

Collecting Aurel Stein

Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences



R. Eden Martin

Bookies have at least three reasons to be interested in M. Aurel Stein, the great explorer and archaeologist of Central Asia. The first is that he led a fascinating life and wrote about his explorations and discoveries in a lively style. A second is that his books were beautifully illustrated and bound; they are fine examples of the craftsmanship of making books. The third and perhaps most important is that he discovered manuscripts and “books” written in unknown languages and scripts, and uncovered the remains of urban centers and cultures that had been lost for centuries. He found writings on paper earlier than any other such writings then known. And he discovered the earliest known printed book – almost 600 years before Gutenberg’s great Bible.

I have a particularly warm interest in Stein because his popular account of his first Silk Road expedition was one of the first “collectible” books I ever acquired. A little over four



Plate from Stein’s *The Thousand Buddhas* published by Quaritch in 1921.

decades ago, I wandered into a Boston bookstore, Edward Morrill & Son, located at that time on Kingston Street around the corner from Sumner. It was operated by Samuel Morrill, son of the original proprietor. Mr. Morrill was very kind to this young, indigent lawyer, and quite willing to talk about the books in his shop. As I was gliding sideways along a wall of shelves, I noticed a book by M.A. Stein entitled *Sand Buried Ruins of Khotan*, 1904. I had been reading a modern book about archaeologists, and the subject of one of the chapters was M.A. Stein, the explorer of Central Asia, who had found the remains of desert settlements along the track of the old Silk Road. Among these remains he had found fragments of writing saved by the dry climate. Stein sounded like a fascinating character, and here was one of his first books, albeit in the “cheaper edition.” Mr. Morrill

explained that Stein’s books were in high demand and that he only rarely saw them. That was enough to get me started.

Marc Aurel Stein was born November 26, 1862, into a Jewish family living on the Pest side of the Danube River (opposite Buda) in Hungary, then part of the Austrian Empire. His parents named him after the Roman Emperor but gave him the French version of the name. Throughout his life he was known as Aurel (pronounced “Owrel”), and in print as “M.A.” Stein. His parents caused Aurel and his brother before him to be baptized in the Lutheran Church for reasons that need not be explained to anyone who has read even a little of the history of Europe in the 19th Century (or, for that matter, the 20th).¹

Aurel’s father was an unsuccessful business-
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man, but his mother was a member of a prosperous family by the name of Hirschler. His mother's brother, Ignaz Hirschler, was well educated and connected; and he would become a major influence in the life of his nephew Aurel.

Aurel's schooling began at a local elementary school and continued at a Gymnasium run by a Catholic order. There he studied not only the Hungarian and German languages and literature, but also the classics – Latin and Greek – as well as math and history. After two years with the Catholics, Aurel in 1873 (age 10) was sent away from home – to a Lutheran school in Dresden – where he polished his German.

Small pebbles often create large ripples in a life. One of these events occurred in the life of young Aurel when in Dresden one of his teachers gave him a copy of *The Campaigns of Alexander* by Arrian. From that moment, according to his biographer Annabel Walker, Aurel "began to read of the great Macedonian conqueror and his exploits in the East, [and] he was gripped by a fascination that lasted all his life and inspired many of his happiest excursions into the mountains and deserts of Asia."² Recognizing it as more than just the story of Alexander's battles, he became interested in what had happened to the Greeks – and to Greek culture – as Alexander's army penetrated into Afghanistan, then Turkestan, and eventually into India.

In 1877 his family arranged for Aurel to return to Budapest and the Lutheran Gymnasium. The Stein family lived near the new Academy of Sciences, with its outstanding library. Aurel was introduced to the librarians and became a regular visitor. Aurel wrote later: "Many pleasant memories of my youth are connected with the fine library of the Academy. Apart from the paternal home, I spent my happiest hours there, and it was there that I began my studies to become an Orientalist taking pains to learn the Sanskrit grammar, etc."³ Though Sanskrit was then known to be related to the classical languages, Aurel's biographer thinks his interest in Asian languages may have been stimulated by the general interest at the time in the origins of the Hungarians and their non-Indo-European language.⁴

In 1879 Aurel (not yet 17) commenced his undergraduate studies in philology at the University in Vienna. Two years later he moved to Leipzig to study with George Buhler, an authority on Indian palaeography and languages. During this period he travelled several times to the Alps where he began rock wall climbing – a skill that would later turn out to be useful. After a year in Leipzig, Aurel moved to Tübingen to study the Vedic period – the first millennium of Aryan occupation of India.

Stein received his doctoral degree in 1883 (age 20) from Tübingen. He then spent two years in

England, at Oxford and the British Museum, studying the Oriental collections and writing early papers on Iranian geography and Indo-Scythian coins.⁵ During this period, he improved his knowledge of English; but more important, he began to develop his life-long affinity for English people and for the style of English life. Also, the fact that opportunities for Indian scholarship were greater in England than in Hungary must have become increasingly apparent.

But scholarship had to give way for a year to compulsory military service in Budapest, which Aurel commenced in 1885 (age 22). One of the more civilized ways to perform this service was to learn surveying and mapmaking – skills which (like rock-climbing) would later turn out to be useful in ways that could not earlier have been foreseen.

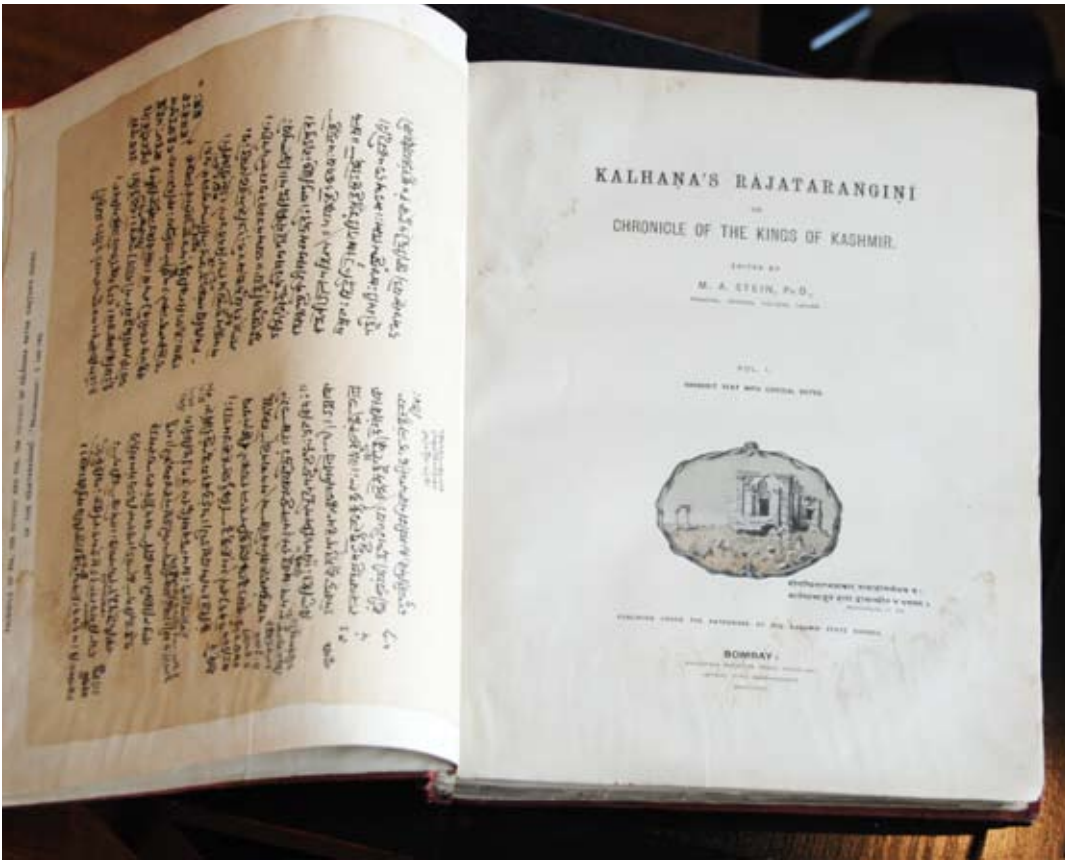
Back in England in 1886, Aurel divided his time between London and Cambridge, studied manuscripts, and attended lectures at the Royal Asiatic Society. Finally in 1887 the prospect of an academic position presented itself: that of Registrar at Punjab University, along with that of principal of the Oriental College in Lahore. It offered him a chance to study in India. In any event, he had no other offers and was running out of funds. He sailed for India in November 1887, just a few days shy of his 25th birthday.

The history of India starts (at least for present purposes) with the movement into India of Indo-European speaking peoples in the second millennium B.C. and the subsequent development of the Vedic civilization that was the foundation of Hinduism. Vedic Sanskrit is thought to be the earliest Indo-Aryan language. Buddhism took root in India in the 6th century B.C., and by the 3rd century B.C. was spreading both west and east of its original homeland.

West-bound Buddhists collided with east-bound Greeks. Alexander and his armies made it as far as India in 326 B.C.. Bactrians (from what is now northern Afghanistan), including descendants of Alexander's army, again penetrated into northwestern India in the 2nd century B.C..

Stein's linguistic and archaeological interests, which had started with his childhood interest in Alexander, centered initially on the conjunction of these civilizations and cultures in the area sometimes referred to as Gandhara – the name of the ancient kingdom which thrived during the first five centuries A.D. under Buddhist kings in northwest India. So-called "Gandharan art" blended the traditions and techniques of the Buddhists and the Greeks.

After his ship arrived in early 1888, it took Aurel three days by train to reach Lahore, capital of the Punjab, north of Delhi, an area now part of Pakistan. To the north lay Kashmir, where Stein hoped to find



The Bombay 1892 edition of *The Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir*.

an early manuscript copy of a unique Sanskrit manuscript, known as *Rajatarangini*, *The Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir*, by Kalhana, a 12th-century poet. Unlike other Sanskrit texts written for religious purposes, the *Rajatarangini* set forth an account of the history of Kashmir from the earliest times to the 12th century. By the late 19th century, several manuscript versions had been located, but they all seemed to trace back to a single source document, written in an early script. The later copies had been made by uninformed copyists who did not understand the script, and thus contained many obvious mistakes. A decade earlier, a European scholar had managed to establish the whereabouts of the early, unique version, but had been allowed only to see it – not to inspect or study it.

Aurel promptly arranged to spend his first summer vacation in Kashmir. In the summer of 1888 he traveled by train and then by boat to Srinagar. It did not take him long to meet Hindu scholars and family heads, from whom he learned that the owner of the ancient text had died and that the document had been divided into three parts among his three heirs. However, none of them would allow him to inspect their portion. He succeeded only in reviewing the Sanskrit manuscripts in the library of the Maharaja of Kashmir, which led to his eventual editing and publication of a catalogue of the library in 1894.

Aurel returned to his work in Lahore, but he did not give up his interest in the rare manuscript. Through what now seems extraordinarily good luck, one of his pupils in Lahore was the son of an important Kashmiri pandit and member of the state council. Through his influence, Stein was able to borrow the three sections of Kalhana's original Chronicle. He worked on it for three years, and then published his first book – the Sanskrit text, with Stein's critical notes, of *Kalhana's Rajatarangini*, or *Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir*.⁶ The two volume version, including Stein's English translation, was published in London in 1900.

My copy of the Bombay 1892 edition bears an inscription by Stein to two of his colleagues.

Stein's interest in Buddhism led him to a book written by Hsuan-tsang, a seventh-century Chinese Buddhist monk who had travelled east through Central Asia to India to visit the land where Buddhism had originated and to collect and study texts of Buddhist teachings. Hsuan-tsang's book was a remarkably detailed description of the country and Buddhist centers through which the Chinese monk had passed, and provided Stein with the best topographical information about the Taklamakan desert to the north of India – the land of the Silk Road, connecting China and the civilizations of the Mediterranean. It

occurred to Aurel that perhaps the best way to study these ancient Buddhist centers would be to reverse Hsuan-tsang's tracks and travel west-to-east through the desert – just as Hsuan-tsang had reversed the tracks of his predecessors who had brought Buddhism to China.

Stein initially divided his time between his duties in Lahore, the summers on Mohand Marg, an alpine grazing area high in Kashmir, and planning for an excursion into the land of the Silk Road. He was drawn to the Silk Road territory in part by discoveries that had only recently come to light. This fascinating story is told by Peter Hopkirk, who called it "the great manuscript race."⁷ A Scottish traveler along the Silk Road had heard of manuscripts on birch-bark leaves, which he

managed to buy and send to Calcutta in 1890. They were eventually deciphered and turned out to be written in Sanskrit during the 5th century A.D. – which made them "one of the oldest written works to survive anywhere."⁸ Their publication in 1899 (along with other manuscripts that were modern forgeries) set off the race to explore Chinese Turkestan – including the area of the Taklamakan.

Sven Hedin, a young Swedish explorer who was the first to penetrate it, called the Taklamakan "the worst and most dangerous desert in the world."⁹ Over his career he published some fifty books, many for popular audiences. (I remember reading one of Hedin's popular works as a teenager, during the 1950's.) Hedin's first real expedition across Chinese Central Asia took place in the spring and summer of 1895, and it almost killed him. During this and subsequent trips, he found the ruins of abandoned cities and brought back assorted antiquities – including terracotta figures, coins and manuscripts. In one of these cities, the Chinese garrison town of Lou-lan, he unearthed scraps of ancient paper and wood fragments bearing Chinese writing dating from the third century.¹⁰

Aurel Stein carefully studied Hedin's book, *Through Asia*,¹¹ and decided to seek financial support and government permission for an expedition into the northern desert. He had

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the right background – the right linguistic training, and first-hand knowledge of the history and art of northwest India, from which Buddhism had traveled along the Silk Road to China. Because of his military training, he also knew how to do surveying. A little lobbying with the new Viceroy, Lord Curzon, may have helped him obtain the necessary clearances.¹²

In May 1900 Stein left on the first of his three great Silk Road expeditions for Khotan – an ancient oasis city on the southern track through the Taklamakan desert.

He later described the region in these words:

[It] comprises those vast basins, elevated and drainageless, which extend from east to west almost halfway across the central belt of Asia. Their longitudinal rim is well defined by the big rampart of the Tien Shan, the 'Celestial Mountains,' in the north and the snowy Kunlun ranges in the south which divide those basins from Tibet. The eastern borders of the region may be placed where the Nan Shan, itself a continuation of the Kunlun, forms the watershed towards the drainage area of the Pacific Ocean. In the west it abuts on the mighty mountain mass of the Pamirs, the Imaos of the ancients, which joins the Tien Shan to the Hindu Kush and on its western flanks gives rise to the headwaters of the Oxus.¹³

Stein set out on foot from Srinagar, in Kashmir, with a small group that included a surveyor assistant and a cook. His route took him through Gilgit, across the Korakoram range to Kashgar, and then – after the summer had waned – to Khotan – where some of the manuscripts of questionable legitimacy had recently turned up. The story of this expedition is set forth in *Sand-Buried Ruins of Khotan*.

In Khotan Stein met an old treasure hunter who told him about a site called Dandan-ulik, several days out into the heart of the desert – visited earlier by Hedin, who had not had the time or means to excavate it carefully. By now it was December 1900, and temperatures in the desert fell below zero. It took Stein and his supporting cast 11 days to reach the remains of the ancient town. With little time to lose, they started excavations immediately. As one of his biographers later wrote:

Dandan-ulik was the classroom where Stein learned the grammar of the ancient sand-buried shrines and houses: their typical



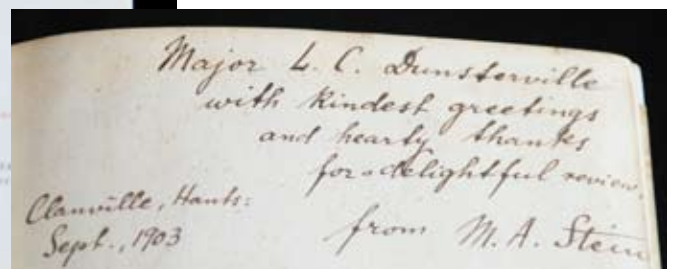
The routes Stein travelled in central Asia.

ground plans, construction, and ornamentation, their art and something of their cultic practices. He also used it as a laboratory in which to find the techniques best suited to excavating ruins covered by sands as fluid as water....¹⁴

It was not long before one of his workers found a leaf of paper bearing words in a non-Indian language as well as 8th century

Chinese copper coins.¹⁵ Shortly after, others found manuscript Sanskrit texts of Buddhist books, some dating back to the 5th century.¹⁶ On Christmas day, other documents were found, this time in ancient Chinese script. Some of these dated back to 782.

In early January 1901, Stein left Dandan-ulik for Niya, another ruined city eastward on the old Silk Road. By the end of the first day of excavations, he had found approximately 100 inscribed wooden tablets containing texts in Kharosthi, an ancient Indian script used during the first three centuries A.D. A few days later he uncovered what turned out to be a rubbish heap, with layers of inscribed wooden tablets and some 20-plus Kharosthi documents on leather. Seals on the wooden tablets depicted Greek deities. These documents, many of which were not translated for decades, constituted a rich collection of reports and administrative documents reflect-



The title page of the first edition of *Sand-Buried Ruins*, with Stein's inscription.

ing day-to-day life in the 3rd century.

February 1901 found Stein still farther east, excavating the remains of a Buddhist temple on the Endere river, where he discovered the oldest known specimens of Tibetan writing. He quickly scratched the surfaces of a few more spots before ending his first expedition in April 1901. On his way back to India, he stopped again in Khotan, where he did enough scholarly detective work to confirm that a batch of supposed early block-printed “books” in an unknown script had been forged by a Khotanese con man. These had deceived a great Orientalist, Rudolph Hoernle, then living in England. One of Stein’s first tasks when he went back to England was to visit Hoernle and gently lay out the evidence that he had been victimized.¹⁷

Stein soon decided that he should prepare two books describing his first expedition – a “personal narrative” for general distribution, and a more detailed work for a scholarly audience. The first of these, *Sand-Buried Ruins of Khotan*,¹⁸ appeared two years after his return. Aurel dedicated it to the memory of his brother. Of the 750 copies printed, about 500 were sold almost immediately. Stein recovered the publishing rights by “buying the printing blocks from the publishers for 24 pounds, and arranged for another firm to publish a cheaper edition” which appeared in 1904.¹⁹ (It was a copy of that “cheaper” edition that got me started on Stein.) Years later I acquired a presentation copy of the first edition, which has a slightly nicer binding. The scholarly book took longer to prepare and did not appear until 1907. It included a compendium of references from ancient sources to the places Stein had visited along the Silk Road, as well as a detailed description of what he had found. The work also included reports contributed by other scholars. It was published as *Ancient Khotan*.²⁰

Back in India in 1904, Stein allocated his time among his official responsibilities as Inspector-General of education in the North-West province and part-time Archaeological Superintendent of activities in the region, his work on the two Khotan books, and planning his next foray into Tibet or Chinese Turkestan. He also had to work out arrangements for dividing up his archaeological and manuscript finds between his sponsors – the British Museum, and the museums in Lahore and Calcutta. Failing to get needed permission to travel in Tibet, he worked on getting permission and financing for another assault on the Taklamakan. While these plans were

underway, Aurel completed the requirements for English citizenship and was sworn in as a British subject.²¹

In the spring of 1905, Stein received word that he could return to the Silk Road and that his work would be financed by the British Museum and the government of India. There was little time to delay for word was circulating that scholars from Germany, France and Russia were planning expeditions.

Stein started out on his second journey in April 1906 (at age 43) on a different route from India – over the “Pamir Knot,” cutting across the eastern corner of Afghanistan. He took with him the surveyor from his first trip, a cook, and a small party of baggage handlers. His principal objective was Lou-Lan – hundreds of miles northeast of Khotan, the site of an ancient town in the Lop desert to the east of the Taklamakan. Hedin had visited there in 1900 and 1901, and had found beautifully carved wooden boards and a variety of manuscripts, and had disclosed these discoveries in one of his books, published in 1903. From Lou-Lan, Stein planned to travel even further east – to the Buddhist oasis site, Dun-huang, in the northwest frontier of China, where it was rumored a great cache of ancient manuscripts had recently been discovered in one of the cave grottos.

Stein’s caravan consisted of his own party of baggage handlers, local guides, and hired local laborers – along with 25 camels, each of which could carry up to 500 pounds of ice, the only source of water in parts of the desert. During the rest stops along the way, Stein worked at editing the page proofs of *Ancient Khotan*, sending them off in batches via the Russian rail system.²²

They crossed the Lop desert and on December 17, 1906, reached the deserted site of Lou-Lan, a Chinese garrison town. The terrain was difficult, and the soles of the camels’ feet were so badly cut that one of Stein’s men had to sew ox-hide soles to their footpads. The trip turned out to be worth it – from Stein’s viewpoint, if not that of the camels. Within the first 10 days, his men turned up fragments of antiquity – “spoons, beads...fragments of lacquered ware, buckles and bronze mirrors, woollen slippers and what proved to be the earliest known piece of woollen pile carpet.”²³

Of even greater interest, the men found Chinese documents on wood and paper. They also unearthed tablets with the Kharosthi writing of northwest India, and a strip of silk bearing similar writing – the first proof that the Chinese had used silk as a writing material. Another important discovery was a scrap

of paper bearing an unknown script – the first example of “the lost language of Sogdiana, the region of Samarkand and Bokhara.”²⁴

Stein left Lou-Lan at the end of the December, stopping at a ruined Tibetan fort called Miran, where his men dug into ancient trash heaps, turning up papers written in the 8th and 9th centuries, as well as wall paintings and stucco figures dating back to the 3rd century.

The main target was still before him: Dun-huang, 380 miles to the east. On the way, he passed “ruined watch towers” in the desert, where he collected records on wood – later found to date from the first century A.D., the “oldest Chinese documents yet known.” He also found letters written on the “earliest known example of rag paper.”²⁵

After a grueling trip, he arrived at Dun-huang on March 12, 1907. About 12 miles to the southeast of the town were located the caves or grottos cut out of the face of the cliffs by Buddhist monks between the fourth and 14th centuries. Well before the end of that long period, the importance of the Silk Road site had begun to fade with the development of faster and safer sea routes and the conversion of Western China from Buddhism to Islam.

As Brook Larmer recently described Dun-huang in the June 2010 *National Geographic* article:²⁶

[T]his isolated sliver of conglomerate rock is now recognized as one of the greatest repositories of Buddhist art in the world.... Their murals, sculptures, and scrolls also offer an unparalleled glimpse into the multicultural society that thrived for a thousand years along the once mighty corridor between East and West.

The complex included at one time “almost 800 caves chiseled into the cliff face, 492... decorated with exquisite murals that cover nearly half a million square feet of wall space, some 40 times the expanse of the Sistine Chapel [and] ...adorned with more than 2,000 sculptures...”²⁷ These were accompanied by some 1,000 paintings on silk and paper. Stein knew from the Chinese sources that the area had been a place of pilgrimage since the fourth century, and that the larger shrines in the caves dated from the 7th to the 10th centuries.²⁸ The artistic and cultural value of these findings was magnified by the fact that Buddhism had been officially outlawed in China in the mid-9th century, so much of Buddhist art had been destroyed.²⁹

Stein’s scholarly appetite was most whetted
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by the rumors that a secret hoard of manuscripts had been found in one of the caves. A Taoist priest named Wang Yuanlu was the guardian of the caves and the rumored discoverer of the manuscripts. In his personal narrative, *Ruins of Desert Cathay*,³⁰ Stein told the story of how the manuscripts had initially been discovered. In June 1900, workmen engaged by Wang were clearing away one of the caves. In the course of that work, Wang tapped on a wall and thought it sounded hollow. So he broke through the wall and discovered a small door which led to a hidden chamber, about 5 feet high and 8 feet wide. When light was brought in, Wang was confronted with a pile of documents, manuscripts, banners, statues and other artifacts. It appeared from the frescoes that the room had been decorated in the 9th century or earlier, and that the room had been sealed perhaps in the 11th century. Thus, it had remained closed off for perhaps 900 years or more.³¹

Stein's next step was to obtain access to the manuscripts for himself³² :

It was useless to disguise the fact from myself: what had kept my heart buoyant for months, and was now drawing me back with the strength of a hidden magnet, were hopes of another and more substantial kind. Their goal was that great hidden deposit of ancient manuscripts which a Taoist monk had accidentally discovered about two years earlier while restoring one of the temples. I knew that the deposit was still jealously guarded in the walled-up side chapel where it had been originally discovered....

On my former visit I had found the narrow opening of the recess, locked with a rough wooden door; but now to my dismay it was completely walled up with brickwork.... The saintly guardian of the reputed treasure explained that the walling up of the door was intended for a precaution against the curiosity of the pilgrims who had recently flocked to the site in their thousands.

Stein learned that the manuscript find had been reported to the Chinese authorities, who initially wanted the collection moved elsewhere for safekeeping. But when they found out how much it would cost, they had backed off:

[O]fficialdom had rested satisfied with the rough statement that the whole of the manuscripts would make up about seven cartloads,

and evidently dismayed at the cost of transport, or even of close examination, had left the whole undisturbed in charge of the Taoist as guardian of the temple.

Stein was afraid that any offer of a bribe would backfire. So he told the priest in his "poor Chinese" about his devotion to the memory of his "Chinese patron saint," Hsuan-tsang, the early traveler who had brought documents back from India. The priest responded – showing Stein wall decorations he had caused to be made showing the great pilgrim's adventures.

Late that evening, one of Stein's Chinese helpers brought back to Stein's tent a bundle of Chinese rolls which the priest had allowed him to take away. These turned out to be Chinese versions of Buddhist documents brought back from India and translated by Hsuan-tsang himself. The coincidence was astonishing, and was taken by the priest as a "quasi-divine hint." Trust was now established. The priest removed the wall blocking the entrance to the storeroom.

[The priest] now summoned up courage to open before me the rough door closing the narrow entrance which led from the side of the broad front passage into the rock-carved recess, on a level of about four feet above the floor of the former. The sight of the small room disclosed was one to make my eyes open wide. Heaped up in layers, but without any order, there appeared in the dim light of the priest's little lamp a solid mass of manuscript bundles rising to a height of nearly ten feet, and filling, as subsequent measurement showed, close on 500 cubic feet.

To clear out the bundles was impossible, so Stein contented himself with inspecting a bundle or two at a time. An inscription on the



ABOVE, the hidden chamber at Dun-huang where manuscripts were discovered. BELOW, the cache of manuscripts Stein negotiated to remove to Britain for study.

wall led Stein to conclude that the documents had been deposited there shortly after the middle of the 9th century.

The first bundles which emerged from that 'black hole' consisted of thick rolls of paper about one foot high, evidently containing portions of canonical Buddhist texts in Chinese translations. All were in excellent preservation and yet showed in paper, arrangement, and other details, unmistakable signs of great age.... All showed signs of having been much read and handled.... Mixed up with the Chinese bundles there came to light Tibetan texts also written in roll form....

I had reason to feel doubly elated when, on the reverse of a Chinese roll, I first lighted upon a text written in that cursive form of Indian Brahmi script with which the finds of ancient Buddhist texts at sites of the Khotan region had rendered me familiar. Here was indisputable proof that the bulk of the manuscripts deposited went back to the time when Indian writing and some knowledge of Sanskrit still prevailed in Central-Asian Buddhism.

The question now was whether the priest would allow Stein to remove materials from



The Buddhist Diamond Sutra – a scroll printed from woodblocks six hundred years before the Gutenberg Bible.

the cave for study in his tent. Stein did not ask – leaving the matter to the discretion of one of his Chinese helpers. His tactic proved successful:

It was late at night when I heard cautious footsteps. It was Chiang who had come to make sure that nobody was stirring about my tent. A little later he returned with a big bundle over his shoulders. It contained everything I had picked out during the day's work.

The same procedure was followed for the next seven nights.

By far the most important among such finds was a remarkably well preserved Sanskrit manuscript on palm leaves, some seventy in number, and no less than 20 inches long. The small but beautifully clear writing closely covering these leaves showed paleographical features which seemed to leave little doubt as to the manuscript going back to the 3rd or 4th century A.D. at the latest.

The most outstanding find of all was a copy of the Buddhist "Diamond Sutra" – a scroll printed in Chinese from woodblocks in 868 – six hundred years earlier than Gutenberg's great printed Bible.

Greatly delighted was I when I found that an excellently preserved roll with a well-designed block-printed picture as frontispiece, had its text printed throughout, showing a date of production corresponding to 860 A.D. Here was conclusive evidence that the art of printing books from wooden blocks was practiced long before the conventionally assumed time of its invention... and that already in the ninth century the technical level had been raised practically as high as the process permitted.³³

Today the scroll resides in the British Library.

Stein soon realized that the study of this monumental collection would take years. His focus was therefore on obtaining permission to remove as much of it as possible. The priest occasionally relapsed into nervousness, "though discreet treatment and judiciously administered doses of silver had so far succeeded in counteracting [his] relapses into timorous contrariness." Finally, the priest asked for a "substantial subscription" to his temple. He also insisted that Chinese sacred texts not be removed. Stein wanted to "rescue

the whole hoard," but the priest would not relent. As Stein later wrote, "[I]n the depth of my heart I could bear him no grudge for these scruples and recriminations, or even gainsay them."³⁴

Finally, they reached a deal.

He agreed to let me have fifty well-preserved bundles of Chinese text rolls and five of Tibetan ones, besides all my previous selections from the miscellaneous bundles. For all these acquisitions four horse-shoes of silver, equal to about Rs.500, passed into the priest's hands; and when I surveyed the archaeological value of all I could carry away for this sum, I had good reason to claim it as a bargain.³⁵

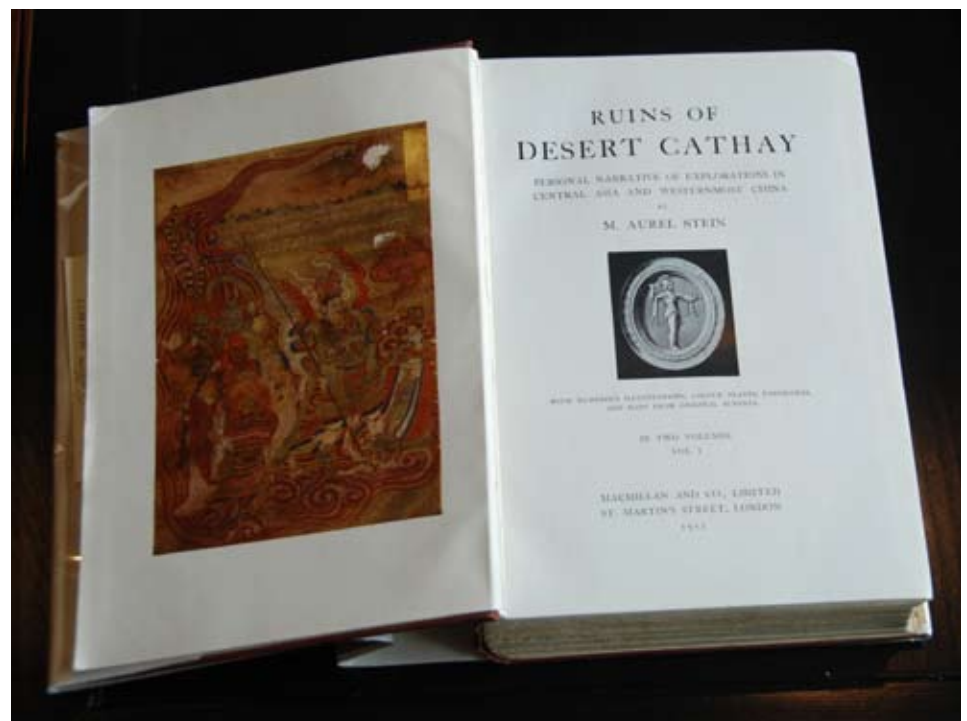
But my time for feeling true relief came when all the 24 cases, heavy with manuscript treasures rescued from that strange place of hiding, and the five more filled with paintings and other art relics from the same cave, had been deposited safely in the British Museum.³⁶

Including another 200 manuscript bundles which were a late addition, Stein left with seven camel-loads of material, for which he paid the then-equivalent of 130 pounds.³⁷

Decades later, when scholars in England and India were able to study the manuscript hoard, they found it included documents written in the following scripts: Chinese, Uighur, Sanskrit, Tibetan, Sogdian, Tangut, and archaic Runic-Turki. Some of the lan-

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Stein published his account of the Dun-huang expedition in *Ruins of Desert Cathay*.



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 guages were unknown. Most of the 7000 manuscripts and 6000 fragments were written in Chinese. Research suggested that the secret cave chamber containing the manuscripts had been closed around 1000 A.D. – perhaps to protect the texts from falling into the hands of barbarian tribes. From the vantage point of today’s Chinese people, the closing of the chamber nine hundred years earlier had simply delayed the disaster. A Chinese publication in 1961 described the Diamond Sutra as “the world’s earliest printed book... [which] was stolen over fifty years ago by the Englishman [Stein] which causes people to gnash their teeth in bitter hatred.”³⁸

Stein’s party left for home on June 14, 1907. His route first took him east – to Kan-chou, then back along the north rim of the Taklamakan desert, then south across the desert to Khotan on the south rim, and finally to India. During the last stage of the trip, in September 1908, high in the Kun-lun range, he suffered a serious case of frostbite and was forced to submit to the amputation of all the toes on his right foot. He hobbled into Lahore in November 1908, ending a trip that had lasted over two and one-half years. By late January 1909, he was back in England.

When word of his discoveries began to spread, public interest was enormous. Sir Leonard Woolley, the discoverer of Ur, called it “an unparalleled archaeological scoop.” The *Times Literary Supplement* described Stein’s achievement this way: “Few more wonderful discoveries have been made by any archaeologist.”³⁹ More recently, the *National Geographic* article described Stein’s find as “one of the richest hauls in the history of archaeology.”⁴⁰

Stein commenced writing the popular account of his trip in the fall of 1909 in Italy.



Another plate from *The Thousand Buddhas*.

It was eventually published in two volumes as *Ruins of Desert Cathay*,⁴¹ and consisted of over 100 pages of text, 350 photos, plates and maps. The more detailed scholarly report took twelve years – appearing finally in 1921 and consisting of five volumes, including a separate volume of plates and another of maps, and scholarly appendices contributed by other scholars. It was published as *Serindia*.⁴² I bought my set of *Serindia* from a New Hampshire book dealer in April 1977 for \$550 – about as much as I’d paid for any book up to that point. (Two copies are now [October 2011] listed for sale on Abe: one for \$84,000 and another for a more modest \$25,500.)

Also in 1921 appeared a separate work published by Bernard Quaritch, *The Thousand Buddhas*,⁴³ a folio of reproductions of the Buddhist paintings from the caves of Dun-

huang, with text by Stein and an introductory essay by Lawrence Binyon. Because of its rarity and size, collectible copies appear only infrequently.

Aurel Stein resumed his official duties in India in early 1912 as Superintendent of Archaeology in the North-West Frontier Province.⁴⁴ Efforts to obtain permission to travel in Afghanistan were unavailing, so he soon turned his attention to the possibility of another expedition to Turkestan. This, however, was complicated by the revolution which had begun in 1911 in Peking, as it was then known, with attendant hostility to foreigners. In November 1912, Aurel celebrated his 50th birthday. Finally, the needed approvals and financing were in place.

Stein’s third expedition began on July 31, 1913. By November he had reached Khotan on the southern branch of the Silk Road. He was back in Dun-huang in March 1914, where he reestablished his relationship with Wang, the

priest-guardian of the caves. In the meantime, Wang had been visited by the French explorer Pelliot, who had also managed to carry off manuscripts and paintings. Chinese authorities had been informed and had ordered Wang to send everything he had to the capital for safe-keeping. However, the authorities had not bothered to pay him anything for such service. Whether for this or other reasons, Wang had held back some of his treasures, and was willing to part with them for an appropriate contribution to the upkeep of the caves. Stein managed to talk him out of four more cases of manuscripts before he left in April 1914. Stein told about this transaction in his talk two years later to the Royal Geographical Society:

Of the careless and in reality destructive way in which the order [to transfer the library to



A shelf of Stein.

Peking] had been carried out I found evidence in the scattered rolls of Chinese Buddhist texts undoubtedly derived from this source which were offered to me for purchase at a number of towns in Turkestan and Kansu. So it was satisfactory to find that somehow a considerable quantity of Chinese manuscripts from the walled-up cells still remained behind...and that my old priestly friend, Wang Tao-shih, was prepared to part with them in regard for a proper compensation for his pious establishment. He showed me with genuine pride the good use to which he had put the sum previously received from me, by building some gaudy new shrines and com-

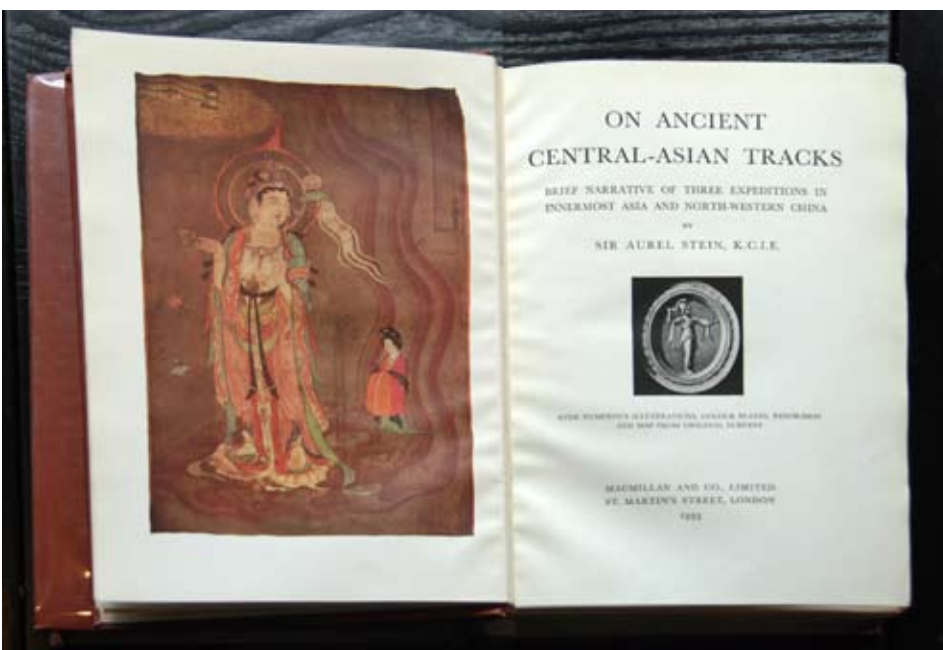
fortable pilgrims' quarters."⁴⁵

On his way to the northeast to visit the ruins of Khara-khoto in the Gobi desert, Stein was badly hurt in mid-July when his horse reared and fell backwards on him, crushing his left thigh.⁴⁶ This was, of course, only one month before the opening of the Great War. Alternating between being carried on a litter and hobbling on crutches, he managed to cross the Gobi from east to west, arriving eventually at Kashgar in May 1915, from which he made it to Bokhara, and from there by train to Iran. He did not return to India until February 1916 – having been away from home

2 years and 8 months, and having traveled 11,000 miles.⁴⁷

For this third expedition, Stein wrote only a scholarly report – *Innermost Asia*⁴⁸ – but no popular account in book form. However, he did read a long paper to the Royal Geographical Society in London, and it was published in *The Geographical Journal*, August-September 1916: "A Third Journey of Exploration in Central Asia, 1913-16." Fans of Stein who missed not having a non-technical book describing this third adventure would have been well advised to get the long journal article, which served the same purpose.

A shortened narrative of Stein's explorations appeared in *On Ancient Central-Asian Tracks* in 1935.



As Stein ended his third expedition, the Chinese authorities ordered that he stop any further archaeological work.⁴⁹ This was no doubt in part due to the rising nationalist sentiment, and in part to reports of Stein's removal of art and manuscript treasures from Dun-huang. An attempt many years later to carry out a fourth expedition to Chinese Turkestan had to be aborted following opposition from Chinese "cultural societies."⁵⁰ Whatever the combination of reasons, he was never able to return to the Silk Road sites of his great discoveries. He would have to turn his attentions elsewhere. In 1916 Aurel celebrated his 54th birthday, but despite his age and injuries, his appetite for exploration was far from exhausted.

Revived plans for a trip to Afghanistan fell through as that country had given France a monopoly on archaeological work within its boundaries.

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In 1926 he visited Swat – now northwest Pakistan – and visited the sites of ancient towns that Alexander had sacked 2200 years earlier, in 327 B.C. In the course of his travels and study, he believed he discovered the site of the rock of Aornos, where Alexander defeated a large Indian tribal force on his way to the Indus. This trip led to one of Stein's most readable books – *On Alexander's Track to the Indus*.⁵¹ (My copy is one Stein presented to Professor Edward Forbes "with kindest regards and in grateful remembrance." Forbes was a Harvard art professor and head of the Fogg Art Museum, which funded some of Stein's research and is now the repository of many Silk Road artifacts.)

During the late 1920's and early 1930's, Stein concentrated on other areas traveled by Alexander – principally the parts of India adjacent to Iran. These led to a series of scholarly monographs published by the Archaeological Survey of India.

In 1932 he made his first trip into Iran – Iranian Baluchistan and along the Persian Gulf – expeditions which led to publication of *Archaeological Reconnaissances in Northwest India and Southeast Iran*.⁵²

In late 1933 he was in Fars – ancient Persia. In 1935-36, he traveled in Khuzistan and Luristan and north-west into Iranian Kurdistan, a trip memorialized in *Old Routes of Western Iran*.⁵³

In 1937, as Stein approached his 75th birthday, he began planning an expedition into the deserts of Iraq and Jordan to examine the remains of the ancient defensive road system maintained by the Roman Empire. He was assisted in this by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. March 1938 found him in an open-cockpit RAF plane in flying suit and goggles flying at 100 m.p.h. over the ground separating the Tigris and the Euphrates, where the Roman border had been. For three months he divided his time between taking pictures from

the air and on-foot inspection of ancient fortified posts in the desert below; and this work continued into the early 1939. During these months, he traced the course of the Roman lines from the middle Tigris to the Gulf of Aqaba, and the Roman road from Aqaba toward Syria.⁵⁴ His manuscript describing this work was not published until 1985, and

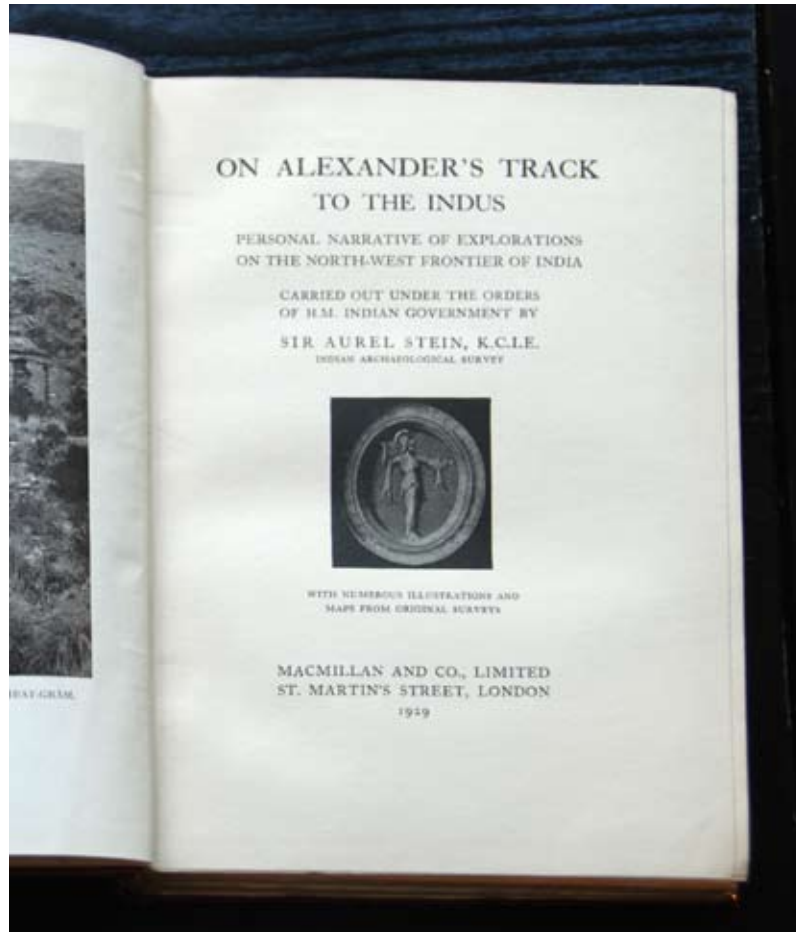
days later he caught a cold – then suffered a stroke. Within a few days he was gone. *The Times* of London wrote that he "occupied a unique position in the field of Central Asian antiquities by reason of his rare combination of the characters of the student and the explorer.... He was a little man, but sturdy and hard as nails. He attained his objects

by indefatigable industry and perseverance."⁵⁶ He was buried in the Christian cemetery in Kabul, a place he had never lived." The stone over his grave says, "He enlarged the bounds of knowledge."⁵⁷

The art, artifacts and manuscripts brought back from Central Asia by Stein are divided between the British Museum, the British Library, and the library of the India Office in London. The British Museum has the largest share of artifacts. (Stein's personal library and some of his correspondence and manuscript material went to the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.) Yet, as Hopkirk observed, "The great bulk of Britain's share of Stein's discoveries lies, unseen by the public, in boxes in storerooms, and not a single fragment of figured silk from the Silk Road can be seen in the small Central Asian section." Of the written material, only the great block-printed Diamond Sutra is on

display in the British Library; the others are protected from both light and handling by visitors. Thousands of the manuscript fragments from Dun-huang have not yet even been catalogued.⁵⁸

In assessing Stein's discoveries and scholarly work, one is compelled to pause over the fact that he removed these written and artistic artifacts from the place he found them – and from the country of whose culture and history they are a part. Hopkirk concludes that, "[T]he controversial circumstances in which Stein acquired the library expos[ed] him – like Lord Elgin – to everlasting criticism. The Chinese, quite understandably, regard him "as the most villainous of the foreign archaeologists."⁵⁹ The Chinese criticisms are summarized in Laslo Bardi's article, "Chinese



Stein (from his childhood days in Dresden) was always fascinated by Alexander.

then in an article rather than a book: Gregory, Shelagh & Kennedy, *Sir Aurel Stein's Limes Report*.⁵⁵ He celebrated his 76th birthday at the end of 1938.

Stein returned to London in time to be there for the start of the War in September 1939. He left for India in November. It was the last time he saw his adopted country. He returned to Kashmir to write up the results of the most recent trips. When not working on his manuscripts, he surveyed "the route of the hanging chains" on a stretch of the Indus in Northern India, and worked on a new edition of the *Rajatarangini*.

In 1943 the door opened to Afghanistan, which he had hoped to visit for over 20 years. In October of that year, one month short of his 81st birthday, he arrived in Kabul. A few

Assessment of Sir Aurel M. Stein's Work," in the *Erdelyi Bibliography*, at 44 et seq.

The pro and con arguments about what Stein and other great discoverers did are slippery, and I have not studied them all. But I have the impression that if one were to apply rigorously to the facts all our inherited doctrines of Anglo-American property and contract law, we would be little closer to an answer to the main question: Did Stein do the right thing in bringing the treasures back to England and India?



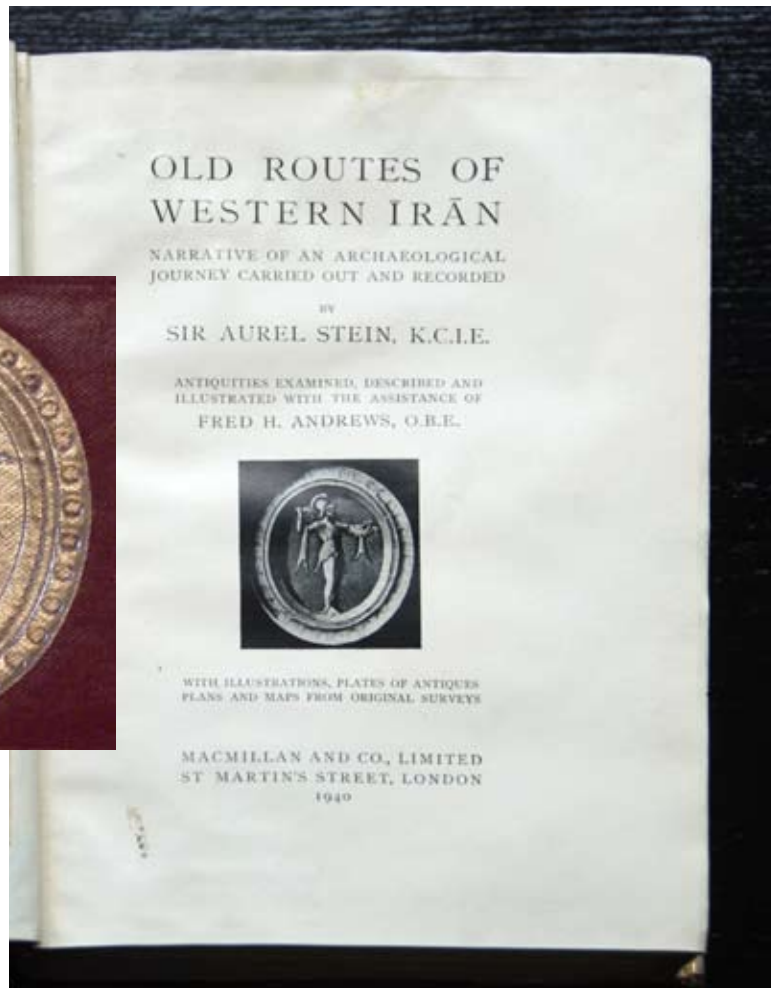
Stein decorated his books with a seal of Pallas Athene which he found on a Kharosthi manuscript.

Before Lord Elgin took the famous marble sculptures back to England, they decorated the frieze of the Parthenon, where they had originally been placed by the Athenian artists. Unlike Elgin, Stein did not rip art treasures out of the context in which they might arguably best be viewed or studied.⁶⁰

More fundamentally, as Michael Kimmelman wrote in the *New York Times*,⁶¹ in an article about Greece's claim for the Elgin marbles, "culture, while it can have deeply rooted, special meanings to specific people, doesn't belong to anyone in the grand scheme of things."⁶² "Why [he asks] should any objects necessarily reside in the modern nation-state controlling the plot of land where, at one time, perhaps thousands of years earlier, they came from?"

Beyond any question of ownership or cultural discontinuity lies the question of what

would have happened to Stein's discoveries if he had left them in place? No one can be sure, of course. We do know that the Chinese initially chose not to remove the manuscripts from Dun-huang when they had the chance because of the expense involved.⁶³ We also know that when an American archaeologist



Title page, *Old Routes of Western Iran*, 1940.

reached Dun-huang in 1924, he found most of the cave walls "horribly scarred by the scratches and scribbles of four hundred White Russian cavalymen who had taken refuge there after being driven into China by a Bolshevik general." The American wrote to Stein telling him what he had found, noting that in light of the Russian vandalism, he had no compunction in removing a statue and pieces of fresco: "I believe that neither you nor your patron saint, Hiuen Tsang [sic] would disapprove of my vandalism."⁶⁴ The photos taken by Stein remained the sole record of many of the wall-paintings.⁶⁵

It also seems highly probable that if Stein had not paid the monk Wang to let him remove the manuscripts, some later traveler-archaeologist would have done so. Within a

few years of Stein's first visit, French, Russian and Japanese explorers visited Dun-huang, and each came away with piles of manuscripts. If Stein had not been the first, their piles would have been larger. Perhaps the materials would today be found in some great library in Berlin or Paris. Or perhaps they would have been destroyed during the Second World War.

Or perhaps they would have remained at Dun-huang – at least until they were sold off or destroyed by the locals. In his speech to the members of the Royal Geographical Society in 1916,⁶⁶ Stein reported that Wang the priest wished he had sold Stein the entire archive when he was there nine years earlier: "The only regret which it had left behind in the quaint little monk was that he had not been shrewd enough to accept the offer made by me in 1907 for the whole hoard, and had thus failed to save it from dispersion and to secure its full value for his shrine."⁶⁷ Bardi tells what happened to the remaining manuscripts that were left at Dun-huang after Stein left in 1916:

A great deal of the consignment sent to Beijing disappeared along the way there; they were donated by the guards to local and provincial potentates or simply sold. Before their arrival when the deficiency of the original shipment would become obvious, the rest of the manuscripts were irresponsibly torn into pieces in order to confuse the Beijing inspectors and to make an exact count of the scrolls for the receiver impossible.

After the rediscovery and reopening of the 'hidden library' there was also a good chance of plundering the treasures on the spot. A kind of 'private archaeology'⁶⁸ and tomb robbery was an ancient tradition by local groups....⁶⁹

Finally, we should remember that Stein was not interested in personal enrichment or retaining possession of valuable art or manuscripts. He was motivated solely by scholarship – finding, saving, translating and interpreting what he found. He later said he had no objection if, after the finds were examined and recorded in the West, they were returned to China for proper safekeeping.⁷⁰ Whether

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such safekeeping would have been possible in China during the tumultuous last half-century is, of course, anybody's guess. Who can be sure that these Buddhist treasures would not have received from anti-religious Maoists the same treatment that was accorded priceless Buddhist temples and manuscripts in Afghanistan by Taliban radicals.

Hindsight may not be permitted in evaluating ethical judgments, but it is the essence of history. We know Stein saved

the manuscripts and that his work helped open great chapters in the history, religion and culture of central Asia. We can be pretty sure that if he had not saved them, they – or most of them – would have been removed from China anyway, or destroyed, or both.

§§

Photographs of books in the author's collection taken by Robert McCamant.

NOTES

- ¹ Two readily-available biographies of Stein are Jeanette Mirky's *Sir Aurel Stein – Archaeological Explorer* (Chicago, 1977), and a later and more readable book by Annabel Walker, *Aurel Stein – Pioneer of the Silk Road* (Seattle, 1995). A recent well-illustrated work is Susan Whitfield's *Aurel Stein On The Silk Road* (Chicago, 2004). Excellent context, including the stories of other explorers of the period, some of whom were competitors of Stein, may be found in Peter Hopkirk's excellent *Foreign Devils on the Silk Road* (Amherst 1980). A highly useful bibliography is Istvan Erdelyi's *Sir Aurel Stein Bibliography 1885-1943* (Indiana, 1999). A recent article in the *National Geographic* contains an excellent description of the caves at Dun-huang in western China and an account of Aurel Stein's findings there. "Caves of Faith," Brook Larmer (*National Geographic*, June 2010).
- ² Walker, p. 11.
- ³ *Catalogue of the Collections of Sir Aurel Stein in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences*, Budapest, 2002, p. 48.
- ⁴ Walker, p. 13.
- ⁵ Walker, p. 19.
- ⁶ Bombay, 1892

- ⁷ Hopkirk, p. 44 et seq.
- ⁸ *Id.*, p. 45.
- ⁹ Hopkirk, p. 9.
- ¹⁰ Hopkirk, 54 et seq.
- ¹¹ London, 1898
- ¹² Walker, p. 62.
- ¹³ *Geographical Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, London, May 1925, Stein, "Innermost Asia...", p. 379.
- ¹⁴ Mirsky, p. 158.
- ¹⁵ Walker, p. 100.
- ¹⁶ Hopkirk, p. 83.
- ¹⁷ Walker, 106 et seq.
- ¹⁸ London, 1903
- ¹⁹ Walker at 119.
- ²⁰ Oxford, 1907
- ²¹ Walker, p. 124-127.
- ²² Hopkirk, p. 149 et seq.
- ²³ Walker, p. 153.
- ²⁴ *Id.*, p. 154.
- ²⁵ Walker, p. 165.
- ²⁶ p. 131.
- ²⁷ *Id.*
- ²⁸ Hopkirk, p. 156 et seq; Walker, p. 163.
- ²⁹ Walker, p. 197.
- ³⁰ London, 1912
- ³¹ Erdelyi *Bibliography*, at 46.
- ³² *Ruins of Desert Cathay*, Vol. II, p. 159 et seq.
- ³³ Emphasis supplied.
- ³⁴ *Id.*, p. 190-93.
- ³⁵ *Id.*, p. 193.
- ³⁶ *Id.*, p. 194.
- ³⁷ Walker, p. 175.
- ³⁸ Hopkirk, p. 166-174.
- ³⁹ Hopkirk, p. 165.
- ⁴⁰ *National Geographic*, June 2010, p. 138.
- ⁴¹ London, 1912
- ⁴² Oxford, 1921
- ⁴³ London, 1921

- ⁴⁴ Walker, p. 194, 200.
- ⁴⁵ Stein, in *The Geographical Journal*, "A Third Journey....," August 1916, p. 193.
- ⁴⁶ Walker, p. 222-224.
- ⁴⁷ *Id.*, p. 231.
- ⁴⁸ Oxford, 1928
- ⁴⁹ Walker, p. 228.
- ⁵⁰ Walker, p. 282-285.
- ⁵¹ London, 1929
- ⁵² London, 1937
- ⁵³ London, 1940
- ⁵⁴ Walker, p. 316, 325.
- ⁵⁵ Oxford 1985
- ⁵⁶ Wang, *Sir Aurel Stein in The Times*, London 2002
- ⁵⁷ Walker, p. 355.
- ⁵⁸ Hopkirk, 229-235.
- ⁵⁹ Hopkirk, p. 6, 173.
- ⁶⁰ Incidentally, the Greek proposal to retrieve the marbles from Britain does not include replacing them on the crumbling Parthenon, but instead suggests placing them in a nearby museum.
- ⁶¹ May 9, 2010
- ⁶² Arts, p. 18.
- ⁶³ Bardi, p. 49.
- ⁶⁴ Walker, 269-270.
- ⁶⁵ Hopkirk, p. 220.
- ⁶⁶ About his third expedition.
- ⁶⁷ *The Geographical Journal*, "A Third Journey..." September 1916, p. 194.
- ⁶⁸ Carrying artifacts home by villagers to decorate their houses.
- ⁶⁹ p. 54.
- ⁷⁰ Walker, p. 268.

Aurel Stein's Grave in Kabul.



Photograph by bhatto on Flickr

CAXTONIAN FOOTNOTES

No, It Really Happened: Dues

Dan Crawford

Have you paid your dues? Not nagging: just checking. It's something of a surprise that more people don't take the precaution of paying a couple of years in advance, the way one member did for a while in the 1980s. If the Caxton Council decides to raise dues, they can't raise yours if you've already sent in that check through 2015.

Dues, especially unpaid, can bring out unusual behavior in our members. (More unusual than expected from a Caxtonian.) Here is a sampling of tidbits from our archives.

At least three members of the Club since the 1950s have, when asked to pay several years' back dues, have claimed that they were made members of the Club behind their backs. Someone else proposed them for membership and they were voted in, they claimed, without their knowledge or consent. You'd think getting regular invitations to dinner for three

years would tip them off, but they claimed they thought this was being done as a courtesy to a Famous Book Person. One of these people, who was a Famous Book Person, did apply for membership three years after having made this claim and the Secretary/Bookkeeper of that era told the Council not to admit him. He'd been enough trouble.

An officer of the Club once suggested, during a brainstorming session, that a special fund be set up to pay the dues of members who had fallen on hard times. Another officer at the meeting asked that this proposal be tabled until Rolls-Royce established a fund for low-income car lovers who wanted a Rolls.

A member of the Club tried to resign because he couldn't pay his dues, and the Council went to his employer and asked if the employer would secretly pay until the man qualified for Senior Status membership. (Senior Status membership involves remission of dues to anyone who is old enough and has been a member in good standing long

enough.) The Newberry Library actually agreed to pay the man's dues for the two years it took for him to qualify, and he was never informed of this subterfuge.

During the Depression, the Council decided to crack down on people who were three years behind in their dues. One businessman managed to scrape together two and two-thirds years' worth, and after he paid, was summarily dismissed because he hadn't paid the full amount.

Frank Lloyd Wright was dropped from membership PROBABLY for nonpayment of dues, so if you haven't sent your check in, you may find yourself in good company. (On the other hand, the year he was dropped was also the year he ran off with Mamah. But as far as we know, no other member has ever been expelled for any such reason.)

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No, It Really Happened: Our Club House

Dan Crawford

In the late 1990s, the Caxton Council went to great time and trouble discussing the matter of whether the Caxton Club should have club rooms and, if so, what kind. Proposals ran the gamut, from a closet to put our file cabinet in to a full working clubhouse with dining room, kitchens, bedrooms for members to stay the night, and exhibit galleries. Some money had been tendered to the Club to finance the investigation of possibilities, with the not-so-subtle suggestion that the prospective donor favored an arrangement on the large side, essentially so as to allow a return to the days of cigars on the table.

Among all the variations discussed, one was particularly terrifying. A member of the

Club approached the Secretary/Bookkeeper with the suggestion that this person buy a one-bedroom apartment in a Gold Coast high-rise and rent it to the Caxton Club.

"It could be an office, a place to hold small meetings, and a bedroom for speakers who came from a distance and needed a place to stay the night," said the Member. "It would save on hotel expenses, and the kitchen might save on paying for their breakfast the next morning."

It was not exactly what the donor wanted, but it was less expensive. (And more practical. The amount tendered by the donor was nowhere near the size needed for his hopes and dreams.) And it was attractive to some members of the Council. At the mention of the kitchen, the thought "minibar" was clearly

visible in their eyes. The Secretary/Bookkeeper, on the other hand, could see his job description being expanded to include "washing bed linens" and "stocking the kitchen." Before the idea could be presented to the full Council, however, other arrangements had been made by the Vice President.

The Club therefore missed the possibility of having its lunches or dinners in the restaurant in the building. But it also lost the terrifying possibility that, as an owner of the unit, the Member involved might have had enough leverage to get passes for Caxtonians to use the building's swimming pool. The thought of Caxton Club Pool Evenings... no, we won't even think about it.

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Book and manuscript-related exhibitions: a selective list

Compiled by Robert McCamant

(Note: on occasion an exhibit may be delayed or extended; it is always wise to call in advance of a visit.)

Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-443-3600: "Torii Kiyonaga and Ideal Beauty in Japanese Prints" (the artist [1752–1815] has been described as "the preeminent leader in... the golden age of ukiyo-e prints"), Gallery 107, through December 11. "Bertrand Goldberg: Architecture of Invention" (the first comprehensive retrospective of the architect's work,) Galleries 283–285, through January 15.

Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, 847-835-8202: "Genus Rosa" (historic rose illustrations from the collection), through November 13. "Highgrove Florilegium" (an official chronicle of the plants growing in the gardens of the Prince of Wales at Highgrove in Gloucestershire), opens November 18.

Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago, 312-266-2077: "Lincoln's Chicago" (portraits of Lincoln's contemporaries paired with lithographic views of Chicago created in the 1860s), Sanger P. Robinson Gallery, ongoing.

Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State Street, Chicago, 312-747-4300: "One Book, Many Interpretations: Second Edition" (commemorates the program's 10-year anniversary with a juried exhibition by bookbinders and book artists interpreting the 10 most recent selections; judges were Caxtonians Paul Gehl, Audrey Niffenegger, and Norma Rubovitz), Special Collections Exhibit Hall, Ninth Floor, through April 15, 2012.

DuSable Museum of African American History, 740 East 56th Place, Chicago, 773-947-0600: "Everywhere with Roy Lewis" (a narrative of the African American experience spanning five decades), through December 31.

Lake Forest-Lake Bluff Historical Society, 361 E. Westminster Avenue, Lake Forest, 847-234-5253: "Uncanny, Unabridged, Unforgettable: 150 Years of Lake Forest" (honors Lake Forest's Sesquicentennial), through December 29.

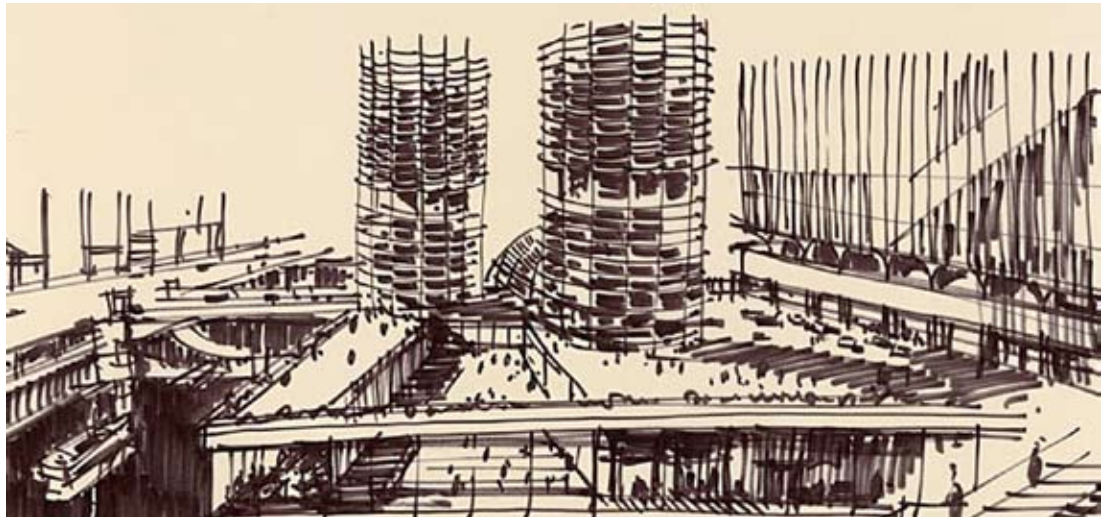
Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago, 312-280-2660: "Ron Terada: Being There" (work that includes paintings, photographs, video, sound, books, and graphic design by this Vancouver artist), opens November 5.

Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton Street, Chicago, 312-943-9090: "Indians of the Midwest" (items from its collections, including: early colonial maps denoting Indian communities; rare books and

manuscripts related to indigenous cultures from the early colonial period to the present; and drawings and paintings depicting Indian life in the Midwest), through October 29.

Northwestern University, Block Museum of Art, 40 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, 847-491-4000: "Views and Re-Views: Soviet Political Posters and Cartoons" (a post-Cold War assessment of Soviet graphic arts with 160 posters, cartoons, postcards and photomontages from a private collection), through December 4.

Northwestern University, Charles Deering Library, 1970 Campus Drive, Evanston, 847-491-7658: "Papering Over Tough Times: Soviet Propaganda Posters of the 1930s," Special Collections, opens November 2.



Art Institute: Bertram Goldberg

MARINA CITY, CHICAGO, IL, PERSPECTIVE SKETCH (DETAIL), 1985. THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO, ARCHIVE OF BERTRAND GOLDBERG, GIFTED BY HIS CHILDREN

Oriental Institute, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, 773-702-9514: "Before the Pyramids: the Origins of Egyptian Civilization" (the most fundamental aspects of ancient Egyptian civilization – architecture, hieroglyphic writing, a belief in the afterlife, and allegiance to a semi-divine king – can be traced to Egypt's Predynastic and Early Dynastic eras), through December 31.

Smart Museum of Art, 5550 S. Greenwood Avenue, Chicago, 773-702-0200: "Process and Artistry in the Soviet Vanguard" (exposes the experimental creative processes that generated iconic Soviet propaganda in the 1920s and 1930s), through December 11.

University of Chicago, Joseph Regenstein Library, 1100 East 57th Street, Chicago, 773-702-8705: "Adventures in the Soviet Imaginary" (the Soviet Union as a world in pictures, facilitated by a vibrant image culture based largely on new media technologies, is explored through two of its most striking manifestations – the children's book and the poster – looked at in the wake of the Russian revolution of 1917 and followed by periodic re-makings – during Stalin's Great Leap Forward, 1928–1932; World War II, 1941–1945; the Thaw, 1956–1964; and Perestroika, 1987–1991), Special Collections Research Center Exhibition Gallery, through December 31.

For complete information on events and exhibits of the The Soviet Arts Experience, see www.sovietartsexperience.org.

Until a replacement exhibit editor is found, please send your listings to bmccamant@quarterfold.com, or call 312-329-1414 x 11.

Caxtonians Collect: Eugene Hotchkiss

Interviewed by Robert McCamant

Eugene Hotchkiss has enjoyed his 37 years as a Caxtonian, even though he claims he's a member under false pretenses. "Elliot Donnelley was chairman of the board of trustees," he explained, referring to the board at Lake Forest College, where Hotchkiss was the President from 1970 to 1993. "He said I *should* belong to the Caxton Club, and he wouldn't take no for an answer, even though I insisted I wasn't a book collector." "Actually," he explained, "I envy true collectors. But I don't have either the discipline or the means." But he reads all the time: the *New Yorker* and the *New York Times* religiously, contemporary biographies of US Presidents; and pretty much anything to do with "PB&J" (Peeps, Boswell, and Johnson, for the uninitiated). He joined the Club in 1974.

"I've never regretted joining," he says. "I've had a lot of fun. Those early meetings with the open bottles of Bourbon and Scotch on the table were an awfully good way to make friends." The Club has also benefited from his membership: his fund-raising efforts on the club's behalf during the late '90s and early '00s have not been equaled.

He vividly recalls the late member Gerald Fitzgerald, whose gift of \$50,000 in "seed money" for the Club to acquire permanent rooms set him (with a committee) on a three-year quest to find such a place. "It turned out to be a wild goose chase," he laughs. "He must have expected other members to step forward with equal gifts. But none came, and needless to say we did not find a place to buy for \$50,000."

Hotchkiss's career as a college administrator grew out of a mistake. To understand this story, you need to realize that Gene had a twin brother, and that they both went to Dartmouth, and that they both served in the Navy after college. As Gene was nearing the end of his naval service, he was surprised to receive a telegram (at sea) from Dartmouth, asking if he'd be interested in becoming an assistant to the Dean of the College. It came

out of the blue, since Gene had not been a campus BMOC while in college. But it was worth an interview, he figured. He went to Hanover, was offered the job (at \$3600 per year), and took it. Two days after he started work, the Dean took him aside and confessed his mistake: all through the process, he had been thinking he was hiring his twin brother! But his brother was already employed, and probably wouldn't have accepted an assistant-dean position, so Gene stayed.

He continued in the dean's office for two



years, and then went to graduate school at Cornell in college administration. "As it turns out, I'm not cut out to be a scholar hiding in the library, though," he says. "I need to be out meeting people, talking to them. I'm better off being an administrator than I am studying administration."

He worked at Harvey Mudd College, Chatham University, and eventually Lake Forest. "I came to Lake Forest because Elliott

Donnelley said I would be the President." Lake Forest had been improving academically, but its finances were tenuous. Hotchkiss managed to get it onto firmer financial footing during his 23 years as President.

After becoming emeritus at Lake Forest, Hotchkiss has kept himself busy with a variety of activities, both non-profit and remunerative. He's had a continuing involvement with the Association of Governing Boards, which tries to improve the effectiveness of boards of trustees at colleges and universities, serving both as

a fellow and a facilitator for the group. He also took a one-year appointment as Interim President of Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida. It could be telling that he has disposed of his books on higher education.

Both while college president and in retirement, he has served on numerous nation-wide, Chicago-based, and local committees and commissions. These days, he's also partners with Carole Whitcomb in a company called Life-Stories, which interviews people to record their histories. "Call me a ghostwriter, if you'd like," he says. "I really enjoy the interviewing process, and doing the writing can be rewarding as well."

Hotchkiss has had several stints on the Club Council, when he strived for perfect attendance. "These days it's gotten harder to get to meetings," he laments. "It's

always more pleasant to come with someone else from the North Shore, but these days few of us seem able to make the trip." He lives in Lake Bluff with his wife, the former Suzanne Troxell. Generally they spend a few months of the winter in Florida. They have one daughter who lives in the Washington, DC area, and works for Hamilton College.

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Bookmarks...

Luncheon: Friday November 11, 2011, Union League Club
Sarah Pritchard and Jeff Garrett
Acquisition Programs at Research Libraries:
What Really Goes On

How do great collections end up in libraries? What are some of the issues that both librarians and collectors confront, how do good connections get made and what are the things that go awry? In this illustrated presentation, Caxtonian Sarah Pritchard and Jeff Garrett, both of Northwestern University Library, will talk about successes and failures experienced during their careers of assembling archives and library collections for several research institutions (some names will be changed to protect the innocent, and the guilty). Come and hear about the acquisitions of: the papers of Illinois politicians in the spotlight of world attention (including a U.S. Vice President of the 1920's and a Governor of more recent times), the papers of an Oscar-winning actress; the digital-only "papers" of a Nobel Prize winner; all this along with other real-life controversies and death-bed disappointments from several different libraries. Pritchard and Garrett will also discuss issues that potential donors of archivalia and rara need to keep in mind as they look to preserving their legacies. Pritchard is the Dean of Libraries and University Librarian; Garrett is the Director of Special Collections and Archives.

Dinner: Wednesday November 9, Cliff Dwellers
Wesley Brown
The Discovery of the New World
through Old Maps

Wesley Brown has been a collector, student, and author on old maps for thirty years. He confines his map collecting to two areas: (1) the earliest world maps up to the year 1540 and (2) the exploration and settlement of Colorado from the 16th through 20th centuries. He has served as an advisor on collection development for the Library of Congress and the Denver Public Library. Through the study of maps, he will investigate man's conception of the shape of the Earth through history and will give particular focus to the discovery of the New World. This general survey will begin with Homer in the 8th century B.C. and will end with Sebastian Münster in the middle of the 16th century. The talk will be illustrated with slides of original antique maps from his own collection, printed between 1472 and 1540.

Beyond November...

DECEMBER LUNCHEON

On December 9, 2011, Caxtonian Sam Ellenport, proprietor of the Harcourt Bindery, (a hand bindery in Belmont, Massachusetts since 1900), will speak, among other fascinating topics, about: a bookbinding anomaly: Linked-Spine Bindings.

DECEMBER DINNER

Note: Second Wednesday!

Our annual Revels, including fundraising auction, will take place at the Newberry Library on Wednesday, December 14. Get your auction items to Dan Crawford at the Newberry!

JANUARY LUNCHEON

On January 13, 2012, Caxtonian Junie Sinson will speak about many aspects of the Nobel Prize for Literature, including: just how does the Swedish Academy reach their decisions, are criticisms of recent selections justified and what effect do the choices have on the direction of American and World Literature.

JANUARY DINNER

We will meet Wednesday, January 18 at the Cliff Dwellers. Speaker to be announced.