



The Legendary Mizners

Alva Johnston

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The real-life adventures of Addison and Wilson Mizner, the subjects of the Stephen Sondheim musical *Gold!*

Alva Johnston's joint biography of Addison and Wilson Mizner is a delightful portrait of two of the early twentieth century's most clever and infamous rascals. Born in the 1870s in California, the brothers quickly rose to prominence during the various booms of the 1920s.

Addison, the elder, was a self-made architect and real-estate dealer who designed many of the fantastic homes of the fantastically rich in Palm Beach. He could "age" a house and its furnishings to any period his client desired--and would pay for. Wilson's adventures were even more daring and varied, and his quick wit was legendary. In addition to getting rich on the Alaskan gold rush, he had careers as a singer, playwright, prizefight promoter, con man, real-estate salesman, and shady hotel owner. Perhaps his most famous quip was one he delivered on being told that President Coolidge had died: "How do they know?"



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