

**THE "FAN KWAE" AT  
CANTON BEFORE TREATY  
DAYS, 1825-1844**

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The "Fan Kwae" at Canton before Treaty Days, 1825-1844 by William C. Hunter

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**WILLIAM C. HUNTER**

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THE  
'FAN KWAE' AT CANTON



HOUQUA.

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THE  
'FAN KWAE' AT CANTON  
BEFORE TREATY DAYS

1825-1844

BY  
*AN OLD RESIDENT*

LONDON  
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, & CO., 1 PATERNOSTER SQUARE  
1882

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## PREFACE.

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DURING the days of Old Canton, the Middle Kingdom deigned to suffer the presence of a small number of 'foreign barbarians' on the banks of the Choo, or Pearl River. Their residences consisted of Factories built expressly for them, and originally destined one for each nationality. They were contiguous, except where separated by three streets of narrow dimensions which led from the suburbs of the city to the river which ran in front of them.

No other port than that of Canton was open, nor had there been one since 1745, and no foreigner was permitted on any pretext to enter the country or even the city outside of which he lived. The actual relations of the Chinese Government with Western nations consequent upon the treaties have caused such an entire change from the old mode of transacting business, as well as in the life then led by the few foreign residents at Canton, that a narration of the peculiar conditions of both (as they were) is now, as a Chinese official would say, placed 'on record.'

PARIS : *March 31, 1882.*

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## OLD CANTON.

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EVEN the departure of a vessel from New York for Canton in 1824 was a rare occurrence. Neither had it yet become fashionable to place the accent on the *last* syllable in the name of that distant port. It would have appeared pedantic. Years after, only, did it become *ton* ! As the ship cast off, the neighbouring wharves were crowded with lookers-on, national and private flags were run up to the mast-heads of sea-going craft lying near.

Cheers were heard as she glided into the river, and the ship 'Citizen,' Captain E. L. Keen, passed Sandy Hook in the evening of October 9 of the above year, bound to the Central Flowery Land. Friends and relations who had accompanied us thus far now took leave, and returned to the city in the pilot boat, steam tugs not having yet come into existence.

The 'Citizen,' of 498 tons was one of seven ships<sup>1</sup> owned by Mr. Thomas H. Smith, of New York, who had been for many years engaged in the China trade. She had already made two voyages to Canton, and before leaving on her present one, had been newly coppered and 'thoroughly' overhauled, the better to withstand the westerly gales she was likely to en-

<sup>1</sup> Viz., 'The Huntress,' 'Beaver,' 'Europa,' 'America,' 'Maria,' and 'Mary Lord.'