VICTORIAN

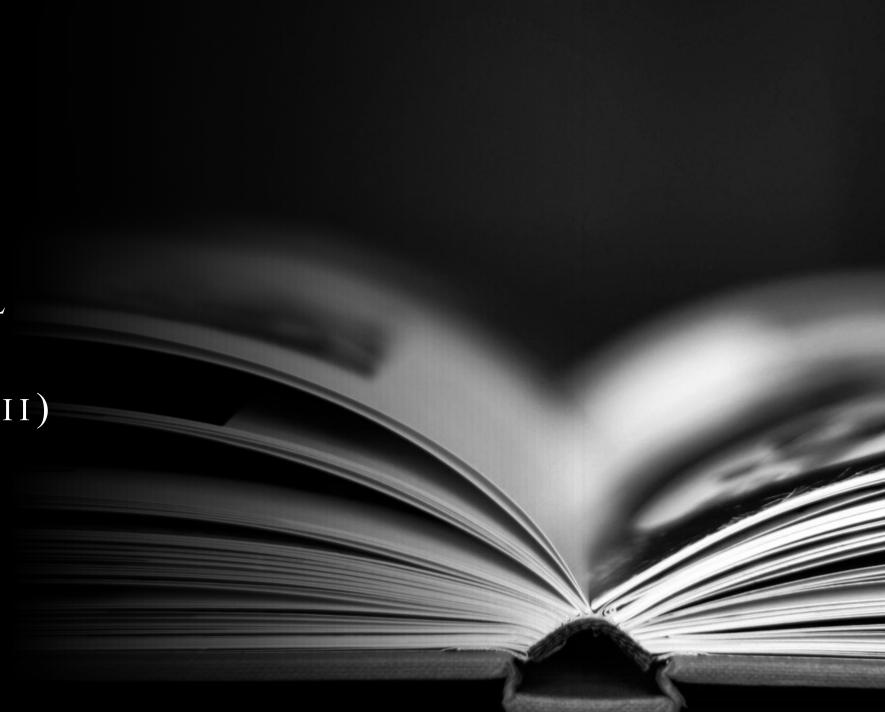
TRAVEL

LITERATURE:

FEMALE TRAVEL

AND THE

ROBINSONADE (II)



This is an interactive document. All sources are correspondingly linked if you click on the right place. Some are highlighted within a text; others, are appropriately marked.

Look out for this icon, which signals the existence of an external link.

This icon signals the existence of an internal link, and will re-direct you to another page of the document.

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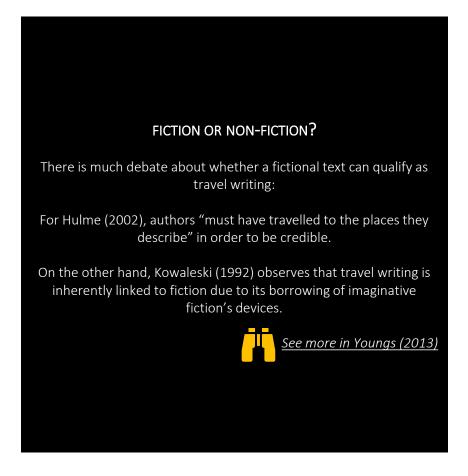
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TRAVEL LITERATURE

Travel literature refers to prose narratives about a journey or journeys, either real or fictional. These stories are neither a "guide" nor a "handbook" for travellers; thus, travel narratives do not include practical instructions about the journey, but rather, they reflect the first-hand impressions of the author/traveller while visiting a foreign place.

The main <u>characteristics</u> of travel literature are:

- Prose writing
- First person narrator (autor-narrator)
- Fiction and Non-fiction
- Descriptive style



In the following <u>video by the University of Kent</u>, Dr. Mathilde Poizat-Amar explains the difference between "travel writing" and "travel literature". As she points out,



Travel Writing	Travel Literature
 All texts (literary and non-literary) Focuses on the trajectory of one protagonist Includes: travelogues, novels, exploration reports, scientific theory reports, or even travel guides. 	 Only literary texts Fictional and non-fictional Does not include: scientific reports and travel guides

KEY CONCEPTS

Travelogue: "an account of one's travels: a book, article, or film recording places visited and people encountered. The literary variety is more often known simply as the travel book."

(The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms, 2008)

~ What the traveller sees, hears, and feels, usually with a first person narrator.

Travel guide or "guidebooks": there is no narration of the journey; instead, the author of a travel guide provides practical tips and resources for the prospective traveller.

~ Originated in the early 1800s by Karl Baedeker's "pocket" guides (Bolan, 2020)



Please, click on the image for a glimpse of an early example of a guidebook for travellers (1790s)

After the Age of Exploration (the latter half of the 15th through the 16th century), the late 18th and 19th centuries are considered as the heyday of travel literature.

<u>Prof. Douglas Fordham</u> attributes this to several factors:

- The decline in publishing costs
- Growing literacy rates
- An increasingly global communications network
- A populist nationalism that took great pride in the discoveries of compatriots

Douglas Fordham,

Aquatint Worlds: Travel, Print, and Empire, 1770–1820.

New Haven and London: Yale University Press, Distributed for the

Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2019. 328 pp.; 215 color and b&w illus.; bibliography; index.

\$60 (hardback)

ISBN: 9781913107048

Studies in print history have traditionally focused on valuable "original prints," not those that reproduce an image first created in another medium, but the overwhelming majority of printed

images before photography were, in fact, reproductive and yet often enjoyed immense audiences Douglas Fordham in his *Aquatint Worlds* investigates one such understudied phenomenon, the aquatint-illustrated travel books popular in England during the Georgian period (1770–1830).

Please, click on the image above for more information about the adaptation of travel narratives to diverse genres.



Brief list of the most popular travel narratives (18th-19th centuries)

Some of the most well-known travel narratives during the 19th century were Homer's *Odyssey,* Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), or even the satirical *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) by Jonathan Swift. The genre was so popular that acclaimed authors such as Charles Dickens, Robert Louis Stevenson and Joseph Conrad also published their own travel narratives during the 19th century.

Please, click on each item to be redirected to its corresponding external resource.



GENDER AND MOBILITY: Urban life

Ideal Victorian women were expected fo fit into the domestic ideology. Thus, their expected place was that of the home.

At home, women were in charge of managing the household and caring for their family —their husband and children. "True womanhood" was inextricably linked to motherhood.

Read more about Ideals of Womanhood in Victorian Britain here.

However, women did venture out of their homes. The city was regarded as a sinful, dangerous, and corrupting place, and so they would usually leave the home with a purpose.

- Upper-middle-class women left the house to pay visits, organize parties, or to do work for charity.
- Working-class women had to combine the caring for their own homes and families, with their (badly-paid) jobs outside.

To facilitate their mobility, the cities offered female-only spaces to keep them from the unsolicited attention of men (including public toilets, department stores, women's clubs, and restaurants).



Omnibus Life in London (1859) William Maw Egley © Tate Image released under Creative Commons CC-BY-NC-ND (3.0 Unported)

Related content:

- Victorian transport advances.
- The Victorian middle-classes
- The working classes and the poor

The Travelling Companions (1862)
Augustus Leopold Egg (1816-1863)
Birmingham Museums Trust

Related content:

Florence Hartley's <u>The Ladies' Book of Etiquette</u>, and a manual of <u>politeness</u>. (1872) (Chapter III: Travelling)

GENDER AND MOBILITY: Abroad

Travelling was considered a dangerous activity for Victorian women. <u>Handbooks for lady travellers</u> advised women to always travel either with a man or a female companion. Those women who dared to travel alone would usually face public scrutiny.

Broadly speaking, the most common types of women travellers during the nineteenth century were:

- Companions (friends/relatives, maids or governesses)
- Wives (or prospective wives) accompanying their husbands to the colonies
- Female missionaries
- Female emigrants (usually lower-working-class) searching for jobs

Some women, typically those from a middle-upper-class background, became **professional travellers**. These women (usually single women with a steady income) visited foreign places and produced interesting sociocultural commentaries and anecdotical writings.

FEMALE TRAVELLERS

You can see below a quote out of one of the most important anthologies of female travellers of the nineteenth century, Celebrated Women Travellers of the Nineteenth Century (1882) by W. H. Davenport.

[Travellers] constitute two great classes: those who discover, and those who observe —that is, those who penetrate into regions hitherto untrodden by civilized men, and add new lands to the maps of the geographer; and those who simply follow in the track of their bolder or more fortunate predecessors, gathering up fuller, and, it maybe, more accurate information. To the latter class... belong our female travellers.

~ W. H. Davenport Adams (1882: 215)



The author manifests the general perception of professional female travellers: they were "followers" due to their restricted access to scientific and political discourses (Wagner, 2015: 175). To maintain their reputation and to attract a steady readership, female travellers usually kept an <u>observational writing style</u>, with no pretensions. In the following pages we will see some examples of the most popular female travel writers of the period.

Many English women travelled abroad during the long nineteenth century, despite their underrepresentation in travel literature anthologies.

In the following pages you can explore three of the most famous Victorian female travellers and authoresses.

Please, click on their pictures on your right to go to their corresponding slide.



Julia Pardoe (1806—1862)



Isabella Bird (1831—1904)



Mary Kingsley (1862—1900)

PREFACE.

LET not any reader open this little work in the expectation of meeting, amid its pages, with subject for scientific speculation or political argument. An affectation of the first had been in me presumptuous, and the second, alike impertinent and unfeminine.

The narrative is a mere simple record of scenes and incidents which I have ventured to hope may not, in losing much of

a

Please, click on the image above to be redirected to the full text of Traits and Traditions of Portugal (1833)

Digitised by Biblioteca Nacional Digital da Portugal



MOST RELEVANT TRAVELOGUES

You can click on each item to be redirected to an external source.

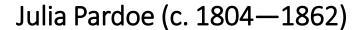
1833 – Traits and traditions of Portugal (vols. I and 2)

1837 – The City of the Sultan: and Domestic Manners of the Turks

1838 – The Beauties of the Bosphorus

1838 – The River and the Desert

1840 – The City of the Magyar, or Hungary and Her Institutions



Nationality: British (Beverley, Yorkshire)

Pardoe was the daughter of Major Thomas Pardoe, an army officer, and she started writing in her teens.

Her first travelogue was *Traits and Traditions of Portugal* (1833). She wrote it after her journey to Portugal for health reasons (a common practice at the time).

Some years later, Pardoe visited Constantinople with her father, where she lived for 2 years (1836-1837). She wrote *The City of the Sultan; and Domestic Manners of the Turks* (1836), which was highly acclaimed in Britain.

As the opening lines of the Preface of *Traits* (1833) suggest (see upper-right picture), Pardoe's style is meek, but detailed.

Pardoe also wrote <u>fiction</u>, and a few years before her decease, she published two collection of tales: *Abroad and At Home: Tales Here and There* (1857) and *Pilgrimages in Paris* (1857).

Pardoe passed away in 1862, due to insomnia and chronic liver disease.



Authoress' portrait: Julia Pardoe by Samuel Freeman, published by Richard Bentley, after John Lilley stipple engraving, published 1849 NPG D9043 © National Portrait Gallery, London



Isabella Bird (1831—1904)

Nationality: British (Boroughbridge Hall, North Yorkshire)

Bird was the eldest daughter of a clergyman, and was educated at home by her mother.

Like many other Victorian female travellers, she was prescribed travelling as a remedy for her poor health. Her first journey was to Boston, America, in 1854, where she stayed with some relatives. After the experience, Bird published *The Englishwoman in America* (1856) and took on the role of caregiver at home after the death of her father.

Bird was in her forties when she travelled again, this time by herself. She travelled to Australia, Hawaii, Colorado, Indonesia, and Tibet, among others. Her most famous publication from this period is *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (1879).

Her reputation in England made her become the first woman to become a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society in 1891.

Bird's style is descriptive, full of details about the landscape and native peoples.





MOST RELEVANT TRAVELOGUES

You can click on each item to be redirected to an external source.

1856 – The Englishwoman in America

1875 – The Hawaiian Archipelago

1879 – A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains

1883 – The Golden Chersonese and the way thither

1894 – Among the Tibetans



- Royal Scottish Geographical Society: More details about Isabella Bird's life and experiences
- Women of HERstory Podcast Episode: Isabella Bird: Explorer, writer, photographer (28')
- <u>National Library of Scotland</u>: Isabella Bird's travel photographs
- <u>Dangerous Women Project (University of Edinburgh):</u> Isabella Bird: writer, explorer, trailblazer

Authoress' portrait: Isabella Lucy Bird Bishop by Benjamin Stone platinum print, July 1899 7 3/4 in. x 5 7/8 in. (198 mm x 150 mm) image size Given by House of Commons Library, 1974 Photographs Collection NPG x36474 © National Portrait Gallery, London





Authoress' portrait: Mary Henrietta Kingsley by Arthur King, photogravure, 1900 NPG x19155

© National Portrait Gallery, London

Mary Kingsley (1862—1900)

Nationality: British (London)

Kingsley was the eldest daughter of George Kingsley, a doctor, writer, and traveller. From a young age, Mary Kingsley received German lessons and had access to her father's library. She was interested in her father's expeditions and writings, and loved to read scientific writings.

Kingsley began travelling after both her parents died in 1892 (she was 30). She wanted to complete the unfinished anthropological research of her father, and travelled alone to the Canary Islands, and then, to the west coast of Africa.

After she returned home, Kingsley published *Travels in West Africa* (1897), her most well-known travelogue.

Kingsley returned to Africa once more, this time as a volunteer nurse in South Africa during the Boer War. She passed away there, and was buried at sea. A final travelogue named *West African Studies* (1899) was published.

Kingsley is known for her sense of humour (you can have a glimpse of this on her Preface of *Travels* (1897)). Like other profesional female travellers, she writes with a self-mockery style, yet with a self-assertion of authority.

PREFACE

To the Reader.—What this book wants is not a simple Preface but an apology, and a very brilliant and convincing one at that. Recognising this fully, and feeling quite incompetent to write such a masterpiece, I have asked several literary friends to write one for me, but they have kindly but firmly declined, stating that it is impossible satisfactorily to apologise for my liberties with Lindley Murray and the Oueen's English. I am therefore left to make a feeble apology for this book myself, and all I can personally say is that it would have been much worse than it is had it not been for Dr. Henry Guillemard, who has not edited it, or of course the whole affair would have been better, but who has most kindly gone through the proof sheets, lassoing prepositions which were straying outside their sentence stockade, taking my eye off the water cask and fixing it on the scenery where I meant it to be, saving firmly in pencil on margins "No you don't," when I was committing some more than usually heinous literary crime, and so on. In cases where his activities in these things may seem to the reader to have been wanting. I

Please, click on the image above to be redirected to the full text of Travels in West Africa (1897)

Digitised by Princeton Theological Seminary Library

MOST RELEVANT TRAVELOGUES



You can click on each item to be redirected to an external source.

1897 – <u>Travels in West Africa</u>

1899 – West African Studies

Related content:

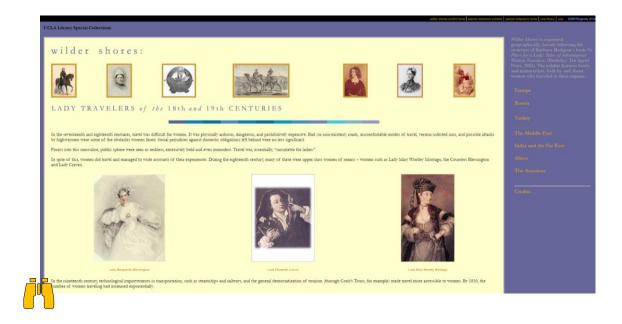


- Mary Kingsley (BYU)
- Dangerous Women Project (University of Edinburgh): Mary Kingsley, breaking the mould
- A map of Mary Kingsley's travels in Africa



Other female travellers

Wilder Shores: Lady Travelers of the 18th and 19th Centuries is a web exhibit where you can find a correlation of female travellers and the geographical area they visited. Please, click on the image below to be redirected to the external source.



The Wilder Shores website was created by UCLA, and it loosely follows the structure of Barbara Hodgson's book No Place for a Lady: Tales of Adventurous Women Travelers (2002)

Some of the Victorian female travellers included in the exhibit are:

- Frances Trollope (1730-1863)
- Lady Marguerite Blessington (1789-1849)
- Harriet Martineau (1802-1876)
- Mary Seacole (1805-1881)
- Emmeline Lott
- Amelia Edwards (1831-1892)
- Isabel Burton (1831-1896)
- Lady Anna Brassey (1839-1887)
- Marianne North (1830-1890)

THE ROBINSONADE

A *Robinsonade* is "a genre of writing that blends survival (usually in an isolated location), adventure, some qualities of the <u>bildungsroman</u> (or spiritual/moral edification plot), and a philosophical exposition on the state of contemporary society" (Kinane, 2019: 4-5).

The Robinsonade usually follows the structure and themes of <u>Daniel Defoe's</u> *Robinson Crusoe* (1719)

In this episode of the *Words to That Effect* Podcast, you can listen to Dr. Ian Kinane's analysis of the Robinsonade and its unequivocal effect on 18th and 19th-century fiction:



MOTIFS

- A shipwreck
- Initial marooning of the protagonist
- An island
- Solitary protagonist as castaway

CHARACTERISTICS

- First-person narrator first-hand experiences narrated by the author
- Epistolary style

 letters written by one or more

 characters

The theatrical robinsonade during the 19th century

During the 19th century, the robinsonade was adapted to the Victorian stages. The story of the castaway inspired numerous plays of diverse genres (<u>pantomimes</u>, burlesques, comedies...).

The first theatrical adaptation of Defoe's novel was *Robinson Crusoe; or Harlequin Friday* (1781) a pantomime by Richard B. Sheridan for the Theatre-Royal, Drury Lane Theatre in London's West End.

The Victorians usually casted actresses for the main role of Crusoe in pantomimes. This role was called the <u>"principal boy"</u> and the actresses performed in "breeches" —that is, cross-dressed. In the picture on your right you can see actress Lydia Thompson as the protagonist of H. B. Farnie's *Robinson Crusoe* (1874)

See more about the theatrical robinsonade in Gould (2011)

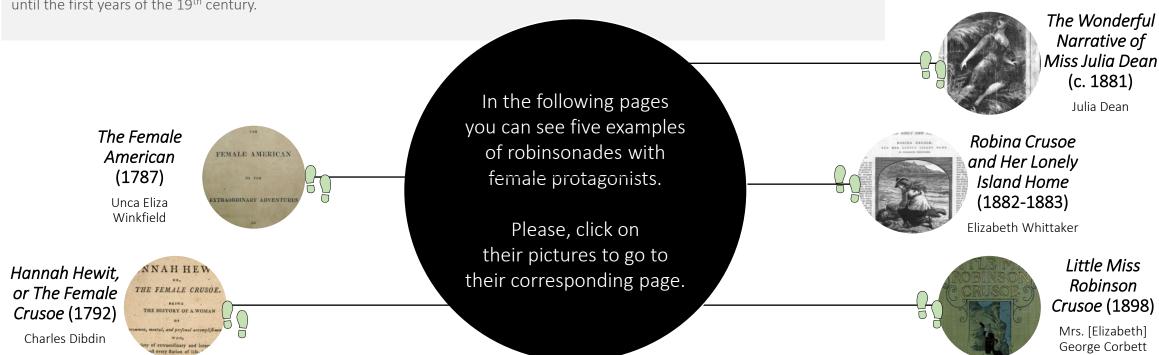


Actress Lydia Thompson, 1836-1908, in "Robinson Crusoe" (1874)

Retrieved from The New York Public Library Digital Collections.

FEMALE ROBINSONADES

Even though the male robinsonade was significantly popular during the 18th century, the female robinsonade did not gain relevance until the first years of the 19th century.



THE FEMALE AMERICAN (1767) by Unca Eliza Winkfield (?)

Authorship: Anonymous, published under the pseudonym of the protagonist (Unca Eliza Winkfield)

Place and date of publication: London, 1767

Genre: novel, Robinsonade

Main characteristics:

• First-person narrator (a woman, Unca Eliza Winkfield)

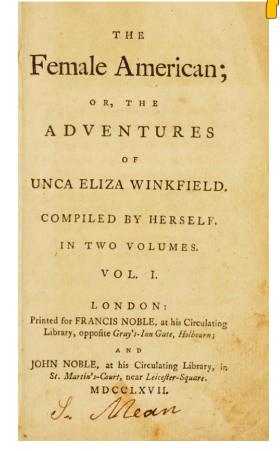
Epistolary style (journal)

Recommended edition: *The Female American* (2001), edited by Michelle Burnham

Protagonist: Unca Eliza Winkfield (biracial, multilingual, and of transnational heritage). She is the daughter of a Native American woman (a princess) and an English settler.

After being casted away in an island, Winkfield has to survive illness, solitude, and adverse weather conditions. However, the story gives us a positive outlook for women, as she is capable of defending herself and thriving in a remote island away from "respectable" society.

The protagonist is able to enjoy a rare kind of **mobility**, which makes her capable of living "wonderful and strange" experiences. She decides to stay in America with the Indian tribe rather than returning to England.



Title page of *The Female American* [1767] Digitised by <u>John Carter Brown</u> <u>Library</u>.



HANNAH HEWIT; OR, THE FEMALE CRUSOE (1792) by Charles Dibdin

Authorship: Charles Dibdin (1745-1814) (actor, composer, plawright, writer)

Place and date of publication: London, 1796 Genre: novel, Robinsonade (3 volumes)

Main characteristics:

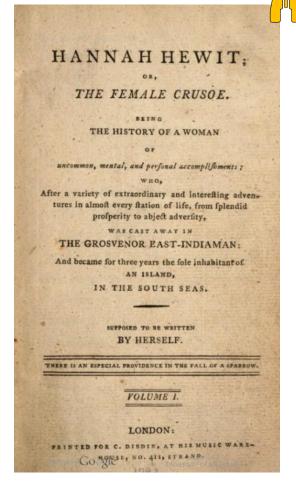
- First-person narrator (a woman, Hannah Hewit)
- Epistolary style (journal)

Protagonist: Hannah Hewit is the daughter of a coal miner.

Her castaway story begins in Chap. IX, Volume II

After the death of both of her parents and a failed marriage, she departs for India to join her brother. Hewit embarks a boat and is ultimately marooned on the African coast. Hewit has to survive the attacks of **cannibal** natives, adverse weather conditions, and solitude. She regrets not having read *Robinson Crusoe* or "any of those books", but she manages to prosper and lives by herself in a cavern. However, after a while, she is convinced she is about to die and lies down in her "tomb".

She is finally rescued by her lost husband, brother, and son, who had been looking for her. Hewit returns to "civilisation".



Title page of *Hannah Hewit; or, The Female*Crusoe (1792) digitised by University of Michigan



THE WONDERFUL NARRATIVE OF MISS JULIA DEAN (c. 1881) by Julia Dean

Authorship: Julia Dean (most likely, a pseudonym) Place and date of publication: Philadelphia, 1881

Genre: novel, Robinsonade

Main characteristics:

• First-person narrator (a woman, Julia Dean)

Epistolary style (journal)

Protagonist: Julia Dean

Miss Dean survives in an island as a castaway, doing "masculine" things like hunting, building, or fending for herself. Dean thinks of God and of her fiancé during her stay in the island. She also thinks of *Robinson Crusoe's* original story, which she "had read when a very young girl" (p. 53).

Like Hannah Hewit, Dean survives by herself and even though she does not encounter any native, she has to endure earthquakes and thunderstorms. As she loses hope to survive, her fiancé rescues her. They live together in the island for a while, and get married in an alternative wedding in the island.



Frontispiece of *The Wonderful Narrative of Miss Julia Dean* (c. 1881). Digitised by <u>University of Michigan</u>



ROBINA CRUSOE AND HER LONELY ISLAND HOME (1882-1883) by Elizabeth Whittaker

Authorship: Elizabeth Whittaker (most likely, a pseudonym)

Place and date of publication: Girl's Own Paper, from December 1882 to August 1883

Genre: serial, Robinsonade

Main characteristics:

First-person narrator (a young girl, Robina)

- Epistolary style (journal)
- Juvenile fiction

This story is addressed to **young girls**, as it was published in one of the most popular journals of the period, the <u>Girl's Own Paper</u>. Robina describes herself as a descendant of **"the world-famed Robinson Crusoe"**. She grows up in a colony with her family but she is sent to England perhaps to finish her formation. She is shipwrecked on a tropical island, where she will live many adventures away from British society.



Illustration of *Robina Crusoe* (1882-1883), Chapter I: "My First Years". Digitised by VictorianVoices.net

Robina takes advantage of her formal education (she has read books about botany, chemistry and geology) and is capable of surviving by herself. After a while, Robina meets and "adopts" (as a mother) a native girl named **Undine**. When both girls are finally rescued from the island, they both travel to England, but Undine is never able to fit in. In the end, Robina goes back to the island with Undine, and she establishes a prosperous colony.

Protagonist: Robina Crusoe (a girl)



LITTLE MISS ROBINSON CRUSOE (1898) by Mrs. George Corbett (Elizabeth Corbett)

Authorship: Elizabeth Corbett (signed as Mrs. George Corbett)

Place and date of publication: London, 1898

Genre: novel, Robinsonade (fiction)

Main characteristics:

• First-person narrator (a young girl of fourteen)

• Juvenile fiction

Protagonist: Leona Robinson

Leona is the daughter of a sailor, left at the care of her uncle in England. She is very active and loves physical work (she can sail and is not afraid of doing it by herself). Leona sails away from the land by mistake and shipwrecks after a storm. A steamer picks her up from the sea, yet that boat sinks and she wakes up on a deserted island.

On the island, she befriends a monkey, builds her own house, and survives by herself. She finds an abandoned settlement and later, she is reunited with the passengers of the ship. They all safely return to England, after having found some valuable gems and earning a little fortune.

For a girl of fourteen to think about building a house will perhaps seem strange to girls who have never had to do anything for themselves; but as there was nobody else to think and act for me, I had, of course, to do my best to rise to the occasion. (p. 73)



Frontispiece of *Little Miss Robinson Crusoe* (1898) by Elizabeth Corbett (Mrs. George Corbett) Digitised by University of Florida.



RELATED EXTERNAL RESOURCES



WomenWriters is a database with information about women authors from the middle ages up to c.1900. It includes a list of female-authored robinsonades from the 18th-19th centuries. Please, click on the image on your left to be redirected.



In this podcast episode of *Unfinished Business*, "Freewheeling Women", you can hear about the stories of Victorian female cyclists and their journeys.

Please, click on the image above to be redirected.

National Geographic features an illustrated guide of "21 women explorers who changed the world". Author: Katie Knorovsky. Illustrator: Bijou Karman. Please, click on the image below to be redirected.



RELATED EXTERNAL RESOURCES



Welcome to Women's Travel Writing, 1780-1840. A Blos-Bibliographical Database, providing full records for all known books of travel published in Britain and Ireland by women between 1780 and 1840, supplemented by notes, short biographies of the travel writers and illustrators, and web links to online digital editions.



First launched in July 2014, the database and its biographies are the work of Dr Benjamin Colibert of the University of Wolverhampton's Centre for Transnational and Transcultural Research, with generous support from the Wolverhampton Faculty of Arts, Business and Social Sciences

and a 2016-18 research grant from the British Academy and Leverhulme Trust.

ravel writing is here defined in terms of genre (narratives, juidebooks, illustrated letterpress plate books, topographical lescriptions, and collections): witness (accounts derived from actual tours); and place of publication (Britain and Ireland). While women contributed only around 5% of the total of such travel writings in the marketplace, the database charts the growing presence and professionalization of women travel writers in the nineteenth century.

You can query the database in two principal ways

Search by single or multiple fields (including author, author roles, title, date of publication, publisher, genre, original language, and regional content)

Browse by Author, Illustrator, Publisher, or Printer

Visit About Women's Travel Writing for information on the database's History, scope and aims; Credits and acknowledgements; Sources and abbreviations; How to cite the database; Contact information; and Copyright.

For the latest developments of the Women's Travel Writing project, please visit the News & Events page.

© 2014–2020 Dr Benjamin Colbert, Centre for Transnational and Transcultural Research, University of Wolverhampto Developed by Movable Type Ltd

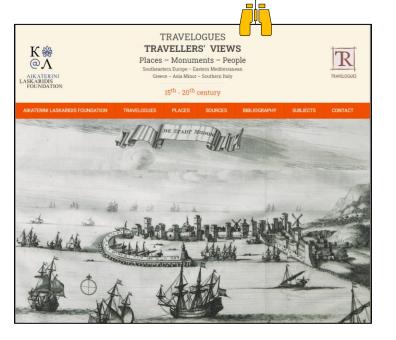


British Travel Writing is a biographical database created by Dr. Benjamin Colbert of the University of Wolverhampton's Centre for Transnational and Transcultural Research.

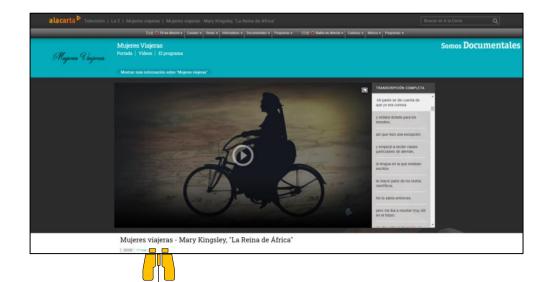
The database includes bio-bibliographical references to women's travel writing (from 1780 to 1840).

Please, click on the image on your left to be redirected.

Travelogues is an image database created within the Project Aikaterini Laskaridis Foundation to promote Greek culture. It compiles an extensive image bank with graphic materials found in travel accounts of journeys to Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean from the 15th century onwards. Please, click on the image below to be redirected.



RELATED EXTERNAL RESOURCES



Mujeres Viajeras is a series of documentaries in Spanish created for RTVE. It features episodes about Isabella Bird and Mary Kingsley, among others. They count with the participation and critical insight of Pilar Tejera, Luisa Rossi and Dea Birkett.

Please, click on the image above to be redirected.



Daniel Defoe's "Robinson Crusoe" & the Robinsonades is a collection of various editions of Robinson Crusoe and other robinsonades. This digital collection is part of the Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature at University of Florida.

Please, click on the image above to be redirected.

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