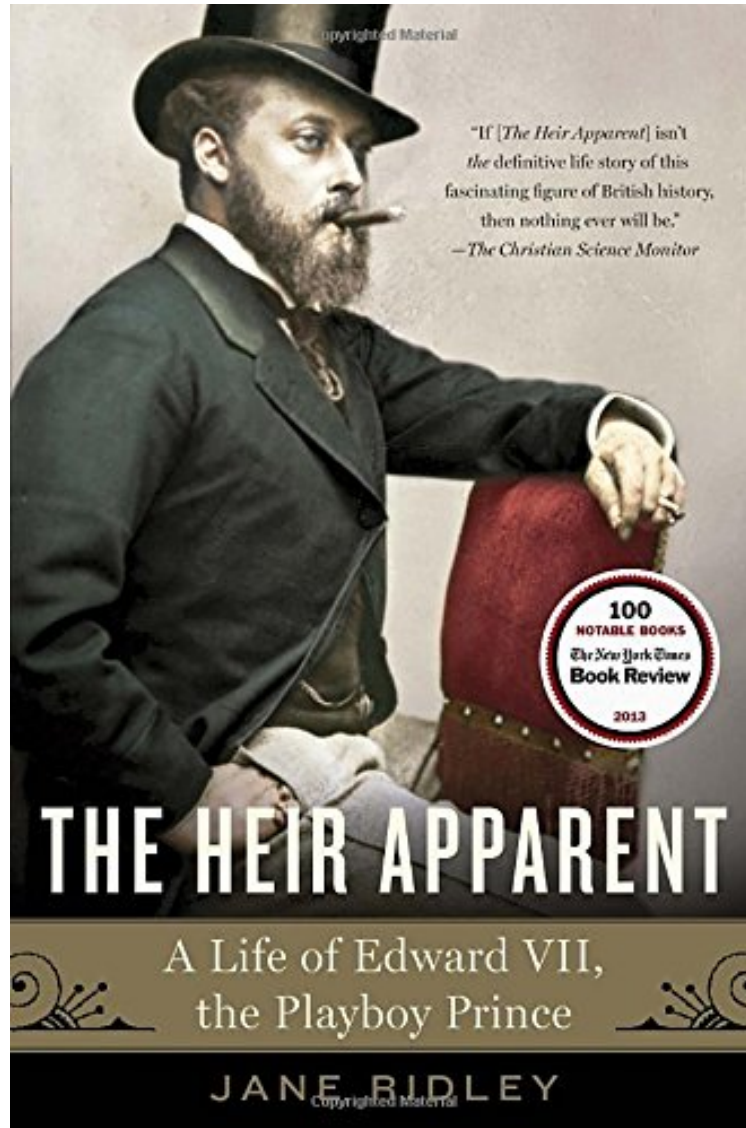


The Heir Apparent: A Life of Edward VII, the Playboy Prince

Jane Ridley

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Jane Ridley : The Heir Apparent: A Life of Edward VII, the Playboy Prince before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Heir Apparent: A Life of Edward VII, the Playboy Prince:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Accepting that a biography's purpose is to follow a life ...By Customer Accepting that a biography's purpose is to follow a life - and this volume does so - it's just too long. The king had quite a life, and I did finish the book, but I really do think it could have eliminated several hundred pages without losing the thread. That said, I learned a lot about this family and the family connections prior to World War I - and

foreshadowed World War II. For me, that was the most interesting part of the book. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Enlightening Look at Edward VII By Easar57I am fascinated with Queen Victoria and her family. Viewing the Queen from Edward's perspective broadens my image of the Queen, as well as Edward of whom my knowledge was limited. This is a thorough look at his world, bringing it vividly to life. I had difficulty keeping many of the parties straight in my mind. There seem to be dozens of persons described and quoted, and many of them have titles in addition to their names which seems to double the work of keeping track of who said or did something. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Worthy Book By IJI was pleasantly surprised with this book. It was more informative and better written than other books I've read on 'the playboy prince/king'. Worth reading if you are interested in King Albert. He started with very low expectations placed on him from everyone including his own mother. He grew into a king who was able to make a real difference in the political world of the time.

NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW AND THE BOSTON GLOBE This richly entertaining biography chronicles the eventful life of Queen Victoria's firstborn son, the quintessential black sheep of Buckingham Palace, who matured into as wise and effective a monarch as Britain has ever seen. Granted unprecedented access to the royal archives, noted scholar Jane Ridley draws on numerous primary sources to paint a vivid portrait of the man and the age to which he gave his name. Born Prince Albert Edward, and known to familiars as Bertie, the future King Edward VII had a well-earned reputation for debauchery. A notorious gambler, glutton, and womanizer, he preferred the company of wastrels and courtesans to the dreary life of the Victorian court. His own mother considered him a lazy halfwit, temperamentally unfit to succeed her. When he ascended to the throne in 1901, at age fifty-nine, expectations were low. Yet by the time he died nine years later, he had proven himself a deft diplomat, hardworking head of state, and the architect of Britain's modern constitutional monarchy. Jane Ridley's colorful biography rescues the man once derided as Edward the Caresser from the clutches of his historical detractors. Excerpts from letters and diaries shed new light on Bertie's long power struggle with Queen Victoria, illuminating one of the most emotionally fraught mother-son relationships in history. Considerable attention is paid to King Edward's campaign of personal diplomacy abroad and his valiant efforts to reform the political system at home. Separating truth from legend, Ridley also explores Bertie's relationships with the women in his life. Their ranks comprised his wife, the stunning Danish princess Alexandra, along with some of the great beauties of the era: the actress Lillie Langtry, longtime royal mistress Alice Keppel (the great-grandmother of Camilla Parker Bowles), and Lady Randolph Churchill, mother of Winston. Edward VII waited nearly six decades for his chance to rule, then did so with considerable panache and aplomb. A magnificent life of an unexpectedly impressive king, *The Heir Apparent* documents the remarkable transformation of a man and a monarchy at the dawn of a new century. Praise for *The Heir Apparent* If [*The Heir Apparent*] isn't the definitive life story of this fascinating figure of British history, then nothing ever will be. *The Christian Science Monitor* *The Heir Apparent* is smart, its fascinating, its sometimes funny, its well-documented and it reads like a novel, with Bertie so vivid he nearly leaps from the page, cigars and all. *Minneapolis Star Tribune* I closed *The Heir Apparent* with admiration and a kind of wry exhilaration. *The Wall Street Journal* Ridley is a serious scholar and historian, who keeps Bertie's flaws and virtues in a fine balance. *The Boston Globe* Brilliantly entertaining . . . a landmark royal biography. *The Sunday Telegraph* Superb. *The New York Times Book Review* From the Hardcover edition.

From Booklist *Starred* Long-lived Queen Victoria had an era named after her, as did her long-waiting heir when he eventually succeeded to the British throne. Edward VII was an absolute style icon and knew how to enjoy a good party and a robust liaison with a pretty and willing woman. The term Edwardian thus became associated with high fashion and high living. The title of Ridley's biography of King Edward is appropriate to the popular sense of the monarch, that his life was defined by his many years as the indulged and indulgent Prince of Wales. But significant research stands behind the author's more judicious understanding of the man, that the dissipated prince evolved into a model king. Barred by his mother from any participation in royal duties out of her obsessive conviction that her son was not of sufficiently solid material to follow her on the throne, Bertie turned, in compensation, to hot pursuit of pleasure, garnering a reputation for playing not only hard but even scandalously. Nevertheless, upon the old queen's demise in 1901 and his own accession, Edward rose to the occasion to be Britain's first constitutional monarch as we define that role today, modernizing the monarchy and making it stronger. A top-notch royal biography for all active British-history collections. --Brad Hooper If [*The Heir Apparent*] isn't the definitive life story of this fascinating figure of British history, then nothing ever will be. *The Christian Science Monitor* *The Heir Apparent* is smart, its fascinating, its sometimes funny, its well-documented and it reads like a novel, with Bertie so vivid he nearly leaps from the page, cigars and all. *Minneapolis Star Tribune* I closed *The Heir Apparent* with admiration and a kind of wry exhilaration. *The Wall Street Journal* Ridley is a serious scholar and historian, who keeps Bertie's flaws and virtues in a fine balance. *The Boston Globe* Brilliantly entertaining . . . a landmark royal biography. *The Sunday Telegraph* Superb. *The New York Times Book* A top-notch royal biography . . . The title of Ridley's biography of King Edward is appropriate to the popular sense of the monarch, that his life was defined by his many years as the indulged and

indulgent Prince of Wales. But significant research stands behind the authors more judicious understanding of the man, that the dissipated prince evolved into a model king. Booklist (starred review) [A] marvelously rich biography of Edward VII . . . Readers both general and specialized will delight in Ridley's work; it raises the bar for royal biographies to come. Publishers Weekly (starred review) A highly readable, definitive biography of Queen Victoria's son, the black sheep of Buckingham Palace, who matured into an effective monarch . . . [A] top-notch life of the king . . . There is no shortage of biographies of Edward VII, but this thick, lucid and lively history deserves pride of place on the shelf. Kirkus (starred review) [A] splendid new biography. The Guardian Profoundly learned and a cracking good read. The Spectator Ridley has written a marvellous biography. Her book is racy and pacy, filled with delicious descriptions of grand Edwardian shooting parties, cutting-edge fashion and, of course, a string of beautiful society women. But she is never trivial, and nor is her Bertie. The Mail on Sunday Ridley's definitive biography is a remarkable achievement. Entertaining, readable and illuminating, this much-anticipated reappraisal of a fascinating life is a brilliant tour de force. Bridlington Free Press Bertie, as he was universally known, couldn't do anything without it being commented on and often distorted. Though the gossip columnists had plenty of material to work with, they only told part of the story. [Ridley] does an excellent job of redressing the balance. Financial Times From the Hardcover edition. About the Author Jane Ridley is professor of history at Buckingham University in England, where she teaches a course on biography. Her previous biographies include *The Young Disraeli* and *Edwin Lutyens*, which won the prestigious Duff Cooper Prize. A Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, Ridley writes book reviews for *The Spectator* and other newspapers, and has also appeared in several television and radio documentaries.