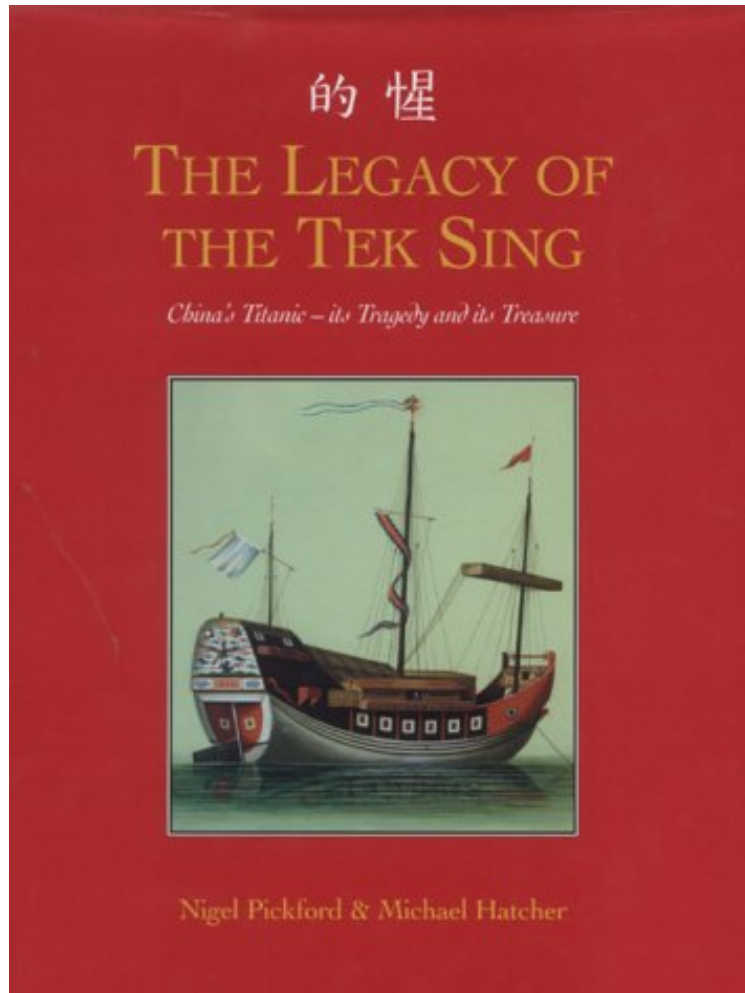


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Legacy of the Tek Sing: China's Titanic, Its Legacy and Its Treasures

Nigel Pickford

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A brief entry in a book of old sailing directions was the starting-point for Michael Hatcher and Nigel Pickford, in what has turned into one of the world's most fascinating historical quests. The object of that quest - the great, ocean-going Chinese junk Tek Sing, which had nearly 2,000 people on board and a priceless cargo of porcelain when it was

wrecked on the Belvidere Reef in 1822. The discovery of this extraordinary time-capsule focuses attention on a deeply embarrassing period of history for the British, when its government was involved in the supply of millions of pounds' worth of illegal opium into China every year, in quantities that were wreaking havoc on the Chinese economy. The story of the Tek Sing draws dramatic attention to the intricacies and ironies of the opium circuit at the time. The antique porcelain that has miraculously survived the disaster is of a design and style rarely seen before in the West and its resurfacing of the history of Chinese porcelain manufacture. Not only is the porcelain intrinsically beautiful, it encapsulates and commemorates a long-forgotten fragment of the past.