



Lucie Aubrac: The French Resistance Heroine Who Outwitted the Gestapo

Siân Rees

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In May 1943, a young Frenchwoman called Lucie Aubrac engineered the escape of her husband, Raymond, from the clutches of Klaus Barbie, the feared Gestapo chief later known as the "Butcher of Lyon." When Raymond was arrested again that June, Lucie mounted a second astonishing rescue, ambushing the prison van that was transporting him. As a founding member and leader of the important French Resistance group Liberation-Sud, Lucie served as a courier, arms carrier, and saboteur who engineered these and other escape plans on behalf of her husband and other Resistance fighters.

Spirited out of France with Raymond by the RAF, Lucie arrived in London a heroine. For the postwar generation the couple embodied the spirit of "the real France": the one that resisted, and eventually expelled the Nazis. However, in 1983, Klaus Barbie made the bombshell claim that the Aubracs had become informers in 1943, betraying their comrades. The French press and the couple themselves furiously denounced this as slander, but as worrying inconsistencies were spotted in Lucie's story, doubts emerged that have never quite gone away.

Who was Lucie Aubrac? What did she really do in 1943? And was she truly the spirit of *la vraie France*, or a woman who could not resist casting herself as a heroine? Siân Rees's penetrating, even-handed account draws from letters, newspaper articles, and other archival materials, as well as several interviews, to decipher the truth behind Lucie and her husband's wartime endeavors and near fall from grace. It offers a thrilling portrait of a brave, resourceful woman who went to extraordinary lengths for love and country.

Lucie Aubrac: The French Resistance Heroine Who Outwitted the Gestapo Details

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From Reader Review Lucie Aubrac: The French Resistance Heroine Who Outwitted the Gestapo for online ebook

Pixie Kris says

A great insight into the time, and her life.

Melisende d'Outremer says

The story of a French Resistance leader and her husband who were accused by Klaus Barbie (Butcher of Lyon) as being Nazi informers.

I was left with many questions after reading this account of the wartime activities of these two that involved escape, torture, rescues. Was Lucie really a resistance hero or was the life she claimed merely a fantasy. Were she and Raymond both collaborators or was this just a malicious piece of last minute rumour-mongering by Klaus Barbie at his trial in 1983?

More compelling was reading of the lives led by Lucie and Raymond after the war, and their need to justify their wartime role even in their last years.

Stephanie Gerdes says

Really Good. Better understanding WWII and French resistance.read at same time as House of 20,000.Books. Interesting to compare.

jeffrey says

This engagingly written story of a French resistant and her husband has a title that is somewhat of a misnomer. It is focused more on the difficulties of unifying the various, mostly communist underground factions to work together against their common enemy, the Nazi occupiers and the puppet Vichy government, and less so on outwitting the Gestapo. It is interesting that even before the war ended, this fragile unity of purpose fell apart and continued to fracture as time went on.

Allyson says

I had already read Outwitting The Gestapo so aside from the final discussion about the many accusations leveled against the Aubracs, I felt I was reading a less interesting version of her autobiography. That is not completely fair to the author as her recounting was more wide ranging but it prevented me from rating it more highly.

Wendy says

In "Lucie Aubrac: The French Resistance Heroine Who Outwitted the Gestapo" which I won through Goodreads Giveaways, Siân Rees brings to life a gripping and insightful account of the life of a heroine who served as a courier and saboteur during the German occupation in an attempt to help resist and expel the Nazis. In 1943 after her husband Raymond Aubrac a senior officer in the Resistance's "Secret Army" is imprisoned and brutally interrogated Lucie devises a crafty rescue plan only to be expelled twice from Klaus Barbie "the Butcher of Lyon's", office before initiating an explosive rescue after ambushing the prison van. With Raymond wounded physically as well as emotionally, their young son whisked away from under the noses of the Gestapo who would use him as a pawn, Lucie and her family stay hidden until the RAF sweeps them away to England where they continue the fight.

Set in France after a crippling defeat at the Maginot Line splits the nation in two, the country is faced with an Occupied Zone, and a Free Zone where eighty-four Marshal Pétain a fascist puppet has set up his government in Vichy. Siân Rees's novel illustrates the dark years of a France struggling with deprivation, financial problems and the persecution of Jews their hope kept alive with the rise of the Resistance and the optimism in a newspaper carried by women past German soldiers in baby carriages. Well-researched from letters, newspaper articles, historical documents and interviews the author searches for the truth about a heroine who years later would have her name and deeds besmirched. because of inconsistencies in her story. This historical account like Siân Rees's writing style flows smoothly and effortlessly and reads like a fictional story exemplifying Lucie's patriotism, and daring, her spirit of resistance and love of family.

Lucie Aubrac (aka Lucie Samuel) who yearned to graduate from Sorbonne University and joined a Communist Youth group wanting social reform and a redistribution of resources but not a totalitarian state is a determined, strong-willed and enthusiastic young woman. Her younger years defined by movement, parental absence and hardship, she tends to fabricate details about her early life as she grows older. Rebellious, unpredictable, excitable and bold, it is these characteristics that not only lead her into danger, but sparks her heroism and wins the hearts of her friends in the Resistance. In contrast Raymond Aubrac (aka Samuel) born into the wealth of a Jewish merchant family is thoughtful, engaging, cool and temperate. It is these traits that make him invaluable in the Resistance Movement and a help in the reconstruction process after the war.

"Lucie Aubrac: The French Resistance Heroine Who Outwitted the Gestapo" is a thrilling portrait of a fearless and brave woman who dearly loved her husband, family and country and would do anything to protect them. I thoroughly enjoyed and highly recommend it.

Judy Gacek says

Well written. Sheds light on the different factions of the resistance in France during WWII and the part the Aubrac's played in fighting the Germans.

Nancy Reynolds says

Very factual book about Lucie and her husband - and their lives and times with the French Resistance. It was very informative.

Kim says

I received this book from a GoodReads giveaway. I love reading about WWII, this is a good book, well written but not an easy read.
