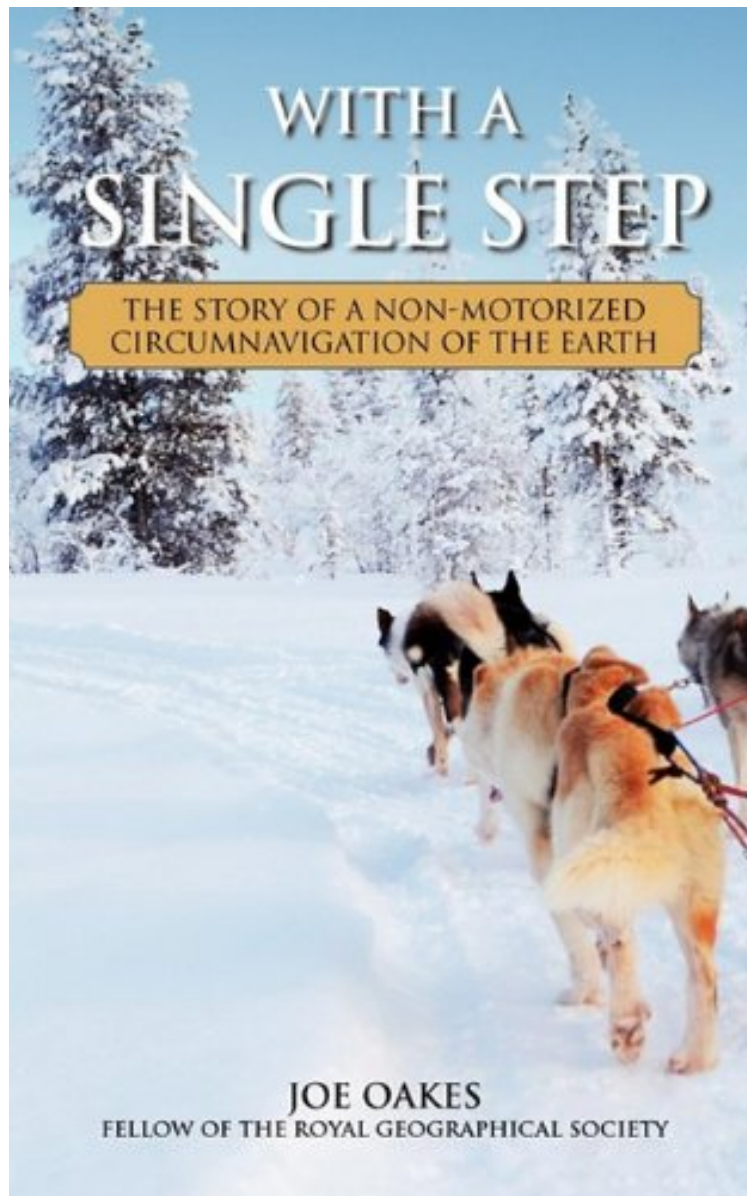


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With a Single Step

Joe A. Oakes

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Joe A. Oakes : With a Single Step before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised With a Single Step:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great humor in telling a fascinating story! By Ronald K. Sellars We have met Joe and would never have dreamed that he had accomplished all these feats. A great guy who always has a

ready joke.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating ReadBy AlfonzoMaking an unpowered circumnavigation of the globe, swimming the Bering strait, jogging across Siberia while in the care of the Russian mob, etc. are all experiences intriguing and unusual enough to recommend this book. If that's not enough you have sharing a magenta tandem bike with flaky Englishman and surly lovestruck Russians all the way across Europe. The adventure and the humor are here. A fun and insightful read. Highly recommended!2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A thoroughly biased review, but mine own.By Dan'l Danehy-OakesThere is no way I can even pretend to be objective about this book, because the author is my father.In the early '90s, he began a project which would take him several years, cost him significant money, and give him memories to last his lifetime; in With A Single Step he shares those memories of his non-motorized circumnavigation of the Earth - the Northern Hemisphere, to be precise.He didn't do it all at once, nor in strict sequence, but he put together the legs that went around the world. Yes, he used motorized transportation to get to the legs, but they joined up (more or less), and he did it.It began with running across Siberia, during the Soviet era. In the text, Dad refers to it as "the chance of a lifetime," and it does indeed seem to have been just that. A couple of Russian promoters (who turned out to be, shall we say, more than a little shady) had put together an event where runners from a variety of countries would start at Lake Baikal and follow the train right-of-way to Irkutsk. The Soviet government had their own reasons for wanting to expose Siberia a bit more to the outside world at this point.This caused Dad, who had dreamed of this for years, to begin assembling, in his head, plans to make the around-the-world sort-of-event happen. Over the next four years, he ran, biked, swam, kayaked, skied, sailed, and mushed in a series of personally-designed events that would, with the Siberian event, amount to the planned circumnavigation. In a few cases, he moved links north or south - for example, having run across the United States, he began his sail across the Atlantic considerably south of the US.He broke only a few laws along the way, mostly involving questionable or outright illegal entry into Country X for himself, members of his team, or both. The funniest of these, to my mind, was his sneaking a Russian citizen, who only had a visa for the United States, into Canada; the most dangerous was sneaking into militarized Russian territory to swim from Big Diomed Island to Little Diomed Island in the Bering strait.One of the things that struck me as I read this was how damned lucky he had to be to do this at all. I'm not talking about the successful business career he'd retired from (he was around 60 during the time frame of this book), but things falling into place, people being available, **things** being available, at the right time in the right place. This is not to denigrate his planning; he thought things through carefully with the information available to him. But there is always information **not** available to someone planning such a feat; and things change, sometimes rapidly.Another thing that struck me, and it's clear that Dad intended it to strike people, is that people around the world are generally decent and friendly if you give them the chance to be. There are bad people, and many of them have power, but they are the exception, not the rule.Dad writes in a breezy style that suits the anecdotal nature of the story: it's like having someone (the Ancient Mariner, perhaps...?) grab you by the hand and say, "Let me tell you a story."And that is what Papa Joe does best.

This is the story of a non-motorized circumnavigation of the earth. The author made his way around the world in stages over several years using whatever means of forward progress were appropriate to the terrain and season. En route he walked, ran, bicycled, mushed dogs, climbed, kayaked, sailed and swam, and in the process became the first person to swim from Russia to Alaska.