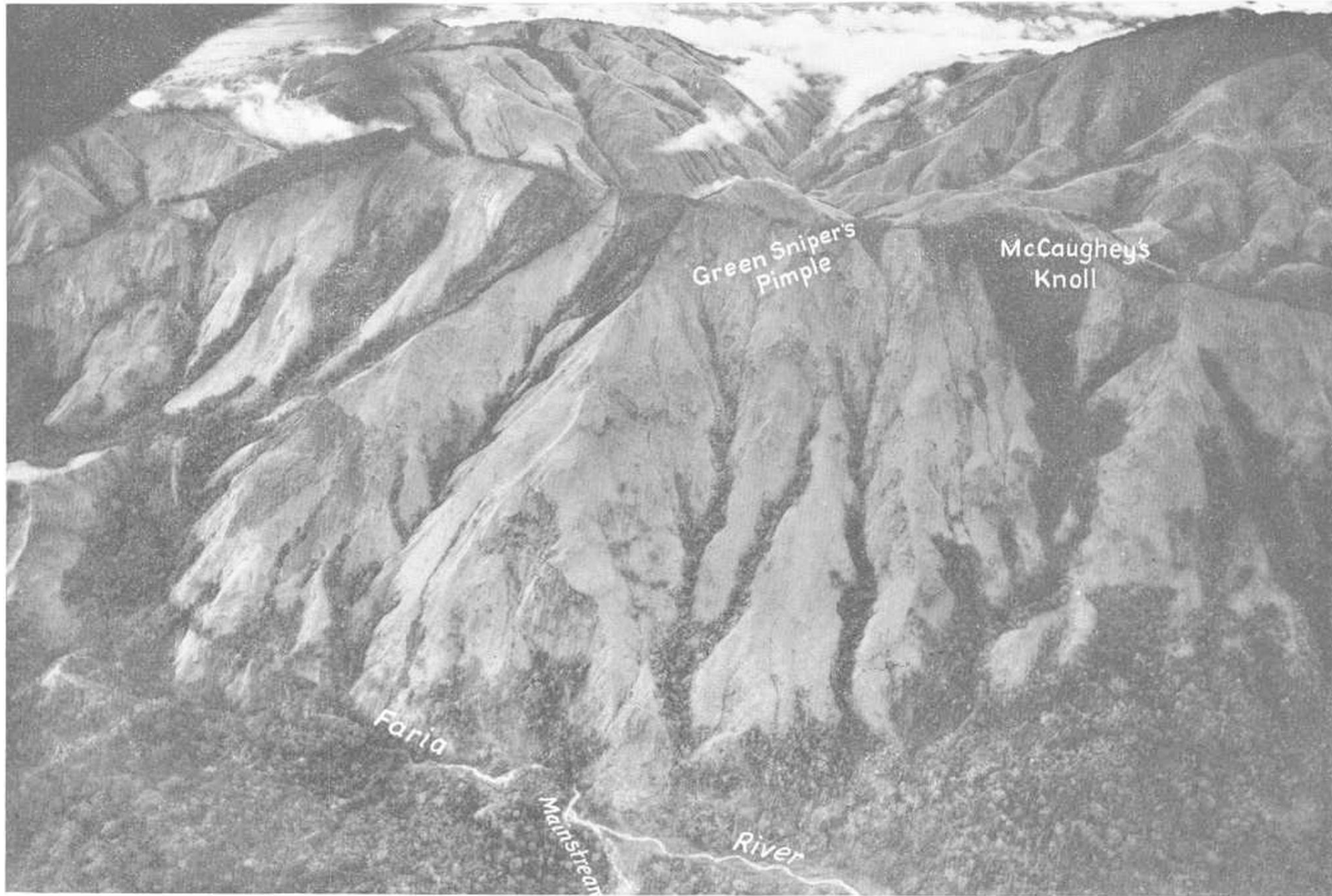
USS Brownson exploding off Cape Gloucester, 26 December 1943.

# 26 December 1943 – New Britain

- Also on 26 December the reinforced 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, landed successfully at Tauali and
- The first night ashore at Gloucester was miserable, and it was the first of many more that were just as bad.
- Drenching rains characteristic of the northwest monsoon poured down in torrents; more trees fell.
- The Japanese in the airdrome area, estimating that only 2,500 men had come ashore, counterattacked the 7th Marines, but they failed, as did a heterogeneous group that later struck at the Tauali positions.



MAP 18

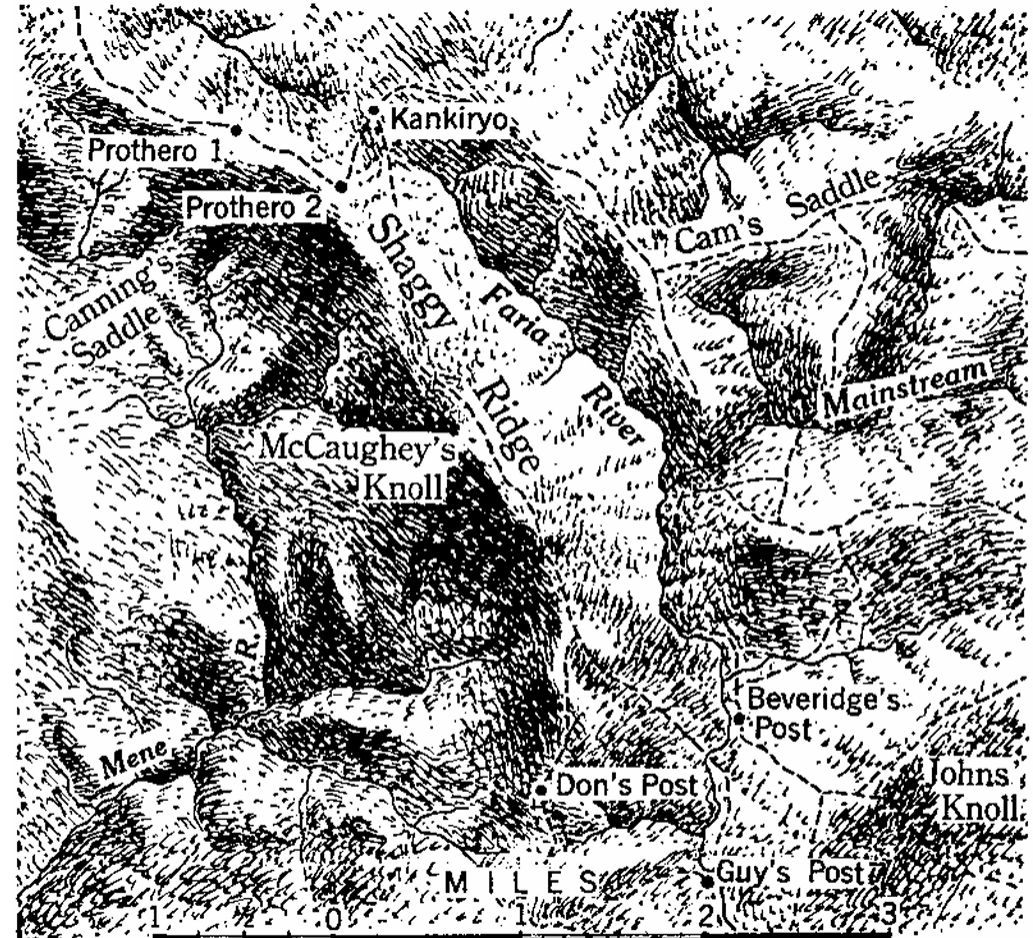


Shaggy Ridge, looking south-west to the Ramu Valley.

(R.A.A.F.)

# 27 December 1943 - Finisterres

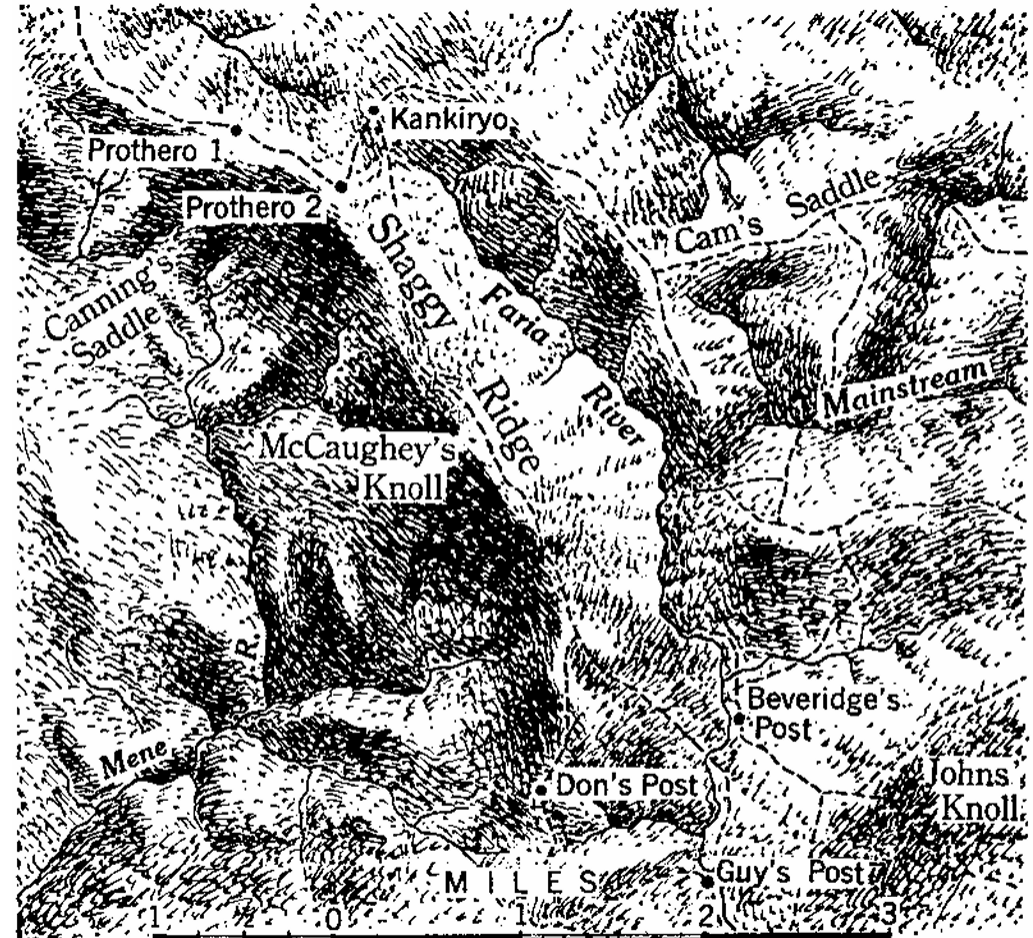
- On the 14th Vasey asked Dougherty to consider an attack along the Shaggy Ridge feature by the 2/16th Battalion to make the Jap more careful in his moves towards the Ramu.
- On 17th December Dougherty sent instructions to Symington of the 2/16th to plan an attack on Shaggy Ridge for 26th December, as he wanted his troops to enjoy Christmas before assaulting the Ridge.
- Patrols from the 2/16th were active on the ridge searching for ways to attack the Pimple but as previously stated it was already obvious that this important feature could probably be taken only by frontal assault.



Shaggy Ridge area

# 27 December 1943 - Finisterres

- Symington thought that the enemy confronting him comprised about three platoons spread from 300 to 400 yards along the razor-back ridge behind the Pimple.
- He ordered Captain Christian's company to attack and capture the Pimple and exploit for about 400 yards along the ridge; Captain Anderson's company would then move forward and consolidate the ground gained.
- Christian would have a detachment of 3-inch mortars and a section of Vickers machine-guns under his command, and in support a company of the 2/16th, a troop of the 8th Battery, a troop of the 54th Battery, the 41st Squadron (Fifth Air Force) and No. 4 Squadron R.A.A.F.
- The supporting fire plan for the assault on Shaggy Ridge was one of the most comprehensive and detailed yet arranged in New Guinea.



Shaggy Ridge area

# 27 December 1943 - Finisterres

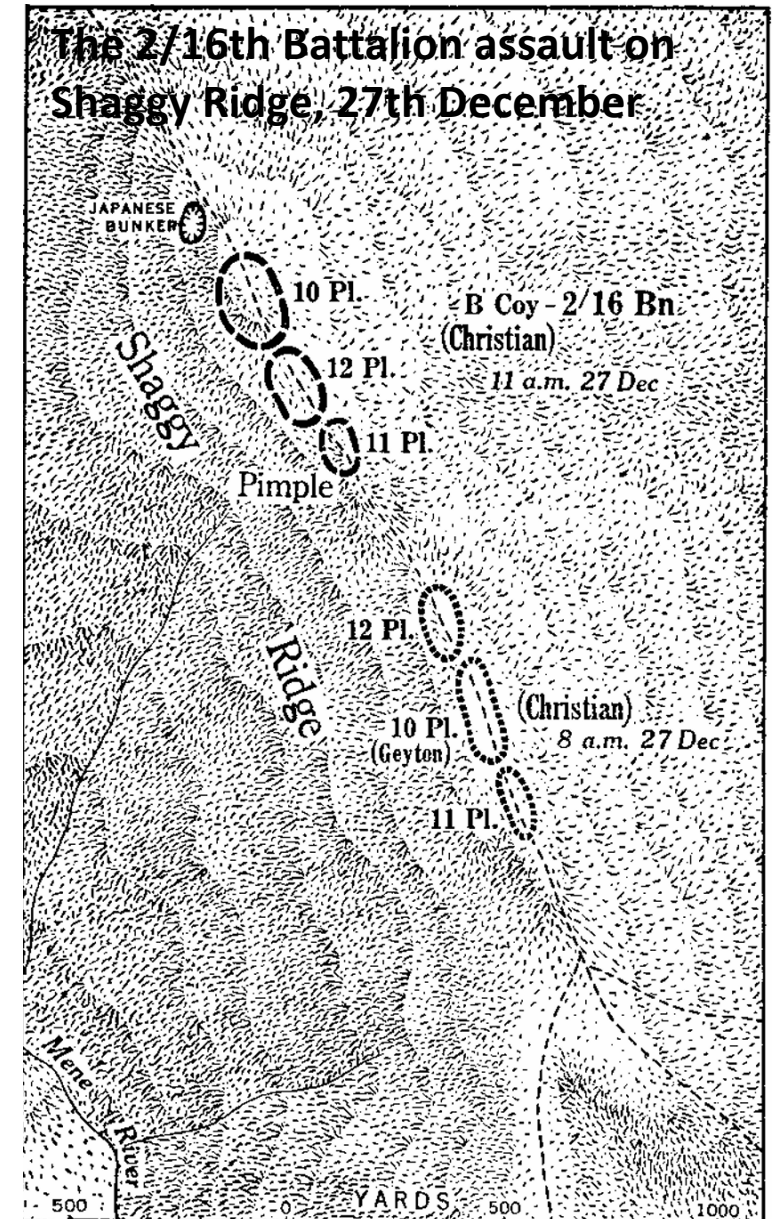
- On the 26th no actual start time could be fixed. The clouds were down, the aircraft couldn't fly.
- As dawn broke on the 27th the Pimple was obscured by heavy mists, but they lifted before 8 a.m.
- Christian's men moved forward to their start-line running east and west of the base of the Pimple.
- Six minutes after 8 o'clock two Boomerangs strafed the Pimple with tracer bullets to indicate the target for the Kittyhawks. Dive bombing started three minutes later and the program of supporting fire then went on uninterrupted.
- Dive bombing, strafing and intense artillery concentrations were impressive sights and the valley and foothills reverberated with a roar which could be heard up and down the Ramu Valley, where many hills held spectators.



Troops of the 2/16th Infantry Battalion, watch aircraft bombarding The Pimple prior to their attack on Japanese positions there, 27 December 1943.

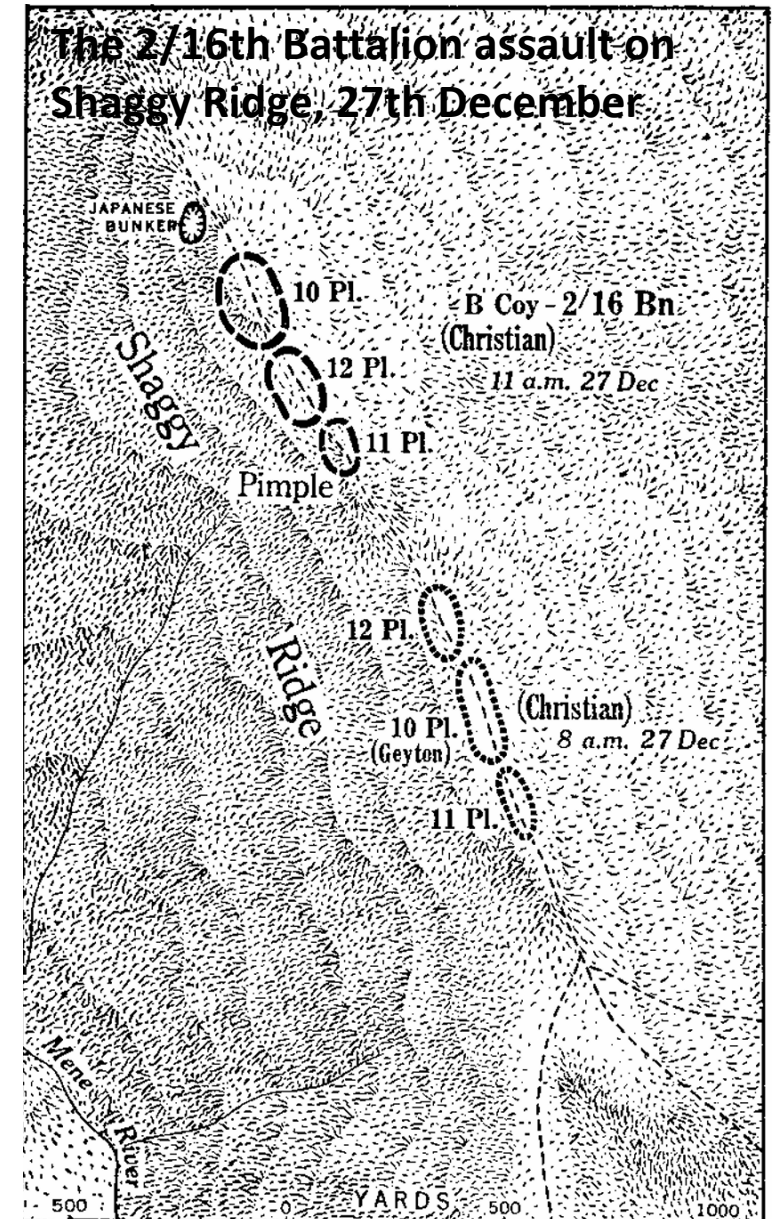
# 27 December 1943 - Finisterres

- At 8.55 the Kittyhawks made their last run behind the Pimple from the east. One minute after 9 o'clock Lieutenant Geyton's platoon moved over the start-line and left the cover of the rain forest to scale the rock face which led to the Pimple and which was now denuded of jungle growth by the bombardment.
- About a quarter of an hour after the start the leading platoon was about 50 yards from the top of the Pimple and had already used bamboo ladders which it had carried forward. The ladders were now discarded as too cumbersome and the platoon clambered forward with one section on the right, one on the left, and the third in reserve.
- On the left Sergeant W. T. McMahon's section was held up when the Japanese threw grenades down from a well-sited pill box. In this shower of grenades, McMahon and Warrant-Officer G. E. Morris were wounded but Corporal Hall, leading his section in from the right flank, dashed ahead and wiped out the pill-box single-handed. It was this action which allowed the platoon to get a footing on the ridge.



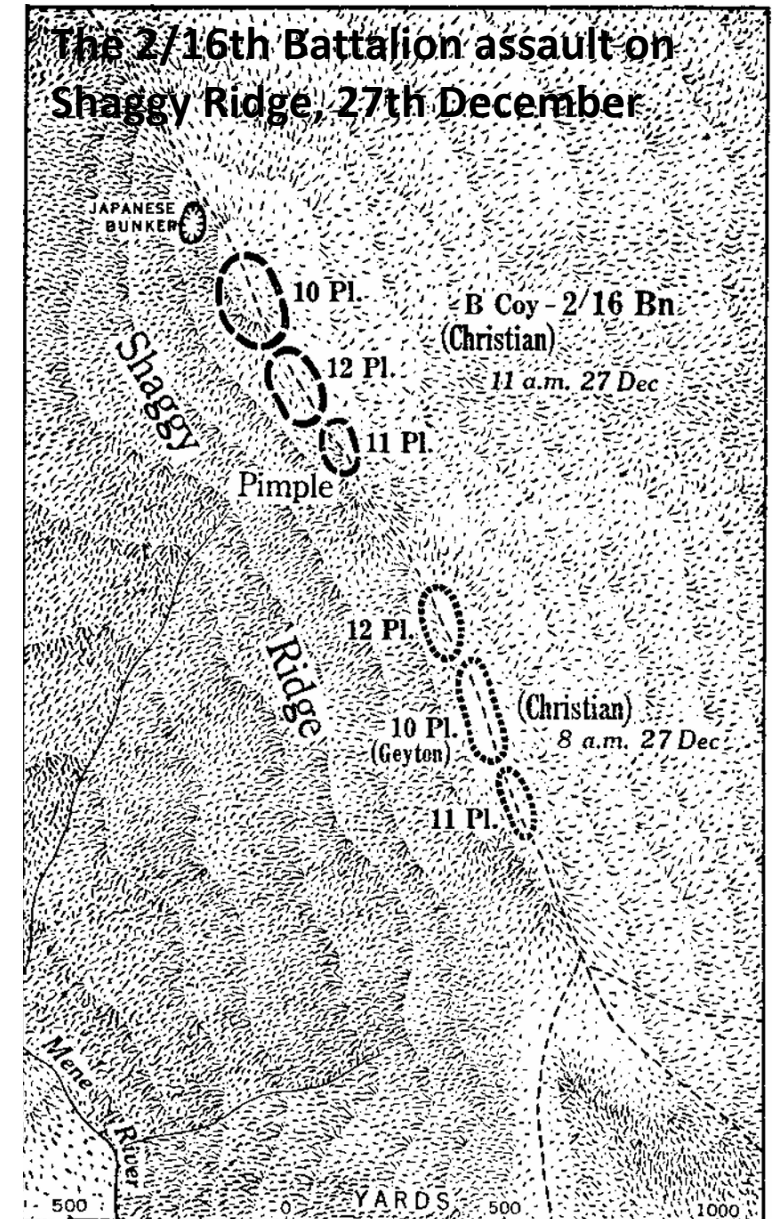
# 27 December 1943 - Finisterres

- Hall's section gained this footing on the ridge at 9.46 a.m.
- Geyton's platoon was now established along about 100 yards of Shaggy Ridge forward from the Pimple to another similar feature.
- A second platoon moved through to exploit beyond this second pimple. Three men charged a rock-made bunker but, despite heavy supporting fire, all three were wounded.
- Grenades failed to dislodge the Japanese and outflanking the position seemed impossible as the sides of the razor-back ridge guarded by the bunker were almost perpendicular.
- Christian therefore withdrew this platoon which dug in on a position just forward of the second pimple with the bunker immediately below them .



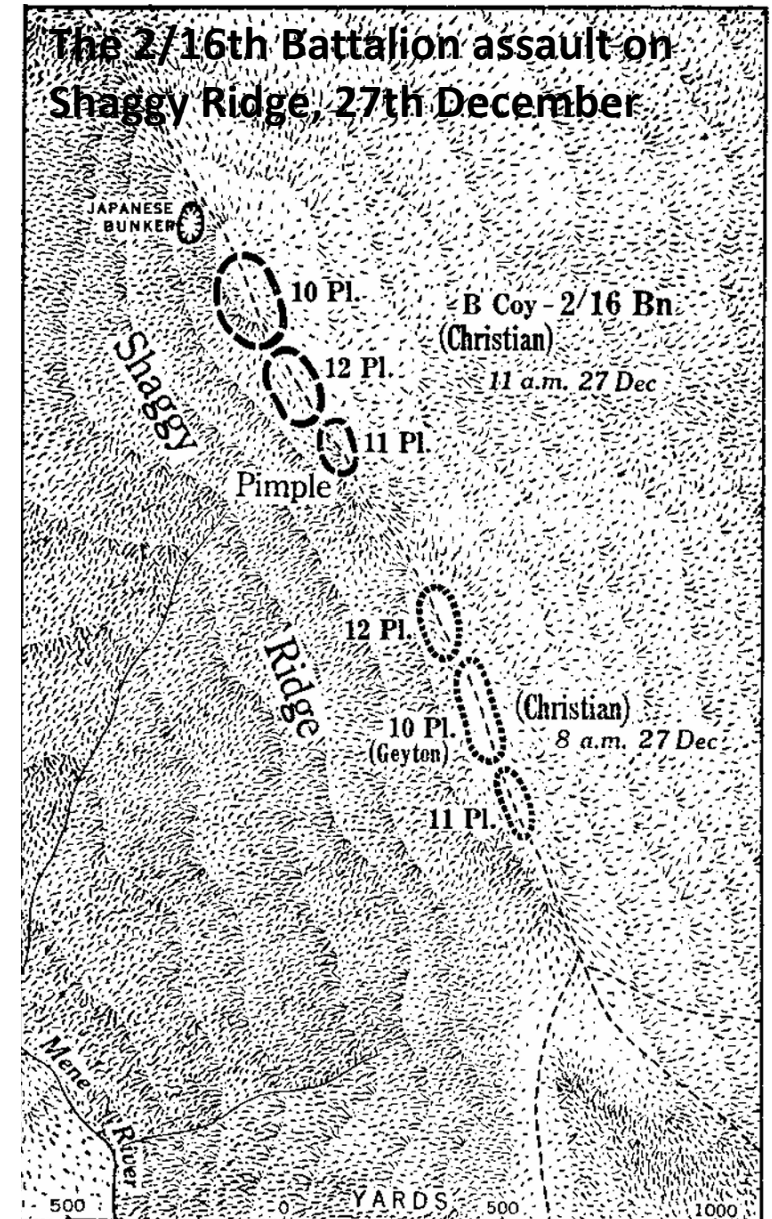
# 27 December 1943 - Finisterres

- Just after 11 a.m., when Anderson's company finished relieving Christian's and began digging in with two platoons along the ridge and one platoon in reserve just below the Pimple, a delayed tactical reconnaissance report by the Boomerangs indicated that large numbers of Japanese were streaming back towards the saddle.
- At 11.40 a.m. the Japanese attacked the third pimple under the impression that it was occupied by the Australians. This pimple was beyond the bunker which had held up the advance.
- The fire from the company's Brens prevented the Japanese from consolidating on the pimple and drove them back.
- A Japanese, who refused to surrender, covered the entrance to his pill-box with a groundsheet and for about two hours flicked away the grenades thrown at him before they could explode. Eventually he was blasted out when a grenade was tied to the end of a bamboo pole which was poked into the pit, the pin being pulled out by a length of string.
- More than 100 grenades were thrown during the day at the rock bunker in front of the second pimple.



# 27 December 1943 - Finisterres

- Aircraft and artillery had played a notable part in helping to extend the area held on Shaggy Ridge.
- During the two-hour concentration the artillery fired 3,368 shells. "Guns were running hot and gunners received burns from either barrel or cradle," wrote the diarist of the 2/4th Field Regiment.
- When the fight was hottest Flying Officer Staley flew General Vasey over the battle area in a Piper Cub.



# 27 December 1943 – New Britain

- The 1st Marines started westward along the coastal trail toward the cape and the airfield at 0730, 27 December.
- The swamp still forced the regiment to advance on a one company front. Each battalion sent small patrols into the swamp to protect its flanks. Sherman tanks of A Company, 1st Tank Battalion, supported.
- By 1615, when it dug in for the night, the regiment had gained three miles, and had become aware of the existence of a large Japanese block about a thousand yards east of the airfield.



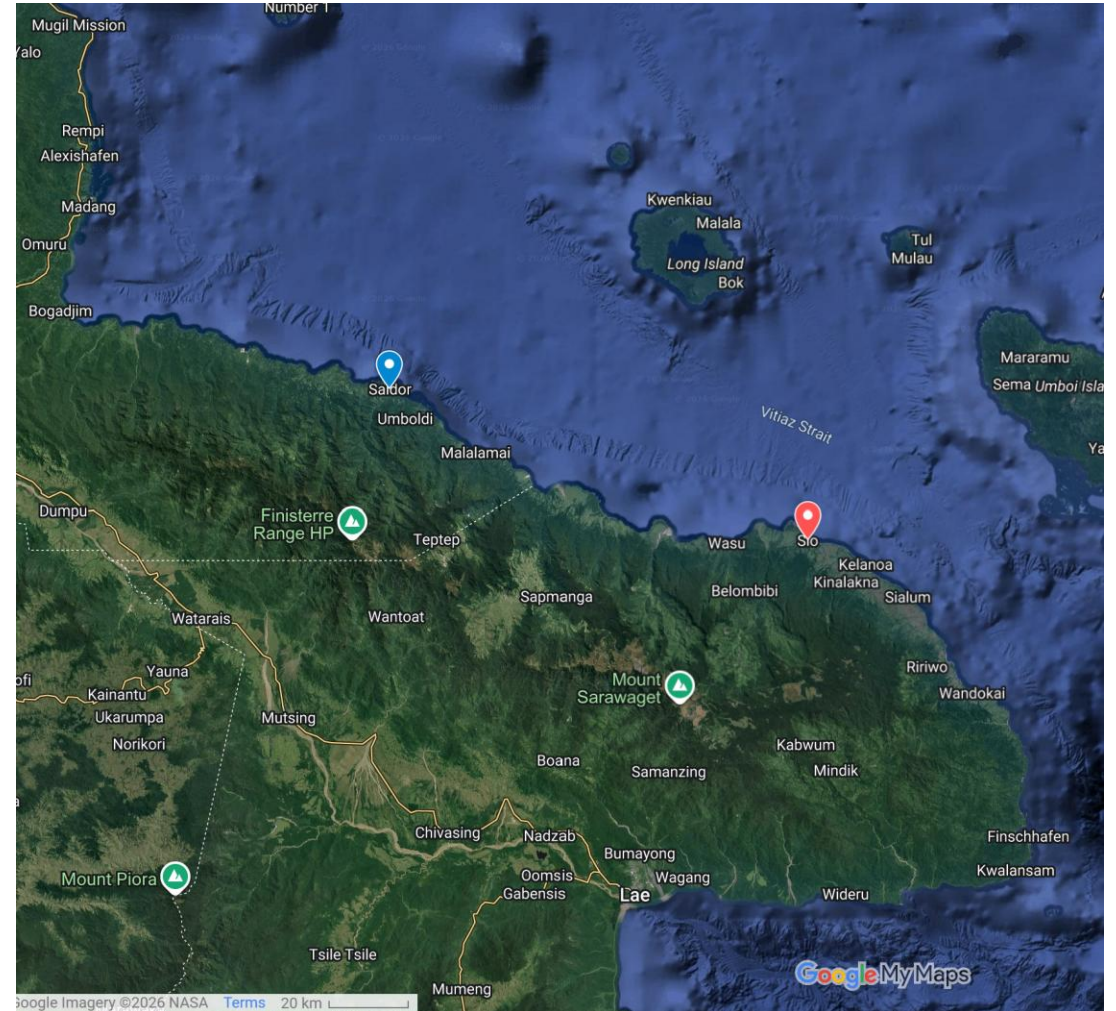
# 27 December 1943 – New Britain

- Between 15 and 27 December Japanese naval planes from Rabaul delivered seven attacks against Arawe and against the 1st Marine Division at Cape Gloucester, and in about the same period the 6th Air Division from Wewak attacked four times.
- By late December, however, the Japanese had lost so many planes to Allied fighters over New Britain, to Southwest Pacific attacks against Wewak, and to the South Pacific's raids on Rabaul that they were forced to stop daylight bombardment and confine their activities to the defense of Rabaul and Wewak.



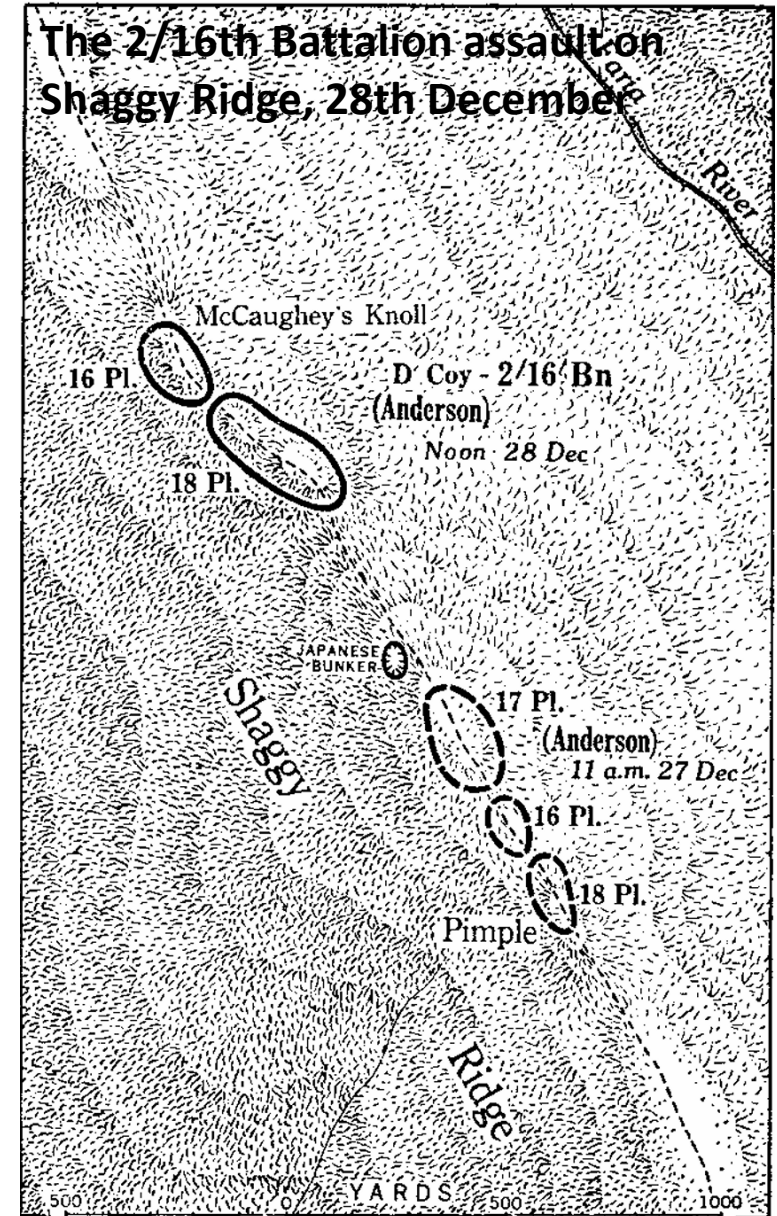
# 28 December 1943 – New Guinea

- On 17th December General Krueger, the commander of the Sixth American Army, had been ordered by General MacArthur to seize the Saidor area on the Rai Coast of New Guinea on or before 2nd January 1944.
- This landing was planned as an exploitation, and was contingent on quick success at Long Island, Arawe and particularly Cape Gloucester.
- On 22nd December Krueger established the Saidor Task Force consisting mainly of the 126th Regiment from the 32nd Division. Brigadier-General Martin was to capture the Saidor area, control such adjacent areas "as would be required to ensure uninterrupted operation of our air and light naval forces", and help to establish air and naval facilities.
- By the 28th Martin was informed that the Cape Gloucester operation was proceeding better than expected and the Saidor operation would probably proceed as planned.



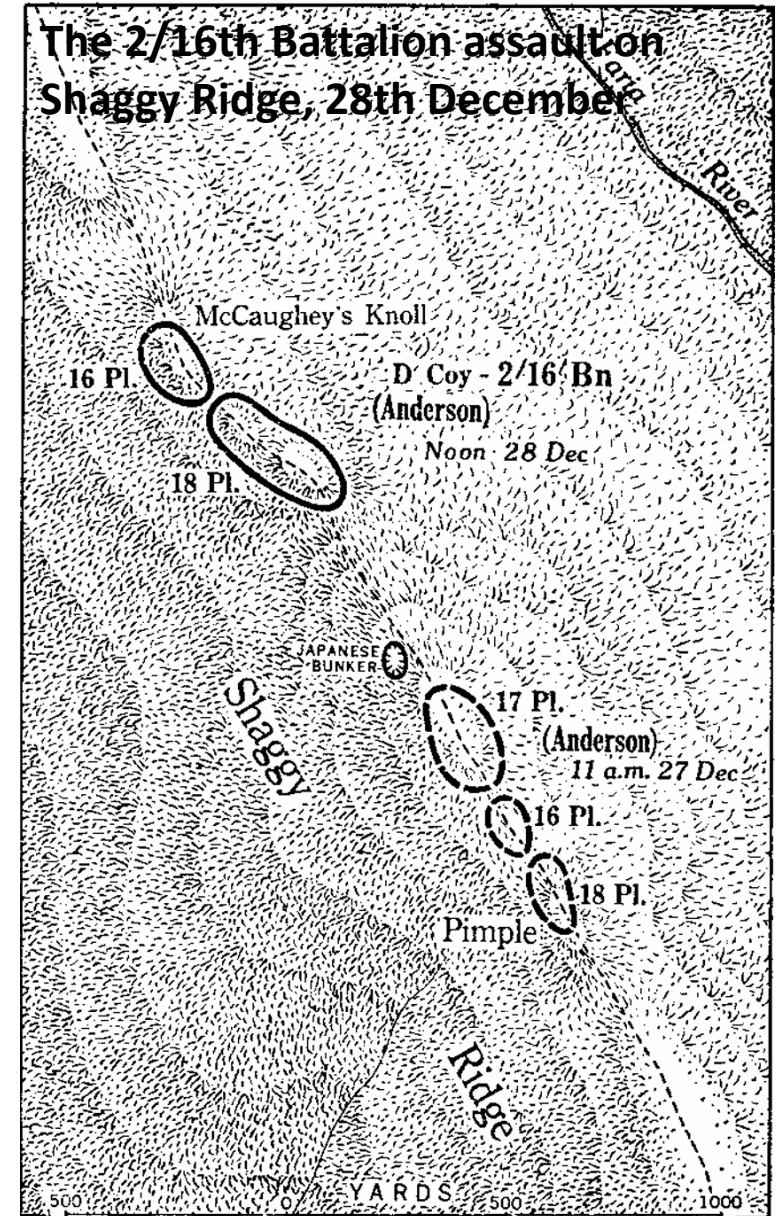
# 28 December 1943 - Finisterres

- The forward troops of the 2/16th spent most of the night digging trenches around and from the second pimple so that they could approach the Japanese bunker from a more advantageous position.
- The Pioneers, protected from fire by the angle of the cliff, chiselled a track along the cliff face towards the bunker.
- Towards dawn the track was level with and just below the bunker.
- To deal with the bunker the engineers designed a special bomb which consisted of a grenade placed in a chemical and sealed in a field ration tin.
- At 8.30 a.m. on the 28th men on the newly cut track and in the foremost positions pulled out the grenade pins and hurled the new bombs.
- The bunker was blasted away and inside its remains were found the bodies of a Japanese officer and a private who had held up the advance.



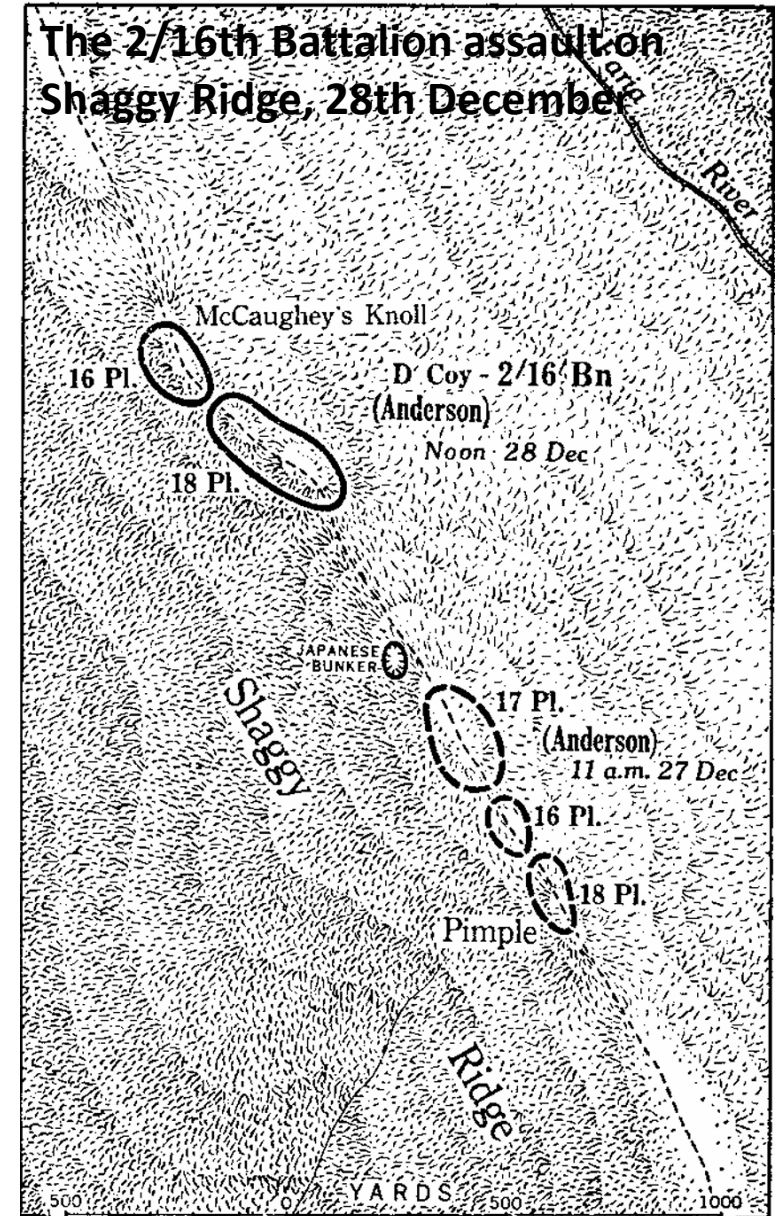
# 28 December 1943 - Finisterres

- At the same time Lieutenant Scott's platoon was sent down the rugged and precipitous east slope of Shaggy Ridge to attempt a wide encircling movement of the third pimple.
- At 10.50 a.m. he reported being at the base of the third pimple and a quarter of an hour later the artillery and mortars began firing smoke to cover his advance on to this pimple.
- Scott reported the "going too tough" straight up the side of the pimple, decided on a different direction, and began climbing up through a belt of timber.
- Six minutes after midday, light and medium machine-guns opened up on the left flank to distract the enemy's attention and allow Scott to move in and attack from the right.
- Six minutes later those behind heard heavy firing from the direction of the third pimple and also saw figures climbing it.



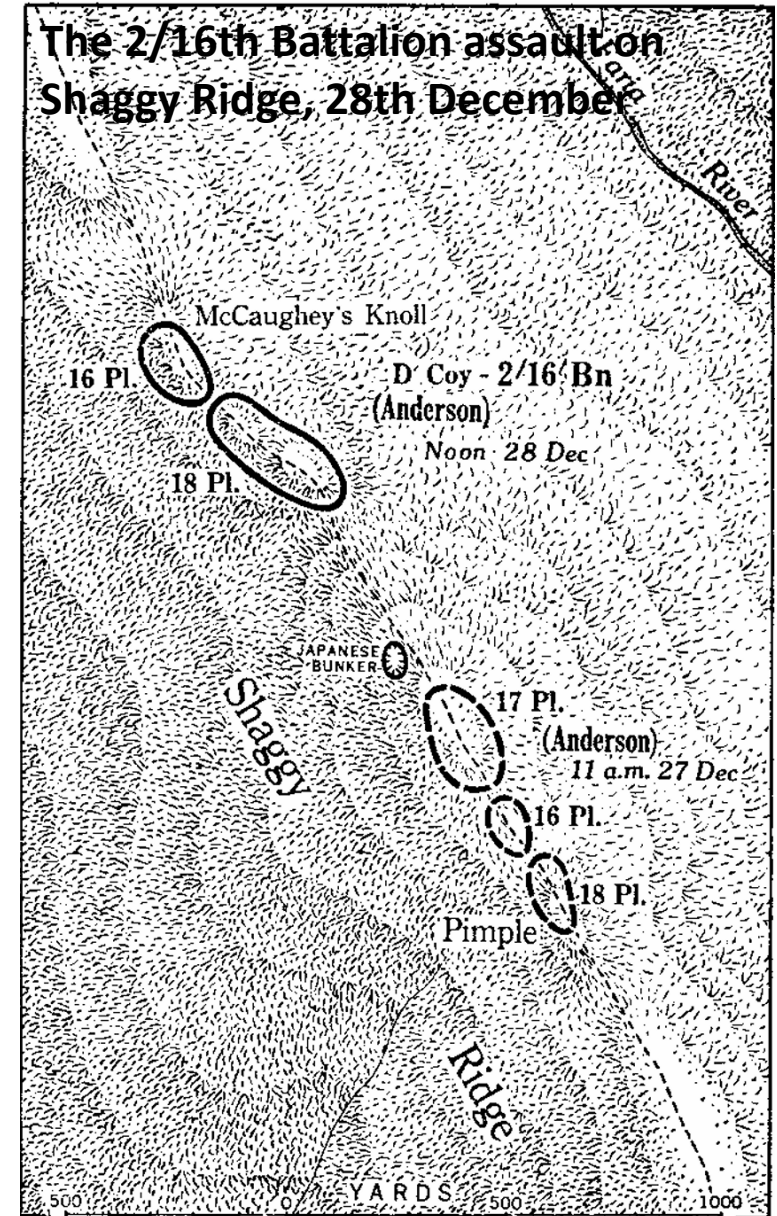
# 28 December 1943 - Finisterres

- At the foot of the objective Scott ordered his platoon sergeant, Longman, to take a small party of Owen gunners up the third pimple.
- Under heavy enemy machine-gun fire Longman and three men charged an enemy machine-gun post near the top.
- Two of his men were wounded but Longman and the other continued to advance on the enemy post and eventually silenced it with Owen-gun fire.
- To reach the enemy post they had to pull themselves up a steep slope with one hand and fire their Owens with the other.
- Still under heavy fire from other enemy posts the two men covered the evacuation of the two wounded and neutralised the fire of another enemy post 40 yards away which was opposing the advance of the rest of the platoon, led by the wounded Scott, up the cliff face.
- Nine minutes after Longman led the first assault, Scott was in possession of the third pimple and was covering the advance of Lieutenant McCaughey's platoon to the fourth and highest pimple, farther along the ridge. The two platoons then dug in on the newly-won ground.



# 28 December 1943 - Finisterres

- Early in the afternoon a Japanese gun began shelling the forward positions on Shaggy Ridge and was promptly answered by the Australian artillery.
- Soon after the gun opened fire about 80 Japanese were seen on the feature about 600 yards forward of the newly-captured ground.
- The artillery immediately shelled them.
- At 2.22 p.m. the Japanese, somewhat chastened by this shell fire, counter-attacked the forward positions of the 2/16th but were driven back by accurate fire.
- When Vasey visited the battalion later in the day he learned that the 2/16th's tally of Japanese dead was now 96.





Thanks for your attention.