

"Vivid and compelling...a terrific read." — Lisa Mullins, Public Radio International

Annie Londonderry's Extraordinary Ride

Traveled Thousands of Miles
HER JOURNEY THE RESULT OF A BET
A Short History of Her Adventures—Attacked and Robbed
Nearly Killed by a Road Dog in Sturtevant, Cal.—Spent
\$1,500 on Her Trip, 2000 Gifts to Make
More History



ANNIE IS BACK.

AROUND THE WORLD ON TWO WHEELS

one woman
one bicycle
one unforgettable journey

PETER ZHEUTLIN

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Annie Londonderry's Extraordinary Ride

Traveled Thousands of Miles
HER JOURNEY THE RESULT OF A BET
A Short History of Her Adventures—Attacked and Robbed in France—
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\$1,500 on Her Trip, 2000 Letters to Mother
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For my late father, Lionel Zheutlin, a kind and gentle soul.

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AROUND THE WORLD ON TWO WHEELS

Prologue

*The maiden with her wheel of old
Sat by the fire to spin,
While lightly through her careful hold
The flax slid out and in
Today her distaff, rock and reel
Far out of sight are hurled
And now the maiden with her wheel
Goes spinning round the world*

—Madelyne Bridges, *Outing* magazine, September 1893

On the morning of January 13, 1895, an enthusiastic crowd, giddy with anticipation, lined the streets of Marseilles to see the arrival of a brave young American in her early twenties. As the petite, dark-haired cyclist pedaled into town with one foot—her other foot, wrapped in bandages, was propped on the handlebars—the Stars and Stripes flew in the breeze from an improvised mount on her bike frame. A loud cheer went up and people waved and shouted as she wheeled by. Dressed in a man's riding suit and astride a man's bicycle, she was accompanied by several Marseilles cyclists who had ridden with her from the village of Saint Louis. The riding party proceeded to the Brasserie Noailles where the local cycling club, the Cyclophile Marseille, hosted a luncheon in her honor. Feted in Paris for several weeks, she had braved bitter cold and snow to reach the south coast of France.

Annie Londonderry was already famous by the time she reached Marseilles. The French press had been writing about her prolifically since her arrival in France, at the northern port of Le Havre, on December 3, 1894. She had started from Boston seven months earlier in a daring attempt to become the first woman to circle the globe by bicycle, and, it was widely reported, to settle an extraordinary, high-stakes wager between two wealthy Boston businessmen.

While in Marseilles, Miss Londonderry endeared herself to the local population. She donated to children's clinic several pieces of jewelry she had purchased in Paris. Admirers sent her countless letters at l'Hôtel de Provence, where she was staying. Unable to reply to them all, she set visiting hours, published in the local newspapers, when people could come to meet her. There, she sold photographs of herself, which she autographed, to help pay her travel expenses. She became a familiar if curious sight on the Cannebière riding up and down the boulevard her bicycle and her

ammal, it curious, sign on the Camille, hanging up and down the boulevard, her bicycle and her clothing festooned with advertising ribbons, and handing out leaflets promoting the wares of perfume maker Lorenzy-Palanca, and the dairy cooperative of Alpes-Bernoises.

On Friday, January 18, a crowd filled the city's Crystal Palace to see her. When the famous cyclist appeared, dressed in a suit provided by la Maison Jaegel, a local boutique, the audience applauded wildly. As Miss Londonderry circled the room on her ivory and gold Sterling bicycle, an orchestra, conducted by the Maestro Trave, struck up "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "La Marseillaise," the French national anthem. In a brief speech, translated into French, she told the people of Marseilles they were "the elite of the French nation." The crowd roared its approval and threw flowers at her. She had, said one local newspaper, "captured the hearts of the people of Marseilles."

Two days later, thousands gathered to bid Miss Londonderry adieu as a drum and bugle corps and a delegation of local cyclists escorted her aboard a French *paquetbot*, the 413-foot steamship *Sydney*. Deeply moved by the outpouring of affection, she wept. Then Miss Londonderry and her Sterling bicycle sailed away through the Mediterranean toward the Suez Canal and points east.

But, unbeknownst to the people of Marseilles, the young cyclist from Boston with the Irish name was, in fact, Annie Cohen Kopchovsky (Mrs. Simon "Max" Kopchovsky), a Jewish working mother of three young children, ages five, three, and two. What the people of Marseilles also didn't know is that "Mlle. Londonderry" was not simply a cyclist on an around-the-world journey, but an illusionist possessed of what one American newspaper called "an inventive genius." She was, to be sure, making a trip around the world by wheel, though she made liberal use of steamships and trains, as well. But just as Londonderry was not her real name, with Annie Kopchovsky things were rarely as they appeared. There were even some who questioned whether she was a woman at all.

By the time she arrived in Marseilles, Annie was halfway through a traveling fifteen-month theatrical production starring herself, a veritable one-woman carnival on wheels who turned every Victorian notion of female propriety on its ear. An inveterate storyteller, consummate self-promoter, and masterful creator of her own myth, she turned her journey into one of the most outrageous chapters in cycling history, and herself into one of the most colorful characters of the gay 1890s.

For more than a century, the story of the audacious and charismatic Annie Kopchovsky and her attempt to circle the world by wheel has been lost to history. Who *was* this mysterious young woman on a bike? What was she like? How did she free herself from the social constraints that surrounded late Victorian women, and undertake such an adventure? Finally, how did an anonymous working-class Jewish mother from the tenements of Boston's West End transform herself into a new woman—the daring, internationally renowned globetrotter, Mlle. Londonderry? In short, what happened?

Going Woman

ANNIE KAPCHOWSKY IS A POOR RIDER, BUT INTENDS TO DO THE EARTH*

Good health to all, good pleasure, good speed,

A favoring breeze—but not too high

For the outbound spin! Who rides may read

The open secret of earth and sky.

—Anonymous, *Scribner's Magazine*, June 1895

Monday, June 25, 1894, was a perfect day for baseball in Boston. The weather was fair, if somewhat overcast, but the hometown team, the Beaneaters, was in Louisville to play the Colonels. The big news of this early summer day—news carried by telegraph cables to newspapers across the country and around the world—was the assassination the previous day in Lyon of French president Sadi Carnot at the hands of an Italian anarchist.

With the South End Baseball Grounds on Columbus and Walpole streets quiet, some who might have gone to the ballpark chose instead to ride the swan boats plying the lagoon in the Boston Public Garden. Others sat on benches, reading the news from France. Pedestrians strolled along gently curved walkways under the garden's graceful willows. If any of them had wandered the short distance to the gold-domed Massachusetts State House on Beacon Hill they would have been treated to an unusual sight. There, at about eleven o'clock in the morning, a crowd of five hundred suffragists, friends, family members, and curiosity seekers gathered at the steps to see a young woman about to attempt something no woman had before—an around-the-world trip by bicycle.

Annie Cohen Kopchovsky arrived in a barouche accompanied by a friend, Mrs. Ober-Towne, and Mrs. J. O. Tubbs, head of the local chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). Her close friends, Pear Stone and Susie Wyzanski, were there to meet her. Governor Green-halge was expected to preside over the proceedings, but sent word at the last moment that he could not attend, much to Annie's disappointment, no doubt. Though "the event lost something of the glamour that comes with state patronage," the scene was a festive one.

Annie was dressed in typical late Victorian attire: a long dark skirt, a dark blue tailored jacket with billowing leg-o'-mutton sleeves, a white shirtwaist with a striped collar and a neat bowtie, dark gloves, and a flattopped hat, under which her dark hair had been tied up in a tight bun. "[S]he was short and lightly built" reported the *Boston Post*. "Her face was unmistakably Polish; her eyes, his

short and tightly built, reported the *Boston Post*. Her face was admirably Polish, her eyes, big brown and sparkling, her mouth wide but well formed and stamped with determination, her complexion olive, her hair dark brown, waving luxuriantly over a countenance full of expression.”

To one side, Captain A. D. Peck of the Pope Manufacturing Company, maker of Columbia bicycles, stood watch over the Columbia “wheel” on which Annie would make her journey. Peck, an officer of the Massachusetts chapter of the League of American Wheelmen, a cycling organization, was dressed in his formal riding attire, including epaulets bearing the abbreviation “MASS,” which allowed him to pass “as a State dignitary.”

Mrs. Ober-Towne briefly addressed the crowd, declaring her conviction that “woman should have the same chances as men.” The head of the WCTU spoke next. “May she set a noble example wherever she goes!” shouted Mrs. Tubbs, who also expressed the wish that Annie would “spread good tidings...among the Bedouins and the nations of the earth.” She then introduced Annie to the crowd. Annie kissed all the women around her, asking each “if she had got her hat on straight,” and announced she was making the trip to settle a wager between two wealthy Boston sugar merchants:

“I am to go around the earth in fifteen months, returning with five thousand dollars, and starting only with the clothes on my back. I cannot accept anything gratuitously from anyone.” She turned her pockets inside out to show that she was penniless.

Mrs. Tubbs held up a copper coin and offered it to her. “A penny for luck!” she declared.

“I can’t take it,” replied Annie. “I must earn it.”

“Take it as pay in return for speaking for the white ribbon, then,” said Mrs. Tubbs, who pinned a white ribbon, the emblem of the WCTU, on Annie’s right lapel.

Next, a representative of New Hampshire’s Londonderry Lithia Spring Water Company stepped forward, handed Annie \$100, and attached an advertising placard to the skirt guard on the rear wheel of her Columbia. The money was payment not only for carrying the Londonderry placard on her bicycle, but for Annie to use the surname “Londonderry” throughout the journey, as well. The latter served more than a commercial purpose; it had a practical one. It would ease her journey to travel under a name that didn’t call attention to the fact that she was a Jew. And, more prosaically, she already had a keen awareness of the importance of publicity and a penchant for showmanship; “Annie Londonderry” would be far more memorable than “Annie Kopchovsky.”

“Anyone else make a bid for space on the wheel?” she asked. There were no other takers that day, though there would be many down the road. “There was quite a crowd present to see her off,” reported the *Chicago Daily Inter Ocean*, “the advertising man being particularly prominent.”

As she prepared to mount her bicycle in front of the State House, her husband and three small children were nowhere to be seen, and she lamented to a reporter that her brother, Bennett, who was in the crowd, “didn’t come up to say good-bye.” Bennett may have thought his sister was *meshugineh*, Yiddish for “crazy,” or he didn’t expect her to get very far—or, perhaps, both.

As Captain Peck steadied her bicycle, she climbed into the saddle at last. Then, carrying only a change of underwear and a pearl-handled revolver, Annie Cohen Kopchovsky, now Annie Londonderry, “sailed away like a kite down Beacon Street.” She would not return for well over a year.

IT WAS “one of the most novel wagers ever made” said one Iowa newspaper: \$20,000 to \$10,000 that a woman could not go around the world on a bicycle as had Thomas Stevens a decade before. The wager was designed to settle an argument between two wealthy Boston men, but carried on at all levels of society in the 1890s, in homes, parlors, public meetings, work places, legislatures, rallies, and newspapers—indeed *everywhere*—about the equality of the sexes, a debate that carried well into the twentieth century and, one could argue, continues today. The requirement that the woman earn the formidable sum of \$5,000 en route above her expenses made the journey not merely a test of her physical toughness and mental fortitude, but of her ability to fend for herself in the world. If she succeeded, she was to win the staggering sum of \$10,000 in prize money.

Talking to reporters as she traveled, Annie often gave idiosyncratic descriptions of the wager. She sometimes said it prohibited her from earning money as a journalist, her chosen profession, and that she was prohibited from speaking any language other than English, even though the only other language she actually knew was Yiddish. One newspaper reported, fancifully, that “when riding she must dispatch a postal card to Boston every ten miles telling where and how she is, as well as the condition of the roads.” Annie even told one El Paso newspaper that the wager prohibited her from contracting matrimony during the trip, not disclosing that she was already married.

ANNIE KOPCHOVSKY WAS, on the surface, as unlikely a candidate for the adventure she was about to undertake as one could imagine. Slightly built and a novice cyclist, she was a Jew, a married woman, and a working mother who was helping her husband, a peddler, to support a growing family.

It was a hectic household. When Annie left Boston in June 1894, she and her husband, Max, and their children lived in the same Spring Street tenement in Boston’s West End as did Annie’s brother, Bennett, his wife, Bertha, and *their* two young children, ages four and two. Max was a devout Orthodox Jew who spent hours studying Torah and attending shul. Bennett was an up-and-coming newspaper executive determined to make a success of himself at the *Boston Evening Transcript*, one of the city’s many daily newspapers. Annie, though already the mother of three and only in her early twenties, worked as an advertising solicitor for several Boston dailies—a vivacious, bright, and attractive young woman and a skilled conversationalist, a woman who could charm even the most frugal customers into buying the newspaper space she had to sell.

She came to the United States in 1875 from Latvia as a young girl of four or five with her parents, Levi (Leib) and Beatrice (Basha) Cohen, and her older siblings, Sarah and Bennett. The Cohens were relatively early arrivals in Boston’s Jewish community, for it wasn’t until the 1880s that large waves of Jewish immigrants began arriving in America, many fleeing oppression in czarist Russia. Boston’s Jewish community was relatively small, however, because the city had a reputation for virulent anti-Semitism. Many Jews remained in New York, where most, like the Cohens, first entered the country, or headed to the midwest or south to Baltimore, Savannah, and Charleston.

In the mid-1890s, about 6,300 of Boston’s 20,000 Jews lived in the West End, the largest concentration of Jews in the city, but only a quarter of the neighborhood’s ethnically diverse population. The West End was filled with new arrivals from all over Europe who tended to carve out small ethnic enclaves block by block. Spring Street was in the heart of the Jewish community, but *within a few city blocks were clusters of Irish, Portuguese, Poles, Germans, Russians, and Italians, and*

within a few city blocks were clusters of Irish, Portuguese, Poles, Germans, Russians, and Italians, and a significant number of African-Americans, as well. It was one of the most ethnically mixed neighborhoods in America, a great churning place of immigrant life; a place where one would hear intriguing stories of faraway places.

In the early twentieth century, Mary Antin described the West End in her memoir, *The Promised Land*, and her experience, arriving as a young child, was not unlike Annie's:

Anybody who knows Boston knows that the West and North Ends are the wrong ends of that city. They form the tenement district, or, in the newer phrase, the slums of Boston...the quarter where poor immigrants foregather, to live, for the most part, as unkempt, half-washed, toiling, unambitious foreigners; pitiful in the eyes of social missionaries, the despair of boards of health, the hope of ward politicians, the touchstone of American democracy....

He may know all this and not yet guess how Wall Street, in the West End, appears in the eyes of a little immigrant from Polotzk. What would a sophisticated sight-seer say about Union Place, off Wall Street, where my new home awaited me? He would say that it is no place at all, but a short box of an alley. Two rows of three-story tenements are its sides, a stingy strip of sky is its lid, a littered pavement is the floor, and a narrow mouth its exit.

But I saw a very different picture...I saw two imposing rows of brick buildings, loftier than any dwelling I had ever lived in. Brick was even on the ground for me to tread on, instead of common earth or boards. Many friendly windows stood open, filled with uncovered heads of women and children. I thought people were interested in us, which was very neighborly. I looked to the topmost row of windows, and my eyes were filled with the May blue of an American sky!

Nevertheless, life in these tenements was hard and cramped. Though she was writing about New York, Gail Collins's description of tenement life could apply to Boston's West End, as well: "No one in the tenements had any privacy—apartments looked into one another across narrow air-shafts, and women often carried on conversations with each other while working in the respective kitchens. A husband and wife knew that half the neighborhood could hear them arguing, or making love."

As Annie walked the West End's cobblestone streets, either going to and from work on Washington Street on the other side of Beacon Hill, to shop for necessities, or simply to escape the claustrophobia of a crowded household, she would hear conversations in as many as a dozen languages. The sound of horseshoes hitting cobblestone ricocheted through streets as horses pulled peddler's wagons past four- and five-story buildings, many with storefronts at street level and apartments above.

If the conversations in the West End created a veritable Tower of Babel, the odor of ethnic food wafting from downstairs shops and upstairs apartments were similarly diverse. The smell of barreled pickles outside a Jewish grocery mingled with the aromas of tomato sauces simmering in Italian homes, cooked sausages from the homes of Poles, and borscht from the apartments of Russians.

Pedestrians ruled the streets. Women in shawls, long-sleeved blouses or bodices, and ankle-length skirts or dresses fondled fruit for sale and cast discerning eyes on cuts of meat and poultry

hanging in shop windows. Boys in knickerbockers and caps hawked newspapers and chased one another down busy sidewalks. Men in topcoats and bowlers talked business and baseball; and the Orthodox Jews, identifiable by their long beards, black hats, and *payot*, long locks of hair near the ears, walked to shul. Kosher butchers abounded in the West End, as did small shops where clothing and shoes were manufactured and sold. The air, already tinged with the aromas of ethnic cooking was scented, too, with leather, fresh meat, and horse sweat. Heavy clothing worn year round, combined with limited facilities for bathing in crowded apartment blocks, meant the streets were filled with human odors as well. The West End was a crowded and smelly place, both for better and for worse.

Though some Jews became prosperous, tenement families like Annie's were the norm. Incomes were modest, with most laboring in small factories, retail shops, or, like Annie's husband, Max, as peddlers of secondhand clothes and other sundries. Consequently, many Jewish women worked as a matter of economic necessity, torn between what most saw as their principal obligation—raising families and instilling a love of Judaism in their children—and the need to feed and clothe those families. Precisely for this reason, material success was greatly admired and revered in much of the Jewish community. Although women especially were expected to devote themselves first and foremost to home and family, their striving for wealth was no sin.

In this regard, Annie was a *shvitsker* (literally, one who sweats, a hard worker), a type of Jewish immigrant for whom America was seen as the place to make a fortune. She certainly had a *shvitsker's* mentality. "*Shvitsers* allowed nothing to stand in the way of their getting ahead," Jonathan Sarna of Brandeis University has written. "They shamelessly abandoned elements of their faith and upbringing, sometimes they abandoned their families...Everything they did focused sharply on the goal of making money and achieving success—that, they believed, was what America was all about."

Opportunities for men, even Jewish men, to realize their dreams of wealth were far greater than those for women, of course. With many traditional avenues unavailable to her, Annie hit upon an extraordinarily novel approach to chasing the *shvitsker's* dream. Nevertheless, her Jewish neighbors may have viewed with some astonishment her decision to leave her family for an adventure on a bicycle, for it is one thing to take a job across town to help support the family, and another entirely to leave a husband and three small children to take a dangerous journey from which one might never return. What possessed Annie to make such a radical choice?

AS A YOUNG woman, Annie had already had her share of heartbreak and borne considerable responsibility for the care of others. She was eager to free herself from the narrow confines of family life on Spring Street and, at least for a time, to forge a new identity, one that would carry her to a better life.

On January 17, 1887, when she was just sixteen or seventeen years old, her father, Levi, died. Her mother died only two months later. Her younger brother, Jacob, was then only ten, and her sister Ros was only eight or nine. With her older sister, Sarah, already married and living in Maine, Annie and her brother Bennett, twenty, became responsible for their younger siblings. Jacob was to die at age seventeen of a lung infection.

Annie married in 1888, the year following the death of her parents, and her first child, Bertha Malkie (known as Mollie), was born nine months later. In 1891, she had her second daughter, Libbie.

and her third child, Simon, was born in 1892.

If Annie was at all conflicted about leaving her husband and children behind in 1894, there is no evidence of it; nor did she, later in her life, express regret about her decision to journey far from home on a bike. Indeed, later events would suggest she was not troubled in the least by her impending separation. “I didn’t want to spend my life at home with a baby under my apron every year,” she would often say.

With the cycling craze at its height in the mid-1890s and women, led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, challenging the established social order, the bicycle represented to Annie a literal vehicle to the fame, freedom, and material wealth she so craved; her proposed journey could provide the opportunity to refashion her identity and create a new life for herself. But it was the sheer force of her irrepressible, flamboyant personality and her gift for drama that would transform Annie Cohen Kopchovsky, Jewish housewife and mother, into the globetrotter Mlle. Annie Londonderry, the most famous lady cyclist of her day, a woman celebrated around the world. For many immigrants, the chance to forge a new identity was part of America’s promise: a chance to leave one life behind and create another. Annie was hardly alone in this regard, though she was wholly unique in how she went about it. Indeed, throughout the course of her trip, she would prove to be, among other things, a master of self invention.

THOUGH SHE MADE her “official” start from the Massachusetts State House on June 25, Annie remained for two additional days in Boston. She had formal photographs taken at the Towne portrait studio, photographs she would sell en route, and handbills printed explaining her venture. She made her final good-byes to her friends and young family and then, on June 27, left Boston at last.

For Max, who worshipped her, it must have been an excruciatingly painful time. The children, except perhaps the oldest, five-year-old Mollie, couldn’t possibly have comprehended what was about to happen. However, Annie’s ambitions came first. She had decided in February to make the trip, intending to leave in May. The death of her teenaged brother, Jacob, on the twelfth of that month, may have caused the delay. But her mind was set. The journey was on.

New York was Annie’s first objective, and from there it was on to Chicago. She did not yet know that, by riding west, she would nearly doom her trip from the beginning.

TO NEW YORK and Chicago, Annie hewed to the cycling routes described in pocket-size tour books published by the League of American Wheelmen (L.A.W.), a national cycling organization founded in 1880. Cumulative distances, landmarks, road surfaces, terrain, and directions were laid out clearly. Thus, a cyclist would know whether she had miles of flat, paved road or impassable sandy hills, or, perhaps, a water crossing, ahead. Places to eat and hotels offering discounts to cyclists were noted. Furthermore, Annie sought the company of other cyclists, whom she was more likely to encounter on the L.A.W. routes.

When Annie left Boston on June 27, she rode out of the city through the area known as the Fens (from which Boston’s Fenway Park derives its name) and the Jamaica Plain, Forest Hills, and West Roxbury neighborhoods of Boston. Here all the roads were macadamized, making for a smooth run on a bicycle, but they turned to gravel at Dedham a few miles further south. Gravel roads offered

a bicycle, but they turned to gravel at Dedham a few miles further south. Gravel roads offered relatively good riding through Norwood, Walpole, and Wrentham. Annie rode through Attleboro and into Providence, where she stopped for the night, on paved roads.

The trip took her nine hours, an impressive day's work for a woman who had never ridden a bicycle, save for two or three brief cycling lessons in the days just before her departure. This was fairly typical of the days ahead. On her weighty forty-two-pound Columbia bicycle, dressed in long skirts and riding over roads that ranged from smooth asphalt to grainy sand, Annie averaged between eight and ten miles an hour on smooth roads, and a good deal less on poor roads, very slow by modern cycling standards. Nevertheless, "[b]icycling seems to have been a heaven-born talent with her," declared the *Atlanta Constitution*.

Annie spent the night of June 27 at a Providence hotel, earning the cost of her lodging plus "\$50 extra by selling candy and lecturing." "My expenses will be met by clerking in a store as a drawing card, by selling photographs and autographs, and by lecturing on physical culture," she told the *New York Herald* when she arrived in the city a few days later. "I have studied medicine for two years, and have paid particular attention to the cultivation of physical beauty."

The roads south of Providence were poor, and the gravel gradually gave way to sand for many miles. In some spots the roads were barely passable by bicycle and she had to dismount and push her wheel along. But, when Annie did find a reasonable patch of road and was able to coast down some of the modest hills in southwest Rhode Island, she probably experienced a physical freedom unlike any she had known before—untethered, defying gravity. For a freethinking woman who had been chaffing for years under the burdens of marriage, work, and motherhood, it must have been exhilarating to glide down gentle hills on a bicycle built for one.

Annie crossed the state line into Connecticut at Stonington. At Darien, she picked up the historic Boston Post Road to Greenwich and crossed the Byram River Bridge to Main Street in Port Chester. On July 2, as temperatures climbed into the high eighties, Annie reached New York City.

WHEELING 'ROUND THE WORLD

MISS LONDONDERRY MUST EARN \$5,000 BEFORE BOSTON SEES HER AGAIN

Mlle. Londonderry...arrived in New York early yesterday morning and went to the house of some friends at No. 208 East Broadway.

Mlle. Londonderry set out from Boston last Monday [June 25]...She says she has met the most polite and kindest treatment on the way to this city. Male and female bicyclers escorted her along stretches of her journey, and even the tramps she encountered treated her with the most distinguished consideration.

Mlle. Londonderry was a solicitor of advertisements in Boston. Her maiden name was Annie Cohen and she is married to a man named Kapchowsky [*sic*], who is in business in the city. She has three children. Her husband, she said yesterday, is perfectly willing that she should make the journey, otherwise she would not have undertaken it. It was suggested to mademoiselle that she might carry her children along with her on a bicycle built for four

mademoiselle that she might carry her children along with her on a bicycle built for four, but she answered that she had enough troubles of her own. The bicyclist's features are of the Slav cast, but her face is lit up by beautiful brown eyes.

—*The World* (New York), July 3, 1894

Annie knew the public was enamored with novel around-the-world adventures and the people who made them, and that once she had proven her mettle her efforts would likely be followed with great interest by the press and the public. She was also aware that publicity would be essential to her success.

“I think after I have been on the road for five or six weeks I can make more money,” Annie told the *New York Herald*, “for then the world will see that I am really in earnest about this trip I have carefully planned for the past three months.”

The word *globalization*, which typically describes the process of international economic integration largely wrought by the revolution in information technology, came into vogue late in the twentieth century. But the later decades of the nineteenth century were also a time of globalization, when advances in communications and transportation technology gave people the means to satisfy their curiosity about their world as never before, and made the world a more interconnected place than it had been just a few decades earlier. International travel was no longer available only to princes and aristocrats; it was becoming accessible to the middle class. Annie understood, as did almost every modern American and European, that at the end of the 1800s the world was, figuratively speaking, growing smaller.

The dramatic spread of the railroads connected once remote cities and towns. Great ocean liners shrank the distance between nations. When Krakatoa, the volcano in the strait between Java and Sumatra, exploded with cataclysmic force in August 1883, the electric telegraph and submarine cable carried the news worldwide within hours, long before the volcanic dust finally settled many months later. It was the first truly global news story that people all over the world learned about almost simultaneously. Though not built until the early part of the twentieth century, it had been conceived in the 1870s that the excavation of a canal across Central America, would literally shrink the world for ships. The Avenue of Nations at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 featured representations of life in Algeria, Egypt, Turkey, Java, and Lapland, with an enormous international supporting cast, a veritable human zoo. Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show starring sharpshooter Annie Oakley, a fixture at the exposition, toured Europe in the mid-1890s, giving Europeans a taste and a vision of the American West.

The nineteenth century, which began with Lewis and Clark's expedition in 1803–1805, ended with a series of around-the-world adventures that held the public in thrall. Thomas Stevens became the first man—the first *person*—to pedal around the world, leaving California in 1884 and returning almost three years later, having covered some 13,500 miles by bicycle. Josiah Slocum, originally from Nova Scotia, would become the first person to sail solo around the world, leaving Boston in 1895 on a thirty-seven-foot sloop he made himself, and returning three years and forty-six thousand miles later.

In 1872, Jules Verne captured the spirit of the age in *Around the World in Eighty Days*, a novel in which Verne's hero, the wealthy eccentric, Phileas Fogg, puts his fortune and life at risk in a wager

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