



# Scattered Under the Rising Sun: The Gordon Highlanders in the Far East 1941-1945

*Stewart Mitchell*

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2nd Battalion, Gordon Highlanders was posted to Singapore in 1937 with their families. When the Japanese invaded Malaya in December 1941, the Battalion fought bravely until the surrender of Singapore on 14 February 1942. Those who were not killed became POWs. Of the 1000 men involved initially, over 400 had died by their liberation in summer 1945.

Despite the diverse background of the members of the Battalion, all were bound by close regimental spirit. As POWs, all suffered hard labor, starvation, brutality and tropical diseases. Rank was no protection from death.

After initial incarceration in Singapore, the Gordons were dispersed to work on the famous Thai-Burma railway, in the mines of Taiwan and Japan and on other slave labor projects. Conditions defy modern comprehension. Others died trapped in hell-ships torpedoed by allied submarines.

The author has researched the plight of these extraordinary men, so many of whom never saw their native Scotland again. Despite the grim conditions, he captures the strong collective regimental spirit and the humor and cooperation that saved so many who would have otherwise have perished – as many did.

This is an inspiring tale of courage and survival against appalling odds.

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