

Pacific Theatre

Part 16: Kokoda to Leyte Gulf

In which we cast doubt on OSS-approved film footage.

by Lestrade aka Unpopular Opinion



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My unpopular opinion, from internet research anyone can do.

What was going on in Papua New Guinea? The Muses slap me awake. As per Wikipedia:

“The New Guinea Campaign of the Pacific War lasted from January 1942 until the end of the war in August 1945. During the initial phase in early 1942, the Empire of Japan invaded the Territory of New Guinea on 23 January and Territory of Papua on 21 July and overran western New Guinea (part of the Netherlands East Indies) beginning on 29 March. During the second phase, lasting from late 1942 until the Japanese surrender, the Allies – consisting primarily of Australian forces – cleared the Japanese first from Papua, then New Guinea, and finally from the Dutch colony.

The campaign resulted in a crushing defeat and heavy losses for the Empire of Japan. As in most Pacific War campaigns, disease and starvation claimed more Japanese lives than enemy action. Most Japanese troops never even came into contact with Allied forces and were instead simply cut off and subjected to an effective blockade by Allied naval forces. Garrisons were effectively besieged and denied shipments of food and medical supplies, and as a result some claim that 97% of Japanese deaths in this campaign were from non-combat causes. According to John Laffin, the campaign “was arguably the most arduous fought by any Allied troops during World War II.”

Um, what? It’s the most intense campaign but only 3% of the enemy deaths are from direct combat?

Computer, numbers please.

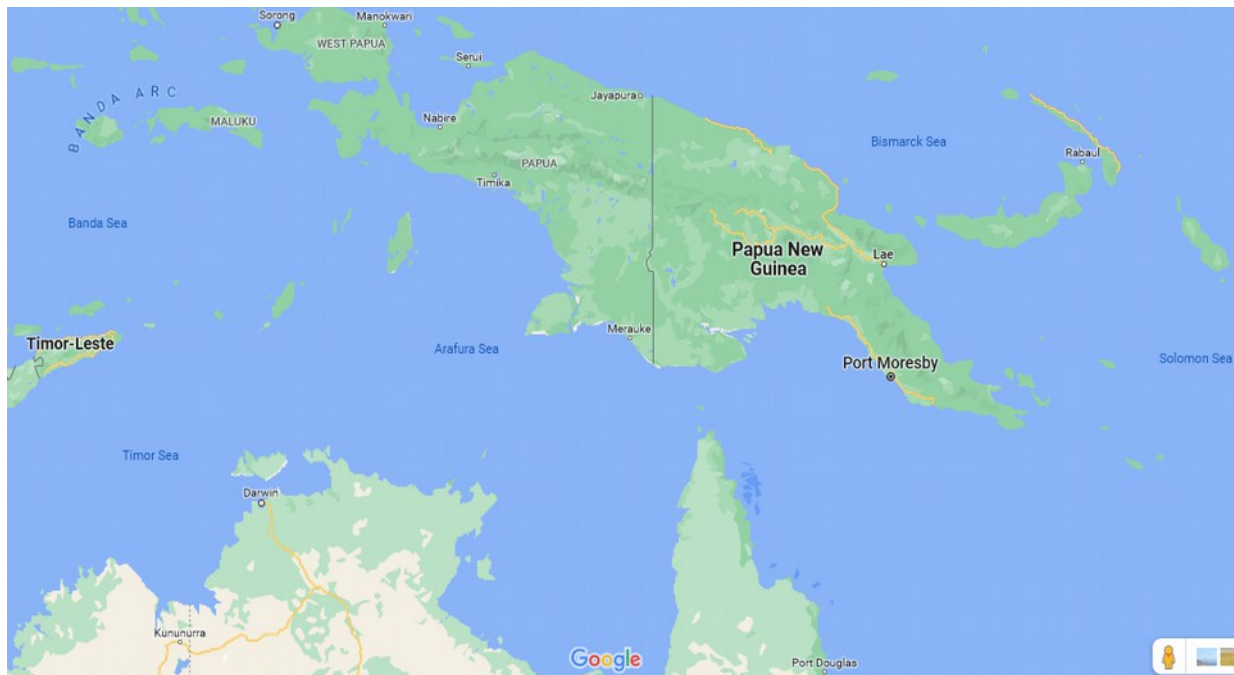
Strength	
	350,000 ^[1]
Casualties and losses	
42,000 total ^[2]	202,100 total killed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  (c. 7,000 killed)^[3]  12,291 (4,684 killed)^[4] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 127,600 on New Guinea main island 44,000 on Bougainville (politically a part of New Guinea) 30,500 on New Britain, New Ireland, and the Admiralty Islands (mostly from disease and starvation)^{[5][3]}
<p>a. [^] Some claim that 97% of Japanese deaths were from non-combat causes. However, this is contradictory to the total number of Japanese combat deaths calculated across most individual battles in the campaign.</p>	

That's a rough start to this making any kind of sense. How many Allied troops took part in this campaign? No idea. Googled it in case it was just Wikipedia on the blink but no, nobody can tell me. Allied casualties? 42K. 30,316 of which would be injury/disease for the Aussies given the stated number of American casualties. 11,684 Allied killed in the entire 43 month campaign = around **270** men killed per month. This would not indicate especially heavy fighting.

How many Japanese? 350k. Quite a large deployment! Triple what is at Rabaul (the mythical regional command hub). Remember they never had the manpower to kick the Americans out of Guadalcanal or invade Australia, but they had 350,000 men to sit in the jungles of Papua New Guinea smoking cigarettes and playing cards. 3% of the casualties from combat, so that's 6,063 men given the 202,100 total killed. That's **141** men killed per month.

So... the Japanese were actually... dying less than the Allies? In direct combat? The Allied forces are losing nearly twice the number of men each time there's an actual shoot-out. But the Japanese lost. Somehow. OK. I guess the Allies had substantially more troops to offset this. Attrition win, perhaps? But that would mean... over half a million Allied troops committed... which totally didn't happen. Guadalcanal is regarded as a much bigger campaign and that's supposed to be around 60,000 men. Right off the bat the numbers don't really work.

If we zoom out from the numbers for a minute, as we approach birds eye view, I would remark that the logistics of housing and feeding and providing fresh water for 350,000 troops (and the 110,000 at Rabaul up the road) is quite a stretch. The Japanese are only short on resources (food, fuel) when the plot requires it.

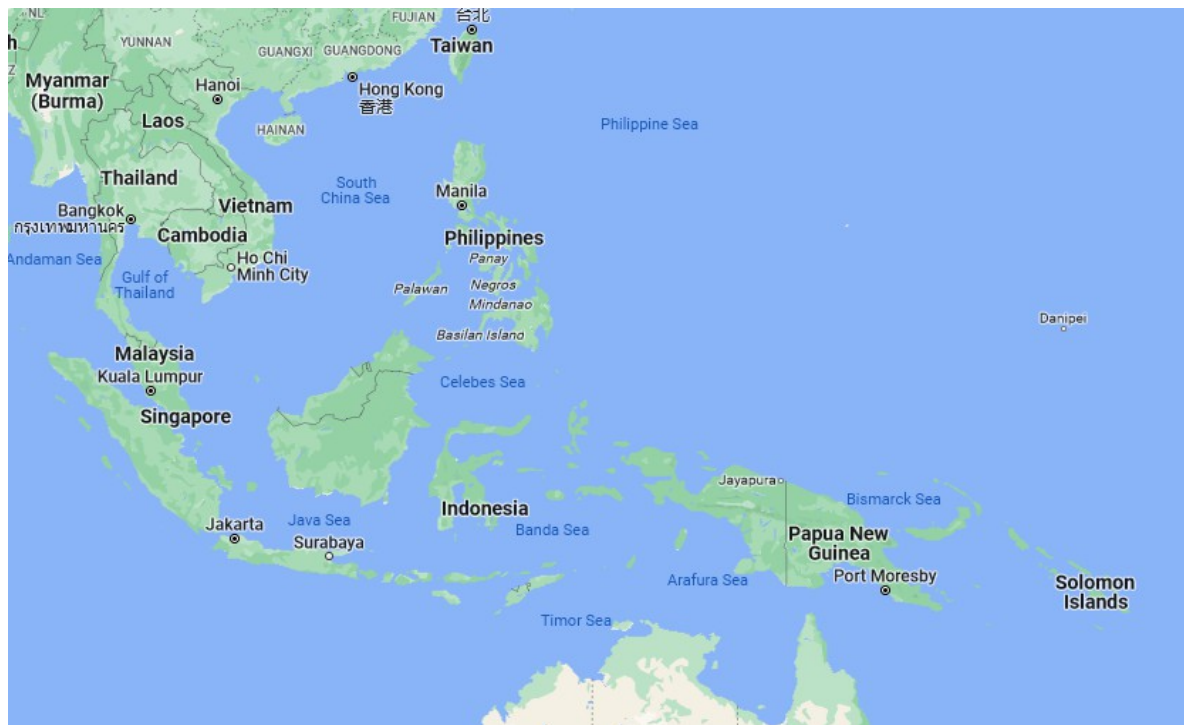


On this map you can see teeny tiny Darwin, also Port Moresby (hub for all the Kokoda Track nonsense) and in the top right is teeny tiny Rabaul. Papua New Guinea is owned/controlled by Australia at this point and is described as being almost entirely undeveloped (the odd mine or rubber plantation aside). It's mountains and rainforest. Malaria, yams and mangoes. No real roads, just dirt tracks that flood every time it rains (which is every five minutes). If you've been reading these papers for a while you'll probably already see that we're campaigning in what is essentially Australia's backyard, in the middle of nowhere, with no risk of collateral damage or eyewitnesses.

Question: what is the military objective for the Japanese in holding Papua New Guinea? It's not a staging ground to invade Australia so... what... was it supposed to be a defensive outpost? To stop the Allied advance north? But then why so many small, isolated bases that can be knocked over one by one? Why no co-ordination? Why do these need to be smashed if the **main** base of Rabaul can be largely ignored?

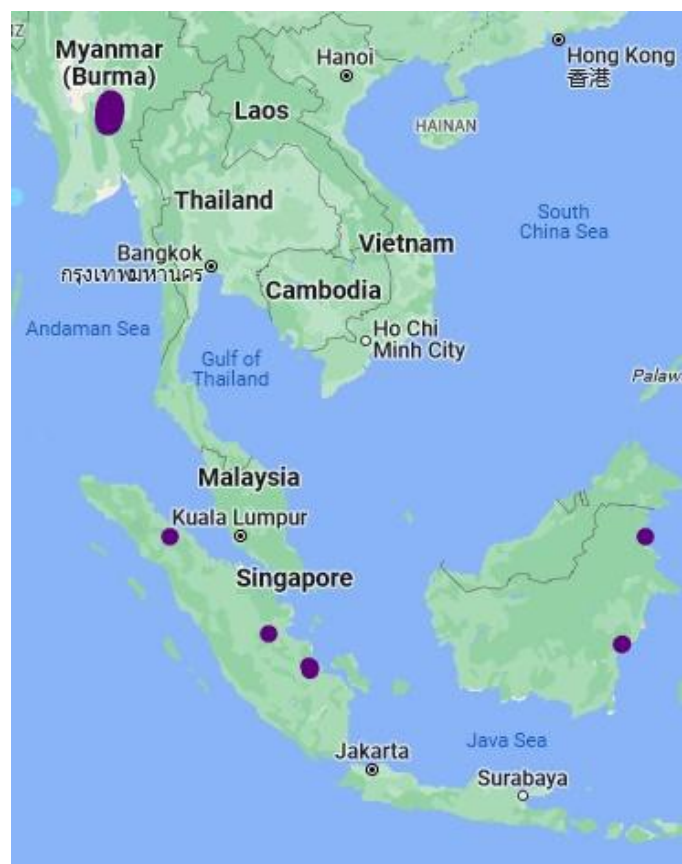
If you have getting on for 200,000 Japanese eventually dying from starvation and disease then why do they stay put in the jungle? The obvious two options are: you either realise you can't hold the position and evacuate or (if we go with the mythos of the Japanese always being fearless psycho fanatics) you go on the offensive and there's a suicidal push south to kill as many Allied troops as possible before you starve to death or get killed. With that many Japanese troops you'd expect an Allied rout, Port Moresby in flames, heads on sticks, that sort of thing.

If we zoom out to the birds, behold, the region:



Imagine you are the Allied commander, based down in Australia. You need to get to Japan. Japan is, so you know, relying on rather large amounts of oil being shipped in from the occupied territories. The oil is claimed to be the whole point of their expansionism. Without the oil, they can't sail their ships or drive their tanks or keep their factories operating.

As per this rather helpful Wikipedia article, you can read about how the oil came from the Irrawaddy river area of Burma, from Indonesia in Palembang Djambi and Medan (south of Singapore) and from the island of Borneo in Balikpapan and Tarakan.



So basically the oil, the beating heart of the Japanese military, comes mainly from these locations (marked in Phoenician purple). Occupied Singapore would be the main port in the area to bring the oil to for processing and to send on to Taiwan/Formosa and then Japan via tankers. As such, a logical tactical move would be to sail from Australia north-west through the Java sea, possibly taking Jakarta on the way, then capturing Singapore. Unlocking Singapore also helps in terms of linking to the west and the British forces in India, freeing up forces in Burma and KMT forces in south-west China. You can then start thinking about recapturing French Indochina, Hong Kong, Taiwan and so on.



I know reader, you're getting maps and everything in this one. This is top quality high budget content.

Now if for some reason you don't want to liberate Singapore and cut off the bulk of the oil, you still need to go north to get to Japan. Tokyo and the Emperor is the ultimate goal here, right? Perhaps you're swayed by MacArthur demanding a retake of the Philippines asap. No time for helping the Brits. OK. Fine. Then you go north, right?



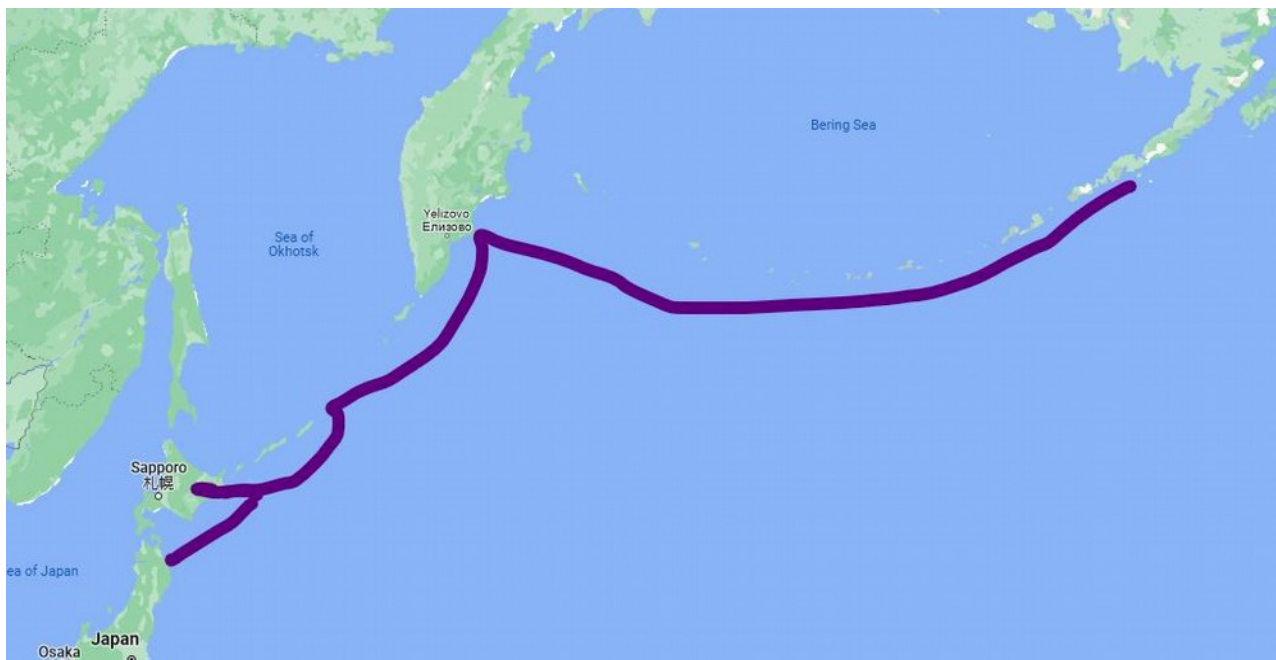
Straight up the Banda Sea, around Mindanao and you hit Manila. But no, we don't do this. Instead, we spend years messing around in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

You can [read here](#):

"In 1944–1945, Allied troops largely bypassed the Dutch East Indies and did not fight their way into the most populous parts such as Java and Sumatra. As such, most of the Dutch East Indies was still under occupation at the time of Japan's surrender in August 1945."

As a brief aside, think how everyone forgot about Kamchatka. Poor Kamchatka.

The Americans already had troops and bases and airfields in the Aleutians. They were, at that time, on reasonable terms with the Soviets who would ultimately declare war on the Japanese and invade China. Why wouldn't the US Navy sail via the Aleutians to Kamchatka, using the Russian ports and facilities to harbour when necessary and then jump off from there to invade northern Japan?



As [per Wikipedia](#):

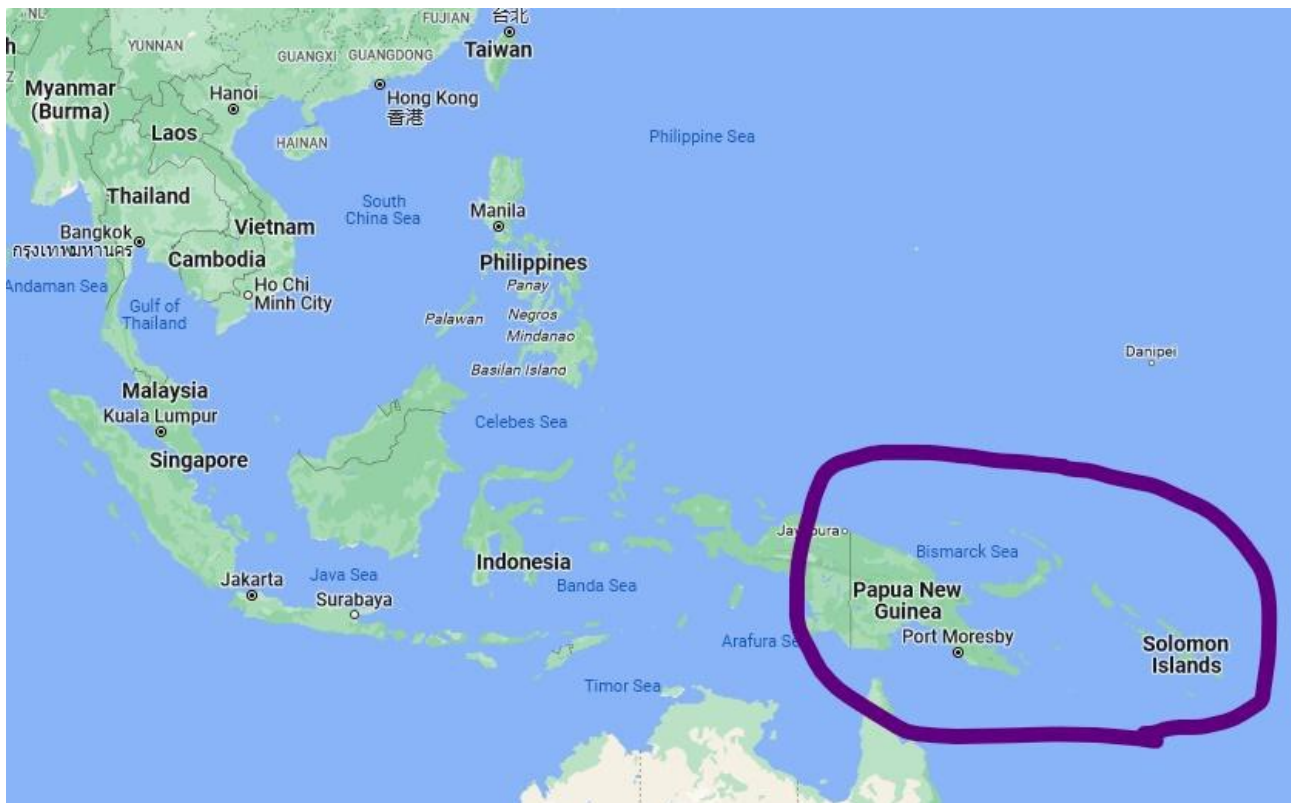
*“World War II (1939–1945) hardly affected Kamchatka except for its role as a launch site for the invasion of **Manchuria** in **August 1945**. After the war, the Soviet authorities declared Kamchatka a military zone: it remained closed to Soviet citizens until 1989 and to foreigners until 1990.”*

Weird, huh?

Returning to the southern Pacific, as we’ve previously touched on, occupied Singapore was never liberated by the Allies, it remained in Japanese control until the point of the Emperor’s surrender. At least the US Air Force was helpful as always:

*“Naval facilities and docks in Singapore were also bombed on **eleven** occasions by American air units between November 1944 and May 1945. These attacks caused some damage to their targets but **also killed a number of civilians**.”*

There are also the numerous “holdout” groups and Japanese island bases completely cut off and isolated by the Allies (e.g. Wake Island, which was left in Japanese hands until the end of the war despite being so close to Hawaii). Sometimes the script requires a full invasion and defeat of the Japanese (e.g. Iwo Jima), other times you can just sail around them.



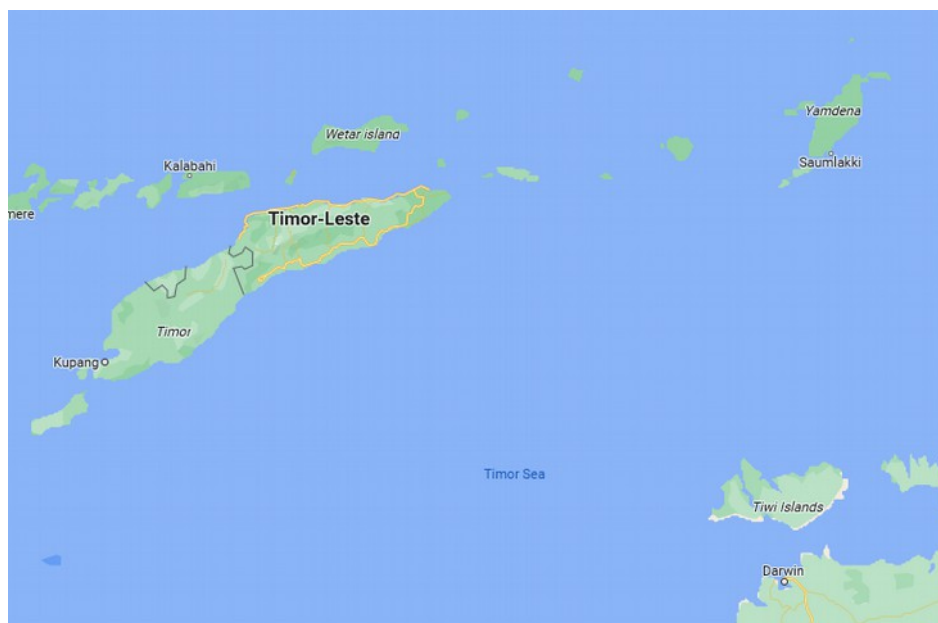
Inside the purple circle: Super Important. Outside the purple circle: Not Important. When you show it like this it comes across as ridiculous.

If we look at the main sites from the theoretical Route A (to liberate Singapore):

[Jakarta](#) was never liberated, remaining under Japanese occupation until the end of the war.

[Surabaya](#) wasn't liberated and stayed in Japanese hands – the only “Battle of Surabaya” is the one where the locals attempt an uprising against the Allied troops attempting to reimpose Dutch rule post-war!

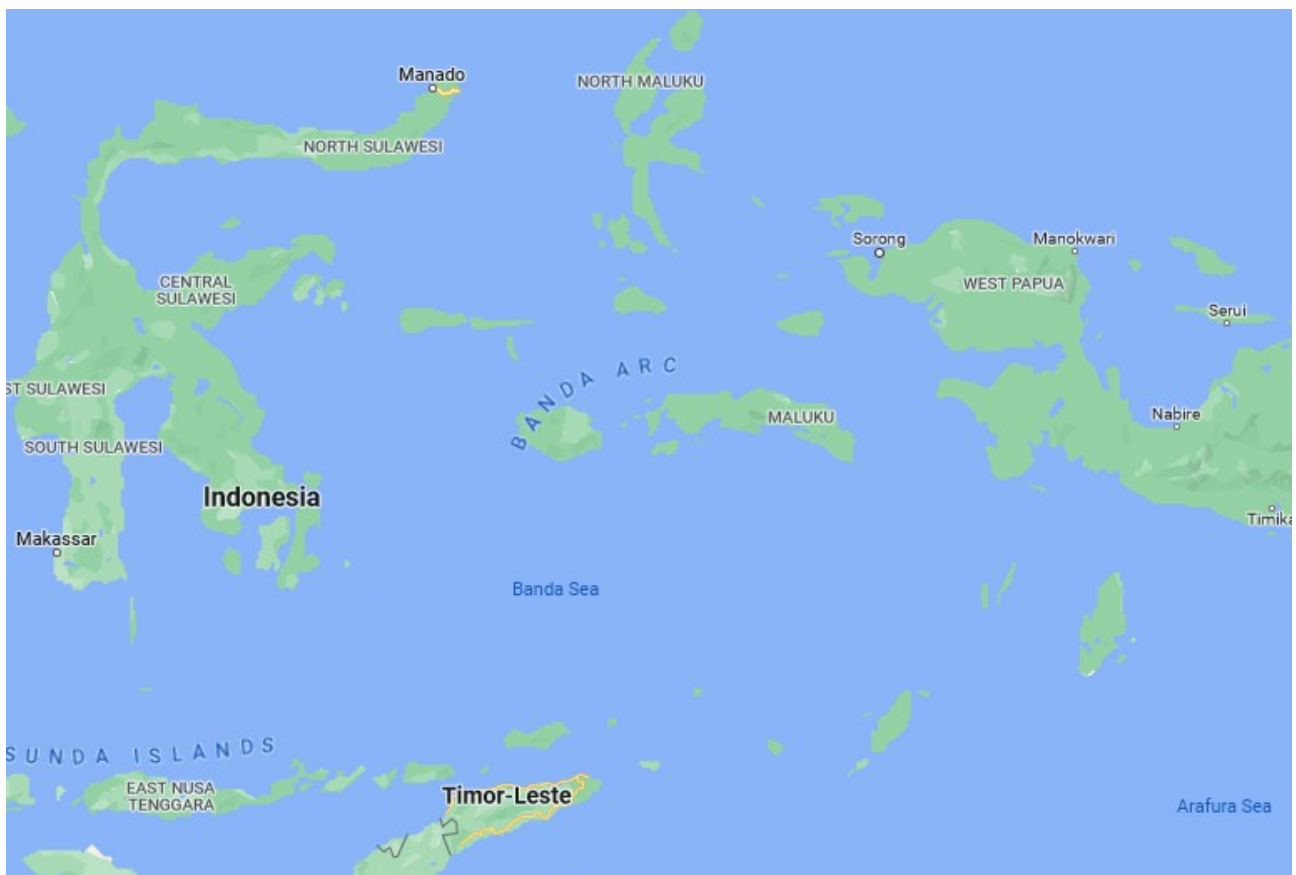
Now if we follow Route B (go north from Darwin):



Timor was occupied by the Japanese until 1945.

*“Although Portugal was neutral during World War II, in December 1941, Portuguese Timor was occupied by Australian and Dutch forces, which were expecting a Japanese invasion. This Australian military intervention dragged Portuguese Timor into the Pacific War but it also slowed the Japanese expansion. **When the Japanese did occupy Timor, in February 1942, a 400-strong Dutch-Australian force and large numbers of Timorese volunteers engaged them in a one-year guerrilla campaign. After the allied evacuation in February 1943 the East Timorese continued fighting the Japanese, with comparatively little collaboration with the enemy taking place. This assistance cost the civilian population dearly: Japanese forces burned many villages and seized food supplies. The Japanese occupation resulted in the deaths of 40,000–70,000 Timorese.**”*

You can read about [the Battle of Timor here](#) which is a cracking Boys' Own adventure story featuring 18 Australian commandos killing 200 Japanese at an airfield; a mysterious Japanese commander known only as “The Tiger”, who rode around the battlefield with his men on a white horse until he was rather predictably sniped, [a picture of some crumbling arches](#) that “used to be a Chinese school” until the Japanese destroyed it(?) and the interesting data point that the Japanese were able to send in 12,000 men to Timor but didn’t have the manpower to go a little bit further south and take out Darwin entirely. All very genuine and believable.



According to Wikipedia nothing happened in [the Tanimbar Islands or Saumlakki](#).

Nothing happened in the [Maluku islands](#) or the Banda Arc in general.

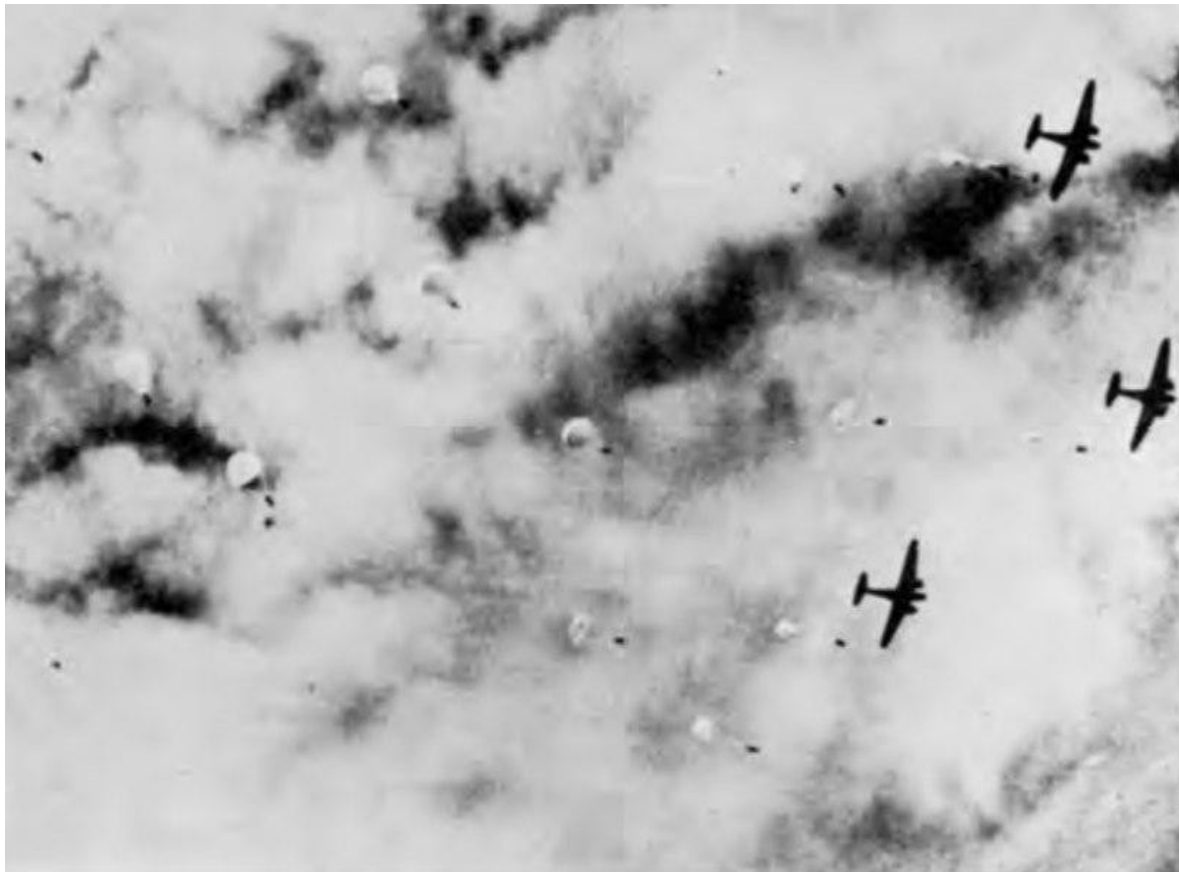
What about the (interestingly-shaped) [Sulawesi](#)? Not much. At the very top right tip of Sulawesi however we have Manado, which gives us the [Battle of Manado](#).

This is a great battle, as it gives us the following photos:



“Japanese paratroopers dropping over Langoan Airfield.” - original [here](#).

And this:



“A wave of the 1st Yokosuka Force paras dropping over Langoan Airfield.” - original [here](#).

And this:



"1st Yokosuka Force paras dropping over Langoan Airfield." - original [here](#). Wow, one of the worst fakes ever!

Just awful paste-ups, all of them. The Battle of Manado article also gives us this quote:

*“Even though the Minahasa Peninsula **does not contain any raw materials or strategic technical installations, its military value remained essential.** The sheltered bays of Manado and Lake Tondano **provide good bases for seaplanes**, as Dutch forces established a Naval Base on the southeast side of Tondano Lake, near Tasoeka (Tasuka). A seaplane base was also established on the southern part of the Lake, near Kakas.”*

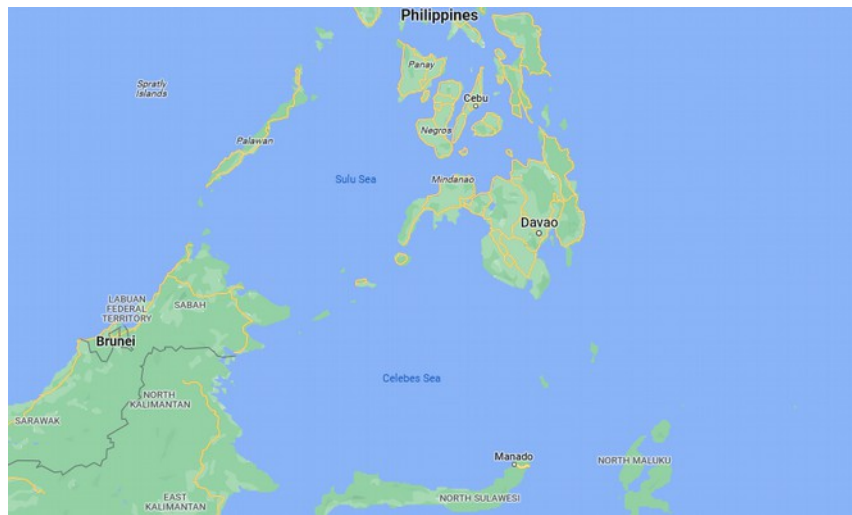
So we’re back to the Tulagi-era nonsense about boat plane bases. Finally, we have this photograph of the Japanese boss, Commander Toyoaki Horiuchi:



original [here](#). You have to laugh at how bad that paste-up is. His fake beard isn't even drawn on evenly, with no sideburn to your right. His head is pasted on too high, and the collar is higher right than left.

He was nicknamed the “octopus man” because of his gymnastic technique and flexibility. Of course he was. For some reason he is seen here sporting a full beard. Google image search “Japanese Commanders World War 2” and note how they are all clean shaven. Some may have a trimmed moustache, that’s about it. Why does the octopus man have a full beard? Well, I assume the beard is fake, layered in to the image or drawn onto the original image, to hide the seam where they spliced in the face onto that body. This may explain why his neck is so long. Why? Because this isn’t Horiuchi perhaps? *Most Japanese can't even grow beards like that.*

So that’s a slice of observation up the “middle” of the ocean between Australia and Davao. We have yet to find anything real occurring.



There is some stuff to talk about with Borneo so I'll loop back to that in a minute. You can see the point, anyway, about how stupid it is that the Allies end up slogging through Papua New Guinea or the Solomon Islands generally.

With the Papua New Guinea campaign, a brief spin through the Japanese leadership board gives us the usual nonsense.

[General Harukichi Hyakutake](#), classmate of Chiang Kai-Shek (small world!), spent time living in Poland and China. He goes to Rabaul and ends up living in a cave:

*“Hyakutake directed Japanese army units solely in the Solomons, primarily on Bougainville. He and his forces were trapped on Bougainville when the Allies established a heavily fortified perimeter at Cape Torokina, and Hyakutake was cut off from reinforcements and re-supply. His attacks on the perimeter failed, and his army was forced to live off the land, **hiding in jungle caves for most of the rest of the war.**”*

Hyakutake suffered a debilitating stroke and was relieved of his duties in February 1945 by General Masatane Kanda. There was no way to evacuate him to Japan for medical treatment until February 1946, after the surrender of Japan. He died on 10 March 1947.”

Of course he did.

[General Hitoshi Imamura](#) was a military attaché to England and later to British India. Spook. He's accused of the infamous [Pig Basket Atrocity](#) (confusingly named given he never forced pigs to weave baskets or made baskets out of pigs) and ends up living in his garden in a custom-built birdcage. Stop laughing at the back. Are you a Proper Historian™? Do you have a Masters? Hmm. Or a PHD? Did you study History? You did? Well, did you specialise in World War 2? In this theatre? In this specific area? No? Didn't think so. Well then. You can't comment.

(The above joke is an example of what I would get as a rebuttal for this entire series from normies reader. Appeal to Authority. It pains me. Some smug latte-sipper chuckling at me that because I don't have the right credentials, therefore none of these observations count.)

[General Hatazō Adachi](#), literally “23 Adachi”, was given the first name “23” by his dad (supposedly due to being born in the 23rd year of the Meiji dynasty but feels like a simple code-name for a spook). We learn:

“With the defeat of the Imperial Japanese Navy in the Solomon Islands campaign, and with landings of US forces led by Douglas MacArthur at Aitape and Hollandia from 22 to 27 April 1944, isolated the vast majority of Adachi's forces. His forces, suffering from malaria, heat exhaustion and malnutrition were rendered ineffective for the remainder of the war, despite Adachi's efforts to achieve some form of self-sufficiency by planting crops and giving priority in rations to the sick. As ammunition began to run low, many of Adachi's commanders resorted to banzai charges against the Allied beachhead at Aitape rather than surrender. By the end of the war in September 1945, most of his forces had been annihilated. Of Adachi's original 140,000 men, barely 13,000 were still alive when the war ended. He surrendered to the Australian 6th Division at Cape Wom, by Wewak, New Guinea.”

Question: how do you pad out the enemy army numbers? Answer: you say there were hundreds of thousands of enemy troops but they all starved to death in the middle of nowhere, in a remote jungle.

We then have this:



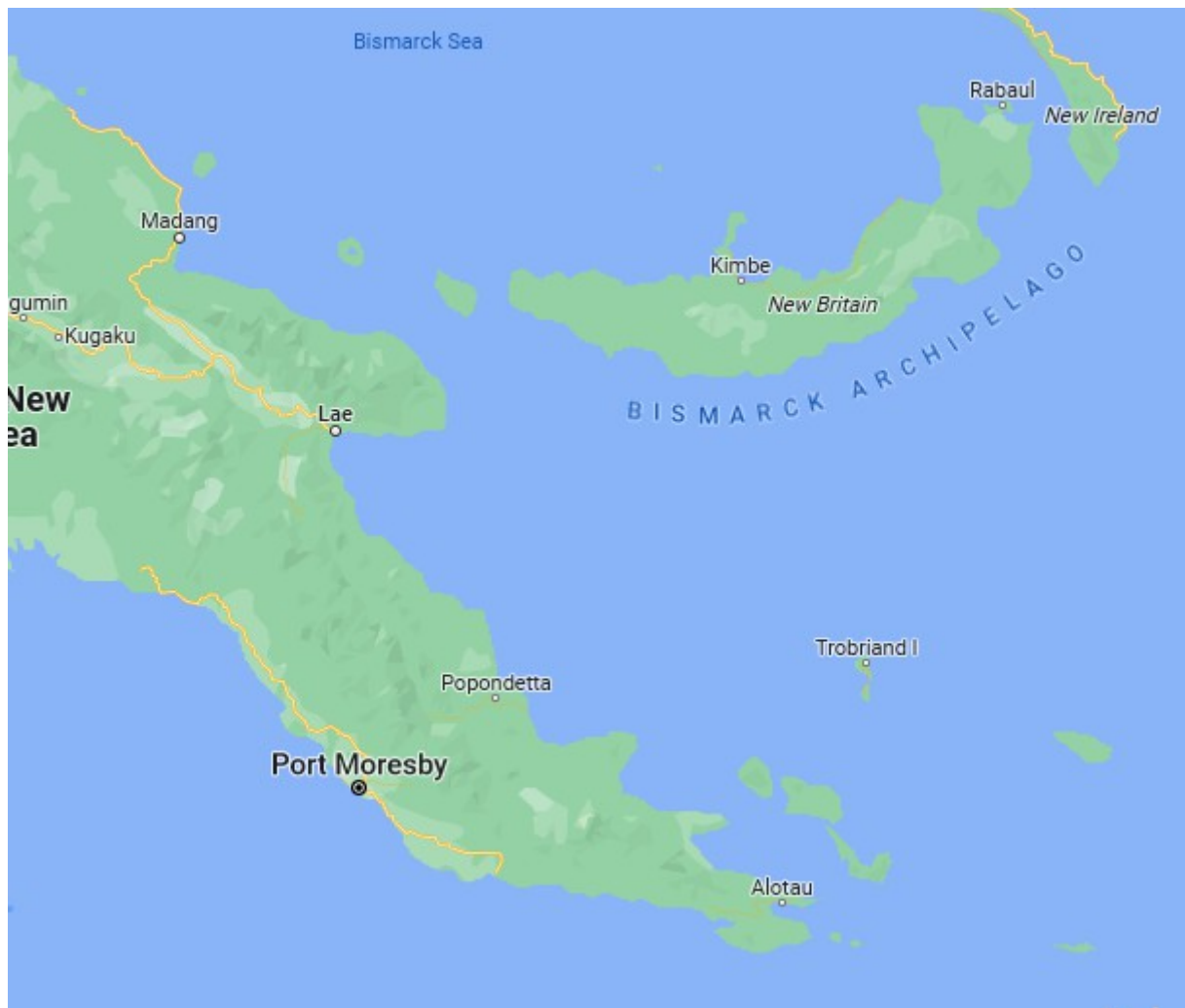
"Adachi on his way to surrender." - original [here](#).

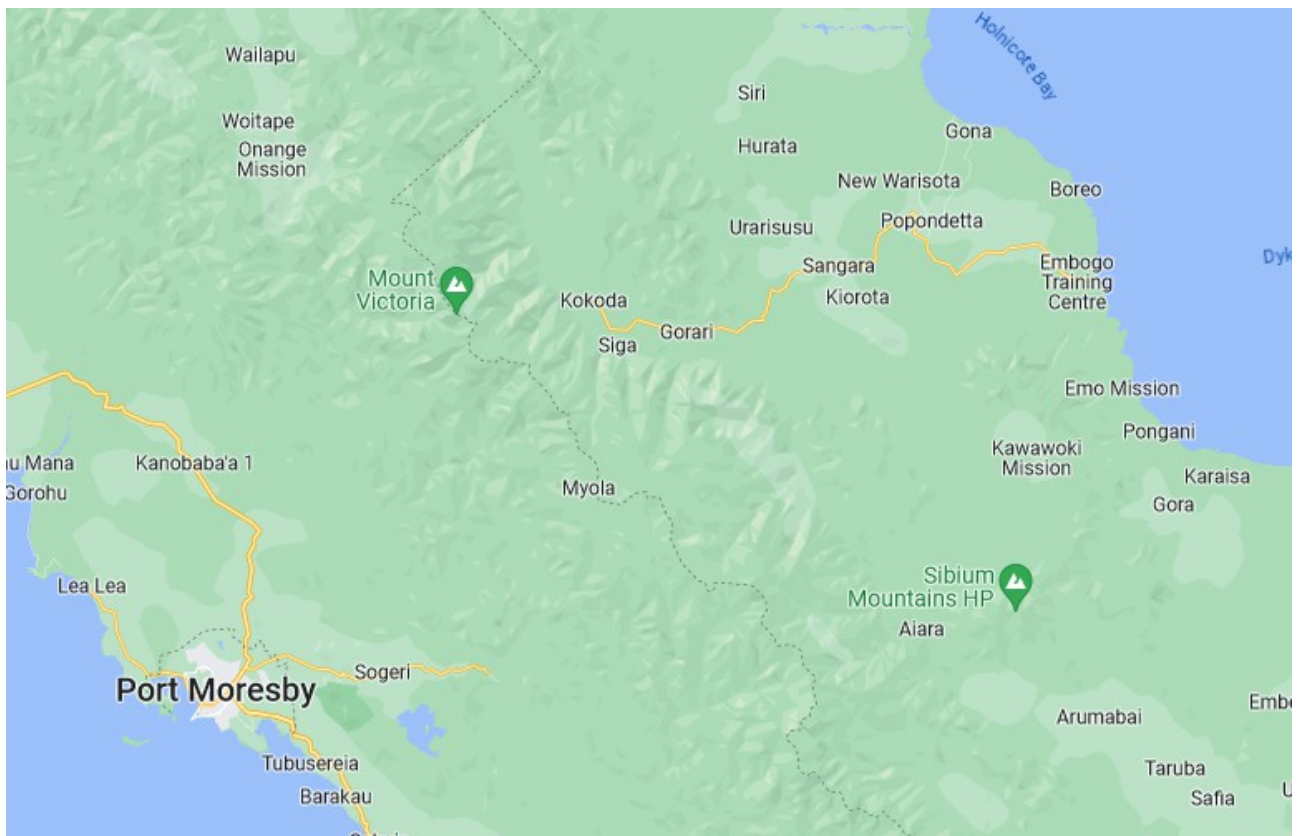
It was the squashed face of the driver that clued me in at first, then I blew up the photo and realised the whole thing was a giant collage/paste-up. The white glow around Adachi. The face floating just above Adachi's head. And so on. You see it now.

So: stupid war in a remote jungle + "130 thousand troops starved never to be found again and their bodies never repatriated" + fake photo of surrender = I think we can conclude there is no Adachi, number 23 or otherwise.

[Tomitarō Hori](#) we've seen before, he's the one who vanishes in a canoe during a storm.

The entire [Kokoda Track campaign](#) is a rather bizarre scenario where for some reason the Allies were determined to march north via Kokoda, along a dirt track, through rainforest and mountains (the [Owens Stanley](#) range, of course). The whole thing was a logistical nightmare and would appear to be a complete waste of time. Why not simply sail around the peninsula? Why not simply strike directly at Rabaul?





Kokoda is next to Mount Victoria in the middle. You go there to reach the Gona / Boreo coastline. Yep. Very important place reader. Very, very important. Vital for the war effort. Something about an airfield I think? The Japanese could... erm... fly a plane from a remote airfield near Kokoda? To possibly bomb... Port Moresby? Maybe? It's something mega serious like this that justifies the whole battle.

God forbid anyone just sailed around via Alotau.

Strength	
30,000 ^[1]	13,500 ^[2]
Casualties and losses	
625 killed	~ 2,050 ^{[4][notes 1]}
1,055 wounded	~ 4,500 including sick ^[5]
4,000+ sick ^[3]	^[notes 2]

13,500. 30,000. But they're padding the numbers again of course:

*"A total of 13,500 Japanese were **ultimately landed in Papua** for the fighting during the campaign. Of these, about 6,000 or two regiments, were directly involved in the "forward areas" along the Track. Against this, the Allies assembled approximately 30,000 troops in New Guinea, although at any one time no more than one infantry brigade, or approximately 3,500 troops, were involved in the fighting for most of the campaign. In terms of total troops committed over the course of the campaign, author Peter Williams estimates that "more than twice as many Australians than Japanese fought on the Kokoda Track."*

So it's maybe 3,500 Allied troops vs. maybe 6,000 Japanese troops. Maybe. On a dirt track. In the middle of nowhere.

Those damned Japanese even killed Babe Lucas!



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P00322.009

“Private Vasil (Basil) Albert 'Babe' Lucas initially enlisted on 20 June 1940, aged 15 and was killed in action on 25 November 1942.” - Original [here](#).

What’s going on here? Blown out and vignetted for no apparent reason. And even if it is real, it proves nothing. He is alive there, so it can't prove he was killed at age 15. Were the Aussies really allowing 15-year-olds to enlist? I doubt it.

My guess would be that Kokoda was used as a sort of training exercise for Australian troops: an extremely awkward and unpleasant hiking excursion, which when combined with live fire training,

starvation from lack of rations and malaria would be awful enough to endure without being a genuine war.

Similar weirdness occurs at the Battle of Milne Bay which immediately gives us this:



“Australian troops at Milne Bay in 1942, shortly after the battle” - original [here](#).

The face of the man on the left is pasted in, on top of the face of the actual person there, like a mask. The skin tone is darker than the rest of the head/body around it, giving the “mask” effect.

And not much consistency in uniforms there, is it?

I should probably spend more time on Milne Bay but it just comes across as fan fiction, a lot of fighting in a creek in the middle of nowhere. The area is then developed into a military outpost for shipping. I assume they had pre-picked the site for that and came up with a story as fluff to improve public morale. You have the Funny Numbers as usual:

Strength	
8,824 ^[1]	1,943 ^[2] Land Troops with Tanks
Casualties and losses	
Australia:	625 killed ^[4]
167 killed or missing	311 wounded ^[2]
206 wounded ^[3]	
United States:	
14 killed ^[3]	

8,824, 311. Roughly two thousand Japanese troops and they pull out at, what, about 50% casualties? Why? Aren't they meant to be fanatics? They usually fight to the bitter end, right? So if they lose half their numbers at Milne Bay they run away and abandon the area but if you recall from the start of the paper with the New Guinea Campaign they'll happily have 200,000 troops die of starvation and malaria without budging? Am I getting that right?

You have the [Battle of Buna-Gona](#) which I won't do a blow-by-blow on, I just wanted to point out in the "Aftermath" section, you get this photo:



"Japanese soldiers killed during the final phase of the battle at Buna Station, January 1943. The large number of dead Japanese and Allied bodies on the beach led the Allies to nickname it "Maggot Beach." - original [here](#).

Computer, blow up the original image and zoom in on the chap in the foreground for me.



Now zoom in on the head. Enhance!



What is going on there? Why is the left side of his head a triangle? I don't think that's a "corpse whose brain was blown out by a high powered rifle hence missing the top of its head" as you'd expect the wound to be jagged and there would likely be visible gore. His face is clean. Instead his head is deformed and extends out like a video game glitch or a low polygon model from a PlayStation 1 era game. Some kind of 1940's photo editing glitch perhaps? Or a more modern retouch using a program like Photoshop to clip and crop part of a face and insert it on top?

Anyway, moving on: you have the [Western New Guinea Campaign](#) which managed to drag on to August of '45 (the last few weeks prior to surrender!). The numbers for this are even more vague:

Belligerents	
 United States	 Japan
 Australia	
 Netherlands	
 United Kingdom	
Strength	
Unknown	Unknown
Casualties and losses	
1,922+ killed or missing	42,000+ dead and nearly
8,000+ wounded	1,000 POWs

Unknown! Ha! 42,000 Japanese camping out in western New Guinea! Madness!

This campaign involved a bunch of battles which I will skim through as they are all a bit silly.

We have the [Landing at Aitape](#) in which 23,000 men fight... possibly 1,000 Japanese? Perhaps? Maybe? Ish? I mean they claim to have killed about 500 and the rest run away.

Units involved	
 41st Infantry Division <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 163rd Infantry Regiment	 18th Army <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20th Division
 32d Infantry Division <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 127th Infantry Regiment	
Strength	
22,500	1,000
Casualties and losses	
19 killed 40 wounded	525 killed 25 captured

We have the [Battle of Hollandia](#) in which 30,000 troops fight maybe, perhaps, possibly 11,000 Japanese.

Units involved	
 24th Infantry Division	 2nd Army
 41st Infantry Division	
Strength	
~ 30,000	11,000
Casualties and losses	
152 killed 1,057 wounded	3,300 killed 300 captured

3,300 of 11,000. Hmm. I wonder.

One of the Japanese commanders at Hollandia was [Masazumi Inada](#), whose wiki bio tells us:

*“After the end of the war, Inada was arrested by the American occupation authorities and tried before a military tribunal held in Yokohama for war crimes. **He was found guilty of his complicity in the cover-up of the vivisection and other human medical experiments performed at the Kyushu Imperial University on downed Allied airmen.**”*

Of course. They were performing live vivisection at a university with screaming American airmen being sawn apart on an operating table in broad daylight. Medical students were sat watching, taking notes. Absolutely plausible. They're complete psychopaths after all, these Japanese. It probably wasn't even really for medical research, they were just being mean. Presumably the Americans would have had him shot or hung for this?

“He was sentenced to 7 years in prison, and was released from prison in 1951. He died in 1986.”

Quite easy going of the Americans to be honest. You might think he'd get worse than 7 years in prison – then released in six years so he didn't even need to serve the full sentence. Out on good behaviour I suppose. No more mutilations, I promise. He's got a great photo as well, looking not military but more actor dressed in costume:



Smoulder at the camera, darling. That's it. Gorgeous. - original [here](#).

Anyway, back to Hollandia proper – of the 11,000 it turns out we're only talking about a couple hundred ground troops on the Japanese side:

*“The port and airfields were the base for units of the Japanese 2nd Army (General Fusatarō Teshima) and the 6th Air Division of the 4th Air Army. These totaled 11,000 men under the command of General Masazumi Inada, Major General Toyozo Kitazono and Rear Admiral Yoshikazu Endo (Ninth Fleet). **Only about 500 of the 11,000 personnel were ground combat troops, being drawn from several antiaircraft batteries.** These troops were positioned along the Depapre – Lake Sentani trail.”*

They're supposed to be constructing multiple airfields or something, but they may have only had one airfield operational.

*“Hollandia was situated on the east side of a headland separating Humboldt Bay to the east and Tanahmerah Bay, 25 miles (40 km) to the west. The town itself was on the shore of Humboldt Bay, with a first-class anchorage. The headland was formed by the Cyclops Mountains, a mountain ridge rising steeply to 7,000 feet (2,100 m) and was backed by Lake Sentani, extending 15 miles (24 km) east to west. **Between the mountain ridge and the lake was a narrow plain where the Japanese had built a number of airfields; three had been constructed by April 1944 and a fourth was under construction. Of these, only one was considered to be complete.**”*

Are we possibly dealing with a couple thousand construction workers? Korean labourers? With a few hundred squaddies manning AA guns? Maybe some sailors working the port? There's no indication of a fleet being held at the “first class anchorage” or we'd have various listings of sunken vessels under the Japanese casualties.



“A U.S. Navy Douglas SBD-5 Dauntless covering the landings at Tanahmerah Bay, Hollandia, Papua New Guinea. Landing craft are heading toward Red Beach 2. Despite unfavourable weather, the U.S. Navy Task Force 58 managed to maintain planes on air alert over the Hollandia area.” - [original here](#).

Leaving aside the plane which I suspect is cropped in to give this an “active battle” vibe, you can clearly see the absence of major enemy facilities in this photo. The ports. The air fields. The bunkers and so on. The photographer must have had his elbow jogged when taking that and missed the 30,000 American troops landing. Must be just out of shot. Shame.

*“On landing, the U.S. troops came under sporadic small arms and machine gun fire, but this was quickly suppressed. The terrain, however, proved more problematic. **Red 2 beach was found to be highly unsuitable and the promised roads were non-existent. Backed by a swamp just 30 yards from the shoreline, and with just one exit trail unsuitable for vehicles, it quickly became congested.**”*

Take another look at that photo above. Can you believe they were surprised that wasn't a decent landing site without access roads? It's blatantly an empty, tropical island.



“US landing craft cross Humboldt Bay.” - original [here](#).

This is a paste up, right? The light is wrong, the ships look flat and too bright. I guess the sun could be shining off the metal but it's more than that I think. There are wakes behind the ships but those are pure white lines, added in. ONI intern busy with the white-out/tip-ex.

We then get confirmation that the “11,000” Japanese were basically clerks / support staff.

*“According to historian Stanley Kirby, the collapse of Japanese resistance was due to a lack of preparedness, changes in the command structure and a lack of combat troops; **many of the 11,000 men based there were administrative and support units. None of the senior officers present had been in post more than a few weeks and the senior air officer had been relieved following the destruction of his air forces at the beginning of April.** Neither Kitazono nor Endo had been able to prepare a comprehensive defensive plan, and in any event had neither the men nor the resources to carry it out.”*

Hard to destroy air forces when the air fields aren't even built yet. What, were the Japanese shipping in planes in boxes and unpacking them next to the yet to be constructed runway? [From Wikipedia:](#)

*“Japanese casualties amounted to **3,300** killed and 600 wounded in combat; a further **1,146** were killed or died in the area up to 27 September 1944. **A total of 7,200 Japanese troops assembled at Genjem and then attempted to withdraw overland to Sarmi; only around 1,000 reached their destination.** Allied casualties amounted to 157 killed and 1,057 wounded. U.S. forces undertook mopping up operations in the area until 6 June.”*

So allegedly you had over 7,000 Japanese run away but only 1,000 made it to their destination. So 6,000 died in the jungles, on foot, retreating. Now it's a spooky skeleton jungle. What happened to the bodies? No word on repatriation. OK. Or, possibly, hear me out here: they never had that many

Japanese at the base in the first place. You're just padding the numbers again, aren't you MacArthur? Or perhaps there was no base whatsoever, hence all the crap faked photographs?

The number 11 rears its head when we look at the [Battle of Wakde](#):

*"Along the mainland, to the west, the Japanese were in the process of constructing an airfield around Maffin Bay (west of the Tor River) and had also built an airstrip at Sawar, about halfway between Maffin Bay and the village of Sarmi. The Japanese had installed anti-aircraft guns around the three airfields, **and had around 11,000 troops in the Sarmi–Sawar–Maffin area**, centred around Sarmi where Lieutenant General Hachiro Tagami's 36th Division had established a command post."*

The ONI loves writing about 11,000 troops. Let me guess, we'll now bring in a 13 or 33 or an 8? Yep:

*"On Wakde itself, there were about **800 Japanese troops**, including a company of infantry from the 224th Infantry Regiment, as well as naval troops, support personnel and a weaponless anti-aircraft battery from the 53d Field Anti-aircraft Artillery Battalion. There were several 75 mm artillery pieces, some mortars and machine guns, **and over 100 bunkers**. **Japanese air assets available to support the defence of Wakde and Sarmi were estimated at 282 fighters and 246 bombers, but the force was in the process of reorganization and was off balance; it was assessed that around half this force would remain in the Philippines and Palau.**"*

Oh they had hundreds and hundreds of planes at this one remote airfield, sure, sure, but erm they were reorganising and... (checks notes)... the planes were shipped around to Palau and the Philippines. The Americans have brutal fighting with the Japanese, as captured by this plucky combat photographer:



"Troops pinned down on the beach at Wakde" – original [here](#).

Not very convincing by itself, so let us instead watch [this Youtube-hosted footage of Wakde](#) which was supposedly filmed on 17/05/1944. Well worth the 7 minutes of your time it takes to watch, try and understand this is meant to be on day one of the battle ([the Wikipedia article clarifies that on the day this was filmed there was a full on shootout with the Japanese and artillery bombardment](#)).

You can see it's just footage of Americans walking around and posing for the camera. This isn't a battle. Nobody is shooting at anyone or worried about being shot. By their own narrative mopping up operations did not conclude on Wakde until the 26th of May. Despite this the airfield was constructed and rendered operation for the Americans by the 21st of May. Somehow.

Can we get another magic "11" at [the Battle of Lone Tree Hill](#)? We can indeed, reader:

Commanders and leaders	
 Walter Krueger	 Hachiro Tagami
Strength	
158th Infantry Regiment	223rd Infantry Regiment 224th Infantry Regiment
Casualties and losses	
400 dead	3,870 dead
1,500 wounded	11,000 dead from sickness starvation
15 missing ^[1]	51 captured
	17 tanks lost ^[2]

We also get this great stub note of a description of what happened:

*“On 14 June, U.S. General Walter Krueger sent the U.S. 6th Infantry Division to relieve the 158th RCT. **After ten days of hard fighting**, the US forces took Lone Tree Hill. The Japanese suffered more than **1,000 dead, including some trapped in collapsed caves**. The U.S. Army suffered about 700 battle and 500 non-battle casualties. **By 1 September, there were still around 2,000 Japanese troops in the area, but they no longer posed a threat to Allied operations**. With Lone Tree Hill in American possession, Maffin Bay became **a major staging base for six subsequent battles**: Biak, Noemfoor, Sansapor, Leyte and Luzon.”*

If there were 2,000 Japanese troops in the area after the battle then what happened to them? If they weren't captured or lost in a "collapsed cave" I mean. No idea. Magical, vanishing Japanese.

[The Battle of Morotai](#) opens with some truly absurd numbers:

Strength	
57,020 (initial force)	~500 at the time of the Allied invasion, later reinforced
Casualties and losses	
30 dead	300+ dead
85 wounded	13 captured
1 missing	(initial invasion period)
(initial invasion period)	

All that to kill about 500 men? Talk about overkill for the American side! **313** casualties and losses for the Japanese, **116** casualties for the Allies. Marvellous. Maybe 500 initially, perhaps, possibly. But added to over time of course. OK.

*“The invading forces greatly outnumbered the island's Japanese defenders and secured their objectives **in two weeks**. Japanese reinforcements landed on the island between September and*

November, but lacked the supplies needed to effectively attack the Allied defensive perimeter. **Intermittent fighting continued until the end of the war, with the Japanese troops suffering heavy loss of life from disease and starvation.**

Morotai's development into an Allied base began shortly after the landing, and two major airfields were ready for use in October. These and other base facilities played an important role in the Liberation of the Philippines during 1944 and 1945. Torpedo boats and aircraft based at Morotai also harassed Japanese positions in the NEI. The island's base facilities were further expanded in 1945 to support the Australian-led Borneo Campaign, and **Morotai remained an important logistical hub and command centre until the Dutch re-established their colonial rule in the NEI.**"

Despite the Japanese reinforcements they were kind enough, the article later explains, to simply retreat to central Morotai and quietly starve to death.

[The Battle of Biak](#) gives us more of the usual:

Strength	
Land: 12,000 infantry , 29 artillery pieces , 12 tanks Sea: Task Group 77.2 Attack Group Air: 5th and 13th Air Forces	Land: 11,400 personnel Company of light tanks Sea: 1 battleship; 4 cruisers; 8 destroyers Air: Initially 18 aircraft of 23rd Air Flotilla rising to 166 aircraft
Casualties and losses	
Ground: 438 killed 2,361 wounded 7,234 non battle casualties Naval: 22 killed 14 missing 68 wounded	~4,700 killed Unknown wounded ~200 captured

11,400, 8, 18.

For long time (long suffering?) readers of this series you'll appreciate the next paragraph as "textbook" script for a Japan v. American remote-island-in-the-middle-of-nowhere battle:

*"Due to the size of the coastline he had to defend, and based on an appreciation of the Allied objectives, **Kuzume focused his defensive plans away from the water's edge. Instead, he decided to carry out a feint, allowing the Americans to come ashore unopposed so that they would advance into the trap he had prepared for them utilizing a series of caves that were located west of Mokmer and to the east of Bosnek. This defensive complex was intended to turn the area around the vital airfield into a honeycomb of defended caves and pillboxes filled with riflemen, automatic weapons, artillery, batteries of mortars, and a single company of Type 95 Ha-Go light***

tanks. The western caves were connected by a series of underground tunnels and were largely constructed for fighting purposes. Kuzume also stockpiled these positions with ammunition and other supplies, with several dumps located around the eastern cave area, along with living quarters for the defenders.”

That is just... perfect. Let the Americans land, let them unpack their kit and stretch their legs a bit, “surprise” them with an “ambush” later on, inland. Have a secret lair made out of coral and caves and so on.

You can read about [the full battle here](#). I’m pretty sure the soldiers in this photograph are pasted in:



“The assault on Biak, infantrymen moving up, May 1944” – original [here](#).

You see how the humans and the tank are all a visibly different level of brightness than the landscape? How they sort of float on the image? It’s a paste up.

We also have a photograph of a Japanese tank that was disabled:



“A disabled Japanese tank at Biak” – original [here](#).

What stopped it? Did it run out of fuel? Did the Japanese park it and run away? Did he lose the keys and go for lunch? The tank is clean. There doesn't appear to be any damage to the thing, nor is there even mud splatter on the bits above the tracks.

How did the Americans defeat this network of bunkers and tunnels and caves? No idea. Do we have photos of the fortifications? Nah. What happened to the Japanese? [From Wikipedia](#):

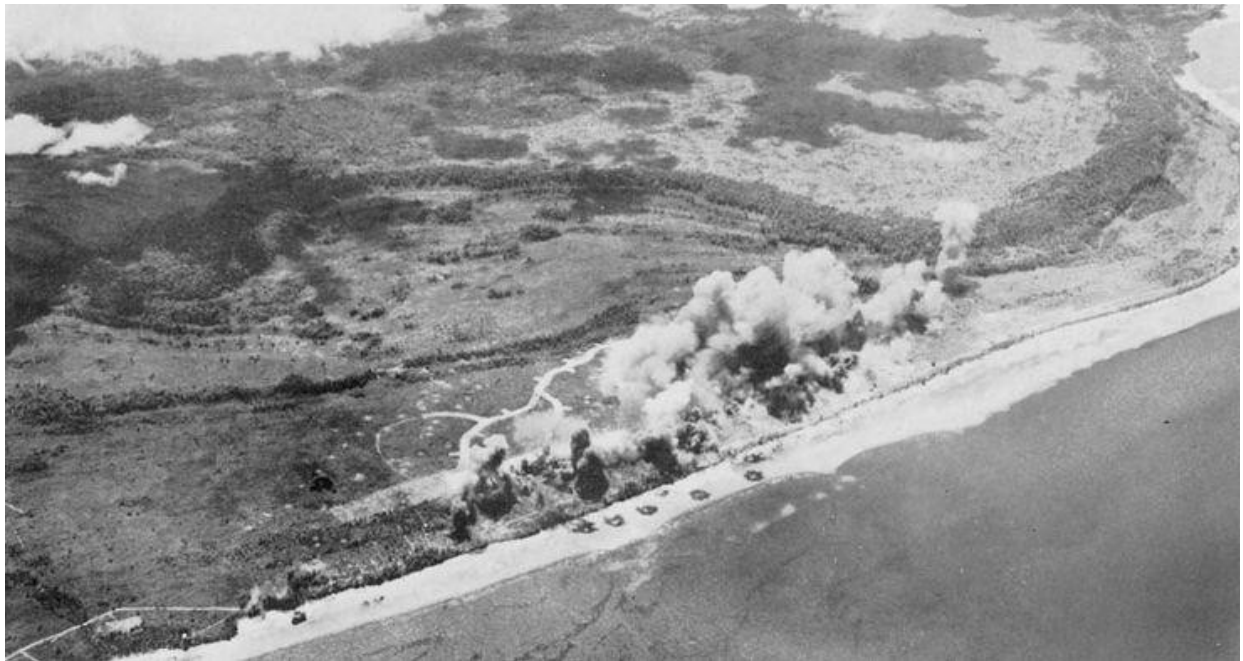
*“The Japanese **fought to annihilation**, with 4,700 killed and 200 captured; the remainder faced death from disease and starvation in the following months Biak was a grinding, shot-for-shot battle.”*

What about the other 6,000 men on the island to make up that original 11,000 figure? No idea. Forget about it, not important. What about the Japanese commander? Let me guess, seppuku in a cave, right?

“He sent messages to command requesting to be evacuated. A float plane was sent in from Korim Bay on the night of 20 June to bring him off. After two more days of intense fighting, Kuzume burned the regimental colors, indicating to his men that the regiment would make the defence of Biak their final battle. He then committed hara kiri, showing his men he did not fear death.”

Yep.

Via DuckDuckGo searching “Battle of Biak ww2” we get this photograph:



"Mokmer Drome on Biak Island under Allied air attack, possibly the pre-invasion bombardment the morning of 27 May 1944."

So that's an empty island being bombed. Or fake clouds pasted in by Lookout Mountain. Where are the 11,000 troops and bunkers and so on?

You're in for a treat now reader as we finally get a photograph of one of the Top Secret No Girls Allowed Japanese Cave Base on Biak:



"U.S. Army Troops Enter Cave; Biak, New Guinea" – original [here](#).

I mean that's literally just some guys exploring a normal cave. None are in uniform.

(Lestrade sighs)

We're never going to get a proper underground base photo are we? At this point I wish Hollywood had made a prop set and photographed in that. Something cheap like from early Star Trek or 60's Batman. Or maybe the volcano lair from that Bond movie.

Moving on: the Battle of Noemfoor immediately gives us more Funny Numbers:

Strength	
10,000	2,000 (US estimates)
Casualties and losses	
66 killed/missing; 343 wounded	~1,730 killed; 186 prisoners

"US estimates" – ha! It was an empty island, right? 186 prisoners captured. Maybe there were 200 guys stationed there as a cheap target, if that. 66 killed so that's Iron Man armour for the Americans this time.

We learn from Wikipedia that the Japanese commander tragically followed the tactical doctrine of Fred from *Scooby-Doo* in suggesting his gang "split up" to investigate and shockingly this was to their disadvantage:

"Facing them were approximately 2,000 Japanese troops, mostly from the 219th Infantry Regiment (35th Division) as well as some from the 222nd Infantry Regiment, who had been in transit to Biak. The garrison was commanded by Colonel Suesada Shimizu, who was also the commander of the 219th Infantry Regiment. Shimizu had arrived on the island on 8 June and had organized his defending troops into fourteen strong-points; ultimately these were too widely dispersed to enable a coherent defence."

The commander was also a bit too nice for his own good and decided to paint a bright red "X" on landmines to make it easier to walk around them:

*"About 300 improvised land mines had been placed by the Japanese around the beach, but **these were clearly marked** and were dealt with quickly."*

Indeed the entire Japanese war plan was to simply run away and get a boat home:

*"A group of about 40 Japanese were killed around some of the caves in the area, **but the majority of Japanese troops had withdrawn inland, as part of Shimzu's plan to move east towards Broe Bay to wait for evacuation**; as a consequence **the only opposition to the landing was an hour-long artillery bombardment from an inland battery, which fell on the landing beach and reef**. One Allied soldier was killed in the bombardment, and two vehicles were destroyed before the battery was suppressed by naval guns."*

Presumably the Americans could have just let them leave? Avoid the battle entirely? Fortunately despite going in ready for violence the American naval guns had rendered the Japanese comatose:

*"In the words of the U.S. Navy official history: "Japanese encountered around the airfield **were so stunned from the effects of the bombardment that all the fight was taken out of them.**" Kamiri*

was captured within hours of the landing. Reports indicated that approximately 45 Japanese soldiers were killed, and about 30 Japanese planes captured, although all of these were damaged as a result of the earlier bombardment and bombing.”

No seppuku for him then. Sensible lad. All very handy really given what the Americans were dealing with on their end – for example paratroopers that couldn’t use parachutes:

*“The following day, 3 July, as a precaution against Japanese resistance elsewhere, the 2,000 paratroopers of the U.S. 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment began dropping onto the island. The regiment's 1st Battalion arrived first, suffering **72 non battle casualties** as several sticks were dropped from low altitude, **resulting in a large number of leg fractures**. The 3rd Battalion followed the next day, incurring **another 56 non battle casualties in the drop**. As a result of the large numbers of injuries, **the 2nd Battalion was brought ashore in LCIs** instead of being dropped by air.”*

If you can’t jump out of a plane using a parachute to land and you need to be shipped in to the battlefield by boat, are you still a Paratrooper? A philosophical question for the reader. Other than the above farce there is then a lot of running around the island and eventually the Americans win there as well. I can’t be bothered to pick this one apart more, let us move on.

We turn to the Battle of Driniumor River in which we have what should be an apocalyptic confrontation where ten thousand Japanese troops banzai charge simultaneously at American positions near Aitape in New Guinea.

“On the night of 10/11 July, an assault force of around 10,000 Japanese attacked en masse across the Driniumor. In support of this effort, they moved several 70 mm and 75 mm artillery pieces forward through the jungle. The Japanese attack plan had envisaged three regiments—the 78th, 80th and the 237th—attacking simultaneously in a contiguous line abreast, on a front between Paup and Afua.”

Wikipedia tells us they had about 20,000 troops involved. Where is Aitape I hear you ask?



Answer = the middle of bloody nowhere, that's where Aitape is.

This is a photograph of Aitape from 2017, 73 years later and with the place much more developed and with a larger population:



Hmm. One suspects that the Japanese might have done better in the war if they didn't keep stacking tens of thousands of men in remote jungle villages and instead had them group up and attack enemy positions.

Anyway, it was a ridiculously one sided annihilation, stretching credibility:

Strength	
	~ 20,000
Casualties and losses	
440 killed	8,000–10,000
2,550 wounded	
10 missing	

They fought 20,000 men and killed a good half of them, in a 4 week campaign, but only lost 440 men? Really? I appreciate there were two and a half thousand Allied wounded but still. You can read all about the battle [here](#) and I would also suggest [checking out this page](#), by a Mr. William Garbo who was part of the battle.

On his webpage you get a lot more photographs of the Driniumor River campaign including a “beach cemetery” for the burial of the deceased:



I find it interesting they built that. On a beach. Not traditionally the best place to bury corpses, what with the tide and erosion and various fauna that could dig up the bodies and so on. Are these American troops? Were the bodies left behind at Aitape or returned to the US after the war? Why are we still messing around in northern Papua New Guinea? What’s going on?

The Battle of Sansapor:

Belligerents	
 United States	 Japan
Commanders and leaders	
 Franklin C. Sibert	 Unknown
 William Fechteler	
 Russell S. Berkey	
Strength	
 Typhoon Task Force	 35th Division
• 6th Infantry Division	
 Task Force 77	
 Task Force 78	
Casualties and losses	
14 killed	385 killed
35 wounded ^[1]	215 captured ^[1]

You can imagine the immense physical restraint it took for the ONI to not have 13 killed and 33 wounded. I respect that. Who was the Japanese commander? Dunno. Has nobody ever asked the captives? Or the military archivists in Tokyo post-war? No idea. A nice round number of 600 total casualties for the Japanese. This is all very credible.

The Wikipedia article is a stub note and mutters something about base development. We follow one of the links [to this page](#) where we learn that, happily, there were rich oil deposits that the Americans could subsequently exploit:

*“In conjunction with the advance to Sorong and Waigeo, General MacArthur planned to occupy and develop the Klamono oil fields, inland on the Vogelkop some thirty miles south-east of Sorong. Allied plans to exploit the oil resources of the Vogelkop and other petroleum centres in the Netherlands East Indies had a long history. The Japanese advance south through the Indies in 1942 had cut off **one of the world's richest sources of petroleum products**, forcing the Allies to depend on Western Hemisphere and Middle East supplies, the latter of which had long been threatened by the German and Italian Armies.”*

It goes on to talk about the development of the various oil fields that the Dutch abandoned or destroyed. My suspicion would be that this aspect of the Pacific Theatre was about an American takeover of various resource nodes on the map. They kick the Dutch out and then steam in and hog all the choice oil fields.

Back to Aitape now for the climactic [Aitape Wewak Campaign](#). The ONI cannot help itself with the numbers this time:

Strength	
~13,000 men ^[Note 1]	~30,000–35,000 ^[1]
Casualties and losses	
442 killed in action	7,000–9,000 killed in action
145 dead from other causes ^[2]	14,000 dead from disease and hunger ^[2]
1,141 wounded ^[1]	269 captured ^[1]

13,000. 1,141. Hardly anyone killed in action despite huge enemy troop numbers (Iron Man armour). The ONI attempting subtlety by saying “30-35,000” instead of 33,000. Or “7-9,000” instead of 8,000. Obvious padding with the 14,000.

The Allied commander, [Major General Jack Stevens](#), ended up involved in nuclear power:

“In 1950, he was appointed Secretary of the Department of National Development and given responsibility for uranium mining at Rum Jungle, Northern Territory. He was later appointed as the Secretary of the Department of Supply in 1951 to oversee research and development. He organised agreements with the United Kingdom and the United States of America on atomic research issues, and during the atomic tests in Australia.

Stevens was appointed as the first chairman of the Australian Atomic Energy Commission (AAEC) in September 1952 to carry out research into atomic energy and enable access to overseas technology and secure technical co-operation. Under his leadership the AAEC established the

experimental nuclear reactor at Lucas Heights, New South Wales. For his role he was appointed Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire."

Perhaps Miles can note here: I understand that nuclear weapons are fake (or rather, that a nuclear weapon is a psychological weapon not a physical weapon). With the reactors, what do we think they are they doing? Some poor bloke shovelling coal into a furnace and getting paid handsomely to not talk to people down the pub? Or perhaps some glowing Egyptian-looking widget floating in mid-air generating energy from the Earth itself using antediluvian science? This might not be the best place for a full explanation but I am interested.

Returning to Aitape-Wewak, you can read [the order of battle here](#). It's pretty thin on specifics, although I thoroughly enjoyed the heroics of two men.

The tale of [Albert Chowne](#) is classic adventure stories for boys stuff. One man takes out multiple machine gun nests with grenades and then run 50 yards straight at the enemy killing more of them, firing from the hip, despite being shot repeatedly in the chest by rifles as he goes. This is credible. He had "momentum" from the charge you see. The enemy rifle didn't throw him flat on his back immediately and knock the wind out of him. They just didn't make the Arisaka rifles strong enough for Aussie rugby players I suppose.

The tale of [Edward Kenna](#) is even better, while you read this quote please imagine Arnold or Stallone doing it:

"Private Kenna's platoon was ordered forward to deal with the enemy machine gun post, so that the company operation could proceed. His section moved as close as possible to the bunker in order to harass any enemy seen, so that the remainder of the platoon could attack from the flank. When the attacking sections came into view of the enemy they were immediately engaged at very close range by heavy automatic fire from a position not previously disclosed. Casualties were suffered and the attackers could not move further forward.

*Private Kenna endeavoured to put his Bren gun into a position where he could engage the bunker, but was unable to do so because of the nature of the ground. **On his own initiative and without orders Private Kenna immediately stood up in full view of the enemy less than fifty yards away and engaged the bunker, firing his Bren gun from the hip. The enemy machine gun immediately returned Private Kenna's fire and with such accuracy that bullets actually passed between his arms and his body. Undeterred, he remained completely exposed and continued to fire at the enemy until his magazine was exhausted. Still making a target of himself, Private Kenna discarded his Bren gun and called for a rifle. Despite the intense machine gun fire, he seized the rifle and, with amazing coolness, killed the gunner with his first round.***

*A second automatic opened fire on Private Kenna from a different position and another of the enemy immediately tried to move into position behind the first machine gun, **but Private Kenna remained standing and killed him with his next round.***

Incredible.

That's ridiculous bullshit, but it's INCREDIBLE ridiculous bullshit and I approve. I want that to have happened. You want that to have happened. It didn't, but it should – that's a good lie.

I would include photographs of the campaign but if you google image "Aitape Wewak WW2" you'll just see dozens of photographs of Australian forces on patrol. They're just doing jungle warfare training exercises, there's no enemy to fight or signs of an actual war zone.

I mean there is this:



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

093458

I have no idea if that's even a corpse, let alone a Japanese corpse. Is he stealing his wallet? Where's his rifle? Etc.

We also have this:



Despite the fact that they definitely had some Australian troops marching around Papua New Guinea in the 1940s they still saw fit to make paste-up fakes of Aussie troops in the mountains.

Why? I assume because they did general field exercises / marches / live fire drills in more coastal, easily accessible areas and didn't properly go out into the wilderness as in the above photo.

To conclude the examination of Aitape-Wewak we have the admission of large numbers of malaria fatalities and some padding and Funny Numbers to round it off:

"By the end of the campaign, the Australians had lost 442 men killed and 1,141 wounded in battle. [18] On top of this, a further 145 died from other causes, and 16,203 men were listed as "sickness casualties". [18] Many of these casualties were the result of an atebirin-resistant strain of malaria that infested the area. Japanese casualties are estimated at between 7,000 and 9,000 killed while 269 were captured during the fighting. Following the end of hostilities in New Guinea, approximately 13,000 Japanese surrendered, with about 14,000 having died of starvation and illness during the entire campaign."

I kept those footnotes in as I felt it was not coincidental to be number 18. Similar to the nonsense of Papua New Guinea we have the Borneo Campaign, which I won't spend too much time on.

First off, the Battle of Tarakan. As per Wikipedia:

"Although Tarakan was only a small marshy island off northeastern Borneo (now divided between Indonesia's Kalimantan and Malaysia's East Malaysia) in the Netherlands East Indies (today's Indonesia), its 700 oil wells, refineries, and airfield made it a crucial objective for Japan in the Pacific War."

And:

"Before the Second World War, Tarakan produced around 6 million barrels of oil annually, an amount which accounts to 16% of the total Japanese annual oil consumption. This made the island one of the key goals of Japanese military (esp. the Imperial Japanese Navy) in their plans to occupy the Netherlands East Indies in the years leading up to the war."

The first battle of Tarakan (where the Japanese swoop in and capture the facilities on Tarakan established by the Dutch) occurs on the 11th of January, 1942. So we don't have the normal excuse of places like Clarke Field in the Philippines that "ooh we only had 8 hours notice no way we could react". You might think that a place like Tarakan, of significant strategic importance (16% of total annual consumption needs!) would be perhaps defended rather heavily.

Nope.

Belligerents	
 Netherlands	 Japan
Commanders and leaders	
 Simon de Waal 	 Shizuo Sakaguchi
 Anthonie van Versendaal †	 Shoji Nishimura
Strength	
1,365 ^[1]	6,600

The wilderness coastline of Aitape-Wewak in Papua New Guinea got over 30,000 Japanese troops. Here it's less than 7,000. Not that important a site, I guess. Note the 1,365 also.

When the Japanese get near the Dutch strategy is to blow up the oil wells / destroy the oil mining facilities. You might ask yourself why they didn't just do this shortly after Pearl Harbour and then flee to Australia. Were they really shipping out that much oil from December '41 to January '42, knowing the Japanese would seize it any minute and risk everyone's lives by staying?

"On 10 January 1942, after an MLD Dornier Do 24 spotted the approaching Japanese invasion fleet, Lt. Col. Simon de Waal ordered the destruction of all oil installations on the island. The engineer platoons dynamited the drilling pipes, causing an underground explosion that prevented the wells and oil below to be extracted in the near future. By 10:00 P.M., 100,000 tons worth of oil had been engulfed in flames."

Despite this the Dutch didn't try to escape, nor did they manage to destroy thousands of tons of oil in storage tanks and even drums of oil around the base:

*"By 13 January, the Sakaguchi Detachment had rounded up all prisoners and captured materials, and handed over the administrative matters to the Navy the following day. The oil facilities at Tarakan by then had been substantially destroyed. In Lingkas, **even though many of the oil had for a large part been consumed by fire, there was still 12,300 tons of heavy oil left in the surviving tanks, and 120 drums of heavy oil.** By June 1942, the wells have been repaired and the oil production continued without any serious hindrance until mid-August 1943, when the first Allied air raids on Tarakan began."*

They padded the numbers so had to get rid of a couple hundred "paper soldiers" in another classic goofy Japanese atrocity. This one involves crocodiles, so I had to quote it here:

*"In response for the loss of minesweepers W-13 & W-14, many Dutch POWs, particularly those from the Karoengan battery were subsequently executed by the Japanese. On 18 January 215 prisoners were marched off from the POW camp and **drowned at sea** near where both minesweepers sunk. **A differing account** stated that survivors from the two sunken minesweepers beheaded the prisoners or tied their hands and feet and threw them into the swamps **to drown or be eaten alive by crocodiles.** Postwar research **could not determine** whether Japanese forces massacred all Dutch prisoners at sea or executed several of them on land."*

Anyway, that was the nonsense of Tarakan '42. In May of '45 the Dutch, Aussies and Americans are back for revenge. Now you might think that the Allies would want to capture the oil facilities, being as that's the whole point of anyone going to Tarakan in the first place. Nope:

*"Tarakan's value to the Japanese evaporated with the rapid advance of Allied forces into the area during 1944. **The last Japanese oil tanker left Tarakan in July 1944, and heavy Allied air raids later in the year destroyed the island's oil production and storage facilities.** Hundreds of Indonesian civilians may have also been killed by these raids. **The Allies also laid mines near Tarakan, which, combined with patrols by air and naval units, prevented Japanese merchant vessels and transports from docking at the island.**"*

So they bomb the place flat, killing natives as well. Nice. With the island cut off from air/sea support and the waters around it mined you might think that the Japanese would have to surrender or starve to death. Even if they preferred to starve, perhaps now you could just ignore them completely and move on in the push north?

Nope, they had an airfield. An airfield that, post-bombardment, would be difficult to repair and lacking aircraft. Or fuel. Or staff. We had to go into Tarakan to get that airfield by golly... and used rather a lot of troops to do so:

Commanders and leaders	
 David Whitehead	 Tadao Tokoi
Strength	
15,532	2,200
Casualties and losses	
251+ dead, 669+ wounded	1,540 dead, 252 captured prior to 15 August 1945
At least 100 civilians killed or wounded ^[1]	

15,000+ troops to fight 2,200!

However, the whole exercise was largely pointless, due to the proceeding aerial bombardments. As [per Wikipedia](#):

*“The main objective of the landing was the capture of the island's airfield. While the battle ended with success for the Allied forces over the Japanese defenders, this victory is generally regarded as having not justified its costs. **The airfield was so heavily damaged that it ultimately could not be repaired in time** to make it operational for other phases of the Allied campaign in Borneo.”*

This is the very important airfield:



“Tarakan Airstrip two weeks after its capture. Note extensive cratering.” - original [here](#).

Not an especially... developed... airfield, right? Try and work out where the 2,000+ Japanese were supposed to be living.

The Tarakan article gives a wishy-washy description of the battle to route out the Japanese from Tarakan. It talks about “booby traps” and “defensive positions”. There’s a “Helen” feature where some Japanese are hunkered down. I have no idea what the Japanese troops were surviving on given that the island has been bombed repeatedly and cut off from the world for a year. What food were they eating? Where were they getting fresh water? Or medical supplies?

Problematically, there’s a complete lack of any photographic evidence to indicate any Japanese were on Tarakan. Check out [this official archive of images](#) for example.

Also rather unconvincing is [this news footage via Youtube](#), starting around 1:25 you see footage of Tarakan being bombed:



You see absolutely no evidence of human life. They’re just bombing the jungle.

This is followed by a frankly bizarre segment where someone in a car is driving along and looking at some huts. Is this supposed to be some sort of Japanese base? Or oil facility? We then get to see the navy bombing an empty island (2:33) approx. At 3:05 or so the narrator talks about the Australian engineers having to clear the way to the island, which, given what we’ve been told, would mostly be about them removing the mines and various obstacles the allies had placed there themselves several months before. Again, are we looking at an empty island? Is this another drill, essentially? The Japanese don’t attack them while they’re landing (in broad daylight) as they’re sporting like that. At 3:53 you can see the Allied forces marching around the island, with local islanders casually standing at the side of the road watching them.



Despite the aforementioned bombing the Allies get the oil wells up and running again:

“Tarakan's oilfields were swiftly repaired and brought back into production. Engineers and technicians arrived shortly after the Allied landing and the first oil pump was restored on 27 June. By October the island's oilfields were producing 8,000 barrels per day and providing employment for many Tarakanese civilians.”

I would agree with this Proper Historian's comment that the whole thing is a sideshow:

*“As with the rest of the Borneo campaign, the Australian operations on Tarakan remain controversial. **Debate continues over whether the campaign was a meaningless "sideshow", or whether it was justified in the context of the planned operations to both invade Japan and liberate the rest of the Netherlands East Indies, which were both scheduled to begin in 1946. The Australian official historian Gavin Long's judgement that "the results achieved did not justify the cost of the Tarakan operation" is in accordance with the generally held view on the battle.**”*

The [Battle of Balikpapan](#) is pretty low effort. What you actually get from the evidence (videos and photos and so on) is that the Allies shoot the coastline, sail up to the coast with the amphibious landing craft and walk around a little bit just inland. You don't get any demonstration of a battle. Or Japanese.

We get the usual daft numbers:

Strength	
33,000	3,100 – 3,900 soldiers 1,100 – 4,500 armed labourers
Casualties and losses	
229 killed	2,032 killed
634 wounded	63 captured.

33,000 to fight less than 4,000 troops who are backed up by an even larger force of workers. Presumably Korean slave labourers? It's usually Koreans tidying up and washing dishes for the Japanese at places like this. Or maybe not because then you'd have the guards massively outnumbered by armed slaves. So ethnically Japanese labourers then, wielding sticks and wrenches and so on.

Spend five minutes googling for "Battle of Balikpapan WW2" and see if you can see anything other than:

A) Allied aircraft bombing empty coastline / a tropical fishing village.

Or

B) An Allied amphibious landing training drill.

I'll wait. Take your time.

You can read the [order of battle](#) on Wikipedia which is (to my mind) essentially ONI fan fiction. We can then turn to media clips from the time: [here's one to start](#) with. Around 1 minute you see the Allies bombing the coastline (empty coastline, they're just burning forest and blowing up the beach essentially but it looks good for the audience back home). Rocket ship number 331 helps with this effort. After sufficient ammunition has been expended the troops begin to land with the narrator claiming that "Japanese coastal guns" are returning fire. We do not ever see these guns or any indication in the footage there is return fire.

As per Wikipedia we know that nobody was hurt in the landing:

"As a result two of the three assault battalions landed too far left, and troops from each battalion became mixed up with others, causing some confusion. Despite this, the landing was opposed only by a small volume of fire, and within 15 to 20 minutes the assault troops had established a beachhead. The landing force suffered no casualties during this first part of the operation."

A "small" volume of fire from the Japanese. I'll bet.

At least we get a photo of the "enemy coastal guns":



Yep. This can only be a **Japanese** coastal gun (undamaged you'll note and with an absence of Japanese troops). There were 28 in total and the Allies took out 17, leaving... **11** operational. Using the **13th** Air Force. Couldn't make it up.

[Next](#) we have this:



We see the landing, in broad daylight, with no sign of return fire:



The narrator explains that due to the aerial bombardment the Japanese have “mostly” fled inland. I thought the “standard combat doctrine” is that they hide inland and abandon the beaches completely? They can never get this consistent. Maybe they flip a coin or something to decide? The Japanese have been cheeky and set fire to the oil fields, hence the smoke. This is contradicted by photos like this next one from the main Balikpapan Wiki page, the caption of which states it was the Allies aircraft that blew up the oil wells:



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

OG3098

“RAAF Liberator bombers over Balikpapan, June 1945. Oil facilities they have bombed are burning beneath them.” - original [here](#).

Although, to be honest, if you look at the large version of that photo those planes look pretty fake and cropped in. I like the “ghost” plane in the foreground. This makes me suspect there was no aerial bombardment, the coastal guns are the old Dutch guns and the smoke cloud is from a fire the Allies set off prior to the landing to give us dramatic shots like this:



We then get the usual script of the Allies being able to land flawlessly and walk inland casually without any issue, as the Japanese have quite literally “run for the hills” and have some nefarious bunker/lair to operate from.



We then learn that despite everything there are natives and Western equipment still on the island and the natives are delighted at the Allies return:





We get an interesting shot of the burning, sabotaged oil fields of Balikpapan at 2:11 and I do wonder if I'm looking at a carefully staged set of fires, like something out of a Hollywood action movie:



You see how that tower to the left is still standing and undamaged? Also the buildings on the right by the pond? The roads are intact. The trees aren't on fire in general, the fire hasn't *spread*. It's actually five specific points that are burning to give the big black smoke cluster.

Finally, I'll leave you with [this video](#) "Man Burnt Alive in WWII Battle of Balikpapan" which is set up to be properly hardcore and traumatic for the viewer. Brace yourselves, gentlemen! Ladies, avert your eyes!

What follows is quite amusing and helpful.

Regard: the Allies land and can walk calmly along the beach in single file, in full view of the interior.



As you watch the clip you'll note that there is no "return fire" and these troops are not actually being shot at. They've just added in a dodgy "gunshot noise" audio FX track to the video to trick the viewer into thinking they're watching combat.

Around the 1 minute mark you'll see the usual footage we've seen a dozen times before of Allies firing machine guns at empty countryside and flamethrowers being aimed at shrubbery. The intel folk then calmly add in this shockingly low quality pre-recorded screaming sound effect to pretend that someone is being killed (e.g. at – appropriately- **1:08**).

Anyway, there's other stages and battles I could talk about with Borneo but it's very much this sort of thing – amphibious landing drills and fan fiction so I'm tempted to move on.

What they never bother to give you is any photographic or video evidence of Japanese installations, or dead Japanese, or captured Japanese, or any injured Allied personnel, or talking to the (now freed) labourers who are usually Korean slaves and should be quite pleased to be free men again. Or comfort women slaves. They don't have anything showing you the engineering teams having to disable mines or the oft-trumpeted "booby traps". Or any exploration of the bunker/tunnel systems the Japanese were lurking in. And so on. All you ever get with these people are photos and video footage of amphibious landing drills (with zero return fire), no visible Japanese presence or coastal defences (the ones show in Balikpapan are clearly field artillery located inland and I have no idea if they are actually Japanese tech or even if the shot is taken in Borneo). You get troops walking around in broad daylight, generally not using cover or acting with any sense of urgency. Nobody is ever injured or killed. They walk up and down the beach for a bit and maybe firebomb a native village and then piss off to the next tropical island. The whole thing relies on appeal to authority,

which is further undermined by the widespread fake images and fraudulent video (e.g. the need to dub gunfire as an audio track).

There are other “battles” in Borneo but it’s more of the same so I feel it would get overly repetitive if I did those too. You’re welcome to look them up and see how it plays out the same way. I just wanted to properly “do” the main beats of the Aussie push north because we haven’t looked at it too closely up until now.

From reading about Borneo we get [Z Force](#) which gives us Major [Tom Harrisson](#) which gives us [Mass Observation](#) and I wanted to focus on this for a minute as I found it quite interesting. From Harrisson’s bio:

“In 1937, Harrisson, with Humphrey Jennings and Charles Madge, founded Mass-Observation, a project to study the everyday lives of ordinary people in Britain.”

We turn to the [main Wiki page](#) on this:

*“Mass-Observation is a United Kingdom **social research project**; originally the name of an organisation which ran **from 1937 to the mid-1960s, and was revived in 1981** at the University of Sussex.*

*Mass-Observation originally aimed to **record everyday life in Britain** through a panel of **around 500 untrained volunteer observers** who either **maintained diaries** or **replied to open-ended questionnaires** (known as **directives**). The organisation **also paid investigators to anonymously record people's conversation and behaviour at work, on the street and at various public occasions, including public meetings and sporting and religious events.**”*

So I read that and blinked and re-read thinking I was hallucinating. You were doing what now?

*“The creators of the Mass-Observation project were three former students from **Cambridge**: anthropologist **Tom Harrisson** (who left Cambridge before graduating), **poet Charles Madge** and **filmmaker Humphrey Jennings**. Collaborators included **literary critic William Empson**, **photographers Humphrey Spender and Michael Wickham**, **collagist Julian Trevelyan**, **novelists Inez Pearn and G.B. Edwards**, **spiritualist medium Rosemary Brown**, **journalist Anne Symonds**, and **painters William Coldstream and Graham Bell**. Run on a shoestring budget with money from their own pockets and **the occasional philanthropic contribution or book advance**, the project relied primarily on its network of **volunteer correspondents**.*

*Harrisson had set up his base in a working-class street in the northern English industrial town of Bolton (known in Mass-Observation publications as “Worktown”), in order to **“systematically... record human activity in this industrial town”** (Madge & Harrisson, 1938:7) using a variety of observational methods. Meanwhile, Madge, from his London home, had started to form a group of fellow-poets, artists and film-makers under the name “Mass-Observation”. The two teams began their collaboration in early 1937.”*

I mean this isn’t creepy at all. This is perfectly normal. Anthropological research. On the working class. Using spies. I mean “unpaid volunteer observers” and the odd “paid investigator” to fill in when necessary. Professional infiltrators, not just amateurs.

*“**An important early focus** was King Edward VIII's abdication in 1936 to marry divorcée Wallis Simpson, and the succession of George VI. **Dissatisfied with the pronouncements of the newspapers as to the public mood**, the project's founders initiated a nationwide effort to **document***

the feelings of the populace about important current events by collecting anecdotes, overheard comments, and "man-in-the-street" interviews on and around the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth on 12 May 1937."

Ah, I see. Nothing to be alarmed about, they just wanted to, erm, get a more authentic understanding of how the general public felt about the monarchy during the '36 abdication. That's all. It wasn't a big political thing. I expect they got what they wanted after a year or so-

*"During the Second World War, Mass-Observation research was occasionally influential in shaping British public policy. In 1939 Mass-Observation publicly criticised the Ministry of Information's posters, which led to their being replaced with more appropriate ones. In addition, their study of saving habits was successfully used by John Maynard Keynes to argue for tax policy changes. During the war, there were also **a few cases** of Mass Observation (MO) doing research on **commission for government authorities** trying to **shape recruiting and war propaganda**: Mary Adams, for example, employed MO on commission for the Ministry of Information."*

Still going strong several years later. Right. We read on:

*"Mass-Observation has been criticised **by some** as an invasion of privacy. Participants were not only reporting on their own lives; **they often commented on their neighbours and friends as well. Such an atmosphere of surveillance was in keeping with the rising culture of espionage**, which dominated the Second World War, although Mass-Observation was an **independent, not a government, effort** aimed at education rather than manipulation of the public."*

I mean if the government employed a bunch of people to spy on the population and send reports to a main headquarters that would be...[what would that be like...](#) But hey, it's not like the Stasi you guys, it was an independent group not a branch of the state.

Anyway, I'm sure they packed that research project in decades ago-

*"A re-evaluation of the Mass-Observation archives **led to a relaunch of the project in 1981**. Today, housed at the University of Sussex, Mass-Observation continues to collect the thoughts of its panel of writers through regular questionnaires (known as directives) and is used by students, academics, media researchers and the public for its unique collection of material on everyday life in Britain. The project issues **annual call-outs** for day diaries on the 12th of May each year, echoing the initial call on 12th May 1937; anyone is welcome to submit a diary of their activity on this day either digitally or physically. **The Mass-Observation archive of materials is currently housed in The Keep, an archive housing East Sussex and Brighton and Hove councils' historical record.**"*

Right. So. Just so we're keeping score here folks, in the United Kingdom for getting on a century now there is a body of social scientists who are definitely independent and definitely-not-military-intelligence-affiliated people who are employing an unknown number of secret informants in the general public who walk around making notes and feeding back reports on what they see and hear on a day to day basis, providing intel on their friends, co-workers, neighbours and so on.

These reports are reviewed and held presumably indefinitely in a giant archive called The Keep.



Lestrade's reaction to this information.

I mean.

I appreciate Miles is a classy guy who runs an intelligent website so I won't write expletives for the next twelve pages. You get the picture how I feel about Mass Observation.

It also very much links up with what Miles has written about previously with the number of spooks employed. I did [a video about it](#) if you're interested.

Anyway, the Allies (or should that be "Phoenician Americans"?) have finally arrived at the Philippines. We then have the various aspects of the [Battle of Leyte Gulf](#) with its various steps (Surigao, Samar etc.).

*"The Allied campaigns of August 1942 to early 1944 had driven Japanese forces from many of their island bases in the south and central Pacific Ocean, **while isolating many of their other bases (most notably in the Solomon Islands, Bismarck Archipelago, Admiralty Islands, New Guinea, Marshall Islands, and Wake Island)**, and in June 1944, a series of American amphibious landings supported by Fifth Fleet's Fast Carrier Task Force captured most of the Mariana Islands (**bypassing Rota**). This offensive breached Japan's strategic inner defence ring and gave the Americans a base from which long-range Boeing B-29 Superfortress bombers could attack the Japanese home islands."*

We then have this marvellous rationalisation for why the main hub for the Japanese (Taiwan/Formosa) wasn't attacked and instead they steamed for the Philippines:

*"The next logical step was to cut Japan's supply lines to Southeast Asia, depriving them of fuel and other necessities of war, but there were two different plans for doing so. Admiral Ernest J. King, other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Admiral Nimitz favoured blockading Japanese forces in the Philippines and invading Formosa (Taiwan), while **U.S. Army General Douglas MacArthur, wanting to fulfil the 1942 promise "I shall return", championed an invasion of the Philippines."***

I'll be he did. He wanted that gold bullion that Yamashita had helpfully stockpiled for him.

“While Formosa could also serve as a base for an invasion of mainland China, which MacArthur felt was unnecessary, it was also estimated that it would require about 12 divisions from the Army and Marines. Meanwhile, the Australian Army, spread thin by engagements in the Solomon Islands, New Guinea, the Dutch East Indies and various other Pacific islands, would not have been able to spare any troops for such an operation. As a result, an invasion of Formosa, or any operation requiring much larger ground forces than were available in the Pacific in late 1944, would be delayed until the defeat of Germany freed the necessary manpower.”

There you go. Attacking Aitape-Wewak? Important. Securing some random atoll? Important. Spending months on end building a motorway to Kunming from India? Important. Attacking Formosa? Nah, forget about it, we're out of men!

Although basically everyone disagreed with the plan, MacArthur was the man in charge of everything (as some sort of Phoenician point man / Prince) and they did what he said:

“A meeting between MacArthur, Nimitz, and President Roosevelt helped confirm the Philippines as a strategic target but did not reach a decision, and the debate continued for two months. Eventually Nimitz changed his mind and agreed to MacArthur's plan, and it was eventually decided that MacArthur's forces would invade the island of Leyte in the central Philippines. Amphibious forces and close naval support would be provided by Seventh Fleet, commanded by Vice Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid.”

To be fair to the Americans they did end up having a bit of a sortie with the [Battle of Formosa](#) (around the 13th of October, naturally), which gives us photos like this:



“B6N torpedo bomber attacking TG 38.3 during the Formosa Air Battle, October 1944” - original [here](#).

Cropped plane silhouette aside, bear this image in mind because in a minute when you're watching the YouTube clips I recommend about the Leyte Gulf naval combat you'll be barely able to tell the difference between that battle and this image.

We also get this:



“Japanese aerial torpedo explodes against USS Houston's starboard quarter during the afternoon of 16 October 1944 while the ship was under tow by USS Pawnee.” - original [here](#).

That fire looks more like someone used white-out / tip-ex on a photo. The image quality is awful as we've seen time and time again, one minute you can have crystal clear shots of the entirety of Pearl Harbour and the next minute it's blurry as hell.

Fortunately for us, the Americans brought along a full film crew to record their endeavours at Leyte so we will now review some of it (FYI, I suspect the footage taken when mocking up Leyte was also partially re-used for faking the Formosa battle).

If we start [with this clip from YouTube](#) we don't learn much. It's just footage of Americans filming themselves firing naval cannon at the sea and flak into the sky. Roughly four planes are shot down which is nice, but these appear to be single fighters flying in otherwise empty sky and not in formation. You don't see fleets of Japanese aircraft is what I'm saying. One plane flies across an otherwise empty sky and gets shot down. Dramatic enough, until you wonder why it is all by its lonesome. I assume the pilot bails out before they start rolling the film and they catch the plane with AA fire as it flies in a straight line overhead.





Or you have [this clip on YouTube](#), “Victory At Sea – The Battle For Leyte Gulf – Episode 19” which is a lot longer but again contains nothing (when you mentally strip back the stirring music and narration) but footage of American ships sailing in formation, firing cannon at the sea and sky and no real indication of battle. The fighter planes we saw in the previous clip being shot at with flak are in this film now shown to be US aircraft, flying through the flak. No dogfights with Zeroes or anything. This is why you want to watch a bunch of different Pathé / newsreel films about the same event, the always end up contradicting each other.

I think this is supposed to be the Japanese fleet, it's hard to tell:



That would roughly match up with the clustered ships being shot at from the American fighter plane POV in the previous clip (at 2:47 above). In reality, this is the old trick of a bunch of Navy target vessels being towed into position and then being shot at by planes for an hour or two, then presented as a major naval engagement.

The Surigao Strait battle is done at night, which is very useful for the ONI as we get “footage” of stuff like this:



Clear as mud. At 12:38 the narrator explains that the (previously covered as useless) PT boats are used in force at Surigao, which I found amusing.

At 12:41 when the PT manages to actually launch a torpedo without exploding(!) we can see the torpedo whizzing away under the water. This, jarringly, made me realise that this is supposed to be happening in the middle of the night and I'm not sure if we're looking at a night scene or they've just filmed this in the daytime and darkened the footage artificially (as was done in old black & white movies at the time).



Did they... have a searchlight mounted on the PT boat trained on the water to light up the torpedo like that? Do you see what I mean? Watch the footage around this timestamp and it's more obvious.

We then go back to a jet black night on the ocean with the only light coming from cannon flashes:



Then it's suddenly daytime:



Now it's night time:



And so on. It appears the main threat of the Leyte Gulf was its anomalous distortion of space time.

We get to see some Japanese sailors clinging to flotsam, who “refuse to be rescued” because they’re psycho fanatic cannibals:



Note that at 17:05 the narrator mentions that the Allied vessels are capable of releasing “chemical smoke” as a smokescreen defence. Seems really obvious in hindsight: when we see shots of ships “burning” with smoke plumes and the like are they just releasing smoke screens (presumably with some minor chemical alterations to give black smoke instead of white plumes)? Perhaps the chemical alteration isn’t even needed – as per this shot below you can see how the main engine of the ship is producing plenty of black smoke by itself via the smokestack/funnel:



Another point from this video: we have shots of Japanese sailors on the Yamato / other Japanese ships, loading cannon and whatnot. The footage is showing co-operation between the two forces

where the film crew can record on both American and at least one Japanese vessel from the deck. See these two examples:



So... what... the Japanese had their own film crews that day? But we managed to get a copy of the footage after the war?



We even get footage inside, of the Japanese officers on the mess deck.

This completely blows apart the footage as fraudulent because you're not meant to take a beat and reflect that either:

A) The Imperial Japanese Navy is allowing gaijin onboard to film them about to fight the wretched enemy and achieve triumphant glory.

Or

B) The Hollywood film crew have brought along dozens of ethnically Japanese actors and paid them to pretend to be the Imperial Japanese Navy.

A is ridiculous on the face of it so... B? So the battle was real but you needed to fake all the scenes with Japanese for the audience back home? Why bother? Why not just film the enemy ships from afar? They had the film crews on board, what you couldn't get a distance shot of the Yamato or something mid battle? Why?

Another clip – this one from [the AP Archive on YouTube](#), which helpfully clarifies the involvement of the [Office of Strategic Services](#) in making the production:



All film of the Japanese Navy is **authentic**. In the sense that the Japanese actors are Japanese.

OK.

So.

Come on:



The OSS is trying to tell me that they had an operative, with a film camera, in a Japanese base, recording the Japanese officer/commander reading a speech to his troops from a little bit of paper and they could dub this in big font.

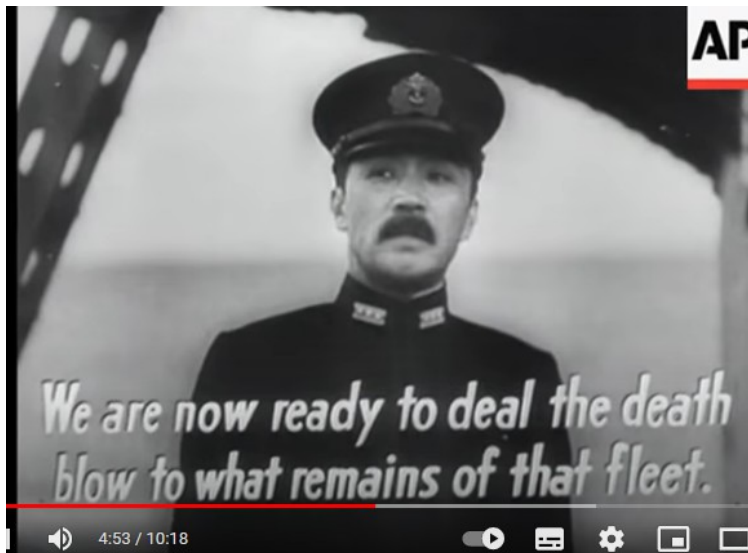


This is a crowd of Japanese pilots listening.

They also had an OSS cameraman on a Japanese boat.



The OSS are at Naval and Air facilities of the Japanese military. In the daytime. Rolling camera.





This is so unbelievably stupid I don't know where to begin. I'll just say it: this AP footage confirms that the OSS / military were using actors to film fake puff pieces for audiences thinking there was a war on. This is why they have footage from "the Yamato" in the other video clip. This is all staged.

From 5:08 [the same clip](#) gives us another example of "filming troops on training manoeuvres and you dub the sound of gunfire over the top to make it seem like battle footage".

Around the 7 minute mark we get to the night time naval battle so again, remind yourself that the footage you're getting of Leyte is created by the OSS.

Ah, it's just so ridiculous. I'm moving on.

You have the [Battle of Mindoro](#) which was over in 3 days. Check out the numbers:

Strength	
10,000 American troops	1,200 Japanese troops
Casualties and losses	
151 killed (18 Army, 133 Navy)	~200 dead
271 wounded (81 Army, 190 Navy)	15 captured
	375 wounded

18, 133, 81. 10,000 men to fight 1,200 men. Only 590 Japanese casualties/captures so what about the other 610? As per Wikipedia:

"The survivors fled into the jungles, where they lurked till the end of the war. The 24th Infantry Division lost 18 men and had 81 wounded.

By the end of the first day, Army engineers were at work preparing airfields. Two were completed in thirteen days. These airfields allowed U.S. aircraft to provide direct support for the Luzon invasion."

They went and hid in the jungle. Of course.

[This clip about combat on Luzon and Mindanao](#) is the usual. I don't really need to comment on it too much, if you've followed along this far you'll get it: training exercises. Machine gunning fields. Bombing forest.

I need to look at the [Battle of Manila](#) but... well, I'm at over 60 pages here and I think that's enough of a paper for now. We've covered a fair bit of ground here and if you've made it this far, I hope you've enjoyed it. I'll need a minute to recharge. Sleep, coffee, that sort of thing.

More To Come...

[Outro Music](#)

