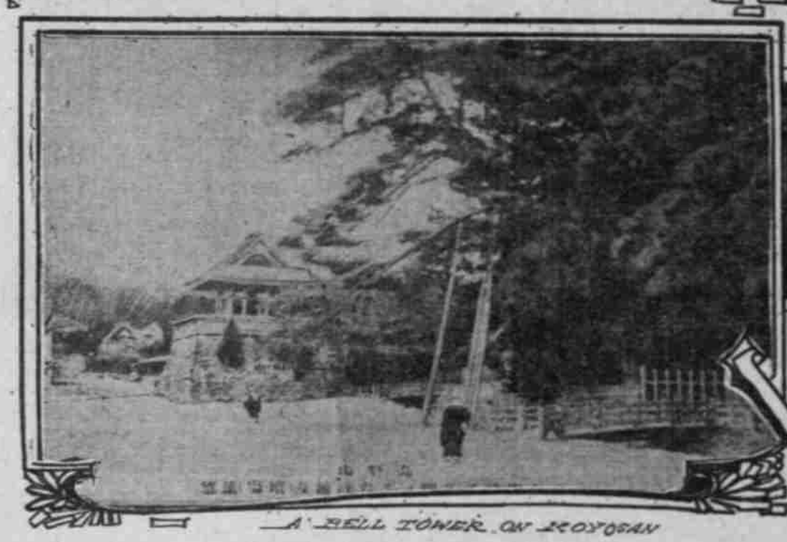
AT THE BUDDHIST MONASTERY OF KOYOSAN.

IN THE VERY HEART OF RELIGIOUS JAPAN WHERE MARKED HOSPITALITY IS SHOWN AMERICANS.

IN THE CEMETERY

A PART OF THE ASSISTANT ABBOT'S RESIDENCE AT KOYOSAN



A BELL TOWER ON KOYOSAN

ONE OF THE TEMPLE TREASURES.

BY ANNIE LAURA MILLER.

THE strangest experience we had in Japan and the one we looked back to with the keenest pleasure was a visit to the ancient Buddhist monastery of Koyasan, where the assistant abbot, our host, gave us meals of Japanese vegetable food, lodged us for the night in silken beds, and the following morning took us to matins and through an enormous cemetery to the tomb of Kobo Daishi, the "great high priest who extended religion," most famous of all Japanese saints.

Koyaguchi, a dingy town on a little branch railroad, was soon left behind and we settled ourselves in our rickshas, smiling back at the landscape that smiled pleasantly at us. It was the middle of a clear October afternoon, bare mountains with long shadows in their hollows, hemmed in the narrow valley through which the road ran winding among fields of ripe, yellow rice. Farmers and their wives paused a moment to look at us, then turned again to their harvesting. We crossed a broad river, rattled over a rocky road through a village, and came to terraced hills with thatched cottages and gardens with occasional persimmon trees full of golden fruit. At a wayside tea-house we had tea, paid our rickshas men and engaged kagos (a kind of Japanese palanquin) for the remainder of the way was steep and we had seven miles still to go, and uphill. Mountain miles, as everyone knows, are the longest miles in the world.

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And the endless and interesting array of people we met in that seven miles! A veritable circus parade of them. Down the road came a man with a load of palmetto bark on his back, then there came another carrying rope made of the bark to the market in the valley, then six men, stepping carefully, bearing six freshly-sawn boards apiece, neatly balanced on poles making a queer contrast to the vision that rose in our memories of Oregon lumber wagons drawn by four stout horses. A group of middle-class people followed, the men riding in kagos, the women walking, with skirts tucked up and red petticoats showing, and one round-faced little boy clinging to his mother's hand.

Then came horses with loads of charcoal wrapped in straw, a man with a double load of bright, new wooden spoons for serving rice, another carrying small blocks of wood for shoes. Going up our way, but more slowly, were 18 men carrying great pieces of stone swung by ropes and poles from their shoulders and destined for monuments in the great cemetery to which they were being borne with much perspiration and a curious grunting chant. And then—ah! There is some truth, after all, in those songs the baritones sing, even if the monks be Buddhist monks. Then came a man carrying buckets of sake, to warm the cockles of the priests' hearts in the chill Autumn days.

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For a mile or two we had the company of two schoolboys aged 10, who were trudging homeward with their books tied in cloths swung on their backs. They told us via Mr. Yamamoto, our student interpreter, that they walked four miles to school every day; history was their favorite study, not new history like the Russo-Japanese war, but the history of the old days, and both of them wanted to be Hideyoshi, Japan's greatest general, but one of them would be Iyeyasu, Japan's greatest statesman. Of course, they knew who they wanted to be. So did I when I was 10, and I'm not sure yet that I wouldn't have liked it, although it is a most unmaidenly wish. No less a personage than Columbus. How he must have felt, discovering the land he had believed in and dreamed of so long! How he must have nearly jumped overboard, although the history books have pictures of that warm-blooded man of the South discovering America with all the gravity of a wooden Indian. The postman on his way up to the monastery with a little handbag of letters joined us and told us how he had cut his bandaged hand on a bamboo sliver, and how every day he went to the monastery with mail, even in Winter, when the snow was deep. So we jogged along together, the bearer of the Imperial mail suiting his steps to ours for the sake of companionship.

As we sat a moment to rest where a stone statue of Jizo—the patron saint of travelers—stood near a little bridge spanning a stream a pilgrim, homeward bound, came toward us. Very tired he looked as he rubbed his hands and bowed, murmuring a prayer to the stone god. And I couldn't help thinking that the prayer helped him on his way, even if it was to a deaf image. Surely it must give a happy sense of security to believe that one special god cares especially when one is weary and footsore.

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We had come to Koyasan, the mountain itself, now, and we followed the path that went steeply up through the gray trunks of the trees until the big forest grew dark and we felt like the beginning of an old novel, belated travelers in the black night. Then the round moon came up and we found ourselves entering a gateway, guarded by a huge bronze image of Jizo. Then there fell out of the kagos three human stovepipes—hollow—for it was long past dinner-time, and full of joints—for the crumpled position one must take in a kago reacquaints one with all the old joints and introduces some new ones.

A black-gowned figure, very broad and very tall, made taller still by high wooden shoes, strode forward in the moonlight, and a deep voice said: "I am priest from Shoje-Shinin"; then, as he bowed low in greeting, "You are very welcome to me." It was the assistant abbot, to whom we had brought a letter of introduction, who gave us the kindly greeting. He took us to his residence to spend the night. The village street was full of lighted shops, where men and boys were still at work, but never a woman did we see, for women are not allowed to live on Kayasan, "whence," says the guide book—forgetting its usual brevity and venturing a man-made pun on this subject—"whence possibly the exceptional silence pervading the place." As we left the street of shops a boy came running with a paper lantern glowing golden to light us on our way and soon we were seated on the steps of the priest's house with the servants unlacing our walking boots.

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Our apartments were as fine as a Japanese house affords, three rooms, out of a suite of 18, opening on a corridor, and a bathroom, where a steaming-hot bath was waiting in a tub as big as a swimming tank. Our sitting-room had a bronze ornament, a kakemono, a bit of writing by a great Baron of Tokio, foreign chairs, a table and a lamp. Here, while a kneeling servant served us with tea and barley sugar sweetmeats, we sat and made the acquaintance of our host.

He was a man of 38 with a broad kindly face and dreamy eyes, a man of education who had studied three years in a Tokyo university, three years in Kyoto for the priesthood, and had been two years at the monastery, where he taught in the middle school while he still studied in the higher. He was studying Esperanto and hoped to translate a book of Buddha's saying (sayings very like those of Christ) and in April of the next year he was going to America to teach Buddhism.

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In the midst of our conversation dinner was brought in: Mushroom soup, cold sweet potato, soup with wheat paste in it, rice, tea and many other dishes that I cannot remember; but everything was the best known to Japanese vegetable diet; only vegetables because animal food is forbidden. None is allowed any place on the sacred mountain, and of live animals only dogs may live there. Bedtime followed fast on the heels of dinner and such beds as we had, made of silken quilts heaped together with a top cover of pongee silk having a decoration of gorgeous dragons and a great black velvet band to tuck under our chins. In the next room we could hear the voices of the priest and Mr. Yamamoto discussing religion, the priest's voice low and steady, and Mr. Yamamoto's eager and full of excitement, for this was our student interpreter's first trip away from Kyoto; all the world was new to him, and exclamations came popping up like bubbles in champagne. Champagne, I said, for the figure comes naturally after years of residence in the Orient where prohibition is unknown, but I will not tactlessly insist on the figure; Shasta water (infinitely preferable as a drink) may be substituted for it although champagne does seem an apter expression of effervescing spirits. And outside in the moonlight beyond "the monastery wall a little stream sang softly, lulling us to sleep."

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In the early morning our host conducted us to Matins by galleries that wound in and out, taking us nearer to the voices of the chanting priests until we came to a long corridor with bronze lanterns and a shrine where the black god of wisdom sat looking down on an offering of fresh white radish. In the dark room beyond, the abbot, dressed in an orange gown, sat on a chair between two lighted bronze lanterns while behind him knelt ten priests, all chanting as he chanted and rang a bell. The room was lined from floor to ceiling with little black tablets bearing the names of many dead men and the chant was for the peace of their souls in paradise.

Perhaps, as they ask for the prayers before they die, they have some fear of their reception in the land of bliss; at any rate, the dead in the religions of the Orient have much need of the prayers of the living. Then we went through the great rambling house seeing its art treasures: paintings, pottery and bronze, but finding most interesting of all the room where the monks sit in Winter reclining their scriptures around a great heated pillar with a shrine on one side. What a picture they must make, sitting there in a group in their orderly garb poring over the endless scrolls of Buddhistic law.

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It was an impoliteness that we kept to ourselves of course, and may here be expressed because we afterwards paid for our entertainment, but after our vegetable breakfast we found our appetites, like those of the Israelites in the wilderness, yearning for the accustomed fleshpots—for at least as much of a fleshpot as is comprised in a soft-boiled egg. We knew that we couldn't be monks and live our neighbors very much on a diet of mushroom soup and cold sweet potatoes; and then we understood about the sake. No doubt it was a doctor's prescription to keep the cockles of the good monks' hearts from freezing. But we did have coffee for breakfast; there on that far-off Buddhist mountain top, and the priest, who made it himself by pouring hot water on sugar-coated cubes of coffee powder, was as proud of the achievement as a priest may be.

How I want to babble on about the abbot's apartments, with its golden walls, decorated by the best of the old artists, its suite of rooms for the use of the Emperor, its art treasures, its great kitchen of shining brown wood, with an open space for cooking; and the fine temple building, too, among the best preserved in the empire; but things like these may be seen in other places, while the great cemetery is unlike anything else in Japan.

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All of the graves and monuments lie under magnificent evergreens along a stone-paved road that stretches for more than a mile through the ancient forest to the grave of Kobo Daishi, the teacher who founded the monastery in 816. There are thousands and thousands of gray tombstones and monuments, for to lie near the dead saint or even to have a stone there bearing one's name assures the believer that he will be reborn into the "Pure Land of Perfect Bliss." Poor trusting souls! May they have their wish, for the Buddhist hell is as dreadful as the one the pious Puritans loved to paint.

The biggest monument of all is to Iyeyasu, the great law-giver; there is one to Hideyoshi and one that Hideyoshi himself erected to his soldier dead, faithful men who had followed him in many wars, and to the enemies whom he had killed; there are tombs of many of the do-nothing Emperors who spent their days in the Kyoto palace; there is a monument to the mother of the present Emperor; there is one to the fish that die every year in the northern island, the grave of a famous warrior priest who died in 1173, the monuments of a family of robbers who are now great barons in Tokio (so do the times and customs change) and a tablet to the family of great actors, the most famous of whom, Danjuro, died only a few years ago. The newest monument in the cemetery is in honor of soldiers who fell in the war with China, and an open space is reserved among the trees for a monument to those who fell in the Russo-Japanese War—for all who fell, the two sons of General Nogi and the son of our washerwoman, aristocrats and commoners alike. The great, silent forest, the soft gray of the stones, the peace of it all, made death seem only a natural rest.

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There is a dark hall in the cemetery full of countless lamps with 100 alight. One big one that never goes out is called the "Poor Woman's Single Lamp." Once a widow, it is said, cut her long hair and sold it that she might present a lamp to the temple, and her gift, far more pleasing to the gods than the 20,000 lamps presented by a rich man, kept brightly burning when a strong wind blew the others out. Behind this hall was the octagonal bone tower filled with the Adam's apples of believers who could not afford monuments. Why Adam's apples, we wondered. It was not to be understood in an Oriental nation, although one could easily understand it in a Christian one. What more natural than for me to offer up that part of our anatomy, since it was acquired by our sinful parent Adam when he choked on the apple core? But the Japanese did not acquire it in the same way, for apple trees have only of recent years been imported into Japan.

As we came to the tomb of Kobo Daishi with bronze altar pieces before it under the trees, the assistant abbot bowed, rubbing his beads and murmuring a prayer; and we thought then that we understood his study of Esperanto, his wish to go to America, he who begged to become, like the saint he worshiped, a "Great High Priest, Extending Religion."

ORIGINAL AMERICAN IS DISCOVERED BY EXPLORERS

PEABODY MUSEUM PARTY MAKES VALUABLE FIND OF BAD-LANDS MUMMY

MUMMIFIED civilization is an ambiguous term. And used as we are to hearing it adduced to apply to Great Britain's policy in India, to the leading American universities and to other vital problems of the day, it scarcely occurs to us that the phrase may be a literal description, as well. Few of us suspect that such a curiosity exists within the borders of our own country, that it is, in fact, a National park. This may be partly accounted for by the fact that there are only two men in this country who possess detailed knowledge of the region, gleaned by swinging from dizzy ledges and grubbing in dusty caves. One of the pair, Dr. J. Walter Fewkes, is still in the canyons digging for the United States Government; the other is A. V. Kidder, of Cambridge, who only recently returned to his home after two years of exploration up the forgotten gulches of the Southwest, where he was sent in the interests of the Peabody Museum of Harvard University.

The story of these two years, as told the interviewer, more especially suggests excavations in Yucatan or Peru than what we are accustomed to regard as our comparatively charted, reclaimed and civilized Southwestern Colorado—a recital of rummagings in primitive fastnesses, of minute remains of implements of peace and warfare, the mute pathos and tragedy of a peace-loving people, fighting to its last trenches and finally exterminated.

The relics on these ledges, said Mr. Kidder, by way of introduction, are so complete as to make it possible to reconstruct the entire civilization. The same conditions which have kept the region a locked treasure chest, have kept the treasure whole, remoteness, inaccessibility, superstitious dread, climate, and one thing more (by far the most important) a general ignorance that such a place exists, which, I find, prevails in the here and now, the Boston of 1908, as generally as it ever did.

To begin at the beginning, then: The Mesa Verde, which is now a National park (though not yet laid out to gravel paths) is a "green table land," in the southwestern corner of Colorado, which takes up an area of 30 miles long and 12 miles wide. Anything more deserving of the somewhat elastic term of tableland it would be difficult to locate. All alone, high, wide and rising sheer, you come upon it in the midst of the plain.

"To reach the place you take a three days' railroad ride from Denver. Mancos is the nearest station. From there you take a 25-mile horseback ride through something which, maybe, isn't a desert, but at times it is hard to tell the difference. Finally the citadel looms up ahead. This high, abrupt table-land is cut and slashed in all directions by deep canyons. The stratification of their walls, sandstone, a layer of hard and a layer of soft, is such as to form deep caves high up in the face of the cliffs, any or all of them hard to reach, and many of them quite inaccessible. The whole region, wild and desolate as it now appears, was once so densely peopled that every one of these innumerable caves was a dwelling, every ledge where a human foot could tread was a highway or a homestead, and today practically every one of these holes in the walls contains a ruin; the larger ones with relics enough to compute their age and the type of civilization they represent. It is as if a hunted race had crawled into cracks like ants to escape, and this is, in fact, the history of these settlements.

"It is certainly odd to ride along the rugged bottoms of these canyons (one of those wildernesses which ought to howl, but don't) and look up at these tight little walled-in places, peering down with their narrow loop-holes. Of course they are deserted and have been so for hundreds of years, but it hardly seems so. The 'oldest inhabitant,' as that term is understood among the Ute Indians, cannot remember of having heard of any of his fathers having heard of a time when these caves were inhabited by anything but evil spirits and demons sent on purpose to plague the Ute tribes and sicken their cattle. A good many of these little castles look as if a mason had been called in to patch up the chink in the wall, it is done so tidily; with only a loop-holed opening for archery or light, and no visible means of coming or going. Elsewhere the buildings look like little fortresses trying to crawl into a hole too small for them—'towers and battlements it sees, bosomed high in tufted trees,' for, oddly enough, the crags are by no means without vegetation. 'Towers and battlements' are literal, by the way. There may not be much attempt at flamboyant ornamentation, but it looks as if the architecture of defense were pretty much the same the world over. There is something decidedly mediaeval in the look of many of those caves. There are round watch towers on top of conical hills. Wales can show just such ruins, on a larger scale, perhaps. And some of the embrasures you could swear were imitations of the early bad manner of some Gallic or Celtic castle builder."

Such examples of this type as what is known locally as the Cliff Palace were quoted by Mr. Kidder. This is one of the largest ruins of the Mesa Verde, and, owing to its remote and secret location, was one of the last of the more considerable groups to be discovered. It is reached by a ride through a monotonous pinon forest, apparently boundless. After man had done his share to hide away the relic, nature did hers. The way up Cliff Canyon is barred by almost insurmountable blocks of stone which have fallen from the ledges, fragments often as large as a house or a moderate-sized office building. And when, after the tedious and interminable ride, the explorer finds himself on the brink of the precipice, fronting the walls and towers of the ruin, which are deep within the stone throat of the cavern above, scarified cliffs below, dazzling white sunlight on thick old growths of cedar and pinon, the ruin itself in dim blue shadow, the scene looks like something out of old legend, something which the pronunciation of the wrong word, the lift of the wrong hand, would whisk away in a spurt of blue flame and a smell of sulphur.

"The remarkable state of preservation of objects in these caves," continued Mr. Kidder, "is the combined result of the dry atmosphere and the sheltered nooks where this people built. If the same relics had been out in the open, even in that climate, archaeology would have to be guesswork. But the hot sun, pouring down on the plateau all day, causes a radiation of heat through the canyons which fairly cooks the region, and against this dislocation the short rainy season makes little or no headway. The caves become ovens. Everything is perfectly preserved: the bodies buried in the backs of the caves seem to have been, in most cases, as perfectly mummified by the South Colorado air as by the lost embalming process of the cliff dwellers. The robes, sandals and implements are found in exactly as perfect a state of preservation. In one of the caves I found a desiccated turkey, and in another some corn on the cob. Excavation is comparatively easy; there is no great amount of rubbish to be cleared away, because nothing much can get into the holes. The walls crumble, or timbers give away, letting in the roofs. The most annoying part of the digging is the deep, fine gray dust which rises in clouds at each stroke of the spade."

The articles enumerated by the explorer, flotsam and jetsam of the curious life of the canyons, would make a lengthy catalogue. There could be a chapter on the pottery alone; and, in fact, so rich are the caves in the financial designs of earthenware that the only persons who ever braved the superstitious terrors of the region before the advent of the scientific men were what the Indians call "pot-hunters," who looted the ruins for what they would yield them in the curio markets of the Southwest. The catalogue proposed would, however, have to take into account one important and significant omission—the people who withdrew from the plains to avoid the clash with the neighboring tribes were entirely ignorant of the use of metal. The rocks of the mesas were their forges. The thick cedar beams which support their roofs were laboriously felled with stone axes. The ends of the timbers show this clearly. It is as if they were worn through, rather than cut or hacked through. Hammers, hatchets, knives, arrow-heads, spear points and tools for domestic use were furnished by the flint, jasper or silicious slate of the rugged bottoms.

The axes show characteristics in common with the ordinary Indian tomahawk. Some of them are not unlike those found in the monuments of the Ohio mound-builders. In some instances the hot climate has preserved even the handles, which are fashioned of coarse osiers bent around the groove in the middle of, perhaps, a two-edged ax, and attached with thongs of hide to thick sticks. Bone implements, feather fabric, braided mats, cotton textiles, implements of wood, even the fragments of a flute, help to reconstruct the mode of life in the cliffs. Awls are the most common among the bone implements.

"It can readily be seen from these remains," said Mr. Kidder, "that the cave-dwellers were an agricultural people, avoiding war if such a thing was possible, very much harassed by some savage and marauding tribe, building their houses in spots which, on account of the erosion which has gone on during the past few centuries, cannot, many of them, now be reached in any way. As authentic a guess as can be made places them between 700 and 1000 years back. The present Pueblo Indians may be in some way their descendants. They are culturally rather similar, building stone houses, and making and using pottery of unique designs. The flat and fertile table lands explain how they made their living, by growing corn, herding cattle and raising small fowl, such as turkeys. When the alarm sounded the approach of the marauders, they probably lost most of their cattle, at least that part that could not be driven quickly to shelter. But if there was time to reach their dwellings they might consider themselves safe. These were and are impregnable."

The pottery was mentioned by Mr. Kilder as by far the most complete and representative of the relics recovered. The significance of the designs, the fanciful shapes and ornaments on these bowls and the minuteness with which the history of the tribe can be read as expressed, now in the rude shapes of the vessels, now in the more ornate, were matters into which the excavator could not go into detail. In general, however, the high development of the pottery-making is thought to be explained by the importance of this pot as an implement of daily domestic use. It was the cliff dweller's aqueduct, or, more modestly speaking, his plumbing. The circumstances of his life were such that he must hold himself ready at any moment to withstand a siege. The earthenware turned up thus far by the spades of the explorers divides roughly into plain ware, decorated with indented or incised patterns, and the painted ware, done chiefly in black and white, or red, black and white.

The last, on account of their rarity and the elaborate decoration which must have been an extremely tedious process, are thought to have been used for religious rites. The method of manufacture was one of crude ingenuity. From a plastic of clay and coarse sand strips were kneaded, slightly thicker than a pencil, and rolled in spiral coils to form the base of the pot. The shape rose, coil by coil, widening for the concave of the vessel and narrowing finally to its mouth. They were baked to such a hardness that today many of them cannot be scratched with steel. Though it is impossible to trace in detail the evolution of design from the materials now at hand, some such progress from the crude to the complex certainly took place, and this will be part of the task of the present excavators.

Asked if the undertaking of getting down the ledges involved risk, Mr. Kidder admitted that it did. "We go to work with rope and swings, often with quite a large party of men. In many cases the only way to reach a ruin is to drop off the ledge above and swing in. There was a 'pot-hunter' out there in pre-Southern days who tried this and came to grief. His party was composed of Ute Indians, always a more or less panicky crowd when they are in the Mesa Verde. He had an idea that there would be a valuable collection of pots down in a ruin of considerable size which he had made out from the other side of the canyon. He crossed, and the Utes lowered him to where he could swing in. He was right about the pots, but he found something else which interested him just then considerably more—a mummy. It was the first he had uncovered, and thinking it over, it occurred to him that it ought to bring more than a common pot. They are grisly looking things, but terribly interesting. He decided he'd take it along. So he hitched on the line and gave the signal jerk. It swung aloft and disappeared. The next he heard was a wild howl from the Utes, 'Devil! Devil!' They let the thing go, and it hanged down to the bottom of the canyon, where its head broke off. The Utes fled incontinently, and the pot-hunter sat down in his cave and devoted the next 30 minutes to laughing. Then it occurred to him that it wasn't such a terribly funny joke after all. He tried to catch the line, but the silly thing had swung out beyond his reach. He sat down and tried to convince himself that the Utes would be back. But he knew perfectly well that they wouldn't. His chances of becoming a mummy himself were extremely good. The process would be going on now if, by the merest luck in the world, some cowpunchers hadn't happened along the bottom of the canyon two days later. Then then he was at considerable pains to explain to them just what that was at the base of the cliff, before they came up to it.

"You wonder what became of this race? The uncanny part of rummaging among the caves is their appearance of having just been left. You find bundles of sticks, utensils, and even food, just where they were put down by some hairy cave man who died before the first crusade was preached. You're rubbing shoulders with the past, and too literally stirring up the dust of ages. It is as if they had gone up on the Mesas for a jug of water and would be back presently. They disappeared a few at a time. Water was always hard to get up there, and the general drying up of the Southwest burned them out. Perhaps they perished by twos and threes as thirst drove them down to the water courses. It would be easy to picture some dramatic last stand, some desperate exterminating fight, but more likely they dropped off quietly, an arrow here, a spear there, family by family and lodge by lodge, until some dark night the last handful stole down the plains to search of some friendly tribe with whom to mix their blood."—Boston Transcript.

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