

“The Daisies Will Bloom Tonight”: Virginia Hall, American Spy
and Saboteur’s Communication Pivotal to Allied Victory in
WWII

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I was first introduced to Virginia Hall when reading about the women of the Special Operations Executive (SOE). I was truly amazed by her accomplishments as a spy in France during WWII. This seemed to be a perfect match for this year's theme, Communication in History: the Key to Understanding, as Hall's actions directly impacted needs for both communication to help London understand what was happening in France and facilitated communication between French resistance groups and the Allies to understand shared goals for victory. The plethora of methods of communication Hall utilized only solidified my conviction that Hall embodied this year's theme.

After gaining background knowledge on Hall, I delved deeper into many resources pertaining to her. I began by discovering various biographies that helped me learn about Hall's specific accomplishments and their significance. Although the majority of records pertaining to Hall weren't digitized, the French, British, and American National Archives all contributed to furthering the amount of primary sources at my disposal. To add, the British Imperial War Museums helped me discover photographs that provided imagery to the information I was reading about. Furthermore, after speaking with Judith L. Pearson to gain context on Hall's actions, I was given permission to use photographs in her possession. By utilizing a wide variety of primary and secondary sources, I was able to gain a fuller understanding of the significance of Virginia's work.

I chose to present my research as a website to take full advantage of the many unique features the website category provides. Within my project, I strived to incorporate many of the quotes and primary sources (documents, newspapers, etc.) that display the full breadth of methods of communication Virginia used. The title of my website is derived from codes Hall

utilized to communicate. Using the various design features of NHDWebCentral, I created a website featuring interactive elements to engagingly display my research.

Throughout WWII, American Virginia Hall acted as an American spy and saboteur to communicate intelligence from behind enemy lines in France. Hall quickly became one of the first agents in France and established networks of informants despite doubts about her abilities. By establishing government contacts, information was funneled back to London that helped officials understand the magnitude of Nazi actions in France. The various methods of communication she utilized all helped defeat the Nazis and paved a way for an Allied counter-invasion.

The impact of Hall's work is evident through Allied victory in France in 1944. The enormity of her contributions to the war is evident through the many accolades she earned. Hall received the French Croix de Guerre, became an honorary Member of the Order of the British Empire, and earned the American Distinguished Service Cross. Yet as one of the first female members of both America's first intelligence agency, the OSS, and the Central Intelligence Agency, Hall blazed the trail for others that followed her. The magnitude of Hall's contributions both to the intelligence community and the Allies has begun to arise in recent years.