



# Harry S. Truman: A Life (GIVE 'EM HELL HARRY)

*Robert H. Ferrell*

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Few U.S. presidents have captured the imagination of the American people as has Harry S. Truman, “the man from Missouri.”

In this major new biography, Robert H. Ferrell, widely regarded as an authority on the thirty-third president, challenges the popular characterization of Truman as a man who rarely sought the offices he received, revealing instead a man who—with modesty, commitment to service, and basic honesty—moved with method and system toward the presidency.

Truman was ambitious in the best sense of the word. His powerful commitment to service was accompanied by a remarkable shrewdness and an exceptional ability to judge people. He regarded himself as a consummate politician, a designation of which he was proud. While in Washington, he never succumbed to the “Potomac fever” that swelled the heads of so many officials in that city. A scrupulously honest man, Truman exhibited only one lapse when, at the beginning of 1941, he padded his Senate payroll by adding his wife and later his sister.

From his early years on the family farm through his pivotal decision to use the atomic bomb in World War II, Truman’s life was filled with fascinating events. Ferrell’s exhaustive research offers new perspectives on many key episodes in Truman’s career, including his first Senate term and the circumstances surrounding the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. In addition, Ferrell taps many little-known sources to relate the intriguing story of the machinations by which Truman gained the vice presidential nomination in 1944, a position which put him a heartbeat away from the presidency.

No other historian has ever demonstrated such command over the vast amounts of material that Robert Ferrell brings to bear on the unforgettable story of Truman’s life. Based upon years of research in the Truman Library and the study of many never-before-used primary sources, *Harry S. Truman* is destined to become the authoritative account of the nation’s favorite president.

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