



One of the 12th January losses was A16-12, captained on that occasion by Peter Gorrie. This pre-Pacific war view of the aircraft is one of RAAF PR photographer John Harrison's better known Hudson views and has been widely reproduced. Notes kept by Harrison show that Neville Hemsworth and David Campbell were flying the aircraft at the time; both men had distinguished wartime service on Hudsons in the Pacific war, but when this photo was taken, in March 1941, there was only limited flying being carried out by No. 2 Squadron. By January 1942 that situation had dramatically changed, but by then squadron records should only be regarded as a starting point for further research.. (John Harrison via Defence Public Relations)

officer at Halong, correct. First of all, the Japanese returned to attack Laha late on the 11th, but with 27 land-based bombers, not flying boats, escorted by Type 0 fighters. The 13 Squadron unit history sheets indicate that after the bombers had dropped about 300 bombs, the Zeros strafed likely targets. No aircraft appear to have been destroyed on this occasion, but a fuel dump went up in flames and controller H. A. "Bob" Nicholas recalls that holes in the runway "were such that they could not be filled in immediately and the ground staff had to make [an] emergency path for the safe guidance of aircraft out on operations".⁶⁷

Next came events on the 12th when half of the Hudsons sent out to attack targets in the northern Celebes were mauled by Zeros. Unfortunately there is less detail on events on the 12th than there is for the 11th, but Ryland again led two other captains, one of whom was Cornfoot, out from Laha in an attack on shipping off Kema (Cornfoot considered that the third captain was Dunne, but this does not appear to be correct). Take-off time was 0515 according to the log book entry made by one of Cornfoot's wireless air gunners, Ken Lewis, but three other

Hudsons had apparently already left Namlea heading for Manado by this time. Those involved from Namlea were the same No. 2 Squadron crews as had been in action the previous day, Flt Lt Cuming, the rest of his crew unidentified but probably second pilot PO P. H. Richards and WAGs Sgts A. E. Blake and K. H. Kelaher, Flt Lt Hodge with second pilot PO E. D. G. Howard and WAGs Sgts J. Mawdsley and H. C. Shore (the last-named from Flt Lt Bill White's crew replacing Sgt Connell), and FO Gorrie with second pilot Sgt W. L. Morgan and WAGs Sgts J. E. Farrington and K. R. T. McCrackan, but their targets, according to Cornfoot's other wireless air gunner, Harry Riley, "were around the opposite side of the peninsula to us . . .". Riley's write-up of events in his diary continued:

After travelling about three quarters of the way I intercepted several messages in plain language the first of which was "Fighters present", then "Zero fighters present", finally, "Lockheed in sea on fire". By this time we were over our target which turned out to be the cruiser we attacked yesterday. There was no fighter opposition for us this time as apparently the other flight had drawn it all over their side.⁶⁸