

# Tsamba, Tibet, and Syphilis

**"Journey with Loshay," by George N. Patterson** (*W. W. Norton*, 248 pp. \$3.75), is a report by a Scottish medical missionary on what he saw, smelled, ate, and thought during a perilous mid-winter journey across Tibet to India. Nicol Smith, who reviews it here, is the author of *"The Golden Doorway to Tibet."*

By Nicol Smith

THOSE of us who have traveled in the Tibetan border lands can only marvel at the intrepidity of George N. Patterson. For it takes courage—perhaps the word is foolhardiness—to venture across Tibet in mid-winter. Yet that is what Patterson did, and he gives a remarkable report on his most remarkable expedition in a new book, *"Journey with Loshay."*

A widely traveled, adventurous Scot, Patterson had spent several years as a medical missionary on the eastern borders of Tibet, some forty miles southeast of Batang, before attempting this three-hundred-mile trek to Sadiyah in Northern Assam. This early period of indoctrination, if nothing else, should have assured him that a mid-winter caravan journey southward over a relatively unknown route was the height of foolishness.

As the Khambas, his wild Tibetan porters, are packing the saddle bags for the start of the journey, one knows that the lonely traveler shares the reader's misgivings as to the good sense of his undertaking. Yet it must be done. The time is 1950, the beginning of a very difficult year along the Western China frontier. The Communist advance into Tibet has seriously threatened his medical supplies. A foray into India is needed to replenish them.

Patterson, however, instinctively knew that if anyone could succeed in reaching India overland through

Tibet, he would be that person. He was perfectly contented to travel mile after mile on a diet of tsamba and dried meat, a colorless diet which is the Tibetan national fare. Two months without a bath was no hardship for this intrepid Scot. And as for eggs, he could take them or leave them. When he could get them, a half dozen at a sitting was frequently only a start.

There is no question that being a medical missionary made his journey easier than it would have been for an ordinary traveler. Yet since this was about the most difficult journey I have ever heard described, the difference to be found lay only between the impossible and the nearly impossible.

An example of the advantage of being a medical missionary may be cited on the occasion of his visit to the garrison town of Gartok. Markam Gartok, as it is locally known, is the home of the Government troops in Southeast Tibet. Here he was the guest of Dege Sey, the highest ranking Tibetan official he was to meet on the journey. Before starting for India, Patterson had been advised to carry some syphilis injections with him, as the incidence of syphilis was very high, particularly among Tibetan soldiers. Some authorities put the figure as high as 90 per cent.

Prepared in advance, the Scottish missionary traveled with a more than adequate supply of neoarsphenamine and maphenchlorsine, a Chinese preparation. He mentioned this to Dege Sey upon his arrival in Gartok and shortly afterwards offered to treat the local Tibetans without charge in return for the hospitality which he had immediately received. The offer was accepted. Several hundred Tibetans soon lined up for the injections.

Food was the greatest problem, but that too was quickly surmounted. The grateful Dege Sey's farewell gift in appreciation of

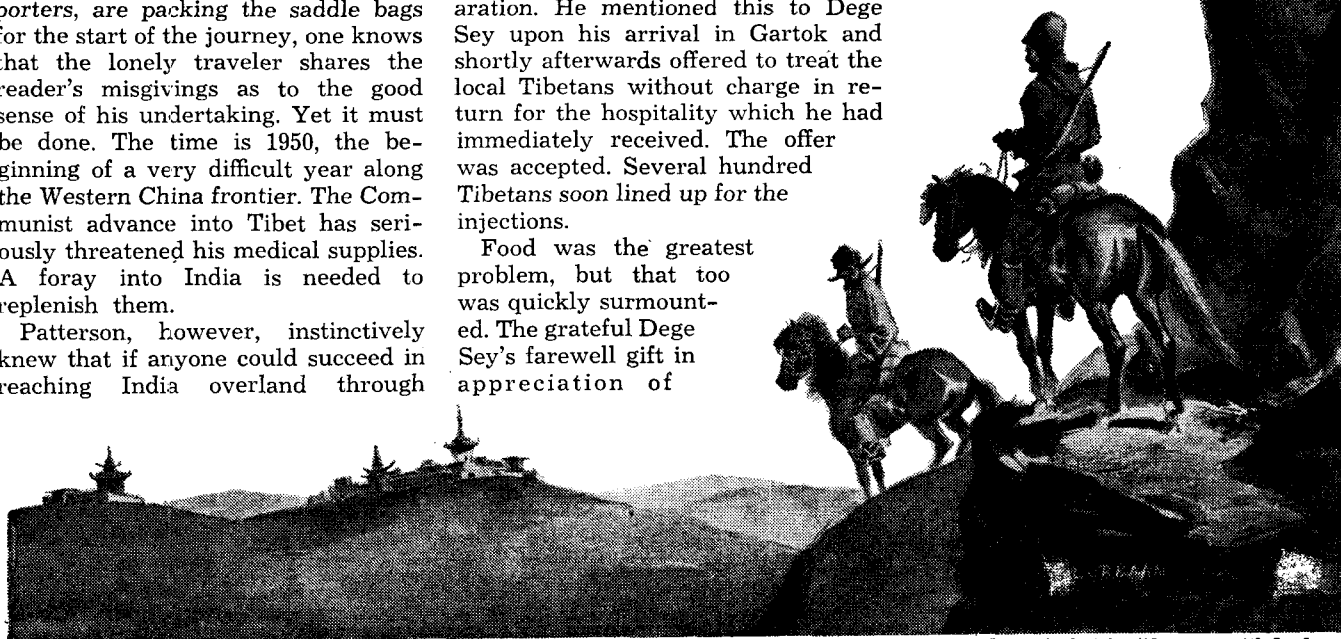
medical services rendered was adequate supplies of flour, butter, tsamba, cheese, dried fruits, walnuts, dried meat, and tea.

But most important, Dege Sey gave Patterson an authorization with his passport to use "ulag" on the trail all the time he was on Tibetan-governed territory. This is a system by which each village or group is taxed in Tibet by being called upon to provide sufficient animals for officials to travel from stage to stage on their journey.

THE Loshay referred to in the book's title was Patterson's personal servant. He was the one Tibetan who would continue for the entire journey right through to Calcutta. His personality develops as the narrative unfolds and emerges after some two hundred pages into an unexpectedly interesting figure. The Tibetan official, Dege Sey, however, was the most colorful individual encountered on the journey.

This book is the story of what Patterson saw, smelled, ate, and thought as he traveled southward through Eastern Tibet along the borders of Yunnan. If you read *"Journey with Loshay"* in bed, no matter what the temperature may be, you will want an extra blanket. It is the story of a journey through a land of yak-dung fires which progresses from cold to colder. It is beautifully described. He successfully reached India because he was physically and mentally prepared to do so.

If you like your adventure tough and vibrant, told in a style that is often superb, here is the book for you.



—From jacket for *"Journey with Loshay."*

## Raven Lake's Few

**"Nunamiut: Among Alaska's Inland Eskimos,"** by Helge Ingstad (W. W. Norton. 303 pp. \$3.95), is a handsomely illustrated report on a remote and anthropologically significant tribe.

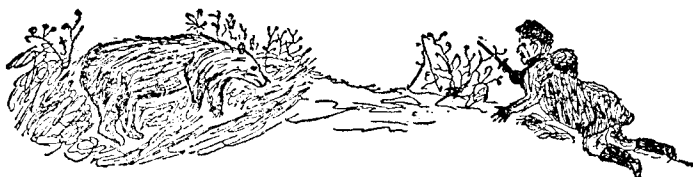
By Raymond Holden

IN THE central portion of that great and little-known range of Alaskan mountains which stretches from the Canadian border to Cape Lisburne, lies Anaktuvuk Pass. The Anaktuvuk River carries the snow waters of the Brooks Range northward, by way of the Colville River, some two hundred miles to the Arctic Ocean. Southward the John River joins the Alatna and the Koyukuk to swell the great Yukon, reaching the Bering Sea hundreds of miles to the southwest, below Norton Sound.

To Anaktuvuk Pass, Helge Ingstad went unannounced, by plane, to join a small colony of almost unknown people who had been reported to live there. What was remarkable about the Nunamiuts was that they were Eskimos, yet they lived apart from other Eskimos, without recourse to that great source of Eskimo economy, the sea. This separation suggested the possibility of a connection with the remote past before the civilization of the people of the Arctic had become diluted and debased by white infiltration.

Mr. Ingstad, a Norwegian anthropologist, discovered, to his great delight, that there was such a connection. The Nunamiuts, less than a hundred in number when he arrived at their Raven Lake camp in the fall of 1949, were an isolated group, physically and culturally different from their seacoast relatives. True, they hunt with rifles, no longer with bow and arrow, but they have retained to a great degree the manners and customs, the beliefs, the simplicity of character, and to a large extent the implements and dress, of their ancestors.

They seem to average an inch or so more in height than the Eskimos of the Beaufort Sea or Kotzebue Sound and the chief item of their economy is the caribou rather than the seal. They are necessarily nomadic, since they must live where the caribou are, and caribou are among the world's most noted wanderers. The life of these primitive hunters is hard, but it is gay and friendly. They seem to be full of laughter and good will. They are skilful with their hands and extremely musical. They



—From *Nunamiut*.

Eskimo drawing of hunter creeping up on grizzly bear.

are not communistic, for they have definite ideas of personal wealth—although the articles of wealth may be nothing more than caribou skins and fat—but they live by mutual aid. Wealth or no wealth, the means of living are shared.

MR. INGSTAD's book, "Nunamiut: Among Alaska's Inland Eskimos," is a fascinating record of a full and revealing year as the only white man in this primitive community. He lived as the Nunamiuts lived, with the exception of the fact that, having no wife with him to gather fuel and prepare his meat and skins, he probably worked harder than most of his male neighbors. His story, although it suffers somewhat from being in between adventure narrative and anthropological report, is a revealing portrait of a type of life which cannot long maintain itself. Already the long and lethal arm of white civilization is beginning to reach toward Anaktuvuk Pass. Hunters must barter skins for cartridges, and over the bridge by which such trade is carried on, even though it be an airplane, pass things which are neither skins nor cartridges—diseases and ideas, wants and envies which can have no place in a simple life.

What Mr. Ingstad tells us of the Nunamiuts he tells with no attempt at dramatic emphasis or exaggeration, yet the drama is there, and it is essentially tragic. Vilhjamur Stefansson's report on the Eskimos of Coronation Gulf was more important from an anthropological and literary point of view, but we are glad to learn, before they vanish into oblivion, of the people of Raven Lake. Not the least of what we learn of them comes from Mr. Ingstad's excellent photographs.



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## Rome in Turkey

**"Travel Into Yesterday,"** by Mary Gough (Doubleday. 305 pp. \$4.50), is an account of the four years the author spent in Cilicia, Southern Turkey, with her archeologist husband. Here it is reviewed by Linda Braidwood, who told about her experiences with her archeologist husband in "Digging Beyond the Tigris."

By Linda Braidwood

TO THE educated American the Turkey of fezzes, harems, sultans, and Armenian massacres is a thing of the past. One thinks now of the Turks of the magnificent battalion in Korea and of the country with the only really functioning two-party political system east of the English channel.

It would be best if we could call on these new neighbors and get acquainted at first hand. But since we can't all call on them personally, the next best thing is to become better acquainted with them and their ways through the eyes of other travelers.

This is where Mary Gough does us a really definite service with her "Travel Into Yesterday," an enjoyable book that in manner of approach lies about midway between Pamela Burr's "My Turkish Adventure" and Willie Snow Ethridge's "Let's Talk Turkey."

Mrs. Gough takes us to Cilicia, a small area in Southern Turkey, where she and her husband—Michael Gough, a classical archeologist from the University of Edinburgh—record and measure Roman monuments that are still observable. Archeology plays an important but relatively small part in the book; it admirably sets the background for the Goughs' activities. Mrs. Gough, though not an archeologist, sounds like an ideal field hand, for she is a draftsman. Her book reveals that she has other qualities essential in archeological work: a sense of humor and a discerning eye.

Each chapter of the book deals with a different site at which the Goughs