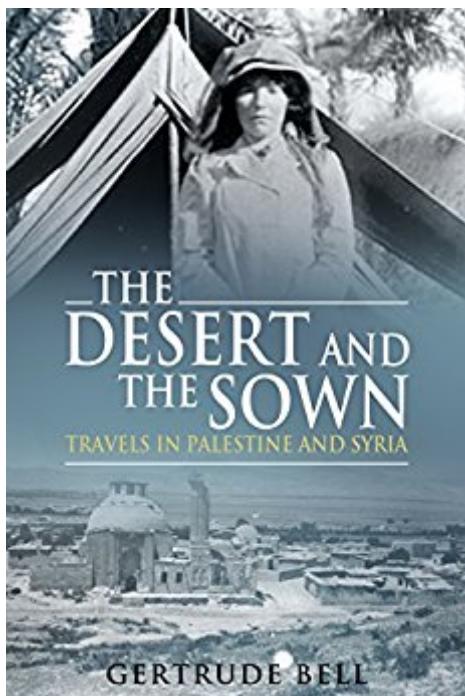


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# The Desert And The Sown: Travels In Palestine And Syria



## Synopsis

“To those bred under an elaborate social order few such moments of exhilaration can come as that which stands at the threshold of wild travel.” In 1905 the Ottoman Empire’s rule in its chief province, greater Syria, was drawing precariously towards its close. Remaining unfazed by hardship or convention, Gertrude Bell, the daughter of an industrialist and land owner, set off on her journey across the region’s interior. During the months that followed, Bell grew to understand and respect the Arab peoples to a degree that few ever have, travelling further than any western woman before her. Although in a place with gender roles so clearly defined, Bell was welcomed at the coffee hearth, like a male guest, able to engage with them on the matters that interested her most. *The Desert and the Sown* is an account of those people Bell met or that accompanied her, showing what the world in which they lived was like and how it appeared to them, bringing to life the desert landscape and culture for a western world fascinated by the Orient. Gertrude Bell (1868-1926) was an English writer, traveller, archaeologist, and political officer. In her lifetime she explored Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Persia. A contemporary of T. E. Lawrence, she worked for the Arab Bureau in Cairo during the First World War and became influential in British Imperial policy making, helping establish the Hashemite dynasties. To this day she is still remembered in Iraq. Albion Press is an imprint of Endeavour Press, the UK’s leading independent digital publisher. For more information on our titles please sign up to our newsletter at [www.endeavourpress.com](http://www.endeavourpress.com). Each week you will receive updates on free and discounted ebooks. Follow us on Twitter: @EndeavourPress and on Facebook via <http://on.fb.me/1HweQV7>. We are always interested in hearing from our readers. Endeavour Press believes that the future is now.

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## Customer Reviews

This is essentially a travelogue written in 1907 by an English woman, traveling through what is now Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey but was then all part of the Ottoman Empire. She traveled "alone" in the sense that she had no English friends/colleagues traveling with her. She only had her local Arab and/or Bedouin guides. Think of this book as an extended National Geographic issue of that region. The photographs alone are worth buying the book. But the most important part of the book is its relevance to today's situation in the Middle East, in terms of getting a better understanding of the tribal customs and relationships, and the fact that these countries do not have a centuries-old tradition of nationhood. There is no "plot" to the book... again, it is a travelogue, but a fascinating one, especially when taking into account the courage of Gertrude Bell, who was 39 when she did these travels... on her own, and very successfully. Her experience and contacts became crucial to the British government at the end of World War I in creating the countries of Syria and Iraq. So as you read this book, you understand a little more about the situation there today.

She was a formidable woman, in her time, to travel in these times and places. She writes very well - I actually couldn't put it down.

Great book, good story told in her personal letters, so glad Seller had it, perhaps little commonly-known intelligent, gifted, early explorer in Middle East.

Fine

Excellent insight into behind the scenes govt schemeing after ww1

This is a fascinating book featuring early archaeology and adventure in the middle east. Gertrude

Bell is a larger than life woman who understood tribal customs and local languages and earned respect from men who normally dismiss women. A good read!

I got this book after reading a bio of Gertrude Bell. I wanted to read something in her own words and was surprised by its readability.

This book when it was written, was an era of peace compared to what it suffers from today. The observations made by the author are as valid today as they were when written.

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