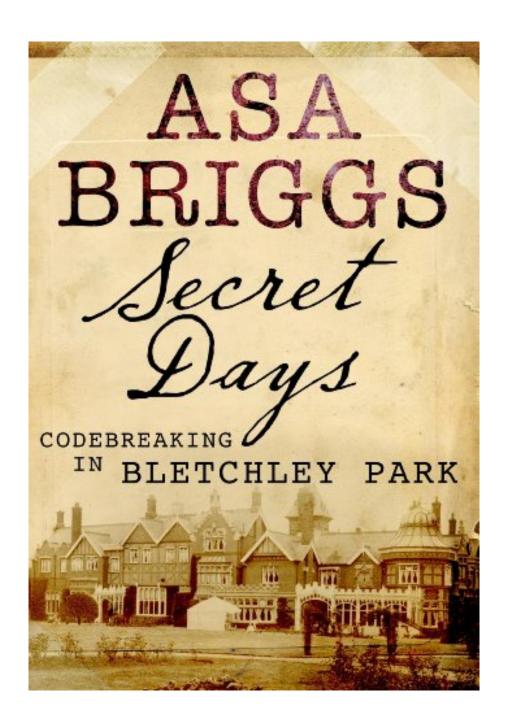


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#### About the Author

ASA BRIGGS is one of the most highly respected British historians. He is the author of Victorian People, Victorian Cities and Victorian Things. He has also written a five-volume history of broadcasting in the United Kingdom. He was made a life peer in 1976.

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The Bletchley Park memoir of Lord ASA Briggs will be one of the most important documents to be published in 2010. Lord Briggs has long been regarded as one of Britain's most important historians. He has never, however, written about his time at Bletchley Park. The publication, which will coincide with Lord Briggs 90th birthday, is a meticulously researched account of life in Hut Six, written by a codebreaker who worked there for five years alongside Alan Turing and Gordon Welchman. In addition to discussing the progress of the Allies'code-breaking efforts and their impact on the war, Lord Briggs considers what the Germans knew about Bletchley and how they reacted to revelatory memoirs about the Enigma machine which were not published until the 1970s. Briggs himself did not tell his wife about his wartime career until the 1970s and his parents died without ever knowing their son's contribution to the wartime effort. The book will be launched at Bletchley in May 2011, in the presence of other Hut 6 veterans and part of the proceeds will be donated to the fund to restore Hut 6 to its former glory.

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3 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

A most useful book By Laurence Daley

A most useful book

Briggs, Asa? 2011 Secret Days: Codebreaking in Bletchley Park: A Memoir of Hut Six .. Frontline Books, London ISBN-10-1848326157 ISBN-13 9781848326156

The Bletchley Park memoir of Lord Asa Briggs is indeed one of the most important documents to be published in 2011. Lord Briggs should be congratulated...

The reason for my interest was that Sir Herbert Stanley saved my sister Leonor and I from the horrendous conditions of the Blanquita Theater in the post Bay of Pigs Invasion days of 1961. This theater, now "Karl

Marx" or some other nonsense title now a days was a horrible place. No functioning toilets, very little food, sleeping on theater seats, and especially and, the dead who had been machine gunned from the stage.

What struck me as strange, was Sir Herbert's now clearly deceptive statements as to my sister and I. Many, years later it became clear to me that Sir Herbert was far more than a diplomat, but was deeply involve in British Intelligence. He was also a very humane person who a friend of mine who he also saved called him the British Schindler iafter that famous if flawed humanitarian.

It only took two paragraphs from this book to define him as an long time member of that strangely effective British intelligence establishment... The two excerpts that follow make it clear that Marchant was a senior operative even in those long ago days at Bletchely Park.

Page 90 "The Hut Three Watch consisted of about a dozen people...When messages arrived from Hut Six a member of the Hut Three Watch took each one, separated the five-letter groups into German words by pencil strokes and wrote down an English version of the text on a separate piece of paper. The head of the Watch meticulously checked the papers that they have given him and then, in turn, passed them on to the air and military advisors, working in pairs, who sat at an adjacent rectangular table."

page 92 "Initially Travis moved the three out of Hut 3 and put a small committee including Eric Jones in charge. As this was not a workable solution. And in July 1942 Travis made Jones sole head, in the first instance for a trial period of three months. Just over a year after he took over, H. S. Marchant was made his deputy and the pair were in charge to the end of the war. I saw little of Jones but liked Marchant, whom I knew less through his role in Hut Three than as a guiding spirit behind the revues in which members of many of the huts in BP (Bletchley Park) took part, including myself as an occasional scriptwriter. Nonetheless, I read with interest some of the Watch Notes that Marchant, a man with a future, issued with the objective of standardizing procedures in Hut Three and increasing accuracy, and I followed with interest his post-war career when in the 1960s, he became Ambassador first to Cuba, and then Tunisia."

This places in the context Sir Herbert's importance in the long standing British watch on the Soviets, from his youthful trip to the Soviet Union, through his role in Bletchely Park, keeping an eye on such as Philby at then and later at the BBC. And of course his sudden promotion from Consul in San Francisco to Ambassador in Havana....

Still it appears he could not get the US to listen about the Soviet Missiles in Cuba, nor save my father from the wrath of the Castro regime. Thus this fine book has clarified yet another point in the obscure recent history of Cuba and thus helped in the preparation of my own book "Love and War in Cuba."

Thank you Lord Briggs

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Not Essential

By Robert W. Audretsch

This is only my 3rd book to read regarding BP. And I stopped reading this book about half way thru as it was just too chatty and autobiographical. I look for organization and depth and did not find it here. This really reads like a memoir and not serious systematic history.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Secret Activities During Secret Days

By Woodyboy1

A good description of the life at Bletchley Park during the WWII code breaking activities. A lot of name-

dropping, but I suppose that's not all bad.

See all 6 customer reviews...

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