

Nellie Bly (Elizabeth Jane Cochran)



Nellie Bly was born on May 5, 1864 in Cochran's Mill, Pennsylvania. When she was born her name was Elizabeth Jane Cochran. As she was growing up, she had difficult trials to overcome such as her father dying and later, her stepfather beating her. Elizabeth wanted a better life but as she grew older she realized how difficult life was going to be for her. She was determined to become a reporter for the paper. In this time women were not allowed to vote or be in business places with men. She wrote a commentary to a newspaper that was written about women. The editor loved the commentary and wanted to know who wrote it so he could give the person a job. When he found out Elizabeth was a woman he had second thoughts, but decided to still do it. He had her change her name to Nellie Bly.

Nellie was adventurous in her writing. One of her first experiences was pretending she was insane and entering into an asylum and witnessing how bad they treated the women there. She was released after ten days and she wrote about all the terrible things that they did to women there. When people read about these stories, an investigation happened and things in the asylum changed.

Nellie was involved in many experiences such as pretending to be a thief to enter a jail, and afterwards she wrote about what happened to women there. She also jumped off a ship to see if the lifeguards would save her. She was a daring woman and her writing helped people think differently about situations. Nellie read a book called Around the World in 80 Days by Jules Vern. This inspired her to try and beat this record. She left and went through many trials. As she visited the different countries she wrote books about them. She did the trip in 72 days which surprised the world, especially since she was a woman.

Nellie Bly was always concerned about the fairness of people and in her efforts she did something about it. One of her famous quotes was "Energy rightly applied can accomplish anything." This is a great quote that describes the kind of person Nellie Bly was and it is a belief we can apply today.

For More Information:

<http://www.greatwomen.org/bly.htm>

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/4547/bly.html>