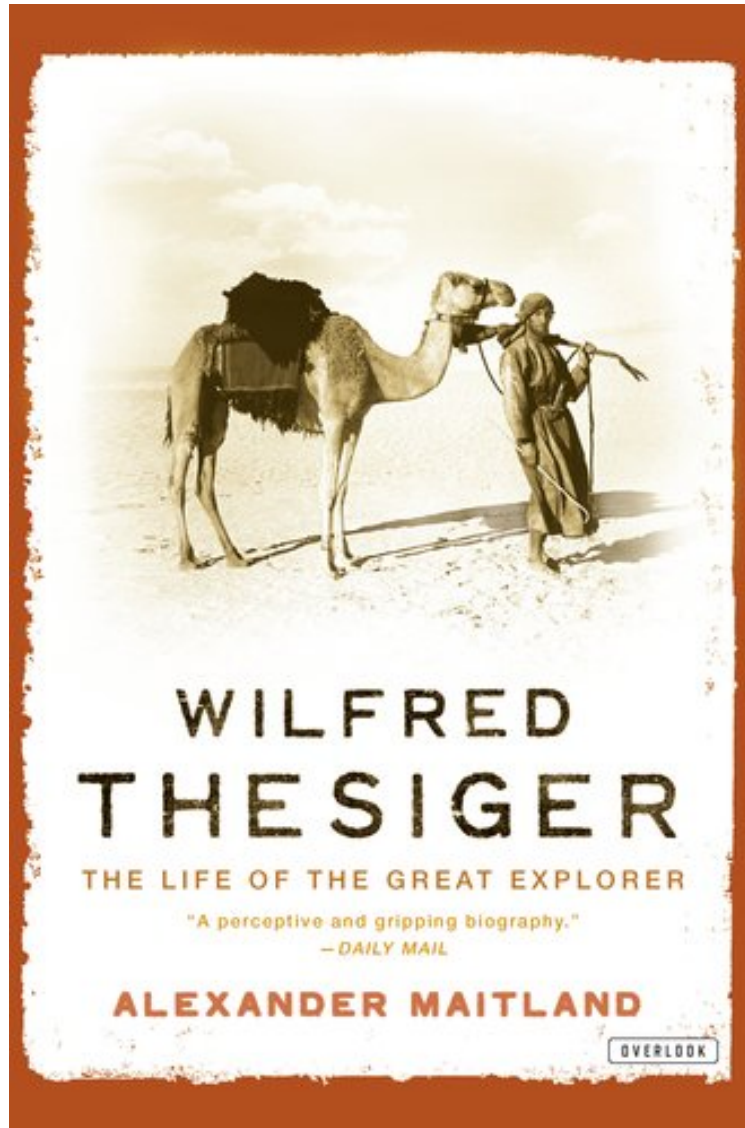



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Wilfred Thesiger: The Life of the Great Explorer

Alexander Maitland

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Wilfred Thesiger (1910-2003), the last of the great gentlemen explorer-adventurers, journeyed for sixty years to some of the remotest, most dangerous places on earth from the mountains of western Asia to the marshes of Iraq. The author of *Arabian Sands* and *The Marsh Arabs* and *The Life of My Choice*, he was a legend in his own lifetime but his character and motivations have remained an intriguing enigma. In this authorized biography--written with Thesiger's support before he died in 2003 and with unique access to the rich Thesiger archive--Alexander Maitland investigates this fascinating figure's family influences, his wartime experiences, his philosophy as a hunter and conservationist, his writing and photography, his friendships with Arabs and Africans amongst whom he lived, and his now-acknowledged homosexuality.

"Biographies of famous travelers and Mr. Maitland's Wilfred Thesiger is an especially good example of the genre; it is always an excuse to ponder first principles . . . Mr. Maitland has interesting things to say about all the books, noting the way, for example, in which the autobiography, *The Life of My Choice* (1987), embellishes without ever quite betraying its original material."