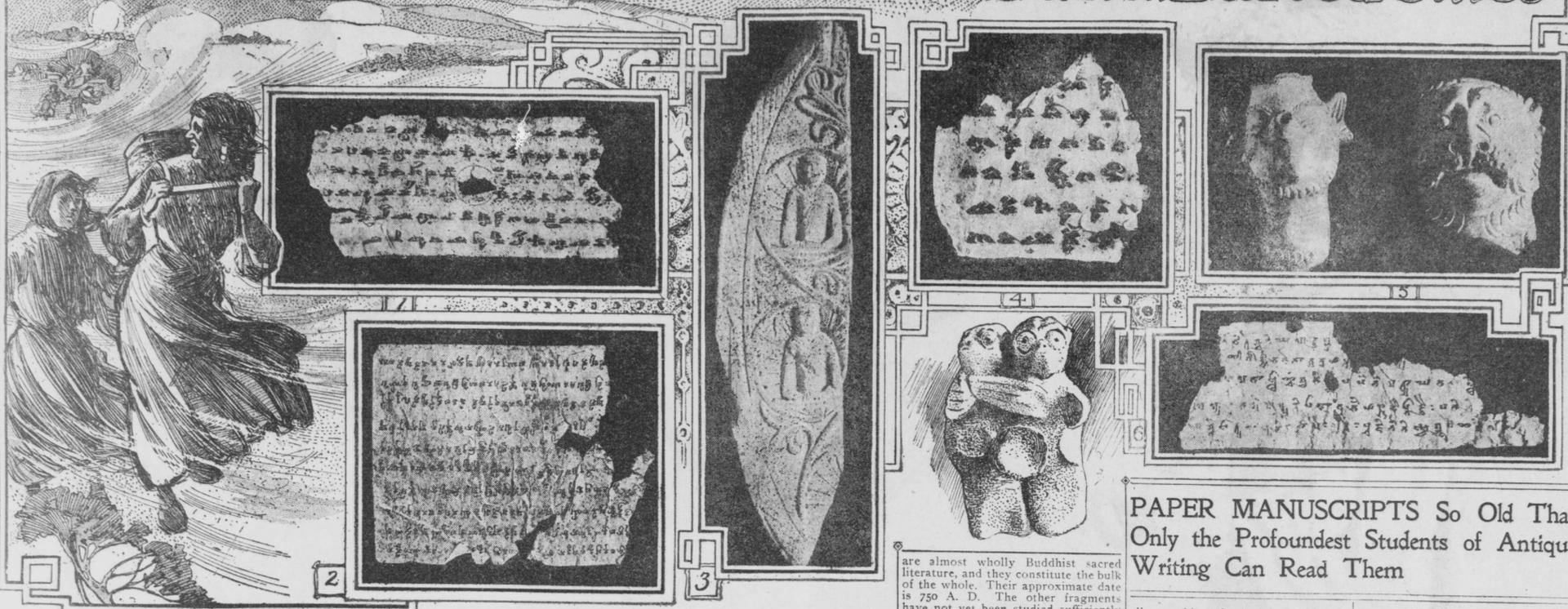


America's Relics From Asia's Sand Buried Cities



AN AMERICAN Traveler's Interesting Discoveries in the Taklamakan Desert of Chinese Turkestan

By OSCAR T. CROSBY

DEAD twelve hundred years ago are they who wrote the strange characters and fashioned the strange clay heads whose images you see on this page. Forgotten are the societies to which those dead belonged. Buried in the desert sands are the cities in which those societies dwelt. Choked and obliterated are the streams which gave to those cities the water of life. Can the busy, noisy present spare a moment to hear the story of the silent past?

In 1895-6 Sven Hedin discovered ruins of ancient dwellings in the Taklamakan desert of Eastern (or Chinese) Turkestan. These ruins are in no sense impressive from the architect's point of view, being quite similar to the ordinary Turkestan dwelling of to-day—plaster or adobe around wooden frames. But historically they are of prime interest. For testimony is thus given that civilization once existed in regions which are now quite uninhabitable because they are completely without water. As the distance of the ruins from present water courses is too great to justify the supposition of irrigation ditches stretching from the one to the other, we are forced to conclude that the same great sand movements which destroyed the towns must have resulted in a shifting of the stream beds which were once the source of life.

The Work of Dr. M. A. Stein
In addition to the sites discovered by Sven Hedin in the several great

journeys, others have been found by Dr. M. A. Stein of the Indian Educational Service. His admirable work at a number of points around the modern city of Khotan, together with the philological research of Dr. Hoerle, now at Oxford, may be taken as the basis of a special body of learning which we shall call the archeology of the sand-buried cities of Turkestan.

It has been my good fortune to obtain a bundle of the paper manuscripts taken from one of these towns. The Hinduo Aksakol in Khotan brought it to me while I was outfitting for a journey up to the Tibetan plateau in September, 1903. The term Aksakol means "graybeard," but the various Hinduos who had received this title of dignity in Turkestan were generally middle-aged men, active traders nominated to represent the body of merchants of their own nationality in each of the big towns of Chinese Turkestan. Thus in Khotan there was an Andjian Aksakol, as well as my Hinduo friend.

The former was a native of Russian Turkestan, whose merchants have immemorably trafficked across the Alai Mountains with their race kindred in Chinese territory.

The Hinduos, traveling over the Karakamur Himalayas, have likewise maintained for many centuries trade relations with the same region, and thence even to China proper, far to the East. Their route is long and incredibly difficult—much of it at altitudes exceeding 18,000 feet, but the rude mountain offers nothing better.

This trade originates in Kashmir, where there has been for at least thir-

ty years a British Resident, though the Maharajah is nominally independent. To foster and protect their trade, and to watch the Russians, a British officer is stationed in Kashgar, about three hundred miles from Khotan. It is he who appoints the Aksakols among the Hinduo merchants; and it was because of a letter from Colonel Miles, the present incumbent, that the sleek money lender in Khotan had met Captain Anginian (my companion) and myself when we rode into Khotan.

A comfortable lodging was put at our disposal, where ample and cleanly rooms were found for spreading our beds, and where our servants could cook the plentiful viands furnished by the rich, irrigated fields of Khotan. Then, also, we had a suitable room for receiving the dignified, amiable Chinese Mandarin, who rules the subject people in kindly paternalism.

When all of our caravan wants had been supplied, the Aksakol, knowing the keen taste of Europeans for antiquities, produced the precious bundle, tied in a bit of dirty paper, the sand of the desert still running out of the corners. A native Taski man had brought it in—perhaps one of Dr. Stein's men had secreted it from the considerable numbers of manuscripts unearthed by that thorough-going scientist.

Chaffering for the Manuscript

There is as yet no quotable value for bits of world-old paper, so we must trade awhile in Oriental fashion before I could call the precious thing mine own. The Aksakol's first offer as usual, was that the Sahib should give anything the Sahib chose. But I had already learned to refuse this noble oblige position, and insisted upon a more definite proposition. Then the original owner was consulted, and finally a bargain was struck at twenty rupees—about \$6.60—leaving both parties satisfied.

At this time of chaffering permitted me to consult Father Hendricks (once a Dutchman, now almost an Asiatic) as to the genuineness of the strange

bits of paper which lay before me. The good missionary has lived in Central Asia for many years. He was familiar with all that had been taken out by Sven Hedin and Stein, and with all the other antiquarian odds and ends sold to the British or Russian officials at Kashgar for the benefit of their respective governments. As there is no European within three hundred miles of Khotan, it was most fortunate that Father Hendricks had consented to journey with us thus far. Thank God, he did not share in the trials which came later when we had painfully climbed the Kuen Lun range to Tibet's cold and tragic heights.

It may seem strange that even in Khotan one must be on guard against forgeries in ancient manuscripts. Yet Dr. Stein, by close cross-questioning, forced confession from a clever native, who for several years, and until 1901, fed the Aksakols, and through them the great museums in London and St. Petersburg, with mysterious bits of yellow paper over which the wise men vainly studied. They were patently puzzled, and, at last, made suspicious by the fact that a number of different alphabets, all unknown, were represented in these cabalistic writings. Now, alphabets are generally less numerous than languages, and when Dr. Stein, fresh from his own personal unearthings, saw that the genuine manuscript showed no letters similar to those that had been coming from this industrious forger, he was able to confound him and turn him over to the mandarin for punishment.

The true manuscripts are hard enough for the paleographers, since they seem to contain, in separate pieces, three distinct languages—one Sanskrit, one a language simply called Central Asian, and Prof. Hoerle, to whom I showed the bundle bought by me, says a third language, not yet deciphered, also appears in some of the fragments.

Whether all the leaves in the manuscript as handed to me had been taken from the same site, Father Hendricks could not learn. Those in Sanskrit

are almost wholly Buddhist sacred literature, and they constitute the bulk of the whole. Their approximate date is 750 A. D. The other fragments have not yet been studied sufficiently to fix a date.

Prof. Hoerle, in the short afternoon which we spent together at Oxford, was able to determine only this piece—that they seemed to contain a contract for agricultural materials. I hope some of our scholars may be interested to probe deeper. Dr. Hoerle was good enough to say that he would be glad to correspond with any one desiring the aid of his work, which stands almost alone in this field. As it is not probable that other examples of these finds will be seen in this country for some time, I have placed these temporarily in the Smithsonian Institute, with request that they be made available, as far as possible, to any inquiring paleographer.

In the ruins known as the Niya River Site, Dr. Stein found wooden tablets covered with what is known as Indian Kharosthi writing. Concerning this find, Dr. Stein says:

Deserted Many Centuries Ago
"There is ample evidence to show that this remarkable site must have been deserted already within the first few centuries of our era. Apart from the Kharosthi writings of the tablets and the leather documents, there is the eloquent testimony of the coins. The very numerous finds, extending over the whole area, include only copper pieces of the Chinese Han dynasty, whose reign came to a close in A. D. 220. The use of wood as the only writing material apart from leather is also a proof of great antiquity. The use of paper for writing purposes is attested in Chinese Turkestan from at least the fourth century, A. D., onwards, yet among all the ruined houses and ancient rubbish heaps not the smallest scrap of paper was discovered."

Sven Hedin also found a site in which the wooden tablets were numerous, and the evidence generally pointed to destruction about 350 A. D. As said above, the date suggested by my Sanskrit leaves is much later—say A. D. 750—and Dr. Stein gives approximately the same date of destruction for some of the sites examined by him. The older ruins are, gener-

PAPER MANUSCRIPTS So Old That Only the Profoundest Students of Antique Writing Can Read Them

ally speaking, further from Khotan, further from the snow-capped mountains than the later examples. The discoveries thus far made indicate, therefore, that during a period of about four hundred years there was a progressive diminishment of the habitable area. It is ever shrinking toward the sources of the streams, which find it ever more difficult to fix a constant course across the wind-swept sands. Thus we see the desert as destroyer—the desert as preserver, but as preserver only of the empty husks of that life which for a season was permitted to flourish.

These fatal movements, however, were not cataclysmic. There is no reason to suppose that our forgotten brethren of the destroyed oases were smothered instantly as were those of Pompeii or Martinique. There was time to starve through many years, perhaps, until, hopeless, they abandoned home and farm to seek some friendlier spot where they might meekly support their diminished numbers.

Some unconsidered trifles they left

behind, to be folded in the warm bosom of the sand while the centuries moved on. These we now cherish as mementoes of that drama, intimate to each one of us—the drama of human life and death.

The photograph marked No. 1 is of a fragment of a leaf from a volume of Buddhist sacred literature. The full length of the page must have been about twelve inches, as is shown by placing the various fragments together. The circular hole shown was at about three inches from the end, and a cord to hold the pages in order passed through it.

No. 6 is another fragment similar to No. 1, and No. 2 is a wider leaf than those two. No. 4 shows writing which is not in Sanskrit; it is in some unknown tongue. These fragments are probably the oldest known examples of paper manuscript.

No. 3 is a photograph of wood carving probably twelve centuries old, and No. 5 shows some clay figures found in the sand-buried cities.



Oscar T. Crosby.

Mr. Oscar T. Crosby, to whom belongs the distinction of first bringing to America fragments of manuscripts from the ancient, sand-buried cities in the Taklamakan desert of Chinese Turkestan, is a resident of Washington, D. C.

Mr. Crosby and Captain Anginian, his companion, are the only white men who have ever penetrated into northwestern Tibet, and their explorations have placed towns, mountains and rivers on what was formerly a blank space on the map. Mr. Crosby was the first white man to visit the Central Asian city of Khotan.

But Mr. Crosby's explorations have not been confined to Central Asia. He was the first American to cross the Abyssinian plateau to the Nile country, and he added much to the world's geographical knowledge of that region. He has also added geographical accuracy to the maps of Somaliland and the Sudan. In Alaska and Mexico, too, he has made extended explorations. He is a graduate of West Point, having entered from Mississippi, but he gave up an army commission to become an electrical engineer.

RIDER HAGGARD'S NEW REPUTATION

Rider Haggard is now winning a new reputation in England as a leading authority on the British agricultural problem. He has devoted himself for years to the task of finding out why the country people are drifting to the towns and what measures should be taken to arrest that drift. He has been traveling through the highways and byways of no fewer than twenty-seven English counties, cross-questioning on the subject everybody whom he has met—laborer, farmer, squire, parson and tradesman. The result of his inquiries is amazing, and his articles on the subject are causing almost a feeling of consternation throughout Great Britain.

"Parts of England are becoming as lonesome as the veldts of South Africa," he says. "The villages are being deserted at an ever increasing speed. The yeoman class has been virtually wiped out. The laborers are flocking to the towns in thousands, every year shows more land laid down to grass, and the country receives five-sixths of its food from abroad. All the farms and other agricultural enterprises are paralyzed by lack of labor. Only the dulleards, the vicians and the wastrels stay upon the land, because they are unfitted for any other life. What little labor there is to be had is incredibly inefficient."

THE ANCIENT LAWRENCE FAMILY

BY ELEANOR LEXINGTON.

THE name Lawrence goes back to the beginning of things.

As Apollo was the god of poets, the laurel or laurea Apollinaris, which was sacred to him and sprang from a shoot sent from heaven, was the wreath with which to crown a poet, who became the poet laureate. Was the first to bear the name Laurens, Laurence or Lawrence, the successor of Apollo, the poet laureate? Or was he a resident of that ancient Italian city Laurentium?

The first of the name of whom there is any authentic record was St. Laurence, or Laurentius, who suffered martyrdom by being broiled on a gridiron, August 10, 258.

The first of the name in England was Laurence the Monk, who became Archbishop of Canterbury. So worthily did founders of the family bear the name that the hero of one Crusade was Robert Laurens of Ashton Hall, who was knighted for his valor and given arms, a cross raguly.

Another "worthy" was Sir Henry Lawrence, Viceroy of India, "one of the noblest men of all time," to whose memory a statue was erected in St. Paul's Cathedral. His brother, Lord John Lawrence, who succeeded him as Viceroy, also gave his life to advancing the interest of Great Britain in the East. His success in diplomatic life he attributed to advice given by his mother: "Don't be too ready to speak your mind."

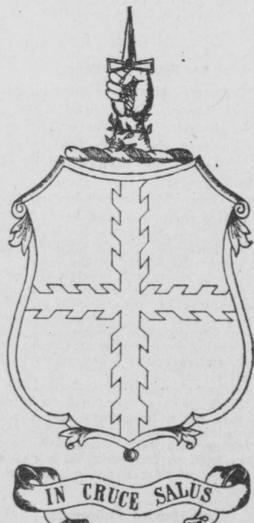
He was shot. After a few months' service he obtained leave of absence and returned home to Grotton to marry his sweetheart, Susanna Parker, to whom he had been engaged for two years. It was his mother who proposed the marriage at this time. "Susanna had better be Sam's widow than his forlorn damsel," she said.

While the marriage ceremony was in progress, the fire alarm bells sounded, summoning all soldiers to arms, whereupon the bridegroom parted from his bride at the church door and marched to join the troops.

The Lawrence arms are a cross raguled gules. Crest, out of an Eastern crown, or a cubit arm entwined by a wreath of laurel, in the hand a dagger. Motto: "In Cruce Salus." ("In the cross is salvation.") These were the arms granted to the Crusader.

Raguled, or raguly, is a term used to represent the rough-hewn stems of a tree, from which the branches have been rudely lopped.

always anxious to show off the infant prodigy, used to ask callers whether they would like to have the boy recite from the poets or paint their portraits. With the frankness of youth the young artist told one of his sitters that he must paint her in



Saraffoff's Turkish Friends.

The De Wet of Macedonia is Boris Saraffoff. He is the hero of countless stories of daring escapes, punishment of Turkish outrages, and desperate fights. Each story illustrates the depravity of Turkish character.

But from England comes one story that rather offsets some of the others. A friend of Saraffoff in London received a letter from him some time ago in which he tells of one of his escapes wherein he was aided by a Turk, and which likewise shows that many Mohammedans are in secret sympathy with the Macedonian cause.

The Turks had me cut off from the mountains," says the letter, "and to have gone the other way would have meant encountering the bashi bazouks. I saw the light of a house and took my chances with it. A Turk opened the door and gave me entrance. He invited me to eat with his family. The bashi bazouks came and demanded admittance.

"This man is a Turk and my friend" said my host, and, apparently satisfied, the bashi bazouks went away. "I spent the night there, and next morning early I bade the Turk and his family good-by. I felt certain he really thought me a Turk, until, at parting, he reached out his hand and said: "Good-by, Boris Saraffoff."

Turkish Cossacks.
Russia is not the only country whose battles are fought by Cossacks. Turkey, too, has her share of these fighters, and, as with Russia, they are her best and most cruel soldiers.

In Turkey they are called "Chirkasses." Their outrages on the Christian peasants of Bulgaria, when brought to light by the American war correspondent, MacGahan, caused the Russo-Turkish War. Since then they have not been so much in evidence, being used in Turkey's Asiatic provinces.

Some Straight Tips.
Some of the straight tips we get in this world couldn't be told from the straightness that is proverbially supposed to belong to a gunstock.

WHAT THE DIE MACHINE CAN DO

A few days ago a young man with a love for making bets stepped into a design-cutting plant.

"I'll bet you a dinner," he said to a friend who had charge of the die-cutting machines, "that you can't reproduce that on steel with one of your machines and make it one-quarter the size it is now." He picked up a bronze campaign medal about two inches in diameter. The medal was one of many varieties seen at the time of the last Presidential campaign. It contained etched and in relief around the outer border the busts and heads of all the Presidents of the United States. In the center was the engraved representation of the bust of President McKinley.

The medal was fastened on the machine, the wheels were set revolving, and in about eight hours of actual grinding the medal had been reproduced on a steel die less than one-eighth of an inch in diameter. It was so small that the design on it could not be distinguished without the aid of a powerful microscope; but under the lens the heads and expressions on the faces were seen to be perfect reproductions of the designs on the original medal.

All the big silverware manufacturers now make their designs by these machines. A set of toilet articles richly backed with silver decorations in high relief gets its beauty from the freedom with which the designer is allowed to work by reason of the die machines. Hand mirror backs, match safes, silver pen knife handles and a great variety of other relief-stamped silverware is made from a die turned out by machinery.

A remarkable story is told about the work of the die machine in bringing the bronze and metal reliefs of the Seal of New York State up to its present high standard of beauty, grace and art. A young man who was employed as traveling salesman for a large silverware concern came in from the road one day, kicking strenuously about some of the designs in his sample case.

"See here," he said to the head of the house, "this is supposed to be a reproduction of the Seal of New York State." He held up a silver die about four inches in diameter, mounted in a dark stained like a seal to be called one. Look at these lines—stiff, cramped, ugly. I can't sell pugdy designs like that."

"Well, what are we going to do?" asked the head of the house.

"Do?" replied the salesman. "Why, make the die by the reducing machine. Get the seal made in a large bronze casting and reduce it to a small die on the machine."

They did it. They have been doing it ever since. Other houses took up the idea. Gradually the cramped, stiff designs began to disappear from the market. They had to be made by them. Thus the Seal of the State of New York as it now appears in the majority of metal decorations is one of the best executed and handsomest seals of any State in the Union.

A Strange Accident.
Some time ago a man fell dead in a crowded street of San Francisco. The hospital surgeons were astonished to find that he had died of what appeared to be a bullet wound in his temple. A hundred people who witnessed the accident were ready to testify that no firearm had been discharged at the time.

An examination exposed a small pebble in the man's brain. For a long time the case was a mystery, until an ingenious detective solved it with an explanation which he proved by experiment. The wheels of a heavy dray had jammed the pebble against the steel rails of the car track, and then discharged it up into the air with such terrific force that it crashed into the brain of the passer-by as if it had been a bullet.

True Bravery.
"I didn't know that you had the ability to write poetry," said "I haven't, but I have a great deal of courage."