



American Legends: The Life of P.T. Barnum

Charles River Editors

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- Includes Barnum's own quotes about his life and career.
- Highlights Barnum's entertainment career and transition into the circus.

"I was a farmhand, a merchant, a clerk, a boss, a theater director, and a bank director; I lived in prisons and palaces, I knew poverty and abundance, I've traveled extensively on two continents, I've met all kinds of people and seen the human character in all its guises, and time and again I have been in the greatest danger. Amidst such a diversity of events, I had to undergo difficult times, but I'm definitely not complaining, and I believe that my life was a happy one, because I always saw the positive side of things." (P.T. Barnum)

A lot of ink has been spilled covering the lives of history's most influential figures, but how much of the forest is lost for the trees? In Charles River Editors' American Legends series, listeners can get caught up to speed on the lives of America's most important men and women in the time it takes to finish a commute, while learning interesting facts long forgotten or never known.

Americans have loved traveling circuses for generations, and none represents the country's love of entertainment quite like the most famous of them all, the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. Circus promoters have long been viewed as somewhat shady hucksters, but none could top Phineas Taylor Barnum, who used a blend of traditional circus entertainment, freak show exhibits, and outright hoaxes to create "The Greatest Show on Earth". Barnum introduced America to Jumbo the Elephant, one of the most legendary acts in the history of the circus, as well as "exhibits" like Joice Heth, an elderly African American woman Barnum advertised as a 161-year-old who nursed George Washington.

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