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William Gell

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### Itinerary of the Morea

Classical topographer Sir William Gell (1777–1836) first came to public attention with his *Topography of Troy* (1804). Based on his travels around Bunarbashi, near to where Schliemann would subsequently excavate, the work became a standard treatise. Byron even wrote: ‘Of Dardan tours let dilettanti tell, / I leave topography to classic Gell.’ A noted conversationalist and intellectual intermediary, Gell became a Fellow of the Royal Society and, indeed, a Member of the Society of Dilettanti. He also served, in 1803, on a diplomatic mission to the Ionian Islands; his subsequent journey, with the archaeologist Edward Dodwell, through the Peloponnese - then known as the Morea - became the subject of several later books, including *Narrative of a Journey in the Morea* (1823; also reissued in this series) and this 1817 publication. Comprising a survey of routes through the area, and their natural and archaeological landmarks, it sheds light on both contemporary Greece and the practicalities of early topographical study.

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# Itinerary of the Morea

*Being a Description  
of the Routes of that Peninsula*

WILLIAM GELL



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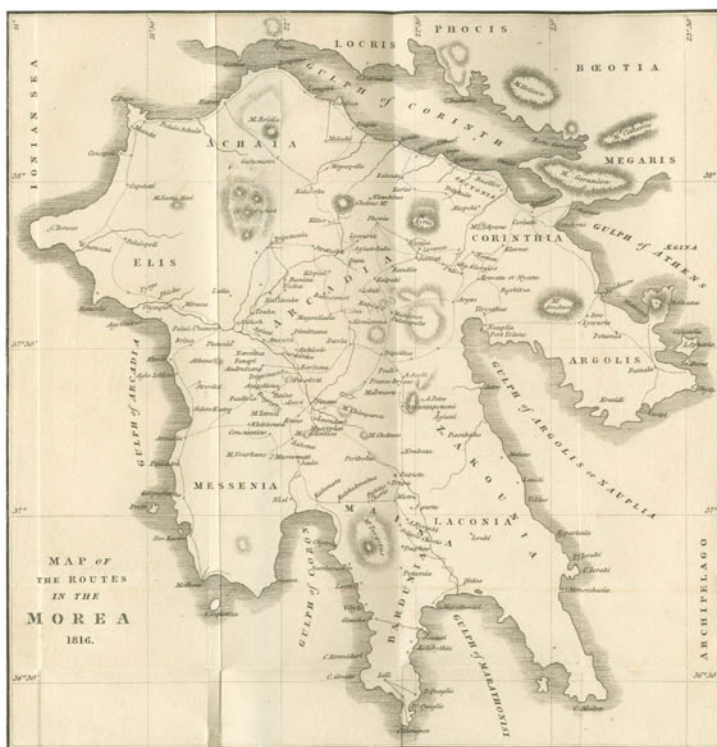
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**Itinerary**

OF

**THE MOREA:**

BEING

**A DESCRIPTION**

OF

**THE ROUTES OF THAT PENINSULA.**

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BY SIR WILLIAM GELL,  
M.A. F.R.S. F.S.A.

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1817.

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TO  
M. BARBIÈ DU BOCAGE,  
*&c. &c. &c.*  
WHOSE RESEARCHES HAVE BEEN OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE  
TO GRECIAN TOPOGRAPHY,

**This Work,**  
CONTAINING  
AN ESSAY ON THE ROUTES  
OF  
**THE MOREA,**

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY HIS FRIEND,

AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

**THE AUTHOR.**

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## P R E F A C E.



To those who travel in the North of Europe, the enumeration of every rivulet, source, or habitation, which occurs on the road, must appear totally devoid of interest or utility; and the notation of tiles, broken pottery, or blocks of stone, yet more frivolous and absurd. To the Grecian traveller, however, these may be circumstances of the more importance. Almost every brook has its value to history or geography; and good water is in some districts so scarce, that he who should make known the discovery of a source, or well, upon the Sunian promontory, would not only materially assist future

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travellers, but render an essential service to the navigators of the Archipelago.

The prospect of arriving in a given time, even at a hut, in so wild a country as Greece, at the close of a day's journey, cannot be without its charm ; and the existence of a single roof may often afford facilities for examining a district hitherto unexplored, on account of its distance from any well-known village.

Blocks of stone always indicate the site of a temple, a city, or a fortress ; while the tiles are sometimes the only memorials of a modern town important to the history of the lower ages, or of the wars between the Turks and Venetians, which the perishable nature of the materials employed in its construction have suffered to exist on the spot.

Broken pottery may also sometimes serve to point

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out the sites of fortresses of the most remote ages, from which the blocks have been removed for the erection of cities of a less ancient date.

It is to be understood, that the measure of distances by the time employed on the road can only be relative, though taken by means of the same horse, always having a person walking in company. This may occasionally vary; for the same animal, returning at night to the spot whence he set out in the morning, is found to hasten his pace, so as sometimes to shorten the distance by nearly one third. This defect is in some measure remedied by a rough statement of the estimated number of miles, by the road, from one station to another: but, while the roads continue in their present state, the hours and minutes will be found of infinitely more service to the traveller; as these miles, in a

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mountainous country, bear no proportion to the real distances, and vary in their excess beyond the direct line between an eighth and a third.

To those who ride post through the country, neither this Essay, nor any other, can be of much use on the spot; for the route from Krabata to Argos, which is here given at 1 hour 52 minutes, might, in dry weather, with a good horse, be traversed in 30 minutes. Even to such travellers, however, the present Essay will become interesting when they publish the account of their journeys, as they may learn from it what they would have seen, had they travelled for the purpose of observation.

It has been asserted, that we are now so well acquainted with Greece, that an apology is required for any work on that country. This might be true, if any one of the critics who have enjoyed this

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imaginary triumph over those who have travelled in Greece had even heard the names of the towns and villages of the Morea. Our sailors may have seen about seven towns on the coast; while, with regard to the situation of ancient cities, our best scholars would be puzzled to point out the sites of Psophis, Methydrium, or Orchomenos, or even Mantinea and Tegea. It is the entire ignorance of the country which has tempted people to assert that they were thoroughly acquainted with it. The gentleman to whom this Essay is inscribed, with all the advantages he possesses of talent and research, is fully sensible of the deficiency of the materials necessary to compile a map of the country.

Notwithstanding the great number of new names and situations to be found in this volume, much yet remains to be done, particularly in Laconia,

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before a sufficient knowledge of the Morea be obtained. One or two individuals only possess the necessary documents; but it is to be hoped that future travellers may be induced to add to the present collection, now that the foundation is once laid.

In the orthography of names, the several different methods of spelling have been generally given, and the ancient and modern appellations have been often indiscriminately used, when well ascertained. The modern names, as well as the ancient, are frequently expressive of some local peculiarity; - and as no two persons write them alike, while some studiously spell them wrong, in order to make a difference, where none exists, between the ancient and modern Greek, it is better that a traveller should be accustomed to the several methods.



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The ancient divisions are adopted, in the hope of rendering the whole more intelligible to the English reader, who must be more accustomed to them than the modern divisions. When this is not strictly observed, it is for the purpose of not breaking a connected line, or circle of routes, as from Sicyon to Alopeki, which, though in Sicyonia, was necessary to complete the tour of Achaia.

There are many words which it will be necessary for every traveller to learn, being in perpetual use for the most ordinary objects, and often compounded with proper names. On this account, an explanation of those most frequently occurring is here given :—

*Derveni*, a guard on the road.

*Khan*, an inn.

*Khangi*, the innkeeper.

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*Pyrgo*, a tower, or house built like a tower.*Limne*, a lake.*Bouno*, or *Vouno*, a mountain.*Potamos*, a river.*Pege*, a well.*Kastro*, a castle.*Palaio Kastro*, an ancient castle.*Romaic*, Roman, a name assumed by the Greeks.*Hellenic*, ancient Greek.*Katabathron*, pronounced by the Greeks *Katavottra*,  
a subterraneous passage for the water of a lake or river.*Brysse*, and *Kephalo Brysse*, a source of water.*Teke*, a Turkish chapel.*Kiosk*, a summer-house.*Tchiftlik*, or *Chiftlik*, a Turkish villa.*Nerro*, water—added to the proper names of rivers.*Mandri*, or *Mantra*, a shepherd's habitation or fold.*Stagni*, a temporary shepherd's fold.

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*Kalybea*, a temporary village, sometimes increasing  
to a populous and fixed town.

*Metochi*, a farm-house and chapel belonging to a  
monastery.

*Agios*, pronounced *Ayos*, Saint—as Agios Giorgios,  
St. George.

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## ACHAIA.



|  | H. | M. | Computed Miles. |
|--|----|----|-----------------|
| 1. PATRASS.                              |    |    |                 |
| 2. Vostizza to Patra . . . . .           | 8  | 15 | . . . 25        |
| 3. Vostizza to metochi of Megaspelia     | 2  | 34 | . . . 8         |
| 4. Megaspelia to Vostizza . . . . .      | 5  | 40 | . . . 15        |
| 5. Metoki to Acrata . . . . .            | 2  | 34 | . . . 7         |
| 6. Acrata to Kamares . . . . .           | 5  | 29 | . . . 12        |
| 7. Kamares to Basilico . . . . .         | 4  | 11 | . . . 15        |
| 8. Basilico to Alopeci . . . . .         | 2  | 58 | . . . 9         |
| 9. Alopeci to Tricala . . . . .          | 6  | 43 | . . . 10        |
| 10. Tricala to Zakoula . . . . .         | 4  | 28 | . . . 10        |
| 11. Zakoula to Acrata . . . . .          | 3  | 50 | . . . 12        |
| 12. Patras to Palaio Achaia . . . . .    | 3  | 55 | . . . 10        |
| 13. Palaio Achaia to a metochi . . . . . | 3  | 22 | . . . 12        |

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