

**THE ROOF OF THE WORLD: BEING
THE NARRATIVE OF A JOURNEY
OVER THE HIGH PLATEAU OF TIBET
TO THE RUSSIAN FRONTIER AND
THE OXUS SOURCES ON PAMIR**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649695812

The Roof of the World: Being the Narrative of a Journey over the High Plateau of Tibet to the Russian Frontier and the Oxus Sources on Pamir by T. E. Gordon

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

T. E. GORDON

**THE ROOF OF THE WORLD: BEING
THE NARRATIVE OF A JOURNEY
OVER THE HIGH PLATEAU OF TIBET
TO THE RUSSIAN FRONTIER AND
THE OXUS SOURCES ON PAMIR**

Printed by R. & E. Clark

FOR

EDMONSTON & DOUGLAS, EDINBURGH.

LONDON . . . HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO.

CAMBRIDGE . . . MACMILLAN AND CO.

GLASGOW . . . JAMES MACLEHOSE.

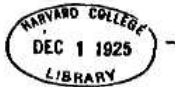
THE ROOF OF THE WORLD



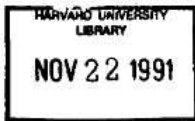
LOWER KUMDAN GLACIER - SHYOK

✓ In 284.11.5

~~In 284.11.5~~
✓



*Gift of
Prof. R. B. Dixon*



PREFACE.

I HAVE avoided in this narrative going into detail concerning those countries which have already been fully described by modern European travellers, and accordingly little is said about the well-known route from Leh to Yarkand, and thence to Kashghar. I offer my sketches so far, more to illustrate the works and writings of Thompson, Shaw, Hayward, Henderson, and Bellew, than my short account of it and its scenes. Where we left the old trodden paths, as in the Tian Shan and Pamir highlands, I have attempted a more minute account of what we saw and heard in those new fields of exploration and research.

My book, however, makes no pretension to be in any way a record of scientific exploration: it merely relates what fell under "every-day" observation, with the addition of occasional information gathered here and there as we travelled. The idea of my writing it was suggested by my sketches forming such a complete series "from the Indus to the Oxus" as to merit publication simply on the ground of representing to a very great extent life and scenery *never before pictured*. In considering the form of descriptive text to accompany the sketches, I decided on that of a narrative as better calculated to give interest to the work.

The whole of the Illustrations (with the exception of the four coloured plates) are facsimile copies of my sketches made

on the spot, being reproductions under the litho-photographic process, executed by Messrs. GEORGE WATERSTON and SON of Hanover Street, Edinburgh. I trust that the authenticity of these sketches, made from nature in localities most of which are entirely new to us in illustration, will compensate in some degree for occasional roughness and want of pictorial effect. The four coloured plates are faithful copies of my original water-colour drawings.

I desire to thank my travelling companions, Captains Biddulph and Trotter, for kind assistance in the subject matter of this book. Captain Biddulph, besides furnishing that which I have acknowledged in the text, helped me in the account of the form of Buddhism now obtaining in Tibet, to which Captain Molloy, British Joint Commissioner at Leh, also obligingly contributed. The Map and all the notes of elevation above sea-level are by Captain Trotter, and in my account of our journey to Chadir Kul on the Tian Shan plateau I have borrowed from his letter published in the proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of 15th June 1874.

Fergan, the latest Russian territorial acquisition in Central Asia, extends the frontier of that Power down towards the scene of our Pamir exploration; and, influenced as the adjoining small States must necessarily be by their strong neighbour, the opportunity will doubtlessly soon be given for a complete examination of the interesting regions near the head waters of the Oxus which remain yet unexplored.

T. E. GORDON.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Arrival at Leh, on the Indus—Preparations for the onward Journey—Hemis Monastery—Masquerade and Burlesque by the Llamas—Budhist Priesthood—Polo—Dancing Men and Women—Cordial Co-operation of Kashmir Authorities—Departure from Leh—Baggage and Riding Yaks—European Governors of Ladak—Characteristics of the Tartars—Shyok and Nubra Valleys—Pack-horses on Karakoram Journey—Dras and Kurgil Ponies—Yaks and “Zos”—Potato Cultivation in Shyok Valley *Pages 1-14*

CHAPTER II.

Susser Pass—Shyok Stream—Winter and Summer Routes—Kumdan and Remu Glaciers—Mountain Hares—Tartar Porters—Mortality among Traders' Pack-horses—Wolves and Ravens—Karakoram Pass—Sugot Pass—Karakash Valley—Yarkand Officials and Frontier—Captain Biddulph's Party joins—Chang-Chemno and Khoten Routes—Pangong Lake navigated—Load-carrying Sheep *15-28*

CHAPTER III.

Halt at Shahidulla—Yakub Khan, Kashghar Envoy—Special Couriers—Annual Yarkand Caravans—Party proceeds to Sanju—Kirghiz and Yaks—Sanju Pass—Bullock Carriage—Mirza Bahaudin—Abu-Bakr's Fort—Kilian Kirghiz—Mission and Envoy reach Sanju—Kargalik—Yarkand—Visit to the Governor: to the City—Dress and Appearance of the People—Streets and Bazaars—Market Day—Hunting-Eagles—Beggars—Population—Mission Quarters—Soldiers—Carts. *29-45*