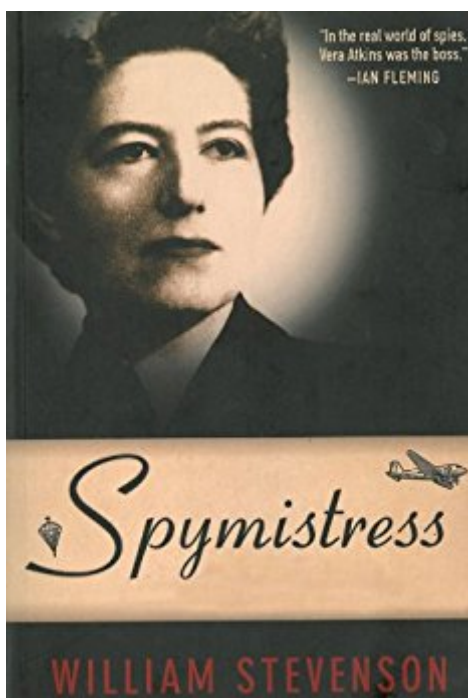


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Spymistress: The True Story Of The Greatest Female Secret Agent Of World War II



Synopsis

She was beautiful. She was ruthless. She had a steel trap for a mind and a will of iron. Born Vera Maria Rosenberg in Bucharest, she became Vera Atkins, legendary spy and holder of the Legion of Honor. Recruited by William Stevenson—the spymaster who would later come to be known as “Intrepid”—when she was only twenty-three, Vera spent much of the 1930s running countless perilous espionage missions. When war was declared in 1939, her fierce intelligence, blunt manner, personal courage, and knowledge of several languages quickly propelled her to the leadership echelon of the highly secretive Special Operations Executive (SOE), a covert intelligence agency formed by, and reporting to, Winston Churchill. She recruited and trained several hundred agents, including dozens of women, whose objectives were to penetrate deep behind enemy lines. The stirring exploits and the exemplary courage of the SOE agents and the French Resistance fighters—who in the words of General Dwight D. Eisenhower together “shortened the war by many months”—are justly celebrated. But the central role of Vera Atkins has until now been cloaked in silence. William Stevenson was the only person she trusted to record her life; he kept his promise that he would not publish her story until after her death. Here is the extraordinary account of the woman whose intelligence, beauty, and unflagging dedication proved key in turning the tide of World War II.

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Customer Reviews

This book was extremely difficult to read. The author is obviously not a writer. I make it a practice to complete every book I start. Doing so in this case, however, was truly a challenge. Although the book is about Ms. Atkins, it seems to be as much about the scores of people she became involved with in her espionage work. What makes the book so difficult to read is the author's writing style, which is basically just a hodgepodge of miscellaneous anecdotes about events and people which often seem totally unconnected to the paragraph before or the paragraph that follows. You often wonder why he even mentions them at all, and you often feel lost. You read some paragraphs and have to wonder what he's saying, even after you've read it a second time. You get the impression that the writer, who obviously had tens of thousands of facts at his disposal about WWII British espionage, is trying to impress the reader with the breadth of his knowledge of the subject. In doing so, however, he seems to have put on paper whatever facts popped into his head at a given moment. The relevance of those facts often escapes the reader, who would need the writer's knowledge of the subject to follow what he is trying to say. Perhaps it is an intellectual deficiency on my part, but I suspect that the vast majority of people reading this book will find it unreadable. Ms. Atkins was a remarkable woman. Fortunately, there is another book about Ms. Atkins that I'm currently reading that is far more readable and enjoyable, and provides a much better portrait of this very complicated woman. The title is "A Life in Secrets - Vera Atkins and the Missing Agents of World War II."

Vera grew into her job as the English spy mistress out of necessity. She remained secretive about her heritage as well her resistance agent training role during WE II. Agents she trained were responsible for delaying German troops from stopping the D-Day invasion of Normandy, as well as creating mayhem amongst German troops all over Europe.

Interesting, A good addition to understanding what went on behind the scenes during WWII. So many road blocks were put in the way of those who were trying to spy out information to help the war effort. It amazed me that so many of those in powerful positions would not cooperate with others and actually hindered the war effort..

This is a very thorough story of behind the scenes of battle in WW2. The leadership of Vera Atkins and the sacrifices of many who served under cover show a new dimension of the secret war against the Nazis. I highly recommend it.

This story certainly gave interesting insight into the pre Churchill years before the declaration of war. The fact that real people were cited in their wartime positions made it all the more interesting. She certainly was a very clever woman at a time when women were expected to stay in the home.

This is almost a hard to read book because of the detail and surprising information about the mendaciousness of some British politicians of the time. A great viewpoint from which to assess the current world status

Found a few things out, I didn't know before. Why the Nazis let the Jews get to Palestine. That UK was riddled with Nazi supporters. Not only Poland and France. But 3 stars for missing information about the Vera Atkins aka Vera Rosenberg.

While the book was read like a college text it was so very captivating and informing. I learned so much about what really went on during the war and especially how valuable Winston Churchill was to the fight and the outcome. There are so many names and details, all backed up by fact or reference that it was sometimes hard to follow and grasp. Vera Atkins, the Spymistress, is such an amazing and brave person. She is to be admired, respected and dearly appreciated for the invaluable role she played in the winning of the war. She was never recognized or acknowledged for her insight, bravery and downright intelligence because that was the way it had to be. It just came out in early 2000 how diligent, determined and genuinely caring about her committed coders she was.

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