



Around the World Single-Handed: The Cruise of the "Islander" (Dover Maritime)

Harry Pidgeon

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"The *Islander* was my first attempt at building a sailboat, but I don't suppose there ever was an amateur built craft that so nearly fulfilled the dream of her owner, or that a landsman ever came so near to weaving a magic carpet of the sea."

So begins this fascinating first-person narrative by a man who did what many dream of but few accomplish. Between 1921 and 1925 Harry Pidgeon circumnavigated the globe in a sailboat of his own construction, experienced many thrilling adventures in the far corners of the world, and relied mainly on his own strength, skill, and resourcefulness to survive.

After building his 34-foot yawl (at a cost of \$1,000 for materials and a year and a half of hard work), the author sailed from California west across the Pacific to Hawaii in a test voyage. Then, from Los Angeles he cruised to lush and fabled islands — the Marquesas, Tahiti, Samoa, Fiji, New Hebrides, and New Guinea. With grace and economy, Mr. Pidgeon describes memorable encounters with native peoples (including suspected cannibals), tribal rites and rituals, the warm hospitality afforded him at many a remote harbor, good times with new friends and, of course, the delights of sailing. But there was danger and hardship as well, as he navigated his small craft through raging gales and giant seas, and a near-catastrophe when the *Islander* ran aground off the coast of South Africa.

Over 60 photographs enhance the text (Pidgeon was also an expert photographer) depicting the *Islander* under construction, under sail and at anchor in various locales; native peoples, houses, and ceremonies; penguins and other wildlife; pearl divers, a canoe race at Port Moresby; a tattooed girl of New Guinea; and many other vivid vignettes.

Well written, exciting, and true-to-life, *Around the World Single-Handed: The Cruise of the "Islander"* will delight armchair adventurers, sailing enthusiasts, or anyone who ever dreamed of hoisting sail and setting out for distant ports of call.

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