A human powered cycle has roots in 1418. It was about 400 years later when bicycles started becoming popular for transportation, but an English inventor, John Kemp Starley, modernized the design to what is still mainstream today.

His greatest contribution to society was in 1885 when he marketed the original Rover Safety Bicycle.

A decade earlier he invented the tangent-spoked wheel (1874).

After his death, his company evolved to manufacturing motorcycles, and then automobiles. This was possible from his contributions such as ball bearings.

John Kemp Starley was born December 14, 1854 and lived in Walthamstow, London.

1872 he moved to Coventry and worked for his Uncle, James Starley. Along with William Hillman they built Arial bikes.

1877 he started a company called Starley and Sutton Co. Him and William Sutton started creating cycles that were safer and easier to operate than the previous ones. They began manufacturing tricycles.

1883 their products were branded as Rovers.

1885 he made history when he produced the Rover Safety Bicycle. It featured 2 similar sized wheels with a chain to power the rear wheel, the common design you see on the roads today.

1889 the company became J. K. Stanley & Co Ltd until the late 1890’s when it changed to the Rover Cycle Company Ltd.

October 29, 1901, Starley died, but his company lives on. They began manufacturing motorcycles and then automobiles shortly after his death.