



Babe: The Life of Oliver Hardy

John McCabe

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In this affectionate biography, John McCabe traces the life and times of one of America's best-loved comics. Oliver "Babe" Hardy had been destined for a legal career, but he was obsessed with the motion picture industry and eventually moved to Hollywood. By the mid-1920s, he was working as an all-purpose comic at the legendary Hal Roach studio. Laurel and Hardy's partnership with the pioneer filmmaker and producer began in 1926. Within a year of their first appearance, they were being touted as the new comedy duo. After collaborating on a number of silent pictures, they seamlessly made the transition to talking films, building a reputation for a warm, charismatic, casual style of comedy. But Hardy's life was not all laughter and fun. His performances were overshadowed by a depressing paradox: although he despised being overweight, his comic identity depended on it. In *Babe: The Life of Oliver Hardy*, John McCabe looks at the public triumphs and personal tribulations of this celebrated comic actor.

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