

Tibet

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**THE MUSEUM** *New Series*  
Spring-Summer 1972



*COVER: Pile of rocks supporting boards with Chinese inscriptions and poles holding Tibetan prayer flags at the summit of a pass on the Tibetan-Chinese border. Such prayer markers were common throughout Tibet, signifying and protecting sacred places.*

The origin of the Newark Museum's outstanding collection of Tibetan Art dates back to 1910, when a group of items gathered by Dr. Albert L. Shelton in Eastern Tibet was acquired by the Museum. Since that time, further additions by gift and purchase have made the Museum's Tibetan collection among the best and most inclusive in the western world. As well, we have amassed a pictorial archive of over 1,000 photographs illustrating the land and its people—an invaluable record of a way of life that has, perhaps, disappeared forever.

The collection itself has been documented in a recently completed five-volume catalogue. The present publication, in conjunction with the first major exhibition of our Tibetan collection in twenty years, is concerned with the little-known story of the Westerners who have succeeded in penetrating the barriers of Tibet, a land forbidden to outsiders throughout its history.

Mrs. Barbara Lipton, Museum Librarian, has prepared a chronological chart and an annotated bibliography tracing the experiences of these intrepid western explorers, missionaries and adventurers.

Miss Valrae Reynolds, Curator of the Oriental Collections, has selected a group of photographs taken by Dr. Albert L. Shelton and has written a short summary of his life in Eastern Tibet. With informative captions the photographs bring to our readers a visual impact of this strange, inaccessible land and provide a background of information that enhances the objects in our collection.

SAMUEL C. MILLER, *Director*

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# *JOURNEY TO TIBET* ONE MAN'S EXPERIENCE, 1904-1922: Photographs from the Dr. Albert L. Shelton Archive

by VALRAE REYNOLDS

## INTRODUCTION

In the 1912 catalogue of the Newark Museum Tibetan collection, a group of objects gathered by Dr. Albert L. Shelton during his mission work in the Tibetan-Chinese border area, mention is first made of the acquisition of a set of photographs. The publication evaluates the photographs in two sentences which remain valid today, sixty years later:

“The interest and value of the collection of objects from Tibet are greatly increased by the two hundred photographic prints which Dr. Shelton has allowed the Museum to make from his films. These photographs show the people, their homes, their customs, their industries, and give many facts in regard to the geography and geology of the country.”\*

Today this photo archive, expanded to some one thousand negatives and prints, is even more important to the Museum's Tibetan collection and to Tibetan scholars because it portrays a civilization and way of life which is completely closed off to the world and, perhaps, no longer exists. It seems appropriate at this time to publish a small section from the archive, in this case concentrating on the work of the founder of the Newark Museum's Tibetan collection, Dr. Shelton. We are greatly indebted to the kindness of Mrs. Dorris Still and Mrs. Dorothy Thomas for the recent loan of further negatives and prints taken by their father.

It may be noted that the Tibetan archive also includes the photographs of Dr. Roderick A. MacLeod, a colleague of Dr. Shelton who worked in Eastern Tibet from 1917 to 1927; the prints of Rev. M. G. Griebenow, a missionary in Northeastern Tibet from 1922 to ca. 1940; and the negatives, prints and slides taken by C. Suydam Cutting on his trips to South and Central Tibet in 1930, 1935 and 1937. The photographs are housed in the Museum Library and are available for study and reproduction.

\**The Tibet Collection, Edward N. Crane Memorial*. July 1912, p. 40 (Newark Museum, vol. 2, No. 3)

Albert L. Shelton, like most of the rare breed of men and women who ventured into Tibet, seems to have been a person with unusual gifts. Born in Indianapolis in 1875, Shelton decided as a young man on the career of a medical missionary, obtained a medical degree and was sent to China in 1903 by the Foreign Christian Missionary Society, a group connected with the Disciples of Christ. He and his wife arrived in Tachienlu, a town in the mountain wilds of Sikang, Western China, in 1904. Although in political China, Tachienlu was on the edge of Kham, the Eastern Tibetan province then being rent by fierce fighting between Tibetan and Chinese forces. After four years and the birth of two daughters, Dorris in 1904 and Dorothy in 1907, the Sheltons moved their mission hospital west to the more completely Tibetan city of Batang. At that time Batang was just outside political Tibet but well into the Tibetan cultural area of Kham.

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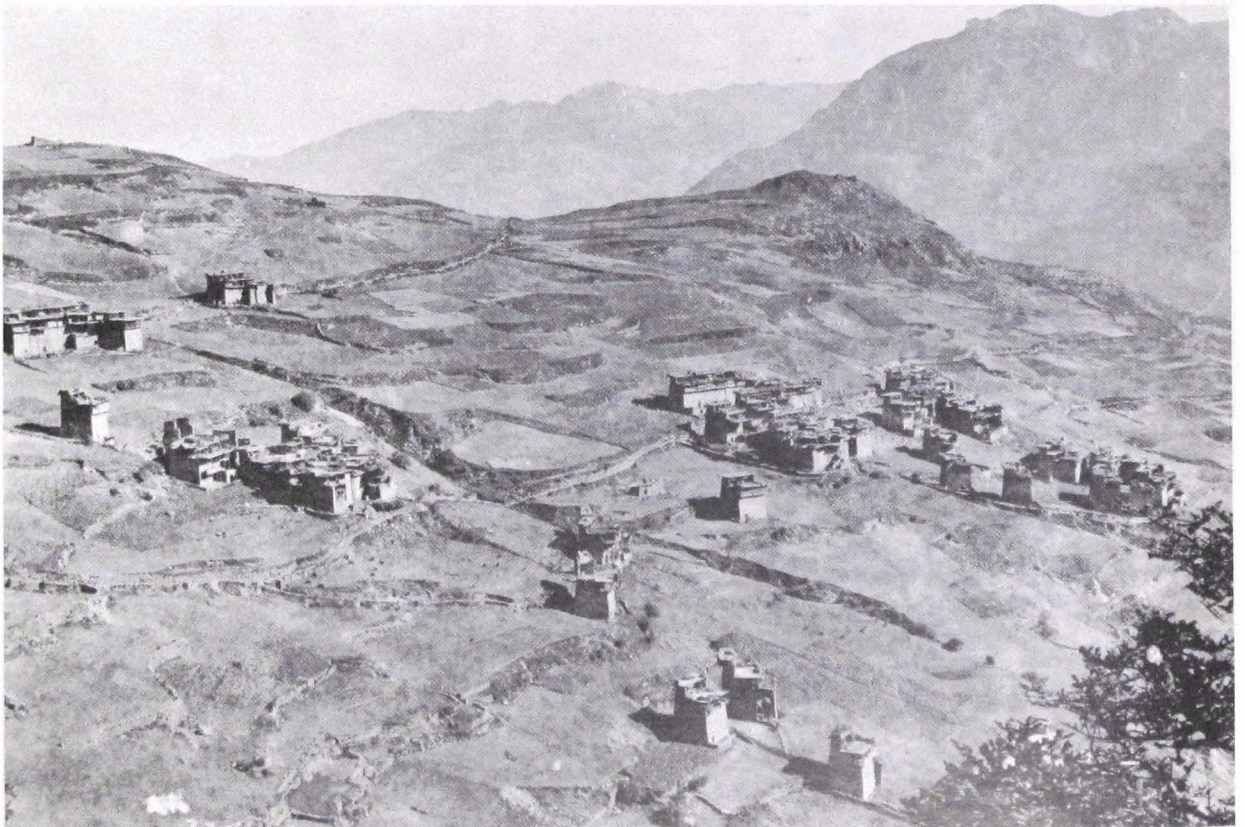
*2. Mrs. Shelton and her daughters cross a river in a yak-skin boat, assisted by armed Tibetans. These light flexible boats were used to float passengers and goods from bank to bank or down stream.*

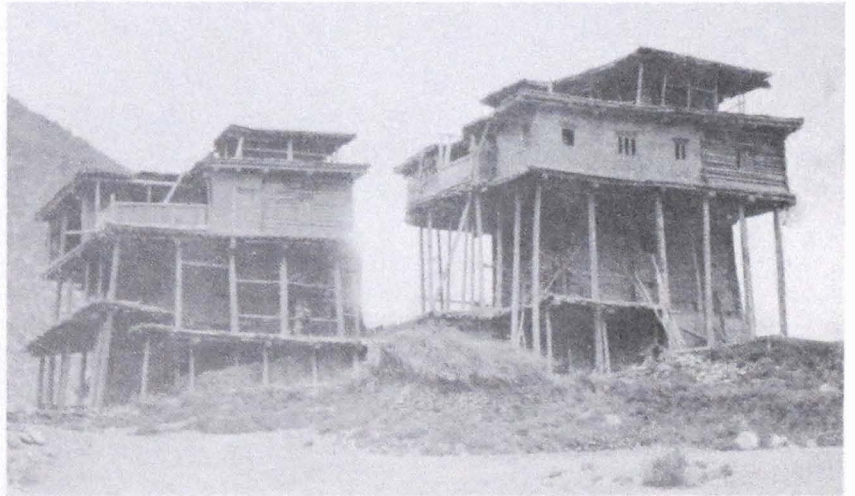
*3. Dzos (a cross between an ox and a yak) and horses swim across a river while people and goods are transported in a wooden boat.*

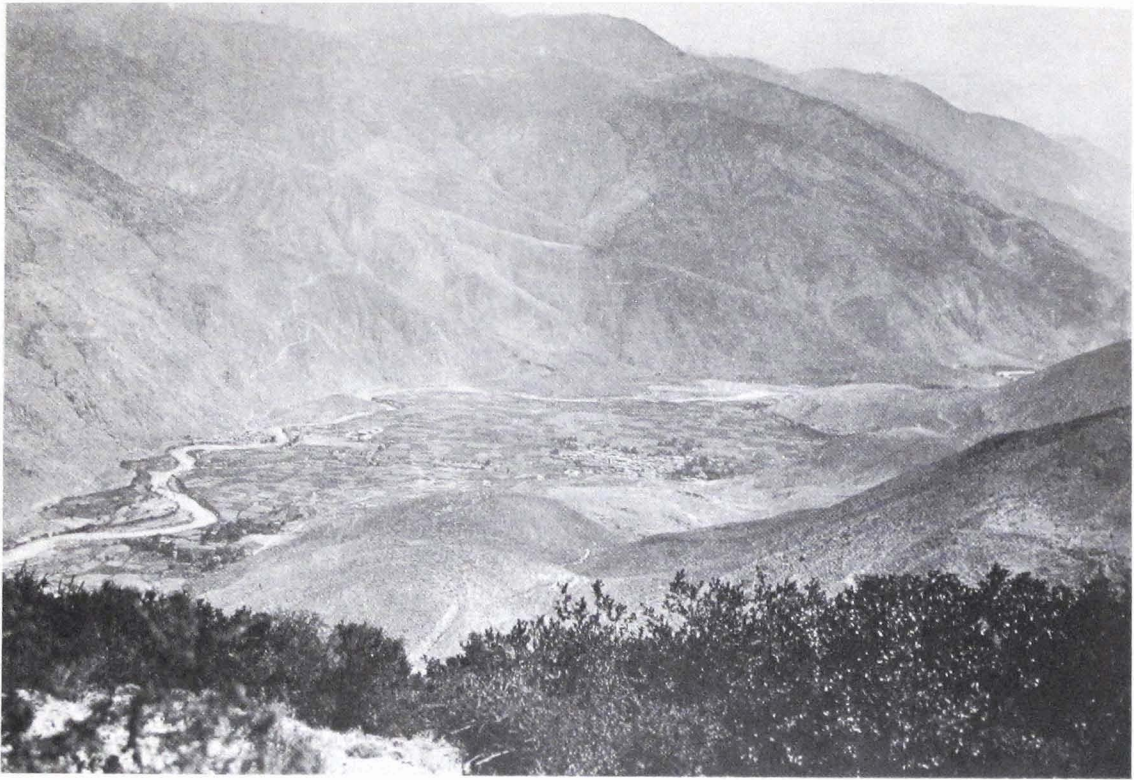


4. View of houses scattered in terraced fields. This dramatic photograph almost gives the impression of an aerial shot, conveying the sweep and rugged quality of the Kham landscape.

5 & 6. Making the best of a precipitous incline, this Kham village has terraced fields and "high-rise" buildings. The houses, built of timber and packed mud, served many purposes: grain storage, shelter for livestock, living quarters, and at the top a prayer room.









7 & 8. The Batang valley with its meandering river and the town of Batang. The steep path on the background mountains is the trail coming from China. "Three days later we reached Batang after having crossed the Dasso pass, the highest on the road, being nearly 17,000 ft. We had gone down, down, and down from the top of this pass, following a narrow road, sometimes built up and sometimes blasted out along the edge of the rolling torrent, which runs down to Batang." (Dr. Shelton's impressions on first traveling to Batang in 1907 from *Pioneering in Tibet*, p. 46.)



9. Traffic over a bridge leading into Batang. This town, lying on the trade route between China's Yantze valley and Central Tibet, had been the scene of fierce fighting between Tibetans and Chinese. At the time of Shelton's stay there, 1908-1921, the area was controlled by the Chinese.

The Sheltons and their daughters lived in Batang until the end of the year 1919, with a break of some three years between 1910 and 1913 when they took a leave to the United States. It was during this leave that the association of Dr. Shelton with the Newark Museum was established. Shelton met Edward N. Crane, a fellow passenger on the Steamship *Mongolia*, en route from Yokohama to America in December 1910. Crane was then involved with the founding of the new Newark Museum Association, and as their friendship developed, it was decided that Shelton's approximately one hundred and fifty Tibetan objects (paintings, images, books and domestic paraphernalia) would be lent to Newark for display. The hope was that they would be eventually purchased by the Museum. In a letter to Crane in March 1911, Shelton explained, "I have no desire to go into this business about the curios in any commercial spirit whatever. My only object in bringing the articles to this country at all was that they might go to some American institution" (underlining is Shelton's). The fledgling institution in Newark was rather timid about purchasing one hundred and fifty items from such an esoteric location as Tibet. When the Shelton items had been put on view in Newark, however, the very exotic nature of the material seems to have made the exhibit a great success: from February to June 1911, 17,724 people visited the display rooms. The matter of purchase was settled, in the end, when Crane suddenly died in the Summer of 1911. His wife and brother, in appreciation of Crane's interest in the collection, purchased it from Shelton and presented the entire lot to the Museum as a gift.

The Museum commissioned Dr. Shelton, upon his return to Batang in the Fall of 1913, to continue to collect Tibetan "curios" with the idea of adding to the Museum's original group. The difficulties of sending freight from Tibet to America are evident in a letter to the Museum from Shelton at this time, outlining the route and expenses:

"I'll give you as near as I can the approximate cost, on 100 lbs. from Batang to New York.

Freight

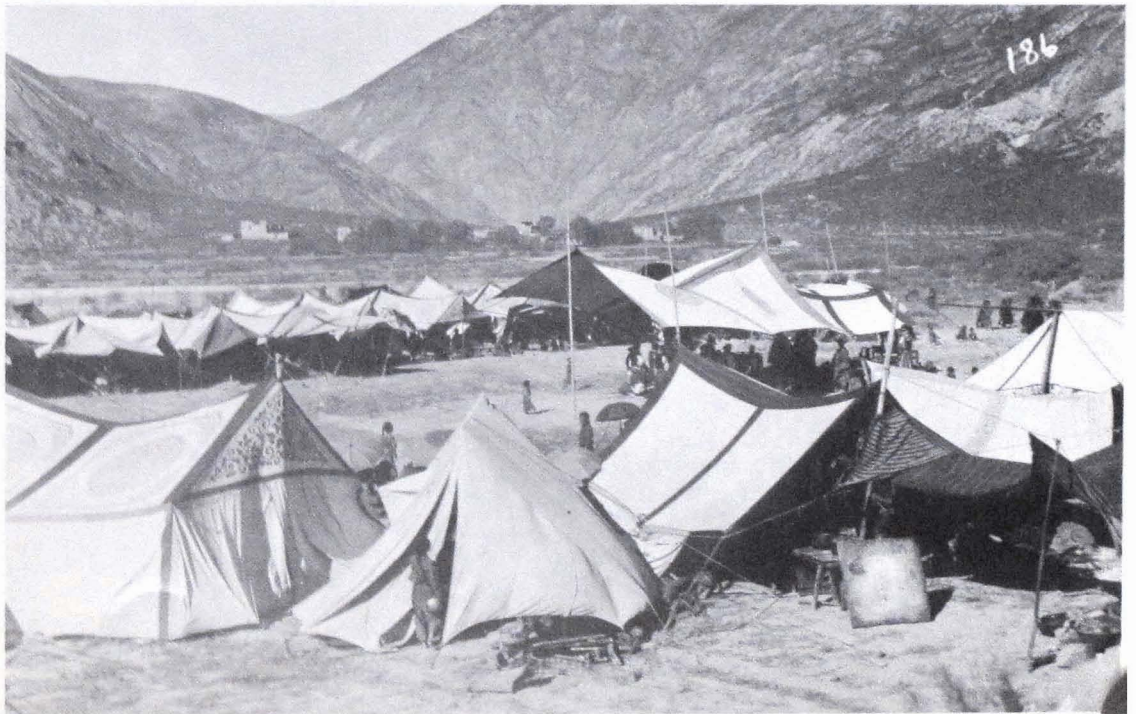
460 miles on Yak (Batang to Tachienlu) about 8 Ru.	\$2.00
140 miles on men's backs to Yachow at 40 Cash about	2.00
600 miles by water to Ichang at about 30 Cash	1.50
1000 miles by steamer to Shanghai at 75¢	.75
Shanghai to New York about	3.50
	<u>\$9.75</u>

Further letters in 1915 and 1916 refer to the precarious situation in the border areas. Despite the "war conditions," robbers and local rebellions mentioned in these letters, Shelton did manage to ship some items out in these intervening years.



10. A woman with a loaded donkey coming into an area of tents, probably set up for the annual festival in Batang. Note the musk-deer hair cushions on the donkey and the butter-tea churn in the foreground.

11. Appliqued white tents pitched around the central "players platform" for the annual autumn festival in Batang.





12. An actor-dancer in a mask at left gestures to a cluster of costumed dancers and town officials (in wide flat hats). The festival, which lasted four days, consisted of pageants and pantomines portraying historical and mythical events.

13. A Batang girl dressed in her best attire for the festival. The Khampas (people of Kham) had a distinctive regional style of dress; the woman of the town, as here, often combined Chinese and Tibetan modes of costume.

14. Dr. Shelton examining a young boy while his mother and brother look on. The stripe-and-cross dyed wool trim on their chubas (robes) was a common Tibetan decoration.





15. The Jö Lama and his wife. This man, a great friend of Dr. Shelton, was an incarnate lama from the monastery of Atuntse, or Jö, near Batang. Defying his high station by marrying, the lama was disbarred from most priestly functions but was considered a holy person by the people. In this charming formal portrait the lama and his wife have surrounded themselves with some of their favorite possessions, including a western cigar box top.

16. A Tibetan picnic: Dr. Shelton and Dorris and Dorothy in wide-brimmed hats sit with the Jö Lama. To either side are Kham men in heavy chubas, their long hair braided and wound around their heads.



17. The Jö Lama (center) and his parents in front of their yak-hair tent. "One day I was going down with Jö Lama to his home. His mother is a nomad and lived some two days to the southeast of Batang. As a usual thing, for my medical and surgical ability, I am treated with considerable respect while traveling along the road, but traveling with him I was a person of no consequence whatever. People would see him coming and would line up along the side of the road, bow their heads and clasp their hands before their faces, and wait for him to ride along and place his hand on one head after another in blessing." (From *Pioneering in Tibet*, p. 67-8.)

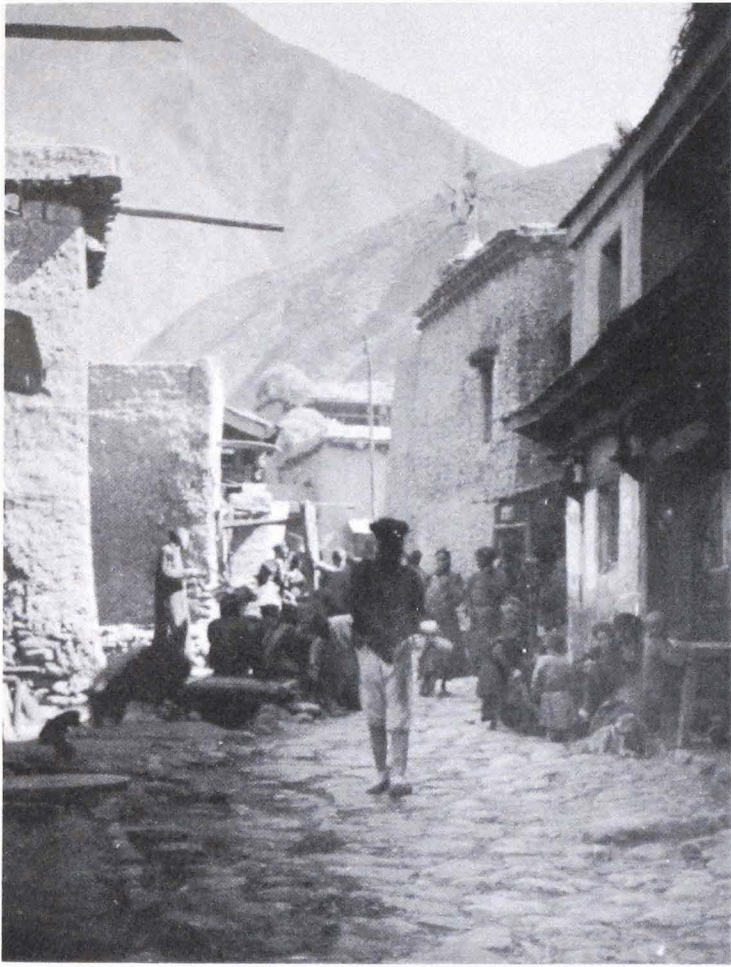
18. The family of Gezong Ongdu, a Batang friend who taught Dr. Shelton the Tibetan language. The teacher is standing at the back holding a wiggly baby. The range of facial types and modes of dress in Kham is well displayed in this photograph.

19. Street scene in Batang. A Chinese man walks forward in the center, behind him are groups of Tibetan men and women.

20. A Tibetan woman carrying a wooden pail, probably filled with water, strapped to her back. The Khampas, both men and women, were accustomed to carrying very heavy loads, a necessity in this mountainous land where wheeled vehicles were unknown.







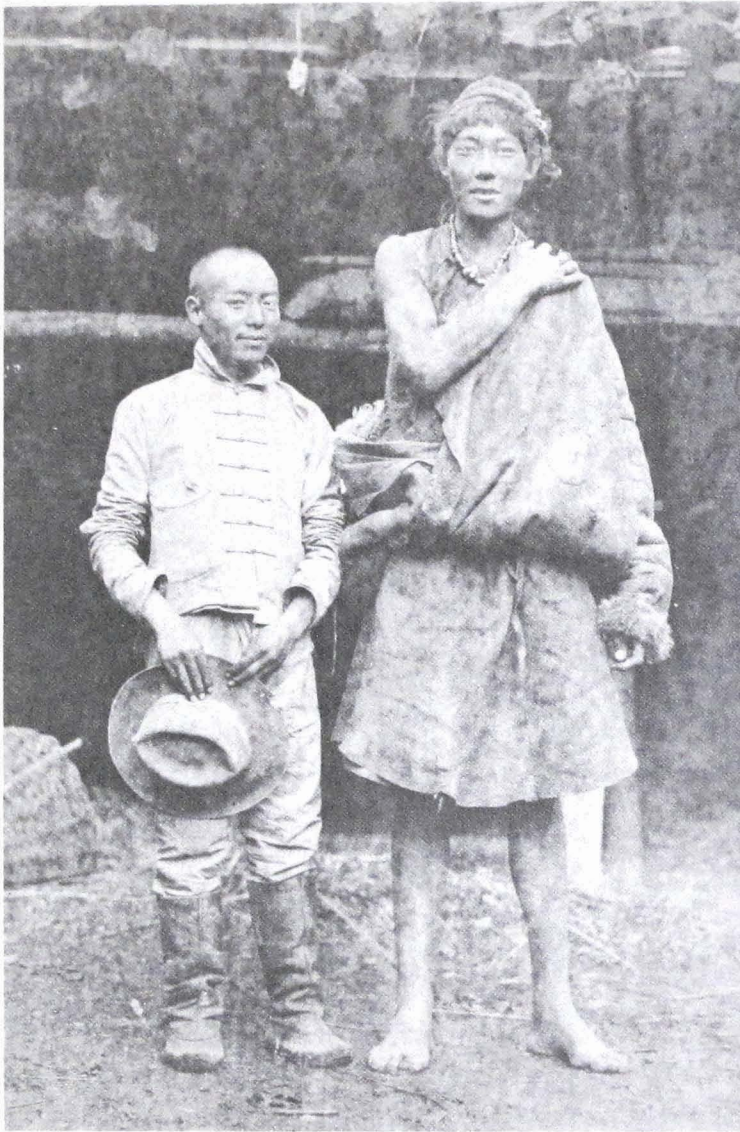


21. Men and women threshing grain on the roof of a house, where the wind can easily carry off the chaff.

22. A man plowing with dzos in harness.

23. Group of yaks, tied by nose rings, saddled and waiting for loads to be strapped on. These hairy beasts were extremely sure-footed in the rough mountain trails and thrived in the high altitudes of Tibet.





24. Li Guay Guang, a Chinese raised by the Sheltons, who served as a Christian missionary in Batang, standing with a Khampa dressed in sheepskin chuba. The contrast between these two men is interesting, as each possesses an individual strength and beauty. The ragged appearance of the Khampa is foiled by the valuable necklace of beads he wears.

25. The young son of the Jan Tsen family. He was recognized as the incarnation of the last abbot of the Tachienlu monastery. He is probably wearing a yellow cap to signify, even at this age, his high rank.

26. Dorothy (left) and Dorris Shelton, soon before leaving Batang in 1919, pose with a Kham boy. It is amazing that the Sheltons and other missionary families could maintain their American customs and dress even in these remote outposts.





27. A yak caravan passing by the outer walls of the monastery in Derge, some six days travel north of Batang. This area was famous for its fine metalwork and printing of religious texts.

28. The Prince of Derge with his two wives and son. Mrs. Shelton relates that the Prince had been banished to Batang after the Chinese took control of Derge. His first wife (at left in photograph), who was from Central Tibet, wore a "head-dress of corals and strings of pearls, with gold and silver and jade bracelets on her arms. She wore charm boxes set with sapphires, turquoises, emeralds, and topaz, and her great earrings, held up in the headdress, were almost too heavy to be worn in the ears."\* Because she had borne no children, it was arranged that a relative of hers would be the second wife (at right in photograph) to provide heirs. (\*Flora B. Shelton, *Shelton of Tibet*, p. 99.)

29. The Prince of Derge with his second wife, two sons, and bodyguards. With the province of Derge continually passing between Chinese and Tibetan control, armed guards such as these were evidently quite necessary.





30. The King of Chala, the province of which Tachienlu is the capitol, at right with his daughter at the time of her wedding. The princess is elaborately arrayed in the style of a Chinese beauty while the bridegroom (at left) is in typical Kham attire with his handsome fur-trimmed chuba.







31. A military parade in Gartok (the seat of the governor of Mar Kham, in political Tibet, just west of Batang). Dr. Shelton had gone to see the Governor to mediate the Chinese-Tibetan fighting in 1917. Just before leaving Tibet in 1919, Shelton was invited by the Governor to bring his family for a visit. The photograph records this occasion. Seated under an appliqued tent are left to right: Dr. MacLeod, a missionary colleague of Shelton, the Governor, an unidentified monk, Dorothy, the Governor's wife, and Dorris.

32. The Governor of Mar Kham and his wife who is dressed in the style of Lhasa. (Photograph from the MacLeod Collection.)

In late 1919, the Sheltons again left Batang for the United States, taking with them a large group of objects for the Newark Museum. In the vicinity of Yunnanfu, in the Chinese province south of Kham, twelve days out of Batang, their caravan was attacked by robbers. Dr. Shelton was taken captive and held for ransom; the rest of the party and most of the baggage escaped. In a hurried note to the Museum dated February 24, 1920, from Yunnanfu, Mrs. Shelton wrote:

"Dear Sirs,

I'm sorry you have been disappointed in the arrival of the boxes from Tibet. Dr. Shelton was taken captive by Chinese brigands Jan. 3rd just 2 days from this place and is still held. He is greatly fatigued I know and must come home with us if he lives through the hardships which he has had to bear this long time with the robbers . . ."

A letter of the same date from Dr. Shelton's sister in Kansas urged the Museum's aid in pressuring Congress to obtain Dr. Shelton's release. Mrs. Shelton published the diary the Doctor kept during his seventy-one days as prisoner. It is an impressive record of patience and strength:

4 January. Have no idea how things will turn out and it does not matter much just about me. Glad loads were not taken and Flo (Mrs. Shelton) and girls allowed to go. Headman just been here scheming to get help. Wants me to help him get ammunition which, of course, I cannot do.

12 January. Letter came at dark from colonel of soldiers, telling them that they would be allowed to submit to Government. They want six things granted over the government seal before releasing me. 1) Pardon for all past offenses. 2) Restoration to citizenship. 3) Reinstatement of soldiers. 4) Release of headman's family. 5) Two hundred rifles. 6) Twenty thousand cartridges . . . At least twenty have come and want to be my servants now. I've had a great increase in popularity since the letter came. Many of them when they come around near me want to show off and sing, "do re mi," "Jesus loves me," and many other hymns.

23 February. It was reported that the soldiers were to catch up with us last night, but they did not and we've come up on the mountain about one mile and are waiting for them to come up so they can have another fight. Bought me a pair of shoes but they were too small. I couldn't sleep for pain in my neck last night. The roughest man in our bunch came in at midnight and gave me an orange. Very kind. About fifty are gambling. They've just brought worst wounded man up.

4 March. I've much to write, but don't feel equal to it. I've been "cached" as yesterday was about my finish. We started at two a.m. and traveled hard till seven p.m. Sighted soldiers at five p.m. They started on early this morning, but left me in this village and I'm locked in a barn loft back over behind all the hay . . . This position will become very confining shortly as I can only sit up and that not very erect, for my head hits the roof, but I am in nice clean rice straw. O, how I thank God that

## CHINESE BANDITS HOLD AMERICAN MISSIONARY

*Dr. Shelton's Case Resembles  
That of Jenkins in Mexico—  
State Department Acts.*

PEKING, Jan. 7 (Associated Press).—Dr. R. A. Shelton, a Christian missionary, was captured by bandits at Laoyakuan, near Yunnan-fu, on Saturday, Jan. 3, and is being held for ransom, according to reports received here.

The wife and two daughters of the missionary have arrived at Yunnan-fu, the former declaring that the kidnapers acted under orders of Yang Tien-fu, a notorious outlaw, who has been operating, with 5,000 followers, in the Kochin Mountains. It is said that the object of his lawless act has been to discredit the local Governor for the latter's refusal to accept the terms of surrender laid down by the band. The brigands said that they would treat their prisoner as a guest unless the military was employed to effect his release.

Yang Tien-fu is reported to have been educated as a military officer in Japan. Officials of the American Legation here and Chinese authorities are actively investigating the case.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 12.—The American Legation at Peking has been directed by the State Department to request the co-operation of the French Consul at Yunnan-fu in efforts to obtain the release of the Rev. Dr. Shelton. It was explained at the department today that this action was taken because there was no American Consul nearer than Canton.

The legation has also been instructed to take up the matter directly with the Governor of the Province of Yunnan, in which the Rev. Dr. Shelton is held.

## Shelton Freed, New Captive Taken by Chinese Bandits

PEKING, March 11 (AP).—Rev. Dr. A. L. Shelton, a missionary of the Disciples of Christ Church, who was captured in January at Laoyakuan, near Yunnanfu, and who has been released through the efforts of the American Legation, is proceeding under escort to Yunnanfu, where he is due to arrive next Monday. He is reported to be well.

Simultaneously with advices of the release of Dr. Shelton came news of the capture by the same band of bandits that had held the American of the taking of a British missionary named Metcalfe, belonging to the China Inland Mission.

Dr. Shelton and his wife and daughters were on their way from Katang to Yunnanfu, and had reached Ruting, less than fifty miles from their destination, when they were captured January 2. The Americans had a small escort, which gave battle to the bandits, with the result that several of the escort were killed. Mrs. Shelton and the children were allowed to proceed, but Dr. Shelton was held with the purpose of enforcing political demands made by Yang Tien-fu, the bandit chief.

After several weeks of fruitless effort the American Legation instructed Colonel Drysdale, the American military attache, who was on his way from Saigon, Cochin China, to Peking, to proceed to Yunnanfu. He arrived there and shortly afterward, at his request, the Legation telegraphed him \$5,000, presumably to meet the expense of the release of Dr. Shelton.

wife and babies were let go! This morning about two o'clock when they brought me in here, the boy who has sort of been my caretaker during the last two months came and crying kneeled down by my side, and asked me to pray for him. The officer who has been my jailer held my hands and cried also. These are the only two who know where I was put. It is getting too dark to see, as the only light I have is a hole from which I asked my keeper to remove a loose brick. Thanks be to God for all His mercies.\*

Shelton was finally rescued March 9th and returned with his family to the United States in the late Spring of 1920. The objects for the Museum, none the worse for the trip, arrived safely as well.

\*Flora B. Shelton, *Shelton of Tibet*, pp. 214-240.



33. A group of chortens, the one in the foreground covered with a protective roof. The chorten, a Tibetan form of the Buddhist reliquary monument, was found on auspicious sites throughout Tibet. The roofed chorten is of the classic shape; cube base, cone, steeple, umbrella, and sun/moon finial, symbolic of the five elements of the universe.



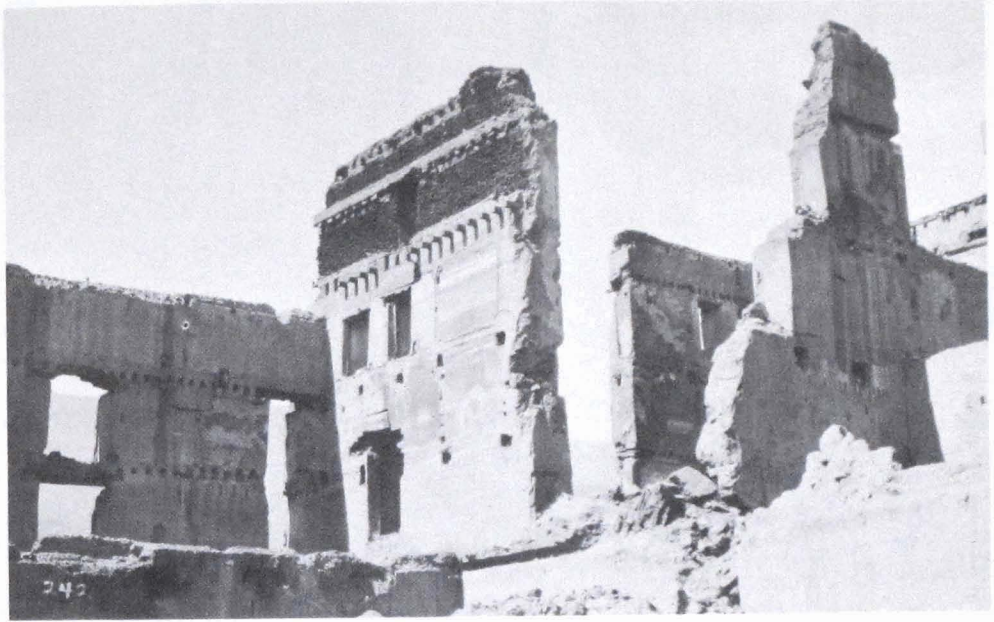
34. A massive pile of mani stones with Mr. Ogden, an associate of Shelton, young Dorris with a Tibetan friend, and "Spot" the dog. This photograph was taken in 1908, shortly after the move to Batang. The mani stones are carved in order to gain merit with the inscription Om ma ni pad me hum or other sacred texts by people passing this site.



35. The Ba Lama (seated), high lama of Batang with attendants. Standing at the center back is a secular official. The three lamas are dressed in traditional Tibetan Buddhist garb; gathered skirts of dark red wool, vest of yellow Chinese brocade, and shawl of dark red wool.

36. View of the ruins of the monastery of Draya after destruction by the Chinese during fighting in 1912-13. In 1913, Shelton was asked to come to Draya, ten days journey northwest of Batang, to attend the wounded and he had the opportunity to vividly witness the suffering and cruelty on both sides.

37. Looking into a large room in the monastery at Batang with a colossal image of Padma Sambhava, partially destroyed, and piles of rubble in the foreground. "Lying about a quarter of a mile from the main part of the town were the ruins of what had formerly been the pride of all that section; a great monastery, housing some two or three thousand priests, and which had been destroyed during the fighting between the Chinese and Tibetans." (Shelton's comments on his first visit to Batang in 1907 from *Pioneering in Tibet*, p. 47.)



38. Dorris and Dorothy seated with a Khampa in front of a forest of printed cloth prayer flags. Shelton described this scene as the site of the grave of a prominent Tibetan.

39. Litang monastery, on the route between Batang and Tachienlu. The cluster of massive wood and mud-brick buildings was typical of the fortress-like aspect of Tibetan monasteries. The roofs and domes were reported to be plated with gold 1/6" to 1" thick.

40. Prayer wheels erected around one of the temples in the monastery of Derge; each wheel was about five feet high and weighed over 250 lbs. The wheels, filled with written prayers, were on pivots so that they could whirl as pilgrims passed by, giving each wheel a push.







After a recuperative stay in America, Dr. Shelton returned to Batang. This time he was alone, Mrs. Shelton having gone to India to work on some translations, the two girls remaining in the States for their schooling. Shelton now had the intention to go on to Lhasa, Tibet's capitol, and establish a medical mission there. He started out from Batang accompanied by the prince of Batang, his teacher Gezong Ogdu, and some companions on February 15, 1922. One day out they received a note from the Governor of Mar Kham, asking them to turn back temporarily to Batang as the times were unfavorable for foreign visits to Tibet's interior. The next day, while heading back, Dr. Shelton was most tragically killed by bandits. Mrs. Dorothy Shelton Thomas has supplied an eye-witness account by Demnbjangtsen, a companion to the Doctor, written in 1960 from India. This man's vivid memories of the event are so beautifully expressed in the account that it was decided to leave the original wording and spelling.

Generally I used to be with Dr. very closely and always rode side by side but that day Dr. wanted to start out first and I was only about 10 minutes behind him. I was getting my mule ready and to see that the rest of the campers were ready to start. Now we were climbing up towards the Kue Yula mountain.

While I was only at the foot of the hill, Dr. already covered half the hill then we were winding along the hill. There was a valley with a stream located between them appeared like the shape of a horseshoe. When I came to this end of the horseshoe he was already at the other end. I still remember it clearly. He turned around and whistled and hollowed to me with his hand. I responded and trying my best to catch up with him but he was still about the same distance away from me. When I reached the stream or inertia part of the horseshoe, he had already turned the corner of the hill and was on the other side. Suddenly, I heard the explosion of three bullets echoing in the valley. I thought perhaps the Dr. was shooting at some jungle birds or wild chickens as we always found that sort of things on the road, so I speed down wanted to help Dr. to bring the dead animal for him, but from a distant of about 40 yards away I saw Dr. was laying on the side of the road. There were blood stains all over his face. I could see a large wound open on his forehead. And the sight alarmed me greatly but I thought maybe the mule slipped and had thrown Dr. on the road so I got down from my mule and ran toward him as I wanted to get near him and to help him but he gestured and commanded me to go back. I couldn't understand what was the matter. My eagerness to help him grew stronger and the more I proceed the angrier he became. I thought he was angry with me that day because I was late. I felt very sad for Dr. had never at any time manifested such an indifferent spirit. But still I wanted to help him then he told me – "If you come near I will kill you." He had a pistol in his hand. Just at the moment of perplexity, there again a chain of bullets fired out speedily behind my ears. Then I began to sense the danger. I came to know that we met robbers. I realized how ignorant I had been of Doctor's good intention towards me. He wanted to safe my

life from the hands of the robbers. I jumped and rolled back down the road side until I found a heap of elevated slope. I hid there breathlessly. After awhile my friend Si Gu Shoo who was the older son of the 2nd higher official of Ba Ton, came running behind me. He was surprised to find me lying there. He joked to me "What is the trouble with you?" There was no time for me to give an answer to him. I pulled him down and made him to lie flat and gasped to him we met robbers and Dr. Shelton has been wounded. Before I could finish telling him the whole detail, there were again continuously bullets flew towards us. You see I was taken by surprise all these unexpected horrible events. I even had forgotten that we must fight and try to kill every robber we see or else we shall be killed by them. We fought for a while but it was difficult for us to kill them for they were hidden well behind the bushes on top of the hill. After a break there was silence and we heard Dr. was groaning with pain and he cried "Ming Shang, . . . Bring water . . . Bring water . . ." We had no water in hand and I knew there was a water can on Dr. Shelton's mule but the mule had gone quite a distance away from Dr. and still far away from us, it was facing towards the robbers.

We crept slowly on the ground behind a few rocks and small bushes. We managed to get hold of the rope which the mule was fastened on. We pulled the mule slowly towards us. Si Gu Shoo was a little senior to me and big built. He reached to the back of the mule and handed me Dr. Shelton's gun so I had two guns with me. Before he could hand me the water can suddenly there were another few of bullets flew over our heads. We drew back quickly but poor Si Gu Shoo got shot on his thigh. He lambed down with me and now we felt our strength was not so strong enough to fight with them. Down the valley we could hear tinkling sound of the bells of the mules and the mule men were singing happily for they did not know what had happened. We were not close enough to warn them the danger ahead of them.

After we fought with the robbers for a while they became very mad. They yelled to one another "We must catch those two Chinese youngsters and skin them to death." but all of a sudden we heard the robbers yelled again so excitedly . . . "A large band of mules with goods is coming. Go and stop them." So they left us and we took the chance to run away from them. Now we were off the track, we slid down the hill with great difficulty. There was the Young Zi River thousands of feet rolling angrily below us. If we should slip off we could throw ourselves down and be killed easily. Thank the Lord finally we found a little path and we saw sheeps wandering on the hillside. We were sure that we came near a village and we went into the chief of the village and explained to him the accident which had taken place and requested him to lend us two mules.

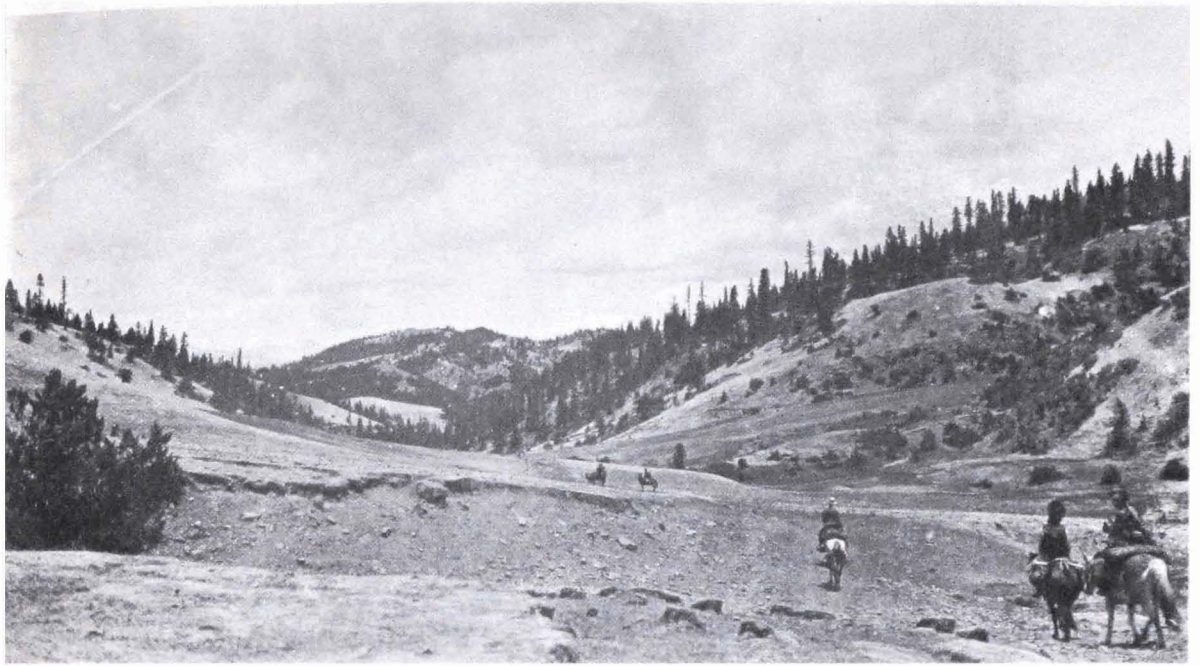
Off we galloped to Ba Ton to report the news to the Mission and the governor sent many soldiers. The whole town was moved and felt sad at the accident which Dr. Shelton had met. A few missionaries, soldiers and many people went to rescue Dr. I was asked to guide the way to the place where Dr. was.

At the very first sight he burst out in tears and said "That is good Ming Shan. You have finally come!" His face was very pale and he was very restless. It was found necessary to amputate Doctor's arm, which had been badly wounded. They stuffed in the guts which came out and fixed him on the carrier. I was extremely sad, a man who loved me as his own son, now I had to carry his amputated arm on the back of my horse. When we reached home the operation was done and that night I had the privilege to nurse Dr. by his bedside. It was so quiet and lonely.

Dr. opened his eyes several times and talked to me, "Ming Shang, I will be gone in a few days, no hope to live, I love you, be a good boy, I have told the other folk to look after you." But I was struck with the sentence "No hope, I will be gone in a few days." No, how could I ever stand the cruel separation a man who loved me and treated me like his own son. Sorrow overwhelmed me. I saw he was praying very earnestly which impressed me so much and I too prayed but it was God's will that Dr. should rest at that time. He passed away peacefully about 4:00 a.m.

*41. Riders, the closest of whom are Khampas, on a trail through timber-covered hills.*

*42. Dr. Shelton on his mule.*



43. A wood bridge across the steep banks of the Mekong river, leading south out of Kham. A Tibetan man waits beside his horse.



# American Murdered By Chinese Bandits

## Newark Museum Thibetan Exhibit Collector Slain While on Trip to L'hasa.

The news has been received here by way of St. Louis of the murder by Chinese brigands of the Rev. Dr. Albert LeRoy Shelton, medical missionary, who made the collection of Thibetan objects shown at the Newark Museum last December.

The notice of the death of Dr. Shelton declared the clergyman, member of the Disciples of Christ (Christian Church), who was the first Christian missionary to be allowed to enter Thibet, was slain by robbers February 17.

The announcement was by the United Christian Missionary Society at St. Louis, which received a cablegram from the Rev. Dr. W. H. Hardy, also a medical missionary in China, which read:

"Robbers killed Shelton near Batang, February 17. Notify girls."

The girls referred to are Dr. Shelton's daughters, Dorothy, 17, and Doris, 15, who are attending school in Pomona, Cal.

### Days from Telegraph.

Dr. Shelton's headquarters were at Batang, near Thibet, and Dr. Hardy's cablegram was from L'kiang, the nearest telegraph station, a fifteen days' journey, and this, it was explained, is responsible for the delay in news of the murder.

Although Thibet has not been open to missionaries, Dr. Shelton departed from Vancouver last August to open a hospital at L'hasa. He had received a written invitation from the Dalai Lama, the supreme power of the Mohammedan church in the province, to establish the hospital, in recognition of his work among Thibetan soldiers.

The last word received from Dr. Shelton was when he was fifteen days' journey out of Batang, which he said he expected to reach December 22. The theory of the missionary society here is that he reached Batang on scheduled time.

L'hasa is a thirty-five-day trip by caravan from Batang and it is not thought the time between December 22 and February 17 was sufficient to allow him to organize the caravan. Consequently it is believed he was on a side trip alone administering to the sick.

### Believe Compulsions Safe.

The theory of his safe arrival at Batang is the fact that no one else is reported murdered. His wife did not accompany him to Batang, but went to Calcutta to obtain translations of the Scripture in the Thibetan tongue.

In his party were Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Morse and their small child of Tulsa, Okla., and Mr. and Mrs. M. H. Duncan of Buffalo, who were entering the mission field.

Dr. Shelton was in St. Louis in October of 1920, attending a convention of the church and related his experiences while a captive of brigands 18 years ago.

He stated he had been endeavoring for years to get the ruler of Thibet to lift the ban on foreigners so he could enter and pursue his work and finally the Dalai Lama had expressed a willingness to grant the request. He prepared to make the journey to Thibet, and he conducted his wife and daughters on a forty-seven-day trip to a point near a railroad station where they were to go to the coast where living conditions were better, while he was to return to Batang.

### Slain by Brigands



The Rev. Dr. A. L. Shelton, American medical missionary, who was killed by bandits in Tibet. The American State Department has called upon the Chinese government to capture and punish the slayers.

## EPILOGUE

Vast as Tibet is, and short as the Sheltons' stay there was, the memory of the Doctor's kindness has remained. The very first Tibetans to visit the Museum as part of an official trade mission to America in 1948 (arranged by C. Suydam Cutting) included *Depon* (General) Surkhang. Surkhang wrote at this time to Mrs. Shelton, then living in Texas:

My mother was from the family of Lhagyri in Central Tibet, and her eldest sister was married to one of the landlords in Bathang whose family is called Nyengo Tshang. During that time they were all exiled for certain case to Schechuen province by the Chinese authorities and after some years their only son Kesang Namgyal, my cousin, returned back to Bathang and stayed there with the late doctor A. L. Shelton. While I was a young boy, my cousin often told us that he was with the late doctor at Khuyuk La (a pass between Bathang and Markham) and also told me that yourself and your two pretty daughters were very kind to him.

Dr. Shelton's life is more fully explored in three publications:

Flora B. Shelton, *Sunshine and Shadow*, Cincinnati, Foreign Christian Missionary Society, 1912.

Albert L. Shelton, *Pioneering in Tibet*, New York, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1921.

Flora B. Shelton, *Shelton of Tibet*, New York, George H. Doran Co., 1923.





44. *The Tibetan Trade Mission to America in the Newark Museum Garden, September 1948. Depon Surkhang is the second from left.*