

Alfred Kidder II 1911-1984

Alfred Kidder II (called Alf, Alfie, Ted, or Teddy by family, friends, and colleagues) was born on August 2, 1911, on Nantucket Island. He was the eldest of five children born to the pioneer Southwestern and Mesoamerican archaeologist Alfred Vincent Kidder (1885-1963) and Madeleine Appleton (1891-1981).

The young Kidder attended the Noble and Greenough School in Dedham (1922-1928), and Phillips Academy in Andover (1928-1929). He graduated *magna cum laude* from Harvard College in 1933, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree; at Harvard he was on the track and football teams, and belonged to the A.D. and the Hasty Pudding Clubs. He obtained both his M.A. (1935) and his Ph.D. (1937) from Harvard, and taught at that institution from 1937 to 1950, except for a four-year period during World War II. In 1950 Kidder came to The University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania (Fig. 4), where he was Curator of the American Section (1967-1971) and Associate Director (1950-1967). He also taught in the Department of Anthropology until his retirement in 1971, having attained the rank of professor in 1962.

On June 23, 1934, he married Mary Barbour (1914-1977), daughter of Thomas Barbour of the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University; the next day they departed for Venezuela (M. Kidder 1942). Mary Kidder accompanied and assisted her husband on almost all of his expeditions, a not so uncommon practice of that time. She spoke Spanish fluently and had had much experience in mending and restoring pottery in the Peabody Museum at Harvard. She also kept accounts and assisted in archaeological record keeping, as well as in publication preparation.

Between 1942 and 1946 Kidder served in the United States Army Air Forces in the ranks from first lieutenant to major. He was involved in administration of the training of foreign air force personnel. He received the Legion of Merit and decorations by the governments of China, France, and Brazil.

Kidder had an avid interest in birds, in fishing, and in collecting figurines of bulls. He was a member of the Tavern and Somerset Clubs of Boston and the Blue Hill Country Club. He died on February 2, 1984, at age 72 and was buried at St. David's Church in Wayne, PA.

South American Research

Within archaeology, Kidder was best known for his investigations in the Lake Titicaca Basin, but he also made contributions to the archaeology of Venezuela, and produced a notable synthesis of archaeological research in the Andes. A list of his major publications is presented below.

His decision to specialize in South American archaeology was certainly influenced by a desire to distinguish his own career from that of his famous father (John H. Rowe, pers. com. 1988; Woodbury 1973). Much of his childhood was spent in Pecos, New Mexico, where his father carried out a landmark field project between 1915 and 1929. Kidder confessed to an early fascination with being a cowboy, but as an adult he chose to be an archaeologist. He began archaeological field research in 1929 when he carried out a reconnaissance in southeastern Utah with Frank H. H.

1 (above)
Alfred Kidder II at Machu Picchu, Cuzco, August 11, 1937.

Roberts, Jr., for Harvard University.

Kidder's survey and excavations in northern Venezuela during 1933 and 1934 constituted his first field work in Latin America and formed the basis of his Ph.D. thesis (1937). The 1934 research was sponsored by Harvard and represented the Peabody Museum's first direct involvement in South American archaeology. A large collection of pottery and other artifacts were brought back to the Peabody, and Kidder later published a monograph on this Venezuelan work (1944). In 1948 he produced a highly regarded synthesis of Venezuelan archaeology for the *Handbook of South American Indians*. In 1936, Kidder also worked in Honduras (Fig. 2).

He went to Peru for the first time in the summer of 1937, in preparation for a course on Andean archaeology he was to teach at Harvard (Fig. 1). During a two-month period he carried out reconnaissance with emphasis on the southern highlands, and his report on these activities represents his first writing on Andean archaeology. In Peru, he was accompanied for a time by Julio C. Tello, one of the fathers of Peruvian archaeology and an old friend of Mary Kidder's parents. In Bolivia, he visited Tiahuanaco, guided by Arthur Posnansky, known for his

extensive volumes on the site and culture.

It was during this 1937 trip that Kidder first visited Pucara (see map, p. 3) and realized the site had archaeological potential: it had a good stratigraphic sequence to provide a chronological guide, and was related to other important prehistoric sites in the region, such as Chiripa and Tiahuanaco (see chronological chart p. 2). He brought back to the Peabody a small collection of sherds from this and other sites visited in 1937. One of the techniques that Kidder used to gain information about pottery production was petrographic analysis, employing thinly cut sections from the walls of ceramic vessels (see Carlevato, this issue). Using Pucara, Tiahuanaco and Inca-style sherds from this 1937 collection, he pioneered the use of thin-section analysis for Andean pottery, perhaps influenced by earlier work his father and Anna Shepard had carried out in the southwestern United States.

Kidder undertook excavations at Pucara in 1939, sponsored by the Peabody Museum. He uncovered rich midden deposits, human remains, and architecture, including probable house foundations and complex temples (see K. Chávez article, this issue). Mary Kidder

(1942) gives a personal account of this and the 1937 trips in her diary, with illustrations of their 1939 living quarters, called the "Harvard Flat" (Fig. 3). For both his 1937 and 1939 investigations, Kidder had been appointed Honorary Fellow of the Institute of Andean Research.

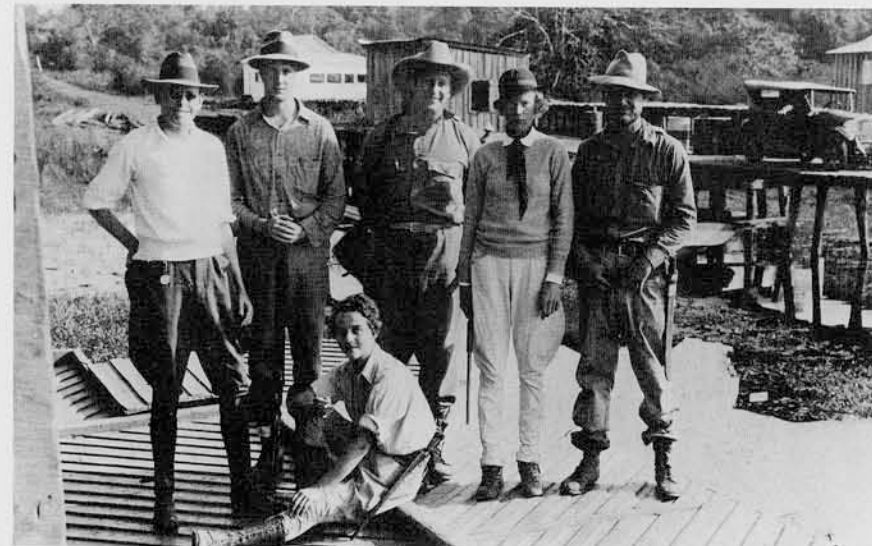
In 1941 Kidder became involved with the ambitious Inter-American Affairs archaeological program.



3
Kidder in the "Harvard Flat," Estacion de Pucara, Puno, during the 1939 project at Pucara.

The previous year, the Institute of Andean Research had planned 10 archaeological projects to be carried out in Latin America and had persuaded the U.S. Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs to fund the program. The impetus for the program stemmed from our government's concern about improving cultural relations with Latin America, since Germany was believed to have as great an influence there as did the United States (Rowe, pers. com. March 1984 and May 1988). Diverse universities and museums were involved, and Latin American institutions and archaeologists collaborated closely in both research and publication (Mason n.d.:6, 22-25).

Kidder became Director of Project 7 in the southern highlands of Peru, with the Peabody Museum collaborating. He named John H. Rowe, then his student, as Supervisor and Marion T. Tschopik as Assistant Supervisor. From June to September 1941 Kidder conducted a regional reconnaissance in the



2
In 1936 Kidder and his wife Mary went to Honduras on a Smithsonian Institution-Harvard University archaeological expedition. Excavations were carried out in the Ulua, Comayagua, and Chamelecor Valleys. From l. to r.: Wilson Popenoe, Drexel Paul, Mrs. Strong, Alfred Kidder II, Mary Kidder, and William Duncan Strong. (Photo: National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, courtesy of The University Museum)

Department of Puno; his aim was to discover the nature and extent of the Pucara culture, and to locate additional related early sites in the northern Lake Titicaca Basin (Kidder 1943:v, 8-9, 39). (Transportation was by a Ford panel truck dubbed by the crew 'the Pampa Jumper.') Kidder's survey still remains a useful and valuable contribution to our knowledge of sites, pottery, and sculpture of the area; and the publications of Rowe's work in Cuzco and Tschopik's on late remains in Puno also stand as important Project 7 results under Kidder's directorship.

After coming to The University Museum in 1950, Kidder continued an active program of field work. In 1955 he carried out excavations at four sites in the Lake Titicaca Basin (Fig. 5): Tiahuanaco and Chiripa in Bolivia, and Pucara and Qaluyu in Peru (Kidder 1956a). This project marked a resumption of the Museum's Andean research program after a 30-year hiatus. The investigation was aimed generally at correcting "the disparity between our knowledge of coast and highland" and at establishing a regional chronology (Kidder 1956a:21; see also Chávez and Chávez n.d.). Kidder took advantage of the advent of radiocarbon dating as a method of resolving chronological problems, and pioneered the use of C14 dates for the Andean highlands (Ralph 1959).

Contributions to Research and Teaching

In Philadelphia, Kidder became directly involved in what today would be called "outreach" programs, helping to present anthropology and archaeology to a broad general audience. He was a regular participant in the CBS television program "What in the World?," which won a Peabody Award for excellence in broadcasting (Fig. 6). He was also Chairman of the Editorial Board for *Expedition Magazine* (1958-1971).

During these years, Kidder served as president of the Institute of Andean Research (1955-1956). He was on the Executive Committee of the Society for American Archae-



4
Alfred Kidder II, 1957.

ology (1952-1954), and served as treasurer from 1961-1965; he was also on the Executive Board of the American Anthropological Association (1958-1961).

As a field archaeologist, Kidder was explicit about many of his goals in conducting research in the Lake Titicaca Basin. Most of his work was directed at resolving cultural historical problems, many of which are still not satisfactorily answered today: he sought to resolve chronological problems, determine the geographical distribution of settlements and styles during specific periods, and describe the origins, nature, development of and relations between the archaeological cultures of Qaluyu, Chiripa, Pucara,



5
Members of the 1955 University Museum expedition to Bolivia. From left to right: Gregorio Cordero Miranda, William R. Coe, Alfred Kidder II, and Mary B. Kidder. (Alan R. Sawyer, not shown here, also participated; in Peru Manuel Chávez Ballón assisted Kidder.)

and Tiahuanaco (see chart, p. 2; Kidder 1943:v-vi, 37-40; 1948a; 1956a). He was cautious and thorough in his description and interpretation of the evidence. Despite the number of years that have passed since Kidder's research was undertaken, the results of these pioneer, long-term, and broad-ranged investigations still stand as important contributions to the understanding of Andean prehistory.

As a teacher, Kidder gave generously to his students. Rowe states that he "taught an excellent course on Andean archaeology. It was a very well organized synthesis of what was known then, with careful presentation of the evidence.... He had a broad command of the archaeology of all of South America" (pers. com. March 1984). He had the ability to isolate research problems, and to stimulate his students to try to solve them. But there were never rigid demands or orientations; rather, he permitted individual freedom and creativity in one's own areas of investigation, and provided encouragement and moral support to pursue those goals. Although shy in conversation, his classroom lectures and discussions revealed a wealth of knowledge. He listened to all sides and was reluctant to adhere to an unchanging dogmatic point of view.

Whether in America or the Andean highlands, Alfred V. Kidder II earned the respect of those with whom he worked or interacted, and he was regarded as a gentleman.

Karen L. Mohr Chávez



6
A segment of *The University Museum's television program What in the World?* filmed sometime in the 1950s. Carleton Coon, Jacques Lipchitz, and Alfred Kidder examine an object while moderator Froelich Rainey looks on. (Reproduced courtesy of WCAU-TV, Philadelphia)

Alfred Kidder II: Selected Bibliography

[A more complete bibliography is on file in The University Museum Archives, as well as a longer biography.]

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