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Nancy: The Story of Lady Astor

Adrian Fort

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A new biography of Nancy Astor, American socialite and social crusader who blazed a trail through British society amid two World Wars

In 1919, Nancy Astor became the first female Member of Parliament elected to the House of Commons?she was not what had been expected. Far from a virago who had suffered for the cause of female suffrage, Lady Astor was already near the center of the ruling society that had for so long resisted the political upheavals of the early twentieth century, having married into one of the richest families in the world. She wasn't even British, but the daughter of a famous Virginian family, and fiercely proud of her expatriate ancestry. But her moral drive was strong, and she would utilize her position of privilege and influence to blow a bracing American wind into what she regarded as the stuffy corners of British politics.

This account charts Nancy Astor's incredible story, from relative penury in the American South to a world of enormous countryside estates and townhouses, and the most lavish entertainments, peopled by the great figures of the day?Churchill, Chamberlain, FDR, Charlie Chapin, J. M. Barrie, and Lawrence of Arabia were all part of her social circle. But hers was not to be an easy life of power and pure glamour; it was also defined by principles and bravery, war and sacrifice, love, and the most embittered disputes.

With glorious, page-turning brio, Adrian Fort brings to life this restless, controversial American dynamo, an unforgettable woman who left a deep and lasting imprint on the political life of a nation.

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