

Netherlands Documentation Project Interview Summary

RG-50.570*0007

Mr. Tom de Booij. Born in 1925
Date interview: 20 July 2004
Location: Baarn

Short summary:

Mr De Booij went into hiding when all students had to sign a declaration of loyalty to the German occupation. He was arrested and was a prisoner in Camp Amersfoort from September 29, 1943 until March 9 1944. His number was 3720.

Mr De Booij was from a family that was part of the establishment. He himself was more radical, always trying to fight the establishment.

Long summary:

Tape 1

Mr De Booij lived in the Dutch Indies from 1925 till 1930.

Family was not religious.

In 1938 he thought that it would all soon begin. The shock came in 1939 and continued. But he was not surprised, he had been expecting it. The first years of occupation, nothing was changing really. In 1942 he started to study Geology at the University of Amsterdam. He was living across the street of the Hollandse Schouwburg (The Dutch Theater).

Students were ordered to sign a statement of loyalty. Booij refused and went into hiding. He was helped by a man called Dobbelman.

He was hiding in an underground place in the woods. His father visited him regularly. There were also other people in hiding there, among them a twelve year old Jewish boy named Billy. The name of the family that took care of them was Le Fevre de Montigny. The maid of the family betrayed them. They were arrested by Doppenberg. Booij was taken to the prison in Apeldoorn. Later he was taken to Arnhem and interrogated by a Dutch man called Bret.

In Apeldoorn Booij was interrogated by Doppenberg. Doppenberg was later shot by the resistance. Doppelman, the farmer that helped the Booij was shot. During a razzia all hiding places in the area were found.

September 29 1943, Booij was taken to Camp Amersfoort.

De Booij talked about life in the camp and about the treatment of Jews. He talked about "Appell" (roll call) about the guards, about how a Jewish prisoner, Mr van Dam, was abused. De Booij explained about the ways he managed not to be beaten by the Germans.

He said it helped him a lot that he spoke the language and understood the culture of the Germans.

Tape 2

More about the time in hiding. About the hiding place. Booij calls it a great time, very romantic. He was very naïve.

After the arrest, Booij was interrogated in Apeldoorn by Doppenberg. At the arrest, de Booij's diary was found in which he had written about the other hiding places in the woods. He had written about Jews in hiding in the same area. And so the Germans went to search for them and arrested everybody.

More about life in prison and life in Camp Amersfoort. Again about the Jewish prisoner van Dam.

On March 9 1944, de Booij was put on a transport to work in Germany. But in Venlo, de Booij was taken from the train by a man called Brohl, a business friend of his father. Brohl gave him a job on a farm in Germany. In May 1944 he was allowed to go on leave to visit his parents, and de Booij stayed in the Netherlands.

After September 6, 1944 he became the adjutant of the group of Aerdenhout of the BS, underground groups that had to arrest people who were on the German side as soon as Holland would be liberated.

Mr de Booij talked about his life after liberation. He was a radical. He was in the USA in the 1960's involved with the civil rights movement. In the Netherlands he was involved with student protest and extreme left wing groups.

Since the 1990's De Booij has tried to help Dutch Travelers, a group of people originally from the Netherlands. Their way of living is similar to that of the Roma and Sinti, but the Dutch Travelers are not from Eastern Europe but from the Netherlands. They live in mobile houses in special camps. In the Netherlands they are known as Campers. The government has tried to get them to live in permanent houses or on special campgrounds. Government policies and bureaucracy often clash with the way Travelers want to live their lives. De Booij tries to help them.

Correct spelling of some names mentioned in the video testimony:

Le Fevre de Montigny

Bret

Doppelman

Kotälla

Brahm

Oberle

Brohl