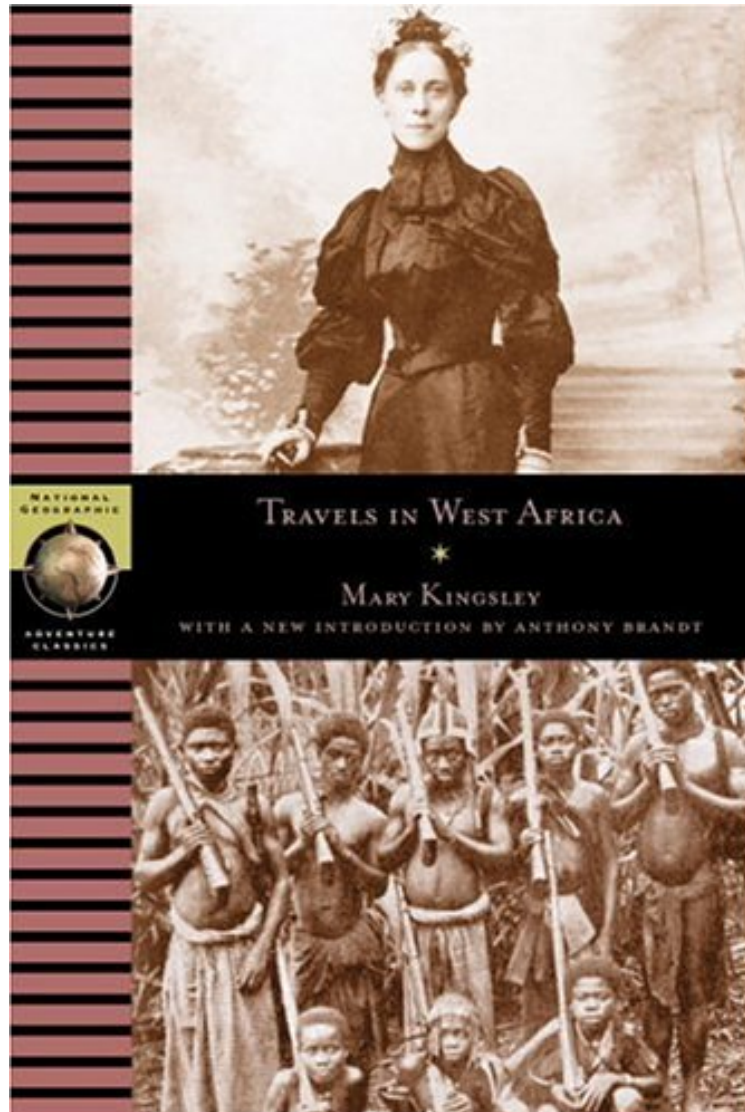


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## Travels in West Africa (National Geographic Adventure Classics)

*mary* KINGSLEY

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**mary KINGSLEY : Travels in West Africa (National Geographic Adventure Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Travels in West Africa (National Geographic Adventure Classics):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A travel journal by a courageous, intelligent, vivacious and witty lady. By Paul I. Dukel Jr. Travels In West Africa, Kingsley Of all the great women travelers such as Gertrude Bell and Freya Stark of Middle Eastern fame and Fanny Bullock Workman and Janet Wuslin of Eastern Asian and Himalayan note I would place Mary Kingsley of African renown greatest of all. I am familiar with the books and works of the

others but Kingsley combines all the attributes of all great travelers, whether male or female. Though she derides her own literary style I find it excellent, she writes with a witty and self-deprecating style which I find engaging. After reading this book no one could doubt her courage and imperviousness to hardship and discomfort. She also seems to possess a quite extraordinary personality as she seems to get along well with practically everyone she meets. But first of all I find her intelligence to be first rate. Her five chapters on fetish are of important value to the anthropologist and student of West African culture, and her comment in the appendix on "Foreign Labor" [page 656 in the Dover edition] may be considered brilliant. It's interesting to compare this work on West Africa to the famous explorer, Richard F. Burton's, "Travels in West Africa" It seems no two people could be more unlike. Burton, though at times brilliant and always interesting and an intellectual of the highest order, is of course extremely opinionated if not outright bigoted. Burton's attempt at humor or wit never comes through like Kingsley's does. Burton has outright contempt for non-Muslim Africans, perhaps justifiably so in the case semi-Christianized mission Africans. But whereas Kingsley also mistrusts the latter, she attempts to understand the pagan African, while Burton never does. While Kingsley's book is always lighthearted, Burton's work seems strangely macabre at times. I am not disappointed in this Dover Publishers edition I have 8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A most remarkable woman By Kay A. Douglas If you enjoyed Katherine Hepburn's spunky performance in "The African Queen" or delight when Elizabeth Peters' fictional Amelia Peabody prods a villain with her trusty umbrella, you will undoubtedly enjoy the real adventures of Mary Kingsley in Africa. At thirty years of age, her parent having both died, the sheltered Miss Kingsley set off for the continent that had for so long ruled her imagination. Setting herself up as a trader in West Africa, she set out across treacherous swamps and uncharted regions, going where few white men - let alone women - had ever been. Kingsley wrote of her travels with a self-deprecating wit, impaling many of the racial and cultural prejudices of her day. She vastly preferred, for example, the unconverted "cannibal Fans" to the tribes influenced by missionaries. She distrusted the motives of the "civilizing" European forces, with good reason. My copy of this affordable Everyman edition, ably edited and introduced by Elspeth Huxley, is thick with favorite underlined passages. She writes of harrowing experiences as if she were recounting events at an ice cream social. Indeed, invariably dressed in proper Victorian garb throughout all her travels, she once escaped impalement in a game trap set with spikes - her voluminous skirts saved her. Of an eight-foot crocodile attempting to climb into her canoe, whom Kingsley dealt a repelling blow with a paddle, she remarked, "This was only a pushing young creature who had not learnt manners." Travelling without the vast entourage that other explorers, such as Stanley, seemed to find necessary, she possessed an independence which bordered on eccentricity. She was, as Elspeth Huxley notes, at heart a lone wolf, always preferring to go her own way and make her own judgements about those she encountered. The character of this indomitable, fascinating woman shines through her account of her travels. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Kim Kennedy excellent, entertaining book. unexpectedly humorous

In 1893, defying every convention of Victorian womanhood, Mary Kingsley set off alone for West Africa to collect botanical specimens. Unaccompanied except for native guides, she plunged boldly into forbidding jungles, often the first European and almost always the first white woman ever to arrive. Undaunted by tales of ferocious cannibals, she made friends with the tribes she met and collected priceless samples of flora and fauna. Along the way she fought off crocodiles with a paddle and hit a leopard over the head with a pot. When she fell into a trap lined with sharp sticks, she was saved by her voluminous crinolines for she always dressed like a lady. *Travels in West Africa* is a book as vivid and unforgettable as the extraordinary woman herself. The charm of West Africa is a painful one: it gives you pleasure when you are out there, but when you are back here it gives you pain by calling you . . . Come back, come back, this is your home. *Mary Kingsley National Geographic Adventure Classics* is a series that celebrates the 100 greatest adventure books of all time, as compiled by a panel of experts for National Geographic Adventure. These titles have been carefully selected for their adrenaline quotient and their status as classics of the adventure genre.

From the Publisher Founded in 1906 by J.M. Dent, the Everyman Library has always tried to make the best books ever written available to the greatest number of people at the lowest possible price. Unique editorial features that help Everyman Paperback Classics stand out from the crowd include: a leading scholar or literary critic's introduction to the text, a biography of the author, a chronology of her or his life and times, a historical selection of criticism, and a concise plot summary. All books published since 1993 have also been completely restyled: all type has been reset, to offer a clarity and ease of reading unique among editions of the classics; a vibrant, full-color cover design now complements these great texts with beautiful contemporary works of art. But the best feature must be Everyman's uniquely low price. Each Everyman title offers these extensive materials at a price that competes with the most inexpensive editions on the market-but Everyman Paperbacks have durable binding, quality paper, and the highest editorial and scholarly standards. About the Author Mary Kingsley (1862-1900) was an English author and explorer known for her bestselling *Travels in West Africa*, one of two books she wrote about her time in the region. She made three trips to Africa throughout her lifetime, the final being to South Africa, where she contracted typhoid as a

volunteer nurse and died during the Boer War.