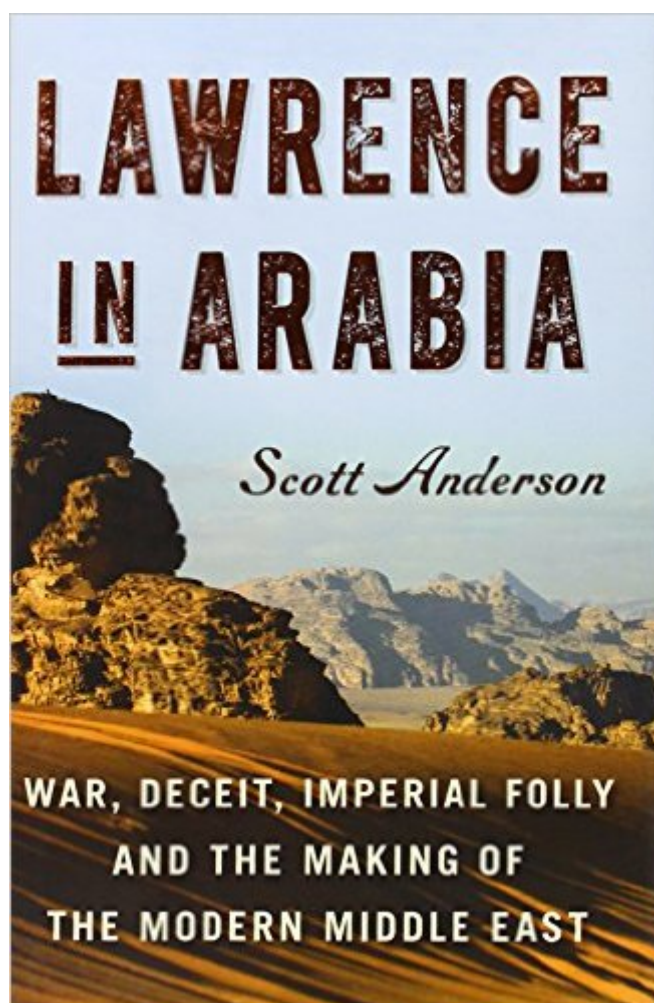


The book was found

# Lawrence In Arabia: War, Deceit, Imperial Folly And The Making Of The Modern Middle East (Ala Notable Books For Adults)



## Synopsis

NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY *New York Times* • *Christian Science Monitor* • *NPR* • *Seattle Times* • *St. Louis Dispatch* National Book Critics Circle Finalist -- American Library Association Notable Book A thrilling and revelatory narrative of one of the most epic and consequential periods in 20th century history • the Arab Revolt and the secret • great game • to control the Middle East

The Arab Revolt against the Turks in World War One was, in the words of T.E. Lawrence, • a sideshow of a sideshow. • Amidst the slaughter in European trenches, the Western combatants paid scant attention to the Middle Eastern theater. As a result, the conflict was shaped to a remarkable degree by a small handful of adventurers and low-level officers far removed from the corridors of power. • Curt Prã fer was an effete academic attached to the German embassy in Cairo, whose clandestine role was to foment Islamic jihad against British rule. • Aaron Aaronsohn was a renowned agronomist and committed Zionist who gained the trust of the Ottoman governor of Syria. William Yale was the fallen scion of the American aristocracy, who traveled the Ottoman Empire on behalf of Standard Oil, dissembling to the Turks in order gain valuable oil concessions. • At the center of it all was Lawrence. • In early 1914 he was an archaeologist excavating ruins in the sands of Syria; by 1917 he was the most romantic figure of World War One, battling both the enemy and his own government to bring about the vision he had for the Arab people. • The intertwined paths of these four men • the schemes they put in place, the battles they fought, the betrayals they endured and committed • mirror the grandeur, intrigue and tragedy of the war in the desert. • Prã fer became Germany's grand spymaster in the Middle East. • Aaronsohn constructed an elaborate Jewish spy-ring in Palestine, only to have the anti-Semitic and bureaucratically-inept British first ignore and then misuse his organization, at tragic personal cost. • Yale would become the only American intelligence agent in the entire Middle East • while still secretly on the payroll of Standard Oil. • And the enigmatic Lawrence rode into legend at the head of an Arab army, even as he waged secret war against his own nation's imperial ambitions. • Based on years of intensive primary document research, *LAWRENCE IN ARABIA* definitively overturns received wisdom on how the modern Middle East was formed. • Sweeping in its action, keen in its portraiture, acid in its condemnation of the destruction wrought by European colonial plots, this is a book that brilliantly captures the way in which the folly of the past creates the anguish of the present.

## Book Information

Series: *Ala Notable Books for Adults*

Hardcover: 592 pages

Publisher: Doubleday (August 6, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 038553292X

ISBN-13: 978-0385532921

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 1.7 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (1,408 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #72,181 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #20 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Military > World War I](#) #26 in [Books > History > Middle East > Turkey](#) #54 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > International & World Politics > Diplomacy](#)

## Customer Reviews

Scott Anderson brings an interesting background to this latest history of the modern Middle East. His father was an agricultural advisor to the US government. As a result, Anderson grew up largely in Taiwan and Korea, although he graduated from Gainesville High School in Florida. A novelist and veteran war reporter who has covered foreign conflicts for two decades in five countries, Anderson spent four years researching Lawrence in Arabia. He combines a feeling for foreign locales and an understanding of the realities of the battlefield with an extensive use of primary documents. The result is provocative history that reads like a political thriller. Given the strategic importance of the Mid-East today, it is fascinating to read of the disproportionately large impact of some fairly low level functionaries in this "sideshow of a sideshow" (Lawrence's own words) in the run up to World War I. German academic and womanizer Curt Pruefer works to foment Arab jihad against British rule under the protection of Turkish rulers. Aaron Aaronsohn was a renowned agronomist and dedicated Zionist who gained the trust of the Ottoman governor by trying to relieve Syria of a plague of locusts. Twenty-seven year old American William Yale transitioned in a short eighteen months from roustabout duties in an Oklahoma oil field to Standard Oil's main agent charged with locating and securing oil in central Judea. Abdul-lah ibn Hussein is assigned by his father, Emir Hussein of Mecca, to sound out the British on supporting an Arab revolt in the Hejaz. Marching into history and legend was TE Lawrence who achieved the wholly unlikely transition from 21 year old archeologist in Syria in 1914 to head of a foreign Arab army in 1919, without a single day of military training.

T. E. Lawrence was legendary even before he died, and some of it was genuinely earned. What makes him a favorite in popular imagination is that he was disdainful of the myth that surrounded him- even when he was instrumental in perpetuating it. He is also, perhaps, seen as a reflection of what many commoners might have felt in the midst of the morass that became World War I: determined to get through the byzantine (no pun intended) negotiations and considerations that were foisted upon the world by outdated principles to arrive at an outcome that would allow his country some honor and the Arabs he was trying to help a measure of dignity that would justify the sacrifices he helped convince them to make. That he made great sacrifices himself is arguably the primary reason there was any honor or dignity to the outcome at all, but the compromises Lawrence had to make to get that far weighed far heavier on him. This volume gives an extensive, nearly blow by blow account of how Lawrence came to the Middle East, why he became attached to the war effort and, most importantly, what he did. Anderson also explores the lives and careers of others who influenced the war and to some extent the outcome, including the German academic Curt Prufer, the American oilman William Yale and the Romanian-Palestinian-Jewish agronomist Aaron Aaronsohn. What all of three of the men shared was that they were also at one point spies, and each of them was trying to play the conflict in the Ottoman Empire to achieve their own ends. To do that, all of them needed the mercurial Djemal Pasha, one of the leaders of the Young Turks, in one way or another. Lawrence, however, is the star.

This is a fascinating book, for the most part well written. While the key character is T. E. Lawrence, the book is formally structured as an examination of the roles of and sometimes interaction among four characters: T. E. Lawrence (of Arabia), Curt Prufer (umlaut over the u), Aaron Aaronson, and William Yale. A brief note about each. Lawrence began World War I on an archaeological expedition--and ended up as a celebrity. Prufer was a German who worked for German interests in the Middle East. Aaronsohn was a Zionist and an agronomist trying to enhance agriculture in Jewish areas. He also developed a spy network as World War I broke out. Yale was of the family after whom the college was named. He was, at the outset of WW I, an official for Standard Oil of New York (now Mobil) seeking access to lands that might be rich in oil. During the war, he became a representative of the United States' foreign policy apparatus. The book provides considerable depth to each of these persons--but Lawrence is at the center. He is portrayed as somewhat enigmatic, someone who was almost a tragic character. While he fought for Arab independence, he knew of nefarious schemes by the English and French to be dominant forces in the Middle East after the war's end. He was a decent person who ended up tolerating acts of violence (such as watching as

prisoners were killed after surrendering). The author suggests that, after a period of time at war, he became someone afflicted with Post traumatic stress disorder. Aaronsohn, too, was an important figure. He tried to advance Zionist ideals and saw that working with Great Britain might be the best pathway. He developed an espionage network in the Middle East, with his sister as a key player.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

Lawrence in Arabia: War, Deceit, Imperial Folly and the Making of the Modern Middle East (Ala Notable Books for Adults) Lawrence in Arabia: War, Deceit, Imperial Folly, and the Making of the Modern Middle East Rain Reign (Ala Notable Children's Books. Middle Readers) One Crazy Summer (Ala Notable Children's Books. Middle Readers Book 1) The Nest (Ala Notable Children's Books. Middle Readers) Five Days at Memorial: Life and Death in a Storm-Ravaged Hospital (Ala Notable Books for Adults) Johnny Cash: The Life (Ala Notable Books for Adults) Hum (Ala Notable Books for Adults) On the Map: A Mind-Expanding Exploration of the Way the World Looks (Ala Notable Books for Adults) St. Lawrence County in the War of 1812:: Folly and Mischief (Military) The Oil Kings: How the U.S., Iran, and Saudi Arabia Changed the Balance of Power in the Middle East Hero: The Life and Legend of Lawrence of Arabia Desert Queen: The Extraordinary Life of Gertrude Bell: Adventurer, Adviser to Kings, Ally of Lawrence of Arabia Greater Middle East Region: Including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Libya and Turkey (Hammond Greater Middle East Region Map) The Farmer and the Clown (Ala Notable Children's Books. Younger Readers (Awards)) Drowned City: Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans (Ala Notable Children's Books. Older Readers) The Skunk (Ala Notable Children's Books. Younger Readers (Awards)) I Ain't Gonna Paint No More! (Ala Notable Children's Books. Younger Readers (Awards)) Elephants Can Paint Too! (Ala Notable Children's Books. Younger Readers (Awards)) How I Discovered Poetry (Ala Notable Children's Books. Older Readers)

[Dmca](#)