

THE NEBRASKA *Cyclone*

LILLIE WILLIAMS AND
THE EMBRACE OF
SPORT AND SPECTACLE

BY LISA R. LINDELL

In March 1889, an Omaha resident and novice female bicycle racer named Lillie Williams hurtled into the sporting spotlight. Over a period of six nights, before an overflow crowd averaging five thousand enthusiastic fans a night, Williams outrode the nation's top "cycliennes" in a hotly contested race in the city's newly constructed Coliseum. By the end, she had pedaled 259.4 miles and broken the women's 18-hour cycling record. Although Williams would eventually take up and excel at a number of other sports—including motorcycling, swimming, and fencing, in which she set records and won championships—unrivaled in her memory was the race in Omaha that launched her professional career.

As a woman athlete in the public eye, Williams encountered challenges and risks, sexism and spectacle. She also experienced and enjoyed new freedoms and a love of competition and showmanship. An exploration of her career illuminates the conditions that converged to make women's competitive cycling a popular, if brief, sensation in the late nineteenth century.





Before a race at Park Rink in Columbus, Ohio, in 1897. Left to right, Lizzie Glaw, Helen Baldwin, May Allen, Tillie Anderson, and Dottie Farnsworth. Alice Olson Roepke Collection

More broadly, Williams' personal story reveals the resourcefulness and tenacity required of sportswomen and "show women" of that era as they crossed traditional boundaries and confronted societal anxieties over changing gender roles. By aligning their own ambitions and aptitudes with the social and commercial interests of both audiences and promoters, a small group of enterprising women athletes were able to pursue noteworthy, though often precarious, careers.¹

Lillie Williams' cycling career began on an impulse. At the time of the March 1889 Omaha race, she had only recently taken up biking for exercise and health, and, as she later maintained, "had no more intention of adopting it as a profession than...of going to the north pole."² Historical records provide a few basic details about her life prior to her entry into the public arena and assumption of the racing name Lillie Williams. Born Edna Hillock around 1862, she grew up in Princeton, Illinois, and was living in Omaha under the surname Burchard at the time of her marriage to printer William Alexander (known as A.W.) Sutton on November 10, 1881. Her parents, Almenia Cole Hillock and James B. Hillock, and brother Charles would subsequently settle in Omaha as well. Williams worked as a compositor at the *Omaha Daily Bee* and other newspapers, and also as a stenographer.³ She made her cycling debut in 1889, "fresh," as she described,

"from sticking type and breathing the leaded air of a composing room from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m."⁴ The appeal of the commercial and physical aspects of the competitive sport—bolstered by the urging of cycling promoter John S. (Jack) Prince, athletic manager of the Omaha Coliseum and seasoned professional racer—inspired her to seize the opportunity to pursue professional cycling.⁵

Bicycling rolled onto the scene in the mid-to-late nineteenth century with revolutionary impact. First developed in Europe, the bicycle evolved from the earliest velocipedes to the high-wheeled "Ordinary" of the 1870s and 1880s, to the modern-style "Safety" in the 1890s. Cycling transformed transportation options, furthered the women's movement as advances in design fostered mobility and freedom, and caught on as a competitive spectator sport. Bicycle races were primarily contested by male riders, but a few venturesome women took up the sport as well. Women's racing, documented back to November 1868 in France, reached the United States at the end of the next decade. Women's riding of the unwieldy high wheel remained highly unusual. Their small numbers largely led them to be viewed as curious anomalies.

By the late 1880s, cycling contests typically followed a six-day format popularized by "pedestrian" (competitive walking) events. The novelty of women competitors and their departure from traditional roles and dress protocols attracted audiences. Adding to the allure was the ever-lurking physical danger of the high-wheel, or Ordinary, bicycle, with its enormous front wheel over which the rider perched and diminutive rear wheel. The hazards included being pitched head-first over the front wheel, mishaps while mounting and dismounting, and pile-ups occurring as closely packed competitors strove to navigate the sharp curves of small wooden tracks at top speed. Standing out among the tiny group of early women high-wheel racers were American Elsa Von Blumen and French Canadian Louise Armaindo.⁶

The six-day bicycle race in Omaha commencing on March 18, 1889, pitted newcomer Williams against veteran Armaindo, as well as Helen Baldwin, Kittie Brown, Hattie Lewis, and Jessie Woods of the United States and Jessie Oakes of Lincolnshire, England—all of whom had recently competed at New York's Madison Square Garden. The women raced on high wheels. The height and make of Williams' bicycle is unrecorded, but later accounts reported her variously riding a 48-inch wheel Champion and a 50-inch wheel.⁷ The racers contested from 7:30 pm until 10:30 pm

Though Lillie Williams began her racing career on high-wheeled "Ordinary" bicycles, by the mid-1890s the new "Safety" bicycle largely displaced the Ordinary.

Alice Olson Roepke Collection



for the six consecutive nights on the Coliseum's track, completing ten laps for each mile. Over the course of the week, the estimated total crowd of thirty thousand packed the building, spilling out of the galleries and even commandeering the track's center space. The audience was a reportedly diverse mix of Omaha society, both women and men, and included Mayor William Broatch, as well as a "confirmed harness thief."⁸ The daily newspapers thoroughly documented the event. "Men yell themselves hoarse, while the ladies clap their hands and wave their kerchiefs, and not infrequently add their sweet voices to all the resounding din," effused the *Omaha Bee*.⁹ Augmenting the carnival atmosphere were lively band music, including a fife and drum trio (with Jack Prince as fifer) parading around the inside track performing "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and, on night three, a spirited chase of a stray dog who had wandered perilously onto the track.¹⁰

Behind the success and spectacle of women's professional cycling were opportunistic sports promoters. Clare S. Simpson emphasizes the influential role of these male entrepreneurs in her study of late nineteenth-century women's cycle racing. They arranged the venues, promotion of the events, and appearance fees and prizes, their earnings dependent on their ability to gauge and ignite audience interest. Tom Eck was a veteran promoter quick to grasp the drawing card potential of female cyclists. He proclaimed himself eager to represent them "as long as they please the public and bring in the shekels, and do good racing."¹¹ At the Omaha race, each woman had a manager, most of whom were also competitive male cyclists. Eck attended to Jessie Woods and Helen Baldwin, Wilbur F. Knapp to Kittie Brown and Hattie Lewis, and William J. ("Senator") Morgan to Jessie Oakes, while Louise Armaindo was managed by her husband and Williams by a Mr. Brown. Sandy Griswold, the sports editor of the *Omaha Bee*, acted as referee, and Prince as overall manager.¹²

Equally as influential for women's cycle racing was coverage by the press. The interests of press and performers alike were served by catering to and building public expectations. The media both responded to and created the fervor surrounding the sport. As newspapers attended to their commercial bottom line, strict accuracy often gave way before inventive and sensational accounts. The interweaving of fact and fiction became an accepted practice in the pursuit of producing a coherent and gripping narrative. Contemporary newspapers comprise a major source of available

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50	33 1/4	109 50	107 50	112 50	44
52	35 1/4	105 00	110 00	115 00	45 1/2
54	37 1/4	107 50	112 50	117 50	46 1/2
56	39 1/4	110 00	115 00	120 00	47 1/2
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The height and make of Williams' bicycle is unrecorded, but later accounts reported her variously riding a 48-inch wheel Champion and a 50-inch wheel.

Wheel and Cycling Trade Review, Vol 3, no. 8 (April 19, 1889): 150.

SUTTON SECURES THE STAKES

The Matron Who Has Masqueraded as Miss Williams Comes First Under the Wire.

Events of the Closing Night of the Bicycle Race.
—The Passionate Effusion of a Poetically Inclined Unknown.

"It's the biggest thing h'ever 'eld," said Jack Prince. The bicycle race, it is needless to say, was what provoked the remark. Myriads, legions of people packed the Coliseum building at 50 cents per pack to see the wind up of the contest. It was a foregone conclusion that Williams would win, for she appeared upon the track as jaunty and fresh, physically, as ever.



MISS WILLIAMS. She has never been fresh in manner, but has bent her energies and her back to making her wheel flash through space like a meteor on short time.

Omaha Daily Herald,
March 24, 1889, p. 7.

Williams was pictured in the *National Police Gazette*, a popular forerunner of tabloid-style magazines, May 18, 1889, p. 13.



material on Williams and her career, and provide valuable primary data when used cautiously and in corroboration with other resources. As products of their time, newspapers reflected and shaped the era's societal attitudes and perceptions.¹³

The coverage of the Omaha race reveals conflicting reactions to women cyclists and their divergence from expected roles. The newspapers recorded the vigorous competitive action of the race, while simultaneously treating the competitors as gendered objects. Space was devoted to descriptions of the women's appearance and costumes, typically tights and close fitting jackets or jerseys, often with colorful sashes and caps. The Omaha papers included stereotyped remarks, especially fixed upon Helen Baldwin, whom they dubbed "Beauty" Baldwin. The "bewitching" "little creature" "took it into her pretty head ... to do

a little riding" but was deemed "too sweet to win," ran the commentary as pieced together from the week's coverage.¹⁴ At the same time, and, increasingly as the excitement built, the press championed the women's skill and speed. As Williams swiftly established her ability as a breakaway sprinter, the reporters strewed the narrative with analogies of her velocity: an avalanche, a thunderbolt, a comet, a meteor, a Corliss (steam) engine out for a holiday.¹⁵ In the Omaha competition, her rivals' attempts to tire Williams by taking turns in spurting ahead were futile. She determinedly rode each of them down and increased her lead. Nothing seemed able to check her vim and flow of spirits, noted the *Bee*.¹⁶ When a forceful starting push caused Williams to topple from her wheel on the third evening and allowed the other cyclists to gain three-quarters of a lap on her, she quickly remounted and made full use of her sprinting powers to recover the lost ground.¹⁷

As the Omaha race reached its Saturday night finale, the admission fee rose from 25 to 50 cents, with no reduction in the crowds or their enthusiasm. Though Williams' victory was by then a near certainty, the women vied competitively until the closing pistol shot, with Williams first, Lewis taking second place, and Baldwin third. Armaindo, who had been ill, finished last.¹⁸ "The Great Race Is Over," the *Bee* proclaimed, pronouncing it the most interesting contest ever witnessed in Omaha. Sports impresario Eck went even further. He declared it "without doubt the greatest bicycle race that was ever held in this or any other country."¹⁹ Williams and the other cyclists were showered with baskets of floral offerings. She received as well a gold medal presented by the Omaha Base Ball Association, engraved with a woman cyclist and inscribed "Champion of the Six-day-three-hour-a-day-race."²⁰

The unregulated and freewheeling nature of many professional sports of the late nineteenth century could favor the wiles of those out for financial gain and fuel suspicions of trickery and fraud. The association of professional sports with commercial spectacle and its working class origins contributed to the rise of an elitist sporting mentality that disdained monetary profit and prescribed narrow codes of fair play. Professional cycling did not escape speculations of chicanery. Williams insisted all her races were contested strictly on their merits. "The public can depend that whatever race I enter I shall do so with the intention of winning if in my power."²¹ Observing

the women's strong rivalry, one newspaper concluded that "They are riding for blood. Women are not fakirs. They don't put up jobs to make a bluff and divide the receipts, no matter who wins."²² At the Madison Square Garden race in February 1889, victor Lottie Stanley's complaint that she earned only \$50, the same as the other contestants received, revealed that women cyclists sometimes operated as salaried "combinations" instead of being rewarded based on their performance. The *New York Times* proclaimed the race a "hippodrome," or fraudulent exhibition. Stanley's hard won win and financial claims were ultimately upheld, and she succeeded in receiving additional compensation.²³

Racing held out the lure of profit to performers, promoters, and wagerers alike. The subject of who should profit and by what means could become contentious. Gamblers' placement of bets on their favorite riders was perhaps the most straightforward financial transaction. At the Omaha event in March, each cyclist was to receive a proportional share of half the gate receipts. Williams' portion was 22 percent, which the *Omaha Daily Herald* reported as \$425 and Williams later recalled as \$750.²⁴ Sports managers typically also received a percentage of the earnings. Shortly after her debut cycling victory, Williams refused an offer by Tom Eck to represent her in return for fifteen percent of her winnings. The incident was complicated by allegations made against Eck by Williams' new, soon to be ex, manager Patrick (Patsy) Fallon. Eck, Fallon claimed, had indicated he would work against Williams if she declined his offer. And he had done just that, Fallon charged, at Williams' second six-day race at the Coliseum, held April 29 to May 4, 1889, which ended in a series of accidents for Williams, forcing her to withdraw. Eck denied this claim and countered that Fallon had boasted that he himself would receive 50 percent of Williams' winnings as her handler.²⁵ Coliseum manager Jack Prince, indignant at Fallon's cries of foul play, contended that Fallon, whose experience was confined to pugilism, had no business thrusting himself into bicycling, which Prince defended as one of "the cleanest and most legitimate" of sports. "It is the aim of the Coliseum stockholders to offer only such amusements as can be attended by the city's best people," Prince preached, "and so long as I am connected with the management of the house it shall be conducted on that principle. Bicycling and prize-fighting will not mix."²⁶

Life as a professional woman athlete brought Williams both physical and social hazards as she

embarked on her cycling career. Bicycle racing was dangerous. Falls from the high machines were frequent. In races that first spring and summer and in subsequent years, Williams' experiences on the track included collisions, head first falls, a sprained ankle, a broken collarbone, and loss of consciousness.²⁷ She quickly learned the necessity of persevering through injuries and illnesses. "The public is a fickle goddess at best to please and makes very little allowance for shortcomings when you appear before her, such as are accorded you in any other branch of business," she observed. "Sick or well you must meet her with a smiling face, declaring you never felt better in your life and must make good or get down and step out."²⁸

**Tomlinson Hall,
Indianapolis, 1897.** Alice
Olson Roepke Collection



Upon entering the public arena, Williams discovered that all was fair game in the eyes of press and public. Reputations, always vulnerable for women, were especially at risk for those who veered from the norm. In July 1889, Williams traveled to Denver where she competed against Baldwin, Brown, and Oakes in a number of contests arranged by sports manager and cyclist “Senator” Morgan. She won races while in Denver, but the primary news she made was of a different nature. “A social scandal,” the *Omaha World-Herald* announced on July 23.²⁹ The publicity revolved around Williams’ association with H.E. Cole, an Omaha real estate agent for whom she was working as stenographer and typist and who took an interest in her bicycling. When Williams went to Denver to compete, Cole showed up at the same time, neither having left word of their intended destination. Speculation about Cole’s supposed infatuation with Williams and an “elopement” occupied the Omaha and Denver newspapers. Both parties were married to other people, the stories emphasized, though Williams was separated from her husband.³⁰

Even as the Denver press accused Omaha newsmen of milking the story during “this hot dry

season,” they, too, continued to repeat and add to the gossip.³¹ Interviewed by a Denver reporter, Williams protested that there was “not a particle of truth” to any of the rumors and resented the unpleasant notoriety. “I don’t think it is fair to start these stories so foolishly,” she declared. “I should like to think I could be just as much of a lady if I do ride a bicycle. I know a great many people have a prejudice against women riding bicycles, but I don’t think it prevents a woman from being a lady, and this sort of a story hurts.”³² She maintained that she had no idea that Cole was in Denver until she met him unexpectedly at the station platform. She was quite capable of handling herself. “I attend to my own business and don’t need any manager.”³³ The story soon died down, aided by Mrs. Cole’s spirited defense of her husband and the sobering fact that the Coles had recently lost their only child.

Independence from managers was a goal largely unobtainable for professional women athletes. Attempts to direct their own careers free of the designs and expenses of managers went against the system in place, a system to which they soon learned to adapt. Performers and managers were mutually dependent on one another as they worked to attract audiences and receive compensation. Entrepreneurial promoters naturally followed where financial opportunities and audience interests beckoned, which, for a brief span, was the novel spectacle of women’s racing. The women cyclists in turn recognized that managers opened necessary doors for them in their athletic quest. In his “Ordinary Women,” Wells contends that “as talented as these women were to the sport of bicycle racing, without promoters, even shifty self-serving ones, to set up and promote the races, there was little they could do to carry on.”³⁴

Of reciprocal advantage for cyclists and promoters was transatlantic cross-migration. British-born athletes Prince, Morgan, and Oakes were among the numbers who established careers for themselves in America. And, as commercial sports and entertainment flourished, American athletes and entertainers traveled to Europe to compete and perform. In the late summer of 1889, Williams crossed the Atlantic to take part in a series of cycling races and exhibitions in which five women (Lottie Stanley, Jessie Woods, Louise Armaindo, May Allen, and Williams) operated as a combination under the management of Tom Eck. Although the specific terms of Williams’ arrangements are unknown, she sailed to England separately and met up with the other women at their training grounds in Long Eaton. Eck’s

Dubbed “Beauty Baldwin” by the press, Helen Baldwin wished to be recognized as an athlete pursuing her craft rather than an object to be ogled. Alice Olson Roepke Collection



ambitions of holding a series of races against the cowboy horsemen of Buffalo Bill's Wild West show in Paris and elsewhere in Europe never materialized, but the cycling tour did attract interested spectators at the various English destinations they visited, which included Leicester, North Shields, Nottingham, Northampton, Derby, Sunderland, Jarrow, and Sheffield. At the latter city, the women commenced a 20-hour race on Christmas Eve.³⁵

Williams eagerly promoted and amplified her victories. "I have been very successful in my outdoor racing," she wrote in a letter to the *Omaha Bee* on January 20, 1890, "having won nearly every race I entered with our combination, and against men, professionals, in which I won a three-mile handicap at Nottingham against [Jack] Lee and [F.W.] Allard, and a one-mile handicap, beat two in three, at Derby, against Lee, [A.H.] Robb and the combination. I have made some good records from a quarter of a mile in 42 seconds to ten miles in 32:30. ... Occasionally I hear the familiar cry of 'Go on Omaha, lap 'em!' and I never fail when that request reaches me to respond and go to the front."³⁶

Reports of a ten-mile race held in Sheffield demonstrated the attention-grabbing appeal of embellished or fabricated narrative. The purportedly closely contested race between Williams and May Allen took on a life of its own, frequently referenced in later newspaper sketches that promoted either Williams or Allen. Though no firsthand account has been found, the London-based *Sporting Life* was quoted as describing the event as "the most desperate and determined contest ever witnessed in England," with Allen finishing one foot behind Williams, the "Nebraska cyclone," both women carried to the dressing room "half insensible and fairly exhausted."³⁷

In her letter from England, Williams confidently predicted that when she returned to the United States, "I shall be the holder of the French and English championship medals and shall then be prepared to match myself against any woman in America."³⁸ Having cancelled her engagement with the combination, she had begun training in the new year at the Ash Inn Grounds in Stockport under Ed Moulton, a veteran American trainer. Moulton was concurrently managing champion professional sprinter James Collins. He would go on to train both male and female cyclists and would spend the last two decades of his career coaching amateur male athletes in track and field, football, and baseball at Stanford University. Williams' regimen consisted of walking, wrestling,



Frankie Nelson was among the competitors Williams defeated in a 24-hour race in St. Joseph, Missouri, in 1890. Alice Olson Roepke Collection

dumb bell exercises, club swinging, and bicycle riding in preparation for a sweepstake race in Paris.³⁹ She later provided further details of her training process: "I train just like a man preparing for a prize-fight. I get up in the morning, punch the bag for ten minutes and then box for another ten minutes. Sometimes I wrestle and jump rope. ... I avoid all fat-making substances in my food, and take excellent care of my general health."⁴⁰ As with the Sheffield race, no firsthand accounts of the French match have been located, though upon Williams' arrival in New York in early March, Moulton announced that she had bested her rivals in Paris by covering 100 miles in 6 hours and 20 minutes. He was ready to back her against "any lady rider in the world in any kind of a race she thinks well of." On a good track and in peak condition, he considered her "the champion of all the female riders now before the public."⁴¹

Williams set out to make good on Moulton's boasts. In April 1890, she and four other contenders, including Helen Baldwin and Hattie Lewis, competed in a six-day race at the Omaha Coliseum for a \$500 purse and "championship of America." On the first night, she broke a women's cycling "world record" by riding forty-two miles and eight laps in three hours. By the last night of the race, Williams held a prohibitive lead, and won

BICYCLE RACING TRANSFORMS LOVELY WOMAN FROM A PALE BEAUTY INTO A PERFECT FRIGHT.

*Dr. George L. Koarney and Mrs. Frazer Deprecate
the Practice of Bicycle Riding as a
Profession for Girls.*

*The Women Themselves Admit That They Will Break
Down, but They Are Determined to Race
for the Money They Win.*



THE GIRLS AT THE FINISH OF THE SIX DAYS BICYCLE RACE IN THE COLISEUM.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch,
Dec. 5, 1897

easily, covering 245.8 miles in 18 hours.⁴² In June, she achieved another victory in a competition at St. Joseph, Missouri in a 24-hour bicycle race against Baldwin, Lewis, and Frankie Nelson, this time for a \$400 purse and, again, "championship of America."⁴³ Williams continued to race, with a few more notable victories as well as some dramatic crashes and injuries, including a broken collarbone in a May 1891 race in Minneapolis. A benefit held in her honor exhibited a certain camaraderie among the cyclists. The program finished with a race between Tom Eck and Jack Prince, which Prince handily won.⁴⁴

The close association of professional cycling with spectacle and commercial enterprise continually manifested itself. Audiences were often treated to races featuring women against male cyclists and against horses, with the women customarily receiving a handicap. In a race contested soon after her St. Joseph six-day victory, Williams lost to cycling champion Jack Prince on a twenty-mile course in which she received a mile and a half start. She won other handicap races

against men, including a matchup in Lincoln, Nebraska, in the spring of 1892 against cyclist Charley Allen. In May of that year, Williams was booked to race a greyhound team and a California race horse. The event was canceled due to poor track conditions, but Williams did race against a horse later that month and on a number of other occasions.⁴⁵ In the fall of 1892, she traveled to Jamaica, where she and American cyclist Charles W. Price performed bicycle racing and "sensational feats on the wheel" to accompany the exhibitions of showman and equilibrist Achille Phillion, who ascended a spiral tower while balancing on a revolving sphere and descended in a blaze of fire.⁴⁶ For women athletes who desired to compete and be judged on their athletic merits, the focus on spectacle was compounded by being viewed as sexual objects. In an interview in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1892, Helen Baldwin complained about the colored lithographs of the women cyclists widely distributed around town advertising the races. She wished to be recognized as an athlete pursuing her craft rather than an object to

be ogled.⁴⁷ The newspaper duly noted Baldwin's grievances, but titled the article "Beauty on Wheels."

The advent of the Safety bicycle in the 1890s swelled the number of women riders. The bicycle's low mount, similar sized wheels, chain-driven rear wheel, and inflatable pneumatic tires propelled its popularity. A drop-frame version and the ease of mounting and steering made the bicycle appealing and accessible to women. Racers would continue to compete on high wheels for a few years, but by the mid-1890s, the Safety had largely displaced the hazardous Ordinary. Also being displaced, though much less quickly, were societal notions of women's inherent weaknesses and what constituted proper behavior. As women bicyclists became more visible, so, too, did public critique. The women who joined the cycling ranks would effect social change advancing women's mobility, independence, and dress reform, but the process of altering prevailing norms was slow-going. The growing numbers of cycling women gave impetus to concerns and debate about health, apparel, and conduct. Critical sentiment especially settled on women's competitive racing, with its perceived masculine associations so vividly displayed. Racing women, as Sarah Hallenbeck observes in her study of women and bicycling, clearly violated late nineteenth-century gender ideals and medical understandings of women's bodies and minds. Along with threatening their own supposed physical and psychological fragility, the women racers threatened to usurp the traditional "male" qualities of endurance, boldness, and competitiveness.⁴⁸ "Every race run by women works direct injury to the cause of cycling," fumed a critic in the 1894 *Referee* sporting magazine. "The sight of women tearing around a race track awhile, attired in semi-masculine costumes, and robbed of almost all the visible attributes that we commonly associate with womankind, is one to outrage the finest feelings of every true gentleman."⁴⁹ In 1895, another vehement antagonist contended that "to pump desperately along with humped back, twisted neck and purple face is to make a spectacle disgusting and alarming. ... Heaven forfend us from a race of racing women."⁵⁰

In the mid-1890s, the League of American Wheelmen (LAW), the governing body for bicycle racing, withdrew its official sanction from races open to women competitors.⁵¹ An article printed in the June 1896 *Omaha Daily Bee* welcomed LAW's prohibition: "Racing among women ought to be abolished. ... Excessive wheeling is positively injurious and shockingly unwomanly."⁵² A six-day

Nebraskan is "Most Interesting Bike Racer in America"

BY DAVID L. BRISTOW, EDITOR

With his handlebar mustache, Ashton Lambie looks a bit like a cyclist from Lillie Williams' day. In barely two years, the twenty-eight-year-old from Waverly, Nebraska, has gone from racing on gravel in Kansas to winning gold medals at the Pan-American Track Cycling Championships. In 2018 Lambie stunned the cycling world by shattering the world record in the Men's Individual Pursuit.



Ashton Lambie

Earlier this year, Bicycling magazine hailed him as "The Most Interesting Bike Racer in America."

As a track cyclist, Lambie races on a banked "velodrome" similar to what Lillie Williams competed on 130 years ago. Just as they did in Williams' day, "tracks still vary a great deal," said Ashton's wife, Margaret. "Olympic standard is 250 meters and wood, which dictates where certain levels of competition can be held. Tracks can be just about any fraction of a kilometer. They can be wood or concrete (or grass!), indoor or out, and banking is different for each."

Superficially, track bicycles have more-or-less the same configuration as the "Safety" bicycles of Williams' later career, but today's bikes are highly engineered for weight and aerodynamics. They are fixed-gear bikes, meaning they are single speed with the pedals coupled directly to the wheel.

And they have no brakes. You slow down by resisting the forward motion of the pedals. This is partly to save weight, Margaret explains, but—and here's a big surprise—having no brakes is mostly a safety feature.

"If the person in front of the pack grabs the brakes hard, everyone goes down," she explains, "but if nobody has brakes, there aren't those dramatic changes in speed."

Today's track cyclists wear helmets, not only for safety but also to improve their aerodynamics. ("Aero is everything.") Crashes are common and "range in terribleness from the rider getting back in and still medaling, to career-ending."

Track cycling includes men's and women's events such as a sprint races, time trials, and oddly-named events such as the Omnium (a multiple-race event held over two days) and Keirin and Madison races. Learn more at Ashton's website, www.teamlambie.com.

Lisa R. Lindell is a catalog librarian at Hilton M. Briggs Library at South Dakota State University in Brookings.

race in which Williams was scheduled to compete in St. Joseph, Missouri, in May 1898 was called off after the organizers learned the track would be blacklisted by LAW if women riders were allowed to race on it.⁵³

Despite attacks on their sport, women cyclists, including Williams, now on Safety bicycles, continued to compete, and, given the draw of their races and frustration with LAW's restrictive control, track owners continued to host them. Among the riders Williams raced in the 1890s were Lizzie Glaw, Tillie Anderson, Dottie Farnsworth, and Mlle. Lisette. In a particularly memorable six-day competition in Detroit in March 1896, Williams grittily continued on despite experiencing four hard falls and injury to her head on the first night and a pile-up on the next.⁵⁴ In a December 1897 interview that appeared in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, she defended her sport and enumerated the benefits she received. She stated that as a professional cyclist, she earned three to four thousand dollars

a year, as opposed to twenty dollars a week as a compositor. A *Post-Dispatch* critic countered that women racers were "forfeiting health for gain... selling body and soul" in unfeminine pursuits.⁵⁵ Asked about her racing costume, Williams acknowledged that it shocked her mother and other family members, "but how else can one ride? Not in skirts or bloomers, as they would hinder our movements."⁵⁶ She asserted that her health had improved after taking up cycling, while agreeing that the sport could be hard on the body. Its dangers were evidenced by the death of cyclist Dottie Farnsworth in 1902 from complications after a fall while riding in the Walter L. Main circus.⁵⁷

The rise of motorized vehicles at the turn of the twentieth century dealt a final blow to the bicycle era. As Williams' competitive cycling days came to a close, she adapted by taking up other sporting pursuits. She gained expertise in fencing, swimming, motorcycling, horsemanship, rowing, and shooting, and also raised fine show stock.

Minneapolis Tribune, May 1, 1904, p. 54.

LILLIE WILLIAMS,



Clever local fencer, who has challenged Mrs. Hulda Sweet of St. Paul.

LADY AND ATHLETE

LILLIE WILLIAMS A LOCAL ENTHUSIASTIC SPORTS-WOMAN.

Lillie Williams, champion lady fencer of Minneapolis and all-around athlete, is an old newspaper woman, being connected at one time with the Omaha Bee, but for the past few years has devoted her time entirely to athletics with the result that in the lines she has pursued she stands in the front ranks with the lady enthusiasts of the country.

Miss Williams is of Southern birth and from childhood's early hour has been connected with athletic work. As a child she was very sickly and the fact that she is so strong and healthy today is accredited to athletics by her. She has traveled through England and the West Indies, accomplishing marvels wherever she went.

It is impossible to go into the details of the different lines she has been interested in and but a few of the athletics in which she was the more prominent can be accounted. As a wheelwoman she is holder of several championship medals for records made by her and which yet remain unbroken. During the summer of 1900 she established two records over the Minnetonka course, one of 50 miles, unpaced, in three hours, including stops, the actual time in saddle being 2:34; the other was a run from Monks to the Mills, unpaced, in 15 minutes. Neither record has been lowered.

She is also an expert horsewoman, shot, swimmer and rower. For more than a year Miss Williams has been engaged in fencing with Prof. F. R. LeRoux as her instructor. She has given four exhibi-

On January 26, 1899, Williams married Franklin H. Williams, clerk at the Minneapolis post office and a former competitive cyclist. He served as a founder and president of the United Wheelmen of America in Minnesota, a group seceding from LAW, seeking more local control. Her first husband A.W. Sutton, from whom she had been estranged for a decade, had died of pulmonary tuberculosis in St. Louis in April 1898.⁵⁸ In Minneapolis, Williams gave exhibitions of her developing dueling skills. "Enthusiasts are unanimous in the opinion that she is as good as the best," noted the *Star Tribune*.⁵⁹ In 1909, press stories reported that she was undefeated and held the title of "champion woman fencer of the world."⁶⁰ In February 1909, now living in California, Williams demonstrated her versatile athletic abilities by swimming five hours without rest in the Long Beach "bath house plunge" to break the record of three hours set the previous week and her own prior record of two hours and five minutes.⁶¹ She advertised in the newspapers her availability to provide lessons in cycling, fencing, swimming, and horsemanship. She additionally offered instruction in boxing, fancy bag punching, and Indian clubs.⁶²

In the early twentieth century, Williams continued to challenge boundaries. She maintained her athletic proficiency and adapted her activities to what captured public interest. As motorcycling developed, she became an early rider and competitor. In 1907, in her mid-forties, she bought a Wagner motorcycle and soon mastered its mechanics. In the spring of 1909, she trained rigorously for the motorcycle races on Los Angeles' new speed track. Williams and other women competed despite the ruling of the Federation of American Motorcyclists (FAM) that the sport was too dangerous to sanction for women. In August 1911, *Motorcycle Illustrated* published a piece by Williams advocating women's recognition by FAM. She was now riding a specially built Elk motorcycle and challenged "any woman motorist in this country, or across the pond," to race. In October, the *Bicycling World and Motorcycle Review* reported that eight women (Dollie Adelman, Lucile Adelman, Viola Culp, Bertha Davis, Seda Leslie, Dora Ludwig, Stella Masters, and Mary Soderblom) were competing in Columbus, Ohio, primarily to decide who would meet Williams the next winter for the world's championship. That race evidently never materialized.⁶³ In 1912, Williams made headlines by applying for a position on the police motorcycle squad of Los Angeles. "I ride every day," she stated, "and, were I a member of



As bicycle racing declined in popularity, Williams gained expertise in fencing, swimming, motorcycling, horsemanship, rowing, and shooting, and also raised fine show stock. *Evansville Press* (Indiana), March 23, 1909, p 6.

the police force, I would do much to stop speeding among automobilists and other motorcyclists. I might as well be working for the city as paying for my own oil and gasoline. Los Angeles is one of the most progressive cities in the country and it should be the first to employ a woman as motorcycle



officer.”⁶⁴ She was not given the opportunity to prove her abilities.

Williams retained something of a public presence through breeding, training, and exhibiting show animals, including angora cats (her Bonnie Eddie was reportedly the highest priced cat in the country), bull dogs (the Earl of Edmont and Princess Nestor), Silky hens and chickens, and trick horses (Irene, a Kentucky thoroughbred saddle mare, and circus-born Ernie). Her menagerie also included alligators and tropical birds. Williams won champion ribbons at state fairs and at poultry and cat shows.⁶⁵ “I have never quite given up a public life,” she reflected, “and for that reason, probably, don’t miss the excitement of past years.”⁶⁶ Rather she looked ahead, “always forging forward,” as she noted in a 1918 letter to Sandy Griswold, now sports editor of the *Omaha World-Herald*, in which she described recently completing a course in auto mechanics from the Pacific Engineering and Automobile School.⁶⁷ The thrilling moments of former public glory yet remained ever fresh in her memory. Thirty years after the launch of her cycling career in Omaha, Williams could still evoke the exhilaration of winning her first race with thousands of fans cheering her to victory. Omaha

reigned supreme in her affections, she wrote from her home in San Francisco, and she would always respond to its call.⁶⁸

Throughout her career, Williams capitalized upon her abilities and resolve and grasped the opportunities open to her. Her story shines a light on the rise of a consumer and commercial sporting culture and the mutual, often colliding space in which performers, promoters, press, and public operated. In many ways subject to the interests and self-serving designs of others, Williams worked within those parameters to fashion a productive professional career that gave her freedom to pursue her athletic activities and create a public identity. Williams attributed her success to hard work and a strong will to ascend to the top of the ladder.⁶⁹ She embraced showmanship and spectacle, while driving herself as a highly trained and motivated athlete. In the face of vocal opposition to women’s engagement in traditionally male activities, Williams pursued her chosen career. Her determined spirit drew a degree of respect even from hardened critics. “She had an independent air about her that gave the impression that she could fight for her rights, and punctuate her remarks in a way that would be remembered,” wrote one otherwise disapproving interviewer.⁷⁰ Through their tenacious work of navigating and pushing gender and cultural boundaries, Lillie Williams and her fellow pioneering women athletes helped lay the path to an expanding world for women. **IN**

NOTES

¹ For discussions of women and cycling in the nineteenth century, see S. Michael Wells, “Ordinary Women: High-Wheeling Ladies in Nineteenth Century America,” *The Wheelmen* 43 (November 1993): 2-14; Sue Macy, *Wheels of Change: How Women Rode the Bicycle to Freedom* (Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 2011); Clare S. Simpson, “Capitalising on Curiosity: Women’s Professional Cycle Racing in the Late-Nineteenth Century,” in *Cycling and Society*, eds. Dave Horton, Paul Rosen, Peter Cox (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007): 47-65; Roberta J. Park, “Contesting the Norm: Women and Professional Sports in Late Nineteenth-Century America,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 29 (April 2012): 739-40; Sarah Hallenbeck, *Claiming the Bicycle: Women, Rhetoric, and Technology in Nineteenth-Century America* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2016); Christine Neejer, “The Bicycle Girls: American Wheelwomen and Everyday Activism in the Late Nineteenth Century” (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 2016); Roger Gilles, “Pedaling Beyond the Petticoats: Women Cyclists in the Gilded Age,” *Michigan History* (March/April 2018): 38-43; Roger Gilles, *Women on the Move: The Forgotten Era of Women’s Bicycle Racing* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2018); M. Ann Hall, *Muscle on Wheels: Louise Armaindo and the High-Wheel Racers of Nineteenth-Century America* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2018).

² *Omaha World-Herald*, Sept. 29, 1907, 17. See also *Daily Times* (Davenport, IA), Feb. 8, 1893, 3.

³ Civil War Pensions, Hillock, James B., Illinois, Regiment F, Company 146, accessed from National Archives and Records Administration; Princeton, Bureau Co., Illinois, in U.S., Department of the Interior, Office of the Census, *Ninth Census of the United States, 1870*, National Archives Microfilm Publication M593, roll 190, p. 482B; Edna C. Burchard and A.W. Sutton marriage, 10 Nov. 1881, Nebraska Marriage Records, 1855-1908; *Wolfe's Omaha City Directory, 1883-84*, 193; *Omaha City and Douglas County Directory, 1887*, 300; *Daily Times* (Davenport, IA), Feb. 8, 1893, 3. James and Almenia Hillock died, respectively, on June 28, 1887 and May 24, 1902 (*Omaha Daily Bee*, June 30, 1887, 4; *Omaha World-Herald*, May 27, 1902, 8). Piecing together Lillie Williams' story poses challenges. Her age and place of birth as well as her name vary in census and marriage records, newspaper accounts, and other biographical sources. The adoption of professional "stage" names and biographies was common among women bicycle racers and other sports performers of the era. Competitors Elsa Von Blumen and Louise Armaindo, for example, were born Caroline (Carrie) Kiner and Louise (or Louisa) Brisbois, respectively. Hall, *Muscle on Wheels*, 19, 37. A mystery yet unanswered is whether Lillie Williams also performed under the name Alma Beaumont, a balloonist whose numerous, sometimes perilous ascensions and parachute jumps drew crowds in northern England in the autumn of 1889 and over the next decade. The *Omaha Bee* identified Williams and Beaumont as the same person, and indeed Beaumont's 1889 balloon performances were conducted in close proximity to the sites of Williams' bicycle tour. After 1889, however, contemporary accounts place the two performers in separate locations during parallel time periods, giving rise to the possibility that more than one individual used the Beaumont name. For sources linking Williams and Beaumont, see *Omaha Daily Bee*, Oct. 20, 1889, 9, Nov. 10, 1912, 11. Beaumont, in interviews with the British press in the fall of 1889, identified herself as a native of Omaha and her father as a retired balloon maker and aeronaut named Glynn Beaumont (*Shields Daily Gazette*, Sept. 10, 1889, 2). In an October interview, she stated that she was also a competitive cyclist (*Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail*, Oct. 15, 1889, 4). The October 11, 1889, *Bicycling World* and *L.A.W. Bulletin* associated Beaumont with a "Miss Archer" (641-42). In May 1890, Alma Beaumont wrote a letter to the press from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where she had been on an ill-fated ballooning tour since January, accompanied by aeronaut Stanley Spencer and manager and professional cyclist William Millar Woodside. She reported the death of Woodside on May 18, 1890, of yellow fever (See *Wheel and Cycling Trade Review* 5 (July 4, 1890): 558; *Jarrow Express*, July 18, 1890, 6). During this same time period, Lillie Williams' presence in the United States is documented. Passenger lists and newspaper accounts identify her as arriving in New York on March 3, 1890, traveling from Liverpool on the ship *Aurania* with American sprinter James Collins and trainer Ed Moulton. (New York, Passenger and Crew Lists, 1820-1957, *ancestry.com*; *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 10, 1890, 2). And in April 1890, Williams competed in a cycling race at the Omaha Coliseum (*Omaha Daily Bee*, Apr. 20, 1890, 9). In 1895, a British newspaper variously linked the professional name Alma Beaumont with parachutists Jenny Dene and Emily De Voy. (*Bury Free Press*, June 8, 1895, 3; *Bury Free Press*, Sept. 14, 1895, 3). On May 13, 1896, aeronautist Alma Beaumont married Herbert Conway, a comedic actor and manager of White's Carnival

in Aberdeen, Scotland (Marriage Register, National Records of Scotland; *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, May 14, 1896, 4). On the marriage license, she gave her name as Mary Brown, her age as 22, and her parents as John Brown and Marian Beaumont, both deceased. (Accounts of performances by Miss Mary Brown, "celebrated lady parachutist," appeared in newspapers of that era. *Glasgow Herald*, July 23, 1894, 1; *Edinburgh Evening News*, July 24, 1894, 4; *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, Sept. 1, 1894, 2). Within a few months of their marriage, the couple made newspaper headlines when Beaumont sought maintenance after a six-week supposed desertion by Conway (*West London Observer*, Oct. 30, 1896, 3). During this time frame, Lillie Williams continued to compete in American cycling races. Beaumont, in 1896, was described as no more than five feet tall (*South Wales Daily News*, July 31, 1896, 6), while Williams, in 1897, was described as 5 feet, 5 1/2 inches (*St Louis Post-Dispatch*, Dec. 5, 1897, 16).

⁴ *Omaha World-Herald*, Mar. 28, 1919, 11.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Sept. 29, 1907, 17.

⁶ David V. Herlihy, *Bicycle: The History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004); Andrew Ritchie, "The Origins of Bicycle Racing in England: Technology, Entertainment, Sponsorship and Advertising in the Early History of the Sport," *Journal of Sport History* 26 (Fall 1999): 489-520; Ritchie, *Early Bicycles and the Quest for Speed: A History, 1868-1903*. 2nd ed. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2018);

Former Omaha Girl Would Be Motorcycle Police Woman

Miss Lillie Williams, formerly of Omaha and now a resident of Los Angeles, Cal., has applied to the chief of police of that city for a position as motorcycle police-woman. Miss Williams when living in this city was at one time an expert tyro on the Omaha Bee and married one of Omaha's old time printers, Al Sutton, who died in St. Louis ten years ago.

Along in the early nineties she took up bicycle riding under the name of Lillie Williams and shortly became famous, defeating all the best woman riders of the world. Leaving Omaha she went to Europe and showed through all the big cities as a balloonist and parachute artist. She also won many medals as a fencer and at one time held the women's championship of this country. Miss Williams went to California about fourteen years ago, married a wealthy ranchman and again broke into the limelight as a raiser of high-class poultry. She also started the first Angora cat farm in this country.

In applying for a position as a motorcycle policewoman she has assured the chief that she can perform the duties as well as a masculine officer and only wants a chance to prove her claims. Should her request be granted she would be the first woman to hold such a position in the United States. Miss Williams has seven championship medals given her for her skill and endurance in bicycle and motorcycle events. She is an all round athlete, an accomplished horsewoman and a strong swimmer.

"If they think that a woman cannot fill the position of a motorcycle police officer on the Los Angeles force," said Miss Williams, "just set a speeder out in front of me and give me a chance at him on my motorcycle. All I want is a chance to prove this."

"I ride every day and, were I a member of the police force, I would do much to stop speeding among automobilists and other motorcyclists. I might as well be working for the city as paying for my own oil and gasoline. Los Angeles is one of the most progressive cities in the country and it should be the first to employ a woman as motorcycle officer."

Miss Williams is an attractive young woman and she is confident that she



MISS LILLIE WILLIAMS.

would make good if given an opportunity. She has made many long trips on her motorcycle and says that, as a sport, it has no equal.

"If they think that a woman cannot fill the position of a motorcycle police officer on the Los Angeles force," Williams told a reporter, "just set a speeder out in front of me and give me a chance at him on my motorcycle. All I want is a chance to prove this." The LAPD did not agree. But this 1912 report contains unintentional irony. Fifteen years earlier, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* had warned that bicycle racing robbed women of their beauty (see p. 202). Still being judged by her looks, the fifty-year-old Williams is described in this report as "an attractive young woman." *Omaha Sunday Bee*, Nov. 10, 1912, p 11.

Simpson, "Capitalising on Curiosity," 50-53; "Velocipede Race in Paris: Sunday Afternoon," *Harper's Weekly* (Dec. 19, 1868), 812; Wells, "Ordinary Women," 2-14.

⁷ *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 13, 1889, 5; *Sunday Leader* (Wilkes-Barre, PA), June 10, 1888, 3; *St. Joseph Herald*, June 8, 1890, 5; *Grand Forks (ND) Daily Herald*, June 24, 1891, 8; *Motorcycle Illustrated* 3 (July 15, 1908): 25.

⁸ *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 24, 1889, 2. See also *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, Dec. 16, 1888, 15; *Bicycling World and L.A.W. Bulletin* 18 (Mar. 29, 1889): 407.

⁹ *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 23, 1889, 2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Mar. 21, 1889, 2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Apr. 21, 1889, 9; Simpson, "Capitalizing on Curiosity," 56, 61.

¹² *Omaha Daily World*, Mar. 19, 1889, 3. Morgan was not an actual senator. He attained his nickname in 1883 after making an impromptu campaign speech for the Republican gubernatorial candidate in Pennsylvania. See *Morning Oregonian*, Nov. 6, 1889, 8.

¹³ For analysis of the role of newspapers in covering sports, see Jeffrey Hill, "Anecdotal Evidence: Sport, the Newspaper Press, and History" in *Deconstructing Sport History: A Postmodern Analysis*, ed. Murray G. Phillips (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 117-29.

¹⁴ *Omaha Daily Herald*, Mar. 19, 1889, 5, Mar. 21, 1889, 5; *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 21, 1889, 2, Mar. 23, 1889, 2.

¹⁵ *Omaha Daily Herald*, Mar. 21, 1889, 5, Mar. 22, 1889, 5; *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 23, 1889, 2.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Omaha Daily Herald*, Mar. 21, 1889, 5; *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 21, 1889, 2.

¹⁸ *Omaha Daily Herald*, Mar. 24, 1889, 7; *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 24, 1889, 2.

¹⁹ *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 23, 1889, 2, Mar. 24, 1889, 2.

²⁰ *Omaha Daily World*, Mar. 24, 1889, 8; *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 24, 1889, 2; *Omaha Republican*, Mar. 24, 1889, 1; *Omaha Daily Herald*, Mar. 24, 1889, 7.

²¹ *Omaha Daily Bee*, June 9, 1889, 2. For analysis of the rise of amateurism, see Norman Baker, "Whose Hegemony: The Origins of the Amateur Ethos in Nineteenth Century English Society," *Sport in History* 24 (Summer 2004); Lincoln Allison, *Amateurism in Sport: An Analysis and Defence* (London: Frank Cass, 2001); Tony Collins, *Sport in Capitalist Society: A Short History* (London: Routledge, 2013), 27-37.

²² *Saint Paul (MN) Globe*, May 6, 1891, 5.

²³ *New York Times*, Feb. 19, 1889, 5; *New York Sun*, Feb. 18, 1889, 1; *New York Evening World*, Feb. 18, 1889, 1.

²⁴ *Omaha Daily Herald*, Mar. 24, 1889, 7, Mar. 26, 1889, 8, *Omaha World-Herald*, Sept. 29, 1907, 17.

²⁵ *Omaha Republican*, May 2, 1889, 1; *Omaha Daily World*, May 3, 1889, 3; *Omaha Daily Herald*, May 3, 1889, 5.

²⁶ *Omaha Daily Herald*, May 3, 1889, 5.

²⁷ *Omaha Republican*, May 2, 1889, 1; *Omaha Daily Bee*, May 7, 1889, 2; *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, May 7, 1891, 2; Gilles, "Pedaling Beyond the Petticoats," 40-41.

²⁸ *Omaha World-Herald*, Sept. 29, 1907, 17.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, July 23, 1889, 1. See also *Omaha Daily Bee*, July 21, 1889, 16; *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, July 22, 1889, 2.

³⁰ *Lincoln Journal Star*, July 24, 1889, 4; *Omaha World-Herald*, July 23, 1889, 1, July 27, 1889, 1. Williams' mother was even quizzed for information. See *Omaha World-Herald*, July 22, 1889, 1.

³¹ *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, July 23, 1889, 2.

³² Quoted in *Ibid.*

³³ Quoted in *Omaha World-Herald*, July 23, 1889, 1.

³⁴ Wells, "Ordinary Women," 13. See also Simpson, "Capitalising on Curiosity," 61.

³⁵ *Saint Paul Globe*, Aug. 9, 1889, 6; *Omaha Daily Bee*, Sept. 22, 1889, 1; *Shields Daily Gazette*, Sept. 30, 1889, 3; *Nottingham Evening Post*, Oct. 4, 1889, 3; *Northampton Mercury*, Oct. 5, 1889, 10; *Sheffield Independent*, Oct. 9, 1889, 8; *Sporting Life*, Oct. 11, 1889; *Derby Daily Telegraph*, Oct. 14, 1889, 3; *Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette*, Nov. 4, 1889, 3, Nov. 11, 1889, 3; *Jarrow Express*, Nov. 29, 1889, 8; *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, Dec. 26, 1889, 8.

³⁶ *Omaha Daily Bee*, Feb. 9, 1890, 9. Williams' victories in Derby were reported in the *Derby Daily Telegraph* (Oct. 14, 1889, 3), but the *Nottingham Evening Post* (Oct. 4, 1889, 3) identified Armaindo as the winner of the three-mile handicap in Nottingham.

³⁷ See *Grand Forks (N.D.) Daily Herald*, June 24, 1891, 8; *Daily Times* (Davenport, IA), Feb. 8, 1893, 3; *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, Aug. 11, 1895, 4; *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Nov. 24, 1897, 5.

³⁸ *Omaha Daily Bee*, Feb. 9, 1890, 9.

³⁹ *Ibid.*; "E.W. Moulton," *Iowa Alumnus* (November 1922): 49-52; "Edward (Dad) Moulton Has Run Last Race and Trained His Last Man," *Corvallis Gazette-Times*, July 25, 1922, 1.

⁴⁰ Quoted in *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, Dec. 5, 1897, 16.

⁴¹ Quoted in *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 10, 1890, 2. Williams later stated she had raced three French women in the 100-mile race in Paris, winning by a mile on the twelve-lap asphalt track. *Daily Times* (Davenport, IA), Feb. 8, 1893, 3.

⁴² *Omaha Daily Bee*, Apr. 20, 1890, 9, Apr. 22, 1890, 2, Apr. 27, 1890, 2; *Nebraska State Journal*, Apr. 28, 1890, 1.

⁴³ *St. Joseph Herald*, June 8, 1890, 5, June 16, 1890, 8.

⁴⁴ *Saint Paul (MN) Globe*, May 17, 1891, 7.

⁴⁵ *St. Joseph Herald*, June 30, 1890, 8; *Nebraska State Journal*, Apr. 29, 1892, 2, May 4, 1892, 6, May 20, 1892, 5; *Lincoln Evening Call*, Apr. 30, 1892, 8. For analysis of sport as commercial entertainment and spectacle, see Dion Georgiou and Benjamin Litherland, "Introduction" in *Sport's Relationship with Other Leisure Industries: Historical Perspectives*, ed. Georgiou and Litherland (London: Routledge, 2017), 4, 11. For accounts of Williams' races with horses, see *Omaha Daily Bee*, June 2, 1889, 2, May 29, 1892, 8; *Courier* (Lincoln, NE), May 28, 1892, 5; *Nebraska State Journal*, June 27, 1892, 8; *Detroit Free Press*, Aug. 8, 1892, 3; *Decatur Herald*, Sept. 3, 1893, 5.

⁴⁶ *Kingston (Jamaica) Daily Gleaner*, Nov. 14, 1892, 2; *Racine (WI) Journal*, Apr. 22, 1898, 8.

- ⁴⁷ *Grand Rapids (MI) Herald*, Aug. 8, 1892, 4.
- ⁴⁸ Hallenbeck, *Claiming the Bicycle*, 2, 132-35, 163; Gilles, "Pedaling Beyond the Petticoats," 39; Hall, *Muscle on Wheels*, 140-42.
- ⁴⁹ Berry Helca, "Object to Ladies' Races," *Referee* 13, no. 21 (September 21, 1894), unnumbered, quoted in Neejer, "The Bicycle Girls," 39.
- ⁵⁰ *Town Topics* 34 (July 25, 1895), 18-19, quoted in Neejer, "The Bicycle Girls," 38.
- ⁵¹ In the 1897 bylaws, LAW included a provision preventing any LAW-sanctioned race event from including a women's race on its schedule. Macy, *Wheels of Change*, 73; Hallenbeck, *Claiming the Bicycle*, 156.
- ⁵² *Omaha Daily Bee*, June 28, 1896, 18.
- ⁵³ *St. Joseph Gazette-Herald*, May 8, 1898, 3.
- ⁵⁴ *The Times* (Washington, DC), Aug. 24, 1898, 6; *Saint Paul (MN) Globe*, Oct. 7, 1898, 5; Gilles, *Women on the Move*, 62-65.
- ⁵⁵ *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Dec. 5, 1897, 16.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁷ *Buffalo (NY) Commercial*, June 7, 1902, 2; *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, June 7, 1902, 9.
- ⁵⁸ *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, Feb. 2, 1899, 7; *Minneapolis Journal*, Feb. 3, 1899, 7; *Saint Paul (MN) Globe*, Mar. 26, 1897, 8; death of A.W. Sutton, April 21, 1898, St. Louis, Missouri, Death Records, 1850-1931. Franklin Williams died from a motorcycle accident, January 5, 1913 in Los Angeles. California, Death Index, 1905-1939.
- ⁵⁹ *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, May 1, 1904, 54.
- ⁶⁰ *Evansville (IN) Press*, Mar. 23, 1909, 5.
- ⁶¹ *Los Angeles Herald*, Feb. 11, 1909, 10; *Santa Ana Register*, Feb. 22, 1909, 8.
- ⁶² *Omaha World-Herald*, May 23, 1895, 7; *Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 22, 1909, 46, Feb. 25, 1912, 51; *San Francisco Chronicle*, Nov. 14, 1915, 18.
- ⁶³ *Motorcycle Illustrated* 3 (July 15, 1908): 25; 6 (July 13, 1911): 50; 6 (Aug. 24, 1911): 43; 6 (Sept. 7, 1911): 44; *Evansville (IN) Press*, Mar. 23, 1909, 5; *Bicycling World and Motorcycle Review* 64 (Oct. 7, 1911): 111.
- ⁶⁴ Quoted in *Omaha Daily Bee*, Nov. 10, 1912, 11. See also *Morning News* (Wilmington, DE), Aug. 3, 1912, 6; *Altoona (PA) Tribune*, Nov. 20, 1912, 10; *San Francisco Chronicle*, Dec. 1, 1912, 47.
- ⁶⁵ *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, Dec. 24, 1905, 15, Sept. 9, 1906, 11, Jan. 16, 1908, 8, Apr. 2, 1908, 13, Aug. 11, 1912, 9; *Omaha World-Herald*, Sept. 29, 1907, 17; *Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 19, 1909, 23, *Los Angeles Herald*, Jan. 21, 1909, 12, Jan. 24, 1909, 4; *Omaha Daily Bee*, Nov. 10, 1912, 11.
- ⁶⁶ *Omaha World-Herald*, Sept. 29, 1907, 17.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Mar. 26, 1918, 10.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Mar. 28, 1919, 11. Details of Williams' life after 1919 are unknown, including the date and place of her death.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 29, 1907, 17.
- ⁷⁰ *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Dec. 5, 1897, 16.