

## Information Sheet

**R 94 Pyle's International Transcontinental Foot Race.  
Programs, 1928-1929.  
One folder, photocopies.**

This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri](http://The State Historical Society of Missouri). If you would like more information, please contact us at [shsresearch@umsystem.edu](mailto:shsresearch@umsystem.edu).

These are programs from Charles C. Pyle's first and second annual transcontinental foot races. The 1928 race was from Los Angeles to New York; the 1929 race was from New York to Los Angeles. Through Missouri the runners followed U.S. Highway 66.

Charles C. Pyle (1882-1939) was a prominent sports promoter and showman who in 1928 and 1929 sponsored professional foot races which traversed the United States from coast to coast. Known popularly as C. C. ("Cash and Carry") Pyle, he had fostered the professional sports careers of football star Harold E. "Red" Grange and tennis player Suzanne Lenglen. The foot races were intended to be profitable affairs, but neither contest proved to be very successful, and the series was halted after the "second annual" event.

The 1928 race departed Los Angeles in early March. It soon earned the sobriquet, "Bunion Derby," as the hot desert roads quickly eliminated more than half of the international field. Following old U.S. Route 66, the troupe crossed Missouri late in April. Averaging about forty miles per day, 55 of the 199 starters finished in New York on 26 May. The winner was Andrew Payne of Claremore, Oklahoma.

In late March 1929 the second race started from New York, to garner more publicity and avoid another early burnout in the desert. This year a vaudeville show accompanied the caravan, performing in a tent erected at the site of the next overnight stop. Essentially retracing the previous year's route, the runners crossed Missouri, again on old Route 66, in late April and early May. However, the promotion was a financial disaster, and only nineteen racers finished the ultramarathon in Los Angeles on 18 June.

The programs, sold prior to the caravan's arrival in each town along the route, describe the itinerary, praise C. C. Pyle's brilliant entrepreneurship, provide background information on foot racing, and provide small photographs and thumbnail biographies of the contestants.

r087                      4 September 1981                      Ella Miller                      *Loaned for photocopying*

## Shelf List

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Vol. 1: "Official Program; C. C. Pyle's First Annual International-Trans-Continental Foot Race, Los Angeles to New York, 1928." 20 pages.

Vol. 2: "Official Program; C. C. Pyle's Second Annual International-Trans-Continental Foot Race, New York to Los Angeles, 1929." 16 pages.

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**Index Cards**

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Joplin (Mo.)  
Maplewood (Mo.)  
Marathon running  
Miller (Mo.)  
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Rolla (Mo.)  
Running races  
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