



RITCHIE BOY SECRETS: HOW
A FORCE OF IMMIGRANTS
AND REFUGEES HELPED WIN
WORLD WAR II

BY BEVERLEY DRIVER EDDY

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REVIEW BY JACK M. CROSSMAN

Ritchie Boy Secrets: How a Force of Immigrants and Refugees Helped Win World War II, by Beverley Driver Eddy, should be considered a continuation and expansion of the ground-breaking, Academy Award-winning documentary *The Ritchie Boys* (2004) directed by Christian Bauer and Bruce Henderson's 2018 book *Sons and Soldiers* (William Morrow, 2018). All try to explain or relate the wonderful story of the European nationals who, in World War II, volunteered to use their intelligence, language, and culture as specialists trained at the secret Military Intelligence Training Center at Camp Ritchie, Maryland. From

1942 to the end of the war, the soldiers proved immeasurably important to the war effort. Their talents led to the successful Allied victory and to peace.

Eddy has compiled an exhaustive record of not only of Ritchie Boys' training, but also of their employment in different theaters of war and their engagement in the war crimes trials in Germany and Japan. Such specialists! What a treasure of talent to aid us in our endeavors against the Axis, and immense kudos to the folks who thought to bring their unique assets to bear.

The soldiers, with their language and cultural experiences, leveraged both to help wage psychological warfare against our enemies, interrogate prisoners of war, and compile vital references about the Axis military to aid the fighting forces in their fight to victory. Without them, who knows how long or how different the war would have been?

Interestingly, when I was in the Army, after intelligence analyst training at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, I was assigned to the U.S. Army Intelligence and Threat Analysis Center—General Intelligence Production Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina (now Fort Liberty), part of the Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM). When I reported to the fort, no one knew what our unit was or where it was located. I accidentally encountered someone from my unit in a large parking lot during lunchtime and found out where it was. It was diagonally across the parking lot from where we were speaking.

We conducted unclassified and classified research on countries' commanders to learn more about the world in the Middle East, Caribbean, and African areas. I researched, wrote, copied, and typed reports and requests for information on some of the same topics as the Ritchie Boys did (order of battle, infrastructure, attitudes, personnel analysis, and more), just not on the same geographic areas or enemies. So, from that perspective, I am aware and familiar with the type of work these fine soldiers accomplished through their work in World War II.

Eddy traces the founding of Camp Ritchie up through World War II and beyond, illustrating it with a great amount of period photographs and diagrams. The narrative moves from the first class to be trained at Camp Ritchie, to what kind of troops trained there, through the various sections, interrogations of prisoners of war, order of battle

(the military intelligence research section), the mobile radio broadcasting company, to the counterintelligence corps of the Army, and the Office of Strategic Services.

The author does not ignore the Pacific Theater, outlining the unique talents and experiences of the Nisei soldiers, and including the Ritchie Boys' contributions to war crimes trials there and beyond. Their contribution to dealing with the end of the war and the war crimes trials is detailed and balanced.

The twenty appendices and voluminous bibliography are especially helpful and noteworthy in a book whose subject occurred over fifty years ago. Eddy's exhaustive research is present on every page. Being the third book dedicated to these overlooked heroes, it serves to bridge numerous gaps and essentially acts as a textbook, aiding researchers and readers in understanding these discreet professionals.

Jack M. Crossman is a retired Army master sergeant with more than thirty years of active and reserve service, including senior assignments in intelligence, operations, and personnel. He served in the continental United States, Germany, and Bosnia, and also served during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM with a Military Transition Team reporting to the 1st Infantry Division. After retirement, he taught at the Joint Intelligence Combat Training Center at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, for three years.

