

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This second and final volume of *British Envoys to the Kaiserreich, 1871–1897* marks the conclusion of an editorial enterprise that saw its first publication nineteen years ago with Volume one of the preceding series *British Envoys to Germany, 1816–1866*. Together, the two series cover Anglo-German history from the resumption of diplomatic relations in 1816 to the year 1897, when Germany's new aspirations in and beyond Europe affected already volatile relations. This period corresponds, roughly and possibly quite tellingly, with Otto von Bismarck's lifespan (1815–1898). Yet while Bismarck and many other statesmen on both sides of the channel feature prominently in the reports that were filed to the Foreign Office, this editorial enterprise aimed, from the outset, to include perceptions of Germany that were as diverse as possible, and in particular the diplomatic reports from the smaller German courts and capitals. What was initiated with the aim of contributing to the historiography of Anglo-German relations gradually coincided with a renewed and widened interest in the history of diplomacy and of international relations. Thanks to the multitude of topics, and the mostly subtle nature of reporting, the selection of dispatches from the British missions in Germany and their compilation in individual instalments, six in all, proved to be a challenging but always enjoyable task. The years 1867–1870, which so far – for the sake of a balanced selection – have been omitted from the project, will be the subject of a future supplement volume.

As with the previous volumes, the publication of this book would not have been possible without the constant support of many people. Special thanks go to the Literary Directors of the Royal Historical Society, Andrew Spicer and Richard Toye, and the RHS publications committee for accepting this edition for publication in the Camden Fifth Series and thus continuing the co-operation with the German Historical Institute London (GHIL). It seems appropriate that *British Envoys to the Kaiserreich* is published under the terms of a Creative Commons licence and can be freely shared electronically in 'gold' open access. Melanie Howe and Daniel Pearce, from Cambridge University Press, and especially Miranda Bethell saw

the book through the printing process with great expertise and professionalism. Thanks are also due to the anonymous readers.

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Again, I am especially grateful to my colleagues and friends at and beyond the GHIL, who supported me over the years and never tired of critically debating the project, its scope and its editorial principles. Jane Rafferty, Angela Davies, and Emily Richards as well as generations of GHIL interns were of invaluable help, as were the staffs of archives and libraries in both the UK and Germany. As with the previous volumes, the vast holdings of the National Archives, the British Library, and the Bavarian State Library, as well the ever-growing resources and collections on the internet, were indispensable in the search for the sometimes obscure details that often make editing historical documents as fascinating as it is unpredictable.

During the various stages of the two *Kaiserreich* volumes I had the pleasure of sharing my enthusiasm for British envoys – and a good deal of editorial pragmatism – with my then colleagues, Chris Manias and Helen Whatmore. Chris delved into the diplomatic correspondence from Germany in a crucial first round of selection and Helen, co-editor of volume one, made sense, among others things, of the often hastily penned initials and notes on the reverse side of the dispatches and helped to bring this volume to a successful completion. Naturally absorption in the depths and shallows of nineteenth-century Anglo-German history was not always understood by my family, but Alex and our sons, Lorenz, Peter, and Benno, provided welcome distractions in the editor's workshop; my thanks to them for constantly reminding me that there is life outside the diplomats' world.

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