

Mata Hari Was Ingalls' Model

Flier Says She Heiled Adolf to Become Female Spy

By KENNETH G. CRAWFORD

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 13.—Laura Ingalls, more-than-35, chic and garrulous, entered here yesterday one of the strangest defenses ever heard in a Federal Court. Fixing 10 men and two women of the jury with wide blue eyes, she told them that she had a vivid imagination and always wanted to be a Mata Hari instead of a flier.

To achieve this ambition, she wrote Hitler-heiling letters to Hans Thomsen, the German Charge d'Affairs in Washington, accepted money and instructions from Thomsen's subordinates and toured the country making isolationist speeches for America First. Her sole purpose, she testified, was to worm her way into the confidence of the Germans so she could expose their subversive acts.

She went to Thomsen, she said, only after J. Edgar Hoover of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had rejected her offer to serve as a secret agent. Hoover explained to her in a letter that his agency hired no women for undercover work.

Animated Recital

Miss Ingalls's recital of her adventures as an employe of the Germans was animated and discursive. In fact, several times Judge James W. Morris warned her against straying from the subject under discussion—whether she was a German agent or merely a free-lance international spy working for the welfare of the U. S. A.

Government counsel had contended that this didn't make any difference since she had worked for the Germans without registering as their agent with the State Dept., but Morris had ruled testimony concerning her motives pertinent.

Whatever her motives, Miss Ingalls made it plain that she was still anti-British and isolationist. She told the jury that Lindbergh was right in scoffing at the possibility of effective air attacks on the mainland of the U. S. A. In speaking of her fear of foreign propaganda, she explained that she was particularly disturbed by British propaganda. She said she still thought it was "wonderful what Hitler has done for the German people."

Some One Like Hitler

She did not dispute most of the testimony of Government witnesses, but denied that she had ever said "we should have a Hitler in this country." What she might have said, she conceded, was that "we ought to have some one like Hitler or Churchill who cared as much about Americans as Hitler and Churchill care about Germans and Englishmen." She doubted, too, whether she had ever called the President "that stupid man in Washington."