

Raffles Hotel, named after Sir Stamford Raffles (1781-1826) the founder of the port city of Singapore and administrator of the East-India Company, has prided itself on its high standards and large luxurious suites. Even in more recent years, by obtaining a suitable price reduction as a Member of the Press, I was able to enjoy its luxury until I found the equally superb Tangling Club in Singapore. On our honeymoon we thought that the next stage from Singapore to Sydney would be dull and short, but not so.

We took off as usual, along a cleared lane in the busy harbour, with the spray on the flying boat's hull rapidly diminishing, until we rose high enough to have a look at the harbour and the city we had left and where we had spent our fifth night. Our stop for the sixth night was scheduled at Surabaya on the Indonesian Island of Jakarta, and when we landed there, we found ourselves in the middle of its War of Independence from the Dutch Colonial Administration. We were not allowed to leave the precincts of the hotel, but the magnificent *Rice-tafel*, consisting of countless small dishes, each more delicious than the next, made up for the military confinement.

One more day, across the featureless but shark-infested Timor Sea to Darwin on the north coast of Australia, and there the last scheduled night-stop on our flight, at least so we thought. When we arrived in Darwin we were told that there was a strike at the Rose Bay Terminal of Sydney Harbour, the end of our flight, and that therefore the flying boat could not proceed. Instead we were to continue on a Dakota DC-3 land plane, which would first take us to Daily Waters for the night and then on to Sydney the next day.

Now Daily Waters consisted of a war time flying strip and a local pub, and is somewhere in West Queensland, or the eastern part of the Northern Territory. I cannot find it on *THE TIMES World Atlas*. Probably the landing strip is no longer needed and perhaps the pub has gone bust, there being no more customers around. But in 1947, Daily Waters was teaming with people who had come from hundreds of miles around. It was the one day of the Circus, which visits once every three years, and so Ann and I had a first night in Australia to remember. The pub had been booked out months ago, and we slept on the floor of the veranda, if indeed we slept at all. Of course we saw the circus, of course we drank a glass or two of beer, but beyond that I doubt if any one could remember more of that remarkable night in Daily Waters that once was on the map.

The last hop to Sydney was uneventful, and we arrived rather tired and were glad that once again the comfort of a good hotel, the Wentworth, received us.