This is a collection of innovative essays examining the role of Wilhelm II in Imperial Germany, focusing in particular on the later years of the monarch’s reign. The essays highlight the Kaiser’s relationship with statesmen and rulers, at home and abroad; his role in international relations; the erosion of his power during the First World War; and his ultimate downfall in 1918.

The book demonstrates the extent to which Wilhelm II was able to exercise ‘personal rule’, largely unopposed by the responsible government, and supported in his decision-making by his influential entourage. But it also shows that there was no lack of contemporary critics of Wilhelm and Wilhelminismus. The essays are based on the latest research and on a wide range of archival sources, and provide an up-to-date evaluation of the role and importance of this controversial monarch. They have been written to honour the innovative work of John Röhl, Wilhelm II’s most famous biographer, on his sixty-fifth birthday.

Annika Mombauer is Lecturer in European History, The Open University. Her previous publications include Helmut von Moltke and the Origins of the First World War (Cambridge 2001), and The Origins of the First World War: Controversies and Consensus (Longman 2002).

Wilhelm Deist was Honorary Professor in the History Department, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany. His many books include The Wehrmacht and German Rearmament (Macmillan 1981) and Militär, Staat und Gesellschaft (Oldenbourg 1991).
THE KAISER

New Research on Wilhelm II’s role
in Imperial Germany

EDITED BY

ANNIKA MOMBAUER AND WILHELM DEIST
Dedicated to John C. G. Röhl
on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday
31 May 2003
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Wilhelm Deist was Emeritus Professor at the University of Freiburg, Germany, and chaired the Arbeitskreis Militärgeschichte until 2002. His numerous publications include Flottenpolitik und Flottenpropaganda. Das
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Even a Festschrift is subject to strict word limits, and the editors regret that it was unfortunately not possible to approach everyone who would have liked to add a contribution to this volume as a way of congratulating John Röhl on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday.

A. M. and W. D.  
May 2003

Postscript

Sadly, Wilhelm Deist did not live to see the completion of this volume. Until the end, he worked tirelessly on this and other projects, and despite his severe illness, he was determined to contribute to the making of this Festschrift for his friend John Röhl. Wilhelm Deist’s death in June 2003 is a great loss to his family, friends, and colleagues, but also to German history. It has been a privilege and a pleasure working with him, and I am extremely grateful to him for his enthusiastic support of this volume over the last two years.

Annika Mombauer  
July 2003
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Auswärtiges Amt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA-PA</td>
<td>Auswärtiges Amt, Politische Abteilung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEG</td>
<td>Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Bundesarchiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA-MA</td>
<td>Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BD</td>
<td>British Documents on the Origins of the War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDF</td>
<td>Documents Diplomatiques Français</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EK</td>
<td>Eulenburgs Politische Korrespondenz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FO</td>
<td>Foreign Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRUS</td>
<td>Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLA</td>
<td>General-Landesarchiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>Die Große Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871–1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GStA</td>
<td>Geheimes Staatsarchiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHSA</td>
<td>Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP</td>
<td>Holstein Papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA</td>
<td>Hauptstaatsarchiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IWM</td>
<td>Imperial War Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Library of Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGM</td>
<td>Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N, NL</td>
<td>Nachlass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>National Archives</td>
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<td>NAZ</td>
<td>Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung</td>
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<td>NFMG</td>
<td>Notes from Foreign Missions, Germany</td>
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<td>NPZ</td>
<td>Neue Preussische Kreuz-Zeitung</td>
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<td>OHL</td>
<td>Oberste Heeresleitung</td>
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<td>PA</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAAA</td>
<td>Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO</td>
<td>Public Record Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>Royal Archives</td>
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<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Staatsarchiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VStNA</td>
<td>Vereinigte Staaten von Nord-Amerika</td>
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