

ALL THAT GLITTERS: THE LEGACY OF JAY GOULD

By June Hall McCash and Richard Jay Hutto

All That Glitters: The Legacy of Jay Gould explores the twin goals of the so-called "King of the Robber Barons" – to create a fortune and to sire a dynasty. The book examines the lengths to which Gould, who started out with only five dollars in his pocket and ended at his death as the richest person in America, would go to acquire the great wealth associated with his name – and why. Determined that his fortune would remain intact and his six children would ever be a close-knit family, protecting one another from the dangers of the world he knew all too well, he created a will that would ultimately destroy both his fortune and his family.

Why does the world need another book about Jay Gould and his descendants? The answer is simple – because the story has never been fully told. Following Gould's death in 1892, a rash of biographies (Halstead and Beale; Northrop; Ogilvie) were rushed into press to capitalize on his notoriety. They were of necessity based on limited information available primarily in newspapers and magazines. In the 1960's two books (O'Connor [1962] and Hoyt [1969]) made efforts to explore the social history of the Goulds. However, both books focus merely on what one scholar has called "the sensational and the scandalous." Both are replete with errors and one even incorrectly lists the names of some of Jay Gould's grandchildren. Two lengthy academic tomes have also been published – a business history by Julius Grodinski (1957) and a biography of Jay Gould by Maury Klein (1987) that ends with Gould's death but says little about his family life and children. Although he bases most of his limited social commentary on

O'Conner and Hoyt, Klein nonetheless sharply criticizes their work, noting that "There is no satisfactory study of the later Gould generations."

All That Glitters: The Legacy of Jay Gould fills that void, providing the first social history of the Goulds to be written in the past thirty years. Using many sources not available to previous writers, the book focuses less on Gould's shrewd business tactics, although they are inevitably a necessary part of his story, and more on his efforts to forge a wealthy dynasty like those of the Rockefellers and Morgans. The second part of the book explores his children's tortuous relationships and how they ultimately destroyed all that he had hoped to build.

The co-authors are uniquely qualified for the project they have undertaken. Both have published books or articles about the wealthy families of the Gilded Age and are experienced in dealing with such families' descendants and documents (see enclosed bios). June Hall McCash, whose training in the French language is extensive (she is a university professor of French), will examine wills, land records, and personal documents of Gould family members who made their home in France (Frank Gould and his sister, Anna, Princesse de Sagan and Duchesse de Talleyrand). Rick Hutto's training as an attorney permits him to access and review court documents from the extensive and lengthy legal records untouched by earlier authors. As one who is himself listed in *The Social Register*, he has also been able to establish contacts that have proven elusive to previous biographers. Both writers have a passion for the Gilded Age and the lavish living that characterized the life styles of the wealthy – topics that the reading public continues to consume.

Sources clearly remain untapped that tell the social history of the Goulds. For many years members of the Gould family, which has been greatly maligned for the past century, have remained understandably uncooperative and suspicious of writers. The present generation has expressed a greater willingness to tell their family's side of the story and to make new documents available to the authors of this book. Already, they have gained the cooperation of at least ten members of the Gould family. As a result, the book is based on the most recent information available, including personal records heretofore unused. It also incorporates many photographs from family collections that have not been previously published.

Ultimately, *All That Glitters: The Legacy of Jay Gould* considers some of the mysteries of Gould family life that have never been successfully examined. Why, for example, did Frank Gould sue his brothers and one of his sisters over the management of the family fortune, yet never touch a penny of his inheritance? Why did three of the four Gould brothers marry actresses despite their beloved mother's disapproval of "such women?" Why did Anna Gould, despite two marriages to titled French aristocrats, end her days alone and lonely (her son and heir to a princely title took his own life) in the Gould mansion she had so longed to escape? Why were some of the Gould grandchildren precluded from inheriting their grandfather's fortune? In short, why was the Gould family fundamentally dysfunctional? *All That Glitters: The Legacy of Jay Gould* has the answers.