



The Leroy Henry Case:

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ALLIED RELATIONS IN GREAT BRITAIN, 1944



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In May 1944, just days before the D-Day invasion, an African-American soldier, Leroy Henry, was accused of raping a British woman in Bath.

Before the case against Henry was resolved in an acquittal, it became an international cause célèbre and an embarrassing scandal for the U.S. military. The British press first brought the case to light, attacking the U.S. military for a miscarriage

of justice. British civilians in the Bath region then took up Henry's cause, running a grassroots petition campaign, which produced 33,000 signatures for Henry's reprieve. The case then caught the attention of the NAACP an ocean away in New York City.

The Henry case drew in diplomats, army officers, government officials, civilians, and human rights activists on both sides of the Atlantic. In

this way, the controversy reveals just how much race and sexuality were implicated in allied power relations and how central they were to the conduct of the war in Western Europe.

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