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WHAT DID THOMAS STEVENS EAT?

AS HE RODE AROUND THE WORLD, 1884–1886

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Thomas Stevens is known to most cyclists because he was the first person to ride a bicycle around the world, a feat that he accomplished between 1884 and 1886.¹ To begin to understand the magnitude of Stevens' achievement, we must try to imagine the world as it was at the time of his historic ride. Much of the ground over which Stevens traveled had no roads, and most of the roads that did exist were unpaved, which meant that he had to ride on all types of surfaces and in many places he had to carry his bicycle.

He frequently had difficulty finding food and lodging along the way. Traveling alone on a bicycle imposed some obvious constraints on Stevens: he could only take what he could carry on his bicycle, and, most importantly, he had to sustain himself on what he found each day along the route of his ride.² In this paper we will concentrate on the food that Stevens ate on his epic journey.

THE UNITED STATES

Stevens began his journey in San Francisco, California, on April 22, 1884 with the intention from the outset of riding around the world.³ In 1884, the

trans-continental railroad was the main link between the sparsely settled western part of the United States and the more intensely developed Midwestern and Eastern parts of this young country. Born and raised in England, Stevens had come to the United States when he was 18, and had worked at different jobs in Kansas, the Wyoming territory, and Colorado before he decided to undertake a bicycle ride around the world. As a result of these work experiences, Stevens knew a lot about the situation that he would encounter when riding through the western part of the country. Consequently, he chose to follow the transcontinental railroad over the Sierra Nevada mountains of eastern California, through the deserts of

Nevada and Utah, and the hilly expanse of the Wyoming territories, and the newly homesteaded farmlands of Nebraska. It also provided at 4-to-6-mile intervals some type of human habitation where Stevens could count on obtaining the food and shelter that he required each day.⁴ Sometimes this habitation was in the form of a hotel or inn but, in the very sparsely populated areas of the mountains and the deserts, the habitation took the form of a farmhouse or a railroad maintenance worker's shack.

Stevens does not describe what he ate at the hotels and inns where he stopped, but the meals were probably fairly standard Western fare. In Willard City (Utah), Stevens had a delightful experience: he was met at the door of a hotel situated in the midst of a bountiful orchard of fruit trees by a young Mormon girl who served him "the finest meal I have eaten since leaving California... As I enjoy the wholesome, substantial food, I fall to musing on the mighty chasm that intervenes between the elegant meal now before me and the Melican plan-cae of two weeks ago."⁵ The Mexican plan-cae was "a barely warmed chunk of tenacious dough made with flour and water only, and soaked in warm grease, dressed with thin Chinese catsup that tastes something like Limburger cheese smells" that had been prepared by a Chinese cook at a railroad line house. This was the worst fifty-cent meal Stevens had ever eaten.⁶

Stevens remarked that "Often on this journey I have been surprised at my own powers of endurance." On one occasion he failed to reach his intended destination of Carter, and spent an almost sleepless night, hungry and exhausted, in an abandoned railcar. The following day it took "at least four hours of the hardest work man ever did to lug the machine into Carter station. It is now nearly twenty-four hours since I have had a bite to eat, and a feverish thirst parches my throat, so that I hail with joy the sight of a small, muddy stream, half a mile this side of the station. The water is thick with mud but I take a couple of swallows of it. My abused and long-suffering stomach, however, refuses to be thus imposed upon, and indignantly spurns the proffered draught. It is now but half a mile to the station, and in a short time, plastered with mud from head to foot, I stagger,

rather than walk, up to the small hotel kept by Col. Carter, after which the station is named, shaking, from sheer exhaustion, in every limb as though with the ague; I swallow a cup of tea and some breakfast, and then to bed."⁷

The second part of Stevens's trip through the longer-settled regions of the United States was marked by many comfortable overnight stays with wheelmen. He then spent the winter of 1884/5 in New York City writing articles for Col. Albert A. Pope's *Outing Magazine* in order to earn the support of this magazine for the remainder of his ride around the world. The effort was successful: Col. Pope gave Stevens a new Columbia Expert bicycle, and, in return for regular reports on the ride, *Outing Magazine* sent money to be picked up by Stevens in major cities on his route.⁸

ENGLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, AND AUSTRIA

Stevens made only a few remarks about the food that he ate when traveling through England, France, Germany, and Austria. The comments that he made suggest that he enjoyed local variations of western food including some substantial meals as a guest of cycling enthusiasts. Stevens' first stop in Germany was at a little gasthaus at Pfalzburg where the people appeared to understand and anticipate an Englishman's gastronomic peculiarities, and for the first time since leaving England he was confronted at the supper table with excellent steak and tea.⁹ On his second day in Germany, Stevens wrote, "Reaching Freudenstadt about noon, the mountain-climbing, the bracing air, and the pine fragrance cause me to give the good people at the gasthaus an impressive lesson in the effect of cycling on the human appetite."¹⁰

SLOVENIA, YUGOSLAVIA, HUNGARY, AND BULGARIA

When Stevens passed from Austria into Hungary, conditions began to get more primitive, and he recognized that this was a foretaste of what was to come as he traveled through Asia. On his second

night in Hungary, Stevens arrived at the gasthaus in the village of Nezmely. The only dinner available was black bread and cheap, but delicious white wine. When Stevens asked for milch-brot, butter, käse, or in fact anything acceptable to the English palate, the answer was, "Nicht, nicht, nicht." Stevens then asked, "What do you have to eat?," and the answer was simply "Brot und Wein."¹¹

In Budapest, Stevens was the guest of the Budapest Bicycle Club at a supper under the shade trees in the exhibition grounds. On this occasion, all present drank champagne and gave toasts including one for the success of Stevens' tour.¹² Stevens spoke with disdain of the French *vin ordinaire*, but he had a very favorable impression of Hungarian wine: "A wheelman the fame of whose exploits has preceded him might as well try to wheel through hospitable Hungary without breathing its atmosphere as without drinking its (fine) wine(s)."¹³

Food in wayside inns in the Hungarian countryside was usually limited and unappetizing. Thus, on the way to Sarengrad (June 13), Stevens stopped at a roadside tavern (a mehana) for some refreshments. The only food available was a thick narrow slice of raw fat bacon that was white with salt, coarse black bread, and red wine. Stevens passed



Fig. 15.1. Stevens inspects pots of food being cooked at a khan(inn) in Turkey.

on the bacon and had the black bread and wine for lunch.¹⁴ On another occasion at a mehana on the road to Belgrade, Stevens was spared the unpleasant task of eating the coarse black bread that was offered when another traveler who was carrying his own supply of edible foods offered to share his milch-brot with Stevens. They then obtained some hune-hen fabrica (Hungarian for "cooked chicken") and wine from the mehana and had a decent meal.¹⁵

Just inside Bulgaria, Stevens halted for lunch at "an unlikely looking" mehana and described the situation as follows: "The mehana was near a cluster of mud hovels which I suppose the Bulgarians consider a village, and I am rewarded by the blackest bread, in the composition of which sand plays no inconsiderable part, and the remnants of a chicken killed and stewed at some uncertain period in the past. Of all places invested in the world to disgust a hungry expectant wayfarer, the Bulgarian mehana is the most abominable. Black bread and mastic (a composition of gum-mastic and Boston rum, so I am informed) seem to be about the only things habitually kept in stock, and everything about the place plainly shows the proprietor to be ignorant of the crudest notions of cleanliness."¹⁶ After this lunch Stevens traveled another 30 km. to reach Sofia, thereby covering a total of 110 km for the day which suggests that this unappetizing food had some nutritional value.

TURKEY

Stevens' description of his travels in Turkey, and beyond, contain many references to the foods that he ate, and the circumstances in which they were eaten. For the most part these were "country foods," quite strange to Stevens, but long accepted elements of the local diet. A description of the main foods that he encountered in Turkey tells the story: black bread. This was found at almost all places where food was available, and at the poorest places it was sometimes the only food to be had. An example is Stevens's account of his lunch at a roadside khan on his way to Nalikan: "Three miles down the valley I arrive at a roadside khan, where I obtain some hard bread that requires soaking in

water to make it eatable, and some wormy raisins; and from this choice assortment I attempt to fill the aching void of a ravenous appetite; with what success I leave to the reader's imagination."¹⁷

- Pillau: This dish was encountered often and in all kinds of circumstances. Pillau consists of rice (sometimes replaced by wheat) cooked in large pots with varying amounts of mutton, beef, or chicken, and flavored with herbs when at its best. This was one of Stevens' favorite foods that he first discovered in a small eating house in Geiva. The eating house had only one room that served for cooking, eating, nargileh-smoking, coffee-sipping, and gossiping. He was asked to examine the contents of the several pots on the fire, and to make a choice for his meal. Stevens' comments, "Most of them contain a greasy mixture of chopped meat and tomatoes stewed together, with no visible difference between them save in the sizes of the pieces of meat; but one vessel contains pillau, and of this and some inferior red wine I make my supper."¹⁸
- Yaort (yogurt): This is milk soured with rennet, and it was one of the most common foods encountered in Turkey.
- Ekmek: This is a common flat bread baked paper thin on thin steel griddles, over a fire fueled with a handful of tezek, in rounds up to two feet in diameter. Here is one of Stevens' experiences with this Turkish bread: "I found ekmek quite handy when seated around a communal bowl of yaort with a dozen natives. Instead of taking my turn with the one wooden spoon in common use, I would form pieces of the thin bread into small handleless scoops, and, dipping up the yaort, eat scoop and all. Besides sparing me from using the same greasy spoon in common with a dozen natives, none of them overly squeamish as regards personal cleanliness, this gave me the appreciable advantage of dipping into the dish as often as I choose, instead of waiting for my turn at the wooden spoon."¹⁹

- Cheese and Butter: When these products were available in the roadside khans, there appeared to be little difference between these two products except for their degree of rancidity and odor. On one occasion when Steven was presented with just such a choice: "Peeping into jars containing either cheese or butter, it was easy to determine that the cheese was the most rancid and odiferous. Without further investigation, I procured some bread and a portion of the comparatively mild and inoffensive butter, and I proceed to make the best of circumstances. The old Khan-jee proves himself a thoughtful, considerate landlord, for as I eat he busies himself picking the most glaringly conspicuous hairs out of my butter with the point of his dagger. One is usually somewhat squeamish regarding hirsute butter, but all such little refinements of civilized life as hairless butter or strained milk have to be winked at to a greater or less extent in Asiatic traveling, especially when depending solely on what happens to turn up from one meal to the other."²⁰



Fig. 15.2. Stevens discovers ekmek in a Turkish village near Angora.

Other local foods included cucumbers, eaten raw, plain or with salt; carpoose (watermelon), which was widely available and tasty when ripe; thick black coffee, served in small cups, and widely available with food; tea, sipped through a small block of sugar; vishner, a non-alcoholic extract of Vishner cherries that was diluted with water to make a beverage that Stevens favored; fruits such as grapes, apples, pears, melons and raisins, pasty sweetmeat (Turkish Delight), a confection containing mastic gum; meats, including mutton chops, chicken, beef, small salted fish; and ghee (clarified butter made from water buffalo milk).

There were a few times when no food was available. An example: on August 13 Stevens finds himself at dusk in the following situation: "In view of the nature of the country and the distance to Keshtobek, I have no idea of being able to reach that place to-night, and when I arrive at the ruins of an old mud-built khan, at dusk, I conclude to sup off the memories of my excellent dinner and a piece of bread I have in my pocket, and avail myself of its shelter for the night."²¹



Fig. 15.3. Stevens stops at a stall selling fruit and melons in a village in Turkey, and he devours most of the merchant's stock.

PERSIA

The list of foods that were strange to Stevens, and the situations under which these foods were encountered, continued to grow as Stevens traveled from Turkey through Persia. The following is a list of the main country foods encountered by Stevens in Persia:

Bread of several different types such as ekmek, broad sheets of bread used for plates on which the meal items were placed, flat pancake-like sheets of unleavened bread (gusht bread), and just plain bread.

- ❑ Milk products: goat's milk, butter, cheese, doke (milk soured with rennet), mast (yogurt), and dried curds.
- ❑ Fruits and nuts: peaches (stewed or dried), apricots, grapes, figs, pomegranates, melons, salted melon seeds, and almonds.
- ❑ Eggs (boiled, scrambled, or raw). In the western part of Persia, Stevens found that eggs were the single most available food.
- ❑ Vegetables: very few vegetables are mentioned by Stevens, but he does mention onions and tomatoes a few times.
- ❑ Meats: duck (roasted), chicken (roasted, boiled, or in pillau), goat (wild or shepherded), mutton (boiled or roasted; in kabobs or in pillau), a pheasant is mentioned once.
- ❑ Prepared dishes: *pillau* (rice, vegetables and or meat, and herbs when best), *mast* (Gum Arabic and varying other ingredients such as water, sugar, and herbs), sweetmeats ("Turkish Delight," made of Gum Arabic, water, and sugar, and other candies), and sheerah (a thin molasses made from wine).
- ❑ Beverages: tea (made in samovars and served in small cups), wine, and *arrack* (an alcoholic beverage made by fermenting the sap of palm tree flowers).

When traveling through Persia, Stevens encountered the widest variety of eating experiences. At times he was entertained lavishly by the local officials, at other times he had to eat what was

available at the village caravanserais where he stayed, and in some remote places he had to share the simple meals in the camps of nomadic tribes that he encountered. For instance, Stevens arrived in Meshed on March 30, 1885, and stayed with a Mr. Gray who was in charge of the telegraphic office in this town. Soon after his arrival, the *sarteip* (chief) arrived with a train of servants bearing dishes of *kabobs*, herb-seasoned *pillau*, and various other strange, savory dishes which, Mr. Gray explained, were considered great delicacies among upper-class Persians and were intended as a great compliment to Stevens.²²

Stevens also had many very primitive eating experiences as he traveled through the Persian countryside. For instance, on April 19, 1885, he was crossing the “Dasht-i-na-oomid” (Desert of Despair) accompanied by three escorts provided two days earlier by the Ameer of Berjand, when one of his escorts procured a kid (a young goat) and four pounds of cold goat meat from a wandering group of Eliautes. At midday they ate the cold goat meat with some bread that they were carrying from the previous night’s camp, and then they traveled on to find a camp of four Eliautes where they arrange to stay for the night. An iron kettle was borrowed to cook the kid in, the Eliautes contributed bowls of *mast* and *doke*, and with this the assembled group made a hearty meal.²³

AFGHANISTAN

Stevens and his three escorts crossed from Persia into Afghanistan knowing that they did not have permission to enter this country. In the dusk of the evening, the foursome made camp beside the trail, and for food they ate the bread and the remains of the cold kid from the night before. The first full day in Afghanistan brought Stevens and his entourage to the camp of a group of nomadic Eimucks. Supper in this camp consisted of flat pancake-like sheets of unleavened bread, boiled goat, broth from the boiled goat, *mast*, and *doke*. Liberal portions of all these items were placed in front of Stevens while all the others in the camp gathered around communal pots of these dishes from which they helped themselves. Stevens got a spoon to use in

eating the broth, while the Eimucks ate their broth by soaking it up with bread.²⁴

Stevens traveled six days in Afghanistan to get to the town of Furrah where he was arrested. Besides having no permits, he was suspected of being a Russian spy. After being escorted by soldiers to Herat, he was held under house arrest. After ten days, Stevens was told that he was to be escorted back to Persia because the government could not guarantee his safety when passing through the countryside.²⁵ During the 17 days under arrest, Stevens enjoyed sweetmeats and tea, and his meals included of *kabobs*, fried eggs, delicious *pillau*, pomegranate jam, good butter, bowls of sherbet, dishes of nuts and salted melon seeds, raisins, pomegranates, dates, and an occasional bottle of Shiraz wine. When traveling under the escort of soldiers, meals were taken in the camps of nomads: the ample meals consisted of bread, fresh goat’s milk, little hard balls of sun-dried *mast*, and bowls of acidulous *doke* that was nutritious and thirst-quenching. Stevens recorded that the one different food found in Afghanistan was fried eggs sprinkled with sugar.

INDIA

Stevens rode from the Afghanistan border through Persia to Baku on the Caspian Sea where he took steamers and trains to reach Karachi in India. During the two months that this took, Stevens was well fed and he slept in a proper bed each night. He landed in Karachi in late July 1886 and traveled by train to Lahore in Kashmir to resume his bicycle ride. Stevens exchanged his beloved US Army sun helmet for a hat that was thicker (insulation) and broader (shade), and, on August 1, 1886, Stevens begins his ride again traveling on India’s Grand Trunk Road (the finest road in the world according to Stevens).²⁶

Accommodations were relatively easy to find in India. Stevens stayed in Army barracks, or in the homes of British people living in the countryside when he was invited, and he stayed in “*dak bungalows*” or hotels run by native Indians.

Food was plentiful in India, and was generally easy to procure, although difficulties arose in small villages populated by fanatical Hindus who did not

want to be contaminated by serving a non-believer. Drinking glasses and diner plates had to be broken and discarded if used by an infidel so his food was often served to him on large leaves that could be easily disposed of, and water was drunk by cupping his hands in such a way that water would run from the source directly into the mouth without the need for a cup.²⁷

Stevens mentions the following specific foods in his account of his travels through India:

- Chowel (rice) eaten in many forms, especially plain or curried
- Chicken
- Land crabs and mussels
- Beans and lentils (dhal, pulse, etc.)
- Chupatties (an unleavened bread)
- Fruit (mangos, bananas, custard apples, golden pomolos, etc.)
- Dood—goat’s milk and buffalo’s milk
- Arrak (palm wine)
- Goodakoo (a preparation of tobacco, rose leaves, jaggeree, bananas, opium, and cardamom seed, used for smoking in a hookah).

Foreign food products available in some places where the British influence was strong included Bass ale, champagne, American cheese, baker’s bread, California Bartlett pears, and Dublin ginger

ale. At the end of his ride through India Stevens stated that, except for the heat, this was the highpoint of his trip. Riding with, and being honored by, wheelmen in Calcutta certainly contributed to the good feelings that Stevens had about this part of his ride around the world.

CHINA

Stevens decided that his chances of crossing by land from India to China on a bicycle were a near impossibility so he took a steamer from Calcutta (where he finished his ride across India) to Canton in China where he resumed his ride. He obtained his visa to travel in China from the authorities in Canton on October 12, 1886. The Opium Wars had only recently been concluded, and the Chinese people were very angry about the disgraceful terms that the English had imposed on them which made travel in China by *fankwae* (foreigners) very dangerous. In spite of dire warnings of danger, Stevens sets off immediately. His troubles started very soon after leaving Canton.

Finding his way through the Chinese countryside was difficult because there were very few roads (canals were used for traveling long distances), and no reliable map could be obtained. As a result, Stevens made slow progress. Accommodations for travelers were in hittims (inns) that were generally filthy places offering only the crudest of accommodations. The guests at these places generally smoked heavily, using

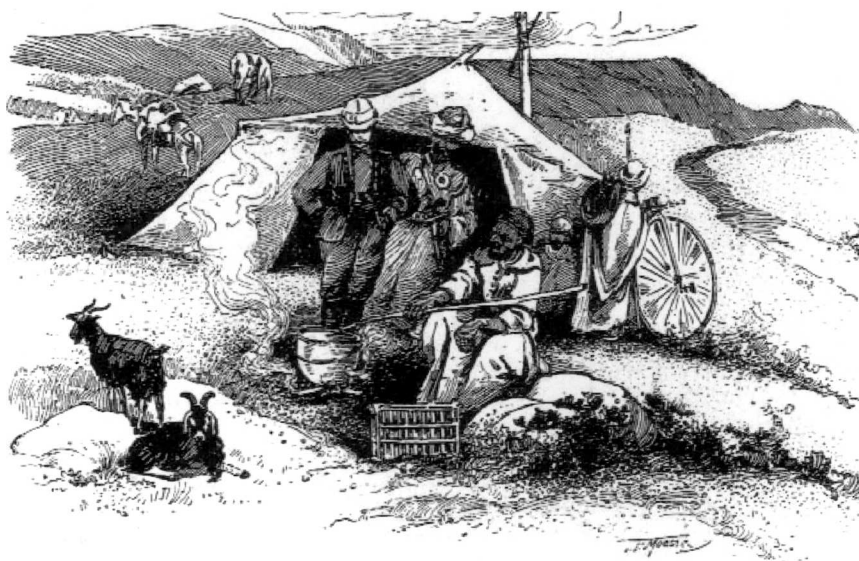


Fig. 15.4. Stevens and his accompanying escort provided by the Ameer of Berjand stop at an Eliaute camp near the border of Afghanistan and Persia, where they cook a freshly killed goat acquired earlier from a group of nomads. The Eliuates contribute rice and condiments, and the group share a sumptuous meal.

both tobacco and opium. Pigs were often kept in rooms adjacent those where people were lodged, and occasionally they were kept in the same room. The hostility of the people to *fankwae* (noted earlier) was great, and Stevens was angrily attacked by mobs when he entered most villages. The situation got worse as he traveled further into the country, and by the time he had progressed to Ki-ngan-foo (23 days from Canton), the mob that formed as he entered the city was clearly intent on stoning Stevens to death. Stevens was barely saved by the authorities who held the mob at bay and spirited Stevens away into the shelter of the official cantonment. At this point, Stevens was taken into custody, and sent by boat down the river to Kui-kiang, and then to Shanghai by steamer.

It was often difficult for Stevens to get food in China because either people could not understand what he wanted, or people were afraid of him since he was a *fankwae*. The foods that Stevens does mention in the record of his trip include rice, fish (fresh and boiled trout), ginger, meat and fowl (pork, dried liver, kittens, chicken, duck), sweetened rice gruel, peanuts, vegetables (turnips, onions, yams, pickled ginger, chopped cayenne peppers), sugar, peanuts (in many forms), mandarin oranges, sweets, and “tid-bits.” As for drinks, tea is mentioned many times. This drink is not only healthy, but it is a safe drink because the water is boiled before it is used to make the tea beverage.

One story illustrates the exotic nature of Stevens’ travels in China in 1886. On November 1, 1886, Stevens arrived at nightfall at a little mountain village. He stopped at the village hittim, and recorded the following interesting account of his meal at this place:

It is the first day’s progress in China with which I have been really satisfied (50 miles covered). Nevertheless, it has been a toilsome day, taken altogether, and when nothing but tea and rice comforts me at supper the reward seems so wretchedly inadequate that I rise in rebellion at once. Neither eggs, fish, nor meat are to be obtained the good woman at the little hittim explains in a high key; nothing but “ch’ung-ch’a” and “mai.” Seeing my sorrowful visage, she suddenly brightens up, motions me to be seated, and leaves the house. Presently the good dame returns with a smile of triumph on her face and an object in her hand that, from casual observation, might be the hind quarters of a rabbit. Bringing it to me in the most matter of fact manner, she holds it near my face and, pointing to it with the air of a cateress proudly conscious of having secured something that she knows will be unusually acceptable to her guest, she explains “me-aow, me-aow!” I conclude to draw the line at kitten and sup this night off of rice and tea.”²⁸

Riding into Kui-kung with the official escort sent to ensure his safe exit from the interior, Stevens met two Englishmen who greeted him

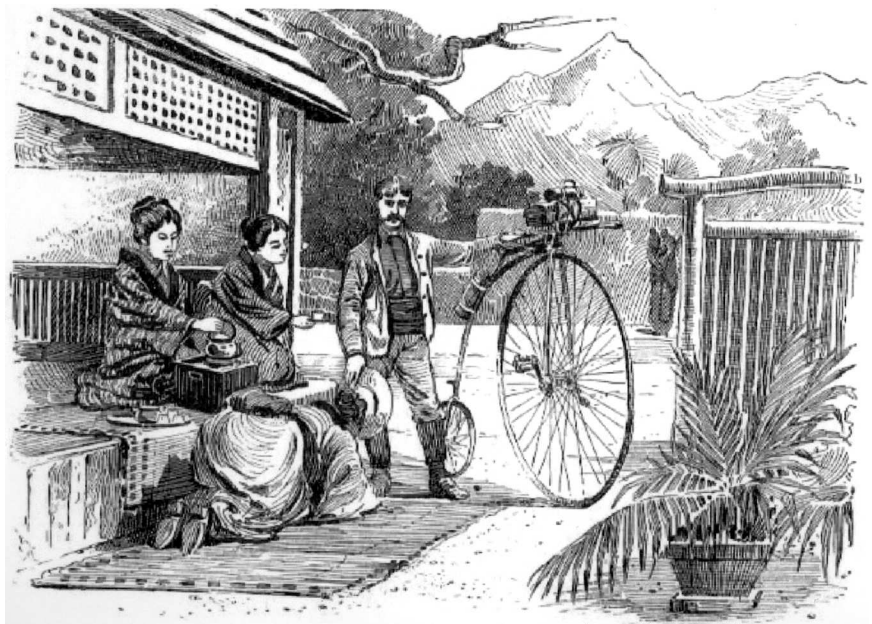


Fig. 15.5. Stevens stops for the night at a village yadoya (inn) in Japan.

warmly and told him that no one expected to see him return from the interior alive. The Englishmen remarked that he looked haggard and fagged out. Upon surveying himself in a mirror, Stevens understood why this remark was made: His hair was long, his face unshaven for five weeks, he was thin and gaunt-looking from daily hunger, worry, and hard dues. But he reflected that he looked worse than he felt, and with some rest and wholesome fare he knew that he would be as fit as ever. The recovery process began soon after arriving in Kui-Kang when Stevens met with Mr. Everard, the British consul, and was given an appetizing lunch of cold duck, cheese, and Bass ale. This was followed by more good meals on the sampans to Shanghai where a new outfit of clothes was purchased and money matters were taken care of.²⁹

JAPAN

Stevens arrived in Shanghai on October 18, 1886, and left 24 hours later for Nagasaki on the west coast of Japan. Overall, Stevens's experiences in Japan were very pleasant. The people were very friendly and helpful, clean accommodations were readily available in towns and villages, wholesome, tasty food was abundant, and the roads were well kept.

The town of Omura was the end of his first day of riding in Japan. He found accommodation at a charming yadoya (Japanese inn). He was assigned a room upstairs, and settled in with the customary service of tea, sweets, little boxed brazier of live charcoal, spittoon, etc. Then the proprietor, his wife and daughter, and all the help came up and prostrated themselves after the most approved fashion. Later, Stevens was given a bountiful supper of several fishy dishes and rice.³⁰

Stevens stayed in a yadoyain Totsuka on November December 16. This was one day's journey from Yokohama, and he found that the proprietors of this inn had knowledge of the foreigner's requirements by cooking a beefsteak with onions, and charging an exorbitant price for the hospitality.³¹ On December 17, 1886, Stevens dismounted in front of the Club Hotel in Yokohama, ending his ride around the world. Soon afterwards he boarded

the steamer "City of Peking," and 17 days later was back in San Francisco, California.³²

WHAT WERE THOMAS STEVENS' FOOD REQUIREMENTS FOR HIS RIDE AROUND THE WORLD?

Stevens was about five feet four inches tall, and he probably weighed about 130 pounds. He averaged about 40 miles of travel per day (i.e., a combination of cycling and trundling) which, because of the poor road conditions, may have been equivalent to about 80 miles per day under modern conditions. His food requirements would have varied depending on the difficulty of the day's journey, but modern science tells us that a man of Stevens' build expending energy equivalent to running a marathon or more every day of his journey would require the intake of food containing as much as 2500 calories of energy each day to sustain his health and body weight.³³

Normally, when one consumes this amount of food from a variety of sources, the vitamins and minerals needed to maintain a healthy body are acquired without any special effort. In this context, it is important to note that (a) Stevens had very little choice about what he had to eat when traveling through the less developed parts of the world, but (b) he did eat whatever was available. The astonishing healthiness of Stevens throughout the three

Table 1: Key factors involved in Thomas Stevens' health and physical powers

- Training, conditioning, and preparation
- Eating enough of a variety of foodstuffs:
 - carbohydrates
 - fats
 - proteins
 - vitamins, minerals, and electrolytes
- No excessive alcohol or tobacco, no opium, etc.
- Low anxiety and positive mental attitude
- A strong body and good health
- Lots of luck.

years of his ride around the world attests to the fact that he had enough food from a variety of food-stuffs to fulfill all his nutritional requirements. Also, he was fortunate to have periods of rest between periods of strenuous traveling during which his body could replenish itself. It also suggests that the foods he consumed along the Asian sections of his journey, despite seeming exotic, provided the necessary calories, minerals, vitamins and electrolytes needed by a person expending energy equivalent to an athlete in competition.

SUMMARY

Thomas Stevens' ride around the world on a bicycle 1884–1886 was a tremendous accomplishment. Many factors contributed to the successful outcome of this momentous, arduous, and dangerous feat, but food was certainly one of the most important elements. The variety of foods encountered, Stevens' willingness to eat what he found to be available along the way, and his strong constitution that was resistant to most diseases (including food poisoning) were all key factors in the happy outcome to this story.

ENDNOTES

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| <p>1 Thomas Stevens, <i>Around the World on a Bicycle, Vol. I</i> (New York: Scribner's, 1887). Thomas Stevens, <i>Around the World on a Bicycle, Vol. II</i> (New York: Scribner's, 1888).</p> <p>2 Gary W. Sanderson, "Across America: Comparison of a Ride Across America on Ordinary Bicycles in 2004 with the First Bicycle Ride Across America by Thomas Stevens in 1884," <i>Cycle History 16: Proceedings of the 16th International Cycling History Conference</i>, edited by Andrew Ritchie (San Francisco: Van der Plas Publications, 2006), 160–175; Gary W. Sanderson, "The Items Thomas Stevens carried on his ride around the world in 1884–1886," <i>The Wheelmen Magazine</i>, 63 (2003), 2–9.</p> <p>3 Stevens, 1887, 3.</p> <p>4 <i>Croft's New Overland Tourist and Pacific Coast Guide</i> (Omaha: Overland Publ. Co., 1880).</p> <p>5 Stevens, 1887, 52–53.</p> <p>6 Stevens, 1887, 30–31.</p> <p>7 Thomas Stevens, "Bicycling in the Far West," <i>Outing and the Wheelman</i>, 4 (1884), 463–4, and in the combined reprint (2001) of Thomas Stevens' account of his ride around the world (note 1) by Stackpole Books in Mechanicsburg, PA, on pages xix–xxi.</p> <p>8 Karl Kron, <i>Ten Thousand Miles on a Bicycle</i> (self-published, 1888), 473–484.</p> <p>9 Stevens, 1887, 121.</p> <p>10 Stevens, 1887, 126.</p> <p>11 Stevens, 1887, 146.</p> <p>12 Stevens, 1887, 148.</p> | <p>13 Stevens, 1887, 151.</p> <p>14 Stevens, 1887, 156.</p> <p>15 Stevens, 1887, 176.</p> <p>16 Stevens, 1887, 178.</p> <p>17 Stevens, 1887, 299.</p> <p>18 Stevens, 1887, 272.</p> <p>19 Stevens, 1887, 333.</p> <p>20 Stevens, 1887, 402–3.</p> <p>21 Stevens, 1887, 298.</p> <p>22 Stevens, 1888, 95–97.</p> <p>23 Stevens, 1888, 161.</p> <p>24 Stevens, 1888, 172–174.</p> <p>25 Stevens, 1888, 228–229.</p> <p>26 Stevens, 1888, 284.</p> <p>27 Stevens, 1888, 291.</p> <p>28 Stevens, 1888, 409–410.</p> <p>29 Stevens, 1888, 428–431.</p> <p>30 Stevens, 1888, 435–436, 452.</p> <p>31 Stevens, 1888, 471.</p> <p>32 Stevens, 1888, 472.</p> <p>33 Melvin H. Williams, <i>Nutrition for Fitness and Sport</i> (Madison, Wisconsin: Brown & Benchmark, 1995, 4th edition).</p> |
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