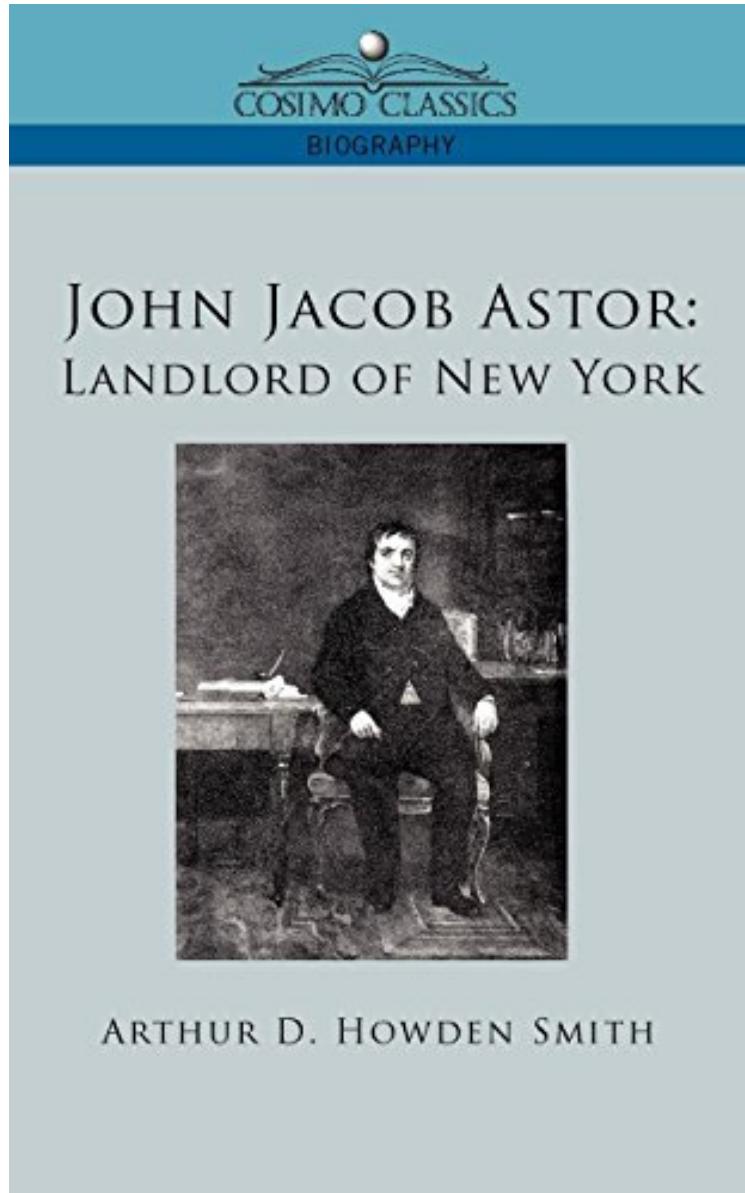


[Download] John Jacob Astor: Landlord of New York

John Jacob Astor: Landlord of New York

Arthur D. Howden Smith

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Arthur D. Howden Smith : John Jacob Astor: Landlord of New York before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised John Jacob Astor: Landlord of New York:

8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Story of the richest man of his dayBy franciscodanconiaA wonderful read which will teach you more than you ever learned in school about the post-Revolutionary War era. Since America is an economic story, NOT a political one, this book SHOULD be REQUIRED READING for all high schoolers to

graduate. The west was settled via the lubricant of Astor's capital, his rapidly expanding fur-trading company. Given more power over America's military actions, Astor would have been able to guarantee America the entire west coast of North America-- leaving Canada with no border on the Pacific. The little US Government's folly in the War of 1812 destroys Astor's trading post in British Columbia, and the rest is history as they say. Ironic, considering Astor was one of the biggest US financier's of the War of 1812. Lesson is: governments don't dictate the outcomes of the world, but business leaders do. You will learn, Astor is first to capitalize on the Louisiana Purchase, and the first to take advantage of the vast findings of Lewis Clark Expedition. Astor led the first trek by land to the west after Lewis Clark, funded all by himself and much cheaper than the Government-funded expedition. Unfortunately, even though the book is titled "Landlord of New York", the book fails to document Astor's real estate investments in any detail. The book spends great detail on the fur trade, with many characters listed and not explained to the modern audience. This book needs to be re-written for modern audience, as most are not even familiar with Astor's only competitor for richest man of his era-- Stephen Girard of Philadelphia. Much more detail and research could be done, concerning Astor's real estate investments. It appears to me that the author, overwhelmed by the task, grew tired as he finished up the fur-trading expose. By the time the book gets to Real Estate, the author is probably clearly tired of his subject, and it shows. The stories of the fur-trade and Astor's early years are so good, however, that the book still gets 5 stars. Overall, if not familiar with the importance of the fur trade in American history, you should read this book. Everyone should read it, for one is a better human for having read it. After reading it, you will realize how bad your history lessons were, focusing ENTIRELY too much on wars and politicians. The story of America is business, and in this book you will learn what made the world tick in the early 1800s. Next thing to read is a biography of Stephen Girard. The book to read right after these biographies, is The Robber Barons by Matthew Josephson-- a great overview of 2nd half of the 18th century in America. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Good - Slow - Wanting By Craig Frooninckx Written in the English of the 1930's, this book was hard at times to read and follow what was going on. It started off very good, describing John's background, his relationship with his family and his desire to go to America. It explains his stop in London and his trip across the Atlantic. His attempt to sell Musical Instruments and how he came upon Fur trading. After the family started, the story gets more confusing and often vague on details, and only the last 30 pages talk about his Real Estate adventures and the end of his life. Near the end, you learn that John Jacob Astor had in his will that all of his ledgers and business notes were to be destroyed which also destroyed the history and understanding of this successful man. I learned quite a bit about this man and his world, but would suggest another source to learn about him than this book. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. boring but informative By L. Wiegele I am still plowing through this history of John Jacob Astor. I believe this was written in the '30's, and the language is very formal and hard to follow sometimes. Focuses a lot on Astor's trade practices and it gets really boring in the middle. The first chapter was the best and traced him from Germany to England and then to America. The author seems to have a slightly negative feeling towards his subject---calling him unimaginative and dull. I felt like I got the gist of his wealth in one chapter---the man got rich off of furs by forming a monopoly. It was interesting to know that the famous Astors became so rich and became leading members of New York society all because the original heir was a determined beaver trapper and tradesman.

Some weeks later a dray drove up to the Astor store, then at 68 Pine Street, and delivered a number of very heavy little kegs which chinked faintly as they were rolled in through the door. "What on earth are those, Jacob?" Sarah demanded when she happened in during the afternoon. "Der fruits of our East India pass," he answered, his deep-set eyes twinkling merrily. "Money?" He nodded. "Ho-how much?" "Fifty-five t'ousan' dollar." "Jacob!" she gasped. And well she might. It was as rich a coup as he ever achieved.-from "Fur and Tea" New Yorkers can't escape the name Astor: it graces theaters, hotels, street names, and even an entire Queens neighborhood. This delightful biography of the "landlord of New York" explains how John Jacob Astor, who arrived in the city a poor immigrant in 1784, created such a fortune-in real estate, fur, and trade with China-not only for himself but for the city and nation around him that his influence could not be denied. Author Arthur D. Howden Smith was, in the early years of the 20th century, a tremendously popular author of pulp fiction on a par with E.E. "Doc" Smith and Edgar Rice Burroughs. And the same boisterous enthusiasm that made his adventure tales of pirates and Vikings so uproaring readable bursts forth from this classic biography as well. Also available from Cosimo Classics: Howden Smith's Commodore Vanderbilt: An Epic of American Achievement. ARTHUR DOUGLAS HOWDEN SMITH (1887-1945) was an enormously prolific and diverse writer, penning numerous short stories, biographies, and business studies, but he is best remembered for his many pulp novels, including Porto Bello Gold (a prequel to Treasure Island), The Dead Go Overseas, The Doom Trail, Swain's Saga, and others.

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