

2nd Lt Cornelis Droogleever Fortuyn
Bronzen Kruis
AKA - Cornelis Dirk Felders
Field Name - Arie Johannes Laumen
Code Name - Dekker; Wim
W/T - Dubois

Cornelis, known as Kees, was born on 10 April 1922 in Amsterdam, the son of Willem Droogleever Fortuyn and Anna Theresia Maria Droogleever Fortuyn nee van Rijkevorsel.

Intending to study at the University in Leiden, South Holland, on arrival Cornelis decided to travel to the UK to join the fight. Travelling via the established Van Niftrik escape route through Holland and France, Cornelis crossed the Pyrenees on foot but was arrested on arrival in Spain and was imprisoned in the Castello de Figueras, Cervera. In April 1941 Cornelis was transferred to the concentration camp in Mirana de Ebro, Burgos where, as part of a group of Dutch prisoners, he was eventually freed by an official from the British Embassy who escorted them to the Dutch Embassy in Madrid. Unwilling to wait for an exit visa, in December Cornelis travelled to Seville and then on to Gibraltar. Boarding a Polish vessel, Cornelis arrived in Glasgow on 4 January 1942. Arriving in London, Cornelis was interrogated by the Intelligence Agency before he commenced training as a wireless operator with SOE.



In September 1942, Cornelis was appointed as radio operator for "Kale" - Karel Willem Adriaan Beukema toe Water, and "Cauliflower" - Adriaan Klaas Mooy.

At 21:25 on 24 September 1942, together with three other Agents, Cornelis departed RAF Tempsford, Bedfordshire in 138 Sqn Whitley Z9286(NF-H). The drop consisted of the four agents to be dropped in two separate locations, and six containers.

Successfully dropped at the drop zone near Balloo, Drenthe, NE Holland, the Gestapo were waiting. Unbeknown to SOE, the Germans had infiltrated the Dutch Section and were operating a very successful counterintelligence operation, known as "Englandspiel". Immediately arrested, Cornelis was interrogated by the SS and transferred to the SD prison Haaren in North Brabant. Following the escape of prisoners from Haaren on 29 November 1943 the remaining agents, including Cornelis, were first transported to the prison in Assen, then in 1944 to Rawicz. Most agents were then transferred to the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. Cornelis was executed, along with 22 other SOE agents, on 6 September 1944.

Cornelis has no known grave and is commemorated on a Memorial Plate at Mauthausen that covers the area where the ashes of all agents killed with Cornelis are believed to be buried.

Cornelis is commemorated on Wall Panel - Not Yet Erected

Photo Source: oorlogsgravenstichting.nl