

Miles from Nowhere by Barbara Savage (1983)

Her & her husband, Larry, spontaneously decided to ride their bikes around the world & create memories to last a lifetime. They outfitted their touring bikes with heavy rear panniers & a light handlebar bag. His bike weighed in at ___ lb & hers at 70 lb. There were times the wind pushed her 115-lb body all over the road.

They really didn't train for it before they left & their muscle obviously paid for this mistake the 1st week on the road. But their bodies soon acclimated to the demands. They wondered if all this time together without a break from each other would have a toll on their relationship & it did, but they made up & became stronger from it. They often became homesick, frustrated or exhausted, but always pushed on.

On 14May78 they headed north from Santa Barbara, CA along the Pacific coast to Prince Rupert, AK. Then headed east to Jasper, CAN, over the Rockies, around the great lakes, to the east coast. They rode the Appalachian mtns & down to Key West, FL. They flew to Europe, rode in Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Ireland, Scotland, England, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Greece, Egypt, India, Nepal, Thailand, New Zealand, Tahiti & returned home on 19Apr80 after **two years & 22,500 miles.**

They met headwinds in southern CA, SD, Spain, but the worst was in New Zealand. They found the rain as soon as they entered OR. It also rained a lot in Ireland. They met friendly people in OR, WA, MI, Portugal, Wales, but the best were in New Zealand. The most considerate drivers were in WA, France, New Zealand; & the worst were in FL, & India. Mosquitoes were bad near Terrace, CAN, SD & Thailand.

It was easier climbing than facing a headwind. There were times when climbing that she would get off her bike to see if she had a flat that was making her go so slow. Riding in the freezing rain was the worst (even snow was better). She realized she didn't notice her pain as much when she quit thinking about it & enjoyed the surroundings. They enjoyed the redwood groves in northern CA.

They did free camping whenever possible. They would meet up with other cyclists along the way, especially Geoff from New Zealand. They also made life friends with people who just invited them into their homes. The barren surrounding in SD drove them crazy. They arrived in CT in Oct (just in time for fall colors) after 6450 miles. They were able to visit family & friends along the way & take days off when needed.

Inflation in some countries (Ireland) ate up their money quicker than the undeveloped countries. They like north Spain better than south Spain (people & climate). They would get their mail & money at the American Express offices around the world. Their shoes, clothes & bike parts fell apart & had to be replaced (some place they had to carry their own replacement parts). Portugal was beautiful, cheap & friendly, but the cobblestones are rough.

Great Britain had nice public restrooms (with toilet paper) everywhere. 25% grades in Wales were common. They would wear the same dirty clothes for days until they had a shower, then

put on the clean set & wash the dirty ones. Sep '79 they got more shots & malaria pills in London. **Germany & Austria** were beautiful. Italy was warmer.

Egypt, India & Nepal were poor, dirty & unsanitary. Rats, flies & mosquitoes were commonplace. Always boil the water there. They got dysentery & got mobbed. Food was cheap, but not cheap enough for the poor that lived there. She had to ask herself why she was born in wealthy America & these people were born in poverty here? India had colors, but Egypt had black. They would go to the hill retreats in India to get away from all of the people. Some parts of Nepal were beautiful (Shangri-la) & amazing views of Mt. Everest. In Kathmandu there were American restaurants.

Most of the countries they could apply for a visa & get it that day, but Australia had a month wait so they didn't go there. Landing in Bangkok, Thailand was a culture shock (& 90dF with 90% humidity). Thai bandits were cruel & dangerous. Karon, **Thailand** was paradise.

New Zealand had more sheep than people. It was unspoiled natural beauty (more so in the south). The campgrounds had flushing toilets, showers, kitchens, washers & dryers. Rising gas prices were turning more people to cycling for transportation & with high import tariffs the supply & demand was out of balance. A tourist could sell his used bike with enough profit to buy another back home & pay for part of the airfare. The Tasman trail was worth the hike through tropical jungle & sandy coves.

Tahiti was another paradise they stayed at before returning home.

Quotes: "You can do anything you set your mind to."

Note: she died in 1983 in a bike accident