

# Queens of the Spy World Whose Intrigues Sway the Fate of Nations



MME. DESPINA DAVIDOVITCH STORCH, the BEAUTIFUL LEVANTINE ADVENTURESS WHOSE CAREER ENDED IN HER DEATH ON ELLIS ISLAND AFTER HER ARREST ON AN ESPIONAGE CHARGE.



Mlle. SUMEY DEPSY, the FRENCH ACTRESS ACCUSED OF FURNISHING INFORMATION to the ENEMY.



MATA HARI, the JAVANESE DANCER EXECUTED AS A SPY IN FRANCE



CATHERINE de MEDICI, QUEEN of FRANCE WHO USED "FLYING SQUADRONS" of WOMEN SPIES to CARRY OUT HER PROJECTS of STATE CRAFT.

## From Delilah's Time Women Have Played Important Parts in Secret Service

DR. STEIBER, who was the head of the German spy system in France previous to the war of 1870, once said: "Two armies won the war. One was my army of peaceful penetration which broke through all the lines of the enemy and paved the way for the army of Von Moltke."

This army of "peaceful penetration" was largely composed of women of all classes that Dr. Steiber had introduced into France from 1867 to 1870. The German woman spy helped to open France to the German armies.

The Germans seem devoid of the prejudice most people have against spies and spying. It was therefore very easy for Dr. Steiber to recruit an enormous army of women spies in a very short time. After a short period of instruction the most intelligent became servants in the households of the best families of France, especially such houses as were frequently visited by military men. German nurses abounded, German piano teachers, German barmaids, German waitresses were to be seen everywhere and all of them reported to Dr. Steiber, who directed the whole network.

**Ordered to Marry in Her Work.** There were cases in which a woman spy was ordered to marry a certain man for the good of the fatherland. And after Fraulein Fuhrer had become the wife of Capt. Duval she was ordered to fall in love with Gen. Ferre and was censured and threatened when she did not succeed within the given time in making an admirer of the latter. In the garrison cities German women spies were especially numerous.

That women are very able as spies has been recognized since the beginning of history. Was not Delilah sent by the Philistines to betray Samson? There are numerous other examples of the same kind in history. Men have always been easily duped by women spies. Catherine de Medici, Queen of France, realized that she could better subdue and govern countries through an army of women than through an army under the best generals. She schooled hundreds of women in the art of spying and sent them as "flying squadrons" to the courts of Europe. It was due to the work of these women that Catherine was able to govern France and the Vatican and earn her reputation for able statesmanship to which the whole world bowed. But clever and subtle as the "Medici women" were they

cannot be compared with the perfect women spies of modern times.

The mission of the women of the "flying squadron" was mere eavesdropping and petty conspiracy. The chief talent of these women was that they knew how to make men love them and thus to extract secrets from them. The modern woman spy must know how to sketch a fortification, how to draw a cross-section of a gun and even how to select the site for the emplacement of a heavy gun.

**Career of Baroness de Kaula.** Among the most subtle and skilful of all the women spies was Baroness de Kaula. During the Franco-Prussian war the French General de Cissy was taken prisoner by the Germans. During his sojourn in Germany Baroness de Kaula and he became very intimate and the young woman, a Levantine by birth, wormed herself into his confidence. After peace was restored Gen. de Cissy returned to Paris, where he soon became a great factor in the reconstruction of the French army. In 1875 he was Minister of War and great things were expected for the "Armee de la Revanche."

At the command of Bismarck Baroness de Kaula received her instructions from Dr. Steiber and was ordered to rejoin the old French General in Paris. Unsuspectingly flattered, Gen. de Cissy welcomed her. The Baroness was installed in a private apartment where the old General came every day after breakfast to listen to her beautiful playing of the piano or to give an opinion on her newest French poem. Baroness de Kaula was a poet, an artist and a musician.

But the Baroness never failed to look through the portfolio of the Minister of War brought with him on these visits and she memorized what was useful for the German Government to know. Her memory must have been phenomenal, for on one occasion she memorized almost completely a document of 6,000 words by reading it but once.

When an accident exposed the Baroness's true character the republic was in great danger. De Cissy never could be made to admit that the woman was guilty. The Baroness returned to Berlin, where she fell in disgrace because she had not completely succeeded.

Another case to the point is that of Felice Schmidt. A beautiful young woman, she had herself banished early in 1915 as a suspicious character from the German border. She went to England and there won a host of admirers among the younger officers. But she was sent after bigger

game. She was ordered to captivate Kitchener. She had managed cleverly so far and the German spy master was sure she would succeed. But she saw Kitchener only once. Only once she had a look at the face of the man who knew not what pity or sentiment was—and she fled.

**Sketched a Gun and Was Shot.** Some time after she made her appearance at Marseilles as an apple seller and exercised her spell over all the people that came in contact with her. She was so pretty and simple that she inspired confidence, and she had acquired the southern French accent to perfection. But one day she was found in a secluded spot making a sketch of one of the big guns. And she paid with her life for this.

Switzerland, Monaco and the Scandinavian countries are now full of women spies. It is amazing how the German net is spread. A story is told of two young women whom chance brought together in a lodging house at Basle, Switzerland. It so happened that both women studied singing under the same professor and they grew very fond of each other.

One day one of them after receiving a letter called out that she had to leave for Berne at once. "I must also leave," said the other one. They had lived six months together without either of them knowing that the other was a spy for Germany.

**Recommended by German Embassy.** Another story is that no sooner had the war broken out than it was discovered that a member of the household of the Prime Minister of England, Mr. Asquith, was a spy of the German Government. This woman had been engaged by Mrs. Asquith through the German Embassy. The Asquiths and the Lichnowskys were very close friends, so that when it was learned that a vacancy existed in the household of the English Minister the German Foreign Office saw to it that the right person was selected for the place.

It is probably no exaggeration to say that Germany alone has to-day 100,000 paid women spies in all walks of life. She has perhaps twice that number engaged in spy work without making a specialty of it. Every German woman living abroad knows that if she sends any sort of useful information to the secret service she will be paid for it. Women of refinement and culture lend themselves to this sort of work as well as servant girls and barmaids.

Germany traded on French sympathy with Alsace to introduce Alsatian women into France as spies. These women were especially placed as school teachers in garrison towns.

Before the war began numbers of German concert hall singers in London who delighted the young navy officers with their quaint English were busily collecting every bit of information they could

gather. At the head of the perfect spy work of the German navy department was Frau von Schroeder, wife of Rittmeister von Schroeder, who was in the Army Intelligence Bureau of the General Staff. Frau von Schroeder, a charming and gifted woman, was cultivated by several American correspondents from whom she obtained information that she desired about the United States Embassy and the United States Navy.

At one time she was so powerful, because of her special knowledge, that notes to the United States in reply to President Wilson's submarine notes were drafted in her study.

**Spent \$10,000,000 a Year.** In the last decade Germany spent on her secret service more than \$10,000,000 yearly, while the English and the French hardly spent one-tenth of that amount on secret work. The Russians spent great amounts of money on secret service work, but these sums were largely wasted, because the Russian Empress herself as well as many of the most influential women of the Russian Empire were agents of Germany. The German horn wives of Russian Ministers and Generals, as well as German dancers, singers and other stagefolk, were in the pay of the German secret service and reported faithfully everything they learned. They even directed their husbands and admirers to do the things the German Intelligence Bureau wanted to have done.

How woman's wit once helped a traitor was related in 1912 in the Budapest *Presse*, when Lieut. Schorveder of the German garrison of Posen and his sweetheart, Ida Mullerthal, were court-martialed on a charge of high treason.

Schorveder was deeply in love with Fraulein Mullerthal, but owing to his poverty the prospect of their marriage was very remote. The despair of the young lovers was well known to a Russian secret agent who approached Lieut. Schorveder and offered him \$25,000 for a plan of the fortress of Posen.

**Poverty Prevented Marriage.** The Lieutenant agreed to the proposal, but found it very difficult to carry out his task. His circumstances were common knowledge in the garrison, and he was carefully watched. It was impossible for him to purloin a plan of the fortress and despatch it to Russia. After he had exhausted his ingenuity without being able to find a suitable scheme to earn the reward he took counsel with his intended bride. Her woman's wit suggested a way out of the difficulty.

"You shall tattoo the plan of the fortress on my back," she said to him, "and I shall easily be able to travel to Russia with it without being discovered."

He accepted the fantastic suggestion. That same night he began to tattoo an accurate plan of the fortress on the shoulders of Fraulein Mullerthal. The

New York and Argentina were observed and she was seen in the entourage of Count von Luxburg of "Spurio venenkt" fame. When she sailed for Spain last October the English secret service was warned and she was taken off the boat at Cadiz by officers of a British destroyer.

The singer's baggage was examined minutely and some papers were found that appeared to be innocent, but under chemical treatment they developed cipher writings. Then Mme. Teodorina was taken by female attendants and stripped and her skin was treated with chemicals. The complete key to the cipher was found on her shoulders.

**Stagefolk Easy Material.**

Stagefolk, because of their extravagant living and proverbial light heartedness, have always been an easy prey of the German secret service when it has been in search of tools. There was the case of Mata Hari, the Javanese dancer who had captivated Paris and London. She was shot by a French firing squad after she had been convicted as a spy.

Mata Hari was a prominent figure in the night life of Paris before the war. She was arrested in Paris February 13, 1917, after the French police had obtained indisputable proof that while on friendly terms with a number of Frenchmen in official or semi-official positions she was a trusted agent of the German secret police. It was established that she had furnished information of great importance to Germany, including advance details of the construction of the British tanks.

Mata Hari's maiden name was Margaret Zell and she was the daughter of a Dutch planter and a Javanese woman. At 14 she met Sir Campbell MacLeod, who fell in love with her and gave up his army career on her account.

Later she deserted him and lived in great luxury in Paris under the protection of a German official. Six feet tall, her great luminous, Oriental eyes shone from an olive hued face of rare beauty. Men in legions were at her feet in all the capitals of Europe and always after a dancing season she returned to Berlin to pay a protracted visit to her German friend.

The arrest in Paris of Sumei Depsy, an actress who appeared with Sarah Bernhard, created a sensation. Her husband, Emile Guillier, had been employed by a manufacturer of artificial limbs and had access to all military and Red Cross hospitals. Sumei Depsy's frequent visits to Switzerland caused the French secret service to be suspicious and led to her arrest on a charge of giving information to the enemy.

Other agents of the German spy sys-

## Germans Most Unscrupulous of Modern Peoples in Using Female Agents in War

stars, with more ambition than money, who were sent to the conservatories of Italy and Paris. Rome, Naples and Milan had more than their share of these spies. Their girlishness, coupled with their wit and subtlety, helped them to obtain valuable information—information which helped to defeat the splendid army of Cadorna. When the net was drawn hundreds of these small fish were caught and many a young girl now behind bars owes her life to her extreme youth, to her thick blond braids hanging loosely on her shoulders.

The whole world has been honeycombed by German spies, mostly women, who have made their way wherever they were directed in order to procure desired information. Wearing the insignia of the American Red Cross women whose parents were unnaturalized Germans have crossed the sea to minister to the wounded in France. These women working in advanced dressing stations have been able to secure valuable information from the wounded and prisoners.

In convicting six of these nurses of German parentage who arrived from America, the French authorities proved that they had conveyed to Germany vital information concerning troop movements and conditions in the allied armies.

**Tools of Agents Higher Up.** Exposures of their system of operating which have been made to the Government agents here indicate that these women spies are simply tools of German agents higher up. They do not direct schemes, but go where assigned and obtain such information as may prove useful.

In one case it is known that a girl of known hostile ties obtained a position where she would be able to observe operations about one of the big coast defence bases. A Federal officer called upon her employers and produced a record showing that she had spent much of her time with a Teuton army officer who is now on Ellis Island and that she has various other suspects among her most intimate acquaintances. He also showed that this girl had no other reason to seek such employment than to obtain information. She was discharged immediately.

In Germany she would have been shot. As a rule allied countries are lenient to women spies and this is perhaps one reason why there are so many and why they are so enterprising. The death of Mme. Despina Davidovitch Storch, the beautiful young Levan-

tine, closed an eventful career. She was only 23 years old when she died the other day on Ellis Island. She had promenade her beauty in all the capitals of Europe and she sought everywhere the company of diplomats and men in uniform. In Spain she was once detained as a spy, but nothing beyond close friendship with German agents could be proved and she was released.

The fact that Germany chooses many Levantine women as spies is due to the fact that these natives of the Eastern Mediterranean have unusual ability in mastering languages. Besides they are very able diplomats and they also have the power of fascination.

**Use in the Present War.**

Women spies have played an important role in the defeat of France in 1870, in Russia's defeat, in the defeat of Rumania, Belgium and Serbia and have greatly aided the German advance in the west.

It is but natural that we should glorify our own and abuse the one who is enlisted in the service of the enemy. No doubt the allied countries have had and still have a great many women spies doing services for them. But it is hardly possible that their recruiting has been as easy as that of German spies.

Since Germany made war her chief industry she had to make spying a chief science. To be a spy is not dishonorable in Germany and to the German mind. Men and women have been trained to it from early childhood and a good many of them, no doubt, do their work from patriotic motives, and these are the greatest menace, because they are imbued with the belief that Germany must be the master of the world.

The Latin peoples have a natural repugnance to this kind of work. Napoleon, who was certainly not an overscrupulous man, refused to bestow a medal of honor on his chief spy, Schulmeister. "Money, as much as you want, but the Cross—never!" The halo of romance hovers over the women spies of the American civil war. Who can forget Belle Boyd, the Confederate girl who helped to save Stonewall Jackson's army? There was also Emma Edmonds, the Union spy, whose adventures could scarcely be duplicated in fiction; Lydia Darrah the Quakeress risked her life to assist Washington's army. But such actions were prompted by patriotism only and were done on the spur of the moment and not as a profession.

After the war began her trips between London and Paris, she would be arrested.