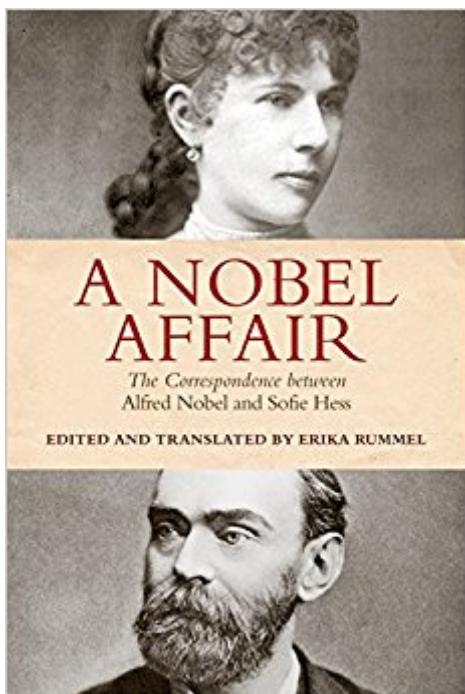


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A Nobel Affair: The Correspondence Between Alfred Nobel And Sofie Hess



Synopsis

Alfred Nobel made his name as an inventor and successful entrepreneur and left a legacy as a philanthropist and promoter of learning and social progress. The correspondence between Nobel and his Viennese mistress, Sofie Hess, shines a light on his private life and reveals a personality that differs significantly from his public image. The letters show him as a hypochondriac and workaholic and as a paranoid, jealous, and patriarchal lover. Indeed, the relationship between the aging Alfred Nobel and the carefree, spendthrift Sofie Hess will strike readers as dysfunctional and worthy of Freudian analysis. Erika Rummelâ™s masterful translation and annotations reveal the value of the letters as commentary on 19th century social mores: the concept of honour and reputation, the life of a "kept" woman, the prevalence of antisemitism, the importance of spas as health resorts and entertainment centres, the position of single mothers, and more generally the material culture of a rich bourgeois gentleman. *A Nobel Affair* is the first translation into English of the complete correspondence between Alfred Nobel and Sofie Hess.

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"A Nobel Affair is a gripping read and an excellent source for understanding Alfred Nobelâ™s life and character as well as his time. It is a rich source for scholars interested in the history of science, technology and medicine, and of womenâ™s history." (Annette Lykknes, Associate Professor, Norwegian University of Science and Technology)

Erika Rummel is a professor emerita in the Department of History at Wilfrid Laurier University.

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