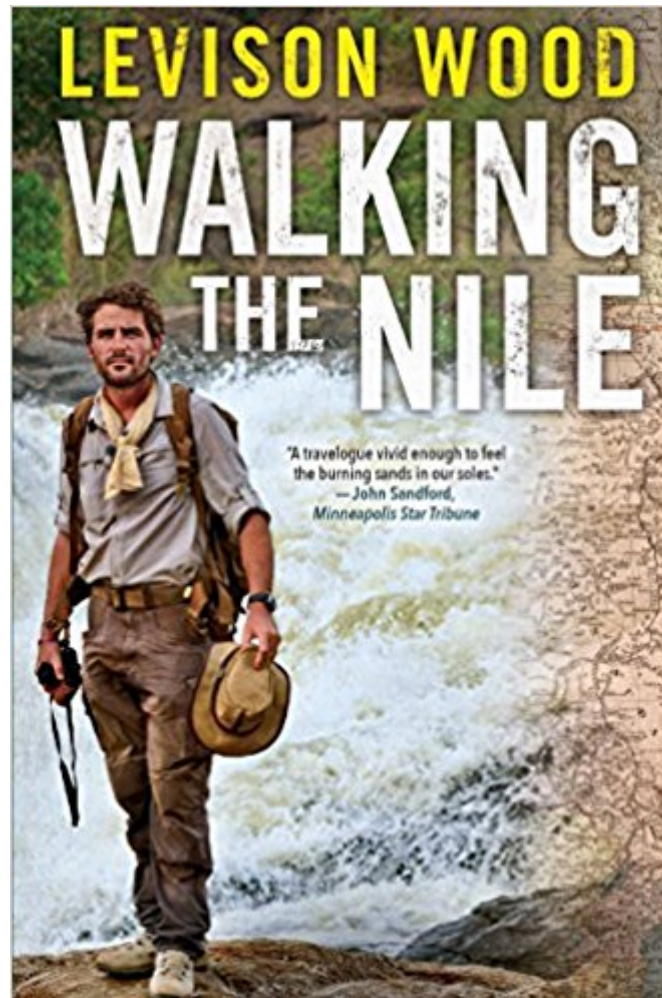




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# Walking The Nile



## Synopsis

The Nile, one of the world's great rivers, has long been an object of fascination and obsession. From Alexander the Great and Nero, to Victorian adventurers David Livingstone, John Hanning Speke, and Henry Morton Stanley, the river has enticed many into wild adventures. English writer, photographer, and explorer Levison Wood continues that tradition, and *Walking the Nile* is the captivating account of his remarkable and unparalleled Nile journey. Starting in November 2013 in a forest in Rwanda, where a modest spring spouts a trickle of clear, cold water, Wood set forth on foot, aiming to become the first person to walk the entire length of the fabled river. He followed the Nile for nine months, over 4,000 miles, through six nations—Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, South Sudan, the Republic of Sudan, and Egypt—to the Mediterranean coast. Like his predecessors, Wood camped in the wild, foraged for food, and trudged through rainforest, swamp, savannah, and desert, enduring life-threatening conditions at every turn. He traversed sandstorms, flash floods, minefields, and more, becoming a local celebrity in Uganda, where a popular rap song was written about him, and a potential enemy of the state in South Sudan, where he found himself caught in a civil war and detained by the secret police. As well as recounting his triumphs, like escaping a charging hippo and staving off wild crocodiles, Wood's gripping account recalls the loss of Matthew Power, a journalist who died suddenly from heat exhaustion during their trek. As Wood walks on, often joined by local guides who help him to navigate foreign languages and customs, *Walking the Nile* maps out African history and contemporary life. An inimitable tale of survival, resilience, and sheer willpower, *Walking the Nile* is an inspiring chronicle of an epic journey down this lifeline of civilization.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

An Best Book of February 2016: In November 2013, Levison Wood set out on an improbable and dangerous undertaking: walking the 4,000 miles of the Nile River from the trickle of its Rwandan headwaters to its Egyptian delta, a trek that would take him through six countries, strife and civil wars, swamps and sandstorms, thousands of years of history, and personal tragedy. Walking the Nile is Wood's account of the expedition, a briskly paced blend of gripping adventure tale and a portrait of modern Africa, full of objective hazards including crocodiles, minefields, and secret police. But why? Even Wood has trouble answering that question, but "ultimately, it came down to one thing. The Nile was there, and I wanted to walk it." George Mallory would be proud. --Jon Foro

--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Praise for Levison Wood and Walking the Nile: An Best Book of the Year (Nonfiction)

Wood's interest, as well as his talents as a writer, lie . . . in finding out what life was like in corners of the world that do not always make it into our headlines and in capturing the character and foibles of the people who inhabit them . . . Mr. Wood has a good eye for detail and a better ear for dialogue . . . What's more, unlike many explorers who went before him, Mr. Wood seems to have remained composed and charming throughout. --Wall Street Journal

Gripping . . . Collecting these stories; let alone doing so beautifully; requires a variety of lucky skills. Wood emerges as a dutiful and brave guide. --Los Angeles Times

Walking the Nile continues the illustrious tradition of travel adventures stretching from Marco Polo to Henry W. Longfellow to Bear Grylls . . . Wood's remarkable achievement is one each reader can savor vicariously . . . This worthy effort . . . should satisfy even the most jaded armchair adventurers. --Lincoln Journal Star

A travelogue vivid enough to feel the burning sands in our soles. --John Sandford, Minneapolis Star Tribune

Moments of sheer beauty and splendor are expertly juxtaposed with descriptions of the harshness of life for millions living in Africa, giving this account a depth and humbleness not often found in memoir/adventure writing. Wood has set a standard that will be hard to surpass. --Shelf Awareness

Walking the Nile has enticed many explorers, but Wood provides an up-to-the-minute portrait of the nations and people that claim the world's longest river . . . Wood is a sharp observer and authoritative writer. He takes pains to describe the

Rwandan conflict, the Egyptian revolution, the Sudanese civil war, and all the culture clashes in between . . . A bold travelogue, illuminating great swathes of modern Africa.Ã¢â¬Kirkus Reviews &#147;[An] ambitious attempt . . . the opinions of the people [Wood] encounters . . . are dynamic and at times surprising . . . These voices, seen through the lens of WoodÃ¢â¬s words, make this memoir a success.Ã¢â¬Publishers Weekly Ã¢â¬[Wood], in addition to being adventurous, determined, and rugged, is also very reflective . . . A collection of anecdotes that seem to be plucked from a Kipling adventure novel . . . From the terrifying to the exotic, Levison Wood has encountered just about everything imaginable, and then some . . . What comes through just as clearly as botany, geology, hydrology and zoology is the remarkable variety of cultures and people he meets along this unique expedition, presenting for us their lives, their work, their societies, and their history.Ã¢â¬CentralJersey.com &#147;An immense feat of endurance, a magnificent journey and a great adventure.Ã¢â¬Ranulph Fiennes &#147;Many have attempted this holy grail of an expedition&#151;so I admire LevÃ¢â¬s determination and courage to pull this offÃ¢â¬Bear Grylls &#147;Obsession, sacrifice, bravery, death&#151;the themes of great expedition tales havenÃ¢â¬t changed since Odysseus set sail. The adventurer Levison Wood has accomplished a doubly impressive feat, not only walking the Nile but capturing that experience in this lovely, evocative book.Ã¢â¬Mark Adams, New York Times bestselling author of Turn Right at Machu Pichu &#147;In the macho, adrenaline-fuelled arena of TV adventurers, Levison Wood is that rare beast: the real deal.Ã¢â¬Radio Times (UK) &#147;Unlike a great many pretenders, [Wood] is the real deal: a former paratrooper, a major in the Army Reserve and as hard as nails.Ã¢â¬Sunday Telegraph (UK) &#147;Wood is not most men . . . He has earned a reputation as a real-life action man.Ã¢â¬Mirror (UK) &#147;BritainÃ¢â¬s best-loved adventurer.Ã¢â¬Times (UK)

I have been in search of another great travel story since I finished *The Long Way Round* and *The Long Way Down* by Ewan McGregor and Charlie Boorman and this is most definitely it. Levison Wood makes Bear Gryll's look like an amateur with his fantastic story of his trek up the Nile - crocodiles, pythons, close encounters with rebel forces, this book has it all

This was a really interesting read, I learned so much about the areas along the Nile, the people, vegetation, animals, previous explorers and political problems still ongoing in a lot of the areas. Levison Wood, a former British soldier, a writer and explorer decides he wants to be the first

to have walked the whole length of the Nile, a journey that would take him 4,250 miles and through many diverse landscapes. When asked why he wanted to do this journey, his ultimate response was "The Nile was there and I wanted to walk it." He had Guides that walked with him through different parts of the continent, needing to change as the languages did. Friends and reporters would occasionally walk small part with him. There was Tragedy, fear and amazement to witness throughout this journey. This is a journey well worth reading.

Walking the Nile is just okay. Wood's writing is serviceable, but certainly not compelling. There's just no "oomph" to it, nothing to make you want to keep turning the pages. While ostensibly a book about walking the distance of the Nile, it's much more a book about how messed up all the African nations he traveled through are. At that, it's not a bad book by any means, but again, the writing isn't compelling enough to hold my interest. Most of the actual walking isn't even included in the book. Instead, Wood mostly includes discussions of the cities he sees and occasionally the villages. I'm sure many will find it a worthwhile read, but for me it was just okay.

I almost didn't read this book because of the cliché cover. The book is more than the author just walking the length of the Nile. The author does a great job of explaining what he's going through and giving you just enough history of each location and nation that he's walking through to make it much more than just an adventure story. I think it was interesting to see the trials and pitfalls that he had to go through just to cross borders and areas in certain African nations. If I had to ask for more I wish a detailed map would've been included in the book to see where he was stage by stage. The author also does a great job of not glorifying himself as this unbelievable person doing unbelievable feats. The truth is this guy spent the better half of the year walking in through Africa and doesn't have many negative things to say besides taking pity on certain situations. Overall a terrific book and would recommend overwhelmingly. Also after doing a bit more research it was documented on tv as well on Animal planet.

Levison Wood, right at the beginning of his travelogue, echoing the mountaineer George Mallory's *raison d'être* for climbing Mt. Everest, states that he wanted to walk the length of the Nile "Because it's there." He then amends that statement, saying that he wanted to follow in a great tradition, to achieve something unusual and inspire others, but that much of his motivation was selfish - to go on a great adventure, to test himself. (Kindle location 67) Later he further refines those objectives to a more external, less personal, focus: "to see

how [the Nile] shaped lives from the ground, day by day and mile by mile. (Kindle location 137) He starts his story not at the beginning of his trek, but in the middle as he encounters the front lines of the Sudanese civil war, where he witnesses rocket fire and an angry mob who wants to kill anyone who may be associated with the United Nations (and, as a white Britisher, he could easily be mistaken for one and shot on sight!) The story then moves back in time to the beginning of the trek, in December, 2013, in the Nyungwe Forest in Rwanda, to a tiny spring sprouting a trickle of water from a hole in a rock, claimed by an agent of the National Tourist Board of Rwanda to be the source of the furthest tributary of the Nile. Wood provides a bit of history, linking his forthcoming journey to Alexander the Great and the Roman Emperor Nero, to Stanley and Livingston and Speke, and rooting it in historical and geographic controversy (Lake Victoria is the commonly accepted origin of the White Nile.) And so, Wood sets off, determined to walk every step of the entire 4,250 mile length of the Nile (measured from the Rwandan spring.) We learn quite a bit about the guides and friends who accompany him through different stages of the trek, and the history and details of the living conditions of the villagers and inn-keepers whom he encounters. We learn about the physical difficulties he and his compatriots face - searing heat, blisters, thirst - but actually little about his own personal discomfort. In the manner of the notable British explorers who preceded him, he soldiers on. That doesn't mean that he isn't affected by those travails. After all, the group faces many dangerous circumstances, from single-minded crocodiles and hippos in the deep jungle to heat exhaustion in the Sahara Desert to AIDS in the villages to war. Indeed, death does overtake the party, causing some soul-searching in Woods. He wonders if continuing the pursuit of his goal at the risk of the lives of his compatriots is too selfish. While the physical difficulties of the trek are discussed, the majority of the focus is on the societal difficulties Wood faces and that the people met along the way endure - the problems at the borders as he passes through Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, South Sudan, Sudan and Egypt, the collapsing economies and infrastructure, famine, war, and the greed of the police and military personnel. On the 30th of August, 2014, after 271 days of trekking, he reaches the Mediterranean port of Rashid (the place where the Rosetta Stone was discovered), in Egypt. Here the Nile waters complete their long journey and a changed Wood realizes, in contrast to his attitude at the beginning of the venture, that he had only gotten through his journey due to the kindness of strangers, the normal people that he had met day to day - a most unselfish understanding born out from all of the events experienced in his story. I received a free copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

I love well written travelogues. It's my ambition to walk the length of Italy and write a book about it

someday. Mr Wood writes a compelling book about walking through different countries with various degrees of danger. There is a section of the Nile he has to miss because of the war situations. So in reality he was unable to walk the entire Nile. He makes lots of friendships with local people who are often friendly and helpful. It restores my faith in the basic decency of many people. This book is well written and fun.

I really enjoyed reading this book but for none of the reasons I expected. Sure there is a bit of adventure but Mr. Levison is more about the people and places. HE does go into some politics but leaves it open to the reader. Great read with lots of surprises.

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