



Around the World in 1000 Days: Highlights of the First Voyage

Miss Columbia was a doll ahead of her time. In an era when few Americans could hope to travel abroad, she went around the world. At a time when no proper young lady went anywhere alone, she set out on her travels unchaperoned. To all appearances just a simple (if highly charismatic) doll, she was in reality an ambassador with a mission.



THE ORIGINAL
MISS COLUMBIA.

Miss Columbia's travels began in December 1899, when she left the home of her creator, Miss Emma Adams, in Oswego, New York, and journeyed to Boston to become part of the International Doll Collection belonging to Elizabeth Richards Horton. Mrs. Horton's collection numbered around 600 dolls and since 1896 had been widely exhibited throughout the country to raise money for children's charities.

March, 1900 Boston, MA

"One little girl asked me if I were not afraid to go by myself on the long long journey & seemed to feel very sorry for me until I told her I was glad to go knowing I should meet with kind people everywhere who would send me where they thought best all over the United States perhaps & then across the ocean."

As the newest member of this large family of dolls, Miss Columbia had been designated to journey across the continent and then board a ship to circle the world. Her mission was to continue Mrs. Horton's charitable work for needy children, and in the process to create a history for herself. Columbia's appearances on her trip would be free to anyone who requested her presence. The only stipulation attached was that at each of her stopping places a tag was to be placed on her dress telling the circumstances of her exhibition and how much money she had raised.

On April 12, 1900, Columbia was packed in a telescoping trunk and sent on her way courtesy of the Adams Express Company which, in conjunction with Wells Fargo Express, provided her with free transportation across the country. Columbia may have traveled unchaperoned, but she did not travel alone. Into her trunk went six extra dresses, warm coat and bonnet, copies of the Boston daily and Sunday newspaper, a red, white and blue sash and a small American flag of silk. One of her most important accessories was a journal in which she and her hosts were to share her adventures at each stop along the way. Miss Columbia proved to be a faithful "journal-keeper"—though her entries were transcribed in many different hands!



MISS COLUMBIA'S TRUNK UPON HER RETURN TO BOSTON.



WESTWARD BOUND

Columbia made her first appearance in Chicago, followed by appearances in St. Louis, Kansas City, MO, and Omaha, NE on her way to Denver. Her visit in Colorado was so successful that she stayed almost a month. Surely she is the only doll who can claim that a reception was held for her on top of Pike's Peak and that a dance in her honor was performed at the Southern Ute Indian Reservation.

June 12, 1900
Summit of Pike's Peak,
Colorado

"I have had as much experience as most dolls but up to now [but] never knew that we could speak or show animation except in secret with children whose confidence we have. But this is a delusion. Any doll can speak on Pike's Peak. The most dormant will be aroused to exclaim "Magnificent! Grand! Glorious!""

soldiers, to the islands. One of these adventurous teachers, Miss Cora E. Fay of Colorado, was to be Columbia's constant companion for the next year.

Before going aboard, Columbia's face and hands had to be thoroughly cleaned because, as recorded in her journal, "I had been kissed by so many big folk as well as little ones. At Denver over 600 children kissed and shook hands with me at one reception... However my face and hands have been well washed for my start over the sea."



INDIAN FAMILY THAT HOSTED MISS COLUMBIA ON SOUTHERN UTE INDIAN REERVATION, JUNE 1900.

On July 13, 1900, Mrs. Horton's little retinue arrived in Los Angeles. She would remain in California for almost a year, appearing at numerous fund-raising receptions and visiting hospitals and orphanages. Everywhere she went children presented Miss Columbia with souvenirs of her visit: a rosary from a Catholic childrens' home, a Chinese hymnbook, a neck chain made of seaweed from children too poor to give anything that cost money. Miss Colombia returned from a brief trip to Alaska with a treasure basket from an Indian boy and from Baja, California with a clay bank and straw sombreros presented by Mexican children. Humble but endearing gifts, these small tokens reflected the affection that greeted the little doll wherever she went.

Finally in July 1901, Miss Columbia secured passage for the Philippine Islands on the U.S. Army Transport *Thomas*, popularly known as the "Teachers' Transport". After the Spanish-American War, the Philippines had been ceded to the United States, and the U.S. government was transporting schoolteachers, as well as

September 11, 1901
On board the ship T. Buford
Manilla Bay, Phillipines

"Do you want to know how I came aboard? They opened one of the large port-holes and I was hauled up through it. There were several ladies too, who came up in the same way. There had been some mistake about my "pass" so Maj. Jones, the commanding officer said I must be called a dead-head.

Dear me! What a dreadful name, but they treat me royally so I shan't worry about what my ticket says."



ACROSS THE SEA

After a peaceful voyage that included a stop in Honolulu, the *Thomas* reached Manila Bay on August 21, 1901. Miss Fay was assigned to a teaching post in Zamboanga on the island of Mindanao, so the two travelers boarded another transport, the *Buford*, for the trip south. The seas were so high that day that the gangplank could not be lowered. Columbia and several of the teachers had to be hauled up from the launch and pulled aboard through an open porthole. If that were not indignity enough, Miss Columbia was issued a tag that read: “Pass bearer on *Buford* as a dead head (underage), from Manila, P.I. to Zamboanga, P.I. to be fed in saloon with a spoon.”



JOURNAL ENTRY FROM GOOD FRIDAY, 1902
DESCRIBING AN EARTHQUAKE IN THE PHILIPPINES.

“Dead head” or not, for the next year Columbia shared Miss Fay’s excursions on Mindanao and even survived an earthquake. But by August 1902, a letter from Mrs. Horton reminded Miss Columbia and Miss Fay of the long trip home to Boston. Passage was found for her on the transport *McClellan*, whose commanding officer, Capt. Nye, would look out for her more than halfway around the world. Before leaving Zamboanga she was cleared by the Collector of Customs, who certified that she had complied with the customs regulations and had not defrauded the government. However, after inspecting her New England wardrobe, he suggested she bring more suitable clothes on the next trip. “It doesn’t snow here very often,” he wrote.

August 18, 1901 Los Angeles, CA

“P.S. As I am a girl they say I ought to have a ‘postscript’ in my book of letters, so I add this one. I find ‘Uncle Sam,’ my ‘escort,’ [note: a male doll who had accompanied Miss Columbia on her West Coast travels] is to be left behind, lest the natives of the new countries to which I am going will think he is come to take possession, which would never do at this time so I bid him God Speed to Boston to the care of the International Doll Collection where I shall one day see him again.”

HOMEWARD BOUND

The *McClellan* docked in New York, and Miss Columbia, her souvenirs, her tags and all of the other mementos of her trip were forwarded to Boston by Adams Express. On Christmas Day, 1902, the express company manager personally delivered her to Mrs. Horton’s townhouse. After two years and eight months of travel her mission was accomplished: She was the most famous doll in the world and she truly had been an ambassador of good will everywhere she went. In her own words: “I met with kindness everywhere, not for my beauty but to show what good even a little plain rag doll can do, if she tries, to make sunshine in the world.”

Now having reached the venerable age of 100, Columbia and her brothers and sisters of the International Doll Collection form the nucleus of the renowned collection of dolls at the Wenham Museum in Wenham, Massachusetts. Instead of traveling the world, the world now travels to Miss Columbia, and visitors from coast to coast and from overseas are always assured a warm welcome from the rag doll who journeyed around the world.