

X - 78 - 78. Typewritten Copy of Review of Battle Hymn of China
from Manchester Guardian, March 22, 1944.

COPY OF REVIEW OF BATTLE HYMN OF CHINA

Manchester Guardian dated 22.3.44

This deeply moving book, written with all the vigour and vividness that come of intense feeling and personal experience, is recommended to all who would see the Chinese people (one stresses that last word) at war.

Though once black-listed as a dangerous Communist agitator, Miss Smedley has, in fact, no politics beyond a passionate championship of the under-dog born of her own wretched childhood and bitter struggles; and, going to China in 1928, she stayed till 1941, living mostly among the common soldiers, often close to the battle line, and spending every penny she could scrape up on their relief. The book is strong meat, but it had to be told. Even yet we hardly realise the cruelty of the Japanese, the deliberate bombing of Red Cross stations, the murdering of wounded Chinese on battlefields, the wanton torture of innocent villagers. Miss Smedley gives for the first time the Communists' point of view in the unhappy clashes with the Kuomintang in 1941; one must say it carries conviction. There are many graphic sketches of Chinese leaders and touches of humour, particularly the story of the epileptic servants ~~who~~ supplied to one hospital on the sound principle that, if they were going to have fits, a hospital was the place to have them in. But one can only mention the outlines of this fine book. It must be read.

O.M.