

# Introduction

**A**round the World in Eighty Days is a story about travel and adventure. It is set in the nineteenth century. At that time, there were no aeroplanes. It was slow and difficult to travel.

In the story the main character, Phileas Fogg, believes that it is possible to travel around the world in eighty days. He bets his friends twenty thousand pounds that he will be able to do it. His new servant, Passepartout, goes with him on the tour of the world. Mr Fogg and Passepartout travel by different kinds of transport: steamships, railways, sledges, and even elephants! They visit Egypt, India, Hong Kong, Japan and America. They have lots of exciting adventures in these places. In India, they risk their lives to save a beautiful princess.

*Around the World in Eighty Days* is a very popular story. It has been made into films many times. Jackie Chan starred in the 2004 version. The challenge of travelling around the world in eighty days has interested people for many years. In 1889, journalist Nellie Bly managed to make the journey in seventy-two days. She wrote about her adventures in a newspaper, the *New York World*. In 1988, the actor Michael Palin took on the same challenge. He travelled around the world without using an aircraft. He completed his journey before the deadline. He recorded his adventures for a TV programme, also called *Around the World in Eighty Days*.

Now read where this great adventure first started ...

## Important people in the story

### **Phileas Fogg**

A rich Englishman who lives alone and who is exact about everything.

### **Jean Passepartout**

A brave, young Frenchman who works for Mr Fogg.

### **Detective Fix**

A detective who wants to catch Mr Fogg because he thinks that he is a bank robber.

### **Mrs Aouda**

An Indian princess who needs saving.

## About Jules Verne

Jules Verne was born in France in 1828. His father, who was a lawyer, sent him to Paris to study law when he was nineteen. But he did not become a lawyer because he was more interested in writing. He continued to write until he died in 1905.

Jules Verne wrote many travel stories, including *A Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (1864), *From the Earth to the Moon* (1865), *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1870) and *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1873). His novels were very popular and he became very rich. He bought a boat and sailed around Europe in it.

# 1

## An Impossible Journey

### The new servant

In the year 1872, Phileas Fogg lived at Number 7 Saville Row, Burlington Gardens. He was a well-known member of a famous London club called the Reform Club. 5

No one knew very much about Phileas Fogg, except that he was a very polite man and a perfect gentleman. He was an Englishman, but probably did not come from London.

Was Phileas Fogg rich? Yes, but no one could say how he had made his money. Certainly it did not seem quite right to ask Mr Fogg how he had made it. He did not waste his money on foolish things, but he was not mean with it either. If money was needed for poor people, he gave it, but he gave it quietly. 10 15

Had he travelled? It was probable, for no one knew the world better than he. Whenever any place was mentioned, he seemed to know something about it.

Phileas Fogg had not been away from London for many years. Those who knew him best said that he always went to his club every day and that he always arrived there by exactly the same route at exactly the same time. His only hobbies were reading the newspapers and playing whist. He often won at this quiet game. He always gave away the money that he won. It was clear that Mr Fogg played because he liked playing, and not because he wanted to win. 20 25

Phileas Fogg did not have either a wife or any children. Nor did he have any relatives or close friends. He lived alone in his house in Saville Row, where 30