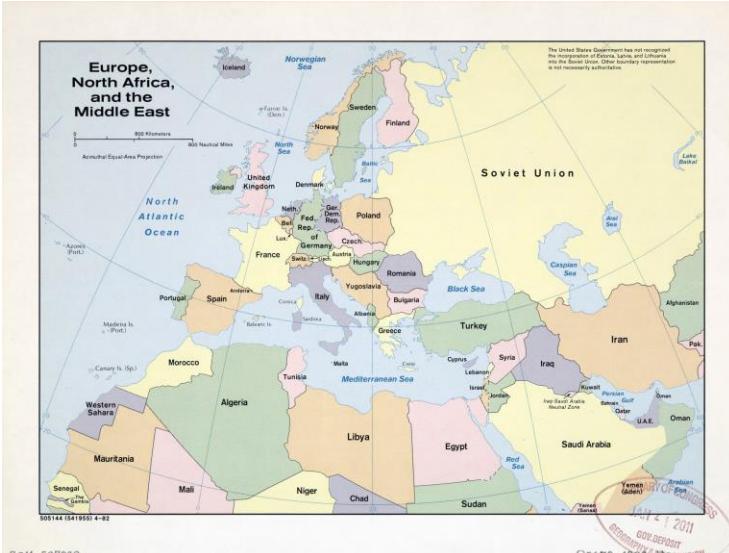
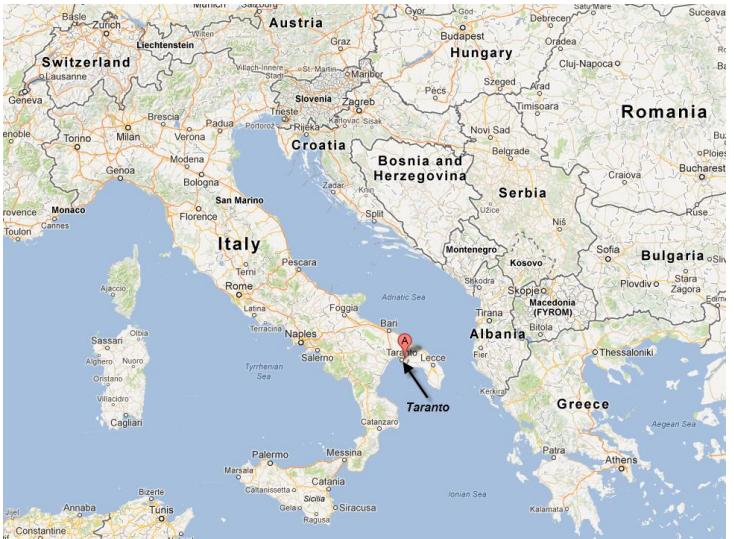
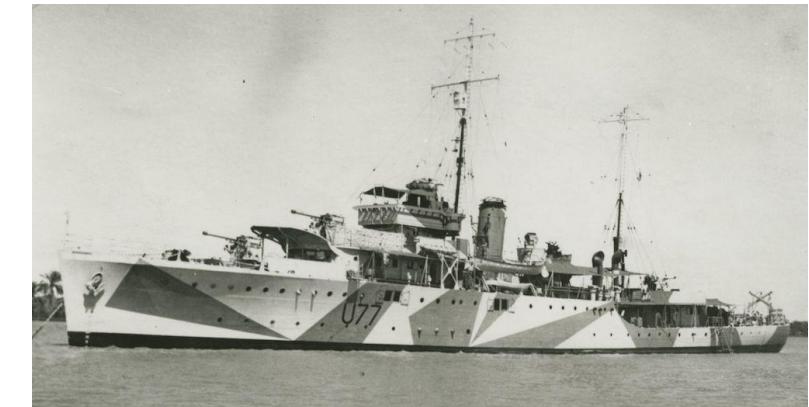


1: J. P. V. Madsen & Four Cousins.

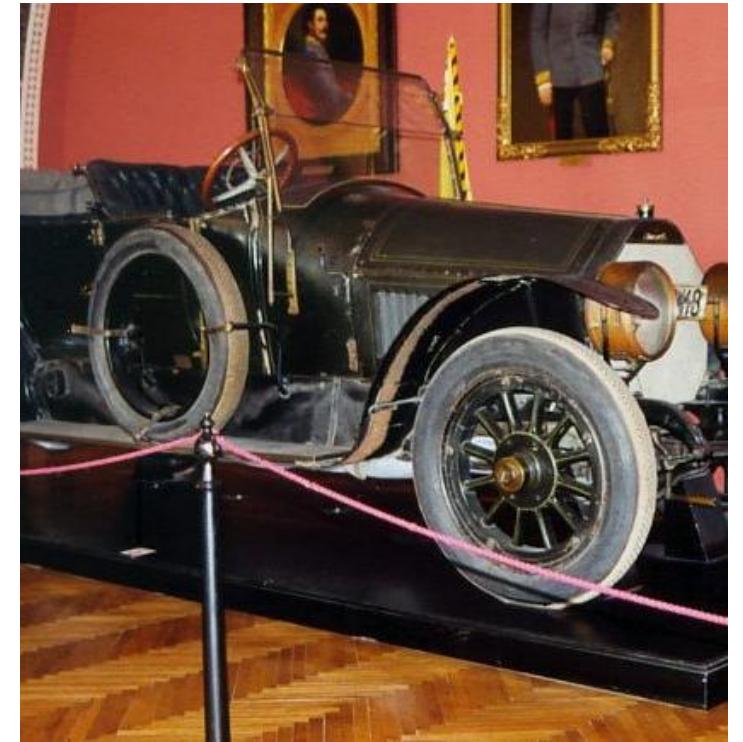
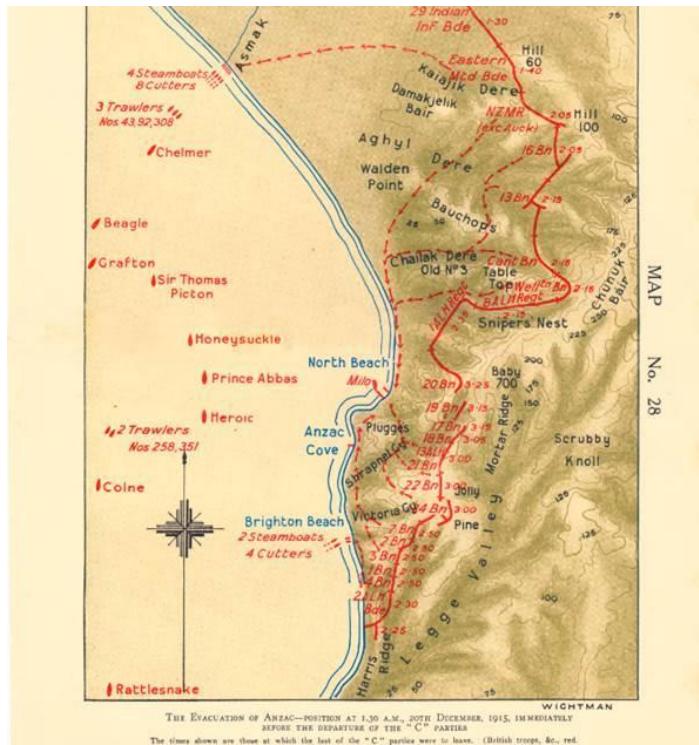
Mediterranean & Middle East 1927-1942.



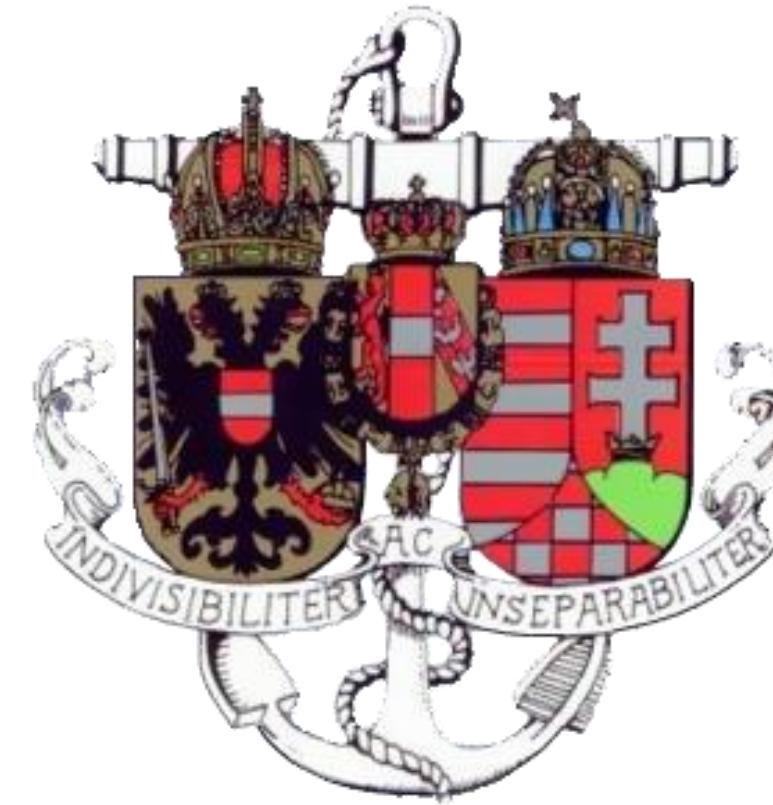
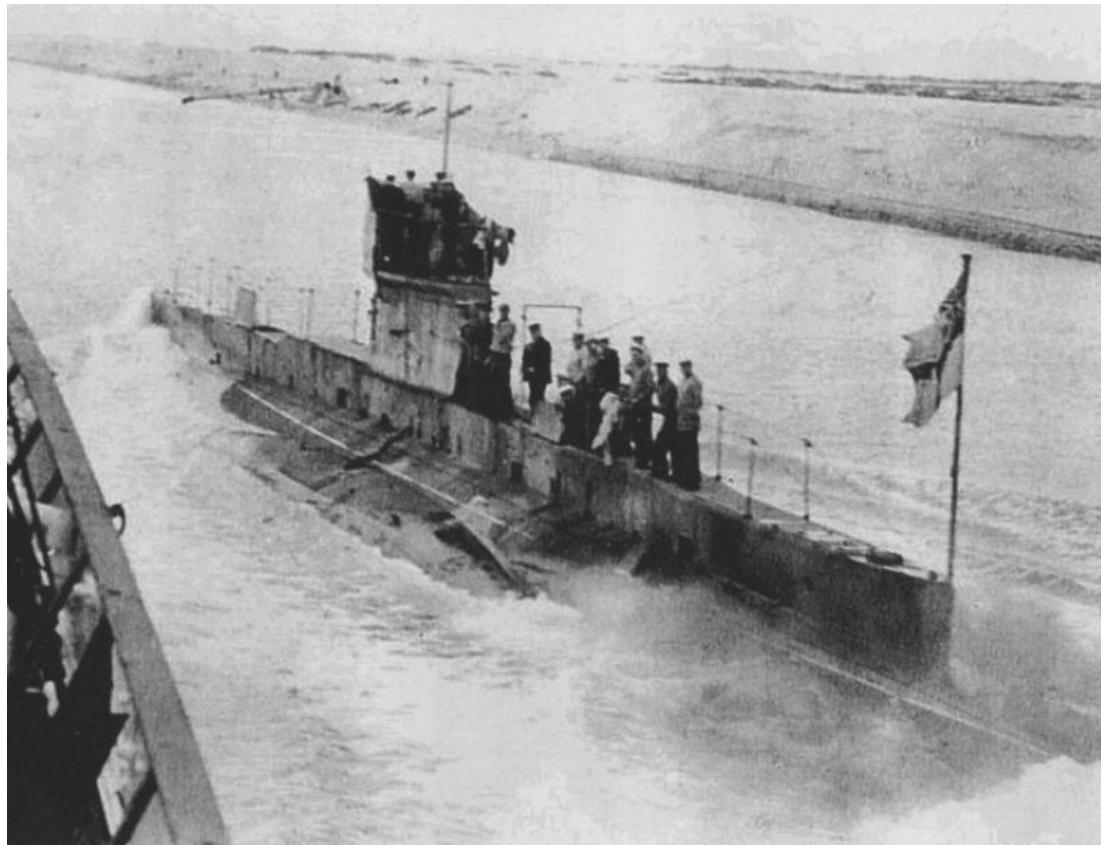
2. William Knox D'Arcy: Anglo -Persian Oil 1908.



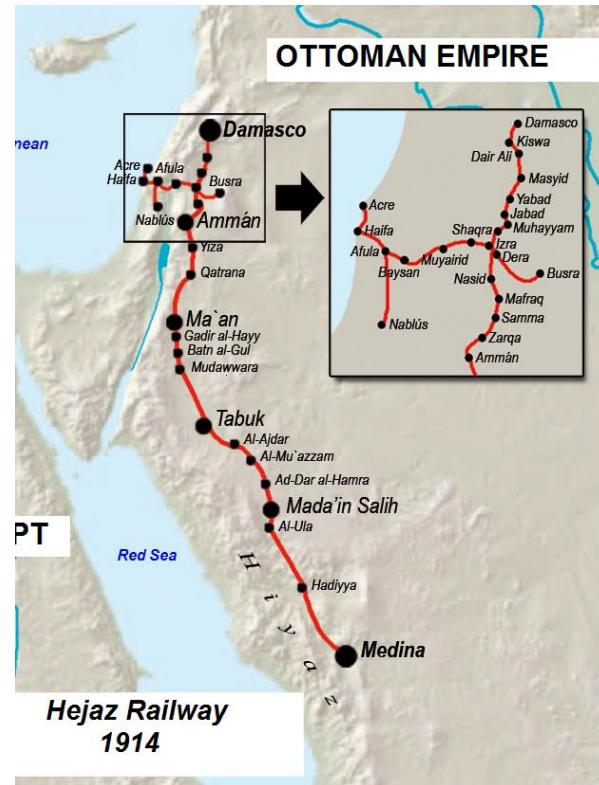
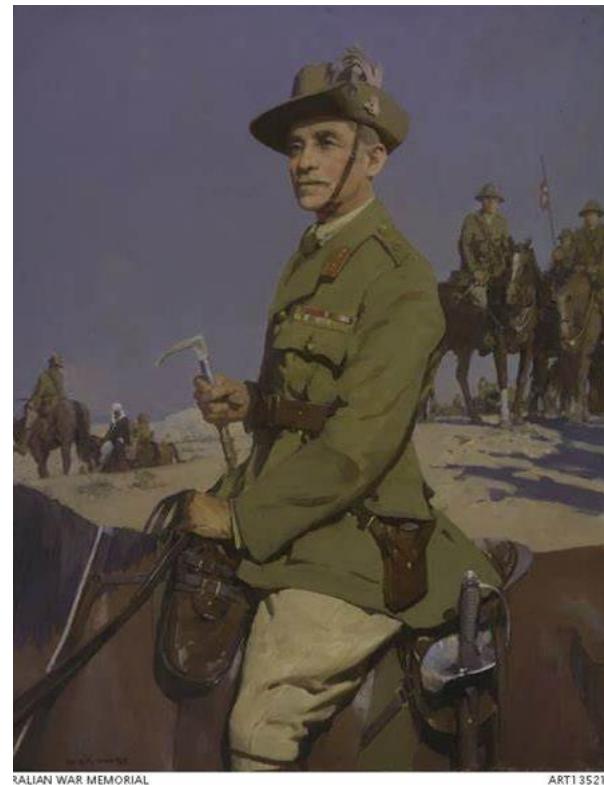
3.WW1: Sarajevo 1914 & Gallipoli 1915.



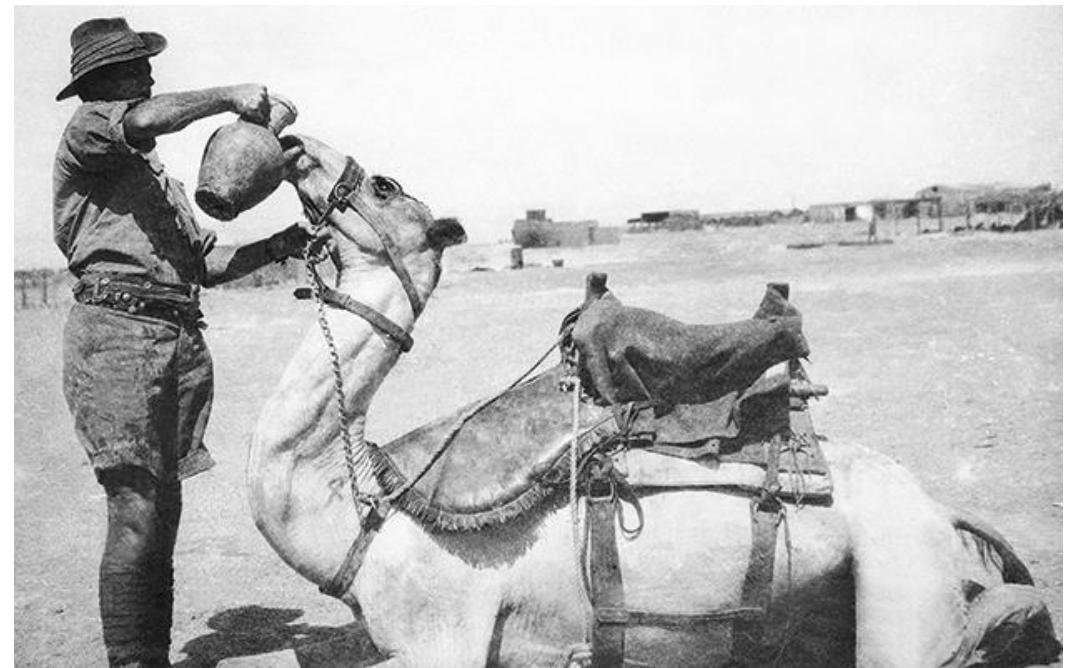
4. Ataturk, AE2 & Austro-Hungary Navy.



5. Ottoman Rail Network, Chauvel-Romani, Light Horse Jericho.



6. Camel Corps.



7. Beersheba 1917, “Bill the Bastard”.



TO BEERSHEBA 1917
WITH THE AUSTRALIAN LIGHT HORSE

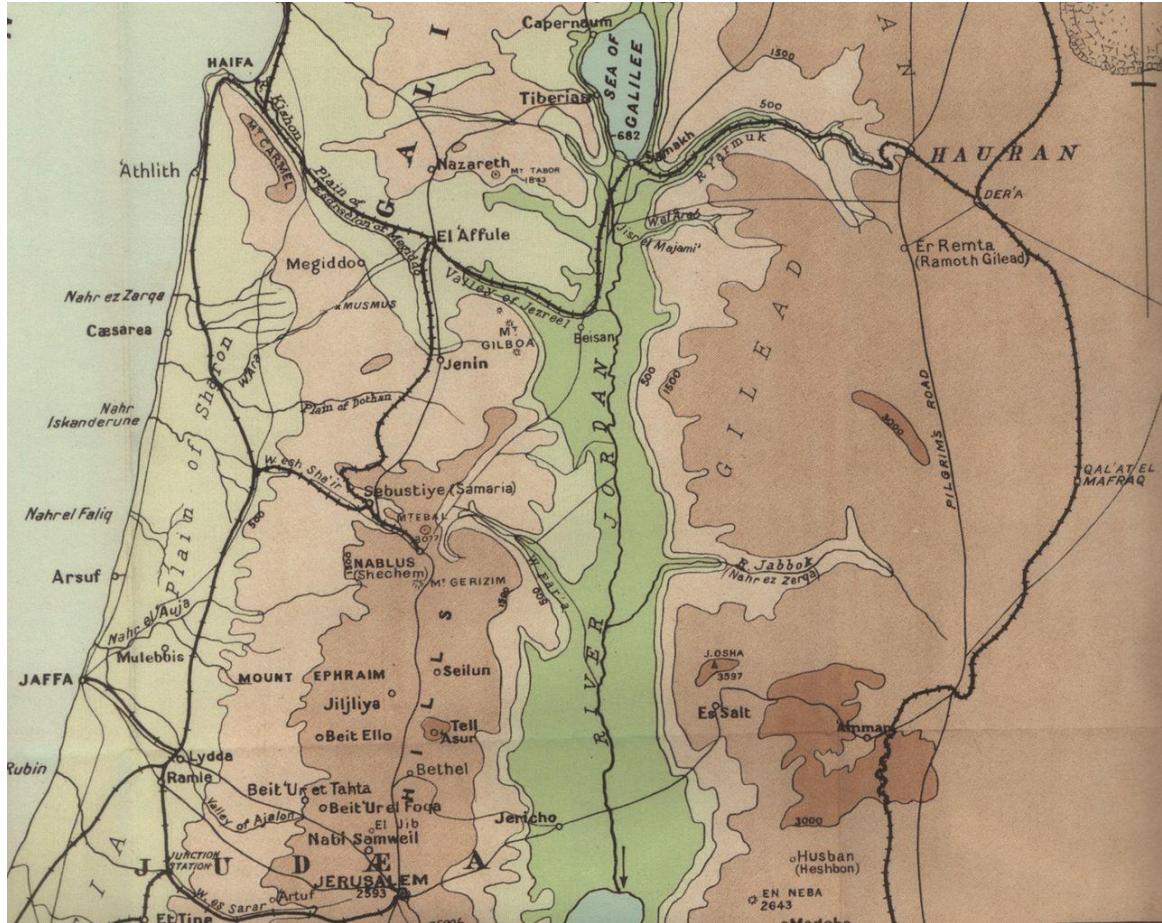


8. Aust.Flying Corps, Mesopotamia Signals, Gallipoli Drip Rifle.

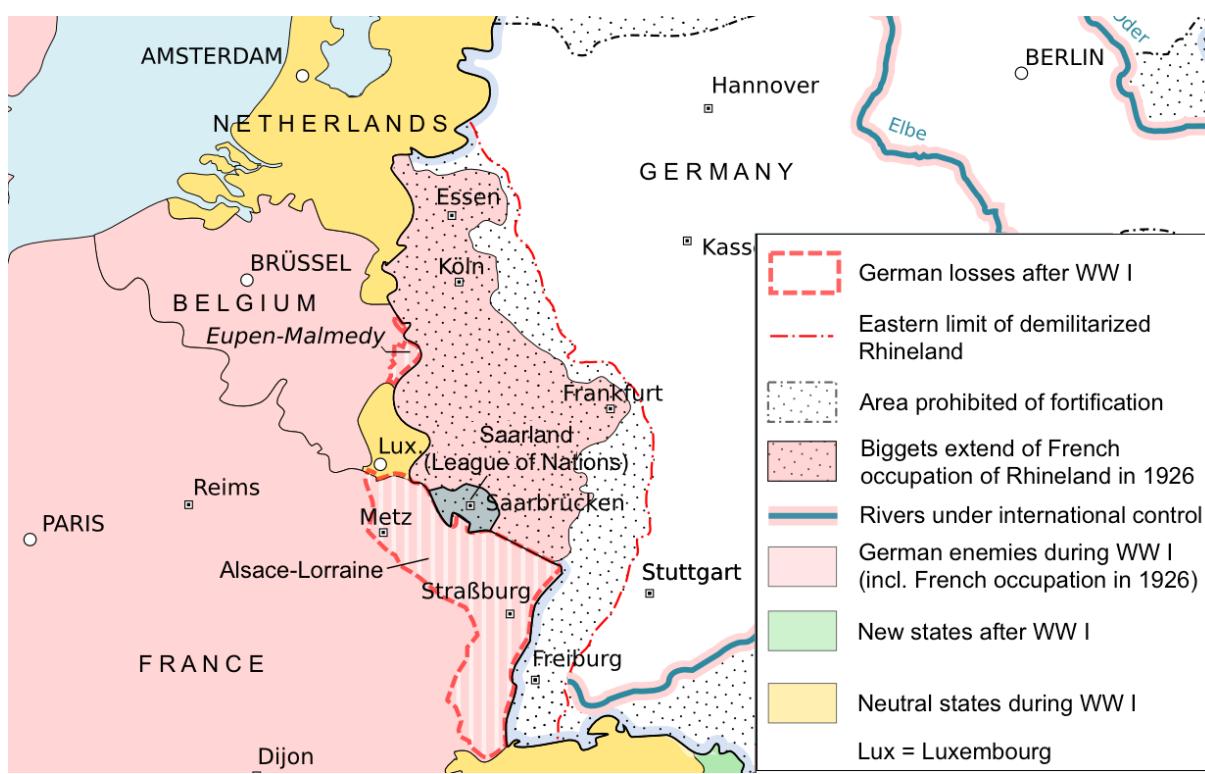


Sig Spence, HQ Sigs at the controls of the mobile wireless truck, Gaza, Palestine.

9. Megiddoo 1918, Dunsterville Force-Baku.



10. Sir John Monash, Versailles Rhineland.



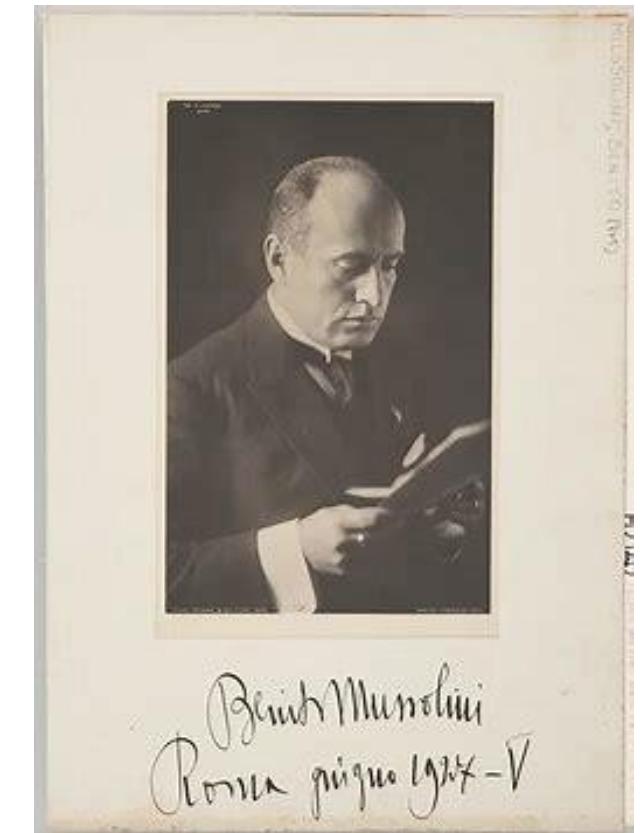
11. JPVM 1927 Tour, Como.



12. Volta Congress Como Sept.1927.



13. Mussolini in Rome 1927, Villa Torlonia.

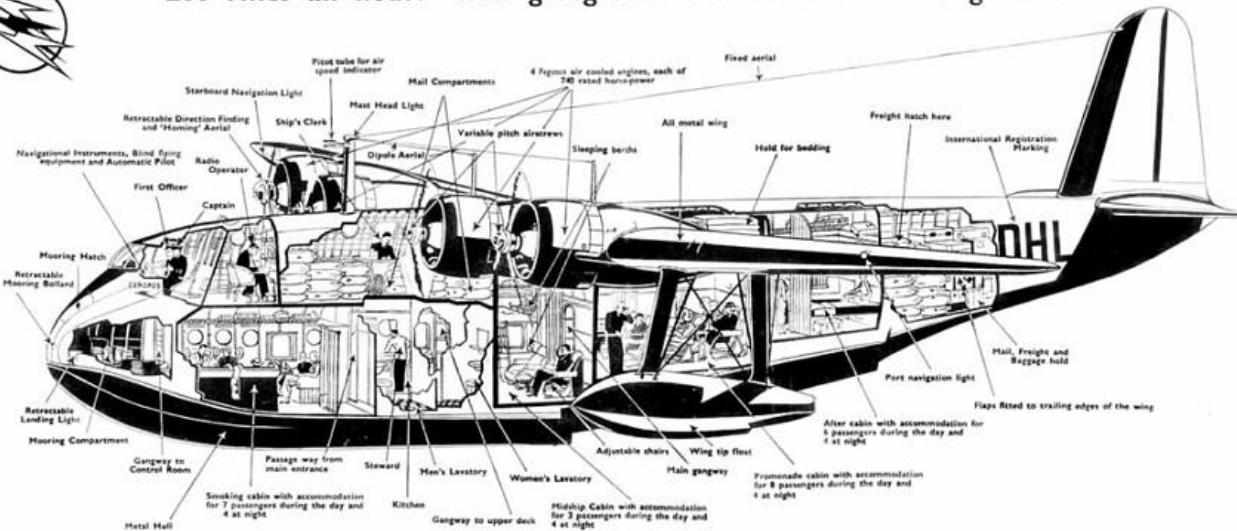


14. Imperial & Qantas Airways to London

December 1939-JPVM.

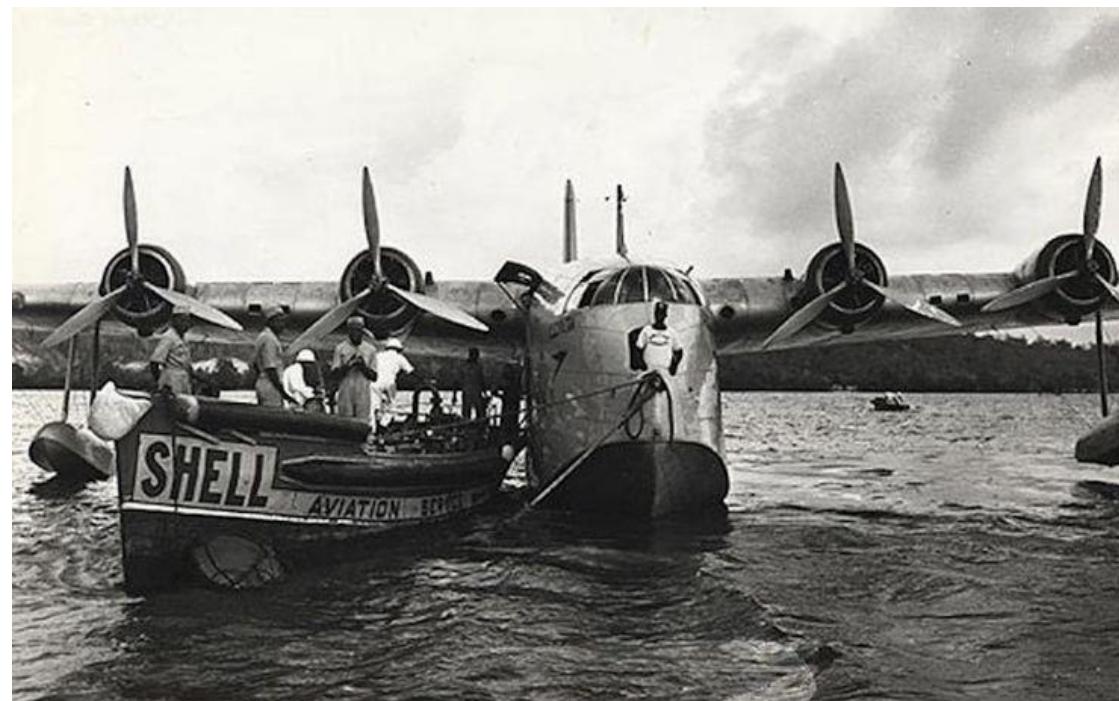
THE NEW EMPIRE FLYING-BOATS

Two decks. Smoking room. Promenade saloon. Sleeping berths. 3,000 Horse power. 200 Miles an hour. Now going into commission. 28 being built

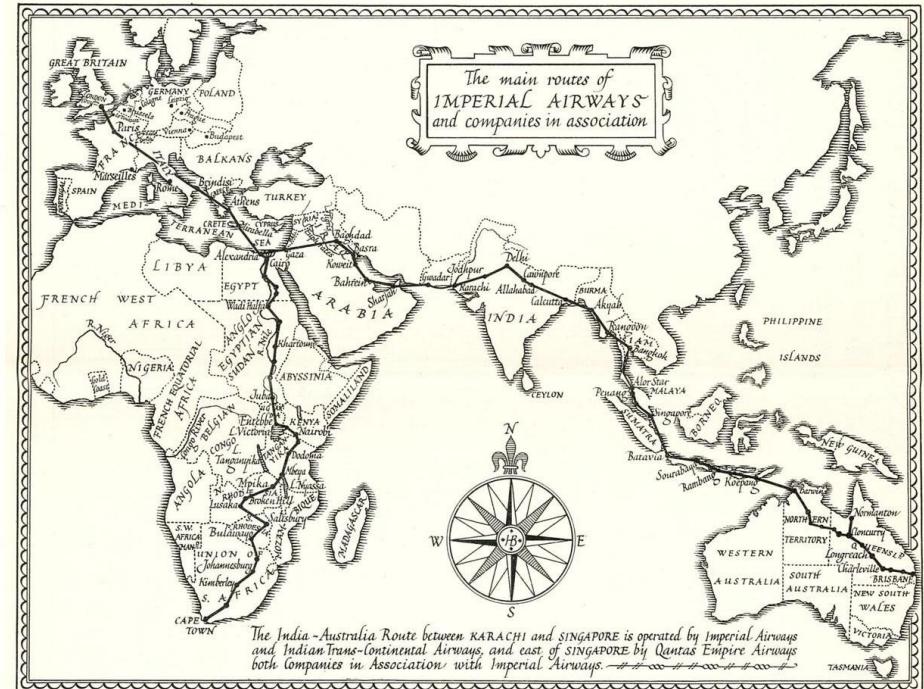
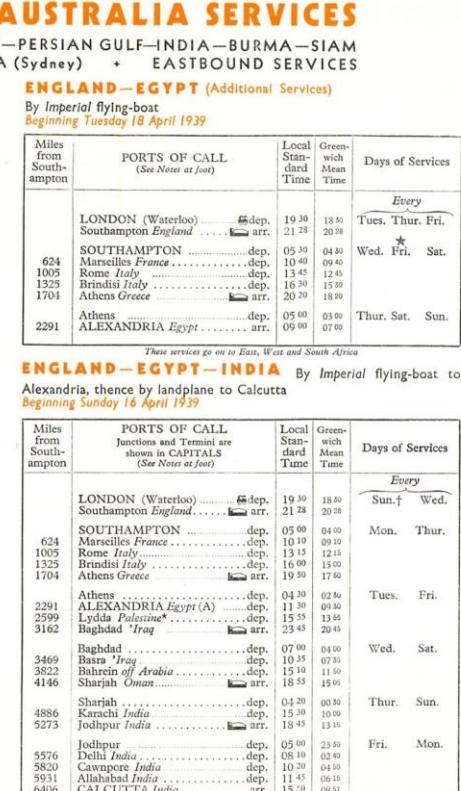


Length 88 ft.; Height from water line 24 ft.; Speed 200 mph (approx); Span 114 ft.; Weight fully loaded nearly 18 tons; Crew 5; Accommodation 24 passengers on day stages and 16 on night journeys

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS

Imperial Airways Ltd. Airway Terminal Victoria Station SW1. Airways House Charles Street SW1. Telephone VICToria 3211 (Day and Night) or broad scope. Imperial Airways is Booking and General Agent in Great Britain for Belgian Air Lines, German Airways and Swissair.


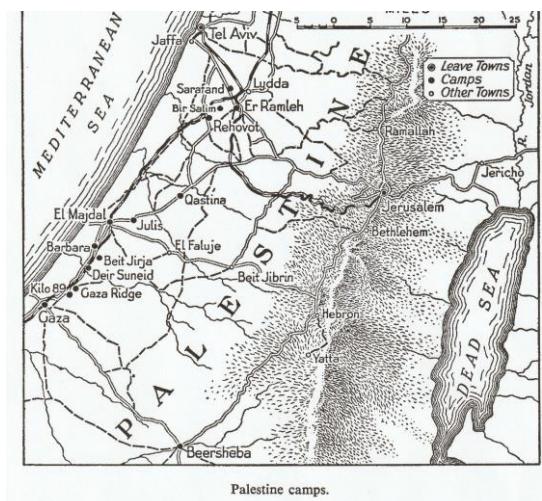
15. Imperial Qantas Flight Schedule.



16. JPVM Washington-London 1941.



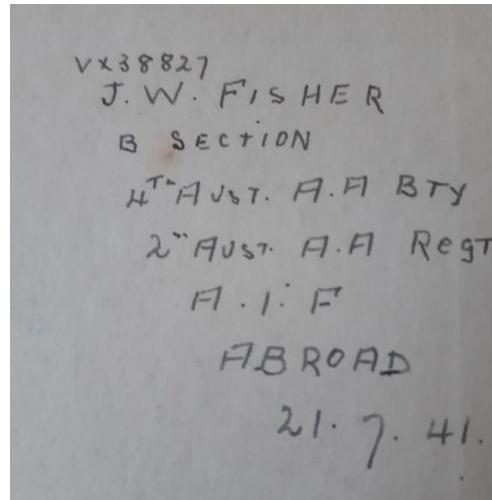
17. Dr. Jim Molesworth (NX 106). 2nd-3rd Bn.



| OFFICER'S RECORD OF SERVICE | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|--|------------------|-------------------|--|---|
| Continuation Sheet to A.F. B.199 (a) (Adapted) | | | | | | |
| A. Form B.199 (a). - 2. (Adapted) | | | | | | |
| Personal Number NX 106 | | | | | | |
| Regt. or Corps AAMC | | | | | | |
| Other Names EDWARD JAMES CAIRNS Surname MOLESWORTH, M.C. (Block Capitals) | | | | | | |
| REPORT | | | | | | |
| Date | From whom received | Record of all casualties regarding promotions (acting, temporary, local or substantive), appointments, transfers, postings, removals, retirement, etc., pay, allowances, admissions to and discharge from Hospitals, Casualty Clearing Stations, etc. Date of disembarkation and embarkation from a theatre of war (including furthest, &c.) | Date of Casualty | Place of Casualty | Authority No. 2011 R.2099 or other document | Signature of Officer certifying to correctness of entries |
| 27.9.41 | AIF M/C | Decorations: Awarded M.C. | ✓ | m/e | AIF M/C ORDERS 637/161 | Ri. |
| 5.7.41 | 2 Echme | HOSPITALS: Was to J.A.G.A. (Chronic Diarrhoea) Detached to J.A.G.A. | ✓/7/41 | " | N 1167 R. 01/1/309 | Ri. |
| 22.10.41 | " | MARCHED IN: To X Det AAMC Long Wing from J.A.G.A. | ✓/7/41 | " | N 1475 R. 01/1/309 AAMC Long Wing | Ri. |
| NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS SPACE. | | | | | | |
| MILITARY CROSS. | | | | | | |
| For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. On 21 Jun. 41, this officer who was attached as R.M.O. personally accompanied 'A' Coy in their attack on FORT GOYBET, and although under heavy machine gun fire with great coolness attended to the wounded. He then established his R.A.P. in MEZZE, and on 22 Jun. 41, was subjected to heavy shell fire. He continued to carry out his arduous duties until two direct hits landed on the R.A.P., partially demolishing the house in which it was situated. He immediately quelled the panic caused amongst civilians, and with great calmness proceeded to deal with the increased number of casualties as expeditiously as possible, thereby setting a high standard of courage for his men to follow. | | | | | | |
| 17.10.41 | 2 Echme | Detach from J.A.G.A. (Levitis) Transf to AAMC Long Wing | ✓/5.9.41 | m/e | N 997 R. 02/9/41/41 4/10/41/41 | Ri. |
| 30.8.42 | 2 Echme | Left 2d AIF M/C Long Wing | 1.9.42 | m/e | AIF M/C Det 2d | Ri. |
| 20.1.42 | AIF M/C | AIF M/C Reg. Dep. | 25.10.42 | " | Ext. M/C 02/2/42/42 | Ri. |
| 31.10.42 | AIF M/C | Detached for duty to HQ. AIF (ME) | 1.11.42 | " | Ext. M/C 02/2/42/42 | Ri. |
| 17.2.43 | " | Trng Wing Detached for duty to HQ. AIF (ME) Reg. Depot. | 25.10.42 | " | Ext. M/C 02/2/42/42 | Ri. |
| 17.2.43 | " | Detached for duty to 2/8 2d Amb. | 2.9.42 | " | Ext. M/C 02/2/42/42 | Ri. |
| 17.2.43 | " | Leaves to be attached to AAMC Trng Wing | 10.9.42 | " | Ext. M/C 02/2/42/42 | Ri. |
| 16.11.42 | AIF (ME) Reg. Depot | Attached from AAMC Trng. Wing | 1.11.42 | " | M 2066 02/2/42/42 | Ri. |
| 9.1.43 | AIF (ME) | Attached AAMC H.Q. (AIF) | 5.1.43 | " | Ext. M/C 02/2/42/42 | Ri. |
| 1.10.42 | AAMC | Regt Unit from 2/8 2d Amb. | 14.2.42 | " | N 1383/244/42 | Ri. |
| 11.3.43 | AIF (ME) | Emb. M/E per L. for return to Aust. Disemb. Melbourne | 31.1.43 | " | N 2819/101/4 M/S | Ri. |



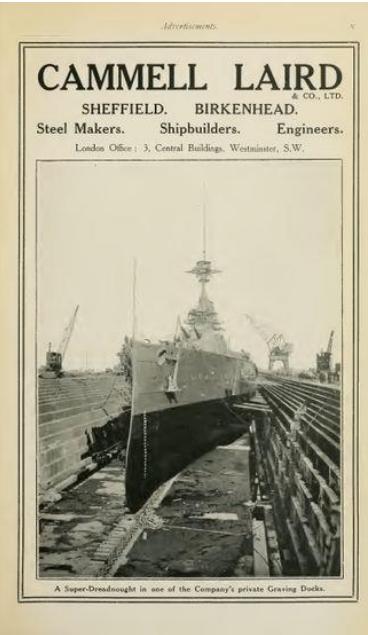
18. John W Fisher (VX 38827). 9th Div. 40 mm Bofors.



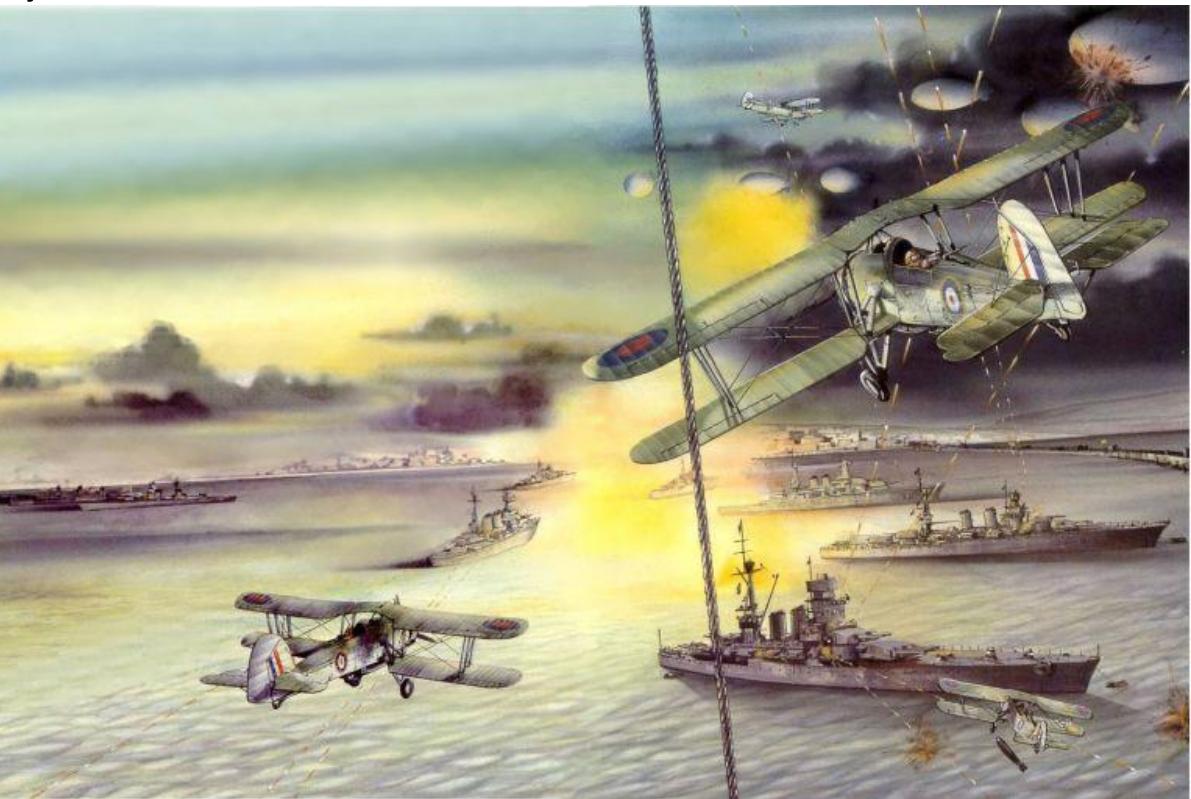
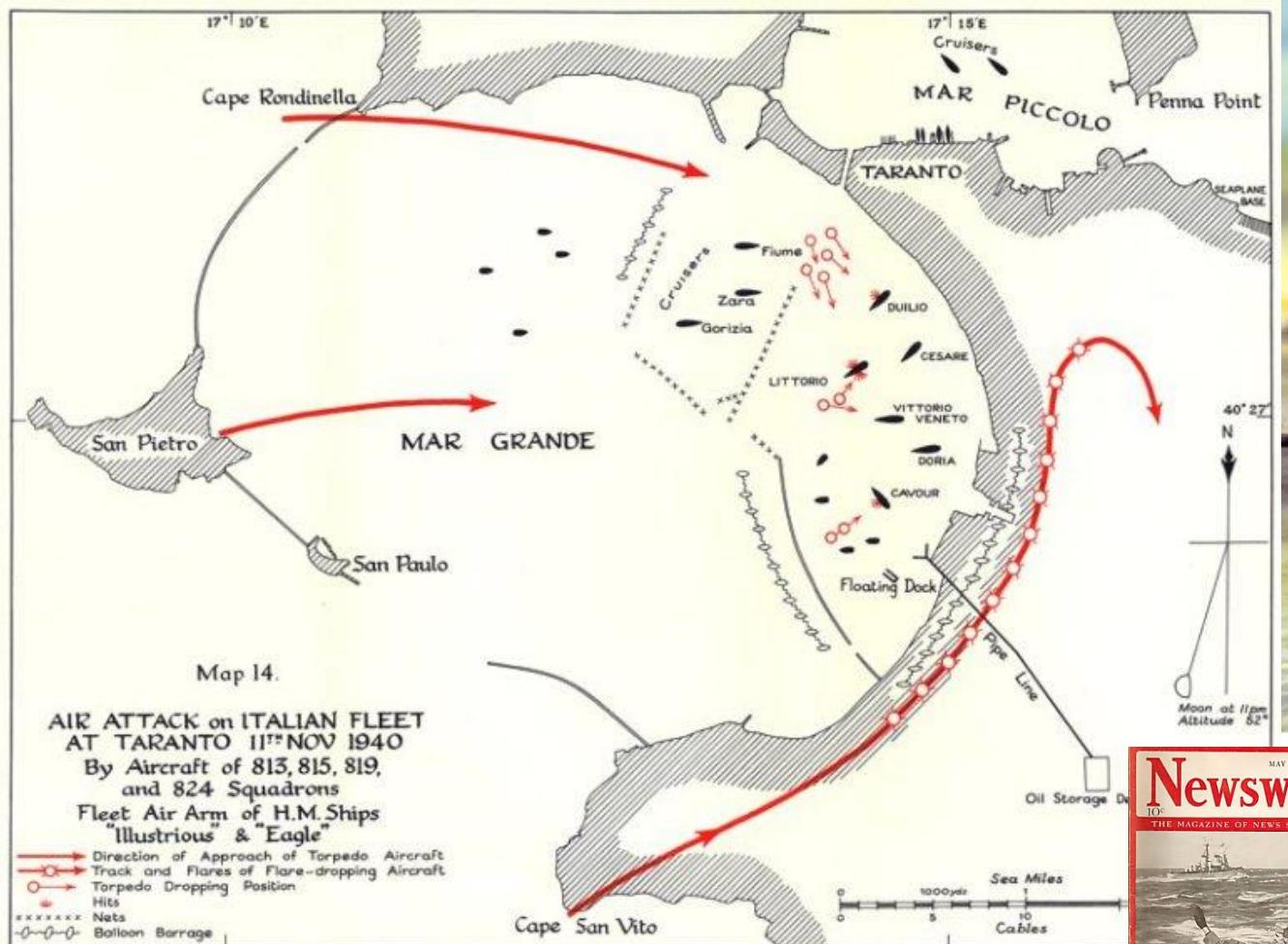
19. Roger Cecil Madsen (NX 36364). 2nd-3rd BN.[“All the King’s Enemies”]



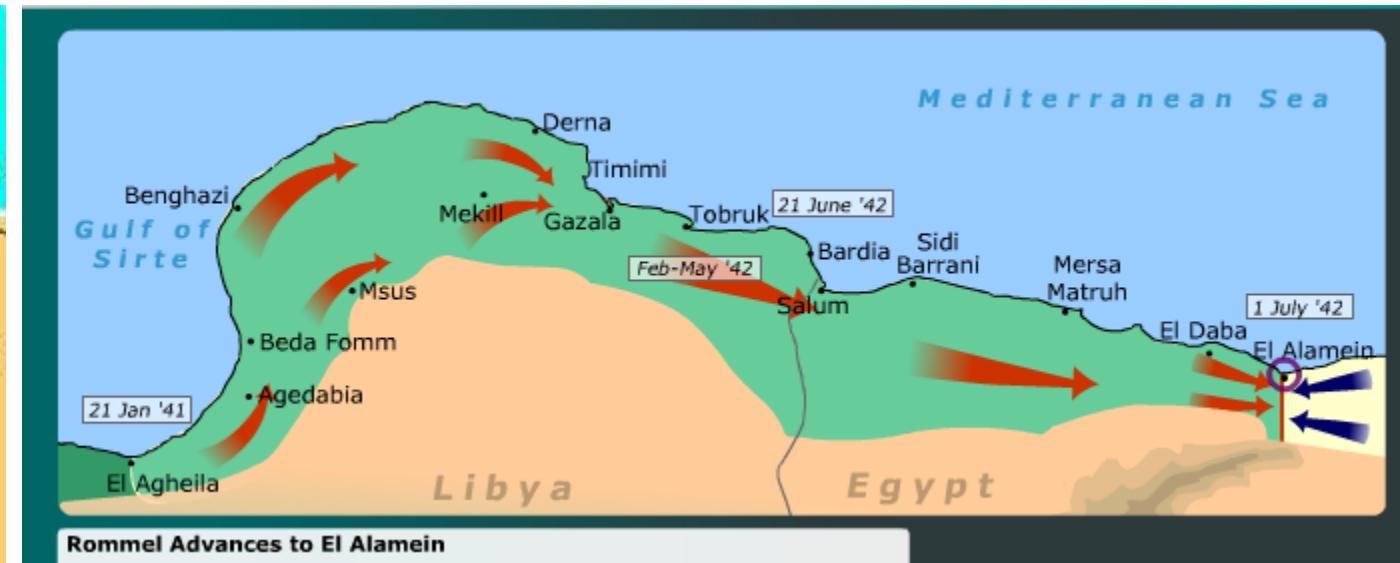
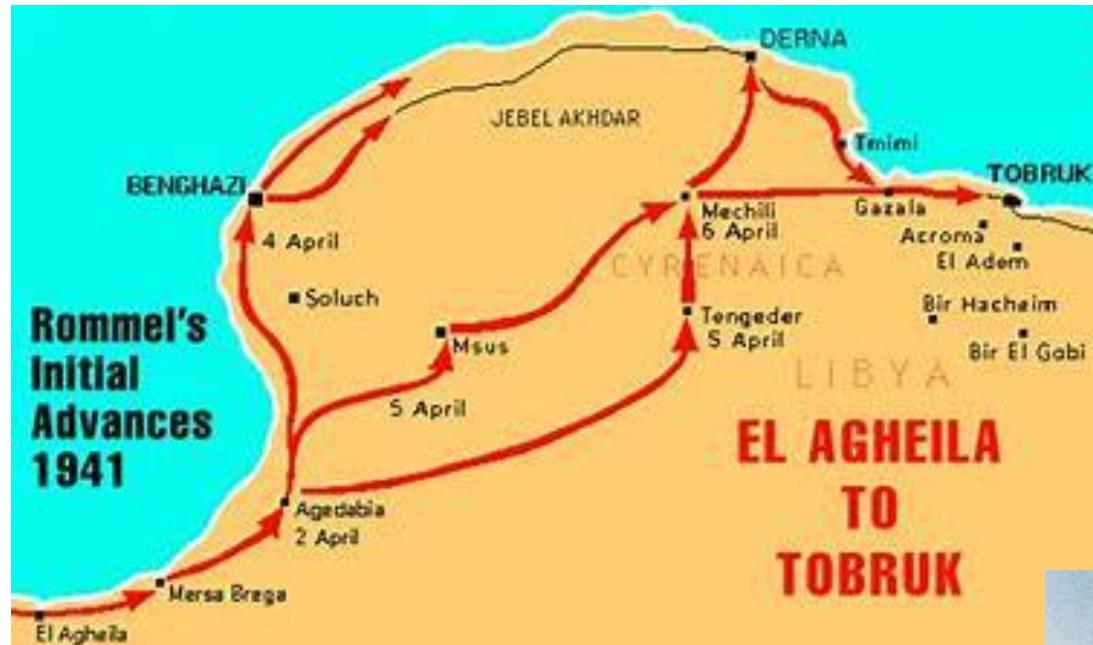
20. John Fitzroy Duyland Bush RN.(GCB).



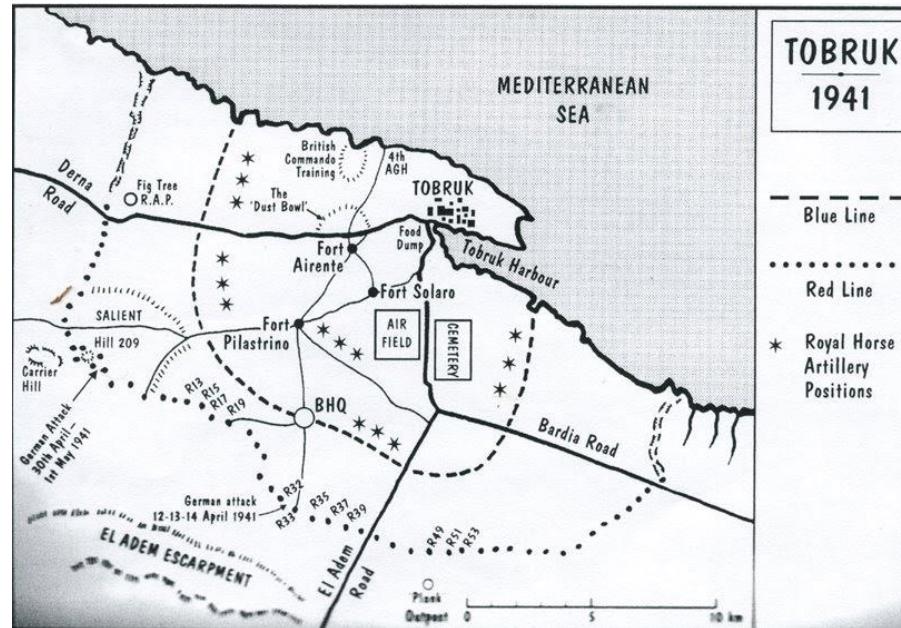
21. Taranto November 11, 1940.



22. Rommel Tripoli- El Agheila, March 1941.



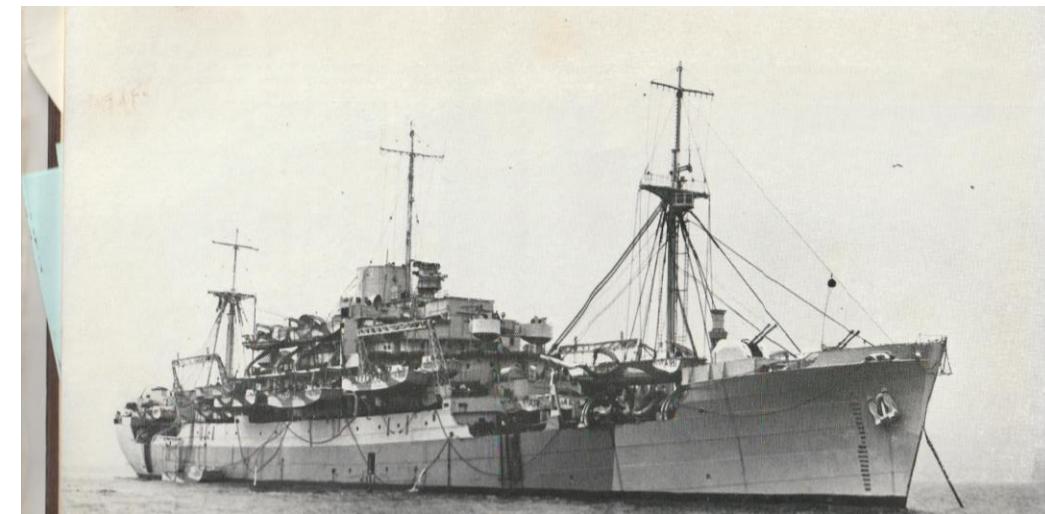
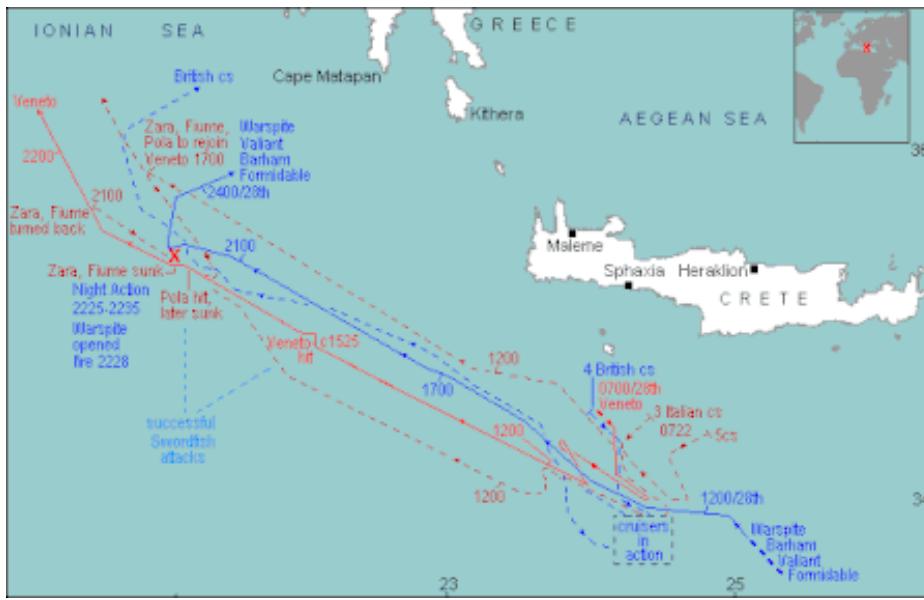
23. Seige of Tobruk, April-November 1941.



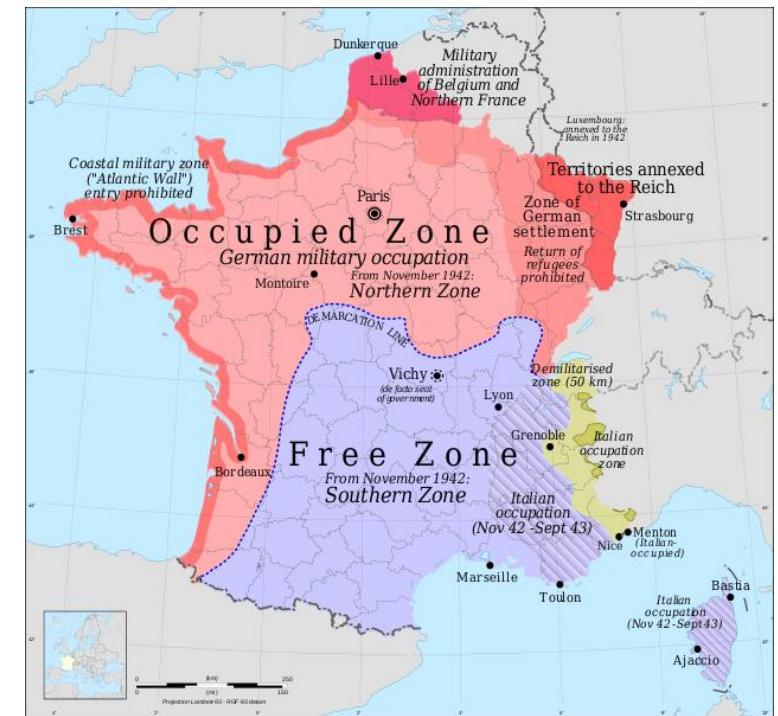
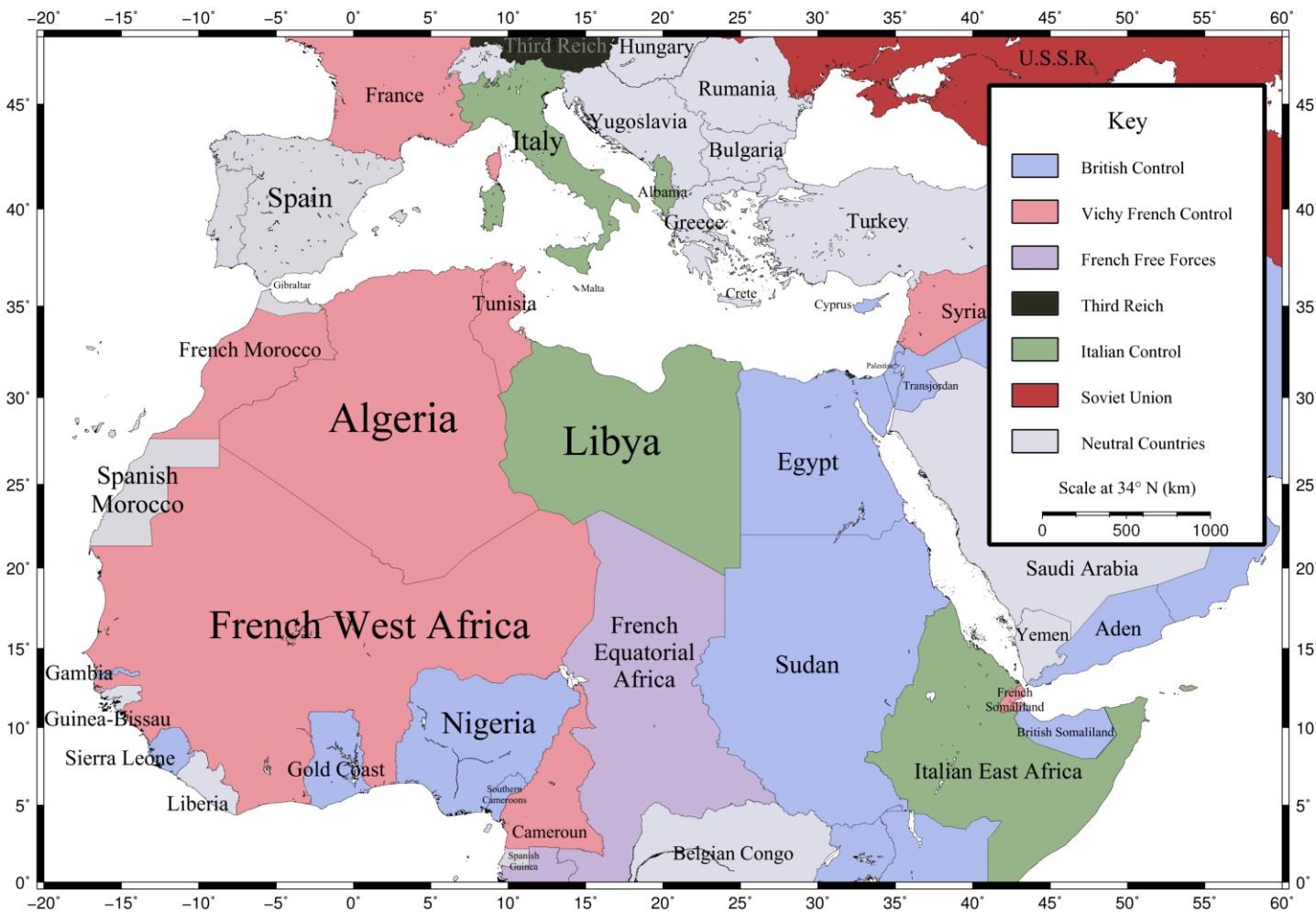
24. The Greek Campaign April-May 1941. “Time on our side”, “ Noblesse Oblige”.



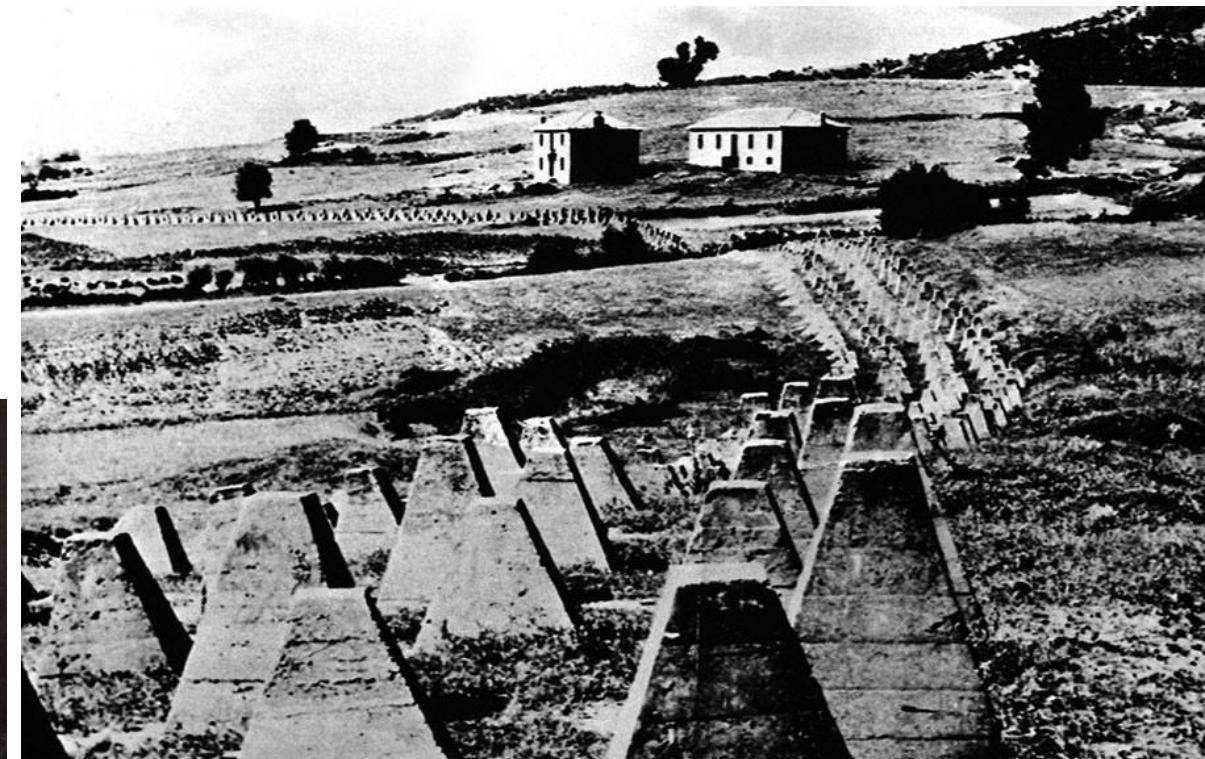
25. The Royal Navy & Greek Campaign. Matapan 1941.



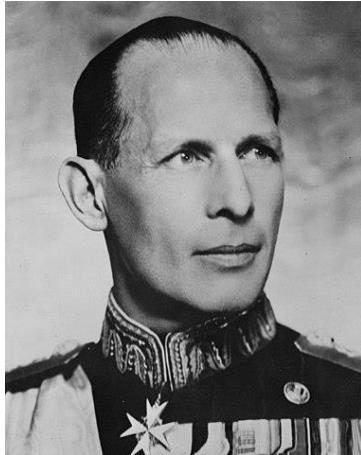
26. Africa (1940) & Balkans.



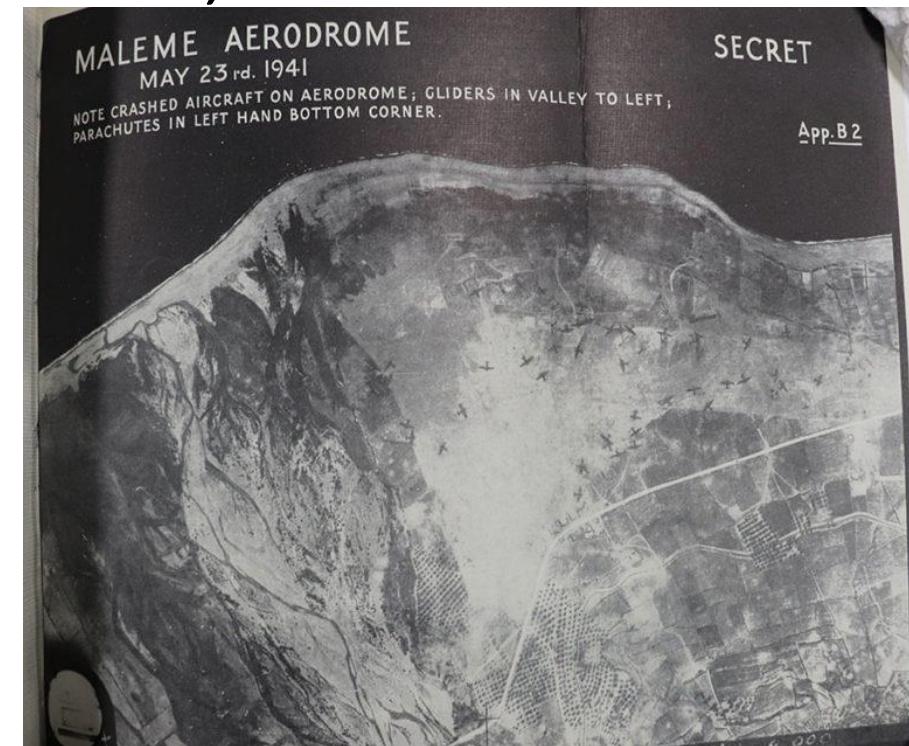
27. Germany & Turkey, Metaxas Line, Danube.



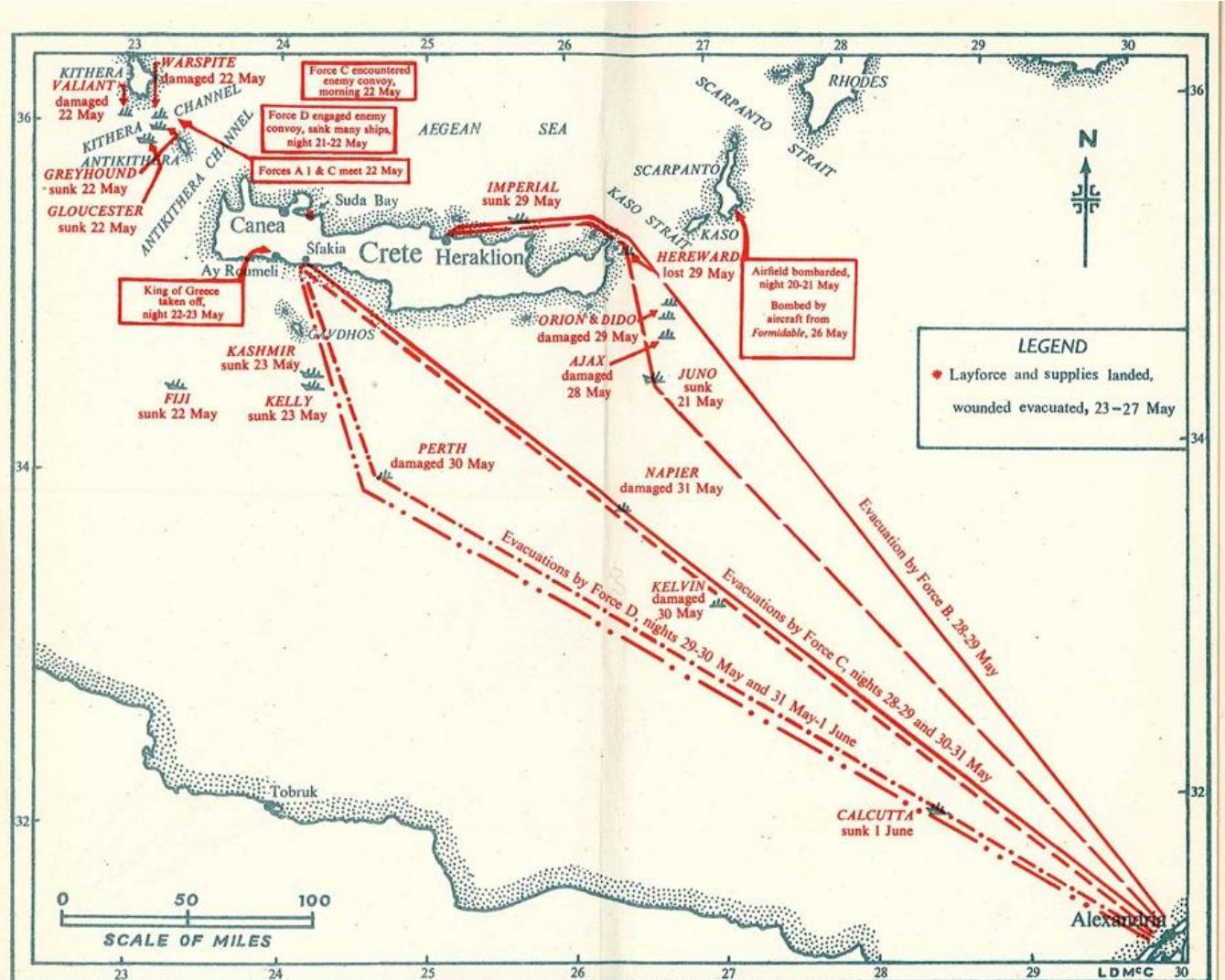
28. Battle of Greece, April 1941.



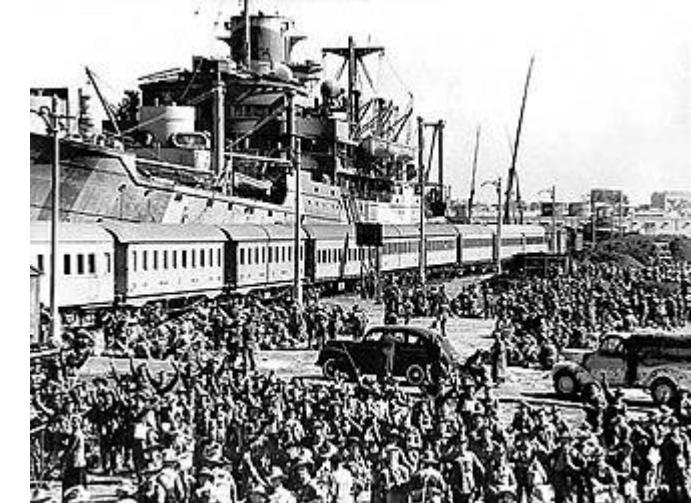
29. The Battle for Crete May 20-31, 1941.



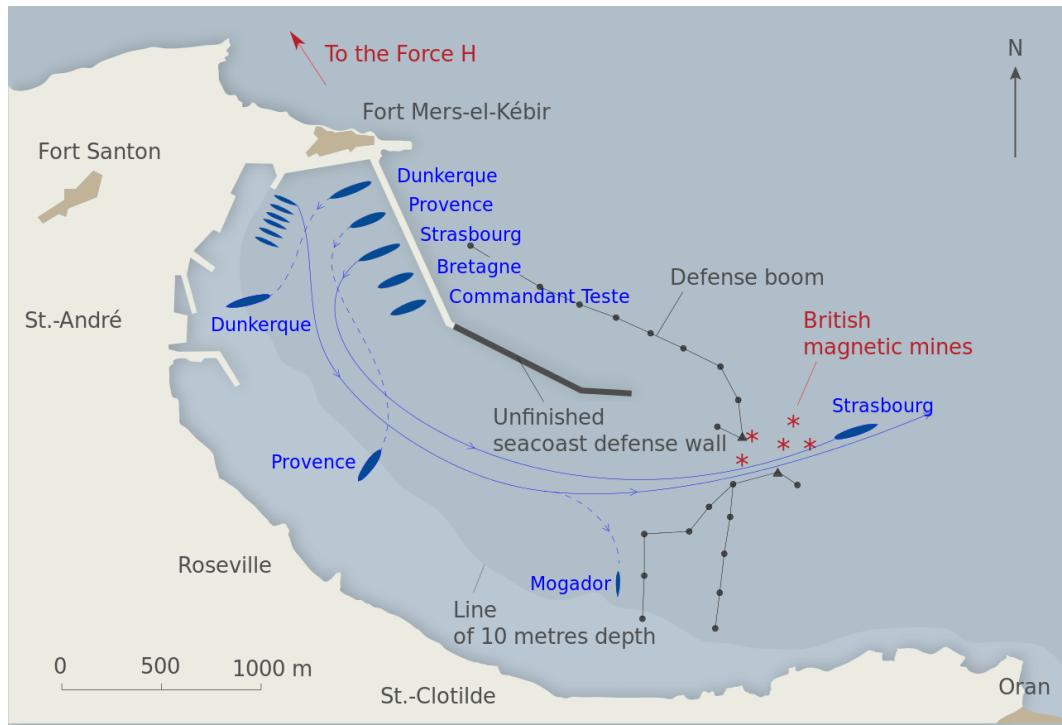
30. Crete Naval Operations.



31. Alexandria & Malta.



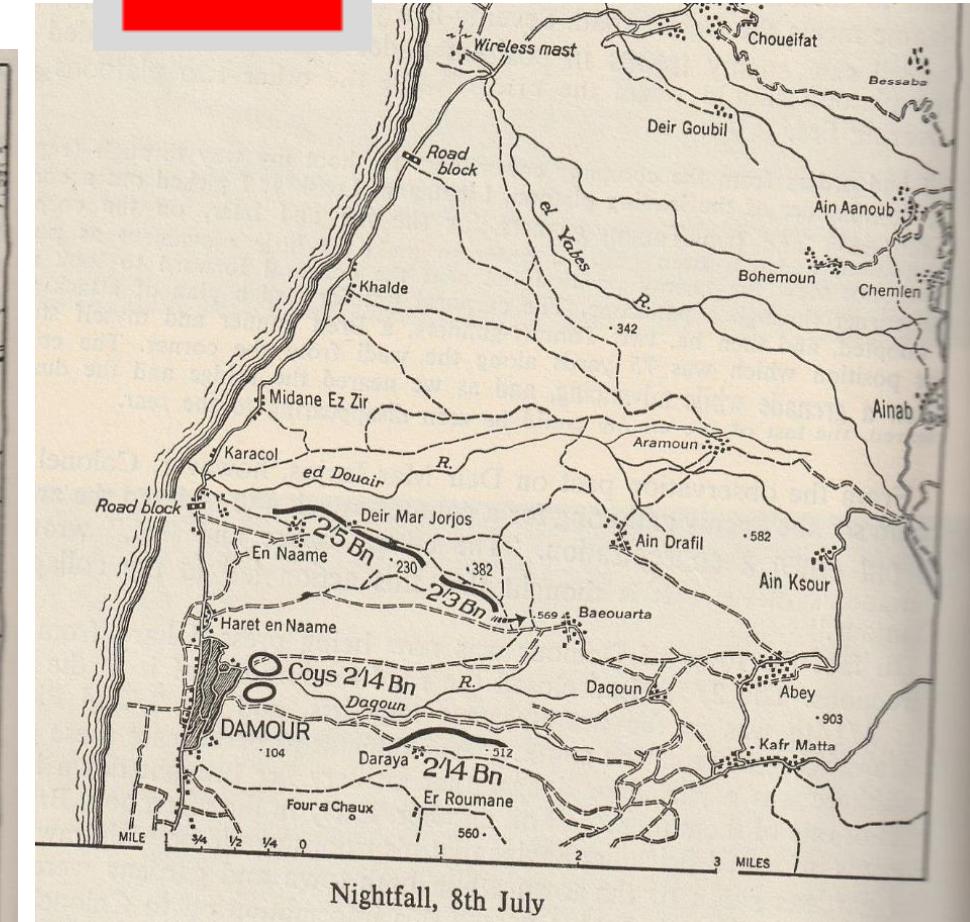
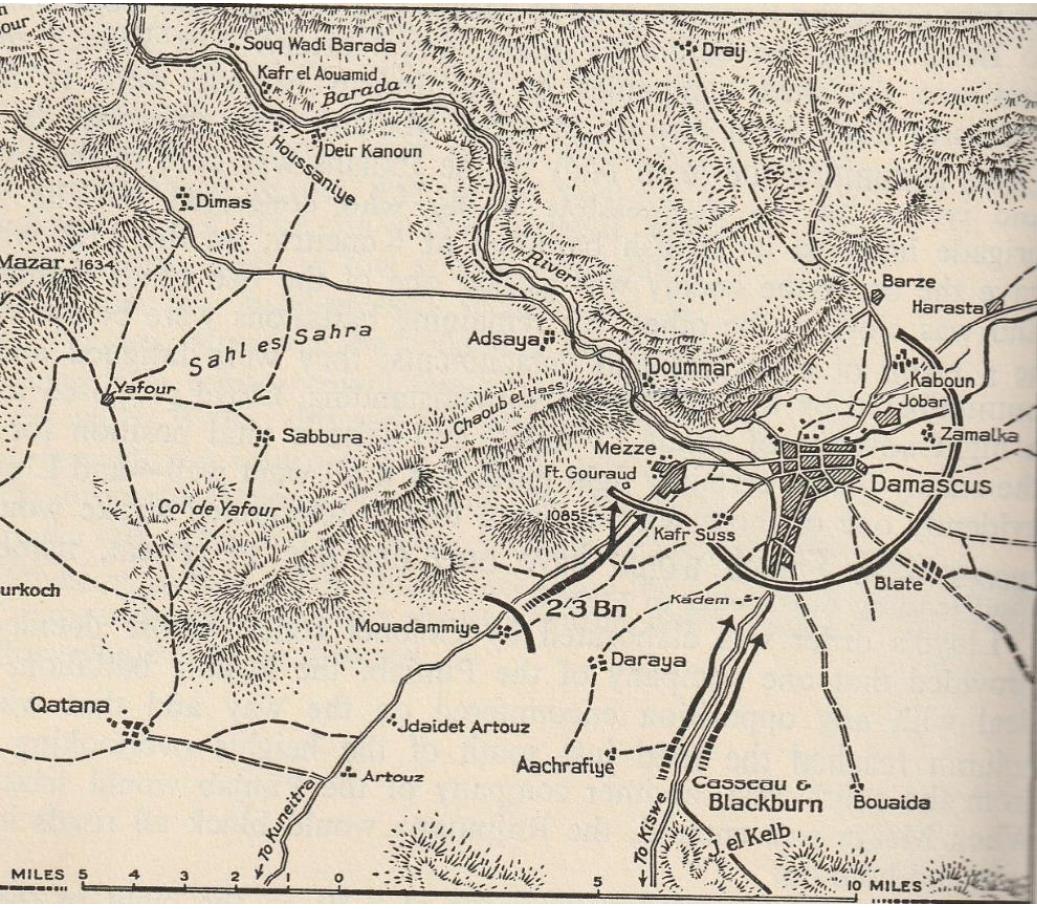
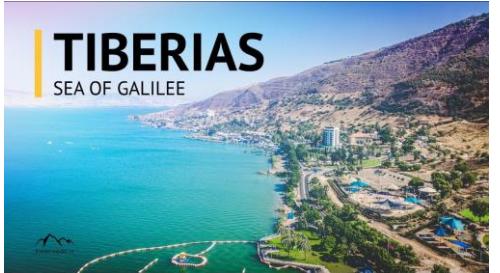
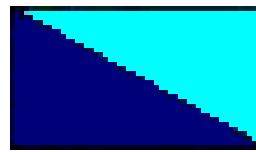
32.Vichy French, Levant, GIB.



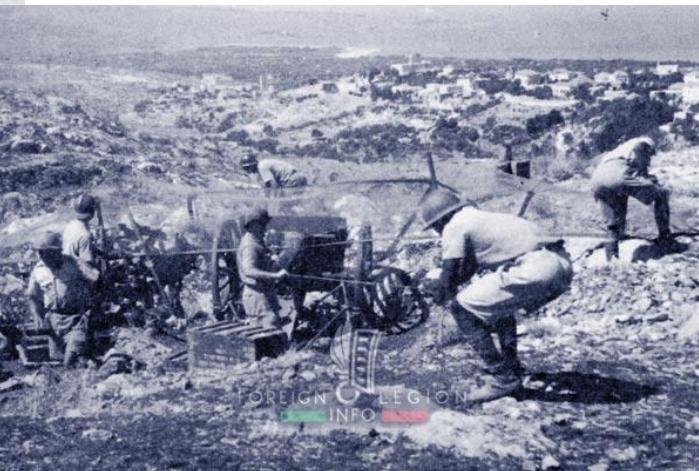
33. The Syrian Campaign: June-July 1941.



34. Damascus & Damour: 2nd-3rd BN 7th Div.Rft



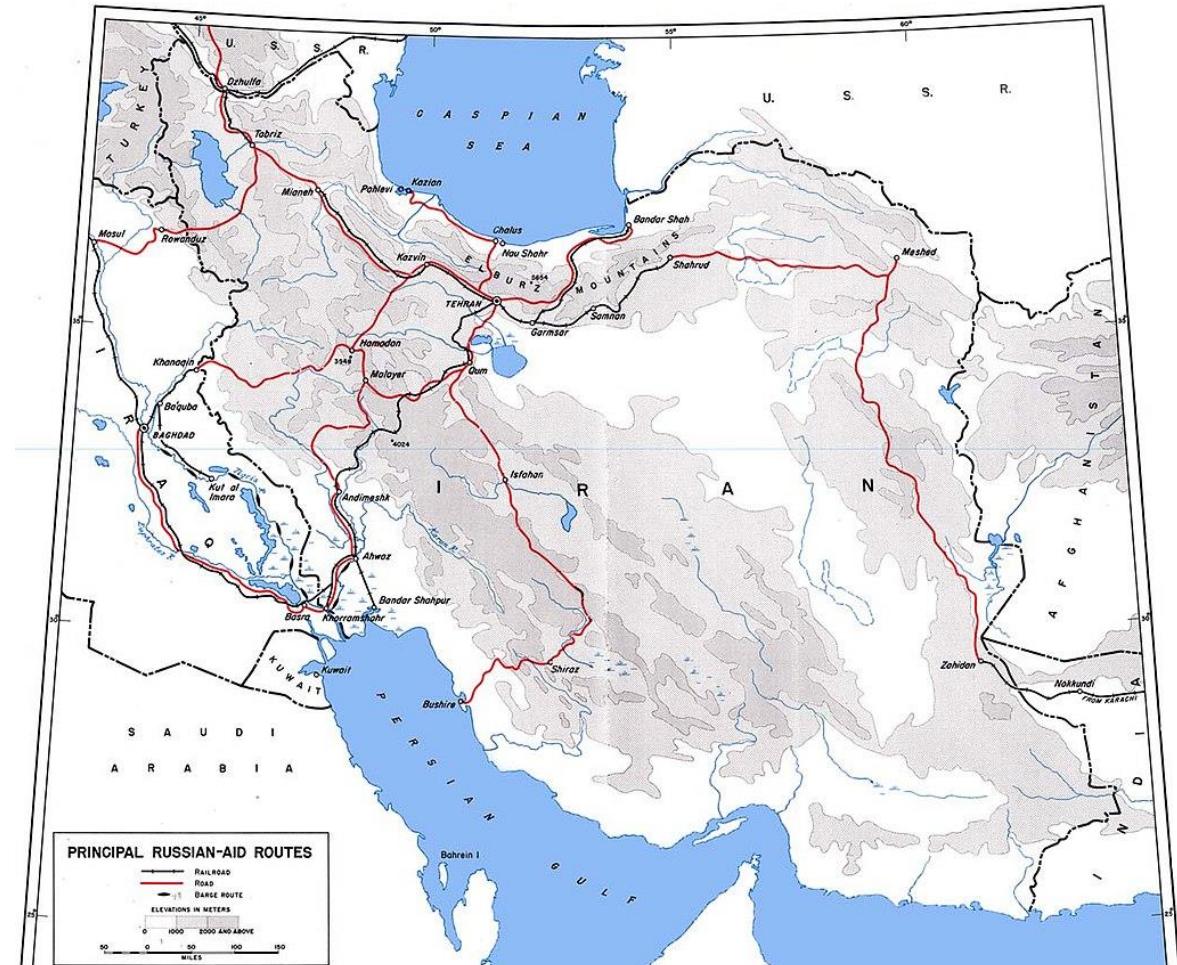
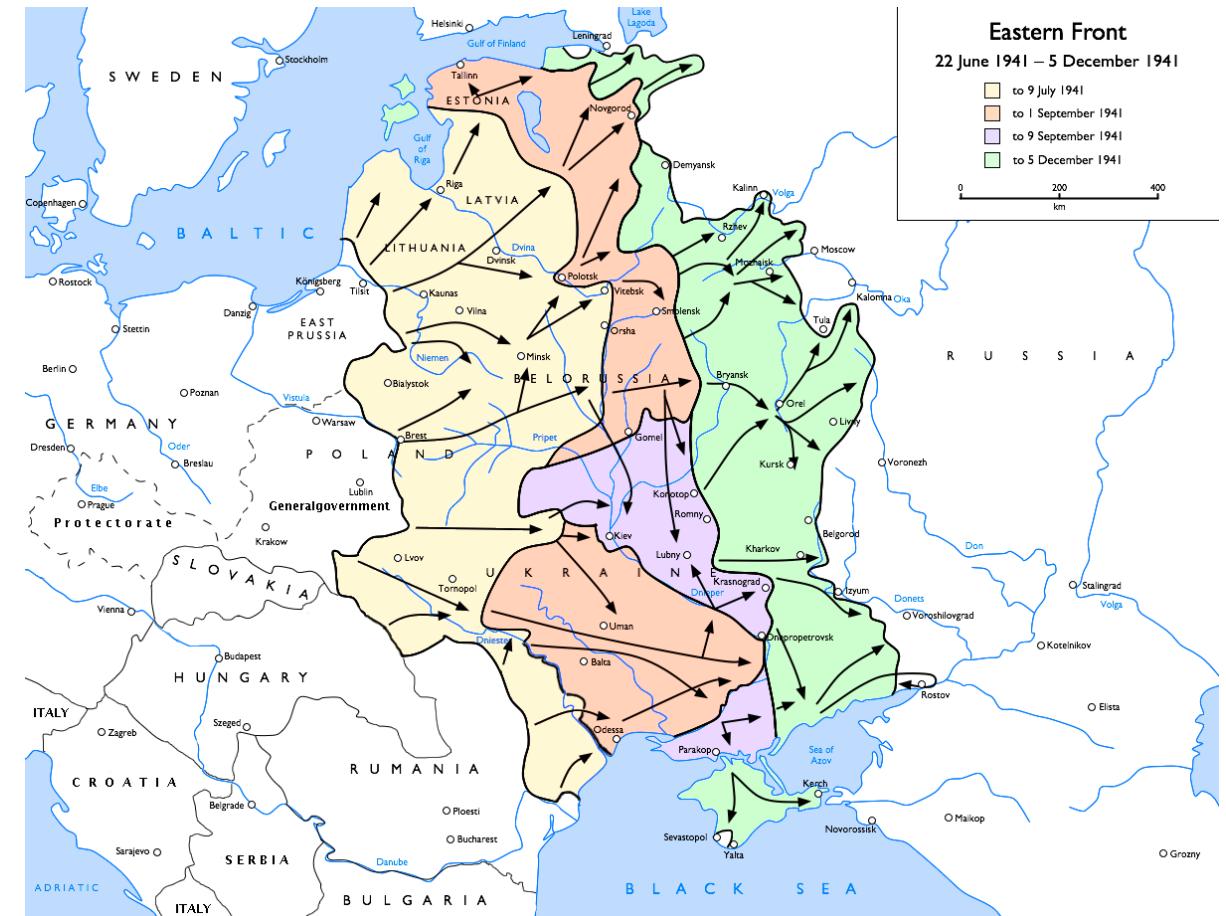
35. Vichy French Syria.



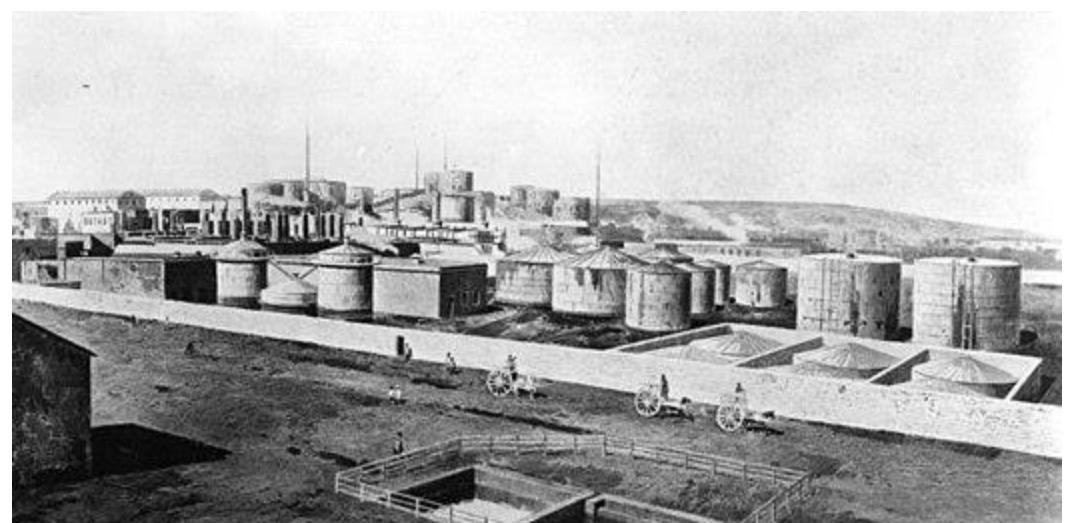
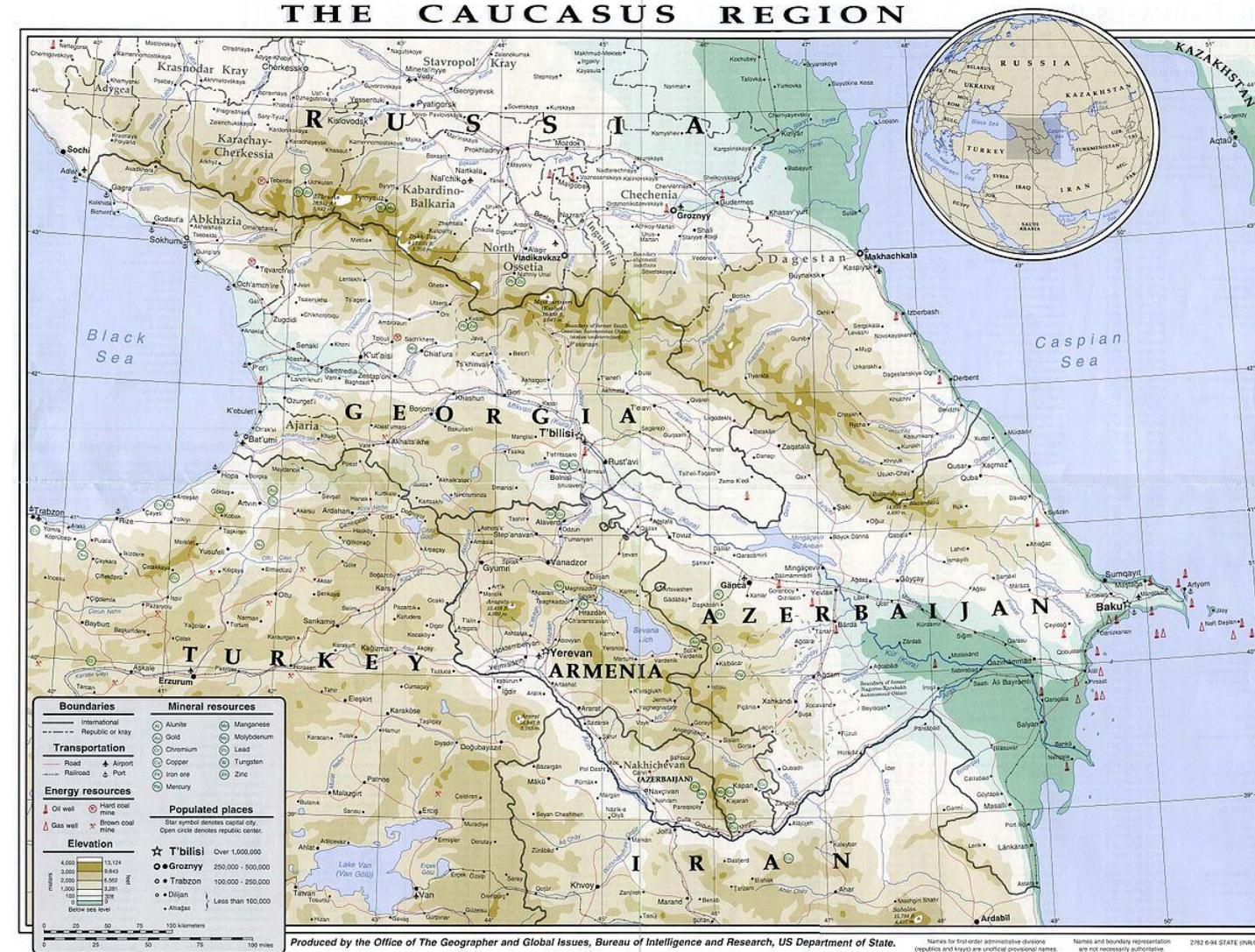
36. Sir John Lavarack, “Tubby” Allan, John Stevenson, Iven Mackay.



37. Russia & the Caucuses.

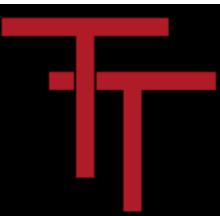


38. Baku Oil.



39. Rommel in North Africa 1942.

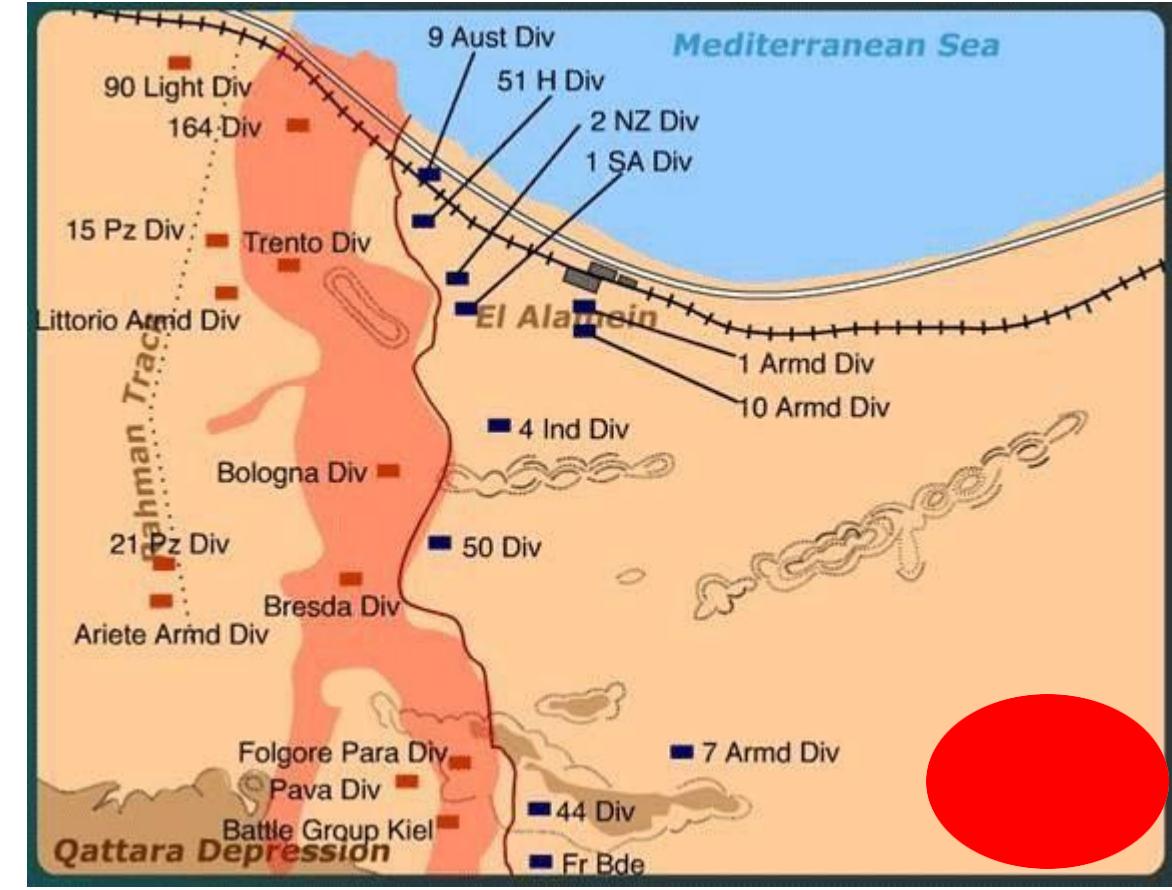




40. 9th Division North Africa- El Alamein 1942.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL



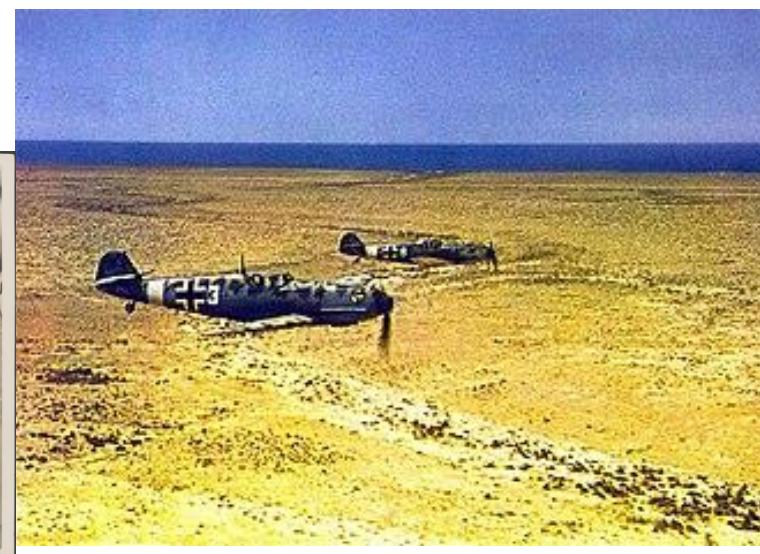
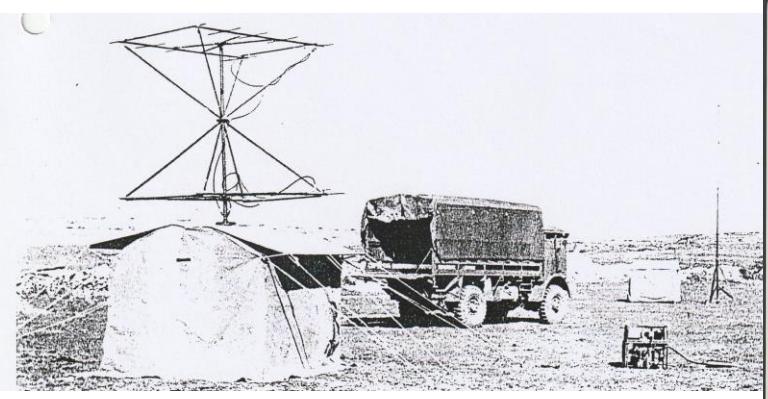
9th Aust. Division



2nd New Zealand Division



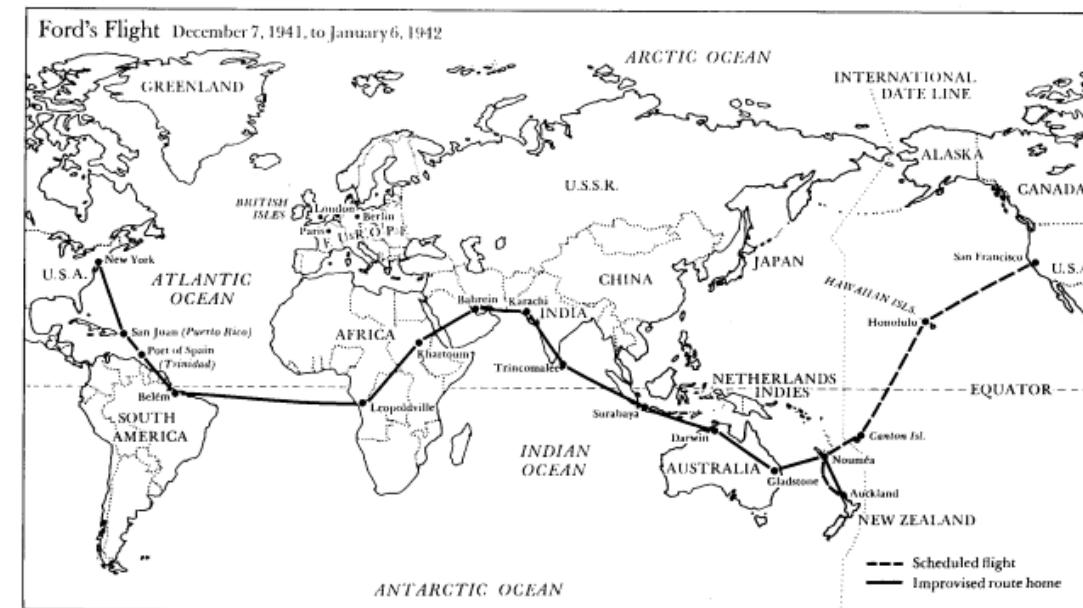
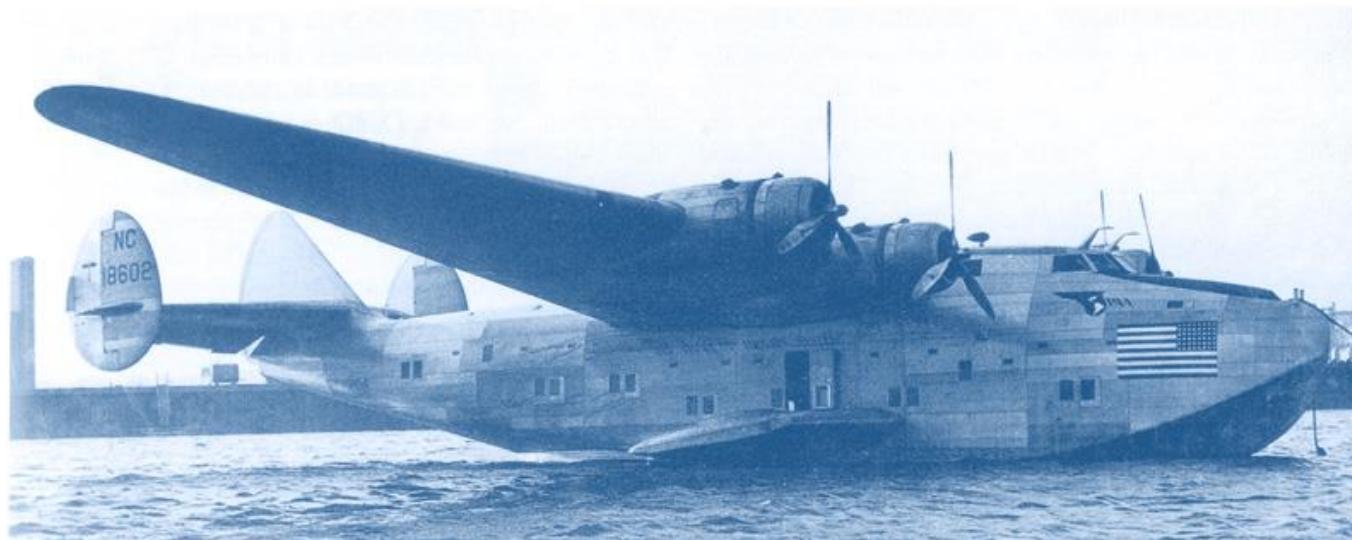
41. The Desert Air War: RAAF Sqdns.



ART20390

42. PanAm "Pacific Clipper". JPVM from Hawaii December 4, 1941.

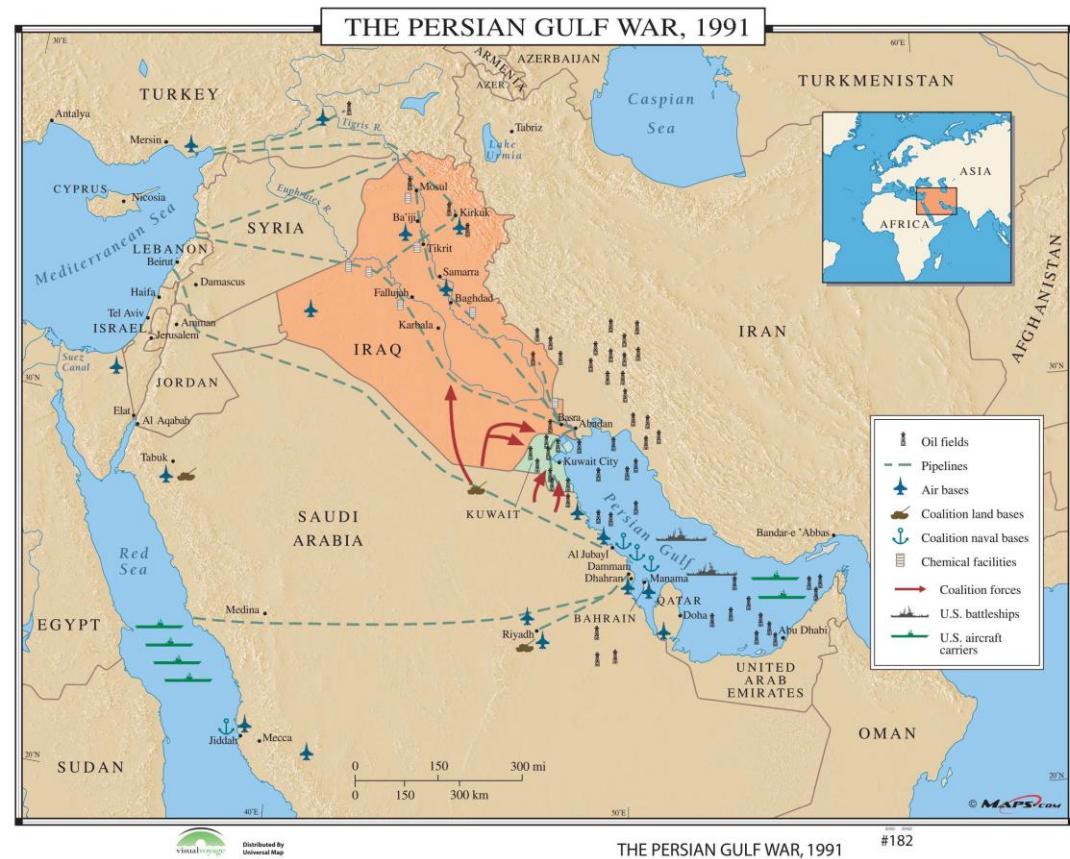
PAN AM HISTORICAL FOUNDATION



43. Aftermath, 1956 Suez Crisis.



44. Gulf War (1991), Afghanistan(2001-2021), Syria Civil War(2011-present).



J.P.V.Madsen & four Cousins:-the Mediterranean & Middle East 1927-1942.

Prepared by: Roger Madsen August,2021.

Slide 1: Introduction. (Roger Madsen, August 2021)

Whilst this material is principally designed to indicate the activities of Prof. Sir John Madsen (1879-1969) & the four cousins, Dr Jim Molesworth (1913-1967), John W Fisher (1920-1985), Roger Cecil Madsen (1916-2002) & John Fitzroy Duyland Bush RN (1914-2013) in the Mediterranean & Middle East areas between 1927 & 1942 it is also useful to consider the Australian involvement in these areas at the earlier period of WW1 (1914-1918) & in the post war period during the Suez Crisis of 1956 & more recently the Gulf War of 1991 & the Afghan International Security Assistance Force (2001-2021). Protection of the Suez Canal & oil resources were the main factors behind the military operations involved & also latterly as a counter to Islamist extremist terrorism in Afghanistan. The units of the three Australian cousins were part of the 6th, 7th & 9th Divisions of the AIF.

In 1911 Churchill (1874-1965) pushed for the British Government to take ownership of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company founded by the Australian -English businessman William Knox D 'Arcy (1849-1917) in 1908 so that the Royal Navy could be reliably powered by an inexhaustible supply of oil from Abadan on the Persian Gulf. Oil at Baku in Azerbaijan on the Caspian Sea had been developed as early as 1846-1882 & was to be a major factor in Hitler's war on Russia from June 1941. Rommel in North Africa in 1941-42 had visions of joining up with German forces coming south from Baku across the Caucuses, which he nearly succeeded in doing in July 1-3, 1942..

During WW1 the Anzac landing at Gallipoli on April 25, 1915 lasted until December 1915 when units were evacuated & transferred to the Western Front whilst others rejoined the Light Horse in Palestine where in both cases they distinguished themselves.

In July 1927, JPVM when on a tour of Europe, England & America he attended an International Congress of physicists in Como Italy, as a Volta centenary celebration & was invited with the other physicists to Mussolini's Villa in Rome where they were greeted & shook hands with Mussolini.

During WW2 JPVM first flew to England in December 1939 via Singapore & the Middle East by 'C' Class Qantas/Imperial flying boat & on a second trip in 1941 went via Los Angeles on a Pan Am Boeing 314 Clipper flying boat, then on from east coast America, the purpose of both trips was radar related & also involving scientific liaison. Dr Jim Molesworth, John Fisher & Roger Madsen had reached the Middle East by early 1941 to their army units & John Bush, a Lt. in the RN was posted to the destroyer HMS Nubian, which was involved with the Greek-Crete campaign in April-May 1941.

The role of R.G. Casey (1890-1976) is quite remarkable as Minister for CSIR in August 1939 in taking up JPVM's plan for radar for approval to R G Menzies (Prime Minister), then as Ambassador to the USA (1940-June 1942) followed by 18 months as Churchill's Minister for the Middle East is noted as well as the trip by Prime Minister R G Menzies to Singapore, the Middle East & Washington in early 1941. Menzies' role in the Suez Crisis in September 1956 in an attempt to internationalise the Canal under UN control ended in failure.

Slide 2: William Knox D 'Arcy : Anglo-Persian Oil 1908.

William Knox D'Arcy (1849-1917) made a substantial fortune in Queensland with the Mount Morgan Gold Mining Company & moved to England in 1889. In 1900 D'Arcy became involved with the search for oil in Persia & by sheer luck & on the verge of bankruptcy, struck oil in May 1908 & the Anglo-

Persian Oil Company was formed, later to become British Petroleum (BP). The D'Arcy concession covered much of Persia but with only 16% of annual profits going to the Iranian Government. The Abadan refinery was completed in 1912 by Anglo-Persian as a pipeline terminus. The British Govt. purchased 51% of the company in 1914 effectively nationalizing it but in 1951 the Iranians nationalized Abadan requiring a 50/50 share of profits & Anglo-Persian withdrew from Iran. During WW2 Abadan was a vital source of oil for Britain & also for shipments to Russia. HMAS Yarra [U77 shown] was in the Persian Gulf on August 25-27, 1941 to secure the Abadan oil & on September 2 the Shah of Iran accepted the British-Russian terms which followed a threatened German invasion after the attack on Russia in June 1941.

Slide 3: WW1: Sarajevo 1914 & Gallipoli 1915.

The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria in Sarajevo (390 km S.W of Belgrade) on June 28, 1914 triggered WW1. The open car he was travelling in is in a museum in Vienna. The map of the Anzac evacuation in December 1915 is shown.

Slide 4: Ataturk, AE2, & Austro-Hungary Navy.

The RAN submarine AE2 (seen in the Suez Canal) was built in England & during the Dardenelles Campaign successfully entered the Sea of Marmora operating for 5 days before mechanical problems forced her to surface & after further damage she was scuttled on April 30, 1915. During WW1 Italy was an ally with a substantial navy & faced off against the Navy of Austro-Hungary [the "Trieste Navy"] but no decisive encounter eventuated. (After WW1 Austria was land locked & had no navy). Kamal Ataturk (1881-1938) led the Turkish defence at Gallipoli & in 1923 became the 1st President of the Republic of Turkey until his death in 1938. In WW2 Turkey remained neutral but supplied Germany with vital chromite minerals against the possibility of invasion.

Slide 5. Ottoman Rail Network, Chauvel-Romani, Light Horse Jericho.

The Ottoman rail network in the Middle East in 1914 was quite extensive & their Hejaz narrow gauge railway ran from Damascus to Medina in Saudi Arabia with a branch line to Haifa on the Mediterranean. After Gallipoli, Sir Harry Chauvel (1865-1945) was in command of the Anzac Mounted Division which defeated the Turkish thrust for the Suez Canal at the Egyptian town of Romani 37 km east of Suez on the 4-5 August 1916. Over the next 2 ½ years Chauvel advanced to drive the Turks back as far as Aleppo on the northern border of Syria.

Jericho was captured on February 21, 1918 & shortly before this, as a diversion, a 3 mile race in desert sands was held & won by "Bill the Bastard", probably Australia's greatest war horse.

Slide 6: Camel Corps.

The Imperial Camel Corps (ICC) of infantry was raised in December 1916 & came to have four battalions from Great Britain, New Zealand & Australia (2) as well as Indian troopers involving some 4,150 men & 4,800 camels. By the end of 1917 the ICC had crossed the Sinai into Palestine but the change in terrain led to the disbandment of the ICC, however 6 British companies remained, 2 of which fought with T.E. Lawrence in the Arab Revolt & in July 1918 operations were carried out to sabotage the Hejaz railway line. There is a memorial to the ICC on the Embankment in London.

Slide 7: Beersheba 1917, "Bill the Bastard".

Beersheba is 43 km east of Gaza (the Gaza-Beersheba line) on the Mediterranean & on October 31, 1917 an Allied attack was commenced but faltered so in the late afternoon Sir Harry Chauvel ordered the 4th Light Horse of the Desert Mounted Corps to attack & the surprise carried them

through the Turkish defences into Beersheba in less than an hour. The supply of water was secured with the capture of 700 Turkish & German prisoners for the loss of 2 officers & 29 other ranks. Gaza was outflanked & a withdrawal from there commenced.

The life size sculpture of "Bill the Bastard" at Murrumburra NSW (home of 1st Australian Light Horse) depicts Bill & his 5 riders who he rescued.

Slide 8: Aust. Flying Corps, Mesopotamia Signals, Gallipoli Drip Rifle.

The 1st operational flights of the AFC in the Middle East were in May 1915 in Mesopotamia using a mixture of 4 different types of aircraft for reconnaissance & light bombing. No 1 Squadron of 12 aircraft arrived in Egypt in April 1916 doing reconnaissance, ground liaison & close air support with a mixture of aircraft but later standardizing on Bristol fighters.

Australian Signal Engineers played a key role at Gallipoli & Mesopotamia-Palestine which led after Beersheba & Gaza to effective mobile operations, as in the wireless truck shown.

The Drip Rifle was devised by William Scurry (1895-1963) while serving at Gallipoli as a private soldier & was used for self firing during the successful evacuation.

Slide 9. Megiddoo 1918, Dunsterville Force – Baku.

The Battle of Megiddo ("Rout of Nablus") was fought 19-25 September, 1918 in the Judean Hills involving the Egyptian Expeditionary Force led by General Edmund Allenby (1861-1936) [bottom left] & included the Desert Mounted corps commanded by Sir Harry Chauvel [bottom centre] which after the Battle of Sharon (a section of the Battle of Megiddo) advanced to Damascus & at the time of the Armistice was at Homs in Syria.

In December 1917 an irregular force of 350 Australia, New Zealand, British & Canadian officers & men led by General Lionel Dunsterville (1865-1946) was formed to approach Baku & the Caucuses from Iran, intending to replace Tsarist forces after the October Revolution (November 7, 1917) who had been fighting the Ottomans, but after Megiddo the Ottomans withdrew & the Soviet forces took control of Baku & its oil. Sir Stanley Savige (1890-1954) [bottom right] who served in both WW1 & WW2 with the AIF was one of the Australians who was part of this Dunsterforce.

Slide 10. Sir John Monash, Versailles Rhineland.

General John Monash (1865-1931) commanded a Brigade on Gallipoli & in July 1916 took charge of the newly formed 3rd Division in northwest France before becoming commander of the Australian Corps in May 1918. Monash is especially noted for his co-ordinated use of infantry, aircraft, artillery & tanks. The German territorial losses after WW1 on the Western Front are mapped.

Slide 11. JPVM 1927 Tour, Como.

In July 1927 Maud (1879-1932) left with JPVM on an extensive overseas tour but remained in England for some time having become unwell & JPVM went on to the Continent & America. In September 1927 a major physics conference was held in Como in conjunction with the centenary of Volta's death in Como. The group photo of attendees apparently includes Ernest Rutherford (1871-1937) & many other leading physicists. An impressive Volta Museum was opened in July 1927 & the attendees were given gold plated medallions to mark the occasion.

Slide 12. Volta Congress Como Sept. 1927.

In 1799 Alessandro Volta (1745-1827) discovered the voltaic pile & in 1801 demonstrated his battery to Napoleon. Three very famous physicists attended the Congress & together they are seated (L to R) Wolfgang Pauli (1900-1958), Werner Heisenberg (1901-1976)-the Uncertainty Principle, & Enrico Fermi (1901-1954)-Chicago Pile controlled nuclear chain reaction December 2, 1942.

Slide 13. Mussolini in Rome 1927, Villa Torlonia.

On the Saturday after the September Como Congress, due to his non-appearance, Mussolini (1883-1945) [Prime Minister of Italy 1922-1943-“who made the trains run on time”] invited the attendees to his Rome Villa (Torlonia) for drinks & shook hands with JPVM when he arrived. In May 1927 Mussolini delivered a discourse on his Fascist regime & is seen in a 1924 photo. Mussolini’s ambitions in East Africa, North Africa & Greece were to be the cause of a great deal of trouble which drew in Hitler & the Germans in 1941-1943.

Slide 14. Imperial & Qantas Airways to London, December 1939-JPVM.

JPVM needed to go to London in December 1939 to resolve a radar/RDF security issue with Robert Watson-Watt (1892-1973) & to recast the Australian radar programme now under wartime conditions. JPVM left Sydney on the Qantas “Corio” to Singapore & then by Imperial Airways to Southampton. He returned to Sydney near the end of January 1941 having met with Watson-Watt at Harrogate (the Air Ministry it appears, moved in late 1939 from London to the Grand Hotel in Harrogate) & after satisfactorily working up a new plan of arrangement (RPL Sydney to be a definite Sub-centre to an RDF Lab. in the UK) & included his offer to Watson-Watt to take personal responsibility for Australian radar secrecy/security, which was accepted.

Slide 15. Imperial Qantas Flight Schedule.

The Sydney to Southampton flying boat journey involved numerous refuelling stops & some 11 night stops which followed closely the earlier Imperial land route from London to Brisbane. The stops through the Middle East & Mediterranean included Basra & Tiberius in Palestine on the Sea of Galilee. In Alexandria JPVM got caught out lighting up a cigarette when refuelling was taking place so it was drinks on him all around.!

Slide 16. JPVM Washington-London 1941.

R.G.Casey (1890-1976) was Minister for CSIR (Nov.1937-Oct.1939), Ambassador to the U.S (March 1940-June 1942) & UK Minister Resident in the Middle East(June 1942-January 1944). Probably the first time JPVM met R.G.Menzies (1894-1978) was as Prime Minister on August 22, 1939 when a short meeting was held including David Rivett (1889-1965) CEO of CSIR & Sir Harry Brown (1878-1967) the Post Master General (1923-Oct.1939) & R.G. Casey as Minister to approve JPVM’s RDF plan for a Radiophysics Lab to be built as an extension of the National Standards Lab then under contract at Sydney University, also as arranged by JPVM.

Menzies undertook a 4 month overseas trip leaving Sydney in January 1941 to impress on Churchill the perilous state of Singapore & flew by Qantas flying boat “Corinna” to Singapore. He then flew on to the Middle East to review Australian troops with General Thomas Blaymey (1884-1951),& to meet with English Commanders & also Admiral Andrew Cunningham RN (1883-1963) in Alexandria who made a very favourable impression. Menzies arrived in London on February 20, 1941 & on February 25th reluctantly agreed to Australian troops going to Greece providing the RN could ensure their evacuation, if & when required. Menzies flew by Pan Am Clipper on to Washington in April & met R G Casey for a briefing (including JPVM’s Scientific Liaison Mission to the US starting from mid May) before meeting Secretary of State Cordell Hull (1871-1955) [Secretary of State 1933-1944] &

President Roosevelt (1882-1945)[President 1933-1945].[photo of Menzies & Casey in Washington in April 1941]

In London the Australian High Commissioner was Stanley Bruce (1883-1967) [HC-1933-1945] [shown on right] who was Australian Prime Minister in 1923-1929 including the formation of CSIR in 1927. In London during June 1941-October 1941, JPVM was in close contact with Bruce especially with regard to Singapore & the proposed use of Australian radar to control the Shore Defence guns in Singapore, Hong Kong, Rangoon & Penang.

JPVM had flown by Pan Am Clipper from Auckland to Los Angeles early in May 1941 & then on to Washington to arrange with Casey & Cordell Hull the accreditation of an Australian Scientific Liaison Officer (George Munro [1901-1994]) to co-ordinate the despatch of MIT material back to Sydney.

Slide 17. Dr Jim Molesworth (NX106). 2nd-3rd Battalion AIF.

Dr E.J.C Molesworth (1913-1967), a nephew of JPVM, graduated in Medicine from Sydney University in 1938 & enlisted with the AAMC 6th Division in October 1939, one month after the declaration of war against Germany, & was assigned as the 1st medical officer to the 2nd 3rd Battalion commanded by Lt .Colonel Vivian England (1894-1951) a veteran of WW1 & with whom Jim formed a close friendship extending to after the War when they would go trout fishing together. Vivian England was the commander of the 2nd 3rd Bn from October 1939 to March 1941.

The 3rd Bn sailed with the 1st troop convoy in HMT Orcades (shown-Sunk by U boat October 1942) which left on 9-10 January 1940 & on reaching El Kantara on February 14, 1940 the Bn. was transferred to Camp Julis in Palestine 490 km north of Cairo. The Bn. saw action at Bardia (760 km west of Cairo) on January 3, 1941 & then at Tobruk on January 21, 1941 against the Italian army when Jim was involved with going forward from his Aid Post to help bring in the wounded. The Bn here was part of the 16th Brigade, 6th Division. Italy entered the war on June 11, 1940 & on June 25, 1940 war was declared against Vichy France.

On March 18, 1941 the Bn sailed on the cruiser HMS Gloucester from Alexandria to Piraeus in Greece taking 22 hours under air attack & then moved 500 kms to the north of Greece to Veria to form a line against the German advance coming through Yugoslavia & Bulgaria but were forced to withdraw to Tempe Gorge on April 18, 1941 & then back to Thermopylae until the final evacuation from the port of Kalamata by the RN. The Bn evacuation was mainly to Alexandria where it was assigned to the 17th Brigade of the 7th Division & then ordered to head for Damascus against the Vichy French, but some of the Bn also went to Crete & the survivors eventually made their way back to Alexandria on May 31, 1941 on HMS Phoebe.

For his actions over a number of days (June 21-22, 1941) at Mezze near Damascus (See Slide 34), Jim was awarded the Military Cross but as was the case with his cousin Roger Madsen, he was admitted to No. 7 AGH with colitis some time later & subsequently joined an AAMC training wing under Brigadier Walter MacCallum (1895-1959) a Sydney University trained doctor & WW1 veteran noted for his organizational ability.

The operating theatre is at Gaza Ridge No 1 AGH. (RCM hospitalized here with some 2,000 patients during Syrian campaign). Jim Molesworth was admitted to 7AGH near Tel Aviv further north from Gaza.

Slide 18. John W Fisher (VX 38827). 9th Div. 40 mm Bofors.

John Fisher (1920-1985) appears to have gained 12 months experience in the CMF in 1939-1940 as a Lance Bombadier on 3 inch & 3.7 inch anti aircraft guns at Georges Hts, Sydney before volunteering for the AIF & enlisting on September 16, 1940 in Victoria aged 21. After 5 months of training John embarked in Melbourne on February 15, 1941 for the Middle East & arrived on March 14, 1941 where he was to spend the next 11 months before returning to Adelaide on HMT Strathallan arriving on March 17, 1942 to be involved in the war in the SWPA. During April-September 1941 John's unit was positioned to defend the key port of Haifa & then in Beirut in July as part of the Syrian campaign. During the Christmas of 1941 there was heavy snow where John was camped in tents & he had a lucky escape when the tent pole gave way & narrowly missed his head. During leave in Cairo John met a business acquaintance of his father & had a drink at the notorious Shepheards Hotel "Long Bar".

Slide 19. Roger Cecil Madsen (NX36364). 2nd-3rd Bn. ["All the King's Enemies"].

After 9 months militia experience in Wagga, Roger Cecil Madsen (1916-2002) enlisted in the AIF on July 10, 1940 initially as a trooper in the 21st Light Horse but was soon chosen to go to Duntroon for a 6 week officer training course attended by some 60 NCOs from all states. On December 4, 1940 he was promoted to Lieutenant & embarked on HMT Aquitania in Sydney & disembarked in the Middle East on March 15, 1941 where he was taken as a reinforcement for the 2nd 3rd Bn on March 28, 1941. [The 2nd 3rd & 2nd 5th BNs are the only 2 Australian BNs to have fought against all the King's enemies ie. Italians, Germans, Vichy French & Japanese].

In late April 1941 the RN was evacuating troops from Greece & Crete & Roger was given instructions in Alexandria from a senior RN Commander (probably on battleship HMS Barham) that the Greek inter island ferry the "Ionia" which he was assigned to was to evacuate nurses & troops but without their gear. As part of Convoy AG15 the Ionia arrived at Suda Bay at 13.00 on April 27, 1941 along with the Corinthia & Itria plus 2 other ships & was the last to enter the harbour to load at a jetty of rock & earth fill all the while being vulnerable to air attack. The "Ionia" was only the size of a Manly ferry & the "Corinthia" (shown along with troops being evacuated in the last 5 days of May) returned to Alexandria zig zagging in daylight in a nightmare journey.

After returning from Crete Roger was taken back on the strength of the 2nd 3rd Bn on May 9, 1941 & was involved with the attack against the Vichy French leading to the capture of Damascus on June 21, 1941. Prior to the 2nd 3rd moving west to the Darmour area Roger appears to have contracted dysentery (colitis) & was shunted back to Palestine by ambulance to enter 1 AGH Gaza on July 4, 1941 eventually to be embarked on the hospital ship "Wanganella" for return to Australia on November 5, 1941.

Slide 20. John Fitzroy Duyland Bush RN (GCB).

Admiral Sir John Fitzroy Duyland Bush DSC (1914-2013) comes from a Bristol family of some 500 years & is descended from Paul Bush (1490-1558) the first Bishop of Bristol (1542-1553) who was appointed by Henry VIII (1491-1547), the father of the Royal Navy. JPVM's mother, Annie Madsen (Bush) (1856-1929) is also descended from Paul Bush-[Annie was a cousin of JFDB's father, Fitzroy Bush a solicitor]. J F D Bush passed into the RN in December 1932 as a public school entrant & joined the training cruiser HMS Frobisher for a year doing 3 cruises to the Caribbean, Norway-Baltic & the Mediterranean before spending 2 years in the Far East as a Midshipman on cruisers & then returned to Greenwich to undertake his Sub. Lt course which he passed with 8 1st class "A"s in the top 10% of his class giving him 3 years seniority. He chose to go to Destroyers & was appointed to the small HMS Stronghold (H 50) whose role out of Cromarty Firth was to support the aircraft carrier HMS

Furious to pick up any “Stringbag” Swordfish which went into the sea (none ever did during that year) & as there were only 3 officers on Stronghold Bush gained invaluable experience in carrying out numerous roles until early 1939 when he went to the Mediterranean on HMS Nubian, a new Tribal class destroyer built by Thornycroft whose officers had been hand picked.

As the junior Cypher Officer on Nubian, Bush decoded the message “Commence hostilities against Germany” at the outbreak of WW2. Nubian had to return to Thorneycrofts in early 1940 for new turbines & after 2 missions to Norway at Namsos & Bodo, out of Scapa Flow, returned to Alexandria at the time Italy entered the War by which time Bush had been promoted to 1st Lt. on “Nubian” at a very young age which was very lucky for him.

Nubian acted as a forward screen to the battleship HMS Warspite at the Battle of Matapan (27-29 March 1941) & torpedoed the disabled Italian cruiser “Pola”. Nubian was involved with the Greek-Crete Campaign in April-May 1941 & on May 26 while carrying out an evacuation from Crete had her stern & steering gear blown off by Stukas & then narrowly missed being bombed by high level Italian planes on her port side but managed to get back to Alexandria & was subsequently towed to Bombay for repair & fitted with Type 286 -10 cm radar. (“Nubian” shown in Alexandria, May 26, 1941).

Based on his 6 ½ years of seniority, Bush was given command of HMS Belvoir (“Beaver”), a new Hunt III class escort destroyer built by Cammell Laird & arrived at Port Said via the Cape on July 1, 1942 (“Ash Wednesday” -the burning of HQ secret documents) & was on 15 minutes notice for 3 days (July 1-3, 1942) to relocate the big wigs (the Ambassador) when Rommel was close to getting through at Alamein & taking Cairo but was stopped by the RAF (900 sorties) & army units including the 9th Division AIF. (On July 10, 1942 the 9th Division captured Rommel’s 621st Wireless decoding unit on a hill at Alamein which had been a major security leak for the Commonwealth units in North Africa for over 12 months).

During Montgomery’s 2nd Battle of Alamein (October 23-November 11, 1942) Beaver acted as a long stop to prevent Rommel using small craft to get in behind the 9th Division positioned on the coast & Bush saw the gunfire which later resulted in him being made Naval Vice President of the 8th Army Veterans Association. In July & September 1943 Belvoir was involved with escort duties for the Sicily & Salerno landings.

Bush remained in the Mediterranean with Beaver for 2 years before returning to the UK having been awarded the DSC for gallantry in 1941 as well as 2 bars & being Mentioned In Despatches. Bush married Ruth Horsey in 1938 who went out to Alexandria but returned to the UK during the War with 3 children. After the War Bush held senior positions including Commander of the British Naval Staff in Washington in 1962 & C in C Western Fleet in 1967. In 2005 J F D Bush recorded a lengthy oral history for the IWM (Imperial War Museum) on which this information is based. Known as “The Burning Bush” as much for the colour of his hair as his character. In later years JFDB was President of the Board of Governors at his old school, Clifton College, which has a remarkable record from its foundation in 1862 in producing many notable students including Charles Bean, the Australian War Correspondent & founder of the AWM. Robert Edwin Bush (1859-1939) another descendant of the 1st Bishop of Bristol was a pioneer pastoralist in Western Australia who used a large part of his fortune to fund a 100 bed hospital in his mansion residence “Bishops Knoll” -Bristol during WW1 for Australian AIF casualties. Lt John Edward Scott Bush RN (1909-1941) a son of REB, was killed on May 23, 1941 during the Crete evacuation on the Destroyer HMS Kupling .

Slide 21. Taranto November 11, 1940.

In the 1930's the Italian shipyards at Trieste & Genoa were involved in a very expensive programme of constructing & modifying battleships & other vessels including many submarines (116 built of which 32 were promised to Hitler for the Atlantic, but 88 lost in total) for Mussolini's Italian Navy where the Commander in Chief was still the King of Italy, Victor Emmanuel III (1869-1947) [k. 1900-1946] whose other role was to dismiss & appoint the Prime Minister. The design of these vessels appears to have been based on the need for speed & also to be competitive with French designs operating in the Mediterranean. No aircraft carriers were included in this construction programme nor was there any radar development. The lack of oil to drive these ships was to be their achilles heel also. Mussolini was attracted to the Roman idea of the Med being "Mare Nostrum" "-Our Sea".

Admiral Dudley Pound as Commander of the Mediterranean Fleet from March 1936 had given instructions to Vice Admiral Lumley Lyster (1888-1957) [bottom right] with aircraft carrier experience to prepare a plan to attack Taranto Harbour in the south east of Italy which he was able to put into execution in November 1940 when he was Rear Admiral in charge of aircraft carriers in the Mediterranean Fleet. In the night attack ordered by Admiral Cunningham some 21 Swordfish torpedo bombers flying off HMS Illustrious in 2 waves launched torpedoes & aerial bombs in the shallow waters against 6 battleships, 7 heavy cruisers & 10 other vessels which threatened British shipping. The Italians did not use searchlights during the attack in which 2 Swordfish were lost & 3 Italian battleships damaged including the "Littorio" which was operational again in 4 months. The "Vittorio Veneto" was attacked but the torpedo missed. A 2nd attack the following night was not carried out due to bad weather.

The Italian Admiral Inigo Campioni (1896-1944) [shown top right] relocated his fleet to Naples until the net & other defences were satisfactorily installed but does not appear to have been daunted & sortied with 2 battleships, 6 cruisers & 14 destroyers to disrupt a Malta convoy 5 days later.

Two months after Taranto, HMS Illustrious was crippled by German dive bombers & was not back in service until late 1941.

The German battleship "Bismarck" was halted by a Swordfish torpedo on May 27, 1941 & the Japanese learnt from Taranto for the Pearl Harbour attack 13 months later, as well as the aerial attack on the Prince of Wales & Repulse out of Singapore.

Newsweek in America on May 13, 1940 featured Mussolini as "Il Duce: Key Man of the Mediterranean" 1 month before Italy entered the War with Hitler, hoping to make territorial gains in France & elsewhere.

Slide 22. Rommel Tripoli-El Agheila, March 1941.

Despite proposals being put to Hitler in 1940 that North Africa leading to the Suez Canal was the gateway to Persian oil that could end the War with Britain & shorten a war with Russia by taking the Caucuses, he remained with his plan for attacking Russia on all the European fronts & only sent Rommel to Tripoli (slide 39) as a blocking force to bail out Mussolini who had endeavoured to attack the British forces in Egypt but was severely defeated at Sidi Berrani in December 1940.

The Australian 6th Division, led by Lt. Gnl. Iven Mackay (1886-1966), replaced the Indian Division at Sidi Berrani who were sent to East Africa by Field Marshal Wavell (1883-1950) & the 6th Division using successful WW1 Western Front tactics captured Bardia (3-5, January 1941), Tobruk (21-22, January, 1941) & Benghazi (Feb. 6, 1941) before being withdrawn to Alexandria as the only Division available to Churchill to take part in the Greek campaign in April, 1941. The 9th Division took over the defence of Tobruk led by Lt. Gnl. Leslie Morsehead (1889-1959).

On January 11, 1941 Mussolini was forced to accept Hitler's offer to send a German force (Panzer, motorized infantry & Luftwaffe) to block the British moving westward to take Tripoli & remove the Italians from North Africa altogether. The port of Tripoli had a handling capacity of 45,000 tons per month whereas Rommel's 7 Axis (2 German, 5 Italian) Divisions would soon require 70,000 tons per month & the Benghazi port facilities had a capacity of 24,000 tons per month requiring transfer from Tripoli. On arrival by plane at Tripoli in mid February 1941 Rommel then flew by Heinkel over the Gulf of Sirte & noted the metalled road from Tripoli to Bardia & in the coming weeks as his forces arrived he ordered them forward to El Agheila having been sent from Brindisi, Taranto, Naples & Bari. [Shown Italian supply trucks. Some 7,000 trucks were required to move Axis supplies from Tripoli & at any time 35% were under repair. The British Long Range Desert Group who were expert in navigation clandestinely monitored traffic "road watch" on the main road from Tripoli to Benghazi & transmitted to British HQ.: volunteers were led by Ralph Bagnold FRS (1896-1990) in the LRDG whose emblem was a scorpion within a wheel].

Despite having been ordered by Berlin not to commence offensive operations until May 1941, out of supply considerations, Rommel retook Benghazi on April 4, 1941 & over the next 15 months was involved in a series of battles see-sawing back to El Agheila & then finally a desperate battle at El Alamein in July 1-3, 1942 in an attempt to get through to Cairo using his limited supplies but blocked by Commonwealth forces including the 9th Division which had successfully held Rommel out of Tobruk between April & November, 1941, & almost certainly saved Cairo at that time.

In June 1942 Rommel did capture Tobruk but Hitler ruled against a campaign to capture Malta because of the experience at Crete in May 1941. The role of Malta as a RAF & RN submarine base against Rommel's supply route was crucial but the success of this disruption varied considerably each month from as low as 6% in the 1st half of 1942, to 100% fuel loss in October 1942 for the final Battle of Alamein. During July to October 1941 the average monthly loss rate was 19%.

Slide 23. Siege of Tobruk: April-November 1941. "The Rats of Tobruk".

In early March 1941 the 9th Division led by Lt. Gen Leslie Morsehead (1889-1959) [left] who had considerable experience at Gallipoli & the Western Front in WW1, relieved the 6th Division at Tobruk & immediately started to strengthen the defences with 3 lines of defence, the Red line (posts R1-R70) being the outer from which daily reconnaissance & fighting patrols were conducted out into no man's land & to Axis sangars. The Blue line was the second Line of defence behind which was the Green line where the artillery was located. The 9th Division with no wartime experience except that of its leaders, was given the instruction by Wavell to hold Tobruk for 8 weeks before relief was expected & to hold off Rommel so that he could be kept out of Cairo. The 9th was to stay in Tobruk for 5 months before being relieved in night naval operations by Polish & Czech units in August-October & Tobruk itself out of siege by November 1941.

Rommel attacked Tobruk on 12-14 April 1941 (Easter Battle) where Panzers were allowed through but with the following troops being decimated & the tanks being fired at point blank range by 25 pounders which was very effective. A 2nd German attack on April 30-May 1 (Salient Hill 209) was counter attacked & ended in a severe sand storm. Tobruk was the 1st time that German Panzers had been stopped after a long list of success in Poland & Europe. The Tobruk Ferry Service bringing in supplies & taking off the wounded included HMAS Stuart captained by Hec Waller (1900-1942) [bottom left] & other RAN ships of the "Scrap Iron Flotilla". Some 14,000 Australians were at Tobruk of which 749 were killed, 1996 wounded & 604 prisoners taken between April 8 & October 25, 1941.

Slide 24. The Greek Campaign April -May 1941. "Time on our side", "Noblesse Oblige".

Prime Minister R G Menzies (1894-1978) arrived in London on February 20, 1941 & on the 25th reluctantly agreed to the 6th Division being deployed in Greece but without contacting General Blaymey (1884-1951) in the Middle East who had reservations. Menzies did insist that naval forces be available should an evacuation be necessary from what he described as "a good cause at great risk". A final unanimous decision was made by the UK cabinet on February 27, 1941 & on March 7, 1941 British forces start to arrive in Greece. It appears that Ultra information was available before this decision was made that Rommel (1891-1944) was not to commence offensive operations until May & that time in North Africa was on the British side. Anthony Eden (1897-1977) the Foreign Secretary & General Dill (1881-1944) the CIGS (Professional head of the British Army) had not been able to get a guarantee from Turkey that she would defend Greece if attacked by Germany & would remain neutral but both Eden & Dill appear to have supported a proposal for British forces to be used to defend Greece in support of an earlier commitment, nevertheless General Wavell (1883-1950) decided that the Australian 7th Division would have to remain in the Middle East as his concern was that there were already insufficient resources to do what was required of him. [Shown left Churchill & Eden, Wavell, Dill, Churchill & Menzies, President Roosevelt].

Churchill (1874-1965) appears to have been most concerned to secure Crete as an air base & was anxious that Congress & President Roosevelt (1882-1945) pass the Lend Lease Act as Britain was by now bankrupt & could only afford to do anything with US support & an active campaign in North Africa followed by Greece may have been a factor in demonstrating Britain's willingness to continue the fight against Germany.

In retrospect it has been noticed that Hitler was delayed by a month in his attack on Russia through having to come to Mussolini's aid & this time was a factor in Hitler failing to conquer Moscow before the winter of 1941-42.

Slide 25. The Royal Navy & Greek Campaign: Matapan 1941.

On February 1, 1941 PM Bob Menzies met with Admiral Andrew Cunningham (1883-1963) the C in C of the RN Mediterranean Fleet in Alexandria & was greatly impressed by him which was all to the good as there were quite a few RAN vessels under his command & with the impending Greek operation being considered the transport of the 6th Division to Greece & the evacuation was to be entirely in Cunningham's hands & at a great cost in RN ships, as it was to turn out, due to Stuka bombing. (The cruiser HMS Gloucester which took the 2nd 3rd Bn to Pireus is shown but was subsequently sunk by Stukas during the evacuation.). Four months after the RN success at Taranto Cunningham engaged a substantial force of Italian Navy ships (27-29, March 1941) in a night action guided by radar in which 3 Italian heavy cruisers were sunk, including the "Pola". HMAS Stuart captained by Hec Waller & HMAS Perth were part of Cunningham's force. During the Greek & Crete campaign the RN Landing Ships Infantry, such as HMS Glengyle, were particularly useful for inshore landing.

Slide 26. Africa (1940) & the Balkans.

The map of Africa & Europe in mid 1940 shows the Italian, Vichy French & British controlled territories at that time. The recent map of the Balkans shows the 9 separate national identities which comprise this region.

Slide 27. Germany & Turkey, the Metaxas Line & the Danube.

Kemal Ataturk (1881-1938) who had led the Gallipoli defense & become the 1st President of the Republic of Turkey (1923-1938) had steered the country on a course of neutrality to avoid getting

into any further wars after WW1 & the Turkish War of Independence (1919-1923). On his death his right hand man from Gallipoli, Ismet Inonu (1884-1973) became the 2nd President (1938-1950) & he pursued the same policies.

Hitler's interest in raw materials from Turkey was for chromite which was secured on June 18, 1941 just before the German attack on Russia by a Treaty of Friendship which lasted until 1944 when Turkey joined the Allies out of a fear of post war Russia. (In Yugoslavia & Greece, Hitler would have been aware of their bauxite reserves & other essential resources for Germany). [On March 27 Hitler ordered an invasion of Yugoslavia following a coup against the pro Axis government but the Yugoslav forces were forced to surrender on April 17 which effectively bailed Mussolini out of his failed attempt to attack Greece from Albania which was blocked by the tenacious Greeks at the Klisura Pass on 6-11 January, 1941]

The Metaxas Line built by Greece between 1936 & 1941 was a series of defensive fortifications intended as protection against an attack through Bulgaria. Romania entered the war on the German side on November 23, 1940 & Bulgaria signed on January 3, 1941 with German troops entering the country on February 28, 1941 at the Ruse Danube river crossing which they built when the Danube thawed. The Greeks knew that as soon as the Danube had been crossed they would be in line for attack.

In September 1939, under an Anglo Turkish Treaty, England provided 25 mil. pounds as a military credit but this had no effect when Eden went to Ankara on February 26, 1941 to demand Turkey declare war on Germany if Germany attacked Greece.

Slide 28. The Battle of Greece, April 1941.

At short notice in March 1941, Hitler expanded his plans to attack the north of Greece to take Thessalonika & block British airfields threatening Romanian oil to include an invasion of Yugoslavia. General Alexandros Papagos (1883-1955) [centre right] the Commander of the Greek Army (& combined British forces in Greece) had successfully stopped the Italian invasion of Greece through Albania however his decision to concentrate on this front left the Metaxas Line weakened & did not utilize the better possibility of the Aliakman Line (Aliakman River) with the British & ANZAC Corps NZ 2nd Divn., AIF 6th Divn.

Thessalonika fell to German Panzers on April 9, 1941 to be quickly reinforced by ships from Black Sea ports & Papagos was forced to surrender leaving the Commonwealth forces to carry out a withdrawal south through the Larissa choke point through which the ANZAC Corps had to pass [kept open by a delaying action at Tempe Gorge on April 18, 1941 including the 2nd 3rd BN] before making a stand at Thermopylae to gain time to embark troops onto RN ships at some 5 port locations up to April 28, 1941.

Generals Henry Wilson (1881-1964) [centre], Thomas Blaymey (1884-1951) [left] & Bernard Freyberg (1889-1963) [right] were the senior British & Commonwealth generals in Greece with Lt. Genl Iven Mackay (1882-1966) leading a combined Aust. NZ. British & Greek Force at Klidi Pass in the far north of Greece on April 11-12, 1941 against a German SS unit but were forced to retreat. The German units proved to be very good in mountainous terrain with Stuka support & 2 Panzer Divisions. [Stuka shown over Athens]

Of the 17,125 Australians of the 6th Divn in Greece, 320 were killed, 494 wounded & 2,030 POW. [The total British force (including 6th Divn.) sent to Greece comprised 58,000 service personnel of whom 903 were killed, 1,250 wounded & over 13,958 POW, considerably more than the number

Churchill anticipated]. According to Menzies' 1941 Diary Churchill estimated his expected total losses for the Greek campaign to be 5,000 which Menzies said was just wishful thinking.

King George II (1890-1947) [top right] of Greece was a cousin of King George VI (1895-1952) of Britain & was evacuated to Crete before going to London for the rest of the War as head of the Greek Government in Exile.

Slide 29. The Battle for Crete May 20-31, 1941.

The distance of Crete from Athens is 360 kms & to Alexandria is 650 kms & Hitler thought the Luftwaffe plan to attack Crete with a surprise daring airborne invasion, whilst being risky, would prevent its use as a forward air base to the British, but give him one to North Africa.

On April 30, 1941 General Freyberg was appointed to command all the Allied forces on Crete which by May 17 was to comprise 15,000 Britons, & 750 NZ, 6,500 Aust & 10,200 Cretans/Greeks & by May 6, 1941 he had definite intelligence that an attack was planned for the 17-20th involving the Luftwaffe & paratroops as bombing of Crete airfields had stopped & Souda Bay had been mined.

There were many airfields in the Athens area available for the large air fleet being planned (530 JU 52 transports, 280 long range bombers, 180 fighters & 100 gliders, 150 dive bombers) with operations to concentrate on the main airfield on Crete at Maleme. The paratroopers' individual weapons & supplies were in separate coloured canisters with parachutes & they were especially vulnerable until they reached their weapons on landing, if they had not been killed beforehand.

On the 20th it looked as though the German attack had been held, but at Maleme the paratroopers managed to gain a toehold due to a cut or break in the NZ communications between the 2 sides of the airfield & their withdrawal gave the Germans the opportunity to fly in reinforcements & supplies which over the next week allowed them to expand all their landings & cause a withdrawal of Allied troops to the south of the island. Australian troops were evacuated back to Alexandria from Sfakia. The Australian casualties on Crete were 274 killed, 507 wounded, 3,102 POW. The total British casualties on Crete (including Australian) were 3,579 killed, 1,918 wounded & 12,254 POW.

Reg Saunders of the 2nd 7th BN was evacuated from Greece to Crete but was left behind for a year aided by locals until he was evacuated by sea to rejoin his BN to serve in New Guinea [shown left with Lt. Tom Derrick VC in NG, a Tobruk veteran] (Saunders also in the Korean War at Kapyong). On 31st -1st June 1941 RAF Sunderland flying boats evacuated 54 senior officers including Major-General Freyberg at Sfakia for return to Alexandria. A similar evacuation was carried out by Sunderlands earlier, at the end of April, from Kalamata.

Slide 30. Crete Naval Operations.

The Crete evacuations ordered by Andrew Cunningham were very costly in RN ships of Light Cruiser & Destroyer classes inflicted by German Stukas, other German fighter bombers & Italian medium bombers. The Light Cruisers which were sunk were the "Gloucester", "Calcutta" & "Fiji" & the Destroyers which were sunk were the "Kashmir", "Hereward", "Kelly", "Juno", "Imperial" & "Greyhound". HMAS Perth was damaged by German aircraft & the destroyer "Kelvin" also. The Battleships "Warspite" & "Valiant" suffered Stuka damage & a serious RN error was exposed in the loss of "Greyhound", "Fiji" & "Gloucester" when anti aircraft ammunition had been fully used & rescue operations had been ordered in the face of air attack. The loss of life on "Gloucester" at some 725 was the most severe.

HMAS Stuart a destroyer & the Light Cruiser HMS Phoebe were both involved in the evacuations from Greece & Crete.

Slide 31. Alexandria & Malta.

The port of Alexandria was a transit point for AIF units moving to & from camps in Palestine to embark/disembark from RN ships going from ports in North Africa, Greece & Crete. As well as being a naval base for Cunningham's Mediterranean Fleet including submarines, there was a floating dock for carrying out repairs such as to the Battleships "Valiant" & "Queen Elizabeth" which had limpets placed under them by Italian divers to detonate on their lightly armoured bottoms on December 19, 1941. (There was also a seaplane base for Sunderlands.). The 6 Italian divers on their 3 mailes ["pigs"] were brought by submarine "Scire" to Alexandria & followed a destroyer through the boom gate & were able to attach their limpets & although caught by the British, did not disclose where the limpets had been placed before they exploded.

HMS Barham was also an old WW1 battleship operating out of Alexandria which was torpedoed & blew up on November 25, 1941 which with the loss of the aircraft carrier "Ark Royal" operating with H Force out of Gibraltar on November 14, 1941 represented a very dangerous time for the RN in the Mediterranean, which it appears fortunately that the Italian Navy did not exploit during 1942.

Air Marshal Arthur Tedder (1890-1967) was the RAF Commander of Middle East RAF (1941-43) based in Cairo & commanded air operations in North Africa & the Mediterranean including the evacuation of Crete & in 1942 saw a substantial build up in the Western Desert which was a key factor in the Battle of Alamein in October 1942.

Malta was a key RAF & RN base for intercepting Axis supplies from Italy to Tripoli for Rommel's campaign in North Africa & came under constant air attack from Luftwaffe planes based in Sicily & also by Italian planes out to destroy convoys bringing in supplies & aviation fuel. In August 1942 the large tanker SS Ohio although damaged managed to reach Malta with 5 merchant ships (9 were lost) & saved the island from surrender. King George VI awarded the people of Malta with the George Cross on April 15, 1942 for gallantry in the face of the violent siege which lasted from June 11, 1940 to November 20, 1942. Malta was an extremely useful base in 1943 for the Sicily landings.

The 1st 3 RAF fighters to defend Malta in 1940 were Gloster Gladiator biplanes affectionately known as "Faith", "Hope" & "Charity". ("Faith" has been restored & is on display in a Malta Museum). The Malta submarine base established in early 1941 had some 12 U-Class submarines before being transferred to Alexandria to escape bombing. The "Upholder" commanded by Malcolm Wanklyn VC is remembered for sinking 14 ships over 12 months before being lost on April 14, 1942 off Tripoli.

Slide 32. Vichy French, Levant, GIB.

Vichy France (1940-1942) [see Slide 26 map] came into being on June 25, 1940 as the "Free Zone" defined by a map Appendix to the Armistice with Germany which was signed in the same railway carriage where Germany surrendered in 1918. [The carriage was located in the Forest of Compiègne 60 kms north of Paris. A faithful replica was built by the French after WW2.] The Armistice comprised 24 articles & was to be valid until a peace treaty was concluded which was expected to be negotiated quite soon as Britain was also expected to surrender but this never happened. Without a navy to control the overseas French territories & not wanting the war to continue from French North Africa, Hitler agreed that the French Navy be disarmed but need not surrender although any vessels outside home waters were to immediately return home.

The most powerful units of the French Navy had left Brest in early June 1940 & despite Churchill's efforts to have them join the RN in the Mediterranean to oppose the Italian Navy, Churchill & his cabinet proposed that 4 options {Join the RN, go to British ports with reduced crews, go to French West Indies or US ports, or scuttle at Mers El Kebir} be put to Admiral Marcel Gensoul (1880-1973) [bottom left] in command at Mers El Kebir to peacefully solve the problem, otherwise Admiral James Somerville's (1882-1949) [bottom right] H-Force would attack without delay. H-Force comprised the battleships "Hood", "Valiant", "Resolution" & the aircraft carrier "Ark Royal" & other ships including the destroyer "Foxhound" which took Capt. Cedric Holland (1883-1950), a fluent French speaking officer who had recent experience in Paris as the naval attache, to speak directly with Admiral Gensoul (an Anglophobe & known to the RN as being very stubborn) but after several determined efforts including leaving a briefcase with the British terms, Holland was unable to obtain any agreement other than that "Force would be met with force" & the evident delaying tactics by Gensoul led to Somerville's ultimatum at 5.15 pm that if terms were not accepted immediately the French ships would be sunk. "Strasbourg" was damaged ("Dunkerque" & "Bretagne" destroyed) but managed to escape back to Toulon where she was scuttled by Vichy personnel along with many other vessels on November 27, 1942 following the allied landings in North Africa to which Hitler responded by taking over the Vichy Southern zone & ending the Vichy control. The British success at Mers El Kebir signalled to Allies & enemies alike Britain's willingness to continue the fight against Germany.

H Force operated from Gibraltar which became a more effective base by the construction of an extended airfield in 1942 using rock from tunnel excavations.

General Henri Dentz (1881-1945) [top image] was the High Commissioner of the Levant (1940-1941) one of the Vichy controlled territories, & Army Commander in Chief of Syria & Lebanon commanding some 45,000 men including French Foreign Legion units. In May 1941 Italian & German planes were being refuelled in Syria on their way to Iraq, which on instruction from Churchill, resulted in the campaign to stop the Vichy collaboration by an invasion on June 8, 1941 through Palestine & Iraq of some 20,000 Australian Indian, British & Free French troops. Damascus fell to Australians on June 21 & Beirut was about to fall to the Australian 21 Brigade when Dentz sought an Armistice signed on July 14, 1941.

Slide 33. The Syrian Campaign: June-July 1941.

It appears that in May 1941 a proposal was put to the Germans that Syria could be used to further German designs in Iraq to disrupt British oil supplies by using the Palmyra air base for refuelling of German & Italian aircraft & also to use the rail system to send ammunition to Mosul & that this proposal came from Admiral Francois Darlan (1881-1942) [top right] the head of the Vichy government military who controlled the French offshore territories. (Darlan was assassinated in December 1942 in Algiers several weeks after the Allies invaded French North Africa where he happened to be & after Eisenhower recognized him as being the French High Commissioner for North & West Africa in return for Darlan ordering all Vichy French forces to cease resistance & cooperate with the Allies, which they did, based on Darlan's authority).

On May 14, 1941 an RAF reconnaissance flight over Palmyra spotted German & Italian aircraft taking off & that night an attack was authorized. The Australian 7th Division was the main force used in a series of battles from June 8, 1941 progressing north up the coast road to Litani River, Damour & Beirut & up the mountainous inland region to Damascus & Merdjayoun ending 5 weeks later with an armistice in which most of the French infantry chose to be repatriated back to Metropolitan France. In order to conceal the identity of the 7th Division in communications it was identified as 6th Division

“Export Force”. A third British force approaching Palmyra from Iraq to Tripoli succeeded on July 1, 1941 in overcoming a Foreign Legion force which was led in Syria by Lt Col. Barre.

At the start of the campaign Darlan ordered some 155 planes from Vichy Algeria, mainly consisting of modern Dewoitine D 520 fighters, to Syria some of which refuelled at Eleusis airfield, Athens (shown). Confusion by 7th Div troops resulted from the similarity of Vichy planes & markings to Hurricanes which presumably was clarified by recognition of the yellow Vichy tail colour.

The eventual success of the 7th Division & Indian Units in very difficult country to overcome a numerically superior force (quite determined to show the Germans that they had put up a credible resistance) familiar with the terrain & well equipped with tanks, mortars, artillery & aircraft, appears to have been achieved through greater physical fitness & endurance of the infantry ,supported by RAN naval shelling of coastal positions & RAAF No 3 Sqdn Tomahawks. Attention to the control of malaria & the revised command structure with the Australia Corps from June 21, 1941 were also factors.

The Vichy military bases in the Levant in 1939 are shown with a total force including regular French Metropolitan battalions (8,000), specials such as the 6th Foreign Legion (4,000) & colonial troops (25,000), [ie. consisting of 18 good French Battalions].

The 7th Aust. Division consisting of 21 Brigade (3 Bns) & 25 Brigade (3 Bns) also included the two 6th Division Bns, the 3rd & 5th. The Indian Brigade group included 3 Battalions & the Free French Brigade of 2 Battalions & a small number of tanks & artillery. [ie.9 good Australian, Indian, British Battalions & 6 doubtful Free French Bns].

Slide 34. Damascus & Damour: 2nd 3rd Bn 7th Division Reinforcements.

On October 1, 1918 the Australian Light Horse took Damascus from the Turks after 400 years by advancing from Lake Tiberius through El Kaneitra & Mezze as well as along the “Old Pilgrims Road ” to the east (The blue colour patch is for a Light Horse Regiment at Damascus).[Lake Tiberius/ Sea of Galilee shown is one of the Imperial Airways refuelling stops JPVM made on his 1939-1940 trips].

The Australian & Indian Battalions assigned to taking Damascus in June 1941 had to fight determined French resistance along the same routes as 1918 but with infantry. The 2nd 3rd Bn of the 6th Div was added to the 7th Div as reinforcements from Camp Julis for the attack on Damascus & at June 18, 1941 when the Bn entrained at El Majdal near Julis (See Slide 17 map) the Bn comprised 21 officers & 385 men. After reaching Haifa 150 km north of El Majdal the Bn travelled for 17 hours in 8 rail cattle trucks in stifling heat across the Jordan Valley & arrived at Deraa at dusk on the 19th (the train at 1 steep section had to be divided in 2) where they boarded civilian buses & a few vehicles which had travelled from Julis by road. The little column drove all night often at walking pace around bomb craters for 80 kms & arrived at Khan Denoun in the early morning of the 20th & at 11.00 am were moved forward by truck to Mouadamiye on the Kuneitra Rd facing Mezze & several French forts (Fort Goybet,Weygand,Valtier & Sarrail) to the west & fighting ensued through to the 21st. The French loss of the Beirut Rd led to the French surrender of Damascus on the 21st. Between the 25th & 28th the 2nd 3rd Bn was involved in unsuccessful attacks on Jebel Mazar (Pt. 1634 mtrs) . a significant point on high ground.

The relocation to the coast south of Damour, a gateway to Beirut, by both the 3rd & 5th Bns (color patches chocolate brown on green & black on red) by the beginning of July was evidently achieved in secrecy but how it was actually done is not clear. The 3rd Bn was about 300 strong at this time & had come from a series of strenuous fights at Damascus & Jebel Mazar & also some men had been in

Libya, Greece & Crete in the last 6 months & were suffering from the effects of exposure & malnutrition. The country across the Damour River leading to the town of Damour was extremely rugged & the Bn was only able to take what they could for 3-4 days on their backs & by mules. The 3rd & 5th after crossing the Damour River down a wet treacherous path were to go far into the hills to the east which was difficult even for the mules where each man had been given 48 hours of rations, 50-300 rounds of ammunition, 2 grenades, 1 sticky bomb, a blanket & a full water bottle. Mules were to carry reserves of ammunition & 1 "No 11" wireless set for each Bn whilst the Brigade Signal Section was to run a telephone line for each Bn. Artillery support was by wireless but more likely by telephone, else by signal lamp to Hill 394 for the inland flank. The remarkable Damour campaign started before midnight of July 5-6, 1941 & continued until the nightfall of July 8 by which time the 3rd & 5th Bns had passed through the town of Damour & the French enemy fire eventually ceased by 1.00 pm on July 11. For several days the 3rd Bn had no army rations & lived by shooting & cooking goats & acquiring horse meat from the villagers. The French resistance was noted for its accurate 75mm artillery fire & mortars which were accurately ranged & had ample supply of ammunition.

Slide 35. Vichy French Syria.

At Nabek in 1938 the Foreign Legion built an Arc de Triomphe with the emphasis on Honour & Fidelity as well as Valour & Discipline. The Legion remembers its involvement in Syria by the battles at Jezzine, Jadra, Damour, Merdjayoun & Palmyra. The "French 75" was the 1897, 75 mm artillery piece which was widely used & the 50 mm mortar was also used very effectively in the mountainous Syrian terrain. The captured French tank shown & put into Allied use was the 11 ton Renault R-35 light tank put into use in 1936 to assist infantry with a 37 mm gun. 2 Bns with a total of 95 tanks were used by the Vichy in Syria but although well armoured were slow & lacked anti-tank capacity. The captured Moran MS 406C French fighters at Rayak AFB near Beirut were a 1938 design but obsolescent.

Slide 36. Sir John Lavarack, "Tubby Allan", Iven Mackay, John Stevenson & Roden Cutler VC.

General John Lavarack (1885-1957) (left photo) was in command of 2 Brigades of the 7th Div. in Syria (the 18th Brigade had been rushed to Tobruk to assist the 9th Div. under L. Morsehead) which advanced in 2 columns into Syria. At Blaymey's instigation on June 18, 1941 Lavarack was promoted to Lt.General & took command of I Corps with responsibility for much of Syria & he reorganized his forces consisting of the 7th Div, British, Indian & Free French to good effect. On July 12, 1941 Lavarack arranged the Armistice at Acre which Dentz could have acceded to 10 days earlier if acceptance from Darlan (& Petain) in Vichy had been promptly notified.

Maj. Gnl Arthur "Tubby" Allan (1894-1959) (centre) returned from Greece with the 16th Brigade (noted for action at Pinios Gorge April 17, 1941) & on June 18, 1941 took command of the 7th Div in Syria. (for 5 months after the Vichy surrender Allan was at Tripoli in northern Syria preparing for a possible German attack).

Lt Gnl Sir Iven Mackay (1882-1966) (top right) was in command of the 6th Div in January 1941 at Bardia & then the disastrous Greek campaign before returning to Australia in September 1941. Iven was a graduate of Sydney University & taught physics between 1910-1914 & served with the AIF on the Western Front in WW1. After the War he studied physics at Cambridge University under Ernest Rutherford in the Cavendish Lab.

Lt Col John Stevenson (1908-1971) (bottom left) was the 2IC of the 2nd 3rd BN until June 21, 1941 when he took command from Lt Col Donald Lamb who had been captured temporarily & wounded

at Mezze. For his actions at Damour, Stevenson was Mentioned in Despatches twice & received the Distinguished Service Order for leadership.

Lt. Roden Cutler VC (1916-2002) (bottom right) was awarded his Victoria Cross for very brave actions under machine gun fire at Merdjayoun on June 19, 1941 & June 23-24 whilst in charge of a 25 pdr against Vichy tanks. At Damour on July 6 he was engaged in bringing a line to his outpost under machine gun fire & was wounded later necessitating the amputation of a leg.

Slide 37. Russia & the Caucuses.

In the 5 months after Hitler's invasion of Russia there was concern in London that he would also use Turkey, like Bulgaria in the Balkans, to send his forces into northern Syria & Iraq & take the British oil fields, however during November 1941 the Soviets moved a very large force from Siberia to Moscow & on December 5, 1941 launched a massive counter attack in the severe winter conditions continuing until January 7, 1942 by which time the Germans had lost the Battle for Moscow & marked the end of Hitler's plan for a quick victory over the Russians.

In November 1941 it appears that Australia was approached with the idea of providing a force should the Germans attack through Turkey, which after the Greek disaster, Australia was reluctant to do, but the entry of America into the War on December 7, 1941 changed the whole picture. The Allied aid routes to Russia via Persia (Iran) & Iraq leading up to Baku are shown.

Slide 38. Baku Oil.

Prior to Hitler's attack on Russia, Baku oil had been supplied to Germany but the Azerbaijan region was to be a vital source of resources of food & oil to Stalin during the Great Patriotic War. (80% of Soviet oil requirements came from Baku). The Baku oilfields had been developed from around 1880 & distribution by rail cars had also been developed. There do not appear to be plans for Germany to get at Baku via the Black Sea & Georgia but only to attack down the Caspian coast- in the end the German defeat at Stalingrad by February 1943 marked a decisive turning point in the War.

Slide 39. Rommel in North Africa 1942.

By late December 1941 Rommel had withdrawn back to El Agheila with its shortened supply line from Tripoli & soon had some 120 tanks which he used in a surprise attack against General Auchinleck reaching back to Gazala where defensive positions were maintained until May 26- June 21, 1942 when in a series of devastating actions Rommel overran Gazala & captured Tobruk & Mersa Matruh. By June 30 Auchinleck had withdrawn back to the very good defensive position of El Alamein at which time the 9th Division was brought forward from Palestine to help stabilize the position. On the 28th June General Morsehead received orders at GHQ to defend Cairo but then told to go to Alexandria-on the 29th Morsehead spent the night with R G Casey (Churchill's Resident British Minister).

German & Italian plans to invade Malta to secure the supply route to the Afrika Korps at this time were deferred due to the success in retaking Tobruk. From April 1941 until July 10, 1942 Rommel had an invaluable source of radio intercept intelligence from his 621st mobile wireless unit interpreting British Army communications & also from January 23, 1942 the Italians had been supplying the daily British Order of Battle decoded from the regular reports of US Col. Bonner Fellers (1896-1973) sent by US diplomatic code which had been broken to Washington from Cairo. The 621st unit was captured by the 9th Division on high ground at Tel El Eisa prompting a complete British radio blackout for a week after the discovery.[The commander of the 621st Capt. Alfred Seeböhm was wounded & died 5 days later in a Cairo hospital & his deputy Lt. Herz apparently under

interrogation provided much useful information]. The Panzer Mk IV “Special” (22 tons) long barrel & the 88mm anti aircraft gun were particularly devastating to Allied tanks. In early 1942, 200 Grant tanks (shown with Bernard Montgomery’s personal tank) were supplied to the 8th Army from the US.

Slide 40. 9th Division North Africa- El Alamein 1942.

After the fall of Tobruk, Roosevelt ordered all the new Sherman (252) tanks in the US Armoured Division be transferred to Egypt & Churchill resolved to go to Cairo himself to decide what should be done. On August 5, 1942 Churchill met with Morsehead & Auchinleck at 9th Division Tac HQ after which, on the 13th, General Alexander (1891-1969) replaced Auchinleck in command of the Middle East & General Bernard Montgomery (1887-1976) was given command of the 8th Army. (Churchill’s choice of General Gott was not recommended by the CIGS Alan Brooke but Gott was killed when his plan was shot down when coming to take up his new position. Montgomery was the better choice Churchill later admitted). From Ultra intelligence Rommel’s last ditch effort to attack Alam Halfa on August 30-September 5, 1942 was known to Montgomery who planned a successful defensive strategy which destroyed some 40 of Rommel’s tanks & forced him on the defensive.

Montgomery through leadership skills, was quickly able to infuse a confident atmosphere within the 8th Army & made a number of command changes, especially to no longer use “Jock Columns” now that there was an abundant supply of equipment & avoided the fragmentation that the Germans had been easily able to pick off.

Montgomery’s 2nd Battle of El Alamein (October 23, 1942-November 11, 1942) ended up being fought over 19 days in which infantry, artillery & air support were decisive whilst the role of the Armoured Divisions were not able to achieve their initial planned objectives with the result that the 9th Division on the northern coastal flank was called on to make the essential break in the face of a concentrated effort by the Axis forces. The Divisional emblems of the Commonwealth & British infantry are shown & in the photo Montgomery is on the left, Auchinleck in the centre & Wavell on the right, all of whom played significant roles in the North African campaigns.[General Richard O’Connor (1889-1981) who led the initial North Africa Campaign of which the 6th Division was part, was captured by a German patrol on April 7, 1941 but escaped in Italy in 1943].

Slide 41. The Desert Air War: RAAF Squadrons.

In the Middle East during 1941-42 there were many RAAF personnel in RAF & RAAF squadrons including RAAF Sqdns No. 3 & No. 450 whose role was mainly infantry support, reconnaissance & fighter cover. Between Alexandria & Benghazi there were some 250 Landing Grounds in the coastal region which were used in the very mobile campaigns to keep in step with the land force movements. Sqdns 3 & 450 gave valuable support to the 9th Division at Alamein at a crucial stage between November 1-3, 1942 with Kittyhawks armed with anti-personnel bombs & the normal 500 lb bombs.

The Landing Grounds at El Daaba & Fuka some 80 kms west of Alamein, were used by the Germans as their main bases during the 2nd Battle of Alamein for their Me 109 fighters (shown, unit JG27) & transport planes.

The Western Desert Air Force was commanded by Air Vice Marshal Arthur Coningham (1895-1948) [born in Brisbane, brought up in New Zealand & with an RAF career from WW1] who developed very good techniques for the tactical use of air power in support of ground units. (General Alexander the Middle East C in C is shown with Coningham). At October 27, 1942 the WDAF comprised 44

Squadrons of fighters, bombers, anti-tank & reconnaissance of some 700 planes. It is not clear how many of Rommel's Luftwaffe were still flying at this time but almost certainly less than 170.

Metrovick LW radar was used in the Western Desert (known in the SWPA as the SCR602 as made in Canada). R G Casey was Churchill's Resident British Minister in Cairo who was in contact with the senior Commanders during Alamein at crucial times. The leading RAAF pilot in the Western Desert was Clive Caldwell DSO, DFC (1911-1994) who flew in Tomahawks.

Slide 42. Pan Am "Pacific Clipper": JPVM from Hawaii December 4, 1941.

Harold Holt (1908-1967) was Menzies' Minister for Science in Charge of CSIRO (Oct. 1939-Aug. 1941) [Holt & Menzies seen together 1939] when JPVM proposed his Scientific Liaison Mission to the US & UK. JPVM left Sydney in May 1941 going to Washington 1st to see R G Casey as the Australian Legation Head who was working in close co-operation with the British Embassy to establish the US Scientific Liaison attache position (George Munro [1901-1994]) before continuing to London by Pan Am Clipper. At the end of November 1941 JPVM was anxious to return via the US & then to go to Singapore to see the C in C concerning Aust. Shore Defence radar to be installed & decided to fly by Qantas from Sydney shortly after his return but the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour changed those arrangements & on January 26, 1942 he presented a detailed report to the new PM John Curtin (1885-1945) [shown] on the current position of Australian radar.

The Pan Am flight JPVM was on from Hawaii was instructed to return to America to New York which involved a very challenging arrangement of refuelling stops shown.

The 9th Division returned to Australia in early 1943 in a convoy of 3 large ships including the Queen Mary which arrived in Sydney on February 27, 1943. At the beginning of the War the "Queen Mary" had been fitted out as a troopship in Sydney & degaussed by the Standards Laboratory.

Slide 43. Aftermath, 1956 Suez Crisis.

The failure of the UK & France to regain control of the Suez Canal in 1956 marked the end of the UK as a major world power & made the European countries acutely aware of their individual limited ability to act outside of US approval. The Hungarian Uprising (October 23, 1956-November 11, 1956) was suppressed by Soviet tanks from November 4, 1956 & that action is thought to have been emboldened by the events in Suez.

Since 1875 France & the United Kingdom (44%) owned the concession which was to expire in 1968 for the newly opened (1869) Suez Canal (193 km long) which could be used at any time in peace & war without distinction of flag, according to the 1888 Convention of Constantinople. On July 26, 1956 President Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918-1970) nationalized the canal to be operated by the Suez Canal Authority as a response to the withdrawal of US/UK/World Bank funding for the Aswan High Dam project which Nasser then approached Russia for. (The reason for the withdrawal of the funding by the US is not clear). The Aswan High Dam was built by 1970 with Russian help but whilst controlling the Nile floods the regular dispersion of silt no longer occurs & large quantities of fertilizer are required for Egyptian crops. [Ethiopia is now building another large dam south of Khartoum to store Blue Nile water -GERD-the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. Britain had built a dam, & raised several times, at Aswan 6 kms -Aswan Low Dam- downstream in 1902 with bottom sluices to allow silt to pass].

On August 13, 1956 PM R G Menzies whilst in London broadcast on the BBC his support for the UK position set by Anthony Eden the UK PM, however a 5 man International Committee (chosen out of 18 countries who had reached agreement out of 22 countries who had attended a conference in

London) which Menzies led to negotiate with Nasser in September was a failure, but Britain, France & the US say they are still going ahead with a plan for a Suez Canal Users Association which was discussed by the UN Security Council on October 5, 1956 but not voted on. R G Casey with experience in the Arab world & by now Minister for External Affairs in Canberra advised Menzies not to support the UK position but to let Nasser have the Canal. The US position was not in support of the UK-French-Israeli military action between October 29 & November 6 as it appears that the US was able to build larger tankers to take oil around the Cape & preserve its interests in the petro-dollar. It was also a US Presidential Election year & Eisenhower apparently wanted to avoid any wars & threatened to sell British Bonds as a financial punishment to a struggling pound Stg.. Egypt sank 40 ships in the Canal during the military action blocking its use for 5 months.

President Nasser visited the US & President Eisenhower in 1960 & evidently got on well together. In the 6 Day War between Nasser's Arab coalition of Egypt, Syria & Jordan against Israel over the blocking of the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping in June 5-10, 1967, Israel totally humiliated Nasser & made territorial gains which it retains to the present time. It was a UN condition at the end of the 1956 Crisis that the Straits of Tiran at the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba (see Slide 44) leading to the Israeli Seaport of Eilat to receive oil & export to Asia & Africa would remain open to Israel, otherwise in the event of the Strait being closed, that would be a condition for war which Israel had thoroughly planned for.

In 2014 the Suez Canal Authority built a 2nd canal to improve the passage & passing of ships & in 2021 the 400 metre long container ship "Ever Given" was stuck in the canal before tugs pulled it free & unstuck the bow.

Slide 44. Gulf War (1991), Afghanistan (2001-2021), Syria Civil War (2011-Present).

Australia has had a military involvement in the Middle East in the Gulf War of 1991 (Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait for oil) & in Afghanistan (2001-2021) against IS/Taliban religious extremists, in both cases led by the US. ISAF is the International Security Assistance Force to Afghanistan.

The Syrian Civil War since 2011 involving 5 factions variously backed by at least 4 foreign countries where it appears that 25% of Syria in the northern area is currently being contested.