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## The Mystery of the Pacific

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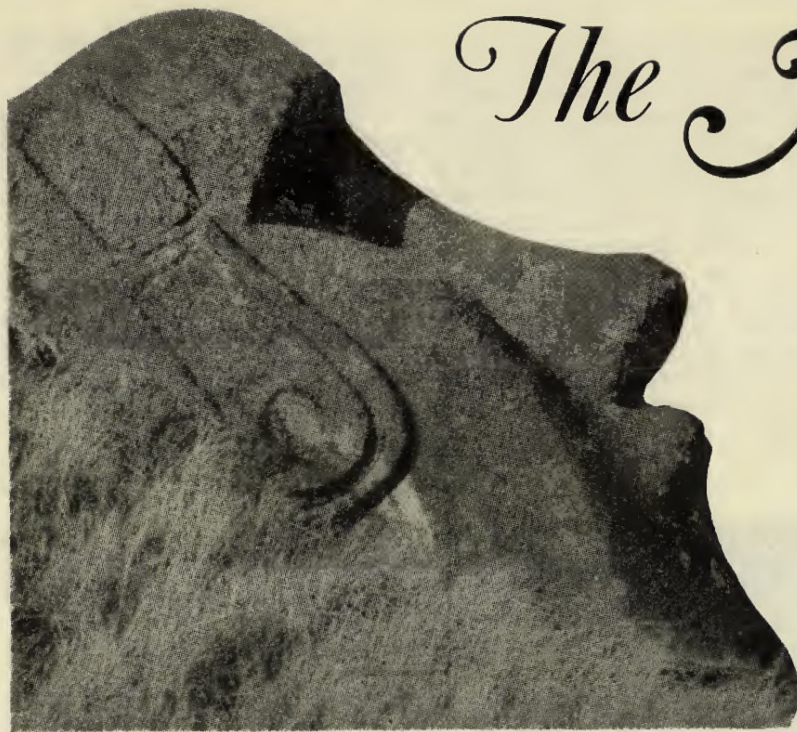
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**Abstract:** This article is a travelogue of visitors to Easter Island. The underlying question is whether or not certain aspects of the island reflect cultural characteristics of the Nephite voyagers during the time of Hagoth.



# The Mystery of the Pacific

By

GEORGE F. PAUL

*Sail with George F. Paul and Captain Ault over the seas to "The Mystery of the Pacific." Are these also expressions from the minds of those who went down to the sea in Haggath's ship?*

**F**EW spots in all the length and breadth of the globe have the enthralling interest that is centered around Easter Island, "the mystery of the Pacific." Members of the crew of the non-magnetic ship, "Carnegie," declared it to be the wonder spot in their cruise of 110,000 nautical miles in all oceans of the globe. This island is in the South Pacific, about 2,000 miles from Chile, to which it was annexed in 1888.

It is on this island that are preserved the enduring memorials of workers in cyclopean stone. These great images are far beyond the capacity of the present islanders. These stone statues are huge masses of tufa-crowned human shapes mounted upon platforms, usually along the edges of the cliffs. They are found in all stages of development, from the partly hewn block in the quarries to the monument finished and erected in place. They are claimed by the traditions of the islanders as the work of their forefathers down to quite recent generations. Yet, despite the tradition, it is difficult to see how a people unacquainted with metals could hew these great masses of

volcanic rock, or how, without some mechanical help, they could lift these weights over the crater rim, transport them long distances and rear them on end.

**L**ET us listen to Captain Ault as he tells the story of his visit: "We were welcomed and guided to the harbor by the entire population who could get into boats. The governor came out with his Chilean flag flying and all seemed delighted to see new faces. It had been six months since the Island had had a visitor.

"We lowered our dinghy and sped ashore. We stayed with Mr. Edmunds, manager of the ranch, for lunch and enjoyed fresh roast mutton, lettuce, cucumbers and bananas. The next day we all took to horses and rode eight miles to see the famous images. Several of the party had never mounted a horse before, so they decided to walk for the last five miles, just to rest themselves. Some of the horses had ridge-pole backs, which is probably the reason that some of the party found it more comfortable to walk than to ride.

"And it rained nearly all day. Once or twice we sought shelter in

the lee of an overturned image, and again, beneath the overhanging branches of a group of fig trees. Here we ate the ripening fruit and enjoyed it.

"We visited the ranch of two Scotchmen who have charge of the ranch where 35,000 sheep are kept. We dug into some of the ancient graves and brought up some of the curiously carved skulls of the ancient chiefs who had been buried there.

"Sewell had a fight with two hawks that had adopted the image mountain as their home, and resented our coming. They swooped down angrily to within a few inches of his head.

"The Scotchmen blamed all our bad luck, rain, no photographs and hawk fights on our having disturbed the slumbers of the ancients in their stony sepulchres. We had lunch under the shelter of an overhanging ledge where a huge image had been carved out. From this point we could see images in every direction, in every position, and in all stages of completion, mute testimony to the sudden stopping of all work by the slaves who were doing the carving.



Strange monuments on Easter Island in the South Pacific, about 2,000 miles from Chile. In the island's small area there are 555 statues, cut from lava. They range from 3 to 70 feet in length.

WE had three native boys to carry cameras and lunch, and when we returned on board, we paid them with sugar and an old coat. Money is of little use on the island. The natives prefer flour, sugar, clothing, soap, and especially lacking were needles and thread. Anyone with an extra pair of black trousers could have had anything on the island for such a treasure.

"Here we again carried on our scientific observations on ship and shore, keeping the recording instruments going night and day for three days. The tents were usually surrounded in the daytime by a crowd of natives, curious to find out what the strangers were doing and watching for any little present we might give them.

"Our old guide of 1915, Juan Tapara, was there and remembered us. In general there was a decided improvement in the manner of living. Many are growing yams, sweet potatoes and corn and raising sheep and cattle.

"The doctor held several clinics, treating the natives for various complaints, mostly rheumatism, injuries from horseback accidents and stomach-ache. The governor's wife, a native woman, teaches the school, and a priest comes from the mainland once a year to care for the religious life of the village. The people are poor, but they are happy, live in a fine climate, and seem to get along very well together. The most severe punish-

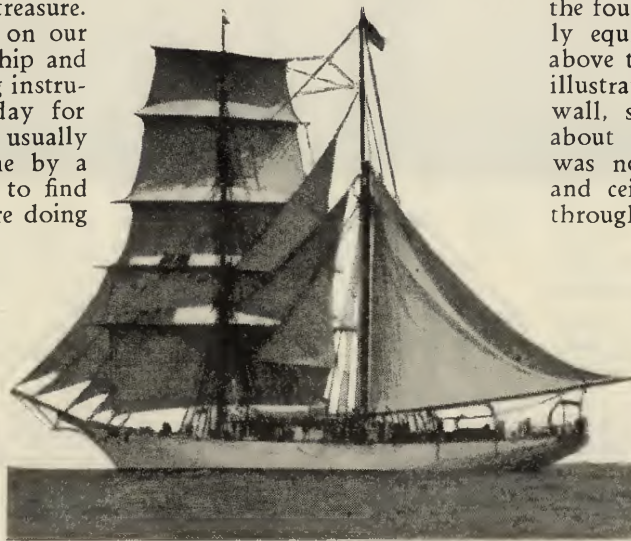
ment, dealt out for robbery, which seems to be the chief crime, is to sentence the guilty person to work in the garden for a day. A former governor, who had been a Valparaiso policeman, had built a small box, in which the prisoner had room only to stand up, no room to 'swat' the flies or mos-

hooks and marvelously carved images.

IN one small hut, consisting of one room with a dirt floor, lives a family of four women. There was a pile of sticks in one corner, a small pile of corn in another, a raised platform with some bedding in a third corner, and in the fourth corner a more elaborately equipped bed, about five feet above the floor. A few magazine illustrations were tacked to the wall, some straw was scattered about the floor, otherwise there was no furniture and the walls and ceiling were full of cracks through which the rain entered freely. The white-covered bed, elevated above the dirt, gave a startling effect of a shrine amid squalor, of a best room in the middle of the kitchen.

"And here lived the old grandmother, one of the few surviving natives of the early days. She spoke only a few words of Spanish and was proud to speak them all at once when we entered the hut where she was squatting in front of a small fire of corncobs in the middle of the floor, boiling a few grains of corn for the family dinner.

The bed is for a fair granddaughter, about 16 years old, "the jewel and treasure of the family, the rose born to blush unseen, on this island of mystery, far out in the boundless Pacific."



The ship Carnegie under full sail.

quitoes, and one day usually proved a cure.

"We wandered about the village, admiring the gorgeous geraniums, snapdragons, hollyhocks and others of the old-fashioned flowers we have known so well; chatting in Spanish with the natives, trading wearing apparel for small stone images, old stone fish-