

May 6th 1942. Captain Goff Hemsworth and his fellow Australian crew flying R.A.A.F. Catalina A24.20 above the Louisiade Archipelago, spotted the enemy Convoy three miles south of Misima Island. It was heading for the northern approaches to the Coral Sea. He sent a sighting signal to Port Moresby, then began to let down for a closer look. During the next few minutes his wireless operator sent details of the number and type of warships which made up the Convoy. It was one of the most important messages of the War, because Hemsworth had seen part of the Force which the Japanese were mustering for an assault on Port Moresby. If that Allied Base had fallen, the Pacific War would have taken a very different turn. Hemsworth's message prompted the Australian and American counter-attacks which culminated on May 8th 1942 in the Battle of the Coral Sea - the first full scale defeat of the Japanese Navy and Air Force. Hemsworth was finally overwhelmed by the onslaught of the Japanese Aircraft, but not before taking two of them with him. — Post War enquiries revealed that Hemsworth and several of the crew were picked up by the Japanese and survived for six months in P.O.W. Camps before being executed.