

NEW GUINEA BATTLEFRONT --- FIGHTING FROM FINSCHAFEN TO MADANG.

Combined Operations in the south-west Pacific for the taking of Finschafen --- a muster of Australian and American troops to make a new landing higher up the eastern coast from Salamaua. Thus, step by step under the inspired leadership of General MacArthur, Allied soldiers, sailors and airmen are removing the immediate threat from Australia.

Though there was opposition on the beaches seven miles north of Finschafen, there were no enemy planes overhead to blitz the first landing. This was a tribute to the Allied Air Forces which had inflicted severe defeats on Japanese air armadas higher up the coast. ~~It was possible for the force not only to land, but also to get ashore the vital stores necessary for sustained attack. The bulldozer is cheerful evidence of the improvement in our resources in the past two years.~~ But with all mechanical aids, there was still a lot of ^{heavy} ~~backbreaking~~ work to be done by the strong arms of the men; ^{and fighting too, at the same time} ~~and the same harassing attacks on Japanese divisions;~~ ~~and the same harassing attacks on Japanese divisions;~~ ~~and the same harassing attacks on Japanese divisions;~~ (Ignore circ)

While the consolidation went on, forward units went ahead to drive the enemy back and dig him out and destroy him: ^{enemy defenses were very active}

Finschafen was the last important Japanese-held anchorage in New Guinea; the way up the Markham Valley was opened by this conquest 60 miles North East of Lae. ~~This land is fertile and lovely~~ ~~the dense and impenetrable jungle which forms the greater part of the valley~~ ~~air strips could be hurriedly prepared and~~ ~~air strips were able to disembark from the huge troop-carrying planes.~~

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And ~~the~~^{so} began the long march north-west towards Madang; there were ~~no~~ roads here, mostly of crushed coral

The inhabitants of the valley gave the Allied troops a welcome; it is said they had refused to work for the Japanese, but they worked with a will for us: ~~the~~ the jungle camera shows them to be friendly and cheerful. One man of the village covered himself ~~in~~^{with} glory by going out and bringing in a lone Japanese, picked up on solitary patrol

The work ~~was~~^{went} on, with ~~the~~^{their} help ~~of the local residents~~. New airfields ~~are~~^{were} built swiftly to back up the advance and prepare the way for more forward movement. More reinforcements ~~came~~^{came} in; and it's good to see lightnings in the sky --- long-range ~~are~~ fighter patrol.

On towards Madang --- the next stop on the New Guinea coast. Signal corps linesmen ~~went~~^{went} out with the all-important communications. There ~~are~~^{were} many rivers here to be crossed, some not very deep but all of them flowing swiftly; one more natural obstacle in this mixture of primitive life and modern war. Here's a pause in the heartbreaking, back-breaking advance; a pause for a wash; and the mail from home has caught up with them. In one letter at least, words have failed; and the writer fell back on the language of signs.

Native carriers have done wonderful work with the Army's transport; with the heart of a lion, surer-footed than a goat, these boys have carried great loads incredible distances up to the front line --- if you can call it a line, this all-round battlefront.

A stream too deep to ford --- and the ingenuity of sappers builds a bridge; every obstacle is overcome, and they're fighting Japs for good measure. Driving him slowly back from his gains^{made} at the start of the Far Eastern war; but ~~cut~~^{cut} here --- the enemy is never far away; one stronghold taken only means --- ~~cut~~ another one lies ahead: but these Australians have proved themselves the finest jungle-fighters in the world.

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