



America's First Adventure in China: Trade, Treaties, Opium, and Salvation

John R Haddad

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In 1784, when Americans first voyaged to China, they confronted Chinese authorities who were unaware that the United States even existed. Nevertheless, a long, complicated, and fruitful trade relationship was born after American traders, missionaries, diplomats, and others sailed to China with lofty ambitions: to acquire fabulous wealth, convert China to Christianity, and even command a Chinese army.

In *America's First Adventure in China*, John Haddad provides a colorful history of the evolving cultural exchange and interactions between these countries. He recounts how American expatriates adopted a pragmatic attitude—as well as an entrepreneurial spirit and improvisational approach—to their dealings with the Chinese. Haddad shows how opium played a potent role in the dreams of Americans who either smuggled it or opposed its importation, and he considers the missionary movement that compelled individuals to accept a hard life in an alien culture.

As a result of their efforts, Americans achieved a favorable outcome—they established a unique presence in China—and cultivated a relationship whose complexities continue to grow.

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