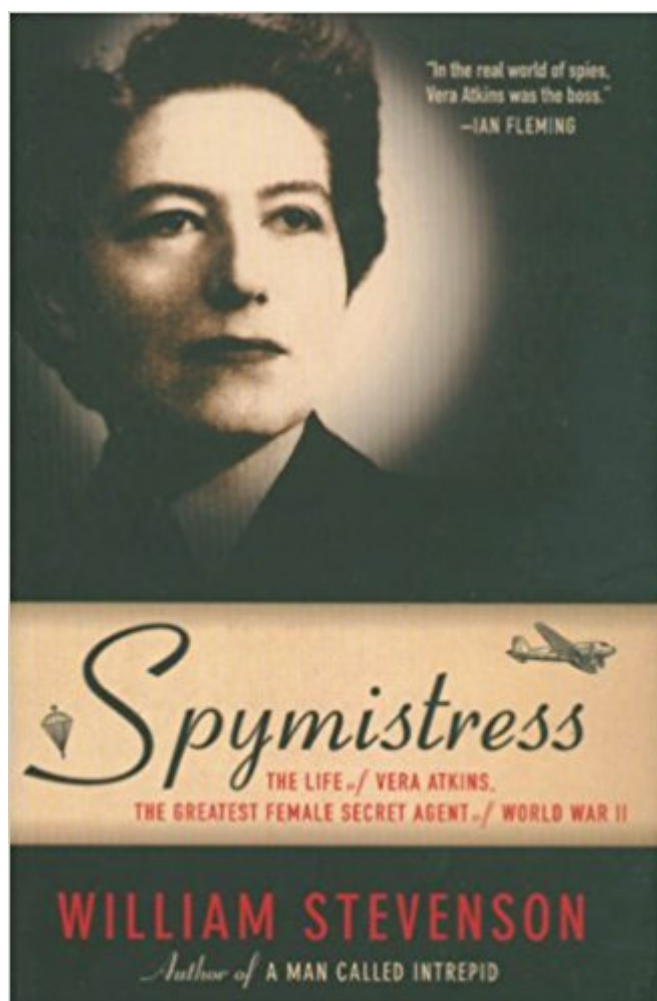


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Spymistress: The Life Of Vera Atkins, The Greatest Female Secret Agent Of World War II



Synopsis

A rousing tale of espionage and unsung valor, this is the captivating true story of Vera Atkins, Great Britain's spymistress from the age of 25. With her fierce intelligence, blunt manner, personal courage, and exceptional informants, Vera ran countless missions throughout the 1930s. After rising to the leadership echelon in the Special Operations Executive (SOE), a covert intelligence agency formed by Winston Churchill, she became head of a clandestine army in World War II. Her team went deep behind enemy lines, linked up with resistance fighters, destroyed vital targets, helped Allied pilots escape capture, assassinated German soldiers, and radioed information back to London. As the biographer of her mentor in the SOE, William Stevenson was the only person Vera Atkins trusted to record her story.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

• Every bit as fascinating and shot through with ambiguity as a spy novel. • (Salon.com) • In the real world of spies, Vera Atkins was the boss. • (Ian Fleming) • More intricate and exciting than the world of James Bond. • (Atlantic Monthly) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

William Stevenson was trained in aerial espionage as a British naval fighter pilot during World War II. A respected historian and expert on covert warfare, he is the author of 16 books including *A Man Called Intrepid* and *Ninety Minutes at Entebbe*. He lives in Toronto.

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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