

HETTY VOUTE
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Hetty Voute was a non-Jewish Dutch woman who was very active in the Dutch Resistance and is mentioned in the stories of many others who dealt with her during the war. She has written several books about her experiences. She was the 7th child in a family that were all active in the Resistance. Two of her brothers had published an underground newspaper for a year and a half.

Hetty, who took a Red Cross course in 1938 to be of help, said she became involved in hiding children when, at the first razzia in 1942, some children were left behind and the student groups started finding hiding places for them. Hetty's brother had worked for KLM in Berlin and communicated the treatment of Jews starting in late 1930's to Hetty's group. By 1942 Hetty believes they hid about 145 children, and probably 400 by the end of the war. Hetty worked hard finding places for the children, getting money to house them and ration cards. Sometimes the group just went and asked random people to help. There were 10 students in her groups and they trusted each other entirely. Her mother was supportive and helped, but her father didn't want to know anything about the activities.

Hetty eventually got caught during an attempt to hide children with a couple who actually were Nazi sympathizers. She and her friend were arrested when they came to reclaim their bikes at the railroad station; they were able to warn others by phone before they were taken to prison. Hetty was 25 when she went to prison and was there for 6 months before she was sent to a camp. She and her friend, Gisela Wieberdink, got through that time by using pipes in the wall to communicate with each other and the male prisoners. They were also able to get a map for the English prisoners to use on an escape. Unfortunately, the Germans told the English that these boys were spies, and they spent the rest of the war in an English prison. Hetty was able to consider this time in prison as almost pleasant and she had an extremely positive outlook about all her experiences. She stated they were often slapped around, but not raped. She and Gisela sang a lot in prison and in the Furcht camp and even when they got to Ravensbrück. They made up funny words to melodies. She said she would not have been able to make it if it hadn't been for the friendship of Gisela, and that they had it easier because they didn't have husbands or children. She states that she and Gisela had much less harsh treatment than the Jewish women. The Jews in Furcht were working at the Phillips Company, and were then sent to Auschwitz.

Hetty said that her experiences in Ravensbrück were better than those of the Jewish women. She said she knew she had actually done things to help, but the Jews were innocent. The experiences did not make her bitter. After liberation, she was taken to Sweden, where she was diagnosed with TB. She was then separated from her friends and learned Swedish to communicate better.

Hetty was married at 28 to a man who had been in a Japanese concentration camp in the Dutch East Indies. They moved back there and Hetty lived there until her TB reemerged and she retired to Holland. She had 4 children and divorced after 26 years of marriage.

Hetty thinks that the experiences didn't make her bitter because she came from a strong, happy family. She has been involved in many activities related to the Holocaust. She had a book where she had written the names of all the children for whom they got distribution

cards and gave it to a historical museum. She worked on getting many articles for the Ghetto fighters House in Israel. She also made a quilt made of many pieces of saved cloth to symbolize the suffering of the women in the Furcht camp. She said that her philosophy was that to help caring for any humans in trouble, you had to be a little bit of a daredevil.