CHAPTER 8

From Bloomsbury Square to Taihang Mountains (1946-47)

1946 to 1947 marked a turning point in my life - and Isabel's. It was the year in which we decided to return to China. We planned to stay eighteen months. We have been there for half a century and expect to end our days there. China has cast a spell on many westerners from Marco Polo in the 13th century and the Jesuit Matteo Ricci in the 16th to undistinguished "New China Hands" such as Isabel and I.

I have no recollection of the voyage home from Singapore, probably because my mind was not on board with my body but back in Britain with Isabel. We had had less than a year of married life and not all that together, before I was posted to India from England. Of course besides day dreaming about Isabel I mused on the fact that the bloody war was over and that the right side had won. Yet for me personally the war had not been bloody. It had been less of a trauma than a trip across the world. In fact I had been in less danger than those who faced the blitz at home - including Isabel. And I had enjoyed learning a little about Asian societies, where most of the human race live.

When after weeks of shipboard daydreaming I arrived in England, Isabel was not there. She was in her native Canada, where she had been sent for demobilization from the Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWAC). But the torture of waiting for her was short.

In 1942 she had come to England from west China with a mass of material collected during a year's field work with a Chinese colleague. Soon after arriving in London, she had contacted the eminent professor Raymond Firth, who had the chair of anthropology at the London School of Economics (LSE). Firth gave Isabel help and encouragement. Now, in 1946, after being demobilized from the army she received a Canadian government study grant. Eager to resume her anthropological studies and put the material into shape, she applied and was accepted for post-graduate work with Firth.

In 1946 I, too, received an ex-serviceman's grant - to study Chinese at the School of Oriental and African

Studies (SOAS), also of London University, so I was allowed to sit in on Firth's seminar. This included students who later became outstanding in the field of anthropology, Edmond Leach, Barbara Ward, Maurice Friedman and others. Unawed by these intellects and despite being a mere auditor I impudently asked: "What is the real purpose and application of anthropology?" insinuating that it was a scholarship in the service of colonialism. This provoked lively discussion. The most interesting participant, to Isabel and me, was a guest lecturer from China, Professor Fei Xiaotong. Fei had been - and still is - active in politics in China and Firth's inviting him to England as a visiting scholar may have saved him from death at the hands of pro-Guomindang murder squads. Isabel and I had read Fei's Peasant Life in China and Earthbound China. Now, at the seminar, he presented a paper entitled Peasantry and Gentry, which we patronizingly approved of because, we felt, it took the writer a step closer to a Marxist analysis.

My study of the Chinese language at SOAS was carried on in less distinguished company. And it was at SOAS that I made the greatest linguistic blunder of my life, in not studying the "characters" of the Chinese written language. One look at those calligraphic curlicues convinced me that I could never master them and I never did until I was in prison 20 years later. At that time I used the Chinese-English dictionary compiled by the head of the SOAS Chinese Department, Dr. Walter Simon, and "read it till the threads broke." In 1946/7 - to my regret - I hardly glanced at it. Not that I had anything against Simon. I admired him for overcoming a speech defect and becoming a notable linguist. But I suspect he had something against me, for when I said goodbye, before leaving for China in 1947, he said: "You will be alright." The remark seemed to smack of malice, meaning" "You are the sort of person who will always land on his feet, no matter what." Simon himself, as a Jewish refugee from nazi Germany, had seen hard times. But he could always find solace in his love of the Chinese language - as I later did in gaol. The other personality I recall from SOAS days is Otto van der Sprenkel, whose course in Chinese history I found as delightful as himself. He was an entertaining lecturer with a touch of satire in his historiography. He was a learned but unproductive scholar, at least according to the principle of "publish or perish." In that sense he has perished. But I recall him as a personal friend with one remarkable gift. He could read aloud and make quite clear passages from James Joyce's Ulysses which made no sense when I read them to

myself. Isabel and I enjoyed our friendship with Otto and his wife Sybille.

When my six months course at SOAS came to an end, so did my enrolment in the RAF and early in 1947 I reported at the dispersal centre. It was an ugly assemblage of Nissen huts on a bleak plain in Lancashire, formerly an American army base. But for us who were about to live the life of civilians it was a place of beauty and joy. We "shopped" for our free issue of civvies in a gigantic shed and picked up our back pay. I collected far more: a free passage back to China at His Majesty's expense.

I was queuing up for something - the whole procedure of discharge was one queue after another - when the man in front made a remark to his pal which changed the course of my life. "This K.R. (King's Regulation) number such-and-such is just my cuppa tea. If you came to U.K. from abroad to join up you can get free repat to the country you came from. I came from Burma" (his father was an employee of a ruby mine there) "so I'll be putting in for a free ticket back." I had run into this chap before on some other queue and found him rather obnoxious, but now I asked him for further details of the K.R. in question. It seemed that I could apply for free passage back to China, not only for myself but for Isabel as well. We two had been talking to each other wistfully about going back but did not see how we'd be able to afford it. Now without hesitation I put my name down. We had a year in which to decide whether we would actually take up the offer.

Isabel responded enthusiastically to the idea. But it was a big step to take into an unpredictable future and when a less risky prospect opened up we considered it. Somehow we had become acquainted with Sir Stafford and Lady Cripps, probably through Raymond Firth. Cripps was then a prominent member of the Labour Government and a potential Labour Prime Minister. I suppose that he saw in Isabel and me a likely young couple (of 31 and 36) for a career in foreign affairs, specializing in Sino-British relations. Cripps sent me along to see the then Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Hector McNeill, to give him my opinion of Jiang Jie-shi (Chiang Kai-shek); or was it to let McNeill look me over? I went to Whitehall with mixed feelings of respect and contempt, and was shown into the great man's suite. He was having a bath, but soon emerged from his private bathroom in a silk dressing gown, with a whisky and soda in his hand. I thought of another Labour M.P. Keir Hardie who insisted on wearing his worker's cloth cap when he went to take his seat in the House of Commons in

the 1890s. McNeill gave me a whisky and soda and I gave him my opinion of Jiang: that he was a corrupt and treacherous cutthroat who had massacred thousands of trade unionists and communists when he turned on his allies in 1927; that he had stockpiled the arms supplied to him by the Americans for use against the Japanese, saving them for future use against the Chinese communists. In a word he was not to be trusted and he would lose the civil war. Britain would do better to put her trust in Mao Ze-dong and the Chinese peasants. As I talked McNeill looked at me, listened and sipped his whisky. Then I knocked back mine and left Whitehall and with it all hope of a career in the Foreign Office. I must confess that I had seriously considered one, thinking that from that vantage point I might, in some small way, have served the cause of communism, by "boring from within." Fortunately the opportunity never arose, or I might have shared the fate of Kim Philby and his kind.

Meanwhile Isabel and I were leading a political life of a different sort. We had managed to find a rent-controlled room on one of London's loveliest squares, Mecklenburgh Square. This was the heart of Bloomsbury and once the home of Leonard and Virginia Woolf. But so far as we were concerned it was part of the area of the St Pancras branch of the Communist Party. Every Wednesday morning at seven o'clock we were at the side gate of St. Pancras Station, selling the Daily Worker, trying to strike up conversations with customers and persuade them to move ahead from being buyers of the paper to becoming members of Party branches. The branches had, in fact, been undermined and scattered by an organizational blunder, of basing them on electoral districts instead of, as before, on the member's place of work. So, as the purchasers fumbled for their pennies, I like the ancient mariner, fixed them with a glittering eye and asked them their opinion of the paper. Some evasively said, "Oh, I just read it for the racing tips," which many doubtless did, for Cayton, the "Daily's" tipster had an unrivalled record. But sometimes I managed to steer the conversation round to foreign affairs and domestic matters and occasionally, to the Communist Party. On Sunday mornings we would sell Saturday's paper, enlarged with extra features, at the railway workers' flats in the Polygon Buildings, a vast tenement, dark and dreary. Sunday was a strategic time for selling papers, many people being at home for the weekly house-cleaning or lying in bed late for "a bit of a read" before Sunday dinner, the biggest meal of the week. It was our biggest meal, too. Food was still rationed and we would hoard our week's meat ration for Sunday lunch, pop the whole joint in the pressure cooker,

leaving the gas on low in our "kitchen" - a few square feet behind a screen in our one-room flat. Meanwhile we would be ringing the bells and knocking at the doors of the Polygon flats. Many of the railway workers were of Irish Catholic background and once an old widow living alone eagerly asked me in, with the words,"Come in, Father," mistaking me for the priest. She bought a copy of the Daily out of the goodness of her heart. I hope she could afford it and that the priest didn't scold her. Another time I came in for a scolding. "We don't want no more war," said the lady of the house leaning on her mop. "No, of course not," I agreed. "Yes but it's your people that are the danger." "My people? Who do you mean?" "Why, the Russians, of course." Daily Worker, communists, Russians, war. That was her chain of thought, induced no doubt by Churchill's "Iron Curtain". Other householders had a better opinion of us. One day I was welcomed by an old customer with exceptional warmth and eagerness. "Thank god you've come at last. I was just saying to my missus, the Daily Worker man will know what to do." The old woman in the flat next door, living on her own, as so many widows and widowers did, had died the night before. The neighbours had picked her up off the floor and laid her on her cheap iron bed, folded her hands on her breast and covered her over with a sheet. But what next? I phoned the St. Pancras Borough Council, then strongly Labour, and they promised to come round as soon as possible.

Selling the Daily Worker brought us into touch, though to only a very limited degree, with the working class. Isabel and I together built up our Sunday sales to 80 copies and were commended by the Party branch. But it was not until much later that we realised the shortcomings of going all out for increasing circulation, as the Party demanded, while paying too little attention to political discussion and recruiting not merely new subscribers but new Party members.

Paper selling was not our only Party job. With our China backgrounds, Isabel and I were naturals for the Far Eastern Committee, which met once a month. There we discussed the situation in the Far East and whipped together reference material as the occasion arose. One such occasion was the visit to London of Aung San, former leader of the Burmese anti-Japanese guerrillas, whom some of us had known in Rangoon, where he had addressed the East and West Association. One "fraternal" member of the Committee was a Burmese student, who hoping to ingratiate himself with Aung San told him that Isabel and I and others of his friends in London were communists.

This evidently came as no shock to the former guerrilla leader (his own brother-in-law Than Tun, being secretary of the Burmese Communist Party.) It certainly did not sour our relations, but it taught us a lesson in security. Aung San was assassinated after his return to the East. So were some other distinguished colonial British allies. These were leaders of the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA). I had known them during my brief posting to Singapore (where I was commander-in-chief of whisky and beer). Now we heard that they had been invited to London to take part in the Victory Parade and were under canvas in Kensington Gardens. We hunted them down and had a joyful reunion. They marched in the parade, proudly in spite of the pain of wearing British army boots. Then they went home to continue the struggle for Malayan independence which they had waged against the Japanese. There, in their native jungles, they were killed by British forces sent to "pacify" the "rebels" who fought to free their country first from Japanese then from British colonialists.

Another Marxist group we attended, more academic than the Far Eastern Committee, was the Historians' Group, attended by the Australian-born historical novelist Jack Lindsay. Also John Morris, an expert on, among other things, the Magna Carta, (to whom I had entrusted my diary of Spanish Civil War days.) After 50 years all I remember of our discussion topics is slavery in Ancient Rome. I am not sure whether we tried to relate that to the current situation in Britain. But the group then and in later years contained outstanding historians of the English Revolution in the 17th century - notably Christopher Hill, later to become Master of Balliol College, Oxford; and on a less academic level, Hymie Fagan, whose The Unsheathed Sword is a masterly presentation of armed uprisings in English history, written in simple English.

There were no uprisings, armed or otherwise, for us to take part in in the London of the mid forties; but there were demonstrations of support for the squatters who, under C.P. leadership, were moving into unoccupied housing. This was mostly either buildings requisitioned by the government during World War II and then left empty, or surplus accommodation left vacant by well-to-do home-owners. All this at a time when many people were homeless. The squatters' movement won wide support for the families who just moved in and stayed put. Eventually most, though not all of them, were evicted; but their militant action strengthened the rent control law, from which, incidently Isabel and I benefited. Without it we could never have afforded to live in Mecklenburgh

Square, whose classic Queen Anne houses were then still intact. I recall one squatters demonstration in Leicester Square in the heart of the West End. When the mounted police trotted in to break it up there were derisive cries of "the cossacks are coming."

Other demonstrations organized by the CP were to draw attention to the Nuremberg trials of Nazi war criminals, such as Goering, Rosenberg and Hess. In an effort to raise consciousness and broaden support for the trials the CP called on Jewish party members and sympathisers to form an association of Jewish ex-servicemen and march as a body wearing their medals. I had three medals for my service in the RAF: the Burma Star, the Defence Medal and the War Medal, all of them, in my case, being rather formal recognition of service, not for outstanding gallantry. I did not, to my shame, march with the Jewish ex-servicemen, still feeling ill-at-ease about being Jewish, even with CP members.

Meanwhile there were other uncertainties in my mind, even about going to China. When if ever would the 'repatriation" actually come through, what with the current shortage of shipping, the slow-grinding bureaucracy, the uncertainty of securing a visa from the Guomindang consulate? So when my study grant at SOAS came to an end I decided to get a job. There was an acute shortage of teachers, not surprising in view of their long hours, low pay and extra duties. But I had enjoyed my brief teaching experience in Shanghai and Chengdu, so I applied at the Ministry of Education. When I filled out the forms the damning fact came to light that my degree was from Columbia, an American University! That would never do, even though Columbia had been founded in 1754 by grant of King George II. I would have to take a teacher's training course and get a proper British diploma, meanwhile living on a pittance for a year or more. I turned it down and decided to become a member of the industrial working class. After shopping around I was offered a job as a lens grinder in a North London basement sweat-shop, at seven pounds a week. My fears of silicosis must have been overcome by the appeal of working in the same craft as Spinoza, whom my father had held up to me as a role model (overlooking his excommunication by the rabbis). Spinoza, incidently, died at 45, of lung trouble. I was saved from that fate by my "repat" notification coming through just before I was due to start work. What if I had become a London lens grinder instead of a teacher and writer in China?

1946/47 was not only a crucial year but a delightful one. And it was brought to a delightful close at a week-end school on the subject of "Utopias" at Hastings on the south coast of England. This was my first visit to Hastings in reality, though I had often been there in imagination. For Hastings is the setting of what is generally described as Britain's first "proletarian novel," The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists. It is about the heart-breaking and body-breaking life of house-painters at the beginning of this century, the author, Robert Tressel being one of them. He was a "de-classed member of the middle class," thrust down into the proletariat. So he had both the education and the experience to understand what he wrote. The story is one of misery but - in the unabridged edition - of hope. The style owes much to Dickens, the approach being ironical, including the title itself. For the overworked and underpaid painters, in the author's eyes give away much of the fruits of their labour to the boss. That is their philanthropy. So they are "mugs" (fools) and Hastings, in the book is called Mugsborough. That was the Hastings I knew before going there.

But the school Isabel and I went to before leaving Britain for China, was different. It was materially comfortable enough, in a rambling old country house, with plenty of plain country fare. Culturally it was luxurious - an intellectual feast with congenial fellow students. The principal lecturers and discussion leaders were Alan Morton and Douglas Garman. Morton is the author of the Marxist People's History of England, which I drew on decades later teaching history in China. Garman was the CP's Education Secretary. The subject under discussion at the school was "the English Utopia," on which Morton late wrote a fascinating book. Those few days immersion in centuries of hope and striving for a better Britain, focusing on works such as More's Utopia and William Morris's News from Nowhere, was excellent preparation for our coming years in China, where I hoped to learn and later teach how 20th century Britain might be made a new Utopia.

Not that we dreamt, as we stepped on board the P & O liner at Liverpool, that it would be for the rest of our lives. Eighteen months was what we foresaw. At the end of that time Isabel expected to return to LSE to complete her work for her PhD. I had hopes of making myself into a journalist by writing about life in the Liberated Areas, which contained about a third of China's population. So I circularized Fleet Street and managed to obtain stringer's credentials for both The Times and Reuters. I was a journalist at last!

My demotion at Air Headquarters, Singapore, from intelligence to control of whisky and beer, had not deprived me of my commission. I was still an officer, if not a gentleman. So we travelled first class. But shipping was so short at the end of the war that it was operating under something like troopship conditions, and such junior ranks as Flying Officer, which I had been reduced to, were subject to sexual segregation, in dormitory accommodation. One delightful memory of the voyage is of sailing through the Suez Canal. This is not normally a pleasant experience. But in my childhood the canal had a romantic appeal because of the way in which, my father loved to relate, Britain acquired control of it from Egypt. The Egyptians, Dad said, put the canal on the market over a bank holiday weekend in 1875. The money had to be put down in a hurry or the French would have snapped up the shares. But with the banks closed, how could it be done? Disraeli, then Prime Minister, called on his friend Rothschild, who personally guaranteed the required amount. That was good enough for the Khedive of Egypt. Dad found this story immensely gratifying. Two Jews getting together to serve the Empire and put one over on the French. His message for me was: "You see how smart we Jews are and how we stick together. Let that be an inspiration to you, my son, when you grow up." At the same time Dad had the typical cockney's good-natured contempt for the frog-and-snail-eating French and his repertoire of music-hall songs included some with anti-Napoleonic roots stretching back to the beginning of the 19th century. But here was I, steaming through the canal in 1947, with Isabel at my side and different thoughts from Dad's in our heads. So when we saw the naked, suntanned little Egyptian boys on the bank of the canal, only a few yards away making obscene gestures at the white passengers on board, including us, we smiled. Less than ten years later President Nasser of Egypt nationalized the canal and Dizzy's and Rothchild's deal was undone.

In Hong Kong we put up at a small hotel at RAF expense, for our travel expenses were covered as far as Beiping, now Beijing.*

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*. The names are confusing. Beijing (Peking) means Northern Capital. But Jiang Jie-shi established his capital at Nanjing, meaning Southern Capital; so he changed the name of Beijing to Beiping, meaning Northern Peace. The Americans, as an expression of non-recognition, for years persisted in referring to the newly-established capital of the People's Republic, Beijing, as Beiping. The British found themselves in a more diplomatically correct position - but only through inertia. They had never got round to changing their usage of Beijing in 1927, when they should have done. So in 1949 history put them in the right.

At our Hong Kong hotel we behaved as ex-officers should (Isabel had been a CWAC lieutenant), sipping lime rickeys in the lounge before dinner. We also looked up an interesting young Chinese couple to whom we had a letter of introduction: Qiao Guan-hua and his wife, Gong Peng. Qiao was later to become China's Foreign Minister. Gong Peng was already known to the international press, having been spokesperson for the Chinese Communist Party in Chongqing. They took us to dinner, banquets having played a vital part in Chinese social intercourse and political life for thousands of years. Shortly afterwards we were visited in our little hotel by a middle-aged Chinese gentleman in an elegant white silk suit. He was Zhang Han-fu, then Qiao's superior in the Chinese communists' foreign affairs set-up and himself a future vice-Foreign Minister. In other words, we were being given the once-over before being sped on our way to the blockaded Liberated Areas.

We set sail for the north China port of Tianjin on a British coaster, the captain giving us seats of honour at his table, doubtless to insulate himself from the other Western passengers who were missionaries. He might have done so less enthusiastically if he had known of Isabel's missionary parentage.

En route we stopped briefly at Shanghai, where I had worked from 1938-40. Now under Jiang Jieshi's Guomindang, the International Settlement looked much the same as before, with its teeming millions, glaring contrasts of wealth and poverty, beggars and prostitutes thronging Nanjing Road, money changers hawking silver dollars for the inflated currency. At night we went to meet "Cynthia" Liao, a prominent woman communist whose family had been closely associated with Dr. Sun Yat-sen. Cynthia scrutinized our letters of introduction, asked some searching questions, and added her endorsement to that written by Qiao Guan-hua and Zhang Han-fu in Hong Kong.

Back on board, heading for the next port of call, Tianjin, Isabel and I considered what precautions we should take to avoid trouble with Guomindang customs and immigration officials. We decided to get rid of all but the most essential credentials, so as to avoid arousing suspicion. I tore mine into small pieces and flushed them down the toilet into the East China Sea. Isabel, after tearing hers up, started to throw them overboard - without paying attention to which way the wind was blowing. It blew the first few pieces back on board, onto the lower decks where the steerage passengers were crowded with their bundles making the place look like a floating

street market. We hurriedly cut short this reckless act of jettison, praying that no jigsaw-playing sleuths should put the incriminating scraps of paper together again. After landing at Tianjin we had another anxious moment when the customs officer examined our books. He picked up one volume, which we had carefully covered in brown paper to hide the title: The Handbook of Marxism. The officer riffled its pages, peering intently. He passed The Communist Manifesto, extracts from Das Kapital, Lenin's Imperialism and similarly subversive stuff. Finally, reaching the end of the book he put it down and started to examine my socks. It dawned on us that he had been looking for dollar bills. We had none, not even between the pages of Das Kapital.

After these nerve-racking experiences we reported to the British consulate, as required by King's Regulations for "repatriates." There, after I had explained our intention of going to the Liberated Areas to write, we were introduced to the Press Officer. After glancing at my card, bearing the impressive words "The Times" and Reuters, he entertained us and gave us a guided tour of Tianjin. This, I mused, was where Jack Woolf had planned to send me as his agent. I thanked the Wall Street crash of 1929, which had saved me from that fate.

Tianjin was one of the ugliest cities in China, an architectural hodge-podge of styles of the fourteen powers which forcibly established "concessions" there after suppressing the anti-imperialist "Boxer" uprising at the turn of the century. The Press Officer, Richard Harris, who had been trained as an architect, observed that there was "a laugh on every block." He was right. The buildings ranged from banks modelled on the Parthenon to structures resembling Viennese opera houses. In addition to this architectural analysis the Press Officer kindly offered, if my articles could be smuggled to him from the Liberated areas, to forward them to England. He kept his promise.[1]

Meanwhile, as advised in Hong Kong and Shanghai we contacted the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Association (UNNRA) to see if they could help us on our way into the Liberated Areas. According to their charter UNNRA were commissioned to send relief supplies impartially into both Guomindang and the Communist areas. They fulfilled this according to the letter of the law. The letter but not the spirit: 98% of the relief supplies went to Jiang Jie-shi, 2% to the communists. Still, for us the arrangement was advantageous, for the Chinese Communist Party was allowed to have two legal representatives in Guomindang-occupied Tianjin, to

handle relief matters. Through the local UNNRA personnel, who were on the whole personally impartial, we quietly got in touch with the two communist representatives. The senior member spoke no English, but his junior, Han Xu acted as interpreter. He was a handsome young man, poised and personable. Thirty years later he was a senior member of the Chinese Foreign Ministry and eventually ambassador to the United States. Our friends told us that UNNRA was forming a small convoy, including two jeeps, to deliver supplies to their depot just over the line in the Liberated Areas; and they were short of a driver. I was eagerly taken on.

While waiting for the UNNRA convoy to form up we seized the opportunity to visit China's ancient capital Beijing. The train journey which now takes two hours, then took four, for it went through guerrilla territory. In the fields I saw young women in bright red clothes and excitedly pointed them out to Isabel as evidence of communist activity; but she explained that they were nothing more exciting than young brides still wearing the traditional colour of Chinese weddings. Somewhat to our disappointment the train was not de-railed by guerrillas and we arrived safely. In Beijing we reported to the British Consulate that our "repatriation" journey was ended. The Consul, however, did not wash his hands of us but turned us over to the British Council, which placed a long, black limousine, flying the Union Jack, at our disposal. In this we rode majestically to Qinghua University in the Western Suburbs to call on Professor Fei Xiaotong, whose seminars we had attended at LSE a year before. He received us hospitably and gave us a report on the state of his nation. He was a politically-minded academic and then occupied a middle of the road position between the Guomindang and the Communists, hoping that China would establish a democracy similar to that of Britain or the United States. Our own hopes for China were different but the encounter was cordial.

The drive to and from Qinghua gave us a glimpse of the charm, beauty and architectural grandeur of imperial Beijing, then still enclosed within its high city wall and towering gates.

A day or two after our return to Tianjin, at the end of October 1947, the UNNRA convoy was loaded. I am ashamed to recall that a sizable portion of the cargo was our luggage, including enough loose-leaves for my notebook to last me until the mid-fifties. It did not include our silver cutlery, a wedding present which we had brought with us as floating capital, like the Jews of the Diaspora. We had disposed of that to an honest broker on

board ship when we feared that funds would run low. Neither the paper nor the silver-selling precaution proved necessary. Events moved faster than we foresaw. In fifteen months we were back in liberated Beiping which on October 1, 1949 was proclaimed capital of the People's Republic of China. Before that we were to live in villages and witness one scene of another historic drama - the re-distribution of the land to the tillers of Ten Mile Inn.

1. Twenty years later, when I was interrogated in gaol during the cultural revolution, this arrangement was interpreted as evidence of my "illicit relations with the imperialists."