



THIS MONTH in MILITARY HISTORY

The Battle of Midway

- 1898 15 260 Marines and Sailors are killed when USS Maine explodes and sinks in Havana.
- 1901 2 The Army Nurse Corps is established under the Army Medical Department.
- 1942 23 GEN Douglas MacArthur is ordered to withdraw from the Philippines.
- 1945 4 The Yalta Conference is conducted to discuss soon-to-be conquered Germany.
- 1945 23 The flag raising on Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima takes place.
- 1947 12 USS Cusk becomes the first U.S. submarine to fire a guided missile—a modified V-1.
- 1961 1 The first Minuteman ICBM conducts its first successful all-systems test.
- 1991 27 Operation DESERT STORM ends after just 100 hours into the ground campaign.
- 1994 28 The first NATO combat action takes place with an intercept of Serbian aircraft.
- 2008 20 USS Lake Erie successfully intercepts and destroys a malfunctioning satellite.

For months following the attacks on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the atmosphere was full of static and concern in the United States. Save for a few isolated breakthroughs, the Americans were largely on the defensive in the Pacific. The Doolittle Raid in April of 1942 was a lashing effort to boost morale, but it was not until the Battle of Midway that the tide in the Pacific had begun to truly turn. The failure of the Japanese to successfully cripple the force projection elements in the Pacific during the Pearl Harbor attack were destined to bite the Imperial Japanese Navy in this engagement.

Prior to the battle, the Americans had broken Japanese naval codes and planted false information in their own communications to confirm their results. The Japanese landing fleet was spotted as early as 3 June after the Americans had determined the date, time, and location of the planned attack. To pre-empt the attack, the Americans will launch a total of twenty-four B-17's in two flights to seek and destroy these forces. They are unsuccessful each time. By 0430 local time on 4 June 1942, the Japanese begin their attack on Midway with the launch of 108 fighters and fighter-bombers. American forces at Midway respond with a flight of 37 aircraft, but the damage inflicted upon the enemy is light and only two aircraft return undamaged. By 0700, the air raid on Midway ends with the Japanese returning to their carriers.

Admiral Nagumo's fleet had launched spotters prior to rearming his aircraft for a second air raid on Midway. It had been determined that additional raids would be necessary to achieve their mission objective. However, that objective changed when the spotter plane spotted the *Yorktown* carrier group. Nagumo instead changes his choice for the raid to target the *Yorktown*. Before Nagumo is able to launch his aircraft, 26 *Dauntless* aircraft launched from *Yorktown* surprise attack the Japanese fleet at 1022. The Japanese carrier *Kaga* was sunk in this engagement, turning the tide of the battle. Shortly after, at 1026, additional aircraft strike and sink *Soryu*. A third wave of aircraft strike at Nagumo's ship, *Akagi*, setting it on fire and stalling counterattacks.

Nagumo had been so focused on *Yorktown*, that he was not aware that *Hornet* and *Enterprise* had entered the operational area. A Japanese counterattack from *Hiryu* strikes and eventually sinks *Yorktown* after all hands are ordered to abandon ship. The combined air power from *Hornet* and *Enterprise* seeks out and sinks *Hiryu* shortly after 1700. Both *Hiryu* and *Akagi* finally sink on 5 June. Having lost four aircraft carriers and without means to replace them, the Japanese eastward expansion is abandoned. The Americans had successfully thwarted the Japanese plot to move on Midway and had crippled their ability to project force across the Pacific.

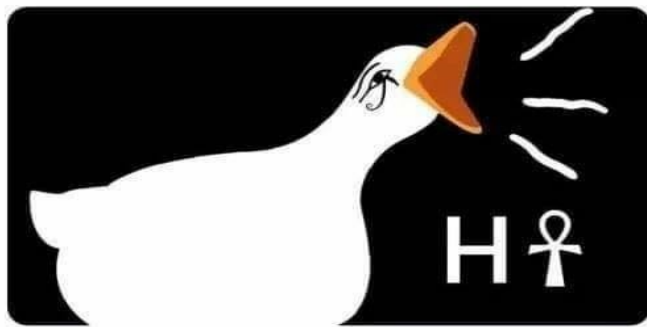
TRIVIA

- 1 What was the name of the ciphering program operated by the Allies that intercepted and decoded enemy messages?
- 2 What major engagement had *Yorktown* sailed from when she entered the Midway area of operations?
- 3 What was the last major offensive launched by the Japanese on the offensive in the Pacific?

ANSWERS FOR JANUARY 2022 QUESTIONS

- 1 What was the U.S. Army Air Force's only jet fighter prior to the transition to the U.S. Air Force?
➤ **The Lockheed P-80 Shooting Star**
- 2 What World War II Army LTC went on to found his own brand of audio speakers?
➤ **LTC Paul W. Klipsch**
- 3 What was Elvis Presley's rank when he was discharged from the Army?
➤ **O-5 (SGT)**

ancient egyptian geese be like:



One of the most formidable and terrifying natural creations is the goose. Here at Rock Island Arsenal, we are very familiar with how terrifying these creatures are when we are actively chased across Rodman Ave. However, we're pretty sure these creatures were feared far longer than that. But probably not by the Ancient Egyptians—for obvious reasons of geography.



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<https://aschq.army.mil/About-Us/History>

WWII Logistics in the Pacific Theater

While it is difficult to abridge theater logistics in World War II—or any war for that matter—to a single article, the movement of materiel in the Pacific Theater was one that can be summarized by the need for Naval aid, establishment of island facilities, and cooperation between many organizations in the War Department.

The origins for the logistics plan in the Pacific Theater can be traced to 1906, when the War Department created the Rainbow Plans. The plan for operations in the Pacific was named *ORANGE*. The plan was modified and refined several times before the war reached the Americans. *ORANGE* was defined to have three key phases. The first of these was defense of CONUS and Hawaii. The second phase was to posture the United States in a position to strike Japan and mainland Asia. The third phase was the applicative phase where the U.S. would effectively bring the enemy to their knees. The problem in these plans was phase two however, as it was largely based off of assumptions and variables that were fluid.

When the plan was initiated after the Pearl Harbor attacks on 7 DEC 1941, it was dependent on the negotiation between the United States and her Allies in Europe. The dire need of relief in Europe meant

that *ORANGE* would stay largely in the first phase until the European Theater came to a close. However, the attacking Japanese force was unlikely to sit idle while the Americans sat on defense. As a result, methodical materiel buildup coupled with cautious island-hopping was the solution that the Americans used to push into the second phase.

The first major move in logistics in the Pacific came when the War Department ordered a logistics task force to be established at Bora Bora. Joint Task Force *BOBCAT*, as it was called, had the mission of establishing and defending fueling station servicing ships that were en-route to Australia. Following the Battle of Midway, it became apparent that defeating Japan required breaking the logistical bottleneck in the Pacific. Thus, an emphasis on establishing secure transport routes from CONUS-W to Hawaii & Bora Bora and through to Australia were of the utmost importance. Cooperation between the joint forces was a necessity to secure a vast ocean filled with small islands with little to no brush cover.

Victory was ultimately achieved and the supplies seemed unending, but this came only after reactions rather than the proactiveness that plan *ORANGE* was supposed to establish.

1. Millett, Allan R.; Maslowski, Peter; Feis, William B. *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012*. Expanded. Free Press, New York. 2012.
2. Murray, Williamson; Millett, Allan R. *A War to Be Won: Fighting the Second World War*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. 2000.

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