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PRAISE FOR *An American Heroine in the French Resistance*

“A sharply etched and moving story of love, companionship, commitment and sacrifice, which takes us on a journey from Dayton, Ohio, to Paris, Brittany and the women's concentration camp of Ravensbruck. This beautifully edited diary and memoir throw an original light on the French Resistance.” —Robert Gildea, author of *Marianne in Chains: In Search of the German Occupation, 1940–1945*

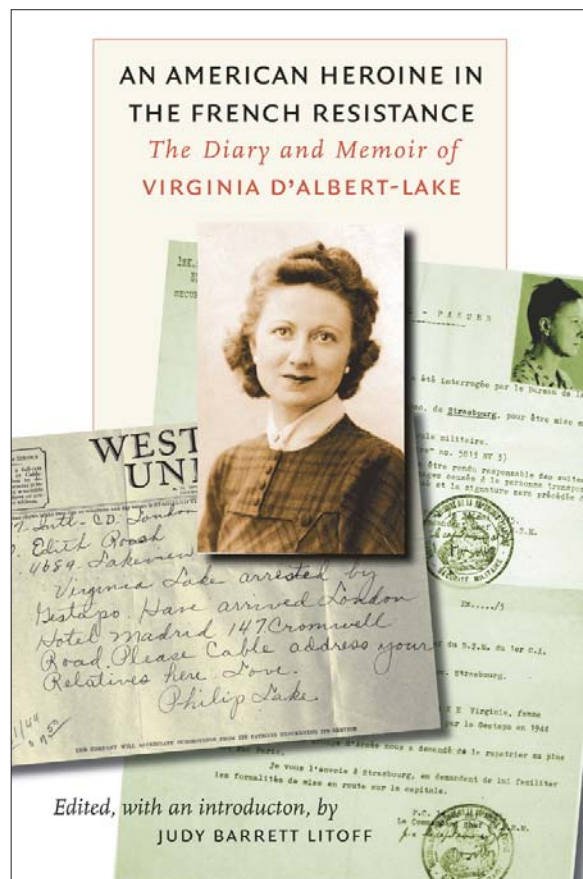
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The Celebration of a Forgotten Heroine

New York — *An American Heroine in the French Resistance: The Diary and Memoir of Virginia D'Albert-Lake* by Judy Barrett Litoff (Fordham University Press, 0-8232-2581-X, March 27, 2006, \$29.95, Cloth) captures the compassion and toughness of a nearly forgotten heroine, providing an invaluable record of the workings of the Resistance by one of the very few American women who participated in it.

Born in Ohio and raised in Florida, Virginia Roush fell in love with Philippe d'Albert-Lake during a visit to France in 1936; they married soon after. In 1943, they joined the Resistance. Defying gender stereotypes, Virginia put her life in jeopardy as she sheltered downed airmen. She was one of thousands who risked their lives saving downed airmen along the Comet escape line that stretched from Belgium to Gibraltar. What distinguished Virginia from other resisters was that she was an American citizen who had the option to return to the safety of her native country. Yet she chose to remain in France where her dangerous work nearly cost her life.



On June 12, 1944, deep in the forests of France, Germans arrested d'Albert-Lake and an Allied airman she was leading to safety. D'Albert-Lake's work in the Resistance was over—she would spend the next eleven months as a prisoner of war, much of it in the notorious Ravensbrück concentration camp for women, where she almost died.

However, even as a prisoner of war she refused to reveal secrets and saved many lives. When Free French and Allied forces finally liberated her in 1945, she weighed 76 pounds, 50 pounds under her normal weight. After the war, Virginia stayed in France with Philippe, receiving awards that included the Légion d'Honneur and the Medal of Honor. She died in 1997.

Judy Barrett Litoff brings together two rare documents in this unique book—Virginia's diary of wartime France until her capture in 1944 and her prison memoir written immediately after the war. Masterfully edited, Litoff recounts the remarkable story of an ordinary American woman's heroism in the French Resistance.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Judy Barrett Litoff's books include *We're in this War Too: World War II Letters from American Women in Uniform* and, from Fordham, *Fighting Fascism in Europe: The World War II Letters of an American Veteran of the Spanish Civil War*. She is Professor of History at Bryant University.

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AN AMERICAN HEROINE IN THE FRENCH RESISTANCE: THE DIARY AND MEMOIR OF VIRGINIA D'ALBERT-LAKE

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"The wonderfully readable diary and memoir of Virginia d'Albert-Lake, a witty, high-spirited woman who chose to remain in France with her French husband during World War II. Illuminating everyday life in Occupied France, this splendid book vividly evokes the trajectory of a fun-loving young wife who found deep reserves of strength and moral courage amid the hazards of war. Highly recommended."—Paul Boyer, Editor in Chief, *The Oxford Companion to United States History* and author of *Promises to Keep: The United States Since World War II*

"Virginia d'Albert-Lake highlights both political crises and personal catastrophes that left France in chaos and almost took her life. This meticulously edited and highly readable account illuminates her own struggle and France's larger struggle to survive in a terrible time."—Allan M. Winkler, Miami University, author of *Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the Making of Modern America*

"Arrested shortly after D-Day in 1944, d'Albert-Lake becomes a German prisoner of war, a brutal ordeal her memoir hauntingly details. Despite her unassuming tone, d'Albert-Lake emerges from these pages as a woman of keen intelligence and exceptional courage. Her story of one woman's very unusual war makes for compelling reading."—Lynn Dumenil, author of *The Modern Temper: American Culture and Society in the 1920s* and coauthor of *Through Women's Eyes: An American History*

"A sharply etched and moving story of love, companionship, commitment and sacrifice, which takes us on a journey from Dayton, Ohio, to Paris, Brittany and the women's concentration camp of Ravensbruck. This beautifully edited diary and memoir throw an original light on the French Resistance."—Robert Gildea, author of *Marianne in Chains: In Search of the German Occupation, 1940–1945*

"Judy Litoff has rescued the unknown story of an American heroine in Occupied France. Days before Paris was liberated d'Albert-Lake was captured by the Nazis. She miraculously came home and her memoir tells the spellbinding story."—D'Ann Campbell, author of *Women at War With America: Private Lives in a Patriotic Era* and co-editor of *America at War*

"It was a privilege to know Virginia d'Albert-Lake. When we were with her during the war, she gave all whom she sheltered hope and belief that they would get back to England. When she herself was faced with all the terror and fear of being incarcerated in a concentration camp, she showed unbelievable courage and fortitude. With the publication of *An American Heroine in the French Resistance*, I hope that many Americans will come to know and honor this remarkable lady."—Flight Lieutenant Terence Bolter, RAF, downed British airman, Distinguished Flying Cross

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