



American Legends: The Life of Amelia Earhart

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*Includes pictures of Earhart and important people, places, and events in her life.

*Includes a comprehensive analysis of her disappearance and the prevailing theories surrounding her ultimate fate.

*Includes a Bibliography for further reading.

*Includes Earhart's most famous and inspiring quotes.

"The stars seemed near enough to touch and never before have I seen so many. I always believed the lure of flying is the lure of beauty, but I was sure of it that night." – Amelia Earhart

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.

During the early 20th century, groundbreaking technology revolutionized transportation both on the ground and in the sky, with new motors making automobiles and airplanes a reality in the 1910s. Around that same time, the feminist movement was underway in the United States, spearheaded by women seeking the right to vote, lobbying for the temperance movement, and trying to make their voices heard.

It was at that crossroads that flight pioneer Amelia Earhart found herself in 1919, the very year President Wilson and Congress were trying to shepherd through the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, giving women the right to vote. That year, Earhart was given a ride on a plane piloted by legendary air racer Frank Hawks, and as she recalled, "By the time I had got two or three hundred feet off the ground, I knew I had to fly."

Earhart's unbridled joy for flying was only occasionally abated by a lack of finances, and a recurring sinus issue, but throughout the 1920s she was one of the few women licensed to fly, and she set an altitude record of 14,000 feet for women in 1922. In 1928, Earhart was the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean, but she was disappointed that she had to do so as a passenger, complaining, "I was just baggage, like a sack of potatoes."

Nevertheless, that trip made "Lady Lindy" the "Queen of the Air" in America, and Earhart was now the nation's best known aviatrix. With her fresh face available for promoting everything from luggage to women's clothing, Earhart was able to finance her own aviation and remain involved in promoting air travel and flying to skeptical Americans. In May 1932, Earhart finally made her solo flight across the Atlantic, for which she received the Distinguished Flying Cross from Congress, the Cross of Knight of the Legion of Honor from the French Government and the Gold Medal of the National Geographic Society from President Herbert Hoover.

By the mid-1930s, Earhart had set many altitude and distance records, but she wanted to attempt a circumnavigation of the world. After an ill-fated first attempt, Earhart and Fred Noonan set off on another attempt, creating one of the 20th century's most enduring mysteries. Earhart and Noonan were to land on Howland Island, 1700 miles southwest of Hawaii, but radio transmissions ceased between the plane and authorities on the ground the morning of July 2, 1937. Earhart and Noonan had disappeared, never to be seen again, despite one of the nation's largest and costliest manhunts.

Unfortunately, the speculation over exactly what happened to Earhart and the mystery of her disappearance have come to overshadow and obscure her many accomplishments. *American Legends: The Life of Amelia Earhart* looks at the theories attempting to explain her disappearance, but it also humanizes the woman whose love of flying propelled her to unprecedented heights among both the clouds and her countrymen. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events in her life, you will learn about Lady Lindy like

you never have before, in no time at all.

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