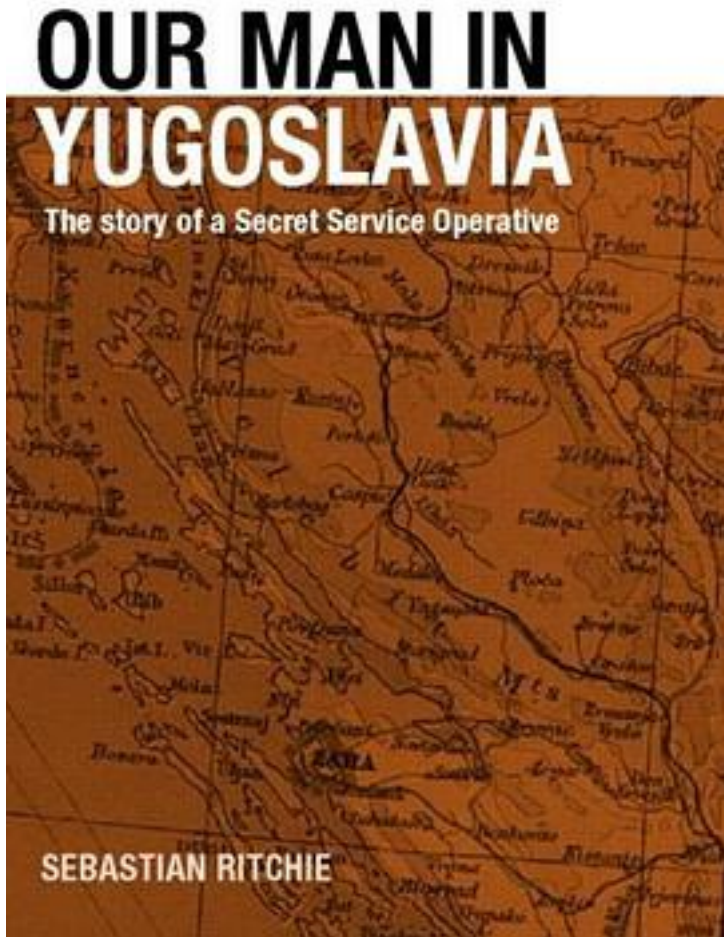


Our Man in Yugoslavia



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The British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS, also known as MI6) is one of the world's most secretive organisations. SIS is not bound by the 30 Years Rule, under which British government departments release their records to the National Archives, and consequently hardly any documented histories of its activities have been written. As a fully documented study of a Second World War SIS operative, *Our Man in Yugoslavia* is therefore unique. Its subject is Owen Reed, an army officer recruited into SIS in Cairo in the summer of 1943. Reed was parachuted in to German-occupied Croatia, where he worked successfully with Tito's Partisans and with other Allied secret organisations, such as the Special Operations Executive, gathering intelligence, arranging airborne supplies and helping escaped prisoners of war to reach freedom. But after reporting back to London in July 1944, Reed returned to Yugoslavia to find relations with the Partisans deteriorating. His erstwhile comrades now began working against him, and the intelligence he passed to the SIS came increasingly to focus on the communist takeover, rather than residual German resistance. In the spring of 1945, Reed found himself at the centre of a tense stand-off between east and west - the first great confrontation of the Cold War - before his final withdrawal from the field. Blending biography and operational history, *Our Man in Yugoslavia* tells the remarkably human story of how an unassuming citizen soldier found his way from the battlefield of Alamein into the Clandestine world of secret intelligence. A case study, illustrating the means by which SIS field operatives were recruited and trained, and describing their work in detail, this book also considers SIS activities in this important theatre more broadly and challenges many earlier assessments of their wartime role.

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