

ARCHAEOLOGY

Blonde Girl Explorer Mystifies Natives of "Forbidden City"

By EMMA REH

WHEN AN American woman hunts Indian ruins in obscure by-ways of Oaxaca State, Mexico, the astonished natives are likely to take her for an angel or a devil.

In the market square in Tlaxiaco, where on Saturdays Indians gather from a wide radius, I have learned what Indians of Achiutla thought, when I visited their town recently seeking ancient and "forbidden" ruins nearby.

Some of the Indians passed along the word that I was an engineer-ess with a compass that would attract treasure. I

had only to walk among the ruins to locate the treasure.

Another version was that I lured people off alone to cut their throats. My informant is an Indian from another town, who has picked up the gossip from Achiutla. He illustrated my murderous custom with a swipe of the hand across his neck and a snappy click of the tongue. I realize now that Achiutla thought I was the devil.

It is nicer to remember another Mixtec Indian, the priest in the town of Teposcolula. As I stood before an altar in his church, he looked at me and then at the images and said:

"Yes, your eyes are like those of the Child Jesus."

The Indian who reported that I was supposed to be a cut-throat, did not himself believe that my power was all evil. To prove his faith that I had friendly magic, he asked me for a liquid which would "chill" the brain of his child, so that the child would know how to read. I said there was no such substance.

"Oh, yes," he said, "it is the stuff your countrymen use for softening their brains."

When I tried to visit the ruins near Achiutla, I was allowed to see them only from a distance, though federal authorities had given permission. The 95-year-old "boss" of the town and the town council apparently feared that I would spot the supposedly lost treasure of the King Yandushi.

Now, as I return north toward Mexico City, Achiutla has been urging me to go out of the way to visit the remote town again. The son of the old chief urged it, saying "all is changed."

Recently the chief's grandson killed a man and the family has lost prestige in Achiutla. Perhaps they think now that the blonde stranger can help them find the treasure or the gold mine of King Yandushi, so that the grandson's release can be speeded.

I may go to Achiutla. No one has seen those guarded ruins, and Achiutla corresponds to Chichen Itza and Teotihuacan, as an important site.

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The French dictionary "Le Petit Larousse" published in Braille type for the blind consists of 20 volumes, each twice the size of the whole work in ordinary print.

ELECTROTHERAPY

Electricity Restores Heart Beat After Sewing Up of Wound

A MAN whose heart has ceased its normal rhythmic activity as a result of an accident, and which has gone into a state of twitching in which it circulates no blood, may be recovered by a strong electrical counter shock, according to a report received by Dr. William B. Kouwenhoven, professor of electrical engineering at the Johns Hopkins University, from a surgeon whose name has not yet been revealed.

Applied Successfully

The discovery that such an electrical counter-shock will bring the heart to rest, but will permit the restoration of the organ to its normal functioning when the circuit is broken, was originally made at Johns Hopkins University by Dr. Kouwenhoven and Dr. Donald R. Hooker, of the School of Hygiene, and Dr. Orthello R. Langworthy, associate professor of neurology.

The discovery has now been applied successfully in the treatment of patients. The surgeon reporting wrote that he has been able to set the heart working uniformly after such delicate operations as the sewing up of a knife wound in the heart. The necessary electrical ap-

paratus has been installed over the operating table, he said.

Animals' hearts, subjected in recent experiments to a shock of about one-tenth ampere, alternating current, have been recovered by sending a strong electrical counter-shock, about seven-tenths of an ampere A. C., through that organ, Dr. Kouwenhoven said. Explaining the reaction, he remarked that the shock from ordinary house voltage is sufficient to cause the heart muscles to act as individual units, and not as the customary unified group working rhythmically. This, in turn, causes the cutting off of the necessary blood supply to the brain.

Stops and Starts Again

When the strong shock is applied, it has been found, the heart does not go into the twitching action, the independent movement of each muscle, as it does when the smaller shock is sent into the body, but is stopped completely and is returned to normal functioning when the circuit is broken. This experiment has been repeated successfully many times.

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L. E. Warren

Food and Drug Administration, United States Department of Agriculture

Friday, May 26, at 1:45 p.m. Eastern Standard Time over stations of the Columbia Broadcasting System. Each week a prominent scientist speaks over the Columbia System under the auspices of Science Service.