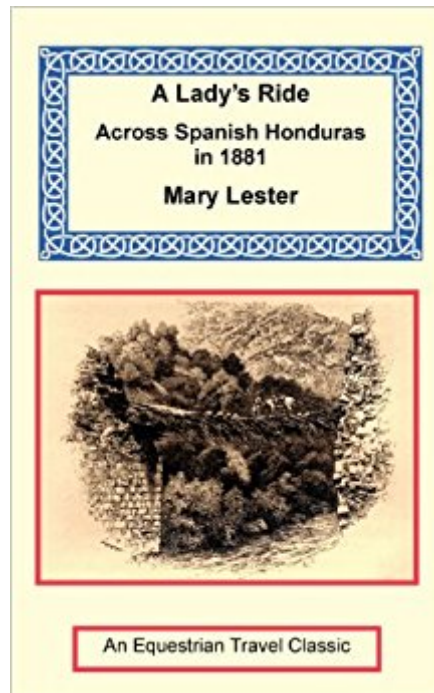




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A Lady's Ride Across Spanish Honduras In 1881



Synopsis

Few Englishmen, and still fewer women, had ridden from the Pacific port of Ampala, over the mountains of Honduras, to the Atlantic in the late nineteenth century. Yet that is what the refined Mary Lester set out to do. The intrepid traveller was laboring under a handicap as reliable maps were rare and what verbal advice was on offer turned out to be dubious and out of date. Yet such inconveniences did nothing to dampen the adventurous spirit of the lady who preferred to ride under the pseudonym "Maria Soltera." Regardless of what they called her, the people in Honduras soon learned to respect the courage and determination of the foreign Long Rider. "I do not fear hardship," she told them, "as I am the daughter of an English soldier and circumstances have compelled me to depend on myself." Lester wasn't making an idle boast. In excellent Spanish, she haggled over saddles, hired mules, deflated bullies and outwitted nefarious guides. She was, in a word, a fire-cracker whose combustible ride across the verdant mountains is still a tale to remember. Thus "A Lady's Ride Across Spanish Honduras" is a gem of a book, with its entertaining account of Mary's vivid, day to day life in the saddle. Yet the hardy amateur author was a keen observer who noted the exotic animal life, social customs, and political conditions of a jungle-trail-world that belonged to that simpler age. Complete with drawings from her journey, Lester's colourful writing brings the "lost" civilization of Spanish Honduras back to life more than a century later.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book was first published in 1884, but it is surprisingly modern and easy to read. Mary, an

unmarried Englishwoman who seems to have an interesting history of which we learn only a few intriguing snippets, embarked on an ultimately quixotic journey from Australia to Honduras (via San Francisco) to take charge of a newly established school. She encountered no startling adventures or fearful dangers, but her lively account (containing a lot of dialogue) of the people she met along the way and the incidents of her journey is told with good humour. Anyone who enjoys first-person travel accounts (particularly those of a bygone era) would enjoy being Mary's travelling companion for the few hours it takes to read this charming little book.

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