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OTHER BOOKS BY EDGAR SNOW



*The Battle for Asia*

*Red Star Over China*

*Far Eastern Front*

*Living China*

(A COLLECTION OF  
CHINESE SHORT STORIES)





TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL EVANS FORDYCE CARLSON

*So well thy words become thee*

*as thy wounds;*

*They smack of honour both . . . .*





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Armed Local Defense Unit in North China

North China Partisan Tries Captured Japanese Machine Gun

The Author Interviews Partisan Leaders in a Cave in Yenai

A Gathering of Partisans in North China Addressed by G. Martel Hall

Traveling Propaganda Unit Entertains Chinese Soldiers and Peasants

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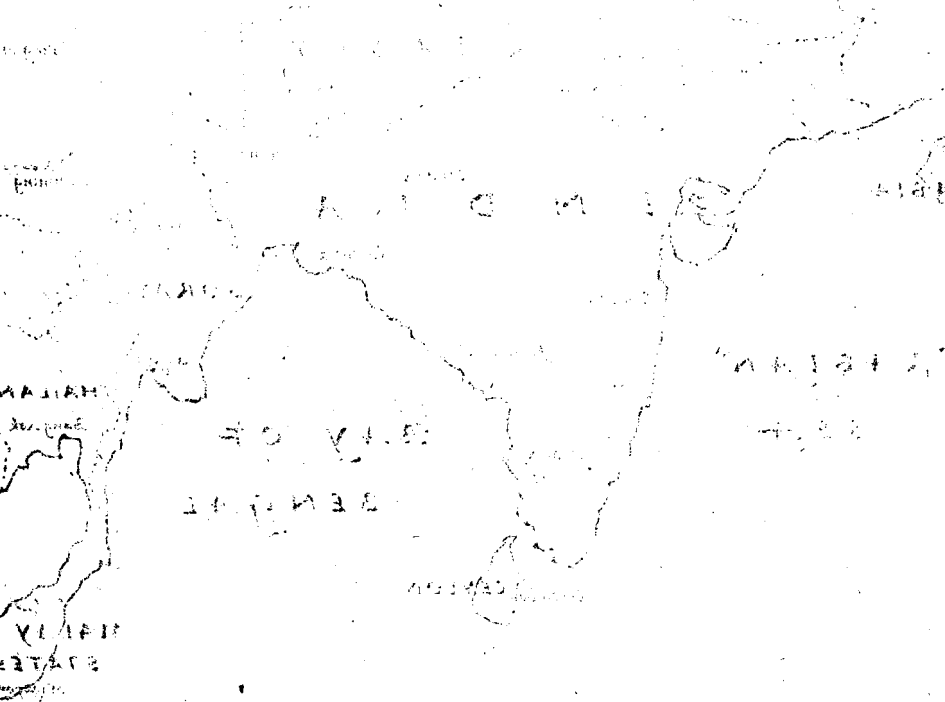
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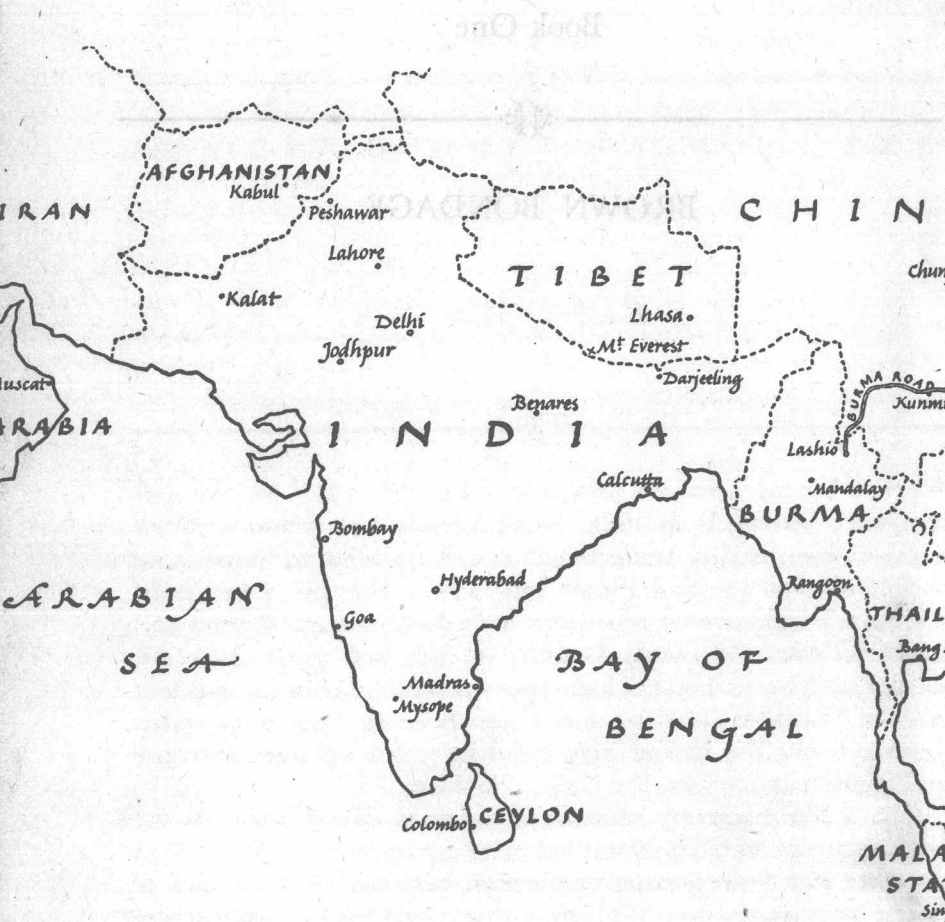
*(Photographs in the Indian section by courtesy of  
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## Book One



A. K. M. D. BROWN BONDAGE





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PART-I-JOURNEY AMONG INDIANS

I

*Back to War*

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WHEN I came home to America in January, 1941, for the first time since leaving it in 1928, I had already seen about a dozen years of war, usually undeclared. I had traveled in Japan, the Philippines and the East Indies, but most of the time I had lived in China. I had covered rebellions in Indo-China and Burma and I had followed Mahatma Gandhi on his first great civil disobedience drive in India. I had reported the Manchurian incident and the Shanghai incident and I had been in Peking to watch Japan provoke the Lukouchiao incident which enlarged into the final ironic euphemism, the China "incident."

So I could scarcely remember a period in my years in the Far East when wars of some kind were not going on. Some of us out there saw a deep-going connection between all these acts of protest and aggression. We knew that Gandhi's spinning-wheel revolt was part of the same pattern inside which the Chinese savagely fought their civil war for a decade, and the Thakins rose in Burma, and the Japanese took Manchuria, and China finally united in resistance. They were all acts in a revolutionary upheaval which would eventually free Asia from feudalism and its institutions and overthrow imperialism. But of that more—quite a lot more—later.

It kept me fascinated for a rather serious decade of my life. I became a part of this history in a small way but enough to realize

that our own destiny would eventually coalesce with these events. The disturbances in the East were also linked with symptoms of general catastrophe maturing in Europe. I wrote several books in which I tried to show that by continuing to arm Japan, after the seizure of Manchuria in 1932, America and Britain were merely strengthening her for that moment when she must surely attack us.

But like others who returned from overseas great with message I found that too many of us here still preferred to believe we lived in a hermetically sealed compartment. You could convince Americans that pyorrhea, body odor, halitosis, constipation and pimply skin threatened the security of their homes, you could sell them remedies for these menaces, but wars were an Asiatic disease or a European disease. We could somehow immunize ourselves from other people's tragedies and even escape the consequences of our own national sins of omission and commission. The contrast between this peaceful land of abundances undreamed of elsewhere, and the poverty and anguish of other lands, was too great for the imagination to bridge. Complacent was the overused word for it.

I found divisions among progressive groups with big responsibilities for molding public opinion and I found a depressing lack of independent thinking among some intellectuals of the left. For example, in the spring of '41 I was invited to talk before the American Writers Congress and accepted. I wanted to call for aid to China, to Britain, and to any nation that fought fascism, and for policies supporting democratic means of mobilization inside those countries. I wanted to assert that the Nazis inevitably would invade Soviet Russia and that those Leftist intellectuals who then opposed Roosevelt's armament program, and support for Britain, would speedily have to reverse themselves. The thing to do was to help the fight against fascism everywhere, jointly with demands for broader democracy inside all the empires. That is how it looked to me. But I never got to deliver that speech. The invitation was withdrawn after the sponsors read my script which they said "contradicted the fundamental convictions of the Congress."

We were no better than other people, I concluded, when it came to moving before being kicked. I almost resigned myself to that fact and waited painfully for the kick.

How impossible it was to overestimate the resistance of the human cranium to the introduction of unpleasant information! I began to feel that journalism, which had failed to mobilize

American opinion sufficiently to compel Congress to adopt changes in policy and elementary measures of survival, was a pretty feeble instrument. The only way you could make a Congressman sit up with a pen was to insert it in a vertical position in the bottom of a Congressman's chair. I was mistaken about that, of course; there was nothing wrong with the old pen or the typewriter. I was simply not good enough at using them to get the desired result. But such an obvious answer did not occur to me till later.

Then the kick came. The Japs returned our scrap iron to us with compounded interest at Hawaii. It found me as surprised as anyone else; not at the success of it, nor at the timing, but at the strategy of it. I had thought Japan would first hit the British and Dutch and be content for an interval to exploit our isolationist sentiments. It seemed to me that by precipitating us into the war and national unity at Pearl Harbor the Japanese had lost far more, politically, than they had gained, militarily; and today it is clear that they did. But Japan's strategy was based on a conviction, then shared by most Allied military authorities, of imminent Russian defeat. Had that expectation been fulfilled then indeed Pearl Harbor would now be regarded as a piece of trickery more "brilliant" than Togo's attack on the Russian fleet at Port Arthur. And as later I traveled across our thinly held frontiers of Africa, Asia and Europe I would realize how much we needed the two years of time which Russian success alone could give us.

Shortly after the fatal Sunday, the *Post* editors called to ask me to go abroad as their first accredited war correspondent—to the Orient, where our citadels were falling fast, then to Russia, then to what was left. The assignment did not excite me as it would have done once. For one thing war as an institution no longer held any glamor for me; I was sick of it and everything to do with it. For another thing, I knew that the whole mess could have been avoided or minimized had we moved against fascism a decade earlier. There was also my new-found skepticism about the usefulness of the press.

When the Air Force offered me a commission in Washington I thought seriously of taking it. I had never been a desk man, but at 36 I couldn't see myself leading any charge of the light brigade, either. Somebody had to organize military research and maybe it was a better way of fighting the war than writing about it. While I was having this debate with myself I went to see an old friend.

in Washington, hard-working Wayne Coy, and as we were talking his telephone rang.

It turned out to concern me. I had hoped to see the President before leaving the capital, but I had not met him before and I had been wondering how to go about it. Now his secretary had located me at Wayne's, I never quite knew how, and in a few minutes I was on my way to the White House. When I got into the Oval Room and saw F.D.R. sitting there with a friendly grin I remembered what I had heard some Chinese far up in the interior say about "Lo Ssu-fu," as they call him. Suddenly there were many things I had wanted to tell him for a long time.

Forty minutes later I left the Commander-in-Chief with the conviction that he would, given the co-operation of Congress, lead us to victory and a wise peace. We had covered a lot of territory in that time and had even managed to settle the microcosmic dilemma of myself and the war. Outside, I felt a lot better about that job for the Post; it was worth doing. I went over to the War Department and signed on as a war correspondent.

Ben Robertson was going abroad for PM, too, but when I told him something about my experience he didn't seem properly impressed. "I never had any doubts about this job of ours, Ed," he said; "we're worth as much as a couple of generals."

"Brigadier, or four-star?" I asked. But Ben didn't like it when I called him General Robertson after that; he believed exactly what he said. I never knew anybody in the business, except Ray Clapper, who managed to keep his respect for the press so intact and so helped to restore my own. Ben's sense of mission and obligation were still as crusader-like as when I had first met him on the campus at Missouri, where we listened together to old Dean Walter Williams preaching his creed of journalism. Ben went on believing it and living up to it till the day a year later when he crashed in a clipper outside Lisbon on his last assignment.

It took us weeks to get away from Washington and we did not manage it till we did, after all, wangle generals' priorities. Only nine clippers were in service on both the Atlantic and Pacific then. It was long before the Air Transport Command, and over in Africa we found that Pan-American pilots were still ferrying most of our planes and personnel. There was no satisfactory communications system as yet and if a pilot got off the radio beam he had a hell of a time finding his way. Planes were carrying heavy

overloads and there were some crashes. Once we almost added to the list when for four hours we flew into a black night searching for that elusive beam and got into it just in time to come over with five gallons of gas left in one tank. But that is strictly personal history.

Anyway it was still an adventure then and we got a pioneering thrill out of that flight over the Caribbean and across the incredibly broad mouths of the Amazon to Brazil and then one hop over the brine to Liberia. I would fly across Africa four times before I saw home again. The repeats were routine but that first sight of endless sand and rock, and then the green ribbon of the Nile laid down on the glistening waste into Egypt and finally Cairo: that was unforgettable.

In Cairo I called on Nahas Pasha, the Egyptian Premier, and I learned elsewhere how the British had put him into office after presenting King Fuad an ultimatum and surrounding his palace with troops and running a tank up the front steps. I learned a lot of other things there that are water over the dam now. Then I told Ben good-bye and went on by British plane across the Holy Land and Trans-Jordania and over barren Iraq down the lovely Shat-El-Arab to Sinbad the Sailor's home outside blistering Basra. And after a day's flight above the shimmering Persian Gulf, skirting Arabia, till we came into India at last, I could see what Karl Twitchell meant by a remark he had made back in Cairo.

Twitchell was leading an American "agricultural" mission into Saudi Arabia and he got the King to invite me to come into Ryad, his capital; and if I didn't get a scoop on the Big-Inch pipeline it was my own fault. One day in Cairo he showed me some of his excellent Kodachromes of the Arabs on a projector he was taking as a gift to Ibn Saud. He ended up with some pictures of New Hampshire in a glorious September.

"Ibn Saud ought to like that New Hampshire autumn!" I exclaimed.

"Good Lord," said Twitchell, "I wouldn't dream of showing those pictures to the King."

"Why not?"

"Up till now I've never told him anything that wasn't true and he believes in my integrity. If I showed the King those pictures and told him the colors of the leaves on the trees were real and not painted he would never trust my word again!"

Not only was Arabia a monochrome of barren sand and a



furnace of heat, but from the time I left Brazil till I hit Delhi it seemed to me there was practically nothing but wasteland below us. It explains a lot about the "backward" men and women in those big spaces that look so promising on our pretty colored maps. It's all One World, all right, and so is a coconut all one coconut. But an awful lot of both of them is husk. Several million young Americans are discovering during this war that the best slices of the meat and the sweetest milk of this earth are labeled U. S. A.—with very little of the husk.

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## II

### *Preface to India*

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UNBELIEVABLE India India of the unforgettable peace of cool, shaded valleys and blue lakes mirroring the Himalayas, and of scorching heat and the choking dust of arid plains and deserts; India, the serene and obscure, the dazzlingly rich and the abysmally poor, the exquisitely tender and crassly inhumane, the sophisticated and the irresponsibly adolescent, the glorious and the despicable, the sensitive and the sordidly brutal, the generously brave and the craven; India, the mother of civilizations and the harborer of barbaric customs, the land of wooden plows and blast furnaces, of sacred cows and communal hatreds and prophets of brotherly love, of spinning-wheel saints and distinguished scientists; land of voluptuaries and ascetics, of the incredibly fat and the incredibly lean, of absolute feudalism coeval with modern capitalism, of naked fakirs who never heard of the rope trick and of political *detenus* whose jail record gives them social position; India, the giant of the future and the prisoner of the present, held in the now harsh, now gentle, hands of perplexed island-bred aliens who are in nearly every particular the antithesis of the people whose destiny they have shaped for nearly two centuries.

Indians are generally much darker than Chinese and other Mongoloids but they are considered by scientists to be Caucasians,