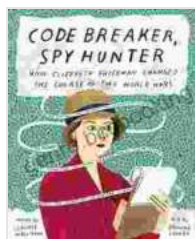


# How Elizabeth Friedman Changed the Course of Two World Wars: A Captivating Tale of Ingenuity and Espionage

In the annals of espionage and codebreaking, the name Elizabeth Friedman stands tall as a pioneering figure who left an indelible mark on the course of history. Her exceptional linguistic skills and unwavering dedication to her craft played a crucial role in deciphering enemy codes during both World Wars, saving countless lives and shaping the outcome of the conflicts.

## Early Life and Education

Elizabeth Friedman was born Elizabeth Smith on August 26, 1892, in Huntington, Indiana. From an early age, she displayed an extraordinary aptitude for languages and puzzles. She graduated from Indiana University in 1915 with a degree in English and Latin. Her passion for cryptography was ignited during her studies, when she stumbled upon a book on the subject.



## Code Breaker, Spy Hunter: How Elizebeth Friedman Changed the Course of Two World Wars by Laurie Wallmark

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English

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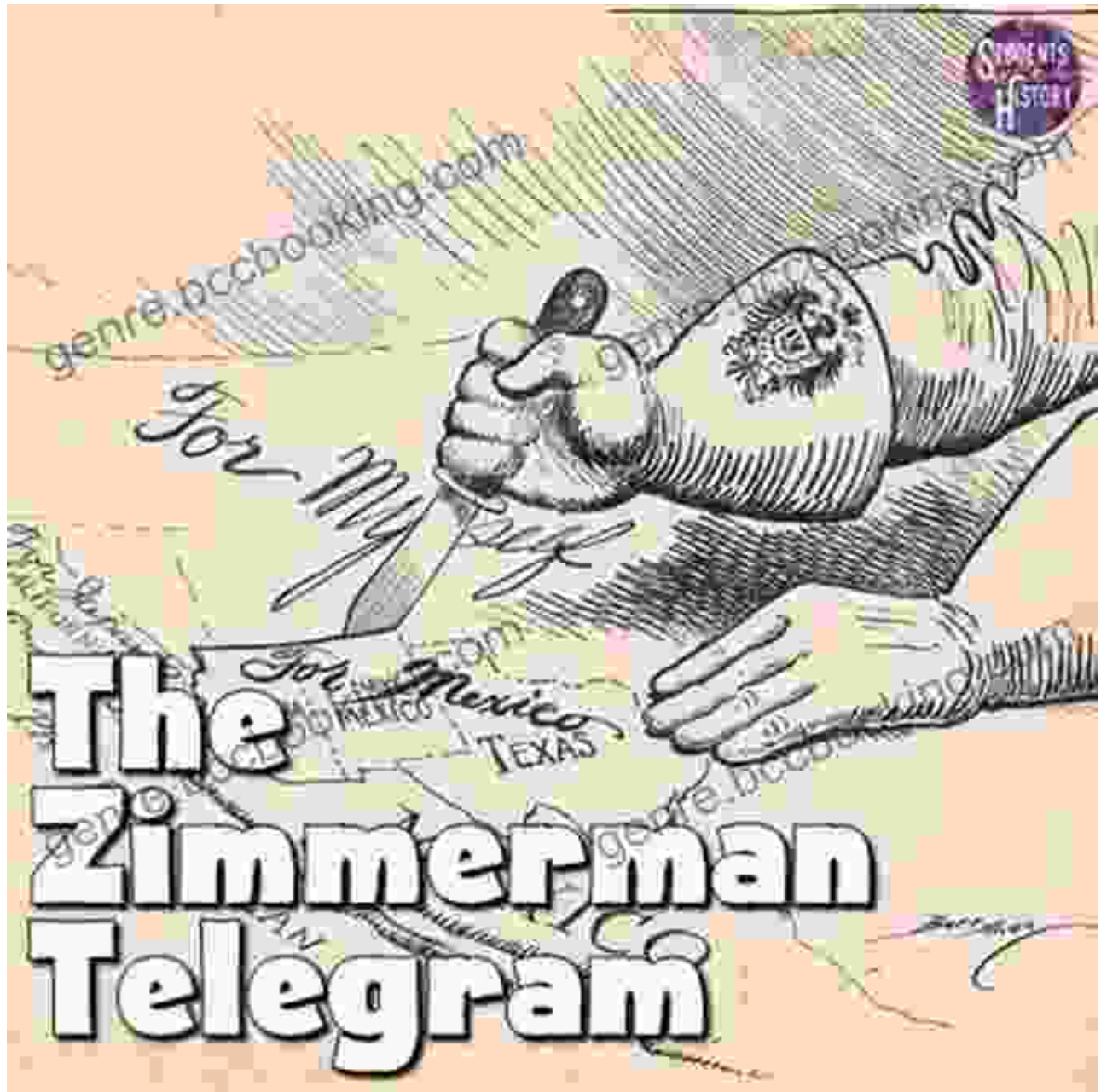
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## **World War I: Breaking the Zimmerman Telegram**

With the outbreak of World War I, Friedman joined the U.S. Army Signal Corps as a civilian code clerk. In 1917, she was tasked with analyzing the infamous Zimmerman Telegram, a secret message from the German Foreign Secretary to the German Ambassador in Mexico. The telegram proposed an alliance between Germany and Mexico against the United States. Friedman's meticulous analysis and decryption of the telegram played a vital role in exposing Germany's plans and bringing the United States into the war.



Elizabeth Friedman's decryption of the Zimmerman Telegram exposed Germany's plans and brought the United States into World War I.

### **Interwar Years: Revolutionizing Cryptography**

After the war, Friedman continued to work as a cryptographer for the U.S. government. She developed innovative techniques for breaking codes and

wrote extensively on the subject. In 1921, she married William Friedman, a fellow cryptographer. Together, they became known as the "First Couple of Cryptography." The Friedmans' contributions to the field were instrumental in the development of modern codebreaking methods.

### **World War II: Enigma Code Breakthrough**

With the onset of World War II, Friedman's skills were once again put to the test. She joined the U.S. Navy and worked tirelessly to break the Japanese PURPLE code and the German Enigma code, two of the most complex and formidable codes of the era. Friedman's innovative approach and relentless pursuit of knowledge paid off when she discovered a critical weakness in the Enigma machine. This breakthrough enabled the Allies to decrypt German communications, providing invaluable intelligence on enemy plans and operations.



Elizabeth Friedman's discovery of a weakness in the Enigma machine played a pivotal role in breaking the German Enigma code.

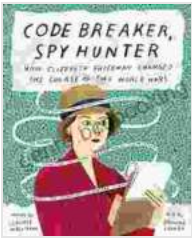
## **Post-War Recognition and Legacy**

After the war, Friedman continued to serve her country as a codebreaking consultant. She received numerous awards and accolades for her groundbreaking work, including the National Security Medal from President Harry Truman. In 1990, she was inducted into the National Security Agency's Cryptologic Hall of Honor.

Elizabeth Friedman's legacy extends far beyond her codebreaking achievements. She was a pioneer for women in a male-dominated field and played a crucial role in shaping the modern intelligence community. Her contributions to cryptography and national security continue to inspire and motivate aspiring cryptographers and codebreakers to this day.

Elizabeth Friedman's story is one of unwavering determination, brilliant intellect, and selfless service. She overcame gender barriers, revolutionized cryptography, and changed the course of history. Her contributions to the war effort saved countless lives and helped secure victory for the Allied forces. As we reflect on her remarkable life and achievements, we are reminded that even the most complex codes can be broken with ingenuity, perseverance, and a deep love of country.

Through her groundbreaking work, Elizabeth Friedman became a legend in the world of espionage and intelligence. Her legacy as a trailblazing female codebreaker and her unwavering dedication to national security continue to inspire and amaze generations to come.



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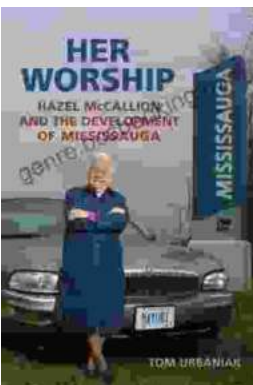
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