

Chapter 1 : The Battle of Guadalcanal - History Learning Site

Both at Midway and at Guadalcanal the Japanese lost irreplaceable pilots. In the former case it was in an effort to secure a decisive battle, and in the latter it resulted from a piece-meal commitment that failed to recognize that the decisive campaign was in progress.

Battle of the Coral Sea order of battle During late April, the Japanese submarines Ro and Ro reconnoitered the area where landings were planned. They did not sight any Allied ships in the area and returned to Rabaul on 23 and 24 April respectively. Escorting the transports was the Port Moresby Attack Force with one light cruiser and six destroyers under the command of Rear Admiral Sadamichi Kajioka. A separate Cover Force sometimes referred to as the Support Group, commanded by Rear Admiral Kuninori Marumo and consisting of two light cruisers, the seaplane tender Kamikawa Maru and three gunboats, joined the Covering Group in providing distant protection for the Tulagi invasion. Once in the Coral Sea, the carriers were to provide air cover for the invasion forces, eliminate Allied air power at Port Moresby, and intercept and destroy any Allied naval forces which entered the Coral Sea in response. In order to try to keep to the MO timetable, Takagi was forced to abandon the delivery mission after the second attempt and direct his force towards the Solomon Islands to refuel. The submarine took no damage and apparently did not realize that it had been attacked by carrier aircraft. Ro and Ro were also deployed in an attempt to blockade Port Moresby, arriving off the town on 5 May. Neither submarine engaged any ships during the battle. A fleet oiler is in the near background. The Japanese forces immediately began construction of a seaplane and communications base. In spite of the damage suffered in the carrier strikes, the Japanese continued construction of the seaplane base and began flying reconnaissance missions from Tulagi by 6 May. Takagi terminated refueling, headed southeast, and sent scout planes to search east of the Solomons, believing that the U. Since no Allied ships were in that area, the search planes found nothing. After the refueling was completed on 6 May, he planned to take his forces north towards the Louisiades and do battle on 7 May. Believing the Japanese carriers were still well to the north near Bougainville, Fletcher continued to refuel. Reconnaissance patrols conducted from the U. Takagi received the report at Takagi, whose ships were still refueling, was not yet ready to engage in battle. Nevertheless, Fletcher decided the risk was necessary to ensure the Japanese invasion forces could not slip through to Port Moresby while he engaged the carriers. Hara in turn believed Fletcher was south of him and advised Takagi to send the aircraft to search that area. Each side readied the rest of its carrier attack aircraft to launch immediately once the enemy was located. Believing that he had located the U. The sighting was confirmed by a Kinugasa floatplane at The Bs actually saw the same thing as Nielsen:

Chapter 2 : Battles of Midway, Coral Sea, and Guadalcanal by on Prezi

Get this from a library! Midway and Guadalcanal. [Tom McGowen] -- Details the World War II battles between the Americans and the Japanese at the Pacific islands of Midway and Guadalcanal.

Some historians believe the Allied victory at the Battle of Midway was the defining moment, followed by aggressive island-hopping all the way to the Japanese homeland. Others view Midway as the tipping point in the war where the initiative hung in the balance only to swing toward the Allies following its major victory in the Guadalcanal campaign. According to many other historians, however, the turning point of the war in the Pacific resulted from the two battles combined. They point out that the Battle of Midway inflicted such permanent damage on the Japanese Navy that when the Battle of Guadalcanal began two months later, they did not have enough resources to hold onto the island or to take it back once the U. Together, these two victories ended major Japanese expansion in the Pacific, allowing the Americans and its allies to take the offensive. The Japanese then began to expand into the Western Pacific, occupying many islands in an attempt to build a defensive ring around their conquests and threaten the lines of communication from the United States to Australia and New Zealand. Emboldened by its rapid and successful victories, the Japanese high command prepared to deal one more decisive blow to the U. Naval forces in the Pacific by destroying the U. The Japanese also intended to occupy Midway as part of an overall plan to extend their defensive perimeter in response to the Doolittle air raid on Tokyo. This operation was also considered preparatory for further attacks against Fiji, Samoa, and Hawaii itself. Admiral Yamamoto Isoroku, Japanese fleet commander, hoped to draw out the American fleet, calculating that when the United States began its counterattack, the Japanese would eliminate the United States as a strategic power in the Pacific, giving Japan a free hand in establishing its superiority over other Asian races in a program known as the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The Japanese also anticipated that another demoralizing defeat would force the U. Nimitz to pinpoint the date and location of the attack allowing him to prepare his own ambush by placing available U. On June 3, , the crucial and decisive naval Battle of Midway began and since the two adversaries were never within sight of each other, all attacks were carried out by carrier-based or land-based aircraft. Over the next five days, aircraft launched from Midway Atoll and from carriers of both navies flew hundreds of miles, dropping torpedoes and bombs and fighting one another in the skies. By June 7, , victory belonged to the Pacific Fleet which had inflicted devastating damage on the Japanese fleet that proved irreparable, solidly checking Japanese momentum. The Americans sank four fleet carriers – all part of the six-carrier force that had attacked Pearl Harbor six months earlier. They were the Akagi, Kaga, Soryu, and Hiryu, with aircraft and over five thousand sailors. The Japanese also lost the heavy cruiser Mikuma. At the end of several days of fighting, the Japanese Navy suffered 3, deaths. American losses included the sinking of the USS Hornet aircraft carrier, the USS Hamman destroyer and the downing of aircraft resulting in deaths total. Battle of Guadalcanal Guadalcanal – a 2, square-mile speck of jungle in the Solomon Islands – lies to the north-eastern approaches of Australia. Though it is a humid and jungle-covered tropical island, its position made it strategically important for both sides. If the Japanese captured the island, they could cut off the sea route between Australia and America. If the Americans controlled the island, they would be better able to protect Australia from Japanese invasion and they could also protect the Allied build-up in Australia that would act as a springboard for major assaults against Japanese installations elsewhere in the Pacific. Although both the Japanese and Americans understood occupying Guadalcanal was critically and strategically important, it was the Japanese that got there first on June 8, Their goal was to build an airfield at Lunga Point and artillery positions in the hills nearby to protect the airfield. By August, 8, Japanese troops were on the island with more arriving each week. On August 7th, the 1st Marine Division achieved complete tactical surprise when they landed on Guadalcanal, supported by the most powerful amphibious force ever assembled: Five cruisers from America and Australia guarded the actual landing craft that gathered off of Tenaru on Guadalcanal. Expecting major Japanese defense, they found nothing. The climate also did a great deal to affect radios and radio communication between those advancing inland and those on the beach. Regardless of these issues, the Americans made no

contact with the Japanese and for the first 24 hours there was no fighting on Guadalcanal. However, though the first 24 hours on Guadalcanal were relatively painless for the Americans, this was not so for the Marines who landed at nearby islands that lay to the north of Guadalcanal: Tulagi, Gavutu and Tanambogo. The Americans needed to control these as this would allow them to oversee the Nggela Channel that separated Guadalcanal from Florida Island, north of it. The landings were fiercely resisted by the Japanese Navy troops who, outnumbered and outgunned by the Allied forces, fought and died almost to the last man. At Tulagi, the landing by 1st Raider Battalion under Lieutenant Colonel Merritt Edson, and the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines was not easy as Japanese resistance was stiff and ferocious from the very beginning. Nevertheless, the Marines fought tenaciously and relentlessly for the next 24 hours and by the end of the day of August 9, they had crushed the last pockets of resistance. The most vicious and brutal part of the Battle of Tulagi was the assault on Hill , which took place on August 8. After pounding the Japanese positions on top of Hill with mortar fire, the Americans assaulted the last positions, using improvised explosive charges to kill the Japanese defenders. Marine casualties were killed, wounded at Tulagi. The Japanese suffered killed, 20 taken prisoner – most of who were Korean laborers. The assault on Gavutu by the U. As the American naval bombardment had damaged the seaplane ramp, the Marines were forced to land in a more exposed location on a nearby small beach and as soon as they set foot on the beach Japanese machine guns opened fire on them inflicting heavy casualties, killing or wounding one in ten of the landing Marines as they scrambled inland in an attempt to get out of the deadly fire. Moving inland, Marines methodically blew up the caves, explosives destroying most of them. The few surviving Japanese conducted isolated attacks throughout the night, with hand to hand engagements occurring. By noon on August 9, all Japanese resistance had been crushed. In the battle for Gavutu and Tanambogo, Japanese defenders and 70 U. Marines or naval personnel were killed in action. This was a sign of what was to come during the six month Battle of Guadalcanal. The Americans arrived at the Japanese airfield under construction on Guadalcanal late on August 8th. Once again, there were no Japanese; they had fled into the jungle. In spite of all the firepower coming their way, U. Navy Seabees began finishing the airfield begun by the Japanese. It was then named Henderson Field after a Marine aviator killed in combat during the Battle of Midway. Marine, Army, Navy and allied aircraft operated from Henderson Field within a couple of days. Each day they took off bombing and strafing known Japanese positions throughout the island and attacking any Japanese ships that ventured into the vicinity. Photo shows Navy plane that was destroyed by Japanese fire. During this time, the Marine began patrolling in the Matanikau Valley, engaging in frequent battles and scrimmages with the Japanese with mixed results. Harukichi Hyakutake, commander of the Japanese 17th Army at Rabaul, began shipping more troops to the island hoping to turn the tide of battle in their favor. Advancing west, his forces attacked the Marines early on August 21 and were repulsed with heavy losses at the Battle of the Tenaru. The Japanese directed additional reinforcements to the area which resulted in the Battle of the Eastern Solomons. Ichiki, whose shame of defeat was too unbearable, committed Hari Kari to restore his honor in death. In two nights of brutal fighting, the Marines held, forcing the Japanese to retreat. By early October the Marines inflicted heavy losses on the Japanese and delayed their next offensive against the Lunga perimeter. On October 13, , the th Infantry, the first Army unit on Guadalcanal, came ashore to reinforce the Marines and took a 6,yard sector at the east end of the American perimeter. On November 4th, they fought 1, Japanese troops that landed on the beach at Koli Point. They killed half the Japanese force. The rest escaped into the jungle. The ground fighting was fierce but the Allies eventually repelled the Japanese and secured the six miles between the air base and the shore. However, the Japanese still had a naval advantage and the sea battles were not going well for the Allies. In mid-November, the U. Navy fought the Japanese when they attempted a major reinforcement of troops. In this four-day battle, the U. Navy foiled the reinforcement effort, and only 4, of 10, Japanese troops reached land. After this battle, the American troops pushed on in an effort to take Mount Austen. Thrashing through the jungle toward Mount Austen, they faced heavy fire from Japanese troops. Upon reaching Mount Austen they began their two-pronged attack on the stronghold at Gifu, securing most of the Gifu area and the west slopes of the mountain. Overall, between and Japanese troops died, and over American troops died in the effort to take Mount Austen. By the end of January , the Americans had taken the Japanese headquarters at Kokumbona on the island. While fighting was vicious

during the six months of the Battle of Guadalcanal, Japan suffered the most casualties. Of a total 31, soldiers deployed, the Japanese lost 14, soldiers killed from fighting, and another 9, soldiers from tropical diseases. About 1, Japanese soldiers were taken prisoner. But by far the most significant loss for the Japanese was the decimation of their elite group of naval aviators. The United States lost 1, troops killed of the almost 60, soldiers deployed, and 4, were wounded. Thousands more were disabled by tropical diseases like malaria. Japan after Guadalcanal no longer had a realistic hope of withstanding the counteroffensive of an increasingly powerful United States funneled to the island as a series of land and sea clashes unfolded, and both sides endured heavy losses to their warship contingents. Operationally, the Battle of Guadalcanal was notable for the interrelationship of a series of complex engagements on the ground, at sea, and in the air. Tactically, what stood out was the resolve and resourcefulness of the U. Marines, whose tenacious defense of Henderson Field enabled the Americans to secure air superiority. Strategically, the Allied victory at this battle ended Japanese air and naval superiority in the Pacific and was the first step in what became an unrelenting march against the Japanese. Although many bitter battles were still to be fought before the end of the war in August , the Battle of Midway and Guadalcanal became major turning points in the war as it stopped Japanese expansion and opened the way for U. As for Guadalcanal and Tulagi, they were developed into major bases supporting the Allied advance further up the Solomon Islands chain. In addition to Henderson Field, two additional fighter runways were constructed at Lunga Point and a bomber airfield was built at Koli Point. Extensive naval port and logistics facilities were established at Guadalcanal, Tulagi, and Florida. The anchorage around Tulagi became an important advanced base for Allied warships and transport ships supporting the Solomon Islands campaign, culminating in the often bitter fighting of the Bougainville Campaign, which continued until the end of the war in Au Share this:

Chapter 3 : Guadalcanal Campaign - | World War Photos

Midway and Guadalcanal has 3 ratings and 1 review. Frank said: A young readers book describing the two battles that changed the direction of the war in t.

A reasonable claim could be made that Pearl Harbor was a turning point, since it committed Japan to a war against an adversary with vastly superior economic resources, and since it galvanized American public opinion behind the war effort. Air, naval, amphibious, ground, and logistical forces were all necessary, as were land bases for both staging forces and as forward areas. From the standpoint of the balance of naval forces the Pearl Harbor attack was of little practical significance since the ships lost, including the ships later repaired, were not of great utility in the campaign. Tarawa produced little in naval casualties for either side, but did strip a forward base away from the Japanese defensive perimeter. By contrast, both Midway and the Guadalcanal campaign produced significant losses in ships, including carriers, the mobile strike forces so prominent in the Pacific war. Without slighting other possible "turning points", the authors will explore the arguments favoring Midway and Guadalcanal as, respectively, the battle or campaign that changed the fortunes of war in the Pacific. Since the Battle of Midway was chronologically prior to the Guadalcanal campaign it will be presented first. After both viewpoints are presented a summary section will conclude the various arguments. The list of victories the Japanese recorded is by any means extremely impressive for a six month period in so vast a theater. Many other Allied ships were damaged. Against this impressive score, the Japanese lost one light carrier, the Shoho, six destroyers, and some smaller ships. The former of these checked the Japanese advance in the Coral Sea area, but at the cost of the fleet carrier Lexington. The few offensive operations conducted by the Allies were little more than raids on the perimeter the exception being the incursion well beyond the Japanese perimeter to launch Doolittle. After Midway, the Japanese were psychologically and militarily on the defensive. From a military standpoint the Japanese Navy was stripped of two-thirds of the fleet carriers that provided the mobile firepower for offensive operations or for rapid responses to attacks on the perimeter. Perhaps as importantly, the losses at Midway included at least 90 veteran pilots. With Japan training only about carrier pilots per year, this was a significant loss, "the coming months were to reveal that the loss could never be made good and was as serious as that of the destruction of the carriers themselves". Midway was to be the Mahanian "decisive battle". The destruction of the American carrier arm was seen as a necessary step before returning to an offensive designed to isolate Australia, although many in the Imperial Headquarters favored immediate operations that could threaten the Australian supply lines. Admiral Ugaki, in a diary entry written on 8 June summarizing the Battle, concluded by writing "Thus the distressing day of 5 June came to an end. Let this day be the only one of the greatest failure of my life! This is almost true by definition, for after Midway Japanese planning was defensive, no meaningful offensive operations were conducted. This is clearly a fundamental change from the pre-Midway planning, when further offensive operations were being studied. In the introduction to his book on the Battle of Midway, Walter Lord wrote that the Americans had no right to win. Yet they did, and in doing so they changed the course of a war. More than that, they added a new name - Midway - to that small list that inspires men by shining example. Even against the greatest of odds there is something in the human spirit - a magic blend of skill, faith, and valor - that can lift men from certain defeat to incredible victory. Winston Churchill wrote that Midway is "rightly regarded as the turning-point of the war in the Pacific". As the Japanese Fleet withdrew to their far-off home ports their commanders knew not only that their aircraft-carrier struggle was irretrievably broken, but that they were confronted with a will-power and passion in the foe they had challenged worthy of the highest traditions of their Samurai ancestors and backed by a development of power, numbers, and science to which no limit could be set. It is interesting to note that the Japanese anticipated the loss of two or more carriers at Pearl Harbor, but lost only 29 carrier aircraft and the midget submarines that contributed little if anything to the operation, while the success of the Midway operation was taken for granted, but produced losses out of all proportion to the potential gain. The confident attitude about the Midway operation was reflected in the wargaming conducted during the planning. It was in sharp contrast to the rigorous conduct of

the Pearl Harbor wargaming. During the Midway simulation the American carriers attacked the main Japanese carrier group while the Japanese planes were on a mission against Midway. Two Japanese carriers were ruled to have been destroyed, but Admiral Ugaki overruled the umpire and declared that only one carrier was destroyed. Later on, even this ship was refloated and participated in post-Midway operations. During the campaign the Japanese, for the first time, lost territory. The Navy suffered significant losses, including two battleships Hiei and Kirishima, a carrier Ryujo, four cruisers, and thirteen destroyers. Against these losses the Allies lost eight cruisers and fourteen destroyers in surface action, and the carriers Wasp and Hornet. Japanese ground and air forces committed to Guadalcanal also suffered heavy casualties. As a percentage of total Japanese strength the losses in ground forces were not severe, but the air losses came from among the most seasoned of the Japanese groups remaining after Midway and were losses the Japanese were not able to replace. Despite the difficulties in attempting to weigh the various factors on each side in the respective battles geographical, material, psychological, etc. Basically, this argument is that in the absence of the victory at Midway, the Allies would have not undertaken an offensive in the Solomons in August. In April the United States had three operational carriers in the Pacific. Against this the Japanese had six fleet carriers and five light carriers. The Japanese advance was well supported by land-based air groups, such as the 22nd Naval Air Flotilla, which had easily dispatched the Prince of Wales and Repulse off the coast of Malaysia on 10 December. There was never any doubt that at some point the war would become one of defense. Thus, the plans that were being debated in the spring of 1942 revolved around a theme of how to achieve a position that would force the United States into a costly war of attrition which the Japanese could negotiate to an acceptable conclusion. A strong case was made for immediate operations in the Coral Sea area. Admiral Yamamoto, however, wanted to craft an offensive that would force the American carriers into battle while Japan still held a sizable numeric and qualitative superiority. After the destruction of the American carriers, Yamamoto agreed that a renewed effort would be made to secure a solid position east of Australia. Midway, however, did not provide the outcome Yamamoto anticipated. If it had been won by the Japanese, it is unlikely that it alone would have brought about the defeat of America, but it surely would have prolonged the war. The Struggle for Guadalcanal - 7 August to 9 February The naval campaign around Guadalcanal was one of the most fierce and lengthy naval campaigns in the history of naval warfare. The campaign lasted for nearly six months and cost thousands of American and Japanese lives. This campaign, from the naval perspective, and indeed from a strategic perspective, was the turning point of World War Two in the Pacific Theater. The experienced and well trained Japanese fleet was still superior to the United States fleet after the Battle of Midway, and was still a threat to the US fleet until it was checked in the actions off Guadalcanal. Because of the loss of nearly all of the US battleships at Pearl Harbor on 7 December, the US fleet was forced to rely on its few aircraft carriers as its major instrument of power. The three operational US carriers, escorted by a small number of cruisers and destroyers, sortied to engage the bulk of the Japanese Navy. In the ensuing engagement four Japanese heavy carriers were sunk, with the loss of only one US carrier, the Yorktown. While the sinking of four Japanese carriers was a tremendous blow to the Japanese High Command, and personally to Admiral Yamamoto, it did not make the loss of the war inevitable. In fact, with the exception of the four carriers and one heavy cruiser sunk Mikuma, the Japanese Combined Fleet was still completely intact. Immediate measures were taken to make good the carrier losses, including converting two old battleships into hybrid carriers. The situation in the southern Solomons, despite the early loss of Henderson Field, offered many advantages for the Japanese, beyond the heavy numerical advantage they held in surface forces. Understanding the basic philosophies of the US and Japanese force structure in the World War Two era can explain much about the outcomes of the various battles around Guadalcanal. Both American and Japanese strategists in the interwar years believed that a conflict between the two would end in a great battle between the two sides using the traditional battleship dominated battle line in an engagement somewhere near the Philippines. American force structure used this thesis as the core of a navy that was designed around the large caliber gun. US planners envisioned a battle where US forces could stand off at long range and pound the enemy with the greater numerical advantage given to it by the agreements of various naval treaties. The US forces were determined to fight these actions in the daytime with nearly limitless visibility. US tradition was one of daytime engagements similar to those in

the Spanish-American war, as stated by Richard Frank in his work on Guadalcanal: Japanese strategists knew that if they fought a Mahanian engagement with the US on American terms, defeat would be the likely result. Therefore they developed a strategy and shaped a fleet that they felt could win on different terms. These other phases included the distant deployment of submarines against the American capital ships, followed by the use of long range G3M "Nell" and G4M "Betty" bombers using bombs and torpedoes these were the plane types involved in the destruction of the Prince of Wales and Repulse. As the American fleet closed, Japanese strategists planned for a series of night attacks, in order to sink more American battle line ships at close range by destroyer and cruiser torpedo attacks. The Japanese regularly practiced these nocturnal engagements in large scale, realistic, night time maneuvers. Japanese reliance on night actions and torpedoes spawned the development of one of the pivotal weapons of World War Two, the Type 93, or "Long Lance" torpedo. With the major units of the American fleet resting on the bottom of Pearl Harbor, the Philippines in Japanese hands, and with the rise of carrier air power, American strategy changed. Mobile operations against the Japanese perimeter were frequent. When the nearly operational airfield on Guadalcanal was discovered the threat to the Australian supply lines was obvious. An invasion force was quickly assembled to prevent the Japanese from using the field. On 7 August, units of the 1st Marine Division began landing on the beaches of Guadalcanal and the nearby island of Tulagi. Resistance was firm, as if to foreshadow the bitter Marine invasions in the years to come, but the few Japanese defenders were soon defeated by overpowering numbers of Marines, with the US forces capturing Tulagi and securing a perimeter around the nearly completed ex-Japanese airfield on Guadalcanal. The major naval actions that would be fought over the next six months in the waters surrounding Guadalcanal, two daytime carrier battles, and five night surface actions, would center primarily on the efforts to resupply each sides land forces on Guadalcanal. For the US, priority was placed on the resupply of the Marine units occupying the small perimeter around what would soon be named "Henderson Field", and the interdiction of Japanese efforts to supply its forces initially to the east of the US perimeter, and ultimately to the west of the US perimeter. Japanese efforts initially were focused on resupply of their land forces especially since at first they believed that the US operation was merely a raid and not an invasion²⁷, but as the dominance of the airpower at Henderson became more apparent, Japanese planning became more and more oriented with the destruction or suppression of the Henderson airstrip, as otherwise US land-based aircraft made supply missions prohibitively expensive. While Midway was a great American victory, it was not necessarily the true turning point in the war. The American victory at Midway succeeded in sinking four very valuable carriers and killing many elite aircrews, yet it left the rest of the Japanese fleet unscratched. For the entire campaign near Guadalcanal, the Japanese enjoyed a superiority in carrier based aircraft, crew training, and a huge advantage in gunnery and torpedo strength. In fact, the Japanese Navy was far from finished, as most of the battles in the Guadalcanal Campaign start with a Japanese superiority in firepower. American morale was high after Midway, yet the majority of the US Navy, certainly her surface gunnery forces, were still untested and unsure. Guadalcanal proved that the US Navy could, with losses, take on the Japanese at night fighting. American gunnery and small unit tactics matured and by the end of the campaign proved to be efficient offensive threats, much as Midway proved the effectiveness of US naval airpower. At Guadalcanal the myth of the invincible Japanese Army was broken. The Japanese Army was spirited and brave, but failed to grasp the realities of modern warfare. It seemed to act under the impression that massed night attacks with unwavering troops would defeat any foe. This tactic proved fantasy when tested against unbreaking US troops. The US Marines and soldiers at Guadalcanal endured massive hardships, and stood through it to handily defeat almost every Japanese attack. Yamamoto was haunted by two things that kept him from committing his entire force. First, he was haunted by the results of Midway, where he had lost the bulk of the veteran Japanese carrier force, and he was understandably reluctant to repeat his mistake. Second, and more importantly, he was concerned with holding the major part of his force for the "decisive battle", the Mahanian showdown between the two battleship battlelines.

Chapter 4 : Battle of Midway - HISTORY

Vengeance; at Midway and Guadalcanal, a novel of war. (Aviator Book 2) - Kindle edition by Leland Shanle. Download it once and read it on your Kindle device, PC, phones or tablets.

Appointed to the US Naval Academy from his native state in , he graduated from Annapolis on February 12, , served two years at sea, then required by law, and commissioned as an Ensign on February 13, . After a year in Eagle on special service, he reported to Maine , of the Atlantic Fleet in December . In August , he was assigned to Franklin , his duty drafting men for the Pacific Fleet and transporting them on board Tennessee to Cavite. Fletcher assumed command of the destroyer Dale in April , and in March , he returned to Chauncey as her commanding officer. In December , he was transferred to the battleship Florida. In April , he was aboard that battleship, the flagship of his uncle Frank Friday Fletcher , during the occupation of Veracruz , Mexico. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for the rescue of refugees on the transport Esperanza. After a year at this post, he returned to the Naval Academy for duty in the Executive Department. He was assigned to Allen in February , before taking command of the destroyer Benham in May . He then had similar duty with Gridley , also building there, and upon her commissioning on March 8, , assumed command. He was relieved of that command in April . In the summer of , he was transferred to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. Here he was in command of one of the two Task Forces participating in operations in the Marshall-Gilbert Islands in the February , and the following month was second in command in the Salamaua-Lae operations. December 8â€™23, [edit] Responding to reports from US Marines on Wake Island of Japanese bombardment and a subsequent invasion attempt in the first week after Pearl Harbor, Fletcher was sent west with the aircraft carrier Saratoga Task Force 11 to provide relief. The task force was recalled by Admiral William S. Pye , who was "keeping the seat warm" until Admiral Chester W. He, a surface fleet admiral, was chosen over more senior officers to lead a carrier task force. He learned air operations on the job while escorting troops to the South Pacific. He was junior TF commander under tutelage of the experts: This battle is famous as the first carrier-on-carrier battle fought between fleets that never came within sight of each other. Fletcher finished refueling first and headed West. On hearing the enemy was occupying Tulagi , TF 17 attacked the landing beaches, sinking several small ships before rejoining Lexington and an Australian cruiser force under Rear Admiral John Gregory Crace on May 5. The morning of May 7, Fletcher sent the Australian cruisers to stop the transports while he sought the carriers. Believing they had found a carrier, they severely damaged her after several all-out attacks, and sank her escorting destroyer, Sims ; on May 11, Henley located her, rescued the surviving crew, and sank her by naval gunfire. On May 8, at first light, "round three opened. Fitch had greater experience in handling air operations, and Fletcher had him direct that function, as he was to do again later with Noyes at Guadalcanal. Zuikaku had earlier dodged under a squall. The Japanese attack put two torpedoes into Lexington, which was abandoned that evening. Yorktown was hit near her island, but survived. Hara failed to use Zuikaku to achieve victory and withdrew. The invasion fleet without air cover, also withdrew, thereby halting the Port Moresby invasion. Fletcher had achieved the objective of the mission at the cost of a carrier, tanker, and destroyer. In battles in Pearl Harbor, East Indies, Australia and Ceylon, they had defeated the British, Dutch, and Asiatic Fleets, and had not lost a fleet ship larger than minesweepers and submarines. Enterprise and Hornet lost seventy aircraft. Japanese attacks on June 4 severely damaged Yorktown; repairs returned her to the battle until she was hopelessly disabled by a new round of attacks two hours later. At dusk Fletcher released Spruance to continue fighting with TF 16 the next day. During the next two days, Spruance found two damaged cruisers and sank one. The enemy transport and battle fleets got away. A Japanese submarine, I , found the crippled Yorktown, under tow, on June 5, and sank her, along with an adjacent destroyer, Hammann. Japan had had seven large carriers six at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack and one new construction â€™ four were sunk at Midway. This did not win the war, but evened the odds between Japanese and American fleet carriers. Following the battle Fletcher was promoted to Vice Admiral and continued to command a carrier group at sea after shifting his flag to Saratoga. Carrier close air support was provided at Tulagi. The invasion of Guadalcanal was uncontested on the beach. Fletcher requested permission from

Admiral Robert L. Ghormley, the overall commander, to withdraw his carriers from dangerous waters when they were no longer needed, claiming that his aircraft losses and fuel state due to maneuvering required him to leave. Fletcher chose to withdraw on the evening of August 8th to prepare for the inevitable Japanese counterattack. The Battle of Savo Island occurred in early morning of August 9, Allied warships under the command of Rear Admiral Victor Crutchley of the Royal Navy, screening the transports were surprised at midnight and defeated in 32 minutes by a Japanese force of seven cruisers and one destroyer, commanded by Japanese Vice Admiral Gunichi Mikawa. One Australian and three US heavy cruisers were sunk, and one other US cruiser and two destroyers were damaged in this lopsided Japanese victory. However, as Crutchley notes, the transports were not touched. Fletcher is sometimes criticized because his carriers were at the far end of their nightly withdrawal, steaming back for the morning, yet too far away to seek revenge. Rear Admiral Richmond K. August 24–25, [edit] Fletcher fought a superior Japanese fleet intent on counter-invasion in the aircraft carrier Battle of the Eastern Solomons. The ensuing battle was essentially a giant aerial dogfight interspersed with shipborne anti-aircraft fire. The US lost 20 planes, the Japanese lost Enterprise was hit by three bombs, and the Japanese carrier Chitose was nearly sunk, but survived. The enemy withdrew without landing troops on Guadalcanal. They had to resort to the Tokyo Express: This criticism may have affected the decision to not return Fletcher to his command after his flagship, the carrier Saratoga, was torpedoed and damaged by a Japanese submarine on August 31, Fletcher himself was slightly injured in the attack on Saratoga, suffering a gash to his head, and was given his first leave after eight months of continuous combat. He was relieved as commandant in October, but continued to serve as commander Northwestern Sea Frontier until April 15, when the Northwestern Sea Frontier was abolished and the Alaskan Sea Frontier established. It was revealed in July, that Task Force 90, under his overall command, had made the first penetration through the Kurile Islands in the Sea of Okhotsk on March 3 and 4, and the same task force on February 4, bombarded Paramushir in the first sea bombardment of the Kurile. On May 1, as Senior Member of that Board he became Chairman, and continued to serve in that capacity until relieved of all active duty for his retirement on May 1, [1] with the rank of full admiral. He retired to his country estate, Araby, in Maryland. In return, he received no consideration by Morison, an attitude picked up by later authors. Fletcher never got enough credit for sinking six Japanese carriers. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. She was buried next to her husband.

The Allies' overwhelming victory at Midway paved the way for the landings on Guadalcanal just two months later and the prolonged attrition of the Solomon Islands campaign, both of which finally allowed the Allies to take the strategic initiative and move onto the offensive for the rest of the Pacific War.

Please leave this field empty. By George Friedman About 75 years ago, U. Their mission was to block the Japanese from building an airfield on the island and, after blocking them, to build their own base to fly from while the Marines drove the remaining Japanese out. Navy would land the Marines on the island, block Japanese resupply and reinforcements from landing, and secure the American line of supply from Australia and New Caledonia. Two months earlier, the Japanese had suffered a strategic defeat at Midway, losing a substantial portion of their fleet in the process. Japan was not without resources, but its primary thinking was now the strategic defensive. It sought to secure its gains by two means: Air Force yet exist in force, but the U. There were two lines of attack available. Second, there was an offensive from the east: Put in terms of the critical and famous islands, this was an offensive through Tarawa, Saipan and Iwo Jima to Okinawa and many other brutal but less famous islands. New Caledonia and Fiji. Together, they made both offensives possible. They were directly on the line of supply to Australia and to the southern flank of any attack on the Gilberts. Isoroku Yamamoto had considered a direct assault on these islands as an alternative to Midway, but he had hoped to force the U. He succeeded in getting Adm. Chester Nimitz to engage his fleet. Two months after Midway, the importance of New Caledonia and Fiji to Japan was greater than ever, but its available force had shrunk. The Japanese had to move away from large-scale carrier operations, but they had a solid alternative. On both sides, land-based aircraft based on the small Pacific islands made the movement of naval vessels dangerous. Airfields built on select islands enabled aircraft to block critical passages and make enemy offensives dangerous. Navy delivered the firepower and troops who landed on an island, and in many cases the airfield was seized or created, blocking forces for hundreds of miles around. This was the island-hopping strategy the U. It was the strategy that Japanese land-based aircraft tried to resist. The naval war undergirded an air war, the bases won by the blood of the infantry. It wanted to isolate Australia and then flank the assault on the Gilberts. It wanted to capture New Caledonia and Fiji. But the key to that was Vanuatu, and the only asset the Japanese had to support an offensive was an air base in the Solomon Islands. The ideal spot for an island base was Guadalcanal. Australian coast watchers observed the movement of ships and noted the construction underway on Guadalcanal. They recognized that Japan was building an airfield there, and they knew that if it were completed, a strategic threat might materialize. They also realized that if they waited until the airfield was finished, an invasion would be incredibly costly, if not impossible. The Marines available for it were unseasoned and few in number. Army support was not yet available. Navy consisted of cruisers and destroyers and too few aircraft carriers to risk any of them. The only positive was that Japanese intelligence had underestimated the size of the available U. Douglas MacArthur understood the potential significance of the Japanese move, and they understood that they were in no position to launch a counterattack. They also knew that if they waited until they were ready, an invasion would be impossible. Japanese aircraft would devastate the landing force, and no carrier would be able to get close without being sunk. If Japan established its air base in Guadalcanal, it could launch a massive operation against U. Japan would then be able to concentrate on the islands of the Central Pacific, making the eastern offensive problematic for the United States. Nimitz, in strategic command and a meticulous planner, had to shoot from the hip. He had to launch the first Allied offensive of the Pacific War. The Invasion The plan was that the Marines would land nearby on Tulagi and the island of Florida as well as on Guadalcanal. Their mission was to capture the airfield before it was activated by the Japanese. Having done that, Navy construction brigades known as Seabees would land and prepare the base for American aircraft, which would then support the Marines in holding the island and, after reinforcement, project power northward. The Japanese forces on the island were unequal to the task, but the Marines were in even worse shape. The Marines had a huge advantage, however. Their mission was to take

and hold Henderson Field, the name they gave the airfield under construction. Then they would be on the defensive. The Japanese would have to dislodge them, moving through the swamps and elephant grass that could slice a man open. Given the available forces and the tactical and strategic reality, the Marines were in a powerful position. The Japanese understood as much. They realized that if they lost the airfield, the situation in the Solomons would reverse, New Caledonia would be secure, and any hope of isolating Australia would be lost. They had to reinforce Guadalcanal and keep sending supplies to it. This was a naval problem, and the Japanese navy had the cruisers and destroyers to protect supply ships. During the invasion, the Americans and Australians sent in cruisers and destroyers. But the commander withdrew the carrier, afraid to lose it. He was bitterly chastised by the Marines, who felt abandoned, but in my view he did what was strategically necessary. It would be almost a year before a large number of carriers were available. But though he was right, the decision left only surface vessels and some submarines to maintain the U. This is because the Japanese had concentrated on naval technology before the war. They had a torpedo with a much greater range than American torpedoes. They also had flashless powder. The water off Guadalcanal was nicknamed Iron Bottom Sound because of the number of ships sunk. In spite of all this, the supplies, from bullets to aviation fuel, made it in. The Marines pushed forward toward Japanese lines, with or without air support. They moved to tactical defensive positions during the night and absorbed countless Japanese attacks, slowly winning a war of attrition. The Japanese sent replacements, but the U. Navy and aircraft slowly choked the Japanese supply effort. Finally, the Japanese evacuated the island of surviving troops. The Beginning of the End This ended Japanese strategic operations, which were already sparse after Midway. As important, the U. The lessons learned about the need for air superiority and massive naval support, as well as the importance of not getting bogged down in attritional warfare, were all carried forward. This was the moment that Japan might have sought out truce terms. There would be almost three years of war yet, and in the Americans could reasonably think there would be many more. The Japanese had lost a battle on a Godforsaken island. The war went on for two and a half years. The United States never lost the initiative. Japanese forces were scattered on small islands, and the Japanese navy could not sortie to their defense. Having turned amphibious warfare into a replicable model, the U. From this point on, the Japanese were simply waiting for the end, with many on both sides waiting to die. Midway and Guadalcanal, in retrospect, ended the Pacific War, if not the death or the fear on both sides. Those battles would give the United States control of the Pacific, a control that has been in place for the past 70 years or so. And they would lead, in the circuitous path of history, to North Korea today. Whatever fears we have in , they would have been very different had the battles of so many decades ago gone differently. That is the measure of the importance of these battles. Two more battles, El Alamein and Stalingrad, came later in the year but not in importance.

Chapter 6 : Vengeance; at Midway and Guadalcanal, a novel of war. by Leland Shanle

Closely following the actual battles of Midway and Guadalcanal, the listener gets an insider's view so vivid the smell of cordite will hang in the air. © Leland C Shanle Jr. (P) Leland C Shanle Jr.

The History Learning Site, 19 May The landing at Guadalcanal was unopposed " but it took the Americans six months to defeat the Japanese in what was to turn into a classic battle of attrition. The Japanese defeat at the Battle of Midway had forced planners in the Imperial Army to reconsider their plans of expansion and to concentrate their forces on consolidating the territory that they had captured. The victory at Midway was also a turning point for the Americans as after this battle, they could think in terms of re-capturing taken Pacific islands " the first confrontation was to be at Guadalcanal. Guadalcanal is part of the Solomon Islands which lie to the north-eastern approaches of Australia. Though it is a humid and jungle-covered tropical island its position made it strategically important for both sides in the Pacific War. If the Japanese captured the island, they could cut off the sea route between Australia and America. If the Americans controlled the island, they would be better able to protect Australia from Japanese invasion and they could also protect the Allied build-up in Australia that would act as a springboard for a major assault on the Japanese. Hence the importance of the island. In Japan, they were divided thoughts as to the importance of the island. Many senior army figures believed that Japan should consolidate what it had and that the army itself was already over-stretched policing its vast empire. The hierarchy in the Japanese Navy disagreed. They believed that any halt to an advance would be seen as a sign of weakness that the Americans would exploit. While the Japanese appeared invincible on the advance, American confidence had to be diluted " so they argued. The Japanese Navy won the argument and the Imperial General Headquarters ordered an attack on the Solomon Islands with the view to establishing naval and army bases there. By the end of May , the Japanese had landed men at Guadalcanal. To begin with, the reports from Guadalcanal seemed innocent enough as the Japanese seemed more interested in the cattle on the island than anything else. However, reports came back that an airfield was being built on the island " at Lunga plantation, probably the only point on the island that could sustain an airfield. By the end of June, there were an estimated 3, Japanese soldiers on the island. An up-and-running airfield on Guadalcanal would have been a major threat to the Americans in the region. The head of all US naval forces, Admiral Ernest King, wanted a full-scale attack on Guadalcanal to off-set this threat. Despite the Roosevelt " Churchill directive that gave the European war zone priority, the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff in Washington gave the go-ahead for the first American offensive campaign since Pearl Harbour in December Vandegrift was told that his men would get time to train once they were in the Pacific as opposed to their base in North Carolina. However, by the end of June, half his division had still not arrived in the war zone and the date for the attack was just 5 weeks away. The naval force that was to accompany the 1st US Marines had also not operated together before and had little experience of amphibious landings. The whole force was also lacking in reliable maps, tide charts etc. Those that were used were found to be lacking in the most basic of details. The naval force had no charts for underwater hazards so they could not calculate how far inshore they could take a ship. To undo some of these issues, it was agreed on two occasions to put back the day of the attack " initially from August 1st to August 4th and then to August 7th. On August 7th, the Americans started their attack on Guadalcanal. Up to that date, the amphibious force was the most powerful ever assembled. Five cruisers from America and Australia guarded the actual landing craft that gathered off of Tenaru on Guadalcanal. The Americans achieved complete tactical surprise. As the Americans advanced inland towards where the airfield was being built, they came across another major problem " the climate. The hot and humid jungle climate quickly took its toll on soldiers carrying heavy equipment. The climate also did a great deal to affect radios and radio communication between those advancing inland and those on the beach was problematic. Regardless of these issues, the Americans made no contact with the Japanese and for the first 24 hours there was no fighting on Guadalcanal. However, though the first 24 hours on Guadalcanal were relatively painless for the Americans, this was not so for the Marines who landed at nearby islands that lay to the north of Guadalcanal " Tulagi, Gavutu and Tanambogo. The Americans needed to control these as

this would give them the opportunity to control the Ironbottom Sound and Nggela Channel that separated Guadalcanal from Florida Island, north of it. Here the Marines encountered fierce resistance and it took the US Marine Raiders 24 hours to eliminate the Japanese who had been based at Tulagi. This was a sign of what was to come. US paratroopers attacked Gavutu and met a similar response from the Japanese and it required fire from nearby naval ships to alleviate the problem. The Americans arrived at the airfield on Guadalcanal late on August 8th. Once again, there were no Japanese there as they had fled into the jungle. The news that the Marines had reached the airfield was greeted with joy in Washington and Canberra. The Marines on Guadalcanal were on their own. Though the landing of equipment had been chaotic at times, equipment had been landed. However, vital equipment such as barbed wire to defend his base, anti-personnel mines etc had not been landed in quantity. The Marines were in a difficult position. There were Japanese on Guadalcanal and their tenacity and fighting skills had already been seen in Tulagi, Gavutu and Tanambogo. The Japanese Navy controlled the sea around Guadalcanal and frequently fired on the Marines. The Japanese air force bombed the airfield runway. However, Vandegrift did have one good piece of luck – the Japanese had left a number of very useful vehicles which the Marines used to repair the runway. Their work was rewarded on August 20th when 19 Wildcat fighters and 12 Dauntless bombers landed at the airfield – now known as Henderson airfield. The Marines now prepared themselves for the expected all out Japanese attack on their positions. The Japanese had landed men on Guadalcanal on August 18th. A regiment led by Colonel Ichiki and a special naval landing force were assigned the task of defeating the Marines. He decided to attack on August 21st. Ichiki ordered a simple bayonet attack on the American positions. Carefully placed machine gun posts meant that many Japanese were killed. Ichiki ordered his men to withdraw but Vandegrift had ordered one of his reserve battalions to encircle the Japanese. It was here that the Americans first found out that the Japanese did not surrender and that they were willing to die for the emperor. Using the planes at Henderson and some tanks that had been landed, the Marines killed many Japanese. Only a handful got away and moved east down the coast to safety at Taivu. Here, Ichiki committed ritual suicide – such was the defeat he and his men had experienced. Despite this triumph, Vandegrift knew that another stronger Japanese force would soon be landing on Guadalcanal – the men that Ichiki had not waited for; the XXXVth Brigade. The Americans had one major advantage over the Japanese – they had to be transported by sea and the ships transporting these men were open to attack from the American planes based at Henderson airfield. By doing this the Japanese could all but escape American fire and they succeeded in landing a large quantity of men to the east and west of the American position at Henderson. Vandegrift decided to do what he could to disrupt the Japanese and he sent a party of Marine Raiders to Taivu. They found few personnel there but they did find out that the Japanese had already moved into the jungle and that an attack on the Americans would not be too far into the future. The American position at Henderson meant that one side of their defensive perimeter was bound by the sea. Vandegrift concluded that the only way the Japanese could attack his position was from the south of the island. The attack began on September 12th. Japanese bombers attacked US positions to the south of the airfield and as night fell, Japanese destroyers and a cruiser shelled the same positions. At least for Vandegrift, it confirmed that an attack would come from the south. The Japanese infantry attacked positions to the south of Henderson. The jungle had also fouled up his communications. The assault on September 12th was a failure and the Japanese had to re-new their attack the following day. The Japanese made two other attempts to attack the Marines and on one occasion got to within meters of Henderson airfield. However, their casualty figures were mounting. By the end of the night, Kawaguchi had lost 1, men killed or wounded. The Marines and paratroopers had also taken heavy casualties with being killed or wounded out of just over men. In all, 20, Japanese troops were moved to Guadalcanal. The US Marines also got reinforcements which gave Vandegrift command over 23, men, though it is thought that one-third of these men were unfit for combat due to a variety of diseases, such as dysentery and exposure. The US air presence at Henderson was also improved. On October 23rd, 5, Japanese soldiers attacked US positions on the east of the defensive zone. Pin point artillery fire ensured the failure of this attack. On October 24th, the Japanese launched a major attack from the south with 7, men. At one stage a small number of Japanese troops got inside the defensive perimeter but fierce fighting drove them back. Why had both attacks failed? The American positions in the defensive perimeter

had been expertly sited. However, the Japanese had failed to take into account the sheer difficulties they would face by going through a tropical jungle to attack the Americans. Therefore, any attack on the American lines was done by an old-fashioned infantry charge against positions that were equipped with mortar and artillery. The terrain had also done a great deal to hinder Japanese communications. With the Japanese in disarray, Vandegrift decided the time was ripe for the Americans to go on the offensive as opposed to being cooped in a defensive role. The Japanese hierarchy in Tokyo refused to admit defeat and ordered yet more men to Guadalcanal. In mid-November, planes from Henderson attacked a convoy of ships bringing Japanese reinforcements to Guadalcanal. Of eleven transport ships, six were sunk, one was severely damaged and four had to be beached. Only 2,000 men ever reached Guadalcanal but few had any equipment as this had been lost at sea.

Chapter 7 : Midway and Guadalcanal by Tom McGowen

Vengeance; at Midway and Guadalcanal, a novel of war. has ratings and 9 reviews. Jim said: Pretty quick read. Author would have done a better job wit.

World War II experienced from the cockpits of fighter aircraft, and through the eyes of men trapped in island Tropical Hells. Written by a retired Naval Aviator and former Paratrooper; the author puts the reader in the F-4F Wildcat and jungle, as warriors engage in a titanic struggle around the globe. A diverse and rich cast of characters reveal the sacrifice and frustrations of war. A no holds bar accounting of the actual battles, shown through the eyes of the novels characters, uncovers mistakes and even incompetence at the highest levels. Vengeance shows the disastrous results of these decisions, on the lowest common denominator; the war fighter. A rare perspective written by an author that flew modern fighters over the historic battlefields, even from the decks of aircraft carriers that fought in the Pacific. A riveting story, Vengeance tells of the impact at an individual level, a personal level; of an entire world at war. Vengeance will pull back the curtain of historical perspective and frame it in reality. The harsh reality will come as a shock to readers who have read of great victories. But know little of the tremendous cost; like fifteen hundred sailors lost in a single nights battle, all five of the Sullivan brothers among them. To the soldier, sailor or airman: Sometimes, even to avenge their deaths. A few years ago I was flying a training mission at twilight off the coast of Southern California. The Hale-Bopp comet was blazing overhead. I decided to get a better look; dumping the nose of my F-4N Phantom II, I held it at zero g as I shoved the throttles to full afterburner. With no induced drag on the aircraft, the JGE-8 engines very quickly pushed the jet supersonic. Leveling at 35,000, its best energy addition altitude, I let the Phantom run up to 1. Above me the stars were coming alive for the night, below me was the ocean, glistening in the pastel color of a sun just set. To the west the curvature of the earth was accentuated by the dark ocean against back lit sky. Finally I looked up to the moon and watched as the Hale-Bopp Comet streaked the sky, just below it. I have since tried through: November 05, 1945, Years ago I was flying a mission at twilight off the coast of Southern California. I shoved the throttles of my F-4N Phantom into afterburner. Above the stars were coming alive, below the ocean glistened in the pastel color of a sun just set. I wondered how I could share this and have since tried through literature. Author of Action and Adventure novels, seen from cockpits, set in historical battles of WW2.

Chapter 8 : Vengeance: At Midway and Guadalcanal (Audiobook) by Leland Charles Shanle | calendrierde

The victory at Midway was also a turning point for the Americans as after this battle, they could think in terms of re-capturing taken Pacific islands - the first confrontation was to be at Guadalcanal.

Updated June 30, Carl would eventually shoot down Midway As a member of the ill-fated VMF during the Battle of Midway , he earned his first Navy Cross while leading an attack against a vastly superior number of Japanese bombers and fighter aircraft. Nineteen of these were old Brewster F2A Buffalo fighters. Immediately Major Parks took off with seven Buffalos and five Wildcats to intercept the enemy attacking force. The rest of the fighters were ordered up too, but held in reserve. When Parks first spotted the enemy formation at 14, feet over Midway, he saw over fighter planes and bombers. The Zero escort was beneath the bombers, apparently not expecting fighter opposition. The Marine fighters peeled off and roared into the Vals, all guns blazing. Several of the Japanese bombers were hit, and dropped away toward the sea. But then the Zeros saw the Marine fighter planes and climbed to meet the Wildcats and sluggish Buffalos. The dancing Zeros cut up the brave defenders. Not only were the marines heavily outnumbered, but their planes could not match the performance of the Japanese fighters. In a vicious dogfight the Americans lost plane after plane. One of them was Captain Marion Carl. He destroyed one Zero on his first pass, but as he climbed for altitude again, other Zeros got on his tail. He nosed over, rammed everything to the firewall, and pulled away. A Wildcat could at least outdive a Zero. In this way Captain Carl managed to escape. On his way back to Midway he made another attack on three Zeros below him and sent one down, burning and out of control. After the "all clear," the Midway radio called: Then came the call, "All fighters land and reservice. It was the heaviest loss the Marines suffered in a single air battle during the entire war. One of our pilots said bitterly afterwards that the Buffalo "should be in Miami as a training plane. Carl flew one of only two planes sent up in the second defensive sortie from Midway. The code name for Guadalcanal was Cactus; thus the collection of squadrons, American and Allied, that rose from Henderson Field to do battle each day was called the Cactus Air Force. While the story of the Cactus Air Force is a tale of inter-service cooperation and dependency, the stars of the struggling group were the Marine fighter and dive- and torpedo-bomber squadrons. Fighting from August to November, the pilots of these and other units that followed eventually turned back the Japanese bombing offensive. Several of these Marine fighter pilots became aces, and nine Marine aviators received the Medal of Honor for their service or for specific missions during the Solomons campaign. Among the other standouts during this period were such men as: Carl was assigned to VMF, and headed to Guadalcanal on August 20 in the very first group of American fliers to land there. They caught the Japanese planes between Malaita and Florida at 9, feet, and shot down all the torpedo planes, while the Zeros got three Americans. Marion Carl claimed two torpedo planes and one Zero. He became an ace on 26 August , when he was jumped while coming in for a landing at Henderson Field. He cranked up his wheels and engaged the audacious Zero over the beach - exploding his quarry before hundreds of witnesses. During an aerial fight off the coast of Guadalcanal on September 9, he was forced to bail out of his shot-up Wildcat and was losing his battle to swim ashore against the tide, when he was picked up by friendly natives in a canoe. After five days with the natives, he finally made his way back to his base. General Geiger, the Marine air commander, informed Captain Carl that Major Smith, his rival ace, had just shot down his 16th plane, while Carl only had But the grinding attrition continued; two days later, Carl led up the remaining four planes of , shooting down a Zero, as did two others. During the period from late August through November , the Marine pilots faced almost daily combat, and some of them, like Carl and Smith ran up large scores. He returned to the United States on 21 October His squadron played a key role in the aerial reduction of Rabaul in early He scored two more kills while flying Corsairs. Carl became a Navy test pilot, setting a world speed record of mph on Aug. But his fame was fleeting and soon forgotten. He flew a Bell X-1 rocket plane at Mach 1. In , Carl set a world altitude record of 83, feet and two years later, as CO of VMJ-1, he was deployed to Taiwan for classified operations. Sadly, General Carl was shot and killed by an intruder in his Oregon home in June, He was 83 years old. I have often reflected on the tragic irony of this. Surely he deserved it. There are tables of Wildcat aces for:

Chapter 9 : In what part of the world were the battles of the coral sea midway and Guadalcanal fought

The Battle of Midway was a turning point in the Pacific War. Before the Battle of the Coral Sea on May , the Imperial Navy of Japan had swept aside all of its enemies from the Pacific and Indian oceans. At the Battle of the Coral Sea, the Japanese won a tactical victory, but suffered an.