



# **Pacific War Uncensored: A War Correspondent's Unvarnished Account of the Fight Against Japan**

*Harold Guard, John Tring*

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Harold Guard became a war correspondent quite by chance, after he had been invalided out of the navy following a submarine accident. Thereafter, working for United Press, he gained a front row seat to many of the most dramatic battles and events of the century.

In March 1942 Guard arrived in Australia, having narrowly escaped from Japanese forces invading Singapore and Java. His dispatches from that disastrous front prompted one observer to comment on “the crisis days when everybody except Harold Guard was trying to hush up the real situation.” At the time he was acclaimed by the Australian press as being one of the top four newspapermen covering the war in the Pacific.

Over the next three years Guard was to have many more adventures reporting on the Pacific War, including firsthand experience of flying with the US Air Force on 22 bombing missions, camping with Allied forces in the deadly jungles of New Guinea, and taking part in attacks from amphibious landing craft on enemy occupied territory. He also traveled into the undeveloped areas of Australia’s northern territories to report on the construction of the air bases that were being built in preparation for defending the country against the advancing Japanese.

What made Harold Guard’s achievements even more remarkable was that he was disabled, and had to walk with a stiff right leg due to his navy injury. Despite this he often reported from perilous situations at the front line, which gained him considerable notoriety within the newspaper world. Harold Guard always endeavored to give an honest account of what was happening in the war, and this often brought him into conflict with the military censors. He also courted controversy on returning to Britain, when he highlighted the deficiencies of the defensive strategy used by the British government in defending Singapore.

Harold Guard passed away in 1986; however thanks to years of work by his grandson John Tring in assembling his dispatches, private correspondence, telegrams, and audio accounts, the full story of Guard’s experiences and observations during the Pacific War have been constructed. No longer subject to censorship, the starkly honest perceptions of how the Allies nearly failed and at last finally won the war can now be told.

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