

A mission for "Felix" and the Gestapo attempt to locate "Cat" transmitting

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Courtesy of the [Imperial War Museum](#), London.

Extract from a film called "Now It Can Be Told" produced by the RAF Film Production Unit for the British Government in 1946 about the work of British agents during the war.

Transcript

Male agent: For my next operation I used another field with a new reception committee. I tried the "Eureka" this time and it worked very well. The aircraft, fitted with special apparatus, picked up our radar waves ten minutes before we heard the engines. The navigator had to watch a green line that moved horizontally across a dial, this line showed him at once when he wondered off course. All he had to do was to keep it in the middle. It was a grand feeling seeing the stores dropping to us. It meant we could soon begin our sabotage activity. It wasn't only explosives we needed, it was just as important to have arms for protection.

We knew the Germans had wireless direction finding stations in France. Once they realised an operator was working within a certain area, they sent out small listening vans. Finally, they were able to place a transmitter to within a few hundred yards, then, they'd watch until they were sure of the actual room. This meant the operator had to be continually on the move. "Cat" hadn't been working in the same room for very long, so perhaps we were a little too confident.

There are shots of German police officers listening to transmissions.

Subtitles: Send two men to Place Carnot - they're transmitting now.

There is sound of loud piano music.

Two men walk towards "Cat's" building and knock on the door of her apartment. They ask her to show her papers. They search the apartment, but find nothing and leave.

Female agent: Luckily, I had made an arrangement with the girl who lived in the house opposite to keep a sharp lookout when my curtains were drawn. That meant I was transmitting or receiving. So when I'd heard a loud thumping on her piano, the danger signal, I was all prepared to receive those unwelcome visitors.

WESTERN EUROPE 1939–1945: RESISTANCE AND SOE

What is this source?

This film is a reconstruction showing the work of men and women who belonged to the Special Operations Executive in WW2. The SOE was set up to carry out missions in enemy territory. British agents working with the French Resistance are shown disrupting enemy communications in preparation for the Normandy landings. The film was produced in 1946 by the RAF Film Production Unit and was paid for by the Central Office of Information.

What's the background to this source?

When the Germans overran most of Europe in 1939–40 there were still many people in the occupied lands who were prepared to resist them. The job of the SOE was to locate people who could resist the Germans and also send agents in to help the resistance movements.

Resistance took many forms. Many resistance workers focused on collecting information about German activities, troop movements and weapon sites. Some took part in sabotage operations, destroying important factories and rail links. It was a very dangerous activity. Resisters risked being tortured and executed. There were often reprisals for acts of resistance as well.

It's worth knowing that...

Many of the 'British' agents were not British! Large numbers of people fled from the German advance in the early stages of the war and ended up in Britain. Some of these were recruited as agents to be sent back to their own countries because they spoke the language, they were familiar with those countries and they wanted to help their country.

The SOE was one of many organisations that carried out operations behind enemy lines. The SOE and other agencies also had to work closely with the RAF and Royal Navy, because agents were usually dropped in from planes or submarines.

What do we learn about SOE agents from this source

1. What training and equipment were they given?
2. What tasks did they carry as agents working in occupied France?
3. What type of people carried out this work?

Use this outline to plan your poster.