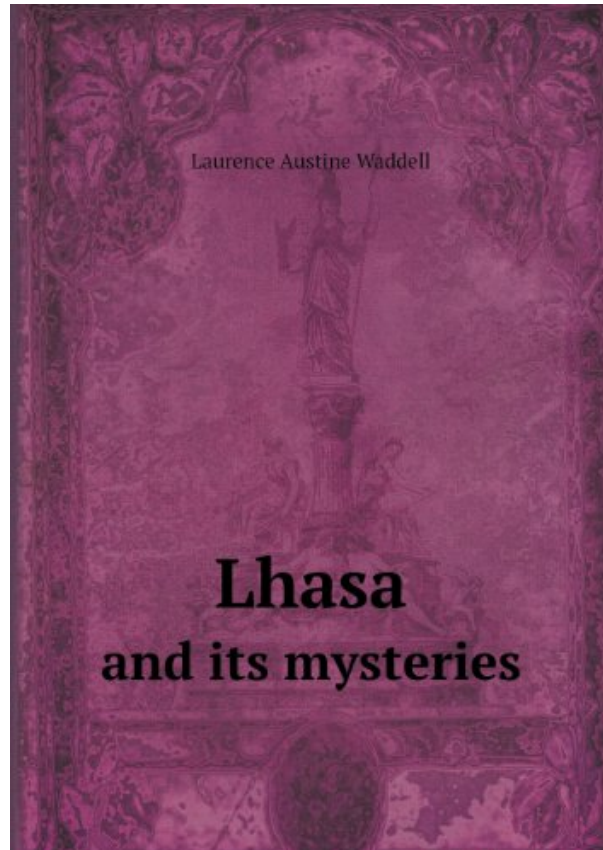
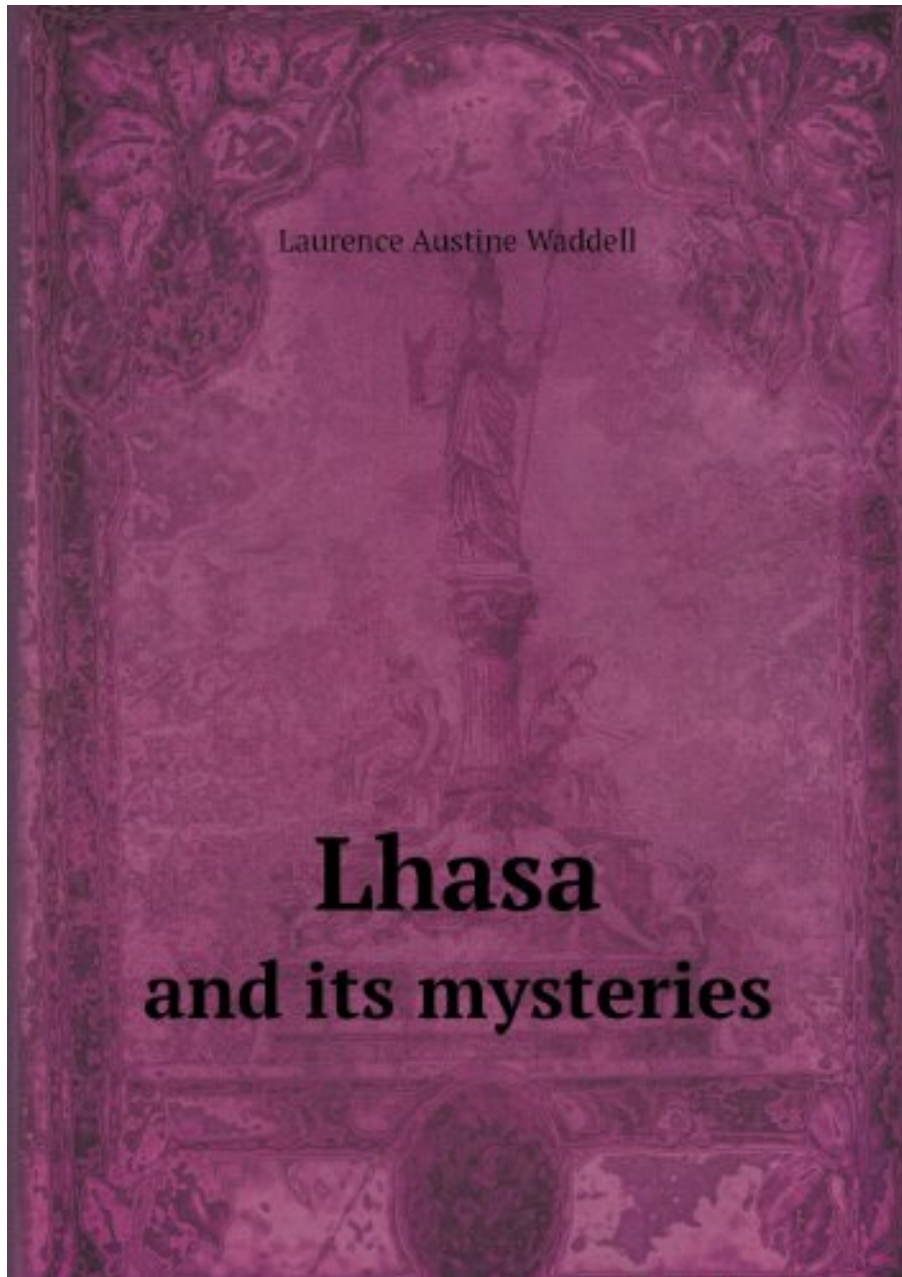


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Lhasa and its mysteries. With a record of the expedition of 1903-1904 (1906). This book, "Lhasa and its mysteries", by Laurence Austine Waddell, is a replication of a book originally published before 1906. It has been restored by human beings, page by page, so that you may enjoy it in a form as close to the original as possible.

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- Binding: Paperback
- 744 pages

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4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Enthusiastically written, but dry to read

By Michael Green

In the main, Waddell's account follows a military brigade into the sacred and forbidden precincts of Lhasa, capital of Tibet. He enthusiastically remarks, with much of the pompous pedagogy of a Brit, about details of daily life for commoners and high priests alike, with comparisons between the mannerisms and culture of the Tibetans, Chinese and Nepalese.

He reveals, among many other and various tidbits, the history of Mt Everest, the indispensable qualities of yak dung (for fuel), the ignorance and widespread illiteracy of the supposedly learned monks, and the military difficulties of the expedition.

Only 1/4 of the book involves Lhasa. Of 448 pages of text, the expedition does not reach the capital city until page 326, where Waddell's observations continue on the "boasted divinity" of the Dalai Lama, whose face shows ravages of smallpox. The expedition had also been warned previously against visiting Lhasa, as the "Grand Lama might die from the shock to his religious feelings." Waddell also details the ways of life for Tibetans in the capital, who, like most Orientals of the period, "appreciate kindness, but worship strength."

Waddell appears too much in his writing. His focus is on the grand adventure, as felt by himself, rather than on the images he hopes to convey to his reader. His book is full of wonderful and interesting details, but these are sprinkled like pepper on a military and political expedition, and though intriguing from time to time, the book overall, without being tedious, is as dry a read as they come.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Genius

By CHRIS CONNOR

L.A. Waddell was a man of his times. His interest in the subject of "Lamaism"--Tibetan Buddhism--was groundbreaking, original and a precise description of the religion that avoids the spiritual tourism of the likes of Richard Gere and Steven Segal that is so often annoying today.

In "Lhasa and its Mysteries" we explore the spiritual and equally-important political landscape of the "hidden kingdom" of the Himalayas and find not a shangri-la but a complex feudal outpost.

Still Wadell utilizes his considerable sociological and historical knowledge to good effect, giving the reader an exact and in-depth account that is both a sociological treatise on the lifestyle of the peasants, the philosophy of the different lamaist lineages, and the flora and fauna then so foreign to outsiders. Anyone wishing to plumb the profound spiritual depths of the richness of Tibetan Buddhism decades prior to the Red Chinese holocaust of this important place is remiss to avoid reading "Lhasa and its Mysteries" and giving it an important place in his or her personal library.

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