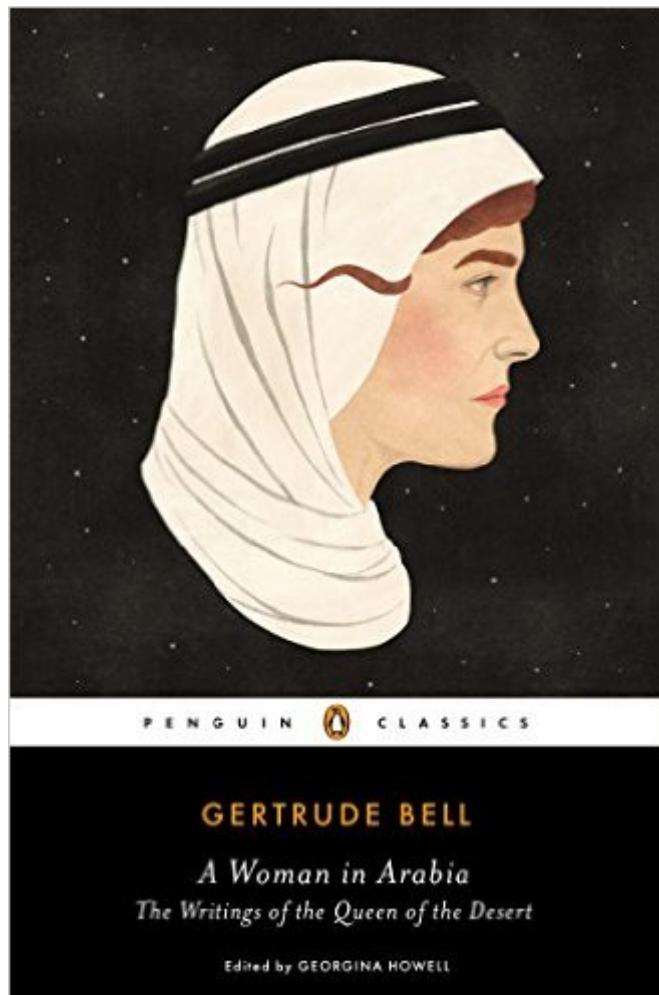


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A Woman In Arabia: The Writings Of The Queen Of The Desert (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

A portrait in her own words of the female Lawrence of Arabia, the subject of the upcoming major motion picture Queen of the Desert, starring Nicole Kidman, James Franco, Damian Lewis, and Robert Pattinson, and directed by Werner Herzog. Gertrude Bell was leaning in 100 years before Sheryl Sandberg. One of the great woman adventurers of the twentieth century, she turned her back on Victorian society to study at Oxford and travel the world, and became the chief architect of British policy in the Middle East after World War I. Mountaineer, archaeologist, Arabist, writer, poet, linguist, and spy, she dedicated her life to championing the Arab cause and was instrumental in drawing the borders that define today's Middle East. As she wrote in one of her letters, "a celt's a bore being a woman when you are in Arabia." • Forthright and spirited, opinionated and playful, and deeply instructive about the Arab world, this volume brings together Bell's letters, military dispatches, diary entries, and travel writings to offer an intimate look at a woman who shaped nations. For more than sixty-five years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,500 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

I have long been fascinated by Gertrude Bell, "Queen of the Desert", a rare traveler in the middle east who loved the land and people, and worked hard for them to achieve their independence. This collection of her letters is an excellent companion read with the biography by Janet Wallach entitled 'Queen of the Desert'. This edited volume presents a very readable summary of her travels and her life in the letters and diaries she wrote daily. She was a woman far ahead of her time, was responsible for the opening of the Iraqi Archaeological Museum, met with kings, princes, diplomats, and ultimately assisted T.E Lawrence in his work in the region after WWI. My only complaint and the reason I can't give it 5 stars is the complete lack of maps, in a travel book! I really shouldn't have to keep an atlas or google maps handy to trace her journey. Otherwise, I'd recommend it to anyone interested in the area, the time period, and the people.

I have read the diary of Gertrude Bell. I haven't found it in the U.S. But read a friend's in England. This book comments on excerpts of that diary but not in chronological order. Instead, the author organized Bell's life into sections and discussed the different details of each within the context of that portion of her diary. Gertrude Bell was an EXTRAORDINARY woman. She lived a life that many men would be fearful of living, especially at the time of pre-World War I in the Middle Eastern desert. Her contributions, in my mind, are controversial. Yet, knowing this history will help the reader get a peep into how the British affected the current borders and problems in today's Middle East. And, one more comment. It was Gertrude Bell who was responsible for taking on the responsibility of setting into motion the establishment of the Iraqi Museum of Antiquities which was looted after the fall of Baghdad. She was more or less the curator and worked there until her last day. I have always thought of her as a woman I would have liked to have known. She wrote several books about the region, mapped it out, spoke Arabic fluently, worked with and for the British government before, during and after World War I, held her own with very powerful men, both British and Arabic, was highly respected, and loved living among the people of the Middle East. I recommend this book and others about her and by her.

An intriguing tale of a phenomenal woman who helped shape modern middle eastern politics. What a shame she is not better known in the west. Should be on every history buff's bookshelf. Should make for a movie to rival "Lawrence of Arabia".

Biography about a strong British woman in the Middle East in the 1920's! We should learn more about her in school, but because of her foresight in predicting the disaster of the partitioning of the

area called Mesopotamia, now Iraq, Syria, etc., her story is controversial, and is avoided, except by those who want to know how we got into this mess!

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