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factory (responsible for producing the V2 rockets), for example, Englishman describes how he and his fellow prisoners managed to smuggle supplies for the resistance, sabotage the Nazi effort, and in one memorable scene, turn the tables on a vicious *kapo* (head prisoner) who was attempting to have him executed. Having emigrated to Toronto after the war, Englishman threw himself with gusto into the struggle against Antisemitism, even at one point going undercover and ultimately breaking into the headquarters of one nascent neo-Nazi group.

What is so good about this book is that Englishman manages to imbue his account with this “Boys’ Own Adventure” sense of excitement and suspense without ever trivializing or down-playing the horrors he was forced to negotiate. The book is imbued with a strong recognition of the extent to which chance allowed its narrator to survive where others equally clever and brave did not. And while readers almost certainly cannot but enjoy the accounts of Englishman’s adventures, this enjoyment nevertheless coexists with a constant sense of the senselessness and depravity of the situations in which he found himself.

It seems wrong to write words like “enjoyment”, “adventure,” and “excitement” in connection with a story of the Holocaust. But Englishman’s book shows how such honest, human reactions, much like his return to the synagogue, are in fact the ultimate resistance to a system that attempted to destroy the human in its victims.

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Tracy Kasaboski and Kristen den Hartog: *The Occupied Garden. Recovering the Story of a Family in the War-Torn Netherlands*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2008.

The Occupied Garden ends in Ontario, where two Canadian sisters visit a local church and recall how their Dutch grandparents would give them Wilhelmina peppermints to keep them quiet during the somnolent sermons. They then walk to the cemetery, where they clean the grave of *opa* and *oma*, gently scraping until the names again become clear. These last scenes reproduce, in a nutshell, the book’s entire narrative, based on the lives of Dutch couple Cor and Gerrit den Hartog and written by their granddaughters, the well-known fiction writer Kristen den Hartog, author of *Water Wings*, (2001), *The Perpetual Ending*, (2003), and *Origin of Haloes*, (2005) and her sister, Tracy Kasaboski. Although the family’s emigration from the Netherlands to Canada does play a role in the book, its main focus is the life of this Dutch family in the war-torn Netherlands under Nazi occupation.

Cor and Gerrit were born in the small town of Overschie and although their families were members of different branches within the Dutch Protestant Church (her parents were more traditional ‘Gereformeerd’, his more pragmatic ‘Hervormd’), their love proved to be stronger than any religious proscription. They married in 1935 and began their life together as simple gardeners, without any sense of the looming military machine that soon would roll in from Germany. During the German occupation, Gerrit became a member of the resistance and served as a section commander in South Holland, which the Nazis considered one of

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the most rebellious parts of the Netherlands. Before liberation could bring safety to the family, an allied plane missed its target near The Hague and two of the den Hartog children lost limbs. They managed to survive their injuries and, like many Dutch who did not see a future in the postwar Netherlands, the family eventually emigrated to the country of their liberators: Canada.

The Occupied Garden is a well-written historical narrative that combines the personal experiences of the young den Hartog family with the larger narrative of the war that surrounded them. It does this both through the - sometimes rather stretched - lens of the Dutch Royal family (with Queen Wilhelmina in a star role) and through the administrative infrastructure of German occupation, under *Reichskommissar* Arthur Seyss-Inquart. The blending of these two stories also illustrates the position of the authors and their outsider's perspective, as Canadians writing about the Netherlands from a Dutch perspective. The story is fashioned from the memories of family members and friends, from the personal memoirs of the grandparents in their diaries, and through research the authors conducted in both Canada and Europe. This research was carried out in a serious and thorough manner, despite the fact that neither sister speaks Dutch, and thus could not consult many of the major works dealing with the German occupation of the Netherlands. The most important insight that they gain is therefore not military or political in nature, but rather constructed from personal memories of the past. With this book, the authors intend to preserve a story that was left unspoken for many years and in jeopardy of being lost forever to time and memory.

At the end of the narrative, a reference is made to the Ottawa Tulip Festival, an annual Spring event which stems directly from Princess Juliana's gift to her nation of sanctuary during the occupation; a fact that probably many young Canadians are no longer aware of. To prevent the historical significance of this event, which represents not only a national, but also a very personal link between Canada and the Netherlands, from becoming forever blurred, Tracy Kasaboski and Kristen den Hartog wrote *The Occupied Garden*. This historical narrative is recommended to anyone interested in the relationship between Canada and the Netherlands.

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