



INTERNATIONAL
TENNIS HALL OF FAME

Women and Tennis

Lesson 1: Alice Marble and Helen Hull Jacobs

Unit Overview: As students work through the activities in this unit they will be introduced to some important women in tennis. They will explore, through varied learning experiences, these women's significance to the game of tennis, but more importantly their impact on the landscape of history. The activities that accompany this unit are geared towards the students' multiple intelligences and will provide academic challenges at multiple levels of cognitive complexity while satisfying the goal of working towards mastery of grade appropriate common core standards of *Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects*.

Objectives:

Students will be able to-

- Form an understanding of the contribution that Alice Marble and Helen Hull Jacobs made to their sport in regards to the game of tennis and as women athletes in general.
- Gain background knowledge through vocabulary activities and comprehension activities (such as guided questioning and using appropriate graphic organizers) about World War II and how Marble and Jacobs contributed to this time in history.
- Demonstrate what they have learned about Marble and Jacobs, their significance to the game, and their place in history by successfully completing guided questioning activities, group organizers, and by taking part in meaningful classroom discussions.

Lesson Time Required: One hour or less



Hall of Famer Alice Marble

A woman of unmistakable glamour and athleticism, the striking Marble, wearing her familiar sun visor, altered the face of the women's game. She demonstrated to the skeptics that it was indeed possible for a woman to master an aggressive, net-rushing style of play. She moved relentlessly through the 1939 and 1940 seasons without losing a singles match. Marble took the women's game to another level with groundbreaking methodology. For more information visit [Alice Marble](#) on the International Tennis Hall of Fame website.



Hall of Famer Helen Hull Jacobs

Often overshadowed by her storied rival Helen Wills but seldom if ever losing faith in her own capabilities, Jacobs made the most of her opportunities and came away with some high honors. For four years in a row, from 1932-1935, she was the singles victor at her native U.S. Championships. In 1936, she was victorious at Wimbledon. Although her game did not feature any dazzling strengths and her ground game was limited, she was highly competent at the net. Moreover, she was a first-rate match player. For more information visit [Helen Hull Jacobs](#) on the International Tennis Hall of Fame website.

Alice Marble Objects on Display in the Museum



U.S. National Women's Singles Championship Trophy, 1940

Black, Starr & Frost (American)

For the third consecutive year Alice Marble won the U.S. National Women's Singles Championships. This was Marble's last major title before she turned professional.

Gift of Alice Marble, 1964

64.1

Location: Grand Staircase, Case 3



U.S. National Mixed Doubles Championship Challenge Trophy, 1926-1945

Black, Starr & Frost (American)

This trophy was retired in 1945 by Margaret Osborne duPont and Bill Talbert after their third consecutive win. Many other Hall of Famers won this championship and are recognized on this trophy. They include: Kitty McKane, Elizabeth Ryan, Jean Borotra, Henri Cochet, Helen Wills, Betty Nuthall, George Lott, Wilmer Allison, Sarah Palfrey, Fred Perry, Ellsworth Vines, Helen Jacobs, Alice Marble, Gene Mako, Don Budge, Harry Hopman, Bobby Riggs, Jack Kramer, Louise Brough, and Ted Schroeder.

Gift of Margaret Osborne duPont, 1991

91.32.2

Location: Grand Staircase, Case 4



U.S. National Mixed Doubles Championship Trophy, 1938

Black, Starr & Frost (American)

The top-ranked American players Alice Marble and Don Budge teamed up in mixed doubles and soundly defeated the Australian team of Thelma Coyne Long and John Bromwich 6-1, 6-2.

Gift of the Friends of Don Budge, 1998

98.70.12a&b

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Tours, 1930s Case



***Life Magazine* featuring Alice Marble**

Time Inc. (American)

August 28, 1939

After falling to Helen Hull Jacobs in the second round of the 1938 Wimbledon Championships, Marble compiled a remarkable winning streak, winning the final 18 tournaments and 111 matches of her amateur career.

Gift of Mark S. Young II, 1995

95.23

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Tours, 1940s & 1950s Case



Alice Marble-Don Budge Professional Tennis Tour Program, 1941

Signed to the tour by promoter Jack Harris, Alice Marble joined Mary Hardwick, Don Budge and Bill Tilden for approximately 60 matches over five months throughout the United States, Canada, Cuba, and the British West Indies.

Gift of Margaret Osborne duPont, 2000

PUB.1941.7

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Tours, Pro Tours Case



Tennis Themed Scarf, ca. 1975

Estate of Alice Marble, 1991

91.14.45

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Culture, Accessories Case

Helen Hull Jacobs Objects on Display in the Museum:



Seabright Lawn Tennis & Cricket Club Women's Singles Championship Challenge Trophy, 1924-1932

Reed & Barton (American)

This trophy was first presented to Mary K. Browne in 1924 and was retired by Helen Hull Jacobs following her third win in 1932 (she also won in 1928 and 1929).

Bequest of the Estate of Helen Hull Jacobs, 1998

98.3.128

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Tours, 1920s Case



Helen Hull Jacobs's Player Badge for Wimbledon, 1937

All England Lawn Tennis Club (British)

Jacobs was defeated by eventual champion Dorothy Round 6-4, 6-2 in the quarterfinals of the ladies' singles championship.

Bequest of the Estate of Helen Hull Jacobs, 1998

98.3.15

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Tours, 1930s Case



Dreadnought Driver Tennis Racquet used by Helen Hull Jacobs, late 1920s

Harry C. Lee Co. (American)

Helen Hull Jacobs, who had great success as a junior player, used this racquet early in her junior career.

Gift of Emily Bingham, 2009

2009.49.5

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Tours, 1930s Case



Helen Hull Jacobs

Ida Frances Laidman, A.R.M.S. (British, 1877-1962)

Watercolor

ca. 1936

ITHF&M Acquisition, 2002

2002.43.2

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Tours, 1930s Case



U.S. National Women's Doubles Challenge Trophy, 1923-1935

Black, Starr & Frost (American)

Helen Hull Jacobs and Sarah Palfrey retired this cup with their third U.S. National Women's Doubles Championship in 1935 over the team of Carolin Babcock and Dorothy Andrus 6-4, 6-2.

Bequest of the Estate of Helen Hull Jacobs, 1998

98.3.114

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Tours, 1930s Case



Wightman Cup presented to Helen Hull Jacobs, 1932

unmarked

Bequest of the Estate of Helen Hull Jacobs, 1998

98.3.89

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Tours, Wightman Cup Case



Postcard showing the American team receiving their miniature Wightman Cup trophies, 1936

The American team of Carolin Babcock, Marjorie Gladman Van Ryn, Sarah Palfrey, and Helen Hull Jacobs defeated the British team 4-to-3 at the All England Club, in Wimbledon, England.

Bequest of the Estate of Helen Hull Jacobs, 1998

98.3.62

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Tours, Wightman Cup Case



Helen Hull Jacobs Military Identification Tag and Bracelet, 1943

United States Navy and Black, Starr & Frost/Gorham (American)

Helen Hull Jacobs, who enlisted as a Lieutenant in the United States Navy, served many different duties as part of the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) and the U.S. Navy Personnel Separation unit in New York.

Bequest of the Estate of Helen Hull Jacobs, 1998

98.3.102 and 98.3.106

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Tours, WWII and Olympics Case



Crossword Puzzle, February 17, 1995

New York Times (American)

Crossword puzzle clues and answers often make reference to athletes. Helen Hull Jacobs, a tennis champion from the 1930s, surely had an easy time completing this puzzle, as she was one of the answers!

Bequest of the Estate of Helen Hull Jacobs, 1998

98.3.100

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Culture, Games Case



Cartoon Drawing featuring Helen Hull Jacobs, 1934

Tom Webster (British, 1886-1962)

Webster was a *Daily Mail* cartoonist and caricaturist specializing in sporting cartoons.

Bequest of the Estate of Helen Hull Jacobs, 1998

98.3.141

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Culture, Fashion Case



Shirt and Shorts worn by Helen Hull Jacobs, ca. 1933

unknown maker

In 1933, Jacobs broke tradition and became the first woman to sport shorts, rather than a dress or skirt, on the international tennis stage.

Gift of Emily Bingham, 2009

2009.49.2 and 2009.49.3

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Culture, Fashion Case



Lawn Tennis Shoes with Spikes Worn by Helen Hull Jacobs, ca. 1935

unknown maker

Gift of Margaret Osborne duPont, 1974

74.9.2a&b

Location: Area 2: Tennis & Culture, Accessories Case

Possible Sources:

- *Changing the Game: The stories of tennis champions Alice Marble and Althea Gibson* by Sue Davidson
- *Beyond the Game: An autobiography* by Helen Hull Jacobs

Materials Needed:

- Vocabulary Builder #1
- Text “Meet Women’s Wimbledon Champion who was also a Spy”
- Text “Helen Jacobs, Women’s Tennis Champion in the 1930s, Dies at 88”
- 5-1-3 Graphic Organizer (Exceed/Meet Expectations)
- Venn Diagram (Partially/Not Yet Met Expectations)

Vocabulary:

- **WWII-** (n.) a global war that lasted from 1939-1945, although related conflicts began earlier. It involved the vast majority of the world's nations—including all of the great powers—eventually forming two opposing military alliances: the Allies and the Axis.
- **Competitor-** (n.) an organization or country that is engaged in commercial or economic competition with others; a person who takes part in an athletic contest
- **Spy-** (n.) a person who secretly collects and reports information on the activities, movements, and plans of an enemy or works for the competitor. (v.) work for a government or other organization by secretly collecting information about his enemies or competitors.

Common Core Standards:

Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects:

- **Key ideas and details**
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.3 Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).
- **Craft and Structure**
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
 - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.5 Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
 - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6 Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).
- **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:**
 - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
 - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.8 Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
 - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.9 Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.
- **Research to Build and Present Knowledge**
 - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.
 - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources
 - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Lesson & Activity

Teaching/Model

1. Vocabulary Builder: Each student will receive a Vocabulary Builder graphic organizer. The teacher will read each word and ask the students to fill in bubble 1 if they have never heard the word before, bubble 2 if they have heard the word but are unsure of the definition, or bubble 3 if they know the word and can give the definition and use it in a sentence.
2. The teacher will work collaboratively with the students to come up with a working definition of the words on the graphic organizer and a sentence using the words as they pertain to the lesson at hand.
3. ****Students who exceed or meet expectations:**
 - a. The students will be broken into groups of three and will independently (or in groups of two or three) read either “Meet Women’s Wimbledon Champion Who Was a Spy” or “Helen Jacobs, Tennis Champion in the 1930s, Dies at 88.”
 - b. The students will then follow the directions to fill out the 5-3-1 graphic organizer using the text that they read to gather factual information and determine importance.
 - c. The teacher will then ask volunteers to share what their “most important word” was and to provide evidence from their text to support why they chose this word.
 - d. Based on the discussions students will leave the classroom with the understanding of who Alice Marble and Helen Hull Jacobs were in regards to tennis and their connection to WWII.
4. ****Students who partially meet or did not yet meet expectations:**
 - a. Students will follow along quietly with their own copies as the teacher reads aloud to the class the two articles above.
 - b. Students will receive a blank Venn diagram. The teacher will project the Venn diagram and with the students complete the Venn diagram comparing and contrasting factual information about Alice Marble and Helen Hull Jacobs based on the articles read.
 - c. Based on the completion of the Venn diagram students will leave the classroom with an understanding of who Alice Marble and Helen Hull Jacobs were in regards to tennis and their connection to WWII.

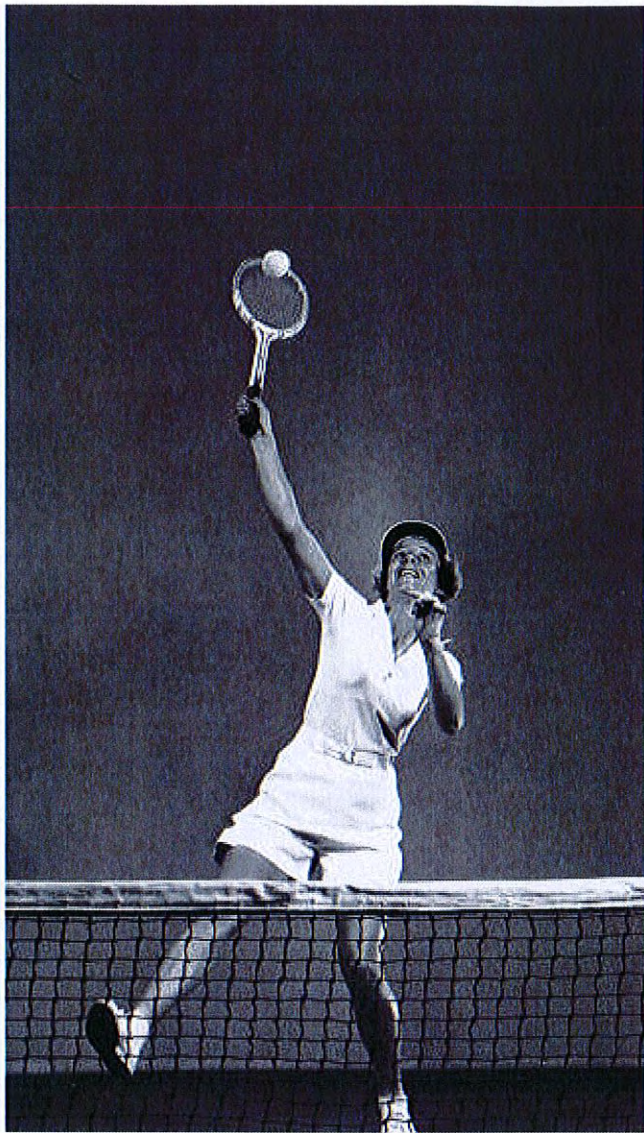
Vocabulary Builder #1

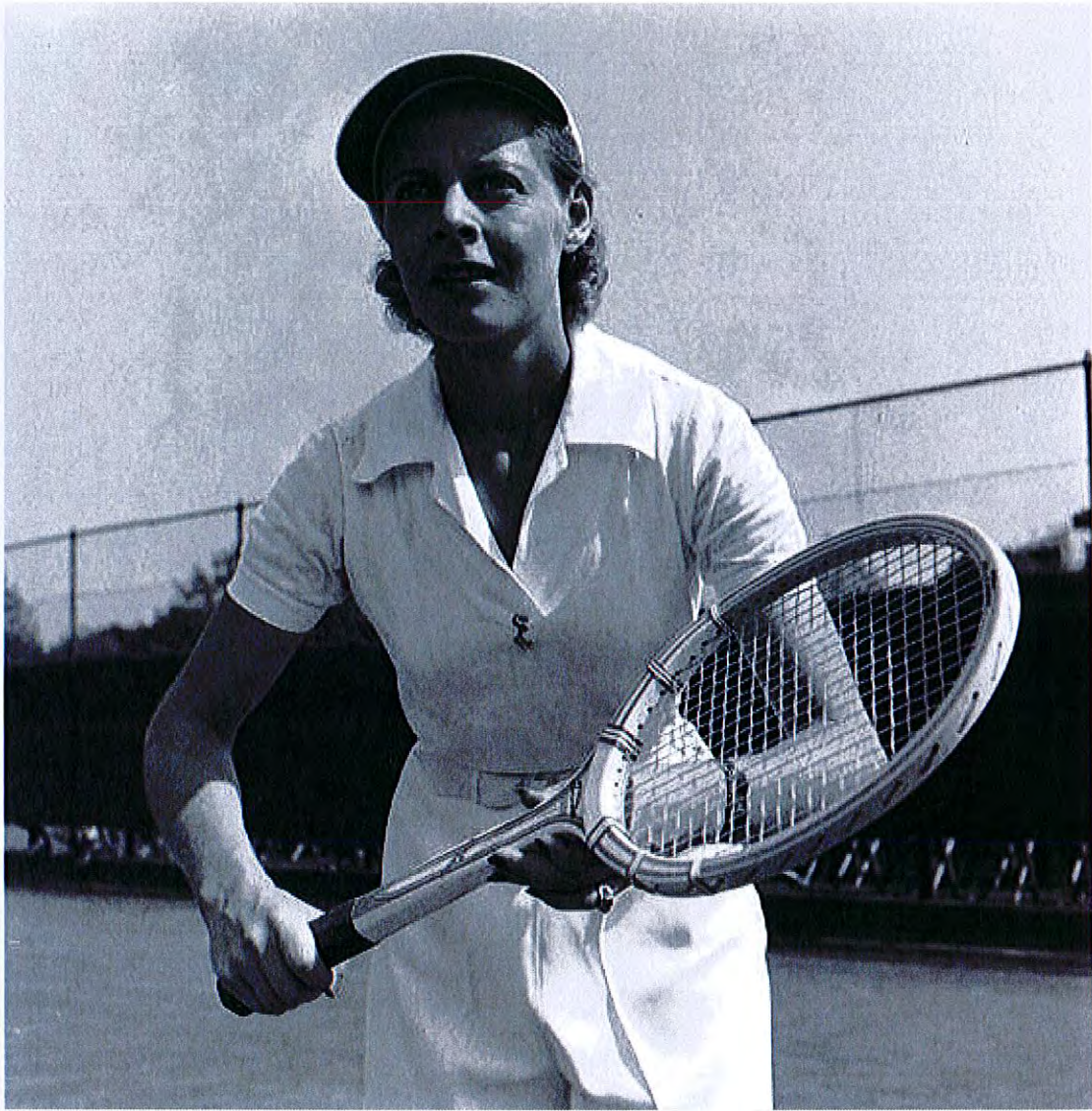
Target Word ❖ Rate of the Target Words. Rate each one using the scale below.	Definition ❖ Write in the Target Words' definition.	Sentence ❖ Use your Target Words in a sentence.
<p style="text-align: center;">spy</p> <p>① ② ③</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">World War II</p> <p>① ② ③</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">competitor</p> <p>① ② ③</p>		
Rating Scale ① = I don't know it at all. ② = I've seen it before. ③ = I might know it.		

Meet the Women's Wimbledon Champion Who Was Also a Spy

Alice Marble won 18 Grand Slam championships -- but her life off the court was as fascinating as her tennis career was impressive









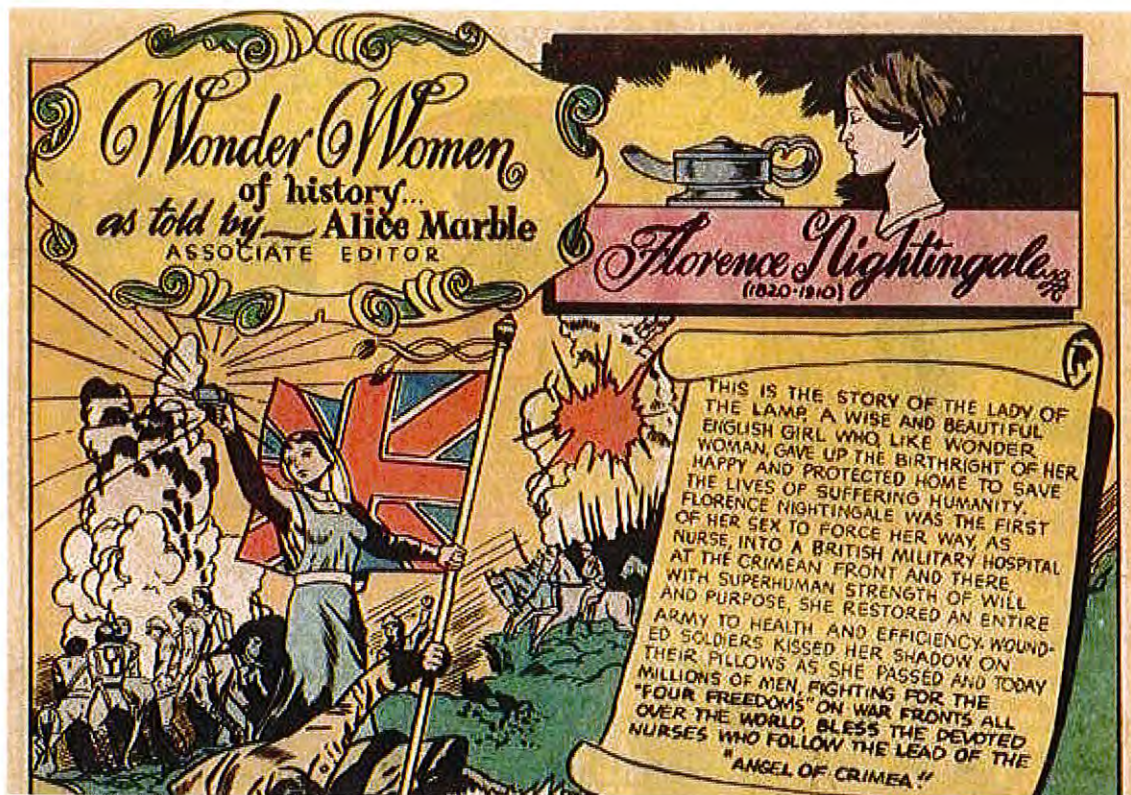
Gjon Mili—The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images

Caption from LIFE. With arms and legs swinging wide, Alice Marble jumps over the net to greet her beaten opponent.

Alice Marble's tennis career was enough to make her a legend. She was the No. 1 female player in America between 1936 and 1940, a winner of 18 Grand Slam championships, an International Tennis Hall of Famer and the first woman to adopt the serve-and-volley style of play. Her aggressive nature on the court led some to say that she played like a man.

But it's the fascinating life Marble lived off the court that makes her more than just a memorable athlete. By the time her career got underway, Marble had overcome a great deal of adversity. In her second autobiography, *Courting Danger*, she recounted being assaulted by a stranger when she was 15, a trauma that she hid from her mother out of shame. Then, as her career was taking off in her early 20s, she fell ill with tuberculosis and required a year of recuperation.

After putting her decorated tennis career behind her, Marble made a bit of a career pivot. DC comics approached her to solicit—as they did from many notable athletes—an endorsement for their new superhero, Wonder Woman. Instead of offering a sentence of support, she became an associate editor of the comic, establishing a new weekly feature called “Wonder Women of history...as told by Alice Marble,” in which she told the stories of women like Florence Nightingale in comic form.



World War II brought new adventures, although for Marble they began with a double tragedy that led to a failed attempt to take her own life. Days after she miscarried a pregnancy, her husband Joe Crowley, a fighter pilot, was killed in action. Inconsolable, Marble reported in her memoir that she accepted without hesitation when the government approached her about operating as a spy in Switzerland—a mission revealed only after Marble's death, when her book was published. "I felt I had nothing left to lose but my life," she wrote, "and at the time I didn't care about living."

Marble's mission to obtain Nazi financial information was cut short when she was shot in the back by a Nazi operative.

But the story doesn't end there: after recovering and reestablishing herself in the U.S., she set her sights on a new cause, the racial integration of tennis. Her July 1950 editorial in *American Lawn Tennis Magazine* advocated for fellow player Althea Gibson to be allowed to play in U.S. Lawn Tennis Association competitions; it was the first major public challenge to the establishment's practice of segregation. "If tennis is a game for ladies and gentlemen, it's also time we acted a little more like gentlepeople and less like sanctimonious hypocrites," she wrote. Marble's letter was a major contributing factor in Gibson's invitation to play in the tournament now known as the U.S. Open.

Before Wonder Woman and the Nazis, back in 1939 when Marble was at the pinnacle of her career, LIFE put her on its cover. In the story, the magazine chided the rest of the media for focusing on Marble's glamor when in fact she was all about grit. (She did, after all, choose comfort over glamor on the court, where she eschewed the tradition of ladies wearing skirts and opted for shorts instead.) As LIFE wrote:

Newspaper writers like to think of Alice Marble as a glamor girl. They prattle about her beautiful clothes, her night-club singing, her movie offers. They call her the "streamlined Venus of the tennis courts." All this is nonsense. She is a pretty girl who looks well in shorts. Her arms and legs are too long and muscular, and she plays too much of a slambang game of tennis to be glamorous...Even

today, at 26, she is somewhat of a tomboy, hits a tennis ball harder than do most men. In fact, if she had her way, she would play only in men's tournaments.

Marble was a Grand Slam-winning, spying-on-Nazis, comic book-editing champion for equality. It's a wonder we're still waiting on the Hollywood biopic.



Helen Jacobs, Tennis Champion in the 1930's, Dies at 88

By SUSAN B. ADAMS
Published: June 4, 1997

Helen Hull Jacobs, who played the sturdy foil to Helen Wills Moody's willowy star turn in the rivalry that captivated women's tennis in the 1930's, died Monday night in Easthampton, N.Y., where she had lived for the past four years. She was 88.

Ralph Smith, her longtime lawyer, said the probable cause of death was heart failure.

Helen Jacobs was a champion in her own right, winning nine major championships, including the United States national title four straight times from 1932-35 and the Wimbledon singles in 1936. She was a mainstay for the United States Wightman Cup team from 1927-39.

But her achievements were always measured against the incomparable brilliance and celebrity of Helen Wills Moody. More gracious than graceful, more indomitable than invincible, always trying but seldom triumphant, Jacobs played Helen the Second to Moody's Helen the First.

That the competitive history between the two northern Californians was called a rivalry, dubbed the Battle of the Helens by a sometimes frothy news media between the two world wars, was a tribute more to Jacobs's tenacity and cheerful pluck than to her shot-making power or on-court success against Moody. Jacobs scored only 1 victory in 11 matches against Moody, and that victory was tainted by controversy when Moody decided to retire with a back injury while trailing by 8-6, 3-6, 3-0 in the 1933 United States final at Forest Hills, N.Y.

The match mesmerized 8,000 fans at the Forest Hills Tennis Stadium in Queens on Oct. 26, 1933, pitting the forehand chop, aggressive net play and dogged determination of Jacobs against backcourt precision and waning power of Moody. When the seesaw match came to its anticlimactic conclusion when Moody walked to the net, addressed the crowd, collected her blue sweater and retired from the fray, Jacobs rushed over and pleaded with Moody to continue. It was an upset of titanic proportions: Moody had not lost on any court since 1926; she had not even lost a set between 1926 and the 1933 Wimbledon semifinals.

While some accounts the next day took Moody to task for depriving Jacobs of the satisfaction of outright victory, Moody was given the last word in a statement handed out following the match: "The match was long and by defaulting I do not wish to detract from the excellence of Miss Jacobs's play. I feel I have spoiled the finish of the national championship. I still feel I did right in withdrawing because I felt that I was on the verge of a collapse on the court."

Jacobs was commended by Allison Danzig in The New York Times for receiving Moody's decision "with sympathy and the finest sportsmanship." They were traits that earned Jacobs a dedicated following throughout her career. Even years later when she was asked to recall the incident, Jacobs maintained the high road. In a 1967 article in The Times, while she allowed that Moody "did not look at me" when she retired, Jacobs summed up the moment in typically generous fashion: "So she defaulted. That was it. We never spoke a mean word to each other. We never nursed grudges."

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The two produced another enthralling final in a major championship: the Wimbledon title match in 1935. Again Moody stole the thunder; once again the circumstances were riveting. Jacobs held a match point at 5-3 before 19,000 fans at Center Court. She seemed, at last, to be ready to claim her moment, and thwart Moody, who was returning to competition after a two-year absence. Instead, Jacobs plowed a short Moody lob into the net when a gust of wind misdirected the ball. Moody won the next four games and the match, 6-3, 3-6, 7-5, for her seventh Wimbledon title.

Jacobs's contribution to tennis history is as the gracious runner-up, and it is probably fitting that her lasting footnote at Wimbledon is as the first woman to popularize man-tailored shorts as on-court attire. "It seemed the sensible thing to do," she would say later.

In the end, Jacobs's admirable courage and fighting qualities earned her nine Grand Slam titles, and a triple crown of singles, doubles and mixed doubles at the 1934 United States Nationals. She was ranked in the world Top 10 for 12 straight times from 1928, was No. 1 in 1936, and was elected to the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 1962.

Jacobs was a commander in United States Navy intelligence in World War II, one of five women in the Navy to achieve the rank of commander. She retired from tennis in 1947 and enjoyed a career as a writer of 19 books, a farmer and a designer of sportswear.

Jacobs is survived by her companion, Virginia Gurnee; a sister, Jean Jacobs Gross of Oakland, Calif.; a niece, Wendy Moore, and three great nieces.

Photo: Helen Jacobs, who won United States championships from 1932 through 1935, displaying her title-winning form at Wimbledon in 1936.

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5-3-1

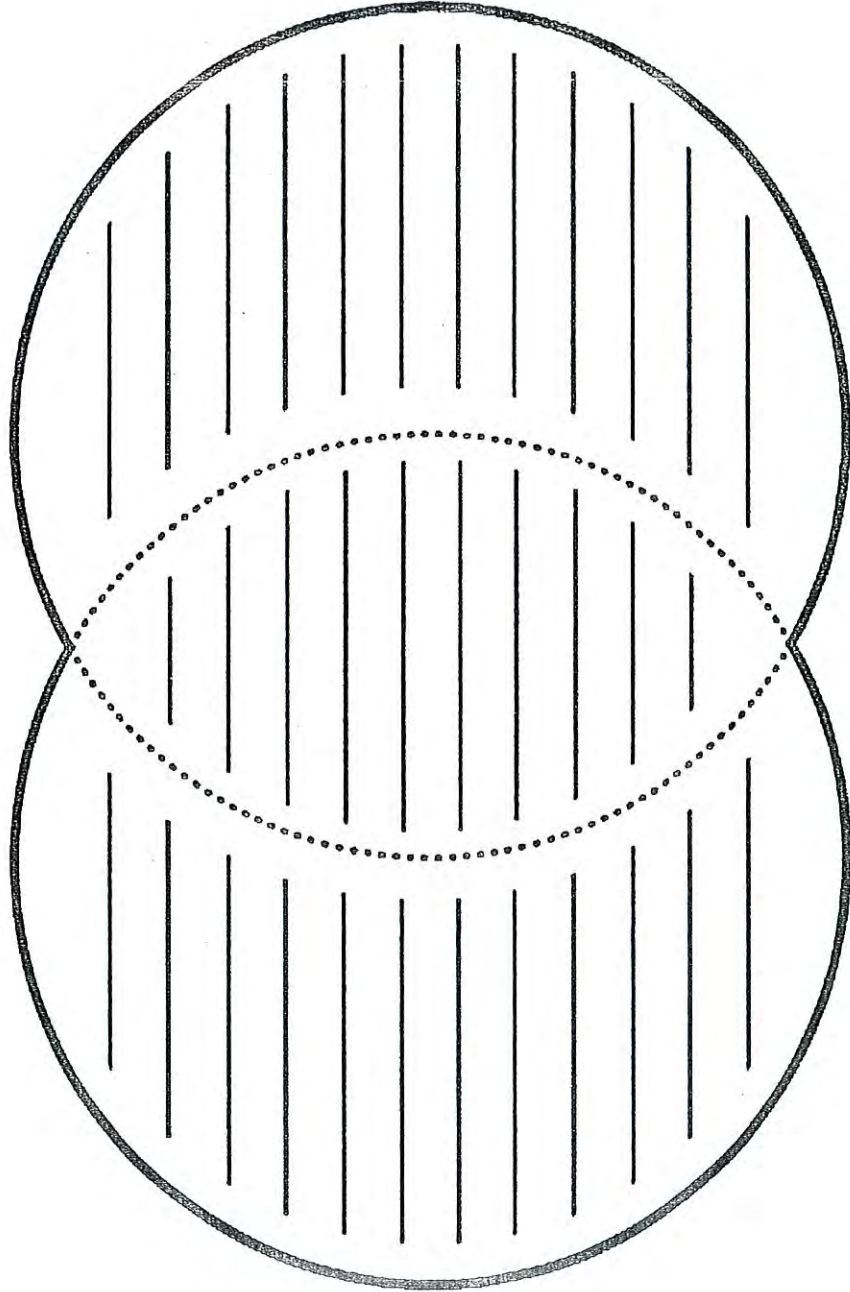
*Directions: After reading "Meet Women's Wimbledon Champion Who Was Also A Spy" or "Helen Hull Jacobs, Tennis Champion in the 1930's, Dies at 88" From the piece of text you read choose the 5 words that you think are most important.

*From the 5 words above narrow your choices to the 3 most important words.

*From the 3 words above narrow your choices to the most important word.

*Use the space below to explain to me why you chose this word as the most important word in the text you read

Name _____



Date _____
