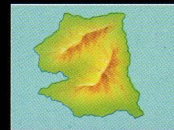


EXPLOSIONS AND INVASIONS

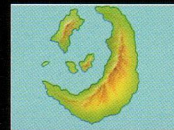
Around 1600BC, the once golden age of Minoan culture went into decline. Although we don't know exactly why this happened, it seems that Crete suffered a series of natural disasters which must have contributed.

THERA EXPLODES

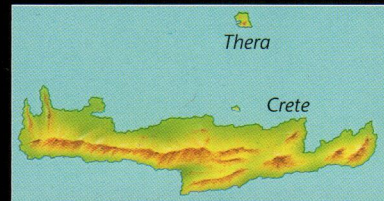
Scientists have discovered that, around 1450BC, the nearby island of Thera was blasted to pieces by a massive volcanic eruption. At about the same time, the palaces on Crete were destroyed. The cause may have been tidal waves and earth tremors, created by the eruption - but, whatever the reason, the whole Minoan way of life was thrown into chaos.



Thera before the eruption



Thera after the eruption



Thera (the main part of which is now called Santorini) is 110km (70 miles) from Crete.



INTERNET LINK

For a link to a website where you can explore the ruins of Akrotiri on Thera and look at more frescoes and pottery, go to www.usborne-quicklinks.com

The explosion on Thera may have been the biggest volcanic eruption in 10,000 years. People would have been killed, farmland ruined by falling ash, and houses destroyed.

