

Sgt Anton Berend Mink Dutch Army
Bronzen Kruis; Kruis van Verdienste
AKA - Anton Berend Mertens
Training Name - Anton Berends
Field Name - Anton Berend Mink
Code Name - Herbert; Polo

Anton was born on 21 October 1918 in Den Helder, the son of Dirk Mink and Agatha Johanna Mink nee Herderschee.

Educated in Amsterdam and Haarlem, Anton attended the vocational school in Den Helder before commencing an apprenticeship in the shipyards. In May 1938 Anton was called up for Military service and by 1939 he was serving as a Sergeant in the Coastal Artillery. Following compulsory demobilisation when the German forces invaded Holland, Anton was employed as a Customs Officer in Limburg.



In April 1942 Anton made the decision to try to get to the UK to join the Dutch forces. Within a week Anton had reached Vichy-France where he was arrested and imprisoned in Châteauroux for three days before he was granted permission to see the Dutch consul in Perpignan. In July Anton crossed the Pyrenees into Spain, and from there sailed to Curacao then onwards to Canada via Cuba and the USA before setting sail for England. In December 1942 Anton reached England and on 8 January 1943 applied for service with SOE (Dutch Section).

Following interrogation, in March 1943 Anton was trained at STS 6 West Court, Berkshire, STS 24 Knoydart, Scotland and STS 51 Ringway, Manchester for parachute training, before he was allocated to his operation.

At 23:00 on 21 May 1943, together with two other Agents, Anton departed RAF Tempsford, Bedfordshire in 138 Sqn Halifax BB317 (NF-N).

Successfully dropped at the drop zone near Garderen, Gelderland, 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, Anton 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 Anton, 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. Anton was executed, along with 22 other SOE agents, on 6 September 1944.

Also Killed: Sgt Oscar Willem de Brey BK KV (Agent/Dutch Army); Laurens Maria Punt BK KV (Agent/Dutch Army)

Anton 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 Anton are believed to be buried.

Anton is commemorated on Wall Panel - Not Yet Erected

Photo Source: oorlogsgravenstichting.nl