



American Legends: The Life of Cary Grant

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- *Includes pictures of important people, places, and events.
- *Includes Cary Grant's quotes about his own life and working with other Hollywood stars.
- *Includes a bibliography for further reading.
- *Includes a table of contents.

“Everyone wants to be Cary Grant. Even I want to be Cary Grant.” – Cary Grant

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, readers 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.

Movie stars are revered for their ability to captivate audiences, and perhaps no actor has done it as well as Cary Grant, the epitome of the suave, debonair actor who may have been rivaled only by dancer extraordinaire Fred Astaire. Grant offered a version of the male actor that stood in stark contrast with the gangster heroes and hard-boiled film noir detectives that populated the screen throughout his career. Impeccably groomed and always clad in dapper attire, Grant possessed a magnetism that was undeniably attractive, all while managing to come across as well-heeled and socially respectable. As a result, there was an archetypal quality to Cary Grant that endeared him to both male and female viewers. After all, he was able to star in major movies well into his 60s, and even after he retired, Grant never lost his charm and continued to maintain a universal appeal that has almost never been rivaled.

Cary Grant occupies an almost sacred place in American film history, but it is still important to recognize that the persona that has enchanted audiences for decades was in fact a creation. Grant was not born with the charm and elegance he later exuded, and the contrast between his upbringing and the man he would later become is arguably the most remarkable aspect of his life story. Born into a dysfunctional family, Grant had a tumultuous childhood that saw him tasked with perpetually overcoming major adversity. With a mother who was too ill to care for him and a father whose interests lay elsewhere, he was in many respects charged with raising himself, a dynamic entirely antithetical to the affluent characters he famously portrayed in films such as *The Philadelphia Story* (1939), *To Catch a Thief* (1953), and *An Affair to Remember* (1957). The progression from Grant's youth to his glamorous adult life was a complex transformation of its own, and it is a Hollywood rags-to-riches story of its own.

At the same time, Grant's rise to stardom was due to an intricate web of factors, including his own natural acting ability, developments in the motion picture industry, and the fortuitous opportunity to consistently work with gifted directors who molded his image. Like nearly every big star, Grant was an exceptionally gifted actor and someone who benefited from a fortunate string of career opportunities that he took advantage of to full effect.

American Legends: The Life of Cary Grant examines the life and career of Hollywood's most iconic leading man. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about Cary Grant like never before, in no time at all.

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