

# World War II

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tough-minded, brilliantly informed English historian, H. R. Trevor-Roper, and the book sustains his judgment.

But the book is much more than a melodramatic tale of how a minute part of Hitler's victims could be snatched from the malignant chaos of the Third Reich; it provides an invaluable insight into Himmler's mind and fantasy. A few simple and unoriginal notions dominated his mind: that Jews corrupted and ruled the world, that Freemasonry and the Papacy constituted an equally ominous conspiracy, and that all civil servants, diplomats, doctors, and homosexuals were expendable. His one vision was the creation, by a variety of means, including compulsory bigamy, of a racially superior Germany that would protect Europe from Asia. From Kersten's account, Himmler emerges as a good husband, a sober citizen who resisted all temptations of enrichment and luxury, and a reluctant murderer: his own plan for the Jews would have involved their mass expulsion, not extermination. But he was the prisoner of his inherited ideas and of his loyalty to Hitler; he readily executed Hitler's grimmer program. Kersten's account of Himmler's hideous mind is a reminder that Nazi totalitarianism depended as much on an ideology as on terror and that its servants belonged to an hitherto unknown underworld of diseased, resentful misfits who transformed private grievance into collective misery.

—FRITZ STERN.

**MEN BEHIND THE GUNS:** As has often been pointed out, the Second World War involved greater advances in military technology than had previously occurred in the entire recorded history of mankind. More than 90 per cent of the weapons we were using at the end of World War II, it has been estimated, were qualitatively new, either in the sense that they had been created *de novo* since the start of the conflict (like the atomic bomb) or had been so vastly improved that they could properly be regarded as being new (like the jet fighter).

The duration of World War II, especially for the British, who entered it more than two years before we did, permitted new weapons to be conceived, developed, tested, manufactured, issued to the fighting forces, and used in combat—all within a span of time short compared with the length of the war. Such technical weapons-

development work was carried out by numerous technical establishments maintained either by the armed services or by such an *ad hoc* government agency as the U.S. Office of Scientific Research and Development.

Gerald Pawle's "*The Secret War, 1939-1945*" (Sloane, \$5) is the story of the work of one such group, told lovingly and with an enthusiasm that is undimmed by the years that have passed since 1946. It concerns the British Admiralty's Department of Miscellaneous Weapons Development, created in 1941 from the earlier Inspectorate of Anti-aircraft Weapons and Devices. Pawle makes it clear that the group had all the properties which characterized a successful weapons-development outfit in World War II, properties that included, among others, enormous group spirit and enthusiasm, here sustained by a nickname—"Wheezers and Dodgers"; extreme impatience with the stodgy ways of standard service officialdom; equal enthusiasm for all the technical efforts of the group, whether or not the development involved appeared in time to be useful in the war as it actually had to be fought; and appreciation of the practical importance of bringing new developments to the earliest possible attention of high government officials.

For the tens of thousands of British and Americans who actually took part in the technical effort of World War II, Pawle's book is a nostalgic reminder of the hectic work, occasional accomplishment, endemic frustration, and sober foolishness of those days. For the general reader, it is a fair and typical account of how things went on a war front not reported in the newspapers. For the historian, it is first hand source material on a side of warfare that probably will prove to have been unique to World War II. In another war, thanks to technology, the pace of events will almost surely be too rapid to permit the useful introduction of weapons whose development is undertaken only after the start of the war. The issue will probably be decided by weapons we have in hand when the conflict begins.

—LOUIS RIDENOUR.

**REGIMENT OF FELONS:** The man who has written his memoirs—"The Legion of the Damned" (translated by Maurice Michael; Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, \$3.75)—under the pseudonym of Sven Hassel is the son, we are told, of a Danish woman and an Austrian officer. He was brought up in Denmark, but when World War II broke out the Germans claimed him and put him in their army. When he deserted he was caught, slapped into concentration camp for a while, and then sent to

the front with a regiment specially made up of deserters and felons.

It is rather difficult for the mind of anyone to understand what a regiment of this sort could contribute to a nation's campaign for victory. What Sven Hassel has to say about the training and indoctrination of this curious collection of fighting men does not make its existence much more understandable. We are reluctant to believe that even the imaginative and inhuman brutality of Hitler's SS Corps could entirely cancel the spirit of a large group of obviously spirited men. That is probably because we who think of what Hassel has to say as a strange and distorted fantasy have had no experience with such degradation of humanity.

He tells us that his one desire is to make plain to the world that war is not merely senseless. He wants us to know that it is an evil flower, no matter what its aim, of the same branch that produced Hitler's foul world. Certainly in the picture which he presents there is little that is even bearable, much less noble. Yet strangely enough the gusto and enthusiasm with which this amazing man piles horror upon horror suggests that perhaps the worst evil in war results from man's ability to get used to it, to fall in with and take in his stride its fiercest bestialities. Sven Hassel's book is the portrait of a man and his companions doing exactly that.

Perhaps this is why the book seems more like fiction than fact. Perhaps it is why the American publisher presents it as fiction while repeating the author's claim that it is "ninety per cent fact." Whether you consider this brutal book as fact or as fiction it is made up of good, violent writing.

—RAYMOND HOLDEN.

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# Hiss

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but shows positive signs of having been deliberately altered, in that many of its types are replacements of the originals and have been deliberately shaped." Mr. Lane also submitted many letters and reports relating to the question of whether or not Woodstock typewriter #230099—that being the number of the typewriter—could have been manufactured soon enough to have been in the possession of Mrs. Hiss's father, its original owner, as early as July 8, 1929. On that day the father's office had apparently written a letter with type characteristics similar to those of the Standards and the Baltimore Documents. Mr. Lane had encountered the same unwillingness to help in this phase of his investigation. He did not claim that he had shown that #230099 could not have been owned by the father, but he believed that he had raised "serious doubts." He asked that a hearing be held for which the process be available to compel the attendance of witnesses.

From all of this Mr. Lane advanced the theory that Chambers had either directly or through one or more confederates fabricated the typewriter and copied the Baltimore Documents. Chambers had done so, Mr. Lane believed, between August 1948, when he identified Hiss as a Communist but disclaimed knowledge of espionage at a Congressional hearing, and November 1948, when he produced the Documents at Baltimore. His motive, Mr. Lane conjectured, was to protect himself in the libel suit brought by Hiss after Chambers on a radio program had described him as a Communist.

In opposition the Government submitted affidavits by a number of experts, including the manufacturers of the typewriter. Mr. Hiss only sketchily describes these affidavits.

Whatever may be the truth as between the experts, acceptance of Mr. Lane's theory is subject to many difficulties. How could Chambers have had the machine fabricated in three months of 1948? Mr. Lane required much of his own time for over a year and a great deal of the time of an entire team of specialists; he had consulted many people and suffered frequent rebuffs so that his effort presumably left a conspicuous trail.

During the period between August and November 1948, Chambers was a regular employee of Time, Inc.; he was running a farm; he was attending Congressional hearings and pre-trial examinations in the libel suit; he

was being pursued by newspaper reporters. These activities would hardly seem to leave the time, energy, and privacy necessary to fabricate or to supervise the fabrication of a typewriter so secretly that no trace of his endeavor was ever discovered.

Assuming that the typewriter had been fabricated, how would he have known where to plant it? Twenty-five or more agents of the FBI had failed to find the Hiss typewriter. The machine introduced in evidence had been found by Mr. Edward C. McLean, Mr. Hiss's chief legal adviser from the time of his indictment to the end of the second trial, because Mr. and Mrs. Hiss had supplied him with information available only to them. And Mr. McLean, a New York lawyer with a reputation for zeal and diligence, had been truly indefatigable in his search; he had traced the wanderings of the typewriter through many hands over a period of more than ten years. Trial counsel Lloyd Stryker had glowingly depicted him and his search to the jury: "a 'stalwart lawyer' who went to Washington time and again . . . he inspected garrets and he poked around in cellars" to find the typewriter.

Again, if Chambers fabricated and planted the typewriter, why did he not somehow let the FBI know its whereabouts? The period of late November and early December 1948 was the low point in Chambers's morale. It was then that he made his famous suicide attempt—because he thought the Grand Jury would indict him and not Hiss. Chambers could readily imagine what was in fact happening: the FBI was making strenuous efforts to find both the Hiss typewriter and samples of typing by Mr. and Mrs. Hiss. It was obvious that unless the Baltimore Documents could be connected with a Hiss typewriter they were not forceful evidence against Hiss. One would think that after such an extraordinary feat as fabricating and planting a typewriter, and in such critical circumstances, Chambers would have given the FBI at least a lead to the location of the typewriter rather than abandon hope.

If Mr. Lane could discover reasons for doubting that the typewriter found by Mr. McLean was the true Hiss machine, why could not Mr. McLean do so, too? Uncritical identification of the typewriter would be most inconsistent with Mr. McLean's conscientiousness both as reputed and as apparently already displayed.

In opposing the motion for a new trial the Government submitted the affidavits to which reference has been made. Principal emphasis was put, however, on the inconsistency be-

tween the motion and the defense position at the trials. The defense had offered the typewriter and identified it by several witnesses. One defense witness, Perry Catlett, had identified it not by its typing but by the fact that the left hand knob of the roller was missing. Even in summation, defense counsel had expressly stated that the Baltimore Documents had been typed on the Woodstock found by Mr. McLean. The Government dissected the motion papers and found them indecisive.

Judge Goddard, who had presided at the second trial, heard the motion for a third trial and denied it. His long opinion reviewed the affidavits, emphasized the inconsistency between Mr. Lane's theory of the typewriter and that of defense counsel at the trials, referred to the legal doctrine that litigants are not allowed additional trials for successive theories and concluded that there had been presented "no newly discovered evidence which would justify the conclusion that if it were presented to a jury it would probably result in a verdict of acquittal." The quotation states the legal test that must be met by evidence submitted on a motion for a new trial. The Court of Appeals subsequently affirmed Judge Goddard's decision.

The book is unquestionably a forceful and exhaustive presentation of what can be said on behalf of Mr. Hiss. For those looking for a vivid, balanced account, "A Generation on Trial," by Alistair Cooke remains by far the best work on the case.

One cannot fail to be moved by the fate of Alger and Priscilla Hiss. Brilliant, charming, industrious and, according to their standards, well-intentioned, they are an outstanding tragedy of our times. Mr. Hiss has served his sentence and written his book. It is to be hoped that society will now find some constructive use for his undoubted abilities.

## LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Henry Sturdevant in "Flight Into Darkness," by Philip Clark.
2. Halvard Solness in "The Master Builder," by Henrik Ibsen.
3. Mr. Salteena in "The Young Visitors," by Daisy Ashford.
4. Frank Skeffington in "The Last Hurrah," by Edwin O'Connor.
5. The Narrator in "The Aspern Papers," by Henry James.
6. "Don Quixote de la Mancha," by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra.
7. Young Rossum, in "R.U.R.," by Karel Capek.
8. Merton Gill in "Merton of the Movies," by Harry Leon Wilson.
9. The Narrator in "The Spell of the Yukon," by Robert W. Service.
10. Kate Sims in "The Twelve Pound Look," by James M. Barrie.



## BOOKED FOR TRAVEL

## Spring on the Riviera

THE French Riviera in the last days of April was a chilly strand, and it moved me to wonder just what the attraction was in the days of its first popularity, when it was a winter and spring sanctuary for Russians, Poles, and Britons seeking shelter from the unfriendly atmospheres in their homelands. Admittedly, the weather was an improvement from the fogs of the isles and the chill of the steppes but, even so, the attractions along the Côte d'Azur, if tonic, were hardly warming.

In these days only the bravest of souls—Scandinavians probably—brave the beach until conditions warm up. On Easter Sunday, by which time I had moved on to Paris, the papers were carrying pictures of sunbathers crowding the small strip of sand at Cannes like Sunday sunworshippers at Coney in July. They had come in one sudden rush, pouring in for the big late Easter week-end which seemed to crowd resorts all over France, from the Côte d'Azur to the Haute Savoie and clear to Paris itself. The Parisians had all, of course, departed. "My dear," as a trapped Parisian explained to me, "anyone who is smart and who isn't trapped here for one reason or another is in Deauville." Yet before the big week-end and after it, at least until the summer would arrive full bloom, there were only a few stragglers in the hotels—a wandering band of Danish tennis players, a couple who wished they had stayed in Miami, a German figure-skater who had been working at Mégève all winter and wanted to thaw out, and a few international types whose nationality would prove indeterminable to anyone without access to their passports. They had replaced the counts, the barons, the monocles, and the ascots, and they would hold the fort until the first full days of summer when the crowd would come, tying up the traffic on the Corniches, even roosting among the pebbles that pass for a beach at Nice.

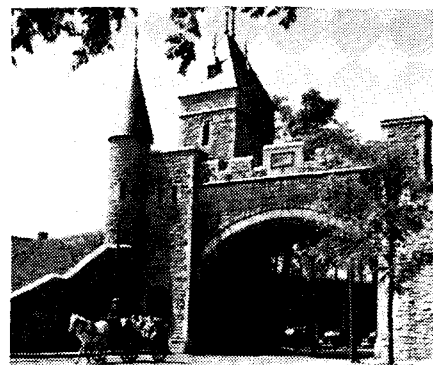
Checking into the Carlton at Cannes shook loose memories of my days as a boy at summer camp, when I used to get post-cards in Maine from the family abroad showing that formidable hostelry's towers and palms. And I would stick the cards in the edge of the screen in the bunk where they would be viewed by passing garter snakes and boys in short pants. It shook loose, too, thoughts of a short

stretch just twelve years ago when the Army lifted some of us out of the mud of Germany and deposited us, just before the spring offensive of 1945, in a seaside room at the very same hotel. It brought back in a sudden rush the Red Cross girls who had a canteen just down the avenue, where they stored their doughnuts and their romantic problems knotted by the strange ways of wars. It brought back the Riviera rules of 1945—GIs in Nice, officers in Cannes, and the WACs in Juan-les-Pins. Real convenient. In between. Also no neckties and no saluting. And the water eddying in, turquoise in the shoals. And the French girls in their Bikinis long before they were called that, starting a frantic rush for the cameras whenever they got up to stretch.

Now in its middle years the Carlton looked good for its age, holding up far better than its guests of the same epoch. No new hotels had been built along the strip, and the Carlton remained both in key and in vogue. But even if the Riviera was settling into pleasant decadence, it hadn't been totally impregnable to onrushing progress. For instance, in the basement of the Casino a mammoth hi-fi set had all but replaced live band music. The selection of records was wider than almost any orchestra's repertoire. And the machine offered musical versatility as well.

Down the line a bit, past the famed three-star gourmet's hive known simply as La Bonne Auberge, there was a new type of lodging, *le motel*. And not only *le motel*, but also *le milk bar*. And the beaches had developed some new names too. Florida, Waikiki, and Miami, pronounced mee-ah-mee. (Meanwhile, back on Miami Beach the hotels were opening rooms called Harry's American Bar, La Ronde, and Cafe Pompeii.)

DRIVING down to Nice one day I had lunch in the gargantuan fastnesses of the Hotel Negresco, that vast white armory spang on the Promenade des Anglais, long recognized as the prima hotel of the city. Shortly I found myself in receipt of a notice which indicated that not only was the Hotel Negresco to be altered but it was to be "renovated to conform to American standards of comfort with air-conditioned rooms, ultra-modern baths, and running ice water." Europeans have the notion that Americans



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