



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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The Bakhtiari Country

Stock#: 66678
Map Maker: Stanford
Date: 1892
Place: London
Color: Color
Condition: VG+
Size: 14 x 6.5 inches

Price: SOLD

Description:

A Famous Femal British Explorer in The Bakhtiari Region of Southwestern Iran.

Map of the route of Isabella Bird Bishop 1831-1904) through Southwestern Iran in 1890 (the route is illustrated in red).

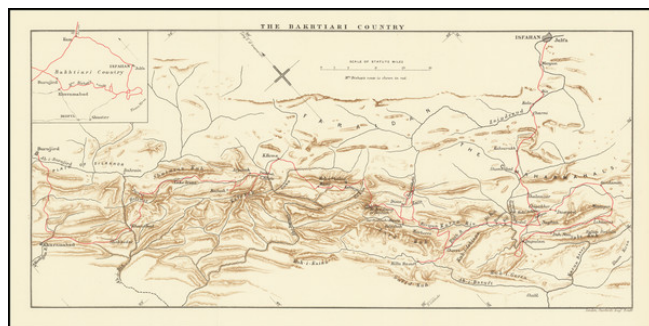
Finely detailed map of the region bounded by Borujerd and Khorramabad in the northwest and Isfahan and Shalamzar in the southeast.

The route illustrated was a part of Bishop's travels through Bakhtiari Country, Armenia, Azerbadjian, Iraq, Irakajemi, Persia, Kurdistan, over a two year period, and provides detailed descriptions including of the peoples, customs, society, social and economic life, geography, etc. Bishop was the first woman to address a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society and one of the first to be elected to its fellowship.

The following is excepted from a review of her account of the region, published in the *Proceedings Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. XIII (1891). p 633.

The Bakhtiari Country. By Mrs. Bishop.—*The authoress said that a great deal remained to be investigated, and the country would be found of interest and profit to the geologist, biologist, the botanist, and the anthropologist. The map of the country showed an area of 15,000 square miles, in the 31° to 34° North latitude, and 48° to 51° East longitude. The distance she actually travelled was over 700 miles.*

A great many objections were made at Teheran to her joining the expedition, but those were overcome by Sir Drummond Wolff, and the Sultan issued instructions for the proper arrangements to be made for her comfort.





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She could not agree that the people of the Bakhtiari country were savages. In the first place, they were clothed, and they had that further mark of true civilisation, that both sexes were clothed in Manchester cotton. They showed reverence for old age and respect for infancy, which was not found in other savage tribes. In the four months she spent amongst them no one offered any personal rudeness—she meant that no man of the Bakhtiari ever lifted the curtain of her tent. They were a pleasant people, and it was easy to move amongst them.

The safety of the traveller in the Bakhtiari country depended upon his observance of Bakhtiari custom—not violating it where it was possible to avoid doing so. Her journey might be divided into two parts. Over the first portion of it two English officers had preceded them on a survey expedition, and wherever those officers had been the natives spoke well of the English, such had been the influence for good exercised by those officers. Her part of the expedition consisted of herself, an interpreter, a cook, and two muleteers. She (Mrs. Bishop) rode on horseback, and they were obliged to take four mules, owing to the necessity for carrying all provisions (except meat) for forty days. The party altogether numbered eighteen men, of whom two only were Europeans, with twenty mules and a few horses. With that party she travelled through that very wild country without any serious disaster.

Travel was comparatively easy in the Bakhtiari country proper, but, on reaching beyond it, outside the range of the influence of the officers to whom she had referred, the people were suspicious, and the party were fired upon twice by a number of tribesmen, but no one was injured. She started for Ispahan on the 30th of April last year, and the first stage of the journey to Shanisaban was through a desert with 300 villages, each village an oasis, each oasis a paradise. On elevated plains, at an altitude of 6000 ft., they found remains of Armenian villages and Armenian graveyards, showing that, probably in centuries long past, Christianity was professed by a far larger number of people in the country than at present.

On her journey she experienced the cleverness of Bakhtiari thieves and the celerity of Bakhtiari justice. In a village she was robbed of all her money, being left absolutely penniless, but in a few days she was repaid the full amount by the local cadî, who had levied it upon the village where the robbery took place. The thief was liable to have his right or left hand cut off, and the decision of which it should be was referred to her.

After an interesting account of the agriculture of the country, Mrs. Bishop said her chief interest was in the Bakhtiari themselves, and a medical chest she took with her, together with minor surgical operations which she undertook, opened the way for her materially in her observance of the native character and customs. Though, as Moslems, the Bakhtiari despised women, yet women acted as their doctors. Blood feuds were marked features, in which



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revenge was taken either by killing the enemy, stealing his cattle, or boycotting him—" leaving him (in Mr. Parnell's phrase) severely alone."

The Bakhtiari professed great friendship for England, but she believed, if ever there came a collision between two armed Powers, who should be nameless, in south-west Persia, the Bakhtiari horsemen would be sold to the highest bidder. Polygamy was the custom of the country, and no female servants were allowed who were not also wives of the man of the house. A Bakhtiari man, therefore, married as many women as he could support, but the women were unveiled and had perfect freedom. However savage inter-tribal wars might be, the women were always safe. . . .

Detailed Condition: