

Sgt Pieter Kamphorst Dutch Army
Bronzen Kruis
AKA – Pieter van Putten
Training Name – Pieter Kerkhof
Code Name – Eddie



Pieter was born on 24 November 1894 in Ermelo, Gelderland, Netherlands, the youngest of eight children of Elbert Kamphorst and Teunisje Kamphorst nee van de Kuilen. In 1932 he married Hermina van de Berg in Avereerst, Overijssel.

In 1914 at the outbreak of war, Pieter was mobilized and joined the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee Brigade (Mounted Police). At the end of the war Pieter remained in service. When Germany invaded the Netherlands on 10 May 1940, Pieter was ordered to move to Zeeuws-Vlaanderen via Antwerp. After the Dutch capitulation on 15 May 1940, the military police brigades were ordered to flee to the UK via France to join the government-in-exile in London. On 10 June Pieter reached Brest where he boarded the "Princess Beatrix" and sailed for Plymouth together with eleven to twelve hundred Dutch soldiers. On arrival, Pieter volunteered for service with the SOE (Dutch) Section.

Following training at STS 6 West Court, Berkshire, STS 21 Arisaig, Inverness, Scotland, STS24 Knoydart, Mallaig, Scotland, STS 51 - Dunham House, Altrincham, Cheshire for parachute training (near RAF Ringway), STS 31 Beaulieu, Hampshire and STS 17 Brickendonbury Manor, Hertford, Hertfordshire in October 1942 Pieter was allocated his operation - "Tomato", and moved to STS 61 Gaynes' Hall, St Neots where he awaited his drop date. Pieter's op was in support of the "Plan for Holland", and he was principally to be involved with the training of resistance groups in the handling of weapons and explosives and to assist leaders in reconnoitring targets and considering the best methods of attacking them.

At 22:07 on 21 October 1942 Pieter, and two other agents, departed RAF Tempsford, Bedfordshire in 138 Sqn Whitley V Z9428 (NF-F).

Successfully dropped at the drop zone at Ermelo, 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, Pieter 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 Pieter, 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. Pieter was executed, along with 22 other SOE agents, on 6 September 1944.

Also Killed: Sgt Meindert Koolstra Dutch Army BK; Sgt Michiel Pals Dutch Army BK

Pieter 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 Pieter are believed to be buried.

Pieter is commemorated on Wall Panel - Not Yet Erected

Photo Source: oorlogsgravenstichting.nl