

**On Their Majesties' Secret Service:  
An Historical Perspective of  
British Invasion/Spy Literature,  
1871-1918**

A thesis presented by

Danny Laurie-Fletcher

In fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctorate of Philosophy in the Faculty of  
Social and Behavioural Sciences.

Flinders University, Adelaide

2014

# Contents

<b>Summary</b> .....	i
<b>Declaration</b> .....	iii
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	iv
<b>List of illustrations</b> .....	vi
<b>Introduction and Literature Review</b> .....	1
<b>Chapter I</b>	
<b>Foreign Agents, Invaders, Government Responses and Novels</b> .....	59
<b>Chapter II</b>	
<b>The Early War Spy Scare and ‘The Hidden Hand’</b> .....	140
<b>Chapter III</b>	
<b>The Concept of the Gentleman in British Spy Literature</b> .....	204
<b>Chapter IV</b>	
<b>The Portrayal of British Women in Wartime Occupations in British Spy Literature during World War I</b> .....	243
<b>Chapter V</b>	
<b>‘The Most Dangerous Woman on Earth’: Sexuality in British Spy Literature during World War I</b> .....	287

**Conclusion**.....318

**Appendixes**.....329

**Bibliography**.....353

## Summary

This thesis is concerned with examining British spy literature, a form of literature that began to appear towards the end of the nineteenth century and developed into a clearly recognised form during the Edwardian period (1901-1914). This is done by looking at its origins and evolution from invasion literature and to a lesser extent detective literature up to the end of World War I. A main focus will be on the political arguments imbedded in the text, which mirrored those same debates in wider British society that took place before and during World War I. These debates and topics within the literature will be examined to see what influence, if any, they had on the creation of the intelligence service of MI5 and MI6 and how foreigners were perceived.

In addition there will be chapters that focus on a number of social aspects, to compare the fictional world of literature with the reality and the mind-set of British society during the given time period especially during World War I. This part of the thesis is aimed at demonstrating that the idea of the 'Self and Other' or 'Us and Them', which is expressed in the literature especially during World War I was used as a means of further creating a sense of difference between the British and the Germans, where the former were used to represent civilisation while the latter as portrayed represented barbarism that was a direct threat to civilisation. While in the case of the portrayal of women in wartime occupations it will be shown that literature was written in a manner that belonged to the style of writing and imagery which is found in British propaganda during World War I about the use of women in

the war effort while not contradicting already held social values about the position of women in society.

In conclusion the thesis will argue that spy literature from its evolution from invasion literature with its use of repetition and recurrence, which was also found in political periodicals and debates at the time, was overall ideologically driven by the right-wing elements of British politics to attack the Liberal Party in order to convince a wider public audience towards a certain political and military point of view. This had mixed results, while portraying differences between the British and foreigners especially Germans.

## **Declaration**

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Danny Laurie-Fletcher

## Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my supervisors Dr. Janet Phillips and Associate Professor David Lockwood, both of whom have shown a continual interest in this project. They have always been willing to listen to my problems and happy to talk over solutions. I would also like to acknowledge the untiring service of the staff of Flinders University Library, notably those in Document Delivery who pursued elusive items for me as well as the URRSA librarians especially Mr. Andrew Taft in finding sources not always the easiest to locate. I would also like to acknowledge the services of the staff of The Barr Smith Library, The British Library, The National Record Archives (Kew), The Imperial War Museum, The National Army Museum (London) and Birkenhead Reference Library at Birkenhead Central Library. Dr. Heather Paul, formerly Faculty Project Officer at Flinders University, in her efforts in securing the funding for my research trip to England. Ms. Nada Lucia, Administrative Assistant at Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, School of International Studies at Flinders, for her valued help over the years. To my relatives in England Mrs. Nicola Burman (1962-2012), Mr. Simon Burman and their son Mr. Charlie Burman in welcoming me into their home in London during the research trip.

As well, my thanks goes to Mr. Peter Phillips (1920-2010), for his interest and valued advice, including his influential enthusiasm and suggestions for this project in its early stages; to Dr. Krzysztof Łada for his interest and suggests; to Mr. Simon King and Ms. Wendy Lovegrove-King for their interest and suggests; to Associate Professor Owen Covick for lending me his E. Phillips Oppenheim novels; and to Mr. Robert Martin for his sterling work in editing.

Finally, I am most grateful to my grandmother (mama) and my mother for their unflagging interest, support and patience in often difficult times.

## List of Illustrations

<i>'I Spy!'</i> ; by L. Raven-Hill (1910).....	76
<i>The French Spy</i> (1890).....	87
<i>Invasion of 1910 with a full Account of the Siege of London;</i> <i>The Times</i> (1910).....	94
<i>None So Deaf</i> —; by E. Linley Sambourne (1906).....	103
<i>Mark Lockwood Stalks the Alien in Epping Forest</i> ; by E. T. Reed (1908).....	110
<i>German Spies in Epping Forest</i> ; by W. Heath Robinson (1910).....	110
<i>German Espionage in Essex</i> ; by D. MacPherson (1908).....	111
Illustrations in <i>Spies for the Kaiser</i> (1909).....	115
<i>Why Read at All?</i> ; by Lewis Baumer (1910).....	116
<i>An Englishman's Home</i> ; by A. C. Michael (1909).....	121
<i>The Great Raid</i> (1909).....	122
<i>A Leaf from a German Officer's Diary</i> ; by A. T. Smith (1910).....	131
<i>Motto for German Spies: Wait &amp; See</i> ; by P. A. (1914).....	145
<i>Schmidt the Spy and his Messages to Berlin</i> ; by Alfred Leete (1916).....	163
<i>Teutonic Barber</i> ; by F. H. Townsend (1914).....	168

<i>Brother Sambo</i> ; by W. Bird (1914).....	168
<i>Boy Scout</i> ; by Wilmot Hunt (1914).....	168
<i>Nurse</i> ; by Frank Hunt (1914).....	168
<i>Three Sacks</i> (1915).....	184
<i>Woodman Spare that Tree</i> (1915).....	184
<i>Prussianised Sport</i> ; by Frank Reynolds (1915).....	223
<i>The Detective on the German Spy-Trail</i> ; by George Morrow (1916).....	232
Front Cover of <i>Munition Mary</i> (1918).....	261
Front Cover of <i>A V.A.D. in Salonika</i> (1917).....	269
<i>The Big Push: Where Are All to Go? or, The Invasion of the New Office</i> ; by H. G. G (1916).....	276
<i>The Electric Bells Having Broke, the G.G.'s (not Grenadier Guards) sit outside Maj. D.'s door in case he wants</i> ; by H. G. G (1916).....	276