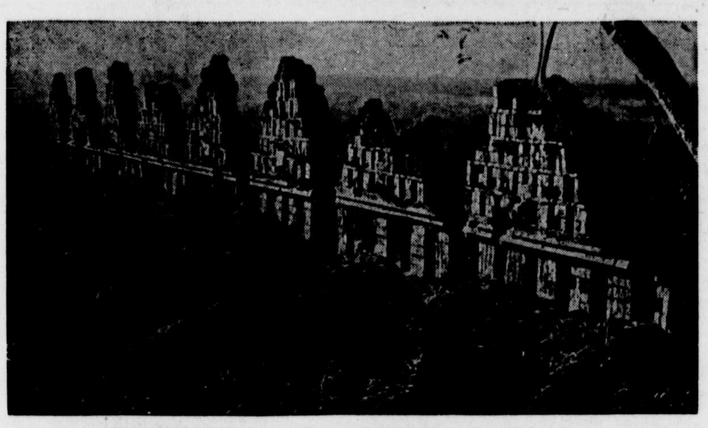
NEWS FROM THE 'HILLS OF THE DEAD'

Ancient Ruins Throw Light Upon Mayan Indian Civilizaton; Old Sculpture Reveals Rare Sense of Humor.



Ruins of Buildings in the Nunnery Quadrangle at Uxmal, Yucatan.

By WILLIAM C. UTLEY

IN THE "Hills of the Dead," long-forgotten slopes of the back country in Guatemala, the picks and shovels of archeologists from the Carnegie Institution of Washington, D. C., are discovering new answers to many mysteries of one of the most brilliant of early American civilizations. Under the direction of Dr. V. A. Kidder, these explorers into the past have come upon important new relics left hundreds of years ago by the Maya Indians.

The Mayas challenge the best minds of science. The civilization they achieved received no assistance from the Old World. It is—or was—America's own.

The Mayas were proficient astronomers. They perfected writing, sculpture and architecture to a high degree. They conducted their affairs under an efficiently organized government. Science is still at a loss to explain how they reached the high cultural achievements which they did, but the patient researches of archeological groups may some day find the answer to the riddle.

"Of first importance," according to the Carnegie archeologists, are the findings in Guatemalan hills, although they have not yet been completely analyzed. It is hoped that they may eventually reveal the whole fascinating story.

Find Four Tombs.

The area now being explored is no more than a mile and a half long, but it contains 100 mounds, beneath which are the ruins of a large Mayan community. Farmers of the region call the site Milaflores, but the Carnegie people intend to name it Kaminaljuyu, the Queche Indian for "Hills of the Dead."

Three important tombs of ancient American rulers have already been opened here, and a fourth is to be opened soon. From the evidences revealed concerning the burial practices of the Mayas, much about their civilization is learned.

"It will take months to get the collection in shape," says Doctor Kidder, "but it will prove a tremendous addition to our knowledge of Maya life, ceremony, dress and art."

Opening one tomb, the archeologists found in its center the figure of a middle-aged priest or noble, who had been left sitting cross-legged there many centuries ago. Jade beads and pendants, handsomely carved, ear plugs and ornaments of crystal and shell, together with a pile of pottery found beside the remains, gave evidence of pompous burial.

Pile Up Pyramids.

At the feet of the skeleton was found another—a slave girl entombed to wait upon her master in the world beyond. Even the dead man's small dog was sent on the long journey with him, for in a corner of the room its skeleton was also found. There were vessels for serving food and millstones to grind the heavenly corn.

The Mayas had a peculiar practice in building their tombs. One pyramid was built upon another, like a nest of jars or boxes. It is believed from the location and formation of the tombs that when one of these priests or rulers died, he was placed in a tomb covered by a pyramid which had been associated with him, indeed one which in all probability he had built himself. When the next in line died, it appears, another pyramid was built, over the first. In the recent Carnegie findings there are four tombs and four layers of pyramids.

Guatemala's lowland jungles, where most of the preceding Mayan discoveries have been made, have already been pretty thoroughly explored. But the new discoveries are in the highlands, and for that reason it is believed they may open up entire new fields of discovery. Though the pyramids were more or less common in the lowlands, this is the first to be found in the hills.

Progressive periods of the Mayan civilization, which may help to trace it back to its mysterious beginnings, are revealed in the new findings. Dr. Kidder has already discovered stratification of buildings. From the various levels of the earth have come generous quantities of pottery which definitely represents a sequence, telling something of the culture of the people over successive eras.

The pyramids belong to a period known as the Old Empire, which is of somewhat later date, flourishing during the early centuries of the Christian era. This empire included many cities in Guatemala, Honduras and southern Yucatan.

The new discoveries bear out the prediction made by Dr. Kidder a year ago, when he said:

"Apparently the highland region was much more of a highway for trade and migration than the densely jungled lowland country. Consequently intensive work on the sites of the region can be expected to provide extremely valuable information as to the chronological interrelations of the various ancient cultures, particularly as it is probable that stratified remains will be discovered."

Stone Art Reveals Humor.

The art of the ancient Mayas is notable not only for its skillful execution, but for the evidence it gives of a sophisticated understanding of human nature—and above all, a delightful sense of humor.

What some critics declare to be the finest specimen of Mayan art in stone was recently discovered by an expedition sponsored by the University museum of the University of Pennsylvania. The stone lintel was the work of an unknown sculptor.

Roof Comb of the "House of Pigeons," an Ancient Mayan Ruin at Uxmal, Yucatan.

In Mayan hieroglyphics were six dates, none of them later than Dec. 2, 757 A. D., according to Dr. J. Alden Mason, of the expedition.

Particularly amusing is the old sculpture in this, a political year. For the scene which it treats is apparently some sort of meeting in the council chamber of a governmental body, and the characters are listening to one of their number as he delivers a speech. That political oratory, then as now, was flavored with a generous helping of plain hooey is evident from the antics and postures of the listeners while the speaker is "waving the flag" in traditional enthusiasm and gusto.

Expert Reconstructs Original.

Now it has long been the custom of sculptors to present such occasions as full of dignity and always working smoothly. But here was a chisel-wielding wag who knew better and did not hesitate to interpret his characters as he knew them, even though his work was to decorate the doorway of a beautiful and dignified temple.

When it was found, the sculpture was badly worn and damaged, but attempts have been made to reconstruct it. Broken lines have been extended with the aid of the many remaining cues to poses and costumes, by Miss M. Louise Baker, expert on archeological art, who is able to visualize the complete scene in its original state.

In the bulletin of the university museum, Miss Baker directs attention to some of the amusing points of the work.

"Two of the trio," she writes, indicating a little group in the picture, "forgetful of the occasion, are entirely absorbed in their own argument, while the third, indignantly bracing himself upon outspread feet, gives a vicious bump with his hip (breaking his own obsequious pose for the moment), demanding attention.

"The seated figures are very human in manner and detail. One dignitary gently pokes the friend in front to ask what it is all about. The friend, willing to accommodate, vainly tries to peer over the intervening mass of feathers (the headdress of the man in front of him), bracing himself on his foot, in his effort to see—a taut neckline giving the cue."

From Miss Baker's description it seems that even the old Mayan Indians were acquainted with our own present-day problem of the woman who wears a large hat in the moving picture theater.

"The last man, and the only one whose face was not completely destroyed, has lost interest after a fruitless attempt to hear and his hand has probably dropped from cupping his ear to toying with his ear-plugs," Miss Baker writes.

The priceless lintel was chiseled from buff-colored limestone. It is two feet high and a little over four feet long. Modern knowledge of the ancient Mayan civilization profits not only from the demonstrated mannerisms of the characters, but from the clothing and the objects held by the Indians.

Replica of Nunnery.

"The original must be seen to be appreciated," Miss Baker writes. It shows in perfect detail even the fingernails on the hand of the chief.

According to Dr. Mason, the clothing is "Greek in quality." The clothes, also, are praised by Miss Baker.

American interest in the ancient Mayan civilization was greatly stimulated in 1933 and 1934, when millions of persons who visited A Century of Progress exposition in Chicago inspected exhibits prepared by Tulane university. Reproduced in exact detail, and beautiful in its brilliant coloring, was an ancient nunnery, remains of which were discovered at Uxmal, in the Mayan country.

© Western Newspaper Union.

The Nunnery Quadrangle at Uxmal. This Was Reproduced at the Chicago Fair.

HELGOLAND

Fishermen of Helgoland.

Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

"HELGOLAND is falling down" may be sung sadly to the tune of "London Bridge" if there is truth in reports that Germany is fortifying this pinhead stronghold in the North sea. Firing great guns menaces the island more than any enemy, for at every big shot sections of its vertical sandstone sides plunk into the surrounding sea.

Like a triangular block of raspberry ice on a vast blue-green platter, Helgoland is melting away into the North sea. The island is literally crumbling away around its population of 2,500 — mainly pilots, fisherfolk, or boarding-house-keepers. Here the Helgolanders try to hold together their island, their flourishing summer resort business, and their traditions on a small bare rock upon which would fit the Federal Triangle buildings along Pennsylvania avenue in Washington, without too much margin.

This sea-bitten morsel is the remotest of the Frisian islands, which water has gouged out from the northern coastline of Europe, and, within historic times, scrubbed down until reduced in size, or in some cases washed away altogether.

Broad submarine rocky ledges in the shoal area around Helgoland are submerged souvenirs of its former extent, estimated to be five times its present size, which is about one-fifth of a square mile. The island lost ground to the extent of about 250 square yards a year until 1892. Then the wave-worn western side was ringed around with a girdle of granite brought from the Danish island of Bornholm. Even thus protected, it is doomed within eight centuries, say the pessimists. More generous geologists give it about forty to go, but go they all agree it will.

After ages of erosion, what remains of Helgoland? A slice-of-pie-shaped wedge of red sandstone streaked with layers of chalk, swept by chill salt winds and incessantly gnawed by the North sea. Its dimensions are notable for their smallness, except the height; the sides rise sheer and dripping from the water to a flat top of 200 feet above sea level. Its importance lies in its position; as Germany's "Eye of the Empire", it watches over the equidistant mouths of the Weser, Jade, Elbe, and Eider rivers, commanding the harbors of Hamburg, Bremen, and Cuxhaven from a vantage point 28 miles from the nearest point of mainland.

Shattered by the World War.

Yet Helgoland, with history practically in its hands, had been reported by astute observers as reluctant to make history and more concerned about making a living. Its experience during the World war proved that history is easy to make but hard to survive. Its scant pasture land was confiscated to build forts. Its rocky cliffs, of which there was already precious little, crumbled off and plunged seaward during artillery fire. The entire population was forced into four years of exile to make room for the military in 1914. When the living remnants returned in 1918, their peace was shattered by three years of blasting down fortifications in accordance with the Versailles treaty, and the further trimming down of the island's slim sides. In 1922 and in desperation, Helgoland petitioned the League of Nations for neutrality. Scheduled for a perpetual bout with the sea, it finds any other country's fight just one too many.

Helgoland has nevertheless had greatness thrust upon it, in spite of being born anything but great as far as boundaries are concerned. It is commonly believed to have as much strategic importance per cubic foot as any other comparable chunk of Europe. It bears the reputation of a Gibraltar on a fraction of Gibraltar's space. In size it bears only a molehill-to-the-mountain relation to the Mediterranean Rock, having about one-tenth the the latter's extent and one-seventh its height above water. Helgoland's three corners can all be visited in an hour's stroll.

From the open sea, it looms like a lone iceberg of dark red—mysterious bulk menacing beneath the naked triangular top, suggested by solitary stone fingers rising like sentinel outposts from the sea. There is no noise except the surf and the sea slapping in half - submerged caves of the red cliffs. There are no trees, no water except artesian wells.

Green, Red and White

Within its diminishing boundaries, it has three parts: the massive rock table of Oberland with its cornered tuft of town, the shoreline shelf projecting below like cap's visor with a second edition of town called Unterland, and the wisp of sandy Dune in tow a mile to the east. A thin green felt of pasturage across the island's top completes the color triad which inspired the flag:

"Green the land, red the rock,
white the sand:
These colors make the flag of
Helgoland."

Like a toy village on the corner of a table, at Oberland's southeast point huddle blocklike houses, square and solid against the recurrent 80-mile gales. The flat skyline is broken by nothing more windcatching than the pretentious little German postoffice of glazed brick and the spire added during Queen Victoria's reign to the Church of St. Nicholas, already centuries old. Around the cliff's edge stands a row of boarding houses and hotels, offering to resorters the first sniff of salt breeze before it reaches natives on back streets. Through the town runs Kartoffalallee, or Potato Lane, bisecting the island through garden patches of potatoes and cabbage, through pasture spots where graze a few sheep and goats, past the red and white cone of the lighthouse, to the little cafe on the northern point where the "Fog Cow" bellows warning every two minutes when the mists swirl low. The whole top is damp in rough weather when clouds of surf fly over it.

The lower town, lacking horses and vehicles of any sort, is not without its own method of rapid transit — namely, sliding down banisters. Men of Helgoland have been known to scorn the elevator operating between the clifftop and the "down-town" level of the two-story town; they mount the iron hand railing of the stairway along the cliff's face and nonchalantly skid down to the foot of the precipice. Here in the shelter of the cliff, houses and shops cluster about a knot of six-foot-wide concrete streets, and a pier receives visitors brought by motorized fishing boats from Hamburg steamers.

Sun tan is the money crop of Helgoland. This is raised chiefly at the expense of summer visitors basking on the frail half-moon of barren beach of the Dune or Sand island, apparently melting into the North sea a mile southeast of the main rock. Here has been located a tiny graveyard for nameless bodies washed up by the waves. Amputated by a seaquake in 1720, the Dune was previously joined to its rocky home base by the tall White Cliff of fine quality chalk, now visible as a reef at low tide. Chalk export, which occasionally attracted as many as a hundred ships to Helgoland's harbor at one time, grew so great that it killed the chalk that laid the golden egg; the White Cliff caved in during a storm and tumbled into the sea.

Its People Are Frisians.

Inhabited by Frisians, a rugged race whom the Romans were proud to call allies, Helgoland remained independent of Europe's great kingdoms for centuries, resisting invasions even of Christianity. In fact, its lasting consecration to old Norse god, especially Forseti, god of justice, may mean that its name developed from Helige-Land, of Holy Land. Natives, however, call their island simply det Lunn, The Land. Although German is the official language, they speak a dialect of Frisian, which resembles ancient Anglo-Saxon.

During the Middle Ages it was theoretically controlled from the duchy of Schleswig, the duke even pawning it to a Hamburg merchant, but actually it was the irrespressible stronghold of those medieval maritime racketeers — pirates, brigands, and beachcombers. The Danes once got possession by threatening to hang all the men, whom they had kidnaped while out fishing, so that the women overthrew the small Schleswig garrison and proclaimed Danish allegiance. Thereafter, when improved water transportation gave it greater convenience, it has been constantly in demand and in use as a stepping stone for larger countries.

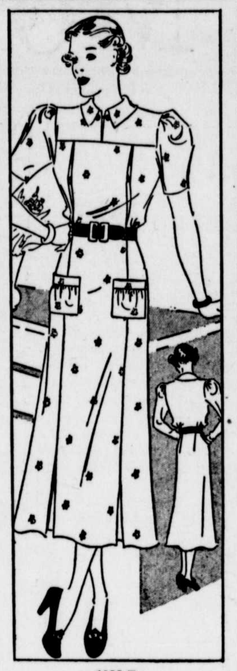
It was a valuable smuggling headquarters during the blockades of the Napoleonic wars. Then England sent seven ships to capture it, in September, 1807, like "plucking an apple hanging over a neighbor's wall"; Denmark finally relinquished claims to it after seven years.

Helgoland was traded in 1890 to Germany for Zanzibar, 3,000 times as large, and the exchange was compared to an entire suit of clothes swapped for a trouser button. But the trouser button demonstrated that it could serve a purpose of vital importance when it became one of the world's strongest fortresses during the World war. Not far away, on a misty morning in August, 1914, occurred the first serious naval clash of the war, when British victory littered the glassy smooth sea with wreckage.

Helgolanders acquired the habit of considering themselves fishermen at the start of the Fifteenth century, when a strange migration of herring brought them great harvests of fish for 200 years. An equally strange emigration of their source of income left them catching only a few lobsters.

Since the island's popularity as a summer resort began in 1828 with only a hundred resorters, the Helgolanders derive their year's income from renting themselves out as pilots and their homes as boarding houses for the season of two weeks.

Frock With New Features



1928-B

So you like this number! Lovely, isn't it? Boasting the very newest in sleeves and smart styling, it is just the frock to occupy the leading role in your wardrobe for weeks and months ahead. What's more, you can make it quickly and inexpensively.

Note the choice of short or long sleeves, the paneled front, the clever collar, the lovely pockets—there is a perfect symmetry of design and a simplicity of line which makes it a favorite from the bell! Fashioned of a printed silk, crepe, or cotton, you can achieve enviable distinction in this smart model, a frock suitable for almost any daytime occasion and the sort to give you the ultimate in satisfaction.

Make it yourself, sending today for Barbara Bell Pattern No. 1928-B designed for sizes 14, 16, 18, 20, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42. Size 16 requires just 4 yards of 39-inch fabric, with short sleeves. Send 15 cents in coins.

Send for the Fall Pattern Book containing 100 Barbara Bell well-planned, easy-to-make patterns. Exclusive fashions for children, young women and matrons. Send 15 cents for your copy.

Send your order to The Sewing Circle Pattern Dept., 247 W. Forty-third St., New York, N.Y.

© Bell Syndicate.—WNU Service.

Burroughs Never Let Go of Youth

I have never had much money, but I have always enjoyed the things at hand. I have become so familiar with the face of Nature that it is as the face of an old friend and I love it in every mood. My years have been full of joy, but they have been years of simplicity and economy. I have never sated myself with anything and the bloom is still on my life.

I have kept young because I have kept free from worldly and selfish ambitions . . . There is nothing like love to keep you young—love for your fellow man and for Nature—and love is Nature's final law.—John Burroughs.

Household Questions

To prevent the juice in fruit tart boiling over, mix a little cornstarch with the sugar before adding it to tart filling.

• • •

Green bananas may be ripened by placing in a paper bag and keeping in a dark closet for a few days.

• • •

When having oak floors laid, have flooring delivered at the house a number of days before work is to be done. Open bales so that dry air can get to the strips to reduce any moisture content.

• • •

Aluminum pots and pans that have become discolored may be brightened by rubbing with a cloth moistened with lemon juice.

• • •

To remove water spots from silk, dampen evenly and press material while still damp. This may be done by sponging carefully with clear water or by shaking it in the steam from a briskly boiling tea kettle until it is thoroughly damp.

• • •

When making cole slaw, or cabbage salad, add half a small onion, shredded fine and mix with the cabbage. It improves the flavor.

• • •

Leftover juices if boiled and used instead of water to dissolve gelatin will give gelatin a richer flavor.

• • •

Do not uncover a steamed pudding for the first half hour of cooking.

© Associated Newspapers.—WNU Service.

Foreign Words and Phrases

Apres nous le deluge. (F.) After us the deluge (attributed to Madame de Pompadour, in reference to signs of an approaching revolution).

Bordereaux. (F.) A marginal note; a memorandum

Chef-d'oeuvre. (F.) A masterpiece.

De nihilo nihil fit. (L.) Nothing comes from nothing.

Mens sana in corpore sano. (L.) A sound mind in a sound body.

Ippissima verba (L.) The very words.

In hoc signo vinces. (L.) By this sign thou wilt conquer. (Motto of Constantine.)

Rus in urbe. (L.) Country in city.

Ne plus ultra. (L.) Nothing beyond; the utmost; perfection.

En deshabille.(F.) In undress.

Wie Gewonnen, so zerronnen. (Ger.) As won, so flown; "light come, light go."

Philosophy of Laughter

Always laugh when you can; it is a cheap medicine. Merriment is a philosophy not well understood. It is the sunny side of existence.—Byron.

NEW PRESSURE LAMP PROTECTS EYESIGHT

Provides 300 Candlepower "Live" Natural Brilliance For Only 1c a Night

A new mantle lamp that protects your sight with 300 candlepower "live," air-pressure light is bringing "eye-health" to thousands of homes, especially in rural communities. This lamp gives 5 times more light than any mantle lamp which has no provision for air pressure. Special laboratory tests prove its brilliance is nearest like natural daylight . . . kind to eyes!

W. C. COLEMAN

W. C. Coleman, pioneer inventor of gas-pressure appliances, has spent 36 years perfecting this lamp. It makes its own gas . . . burns kerosene or gasoline. It operates for only 1c a night! It is clean, safe, and is an ornament in any home.

Eyestrain is caused by poor and insufficient light, and often results in serious damage to the eyes. Now, nobody need take chances with their precious sight. This new Coleman Lamp is so inexpensive that no one can afford to be without it. It provides plenty of light for every home need . . . for reading, sewing, studying, playing.

Readers of this paper can get full details of this remarkable lamp, including illustrations of the many beautiful models, by simply sending a postcard to W. C. Coleman, Dept. WU-171, Wichita, Kansas.

SYLVIA CRACKS THE WHIP!

OF COURSE, children should never drink coffee. And many grown-ups, too, find that the caffein in coffee disagrees with them. If you are bothered by headaches or indigestion or can't sleep soundly...try Postum for 30 days. Postum contains no caffein. It is simply whole wheat and bran, roasted and slightly sweetened. Try Postum. You may miss coffee at first, but after 30 days you'll love Postum for its own rich, satisfying flavor. It is easy to make, delicious, economical, and may prove a real help. A product of General Foods.

FREE—Let us send you your first week's supply of Postum *free!* Simply mail coupon. © 1936, G. F. CORP.

GENERAL FOODS, Battle Creek, Mich. WBA 9-12-36
Send me, without obligation, a week's supply of Postum.

Name _____
Street _____
City _____ State _____

Fill in completely, print name and address.
If you live in Canada, address: General Foods, Ltd., Cobourg, Ont. (Offer expires July 1, 1937.)

THE BEST FEATURES IN AMERICA
BY WORLD FAMOUS AUTHORS AND ARTISTS
REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS TO YOUR HOME NEWSPAPER