

Drs. Paulien Bruggeman-Citroen
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12 February 1996

Dr. Mordecai Paldiel
Director of The Holocaust Martyr's and Heroes'
Remembrance Authority
Yad Vashem
P.O.B. 3477
Jerusalem 91034
Israël

Re: Bruhn Friedlaender, Maria-Holland (9690)

Dear Dr. Paldiel,
About Maria Friedlaender, née Bruhn, I can affirm she took into hiding in her home at Wassenaar my father- Paul Citroen, painter, born in Berlin 15 December 1896, deceased at Wassenaar 13 March 1983, - brother of Hanan Aron Cidor, late ambassador of Israël in Holland, (formerly called Hans Albert Citroen), born in Berlin 25 Nov. 1906, deceased in Jerusalem 8 March 1985 - son of Hendrik Roelof Citroen, born in Amsterdam 18 January 1865, deceased in Berlin 9 October 1932 - and of Ellen Philippi, born in Berlin 30 June 1872, deceased in Bergen-Belsen 6 January 1945.

On 28 August 1942 the German Sicherheits Dienst ordered that my father, being a Jew, be arrested. (see appendix, from "Wassenaar in de Tweede Wereldoorlog" - "Wassenaar in World War II" - by F.R. Hazenberg, A.N.W. Kenens, W.P. van der Krogt, R. van Lit, C.N.J. Neisingh, edited 1995. The authors investigated all the police reports of the Wassenaar archives from the war years).

My parents were warned by a good policeman, however, and we could leave our home just in time. It was imperative that my father should hide somewhere at Wassenaar as leaving the village was too dangerous because of the German checkpoints along all the outward roads and controllers in the tram. For a woman and child it was easier, so my mother and I left the village by tram and went into hiding elsewhere.

Maria Bruhn was a friend of my parents, but by taking and keeping my father in hiding she risked her life and, as I was told, she did so in good humour. My father stayed there for about 4 or 6 months, - I don't remember exactly for how long it was. By the above mentioned book I understood Paul Guermonprez, a member of the Resistance, and his Jewish wife Trude Jalowetz found a safe hiding place with Maria Bruhn, too! She herself never mentioned it.

It is possible Maria Bruhn hid more Jews during the war as for instance from september 1942 onward she hid her husband. (the marriage was declared annul by the Germans) It may be difficult to trace others who were saved by her after all these years.

Anyway, it is thanks to her among others that my father survived the war!

Sincerely yours,
Drs. Paulien Bruggeman-Citroen

Paulien Bruggeman-Citroen

Appendix