
Cape Esperance: The Misunderstood Victory of Admiral Norman Scott

Jeffrey A. Ballard

Sons of heroes, call forth the steel!

—Ossian

On the night of 8-9 August 1942, a combined Australian-American naval force, screening the amphibious landings in the Southern Solomon Islands, was completely surprised and thoroughly defeated by a numerically inferior Imperial Japanese naval force. The loss of Allied ships and sailors was unprecedented. The Battle of Savo Island was the worst defeat in United States Navy history and remains so today. During the 103-minute battle, 1,023 Americans and Australian sailors were killed and 709 wounded.¹ The next morning, one light and four heavy cruisers dotted the sea floor between Savo Island, Guadalcanal, and Florida Island. Thereafter, this body of water earned the nickname “Iron Bottom Sound” because compass needles quivered as ships passed over the accumulated mass of iron at the bottom.

One month later, Rear Admiral Norman Scott defeated a surprised Imperial Navy cruiser-destroyer force off Cape Esperance with the loss of only a single destroyer. There seemed no doubt that this reversal after the August defeat was an unqualified victory for the Navy, but this writer asserts it was not. South Pacific Commanders thought so, however, and dogmatically adopted Scott’s tactics in order to snatch more quick victories on the contentious waters around Guadalcanal.

In the long run, however, the legacy of Scott’s “victory” did more harm than good. The month after Cape Esperance, the fortunes of war reversed, and on 12-13 November, the Navy suffered intolerably once again. This night, four destroyers and a light cruiser joined the graveyard of ships below Savo Sound, and 739 lives, including two admirals, would be lost in pursuit of a second Cape Esperance.² Unquestioning repetition of Scott’s tactics persisted throughout the Guadalcanal Campaign, into the New Georgia Campaign, and until the third quarter of 1943. As such, the misunderstood lessons of Cape Esperance were a contributing cause to the loss of more than a dozen ships and the deaths of many thousands of sailors, including Scott’s own, in November 1942.³

Battle Narrative

The root cause of all the battles in the South Pacific during the fall and winter of 1942 was Japanese reaction to the American assault in the Southern Solomon Islands (7-8 August). Imperial General Headquarters was slow to react, believing the American landing was simply a raid on the unfinished airfield on Guadalcanal, and once destroyed, the Americans would withdraw. Imperial Navy estimates that less than two thousand US Marines had landed on the island supported this assumption, but the actual number was five and a half times that.⁴

In the first weeks of August, the Japanese took steps to retake the airfield and were bloodily repulsed. Repeatedly, Imperial Army commanders ordered poorly coordinated frontal assaults against the heavy weapons of the First Marine Division's perimeter. On the 21st they initiated a second effort to retake the airstrip, renamed Henderson Field by the Americans. Once again, without sufficient troops or coordination, their attempt to penetrate the Marine lines from across the Tenaru River failed.

In the final days of August, Imperial Naval Headquarters finally realized the danger posed by the Allied landings in the lower Solomons. Tokyo deferred the pending New Guinea offensive and redirected the 2nd (Sendai) Division to Guadalcanal. This strategic shift was significant because it elevated defense of the Solomon Islands above the capture of the Papuan Peninsula and further delayed a potential Japanese invasion of Australia.⁵

Unlike the Army, the Imperial Navy's reaction to the Allied landings in the Solomons was swift and decisive. The Combined Fleet, including three carriers and three battleships, sortied from Truk in the Caroline Islands, in an attempt to force the United States into a decisive battle that they hoped would drive the Americans to a negotiated peace. Imperial Navy preparations did not go unnoticed, however, and Australian Coastwatchers and Allied reconnaissance aircraft reported on its movements to Pacific Fleet headquarters in Hawaii. Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet (CINCPAC), Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, countered the advance with three carriers, resulting in the Battle of the Eastern Solomons, 24 August 1942. The Japanese lost light carrier *Ryujō* but inflicted heavy damage on the fleet carrier *Enterprise*.

On 11 October, at 1347, a B-17 from the 11th Bombardment Group (Heavy) observed a Japanese convoy tearing down the "Slot" less than one-hundred miles from Guadalcanal.⁶ The USAAF aircrew erroneously reported the "Tokyo Express" as being composed of two cruisers and six destroyers.⁷ In fact, the Army pilots had spotted Rear Admiral Takaji Joshima's "Reinforcement Group," which

consisted of two seaplane tenders, not cruisers, and six destroyers that transported advance elements of the 2nd Division and much of its heavy equipment.

Several hours behind Joshima, but part of a separate operation, was Cruiser Division 6; heavy cruisers *Aoba*, *Kinugasa*, and *Furutaka*. On 9 October, the Eighth Fleet headquarters at Rabaul dispatched the veterans of Savo Island to bombard Henderson Field two nights later. With the airfield out of commission, Joshima could make good his escape on the 12th. Commanded by Rear Admiral Aritomo Goto since the Battle of the Eastern Solomons, the cruisers, screened by two destroyers, remained undetected by Allied reconnaissance aircraft or Coastwatchers at dusk.

With three new American task forces in the area, Commander South Pacific Fleet (COMSOPAC), Vice Admiral Robert L. Ghormley, felt sufficiently equipped to challenge any Japanese reinforcement of Guadalcanal. COMSOPAC, gifted by the arrival of the Army's Americal Division, ordered the 164th Infantry Regiment to reinforce the beleaguered First Division Marines on the island.

The nearest of Ghormley's units was Task Force 64.2, commanded by Rear Admiral Norman Scott, who flew his flag in the heavy cruiser *San Francisco*. COMTF64.2 had been present at Savo Island but was unengaged as commander of the Southern Force in light cruiser *San Juan*. Determined not to be surprised, as the Allies had been in August, Scott patrolled just north of the Rennell Islands, beyond the range of the big Japanese Kawanishi flying boats at Rabaul. He would, however, be ideally situated to intercept any Japanese advances.

After two days of uneventful cruising, TF 64.2 began its approach to Savo Island at 1600 on the 10th. Scott held COMSOPAC orders to "search for and destroy enemy ships and landing craft."⁸ An hour later, Scott announced to Task Force Sugar his intention to engage the enemy just before midnight and repeated the enemy's strength as reported to him via short-range Talk Between Ships (TBS) radio.⁹ At sunset (1815), Scott set Condition Readiness ONE and all hands went to General Quarters.¹⁰ After rounding the northwest coast of Guadalcanal, TF 64.2 began to patrol north-northeast from a point north of Cape Esperance to Savo Island an hour before midnight (2300).¹¹

Scott's ships assumed "formation DOG," the line-of-battle reminiscent of the Age of Sail. His cruiser division included the heavy cruisers *San Francisco* and *Salt Lake City* and the light cruisers *Boise* and *Helena* bracketed fore and aft by two divisions of destroyers. Captain Robert G. Tobin, Commander Destroyer Squadron 12 (COMDESRON12), led the column in flagship *Farenholt*, followed immediately by *Laffey* and *Duncan*. Destroyers *Buchanan* and *McCalla*, newcomers to the task force, followed *Helena*, the last cruiser in column.

Despite his awareness of Joshima's position, Scott miscalculated the enemy's arrival time. Consequently, he missed an opportunity to strike the Reinforcement Group, which was already unloading at various points along Guadalcanal's northern shore. He was, however, in a perfect position to strike Goto's unsuspecting "Bombardment Group."

At about 2200, Scott, expecting contact with the enemy within the hour, ordered his floatplanes aloft to spot for his cruisers.¹² The admiral, who knew the damage burning planes had caused at Savo Island, had already ordered his Curtiss SOC "Seagull" scout planes, except one per cruiser, to be flown-off to Tulagi. Additionally, Scott ordered all non-essential flammables be stowed or jettisoned. Ominously, *Salt Lake City's* plane crashed on takeoff when "a flare in the cockpit inexplicably ignited."¹³ The flaming wreck threatened to give away the position of Task Force Sugar. Fortunately for the Americans, Joshima could not see the conflagration because of an intervening land mass and radioed Goto that the Sound was clear of Allied shipping. Joshima also failed to mention the presence of enemy scout planes that might have warned Goto of the American presence.

After sunset, all radar sets in the American formation were energized and active, sweeping their assigned sectors. At 2225, *Helena's* sensitive millimeter-wave (SG) radar registered Goto's formation bearing 315°T, distance 27,000 yards (15.33 miles) but failed to report the contact for 17 minutes.¹⁴ The tactical situation was the reverse of that two months earlier at Savo, with the Americans aware of the approaching enemy and at battle stations, while the Japanese approached Guadalcanal unaware of the American presence and unprepared.

Getting uncomfortably close to the west coast of Savo Island, Scott countermarched to the southeast. At 2332 Scott ordered a column (follow-the-leader) turn of 180 degrees to port via TBS: "This is CTF. Execute to follow: left to course 230°" and thirty seconds later, "CTF. Execute."¹⁵ Inexplicably the column split in two with *Farenholt* leading *Laffey* and *Duncan* in a wider arch. *San Francisco* and the remaining ships turned more tightly placing Tobin's destroyers between Scott and the approaching enemy. Tobin, realizing his predicament, ordered the former lead destroyers to increase speed, advance along the cruiser's starboard flank, and regain their position ahead of *San Francisco*.

Helena finally reported the contact to COMTF64.2, and *Salt Lake City* and *Boise* immediately concurred.¹⁶ *Boise's* radio operator, however, reported the unidentified contact as five "bogies," and referenced a relative and not a true (magnetic) bearing.¹⁷ *Boise's* use of the code word for an airborne contact and the illogical compass heading confused Scott.¹⁸ With *San Francisco's* meter-wave (SC) radar turned off, the admiral was unable to verify that the contacts on *Boise's* screen

were not Tobin's destroyers. He knew only that the destroyers were somewhere off his starboard side.

Unknown to both Scott and Tobin, *Duncan* had left the formation and was singlehandedly executing a torpedo attack on an enemy cruiser. *Helena*, *Boise*, and *Salt Lake City*, whose radar images were becoming clearer by the moment, did not believe that their contacts were American. At least one United States ship fired on *Duncan*, because she received multiple hits on her unengaged (opposite) side, meaning that the rounds were American and not Japanese.¹⁹

The countermarch had caused Scott to inadvertently cross Goto's "T," at the range of only 4,600 yards (2.61 miles).²⁰ COMTF64.2 could not have asked for a better firing solution, but blind to the fully developed radar plot, issued no orders. At 2345, *Helena's* skipper requested permission to commence firing and Scott responded "Roger" but the admiral had only meant to acknowledge *Helena's* last transmission.²¹ *Helena's* first salvo committed the American fleet and within a minute, all of Task Force Sugar's guns were ablaze. While the cruiser's secondary batteries illuminated the Japanese with star shells, the American 6 and 8-inch main batteries poured fire into the unsuspecting Bombardment Group.

Moments before the Americans commenced hostilities, the ships in Goto's formation were preparing to begin the midwatch with Savo Island broad off their port bow.²² CRUDIV6 (*Aoba*, *Kinugasa*, and *Furutaka*), less heavy cruiser *Kako*, which had been sunk by the American submarine S-44 on 10 August, departed Shortland Island at the southernmost point of Bougainville on 9 October.²³ To ensure the "Cactus Air Force" could not interfere with Joshima's escape, Goto intended to bomb Henderson field and ground her planes.²⁴ Goto had made this round trip once before, bombarding Lunga Point on Guadalcanal on 25 August. This action deprived the Marines of much needed sleep but he arrived too late to support the Imperial Army crossing the Tenaru.²⁵ Nevertheless, for his current mission, the destroyers *Fubuki* and *Hatsuyuke* screened Goto's heavy cruisers. Covering the 349 miles in two days, Goto would enter Savo Sound about midnight on 11 October, bombard the Marine position, and make good his escape before dawn.

As American salvos began to strike his force, Admiral Goto refused to believe battle was at hand. Like the Allied commanders at the Battle of Savo Island, the Japanese were completely unprepared and for six or seven crucial minutes, did not react.²⁶ Goto believed Joshima's destroyers were firing on him and signaled with his blinkers "I am *Aoba*" repeatedly making the flagship's bridge an instant target for American gunners.²⁷

Aboard the San Francisco, *Helena's* unexpected commencement of

hostilities caused the admiral genuine alarm. Scott nearly threw away the advantage of surprise when he ordered a ceasefire to check on the status of his destroyers. “How are you?” queried the admiral via TBS. Tobin replied he was fine but did not know who the cruisers were shooting at.²⁸ Scott ordered a resumption of fire at 2351, but only after *Farenholt* flashed recognition lights—green over green over white, in vertical line.²⁹

The Office of Naval Intelligence’s report described the situation after 2351 as being “so intense and the firing by all the ships so rapid and simultaneous that it is impossible to relate the events in any great detail or with a clear chronology.”³⁰

Unable to stop what he believed was friendly fire, Goto ordered a 180-degree column turn (instead of a simultaneous turn) to starboard to escape.³¹ Such a turn caused each ship in the Japanese formation to pivot and reverse course in the same spot as the preceding. This made the Japanese easy targets and the Americans sank the *Fubuki* before it finished its turn. The blinking signal lights on the *Aoba* directed American gunfire that wrecked the bridge and mortally wounded admiral Goto. Rapid fire from the light cruiser’s 6-inch guns and the rhythmic salvos of the heavy cruiser’s 8-inch main batteries sank the *Furutuka*. In the confusion, *Kinugasa* and *Hatsuyuki* inadvertently turned to port rather than starboard, and

Photo # NH 97728 Japanese cruiser Aoba soon after completion

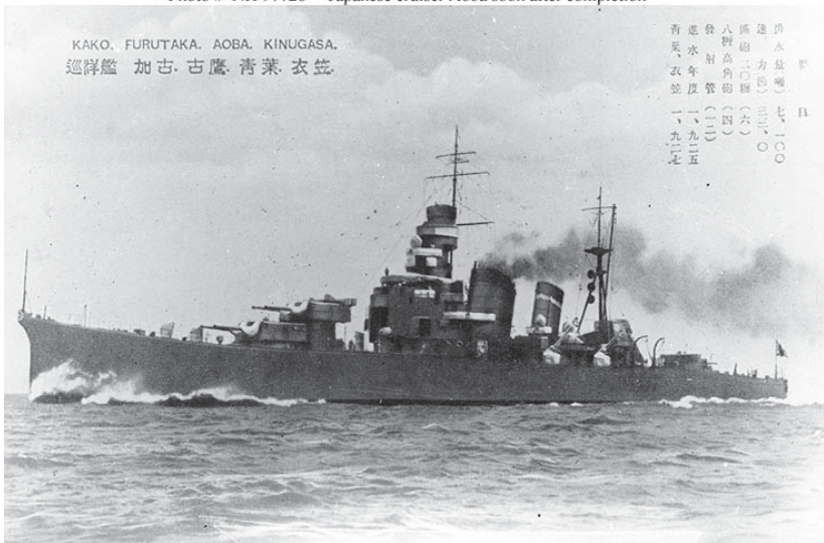


Figure 1. The Japanese Heavy Cruiser, *Aoba*, photographed soon after completion, c. 1927-1929. Naval History and Heritage Command collection.

because the Americans concentrated on the closer ships, they escaped.

At precisely midnight, and with the Japanese in full retreat, Scott ordered a ceasefire and the flashing of recognition lights. *Boise* foolishly turned on its searchlights and received ten or eleven hits from the retreating Japanese, causing immense damage. The deluge caused one of *Boise's* magazines to explode, disabling all three forward turrets and the ship fell out of column to the port.³² Quick action by *Salt Lake City* saved *Boise*, as it interposed itself between the stricken *Boise* and the retreating enemy. As a result, the heavy cruiser *Kinugasa* hit *Salt Lake City* with two 8-inch shells.³³ By twenty minutes after midnight, all radar screens were clear, and Scott called off the chase.

Analysis

The Battle of Cape Esperance was the second of five surface engagements between ships of the United States and the Imperial Japanese navies near the South Pacific island of Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands. The Japanese called the clash the Sea Battle of Savo Island, referencing the first surface action two months earlier. Although COMTF64.2 prevented Goto from accomplishing his mission, the conduct of the battle was far from flawless. The botched countermarch highlighted Rear Admiral Richmond K. Turner's observation that "scratch teams performed poorly in stressful situations."³⁴ It was becoming apparent that ships in the combat zone had too little time for training, and the exercises Scott conducted while loitering near Rennell Island could not make up for years of neglect. The Americans overcame small errors such as the misuse of the term "bogie" and the usage of relative, rather than true (magnetic) readings but the battle showed the significance of these small errors. Captain Tobin, in his after-action report suggested that the code word "skunk" be used to describe an identified surface contact, and Nimitz ordered the change immediately.³⁵

Norman Scott, a bona fide member of the Navy's "Gun Club," employed naval rifles to the exclusion of torpedoes in achieving his mission. Scott's battle plan specified that the cruisers were to employ "continuous fire against small ships at short range, rather than full gun salvos with long intervals."³⁶ Admiral William "Bull" Halsey, who succeeded Ghormley as COMSOPAC six days after the battle, was extremely impressed with *Helena* and *Boise's* machinegun-like fire of their 6-inch main batteries. The hyper-aggressive Halsey ordered "continuous fire," as opposed to measured "salvo fire," to become the fleet's standard operating procedure.³⁷ Halsey's judgement, which equated volume of fire with accuracy, was well intentioned but flawed. Navy gunnery studies, conducted after the New

Georgia Campaign, showed that of 4,591 6-inch shells fired, only one-quarter of one-percent (12) scored a hit.³⁸

The battle drew attention to fire distribution as an emerging issue with radar-controlled gunfire. Although Scott's battle plan called for a normal distribution of fire (each ship fires on the vessel opposite it) all of Task Force Sugar's radar-directed gunners tended to fire on the ship with the most prominent radar signature.³⁹ Consequently, the two nearest ships with the most prominent signatures, *Fubuki* and *Furutaka*, received excessive fire. Both ships received devastating damage while the remaining enemy ships, except *Aoba*, escaped relatively unhurt. In all fairness to American gunners, the perpendicular orientation of the formations complicated target selection. Better fire discipline was required, to which CINCPAC subscribed "training, TRAINING and MORE T-R-A-I-N-I-N-G."⁴⁰

Both Nimitz and his boss, Admiral Ernest J. King, Commander-in-Chief US Fleet (COMINCH), questioned Scott's choice of *San Francisco* as his flagship. On 9 August, Scott had selected the light cruiser *San Juan*, which was equipped with SG radar, so the admiral knew the millimeter-wave radar's surface search capabilities. At Cape Esperance, *San Francisco* used only its short-range Fire Control (FC) radar, which was not designed for surface search. For security reasons, *San Francisco* turned off its own SC set.⁴¹ Thus, Scott relied on his seeing-eye-dogs *Helena* and *Boise*. Flying his flag on any of the three other cruisers, all equipped with SG radar, would have given the admiral immediate access to the complete radar picture and thus facilitated prompt decision-making.

The action also illustrated that the US Navy lacked sufficient surface warfare doctrine for light forces at night. To his credit, Scott made it up as he went along and his force generally performed very well. In his endorsement of the COMTF64.2 after-action report,



Figure 2. Rear Admiral Norman Scott. U.S. Navy photograph, now in the collections of the National Archives.



Figure 4. *USS Duncan* (DD-485) underway in the south Pacific on 7 October 1942, five days before she was sunk in the Battle of Cape Esperance. Photographed from *USS Copahee* (ACV-12). U.S. Navy Photograph, from the collections of the Naval History and Heritage Command.

Savo Island commanders had not. The admiral drafted a cohesive battle plan and communicated it to TF 64.2 skippers two full days before the battle.⁴⁴ Aware that crew fatigue had been a major factor in the defeat two months earlier, Scott made sure his crews had ample time to take meals and ready their battle stations before calling them to General Quarters.

Scott strictly adhered to CINCPAC's new policies addressing the cause of the many fires triggered by Japanese shells and torpedoes in August. Nimitz concluded that the all-consuming fires aboard the Northern Group of heavy cruisers, (*Quincy*, *Vincennes*, and *Astoria*) were "due, in part, to the large amount of flammable materials on board, a consequence of the many years of peacetime cruising."⁴⁵ He then issued a fleet wide directive ordering the removal of unnecessary topside combustibles and unneeded observation aircraft from ships before going into combat.⁴⁶

Finally, an important characteristic of Scott's success was that TG 64.2

met the enemy outside of Savo Sound, so its movements were not restricted by the surrounding islands. On the open waters, Scott maximized the effectiveness of his radar and prevented the Imperial Navy, which was proving to be an adept night fighting force, from hiding their silhouettes against Guadalcanal's high mountain range or the high volcanic cone of Savo Island.

Certainly, Cape Esperance was a shot in the arm for American morale, which had been in freefall since August. It is worth questioning whether Scott's tactics were worthy of the unquestioning duplication they received by South Pacific commanders, and if Cape Esperance was a lasting victory.

Like most every surface action in the Southern Solomon Islands, Cape Esperance was strategically inconclusive, because it did not award local naval superiority to either combatant. By dusk the following night, the Americans had virtually surrendered Iron Bottom Sound to the Imperial Navy. Scott did succeed in preventing the bombardment of Henderson Field that night, but four nights later the Marines would endure a hellish assault. During "The Bombardment," battleships *Kongo* and *Haruna* lobbed over nine hundred, 14-inch, high-explosive shells on Marine positions and the airfield. The cannonade destroyed forty-eight planes, killed forty-one men, and put gapping craters in the airfield that grounded the Cactus Air Force for more than a month.⁴⁷ The Imperial Navy took full advantage of the grounding and reinforced Guadalcanal with infantry, artillery, and heavy equipment, including tanks, in broad daylight. The sight of Japanese transports disgorging troops on the beach caused one exasperated Marine Colonel from First Division Headquarters to report "We don't know whether we'll be able to hold the field or not."⁴⁸

Based on the after-action reports submitted by Scott's captains, Nimitz calculated that TG 64.2 had sunk three cruisers and five destroyers. In the CINCPAC's endorsement to King, Nimitz determined, "we administered as severe a defeat to them as they did to us in the earlier battle."⁴⁹ He concluded that with the advantage of surprise, like that enjoyed by the Japanese on the night of 8-9 August, "our light forces are equal or superior."⁵⁰ In reality, the damage inflicted by Scott was not comparable at all. In the summation, the American margin of victory was but one Japanese cruiser, making Cape Esperance a marginal victory for the USN. Damage to the surviving ships was about equal. *Boise* was forced to return to the United States for repairs on her three forward turrets and likewise *Aoba*, with her number 2 and 3 turrets disabled and her bridge wrecked, returned to Kure. Neither would return to action until spring 1943.

The October battle occurred far too soon after the Savo Island defeat to make any definitive judgements about Scott's tactics. Significant staff work was



Figure 5. *USS Boise* (CL-47) arrives at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, Pennsylvania, for battle damage repairs, November 1942. The damage she sustained resulted in a large fire that burned out her three forward 6/47 gun turrets and their ammunition spaces. U.S. Navy Photograph, National Archive.

required to analyze lessons learned from past operations, formulate recommendations, and make doctrinal changes. This lag meant that months passed between evaluation and implementation, causing recommendations to arrive too late to affect the outcome of subsequent battles. For example, the Navy did not release its official report on the Battle of Savo Island until May 1943, nine months after the action and four months after Guadalcanal was secure.⁵¹

Four major surface battles took place on or near Iron Bottom Sound during the period between Savo Island and the release of the “Hepburn Report.” In almost every case, commanders emulated some or all of Scott’s tactics. Though the actions foiled Japanese plans to either reinforce the Imperial Army or bombard Henderson Field, the cost in ships and lives was staggering. For example, by the time the Americans secured Guadalcanal in February 1943, the Japanese had sunk or severely damaged twelve of the fourteen heavy cruisers committed to the

Southern Solomons. *Salt Lake City* was the exception, and received only moderate damage during the 11 October battle.⁵² In terms of lost ships and men, the final reckoning of the Guadalcanal Campaign was that the combatants losses were approximately equal, reinforcing the marginal nature of the tactical effort.⁵³

In the final analysis, the Japanese defeat at Cape Esperance had more to do with their failures than with American successes. Goto had been surprised because, up to this point, the Navy had completely deserted the Sound at night. Japanese certainty that the Sound was free of Allied shipping was due to lack of vigilance and Joshima's failure to grasp the significance of cruiser floatplanes and report their presence to Goto. The Japanese would not likely make these mistakes again.

Scott's Legacy

As noted above, South Pacific commanders sought to repeat Scott's success for the remainder of the Guadalcanal Campaign and the first half of the New Georgia Campaign—often with calamitous results. One month after Cape Esperance, Rear Admiral Daniel J. Callaghan lead a cruiser-destroyer force in the Night Cruiser Action of 12-13 November. Within the confines of Savo Sound, the American column smashed headlong into the Japanese formation of two battleships, one heavy cruiser, and eleven destroyers. The engagement quickly degenerated into a “barroom brawl with the lights out”⁵⁴ as American and Japanese ships mixed like fish in a barrel. Point-blank gunfire on the flagship's bridge killed Callaghan and most of his staff.

Nimitz judged the action was a tactical victory, because like Cape Esperance, Callaghan prevented the bombardment of Henderson Field. The overoptimistic Naval Intelligence Branch estimated that Callaghan had sunk three cruisers, five destroyers, and that no enemy ship escaped damage.⁵⁵ In reality, Callaghan had damaged the two battleships, three destroyers, and had sunk two destroyers. The Americans lost the light anti-aircraft cruiser *Atlanta* and four destroyers. Due to heavy damage, both heavy cruisers *San Francisco* and *Portland* left the theater for repair. The only ship to escape unscathed was the destroyer *Fletcher*.

While it can be debated whether the results were worth the cost, there is little dispute that Callaghan fought this battle poorly. Although Scott, the victor of Cape Esperance, was present in his flagship *Atlanta*, he was junior to Callaghan, the Officer in Tactical Command (OTC). Callaghan, who had been Ghormley's chief of staff, was put to sea by Halsey's promotion to COMSOPAC and had little tactical command experience. Consequently, he imitated Scott's October tactics and in

doing so, he repeated the errors of Cape Esperance and even magnified some.

Callaghan was roundly criticized for not issuing a battle plan, as Scott had done, and for not selecting a ship equipped with SG radar as his flagship. This night, however, the ships tracking the Japanese approach reported the contact immediately, but because he lacked the complete tactical picture, Callaghan squandered his radar advantage and failed to issue timely and succinct orders.⁵⁶

Like Scott at Cape Esperance, Callaghan also failed to employ his destroyers effectively. Nimitz and King both censured Callaghan for repeating Scott's mistake of tying his destroyers to the cruiser line. King lamented deploying destroyers in this manner "unnecessarily exposed the destroyers to gunfire and prevented them from making a coordinated torpedo attack,"⁵⁷ adding "Destroyers are essentially an offensive weapon, particularly at night with their torpedoes."⁵⁸

Collectively, the scratch team of seven destroyers from two different squadrons launched forty-nine torpedoes, but post-war records indicate they did not strike any Japanese ships.⁵⁹ Nonetheless, excessive American optimism claimed twenty-four torpedo hits. The Japanese, on the other hand, scored six hits on five ships, which contributed to the sinking of *Laffey*, *Cushing*, *Barton*, and *Monssen* and damaging the stern of *Portland*.⁶⁰

Unlike his favorable assessment of the October battle, Nimitz criticized Callaghan for selecting the column formation and distributing destroyer divisions fore and aft of the cruisers. In this case, a thirteen-ship column proved unwieldy and difficult to maneuver. CINCPAC also wondered why the ships with SG radar were placed eighth and last in the column and not first and fifth.⁶¹ Closing his report, Nimitz reiterated that the single biggest problem confronting the Navy in the Solomons was that his commanders continued to focus on naval gunfire, generally ignoring the offensive potential of their destroyers while simultaneously dismissing the effectiveness of the enemy's torpedoes.⁶²

Vice Admiral William S. Pye, the President of the Naval War College, went so far as to say if Callaghan had survived, a court-martial was in order. Instead, both Callaghan and Scott received the Congressional Medal of Honor (posthumously).⁶³

If Norman Scott was the disciple of Alfred Thayer Mahan's "Big Gun Navy" then Rear Admiral Willis A. Lee was his prophet. Not unexpectedly then, the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal was fought exclusively by the radar-controlled gunnery of his battleships *Washington* and *South Dakota*. The action was the Navy's first battleship versus battleship combat since Admiral Sampson fought the Spanish at Santiago, 3 July 1898. On the night of 14-15 November, Lee sank the battleship *Kirishima*, which brought with it the distinction of being the only

battleship sunk by another battleship in the South Pacific theater.⁶⁴ Destroyer torpedoes holed battleships *Yamashiro* and *Fuso*, sunk at the Battle of Suriago Strait on 24-25 October 1944, before Admiral Oldendorf's battleships finished them off.

Based on available information, Naval Intelligence believed that Lee had defeated a superior force, sinking one battleship, three to five cruisers, and a dozen destroyers.⁶⁵ The truth was far less impressive. Actual Japanese losses were one World War I-era battleship and a destroyer. But once again, American claims of victory were substantiated because Henderson Field aircraft were flying again the next day. Lee was fortunate that his destroyers—and later *South Dakota*—drew the attention of the Japanese torpedoes, sparing the flagship any serious damage.

A gushing Halsey wrote that Lee's plan was "audaciously planned and executed."⁶⁶ Uncharacteristically, both Nimitz and King restrained their criticism. However, Nimitz did observe that if Lee's column had engaged the Japanese outside of the Sound, as Scott had done at Cape Esperance, the enemy would not have been able to approach from the radar shadow caused by Savo Island.⁶⁷

Contrary to using his destroyers offensively, Lee used them as bait for Japanese torpedoes and only one of the four survived. Admiral Pye criticized Lee for this mistreatment, but the undisputed chairman of the Gun Club was not bothered by the censure. In Nimitz's report to King, he expressed, for the first time, his concerns about the American Mk.15 torpedo. He found the *Gwin*'s inability to dispatch foundering *Benham* embarrassing.⁶⁸

Except for Savo Island, the Battle of Tassafaronga was the Navy's worst surface defeat of the Pacific War. After a bright moon period, which suspended all but the most critical nocturnal visits to Guadalcanal, the Tokyo Express returned to the Sound with the waning moon. In the early hours of 1 December, eight Imperial Navy destroyers sailed deep inside the Sound and dealt a devastating blow to Rear Admiral Carlton Wright's numerically superior Task Force 67.

The Japanese skirted Tassafaronga Point to hide their silhouette in against Guadalcanal's 6,000 foot mountain range, but Wright's flagship *Minneapolis*, equipped with SG radar, detected the Japanese at a distance of 23,000 yards. The American battle line of four heavy cruisers and a light cruiser tracked the enemy as the two forces closed on reciprocal and nearly parallel courses. With a combined speed of thirty-two knots, the formations closed rapidly, and the range quickly fell below 10,000 yards (5.6 miles).⁶⁹

For this mission, Halsey had assigned Wright the four destroyers of Destroyer Division 9 (Commander William M. Cole). Cole arranged his ships in a column 4,000 yards off *Minneapolis*'s port bow in an attempt to address the

underutilization of Seventh Fleet destroyers. Per Wright's battle plan, Cole was to deliver a torpedo attack and clear the gunnery range, thereby avoiding *Duncan's* fate. For their part, the cruisers were to withhold fire until the first American torpedo detonated.

A detached destroyer column dedicated to offensive action demonstrated progress but Cole was not free to initiate the attack and required an order from Wright to do so. For eight minutes, Wright hesitated, and Cole watched his ideal firing solution disappear before requesting permission to launch. Wright delayed again, wasting another six minutes before giving the order. The twenty-four torpedoes fired by DESDIV9 sped into an impossible tail chase because the Japanese were abaft the beam of the destroyers.

In the meantime, the cruiser's range to target fell well below the minimum range specified in Wright's battle plan and the admiral ordered his 6 and 8-inch guns to fire before all Cole's torpedoes had left their tubes. Now with ample warning, the Japanese immediately executed a counter-march and escaped, but not before firing twenty fast-running torpedoes of their own.⁷⁰ Wright would have done well to order a similar 180° turn because his cruisers sailed directly into the deadly spread of Japanese Long Lance torpedoes. All four TF 67 heavy cruisers were struck by at least one torpedo knocking off the bows of *Minneapolis* and *New Orleans* forward of Turret No. 2, holing *Pensacola* and sinking *Northampton*. Herculean effort by fleet tugs saved *New Orleans* and the flagship, but both returned to the United States for lengthy repairs. Only *Honolulu* and Cole's destroyers escaped undamaged. Destroyers *Lardner* and *Lampson*, attached to the force at the eleventh hour, fired a few ineffectual salvos, but kept their distance for most of the action lest they suffer the same fate as *Duncan*.

Nimitz believed Wright exaggerated when stating he had sunk two light cruisers and seven destroyers. Nevertheless, both Nimitz and King restrained their criticism. With some help from Naval Intelligence, CINCPAC revised the totals downward to four destroyers sunk and two others damaged, but even this was an exaggeration. TF 67 sank only a single destroyer and failed to damage any of the other seven ships present. This fact can be attributed to poor fire distribution, which had remained an issue since Cape Esperance, with all of Wright's cruisers firing on the hapless *Takanami*, the largest and brightest blip on their radar screen.

Wright received little criticism for his conduct of the battle even though his losses were disproportionate to the damage inflicted. Halsey was most displeased with Captain Cole for not launching his torpedoes at the optimal angle and range, but it was Wright and not Cole who caused the delay. Nimitz judged that, "the conduct of the battle was generally correct."⁷¹ CINCPAC concluded his

report, of what would be the final battle of the Southern Solomon Islands Campaign, by saying that the Japanese were more skilled in the use of guns and torpedoes. This conclusion was an oversimplification that gave little consideration to issues of leadership, doctrine, and the developing awareness of problems with the Mk.15 torpedo.

By 9 February 1943, the Japanese quietly completed their evacuation of Guadalcanal, and Halsey looked forward to resuming King's plan to neutralize the Japanese citadel at Rabaul. Lacking the amphibious resources to assault the Central Solomons for the time being, Halsey assembled an impressive array of naval power with which to "keep pushing the Japs around."⁷²

Lee's *Washington*, three recently commissioned fast battleships, and two older battleships joined carriers *Enterprise* and *Saratoga* in the South Pacific. This gave Halsey mobility and striking power, but the confined waters of the New Georgia Sound would prove just as dangerous to the Navy's heavies as Iron Bottom Sound. The tip of Halsey's spear, therefore, would be Rear Admiral Waldon "Pug" Ainsworth's cruiser-destroyer Task Force 38.

When the American invasion of New Georgia finally came, on the last day of June 1943, the Japanese were unprepared. The Imperial Navy responded with the limited forces at their disposal resulting in two actions named the Battles of the Kula Gulf (5-6 July) and Kolombangara (12-13 July). Although considered minor naval actions compared to the colossal battles on Iron Bottom Sound, both are worthy of discussion because they demonstrate how the legacy of Cape Esperance persisted through the Guadalcanal Campaign and into the next.

Ainsworth's conduct of both battles resembled that of Scott's at Cape Esperance in most every way. Prior to each battle the admiral conducted a brief conference and presented the same battle plan with an A and B option. Neither option utilized the offensive capabilities of the destroyers assigned to his command. He did allow them to fire at targets of opportunity but only after gunfire, in full radar control mode, commenced. Before both battles, Ainsworth arrayed his force in column with destroyers fore and aft of the cruiser line. In both cases, he maneuvered to cap the enemy's T. Like Wright, Ainsworth failed to make significant course changes, after initial contact, and sailed into torpedo water.

Fortunately for the Americans, Japanese torpedo gunnery was uncharacteristically poor and only sank light cruiser *Helena* (Kula Gulf) and damaged *Honolulu*, *St. Louis*, and *Leander*, sinking destroyer *Gwin* at Kolombangara. Similar to Wright's assessment of his battle, Ainsworth was convinced he had won two major victories. In actuality, he had sunk only destroyer *Niizuki* (Kula Gulf) and the old light cruiser *Jintsu* (Kolombangara).

It appears that Ainsworth did not read any of the action reports of the battles on Savo Sound. Consequently, the admiral deviated little from Scott's conduct nine months earlier and duplicated many of the errors made previously. Despite being Commander of Destroyers in the Pacific for the first half of 1942, Ainsworth used his destroyers defensively like Scott at Cape Esperance. Ainsworth, like Scott and Lee, was a devotee of the naval rifle, and relied entirely on the high rate of fire and superior fire control of light cruisers *Honolulu*, *Helena*, and *St. Louis*, which overwhelmed the enemy's lead ships, demonstrating poor gunfire distribution.

Halsey was generally pleased with Ainsworth's performance and praised his battle-plan, although he had duplicated Scott's tactics, which were under heavy scrutiny in mid-1943. COMSOPAC criticized Ainsworth for "missing the 'golden opportunity'" to deliver an early torpedo attack.⁷³ He also repeated the mantra that destroyer commanders need freedom and lamented the missed offensive opportunities.⁷⁴ The torpedoing of all four of his cruisers was evidence that existing doctrine needed revision. Nimitz was less pleased with Ainsworth than Halsey. CINCPAC's main concern was the damage to the cruisers, as *Honolulu* and *St. Louis* lost their bows to torpedoes. They survived, but were out of the war for an extended period. Capping the T, while ideal for naval gunfire, provided a poor torpedo solution. Poor fire distribution under radar-controlled gunfire continued to be a problem.

Conclusion

While Admiral Scott's success at Cape Esperance was a much-needed boost to American morale, his victory had sinister consequences on the conduct of future operations. South Pacific Commanders strove to replicate his achievement by mirroring Scott's tactics, but Scott's feat was due to exigent circumstances, and this flawed their logic. The Americans caught Goto off guard because since the August battle they virtually abandoned control of Savo Sound to the Japanese every night. Consequently, the Navy's sudden reappearance completely surprised the Japanese. TF 64.2 also benefited from the fact that Joshima's exact position was unknown to Goto, causing him to withhold fire for six to seven crucial minutes, while he challenged the Americans with his desperate "I am *Aoba*" message. Neither circumstance would likely occur again.

The Navy's belief that Cape Esperance was a smashing success (rather than a marginal victory) reinforced the pre-war notion that gunfire alone would be the final arbiter in naval combat. Furthermore, it seemed to vindicate the Mahanian

cult of the Big Gun as Scott “demonstrated his allegiance to this school of thought.”⁷⁵ Consequently, the Americans continued to “concentrate on tactics designed to maximize the effectiveness of gunfire”⁷⁶ to the exclusion of a balanced surface warfare doctrine. The superiority of the “hammer and anvil” of gunnery and torpedo would be demonstrated at Vella Gulf (6-7 October 1943), improved at Cape St. George (24-25 November 1943) and perfected at Surigao Strait (25 October 1944).

It would be a year before anyone recognized the flaws in Admiral Norman Scott’s victory, and because of this, the Navy lost indispensable ships and many hundreds of sailors. Had Scott survived the South Pacific Campaign there is every reason to believe that he would have been an agent of change, but the fact is he did not live to celebrate Thanksgiving 1942. As mentioned previously, friendly fire from the *San Francisco* killed Scott on 13 November and he posthumously received the Congressional Medal of Honor. Incidentally, in 1942, 13 November was a Friday.

Notes

1. Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Struggle for Guadalcanal: August 1942- February 1943*, vol. V of *History of the United States Naval Operations in World War II* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1949), 63.

2. Richard B. Frank, *Guadalcanal: The Definitive Account of the Landmark Battle* (New York: Random House, 1990), 459–460.

3. James D. Hornfischer, *Neptune’s Inferno* (New York: Bantam Books, 2012), 437.

4. Hornfischer, 44.

5. Adrian Stewart, *Guadalcanal: World War II’s Fiercest Naval Campaign* (London: William Kimber, 1985), 75.

6. Chester W. Nimitz, CINCPAC Report, December 26, 1942, 2, Record Group 38, Box 19, National Archives II, College Park, MD.; The “Slot” was the nickname given the New Georgia Sound which was bordered by the two parallel island chains that made up the Solomon Islands.

7. Recognizing the danger posed by Allied airpower in the daylight, the Japanese transported troops to Guadalcanal in regular nightly destroyer runs, the frequency of which prompted American sailors and airmen to refer to these operations as the “Tokyo Express.”

8. U.S. Navy. Combat Narratives: Solomon Island Campaign, Office of Naval Intelligence. IV *Battle of Cape Esperance*, 11 October 1942, 3, Washington DC: Office of Naval Intelligence, Publications Branch, 1 October 1943. No. 485.

9. *Ibid.*, 6.

10. *Ibid.*, 5.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Ibid., 7.
13. Ernest G. Small, *USS Salt Lake City* Action Report, October 19, 1942, 4, Record Group 38, Box 1390, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
14. Combat Narratives, 7.
15. Ibid., 7.
16. Ibid., 11.
17. Edward J. Moran, *USS Boise* Action Report, October 30, 1942, 4, Record Group 38, Box 1025, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
18. Norman Scott, Task Group 64.2 Action Report, October 22, 1942, 3, Record Group 38, Box 17, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
19. Morison, 161.
20. Crossing or capping the “T” was a tactic used in naval warfare where one line of ships passes in front of another at a right angle. This maneuver allows the crossing line to bring all their guns to bear while their enemy may only rely on their forward guns.
21. Scott, 4.
22. The watch was from midnight to 4 AM (0000-0400).
23. Raizo Tanaka, “Japan’s Losing Struggle For Guadalcanal,” United States Naval Institute Proceedings, 82 (July 1956): 699.
24. The Allied code word Cactus referred to Guadalcanal, so the mixed bag of Navy, Marine and USAAF aircraft which operated from Henderson Field were called the Cactus Air Force.
25. Morison, 73.
26. Matome Ugaki, *Fading Victory: The Diary of Admiral Matome Ugaki, 1941-1945* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991), 237.
27. Ibid.
28. Charles H. McMorris, *USS San Francisco* Action Report, October 31, 1942, TBS Transmissions, unpaginated, Record Group 38, Box 1396, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
29. Morison, 160.
30. Combat Narratives, 12.
31. A simultaneous turn is the opposite of the column turn (follow the leader) as all ships in the column initiate the turn immediately from their present position.
32. Moran, 11.
33. Small, 16.
34. Morison, 271.
35. Robert G. Tobin, COMDESRON12, Action Report, October 23, 1942, 60, Command File, World War II, Box 341, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC Navy Yard.
36. Combat Narratives, 3.

37. William F. Halsey, Commander South Pacific, Second Endorsement of USS McCalla Action Report, January 8, 1943, 1, Record Group 38, Box 22, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

38. Vincent P. O'Hara, *The U.S. Navy Against the Axis: Surface Combat, 1941-1945* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2007), 318.

39. Combat Narratives, 3.

40. Chester W. Nimitz, CINCPAC Report, December 15, 1942, 16. Record Group 38, Box 19, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

41. McMorris, 11.

42. Frank, 297, 304.

43. Combat Narratives, 3.

44. Ibid.

45. Chester W. Nimitz, Pacific Fleet Confidential Letter 29CL-42, July 28, 1942, 1. Command File, World War II, Box 233, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC Navy Yard.

46. Ibid.

47. Morison, 172-174.

48. Ibid., 175.

49. Chester W. Nimitz, CINCPAC Report, December 26, 1942, 6.

50. Ibid.

51. Arthur J. Hepburn, Report of the informal inquiry into the circumstances attending the loss of the *U.S.S. Vincennes*, *U.S.S. Quincy*, *U.S.S. Astoria*, and *H.M.A.S. Canberra*, on August 9, 1942, in the vicinity of Savo Island (Solomon Islands). May 13, 1943, 52. Record Group 38, Box 1727. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

52. Jeffrey A. Ballard, "Firing Point: The Evolution of U.S. Navy Destroyer Torpedo Attack Doctrine During Operation Watchtower, 1942-1943" (master's thesis, American Military University, 2015), 56.

53. Hornfischer, xix.

54. Hornfischer, 292.

55. Chester W. Nimitz, CINCPAC Report, December 28, 1942, 1, Record Group 38, Box 19, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

56. Ernest J. King, Battle Experience, March 15, 1943, Chapter 20, 10, Record Group 334, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

57. Ernest J. King, Battle Experience, March 25, 1943, Chapter 28, 11, 18 & 37, Record Group 334, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

58. Ibid.

59. Ballard, 43.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid., 44.

62. Chester W. Nimitz, CINCPAC Report, February 18, 1943, 20, Record Group 38, Box 19, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

63. William S. Pye, Comments on the Battle of Guadalcanal, June 5, 1943, 3, Record Group 38, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

64. Hornfischer, 366.

65. Ballard, 48.

66. William F. Halsey, Report of Night Action, Task Force 64, March 2, 1943, 1, Record Group 38, Box 25, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

67. Jeff T. Reardon, "The Evolution of the U.S. Navy into an Effective Night-Fighting Force During the Solomon Islands Campaign, 1942-1943" (PhD. diss, the College of Arts and Sciences of Ohio University, Athens, OH, 2008), 7-49.

68. Chester W. Nimitz, CINCPAC Report, March 18, 1943, 2, Record Group 38, Box 20, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

69. Morison, 297-298.

70. Ibid., 302.

71. Chester W. Nimitz, CINCPAC Action Report, February 15, 1943, 15, Record Group 38, Box 19, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

72. Theodore Roscoe, *United States Destroyer Operations in World War II* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1953), 216.

73. William F. Halsey, First Endorsement on CTG 36.1 Action Report of August 3, 1943, September 10, 1943, 3, Record Group 38, Box 140, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

74. Ibid.

75. Reardon, 67.

76. Nimitz, CINCPAC Report, December 28, 1942, 8.

Bibliography

- Ballard, Jeffrey A. "Firing Point: The Evolution of U.S. Navy Destroyer Torpedo Attack Doctrine During Operation Watchtower, 1942-1943." Master's thesis, American Military University, 2015.
- Frank, Richard B. *Guadalcanal: The Definitive Account of the Landmark Battle*. New York: Random House, 1990.
- Halsey, William F. Commander South Pacific, Second Endorsement of USS McCalla Action Report, January 8, 1943. Record Group 38, Box 22, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- _____. First Endorsement of CTG 36.1 Action Report of August 3, 1943, September 10, 1943. Record Group 38, Box 140, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- _____. Report of Night Action, Task Force 64, March 2, 1943. Record Group 38, Box 25, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- Hepburn, Arthur J. Report of the informal inquiry into the circumstances attending the loss of the *U.S.S. Vincennes*, *U.S.S. Quincy*, *U.S.S. Astoria*, and *H.M.A.S. Canberra*, on August 9, 1942, in the vicinity of Savo Island (Solomon Islands), May 13, 1943, Record Group 38, Box 1727, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- Hornfischer, James D. *Neptune's Inferno: The U.S. Navy at Guadalcanal*. New York: Bantam Books, 2012.
- King, Ernest J. Battle Experience, March 15, 1943. Record Group 334, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- King, Ernest J. Battle Experience, March 25, 1943. Record Group 334, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- McMorris, Charles H. USS San Francisco Action Report, October 31, 1942, TBS Transmissions, unpagged. Record Group 38, Box 1396, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- Moran, Edward J. *USS Boise* Action Report, October 30, 1942. Record Group 38, Box 1025, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- Morison, Samuel Eliot. *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*. Volume V: *The Struggle for Guadalcanal, August 1942-February 1943*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, Inc., 1949.

- Nimitz, Chester W. Pacific Fleet Confidential Letter 29CL-42, July 28, 1942. Command File, World War II, Box 233, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC Navy Yard.
- _____. CINCPAC Report, December 15, 1942. Record Group 38, Box 19, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- _____. CINCPAC Report, December 26, 1942. Record Group 38, Box 19, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- _____. CINCPAC Report, December 28, 1942. Record Group 38, Box 19, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- _____. CINCPAC Report, February 15, 1943. Record Group 38, Box 19, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- _____. CINCPAC Report, February 18, 1943. Record Group 38, Box 19, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- _____. CINCPAC Report, March 18, 1943. Record Group 38, Box 20, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- O'Hara, Vincent P. *The U.S. Navy Against the Axis: Surface Combat, 1941-1945*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2007.
- Pye, William S. Comments on the Battle of Guadalcanal, June 5, 1943. Record Group 38, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- Reardon, Jeff T. "The Evolution of the U.S. Navy into an Effective Night-Fighting Force During the Solomon Islands Campaign, 1942-1943" PhD. diss, The College of Arts and Sciences of Ohio University, Athens, OH, 2008.
- Scott, Norman. Task Group 64.2 Action Report, October 22, 1942. Record Group 38, Box 17, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- Small, Ernest G. *USS Salt Lake City* Action Report, October 19, 1942. Record Group 38, Box 1390, National Archives II, College Park, MD.
- Stewart, Adrian. *Guadalcanal: World War II's Fiercest Naval Campaign*. London: William Kimber, 1985.
- Tanaka, Raizo. "Japan's Losing Struggle For Guadalcanal," Part I, *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, 82 (July 1956): 687-699.
- Tobin, Robert G. COMDESRON12, Action Report, October 23, 1942. Command File, World War II, Box 341, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC Navy Yard.

Roscoe, Theodore. *United States Destroyer Operations in World War II*.
Annapolis: United States Naval Institute, 1953.

Ugaki, Matome. *Fading Victory: The Diary of Admiral Matome Ugaki, 1941-1945*.
Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991.

U.S. Navy. Combat Narratives: Solomon Island Campaign, Office of Naval
Intelligence. IV *Battle of Cape Esperance, 11 October 1942*. Washington
DC: Office of Naval Intelligence, Publications Branch, 1 October 1943.
No. 485.