

ACTION REPORT

ORIGINAL

COMMANDER NORTH PACIFIC FORCE

SERIAL 0811

8 SEPTEMBER 1943

EVACUATION OF KISKA BY JAPANESE -- 1943.

[REPORT COVERS 24 MAY-15 AUGUST
1943.]

VOLUME 1, THRU ANNEX C.

55711

ACTION REPORT

COMMANDER NORTH PACIFIC AREA

SERIAL 0707

23 AUGUST 1943

COORDINATED BOMBARDMENTS OF KISKA, REPORT OF .

REPORTS ON COORDINATED BOMBARDMENTS OF JAPANESE INSTALLATIONS ON KISKA 22 JULY 1943 AS PRELIMINARY TO CAPTURE OF THAT ISLAND IN AUGUST 1943. FORWARDS REPORTS OF TASK GROUPS 16.21 AND 16.22 COVERING THIS ACTION .

SECRET

Fleet Post Office,
 San Francisco, Calif.,
 July 25, 1943.

From: Commander Destroyer Squadron TWO.
 To : Commander-in-Chief, U. S. PACIFIC FLEET.
 Via : (1) Commander Task Group 16.7.
 (2) Commander North PACIFIC FORCE.

Subject: KISKA Bombardment, 22 July 1943, report of action.

Enclosure: (A) Track chart covering the movements of the MORRIS during the bombardment.
 (B) Copy of War Diary for 22 July 1943, which covers the period of the subject action.

1. In compliance with Commander Southern Bombardment Group (Commander Task Group 16.21) operation Plan Number 3-43 of 18 July 1943, which was complete and most understanding, the Japanese installations at KISKA were bombarded Thursday, 22 July 1943. The destroyers attached to this Task Group were assigned the following missions; (a) The BACHE, HUGHES, and AYLWIN were assigned the mission of maintaining anti-submarine screen ahead of the cruiser column during the bombardment and to protect the firing group against attacks by submarines and motor torpedo boats. Any targets of opportunity were to be taken under fire by these ships. (b) The MORRIS and MUSTIN as a part of the bombardment group, and under the plan used, were assigned the mission of delivering gun fire at certain installations in the GERTRUDE COVE area and to destroy enemy aircraft and surface craft.

2. To accomplish the above the screening group was assigned stations as follows: HUGHES 5320, BACHE 5005, AYLWIN 5050, all assignments relative to the firing course and fixed on the WICHITA as guide. These assignments were made to meet a number of considerations, to permit the destroyers to act aggressively, and to deny penetration of the screen by submarines. Ships were placed far enough ahead to permit them to act effectively in case submarines were located close to or in the track of the bombardment group. Due to the high speed of the bombardment group, it was considered that not more than one pass could be made at a submerged submarine and therefore a full shallow pattern would be put down to do the maximum damage without delay. It was anticipated that submarines and/or motor torpedo boats might come out of GERTRUDE COVE to attack the bombardment group during the approach. However, if nothing was sighted in this direction by the screen at the time the head of column changed to the firing course, there would be little danger from this area and the destroyers in the rear of the bombardment group would be in a position to handle any attack that might materialize. The most likely and most dangerous source of

July 25, 1943.

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potential trouble seemed to lie in the possibility of submarines and/or motor torpedo boats coming out of SOUTH PASS to KISKA HARBOR or around LITTLE KISKA Island. To use SOUTH PASS submarines would have to maneuver on the surface due to the depth of water, therefore, anything coming through this pass would make an excellent target of opportunity for the screening ships. For this reason it was desired to have the track of the left hand screening vessel come within fourteen thousand yards of this narrow pass in order that effective fire might be used on anything coming out to attack the bombardment group. Although destroyer gun fire will range out farther, it is not considered effective on fast moving targets at ranges greater than thirteen thousand yards. The MORRIS and MUSTIN who had bombardment missions followed astern of the cruiser column at a distance of five hundred yards.

3. Prior to and during the bombardment, navy patrol planes and army bombers were in the area and under observation. Anti-aircraft fire from KISKA Main Camp area seemed to come very close to one of our patrol planes. No hostile aircraft or ships were observed. Shore batteries were not observed to reply to the bombardment fire.

4. The bombardment of the target areas assigned to the MORRIS and MUSTIN seemed to be effectively covered. The smoke from the cruiser gunfire cut off the view of the beach a good deal of the time. However, navigational plot and the generated bearings checked remarkably well. Some puffs of smoke could be seen in the target area but there was no way of telling what damage was being done.

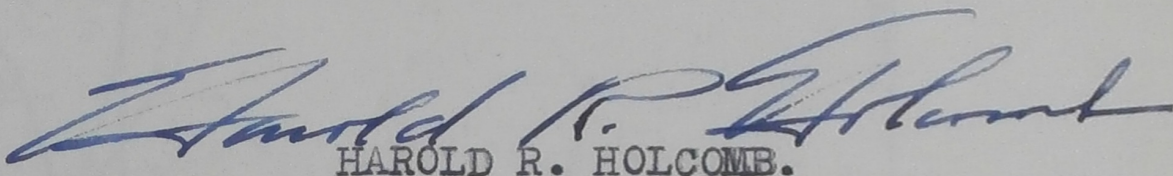
5. The conduct of the commanding officers and all others that I observed during the bombardment was excellent. All hands were calm and attentive to their duties and eager to engage the enemy.

6. Enclosure (A) is a track chart of the MORRIS during the bombardment. As this report is being prepared and submitted at sea, similar data covering the movements of other vessels of the screen are not available. Enclosure (B) is a copy of the War Diary covering the period of the subject bombardment.

July 25, 1943.

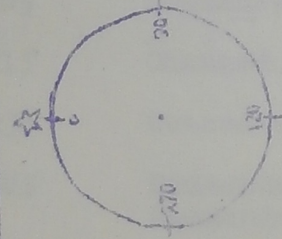
S E C R E TSubject: KISKA Bombardment, 22 July 1943, report of action.

7. The material condition of the MORRIS, MUSTIN and HUGHES is a matter of considerable concern during engagements and operations requiring high speed. None of these ships can make full power. They all are in need of extensive overhaul. The condition of the MORRIS was somewhat improved over that which obtained during a recent bombardment of KISKA in that she managed to make turns for twenty nine knots while retiring. All equipment in connection with the armament functioned normally.



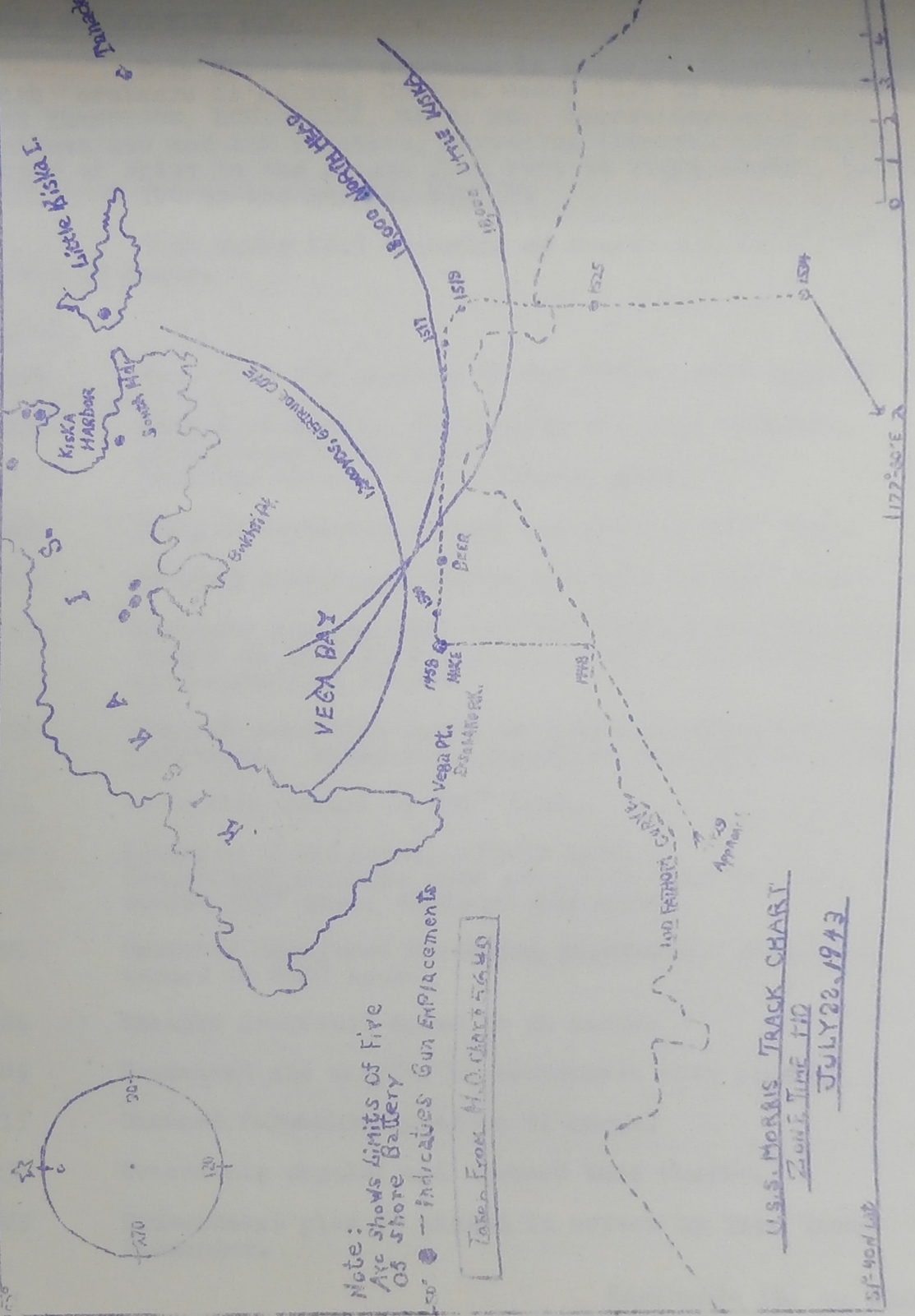
HAROLD R. HOLCOMB.

Copy to:
COMDESPAC.



Note:
 Ave shows limits of Five
 of shore Battery
 ● — Indicates Gun Emplacements

Taken From H.O. Chart 5640



U.S.S. MORRIS TRACK CHART
Zonal Time TID
JULY 22, 1943

517 404 Lab

Enclosure (A) to COMDEX
 TWO ltr Serial 00269 date
 July 25, 1943.

ZONE DESCRIPTION #10.

Task Group 16.7 steaming in cruising disposition ONE with cruisers in column, ComTask Group 16.7 in the WICHITA, SAN FRANCISCO, LOUISVILLE, SANTA FE. Screen screening arc between 250 and 110 relative, screening interval 5000 yards. Order of ships in the screen from left to right HUGHES, BACHE, COMDESRON TWO in the MORRIS, MUSTIN.

Task Group 16.7 steaming on course and axis 275° true, speed 17 knots.

L.C.T.

- 0705 Commenced zig zagging in accordance with plan 10.
- 0800 Wind W, force 3. Visibility 10. Sea moderate. Flying conditions fair. Position 50-51.2 North, 175-46 East.
- 0900 Changed formation course and axis to 000° true.
- 1000 Changed formation course and axis to 055° true.
- 1004 Cruisers took special anti-aircraft formation equally spaced on 1000 yard circle. Destroyers remained in anti-submarine screen.
- 1130 Changed formation speed to 9 knots. Cruisers streamed paravanes. Destroyers patrolled stations at 15 knots.
- 1134 Formation turned to 090° true.
- 1200 Position 51-22 North, 176-08 East. Course and distance made good from noon to noon, course 320° true, distance 159 miles.
- 1201 Cruisers completed streaming paravanes. Formation turned to 055° true.
- 1204 Changed formation speed to 20 knots.
- 1205 Commenced zig zagging in accordance with plan 10.
- 1215 Changed formation speed to 23 knots.
- 1235 Ceased zig zagging and resumed base course.
- 1305 Bombardment plan #3 placed in effect by Task Group Commander.

Enclosure (B) to COMDESRON
TWO ltr Serial 00269 dated
July 25, 1943.