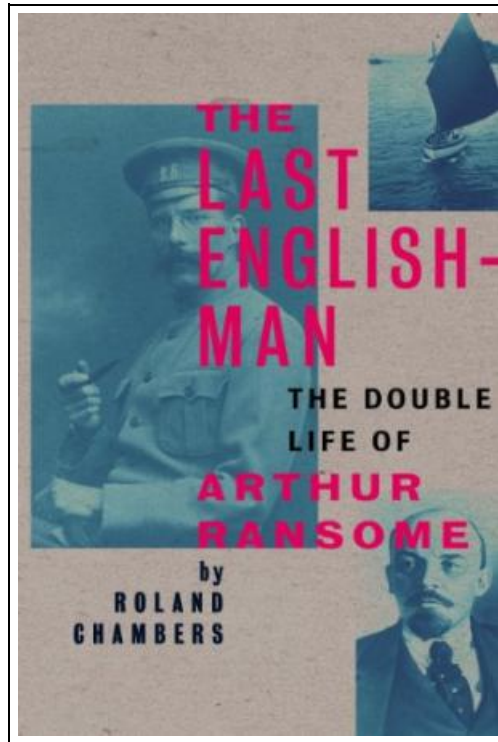


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## LAST ENGLISHMAN [THE] : THE DOUBLE LIFE OF ARTHUR RANSOME

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David R. Godine Publisher, 2012. Hardcover. Condition: New. Dust Jacket Condition: New. Arthur Ransome is best known for the twelve immortal "Swallows and Amazons" books he wrote on his return from Russia in 1928. From his prose he appears a genial and gentle Englishman, who, like his protagonists, pursued benign maritime adventures. Nothing could be further from the truth. By the time he wrote his masterpieces, the most interesting episodes of his life were well behind him. For Ransome led a double, and often tortured, life. Before his fame as an author, he was notorious for very different reasons: between 1917 and 1924, he was the Russian correspondent for the Daily News and the Manchester Guardian, and his sympathy for the Bolshevik regime gave him unparalleled access to its leaders, policies, politics, and plots. He was also the lover, and later the husband, of Evgenia Shelepina, Trotsky's private secretary, as well as friends with Karl Radek, the Bolshevik's Chief of Propaganda, and Felix Dzerzhinsky, founder of the secret police. In denying the horrors that followed the Revolution, and in considering Stalin a latter-day Cromwell, he was the bane of the British establishment. Yet his contacts earned him not only the admiration of liberals, both in the U.K. and the U.S., but a place in the British Secret Intelligence Service. In this biography, Chambers traces Ransome's life back to his earliest childhood, his struggles as a hack writer, and his flight from a disastrous marriage, then on to the decade he spent in Russia during that country's violent, formative years, ostensibly as a journalist, but more accurately as a spy (albeit a sympathetic one). The book's genius lies in Chambers's complete understanding of the Revolution's complexity, the rise and fall of the factions, the extreme personalities who guided it and were...

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