



A Rage to Live: A Biography of Richard and Isabel Burton

Mary S. Lovell

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An "extraordinary biography" (*New York Times* Book Review) of a brilliant pair of adventurers.

Their marriage was both improbable and inevitable. Isabel Arundell was a schoolgirl, the scion of England's most distinguished Catholic family. When she first saw him while walking at a seaside resort, Richard Burton had already made his mark as a linguist (he was fluent in twenty-nine languages), scholar, soldier, and explorer--at once a symbol of Victorian England's vision of empire and an avowed rebel against its mores. When she turned and saw him staring after her, she decided that she would marry him. By their next meeting, Burton had become the first infidel to infiltrate Mecca as one of the faithful, and, in an expedition to discover the source of the Nile, would soon be the first white man to see Lake Tanganyika. After being married, the Burtons traveled and experienced the world, from diplomatic postings in Brazil and Africa to hair-raising adventures in the Syrian desert. In later life Richard courted further controversy as a self-proclaimed erotologist and the translator of *The Kama Sutra*. Based on previously unavailable archives, Mary Lovell has written a compelling joint biography that sets Isabel in her proper place as Burton's equal in daring and endurance, a fascinating figure in her own right.

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