

ARCHAEOLOGY

5,000-Year-Old Pottery

Evidence uncovered for linking the Iranian Plateau with the Indus Valley. Water, now scarce in Mekran, was once more plentiful there, the expedition's findings showed.

► **NEW EVIDENCE** for linking the Iranian Plateau with the Indus Valley was obtained by the Peabody Museum-Harvard Expedition to Pakistan.

Dr. Henry Field, anthropologist and leader of the expedition, told *SCIENCE SERVICE* upon his return to Coconut Grove, Fla., of the discovery of new archaeological sites in little-known Mekran that yielded beautiful painted pottery about 5,000 years old.

Soundings in a small mound near the center of this inhospitable desert region revealed a splendid series of terra cotta figurines of humped bulls characteristic of the classical site of Mohenjo-Daro on the river Indus.

Some of the painted pottery bore naturalistic designs similar to those found in Iran and at Kish and Ur of the Chaldees in Iraq, formerly Mesopotamia.

Since water is now very scarce in Mekran, it was deduced that in Chalcolithic times the climate was different, with considerably more rainfall than the present seven inches annually. Desiccation is increasing in this region.

The expedition consisted of Dr. Field, who was accompanied by Mrs. Field as photographer and recorder, a member of the Pakistan department of archaeology and four specialists from the University of Karachi. Travel was by jeep, truck, camel, horse, bull and on foot.

Crossing of the Baluchistan desert from the Arabian Sea to Quetta was made in 21 days under difficult conditions.

The Baluchis proved to be very friendly, although they were puzzled by the foreigners who measured and photographed them, purchased their household goods, picked up broken pottery from mounds, chased and collected snakes and lizards, and dug up plants, often during the blazing heat of the day.

The expedition obtained anthropometric data and photographs on 275 Baluchis and Brahuis that will throw light on the racial connections between Baluchistan and Iran.

To show the fast-changing culture of the Baluchis, an important ethnological collection of costumes, jewelry and household utensils was purchased. Tape recordings of their music were made with a battery-operated machine. Plants and animals were also collected.

Crossing to Bahawalpur State, which adjoins the Indian frontier with Bikanir, the expedition made a 500-mile reconnaissance survey along the now-dry Huqra River bed. Here painted pottery of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa types was collected from a chain of mounds from Fort Derawar to east of Fort Abbas.

Photographs and observations were made on the living peoples of this region for comparison with the data from Baluchistan. Some early manuscripts, which may throw light on the history of the region, now known as Cholistan, were photographed.

Dr. Field reported receiving the utmost assistance from the Pakistan Government. Specimens collected are now on the way from Karachi to Harvard for study.

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MEDICINE

Quieting Drugs Increase Effect of Sleeping Drugs

► **TWO QUIETING** drugs that are winning wide attention as aids in treating mental disease can potentiate the effects of ethyl alcohol and the barbiturate family of sleeping medicines.

The two quieting drugs are reserpine and chlorpromazine. Neither of them is a sleeping medicine. Patients taking them are calmed but do not feel sleepy.

Animals that had just recovered from a barbiturate almost immediately went back into deep hypnosis when given chlorpromazine. This shows that it is a true potentiator, and not merely a prolonger of the action of the barbiturate.

This research with the quieting drugs is reported in *Nature* (June 25) by Drs. Bernard B. Brodie, Parkhurst A. Shore and Stanley L. Silver of the National Heart Institute, Bethesda, Md., and Dr. Robert Pulver of the Geigy Company, Basel, Switzerland.

Science News Letter, July 9, 1955

AERONAUTICS

Plane "Snaking" Can Be Caused by Air Turbulence

► **AN EXPLANATION** of the periodic wobbling of airplanes during flight has been proposed by engineers at the Langley Aeronautical Laboratory of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, Langley Field, Va.

Wind tunnel tests showed that atmospheric turbulence could cause this "snaking," which decreases the accuracy of aerial guns and is a nuisance to pilots.

The new theory would explain some of the instances of wobbling that cannot be laid to other causes, John D. Bird of the Laboratory said. In the past such factors as small amounts of slack in the rudder control system and the effects of sloshing fuel have been blamed for snaking.

Science News Letter, July 9, 1955



SOLAR-POWERED TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT—The solar battery will receive its first practical test in a telephone system this summer when an experimental unit, essentially identical to the model shown, will be installed in Americus, Ga., to supply power to terminal equipment on rural telephone lines. Heart of the Bell Telephone Laboratories solar battery is a tiny silicon disk that converts sunlight into electricity. (See *SNL*, May 1, 1954, p. 278.)