



# The Acrobat: Arthur Barnes and the Victorian Circus

*John Stewart*

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## **The Acrobat: Arthur Barnes and the Victorian Circus** John Stewart

Arthur Barnes--"The 100 Somersault Man"--was the world's greatest acrobat, a legend of the circus. He toured for 23 years with the biggest companies in Britain, Europe and the United States, performing for all the crowned heads, as well as for Abraham Lincoln. This book traces his story as a bright thread of triumphs and tragedies running through the tapestry of the mid-Victorian era, a tapestry made rich by extraordinary events of the day and by the eccentric characters attracted to such a profession as the circus. We follow Barnes as he escapes the doom of the iron foundry by bounding out of the desperate slums of the East End of London at the age of 14 to become the "champion vaulter of all the world."

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