

Chapter Five

Roger to January Second

On October 26, 1944 (I will always remember that date), I was awakened at 6 o'clock in the morning by Mr. Ponsen, the caretaker of an old fortress just out of town and also a member of the Underground who won a medal from the Queen. He said he had found a couple of men who claimed that they were Canadian soldiers and did not know what to do with them. They said they had been captured near the Dutch-Belgian border and that they were from the Canadian Scottish Regiment. Both had been taken prisoner and claimed they had escaped from a train coming out of Utrecht. The caretaker wanted me to interrogate the soldiers to make sure that they were Canadian and not Gestapo dressed in Canadian uniforms, trying to infiltrate the Dutch Underground. They were currently hidden in the cold and damp basement of the old unused Fort.

I found the soldiers, dirty, and very hungry. One was a young Captain (who later became a colonel), the other, a private. While I interrogated them, Rakers stood nearby with his hand on the gun in his pocket, ready to shoot them if the answers were not satisfactory. Captain Roger Schjelderup was both very sick and tired. He seemed so young. His regi-

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mental number was different from mine, but of course his number was army and mine Air Force. I asked them many questions about Canada, the army and the English. I had to be very sure. After a couple of hours I was convinced that they were telling the truth.

Roger was too sick to ride a bicycle so he had to be left there until dark. He was brought to Rakers' home in the car of a doctor. As the Canadians were cold and dirty, they really appreciated a bath, dry clothes and the food they were given to eat. Louis Trainor, the second soldier, was taken to a home in Bilthoven, a few miles up the road, since Rakers' house was full. A few days after Roger was picked up, two other soldiers were found by the underground, and homes were found for them in Hilversum. They were Sergeant Amando Gri, nicknamed "Doc", of Trail, B.C. and Private Swartz of Vancouver. The next two, Sergeant Major Wilf Berry and Private Briere, met a up with group of teenagers who were hiding from the Germans to avoid being sent to Germany to be used as forced labour. The teenagers introduced Wilf and Marcel to a couple in the Underground and they were put up in Bilthoven, a few miles north. Wilf and Marcel were moved two or three times as houses with good hiding places were not easy to find and few people had enough food (Rakers had to keep track of a lot of people, so he would always know of someplace to hide someone.) I was lucky that I had my identity papers and Rakers had a spare bicycle, but it was taking a big chance every time we went out.

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The Canadian soldiers had all been captured on a canal Northeast of Brussels. After being captured, they were marched back from the front line and transported to Utrecht where they were interrogated for a week. Later they were put in a box car, taken to a siding and left there for a few days. I guess the Germans were not sure what to do with them and transportation of any kind was very scarce. When the Germans searched them, they didn't find a small jack knife that one of them had hidden. The prisoners started cutting a hole in the floor of the box car which was made of four inches of heavy plank. They got it cut almost right through, but were too well guarded to do much, so they waited for their chance. Eventually the train started to move, heading for a camp in Germany. When they were a few of miles out of town, the train slowed down then stopped. The Canadian soldiers pushed out the hole and eleven of them jumped out. The others in the box car did not want to take a chance. Some were nervous and did not know what to expect. During their train trip to Utrecht, they had stopped at a small station and were held in a waiting room. Smiley, one of their friends, hid behind the counter when the other POWs were returned to the box car, but the Germans counted heads and found one missing. They went back and found him and, with their rifle butts and their boots, beat him out and all the way down the platform. They then locked him up in the box car at the end. We only found six of the escaped prisoners, but six out of the eleven was pretty good odds.

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Roger stayed with me at Rakers' house, so we could look after him. The doctor checked him over and found out that he had pleurisy, an inflammation of the lungs. Because he had a big fever, he had to have his bedclothes changed a couple

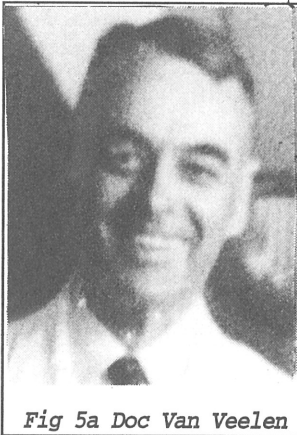


Fig 5a Doc Van Veelen

of times a day and bathed. Dicky and I looked after him for a few days but it got to be too much; so Doctor Van Veelen arranged for help from a nurse whose name was "Nellie." She stayed right at the house to look after him. Dicky and I had many laughs because she was very "aloof" and when she drank from a cup she would hold her little finger out. Dicky would imitate her and we would break out laughing. She never caught on to what we were doing. Sometimes things got a little boring so we had to have something to amuse us.

Roger was very sick and we were not sure if he would live. We talked about what we would do with the body if he died. Would we dig a hole in the back yard and bury him or maybe take him to a farm yard? Or would we leave him some place with his identity on him so the Germans would find him and the Red Cross would bury him? One thing was for sure, the body could not be found in the police station or in the house. There were too many other lives at stake. But luckily he got better and all was well.

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One night Rakers went to a meeting in the village. He didn't think much of it and said he would not be late returning. Ten o'clock was considered late and still no Rakers. Eleven o'clock, then twelve o'clock passed and still he wasn't home. By this time, Dicky and I were getting very nervous. We then began wondering if the Germans had raided the meeting, so I started to gather up all the different Underground papers. It was surprising what was left around. Papers were under the carpet, behind shelves and all over the place. A lot of them were on the dining room table. I put them all in my hiding hole. I then dressed Roger, as sick as he was and told I him that we might have to get in the hole tonight, and made him practice coughing without making a noise. He was really too sick to give a damn but it could have been a life or death situation. Dicky and I then sat upstairs in the dark looking out of the window with the hiding hole. (I don't think I have ever put in such a long three hours). Of course we were thinking the worst.

About one o'clock we heard gun-fire at the corner. We were sure that the Germans were shooting at Rakers and others of the group. About one thirty, a big car drove down the road, slowed down next door and almost stopped, then started up again and slowed down in front of our house, then stopped. You could have heard a pin drop. Both of us figured that this was it, and I don't even think we were breathing. We both figured Rakers had been arrested, although neither of us said it, and we were both sure

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the Germans were coming to raid the house. But then the car drove off. What a relief!

A little while later Rakers came home. He was very calm as if nothing had happened and nothing did happen to him. The meeting had just lasted longer than expected, so all the worry was for nothing. In fact Rakers was a little displeased at us for making such a fuss.

I got nervous at times; we were not exactly playing games, and I was not as calm as Rakers. Rakers and Dicky would have been shot if the Germans had found me in their home. In contrast, I would only be taken to a concentration camp or a prisoner of war camp. With these dangers, you had to try to think of it all as one big game or it would get to you. When lying in bed at night, hearing a car drive up or someone talking outside, I would jump up, look out the window and ask myself if it was a raid or if someone was coming. One tried not to be on edge. For their part, Rakers always seemed very calm and Dicky seemed to take it in her stride. I just cannot get over how brave they really were! When you think of what they were doing for Holland, not just taking a chance on their own lives, but those of their family and children; not just eight hours a day, but twenty-four hours a day. In the seven months I was there I don't remember him ever taking a day off. He was always on guard with three identity cards ready in case he had to go on the run.

Food was getting very hard to find by this time. Everything was rationed and even when it was rationed you could not get it very often. There just

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wasn't any food around and the Germans gathered any they found for themselves or sent it back to Germany. Tobacco did not exist as we know it today. We would buy green leaves from a farmer, dry them in the attic and cut them into thin strips with a paper cutter. The tobacco it made was very strong and very rank, but when you haven't anything else it's just amazing what one would do for a cigarette. There were a lot of good farmers who would sell food at a reasonable price, but some of them didn't want money. They wanted linen, blankets, gold and silver and would give their rings for a sack of potatoes.

We were very lucky as to electricity. They cut the power off at the main station but the air raid warning was on a separate power line, just in front of the house. Rakers climbed the pole, tapped into the line with a thin wire and ran it to the line going into the house, giving us enough power for a couple of lights. We had to be very careful to black out all the windows so there was no chance of anyone seeing us with these lights on. If the Germans caught you doing that they would get very upset and, for punishment, take all your furniture, except one table, one bed, one chair, and one set of clothes. The rest would be sent to Germany with a big sign on it saying, "A gift from Holland."

Another winter was coming and the German people were getting cold, even the soldiers. Under the occupation, everybody had to give four blankets, one complete outfit of men's and lady's clothes. As the Dutch had not been able to buy anything for years, they couldn't spare these items but they had

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to give them anyway. When you gave the clothes, the Germans would put a sticker on your door. If you didn't have a sticker on your door they would come later to take the clothes plus a lot more. The Germans had been fighting a very long war, over five years now, and all of Europe was running out of everything. Nobody dreamed that the war would last this long.

The Germans had taken big losses in Africa, Italy and on the Russian Front. Although they were fighting very hard for survival, it was amazing how high their morale was. They all still believed Hitler would come up with some kind of secret weapon. The latest one was the Buzz Bomb (known as the "Doodlebug" this was the VI Vergeltungs waffe No.1 Revenge Weapon, later they had the V2 rockets). It was very hard on people's nerves because one never knew where it was going to land. You would hear the buzz noise and not worry much, but when the noise stopped you knew it was coming down.

The Allies parachuted into Arnhem and Nijmegen on Sept. 17th, 1944 as part of their drive north. Things got bad in Arnhem and in Holland in general. The people had already been heavily bombed and now they were caught in the fighting right in town. Something went wrong with the Allies' plans. The British army could not link up with the airborne force and thousands of paratroopers lost their lives or were taken prisoner. At the end of the battle, lots of them were on the loose, hiding in Holland, but I never saw any of them as I was too far north. It was a very bad defeat for the Allies.

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After the paratroopers scattered, the Hitler Youth movement (Hitler Jugend) was sent in. They were fanatical young Nazis who had been trained from a very young age. The Germans took these kids, when they were 12 to 15 years old and sent them to a Nazi school. They were taught to be very proud Aryans and that they were "the master race." They gave them guns and tough army training. They were like miniature SS troops and many were even worse. They counter-attacked and took back the town. Of course they were very angry with the Dutch people for welcoming the Allies and giving them full support. The Dutch in Arnhem had thought the war was over and that the Allies were there to stay.

This gave the Germans a great morale booster all over Holland; they were really strutting around again. The Germans started confiscating everything: furniture, clothes, and anything else they could move. They raided all the houses; what they could not take, they destroyed, they put big swastikas on beautiful furniture and walls. If they could not take it, no one else was going to have it. I guess they figured the Allies were not far away. A lot of the people left when the fighting started and were not allowed to go back until after it was over. Most the people in town lost everything. It was getting harder to survive in hiding and even harder to get food. Food was getting very scarce and the German soldiers were getting more and more on edge. Most of them felt the end was very near, but the real tough SS Nazis never showed any sign of weakening. If a soldier on the streets of Utrecht spoke about losing the war, a

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German officer would shoot him on the spot. Rakers' cousin from Amsterdam, Manse, his wife Jo and their little boy came to live with us. This made seven adults and four children in a small three bedroom house. Food in the big city was getting very hard to get. We all helped Dicky with the house work, cooking and cleaning, and Rakers got the food. Where from? I never found out.

A couple of weeks later, Sergeant Major Wilf Berry and Marcel Briere arrived to hide with us. They had been living in a small town north of us, but the people they were staying with didn't have enough food or a proper place for them to hide, and were getting very nervous. Not everyone can live under these circumstances. Rakers' home had three very small bedrooms upstairs, a small front room, a dining room and a kitchen downstairs. In this small space, eight adults and four children were now living, including four of us Canadians. That takes a lot of calmness with the Germans all around. Dicky took it as it came. You can see why 50 years later, I have such tremendous respect for her. Dicky, or Mamma as I called her, will always be a beautiful Lady to me.

In the third week of November I went to stay with Heitinga, in Utrecht; again, a bit of a winter holiday. As they say, a change is as good as a rest. Things were different with Heitinga. I never really knew what job he did in the Underground. He would keep company with a chauffeur in the German Army, using him to obtain information. In the Underground most people didn't know what any others were doing

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in case they were caught. However, the Underground had a newspaper and announced that Heitinga was not to be trusted, as he had been seen associating with the Germans. He had to be careful with Underground people who didn't know him, as they might have tried to shoot him and, as he worked in the Underground, he also had to be careful of the Germans. He had to keep his doors double locked all the time and just answer to certain knocks. I guess I should have been more nervous there, but I wasn't. Most of the farmers wouldn't sell him any food, so it became very difficult to get food for him and his family. But I fully believe he was good and I trusted him. The Heitinga's shared everything they had. Sometimes for breakfast we would just have an apple. People in town were really going hungry and cold now, with little kids begging crusts of bread. If the Dutch couldn't afford the black market or get food from a farmer, they just went hungry. I used to sit, read novels and think, "My God, I am part of a big story and just don't realise it."

I was with the Heitinga's for a few weeks when Rakers came to get me. He did not say he was coming; he just showed up. He knew a German who had lived in Holland for many years, before the war. When the Germans invaded Holland, he had to go in the German Army. However, he used to keep in touch with Rakers and tell him what was going on. He now had heard that the Germans were going to search all the houses in town for Divers, so I went back to what I called "home", in Groenekan.

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I was never given any notice of when I was to be moved as people never wanted others to know what they were doing. Rakers would just come out of the blue and we'd leave. I never had any possessions so I never had to pack, except for picking up my shaving kit, a pair of socks and a change of underwear. I played a lot of cribbage at Heitinga's with their daughters Shelah and Eileen. I taught everyone the game and we had a lot of good times.

December fifth is St. Nicholas day, a European custom where they give presents. All of us dressed up in a suit and tie for this. St. Nicholas and two Zwarte Piet or "Black Peters" are part of this activity. The Black Peters visit homes carrying a potato bag and if little kids are bad during the year they are always told that Black Peter will put them in the bag instead of giving them presents. For weeks ahead, the kids were scared of Zwarte Piet and were good. We had St. Nicholas and Zwarte Piet come to the house all dressed up for the kids and me. The one Zwarte Piet was the Westerbeek girl from Hilversum where Wilf was living. She worked with Vonny. St. Nicholas sat like a judge with Peter on each side and read from his book which listed all the good and bad things that the kids had done all year. To please the kids I was put in the sack and played the part of being a bad boy. A lot was going on around the house at this time. People were coming and going and they were having many meetings as quite a few people had been caught by the Germans. There were also people picking up food. With all this activity, the people next door thought Rakers was in

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the black market business and that I was a Dutchman from Groningen in northern Holland, and hiding from the Germans. I would have liked to have seen their faces when it was all over and they found out that I was a Canadian, and that Rakers was one of the heads of the Underground. Sometimes there would be a dozen bicycles in the yard. The Germans must have thought he was a very busy policeman. Food was getting harder and harder to get. It had been hard all along but much worse now. Some of the farmers would not sell their produce.

The prices got higher, but people just didn't have the money. One night, the Underground raided one of these farmers. They took bicycles, big trailers and large wagons. They took all the extra food that the farmer had. It was to be given to the people in hiding who didn't have ration cards. Rakers had organised the raid but he didn't go inside because he knew the farmer and his family. He remained on guard outside.

He had to hurry home as soon as it was over because he knew the Mayor or the Germans would be phoning him. It wasn't long before the Mayor did phone and informed him of the raid. Rakers had to go out and investigate the theft. So, he went back to the farm that he had just robbed to try and find out who robbed it. He took down all the particulars and examined the bicycle tracks. He led the investigation in the opposite direction to keep all suspicions away from his group. A few days later he was sitting in the police station working, not the police house where I lived, when the German police

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came and said they wanted to see him. He was ready to go out the window and make a run for it because he thought they were after him for Underground work. But they were just checking up on the farms that had been raided. It gave Rakers a scare for a minute but he was real cool, at least on the outside. I guess I will never know how people like this really felt inside. He told the Germans about the raid, told them which way the thieves had left but said that he had lost their track. It was the middle of December 1944 by now. We were all starting to think of Christmas, saving up little things and planning everything.



**Fig.5b St.Nicholas and Black Peter
on December. 5th 1944**

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Rakers had bought a rabbit which we kept in the back shed. We had saved things like a couple of packages of jelly powder; anything to make Christmas a little special. We all helped to clean the house. We all had to do a little work because at this time there were thirteen of us living in a small three bedroom house. There were a lot of things to do. In early December, we were decorating the house and planning a good time when Frits came. We just thought he had come to visit us near Christmas. But then he told us that a group was being organised to cross through the German lines and we would have to leave in two days. He knew very little about it, just that. We were to go to a certain place and be left there. We would then be met by another guide and taken to a small town on the River Waal. We were all very excited about going after waiting all this time. Leaving just a couple of days before Christmas was sort of sad, but also exciting. So many mixed feelings. Dicky was very sad thinking of us all leaving, now just before Christmas. Rakers was against it, so was Eep Bos. They figured that there were too many of us travelling together and that we had waited all this time so it would not hurt to wait a little longer, since the Allies were getting closer. No one knew exactly where the orders came from for us to go, but things were getting tougher in Holland and I guess they knew it was going to get worse. We had great ideas of what we were going to do. Frits guessed we were going to cross the German lines over Christmas when they were celebrating. Mean-

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while, Rakers was very busy as he had a lot of work to do these days.

The Germans were getting tougher, sending all young people, or any able bodied person, to Germany. I guess that was the main reason why we were leaving, as it was getting harder and harder to survive. Rakers took me on a quick trip into Utrecht to say good by to the De Baai family I'd stayed with. I told the daughter, whose father was in England someplace, that I would thank him very much for all they had done for me. As I said, he had been a flier before the war and was in Italy when it all started.

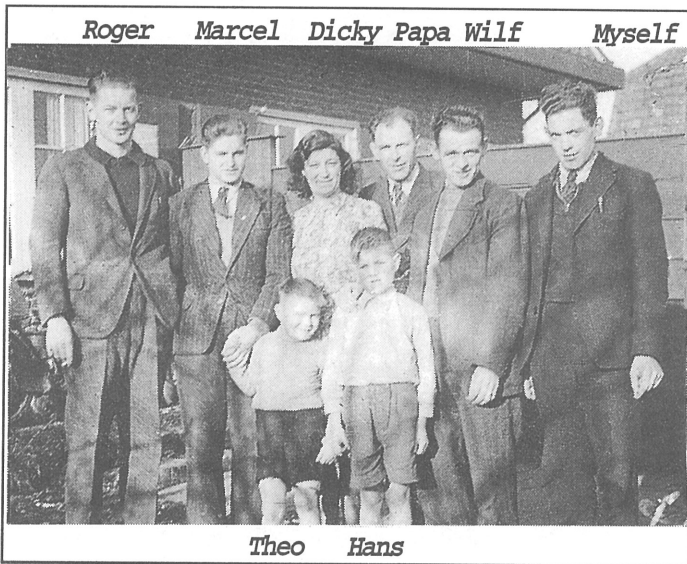


Fig.5c The day before we left Rakers

He had made his way to England, and was a flier in the RAF. We had full hope of being in London in

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a few days and as I left I thanked them for all they had done for me. Then we went to see the Heitinga's to say Good-bye. I told them, "I will have a drink for you in London, on New Year's Eve". We felt pretty definite that we would be back in England in a couple of days. There was a lot of excitement, saying good-bye to all the people I knew. I felt I may never see them again. We had all been so very close. Slim, from the hospital, gave us a quart of straight alcohol, which we mixed with citron and water. It wasn't bad. We had a few drinks each.

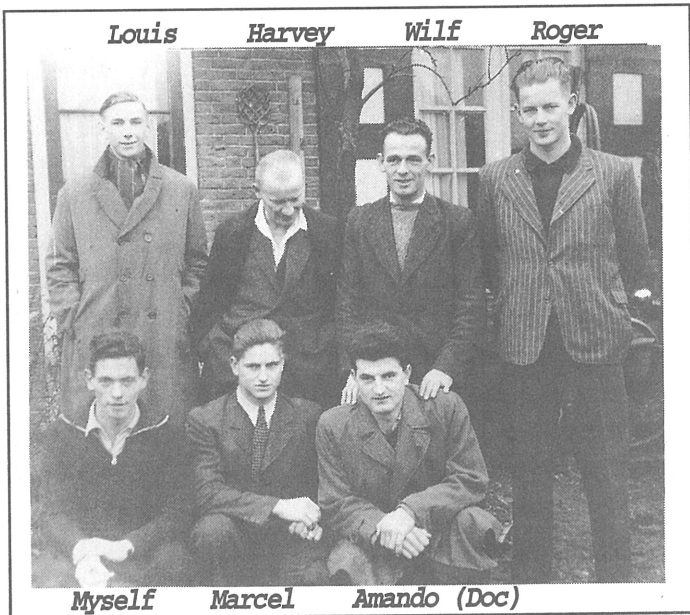


Fig.5d The Morning we left Rakers to travel south to Amerogen

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The next morning, Amando Gri (Doc) and Harvey Swartz, the other two soldiers, came down early in the morning. They had been living with Klaas Scheepvaart near Maartensdijk. Then a couple of guides came. Each guide had brought an extra bicycle and a few other people had left theirs. We took a lunch because we were going to bicycle thirty or forty kilometres. After laying around for months and not doing much, that was a long ride. There were a lot of sad farewells. Dicky, Rakers and I had become very close over the last seven months. Dicky had such great plans for Christmas. (They never did eat the rabbit we had kept in the shed for Christmas). He was very nervous about it, feeling it was not safe. Rakers still didn't like the idea of us going. He was very nervous about it, feeling it was not safe. We rode in pairs, a couple of telephone poles between each pair. I bicycled out of town with Slim whom I had got to know quite well by this time. We had just gone a few miles when one of the bicycles broke down, so one of the guides took the broken one back. We still had a couple of guides. After going ten miles or so, I met the "Teacher" on the road. I broke from the group and went over to talk to him. I was wearing his sweater and other pieces of his clothing back to England. He said "That's OK." He had fixed up my battle dress, had it dyed, and had been wearing it since we changed clothes when I first met up with the Underground. He was very surprised to see me biking down the road and he also did not like so many of us going together. We said farewell, be-

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cause I had to go very fast to catch up to the others who had cycled ahead.

We went maybe another thirteen miles and were met by our next guide, called Dirk. The other guides left us and Dirk was taking us the rest of the way. He was the one that had organised our escape and was in charge of the operation. He couldn't speak much English. He told our guides what we were to do and they explained it to us. They then said good-bye and left. They had told us, "You have to cross a river in a small barge that is pulled across the River Rhine on a cable. It is powered by the current.

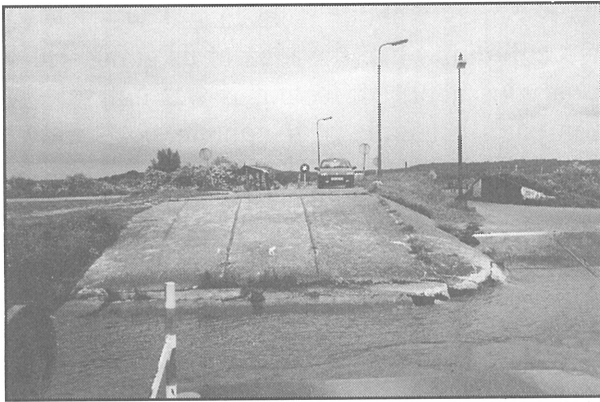


Fig.5e The spot where I pushed the boat off the bank of the river (taken after the war)

There will be a German guard on the ferry. Say nothing, get on it, pushing your bicycle." They then said, "Follow Dirk into the town of Amerogen and go half way through the town. Dirk will stop at a house and you are to go in with him." When we got to the

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Dutch Rhine we had to go on the little ferry. The guides rode ahead of us. The guides had given us our money for the ferry and we rode down the bank after them. We got on the barge and we handed the ferryman the money. All was going very good. No problems, everything seemed all right until he couldn't get the little ferry off the bank. A couple of the fellows around me got off to help push and the German guard on the ferry was also helping to push. I didn't go to help until a woman started looking at me, more or less saying why I didn't get off and help? I decided to help. The only place to push was next to the German guard.

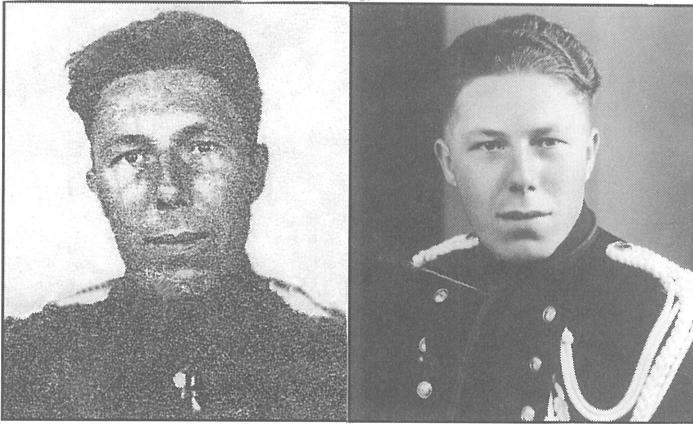


Fig. 5f Dirk
Jan. 2 1944

Fig. 5g Dirk after the
war in his Army uniform

He said something to me. I answered back in Dutch, "Ja, Ja", which seemed OK! I guess there was no way he would think a Canadian airman would be

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pushing a boat off the river bank alongside him. Little did he know there were seven of us. After crossing the river we had an hour or so to go to come to Amerogen. Roger and I were taken into the house of Cornelissen. There we found a husband and his wife who couldn't speak English, but their sixteen year old teenage daughter could speak a little. Her name was Nellie. She must have impressed me, as I remember her very clearly.



Fig.5h House of Cornelissen

We were taken up to a big attic where Roger and I stayed, while two of the other fellows were taken to the family Esveld and the three others to the family of Hoogland. Our hosts were farmers and had enough food put away to feed us. We were expected to leave in a day or so. There was also a Jewish fellow

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and a Dutchman hiding in the same house as us. We taught the Jewish fellow how to play cribbage. don't think we ever beat him once he learned the game.

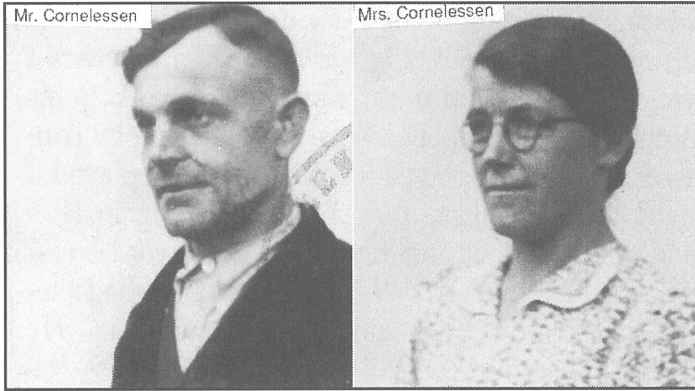


Fig.5i Mr. and Mrs. Cornelissen



Fig.5j Nellie (only 16 at this time)

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That bothered us to no end. A couple of days before Christmas we had a chance to write another letter which a courier was going to take across the lines. Couriers were Dutchmen who went alone at night through the lines taking messages and bringing messages back. It was a very dangerous task with lots of challenges but only a few got caught. Letters I wrote to Ginger, and those which Roger wrote to his mother in Courtney, BC were by passed on by courier. He had never played it before. We had played it night and day during our period of hiding in Holland. He would sit and figure out every card and I He wrote his mother, "We are playing cribbage together and you must contact Bob's mother." He added, "Everything is OK," not thinking that this letter would place us together. We expected to be back in England in the very near future. Christmas came and it was like any other day. The Dutch were so fed up with the Germans and the war that they ignored it. Roger and I sat in the front room most of the day and played cribbage. After playing a few games we tried to sing some Christmas tunes but neither one of us had very much of a voice so it was not very successful. We then decided to go up to see Wilf Berry and Marcel Briere. They had a Christmas tree for the little girl who lived in the house. Wilf, who was the Sergeant Major, had a Sten gun wrapped up under the tree so we could take it with us. It was quite a Christmas present! We next walked over to visit Gri, Harvey and Louis and then walked back to Cornelissen's. We were a little fed up because we expected to cross the lines over Christmas. It became quite

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nerve racking, as we were very close to the launching sites used by the Germans to fire buzz-bombs over to England. They were noisy and were launched day and night. That was Hitler's secret weapon going off and my Christmas of 1944.

We met a couple of British paratroopers from the Arnhem airborne drop. They were also getting fed up and were very anxious to get back. Hundreds of them had been hanging around for months and the Dutch could not look after them all properly. I had been very lucky as I had been in Holland all by myself for a long time and had great places to stay! I had met some very good people. I had been able to get about easily but with large numbers of airborne soldiers on the loose, most of the evaders had to be in hiding all the time. It seemed very strange that we were wandering around, visiting friends, only a few miles from the front lines. Food was really becoming very scarce and hard to find, as so many of the soldiers from the failed parachute drop at Arnhem were concentrated in the south where we now were. We met an English Private, a Sergeant and a Captain, (who was also a Medical Doctor Paratrooper,) who were also going to go with us.

New Year's Eve came and it was very quiet. We sat up until twelve o'clock, listening to the buzz bombs going over to England, then wished each other a Happy New Year. The little Jewish fellow wouldn't sit up with us, so we sneaked up to his bed at twelve, lifted the blankets up and poured a little cold water on him to wish him a Happy New Year.

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He did not appreciate it and it was sort of a mean trick, but one has to have a little fun once in a while.

The man in charge of the Underground in this area and Dirk were still finishing their plan to get us back. They had arranged with a German soldier to let us through where he was going to be on guard, but he was sent on leave or was posted some place else. So everything had changed and new plans had to be made.

The Air Ministry sent a letter to the RCAF on Dec. 24th, 1944, and the RCAF in turn sent a letter to my mother and my wife on Dec. 26th, 1944. Registered, secret and confidential. They had received a secret message that I had been safe in hiding as of July. My wife and my mother had heard nothing since June when I was shot down. They still didn't know if I was alive or not.

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ADDRESS REPLY TO: THE SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE FOR AIR, OTTAWA, ONTARIO.		OUR FILE..... E.133074..... (R.O.A) REF. YOUR..... DATED.....
ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE		
REGISTEEREE SECRET CONFIDENTIAL AIR MAIL		
OTTAWA, Canada, 26th December, 1944.		
Mr. C.A. Porter, 3406 Imperial Street, New Westminster, B.C.		
Dear Mr. Porter:		
The Royal Canadian Air Force Casualties Officer, Overseas, has advised me that a secret message has been received, concerning your son, Flight Sergeant Robert Edward Porter, previously reported missing on Active Service.		
It is advised that your son is known to have been safe and in hiding in enemy occupied territory July 7th, and no information concerning him has been received from any source, subsequent to that date. On no account whatever must this information be communicated to anyone. Although grave anxiety is now felt for his safety in view of the lapse of time during which no information has been received, in order to ensure every possible chance of your son's safety as well as others and those that may be assisting them, this news is not to be disclosed even to friends.		
You may rest assured that as soon as further advice is released to these Headquarters it will be communicated to you immediately.		
May I offer you my sincere sympathy in your continued anxiety.		
		Yours sincerely,  R.C.A.F. Casualty Officer, for Chief of the Air Staff.
<small>R.C.A.F. C. 328 2096-1-46 (1271)</small>		

Fig.5k Letter of December 26th saying I was seen July 7th