Mary Henrietta Kingsley Encyclopedia Article

Mary Henrietta Kingsley

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Mary Henrietta Kingsley

1862-1900

English traveler who ventured to remote areas of Africa and nearby islands, collecting information to complete an unfinished book by her deceased father, George Henry Kingsley. While visiting the French Congo, she was brave enough to pass through a tribal zone inhabited by the Fang, a tribe well known for its cannibalism. In spite of many narrow escapes, she managed to collect an assortment of beetles and freshwater fishes, which she donated to the British Museum. Her writings were very sympathetic toward the problems and lack of medical care for the black Africans she had encountered. Kingsley died in Simonstown (now in South Africa) at the time of the Boer War, during which she was nursing sick prisoners of the conflict.