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Princess Margaret: A Biography



Synopsis

"Theo Aronson's latest royal book is a model of what a royal biography should be... The problems of being a princess in today's monarchy are vividly implicit in every page... I found the book eminently readable in an easy style that lends itself to wit and irony..."Elizabeth Longford, The Tablet" A balanced and on the whole generous interpretation of this most elusive of royal characters. Aronson expounds convincingly the almost intolerable pressures to which a woman of intelligence and character must find herself subjected when entrapped in the mesh of royal responsibilities."PHILIP ZIEGLER, Daily Telegraph 'Books of the Year' "Theo Aronson is a practised royal biographer who writes with fluidity... It is good to find royal gossip in which no one is absurdly inflated and no one viciously demeaned."Times Literary Supplement" Aronson's strength is his style: he is an elegant writer who can handle the broad picture and the telling detail."Daily Telegraph Part imperious royal figure, part femme du monde, Princess Margaret spent the greater part of her life torn between meeting the exacting standards of the monarchy and flouting its long-established conventions. She has been described as tragic, unresolved, a royal maverick, a woman of conflict, a princess without a cause. From any viewpoint, she remains the most interesting member of the royal family. Widely praised on its publication in hardback, this is the first detailed, in-depth study of this controversial figure. A respected royal biographer. Theo Aronson is uniquely qualified to tell the Princess's story " from her private and public life. He has been helped by many who know Princess Margaret and has drawn on several new and unfamiliar sources. He has also had the incalculable advantage of several audiences with her, allowing him to incorporate many of her memories, observations and opinions in his book. This is a fresh, frank and highly entertaining account of an always colourful life.

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Customer Reviews

Over the course of seven decades she has gone from being the cherubic little princess who captured the hearts of the pre-war public, to the controversial, often badly behaved tabloid darling whose escapades foreshadowed those of her nephews and their wives, to the shadowy figure whose recent stroke would seem to have more or less removed her from the public stage. In this evenhanded but essentially sympathetic biography, the Princess emerges as both surprisingly interesting and sadly adrift, a woman whose only substantial accomplishment may end up having been the mother of two apparently well-adjusted and happy children (a feat her older sister might well envy). Having interviewed members of the Royal Family for various other projects over the years (an advantage denied most unauthorized biographers), Aronson weaves first-hand quotes into his narrative to good effect. He effectively discounts some earlier biographers' wilder claims (of inherited madness, for example) while, it must be admitted, adding some of his own (is it really possible that the Princess confessed to having "detested" her grandmother, the formidable but endearing Queen Mary?). All in all, though, a pleasant and worthwhile read for Royal-watchers.

I met Princess Margaret on a number of occasions during the war at Lichfield in Staffordshire when I was a Choirister at the Cathedral and the Royal family used to stay there some weekends to avoid the London blitz. One of my Army friends also knew her well being in the Guards and frequently required to act as escort. She was totally spoiled, devoted to self satisfaction at others expense, living in a world of her own. Extremely beautiful in a petite way she eventually arrived at the inevitable stage where she was regarded as something of a pathetic joke by her inner circle. A sad life brought about largely by the refusal of the Church and staid politicians to allow her to follow her heart with a truly brilliant war hero. Lord Farrow.

What a difference a few decades make! Poor Princess Margaret, and before her... poor Duke and Duchess of Windsor! Let me get this straight now. Wallace Simpson was divorced with 2 living

husbands. Today's Prince Charles is divorced and Camilla is divorced with a living husband, but he is still in line to be king? Prince Andrew married someone totally inappropriate..no problem..just get a divorce. Did I remember to mention Princess Anne? She too married someone totally "inappropriate..no problem..get a divorce, and marry someone else.How hypocritical! Even Prince Philip's parents were divorced.Yet, Queen Elizabeth would not let her marry Townsend. Chances are she probably would have tired of him eventually anyway, and divorced.In the end, Margaret, loved her rich, spoiled lifestyle more than she loved any man.I give this book 5 stars. It was a sweet book which told the good, the bad, and the ugly about Margaret and the British Royal Family.

I actually really enjoyed this book. I think the author was very fair and balanced regarding the Princess and her strengths and weaknesses. It seems strange to actually feel sorry for someone who quite obviously had every advantage life has to offer. I came away feeling that if she hadn't been born a Princess, she could have achieved so much more and maybe found some happiness and self worth on her own. Definitely worth reading.

This was a good, informative book. It was written several years ago, before the death of Princess Margaret or even the Queen Mother, so it feels out of date, of course. However, it was quite comprehensive, focusing on the Princess's issues with her personal life and the press. The book gave me what I wanted to know - basically, who Princess Margaret was and what her life was like. It was well written and not too critical or too forgiving. I enjoyed it.

Curious writing style, somewhat chronological, but lots of overlap and flashback made it curious. One-sided in many cases also never malicious. Made you feel sorry for the all the Royals as they evolved, especially Margaret ... she was constantly caught in the middle of things!

I really enjoyed this book. One minute I liked her and the next, well not so much. As much as we may all envy people that have money their lives aren't always a bed of roses. I wouldn't have wanted to live her life.

This was a very good biography of a very complex woman who defied the normal for royals. I enjoyed it, I was fascinated by Princess Margaret in my younger days but I never really knew much about her personal life...Eths

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