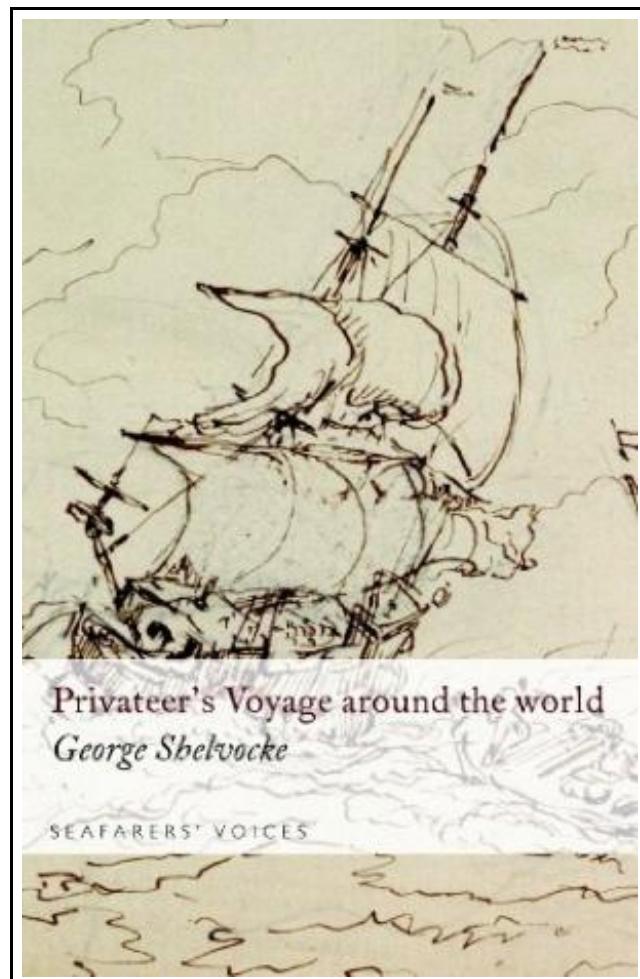


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Pen Sword Books Ltd, United Kingdom, 2010. Hardback. Book Condition: New. 174 x 120 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. In 1719, Captain George Shelvocke, a poverty-stricken ex-naval officer, appealed for help to an old shipmate, Edward Hughes, who was then part of a consortium fitting-out two privateering vessels to prey on the Spanish in the Pacific. He offered Shelvocke the captaincy of the larger ship but then demoted him to a smaller vessel, and Shelvocke, bitter and revengeful, immediately set off on his own for South America with a semi-mutinous crew, and his much-hated Captain of Marines, William Betagh. After rounding Cape Horn, one of Shelvocke s men shot a black albatross - an event later to be immortalised in Coleridge s Rime of the Ancient Mariner - and then, off Chile, with considerable loot onboard his ship, the Speedwell, was wrecked in the Juan Fernandez Islands. Undaunted, he built another vessel and eventually returned to England, via Macao, loaded with Spanish plunder. Back home he was arrested for piracy and defrauding his shareholders, though he argued that he owed the original owners nothing as their ship had been honestly lost. The events were grippingly portrayed in his memoir A Voyage Round the World by Way of the Great South Sea, though some of it was disputed by Betagh and others, and it still reads today as a fast moving, incident-packed tale exposing the world of the maritime mercenaries and privateers, men who would take on anything and everything - for Gold! GEORGE SHELVOCKE was born in 1675 and entered the Navy when he was 15. During the wars with France and Spain he rose to become sailing master and then a Second Lieutenant. In 1713, at the end of the wars, he found himself on half pay...

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