

Maria Agnes Pommée (4)

GRONVELDERWEG (Tegenover No. 81 - Ingang woonwagens)

Maria Agnes Pommée was born in Gronsvelderweg (Maastricht) on August 17, 1939, as one of eight children of Benedictus Antonius (painter) and Anne Pommée. Benedictus was born in Amsterdam on March 1, 1907, and Anne (born Steinbach) was born on January 28, 1909 in Stromberg.

Maria, her parents and her siblings – Dirk Hendrik (born in Heerlen on December 17, 1929, 14 years old at time of deportation), Maria Francisca (born in Sittard on July 26, 1931, 13 years old at time of deportation), Johannes Hubertus (born in Sittard on July 3, 1932, 12 years old at time of deportation), Anna (born in Kerkrade on November 3, 1933, 10 years old at time of deportation), Karel (born in Beek on March 23, 1935, 9 years old at time of deportation), Antoon (born in Beek on February 27, 1937, 7 years old at time of deportation), and Margaretha (born on Venlo in March 16, 1944, 4,5 months old at time of deportation) – were a Dutch Sinti family that used to live in a trailer park at the *Kleine Heide* in Venlo.

As depicted in Herman van Rens' book on the arrests and deportations of Sinti, Roma and Jews from the Netherlands, them and all other Dutch Sinti and Roma were deported on May 16, 1944. The deportation order of the *Sicherheitspolizei* was given to all police commanders in the Netherlands on May 14. The order stated that all Sinti and Roma and their children must be gathered and kept ready?. The Sinti and Roma were all persons who were of foreign and non-Dutch descent, which was determined on the basis of outward appearance and customs that supposedly defined them as 'gypsies or Zigeuner'.

The arrest of all Sinti and Roma on the *Kleine Heide* were conducted in the early morning on May 16, 1944, and included 22 persons. The order was that all Sinti and Roma had to arrive in Westerbork, a transit camp, before 8am. The detainees were between 2 months and 55 years old, including Maria's entire family. On May 19th, 1944, the Pommée family was deported with the 64th transport to Auschwitz. The transport included 453 persons, including 245 Sinti and Roma who were arrested during the raid, comprised of 40 families with 147 children. The train arrived in Auschwitz on May 22nd. Maria's mother Anne and her oldest brother Dirk Hendrik were murdered on the day of their arrival. Her father Benedictus was transferred to the forced labour camp *Mittelbau-Dora*, which was a part of the camp *Buchenwald*, where the detained had to produce armament and missiles. He was murdered on March 8, 1944 at the age of 38.

In total around 23.000 Sinti and Roma were deported to Auschwitz. Most of them died of hunger, sickness or exhaustion. On August 2, 1944, the camp was cleared and 2897 persons of Sinti and Roma descent were gassed to make space for incoming Hungarian Jews. Maria, four years old, and her siblings were murdered on that day, too.

Sources

- <http://totenbuch.dora.de/names/details/letter/p/lang/de/page/22/person/10740/ref/names>
- http://en.auschwitz.org/m/index.php?option=com_wrapper&Itemid=31
- <http://historie.venlo.nl/naam.asp?letter=P&offset=60>
- Herman van Rens – Vervolgd in Limburg