

**WESTERN EUROPE 1939-1945: RESISTANCE AND SOE**

These document extracts relate to the citation of SOE agent Christine Granville. A citation was a statement recommending a person for a medal for bravery

Catalogue ref: HS 9/612

**Extract a**

Citation in respect of				Date Recommendation passed		Army Form W. 3121.
MISS MARY CHRISTINE GRANVILLE				forward		
of I.S.S.U.6 Special Ops (Med)				Received	Passed	
Division				SO(M)		
				AFHQ		Relieve
Schedule No.	Unit	Reptl No.	Rank & Name	Action for which commended	Recommended by	Honour or Reward
-	I.S.S.U.6	-	Miss Mary Christine GRANVILLE	<p>Miss Mary Christine Granville is a Polish patriot of high integrity who has been employed by this organization for four years, much of the time on work of the most dangerous nature inside occupied Europe. During this time her work has been not short of remarkable and of the greatest value to the Allied cause. She is now in the process of becoming a British subject and of, in fact, being commissioned into the W.A.A.F.</p> <p>On the night of the 6th/7th of July she was infiltrated into Southern France by parachute to act as liaison officer to the chief of the area, a British Field Officer working with the Maquis. She was also commissioned in view of her exceptional language qualifications and experience in such matters, to work on the possibilities of the subversion of satellite enemy troops. This last field had not previously been exploited by this organization in France.</p> <p>She started work immediately and within a week reported that she had done the preparatory work on the subversion of Polish troops in the German Army, and that the possibilities were considerable. On the 17th July, her Area Commander reported that her work with these troops was already proving so widespread that it was essential to send another officer to help her.</p>	<p><i>W. Stawell</i> by <i>W.A.M. STAWELL</i> C.B.E., M.C. Maj. Gen. SO(M)</p>	<p><del>George Cross</del> C.B.E. (Brave G.M.)</p>

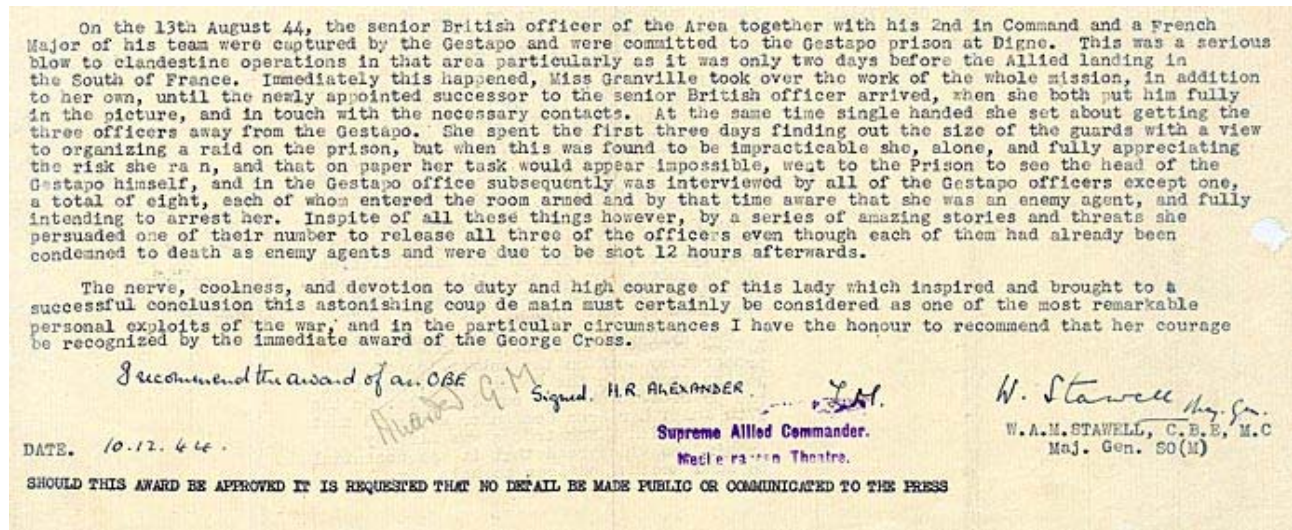
**Extract b**

When the invasion started she remained in the Vercors during the whole of the battle for the plateau and finally escaped through the lines with the French General commanding F.F.I. South Eastern France, on the day that it fell. During the whole of this time she continued with her work on satellite troops and on her various liaison duties, and in fact was so effective that she was able to report that the Polish troops at Briancon would be prepared to surrender to the Maquis if certain conditions were fulfilled.

From the Vercors, she was sent to Col de Larche on the Italian frontier where she personally managed to effect an important liaison, which had not previously been successful, with Col Marzalani of the Italian Maquis. Later she penetrated into Northern Italy where she remained on another important liaison mission, often under fire, for the next two weeks.

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**Extract c**



**What is this source?**

These documents come from the personal file of SOE agent, Christine Granville. The extracts are part of her citation, a document recommending the award of a medal for her work in the war. You can also find her photograph in the source box.

Christine Granville was actually cited for medals on other occasions for her work in Poland.

**What's the background to this source?**

Granville was an agent for the Special Operations Executive (SOE). Her name was actually Kristina Gizycka and she was Polish. She escaped the occupation of Poland by Germany. She was brave, intelligent and spoke several languages. This made her an ideal SOE agent. She worked in Poland, France, Italy and North Africa as a British agent.

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was anxious in the early 1940s that Germany was able to use the resources and manpower of the lands it had conquered for its war effort. He was also aware that there were resistance movements in the countries that Germany had occupied. The aim of the SOE was to try and disrupt Germany's use of its conquered lands and to help resistance movements.

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**It's worth knowing that...**

Christine also worked in Hungary and Turkey as a British agent. In 1941 she was arrested and interrogated. She escaped but the Gestapo now had a photograph of her and were looking for her. Despite this, she returned to Poland to carry out her work.

At the end of the war she was told by British intelligence that they no longer had any use for her, and she felt bitter about this. She returned to Poland and started working for the Polish intelligence agencies.

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**What do we learn about SOE from this source?**

1. Study **extracts a-c**. Make a list of Christine's achievements.
2. Which qualities or qualifications would have helped her most to carry out this work successfully?
3. A citation is a recommendation for a medal. If you were the Prime Minister would you have awarded Christine the medal?
4. Would it be going too far to say that Christine was the perfect SOE agent?