practical approach to decorating, reflected in the crime writer's ability to paint and mount her own wallpaper.

Although Christie's financial constraints are cited, the volume is, overall, a window into a world of privilege. This world is highlighted in the third section, "The Households—Servants and Staff." Christie notes, however, that servants were not a luxury: "It was not a case of only the rich having them; the only difference was the rich had more" (45). The fourth and fifth sections, "The Home Town—Torquay" and "The Home County—From Dartmoor to the River Dart," concentrate on Christie's accommodations. There is a sense of loss over the leveling of Ashfield for "dull square buildings, flat pocket-handkerchief lawns and boxy bits of hedge" (57), tempered by a quiet celebration of the sites that still remain in Torquay and that are portrayed in some of Christie's novels and short stories. The home county, too, provided inspiration for characters and settings.

Sections 6 and 7, "The Parish—Galmpton and Churston" and "The House—Greenway and Its Gardens," reveal an England closely associated with the Golden Age of crime fiction: quaint towns and villages, lush green fields, and magnificent country houses. The most stunning house of all is Greenway, a property purchased by Christie for just £6,000 in 1938 (108). The photographs, with accompanying narrative, do justice to the grand estate, a property now owned by the National Trust and recently restored at a cost of £5.4 million (107). The final section, "The Legacy—The Tourism and the Brand," is devoted to the various ways that people remember Christie and celebrate her achievements. Interestingly, Christie was uncomfortable with such voyeurism, suggesting that "people should be interested in books, and not their authors" (129). Yet the Christie industry thrives long after her passing in 1976. Devotees of this prolific author can explore not only the books but also many of the places that provided her with both inspiration and respite.

The work takes a very personal approach, evident in Macaskill referring to her subject as "Agatha" rather than "Christie" and demonstrating an obvious affection for the original Queen of Crime. This approach is highly engaging for the dedicated fan of Christie, although is perhaps less useful for the serious scholar of the Christie canon. Overall, the work will provide enjoyment to many—from those with a passing interest to those with a long fascination with the woman who has left an indelible mark upon crime fiction. Indeed, this volume will make an elegant addition to any Christie collection.

—Rachel Franks

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❍ Agatha Christie Mallowan. *Come, Tell Me How You Live: An Archaeological Memoir*. 1946. Rpt. with new introduction by Jacquetta Hawkes. New York: Morrow, 2012. 205 pp. $13.99.

Aside from her renown and success as a mystery writer, Agatha Christie is often associated with the discipline of archaeology. She was interested in the archaeology of the Middle East, setting several of her mysteries in and around archaeological sites and archaeologists (*Murder in Mesopotamia*, 1936; *Appointment with Death*, 1938; *Death on the Nile*, 1937; *They Came to Baghdad*, 1951; and indirectly even *Murder on the Orient Express*, 1934). She met her second husband, Max Mallowan, at the famous archaeological site of Ur. Christie was visiting the Ur excavations where Mallowan served as an assistant director to archaeologist Leonard Woolley. Woolley assigned Mallowan to take the author on a tour of the area, and thus began their relationship.

For a number of years, Christie spent winter "seasons" accompanying her husband on his archaeological expeditions, living in primitive conditions and assisting him with his work. *Come, Tell Me How You Live* is her description of that part of her life, when she was not Agatha Christie the famous writer but Mrs. Mallowan, the archaeologist's wife and partner. She began to write the volume in 1930, although she did not complete it and publish it until 1946. Christie wrote the book to explain to friends exactly what she did when she was on these expeditions, and she does an excellent job in conveying the setting. The roles she undertook while in the field focused primarily on the artifacts recovered: cleaning and repairing, cataloguing, photographing. Although she always had a room for her own writing, she regularly set her work aside as soon as it was clear that her assistance was needed with the archaeology.

Unfortunately, this book is not one of Christie's most widely read volumes today, but it had an impact on an earlier generation of women archaeologists. In the new 2012 edition, archaeologist Jacquetta Hawkes provides an introduction that places the volume in context and outlines Christie's contributions to archaeology. Hawkes had the opportunity to visit the Mallowans in the field and recalls how impressed she was with Christie's varied work for the archaeological expedition. Recently, Trowelblazers, a Web site that "celebrates women archaeologists, paleontologists and geologists," featured an article on Patty Jo Watson, an internationally acclaimed archaeologist who began her research in the Middle East. In the post, Watson is quoted as saying that *Come, Tell Me How You Live* inspired her to become an archaeologist. Watson likely read the book a few years after it was published, at a time when there were few role models for women going into archaeology (archaeologists such as Kathleen Kenyon came along a bit later). Indeed, in the 1930s and 1940s—especially in the Middle East—many of the women associated with archaeology were wives of archaeologists who accompanied their husbands to assist in fieldwork, and they spent most of their time in the lab.

For a very long time, labwork was seen as the purview of women, whereas only men could take on the more physically demanding fieldwork. This is an interesting and perhaps ironic perspective since, particularly in the Middle East, the actual physical labor was done by local workmen under the supervision of the archaeologist. As Christie describes in this volume, many of these local workmen had years of field experience and knew exactly what to do. Nonetheless, it is only later that women would be accepted as field directors. Not surprisingly, World War II had a large impact on the notion of what women could and could not do.

In her evaluation of Christie, Hawkes comments that she believes that "although she gave so much time to it, Agatha Christie remained inwardly detached from archaeology" (15). Hawkes sees Christie as a "happily amused onlooker" (15). It is this point that is perhaps most important in understanding this book. Christie's volume rarely includes descriptions of the archaeological work; she is much more interested in the people and their many interactions. Indeed, one can argue that Christie was a very good ethnographer and anthropologist because she focuses on the people and the effect of these expeditions on the local communities. Her descriptions of events and people not only are entertaining and funny but also provide a nuanced perspective on the place, the time, and the people.

At the beginning of the book, Christie demonstrates that she understands how her book links with what archaeologists do. She juxtaposes the questions that people ask her about living in Syria with "the question, too, that Archaeology asks of the Past—*Come, tell me how you lived?*" (17, emphasis in original). In answering this question in the remainder of the volume, Christie provides the kind of detail that archaeologists hope to convey when

they interpret and explain the past. One cannot help but think that the book's title is also a play on the word *tell*. *Tell* is an archaeological term especially used in the Middle East for an artificial mound consisting of the accumulated remains of one or more ancient settlements. Most of the sites excavated by Mallowan were tells.

Christie describes geographic areas that figure prominently in today's news, especially places in Iraq and Syria. Events that shape present-day headlines were recent events at the time of her writing and give the reader another perspective on the importance of place. Although Christie occasionally mentions these larger events, her focus remains on the day-to-day lives of those around her: the interactions of Europeans, Arabs, Kurds, and others. Her descriptions are of a time when a 25-mile trip into the nearest town could take two or more days and when communication with those not immediately present was almost nonexistent. In this exotic location, she relates small tales of village life. She superbly outlines details and sees humor in what must have been some physically uncomfortable situations. Some of her descriptions might remind the reader of the kinds of things that Miss Marple would know in her village, although fortunately without murders.

Come, Tell Me How You Live is an interesting, entertaining, and fun book for everyone to read. The 2012 edition, with the introduction by Hawkes, provides some needed context and background to better understand Christie's tale. Archaeologists no longer do archaeology the way that Christie describes, but she gives an important perspective on archaeology's past. As Christie notes in her epilogue, which has become increasingly problematic today, "*Inshallah,* I shall go there again, and the things that I love shall not have perished from this earth . . ." (205).

—Lynne Goldstein

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❍ Agatha Christie. *The Grand Tour: Around the World with the Queen of Mystery*. Ed. Mathew Prichard. New York: HarperCollins, 2012. 376 pp. $29.99.

In 1922, Agatha Christie accompanied her first husband, Archibald, on a 10-month trip around the world as part of a trade mission to promote the British Empire Exhibition that was to open in 1924. The main places they visited during this trip were South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, and Canada. During this time, she wrote numerous letters, mainly to her mother. Her grandson, Mathew Prichard, has collected these letters, as well as numerous photographs she took along the way, in this book.

Occasionally, the letters and photographs are accompanied by pertinent passages from Christie's posthumously published *Autobiography,* offering some of the author's retrospective comments on the trip. Among those is Christie's explanation of why she decided to accompany Archibald, although at first she was reluctant to leave her child, Rosalind, for such a long time. According to Christie, her mother talked her into going, saying that "[a] wife's duty is to go with her husband'" and cautioning that "if you're not with your husband, if you leave him too much, *you'll lose him*.'" Christie's reply is sadly ironic in light of later events: "Archie is the most faithful person in the world" (17, emphasis in original). In spite of her ultimately misplaced confidence in Archie's fidelity, she apparently heeded her mother's warning.