



"There is no Kormoran survivor who can say that the unidentified sailor on C.I. was one of our men. He must have been a *HMAS Sydney* man. We had no floats made by Lysaght. I cannot understand the Australian authorities' attempts to cover up the truth."

As Japanese forces occupied Christmas Island between March 31, 1942 (only 53 days after the dead seaman's body was brought ashore) and August 24, 1945, is it likely that Australian officials' intention to mark the grave site with a headstone was interrupted and ultimately forgotten? Ditto the alleged "inquest"?

In April, 1989, the Christmas Island administrator, Mr A. Taylor, sent to the writer a colour photograph purported to be of the "unknown grave". Unlike all other descriptions of it supplied by ex-Island residents, the administrator's photograph of the grave revealed a concrete border, a big rock at its centre, and, at the head, what appears to be a shattered inscription plate: quite obviously not the grave that has been described by old-time residents as "just a mound over-grown with weeds". Equally as obvious is the belief that Australian Officials do not know the actual location of the unknown seaman's last resting place and seem disinterested in locating it, much less marking the site with a commemorative headstone or

identifying plaque. This is, indeed, a sad indictment against our public service's apathetic mentality, reinforcing the legend: "There are none so blind as those that do not wish to see." Nor any as ignorant as those who do not want to know.

Another point: The raft was found in February, 1942; by the size of the barnacles (reported at the time to be "six inches long"), it was in the water about three months. By the currents, it had come from the south-south-east. By the markings, it was Australian. The body was still in a state to be identified as 'Caucasian'. The following ships were sunk in the Indian Ocean by German ships during 1941 (others were taken in prize): (Atlantis): Mandasor: 24 January, 1941. Near equator, about 60 E. (Pinguin): Empire Light: 25 April, 1941. Near Socotra. Clan Buchan: 28 April, 1941. Near Socotra. British Emperor: 7 May, 1941. Near Socotra. (Kormoran): Velebit: 26 June, 1941. Bay of Bengal. Marceba: 26 June, 1941. Bay of Bengal. Stamatios G. Embiricos: 24 September, 1941. Near equator, about 65E.

From Marceba and S.G. Embiricos, there were no casualties. There is no way that a liferaft from any of those areas could have drifted to Christmas Island. So, all facts considered, if the unidentified corpse was NOT a *HMAS Sydney* crewman, from where did it come?