



Journal of a Residence in Chile During the Year 1822, and a Voyage from Chile to Brazil in 1823

Maria Graham

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In 1821, Maria Dundas Graham sailed for South America on H.M.S. Doris, a ship sent to protect British mercantile interests in that volatile region. After her husband, the ship's captain Thomas Graham, died en route, the newly widowed Maria Graham landed in Valparaíso, Chile. Resisting all efforts to hustle her back to England, Graham, a professional writer and highly educated woman, rented herself a cottage in the Chilean?not the British?section of Valparaíso and traveled through Chile for nine months until driven out by a major earthquake and the threat of civil war.

The resulting *Journal of a Residence in Chile* (1824) tells the gripping story of a gothic heroine in a dangerous but fascinating new land. The author has an eye for detail and a gift for storytelling, and so she creates a travel narrative with a compelling plot and vividly realized characters.

Among the first travel narratives authored by a woman, Graham's *Journal* establishes literary strategies for travel texts to follow and shows clear differences from male narratives of the same period. The *Journal*, with Jennifer Hayward's illuminating new biographical and critical essays and appendices, is also invaluable for scholars and general readers interested in Latin America. Graham provides one of the few firsthand accounts in English of the independence movements in South America, meets with many of the major historical figures involved, provides detailed historical and political readings of events, and depicts Chile of the 1820s in accurate and loving detail.

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