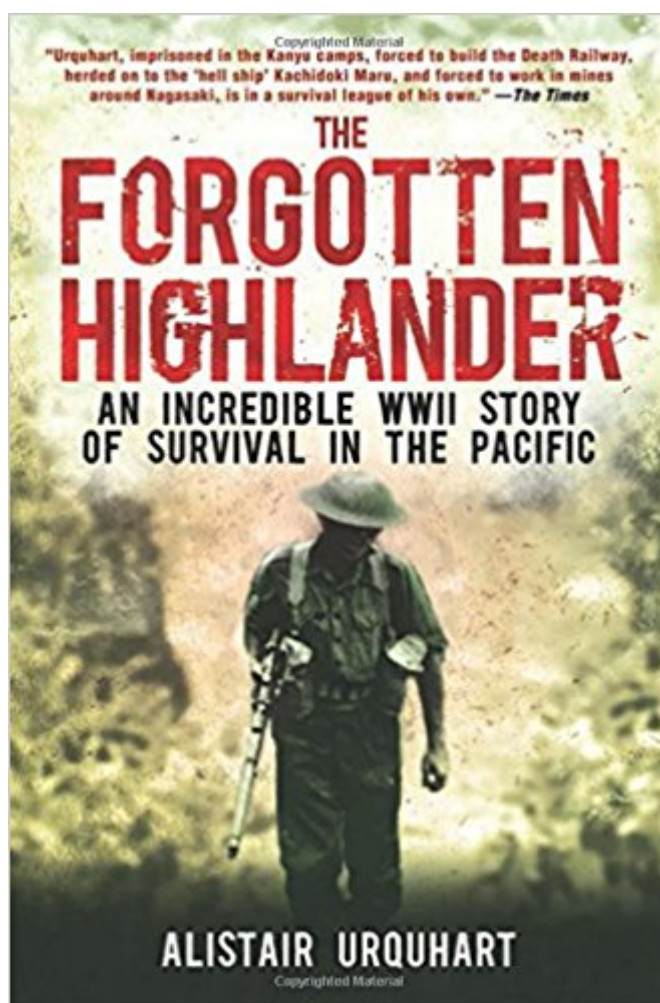


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The Forgotten Highlander: An Incredible WWII Story Of Survival In The Pacific



Synopsis

A remarkable story of survival during World War II—a Scottish soldier that survived work camps, five days adrift at sea, and the atomic bomb! Alistair Urquhart was a soldier in the Gordon Highlanders, captured by the Japanese in Singapore. Forced into manual labor as a POW, he survived 750 days in the jungle working as a slave on the notorious “Death Railway” and building the Bridge on the River Kwai. Subsequently, he moved to work on a Japanese “hellship,” his ship was torpedoed, and nearly everyone on board the ship died. Not Urquhart. After five days adrift on a raft in the South China Sea, he was rescued by a Japanese whaling ship. His luck would only get worse as he was taken to Japan and forced to work in a mine near Nagasaki. Two months later, he was just ten miles from ground zero when an atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. In late August 1945, he was freed by the American Navy—a living skeleton—and had his first wash in three and a half years. This is the extraordinary story of a young man, conscripted at nineteen, who survived not just one, but three encounters with death, any of which should have probably killed him. Silent for over fifty years, this is Urquhart’s inspirational tale in his own words. It is as moving as any memoir and as exciting as any great war movie. 24 color illustrations

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Customer Reviews

“A book you must read.”
“A story of almost unimaginable suffering.”
(BBC Radio 4)
“Riveting, powerful, moving.” (The Observer)
“A remarkable memoir.” (Financial Times)
“In his memoir, Urquhart employs matter-of-fact prose

that is somehow perfectly appropriate to describe the horrors he experienced. Although grateful and positive about the many benefits in his long life – he describes himself as a lucky man – he is angry at the Japanese government's lack of acknowledgment of Japan's wartime abuses, and he feels neglected by his own government. His story makes clear that he has every right to feel that way. (Library Journal) “Memorable, vivid, relentless.” (The Herald [UK]) “Urquhart, imprisoned in the Kanyu camps, forced to build the Death Railway, herded on the 'hell ship' Kachidoki Maru, and forced to work in mines around Nagasaki, is in a survival league of his own.” (The Times [London])

Alistair Urquhart was born in 1919 and is the last surviving member of the Scottish regiment the Gordon Highlanders who were captured in Singapore. He teaches computer skills in Scotland. He is currently battling skin cancer – a probable result of his years of forced labor in the tropical sun. He lives in Dundee, Scotland.

Alistair Urquhart is to be very highly commended for this historic description of man's inhumanity to man! This true story is highly descriptive however, I very much doubt that any of us could ever truly understand what these Prisoners of War had to go through some 70+ years ago. I also got a feeling that the author's style of writing was in a modern style and somewhat closer to this present age than the time under examination. This comment is purely made under my perception that the author's style of writing is more akin to the current years than that of the 1940's, which for me, I found very readable.

This was an excellent book. It has horrific times for the man featured in this story. It was absorbing and since it is based on a real person, real events, I had to know more about this man. I found more info on Wiki. I recommend this book. It was easy reading, and not bogged down with WWII details or numbers or historical data. I admire anyone who can live thru what he did and not be crazy.

It's an incredible story, perhaps that explains my own personal doubt as to the truth of what is related in it. I had the feeling that some details were borrowed from other people's experiences in order to make the journey coherent. With that said, I would encourage anyone with an interest in the subject matter, to read this book and make up your own mind. The general subject information is very informative and useful in the understanding of the (time and place) described in the book.

This book needs to be read by all. The truth of mans inhumanities to man need to be made publicly known and HOPEFULLY a lesson can be learned and action taken out of such devastating evil. And maybe we can appreciate the fact that war is NOT the solution to our differences. Perhaps if we seek out the men of goodwill who are WILLING to resolve their differences around the conference table rather than sending our men and boys to slaughter and subjecting those who survive to a life of personal devastation. Perhaps one day we can shine the light on those with VESTED interests and STOP them in their tracks before they can lead us into such destruction. Something CAN be done about it if we decide it can. We must not give up hope - men of REASON need to band together and make this world a saner place to live before it goes BANG. Thank you very much for writing this book. Making this information known means a great deal to this word in bringing up it's awareness of the horrors of war.

This is the second book I have read about this very brutal episode in WWII. It beggars the mind to read of the level of suffering inflicted on the surviving members of the British Army in Singapore after the fall to the invading Japanese Army. That anyone survived is a testament to human grit and our capacity to defy inhuman treatment. It reads like an apocalypse story of alien invasion. The only thing missing is humans being served as food. After being moved to Japan to continue working as slave labor, the author experiences a near miss as Nagasaki is bombed with an atomic weapon. His further adventures on the road back to England are further enlightening. This man deserves your attention to his book.

I did not know the story of the British men who worked as slaves for the Japanese. This tells the entire story from one man's point of view.

A marvelous read. My then-future uncle was second officer of HMS Li Wo and was machine-gunned in the water after it was sunk on February 14, 1942. He was then thought lost--but managed to survive 42 months of captivity and slave labor on Sumatra. Another aunt and uncle survived 38 months of civilian internment in Santo Tomas and Los Banos. The general outline of the story is not unknown but the details are telling and need to be put to paper.

The author reminds us of the incredible suffering and brutality of the Japanese soldiers. Just as the Holocaust serves a reminder of the unthinkable, we must not forget these similar acts from the Japanese. By reliving this nightmare, Alastair provides us with the factual, historical evidence of an

event that should never be forgotten. His is an amazing example of the human will's overwhelming effort to survive. I thank him for re earthing a painful memory of unspeakable evil for our collective benefit. As we continue through this age of terrorism, let us not forget we have faced this before and remember that strength can be used for evil or to prevent that same evil from taking hold.

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