

THE PERUVIAN EXPEDITION OF 1914-15
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
YALE UNIVERSITY AND THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

HIRAN BINGHAM
DIRECTOR

DRAWER A, YALE STATION, NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

November 28, 1916.

My dear Bert:-

You will remember that we eventually succeeded in bringing back from Peru on the last expedition, some seventy-four boxes of potsherds, bones and a few archaeological objects of interest to science, but nothing of value. Many months elapsed after this permission was given, because, owing to the war, no space could be found in any steamers for their being shipped. Thanks to the courtesy of Messrs. W. R. Grace & Company, they were eventually shipped and were received here during the latter part of the summer.

The more valuable part of the collection is made up of the skeletal remains, which I offered to the National Museum for study. They cannot accept them, however, unless they are to become their property. Now they do not belong to us, but to the Peruvian Government, who allowed us to take them out of the country on condition that they be returned in eighteen months. Owing to the great delays that were occasioned in Peru, the first six months expired before the boxes reached us, and the entire term ends in August 1917. Acting on a suggestion from the Smithsonian Institution I have been endeavoring for the past few months to secure permission from the Peruvian Government for the bones at least to remain in this country and become the property of our National Museum. Messrs. Grace & Company have been kindly using their good offices in this regard, but I have just received a letter from them informing me that the Peruvian Government will probably object to such an arrangement. It is suggested, however, that a written application be presented to the Peruvian Government through our State Department, applying for an extension of the term allowed. Messrs. Grace & Company feel that it would be extremely inadvisable to make any effort to obtain permanent cession of the bones, even though there is no law in Peru forbidding their exportation. The whole matter could so easily be used as a pretext by the political enemies of the present Government and the yellow press of Lima, that it is doubtful whether any good would come from this attempt. The matter has assumed a very large importance in the eyes of the Peruvians, who feel that we are trying to rob their country of its treasures.

I wish you would talk the matter over with Dr. Hrdlicka and Dr. Holmes, and see whether you think it is worth while to attempt to save the skeletal remains. They include about twenty fine specimens of trepanning, besides the most remarkable instance of trepanning of which we have knowledge, namely a skull with five holes. I am almost tempted to let the Peruvians "whistle for it", but I suppose that would not be fair to any future work that the National Geographic Society might try to do in Peru. If only Pezet were still Peruvian Minister we might accomplish something, but on the whole, I fear the game is not worth the candle. My suggestion is that the collection of skulls be turned over to the best anthropologist in this vicinity that is willing to handle it, on the condition that it is to go back to Peru in the near future. *Are you willing?*

By the way, have you seen Ferris's monograph on the Indians of Cuzco and Apurimac? I think you will be pleased with it. It is a fine, scholarly piece of work and the conditions imposed by your offer to pay for the cost of the Memoirs have been faithfully carried out. In accordance with your desire that a note, stating that the expense involved in the publication of this Memoir has been assumed by the National Geographic Society, be placed at the foot of the first page of the text, this has been done exactly as you requested. As soon as we receive them, one hundred copies will be sent you in accordance with your request.

With kind regards,

faithfully yours,



Gilbert H. Grosvenor, Esq.,
National Geographic Society,
Washington, D.C.