



The Secret War: Spies, Ciphers, and Guerrillas, 1939-1945

Max Hastings

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From one of the foremost historians of the period and the acclaimed author of *Inferno* and *Catastrophe: 1914*, a sweeping examination of one of the most important yet underexplored aspects of World War II—intelligence—showing how espionage successes and failures by the United States, Britain, Russia, Germany, and Japan influenced the course of the war and its final outcome

Spies, codes, and guerrillas played unprecedentedly critical roles in the Second World War, exploited by every nation in the struggle to gain secret knowledge of its foes and sow havoc behind the fronts. In *The Secret War*, Max Hastings presents a worldwide cast of characters and extraordinary sagas of intelligence and resistance to create a new perspective on the greatest conflict in history. *The Secret War* considers not only Alan Turing and the codebreaking geniuses of Bletchley Park but also their German counterparts. Hastings plots the fabulous espionage networks created by the Soviet Union in Germany, Japan, Britain, and the United States. He examines the role of Britain's Special Operations Executive (SOE) and America's Office of Strategic Services (OSS) as sponsors of guerrilla war, and tells the almost unknown story of Ronald Seth, an SOE agent who was turned by the Germans.

The Secret War links tales of high courage ashore, at sea, and in the air to the work of the brilliant “boffins” at home, who battled the enemy's technology. Hastings's history is high policy and human drama, mingled in the fashion that has made international bestsellers of his previous works.

Praise for *The Secret War*

“This is his war and he writes with an easy assurance, scattergunning opinions. . . . Hastings is on form. He has set out to provide thought and discussion, and, with his familiar robustness, shotgun at side, he has succeeded.”—*Times* (London)

“As gripping as any spy thriller. . . . Hastings understands, better than any previous historian, that this is as much a story about human nature as it is about the mechanics of codebreaking or spycraft. . . . He has a novelist's eye for the telling detail. . . . This book works because Hastings is simply a very fine writer who is not afraid of making judgements. . . . Hastings's achievement is especially impressive, for he has produced the best single volume yet written on the subject.”—*Sunday Times*

“A compendious, crisply argued, and witty assessment.”—*Financial Times*

“Authoritative, exciting, and notably well written.”—*Daily Telegraph*

“A serious work of rigorous and comprehensive history . . . royally entertaining and readable.”—*Mail on Sunday*

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