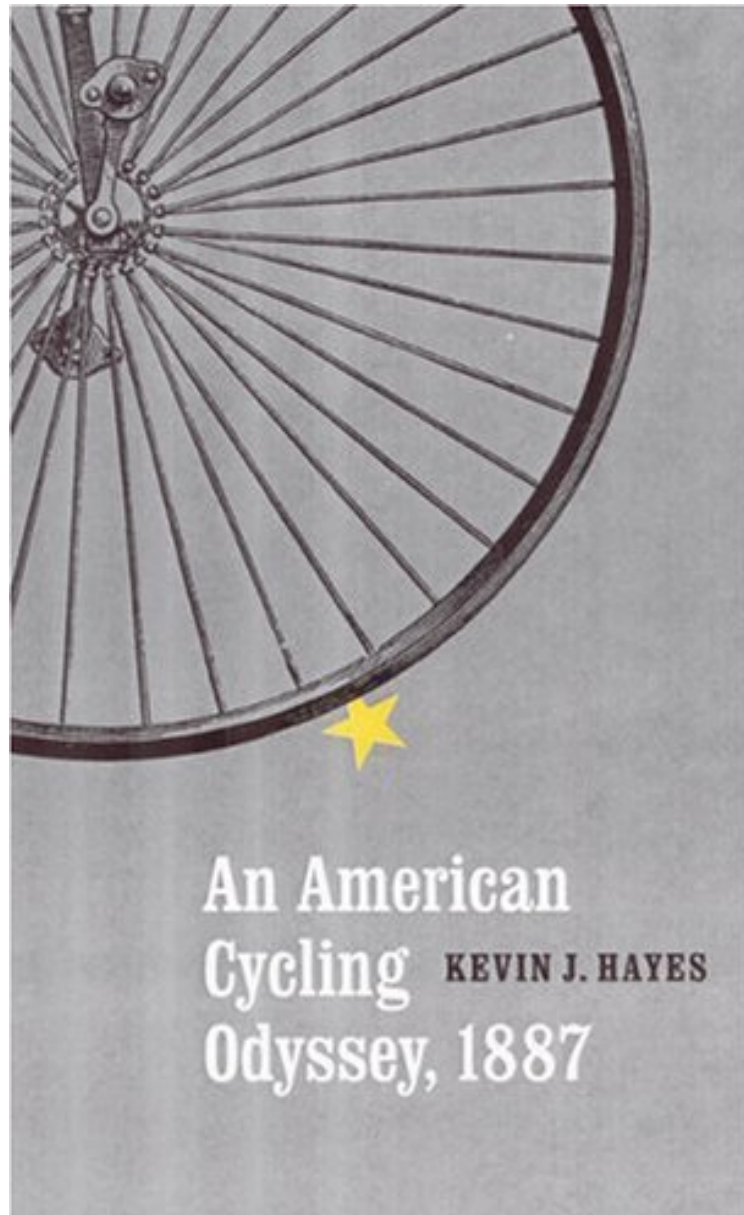


[Download ebook] An American Cycling Odyssey, 1887

An American Cycling Odyssey, 1887

Kevin J. Hayes

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Kevin J. Hayes : An American Cycling Odyssey, 1887 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised An American Cycling Odyssey, 1887:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Allen WuttkeFast service - great bool0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent story George Nellis' adventureBy Clyde PutmanExcellent story George

Nellis' adventure, I was astounded at what could be accomplished on a high wheeler before roads were any good.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Journey through late 19th century America on two wheels.By PaulAmerican history written from the perspective of a cyclist traveling across the country during the late 19th American century. The cyclist / newspaper writer eloquently describes his face to face adventures with humor and comraderie. The author of this book Hayes has amble skills of his own that weaves the story together.must read for anyone that has mounted a bicycle or an interest in American history.

In 1887 a twenty-one-year-old newspaperman named George Nellis (1865-1948) rode a bicycle from Herkimer, New York, to San Francisco in seventy-two days, surpassing the transcontinental bicycle record by several weeks. He averaged fifty miles a day pedalling a fifty-two-inch, high-wheeled Columbia Expert "ordinary" bicycle with a tubular steel frame and hard rubber tires, and he lost twenty-three pounds in the process. He bicycled ever westward through sleepy villages, farmlands, and growing cities of the rapidly changing nation and trekked across uninhabited stretches of prairies and mountains that marked its shrinking frontier. Following his daily ten-hour rides, Nellis sat down and wrote letters about his adventures to his hometown newspapers and a national cycling magazine to finance his cross-country journey.Nellis's epic journey over dirt paths, muddy roads, and occasional railroad ties was plagued by terrible weather, frightening experiences, and odd encounters; yet it was also enriched by breathtaking natural wonders and the generous spirit of many people he met. He nearly drowned in a flash flood, was chased by a furious bull, killed a coyote that accosted him one night, fell victim to mirages in Utah's Great Salt Desert, narrowly missed a tremendous fire that wiped out half of a California town only hours after he had left, and witnessed a horrifying accident on a train track. Nellis also managed to meet the legendary baseball player A. G. Spalding in Chicago, take in professional baseball games in Detroit and Chicago, participate in several bicycle races in Omaha, attend an opera in Cheyenne, Wyoming, enjoy a circus, and eat over two dozen bananas in one sitting in Osceola, Indiana.Drawing on Nellis's letters and media coverage of the trip, Kevin J. Hayes recreates in compelling detail this amazing trip and the many ordinary and extraordinary faces of late-nineteenth-century America that were once revealed to a young bicyclist.

From BooklistEnglish professor Hayes chronicles the record-setting, cross-country bicycle adventure of one George Nellis, who set out from Herkimer, New York, on May 24, 1887, and fetched up in San Francisco 72 days later, weeks earlier than any previous cyclist had accomplished the feat. The author sprinkles the narrative with quotations and dialogue from Nellis' own articles about the trip, and he also supplies a capsule history of cycling in America, including a broader glimpse of American culture in the late-Victorian era, a time when the sight of a young man peddling a bike brought people out of their houses to gawk. This was adventure before there were airplanes or fast automobiles, when cycling was still considered the ultimate in dangerous pursuits. Perhaps this sparkling account will give Nellis, unknown outside cycling circles, some of the lasting recognition he so richly deserves. Recommend it to all readers of true-life adventure and especially to anyone who enjoyed Tim Moore's delightful cycling memoir *French Revolutions* [BKL My 1 02]. David PittCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "This is an enjoyable book about a little known aspect of US history."Choice