The Midas of the Wabash

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Published by Purdue University Press

Kriebel, Robert C.
The Midas of the Wabash: A Biography of John Purdue.
Purdue University Press, 2019.
Project MUSE. muse.jhu.edu/book/76755.

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This will be brief and to the point.

A four-story, nineteenth-century brick building that is still standing in downtown Lafayette once housed the Lafayette Milling Company, millers of flour. More recent owners rehabbed it for offices. Every noon, for a couple of years, its basement filled with the chat and clatter of lunch-hour patrons of The Milling Company restaurant, later renamed Hunters Pub.

There, one noon in early 2000, a county judge, a writer, a retired Purdue University vice president, and an advertising executive munched on chips and sipped iced tea while waiting at their table for the sandwiches to arrive.

“What can you tell me about John Purdue?” the writer asked the vice president.

“Not much,” the vice president said, “except that he must have been an s.o.b. to work with!”

As it happens, that analysis was not completely wrong or right, as this volume will show.

The vice president didn’t need to know better; he only needed to know more.

-Robert C. Kriebel
Lafayette, Indiana