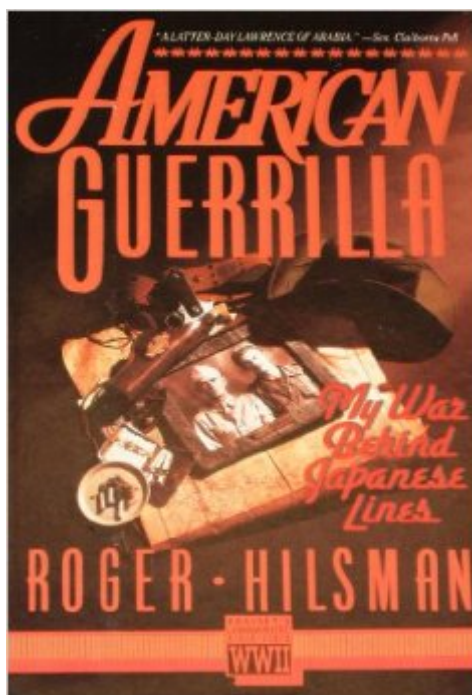


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# American Guerrilla: My War Behind Japanese Lines (Brasseys Commemorative Series Wwii)



## Synopsis

Recalls the adventures of a twenty-five-year-old lieutenant in Burma, ambushing the enemy and rescuing American prisoners, including his own father.

## Book Information

Series: Brasseys Commemorative Series Wwii

Hardcover: 300 pages

Publisher: Brassey's: Putnam Aeronautical; First Edition edition (May 1990)

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Product Dimensions: 8.4 x 5.7 x 1.1 inches

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Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (12 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,295,051 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #380 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Ethnic & National > Japanese](#) #2917 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Military > World War II](#) #12313 in [Books > History > Military > World War II](#)

## Customer Reviews

It is a matter of official U.S. military record that Roger Hilsman served first with Merrill's Marauders and later transferred to active duty with Detachment 101 of the Office of Strategic Services, with which he fought behind Japanese lines in northern Burma with the American-Kachin Rangers. (As an aside, Tom Chamales, who wrote the novel "Never So Few," also came to Det 101 from the Marauders.) Mr. Hilsman's prose may be politically incorrect, his military jargon may be imprecise, his post-war activities and claims may be distasteful to some--as reviewer John Hancock claims--but Hilsman's service during World War II should never be questioned or dismissed. Hilsman's service record is referenced in several excellent books on the Marauders and on Det 101. Among the most notable books is OSS 101 Det veteran Richard Dunlop's "Behind Japanese Lines with the OSS in Burma" (Rand McNally, 1979); Dunlop also wrote a well-regarded biography of his former OSS boss, "Wild Bill" Donovan. Check out the sources...don't believe the rants of someone like Hancock.

Well written, easy to read memoir by a guy who "was there" during WWII and "did it". The book covers Hilsman's entry into OSS and deals with his involvement in occupied SE Asia. Very interesting and definitely worth the five bucks, or so, that I paid for it "used".

there are books like this one, perhaps now merely for those who are academically interested in the subject of the World War. Hilsman has a casual and elegant style of writing, his narrative is filled with marvelous details, he has an unerring memory (how I wonder, this book was written many years after his war experience). Here you meet some of the characters from your history books, and learn how they were viewed by their men and their soliders (Stillwell, Seagrave, Merrill). It's a forgotten part of WWII history, and the American soldiers who sweated and steamed in the tropical jungles of Burma find little acknowledgement in any contemporary war talk. So here is an exquisite reminder. Hilsman writes with heart too--he reminds us that even armies defending or attacking each other in foreign lands have to behave with dignity and respect toward those who are native to the land. The book is in many ways an intensely personal narrative, but it's strength and beauty lies in the retelling of a part of the war not often remembered today. Good job, Mr. Hilsman!

The author went on to have a long and noted career as an academic and government official. He was chief of the State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) and the Assistant Secretary of State during the Johnson administration. Roger Hilsman graduated from The US Military Academy in 1944 and was assigned to the OSS, Sent to Burma, the author commanded a guerrilla battalion, ambushing Japanese patrols, blowing up bridges, spying on the enemy, and slipping back into the teeming jungle. later he went to the prison camp in Manchuria where the Japanese had held his father and helped liberate him. This is an articulate and informative memoir. In the course of his career the author has written many political and policy books. This gives a sense of the man behind the job.

This is a specialized book that , in my opinion, would not appeal to the general reader. It was recommended to me because I happened to travel to Burma at the same time, and on the same ship, during World War Two. I never met him but we were in the same outfit (Merrill's Marauders). I enjoyed reading his experiences as an officer as a comparison to mine as a soldier. However, he was wounded severely in his first two weeks of infantry combat while I lasted ten months without a scratch. His experiences after Burma are really a biography that did not interest me.

After reading the book and the included reviews below, they are just a reminder as to how controversial history can be, and how recollections vary about events. Roger graduated from West Point in 1942, and found himself soon entrenched with Merrill's Marauders and an OSS Detachment

during WW II. After Burma and the Philippines, he started working as an intelligence chief in JFK's Administration (including Viet Nam). I suppose I found most interesting was his years working as a guerrilla and what you had to do, the techniques and sacrifices, to survive and be successful. Worth reading - make up your own opinion on some of the operations.

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