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# The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)

*Part II*  
*inside the archive*

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Royal  
Geographical  
Society  
with IBG

# | Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Polar Exploration</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Everest Expeditions</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Women Explorers</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Cartography and Mapping Uncharted Territory</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Introducing Automated Text Recognition (ATR)</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>About the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) Part II archive</b>	<b>13</b>



# | Introduction

Geography has never been more important in helping us to understand our rapidly changing world.

– *Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)*

How has the world changed over time? And what changes can we predict for our future?

The impact of our rapidly changing world to people, cultures, places, and the environment is at the core of the geographic discipline.

Those that came before us—the likes of Shackleton, Hillary, Bell and many more—not only traced and discovered parts unknown, but they did not so much with the promise of success, but the incredible probability of failure.

From the role of women to polar exploration, this lookbook demonstrates the interdisciplinary scope of geographical research and provides a window into the foremost geographers and expeditions of our time.

To learn more about the stories in the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) Part II archive, visit [wileydigitalarchives.com/rgs](http://wileydigitalarchives.com/rgs).



# Polar Exploration



Hurley, Frank. "Endurance' in the Ice in Full Sail." RGS Images Online, 1 Jan. 1914. Wiley Digital Archives.



## FILE THIS UNDER

Heroic Age of Exploration, Antarctica, Geopolitics, Geography, Cartography, Anthropology, Meteorology, Magnetism, Environmental Studies, Climate Change



## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Antarctica is one of the most remote places on Earth, and was the last continent to be explored. In the decades following the first landing on Antarctica in 1821, curiosity of the unknown region accelerated exponentially. By 1895, the International Geographical Congress declared the region to be "the greatest piece of geographical exploration." The Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration began at the end of the 19th century and closed with Ernest Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition in 1917. During this period the Antarctic continent became the focus of an international effort that resulted in intensive scientific and geographical exploration and in which 17 major Antarctic expeditions were launched from 10 countries. The prize of the Heroic Age was to reach the South Pole.





## WHO

Ernest Shackleton, one of the principal figures of the period known as the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration.

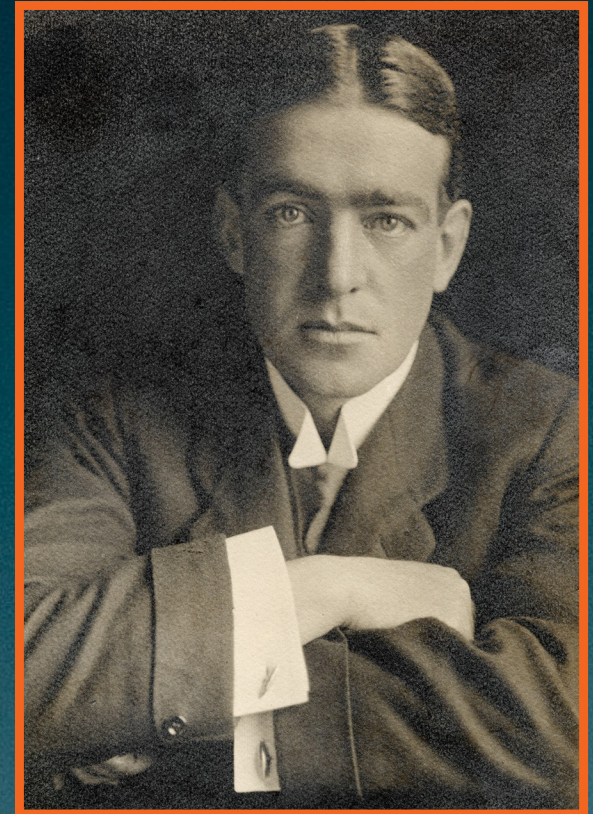


## WHY HE'S NOTABLE

In 1914, Ernest Shackleton led the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition with the aim of setting a record by crossing Antarctica via the South Pole.

Unfortunately, their ship, the *Endurance*, was trapped and crushed by pack ice before they even stepped foot on Antarctica. The crew abandoned the ship, and Shackleton ordered each of the 27 men to dump all but two pounds of personal possessions before the *Endurance* eventually sank. Shackleton and all of the expedition members then embarked on an epic journey on lifeboats over packed ice to Elephant Island, where they stood on solid ground for the first time in 497 days.

In the hopes of securing help from a whaling station, Shackleton and five expedition members then sailed one lifeboat to South Georgia with very little hope of survival, food or shelter. They arrived at the whaling station, where they sounded the alarm and borrowed a ship to sail back to Elephant Island to rescue his men and depart from Antarctica, 24 months and 22 days after leaving England. Miraculously, all 27 expedition members survived through extreme conditions. This tale of heroic failure has been described as the greatest survival story of all time.



Mills, H. Ernest. "Sir Ernest Shackleton." RGS Images Online, 1 Jan. 1909. Wiley Digital Archives.

**Related items & special collections in the RGS-IBG Archive:** Maps, manuscripts, *historic photographs* from the great Antarctic adventures of Ernest Shackleton and *Robert Falcon Scott*, expedition reports, a volume charting changes in the ice shelves of Antarctica, personal items formerly belonging to some of the world's greatest explorers, such as Shackleton's Burberry® helmet, and more.



# Everest Expeditions



*Various Newspaper Cuttings and Photographs, 1924 Expedition." Everest Expeditions, 5 May 1921. Wiley Digital Archives.*



## FILE THIS UNDER

Exploration, Mount Everest Expeditions, Nepal, China, Geopolitics, Geography, Cartography, Anthropology, Environmental Studies, Photography, Climate Change, Decolonizing Western Narratives



## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Mount Everest is Earth's highest mountain above sea level, located on the crest of the Great Himalayas. The international border between Nepal and China runs across its summit point. In 1921, the first British expedition was organized and financed by the newly formed Mount Everest Committee, with the goal of mapping and reconnaissance to discover whether a route to the summit could be found. Several expeditions took place in the early 20th century as climbers attempted to reach the summit, facing medical issues, exhaustion, lack of oxygen, inexperience and even death.



## WHO

Edmund Hillary, credited as the first man to step foot on the summit of Mount Everest.



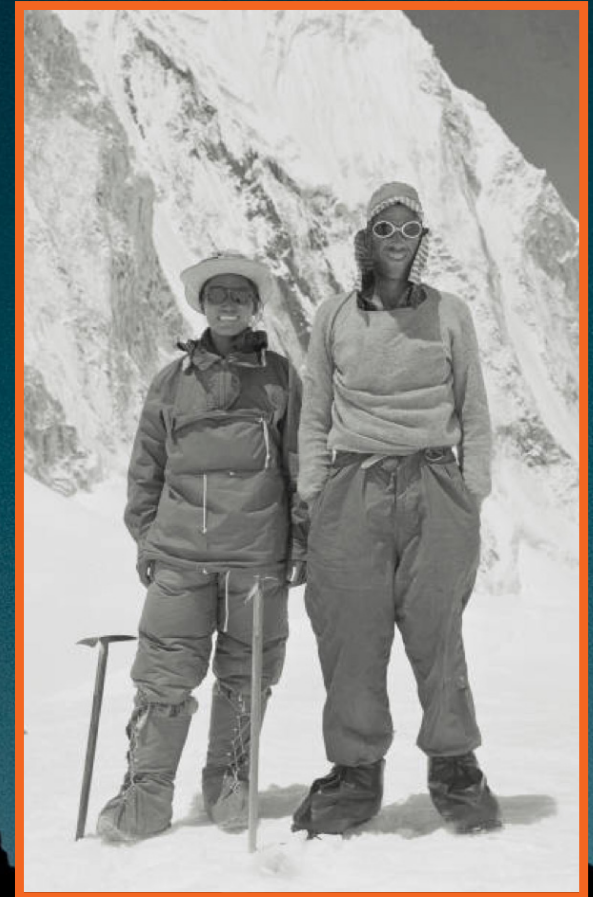
## WHY HE'S NOTABLE

In 1953, the ninth expedition to Mount Everest began, organized and paid for by the Joint Himalayan Committee. Wilfrid Noyce and Annullu had created a path to the South Col before, and two climbing teams were formed to attempt to reach the summit via this path, with Charles Evans and Tom Bourdillon serving as the first pair to set off. While they were successful in reaching the South summit, they were unable to complete their trek due to problems with their equipment.

Just two days later, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay were the second pair to take a turn, and with the aid of standard oxygen equipment, they reached the summit on May 29, 1953. They had used the South Col route. During their very brief time at the summit of Mount Everest, they stopped to take some photographs and also buried some sweets underneath the snow.

Over the years there has been one question that has plagued this huge achievement. Many people were confused as to which out of the two was actually the first to set foot on the summit of Mount Everest. Although there was a lot of speculation, Tenzing stated that it was, in fact, Edmund Hillary. As a result, Hillary was credited as the first man to actually step foot on Mount Everest and was subsequently awarded a knighthood for his achievement.

Hillary and Tenzing's success marked 32 years since the first Everest expedition was organized, and thousands more have joined the ranks since.

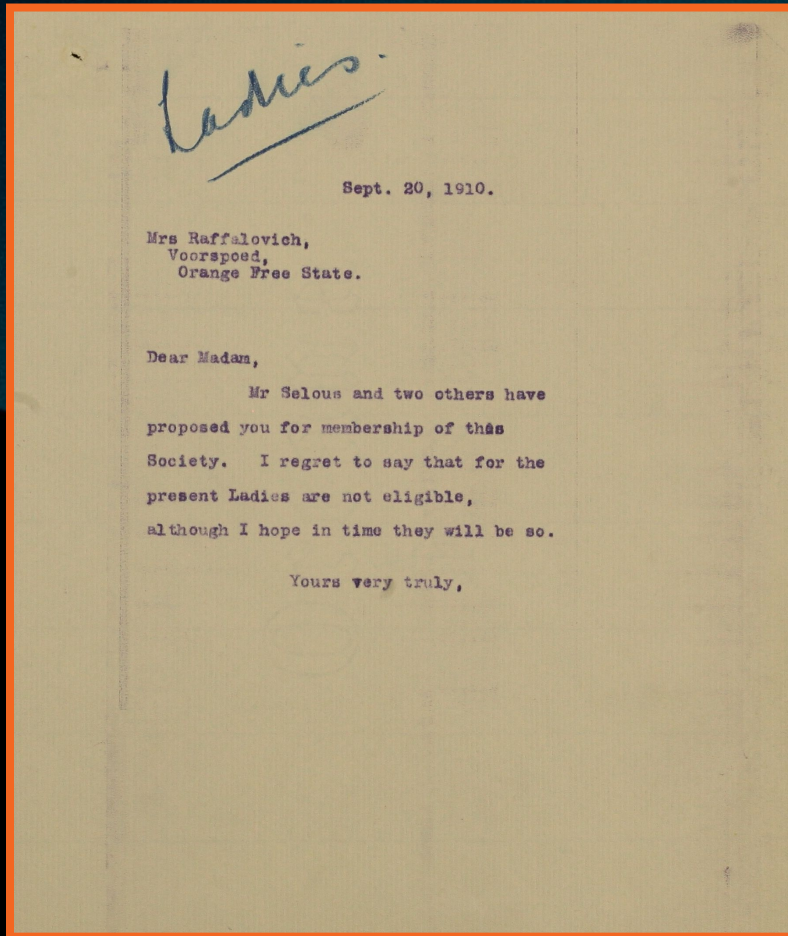


Gregory, Alfred. "Full Length Portrait of Hillary and Tenzing." RGS Images Online, 1 Mar. 1953. Wiley Digital Archives.

**Related items & special collections in the RGS-IBG Archive:** Maps, manuscripts, historic photographs, expedition reports, personal items formerly belonging to some of the world's greatest explorers, accounts of the journeys of Edmund Hillary, Tenzing Norgay, George Mallory, Charles Bruce, Edward Norton, Maurice Wilson, paraphernalia of exploration, for example, *oxygen sets* used in the various attempts on Everest and more.



# Women Explorers



## FILE THIS UNDER

Women Explorers, Women in the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG), Gender Studies, Middle East, Iraq, Asia, Europe, Desert, Geopolitics, World War I



## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The late 19th century to the early 20th century was not an easy time to be a woman in science. Females were ostensibly barred membership from professional and academic societies—institutions that were integral to accessing the resources and networks necessary to advance their discoveries and careers. Access itself did not guarantee equality either; while 1913 marked the first time that the RGS-IBG recognized the capacity of women to produce geographical knowledge and their right to apply for membership, their acceptance generally boiled down to expertise, experience and sociability—qualities that were inherently difficult to achieve based on the limited opportunities afforded to them.

*Correspondence and Notes/Printed Does Re Admission of Women. Newscuttings Re Selection of Women." Additional Papers, 1809–1915. Wiley Digital Archives.*





## WHO

Gertrude Bell (aka Queen of the Desert)



## WHY SHE'S NOTABLE

Even if all odds weren't stacked against her as a woman, Gertrude Bell's accomplishments would still stand in a league of their own. While it can't be denied that her upper-middle class background opened doors to resources and networks that would have otherwise been denied to her, it was Bell's courage, fearlessness, inquisitiveness, and knowledge as an explorer that ultimately enabled her to achieve her legendary status in history.

Detailed in expedition reports, letters, photos and published books, Bell's extensive travel through the cities and deserts of the Middle East revealed the contours of the Arabian world to the western world for the very first time. Her intimate familiarity and knowledge of the region's unique terrain and its varied indigenous population were instrumental to shaping British imperial policy in the early 20th century, making her the only woman to successfully exercise political power throughout the critical years of the first World War.

Gertrude Bell is perhaps best known for her contribution to the Conference in Cairo in 1921, where she played a major role in establishing and helping administer the modern state of Iraq, using her unique perspective from her travels and relations with tribal leaders throughout the Middle East. Further, the National Museum of Iraq and the National Library of Iraq were born in significant part from her vision and advocacy, as Bell strongly advocated the belief that relics and antiquities should be preserved in their home nations.

Primary evidence of Bell's experiences reflect the divisive forces at work in the Middle East and are relevant to the struggles still faced there today.



*J. Weston & Son. "Gertrude Bell." RGS Images Online, 1 Jan. 1900. Wiley Digital Archives.*

**Related items & special collections in the RGS-IBG Archive:** Gertrude Bell's notebooks, archaeological drawings, maps, personal letters, diaries and more. Diaries, field notes, photos and other critical primary source materials illuminate Bell's contemporaries as well, including Isabella Bird, *Mary Kingsley*, Lady Hester Stanhope, Elizabeth Ness, *Freya Stark*, Gertrude Caton-Thompson, Louise Boyd, Phyllis Wager and more.



# Cartography and Mapping Uncharted Territory



*"Orographical Map of Canada." Map, 1908. Wiley Digital Archives: Royal Geographical Society (with IBG).*



## FILE THIS UNDER

Mapping, Geopolitics, Borders and Boundaries, Colonialism, Exploration, British Empire, Art, Science, Naval History, Globalization, Human Geography, Physical Geography



## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Maps have been one of the most important inventions created by humans; they have allowed us to record and navigate our way around the world. Maps also function as historical records, allowing us to see changes in physical geography alongside the changes in human geography, such as place names, borders, and territories.

The techniques of cartography have continually developed over time to meet the demands of mapmakers and users. Technologies such as the compass, printing press, telescope, sextant, and photography each improved mapmaking by allowing users to create more accurate maps.

In the 21st century, the use of computers has helped mapmaking by allowing us to store, sort and arrange data, and share that information across the world. Wiley Digital Archives provides geo-reference coordinates on thousands of maps to give researchers the ability to export into GIS programs and plot against other maps and datasets.

Historical maps are essential for examining how things have changed over time and ask questions such as, "What used to be here, and what is here now?" This allows us to understand changes over time to political borders and territories, locations of natural resources and commodities, and wildlife habits and deforestation.





## WHO

Freya Stark, cartographer, travel writer, and explorer of the Middle East



## WHY SHE'S NOTABLE

Freya Stark (1893 –1993) went on her first expedition to Lebanon and Syria in the late 1920s and eventually made her way to Iraq, Yemen, Egypt, Kurdistan, Kuwait, Iran, Kurdistan, Persia, and India, purposely going to remote places where no European woman had travelled before. She learned to speak Arabic, Iranian, and Turkish to connect with indigenous communities in ways that few non-locals could.

During her travels, Stark studied the physical landscape, the people and their culture, and made detailed maps of the area. She studied cartography in London and often corrected maps of the Middle East distributed by the British Foreign Office. Her mapmaking achievements earned her an accolade from the Royal Geographical Society, and she soon became a widely recognized expert on the Middle East.

Freya Stark wrote 24 books, several volumes of collected letters, and four volumes of memoirs. She lived to the age of 100, was knighted in 1972, and was still travelling the world in her later years, including to Persia when she was 76 and the Himalayas at 86.



*"Freya Stark." RGS Images Online, 1 Jan. 1942, Wiley Digital Archives: Royal Geographical Society (with IBG).*

**Related items & special collections in the RGS-IBG Archive:** Maps, manuscripts, letters & correspondence, historic photographs, *details of expedition routes*, accounts and photographs of Middle East expeditions.

# Introducing Automated Text Recognition (ATR)

ATR is an AI-driven image recognition program that analyzes handwritten documents, runs the images against a variety of datasets to determine the best match, then attempts to recognize words within these handwritten documents. ATR differs from Optical Character Recognition (OCR), which is the standard for most digital archival collections, in that OCR focuses on each individual letter in typeset materials but cannot read handwriting.

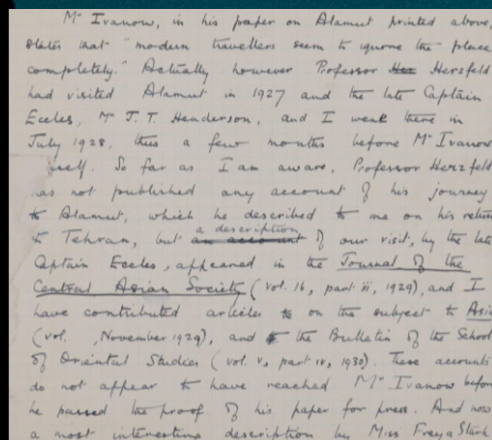
Without ATR, a manuscript page can only be found via top-level metadata. The text isn't searchable, and it can only be analyzed by reading it, which can be a taxing and time-consuming process. Through the introduction of ATR, manuscript pages are converted into typeset, the text is searchable, and it can be translated, cited, and analyzed with textual analysis tools.

There are hundreds of thousands of pages of handwritten text within the Wiley Digital Archives program, spread out across each archive. Through the incorporation of ATR into the WDA program, our analysis results will be different. New connections can be discovered, old paradigms or accepted wisdom can be challenged, and new discoveries will inevitably be made.

The implementation of ATR means that manuscripts and printed materials will come close to parity in their discoverability. ATR at this scale has the potential to change the nature of manuscript research and open the field to new researchers struggling with the requirements and skillset needed for intensive manuscript reading. WDA will be the only commercial archival program to implement ATR across all of our archival offerings.

To learn more about Wiley Digital Archives, request a demo, or start a free trial, visit: <https://www.wileydigitalarchives.com/contact-us/>.

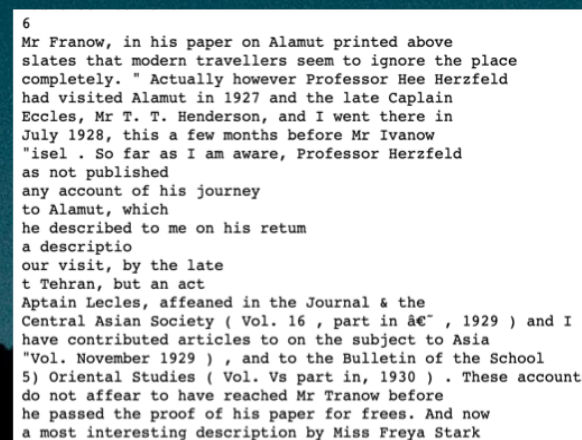
Before



Mr. Ivanow, in his paper on Alamut printed above, states that "modern travellers seem to ignore the place completely." Actually however Professor Herzfeld had visited Alamut in 1927 and the late Captain Eccles, Mr. T. T. Henderson, and I went there in July 1928, this a few months before Mr. Ivanow's paper. So far as I am aware, Professor Herzfeld has not published any account of his journey to Alamut, which he described to me on his return to Tehran, but a description of our visit, by the late Captain Eccles, appeared in the *Journal of the Central Asian Society* (Vol. 16, part II, 1929), and I have contributed articles to on the subject to *Asia* (Vol. November 1929), and to the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* (Vol. 4, part 11, 1930). These accounts do not appear to have reached Mr. Ivanow before he passed the proof of his paper for press. And now a most interesting description by Miss Freya Stark

Lockhart, Lawrence. "Some Notes on Alamut." *Journal Manuscripts*.  
Wiley Digital Archives: Royal Geographical Society (with IBG).

After



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# About the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) Part II archive

Wiley Digital Archives' Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) Part II archive spans all aspects of geographical thought and includes materials from the society's library, as well as its extensive archives and maps collections. Maps and charts are complemented by manuscript material, fieldnotes, correspondence, drawings, photographs, pamphlets, atlases, gazetteers, and a range of other published and unpublished material.

The archive sheds light on the impact of geographical science on history, exploration, colonialism, gender studies, and diplomatic policies, as well as natural resources, cultural studies, anthropology, and ethnography. Researchers can explore unique primary sources from the most influential expeditions and explorers of the 20th century.

RGS-IBG Part II dates from 1900 – 2010. The collections in this archive create new pathways for interdisciplinary research and education, while, at the same time, preserving one of the world's most important geographical archives.

Visit [wileydigitalarchives.com/rgs](https://wileydigitalarchives.com/rgs) to learn more about the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) Part II archive.