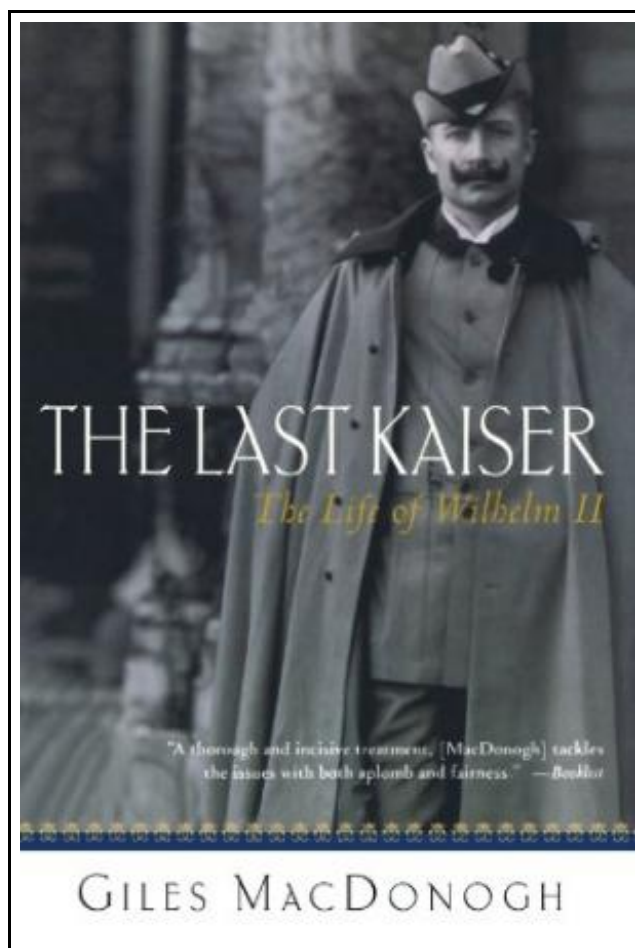


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THE LAST KAISER: THE LIFE OF WILHELM II

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St. Martin's Griffin. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 560 pages. Dimensions: 8.4in. x 5.4in. x 1.4in. Germanys last kaiser was born in Potsdam on January 27, 1859, the son of Prince Frederick of Prussia and Princess Vicky, Queen Victorias eldest child. William was born with a withered arm---possibly the result of cerebral palsy---and many historians have sought in this a clue to his behavior in later life. He was believed mad by some, eccentric by others. Possessed of a ferocious temper, he was prone to reactionary statements, often contradicted by his next action or utterance. He was rumored to have sired numerous illegitimate children and yet was by all appearances a prig. He was brought up by a severe Calvinist tutor Hinzpeter, but his entourage spoiled him, allowing him to win at games and maneuvers to compensate for his deformities. This gave him a sense of inherent invincibility. William became kaiser at age twenty-nine. Two years later he drove Bismarck out after he had blocked his liberal social policy. He destabilized the Iron Chancellors foreign policy by failing to renew the Reinsurance Treaty with Russia, a decision that opened the way for Russias alliance with France in 1891. William then went on to build a powerful fleet. Though he always denied his target was Britain, there is evidence that German domination of the seas was his real aim---his secretary of state, Tirpitz, was less anxious to please the British than the grandson of Queen Victoria. But William idolized the British Queen. As soon as he heard she was dying he rushed to Osborne House to be at her bedside; his own daughter later said, The Queen of England died in the arms of the German Kaiser. William II is widely perceived as a warmonger who seemed to delight in power-grabbing, bloodshed,...

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