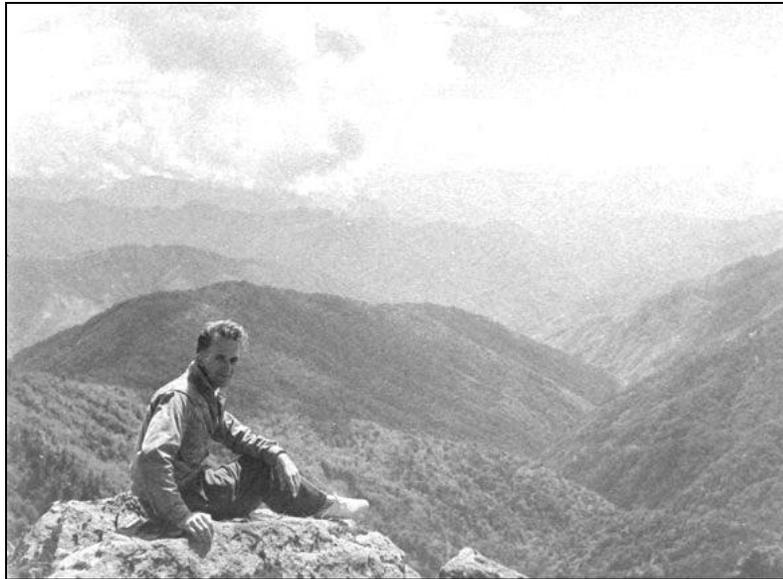


**A JOURNEY TO WESTERN TIBET:
THE JOURNAL OF WILBUR L. CUMMINGS, JR.**



EDITED BY DAVID M. ELLERTON
WITH A FOREWORD BY JOSÉ IGNACIO CABEZÓN

THIS PUBLICATION IS A JOINT PROJECT OF THE [UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SANTA BARBARA](#) AND THE [SANTA BARBARA MUSEUM OF ART](#).

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This book makes available to the public for the first time the journal of Wilbur L. Cummings' trip to Tibet with F. Baily Vanderhoef, Jr. Their photographs and memoirs of the 1938 trip are accessible online at <http://www.religion.ucsb.edu/tibetjourney1938/>.

FOREWORD

In the spring of 1938, two young American explorers, Wilbur L. Cummings, Jr. (1914-1943) and F. Bailey Vanderhoef, Jr. (1913-2008), set off on an expedition into Tibet. Leaving from the small Indian hill station of Kalimpong, they crossed the Himalayas – their principal goal, to document the religious art and the famous “lama dances” at the monastery of Palkhor Chöde, located in the city of Gyangtse in western Tibet. Their photos of the yearly festival of the unveiling of the monastery’s famous massive [silk tangka](#) appeared in the June 12, 1939 edition of *Life* magazine, some of the first color images of Tibet to appear in the American popular press. Mr. Cummings later compiled a journal of the trip. This is the document that you have before you. Written as a day-to-day narrative of the journey, it brings to life the details of this amazing trip in a manner that is characteristic of the travel narratives of the period. Together with Mr. Vanderhoef’s memoirs, previously published on this same website,¹ Mr. Cummings’ journal provides us with an important historical record of travel in the Himalayas and Western Tibet in years before the second World War.

Mr. Cummings’ text has been carefully edited by Mr. David Ellerton. Mr. Ellerton’s decision to edit with a light hand was a wise one, for the chief value of this document lies in the fact that it is a record of one individual’s views and impressions of a journey undertaken at a specific point in history. Some of the factual details of Mr. Cummings’ book would undoubtedly have to be corrected in light of contemporary scholarship, which has obviously come a long way since 1938. Some of the author’s views—his opinions about Himalayan peoples, Tibetan religion, Tibetan art, etc.—are, by today’s standards, somewhat dated. But we must remember that this chronicle was written seventy years ago: when the British still controlled India, when scholarly writing about Tibet was scarce, and when European and American attitudes toward “the Orient” in general, and Tibet particular, were very different from what they are today. As a window into an American explorer’s impressions of the peoples, cultures and landscapes of Tibet and the Himalayas, however, Mr. Cummings’ journal provide us with a richness of detail that is rare to find among travelogues. Instead of viewing this text as a registry of facts, I encourage the reader to see it as a window into the experiences of its author. From this perspective, the journal provide us not so much an objective, scholarly perspective on the people and things that the traveler encounters, but rather the subjective viewpoint of the traveler himself. It is the image of Tibetan and Himalayan culture as this is reflected (and refracted) on the surface of the mind of a young American explorer with very limited access to scholarly knowledge about Tibet. But perhaps I overstate my case by emphasizing the subjective, since some of Mr. Cummings’ descriptions and photo-documentation are indeed interesting ethnographic and scientific contributions in their own right. For example, Mr. Cummings obviously possessed a great deal of knowledge of botany and his remarks about and documentation of the

¹ See <http://www.religion.ucsb.edu/tibetjourney1938/Vanderhoef%20Memoirs.pdf>.

flora of the Himalayas are not insignificant. The same can be said of his interest in the process of the production of Tibetan crafts. His descriptions of a metalworker's shop, the process of gilding, of boot-making, and of paper making are important contributions to our knowledge of these enterprises. In any case, whether one reads this journal to learn more about Tibetan culture, or for the sheer pleasure of being transported into another place and time, I can guarantee readers will not be bored, for Mr. Cummings wrote his journal in a most vivid, honest, and lively style that is occasionally very amusing. On occasion we get a sense of the things that annoyed him, but we also come away with a sense of the things that he appreciated most—from the beauty of the Tibetan landscape to a sumptuous Tibetan banquet. All told, Mr. Cummings' journal is a rich document that has much to teach us on a number of different levels.

A Journey Through Western Tibet is being published as a joint venture with the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. Together with Mr. Vanderhoef's memoirs, it commemorates Mr. Cummings' and Mr. Vanderhoef's gifts of paintings, sculpture and ritual objects to the museum, a collection that comprises an important part of SBMA's permanent Tibet collection. These objects were brought back from the trip documented in these pages, and some of them are specifically mentioned here. This joint venture between a public university and a museum represents for me a model of the very best of inter-institutional partnerships in the service of the broader community. I consider myself lucky to be part of this ongoing collaboration.

Finally, I would like to thank the individuals who have worked to make this publication a reality. First and foremost, Ms. Molly Cummings Minot Cook who so graciously agreed to the publication of her brother's journal, who generously helped to fund this publication, and who contributed the biographical note on Mr. Cummings that follows this foreword. Mr. David Ellteron worked countless hours to edit the entire work, as has been mentioned. His careful attention to detail has made the journal much more readable and accessible. Special thanks also go to Susan Shin-tsu Tai, Elizabeth Atkins Curator of Asian Art at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. Susan was the driving force that kept this project on track. Without her gentle prodding, this work would never have been completed. Mr. Will Dewey and Ms. Christina Miller helped to edit the first draft of the manuscript. Dr. Paul G. Hackett read through an early version of the journal and provided some valuable information on the people mentioned in its pages. This information has been preserved as footnotes to the present edition. Finally, Mr. Vikas Malhotra was responsible for revising the website and adding new images to the archive. I would like to thank all of these individuals for their contributions.

José Ignacio Cabezón
UC Santa Barbara
September, 2011

BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION

My brother, Wilbur Love Cummings (known as “Billy” to everyone), was my idol. I was his loving shadow and adoring sister, bugging him throughout our lives together. I was three years younger: he was born in 1914, and I in 1917. He was so gentle, kind and tolerant, and also quite talented and capable from the time he was a young boy. He was Poet Laureate of Exeter Academy and graduated *cum laude* from Harvard in the 1930’s. As a young man, he had a great interest in Oriental art, spending his last penny on objects of great beauty at Yamanaka’s in New York City. He added those items to a display cabinet with special lighting effects he built in his bedroom. I still have his Tang Horse, his Guanyin (a Buddhist statue), an intricately carved wooden Shiva, as well as several Ming vases and many *netsukes*. Billy also gave me several lovely sliver Tibetan bowls from his trip to Tibet.

His dream was to take a year off after college and make a trip to the Orient—especially Tibet—with his best friend, Bailey Vanderhoef. With great hopes and plans, they made preparations to travel all the way to Lhasa by foot and Tibetan pony. They got as far as Gyangtse, but unfortunately, they were not allowed any further because the Tibetans were choosing the new Dalai Lama that year (1937-1938). They bought a great many objects of art that are now on exhibit at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. Billy took hundreds of photographs in both black-and-white and color. My brother was an excellent photographer, and working in his own dark room in our cellar, he turned out magnificent pictures—even in those early days. He worked with the very first color transparencies, and printed them using three color negatives with filters, or RBY, which was a very tedious process.

In the mid-thirties—while in our late teens—we bought a Luscombe airplane together. We flew all over the country together competing in aviation meets and won a lot of sliver! Being that Billy played polo at Harvard, he had a love of riding that remained after graduation. Another of our adventures together included riding in Montana where our family had a cattle ranch. Billy strapped on my first wooden skis with metal edges and kept them waxed for speed! Once I dropped a lens cap from a lift and my brother skied a whole lift line down to retrieve it. He was a Navy transport pilot in World War II, and was tragically killed early in the war. My other half had left me; I was never complete again.

It was not until seventy years after his death, as I was cleaning up my darkroom so the grandchildren would not find such a mess, that I found all the material on his trip to Tibet that my mother had kept. I was instantly inspired to put it all together with the color negatives that had never been printed and his daily diary. The color negatives were in very poor condition, wrinkled and bent, and looked impossible to reproduce. Happily, I found Ira Wunder, a photography wizard in White Plains, NY. He spent the last year (2010) putting all of Billy’s prints together, both the black-and-white as well as the difficult color ones that had never been viewed or printed before. They are fantastic, and I hope by sharing these that those interested in

Tibet and Tibetan art will learn from and appreciate the work of Billy Cummings, a highly talented young man.

Molly Cummings Minot Cook
February, 2011

THE TWENTY-SECOND OF APRIL

The last two days have been spent gathering up various odds and ends to prepare for our visit to [Sikkim](#). MacDonald Duff has written to the Political Officer in [Darjeeling](#) to facilitate our arrangements there, something that we hope will make it easier to enter Tibet.

We had dinner around seven this evening after a hectic afternoon of packing. There was the question of where to pack things and where the valuable bronzes were to go, for it would be a dreadful task to change everything. We have taken only one photographic trunk and left some of the color Tri-Pak behind. I hate packing in this climate. Dust rolled over the city in great stifling clouds and covered all the leaves of the palms, until they were a uniform shade of dusty brown. Tables, chairs, and everything else was covered by dust. Dinner was rushed. We had to make the train at half past eight. Howie and Mac were both out to dinner. Before they left I asked Howie how much we were expected to tip the servants. He said he did not know, but as soon as the last of them was gone, we found out. I gave the bearer, Quovan, five rupees and that started it. When we got to the front door, all the *baboos*, or porters, were standing around with their hands open waiting for the U. S. Treasury. I was very angry with this demand for baksheesh (tips). We got away for twenty rupees. It was not graceful, and I was, as usual, furious. The gardener had made up boutonnieres for us.

We arrived at the station and were besieged by the usual five or six porters, where two would have sufficed. I got a new shock upon seeing our train. Expecting something very primitive, it exceeded those expectations. A compartment consisted of a room open on both sides like a cattle car, with sliding shutters and fans. All the rest—two bunks, over and under, on each side, and in the center a third lower—were made of wood. I picked one. There were two other Bengalis traveling in the same coupe, and I was surprised to find how clean and pleasant they were. The train pulled out at nine. Bailey, being old in the ways of Indian trains, took the side seat that had a back, and I was in the center. I soon discovered that the backrest for sitting was too high to hold one on the seat when lying down. The Cozy Rapture began to slide, and on every corner either my head or my feet rolled off onto the floor! We could not turn off the lights until after diplomatic negotiations had been initiated between the Indians, who wanted to read, and the Caucasians, who wanted to sleep. Amicably concluded, with remarks upon where we were going, the lights were turned off. In the meantime, I began to acquire some skill on the bench. There was no mattress to sink into and to hold one, only a layer of kapok with leather quilted over it. We both slept like logs as soon as we were used to riding the wild nightmare of the Bengal Railroad.

I was very curious to find out how a native goes to sleep so I closed the eye visible over the top of the armrest and watched with the other below, through the crook of my elbow. He unfolded his bed and sat down with his knees up under his chin. He spent about a half hour reading the Times pictorial section, on bathing beauties and the resemblance between seals and human beings. Then he

took off his shoes, removed his socks, and I saw that he had enormous splayed out large toes. Shoes were an innovation and very European. He wore Jaeger wool socks. He tucked his socks into the shoes and put them under the bunk. Another waiting period ensued during which he contemplated his large toes with Brahmanic stare. His face was badly pock marked. Next he took off his coat. His shirt was embroidered and had little cut insets of cloth sewed into it like women's handkerchiefs. He had no buttons, but instead large gold shirt studs went down the front. It had no collar, only the place for one like an English stiff shirt. It was not a good combination. His little pillbox-like hat of black fur was placed on a hook. He was left with nothing on save a pair of very sheer trousers and his embroidered shirt, and sat scratching his hairy legs in a rather eclectic fashion. He then went to sleep with his knees up, flat on his back.

The chap in the bunk above him did not even unroll his bed but sat propped up against it looking at the electric light switch. He was very good looking with light skin and fine features, the result of having played rugby for some team.

I went to sleep as soon as the lights were out. Bailey's asthma did not bother him. I expected he would suffer from the smoke that came in through the blinds, but he never has a problem when I most expect it. About four I woke up, and noticed the train was standing in the station of some little town. It was very cold. My blanket had fallen off, and the fan made me stiff in every joint. I still did not know when we got to [Siliguri](#), so I got up and leaned across Bailey, hoping not to wake him, and asked the stationmaster outside.

"You arrive Siliguri six-thirty morning," he replied in broken English. The station, as nearly as I could see in that vague, bleared state, had a clock that did not agree with mine. There was a half hour difference. "Yes, Calcutta have different time," the stationmaster commented. Glorious, a half hour more of sleep! I went back to sleep thinking I had overtipped the porter.

* * *

THE TWENTY-THIRD OF APRIL

The morning was very thin and pallid. We got up about six and shaved with cold water. The occupant of the upper bunk, of the name Waleski, had disappeared. The lower bunk was occupied by a sleepy Indian covered with a beautiful shawl. It had turned cold during the night. The trees were moist with dew, and over the early paddy fields the mist swirled and eddied. We could catch vague glimpses of the mountains ahead, but soon lost them again in the fog. By the time we arrived at six-thirty, the sun was out, making the streets and platforms of the station a mad blinding of light.

Kulbahadur Chattri, to whom we had written to meet us, was there in a new Ford. He took over our luggage, and we went to eat. There were three classes of dining rooms, and although we had traveled second class, we picked the first class room. A very red faced, healthy looking English woman was putting away vast piles of bacon and sausage. We had some scrambled eggs and bacon, and admired her fortitude and stomach, which was on the increase. Breakfast came to two chips. Both Bailey and I were so excited that we did not need much to eat.

The ride to [Kalimpong](#) took about two hours. We climbed constantly up into the cold, following one gorge of rushing water through hanging orchid trees and the feathers of the bamboos. We went through forests and occasional clearings until the road hung over the precipice and we came upon the lower [Tista](#). Then we began to mount steadily on the left hand side of the gorge, now under hanging orchid trees, and then back into the sunlight. Peaks rose up on all sides like those of a Japanese painting and lost their tops in the low clouds that broke and streamed past the rocks. Halfway to our destination we crossed the Tista. There was a very ancient suspension bridge with rusty cables and Scotch battlemented ends. A sign stated that only empty, light cars may cross, three wagons at a time, and that troops must break step and proceed single file across the bridge. We piled out of the car and walked over the bridge. Underneath us the water was black from the dead leaves and jungle. On the other side we watched the car. After walking back and forth two times with some supplies, we got back into the car and started out over the bridge. The whole bridge sagged, and a sort of trough in the wave was always below, but nothing snapped.

After driving for about a half hour longer, we came to the hills just before Kalimpong. There was a fountain on the edge of the road with an abrupt drop to the river a thousand feet below. Natives in costume were filling copper water pots at its slow stream. I had never seen mountains more beautiful. The clouds lifted for only a few moments, and we saw the snow white Himalayas above the foothills. White like pearls in the blue sky, they stood for an instant in eternity, then the clouds came upon them again; and that sharp truth of the solid earth gave way before the moving clouds with their veiled and changing shapes. Everyone stood staring at that unveiled mystery, and no one spoke. Bailey and I shall never forget that moment. We took some pictures, I with my virgin camera.

In a few minutes we were driving up the hill to the Odlings.² We drove in, and there was Bunty with her bright happy face and beautiful hair, standing to meet us. For a moment I thought I saw in her face Mrs. Merricks,³ who was so far behind in New York.



I am always afraid of meeting people for I often talk and tell too much, and repent afterward. I think that this time I shall do the thing properly with dignity and martial bearing, mentally tying diplomatic colors over a stiff shirt. It never happens that way, and it did not this time. I forgot all phrases; they are worth so little here for this is as near paradise as this world where honey has its sting may come. We went out on to the terrace to look over towards [Chomolhari](#) and [Kangchenjunga](#). Vague outlines persisted in the mist. Bunty brought us coffee and cake. She must think me a fool for I had nothing to say. There was too much loveliness.

² This refers to “Bunty” and Norman Odling, Mr. Cummings’ hosts while in Kalimpong. Dr. Paul G. Hackett has identified and provided information on several of the individuals mentioned throughout Cummings’ journal. Throughout this text his footnotes will be preceded by his initials, PGH. My own comments will be preceded by my initials, DE.

³ PGH: The reference is to Henrietta Sands Merrick (b. 1879) in New York. She was an explorer who wanted to visit Tibet. Merrick hired Dorjé Tharchin as a guide, and with permission from the British authorities, traveled to Gyantse with Tharchin in the Spring of 1931. See Henrietta Sands Merrick, *Spoken in Tibet* (NY: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1933).

We spent the morning trying to get in touch with the Political Commissioner at Darjeeling, so that we might go to see Mr. Gould⁴ before he leaves for [Yatung](#), or we shall not be able to get the pass for weeks. He is sticky, called B. J. by those who know him. He is a sort of moody Dane on his battlement guarding the pass. I had no success giving numbers, and discovered that you must ask for people by name, for numbers have no meaning whatsoever. 25-A became 258, and we got nowhere until finally Bailey got the idea across as the operators changed before lunch. He telegraphed to the border so that we may cross into Sikkim tomorrow and see the arbiter of our trip. After we got in touch with the Political Officer in Darjeeling, we knew that we should have to face the dragon in [Gangtok](#).

Bailey and I spent the afternoon wandering through Bunty's beautiful gardens, which are terraced on all the hillsides around the house. She is a wonderful gardener, and the whole mountain blooms. At the lunch there was the doctor, a woman much like Miss Baine, stocky, decided and efficient. She provides care for the homes. Norman Odling is a charming host, and it was a long time before I realized that he has a wooden leg, having lost the other during the war. The lunch was a brilliant affair; the Odlings are the world's most accomplished hosts. After lunch we walked through the gardens, and Bunty showed us the new orchid garden she is building. The orchids are just coming into bloom, and have the most beautiful blossoms in the world, like butterflies—*Cypripediums*, *Cattleyas* and others. She was made a present of a large cement frog weighing eight pounds. It has been hidden.

The taste of that day was marvelous after the low lands. Before supper we walked down to the shops in the village with the assessor, who is also staying here; he is a meek, retiring man—nice but not interesting. We slept like the dead that night.

* * *

⁴ PGH: Sir Basil John Gould (1883-1956), a member of the Indian Civil Service, was the Political Officer for Sikkim (stationed in Gangtok) and controlled entry into Tibet.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH OF APRIL

At nine o'clock we set off in a Ford with two *baboos* in the front seat. It was green and in very poor condition. The non-driving *baboo* held the car in second gear going down the hills. For miles we descended into the Tista Valley from Kalimpong, running between the little farms and through the semi-jungle of these upper lands. It grew hotter as we descended. Most of the way down we retraced our way to Siliguri, but then turned right to continue up the Tista to Gangtok. We met many caravans of Tibetans coming down with wools packed on to their mules. The mules have bright saddle pads and their harness is decorated with tufts and tassels of bright scarlet. The men wore high Tibetan boots with embroidery up the front and jodhpurs that fit into them. Their queer hats had earflaps in the front, back, and sides, which turned up around the crown and displayed the inner lining of fur. The crowns were embroidered in gold and silver on bright background—usually mauve—and on top sits a coral button. They wear their hair long, drawing it back behind their ears so that it curls in little drakes tails with long, scraggly wisps visible behind their ears. All of them carry long knives, some of beautiful silver work. The women are more ornate than the men with gold fluted beads around their necks and rounds of bright red felt between them. At their ears, or rather over them, they wear conchos of gold about three inches across. They rouge their cheeks with orange, and around their necks are charm boxes, heavy and studded with turquoise and red coral-like stone. These are sometimes gold, but usually made from brass. Both men and women wore shawls tight around their waists. We often stopped to let them by as they carried heavy baskets of dunnage from their foreheads with a top strap. All of their buttons or pins are of gold, and the colours of their clothes are bright: mauve, purple, red, green and yellow, and all of the ochery tones.

They are a hard, beautifully developed people. They have the stout calves of mountaineers, and their physique is thin-fleshed and muscled, showing so well its strength. The altitude has given them large chests. There is a dignity in their faces that is Chinese, yet more real and strong, and in their eyes is humour, which is a rare thing amongst Orientals. They can smile, and when they do, it shows their teeth to be very white and evenly placed. Their expression is one of age, even in those who are young. Wisdom seems to be born with intelligence, and it shows in their eyes. The Tibetans are not small and ill formed like the more degenerate races of the plains of India or even Southern China, and I encountered very few with halting gait or stooped bearing. All of them were of good stature—my own height or greater—and I have seen pictures in which they were several inches over six feet. One likes and respects them immediately. Their integrity and hard labor in the mountains has made the expeditions to Everest and the other peaks such great a pleasure.

We climbed up the valley on a road that was little more than the car's width in some places. Everywhere there were signs of recent rock slides where

heavy rains brought round, mica-filled boulders down from the slopes. Stones for making culverts and retaining walls are shaped where they are to be used; the stonework usually being quite small and reminding one of the medieval age. Women and men work on the roads, sitting all day long with a hammer, shaping and laying the stones. They live in temporary thatched houses made of bamboo, which are situated along the road near the work.

The bamboo here is the most graceful in the world. It stands twenty or thirty feet in height, but falls over at the top for eight or nine feet, making a beautiful curve against the sky with the leaves standing out like small fingers from the twigs. It is especially lovely when prayer flags are run along their length, fluttering in the wind on the hillsides like pale ghosts of enchantment.

All of the hills are terraced for growing grain and tea, although we saw no tea today. It is amazing to see the work that has been done here. What we would call mountains are cultivated to their very tops with the thatched roofs and half timbered walls of houses, and the clumps of bamboo rise from these diminutive flats on the steep incline. The view from the fountain at the bend of the road before one arrives in Kalimpong is especially beautiful, stretching towards [Kangchenjunga](#) and [Everest](#) in one direction, and towards the hills of the town dotted with the houses of the Kalimpong in the other.

The three of us arrived at the Political Officer's bungalow after climbing for hours at the cool heights of Gangtok. Elizabeth M. Steel, who is helping with the printing of cloths here, was with us. When we saw B. J. Gould, I felt as though we might as well go home. He was a tall, stooped man with a mole on one cheek. He had beetling eyebrows, grayish skin, and his voice was a roar or deep note. He did not talk, but instead lectured, and called one aside like a naughty child to do so. "I should like to see you a moment," was the usual phrase. He had a way of fussing about and worrying every question until it was thin and exhausted. He engaged every inquiry with a sort of senatorial brutality, enough to quell even the most intrepid individual. We were immediately informed that for the last party it took four months to receive permission to climb Everest. He was in a rotten humour and worried everyone at lunch.

I sat on his left and he regarded us like insects with classified disapproval. "It is not our position here to encourage or help other nationals to enter Tibet. It has become all too common an opinion that going into the country is like taking a ticket to Brighton," he said as he glared, stopping all conversation. The possibilities of entering Tibet began to fall into the lurid light of official red tape. It will be necessary to consult the government at [Simla](#), and I shall have to leave for [Bhutan](#). Changing the topic, we began to discuss wooden book covers and *thangkas*. Gould had some very bad rugs, which had to be admired. He also had several good hangings, although they were all damaged in the earthquake.

After lunch we sat on the porch of the bungalow, which encircled it entirely and had an enormous wisteria climbing to the eaves, twisting its heavy trunk about the pillars. Pots of orchids and flowers were abundant. There had been a heavy hailstorm and the leaves were stripped from everything; new shoots appeared on the wisteria and the almost bare trunks of the tree ferns. The aides-de-camp moved about the property in their red coats with large black frogs. They wore top hats with a feather in front and long pigtail hangs that reached to their

waists. Four of them were always on one mission or another. They wore Tibetan boots, and all were old, shambling about.

Gould wanted his nap. "If you want to see the bazaar, you had better go now before they are all drunk. They have to hold church before eleven so that they are not too drunk to leave the place," he said, and rose while hanging on to the edge of the table, for he had recently undergone an operation on his appendix. The three of us left for the car and started down the hill, and Gould eventually went to the back of the house. Silence descended upon the group. Richardson⁵ had gone around to the back of the house, and Mr. Arbuthnot was gone, although the women remained together. Dr. Morgan was plainly irritated. He remarked the next day, "B. J. is like a pea on a drum: a damn good drum and a poor pea." He had to be taken aside several times that very morning.

The market was interesting, with no more drinking involved than our church fairs at home. All sorts of things were spread out on cloths in the sun of the compound. Yellow saffron, brown rice, spices, and brown dried things, which had appeared in our curry at lunch. I found a very beautiful dagger in a silver sheath, and I realize now I should have bought it. I did not know how good it was and wanted to wait until we arrived in [Gyangtse](#). We took some pictures. They are nice people to photograph, paying no attention whatsoever, but very amused at our ways. It is impossible to adequately describe the rich atmosphere of the place, with turquoise and jewels set heavily in brass and copper, as well as the color of the faces and the variation of smells. We returned to the bungalow at about three o'clock.

In order not to disturb the old boy, we dropped the car at the gate and walked in—this was Elizabeth's idea. No one was around so we sat down on the porch and waited. There was a tall, dark man wandering about, who was wearing a yellow robe and horn-rimmed glasses, and carrying a briefcase. Richardson put in an appearance and said, "How do you like our monk? B. J. will love this."

B. J. later appeared, and the house came to life. The yellow brother was rolled into the back office, and the tones of Gould's voice came through the windows, low and menacing. The man in the yellow robe went away.

"I want a picture of that chap for the C. I. D.," Richardson said as Gould reappeared. He was now in a better mood, and took us aside. We marched and countermarched around the fountain with the triple spitting gold fish while we expanded on the necessity of bearing the white man's burden.

"Even one's servants ride in Tibet. I don't care what you do in Sikkim, but in Tibet one rides," he remarked. He is an old type of frontier man. He sent us off into the back room to write a letter to the government in [Simla](#). The pen was bad and the ink low in the well. The desk was piled high with dog-eared papers containing out of date information and pictures of the [Potala](#) while files spilled and dirtied the table; all about there was an atmosphere of studied neglect. I cleared a little space through the muck and paper to the blotter, and we began to write. A half hour went by and we were nearing the end with some trepidation for

⁵ PGH: The reference is to Hugh E. Richardson, British Political Officer and Officer in Charge of the British Mission to Lhasa. Appointed as British Trade Agent in Gyangtse in 1936. He also served as Acting Political Officer for Sikkim in Gould's absence.

fear that our memories might do us some wrong. He reappeared and said, “Look here, why don’t you write that back at home. It’s always difficult without much time. Morgan will be down tomorrow to see that child with the spells.” He was almost cordial, smiling and encouraging. We learned later that he had gone over the prints minutely behind a newspaper and was impressed. We returned to the porch after folding up our draft, and a Tibetan wearing an embroidered cap and paneled coat brought us tea. There was a lighter note on the conversation. We left before the old man could change his mind. A short talk with Richardson revealed that we might even get to [Lhasa](#) if the wind blew from the south. We shall meet him in Gyangtse. Gould told Elizabeth, who made diplomatic efforts on our behalf, that we should go that far, but he would not make it easy for us. He is very bitter about the trick that Bernard played on the Yellow Hats. It seems that he told the lamas in Tibet and Lhasa that he was a single man and, therefore, able and likely to witness not only the dance, but the secret mysteries of their order as well. He did so and, on returning to Gyangtse, boasted about it to Richardson.⁶ Word got out to the Tibetans and the government was very angry. Reflecting on the permission granted by Gould and upon the government in Simla, they gave him a rap over the knuckles, and he is properly angry about the whole matter.

Richardson told us the story of the wife of the former trade agent, Williamson, who was invited to Lhasa and had to attend many feasts. A man was placed beside her to tell her what to eat and what to avoid. As the dishes were placed before her, he turned to her, and in a whisper said, “Don’t eat that. It’s guts.” Morgan has spent over a year on duty in Lhasa as a doctor. Having been there twice, he is sick of the place.

Returning to Kalimpong, we had to push bullock carts out of the middle of the road where the owners had left them. It was late, and the lights in the car were very bad. On the way back, we saw one of the straw huts afire high on a mountainside. It stood out like a beacon light against the black mass. The surrounding hills, which appear deserted in the day, take on habitation at night, for the lamps are lit and glow like stars against the black firmament of the hills.

* * *

⁶ PGH: There is a problem with this story in that Theos Bernard never returned to Gyangtse after Lhasa. Only Tharchin returned to Gyangtse (Bernard returned via Shigatse and Sakya to Sikkim); Bernard did make boastful statements to Dr. Morgan in Lhasa, so there remains some confusion here as to the exact origin of his story.

THE TWENTY-FIFTH OF APRIL

This morning we went to see the Kalimpong Arts and Crafts with Mr. and Mrs. Morgan,⁷ who have just arrived from a trek, and Mr. Odling showed us around. His office is in the back of one of the buildings, and is a wide airy room with the walls covered with blueprints of the houses he has built here in Kalimpong. He got up with his perennial smile and we started off. We first went to where they were weaving materials on a Swedish loom. These were installed by a Swedish woman who had worked at Tagore's place, [Santiniketan](#). She had not liked it there, living in a mud hut and mixing holiness with the pattern and warp of her weaving. She was run down when she came to the Arts and Crafts, and there that she set up the looms. Some time later, she made an attempt to travel into Tibet without the permission of the Political Officer. She was captured after crossing the mountains, but escaped and tried again. She was writing copy for a Swedish newspaper. The second time they confiscated her photographic apparatus and sent her packing. She was an enthusiastic sailor and came from Sweden to India in a boat with an outboard motor.

To continue with the industries, they have admirably combined modern simplicity and design with the colours and design of the Tibetan weavings. It is a cottage industry. Woodwork, weaving, rug making, and making bric-a-brac are all a part of the scheme to teach the natives to respect handiwork and to learn that there is no stigma attached to doing manual labor. We spent the morning wandering about the area.

That afternoon, after going to the dairy, we went to see Dr. Graham.⁸ There were three types of farms on one hill: tropical, citrus, and American corn. The school and the new kindergarten buildings are very well done. Norman is a good architect in that he concentrates on light, practicability, and the effect on children, although the placement of his buildings is poor. The kindergarten is his best work.

We drank tea with a crowd in the doctor's study, but he was too surrounded to catch a glimpse of his great personality. We spent our time admiring his collection of bronze, brass, and copper from Tibet; it is the finest collection in the world. There was one especially beautiful piece in the shape of a devil dagger, which is to be thrown like a *dorjé* at the evil spirits outside a monastery door. We shall go back later to meet this charming man, and I shall describe him then. Teas are rotten affairs to get to know anyone.

We returned home in time to wash for supper. Norman's new radio had arrived, and we listened to the cricket scores from England. Conversation at dinner hinged on the architecture of Simla: the mistakes and false chimneys of the

⁷ PGH: Thsi referes to Dr. William Stanley Morgan (1901-1977), a physician attached to the British Mission in Lhasa.

⁸ PGH: Graham was a missionary who ran an orphanage in Kalimpong.

administrator's houses, and the good, modern architecture in the government buildings. I was very interested to hear these men discuss diplomacy. The Maharaja of [Alwar](#), who was a bloody man, came under discussion. He used to have petrol poured on his polo pony and have it set afire if the beast did not play well. When finally he was ousted by the work of Lord Willingdon, they found in his palace over a hundred skeletons of people who had been murdered under his order. At a final banquet given for Lord Willingdon, attended by the Maharajas, this particular Maharaja also attended. Lord Willingdon went down after the function was over and told the man how complimented he was by his attendance, even though he was a foe. The man burst into tears. Willingdon has left his mark upon the spirit of India, and even those who opposed him loved him in the end.

* * *

THE TWENTY-NINTH OF APRIL

For five days now I have neglected my diary, but what has happened—like most perfect times—has been nothing short of delightful. We have wandered day after day through the village swinging our cameras like lamps in our hand, and watching the pink, white, and blue prayer flags wave on their lithe bamboo poles. We have followed the road to the monastery for two days now, but not until yesterday did we make it to the top and into the compound. The road goes up to the right from the main trade route, and is set with heavy cobbles. The charcoal carriers travel up and down the road, leaning their loads on the crutch of a walking stick that they carry. There is also a large corral and posting house below, where the Tibetans in their black kilts and carrying long silver sheathed knives sit and talk out the day. They wear their hair in black pigtailed tied up with a knot of magenta or purple brown ribbon. They have faces much like our American Indian, and smile continuously. They are always laughing and think we are a great joke.

At the monastery,⁹ which was quite new, we found three young monks playing uproariously in the temple courtyard. It looked like a game of tag. They were building a new coping to the yard, and little flowers had been set out to beautify the place. One of them opened up the temple doors to let us in. They were stunning doors, orange red wood with great hinges of beaten copper across them. The handles were huge rings of brass that turned to unlatch. The jambs and lintel were carved and painted in blues, reds, and whites, all brilliant colours, on the dark wood. The walls were of plaster white. Inside all was darkness, but the walls of the temple were completely frescoed. The work was very good, and the colours mellow. Some of the figures were obviously portraits and were excellently done. On the altar were silver bowls, some large and others small, filled with water colored to look like tea. Below these were the two teaching seats arranged face to face with canopies suspended over them. These were high and intended to be sat upon in a cross-legged posture. The desks had spirit bells, *dorjés* and bowls on them. Below those seats and along the sides of the center of the temple were the bench-like desks and sitting mats of the students in two rows face to face. Yet the temple was not very tidy, and was articles were piled in the dark corners. Situated in back were the glass cases for Tibetan books. These books had heavy wooden covers wrapped in yellow silk, ties of red, and end pieces of red and blue that fell from between the board. These were in cases between the three chief images, Amitabha, Gautama, and a Tibetan deity, who is perhaps a form of Avalokitesvara, only male instead of the female Guanyin of the Chinese. We had a good time browsing, and the monks were hugely amused, talking amongst themselves and laughing. We found two large horns hanging from the pillars. These pillars were beautifully carved, tapering to a capitoll, which acts as a beam

⁹ PGH: The monastery being referred to is Thekchen Chöling, which is on the outskirts of Kalimpong.

under the actual roof. The temple was quite clean, and did not have any good banners, although there were some paintings under glass. One banner hung centrally from above between the seats of the students and the pillars. The images were very bad and of foreign workmanship. The demon, however, was excellently made and full of life.

After signing our names in the book and leaving an offering, we went on down the hill. Thunder and rain seized the mountains, and it did not seem that we could make the other side of the hills in time. We moved down the road playing with the little goats, which are terribly soft and full of life, and bound as though someone released a spring in their tiny tummies. The dogs here are the most amusing in the world. They look as though all the combinations and permutations of dogs had come together producing fuzzy mongrels of the sweetest sort. Their ears are universally droopy and drag on the ground. They are usually quite thin, which results in misshapen heads, and they have legs like a Pekingese. Their coats are no particular shade of color. I found one with black feet, ears, and tail, while the rest of his body was a sort of mule grey.

We stopped at the Industries to see what was being made, and it was going full blast. We got a lot of ideas from them. Exiting the building, we noticed Dr. Graham cantering down the road on a pony and looking good at seventy-six years of age, but we could not catch up with him. Instead, we wandered up the hill with the storm still growling overhead. I was anxious to finish the last of the design for Bunty so that she could use in her work.

Commander Lyttleton arrived for tea, and I met him after the painting was finished. Following supper—or rather, during dessert—Raja Dorjé¹⁰ arrived. As he sat down, the door outside opened.

“Oh, its one of the Bhuts,” Bunty remarked. I suggested that we throw a *dorjé* at it. “Well, Dorjé’s here; we’ll throw him around after dinner,” she replied. I felt as though the ‘foot had gotten into it,’ but he thought it was grand fun. He was wearing a high Tibetan collared coat with a single looped gold button on the right shoulder. It was black with gold edging, heavy, and with sleeves that turned back to show the white silk lining. It became him. He had a broad face with a drooping mustache, drooping because it grows that way on his face, for it is clipped short. He has a wonderful sense of humour.

We played a game after dinner in which one pushes little counters around; it is a sort of combination of pool and tiddlywinks. A round of songs started with the Commander, who was burlesquing at the piano. We all began to sing, and Dorjé and Bunty began a village dance in the middle of the room. Norman was singing “Billy Boy” in a flat tone and at the top of his lungs. We were all making as much noise as humanly possible. About a minute later, Dorjé brought in a ten-foot long Tibetan horn and blew something akin to “Tit Willow” as if performed by a Russian male chorus with sore throats. Awful sounds like a dying cow with a basso profundo came out of the brass monster. As it kept bending in the center where it telescopes for carrying, we had to form a brigade to hold it up. After awhile Dorjé’s pit began to build up and the thing would not blow. In the meantime, the piano was still going full tilt. In any other country we

¹⁰ PGH: This is the renounced King (*rāja*) of Bhutan; father of Jigme Taring.

should have been arrested. Bunty played, as well as Commander Lyttleton, who had recently married and traveled to [Sundakphu](#) Mountain. We sang the song books in their entirety. At about half past eleven, Norman remarked, "Well Dorjé, do you think you can get home, or shall we give you a bed here?" Raja decided he could get home and began to curtsy out the front door. He looked comical with his stout Tibetan legs encased in heavy knitted black socks with no garters, as he raised his robe to his waist. One of these dips brought him into collision with the front door, which precipitated him down the stone steps still doing his bow. We all went to bed dog-tired.

This morning Bunty sent in a note to us that read, "Lads, snow's showing. B. O." We dashed out of bed. I put on my kimono and skidded downstairs to the porch in back. There were earth's highest peaks revealed after the storm of the night before. Kangchenjunga was a tremendous pyramid of heaped snow rising over the foothills in the quiet light. The entire range covered the horizon with their stupendous quiet. From the tops of the peaks streamed banners of snow like the thin smoke of a distant fire, but they were long, blue and cold against the sky. I ran upstairs to tell Bailey. I shaved while he went down, and then left to photograph. We met on the hill above the house. On the road up we met Bunty, Norman, and Elizabeth, who were out for a ride. They told us to go to the top of the hill. Upon arriving, the whole glory of the range was revealed. There are no mountains on earth as beautiful. It seemed so foolish even to attempt photographs; nothing can give the glory of those peaks, save the eye and the mind alone. They exist only for imagination; they are symbols, not realities; they are aspiration and not humility; they are the symbols of greatness and of the soul.

In the afternoon we went to Raja Dorjé's for tea. Commander and Mrs. Lyttleton came late in one car; and Bunty, Bill, and I in another, which was a rather decrepit Ford. In order to go to the post office, the others had started before us. The boy stopped right in the middle of the road, but Bunty went right on talking so it was two or three minutes before any of us realized that we were not moving. We had no intention of going into the post.

Dorjé lives near the end of the road. One enters through a stone, arched entrance, like those of the temples, followed by a short avenue of *Cryptomerias*. The avenue is very narrow and is lined by painted green petrol tins filled with flowers. Once in the grove where the house stands, there is no place to park except for the front lawn. The house is a terrible combination of Tibetan and Victorian bad taste. It has a balcony running across the front of New Orleans iron flowers, which have been painted Buddhist yellow, and the pillars supporting this upper porch are dark red. The roof is red painted corrugated iron, and on top of this are the golden finials of a temple. The Dalai Lama stayed here between 1908 and 1912.

Dorjé was in fine form, and was wearing a heavy plum colored robe that was just short enough to show his hairy legs over the black long stocking and the Oxford shoes, which are black and look painful. Raneé is delightful.¹¹ She is a small Tibetan woman with a sweet smile and a face the mellow color of old bronze. Her eyes are brown with a suggestion of Tibetan coral in their depths. Her

¹¹ PGH: This refers to Rani Dorjé, the wife of Raja Dorjé.

hands are small, folded, and Chinese. She was wearing a vivid blue shirt, plum colored robe, striped apron, and a beautiful Moghul plaque of a peacock in enamel and rubies at her throat. It was hung on Tibetan coral and gray, mottled beads. It suited her well. She was the woman who refused to marry in Lhasa and whose letters to Dorjé were carried by Dr. Graham. Dorjé is the same age as Bunty, and studied together for nearly twelve years under the same Amah and tutor. Tea was a profusion of cakes and bun breads.

After finishing his work at the post, Commander Lyttleton arrived. Dorjé went out to meet him, and there were the sounds of a wrestling match on the porch. Dr. Graham, who was sitting near Bill, smiled. In they both came panting, bursting through the curtain hung across the door as Mrs. Lyttleton sat in the far rear. A conversation ensued about the drinking horns, which were hanging on the wall, and the armor of the Bhutias, which resembled that of the Saracens in the days of the Crusades. Bunty was feeling a little absent, and sat over in the corner by herself not saying very much. Dorjé bustled around the room passing butter, jam, and cakes of which there was a grand supply. He got bored and went outside, only to reappear with two silver Tibetan, or rather Bhutanese trumpets. They were about seven feet long and beautifully made. The Commander took one, and growing bright red in the face tried to blow it. A horrible noise came out, sounding like something most reluctant to die. Dorjé blatted on one for a while, and the party began to come to life. Both trumpets were called into service and things turned hilarious. Dr. Graham hit the proper note first, and then I followed suit. We howled and tooted away together with the horns lying in the center of the rug, bell to bell, like two snarling dragons. It was marvelous, very good fun. Britannia warmed up by the minute and soon wanted to blow. Liz was nearly killed trying to blow, turning bright purple while the horn made a slight whisper like morning leaves. Dorjé decided that we needed some lessons in blowing, so he went out back and brought in a couple of Tibetans carrying brass horns. They went out on the front porch. One would blow A-U-M, and then let the note sink to the lightest breath of its former roundness. Meanwhile, the second horn would come in strongly once more, so that the sacred syllable seemed to be constantly repeated in a sort of celestial canon of music. I tried to blow with them, but my lips had come to lack control, and I could not achieve the horn's deep note anymore. The Tibetans stood oddly with their shoulders hunched over the horn like sitting vultures and their fangs stuck out behind so that their lips were in a straight line with the mouthpiece. This was really important for the tone in any other position because the instrument is not a comfortable one. The horn's sound cannot be prolonged, and bubbles away with too much effort. Dorjé was as pleased as punch, and the poor, berobed servants were nearly worn out from playing the horns.

We began to leave, but Dorjé decided to show us the rooms in which the Dalai Lama had stayed during his exile in the Chinese invasion. It was firstly a temple, and secondly a room for the Lama's contemplation. As one entered, straight-ahead and to the left was the raised throne next to the window with the desk in front of it. On this were a bell and *dorjé*, a teapot for libations with peacock feathers in its top, a small metal concave mirror, and a double skull drum. Mixed with the feathers were the dried stems of a grass sacred to the Tibetans.

The throne was of gilded wood, painted with the rose design. On the Lama's left was a case on which were books and a great deal of junk. Next was a long table on which were all sorts of things, mostly in poor condition.

The altar, or rather two altars—one before the other—deserve description. Firstly, on the floor was a long box for burning incense with a slit in the top to allow the smoke to rise. Next came the first altar. At either end of it were silver butter lamps, large and beautifully worked. Between these were eight small ones filled and waiting for the ceremony to occur on the next day. Buddhist sacred days are the eighth, eighteenth, and thirtieth of the month, though all except for the last I shall have to check. There were also the usual eight bowls filled with water as offerings to the Gods. Behind this small altar was the usual altar, which had a similar layout, but also contained beautifully wrought bowls of parched rice with tops on them. Trumpets and prayer wheels were standing about the room. The altar itself was too confused to be worth mentioning. The usual three deities were present, Amitabha, Buddha, and he who introduced Buddhism to Tibet.¹² On either side of the altar were bookcases. These contained the hundred and twenty sacred books.¹³ These were splendid examples of the binders' craft. Each page was put on hide and separated from the rest, the writing occupying the central portion, which was gold on black leather. On either side of the text were pictures, similar to Persian miniatures, and of fully, fine workmanship. Each page had two or three thicknesses of brocade folded over the writing to preserve it, so that each page of the book was a sort of sandwiched text.

We left Raja Dorjé's feeling that a rich treasure house had opened its doors, revealing the riches within like a split pomegranate.

* * *

¹² PGH: "He who introduced Buddhism to Tibet" refers to Padmasambhava, also known as "Guru Rinpoche."

¹³ DE: This is most likely a reference to the Kangyur, the collection of canonical texts considered to be the words of Buddha.

THE THIRTIETH OF APRIL

Today was celebrated in all the monasteries so smell of the butter lamps was noticeable. The air was also thick with the more subtle incense of prayers from the long sere flags and the circle of the knotted prayer wheels.

In the morning we went down to the Industries. They were having a white sale, and all the vultures were there to buy the oddments and mourn the end of things. Bunty was in her office. Since we had been all over the bazaar jostling amongst the brave-chested Tibetans with their mules and the marketers, all of whom were buying things for Saturday of next week, which is Market Day, we asked her where we could find some of the silver and brass work of Tibet. She told us to come back later, and when we did, she took Liz and us to a silversmith's shop up the road in the direction of Tibet.

The shop was open along the front, its corrugated roof under the shadows of the streaming prayer flags and the leaves of a great tree. At one end was a raised dais on which sat the smith, a friend of Bunty, with his work about him. He was very skillful, not a whit less so than the old smiths of times gone out of ken. He had butter lamps of the same beautiful pattern as those at Raja Dorjé's temple. Bunty talked to him. Silver was at a rupee a *tola*, which meant that silver was worth less than its own weight. There are forty-two *tolas* to a pound, and a rupee weighs exactly one *tola*. "This is really very c-h-e-a-p," spelled Bunty. Bailey found a beautiful bowl of old craftsmanship. He left it to be repaired around the base, which had broken in the beading. It cost twenty-five rupees weighing that much in silver gilt.

In the afternoon we had a screaming contest at tea. Bunty yelled at the top of her voice, "Now I won't have you all screaming at me!" We said farewell to Commander and Mrs. Lyttleton. They are delightful people, both of them. He is a man of great wit and understanding, and will go a long ways in his field. He makes one like him at first sight.

* * *

THE SECOND OF MAY

Today is Sunday. We went up to the church at St. Andrew's Colonial Homes to hear Mr. Sandford of Marlborough speak during the service. He was full of schoolmaster platitudes and gave neither a good speech, nor a continuous one, but hemmed and hawed through the half hour allotted.

This afternoon we went to see [Rabindranath Tagore](#),¹⁴ who has taken the house next to the Odling's on the hill. As we walked over along the hill, Norman's leg began to squeak from a lack of oil, a ghastly sound to come from an apparently sound limb. It reminded me of the story that Bunty told about the disappointed bees attacking the good hard English oak of that appendage. We came down the hill to the house where he would be greeting people. Hundreds, rich in color with saris and men's turbans, had gathered and were milling about the house. Few Tibetans, save women, were in the group. As we went down the last turn in the road, we saw Dr. Graham and Mr. Sandford entering the group. The people gathered and sat on rugs placed around the *porte cochère* of the house. Mothers of various ethnicities—Mongolian, Bengali, and Gurkha—tried to keep their infants quiet. There were chairs in rows for the Europeans. I sat down with Dr. Graham, and Bunty went over amongst the native women, who welcomed her as one of them. She is universally loved here. We waited as the local men in charge of the reception provided the women with wreaths of flowers, leis, and bouquets to fill their hands. Tagore entered, while a son and his wife waited in the background. He was a tall man with piercing eyes and wore a buttoned-up coat of brown, wool-like material.

Tagore came slowly from the black of the house into the light. He walked with obvious weariness and uncertainty, but did not take the arm offered to him by his son as he descended the steps. A hush well observed even by the children fell upon the crowd. He walked to the chair under the canopy of the *porte cochère*, which was placed in a throne-like manner, and sat down with his eyes half closed. When he was seated, three girls with beautiful voices and of great beauty sang a song of welcome to him. He listened with his eyes shut and hands resting on his knees. The first impression one has of Tagore is that of majesty. Though not a large man, he seemed to tower above the people around him. He wore a homespun coat of rough camel's hair, which made him seem patriarchal. His face was that of a sage, with full white beard and mustache. His hair receded back from his temples and pink scalp, and fell in waves over his ears like Liszt. His face was an even brown of a smooth, woody color. His hands were very strong, yet of great grace. When he shook hands, it was not the grip of an old man, but youthful and crushing. After the song finished, the women came forward and laid their leis around his neck and put bouquets into his hands, until he was quite clothed in flowers. He had the bouquets put aside on a table and cloaked in

¹⁴ PGH: He was a famous Bengali Poet.

flowers began a speech in Bengali larded with Hindustani. He had a rich though old voice. He was seventy-six. He spoke softly and melodiously. Initially, it was difficult to hear him, but the strength of his voiced increased over time. As he talked, a little child fell asleep at my feet, and a mother consoled a crying child at her breast. He seemed to be unconscious of the people, and the even tenor of his speaking continued without interruption. When he had finished, he spoke in English.

“I wish to express my appreciation to my Western friends for coming to pay respect to this old poet. It makes me very happy to see all races here together, for my poetry is not for one people nor for one land but for the whole world,” he said. Although these are not his exact words, he spoke near to them in a fine voice that without effort made its wisdom felt.

Dr. Graham then went forward to introduce the Westerners to him. I was amongst the first.

“These are the two young men from America who have come here to do work in Tibet,” said Dr. Graham.

“How long have you been in India?” asked Tagore.

“A few weeks only,” I answered. He looked at me through his thick greenish glasses and held my hand firmly in his strong fingers.

“I wish you great success with your work,” he said and smiled up at me.

There is something in the man that leaves one dissatisfied when one has left him. I went a few yards away to where Bunty was sitting. A brown-faced, dowdy woman came up to us, and in a loud disturbing voice began to talk about roses. She seemed to shake the mountains with her stupidity, and I felt ashamed of our whole race—on one side was the silent and voluble reason of Tagore, and on the other, this sounding and empty brass of England. I muttered to Mr. Sandford, “I wish we could shut her up.” I walked away and looked at the mountains. For a moment the clouds lifted over the [Jelep La](#); the snow was golden in the late light of the afternoon. Grey mist rushed down the valley and climbed Kalimpong hill. A grey cloud was overhead, and the valleys as far as sight were filled with the landlocked clouds. This vision was like Tagore’s wisdom in that motley crowd. Golden and shining with an unearthly inner light, the mountains stood for all the secret food of mankind, and the mysterious providence of nature. Suddenly it seemed very clear to me. The gathering became a symbol. The woman with the loud voice was a part of that great chain which our forward leaders drag after them. I heard a rustle in the crowd. The clouds closed again. Tagore had risen, walking slowly into the house. The afternoon was over. We walked back to the house where Dr. Graham told us about Aomee Semple McPherson¹⁵ stealing one of his young proselytes from him in Palestine. She was extremely irritated because the authorities would not allow her to produce a play of the resurrection of Christ at the site of the tomb.

We had a cold supper, and ate ‘dirty,’ as Bunty said. Mr. Kydd promises to get the bungalows for [Sundakphu](#).

¹⁵ PGH: He was a controversial Christian evangelist from Los Angeles and founder of Foursquare Church.

THE FOURTH OF MAY

Aku left yesterday to meet us at [Mane Bhanjang](#). We left around nine o'clock in Mr. Pempa Hiahy's little, green Ford, with lunch on the back of the seat, the tripod on the floor, and our fourth dragoon guards' suitcase jammed into the stuffing behind the rear seat. We started off in the sunlight, but after descending into the Tista Valley and across the bridge, we climbed the other side through tea plantations into the clouds. These plantations looked like a bit of Japan transplanted here. The bushes, which were cropped short, seemed like little green hills and ridges under the *Cryptomerias*. The coolies, mostly women, walk among them hoeing and spading the earth with their hoe forks, while others have baskets on their backs and pluck the leaves to be cured that day. I grew rapidly colder as we rose into the thick growth of cedar and *Cryptomeria* above. Often the clouds hid the road so that we could see only a few feet in front of the car, but occasionally they opened to show the hills with their even, sun-dappled flanks of green tea and the dark spires of the *Cryptomerias*. In and out of the hills, we drove past little villages, with houses made of matting, until we came to [Ghum](#).

It was here that Mr. Kydd was supposed to have a coolie waiting with our bungalow passes. No one was at the station of the little D. H. Railway, so I called Kydd on the phone. He was full of apologies, but had not yet obtained the passes. I told him we would come after them.

When we arrived at the office of the Darjeeling Times, nobody was present. I waited about fifteen minutes before Kydd showed up, although when he arrived, he was still without the beastly passes. He was a very fat man; the type with an overhanging belly. He was red faced, talked loudly, and fussily complained the whole time anyone talked to him. It was taxes. His neighbor had not paid, but was a far more successful man than he was.

"It's a glib tongue, and a slippery way that counts more than honesty," he said. I judged he referred to his honesty, and thought that three days had elapsed since we asked for passes. "You can't get a thing done around here unless you bribe and pull for what your worth. The Governor convened [mela](#) and there's nothing to be done now. Those passes should have been here three days ago. I have been down to the Deputy Commissioner's Office three times myself, and he is always too busy. But then you know how lawyers are! They care more about wrangling than turning an honest penny," he said as he looked at me for approval.

"What was in the paper this morning?" I asked.

"I don't know. I haven't seen it yet. You see I'm the editor," he said with pride. I had seen the paper. The front page was badly inked and consisted of steamboat sailings and 'To Let' advertisements. There followed a page of bad photographs telegraphed on an old machine, and then towards the fourth page a few squibs of badly edited news with the important facts wholly omitted.

Kydd was fighting for time. He was by experience adept. With a sudden show of energy he turned around, his red face beaming under hair that was grey

from age and port wine in seltzer. “We’ll go down and get the passes from the office. You know how these *baboos*¹⁶ are. Have you room?” he asked as I looked down at the car with our bag, the chauffeur, Bailey, and the tripod in it. It was a possibility. Kydd measures at least twenty inches across the prominent portion of his body when viewed from behind. We went down the steps to the car. He got in heavily, and we wandered through the crooked hill streets of Darjeeling. It reminded me of Italian towns where the roads follow the old vineyard levels between dusty olive trees. In this part of the world, there were the *Cryptomerias* and absurd Victorian gingerbread houses. The were names such as, Dahlia, the Grange, Himalay, and Rose all engraved on stone and set into the stucco of the walls. We met the runner with the passes on the road. Turning back we saw interesting shops with jewelry, such as large beads of gold between red felt. I must get some for Molly.

It was half past one before we arrived at Mane Bhanjang. Aku was waiting for us with good saddles and better ponies than I had expected. The packhorses had gone on ahead. We started on foot. I remembered lunch, and we ate it leaning on the car while the curious villagers stared at us. They were mostly Nepalese with a mixture of Tibetan. The shopkeepers were as usual the Mauris, the Jews of India. It was a bad day, cloudy with occasional rain, and the mist tore through the trees, streamed past wet rocks, and filled up all the hollows with ghostly light.



The first section of the trail climbed two thousand feet in about an hour,

¹⁶ PGH: Usually spelled “*babu*,” this refers to a clerk in the British service.

which Baily and I walked. We needed exercise after life in the plains. Our breath came painfully, for the pace I had set was too fast. When we reached the top of the ridge, Bailey began to ride. Aku was a picture of Oriental solemnity. He carried an umbrella, and wore jodhpurs and golf socks with Oxford shoes. He had a great, white, turtle necked sweater that conformed to the contours of his dignified belly. On his head he wore a dirty brocaded cap with a red button on top. His face was in a perpetual smile, and his Mongolian moustache dripped rain. Helping him was a thin, nondescript brigand who also carried an umbrella and prided himself on his Scotch-plaid turban. We carried on at a fairly even pace, about two and a half miles per hour. Around four-thirty we arrived at the bungalow at [Tonglu](#).

The bamboos were beautiful. With the rain on them, they hung weeping in bowed sorrow in contrast to the twisted, hard, riddled trunks of the *Rhododendron grande*, which, here, grow to forty feet in height. Most of those we saw had shed their flowers of pale yellow, and the browning petals littered the trail. Everything was moist; the mist leaves droplets wherever it strikes the earth. It cannot truly be called mist for it is a cloud resting on the hills.

It was cold when we arrived at the Bungalow, and we could see nothing, not even to the edge of the khud (cliff or ravine). Bailey found the temperature at nightfall had dropped to fifty-five. We were glad to eat supper and crawl into our sleeping bags. The bungalows are badly designed, and the fireplaces give no heat. It is not surprising given their small size. They are about two by two and a half feet, three feet deep, and have a flue at the back. The rooms also have large screened ventilators leading into the attic so that all the heat travels directly out the roof. We gave up, and feeling a little discouraged went to sleep.

* * *

THE FIFTH OF MAY

I awoke around five-thirty hoping to see the mountains standing stark and clear in the distance. A dense fog swirled like dirty mop rags around the windows and into the open door. A crow cawed sleepily, and outside the horses stirred their little bells. Bailey turned over and remarked, "It looks like shit." I agreed with him and went back to sleep. At six I was awake again, and this time the sun struck across the windows. I sat up and looked out the door. For an instant it was clear. [Kanchenjunga](#) and [Kabru](#) seemed to be golden islands of the Hesperides over the shining clouds. Little wisps of blue smoke curled about their snows. The vision lasted about a minute, but a cloud soon swept up over the bungalow, and we heard again the steady tapping of rain on the tin roof.

We ate breakfast at six-thirty and were on the road by eight, but much happened in between. We discovered in our little john the usual sort of close stool on which the Englishman dictates the policies of empire in the far corners of earth. Both Bailey and I did our share to sully the china, and a half hour later a tremendous hullabaloo was raised. We had no sweeper. Aku was paralyzed, and the Chowkidar nearly shed his turkey-red turban. What was to be done? No one could empty the morning efforts save a sweeper, which we had not brought. The courtyard was full of evil smelling natives, only one of which would not have defiled himself doing worse tasks, but no, a sweeper, an outcast must dump the commode. The Chowkidar wanted a rupee, eight *annas* to have a sweeper come seven miles to dump the thing. I became angry and told him that he would get eight *annas*, and he could jolly well dump it himself. Aku remarked, "But he is the Chowkidar." The Chowkidar wrung his hands. At current prices in America the use of public cans is worth, at best, ten cents a try. We had both tried, so that was twenty cents. Eight *annas* (half a rupee) were worth nineteen cents, which for this part of the world was enough, considering the lower standard of living. He could jolly well twiddle his forefinger in it or get someone else!

Both Bailey and I were very discouraged by the weather. Rocks were slippery, and the trail was full of wet clay. My boots held with their cleats, but Bill was wearing his tennis shoes, which were soon soaked. He never said a word about them, which is to his credit. I should have stopped the work for a dry pair.

The road descended in the forenoon about two thousand feet, every foot of which we noted as one to be climbed in the afternoon. But this was the most beautiful part of the trip. Occasional brushes of sunlight swept over the hills when a patch of blue showed in the cloud. Momentarily, it was delightfully warm, but then the cold damp of the cloud reasserted itself and made us walk faster. Along the side of the trail, fern filled grottoes dripped crystal water that fell in long drops and ran from hanging moss with a musical sound into a basin below. In one of these Bailey found a giant Jack-in-the-Pulpit. The hood measured nearly seven inches across and was bright green, spotted and streaked with brown of a rusty shade. The calyx was reinforced inside with ribs of brown that followed the brown

streaks on the outside. These ribs looked the same as those found on the bottom of a toadstool. The spadix was elongated and thin so that it followed out through the curled tip of the calyx and hung for several inches on the ground. Having such an elongated member to facilitate pollination, one suspects it must be fertilized by some creeping insect. Its leaf, though larger, was like that of our Jack-in-the-Pulpit at home, for it had three leaves on a thick fleshy stem, with two of these to each plant. We also found a smaller variety similar to our own, but with a different leaf. This variety had a cluster of five leaves like that of a Lupin. After walking for ten miles, it was time for lunch at a little village. Bailey had put the arum into his breast pocket. The man who met us rushed up to him crying, "poison, poison," and snatched the flower from him throwing it away.

We wanted to try the can opener we bought in El Cajon for the first time. Both of us had forgotten how to use it and made a mess of it, spilling tomato juice on all over us to the amusement of two old hags hanging over the wall of the house. They talked, laughed and spat while we ate cold chicken and drank our tomato juice.

We walked long enough to get the chilly mist out of our bones, and then rode the rest of the way. It turned out to be a wise decision for the trail mounted rapidly upward to eleven thousand nine hundred and twenty feet where the bungalow of Sandakphu was. No sooner than we had arrived at two o'clock than it began to rain and hail. The bungalow is new, but the genius who designed it put wired glass into the steel windows so that it is impossible to see out, mist or no mist.

The *baboo* that has been following us came in to talk this evening and wanted to know how to build fireplaces. When he had garnered all the information he wanted, he dismissed the whole thing with a wave of his hand and Oriental superiority, saying, "Ah, yes, there are thousands of such empirical formulas for the construction of fireplaces."

"Yes, all formulas dealing with flow and convection are the result of trial and error, the airplane itself is an excellent example," I answered. I hate the sniveling, dirty-faced Bengalis with their smooth voices, their thieving ways, and their dishonest speech. I only wish that the Ghurkas had destroyed the entire race of them. I shall complete the diagram for Norman and Bunty tomorrow if this weather keeps up.

* * *

THE SIXTH OF MAY

I was up at five-thirty this morning, and the mountains were still covered with clouds, but bright sunlight lay near the ridges, making them like flames where the *Rhododendrons* were thickest. The clouds soon moved away from Everest. The mountains are about ninety miles away, and Everest is sandwiched between the long line of peaks to the southwest and the tremendous [Makalu](#) to the northwest. Bailey and I were jubilant, but wary of the clouds mounding up in the valley to the east. The wind was, however, cold and from the southwest; and we hoped it would clear the clouds completely from the prospect. Kanchenjunga was lost in great masses of billowy mist to the north. Our hopes seemed justified, for gradually the sere white of the Everest group became clearer and clearer; a great wedge of wind broke the layers of clouds apart to reveal more and more white teeth at the edge of the horizon. Bill and I took a couple of pictures. We returned around the rear of the great rock that towers above the bungalow to the south and looked for a long time into the distant plains of India through a rift in the clouds. It was about seven when we returned to the bungalow. A few shouts brought Aku, sans umbrella, running down with breakfast.



I asked him to make scones. He did, and I still do not know what ingredients he put into them. They tasted very good in the mouth, but smelled vaguely like horse manure under the nose.¹⁷ The result? We ate them and asked no questions. We scarcely finished breakfast in time. [Kanchenjunga](#) could be seen through the level striations of the clouds. Its peak, twenty-four miles away, towers high above one. It seemed strange to see Kabru, usually a long, sagged ridge of white snow, end with a perfect pyramid to the west of Kanchenjunga. We got out the cameras and waited. I have never seen such color. The snows seemed diaphanous, unreal, and something cloudlike floating in the deep blue of the high sky. The snow shadow was the same blue as the air, so that the mountain had no solidity, only a dreamlike airiness. There it floated as a cloud among other clouds, never clear enough of them to reveal its form, but instead like a presence of reality in a misty world. We never saw it, for the clouds piled themselves against the snow, obliterating every true line of its curved ramparts in unsubstantial pageantry; and that cloud—cold, grey, and filled with small rain—came swirling over the ridge, boiling up from the depths like smoke driven by a great wind. We watched the sunlight fleeing westward towards Everest, which was now lost in the round clouds. It lighted ridge after ridge, the shadow of the rain following close behind with the moss cloud that stole the color from the *Rhododendrons* and wreathed its tendrils about the trunks of the stunted spruce. The land grew barren, brown, and filled with sorrow and poverty. It might have been an upland heath, a peat bog, or an unwholesome fen filled with the rank mist of evening. We could have cried at our loss; the change was sudden and complete as robbery. The beauty of the mounting sunlit snows was gone, and now the void mist moistened everything with its vile spittle.

We folded up the camera and returned to the bungalow. It had seemed miserable before with its wired, opaque panes of glass and whitewashed walls. Now it was doubly so. The ineffectual fires, whose heat was no sooner created than lost, made us angry, and then began the rain, pouring torrents on the roof and chilling the cold damp air. We made a couple of attempts at walking through the mist, only to be driven back by the cold rain. On one of these, however, we managed to solve the sweeper difficulty.

Aku made an excellent curry, having first cut up the chicken with a meat axe to add interest to its taste. He is a good cook if one ignores the fingernails. All the fine herbs of the earth are lodged under them, and they are spiced with the filings from hooves and the dandruff of white mules. But we shall ignore that, for I did not shave this morning myself. Bailey has not shaved for two days and is acquiring the appearance of explorer.

Bailey sat in front of the fire with the bellows. He had just finished papering up the various architectural defects of the place. He wore a flannel shirt and a muffler tied crossways with the ends tucked into his belt. He was leaning on one hand, and was a picture of dejection. This morning he found a piece of bamboo and manufactured a marvelous object for dusting the flies off the cake. I played with my Rolleiflex camera and then degenerated to designing fireplaces for Norman Odling. I designed the flue seven inches too small because I forgot

¹⁷ PGH: Dung is used for fuel, hence the smell.

that the radius was not the diameter. It was a lovely drawing, all colored showing the convection.

We have been thinking of home. Our families were probably sitting on their terraces watching the sun go down. I imagine the daffodils are out, and one lone *poeticus* appears near the root of the hickory tree. The roses send out their long thick shoots with soft thorns, and over the hall grow purple blossoms of wisteria. They are probably thinking that we are having a marvelous time, but the rain pours down cold and damp.

* * *

THE SEVENTH OF JUNE: KARPONANG BUNGALOW

Awake at five thirty, we both spent the half hour waiting for the other to get up first and begin the agony of packing where we left off the night before. I was no sooner in the tub than Bunty knocked on the door to ask if we were awake. Moving the negatives along the string before getting in, I noticed they were all good and that the catalog was finished. We were both downstairs by fifteen after six. We completed the packing by adding the Li-Los and the heavy boots to the canned goods. I think both Bailey and I felt a little sad at leaving Glen Rilley. It was awkward at breakfast. I ate too fast and felt badly afterwards.

As I got the first things together, Bailey loaded the Pempa Heshy, which was an old Willys. As we left, Bunty had a good laugh when she found we were bringing our bowls with us, and that I had my amulet. We were on the road at seven, having said goodbye to Mr. and Mrs. John Muir and to Liz. I think Liz has truly come to like us in spite of our nationality, and she was sorry to see us go.

The road to Gangtok was fraught with interest. We lost sight of the first pass at Rongpo. We then came upon an area where some coolies had made a large road repair left all the litter in the middle of the road. The driver just honked his horn. He was very indignant when we suggested he should heave a little rock over the edge and into the Tista, which was a roaring, muddy torrent of water below. In two minutes we cleared more rock than all twenty coolies did in the next five. We spent the rest of the time speculating on a canoe or flatboat trip from Gangtok to the sea.

In Gangtok Mr. Richardson was feeling very political in the absence of B. J., which made it rather nasty for a few minutes. He was planning to hold us back until the twelfth so that a *poona* and wife might pass through without being contaminated by us. There was much discussion of what liars Americans were, with special reference to Bernard and Mrs. Cutting. Apparently Bernard appeared in the newsreel wearing a lama's cloak, to which he was not entitled.¹⁸ Mrs. Cutting claimed to be the first white woman in [Shigatse](#), but Mrs. Williams had been there before her. While opposite the drill ground in Lhasa, she also remarked that it was probably the first time the Tibetans had seen a white face. At the same time, Bernard was also wandering about, to say nothing of the troops and the wireless operator. It is merely out of spite he refuses to grant a pass to Emma Schmidt, the Theosophist. It is too bad that the officials of England cannot understand the necessity for treating America with some sense of decency, for America consumes the entire Tibetan wool crop of twenty-five thousand bales. England buys nothing from Tibet, and yet the attitude persists. His Tibetan *baboo* finally returned with the passes, and we cleared out of the residency as quickly as

¹⁸ PGH: This is possibly a reference to a series of photos accompanying an article that appeared in the British newspaper, *The Daily Mail*, in December of 1937; if it is an actual newsreel, I am unfamiliar with it.

possible, since it was already past twelve.

We met Aku about three miles outside of town. He had three mules to carry the load of eight. While he was in a quandary, we ate lunch. He loaded up the saddle horses after a Tibetan refused to let him have mules and afterwards, went on foot to the market in Gangtok. We went onward. The mule belonging to the Tibetan slipped and went down a half mile after starting. He had to be unloaded and fixed again later. Sometime later, Aku came galloping up on a brown horse, and said there was transport four miles ahead. We walked. The weather was beautiful and clear, and the glorious landscape of Sikkim surrounded us. Everything was lush green; tender, young shoots were visible in the paddies, and the *Rhododendrons* had furry new leaves that will grow glossy with age. When we found Aku, he had mules, although they were very small and very bad.



The weather was changing. Thunder rolled its iron barrels through the hills; and as we climbed, we came to the fringe of the cloud. The forest was dank and close. It began to rain, gently at first, then harder until we were completely soaked. As I sat in the saddle, the rain collected in my lap and ran into my pants at the fly. A stream coursed down both legs, soaking my underwear and filling both shoes with water. It grew colder and the rain continued. By the time we arrived, I was chattering from the chill and wetness, and there was not a piece of dry

clothing on me. I had given Bailey my waterproof for he had left his behind. I trusted my ski clothes would keep the rain out, but that was a fatal error. Even my felt hat leaked, and little cold streams flowed down the back of each ear, dampening the one dry place, my collar. As we arrived here the weather relented, and the moon was shining blue upon the steep hills. There was the constant sound of a waterfall, similar to wind coursing through tall trees. I was very sleepy. Before dinner I had a rub down and drank hot tea with brandy in it. Aku, as usual, cooked too large a meal, and I drank water after eating rice, which is always fatal.

* * *

THE EIGHTH OF JUNE: CHAMPITANG, TIBET

Last evening we sat drying our clothes and making remarks about political staff. It was very cold, and all the doors had been locked open, so that there was no chance of heating the rooms. But Karponang was one of the best bungalows and well equipped. In the morning we awoke at five thirty and Bailey was up first. He did not shave, and I began to think about the decline of man, while I was still cozily enwrapped in my down. After fifteen minutes had passed, moral, political, and clerical reasons impelled me to shave, however, my clothes were not yet dried. Breakfast was quickly over, and the Chowkidar's wife discovered a knife was missing, so we paid one rupee for the missing knife, and one rupee for wood. Our mules hired the day before had been returned to their owners, but before the Sahibs stirred, Aku had procured a new, larger bunch. That night I decided to go out to consult a man concerning the purchase of a dog. I went tramping down the long alley through the boxes and stepped plunk in the middle of Aku, or rather in Aku's middle. He emitted a loud groan and switched on a light. I walked out of reach of the light, which he was holding on my retreating form with surprising accuracy for a man whose middle had been stepped on at ten o'clock. On the return journey there were two beds to step over, for our dark eyes had joined Aku on the floor. But let's return to the narrative of the morning.

We were on our way after the row with the Tibetan lady was amicably concluded. We departed for [Changu](#), which took us along beating cliffs and over waterfalls and stone bridges with corbelled arches. We climbed higher, and at about eight o'clock the sun broke through the clouds. Patches of sun and mist floated across tracts of *Rhododendron* and the bright, leaping water. As we moved higher, the alpine flowers showed themselves: anemones, iris, and wine dark polyanthus. The anemones were yellow, blue, mauve, and white of all varieties and sizes, from little ones that seemed to be blooms clipped and thrown into the grass, to tall blue ones that were two feet high and had broad blooms, which were blue and mauve with great yellow stamens around the pistil. Polyanthus was the most varied of all. We saw three types of yellow specimens: single, multiple, and a weeping bell-like flowering type. As climbed higher, we left the fields and passed through a narrow falling valley. The road had always been walled with great squared stones, but here it became an actual wall, wandering between the trees and high stones that had fallen from the hills. Streams passed underneath it and pooled on the higher side of the road. The water was clear and green, and around its edges grew iris, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, and the yellow, buttery blooms of the short cowslips. Moving still higher, we left the floor of this delightful garden of cedar and *Rhododendron* for the barren land around Changu. We arrived about eleven-thirty. We ate lunch on the bungalow porch while the rain, which obscured the glorious sun, came down on us. The syces, or grooms, were a nuisance all morning, bringing the horses when they were not needed and being absent when they were. I took some movies and stills.



After lunch we traveled six steep miles to the [Nathu](#). Primroses were abundant and of all colors: blue, deep wine red, and pale yellow like butter in the spring. We also saw the miniature white *Rhododendron niveum*, which is a charming dwarf. The trees began to fall away like the bamboos that had utterly ceased long before. We saw dim patches of snow through the encircling mist that slowly revealed black mountain lakes and the glistening rocks. Nothing appears as deep as a mountain lake when clouds hang over it. It became like the very entrance to the underworld. Great rocks obstructed the trail as we neared the top. The *Rhododendrons* clung nearer to the ground. It was so early in the spring that the crosiers of the ferns were still hairy and thickrolled. A bitter wind filled with mist and rain struck our faces. The mules stopped often, and we walked most of the way for our saddles were still wet and it was painful riding. Finally, we saw a cairn of stones decked with faded and bent prayer flags and poles. The top of the pass was strewn with these pious hopes. Our driver put a stone on top of the largest cairn, and we followed suit. Stopping briefly on top, Bill and I took photographs of the mules and mist. There was not much to see, for the cold and mist, merely covered surrounding patches of snow. Spring had not yet arrived, and not even the most hidden of the Alpines was visible; winter still held the pass.



We descended through boulder-strewn paths that seemed to go nowhere save down. Flowers appeared again, the wind ceased, and patches of clear sky showed ahead. Behind the pass, the thin streaks of mist lowered over our heads, tearing past stones and through the pinnacles of the mountains. The sound of it came faintly down to us as if from another world and entered into the pleasant reality of the surroundings. We quickly one forgot the pain and gave ourselves up wholly to the contemplation of pleasure. Jumping from rock to rock, we found new flower after new flower. The anemones were most perfect on the Tibetan side of the pass. Soon the mountain fields in which woolly Yaks grazed gave way to terrain with small fir and cedar trees. A forest of these giants soon towered above us, and thick moss covered the ground below. It looked like British Columbia, and I could not help think of our day of skiing near Vancouver. We were tired and raw from the wet saddles when we arrived at the bungalow after traveling twenty-two miles. A noisy Yak tried to join in the unloading operations, but was finally driven off with cries of ‘chaw’ and a few well-aimed rocks. He stood a few yards away swinging his duster of a tail and chewing grass. I missed the sound of water tonight, for it is very still here amongst the trees. Tomorrow we leave all this green and have lunch in [Yatung](#).¹⁹

The Richardsons provided us letters addressed to the agents in Yatung and Gyantse. They were insulting when read this evening as a matter of precaution. Incidentally, the missing knife from Karponang appeared this evening in our baggage, so the old lady was right in her count, and I am out one rupee until a month from now. We have been reading Agatha Christie’s *Sittaford Mystery* to each other. She does write better than any other mystery novelist. I was so sleepy

¹⁹ PGH: Also known as “Dromo” (Tibetan name), it was the location of one of two trade agencies run by the British (the other being Gyantse).

that I could not see the keys. The Chawkdar came in with a very poor devil driver for which he wanted thirty-five rupees and a bowl lined with copper. I could not resist laughing. My drinking bowl was silver and cost only twelve rupees at the most. Americans must be suckers in Tibet too.

I was completely delighted by the Tibetans yodel, which is different, but a perfectly good yodel. They whistled and screamed “*A-a-a-chou*” at their mules, and sung a strange song in the Jewish minor. I tried to catch the song, but the boy was upset, which made it hard to hear. Incidentally, he smoked cigarettes in a holder while walking up the Nathu La without a rest. They are bad for the wind. We now have three Tibetans with us, and all are decent chaps.

* * *

THE NINTH OF JUNE: YATUNG, TIBET

We were up at five thirty this morning here at [Champitang](#), and the weather was gloriously clear. In the valleys mist floated and eddied like some ghost sea breaking in the tops of the White Firs. I went outside to watch the coming of morning while Bailey shaved. You could see all the way to the Nathu La, where high clouds hung still faintly orange with the first light of the sun. Birds were singing, resounding deep in the cones and needles of the giant trees. The day was full of happy sounds, and light filled all the spaces that had been so sorry the night before. I took several pictures of the pass and returned to find Bailey out with the hunting look in his eye, which meant no picture would be missed. We disagreed quite promptly on what constituted a good picture. Finally, we congregated at the back of the muleteer's rest house. A few women were on the porch, crying with giggles and bashfulness. A Tibetan muleteer sat there with them. He ventured to pose and thinking the better of it went back into the house to bring out the screaming naked child of one of the women. There was a great laugh all around, and the picture was taken. I went back inside and cleaned up while Bailey went on with his camera. It seemed so gloomy inside after the bright sunlight. We ate breakfast in a hurry, which today was eggs 'rumble tumble.' Aku had watched me make them only once, yet he produced a fair dish. After breakfast the mules were loaded while we finished our packing. I, of course, forgot the anemones that I had pressed in the Agatha Christie book and in *Blackwoods* magazine the night before to send home.



We walked through the long slanting light of the trees, and around a bend where the mountains stood out with their gullies and rifts of snow against the deep sky. Moss was under foot instead of the rough stones of the highlands near the pass. A wind sprang up making the needles sting and sound like waves breaking on the shingle of some long distant beach. We were sublimely happy, and lifted by our happiness into a realm close to ecstasy. Flowers lay strewn along the path. There were yellow primroses of all shades, deep and butter light as in the spring before the grass has sprouted. Irises began to appear as we descended, and great fields of them stretched out between the thinning firs. Like our own wild blue iris, the red purple blooms were rich as a monk's surplice or wine spilled on a white lawn. Streams of blue water ran under our feet, turning the pebbles into richly colored gems. As we came out into the fields, buck brush and salal began to accent the air, and juniper clung close to the ground. The *horizontalis* was in bloom, the little pink bells loading the glossy green with color. From the fields we saw the gold of a monastery roof. We caught our breaths and were quick with excitement, for we had walked the entire way. As we arrived at the edge of the ridge, we looked down into what might have modeled Shangri-La. On the mountain's edge stood the monastery; its sloping white walls with orange and blue bands; windows mullioned in rich ochre red and yellow with Chinese fret work; and the flat roof with its long shakes held down with battens and stones like those of Switzerland. Below it hundreds of feet curled the silver thread of the Chumbi River. A village, Rinchengang, was there below Kaju Gompa, whose roofs shone wet in the richness of sun falling through rain clouds on the lush green of the bearded barley. We sat down near a *chorten*, or *stupa*, and waited for the sun to pick its slow way up the hillside tree by tree. It rose from the shining leaves of one bush to another until it came to the golden spire of the monastery. There it stood like a jewel in the diadem of the hills. Sparkling light crossed the river's breast far below, and there was the sound of wind. We proceeded downward. The monastery suddenly appeared around a bend. As we approached we heard the drone of chelas. We came upon the outhouses first, and noticed that the place was falling into decay. The great bay of the chapel had lost its frame, and the valances of the windows were faded to a uniform grey from their once bright red, yellow and blue. They were blue with white circles at the top, had a yellow band next, and then red just over the pleated white of the valance itself. We stopped to fill our eyes with this strangely somber yet lifting architecture, and then rode down to the entrance.

At the end of the lane of *chortens* stood the head lama with his disciples. He was grey with a long white Chinese beard flowing to his waist. His hair was in two great rolls that stood up on his head. He smiled upon us and came forward. I did not expect ceremony this soon and was a little surprised. We met just in front of the water basin of the monastery where a splendid bronze headed dragon poured water from its mouth. The old man threw clothes over our hands, but we had nothing with which to reciprocate the gesture. I searched my pockets in vain. Bailey finally produced his pet Sharvet and gave it to the old man with good grace. I gave the customary offering to one of his inferiors. The five rupees were quite promptly handed to the old man. He seemed quite pleased, and asked us to

sign the visitors' book. Having signed, we rode ahead while the old man waved to us from the trail. I noticed what beautiful lead tops the *chortens* had, ribbed and topped with a moon in crescent. As we rounded the bend, I could see into the top storey of the Gompa. It was open and I could see the painted beams radiating under the flat roof. Thinking how similar to Shangri La it must be, we descended into the hushed music of the white pine below.

After some time we came out at the river's brink in the town of Rinchengang. We went between the narrow set houses with their walls cracked and crazed and leaning over us at askew angles. Coming out in the square opposite the temple we found a beautiful tree near the fountain. Here there were children playing, and an old man sat humming to himself some old monotonous tune. They fled. We crossed the little stream that runs through the town, and unable to resist, I went back to photograph the old tree. Fifteen minutes and three photos later, I still had not succeeded. As we carried on, we noticed the caves of hermits up on the sides of the hills; the black holes of these caves opened their blackness to the outer world. At the entrances prayer flags hung from tree to tree and kept the devils out of the practitioner's contemplation. Doors painted yellow sealed the inhabited caves. The valley was so much like our own West, i.e., the west fork of the Yellowstone, such that I felt at home. White pine clothed the hills. In the narrow fields between the river and the wall of the mountain, green heads of barley waved in long rolls as the wind combed it into silver waves. On the other side, men were plowing with a wooden plow drawn by oxen. The women were hoeing and spreading the balks into clean turned soil for sowing. Others were spreading grain from bags hung around their necks like Millet's "Sower." They all greeted us as we passed, smiling and showing us their fine teeth; they seemed happy and content with their work. The river was at our side, roaring and white with silt from the sides of the rain soaked hills. Its huge waves rushed over stones and rose far above the level of the road, making it seem ever willing to engulf what little paving there was of the rough stones that could cause even best horse's hoof to slip. We went quickly, and a little after twelve saw us up from the river at Yatung.

After lunch we went to the clerk's office to get our bungalow passes. There a fat Bengali waited for us. "Twenty-four rupees please," he said. Outside of the window, huge lupins of pink, blue and pale lavender grew in beds, thick and brilliant in the sun. Ugden Thondup, who had come to the bungalow earlier with Aku, was with us. He seemed pleasant and took us to buy scarves for presents. We bought six in a little shop, costing us twelve *annas* each. It was certainly a special price. It began to rain. We returned to the bungalow and began to polish bowls. Later, when the rain let up, we found wild strawberries—small and savory—and feasted on them. The Tibetans do not eat them.

Around dinner, or rather tea time, I met the doctor from Waziristan who had provided service in Tibet. He had many tales to recount, chiefly concerning the impossibility achieving our goals in Tibet. All the *thangkas* had been bought up; he said we could not compete with groups such as Bernard and Cutting, however, I trust more our luck than to his word. He was interesting and had been to Lhasa, spending two and a half years on the trade route. He had a very beefy face, which was scarred with sunburn and peeling off along the cheek bones. He

looked down as he spoke, and was very positive, but I imagine only the English can collect things in Tibet. He has two mammoth English Bulldogs. He inquired about Ugden Thondup La, who is hoping to eat at Tarings with us.

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THE TENTH OF JUNE: PHARI, TIBET

Having risen, packed, and eaten breakfast, we waited, but still there was no sign of the mules ordered from the Trade Agent. We watched the bridge over the Chumbi, but the mules that crossed went up the river and did not come our way. It began to rain lightly, a sort of fine drizzle that swept through the trees and veiled the tops of the hills like old prayer flags. Across the valley and river, and over the stoned roofs of the town, there was a scar in the rock where a stone once fell into the village. Hundreds of pale colored prayer flags covered that area to keep the demons of the mountain from destroying the village again. They hung in festoons, fluttering and small in the wind that sweeps mist through them and makes the valley sorrowful with old remembrances of death. By eight o'clock our mules were not yet over the bridge of the cantilever timbers, and we began to grow impatient. The doctor the night before had allowed them until eight to arrive, for they were traveling from Rinchengang below Chumbi. However, with twenty-eight miles to go in variable weather, we began to think it was too late. Ugden Thondup went down to the village just as they began to arrive, but all was not yet well. The muleteers began to choose the best boxes for their mules, and finally one pugnacious, little, muscle-bound Tibetan was left with the heaviest loads for his six mules. A great row began. Ugden parried with him, but on the offensive, the Tibetan called his *baboo*, which, although he did not show it, got under Ugden's skin. Finally, the Tibetan, in a rage of fury, pulled up his tie line, undid the mule's forefeet and whipped them down the hill towards the town. They were half way to the river when Bailey told Ugden to send a man after him. The chap went half way and called in a sort of monotone, leading to no result save that the Tibetan ran across the bridge and disappeared around the fence one way, while the mules went another. Ugden was out of sight awhile. He returned with the village Kondi, Tempa-La, and the Trade Agent, an old betel nut. The Kondi held the young Tibetan by one ear and was beating him with one boney fist; their argument could be heard over the river rapids. The Trade Agent was very apologetic about the whole incident and most helpful. The change that came over the muleteers was instantaneous. The old man in his brocade *chuba* (Tibetan shirt) picked up the boxes in question, weighed them, and then again berated the young muleteer for being a fool, outlining several interesting punishments for the offender. Tempa-La came into the bungalow to collect the half pay of the muleteers as is customary, but decided to collect the whole thirty rupees in order to have leverage when the men returned the next day from Phari. He was most kind; there was a great understanding and sympathy in the old man. He treated the muleteer as an errant child and seemed to understand our voiceless predicament I used my one Tibetan word, *tuchi*, thank you, and he beamed with amusement. Bailey and I started off with the two syces and left Aku to finish the packing.

We progressed up the Chumbi valley, which grew ever narrower as we climbed. The river became a rushing torrent, leaping horse high over its boulders,

while on both sides the tall firs and white pine closed in upon us. The countryside around us was just like northern Washington. Along the road grew thousands of tall, wild irises; and in the sunny fields were blue Tibetan poppies. I believe, on second thought, that they are poppies and not *Anemones*, for I cannot think of an *Anemone* possessing a pubescent oblong leaf instead of its usual dentate and cut leaf that we see at home in the *Anemone nemorosa*. Additionally, barberry bushes in full yellow bloom were as high as us on horseback; and bush roses, red and yellow, grew in clumps. Katonah *Aster h.* was also in bloom, as well as a new variety of what seemed to be a juniper with yellow blooms like a buttercup. As we traveled beside the stream, it glistened between the trunks of great trees; and from the cliffs on either side, fell mist like waterfalls. The sun was now out in full, and everything took on a new life in its sudden brilliance. I longed to mark each flower I encountered in order to gather some seeds upon our return, and I succeeded in marking several.



After about seven or eight miles, a big group of rich Tibetan buildings with great combs over the doors and sloping windows painted in bright colors appeared on the opposite bank of the river. It was very large, but all of one storey, with white walls set in the bank of hills, green with spruce and white firs. Ugden told us that it was the Tibetan mint where the blanks for the coins were made,

which were later sent to Lhasa to be stamped with the face of currency. On our side of the river were the godowns of the blacksmiths. They were filthy holes, about ten by six, and had no means of keeping warm in these demon winters when the Bhuts of the snow take the life from the whole land. We didn't see anybody; the entire place seemed deserted. On the side of one building was a large mill wheel, overshot with a wooden axel. It had been set up to do the blank stamping, but Ugden said it could not match the power of one brawny blacksmith and was therefore abandoned. I asked if Kumbe-La was behind this, but it seems it was before he held sway in the palace of the Dalai Lama.

We came upon a meadow and sat down for lunch. The field was full of aconite, which required we watch the horses carefully, but at the edge of a little cavern were the most glorious poppies I have ever seen; they stood three feet high on their thick stems and had blooms measuring three inches across. Among them were pale yellow primroses. As we ate, some of our mules caught up to us and went ahead.

A few miles later, the landscape began to change its character. The road left the trees and went up into barren hills covered with dwarf *Rhododendron* and purple azaleas, all of which were in full bloom and seemed colored with snow and sunset colors. Along the edges of the road we found a real dwarf iris whose blossom measured about six inches from the gorun at the highest point and about an inch across. We built up little *chortens* over them so that we might later procure the roots to bring home. Additionally, there was a single hyacinth, which was purple and yellow, and a delicate flower of unbelievable beauty.

By now we were well into the deserted hills. The wind, cold as the high snows could make it and always at our backs, drove us onward. The miles passed at the slow pace the rough round stones of the road dictated. The land slowly leveled out and became even more scarce in vegetation. This in contrast to the rich lake bottom we passed before lunch where the yaks grazed in short but rich grass with the river meandering between the black tents of the drivers. Sitting high upon the hill above rested a little hermitage, a white jewel on the brown hill. It was really a mountain, but such things do not count here. The famous Rinpoché who visited India used to spend six months in silent contemplation there. The clouds passed in front and below of it, and the bright sun struck one yellow spear into its bright sides that seemed dazzling even at that great height. Around us, however, everything was brown. We passed an occasional muleteer or solitary Tibetan walking grimly along in his felt boots and his sleeves hanging below his hands like some understuffed doll, dressed as such because the wind was cold against him. Only occasionally they smiled, for rain began again as the afternoon wore on into the night. Finally, in the distance of the flat plain, I saw the [Dzong at Phari](#). It seemed close by five o'clock, but a full moon would see us to the bungalow. How slowly the earth passed underfoot—one stony streambed after another, and in between, the level ground strewn with cobbles. It was cold and windy. Thin clouds briefly covered the face of the moon, and in the hills some animal yelled in thin piercing screams. I thought of the spirits of Tibet and the *chortens* on the hills with their worn and wind tattered flags waving mantras to Maitreya, especially one set over the great plunge of water that came down from the cliff. How lonely it seemed; its red sides glistened in the late sun that drew the

shadow of the valley up to its very base. Mist dewed the valley, veiling the turfed houses that stood there covered with moss. The people living in them also seemed mossed over and grim. I did not blame them, for it was bitterly cold in the middle of the summer. With night coming on and nothing to break the level monotony of the plain except the long line of the walls of peat and yak dung, I wondered if perhaps the prayer flags did not have more meaning than we gave them. The night was cold, and the moon seemed to be a baleful eye set in the brow of heaven, the third intellect of some great idol moving through the ethereal wrack. The rain struck us coldly, and there was perpetual crying in the dark hills. We could not see their tops, for the mist caused the faint light to loosen their outlines; they were abutments to the heaven of unknown gods.



We arrived at the bungalow almost dead for weariness, having been up for sixteen hours—eleven of those in the saddle. I was surprised it was not the usual type of bungalow, but a walled fort with a gate barred by a door and stile. As we approached and the noise of our bells alerted those inside to our presence, the door opened and light streamed out from the inner court. We ate a weary dinner and we went to bed as soon as the mules arrived. As I was about to fall asleep, I heard the faint, low sound of the monastery horns.

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THE ELEVENTH OF JUNE: TUNA, TIBET

We started early this morning—a little after seven—for we planned to cover twenty-one miles. It was raining, and we took one picture of the fort by which to remember it. It was destroyed in 1904 by the British. I thought of the Chinese fort before Gautsa with its broken walls, but still housing the orange disc of the Celestial Empire. As we traveled, the weather cleared until finally [Cholmolhari](#) came into view, the peak of which we saw earlier coming up the Chumbi Gorge. Mists fought each other for possession of the peak, and across the plain the rain drew its long moss. The wind stirred, but it still blew into our backs and saved our purple faces and lips from further agony. But I am ahead of myself.

As I was brushing my teeth, I heard the sound of drums and chanting accompanied by a bell. It seemed similar to a Gregorian chant, falling and rising in weird minor cadences. Rushing outside, I found it came from nearby open door. I looked into the courtyard where the mules were kept for saddling, and there sat two young monks, each with a double faced drum that they swung slowly, causing the strikers on the strings to bounce from face to face. One held a *dorjé* in his upraised hand, and the toner rang the *dorjé* bell. They chanted softly in unison with great melody. I left the doorway before they discovered I was there and called Bailey.

During the night another amusing incident occurred. I awoke from a dream of mountaineering in the high Himalayas where I was gasping for breath. Having awakened, I still could not breathe. I thought our altitude—fourteen thousand three hundred feet—might be the cause of the dream and abruptly gave up hope of ever climbing Everest. As I turned over I choked, but now I was wide enough awake to realize that the string of my amulet was quietly choking me to death, having become hooked to the button of my sleeping bag.

Let us return to the narrative of the morning. We met a head lama on the road who was on his way from Nepal to [Shigatse](#) via the Tomasha in Gyangtse. He wore a yellow lacquer hat and heavy plum colored robes. A cowl covered the back of his neck and stretched up under the hat. His mule was caparisoned with all sorts of blankets and gloriously embroidered bags and sachets. I thought of the Abbot of Nottingham and of Holy Chaucer's Monk on his mule all of white and of bells, for this old man was medieval to the very curled toes of his boots. A retinue followed him, his headsman on foot telling a great string of a hundred and eight beads that hung around his neck, and in front of him the courier gorgeous in brilliant scarlet trimmed with gold and his hat of black fur and gold brocade. We sent Ugdén forward to ask his permission to photograph him, which he granted, but the clouds obscured the sun. We followed for nearly twenty minutes before the sun returned. The old man preened and perked his finery, took off the cowl, and set his hat straight on his shaven head. I took three stills of him on horseback, and Bailey did the same with the movie camera.



During lunch in the little fort between [Phari](#) and Tuna, which was situated in the midst of the plain, the mountain finally came out as though too proud to hide longer in feeble mist. In the sun, the edges of the glaciers were blue as amethyst and whiter than any page of paper. The mountain rose directly from a plain and was almost alone in its grandeur of sheer cliffs and sliding snow. We photographed until our film was exhausted, and still the majestic peak fascinated us as it changed in the changing light and shadow to another form. It was somewhat of a come down to find that our can opener, which we had bought in El Cajon, California, had been lost, and that the hard-boiled eggs, which had resided under the water thermos and at a canter, were properly crushed. I loved Aku less then, but was to like him even less later.

Around three o'clock we arrived at Tuna. It was a little squalid village of no real interest except that it had the best view of the mountains for which one could ever hope, for it was at the foot of the hills on the opposite side of the plain. These hills on the west were just great masses of earth and stone on which no single plant grows, absolutely barren, and up which the dust devils race along the wind. I looked forward to a long afternoon of sorting out the supplies in order to leave one box here, reading and writing, and a little hunting for good shots. On arriving, Aku announced that he had forgotten our bedding, which added to the ambience—the syces never being on hand when wanted left us in a fine condition. We brought Aku into the room, and reminded of his various shortcomings: the

lost lid on the Klim can, the crushed roll and the resulting lost lock, the bedding, the insubordination of his servants, the eggs, and the Californian can opener. He performed much better now, though he could not remember to shut the door and in order to keep in a little heat! However, there seems to be a new face on things, and he is obviously making an effort to remember. It will not last long, I fear, as he has an extraordinary facility for saying "Bhut Acha!" when he does not have the vaguest idea of where he is going next.

I rather unfortunately bought a hot chutney before we left. We tried it this evening and nearly burned ourselves. The bottle has been given to the criminal *pro tempore*. Additionally, my face is coming apart, and Bailey's lips are swollen and blue from the sun and wind. I wish my nose was not so long, or I had brought my black Stetson to protect it.

Ugden Thondup told us that he had seen the present abbot of the Kaju monastery (the one who gave us the scarves) perform the *tumo*, i.e., the drying of wet sheets through body heat, some years before. I hope to see a demonstration of this before I leave Tibet.

I always seem to continue forgetting the amusing incidents for the more magnificent but less personal mountains and flowers. The old lama with his horn-rimmed spectacles displayed another rather dexterous medieval trick. After we photographed him and were still following behind, the old boy calmly began to pee while his mule trotted along as gaily as ever. The management of a water hose from a moving fire wagon is quite a feat, but if the lama ever came to New York he would be acclaimed the victor.

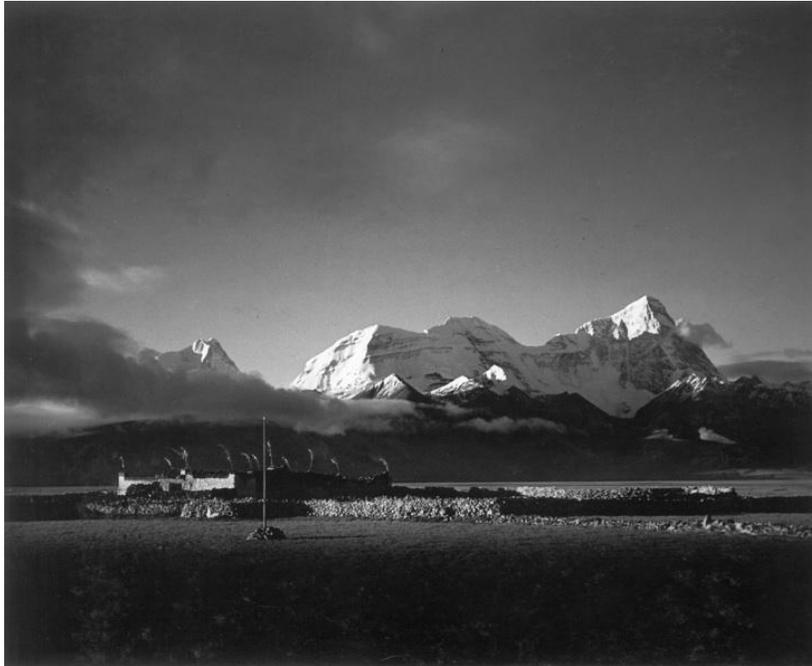
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THE TWELFTH OF JUNE: KALA, TIBET

Last night, of course, we had no bedding, so Bailey got on top of his air mattress with two wool curtains, his coat, and everything he wore during the day, plus a pair of pajamas. I noticed the hangings over the doors were nothing but blankets so I rolled myself up in them. I also used the curtains, which were of a blue colour tie-dyed with red and purple, very gay but not long enough nor wide enough. We piled the fire high with dung and the room was quite warm when we went to bed. However, the altitude being what it was, and with that large iceberg, [Chomolhari](#), nearby, the single window we opened soon had the room down to a temperature that would make a woolly Tibetan goat's hair stand on end. Air penetrated every crack of my bed, and Bailey was no less miserable. I arranged the curtains crosswise and the portieres along the bed, but in between there was mean ventilation. Moonlight came in the window in cold white beams, while outside it shone on the snow of the black mountains, causing them to glisten like flames in the night, but they looked very cold and so did the moon. The fire soon turned into red ashes. Dung is light material and contains little water after being plastered on the bungalow's wall for several months. The finger marks imprinted in it always amused me as I threw a chunk into the fire. Such fun, patty cakes of rich, ripe, yak turd, oh boy! The fire was going out, and there was little or no more dung to feed it. Around this time, we were so tired that we fell asleep in spite of our sunburned faces, our sore fannies, the twenty-one miles, and the cold running like ice water through the cracks in the bedding.

I awoke at around half past four, feeling as though I had died and was knocking at the gates of a chilly heaven. A faint light began to fill the room, and I suddenly thought of the mountain. I turned over and craned my head out of bed to see. A little white light had just touched the top of the last snow. It was absolutely clear, but still too early for a photograph. Bailey was still sound asleep. I leaned back into bed, but the warmth that had been there was gone. Making matters worse, my coat slipped off the bed, and one of the curtains came loose. I curled up and hoped that death might come to deliver one poor, aching soul, but outside the sound of morning was beginning. A hen clucked and scratched in the yard, and one rather stentorian rooster crowed the victory of unseen challengers. I thought how similar his attitude was to some people I know as I tried to find a warm spot. I slept for a wee quarter of an hour more. I awoke again with the horrible feeling that the sun must have reached the plain and my picture gone, but I looked out and the first ridges below the peak were just springing from the dark sky into white brilliance. I looked at my watch—quarter to five—and contemplated consequences of waiting ten more minutes. Bailey's mouth was open, and he was sound asleep. I heard Aku bustling around in the courtyard and hoped that he would not come roaring in asking, "What you want for breakfast?" Unlike Faust, my good angel got the better of me, so I got dressed. Bailey opened one sleepy eye. He was not interested in the mountain, for he was too cold and too sleepy.

The Chowkidar came after I called him and built up the fire. I closed the window as I left with the movie and the Rolleiflex camera. The timing was just right; the snows were brilliant and full of light, though the plain was still in darkness. I took three still pictures and about twenty feet of color movie. On returning to the bungalow, I found the bedding had been sent back to us by some poor devil that arrived at four in the morning.



We left the bungalow around seven. The entire morning we followed the rock piled mountains across the valley to the north of the Cholmulhari Massif. We passed through mile after mile of desert in which only nettles, stunted lupin, thistle too poor to bloom, and a little sedum grew in sparse bunches. Not only sand, but rocks of all sizes littered the trail and the desert. The hills with their red and parched rock looked like the tailings from some giant mine. Soon the wind was blowing cold from the west behind us. Along the way we passed several caravans of yaks loaded with wool, and a number of donkey trains with bales of tea headed in the same direction as us. Before arriving at Dochen, we came to the edge of a vast though shallow lake. For miles it seemed to be a mirage retreating before us. Perhaps we did see its mirage before the actual water came into view, for one could see the waves of heat rolling across the plain with a fluid elasticity. I am certain we saw a true mirage the day before, for there was no lake on the map where it appeared. Yet there it seemed to be, reflecting the lines of the mountains with its ripples glowing from the browns of the rock and the dull foliage. How the Tibetan sheep lived here I do not know. The whole land is overgrazed and is a desert, yet in the hills and along the plain the rude shepherds drove huge flocks of

black and white sheep, and longhair goats with their twisted flat horns graze. When they have passed by the area, the yaks eat what is left. There is a lesson to be learned here Mr. Roosevelt!

We ate lunch at [Dochen](#) near the side of the lake. During the afternoon we followed the same barren hills, but with the lake reflecting the cloud covered mountains. My face was so painful at this point that I had to mask it entirely with a handkerchief. It was not red but that peculiar purple that comes from exposure to ultraviolet light. Even the light motion of the cloth was enough to wring tears from my eyes. My chin and nose began to bubble with blisters, even though I had taken the precautions of using cream and camphoric; there was no virtue in using them. A new flower appeared beside the road, a dwarfed iris with a large blossom not more than two inches from the ground and leaves as fine as coarse grass. There were also little, scarlet, trumpet shaped flowers with no stem coming like a crocus directly out of a whorl of leaves flat in the dust. Our horses' hooves would break them off, causing them to roll like little flames ahead of the wind. When we reached the end of the lake, we saw a very large monastery on the hill, and I had hopes we would stay here for the night, but they were dashed when I saw the telegraph line turn down the river through a valley. We have followed the telegraph line since leaving Gangtok. It is the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day that leads us to Gyantse and might lead us to Lhasa. We photographed a large, square *chorten* against the mountains before we left. The wind howled past us in the narrow valley. We passed a couple of towns subsisting from the few acres in the river bottom. Their houses looked like those of the American cliff dwellers, stone with sloping walls and oval corrals for sheep built of loose stones. As we traveled down the valley, we came to the place where the British met the Tibetan army in 1904. The houses were deserted, and the holed walls were crumbling. It made for a small field of battle, but the strategic layout of the land was obvious. The British had the superior position (with exception of the Tibetan snipers in the houses), for they were coming down the valley. The Tibetans fell back to the town of Kala where they surrendered to the British.

I took a bath and examined the damage wrought upon my fanny by this strenuous riding, which was considerable and left it raw in a number of places. However, we will not be stopping until reaching Gyantse, for we must make the Tomasha. Our lama friend of the spectacles and pancake hat passed us while we were eating breakfast, and we did not catch up with him. He, no doubt, will spend the night at the monastery we saw on the hill above the lake just before [Kala bungalow](#). This was a nice place. We had a good supper, although we still had no meat except for bacon at breakfast, for we have not been able to get fresh mutton as I hoped. We left a box of food at Tuna for the return journey. I hope that it is there when we return. In it are rations for six days, which should be ample.

I have to pinch myself every so often to believe that I am really in Tibet. It is so similar to our own northwest that I feel quite at home. The land we passed through today was like the Arizona desert; as we traveled through the Chumbi valley, I realized that it could just as easily been the west fork of the Agnes or the West Yellowstone River where it passes through the Flying D Ranch. I cannot understand the Englishman's provincial wonder at the place. An Englishman's idea of America, if any, is gained from the C.P.R., for he must do his cruise

around the world by staying only in places connected to Britain, which means Canada and not the barbarian States.

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THE THIRTEENTH OF JUNE: KHANGMAR, TIBET

We were up very early this morning at Kala, for twenty-eight miles of riding lay ahead, which neither of us relished much. At five o'clock, we looked at each other to see who would make the break and get up first. Bailey finally did, so I turned over for another forty winks while he was washing the puss. How good our cozy raptures felt after the wretched bedding of the previous night. During breakfast the Chowkidar brought in two *thangkas*, both of which were rather good, although one had a hole in it. I had expected a couple of modern garish monstrosities, but was pleasantly surprised. We told him that we would consider them on the return trip.

We followed the plain of Kala all morning, which runs parallel to the Phari, although it is one ridge over. We came across not a single house until reaching the valley of Samada. Just before arriving at the bungalow for lunch, we passed dozens of ruined houses at the entrance to the valley. We could see the line of the fields surrounding them, but the once fertile land was now barren and covered with stones spilled from the steep hills. The houses looked more like medieval fortresses than houses and were quite huge. Some of the towers had doorways running three stories high like a great light slit dividing the building in half. All the woodwork had collapsed, and the interiors were filled with the slate and rubbish of the floors once held by wooden beams. Most likely, they were deserted hundreds of years before when the overgrazed land became a desert like northern China, which was once so fertile. However, many of the houses are still inhabited and have no relation to the houses abandoned to the wind and rain. The density seemed to depend only on the width of the land cultivated near the river. Another reason for the desertion of these homes may have been the lowering of the lake level, for the same water that comes from the Palin next to the Chomolhari Massif also waters this narrow, brown valley. Shortly before reaching the bungalow, we passed a beautiful, little monastery of extremely good architecture, and another was visible far back off the road in a valley of the hills. I hope to visit them both on the way back.

With lunch finished, we set out again. Not far in the distance was a second monastery, close to which we passed. The rest of the day we followed the river, passing one deserted village after another, yet there was life always with the dead, for barley was just beginning to sprout at the water's edge. The cultivated land, however, was certainly receding. Only five feet away from a living field and a few inches higher would be one dead and abandoned to the collecting stones. Late in the afternoon we took photographs, which I hope turned out well, of a tower over a rushing stream, the light glinting from the waves. At one point Mela, who looked more decidedly ridiculous than ever—his feet too short to reach the stirrups, his balaclava helmet bobbing about his head, and his umbrella stuck down the back of his neck—came bouncing up to Ugden's horse. His horse immediately took a nip out of Ugden's and started a fight. I was taking a photo

with both hands off the reins and went bouncing across the river in less time than it takes to type this sentence. Mela was vastly confused and Ugden properly angry. I do not know what was said for it was in Tibetan, but I can guess. I gave poor, little Mela hell for beating his horse, as did Aku, who wanted to know whether he was fit to ride. However, Mela's troubles were not over. He was a poor rider and ended up with his horse in the center of a barley crop to the great annoyance of the owners, who were coming down from their fortress in the hills to give him hell. Most Tibetans were twice as large as Mela, who was a shrimp, so he collected himself together and bolted from the scene.

We arrived at [Khangmar](#) at about five. Opposite the bungalow was a strange rock hill, twisted in such a way that made the strata look like the grain in a piece of walnut. There is a legend that Guru Rinpoché made the rock that way with the print of his giant thumb, and it certainly does have the appearance of being a fingerprint in one place.

I covered my face again today, and it feels much better, but my chin and the tip of my nose have risen into welts that itch fearfully.

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THE FOURTEENTH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

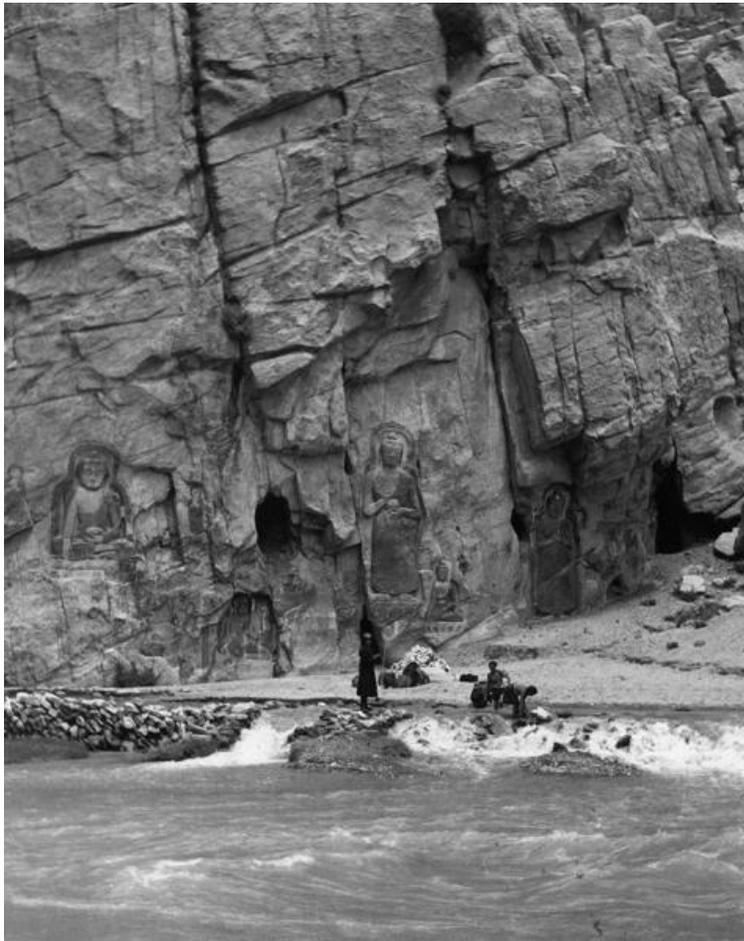
The mules were loaded and on their slow, lop-eared way down the river towards Gyangtse before seven o'clock this morning. Twenty-nine miles lay ahead of us today, so we were not much later in starting. As we rounded a bend in the road, the bungalow, low and white behind us, disappeared as Guru Rinpoché's mountain hid it from view. Towards the end of the morning, after traveling for many miles, we came out of the red, stony hills, where the trail had been even, and into a gorge littered with enormous boulders. The hills above were of sandstone and cut into fantastic shapes by the wind, as if the demons and spirits of the hills grimly looked down upon the late traveler. On the great, standing rocks, through which the river's white foam passed thunderously, were carved and painted buddhas of enormous size. They were painted in soft and perfect earth colours: blue of turquoise, red of the rotten iron, and green from unsmelted copper. It was a wild place. The tops of all the rocks near the trail were covered with the little stone cairns of muleteers whose heart and luck failed them in this grim torrent of stone and wild water. A few miles further, but still within the sandstone hills, another group of larger buddhas were also painted on the stone. They were like the awful paintings of Roerich of Monads²⁰ that contained things half living and half of stone, which were the germ plasm of soul and the undivided essence of life's lowest manifestation. Others must have felt the spell of these twisted shapes, for stones had been put in a wall before the images, each rock a prayer against devils of storm and dust.

At the end of this rocky place we came into a wide swath of fields, in the middle of which stood the house of some wealthy man. It might have been built by Frank Lloyd Wright so clean were its long low lines and the juxtaposition of the walls and openings. It was here that we caught up with our mules. One of the muleteers was soundly berated by a woman across the river, and did not seem anxious to stay and talk. Aku had gone ahead to arrange our transport. We came in sight of the bungalow after a few more miles. A few hundred yards up the river were coloured standing buddhas carved into the cliff. They reminded one of the [Bamian buddhas](#), though far smaller. The bungalow was a relief to our sun-tired eyes, for in its compound were poplars that kept up a constant whisper in their leaves while we sat eating our lunch. There was a little, black pony that continued to stick his head in at the gate of the compound. However, he would dash off and hide behind his mother when anyone came close.

We departed after lunch, but Aku stayed behind because the other mules did not arrive in time. The valley began to widen, and over its floor grew sweet scented irises, tiny blooms blue with white falls that were to the nose as cold water in a thirsty desert. Trees, which had been so absent during the morning, also began to appear. Earlier, we had passed town after deserted town, where only the

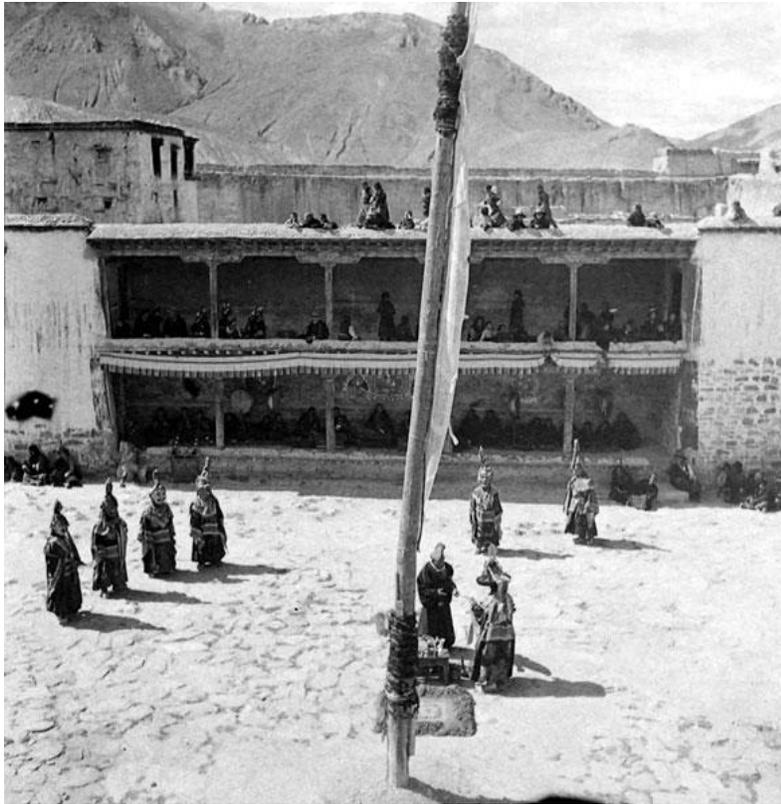
²⁰ PGH: This refers to Nicholas Roerich.

great walls of the houses, the mains with their battlemented tops, and the towering keeps were still standing. The fields were littered with stone, and the fences wandered crazily over them, fallen and scattered by the wind and snow. Ditches, once brimming, were dry, and sheep grazed where once the bearded barley had grown. As the plain widened it became more populous. We passed a great *chorten* just before the village of Nayni, and as we drew nearer to the village, we noticed its fine temple.



Phenomenal luck has pursued us across the wanderings of this trip, and today it struck one again. We were stopped by two Tibetans who told Ugyen a dance was being performed in the temple and today was the Tomasha. We wanted to see the dances in Gyangtse, but the conflict of dates between the Tibetan lunar calendar had confused our schedule. We rode across the fields to the temple. Ugden preceded us, and when we arrived told us to ride on. In medieval fashion, we rode past a group of people and through the towering gate of the temple into

the court. At the entryway sat grinning and frowning guardian demons of the temple painted with bright earth colours. Still on horseback, we followed the lictors of the temple to the gate of the sanctuary as they flailed the people from our way. Here sat ponderous, red lacquered doors with huge bosses of brass and auspicious signs nailed into them. Frescoes decorated the jambs and ran along the walls. We dismounted leaving our horses with the temple servants. All along we heard the deep *aum* of the drums, the clangor of cymbals, and the deep growling horns. As the doors were thrown open before us, the noise burst out, overpowering in its deep throbbing incessancy. The doors opened to a court full of people. In the center was a lama slowly turning in his dance, and around him the demons of the earth and the aether moved in a great circle. As we entered, they turned their lacquered faces towards us, and the music halted. Immediately, it started again, and with their mimicry they turned and turned, their hands moving in little circles the streamers fluttering from their fingertips. In the centre, the Black Hat lama held *dorjé* and bell together, and the cymbals crashed together. Incense was in the air. The people crowded the windows of the temple and sat in the corners of the court.



We stood for only a moment before a priest with two lictors before him came towards us. He asked if we would like to join the company high in the

canopied balconies above the gate. We waited a moment and then followed him up. As we reached the door the headman of the village in his deep, plum *chuba* met us and conducted us to the seats of honour in the centre of the *gompa*. We looked out over the courtyard where the figures swayed. Along the other wall and under a loggia frescoed with the saints of Buddhism sat the orchestra of red lamas. They had great conical 'Devil Dance' hats, two horns, four cymbals, and four drums with high sticks. The old lama in the centre, wearing a broad black hat with gold scrolls cut and set into its crown, continued on with the ceremony of slaying the year's devils. It was at this point that I realized we were watching the dance of the Black Hat Lamas, one of the rarest and most sacred in Tibet. As they turned and the dance continued below, I looked around almost dazed with the splendor of the audience. Women with their high, jeweled headdresses sat and watched us, as men in rich brocades and satins sat watching the lama dance.

Beside us sat the headman. He asked if we would like a beer. We said yes, and his servant brought us two exquisitely wrought silver teacups full of *chang*. He was quite amused watching us taste the barley beer, for Ugden told him that this was our first time. It was sweet and seemed to be still fermenting. "Bottoms up," the headman insisted. We tried, but a Tibetan teacup is not fixed to its silver holder, and if tipped too far, falls out. I tried my best by tipping and holding, but the cups—similar to shallow champagne glasses—have a habit of spilling their contents when tipped. This one performed as expected, and there was a chorus of laughter from the people around as we began to spill. Everyone was in a festive mood, and they seemed to like us, for candy and biscuits were passed on a piece of green brocade and basket. Huntley & Palmer biscuits figured large in the collection. The headman, who seemed to be enjoying himself immensely, had two more cups of beer passed to us. This time we were successful in downing it all between deep breaths, and much compliment was offered on the feat.

The dance was in earnest. The old lama left the hollow carpet on which he danced, and led the ring of dances swiftly around the yard. The clowns also joined in with their thigh-bone trumpets. They killed their quota of children with a huge, musical comedy knife and went bouncing off into the corners of the Jong. The headman explained that the clowns were there to keep the populace from being bored. They wore costumes much like medieval jesters.

The dance finished with a tremendous clap of music and the dancers returned to the door of the temple below us. We were invited to inspect the temple. Entering the main hall of the temple we found the monks dressing for the Black Hat dance, which was like the one outside except for it was performed in the temple. They had huge hats, which lay about the floor in their lacquered cases. Bailey and I hardly noticed the temple, for two exquisite conch trumpets lay on the side of the altar. Consisting of the most beautiful silverwork with dragon designs and inlaid jewels, they were far finer than anything that had so far left Tibet. We would have given our souls to possess them. From here we moved to the side chapels, finally coming to a room where chief character in the Black Hat dance was being dressed. It was all quite informal, and everybody seemed to be enjoying themselves and happy that we were there. An old monk with a sly grin performed a burlesque of the dance causing everyone to laugh and applaud him to

the great discomfort of another monk who was wearing stiff brocades and waiting for the second dance to begin. The process of donning the famous black hat was interesting. First, a little skullcap of black felt was placed on his head and tied under his chin. After this, the huge, round, lacquered pancake was tied on top. Having requested to photograph the dancers, four chief characters lined up on the temple steps, and we took their pictures. As people crowded around us, the lictors again flailed them with their rope whips and drove them away from the camera's eye.



We left the temple with great reluctance. Everyone had been so kind and seemed sorry that we were moving on rather than watching the second dance inside. Had I known what lay ahead I would have stayed. The dance, however, would be the same except it would be performed in the open centre of the temple where participants wearing large round hats frighten devils out of that sacred room, bring auspicious conditions for the next year. We offered the temple ten rupees and tipped all the servants that had accompanied us. They seemed very pleased with the gift. I was glad, for we could not have been better treated. All the mystery and prejudice that surrounds these delightful people is entirely false.

Four miles from Gyangtse we had to change transport again. Aku had still not caught up with us. As we reached Gyangtse, we were met by Lieutenant Hudson, who rode a fine grey horse from the [Kokonor](#). He brought us to the bungalow and had tea with us there. He later introduced us to Mrs. Duff, and passed along the Major's invitation to dinner, which would begin at eight.

Cleaned and combed, we left with the Sikh that came for us. The Major greeted us at the fort. Drinks were copiously poured, and he insisted on mixing them—gin then whiskey. Bailey and I were not handling them too well. After a long dinner in which Mrs. Duff revealed herself as a Catholic and in violent

opposition to my remarks that the *mantra* of Tibet and the Catholic Church were quite the same anthropologically. The Major was amused. After dinner we had beer and played darts. Hudson performed an imitation of troop movements with the empty beer cans in great style. We were introduced to Mr. Wiseman, the Major's dog. The party finished around ten o'clock. I have a date for polo.

Returning home, I felt terribly tired and a little sick. Bailey was looking pretty green as well. It had been too much: twenty-nine miles, a lama dance, and a military supper. I was terribly sick, and felt as though I were losing my mind along with everything else. Finally sleep came. It is hell being sick, not to mention being drunk as well.

How poorly I have described all this. It must be amended some later day. It is hard to assess, but perhaps there is a story in it. I have been faithful to the facts, although not descriptive enough. There is so much here that I shall not forget the rest.

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THE FIFTEENTH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

We both awoke feeling very sick this morning not knowing whether it was due to bad liquor, the altitude, or a simple reaction from the double marches and long days of the past week. I could hardly eat breakfast, for my stomach felt too squeamish, and my head was only too lightly screwed into its socket. In the first part of the morning, neither of us felt like moving, and not until ten did we accept Lieutenant Hudson's invitation to meet him at the fort. We arrived there to find him in a foul mood but looking very spruce in his shorts and jacket with the brass tabs at the shoulders. He sat down and told us we should see the [Tibetan Trade Agent](#)²¹ before visiting the monasteries or wandering about the town. Rai Sahib²² was asked to post a letter to someone, and we returned to get ready our gifts. The sun nearly finished us both. We were dizzy and weak, and my feet and hands, which were cold and still, felt like leaden images of their more lively selves. Once in the bungalow we collapsed on our beds and slept.

After lunch (around two o'clock) the Rai Sahib called. He was a spruce Tibetan in a golf tweed suit and broad hat. He wore glasses and his pigtail looked most comical hanging down over his half belt at the back. The tassel waved about just below his coattails. We walked over to the Trade Agent's house. We passed through the gate where a little man with a wizened, pockmarked face and butter spotted *chuba* met us at the door. I thought he was a servant, but the Rai Sahib introduced him to us as the Trade Agent.

He brought us into the house through a barren room filled with suitcases made of horsehide and fur. It was quite dark as the narrow windows let in little light. The next room was really a part of the first, except for a partition of boards running up the pillar to separate them. We reached his living room and sat down opposite the altar on which two silver butter lamps flickered and guttered in the wind from the courtyard window. We sat on low benches like window seats, which were a few inches high and covered with blankets. Baily and I sat together in the window while the Trade Agent with the interpreter, the Rai Sahib, sat opposite us. He asked if we would like Tibetan tea or Indian tea. Feeling almost sick at the smell of his lamps, we decided on Indian. Soon a boy arrived carrying an English silver tray of very poor quality with very brightly painted English china on it. These were undoubtedly presents given on the same sort of occasion

²¹ PGH: The Trade Agent at this time would have been Kesang Tsultrim (Skal bzang tshul 'khrims). This identification is confirmed by his later description, "the Tibetan Trade Agent was a very pious man, as his rich prayer wheel would indicate," which mirrors the description of him provided in British Records (Who's Who in Tibet, 1935).

²² PGH: Rai Bahadur Norbhu Dongdrup (1889-1944) was an ethnic Tibetan born in Darjeeling and interpreter for Gould. As a member of the British Mission in Lhasa, he served as envoy to the Tibetan Trade Agent at Gyantse. He eventually became British Trade Agent at Gyantse.

as ours. As we had entered the room, the Rai Sahib presented us with our scarves, which we placed over the wrists of the Trade Agent. Our present, which was a gold watch, was shown to him and then waved away into a corner.

The tea arrived, and small talk began.

“How long have you been away from home?” he asked.

“Seven months,” we informed him. The conversation went on slowly through the interpretation of the Rai Sahib.

“Did we like Tibet?”

“Yes,” I answered, far more interested in a matched pair of silver and gold skull cups on his altar. I could not stop thinking about whether or not he would sell them as I talked of the splendid art of the Tibetans. His teacup came arrived. It was a magnificent example of [Kham](#) craftsmanship. It had a most pleasing base in the form of a lotus fashioned in thick *repoussé* silver, and around the top were hunting scenes in gold. We remarked its beauty, and for the first time heard about the famous silversmiths of Kham.

“The best silver does not come from Shigatse?” I asked.

“No, no, theirs is far lighter and worse wrought,” he answered. I gave up my idea of sending for the famous Shigatse work, three forbidden days away, and decided that I must have a piece from Kham, for that cup of Kumbella’s was from Kham.

The interpreter and the Trade Agent spoke amongst themselves and left me free to gaze. There was an excellent set of *thangkas*²³ in the room, also from Kham, and the Chinese influence so great that it excluded some of the regular Tibetan features. They seemed new, but were of fine workmanship. On the top of the altar rested seven reliquaries with a swathed god in the window of each. Below them were butter offerings in little discs—one on top of the other—on a stick, like a large lollipop. The place smelled badly of the burning butter. As the first cup of tea ended we began to talk over the business of the visit. We mentioned we might visit all the *gompas*, and he had no objection. “Might we visit the hill of the *thangka*²⁴ this afternoon to find a suitable place for the camera?” we asked. He consented and told us that a servant would be sent ahead to warn the priests of our arrival. When we had finished a second cup of tea—Tibetan tea with salt and butter for them, and a clear, pallid sort for us—he rose and saw us to the door, parting the yak’s hair hanging so that we might pass through. He shook our hands with what seemed true cordiality. I liked him very much, for he illustrated to me what I have thought all along: the Tibetans are a normal people of normal interests, and not more cognizant of mystery than any other religious nation. They much resemble the medieval Catholic in their religion. Charms and amulets were as much pedaled in the fourteenth century as they are today.

Outside we met Ugyen Thondup, who went on with us to the town. The Rai Sahib left at that point, for he had work to do. Ugyen explained that the

²³ PGH: *Thangkas* are Tibetan religious paintings.

²⁴ PGH: “The hill of the *thangka*” refers to the large artificially constructed wall at the rear of the monastic complex at Gyantse from which large appliqué *thangkas* are displayed on special occasions throughout the year.

Tibetan Trade Agent was a very pious man, as his rich prayer wheel would indicate (which was also from Kham, and of which he was very proud). Although he was now a monk much respected in the community, he had once indulged in *chang* and been a regular *roué*—great sinner, great saint. I had visions of him looking over our present and deciding of what sort we were. I hope the gold stays affixed until we are back in Kalimpong. We wandered along the dusty, rutted road, and past the ditches, which were little stony fields into which the men and women threw water with a shovel. We traveled around the base of the great rock of the Dzong and into the main street of the town. We walked between long walls with bright figures of the Buddha set into their tops, some quite new, products of late devotion. On the left were the shops whose dark interior one entered through a low narrow door. Most of their stocks consisted of undated Eveready batteries.

We went up the street beside the water ditch at the base of the wall to the square. There in front of us and to the left were the huge gates of the monastery compound. They were massive, tremendously thick gates with a huge guardian demon on either side. These doors were too magnificent to describe; they must be seen. Brilliant red, blue, gold, green, and magenta combine in the weird fantastic forms of the carvings to give them a barbaric effect that is wholly new and strange. The gods had blue and red faces and fat bellies, and from the one that was the demon of Tibet, heads hung by their hair in a chain about its waist. The gate was deep blood red and had faded frescoes of the gods painted on its walls. We entered into the temple proper where we were met by the caretaker of the temple, a young, fat-faced monk, and several others holding Roman lamps in each of which burned a rag soaked with butter. The doors swung open as we approached, and we proceeded directly into the central room of the temple. It was dark inside. The lamps made amber pools of invisible light in the darkness. They illuminated nothing, and simply existed as yellow flames in the complete obscurity of the temple. Always moving in clockwise direction to gain merit, we came to the sanctuary, which was behind the room where the lamas sat at prayer. There was a huge Buddha, and along the walls were standing Buddhas, thirty feet high and showing the different hand positions, which told the story of the Buddha's temptation. I recognized only the one in which he implores the earth as witness against Mara. They were made of clay. Far above them towered the central buddha, his head alone illuminated by clerestory windows at the top. The rest of the room was in complete darkness save for the lights of the altar and those faint-glowing, glimmering flames in the lamps of the monks. I have never seen such huge lamps, some of which were very old, four feet across, and made of silver and gold. I also noticed two rather bad Tang vases full of artificial flowers among them. The room was decked with these paper flowers, strung from the hands of one standing Buddha to the next in long swinging garlands. Everything was gilded, and gold woodwork backed the heads of the Buddhas in fine Tibetan-Chinese scrolls. White offering scarves hung from the ears of the Buddha.

We returned to the general room again, where it was lighter. The pillars rose out of darkness into the half-light above us. They were red, carved at the capitols, and from them hung long brocades with Tibetan letters. There consisted of many colours of the richest cloth from China. Along the floor were mats for the

*chelas*²⁵ to sit upon during the chanting.

From here we went into a chapel on the right, which housed a stupa containing the remains of a lama. Although they told us it was gold, it smelled like brass to me. Also in this room were some of the finest books that we have seen in huge carved wooden covers. I hope that we may be able to obtain some of them to take back with us. There was, however, one of even finer quality. On the leather roll of the great *thangka* sat a heavy book—which must weigh nearly a hundred pounds—with tremendously thick and wide covers. Its leaves were at least two and a half by four feet, and Bailey had his eye upon it. Opposite this chapel was another containing a rather neglected image of the Buddha, before which only a few lamps were burning.

The next storey contained a new room with frescoes depicting the late Dalai Lama. It was very new and not too interesting, save that the art was as well done in technique as the older examples, but not in conception. Attached to the railing that protected the painting was a stick with rings at the top like that that carried by the Chinese Guanyin.²⁶ We toured dozens of chapels after this, moving between as many as three stories. Once I am more familiar with the place, I may be able to construct a layout of the place and find my way.

Having made an offering of ten rupees, which pleased the monks greatly, we left the temple and started up the hill to find the best position from which to photograph the great *thangka* that will be shown tomorrow morning. We decided upon the top of a nearby temple. Faint from the foul air and our poisoning the night before, we returned to the bungalow in time for tea.

Here is a list of the various rooms and items contained within them that I must remember:

- View of the ceiling in the main sanctuary from balcony in the Dalai Lama room.
- The images of the dead lamas dressed in robes his head.
- Room with figures in grottoes.
- Great figure of Guanyin.
- Portraits of famous lamas with the Indian Ascetic among them.
- Chamber of horrors with stuffed animals and birds, as well as old relics.

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²⁵ PGH: *Chela* ('student') is used in this context to refer to young monks. Although a Hindi word (meaning 'servant' or 'slave' and by extension, 'a student indentured to a master'), British sources in the 19th century used it for a disciple of a Tibetan master, and such usage appears to have been popularized by Rudyard Kipling in his novel *Kim*.

²⁶ PGH: This is the Chinese name for Avalokiteśvara, the 'Bodhisattva of Compassion.' The Dalai Lamas are considered to be manifestations of Avalokiteśvara.

THE SIXTEENTH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

This morning we were up at five-thirty and outside at six in order to view the great *thangka*. As we walked around the corner of the Dzong²⁷ we saw that it was already in place on the great wall. Morning haze covered everything, and the slanting beams of the sun struck it like gold over the roofs of the city. As we entered the gates we heard the conchs blowing and the beat of the huge drum. Even as we walked the lamas began to assemble for their holy walk about the city. Both the old and young had their yellow hats, ear lappets, short yellow and red hats, and those great bushy things representing the 'devil dancer.' We hurried past the rows of monks to the temple we had picked for photography.

On the roof we set up the camera and waited. The sun rose directly to the right of the *thangka*, which blinded us as well as the lens. It would be up for two hours, and we stood there waiting for it to move far enough around to be screened by the hood. We took two colored pictures of it, and the last as the lamas arrived to take it down. Bill and I hurried to the rock to see the *thangka* as it came down. I took pictures madly, and was followed by a crowd of children crying for baksheesh and smelling of butter. There was time to get in several good views before the first strip was lowered from the top a hundred feet above us. Bailey was using the movie camera. I watched them begin the process of taking it down and took close shots of the *thangka* as it slowly was lowered and folded by everyone there.

It was a most beautiful work of appliqué, consisting of Indian, Chinese, and Persian brocades of various colours. Some of the black hair was made of deep blue velvet that seemed to have a pattern in the pile. I had never seen velvet like this before. Some of the figures were outlined with a thin strip of contrasting colour, others simply depended on the colours to separate them from the background. The drawing and perspective of the *thangka* was remarkably good and very Indian in its influence. This was especially true of the attendant female deities. The predominant color was yellow, the flesh tones being made of heavy yellow silk brocade with a design, but without gold. In the aureole around the Buddha's head there were beautiful cloud designs of Chinese workmanship. Some of this finer work may not show in the picture for it was conceived on such a huge scale that small designs are lost. The entire *thangka* was folded into a huge leather bag and then carried down the hill by the monks and laymen, a new group getting under it each time the conchs blew. It was preceded by two standard bearers and the Ringding Geling Lamas with the conchs.

²⁷ PGH: A Dzong (*rdzong*) is a fort or fortress that served as the district headquarters and seat of an administrative officer of the administrative districts in Tibet for the Tibetan Government; it could also be provisioned as a fortress in the event of an attack. The town of Gyantse was centered around the Gyantse Dzong and the Palkhor Chöde Monastery next to it.



We took some pictures of the front of the *gompa* and the great *stupa* before returning for lunch. In the afternoon we went to the sealing of the racehorses by the Dzongpön. We were too great an interest so we decided to return again after admiring the appliqué on the tents. On the way back from the *gompa* Bailey found a good powder horn in the bazaar.

It is now quarter after ten and I must be up at three-thirty to see the racing at four. What a peaceful life. I hope that we shall be completely well tomorrow, for we are still not recovered.

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THE SEVENTEENTH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

At three o'clock Aku came in with the hot water and lit the lamps. Outside a bright moon was shining on the grass in the compound. I looked at my watch, which read three o'clock; I could have murdered Aku for causing us to lose that precious extra half hour of sleep. We dozed while the lamp bleared our eyes, waiting for half past to arrive and a real necessity to get up. How utterly foolish a horse race at four o'clock sounded. I looked out the window again, and there was no sign of the dawn breaking, only the still, white moonlight on the dewless grass. There was no wind, but it was very cold. Finally Bailey got up with a groan and said, "We'll never get any sleep in Gyangtse: the first night a party and bad liquor, the next awake at five to see the *thangka*, and now three for a horse race. I wonder what comes off at two tomorrow." Ugden appeared at four smelling evilly of *chang*²⁸ and whiskey. He had not been to bed all night and was decently tight. Aku shuffled off into the dark in his bare feet.

We walked over to the Dzong and up its side as someone let off a gunshot. We all thought the race had begun and rushed up the steep rock with our hearts pounding and breath searing our lungs in the cold morning air, but nothing had happened. On the shadowy hillside the whole village was congregated watching a fire on the mountain two miles away. In the east the dawn was breaking. A few clouds detached themselves from the deep sky, and a bright wedge of light began to force the night westward to where the moon shone brighter than it had all night. From the village roofs the smoke began to curl and hung in thin grey strata upon the motionless air. We sat and waited. Suddenly a great shout was raised. The fire on the distant hill had gone out, leaving a stain of white smoke in the air. Little black dots began to race across the plain. A great band of yellow light struck across the fields in front of them, lighting the early blades of the barley in brilliant gold. Now strung out in a long thin line on the road to the great fort, they moved into the show once again. After a few minutes, the first of them reached the bottom of the Dzong, and the morning light struck the battlements of the fortress until they were as brilliant as the moon that still hung reluctant to go over them. The horses drew closer, and their Tibetan riders urged them on with flail-like whips. Their bodies told of their exhaustion: frothing at the mouth, flanks heaving and spotted with white sweat, and nostrils scarlet with lack of air.

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²⁸ PGH: This refers to the barley beer brewed in Tibet.

THE EIGHTEENTH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

We had a full night's rest for the first time in two weeks. We did not rise until seven. I have been using an air mattress under my cozy rapture and it is a great success. After breakfast I found Mr. Hudson waiting for me to play polo.

We rode across the fields to the west—almost to the foothills—before we came to the ground. The Major²⁹ was already there, and a large group of Sikhs stood around with the horses. Mr. Hudson and the Major took one side and left me with some Sikhs so nearly alike that I had trouble distinguishing the back from number two once the ball was in play. We played hard, and I nearly died for lack of air at the altitude, my lungs searing and burning as they fought for air. I played all over the field until I began to find my way. The second chukker [period] went far better, although the better and faster play left me more short of breath. Although we did not score, we kept the ball in their end of the field a good lot of the time.

Following the match, I went to the fort and had a beer, before cantering to the dark bungalow to find Bailey writing letters out on the lawn.

This afternoon we went into town and found it nearly deserted, for everyone had gone to see the archery of the Tomasha.³⁰ We ferreted out a goldsmith and examined his work, which was not that great. He claims, however, that his sons are better goldsmiths. From there we went to the *gompa*,³¹ but found it locked up tighter than ever. We asked about purchasing books, and the head lama assured us that it was impossible. Never in thousands of years had a book been sold from the monastery. We returned feeling very down for wanting a book. On the way we stopped to see the archery, but nothing was occurring except for gambling and the consumption of great quantities of *chang*. The Assistant Dzongpön³² was examining the arrows of the men before the shoot. I examined one myself. They were made of bamboo, hardened and straightened in the fire. The shaft fit into the hollow back of the head, which was long, concave, and did not come to a point, but was merely fine at the end. The back of the blade was wrapped with a thin piece of leather. The feathers were attached with glue stewed from skin, which appeared to be a sort of casein. The three feathers were not more than a half an inch in height, and were tapered to the shaft in both the front and rear. Wound between the hair of the feathers and continuing all the way to the nock was silk thread, which was formed into a crown knot below the nock. The

²⁹ PGH: Thsi is Major Frederick M. ('Eric;' 'Hatter') Bailey (1882-1967), British Political Officer for Sikkim (ca. 1921-1933).

³⁰ PGH: This refers to a party or festival in Tibet, often with competitions, games and feasts.

³¹ The Tibetan word for 'monastery' (*dgon pa*) literally means 'an isolated place.'

³² PGH: the Dzongpön (*rdzong dpon*) is the title held by the chief administrator of a Dzong.

arrows varied in length but were about the same length as our own.

We went back to the bungalow before returning, once again, to the field, but we were finally driven away by snotty-nosed little brats begging at our heels. The first rider came up the rock driving three unmounted horses before him. Their owner's name was emblazoned upon the saddle pads, which was all they carried. The horse on which the man rode struggled to make it up the slope and road to the gate. Other horses now came down the road and prepared to mount the hill. Some were able, while others shambled, their joints loose with fatigue from the steep incline. We walked ahead of them.

We entered the courtyard of the castle where sat a court of medieval splendor. Over the flat top of a gate sat the two Dzongpöns and the Khenchen.³³ Each was dressed in brilliant Chinese brocade, one in a fine Chien Lung kössu work, the other in pink and gold, and the third in dull chartreuse. They wore wide-brimmed hats, from which hung loose strands of scarlet silk that moved as the wind played with the fringes. Behind them stood their servants gorgeously arrayed in chartreuse with red belts and burgomeister hats, all six of them stiff and expressionless behind their master's representative. Before the officials sat two brilliantly lacquered tables, which were ornamented with rich carving of clouds and dragons and painted in blues, reds, and gold. The horsemen came before them each holding a baton of wood with the number of his place written upon it. The horse that finished first was led by a gift scarf held by a boy who had a tall feather of eagle's down in his hat and wore a strange half-Chinese costume of brocades and felt in red and gold. The owner rode with a scarf of three colours—red, blue, and white—thrown around his neck (he may have been only the jockey, for the owner was a very rich man). He approached the judges who presented him with sixty bowls of fodder, corn for his horse, and several rolls of brocade. He laid down his baton at the feet of the judges. The second-place finisher then arrived, pushing through the dense crowd of brilliant brocaded and embroidered clothes. He received thirty bowls of corn, and half the amount of brocade. The third-place finisher received half of that. Then the horsemen mounted the ponies together, and with wild bells and cries, pelted each other with balls of powdered tsampa so that the air was smoky and white with the dust. Screaming wildly, they dashed off down the slope, horses stumbling and slipping on the stones of the battlements. Down the stronghold they went, a thin line of brilliantly coloured men, their brown faces golden in the early level rays of the sun and their wild dress flying about them. The judges, the representatives of the Dzongpöns, however, did not deign to notice the horde that poured past them, not even moving their stern faces enough to swing one of the heavy turquoise earrings that they wore. Finally, these three, silent men began to slowly process, preceded by servants carrying the two lacquered tables and men with whips in front of them. As they walked, the crowd fell back before the stinging lashes of the lictors. We watched them go, and gradually silence came over the stones. The last beggar was gone, and his whining

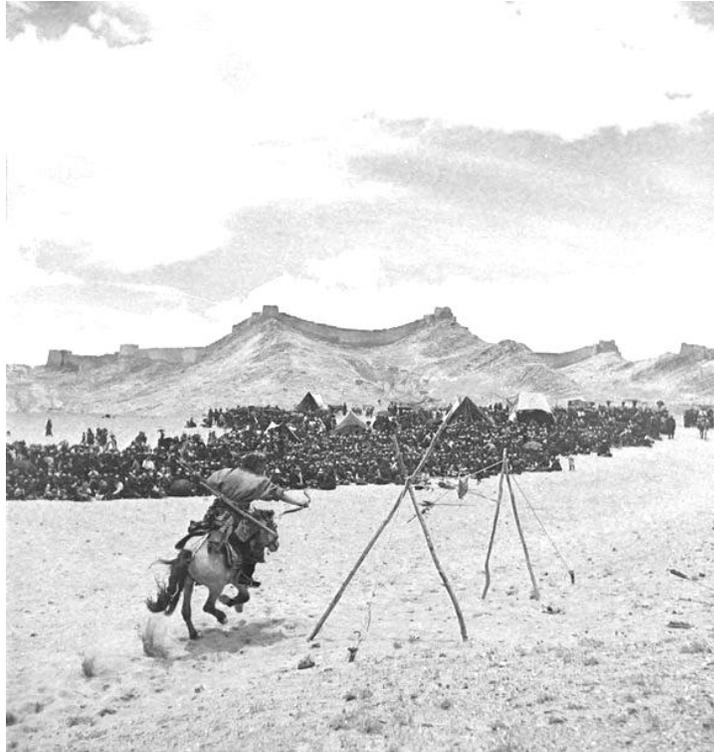
³³ Gyantse had two Dzongpöns known as the 'Western Dzongpön' and the 'Eastern Dzongpön,' depending on which end of the Dzong their offices were located. Khenchen (*mkhan chen*) is a title meaning 'great abbot,' that is, the abbot of Palkhor Chöde monastery in Gyantse.

lost down the side of the hill. The stronghold recommenced its long sleep of thousands of years untroubled by petty man, who had built it vainly. The sun shone along the withered wall with its crumbling dentils, defenses, and fallen battle walks; and up the long cracks of the towers leaning against the sky. For another year, not so much as one lizard chirp would make its echoes rouse from sleep. The crows settled onto the deserted walls with ruffled black feathers and did not crow.

Back at the bungalow we ate breakfast feeling as though it must be time for lunch, yet it was only half past six. The morning dragged on wearily until eleven when the archery contests began. Gathered in the plain northwest of the monastery walls was one of the largest crowds ever seen in Tibet, nearly fourteen thousand people in their best brocades. Mongol tents lined the lists, their blue appliqué rising and billowing in the wind that swept across the hills. They were gorgeous with their great scrolls and spirals, and the eternal show sewn upon their white walls. Some were of black yak's hair and had white upon them, while some were brown. On the ridges of the land around the lists, thousands upon thousands of jeweled women moved their medieval headdresses heavy with red felt, coral, pearls, and turquoise. The wealthier women wore gold gowns set with turquoise, emeralds and diamonds, which formed huge plaques of colour upon their Mongolian chests.



In the lists were two teams of archers, mounted with bows and Tibetan prong guns. Ten men in each team sat on their horses waiting for the signal to ride. When it came they spurred their horses towards the first target: a metal disc hung between two poles. Holding their flintlock pronged guns in their left hand so as not to spill the priming, they fired point blank at the target, which spun under the charge and red flash of the smoky powder. A few yards further, hung a leather bag between two sticks. Quickly the men shifted their gun to the back, and drew an arrow tipped with a long iron head fletched with eagle feathers. The nock was decorated with eagles' down in a great pompom. Arriving at the second target, they fired at it, some leaving their arrows quivering in the leather but most firing into the audience. The arrows were twisted wood, and very slow with their huge feathers to catch the wind. The bows were imported, old, very short of wood, and continuously warped and repaired to maintain them in the dry climate. The men shot with the bow horizontal laying the arrow across it while they held the arrow by its nock with two fingers underneath and thumb on top. I think the arrows were made of willow and were thus badly shaped, for wood was a rare thing in Tibet. The quivers held the arrows separate, having leather pockets for each arrow so that the fletching would not be ruined, as was the case with our quivers where the arrows are crowded together in a single tube. The quiver hung below the men's waists from a sling over the shoulder. No, I am mistaken. Actually, the quiver was attached to the skirt of the saddle, for the quivers never moved even when the men lost their balance. While they were shooting the gun, the bow was ready, and hung over the quiver. After shooting the gun, it was slung across their shoulders Bedouin fashion, and the bow and arrow were then taken up. The men were very poor riders, not managing their horses, which were badly trained and shied at the report of the gun. Many of the men nearly fell, for they did not use their legs to hold on to the horse. Here a horse is regarded, as the Major remarked, as a means for getting from A to B and back to A. They are sat on like chairs, usually with legs stretched far apart with saddle clothes, bags, and voluminous silk clothes. Many of the guns went off before the men had even started down the run towards the targets. One went off while slung on a gentleman's back, singeing his queue and ruffling his dignity. The riders were not impassive as they were supposed to be. They were grandstanders; when they made a good shot they turned around for the ladies' approval and beamed. Missing their arrow, many would fling the cloth yard at the target in rage and ride off sulking. If that occurred, they were booed and hissed by the audience, and often little urchins would run behind them chasing them out of the lists in disgrace. They wore broad-brimmed hats with the scarlet fringe falling from the centre to the edge. These came off as they galloped and rested back on their shoulders. They had on tunics, or rather *chubas*, of green brocade with belts of red silk. One of the archers even wore a tattered coat of gorgeous *kössu*, which, though ragged and dirty, was finer than anything in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



On the sidelines sat the British tent, and in it were Rai Sahib Wangdi,³⁴ Mr. Hudson, and Mrs. Duff. The Major did not come. Beside them were the tents of the Dzongpöns, appliquéd in deep blue on white canvas. Their representatives sat below the lacquer thrones reserved for them, but as they were overseeing the fete, they did not appear, although they obviously vied with each other over the fineness of their retinue. Priceless is the only word to describe their clothes. This is a strange land where a good pair of scissors is worth more than jewels.

We left just before lunch in order to clean up, and then rode over to the fort, where the Major, Mr. Hudson, and Mrs. Duff were waiting. After beer we had lunch, during which the Major relayed to us some interesting anecdotes about building the fort. The contractor had used sand instead of cement and kept the government watchman drunk for three months in order to get away with it. They were now pulling down the towers. "They are useless," he commented, "as you can only fire straight from the loopholes. The contractor forgot to mitre them inside." Mr. Hudson collects birds' nests and has found the old towers to be a treasure house. He told a story of his Tibetan memories.

³⁴ PGH: Kyibuk Wangdi Norbhu (b. 1897), was a Tibetan employee of the British Mission in Yatung and one of four Tibetan boys sent to England for education in 1913. Thus, he spoke excellent English. He married the second daughter of Raja Dorjé, and his family had estates near Gyangtse.

I received a letter from the Himalayan Club and one from Sis, which said that her mother was not well and expected to die. A case of grip has made Beezy weary. I wish that I would hear from the family. I must send a telegram to find the dimensions of the marquee.

* * *

THE NINETEENTH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

At quarter of ten we started for Choktay's³⁵ as Mr. Hudson had arranged for us to meet him and his family. Unfortunately, the British Trade Agent could not go to act as interpreter as he was going to the Tendongs³⁶ with the army staff. We walked to town with Ugden and over to the Dzungpön's house, which was situated to the east of the main part of town. It was large and surrounded by a high wall. We entered at the gate with Ugden before us holding the presents: toilet soap, three pairs of shears, and a watch. We waited in the courtyard while the servant arranged the gifts on a brightly colored Tibetan lacquer tray. I looked around as we stood on the doorstep waiting. Two of three outer walls of the court were roofed like sheds and had long mangers near the floor. Several horses stood there, saddled, ready and waiting to be ridden. The mangers were of plastered mud brick with roofs of slate, and had posts inside made of wood. The door to the house had two painted pillars with long flaring tops like the temple entrances. The entry was similar to a porch with doors leading off at either side into the house. On the back wall was a fresco of a monk throwing a *dorjé*.

After some time, the servant who had announced us returned and led us into the garden. Here sat a large tent with a fly over it. Both were gorgeously embroidered in blue with relief of red. This appliqué ran down to the corners in the Greek Key pattern. The garden was freshly sodded with spade marks still visible where it had been fitted together. Pots of flowers had been planted intermittently in order to make the place more beautiful. We were met by Mr. and Mrs. Choktay, both of whom came forward and shook hands with us. Bailey and I threw our scarves over his hands and followed him into the tent. We had tea and talked, engaging in the sort of vague generalities that can filter through translation. Ugden did very well. He asked us asked where America was, how long we had been away, and why we had come to Tibet. The Dzungpön was very interested to hear that for years we had wanted to come. Tea came in a Chinese silver *cloisonné* pot and was served by the petite Mrs. Choktay. She was a perfect hostess. Some guests had already been at the house when we arrived, and others now began to arrive.

The Choktays invited us to stay for lunch, and our interpreter told us that

³⁵ PGH: Thsi is also spelled Chokte (*lcogs bkras*); Dorje Wangyal (1910-1963). He was Western Dzungpön of Gyangtse highly influential in Lhasa. He married Namkye Tsedrön, the daughter of an aristocrat, who was considered by many to be the most beautiful women in Tibet.

³⁶ PGH: The original typescript reads 'Tnedon' and is probably a typo for 'Tendon,' i.e., Eastern Dzungpön of Gyangtse, also spelled 'Tendong.' Since Tendong is the name of an aristocratic family and the head of the household and there was a Tentong Gyurme Gyatso, who was a 'Shapé' (Cabinet Minister) in the Tibetan Government, this may be one of his relatives.

we had already accepted through Hudson and the Rai Sahib. Regardless, we wanted to stay. Soon Kumar Chimi,³⁷ who had been introduced to us and had read the letter from Ranee Chuni,³⁸ began to speak in English. He was a tall good-looking young man of the Tsering family.³⁹ His little girl was there as well. She was a darling doll—not human at all—and very well-behaved. We all sat at one table: Baily and I, Mr. and Mrs. Choktay, Ugden, Kumar Chimi, and two rather older Tibetans. Mr. Choktay was called away to business and left. We began to play a game called snakes and ladders at which I had great luck and won. The Tibetans love a game and anything involving gambling. They use the same dice as we. Opposite us sat the women, one of whom—a sister of Mrs. Choktay—wore a gorgeous Gyangtse bowed headdress and a magnificent sunburst hung on strands of pearls. Next to her, and no less gorgeous, was Mrs. Bo Tsering, the wife of the Rai Sahib doctor in the civil hospital. She was dressed in the Lhasa style, wearing a triangular headdress with yak's hair falling from either side. She also wore the hair earrings of Lhasa, which were tremendous turquoise ornaments that hung from her hair in front of the ears and down her face. Her gown was magnificent, gold and inlaid with the most perfect stones and a few diamonds. She also wore many ropes of irregular pearls to hold her chatelaine. Also in attendance was the mother in the Choktay family. Mrs. B. Tsering had brought her newborn baby and proceeded to suckle it at odd moments without any self-consciousness whatsoever, giving it her breast through the *chuba* whenever it wanted to drink. The mother was doting over the two children, the Bo child and the little girl of Kumar Chimi. They formed a little group by themselves, and it was interesting to study their characters without knowing the language. Mrs. Bo was the retailer of scandal. There was also another woman of mother Choktay's age, but she soon left and the party became a closed council of war with occasional glances at the men playing at our table.

When we finished our game, we drank a third glass of *chang* to celebrate, and two cups of Tibetan tea to boot, which were not bad at all and very much like a soup. Following this, the *baboos* from the fort and one of the Tibetans started a game of snakes and ladders. We just sat and watched. Sometime later, a game of mah-jong was proposed, but before it began, Kumar Chimi wanted to see the pictures. They were very interested and made most interesting comments on the work, most of them to the effect that the murals seemed old even in our photographs. They also understood, much like Kumbella,⁴⁰ the idea of influence

³⁷ PGH: This refers to Chime Dorje Taring, the second son of Raja Dorjé (the family name is 'Taring'). He was married to 'Daisy Tsarong (see below). Following her death, he would remarry to one of his late wife's nieces, another one of the daughters of Dele Rabten and Norbu Yudon (Tsarong), Dekyi Wangmo, becoming the brother-in-law of Chokte's wife, i.e., he would marry one of Namkye Tse-drön's sisters.

³⁸ PGH: This is Rani Dorjé, wife of Raja Dorjé and mother of Kumar Chimi.

³⁹ PGH: This is probably an error and meant to refer to 'Taring family.' Mr. Cummings may have confused the names due to the presence of Dr. Bo Tsering.

⁴⁰ PGH: This can also be spelled Kumbela or Kunphe-la. He was a favorite advisor to the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and a strong advocate of modernization. Following the death of the Thirteenth in 1934, he was ousted from the government by his political

in art. The idea of applying the method to their own monastery thrilled them, but they could not see the practical value in it, the monastery was not actually present there and within walking distance. After looking at the pictures, we began the game. I could not remember enough of rules and strategy to play, and the game seemed new to them as well. In the meantime, a very obsequious person arrived—almost sneaking in—with his tongue hanging out to Kumar Chimi, who paid no notice to him at all. He brought no gift. They tried to teach him mah-jong but he was as dumb as they come, and it took three hands before he had vague idea of the score. I nearly learned the game in Tibetan, let alone figuring it out in English, when his instructor, the wit of the party, had finished explaining. About this time a retired major of the Tibetan army arrived. He was a jovial old boy with front teeth missing and a wisp of grey beard like Spanish moss on his chin. He immediately downed three cups of *chang* and began to kibitz for all he was worth. Our glasses were kept filled all the time. Servants moved about with silver punch bowls of *chang*, using a silver ladle inlaid with bits of turquoise and chased with a lotus design. The only defense against receiving more *chang* was a full glass, for the servant would not take an answer of “*ma réd*” for anything.⁴¹ He simply poured and poured, and when it was exhausted another earthenware jug came out from the house.

This went on until about two o'clock when we left the tent and the tables were covered for lunch. I found the way to the little boy's room with Ugden's help, which was a most magnificent two-holer built to withstand the wear and tear of the ages and situated a full storey above the earth with a flight of stone steps leading up to it. Without seats, everyone squats, which, by the way, is much easier. *Chang* has the same effect as new wine or old beer, so it was none too soon! After reading *To Lhasa in Disguise*,⁴² I have been observing carefully whether Tibetans pee standing up or squatting. It seems as though about ninety percent relieve themselves while standing up, and the other ten while squatting. The higher classes seem to prefer squatting. It was less damaging to the robes, especially if on a good, stout two-holer like the Choktay's. When we returned, feeling much relieved, lunch was served. I wondered why the tablecloths were made of rubberized material, and I now believe it was due to Bailey and I being in attendance.

Situated in a ring on the table were shallow dishes full of different sorts of delicacies of unknown quantity and quality, which smelled wondrously good

opponents and exiled to southern Tibet, from where he relocated to Kalimpong and settled. This is where Cummings and Vanderhoef most likely met him.

⁴¹ PGH: This (*ma red*) means 'no' or 'no thanks' or 'please no' in Tibetan.

⁴² PGH: William McGovern's account of sneaking across the Indian-Tibetan border disguised as a coolie (pack mule attendant), and from there, to Lhasa in contravention of both British and Tibetan authorities. Having revealed himself in Lhasa, he was treated with hospitality, though promptly escorted back to Indian Territory and succeeded in laying claim to the title of the 'First American to visit Lhasa.' His published account served as inspiration and a guidebook of cultural cues for anyone trying to visit Tibet. He is considered to have been the role model for the character 'Indiana Jones.'

after all the *chang*. At each person's place were chopsticks of ivory and a baby's spoon with the hollow running up the handle. No plates were passed to us. Bill and I watched Kumar Chimi eat first. He took up his sticks, tapped the ends on the table to even them, and with wondrous dexterity began to shove into his mouth as much food as we were able using a fork. His method, in fact, was far better than ours, for there was no pushing to be done. I tried with catastrophic results. The sticks flipped past each other and deposited a piece of sea slug nearly on Kumar's brocade. Mrs. Choktay laughed and promptly handed me a piece in the spoon. Kumar, whether out of kindness or sheer terror, began a lesson. "Tap them first on the table, and then hold them like this," he said partly in Tibetan and partly in English. I tried again and managed to successfully transport a piece of sardine up and into my mouth. Next, I tried to eat some bamboo shoots and peas. The amount I was able to pick up would have starved a canary. However, with repeated attempts, we soon became very adept and could pick up anything with the sticks, even bits of meat covered in gravy. In the end it was quite simple, and we ate better than we ever could have English-style.

The dishes were the best I have ever tasted. The cooking had all the delicacy of the French, but with larger portions, so one did not have to wait for the next tidbit to arrive. The food was excellently seasoned and of most interesting variety, containing nothing heavy or indigestible as at an Englishman's table. No single dish tasted questionable—all were delicious. There were sea slugs from China dried then boiled, which tasted a little like bacon but far more delicate. There was green celery cut in small slices with rubbed mutton, which was hot. In another dish were tiny prawns no larger than a question mark. They were cold and quite brown. Next to that was a dish with hot chunks of mutton covered in gravy and peas, which was tinned in China. Other dishes included sliced small tongue, which was cold; sliced fat mutton; and mutton steeped in chili sauce. Some time later, bowls of mutton broth containing thin macaroni and slices of omelet were passed around. This also was eaten with chopsticks. One would bring the macaroni up to one's face with them, and then the suck them in with the maximum possible noise. Afterward, we drank the soup, eating any remaining pieces. No sooner were we through than a servant appeared with another bowl, which was emptied into the first. It was very good, and beautifully seasoned. I must say that this is one of the most delicious meals that I have ever tasted, absolutely on a par with the best cuisine in Europe and in some respects far more subtle and never as heavy. The meal finished with *chang*, which we drank saying, "*tashi delek*," or "good luck!" After handing our folded napkins to the servants, the bowls and cloth were cleared.

During the last of part of the lunch, Choktay sat down between Bailey and me. He looked at the prints while we explained where and what they were. He then wanted to see the *shishi* and my *gow*.⁴³ He was very much interested in the latter and thought it beautiful. He admired the *shishi* for its pure amber. In fact, the two had been under discussion ever since the morning when the Dzongpön

⁴³ PGH: A *gow* (also spelled '*gau*') is a small box (often made of pure silver with occasional gold-plating and inlaid with precious or semi-precious gems) for storing relics and other relics and other religious items.

had left for business. The amber was compared with the cloudy beads of the sister-in-law of Choktay, whose pieces were like stones with coral beads strung between them. They also preferred the clear amber. We discussed the origin of amber in the North Sea. The conversation then moved to our interest in collecting some fine works of Tibetan craftsmanship. Kumar Chimi was immediately interested and offered to find us some proper earrings, also mentioning that he knew of some good *thangkas* for sale. Since his family had fallen on hard times, he undoubtedly meant his own. Choktay was not interested, and his own silver was not of the finest quality; it was merely Shigatse work with rather poorly affixed gold. He was more interested in natural wonders. We discussed the arts at length, and they seemed complimented when we expressed there was merit in their work.

Choktay suggested a rest from sitting, so we moved to the lawn. A servant brought him a malformed stag's horn. It had been injured, and its horn had grown into a vast, misshapen knob above the head, which was about three inches in size and looked like a great brain or cauliflower. The Dzungpön was convinced that it was a brain with a single horn protruding from it. He explained that such things were indicative of the holy mountain, and on them were often found images of the Buddha. He believed that this stag had been close to a higher incarnation and therefore, it died and left this mass, which was meant to show men the way to nirvana by following the bumps and valleys upon the mountain. This particular monstrous growth, he mentioned, was a replica of a holy mountain, although I could not catch the name. It was a mountain so holy that monks visited it only once every twelve years on a certain day. Any man possessing this brain of the stag could find his way around the mountain and receive the great passing. My explanation wasn't at all popular, so I retracted it for another, which was more marvelous than any of theirs. I told described the pearl buddhas found off the coast of Japan and the statue of Buddha found in Central America. I was much approved for my piety. They shook their heads wisely as if to say I knew it all along, and the breach was mended.

Bailey suddenly began to feel sick, and indeed he was very pale—so pale that he could hardly stand. He said that he could not see me. Too much *chang* I suspect. We went to ask of Mrs. Choktay if we might go, as is the custom. She shook hands very kindly and said something in Tibetan. We then saw Kujar Chimi, who asked us to come see him after Mr. Richardson had left so that we might not have a conflict. I was very glad, for we could not have a good time with the British and their eternal Raj about. I do believe even the Tibetans noticed the difference in us. We were, perhaps, among the first foreigners who, instead of being stiff, honestly enjoyed themselves at one of these dinners. Choktay was more than kind in following us all the way out to the front gate where he bid us farewell, invited us to come again to see his treasure, and thanked us for our presents. I wish they had been more worthy of this delightful man. We walked back to the bungalow and Bailey went to bed.

In the bungalow, there was a sack of odds and ends left by some Tibetan among which was an excellent human bone skirt, which I hope to buy.

* * *

THE TWENTIETH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

We paid our visit upon Dzongpön in his tent this morning. He was a slight man, older than Mr. Choktay and of not nearly as great wealth. He was, however, very kind, despite being very busy. We entered with our gifts and scarves. He said thank you in English. We sat down on the divans that lined the tent, which were covered with leopard skin. He sat there with us and inquired about our ages, why we had come to Tibet, and whether we liked it—all questions we had been asked a thousand times before. His servant arrived, and he asked whether we would prefer sweet or Tibetan tea, to which we answered that we would like Tibetan. I have come to like it and enjoy its thick broth. There is a ritual to drinking it. One must first blow the froth along the top of the cup until there is a clear space from which to drink. Then, in a large, noisy gulp, put a part of it down. Usually, one hands the cup back to the servant, who refills it, or if he is wise, takes it away. However, the cup is as a rule kept full from a great earthenware pot that is set on the coals inside another crock, which has three dogs on the inside to support the teapot and holes in its sides to allow the charcoal or dung to burn.

After we had been sitting for some time, one of his petitioners entered the tent and talked to the Dzongpön. There were two of them and both acted as judges. We asked Tendong about his position as Dzongpön. He told us that it was not hereditary position, but rather one of civil rank to which one rose through merit, and thus, there were assistant Dzongpöns. These do not stay in one place, but instead receive their orders from Lhasa, and move about continuously. However, as they are elected from the more wealthy families, the office tends to pass from father to son. Having reached a fitting age, and after an extensive training, the son will take his father's place. After talking for a while, we left and walked to the village to see the goldsmith. He and his four sons were all busy. We were shown one butter lamp there, and one of them went to fetch another model, which was recently completed and out on approval. While the messenger was gone I looked about.

The forge of the smith was a hollow square made of unbaked clay or mud in which were burning the coals of his fire. A tube entered near the bottom in order to fan the flames, to which is attached a bag made of the skin of some animal. Its neck and three of its legs were sewn up, while the other leg was attached to the tube. This had a valve and a handle by which to raise it. The ones made from furry animals were in great demand. Many were made from long-haired cat, although the larger ones were usually made from dogs. The poor, starved dogs must feed the fire even in death. Next to the forge and the little boy who tends the bellows was the anvil, a square piece of iron set into a large block of wood. The wood was usually buried into the floor of the house, which was beaten earth. In this place it consisted of hard clay mixed with sandstone and sharp slate. The anvil had a flat top, and on it are beaten the silver and gold.

Beside the anvil were his dies cut from brass into shape from parts of

moulding, wings of *dorjés*, curls, and dots of all sizes. These are cut intaglio, and having beaten a piece of metal into these pockets, it comes out cameo. These little bits are cut and filed, and then sweated onto the piece being made, forming a solid blister on the side of the vessel. The leaf, *dorjé*, and lotus petal designs around the tops and bases of butter lamps are made in this fashion. Also present were parts for rings, earrings, rings for counting cycles of prayer beads, and anything that may be made better in this way than by hand. I did not see the cutting of brass, but it was likely scooped out with some steel set or punch tool. There was no casting, for all the work was beaten into shape with the help of fire, after which it was applied to something or chased. Yet, the most exquisite work was produced in this fashion. Tibetan silverwork is perhaps the most original of all their metalwork, for in everything else they imitate the Chinese.



This jeweler had a Chinese beam scale with a fixed weight that slid along the beam, measuring the weight of the gold according to its foot-pound units. The stations were marked with black lines on the ivory beam. He would check it by throwing rupees into the pan to bring it again into balance, thus proving the accuracy of the scale in which he did not believe. It fit into a little wooden case resembling something made for a miniature violin. His hammer was very heavy for the fine work he did, much like a knapping hammer or the little square-headed hammers used by geologists. He used a touchstone, which was black like a whetstone, to test the fineness of gold or silver, and cleaned it by rubbing it on the grease in his hair, for he had no nitric acid. Various other implements were scattered around the shop: little clamps of blue steel for holding beadings during the sweating in the coals, odd bits of wire and tongs for lifting the hot metal, snips for trimming the edges of the moulded things, and a great pot of water in which he

scrubbed the silver finished with charcoal to give it that peculiar whiteness characteristic of Tibetan silver.

Tibetans like this blanch of the metal, which looks like freshly rubbed aluminum. They never polish it in order to produce a shine in the way that we do. For this reason, the work look crude, unfinished, and like something other than silver. The best Tibetan silver comes from the province of Kham on the Chinese border, with the next best coming from Shigatse. There are, however, many good silversmiths from Shigatse. The Kham work ranks alongside the finest work procured in Europe or America today, while the work from Shigatse is definitely inferior. The Tibetan goldsmith is also adept at gilding silver, but I have only heard this process described. Apparently a thin leaf of gold is laid on the silver with a sticky substance—no doubt pitch, of which the Tibetans seem to use a great quantity—after which and the piece is heated until the gold adheres to the silver. In this way, the gold gives added character to the designs. The skill of the smith is roughly determined by his ability to keep the gold from running out of the design.

Most of their jewelry and vessels have turquoise, the most valued stone of Tibet, set into them. This is done with a sort of sealing wax. A powder is first put into the setting with the stone placed on top. It is firmed with the hammer and then heated with a coal held in the tongs. This melts the wax and fixes the stone permanently. It is a good method, for the stones are seldom lost. The setting is then bent to the shape of the edges of the gem. There is no such thing as a turned piece of silver or gold, for the Tibetan does not know how to use the lathe—at least they have not until recent times when some copper is spun and turned. This is not true of the precious metals where the process is that of bumping with the hammer. This gives a beautiful finish with tool marks, which, however, the Tibetan does not admire, far preferring our shiny products of machinery. Silver and gold work are exclusively used for *chang* bowls, the tops and bases of cups, spoons, ladles for *chang* (which are set with turquoise), settings around powder horns, boxes for snuff, jewelry, *gows*, chatelaines, and jewelry or other settings for stones on the felt headdresses. In addition, there are the various things associated with a rich man: counters for rosaries, little *dorjés* and bells, decorative work on the copper vessels, and the horns of the *gompas*. Most of the silver is beaten from the Indian rupees, which is a long process of amalgamating the coins and beating them into round flats. I went back this afternoon to find the old man and three sons hard at work making the plate from which they will form my butter lamps. Solemnly they weighed out one hundred and forty *tolas*, or rupees, of silver for the lamps and then began to work. George, Victoria, and Edward soon merged into undistinguished yellow-coated ingots under the hammers.

We went to the bootman (the cobbler) after the silversmith. He came to us while we were eating lunch, which was after the silver had been weighed. We followed him into town, around several alleys, and into a cellar-like workshop, which had a dark ladder in lieu of a staircase. Cobblers are alike the world over, but this man had less than nothing with which to work. His cutter was like a meat chopper, which he whetted on a large stone moistened with spittle, and the thread he used was pulled from the stem of a plant (I must find out which plant it was, probably flax) by his son. In addition, he had wax, an awl, and needles.

The soles of Tibetan boots are works of art. First, three or more pieces of felt are sewn together, after which the edges are bound. Then, with adroit stitching the welt is built up until the sole resembles a slipper without a top. Along the roads, one can see men making their own shoes out of felt that is sewn with woolen thread as they follow their mules. Others spin the thread onto a tiny distaff a few inches long, as they hold a great bundle of wool under their arms. The women spin differently, using a heavy spindle with thread hooked to its top. They give it a spin on their skirt and drop it. The thread wound around it is led through and hooked at the top so that the strand of thread between the bobbin and the women's spinning fingers, which twist the thread, is constantly wound tighter. When the thread is tight enough, she stops the revolving spindle and winds that section of thread up on it, hooks it under the hook at the top, gives it another spin, and repeats the process. There is also a larger spindle, which has a long bottom that is supported on a smooth, concave piece of broken pottery. This can be spun with the same result, but is used sitting down. All the wool in Tibet is spun this way. As far as I know, the wheel is unknown and there is no machinery.

The cobbler's wife sat near him. She was a jovial, dirty-faced, old woman who spun the thick thread for the soles of the shoes he would soon make. Poor men wear felt boots, while those better-off wear leather; women wear only felt boots. The Dzongpöns have scrolls of coloured leather on their boots, while women are content with embroidery upon the toes. We ordered two pairs of the first-class boots, which cost thirty-five rupees. He demanded an advance of thirty to buy the special leather.

On the way home, I bought the pieces of turquoise for the prayer beads I would have made and gave them to the goldsmith along with four *tolas* of gold from an old earring that had been pawned. It proved to be twenty-four carat on the stone. This would be made into the *dorjé*, bell, and wheel of life for our beads. The beads must be the seeds of a certain tree, whose name I do not know, although I am certain that it is not the *Ficus religiosa*. Bailey bought a rather second-rate *thangka* out of stock for a present, which cost twelve rupees.

I must not forget the spear with the bells on it that the mail runner carries.

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THE TWENTY-FIRST OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

We intended to visit the *chorten* this morning, but soon after breakfast a new load of things to buy arrived from the lama. Nearly every piece of the collection was perfect quality this time, especially three pieces of Shigatse silver on which I have my eye, although I feel that Bailey should have the first choice since I bought the bone skirt earlier. There were also some beads and a bone carving to replace those missing from the bone skirt—now I have something of indeed great rarity. Among the collection was a skull cup that was painted on the inside. The dead person had a very shallow brainpan, for the eye holes make it shallow for libations of any kind.

After lunch we went to the *chorten* and through all hundred and eight stinking shrines. There are in them all only three passable frescoes worth troubling about, just shrine after shrine with pot-bellied gods and stinking, filthy air that had not seen sun until the moment we arrived.

After we had seen the *chorten*, we sat on the porch of the *gompa* and waited for a storm to pass. I drew the wheel of life that I wanted from the awning in the top of the *gompa* roof. We then went to the goldsmith and tried to explain to him that we wanted to replace the central bead in the rosary with the wheel. I am not sure he understood, but he will make one, which we can then criticize.

It turned out that my theories of the Tibetans not using a lathe to spin copper unless it was very modern are false, for this morning one of the old altar vessels was of spun copper and well done. The top of another was also turned from a solid casting, for one could see the chatter of the tool marks. The goldsmith also had a foot-shaped piece of iron for bumping our round vessels. He stuck this through the base of a crotch of wood so that the end of the iron was under a rock or forced into the floor, thus forming a tripod that left the projecting round toe as the working end. They fired the silver until was soft, worked it until it was again hard, and then repeated the process. I also noticed the clever opening of the bellows that I did not see yesterday. It was a long slit with a piece of lath sewn to each side of the mouth. The fanner lifted the skin on one side before grabbing the other side in his hand and compressing the skin as wind was needed. When the air was exhausted, he dropped the other side and lifted it again.

We also watched a miller grinding just outside of the town, for we had gone to see if any of the other goldsmiths had any good vessels on hand. They had nothing, and upon returning, I heard the wheel turning in the mill. We went in to investigate. The paddle, a vertical wheel, was fixed to the upper stone. Around the axle was built a fence of mud or clay, and into this leads the hopper of burlap slung from the beams that contained the grain. This fence controlled the flow of the grain from the hopper and was similar to a watering tin for chickens. The fence filled with grain communicated to the space between the stones either through extra holes, or through space left at the axle; I suspect it was the latter. If the grain did not flow fast enough, the wheel slowed down for lack of lubrication.

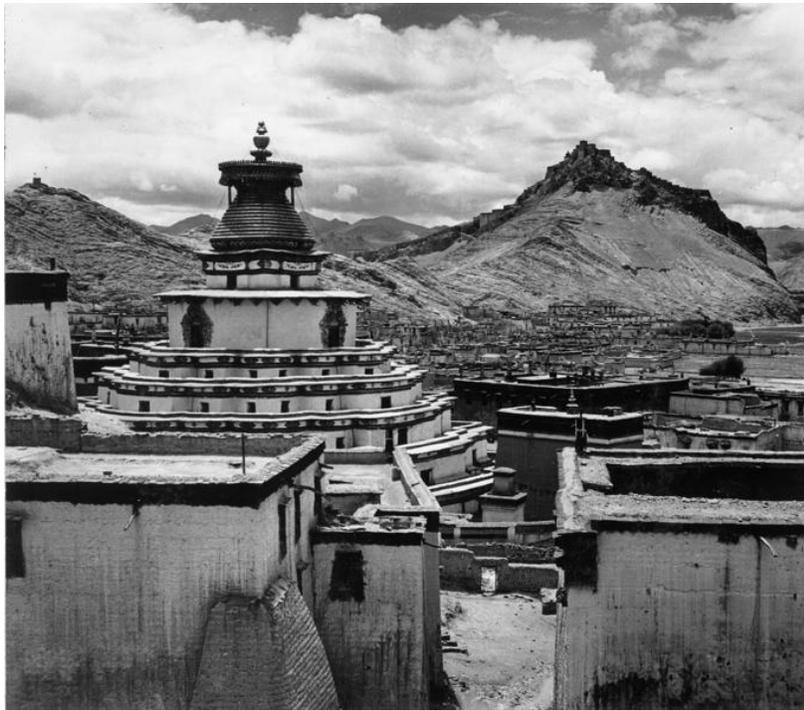
The resultant flour was very fine, but full of sand and grit, which undoubtedly accounts for the good teeth of the Tibetans. In the floor near the wheel was the control for the water gate. The miller raised and lowered this, placing wedges under a crossbar fixed in the top pole of the gate. The grind was slow.

We returned home and spent a long evening with Mrs. Duff, showing her the skull, one of which she also purchased. Bailey wrote a long letter home, and I went to bed early.

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THE TWENTY-SECOND OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

We arrived at the *gompa* at about ten this morning and went straight to the roof from which the best view of the top of the *chorten* may be obtained. From there we took a tri-pak of it, which showed the fine detail of the top and the upper doors. We also took a long black and white photo of the nunnery next door, which is forbidden ground for us. Inside the *gompa* we obtained a separation of the new portrait of the late Dalai Lama before reviewing the upper storey. We must indeed have been sick the last time we were here, for in the gallery running through, across, and out from the central, upper room were the most beautiful frescoes I had ever seen; and Bailey, who is experienced in these matters, was overcome. We shall have to photograph them carefully in color. The old lama, who was an acquaintance of ours in the *gompa*, was there. He was a keeper and had a delightful Pepsodent smile, even if the rest of him was grimy. We brought him a watch and jackknife as presents, and he seemed very pleased. Most of the time was spent photographing the central shrine in the tri-pak, for a half an hour's exposure was necessary. We also found that the Tibetan had dropped Bailey's camera, which ruined it by breaking out its frame. We had to return to the bungalow in order to fix it.



On the way back, we went to the shop of the goldsmith who was finishing the *dorjés*. He would take one part, hold it to the finished place with an angle of iron, put it in the fire, and blow up the flame. Then, at the right moment, he quenched it in water, and a new arm of the tiny thunderbolt was in place. He was very astray on the idea of the wheel of life, so we set him straight. All four of them were working on the bases of my lamps, which are beginning to take form. The metal looked did not look like silver; old iron could not be half as yellow-black and scarred looking. While we were there, Bailey found another Tibetan seal, and a chap came in who wanted to get rid of silver, for he was going to India and wanted paper. We told him to come to the bungalow.

He arrived around teatime. He had three books, one of which was not half bad, so Bailey bought it and two butter lamps as presents. They are quite well wrought, though light. At this point, we had heard the prices for the things that the lama's brought. They are outrageous, so we shall let the old boy cool a bit before buying anything. Mrs. Duff came in a little later. She bought the bad *dorjé* and bell that we refused yesterday.

Tonight we have a gasoline lantern, which I succeeded in lighting after heroic efforts. I am deathly afraid of them, even after last summer at the ranch where there were about twenty of them. Bailey is bemoaning the fact that he did not send his great letter in the post yesterday.

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THE TWENTY-THIRD OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

After breakfast, which we had late this morning, the chap with the silver to be changed arrived. He was very humble, which he demonstrated by sticking out his tongue. He had about two hundred and forty rupees, which we changed for him. Aku helped by ringing each piece onto a tiny stone that he brought in from the courtyard. He also brought with him a number of butter lamps and a rather fine book with black leaves and the best of covers. It was not, however, as good as those in the *gompa*. He wanted a thousand for it, as the rumor that we are looking has gotten around. We told him it was worth about two hundred and would give him no more for it. Bailey bought two lamps from him. A little while later, another man arrived with some very excellent velvet made up into a women's dress, which we bought as a possible present for Liz.

At around half past nine, Mrs. Duff arrived, and we set out on horseback for the bazaar. She had never seen the smithing of gold so we took her to see it. When we arrived, the smith was just finishing the wheels of life for our rosaries. They still needed a beading at the edge of the tire, so we asked him to do that. First, he took a lump of gold from the glowing crucible and poured it into the hollow of a charred piece of wood, which he had filled with butter as a flux. Next, he took it and put it again into the coals for a moment. After this, he quenched it in water and then began to pound it into a square long bar, repeatedly putting it into the fire to set it and to make it soft again when it had become hard in the beating. Then he drew it through the die until the wire was the right size. The smith then pulled out a large buffalo's horn, which was flat and curving on one side, from behind the bench. He used this as a surface on which to cut into the edge of the wire with a tool like a leather man's knife, but with a moulding, and he rolled the wire as he pressed it with the knife. He moved the knife over a bead until the wire took on the appearance of a finished beading. The first smith then cut this into the right length, made it into circles, and fastened it to the wheel with little angles of iron. As he heated it, the two merged together and the moulding was fixed. Mrs. Duff was as fascinated as we were, watching every movement he made. She has spent the majority of her time with the English at the fort and has seen little of the real life of the villagers.

We left at a quarter to twelve, as we were having lunch with the [Tendongs](#) on the top of the Dzong. Mrs. Duff left us at the foot of the rock and went back to the bungalow. She bought the two large silver *dorjés* and counters that he had there. I purchased a couple of interesting silver spoons.

It was a long and slippery walk up the shale-covered battlement to the top of the Dzong. The old steps, once kept in condition, are now falling to ruin, and from the sides, the walls are splitting and crumbling. In many places, one can look down upon the flat roofs of the houses below with their litter of gold yak tails placed over the chapels and their smoking chimneys, or rather, the smoke that curled up from the upper windows. The horses were winded when we reached the

top. On the way, we passed the old *chang* woman with her three donkeys that carried barrels full of *chang*. The barrels were like small casks with wooden lids, and in the center of them was a hole by which they could be lifted. Out of this the *chang* sloshed like a little geyser as the donkeys ambled along the road. She had a mean, thin voice, and cursed as fast as most Tibetans can bless.

Upon reaching the top, we found Tendong waiting for us outside of his house, which was an honour. He led us up the stairs that wound around the end wall and inside. We entered through a narrow smoky passage. I could smell the aroma of food cooking and began to feel hungry, for a Tibetan meal is a rare treat indeed. In the centre of the house was a courtyard in which servants were washing, cooking, pouring out *chang*, and doing a number of different things; and old women were spinning with their whirling bobbins. Everyone looked up and smiled as we entered. We moved into the living room where [Mrs. Tendong](#) was standing to greet us. It was a narrow, low room and about twenty feet long. The roof was supported on one beam that ran through the centre, which, in turn, was supported by two carved, red pillars with gilded and flowered tops. At the far end were low benches, or rather, divans covered with leopard skin, and near them was the table. Along the side of the room and over the Chinese cabinets hung bright Japanese illustrations of the latest styles from Tokyo, all of which were modeled by winning geishas with too much sex appeal and too little gown. At the end of the room on the wall were pasted Chinese chromos of birds and flowers in a rather decadent Hiroshige style. Crested terns were much in evidence, as was wood duck. In one corner a candle was burning in a glass lamp, and over it a prayer wheel turned with the rising heat. We were able to see through some green cheesecloth and the unglazed window to the courtyard.

We first had English tea, but since we had come to like it and the Tibetans seemed complimented by this, we also had the Tibetan tea. In addition, the cups were so gorgeous that I could not resist. It was served in gold and silver lotus-shaped cups of the finest Shigatse work. We had several cups while the conversation progressed. Tendong was charmingly American in his ways, and we found that we could discuss anything with him. He wanted to know what had affected our country, and I was voluble to a strain on the interpreter concerning the subject of Mr. Roosevelt. Tendong seemed to already be aware of what had occurred in our country and understood the situation from similar ones under the late Dalai Lama. Lunch then arrived and we had enjoyed an even more delicious lunch than the other day at the Choktay's house. Course after course arrived, which was interspersed with copious *chang*.

During lunch, Bailey asked to see Tendong's hat. He had a servant bring it, who happened to be the man we so admired after the horse race. The hat had a loose brim of brocade, and the crown was stiff and round. A tassel was set into the top so that the fringe reached down only to the brim. The centre of this tassel was a threaded grommet. On the finial, which I grasped with delight, was a tiny knob of gold. From this hung four flat pieces of gold, which, like a butter lamp, covered it. This ended in a spire of purest blue turquoise. The spire was attached to a thread that unscrewed a false base and then traveled inside the hat, the whole of which then screwed into the crown. The effect was most beautiful. We asked him if we could have some made, and he said that he would look into it. The jewels

must be obtained in Shigatse, while the knob and hat must be made in Lhasa.

The lunch ended at three, and we returned to the bungalow in order to collect our money order at the post office. After counting it, which took until nearly half past five, for it was all in silver, we returned home with a coolie carrying two thousand and Mela carrying seven hundred. On the way we saw the English watching a football game between the Tibetans and Sikhs. We joined them, and Mr. Richardson was despicable with his usual egoistic sarcasm and possessiveness about Tibet. Expressing assurance of his own perfection, he pumped us for anything with which he might find fault. The hair began to rise on my spine. We had to accept a drink afterward, as we were already full of *chang*. He showed us his collection of thangkas and Tibetan silver, and it was indeed first class. He had one of the finest *serkyem*⁴⁴ sets of beautiful Kham craftsmanship that I will probably ever see. We endured it for some time, listening to him ramble on about his eight polo ponies, his football career, and the winter he intends to spend at Lhasa. I would like to buy a silver teapot similar to the one in his possession, for it was unusually good. We returned to the bungalow in time for supper.

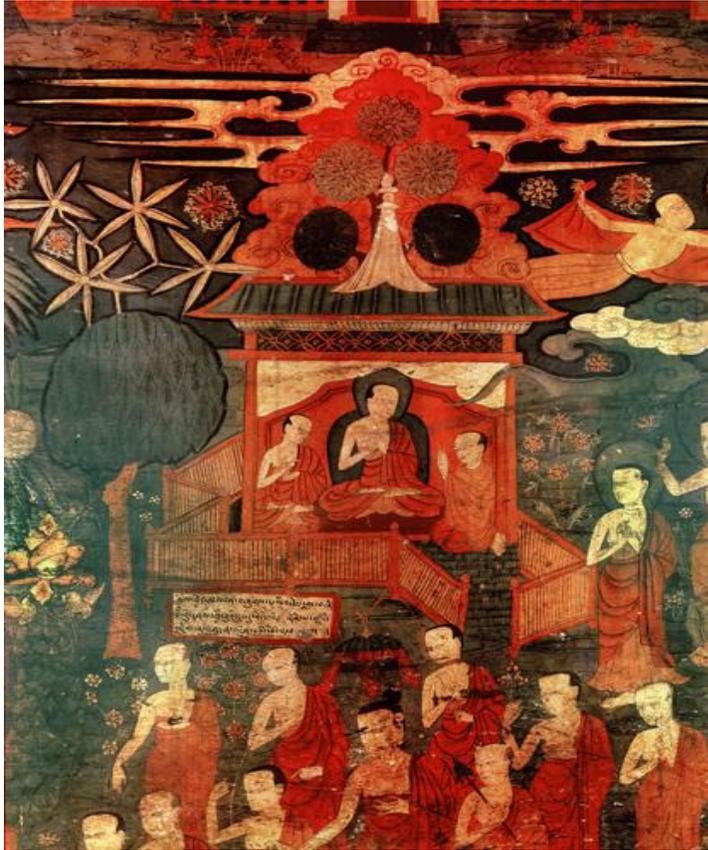
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⁴⁴ DE: *Serkyem* (*gser skyems*) or 'golden drink' is an offering made to the deities and protectors of the Buddhist pantheon. In this case, Mr. Cummings is referring to the metal offering vessel in which these libations are made. This usually consists of a small, stemmed teacup that rests in the center of a cylindrical base.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

Last night Mrs. Duff came in to our room, and bought Bailey's butter lamp. We had a long chat about nothing in particular. She is a hard case, but tolerant and interesting, which is more than one can say for the political staff.

This morning we examined a number of other things, which were all rather poor, and Dr. Bo Tsering⁴⁵ dropped in to see us in between his visit to the fort and the civil hospital in town. He was most encouraging, seeming to understand what we wanted and able to obtain it. I hope to augment my collection of silver through him. He seemed even hopeful about the books. We gave him a list of objects we wanted to buy, amongst which was my silver duphum.



⁴⁵ PGH: The reference is to the Sikkimese doctor who served as the assistant doctor to William Morgan in Lhasa. He also treated patients on his own.

When he left, we went on to the [Kumbum](#),⁴⁶ the chorten, and made separations of the two best frescoes in two of the chapels, the first of which was on the ground floor, as well as details in colour. I shall have to return again later and make watercolours of them for guides. It was after one o'clock when we started back to the bungalow, and we were expecting the Tendongs for tea. After lunch, a boy, who had been sent by them, arrived with a note saying they would not be able to attend since they were leaving for Shigatse tomorrow and they wondering whether we would be offended. They also sent a man to Ugden to inquire if we would be angry should they refuse, which was one degree more removed. They were obviously pressed for time or they would not have gone to so much trouble, so we assured them it was all right. Later, we sent a letter through Ugden concerning the hats. The rest of the afternoon we spent showing the colour photographs to Mrs. Duff.

After supper Ugden returned with a message from Mr. Tendong. He would be delighted to have the hats made, and will accept no money until they are completed. He will choose the jewels himself in Shigatse, and it will take about three months for the two hats and finials to be completed. They will be sent to Norman Odling in Kalimpong. He also sent along a piece of his wife's jewelry and suggested that we might like to purchase a *gow*, which will come tomorrow morning. His wife was anxious to have more modern jewelry. I think they must like us, for they have taken so much trouble to please us. I certainly feel more at home with the Tibetans than with the English, and it seems rather interesting that Mr. Tendong is rushing off before Mr. Richardson's party tomorrow. He suspect he is in not a great hurry to get to Shigatse, for it is only a visit to see his father. Mr. Richardson is not the apple of the Tibetan eye either. I learned one new Tibetan phrase yesterday from Mr. Tendong: "*la-me tuche se*," which is a polite way to say, "no, thank you."

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⁴⁶ PGH: Literally 'hundred thousand images;' it is a generic name for the *stupa* or *chorten* in the middle of the Palkhor Chöde monastery at Gyantse.

THE TWENTY-FIFTH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

This morning we were awakened by the shrill voices of women setting up the tents and marquis for Mr. Richardson's Tomasha. They must have been at it since early dawn, for the lunch tent was already up, The tent had the arms of England as well as many Chinese good luck signs, and outside our dining room door was a marquis spread over the little terrace. During breakfast, they arranged pots of flowers and placed the tea tables, which were covered with piles of those dry sweets that Tibetans so love, before low divans draped with rugs. In one corner of the lawn a target for archery was set up, and Mr. Richardson and Mr, Wangdi explained that it was for whistling arrows.

Mr. Richardson appeared quite prominent in his grey suit with the white pin stripe. He swung a broken polo stick for a swagger and rolled about saying little and doing less, save impressing the poor workmen with the importance of the British Raj. He was in his moment and the fit had him.

After breakfast we wrote letters, Bailey to various people, and I an especially bad one to Marian. We had not been at it long when a messenger arrived from the Tendongs with her *gow*. She wanted twelve hundred rupees for it, but that was too much to decide in an instant. We sent it back to them with a note. There was also a servant of theirs who was going to Calcutta and needed Indian money.

Twelve o'clock came all too soon and God arrived. He was on horseback gorgeously caparisoned with saddle robes of brocade and dark red. Accompanied by lesser dignitaries, he wore a flat, gold lacquer hat tied under his chin. He had gone around to the Tomasha ground before we arrived, and as we came up to him, he shook our hands with a broad smile. The first event was the ceremonial tea. Bailey and I had sweet tea with Mr. Hugh Hudson from the fort while we watched the Rinpoché.⁴⁷ Several monks approached and greeted him by bowing their heads and touching their skull to his forward-leaning head as he inclined in his chair. During this time, drinks were passed around. The Tibetans very much liked grenadine and crème de menthe, and consumed many bottles. The drinking of cordials occurred under the marquis, and we had pegs. In another tent musicians played a wailing Chinese tune accompanied by singing that ran up and down an antique minor scale, ending with a Jewish cantor. It began to grow tiresome, and Mr. Richardson gave the signal for everyone to proceed to lunch. I went in to wash, and upon returning, found to my embarrassment that the voracious Tibetans had already through their soup.

⁴⁷ PGH: Thsi is a general title of respect, often used for either an incarnate lama or the abbot of a monastery. As explained (in the text below), here it refers to Taring Rinpoché, a.k.a., Lingbu Lama (b. 1886). He is the son of the former King and Queen of Sikkim, and half-brother to [Taring] Raja Dorjé. Hence, he is the Kumar Chimi Taring's uncle.

We were assigned very good places at the table. I was opposite Dr. Bow, and on my left was Mr. Choktay, the Dzongpön. On my right sat Kumar Chimi, who was feeling a little ruffled by his uncle, [Taring Rinpoché](#). It seems that his uncle has been trying to grab the family lands for years, and it is now open warfare. Taring Rinpoché is the brother of the late Maharajah of Sikkim, and Kumar is the son of his son, Chimi Taring.⁴⁸ Bailey was sitting next to the Rinpoché, who, with Mr. Richardson, was across the table from me, and next to him was Lobsang, the interpreter. During lunch we talked about a great deal. The conversation turned to flying and America, and a tour of the United States was proposed. The traveling party would consist of Kumar; the Rinpoché; Daisy, Kumar's wife;⁴⁹ Delig Rabdin and his wife; the father of Mrs. Choktay,⁵⁰ who was, incidentally, secretary to the late Tashi Lama and now headman of Gyangtse; Mrs. Choktay; Billy; and myself. We would charter a plane and travel around the States. I caused much laughter when I asked them for a deposit on the tickets.

After lunch was a series of games: darts, archery with whistling arrows, and the shooting of air rifles. All joined in save the Rinpoché, who watched with dignity and, I might add, absorbed a drink or two. The old Khenchen, the Tibetan Trade Agent who like whiskey, was also putting them down. The games soon stopped and dancing began. Three women and two men did a sort of shuffle and tap on a long board to the accompaniment of a Chinese violin, a flute played by the sweeper, and a sort of dulcimer played with a plectrum. Following this, we turned to games once more, playing peggity, mah-jong, and poker. Mrs. Duff, Mr. Hugh Hudson, Kusho Delig Rabdin and I made up a table of peggity. At first, Kumar Chimi sided with Delig against Mrs. Duff and me. The Tibetans

⁴⁸ PGH: There is some confusion here. First, 'Kumar' and 'Chimi Taring' are the same person. When the Maharaja of Sikkim, King Thutop Namgyal, died, the throne was offered to his son, Raja Dorje Taring, who declined it. Hence, the late king was succeeded by his Oxford educated brother, Sidkeong Tulku, who introduced land reforms and consequently was murdered within his first year as King. The throne then passed to Raja Dorjé Taring's younger half-brother, Chögyal Tashi Namgyal, both of whom were the brothers of Taring Rinpoché. Consequently, this should say, "The Rinpoché Taring is the *son* of the late Maharaja of Sikkim, and Kumar is the son of his [*half-*] brother, Raja Dorje [Taring]."

⁴⁹ PGH: There is more confusion here. This cannot be 'Daisy,' since she dies in 1931. Having been informed of his previous wife, 'Daisy,' Cummings has confused the name of Kumar's new wife, Dekyi Wangmo, i.e., 'Dekyi' as 'Daisy.' Changchub Dolma ('Daisy') Tsarong (1912-1931) was the youngest daughter of Lord Tsarong. She was the wife of Taring Raja Dorje's second son, Kumar Chime Taring, but died of dysentery in 1931. To maintain the close relationship between the house of Tsarong and the house of Taring, it was suggested that Chime become the second husband to his elder brother's (Jigme) wife (Rinchen Dolma 'Mary' [Tsarong]), but his sister-in-law rejected the idea, and instead proposed a marriage to her niece [and hence, his late wife's niece], Dekyi Wangmo, another daughter of Dele Rabten (i.e., Chokte's wife's sister).

⁵⁰ PGH: Also spelled 'Dele Rabten,' Dorjé Yugyal (b. 1890) was married to Norbhu Yudon [Tsarong], father-in-law of Kumar Chime Taring, and father of Chokte's wife, Namkye Tsedrön.

continually won, which seemed to please them. We had an excellent time. Kusho Delig Rabdin invited me to go Shigatse, and I wish it were as simple as that. Perhaps I can next time.

Around three o'clock, Taring Rinpoché put on his lacquer hat with great ceremony and amid the bows of the multitude mounted his horse and rode off. The effect on the Khenchen was immediate; his drinks changed to deep amber from yellow, and he began to get noisy. When the party dispersed at five, he had great difficulty missing a solitary chair planted in the middle of the lawn, and Richardson had to steer him around it.

Bailey caught a cold from the dust that blew upon us yesterday and is coughing badly.

* * *

THE TWENTY-SIXTH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

This morning Bailey was feeling very poor, for the cold had settled into his bones. He got out of bed late and was quite shaky. Going to the *gompa* to photograph was out of the question. After breakfast, more items for sale arrived, and Bailey bought a very fine, large book cover and a betel nut box. I left the house with Ugden to go to the bazaar. I hoped to buy some coral for a rosary to accompany my *dorjé* and bell. We arrived in town, and I walked all the way through the bazaar not buying anything save a few strings of beads, nuts and the usual odds and ends. At the other end of town and across the little square, I purchased another nut rosary and found a charming little brown glass snuff bottle with a silver top and stopper, which also had turquoise set in the top of it. There was a silver spoon on it and it reminded me of Bailey. On the way back through the bazaar I decided on some strands of coral, which had a beautiful, deep red color, and were of better quality than one can buy in New York. I have never seen such colour. The beads were quite uneven and often pitted, which added to their charm. Since Bailey was also interested in purchasing coral, I asked the dealer to come to the bungalow at half past one.

As we were leaving the bazaar, a little man with watery eyes accosted Ugden on the street. They moved off into the doorway of a house and talked. I did not join them for a moment, hoping that something might be for sale. Ugden returned and said the man had some images for sale. We followed the man down into the cellar of the building, which was unpleasant and had piles of shit lying plentifully about. We went up a narrow ladder to the next floor, and a dog that was tethered on the roof began to bark and strain at his leash. Its kennel, which was built out of mud, was also on the roof. Its hackles were up and I hoped the chain would hold. We went another few steps and entered a room on the front of the street. Around three sides of the room were benches covered with good but very dirty rugs. The furniture—tables and cabinets—was in disrepair, but had all once been good. The man with the weak chin and watery eyes went over to the altar and brought forth one of the usual clay painted idols. It did not measure up to what I wanted. On one corner of the altar shelf I saw the head of a copper gilded idol sticking out of some filthy cloth wrappings, and I asked to see it. The man reluctantly picked it up and unwrapped the first layer of cloth. Underneath was an old gift cloth. He handed it to me and I unwrapped the rest while he looked at me with eyes like those of a beaten hound. He began to complain to Ugden as the last wrapping came off.

Underneath the cloths was the finest image I have ever seen. The hair was in long curls, cavalier down the back and painted blue. The face was exquisitely modeled and the lips half parted as though speaking. The lips and eyes were painted, and the face, as was the custom, was dull gold paint. The right hand was raised as though preaching, and in the quiet left hand was a skull that had the three, precious jewels rising from it. The feet were not crossed, but relaxed upon

the base. The whole was gilded copper. Modeling conception and the fine skill of a true artist made this a magnificent piece. He told Ugden how much he lost gambling in the Tomasha, and how he had even mortgaged his earring to his debts. The man asked a hundred and fifty rupees, and I offered seventy-five. The bargaining stopped at eighty and the prize was mine. Ashamed to be seen selling his god, he wrapped it in his chuba. I left twenty rupees in a pot on his table. On the way out he spoke to his wife, while we wandered back through the market and out into the plain to the bungalow. Once back at the bungalow, Ugden hid the image and we paid him the remaining sixty rupees. The year before, Professor Tucci from Rome paid him four hundred and fifty for the mate. After lunch, the man with the coral arrived. I bought my strands, as well as some larger ones. Bailey, however, did not purchase anything, which left me disappointed, for I thought my judgment of the stones was accurate.

Bailey had a nap and I began to photograph in the *gompa* with the Coleman lamps. The light seemed a little greener than electric, but I think it was due to an error on the right side. I made four photographs and returned, feeling dead tired and sick from the reek of the butter lamps on the high altar.

In the evening I attempted to string a rosary, but had no success whatsoever, for I do not know how. I went to bed furious at myself for breaking three beads and thus needing a new strand to make up the hundred and eight. I dreamed about demons, and especially Tam Din,⁵¹ who threatened the early part of my sleep. It was a wretched time.

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⁵¹ PGH: Hayagriva (Tib. *rta mgrin*), a horse-headed deity, often depicted with wings.

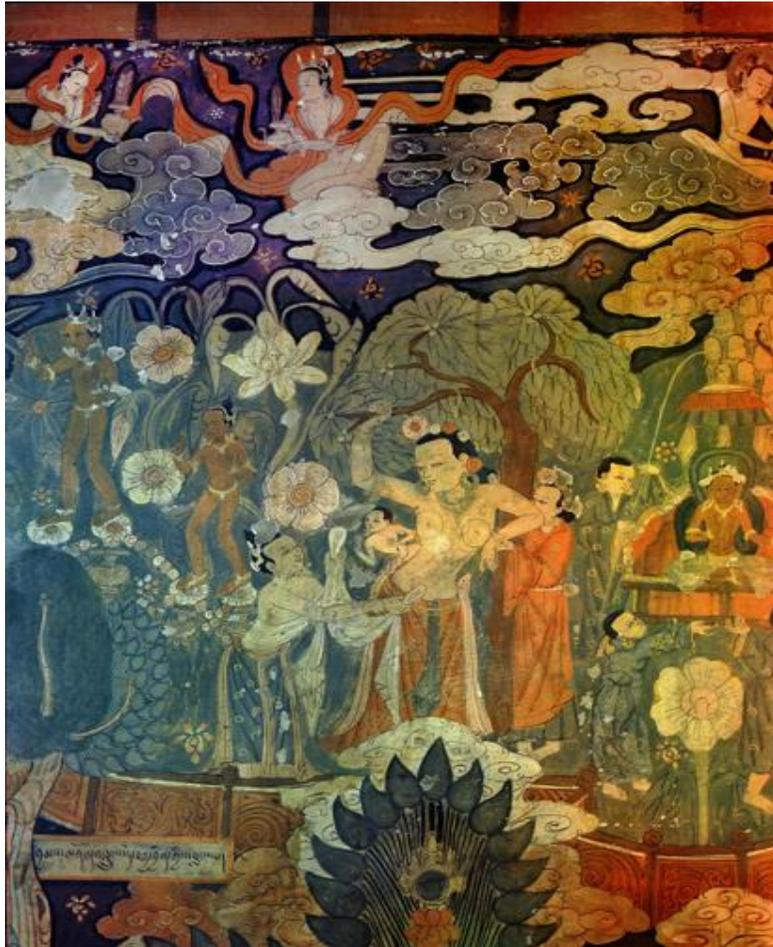
THE TWENTY-SEVENTH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

This morning after breakfast a man came in with a beautiful golden *chuba*, which Bailey purchased. He also had a *thangka* painted by the same man that did the Kumbum. He wanted fifty rupees for it, which was not bad, but I may try to get it for forty. Around ten o'clock we set out for the *gompa*. On the way, we went to the jeweler, and Bailey bought coral for a rosary. I am glad, as I was feeling guilty for spending the money. From there we went to shop of the jeweler who is making the lamps. They're beginning to take form, and the bases have received their foliation. The piece was stuck on the end of a stick with pitch under it, and then tapped into form just as it was done at Sennas in Bangkok. We picked up the extra counter for Mrs. Duff's string and then went on to the *gompa*. We took two more photographs of the same wall and two of the outside, before returning home for lunch. We did not go back in the afternoon. I strung Molly's, Zahr's, and my own rosaries again, knotting them at the *dorjé*, which made them neater. The afternoon was soon gone and dinner arrived. We had tea with Mrs. Duff, who came in to see what we had purchased in the last few days.

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THE TWENTY-EIGHTH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

We spent the morning photographing in the *gompa* again. We came back for lunch. In the *gompa* the Eucharistic Congress of Tibet was meeting and we could see them blowing the dirty froth on their tea through the clerestory window of the main hall. What a stench wafted up from all those monks assembled below. We did not observe them for long, but instead returned to our work. Today we photographed the work of a different artist, for another painter had done the north wall of the back or north passage. We photographed scenes from the life of the Buddha.



After lunch another *chuba* arrived, and I bought it for seventy-five rupees. It needs a bit of cleaning, but will go well with Jojgoön's outfit and hat. I also bought the Leviathan incense holder and the *thangka*, the latter for fifty rupees, as we could not get him to come down on the price. It is, however, unique. The rest of the afternoon I wrote letters: one to Bunty, and one to Grannie.

* * *

THE TWENTY-NINTH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

Early this morning the barber came, and Bailey and I had our hair cut before and during breakfast. Before we were through eating, the man with coral arrived with some *gows* and a piece of French ormolu. I did not see anything that I wanted, but Bailey's eyes were sharper than mine. I went in to get my hair cut and left him to bargain with the man. The little Tibetan snipped and cut, and the result was a bowl cut similar to something I received from Grandfather years ago. However, what he cut off would have stuffed an old-fashioned hair couch and not scratched the legs nearly as much as horsehair. While I was getting cut, I could hear Bailey wrangling in the other room. The man believed the French piece to be of gold, and we were convinced that it was not. Bailey bargained him down to twenty rupees from a hundred.

Soon after that, it was time to depart for Taring, as it was seven miles away and we were expected for lunch at twelve. We set out for the fort and beyond. The government horses were being fed and looked thoroughbred when compared to ours. Two Sikhs that were observing them looked very superciliously at us when we passed, and well they should. No one could determine the breed of our mounts. They were horse as dog is dog and nothing more. We rode onward, following the telegraph line to Lhasa. The road followed an old, dry wash that came down from the hills northwest of Gyangtse. The Dzung faded into the general blue of the hills behind us. Rain began to threaten, and we could see the mossy tendrils of the water trailing across the hills as though the wind drove the clouds forward and left the rain behind to fall. The hills seemed greener than they have for days, and it was pleasant not to have the continual dust in our eyes. As we moved along, we crossed dry, bone-like ridges of sandy rock that ran through the fields of barley and mustard like the deserts along fertile Egypt. We crossed over them where they stretched like dams to visions across the valley. In the rocks were the deep, worn footsteps of generations of horses, the pockets nicely spaced at a horse's pace. It seemed so strange that a wheel had never traveled this road since the beginning of time, and that a horse's tread could remain even for thousands of years. However, this was Tibet and the Middle Ages still stretch their dun pale of similitude over this land.

Around noon we came in sight of Taring, for which we had so long looked through the coming rain. It seemed like any other Tibetan village, save that it was whiter and the long rows of level windows showed it to be a richer house, though it was still made of mud. Kumar did not come out to meet us, so I sent Ugden ahead to announce our arrival. He met us farther back in the garden, and I must confess that I felt a trifle insulted, for before this we had been met properly.

We had tea in the bungalow and garden built for European visitors. It was a drab place full of bad Chinese junk, lotuses made of brass, pot-bellied gods, and one American tapestry of deer drinking from a pool in the forest around the time of the Pullman Dynasty. The place was full of golden oak furniture, stands

with mirrors in the back, and tables with dropped bosses and carved oak legs. I had never seen a worse conglomeration of taste. It was a relief to move inside for dinner in the large house, which was pure Tibetan. Kumar's wife Daisy and their little girl were there. She was a lonely child with no playmates save the *ama* [mother], who hung her soul upon the child's every motion. Despite this, she was well behaved, and a beautiful woman she will be, for she has perfect features.

We ate dinner in the principal room of the large house. We sat on the divan in the window that looked out over the courtyard towards the hills. As I looked out, two old cows chewed their cuds in the mud of the yard. Beyond the red pillars of the house, the rain swept over the hills, and on its heels the sun fell again; it was a day of tattered weather. One entire side of the room we were in was filled with cupboards painted in Chinese patterns, and on top of them was a long altar with a glass front filled with gods swathed in their gift cloths. A small gilded pagoda stood out in the room with a solitary butter lamp in it, although the lamp was not burning. To the right—leaving space for the door—was the high seat of the priest or whoever wanted to conduct the ceremonies. In front were two silver-topped bells and two silver *dorjés*. These stood on a table with the *tsampa* box of the *serkyem* set.

Before lunch, Kumar showed us his silver and gold vessels, which though large and of the best Shigatse craftsmanship, were not as good as the Kham vessels that we previously saw. Lunch consisting of all the usual Tibetan dishes was then served, as well as buttered tea and *chang*. Conversation was difficult. I had never had such a bad time; Kumar was not a major constellation of brilliance. He was interested in ploughs and I told him about gangplows, explaining how they are used on the large farms in our won west. We talked about many ordinary and dull topics: the average rainfall in Tibet, the maturing of crops in the short season, and the apple trees imported from the United States to Lhasa and wonderful fruits they gave. He had shown us a piddling peach tree in a pot of which he was very proud.

Afterwards, I asked if he would be willing to sell the teapot, for Chuni told me that they were short of money these days. He was 'yes and no and I'll have to ask father.' We were shown the chapel, which was a long room with the altar on the long side of the room instead of at the end. One entered around the corner and through a spirit screen, which was like the lightproof entry of a darkroom. The roof was supported by two large, scarlet pillars with carved capitols from Shigatse. The roof here was higher than the rest of the house, and clerestory windows lighted it from the side opposite the altar, even though it was in the centre of the house. Attached to each pillar was a tall trident with a banner of brocade affixed to it. They were round banners like those we saw at Thangka Day, and they were wrapped in their dust cloths. The altar was elevated on a step. In front of it and all along the room stretched a sort of enclosed passage looking much like a porch. The altar was behind this, and housed three images. A large copper and silver butter lamp was burning in front of it, and thirteen bowls of tea were on the altar shelves. Indiscriminate other vessels filled it to capacity like a junk shop. On either side of the altar were high and long bookcases to contain the hundred and eight volumes of the Kangyur of which Kumar was very proud. The woodwork was newer in this portion of the room and was not yet painted. It was

cleverly designed to conform to the sag of the roof already present in the room. Roofs were heavy here, for they were made of adobe, and therefore, floors and ceilings sagged. All around the upper part of the walls were frescoes like the one in the room where we ate lunch. They were painted by the same man who had executed the final one in the *gompa* of Gyantse. He also did the portrait of the late Dalai Lama.

We left after lunch and returned to Gyantse in the rain. It poured most of the day, and we were glad to get home. We sent Ugden off to Dr. Bo to see about purchasing more items. After supper and in the dead of night, his coolie returned with Ugden bearing the treasures of the East: *thangkas*, the *chang* bowls I wanted, the devil driver, jade bowls and cups. In fact, it was the best collection we have seen thus far. I am mad about the bowls that belonged to Choktay.

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THE THIRTIETH OF JUNE: GYANGTSE, TIBET

Last night I had such a sore throat that I went to bed full of disinfectant and aspirin. Bailey coughed the whole night, and by morning we were both thoroughly miserable. Our state was attributable to the rain the day before, and the dust falling from the *gompa* roof after I drove nails into the beams to hold the lights. We decided to do nothing that morning. Dr. Bo arrived around nine-thirty and we asked him how he was faring in obtaining our desired items. He sent requests to Shigatse for some things, and we settled the prices for those things that had already arrived. He departed for the Tibetan Trade Agent's place, who was in possession of some Kham silver. We were writing letters when he returned with the news that he had obtained several pieces of the best work.

After lunch we went to see his Kangyur. He lived near the bridge in the old house the British occupied when they gained control of Gyantse in 1904. We were not interested as it was only a printed copy, and we are looking for hand-written versions. He said he would bring over the silver sometime in the next half hour.

When it arrived, we nearly went mad with joy. It was the finest work that we had ever seen: two teapots from Kham and a *torchay* set of the same fine craftsmanship, both made of silver that we treat with respect bordering on worship at home. The teapots were made of solid, unalloyed silver, yet they had resided on the stove for so many years, and their bottoms were caked with ashes and smoke. We bought them and sent the rupees to the old Trade Agent in a bag with Aku and the doctor. We spent the remainder of the daylight cleaning the pots. Except for some minor bumping and straightening they are in perfect condition and of the best workmanship I have thus far seen. Kham is near enough to China to inherit the craftsmanship of the Empire. He also brought fifteen *thangkas*, which Bailey purchased as presents. I had no interest, for they were all quite bad. I still had my eye on Chenrezig,⁵² the new *thangka* from Lhasa.

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⁵² DE: Chenrezig (Span ras gzigs) is the Tibetan name for Avalokiteśvara, the 'Bodhisattva of Compassion.'

THE FIRST OF JULY: GYANGTSE, TIBET

Today has been completely lost because Mr. Richardson took the other Coleman lamp from us. In the morning I sent a note to him asking for it back. In his reply he mentioned that the lamps were government property and were not to be used in the *gompa*. That complicated our plans, for we cannot get along without them. The note was curt, but contained an out, as he mentioned there was a spare lamp. I wrote again finding it difficult to conceal my hatred of the man in the note. He did not answer this time.

A half an hour later he appeared along the path to the bungalow swinging his broken polo stick in an irritating manner of official assurance. I was washing at the time, and caught only a few words that passed between him and Bailey about the lamps. When I came out, I found that he had decided to let us have the lamp. He took Bailey unaware as he entered, and my silver pot was still sitting on the table. Bailey hurriedly placed this on the rug behind the door, turned over the *thangkas*, and became pleasant. When I had dried my hands Mr. Richardson was outside talking to the engineer, a dingy little man with thin legs in jodhpurs. "The glass needs mending," he said "and I suggest that you attend to the skylight in the dining room." It had indeed leaked badly; the water was cutting a streambed out of the mud of the house. Mr. Richardson then felt that he must make an inspection of the bungalow for repairs. I thought of the storeroom full of Tibetan plunder and our pact with Dr. Bo not to reveal it to Richardson. Luck was with us, for he began on the topic of disinfecting the room in which Dorjé had slept and did not enter the house at all. He disappeared down the path swinging his stick, and was followed by his obedient and timid engineer with the stupid face.

We waited, but the lamp did not arrive. We were out on the lawn when two men arrived with the pair of food boxes. They wanted eighty rupees, but I managed to obtain them for twenty-seven. I then went for a walk in order to see the papermaking. On the way, I met the two monks who had come the day before with the bones. They motioned in a manner that suggested they had something to sell. As we returned to the bungalow, one of them squatted down on the road and a little puddle stretched out beyond the limits of his skirt. After we arrived they showed us two *thangkas*, all the time looking furtively out of the door and talking in whispers. I bought the best one for thirty rupees, although they wanted fifty-five, and they left. The lamp still did not arrive, so we spent the rest of the afternoon cleaning the silver teapots. Later, a note came from Hugh Hudson asking me to polo and us to tea in the afternoon.

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THE SECOND OF JULY: GYANGTSE, TIBET

This morning Bailey went to the *gompa* to photograph, and I joined the men at the fort for polo. They were late. Mr. Richardson, as usual, was immaculate and came out with Hudson. We rode together across the fields to the ground. The earth was hard and cracked with the heat. It was a good sight to see the Sikhs riding in column with the old man at their side. As they passed us, he ordered 'eyes right,' and then 'eyes forward.' They moved like machinery. If only they played their positions as well. We played four chukkers. In the first, I found that Mr. Richardson did not concern us. He was a very bad player and left the game to his two teammates. One, a Tibetan named Dorjé, was dead on the ball, a good rider, and plays a long game. The same is true of the Nepali, who was the second clerk in the post office. Both of them are better than the English. On my side were Hudson and a Sikh. I played number two. As the game developed, I realized that we were far outplayed by the others and our only chance of scoring lay in keeping the Tibetan and the Nepali checked. No one else seemed to want to ride them off so I did. From then on our chances rose until Hudson scored a goal. Richardson played bad polo all morning, taking it easy at number three. In the third chukker, I thought my lungs would burst for air, and my spleen hurt me terribly. I was cramped, doubled up, and did not play very well. However, in the fourth I managed to score twice, leaving us only two goals behind Richardson's team. I think I played better polo than ever before, even at Harvard.

Returning to the bungalow, I found Bailey already back from the *gompa*, having finished the south wall of the north passage. After lunch I went to see how my lamps were progressing and asked the smiths a great many questions about their work. I found out how they put gold on to the silver in the cups. Equal parts of gold and mercury were mixed forming a soft amalgam. The place to be plated was then treated with mercury until it was bright. The paste was then affixed, and the whole of it heated over the fire. During the heating, the mercury left the combination as vapor, and they knew well the danger of this vapor. The remaining gold was then burnished with a coral bead. They complained that a lot of gold was wasted in the process.

They also explained to me one of the polishes they employ. They boil bitter fruits, orange, lemon, and other tart things until syrup remains. Combined with salt, this syrup creates an acid strong enough to remove stains from the silver, leaving it shining white. Another polish was made from dissolving lime rock in water, which was used in the same way. I shall, however, come to know these later processes more thoroughly, for they plan to show me how to use them. I have a sample of the rock they use so I can test it for its chemical name, though I suspect it is cocoa. Some other Tibetans arrived and began to suck tea, so any more inquiring further was not possible. Udgen and I then left.

This afternoon we had tea with Hugh Hudson at the fort. He was most kind and entertaining. He told us about some of the campaigns he participated in

over the years and showed us pictures. Then, as it was raining, he showed us around the fort. The arsenal contains about thirty thousand rounds for rifles in reserve, and about twenty-five thousand for regular use. Besides this, there was also the ammunition for the new Vickers Berthier gun, a sort of submachine gun. A tripod was mounted onto the barrel, which sits on a prolongation of the stock that sticks out where it joins the metal. It held a clip of thirty rounds, and ten of these may be fired at a rate of a hundred and twenty to the minute before the barrel must be changed from heat. The barrel had a handgrip allowing the gun to be carried at a man's side. By twisting this grip a half-turn, the dogs of the barrel disengaged, and it may be lifted out. The action functioned by means of a cylinder with a connection in the barrel. When the bull's-eye reached this union or hole, the gases forced the piston back, and with it, the movable breech block. This ejected the cartridge and brought in the next round. It was a cleverly constructed and handy weapon, ideal for the sort of work that might be required here. Its extreme mobility, combined with about half the firepower of a modern machine gun, made it a weapon with which to be reckoned. The patent came from Belgium and the Berthier factory—at least I believe Hugh said Belgium. There were, besides these, the regular bayoneted rifles lined in rows in the arsenal. There were three racks of twenty each and probably enough along the wall to make up an even hundred. After surveying the arsenal, we went to the kitchen where the bakers were baking the unleavened barley bread, and then to the schoolroom where the 'three R's' were being taught.

The infirmary was a gloomy, though immaculate, place with room for about six patients, though more beds could be added if necessary. The barracks was a long room, and when we entered, the men on their beds sprang to attention. Each bed had an allowance of army blankets, which I believe to be three. Over the head of each bunk was a rack or shelf for belongings. This barracks was below another one, which had only six beds in it, for the other end was the schoolroom. The building was in the center of the fort and well protected from the walls. The water of the fort came from a well in the center of the men's courtyard. The other courtyard that was connected to the officers' quarters and the office of the British Trade Agent had a garden in it, but it was looking very discouraged and sere.

We returned to the bungalow in time for supper and straightened up the living room so that it will look more decent, hanging the walls with *thangkas* and putting silver and a cover on the table.

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THE THIRD OF JULY: GYANGTSE, TIBET

As we were preparing to photograph in the *gompa* this morning, Dr. Bo arrived. He wanted to settle the sale of the *thangkas* with Bailey. All together, he bought about twenty-five middling-to-fair paintings. As Dr. Bo was leaving, a friend of his brought more silver items, which included a very good prayer wheel and the retaining bands for the *tsampa* offering in the temple. I think that I shall buy the prayer wheel, and perhaps, the other piece as well, which could make excellent flower arrangements.

After lunch, we set out for the *gompa* and took three photographs of the west passage and one of the east wall. On the way back, we stopped to check in on the silversmiths. Back at the bungalow, I wrote a letter to Father about the finances. I have been a little foolish in my love of fine things, but since I have spent less than any other year before, I do not think that he will object.

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THE FOURTH OF JULY: GYANGTSE, TIBET

On the way to the *gompa* this morning, we stopped at the silversmiths to see the lamps and order the engraving we hoped to have carved into them, which read, "This butter lamp was made in Gyangtse on the eighth day of the fifth month of the Year of the Tiger." I believe this is correct, but I must check. A writer marked the inscription around the bases of the lamps, and I watched him engrave the wave-like mark that signifies the beginning of a sentence.



We completed the frescoes in the *gompa*, to our intense relief. As we left, we joined in the file of monks leaving the ecclesiastical council. They had been chanting while we were photographing, and with the bell punctuating the periods, it sounded distinctly Roman Catholic. Filing out with them, the stench was something to be wondered at. They all wore their tall, half-moon hats, and over their thick regular clothes, heavy yellow capes. They were all hot, as the sweat running down their faces exemplified. At the door, they received their portion of *tsampa* from the bags piled there. We hastened away, for we had our fill of the

stench.

We ate supper at the fort, walking over in the growling thunder and patter of coming rain. Mr. Richardson was there and in fine humor. He told a glorious story about Aunty Mary's pants. She was invited to a dinner of the Governor and had to wear western clothes. During dinner she was visibly squirming and wriggling, but after some time was quiet again. After dinner, one of the aides-de-camp fished out a pair of pants from under the table and asked in a loud voice to whom they belonged. Aunty Mary, quiet as usual, claimed them; and the Governor's rage was unbounded. She was taken on the mat right then and there.

We drank sherry before dinner, wine with dinner, and cordials and brandy after dinner. Mr. Richardson can certainly host an excellent dinner, though it was unclear whether it was Hugh Hudson's or Mr. Richardson's dinner. We stayed until about ten, and then returned to the bungalow. I felt sick again from the liquor, which must be due to the altitude. Either that or I have a very weak stomach, which I doubt considering the food on the "Corneville."

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THE FIFTH OF JULY: GYANGTSE, TIBET

We spent this morning reading and writing in the bungalow. I wrote a long letter to the family, which will be very unsatisfactory, for I am so anxious to get home now.

In the afternoon, Mr. Richardson and Mr. Hudson came to the bungalow for tea. Mr. Richardson has offered to get me some Shigatse silver when he leaves. He is becoming a real friend in spite of the friendly enmity of a few days ago. I am glad I learned to play polo. They left about five thirty as both had a great deal to do before Richardson's departure for Yatung. We shall see him there.

A letter of desire came from Norman concerning the color prints. Apparently, Edmund Evans cannot read an ordinary neutral scale, leaving me a little fed up. We replied giving what advice we could.

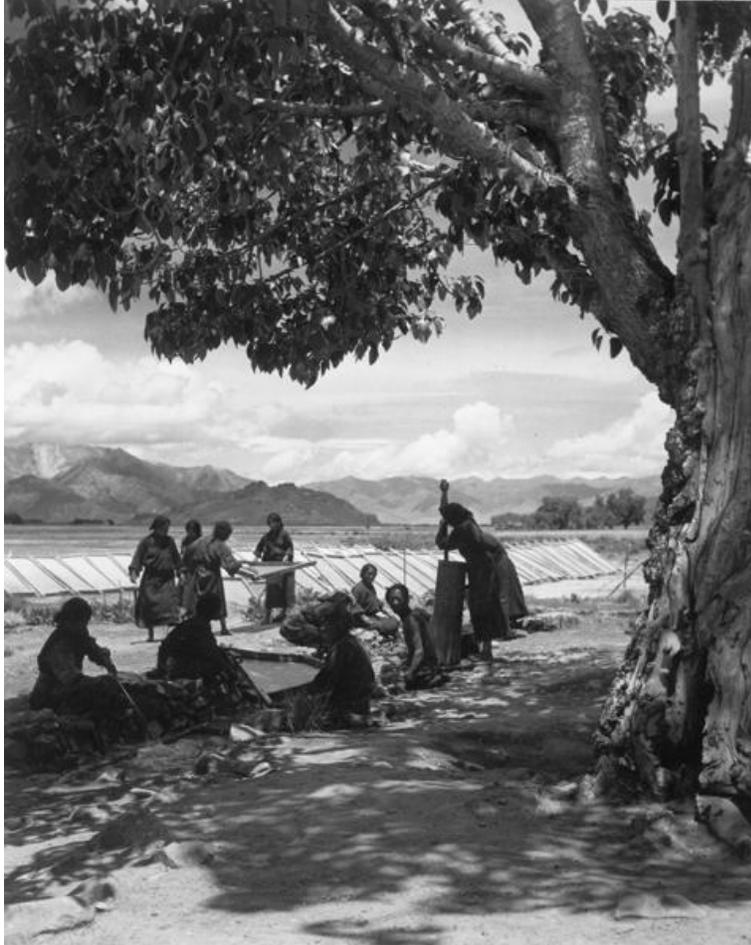
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THE SIXTH, SEVENTH, AND EIGHTH OF JULY: GYANGTSE, TIBET

These last few days have been nothing but rows with the Rai Sahib Wangdi over our departure. It seems that we shall have only five weeks in Tibet instead of six as our pass promised us; however, the work is done, and I suppose there is no cause for griping, but I do hate being dictated to by petty officials, and get unduly angry at their joyously summary notices. It is rather interesting that Mr. Wangdi waited until Mr. Richardson had left before starting the trouble.

I am beginning to see that Bailey's evaluation of Richardson is correct; he is willing to be entertaining while fed, but he is another person underneath the veneer. I am gullible and began to feel that he would help us; however, he telegraphed and expressed his support of Wangdi's nastiness; this will be hard to forget.

I have investigated the paper making process. The bark was imported in flat cakes from Bhutan and left to soak in water for fifteen or more days to free the fiber. This mass was then placed in a pile and kept wet for an indefinite time, for they used it in the foot pounders. Here, it was reduced to pulp, full of pieces of bark and stringy fibers. The resulting mass was then piled again and left alone until making the paper. During this time it dried and must once again be mixed with water in a churn. The mixture was placed into a pot and then ladled into the flats. The flats were frames of wood, across the bottom of which was cloth a little heavier in texture than cheesecloth, but containing enough holes through which water could pass. The cloth was pegged to the sides of the frame. These frames were held under water, into which two ladlefuls of the mash were placed. The people working over the flat then beat the pulp into an even texture over the entire surface of the cloth. Situated on either side, they lifted the flat from the stream, allowing it to drain. It was then handed to two carriers who placed it end up against a rack in the sun. The paper was removed from the cloth when dry. The paper they made was of three kinds: one from Bhutanese bark; another from old paper, such as newsprint, coming via the trade route; and a third from the stems of aconite. The paper made from the bark was brown with specks of dirt, fiber, bark, and clear patches. It was quite strong and very attractive, having a glossy, mica-like appearance to it. The aconite paper was whiter but not as strong. The best for texture and strength was, of course, that of digested paper made elsewhere. We took extensive photos of the process, and perhaps these could supplement an article.



We have not yet read the inscriptions in the *gompa*, and must do it tomorrow. We must also photograph Choktay's house. I shall not be sorry to leave, though I would like to have more photographs of native industries. However, they are difficult to photograph, and I need a wider pass to attack them with any success.

We have been spending considerable time with Dr. Bo, who prefers to play tennis than hunt up antiques for us. He sent word, however, that he would come tomorrow with the Tibetan Trade Agent's *serkyem* set. The old boy himself sent over a gorgeous tent and a gold cup yesterday. He wanted a thousand rupees for the gold cup, which was worth nine hundred, and quoted six hundred for the tent, which was dirt cheap; however, I am not sure what I would do with a tent.

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THE NINTH OF JULY: GYANGTSE, TIBET

This morning we went over to the fort to settle our accounts with Rai Sahib Wangdi. We met him on the way, and he said he would return in a few minutes. We went on to the post office, where there were letters for Bill and me. I received one from Bunty, and he received a lengthy gossip-filled one from his dad, which was very interesting. We sat in the post office and read them while the clerks tried to understand what was being said. Later, we went to find Mr. Wangdi, but he was not at his house, so we went to locate Mr. Hudson and tell him we would be unable to climb the mountain on Sunday because of our shortened date of departure. We did not find him, so we sat down on the wooden steps of the fort to read our letters. Just as we were finishing and ready to leave, we saw the new doctor coming into the yard. He wore riding britches over his socks and no boots. He had beautiful calves and a deep chest, and from his breast pocket protruded the inevitable stethoscope. We had not met him yet, but had heard much about him, so we introduced ourselves. Dr. O'Mally then asked us in for a drink, and we sat in his room and tried to explain what was wrong with our present government—Mr. Roosevelt in particular—for he seemed to think we were having a depression just to be perverse. We left him and returned to the bungalow. Ugden was still out with the Rai Sahib.

In the afternoon, the Choktays came to tea, and we had a most cheerful time with them. Kusho⁵³ was one of the most brilliant Tibetans I met. His intelligence was apparent in his eyes and vivacious speech. I felt almost able to understand him, for he speaks clearly and with such precise inflection. His wife speaks with a French accent and is less periodic in what she says.

She did not wear her gown, and he was wearing a broadcloth *chuba*, which became him well. They brought two altar stands for presents when they came. We talked about a world of things, chiefly the little French cabinet and the [Kumbum thangka](#). He was amazed at the luck we had had in collecting items, and a little chagrined to think that he had lived here all his life and never found any of these things. He did not mention the *chang* bowls. Later, Dr. Bo came to the bungalow, and brought with him the Khenchen's *serkyem* set for me to examine. He and was embarrassed to find the Choktays there, however, he left the Tibetan Trade Agent's servant outside and joined us. His presence left us excluded from the conversation, and Ugden sat alone in the corner. They left about five thirty, and Dr. Bo produced the *serkyem* set. I bought it—even though I was so badly reamed for the first one—as it was immeasurably finer than mine. Although it did not match as well, it was some twenty *tolas* heavier. Dr. Bo then left to talk to the old man. We received a note just before dinner saying that he would settle for my set plus a hundred and twenty-five rupees, so I sent over the money delighted to get so fine a piece. I envision it as an after dinner coffee set.

⁵³ PGH: An honorific term of address for a nobleman or official.

THE TENTH OF JULY: GYANGTSE, TIBET

This morning was very full. Kumar Chimi came to visit us in the early morning to say that he could let us buy the pitcher or *shaklo*. Since I already had a finer one than his, I left the *shaklo* to Bill, who offered a hundred rupees for it. I am glad that Kumar came to see us off, for I was afraid that we had offended him by asking to buy some of his silver. I did know from Chuni that they were feeling hard up and so judged it judicious to ask. It has turned out for the best. He sat and had tea with us at ten o'clock. He brought as presents a very poor amulet case and an inkstand, which was still full of ink. When he left, Dr. Bo appeared with his friend who owned the prayer wheel, the *tsampa* set, and the brocade *chuba* that Bailey wanted. We purchased all three after a bit of wrangling to keep the prices reasonable. I paid a little over two rupees per *tola*, but since the wheel and set were very good, I could hardly complain. They both left, but then the eight servants of the Khenchen appeared with the *serkyem* set and a request for *baksheesh*, which Bailey distributed as I was on the can.

We spent this afternoon packing our treasure into the two empty food boxes. There was hardly room enough for everything, for it was quite a pile when brought together. I hope that nothing will be broken or dented on the way. Everything is wrapped in cloth and newspaper and then nested in hay. We shall find out once we arrive in Kalimpong.

Two other *thangkas* arrived and were so cheap that I could not resist buying them as presents, which will solve the Christmas problem upon returning home. I sent a note to Mr. Wangdi about buying a Lhasa terrier, and he wrote back saying that Lobsang would not part with his pups. I must see the dog woman in Gangtok while we are there. She has white ones, but perhaps a couple of sports in grey. Ugden has been gone all afternoon with his friends. I did not want to let him go, but if we had not, it would have spoiled more than we lost in the time. Anyway, we did finish the inconvenient packing. I also purchased four saddle rugs, two for the Brys, and one apiece for Chuck and Buck. I may be foolish, but when I think about how it will please them, the two or three dollars I spent does not seem like much.

I blackened the interstices of the wheel this evening, having cleaned it during the day. This was the first example of oxidized work that I had seen. By the way, the grammar on my lamps was not correct, for the case of Gyangtse being incorrect. Gen is very contrite about it.

* * *

THE ELEVENTH OF JULY: GYANGTSE, TIBET

The man from Taring came early this morning with the *shaklo*. It was a beautiful thing and will go well in Bailey's room. The servant also brought a good *thangka*, which I bought for a hundred rupees. I am awfully glad to obtain another good one. Ugden then came in and sold me Dr. Bo's *thangka* for forty rupees, and Bailey purchased his amber dishes for thirty. We began to pack, and Bailey worked on the *thangka*, which the carpenters completed and delivered this morning. While lifting the new *thangka* off from the Kumbum, I detached the latter from the hook. It slid down the rough wall and did more damage than has occurred in the last three hundred years. I was absolutely out of reason; I was so angry that I had to polish a butter lamp to get over it. I do not think I have ever hated my own clumsiness so much, and I wonder if I shall ever stop breaking things. The *thangka* was not damaged too significantly, but it was one of the most stupid things that I have done for years. God willing, someday I may be able to handle things with more care and foresight.

After Bailey finished packing the box, and I was feeling well enough to examine the damage, we went to the *gompa*. We translated all the relevant inscriptions to our work. Apparently, the whole set of frescoes were of subjects from the Kangyur and thus meaningless to Hinayana Buddhism, which is the extent of my knowledge. While we were there we met Taring Rinpoché, who was listening to the service with the representative of the regent from Lhasa. Old Taring greeted us very cordially, and later came back to the rear of the *gompa* to see what we were doing. He was an interesting man. Low, heavy and with a deep mellow voice, he was a commanding person. His face was round and seamed with the marks of intelligence. He was probably about fifty years old. He told us of his own *gompa*, which was older than the main one in Gyangtse, but destroyed by the Mongols in the wars. He rebuilt it himself, and it, therefore, no longer contained the original frescoes, for he told us of the new ones that had been painted there. We promised the next time we came to Tibet we would call on him at Taring. He then returned to his guest, the Regent's representative, and they sat receiving gift scarves in the clerestory window of the main assembly hall. Inside this window there was a considerable ledge with a slight railing made of clay, which was black and polished with use. The balcony was wide enough for sitting cushions, and there they sat together with the offerings of rice, raisins, and dates piled beside them and buttered tea in jade cups. Neither drank the tea. We had not been back at work for more than a few minutes when Taring Rinpoché called us to him by his servant. We went out into the light where the old man held of the *gompa*'s most sacred books, the letters raised in gold on a blue page with square arabesques about the writing. The front of the page was covered with brocade. The rest of the book was written in black on white pages. I do not think it as good as the little book I purchased, but its holiness and age commended it to them. Both the Rinpoché and the man from Lhasa handled with the utmost of care a clean gift

scarf under the page. After showing it to us, they put it back on the other pages, replaced the wooden cover, and the book was taken away. The covers were plain wood, and contained no carving as the more interesting ones had. They claimed the book was five hundred years old, and if true, it predated the *gompa*. The man from Lhasa was gorgeous in brocade. He wore a brilliant D. of C. yellow chuba, and over it, a red orange brocade coat. The hat he wore was flat with a raised crown. Upon it was a finial of jewels—rubies, sapphires, and turquoise—and in the front was a wide medal set with finest India emeralds, rubies, diamonds and pearls. It lay beside him on the cushion. The hat was made of split reeds, and between them was a transparent paper. From the top fell four fleur-de-lys of brocade edged with blue. The hat was very old, for the wood was nearly black. At the junction of these lilies was the finial. He was not as cordial as Taring, though he shook hands with me. Taring was, in that respect, very broad minded for he does not expect the same humble obeisance from foreigners.

As we left the *gompa*, we tried to buy one of the ‘Devil Dance’ hats from the lamas, for we wanted one ever since we saw one hanging on the doorknob of the monastery citadel. They brought forth many that were butter-stained and of poor quality, but we offered twenty rupees apiece for a good one.

Having given the keeper the chain to his watch, we departed, and for the first time in a week the sun broke through the clouds. We went to see the jeweler and tried to buy waterproof cloth on the way. We arrived at the jeweler’s shop to find our lamps nearly complete, and I took numerous photographs of men working on illustrations for a book on Tibetan silversmithing. They were very kind and posed beautifully without moving a muscle, a skill all these Orientals seem to possess. In the afternoon, Dr. O’Mally and Mr. Hudson came to tea, and Aku baked a nice cake. Mr. Hudson had a bad throat and was feeling rotten.

After they left, we continued to pack, and I finished brightening the prayer wheel. I made a mistake: we packed the *thangkas* after returning from the *gompa*. We ate dinner at the fort, and as usual, had hardly anything to drink, which got to us. We returned to the bungalow feeling ill.

* * *

THE TWELFTH OF JULY: KHANGMAR, TIBET

This morning we rose at half past five, packed the rest of the boxes, and ate breakfast at six. After attending to the last minute details, we departed, leaving the pack train to Aku, which consisted of seven pack mules and three riders. The morning was clear with only a few cumulus clouds, and we were optimistic about escaping rain for one day. Having departed at seven, we reached Saugang at quarter of twelve. After lunch we photographed the rock hewn buddhas, as well as those in the rock-filled valley at the bend of the Saugang valley. Unfortunately, it became overcast, and from Saugang onward we had occasional bursts of rain. Bailey and I wore our Tibetan hats with the earflaps, for when it is cold you one can lower the flaps and retain the warmth. The trip was very dull. Bailey read an article by Smythe on the Shrekhorn in *Blackwoods Magazine* most of the way. It was a good incident, but a poorly written article. Around three thirty, it grew bitterly cold, and we were glad for our hats. We arrived in Khangma a little before five, and Aku had already prepared tea, for he passed us during lunch. Ugden was cold and rode ahead of us.

Flying Note:

An airport could be constructed from Gyangtse to Taring and no further. There are no natural landing fields in that area, or anywhere from Gyangtse to Khangma. However, towards Lhasa and northeast of the fort, a 'crack-up' might be possible without injuring the pilot. One could easily make a field there.

* * *

THE THIRTEENTH OF JULY: KALA, TIBET

We awoke at five-thirty this morning and departed by half past six. Almost immediately it began to rain, and we made our way to Samada in the driving mist, wind, and solid rain. As we followed the river, we became quite cold and uncomfortable. It seemed foolish to poke along at our usual rate, so we cantered much of the time. This kept us warm in spite of the adverse weather. The tops of even the lowest mountains around us were powdered with snow, which manifested as rain five hundred feet lower. The river was swollen over its banks, and often the road disappeared entirely under the ugly swirling water. Laden with silt, the waves rushed by and in many places had undermined the banks, taking slices out of the trail. At one point, my horse fell in up to his belly. Scrambling madly at the bank—on his knees part of the time—he finally made it onto the road. My shoes were full of water and I was afraid for the camera hanging on the saddle skirt. I was furious with the animal at times, and this was one of those times. This incident was indicative of his usual tricks. He was never satisfied with drinking the water near shore, but always waded out into the middle of the stream where it was muddiest. This time he got more drink than he bargained for.

Along the road the marigolds were in bloom, and a creeping purple vetch grew near to the ground, too close for the sheep to cut it. Dandelions and cinquefoil displayed their yellow along with a large-leaved plant that had yellow blooms much like the asters. The dwarf blue aster with the pink center was also in bloom. We passed town after town, most of them deserted, as we progressed up the valley. We also passed two very large pack trains bound for Lhasa, one in charge of a very pretty Tibetan girl, who was accompanied by two guards armed carrying rifles. We did not offer our compliments. We reached Samada around half past nine and stayed until ten drying our socks and drinking Bovril to warm up. The weather lightened while we were waiting for the spare horses for Ugden and Mela. The latter was riding worse than ever; he held himself in the saddle with the reins, the horse cantering along with its mouth wide open and the bit digging into its jaw. He was a stupid man who was afraid of horses and unable to ride, yet a groom. He rode on a high saddle with around eighteen inches of stirrup and his feet forward instead of to the side. The smallest lurch sent him reeling with the three umbrellas on his back. His Balaclava helmet added the final Cervantes touch to our Sancho Panza. He was told to keep up with us when we cantered, and he was a bright shade of blue when we arrived at Samada.

After Samada we continued up the valley and the river, and over a bridge into which the river had carved invisible holes that were covered by the water that flowed over the top. I went first, the horse unwilling and putting up a fight in the center. His rear quarters slid into a hole, and he bolted for the correct bank. The others followed having better luck. The bridges were all pier and no span due to the rarity of the wood here, so when the water rose, it usually carried everything before it and flowed right over semi-dams of this sort.

We emerged into the plain and could see the bottoms of the Cholmuhari Range off to the left. The tops of all the hills were lost in dank mist that left patches of powder snow on their peaks. It was little wonder the Everest Expedition gave up, since tons of loose snow often thundered down the eastern face. Yaks were grazing in the grass, which was plentiful due to the last two weeks of rain, and when we reached the tableland above the riverbed and over the buttes, we saw a group of four wild asses. They were about the same size as a mule, with brown backs, a white streak on the rump, and four white legs with brown running down in a clock along their leg. There were three grown animals and one colt. They did not shy away from us but stayed nearby grazing quite calmly. We were about halfway along the Kala plain when it began to rain again, and the rest of the journey was very wet. No sooner had we arrived at quarter past one, than the sun broke through and warmed the air.

Aku arrived about three thirty in the afternoon. One of the mules had run away and ripped the bottom out of our large duffle bag. They had also taken the rope off the medicine bag, and it was falling apart. I sometimes get a little angry with Aku. He rides along continually conscious of his own dignity, as opposed the humble folk who walk and do not pay the slightest interest in what is occurring. I baseball-stitched the rip for about three feet, and then taped the rest with hot adhesive tape. I hope it will hold to Kalimpong.

What a godsend our Tibetan hats have been, for with the flaps down they keep the wind from burning your face and are warm with the fur on one's ears. They become a little soft in the rain but have held up very well so far. I hope that mine will make it back home, for it will be marvelous in the winter.



Flying Note:

About seven miles from Kala, the valley widens and one is fronted with a series of buttes at the confluence of the Kala valley and the Phari Plain. On top of these buttes and towards the hills is a beautiful landing area with the terrain following the wind, which is always westward or blowing from the Kala end of the plain. This field is runnable for about three miles. At the end, is a slight rise of hills about a hundred and fifty feet in height. Should a plane touch these when taking off, it would suffer no damage, for it is mostly pebble and vetch. The field itself is mountain turf with round pebbles and cobbles throughout, but nothing large enough to trip up a large tire.

Beyond the hill, one reaches the Kala Plain. There is a possible landing to the south of the wires, but near the trade route, which has sunk about three feet into the plain, there are enough miniature arroyos to give one some trouble. North of the power line—from about a half mile below the ride to about two miles from Kala—is an ideal place to land a plane, for it provides about five miles of runway. A ridge extends along the telephone line and out about a hundred feet to the north, but beyond this there should be no trouble with even the largest ships. Near the hills to the east there are large stones, and near Kala, and about two miles east of it, there are irrigation ditches and barley fields. But the plain is enormous and should provide no difficulty, even at this altitude, which is 14,600 feet above sea level. I judge that a plane would require about two miles in order to take off up here, perhaps a trifle more.

* * *

CONCLUSION

The foregoing is an excerpt from Mrs. Macdonald Duff's diary for the day of June 14, 1958. The schedule is slightly different from what I recorded at Leyning, and I feel in parts inaccurate. I shall, however, check its meaning with the head lama. She has been at great pains to write something down and has done exceedingly well for an untrained observer.

THE DANCES AT GYANGTSE GOMPA

By Macdonald Duff

Immediately opposite our balcony on the other side of the courtyard and level with it was a long, covered shelter with an open front, in the middle of which was the head lama's throne. Two officials came into the courtyard carrying flat, coloured pieces of material. In their other hands they held long, leather whips with which they drove the crowd back. They used these to some purpose, flinging them about with great vigour, often causing clouds of dust to fly from the garments of the people they hit! The courtyard was cleared in this way, and the people sat or stood several rows deep around the outside, forming an immense circle. The flat roofs of the various colleges and buildings were also crowded with people, including many yellow-capped nuns. A chair was brought into the courtyard and covered with a large red cloth and the dance began, the band having taken up their position below our balcony. The band consisted of several large drums, which were held upright on poles and struck with curved sticks. There were also two enormously long telescopic horns. First, a procession of some fifteen lamas entered the courtyard performing a measured ceremonial step, which was more posturing than dancing, to the accompaniment of a slow beat on the huge drums and long blasts on the big horns. They were dressed in voluminous robes of the most rich and beautiful Chinese silk, each one different, with colours and designs too exquisite for words. Some had great gold dragons writhing all over them, and some were patterned with flowers and some had human figures worked into them like those on a Chinese vase. They each wore a long and wide apron, which had large eyes patterned on the chest and designs of human skulls around the bottom or the apron. On their heads they wore huge, round flat black hats with a spike on top, surmounted by a small skull. In their right hands they carried a small dagger, and in their left, a bowl made from the top of a human skull, which had a fringe hanging from it. They were followed by the gorgeous and impressive figure of the head lama, who wore a scarlet silk robe and a tallish cylindrical scarlet cap, rather like a tarboosh, only higher and made of bright scarlet silk. When he reached the chair he seated himself in it, and a large scarlet umbrella was opened and held over his head by an attendant. The music (if it can be called that) now became

more rhythmical, while the huge horns kept up a continuous braying or roaring. The head lama now held a large pair of brass cymbals in his hands and struck them together at the end of each stanza of music.

The dancing lamas progressed slowly around the courtyard with slow steps and much posturing, making sinister little stabbing movements with their right hands, which held the daggers, and holding out their skull bowls in their left hands. The leader of the dance, a tall lama who wore a magnificent robe of thick blue silk or satin covered in gold Chinese dragons, stood in the centre of the circle formed by the others. He also held a dagger and skull bowl and he danced in front of the seated head lama. The whole effect was weird, fantastic, and sinister in the extreme. This went on for a long time, their movements being generally slow and measured, except when the leader quickened his now and then. After some time, they all filed out in groups of three past the head lama in his chair. They were still dancing, but as they passed the head lama they did an extraordinary step that consisted of hopping forward three times on the same foot without putting the other foot to the ground. Eventually they disappeared around a corner of one of the colleges. I noticed a queer thing at this point. A woman was standing near a corner of the building where they disappeared. As the last dancer passed her she held a child out head first so that its head touched the lama's robe. The daggers and skull bowls in this dance were supposed to be those of the sorcerers, or Black Hats, who according to old religion needed human blood for their rites. The head lama now took his seat upon the throne under the covered shelter, and the drums and horns took up their positions on each side of him. Let me add something I previously forgot to mention: before the dance started, the proceedings opened with two monks on a college roof wearing yellow hats and blowing small shrill horns.

The next dance consisted of two lamas wearing beautiful silk robes and huge animal masks that resembled horses' heads. They carried naked swords in their hands and did a slow dance one on each side of the arena. It was the same sort of slow posturing dance, but interspersed with small turns, side steps, and forward leans during which they rested the point of their swords on the ground. The drums, the horns and the occasional clashing and rattling of cymbals, went on incessantly. The horse headed lamas eventually danced out of the courtyard and were succeeded by something much more terrifying, which will tax my powers of description. First, two small figures appeared dressed in flowered white robes and red turbans and wearing grotesque human masks, one green with purple lips and one orange with red lips. They represented Indians and were also clowns. They carried a kind of flute in their hands. They performed a grotesque dance that included a lot of running backwards and forwards, while they moved to the part of the courtyard where the dances began and blew a blast on their flutes. From this summons, two frightful apparitions made their appearance. They were tall and dressed as skeletons in white shining suits with the bones outlined in bright scarlet. They wore huge skull masks that had a large fan shaped thing, similar to certain kinds of fish, on each side. They had enormous skeleton hands, the palms of which were scarlet, and long white fingernails. Their long, claw-like feet were also scarlet and white. Around their waists they wore, red, white, and green draperies, while at the back of their heads hung a grey-blue hood. While these

skeletons—accompanied by their attendant clown—were performing a dance with much prancing and waving of their dreadful hands, a young lama appeared and seated himself at the other end of the courtyard. He was dressed in the ordinary clothes of a lama and wore a fur hat upon his head. He sat cross-legged wrapped in his cloak. The dancers drew forth a black and obscene looking object that looked like a square, twisted mass of old, black leather with a long cord fastened to each end. The two skeletons each seized an end of this cord and twisted it around their wrists. They then danced away across the courtyard, swinging and dangling the black twisted mass between them. With much posturing and turning they finally reached the centre of the courtyard where a square carpet was spread, upon which sat an extremely old and very dead looking horse's head. They deposited the twisted mass on this carpet, and with a blast from the flutes, danced themselves away, evidently unwillingly, but compelled to do so by the summons of the flutes. Their attendant clowns performed another grotesque dance and then vanished. The meaning of the skeleton dance was as follows. The young lama seated on the ground represented a dead man. The skeletons or spirits of hell seized him and dragged forth his soul, represented by the black twisted mass. They take it away, while making sport with it on the way, and eventually, I presume, deposit it in hell or the place of the dead, represented by the carpet with the dead horse's head on it.

After this, an enormous number of lamas appeared in the courtyard dressed in gorgeous robes and wearing grotesque animal masks. I counted 47 in total, but there may have been more. There were bulls, tigers, horses, stags, vultures, and bats. The sun shining on their beautiful coloured silk robes caused the silk and gold to gleam and glisten. This combined with the grotesque heads rising above these marvelous robes created the most bizarre effect. They danced slowly and solemnly around in a huge circle with a lama in the centre leading them. He was the same one that had led them before, but now he wore an animal's head, together with the same lovely dark blue silk and gold robe. While this was going on, long mats were unrolled on the ground all around the courtyard. The dance came to a stop, and all the dancers sat down on the mats, including the leader who sat on a mat in the middle of the circle. Then a small lama boy came around with a large teapot, but the only person who received any was the dance leader, for he was the only one who had been given a cup. The boy only made a pretense of offering any to the seated circle of horses, tigers, birds, and bats, and other animals! After this, we were served lunch on our covered balcony.

* * *

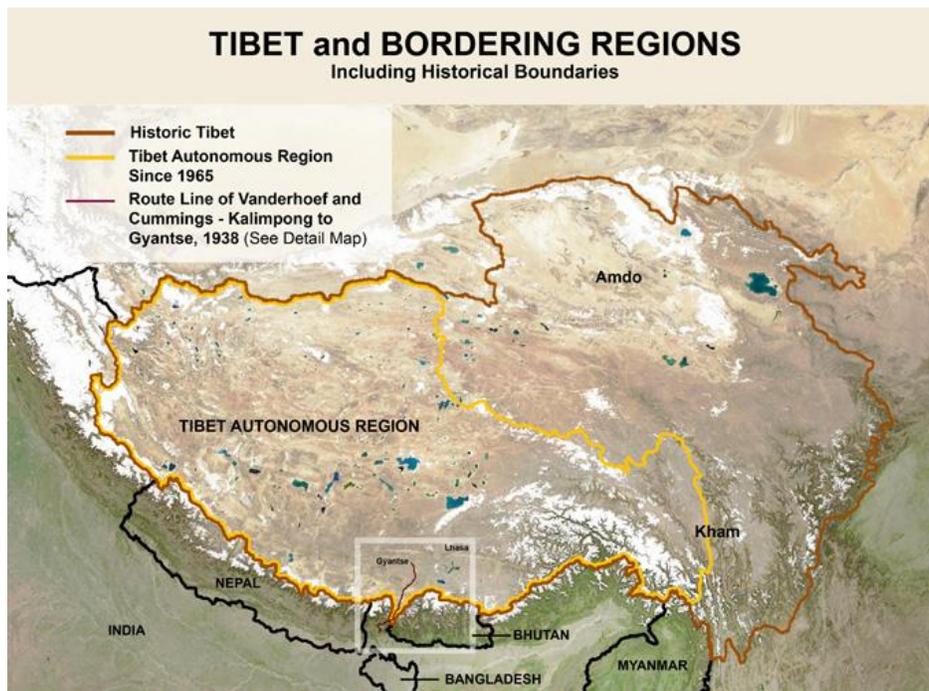
APPENDIX: MAPS⁵⁴

Figure 1: A map of Tibet. See details of the inset in the following map.

⁵⁴ These maps were created by Ms. Joy Davis.

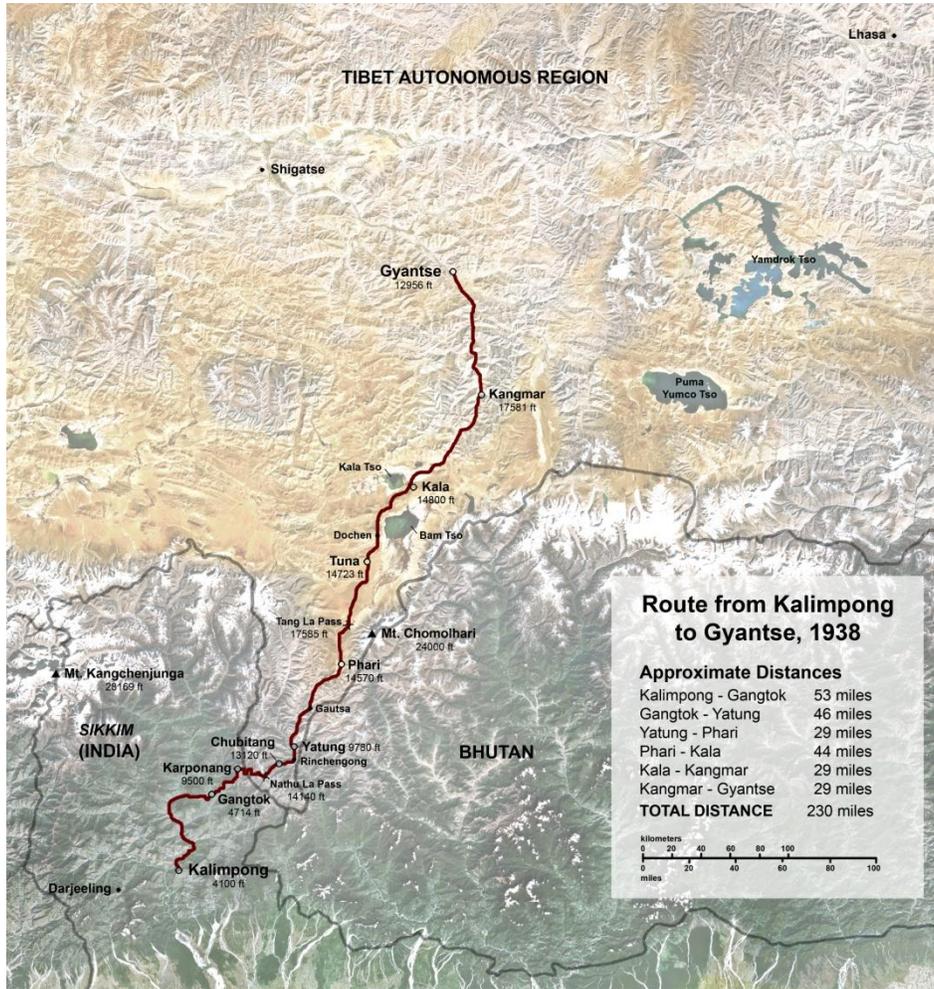


Figure 2: The route that the two travelers followed