

nature' to them, as it was for the Fijians. But the Fijians had the advantage in their eyesight and hearing. The New-Zealanders were just as good bushmen, he said, and besides were more determined in walking long distances. The Fijians were good up to ten miles, but after that they wanted to lie down.

The Tongans were more like the Maoris and fought outstandingly, although their bushcraft was not equal to the Fijians'. Lieutenant Masefield was responsible for training the Tongans, he said, but there were only seventeen of these troops on New Georgia at the start.

"Lieutenant Masefield was killed behind the Munda Field when it was still in Japanese hands, and it was a tremendous loss to the unit. He was acting as 2 i/c. We were terribly short of officers, so everyone had to adapt themselves to new situations as they arose. A sergeant might be 'quartering' one day, liaison officer next, and out on patrol the next. So diversified were

our activities that once when Major Tripp was wounded and missing, a sergeant had to act as O.C.," said Larsen.

Discussing the training of the unit, Sergeant Larsen said that it was necessary for the New Zealand N.C.O.s to learn to speak some Fijian, and the Fijians in their turn learnt the English words of command. There were also interpreters in the unit. When the unit reached Guadalcanal they had to learn pidgin English to enable them to talk with the Solomon-Islanders. This was a strange language, he remarked. An aeroplane to the Islanders was 'schooner belong Jesus Christ,' and their definition of a cross-cut saw, 'push him he go, pull him he come, all the same big brother axe.'

Sergeant Larsen said that the U.S. Army gave his unit all the co-operation they could wish for, and that although their methods of fighting were different they got on well together.



How the fight for Munda began. The shaded area was occupied by the Japanese, and the arrows indicate the Japanese movement along the Munda Trail to the first action with the commando.