

The Life, Adventures and Piracies of the Famous Captain Singleton

Daniel Defoe



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Defoe here offers a searching exploration of society from the point of view of its outcasts. Originally was published in 1720, a year after ROBINSON CRUSOE, when Daniel Defoe was fifty-nine, CAPTAIN SINGLETON is an absorbing and delightful tale. Twenty years before had seen THE TRUE-BORN ENGLISHMAN and THE SHORTEST WAY WITH THE DISSENTERS; and we are told that from "June 1687 to almost the very week of his death in 1731 a stream of controversial books and pamphlets poured from his pen commenting upon and marking every important passing event." The fecundity of Defoe as a journalist alone surpasses that of any great journalist we can name, and we may add that the style of CAPTAIN SINGLETON, like that of ROBINSON CRUSOE, is so perfect that there is not a single ineffective passage, or indeed a weak sentence, to be found in the book. It is believed to have been partly inspired by the exploits of English pirate Henry Every. The narrative describes the life of an Englishman, stolen from a well-to-do family as a child and raised by Gypsies who eventually makes his way to sea.

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