



Eleven Days in August: The Liberation of Paris in 1944

Matthew Cobb

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A gripping day by day account of the liberation of Paris from the Nazis in August 1944

"I had thought that for me there could never again be any elation in war. But I had reckoned without the liberation of Paris—I had reckoned without remembering that I might be a part of that richly historic day. We were in Paris on the first day—one of the great days of all time." —Ernie Pyle, US war correspondent

The liberation of Paris was a momentous point in 20th-century history, yet it is now largely forgotten outside France. This account is a pulsating hour-by-hour reconstruction of these tumultuous events that shaped the final phase of the war and the future of France, told with the pace of a thriller. While examining the conflicting national and international interests that played out in the bloody street fighting, it tells of how, in 11 dramatic days, people lived, fought, and died in the most beautiful city in the world. Based largely on unpublished archive material, including secret conversations, coded messages, diaries, and eyewitness accounts, this book shows how these August days were experienced in very different ways by ordinary Parisians, Resistance fighters, French collaborators, rank-and-file German soldiers, Allied and French spies, and the Allied and German High Commands. Above all, it shows that while the liberation of Paris may be attributed to the audacity of the Resistance, the weakness of the Germans and the strength of the Allies, the key to it all was the Parisians who by turn built street barricades and sunbathed on the banks of the Seine, who fought the Germans and simply tried to survive until the Germans finally surrendered, in a billiard room at the Prefecture of Police. One of the most iconic moments in the history of the 20 century had come to a close, and the face of Paris would never be the same again.

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