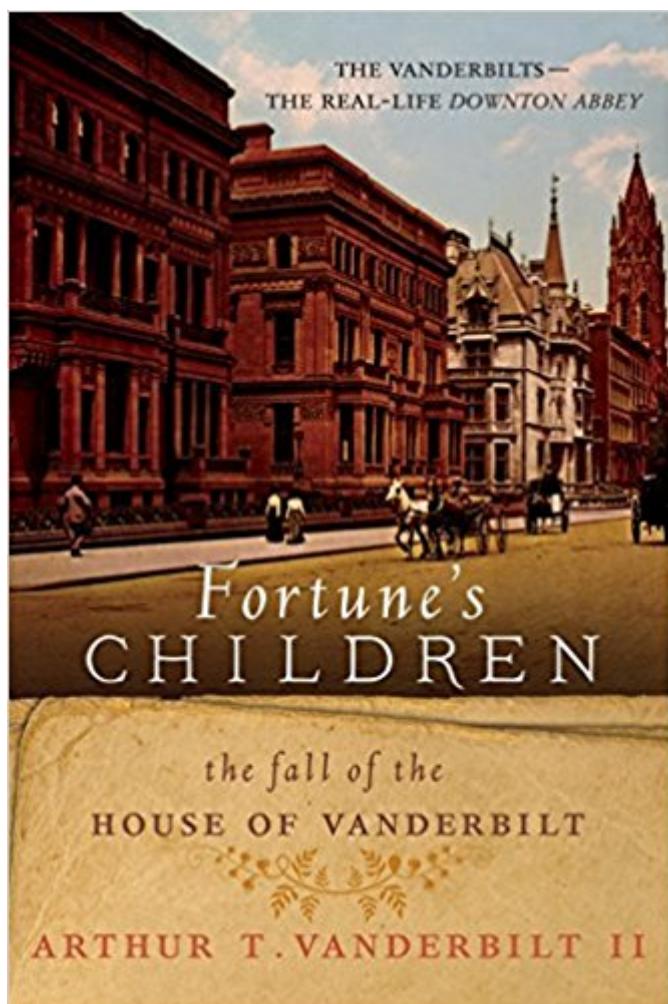


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# Fortune's Children: The Fall Of The House Of Vanderbilt



## Synopsis

Wall Street Journal BestsellerFor fans of "Downton Abbey", a real-life American version of the Crawley family "Fortune's Children" is an enthralling true story that recreates the drama, splendor, and wealth of the legendary Vanderbilts. 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."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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

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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"Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

If you have ever been to Biltmore House and heard the information on the tour, you'll love hearing the behind the scenes stories in this book. The Gilded Age was an age of extravagance and waste for those who were fortunate enough to cash in on their interests. Everyone should tour the Biltmore House in Asheville, NC. It really brings the gilded age into focus.

I enjoyed reading the Fortune's Children" by Arthur T. Vanderbilt a brilliantly written book and so much more.

This is a very good book. Interesting and a good tale of America. You just have to keep in mind of who all the Willies, Billies, Cornelius, Neilys and Neils are. Fascinating.

Such an interesting story of this family. I love reading history rather than fiction novels. This book also includes some really nice pictures. A great read!

One can't imagine having so much money! Astounding what millions can buy. I'll never know. This is an interesting history of a by- gone era. It takes you back in time and if you have an imagination, as I do, you can almost feel the elegance of living in that time. If built today, where would we put such monstrosities? Excellent book; this one stays in my library.

The Vanderbilts were an American institution whether you liked them or not. Their rise to fame, wealth and power was one of the several American Dream stories of the 19th Century. This book is fascinating and an easy read.

Fascinating tale of wealth, family and the transformation of New York City. Author does a masterful job of describing clothes, houses, manners and food. Truly an American Dowton Abbey tale.

Great book loved it

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