



Following Isabella: Travels in Colorado Then and Now

Robert Root

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A world traveler, Isabella Bird recorded her 1873 visit to Colorado Territory in her classic travel narrative, *Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*. This work inspired Robert Root's own discovery of Colorado's Front Range following his move from the flatlands of Michigan. In this elegantly written book, Root retraces Bird's three-month journey, seeking to understand what Colorado meant to her—and what it would come to mean for him.

Following Isabella is a work of intersecting histories. Root interweaves an overview of Bird's life and work with regional history, nature writing, and his own travels to produce a uniquely informative and entertaining narrative. He probes Bird's self-transformation as her writing moved from private letters to published books, and also draws on reflections of other authors of her day, including Grace Greenwood and Helen Hunt Jackson. Like Bird, Root experiences his most fulfilling moments in the mountains, climbing formidable Longs Peak, living alone in the cabin of famed editor William Allen White, and wandering wild landscapes.

Through reflections on earlier writers' experiences, and by weighing his own response to them, Root learns not only how to come to Colorado, as visitors so often do, but more important, how to stay.

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