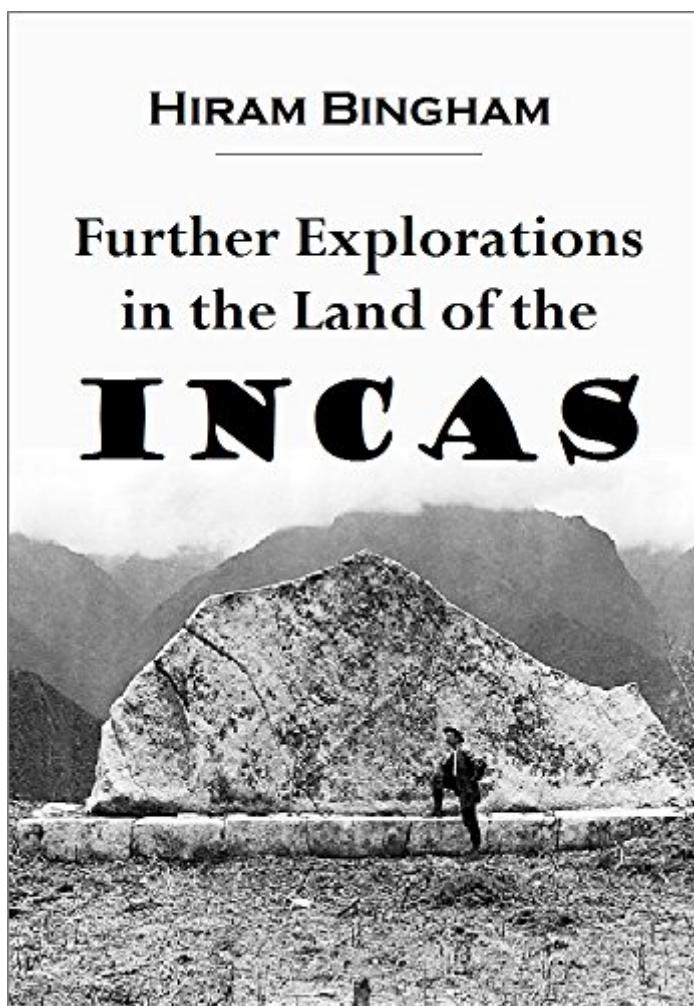


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Further Explorations In The Land Of The Incas (1916)



Synopsis

Hiram Bingham III (1875 – 1956) was an American academic, explorer and politician. He made public the existence of the Inca citadel of Machu Picchu in 1911 with the guidance of local indigenous farmers. In 1915, the National Geographic sponsored Bingham on another expedition to Machu Picchu. Bingham writes: "the Expedition of 1915 had for its chief object the securing of as much information as possible about the former inhabitants of Machu Picchu and the territory immediately surrounding the city. "In the course of our work we crossed a number of hitherto-unexplored areas, collected large numbers of botanical and zoological specimens, mapped a new river system, and took measurements of nearly all of the savage inhabitants of the newly visited valley, besides many of the semicivilized folk of the older valleys." In writing of one close call, Bingham writes: "That night we camped near a glacier at an elevation of about 15,000 feet and found that our sleep was considerably interfered with by the coldest weather we had yet encountered. The next day one of the mules overestimated the width of the narrow path and fell, carrying his rider with him. ..." In explaining how the Incas were able to move the megalithic stones for their buildings, Bingham writes: "They had no machinery and did not use iron or steel. They used levers and inclined planes. They also made huge fiber ropes, out of which they constructed long suspension bridges. They thought nothing of handling blocks of stone weighing five tons and upward. Indeed, there are numerous stones that weigh over 15 tons which were fitted together with a skill that has amazed all beholders." Interestingly, Bingham does not attribute the Inca's stone masonry to help of "ancient aliens" or any mysterious technology such as anti-gravity or ability to make the rocks molten but rather is content to stick to the simple block and tackle explanation.

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