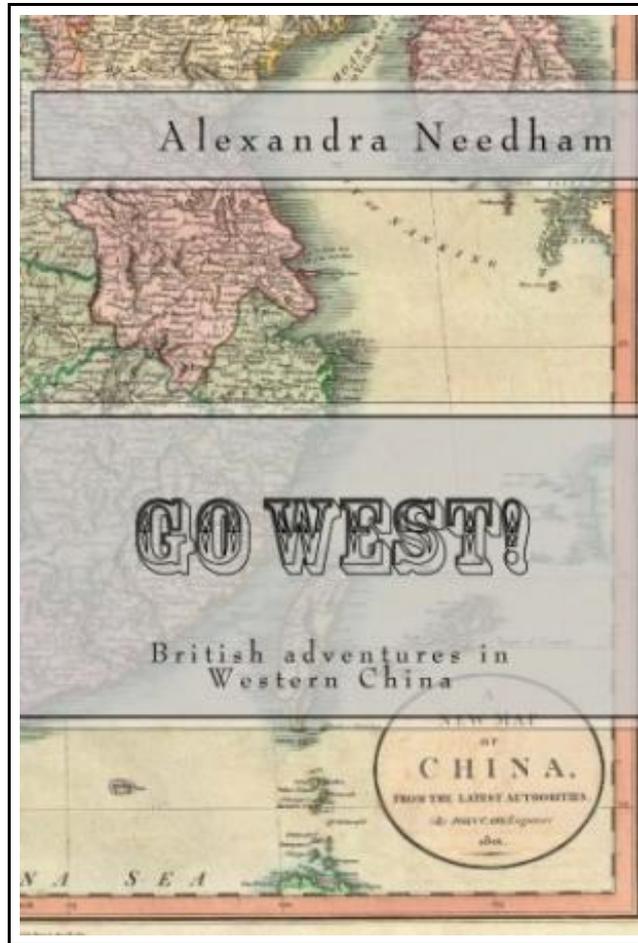


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GO WEST!: BRITISH ADVENTURES IN WESTERN CHINA



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Createspace, United States, 2014. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 229 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Between Marco Polo in the late 13th century and French priest Abbe Huc in the 1840s, practically no European set foot in western China - then considered one of the most difficult regions in the world for road, rail and river navigation given its formidable topography of high mountains, deep valleys and great rivers. This isolation gave western China somewhat of a reputation amongst westerners as a hidden El Dorado - a place of great wealth and fertility. From the 1850s onwards, as the Victorian age was in full swing, Britons - and other westerners - began to develop a taste for overseas adventure, exploration and trade as the British Empire expanded its reach across the globe. Britain already had a strong hold in Hong Kong and was present in coastal treaty ports in China, but the Chinese market had not yet produced the massive increase in trade that many colonial expansionists had hoped for. A few adventurous souls began to believe that if access could be gained to the whole of China, through its inland ports, then access could be gained to the world's largest market with some 400 million people - the size of the whole of Europe. This was not only access for trade purposes. Missionaries believed that the scope of the work they could do in inland China was endless, with a huge population most of whom had never heard of the word of God; and botanists and natural scientists wondered at the myriad exotic and as yet unknown species which flourished in China's sub-tropical south-western corner. Others were just curious and had an appetite - and the budget to match -...



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