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Summary

Ina Den Ouden (née Dela Gesina Wikkerink) was born to Dela (née Eppink) and Jan Wikkerink in Arnhem, the Netherlands on April 20, 1934. They moved almost immediately to Aalten where they remained during the war. She was the second youngest of eight children. Most of her aunts and uncles lived nearby. Her father worked for his own father at BH Wikkerink & Sons, a construction and housing contractor.

Ina describes her housing and neighborhood. Her family were observant Christian Reformed parishioners, and she attended a church-affiliated school. There was one synagogue in town. Her parents were involved in many community affairs, including the volunteer fire department.

Ina describes the various Resistance activities of her family, one of which included a place in their home to hide fugitives, a Russian pilot in one instance. A local rabbi and his wife in hiding placed their newborn child on the doorstep of Ina's family on Jan. 21, 1943. Ina's family named him Willam Jan Herstink and kept him until the war ended. The baby was then named, Aaron Jade, by his birth parents.

In October 1944, German soldiers arrested Ina's father and placed him with the local police. A friend helped her father escape that same night. When her father couldn't be found, the Germans burned down the house. While the family shifted from place to place, her father remained in hiding until the family was liberated in March 1945.

Queen Wilhemina visited afterwards to thank her parents for their wartime contributions. Her father was also given an award and made into a duke. In 1953, Ina moved to Canada as did four of her siblings. Her father was honored by Yad Vashem and other Jewish organizations. He died in 1981. Ina concludes with reflections on life lessons learned from her father.