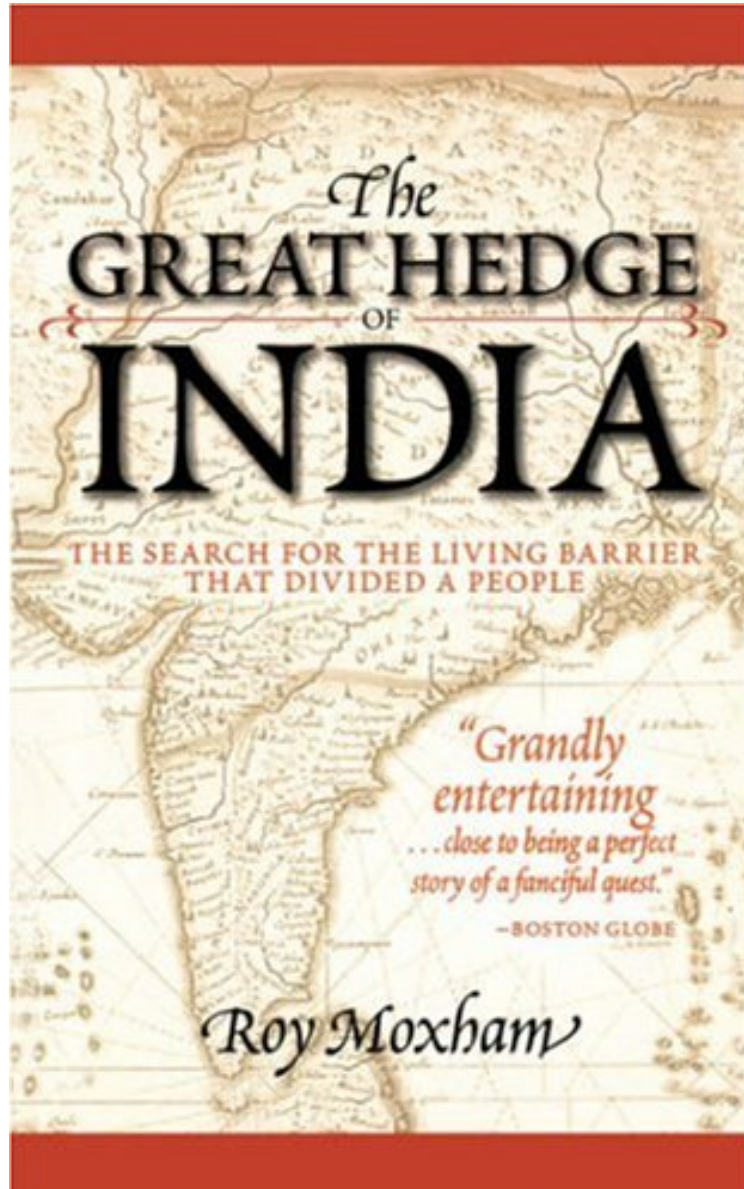


(Mobile pdf) The Great Hedge of India: The Search for the Living Barrier that Divided a People

The Great Hedge of India: The Search for the Living Barrier that Divided a People

Roy Moxham

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Roy Moxham : The Great Hedge of India: The Search for the Living Barrier that Divided a People before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Great Hedge of India: The Search for the Living Barrier that Divided a People:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is a wonderful book!By GraybeardThis is the true story of British writer Roy Moxham's quest to find an enormous 800-mile hedge in India that piqued his curiosity when he saw it mentioned in a footnote in a book that he picked up in a used bookshop in London. One would think -- as did Moxham -- that such a colossal object would be a cinch to find. Incredibly, however, Moxham's 3 years of meticulous research, visits to Indian villages and tramping through the countryside where maps showed the Great Hedge was supposed to have run turned up no physical trace of it, nor could Moxham find anyone in those places who had ever seen it or even heard of it. Finally, after 3 years of no success and apparently dimming prospects, Moxham met an old monk in a village who had heard of the hedge and showed him where it had been and where a barely recognizable faint trace of it remained. Then, in another village he met another old man who had known about the hedge and shared what he knew about it. Finally, in another village Moxham met yet another old man who was familiar with the Great Hedge (aka Parmat Lain) and showed Moxham much more satisfyingly recognizable and sturdy remnants of it. Success at last!This is a great story for travel buffs, history buffs and India buffs. It has captivating descriptions of India and provides insights into England's former colonial rule there, trade restrictions, customs enforcement, salt production, salt taxes and the biological need for salt.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Moxham Writes an Adventure the Equal of Anything Indiana Jones Did in the Movies!!By Dayton Lavon KitchensRoy Moxham tells a true story worthy of anything coming out of Hollywood. In a supreme irony his work in finding the virtually unknown Customs Hedge (the Great Hedge of India referred to in the title) echoes the words of Indiana Jones in Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade where he points out to students that 90% of their work will be in the library. Moxham's own work begins in used book stores and continues with hundred year old maps and obscure official publications buried in forgotten archives.Moxham takes the time to explain the importance of salt to human health. Something that is largely lost on modern westerners who eat processed foods already loaded with all the salt they need. Moxham correctly points out this wasn't the case with the population of India in the 19th century living in tropical heat without food heavy in salt content. He points out the short and long term effects of salt deprivation.Moxham takes plenty of time to detail the brutality of the British colonial system in India which though not malicious and motivated primarily by greed was still monstrous. Moxham also does a fine job describing the people and culture of central India.Moxham does a great job in pacing this book building up to his discoveries near the end. The book is very densely written with a wealth of material in only 223 pages. It is a tribute to Moxham's writing that the book is immensely interesting given that basically he is trying to locate an embankment with some trees and bushes on it.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Intriguing historyBy Gail HarrisMr. Moxham writes about a forgotten story of history; one that is both tragic and astonishing. His research should win awards.

"Remarkable and astonishing, says Jan Morris of Roy Moxham's account of his search for one of the least-known wonders of Queen Victoria's India, and John Keay finds it a compelling read, simply told, and simply wonderful. An unquestionably fascinating tale, as well as a travel book and historical detective story, *The Great Hedge of India* begins in a secondhand bookshop on London's Charing Cross Road. There Roy Moxham buys the memoir of a nineteenth-century British colonial administrative officer, who makes a passing reference to a giant hedge planted by the British across the Indian subcontinent. That hedge which for fifty years had been manned and cared for by 12,000 men and had run a length of 2,500 miles becomes what Moxham calls his ridiculous obsession. Recounting a journey that takes him to exotic isolated villages deep in the interior of India, Moxham chronicles his efforts to confirm the existence of the extraordinary, impenetrable green wall that had virtually disappeared from two nations' memories. Not only does he discover the shameful role the hedge played in the exploitative Raj and the famines of the late nineteenth century, but he also uncovers what remains of this British grand folly and restores to history what must be counted one of the world's wonders and a monument to one of the great injustices of Victorian imperialism. Grandly entertaining ... close to being a perfect story of a fanciful quest.*Boston Globe*

From *Library Journal*The Indian equivalent of the Great Wall, the Customs Hedge, which is rarely mentioned in history books, was grown to prevent the smuggling of salt in response to the East India Company's oppressive Salt Tax. Composed of thorny trees and shrubs, this barrier covered 2500 miles and was attended by 12,000 men for 50 years before it was finally abandoned in 1879. In this notable debut, Moxham, a paper conservator obsessed with the Customs Hedge, recounts his efforts to confirm its existence. Armed with a Global Positioning System navigator and photocopies of old maps from the Royal Geographical Society and sustained by the hospitality of the locals, the author traveled through many remote villages of India's interior until he finally located remnants of the Customs Hedge in dacoit-infested Chambal. In his highly readable account, Moxham exposes the rapacity behind the levy and collection of this historically famous tax and the widespread corruption it engendered. For comprehensive history collections devoted to India and the Raj.*DRavi Shenoy, Naperville P.L., IL Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.*From *Booklist*More than 2,000 miles long and tended by 12,000 workers. Was a hedge the British cultivated in India a mad monument to the topiary arts? Quite serendipitously in a colonial memoir, Moxham discovered such an oddity was maintained up to 1879, and he instantly decided to discover the hedge's purpose and any of its physical vestiges. The

first task he ascertained from colonial archives stashed in London: the thistly hedge was the barbed-wire fence of its day, marking a customs line imposed to enforce the British tax on salt. Finding the hedge's remnants was a more elusive and frustrating labor, but it propels the travelogue in delightful directions as Moxham trains and ambles about central India, seeking help from villagers in locating the long-forgotten barrier. With revealing digressions into the salt tax's significance in the history of India--Gandhi defied it in 1930--the author rounds out an amazingly curious story, one to enjoy and savor while vicariously accompanying Moxham to see if he does find palimpsests of the hedge on the dusty plains. Gilbert Taylor Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved