

[next](#)

Joshua Slocum



February 20, 1844 - Unknown
Birthplace: Mount Hanley, Nova Scotia.
Naturalized U.S. Citizen 1865 in San Francisco.

“To young men contemplating a voyage, I say go.”

It was *Sailing Alone Around the World*, Slocum’s third book (1899), that brought him the recognition he so deserved, that finally flung open the window on this quintessential mariner’s storied life. In his first book, *The Voyage of the Liberdade* (1890), Slocum relates how he was shipwrecked in South America, built a 35-foot junk, and sailed home with his family. His second book, *The Voyage of the Destroyer* (1893), is his story of delivering a warship to South America. Both would be forgotten if not for , which documents the first ever circumnavigation under sail -- a three-year, 45,000 mile odyssey – completed in a pudgy, old, 35-foot gaff-rigged work boat that Slocum rebuilt himself.

One of eleven children, a cobbler's son from Nova Scotia whose formal education stopped at grade three, the impatient Slocum ran away from home at age 14 to become a cabin boy. By the time he was 18, he'd rounded Cape Horn twice, and passed his exam for a Second Mate's certificate. After stints in salmon fishing and the fur trade, he was soon master of cargo vessels out of San Francisco – eight different ships in 13 years. When one of his ships dragged anchor and wrecked, Slocum's valor and ingenuity in saving both crew and cargo earned him another vessel. An aspiring writer, he became a correspondent for the *San Francisco Bee*.

After his circumnavigation, Slocum tried to settle on Martha's Vineyard, but he was rarely there. The pull of the sea was too strong. The National Geographic Society once ranked Slocum with Dr. David Livingston, Charles Lindbergh, and Sir Galahad as adventurers.

After leaving the Herreshoff yard in Bristol, R.I., on a voyage in 1908, Slocum disappeared at sea.

- *Roger Vaughan*

Links of Interest:

["Around the World Alone" - Sports Illustrated article on Joshua Slocum](#)

[The Voyage of Joshua Slocum on Google Earth - Video on World News](#)

[Biography from Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online](#)

["The Voyage of the Liberdade" - on ibiblio.com](#)

[Joshua Slocum Wikipedia page](#)

[**Back to 2011 Hall of Famers**](#)