Lt Jan Christian Kist Dutch Army
Bronzen Kruis; Kruis van Verdienste
AKA - Jan Wilson
Training Name - Jan Christiaan Karels
Field Name - Johannes Kok
Code Name - Walt; Mr Bruinsma



Jan was born on 22 September 1913 in Leiden, South Holland, Netherlands, the only child of Dr Antonie Kist and Maria Kist nee Bok.

Educated at the Leide Gymnasium and at the University, in 1937 Jan served for two years as a Midshipman in the Naval Service at the Royal Military Academy Institute in Willemsoord, Overijssel, but left at his own request and recommenced studying at Leiden University. In May 1939, Jan was mobilized for military service but was able to continue studying part time. Following compulsory demobilisation when the German forces invaded Holland, in May 1940 Jan returned to his studies full time at Leiden University where he was awarded a Master's degree in Literature. Jan was employed as a Latin and Greek teacher at a private boarding school in Bilthoven, Utrecht when, in September 1941, he decided to leave Holland and serve with the Dutch forces overseas.

In October 1941 Jan commenced his journey to the UK. Travelling via Nancy, Lyons and across the Pyrenees to Spain, in July 1942 Jan reached Gibraltar and then proceeded to the UK, arriving in August and immediately volunteering for service with the SOE (Dutch) Section.

Following training at STS 6 West Court, Berkshire, STS 31 Beaulieu, Hampshire, STS 4 Winterfold, Cranleigh, Surrey and STS 51 Ringway, Manchester for parachute training, Jan was allocated his operation -"Hockey" - and awaited a drop date.

At 23:37 on 18 February 1943 Jan, together with his radio operator, departed RAF Tempsford, Bedfordshire in a 138 Sqn Halifax.

Successfully dropped at the drop zone near Garderen, Gelderland, Netherlands, 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, Jan 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 Jan, were first transported to the prison in Assen, then in 1944 to Rawicz. In July 1944 Jan was seen in Rawicz and is believed to have been murdered there, although the exact date of his death is unknown.

Also Killed: Sgt Pieter van der Wilden BK

Jan has no known grave and is commemorated on the Englandspiel Memorial, Den Haag, Netherlands

Jan is commemorated on Wall Panel - Not Yet Erected

Photo Source: englandspiel.eu