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Thursday, June 21, 2012

## Vincent Astor Townhouse

*"The golden gleam of the gilded surface hides the cheapness of the metal underneath..."*

A weekly blog keeping alive the Gilded Age Era and the mansions, parties, yachts and people that made it so gilded.

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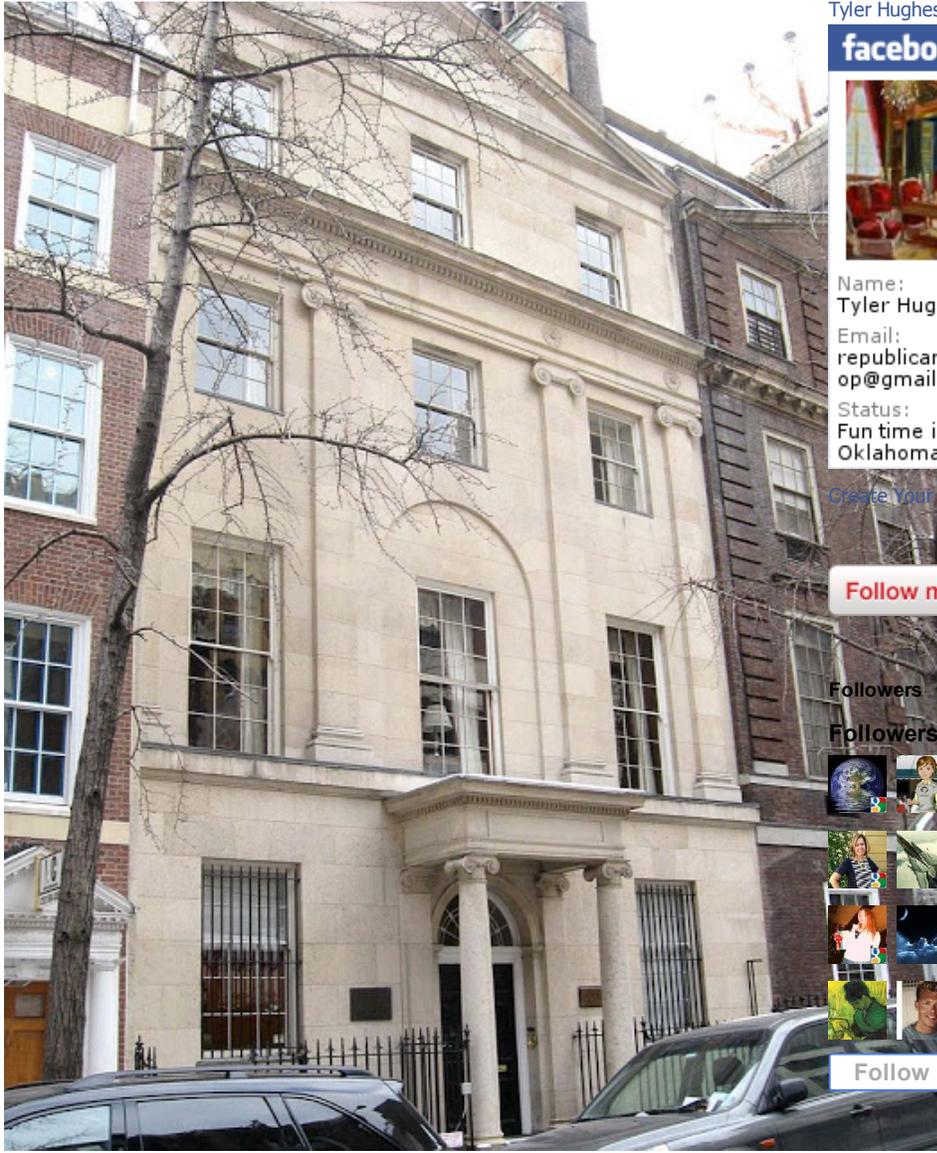
**Tyler Hughes**

An eccentric connoisseur of architecture.

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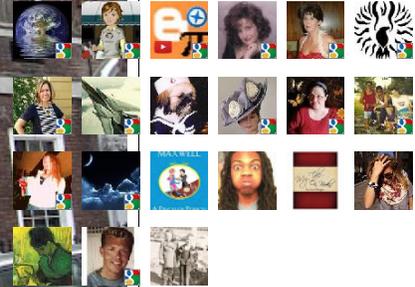
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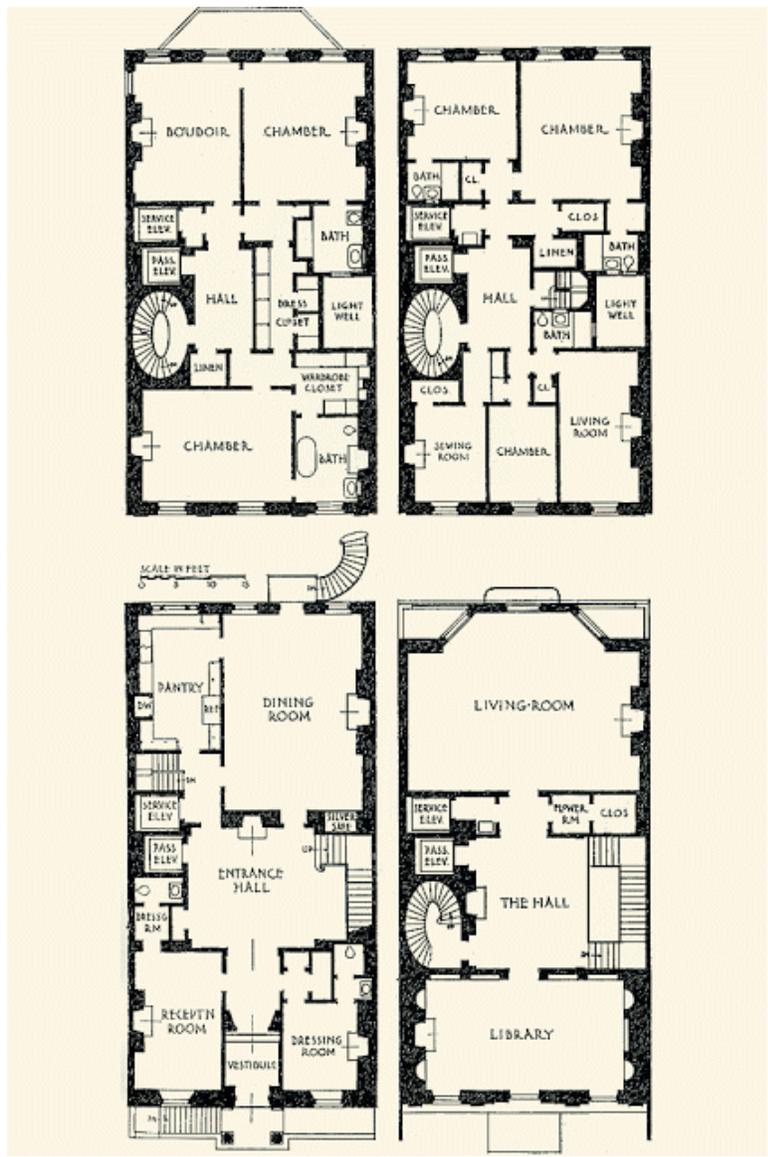
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Mrs. Astor's Ballroom and Art Gallery

Vincent Astor was described as the richest kid in the world, a title he had been given rather than had earned. His seemingly endless fortune came not from hard work and years of saving but from his enormously wealthy father and his enormously wealthy family, who not only had the benefit of being one of the wealthiest families in the United States but also one of the most socially prominent. This was all made possible by Vincent's grandmother Caroline Schermerhorn Astor who was know simply as The Mrs. Astor, The dowager queen of New York City society. The Astors were an extremely wealthy family of slumlords whose fortune was found by the patron of the family John Jacob Astor who was a fur trader and real estate mogul. Vincent's father, John IV, had built the most luxurious hotel in the world, the Waldorf-Astoria. Sadly, though, John did not live very long and perished on the Titanic at almost age fifty. His larger than life fortune was left mostly intact to Vincent some \$87 million with a \$10 million trust to his daughter Alice and a \$7 million trust and \$1 million going to his second wife, Madeleine. Madeleine had received most of the residences

all to be given up if she remarried. Well madeleine did remarry and the houses went to Vincent. Vincent later on sold the properties and instead of the massive Fifth Avenue mansion he had received he commissioned a small townhouse. The architect he chose was Mott B. Schmidt and soon Schmidt submitted plans for an Adam-inspired townhouse with a floor plan designed for comfort.



Floor Plans

The interiors would be comfortable although still designed for entertainment. The biggest room in the house was the living room which would on occasion double as the ballroom. During huge balls the entire second floor was opened up to create one massive ballroom. His second wife, Brooke, had her bedroom on the second floor in the front while his was toward the back on the third floor.

William Henry Vanderbilt's Vase

The Collis P. Huntington Mansion on Fifth Avenue

Vincent Astor Townhouse

The Astor Double Mansion: Mrs. Astor's Side

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The 1861 S. B. Althause Bldg – No. 19 Mercer Street - The side pilasters were once adorned with Corinthian

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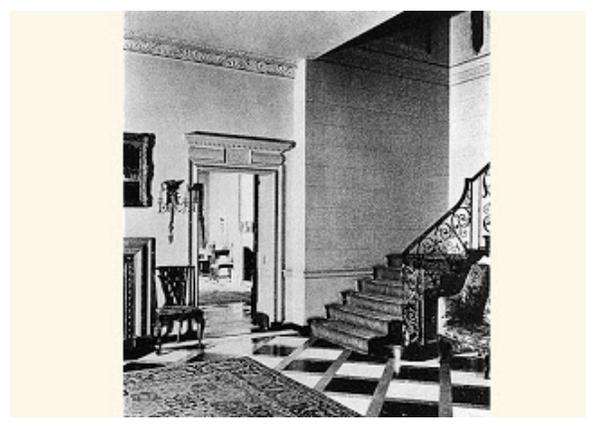
'Black Point' - '\*Black Point\*', the '\*Henry Huddleston Rogers\*' estate designed by '\*Walker & Gillette\*' c.



Entrance Hall Fireplace



Second Floor Hall



Stair Hall

Astor later on decided he no longer wanted the expense of maintaining a city townhouse and moved to an apartment at 120 East End Avenue. The home was later bought Junior League which still maintains it today.



1914 in \*Southampton\*. Click [HERE](#), [HERE](#) and [HERE](#) for more on \*Bl...

2 weeks ago

**Mansions of the Gilded Age**



Haunted Mansions of the Gilded Age - Last year for the month of October, in celebration of

Halloween I made 31 posts about Gilded Age mansions that are haunted, said to be haunted or look lik...

1 month ago

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Summertime Flying at Villa Turicum - From the July 28, 1913 Chicago Daily Tribune: "The flying

boat I budded out of its experimental and exhibition chrysalis yesterday and stepped into the ...

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"BROOKBY HOUSE" - A GORGEOUS IMITATION OF FAIRY-LAND -

Friends of Brookby House on Facebook

John W. Blodgett has created a gorgeous imitation of fairy-land at his new home at the corner of Robinson Road ...

3 months ago

**Beyond the Gilded Age**



The Low Memorial Library - The \*Low Memorial Library\* at Columbia University designed by \*McKim, Mead & White\* c.

1897 in \*New York City\*. The

\*Note all photos and floor plans except for the first photo come from Mott B. Schmidt the first one comes from Wikipedia

Posted by Tyler Hughes at 8:30 AM

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### 3 comments:

**The Devoted Classicist** July 1, 2012 at 5:42 PM

I have long admired this handsome house.

Reply



**Tyler Hughes** July 2, 2012 at 8:03 AM

Yes indeed it is very wonderful, I am so glad that this remarkable piece of history has been saved.

Reply



**Ryan** December 31, 2012 at 8:34 PM

Aside from the Anne Morgan townhouse on Sutton Place, which is also a Mott B. Schmidt design, I think this may be my all time favorite New York home. I've seen that picture of the dining room before, though and have been confused by it. If you look at the floor plan, the dining room's fireplace is on the right and the windows are at the back, but in the picture, the fireplace and windows don't show this arrangement. I'm not sure how that happened.

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building served as the university's

...

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#### Golden Newport



Hammersmith Farm, The Auchincloss Estate - Hammersmith Farm was the large estate of the Auchincloss

Family. Today, the estate is owned by a different family than the Auchinclosss, although they sti...

4 years ago

#### Behind The Hedgerow

Back by popular demand! - More showings, more free DVDs... Join us this weekend at the Jane Pickens in Newport!

5 years ago

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