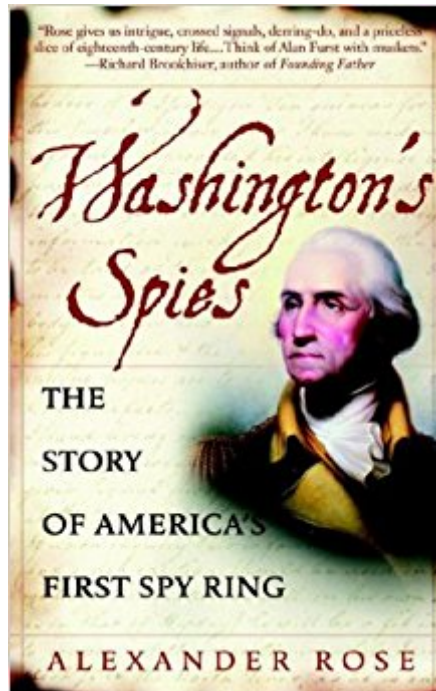




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Washington's Spies: The Story Of America's First Spy Ring



Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES A BESTSELLER — Turn: Washington's Spies, now an original series on AMC Based on remarkable new research, acclaimed historian Alexander Rose brings to life the true story of the spy ring that helped America win the Revolutionary War. For the first time, Rose takes us beyond the battlefield and deep into the shadowy underworld of double agents and triple crosses, covert operations and code breaking, and unmask the courageous, flawed men who inhabited this wilderness of mirrors — including the spymaster at the heart of it all. In the summer of 1778, with the war poised to turn in his favor, General George Washington desperately needed to know where the British would strike next. To that end, he unleashed his secret weapon: an unlikely ring of spies in New York charged with discovering the enemy's battle plans and military strategy. Washington's small band included a young Quaker torn between political principle and family loyalty, a swashbuckling sailor addicted to the perils of espionage, a hard-drinking barkeep, a Yale-educated cavalryman and friend of the doomed Nathan Hale, and a peaceful, sickly farmer who begged Washington to let him retire but who always came through in the end. Personally guiding these imperfect everyday heroes was Washington himself. In an era when officers were gentlemen, and gentlemen didn't spy, he possessed an extraordinary talent for deception — and proved an adept spymaster. The men he mentored were dubbed the Culper Ring. The British secret service tried to hunt them down, but they escaped by the closest of shaves thanks to their ciphers, dead drops, and invisible ink. Rose's thrilling narrative tells the unknown story of the Revolution's most murderous intelligence war, gunrunning and kidnapping, defectors and executioners — that has never appeared in the history books. But Washington's Spies is also a spirited, touching account of friendship and trust, fear and betrayal, amid the dark and silent world of the spy. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

The unfamiliar terrain of Britain's American colonies made it vital for both sides to gain knowledge of enemy troop movements during the Revolutionary War. But acquiring that information called for a level of espionage that neither side was prepared for, requiring both to make up many of their operational procedures as they went along. *Rose (Kings in the North)* focuses on a small band of Americans, longtime friends who created an intelligence network known as the Culper Ring to funnel information to George Washington about the British troops in and around New York City. The author quotes extensively from their correspondence, showing how contentious the relationship between the general and his spies could get, especially when Washington thought they were underperforming. Rose also delves into technical aspects of the Culpers' spycraft, like their attempts at cryptography and invisible ink. Although his story is compelling in its descriptions of occupied New York, where patriots and loyalists lived together in an uneasy balance, it is diffused somewhat by lengthy digressions into the more well-known spy tales of Nathan Hale and Benedict Arnold. Be sure to follow along with the footnotes, too. •Rose works in several more anecdotes among his documentation. (May 2) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“Alexander Rose tells this important story with style and wit.” •Pulitzer Prize-winning author Joseph J. Ellis “Fascinating . . . Spies proved to be the tipping point in the summer of 1778, helping Washington begin breaking the stalemate with the British. . . . [Alexander] Rose’s book brings to light their crucial help in winning American independence.” •Chicago Tribune “[Rose] captures the human dimension of spying, war and leadership . . . from the naive twenty-one-year-old Nathan Hale, who was captured and executed, to the quietly cunning Benjamin Tallmadge, who organized the ring in 1778, to the traitorous Benedict Arnold.” •The Wall Street Journal “Rose gives us intrigue, crossed signals, derring-do, and a priceless slice of eighteenth-century life. Think of Alan Furst with muskets.” •Richard Brookhiser, author of *Founding Father* “A compelling portrait of [a] rogues’ gallery of

barkeepers, misfits, hypochondriacs, part-time smugglers, and full-time neurotics that will remind every reader of the cast of a John le Carré novel. —Arthur Herman, National Review
From the Hardcover edition.

I live on Long Island, near Setauket, the scene of much of the action in this book. A local historian wrote a review of this book for our hometown newspaper in which she compared "Washington's Spies" to the currently popular "George Washington's Secret Six" by Brian Kilmeade and Don Yaeger. Here is some of what she had to say: "Kilmeade and Yaeger have spun more than one story here. This non-fiction book hovers dangerously close to the side of fiction" [whereas] "Historians can refer with confidence to Alexander Rose's book." The reviewer provides this side-by-side comparison of Rose's book with Kilmeade's and Yaeger's: "Washington's Spies: The Story of America's First Spy Ring" vs. "Secret Six: The Story of the Culper Spy Ring." Bibliography: 16 pages, including 4 pages of primary sources alone. Notes: 60 pages, documenting every quotation and inference. "Secret Six": Bibliography: 6 pages, with 3 primary sources listed. Notes: None. I will add this: Not only is "Washington's Spies" the better history, it is well-written history that will keep you reading from cover to cover. It's not just about the Culper Spy Ring; it's also an interesting look at life in New York City and on Long Island during the Revolutionary War. You will gain added insight as to why the British lost that war and their American colonies by indulging in neglect, greed, corruption, and brutality that ultimately hardened the resolve of Patriots and lost the allegiance of many disheartened Loyalists. I give 5-stars to "Washington's Spies: The Story of America's First Spy Ring."

Very informative about a little known piece of U.S. history. The writing is a little heavy and slow at times but in some places really reads like a modern-day spy thriller. Is especially fun when read in conjunction with the viewing of "Turn," the new serial on AMC. I should think all history buffs, students of codes and codebreaking, and residents of the New York/Long Island area would especially enjoy this work.

I wanted this book because of the tv series "Turn" on AMC and you can tell Rose is a writer for the show based on the book. The book is the show 2x then add all the historical content that is left out of the show. Makes you appreciate the creative minds of the ones around you a lot more. I wish this could have been in the history lessons in school growing up, would have been far more interesting

I had read previously a poorly written, pale shadow of this well-written book. It was written by some shoddy reporter from Fox News. So glad a friend recommended this one as the antidote. Alexander Rose's version is the real deal. Bravo.

Excellent read! Well sourced. Notes in the back are also excellent. First read on my new Kindle so I wasn't attuned on how to jump back and forth. When you hit a footnote, highly recommend jumping to it to pick up the details there.

If you want to know a side of the Revolutionary War that many don't know, you have to read this book. Excellent content and very enjoyable to read. I had to force myself to put it down.

During the Revolutionary War, General George Washington relied on an intelligence-gathering group of barkeepers, neurotics, hypochondriacs and smugglers to keep him informed of British-occupied New York. Most young men were galvanized to join the militia. Other men and women served their country in more covert, creative ways. Celebrated historical author, Alexander Rose, reveals the story of Washington's Spies, a fascinating tapestry of eighteenth century life, code creators and double agents. These information gatherers traversed the Hudson, Connecticut and Long Island bringing chief spymaster, George Washington, timely and accurate intelligence of English Admiral Howe's designs and movements in Manhattan. Howe was slow, but Washington knew he was methodical and needed to keep track of what Howe had up his sleeve. These covert activities ultimately helped us win the Revolutionary War. Mysterious chapter headings will perk your interest ("The Man of Parts and Halves," "The Year of the Hangman"). The book overflows with fascinating details about privateering to benefit the Colonials, invisible ink and secret codes. Connecticut residents will enjoy reading about Weathersfield, Mystic, East Haddam and New Haven. Reviewed by Holly Weiss, author of Crestmont

I purchased this book for my grandson but am reading it before passing it along. I am learning a lot of very interesting early American history I never knew about

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