



Fortune's Children: The Fall of the House of Vanderbilt

By Arthur T., II Vanderbilt

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Vanderbilt: The very name is synonymous with the Gilded Age. The family patriarch, "the Commodore," built a fortune that made him the world's richest man by 1877. Yet less than fifty years after his death, no Vanderbilt was counted among the world's richest people. Written by descendant Arthur T. Vanderbilt II, *Fortune's Children* traces the dramatic and amazingly colorful history of this great American family, from the rise of industrialist and philanthropist Cornelius Vanderbilt to the fall of his progeny-wild spendthrifts whose profligacy bankrupted a vast inheritance.

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Fortune's Children: The Fall of the House of Vanderbilt By Arthur T., II Vanderbilt Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #283863 in Books
- Brand: William Morrow
- Published on: 1989-08
- Ingredients: Example Ingredients
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Binding: Hardcover
- 496 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Among the author's earlier books is *Changing Laws*, an award-winning biography of his grandfather, Arthur T. Vanderbilt. His latest history, witty, entertaining and sad, also merits a prize for the writer, a lawyer and one among many members of the fabled family who inherited the Vanderbilt name but not the wealth. "The Commodore" (1794-1877) made \$105 million by hook and by crook; Alva, wife of the founding father's son William, went on spending sprees that later heirs followed. Stories about the author's ancestors have been told before, but not so vividly as in his evocations of the snobbery, ostentation and profligacy that caused "the fall of the House of Vanderbilt." Today's Vanderbilts are not rich-rich; the money is gone with the clan's grand homes, felled by wrecking balls in New York and elsewhere, leaving only memories of a singular time in the American past. Photos not seen by PW. BOMC alternate.

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From Library Journal

This could give Donald Trump nightmares: It is the story of how the seemingly solid fortune of railroad mogul Commodore Vanderbilt was dissipated down to practically nothing in the space of a century. In this family history, Vanderbilt dramatizes both the successes and excesses of America's Gilded Age--the enormous new wealth, the lavish lifestyles, and, later, the desperate schemes to maintain social status and fortune (contesting wills, matchmaking with nobility, and, most notably, battling for custody of "Little Gloria"). But the story is not so much about people as the palaces they built--the Breakers, the Biltmore, and mansions which used to occupy blocks of now-prime Manhattan real estate--all of which became white elephants sold to preservation societies or Towers of Babels that fell under a wave of taxes and upkeep cost. An absorbing social history. BOMC alternate.

- Judy Quinn, *"Library Journal"*

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From the Back Cover

Vanderbilt: the very name signifies wealth. The family patriarch, "the Commodore," built up a fortune that made him the world's richest man by 1877. Yet, less than fifty years after the Commodore's death, one of his direct descendants died penniless, and no Vanderbilt was counted among the world's richest people.

Fortune's Children tells the dramatic story of all the amazingly colorful spenders who dissipated such a vast inheritance.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Rachel Robbins:

This *Fortune's Children: The Fall of the House of Vanderbilt* book is just not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you receive by reading this book is actually information inside this guide incredible fresh, you will get details which is getting deeper an individual read a lot of information you will get. This kind of *Fortune's Children: The Fall of the House of Vanderbilt* without we recognize teach the one who examining it become critical in considering and analyzing. Don't possibly be worry *Fortune's*

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Treva Ritter:

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Jason Scott:

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