



The Jewel of the Gold Coast: Mrs. Potter Palmer's Chicago

Sally Sexton Kalmbach

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Bertha Honore Palmer was the "Queen" of Chicago society from the time of her marriage to the very successful Potter Palmer in 1870 until her death in 1918. This is a well researched account of her impact on the social life of Chicago, her leadership as Chairman of the Board of Lady Managers for the Columbian Exposition of 1893, and her influence on the Art Institute of Chicago, to which she donated much of what has become a great collection of Impressionist paintings. The book includes 55 illustrations including mansions built in the Gold Coast area starting in the 1870s when Potter Palmer made the bold move north of Oak Street. He filled the swamp land with sand from Lake Michigan and began selling lots to his very rich friends--hence the name "Gold Coast." A picture of the Palmer "Castle" is included, along with views of the ballroom/art gallery, entry way and items rescued after the Castle was razed. Sally Sexton Kalmbach's gem is packed with carefully researched stories, which she tells with her unique sense of humor and easy style.

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