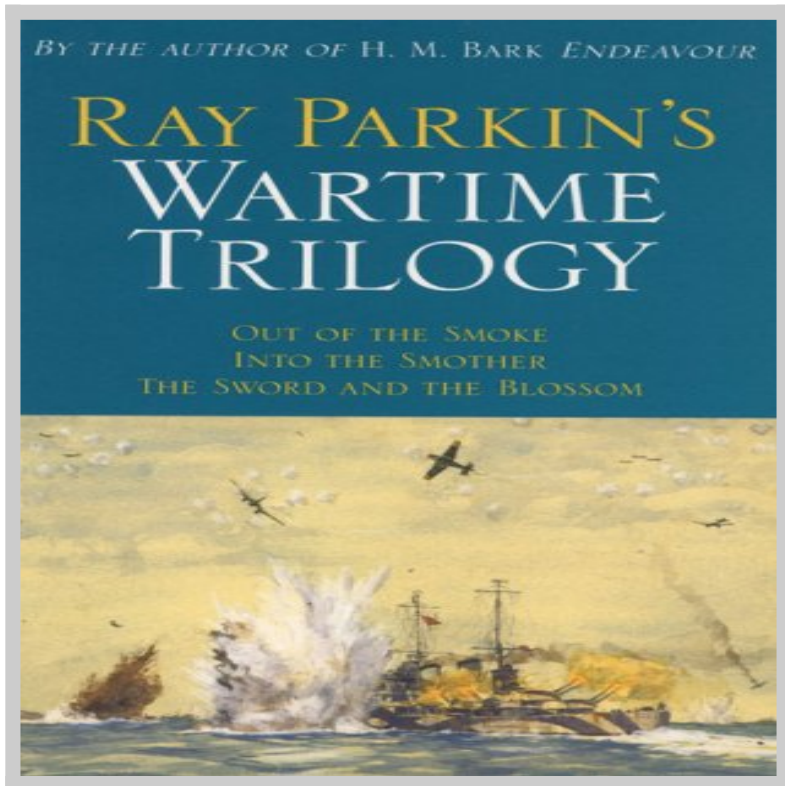


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Ray Parkins Wartime Trilogy Smother Book Preview

These brilliant books hum with action, adventure and courage. Honestly and plainly written, they are full of humanity and great wisdom. Out of the Smoke tells of Ray's experiences as Action Chief Quartermaster in HMAS Perth, which was sunk while engaging an overwhelming Japanese naval force in the Sunda Strait. Two cruisers, HMAS Perth and USS Houston, fought until their ammunition was exhausted. Thus defenceless and surrounded, sunk by four torpedoes and gunfire. It had been a night action, desperate and determined until the inevitable end. A small party of the survivors tried to sail a derelict lifeboat to safety, only to land at a port in enemy hands. In his Introduction to the book, Sir Laurens van der Post

describes *Out of the Smoke* as 'one of the great stories of war at sea'. *Into the Smother* tells, direct from the author's diary, of his fifteen months as a POW on the Burma-Siam {Thailand} railway. The construction of this railway remains one of history's most awful instances of man's inhumanity to man. Ray documents with remarkable restraint the horrors and sufferings he and his comrades endured at the mercy of the cruel jungle and the Imperial Japanese Army. The book has an appendix by Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop, to whose care Ray had entrusted his secret writings, drawings and paintings when taken to Japan. *Into the Smother* is impressive in its honesty and inspiring in its evocation of courage and endurance. *The Sword and the Blossom* tells of Ray's last twelve months of captivity. Shipped to Japan in an incredibly crowded, derelict tramp steamer, he and his comrades endured submarine attacks and weathered a typhoon with open hatches. They were then taken to a POW camp at Ohama, on the shores of Honshu, where they worked in a coal mine under the Inland Sea. With the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki andmdash;one just to the north of them, the other just to the south-the POWs found themselves free among a people who had held over them the power of life and death. *The Sword and the Blossom* gives the reader a remarkable insight into the Japanese way of thinking, and lights the ghastly experience with magnificent prose. These classic books are illustrated with Ray Parkin's evocative and detailed drawings and sketches, made secretly at the time.