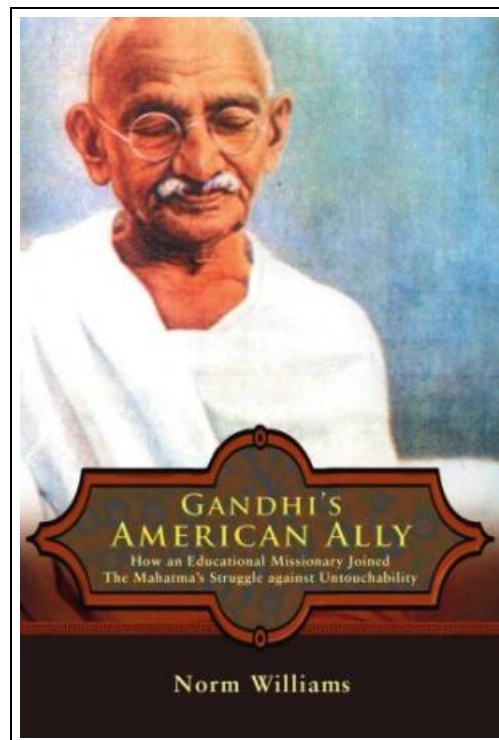


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GANDHI S AMERICAN ALLY: HOW AN EDUCATIONAL MISSIONARY JOINED THE MAHATMA S STRUGGLE AGAINST UNTOUCHABILITY (PAPERBACK)



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iUniverse, United States, 2008. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.A son strives to understand his father, an iconoclastic Methodist missionary to India during the 20s and 30s. Williams father, Fred, arrived in India in 1921 as part of the Methodist ministry. He was, from the start, called to help meet people s mundane human needs down here on planet Earth, writes Williams in an easeful, searching voice. Fred understood the evangelical aspects of his mission-to convert as many Hindus to Christianity as he could-but this soon lost any meaning when it failed to address urgent, everyday concerns. He was drawn to the philosophical, political and cross-cultural issues that roiled India during these pre-independence days, and Williams evokes them all with bite and immediacy. There, on the plains of Bengal, Fred partook in an experiment in rural education, cutting like a torch through the Hindu caste system, convincing his students to appreciate the dignity of labor-in that anything removing us from our work, removes us from our lives-inhabiting elegant, appropriate mud houses and making good use of the glories of a sanitation system. Proselytizing took a back seat to encouraging self-government, countering conditions that led to disease, poking moneylenders in the eye and curbing population growth. There was an enormous need to handle infant and female health care, which Williams found of greater value than foisting one s religion on others. None of this, Williams admits, exempts his parents from ingrained colonial superiorities. Still, they were ready to relinquish their Western lifestyle and embrace the clothing and food of their neighbors, and their desire for independence. Everything would come to a head in India with Gandhi-the challenge to tradition and custom, undermining the hierarchy of class that suffocated independence. Williams parents, who forged...



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