

New Awards Given To U. S. Flyers in Australian Area

Oak Leaf Clusters Are Presented by Maj. Gen. Kenney

By the Associated Press.
GEN. MACARTHUR'S HEAD-QUARTERS, Australia, Oct. 13.—Officers and men of the United States Air Forces who performed acts of heroism not only once but several times were awarded oak leaf clusters by Maj. Gen. George C. Kenney today instead of additional silver stars.

Those receiving the awards included:

Capt. Nathaniel H. Blanton, Earlsbrook, La., and Second Lt. Clarence T. Johnson, Jr., Atlantic Beach, Fla.

First Lt. Albert Nice, the Bronx, N. Y.; Sgt. Daniel Reuther, Jr., New York; First Lt. Hugh O. McTague, Brooklyn.

Capt. Blanton received his award for an action in the Darwin area June 14, when as pilot of a P-40 fighter which intercepted a large formation of enemy planes he shot down one Japanese Zero after a fierce engagement. He had received a Silver Star when he led the fighter planes which intercepted nine Japanese bombers and six Zeros over Eastern Java February 18. Capt. Blanton shot down one bomber and maneuvered the flight so other members were able to shoot down the other eight bombers and one of the Zeros.

Lt. Johnson was piloting a P-40 over Horn Island off Northern Australia on March 14 when he was intercepted by a formation of enemy planes. He shot down one Zero in a hard battle.

Previously he was awarded the Silver Star for an action over Darwin June 15 when he attacked 27 Japanese bombers and placed bursts in several of them. He continued his attack even when one motor was crippled and finally was forced to use his parachute when the plane caught fire. He walked through swamps and jungle country for six days to reach his base.

Awards Are Presented To Aleutian Flyers

HEADQUARTERS, ALASKA DEFENSE COMMAND, Oct. 13 (AP).—Maj. Gen. Simon T. Buckner announced the award of the Purple Heart to four officers and three men and the award of the Air Medal to three officers and five men, all lost in aerial action in the Aleutians.

The Purple Hearts were given the crew members of a bomber which participated for three weeks in raids against the Japanese and then was lost in a dense fog during another attack on the enemy. The bomber and crew were listed as missing in action.

The air medals went to crew members of a bomber which was shot down by enemy anti-aircraft fire on its first run over Kiska Island to bomb a naval concentration.

Rear Admiral T. W. Leutze Leaves Norfolk Base Post

By the Associated Press.
NORFOLK, Va., Oct. 13.—Rear Admiral Trevor W. Leutze, fifth naval district supply officer in command of the Naval Supply Depot at the Norfolk Naval Operating Base, will retire on November 1 and will be succeeded by Capt. Malcolm G. Sillarow, U. S. N., who has been executive officer at the supply depot. Although he reached the statutory retirement age of 64 years last November 1, Admiral Leutze was retained on active duty during the last year. He has been in command of the Naval Supply Depot at the Norfolk Base since July 20, 1937.

Adams P-T. A. Will Use Movie Machine Tonight

The Parent-Teacher Association of the Adams School tonight will make first public use of a sound-motion picture machine which was purchased largely from funds received last spring in The Evening Star-P-T. A. Salvage-for-Victory Paper Campaign.

At a meeting of the association at the school at N. Eleventh and California streets N.W., the picture "Youth Takes to Wings" will be shown, and Dr. Ben D. Wood, educational consultant with the Civil Aeronautics Authority, will be the speaker.

Adams, one of the more active schools in the paper collection campaign, turned in a total of 72,762 pounds, including 8,167 pounds of magazines.

Solomons

(Continued From First Page.)

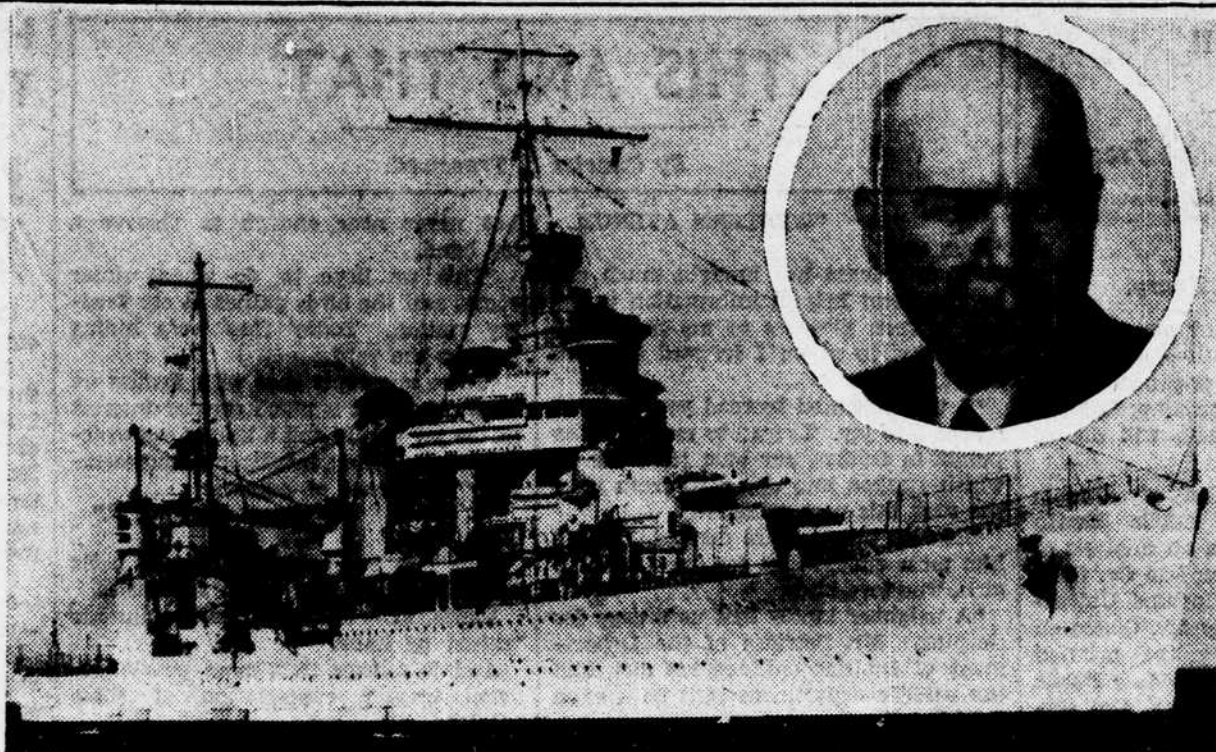
G. Greenman of Watertown, N. Y., were saved.

The Navy said it was impossible to determine what losses were suffered by the Japanese force of cruisers and destroyers. But the communiqué added that "the enemy withdrew to the northwest without attempting an attack on our transports and supply ships."

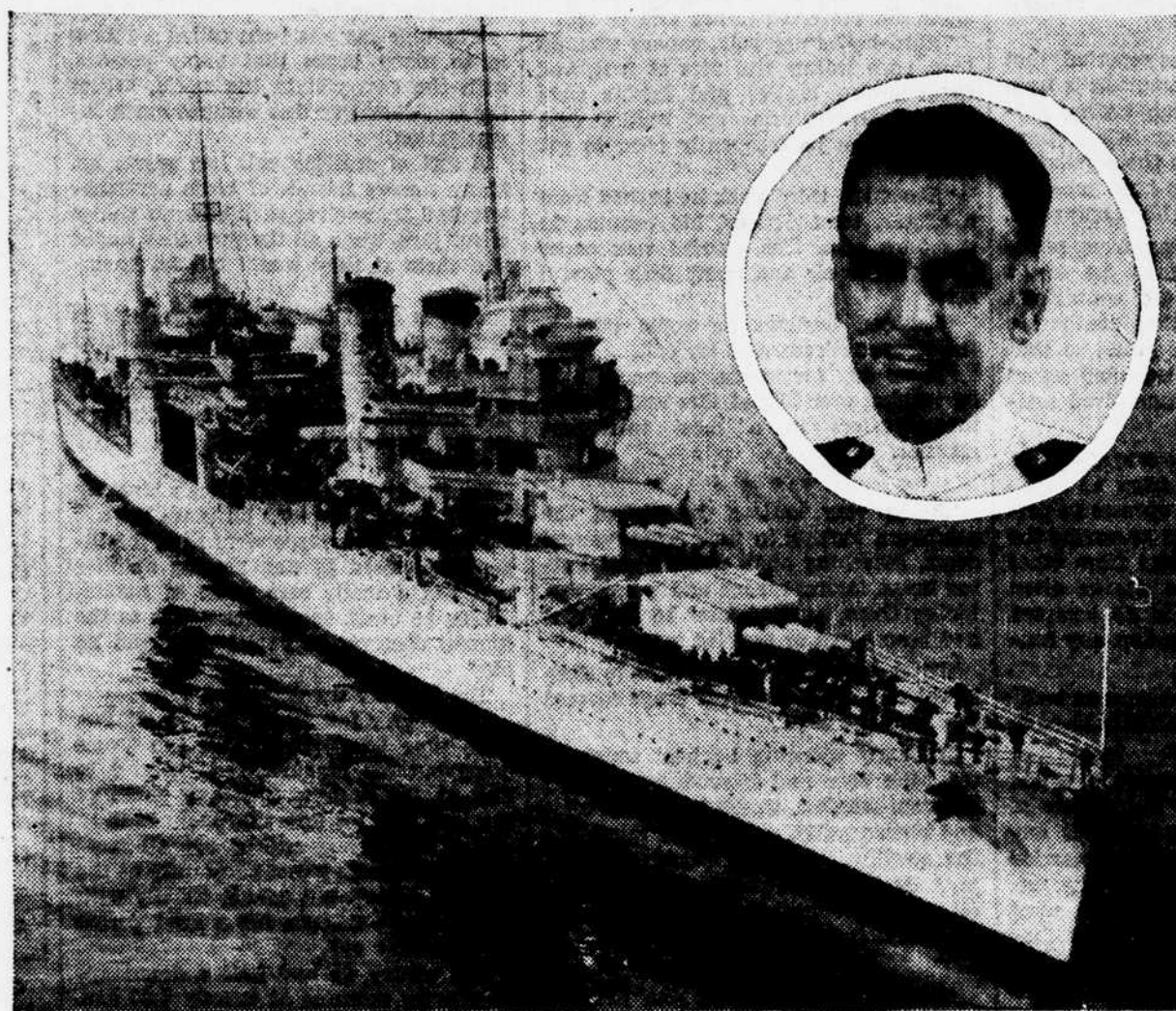
Description of Battle. Events leading up to the major battle during the night of August 8-9 were described by the Navy as follows:

Vigorous opposition was offered to the consolidation of our positions. Throughout August 7 and August 8, enemy planes carried out raids on our shore positions, transports and fleet units. These raids did not prevent United States Marines from sealing most of the key positions in the Guadalcanal-Tulagi area by the afternoon of August 8. Meanwhile, additional troops, supplies and equipment were being unloaded from transports and supply ships, and it was imperative that these operations be successfully completed. To this end, screening groups of Allied cruisers and destroyers were placed on both sides of Savo Island to guard the western entrances to the transport area. An additional screening force was stationed near the transports to provide close coverage within the harbor.

Japanese aircraft began dropping bombs at 1:45 a.m. the night of August 8-9. Enemy cruisers and destroyers headed for the supply



CRUISERS REPORTED LOST—The Navy announced last night that three of its heavy cruisers, Quincy, Astoria and Vincennes, were sunk during the early phase of American occupation of the Solomon Islands. Above: The Quincy and its commander, Capt. Samuel M. Moore, reported among those killed.



The Astoria and its commander, Capt. William G. Greenman.



The Vincennes and its commander, Capt. Frederick L. Riefhohl.—United States Navy Photos.

ships. The Canberra, covering the landing operations at this point, was damaged, set afire and later abandoned. She sank the next morning. After this brief engagement, the enemy steamed for the passage northeast of Savo. There, Japanese searchlights and starshells disclosed a second screening force of destroyers and cruisers.

Third Force Escapes Attack. Badly damaged in the same engagement, the Astoria burned throughout the night and finally sank. A third United States force, stationed within the landing area, apparently escaped the attack and, while the cost was heavy, the necessary reinforcements and supplies reached their goal.

The importance of the Solomons operations was emphasized by the Navy in a communiqué disclosing that the United Nations have established bases in the New Hebrides and Fiji Islands as well as in New Caledonia. This was the first mention made of bases in the New Hebrides and Fiji Islands.

The Japanese expansion in the Solomons, the Navy said, would have threatened these bases along with the United States supply lines to Australia and New Zealand. The enemy's apparent intention to control air and sea, it added, also would have put them in a position to strike at the Port Darwin naval base and other strategic Australian sites.

"It was necessary, therefore," the Navy asserted, "that these designs of the enemy be blocked by our capturing and utilizing the key positions in the Southeastern Solomons. This was accomplished on August 7 when United States forces surprised and captured Japanese positions."

Extent of the American invasion losses was hinted in Navy communiqués from the beginning. On August 8 and 9, the Navy declared "considerable enemy resistance" was encountered and naval spokesmen cautioned the Nation that casualties in such an offensive were necessarily high.

On August 17, a communiqué said, "No further statement is made at this time of the damage to our forces because of the obvious value of such information to the enemy." But the latest communiqué announced:

"The loss of these four cruisers has now been offset by the appropriate reallocation of ships which is made possible by new construction."

Each of the three cruisers carried nine 8-inch guns. The Quincy and Vincennes, of 9,375 and 9,400 tons,

respectively, each had a normal complement of 45 officers and 907 enlisted men. The Astoria, 9,950 tons, normally carried a crew of 49 officers and 850 enlisted men.

The home of Capt. Moore was in Beverly Hills, Alexandria. Mrs. Moore, the former Camilla Chipman, has been staying with friends in Annapolis since learning of her husband's death some time ago.

Capt. Moore attended Eastern

High School and the old Swalevel Prep School here before entering the Academy at Annapolis in 1909. He was in charge of a group of destroyers which evacuated Americans from Spain during the civil war there.

He had been on duty in the Navy Department when assigned to sea duty in May of this year. He was appointed a captain prior to leaving Washington.

100 Japanese Planes In First Attack on Cruiser, Survivor Says

Men Refused to Leave Vincennes When Ordered, Chicagoan Declares

By the Associated Press.
CHICAGO, Oct. 13.—The Chicago Tribune, in a copyrighted article today, published an interview with Milton A. Schneller, 34-year-old Chicagoan, electrician's mate, first class, who was aboard the U. S. S. Vincennes off Tulagi Harbor during the battle of the Solomon Islands in August.

Schneller told Roy J. Gibbons, Tribune staff writer, that the first Jap counterattack came by air on August 7 and there were about 100 Jap planes in the attacking squadron.

"They came down to within what appeared to be only a few feet of the water," Schneller said, "and were in such close order that we were able to blast many of them from the sky with our 8-inch shells, which were fired point blank into their midst."

He said the Japs "pursued the same tactics" on the second and third days of the battle, but "we had come through the fight unscathed and our defense was improving."

All Hell Broke Loose. Schneller said he was asleep when the general alarm was sounded and "when all hell broke loose and the old Vincennes seemed to shiver from stem to stern."

"The first Jap hit smashed our sky aft (rear range finder) to pieces. . . . Then we took a torpedo right in our guts. We shuddered again. Came another direct hit, and all lights went out. Shells and torpedoes meanwhile were coming fast. Number one fire room was hit directly after us. The third torpedo hit the number four fire room. The fifth hit the forward engine room and the sixth struck forward at the bow."

"Then firing ceased almost as abruptly as it had started. We were still afloat, but listing badly."

Schneller said Comdr. R. A. Hansen appointed him to the upper deck "to see how things looked."

Was Ragging Jerns.

"On opening the hatch into the marine compartment, I found the place to be a raging inferno," Schneller told Gibbons. . . . When I came down the ladder into our control quarters two and half decks below topside, I reported to Mr. Hansen that in my opinion it would be possible to escape if we went straight up and not through the officers' forward passage.

"There were 48 men in that area of the ship and Mr. Hansen, on receiving my report, said those who wished to go could do so and that it was every man for himself."

"Nine of us got out. I can't recall too vividly the order in which I went up the ladder . . ."

Schneller said that on deck the discipline of the crew "was wonderful. We had to throw some of the men into the water. They refused to leave the ship even after being ordered to do so."

Floats for Hours. "We floated for what seemed like hours. Hundreds of men were bobbing around in the sea. In my immediate vicinity some 75 men were floating in the neighborhood of a raft on which were 20 wounded sailors. I was stationed about 100 feet out from one of the corners of the raft to act as a guard against sharks. Other men occupied similar positions."

Schneller said he was picked up by a destroyer and transferred to another ship and taken to a base and transferred aboard a transport and taken to the west coast.

Schneller told the Tribune writer that "We lost a lot of fine boys aboard the Vincennes and the other ships that were with it. These lads were my buddies. From now on I fight for Uncle Sam and for vengeance, too."

Bow-and-Arrow Duel

Because the Nazis have banned carrying of firearms in Denmark, an actor who wanted to fight a duel with a critic chose bows and arrows.

Turn the trash into cash and use it to smash—the Axis. Collect that junk metal now.

First Salvo Hit Astoria as Men Ran to Stations, Survivor Says

Enemy Appeared to Be Approaching From Both Sides With Deadly Fire, Texan Relates

By the Associated Press.

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 13.—An unexpected night encounter with a hard-hitting, sharp-shooting Japanese battle force burned vivid images of flaming guns and ships in the memories of the survivors of three heavy United States cruisers sunk off Tulagi Harbor August 9.

Some of the men who lived through that night of horror have reached San Francisco. The Navy has permitted them to tell something of what happened.

Lynn F. Hager, a tall, sharp-eyed Texan, was on sky control watch on the Astoria. The night was black under thick, low clouds. He could not see the other cruisers, the Vincennes and the Quincy, which moved along with the Astoria on their circular patrol of the harbor mouth.

Hager's keen ears picked up the ominous moan of an airplane. He flashed a message to the bridge. Word was sent to the captain.

Constant Fighting.

Suddenly the night gave way to a clearing white gas, a flare burst through the clouds a few hundred feet above the ship. Simultaneously from the southern end of Tulagi Bay, a searchlight pinioned the Astoria for a brief moment.

The light snapped off. Then guns flamed from close quarters and the Astoria shuddered under the impact of shell after shell. Ammunition ready boxes exploded and showered the bridge and the deck with lead.

It was the beginning of the battle that ended only after the three United States fighting ships had been mortally wounded.

"We'd been fighting constantly since the beginning of the Tulagi battle, 36 hours before," said Hager, whose home is in Marquez, Tex. "The first salvo hit us while some of the men were still running to their stations. Right at the beginning, they knocked out one of our turrets."

Started Firing to Port.

"As soon as their search lights picked us up, we turned and started ships were coming to us from both sides. Just then, over from the island on the west of us, a searchlight caught us in its beam."

"Our commander cut loose at the light and after a few minutes the light went out in a kind of a big puff. Lt. Comdr. E. K. Wakefield was directing the fire. He was one good officer. He had lost his binoculars and after looking around a minute he asked to borrow mine. He took a look through the glasses I handed him and said, 'Well, that's one Jap ship who'll never throw another shell at us.'"

"But we kept getting hit. "Men up on the sky control kept dropping. They were scattered around the decks. One of the officers went down to take some of the men from a sick bay . . . but there wasn't any sick bay left. It had got a direct hit."

Order to Abandon Ship. When it was no longer possible to fight the burning ship, orders were given to abandon. Hager said he started to help move the wounded off the forecastle, but dived overboard to get a raft that seemed to be in good condition. He did not get back to the ship.

Francis P. Williamson of Petersburg, Va., was on the Quincy. He told of getting aboard a life raft after the cruiser had been abandoned and of signaling a United States destroyer with a flashlight.

"While we were in the water," Williamson said, "there was one guy close to me. He had almost his whole body shot away. Once he said, very quiet, 'I can't last more than 15 or 20 minutes more. I got a hundred dollars in my pocket here if it'll do you fellows any good.' But nobody took it."

Hager told of rescue ships firing their machine guns to drive off the sharks that had been attracted by the men struggling in the water.

"When the destroyer came up on us she was firing," he said. "We thought she was Japanese, fixing to machine-gun us."

Hager suggested to the men with him on the raft that they leave it and scatter in the water so they would not offer so easy a target. Only two others were willing to take a chance in the water, however.

"We soon found out it was our destroyer," Hager continued. "They said the sharks were after a wounded officer and they machine-gunned

Allies Are Reported Skirmishing With Japs Around Gap

Mountain Troops Make Some Forward Progress In Owen Stanley Range

By the Associated Press.

GEN. MACARTHUR'S HEAD-QUARTERS, Australia, Oct. 13.—Allied mountain troops in New Guinea were reported skirmishing today with the Japanese in the region of "The Gap" through the Owen Stanley Mountains not far from the mile-high Templeton's Crossing.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur's communiqué said only that "skirmishing is taking place north of Myola," but a spokesman added that Allied forward elements had made some progress forward. From Templeton's Crossing, which the Allied troops are approaching, the mountain trail drops 5,000 feet in 12 miles. No details were given as to the strength of the Japanese, who have been withdrawing steadily from positions in the Owen Stanley mountains. It was believed, however, that only forward elements of both sides were involved in the fighting.

It was pointed out that problems of supply and not the strength of the Japanese resistance was slowing up the Allied progress.

Air activity was on a reduced scale, but medium bombers and attack planes again raked the trail to Buna along which the Japanese must bring up their supplies and reinforcements. Japanese installations at Buna also were bombed.

them to save him. I don't know whether it was a shark or not, but while I was out there in the water I saw a big white streak heading for me, and I did some fast swimming to get back to the raft. I never saw the two men who swam off with me after that."

Comdr. Wakefield is from Pennsylvania and was graduated from the Naval Academy at Annapolis in 1930. He is 36 years old. Lt. Comdr. William H. Truesdell, 39, of the Astoria, wounded in the battle, was graduated from Annapolis in 1925. He is from Illinois.

Curious about this?

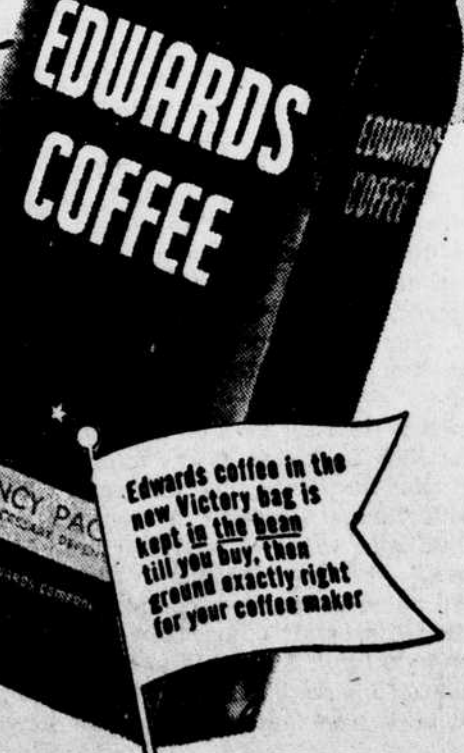
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