

Netherlands Documentation Project

Interview Summary

RG-50.570*0022

Interviewee

Mrs. Johanna van de Velden

Date

28 January 2005

Location

Amsterdam

Short Summary

Mrs. Van de Velden was a witness of the arrest of the patients of the Jewish hospital in Rotterdam. She saw a family in The Hague taken away. She was evacuated from her house and was transferred to a house where Jews had lived before who had been deported.

Summary

Mrs. Van de Velden was born on December 10, 1921 in Rotterdam. She married her husband so that he did not have to go into labor detail, but that helped only temporarily. Her father worked at a bank, he had a PhD. It was the time of depression. Her family was not religious. Her parents were not very interested in politics.

She remembered refugees coming from Germany.

She remembered the beginning of the war. May 1940 was a total surprise. Of course they knew what had happened in Poland, but that seemed to be such another matter. And one knew that they did not like Jews, but nobody thought they would attack the Netherlands. About the bombs on Rotterdam

She worked in an accountant's office from 1938 till 1942. This office was bombed.

She remembered that there was a Jewish employee who disappeared from the office.

She talked about a friend, who lives in California, her name was An Groen, later Anja Haak.

In 1942 or 1943 she saw that the Germans were changing in their policy toward the Jews. She was at her mothers house when she saw how the Germans took the patients from the Jewish hospital in Rotterdam (Joodse Invalide) . Hospital personnel carried the people out. There was a lot of screaming. It was astonishing. The downstairs neighbor was Jewish and she saw how her own mother was taken away. All the people went in to trucks. They were in pyjamas. Germans were giving orders.

Break

About 40 or 50 people were taken away. It took about thirty minutes. Mrs van der Velden wondered what they were going to do with those little people (mensjes). Mrs van der Velden thought: They are not going to survive this trip.

In 1943 in the Hague she saw a couple with a baby taken somewhere by a Dutch police man.

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The names Westerbork and Amersfoort were known, but she did not know what they meant, or what they were.

She was living in Scheveningen and had to be evacuated, as everybody who lived at the coast. They got a house in the Hague that used to house a Jewish family.