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Agent Zigzag: A True Story Of Nazi Espionage, Love, And Betrayal



Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF A SPY AMONG FRIENDS
A New York Times Notable Book of the Year
A Washington Post Best Book of 2007
One of the Top 10 Best Books of 2007 (Entertainment Weekly)
New York Times Best of the Year Round-Up
New York Times Editors' Choice
Eddie Chapman was a charming criminal, a con man, and a philanderer. He was also one of the most remarkable double agents Britain has ever produced. Inside the traitor was a man of loyalty; inside the villain was a hero. The problem for Chapman, his spymasters, and his lovers was to know where one persona ended and the other began. Based on recently declassified files, Agent Zigzag tells Chapman's full story for the first time. It's a gripping tale of loyalty, love, treachery, espionage, and the thin and shifting line between fidelity and betrayal.

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Customer Reviews

An outstanding book. Growing up I heard many stories of WWII and this book was fascinating in that it gives the reader an opportunity to learn about espionage operations the public were never privy

too. The reader is introduced to all the players and the author does a superb job of telling the story in all its complexities. I have personal opinions about the players (including the "lead", Eddie Chapman) which no doubt are quite different from probably all others. I have to wonder exactly if the entire charade were even worth it, considering that Ultra and Enigma were breaking many codes needed by the Allies. What I found truly appalling was the free pass that this lifetime criminal Chapman was given merely because he "worked" for MI5. Digging into my own personal sentiments I feel that very possibly they were all playing "war war" and enjoying the game in the safety net of their own environments. Chapman got his free pass in everything in life it seems due to a natural born con artist ability which also allowed him a self entitled and superior attitude which carried him safely through to a comfortable old age. Absorbing reading also was the German element and their players in this story. All fascinating and excellently written. The reader won't easily be able to put this book down.

A somewhat duller book than one might expect. Perhaps it is because much of the material is still classified or the author's bent towards psychology, but the book focuses far too much on Chapman's state of mind, mood swings, and, very little on his exploits. For someone supposed to be one of the most significant double agents of World War II, the entire narrative is rather thin. According to this book, I'm really not so sure why he was considered all that important. I'd recommend this book only if you are thoroughly taken with the minds of spies and not their exploits.

Fascinating story - part Follett, part le Carre' with a little bit of Ludlum thrown in, but all true. This is a very well researched and written account of what has to be one of the most interesting stories of WWII espionage. It is also a character study of a very complicated and contradictory personality. Having just seen a newly restored de Havilland Mosquito bomber at AirVenture in Oshkosh (one of only 2 airworthy Mosquitos anywhere in the world), the part of story involving the sabotage of the de Havilland factory was particularly interesting to me. I enjoyed Macintyre's writing style and look forward to reading Operation Mincemeat.

This is a mildly interesting story of a double agent during WWII. However, it does not live up to its billing as an exciting spy thriller. There are very few occasions where Zigzag is in danger of being arrested, and when discovery is imminent. he wiggles out of it through his glib tongue. Thus, there are really no tense moments when the Abwehr or MI5 are at the door. Since this is a true story, the facts can't be changed, and in that light, the book was a disappointment.

An extraordinary story of a British double agent of the Second World War (WW2). Details of the escapades of Eddie Chapman, have been released only during the last decade. Chapman was a career criminal but with an unusual intelligence, used primarily to benefit himself, but also with a bizarre loyalty to Britain. The only part of the British Isles captured by the Nazis was the Isle of Jersey which was where Chapman happened to be, serving a sentence in the local jail, when the Germans arrived. His ingratiating with the Germans saw him released from prison, and sent back to Britain as a German spy, where he immediately contacted the British authorities. In return for not being prosecuted for crimes for which the Brits were keen to see him charged, he became a double agent. Zigzag, Eddie Chapman certainly did, and if anyone doubts that fact is stranger than fiction, then reading this book is a must. Chapman survived WW2 and resumed a questionable life among the lawbreakers of Britain.

If you have any interest in WWII this is a book for you. I am amazed at how many true stories are stranger and better than any fiction that anyone could dream up. After you read this one you might go to A man Called Intrepid which is another WWII story that could produce at least a dozen good films if we actually had a Hollywood with any talent and imagination.

The story of a restless unconventional man living in times of cold conformity and a dark war - a challenge he flips into a triumph over a powerful state (two of them actually). Eddie Chapman finds peace by pursuing his own life with his own ethics and in his own manner, at a time of immense discord and death. His story is an inspiration of personal awareness and choice in difficult times, in addition to an amazing perspective on World War II. The book is personal rather than political - and raises more questions than answers - but delivers a stunning narrative of an unusual, talented and strangely ethical human being in his bold search for connection, love and peace. I read it in one evening, both inspired and wanting to know more :)

Fascinating look at a true life WWII double agent. When thinking of WWII, what frequently comes to mind is the atrocities committed by the Nazi regime in their death camps. Although they are lightly touched on in this book, the focus is on the Abwehr, the German intelligence gathering arm. Frequently, in my opinion, they come off more as bumbling nitwits instead of the well-oiled Teutonic machine often associated with Germany. There are also a few eye-opening moments revealed. A must read for any fan of history and humanity.

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