

Postscript to “Recollections 1929 – 1952”

Memories are very selective. We remember some things and we do not remember other things. And some things we just remember incorrectly.

Conversations with relatives, research in the family archives in the Netherlands in 2006 and 2007, and research in other sources, now enable me to make some additions to and corrections in the original text of Recollections 1929 - 1952.

Chapter 2 – The Early Days

On page 7 I wrote:

“Vader had looked to his grandfather for inspiration rather than to his father who had been a partner in a firm of coffee dealers in Amsterdam. The coffee business had hit hard times and lost a lot of money. The story goes that Grandmother van Alderwerelt, who had quite a bit of money, paid the debts of the coffee business to avoid bankruptcy and told Grandfather in no uncertain terms that he was retired and could never again be active in that business.

In the archives I found two documents. The first one, dated Amsterdam 31 December 1904, announces that H. van der Kaay & Co. ceased doing business on that date and that Ch. F. de Roo van Alderwerelt, my Grandfather, would handle the liquidation.

AMSTERDAM, 31 December 1904.

M.

Hiermede hebben wij de eer U te berichten dat onze vennootschap op heden is ontbonden.

De Heer CH. F. DE ROO VAN ALDERWERELT is, bij uitsluiting, met de liquidatie der loopende zaken belast.

Hoogachtend,

H. VAN DER KAAY & CO.

The second one dated Amsterdam 1 January 1905 makes reference to the first document and announces the formation of the firm Van Alderwerelt & Co., brokers in coffee. It states that J.Ph. Hoekstra is authorized to sign for the company and shows how my Grandfather and Mr. Hoekstra will sign.

AMSTERDAM, 1 Januari 1905.

Onder referte aan nevanstaande circulaire heb ik de eer U te berichten dat ik mij heden alhier gevestigd heb onder de firma

VAN ALDERWERELT & CO.

als Commissionnaire in Koffie.

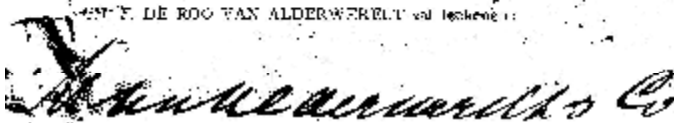
Den Heer J. Ph. Hoekstra heb ik volmacht verleend mijne firma per procuratie te teekenen.

Ik verzoek U van onderstaande handteekeningen nota te willen nemen en verblijft

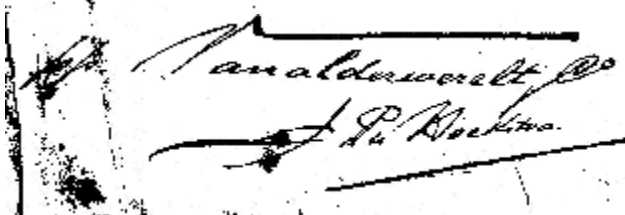
Hoopachtend,

CH. F. DE ROO VAN ALDERWERELT.

CH. F. DE ROO VAN ALDERWERELT zal teekenen:



De Heer J. Ph. HOEKSTRA zal teekenen:



So this documents the creation of Van Alderwerelt & Co., and that is the firm that subsequently went out of business at considerable cost to the family.

On page 7 I also wrote:

“Also residing in Ede was the van Till family. Gerhard Frederik baron van Till, Major General in the Artillery, lived with his wife, two daughters and one son in a large Victorian house on several acres of wooded terrain just outside of the village. The younger daughter, Henriette Cornelia barones van Till, for a time commuted by train to Utrecht to study violin at the Music Academy.

Before moving to Ede, the van Till family had lived in Utrecht where two of their three children were born.



Grootvader van Till in 1910 in Utrecht

The Municipal Archives of Ede show that in 1918 Grootvader van Till was transferred to Ede and bought the house “Roxane”. The Archives do not show exactly when the house was built but we know it was built before 1903 when building permits were first required. The house was sold probably in late 1945 as part of the settlement of Grootvader’s van Till estate.



Grootvader van Till



Roxane abt 1925



Grootmoeder van Till



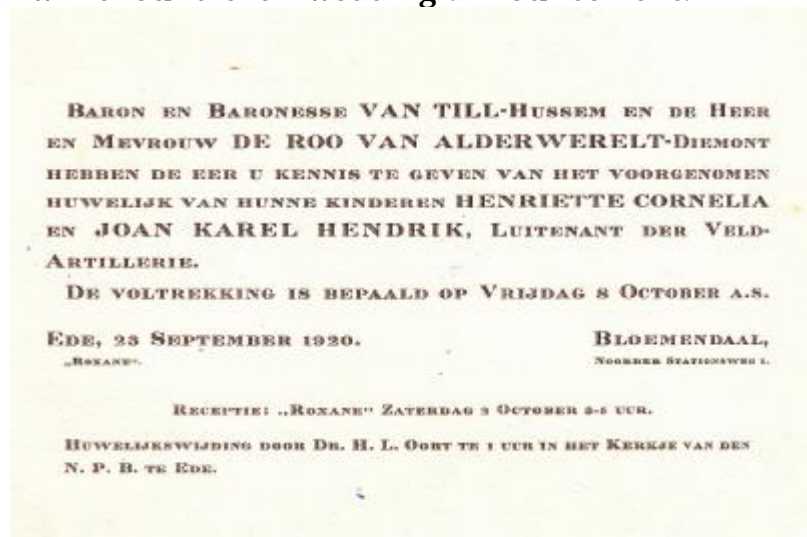
Roxane in 1982.

You will note that a highway had taken up a lot of the property in front. According to the town of Ede records, the house was torn down in the spring of 1988 to make way for an office complex.

On that same page 7, I also wrote:

“The young lieutenant and the general’s daughter must have met quite soon after Vader arrived in Ede because their marriage took place at the van Till house on October 8, 1920, when both of them were just 23 years old. It seems that they rebelled against then established norms as they insisted on writing their own wedding ceremony which did not include wedding rings. Also, as neither family was particularly religious, they did not want to be married in a church so the van Till house was chosen as the site for the ceremony.

I have meanwhile found their wedding announcement:



The very last line of the announcement says that the ceremony will be conducted by Dr. H.L. Oort in the Church of the N.P.B. in Ede. So, the wedding ceremony that they wrote was performed in a church and not at the van Till house.

It is also interesting to note that a reception was planned for Saturday 3 October 1920 at “Roxane”, the van Till house in Ede. A bit odd because that was almost a week before the actual wedding.

On page 8 of the same chapter I wrote:

“The young couple settled in a small house on Bergstraat in Ede where “Rugier was born in 1921 and Frits in 1926. Sometime after Frits’ arrival, “Grootvader van Till had a larger house built for the young family at “Arnhemscheweg 88, in the pine trees along the road to Arnhem. It was “in this house that I was born on October 16, 1929”.

I have since then learned that documents in the Municipal Archives of the town of Ede show that on 9 June 1926 building permit 1926/324 was issued to G.F. baron van Till, so that was less than 30 days before Frits was born.

The following picture of the house was taken in the early days. When I was there on a visit in 1955, the house was surrounded by pine trees.



Arnhemscheweg 88, Ede

On page 15 I wrote:

“Also living nearby in The Hague was Tante Ina, Moeder’s older sister, “and her four children. I sometimes played with the youngest daughter, “Elizabeth. The other 3 children were a bit strange so we did not see “them often. In spite of the fact that they were close relatives, we were “not particularly close to them.

My mother’s sister, Ina, was married to A.M.C. Sandberg until divorced in 1931. The following picture was most likely taken in 1933 at the 40th wedding anniversary of my grandparents van Till.

So this picture was in the archives:



From left to right:
Front row: Wim Sandberg., Frits, Margriet S., Gerhard S.
Second row: Elisabeth S., Grootmoeder and Grootvader van Till, Dan,
tante Ina Sandberg,
Back row: Moeder, Vader, probably Elisabeth van Haersolte, uncle
Gerhard van Till.

Chapter 3 Growing up in The Hague

On page 16 I wrote:

“As a horse artillery officer, Vader had a riding horse that was stabled at “the army barracks. His “oppasser” or batman, an enlisted private, would “bring the horse to the house early each morning so that Vader could go “for a ride in the nearby dunes before going to his office. Sometimes “when Vader could not go riding, one of us boys would be allowed to ride “the horse around the block, under control of the batman.

Here is a picture of Frits with Vader’s horse Adolphus:



Chapter 6 – The Occupation Continues 1942 – 1943

On page 30 I wrote:

“However, Vader again managed to do the impossible and was able to “rent a house in Wassenaar, a nice residential suburb north of The “Hague.

In the family archives I found this picture of Storm van ‘sGravesandeweg 5. It must have been a nice day because all the windows are open!!



Chapter 8 – Kuinre and Liberation 1945

On pages 37 to 40 I wrote about my recollections of the time I left home in Wassenaar and went to Kuinre in the Eastern part of Holland during the so called “hunger winter”. In the family archives I found a number of letters written at that time, one by Mr. Schouten, my host in Kuinre, two by my father and nine written by me to my parents. The methodical person that he was, my father kept carbon copies of the two letters he wrote to Mr. Schouten and noted in all the items from me the date he received them and the date he answered them. These letters contain many facts and details that I had totally forgotten and that only came back to mind when I read them. So, here are translations of these various letters. The items in parenthesis were added by me for clarity.

Letter dated 8.30pm 3 February 3, 1945 from me, in Kuinre, to my parents, received by them February 12, 1945 without a postage stamp or cancellation so it was hand carried by someone.



Dear Vader and Moeder,

How are you two? I am writing you a letter now but I still hope to be able to call you before you receive this letter.

After I left home (in Wassenaar) Thursday morning, Frits and I had to wait a long time at the Staringkade (in den Haag). After Frits had left, I went to bed at 9.30pm. I had only been in bed a short while when the truck arrived. We sat in the tank compartment from 10.00pm until we arrived in Wolvega at 4.00am the next morning. The truck did not get into any accidents, except that we drove into a bomb crater (somewhere along the way). It was warm in the tank but it was also hard (to sit). We did not run into any problems (with the German guards) at the bridges over the Ijssel river.

In Wolvega I was well received by a farmer called de Boer and they served me a large breakfast but I was not very hungry because I had food in the tank.

In Wolvega, we rented a bicycle and with Vreken Nauta, a niece (or cousin?) of Anneke Tuyl Schuitemaker and a friend of the de Lange girls, went on our way to Kuinre. There was a strong wind blowing so halfway there we approached a farmhouse and they let us stay until this morning. I slept in the hay with the farm hands. During the night the cows got hungry and started eating the hay that I was sleeping on! In the morning we got back on our bicycles and rode to Kuinre. We had a friendly reception when we arrived there and I was told immediately that I could stay. At noon we had sauerkraut with pork and this evening bread with fried eggs and ham. They recently slaughtered (a pig) and the hams are hanging from the ceiling. Here they have: pigs, rabbits, chickens and a goose and soon a cow. I wish I had a way to send you some things. I can buy a pig for 1,000 guilders, very cheap, bacon 30 guilders a pound. The (German) checkpoint across the Ijssel river is very difficult and one can't get anything through there.

I will write again soon because now I am going to bed, I am tired. We have electric lights here!

Warmest regards, also for Frits.

S/s Daan

PS: Vreken Nauta will probably take this letter with her. I will try to call you.

Letter dated 4 February 1945 from my host in Kuinre, W.H. Schouten, to my father, received by him 7 March 1945 through regular mail channels.



Dear Mrs. and Mr. de Roo van Alderwerelt,

Yesterday morning your son arrived in Kuinre, in the company of Miss Nauta. The journey therefore went according to plan.

My wife and I will take your son into our family, although there is a very small chance that later he may have to move to a different address. We have a niece in Amsterdam who has three children and one more on the way, and we offered her to come and stay with us if that should become necessary. The chances are not very great but I did want to mention it because a move of Daan could create the wrong impression. I promise that if necessary I will find a good place for him.

I am part of the Inspection Service of the North-East Polder and in that function I have a number of farmers under me who will perhaps be inclined to take him in. You really do not need to worry about this.

We very much hope that we will be able to return Daan to you as a strong young man. In so far we now know each other, I believe that we certainly will be able to get along together. Anneke Tuyl Schuitemaker will already have told you about our family. I am a nephew (or cousin) of W. Schuring, major in the field artillery in den Haag, who is now in a prisoner of war camp. I imagine that you probably know each other.

In closing, I would like to know what your wishes are with respect to your son's activities. If necessary, I can help him with his home work. We are Dutch Reformed and quite regularly attend church services. I hope you will write me what Daan was used to at home.

In anticipation of your letter, I remain, yours faithfully,
S/s W.H. Schouten

Letter dated 6 February 1945 from me to my parents, received by them 24 February 1945 through regular mail channels.



Dear Vader and Moeder,

How are you doing? Saturday 3 February I wrote you a letter and gave it to someone who was going to den Haag.

I am really very fortunate here. Pop (an unusual nickname for a woman) and Wim (Mrs. and Mr. Schouten) are very nice people. They feed me everything that will make me gain weight. I help out with everything here. I feed chickens and rabbits, keep the stove going, go to the farmers to get milk, etc. This week we will get a cow, the stable has just been completed. This house is sort of a wooden barracks, but inside it is cozy and they have a lot of books about construction and architecture. I never wear shoes anymore but inside I wear socks and outside rubber boots.

I will probably be able to get a special ausweis (pass) so I can go into the NOP (North-East Polder). Then I can go with Wim to see the farms that are under his supervision. There are 8 of them and each from 500 – 600 hectares (1200 – 1500 acres) so quite a bit larger than the “Tollenburgh”.

If possible, can you send some of my school books, such as chemistry, German and English, when there is someone or a vehicle that is coming in this direction? Also a package of laundry powder, if possible; they really have very, very little of that here. They were very happy with the package of tea that I brought them, they were running short.

If there is a vehicle that is going to den Haag, I will try and send a “mud” of potatoes, 50 pounds of wheat and some bacon. The potatoes are only 7 guilders per mud and no need for ration coupons! Wheat is pretty easy to get. The Lemmer ferry boat will resume service so mail will perhaps improve.

We need to get two horses from Brummen, near Zutphen. Wim is a good horseman and I will be able to learn it well.

How is Frits doing; no problems with razzia's? If he can manage to get here, I think he will be welcome; there is a spare double bed. However, there are lots of razzia's here too. I am unable to call Wassenaar, the telephone lines are down.

Up to now I have only spent 2.50 guilders for the bicycle rental from Wolvega to here. Do you hear anything from Rugier? I will try to write him.

Here we have a cleaning woman every morning and once every 14 days a seamstress. Wim has written you a letter. Probably about finances.

I get plenty to eat here. In the morning a bowl of porridge and 6 or 8 slices of bread. In the middle of the day a hot meal with meat or ham. Sunday we had rabbit for dinner and soon we will kill a goose and a rooster. In the evening bread with eggs and ham. Marius is a nice little boy. He calls me uncle Daan!
Warmest regards for everyone,
S/s Daan

PS: Possibly I may be able to have some bread ration coupons mailed to you from Pop's mother in Groningen. They are almost impossible to get here.

Letter dated 11 February, 1945 from me to my family, hand carried to Utrecht where mailed through regular mail channels and received in Wassenaar 27 February 1945.



Dear Vader, Moeder and Frits,

How are you all? I am doing fine and now totally fit in here. I have lots to do every day, the cows have arrived and I have to feed them and give them water. Mr. Schouten milks them. We churn the milk (to make butter) and we use the coffee grinder to grind wheat for the porridge.

The day before yesterday, Friday, I spoke on the phone with Anneke T.S.; the phone has been out of commission for quite a while.

I have weighed myself and I am now 112 pounds after only four days here.

There is a great shortage here of soap and soap powder; apart from that we have everything. Eight liters of milk a day, so always porridge!

Mr. Schouten asked if you had perhaps a saddle you could sell him or lend him.

Every day, masses of American bombers fly over, a mighty sight! The battle in the West has resumed again!

It is very difficult to send you anything; I would just have to catch someone who is going in that direction by car.

I have written Grandmother and Rugier.

A sister of Mrs. Schouten has arrived here from Leiden in someone's car. She told us that your bread ration was now 400 grams and potatoes one pound. Here the bread ration is 1,800 gram and no rationing of potatoes.

For a few days I did not feel very well, probably from the food but now that I have all sorts of things to do, I am hungrier; in the beginning I was not very hungry.

Have you already received a letter from me? Perhaps the one I gave to Vreken Nauta; she was going to travel from Wolvega to Wassenaar. (This refers to my first letter dated 3 February).

The polder (an area of low lying land reclaimed from a body of water and surrounded by dikes) was explained to me. It is divided into four districts each with a district office; Kuinre is district 4. The office handles work schedules, payrolls, etc. There is one inspector in every district and here it is Ir. De Boer. (Ir. is the title for someone with an engineering degree). Mr. Schouten is his assistant, so a nice job.

Just before I arrived here, there was a large razzia (roundup of people) in the polder. Early in the morning all roads were blocked by armed German soldiers, even with some cannons. They thought that there was a major underground organization here and they found riffles and machine guns. A lot of workmen were taken away, but as far as I heard, none of the underground people were caught.

Are they still firing a lot of V-2's? Here every now and then and then we see the contrails far in the distance.

Warmest regards and lots of love,

Daan

Letter dated 14 February 1945 from me to my family, received by them on 27 February in the same envelope as the above letter dated 11 February, 1945.

My letter of 11 February remained here for a few days because the people that I was going to give it to have not left yet. So I will write a little more; I am home alone and so have some quiet time.

How are you doing on my mittens? Are you making progress? I can get sheep's wool here for 17 to 18 guilders a "knot"; for a pair of socks you would need two "knots" so that would amount to some 35 guilders which I feel is an awful lot. However, a pair of socks I could really use.

The sister of Mrs. Schouten has left for Groningen where her parents live. She plans to return to Leiden in 1 ½ weeks but does not know yet how. Her bicycle is not good enough for that kind of distance.

A lot of people come by the house, colleagues of Mr. Schouten and people from the district office, young men 20 -25 years old with whom I get along just fine. Also here is a brother of Mrs. Schouten who is camp clerk of "the labor camp Kuinre". He is also young, 21; his name is Johan and he is nice too, just a little egotistical.

Recently there was someone here who, for the fun of it, asked how long I thought I was going to be here. Mr. Schouten answered that I would ride to Wassenaar on the back of allied tanks, so that I would stay here until the end of the war!!!!

Marius is a nice little kid and is getting some sense; he calls out "po" if he has to pee, is often dry at night. At 10 in the evening they get him up and put him on the pot. He really dislikes wet diapers.

The wind is really blowing but the barometer is going up. This morning there were again masses of bombers flying over us.

I feel terrible that it is not possible to send you all sorts of food. Perhaps I can somehow get some ration coupons for bread and potatoes for you.

Would you please ask Mr. Oussoren for a math assignment and also Lange for a French assignment? I have translated some from my reading book. I have also read "The Frigate Johanna Maria" which was in the bookcase here.

Perhaps you can try to call me from the Tuyl Sch. house so that we can possibly talk to each other.

I have no complaints here but I miss you terribly.

The village of Kuinre is so small that you can walk through it in a few minutes. It is one street with a couple of small houses, a café, a few shops and two churches, one of which does not have a tower.

It is now 2.40 in the afternoon and just now many allied planes are coming over, returning in the direction of England.

Warmest regards and lots of love,

Daan

Letter dated 25 February 1945 from me to my parents, received by them on 10 March, 1945 with a postmark of Den Haag so someone hand carried it across the country and mailed it from there.



Dear Vader and Moeder,

I have not written for a while because I am being kept busy here. I am eagerly awaiting news from you. I don't know how long the mail now takes, but it should not be as long as in January when the Lemmer ferry did not run.

My condition has really improved here and they say that I already look much better so that is a good sign.

From the clerk at camp Kuinre I received several ration coupons; they are as follows:

- 14 rations potatoes
- 17 rations bread
- 2 rations bread
- 5 rations barley
- 2 ration butter

These ration coupons did not cost me anything. I hope you can use them.

An effort is being made to get me a job as polder messenger or something like that. In that case I could earn 20 guilders a week which I could then give to Mr. Schouten towards the cost of my stay here.

There are people in this area who find it a burden to take in children from Amsterdam, but here they are very happy that I am here because I do a lot. I always feed the cows, boil potatoes for the pigs, keep the stove going with peat briquettes and sometimes I go

fishing. I have not caught anything but soon I hope to go fishing with a polder supervisor who goes out frequently and knows the good places.

Only on Sundays do I wear my "normal" clothes and shoes. During the week I wear blue workpants and rubber boots because everything is muddy.

Saturday, a four engine American bomber crashed in the polder. He came in flying very low and then crashed but because he came from the direction of Germany he had already dropped his bombs. Nine pilots bailed out and were taken prisoner by the Germans. There is a steady stream of airplanes, even when it is overcast.

The only problem here is the mending of my socks. I am thinking about buying some wool and use that to mend my socks.

What do you hear from my school? They have probably opened up again? I know about an English teacher in Lemmer, perhaps he can give me English lessons.

I also have been working on Algebra and Geometry. Also French; they have dictionaries here which really helps.

Have you heard anything from Rugier and Ritie and grandmother? I heard here that the village of Lienden was evacuated three times but after a while were always allowed back. They now seem to have been evacuated again. In the area of Zwolle and Deventer they are firing V-1's and V-2's (rockets). In Deventer you can apparently clearly see the wings of the V-1's.

They are saying here that the war will an end within two months; I hope so but I don't believe it. I would really like that because then I could be with you again.

How is the rationing situation now? I hear that at the moment the rations have increased a bit; is that true? Swedish ships with foodstuffs destined for the western part of the country regularly dock at Delfzijl. There is no possibility to send you anything because vehicles do not go beyond Utrecht or Amsterdam; never to den Haag or Leiden.

How is Frits doing? Does he have any problems with razzia's or the like?

Please give my regards to Mr. Ingenhoes (?) and Mr. Honijk.

Best regards to everyone

S/s Daan

PS: Can you ask Mr. Steller for a science project? The Schouten family sends their regards to Anneke.

Letter dated 26 February 1945 from my father to my host in Kuinre, Mr. W.H. Schouten, copy of which was enclosed with letter dated 8 March 1945.

Dear Mr. Schouten,

My plan to write you was postponed until I had heard something from Daan. That is why you had to wait a while for this letter.

My wife and I were very pleased and relieved with your telephone message that Daan had arrived and also with his first short letter. We were more than thrilled with the news that Daan could stay with you. We are very grateful to Mrs. Schouten and you for the hospitality.

When you receive this letter, Daan will already have been with you for several weeks. So, I do not have to introduce him to you, you know him quite well by now. I won't say much about his illness in the summer of 1944, the consequences thereof and his

originally successful recovery. However, in December 1944 and January 1945 the recovery stopped and he went so alarmingly downhill that if we could not get him into better circumstances, he would most likely be a casualty of this wartime situation for his whole life. Then, Miss Tuyl Schuitemaker offered us a solution, for which we were extremely thankful. We had to make a quick decision and he went on his way immediately. Any consultation with you had to wait. There was no other way. May I now ask you for a proposal as to how you would like to handle the financial side of his stay with you?

I gave Daan 100 guilders, not knowing when I would see him again; please hold on to this so that you can give him some pocket money; anyway, that was my intention. A few days ago I sent you a money order of 100 guilders. This way you will have some money on hand for eventual expenses. You can incur any expenses for Daan that Mrs. Schouten or you find appropriate, without consultation with my wife or me; that would take too much time.

In the meantime you are getting to know Daan and you will already have discovered that with you he is in exactly the right surroundings considering that his interests match the area of your function, your daily work and activities. That pleases us greatly because he will be able to learn a great deal from you and that will contribute to the decision as to what he wants to do later. His inclinations are entirely in your field of work and he can now see and show if this direction truly appeals to him or not. He can now show his love of animals and their care, his interest in sowing and planting and the growth and harvest of crops; in other words, he can now show if this goes further than words or an occasional situation. He is still only 15 years old. As far as this is concerned, I gladly turn him over to you.

He took part of his school books with him; I hope to send him the rest. I would much appreciate it if you have the opportunity to keep an eye on this. He does not want to lose an entire school year.

In his enthusiastic letter, Daan relayed your question about a saddle. I will not be able to give you one of my own saddles as they are part of my military equipment. But, I would be able to lend you one. Also, I will see if I can find one for you. A difficulty is the shipping of it. If we can get it as far as Lemmer, would you be able to pick it up there? Daan wrote about wool socks. He will certainly need these and perhaps Mrs. Schouten can arrange something.

Daan also wrote that he would like to send us some food. He is concerned about his mother (and perhaps correctly so). However welcome anything would be, the shipping problems are probably immense; I am not able to judge that fully. Last week I received from Friesland a bag containing 45 kilos of potatoes and a 9 pound cheese, part of a shipment originating from Stanfries, agents for N.V. Haagsche Expeditiebedrijf en Scheepvaartonderneming in den Haag. Once something is in den Haag or Leiden, then I can get to it. Do you have any ideas on this?

There remains the question how long Daan can stay with you. My answer is simple and clear: as long as he can and you will have him, even if it is a year. We entrust him totally in Mrs. Schouten and your care.

If Mrs. Schouten or you have an opportunity to write us how Daan is doing and if he is fitting in and feels at home, we would much appreciate that. Traveling has become impossible. We will have to postpone a personal meeting. May it be sooner than we expect.

Our best regards to Daan.

Yours faithfully,

S/s dRvAlderwerelt

Letter dated 1 March 1945 from me to my parents, hand carried by a marechaussee (State Police Officer) to Utrecht, from where it was mailed and received in Wassenaar on 22 March 1945



Dear Vader and Moeder,

Here's a short letter; a marechaussee is going to Rotterdam and he can take this letter with him.

A few days ago, a woman, looking to buy food here and then going to Friesland for the same purpose before returning to den Haag, was here and I gave her a letter with ration coupons in it so that she could mail it to you from Den Haag. I hope that the letter will reach you. (That was my letter of 25 February translated above).

At the moment I don't have any additional rations coupons or I would send them because this is a perfect opportunity.

Tomorrow morning I have to get up at 5.00am because we have to deliver pigs to Steenwijk. I am pretty busy here! In the evening I sometimes go to the district office to eat porridge with the young men there. Yesterday evening the four of us ate porridge made with 5 liters of milk!

How is the situation at your end? Are they still launching V-2's? Here they fire V-1's periodically; they go up maybe some 50 meters and then like an airplane fly to England. Periodically the Germans round up bicycles here but we are not being bothered by razzia's anymore. How is Frits doing? Can he freely go about? I am sure he is out of cigarettes. Sometimes you can get home grown tobacco here. It is windy here all the time because it is so flat and open.

A few days ago a young man of 36 was shot and killed by a marechaussee when he ran away during an attempt to arrest him on orders from the S.D. (German Security Service). This really stirred up everybody and the policeman doesn't show his face very often anymore. Now I have to go to bed, it is 9 o'clock. I will quickly check the cows to make sure they have enough hay to eat.

Regards from
S/s Daan

Letter dated 8 March 1945 from my father to my host in Kuinre, Mr. W.H. Schouten.

Dear Mr. Schouten,

Your letter of 4 February, postmarked in Zwartsluis with an illegible date, arrived only yesterday. You will probably have been waiting some time for a reply and therefore I want to write you right away about your questions. In the meantime I already wrote you

on 26 February but that letter requires some additions. But beyond that I fear that letter may not have reached you because the chances were not very great. That letter was taken to den Haag so that together with other letters it could go out by courier. It is entirely possible that the letter was lost in one of the bombings in den Haag. Fortunately, I have a copy which I enclose. This letter will therefore pick up where the earlier one left off.

As I already wrote, we are turning Daan entirely over to the care of Mrs. Schouten and yourself. We do not know the local situation and it would therefore be incorrect for us to say what we might wish to be done. But, we do want to answer your questions. I will be brief: allow Daan to fully take in the country life and if it fits then also the farm life and allow him to take part as much as possible. In this I am thinking of the taking care of and feeding of animals but also field or garden work, perhaps in your own yard or with a trusted farmer. I leave it entirely to you whether you want to do this or not. Daan always enjoyed that very much although he was not able to milk a cow entirely dry.

On average about an hour a day doing homework would seem sufficient. So much depends on weather conditions. Some help with his work, particularly in mathematics, is needed because he often thinks that he understands and knows it and knows everything he learned last year! Change of schools has contributed to gaps in his knowledge. As I already wrote you, your keeping an eye on this would be very much appreciated.

We have no objections to Daan making friends with boys of his own age from the farms in your area and from the village, provided it is with your approval. The more he feels at home there, the better.

We leave it to Daan whether he goes to church or not. He was not raised in the Dutch Reformed Church. Here in Wassenaar the Dutch Reformed village church did not appeal to him. We certainly have no objection to a more or less regular church attendance. So much depends on the minister. Daan will have to decide for himself. I was baptized in the Dutch Reformed Church but a regular church goer I am not.

I know your nephew (cousin) major W. Schuring very well. For many years I served with him in Ede; later on also lots of contact while both of us served in den Haag but we saw each other less there than in the small garrison of Ede. I was in the Ede garrison for 12 years, 10 of them married, until I was transferred to den Haag. I love the country life and would really like to return to it.

With best regards, also to Mrs. Schouten, I remain, yours faithfully,

S/s dRvAlderwerelt

PS – If a bicycle or a wagon of sorts would be useful for Daan, then I leave the purchase thereof entirely to you.

Letter dated 8 March, 1945 from me to my parents. It was hand carried and postmarked den Haag 20 March and received 22 March, 1945.



Dear Vader and Moeder,

How are you? All is well here. I have heard that den Haag and Wassenaar have been bombed heavily. In den Haag it was apparently the Bezuidenhout that was hit. Els, a girl from Leiden who came with Anneke said that only den Haag was bombed. She will return to Leiden tomorrow after having been here a few days. She will take this letter along for me.

Mr. Schouten has been very busy and is away for a few days so I have to look after all the animals. Last week we delivered pigs to Steenwijk; it was very interesting to cover that much distance with horse and wagon. Along the way we saw an American fighter plane that had been shot down and had crashed in an inundated meadow. The war is going well. Cologne has fallen and now they are close to Bonn according to local sources.

I have placed a call to you to try and get some news from you concerning the bombings. I hope you had no damage.

14 March, 1945

Els still has not left and so this letter was still here. This morning I received a letter from Rugier and Ritie from Alkmaar. He wrote that he had given some peas and beans and some milk powder for you to someone going to den Haag; that is great. He is working on being able to move to a farm and wrote that perhaps there would also be a place for me. He also wrote that perhaps he will travel to Wassenaar to bring you some more foodstuffs. I am doing fine and now have a polder ausweis (pass) so now I go along into the polder. We just got a message that Els can get on a barge to Amsterdam. I am still working on ways to send you something. I have to close now, she is leaving.

Warmest regards and much love

S/s Daan

Letter dated 22 March, 1945 from me to my parents, hand carried by a marechaussee, postmarked 27 March in Leiden and received in Wassenaar on 29 March, 1945.



Dear Vader and Moeder,

The day before yesterday I finally received three letters from you. One dated 11 February from Moeder, one of 20 February from Vader and a postcard dated 6 March from Vader. I was happy to hear from you. It must be very quiet now that there are just the two of you

or is Frits home again? He is probably doing well at the v.A.v.S. (?) even though they live in den Haag. How nice that you received all sorts of things (food) from them. After I was here 5 days, I weighed 112 pounds, when I was here 5 weeks I weighed 126 pounds so in 5 weeks I gained 7 kilos and I look a lot better.

The wheat bread that you had baked must have been wonderful. I enjoy that here too. Do you still play the violin now and again? The mittens are almost not needed anymore.

How fortunate that you have not suffered from razzia's and bombings. I received a long letter from Jaap Endte (?). Their house burned to the ground and they were only able to save a few things. Terrible.

The fact that your water is now rationed does not surprise me at all. During long periods of the day we have no water either.

The garden has been dug up and we have built a good chicken coop. This week we will put seed in the ground, it is now beautiful weather, we are sitting outside and the stove is not on anymore.

Vader, are you recovering from the diarrhea? The food from the central (soup) kitchen is probably pretty bad.

We also have skimmed milk here but we use the ration coupons to buy buttermilk. We now have two cows that together produce 15 liters of milk a day, fantastic.

How nice you finally heard something from Rhijnvliet (my grandmother) and Ede (my mother's sister). And how great that Tante Atie (this must be a great aunt or someone we just called aunt, but I do not now know who she is) sent you ration coupons! Maybe I will go and visit her. Also that you have been able to trade tea and that you have received food items from the Swedish Red Cross.

I work on my school stuff periodically. In Lemmer is an English and math teacher.

Perhaps I can go there one day.

I really feel at home here. Your package and letter of 28 February has not arrived yet. Mr. Schouten received a letter from you. Enclosed was a copy of a previous letter. An incredible number of (allied) airplanes are coming over day and night (on the way to and back from Germany). Fortunately Schenkkade 218 was not damaged, from what I hear here it must be terrible in den Haag. The war is going on full blast but we do not notice or hear anything here. I now have a polder ausweis (pass) so that once in a while I am in the polder. It is still a bleak flat area. Half will be allowed to go under water because they can not run the pumps anymore to keep it dry.

On Sunday Mrs. Schouten will be initiated in the Dutch Reformed Church; her parents are coming from Groningen and we will have two roosters for dinner. I have heard nothing further from Rugier after his first letter.

This letter will be hand carried by a marechaussee (police official)

Lots of love

S/s Daan

The Schoutens are sending their regards.

Letter dated 2 April, 1945, from me to my parents, hand carried to Amsterdam by polder workmen and received in Wassenaar 14 April, 1945.



Dear Vader, Moeder and Frits,

How are you? Here all is still quiet for as long as it will last because the war is coming closer all the time.

Last Thursday I gave a letter with some ration coupons for you to someone who was going to den Haag in a car of the N.O.P. (Letter never received in Wassenaar). This letter is going with some polder workmen who are going to Amsterdam.

Are you still bothered by the V-2's or have they stopped them? Here in this area we do not see them anymore.

How is the food situation? I have heard that generally there has been some improvement in the cities. The bread from the Swedish Red Cross must have been fantastic. And your fuel supply, how is that going? Do you still have some wood to burn? Because there are so few trees here it is very difficult for the local people who do not work in the polder. They say that I am growing and have rosy cheeks. I feel totally at home and know my way around. I already know several people in the village.

On a farm in the polder there are two pigs, each with 11 young ones. Two of them died so now there are 20 in total. Also a dog with 8 youngsters. Nice to see that all. We now have two different cows and they give 18 liters of milk a day.

The mittens and handkerchiefs were very welcome! Mrs. Schouten was very happy with the soap powder. This past week I have not heard anything further from you. Also from Rugier I have not heard anything further since his first letter.

A short while ago, the Germans planted explosive charges in the polder dikes near Lemmer. If they blow them up we will fortunately not get inundated as we live on "old" land, just outside the polder.

Finally we have summer time again so that it is light later in the evening and we can work in the garden in the evening. Pretty soon we will have little chicks and little rabbits and goats will get born.

These last lines I am writing right handed. I will practice a little more right handed. It is now getting dark, we do not have any electric light anymore since Zwolle was bombed.

Warmest regards

S/s Daan

The Schoutens are sending their regards.

Postcard dated 11 May 1945 from me to my family, postmarked 14 May in Kuinre.



Dear Vader, Moeder and Frits,

Congratulations on the liberation of our country! How are you all, is everything okay and have you already received English food parcels?

Everything is now quiet here; our liberation took all of one day. In the morning local forces and four Canadian armored vehicles reached our area. They had to retreat from the Germans. During the night the Germans were in Kuinre and the Canadians in Blankenham. Fortunately, everything turned out okay as the Germans fled during the night and were caught further up the road in civilians clothes.

So then we had an enormous party, and again when we received the news of the capitulation of all German troops in Holland and again when Germany finally surrendered. I think we partied for four nights from 8 to 1 at the canteen at the workmen's camp.

I am very eager to come home again. As soon as travel is allowed I will come over with lots of food stuff. I am busy again and walking around in a coverall and wooden shoes. It is warm here.

Is Frits home again? Have you heard from Rugier, is he still in Alkmaar?

Regards

S/s Daan

Conclusion after reading all the letters

There is nothing like first hand contemporaneous accounts to tell you how it really was. After all these years, 60+ now, I had forgotten most if not all of the details. It amazes me that there continued to be mail service of any kind and I believe that some letters never did reach their destination.

It is now obvious to me that there was an entire network, consisting mostly of young women, that devoted itself to finding homes in the eastern countryside for hungry children and most likely also for young persons who were in need of a hiding place to avoid capture by the Germans and transportation to forced labor camps. Tanker trucks don't just show up, farmers are not waiting for you at 4 o'clock in the morning with a large breakfast, bicycles don't rent themselves and my hosts were expecting me. To me that says organization but at the time I did not question it nor do I recall it ever being discussed at a later date within the family. Clearly, we looked to the future which would be better than the past so we put the past behind us.

Chapter 9 A New beginning 1945 – 1947

On page 41 I wrote:

“Frits had volunteered for the new Dutch Army which would help fight the Japanese in “the Far East and so he was receiving his basic training in England.



Tante Anneke upon her return to Holland from Japanese prison camp and Frits in uniform (note his foot in a cast!)

On page 41 I also wrote:

“Rugier did not go back to the University at Delft to complete his electrical engineering “degree and instead looked for a job and a place to live on his own. In late October 1947 “he married Iet in Rotterdam.



Rugier and Iet



Dan and Frits with bridesmaid

Chapter 11 – The London Years 1948 – 1951

I completely neglected to write about the fact that while we lived in London, Frits, who lived in Holland, had decided to get married. We flew over to The Hague and Frits and Eve were married there on 29 July 1950.



Friend & Dan

Eve & Frits

Moeder and Eve's father

Chapter 12 – Preparing for the New World 1952.

On page 52, I wrote:

“On September 6, 1952, early in the morning, we took the train to Rotterdam. Vader and “Moeder came with me and Rugier and Iet as well as Frits and Eve also came to the pier.

It was Willem who drew to my attention that his parents, Frits and Eve, could not have been there as they were living in Indonesia at the time. In fact, Willem was born there on 25 July of that year! So, obviously my recollection was wrong and I went looking for pictures of that time period and found:



Picture taken by Rugier from dockside.



Picture taken by me from ship's deck shows from left to right: Moeder, Vader, Rugier, Iet

D.M.O. de Roo van Alderwerelt
March 2008