allan drummond

# pedal power
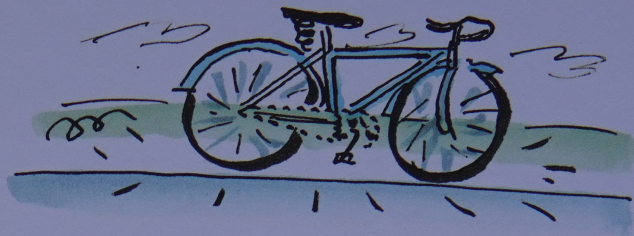
How One Community Became the Bicycle Capital of the World

inflatable tires
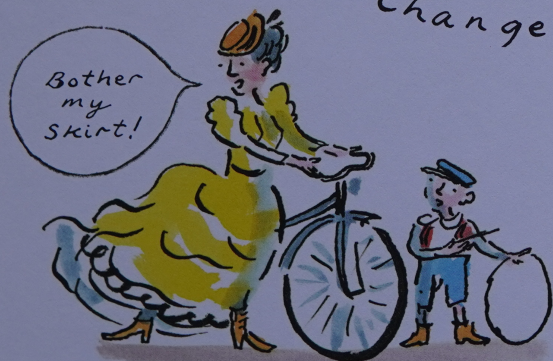


smooth roads

Bicycles have



changed the world
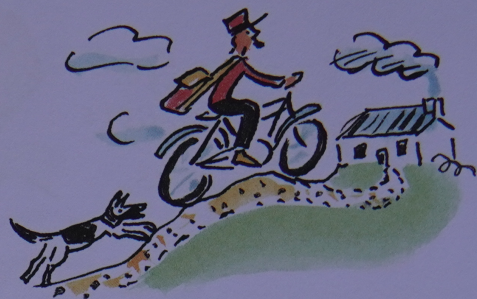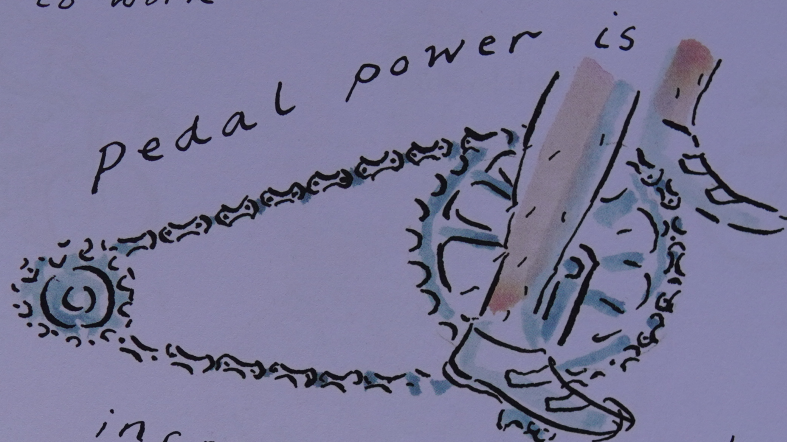
Bother my skirt!



Women's independence...

free at last!



Bloomers and pants

Travel to work

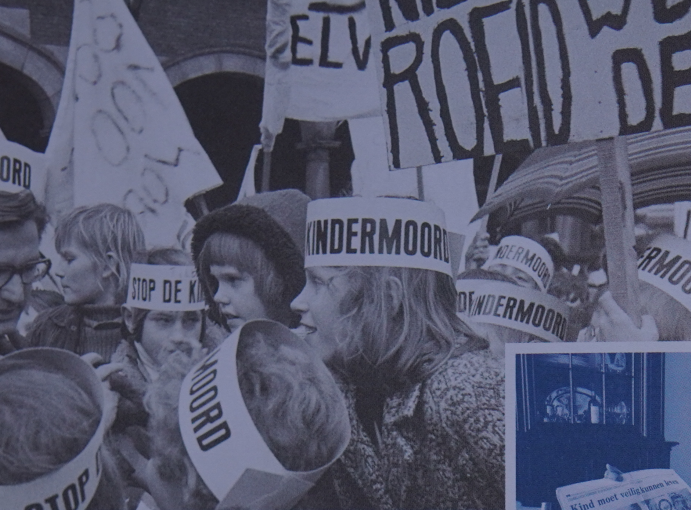mail Delivery

pedal power is

incredibly efficient

Using the same energy...

...a bike goes...

as walking....

...three times faster

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

When I started working on this book, I wanted to write and illustrate about how wonderful it feels to ride a bike, particularly in a city. I also wanted to show how amazingly energy-efficient bicycles are. Quite soon the words *pedal power* popped into my head, and I knew that this would be the title.

On my journey of discovery, I looked at the history of bikes and learned about all the crazy shapes that people tried before the design we know today. I also read about the incredible trips people made on two wheels. When I came across the story of Maartje Rutten and the Amsterdam protests, I realized that the words *pedal power* meant so much more.

So I went to Amsterdam to meet Maartje and see for myself. She showed me her lovely big bike, and one of the first things she said was "Cities need bikes." That simple statement is at the heart of this book. Bikes, said Maartje, have the power to make city life better.

I thought about how when I was young my bike took me on adventures that I still remember today. When I was an art student
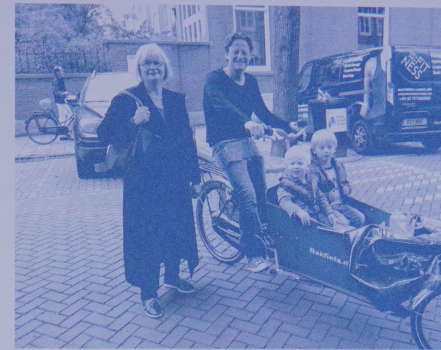
in London, I used my bike every day. I was fearless and enjoyed taking on the traffic. The first time I battled with the red buses and black taxis passing Buckingham Palace, I felt as if I were king of the road. It was great fun—but dangerous. You had to be young, brave, and fit to even attempt cycling in London.

Since those days, just like in Maartje's Amsterdam, the number of vehicles in all our cities has continued to grow. Only a few years ago, it seemed as if motor traffic had won the battle.

But today London, like Amsterdam, is much more cycle-friendly. Every week sees another stretch of precious street painted blue and made into a bike lane. Motorists now have to pay to enter the city's center on workdays. All of this is making life a little better and, in my opinion, much fairer for everyone.

It looks as if the whole world is now following in the tracks of pioneers like Maartje. Hopefully soon, riding a bike in London or any other city will not be just for the young, brave, and fit. Anyone should be able to jump on a bike and buzz about safely, secure in knowing that they truly have pedal power. *Ding! Ding!*

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Thomas Stevens
around the world 1884-1886

Annie Kopchovsky
around the world 1894-1895

Great                    Cyclists

Sir Bradley Wiggins

Charles Minthorn Murphy
one mile in a minute 1899

Eddy Merckx
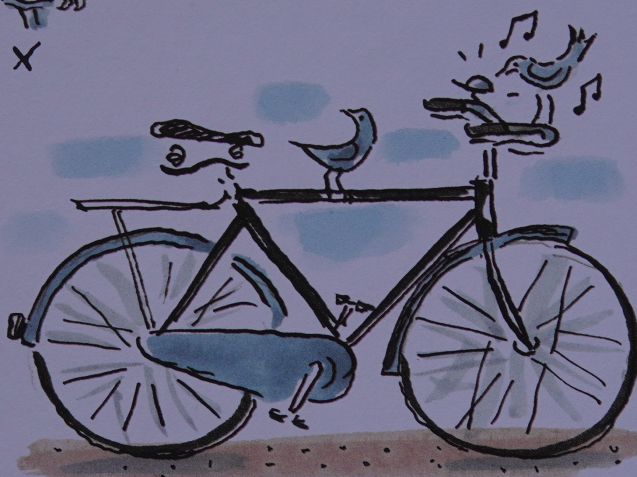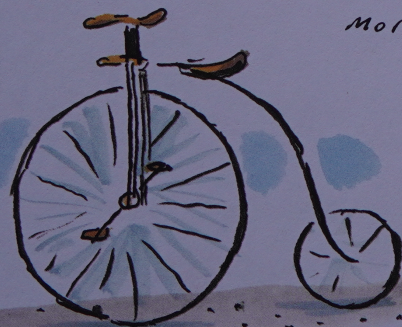HOLTEN
hour record 1972

the BMX

the Hobby Horse

Great
Bikes

of the
World

China's Flying Pigeon bicycle—
more than 75 million built

the penny-farthing

the unicycle