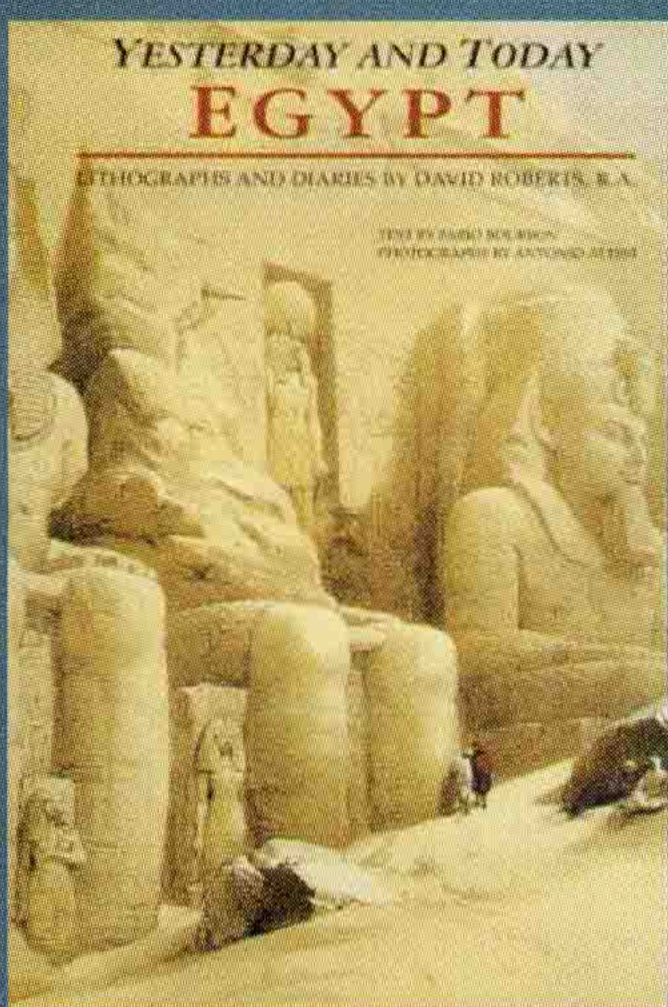


my favourite book.

What is the most inspiring travel book you have read? This month, Mark Davidson shares his appreciation of David Roberts's *Egypt: Yesterday And Today*. Send a review of your favourite book to hfu@realtravelmag.com.



Egypt: Yesterday and Today – Lithographs and Diaries

David Roberts R.A.
Crowood Press

As a travel writer and photographer, one of my greatest inspirations is David Roberts, a Scottish artist known for a prolific series of detailed lithographs of Egypt and the Near East produced from sketches made over the Grand Tour of the region between 1838 and 1840.

The book looks at the places he visited in Egypt with a current photograph alongside the image he sketched whilst there. It is intriguing to see how the locations have changed through the ravages of time, even though it is only a little over 150 years since he travelled there. His diary entry is shown on each page, and as you flick through the book you see many of the most famous locations in Egypt, from the Colossi of Memnon to the Pyramids at Giza.

It is interesting to see the temples at Abu Simbel, built by the Pharaoh Ramses II, and how they looked before they were threatened by the rising waters of Lake Nasser after the Aswan High Dam was built. They had to be moved 60 metres up the sandstone cliff during a five-year period between 1964 and 1968.

One can only imagine what it was like to be a traveller in the days of yesteryear, living with Bedouins, listening to their tales by the campfire and bartering with the local traders who sold their wares far and wide. Oh, how I yearn to go back in time!

Mark Davidson