



## Is Paris Burning?

By larry collins

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This is the famous, dramatic story of the Allied liberation of Paris. *Is Paris Burning?* reconstructs the network of fateful events that heralded one of the most dramatic episodes of our time. "Is Paris burning" screams the shrill voice of Adolf Hitler. At that moment, noon on August 25, 1944, advance elements of General Leclerc's Free French, supported by American infantry, were streaming across the bridges of the Seine. Their arrival was the climax of an extraordinary and fateful interplay of circumstances that saved the city, its population and its priceless treasures from Hitler's vengeful sentence of destruction and death. Few days in history have witnessed an emotional outpouring as overwhelming as that which accompanied the liberation of Paris. Yet few men then realized, or even now comprehend, the miracle that had occurred; how narrowly all Paris had escaped being reduced to rubble and ashes. The whole story of that miracle is told for the 1st time here. It encompasses the explosion of events that involved Prussian generals and schoolboys of the Resistance, General de Gaulle impatiently forcing the hand of his reluctant American allies while he himself was desperately maneuvering to gain control of the French underground, and the ordinary people of Paris rising to throw off the Nazi occupation as an enraged Hitler vowed to leave the city "nothing but a field of ruins". *Is Paris Burning?* is the product of nearly 3 years of research, during which the authors studied hundreds of documents, transcripts of Resistance radio messages, 20-yr. old cables, microfilms of German military records seized after the war, the official archives of SHAEF, and the files of secret correspondence between de Gaulle, Churchill, Roosevelt, and Eisenhower. *Is Paris Burning?* interweaves the personal experiences of those who were in the forefront of the melee and those who were behind the scenes and brings vividly to life the impassioned days when Paris struggled for her life.

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## **Is Paris Burning? By larry collins Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #474857 in Books
- Published on: 1965
- Number of items: 1
- Binding: Hardcover

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