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# This Is Berlin: Radio Broadcasts From Nazi Germany



## Synopsis

By the acclaimed journalist and bestselling author of *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, the dramatic daily radio broadcasts that described the menacing steps Germany took toward World War II--just as America and the world heard them. Through his broadcasts for Edward R. Murrow on CBS Radio, William Shirer was a masterful chronicler of the events in Europe that led up to World War II. His first major Berlin broadcast was an eyewitness account of the Anschluss--the fall of Austria to Nazi Germany in 1938. Soon after, Shirer covered Neville Chamberlain's betrayal of Czechoslovakia and that country's subsequent capitulation. For the next eighteen months, Shirer's broadcasts covered German threats against Poland and the subsequent "Blitzkrieg" offensive; the staggering news of the almost unbelievable Soviet-Nazi non-aggression pact; the declaration of war by Great Britain and France; the Nazi invasions of Norway, Denmark, Holland, and Belgium; the Battle of France, the Battle of England, and the threatened German invasion across the Channel. "This Is Berlin"'s reportage offers rich insights into the very last days before total gloom descended and World War II began. A preface by noted historian John Keegan and an introduction by Shirer's daughter, Inga Shirer Dean, both serve to put Shirer's life and work into context.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In the mid-1920s, Iowa farm boy and sometime reporter William L. Shirer came to Paris, intending, like so many of his contemporaries, to become a great expatriate novelist. He found that his talent lay in the realm of fact, however, and for the next decade and a half he covered wars, revolutions, famines, and plagues in Africa, Europe, and the Middle East for a succession of newspapers. His

reporting skills landed him a post in Berlin in the mid-1930s, where he was able to see firsthand Adolf Hitler's ascent to power, an experience that illuminated the pages of Shirer's classic, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*. "This Is Berlin", a collection of Shirer's radio scripts, crackles with even greater immediacy. It describes, as they were occurring, the great events on which Shirer would reflect in his later book, among them the Nazi annexation of Austria and northwestern Czechoslovakia, the Munich Pact, the German invasion of Poland, and subsequent conquest of much of the rest of Europe. Acting as eyes and ears for his American audience, Shirer provides details that are often absent from standard histories of World War II, among them the viewpoints of the German media and ordinary citizens in the face of crisis. He also delivers revealing tidbits of information in passing, such as his list of the bestselling books in Germany at the start of World War II--at the top of which is Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*, followed by the expected anti-British and anti-Soviet screeds. Shirer's reportage makes for fascinating reading, and it provides an important new primary source for historians, as well. --Gregory McNamee

Shirer's (*The Nightmare Years*, etc.) broadcasts from Berlin during the days leading up to and during the early years of WWII, like Edward R. Murrow's from London, stand as one of the great pillars of broadcast journalism. Now collected for the first time in a single volume, they will also stand as one of the great testimonials from that chaotic period when the sides were being chosen up and no one was exactly sure what would come next. Shirer's broadcasts, written and transmitted under the noses of Nazi censors, are models of eloquence and subterfuge as Shirer's daughter, Inga Shirer Dean, points out in her preface, sarcasm and irony were one of Shirer's few means of getting an unpleasant fact past the censors) and read so well that one can imagine their power transmitted over the radio waves to an unsettled world. Produced for a civilian audience back in the U.S., Shirer's reports present the facts in a clear and direct way that explains the alliances, beliefs and concerns of the first part of the war; his broadcasts about the Hitler-Stalin alliance and his explanation of the Anschluss offer a firsthand look at history in the making with such immediacy that any reader will find it hard to put down. 16 pages photos. (Dec.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

There can be little doubt that William Shirer was one of the great journalists of the twentieth century. He was a true witness to an unfolding century and nowhere was this more than case than his observations from Nazi Germany. Unlike many historians looking back at events from a distance and trying to uncover their meanings, Shirer was a virtual participant. He lived in Germany for a number

of years, was fluent in the language and had personally met many of the key players first hand. He had attended the Nuremburg rallies, witnessed the rise of the evil of Nazism and was thus in a position to give a first hand account of the events. This he did through his daily radio reports to CBS in America. It is these reports that form the basis of "This is Berlin." "This is Berlin" can be described as history in the making. While it is true that Shirer had to comply to close censoring of his broadcasts, he was nonetheless able to convey an element of truth by the use of subtlety and nuance that often went over the head of his Nazi minders. Shirer was no Nazi dupe. Rather, he was a rigorous journalist working at the top of his trade. Shirer is a person whose works should be read by all those searching for details on the horrors of the rise and ultimate decline of the Nazi juggernaut. He was a first rate journalist and writer and this book is testimony to his abilities.

"This is Berlin" is another well-written and insightful book by the author of the monumental "The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich" and "Berlin Diary". The introduction by noted historian John Keegan puts William L. Shirer's work for CBS Radio during the war in perspective, while the preface by Shirer's daughter provides further detail and information on the newspaper correspondent and radio journalist who won fame for his unparalleled coverage of Nazi Germany during the Second World War. Having immersed himself in contemporary German life, William Shirer was America's man on the spot during the rise to power of Adolph Hitler and his Nazi Party and the war that followed. The CBS correspondent knew all of the Third Reich's senior civilian and military leaders and the insights he provided during his radio broadcasts to America as history unfolded in Europe were unparalleled. But as the war progressed, Shirer became increasingly unhappy with a Nazi government that did everything possible to first censor and later stifle altogether his broadcasts. In the end, unable to provide balanced coverage of events, he asked to return home. This book is best read in conjunction with "Berlin Diary" in which Shirer provides his comments on the war. For example, in "This is Berlin" we read his broadcasts on the British bombing of the German capital. But in "Berlin Diary" we find his excellent analysis of how a few Royal Air Force bombers managed to keep the entire population of the German city awake, bringing home the true price of war to the Third Reich and resulting in decreased output in the factories of Hitler's key city. Shirer concluded that had the British or the Allies launched a sustained and much larger bombing campaign on Berlin earlier in the war, Hitler and his Nazis might have had second thoughts about expanding the war. And perhaps German opposition to the Third Reich might have been much stronger. This tremendously interesting book is highly recommended for anyone interested in the history of Nazi Germany, World War II and the struggle of a free press to survive under a totalitarian regime.

The book is in as perfect condition as you could ask for being used. Only problem I had was I did not know of two copyrights by Easton press. This is the 2001 copyright and I wanted the 1991 copyright. Unless I missed it I did not see the ad making this fact known.

After reading his Berlin Diary and his Rise and Fall, I often wondered what his broadcasts were like. Now we have it. What a blessing. even if each broadcast was censored to some degree.

It is a classic.I came to trough it after reading The Rise an Fall of the Third Reich and others from him.Although written on things that happened many years ago, it is worth realizing how events conduced toTHAT war.Many wars were to come thereafter. History repeats itself.Mr. Shirer was a master in his job.

product exactly as described, and shipped quickly- thank you!

The fact that William Shirer was limited by the Nazis in what he could write in this book should not detract from what he has to say about events in Berlin, Germany, during the years 1938 through 1940. At times Shirer would use expressions or other methods unfamiliar to the German censors to get his point across to American readers in his diary. In each case of a German takeover, the Nazis would use the excuse of "counterattack" or to "rescue the citizens of the country" they were invading. Shirer was placed in this part of the world during a very historic period in history, and provides readers with his best efforts despite Nazi censors. Eventually his frustration at what he was allowed to report made him feel like a spokesperson for the Nazi regime, and he felt his usefulness as a reporter was over. We can always be thankful for what he has left us regarding World War II.

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