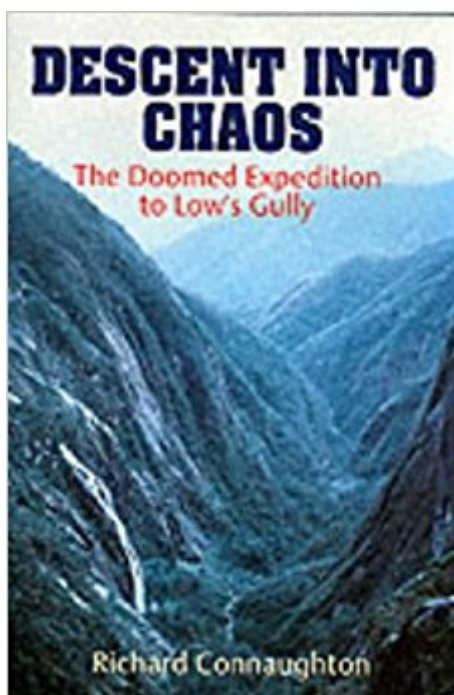


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Descent Into Chaos: The Doomed Expedition To Low's Gully



Synopsis

In early March 1994, five exhausted and starving members of a British Army expedition emerged from Low's Gully, a five-mile-long hell hole falling away from Mount Kinabalu in the jungles of Borneo. However, the achievement of the five - mostly fit and able young British non-commissioned officers - in being the first to conquer Low's Gully, was overshadowed by the fact that the other five members of the team, two relatively old and senior British officers as the leaders and three young novice Chinese storemen and guards serving under the British military in Hong Kong, were apparently still lost in the gully. What had gone wrong and why had the group broken the golden rule for such expeditions - never split up? The rescue attempt by Malaysian and British servicemen and local people became a daily feature in the newspapers and on television. Then the five, seemingly against the odds, were found alive. Shortly afterwards, one of the officers sold his story to the "Daily Mail". He publicly blamed the members of the first group to emerge for the debacle and also made an unprecedented attack on the Chinese soldiers. Yet, in important areas, the findings of the Board of Inquiry into the incident went against the officers, the Board taking the view that, in some respects, the leader's judgment and leadership were flawed. Richard Connaughton's search for the truth behind this story took him around the United Kingdom to Hong Kong and to Sabah, Eastern Malaysia. The result is a balanced account of what became the notorious descent into Low's Gully. Richard Connaughton is the author of "Celebration of Victory" and "Shrouded Secrets".

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This true story of survival has been the subject of two other books and a movie. In 1994, a ten-man

group of soldiers, 7 British and 3 Chinese from Hong Kong, went to Sabah, Malaysia with the intention of being the first ever to successfully navigate Lows Gully. Lows Gully is a deep chasm off the northern flank of Mount Kinabalu. Superstition, mystery and intrigue surrounds this place instilling fear into some of the locals. It was into this situation that these men went to create history. The other two books that were written about this expedition came from four of the team involved. With regard to this book, R.M. Connaughton is independent. He seems well qualified to undertake such a task having a military background and actually serving in the Far East. At the beginning of the book, he provides historical, yet essential background information to Mount Kinabalu and Lows Gully. He relates the exploits of Hugh Low (whom Lows Gully was named after) and Spenser St John. In the 1990's the attempt by Robert New and Steve Pinfield is also related. With the background information, Connaughton then begins to describe the preparations for the expedition describing the building of the team and the travelling to Mount Kinabalu. There is a photo section in the middle of the book and at the end there is a chapter entitled "Reflections" which describes some of the findings of the subsequent Board of Enquiry. The book highlights the various tensions that existed between team members and tries to establish what exactly went wrong. Connaughton does an excellent job with this difficult task. The chapter detailing the extensive rescue operation that took place with the British and Malaysians deserves a special mention. This is an excellent book and you can almost envisage the savage jungle terrain that is described as you read it. On the whole this is a well-written and well researched book and I thoroughly recommend it.

Saw half the movie, didn't read the book yet. What is the title of the movie ? Is it for sale ?

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