

## SPOTLIGHT ON SINGAPORE

### A TRIBUTE TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO WERE THERE

by

Denis Russell-Roberts

Rivalling only Dunkirk as a major defeat, the sinking of the *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse*, followed by the total loss of our impregnable Gibraltar of the East in the capture of Singapore, has been analysed and re-analysed by people who know — after the event. It is very easy to blacken the names of generals, find scapegoats in the joint chiefs of staff, and to call in question the whole concept of British strategy, which did indeed make Singapore impregnable from the sea, but left it wide open at the back to little yellow men dropping from the trees.

This book is not like that. It is the personal story of a serving officer, intelligent and articulate as well as brave, who, with his wife and year-old daughter, found himself caught in the neap-tide of catastrophe, and has recorded everything, not with hindsight, but as it happened.

What happened does not make for pretty reading. The rout of an army, the collapse of a system, the death of his wife at the hands of the Japanese, and his own experiences in the fighting and as a prisoner himself — these things would be sombre indeed except that this is a story of high courage, of individual acts of heroism which illumine the whole dark episode with flashes of simple splendour.

Lieut-Colonel Russell-Roberts calls his book "a tribute." And so it is. It is a tribute to the men and women who were there, whose staunchness, gallantry, and, above all, human kindness in the face of disaster not only make compelling reading, but, as with Dunkirk, could change defeat into victory — of the spirit.

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*To  
our daughter  
Lynette*

