



Selkirk's Island: The True and Strange Adventures of the Real Robinson Crusoe

Diana Souhami

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Piracy and betrayal frame the epic story of solitary endurance that inspired Daniel Defoe's classic novel.

Who was the real Robinson Crusoe? And what did he really experience during his solitary stay on a remote island in the Pacific? Diana Souhami's revelatory account of Alexander Selkirk's adventures on the high seas and dry land leads us to the answers to both these questions, and explores the reality behind the romance of privateering on the high seas.

Born to a poor Scottish family, Selkirk signed on with an ill-fated quest to sack the famous Manila galleon, one of the richest prizes on the southern seas. After a series of misfortunes and disagreements among the crew, Selkirk was put ashore on an island three hundred miles west of South America, where he spent four years learning to survive with little more than his bare hands.

Acclaimed biographer Diana Souhami evokes all the strangeness and wonder of his story and interprets the haze created by three centuries of literature and legend. The result is a brilliantly lucid and lyrical recovery and discovery of a forgotten man and his unforgettable experience.

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