


Memoranda and Documents

THE MYSTERY OF THE NEW YORK REPORTER AND THE MASSACHUSETTS “WILD MAN”

PETER ZHEUTLIN

One day in late July 1895, Charley Richardson (fig. 1), a lanky young farmer from Royalston, Massachusetts, was riding in his farm wagon when the wheel fell off, throwing Richardson to the ground and injuring him. The wheel nuts had been removed, and Richardson later discovered them in his barn with a note warning him not to try to find out who had done the deed. Some days later, Richardson found his rakes and pitchforks lashed to the high beams of his barn.¹ Perhaps it was all just an elaborate practical joke.

But with the approach of Halloween, as the night air in the hills around Royalston turned chill and darkness set in early, the harassment escalated. First, one of Richardson's sheep had its back broken. Then, on Monday 21 October, a heavy clock pendulum was thrown through his bedroom window, narrowly missing him as he slept. The next day, Richardson's cows disappeared from his pasture. His nerves frayed by the mysterious events of the previous days and weeks, Richardson took a pistol and five cartridges and headed into the woods to search for his livestock. Noticing smoke in the distance, he walked slowly and cautiously toward the source, where he saw a man huddled by a fire in a small clearing.

I thank Mary Levy Goldiner for permission to quote from her grandmother Annie Kopchovsky's scrapbook, which is in her possession.

¹This account is drawn from the following newspaper stories: “Life in Danger,” *Boston Daily Globe*, 24 October 1895; “Wild Man in Royalston,” *Fitchburg Daily Sentinel*, 24 October 1895; “Royalston's Mystery,” *Fitchburg Daily Sentinel*, 25 October 1895; “Kept in Fear,” *Boston Daily Globe*, 25 October 1895; “Is He a Dime Store Victim?” *Springfield Daily Republican*, 26 October 1895; “The Royalston Sensation,” *Athol Transcript*, 29 October 1895. The dates of the various events described differ slightly in different accounts, so the timeline I present here is approximate.

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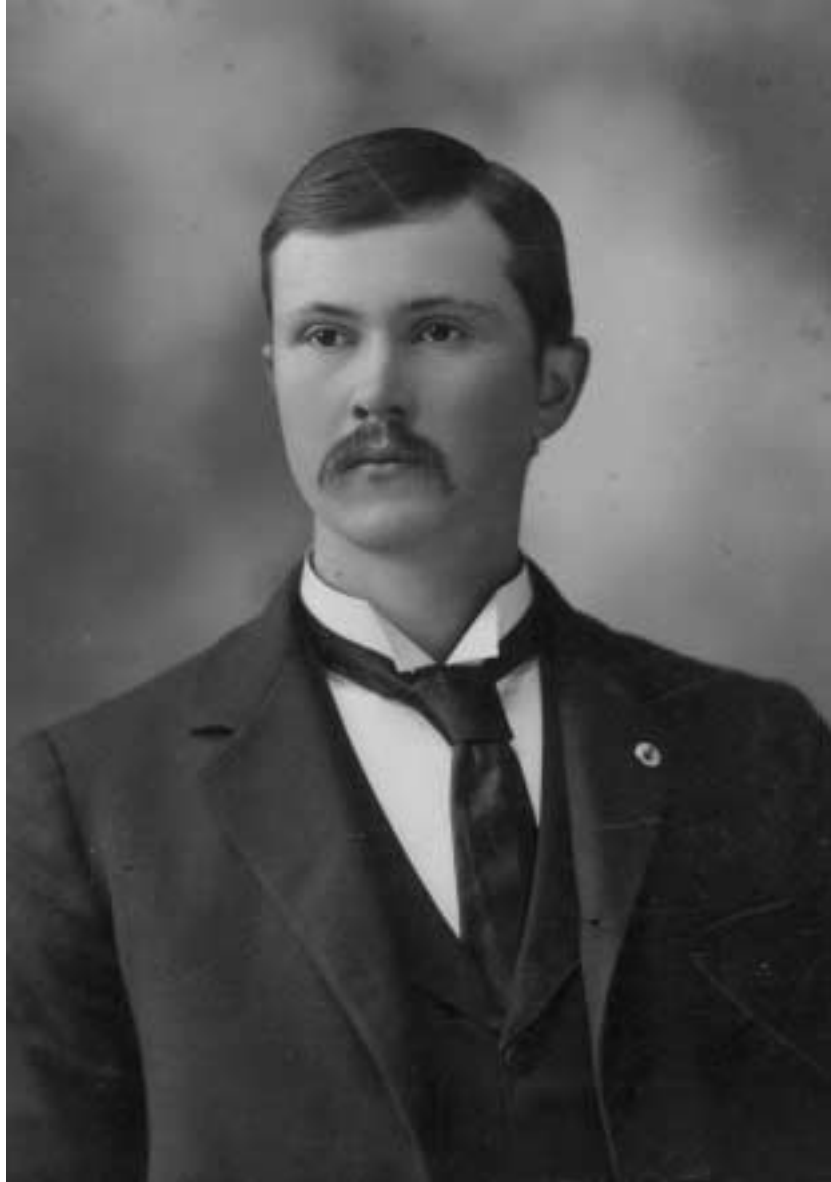


FIG. 1.—Charley Richardson at age twenty-one, about the time of the wild man's attacks. Courtesy of Jim Richardson.

Richardson's next step snapped a twig, and the man by the fire abruptly stood up and looked around. He was gaunt, about six feet tall, with a scraggly gray beard that stretched to his waist, sunken cheeks, and eyes that "blazed fiercely."² Clothed in tatters, he looked more like a creature of the woods than a man.

Before Richardson could act, the "wild man," as he came to be known, drew a pistol and fired a shot that ripped through Richardson's coat near the hip. The wild man then fled into the woods, with Richardson in hot pursuit. Richardson fired five times but missed. "I thought the man, by his appearance, must have been 70 or 75 years old," Richardson told the *Fitchburg Daily Sentinel*. "But when he began to run he went like a man of 21."³

After the shooting, Richardson took his mother, who lived on the farm with him, to Athol for her safety. When he returned home about 5 P.M. with a friend, Leslie Woodbury, who had agreed to help search for the wild man, he went into the kitchen and lit the stove to make tea. The stove exploded, sending Richardson careering across the room. He was unharmed but soon discovered that not only had gunpowder been placed in his stove, but his pantry shelves had been emptied. The wild man had struck again. Later that same evening Richardson was shot at again, this time during a cornhusking bee at his barn. The bullet passed through his hat, slightly burning his forehead, and shattered a windowpane. Several other people at the farm heard the shot fired that night, but none saw it. Richardson was sure the strange man he had chased through the woods was responsible for all the attacks.

As word of the violent events spread, panic gripped the residents of Royalston and neighboring Athol. On Thursday 24 October, a state detective named Murray and the Athol deputy sheriff, Roswell L. Doane, a stocky, balding man with an impressive handlebar mustache, put together a posse of about two dozen well-armed men and led them into the woods to look for the wild man.⁴ The posse returned empty-handed after four hours, but in the meantime, the Richardson barn was set ablaze.

²"Wild Man in Royalston," *Fitchburg Daily Sentinel*, 24 October 1895.

³"Wild Man in Royalston," *Fitchburg Daily Sentinel*, 24 October 1895.

⁴There is a photograph of Doane in *Athol Past and Present* by Lilley B. Caswell (self-published, 1899).



By this time, news of the Massachusetts wild man had reached Boston and New York, where newspaper editors spied a story sure to find a wide audience. On 24 October and again on the next day, the *Boston Daily Globe* carried stories—one of them on the front page—describing the assaults against Richardson. The reporter, who had traveled to Royalston to investigate, suggested that a “little gray-bearded man” was the “probable miscreant” and reported the unsuccessful efforts to capture the “marauder.”⁵

In New York City, at the Park Row offices of the *New York World*, the crown jewel in Joseph Pulitzer’s newspaper empire, two telegrams from Boston, both dated 25 October, landed on the desk of Morrill Goddard, the *World’s* Sunday editor. They outlined a story with all the elements of the sensational features that were a staple of the Pulitzer papers and their competitors. The first telegram read, “We have had two or three reports of the wild man’s doing around Royalston, & farmers are surely in state of abject terror. From what I can learn, there is material for picturesque story. Have mailed clipping from local story of latest Escapade.” The Western Union telegram was signed Sanger.⁶

Apparently concerned that Goddard might not have gotten the first telegram, or that it might not have conveyed enough urgency, Sanger sent a second telegram, this one via the Postal Telegraph Cable Company: “Athol Mass. Farmers are panic stricken over antics of supposed wild man. Men armed to the teeth whenever they leave home. Looks

⁵“Life in Danger,” *Boston Daily Globe*, 24 October 1895; “Kept in Fear,” *Boston Daily Globe*, 25 October 1895 (this story was signed “The Globe Man”). Though Richardson described the man as six feet tall, the *Globe* described him as “little.”

⁶Telegram in scrapbook kept by Annie Cohen Kopchovsky, now owned by her granddaughter, Mary Levy Goldiner (hereafter Kopchovsky scrapbook). “Sanger,” who might also have been the “Globe Man” who wrote the story for the *Boston Globe*, could have been William H. Sanger, whose occupation is listed in the Boston City Directories for 1895 and 1897 (published by Sampson, Murdock, & Co., Boston) as “correspondent and asst. clerk of [the Massachusetts] Senate”; “correspondent” suggests that he was a newsman. Another possibility is Elizabeth C. Sanger, no relation to William H., who, for thirty-six years, beginning in 1903, was the *Boston Globe’s* society editor. (See the “Who’s Who on the Boston Globe” form completed by Ms. Sanger and on file at the *Boston Globe* archives, Boston.) Sanger began her *Globe* career as a “special story writer” in 1900. In 1895 she would have been thirty years old, perhaps trying to build her journalism credentials by freelancing for the *Globe* and the *World*. Or there could be another Sanger altogether.

like good material for Sunday Special. Shall I go for it? This has no connection with Connecticut wild man. Sanger.⁷

But Goddard did not tell Sanger “to go for it.” Instead, on Saturday 26 October, Goddard dispatched a young female reporter from New York who, later that evening, having arrived in Boston by train, registered at Young’s Hotel in the Back Bay as Nellie Bly.



Nellie Bly was the pen name of Elizabeth Jane Cochrane, a pioneer investigative journalist with a flair for writing sensational feature stories and a taste for luxury.⁸ Bly earned worldwide fame in 1889 when, at the age of twenty-five, she departed from New York in an attempt to break the record set by Jules Verne’s character Phileas Fogg in the best-selling 1872 novel *Around the World in Eighty Days*. Bly’s stunt gripped the nation and sold mountains of newspapers for Joseph Pulitzer as the *World* reported on her progress. A contest sponsored by the paper in which readers were invited to guess how long Bly’s journey would take drew more than a million entries in a country of just sixty-three million people. Traveling by train, steamship, and coach, Bly made the circuit in seventy-two days and returned to cheering crowds in New York City.

Bly became a hot commodity. Her image soon adorned trading cards, and the McLoughlin Brothers turned out a hugely popular board game called *Around the World with Nellie Bly*. Bly was, without question, the most famous woman journalist of her day. Indeed, she was one of the most famous women of her time.

But the woman who registered at Young’s Hotel in Boston as Nellie Bly was not Nellie Bly. Bly had retired from journalism in early 1895 to marry a wealthy industrialist forty years her senior, though she con-

⁷Telegram in Kopchovsky scrapbook. A number of wild man stories circulated around New England in 1895. On 13 September 1895, the *Boston Daily Advertiser* and the *Boston Daily Globe* carried identical stories headlined “The ‘Wild Man’ Coming,” datelined West Hartford, Connecticut. “The wild man has left Colebrook and is now traveling towards Massachusetts,” the stories began. They described a wild man in the vicinity of Colebrook, Connecticut, who was stealing chickens and onions from local farms and chased a farmer for two miles through the woods. Another farmer reported seeing the wild man, described as a “crazy freak,” in his brother’s barn, but the wild man escaped through a small window and headed “to the mountain.”

⁸Brooke Kroeger, *Nellie Bly: Daredevil, Reporter, Feminist* (New York: Times Books, 1994), pp. 260–61.

tinued to write occasional features for the *World*. The woman assigned to cover the story of the Massachusetts wild man was Annie Cohen Kopchovsky, then in her mid-twenties.

Kopchovsky was a Jewish immigrant from Latvia, a married mother of three small children who had recently moved from Boston to New York City—and my great-grandaunt. Just six weeks earlier, she had completed a fifteen-month 'round the world tour by bicycle, arguably the first woman ever to do so.⁹ Though she cycled under the name Annie Londonderry by agreement with one of her sponsors, the Londonderry Lithia Spring Water Company of Nashua, N.H., her first-person account of her bicycle journey appeared in the *World* on 20 October 1895 under the byline “Nellie Bly, Jr.” The *World* proclaimed her trip “the most extraordinary journey ever undertaken by a woman.”¹⁰

It was this adventuresome woman, now in excellent physical shape after riding thousands of miles by bicycle, who traveled to Athol, Massachusetts, to investigate the violent goings-on there. As described in the nail-biting feature she wrote for the *New York World's* Sunday edition, she announced to Sheriff Doane that she had been sent by the paper “to capture the desperado” and convinced him to let her join a second posse that formed on Sunday 27 October to track down the man who had been tormenting Charley Richardson.¹¹



⁹It was while researching Annie Kopchovsky's bicycle trip that I learned of her involvement in the case of the Massachusetts wild man. With the help of a genealogist, I located Kopchovsky's only surviving direct biological descendant, her granddaughter (my second cousin once removed), Mary Levy Goldiner of Larchmont, New York, who had Kopchovsky's scrapbook.

¹⁰“Around the World on a Bicycle,” *New York World*, 20 October 1895. For more on Kopchovsky and her trip, see Peter Zheutlin, “Chasing Annie,” *Bicycling*, May 2005, pp. 64–69. The bicycle craze of the 1890s, the woman suffrage movement, and the woman's rights movement in general were interrelated. Indeed, in 1896 Susan B. Anthony told Nellie Bly (the real Nellie Bly), “bicycling has done more to emancipate women than anything else in history” (*New York World*, 2 February 1896). For a good discussion of women and the bicycle see David V. Herlihy, *Bicycle: The History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 266–73. See also Frances Willard's 1895 book, *A Wheel within a Wheel: A Woman's Quest for Freedom*, republished in 1997 by Applewood Books, Bedford, Mass. Willard was the founder of the Women's Christian Temperance Union and a leading suffragist. For Willard, mastery of the bicycle was a metaphor for women's mastery over their own lives. She learned to ride at age fifty-three, she said, “from a love of acquiring this new implement of power and literally putting it underfoot” (p. 73).

¹¹“Capture of a Very Novel ‘Wild Man,’” *New York World*, 3 November 1895.

In November 2003, I called the Athol Public Library looking for information about the wild man of 1895 and was referred to a local historian, Richard Chaisson, a retired journalist from the *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*. When I phoned Chaisson, he immediately recognized the story I was talking about. “Oh, yes!” he said, “The *New York World* even sent Nellie Bly up here to investigate.” When I explained that it wasn’t Nellie Bly but Annie Kopchovsky who had been sent by the *World*, Chaisson was astonished. We met a few days later at the Athol Public Library.

Richard Chaisson had copied stories from contemporary local newspapers about the wild man for me, and I, in turn, gave him a copy of Annie Kopchovsky’s feature from the *World*, an original of which she had saved. Chaisson and I drove toward Royalston to the spot where, he surmises, Sheriff Doane’s posses had combed the woods for the wild man. In the nearly one hundred and ten years since those events, much of the land once cleared for farms has reverted to forest. Stone walls run for miles, demarcating former pastures and homesteads. But Royalston is still rural, and many of the houses that Kopchovsky would have seen when she arrived in town remain there today. We visited the site in mid-November, and it was easy to imagine the scene in late October 1895, when search parties fanned out through the dense stand of pines and leafless hardwoods.



Kopchovsky’s dramatic piece about the capture of the wild man consumed almost a full page in the Sunday 3 November edition of the *World*. It included a sketch of an intrepid young woman armed with a pistol—and sporting dainty gloves—leading a large group of men wielding axes, pitchforks, and other weapons (fig. 2). Kopchovsky’s story appeared under the byline “The New Woman,” a term often used in the 1890s to describe the modern woman who asserted herself as the equal of men or who was engaged in the woman’s rights movement. She set the scene with flair. “One has a strange feeling in stepping into a town where all is mystery and excitement,” she wrote. “Where men are patrolling the streets armed to the teeth, and where women peer nervously at every passer-by. Where you hear frightful accounts of the murderous doings of a mysterious somebody.”¹²

¹²All quotations are from “Capture of a Very Novel ‘Wild Man,’” *New York World*, 3 November 1895.



FIG. 2.—Illustration from Annie Kopchovsky's feature article (signed "The New Woman") for the *New York World*, Sunday 3 November 1895; Kopchovsky is shown leading a posse of armed men into the woods to hunt down the wild man.

Kopchovsky followed Sheriff Doane in a carriage as he set out to form his posse. "At every farmhouse farmers, all well armed, would join our party until a small army was traveling the narrow, winding, rocky road through a bleak barren country," she wrote. "Occasionally we passed a small church. But there were no divine services at them, even in Massachusetts. Everybody—pastors, deacons and brethren—was on the hunt." When they reached Royalston, everyone gathered around as Charley Richardson "carefully described his foe. At last all was ready for the hunt."

The group divided into squads. Fortuitously, though a dozen reporters were on hand, according to Kopchovsky, she was the only one who ended up in Charley Richardson's squad, and she engaged him in conversation along the way: "I sounded him on courage and found that he did not possess as much of the stuff as the knights of old. In fact, he was nothing but a timid boy."

When Kopchovsky quizzed Richardson about what books he liked to read, he replied that he was “fond of ‘these wild Western stories where men shoot and raise Cain.’” She asked “if he had taken it into his mind to do wild things like the men in the books,” and he said “sometimes he wanted to be a cowboy or a mountain hunter or a detective.” Finally, Kopchovsky wondered aloud if he “was not tired of life on the farm.” Richardson’s response, that he “longed for life” in the West, “was about all I wanted,” Kopchovsky declared. “I put two and two together, and with the facts I had put down out of the stories told me [about the wild man] I soon deduced the theory that Charles Richardson was the wild man who had been shooting at and attacking himself and appearing that he was frightened, and at the same time making idiots out of his neighbors.”

Her theory was bolstered by some clever forensic work. Kopchovsky noted that the bullet holes in Richardson’s coat and hat were made by a .22-caliber pistol. When Doane later showed her Richardson’s pistol, it was a .22. She also noticed that the hole in Richardson’s coat “ranged downward,” though Richardson had said the bullet came from below, and she spotted a powder burn on the coat, indicating a shot at very close range. “I asked the boy about this,” wrote Kopchovsky.

“‘How far was the wild man from you when he fired?’ I asked.”

“‘About twenty paces.’”

“This was a ‘dead give away.’ Anyone with any knowledge of gun or pistol shots knows that there could be no powder burn at that distance.”

When Kopchovsky shared her theory with Sheriff Doane, he was inclined to agree, but, he said, he “would not dare tell the Royalston farmers our opinion. ‘They would not believe us,’ he said, ‘and would most probably try to handle us roughly.’”

The next day Doane questioned Richardson at the district attorney’s office in Worcester and, according to Kopchovsky, told Richardson he suspected that Richardson himself was the wild man.

“‘How do you know?’ asked the boy in a tremulous voice.”

“‘Do you remember the young lady who was searching with us yesterday?’ asked the Sheriff. Charles did remember.”

“‘Well, she is from New York, and is a mind-reader. She told us all.’”

Richardson then broke down and confessed, allowing Kopchovsky to brag, “I solved the mystery and found the Wild Man.” Doane, she claimed, acknowledged his “grateful appreciation” in a letter to her:

“Please accept my thanks for your valuable suggestions and services and your great courage. R.L. Doane, Deputy Sheriff.” Kopchovsky, alias Nellie Bly Jr., alias Annie Londonderry, had pulled the mask off the vicious wild man, revealing the scared young man underneath.



The denouement of the wild man story was not reported in local newspapers quite the same way as it was in the *World*. One of them, the *Worcester West Chronicle* of Athol, questioned Richardson’s guilt, opining, somewhat obtusely, that “the difficulty in [the] situation thus far, is because the lack of other than circumstantial evidence. . . . The peace and safety of the community demanded a solution of the present mystery as far as possible by local investigation. With the broadest charity and the kindest sympathy, the public mind would rest more easily in a verdict of mental aberration, than to be confronted with the fact of the presence of a demon haunting our dwellings and crossing our pathway.”¹³

Most accepted that Richardson had invented the wild man himself, perhaps to scare his mother into selling the family farm so he could pursue his dream of life in the West. They balked, however, at making Kopchovsky the heroine of the story. For one thing, she had not been the first to suspect the young farmer. On 25 October, two days before Kopchovsky’s arrival in Athol, a story in the *Fitchburg Daily Sentinel* had reported neighbors’ suspicions that Richardson and the wild man were one and the same: “There are . . . Royalston people who take very little stock in these ‘wild man’ stories. It is said that Charley Richardson has for some time wanted to move away from his dismal home, but his mother has objected. . . . He has up to the present time been accepted as the soul of truthfulness. It would be a stranger mystery still if it were discovered that Charley had fired the shots himself, set fire to his own barn, blown up his own stove with powder, and all at the risk of his own life.” After his identity was revealed, the *Athol Transcript* noted that “the ‘Wild Man’ turns out to be as has been suspected for two or three days past.”¹⁴

Kopchovsky’s starring role in provoking Richardson’s confession also strains credulity. Richardson admitted his guilt on the morning of

¹³Item, *Worcester West Chronicle*, 31 October 1895.

¹⁴“Royalston’s Mystery,” *Fitchburg Daily Sentinel*, 25 October 1895; “Latest, The Boy Confesses,” *Athol Transcript*, 29 October 1895.

28 October to Detective Murray and Sheriff Doane after being questioned “sharply,” according to the *Athol Transcript*, and the first local newspaper stories about the confession appeared the next day.¹⁵ It is possible that either Kopchovsky, Doane, Murray, or perhaps all of them working together had put the pieces together on the twenty-seventh. But if Kopchovsky’s story in the *World* is to be taken at face value, she was either a very quick study, having just arrived on the scene, or local law enforcement was profoundly inept, or both.

The portrayal of a smart-as-a-whip city girl besting the local constabulary was bound to raise hackles in the hills of north-central Massachusetts. In the judgment of the *Fitchburg Daily Sentinel*, credit for solving the case was due “almost entirely” to Sheriff Doane, “who early formed the opinion that Richardson was playing upon the credulity of his friends and neighbors.”¹⁶

The *Athol Transcript* had harsher words for Kopchovsky and the *World*, charging Pulitzer’s newspaper and its reporter with “fake reporting” in a story that appeared two days after Kopchovsky’s feature:

The Royalston “wild man” case does not “down” at once. The sensationalists of the *New York World* have got hold of the story and they are making the most of it that is possible. . . . It claims that the “wild man” was in reality captured through the efforts of the *World* Reporter, Nellie Bly, Jr., the sensation writer of that newspaper and she publishes a card of thanks purporting to come from Sheriff Doane, acknowledging his great indebtedness to her for helping to solve the “mystery” and this after the bottom had dropped out of the whole thing. Mr. Doane informs us that he never wrote such a card, or endorsed her efficiency in the case. . . . The laugh seems to be on Sheriff Doane for being published as endorsing this reporter’s connection with the business, but we imagine there is no little disgust at the unscrupulous attempt of a great newspaper to play upon the gullibility of its readers.¹⁷

Kopchovsky’s scrapbook does contain a receipt from Doane, but the wording is much less effusive than the purported letter that she quoted in her story. The receipt, written on a piece of notepaper from Young’s Hotel in Boston, acknowledges a payment of ten dollars to Sheriff Doane on 27 October: “Received of A. Londenery [*sic*] \$10.00 for assisting in search of wild man at Royalston Mass.”¹⁸ (Apparently on the trip from Boston to Athol, Kopchovsky had switched from her

¹⁵“The Royalston Sensation,” *Athol Transcript*, 29 October 1895.

¹⁶“Richardson Was the ‘Wild Man,’” *Fitchburg Daily Sentinel*, 29 October 1895.

¹⁷“Fake Reporting,” *Athol Transcript*, 5 November 1895.

¹⁸Handwritten note in Kopchovsky scrapbook.

World alias, Nellie Bly Jr., to her cycling alias, Annie Londonderry.) The ten dollars could indicate payment for a scoop, but more likely Kopchovsky secured the document as a way to confirm her role in the escapade. She had probably anticipated the very request that her editor Morrill Goddard at the *World* made in a telegram addressed to “Mrs. Anna Kapchiwsky” in Athol on 28 October, which read in part, “can’t you get some kind of letter of thanks for your services signed by sheriff judge town officials or somebody.”¹⁹ Kopchovsky’s scrapbook containing documents related to the wild man story contains no notes from Doane other than the receipt.

But we shouldn’t be too surprised to find Kopchovsky embellishing her role for the sake of a good story. When she was making her way around the world by bicycle, for example, she told many tall tales—she was flamboyant and dramatic and eager to spin a good yarn, especially to gullible male reporters. For example, she told several reporters, falsely, that she had studied medicine at Harvard.²⁰ She claimed to have ridden across India and overland to the Chinese coast.²¹ She did not; she sailed from Marseilles to Colombo, then to Saigon and up the coast of China. And at various times she claimed, again falsely, to be a lawyer, a wealthy heiress, and a speaker of six languages (she spoke English and Yiddish).²² Like her namesake, Nellie Bly, Kopchovsky had a “brazen capacity . . . to tell a white lie.”²³

Although Kopchovsky’s wild man story for the *World* may have stretched the truth, it was typical of the sensational journalism of the day. It was more farce than fraud, more mischief than malice. And she concluded with a surprisingly forthright avowal of how the newspapers benefited from the scandal: “Young Richardson was released and allowed to go home, as he had really committed no crime. He had only frightened his poor old mother almost into fits, also his friends and neighbors for miles around, had given the local detectives and of-

¹⁹Telegram in Kopchovsky scrapbook.

²⁰See, e.g., “Round the World,” *Buffalo Express*, 1 November 1894, and “Around the World,” *Rochester Post Express*, 2 November 1894.

²¹“She Rides a Wheel,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 24 March 1895.

²²From various newspaper articles published in France in December 1894 and January 1895 and kept in Kopchovsky’s scrapbook. Unfortunately, precise identification is difficult (and beyond the terms of the present investigation). Before pasting these articles in her scrapbook, Kopchovsky cut off the dates and the mastheads, so I have been unable to identify the exact dates of publication or the newspapers in which these claims appeared.

²³Kroeger, *Nellie Bly*, p. 145.

ficers the hardest case they had ever tackled, and the Massachusetts papers the only occasion for months to bring out their big 'scare' headlines and the Sunday *World* an opportunity to show its usual expertise in exposing the whole business."²⁴



If Annie Kopchovsky ever saw the article from the *Athol Transcript* labeling her a fraud, she would have been amused to see the fuss she had created at a time when the only two pieces she had written for the *World* were the account of her bicycle trip and an article on women farmers living in New York tenements that appeared under the byline "N.B. Jr."²⁵ Kopchovsky had all of the characteristics the *World* would have coveted in any journalist, especially a woman journalist, of whom there were very few at the time. She was, as her bicycle trip demonstrated, fiercely independent, flamboyant, and a risk taker. She was also, by all accounts, a clever conversationalist, physically strong and courageous, bright, cunning, resourceful, and nothing if not persistent. She had chutzpah, as she herself might have said.

Kopchovsky continued to write for the *World* for several months. She "spent a few days as an inmate" at the Door of Hope, a charitable home for wayward girls seeking to turn their lives around, for a pre-Christmas feature that appeared in the *World* on 22 December 1895. She wrote about "the smallest hospital in New York," the Beth Israel Hospital on the Lower East Side, a hospital serving and supported by a community of Russian Jewish immigrants. She traveled to New Jersey for a scoop about a self-proclaimed messiah and wrote about a women-only stock exchange near Wall Street.²⁶

Sometime in 1896, she traveled to California to recuperate from what was likely a case of tuberculosis. In 1898, still married to the same husband she had left for fifteen months to go cycling, she had a fourth child. Now settled in the Bronx, Kopchovsky went into the garment business. She owned and operated two businesses during her life, working nearly until the day she died in 1947.

²⁴"Capture of a Very Novel 'Wild Man,'" *New York World*, 3 November 1895.

²⁵"New York's Tenement-House Farmers," *New York World*, 27 October 1895.

²⁶"Inside the Door of Hope Where Barbara Aub First Confessed," *New York World*, 22 December 1895; "The Poor Aid the Poor Sick," *New York World*, 2 February 1896; "A Modern Christ and His Flock," *New York World*, 24 November 1895; "Private Rooms for Women Stock Gamblers," *New York World*, 17 November 1895.

Charley Richardson was never charged with a crime.²⁷ He stayed on at his farm, married in 1901, and had a daughter, Clara, born in 1905, and a son, Charles, born in 1908. He served on the Royalston School Committee for eighteen years and the town finance committee. By the time he died, in 1942, the Massachusetts wild man had become an obscure piece of local lore about mysterious doings in the haunted woods of north-central Massachusetts during Halloween week, 1895.²⁸

²⁷“Capture of a Very Novel ‘Wild Man,’” *New York World*, 3 November 1895.

²⁸In March 2005, with the help of Richard Chaisson, I located Charley Richardson’s great-grandson, Jim Richardson, living in Royalston. He had never heard of his great-grandfather’s wild man escapade, though he did report that he had heard his great-grandfather was “a little off.” We met in early April, and, with the help of family records, Jim Richardson provided this information about Charley Richardson’s later life.

Peter Zheutlin is a freelance writer whose work has appeared in many publications, including the BOSTON GLOBE, the LOS ANGELES TIMES, and the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. He lives in Needham, Massachusetts, and is working on a book about Annie Kopchovsky’s bicycle trip around the world.