



Long Way Round: Chasing Shadows Across the World

Ewan McGregor , Charley Boorman , Robert Uhlig (co-author)

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It started as a daydream. Poring over a map of the world at home one quiet Saturday afternoon, Ewan McGregor - actor and self-confessed bike nut - noticed that it was possible to ride all the way round the world, with just one short hop across the Bering Strait from Russia to Alaska. It was a revelation he couldn't get out of his head. So he picked up the phone and called Charley Boorman, his best friend, fellow actor and bike enthusiast. 'Charley, ' he said. 'I think you ought to come over for dinner...' From London to New York, Ewan and Charley chased their shadows through Europe, the Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Russia, across the Pacific to Alaska, then down through Canada and America. But as the miles slipped beneath the tyres of their big BMWs, their troubles started. Exhaustion, injury and accidents tested their strength. Treacherous roads, unpredictable weather and turbulent politics challenged their stamina. They were chased by paparazzi in Kazakhstan, courted by men with very large guns in the Ukraine, hassled by the police, and given bulls' testicles for supper by Mongolian nomads.

And yet despite all these obstacles they managed to ride over 20,000 miles in four months, changing their lives forever in the process. As they travelled they documented their trip, taking photographs, and writing diaries by the campfire. "Long Way Round" is the result of their adventures - a fascinating, frank and highly entertaining travel book about two friends riding round the world together and, against all the odds, realising their dream.

Long Way Round: Chasing Shadows Across the World Details

Date : Published October 1st 2004 by Atria Books (first published 2004)

ISBN : 9780743499330

Author : Ewan McGregor , Charley Boorman , Robert Uhlig (co-author)

Format : Hardcover 320 pages

Genre : Travel, Nonfiction, Adventure, Biography, Autobiography, Memoir

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From Reader Review Long Way Round: Chasing Shadows Across the World for online ebook

Robin Allen says

This book was kinda boring and whiny for a couple of rich dudes on bikes with a film crew following them around.

Melissa says

I'm not even going to blame the fact that I interrupted reading this with a few much better books & coming back to it was torturous. Too much man whining, too much man bickering, too much "Oh but we miss our families so much!!" No one forced you to leave them & take this trip, did they?

Shannon says

This is a true story about two fairly well known people taking a trip across a vast distance. The A-List actor and a well-to-do buddy (d-list actor?) have a dream and try to put it into action. Some of their challenges are ones that most people would not have - e.g. having a director who does not want you riding a motorcycle to practice for the trip in case you injure yourself before your movie is complete. Some of the other challenges they thought were unique to their "star power" were likely challenges that anyone travelling the road less travelled would have: i.e people coming out to stare, insisting on some celebration or having a political leader want to meet you. I have travelled some and am not famous for anything and I have had these experiences.

There is lots of whining and the book is not particularly well written. Having said that, these guys are not famous (or almost famous) for their writing skills. Also, they have obviously not had to endure many hardships throughout their lives but I wish the editor had reeled them in a bit.

One of the areas that I thought was really lacking in their writing was their insistence that the adventure really moved them, that they felt connected to the places that they had visited and that it changed their lives. Unfortunately, they could not demonstrate this and had to rely on telling us that. I actually believe them but wish I could have read the book and felt it with them.

Not the worst book out there and if you are a motorcycle kind of person you will get a lot more out of the many pages devoted to their research and decision making (and errors) that went into motorcycle choice.

Sundeep Supertramp says

About the authors:

Ewan McGregor, the author. Does that name ring some bells? Yeah, he is the same guy from the movies Star

Wars, The Impossible (2012), The Island (2005), Big Fish (2003).

It is claimed that the other author, Charley Boorman, is also an actor. Though I've not noticed in any movie, as far as I could remember, here are a few movies which starred him. Travellers (2011), Deliverance (1972), Excalibur (1981), The Serpent's Kiss (1997).

Plot:

The whole idea of the book is to circum-navigate around the world from London to New York.

My take on the book:

This is first of its kind I've ever read. Of course, I was familiar with the word 'circum-navigation' but never read anything like 'circum-navigating on motorbikes'. To top that, by Ewan McGregor and his actor friend Charley Boorman. It is not very often that you get a chance to see two famous, successful actors of Hollywood, struggling in the muds and potholes with their bikes. I don't know any reason why they would even attempt such a thing.

Ewan McGregor and Charley Boorman are no childhood-friends, as it happens with many. Their love for bikes is the only thing which binds them and makes them good friends.....

To read the whole review, click the link below....

<http://booksreviewwala.blogspot.in/20...>

Brad says

My love of Long Way Round is purely emotional. We are not talking about great literature here, nor should anyone expect it. After all, the book isn't written. It is spoken. But that adds to the charm.

As these two spoiled boys travel around the world from London to New York, cutting through places like Kazakhstan, Russia and Mongolia, it is the chattiness and comradeship of such close friends living a "Boys' Own" adventure that sucks us in. Whether they are shitting their pants when a Russian miner comes down the stairs with an AK-47 on his hip or they are overwhelmed with emotion when they spend time with Mongolian kids in the sewers of Ulan Bataar, whether they are arguing over the killing of a Grizzly Bear along the Road of Bones or they are worrying for Ewan's life after a car crash near Calgary, they are really just two real blokes enjoying a lark.

But they do it all with humility, which suppressed my usual annoyance at rich folk whining about supposed adversity while doing something the rest of us never will. Ewan McGregor and Charlie Boorman actually seemed to get the immensity of what they were doing (and how insanely lucky they were to be doing it), and even though they complained about the rough roads and the cold and the wet and the adversity, they really learned some important lessons during their trip -- particularly when it came to the importance of their families.

As for me, well, I was surprised to discover that I was inspired by Ewan and Charlie to make a journey of my own. It hasn't happened yet, but it will. But I think I'll be taking my son.

This book may not be for you, but it was definitely for me.

Mitchell says

Long Way Round is a fairly well-known TV series documenting the journey undertaken by actors Ewan McGregor and Charley Boorman in 2004, riding motorcycles all the way around the world from London to New York, across very remote and wild terrain in Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Siberia. McGregor was already quite a famous actor, appearing in Star Wars, Trainspotting and Big Fish; Boorman was considerably less well-known, in the shadow of both Ewan and his more famous father John Boorman (the director of Deliverance). Long Way Round turned out to be the largest success story of both their careers.

I'd already greatly enjoyed the TV series, and since I have motorbikes on the brain at the moment, I recently rewatched it and then picked up the book, which is ostensibly written by both of them but is actually obviously ghostwritten. The style is a bit strange, actually - it regularly cuts between Charley and Ewan, prefacing their segments with their names, but there is no difference whatsoever in their writing style (because, of course, they didn't really write it) and the only way I could ever remember who was talking was to see whether it was "Charley and I" or "Ewan and I" doing something. I'm really not sure why they chose that style.

The book is related in a fairly conversational tone, as though the two adventurers are telling you stories at the pub, and the chronology jumps around quite a bit in the early stages, with flashbacks to the planning sections while they're already riding through Europe. It's a very easy and quick read, and one which I found very enjoyable, but I wouldn't recommend it to somebody who hadn't already watched the TV series.

For somebody who has watched the TV series, however, it's a fascinating in-depth look at the journey. There were a lot of things which happened to them that weren't featured in the series simply because they didn't catch them on film and therefore couldn't work them into the narrative; my favourite would have to be Charley pulling two people out of a car crash on the Road of Bones. There's a deeper insight into their relationship with their two producers, Russ and David, including a crucial confrontation in Prague; there's also a deeper insight into the two men themselves. Both Ewan and Charley are extremely honest about what they think about themselves and each other: their flaws, their strengths, the things they do that really piss each other off... and the fact that, at the end of the day, their positives outweigh their negatives and they're still best friends. There's also appendices detailing the exact mileage and destinations they covered on every day off the trip, and a full inventory of all the equipment they carried on the bikes and in the support vehicles.

Overall, Long Way Round is an excellent supplement to its televised brother, but probably wouldn't work as a stand-alone book.

Wendy Blansett says

Great book. This book is not necessarily all about the bikes and blokes that ride them, but it is more about the places, the people, and the moments. Ewan and Charlie travel through some of the most remote and poorest regions of the world, but wherever they go, the people are gracious and kind, offering what little they have, including food, liquor, and shelter.

Ewan rarely plays his "Obi-Wan" card - only when it's a must. For most of the journey people have no idea who he is. He is just a guy riding through occasionally in need of help and often needing a place to stay and a meal.

As the guys travel through Kazakhstan, Serbia, Russia, and Mongolia, they realize it's not about getting from one point to the next, but about all those moments in between.

Really well written in alternating voices of Ewan and Charlie. Just a great book!

Lindsey says

Wow... I went into this book with very little expectations, firstly I know nothing about bikes, and secondly I thought that it may be some kind of shameless promotion on behalf of Ewan McGregor and Charlie Boorman but I was incredibly wrong.

I was amazed at the journey these men took, and especially amazed at the vast amount of emotion that they both experienced and described throughout the journey and especially at their homecoming.

This is a book for any travel lover, for those who wish to experience a world outside of their own, I was moved by the journey of these men and the relationships that developed while on it, I have a new found respect for Ewan McGregor and Charlie Boorman and applaud them for accomplishing something so amazing.

Mikayla Gray says

Having adored the Long Way Round TV series, where actors Ewan McGregor and Charley Boorman biked from London to New York "the long way round", it was only a matter of time before I picked up the book. I met Charley Boorman a few years ago and we swapped travel stories (his were far better than mine!), leaving me in awe of the adventures he and Ewan had been on. So when I found Long Way Round and the Scotland to South Africa adventure Long Way Down in a charity shop for pennies each, there was no excuse for me not to finally read them.

If you haven't seen the series, the book is a dual pov sort of travel diary from Ewan and Charlie as they hop on a pair of donated BMW motorbikes and travel across Europe, Asia and North America to reach New York, crossing 12 countries and 20,000 miles in 119 days. It's meandering, a little self indulgent at times with more than a little navel gazing, but it's also inspiring and uplifting. The guys bicker and argue, clash with their road crew and tv sponsors, but for every breakdown or day of riding on unpaved, dangerous roads completely alone, there's a Mongolian sunset or encounter with locals that makes it worthwhile. An encounter with Eastern European gangsters is simultaneously laugh out loud funny and genuinely a bit scary, while a surprise visit from Ewan's dad on the road enough to make me well up. I skim read the opening chapters which covered the set up and logistics, keen for the guys to get on the road, but the book gives great insight into the effort and physical and emotional toll that the trip took on everyone involved, especially Ewan and Charley. If you're hoping for a juicy read riddled with schadenfreude about a Hollywood A-lister forced to rough it in the wilderness, you'll be sorely disappointed. Both guys dive headfirst into their journey, embracing everything that comes with it, good and bad.

I've been reading this book on and off for nearly three months. It's certainly not unputdownable, more of a lazy Sunday afternoon read that you can dip in and out of. If you're a travel fanatic like me, you should definitely give it a go. Long Way Round is an absolute must read for anyone who dreams of leaving it all behind and chasing their shadow across the world.

Redfox5 says

I wasn't sure that I was going to like this book. Although I think bikes are nice to look at, as a car driver, anything on two wheels on the road annoys the hell out of me. So the idea of going around the world on a bike wasn't particularly appealing. I thought it would be dull. I was wrong and I flew through this in two days.

I love Ewan McGregor and this book allows you to see a different side of him to his movie star personality. I have no idea who Charley is but I enjoyed his point of view none the less. Both of them seemed like grumpy old men. They did moan and cry a lot. At one point I wasn't sure they were liking any of it. But they would keep reassuring the reader every time something amazing or beautiful happens that it was all worth it. I think the most amazing thing about this book is how complete strangers came to help them whenever they needed it and this wasn't just because they were film stars as lots of the people didn't know who they were but did it out of human kindness. Makes you feel better about the world.

I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys travel writing, bikes or any one who fancies Ewan, though he doesn't look great with that beard!

Rex Fuller says

Disappointed. I wanted and expected to like this. There are pieces of it that I did like, such as the instances of interacting with Ukrainians and Mongolians. Those pieces, approximately 20% of the book, are lost in constant whining about the authors' disagreements with each other and their support crew members, not having enough privacy from media, missing their families, and generally what was going on inside their own heads. The authors show some writing talent and a stern editor who could have forced them to focus other than on themselves might have made this a worthwhile read. That's as kind as I can be. What I really want to say is most of the time they came across as arrogant little Brit snots. Among British actors writing travel books stick with Michael Palin, a true gentleman.

Sarah says

I am a total sucker for armchair travel. I love reading about adventures and long distance travel, especially if done on a bike, foot or some other odd thing. I love reading about the details of what people ate, what gear they brought, funny stories of misunderstandings and the significance of meeting people on the road. This book of Ewan McGregor and his buddy taking a motorcycle trip from London through Europe, into Kazakstan, Mongolia and Russia seemed initially to have all of those things. Win win, right? This was an easy read, and I am still glad I read it but the dialogue in this is fucking ridiculous. The two bicker constantly like an annoying married couple and then say things like, "I'm sorry I was short with you. I am missing my family, please forgive me. Let's go fix our motorcycles." They fight, make up like robots, and then swear

they are going to relax and open themselves up to the joys of travel. Over and over and over and well, you know. Some of the travel details get lost in the non-stop discussions of their bikes, which is unfortunate. Their interactions with locals were usually the best parts of this and what ultimately kept me going. Also, I'm glad there are pictures because they are both really bad at setting the setting. Describe the scenery people! Quit wailing about the state of the road!

Red Flag: There is a lot about motorcycles. Like really really a lot.

Kendal says

Long Way Round is a mentally and physically exhausting journey made by two friends who wanted a break. The book is comprised of Ewan McGregor and Charley Boorman's daily diary entries that were written during the entire trip. By sharing both of their personal diaries you are able to get two very different perspectives of their overwhelming trip around the world.

In the beginning, I was a little irritated, especially with Ewan. He liked to name-drop quite a bit and, also, liked to mention which movies he was filming at the time. However, as I kept reading, I realized that Ewan's journey was about leaving the film industry behind and discover new things about himself. I thought it was amazing how he and Charley were able to get on a pair of huge BMW bikes without an entourage and travel across some of the most difficult and dangerous roads in the world. They would stay with complete strangers and found out the true meaning of hospitality.

For Ewan and Charley, Mongolia was the highlight of their journey. They were able to, finally, leave behind their insecurities and obsessions of keeping their riding schedules. They started to absorb and enjoy the ride. At one part, they decided to take a quick dip in a nearby river.

Ewan: "This is so liberating!" I screamed, running naked along the riverbank back to my bike. "Three nude men in the countryside. We should have some drums and bows and arrows." The best part of the impromptu skinny-dip was that we had shaken off our obsession with keeping to the schedule...But we'd come to realize that keeping to planned mileage was pointless if we didn't experience anything along the way."

It was moments like that that made the book so entertaining; watching grown men run around like little boys enjoying their adventure.

However, there were times where the extreme demand on their minds and bodies was just too much. Charley wrote that "It was just so hard. More than once I thought: what the f—k am I doing here? Why am I doing this? Who thought this was a good idea? I just wanted to go home. For the first time, I really hit a low, my mood all the worse for not having eaten since breakfast." When Charley would really let himself experience the land, he would lift himself out of his dark mood and journey on. Their extreme mood swings were prevalent throughout their journey. They had highs and lows. It really is amazing how they were able to fight through their emotions to meet their goal.

I really enjoyed this book. I experienced all the highs and lows with Ewan and Charley. You are left with such a respect for what these two accomplished. They left behind the comfort of their families and their privileged lifestyle to experience extreme off road biking and other cultures. They came back changed men.

Sian Wadey says

Author B in my A-Z was Charley Boorman although it says that **Long Way Round** was just written by Ewan McGregor.

I'm a fan of both actors but I've never seen the TV show so I went into this with a fresh mind not really knowing what to expect. And can I say it was the biggest disappointment.

Both authors moaned, whined and cried their way around the globe. I know it must be hard to miss those you live with constantly, but they were crying when they left and cried during a lot of the journey. When they weren't crying they were moaning about the conditions of the road, which they should have expected and each other.

On top of that it was hard to tell which of them were narrating. Their writing styles were very similar and when events happened they were brushed under the carpet. Nothing was explained in much detail. In fact more time was spent complaining about the state of the roads.

In Ewan McGregor's sections he would constantly 'film drop' mentioning what he'd been in as well as any encounter when someone recognised him from a film. Although I like him as an actor, I didn't really care about that in this context and when he started worrying about his career I skipped large chunks of text.

There were a few bits I enjoyed when there was a lot of tension, or funny moments, which it should have been for the majority of the book in my opinion, which is why I'm giving it two instead of one. But overall it was a complete and utter let down. I don't think I'll be reading one of their books again.

Shawnté Salabert says

London to New York

A tale of two dudes on bikes

Friendship and folly
