

He had seen how his bicycle racing attracted attention to his bicycle shop. He began now to think up other sensations to advertise the bicycles he wanted to sell. He had only his life to gamble—so he risked it. He rode a bicycle on a tightrope stretched between the roofs of two 12 story buildings on Washington Street. Ropes attached to the handlebars were held by men on the opposite roof, but these held no protection for Carl. A wavering quarter of an inch would have hurled his padded form to the street.

Encouraged by the success of this stunt, he and his brothers built "the biggest bicycle in the world" in the repair shop behind the salesroom. Towering more than twenty feet over the crowds held back by annoyed police, Carl rode it through the Indianapolis streets. The building of the giant bicycle revealed flaws in the bicycle's mechanism to the brothers. They broke their machine down to smaller scale, and the result was their own product—the Fisher bicycle.

That winter Carl mounted a racing cutter built of steel tubing on runners in the Fisher shop. Splendidly attired, he drove the streamlined snow vehicle along Capitol Avenue. No other sleigh could attain the speed of his lightweight cutter. This miracle of lightness and swiftness revolutionized snow racing.

Everything Carl did made news. Police and press kept his name on the front pages. They began complaining that his pranks endangered lives and stopped traffic. They threatened to arrest him. Finally they put their threats into effect, and warrants were served against him. Police and other public officials began coming to the Fisher bicycle shop to demand that its owner stop "risking public safety as well as his own." But, like everyone else, they stayed to wonder at his energy and charm.

When Carl announced in the newspapers that he would hurl a bicycle from the top of the city's tallest building and that anyone returning the frame to his shop would be rewarded by a brand-new bicycle, the police announced that if he tried such a stunt he would be arrested. Carl's answer was to advertise the date. On the morning set, police formed a cordon around the building to prevent his reaching it. Crowds waited in fear that