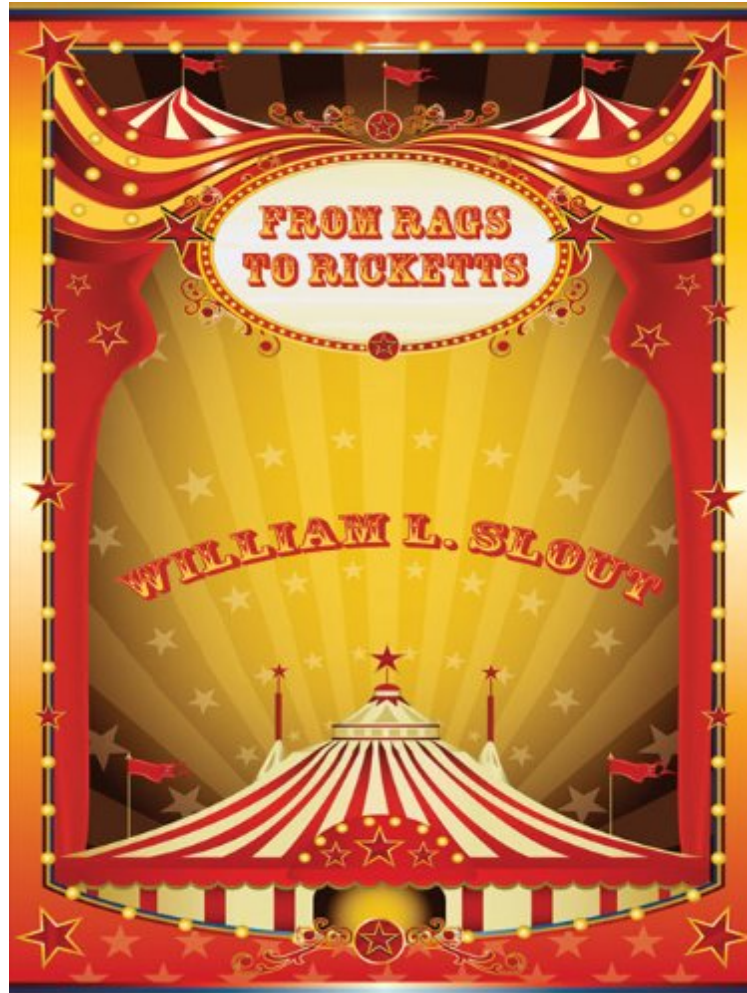


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## From Rags to Ricketts and Other Essays on Circus History

*William L. Slout*

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**William L. Slout : From Rags to Ricketts and Other Essays on Circus History** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised From Rags to Ricketts and Other Essays on Circus History:

William L. Slout, circus historian par excellence, here provides six essays on the development of the American circus. "From Rags to Ricketts: The Roots of Circus in Early Gotham" looks at the beginnings of circus entertainment in old New York City during the eighteenth century. "The Great Roman Hippodrome of 1874: P. T. Barnum's 'Crowning Effort'" describes the great showman's grand experiment: the collection and display in the Big Apple of the "largest collection of living wild animals in the world." "The Recycling of the Dan Rice Paris Pavilion Circus" tells the story of an American circus entrepreneur who took his traveling show to Europe in 1867. "Strange Bedfellows: The Poge

O'Brien Interval, 1874-1875" relates how O'Brien partnered with P. T. Barnum to take the circus master's show on the road while Barnum was creating his "Great Roman Hippodrome." "Two Rings and a Hippodrome Track" demonstrates that the first two-ring circus mounted by Barnum (or anyone else) occurred in 1873, and not 1872, as previously supposed. Finally, "The Adventures of James M. Nixon, Forgotten Impresario," describes the career of a major circus manager who worked between the 1843-75, directly competing with Barnum for the same audience--and eventually losing the struggle. Sloutr's vivid accounts, highlighted by contemporaneous newspaper accounts of the excitement generated locally by these traveling shows, help bring a long-forgotten era alive again.