

Memories of mother's World War II experiences as political prisoner in the German concentration camps of Vught, Ravensbrück and Dachau.

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Renny van Ommen-de Vries, 1901-1993, was arrested in April 1944 for her part in a resistance group led by Henk Dienske.

Dienske died in the Nazi concentration camp Beendorf/Neuengamme, just before the war's end, from abuse and starvation.

Mother survived Dachau and she and her closest friend worked for an American war press contingent in Grünwald for a short period after their liberation.

They were then repatriated with the war press plane to Holland. In this horror their Faith sustained and comforted them. This is the legacy that we gratefully

received from our parents and grandparents.

The below stories are part of the book I published in 2012:

[“The Mastmakers’ Daughters”](#) and [“De Mastmakersdochteres”](#) the life-story of our mother and her Nazi cousin

contains a complete account of the entire 13 months that my mother was imprisoned.

These two links are for an English and Dutch article written on the 75th anniversary of the AGFA-Commando women prisoners April 30, 1945 liberation. It describes the last desperate days of the internment and their daring strike;

probably the only recorded WW-2 women prison strike:

[THE LIBERATION OF THE DACHAU “AGFA-COMMANDO” WOMEN](#) en [DE BEVRIJDING VAN DE DACHAU “AGFA-COMMANDO” VROUWEN](#)



The AGFA Commando women April 28 1945 on their Death March through the village of Perchau.

Photo Benno Gantner

More Links:

[WIKIPEDIA](#) recommended for many other links and information, also links to the Dutch, German and French

[Christmas 1944 in Dachau](#), a moving account of a reluctant celebration and a daring escape.

[The AGFA Kommando](#) : a web site maintained by my twin brother Jan van Ommen with detailed information

Dutch women in the Dachau satellite camp.

[Christmas 1944 in Dachau](#) a moving story of a reluctant Christmas participation and a daring and hilarious su

[Kerstmis 1944 in Dachau](#), een ontroerend verhaal van een schoorvoetend begin en een slimme ontsnapping

[Concentration Camp Ravensbrück](#) Link to website on the conditions and history of this camp where mother

Vught in September 1944.

["The Bible in Concentration Camp"](#). An address to the Waalkerk church June '45 by

mother.

[Vader's Dagboek](#) Dagboek dat Dick van Ommen bijhield vanaf zijn gevangenschap tot

de terugkeer van zijn vrouw op 22 mei 1945.

A daily longhand diary, in Dutch, for the 13 months of mother's imprisonment. A

better-known diary was written just a few miles

away in the same period by Anne Frank. Coincidentally my father received one of

the very first published diaries of "Dagboek van Anne Frank"

from Otto Frank with his dedication. Otto Frank was a client at the bank where our

father worked.

Gruenwald April/May 1945 Photos.

I met Harry Cowe in the nineties in Seattle. He was 27 in 1945, he worked as an A.P. photographer and later for Seattle Times Nathan (Nate) Asch's father was Sholem Asch, Polish Jew, who wrote "The Nazarene".

The second photo shows Charley Greene who was 29 at that time, I found him back in St. Paul, Minn. In the center is Col. Jay Vessels, Rick ?, Claude Farmer. These correspondents traveled through Italy with Ernie Pyle and Bill Mauldin. After the war their main duties were to document the aftermath of the Dachau atrocities and to accompany Hollywood and government V.P.'s. Other names in their group: Art Everett who became a top A.P. writer after the war. Don Jordan, cook Paul Zimmer from Oakland, Ca. Colonel Max Boyd, public relations officer for their air force unit. The middle photos show their return from Munich to Holland. A day permanently etched in my memory when mother and Tante Nel came to pick us up from our second-grade class.



L.R.: Nel Niemantsverdriet, Harry Cowe
Rennie van Ommen-de Vries, Nathan Asch



May 21 1945 Pentecost, flying home with
the US War Press plane



1991 Mother passed
away on 12-23-'93 and Nel in January
2001



I.D. in Resistance Group