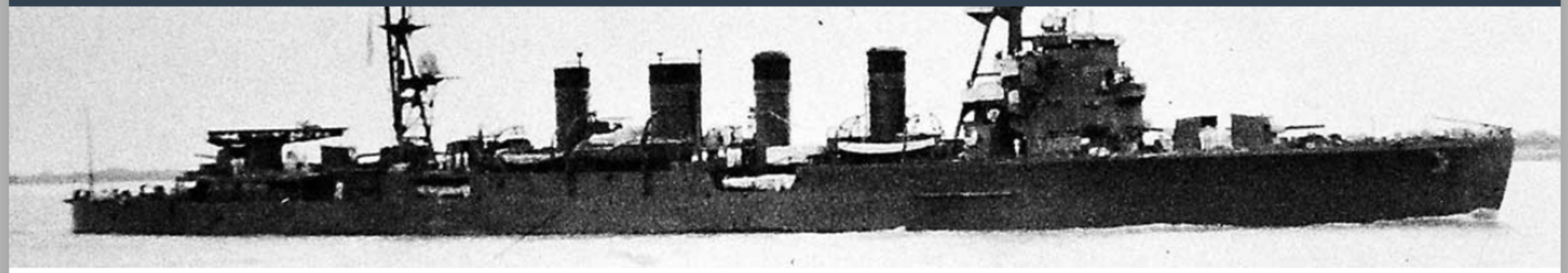
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Battle of Empress Augusta Bay: November 2, 1943



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In the Battle of Empress Augusta Bay on November 2, 1943, the U.S. cruisers and destroyers of Task Force 39, commanded by Rear Admiral Aaron S. Merrill, USN, turned back Japanese forces as they tried to attack invasion shipping off **Bougainville** early in the morning. In this battle, the Japanese lost the light cruiser *Sendai* and the destroyer *Hatsukaze*, while damage to U.S. vessels was repairable. The U.S. Navy cruisers that helped to sink *Sendai* were USS *Cleveland* (CL-55), USS *Columbia* (CL-56), USS *Denver* (CL-58), and USS *Montpelier* (CL-57). The U.S. Navy destroyers that helped to sink *Hatsukaze* were USS *Claxton* (DD-571), USS *Spence* (DD-512), USS *Stanley* (DD-478), USS *Thatcher* (DD-514). USS *Foote* (DD-511) was damaged in this action and was transported by USS *Charles Ausburne* (DD-570). This action, with its successful use of radar to manage U.S. forces, markes the end of Japan's previous advantage in night engagement.

Image: **LC-Lot-2406-42**: Japanese cruiser of the *Sendai* class, undated. Halftone image from the Department of Naval Intelligence, June 1943. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.