

“An Autobiography between the Lines”: Karl Kron’s *Ten Thousand Miles on a Bicycle*

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T*en Thousand Miles on a Bicycle* is surely one of the strangest books in the annals of cycling literature. When it appeared in 1887; three years later and 500 pages longer than originally planned; many readers and reviewers were puzzled, unsure of what to make of it or its author, one Karl Kron, the pen name of Yale graduate Lyman Hotchkiss Bagg, a journalist, librarian, and author of *Four Years at Yale* (1871), born in West Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1846.ⁱ Kron, as the title of his book suggests, was an avid cycle-traveler, one of the first to travel extensively by bicycle in North America. In the late 1870s and early 1880s, he rambled awheel all over the northeastern United States and Great Lakes region, venturing as far west as Ohio and Kentucky, up into parts of Canada, and even visiting Bermuda. Kron’s book not only describes these many adventures, it provides an exhaustive, encyclopedic survey of early cycling culture, unlike any other cycling book I can think of. Some of Kron’s original readers found it tedious and frustrating; others saw it as the curious masterpiece of an “eccentric genius.”ⁱⁱ

The first thing readers notice about the book is its sheer size: 675,000 words, 900 pages of small type. It’s so large that one reviewer remarked, “If carried with you on a bicycle, it would be impossible to take anything else.”ⁱⁱⁱ Not only is it an imposing object to pick up (the tome weighs in at about two pounds), it’s literally hard to read—its tiny type can be taxing on the eyes. Upon the book’s publication, the reviewer for the *Irish Cyclist & Athlete* announced: “This work of years has at last assumed enormous dimensions of closely printed matter.”^{iv} Another critic from Pittsburgh’s Bookmart admitted with some exasperation, “Of course, I haven’t read a fortieth part of it. Nobody ever will or can.”

The second striking feature is an un-

usual proportion of text dedicated to tables of contents, indexes, and addenda, and that the indexes (all 76 pages of them, as Kron proudly points out), are placed at the beginning of the book rather than at the end, where we might expect to see them.^v Kron foregrounds this aspect of the book in a way that may strike readers as odd, as if he is emphasizing the significance of the indexes over the actual text of the rest of the book.

The book has no illustrations either, which is unusual for a cycling book in the 1880s. This was the great age of illustration, when it was common for books and magazine articles to feature accompanying drawings or early photographs. Almost all the other cycling books from this period that I can think of (texts by, for instance, the Pennells, Thomas Stevens, George Thayer) feature illustrations. But Kron’s does not—at least not the way we might expect. The book does contain two illustrations at the very beginning, in the book’s front matter, but they have nothing to do with cycling: one is a portrait of Kron’s bulldog, Curl, across from the title page. (The book is, in fact, dedicated to the memory of his “bull dorg,” as Kron liked to call him.) The other is a small image on the Subscribers’ Autograph page of the New York University Building on Washington Square in Manhattan where Kron lived while he was writing the book.

The two curious illustrations lead to the next curious feature of the book: in the middle of the volume, there are two long chapters with almost no connection to cycling. One is a sweet tribute to his aforementioned deceased dog and the other an homage to his favorite building. Kron says in a footnote that he’s including the first of these, if not the second, as a kind of concession to the “general reader,” who may find the cycling focus of the rest of the book arcane.^{vi} Contemporary reviewers generally praised the Curl chapter, in particular, though most noted

its out-of-placeness.

The contrast between these two chapters and the rest of the book is merely the most extreme example of its genre-defying, hodge-podge of styles. Some chapters, especially the early ones, are conventional essays about the early cycling experience—Kron explaining the appeal of cycling, what clothes are appropriate to wear, his personal evolution as a cyclist, the viability of winter cycling, and his general philosophy of cycling and cycle touring. These are probably the most accessible parts of the book.

Kron mixes in a handful of poems, especially in the early parts, often placed between long chapters, in the style of magazines of the day. Some of these are imitations or parodies of other poets’ works (for instance, Thomas Love Peacock and George Arnold) while others are original pieces by Kron, such as his prefatory poem, “May Fourth, 1887.” Elsewhere in the book, Kron occasionally includes excerpts of classic poetry by writers such as Robert Herrick and Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

A large portion of the book, however, consists of itineraries and meticulously detailed road reports of Kron’s many cycling trips. These chapters tend to be rather listy and dry, providing specific distances traveled, road surfaces encountered, and bits of advice for route finding. Here’s a typical example from the chapter “Around New York,” where Kron is recounting an 1879 run to White Plains:

I found a discouraging amount of sand alongside the park [Jerome Park], on the single occasion, in August, when I ventured beyond its lower border. Between there and Central Bridge, a distance of about three-and-a-half miles, the avenue may be ridden without dismount, in both directions; though there are two or three short grades whose ascent is apt to be made difficult by sand-ruts, while the general looseness of the surface, and the general presence of many drivers of fast horses, combine to render the course rather unattractive for bicycling.^{vii}

This kind of detail certainly could have had practical value for the prospective cyclist in the 1880s (though some of it may well have been out of date by 1887), and it is helpful to historians interested in nineteenth-century road conditions, but, in general, it makes for tedious reading.

The middle of the book features three much more personal chapters, an autobi-

ographical one called "Boneshaker Days," about his recollections of the velocipede craze of 1869, and the personal ones about his dog and building. These are the most conventionally autobiographical parts of the book, full of anecdotes and emotion, and the contrast with the arid itineraries is striking. Here, for instance, is Kron's poignant account of Curl's demise, which interestingly, occurred just before Kron's first encounter with a velocipede in 1869:

I think that his [Curl's] resentment of the notion of my pushing about a velocipede or bicycle . . . was so extreme that he decided he would not live to witness the shameful sight. So, alone in the cold and darkness of a winter's midnight, he dragged his tottering limbs out from his snugly sheltered den, and, . . . dropped down dead in the snow.^{viii}

The second half of the book is largely taken up with second-hand accounts of routes, statistics, and "records" of other cyclists from the United States and around the world. The main mode here is summary. Kron reports on and quotes from his extensive correspondence with other cyclists, recounting their riding accomplishments. These chapters are heavy on numbers (dates, miles traveled) and names (of riders and places) but some of Kron's running commentary on these reports is entertaining. For example, he says Charles E. Pratt only replied to his request for Pratt's "statement of fact" about his cycling life once Kron threatened to "destroy him with dynamite unless he forthwith contributed something for this chapter."^{ix} When summarizing the globe-circling cycling adventures of Thomas Stevens, Kron cheekily sees them "having a sort of kinship with my own desperate struggle to push this book around the world."^x

The final 150 pages of the book contain a miscellany of material: chapters exploring logistical, political, and institutional issues, such as "The Transportation Tax" and "The Hotel Question;" opinionated overviews of groups such as the League of American Wheelmen and the England-based Cyclists' Touring Club; and a long bibliographic chapter, "Literature of the Wheel," in which Kron provides a kind of annotated inventory of almost all known cycling literature, both books and periodicals, up to 1887. The final non-poetry chapter is "This Book of Mine, and the Next," a lengthy blow-by-blow account of how *Ten Thousand Miles on a Bicycle* came to be published—the various

negotiations with prospective publishers (including Colonel Albert Pope), and the subscription method Kron ended up using, whereby he sought out 3000 subscribers, asking each to pay \$1 in advance (and another on the book's arrival)—and the scheme for his second volume, to be titled *My Second Ten Thousand*, which never materialized.

Many of Kron's contemporary reviewers were, not surprisingly, confused. Some praised the book's thoroughness and originality. One reviewer called it "the first classic of cycling literature . . . [it] should be owned by every wheelman" (*Wheeling*, London). *Australian Cycling News* said it was a "monument of cycling." *The Wheelman's Gazette* (Indianapolis) called Kron's massive tome "the first great work on the subject of cycling, becoming to all wheelmen that relation that Isaac Walton's *The Complete Angler* bears to fishing."

But almost as many found it baffling or even downright infuriating. *The Army & Navy Journal* called it "a curious hodgepodge of a volume." *The Philadelphia Press* dismissed it as the "most ridiculous book of the season." *Bicycling News*, London, laughed it off as "an egotistical non-entity, a gigantic sham." And *The Boston Herald* scoffed that it was "one of the most worthless volumes ever written: the work of an idiot, not a sane man."

This radical split in critical reaction was, to some degree, the result of uncertainty about how to read the book. In the opening paragraph of the preface, Kron claims that his book is "designed less for reading than for reference." He says its model is that of a "gazetteer, a dictionary, a cyclopaedia, a statistical guide" where one can seek out specific "special knowledge," rather than the kind of book one might pick up and read cover to cover.^{xi} But the book is also, as Kron says a few pages later, "a sort of autobiography," in that it also tells some of the story of his life, touching occasionally on "its trials and troubles" as well as his "amusing experience[s]."^{xii} As a result, the book is a curious hybrid of reference guide and autobiography, and the tension between these genres tended to create problems for readers unused to such blurring of generic lines.

My initial experience of trying to read Kron's book is probably typical. I breezed through the first seven chapters or so, but then, when I hit the road-report chapters, quickly lost interest, found myself

skimming and skipping ahead. Eventually I gave up. I missed the narrative pull and personal elements of the early chapters, and found myself wanting to hear less about road conditions and more about Kron himself. We get glimpses and flashes of his personality early on (for instance, his predilection for cold baths; his obsession with cyclometers; his almost pathological hatred of cyclist "scorchers" and back-trackers).^{xiii} But these telling autobiographical tidbits disappear for long stretches before they re-appear mid-volume. Feeling exasperated, I put the book back on the shelf.

But as frustrating as it was at times reading the book, I found myself drawn back to it, intrigued by the presence of Kron. As a literature scholar, I sensed something quite sophisticated going on in the book in a literary sense. (This despite Kron's insistence that he has no time for "literary men" and that his goal was clarity rather than "verbal attractiveness," as he puts it.^{xiv} In fact, he warns in the "Preface" that he has made no effort whatsoever to make his touring reports "readable."^{xv} Many readers would say Kron succeeded on that front.) The way Kron's character is gradually revealed over many chapters reminded me of the kind of incremental revelations of a first-person narrator in a long, sprawling novel, such as, say, Laurence Sterne's unwieldy *Tristram Shandy*. And, as in that strange work of fiction, the portrait of the narrator that emerges is eccentric, complicated, and compelling, full of contradictions, frustrations, surprises, and humour.

I think Kron's book has been misunderstood, and somewhat unfairly treated by the majority of both his contemporary critics and later cycling historians. It's generally been seen as an oddity, a monstrous anomaly that contains some useful data in its highly subjective inventory of 1880s cycling culture (about how far and where cyclists rode in the high-wheel era, what they thought of road surfaces, what kind of cyclometers they liked to use, etc.), but that overall is just weird, dry, boring, and baffling, overburdened with lists and statistics. I'd like to propose a kind of re-evaluation.

Glen Norcliffe's assessment in *The Ride to Modernity* is representative of how cycling history has tended to view Kron's book. He describes *Ten Thousand Miles on a Bicycle* as "possibly the most boring book ever published."^{xvi} However, he

admits that despite the book's "excruciating" details, it is "a priceless document" because of the way it provides some of the clearest, most detailed accounts of roads and road conditions in North America in the 1880s.^{xvii} Norcliffe goes on to praise Kron's detailed account of Canadian roads in 1883 (159-63), but Norcliffe's take on Kron's book is typical of how most cycling historians have treated it: as having purely practical value, with no artistic merit.

Robert J. McCullough, on the other hand, has recently offered a different view of the significance of Kron's book in cycling history. He argues that the few historians who have seriously considered Kron's book have missed its other important contributions, and failed to appreciate "the substantive value of his narratives."^{xviii} I agree with McCullough, though I have a different focus. McCullough, a landscape historian, is interested in Kron's descriptions of American landscapes and his general awareness of surroundings, both of which have been ignored. I, meanwhile, am intrigued by how the literary aspects of Kron's book have been overlooked.

I would argue that *Ten Thousand Miles on a Bicycle* is more literary than it's generally been given credit for, though not necessarily in conventional ways. It is both literary and anti-literary at the same time, a hybrid of narrative and reference, manifesto and minutiae impossible to categorize simply, to pin down in any one particular genre.^{xix} Yes, long sections are dry and even boring, but to my eye, there's something artful and post-modern about Kron's use of what we'd today call pastiche (a mish-mash of genres) and paradox (in the conflicted persona of Karl Kron). The book is not an easy read, to be sure, but neither is Joyce's *Ulysses* or Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*.

Ten Thousand Miles on a Bicycle is surprisingly personal in places and this literary aspect of the book most interests me. As Kron tells us in the preface, the book is, in addition to being a "gazetteer," also "a sort of autobiography," if not obviously, then certainly "between the lines."^{xx} I'm interested in this self-fashioning aspect of the book, and how it's possible to trace, amidst the road reports, distance logs, and endless indices, a fascinating self-portrait of a solitary, eccentric, obsessive, strong-minded, funny, and passionate cycling enthusiast. Although *Ten Thousand*

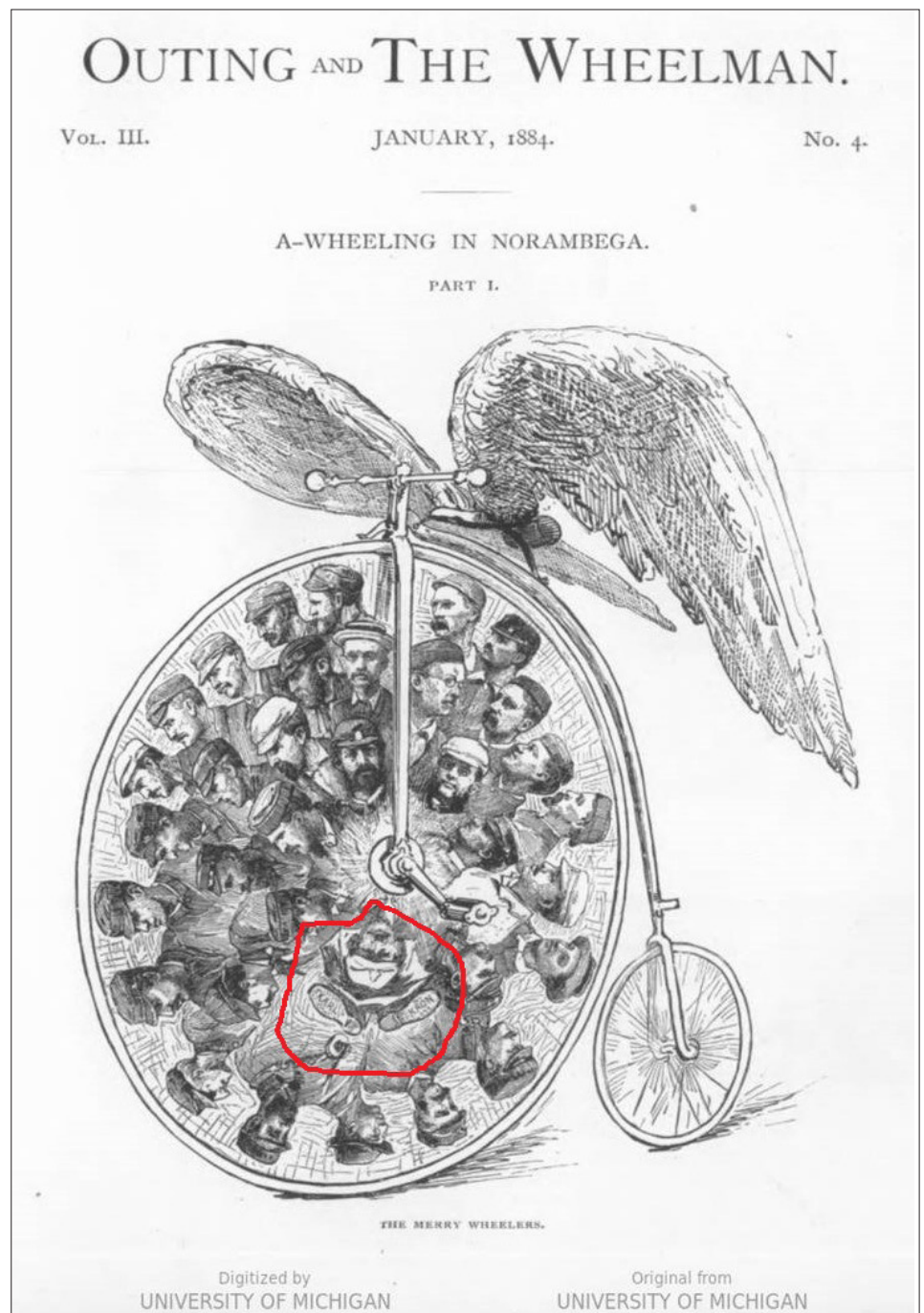


Figure 1: The title page from J.S. Phillips's article in *Outing and The Wheelman* from January/February 1884 about a cycling trip in Maine that Karl Kron took part in. The group-photo illustrated features the bottom of Kron's feet instead of his head. These feet are shown here encircled in red (not on the original magazine cover) just below the head (of another person) shown below the front wheel axle.

Miles on a Bicycle is "a book of American roads,"^{xxi} it is also a book about a fascinating and most unusual American man.

A portrait of Kron slowly emerges over the course of the book, revealed directly through what he tells us about himself and indirectly through the way he writes about cycling. I will focus on three specific features of Kron's personality that come to define his personality, with the aim of illustrating the eccentric and

complex nature of his persona, one worth getting to know.

First, Kron is a loner, a solitary figure by choice, who prefers to live alone (he never married) and to cycle by himself (he never joined any cycling organization, preferring to remain "unattached," as one observer put it).^{xxii} This was unusual in an age of cycling clubs, when cycling was seen by many as a highly social activity. But Kron explains several times that

he's always preferred "solitary" athletic pastimes, that cycle touring is for him the perfect solitary activity, and that, as Kron puts it in verse, "The lonely tour hath more to please."^{xxiii} He was notoriously shy, according to Emil Rosenblatt, and disliked having his likeness taken. Still, it's remarkable that for all his travelling in an age of prolific illustration and photography, there are few surviving images of him on or off a bicycle.^{xxiv}

Kron cultivated the image of outsider. A good example of this can be seen in an image that he talks about in the chapter "In the Down-East Fogs" but does not include one that accompanied a piece by J.S. Phillips in *The Wheelman's* January/February issue of 1884.

Phillips's article describes a large group cycling trip through Maine, one that Kron, uncharacteristically, took part in. When an English illustrator, who travelled in a carriage behind the group of 36 cyclists, was composing a "group photo," so-to-speak, Kron convinced him to insert an image of the soles of Kron's shoes (with his name inscribed on the soles) instead of his face.^{xxv} See **Figures 1 and 2**. As this image suggests, Kron liked to position himself as different, as his own idiosyncratic man, one who stands apart from the crowd—even when he's in the middle of it.

Not surprisingly, Kron seems more comfortable around things than people. He claims to love the isolation of his "Castle Solitude" on Washington Square because of the way it allows him to minimize human interaction.^{xxvi} He much prefers the company of books, bicycles, and dogs (or, at least, his dog), to members of his own species. Two of the most memorable chapters in the book, "Columbia, No. 234," and "Curl, the Best of Bulldogs," are about Kron's emotional connections to his first bike and his first pet. Nowhere in the book does Kron mention a human relationship that possesses for him anything close to the same intensity.

Kron was probably what we today would call obsessive-compulsive; his desire, even need, for compiling and organizing data was extreme. Indexing was a great passion for Kron. As an undergraduate, Kron worked for the *Yale Literary Magazine*, putting together an index for the first 33 years of the magazine—"a monumental compilation" he calls it,

which would also be a fair description of his cycling book.^{xxvii} In fact, Kron tells us that he almost didn't graduate from Yale because he had been "kept out of college" for a term, a result of him being so engrossed in his index work that he failed his exams. When he fell for velocipeding



Figure 2: Close-up from Figure 1 showing the bottom of Kron's shoes.

in 1869, Kron recalls that his enthusiasm for it was so powerful that, for a while, he was even distracted from his beloved "index checks."^{xxvii} When Kron rediscovered cycling in 1879, after a 10-year hiatus, he soon conceived of a way to combine his two great passions, bicycles and indexes, by writing *Ten Thousand Miles on a Bicycle*. While pushing to complete the book in 1885, Kron seems to have developed a repetitive-strain injury (severe "writer's cramp") from over-work. He taught himself how to do his "pen-pushing" with his left hand so he could continue nonetheless.^{xxix} Kron's obsessive impulses are also evident in the "relentless persistency" with which he pursued subscribers for his book.^{xxx} Kron was proud of being able to circumvent the usual machinery of publication (bookstores, agents, advertising), but his subscription method took an enormous amount of time, effort, and moxy. He boasts that he "*carried on an enormous correspondence, in attracting 3,600 advance subscriptions, from every part of the globe, and in arranging agencies in more than 150 principal towns.*"^{xxxi}

For such a purportedly shy man to approach thousands of people, most of them strangers, asking for a one dollar advance on his curious project, given "the human animal's indisposition to pledge money for anything unknown," seems a perverse thing to do.^{xxxii} But once committed to the scheme, as with all his endeavours, Kron was indeed relentless. In typical

Kron fashion, not only does he list all the subscribers in alphabetical order at the end of the book, he also includes each's "order of enrollment upon the subscription list."^{xxxiii} Finally, Kron exhibits an unusual fascination with numbers and numerical coincidences. There's a mathematical aspect to his book, at least in the compiling of numbers, and the discussion of the significance of particular numbers. For instance, the number 46 comes up frequently. Kron talks about how his "46" wheel was "unusual and distinctive" even old-fashioned in an age when many rode much larger wheels.^{xxxiv} He says he likes the number for "sentimental reasons," having been born in 1846.^{xxxv} Kron also talks a lot about his Columbia No. 234 bicycle. He claims, somewhat facetiously, that this number was significant because it was not

only the serial number of the machine but also the cost of the bicycle—if, he reasoned, one counted what he paid—plus the surgeon's bills for a repaired elbow, following a tumble on the inaugural ride.^{xxxvi} Then in the chapter "My 234 Rides on 'No. 234,'" Kron also claims that on December 30, 1882,^{xxxvii} his last day of wheeling that year, he realized that 234 was the exact number of days that he had "mounted the wheel" in 1882. Such numerical coincidences and patterns (however forced some of them may seem) abound in the book.^{xxxviii}

Readers today might recognize in these three qualities of Kron's persona some of the classic indicators of Asperger's Syndrome: limited social interactions, a tendency to focus on the self rather than others, and an obsession with specific, unusual topics. Indeed, Karl Kron may well have had a high-functioning form of autism or some other psychological condition. It would explain a lot of the oddness of his book. But ultimately we can't know for sure how much of the Karl Kron that comes through in the book is the real Lyman Hotchkiss Bagg and how much is a literary performance of semi-autobiographical character.

In any event, the "many queer autobiographical details"^{xxxix} in the book (*Buffalo Courier*) bothered some critics, who felt that personal information about Kron was inappropriate in a book that claimed to be, primarily, a "gazeteer" of

American roads. The word “egotism,” meant pejoratively, comes up a lot in the reviews. London’s *Pall Mall Gazette* called the book “a masterpiece of egotism Hardly one page have we been able to refer to without reading something about the author.” *Bicycling News*, also London, went even further: “*The Ego is omnipresent [in Kron’s book] to the exclusion of all else. In fact, the printers must have wanted a fresh supply of capital I’s.*” Kron, however, anticipated this line of criticism, and in the preface, he vigorously defends the “egotism” of the book, describing it as “scientific and unobtrusive,” and necessary to illustrate “the enthusiasm of the wheel” that he sees all around him.^{xl} Interestingly, Kron contends that it’s impossible to wholly eliminate the personal from even the most clinical accounts of road surfaces and routes: simply “reporting the roads of a continent,” Kron explains, will, on some level, reveal and “reflexively exhibit the reporter’s habits and character.” This is not a bad thing, Kron argues. The book’s “vitality would be destroyed if ‘the personal equation’ could be eliminated,” he claims.^{xli} I completely agree. Kron’s book does possess a unique “vitality” which comes almost entirely from its autobiographical elements. Kron’s character—quirky, biased, meticulous, self-involved, stubborn, self-deprecating, funny, and passionate—emerges gradually between the lines, amid the miles, indexes, and lists. Over the course of a very long journey, readers come to know the habits, best qualities, annoying tics, and pet-peeves of this fascinating and strangely likeable travelling companion.

Cycling historians should re-visit Karl Kron’s curious, sprawling, Tristram Shandy of cycling literature with new eyes, and re-consider it as more than just an odd “gazetteer” of American roads. For it is nothing less than a singular autobiocyclopaedia, strange, personal, literary, and rich. I give the final word to the reviewer in *The Hartford Courant*: “*The book would be as dull, prosaic and borous [sic] as the author aimed to make it, if he had been able to live up to his ideal. Luckily, he couldn’t. His individuality has asserted itself. He himself has crowded in,—among the three-cornered stones, the up-grades and the pauses to oil the machine,—and some of his literary excursions are exquisite.*”^{xlii} ●

Notes

- 1 The pseudonym “Karl Kron” came from Bagg’s weekly column for the New York World, “College Chronicle,” in the 1870s. Bagg used the abbreviation “Coll Chron” and eventually adopted it, with altered spelling, as a pen name to protect his family name from “notoriety” of publishing, as he put it. Karl Kron, *Ten Thousand Miles on a Bicycle*, (New York: Karl Kron, 1887), 280. Bagg used the name Karl Kron for his cycling writing, so hereafter I will refer to him by that pen name.
- 2 Spirit of the Times review quoted in Karl Kron, “Notices and Subscriber Opinions of Ten Thousand Miles on a Bicycle.” Pamphlet. (New York: Karl Kron, 1888). Kron compiled all the book’s reviews into a 116-page pamphlet, which he circulated as a somewhat curious attempt to promote further sales. Kron included all reviews, even the negative ones. All quotations from reviews that follow are taken from this unpaginated pamphlet.
- 3 The *Pall Mall Gazette* review quoted in “Notices.”
- 4 In his mock “Obituary Notice” of 1890, Kron proudly quotes a letter from an admiring reader who wrote, “As I am careful of my eyes, and rarely read by gaslight books in smaller than long primer type, it is significant that your smallest type [nonpareil] did not tire my eyes. . . . But almost unquestionably it [the small type] repels buyers,—especially those not particularly bookish in their tastes.” Elsewhere in the same letter, the writer admits to having read “perhaps a third of your book.” Lyman Hotchkiss Bagg. “Obituary Notice of ‘A Yale Graduate of ‘69.’ Written by Himself. (New York: Karl Kron, 1890), 4.
- 5 Karl Kron, *Ten Thousand*, viii.
- 6 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 407.
- 7 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 71.
- 8 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 424.
- 9 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 504.
- 10 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 483.
- 11 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, iii.
- 12 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, viii.
- 13 Kron says he’s been a proponent of cold baths for 18 years (*Ten Thousand* 61). He valued most “distinct miles,” as he called them (51). His favorite fabric for cycling clothes was velveteen (19).
- 14 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, iv.
- 15 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, iii.
- 16 Glen Norcliffe, *The Ride to Modernity: The Bicycle in Canada, 1869-1900*. (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2001), 157.
- 17 Norcliffe, *Ride to Modernity*, 157, 159.
- 18 Robert L. McCullough, *Old Wheelways: Traces of Bicycle History on the Land* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015), 93.
- 19 Kron, “Notices” find name of reviewer
- 20 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, vi.
- 21 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, iii.
- 22 He was, for instance, present in Newport at the founding of the League of American Wheelmen in 1880, but did not become a member. Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 24.
- 23 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 61, 256, 34.
- 24 Kron explains, “I always turned the back of my head to the camera whenever I had any volition in the matter of defending myself from its deadly aim.” Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 280.
- 25 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 279-80.
- 26 “It is tacitly understood by all that the object of a man’s making his home in such a place is not to form new acquaintances, but to escape from those already formed.” Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 462.
- 27 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 392.

- 28 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 393.
- 29 Bagg, “Obituary Notice,” 5.
- 30 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 392.
- 31 Bagg, “Obituary Notice,” 4.
- 32 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, vii.
- 33 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 734. Kron’s subscription approach was only partly successful. According to an obituary from 1911, “The book was not a success financially, and this was owing to the erratic course taken by the author in bringing it out. Postponement succeeded postponement until those who had subscribed for it got tired and quit.” “Karl Kron is No More,” 136.
- 34 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 61. Kron was 554” tall, which also explains why a smaller wheel suited him (59).
- 35 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 23.
- 36 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 35.
- 37 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 49.
- 38 Certain dates seem to hold special significance to Kron as well. For instance, he riffs on the importance of May 29 being the date of both his inaugural ride on a high-wheeler in 1879 and of the “memorable mustering of the clans” of wheelmen at Newport, and the founding of the League of American Wheelmen in 1880. Kron, *Ten Thousand*, 24.
- 39 Review in *The Buffalo Courier*.
- 40 Kron elaborates: “It is not because I think myself a great man, that I feel free to give an abundance of personal details, which, if I were one, would interest the great world outside. It is rather because I think my personality of absolutely no account to that outside world,—because I think my details too tedious to be worth outsiders’ studying, even as a basis for sarcasm and ridicule,—that I feel free to reveal myself unreservedly to the little ‘world on wheels’” (v).
- 41 Kron, *Ten Thousand*, vi.
- 42 Kron speculates that the author of this anonymous review was C.H. Clark, of Yale ‘71. Bagg, “Obituary Notice,” 3.

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