

INFAMOUS SPIES

An
Espionage
Series



MATA HARI



THE EXOTIC DANCER TURNED SPY

Margaretha Zelle (1876 -1917), better known by her stage name Mata Hari, is arguably the most infamous female spy of all time. She gained international acclaim as an exotic dancer in Paris before the French charged her with espionage and executed her for alleged crimes during World War I.

During the war, Hari was a lover and courtesan to many high-ranking allied military officers. Her close relationships with these prominent men aroused suspicion that she was gathering sensitive information and relaying it to German intelligence.

On one occasion, when interviewed by British intelligence officers, Hari claimed to be working as an agent for French military intelligence, though they would not confirm her story.

On February 13, 1917, Mata Hari was arrested in her hotel room in Paris. She was put on trial, accused of spying for Germany and consequently causing the deaths of at least 50,000 soldiers. She was found guilty and executed by firing squad at age 41.



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