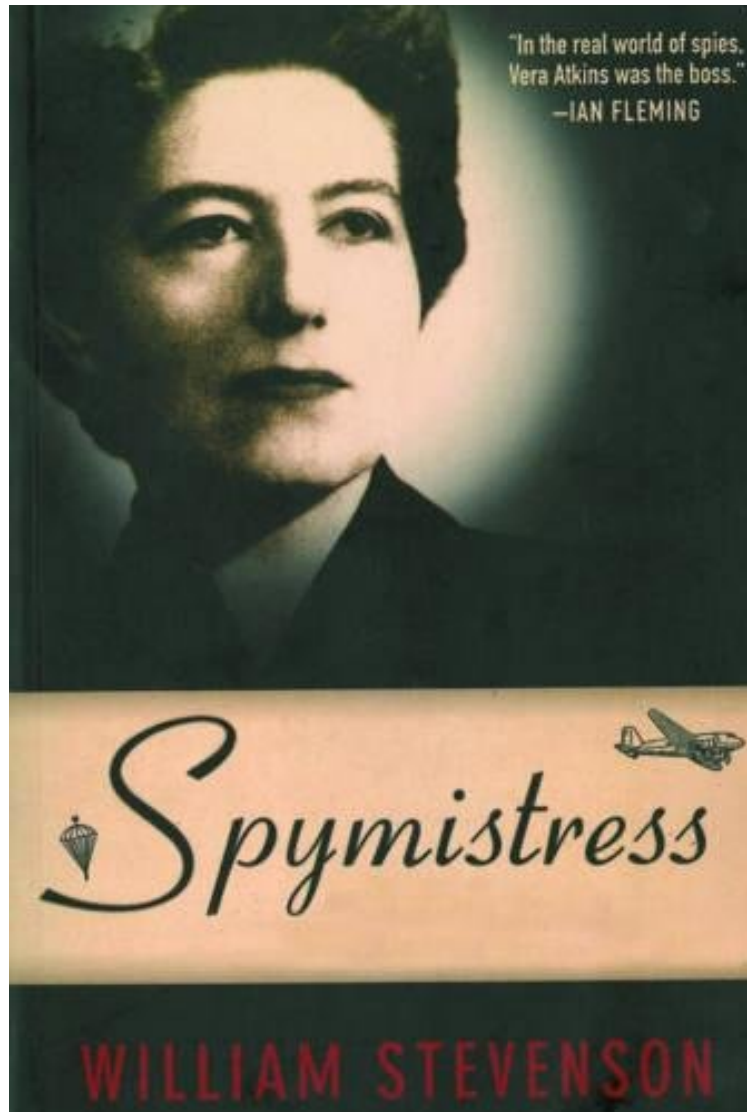


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Spymistress: The True Story of the Greatest Female Secret Agent of World War II

William Stevenson

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William Stevenson : Spymistress: The True Story of the Greatest Female Secret Agent of World War II before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Spymistress: The True Story of the Greatest Female Secret Agent of World War II:

70 of 73 people found the following review helpful. Good luck trying to read it!! By Charles R. Delobe 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." 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Review: Spymistress: The True Story of the GreatestBy Juan M. RodriguezI enjoyed this book immensely. I was shocked and amazed at what transpired in the UK's parliament during ww2 and the many Nazi sympathizers among the upper echelons of English society. I especially liked the way the footnotes were a click away. I've felt guilty at times because footnotes in hard copies are not so readily accessible, therefore not referred to. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Must ReadBy cheryl_pooler@yahoo.comThe two British Intelligence Agencies competing with almost two different agendas is an eye opener. Vera is the true hero of this story and all the women and men she trained. Her dedication to her people, race, country never wavered even as her country abandoned her.

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.

“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) About the Author 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 sixteen books, including Intrepid’s Last Case, Kiss the Boys Goodbye, and Ninety Minutes at Entebbe. He lives in Toronto.