

## **Netherlands Documentation Project**

### **Interview Summary**

**RG-50.570\*0020**

**Interviewee**

**Mr. Hermanus Kars**

**Date**

**27 January 2005**

**Location**

**Amsterdam**

#### **Short Summary**

Mr. Kars was married to a Jewish woman. He hid people. He witnessed what happened to his in-law family. He witnessed several arrests.

#### **Summary**

##### **Tape 1**

Mr. Kars was born 31 October 1915 in Kerkrade, lived in Amsterdam. The family was Catholic but not practicing. He was the oldest of four sons. He went to public schools, elementary school from 1922 until 1928 then to the MULO which he did not finish. He started working in 1930 first at the Railways. In the crisis he lost his job. His parents were Social Democrats but not politically involved.

In May 1940 he was in the army. He was in medical care unit, with one box of medical supplies for 4000 people in an office. He had a Jewish girlfriend and they decided to marry quickly, expecting that this will be forbidden soon.

1941 was the beginning of anti-Jewish measures. His wife had to wear the star, but she didn't wear it. They married in June 1940. They lived in Amsterdam West. Since 1943 he lived at Bosenlommerweg, where he still lives today. Since 1942 they had a friend of his wife's in the house, later more people -- in total four people were in hiding.

Kars witnessed an arrest in the Rivierenbuurt (river neighborhood) in Amsterdam South. An old man was arrested by a Dutch man in 1943. And he saw other arrests.

In 1943 his wife's family was called up to be deported. Her father and mother went into hiding. The police found an empty house. His mother in law sometimes visited her daughter and she was arrested in the house of Kars and his wife. Kars was not present. When he was told, he went to his father-in-law to tell him and Kars brought his father-in-law to the Dutch Theater. He later found out that his mother-in-law was arrested by two Dutch policemen Grootendorst and Gringrig. He found out the names after the two men had died. His wife's parents were put on a transport in the summer of 1943 and were gassed in Auschwitz. He was angry at his wife for opening the door. His wife's sister wanted to go to her parents' house to get some clothes, she was also arrested. The name of the family was de Leeuw.

About an arrest in the River Neighborhood (Rivierenbuurt). People were ready to leave. The police rang the doorbell and they were taken, one family at a time. No audience.

His wife's sister was taken to Vught as a punishment case. She worked for Philips. She threw a card from the train, which he received. She was gassed in Auschwitz. When she was in Vught, they tried sending her packages. They had to bring the packages to the

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Jewish Council, and they would send it to Vught. But from the letters from the sister it was clear that most packages did not arrive.

His wife's name was Rosa de Leeuw.

#### **Break**

They married on June 15, 1940. His mother was against it, because she did not like Jews.

Before 1940 a lot of immigrants came, rich Jews from Germany. The poor ones were kept in Westerbork.

When his wife's parents were arrested, they stayed in the Jewish Theater for two weeks. They kept in contact through letters. They were killed in Sobibor, he looked it up the book, Sobibor. None of his in-law family came back. The people in hiding in his house all survived. The house was then at the end of the city, it was all farmland.

#### **Tape 2**

He read the letters that he received from Vught and Westerbork and the card that his wife's sister threw from the train to the East.

His wife's sister was called Reintje.