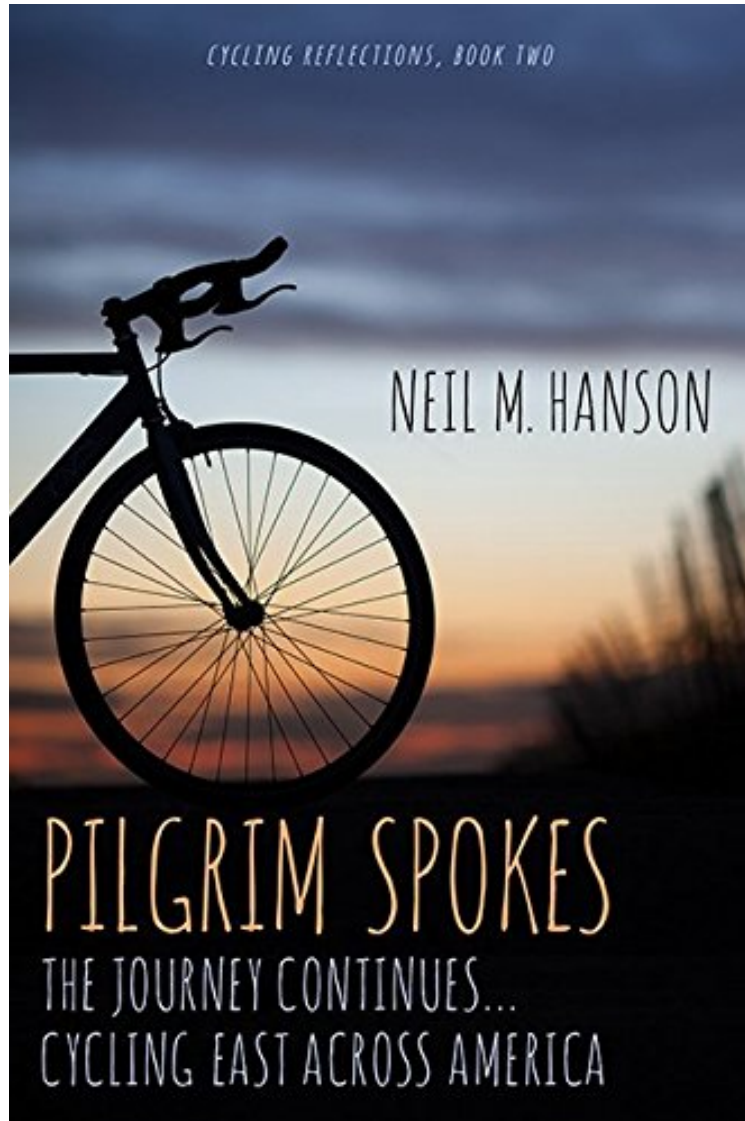


[Mobile library] Pilgrim Spokes: Cycling East Across America (Cycling Reflections)

Pilgrim Spokes: Cycling East Across America (Cycling Reflections)

Neil M Hanson

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Neil M Hanson : Pilgrim Spokes: Cycling East Across America (Cycling Reflections) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Pilgrim Spokes: Cycling East Across America (Cycling Reflections):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Far more than a biking story By Glynn Young A few years back, I spent a weekend with a group biking the Katy Trail in Missouri. The trail is widely known among biking enthusiasts across the country its the longest (and narrowest) state park in the United States. A former rail bed, the trail stretches from Clinton in western Missouri almost to the Mississippi River in St. Charles County, just to the north of St. Louis.

And there are now plans to extend the trail from Sedalia to Kansas City. The trail is almost completely flat. It generally follows the path of the Missouri River, and in fact the river is often just to the right of the trail. It passes through forested areas and farmland, a tunnel or two, along the bottom of towering bluffs, and alongside open road. Even on weekends, it's rarely crowded, and then only near popular tourist spots like Augusta (and its wineries) and St. Charles. And what you find yourself doing while biking the Katy is thinking, reflecting, and meditating. That's exactly what Neil Hanson did when he biked the Katy as part of a longer journey, described in *Pilgrim Spokes: Cycling East Across America*. After completing the first half of his ride, recounted in *Pilgrim Wheels: Reflections of a Cyclist Crossing America*, he continued east to Annapolis, Maryland. (I should point out that he was 60 when he finished, and consider what good shape he was in to bike 100 miles or more a day.) Hanson finds the people of the American heartland, but he provides an unromanticized picture of them. It's generally a positive picture of generous people, people interested in what he's doing, people who tell him stories of their lives and towns. But it's also the occasional rude and mean people like the pickup truck driver who threw a bottle and hit him while he was riding in western Pennsylvania. Hanson reflects on his own life, but also on the areas and regions he's traveling through: the old National Road, how U.S. 40 has dramatically changed over the decades, the beauty and history of covered bridges in Indiana, the (varying) quality of food available in small towns and small cities (he's biking, so he can eat a lot of chicken fried steak), and more. In between the two books, his marriage of 30 years had dissolved. Dissolved is the right word and he reflects on that as well. *Pilgrim Spokes* is a wonderful biking story, but it's far more than a trail and travel guide. It does two things simultaneously, telling the story of a journey across the country, and telling the story of one man reflecting on his life, its high points and its imperfections. And his view of his own life is just as unromanticized as his account of the people he meets. It's the kind of book that stays with you, because it's the kind of book that tells what happens when you balance yourself on the two-wheeled frame and take off, the air moving around you, your legs pumping the pedals, the trees seemingly flying past like smudged paintings. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Go along for the ride. You'll feel better for it. By Stonewort After reading Neil's book about the first half of his cross-country bike ride, I was eager to read this one about the second half, though I wondered if it would be as good. Turns out it's actually better. In this tale, recounting the ride from the Midwest to points east, Neil has honed his observational skills and does an even better job of blending in-the-moment travelogue with cogitations on the bigger meaning of it all. What I liked best about both books is that they allowed me to join the trip vicariously and experience the road as Neil and his cycling buddy did. I could relate to the joys and miseries he details and felt the pleasure of recognition when he described places I have been. I particularly liked reading about his encounters with the people along the way, often fellow travelers, waitresses, motel proprietors, and the like. It still amazes me that Neil had the stamina and overall fitness to undertake this ride. It inspires me to know that at an age when many men morph into couch potatoes, Neil is still out there facing the same physical challenges that he undertook 35 years ago. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Enjoy one man's thoughts while riding cross country. By Hrdlee I really like reading travelogues ever since I picked up Bill Bryson's *A WALK IN THE WOODS* several years ago. I found a copy of *PILGRIM SPOKES* in the Globe Hotel in Hartsburg, MO while cycling the Katy Trail with my wife of 37 years. Mr. Hanson's struggle with his sense of adventure and a failed 30 marriage (and the Globe) had me reflecting on my own decisions moving into the later years of life. This was a good read for me at my place in time.

Award-winning and best-selling conclusion of an epic American journey.

"Neil Hanson takes you on a journey that's both on the road and in the mind. For him, travel sparks observations on a myriad of topics, which he shares in his sparkling prose." --Stan Purdum, author of *Roll Around Heaven All Day and Playing in Traffic* "Pilgrim Spokes delivers a delightful blend of travelogue, cycling insights, and reflections. . . . [It's] a vivid read filled with personal reflection, philosophical insights, physical challenges, and a dose of spirituality that immerses the reader in an exhilarating ride." --D. Donovan, Senior er, *Midwest Book* "Hanson is a thoughtful narrator... Readers will consequently feel fortunate to find themselves immersed in meditations...this isn't just a book for bicycle enthusiasts; it's also for any fan of the examined life. ...A book that offers plenty of 'shared sojourner's camaraderie' in the company of a happy, philosophical companion." --Kirkus s About the Author A lifelong cyclist, Neil Hanson's two-wheeled adventures have taken him across America, along the Natchez Trace, and throughout northern Italy. Originally from Kansas, Neil currently lives in Colorado, where he navigates his bicycle up and down the inclines of the Rocky Mountains. His books include *Pilgrim Wheels*, part one of the deep and introspective journey story woven around his cross-country trip that concludes in *Pilgrim Spokes*, as well as a how-to minimalist-touring guide, *The Pilgrim Way*.