
Crash story of the Mosquito DZ316 and the hiding pilot

It is Sunday evening May 9, 1943, the Netherlands was occupied for three years. At 8:13 pm a large group of aircraft flies over that were on a mission over the Netherlands. At the same time, the English twin-engine Mosquito flew nearby. Peter F. Hall (pilot) and his navigator William C. Woodruff were together on a weather reconnaissance mission.

The Allies made several weather reconnaissance daily to provide a good forecast for the upcoming land, sea and air operations. The aircraft, the Mosquito, was specially equipped with cameras for this type of mission, called Photorecce and Meteorological Photography Aircraft (PAMPA). Hall and Woodruff had taken off from Oakington, England, airport at 6:45 pm that evening.

Four German fighters of the type Focke Wulf FW 190 A-5 caught sight of the fast English Mosquito. The Focke Wulfs had taken off from Woensdrecht airfield and belonged to the Jagdgeschwader 4./JG1 (German name for a squadron). Normally a Mosquito was a very difficult aircraft to intercept, partly due to its speed and altitude. The German pilot Hauptmann Robert Olejnik shot at the Mosquito, after which the aircraft shattered into burning pieces in mid-air. The crew of the Mosquito was able to save themselves just in time with the parachute. Because the time was about 8.13 pm in May, the occupier could clearly see both parachutes coming down from the ground.

The German pilot Hauptmann Robert Olejnik was born on March 9, 1911 in Essen-Borbeck. During the war he flew 680 missions and shot down 42 planes. He survived the war and died on October 29, 1988 in Munich.

The plane wreckage fell scattered on the ground at several farms north of Slootdorp. Among other things, a piece of the fuselage landed at J. van de Oord (lot F50) and J. Schrale (lot E25) on the Wierweg. The largest part of the Mosquito came down in flames at the Schelpenbolweg near F. Aukema (lot E37).

The P/O observer William C. Woodruff landed with his parachute in the Wieringermeerpolder south of the Haukes, on plot E38 (tenant L. Vreugdenhil) and was arrested there almost immediately by Dutch Marechaussee Mr. T van de Hoek. Together with the head of the Air Defense Service (LBD), Mr. CW van Zijll-Langhout, he handed over Woodruff to the German soldiers who had arrived in the meantime.

Woodruff spent the rest of the war in a POW camp. Woodruff passed away on July 25, 2003. The possible other location where Woodruff landed is mentioned at KE Vlieg (lot E52/53) Mr. John de Vries from Pella USA. John was born on May 21, 1934 as Jan de Vries and emigrated in 1949. In June 2015 he wrote a letter with his eyewitness account.

The Mosquito pilot, F/O Peter F. Hall, landed at a different location with his parachute. In the report of the LBD of 12 May, van Zijll-Langhout mentions the following about the evening of 9 May. The pilot Hall landed on the farm LY Kuipers on the Schelpenbolweg (lot E42). Immediately after LBD's arrival, the Englishman appeared to have disappeared. During the interrogation of Kuipers by Van Zijll-Langhout, he stated that the Englishman had seen walking across J. de Vries' land (lot E41) in the direction of Schelpenbolweg. Afterwards, the LBD paid a visit to Mr. Jelle de Vries on the Schelpenbolweg. He says that they (Jelle De Vries, J. vd Meulen and JE Rinsma) had come across de Engelman on De Vries' plot. The Englishman had made it clear to them with gestures that he wanted to be hidden. He was refused this, reported de Vries to van Zijll-Langhout. After this, the Englishman continued to the Schelpenbolweg. After this, De Vries and his servants no longer paid any attention to him, because they "were of the opinion" that he "walked into the arms of the members of the "German Wehrmacht", who had already arrived". De Vries and the servants "went to take a look at the Englishman's parachute".

A 2015 letter from Reinder Jacobi from Canada describes the eyewitness account of the Jacobi family. Mr. Melle Jacobi was a tenant on plot E14 on the Wierweg in Sloodorp. In January 1935 Melle Jacobi came to the Wieringermeer with his wife and 2 children. In August 1935 the youngest brother Gooitsen Jacobi came to work on the farm in Melle. After the war, in 1955 the Jacobi family emigrated to Brazil. In the eyewitness account of Melle Jacobi, it is described that Melle Jacobi went to it (the location of the paratrooper) on the bicycle. When he arrived at the yard of Jelle de Vries on the Schelpenbolweg, it was already full of German soldiers (Zoll Grenz Schutz in Den Oever). Jacobi asked de Vries at an unnoticed moment where the pilot was hidden. De Vries nodded to a small corner of flowering tuber seed in the vegetable garden. The Germans walked around the piece of tuber seed with their rifles at the ready, without anyone having the idea to examine the field more closely.

Mr. John de Vries (Jelle de Vries's son) emigrated in 1949 and lives in Pella USA, his account differs from that of Melle Jacobi. The pilot was helped to remove his parachute and he was taken to De Vries' farm to hide. Unfortunately, there was not enough time for this, because the Germans had already arrived at the farm on the Schelpenbolweg. Pilot Hall was hidden in the middle of a pothole about one meter high and three meters in diameter and covered by Jan Bruinsma. The story of John de Vries is different from

Melle Jacobi, but essentially the same.

In any case, it frustrated the German occupier, who immediately went to search the farm of De Vries and the neighbors. De Vries and Bruinsma were interrogated by an interpreter, but by switching to Frisian the interpreter did not get much further. De Vries got quite nervous because he illegally hid wheat and even a radio on the farm, but neither was found. The German soldiers dug into the hump where Hall was hidden, while De Vries stood next to it, but found nothing. nerve-wracking. The soldiers searched until midnight without finding anything, says John de Vries.

John de Vries mentions in his story that Hall had left the hump during the night, walked back to the LY Kuipers farm and hid there in the chicken coop. Monday morning 10 May at 6.30 am Mrs. Kuipers went to feed the chickens and look for eggs and was shocked when she opened the chicken coop. There Hall sat among the hens and just gulped down a raw egg. She immediately put her finger to her lips to signal Hall to be quiet. De Vries was called in and Hall was taken back to the farm where he was given a real breakfast, changed clothes and was hidden for the rest of the day.

Jelle de Vries and Melle Jacobi had agreed that when things calmed down, Jacobi would pick up the pilot. After dressing up the pilot Peter Hall as a farmer, they set off together to Jacobi's farm on the Wierweg. Via the land of De Vries, through the canal (the Wiertocht) they came behind the land of J. Schrale (lot E25) and continued to Jacobi's farm. From there to the bushes near the draft ditch (the Hooge Terptocht, which is now partly filled in as a rubbish dump). An underground shelter had been built there. In the hide, Hall was accommodated with two Jewish people in hiding (names unknown), who also had a hiding place there.

The occupier felt taken for granted. And when the occupying forces had not found the pilot the following day(s), they captured J. de Vries, Bruinsma and De Vries' brother. Visible from De Vries' farm, the three men were lined up 15 meters apart, each guarded by 3 or 4 German soldiers wearing helmets. A German officer threatened the three with death if the pilot did not show up immediately.

John de Vries (9 years old) and his brother Jerry (7 years old) came home from school and saw the three men and recognized their father. Both yelled "hi daddy" but their father did not respond. John recalled that his father saw "white as snow".

About an hour after John's return, an interpreter with a German entered Mrs. De Vries's house. It was announced that the three men would be hanged and that father De Vries had asked for Reverend L. de Goede from Slootdorp.

Meanwhile, it was rumored that the Germans would carry out a raid and search all the forest strips along the trails and canals. In 1943 there were hardly any trees in the polder that had only been drained 13 years before. The imminent threat of a raid made residents very concerned. The safety of the Jewish people in hiding was also in danger. The pressure was further increased by the occupying forces. The pastor from Slootdorp, L. de Goede, was asked as an interpreter to explain the situation to the Englishman. Because the reports of De Vries and Jacobi here differ, it is possible that the pastor first visited the hiding place on the way to De Vries' farm.

The pilot Peter Hall thought that, in this case, it would be better to surrender to the German occupier. Towards evening Gooitsen Jacobi, Melle's brother, left for Slootdorp with the pilot and the two Jews. There are two different storylines. Story 1 by Melle Jacobi: That night they hid in the open air on a piece of wheat land (location unknown) and the next day the pilot surrendered in Middenmeer. Story 2, of the elderly in Slootdorp. They tell the story that the English pilot hid for a few days in the Reformed church in Slootdorp. Behind the church organ was a small hiding place and the story goes that Hall hid there. If this is the case, a lot of risk has been taken because the church tower was a German lookout during the war.

In any case, the follow-up is described in detail in the additional report of the LBD of Van Zijll-Langhout of 14 May. Van Zijll-Langhout was called that morning by the mayor A. Saal that the fugitive English pilot was with the Guard of the Marechaussee JH Noot.

The pilot Peter Hall had entered hotel Smit in Middenmeer at 07:30 in the morning. The owner of the Hotel, Mr. RD Smit immediately informed the police. Mr. After the report, Noot immediately went to hotel Smit. There the report states that "after he had breakfast, he took the airman to the police post in Middenmeer". After this Hall was "surrendered" by Van Zijll-Langhout to the Feldgendarmarie (German military police) in Alkmaar.

After this, the Germans stopped their searches, released the three hostages and the Jewish people in hiding were able to return to their hiding place on the Hooge Terptocht. Yet after all this that place was no longer considered safe by Melle Jacobi. Another woman in hiding, Mrs. Annie Geuzenbroek, who was hiding in a small room on the farm, was approaching a nervous crisis. It was decided to take the three people in hiding to Melle Jacobi's father in Nijega (Friesland). The resistance hero from the polder, Mr. AC de Graaf, had a brother who had access to an official car, with which one could safely undertake the journey. In Friesland, Annie and the two Jewish people in hiding were able to wait for the end of the war.

From Alkmaar, Peter Hall was deported by the Germans to a prisoner of war

camp. Hall spent the rest of the war in a POW camp. About a year after the end of the war, the De Vries family received a letter from England that Hall had returned safely and was living in Glasgow.

The impressive story of the families of Mr. Melle Jacobi and John de Vries and many others about the risks that were taken, the possible reprisals by the occupying forces, Jewish people in hiding, AC de Graaf and the English pilots may not be complete. If anyone remembers or has any details available, we at the Hollands Kroon Memorial Foundation would like to keep this for future generations. You can email our chairman Mark Hakvoort about this: mark@shhk.nl