

**Sybe K. Bakker**  
**RG-50.030.0720**

## **Summary**

Sybe K. Bakker, born on January 4, 1925 in France, discusses his parents and brother; his Dutch ancestry; his mother's death in 1928; his and his brother's time living with his grandmother in The Hague, Netherlands while his father worked in South Africa; his father's brief return to the Netherlands in 1937 before moving to England; his grandparents' plans for the family to join his father in England before the invasion of the Netherlands in 1940; his grandparents; his grandfather's socialist political views; his father; his father's veterinary practice and focus on swine; attending school in Bilthoven, Netherlands with Jewish and non-Jewish students; his half-brother; switching schools and continuing his studies in Hattem, Netherlands; how his grandparents' experiences during World War I impacted how they reacted to the German occupation during World War II; life under German occupation; his classical education, which included studying Dutch, German, French, English, Latin, and Greek; finishing school and attempting to go to the Dutch merchant marine academy, only to be denied because he would not sign a declaration supporting Nazi policies; going into hiding in 1942 after refusing to sign the declaration; the resistance providing him ration cards while in hiding; becoming involved in the resistance; traveling to Belgium with a friend, Harry, and attempting to get into France, Spain, and Portugal in efforts to ultimately get to England; being arrested while trying to reenter the Netherlands from Belgium; being interrogated at a police station but being released after one night; learning Harry's father was also involved in the resistance; becoming involved in helping stranded Allied airmen get to safe houses before his arrest by German troops on December 5, 1944; having to prove he was not Jewish; being transported to a nearby town to be questioned by the Gestapo; being transported to Kamp Erika, a concentration camp, near Ommen, Netherlands; conditions in the camp; forced labor digging trenches and other hard labor; being forced to sing as he and the other prisoners were marched through town to their forced labor assignments; getting beaten by multiple guards for singing poorly; using shovels as helmets during air raids; liberation in March 1945; returning to Hattem and going into hiding; receiving a resistance assignment to cut telephone wires; how the resistance became a sort of police force; how many in the resistance joined the armed forces at the end of the war and his service in the marines; his brother's service as an air force pilot in the expeditionary forces; his training for the Pacific Theater of World War II with American Marines; V-J Day; completing training and serving in Java, Indonesia in the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps for two and a half years; becoming a motor mechanic and driver; returning to the Netherlands briefly after the completion of his service and then moving to England; reuniting with his father, stepmother, and half-brother; working in England until 1950; sailing in his free time; sailing across the Atlantic Ocean to the United States as part of a competition; competing in many several sailing events; meeting his future wife on a ship from England to the United States for a visit; learning the dairy trade; getting married in Vermont; moving to the Baltimore, Maryland area for work; his son, daughter-in-law, and grandchildren; and his war medals.