The Rockefellers
Program Transcript

Narrator: October 9th, 1901: The steam yacht *Wild Duck* sailed out of Providence, Rhode Island. On board was one of the richest men in America, John D. Rockefeller, and his family. The boat was bound for an estate at Warwick Neck, on the west shore of Narragansett Bay. Soon the groomed lawns would welcome 500 guests, the lions of the gilded age. Outside the gates, reporters gathered -- for the wedding of Rockefeller's only son, John Jr., and Abby Aldrich, daughter of a powerful Rhode Island senator. Pinkerton guards had been deployed to protect the bejeweled guests and glittering wedding presents. They had another, more dangerous assignment. John D. Rockefeller, founder of Standard Oil, was the most hated man in America -- described as monstrous, evil, cruel. Rockefeller was hounded by reporters -- stalked by strangers asking for money. He had taken to keeping a revolver by his bed. There had been kidnap threats against his family -- and letters warning of homemade bombs destined for the Rockefellers' house. This was a family under siege. It would fall to the new bride -- and to the dutiful, obedient son, already oppressed by the burdens of growing up a Rockefeller -- to find a way forward for the family.

In the early 19th century, they called this part of upstate New York the "Burned Over District." Burned not by fire, but by fire and brimstone, by the blaze of Christian revivalism. Preachers urged a life of hard work, prayer, and good deeds, to build the Kingdom of God on Earth. It was in the midst of this evangelical fervor that John Davison Rockefeller was born in 1839 -- the second of five children. His mother, Eliza Davison Rockefeller, was deeply religious, stern, disciplined. Even as a young woman, she had not been given to smiles and laughter.

Ron Chernow, biographer: But she had this fatal moment of weakness one day when William Avery Rockefeller appeared on her doorstep peddling cheap trinkets, and he had a little slate that was tied to his buttonhole, and on the slate he had chalked, "I am deaf and dumb." This was part of his con man routine. And Eliza, quite out of character, was immediately smitten

by this charming rascal, and in fact proclaimed in his presence, "I'd marry him if he weren't deaf and dumb."

Albert Berger, Historian: He's a scoundrel. Apparently an enchanting scoundrel in person, and he certainly enchanted Eliza, and apparently he enchanted a good many other women, too, which is part of being a scoundrel.

Narrator: Unlike his devout wife, William Avery Rockefeller kept away from the church. He was a traveling man, a salesman who sold quack cures from a wagon out on the western frontier. People whispered about his footloose life. They called him "Devil Bill."

Albert Berger, Historian: He would come and go as he pleased, never with advance warning. He'd be away for months -- there'd be credit at the store. One winter he ran up a bill in one store of $1,000, and in the 19th century that's an enormous sum of money. But then he would come back, most frequently at night so people would never know where he came from, and he would tell stories of his exploits that were never quite complete enough to pin him down as to what he had done or where he had done it.

Narrator: Devil Bill's laughter and music flooded the house. He would be fingering wads of cash, wearing fancy new clothes. He once appeared with a patchwork tablecloth made out of bank notes. "I had a peculiar training in my home," John D. observed of his childhood. " It seemed to be a business training from the beginning."

Albert Berger, Historian: Bill Rockefeller admitted to one of his neighbors, "I do business deals with my sons and I always try to cheat them to make them sharp." Now, John D. did not always like those lessons in business, but he absorbed them.

Narrator: His father lent him money -- always at the prevailing interest rate -- then deliberately called in the loans without warning to make sure his son had kept reserves. With

Devil Bill, John D. discovered the excitement of taking a big risk, the allure of cold cash. Eliza taught him the sober habits of her Christian faith -- thrift, hard work, and perfect self control.

Clarice Stasz, Historian: He was like a little adult. When he went to school, students talked about him being Mr. Serious. And although he had a wonderful sense of humor that was very sly, for the most part he behaved very rigidly even, and liked things orderly, the way his mother did. Things occurred according to schedules. And there was a reward for good behavior, and there was a sacrifice for bad behavior.

Narrator: In 1849, the world fell apart for the Rockefeller family. Bill was accused of the rape of a maid he had hired to work in the household. Rather than confront the charges, he fled, leaving the family alone to face the scandal. It was a moment of intense shame for 10 year-old John.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: And I think that it was in the face of the malicious tongues of village gossips that John D. Rockefeller developed this very wary, secretive, self-reliant nature, because people were always whispering about his father, and John D. himself would not have known the truth of his father, but I think that he felt that he would face down the village gossips by developing this very hard and stoic air.

Narrator: Eliza and her five children found refuge in the local Baptist church. Each Sunday, when the collection plate was passed around, she urged young John to contribute his few pennies. He came to associate the church with charity. A Baptist preacher once encouraged him to make as much money as he could -- and then give away as much as he could. It was at this moment, Rockefeller later recalled, "that the financial plan ... of my life was formed." But the sound of coins in the collection plate still had the distant ring of Devil Bill.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: John D. came to associate money with those rare times that Father came home, flush with cash from the road, and that the Rockefellers briefly functioned as a real family. And I think the fact that John D. grew up in this perpetually insecure situation,

wondering when Father would come home, wondering if they would pay off the credit at the general store, created a person who had an abnormal need, not only for a large amount of money, but for constant security, and somebody who disliked surprises, somebody who wanted to master chance and outwit fate.

Narrator: Fate delivered John D. one more bitter surprise. He soon discovered that his father had taken a second wife -- under an assumed name. Shielding his mother from the shame, John kept the bigamy a secret. To carry on his double life, Bill moved the family to Cleveland. Then, he disappeared again, leaving them alone in the new city.

Albert Berger, Historian: And this turned relations between John D. and his father stone cold. I think in the long run, it had the effect of leading John D. to decide to make a life for himself that was as different from his father's as he could manage, without quite abandoning things that he still thought of value in what his father had taught him, like business.

Narrator: John had hoped to go to college. Now, he dropped out of high school and started looking for work -- to help support the family. "I did not go to any small establishments," he recalled "... I was after something big." He found a job as an assistant bookkeeper but threw himself into it with missionary intensity.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: As soon as he starts working, there is nothing lighthearted or carefree about this young, 16-year-old boy. He closely reviews every bill and jumps on errors of even a few pennies in the bill. He is amazed at the laxity and inefficiency of these much older bosses who are much more experienced. And I think that was the thing that distinguished Rockefeller from an early age. Not so much brilliant, flashing intelligence, but this thorough, plodding, systematic way that he did things.

Narrator: John began to keep a ledger, noting every expenditure, large and small. For him, numbers were sacred.

Clarice Stasz, Historian: John D.'s ledger took on a special role of being a kind of conscience, I would say. He recorded his contributions to various causes -- to church, every penny that he gave to a poor little girl he saw on the street, to abolitionist causes. And he would use this throughout his life as a way of evaluating himself.

Narrator: Line upon line, as his earnings grew, his ambition quickened. He borrowed $1,000 from Devil Bill -- with interest -- and plunged into the risky business of commodity trading -- buying and selling meat and grain. He was just 18. Only a year later, the "something big" he was looking for surfaced -- in the back woods of Pennsylvania.

Oil -- to grease the wheels of America's infant industries. Oil to fuel an explosion of growth. News of the discovery unleashed pandemonium as thousands of speculators descended upon the region. Overnight, wildcatters stripped away whole forests and put up thousands of rickety derricks -- hoping to strike "black gold."

As the oil gushed skyward, fantastic stories appeared of instant fortunes. Among the Cleveland businessmen lured to the region was John D. Rockefeller. He was no wildcatter. He saw that drilling for oil was a very risky business. Refining, not drilling, he decided, was where the steady money was to be made. Soon, a new rail line linked Cleveland with the oil region. Rockefeller built his refinery right beside it. It was one of the first in the city to produce kerosene, the new fuel for lamps that was cheap and clean. "The poor man's light," as John D. called it, would bring a brilliant glow into American homes. The soaring demand for it, he was convinced, would make him rich. "I shall never forget how hungry I was in those days," he later wrote. "I ran up and down the tops of freight cars ... I hurried up the boys." Obsessed with the business of oil, he mastered every detail, developed new products to sell. By age 25, his refinery was one of the largest in the world.

Peter Collier, Biographer: He really mortgaged his life, up to the hilt. He borrowed tens of thousands of dollars, which is the equivalent of course of millions today. He had the strength of this vision that this was where his destiny was, and this was where the destiny of this country

was, that the country was going to, kind of, ride to greatness on this tidal wave of oil. And he constantly felt that he would inevitably triumph in some fundamental way.

Ellen Fitzpatrick, Historian: He honestly believed that he had a calling to make money, and that it was a gift that had been bestowed upon him by God. Just as some people could sing opera, and other people could paint beautifully, he had a particular aptitude for acquiring wealth. And he considered it a God-given gift.

Narrator: John D. tended his faith as carefully as his business. As a lowly clerk, he paid for a slave's freedom and gave to a Catholic orphanage. As he grew rich, his donations grew more generous, especially for his church in Cleveland.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: He falls in love with this church. He sweeps the chapel, he rings the bell, he lights the candles. He teaches in the Sunday school. He seems to find in the church a refuge from the sort of sin that he has encountered with his father.

Narrator: Soon, John was drawn to a young woman as devout and determined as he was.

Albert Berger, Historian: Laura Spelman was an 1840s, 1850s feminist. She was the valedictorian of her high school graduating class, the same class that John D. was in, and the title of her address was, "I can paddle my own canoe." And it was a plea for women's suffrage in 1855.

Clarice Stasz, Historian: When John courted her, it was very different from the other young men of her set who were also after her and would see her at balls and parties. He would come to her house, and they might play a little piano together, but then they would often sit down with his ledger books, and go over them together. And she apparently found them just as interesting as he did.

Narrator: On September 8th, 1864, John and Laura were married in a small private ceremony.

Rodman Rockefeller: My great-grandmother was a figure who perhaps had a bit of hell and brimstone in her philosophy, who basically believed, "through deeds you go to heaven," and, therefore, you could very likely go to hell if you weren't properly motivated and properly achieving.

Narrator: Like his devout mother, Laura strengthened John's sense that he was doing God's work -- not only in church, but also in business. Rockefeller's future, however, was harnessed to an industry in trouble. "So many wells were flowing," he lamented, "that the price of oil kept falling, yet they went right on drilling." He saw an industry plagued by over-production, and his own success threatened by what he described as "ruinous, cutthroat competition."

Ron Chernow, Biographer: John D. was shrewd enough and he was analytical enough that he realized that in order to figure out a way to save his own firm and his own newly-won fortune, that he had to figure out a solution for the entire industry. It was at that point that John D. began to conceive of the oil industry as one big interrelated mechanism. And you couldn't just change one component, you had to control the entire machine.

Narrator: In a move that would transform the American economy, Rockefeller set out to replace a world of independent oilmen with a giant company controlled by him. In 1870, begging bankers for more loans, he formed Standard Oil of Ohio. The next year, he quietly put what he called "our plan" -- his campaign to dominate the volatile oil industry -- into devastating effect. Rockefeller knew that the refiner with the lowest transportation cost could bring rivals to their knees. He entered into a secret alliance with the railroads called the South Improvement Company. In exchange for large, regular shipments, Rockefeller and his allies secured transport rates far lower than those of their bewildered competitors.

Ida Tarbell, the daughter of an oil man, later remembered how men like her father struggled to make sense of events: "An uneasy rumor began running up and down the Oil Regions," she wrote. "Freight rates were going up. ... Moreover ... all members of the South Improvement

Company -- a company unheard of until now -- were exempt. ... Nobody waited to find out his neighbor's opinion. On every lip there was but one word and that was 'conspiracy.'"

Ellen Fitzpatrick, Historian: What it really represented was the face of monopoly. It immediately became clear that the entire nature of the enterprise was going to change in ways that spelled their doom. And so there was a shock of recognition, that they were going to be left behind, and that a whole world that had been opened up to them was soon to close.

Peter Collier, Biographer: The image that was always used was that of the anaconda, the squeezing, python-like grips of this economic snake that was just taking individual entrepreneurs and just putting them out of business and reducing them to a kind of economic strait where they had no alternative but really to sell out, to sell out the principals in this conspiracy. It was a conspiracy, really. It was one of the first great economic conspiracies in this country.

Narrator: In an effort to thwart the scheme, many independents refused to sell crude oil to Rockefeller and his associates. Undaunted, Rockefeller used the threat of the South Improvement Company to intimidate his rival refiners in Cleveland. His brother and business partner William characterized the plan as "war or peace": sell out to Standard Oil or suffer the consequences. At first, they approached their targets with deference and flattery. Rockefeller himself used his own considerable talent for persuasion, presenting Standard Oil as a brotherhood based on cooperation.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: He had this missionary faith that he was destined to guide this industry, and when he took over his rivals he not only wanted their plants, he often wanted their managers, so it was not in his interest to alienate them. He much preferred convincing people to sell to him voluntarily rather than trying to squeeze them through terror tactics, although if necessary he would resort to very rough methods in order to soften them up, or, he used a phrase, to give them "a good sweating" before he negotiated with them.

Narrator: Rockefeller might create a shortage of the railroad tank cars that transported oil. He might go out and buy up all the barrels on the market so a competitor would have no place to store his oil or ship it. He would even buy up all the available chemicals that were necessary to refine oil. Rockefeller instructed Standard Oil men to communicate in code. The company was nicknamed "Club"; John D. Rockefeller was referred to as "Chowder."

Many of Rockefeller's targets had no idea that the local refiners who were slashing prices and acting like competitors were actually part of Rockefeller's growing empire. In just two months, he had taken over 22 of the 26 Cleveland refineries, revealing the single-minded drive that would make him both the wonder and the terror of American business.

Judith Sealander, Historian: Nobody knew what he sounded like, nobody'd heard him. He walled himself off and the people who DID know him, the people who DID find him ruthless, had reason to find him ruthless, because you come up against someone who has no self doubts, who has a vision, and who has no qualms about achieving that vision -- because he doesn't think he's doing wrong. Once he made his mind up, you might as well sell your company, because it was going to be part of Standard Oil.

Narrator: Methodically, secretly, John D. Rockefeller was doing more than transforming a single industry -- he was changing forever the way America did business. "The day of combination is here to stay," he declared, "individualism has gone, never to return."

Ron Chernow, Biographer: By 1879, when Rockefeller is 40, he controls 90 percent of the oil refining in the world. Within a few years, he will control 90 percent of the marketing of oil and a third of all of the oil wells. So this very young man controls what is not only a national but an international monopoly in a commodity that is about to become the most important strategic commodity in the world economy.

Narrator: Rockefeller relished time spent with Laura. After the birth of their first child, Elizabeth, they moved to Euclid Avenue, Cleveland's "millionaires' row." Rockefeller could have

afforded any mansion on the street, he deliberately picked a more modest house, where his three remaining children were born -- Alta, Edith, and his only son, John Jr. Convinced that riches led to sin, Rockefeller, now one of America's richest men, faced a difficult task in raising his children.

Clarice Stasz, Historian: They seemed a bit afraid of this wealth, and they felt they should continue to live as they had in the past with very simple wardrobe, children sharing toys, children earning allowances, that this was an important part of building character and continuing the virtuous life -- that to in some way to give in to too much luxury would lead one astray.

Narrator: Laura compelled young John to wear his sisters' remade hand-me-downs until he was eight. She once proudly confided to a neighbor, "I am so glad my son has told me what he wants for Christmas, so now it can be denied him." After she was diagnosed with consumption, the Rockefellers began to spend more time at Forest Hill, their 79-acre estate outside of Cleveland. Despite its grand facade, he insisted the interior remain bare of all signs of luxury or pretension. "Money," Junior recalled, "was something there like air or food or any other element, yet it was never easily attainable."

Bernice Kert, Author: In the setting where all this frugality and restraint was practiced in the household, he was surrounded by hundreds of acres of gardens and lakes where they could ice-skate, by every outer manifestation of wealth, and then in the intimate family setting he was being raised like a poor little kid.

Narrator: To earn pocket money, Junior mended doors, killed flies, and sharpened pencils, dutifully keeping track of every penny in a ledger, just like his father. He attended prayer meetings and recited temperance slogans without complaint. By age 10, he had signed a solemn oath that he would abstain from "tobacco, profanity, and the drinking of any intoxicating beverages." Junior and his sisters were constantly pushed by their mother to cleanse their souls of sin.

Bernice Kert, Author: Every Sunday afternoon, Laura would sit down with the children and they would discuss what she called their -- what she called their "ill-conceived actions of the week." And that was, were the besetting sins, and the idea was to examine what they did and basically ask forgiveness. And analyze how they could improve their behavior for the next week.

Clarice Stasz, Historian: The most important lesson that she taught the children was, "What is your duty" -- and that is what is to guide your life, service to others. You are not here just for your own enjoyment, or even just simply to pray. You have a purpose beyond that.

Albert Berger, Historian: Laura was the disciplinarian in the family and John D., Sr. a doting, cheerful, indulgent father. He plays with his children, his son. Teaches him to skate. When they're a little older, he ties a white handkerchief to the back of his belt and he leads the kids on bicycle chases across his estate.

Narrator: Rockefeller led his children through the winding roads at Forest Hill, revealing a boyish excitement that few outsiders ever saw. He loved to play games, electrifying the children with daring feints, sudden thrusts, and unexpected wheeling turns -- followed by whoops of delight when he won. Junior recalled, "Father never told us what not to do. He was one with us." Although Rockefeller was a merry companion for his children, he and Laura kept them cut off from the outside world. "We went rarely, practically not at all, to neighbors' houses," John Jr. remembered. "We had no childhood friends. No school friends." The austerity drilled into John D. by his mother Eliza still reigned in the Rockefeller family. At age 76, immobilized by a stroke, she died with her eldest son at her side. She never knew her husband had taken a second wife. Rockefeller expected his estranged father to attend the funeral. When Devil Bill failed to show, it was the last straw.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: The day before Eliza's funeral, John D. instructed the preacher to describe his mother as a widow. This was part of his revenge. He was editing his father out of

existence, and he never forgave his father, and he distinctly left the impression with people in subsequent years that his father was dead.

Narrator: In 1883, Rockefeller moved his family to New York, the center of America's burgeoning industrial economy. The king of Standard Oil now set out to transform his company into something bigger and more powerful than anything the world had ever seen. Rockefeller reigned over a patchwork of companies, cumbersome to manage. He was looking for a way to skirt a law that then prohibited combining the operations of businesses in different states. His solution was to have stockholders in 40 companies secretly trade in their shares for certificates in a Standard Oil trust. The trust became a corporation of corporations. Rockefeller had devised an ingenious legal shield. Behind it, he could command his vast business empire -- smoothly and in complete secrecy. In 1885, he moved Standard Oil into an imposing granite fortress near Wall Street. 26 Broadway soon became the world's most famous business address. It was also a hated symbol of a monopoly so powerful that no law seemed able to control it.

Ellen Fitzpatrick, Historian: Small businessmen, middle class Americans, people who were independent, who were used to believing that hard work and determined effort was the way to success looked at corporations like the Standard Oil with their unprecedented size, and felt afraid. And so feeling ran extremely high and the hostility was intense.

Narrator: Rockefeller saw himself as a prophet of a new order. He called it "cooperation"; his critics called it monopoly. His company would be the world's first great multinational corporation -- efficient and stable, with vast economies of scale.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: During the first 20 years of Standard Oil, John D. Rockefeller managed to lower the price of kerosene from 23 cents a gallon to seven cents a gallon and he managed to improve the quality of the product at the same time. He was a monopolist, he was a rough and often unscrupulous monopolist, but he was also a very smart and enterprising businessman. There was nothing complacent about him. And it was one of the ways that he was able to justify these rough methods to himself.

Narrator: Rockefeller had wanted to remain invisible, but he wielded such power that he became a magnet for suspicion. Hearings, investigations, and lawsuits began to challenge the Standard Oil empire. John D. was called to testify in one forum after another.

Peter Collier, Biographer: He was a kind of difficult witness to kind of pin down. Because on the one hand he was verbally fairly clever, actually, and keen in terms of his ability to listen to the questions. When he was being investigated about the South Improvement Company for instance, one interrogator said something about the Southern Improvement Company, and he seized upon that misnomer and John D. said, "I wasn't part of that."

Narrator: One reporter described 26 Broadway as "...a cave for pirates. A den for the cutthroats of commerce." Reporters who eluded the security guards encountered doors with special locks. The trick was to twist the rim with thumb and forefinger before turning the knob. If a trespasser did not know the secret he could find himself trapped between locked doors. Half of America seemed willing to lynch Rockefeller. The other half wanted a loan.

Judith Sealander, Historian: He received on average 50 to 60,000 letters a month, asking for help. Dozens of people followed him in the street. Literally, crowds stood around the Standard Oil offices waiting for him to come out. Little children, painfully thin, crying in the street and so on. Rockefeller felt overwhelmed.

Narrator: By 1889 John D. pegged his fortune at more than $40 million dollars. He had always been a generous man, but at the same time loath to waste a penny. He hired Rev. Frederick Gates, a Baptist minister, to help him forge a new set of principles for philanthropy.

Judith Sealander, Historian: Senior began very seriously to re-think not just the vehicles but the purposes of charity. Charity as a way of remaking society and not ameliorating evil. So, cure scarlet fever, don't provide another scarlet fever ward in a children's hospital. Find a more

productive way of growing corn, rather than making a soup kitchen. He was ahead of his time then, he still is.

Narrator: In the coming years, Rockefeller would fund the education of black women at Spelman College in Atlanta; found the University of Chicago -- the midwestern equivalent of the Ivy League; support groundbreaking medical research and public health campaigns. Frederick Gates pushed him on, warning, "Mr. Rockefeller your fortune is rolling up ... like an avalanche! ... You must distribute it faster than it grows! If you do not, it will crush you and your children and your children's children!" Already strained by the demands of making money, Rockefeller now staggered under the new pressures of giving it away. "I investigated and worked myself almost to a nervous breakdown," he said, "in groping my way through the ever-widening field of philanthropic endeavor."

Suffering from chronic stomach problems, Rockefeller took time off from work and retreated to Forest Hill. To regain his health, he worked outdoors, rode his bike, and ate simply. By the end of the summer he had gained 15 pounds. Still, he resisted returning to work and now contemplated something unthinkable: retirement.

Laurance Rockefeller: Here he was this wealthy person with great power, and in his mid-50s he gave it all up. Now, in the history, I have never seen anybody do anything like that and then be happy without it. See, he had incredible wholeness and self-sufficiency, see. Power, money, status, position were no longer important to him.

Narrator: In 1897, John D. Rockefeller retired from Standard Oil, keeping the presidency in name only. No public announcement was made. Few Americans realized that the man they believed responsible for running the most powerful corporation on earth had surrendered the reins. When asked why Rockefeller retained the president's title, one senior director explained, "... He had to keep it ... Cases against us were pending in the courts; and we told him that if any of us have to go to jail, he would have to go with us." As the only son and heir, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. carried a heavy burden. From an early age, he had been taught that the

responsibilities of the family fortune and name would be his to bear. By age 18, he had suffered two nervous collapses.

Albert Berger, Historian: John D. Rockefeller, Jr. has some really rather impossible tasks ahead of him. Because by the time he comes of age his father has been successful beyond anybody's wildest dreams, including his own. To the point where the son cannot possibly match the father. Moreover, he is certainly familiar with the proverb, "Of those to whom much has been given, much shall be required." And by the time he comes in to his own, he realizes he's been given more than anybody else. So, of course, from him shall be required more than anybody else.

Narrator: Intensely conscientious, Junior entered Brown University in September 1893. He still wrote all his expenses down in a ledger, and mended his own clothes. Slowly, however, he began to wean himself from his strict upbringing. For the first time in his life he went to the theater, enjoyed football games, and even once smoked a pack of cigarettes. To the horror of his mother he learned to dance. Soon he met Abby Aldrich, a popular Providence girl undaunted by his name or his money.

Bernice Kert, Author: Abby Aldrich, because she was raised in a liberated, relaxed, artistic family, was like an injection of dynamism and interest in the larger world, which John had been shielded from.

Narrator: Abby's father, Nelson Aldrich, was a controversial United States senator from Rhode Island. He was fiercely criticized by the press for being the prime power-broker of the great trusts. Junior admired Abby's ability to be loyal to her father and ignore the criticism he attracted. As he approached graduation he still worshipped his own father and was deeply wounded by relentless attacks in the press. In 1897, fresh out of college, Junior went to work for Standard Oil. "My one thought from the time I was a boy," he recalled, "was to help my father."

Albert Berger, Historian: When he got there, nobody bothered to tell him how he was expected to help. He was given a desk, he was given a salary, he was given some miscellaneous chores, but nobody told him what was expected of him. He had to find out for himself where his place in the world was, and perhaps that is what Senior had in mind, was letting him find his own way. But in this case it made life more difficult for the son.

Narrator: Anxious to succeed at something, Junior tried investing. He trusted the advice of a shady Wall Street speculator. Suddenly, cautious Junior lost $1 million dollars of his father's money.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: He went to see his father, with what must have been a terrible churning sensation in his stomach. His father reacted very patiently. John D., Sr. asked him a lot of questions and instead of in any way scolding or reprimanding him at the end says, "All right, John, I'll take care of it." He saw that his son was flagellating himself about this incident and that there was no need punishing a son who was so clearly punishing himself.

Narrator: Fearing the family's vast fortune would overwhelm his son, Senior begged Junior to relax. Laura, however, pushed him forward. "You are the son of the king of kings," she reminded him, "and so you can never do what will dishonor your father, or be disloyal to the king." Junior anguished over whether to marry Abby, and for four years prayed every day for divine guidance. Gently, his mother ended his agony, saying, "Of course you love Miss Aldrich. Why don't you go at once and tell her so?" That fall, the freewheeling Senator Aldrich invited guests to an extravagant wedding. In private yachts, the elite of Gilded Age society descended on his Rhode Island estate. Many in the press saw this union of money and political power in dark terms. One reporter warned, "The chief exploiter of the American people is [now] closely allied by marriage with the chief schemer ..." For the austere, controlled Rockefellers, Junior's new wife would be a liberating influence.

Clarice Stasz, Historian: When they're first married and Junior says, "Well, you'll have to keep a ledger," she just says, "No, I won't." And when he gives her a thousand dollars as a

wedding present, a rather interesting act in itself, she gives it to the YWCA in Providence. So immediately you see she is going to assert herself.

Narrator: Abby joined the Rockefellers as they were about to enter the most painful moment in their history. Her husband would soon find himself in the harsh light of public scrutiny -- alongside his father.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: When John D. was in his 50s, his hair started to fall out and his mustache began to fall out and suddenly, in 1901, all of his body hair fell out. Not just from his head, all over his body. And this was a very crushing and humiliating thing to suffer from because when you see photographs of him completely bald in the early 1900s he looks like he could be in his 70's or 80's.

Narrator: Rockefeller had looked forward to the end of his long career. But now, the scandal surrounding his rise to power would be resurrected -- in haunting detail. Rockefeller and Standard Oil were about to be investigated by a vigorous new president, Theodore Roosevelt, and an increasingly assertive press. In 1901, the managing editor of *McClure's* magazine, Ida Tarbell, decided to research America's most secretive businessman. She began her investigation with an emotional journey back to Pennsylvania, where oil men like her father and brother had fought Standard Oil. Here she talked with legions of Rockefeller enemies. "The task confronting me is a monstrous one," she wrote. "I dream of the octopus day and night and can think of nothing else."

Ron Chernow, Biographer: When Ida Tarbell started writing the series, Rockefeller didn't realize how powerful the press had become in an age when Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst had mass newspaper chains. He didn't realize the new sophistication of muckrakers like Ida Tarbell, who were capable of taking a very complex subject, slicing it open, and really dissecting a person's life or an institution.

Narrator: In 1902, Tarbell's revelations gripped the nation. She brought to life a drama in which independent oil men were crushed by the mighty Standard Oil. She documented the monopoly's collusion with the railroads, the kickbacks and shady dealings. She exposed the sweatings and crushings, the spies and codes, the secret ownership of supposed rivals. "There was not a lazy bone in the organization, not an incompetent hand or stupid head," she wrote. "But they had never played fair, and that ruined their greatness for me."

Ron Chernow, Biographer: Because the series was such a great success and the circulation of *McClure's* kept jumping up, they allowed the series to run to 19 installments and what happened with each installment was not only did the audience grow larger, and Teddy Roosevelt was avidly reading it and writing fan letters to Ida Tarbell, a lot of new sources were coming out of the woodwork as it went on and so there was a tremendous crescendo and the public kept getting angrier and angrier at Rockefeller.

Narrator: President Theodore Roosevelt denounced him as a law breaker. Novelist Leo Tolstoy cried out that no honest man should work with him. Rockefeller was called a pirate, a buccaneer, a robber baron. He received torrents of abusive mail, even death threats. Still, he refused to answer any of the charges leveled against him. From his mother's silence in the face of family scandal, he had learned, as he put it, to "let the world wag."

Judith Sealander, Historian: I think if he had responded early to the Tarbell series, the wave of press and political denunciation might have subsided a bit. But Senior knew that he could respond to some things in the series and say that's just not true, but he also knew that there were plenty of other things that were true -- about the rebates, the bribing and so on. So, I think he probably in the end knew that he had no choice.

Narrator: Tarbell traveled to Cleveland to glimpse the Titan at one of his rare public appearances at the Euclid Avenue Baptist Church. "There was an awful age in his face," she observed. "The oldest man I have ever seen. Mr. Rockefeller may have made himself the richest man in the world, but he has paid. Nothing but paying ever ploughs such lines ..." Tarbell

described Rockefeller's agitated behavior, the way he was "searching the aisles" for possible enemies. "Mr. Rockefeller," she concluded, "for all his conscious power, was afraid. Afraid of his own kind."

Ron Chernow, Biographer: She then capped the 19-part series with a two-part character study where she described Rockefeller as hideous, and leprous in appearance, and that actually wounded him much more than her exposé of his business methods. He felt that it was very unfair to have portrayed him in this ghoulish fashion and to make the fact that he had lost all his hair somehow proof of his depravity.

Narrator: The most painful blow, however, was Tarbell's exposure of Rockefeller's father as a snake-oil salesman, bigamist, and accused rapist. The discovery that Devil Bill was still alive set off a nationwide manhunt. One newspaper publisher offered $8,000 for information about him. Rockefeller began to fear that his children might be kidnapped.

Judith Sealander, Historian: Ida Tarbell really took a toll on the family. John Jr. certainly had what could only be described as a really catastrophic nervous breakdown. Senior had serious, continuous stomach ailments. His wife was ill. So that I think that the whole family, not just Senior, was reacting to what they saw as a body blow.

Narrator: Isolated and discouraged, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. confided to his bible class, "I've never had more occasion to seek the sympathy of friends. ... All the money in the world will not take the place of friends. ... Riches," the young heir warned his pupils, "breed but sin."

Ron Chernow, Biographer: This must have been an especially distressing period because, as he's working at Standard Oil, he has a lot of contact with his father's hand-picked successor, John D. Archbold, who's engaged in an enormous amount of political corruption. And so, I think that the Tarbell series is especially distressing because he wants desperately to believe in his father's innocence. And yet he's increasingly disturbed at 26 Broadway by the sordid atmosphere

of Standard Oil. Which meant that on some level, he must have suspected that a lot of these things were true.

Narrator: Adrift at Standard Oil, Junior threw himself into building a new home for his father. Located at Pocantico Hills, 30 miles north of New York City, the site was called *Kykuit,* Dutch for "lookout." It had a panoramic view of the Hudson River.

Soon it became a haven for the family. Outside its walls, reporters gathered, demanding answers. For Junior, facing a hostile public became increasingly difficult as he and Abby began to have children. Their daughter Abby, nicknamed Babs, was soon followed by John D. Rockefeller III who was heralded as the "Richest Baby in History." Newspapers gloated that the Titan could not visit his first grandson because of fear he would be served with a subpoena. With a rash of lawsuits now pending against Standard Oil, Rockefeller began leading the life of a fugitive, keeping his whereabouts secret. *Kykuit* became both his prison and fortress, surrounded by Pinkerton guards. As the Tarbell series drew to its close, the federal government announced sweeping anti-trust indictments against Standard Oil. Senior was determined to carry on, confident in his own rectitude. Junior could not.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: Here was the son of the most controversial businessman in America, who had to figure out, by sheer force of character, a way to change the image and the direction of this family without openly repudiating this father he loved. He had to be both loyal to his father and loyal to his principles at the same time even though his principles often differed from those of his father.

Narrator: In 1910, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. decided to retire from the Standard Oil Trust and devote himself exclusively to helping his father give away the family fortune. With Junior at his side, Senior launched the Rockefeller Foundation, endowed with $100 million dollars. Its ambitious goal was "to promote the well-being of mankind throughout the world."

Judith Sealander, Historian: Other people may have had trouble reconciling Senior as the greatest philanthropist of his age. I think what's important to note is that Senior never had a moment's worry. The notion that he gave away hundreds of millions of dollars to assuage guilt is nonsense. The notion that Junior became a great philanthropist because of worry and guilt is not so easy to call. Junior was a man plagued by self-doubt.

Narrator: On May 15th, 1911, the Supreme Court of the United States declared that Standard Oil was a monopoly in restraint of trade and should be dissolved. Rockefeller heard of the decision while golfing at *Kykuit* with a priest from the local Catholic church, Father J.P. Lennon.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: And Rockefeller reacted with amazing aplomb. He turned to the Catholic priest and said, "Father Lennon, have you some money?" And the priest was very startled by the question and said, "No." And then he said, "Why?" And Rockefeller replied, "Buy Standard Oil."

Narrator: As Rockefeller foresaw, the individual Standard Oil companies were worth more than the single corporation. In the next few years, their shares doubled and tripled in value. By the time the rain of cash was over, Rockefeller had the greatest personal fortune in history -- nearly two percent of the American economy.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: And it was really losing the antitrust case that converted John D. Rockefeller into history's first billionaire. So that Standard Oil was punished in the federal antitrust case, but John D. Rockefeller, Sr. most assuredly was not.

Narrator: Rockefeller's lucky streak was not over yet. Just as the electric light bulb threatened to wipe out the need for kerosene, the automobile appeared. The market for gasoline sparked euphoria in the oil industry. Rockefeller's soaring fortunes made it seem as if he had outwitted his critics again. Increasingly genial and relaxed, he cast off his business suit and experimented with a variety of wigs. He delighted in the birth of Junior's second son Nelson, born on Senior's

birthday. Three more boys followed: Laurance, Winthrop and David. With the furor over Standard Oil subsiding, and the philanthropies launched, Junior was determined to give his children an inheritance they could be proud of. But his hopes of redeeming the family name were about to be shattered.

Narrator: In the fall of 1913, beneath the majestic peaks of the Rockies, a labor dispute was engulfing the coal mines of southern Colorado. It would engulf the Rockefellers as well, making the family once again the target of national outrage. The explosion came on September 23rd in the foothills near Ludlow. Eight thousand miners struck a Rockefeller-owned company, Colorado Fuel and Iron, demanding more humane living and working conditions. CF&I immediately evicted the strikers from their homes. Families were forced to move into a makeshift tent colony beyond company grounds. The striking miners came from 32 different countries. Some thought John D. Rockefeller was the president of the United States. As both sides braced for a showdown, CF&I brought in gunmen and had them deputized by county sheriffs. Union organizers descended upon Colorado, including the fiery Mother Jones, who led a protest on the state's capital. In December, four feet of snow fell on southern Colorado. Twenty thousand men, women, and children shivered on the windswept plain. With no end to the stalemate in sight, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. was summoned to testify before Congress. Although he was a company director, he said he knew little of the situation and had put his faith in the managers on the scene. Then, he declared his faith in the open shop, the right not to join a union. An approving Senior rewarded his son with 10,000 shares of CF&I stock.

Albert Berger, Historian: Senior was no friend of labor unions. And Junior goes along without really thinking about it. Without realizing that it is damaging the men who are working for him, without thinking about what it is doing to those communities, and without realizing what it can do to him.

Narrator: On the morning of April 20th, two weeks after Junior's testimony, a company of 35 National Guardsmen stationed themselves on a hill overlooking the tent colony in Ludlow. When a shot rang out from an unknown location, the Guardsmen began raking the camp with

machine gun fire and a pitched battle began. Trapped families sought shelter from the bullets in dirt bunkers hidden beneath the tents. The cries of frightened children pierced the din of battle.

At dusk, when the southbound local rumbled in to Ludlow, families who had been trapped in terror seized the opportunity to escape behind the barrier of 36 freight cars. As the train pulled away, the brakeman reported seeing the tent colony engulfed by flames -- lit, he claimed, by the torch of a soldier. The extent of the tragedy came to light the next morning. In a bunker beneath one of the tents, the bodies of two women and 11 children were discovered. *The New York Times* reported they had suffocated, "like trapped rats...[more] terrified by the bullets which whistled above their heads...than the flames."

Accounts differed, but the massacre had claimed at least 24 lives. Scores more were injured and burned. To many, there was no doubt who bore responsibility.

For the first time the full weight of public opinion descended directly upon Junior's shoulders.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: Here was John D. Rockefeller, Jr. who was earnestly trying to redeem the family name, who was trying to distance himself from the family's corporate past and all of these unscrupulous actions that his father had been accused of. And suddenly he's being accused of something far worse than anything that his father had been accused of, which was complicity in the deaths at Ludlow.

Narrator: Angry pickets marched in front of Junior's home and his office at 26 Broadway. Speakers urged mobs to shoot him down like a dog. Novelist Upton Sinclair publicly indicted Junior with the charge of murder. Radical workers threatened to storm the locked gates of *Kykuit*. This especially rattled Junior, whose mother, Laura, lay inside the walls close to death. Then, a homemade bomb exploded in a tenement, killing four radicals. It was believed to be destined for Junior's townhouse. But by December 1914, the miners' relief funds were exhausted. They were forced to return to work. It appeared to many as if management had won. But not to John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

Peter Collier, Biographer: John D., Jr. saw -- I could have the blood of these people on me and my children for a generation, and to his credit he eventually saw that he had to take a hand not only in cooling out that situation in Colorado, in making it right, but that he had a duty to regularize this unruly, turbulent field of worker relations in America.

Narrator: One of the first signs of Junior's transformation came when he was summoned to testify before a government commission investigating the strike. On his way in, he stopped to shake hands with Mother Jones. "I have never believed that you knew what those hirelings out there were doing," Mother Jones told him. On the stand, John did something his father never would have done -- publicly admit that he had been wrong. Young Rockefeller then promised to go to Ludlow himself and speak directly with the miners. As he was about to make his journey of atonement, his mother died. One of the first sympathy notes came from Mother Jones.

Narrator: In September 1915, Junior arrived in Ludlow. He refused to carry a weapon or have bodyguards.

Judith Sealander, Historian: He sees the way in which miners lived. He sees how thin their children are. He understands that there is no potable drinking water in most of the camps. He, in fact, for someone with a reputation for immense rectitude and shyness, comes out of himself.

Narrator: Preaching a gospel of cooperation and Christian brotherhood, Junior laid out a plan for a panel to address worker grievances. He also promised the miners they would not be fired if they chose to join a union instead. His approach worked. The miners voted for his plan in a secret ballot. The usually straitlaced Junior took the hand of a miner's wife and gaily broke into a dance when a four-piece band struck up the Hesitation Waltz.

Bernice Kert, Author: John's rearing as this child who had to eat plain food and wear plain clothes and be a plain little kid -- he knew how to conduct himself with miners and families who were living in tents and who were living in great deprivation -- he ate the food they had, he

sopped up the gravy with his bread. It's a wonderful portrait of a man who as it turned out, you kind of see Laura Spelman over his shoulder, realizing that she brought good to this boy as well as repression.

Narrator: Selling the plan to CF&I management was not easy. Junior cashiered the Rockefeller agent on the scene. When his father's advisors protested, he brought in his own team.

Albert Berger, Historian: When the dust is settled, Junior is running the show. And his father, by his silence, says "Go ahead." And it is at that point that he really becomes the master of the house. Senior hasn't transferred all the money to him. In fact, it's after he succeeds in minimizing the damage at Ludlow that Senior begins transferring the enormous amounts of money to Junior's name.

Narrator: "Dear Son: I am giving you 20,000 shares of the stock of the Standard Oil Company, of the capitalization of $30,000,000. ... Go carefully. ... Be sure you are right, and then do not be afraid to give out, as your heart prompts you, and as the Lord inspires you.

Dear Son: I am this day giving you the following securities: 60,000 shares of Wheeling and Lake Erie Railroad ...

Dear Son: I am giving you $65 million dollars of United States government bonds ... Affectionately, Father."

Narrator: Though Junior thanked his father profusely, years later he revealed darker feelings about his legacy: "I did not choose or seek to be the recipient of [such] wealth," he wrote. "It has not meant the greatest happiness."

Ron Chernow, Biographer: He was terrified of receiving all of this money because he knew the pressure and responsibility that went with it. And it was particularly a source of tension

because he had very little self-confidence, so that he was constantly worried that he would fall short of the demands of this great fortune.

Narrator: As a boy, Junior had learned the biblical saying that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Steven Rockefeller: He was deeply troubled by the image of his father as a robber baron and John D., Jr. saw his life's mission as trying to remove the taint that seemed to exist around the Rockefeller wealth, and the Rockefeller family, and the Rockefeller name.

Narrator: Years before, Senior had been warned that his vast wealth, like an avalanche, could crush him and his children and his children's children. Now his son Junior faced that danger. As he drove himself mercilessly to redeem the family name, the weight of the Rockefeller fortune would threaten to overwhelm him.

Narrator: April 20, 1914, Ludlow, Colorado. Bullets fired by National Guardsmen raked the tents of striking workers and their families at a coal mine owned by the Rockefellers. No one knows exactly how many men women and children died that day. It was called the Ludlow Massacre. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the man held responsible, looked to the future with great anxiety.

The Rockefeller name was despised in America -- associated not only with Ludlow but with Standard Oil, the feared monopoly founded by his father.

But Ludlow was a turning point. Junior transformed the tragedy into a kind of triumph -- beginning the seemingly impossible task of recasting the Rockefeller name.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: If you had told anybody in the United States, that the Rockefeller family would some day be synonymous with good deeds rather than corporate

rapacity, they would never have believed you. I think Junior sacrificed himself to redeem the family name.

Narrator: He created a remarkable family. His five sons scaled the heights of the American century.

John D. Rockefeller IV: They were at the center of everything, business life, political life. They were in the middle of it. That's exactly where they wanted to be and they loved it.

Narrator: One reached highest, but his careless ambition helped rekindle public suspicion of the Rockefellers' wealth and power.

Peter Collier, Biographer: This is a man who is going to fly Icarus-like across the, American political frontier and he's going to have Icarus-like, a dramatic fall, and he's going to take the family down with him

Narrator: At Pocantico Hills, the family estate on the Hudson River, the grandchildren of John D. Rockefeller, Sr., the world's first billionaire, inhabited a world of their own.

Peter Collier, Biographer: This is not just an estate. This is a place that's 10 times the size of Monaco, that's five times the size of Central Park. This is like a country in the midst of America. It's their mythic place, and it's their native land.

Narrator: A third generation of Rockefellers grew up surrounded by a splendor few could imagine: free to enjoy the fruits of the family's unparalleled wealth, but not free of the stain of Standard Oil and the wound it had inflicted on their father.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: John D. Rockefeller, Jr. always felt that he had to be a figure of granite rectitude. He had to be somebody beyond reproach and his children had to be model children because he had grown up in a situation where he felt the whole world was watching him

and so he assumed that the whole world was watching his children in exactly the same critical spirit. And I think this really took its toll. It made him a very tense and rigid man. It made him a very exacting and even tyrannical father.

Albert Schenkel: His strict sense of morality was maintained from his Protestant upbringing. Junior continued to pray daily, to insist that his children pray with him daily, to insist that his children memorize Bible verses, and to insist that there was a vital sense of connection with God in his own life and in the life of his family.

Laurance Rockefeller: The Christian heritage, daily prayers, you see, learning bible verses, so we were saturated in the traditions of the Christian ethics. We used to go around in a circle saying verses to see how long we could stay in. Of course the one, the Bible verse that Father so emphasized, "Unto he who much is given, much is required," that was almost like our flag.

Narrator: Junior wanted his daughter Babs and his five sons, John, Nelson, Laurance, Winthrop, and David, to practice sobriety, and value diligence and thrift -- the virtues of his own Baptist youth. The children were paid for household chores -- shining shoes, catching mice, growing vegetables. Cooking dinner was their responsibility once a week.

"I was always afraid money would spoil my children," Junior once said, "and I wanted them to know its value and not to waste it." In keeping with family tradition, the Rockefeller children kept account of their income and expenses to the penny.

David Rockefeller, Sr.: He felt it was important to appreciate the value of money and that he didn't have an unlimited amount, certainly we didn't, he gave us rather modest allowances. But he felt it was important to know where it went and therefore we had to put down what we received and what we spent. And each week we would add up both columns and take cash out of our pocket and see whether what we had was what we should have according to what was reported."

Ron Chernow, Biographer: That little book was kind of like a keyhole through their father could see everything that they were doing and how they were living their lives. And there was the whole week's activities laid out for his approval or his disapproval.

Peter Johnson: With some of them he had much greater success than with others. John III accepted this and followed through on it very strongly. Nelson seems to have had a great deal more difficulty doing this.

Narrator: Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller, the irrepressible second son, organized his brothers in all manner of activities. Especially those which supplemented his weekly allowance.

Laurance Rockefeller: We all had our first venture capital by borrowing engaged couples, meaning rabbits, from the Rockefeller Institute and then they would have a family and then we'd sell the young back to the Institute for 50 cents a piece. The culmination was one day mother had a muff and she put a rabbit in her muff, then it was peaking out to us. ... You know that really made her a folk hero.

Bernice Kert, Author: She was the one who liberalized everything. She really was the buffer who tried to help them understand their father and she was much more available. She read to the children, she was concerned about their them. I think her contribution was pivotal.

Narrator: Abby Aldrich Rockefeller often found herself torn between her devotion to her children and the demands of her husband.

David Rockefeller, Sr: He loved driving horses and they routinely would go out for a drive every afternoon. And father seemed pained and grieved if she would insist upon doing things with the children rather than with him, when we would go off and see a play or visit a museum or some object or something that we were interested in. It was not a terrible emotional strain, but the tension certainly existed and I think we were certainly aware of it.

Narrator: Golf House,

Lakewood, New Jersey

July 10, 1918

Dear Son:

I am giving you one hundred and sixty six thousand seventy two (166,072) shares of the stock of the Standard Oil Company of California. I have directed the office to have this stock transferred to you.

Affectionately,

Father

Kijkuit
Pocantico Hills
New York

December 15, 1920

Dear Son:

I am today giving you twenty million six hundred and eighty eight thousand dollars ($20, 688,000) par value in bonds of the State of New York and Corporate Stock of the City of New York, and directing Mr. Carey to transfer and deliver the same to you.

Affectionately,

Father

Kijkuit
Pocantico Hills
New York

October 22, 1920

Dear Son:

I am giving you a check for five hundred thousand dollars ($500,000). It will be available for use on Monday next.

Affectionately,

Father

Narrator: By the early 1920s, Senior had turned over half a billion dollars in assets and securities to his son. And with it a heavy responsibility: The stewardship of the great fortune.

"I am indeed blessed beyond measure to have a son whom I can trust to do this most important work. Go carefully. ... Be sure you are right ...

With tenderest affection,

Father.

Steven Rockefeller: John D., Jr. saw his life's mission as trying to remove the taint that seemed to exist around the Rockefeller wealth, and in many ways through his philanthropy trying to finally justify the accumulation of this great fortune.

Narrator: Whether restoring the palace of Versailles, saving the Giant Redwoods in California, or founding a medical college in China, Junior was consumed by his work. Asked by a reporter where her husband was, Abby Rockefeller replied, " I don't know where John is anymore....I'm sure he's out...somewhere...saving the world..."

Peter Collier, Biographer: He can invest in a profound way with this money and he can in some sense be a Titan in the same way that his father was. He with associates invested in every avenue: medicine, science, education, the arts, foreign policy.

Narrator: The pressure proved too much for Junior.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: Very often he would come home at the end of the day with a throbbing migraine headache and he would lie down in the darkened bedroom with a compress on his forehead. He was really putting himself on the line in a courageous and personal fashion.

Narrator: His headaches became so incapacitating that he was forced to take a rest cure at Dr. Kellogg's Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan, where he was diagnosed with over-exertion.

While the son sacrificed himself to redeem the father, the father seemed remarkably at ease. Long away from business and free of the burden of the great fortune, John D. Rockefeller, now in his mid-80s, settled into his retirement.

In his old age, Senior showed the world a side of himself only those who knew him best had ever glimpsed, as the former recluse played up to the movie cameras.

Through the magic of public relations, John D. Rockefeller, Sr. was transformed from a reviled robber baron into a genial old man, famous for dispensing dimes.

Every day he appeared at the golf course at 12 past 12 to indulge in his favorite past-time.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: He's gay, he's lively, he's jaunty. He flirts with pretty young women, he loves to sing hymns, tell corny jokes, and mimic people.

Clarice Stasz, Historian: He'd spend his mornings working on the stock market and then he would go off and golf or ride around in a car in the afternoon, but always with women or children along.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: Everybody notices that he's fascinated with women. If he meets a group of pretty young women, he will invite them to play golf or come to lunch. One of his many rituals was that every afternoon at 3:15 he and eight to 10 other people would take a drive in the country. And John D. always sat in the middle of the back seat and he preferred to have a buxom lady on his right and one to his left. He would then take a blanket and he would draw the blanket up to their chins and then his hands would be straying underneath. The back seat became known as the "hot seat. And there is a recorded episode of a young woman jumping out of the hot seat, running back to the second car, and telling the driver, "That old rooster oughta be handcuffed!" So he developed a reputation for these wandering hands. And this behavior, to people who had known him earlier, seemed completely out of character.

Narrator: "Dearest papa, This is going to be the hardest letter I've ever had to write..."
In 1922, while still at Battle Creek Sanitarium, Junior received a disturbing letter.

"I've smoked ... I was 10 million kinds of a fool to do it but now that it's done there is nothing left for me to do but tell you about it... Your loving daughter Babs."

Ron Chernow, Biographer: John D., Jr. managed to create an atmosphere of fear that had a powerful effect on the children. He had promised them all $2,500 if they didn't smoke until the age of 21, and Babs, the one daughter, when she was 19, sat down and wrote this anguished letter confessing that she had smoked a cigarette, and you would think reading the letter that she was confessing to capital crimes rather than having smoked a cigarette.

Clarice Stasz, Historian: He could be, from her point of view, really cruelly demanding, and for example, he would show her his report card as proof of how she's supposed to improve over time and be a better performer in school. And so he demanded a level of impeccable behavior from her that was very unrealistic.

Bernice Kert, Author: When she got to be a young woman, she really wanted to just be free of the Rockefeller burden, and she was a fun-loving woman, young 19-year-old who loved gaiety and parties, and she experimented with drinking and smoking, and the more he tried to control her, the more she resisted.

Narrator: Babs escaped her father's control by marrying at an early age. Her brothers, eager to embrace the new freedoms of the Roaring '20s, continued to struggle within Junior's sphere.

Peter Collier, Biographer: The brothers really grew up feeling differently about their father than John, Jr., had felt about his. John, Jr., had felt that he had to justify his behavior in terms of his father's approval. For the third generation, they were, ah, mainly, I think, worried about how they would evade some of the strictures of John, Jr., how they would act like modern young teenagers, not like kind of young ministers out of a George Eliot novel, which is how he would have had them, them act, and there was a kind of constant sort of subterranean rebellion.

Laurance Rockefeller: All young people rebel, but I perhaps had more to rebel against. Not that it was bad, but it was so much superimposed and restricting, and in a way limiting freedom of thought and action.

Narrator: Even John the most compliant among the brothers would later complain: "Father always has his own way, He is so wonderfully broad in business relations but so narrow in some of his family details."

As the first son and bearer of the family name John D. Rockefeller III, a serious and introverted boy, was, from an early age cast in the mold of dynastic heir.

Peter Johnson: His grandfather would write him at his birthday and Christmas time, and say things like, "I look forward to when you can join your father in helping to carry the heavy burden," and so on. So John grew up that had been delimited for him. There was not an awful lot of choice for John.

Narrator: In 1929, fresh out of Princeton, John arrived at New York's most famous business address to take his assigned place helping to run the family businesses and philanthropies. The debut of the world's richest heir attracted so much attention that Junior decided to hold a press conference.

Peter Johnson: John comes in, shy, reserved, uncertain; he's never done this kind of thing before, and is questioned by all of the assembled New York City press corps. They were all barking questions at him and to get underneath, and John progressively withdrew as the press conference went on. One of the reporters wrote about him, sort of, crossing his legs and trying to twist attempting himself into a pretzel. And I think began to view his role as, "This is very serious, I'm burdened, I'm afraid of making a mistake." And I think it was a very, very difficult moment in his life.

Narrator: At the end of the painful ordeal John confided to his diary: "Must get out of the papers for a long time now."

The year after John's debut at 26 Broadway his younger brother Nelson appeared on just about every national newspaper front page, the beaming groom in high society's wedding of the season. Six days out of Dartmouth, despite his father's concern that he was acting impetuously, he married Mary Todhunter Clark, from a wealthy Main Line Philadelphia family. Nelson took his wife, "Tod," on a nine-month trip around the world. More than a honeymoon, the trip was a

grand tour to the far reaches of the former Standard Oil empire. Shortly after their return "Tod" gave birth to John D. Rockefeller's first great grandson, Rodman Clark.

Nelson wasted no time in arranging for the appropriate four-generation photo. It was a moment of great symbolic importance. The ebullient and energetic second son had all but declared his intentions to supplant his older brother as dynastic heir.

Peter Collier, Biographer: There's a kind of silent coup that takes place in the third generation with Nelson, and it's silent only because it's consensual. Everybody in that generation, including in a sense John D. III, recognizes that Nelson is the most likely to succeed, that there's something about this young man that is just different from the rest of them.

Narrator: In 1929, Junior was putting the final touches on The Riverside Church, a magnificent structure he had erected on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Built on a monumental scale, Riverside resembled Europe's great cathedrals, but only in its architecture.

Albert Berger, Historian: It certainly harks back to a Gothic cathedral, but as statues of saints and martyrs are placed around traditional cathedrals, there are statues of scientists and law givers, there's even a statue of Darwin in Riverside Church. Now, that's a statement.

Narrator: While he remained committed to the faith of his mother and grandmother, Junior had come to believe that scientific progress was an expression of God's will and the means to create God's kingdom on earth.

Albert Schenkel: This is what Junior embodies, both the old and the new. The old revivalist impulse to reform the world and the new measures that are coming out of science and business. And so businesslike efficiency and scientific research become the new means, the new tools for achieving the

Narrator: Christian fundamentalists in the 1920s saw Junior's embrace of science as a rejection of the Bible's teachings.

They worried that the richest man in the world, was extending his influence into the religious realm.

One preacher put it in apocalyptic terms: "When one man can control the financial world, the educational world, and practically the religious world, the day of the Anti-Christ is not far behind."

By now the Rockefeller fortune was estimated at one billion dollars -- invested not only in the companies that once made up Standard Oil abut also in banking and in new industries.

Armed with his vast wealth, Junior had become as formidable a philanthropist as his father had been a businessman.

Sometimes he even employed similar tactics.

Laurance Rockefeller: Father had this great love and joy in opening up wherever he was whether it was Maine or Tarrytown or Wyoming the beauty of nature so people could see it. He took us on voyages to see America. We were camping, and building log cabins and riding horseback, and we were hiking, and then Nelson and I were avid photographers so we were taking pictures and looking for the best view wherever we went.

Narrator: During a family trip to Wyoming, Junior was awed by the majestic Teton Mountains. Their beauty, he said "surpassed anything he had ever beheld." What he saw below, in the town of Jackson Hole, dismayed him.

David Rockefeller: He saw the honky tonks and newsstands and so on that were being put in the view of the beautiful Teton Mountains and that persuaded him to buy the land and give that to what is now a part of Grand Teton National Park.

Judith Sealander, Historian: Junior probably spent somewhere around $13 million in acquiring land around Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Initially, as did most of the Rockefellers, he bought that through a cover company, nothing surprising. Any time the Rockefeller name got involved, prices skyrocketed. Nothing illegal about it, though probably he got some extra-special help from the Park Service identifying acreage.

Albert Berger, Historian: The way Junior acquired the Grand Tetons was a substantial use of power. And in that sense the philanthropic impulse is not necessarily different from Standard Oil. Remember, Senior thought that Standard Oil was not just a profit-making corporation, but way of making the world a better place. Junior's not-for-profit corporation was no different in that regard.

Narrator: Like the independent refiners crushed by Standard Oil, local businessmen were outraged.

Ron Chernow, Biographer: He encountered tremendous opposition and resentment. There were dude ranch operators and local cattlemen and ranchers who felt that these were rich folks from Back East, who were throwing their weight around and trying to ruin their way of life, and they didn't see it as a gift, they saw it as this rich family that was pushing them around, and it was a protracted battle.

Albert Berger, Historian: That park is beautiful, but it was developed in the way it was because Junior thought that's the way it ought to be and he had the money and the contacts to make it happen.

Narrator: For Junior, preservation provided an escape from a modern world which he found uncomfortable. At Williamsburg, he spent 55 million dollars to restore Virginia's colonial capital to an idealized version of the past. At The Cloisters, a museum on the northern tip of Manhattan, he created a medieval retreat -- and filled it with ancient treasures.

Albert Berger, Historian: Junior's interest in art went backwards. He was interested in older art, historical art, and certainly that is what The Cloisters displays beautifully. But while Junior sought peace in the old, his wife Abby, found excitement in the new.

Bernice Kert, Author: She was attracted by the unusual, adventurous, inner directed art. She liked experimentation, she was open to new ideas, and also she wanted to understand the art that her children would grow up to understand. In other words, she wanted to be a modern.

David Rockefeller, Sr: Mother liked beauty whereever she found it, and she found it in many different places, both in nature and in contemporary art. And that's where they pretty much parted company. Father ... anything that was abstract would to him automatically be not very good.

Bernice Kert, Author: He felt it was self-indulgent, he didn't understand it, he thought it was ugly and unpleasant and disturbing. And he didn't ... it was, I guess, very difficult for him to realize that this woman that he loved so, and was so devoted to, and had been such a partner to him, would go out and support something that he didn't approve of.

David Rockefeller: We had a great big house at 10 West 54th Street, and because father didn't want her modern art as he would call it, around, she took over the seventh floor of the house. It had nine stories. She built an art gallery.

Narrator: Abby spent her own money to build an art collection. But she needed her husband's millions to realize her vision: the creation of a Museum of Contemporary Art. And Junior, after a

lifelong struggle for Abby's attention, was not about to pay for a museum he knew would take his wife away.

Clarice Stasz, Historian: He came to resent her being on the telephone. He resented her going to committee meetings, and he would only begrudgingly go to social events where it was necessary that he appear.

Narrator: Despite Junior's opposition Abby persevered. In 1936 *Time Magazine* recognized her as "the outstanding...patron of living artists in the United States."

In 1939, after 10 years in a temporary home, the Museum of Modern Art, MoMA, opened its doors.

Newsreel (archival): Just off 5th Avenue, on a site long occupied by the old-fashioned town dwellings of the Rockefeller family, stands the spanking new home of a nationally important institution...

Narrator: Junior not only donated over $6 million dollars, but had the Rockefeller home torn down to make room for the museum. In exchange, he extracted a promise.

Clarice Stasz, Historian: Abby made a bargain with Junior that they sell their property on 54th Street and move to an apartment, and he agreed to do it provided that she agreed to cut back most of her activities at MoMA. He was concerned about her health then which was beginning to fail, and so she used that as a bargaining chip.

Narrator: For the Rockefellers, the Museum of Modern Art would always be known as "Mother's Museum." If mother had a museum, father had a monument.

Peter Collier, Biographer: Rockefeller Center will always be the place that the Rockefellers can point to as the physical embodiment of what their family accomplished. It's putting the family stamp right in the face of New York City and therefore on the face of America.

Narrator: It had been conceived in 1928 as yet another philanthropy -- a new home for the Metropolitan Opera and development of the surrounding three block area. But then the stock market crashed in 1929, ruining millions of investors and wiping out more than half of the Rockefeller fortune. Junior developed shingles, frequent, severe colds, "I walk the floors at nights, wondering where I'm going to get the money to build these buildings," he wrote.

Albert Berger, Historian: He's stuck with a couple of rather substantial blocks of property. He has to pay lease payments on them. He has to pay property taxes on them, and this is the absolute rock bottom of the country's economic history. He can eat the loss or he can do something which is really very, very risky...

Narrator: Junior had been humiliated by the failure of his first business venture 30 years before. Now, he rose to the challenge. He put up a third of his diminished fortune and gambled on the massive project.

With 13 buildings surrounding a 70-story tower, Rockefeller Center was designed on an epic scale -- described as "a mixture of brashness and grandeur."

Employing 75,000 workers, it was the only major construction project in New York City in the grim days of the Great Depression.

Peter Collier, Biographer: This is an act of faith in America. I think Americans were fascinated by the size, the magnitude, and the fact that this man, this family, believed that there was a future for the country, and this great monument was in effect built for that.

Narrator: In what would become a yearly tradition, grateful workers lit the first Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center in 1933.

Junior arrived early every morning. He supervised blueprints, measuring each detail with his gold carpenter's ruler; pouring over every aspect of construction.

Peter Johnson: John D. Rockefeller, Jr. had been told by the architects that buildings of this size with lobbies of this size needed adornment, they needed things to attract people, to make them more beautiful so people wanted to rent them and be there. And he assigned the, ah, the carrying out of this particular part of the project to his son, Nelson.

Narrator: From handling public relations to renting office space, Nelson, who was only 24, had become Junior's right hand man at Rockefeller Center.

Joining forces with his mother, Abby, he made the case for commissioning a mural by the controversial Mexican painter Diego Rivera, to adorn the entrance the RCA building, the showpiece of Rockefeller Center. Its theme, in keeping with the surrounding art would be "Man at the Crossroads looking hopefully toward the future."

Peter Johnson: He submitted a, a sketch showing what he was going to do, man at the crossroads, and it had all people standing around, but it was going to be done in beautiful, vibrant Mexican colors, and it would be just astonishing.

Working day and night Rivera, an avowed Marxist, began to give shape to his vision.

Peter Johnson: As he gets down towards the bottom, all of a sudden the face of Vladimir Ilich Lenin appears in the quintessentially capitalist building, the quintessentially capitalist family, by the architects, by others, and Nelson is dispatched to talk to Diego.

Narrator: "While I was in No. 1 building at Rockefeller Center yesterday viewing the progress of your thrilling mural," Nelson wrote Rivera, "I noticed that ... you had included a portrait of Lenin....As much as I dislike to do so, I'm afraid we must ask you to substitute the face of some unknown man where Lenin's face now appears."

Rivera refused. "Even a millionaire, should know that there are some things that cannot be bought," he said.

The Rockefeller Center management draped the huge fresco, 63 feet long and 17 feet high, in canvas, paid Rivera in full, and dismissed him.

There were protests and demonstrations. And what the Rockefellers dreaded most: bad publicity.

On the night of February 11, 1934, the mural was destroyed. The pieces of plaster carted away under the cover of darkness.

Years later, Rivera had his revenge. He re-painted the mural in Mexico City. This time, he added Junior, martini in hand, beneath a section he called "the germs of Capitalism."

In his vigorous old age, John D. Rockefeller spoke often of reaching a hundred years. He died on March 23, 1937 at his winter home in Ormond Beach, just two years short of his goal. To the end of his days the king of Standard Oil, long vilified as "monstrous, evil, cruel" believed that he was at peace with God.

Laurance Rockefeller: I've carried this verse in my purse for so long I can't remember. It's a quote from my grandfather:

"I was early taught to work as well as play, my life has been one long, happy holiday. Full of work and full of play, I drop the worry on the way. And God was good to me every day."

Narrator: The funeral was held at *Kykuit* the symbolic seat of the Rockefeller family and now Junior's residence.

All over the world, in every office, company and refinery of the former Standard Oil Empire, work ceased for five minutes.

Newsreel (archival): "Rockefeller Center, a city within a city, reached completion after eight years of construction. Planned in boom times and built during the Depression..."

Narrator: In 1939, as he put the last rivet in Rockefeller Center, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., now 65, could look back on a life of achievement.

"...No man in America ... lived up to his ideals more than John D. Rockefeller, Jr.," said Ida Tarbell, the journalist whose expose of Standard Oil had tarnished the Rockefeller name. ". "I know of no father that has given better guidance to his son than has John D. Rockefeller."

Albert Berger, Historian: By spreading his philanthropy as broadly as he did, Junior gave a very large number of people reasons to remember the Rockefellers that had nothing to do with Standard Oil, that had nothing to do with Ida Tarbell, ah, but that had to do with beauty and nature and scientific progress .

Ron Chernow, Biographer: I feel that John D. Rockefeller, Jr. really sacrificed himself to redeem the family name. He succeeded to such an extent that by the time his own children reached adulthood in the 1930s, it was probably very difficult for them to imagine the firestorm of controversy that had surrounded the Rockefeller name only 30 years before.

Peter Collier, Biographer: John D., Jr. has created this remarkable family. These five boisterous boys and all with great promise. But there is a kind of peril, and he sees it early on,

and that is that they can undo with careless gestures, the work that has taken him 30 or 40 years to complete.

Narrator: In 1945, Junior had the portraits of his children painted to hang at (in) the grand living room of the Playhouse at Pocantico. He was proud of his sons, who had served their country in WWII.

Peter Collier, Biographer: The war is a crucible in which the brothers, really become men, and become men not only chronologically but become men inside the Rockefeller family. The war begins the transition between Junior's control of the family and their control of the family.

Narrator: At war's end, the brothers, eager to carve out a role for themselves, descended on Rockefeller Center. Settling in the modestly named Room 5600 -- the family offices which would soon occupy three floors of the RCA building .

Peter Johnson: The Brothers literally invaded Room 5600. They were not gonna come back and simply pick up where they had left off and do their father's bidding. They were going to try and change things, as powerfully as they could. And in doing this Nelson very much took the lead.

Rodman Rockefeller: He probably had the most organizational energy of any of them. Like his grandfather Rockefeller, he was farsighted and was constantly trying to see what could be done, what -- how could we do things better? He probably had a lot of ideas that he put forth with considerable energy.

Narrator: As early as the 1930s, Nelson had begun to muscle his way into the position of leadership reserved for his more retiring older brother, John. As President of Rockefeller Center he had played a key role in its commercial success. And in 1939, he took his mother's place at the Museum of Modern Art. During the war Nelson had proved himself outside the family . He served in Washington under Franklin Delano Roosevelt setting wartime policy for Latin

America. At the end of his tour, one observer note : "Nelson Rockefeller...[is] someone who can keep all the balls in the air without losing his own." Nelson now challenged Junior's control of the family office, replacing his father's associates with his own and his brothers.'

Peter Collier, Biographer: Talk about the best and the brightest; these are the best and the brightest minds. And the question was how are we going to use this power that hangs over the country like a vast charge of static electricity. How are we going to use it? Tap into it?

Narrator: To reflect the new confidence, Nelson remodeled room 5600 in a daring modern style. He led Junior on a tour of the new family offices. and with characteristic enthusiasm asked, "Gee, pa, isn't this all impressive?" Junior softly replied: "Nelson, whom are we trying to impress?"

Newsreel (archival): This is the story of Cinderella, 1948 edition. At the palatial mansion of Winston Guest in Palm Beach, Winthrop Rockefeller takes as his bride Barbara Sears, daughter of a miner.

Narrator: On Valentine's Day 1948, Winthrop Rockefeller married a divorced former actress and showgirl "Bobo" Sears. The gossip columnists called it a "Cinderella marriage." But what the press did not say was that the Rockefeller Cinderella was marrying, was not the prince.

Peter Johnson: It certainly appears that Winthrop was the odd man out. As a young boy he became the sort of butt of jokes and the one that was excluded from play by Nelson and Laurance. They would oftentimes lure him into traps, lock him in closets, all sorts of things. Once or twice Winthrop just snapped and ran after Nelson and I think at one point was chasing him around the house with a kitchen knife trying to catch him.

Narrator: In 1935, Winthrop set off to the oil fields of Texas to find himself -- after being expelled from Yale for showering in his dorm with a young lady. The Standard Oil fortune

worked as a common roustabout, digging ditches, repairing pipelines, learning to drink like a field hand.

He returned to New York in 1938 and joined the Chase, the Rockefeller family bank. But even then, to Junior's great dismay, Winthrop spent much of his time as a man about town, delighting the tabloid press and gossip columnists.

A distinguished tour of duty in World War II briefly redeemed Winthrop in his father's eyes. But even that proved short-lived.

Disappointed that his son was marrying a divorcée, Junior did not attend Winthrop and Bobo's Palm Beach wedding.

All brothers were now married, and had begun their own families. Their children, known as, "the cousins" roamed Pocantico, unsettling Junior, delighting Abby, and discovering what it meant to be a Rockefeller.

Steven Rockefeller: My own personal experience of Pocantico as a child is of a place that, on the one hand, was something of an Eden. Apart from the rest of the rest of world it was serene and beautiful but also as something of a prison. It cut us off from ordinary relationships with other people and from the larger world. I remember as a child being disturbed by the fact that the family properties were patrolled by dogs with armed guards. And I remember reading as a boy, Charles Dickens', *The Tale of Two Cities*, about the French Revolution. And this piqued my imagination that here we were, in a sense, living as a rather aristocratic family in exclusive surroundings. And I began to imagine that out there was an angry mob who deeply resented what we had.

Narrator: Inside the walls of the family estate, "the Cousins" were schooled in Junior's strict moral code.

David Rockefeller, Jr: My grandfather was very powerful in that way. He transmitted the values that he and his father had held down to his six children, and down to all of us in the cousins' generation,

Peggy Dulany: From a very early age, we were given an allowance and told that 10 percent of that allowance had to be given away. So from the time we had anything to do with money, it wasn't only getting money or saving money, it was giving away money.

David Rockefeller, Jr: I think it was really Sunday when we received allowances, generally strategically just before church, as I recall. So a portion of that allowance was certainly going to go out pretty soon thereafter and then an accounting for it. But I know with some of my sisters, it became kind of a game to see how skillfully you could invent the previous week's expenditures.

Narrator: The ledgers which had regulated the lives of three generations of Rockefellers were all but abandoned by the time the Cousins came of age.

But lunch with grandfather at *Kykuit* was a ritual.

Rodman Rockefeller: He used to receive us as a family on Sunday, and we would come, and that was a moment of some formality. I mean, you got all dressed up for it and you came on time.

Abby O'Neill: Grandfather would sit at the head of the table and he would carve a roast, and he did it like a surgeon. I often looked around the big table with about 20 people at it and wondered how he was going to make that roast beef go that far. But he sliced very fine slices and served them around. And conversation flowed. And of course grandmother always made things fun. She loved having her family around and she loved any social occasion.

Narrator: On April 3, 1948, after a long winter stay in Arizona, Abby welcomed her family to *Kykuit*.

David Rockefeller, Sr.: My wife Peggy, and our son, David, and I were with her alone for a good part of the weekend, and we -- it was, we had a wonderful time together, and strangely as we went back to New York in the car after it, we both felt that it had a very special meaning for us, and we even wondered whether it might be the last time it would happen.

Narrator: Abby Aldrich Rockefeller died the following day, at age 73 -- of a weak heart. Junior, whose world revolved around Abby could not bear the pain. "Take this blow away" he said, insisting that his wife be cremated immediately. " Take this blow away..."

Abby O'Neill: I knew he missed her terribly and he and I had become very close, so I went up and I spent two weeks with him that first summer that she died, he talked about her and, you know, "When Mama and I did this, or Mama and I did that," or, "I'm doing this for her in her memory." He never more or less said, "I'm terribly sad," but you knew he was.

Narrator: Though he would live out the rest of his life at *Kykuit*, Junior transferred Pocantico to his children four years after Abby's death.

Peter Johnson: The year 1952 marks the end of the transition from John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to his sons. It's from that point on that the sort of the "brothers' generation," begins to have the recognition, visibility and effective control over the things that allows them to do the kinds of things they want.

Peter Collier, Biographer: The brothers were anxious to get the money. Unlike their father for whom the money had been associated with such evil, fraught with such peril. There was a sense that this money could be used for personal ends now. To pursue their professional and social objectives.

Narrator: John III continued to run the family philanthropies, but was emerging from his father's shadow through his work in population control, and US-Asia relations. Laurance, who had inherited his grandfather's business touch was a pioneering venture capitalist. He invested in aviation, new technologies, and built tropical resorts with an eye to conservation. David, the family intellectual, was, at age 37, already senior vice-president of The Chase Bank and was becoming a champion of urban renewal. Even Winthrop had found an interest of his own. In 1952, he went to Arkansas to divorce Bobo Sears.

There, he fell in love with a mountain plateau, named Petite Jean, and transformed it into a cattle ranch, Winrock Farms. "This is my show," he exulted. "It doesn't have anything to do with any Rockefeller family project."

The Rockefeller most in the public eye, Nelson, was a prominent member of Dwight D. Eisenhower's administration. At once a Cold Warrior and Social Liberal, Nelson bombarded the cautious President with ideas, but they were largely ignored.

"I've learned one thing," he confided to an associated as he left Washington, "you can't have influence in government if you haven't been elected."

Nelson returned to New York, "like an exiled monarch come to retake his throne, " in the words of a biographer. Laurance stepped aside, ceding Nelson the presidency of Rockefeller Center. John reluctantly surrendered control of the Rockefeller Brothers' Fund, the brother's philanthropy.

It was 1956. America stood at the pinnacle of its prestige, and the Rockefellers were the nation's first family not only of wealth but also of power.

Peter Collier, Biographer: If there was an establishment in America in the '50s, it was these Rockefeller brothers. These young men have taken their place as these absolutely unique

members of a unique family. They're, in some sense, the very tip of this kind of the American century, the American experience, this optimism that buoys America, in the post-war era.

Jay Rockefeller: They were in many ways at the center of business life, conservation life, environmental life, political life. They were in the middle of it. That's exactly where they wanted to be. And they loved it.

Narrator: Fifty years after Ida Tarbell's scathing attack on John D. Rockefeller, Sr. in *McClure's* magazine, *Fortune* magazine published a glowing profile of his grandchildren. Each brother was said to be worth upwards of 100 million dollars. But more important than their wealth, *Fortune* argued, was the vast social empire which the brothers commanded. From their headquarters in mid-town Manhattan their influence reached into every sphere.

Joe Persico: Over the years, through the Rockefeller philanthropic enterprises, charities, support of science, their business enterprises, a web had developed which spread out and was interconnected with practically every center of power in our country, and abroad as well. So this was the real strength and power of the family going well beyond money alone.

Peter Collier, Biographer: Sometimes they would joke about it, they'd say, "Well, David gets Europe, Nelson's going to have Latin America, and you know, John D., III, gets Asia," and then they'd make some joke about what Winthrop got, you know, which would be something like Arkansas. But nonetheless, there was something really behind the joke.

Narrator: "... Sheer diversity and excellence of intent," *Fortune* rhapsodized, "set these young brothers apart as the most unusual brothers of their generation.'

Laurance Rockefeller: So when father read this article he was quite overwhelmed and he wrote us this extraordinary letter. He capsulized it by saying, "I used to be known as the son of my father, from now on I'll be known as the father of my sons."

Narrator: To Junior, his first child was less a source of pride. At age 53, now on her third marriage, Babs continued to rebel.

Clarice Stasz, Historian: She refuses to give money to charities. And Junior knows this because he checks over her income tax reports, and complains to her that she is not giving money away. Babs' attitude is really essentially one of "So what, I get to do what I want now." Babs seemed to reject the family's mission of public service. Her brother, Nelson, was about to take it in a whole new direction.

Narrator: In 1958, Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller ran for governor of New York, the office from which Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt had propelled themselves into the presidency of the United States. For a family that had repeatedly been hurt by public criticism it was a step fraught with peril.

Rodman Rockefeller: My great-grandfather was attacked over an extended period of time by journalists so in that sense this was a dangerous, unpredictable world out there, and the best thing to do was stay away from it, not provoke it.

David Rockefeller, Jr.: I think that Nelson's own very extrovert personality and then going into politics, brought the family more into the public eye than they'd ever been really comfortable with before, and created some tension in the family because if one person goes public to that extent, in a certain sense they bring everybody else with them.

Narrator: The brothers put aside their apprehensions, and backed Nelson.

Peter Collier, Biographer: The brothers all collaborate in his first political campaign, they all contribute. John D., III is a little reluctant, but you know, who is he really? He's the bypassed first son, you know how can he prescribe policy for this generation? So there is a sense that they had come so far, why not go the extra step? Which is the step that leads them to the White House.

Narrator: In his race for the Republican nomination for governor, Nelson Rockefeller ran against a conservative, Walter Mahoney.

William Rusher: I remember Walter Mahoney saying to me early on, "The one thing I cannot gauge is the effect of big wealth when it is brought to bear," and he was right on the mark when he said that, because we found out that in New York's 60 plus counties, practically all of them, in practically all of them, the county chairman was either the president of the local bank or the lawyer for the president of the local bank and all of the local banks had affiliations with Chase-Manhattan, and there was just no stopping Rockefeller. He rolled over us with no trouble at all.

Narrator: The Republican nominee would go on to oppose the incumbent democratic governor, Averell Harriman. A patrician, heir to one of the nation's largest railroad fortunes, Harriman could match Nelson Rockefeller's resources. But not his personality.

Reporter (archival): Mr. Rockefeller, what's that in the package?

Nelson Rockefeller (archival): I've got a wonderful piece of salami. After they got all of the pictures in there, I said, well what I come in to get is the salami and not the pictures. So, I had to finish my purchase.

Harriman (archival): The chefs and the cook gave me some delicious food to eat. Uh, the gefilta fish with horseradish and then blintz with...

Steven Rockefeller: He discovered that he thoroughly enjoyed politics, being out in the hustings with people. He loved the give and take of dialogue with people on the street and in restaurants, in all sorts of different situations.

Joseph Persico: The people reacting to him would start the adrenaline flowing, and the big grin would come out, and he would start slapping the backs and pumping the flesh, and giving people his trademark, "Hiya, fella," and he would clearly enjoy it.

Narrator: As the 1958 gubernatorial campaign wound down Rockefeller had traveled 85 hundred miles, delivered more than 100 speeches And spent as much as four million dollars -- more than any candidate running for state office ever had.

Newsreel (archival): At the GOP campaign headquarters in New York City, it's Nelson A. Rockefeller who's the Empire State's governor elect. A winner by 560,000 votes...

Narrator: For John D. Rockefeller, Jr., now a frail 84 years old, Nelson's victory was the vindication of his life-long mission to redeem the family name.

Steven Rockefeller: The fact that Nelson had been elected was a sign to him that the people of the United States had in fact fully accepted the Rockefellers in spite of the early history of the family.

Joe Persico: Nelson Rockefeller had done something that no other Rockefeller had ever done. He had gone public, he had won the affirmation and the mandate of the people, and that meant as much to him personally as it did politically.

Narrator: On May 11, 1960, at age 86, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. died during his winter stay in Tucson, Arizona. The funeral was held in New York, at The Riverside Church, the gothic cathedral Junior had built.

By the time of his death, Junior, who had given away over half a billion dollars, was regarded as one of the world's foremost philanthropists.

To his children and 22 grandchildren he was leaving an invaluable inheritance, a name which stood not for corporate greed, but for the "well-being of mankind."

Nelson rushed to fill the void his father's death had created. Less than a year after Junior's death, he moved into *Kykuit*, the mansion at Pocantico Hills his father had built for his grandfather.

The many modern sculptures he added to his father's classical statuary, and imposed on his grandfather's stately landscapes, underscored that he was the New Lord of *Kykuit*.

Junior's death freed Nelson to make a move he had contemplated for some time. On November 17, 1961, the family offices announced that Rockefeller and his wife Mary Tod Clark were divorcing after 30 years.

Although the marriage had been strained for some time, and rumors abounded of Nelson's many affairs, the divorce had profound implications for the Rockefeller family.

Peter Johnson: People were hurt and upset, and I think for the first time people began to question Nelson's motivations, Nelson's -- the reasons why he was doing things, what was most important to him.

Steven Rockefeller: He was the governor of New York; he was aspiring to run for president of the United States. Therefore, there was a great deal of public attention focused on him and his life. A divorce is not a happy or pleasant thing for any group and the Rockefeller family's always been shy of publicity. And, so the spotlight that Nelson attracted, because of the divorce, made everybody a bit uncomfortable.

Narrator: Two days later, as Nelson and his brother David discussed consequences of the divorce, Nelson received a telephone call. His and Mary Clark's youngest son, 23-year-old Michael, had disappeared while on an expedition to Papua New Guinea.
Nelson immediately flew to New Guinea accompanied by his daughter Mary, Michael's twin sister.

Nelson Rockefeller (archival): "I'm headed out there so to be there. We hope they find him before we get there..... but to be there when they do find him."

Narrator: Nelson took charge of the search which soon assumed the dimensions of a military operation. The Dutch Navy sent ships. The Australian Navy sent planes. President John Kennedy even offered use of an aircraft carrier.
It was all in vain. Michael Rockefeller was never found.

Nelson Rockefeller (archival): Ever since he was little, he's been very aware of people, their feelings, their thoughts. He's a person who's always loved people and been loved by people.

Steven Rockefeller: The whole experience of searching for Michael in New Guinea, the failure to find him or even to be able to determine exactly what had happened to him, was a very grim experience for the whole family. And Michael is the only one of the cousins to have been lost as a young person, and it was a deep shock to everyone.

Narrator: In November 1962, Nelson Rockefeller was re-elected governor of New York in a landslide. The popular governor of the nation's most populous state, Nelson had a golden opportunity to gain the Republican nomination for President.

As the 1964 presidential elections approached, opinion polls showed Rockefeller holding a commanding 17 point lead over his closest rival, the Republican senator from Arizona, Barry Goldwater. Most observers regarded Nelson's nomination for the Presidency in 1964 a foregone conclusion.

Then, in the months before the Republican primaries, there was talk of a woman in Rockefeller's life.

Newsreel (archival): "There's a strong rumor around today, governor, that you were going to announce your personal plans for the future."

"No comment."

"When do you expect to be able to comment on this, Governor?"

"No comment..."

"Are we invited?"

"Couldn't identify the questioner."

"Are we invited?"

"No comment."

Narrator: The marriage took place at Pocantico on May 4, 1963. The bride was Margaretta "Happy" Murphy, recently divorced and the mother of four children. Laurance hosted the wedding. Neither Nelson's children nor his other siblings attended.

Earlier in the week Winthrop had come all the way from Arkansas to try to dissuade Nelson from marrying.

That very weekend, John D., III entertained Nelson's ex-wife Tod at his home in Williamsburg.

David Rockefeller, Sr: I think it would be inaccurate to say that it didn't create problems for him, both politically and within the family. I think that his political career, um, started to come to an end at the time of his divorce and remarriage.

Nelson Rockefeller (archival): My great honor and pleasure to introduce to you someone that some of you have been looking for quite awhile, Mrs. Rockefeller.

Peter Collier, Biographer: Nelson at this point really knows no bounds. He is, you know, he is riding the updrafts of this amazing thing that has happened with the family in the post-war era, and figures, you know, he can have it all.

Joe Persico: These were much more conservative times, socially, in this country. He was warned that this was a very perilous thing for him to do in light of his still-burning political ambitions. He went ahead with it anyway.

Narrator: For weeks, the Rockefeller name was splashed across the national press. Nelson was called a home wrecker; his new wife was accused of abandoning her young children. By late May his lead over Goldwater had vanished. A pundit, who only weeks earlier had been certain of Nelson's nomination, now said his chances were worth 'little more than a plugged nickel.'

In the spring of 1964, with the odds stacked against him, Nelson Rockefeller set out in pursuit of Barry Goldwater.

Barry Goldwater (archival): Why would you and I allow our federal government, this administration, to act in such a pussy-foot way...

Narrator: It was a duel of opposites: Goldwater, the leading conservative of his time against Rockefeller, the eastern establishment liberal Republican.

Nelson Rockefeller (archival): The basic issue is whether the extreme right wing is going to infiltrate the Republican Party and, as they did at the Young Republican Convention, actually take over the leadership

Narrator: Rockefeller minced no words and spared no effort or expense in the race for the Republican nomination.

By the time he and Happy, now pregnant, arrived in California, the decisive primary of the campaign, polls showed Rockefeller leading Goldwater by nine points.

Nelson Rockefeller (archival): It is my opinion that the California primary, the Republican voters in that primary are going to play the leading part in making the decision as to the character and nature of the Republican Party and its leadership that goes down in the convention here in California.

Narrator: As the candidates marshaled their forces for the decisive battle, the campaign degenerated into a brawl. There were intimidating phone calls and bomb threats. Goldwater accused Rockefeller of being "morally unfit." Rockefeller called Goldwater "extremist and irresponsible." Through it all, Rockefeller's lead held.

Then, three days before Californians were to go to the polls, Happy Rockefeller gave birth to a son.

Nelson Rockefeller (archival): It was born at 4:15. Seven lbs, 10 ounces. And it's a really thrilling moment. Thanks very much.

William Rusher: The birth of the first of Nelson and Happy's children, at that time, didn't make it any easier for Nelson Rockefeller. It brought up again the whole business of his having thrown over his first wife and having married this fresher article of Happy Murphy. It was just the wrong time, when you're in a very narrow race, to have a subject like that come up.

Narrator: Two days after his son's birth, Nelson's lead over Goldwater disappeared. On July 16, at the San Francisco Cow Palace, Barry Goldwater was nominated in the first ballot.

Barry Goldwater (archival): I would remind you that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice.

Narrator: The runner-up, Nelson Rockefeller, was given five minutes to address the convention.

Archival: May we have order, may we have order, may we have order so that the delegate may be heard.

Narrator: The mostly hostile crowd Governor Nelson Rockefeller addressed that day was no longer his Republican Party.

Rodman Rockefeller: Present probably for the first time in any significant numbers in a Republican convention was a strong conservative populist force of people, what today I think we would identify, at least in part, as the Christian Coalition, who were in open rebellion against the so-called Liberal Republican Party.

Nelson Rockefeller (archival): During this year, I have criss-crossed this nation, fighting for these principles, fighting to keep the Republican Party the party of all the people [audience response]. And warning of the extremist threat, its danger to the party [chants of "we want Barry"].

Joseph Persico: No matter how long and hard they jeered and shouted, he kept watching his time. And he said, I'll stay here until I get my five minutes. The five minutes endured for 15 minutes. That was a shining moment, Nelson Rockefeller standing up, courageously, taking the hoots and hollers of the crowd and refusing to bend.

Narrator: Nelson Rockefeller returned home to *Kykuit*. Surrounded by his beloved art collection and the affection of his new family, he settled down to the business of running the State of New York.

Spending taxpayers' money as freely as if it were his own, he embarked on a massive building spree which would transform the Empire State.

Miles and miles of highways. Hundreds of water treatment plants. Fifty new state parks.

Joseph Persico: He liked nothing better than to see the dirt fly. That's why he built this huge university system. He built the new capitol, known today as the Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza. Here was something tangible that you could put your hands on, that you could see, that would long outlast his own life.

Narrator: As Rockefeller became absorbed in remaking New York State, his presidential virus seemed to be in remission.

"I believe Rocky when he says he's lost his presidential ambition," journalist Bill Moyers commented, "I also believe he remembers where he put it."

CAMPAIGN SONG (archival)

Narrator: In August 1968, Nelson Rockefeller went to Miami Beach to seek the Republican nomination for the third time.

There, his dream of reaching the White House effectively came to an end.

Jay Rockefeller, IV: It was fated it was mathematically impossible. It was in the cards. It was in the stars that he wasn't gonna get elected President or nominated to be President because he

was a Republican and he was the wrong kind of Republican. I don't mean to be uncharitable about that, but that's just the way it was.

Narrator: The end of Nelson's presidential hopes denied the grandchildren of John D. Rockefeller the final prize in their ascent to the pinnacle of American society.
But as they gathered in New York to be honored for their commitment to philanthropy, the Rockefeller brothers remained at the center of American life.

From real estate in Manhattan to fishing docks in Venezuela, their holdings were vast and diverse.

At a time when America was growing suspicious of wealth and power, the brothers had achieved a dangerous visibility.

John D., III, was a valued expert on Asian affairs. Laurance was a leader in the field of conservation.

David, now President of The Chase Manhattan Bank, was an ambassador for world capitalism. Even Winthrop had become a public figure. In 1966 he had been elected governor of Arkansas, the first Republican in 100 years.

The success of Winrock Farm, his commitment to Arkansas development, and his name, had made him an irresistible candidate in the poor southern state.

Robert Douglass: Everybody knew him and called him Win, and he wasn't a great speaker, but he'd get up and he'd give this message about bringing the economy of Arkansas up and giving them opportunities for education and jobs. He had a great message. When it was all over he said, "How did I do?" and I said I thought your speech was great. He said, "No, could you see my boots?" He'd always pull up his trousers he could see the WR brand on the boots to let 'em know he was one of the guys.

Narrator: For this Rockefeller with the common touch, the prodigal son, "the odd man out" in the family, his election as governor meant much more than a political victory.

Winthrop Rockefeller (archival): If I can do something to correct some of these things and get people as mad and excited as I am then I feel my great mother and father would be proud of me.

Narrator: Babs too would have made her father proud. Waiting until Junior's death to join her brothers as a philanthropist, she had become deeply involved in the Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, and in 1971 she donated Greenacre Park, a pastoral retreat in mid-Manhattan. All five brothers attended the opening -- the last time they would all be together in public.

In February 1973, the Rockefeller family gathered at Petite Jean Mountain in Arkansas for the funeral of Winthrop, who had died of cancer at age 61.

Nelson Rockefeller (archival): My memory goes back over the years to when we were children. The games, the chores, the rough houses, the fights. But always in the last analysis a united family.

Narrator: Winthrop was the first Rockefeller in the third generation to pass away. Babs would die three years later, also of cancer. Their deaths signaled the beginning of a painful transition to a new generation.

Steven Rockefeller: The Cousins found that they could not no longer accept uncritically the role of being Rockefellers. Most of us went into our twenties in the 1960s. So we were caught up in a social environment that involved the Civil Rights Movement and the women's movement, the anti-war movement and if you took seriously these social movements, which all of us did, because we in a sense had been brought up to be morally concerned, socially concerned, then you had to question the history of the family and your own identity.

Peter Collier, Biographer: A remarkable number of them want to change their family's name, they want to not be Rockefellers anymore, they want to -- in the case of the young women of the fourth generation -- they want to take their mothers' maiden name, they want to give away the money, they want to go live on a reservation, they want to go live in a boxcar someplace; they want out, they want out of that family.

Peggy Dulany: It was the radical student left days, and in many ways the name Rockefeller symbolized the Establishment, and what the student movement was about was anti-Establishment. There was no question that I felt the tension of being involved in a movement which was using my family name as a symbol. And yet that was my name. I mean that couldn't but create tension within me, and it did.

Narrator: It was Nelson Rockefeller who turned left wing animosity toward the family into rage. In September 197.1 he ordered one thousand New York state troopers into the Attica state prison to put down an inmate revolt.

Attica Prisoners (archival): We're all ready to die.

Narrator: During four anxious days the nation was transfixed by images of 1300 barricaded inside Attica and the 38 prison guards they held hostage.

The inmates demanded better living conditions and a general amnesty for the takeover. On the fifth day of the siege, after they rejected a last appeal to release the hostages, the governor, who had monitored the crisis from his home in *Kykuit*, resolved to act.

It was the bloodiest prison takeover in American history. Police and prison security gunfire killed 29 inmates and 10 hostages in less than six minutes.

Nelson Rockefeller, the man who ordered the attack, was held accountable.

Protestors (archival): Run Rocky, run Rocky, run Rocky run. People of the world are picking up the gun...

Narrator: Not since John D. Rockefeller, Jr. was called a murderer after the Ludlow massacre in 1914, had a Rockefeller faced so much hostility.

Protestor (archival): How many guards did you kill, how many guards?

Protestor (archival): I'm from the Attica Brigade, and I'd like to make a concrete proposal.

Nelson Rockefeller (archival): Good.

Protestor (archival): That the stuff that's going on at Stonybrook where I'm a student, where you floated a bond in order to pay for dormitories being built, which we have to pay off the interest on those bonds, which your brother's bank Chase Manhattan bought and is reaping the profits off that interest. I think that that's an outrage. You run the state like a corporation.

Protestor (archival): There's a million questions that you're going to have to answer, Mr. Rockefeller. Because you and your brothers, you're the ones that are the problem in this country.

Peter Collier, Biographer: In these times when Marxism was taken seriously in America, they were seen as the lodestone, the rosetta stone. It's kind of *cherchez les Rockefellers* instead of *cherchez la femme*. It's find the Rockefellers and you understand power in America and how it works. Nelson was the man, you know, making the assault on political power; David was the man that had the reins of economic power in this country. He's operating in stealth, in secrecy, secret meetings. You saw him creating, presumably, détente through tools like Henry Kissinger. You saw him manipulating the world's economic markets, very much the image of the first John D. Rockefeller.

Narrator: From their perch at Pocantico Hills, the brothers weathered the storm of criticism. Much like their grandfather's a century before, their attitude seemed to be, "Let the world wag."

Nelson Rockefeller (archival): I have decided not to seek a fifth term as governor of New York. I will resign next Tuesday after 15 years of service to the people of the state.

Narrator: On December 11, 1973, Nelson Rockefeller, weary of controversy retreated from public life.

The following summer, as he vacationed in Maine, the former governor received a telephone call that would drag the family back into the limelight.

It was August 17, 1974 -- two weeks since President Richard Nixon resigned in disgrace in the wake of Watergate. The new president, Gerald Ford, asked Nelson Rockefeller to be his Vice President.

Joseph Persico: The last thing that Nelson Rockefeller ever wanted to be was vice president of anything. To be "standby equipment." He was not temperamentally suited for it. He was a man who wanted to be in charge.

But the country was in the midst of a crisis and how could you say no when your President turns to you. So he did it. But there was a more practical reason as well. He had behind him three failed bids as a candidate for his party's Presidential nomination, and this was the last game in town for him, this was the last card he could play.

Narrator: Nelson Rockefeller arrived in eager to begin his new job. He expected his confirmation hearings to be a mere formality. They were not.

Nelson Rockefeller (archival): I have held public office under six presidents. I've been elected four times and served for 15 years as governor of the State of New York. I think the record speaks for itself.

Narrator: Initially the hearings focused on Nelson Rockefeller: back taxes owed, personal gifts to associates and friends, and a covert operation where Laurance financed a book critical of one of Nelson's political opponents.

But far and away the issue that most interested Congress was Nelson Rockefeller's place as a member of what was thought to be America's wealthiest family.

Nelson Rockefeller (archival): Am I the kind of man who would use his wealth improperly in public office, or more generally or more importantly would my family background limit and blind me so that I would not be able to see and serve the general good of all Americans?

Peter Johnson: It's really a relationship between money and power. How far do we trust individuals with great financial resources with the governance of a democratic society?

Peter Collier, Biographer: There's been this notion of Rockefeller power that has been bandied about by the New Left and -- over a five- or a 10-year period, to the degree that it's kind of penetrated in some sense popular culture. So when he comes finally for his crucial moment, for his interrogation, there's a sense, okay, we're going to get a chance to see this power at last, this power that's been hidden for two generations now, and the power in the form of money.

Narrator: Congress asked Nelson to disclose not only the extent of his own finances, but those of the entire family.

Robert Douglass: And I said, "Look, Governor, this is a major invasion of privacy. This is the occasion, if you want out of this process, this is the event that I think you can say, 'You can take

this job and you know what you can do with it." And I said: "This is, this is the time to exit." And he looked at me and he said, "No," he said, he said, "I'm going to go through with this."

Narrator: "Not since Lady Godiva rode naked through the streets of Coventry," wrote the *New York Times*, "have the inhabitants of any town itched to see something hidden as people here now desire to see the extent of the Rockefeller fortune."

Speculation was rampant. Estimates of the Rockefeller's financial holdings ranged from five billion to 60 billion dollars.

Archival: They do recognize that questions have been raised whether the financial holdings of this family or the manner in which they are managed present a conflict of interest...

Narrator: Nelson's vice presidential hearings exploded the myth of the Rockefellers as a family of enormous wealth. The family office disclosed that the Rockefellers' combined worth was 1.3 billion dollars, far below even the most conservative estimates. Yet, as one observer noted, "the point was not that they lacked power, but that their power lay elsewhere"; in their connections in business, politics, and world affairs and the mystique of the Rockefeller name.

On December 19, 1974, Nelson Rockefeller was sworn in. For a job he'd once dismissed as "standby equipment," he paid a huge prize.

Peter Johnson: Some of the brothers were concerned that Nelson had brought publicity to the family that was not necessary, that questioning the motives and impugning the integrity of family members and its institutions was simply wrong, and that he had sacrificed the good name of these institutions and their reputation for his own political career.

Narrator: Nelson's tenure was frustratingly short-lived. In November 1975, as Gerald Ford prepared to campaign for president, he dropped Nelson Rockefeller from the ticket under pressure from the Republican right wing.

Nelson Rockefeller (Archival): I understand all of the reasons these different things happened. And you get ... Why burn up energy on getting upset?

Joseph Persico: He went back home to New York, never gave another dime to the Republican Party, never made another speech on behalf of anybody in the party. His turning his back on public life to me seemed to mark a real change of direction. It had meant so much to him before.

Narrator: In his retirement, Nelson Rockefeller reminded his speech writer of "The Old King," a painting by French Master Georges Roualt.
"... the eyes bare slits, the chin firmly set in an ancient defiance ... as remote as a lost planet ... In [Nelson's] case ... a prince who had grown old and who had never inherited the kingdom."

Narrator: Nelson Rockefeller returned to the family offices, expecting yet again to take the reins of the Rockefeller family.

The brothers had always stepped aside for Nelson, but this time John III, the bypassed older brother, the one most disturbed by the way Nelson's ambition had exposed the family, finally stood up to retake his dynastic place.

Peter Johnson: They, they had had a number of arguments in brothers' meetings. John said that, "You told me a long time ago that there were two things that you wanted to, above all things: you wanted to be President of the United States and you wanted to be the leader of the Rockefeller family. You have failed in your first objective and if you don't mend your ways, you will fail in your second objective." And by the summer of 1977, John and Nelson were not talking to one another.

Narrator: The Rockefeller family was coming apart. In the 1970s, some of the cousins joined the assault of the left against the Rockefeller brothers.

Peter Collier, Biographer: I was, I guess it's fair to say, at the heart of the New Left at that time. I was an editor of *Ramparts* magazine which was a kind of interoffice memorandum of the New Left, if you will. And one of the staples, of course, in *Ramparts* journalism was the Rockefellers. And one of the -- actually the most fruitful sources of fundraising for us were the Rockefeller kids; that is, the children of Nelson and David and Laurance, gave us money, in effect, so that we could write these, um, these searing pieces about their fathers and uncles.

Narrator: In 1976, the cousins went public with their grievances in a tell-all book written by *Ramparts* editors Peter Collier and David Horowitz. It described the Rockefellers as a family "having an abundance of everything except feelings."

"Their own children are pulling down the curtain ... [with] stunning declarations," wrote *The Washington Post*.

Peggy Dulany: My father's generation was quite understandably very upset that their dirty laundry was being aired in public, and there was -- they were upset because of some of the things that we said and meant, and then they were also upset because of some of the distortions that appeared in the book, and also some of the things that we thought we'd said off the record that then got published.

Narrator: Nelson was the angriest of the brothers. He called the cousins "disloyal, ungrateful, and irresponsible," and with few exceptions, incapable of being entrusted with the family institutions.

David Rockefeller, Sr: It was hurtful, and I think for a brief time probably did create more damage than was necessary. I won't say that it didn't strain our relations, but at no time did we ever, in any way, break relations with the children. They always were free to come home. Some of them wanted to come home and tell us why we should believe in communism, or some other

"ism" that we didn't believe in, and they were not necessarily pleasant conversations, but at least they felt free to do it.

Laurance Rockefeller: Each generation has to challenge the values and the appearances of their parents and make them theirs in order to come back and conform. So unfortunately, these growing pains all went public. [Laughter] And it was a humbling situation for everybody, particularly for the participants.

Narrator: The cousins would in time make their peace with the Rockefeller family. But John D., III and Nelson never had an opportunity to reconcile.
John III died in a car accident near his home in Pocantico, in July 1978. His brother Nelson survived him by only six months.

Joseph Persico: It was a Friday night in 1979, and I had gone to bed, and half asleep received a phone call from a fellow former Rockefeller colleague and friend who said he'd just heard on the news that Nelson Rockefeller had died, and the report was that he had died on a Friday at his office, it was roughly nine o'clock.

Newsreel (archival): The former vice president had returned to his office at the RCA building following dinner to work on his art collection...

...returned to his office to work on a book about art. A security guard discovered him slumped over his desk shortly after ten o'clock last night.

Joseph Persico: And I remember turning to my wife and saying, "I observed the rhythms of this man's life for 11 years, there was no way that he was working at the office at nine o'clock on a Friday evening."

Narrator: In the days that followed, politicians and editorial writers eulogized Nelson Rockefeller's distinguished public career.

Henry Kissinger (archival): Nelson Rockefeller was a universal man. He had an interest in art, he had an interest in politics, he had an interest in education, and all of it came from his conviction that he had an obligation for service.

Narrator: Then, day by day, the story of Nelson's death, became clouded by scandal.

The public had been misled. Rockefeller had in fact died at 13 West 54th Street, his Manhattan townhouse, not at his office at Rockefeller Center.

Joe Persico: It became known that he had been alone with a young woman who worked for him in undeniably intimate circumstances, and in the course of that evening had died from a heart attack.

Narrator: A week after his death, a memorial service was held at The Riverside Church. Among those attending were two presidents and a vice-president. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, a long-time friend delivered the eulogy.

Narrator: Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller was buried at the northwest corner of Pocantico. Near the golf course where John D. Rockefeller, the founder of Standard Oil and maker of the great fortune had played. The gardens Junior, the philanthropist who redeemed the family, had cherished. The sculptures that Nelson, the third and final lord of *Kykuit*, had so boldly placed. For a century, the Rockefellers occupied a unique place as one of America's most influential and controversial families. Three generations had left their mark on history. It would fall to a fourth generation to find a way forward.

Steven Rockefeller: Why do we want to preserve this power? Why do we want to devote our lives to maintaining all these institutions that have been created by the family? We came to realize that the real problem was the integration of power and goodness.

And that if the family was going to continue to work together, philanthropic commitments and values would be at the center.

Peggy Dulany: Everyone recognizes that not any one, and even not all of us, can do everything, obviously, but I think each of us has a drive to contribute in some way to that mission.

Rodman Rockefeller: It's a family, which is very much trying to continue some traditions, at the same time starting others. It remains to be seen how well we do.

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