

anne frank house

Sources for the date of death of Anne and Margot Frank in Bergen-Belsen

The date of death of Anne and Margot Frank of February 1945 is based on the following sources:

- Eyewitnesses (Rachel van Amerongen, Lientje Brilleslijper, Nanette Blitz, Annelore Daniel);
- Transport date of 7 February 1945 (transport list);
- Receipt of a Red Cross parcel around 23 January 1945 (Red Cross document);
- Progress of the disease typhus: fatal in 40-60% of cases around 12 days after the first symptoms (Report: Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment);
- Criteria for the 'official' establishment of the date of 31 March 1945 used until now. 31 March is in fact an 'officially' established date, solely based on a statement by Lientje Brilleslijper from 1951. At that time Otto Frank urgently needed the requested statements in order to have a certificate of inheritance drawn up. (Source: letter by Kleiman on behalf of Otto Frank to the 'Committee for the Reporting of the Decease of Missing Persons' (*Commissie tot het doen van aangifte van overlijden van vermisten*) of the Dutch Ministry of Justice, 7 May 1954)

Dutch Red Cross (*Nederlandse Rode Kruis - NRK*)

After the war, the approximate place and date of death were established by the information agency of the Dutch Red Cross in the course of its legal task of establishing the place and date of death of missing persons. (Raymund Schutz, 'Presumably on transport' (*Vermoedelijk op transport*), Archival Science master's degree thesis, p.3]

Source: Dutch Red Cross file 117266, *Carthoteekkaartje Afwikkelingsbureau Concentratiekampen*: 'Died in Bergen-Belsen in approximately March 1945 according to statement of Mrs Rebling-Brilleslijper (...) 22.1.52. Concl. died in Bergen-Belsen not earlier than 1.3.45 and not later than 31.3.45'.

The official death certificate was then dated by the 'Committee for the Reporting of the Decease of Missing Persons' at 31 March 1945.

The standard practice of the 'Committee for the Reporting of the Decease of Missing Persons' was to date unknown dates of death at the last day of the month, if they could link the fate of a missing person to an event or an eyewitness statement. Lientje Brilleslijper stated that the deaths of Anne and Margot took place around March 1945. On the basis of this statement, the Dutch Red Cross concluded that the deaths of Anne and Margot occurred between 1 and 31 March. The date of death was then set at 31 March 1945. (Michiel Schwarzenberg, Dutch Red Cross, telephone conversation of 13 March 2015 and email of 15 March 2015)

Eyewitness statements

Rebecca (Lientje) Brilleslijper

- On 22 January 1951 Lientje Brilleslijper stated to the Dutch Red Cross that the date of death was 'around March 1945'.
- At the request of Otto Frank, on 11 November 1945 Lientje stated: Margot and Anne Frank died around the end of February or the beginning of March 1945.
- In 'Memories of Anne Frank' (*Herinneringen aan Anne Frank*), which she wrote on 5 April 1951 at the request of Otto Frank, she says: 'the end came in February 1945'.



Janny Brandes-Brilleslijper

- Stated to both Jon Blair (*Anne Frank Remembered*, 1995) and to Willy Lindwer ('The Last Seven Months' (*De laatste zeven maanden*), 1988) that Margot was gravely ill and that Anne also showed the symptoms of typhus. She dates their deaths at very soon after the liberation of Bergen-Belsen, but does not cite any other sources for this.

Rachel van Amerongen

- Was in the same barracks as Anne and Margot.
- In the documentaries of Lindwer and Blair, Rachel tells of clear signs of typhus in Margot and Anne.
- Rachel departed for Raguhn on 7 February 1945 (Source: transport list, Bergen-Belsen to Raguhn, International Tracing Service, Bad Arolson). Her name is on this list, together with those of Auguste van Pels and the Daniel sisters.

Auguste van Pels

Departed for Raguhn on 7 February (Source: transport list, Bergen-Belsen to Raguhn, International Tracing Service, Bad Arolson).

Annelore Daniel

- Stated in an interview in 2014 concerning typhus in Anne and Margot: 'they were both terribly ill'.
- Departed for Raguhn on 7 February (Source: transport list, Bergen-Belsen to Raguhn, International Tracing Service, Bad Arolson).

Nanette Blitz

- Saw Anne and Margot for the last time in January 1945 (letter to Otto Frank, August 1945).
- Anne was thin and ill.
- 'Hears' about them in February 1945.

Hanneli Goslar

Has often told of her meeting at the fence over the years.

In all these statements, the constant factors are:

- Contact before the meeting at the fence was made by Auguste van Pels (departed for Raguhn on 7 February: transport list, Bergen-Belsen to Raguhn, International Tracing Service, Bad Arolson).
- Meeting with Anne took place in February 1945 (Blair, Lindwer, newspaper article, 12 July 1957, from the archive of Ernst Schnabel).
- Margot was too ill to get out of bed (ibid.).
- Anne was thin, her head was shaved and she was ill (newspaper article, 12 July 1957, from the Schnabel archive).
- The evening after the first meeting with Anne, Hanneli threw a package over the fence (Blair, Lindwer, newspaper article, 12 July 1957, from the Schnabel archive). Thereze Klee, Hanneli's grandmother, who was with them in the camp, received a Red Cross parcel around 23 January 1945 (letter, *Commission Mixte de Secours de la Croix-Rouge Internationale*, 23 January 1945, to *Generalführer* Hartmann).
- There was another meeting two or three days later, when another package was thrown over the fence. This was also the last meeting. (Blair, Lindwer, newspaper article, 12 July 1957, from the Schnabel archive.)
- Hanneli is unable to accurately date her last meeting with Anne. She has made various statements about this:
 - The last time must have been around ten days before the death of her father on 25 February 1945.
 - She also says that she did not see Anne again after throwing the second package.

