

May French Sheldon Encyclopedia Article

May French Sheldon

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May French Sheldon

1847-1936

American author and explorer who was one of the first white women to visit Central and East Africa. Born in Pennsylvania, Sheldon worked in England in the publishing business. She married an American, Eli Lemon Sheldon, in 1876. She later became a best-selling author and renowned traveler. Her husband financed her journeys and she was typically accompanied by more than 100 porters, guides, and servants. Her most popular book was *Sultan to Sultan*, (1892), inspired by her trip to Central and East Africa, where she described her experience with more than 35 different tribes. Sheldon gave lectures on her travels in Africa to raise money for the Belgian Red Cross during World War I.