

PICTURE THIS | GALLERY

A SHORT CATALOGUE OF WORKS BY AUREL STEIN

together with related material on Central Asia and Chinese Buddhism

from the Library of Nathaniel Tarn

October 2025

Catalogue 51

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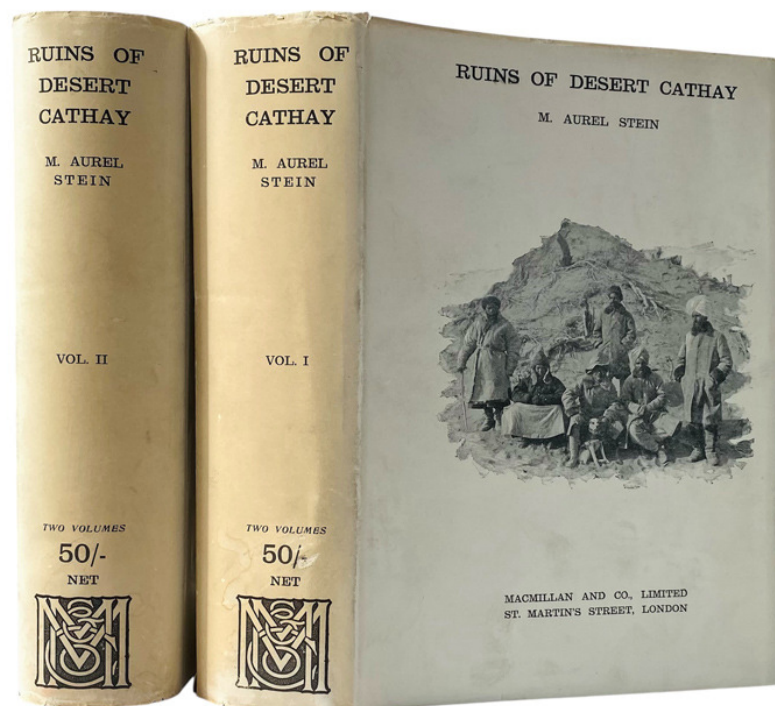


AUREL STEIN – BOOKS

1. **STEIN, M. Aurel – Ruins of Desert Cathay**

London: MacMillan, 1912.

Two volumes. First edition, first impressions. Octavos. Volume I: pp xxxviii, 546, [2]; Volume II: pp xxii, 518, [2], with a total of 8 colour plates (all with tissue guards), six folding panoramas, 333 b/w plate illustrations and 3 folding maps across the two volumes. Bound in brown cloth covered hard boards, gilt to spine and gilt embossed device to upper boards. Complete with the rare original publisher's dust jackets, printed on cream colour paper with black lettering and a photographic image to the upper panel of each. This is the account of Aurel Stein's second expedition to Central Asia, between 1906 and 1908, the highlight of which was his discovery in 1907 of the Mogao Caves, also known as "The Cave of the Thousand Buddhas" near Dunhuang and therein a printed copy of the Diamond Sutra, the world's oldest printed text which dates to 868 A.D. The books are both in Fine, bright, clean and unmarked condition. The jacket on volume I is Near Fine with some tanning to the spine. The jacket of Volume II has tears and loss at the bottom of the upper panel. The loss, which is approximately 4.5cm x 4.5cm, could be well restored by a competent paper conservator. This is an exceptional set of a landmark work of early 20th exploration and discovery. We can find no other copies of this book with jackets presently offered sale and our study of auction records found only one set offered with jackets (Sothebys 2015). [JMB-47] £3,200

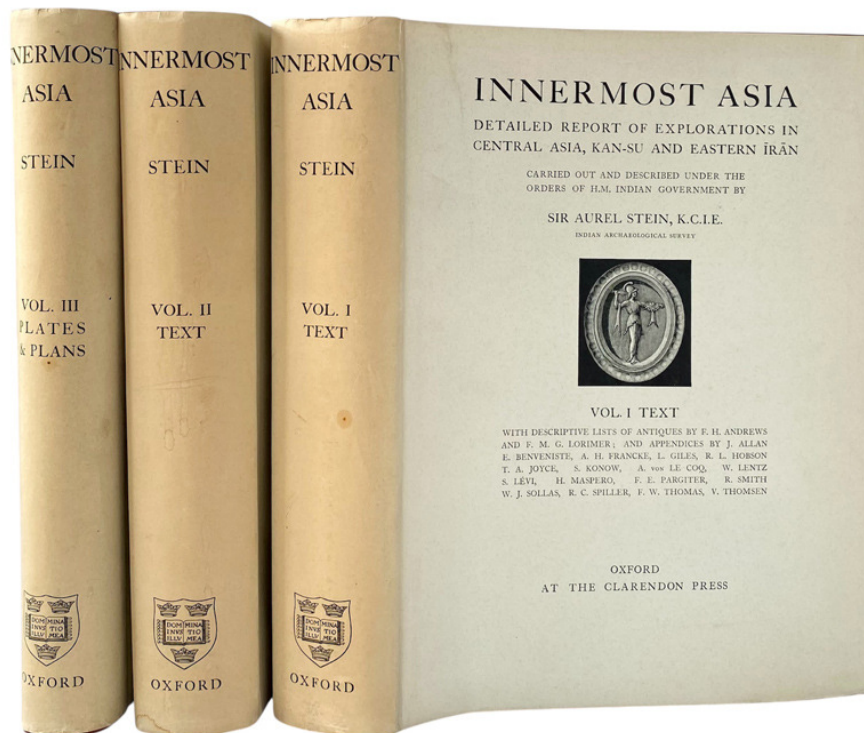


Second state with Maps A, B, C, D in an Envelope

2. **STEIN, Sir Aurel - INNERMOST ASIA. Detailed Report of Explorations in Central Asia, Kan-Su and Eastern Iran, carried out and described under the orders of H. M. Indian Government by Sir Aurel Stein, K. C. I. E. Indian Archaeological Survey.**

Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1928

First edition, second state. Three volumes, Folios (34cm x 25cm) plus the large brown envelope, printed in black to the front, containing Maps A, B, C, D. Volumes I & II – Text, pp xxxix, 1159 with text illustrations; Volume III – Plates and Plans, with 137 plates and 59 plans. Bound in terracotta colour cloth covered hard boards with gilt to spines and upper boards. All three volumes are with the original beige dust jackets lettered and decorated in black. All three books and the jackets are in Fine condition, the only flaw to note is a crease across the front panel of the jacket on Volume III. This is an exceptional condition set. This is one of approximately 250 sets made up without Volume IV – Maps as explained in the note below. [JMB-33] £12,000



Innermost Asia was issued complete as three volumes of text and plates, as above, together with Volume IV – Maps. The map box contains 47 maps plus the four maps A-D included here. These 47 maps were originally issued by Aurel Stein in 1923 in *Memoir on Maps of Chinese Turkistan and Kansu from the Surveys made during Sir Aurel Stein's Explorations 1900-1, 1906-8, 1913-5*, published by Trigonometrical Survey Office, Dehra Dun. Maps A, B, C, D were prepared for publication with *Innermost Asia* and were not previously issued.

As noted on page xxvi of this copy of Volume I, "The number of copies available of the text and illustrations that are contained in Vols I-III was greater by some 250 than that of the main series of maps contained in Vol IV. A number of sets, of which this is one, were therefore made up consisting of vols I-III and Maps A, B, C, and D only, and lacking the main series of 48 [sic] maps which were previously published in 1923 in a portfolio with Vol XVII of the *Records of the Survey of India*."

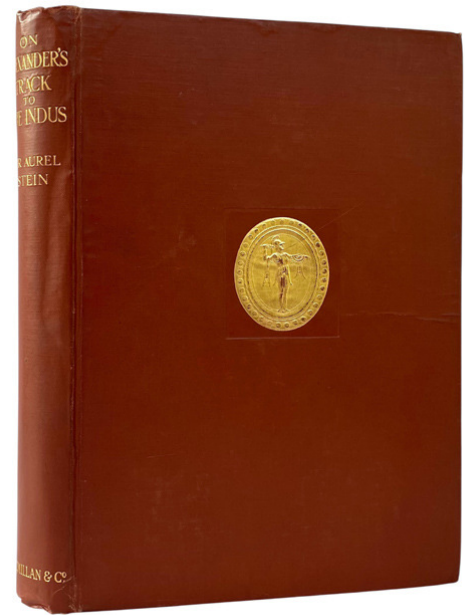
Most likely these subsequent state sets were offered to buyers who had already purchased Stein's 1923 *Memoir on Maps of Turkistan* and did not require a repeat set of the maps contained therein.

Note on OCLC: Both *Innermost Asia* and *Memoir on Maps* are widely held institutionally as would be expected. OCLC lists 47 holdings of the *Memoir on Maps* including the portfolio of 47 maps. For *Innermost Asia*, the main listing shows 178 holdings. Interestingly this cataloguing indicates Volume IV as being only the four maps A-D; presumably in fact many of the institutional holdings therein include the full box of 47 + 4 maps.

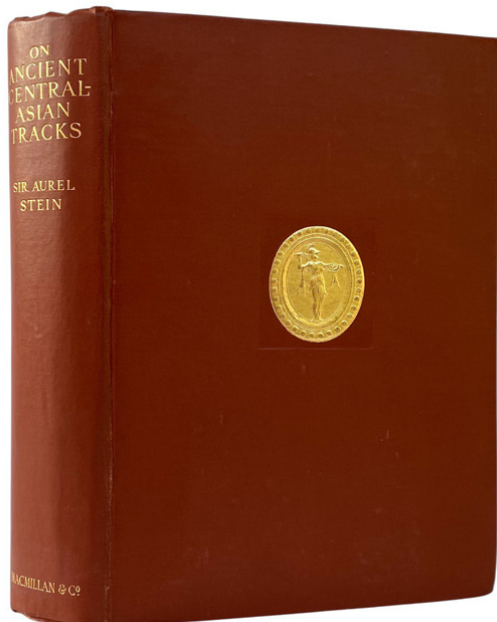


3. **STEIN, Sir Aurel - On Alexander's Track to the Indus. Personal Narrative of Explorations on the North-West Frontier of India, carried out under the orders of H.M. Indian Government**
London: MacMillan & Co., 1929

First edition. Octavo, pp xvi, 182 + 97 photo plate illustrations and two folding maps bound in at rear. Bound in brown cloth covered hard boards, gilt to spine and gilt embossed device to upper boards. Top edge gilt. Small bookseller's label of Arthur Probsthain to the front pastedown. Stein's account of his travels and explorations in the lands beyond the Indian controlled North-West Frontier, a region crossed by Alexander the Great and the areas between the Swat and Indus Rivers. A little bubbling of the cloth, overall in Near Fine condition. [JMB-22] £400



4. **STEIN, Sir Aurel - On Ancient Central-Asian Tracks. Brief Narrative of Three Expeditions in Innermost Asia and North-Western China**
London: Macmillan & Co., 1933



First edition. Octavo, pp xxiv, 342 + large folding map of Chinese Turkistan and 2 pages publisher's adverts at rear. With frontispiece and 147 further photo plate illustrations. Bound in brown cloth covered hard boards, gilt to spine and gilt embossed device to upper boards. Top edge gilt. This is Stein's briefer account of his three major expeditions to Central Asia, 1900-01, 1906-08 and 1913-14, during which he travelled the northern and southern silk roads, visited the Pamirs, Khotan, Dunhuang, Turfan, Kashgar and many other places and undertook major archaeological and topographical work. The book has a pencil inscription to the front free endpaper:

"Jerome Farrell, Jerusalem, April 1933". Farrell was General Director of Education, Palestine in the 1930's. Otherwise the book is clean and unmarked internally, binding remains strong, boards are clean and bright, overall in just about Fine condition. [JMB-64] £750

AUREL STEIN – OFFPRINTS

5. **STEIN, M.A. - Notes on Inscriptions from Udyāna presented by Major Deane**

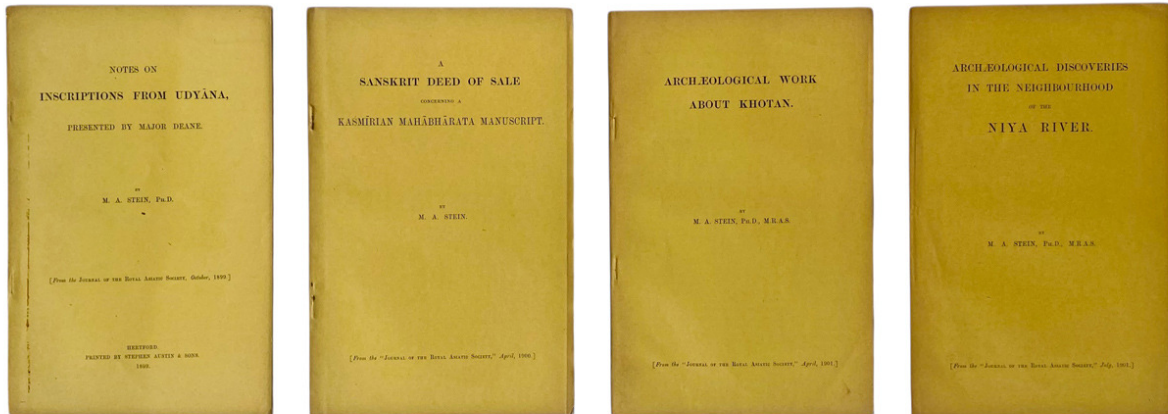
Hertford: Stephen Austin & Sons, 1899

First separately bound issue, originally published in Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1898. Octavo, 2 pages illustrations + pp 895-903. Staple bound in yellow soft card covers. In Very Good condition. This is a scarce early Stein offprint, which predates his first expedition to Asia. [JMBX-134] £200

6. **STEIN, M.A. - A Sanskrit Deed of Sale concerning a Kaśmīrian Mahābhārata Manuscript**

Hertford: Stephen Austin & Sons, [1900]

First separately bound issue, originally published in Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, April 1900. Octavo, pp 187-194 + folding plate illustration of the manuscript at the centre. Staple bound in yellow soft card covers. In Near Fine condition. [JMBX-135] £175



7. **STEIN, M.A. - Archaeological Work about Khotan**

Hertford: Stephen Austin & Sons, [1901]

First separately bound issue, originally published in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, April 1901. Octavo, pp 295-300. Staple bound in yellow soft card covers. In Near Fine condition. [JMBX-136] £150

8. **STEIN, M.A. - Archaeological Discoveries in the Neighbourhood of the Niya River**

Hertford: Stephen Austin & Sons, [1901]

First separately bound issue, originally published in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, July 1901. Octavo, pp 569-572. Staple bound in yellow soft card covers. In Near Fine condition. [JMBX-137] £150

9. **STEIN, Dr. M. Aurel - Explorations in Central Asia, 1906-8**

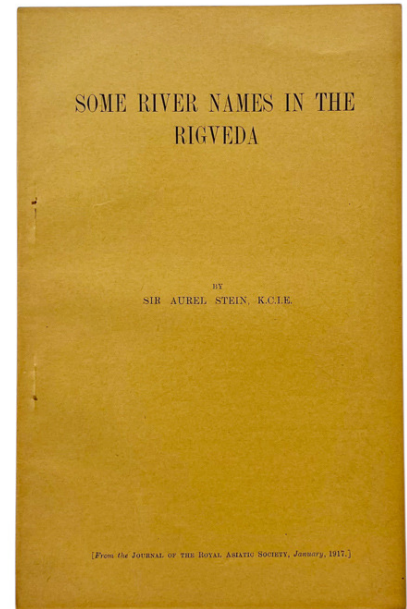
Edinburgh: The Scottish Geographical Magazine, 1910

First separately bound issue, originally published in The Scottish Geographical Magazine, May-June 1910, being the transcription of a speech delivered before the Society in Edinburgh on 27 January 1910. Octavo, pp 225-240 + pp 280-293. With 8 photo illustrations within-text. Staple bound in plain white covers. In Very Good condition. [JMBX-138] £50

10. **STEIN, M.A. - Some River Names in the Rigveda**

Hertford: Stephen Austin & Sons, [1917]

First separately bound issue, originally published in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, January 1917. Octavo, pp 91-99. Staple bound in yellow soft card covers. In Near Fine condition. [JMBX-139] £40



11. **STEIN, Sir Aurel - The Site of Alexander's Passage of the Hydaspes and the Battle with Poros**

London: William Clowes & Sons, [1932]

First separately bound issue, originally published in The Geographical Journal, July 1932. Octavo, pp 31-46 + five photo illustrations on four plates and two full page maps. String bound in blue soft card covers. In Very Good condition. [JMBX-140] £40

12. **STEIN, M.A. - The Ancient Trade route past Hatra and its Roman Posts, [Royal Asiatic Society], [1941]**

First separately bound issue, originally published in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, October 1941. Octavo, pp 299-316 + 1 photo plate illustration and within text full page map. Staple bound in light brown card covers. In Near Fine condition. [JMBX-141] £30

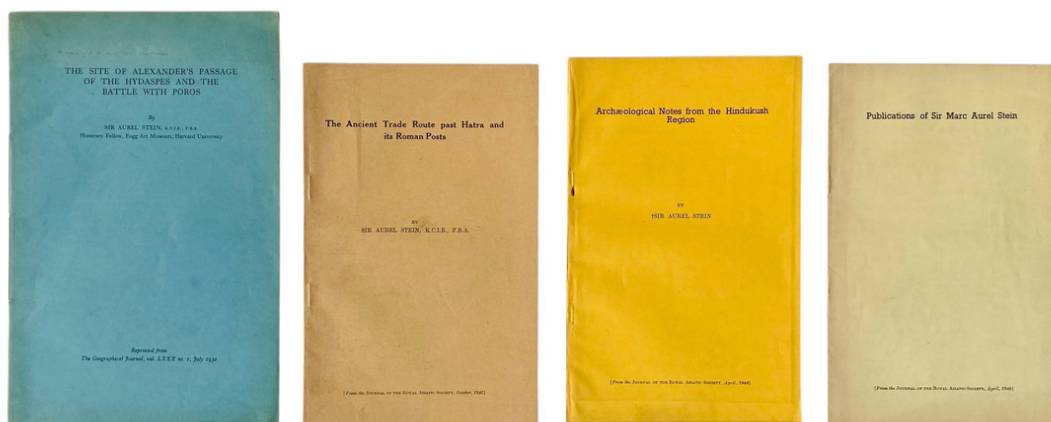
13. **STEIN, M.A. - Archaeological Notes from the Hindukush Region [Royal Asiatic Society], [1944]**

First separately bound issue, originally published in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, April 1944. Octavo, pp 5-24 + folding map titled "A Rough Sketch Map of Hatūn" and with six photo illustration on three plates. Staple bound in orange card covers. In Near Fine condition. [JMBX-142] £40

14. **Publications of Sir Marc Aurel Stein**

[Royal Asiatic Society], [1946]

First separately bound issue, originally published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, April 1946. Octavo, pp 86-89 + three blank pages. Staple bound in soft cream covers. A check list of books and articles by Stein, the earliest listed is an article in *Indian Antiquary*, Vol XVII in 1888. In Near Fine condition. [JMBX-143] £15

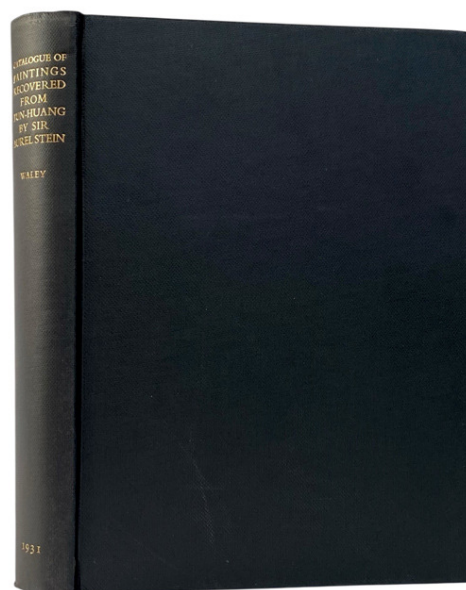


OTHER RELATED MATERIAL ON CENTRAL ASIA AND CHINESE BUDDHISM

15. **WALEY, Arthur - A Catalogue of Paintings Recovered from Tun-Huang by Sir Aurel Stein, preserved in the Sub-Department of Oriental Prints and Drawings in the British Museum, and in the Museum of Central Asian Antiquities, Delhi**

London: Printed by order of the Trustees of the British Museum and of the Government of India, 1931

First edition. Quarto, pp lii, 328. Bound in black cloth covered hard boards, gilt lettering to the spine. No jacket (possibly as issued). Preface by Laurence Binyon in which he notes that the story of the discovery of these paintings was fully told by Stein in *Ruins of Desert Cathay* (1912) and *Serindia* (1921). Arthur Waley, in his role as Assistant-Keeper of the Sub-Department of Oriental Prints and Drawings, undertook the production of this volume. The catalogue provides much detail

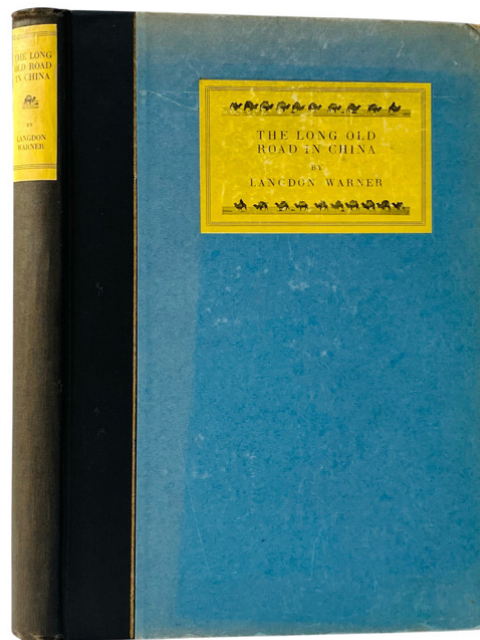
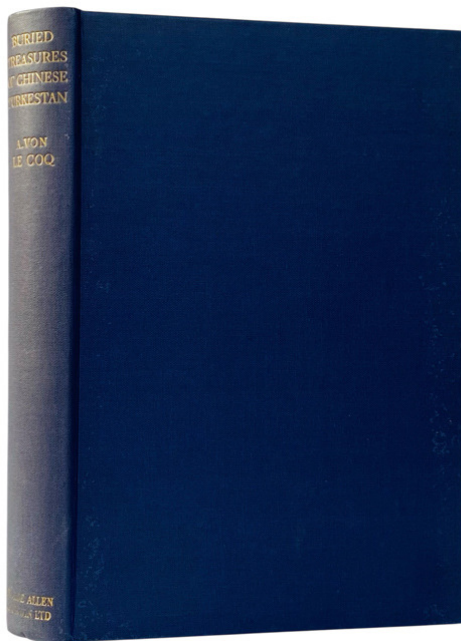


on paintings in both the London and Delhi collections, though there are no illustrations herein. The book is in Fine condition, clean and unmarked. An uncommon work, especially in this condition. [JMB-39] £375

16. **LE COQ, Albert von - Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan. An Account of the Activities and Adventures of the Second and Third German Turfan Expeditions**

London: George Allen & Unwin, 1928

UK First edition of book originally published in German in 1926 and translated here by Anna Barwell. Royal octavo, pp 180, with 52 b/w photo plate illustrations. Bound in dark blue cloth covered hard boards with gilt lettering to the spine. Nathaniel Tarn's copy with his bookplate to the front pastedown. Albert von Le Coq was an archaeologist attached to the Museum für Völkerkunde (now called the Ethnological Museum of Berlin) who was involved in organising the first German Turfan Expedition, and then led the Second and Third Expeditions where he discovered extensive networks of Buddhist caves in Xinjiang. Much of the treasure hauled back to German by Le Coq was destroyed during Allied Bombing in WW2. The book is in almost Fine condition, clean and bright within, slight tanning to the spine and a little rubbing to the gilt at the bottom of the spine. [JMB-70] £300



17. **WARNER, Langdon - The Long Old Road in China**

Garden City: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1926

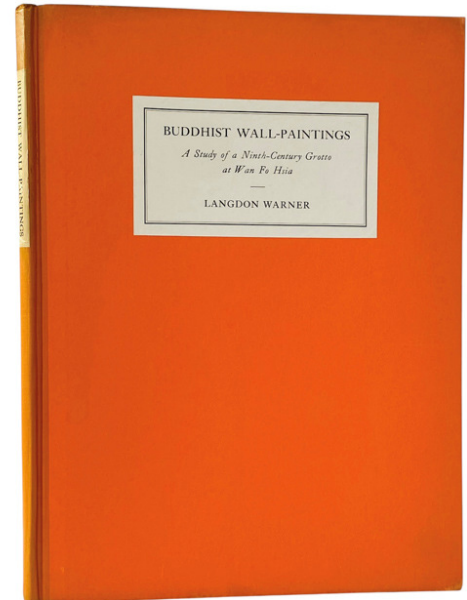
First edition. Tall octavo, pp viii, [2], 168pp, with 17 photo plate illustrations and 3 maps. Bound in blue paper covered hard boards over black cloth covered spine with a yellow paper title piece pasted to the upper board. Nathaniel Tarn's copy with his bookplate to the front paste-down. Langdon Warner (1881-1955) was an

American art historian and archaeologist and Professor at Harvard University. Warner recounts in this book his expedition to Western China where he reached the Mogao Caves in January 1924. The book is in Very Good condition, clean internally, the blue paper boards are a bit faded at the extremities. [JMBX-33] £100

18. **WARNER, Langdon - Buddhist Wall-Paintings. A Study of a Ninth-Century Grotto at Wan Fo Hsia**

Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938

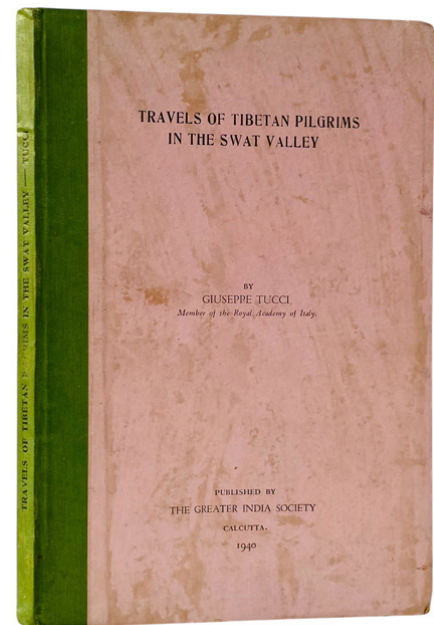
First edition. Folio, pp xv, 33, [6] + full page diagram of the Wan Fo Hsia cave and 45 full page b/w plate illustrations. Bound in orange paper covered hard boards over orange cloth covered spine, cream paper title labels pasted to the upper board and spine. Nathaniel Tarn's copy with his bookplate to the front paste-down. An excellent clean and tight copy in Near Fine condition of an uncommon book. [JMB-19] £300



19. **TUCCI, Giuseppe - Travels of Tibetan Pilgrims in the Swat Valley**

Calcutta: The Greater India Society, 1940

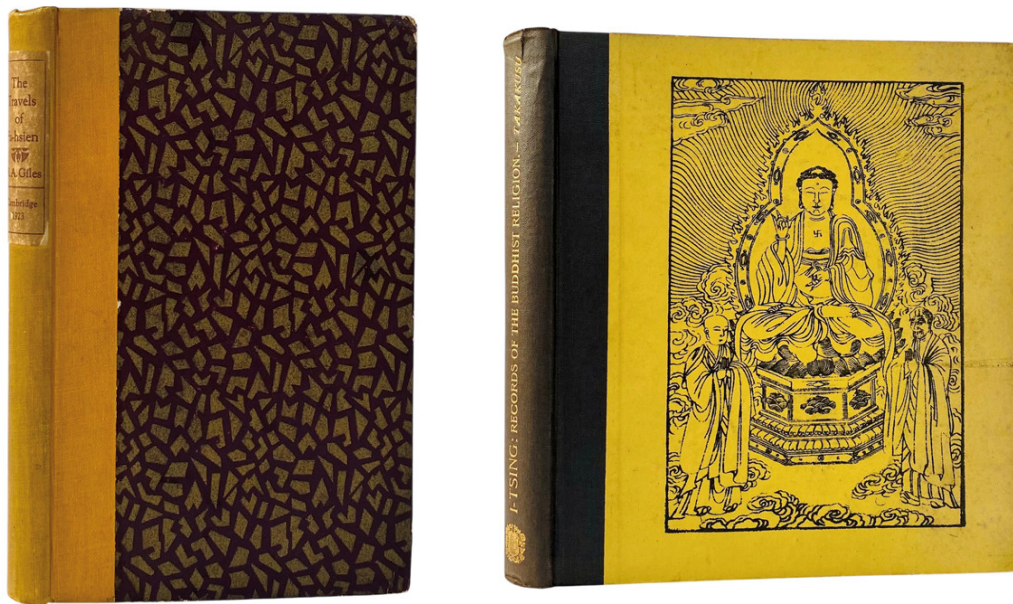
First Edition. Octavo, pp 103, 2 pages Addenda + 2 pages publisher's adverts. Bound in pink paper covered hard boards over green cloth spine, with black lettering to the spine. In his introduction herein, Tucci notes his debt to Aurel Stein for his explorations in the Swat Valley, which Stein wrote about in "On Alexander's Track to the Indus". Here Tucci translates the itinerary of Orgyan Pa in the 13th century and the travels of Stag Ts'an Ras Pa in the 17th century through the Swat Valley, which is in the Hindu Kush mountain range in northern Pakistan. Giuseppe Tucci (1894-1984) was an Italian scholar who specialised in Tibetan culture and the history of Buddhism. The book is in Very Good condition, the page block is clean and unmarked and essentially fine, the endpapers and papers covers have some browning which appears to be glue offset. This appears to be a general problem with this book as we have seen same on other copies. [JMB-89] £120



20. **GILES, H.A. - The Travels of Fa-hsien (399-414 A.D.), or Record of the Buddhistic Kingdoms**

Cambridge: at the University Press, 1923

First edition. Small octavo, pp xvi, 96. Map of Fa-hsien's travels to the rear endpapers. Frontispiece illustration. Bound in decorative paper covered hard boards over mustard colour spine. Paper title label to spine and a second identical label tipped onto the front pastedown. Fa-hsien's travels took him to Ceylon, India, the Swat Valley, Kashgar, Khotan and across the Lop-Nor Desert. He was one of the earliest Chinese Buddhist monks to travel to India in search of Buddhist scriptures and monastic practices. Nathaniel Tarn's copy with his bookplate to the front paste-down. Otherwise clean. In Very Good Plus condition. [JMBX-146] £60



21. **I-TSING and translated by J. TAKAKUSU - Record of the Buddhist Religion as practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671-695)**

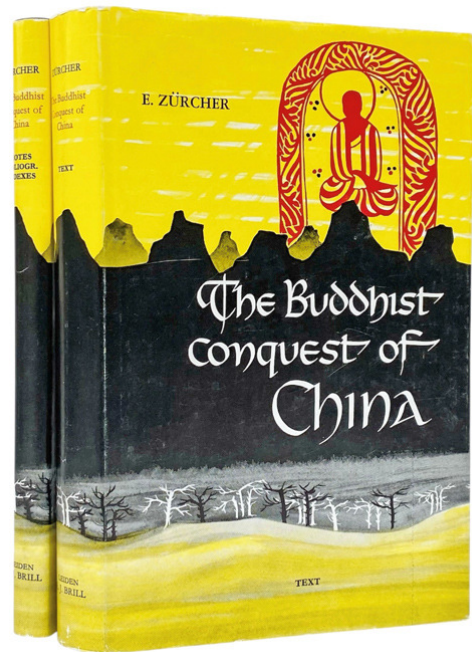
Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1896

First edition. Quarto, 20cm x 23cm, pp lxiv, 240. With large folding map showing I-Tsing's routes from China to India and back bound in facing the title page. Bound in yellow paper covered hard boards over black cloth covered spine, gilt-block text to spine and the boards decorated with an image of the Buddha to the upper and the title, translator and publisher in Chinese characters to the lower. I-Tsing followed in the footsteps of Fa-hsien by travelling to India to study and bring home Buddhist scriptures and learnings. In this book, Takakusu has translated the writings of I-Tsing and provides a commentary and evaluation. The book is in Near Fine condition, clean and unmarked within, the boards a little dust dulled and the spine gently faded, small split at the head of the spine. Scarce in commerce. [JMB-97] £750

22. **ZÜRCHER, E. - The Buddhist Conquest of China. The spread and adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China**

Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972

Two volumes. Second edition, 1972 of books first published in 1959, and here reprinted with additions and corrections. Volume 1: Text, pp XIII, 320. Volume 2: Notes - Bibliography - Indexes, pp 321-470. Bound in brown cloth covered hard boards, gilt to spine and upper board, and in the publisher's original dust jackets. Zürcher's work is a landmark study on the adoption, spread and adaptation of Buddhism from India into China in the 4th and 5th centuries. Nathaniel Tarn's copies with his bookplate to the front paste-down of both volumes. Both books are in almost as new condition, Fine and bright. [JMB-35] £170



Books from the Library of Nathaniel Tarn

Nathaniel Tarn (1928-2024) was a French-American poet, essayist, academic and anthropologist. Born Edward Michael Mendelson in Paris and schooled in England, he lectured in South-east Asian Anthropology at SOAS in London in the 1960's. He later moved primarily to the field of literature and poetry, and relocated to the US where he lectured at Princeton, and then became Professor of American and English Literature at Rutgers University. Even after this career change, Tarn continued to write and publish anthropological work including on the sociology of Buddhist institutions. He continued writing and researching in retirement from his home outside Santa Fe, New Mexico, as a poet, literary critic, translator and editor of magazines.

