

Alistair Cooke, then a Washington correspondent for The Guardian, recognized a great story to be told in investigating at first hand the effects of the Second World War on America and the daily lives of Americans as they adjusted to radically new circumstances. Within weeks of the Pearl Harbor attack, with a reporters zeal, Cooke set off on a circuit of the entire country to see what the war had done to people. He talked to everyone he encountered on his extensive trip, from miners to lumberjacks, to war-profiteers, to day-laborers, to local politicians - even the unfortunate Japanese-Americans who had been rapidly interned in stark, desert camps. Intertwined with his reflections on changing landscapes and cityscapes and with his unique storytelling skills and insight, his acute ability to define detail and catch the sounds and syntax of different regional accents, this is Alistair Cooke moving into his prime as a reporter and a writer. His prescient observations on what was happening and considerations on where America was headed provide a clearer understanding of a critical moment in world history just prior to the dropping of the Atomic bomb. This unique travelogue celebrates an important American character and the indomitable spirit of a nation that was to inspire Cookes reports and broadcasts for some sixty years.

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