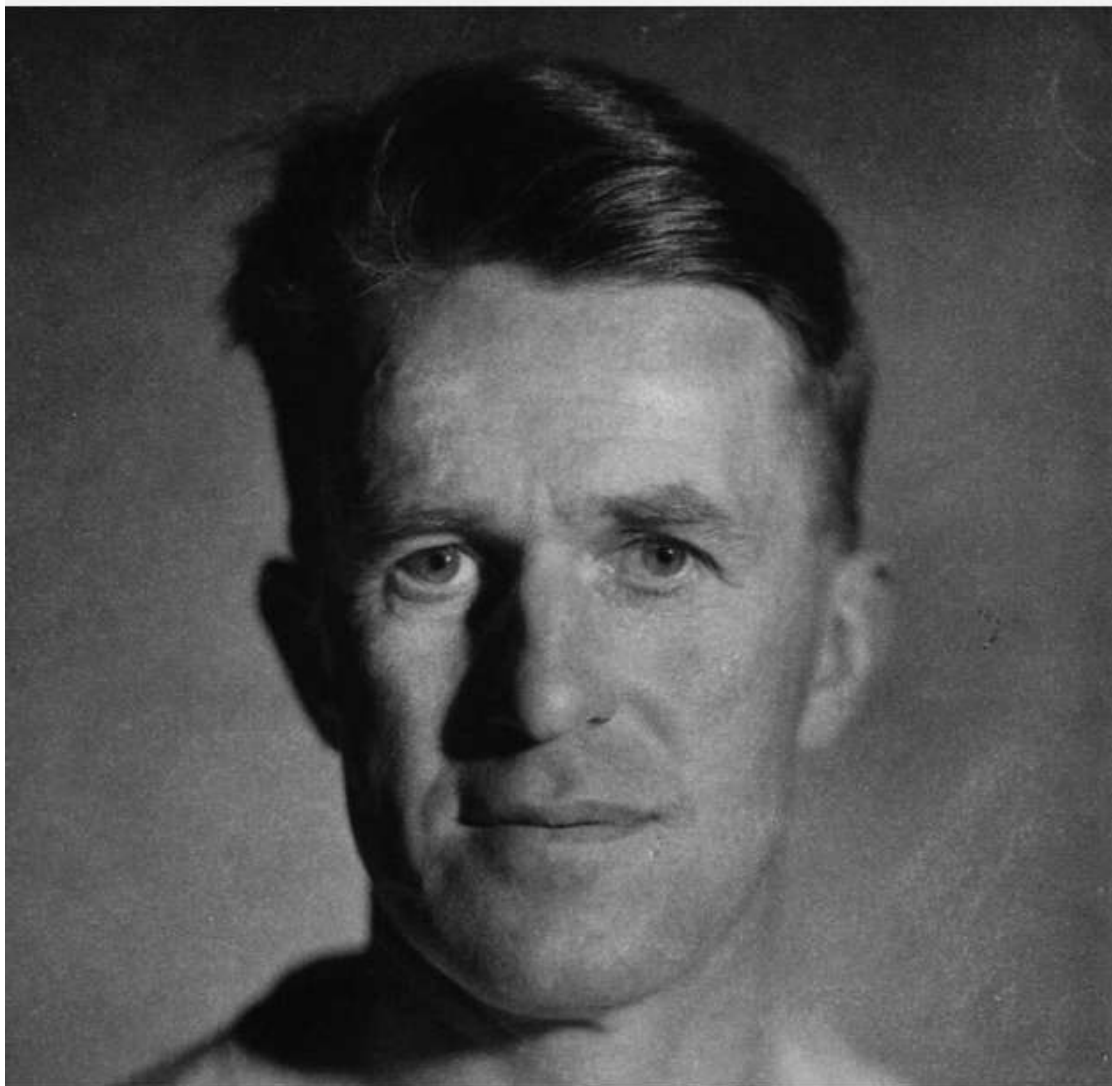




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T. E. LAWRENCE
(1888-1935)



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The Complete Works of

T. E. LAWRENCE



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Complete Works of T. E. Lawrence



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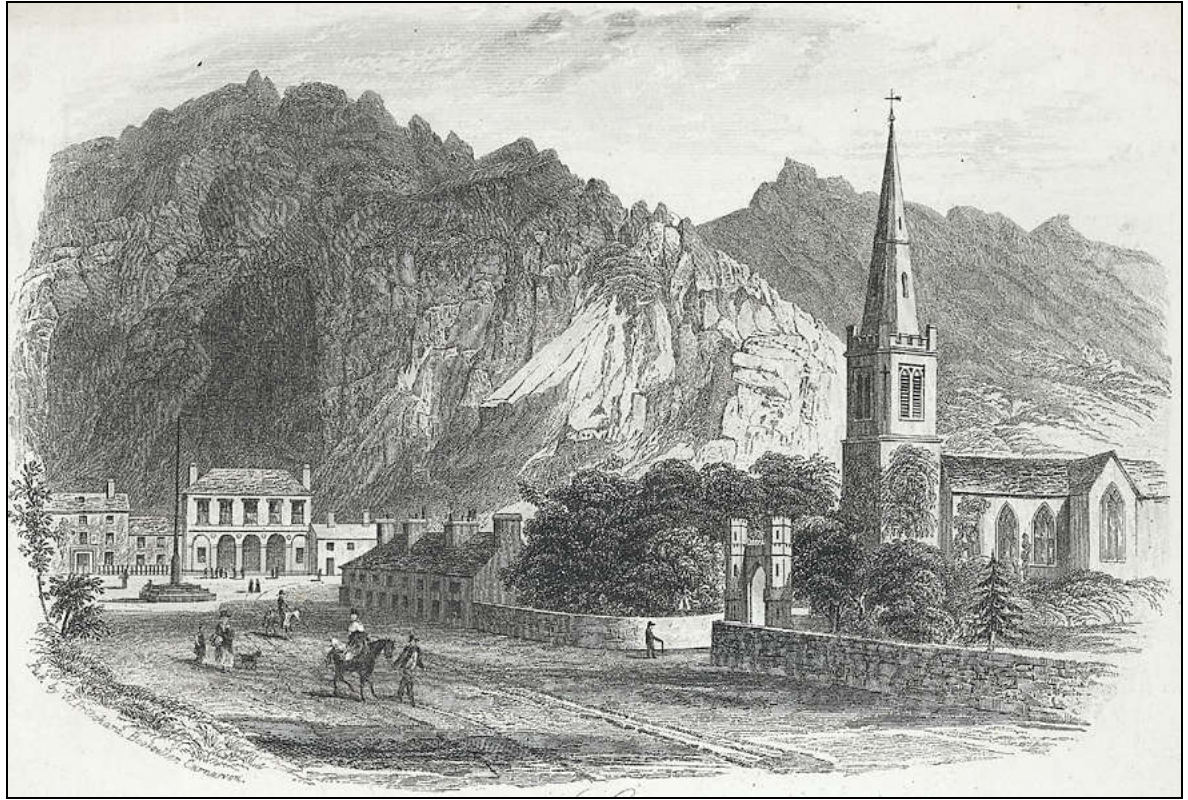
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The Non-Fiction



Tremadog, a village in Gwynedd, North West Wales — Lawrence's birthplace



Tremadog, c.1865



Lawrence's birthplace, Gorphwysfa, Tremadog



Lawrence, aged five



Lawrence attended the City of Oxford High School for Boys from 1896 until 1907

Preface to 'The Wilderness of Zin' (1914) by C. Leonard Woolley



WE MUST BEGIN with apologies. Mr. Woolley and I are not Semitic specialists, and our hurried flight across the country did not give us either time or opportunity to collect place-names. We therefore deal simply with the archaeological remains in the desert, and even on these, from pressure of work elsewhere in Syria, we could only spend six weeks. When we went to Sinai we learnt for the first time the names of former travellers; and in our ignorance of how much they had done, we repeated a great deal of their work, especially on the later sites. French, German, American, and English travellers had recorded all these before us. What certain of those travellers have published is usually more than sufficient, and the limited public interested in Byzantine matters will naturally refer to their special articles. As a rule, we have avoided making infinitesimal corrections in their plans or notes, and have put forward only fresh information or criticisms which we think pertinent. If these latter are sometimes drastic, we must plead that our knowledge of pottery, acquired during some years of excavation in the neighbouring countries, and our experience of the allied remains in Egypt and Syria have enabled us to take a wider comparative view of the civilization of the Negeb than most of our predecessors could. We both speak Arabic easily.

On the whole, the work done by the French fathers in this country and published by them from time to time in the *Revue Biblique*, seems to us at once very sane, very interesting, and very exact. Their notes on Abda, so far as they go, are admirable. Their description of their ride from Nakhel to Kadeis and through Wady Jerafi to Petra could not be improved upon; and on more particular points, as in their description of Graye (Geziret Faraun), or in their historical and anthropological notes on the Arab tribes, they show the learning of specialists tempered with mercy. Musil, their Austrian competitor, has made wonderful collections of Arab songs, mostly from the Kerak district, and he has been over the whole country, surveying and photographing; but his field notes are sometimes both vague and heavy.

In English there is occasional work, of very varied quality, in the Quarterly Statements of the Palestine Exploration Fund. The field notes of Mr. Holland are of interest between the Canal and Jebel Muwacilleh, and he was a keen observer; but his excursions into archaeology are not successful. The really great man is Professor Edward Palmer, who, aided by Tyrwhitt Drake, made a journey in the Till and Negeb in 1869 and 1870. His book is a very carefully written, very lively and very complete summing up of the features of the country. Palmer was a great linguist, and therefore particularly interested in place-names. His zest for these sometimes led him astray. If he had had an archaeological instinct or training, our visit to the Desert would have been waste of time. As it was, he was afraid to be too definite in his judgments, and so laid himself open to misuse or misquotation by champions of private and particular theories upon the country and its occupation. His book should be read in conjunction with our own, for we have avoided, where possible, allusion to things which he has done once and for all.

Where we have had occasion to criticize his work or attack his theories we have done it vigorously; but we hope that people will not read into our attitude anything more than the respect due to a powerful opponent; for Palmer himself and for the journey that he and Tyrwhitt Drake, under great difficulties, made so vivid and fruitful for us, we have nothing but unqualified admiration.

The main objects that we had in view were four: to get some idea of the character of the country in successive periods; to trace the Darb el Shur, the old inland route of caravans from central Palestine to Egypt; to identify sites mentioned in the Bible and other historical writings; and, though this lay outside the limits of the new survey, to study the neighbourhood of Ain Kadeis, supposed to be the Kadesh-Barnea of the Israelite wanderings. In all these endeavours, except, perhaps, the third, we had some measure of success. If a disproportionate amount of our results is devoted to Byzantine instead of to earlier and more interesting remains, it is because we were obliged to deal with the actual rather than with the desirable. The identification of old sites of the Bible, so frequent in the former survey of Palestine, was there made possible by the careful collection of place-names. In our haste we could not enter upon this work. It has been very completely done, however, by the actual surveyors, and it is their opinion that in this desert country, subjected to the fluctuating waves of nomad invasions, old names are little likely to survive. Places are usually called after some temporary and recent inhabitant, or after some prominent but not always permanent natural feature.

In the beginnings of our journey, we were aided (in common with the other surveyors) by Erfan Bey, Kaimmakam of Beersheba. He was free from the widespread suspicion of map-makers, and was very friendly. With the Arabs we had the best relations throughout. Of course, each tribe has a vile opinion of the virtues and morals of its neighbours; but Captain Newcombe began work in the country by getting to know the chiefs, and so secured for himself and the other members of the survey without paying blackmail or giving presents - a toleration that became cordiality at times. The tribesmen we met were naturally inquisitive and sometimes distrustful, since we did not always follow the lines of the survey parties. But they were all very good-tempered, quite ready to act as guides or emergency helpers (of course, expecting a reward - a frame of mind not unknown in Europe), very hospitable, and most scrupulously honest. Near Ain Kadeis, where our riding camels strayed away, the Arabs brought them in, unasked, to the station at Kossaima. It will be obvious from this that we had no dragoman with us.

We must beg from our critics (if there are any critics in these busy days) more mercy than we ourselves have shown. The original scheme of this book has suffered many things in execution. It was to have been rounded off by some chapters from Captain Newcombe, to treat of place-names and of the histories of Arab tribes, and to explain the triangulation of the actual survey and its results. None of these chapters was written, but all were in preparation when the outbreak of war changed Captain Newcombe's plans, and hurried him into France in the first days of the campaign.

As there is none of Captain Newcombe's independent work in the following pages, I think we shall be justified in saying a few words about his leadership of our party. We were sent down in the midst of his work (which was being done against time) to bother him on a subject that furthered his own studies in no way. We had with us only a scratch outfit raked up in Gaza. Yet he welcomed us, stripped himself of what he called his 'luxuries' for us (and he was already living in the barest way), got us camels, and in Khalasa fed us till our stores arrived. Living with him we got a clear insight into his methods. I had five parties under him, and yet in this unmapped wilderness always knew exactly where each party was, and how its work was going on. He established a regular post, and supply caravans from El Arish, Gaza, and Beersheba, to feed his men and animals. He was ambassador for all of us to Arab tribes and to Turkish officials, and managed both, leaving behind him a reputation which will smooth the way of any future English traveller in the desert. This labour of

organization would have been enough for most men, living as roughly and uncomfortably as Newcombe did: yet in addition he contrived to map a larger district than any of his assistants. Off by dawn with guides and instruments, he would return to camp at dark, and work perhaps till midnight, arranging and calculating and recording for the benefit of the other parties. He was the prime begetter of the Survey, and thanks to his elaborate camel-contract, his skilful handling of his transport and supply columns, and the Spartan simplicity of life to which he also converted his subordinates, the expedition, in economy of money and time, beat all records of similar surveys in the East.

This book as it stands, therefore, is the work only of Mr. C. L. Woolley and myself. Mr. Woolley had written of the Byzantine towns, the Northern tells, and the journey, when the war sent him also into the Army, and forced him to transfer his materials to me. These included parts of the historical chapter, and parts of that on the Darb el Shur. It is, however, impossible for either of us to take sole responsibility for any part. Some of the book is a transcript of field notes, hammered out between us in the evening in the tents. Some of it was written in collaboration at Carchemish, before the excavations there began in the spring. In Mr. Woolley's absence I have revised parts of his work where I was competent to do so, and have left it untouched elsewhere.

Dr. A. E. Cowley, of Magdalen College, Oxford, worked out such Hebrew and Nabatean fragments as we brought back. He is responsible here for the Nabatean inscription from Khalasa, printed in Chapter VI. Mr. M. N. Tod, of Oriel College, has done the Greek inscriptions, and has prepared for publication all those given in Chapter VI, and Professor D. S. Margoliouth, of Oxford, has translated the Arabic stone from the Nagb of Akaba given in the same chapter. I owe thanks also to Mr. D. G. Hogarth, who read the text, and improved it in many details, and to Professor A. S. Hunt, of Oxford.

T. E. L.

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