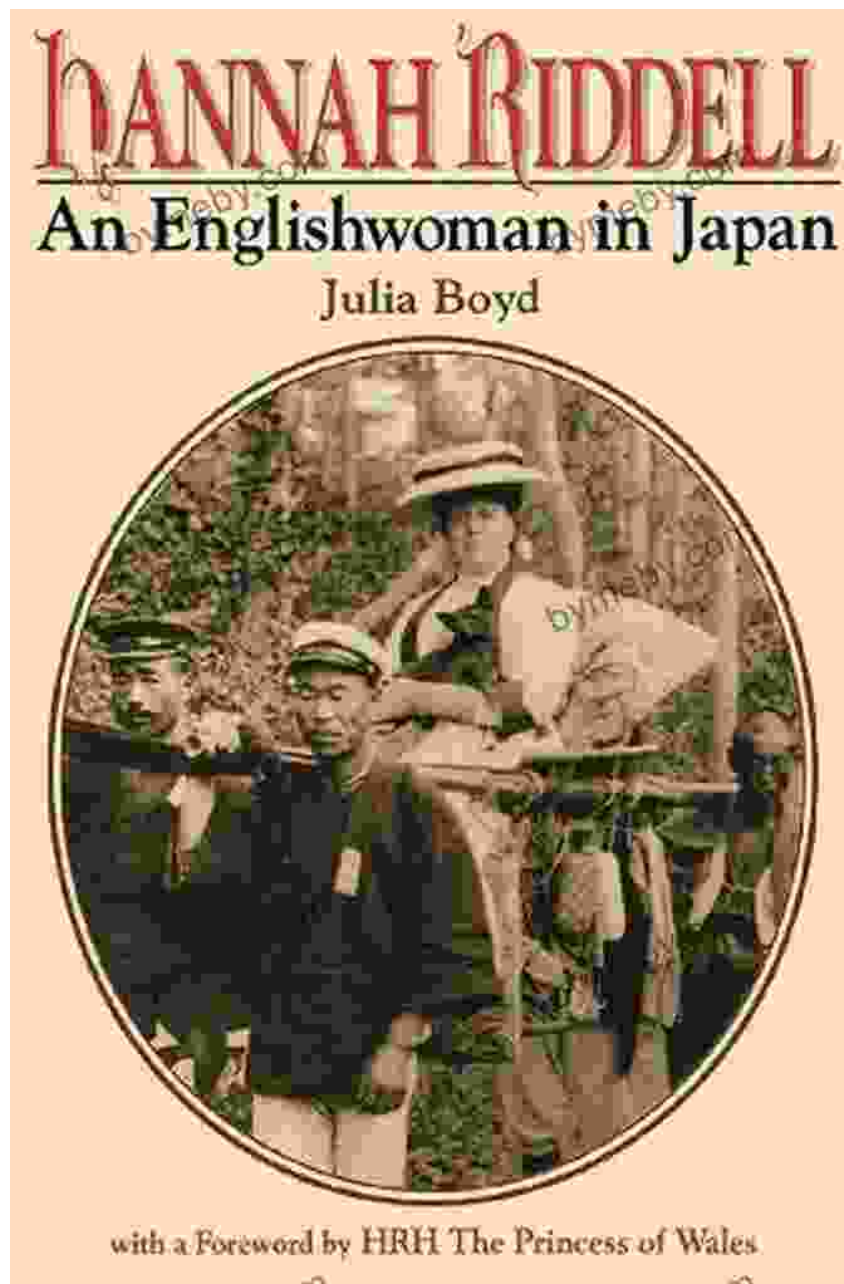


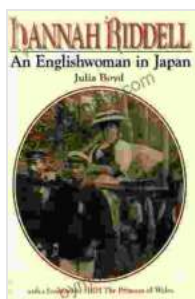
# Hannah Riddell: An Englishwoman in Japan



Hannah Riddell was an extraordinary Englishwoman who lived during the Victorian era. In 1858, at the age of 24, she embarked on an adventurous journey to Japan, a country that was just beginning to open up to the West. Riddell spent the next three years traveling extensively throughout Japan, observing and documenting the country's unique culture and witnessing

firsthand the dramatic changes that were taking place during the Meiji Restoration.

Riddell's experiences in Japan were captured in her book, "An Englishwoman in Japan," which was published in 1875. This fascinating account provides a rare glimpse into a bygone era and offers valuable insights into the social, cultural, and political landscape of Japan during a pivotal period in its history.



## Hannah Riddell: An Englishwoman in Japan

by William De Lange

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 4678 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 215 pages



### Hannah Riddell's Journey to Japan

Hannah Riddell was born in 1834 in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England. She was the daughter of a wealthy merchant and received a privileged education. In her early twenties, Riddell developed a strong interest in travel and adventure. In 1858, she decided to embark on a journey to Japan, a country that had long fascinated her.

Riddell arrived in Japan in the summer of 1858. At that time, Japan was still a relatively closed country, and Westerners were not generally welcome.

However, Riddell was able to obtain permission to travel through the country with the help of a Japanese interpreter. She spent the next three years traveling extensively throughout Japan, visiting major cities such as Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka, as well as smaller towns and villages.

### **Riddell's Observations of Japanese Culture**

Riddell was a keen observer of Japanese culture, and her book provides a wealth of information about the country's people, customs, and traditions. She was particularly interested in the role of women in Japanese society. In her book, she wrote about the seclusion of women in the upper classes, the practice of foot-binding, and the arranged marriage system.

Riddell also wrote about the Japanese people's love of nature, their artistic traditions, and their religious beliefs. She was particularly impressed by the beauty of the Japanese landscape and the skill of Japanese artisans.

### **Riddell's Witness to the Meiji Restoration**

Riddell arrived in Japan just as the country was undergoing a period of rapid change. The Meiji Restoration, which began in 1868, saw the overthrow of the Tokugawa shogunate and the establishment of a new imperial government. Riddell witnessed firsthand the dramatic changes that took place during this time, including the modernization of the Japanese economy, the use of Western technology, and the adoption of a new constitution.

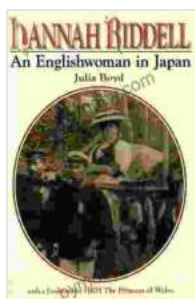
In her book, Riddell wrote about the challenges and opportunities that Japan faced during this period. She was optimistic about the country's future, but she also recognized the need for Japan to balance its newfound modernization with its traditional values.

## The Legacy of Hannah Riddell

Hannah Riddell's book, "An Englishwoman in Japan," remains a valuable resource for scholars and historians studying Japan during the Meiji Restoration. Her firsthand account provides a unique perspective on a pivotal period in the country's history.

Riddell's journey to Japan was a remarkable achievement for a woman of her time. She was a pioneer in the field of travel writing, and her book helped to open up Japan to the West. Her legacy continues to inspire people today who are interested in exploring the world and learning about different cultures.

Hannah Riddell was an extraordinary woman who lived an extraordinary life. Her journey to Japan was a testament to her courage, curiosity, and love of adventure. Her book, "An Englishwoman in Japan," is a valuable record of a bygone era and a timeless story of cultural exchange.



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