

Haw-Haw, Lord Biography

Haw-Haw, Lord

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Biography

The Nazi propaganda broadcaster known as Lord Haw-Haw was one of several individuals employed by the Axis powers to demoralize Allied soldiers. Lord Haw-Haw, so called because of his drawling, exaggerated British accent, worked for the Nazis in Berlin from 1938 until World War II ended in 1945. William Joyce was born in New York in 1906, the son of a naturalized American. Most of his childhood and young adulthood, however, was spent in Britain and Ireland. In the 1930s he joined the British fascists, led by Sir Oswald Mosley; he also co-founded Britain's National Socialist League. In 1938 he traveled to Germany to offer his services as a propagandist.

For the next seven years Haw-Haw's broadcasts, along with those of Axis Sally and Tokyo Rose, could be heard over British airwaves. More often than not their languid delivery elicited more amusement than anything else, but he was still a reviled figure. It was his distinctive voice that led to his arrest after the war ended in May of 1945; a British soldier heard him in a store asking for a pack of cigarettes. Because Joyce had obtained a British passport before heading to Germany, he was tried for treason in London as a British subject and hanged early in 1946.