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Seizing the Enigma: The Race to Break the German U-Boat Codes, 1939–1945, Revised Edition

David Kahn
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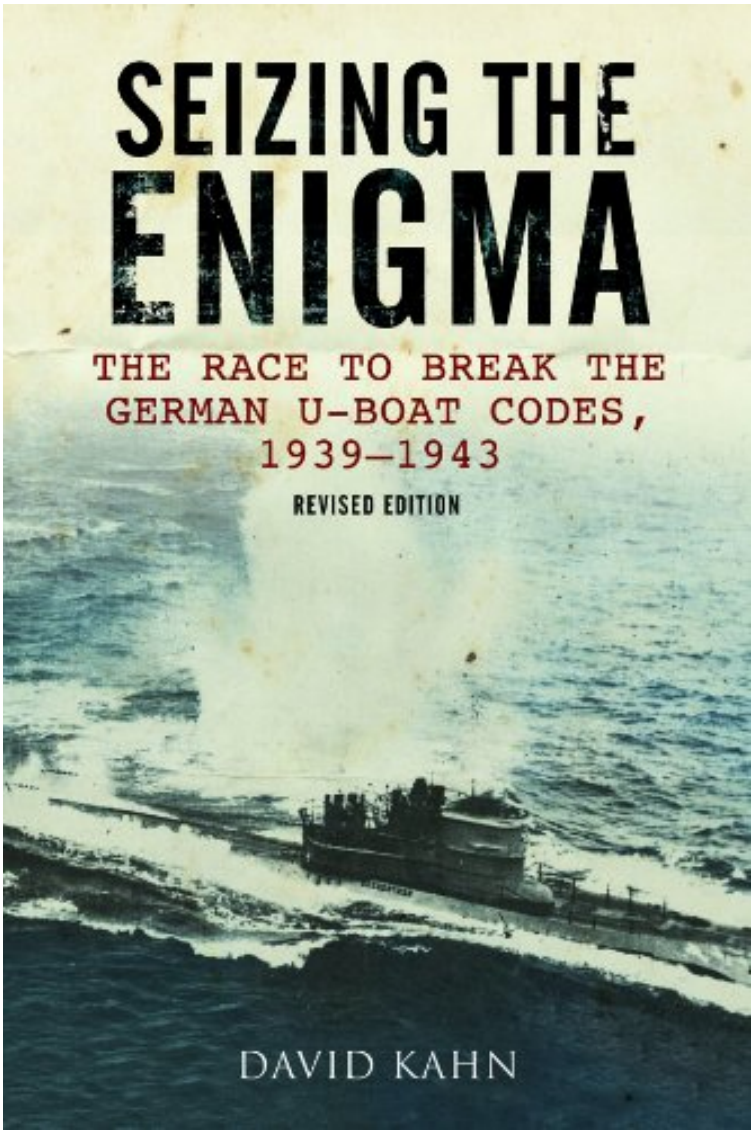

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here. WWII was the classic "cat and mouse" game. Rommel's success in North Africa was more about his intelligence team than anything else. When he was no longer able to read allied messages, he was just another General Officer that had to think his strategy differently in battle planning. It is easy to be the "Desert Fox" when you can read your enemies' message. The cracking of the Enigma was one of the greatest successes of WWII and help the allies defeat Nazi Germany. The Midway battle was successful because the US cracked the Japanese JN -25 code. This is a simplification of the book. The reading can be challenging at times; however, it is a great read for us historians. Knowledge is power!4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Great account of the effort by the Allies, especially Britain, to break EnigmaBy John RatcliffI have read a number of accounts of the role of Bletchley Park and other factors accounting for breaking the German Enigma code and cipher system during World War II. This is by far the most complete. In particular, Kahn describes how important to the overall effort capturing actual code books was without in any way diminishing the brilliant cryptanalysis which occurred at Bletchley Park. Also gives overdue credit to the early work done in Poland which made its way to Bletchley Park.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great bookBy Dale D. WyattI thoroughly enjoyed this book. It showed the complexities of enigma and the race to break the code. I had seen the movie the Imitation Game which is a poor Hollywood version of what really happened at Bletchley. I particularly enjoyed the pictures of the machine and the explanation of how a message was sent through the enigma machine.

Seizing the Enigma tells the thrilling story of the Royal Navy's battle to crack the Germans' supposedly unbreakable U-boat Enigma code, which would allow the vital Allied convoys in the North Atlantic to be routed away from Dönitz's wolfpacks. This battle was fought both on shore and at sea: by an assortment of scientists, chess champions and linguists, including Alan Turing, the father of the modern computer, who struggled to crack Enigma at Bletchley Park, and in the Atlantic by sailors and intelligence officers, such as Ian Fleming, the future creator of James Bond, who undertook dangerous and often fatal missions to seize the essential encryption keys and Enigma machine components from Kriegsmarine surface ships and U-boats. Kahn expertly brings this unparalleled intelligence operation to life in this revised paperback edition of his classic book.

“[Kahn’s] 1997 history of cryptology The Codebreakers is regarded as the seminal work on the subject. One senses that in the future Seizing the Enigma will be regarded in the same vein. Kahn tells a long and technically demanding story with all the skills of a professional journalist. He deftly mixes intricate accounts of the workings of the Enigma machines themselves and their accompanying codes with useful pen portraits of the principal characters involved…an absorbing and thoroughly well documented account.” ? Naval Books of the Year column in Warship, 2013“The book remains a highly recommended account with a wealth of materials.” ? Naval History Book s, Naval Historical FoundationAbout the AuthorDavid Kahn holds a PhD in history from Oxford University. He worked for thirty years as a journalist in New York and Paris, and taught intelligence courses at Yale and Columbia. In 2002, he was scholar-in-residence at the National Security Agency in Washington, D.C. His massive history of cryptology, The Codebreakers, is still considered the standard work on the subject.