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**Hughes Jacobs of Val-Dieu**

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## **Hughes Jacobs of Val-Dieu** (\* 17 Nov 1900 – † 9 Oct 1943)

1. Name variants: Karel Jacobs, Charles Jacobs, monastic name: père Hugues, pater Hugo, father Hughes

2. Places: Val-Dieu, Aubel, Antwerp, Utrecht, Haaren, Oisterwijk, Bunnik, Camp Haaren, Rhijnauwen

3. Biography: H. J. entered the abbey of Val-Dieu (Belgium), where he was ordained and appointed lector and lecturer. In March 1940, H. was mobilized and experienced the horrors of war. In France, he was taken prisoner of war. After his release in August 1940, he returned to the abbey where he hid numerous French and Belgian soldiers who had escaped from war captivity in Germany. Five months later, he had joined the resistance. Within the abbey, he was helped by F. S. Muhren who joined the resistance group of Arthur Renkin (Luc-Marc). Together with F. A. Meijs and vicar P. Nolens, they published a clandestine journal ('La Tribune Libre' – 'Het Vrije Woord') and were involved in an escape route, crossing the Dutch-Belgian border. The resistance groups were infiltrated by the Abwehr, leading to the arrest of 17 members of Luc-Marc, with many to follow. Those not arrested, suspended their activities, including both fathers. Facing all risks, H.'s conviction led him to restart his espionage work for Clarence. Meanwhile, the arrested were detained in Camp Haaren, where interrogations, often involving torture, continued. This led to the encirclement and search of the abbey of Val-Dieu by the GFP on 18 Mar 1943, where S. Muhren was arrested. Abbot Alberic Steiger was taken hostage as they couldn't arrest H. who was assisting a mass in the area. Returning to the abbey, H. was arrested the next day. By doing so he saved his abbot and the abbey. In total, about 80 people were arrested. On 29 Jul 1943, the case was brought before the military court in Utrecht, which led to the death sentence of 12 Belgians and Dutchmen, including both fathers. Posthumously, H. was recognized as a Lieutenant Intelligence and Action Agent.

4. Cultus:

a. Relics: His urn containing his ashes is interred in a stele in the abbey church of Val-Dieu.

b. Liturgical commemoration: Each Sunday closest to 9 Oct, at the end of the mass at Val-Dieu abbey.

c. Patronage: Huguette Thimister declared that her father named her Huguette out of respect for H.

d. Attributes: –

5. Fontes: Archives of Val-Dieu (Liège), CegeSoma (State Archives, Brussels, B), Nationaal Archief-CABR (The Hague, NL).

6. Literature: P. DE JONGH, *Grenzeloos Verzet, Over spionerende monniken, ontsnappingslijnen en het Hannibalspiel, 1940–1943*, Turnhout 2018, 344; P. DE JONGH, *Résistance sans frontières, Enquête sur les groups d'espionnage et les lignes d'évasion (1940–1943)*, Turnhout / Waterloo 2019, 366; J. VAN LIESHOUT, *Het Hannibalspiel*, Bussum 1980, 336; B. M. KEMPNER, *Priester vor Hitlers Tribunalen*, München 1966, 170; B. MERGELSBERG, *Pater Andreas (Godsdal) aan het woord*, in: *Verzet in Voeren (1999)*, 17–18; B. MERGELSBERG, *Père André (Val-Dieu) raconte*, in: *Résistance dans les Fourons (1999)*, 17–18.

7. Illustrations: A portrait is on display near the stele in the abbey church; several pictures are published in P. DE JONGH *Grenzeloos Verzet / Résistance sans frontières*.

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