

1 LCDR KERR: I call Mr Jack Kendall, sir.

2

3 <JACK KENDALL, sworn:

[10.23am]

4

5 <EXAMINATION BY LCDR KERR:

6

7 LCDR KERR: Q. Mr Kendall, could you please tell the
8 Commissioner your full name?

9 A. Jack Kendall.

10

11 Q. And your current address?

12 A. [REDACTED]

13

14 Q. What is your current occupation? Are you retired?

15 A. Retired, yes.

16

17 Q. Mr Kendall, during the Second World War, you served in
18 the Australian Army; is that correct?

19 A. Yes.

20

21 Q. During your service, in about February 1946 you went
22 to Japan; is that correct?

23 A. With the Occupation Force, yes.

24

25 Q. You went to a place called Kure?

26 A. Yes.

27

28 Q. What regiment were you in, sir?

29 A. I beg your pardon?

30

31 Q. What corps were you in?

32 A. Water Transport. First Australian Water Transport
33 Company.

34

35 Q. What were your duties in Kure?

36 A. Well, there, you couldn't go anywhere unless you went
37 by boat, so we did all the taxiing around, and then we had
38 security for the RAAF down at Beppu and Kure and we used to
39 do reconnaissance around a lot of the islands in the Inland
40 Sea to make sure that the Japanese were getting their
41 proper wheat supplies, and any problems from the people,
42 the heads of the families that ran the islands.

43

44 Q. During this time in and after February 1946, where
45 were you based specifically?

46 A. We had two bases. We were out at Point Camp, which
47 was the ex-Japanese submarine camp, and down at the basin,

1 which is just out of Kure's docks.

2

3 Q. What types of submarines were at Point Camp?

4 A. Where we were, they had the midget submarines. There
5 were still some there when we went there, and it was their
6 training place during the War. But down in Kure, all
7 around Kure itself, they were everywhere at that time.
8 Submarines, battleships, aircraft carriers - they were
9 there.

10

11 Q. When you say "submarines", do you mean submarines
12 other than midget submarines?

13 A. No. They had the big submarine that they took the
14 midgets on. And also at the time, though I never saw them,
15 but I saw photos of them, there were some German U-boats as
16 well.

17

18 Q. You were the coxswain of the 40-foot work boat?

19 A. Yes, I was the coxswain of the 40-foot work boat.

20

21 Q. Can you identify that boat from memory?

22 A. Yes, AB1920.

23

24 Q. Did you have some crew on that work boat?

25 A. There were only two on all of our craft. We had
26 landing barges, work boats, fast supply boats and some
27 Japanese boats that were working for us, too. There were
28 only two on any Australian craft.

29

30 Q. Do you remember who your offsider was?

31 A. Not really. I know his name is the same as mine,
32 Jack, but we changed offsidiers, because they also had to do
33 other duties. We ran a ferry service with the barges seven
34 days a week over to Iwakuni from Kure, so they moved the
35 crews around.

36

37 Q. During the period of your duties in and around Kure,
38 did you assist others to undertake surveys of different
39 islands?

40 A. That's right. That was one of the jobs, yes.

41

42 Q. In about early 1947, did you transport a particular
43 British officer to an island?

44 A. I did.

45

46 Q. What was that officer's name?

47 A. CAPT Shortino.

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Q. Do you recall how that name was spelt?

A. I will tell you, S-H-O-R-T-I-N-O. I'm not sure.

Q. You say that he was a Captain?

A. Yes, he was a Captain. He was a Captain in the King's Own Royal Fusiliers.

Q. How did you learn that?

A. Well, on his ribbons, at the end he had like a swift, he called it, but I called it a greyhound, and I said to him, "What is that?" He said, "I'm a King's messenger."

Q. You took CAPT Shortino to one of the islands on a particular occasion?

A. That's right.

Q. Can you please tell the Commissioner what happened on that occasion?

A. We normally got a GT - that was your job for the next day, and so forth, but I was called in to my commanding officer, and I was told that I was going to pick up - before that, I had to go and get a radio fitted. None of our boats had radios. We had a ship-to-shore radio fitted, and a signalman went with us. That made three in the crew. The next day, I went down and picked up Shortino at the Kure docks, and he had his own interpreter with him. I knew where I was going, but prior to that, there was a bit of a rumour going around that I was going down - something to do with *HMAS Sydney*.

Q. How did you learn of this rumour, do you recall?

A. I had been down there, maybe four weeks before, to the same place with our 2IC, and he went in there and he was in there for quite a while, and I still think that he stumbled on something that shouldn't have been there. Then he reported it back to our commanding officer, and it possibly went back to LTGEN Robertson, who controlled the BCOF, and then I think it came back that the English side was told about it, and that's why I think I went back there.

Q. You said that you think your 2IC had some knowledge about *HMAS Sydney*. Why do you think that?

A. Well, on this island, there was nowhere you could dock. You had to anchor off and either go in in a two-man dinghy or get the Japanese. All right, they would come out and row you back in. Now, I wanted to go with him, and he

1 said, "No, you stay here. I will go in. I have a few
2 things to do, then I will come back."
3

4 When he came back, all I said was, "What's going on?"
5 He said, "No. Let's go. We want to get home." We could
6 not travel through that in the dark, in the Inland Sea. It
7 all had to be island to island to island to get home, and
8 that's when *HMAS Sydney* was mentioned.
9

10 Q. Who mentioned it?

11 A. He said something about, "I think it's something" - he
12 never said what it was - "to do with *HMAS Sydney*." That's
13 all he said.
14

15 Q. This was the officer who was second-in-charge of your
16 unit?

17 A. Yes, he was a Captain. I can't remember his name.
18

19 Q. Who was the officer in charge of your unit?

20 A. MAJ Horton.
21

22 Q. Did the 2IC ever tell you what the basis for his
23 belief was?

24 A. No, the 2IC actually was out of the orderly room. He
25 hardly ever went anywhere. That's why I couldn't
26 understand why he went down there.
27

28 Q. Did he ever tell you what the basis --

29 A. No, no. Well, everyone - we all spoke about it. We
30 all knew about *HMAS Sydney*, but that was it. We weren't
31 interested.
32

33 Q. When you say, "We all knew about *HMAS Sydney*" --

34 A. Well, yes, in my particular group we were, and no-one
35 thought any more about it. I never thought any more about
36 it until three or four years ago.
37

38 Q. When you say that you knew about *Sydney*, you are
39 referring to her encounter with the *Kormoran* in November
40 1941?

41 A. Yes.
42

43 Q. And her sinking?

44 A. Yes.
45

46 Q. After you undertook that trip with your 2IC, did you
47 go back to that island again?

1 A. That's when I went back with Shortino. It could have
2 been a week after, or something. The reason I was picked,
3 I think, was because I'd previously had Shortino out when
4 he was in civilian clothes. He knew me and he knew the
5 boat, and I think that's why he nominated that I take him
6 back.

7
8 Q. Do you remember who was on the boat when you took
9 CAPT Shortino?

10 A. He only had his own interpreter from his own HQ at
11 Kure; no-one I ever saw or knew.

12
13 Q. So there was CAPT Shortino, his interpreter, you - and
14 anybody else?

15 A. Yes, the other crew were me and the radio operator.

16
17 Q. Do you remember the radio operator's name?

18 A. No. I think he was out of the Infantry Division that
19 was there in Kure. He was only there for that trip and
20 took the radio out, and that was it. I asked him what the
21 radio was for. He said, "Weather reports." I thought,
22 "Well, that's strange", because we never, ever worried
23 about it before.

24
25 Q. When you transported CAPT Shortino to that island - do
26 you remember the name of that island?

27 A. No, no. They all had queer names. What we used to
28 do, ourselves, was that we would name them from the top
29 down to the bottom, 1, 2 and 3. We were working off charts
30 that were years old. A lot of the islands weren't named.
31 Some weren't even inhabited.

32
33 Q. This island was inhabited?

34 A. Yes. You couldn't get in ashore, but they had market
35 gardens in there and they were growing a bit of rice. The
36 funny thing about nearly all those islands, the 30 and 40
37 group - a lot of them were all ex-Imperial Japanese Navy,
38 and we were right in amongst where the submarines were
39 trained and the Naval College at Eta Jima. We were right
40 in amongst it.

41
42 Q. You referred to the "30 and 40 group"?

43 A. I beg your pardon?

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45 Q. You just earlier referred to the "30 and 40 group".
46 Did I hear you say that?

47 A. Referred to?

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Q. Yes, in your evidence.

A. "30 and 40 group"?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the witness was referring to the fact that there were a great number of small islands just off Kure.

Q. Is that right?

A. Sorry, you mean we may have referred to the islands as 30 and 40s - well, I really don't remember that, because I wouldn't have any idea, unless I had a chart, how many actual islands were on the chart.

LCDR KERR: Q. Did the island that you transported CAPT Shortino to have a town that had a name on it, do you recall?

A. Well - no. They're villages. They're family villages. They're fishermen. During when the Americans were doing their bombing, none of those islands was touched, none of them. They were just like gypsies. The big junks used to come in - where they had a loading dock on a lot of the islands, they came across from Formosa, and they used to get supplies from them. Saccharine was something that was worrying the black market, and that was something that we were told to look out for, through our interpreters.

Q. What happened when you took CAPT Shortino to this island?

A. Well, it was too late to make the run back to base, so we went up to another one further, going north, where we had a pontoon.

Q. Could I stop you there, sir. You arrived at the island with CAPT Shortino?

A. Yes.

Q. What happened then?

A. I hung up out the front for a while until we got the Japanese attraction, waved to them; they knew the boat; they knew us; and a man came out with a rear-steer paddle, picked up CAPT Shortino and the interpreter and took them in. I know it was late in the afternoon. He may have been there for an hour, or more or less. Next minute, he came back out and he had this blue type of small bag with like a lanyard top on it. Then he jumped in, and they went back.

1
2 We had four bunks. He was on one bunk, but under the
3 bunk on the bottom, he had a locker, and he put that in
4 there and his gear in there. He had his gear in there when
5 he left Kure. Then we took him back that night, and we
6 stayed. I slept outside and the others slept inside. Next
7 morning, we took off and we got back to Kure's docks, and
8 he got off and went back to HQ, and he had that bag with
9 him.

10
11 Q. Do you recall whether he took that bag with him when
12 he left your boat?

13 A. He did, down at the Kure docks, where we had picked
14 him up at.

15
16 Q. When he left your boat initially to go on to the
17 island with the Japanese, did he take that bag with him, do
18 you know?

19 A. Yes - well, he carried something with him, but
20 I wasn't - I could have been doing something, but I know he
21 wouldn't have got it in there; it was something that was
22 new and looked like it came with him, not off the island.

23
24 Q. But you don't know that for certain?

25 A. No, I'm saying he had something in the bag.

26
27 Q. Did he tell you? Did he volunteer to you?

28 A. No, no.

29
30 Q. Did you ask him?

31 A. No, I never asked him, because we had it in the back
32 of our mind what he was going to get.

33
34 Q. And what was it you had in the back of your mind?

35 A. Well, I thought if it's a round sailor's cap, it would
36 not have "HMAS Sydney" on it. During wartime, all they had
37 was "HMAS", but I believe they wrote inside their caps
38 their name and number. So it wouldn't matter what cap he'd
39 picked up. If he looked inside, there would be a name and
40 number - name of the ship and number. I think that's what
41 I was told by Navy personnel.

42
43 Q. Had CAPT Shortino ever told you why he wanted to go to
44 that island?

45 A. He said it was a part of his job and he told me, "It's
46 your job to take me down." That was it.

47

1 Q. What was it that you heard or were told that made you
2 think that he may have been going to get a round cap?

3 A. I beg your pardon?
4

5 Q. What was it that you were told or you may have heard
6 that made you think that CAPT Shortino was going to get a
7 round cap?

8 A. When I brought our 2IC back that time, he said
9 something about an HMAS tally. Naturally, an HMAS tally
10 has to be on a cap, but if it is a tally on its own, you
11 can wrap it up in your hand. So I presumed it was a cap
12 with "HMAS" on it, but not "Sydney". That wouldn't be on
13 the cap.
14

15 Q. That was just an assumption that you made?

16 A. Yes. Well, I know there were *Perth* POWs at Hiroshima,
17 but the thing is, they had been POWs for years. It
18 wouldn't be anything to do with the *Perth* crowd.
19

20 Q. To the best of your knowledge, did anybody from your
21 unit ever see what CAPT Shortino had brought back with him?

22 A. No, there was only myself and what we call my engineer
23 with us, and it was just a part of a job, to us.
24

25 Q. Did you ever see an "HMAS" tally band while were you
26 there?

27 A. No, never.
28

29 Q. Did you ever see an "HMAS Sydney" tally band?

30 A. No.
31

32 Q. Did any of your unit or your colleagues ever tell you
33 that they had, at that time, seen a "Sydney" or an
34 "HMAS" tally band?

35 A. No, they couldn't have, because it went off down at
36 the Kure docks, not at our depot.
37

38 THE PRESIDENT: Q. If it was there at all?

39 A. Beg your pardon?
40

41 Q. If it was there at all?

42 A. True.
43

44 Q. The reality is, you don't know what was in that bag?

45 A. No, but there was something in it that he didn't want
46 us to see - I presume that.
47

1 LCDR KERR: I have nothing further, sir.

2

3 THE WITNESS: Excuse me, I met - not personally, but
4 I actually came face to face with CAPT Shortino in about
5 1950. There was a photo of him in the Sydney Morning
6 Herald. He was out here representing a cattle company in
7 England and they were looking for property out in the
8 Northern Territory. When I read it, I couldn't believe it,
9 that I actually saw him again.

10

11 THE PRESIDENT: It is not correct to say that in 1941
12 sailors' tally bands only had "HMAS" on them, is it?

13

14 LCDR KERR: No, sir, it is not. Our information is that
15 it wasn't until later, after *Sydney's* loss --

16

17 THE PRESIDENT: In 1943?

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19 LCDR KERR: In 1943 a Commonwealth order was made that
20 ships' tally bands were only to contain the letters "HMAS".

21

22 THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Thank you, Mr Kendall.

23

24 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

25

26 <THE WITNESS WITHDREW

27

28 CMDR RUSH: I call Dr David Stevens.

29

30 <DAVID MURRAY STEVENS, affirmed: [10.40am]

31

32 <EXAMINATION BY COMMANDER RUSH:

33

34 CMDR RUSH: Q. Could you state your full name to the
35 Commissioner, please?

36 A. David Murray Stevens.

37

38 Q. You reside at [REDACTED]

39 [REDACTED]

40 A. That's correct.

41

42 Q. Are you the Director of Strategic and Historical
43 Studies with the Sea Power Centre in Canberra?

44 A. That's correct.

45

46 Q. Dr Stevens, do you hold a doctorate or did you obtain
47 a doctorate in history from the University of New South