



# The Search for the Buddha: The Men Who Discovered India's Lost Religion

*Charles Allen*

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Buddhism is now 2,500 years old and has about 300 million followers worldwide and almost 3 million adherents in the United States. Yet, until the late eighteenth century when Sir William “Oriental” Jones broke the Brahmins’ prohibition on learning the sacred language of Sanskrit, the Buddha’s teachings were treasures unappreciated in the West. Uncovering clues about Buddhism’s origins from inscriptions on pillars and rocks, Jones pioneered an enthusiastic band whose search for the Indian subcontinent’s secret religion is chronicled in this book of high adventure and monumental historical detection. Acclaimed narrative historian Charles Allen brings to life extraordinary eighteenth- and nineteenth-century characters and travels to lost holy places across the Eastern world as he tells the story of how Westerners found the Buddha. Allen has recorded the Western birth of a religion whose influence in America has increased tenfold in the just the past forty years.

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