



# EUROPE REMEMBERS THE LIBERATION OF OSS



Leo van den Bergh, sitting on a pile of 155 mm grenades.  
Photo: City Archives Oss

# September 2019, Oss 75 Years of Freedom The Liberation of Oss

Oss, 01-09-2019

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Arno van Orsouw

2019, Oss 75 Years of Freedom, the Liberation of Oss

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Research on city walks around 75 years of freedom in the centre of Oss.

These walks have been developed by Arno van Orsouw at the request of City Archives Oss.

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ISBN: XX XXX XXXX X

NUR: 689

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# Foreword

Liberation.

You can be freed from all kinds of things; usually it will be a relief. Being freed from war is of a different order of magnitude. In the case of the Second World War, it meant that the people of Oss had to live under the German occupation for more than four years. It also meant that there were men and women who worked for the liberation. Allied forces, members of the resistance and other groups; it was not without risk and they could lose their lives from it. During the liberation of Oss, on September 19, 1944, Sergeant L.W.M. Brown of the Grenadier Guards was fatally hit by a German shooter. In the Netherlands, approximately 250,000<sup>1</sup> people died as a result of the war. The liberation of the Netherlands (September 1944 to May 1945) cost the lives of 50,000 allied soldiers. The total number of deaths from the Second World War (1939 - 1945) was estimated at 55 million, half of whom were civilians.

That is why we can and must be very grateful for 'our' liberators. It is no small feat that a stranger enters into battle with the enemy to free you. Let us not forget our liberators and the effort they have made and give them the attention they deserve 75 years later.

For my research I consulted many different sources and spoke to many people.

I would like to pay special attention to the Oss photographer Leo van den Bergh. At the risk of his own life, he photographed the war preparations, fights and liberation. To the Germans, photography was equivalent to espionage and you were usually shot on the spot. Thanks to him, we have a lot of relevant information about the liberation of Oss, beautifully captured. These photos have travelled all over the world at that time.

Thanks also to the working team Projectgroep Luchtoorlog Oost-Brabant (PLOB) (Project group Air War East Brabant (PLOB)). This group is domiciled in the tradition room "The Typhoon"<sup>2</sup> at Volkel Air Base. The tradition room can be visited, but you must first register. A visit is definitely recommended. Spring 2019 I was in the Typhoon, I had a few questions about a C-47. Ruud Wildekamp (editor-in-chief) asked me; "What do you want with it"? My answer; "Well I want to do a city walk in September". I was allowed to use the information about Oss, on condition that I mention the source. Ruud died suddenly on August 18. I would very much have liked to hear his comments; but unfortunately that is no longer possible. But herewith I also want to thank Ruud posthumously for his efforts and help.

Additional material was consulted; the diaries that were written by some people in Oss at that time, various reference works and archive documents. Mia Scholten van den Bergh's second cousin, John van den Bergh, has also given permission to use their story. There was e-mail contact with Hans den Brok, author of the book Wings of Freedom. Ton Verberne also contributed with information about the KP Nuland (Knokploeg, Fighting Team). And there were witness statements from Ria van Eertwegh and Cor Ottens.

Last but not least, the employees of the City Archives in Oss, "do you have a minute?" made their contribution. Also Norah Macey and Jos van den Bergh who were very helpful to check the English text for me.

All that has become the following story; this is my research. This is the basis to be able to walk a new theme city walk through the centre of Oss in mid-September, when the liberation was 75 years ago.

Oss, 21 Augustus 2019

Arno van Orsouw

Retired Captain, Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAf)

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.verzetsmuseum.org/jongeren/invalid/doden\\_wo2](https://www.verzetsmuseum.org/jongeren/invalid/doden_wo2)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.traditiekamertyphoon.nl/new-page.html>

## Abstract

The Allies wanted to shorten World War II in early September 1944 by performing a pincer movement via the route Liege, Eindhoven, Nijmegen, Veghel, Arnhem from there to Nunspeet. As a result, a large part of the occupiers in the Netherlands would be trapped.

Meanwhile, various people and groups in and around Oss resisted the occupying forces. The resistance happened in all sorts of ways.

The Allied plan also provided for an attack from the east of the Netherlands. The goal was to conquer the industrial heart of Germany. They could ignore the Siegfried line "Westwall" as it was on the right side of the planned route.

The liberation of Oss was not in the plan, but by chance Oss was liberated. However this brought Oss to the front line. Unfortunately in Oss, on September 25 1944, they found out the hard way.

On the other hand, because of the early liberation, the people in Oss were not dealing with the "Hunger Winter". After September 25, '44, Oss and the Maasland were still troubled for a considerable time by shelling carried out by the occupying forces. They shot from across the river Maas with the intention of hitting the factories. The fired V.1's also provided the inevitable stress; many have fallen down close to and around Oss. In Lith, such an impact caused a great deal of damage and injured people. On May 5, 1945, the war was officially over and the residents of Oss and Maasland were able to resume their normal lives.

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# Prologue

The story starts during the interbellum period; a period in which everyone was happy that the Great War (First World War) had ended. The time that followed was one of reconstruction and progress. Unfortunately, the economy came under pressure and, as a result, the priorities of most governments changed. In the Netherlands there were cuts in the army. The idea was that there would be no more war. There was an anti-militarist "Broken Gun" movement of conscientious objectors and service refusers, who also had an influence on this.

After this the crisis came and it went downhill, Oss got his gang, Germany Adolf Hitler and the Dutch government the "Affaire Oss". The Dutch army was thinned out and the reconstruction and modernization came too late. Despite the great efforts of the soldiers, they could not offer enough resistance against the Germans. The occupier had learned from his shortcomings from the Great War and had occupied much of Europe in no time.

The occupation followed and with it the slowing down of the Dutch economy. Everything of value went to Germany and the Dutch companies had to make the best of it. This too can be read, especially the story about Bergoss and the way it went there commands respect for the staff from then on.

Resistance to the occupier grew and there was a lot of opposition. From official disobedience to strict compliance with procedures. Examples of this: the distribution office, the release of semi-finished products from Organon. Also violence was not shunned and even experienced by the NSB mayor Hermanus van Apeldoorn.

Then there was Operation Market Garden. Oss was not on the route but the story of military police officer (Koninklijke Marechaussee) J. Maertens was convincing enough. The Guards Armoured Division "briefly" had the opportunity to go to Oss with a small combat unit. The prisoners of war who were involved were never found. But Oss was liberated on September 19, 1944. Be it for one day, because the occupier was back the next morning. They were kicked out again with unified powers by the fighting team. The warehouses with their huge food supplies were now interesting for both parties. We know that thanks to Alphons Snoek and his precise way of working.

On September 25, the German occupiers mounted a counterattack, but as there were enough reinforcements and the KP Nuland happened to be in Oss, that attack was repulsed. Be it with losses on both sides and major material damage. From here the situation was better in Oss if it were not for the Germans shooting at Oss over the Maas. Their goal was probably to destroy the stock warehouses. They did not succeed, but the people in Oss had anxious times. Eventually the 11th Hussars were instructed to guard Oss. That went well with them, also playing soccer with the people and as you can read in their diary, showering with hot water.

They also had an officer's dance with the "Burgomaster of Oss (M. de Bombac)". Only the V.1's that flew in abundance were at a certain moment a real threat. Oss emerged reasonably well from the war, and the city and municipality of Oss are currently

doing well (2020).

With reference to, concerning the diaries and other reading material, I have not changed the literal text, in italics, or changed it to the current spelling. It would not have any added value, moreover the fragments remain authentic. Regarding some dates mentioned in the diary texts: they have shifted, or an event seemed to have an incorrect date. But after investigation, the correct date floats to the surface. The diary stories give a clear picture of what the Ossenaar experienced in those days. I have put the stories I used in the correct timeline.

This is not a self-contained story; it is my background research for my walk through the centre of Oss for 75 years of liberation, which I developed at the request of the Oss City Archives. I would like to share this with interested parties. Even if you are not going to walk the Market Garden route in the city, this piece provides a reasonable insight into what was going on in the time before and after the war in Oss. It is not complete and not in detail, all those other books have already been written about that. See the reading list for this.

Oss, 21 Augustus 2019  
Arno van Orsouw  
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# Interbellum

The Netherlands is an anti-militarist country, the armed forces are regarded at its very best as a necessary evil that was then and is still the case today. Although anti-militarism is rejected by politicians as utopian and dangerous. Johan de Wit once reported: *"For the aerdt of the Dutch is soo, that if the need arises and the pericules are not quite clear for them, they will not be deposited to vigilate properly for their own security<sup>3</sup>"*. Freely translated: "As Dutch people we have very little to nothing over for our safety."

After the First World War it was thought that this will never happen to us again. Economic growth prospered all over the world until the 1920s, until in 1923 hyperinflation took place in Germany.

During the recession between 1920 and 1927, by changing priorities, the government opted for major cuts, especially in defence spending. However, this was not experienced as a problem. After all, the international political situation was relatively calm and there was no threat whatsoever.

The German economy was restructured. On September 26, 1923, for example, Gustav Stresemann abolished the "passive resistance". He and other politicians led Germany with more sensible foreign policy in calmer waters. Shortly thereafter, in November 1923, Germany was startled by the failed Bierkellerputsch in Munich. This made Adolf Hitler instantly a well-known name in Germany. As is often the case, Hitler was inspired by someone else, in this case Benito Mussolini. A coup d'état to overthrow the Weimar government was committed in Munich. The coup was followed by a demonstrative "March on Berlin". For this, Hitler ended up in jail and devoted himself to writing *Mein Kampf*.

Once out of jail, he took a smarter approach. Democracy became the means he used to gain power. The national-socialist party came to the German parliament, the Reichstag, through elaborate propaganda and intimidation of opponents.

Things had not gone much better in Oss since 1929, the largest employer, Jurgens, had left for Rotterdam. As a result, around 1300 people lost their jobs at Jurgens. This had major consequences for the population of Oss and the suppliers of Jurgens. For Oss, the second wave of crime started. Splendor had taken over 'Jurgens' site but went bankrupt the next day and was taken over by Philips. The poverty among which many in the Maasland suffered certainly contributed to crime<sup>4</sup> in Oss and the surrounding area. Before the war, Oss made a name for itself as Chicago on the Maas.

On October 24, 1929, the stock market collapsed all over the world and the crisis was complete.

H.W. von der Dunk (1984 under the heading "Between Crisis and War<sup>5</sup>, Society and the Armed Forces in the 1930s") reports: *"The 1930s have lingered in history as the decade of short-sightedness. Wrong decisions, missed opportunities, illusionism and defeatism mark the road that led to the Second World War"*.

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<sup>3</sup> J. Huizinga, A new book about Jan de Wit, (collected works II, 75, Haarlem, 1948.

<sup>4</sup> Nagel, W. The crime of Oss, Daamen's Uitgeversmaatschappij, The Hague, 1949. L. van Nie, Criminal Police, Strengholt, Amsterdam, 1964, P406 - 407.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. G. Teitler, Between Crisis and War, Society and the Armed Forces in the 1930s, B.V. publisher De Bataafse Leeuw Dieren, ISBN 90 6707 043 2, 1984, P5.

In Oss in the 1930's it was doom and gloom, many people were in social assistance. There was poverty. The people in Oss were able to get to work with the help of the employment office, but it didn't yield much financially. In spite of that, they would rather go to the employment office than going on welfare, because the latter was seen as a disgrace.

The provision of employment was controversial, especially in socialist circles; the provision of employment was regarded as a form of exploitation. The work was hard, 50-hour work weeks, the circumstances terrible and the wage was just enough to make ends meet with a family. In 1939 someone in the job creation earned 14 to 17.50 guilders a week, converted<sup>6</sup> to 2016 between fl. 325.89 and € 147.88. In the vicinity of the projects, the government had so-called "labour camps" built where the employed people lived. They could only be home on Saturday evening and Sunday. Most used a bicycle to get to and from work.

In a conversation with my father who worked alternately on the Maas and in the moor near Nistelrode; *"we overexerted ourselves; it was always something with the clay in the Maas. The clay was too wet or too dry and could hardly be processed by hand (scoop). The foreman could not care less and somehow you had to attain the cubic meters. On the moors it wasn't much better, digging for silver sand meant that your shovel was worn out in no time. If you had to scoop pebbles there it was much worse, it rolled off your shovel before it was in the cart. If your bicycle tire was broken and you had to replace it with a new one, then a large part of your benefit would be spent. But you had to do otherwise you had no food. Unemployment benefiting, Going to a support body for a note and a stamp wasn't an option"*. My father, however, sometimes did not escape to that.

## The Government

The then Dutch government was the third Colijn cabinet; they had all kinds of challenges. The financial and economic problems remained central. In 1936 the cabinet decided to devalue the guilder. The cabinet was increasingly confronted with international tensions. Tensions were also reflected in The Netherlands as a result of the actions of the National Socialist Party (NSB).

## The Affair Oss<sup>7</sup>

In the 1930s, Oss suffered from extreme crime for quite some time. Due to major intervention by the municipal police and a special military police brigade, this was suppressed. Around 1938, the investigation of this brigade revealed some sex scandals in the "better" environments: of a Jewish entrepreneur who had maintained sexual relations with his female staff; of some priests accused of dealing with a woman; some priests who had homosexual relationships with some boys. Something could be said about those allegations. Dealing with a woman is not forbidden by priests by law and homosexual relationships dated back many years.

The Catholic Minister of Justice in the fourth Colijn cabinet, Goseling, judged that the brigade had gone beyond its powers; the investigative power was taken away from them. This happened because the bishop from Den Bosch turned to the attorney general Baron Speyart van Woerden. Van Woerden, in turn, informed the Minister of Justice Goseling (Roman Catholic State Party). He let himself be manipulated for Van Woerden's own end. The NSB in particular tried to exploit the affair for its own gain. The opposition in the Lower House and the non-Catholic press accused Mr.

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<sup>6</sup>The value of Guilder Euro, International Institute of Social History, <http://www.iisg.nl/hpw/calculate-nl.php>

<sup>7</sup> Jos Smeets, The Oss affair, From local conflict to national riot, The fight between the Military Police, the police and the public prosecutor.

Goseling of attempting to cover up a dirty case.

The fourth Colijn cabinet took office on June 24, 1937, but due to the lack of consensus on financial policy, the cabinet offered its resignation on 29 June 1939. . The fifth Colijn cabinet succeeded the fourth Colijn cabinet on 25 July 1939.

Rearmament, is there going to be a war?

There was so much demand for war material in Europe that it was difficult to acquire it. The construction and modernization of the Dutch army was delayed as a result. Most were bought in Germany, which later turned out to be handy for the occupier, they could use it against themselves.

Air Protection and Air Guard Services<sup>8</sup>.

On 11 February 1929 the mayor of Oss received a list of questions about the state of affairs with regard to air protection. The question came from the Territorial commander of the province. From the answer it could be concluded that people had once thought about air protection. Until then it had not been possible to set up the service. On the 30th of December of that year there was a lot of information in the provincial government office. Despite the receipt of the brochure, "Hints for the mayor regarding air protection", Oss failed to act.

It was not until 1936 that Mayor Ploegmakers took the initiative to set up a local branch of the Dutch Association for Air Protection (NVL). Through collaboration between the fire brigade and the first aid association, a first form of organization got off the ground. That year, the council also placed the subject of air protection on the budget for the first time. Based on the guidelines of the NVL, Oss came to the establishment of its own LBD. In addition to the fire brigade and first aid, municipal officials were also designated for this task.

## Munich Conference

September 29, 1938. At the Munich Conference on September 29, 1938, France, England, Italy and Germany agreed that Germany could occupy the Sudetenland. England and France also guaranteed the borders of the rest of Czechoslovakia. The Munich conference in 1938 was the culmination of the French and British "appeasement policy". Without a struggle, part of the sovereign state of Czechoslovakia was given to an aggressively operating Germany, on the condition that this would be the last German territorial expansion. In this way the Allies hoped to preserve world peace.

Closer to home

On the initiative of Mayor Caners van Ravenstein, a meeting was held on 22 November 1938 to which all mayors of the municipalities in the Maasland were invited. During the meeting it was decided that the municipalities would come to a certain form of cooperation. Particular attention was given to support in resolving foundation problems and the collective procurement of materials.

Further cooperation took place during the mayors' meeting on August 22, 1939 in the town hall of Oss. Mr. A. van Batenburg also commented<sup>9</sup> explanation of the common air protection scheme. Mayor Ploegmakers said that he was charged by the Queen's Commissioner with organizing an LBD circle in the Maasland. The circle also had to include the municipalities of Alem, Berghem, Geffen, Heesch, Herpen, Lith, Megen, Nistelrode, Ravenstein, Reek and Schaijk.

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<sup>8</sup> Ruud Wildekamp et al., Working Group Project group Air War East Brabant (PLOB), Tradition room "Typhoon" airbase Volkel, Oss, P1, version 2016.

<sup>9</sup> Head of the Government Information Service at the Ministry of the Interior and Deputy Inspector of National Air Protection.

## Mobilization

On November 01, 1939, the Netherlands had already been mobilized, the special State of Siege was proclaimed for the Municipality of Oss. This meant that, if the situation so required, the Military Authority could take over the civil administration. The announcement applied to all municipalities in the Maasland. It never came to an actual exercise of this.

When the Dutch army was mobilized on 27 September 1938, soldiers were also stationed in Oss in August 1939. Initially these were the transport columns of the 3rd Company of the Supply and Disposal Troops (3 CAAT). Initially they were housed in the local BLO School. On November 17 that year this unit left for Heeswijk and Dinther. Their place in the community of Oss was taken by troops of the 3rd Army Corps (LK). They too were initially housed in advanced schools, including the St. Gabriel School on Slachthuislaan and in building F of the Philips factory. Both for Philips and for the Oss community this caused necessary nuisance. On the other hand, wherever soldiers are there will be bustle (entertainment), ladies fell in love and the surplus military "morsel" also tasted great. After a while, a few barracks were erected for the military, largely resolving the problems. The troops that were stationed in and around Oss all belonged to the VI Division. They were part of the 3rd Army Corps, the Staff, 1st and 2nd Battalions of 14 RI, and the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions of 7 RA. According to the changed plans of the General Staff, which were cancelled in early April 1940, the following had to be done. After the outbreak of hostilities, the III LK had to move behind the Waal-Lingstelling. This is to form the Southeast Front of the Fortress Holland there.

To ensure rapid movement, these troops were placed in the immediate vicinity of the through roads, Oijen - Oss - Heesch, Nuland - Oss and Schaijk - Oss.

Also in Oss, the staff of the 5th Company Air Target Machine Guns (5-LuMitr), under the First Lieutenant G.J. Kortebein, and two platoons, the 3rd and the 4th, placed<sup>10</sup>. Their task was to protect against airborne attacks from the relocation of the III LK and the crossing over the Maas in particular. The company staff was housed in a home on the Eikenboomgaard. The 3rd Platoon (3-5-LuMitr) was also placed in the city and the pieces came in the vicinity of the station. The 4-5-LuMitr was stationed in the vicinity of the staff on the Oak orchard. As a result of the heightened threat, the 1st Platoon was relocated to Lith at the beginning of May 1940 to protect the pontoon bridge that had been struck there by the Genie. The 2nd Platoon was given the same task at the military ship bridge of the Wilt. The 3rd and 4th Platoons were kept in reserve at the Oak Orchard.

All those soldiers also had consequences for the population of Oss and the training thereof. As lots of schools were occupied by soldiers not much came of education. Primary education certainly suffered. My brother then at the age of six told me sometimes; *"In the beginning it was wonderful that I didn't have to go to school. But that turned out to be a major handicap in the field of language and arithmetic years after the war"*. During the war, the occupier claimed buildings, and after the liberation, the Allies.

## The raid on the Netherlands

The air protection service Oss. The commander and men were ready on the morning of May 10, 1940. They were supposed to pass on their findings for 24 hours. The first report was only given at

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<sup>10</sup> The 1st Platoon of this 5th Company protected the Maas crossing at Lith during this period and the 2nd Platoon stood at the ship bridge at Het Wild. NIMH, Archive KL, Box 650 The retreat of III LK and the Lt.Div.

5.37 am on 10 May. Before that, planes had passed by within the field of vision of the post, but they were deprived of a (communication) connection for an hour.

That morning of May 10, the 3rd and 4th Platoons, who had been stationed at the Eikenboomgaard for about one year, shot with a 20 mm anti-aircraft gun at the passing aircraft. Some of the planes dived down, but did not shoot back. A large German plane was hit and crashed between Teeffelen and Macharen.

One of the pilots was killed and another wounded. The survivors were locked up in the police station but the next day freed by their own troops.

The first report concerned fifteen German bombers who moved across the post from east to west. At 6.40 am a similar report followed and again a complaint that there was no communication for one hour. At 7:50 am, Oss reported that, at 500 meters above the post, an air fight was taking place between two hunters and a bomber and that notes had been ejected. The next report from post Oss was at 8.08 am and concerned the crashing, between 6:15 am and 6:45 am, of two unknown planes. Seven minutes later it was reported again that an airplane had crashed north of the post.

At 09.24 the report was made of eight German, three-engine, aircraft that flew from 4000 meters from east to west, followed two minutes later by countless German planes. At 9.55 am the post commander managed to report that another unknown aircraft crashed north of the post. Two parachutists are said to have left the plane. Two minutes before, the Ravenstein air guard station had also passed on this report and counted three parachutes<sup>11</sup>. At 10:15 that morning, three German bombers crossed Oss and an hour later the report of a German bomber shooting at the Dutch troops. At 11.45 a further announcement was made, also reported by Ravenstein, that a plane crashed northeast of the post from which three paratroopers jumped<sup>12</sup>. The following report, at 11.50 am, concerned nine German bombers that crossed over on a north-western course. At 12.40 six unknown planes were reported that were heading north-east at 4000 meters. Three minutes later another six unknown aircraft followed in the same direction.

Between 12.00 and 16.00 o'clock, Oss no longer reported exact numbers, but always mentioned countless or more planes coming over in easterly direction. Post Oss also continued to faithfully transmit its reports during the night from Friday to Saturday. Due to the darkness, the exact numbers were not given. The penultimate report, at 4.40 a.m., concerned ten German single-deckers who travelled at a height of 100 m from east to west. At 06.29 am, on the 11th of May, the last report was made and the departure of the post was announced.

#### Translocation

At 7 am on the morning of that 10th May 1940, the transfer order for the troops of the 3rd Army Corps was issued. The Land van Maas and Waal was reached via the military bridges at Oijen and Lith to march from there to Tiel. Although the relocating troops were attacked several times by machine guns, the number of casualties remained limited. Prior to the relocation of the 3rd Army Corps, 3- and 4-5-LuMitr already had positions on the north bank of the Maas near Oijen. There

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<sup>11</sup> These aircraft remain unknown. Eligible area He 111 of 2.Aufklärungsgruppe der Oberbefehlshaber der Luftwaffe who landed at Rossum and a Heinkel 111 of which only the aircraft became known to have crashed in the Betuwe. Since no times of these accidents became known, a comparison with the reports made is hardly possible.

<sup>12</sup> This aircraft also remains unknown. A Ju 52 / 3m of 2./KGzbV 12 qualifies for an emergency landing at Leeuwen. One of the fourteen passengers died, the others were injured. These Junkers were set on fire by the crew and were completely lost. The time of this is also unknown.

they strengthened 2-6-LuMitr that had been directed from Beneden Leeuwen to this vital bridge. From that position the local military pontoon bridge had to be protected.

Dagorder voor de luchtverdediging<sup>13</sup>

Hoofdkwartier, 10 mei 1940

Op het einde van dezen eersten dag van den schandelijken aanval op ons vaderland is het mij een behoefte, mijn warmen dank en waardering uit te spreken voor hetgeen de luchtverdediging heden heeft verricht.

In mijn circulaire van 14 april j.l. ... heb ik U allen voorgehouden hoezeer een voortdurende paraatheid in het bijzonder voor de luchtverdediging noodig is, en het verheugt mij te kunnen getuigen, dat vandaag aan die eisch ten volle is voldaan. Veel is van u gevaagd, en smartelijke verliezen zijn geleden, maar de vijand heeft slagen ontvangen van een zoodanige kracht, als hij stellig niet had voorzien en thans kunnen wij vaststellen, dat zijn boos opzet althans voor vandaag is mislukt.

Dit was echter nog slechts het begin. Rekent er op, dat er nog veel van U zal worden gevraagd, zoodat een taaie volharding noodig zal zijn.

Evenwel kunnen wij er op rekenen, dat onze bondgenoten ons niet in de steek zullen laten.

HOUDT VOL, TOT HEIL VAN HET VADERLAND!!!  
LEVE DE KONINGIN!!

De luitenant-generaal,  
Commandant Luchtverdediging  
P.W. Best

Day order for air defence

Headquarters, 10 May 1940

At the end of this first day of the shameful attack on our homeland, I need to express my warm thanks and appreciation for what air defence has done today.

In my circular of April 14, last ... I have told you all how much constant preparedness is required, especially for air defence, and I am pleased to be able to testify that the demand has been fully met today. Much has been wiped out of you, and painful losses have been suffered, but the enemy has received blows of such a force, if he had certainly not foreseen, and we can now see that his evil intent has failed at least for today.

However, this was just the beginning. Expect that much will still be asked of you, so that a tough endurance will be necessary. However, we can count on our allies not to let us down.

PERSIST, TO THE WELL BEING OF THE COUNTRY !!!  
LONG LIVE THE QUEEN !!

The lieutenant general,  
Commander Air Defence

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<sup>13</sup> Brongers, E.H. Inventory from various sources of German planes shot down or destroyed in the May days of 1940 during or as a result of the battle in the Netherlands. <http://www.bhummel.dds.nl/index2.html>

# Oss occupied<sup>14</sup>

After the German *254 Infantry Division* broke through at Mill, its units advanced to Nistelrode<sup>15</sup>. *Aufklärungs Abteilung 254* was sent to the Zuid-Willemsvaart between 's-Hertogenbosch and Veghel to explore the area in between. One of these reconnaissance units found a bridge that wasn't destroyed at Heeswijk and could continue on towards Vught. A second unit of *Aufklärungs Abteilung 254* was sent to Oss. They entered the city between seven and eight in the morning of 11 May. There the group had to leave a small garrison behind and carry out a further exploration, via Geffen and Nuland, to 's-Hertogenbosch. In the wake of these reconnaissance units, the *SS Standarte Deutschland* advanced and captured 's-Hertogenbosch.

Yet the conquest of Oss and 's-Hertogenbosch was no more than the right-wing cover for the passage of the *9. Panzer Division* to Moerdijk. The main axis of the advance of the *9th Armoured Division* ran between Uden and Zeeland to the Zuid-Willemsvaart near Veghel. After a short but fierce battle at Veghel, the advance over Sint Oedenrode, Tilburg and Breda continued.

## Oss in numbers

At the time of World War II, the municipality of Oss consisted solely of the city of Oss as a residential area. It had its own industry and was surrounded by the hamlets: Amsteleind; Heihoek; Horzak; Klein-Ussen; Schaijksveld; Elzeneind and Ruwaard. The total area was 2966 ha and as of January 1, 1940 Oss had 17,930 inhabitants<sup>16</sup>. The industry<sup>17</sup> was partly based on meat processing: a slaughterhouse; N.V. Gebroeders Hartog; Zwanenberg. Organon as a Pharmaceutical industry and furthermore Philips, wood processing companies and the Steam Bakery "De Ster" from the Ploegmakers brothers. And don't forget the Bergoss and Desso textiles. Nevertheless, around 14% of the workforce of Oss was unemployed<sup>18</sup>.

## Mayors of Oss

As of that date 1936, J.F. Ploegmakers was still mayor of the municipality. He died, however, in January 1941 and was succeeded on May 15, 1941 by L.J.H.C.A. de Bourbon. The deceased mayor was one of the Ploegmakers brothers of the Koekfabriek (gingerbread factory) De Ster. Louis de Bourbon was a grandson of Karel Naundorff, who claimed to be Louis XVII of France and therefore claimed the throne. It has never been proven that this is incorrect. Before De Bourbon became mayor of Oss, he was mayor of Escharen, which is located near Grave.

## Mr. L. de Bourbon

Mr. L. de Bourbon takes a very special place among the mayors of the city of Oss. During the first years of his office, De Bourbon, partly fuelled by a stream of regulations and orders, developed strong anti-German feelings. In March 1943, in protest against the registration and raids of Jews

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<sup>14</sup> Working Group Project group Air War East Brabant (PLOB). Tradition room "Typhoon" airbase Volkel, Oss, P5, version 2016

<sup>15</sup> Nierstrasz, V.E. The defense of north Limburg and Noord-Brabant. The Hague, 1953: 392 and text with attachment card 12

<sup>16</sup> Statistics Netherlands, Statistics of the course of the population 1939 - 1940, The Hague, 1943.

<sup>17</sup> Paul Spanjaard, Anja van Esch, e.a., *Het Maasland in de oorlog*, Jan Cunen centrum Gemeente Oss, druk Witsiers Oss, 1985, ISBN 90 6763 010 1, P7 – 28

<sup>18</sup> B. van Herpen - Ruys en P. van der Sluys, *Work and unemployment in Oss 1918-1940*, unpublished thesis, Nijmegen (1980), p 135-146

and the instructions of Osse citizens for work in Germany, he resigned and went into hiding<sup>19</sup>. De Bourbon sent copies of his letter of resignation to all Dutch mayors.

From his hiding place he took charge of the resistance in the Maasland. In this area he became commander of the "Order Service" and chief leader of some "fight teams" (KP). On March 17, 1943, he was sentenced to death in absentia<sup>20</sup>, the order was there to immediately execute him upon his arrest. Not all acts of resistance can be attributed to De Bourbon. After the war there was rather dissatisfaction with the honour and appreciation accredited to Mr. L. de Bourbon received. This can be read later in the resistance section.

He was succeeded on 23 June 1943 by the pro-German observer J. Pulles. Jan Pulles collaborated with the occupier but remained acting mayor until March 17, 1944. As of that date, he was replaced by the NSB member Hermanus Apeldoorn, formerly alderman in Eindhoven. He too maintained a strong pro-German regime. On 10 August 1944, mayor Apeldoorn was liquidated by resistance group "Margriet" from Den Bosch in Ravenstein. After the death of Hermanus Apeldoorn, J. Pulles again was taken on as acting mayor.

Immediately after the liberation of Oss, Mayor De Bourbon resurfaced and took over, albeit temporarily, as the mayor. His term of office was therefore split in two. He refused a permanent appointment, after which he devoted himself to writing poems.

## Living in Oss

During the occupation, the Zwanenberg and Organon factories were forced to continue their production. Both companies, with Jewish owners, received a German administrator. At Organon this was Dr. Konrad Duden, at Zwanenberg a certain Paul Horlborg. The latter in particular had a bad name in Oss (and fired all employees of Jewish descent at an early stage). It was their task to ensure production and production resources for the benefit of the German war economy. When the Germans also claimed workers from the Osse industry for their own factories, both turned out to have a completely different view of their task.

In addition to administrators in some branches of the Osse industry, a Local Executor was placed in the city in May 1940 to represent the direct interests of the occupying forces. That was Captain Frank. This led a subdivision, or *Nebenstelle*, of the Region Executor in 's-Hertogenbosch. In addition to performing the duties of a Region Executor, this Local Executor also carried out assignments for the German army commander in 's-Hertogenbosch. For the most part, this intervention related to the supply of the food and canning industry to the German army food warehouses.

Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty in the reconstructed Chamberlain cabinet, delivered a speech on January 20, 1940. During this radio speech he started to underline the successes that England and France had achieved. Winston Churchill<sup>21</sup>, (*radio address of January 20, 1940*): *"if all these neutral nations I have mentioned, and some others I have not mentioned" (de Verenigde Staten), "were with one spontaneous impulse to do their duty in accordance with the Covenant of the League, and were to stand together with the British and French Empires against aggression and wrong? At present their plight is lamentable; and it will become much worse ... Each one hopes that*

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<sup>19</sup> W.A.H. den Ridder, *Collaboration or resistance ?*, Oss 1995, publisher den Ridder Oss, ISBN 9789090089423

<sup>20</sup> December 24, 1958, interview with Mr. L. de Bourbon in the Noordbrabants Dagblad, the household.

<sup>21</sup> Randolph S. Churchill, *Into Battle*, Speeches by the Right Hon. Winston S. Churchill, C. H., M. P., uitgever Casell and Company, 1941, p. 160.



*if he feeds the crocodile enough, the crocodile will eat him last. All of them hope that the storm will pass before their turn comes to be devoured. But I fear, I fear greatly, the storm will not pass. It will rage and it will roar, ever more loudly, ever more widely. It will spread to the South; it will spread to the North”.*

In short, Winston warned that the “crocodile” in this case Nazi Germany, would swallow everyone. At Organon, people were also aware that something was coming. Because they were familiar with the tactics of the Dutch army, withdrawal to Vesting Holland, business space was rented in Mijdrecht. The idea behind this was that if the army had withdrawn they could continue production there.

The meat processing industry and Philips were not only used for export to Germany. By order of the *Wehrmachtsbefehlshaber in the bestetzten Niederlande*, large stocks of foodstuffs and stimulants were built in the warehouses, or *Verpflegungslager*. In addition, a bakery unit, a *Heeresbäckerei*, came to the De Ster steam bakery (gingerbread factory). Oss thus became of great importance to the occupier. For the management and issuance of these stocks, *Catering issuing offices* were set up at the warehouses and the bakery. The group consisted of around 90 people, bakers, butchers and administrative staff. They were assigned to *Nachschub-Battailon 609*, under the leadership of *lieutenant, later captain Frank*. The staff of this unit had settled in nearby Heesch. The German private organization *Wachdienst Niedersachsen* was responsible for monitoring the various warehouses<sup>22</sup>.

After the Eindhoven branches of Philips were bombed several times, the German administrator of the company started spreading or moving vital production departments. The production of radio tubes, which was extremely important to the Germans, was partly taken over by the Oss site. But also the Willem II cigar factories in 's-Hertogenbosch and the Thermion lamp factory in Lent were allocated part of the production of these lamps.

C. Fontein<sup>23</sup> Molenstraat 56

C. Fontein F. Fontein-Eldering (*Ik men dat 't vort zat is*) reports: *“When I start my practice in Oss at the end of July, beginning of August 1940, the city does not yet have a real hospital. In the Begijnenstraat is a nunnery. At the back is the old men’s home at the front something that looks like the start of a hospital. There specialists from Den Bosch, Nuboer, Van Ginneken, Bour and Simon, have consultations on Friday afternoon. They also perform simple operations with the assistance of the general practitioner. The small clinic is gradually becoming a real hospital. During the war internist Vetter and surgeon Bauer come to Oss, followed a few years later by gynaecologist doctor Le Loux. That is a colossal relief of our work.*

*In the beginning we have large practices. Oss has around eighteen thousand inhabitants in 1940. After hiding the Jewish doctor Danby, who is the substitute for Doctor Frank, we are only four at the beginning of the war: the old Verbeek, L. Stoltz, the young Wasmann, who just succeeded his father, and I, the newcomer Fontein. [...]*

*I bring a motorcycle from Zundert that repeatedly refuses service: greasy spark plugs! (Pietje Verbruggen is my helper and support). At that time he is still shoeing horses in the alley next to Cunen; the same street where Desseaux weaves his first rugs in a rented warehouse. On Piet's advice I always carry spark plugs in my pocket which I first cleaned at home. While on the go (en route) I can swap them quickly. The greasy spark plug then goes into the other bag. Yet it is*

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<sup>22</sup> NIMH, Archives KL, Prague Collection 74051, Security assignment Ortskdtr. 'S-Hertogenbosch

<sup>23</sup> C. Fontein F. Fontein-Eldering, I think it is enough, Memories of 40 years of medical practice in Oss, publisher C. Fontein, editor Jos Neomagus, print Wim Janssen, 1978, P1 - 14

*sometimes necessary to walk beside the motorbike to get the engine working again. "Isn't it working?" I get to hear. "No, I walk for fun. Otherwise I will get too fat, is always my answer".*

# The companies in Oss

## Bergoss during the war<sup>24</sup>

Brief history of Bergoss. The company was founded in 1856 on Molenstraat as a cotton wool factory. The company was founded by Daniël van den Bergh (1794 - 1866) and his cousin Isaak van der Wielen. Over time, the company is continued by Jacob Daniël van den Bergh (1846 - 1921). The company name is then "Gebroeders van den Bergh", it is moved to Walstraat in May 1875. In 1888 the flourishing company was relocated to Klaphekenstraat. The factory halls with the saw-tooth roofs travel around 1900. The name is then "Noord-Brabantsche Stoomkapokfabriek" in Oss. They also own other companies outside Oss. In 1916 they started producing carpets in Oss. The N.V. Gebrs. Van den Bergh's Industry and Trading Company. On March 9, 1931, the company received the designation "Royal" and Bergoss also did not escape the crisis. It has always remained a family business until the end of its existence.

The Second World War started with direct consequences for Bergoss<sup>25</sup>. Trade with other countries must be stopped and claims there can no longer be collected. All family members resign on August 1, 1940 and the last on September 1, 1940 as leaders of the company. Henri E. P. van Dijk and Dirk Kalkman take their place, and Henri Coenrad Brinkman is appointed as a member of the Supervisory Board. They also take the shares of the family on the contract for this is dated 15 - 16 July 1940. Isaac van den Bergh resigns on 01 December 1940 as director and Jacob A. van den Bergh and Frederik C. remain as employees until 31 August 1941. On 1 September, the occupying authorities appointed S. Scheibler as "Verwalter" (administrator) of the N.V. Gebrs. Van den Bergh Royal Factories in Oss. Messrs. Van Dijk and Kalkman, however, know how to keep the company and protect it from takeovers.

Ir. H.E.P. van Dijk and D. Kalkman (*2019 Bergoss during the occupation 1940 - 1945*, Report on NV Van den Bergh's Kon. Factories in Oss) reports: "Our considerations include two parts: first, our difficulties with the German authorities, especially regarding the restructuring, secondly, the difficulties we had to overcome to keep the factories in operation."

There were quite a few challenges<sup>26</sup> and that is an understatement. Mr. A.J. and F.C. van den Bergh still walked around the site daily after the agreement, but had to withdraw after March 1941. This was due to claim 12-3-'41, 48/1941, in which companies that had undergone modifications after May 9, 1940. The occupier thought that when the company changed after 12 March from owner that they were fraud the system. Approval for these changes had to be requested. Everyone understood that it would only get worse in the future and it was decided to apply the tactics of "stretching." This delaying tactic was successfully applied until the end of the war. The request was met in June 1941 and the first interview took place on August 4, 1941. The management Dr. Brinkman and Dr. Küssel from the Wirtschaftsprüfstelle took this part.

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<sup>24</sup> Agnes Lewé, *Bergoss across the floor*, Stadsarchief Oss, ISBN 978-90-8962-238-9, uitgever Iris Berghem, januari 2018.

<sup>25</sup> Agnes Lewé, *Bergoss during the occupation 1940 - 1944*, Stories from the city archive 8, Stadsarchief Oss, Uitgever Stadsarchief Oss, January 2019.

<sup>26</sup> For details see: Agnes Lewé, *Bergoss during the occupation 1940 - 1944*, Stories from the city archive 8, City Archives Oss, Publisher City Archives Oss, January 2019.

On August 28, 1941, Mr. Siegfried Scheibler from Krefeld became 'Treuhänder'<sup>27</sup> (Trustee) of the Osse Company. Protests were filed because the company was no longer in Jewish hands, in accordance with the arrest. It was in vain. Mr. Scheibler understood what was going on and explicitly asked the management to continue to lead.

The agreement concluded with the family was not approved and a new one was due. As usual, parties also appeared who wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to their advantage. These came from both Germany and the Netherlands, including The Hague. It was decided to adjust the contract and submit it to the Wirtschaftsprüfstelle. Rudolf Strasser from The Hague was also kept at bay by deceit and deception. In 1943, on behalf of the Deutsche Revisions- und Treuhandgesellschaft (Trust company), the first audit took place and in November the second. In November, the Wirtschaftsprüfstelle (economic testing) asked for the confirmation that: "the company has neither a judicial influence nor a judicial participation in terms of personnel or capital." The year 1943 ended without anything further of importance in the German story. Unfortunately it was still war.

At the beginning of 1944 the occupying forces returned to action, a certain Dr. Hessmer was sent to the company. He started the investigation into the value of the company from 1940, to which both directors filed an objection. The argument: the company was largely on hold which was not the fault of the Bergoss management. To the great pleasure (satisfaction) of Ir. H.E.P. van Dijk and D. Kalkman the German stood his ground.

Ir. H.E.P. van Dijk and D. Kalkman (2019 *Bergoss during the 1940 - 1945 occupation*, Report on N.V. Van den Bergh's Kon. Factories in Oss) reports: *"On 24 March 1944 we had a final meeting with Hessmer. He informed us that he had calculated the value of the shares at f 1,045,808.67, but that the final determination depended on the NAGU<sup>28</sup>. When asked whether it was better to fix the price after the war ended, because they had a better view of the future, Hessmer replied: "dass könnte Ihnen so passen" ("that could suit you"). We then asked him if he did not believe in the final victory. "Ich wohl, aber Sie nicht" was his fierce answer. [...]("I do, but you don't") "On July 5, 1944, we were surprised by the statement from the Rüstungsinspektion (industry inspection) that our company was declared (unsolicited) as "S-Betrieb (Sperrbetrieb)". This meant that we did not have to hand over any of our staff for work in Germany or for work in the Netherlands for the benefit of the Germans".*

Ir. H.E.P. van Dijk and D. Kalkman also abused the over-organization of the Germans. One office often did not know what the other was doing and they used that to their advantage. Finally in August 1944 both directors followed the advice of one Mr. Schultz to await the developments for the time being. And as they mention in their report, they were certainly planning to do that already. They agreed that everything could be gained by waiting. By the time the NAGU had expired, the Germans had already fled and Oss was about to be liberated.

## Company (Bergoss) 2

At the beginning of the war, raw materials were still used. There was enough supply and it did not look worrying for the future until then. But as time went on, there was nevertheless a lack of resources.

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<sup>27</sup> German receivers (administrators, trustees) who during the Second World War in the Netherlands and elsewhere ran the government of either looted Jewish companies or companies that were recognized as important for warfare.

<sup>28</sup> Niederländische Aktiengesellschaft für Abwicklung von Unternehmungen (NAGU).

Ir. H.E.P. van Dijk and D. Kalkman (2019 *Bergoss during the occupation 1940 - 1945*, Report concerning NV Van den Bergh's Kon. Factories in Oss) reports: "The railways and bridges damaged by war actions were urgently restored, but Oss was isolated for many months, and transport at that time presented almost insurmountable difficulties. A few years later, when the railways no longer had sufficient material, these difficulties once again made themselves felt.

*Already in 1940 the rising demand for and the falling supply of industrial products started to take hold. Competition faded and that collegiality increased, mainly because the growing business difficulties were experienced by all manufacturers to a greater or lesser extent. These sought and found mutual support in the existing associations of industrialists, who, among other things, performed important work in the application for and the distribution of the raw materials and substitutes allocated by the now established State Bureau. [...] "If ever, as became apparent in these years, that only personal initiative - no matter how restricted- could find ways and means to make the company survive these times. The forced relations of our complicated company, which consists of several different branches, with the Government Offices and their sections and with the business organization, were therefore very intensive. We were thus registered with no fewer than 12 National Offices and 14 sections and in the Industry Main Group with 4 business groups, 7 departments and 7 sub-groups! The correspondence with this, the surveys, notifications and instructions sometimes had the character of an avalanche, but were always dealt with promptly by us".*

Miraculously, there was an increasing demand for the products and it was difficult to meet them. The biggest problem came when they threatened to have no coal anymore. Allocation of coal came from the National Coal Office and that was a meagre size. On September 1, 1941 things went wrong when the director of the Rijkstextielbureau J.A. Panhuizen felt that Bergoss was no longer "lebenswichtig" "vital". By switching to burning wood at a certain moment, the problem lost some of its importance. Wood could be traded freely.

There was also a shortage of raw materials, when they switched to artificial silk, paper yarn, and paper ticking<sup>29</sup>, chicken feathers, flax beard<sup>30</sup>, sea grass and later straw. Cotonine<sup>31</sup> was used for filter cotton. It is clear that other producers also faced the same problems. Because Bergoss made many different products, that was a disaster for the occupiers. The Germans wanted to record everything thoroughly but did not understand that a company like Bergoss could be so chaotic. They weren't in the least, but the confusion did work to their advantage to keep the company open. They were considered 'Lebenswichtig'!

At a certain moment, somewhere in 1943, management decided not to open organizations' unregistered letters anymore. They simply disappeared into the trash, they were never delivered to Bergoss, a creative case of civil disobedience.

#### Personnel problems

Ir. H.E.P. van Dijk and D. Kalkman (2019 *Bergoss during the occupation 1940 - 1945*, Report on N.V. Van den Bergh's Kon. Factories in Oss) reports: "In 1942, the combing through (searching) of the companies and the 'wreckage' of the workers began. Our employees have come out well. Thanks to the use of all kinds of cunning, we have only had to donate a small percentage, among which in the

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<sup>29</sup> Ticking is the fabric that is applied like a skin around the core of a mattress. The cover consists of a cotton layer, a fleece that prevents the filling from coming out, and a cotton cloth to finish.

<sup>30</sup> All animal, vegetable and artificial fibers, cellulose, intended for the artificial silk industry, spinning paper and processed bollard or flax beard, as well as all yarns made there from.

<sup>31</sup> Cotonine (German: Flockenbast) is the collective name for short-fiber ("cotton-like") material made from flax or hemp by making these raw materials more or less completely disintegrate into elemental fibers by means of some special chemical treatment. Flax waste.

*first place most of the N.S.B.(members) and N.A.F. members, who, incidentally, were very few of our staff. They were nevertheless considered to be sympathetic to the new order”.*

Not everyone appeared to be equally reliable due to the scarcity and there were rotten apples among the staff as well. By lending staff, the meat processors and Philips were kept functioning. These companies were therefore ‘lebenswichtig’ and ‘Kriegswichtig’. Both directors praise the staff that proved to be reliable.

Even Bergoss continued to develop new production processes and machines. Patents were applied for but were stolen from them just as well.

Justice could not be expected from Germany. Here too they tried to stretch things out through court cases and the hope that the war would one day stop. Due to the poor diet, absenteeism also increased. They tried to prevent this at Bergoss through supplementary feeding. It did entail extra costs.

### **Carpet factory Desseaux <sup>32</sup>**

In the summer of 1936 a building on the Philips grounds was leased to the firm ‘Manufacture Mouscronnoise de tapis Moquettes’. It was building B, the part where the metal ware was established at that time. This ‘Desseaux’ (DESSO) company already existed in Belgium and now tried to found a subsidiary in Oss. Oss, which was not used too much anymore in the industrial field, welcomed the Belgians with open arms. Who knows, maybe something good would come of it, they reasoned. And we know that it did. DESSO has gone from Oss but still exists.

Various people from Oss could be given jobs. The company went well, it had potential. It is a pity that the war here became a disturber (troublemaker) and the company came to a standstill due to lack of material. After the war, Desseaux started the production again.

In 1946 a new factory was built on the Molenweg with the assistance of the Marshall Help plan. When the first building of the then large DESSO factory was ready they immediately moved in.

The carpet factory in Oss closed its doors in 2003 and 70 people lost their jobs. The production was transferred to the Desso location in Waasmunster. Oss remained the base for the construction teams of the sports field division of Desso. The artificial grass carpets are produced in Dendermonde. Carpet tiles are still (2020) produced at the Waalwijk site.

In 2008, Desso<sup>33</sup> had about 1000 employees and factories in Waalwijk, Oss and Sint-Gillis-bij-Dendermonde. The current product range (2020) consists of carpets, carpet tiles, artificial grass tiles, artificial grass mats and artificial grass.

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<sup>32</sup> J.J. Rikken, *Memories of The First 15 years of Philips Oss*, offered to Ir P. Ch. Kenninck the Eighth Director. On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Philips Oss. 1929 - 1969, P17 – 18.

<sup>33</sup> Note writer: In 2007, Armstrong sold the company to NPM Capital NV, which is part of SHV Holdings. Armstrong had come into trouble through an asbestos affair in the United States. Thus Desso came into Dutch hands and Stef Kranendijk became the manager.

## Organon during the war<sup>34</sup>

It is September 1939. Poland has been conquered by the Germans and Russians. The tension in The Netherlands is increasing rapidly.

On March 18, 1939, it was decided to set up a committee that would form the mobilization office. The committee consisted of Mr. Kober, Mr. Reppmann, Mr. Lens and Mr. Prinsen Geerligs. The Mijdrecht location entered into force in May 1940. Valuable preparations such as Insulin and Menformon in the form of dry powders were also stored in the safe of the Amsterdam Bank.

Saal van Zwanenberg lived at that time in The Hague. In 1932 he was appointed director of the Pig Centre, a body established by law with the aim of giving pig farmers in pitiful circumstances the necessary support from the government. The mobilization agency decided that shelter trenches should be dug. In the event of an air alarm, anyone who had no function had to go as quickly as possible to hide in the trench. That air alarm came from very close, because the post commander and his group had set up an observation post on one of the tallest buildings in the city, the Organon factory. On August 28, 1939, people started digging the trench. Whoever owned a shovel was asked to Organon<sup>35</sup> to take it with him.

I don't know if the trench was used by the workers of Organon, but Marius Tausk (*Organon The History of a special Dutch company*, 1978) reports: *"A few years later I was standing next to our German acting manager, Dr. Zastrow, just looking out the window, when we saw a German soldier appear from the trench followed by a sluttish woman. This triggered Mr. Zastrow's remark": "Jetzt weiss ich was "hiding" bedeutet"*.

At the end of 1939, everyone was very worried about ensuring production in the event of war. The foreign branches also had to continue to operate. Last but not least, there were concerns about a certain group of employees who were more at risk than others. On November 8th the Grebbe Line was put under water and on November 9th all military leave was withdrawn. Marius Tausk and his family moves from Nijmegen to Hotel van Alem on 22 November and stays there.

Three weeks before the German invasion of Poland, Mr. Gispén returns from his trip there. He reports on the situation there, of which Marius Tausk is deeply impressed.

Marius Tausk (*Organon The History of a Special Dutch Company*, 1978) reports: *"It is difficult for the visitor to escape the impression that people in Poland are currently dealing with a people who are preparing for war with a restrained composure. The word war is practically continually used. Whatever is said, one always hears the typical: "Wenn es keinen Krieg gibt". Of course, everything is done on the part of the government to stimulate nationalism; one imagines himself, when in Warsaw, in some German city, with the difference that one does not hear Heil! Everything is flags, military bands, images of Pilsudski and Smigly-Rydz. In one word: provoked nationalism, as we know this from dictatorial states"*.

So it didn't go well there. How would The Netherlands fare under the German occupation? In the meantime we know that. It was January 1940 and it was really severe frost, in Finland it was even colder. The Finns had been stubbornly resisting the Russians with a small army since 30 November. In Oss near Organon, people were wondering should there be no production in England? That would go well, but it would also give you trouble with patents, but those problems could be overcome.

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<sup>34</sup> Marius Tausk, *Organon The History of a Special Dutch Company*, 1978 Dekker & Van de Vegt Nijmegen, ISBN 90 255 9901 X, Printing: Van Gorcum B.V. Assen, Chapters 40 to 58.

<sup>35</sup> Marius Tausk, *Organon The History of a Special Dutch Company*, 1978 Dekker & Van de Vegt Nijmegen, ISBN 90 255 9901 X, Printing: Van Gorcum B.V. Assen, P 170.

Organon May 10, it is war

Marius Tausk (*Organon The History of a Special Dutch Company*, 1978) reports: “On Friday morning at about 5 o'clock there was a staggering noise from rattles and some sort of flapping machine. I woke up and saw the sky full of twin-engine bombers flying west. For an hour there were continuously around 120 or 140 in the piece of sky that I could see from my window. They flew at an altitude of about 2000 m quite slowly and one of them was brought down by anti-aircraft guns, like the once placed on the roofs of buildings in Oss.

*When I was able to get to a radio device around 6 o'clock, we heard messages with just a few minutes in between, what kind of paratroopers had landed and how quickly they were cleared away. The closest were near Ravenstein, a town on the Maas between Oss and Nijmegen.*

*Around 8 o'clock we were all together in the company, with the exception of those living in Nijmegen, an open city that was immediately cut off from the rest of the country by the destruction of all bridges. Among them were Kober and Boerrigter. Nobody was allowed on the road, telephone and telegraph offices were closed, but with difficulty we were able to get telephone connections through the police station Note: Meaning the Marechaussee barracks. The army controlled everything and took over what it found useful. The English visitors who were at Organon could be brought to IJmuiden and went home by boat. Several important employees were absent. Prinsen Geerligs was a reserve officer among the weapons, De Fremery and Lens worked as reserve officers in a laboratory of the artillery facility in Delft and investigated gas-protective clothing for permeability to mustard gas.*

*They wanted the Mijdrecht team to leave as quickly as possible. As many manufacturing ~~rules~~ instructions as possible had to be burned if necessary, duplicates were in London. Around 2 p.m. the team left for Mijdrecht on a flatbed truck. The government announced on the radio not to leave home to prevent chaos. Marius Tausk also thought of leaving. [...]*

*My hesitation ended very early on Saturday morning. A senior police officer, Mr. A. Keultjes, worked at the Osse municipal police, whom we had gotten to know a bit better in recent months because he lived three houses away from us and a daughter of his came to play with us regularly. This Mr. Keultjes - who apparently, like many others, assumed that I was Jewish - came to me very early in the morning on 11 May with a statement to the effect: if you still want to leave, you must now go; the Germans are already at Grave across the Maas. The extent to which this message was actually correct is irrelevant here. The manner in which I received it and the timing had a kind of shock effect, which contributed at least as much to my impulsive decision as my formal obligation to go to the fortress Holland”.*

The manufacturing instructions and other papers were not burned. Reppmann had them buried in crates on a still undeveloped part of factory grounds “The Polder”. Even months later there was sand in all kinds of files. The wines for the manufacture of Orgatonicum had been drained into the sewer.

Saal van Zwanenberg and his family were still alive and still lived in The Hague. He had come to know the diplomat Dr. C.M. Gurmendéz from Uruguay and knew that he could go there in case of emergency. That happened and Saal van Zwanenberg was appointed Consul of Uruguay. Mr. and Mrs. Zwanenberg received diplomatic passports. They had no trouble leaving the country; the policy of Germany was to remove all foreign diplomats as quickly as possible from The Netherlands. On July 16, Saal and his family left with about 150 people for Portugal to travel to Uruguay from there.



On October 14, a notarial deed was signed for the Dutch Consul General in London, which had been approved the week before. That was done by the Minister of Justice P. S. Gerbrandy. N.V. Organon was now based in Willemstad, Curacao. Management in The Netherlands was thereby deprived of the powers of Organon companies abroad.

Organon May to November

Churchill had just given a heroic speech on June 4 containing the famous piece;

*"[...] we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills, we shall never surrender<sup>36</sup> [...]"*.

It gave everyone courage and hope that freedom would be fought for them somewhere in the world. At Organon people started to suffer from the occupier. The seventh issue of the "Regulation for the Occupied Dutch Territory" was published on 27 June. Including the "Claim of the Reich Commissioner [...] concerning the treatment of enemy assets".

For example, N.V. Zwanenberg's Factories, Organon's largest shareholder. According to Article 13 of the Regulation, managers of such assets could be appointed to guarantee and conserve assets. This was the "Generalkommissar für Finanz und Wirtschaft". Such a manager was in charge of the overall management of the company and was accountable only to the aforementioned German Commissioner General. No one could doubt at the end of June that the appointment of a German manager was imminent.

Effective November 21, 1940, Dr. Konrad Eduard Duden, employee of the Legal Department of Schering A.G. in Berlin, accepted the position of Manager, Verwalter, of the N.V. Organon. A company that fell under the definition of hostile assets. He only held this position until 10 November 1941. Then his position was changed. He became Treuhänder, a word that requires much explanation, not for an enemy, but for a Jewish enterprise.

## Organon under German management

On April 22, 1941 a "Verwalter" was later appointed "Treuhänder" at Zwanenberg, it was Paul Horlborg. He had a plate with the text applied to the facade of the office building<sup>37</sup>; "Juden und Judenknechten ist der Zutritt zur Fabrik verboten". At Organon, it could have been worse.

Every effort was made to have Professor Laqueur emigrate even at the Schering Company in Germany. It didn't help and Laqueur stayed. It was not bad for the company. Professor Laqueur did not have to sell his shares to Zwanenberg, read, the occupier.

Sale of Organon

Marius Tausk (*Organon The History of a Special Dutch Company*, 1978) reports: "We have already noted that the word "Treuhänder" is one that still requires a lot of explanation. (This cannot really be said of the Dutch term "administrator".) A "Treuhänder" is someone whose faithful hands have been entrusted with something. Of course, according to the aforementioned regulation, this trusting was not done by the Jewish owner and it was not his interests that the Treuhänder had to look after

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<sup>36</sup> [...] Wij zullen op de stranden vechten, wij zullen op de vliegvelden vechten, wij zullen op de akkers en in de straten vechten, wij zullen in de heuvels vechten, wij zullen ons nooit overgeven [...]

<sup>37</sup> J. Presser, *Ondergang, The persecution and extermination of Dutch Judaism 1940-1945*, 1st part, pp. 120-121, The Hague, Staatsuitgeverij 1965.

*"with the care of a good administrator". On the contrary, the Treuhänder was allowed to perform all acts that the business entails and he could therefore also sell the company wholly or partially. The purchase price certainly did not get the Jewish owner.*

*The Germans had set up their own company in The Netherlands for the large-scale sale of Jewish companies, the Niederländische Aktiengesellschaft für Abwicklung von Unternehmungen (NAGU). In addition to Dr. Duden, who had already been appointed Treuhänder of Organon on 10 November 1941 on the basis of the "Jews removal regulation", also became NAGU on 18 February 1942 as the second, so-called Veräußerungstreuhänder<sup>38</sup> appointed. Together they now had the task of determining how Organon could best be sold to the only candidate, Schering A.G. That Dr. Duden did not make a big deal of wondering which chair he would sit on, Organon's or Schering's, it seems clear to me.*

Due to prior trading, several shares of Zwanenberg were still held by Saal van Zwanenberg. On December 16, 1942, the former daughter company of Organon, DEGEWOP, bought up Organon. The fact that not all shares were physically present was apparently no problem for the German occupier.

Dr. Duden left and appointed the Scheringemployé Dr. Siegfried Zastrow as his substitute. After the approval of the amendment of the articles of association by the Dutch Ministry of Justice in The Hague, the management of Organon was dismissed on January 23, 1944. Organon was no longer under "German management", but had become a subsidiary of the Schering Group in Berlin. The war was almost four years old at the time and a lot had happened at Organon.

In the meantime, Organon's branches were operating abroad: America; Mexico; Brazil; and Argentina.

## **Organon, the fate of the Jewish workers**

It was September 1941 when Dr. Duden sent a list to The Hague with the names of Jewish employees. At least those who were considered Jewish. There were 23 and that was about 6% of the staff. They were generally highly trained staff doctors and professors. In the end, ten (10) of them did not survive the war. Sixteen of the 23 were fired in December 1941. On November 13, Duden sent a list with nine (9) names holding an exceptional position to the Sicherheitspolizei. This was in the event of the arrest of "large numbers of Jews" to prevent Organon's work and investigation from coming to a halt. Marius Tausk argues in his book<sup>39</sup> for Dr. Duden who, he writes, did what he could to help the people.

Marius Tausk (*Organon The History of a Special Dutch Company, 1978*) reports: *"Undoubtedly, several friends, acquaintances and colleagues at the time wondered whether and why I did not appear on the lists of Jewish employees, and some might do so now. The historian, who at that time had a not insignificant position in the company, should not evade that question and. The question about my descent was one of the first that Dr. Duden suggested to me when he accepted the management of Organon. I replied to him that I was registered at the Oss town hall as someone with two Jewish grandparents and therefore did not have the bad J on my identity card. To the further question, if I could show all the necessary papers when asked, I replied that I was still waiting for the baptismal certificate of one of my grandparents born somewhere in Central Europe. I*

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<sup>38</sup> Veräußerung is perhaps best translated by "alienation".

<sup>39</sup> Marius Tausk, *Organon The History of a Special Dutch Company, 1978* Dekker & Van de Vegt Nijmegen, ISBN 90 255 9901 X, Printing: Van Gorcum B.V. Assen, P228 - 229.

*thank you for the Dr. Duden offered Schering's assistance in tracing the missing paper".*

Unfortunately the situation was different for the neighbour of Zwanenberg's canning factory. Treuhänder Paul Holborg already told the various authorities on 13 August 1941 that they are "Jew-free as of today".

Supplementary food was also supplied to the workers of Organon during the war<sup>40</sup>.

## **Steam bakery "De Ster" Firm Ploegmakers**

Johannes Franciscus Ploegmakers was the mayor of the municipality at the outbreak of the war. He died, however, in January 1941 and was succeeded on May 15, 1941 by L.J.H.C.A. de Bourbon. The deceased mayor was one of the Ploegmakers brothers of De Koekfabriek (gingerbread factory) De Ster. They are an old Osse family of whom a certain Vreijnss, Geritss and Ploechmaeker were already mentioned in 1625.

In the nineteenth century this family lived on the Amsteleind. The factory started in 1903 in the Kerkstraat opposite the Grote Kerk (Big Church, nickname for the Church of The Immaculate Conception of Mary), next to the home of Frans Jurgens, diagonally opposite the former Wehberg store. The brothers Henricus Petrus and Johannes Franciscus Ploegmakers start the gingerbread factory "De Ster". On 23 September 1911 a building permit was issued for the construction of a ~~biscuit~~ gingerbread bakery in Monsterstraat 3. In 1913 the company was established there. These were the former premises of Arnold J. Jurgens (1858 - 1915); the street is at that time still called the horse's street because of horse inspections at that location. Presently, in 2019, the street is called Monsterstraat. It means inspecting horses. This building also used to house the dance school of Cor van Rongen Sr. and Jr. Miens Eethuis (eatery) is established here, it will stop in February 2020. The factory was behind this building.

The gingerbread factory moved again in 1919, now to the vacant factory of Meijer van Leeuwen in the Molenstraat. It was a margarine factory that could no longer compete with Jurgens. The gingerbread factory, which used a star as its logo, introduced famous brands of gingerbread such as "Fruitcake, Filled Candy Cake, Non Plus Ultra (it couldn't be better), Honey Breakfast Cake, De Ster and Brabant's Roem. In 1925 the selling price of the gingerbread was between 22 and 45 cents.

## **The Star during the Second World War**

A bakery unit, a Heeresbäckerei, was introduced in the De Ster factory. Oss thus became of great importance to the occupier for the management and issue of these goods<sup>41</sup>.

*Verpflegungsausgabestellen* were set up at the warehouses and the bakery. The workforce consisted of around 90 people, bakers, butchers and administrative staff. They were assigned to Nachschub-Battailon 609, under the leadership of Oberleutnant, later Hauptmann (captain), Frank.

The factory was closed in the 1950s, after which the building was purchased by Mepro (store panelling). This characteristic factory building was demolished in 1983. There is now an apartment complex with a pharmacy below and the doctor's office "De Lievenkamp".

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<sup>40</sup> Ernst Hoonakker, Pharma Copy, 11 (1), P11 - 13, January 1983, In: Made in Oss, Stories from behind the blue wall, The Christmas package P80, final editing by Gé Ruigt, publisher Memorylaneorganon, printing company Lai-graphics Oss, June 2011.

<sup>41</sup> Note writer; warehouses also mean the warehouses of Hartog, Zwanenberg and Philips. Huge amounts of luxury items were stored at Philips.

## Philips establishment Oss

Just before the start of the Second World War, Philips Oss did not do too badly. The government had decided to invest in defence again and many new barracks were built. You already understand the floodlights FLM and FLH came from Oss. Also lighting for other similar projects was obtained (purchased) at Philips. There was quite a bit of work available for the staff.

From 1937 to 1938 they were also joined by the Zwanenberg firm. Space was rented by Zwanenberg to store "crisis meat". Due to the crisis and the resulting stagnating export, Zwanenberg was busy slaughtering surplus cattle.

J.J. Rikken (Memories Of The First 15 Years Philips Oss<sup>42</sup>) reports: *"Thus, it was decided by the government to slaughter a certain percentage of livestock and canning the meat for the unemployed. People were given the opportunity to buy this canned meat at a low price. The price for one kg of canned meat was NLG 0.25. The meat was of good quality, perhaps not as perfectly treated as normal, but it tasted good. Many unemployed people who were on welfare, could not afford the 25 cents, so the meat sometimes changed hands. However, there was not much enthusiasm for it, because the name "crisis meat" had left its mark as "lesser quality". But for those cans, scattered here and there during the 1940/1945 war, people easily paid 30 guilders each.*

With the mobilization in 1939, buildings from Philips requisitioned and resulted on soldiers being on the site. The factory site was converted into an army site. The "Celsior" building of the Jurgens butter factory turned into a horse stable. But also elsewhere, were soldiers quartered in Oss, in schools and with private individuals. It also had its advantage because where soldiers are is entertainment and the people of Oss benefited.

J.J. Rikken (Memories of The First 15 Years of Philips Oss) reports: *"It was typical of that time that every evening a line of people were waiting at the gate to get the leftovers from the kitchen. Sometimes this degenerated into heated arguments as who was first in line. Exactly on time the gate was opened by the sentry. It was as if the floodgates were opened, the way the people ran inside. This was impossible, so it was soon stopped by letting people enter in small groups. For Philips, the soldiers caused no problems, although a few girls found their life partner here. The work just went on".*

With the current assignments it also went better, as you can read. Everyone in The Netherlands wanted things to be right before things went wrong and Philips benefited.

## Philips 10 May 1940

Everyone knew that there was something wrong; people had come to the company. The soldiers were leaving in long lines and left quite a few things behind. As Mr. Rikken explained, the director, Mr. Zwegers talked to the people. The salary of the employees had already been prepared long beforehand and now that the time had come, everyone was given two weeks' pay. The factory was closed until further notice and luckily no one was fired.

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<sup>42</sup> J.J. Rikken, *Memories of The First 15 Years of Philips Oss*, offered to Ir P. Ch. Kenninck the Eighth Director. On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Philips Oss. 1929 - 1969, P18 – 35.

A few weeks later production started again. The ladies were also able to get back to work and for the time being there were enough parts in stock. Furthermore, people were so creative that solutions were devised for challenges. In Oss, the occupying forces had not been bothered yet, but in Eindhoven it was already starting to become a "Weermachtbedrijf". As Mr. Rikken writes, Oss got some fringe-benefits here. Radio tubes were made for German submarines, in Oss they created "feet" with rubber rings for the radio tubes. Unpacking and packing was more work than the actual process.

J.J. Rikken (Memories of the First 15 Years of Philips Oss) reports: *"The Germans came to exercise control over such work. I once overheard a conversation between 2 officers. One of them could not understand that for such a little bit of work such a long way had to be travelled; from Eindhoven to Oss and back again. But the other managed to convince him that Oss was specialized in this type of work. We had to laugh secretly; those gentlemen had certainly never heard of a "Slow down action".*

Philips Eindhoven was bombed on December 6, 1942, which is why Philips is diversifying the production and Oss was the perfect place to do that. Buildings were vacant again; the companies Klip and Zwanenberg had left.

J.J. Rikken (Memories of the First 15 Years of Philips Oss) reports: *"People were hired to unload the wagons and store everything in the warehouses. The girls were given a lot of work by ironing drawings and bills of materials that had been saved from the archives, but had suffered water damage. In the meantime, the food shortage became apparent. Some companies provided hot food in the afternoon, mainly in those companies that were important for the German army. Philips Oss now also belonged to the group that was somewhat eligible. We received the food from Zwanenberg and we called it "Philiprak" in imitation of Eindhoven. At first the food was consumed in the department, but it soon became apparent that there was a need for a cafeteria. The previously described "Celsior" building was still intact. The walls around it had long been demolished, because during the mobilization this building had served as a stable for the Dutch army. Now it was renovated and transformed into a beautiful cafeteria. A great asset for the staff, who now had their own recreation room. Most people remained in the afternoon due to the provision of hot food. It was also in this building that Mr. van Heukelom was honoured for his 25-year service anniversary. Naturally, the entire staff was present here".*

The production of radio tubes was transferred to Oss; the fixtures had to make way for it. The so-called smelting furnaces and pipes were installed. After a short time, the radio tube department was running. Philips Oss now completely belonged to the Wehrmacht. That had advantages and disadvantages. The advantages were that quite a few people were working at Philips. But as the story shows, there were also people who withdrew this way from the "Arbeitseinsatz".

The Arbeitseinsatz (Labour commitment) was the German name for forced labour. This historical term refers in particular to the period of the Third Reich among the Nazis, from 1933-1945. During the German occupation of The Netherlands, from May 1943, the Germans also officially introduced the Arbeitseinsatz in our country.

Whether he sabotaged or not, once inside Philips a person could move as free as a bird. He had a pass and could go wherever he wanted. But unfortunately there were also N.S.B.-ers who wanted to be protected from work in Germany.

My father also suffered that fate and fortunately survived. He was employed in Oberhausen at a graphite factory that supplied that product for the steel industry. The allied forces did not like that at all and regularly bomb Oberhausen. To the detriment of my father, foreigners like him were not

allowed in the shelters, only, very exceptionally, if there was room left. He experienced very anxious moments because of this.

Porters in uniform also came from the security service in Eindhoven. A fire watch was set up; this team consisted of around 10 people. Sandbags and buckets were also installed in all-buildings to fight fires. At this moment looking back in time, there has never been a fire.

The Germans requested more space again, this time for provisions for the Wehrmacht.

J.J. Rikken (Memories of the First 15 Years of Philips Oss) reports: *“The Germans came to claim space for food, etc., for the benefit of their army. The first floor of building F and the buildings that the firm Klip had managed were claimed for it. Soon these buildings were crammed with all kinds of articles, such as canned meat, flour, liquor, smoking materials, etc. Strictly guarded by the "schutzwache", these were soldiers rejected for the front, but suitable for security service, these buildings were inaccessible to unauthorized persons. The people, who worked there, for loading, unloading and supervision, were N.S.B. -ers. We were sometimes allowed to look at the loading and unloading, but getting a finger on the goodies was not an option. Situated in our fixtures department on the first floor we were just above them and were as such confronted daily with those wonderful things.”*

The production of fixtures continued as well as it went, certainly with an eye to the future. No one doubted that there would eventually be an end to the war. A new luminaries, fixtures factory would then be established. Various test products were also made for future tube lamp lighting. The newly appointed chief, Mr. Lonkhuyzen, did not have an easy task. He had to compromise with friend and foe to keep everything going. His staff showed total solidarity!

On "Dolle dinsdag" (Crazy Tuesday), 5 September 1944, the Verwaltung (administration, management) of the Philips group had left the head office in Eindhoven and had moved to Oss<sup>43</sup>. There, an order was given for the robbery of the production equipment from the Osse site. Philips own personnel was forced, under the supervision of a group of around twenty military technicians, to cooperate and to load the equipment into a few available train wagons. Even before the train was loaded, the "Verwalters" left with a large load of food from the warehouse, towards Germany. The disposal of the equipment to Germany never happened.

J.J. Rikken (Memories of the First 15 Years of Philips Oss) reports: *“The Royal Air Force (RAF) apparently received a tip, saying, where the Philips people had not succeeded, they would get it done. They were present when a train departed from Oss in the evening with materials and presses. There were 3 fighter planes. First they flew over the train a few times, the driver stopped, the people all fled. This happened between Oss and Berghem. Philips people were also on that train and could tell it later in all detail. Soon the fighters came back and shot the locomotive and the train powerless. The train stood there, blocking everything and remained there until after the liberation”.*

### **Philips and the alcohol abuse<sup>44</sup>**

J.J. Rikken (Memories of The First 15 Years of Philips Oss) reports: *“One event from those turbulent days is worth mentioning. We, the Philips people had long watched the loading and unloading of those wonderful things without ever having the chance to get hold of anything. We had already*

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<sup>43</sup> NIOD, Archief illegaliteit, dossier 190a, Groep Albrecht, map 13E

<sup>44</sup> J.J. Rikken, *Memories of The First 15 Years of Philips Oss*, offered to Ir P. Ch. Kenninck the Eighth Director. On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Philips Oss. 1929 - 1969, P29 – 31.

*discovered by different means, where the bottle baskets with liquor were stored. We just had to wait for the right opportunity. Due to the events of the last days, the alertness of the "schutzwacht" was a bit slack. One afternoon, when they were sitting at the front, talking about the chances of war, it was for us: "Now or never"! Via the forge one could reach, with a ladder, the roof of the buildings where the bottles were.*

*A few roof tiles were removed quickly; a rope with a hook had long ago been put together. A few men stood on the lookout, a few on the roof, and in no time there was a bottle downstairs. A big one of 25 litres! Closing the hole, removing the ladder and hiding the bottle was a matter of minutes. We spread out if nothing had happened. A while later the main porter came with a worried face. There was a man at the gate who stated that he had seen from the outside that someone had pulled a bottle through the roof of the warehouse. That man wanted to blackmail us, he also needed some of it, and otherwise he would report it to the Germans. We played stupid, pretended we were not aware of any wrongdoing. He would have been mistaken and tried this that was our argument. The porter indeed managed to convince the man that nothing was wrong and he disappeared. This danger had passed, but now it was time to be extra careful.*

*When all was quiet again, it was possible to divide the loot. We soon found empty bottles. Each received a bottle full, the rest was hidden again. But it was just the same with us as Noah from the Bible with his wine. The stuff we had acquired was incredibly strong. Because we hadn't had liquor for so long, there were soon a few who passed out. No problem, we put them somewhere in a quiet place to sleep off their intoxication. Worse was that one man went crazy from that liquor in his head. He raged and ranted, "He would put those bad guys in their place to take all that good stuff away from us." Good advice was expensive; this had to be avoided at every price. After much effort, we succeeded in restraining the man and calming him somewhat. He had to leave as soon as possible. However he could not leave through the gate. Then just behind the forge over the wall. He agreed that someone would take him home by bike. Bicycle over the wall, man over the wall, and that was it. They returned home without any accidents. It had been an exciting afternoon".*

And so the war passed by Philips Oss slowly but surely. More about the story of Philips on September 19th further up.

## **1942 Titus Brandsma<sup>45</sup>**

Titus Brandsma has meant a lot to Oss. Due to his actions, some education and social life were set in motion, and the public library was also created by Titus. From 04 May 1919 Titus was a member of the editorial staff of the newspaper, "De Stad Oss, newspaper for Oss and surroundings". He refused to place advertisements and such from the occupier; he also urged the other Catholic newspapers to do the same. As chairman of the Association of Boards of Catholic Schools, he has a clear answer to the occupier's decree to deny all Jewish children access to education. On behalf of the bishops he communicates; *"That the church will not distinguish between gender, race or people."* The occupier was not exactly happy with that and consequences were imminent.

On Sunday, May 4, 1919 "The City Oss, news magazine for Oss and surroundings" appears under Titus' leadership in a new jacket. In his first editorial, Titus brings strong attention to the magazine: *"But who in the present and the time will not appreciate a powerful magazine? Who does not see how necessary it is in these times to make the Press strong, and not the least the local Press?"* The City of Oss is distributed for free throughout the month. Eight pages, twice a week. Many of the articles on important social and political topics are from Titus' hand.

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<sup>45</sup> Rotary Club Oss-Maasland, *Foundations*, historic force fields in the city of Oss, Pre-press Drukkerij Buuts Nistelrode, Druk Kampert Drukwerk Oss, 2008, [www.rotary-oss-maasland.nl](http://www.rotary-oss-maasland.nl)

It is not the only Osse activity in which Titus makes a statement. He emerges as a driving planner, a man who has had a major influence on social life in Oss. It is the citizen and the bourgeoisie as a collective-to which Titus is so strongly committed during and after his Osse period.

Titus Brandsma Lyceum (TBL)

From Villa Josina to Titus Brandsma Lyceum (TBL).

Even before the First World War there were plans to establish a "Hogere burgerschool" (HBS) Civic School in Oss. The bishop of Den Bosch gave his permission in October 1913. It takes until 1923, partly thanks to Titus' obtained government subsidy, that the HBS actually materializes.

One explicit condition is attached to the estate: Villa Josina had to be designated as a school building but soon becomes too small. Between the end of 1926 and April 1928 the present impressive building at Molenstraat 30 will be placed adjacent to the villa. The school is named after Titus Brandsma in 1948.

Titus manages to realize another ideal in 1921, a public library and reading room. Initially in a small hall at the Heuvel and later in Villa Josina. Bringing good literature to people and developing the Catholic population; that's what Titus was all about. In 1924 he is appointed librarian and censor, which he will remain for four years. Shortly after its establishment, 1000 books are already being requested every month for reading.

Before 1940 Titus was already known to the Germans<sup>46</sup>, because he was critical of the regime. In mid-1936 he became a member of the "Committee of Vigilance against National Socialism". He did not hide his opinion during his philosophy lectures. Titus saw early on where the National Socialists would go. After his 14th visit to a newspaper editor, Titus is arrested on January 19, 1942 in the Doddendaal monastery in Nijmegen.

He is transferred to cell 577 in the "Oranje Hotel" in Scheveningen. His stay has a positive side; he relaxes there and writes his cell memos memories "My cell" and "Day order of a prisoner". After six weeks he is transferred to Amersfoort and the Polizeiliches Durchgangslager. He is the strong support for fellow prisoners. From here he goes to the prison in Kleve and then to Konzentrationslager Dachau concentration camp Dachau. His poor health cannot cope with the hardships of camp life. The Jews were already having a very bad time there, but Catholic priests were treated even worse. On July 26, 1942 at 2 p.m. a deadly injection ends the life of Titus Brandsma.

In 1960 the monument was erected at the TBL and in 1982 he receives the Resistance Heroes Cross posthumously. Titus Brandsma was beatified by Pope John Paul II on November 3, 1985. On November 06, 2015, Titus Brandsma became honorary citizen of Oss 73 years after his death.

In front of the statue of the priest, in the garden on the Molenstraat of the TBL, is a steel column. A column in the form of a desk with the certificate and the medal on top. There is a memento in the Titus Brandsma room in the town hall.

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<sup>46</sup> L. (Lou) de Jong, *The Kingdom of the Netherlands in World War II, 1939 - 1945*, National Institute for War Documentation, Amsterdam, publisher Staatsdrukkerij 's-Gravenhage, 1969 - 1994, Volume 05, Band 2, P747 - 759.



## St. Anna hospital

The Nuns of Charity write in their chronicle <sup>47</sup> that our country is taken by surprise by the occupiers. The nuns provide assistance to evacuees and according to them there is no further damage in Oss. The occupier has however temporarily confiscated St. Joseph's School. The hospital is slowly but surely expanding, departments are being added and the cemetery has expanded. The farm that existed before the war had about eight cows and a few pigs. Everyone thinks it is "strange", but more and more animals are disappearing. Due to the expansion of the hospital, the 95th nun came to work there on 16 May 1942. In the same month, Dr. Vetter and the surgeon Dr. M. Bauer also came to Oss to work in the hospital. On November 9, 1942, the hospital receives the recognition to act as a training place for the nursing diploma A. Although the renovation plans are on hold, hospital life continues as usual. Of course the hospital had to deal with milk shortage and a scarcity of textiles. They received extra food vouchers; it can also be read that the Germans dragged everything and especially the best to Germany. Mother Willibrordina proved to be resourceful and there was plenty in comparison with other places. Other nuns who visited Oss always noticed that.

# The resistance in Oss and surroundings

## The resistance in Oss introduction

Throughout the Netherlands, but also in Oss and the surrounding area, "resistance" was committed against the occupying forces. The resistance took various forms such as: thefts; robbery; sabotage; espionage; falsifying documents; stealing food stamps; defusing "difficult" people. There were active groups such as KP-Nuland and KP-Herpen and the espionage group "Albrecht"<sup>48</sup> the latter was active throughout the Netherlands. There were also groups or individuals who helped with people in hiding, helping pilots disappear and hiding Jews. It was not only performed by men but also by women.

At Oss' distribution office, most employees were actively helping others. The head of the office, Jan van Rosendaal was not to be trusted, so everyone had to be very careful. Police officers also participated, including Kees Snethorst. Mia van den Bergh had a special relationship with this police officer.

There was an incident in the swimming pool; Kees Snethorst was also a lifeguard there. Mia saw that Marie Kemps had dived into the pool but was not coming up. Mia did not hesitate for one moment and brought Marie to the surface. After much hassle, Kees Snethorst was called in, he had been busy somewhere else in the swimming pool. Thanks to Mia's help, luckily all turned out well for Marie Kemps. Kees asked Mia not to tell anybody about the incident because otherwise he would lose his job. Mia never did that but they did have a special bond because of this. This would come in handy during the war.

As the occupation time progressed, aversion to the occupier increased. That had all sorts of causes, too many to mention, but one of them was that they became increasingly unfriendly and exploited the community.

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<sup>47</sup> Rien van der Heijden, *Sint Anna Hospital 160 years Nuns of Charity in Oss*, Print work Ten Brink, Meppel, 2016, ISBN 978-90-8962-012-5, NUR 680, P126 -157.

<sup>48</sup> L. (Lou) de Jong, *The Kingdom of the Netherlands in World War II*, Other illegal work, Albrecht group, 1939 - 1945, National Institute for War Documentation, Amsterdam, publisher Staatsdrukkerij 's-Gravenhage, 1969 - 1994, Volume 07, Band 2 , P894 - P903.

As always after a war, people receive awards for their actions, and so did the mayor of Oss Louis de Bourbon. Not everyone in Oss and the resistance was charmed by this. It is true that de Bourbon had successfully tried to thwart the occupier in all sorts of ways. He had turned a blind eye to the illegal work that was happening at the distribution office, among other things. But he was also given the honour of acts of resistance that he might not have done.

This has put a lot of bad blood among the population; there were resistance fighters who therefore wanted nothing more to do with the past. A pity, for two reasons: firstly, those people deserved the respect, honour and a Resistance Memorial Cross just as well. After all, they had risked their lives, an act that should not be underestimated; secondly, because they kept silent, they sometimes became frustrated over the years.

## Women in the resistance

Women have remained somewhat underexposed in all post-war documents, that "what" is an understatement. One of them Nel Botden must also be mentioned. Among other things, Nel was active for pilot assistance and brought English pilots who were shot behind on her bike to safe addresses! She also contributed to the illegal newspaper, which also happened in the current Groene Engel.

Nel Botden did not agree that Louis de Bourbon should have received a Resistance Memorial Cross, which is why she refused hers. According to her sister, she absolutely did not agree.

This is also apparent from the letter<sup>49</sup> that Mia Scholten van den Bergh sent to Agnes Lewe of the Oss City Archives. At first she did not want to say anything about her war past. But at the insistence of her second cousin John van den Bergh, it was all written down and preserved for posterity.

John van den Bergh ( <http://www.tweede-wereldoorlog.org/mia-van-den-bergh.html> ) reports: *"Louis de Bourbon has been awarded of all kinds of resistance acts on the basis of some demonstrably incorrect testimonies. According to Mia van den Bergh, but also according to the convictions of others, this medal is definitely incorrect. He literally told Mia "I am not a soldier, I am no hero and I just want to paint".*

*If Louis had lived longer, he would certainly have contradicted these stories about him in the resistance, as people who knew him personally in the Oss period say. The medal was awarded post humously by others who "arranged" for the medal, the evidence submitted was falsified.*

*The following list of women is certainly not complete, and without shortening the others, a few names: Reina Prinsen Ceerlings; the nuns Oversteeg; Jacoba van Tongeren; Truus van Lier; Mia van den Bergh, the sister of photographer Leo; "Sister", who got into a fire fight on the dike in Lith; Dr. Margareth Danby who kept the Germans away with a red spark; The "heaven" of the JMJ nuns in Ravenstein.*

The illegality, The Siren<sup>50</sup>

When the radios had to be returned, K.A.M. Veltman, H.O. Clerkx and Ms. H.P. Clerkx to issue a leaf. The target; keep the population of the region regularly informed of the most important and the latest news. That was in Heusden on 07 June 1943. There was hesitation between the name

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<sup>49</sup> Mia Scholten van den Bergh, *letter to Agnes Lewe*, date July 1, 2009, Canada, in the possession of the Oss Municipal Archives, Map Mia Scholten van den Bergh.

<sup>50</sup> L YDIA E. STORE Completely revised by Drs. HANS DE VRIES, *The Underground Press 1940-1945*, this publication was released on August 15, 2014 by the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation (NIOD) under a CC-BY-SA 3.0 license, - <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/nl>, VEEN, PUBLISHERS, Previously published The Hague, 1954, ISBN 90 218 3746 3, P224.

IRENE<sup>51</sup> and SIRENE, finally the last name was chosen. The first name was also included. For security reasons, the magazine was mainly distributed outside Heusden by post in self-made service envelopes.

Oss.

DE SIRENE was initially spread in Oss by M.J. van der Loop. Very soon this was considered too dangerous. One copy was therefore partly taken over and supplemented with local announcements. This was done by G.J. van Balveren and Nel Botden. Initially this happened at the "De Maaskant" water board, where Nel Botden worked. A little later at Van Balveren in his house and later at the Fraters in the Begijnenstraat. When this building was seized by the Germans, it was only just possible to remove the illegal materials. After Van der Loop's arrest for other reasons, it was considered safer to relocate. They ended up in the boiler room of the Vissers<sup>52</sup> church, where work continued until the liberation of Oss. The distribution in service envelopes also took place in Oss. After the liberation of Oss, two months earlier than that of Heusden, this last edition was continued legally. Large differences of opinion arose between the two editors after this fact became known.

## A consideration

With regard to the experience of a truth. Whether someone has rightly received a distinction, the following: A historian tries to come to a reconstruction on the basis of reliable sources. If they contradict each other, a further investigation must be carried out. Everyone who has experienced something comes with his own truth. That truth can deviate from other truths. There can be a difference just by the physical place or perception. The English also say it very nicely; A point of view. An example is the story I wrote down after a conversation with Maria (Ria) van Eertwegh and Cor Otten. Both have experienced the raid by the Allies at the Vissers church. Ria from the Berghemseweg and Cor from the Klaphekkenstraat. The same moment but two different stories. However, the events at the church are told differently by each person. Unfortunately, most of the people in this story have already died, so it is now difficult to find a correct fact. In addition, the women in the resistance were unfortunately more silent than men. Among those men, at least one was good with his pen. An Old Dutch saying; "where there's smoke, there is fire". In other words, that someone refuses a Resistance Memorial Cross for some reason is also something to consider. Mia van den Bergh refused the Resistance Cross because it had been awarded to people who had paid for it, and who had not deserved it, so she felt it was "cheap" and not an honour at all.

## The resistance at Bergoss

As we have been able to conclude from Messrs Van Dijk and Kalkman's report, their tactics were to stretch and stick with it. As the war endured they got to know "the system" and made solid use of the fragmentation of all those offices established by the occupying forces. You can say that those offices or organizations were not effective in working together. Even after more than four years of occupation, "they" still had no control over Bergoss. Indeed, the management of Bergoss had made the company "Lebenswichtig". This was partly due to the many products of the company. The "non-important mail" was referred to the trash bin without mercy, once a question came up, the answer was: "certainly because of the unreliable sorting people!"

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<sup>51</sup> Note writer: Irene means freedom.

<sup>52</sup> Visser's church, named after pastor Vissers who built it.

## The resistance at Organon

The directors made an effort to ensure that Organon remained an economically healthy company. However, efforts were also made to keep most preparations in the Netherlands. Even the National Agency for Medicines was regularly on the side of Organon and banned exports. There was some consolation in that they produced hormone intermediates but no ammunition.

A number of people from the staff were in the "Oranjewacht" according to the occupying forces. According to the charge, the Oranjewacht was essentially a clandestine continuation of the forbidden civilian guards, whose members were mainly former soldiers. The aim was to work for the restoration of an independent Netherlands. This under the house of Orange and to prevent unrest and bloodshed during the expected vacuum between the departure of the Germans and the entry of the English army. For these tasks, weapons, ammunition and explosives would be purchased in an early period.

This is also mentioned in a report of 01-05-1947 from the Community for Old Illegal Workers in the Netherlands. On continuation sheet 3, "The Orange Guard" by the Boerrigter - Geerling group.

It was the Organon staff members J.H.J. Boerrigter, M.C. Geerling and A.W.F. Middelberg. The employees J.C. Leuring, H.D. Verdam and A. Middelbeek, who did not have to appear before the court-martial, but got away with a few months concentration camp, and D.J.J. Bos, who was not arrested. The verdicts of the court martial were: twelve years in prison for Boerrigter, four years for Geerling and three years for Middelberg. This ruling needed confirmation by the Wehrmachtbefehlshaber in the Netherlands, General der Flieger Fr. Christiansen, who withheld from the too mild conviction of Boerrigter. He was sentenced to death and executed by the same court in a second trial.

Mr. A. Middelbeek

A. Middelbeek (Organon The History of a Special Dutch Company, 1978) reports: *"With a bald head and a slight reduction in weight. The return to Organon was heart-warming: Van Geuns immediately started giving us a list of people whom we could not trust in any way. Mr. Duden was very easy. He advised to keep a low profile from now on! The three weeks of vacation that I received did me a lot: my weight increased by 9 kg..... During our stay in Amersfoort we had a lot of support from each other: it was a real Osse gang<sup>53</sup>, completely sealed during the interrogation. With us, the chain of arrests broke off. "*

Jan Elibert van der Helden

In the summer of 1942 a Dutchman was flown in from England and lowered with a parachute to provide information to the English army command. One of the addresses where he often typed his reports and spent the nights was the house of employee J. E. van der Helden Anjelierstraat 12 in Oss. The spy died in a German concentration camp on December 1, 1944, when Brabant was long liberated.

Jan Elibert van der Helden was mobilized as a reserve officer in 1940. His widow told Marius Tausk how he longed to do something for the country. Providing shelter to a Dutch agent of the English intelligence service seemed to him an important task. His wife was just as enthusiastic as himself. Jan van der Helden was picked up on the night of 14 to 15 July 1944. After a stay at Oranienburg camp, he ended up in Neuengamme, where he got a knee infection. Van der Helden died of this infection in the Aurich concentration camp at the age of 32.

Marius de Langen

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<sup>53</sup> An allusion to crime and silence, for which Oss was notorious in the thirties.

Marius "Jus" de Langen from Bilthoven was a member of the resistance who had been in hiding for some time and did not stop doing anything. He came in contact with our head of staff in 1943. Van Geuns, who could provide him with a job at Organon. There he made himself very useful, but he soon started his illegal work again. He was arrested and taken to Vught concentration camp, where he was executed on 11 August 1944. Oss now has a Marius de Langen street.

## The shares of Organon

Toon van den Akker was 15 years old when he joined Organon and was responsible for the distribution and shipment of mail.

For Van Geuns it was clear that the shares acquired by Schering, contrary to all requirements, should not be handed over. The only man who could prevent that was Toon van den Akker. Toon told Marius Tausk in full details 32 years later how he carried out his very unusual assignment.

Karl Ruppert gave Toon instructions for packing and sealing the shares at his office in the presence of Van Geuns. Ruppert kept a sharp eye on this.

Toon had to make a registered mail with the indicated value. According to regulations of the post office (P.T.T.) provided with unbroken wax seal and the address had to be written on the wrapping paper. Affixed address labels were not allowed. Toon had wax and stamps with him and started work at half past eleven, which was completed flawlessly within a few minutes. He apologized for the fact that his handwriting was not good enough. He suggested that the address be written by an experienced correspondent.

This happened and Toon left with the package. He had to hurry because the hour stamp at the post office, which was moved at the full hour, still had to be that of 11 o'clock. After all, there should have been no significant time between packing and mailing. He was able to remove the applied wax seals within a few minutes. He exchanged the shares for a copy of the "Deutsche Zeitung in den Niederlanden" corresponding in size and weight. With the new wax stamped package he arrived at the post office well before noon. He had the official check the integrity of the seals. While this man took a cigarette out of the bag offered to him, Toon was able to unobtrusively break the wax seal along the strings.

A phone call from Berlin prompted Ruppert, his helper, the director of the post office, the Osse police and the Sicherheitsdienst in 's-Hertogenbosch. Toon van den Akker could not come up with an explanation for the enigmatic disappearance of the shares, nor any of the others. Mr. Saal's former secretary honestly stated that he had written the address only once. The stamps were apparently broken after shipment. Probably the shares were stolen along the way, where employees of all nationalities were used to handle the postal items. Van den Akker and Van Geuns had to join the German S.O. they arrived in Den Bosch and were heard separately. They wanted Toon to fall into a trap by showing him a confession with the forged hand drawing of Van Geuns. He could not help it and, moreover, caused his interrogator to become very angry by having him speak German for 15 minutes. He then very calmly stated that he did not understand that language. He and Van Geuns were allowed to go.

The shares were given to the bricklayer F. W. Muller, who lived in one of the workers' houses, which at that time was still a sort of enclave on the factory site. He was promised that he could continue to live there. Muller retired in 1953 and died in 1962. The workers' houses were demolished, but Organon paid the rent for an old people's flat for his widow until her death.

## Explosives factory

The report of the Osse Resistance Group also states on incident sheet 4 an incident with one of the employees of Organon. It was J. H. de Roos. He was producing explosives on the heath in a hut. Partly because of its explosives, the register office of Amsterdam had been blown up. The explosives were smuggled to Amsterdam by women. The report also mentions that Roos shot at a German officer but did not hit him. De Roos shot through the window six (6) times but only hit the hat. The German officer was Dr. Zastrow who probably, as can be read in the book of Marius Tausk (P243 - 244), had received a tip. That tip would then come from Horlborg the Treuhänder from the Zwanenberg Factories. Zastrow sent a report to Germany on April 27, 1943.

A number of house searches and arrests followed. One of the arrested was the twenty-three-year-old analyst C. L. Breukhoven. He had a lot of contact with De Roos and confessed (according to Zastrow's report) to have helped him with his work. Together they had also distributed a magazine "Rattenkruid" in Oss, in which they called for sabotage.

They also invaded the Hes family. There the German police found a sister of Guus Hes Greet and her husband Simon den Hartog. Simon had worked as an administrator in various Organizational Companies and was last on the salary list. He was also on the list of 23 Jews and that of the group of sixteen who were fired in November 1941. They were both taken by the police and never returned.

The production of estrogen.

The estrogen production, Menformon, visibly deteriorated. It was made from horse urine, and those poor horses had an increasingly poor diet!

There was also a lot of estrogen production in the sewer. If an "air alarm", an announcement of a possible air attack, was issued by telephone then all chemical processes had to be stopped. The instruction was meticulously followed, while there was normally not much interest in following instructions. So many of the semi-finished products ran into the sewer.

Of course, much more<sup>54</sup> happened at Organon in this area. Staff<sup>54</sup> who travelled back and forth from 's-Hertogenbosch to Oss sometimes took 'Deutsche Dienstpost' to Oss. Occasionally, "adapted" signals ended up with others.

## C. Fontein<sup>55</sup> Molenstraat 56

C. Fontein F. Fontein-Eldering (I think it is enough) reports: *"The Society for Medicine must include a few members of the NSB doctors association on the board. We, as members, were not interested in this. The only solution is to cancel the Society. For this purpose, a circuit assembly is organized in Den Bosch.*

*During the survey, someone asks how much money is left. A few thousand guilders! During the assembly it is decided to "eat the cash". I go with the old Verbeek on the back of my motorcycle. Afterwards we are so "under the influence" by the spiritual fluid, which also flows for free, that some colleagues walk with us until we have enough speed to stop from falling. Imagine the stiff Verbeek with its wing collar on the back of the motorcycle! By the way: we are not in danger, because we are the only ones on the completely dark road.*

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<sup>54</sup> It was mainly Mr. J. A. H. van den Broek and A. A. P. Schraven. Marius Tausk, Organon The History of a Special Dutch Company, 1978 Dekker & Van de Vegt Nijmegen, ISBN 90 255 9901 X, Printing: Van Gorcum B.V. Assen, P248.

<sup>55</sup> C. Fontein F. Fontein-Eldering, I think it is enough, Memories of 40 years of medical practice in Oss, publisher C. Fontein, editor Jos Neomagus, print Wim Janssen, 1978, P1 – 14.

*If my motorbike is really broken, I can borrow one from a patient who refused to hand in his motorcycle. However, the man is betrayed and gets the Grüne Polizei at the door. He refers to me. As soon as the Germans are gone, he made a break for it with the motorbike that I have just returned. Meanwhile the Grünen pay a visit to my wife, scaring her to death, but who manages to talk herself out of it. I go to the NSB mayor and achieve that the man is not prosecuted as long as he returns his motorcycle for use by the Osse police. The man, who has gone into hiding with his bike, is soon back home”.*

#### Clandestine transportation

C. Fontein F. Fontein-Eldering (I think it is enough) reports: *“In my first years in Oss, patient transport causes quite some problems. The ambulance consists of an old delivery van with a few sawhorses, on which a stretcher can be placed. But the car is also used for other purposes .... [...] On a Saturday morning, there is a lot of snow, I call doctor Nuboer in Den Bosch for an acute case. He promises to come immediately. In the meantime I warn the ambulance driver to pick up the patient. When Nuboer in his tiny Fiat car with gas generator arrive at the hospital, the patient is not there yet. So Nuboer and I went to the patient's house, on a small road behind the mountain of waste at Zwanenberg. We can't get close because of the snow. No worries, we put the patient in a chair and carry him to the back seat. He is taken to the hospital for surgery. Nuboer is furious! Later it turns out that the ambulance was used for the transport of illegally slaughtered pigs .... Everyone is happy when Jo Rosmalen takes care of the patient transport, even though he cannot stand the sight of blood!*

#### A fake cast leg

C. Fontein F. Fontein-Eldering (I think it is enough) reports: *“A patient who has to go into hiding hands over his car to me. As a doctor I am one of the few with a permit. I am sometimes called upon to lend the car for "certain activities" to one of the Carmelite fathers. I am not asking for what, but I feel it is about resistance work. One day they ask me to come in as a driver. It turns out to be the transport of underground newspapers, which I have to pick up in Begijnenstraat. When I report, the Van Loosbroek brothers with rolled up sleeves are still busy handing over to the last copies. The back seat gets out of the car, the newspapers in it, plaid over it. A friend of mine with his leg in a fake cast, sits on top of it and so I leave with my "patient" for Den Bosch. There I have to, be at the lookout for a man who will ask me for a light for his home made cigar. He tells me where the cargo has to go ”. [...] “In February 1942 I can hardly get through the snow by car. As a joke I say to Jo Rosmalen, were I am refuelling: "A sleigh will actually do much better!" That same afternoon he has a sleigh for me, complete with horse and coachman. I use it until the snow has melted”.*

#### The gasoline has run out

*“We see the miracle happen. Shortly before the liberation, only the bicycle is left as means of transport. I partially demolished the car to prevent it from being confiscated. There is no gasoline anymore anyway. One day I am called to a woman suffering a miscarriage. She is bleeding a lot. The only way to get her to the hospital quickly is on the back of my bike. There she is, holding me tightly around the waist. This way we drive as fast as possible to the Begijnenstraat. To make matters worse, the elevator stops between two floors. Fortunately it only takes five minutes. It feels like hours. In any case, I can still help her in time.*

*Around that same time I put my bike with a patient in the dark front garden. I come back after ten minutes: Bike gone! A true disaster.*

*A week later a patient comes to general practitioner Fontein, who has just returned from the jail. He hears the story of the bicycle and says sadly: “Too bad I was in jail! Otherwise I'd have had it back in no time flat, or a better one”.*

## KP Nuland

Jan Verberne. During the war years 1940 - 1945 was his pseudonym Jan van Nuland. From 1939 he was in the 5th Army Corps, 5th Division in the 17th Infantry Regiment. Jan was stationed in Erp and experienced the battle at Mill. He was taken prisoner of war on 11 May 1940. After his captivity, Jan lived in Helmond but was unable to stay there due to certain activities. Then he left for Oss. From the early years of the Second World War he was in the resistance with the Knokploeg Nuland (fighting Group Nuland). Jan van Nuland was the commander of the KP Nuland. The fighting Group is responsible for many actions. The group operated from Nuland but had consultations with the "assembly point" in Lithoijen. It was their "headquarters" and weapons depot the farm<sup>56</sup> of Tiemissen at Lithoijen.

The group committed robberies and acts of sabotage. They have sabotaged the Oss's Hertogenbosch railway line several times. Sometimes in three places at the same night. As a result, no transports from the occupier could take place.

During one of these acts of sabotage brought a train to stop, there were captured resistance fighters on board. These were put on transport by the occupier. Among them Drs. Frans van Gulick fiancée of Mia van den Bergh. This employee of the distribution office in Oss was arrested in The Hague. Here he was hiding from the occupier. Unfortunately they just couldn't get him off the train.

### Liberation Sugar Town

September 17th the plan was born "Liberation Sugar Town" the liberation of Oss. The group had come into the possession of a machine gun and thousands of cartridges due to a weapon drop. Sugar Town was the code name for the city of Oss with all its food stored in the warehouses. On Monday afternoon about three o'clock the preparations are so far that they want to attack Oss but then they hear planes coming. The plan is being confused by the Allies. Jan van Nuland's group got particularly busy during Operation Market Garden picking up allied soldiers stranded in the polder. These were picked up and brought to safety, then transported to their regiment in the "Corridor". Picking up jumped aircraft crew and paratroopers was named "Pick up Umbrella". The German soldiers who did not know where they were at all and who roamed the polder were arrested. At a certain point in time a prisoner of war camp had been created. The captured soldiers were later handed over to the allies. In short, they were busy with it during the last days of the occupation.

## KP Herpen

KP Herpen commander Ben Arts alias Hein de Leeuw. The fighters in the Maasland worked together as previously written. At Tiemissen there was also the weapons store, most of the weapons came from raiding German soldiers.

In March 1944, Hermanus Apeldoorn was appointed mayor of Oss. The appointment document was signed by Generalkommissar für Verwaltung und Justiz Wimmer, who arranged the mayor appointments for Seyss Inquart. Apeldoorn was a great instrument for the occupiers, and in a very short time, he had reformed the city administration in accordance with the Nazification process. He had set up a card system with the names of people he thought worked in illegality. An excerpt from this card system has been preserved. Virtually the entire staff of the distribution office in Oss was in hiding. Mia van den Bergh, former employee of the distribution office, then fulfilled a task at KP Nuland. Later she left for Tilburg due to circumstances.

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<sup>56</sup> Note writer: De Bourbon was also in hiding at this place.



## The murder of Hermanus Apeldoorn

Mayor Apeldoorn was already ready in June 1944 to roll up and liquidate the entire Osse group. The active good ones in the police force also came under heavy pressure, as can be read in the book *Collaboratie of Verzet*. Some of them were: Hendrik Verreyt; Jan Leemhuis; Piet Deijnen; Hendrik Zeegers; Bart de Ruiter; Kees Snethorst. At the insistence of three officers, the plan was taken to eliminate mayor Apeldoorn in cooperation with the resistance groups.

Apeldoorn would go as a Dijkgraaf (head of the Water Board) to a meeting of the De Maaskant Water Board. This took place in the hotel of the Pfaltz, later "De Keurvorst". A great location to liquidate the man.

On 10 August 1944, Mayor Hermanus Apeldoorn was killed in Ravenstein. The attack took place in the afternoon in the hotel of De Palts "De Keurvorst". People were immediately arrested in Ravenstein and as revenge Jo Meulemans was taken by the S.S. and shot to death.

The SD in Den Bosch comes into action immediately. SD'er Albert Rösener<sup>57</sup> after the war, reports; *"We first drove to NSB Cornelis de Jongh in Grave, who gave us a list of German-enemy people. We decided to shoot the fourth on the list. Four others go to Camp Haaren as hostages."*

At 10.45 p.m. they ring the Meulemans family, from the animal feed company of the same name. Jo (unmarried, 38 years old) opens in pyjamas. SD'er Michael Rotschopf, reports: *"I was right in front of him. When I was sure he was the right person, I shot him with my gun. I saw him fall "*. Mother, Anna Meulemans, reports: *"When the front door was opened, the shots fell immediately. My son still shouted: "O God, I'm dying"!* The shooter is a rejected German front soldier who was transferred to the SD in Den Bosch.

The attack on Apeldoorn is said to have been carried out by the KP van 's Hertogenbosch, Margriet.

Later, one of the alleged perpetrators in Den Bosch was arrested by the Sicherheitsdienst. He was executed in Camp Vught.

## J. Pulles acting mayor

On 10 September 1944, after the death of N.B. Mayor Apeldoorn, the second period of observation began for Pulles. This lasted until September 19, 1944 when Oss was liberated, on that day J. Pulles went into hiding. On the door of his home in Molenstraat number 60 was a cardboard with the text<sup>58</sup>: *"Mr. Pulles lives here, who is the first turn after the war "*. I will come back to Jan Pulles.

## Resist of the doctors in the hospital

There were also people hiding in the hospital. This is to be read in the book by Rien van der Heijden. The occupier sometimes managed to find someone but always found the patient "sick". Later on, a sign with the text infectious disease helped enough to keep the Germans away. Other doctors including L. Stoltz were also in the resistance or helped here and there.

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<sup>57</sup> Brabantsdagblad, *The Bloody Summer of 1944: "O God, I'm going to die" !*, Region P6 - 7, 17-08-2019.

<sup>58</sup> W.A.H. den Ridder, *Collaboration or Resistance?*, Research Attitude Osse Burgemeesters (1940-1945), Publisher Ridder, 1995, ISBN 90 9008942 X, P35 and beyond.

## Mia Scholten van den Bergh

Mia had been active in the resistance during the war and has received various awards for this. One is the Resistance Hero Cross. After the war she moved to Canada, Mia died in 2010. At the insistence of her second cousin John van den Bergh, Mia wrote down her story, which can be read on the website<sup>59</sup>. The Oss City Archives is in possession of a hard copy, number 2181. Mia's story is her perception of the Second World War. Here is a summary.

Mia was 26 years old when the war broke out, Leo van den Bergh the photographer was her older brother. They lived at the address Molenstraat 44 in Oss. Through her work as a volunteer Mia knew many people in Oss. She was a welcome guest. She was able to organize well and turn an incomprehensible doctor's language into a simple (Jip and Janneke) story. Her special relationship with the police officer Snethorst has already been described.

Leo van den Bergh took many photos during the war and especially during the liberation of Oss. These together with all documents and stories are a true source for the history of Oss.

### The Distribution Office of Oss

John van den Bergh (The Resistance, Mia Scholten van den Bergh) reports: *"When her work for the "distribution" started the lazy life for Mia ended. For this work she was asked by Jan Bijvoets, among others, who was employed by the municipality of Oss. "If you can organize good parties then you can do this also", this was how she got a permanent job. This was the time in 1939 when the threat of war increased and the central government made preparations for the population in view of the expected food shortage.*

*The fact that Mia was chosen for this position was not without obligation. She was immediately told when she was appointed: "and you know what else you can do". As Mia already interpreted it at the time, this was an incentive to put the real needs above the regulations. Apparently, the problems that this "instrument" of the government could cause in people's daily lives were already taken into account. Thoughts that would go far beyond what people could have initially assumed".*

The government had decided to create distribution offices. All families were listed and family cards (stamkaarten) had to be created. Mia had a lot of initiative of her own and as a result, her task continued to expand. Once the war broke out it turned out to be good. There were so many documents to sign that she did it herself. Mia thus became department head and became responsible for all securities. Mia knew the rules well and often used them to her advantage. The office eventually moved to the old office of Jurgens in the Kruisstraat. The current (2019) Groene Engel.

The distribution office had to provide the expected number of residents of Oss on a monthly basis. But they applied for an additional 500 residents each month. An application was good for a monthly stock. If more illegal vouchers were needed, they were supplied by a printing company. Mia swapped the legal and illegal coupons that were stored in a vault. Jacques van der Heyden was responsible for the safe but played the game. Jan van Rosendaal, the chief executive of the distribution office, was "very wrong" according to many of the resistance.

After August 1942, the Distribution Office on the Kruisstraat played an important role in the local resistance work. Mayor De Bourbon admitted that. That too was an act of resistance. He himself

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<sup>59</sup> <http://www.tweede-wereldoorlog.org/mia-van-den-bergh.html>

had no actual share in the illegal activities. It can be read that the distribution manager, Jan van Rosendaal, even blamed him.

The illegal material was distributed throughout the Maasland, on this moment the Township Oss. Mia wrote the receipts for the food vouchers herself, with fictional names and addresses. She often had to do it in the evening and was therefore very tired. As a result, Mia often fell asleep at her desk. Jan van Rosendaal terrorized all staff and often threatened to send the people to Camp Vught. Thanks to Van Rosendaal, her house was also searched every month. You had to be careful with that man.

Mia on sick leave

Van Rosendaal wanted to set up a trap to catch Mia, but Mia had received a tip about this. Mia had to be legally absent from time to time and her neighbour, Dr. Oscar Wasman, helped. This gave Mia time for all other illegal activities. The doctor's statement turned out to be very useful for this. Mia's family members were also threatened and accused, but they did not break under the pressure. In fact, they helped Mia every now and then. The house was searched regularly, wallpaper torn off, mattresses cut open and turned upside down. Ad Jo Kocken, the neighbour, the weapons and ammunition were hidden somewhere in his house.

Forced labour

John van den Bergh (The Resistance, Mia Scholten van den Bergh) reports: *"In Oss, Mia was involved in" underground activities ". She was not a member of a certain larger fight team or resistance group. An organized illegally working group was the "triumvirate". This consisted of Clemens Roeffen, Jan Buijvoets and Mia. In addition, Mia had a relationship with Kees Snethorst, who had a fallback spot through her.*

*From 7 May 1943 all men aged 18 to 35 had to register for work deployment in Germany. Everyone from this group who did not have "approved" work in the Netherlands had to join the employment office. In Germany, after all, there was a large shortage of workers because the German men had to become socially obliged soldiers. All available men were forced to work in factories in Germany such as Krupp and Dürkopf and others. After the war, it turned out that more than 500,000 men had been forced into labour. Many Dutch people did not want to do this work for the enemy in dangerous Germany. Housing and working conditions were also usually very miserable. Moreover, staying there was certainly not without danger because of the Allies' attacks on the war industry".*

Many Oss citizens were helped by Mia and Kees Snethorst. If a raid was imminent, Kees warned Mia, who in her neighbourhood made sure that the attic of her father's wooden box factory was accessible. During the night, the people went hiding, via the Klaphekkenstraat, entered the grounds to climb into the attic via a secret entrance. Now (2020), it is Oostwal 30 - 84. As soon as it was daylight again, they also left unobtrusive again. In her story, Mia also praises the farmers who often offered large numbers of people in hiding, including Jews, free of charge.

Mia and the KP Nuland

Due to circumstances, Mia became acquainted and later became part of the resistance group in Nuland. The resistance group in Nuland had not joined any other group. This is in contrast to the "National Organization" which kept records of their members. That was extremely dangerous, as a result of which many people were arrested by the Germans. The Nuland fighting team consisted of different cells. Some members of a cell were in another cell and so the group was like a

honeycomb<sup>60</sup> connected. The liaison officers were often "Good" police officers. There were no lists with names of the people in hiding either. Mia's group was led by Piet van Druenen. She had come in contact with that through Nelleke van Zwanenberg. Nelleke was called by Mia the "Mother" of the underground in East North Brabant.

## The Germans and meat factories

Towards the end of the occupation, Mia and Jan van Zwanenberg, together on one bicycle, met Germans who wanted to go to the meat factories in Oss. Jan gave his bike to Mia and she left for the water supply pump station. That was on the edge of Nuland. The water supply network had its "own" telephone line. The Germans were unaware of this during the entire occupation, which was handy for the resistance. Mia called Oss and warned that the convoy was coming. The Germans were "warmly" received in the area of Gasstraat and Molenstraat. The surviving occupiers returned in the evening to their quarter in Nuland.

As mentioned earlier, the KP Nuland committed sabotage to train traffic. From the grocery store of the Zwanenberg family, where people gathered, they attacked the railway line. Mia was also involved in some of these campaigns.

John van den Bergh, *The Resistance*, Mia Scholten van den Bergh, reports: *"A prepared report shows that the track was sometimes sabotaged six times a night. For example, an important train transport with meat was stopped, which came into the hands of the Allies as a result of this delay."*

Eventually Mia left for Tilburg and of course became active in the resistance there as well. Because it was not forbidden to travel by train through the Netherlands, she often used it. She later returned with the liberation of Oss. Because the front was just beside Oss between Oss Geffen and Nuland, the KP Nuland worked from Oss. They had their headquarters in the empty cafe of "van Goey" on the Heuvel. KP Nuland<sup>61</sup> has contributed greatly to the liberation of Oss, among other things when the Germans opened a counterattack on Oss on 25 September. Mia then worked with Jan Verberne under the alias Jan van Nuland.

Mia's fiancée Drs. Frans van Gulick

In the spring of 1944 a warning came via Kees Snethorst. The NSB mayor Apeldoorn had a list of names of "wrong" officials in his eyes. Various officials had to look for a hiding place.

Drs. Frans van Gulick was Mia's fiancé and worked for the municipal secretary. Municipal secretary Gerard Konig went into hiding with Frans van Gulick in The Hague. Mia gave them fake papers with other names on them, in the event that they were wanted under their own names.

Frans was mistakenly suspected and Mia was sure that Frans was innocent, but she never told something. Van Apeldoorn thought that Frans wrote articles for the underground. Frans van Gulick was therefore not on the purification list but was a suspect.

Mia saw Frans for the last time when he pushed her onto a moving train. He did that to prevent her from being followed. Gerard Konig came to Oss every Saturday for better knowledge. During one of his visits to Oss, Gerard urged Mia to write a letter for Frans. On the first train to Amsterdam on

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<sup>60</sup> Note writer: the current terror cells in the World are often put together in this way. Sometimes the link goes between two cells via messengers of which only one (1) is known per cell. In order to complicate the investigation, no use is made of mobile connections or internet.

<sup>61</sup> John van den Bergh, <http://www.tweede-wereldoorlog.org/mia-van-den-bergh.html>, (source: testimonials from 5 former members of the KP Nuland in 1989 and 1994). In 1947 an official report was drawn up in which the major role of the KP Nuland in the liberation of Oss was laid down. (see reading list)

Monday morning, he was picked up in that train. He gave up his own identity and was arrested. The letter led to Frans van Gulick, who was subsequently arrested in The Hague. Frans van Gulick went through camp Vught and ended up at Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. He died there at the end of the war.

Mia had made a request for Frans for the Resistance Memorial Cross. The application was honoured and the recognition granted posthumously to his children. The transport from Vught by train to Bergen-Belsen, which also included Frans, would pass Nuland. The KP Nuland, in which Mia also participated, tried to derail this train so that the prisoners could be freed or escaped. However, because the Germans sent a locomotive ahead, this locomotive derailed and not the intended train. The rails were given an emergency repair, which allowed the other train to move on, although slowly.

Frans did not use the opportunity to jump out of the train. However, a note was thrown out of the train in Oss. Mia heard afterwards, through an escaped prisoner, that Frans knew she was safe. Frans van Gulick's relatives blamed Mia for his death. Mia searched for Frans for two years after the war. Knowing he was lost, she married Harry Scholten, they immigrated to Canada where they had three children. When Mia died, her daughters found the name "Frans" inside her wedding ring. Also, the first two children (Carmel, Norah) were born in Tilburg, the third (Lily) was born in Canada.

In 2009 she wrote a letter to Agnes Lewé in which she spoke of lies about the period immediately after the war. She looked back bitterly on this period. She wanted to say as little about it as possible, but "The past always comes back ...". When she died in 2010, a photo of Frans was in her bag. Her engagement portrait (with Frans) was found in the house, hidden in the back of a cupboard.

# Finally, the liberation

## September 1944 Market Garden

British commander Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery pleaded for a bridgehead in the German lines during the Allied advance from Normandy. After some doubt, Commander-in-Chief Eisenhower agreed to this daring plan.

In order to end the war earlier the plan was born to make a quick push true to the Rhine. It was important that the bridges over rivers and canals were kept intact. The bridges were of vital importance to move the army as quickly as possible towards Germany. The ultimate goal was Nunspeet, to take the German army in the west of our country into pincers. Operation Market was the air landing at different parts and bridges on the route.

Operation Garden was the advance by land from liberated Belgium to Arnhem. The route ran globally from Liege to Eindhoven, Son, Veghel, Uden, Grave, Nijmegen and from there to Arnhem. In addition, they thus bypassed the "Westwall" between France and Germany. The Ruhr area, the industrial heart of Germany, could then be attacked from the east of our country. Oss was not mentioned in the entire story.

The whole plan was very daring and hung together with a few uncertainties. One was the weather and another intelligence service. Intelligence was of vital importance: where did the anti-aircraft stand; where German troop concentrations were; what about the help of "fighting groups" or the resistance; and so much more. The operation was put together in seven days and that in itself was a true achievement.

Two factors ensured that the operation did not reach the target. The weather, the fog in England, because of this the supplies could not be delivered on time. In the Netherlands too, the weather was sometimes bad and the supplies fell into German hands. The other cause was the fierce German opposition, especially in and around Arnhem.

The national road was very narrow and a lot of troops and equipment had to cross it. Moreover, there was unexpected resistance from the occupying forces in various places. Especially around Veghel, here and there was another SS armoured division. Due to a breakthrough by the Germans over the road at Veghel, the column in Velp came to a halt. This was at the "Kleine Elft" café near Grave. The Guards Armoured Division had to stop here for a while. They were waiting for their comrades who had to come to them from Veghel and Uden.

# Sunday 17-10-1944 D-day

## D-day, Sunday, September 17

D-day<sup>62</sup> Operation Market Garden is about to start, it has been decided to send scouts and combat aircraft along the two supply routes and to make the German Flugabwehrkanone (Flak) harmless. The Northern approach route also crosses Oss. That is why shooting and cannon roaring was observed in the city. It was decided to perform the operation in daylight. This was the safest despite Flak's disability. Safe, to pull large numbers of gliders very close together to the landing sites (tow). The gliders were able to land more safely during the day and that also applied to the paratroopers. This was in fact one of the lessons learned from the Normandy landing.

## The Nuns of Charity (Liefde)

Rien van der Heijden (Sint Anna Hospital 160 year's nuns of charity chronicle <sup>63</sup>) reports: *"its Sunday half past two in the afternoon. We hear an extraordinary roar of planes; hundreds are flown to Nijmegen, Arnhem. On the shelf by the maternity ward, the doctors are watching with binoculars: from far away they see the parachutists jumping; poor boys; they were mistaken in the places and dropped too early, were immediately overtaken by the Germans and shot or captured. The nuns go to 't Lof not without any tension. It's an invasion thousands of paratroopers are coming down too early with the above-mentioned fateful consequence. In the evening we already had some here in the hospital, which were dead or wounded in the polders. The Germans resisted formidably and were furious"*.

## Pater Simplicius

On the Sunday morning, fighter aircraft had already been above Oss and the surrounding area to take out the Flak. For him the afternoon started at a quarter to two (13.45 hrs) with the hearing of a gun roar and shelling by planes. It can only be that the Flak is being attacked around Oss for the second time. Large numbers of aircraft and gliders are observed after this. Some fly so low that one can see the tow cables. It gives him and his colleagues hope that liberation and therefore peace are close.

## The aircraft above Oss

The northern flight route<sup>64</sup> van Market D-Day plus 1 and D-day plus 2 over Oss.

Why did so many planes fly over Oss in the first days of Operation Market Garden? Well, because the "Northern Route" just ran across Oss.

The most commonly used aircraft were the C-47 Dakotas. Dakota is an American boy's name and

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<sup>62</sup> Note writer: this designation became known through the invasion in Normandy, but is also used for other operations.

<sup>63</sup> Rien van der Heijden, *Sint Anna Hospital 160 years Nuns of Charity in Oss*, ISBN 978-90-8962-012-5, NUR 680, Print: Ten Brink, Meppel, 2016, P145.

<sup>64</sup> John C. Warren, *Airborne Operations in World War II European Theatre*, Planning and execution of large-scale airborne operations by the Army Air Forces in the European theater, SEP 1956, USAF HISTORICAL STUDIES: NO. 97, Organization Name(s), Air University, USAF Historical Div, Research Studies Institute, Maxwell AFB, AL, 36112, P 90 – 91

means "Friend; ally. It's a tribal name." The C-47 was the cargo variant of the Douglas DC 3. A twin-engine aircraft that was used for the paratroopers and the provision and towing of the gliders.

The time used was Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus 1 hour, which is our current winter time. Nowadays GMT is called Universal Time Coordinated (UTC) and at NATO Zulu. The time in the United Kingdom is therefore that of the zero meridians. The NATO designation of zero (0) is Zero and the designation of the letter "Z" is Zulu, which is why it is called Zulu by the NATO.

The Northern route started in the coastal town of Aldeburgh next to the Aide estuary. Then it went 94 miles<sup>65</sup> straight across the North Sea to the western tip of Schouwen. There was a ship on the North Sea that served as the route point for Schouwen. Schouwen could not be missed as a route point due to the special shape of the island. After that it went 18 miles to the east of Schouwen without moving the route. From there it went 52 miles to the Identification Point (IP), codenamed ELLIS. ELLIS was approximately 3 miles south of 's Hertogenbosch. It was easy to recognize visually due to the different motorway junctions. ELLIS was approximately 30 miles southwest of the drop zones near Arnhem, and about 25 miles southwest of the drop zones of Nijmegen. The dropping points of Eindhoven were approximately 10 miles east-southeast of this.

The gliders were flown around 1000 feet<sup>66</sup>, ± 300 meters, above the Americans to the drop zones. The aircraft with the American and English paratroopers also had their own specific height. On the return flight, each aircraft used its "own" flight height and thus a narrow four-lane airway was created.

As a result, during the first airlift, 1055 aircraft with paratroopers and 478 with gliders could be delivered in 65 minutes. Truly an achievement. A large group of escorts flew along with these aircraft to protect them from enemy aircraft and anti-aircraft defences, Flak. The Americans flew at 1500 feet, at the drop sites 500 feet and to have no problems with the incoming traffic back at 3000 feet.

American paratroopers flew with 9 aircraft in V-formation, or in series of 27 to 45 aircraft.

The British tows with the gliders flew in numbers of 30 - 50 per 2 grouped. There was an interval of 10 seconds between the groups. On the way there at 2500 feet and the way back from the C-47s between 5000 - 7000 feet. For the map, folder 6, see page 93 of the book Airborne Operations at World War II European Theatre.

The photos of airplanes that Leo van den Bergh took during the first days of Operation Market Garden show among other things the Dakota.

After two days it was decided to use the Northern route anymore. Far too many losses had been caused by the gunfire and anti-aircraft defences of the Germans. The southern route went over the liberated part of Belgium towards Liege. From Liege the aircraft followed the corridor of "Garden" which resulted in fewer losses. The German Air Force played in the entire story no significant role.

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<sup>65</sup> Nautical miles are used in aviation. 1 nautical mile, abbreviated NM is equal to 1852 meters. The speed is indicated in knots, these are nautical miles per hour.

<sup>66</sup> Although the foot is not an SI unit, its length was recorded internationally in 1958 via the inch (valid since July 1, 1959). An inch is exactly equal to 2.54 cm and there are 12 inches in one foot. This means that a foot is 304.8 mm = 0.3048 m. One meter is therefore 1 / 0.3048 or approximately 3.28 feet.



Other people saw the flak firing desperately in the morning. All kinds of fighter planes were flying lower and lower. The fighters were shooting the anti-aircraft guns.

### **The magazine "Sirene"**

According to the unknown writer of the Sirene, the whole spectacle had started in the morning at ten (10 a.m.). The Luftwaffe sparkled with absence. From half past ten to half past eleven (10.30 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.) there was an air alarm. In the afternoon at 01.30 p.m. there was another air alarm, the Germans fled inside and the Osse citizens came outside. Almost everyone stood outside to watch the spectacle "an air show in optima forma". After two hours the "safe" air signal was given, but it became dangerous again for the Osse citizens it was again watch out en be careful for the occupier.

Many German soldiers left Oss at around 10 p.m. The resistance was in the polder, so as you could read, planning "Liberation Sugar Town". They were also busy with operation "Pick Up Umbrella".

# Monday, October 10, 1944, D plus 1

In the early morning, the KP also brought German prisoners of war to Grave with a "puffing wood-gas generator truck". At that moment the Maasland is freed and the entire route to Grave swept clean.

The people of the resistance are busy in the polder picking up fleeing German soldiers. It also provides them with additional weapons and ammunition. At 10 am a courier comes to tell us that a large group of retreating Germans, one hundred strong, is arriving in Lith. They are on foot to the ferry, the moral is out and there is no singing! Unfortunately, the group is too large to pick up; the resistance group is too small in numbers.

Because of their activities in the polder of the Maasland, the fighting groups had some 120 prisoners of war. They were handed over to the English at Grave.

They continue with operation Pick up Umbrella.

In the morning it was quiet above Oss, there was no plane in sight. In the distance, gun-roaring and sometimes machine-gun fire was heard. Around three o'clock in the afternoon it started again. About six fighter aircraft flew around and above Oss. After that the huge hum started to swell again and soon thousands of planes were hanging over Oss. Everyone who could do that sat on a roof watching the planes. The entire operation lasted until around 16.15.

Henk Neuschäffer knows that a glider has landed on "Den Brand". That the Germans guard the warehouses with food. And that one citizen of Oss was shot because he wanted to loot. Johannes Post also states that doctor L. Stoltz and De Bourbon were observed at the glider at Den Brand. That the returning planes fly so low that branches of trees are sometimes dragged along. That is clearly visible by the people standing on the roofs of the factories. The planes go over the Bosschebaan and back over Oss. The pilots wave to the people below.

The magazine the Siren. In the Sirene you can read a more extensive story with more relevant information. It is also known how many planes hung over Oss yesterday and there were more than a thousand. The Second Army moves from Belgium to Brabant.

10.00 in the evening. Father Simplicius writes that Mayor De Bourbon has turned up again. And that his transport came from an English glider.

## Crashes<sup>67</sup> near Oss

The air transport on the 18th went to Arnhem, D plus 1 was led by 126 American planes. Two series of 36 from the 314th and two from 27 of the 315th Transport Group. They had to bring 2119 British paratroopers from 4 parachute brigades to DZ Y. Together with them 51 tons of stocks including 407 parapacks (hung outside on the Dakota). A total of 24 door packages in the Dakota. Their journey from the departure at 11.23 a.m. went well until they reached Oss, six miles from ELLIS ('s

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<sup>67</sup> John C. Warren, *Airborne Operations in World War II European Theatre*, Planning and execution of large-scale airborne operations by the Army Air Forces in the European theater, SEP 1956, USAF HISTORICAL STUDIES: NO. 97, Organization Name(s), Air University, USAF Historical Div, Research Studies Institute, Maxwell AFB, AL, 36112, P 125 – 126.

Hertogenbosch). One of the planes was hit by gunfire and crashed with all its passengers on board. Flak set fire to another plane, the passenger of which jumped with their parachute, and then set off for the corridor. Another C-47 was hit by Flak about 10 miles away (Reek?) and started to burn. The parachutists and at least one (1) of the crew members came out and were brought by Dutchmen to Nijmegen.

## Hans den Brok<sup>68</sup>

Hans den Brok has researched the Troop Carrier C-47 losses in Market Garden and the role of the Dutch underground movement. In his book "Wings of Freedom" which is a major source of information, there is also much to read about the crashes near Oss. Hans is an expert and is praised by many for his work. In 2012, he received an award for the work he has done for The National WWII Glider Pilots Association. He received the: "S. Tipton Randolph Memorial Award" for outstanding service in the interest of the National World War II Glider Pilots Association, Inc. <https://www.wv2gp.org/research/ResearchTeam.php>

Hans den Brok (e-mail 10-10-2019) reports: *"The aircraft ended up in the Betuwe and all of the passengers were killed. Although Tucker's plane also ended up in the Betuwe (although this evidence was at the time - 2000-2005 - paper thin), that crew did end up at Lith in the polder, and via Megen to Grave"*.

Crash C-47 42-100734 Brobbelbies near Schaijk

One of the crashed C-47s on the 18th had the serial number 42-100734 the location was 51 ° 43'5.88 "N - 5 ° 36'25.53" O. This is near the Brobbelbiesweg in Schaijk. The C-47 was from the 97 squadron on board including Lt E. B. White. Cor Guntlisbergen<sup>69</sup> has recorded an eyewitness account of this crash. The source is Mr. Van Lingen and the conversation took place on November 4, 1983 in Uden.

Van Lingen reports: *"It pulled a glider that, after a tow rope rupture, landed on the Brobbelbiesweg. In this glider was a jeep with a few men. The nose could go up and the jeep out. The C-47 was blasted the day after by the Germans and therefore completely burned out. The next day, Grad van de Wetering (from Uden) tried to remove the rubber (on the wing). (This rubber was for ice deposition and could be blown up to remove the ice.) Grad then pulled out a lamp. it is a landing lamp"*.

The WACO (glider) has landed NO van Slabroek.

The C-47 43-15498. In the book by Hans den Brok you can read the following about this aircraft. It belonged to the 316th Troop Carrier Group and serial A-42. The following crew was on board: PIL 2ndLT Jack A. Murrel; COP 2ndLT Robert G. Lancaster; R / O PFC William A. Kabaker; C / C T / SGT Edwin G. Tuman. Other colleagues lost sight of the aircraft above the landing zone. The crew ended up as Prisoners Of War (POW). In the book on page 188 by Hans den Brok there is a statement by Ed Tuman.

Ed Tuman (Wings of freedom, Hans den Brok) reports: *"[...] After a while we pulled out again. We*

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<sup>68</sup> Hans den Brok, *Wings of freedom*, Troop Carrier C-47 losses in Market Garden and the role of the underground movement, 2008, copyright Blurb Inc., P188 – 189.

<sup>69</sup> Ruud Wildekamp et al., Working Group Project group Air War East Brabant (PLOB), Tradition room "De Typhoon" Volkel airbase, 2000.

*went to a railroad station and then we crossed a river. Later I did see the British paratroopers marching by. [...]*”.

In e-mail contact with Hans den Brok, he clearly believes that Murrel's aircraft landed at Biezemortel. It is therefore unlikely that this crew was at the railway station in Oss. There were no trains on the 18th September on the line 's Hertogenbosch - Nijmegen. There was a train at Berghem blocking the line and between Oss and Hertogenbosch the line was sabotaged by KP Nuland. It was too dangerous to move around, the Allied fighter planes fired at everything that was moving around. And especially on trains and cars. Travelling from Biezenmortel to Oss would mean suicide, and vice versa too.

It is therefore unlikely that the prisoners Murrel and his companions were at the station in Oss. Moreover, Ed Tuman does not indicate at which station they were. And he doesn't tell about the way they crossed the river. At that time there were enough stations between Biezemortel and 's Hertogenbosch to board. Moreover, it was further away from the Corridor and had fewer priorities among the Allies. The bridges at Hedel were then still in the hands of the Germans. The polder of the Maasland was in the hands of the various fighting groups from the 18th. Around the 19th they had already arrested ± 120 Germans prisoners of war. In their 1947 report, the KPs' did not mention anything about English or American prisoners of war at the station of Oss.

The English liberators, in turn, did not find in the afternoon prisoners of war in Oss. Despite everything that is been written about it, enough questions remain open. The Germans had lists of everything; one of those is a list of captured soldiers. Maybe that list offers a solution. I am already busy searching were the archive is to find with the list of the Dutch prisoners. To be continued.

Meanwhile, the weather is bad, there is little visibility and there are a lot of low clouds. As a result, the dropping, with all its consequences, is not carried out accurately enough. There is a lot of small arms fire in the area of Best that bothers the aircraft and their crew.

Another safer flight route

The returned pilots blamed part of their losses due to the lack of support from fighter aircraft and bombers. They had not seen any "friendly" aircraft above the IP. The management then decided to use the southern route from now on. The route ran over part of liberated Belgium, so it would become a bit quieter above Oss.

## Tuesday 19-10-1944 D plus 2

The fighting groups. In the meantime, the operation "Pick up Umbrella" came to a successful conclusion very early in the morning. The entire Maaskant up to and including the hamlet Het Wild is now firmly in the hands of the resistance. Maybe there will be a weapon dropping and reinforcement in the afternoon at Lithoijen for the KP Nuland. Then the postponed operation Liberation Sugar Town can be discussed again. They want to free Oss in the afternoon after the dropping has taken place.

### An awake police officer <sup>70</sup>

It is early in the morning and a police officer who was on duty that day made a tour of Oss on his bike. It was J. P. Maertens from Oss. Maertens was a Marechaussee and added to the Osse corps. He did the rounds to see how the Germans were arranged. At the Vissers church he had seen Germans with a machine gun in the church tower. When he passed the station he saw a group of Germans standing with, in his opinion, English prisoners of war. Another spectator, a boy, told him that there were also American officers.

When he arrived at the desk he was instructed with a colleague to collect milk in Schaijk for the St. Anna hospital. His colleague was T. F. A. Smeets. Together they went with a Wagoner, horse and carriage, on the road to Schaijk. Their bikes on the back of the cart. In Berghem they met people from the Order Service who told them that in the south everything was liberated. But when they arrived at Schaijk, they didn't notice it; in fact there was a lurid atmosphere. A resident of Schaijk who was left behind told them that the people of Schaijk had gone to "De Elft" (café De Kleine Elft). There would be English tanks there, so they went by bike to the national highway.

The armoured division was fixed for a moment, and parked under the trees on the national road. It was the Armoured Division of the Grenadier Guards. They stood there because they had to wait for their colleagues who were pinned in Veghel. There was a whole crowd, including some monks. At the insistence of his colleague, Joop told them of the prisoners of war at the Osse station. The English-speaking monks, in turn, passed on the incident to a liaison officer. Maertens had to ride at the back of the bike and was taken to Zeeland (the village). He had to tell his story again in General Dempsey's staff wagon. To clarify the story, he made a drawing with the position of the German soldiers. The English did want to free their comrades, but made it clear that there could be no question of a permanent occupation of Oss. Joop Maertens said that there were large amounts of meat. But they made it also clear that they had enough to eat themselves.

In the meantime, it was already after noon. A patrol led by Captain O'Donovan was sent on the road; Joop Maertens had to stay behind. According to him, in case it should go wrong.

Father Simplicius. No more aircraft were heard. That was correct as we know; the route above Oss was not in use anymore. According to rumours; the English would have created a "corridor" between Eindhoven and Nijmegen. Members of "Vrij Nederland" (the underground movement) had visited the monastery in the morning. They asked for "the blessing", because as they said they would take action this afternoon. In the meantime at 01.45 p.m. Father Simplicius went to rest.

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<sup>70</sup> Paul Spanjaard and Anja van Esch et al., *The Maasland in the war*, publisher Jan Cunencentrum municipality of Oss, 1985, print Witsiers B.V. Oss, Lithography repro town hall Oss, ISBN 90 6763 010 1, P57 - P58.

The resistance was almost so far to start with the operation "Liberation Sugar Town". But for them, too, the day would have a surprise in store. Although, they would fight against the Germans. The KP Nuland gets to hear that the Allies are busy with the liberating of Oss.

### **The battle for freedom**

At 2.55 p.m. Father Simplicius was awakened by gun roaring and noise. Two English tanks had driven full speed through the Molenstraat. They had disappeared in the city centre. He heard shooting on the other side of Oss. A few Germans had fired at the tanks from the railway yard, but the English had ignored this. They had driven on towards the Vissers church. The English tanks and the people of the resistance had been hit with the Germans there. According to Brother Helenus, the "nasty bakers" were the first to come.

Marius Tausk (Organon The History of a special Dutch company) reports: *"The first English tanks appeared on September 19. They were piloted in by two Organon employees, Wim van der Boom and Fer van Helden, who had managed to reach the English outposts at Reek by bike".*

### **Cor Otten<sup>71</sup> in the Klaphekkenstraat**

Cor Otten; *"I was 6 years old and lived on the corner Klaphekkenstraat Kazernestraat, in the Klaphekkenstraat 9a. Among them was Johan and Agnes van Hoogstraten's grocery store, which later became a Spar store.*

*At some point in the afternoon there is a lot of noise in the street and two tanks are rolling up. They drive in the direction of the Vissers church. The first tank stops at 9a near their house and slowly but surely directs its barrel towards the tower of the church. The threat alone is enough to get the Germans out of the church tower. "*

The tanks were fired at from the tower, Captain O'Donovan then ran into the hall of the church tower and shouted down the two Germans.

Cor Otten; *"They drove further and shot through the girls' school on the Berghemseweg. The joint gym of the boys 'and girls' schools stood at the rear of it. Quite a few Germans were stationed in the gym. The Germans who present there surrendered themselves to captain O'Donovan. A lot of people were after the skirmishes on the move. It was party time; some people were emotional and crying".*

A few days later Cor received money to go and get a Dutch flag and a party hat from the Speet store. Cor Otten; *"Suddenly two (2) Germans came from the Kruisstraat. Everyone who was near the "Gengske" fled into the basement of butcher shop Willemse. They did that to hide from the possible shooting. It was a scary moment. After a while everyone came up and out again, apparently nothing had happened.*

*Later in September the Germans fired from across the Maas to Oss and we hide in a basement of the warehouse behind our house. The warehouse had a concrete floor and was parallel to Klaphekkenstraat. "*

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<sup>71</sup> Report on the conversation with Cor Otten, Oss library, 04 June 2019.

## Maria (Ria) van Eertwegh<sup>72</sup>

Ria lived on the Berghemseweg; her father was the owner of the windmill. The location of the windmill was then, coming from the centre, on the right side of the road. Just past the current roundabout Berghemseweg, Professor Regoutstraat and Burgemeester van den Elzenlaan.

Ria van Eertwegh; *“The English arrived at the church between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. and indeed shot at the Germans. The Germans were probably no longer in the church tower but in the girls' school that stood right next to the church on the Berghemseweg. The soldiers did shoot at the Germans, right through the girls' school. But certainly not at the church. There was also a boys' school that stood on the Linkensweg (at right angles to the Berghemseweg) and belonged to the same parish. A lot of people were on the move to watch things.*

*Weeks later, when the Germans left Oss and Maasland, they shot from across the Maas on Oss. We were hiding in the windmill in a parked car. A T-Ford, the wind mill was already grinding electrically and no longer with wind, all the wind stuff was gone. The reason for hiding in the remains of the windmill was because of the thick walls”.*

Captain O'Donovan continues his campaign through Oss. As he imprisons more Germans, a large crowd of people follows his operation. That is not without danger; innocent spectators are also hit by ricochets.

## Bergoss Finally freedom

Ir. H.E.P. van Dijk and D. Kalkman (2019 Bergoss during the occupation 1940 - 1945, Report on N.V. Van den Bergh's Kon. Factories in Oss) reports: *“Finally, September 19, 1944, Oss was liberated! The goal set for our company was achieved. The buildings, machines and installations were completely intact. All machines and devices were retained with the exception of a one (1) horse power electric motor, which was rented by the Wehrmacht (Festungs Pionierstab Amsterdam) on conditions laid down in an obese 14-page contract, but of which we never received the rent!*

*We have had to temporarily remove the coat of arms from our office building, but we have always been able to maintain the "Royal" designation. On Tuesday, September 19, 1944, English tanks came to liberate Oss with the help of the fighting groups. Due to the combat operations, the company was closed at approximately 3 p.m. Our company was involved in combat operations because two tanks, searching for the enemy, were driving on our pasture between the office building and the factory site and they were fighting against Germans armed with machine guns. A few bullets ended up in a large pile of branch forests that were stored on the factory site on the south side of the rowing yard. As a result, this pile caught fire for approximate 4 hours.*

*Thanks to the direct intervention of our fire brigade and the rapid help of the municipal fire brigade, it was possible to prevent the fierce fire from spreading to the factory buildings. The fire-fighters boldly fulfilled their duty, although the bullets flew around them. It could not be prevented that almost our entire stock of fire wood went up in fire (± 380, tons). Also a part of the open shed burned; under a pile of hay a car was hidden for the Germans, the car also was a flame.*

*The combat actions also caused damage to the north side of the office building (glass and wood damage). In addition, the tanks destroyed part of our fencing. This liberation took place "en-passant" by 2 English tanks and the patriots from Oss and surroundings on Tuesday, September 19, 1944. The issue of arization, the removal of Jews from the*

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<sup>72</sup> Report on the conversation with Ria van de Eertwegh, Lithoijen, marina, 17 May 2012.

*factory and taking over the ownership was come to a halt.*

*We were liberated! However, the near future was not very promising for our company. Rail traffic was stopped, transport by road and water was blocked. Electric energy was no longer available. The raw materials were largely used up and only a small amount of fuel remained. How further? The factory gate was reopened on 2 October 1944 and the mattress company resumed. But that's another story".*

There were also many German soldiers in the factories along the railway tracks. On the rail way marshalling yard, a few German soldiers fired at the English tanks on which the tanks attacked the Germans. Two larger tanks arrived after a while. When the Germans showed even more resistance, they shot a few times with the cannon through the rail way wagons. By doing that the battle was over. On the Spoorlaan, one house was badly damaged by the fighting and some others were slightly damaged. From the Spoorlaan the fight went to Molenstraat.

### **L/Sgt. Lionel (Len) William Mons Brown<sup>73</sup>, Grenadier Guards, HQSqdn, GAD**

The English commanded by Captain Patrick O'Donovan had little trouble rounding up the Germans. In the meantime they were also helped by the resistance; spectators were amazed by their large number of weapons. A sniper also wounded the English sergeant Lionel (Len) William Mons Brown, of the Grenadier Guards Armoured Division, in the Molenstraat.

Mons is the French name for a place in the south of Belgium. His father was stationed here during the Great War at the birth of Lionel. The shooter who injured him was probably hiding in the rail house on Molenstraat - Spoorlaan. Lionel Brown died in the Sint Anna Hospital in the Begijnenstraat. In Oss, in honour of Lionel, a street, the "Sergeant Brownstraat", is named after him.

Dr. M. Bauer

*Dr. M. Bauer; "The liberation of Oss on September 19. After a fire fight of barely 45 minutes, English soldiers chase away the small group of remaining Germans. Two Englishmen were wounded in the fighting. They are taken to the Sint Anna hospital; Sergeant Brown, one of the two, succumbs to his injuries after a few hours. Three men from Oss are killed, eight are injured. Eight were wounded on the German side."*

Bert Wattenberg

Bert Wattenberg (Interim 2014\_2 Osse's new book, residents affected by the Second World War) reports: *"With the liberation of Oss on September 19, 1944, the Germans in the city fired at everyone who passed by. Frans van Nuland walked with Antoon van Bakel and Jan Hendriks at the Klaphekken-Bram van den Berghstraat intersection when Germans shot at them from the direction of Bergoss's office. Jan was hit in his lower body and fell down dead. Frans was hit in the thighs and fell to the floor. Antoon ducked away but was still hit and sustained minor injuries to one of his upper arms. Some people from Oss came to the rescue and carried Frans to the Sint-Anna hospital in the Begijnenstraat. When they arrived with him on Molenstraat, near Houtstraat, the Germans were shooting again. This time from a position in the railway signal control house at the level crossing at hotel-restaurant Van Alem. [...]*

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<sup>73</sup> J.W.G.M. Thuring, *Vleespotten and Kippeketten*, Spectacular liberation of Oss and Heesch September 1944, second edition 1994, Publisher Bevrijdingsmuseum 1944 Rijk van Nijmegen, Groesbeek, P29 - 31.



*They hit Adriaan Maas. Thanks to rapid intervention by surgeon Dr. Bauer and Dr. Vetter of the St. Anna Hospital, Frans van Nuland was able to keep his leg. He remained troubled by a "stiff leg." Unfortunately, Adriaan Maas could not be saved. He got a bullet in the head and died instantly. He was a milk vendor by trade and wanted to tell his customers that day that milk could not be delivered because there would be a fight for Oss. He was probably attacked by the same German soldiers who managed to hit Sergeant Len Brown from the same railway signal control house on September 19 on Molenstraat / corner Boterstraat when he freed Oss with his small force from the occupying forces."*

The fight on the corner of Boterstraat

At the corner of Boterstraat and Molenstraat, two soldiers are fighting against the Germans. They lie on the pavement: Guardsman Lumpsden (with helmet) and Lieutenant Claude Duclos of the Welsh Guards. They are shooting towards the German soldiers, who have entrenched themselves in the substitute's house at the Molenstraat railway crossing. The smoke from the firing of the Bren gun can clearly be seen. The soldiers managed to get the curious Osse citizen, who stood next to them, with his bicycle backwards. See photo BCO010323<sup>74</sup>, City Archives Oss.

### **The Dutch flag flies on the town hall**

The municipal messenger Henk van der Lee knew where a Dutch flag was stored and grabbed it and hung it out. Most of the civil servants who were in the town hall had not noticed his action. The flag is clearly visible on the many photos made by Leo van den Bergh.

In Dr Vetter's annual report of 24-02-1945 it can be read that the long-awaited moment arrived at 3 p.m. Doctor Vetter, Report dated February 24, 1945, reports; *"The entry of the English into Oss almost completely abandoned by the Germans. The German units still present resisted for about 45 minutes, unfortunately with such interest from the people of Oss, that the number of wounded and killed civilians exceeded that of the military victims. We enlisted two English soldiers that day, one of whom died at night, and also eight German prisoners of war; 3 civilians were brought in dead and 8 wounded. The prisoners of war were nursed in room 8, later in room 7. For English soldiers room 12 was made available; their number increased gradually to 9. Also, 2 Germans were admitted on 24 September. In mid-October, the Allied soldiers and German prisoners were transferred to hospitals in Nijmegen, so that all the halls could be made available again to civilians. Some damage as a result of the war was not inflicted on the hospital this year"*.

Brother Helenus; *"Despite the serious situation, it was still a comical sight on the Heuvel. Entire crowds of people went to the battlefield. The streets were black with people. A cannon shot, however, was sufficient to wipe the street clean again. Noses stuck out around every corner and side of each porch. The bullet was barely out of the barrel or the people reappeared.*

The captured Germans were parked under the covered terrace of café Widow de Smit. There were quite a few of them. The café was also used as an emergency school for the youth. But according to Cor Otten they were often sent home with the announcement that the lessons were cancelled.

Philips, too, was liberated from Germans, thus opening up a warehouse with many delicacies. The KP Nuland is actively helping the English. In one of the photos (BCO010329) of Leo van den Bergh,

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<sup>74</sup> There is an original copy of this photo, a photo printed later (BCO010323 A), size 10.5 x 14.5 cm. and another original copy (BCO010323 B), obtained in May 1994 from Mrs. Den Brok-Loonen (Venray) [http://osspubliek.hosting.deventer.net/detail.php?nav\\_id=0-1&id=302655864&index=0&volnummer=0](http://osspubliek.hosting.deventer.net/detail.php?nav_id=0-1&id=302655864&index=0&volnummer=0)

their leader Jan van Nuland (Jan Verberne) is on the back of a tank giving instructions to the tank commander.

## De Bourbon back in Oss

In the Meuse chronicle, Jan Leemans tells us that a colourful caravan is set in motion under a cacophony of roaring pistons (the pistons in the engines of the cars). It goes towards Oss. They are waved out by a "madly swept" crowd. The mayor is also back in Oss. He was taken from Lithoijen to Oss under the guidance of a small convoy and a truck with a wood gas generator. There is a party going on in Oss.

Jan Leemans, Maaskroniek<sup>75</sup>, reports; *"Within an hour, the Osse bourgeoisie will also give up its last reserve of saved emotions and be able to live out its liberation rush, the moment has been chosen psychologically, you will only experience Liberation Day once, the family celebration of us all"*.

Party all over Oss, in the evening the flags are hanging out and all the citizens think they are liberated. The mayor De Bourbon goes to the Heuvel (town centre) where the party is going on.

In the chronicle of the nuns on September 19 it says: "By the now organized K.P. invited, even forced with Dr. L. Stoltz, who played a major role in this and made himself worthy for Oss. Some English tankers (tanks) arrive in Oss in the afternoon. There is a fight between the English, the Germans and the Dutch with many dead and wounded. In room one (1) there are Germans on one side and English and Dutch on the other side; even people who walked unsuspectingly were killed or injured. It was a crazy Tuesday that evening. The Germans have withdrawn and the people shout and cheer for the liberation. Oss is free! They thought so, but now it started well, because just for a moment the Germans were hiding."

The prisoners of war that it was all about were not found; they somehow disappeared from the face of the earth.

The hospital is struggling with a lack of space and an emergency hospital is being set up in the Sint Nicolaas institute.

Joop Maertens was allowed to go to Oss again. We owe Joop and his colleague Smeets that Oss is liberated. The meat factories and warehouses were until then not interesting enough for the Grenadier Guards. Their comrades who were imprisoned, however, did. But they were only there in the story of Joop Maertens. Joop Maertens and colleague Smeets have contributed greatly to the liberation of Oss.

The liberation of Oss is celebrated on September 19, when two English tanks, a tri-ton lorry and a platoon of grenadiers, appeared. A few days later reinforcement was added. In the evening they all left again and in the morning, the 20th, Oss was "German" again.

Oh yes and if you wonder how the milk order for the hospital ended? The milk was delivered there that day.

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<sup>75</sup> Editing, Rikie de Vries, Piet van Hees, *World War II on the Maaskant*, Publisher, Heemkundekring, MAASDORPEN IN DE GEMEENTE LITH, 18th year no. 42, May 5, 1995, Chapter 4, Diary of a Lithenaar P32.

# Wednesday, September 20, 1944 and beyond

“They are coming back”.

The only fear some people had was that the Germans would return. Unfortunately, this suspicion was justified. The English were busy fighting for the road from Eindhoven to Nijmegen and could not keep Oss liberated.

The Germans already showed on September 20th that they had not yet been driven out. In the early morning a 19-strong group of Germans entered Oss again. They preferably shot at buildings with Dutch and American flags. Mayor De Bourbon informed the KP Nuland. These came to Oss and after a short fierce fight two (2) Germans were killed and the rest surrendered.

Another group of Germans returned later in the afternoon via the Hescheweg. They drove to the meat factories and then recharged their cars. The KP Nuland was notified by telephone from the water company. That warning came from Mr. Hengel, director of one of the factories. The KP Nuland then intercepted the three trucks at Nuland and killed the Germans. The railway line to 's Hertogenbosch was already inadequate at that time. The Germans had loaded a train full of rations and wanted to tow it to Utrecht via 's Hertogenbosch. From Utrecht the train had to go to Germany. The track to Ravenstein was blocked by a shattered locomotive at Berghem. The KP Nuland who received a message via the water supply telephone blew up the railway line. And so in the 1947 report you can read up to five (5) times! Further on at Rosmalen there was also a damaged train.

Later in the evening, seven (7) English tanks came rolling into Oss, which looked reassuring to the people of Oss.

Thursday, September 21, 1944

At around 1 p.m. about 30 English trucks arrived in Oss. They came to Zwanenberg to pick up meat and were protected by a large number of combat vehicles. It was a party in Oss again, people cheered on the liberators, they in turn handed out cigarettes. According to a connoisseur quite different from “own cultivation”.

Friday, September 22, 1944

The 22nd Germans arrived again with trucks. They tried to get to the Philips factory to plunder the warehouse there. The Order Service (OD) and an English tank convinced them not to.

## Bernardus Welting and the letter from Jan Pulles

Bernardus Johannes Hendrikus Welting was born in Grave in 1896, his father was music director by profession. He married Maria Theresia van Leeuwen in 1930. Mrs Van Leeuwen was born in 1895, her father was a cooper. Maria Theresia is named after her grandmother, her father was born in Teeffelen. Her grandfather was a farmer by profession. When Bernardus married Maria van Leeuwen, he was deputy committee at the postal service. They lived in Oss.

Jan Pulles was strongly pro-German and associated with the NSB, in practice Pulles was a puppet. Mia van den Bergh: *“Every day you could see his mother bump up the stairs from the town hall in the Molenstraat to her son. She exerted a strong influence on her son. This was no secret”.*

Mayor Apeldoorn was shot on August 10, 1944 in Ravenstein by the KP “Margriet” from Den Bosch.

The reason for his execution has already been discussed. About Jan van Rosendaal, Apeldoorn writes "very correct in attitude". After the war, Rosendaal would speak and write himself out of his incriminating position and he even received a Resistance Memorial Cross!

## Betrayal by mail

Jan Pulles typed the anonymous letter at the beginning of September 1944 and addressed it to: "DIE SICHERHEITSDIENST KAMPF VUGHT". The letter was sent from the post office at Molenstraat in Oss.

Unfortunately for Pulles, there was an observant postal officer, Bernardus Welting. The man was nicknamed "Pasrijk". Welting understood through the addressing, Camp Vught, that this letter could have disastrous consequences. He personally kept the letter out of reach of others and didn't tell anyone about it.

Mia said; "After the liberation of Oss I went to the post office to buy some stamps. Welting watched the entrance and asked me to wait a minute. He went to the back of the building where the concerned letter was hidden. With the remark; "This will be of your interest," he handed me the letter in question.

Jan Pulles told about underground practices but none of it was right. Several people were mentioned, including those who were not involved in anything. Adriaan Ploegmakers and Mia van den Bergh were also among the names mentioned. The people mentioned made it very difficult for the NSB, according to Pulles, and had to be picked up to restore the peace in Oss.

The letter was drawn up in German. After reading the letter, Mia couldn't believe her eyes. By the way of writing, the suspicion immediately arose that the "letter" was written by Jan Pulles. Guil Marijnissen, the father of the late Jan Marijnissen of the Socialistic Party (SP), has verified this. He did this by comparing the typing done with Jan Pulles' typewriter. The letter indeed appeared to have been produced on that typewriter. Jan Pulles was after the liberation in detention in the jail at the Koorstraat. When Mia confronted him with this letter, he confessed that he had written it.

It can be guessed what would have happened if the letter had arrived at the Sicherheitsdienst. Innocent people were reportedly deported and then killed.

After the war, Pulles, as well as Mayor Hermanus Apeldoorn, who was appointed in early 1944, were found guilty of treason.

The letter in question from Jan Pulles.

Unfortunately, there is no better version of the letter, the original no longer exists.

16. september 1944

Herrn Chef des Sicherheitsdienstes  
Marienhof  
V O U G H T .

Ich möchte Ihnen folgendes zur Kenntnis bringen aus Oss.:

Es fällt auf dass einige Personen sich immer wieder zusammen treffen und auch zu zwei Besprechungen halten. Der Verdacht besteht dass es um eine Geheimorganisation handelt, die beim Abzug der Deutschen Terroristataten ausüben will. Die Personen sind dazu allerdings im Stande und Ihre Auslassungen und Mitteilungen an dritte Personen lassen darüber kein Zweifel. Es sind folgende Personen:

**Adrianus Ploegmakers;** kann. Notar, Molenstrat 88, Oss. Dieser war Offizier in ehemaligen niederl. Wehrmacht und geht immer schon hervor gegen alles, was deutsch ist. Er ist das Haupt der Organisation und unterhält enge Beziehungen zur Römischer Geistlichkeit. Er gibt die Befehle weiter.

**Plasmans,** Steuerempfänger, Molenstrat 1, Oss. Dieser ist vielleicht der grösste Hetzer. Ist sehr befreundet mit Ploegmakers und kommt oft mit diesen und anderen zusammen. Der Bruder seiner Frau ist in 1940 durch ein Deutsches Gericht wegen Grauelberichterstattung zur langjähriger Zuchthausstrafe verurteilt worden. Deshalb hat er grossen Haas gegen die Deutschen.

**Van, Teeffelen,** Fabrikangestellter, Molenstrat 1 Oss. Dieser hat mehrere Monate Festgesessen durch den Sicherheitsdienst, vermutlich wegen Mitglied einer Geheimorganisation oder Verbreitung illegaler Blätter. War Feldwebel in der ehemaligen Niederländische Wehrmacht. Bekommt sein Aufträge von Ploegmakers.

**Jansen,** Bondgebouw, Heuvel 35 Oss, Inhaber eines Restaurants, war bei den Eisenbahnergruppen der ehem. Niederl. Wehrmacht. Hatte den Auftrag die "Untertaucher" zu warnen, wenn Kontrolle durch die Deutsche Polizei ausgeübt würde. Geht scharf gegen die Deutschen hervor. Gehört zum Kreis um Ploegmakers.

**H. van Heugten,** Correspondent einer Bank, Klapherkenstrat 1 Oss, hat zu gleicher Zeit wie van Teeffelen in Gefängnis gesessen schon 1941 oder 1942 auf Laat des Sicherheitsdienstes.

**M.M. van Hengel,** Fabrikdirector Hartog's Fabriken, Burgemeester van den Elzenlaan 1 Oss, hat zu gleicher Zeit wie van Teeffelen in Gefängnis gesessen schon 1941 oder 1942 auf Laat des Sicherheitsdienstes. Gehört zum Kreis um Ploegmakers, scharf antideutsch und immer in Gesellschaft antideutsch Leute. Die beiden Letztgenannten sind augenscheinlich Männer beteiligt an der Organisation von Ploegmakers.

Die Verdankung besteht, dass diese Gruppe Attentate auf Eisenbahne ausübt. Nachts wird man diese Leute kaum zu Hause treffen, da sie meistens bei anderen schlafen. Ausrottung dieser Bande sollte die Ruhe unter alle Deutschfreundlichen in Oss und Umgebung wieder heratellen. Ploegmakers

Ploegmakers ist eine Neffe der Fräulein Mia van den Bergh, die Secretärin der Untertauchorganisation. Diese Mia van den Bergh ist die Verlobte des Franz van Glick, der vor 14 Tage zusammen mit den ehem. Gemeindesecretär aus Oss, Mr. König, durch den Sicherheitsdienst fest genommen wurde und der jetzt noch im Konzentrationslager zu Vught verbleibt.

So sieht man dass all diese Leute mit einander in irgendwelche relation stehen.

Heil Hitler!

Image letter with thanks to:

John van den Bergh <http://www.tweede-wereldoorlog.org/mia-janpulles.html>

Translation of the traitor letter from Jan Pulles, see page 35 Annex 1  
September 18, 1944

Herrn Chef des Sicherheitsdienstes Marienhof  
V U G H T

I want to bring the following to your attention from Oss:

It is striking that some people keep coming together again and also hold discussions with two people. The suspicion is that it is a secret organization that wants to carry out acts of terrorism against the Germans. These persons are certainly capable of doing so and their statements and communications to third parties leave no doubt about this.

It concerns the following people:

Adrianus Ploegmakers; Candidate notary, Molenstraat 68. He was an officer in the former Dutch army and is therefore against everything German. He is the head of the organization and maintains close relations with the Roman Catholic clergy. He gives orders.

Plasmans, tax collector, Walstraat 1, Oss. He is probably the biggest booster. Is very friends with Ploegmakers and often comes together with him and others. His wife's brother was sentenced in 1940 by a German court against "Creuelberichterstattung"<sup>76</sup> to years of imprisonment. That's why he has a great hatred of the Germans.

Van, Teeffelen, factory employee, Molenstraat 1, Oss. Has been detained for several months at the Sicherheitsdienst, presumably due to participation in a secret organization that distributes illegal news messages. Was a sergeant in the former Dutch army. He gets his assignments from Ploegmakers.

Jansen, Bondsgebouw, Heuvel 35, Oss. Owner of a restaurant, was incorporated into the former railway department in the former Dutch army. He is instructed to warn "people in hiding" as a control by the German police. Strongly goes against the Germans. Belongs to the Ploegmakers group.

H. van Heugten, correspondent of a bank, Klaphekkenstraat 1, Oss. At the same time he was imprisoned with van Teeffelen in 1941 or 1942 by order of the Sicherheitsdienst.

M.M. van Hengel, Factory Director at Hartogs factories, Burgemeester van den Elzenlaan 1, Oss. Belongs to the Ploegmakers group, strong anti-German and always in the company of anti-German people. The last two persons are apparently involved in the organization of Ploegmakers.

It is suspected that this group is carrying out acts against the railways. At night people will hardly ever find these people at home, because most of them sleep with others. The extermination of this gang will restore the peace to all "German-friendly" dikes in and around Oss.

Ploegmakers is a cousin of Miss Mia van den Bergh, the secretary of the hiding organization. This Mia van den Bergh is the fiancé of Frans van Gûlick, who together with the former municipal secretary of Oss 14 days ago

Mr. Konig, were taken into custody by the Sicherheitsdienst and are currently in concentration camp Vught.

In this way one sees that all these people are in some way related to each other.

Heil Hitler!

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<sup>76</sup> Cruel reporting.

# Saturday 23 September

## The siren appears openly

De Sirene; [...] *"This is how our "Siren" appeared officially and openly this afternoon. Truly, especially for those who have cooperated so far, and who have distributed this magazine, a great moment. To say it once with very simple words: It did your "old" heart well. With how much danger had the leaflet been put together for a long time, and with what caution should it have found its way to certain addresses. This time it was printed in Orange, the colour that is dear to us now more than ever, because it knows how to tell us so much, because it is such a brilliant colour in addition to the colours of the Dutch flag. No wonder that the copies of our "Sirene" flew out of the hands of those who offered so! By the way, this public appearance was a complete surprise to me. Never during the illegal period did I immerse myself in the fact that the "Sirene" could be marketed again in this way, yet the idea of doing it in the future is a good idea". [...] "For us we can only thank God that the Gestapo has never found us. And that is why our thoughts mainly go to one of our group, who is not allowed to experience these happy days ... [...] it could have been completely different for him! The memory of this comrade tempers our enthusiasm. If one had the right now to spread glorious the Orange-Siren, then certainly he, whose name we can call, because it no longer poses any danger: Martien! As far as we know, he stays in the S.D. prison in 's-' Bosch. Martien, whether or not you have been detained for your sacrificial and dangerous work for the Siren - it is very likely that it has had a different cause. [...] Today's issue includes a proclamation from HM the Queen, an article written by our mayor, in which this "The Siren" sees the future grow into a large regional magazine, an article written by the high pea. Blanket and other items. It is published by MG's Information Section. This was for Oss, today's event. "*

Because the Sirene declared itself legal on this day and there had probably been no consultation with the editors in Heusden, a disagreement arose between the two. Heusden where the other editors were was still waiting to be freed.

# Monday 25 September fierce fighting on the Hescheweg.

On the 25th the Germans did a fierce counterattack on Oss. At 6 p.m. a group of about three hundred soldiers started the fight. They used partially citizens from Nuland and Heesch as cover. They set off quite a few fires, mainly on the Hescheweg, which was then on the outskirts of Oss.

The English led by Captain Clark with his men and tanks plus the KP Nuland repulsed the attack. Because the war front was between Oss, Geffen and Nuland, the KP Nuland worked from Oss. They had stored their headquarters in the empty café of "van Goey" on the Heuvel. That is why they were immediately on site. On the English side, unfortunately, one was dead, with the Germans 25 and many wounded. At the KP Nuland, two wounded were regrettable.

Pater Simplicius, reports: *"It was around half past five when the attack started. We had just finished our choral prayer. By order of Father Prior we all had to go to the basement, which runs under the monastery.*

*At about 8 o'clock the attack was resolved. From the basement we heard the guns and the rattling of machine guns. The Germans came from Heesch and pushed ever closer. The intention was apparently to seize the meat companies of Zwanenberg and Hartog. The English had set up their machine guns at these factories. The Germans continually bombarded the factories with shells to set fire to the buildings. In the meantime we were waiting in the basement and some of us were very scared. At about eight o'clock I went up with a few others for a certain message and then we saw a fantastic glow from the corridor 300 meters from our monastery. The flames rose with great waves in the screen-like evening. It was a terrible spectacle.*

*While we were standing there looking to this, the doorbell was suddenly pulled hard. We went to see and saw several people accompanied by English soldiers, who had fled from the area of the guns and the fire and sought shelter in our monastery. A few moments later a fire broke out in other places. The English soldiers said that the attack was repulsed, but that the Germans would do another attack. That is why they had requested reinforcement in Grave. The Germans had withdrawn, but many Germans had also hidden themselves in houses. Further details were now coming in about that the houses had been set on fire by the Germans with hand grenades and matches.*

*Partly the fire was also caused by the English, who had set fire to the houses in which the Germans were hidden. Eight or nine houses were burned down. Fortunately the wind was favourable otherwise many more houses would have burned down. The English had one dead and a few wounded. Some civilians were also injured. As is understandable, the entire monastic order of the day was confused. Everyone ate their own sandwich. Several of us brought suitcases, blankets, and other valuables to the basement, because each of us expected a new attack. Father Prior gave various people from the neighbourhood, including women, leave to enter the Slot. Then many people with suitcases, blankets, suits, coats, etc. entered our monastery and moved into our cellars. It was a beautiful sight. They were determined to stay with us in the basement tonight.*

*We Fathers, however, longed to move into our normal upstairs bedrooms and that is why I also went up at about half past ten. After I had shaved, I was just getting ready to get into bed when we were all warned that the Germans were coming again. Then we moved to the basement again, in the opinion that we had to spend the night in the basement. In the basement, as has been said, there were already many people from here. These people stayed in our basement all night. Most Fathers, however, went up again at half past twelve, because it remained calm. A few stayed up all night. There was a lot of shooting during the night, but I was so sleepy that I heard nothing about it".*

*Marius Tausk (Organon The History of a Special Dutch Company P271) reports; "There were, however, hundreds of Germans in Oss. Shots were fired for days and on 25 September German troops from Heesch launched a counter-attack, in which many homes were destroyed or severely damaged, including those of Organon staff D. de Vries (head of accounting for decades), Dr. Prinsen Geerligs and ir. Scheijgrond. Entire streets were evacuated. The factories were largely silent. On 27 September a projectile near our Pharmacology struck and one hour later, around 6 in the afternoon at the main entrance of the factory, five minutes after Van Iersel and two employees left. Most of the windows in the then main building fell and were replaced by cardboard two days later. The coal (and therefore steam) supply was a major concern. On Sunday, October 1, a message was read in the churches from the four large companies, in which the employees were asked to go back to work on Monday, which often could mean nothing more than cleaning and tidying up".*

In a conversation held in the library of Oss on March 15, 2019 with Jack van der Pas. Jack also lived there with relatives, and he should have fled dangerously for his own life. A German sitting in the house points the best way through the window with his thumb. He said that the people in the



neighbourhood were destitute. It would take years before the damaged houses were rebuilt. His father was a contractor and had rebuilt his house in no time, as it would later turn out to be against the rules. He was fined for that. He had worked in violation of the "Netherlands Reconstruction Act". The fine was NLG 600. Most people from the street often hid in the basement of the Klooster in the Molenstraat, this can also be read in the report of the monks.

### Wednesday, September 27, 1944

In the liberation journals you can read that quite a number of tanks have been added to Oss. Were there already sixty now against two hundred. The occupation in Oss is also increased by five hundred Poles. Two cars of the Princess Irene Brigade entered Oss and left again. The fights are in Heesch on this day and it is very intense there. The BBC radio has officially named Oss as a liberated city. But the gun roar and machine gun fire are not off the air.

### Large stocks in Oss

PLOB; "The British Daily Mirror reported on 27 September 1944 that the British in Oss had seized the food depot of the entire German army in the Netherlands. With that, according to the correspondent, 10 million rations, including 8,000 tons of meat, complete bakeries and a large supply of liquor, fell into their hands".

From the war diary of the 11th Hussars; 27/9/1944<sup>77</sup> RHQ. B & D Sqns (squadrons) carried out patrols West of VEGHEL. SCHINDEL was strongly held by the enemy and 131 Bde (Brigade) were unable to take it, and the enemy had a strong line North from DINTHER. The Guards Armd (Armoured) Div (Division) reported OSS clear of the enemy and at 1700 hours RHQ Tac (Tactical) moved to MENZEL where the Regt (Regiment) concentrated in pouring rain.

30/9/1944 11th Hussars were to be responsible for the defence of OSS by day and night with day patrols up to the line of the river MAAS to the North. The Regt was ordered to move at first light the following morning and take over from 52nd Recce Regt (52 Div) in OSS area. C Sqn were to remain under command 22nd Armd Bde.

B Sqn. Orders to move at first light to OSS next day.

01/10/1944 RHQ moved to a textile factory in OSS and were soon joined by D Sqn and C Sqn. [...] At last light the Sqns took up defensive positions around OSS and one Tp (Tactical Position) of the Norfolk Yeomanry (A/Tk (anti tank) guns) came under command. 5th RHA (Royal Horse Artillery) laid down DF (Defensive) lines for us and we also had 100 local patriots under command, with a complicated telephone system bringing in information. It was thought that the enemy might try and breakout East through OSS itself after their failure to get through HEESCH a few days previously.

In their report you can read that the "Patriots" had a complicated telephone line from which they got their information. The water supply telephone in this case.

### Food Dump in Oss

The 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars; *"Also in OSS itself there was a large German food dump at the HERTOOG factory, which at one time had been shared by both British and German echelons, but was now exclusively for British use. C Sqn reverted to command at 1400 hours"*.

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<sup>77</sup> The 11th Hussars, War Diaries, September 1939 To March 1946, [http://www.warlinks.com/armour/11\\_hussars/11huss\\_44.php](http://www.warlinks.com/armour/11_hussars/11huss_44.php)

## Alphons Snoek meat warehouses

Alphons Snoek, manager of one of the meat products warehouses in Oss, supplied the requested items every day, both to the Germans and the British. After delivery, the unit commander had to sign the warehouse book. This is to prove that the requested goods were actually delivered. For example, it could happen that the signature of a British officer appeared underneath that of a German Feldwebel. Snoek was just a punctual man.

## Hen Bollen

Hen Bollen<sup>78</sup> (*Corridor to the Rijn*, P 207) reports: "*German depots in Oss: Supplies for friend and foe.*"

On September 22, 1944, a patrol of the Household Cavalry led by Captain P. O'Donovan discovered three large German depots in Oss with meat, cold cuts, preserves, gin, cigars, chocolate, sugar, butter and gasoline.

The writer Roden Orde of the Household Cavalry called it "*a paradise that would be the land of promise for more than a week.*"

Officers from other British divisions, as well as war correspondents, expressed themselves considerably less moderately. There were huge supplies, sufficient for the entire 2nd Army, it was said in a report from the Coldstream Guards. On September 27, the Daily Mirror reported that ten million rations, including eight thousand tons of meat, were stored in Oss.

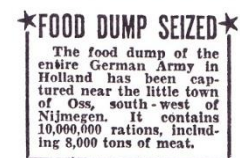
The depots were in a meat factory and Major Willoughby van de Guards was in charge of supervision.

The following days, when the Germans cut off the Corridor and the supply of the 30th Corps was seriously compromised, the depots brought a solution. Oss was still not conquered and that led to an extremely strange situation. The Dutch manager Alphons Snoek made it clear to the British that the Germans also took supplies from the depots every day. As proof of this, he showed them the warehouse book, in which a German officer had put his signature on the same day under a list of articles. From then on the British Supply and Disposal Troops were given an armoured escort to Oss. On September 24, Lieutenants Hughes and Winterbottom visited the depots with a column of trucks. They wanted to drive away with the fully loaded wagons when a group of Germans approached the site. Snoek and the two officers jumped over a wall like hares and ran into an adjoining house. From there they saw that the courtyard of the warehouse was full of Germans. Shortly thereafter, British armoured vehicles led by Captain Philip Profumo entered the site. The Germans did not know how quickly they had to go to escape captivity. Then the British lieutenants neatly put their signature in the warehouse book. The 'wizard of Oss', as the British called Snoek, simply insisted that friend and foe signed for the obtained goods.

03/10/1944 Position remained the same during the day and at night three patrols were used to cover roads to the North and East of OSS. SHQ during this period was established just North of OSS.

04/10/1944 Resting, still at OSS. Orders to relieve C Sqn on the morning of the 5th Oct.

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<sup>78</sup> Hen Bollen, *Corridor to the Rijn*, Operatie Market Garden september 1944, uitgever Terra, 1988, ISBN 9789062553617, P207 inlay.

## Thursday, October 5, 1944 The Siren Oss

### Death of Miss B. Bierman<sup>79</sup>.

De Sirene Oss; [...] *"We are making a leap from several days, of which not much can be mentioned and which could therefore be labelled as good days. From the surrounding the sound of guns and explosions reached us, the sound sometimes closer to Oss and then further away. They became more or less used to this. Although the sound of guns and explosions must be attributed to acts of war, it is said that those days were "quiet." Quiet for ourselves, but were they quiet for others?"*

*We fully sympathize with the others because they belong to the same people with us and because we have experienced and know what a war means in its most terrible consequences. The others will therefore not call us egoists if we fervently desire that the screeching transactions will from now on pass us by.*

*This afternoon, however, it was by no means apparent that we have already had the last horrors. Two planes approached. Air alarm was not given because, as some have clearly seen, they were English aircraft. Suddenly those planes plunged down and dropped five bombs, which exploded with loud bangs in the immediate vicinity of the factories and station. This incident naturally caused a great deal of commotion. Every bang tore a piece of the last days to shreds. After the first shock came the question of how and why. Why English planes? Various plausible explanations were made. For example, it is quite possible that the English pilots thought they had attacked German trains. Because on the marshalling yard, they were working on two locomotives and a few wagons, which had remained here since the railroad strike. Confused by the erratic course of the front line, the airmen were mistaken and thought they had done their duty by bombing the "German trains".*

*The assumption that this attack was intended for the factories is less acceptable and the pilots have certainly been aware that Oss is in allied hands. Because although it was only reported on English radio on 27 September that Oss was liberated in this case. It was therefore in no way possible to speak of a quick report as this "news" came in a week "after date"! Nevertheless, the pilots had sufficient opportunity to become acquainted with it. It is now 5 October! Anyway: This attack is all the more tragic, because it makes victims regrettable.*

*For example, one person from the Zwanenberg, Ms. B. [Bierman, Berghemseweg] telephone operator was seriously injured. (She died a few days later. Ed.) Then the goods shed got a direct hit and buildings in the vicinity of the yard suffered quite some damage. We will not talk about the number of windows destroyed. So many windows have had to suffer in this war. Indeed it has been quiet in Oss the last days and we have to take into account that we are not, not always far from the site of war, not to complain. It could even have been completely different. Again: We are grateful for this. But there is still danger, and every now and then we experience something that goes far beyond the normal course of events. Imagine that before the war, there were casualties, as happened today, that so much was destroyed then as happened today. All this would have found a strong resonance throughout our country and possibly even beyond. Now it is just a local incident that stirs up in a very small area.*

*How terrible a world war is, how misery has the misery of a single individual who knows how to whip up others; what does a system do if it is not aimed at higher values".*

05/10/1944 Also on the 5th<sup>80</sup>, 3 Typhoons suddenly attacked the HERTOOG factory in OSS with rockets, wounding about 10 civilians. Div were immediately informed but it was never discovered

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<sup>79</sup> Agnes Lewe, The Liberation of Oss In Diaries, Stories from the City Archives 5, Print Design & Publication municipality Oss, Publisher City Archives Oss, 2015, P124 - P125.

<sup>80</sup> Note writer: Strangely enough the incident is mentioned in the diary on the 2nd of October.

why this attack took place.

An Officers dance was given on the night of the 5th at which the Burgomaster of OSS M. de Bombac (this is Louis de Bourbon) who claimed to be the rightful king of France welcomed the British Army, despite the unfortunate incident at the factory.

Indeed, on October 5, the operator of Zwanenberg, Miss H. W. G. Bierman, was fatally wounded by machine gun fire from English planes. She died on October 7. (M. Tausk, P272).

07-10-1944 B Sqn.

3Tp was under fairly heavy artillery fire during the night. One AC (Active Component) was hit but no casualties. At 1500 hours all patrols were withdrawn and the Sqn moved complete into the Phillips Factory at OSS where Capt Lovett had found extremely satisfactory accommodation. The Colonel had decided that 1/6th Queens were using the Sqn in roles only suitable for Infantry and he needed the extra Sqn for the defence of OSS. At night time the Sqn provided two Tps for the perimeter defence of OSS. This was done by 2 and 5 Tps who returned at first light to the Sqn area.

10-10-1944 Lt Nicholson with a Scout car patrol reced (Reconnoitred) the area NE of OSS and saw no signs of the enemy. 2Tp returned at last light and 1Tp and 4Tp did the night patrols. A football match against D Sqn resulted in a draw. Yesterday and today the whole Sqn had hot showers in OSS.

### **Football in Oss**

16-10-1944 B Sqn.

Sqn in same position. We are to paint our cars and do a certain amount of training. Everybody is comfortably accommodated, *baths are available and there are 3 football grounds in OSS*, of which we took advantage. 4Tp and 5Tp were out at night in the normal place. There was a little shelling from the NULAND area.

The English also often played football against teams from Oss.

17-10-1944 D Sqn.

3Tp right, saw nothing during the day due to the rain except 2 SS officers inspecting the bank, one of them was shot in the thigh by LCpl Rivers.

4Tp left, no movement seen. Rain all day. Tom captured 2 Dutch spies who had been paid 3000 Guilders each to find out who and what we were. Nothing seen during the night.

18-10-1944 RHQ. D Sqn had previously laid booby traps there but it was found out that these had been tampered with and neutralised probably once again by civs (Civilians) in enemy pay. A curfew was imposed on the town from 2100 hours to 0600 hours and any civs leaving or entering OSS were liable to be shot by our patrols.

### **Enthusiastic hospitality in Oss**

27-10-1944 RHQ. (Position naer Tilburg.) RHQ pitched up for the night at a Trappist Convent Guest House, and the atmosphere, was perhaps, well-timed to counteract the moral effects of our 3 weeks residence in the enthusiastic hospitality, particularly of the female population, of OSS. Bag for the day 8 PoW and 2 bazookas.

## Vergeltungswaffe V1<sup>81</sup>

“Onze Lieve Vrouwke geef hem nog een douwke” Dear Saint Mari push him a little further”, a prayer during the Second World War.

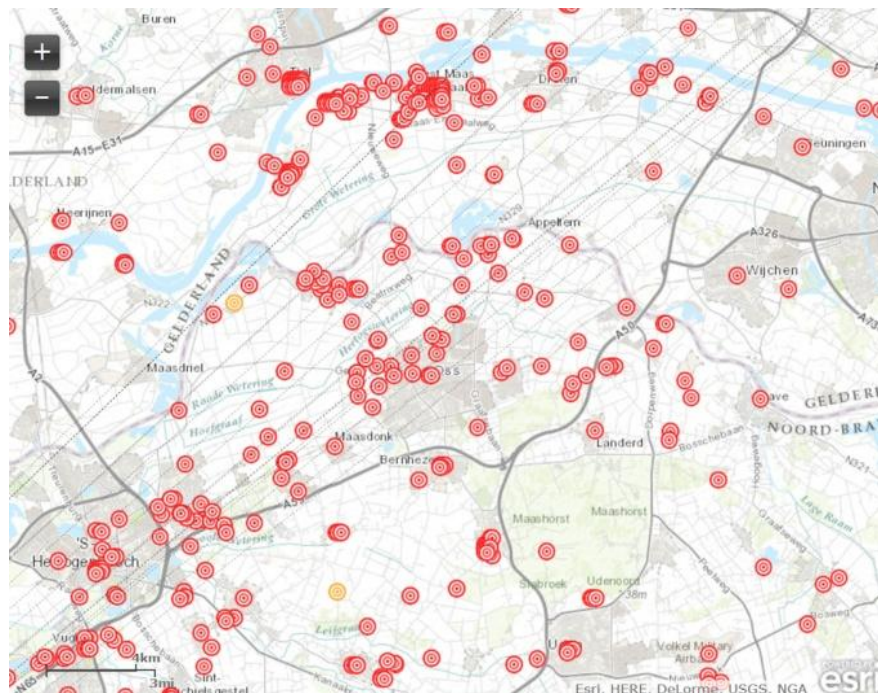
It was a weapon often used by the Germans, during and after the liberation of Oss, almost 4,000 flew over our city and the Maasland. That was not without danger. There was a radio tube in the navigation system, among other things. Yes you guessed it they were made at Philips in Oss for the Wehrmacht. The Philips people tried, without noticing, not to deliver too good tubes. The result was that the V1s collapsed in the most involuntary places. With all its consequences.

The V1, Vergeltungswaffen 1, was an unmanned jet aircraft that was used by the German Luftwaffe as a flying bomb. The Fieseler Fi 103, named after the German aircraft manufacturer of the weapon, had a length of 7.9 meters and a wingspan of 5.3 meters. The V1 was able to reach a maximum speed of 656 km / h and had a range of 240 to 400 kilometres. A V1 weighed 2180 kilograms and had a warhead of 850 kilograms. From 13 June 1944, a week after the Allied landing in Normandy, a total of more than 9,000 V1s were launched to targets in England, Belgium and France.

Around 2,000 V1s crashed on Dutch territory during the Second World War.

The impact sites of the V.1 in the Maasland and surroundings

Print screen website: [www.vergeltungswaffen.nl](http://www.vergeltungswaffen.nl)



<sup>81</sup> <http://www.vergeltungswaffen.nl/v1.html>

# Conclusion

War leads to nowhere and only knows victims and losers. In history there have been people who have promoted war as a means of pressure. Carl von Clausewitz, wrote his book "Vom Kriege" in 1832 that starting and waging a war could only be good. Once the war was going on, and you were victorious, politicians would have to take over. Also Alfred von Schlieffen 1905-1914 with his "Schlieffen Plan". According to him, if you planned well, you could be in Paris in no time and force the French on their knees. Unfortunately for him, others who thought they were smarter changed his plan. The original was so seriously changed that it did not work in 1914. The result four dramatic years of war. Not to mention Erich von Manstein. He is the father of the Blitzkrieg-attack codename, "Fall Gelb". They were all reasons and plans for the Nazi Regime to think about expanding their territory. Unfortunately, the leaders in Germany had not learned from Hannibal and Napoleon. Moreover, their successes in their own country had given them insanity. You can in any case conclude that they had not done their best at school, with history lessons. Unfortunately, the whole world has suffered.

Fortunately we have not had a major war or a border conflict in Europe after 1945. Apart from activities in Northern Ireland and the Basque Country, the European Union has kept it calm until now. NATO has also had an influence on this. Unfortunately, after 1991, there was a large-scale conflict in the Balkans. It was primarily an ethnic war, and there are no winners there either. I don't know what the future will bring. What I can estimate is the following; future large-scale conflicts will mainly be conducted via satellites, viruses and threats via the internet. For example, switch off the power in a country and it is completely chaotic. As example the Russians<sup>82</sup>, who paralyzed entire companies with the NotPetya virus in Ukraine in June 2017, with major problems reaching the port of Rotterdam as an additional damage.

I hope that there will be no real threat close to home for the time being. "Our" army is currently in almost the same state as before the Second World War. This is called "Peace Dividend" by politicians. Not enough staff and not enough ammunition. Of the initially purchased 248 F-16s, a hand full of them is still flying around. Admittedly they are more than 40 years old. To replace them, "as many as 38 new" combat aircraft were purchased. Leopard tanks have been sold and when the repentance came, we started leasing them from Germany. Due to dirt and years of deferred maintenance<sup>83</sup>, the kitchen of the Marine Barracks in Doorn will be closed on August 19, 2019! Politics apparently has the idea; "Our NATO partners will help us". And about that help from NATO partners, the current president of the United States, Donald Trump, has different thoughts about that. The defence personnel deserve a big compliment, they do everything possible to make all (political) missions to a success.

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<sup>82</sup> Huib Modderkolk, *It Is War and nobody sees it*, Podium B.V. Publisher, Van Eeghenstraat 93-95, 1071 EX Amsterdam, 02 September 2019, 4th edition, ISBN: 978 90 5759 980 4, Secret service, Internet, Sabotage Espionage.

<sup>83</sup> News paper Brabantsdagblad, *Doorn dirty barracks kitchen closed: Marines are without a warm bite*, 20-08-2019, P5.

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### Tips:

For photos of the liberation of Oss see: Oss City Archives / archive  
<http://osspubliek.hosting.deventit.net/> search on, image material, Leo van den Bergh.

Or search for visual material: Display options for World War II WWII. The photos start with BCOxxxxxx where the x's are a number, for example BCO010476.