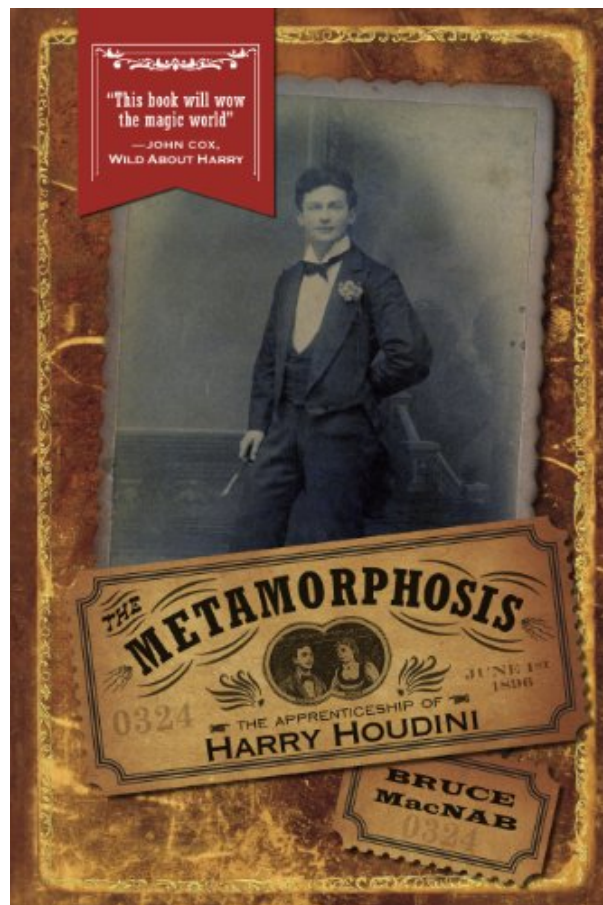
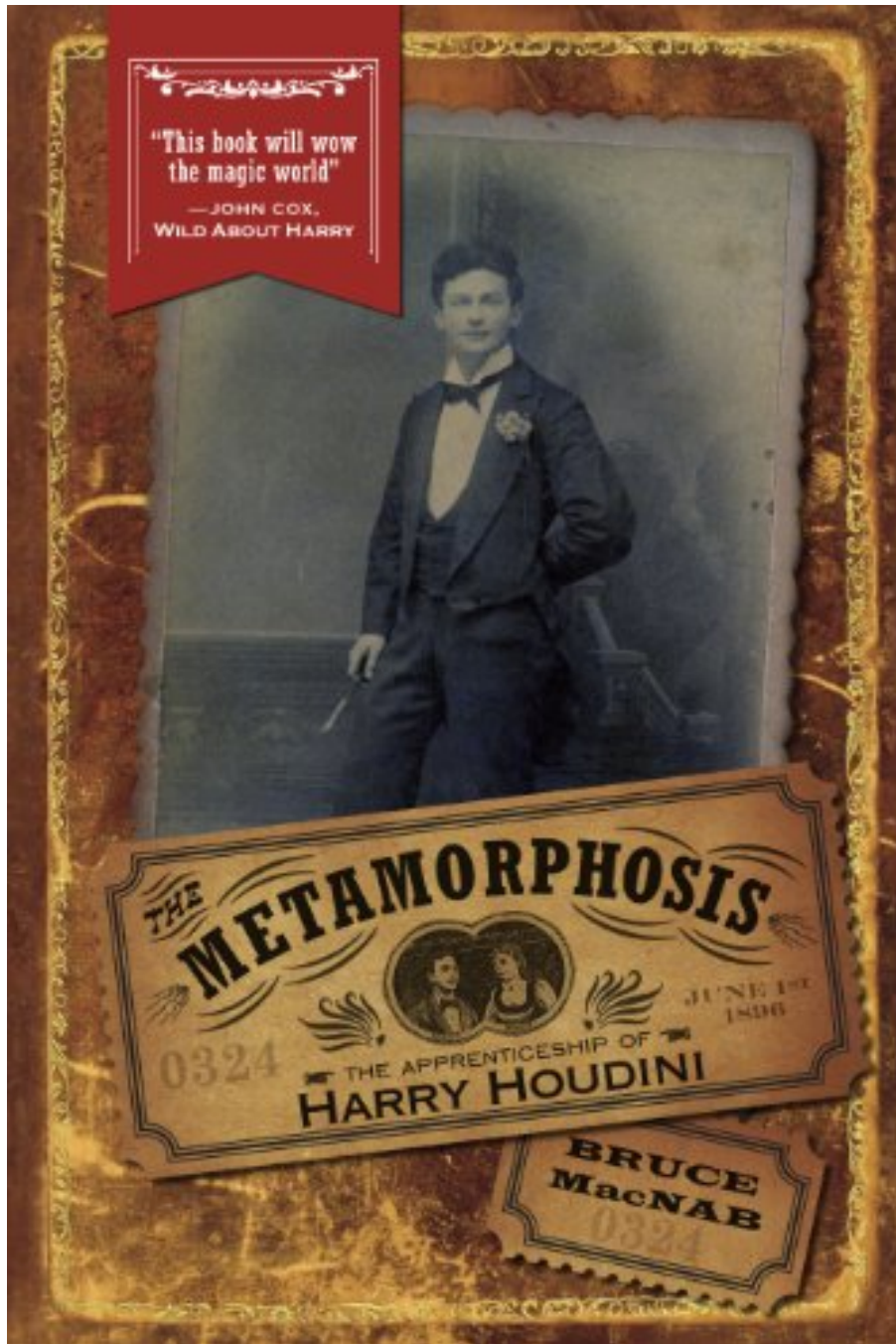


# THE METAMORPHOSIS: THE APPRENTICESHIP OF HARRY HOUDINI BY BRUCE MACNAB



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## Review

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Gasps at heroic trials and dreadful tribulations as a struggling young magician goes on the road with the acclaimed Marco Magic Company to conquer the competitive and challenging theatre circuit of eastern Canada!

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Swoon as Houdini goes out on his own with his young wife in tow!

Cheer as he mesmerizes and marvels with the miraculous metamorphosis!

Cast your gaze upon a veritable cornucopia of rare photographic images, many never before seen in public!

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In May of 1896, a young magician from New York City joined the cast of the Marco Magic Company and embarked on a summer-long tour of eastern Canada, including New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. It was during this excursion that Handcuff Harry AKA Harry Houdini first showcased the talent that transformed him from a small-time conjurer, who performed for pennies in dime museums, into the world's most celebrated escape artist. When he wasn't performing on stage, Houdini was barnstorming through the streets of every town and city he visited, astounding onlookers in police stations, hardware stores, and hospitals by freeing himself from the clutches of every restraining device strapped or wrapped around him. In this absorbing book, enriched by rare, period photographs, Bruce MacNab recounts a fascinating but shockingly untold chapter in the career of the man whose name is still synonymous with the word magic.

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3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Bruce MacNab mines Houdini gold in the Maritimes

By John Cox

In 'The Metamorphosis: The Apprenticeship of Harry Houdini', author Bruce MacNab has combined his passions for Houdini and Maritimes history to create a book that is not only a terrific day by day account of Houdini's 1896 Canadian tour, but also a vivid snapshot of everyday life at the turn of the century. It really is one of the most remarkable books ever written about Houdini, as well as being a marvelous chronicle of what it was like to be a traveling magic troop in the 1890s.

Because this period of Houdini's life has never really been put under the microscope, this book contains a wealth of previously unknown details about the great escape artist. We learn that Houdini used a trained chicken, "Banjo" (named by his mother) early in his career; discover the details of Houdini's lost Trilby levitation; and meet his very first assistant, John Kenny.

But maybe the most historically important aspect of this book is how Houdini's employer, Edward James Dooley (aka "Marco"), is fleshed out as he has never been in any book before. The perception has long been that Dooley was a bit of con man who abandoned Harry in Bess in Canada. But this is not true at all. Dooley

was a sincere performer and lover of magic who's greatest flaw appears to have been his bad luck (which I can't help but think continues in 2012 with a book that immortalizes his most disastrous tour). But Houdini had great affection for Dooley, and McNab has discovered that their friendship continued long after the ill-fated tour and into the years of Houdini's great success. This is as much a book about a failed magician as it is about the early career of a superstar.

What also makes 'The Metamorphosis' a real joy is how MacNab has fleshed out each chapter with wonderful details about the Canadian towns and cities that Houdini and the Marco Co. played. One really gets a strong sense of time, place, and local color. Even without Houdini (and Harry is sometimes absent for full chapters) this book remains fascinating as it vividly captures the pulse of the 1890s. And I haven't even mentioned the generous amount of never-before-seen photographs and documents, including a mind-blowing series of four sequential shots of Harry and Bess performing Metamorphosis in 1901.

'The Metamorphosis: The Apprenticeship of Harry Houdini' by Bruce MacNab is meticulously researched, beautifully written, and essential reading for anyone interested the deeper story of Harry Houdini.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Fascinating Read

By Delmar J. Proctor

This book covers the very early part of Houdini's career. I have over 20 books in my library about Houdini and none of them spend many pages on this part of his career. It is a very interesting read about Houdini and also show business in the late 1800's.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

An excellent book on a little unknown part of Houdini's life

By Ron Cartlidge

An excellent book on a little unknown part of Houdini's life. The author has a way of wanting you to read more.

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