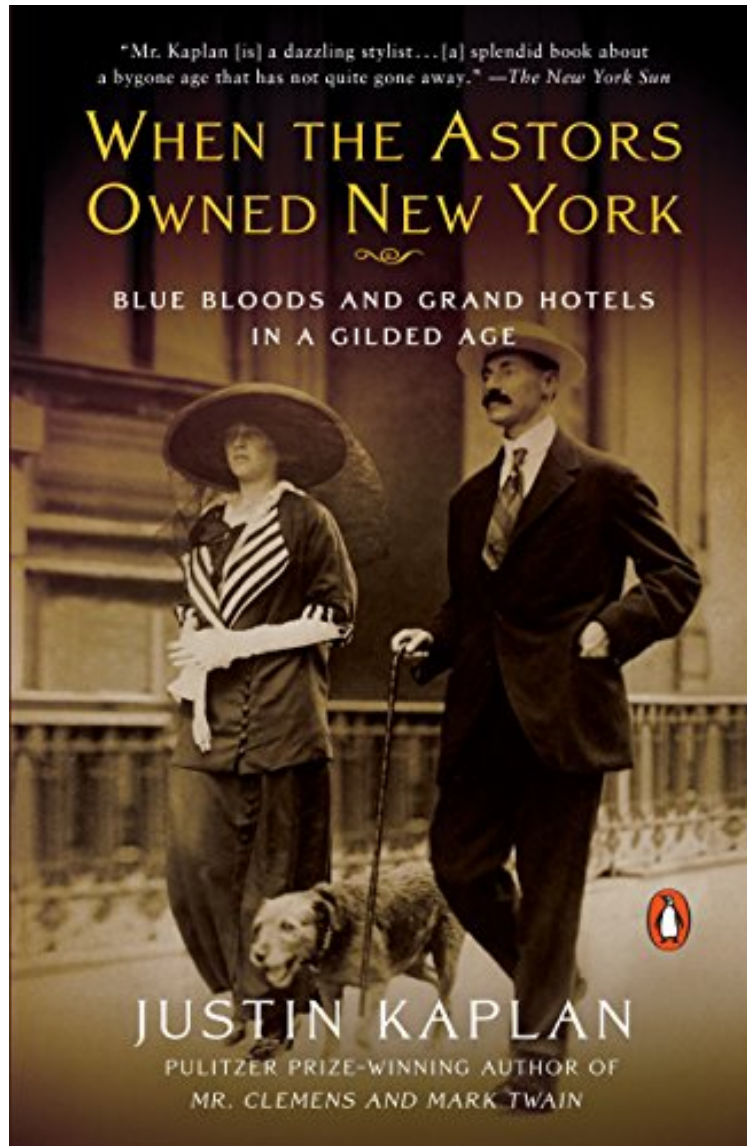


[FREE] When the Astors Owned New York: Blue Bloods and Grand Hotels in a Gilded Age

## When the Astors Owned New York: Blue Bloods and Grand Hotels in a Gilded Age

*Justin Kaplan*

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**Justin Kaplan : When the Astors Owned New York: Blue Bloods and Grand Hotels in a Gilded Age** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised When the Astors Owned New York: Blue Bloods and Grand Hotels in a Gilded Age:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Interesting If Somewhat Too Brief History Of The Astor FamilyBy R. J. MarsellaThis relatively slimmed down version of the Astor family's rise to financial prominence frustrated as

well as informed me. As an outline it has enough information about the family and the lavish hotels they built to give a general reader the gist of their influence on the shape and lifestyle of New York high society in the turn of the 20th century period. The rivalry between the two wealthy cousins and their individual eccentricities are well covered. So much more could have been included on some of the more interesting episodes of the family history that were almost strangely glossed over by the author. I found myself looking up things to supplement my understanding frequently because the book left me hanging on some of the most intriguing aspects of this story. That said, I did enjoy the book and learned some interesting background on the Astors and the author stimulated my curiosity to know more so from that perspective this was a worthwhile read. I think a more in depth treatment of the subjects here would have been warranted. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Interesting account of the development of NY Society By JustMikeGreat historical account of the early days and formation of New York society, the 400 list, and the famous families that still dominate NY society today. It starts with the first beaver trapping Astor who instilled the value of land in his sons. From a small downtown office, the family managed to purchase nearly all of the available land at the time, although the morality of how they parlayed this into their fortune is questionable. The book presents the very different personalities of the two sons and heaits of the original Astor who had reservations entrusting his hard earned fortune to them. It goes into further detail about how the rivalries between the wives of these men fueled a family feud and makes for interesting reading overall. The book is well written and moves along quickly. Definitely worth reading to those who get into this kind of material. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A GEM of a Read By Old Nana Absolutely great read for anyone who loves history, juicy gossip, and seeing how the other half lives--from those who pulled themselves up by their bootstraps to those who followed--sometimes working diligently to enhance the family fortunes--sometimes working overtime to waste it. You won't regret buying this book, written eloquently by an author who is as historically correct as he is entertaining. I must also commend the editing this book received. This is a gem.

In this marvelous anecdotal history, Justin Kaplan—Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer of Mark Twain—vividly brings to life a glittering, bygone age. Endowed with the largest private fortunes of their day, cousins John Jacob Astor IV and William Waldorf Astor vied for primacy in New York society, producing the grandest hotels ever seen in a marriage of ostentation and efficiency that transformed American social behavior. Kaplan exposes it all in exquisite detail, taking readers from the 1890s to the Roaring Twenties in a combination of biography, history, architectural appreciation, and pure reading pleasure.