Stories of Survival OBJECT · IMAGE · MEMORY



Zarouhy, Racine, ca. 1920

Zarouhy (Hripsime) Akgulian

Konya (Karaman), Ottoman Empire, 1900 - Racine, Wisconsin, 1972

Ottoman Coin

Ottoman Empire, early 20th century On loan courtesy of Mark Akqulian

Reflections by Mark Akgulian, grandson of Zarouhy

The origins of this coin and even its significance to my grandmother are unknown to me. What is known, Hripsime was a young girl when the Armenian Genocide began. She somehow found safety as a housekeeper with a wealthy Turkish family, while her friends, family and community disappeared. She never talked of her experiences but I was told she was reluctant to leave the safety of her situation, eventually persuaded to leave the safety of her situation, perhaps by force, by her brother and sister.

Hripsime came to America, to Racine, Wisconsin in an arranged marriage to Ayak Akgulian, a man who was nearly twice her age who was still dealing with the murder of his family in the Genocide. At Avak's insistence, Hripsime took the name of his first wife, Zarouhy.

My grandmother gave this coin to her namesake, Laura Hripsime, who many of us believe, maintains a mystical embrace with my grandmother.

I've often imagined at what point did Hripsime acquire this coin? Was it a remnant of coins to secure her passage? Was it money given to her by her Turkish employer? Or perhaps she stole it from that same family?

Mark Akgulian 9/22/2017 THE ORIGINS OF THIS COIN IS EVEN HE SIGNIFICANCE TO MY GRANDWOTHER ARE UNKNOWN TO ME. WHAT IS KNOWN, HRIPSIME WAS A YOUR GIRL WHEN THE ARMENIAM OFFICED BEGAN. SHE SOMERON FOUND EAFETY AS A HOUSEKEEPER WITH A WEAUTHY TURKISH FAMILY, WHILE HER FRENCES, FAMILY & COMMINITY DISAPPEARED. SHE NEVER TRUVED OF HER EXPERIENCES BUT I WAS TOLD SHE WAS REMOVED TO LEAVE THE SAFETY OF HER SITUATION, EVENTARLY PERSUADED TO LEAVE THE SAFETY OF HER SITUATION, EVENTARLY PERSUADED TO

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Marle Arapliano

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Othman, Chicago, 2017

Othman, a trained physics teacher, came to Chicago in 2012 from Baghdad. The application process took four and a half years and included three separate interviews. He initially secured a job working as a cook in a restaurant, but volunteered outside of work at the Iraqi Mutual Aid Society (IMAS) helping settle other refugees. Finding it was his true calling, Othman is now a client services manager at IMAS.

Othman Al Ani

Baghdad, Iraq, July 1, 1984 -

Domino Set

Baghdad, Iraq, 1992 On loan courtesy of Othman Al Ani

Reflections by Othman Al Ani

I brought this dominoes with me from Baghdad because it's mean the great times I spent with my friends. I chose this dominoes from all other stuff because I know those old times may not back again. When I went to see my friends for last time before leaving my country, they gave this dominoes to me to keep it with me to remind me about all great times we spent together.



I brought this Dominors would with me from Baghalad because its mean the great times I spent with my FRAINDS. I chose this Dominos from all other stuff because I know these old times may not back again. When I went to see my frainness for last time before leaving my country, they gave this Dominos to me to keep it with me to remind me about all great times we seen together



Mariam (left) and Elizabeth (center), Melvindale, 1968

Sisters, Mariam and Elizabeth, were saved from the Armenian Genocide by their brother, Guregh, a Catholic monk in Venice, Italy, who had them smuggled to safety. After time in Italy and France, arrangements were made for the sisters to travel in January 1921, to the US, to marry. Elizabeth married a distant cousin Krikor Knekleian, who arrived in the US prior to WWI, while Mariam wed a friend of Krikor, Khatchig Balian. The couples settled in Michigan.

Mariam Balian (née Kibarian)

Banderma, Ottoman Empire, April 17, 1897 - Melvindale, Michigan, December 1982

Elizabeth Knekleian (née Kibarian)

Banderma, Ottoman Empire, June 21, 1904 - Dennellon, Florida, January 15, 1995

Wrappers (Bohça)

Banderma, Ottoman Empire, late 19th century On loan courtesy of Greg Bedian

Reflections by Greg Bedian, grandson of Elizabeth, great nephew of Mariam

They once wrapped the things
The girls took to the baths
Now they are sentinels
Preserving their memory
Shrouding their pain
Reminding us all
Of what life might have been

In memory of Elizabeth and Mariam Kibarian

(Translation from Armenian)





Peter, Chicago, 2008

Peter Magai Bul

Wangulei, South Sudan, January 1, 1982 -

Photograph

Pongborong, South Sudan, 2007 On loan courtesy of Peter Magai Bul

Reflections by Peter Magai Bul

Family reunion: 20 years later!

On Wednesday, December 26, 2007, I stood among hundred of my village children, waiting to be introduced to the students who warmly welcomed me to the village I had been gone for 20 years. As I stood with my left hand in my pocket, right hand with a pen on my chin, and attentively listening as beautiful school children singing and clapping as they welcomed me and two of my American friends namely Brandi Reissenweber and her husband Chris Curl, there was so much occupying my mind. First, I was happy for the reunion with my family and people of my beloved village and also excited for the fact that I was proudly standing from the field that reminded me about all my childhood.

Pongborong was occupied as a cattle camp during the rainy season. When the cattle are taken close to the River Nile during the dry season, children from the surrounding villages would gather there for activities. Second, those school children knew I was coming from America and expected me to help them with education. Finally, I knew my visit to the country that was set to gain independence in 4 years to come was the beginning of my long term responsibilities because I am a member of war survivors that was often referred as "seed of the nation" by our Southern Sudanese leaders who were fighting the Islamic-Arab led government of Sudan.

Peter Magai Bul October 10, 2017 In front of me from right is my niece Abul Kuer Bul

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Teter Magai Bul October 10,2017 In front it me from vibrat is my niecu Abul Kuer Buk

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Mirsad, Skokie, 2018

On July 20, 1992, Mirsad was captured by Serb forces and was sent first to Omarska concentration camp and then a second camp at Manjaca. After the Manjaca that camp was closed under pressure from the UN, Mirsad spent six months in Croatia until he was able to immigrate to the US and settled in Chicago. Both of his brothers were killed in the war; one is still missing.

Mirsad Causevic

Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina, January 24, 1969 -

Recipes

Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1992 On loan courtesy of Mirsad Causevic

Reflections by Mirsad Causevic

Things I managed to save from the camp: writing recipes, learning German, "cigar holder"...For writing we used aluminum foil and wrappings from cigarette boxes, which we received every second week from the Red Cross.

When we didn't have scheduled work detail we tried to occupy our minds as we wiled away the time inside the barn.

Someone came up with the idea to use paper from cigarette box to write culinary recipes. Writing recipes of various dishes, we tried to fool our psyche and our hungry stomachs. While doing so we imagined eating this food.

Mirsad Causevic Bosnia and Hercegovina



Mirsad Causevic

Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina, January 24, 1969 -

Handmade Playing Cards

Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1992 On loan courtesy of Mirsad Causevic

Reflections by Mirsad Causevic

We would use whatever we could to create to create distractions from our current situation—an empty box of crackers became a chessboard or a deck of playing cards—anything to help to pass the time.

Of course, all this had to be done secretly. Nevertheless, this has helped as to draw attention, at least in short moments, from our cruel reality.

Mirsad Causevic Bosnia and Hercegovina





Siyin, Cambodia

This jade pendant belonged to Siyin's paternal grandmother. It was given to Siyin's father, who hid it during the Khmer Rouge regime. As an ethnic Chinese Cambodian, he was particularly targeted during the genocide and fled Cambodia in 1976. He immigrated to the US in the 1980s. The pendant, which had successfully remained in the family's possession, was given to Siyin, before she came to the US in 1995.

Siyin Duong

Cambodia, January 30, 1975 -

Jade Pendant

Cambodia, 20th century
On loan courtesy of Siyin Duong

Reflections by Siyin Duong

This necklace pendant is an inheritance by my grandmother from my father's side, given to me.

It is a representation of my family for generations.

Duong Siyin

(Translation from Khmer)

याक्राम् देशकार्योष्ट्रमः याक्रम्य स्थानिक्ष्य भूर्य हिंछेड

This urn belonged to Siyin's maternal great- grandmother. Her grandmother hid it under the floorboards of their home when she heard that the Khmer Rouge was closing in on their town. They later went back to their home and found that money they had hidden in the walls of the house was gone, but the urn remained hidden under the floorboards.

Siyin Duong

Cambodia, January 30, 1975 -

Ceremonial Urn

Cambodia, 20th century
On loan courtesy of Siyin Duong

Reflections by Siyin Duong

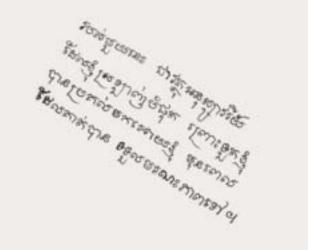
This Khmer copper urn is a gift from my greatgrandparents who had kept it for generations.

It is the souvenir I love most because my greatgrandparents gave it to me before they passed away.

Duong Siyin

(Translation from Khmer)





सुर्व हिंदीक



Gabriel, Kansas City, Missouri, 2016

Gabriel Dut

South Sudan, 1980 -

Photograph

Juba, South Sudan, 2007 On loan courtesy of Gabriel Dut

Reflections by Gabriel Dut

My name is Gabriel Dut. I took this picture of my father and I in Juba, Republic of South Sudan in the year 2007. My father name is Atem Dut. He was my hero and role model in life. I only spent a very short time at home with my father and mother and soon were separated by the civil war in Sudan which forced me to leave my village at a young age of seven years old. For the next 20 years I lived in various refugee camps in East Africa. I walked for 3 ½ months from South Sudan to Ethiopia in 1987. I didn't know if my parents were dead or alive since I left them. I was in the refugee camps with thousands of other kids from all around the country living and taking care of ourselves. The United States decided to bring some of us to America as part of their group called "The Lost Boys of Sudan." After so many years of not knowing what became of my parents and younger siblings, I heard that after I left, the war reached our villages and they had to flee too and eventually settled in Uganda border with South Sudan. They spent years there while I was in Kenya with the rest of the lost boys. When I became a citizen of the United States in 2007, my first priority was to go and visit my parents who were living in Juba at the time. The picture of my dad in my head was of a younger person but he was now older in age after 20 years. The excitement was unbearable and could not

sleep on the plane on the way to see them. My mom could not recognize me when she saw me for the first time after 20 years and thought she told me later I look like a person she knew in the refugee camps where she was. As customary the picture is just me and my dad sitting while he is having his favorite drink. The words of advice that my dad told me were unforgettable. He told me to be a good man and treat others with dignity and respect. Told me to get married and find a wife. This ended being the last time I saw my dad because in the year 2010, my dad was killed by cattle rustlers in our village. He didn't want to live in refugee camps anymore and want to go back home. We decided that we should respect his wishes although we knew the villages had insecurity. He was a man who makes his decisions and live by them. Although that was the last time I saw him, I was in peace that my dad did not pass away before we saw each other. I remember only the good times when I was five or six and the good stories he used to tell me. Life is what it is. I now have children of my own, I hope my 2 boys have some of the qualities of my dad. There are no words that describe the love between parents and their children. It is a universal language that everyone feels. I love you dad.

Gabriel Atem Dut

My name is basical Dut. I take This prime of my fetter and I is John Republic of South Sudan in the year 7007 my father remove in Atlan Dat. He was my have said role made in light. I only spect on very short time at bone with my fether and moralties and seen were separated by the simil was in Sidem which great my to leave my volve it a young say of seven your old. per the meet do yet I lived in warrang Regula campe in East Africa. I work gov 3 5 martis from South Sudan to Ethiopia in 1987. I didn't know it my parents were dead or while Since I lege Man. I was in The regiges Compa with Thousands of other Kide from all around the country living and their care of surselves. The winted States decided to being some of us to America on part of their grap called " The last bugs of Sudan" Agiller so many genra of not knowing ober brown of my formula and younger sidings. I beard that geter I legt the over reached our villages thank and they had to glee the and evertually Settled in ugunda boder with South Sudan -they spect years there while to was in Kanga with the sort of the last long. when I become a citizen of the winted gloths in 300% my first privily.



where the was - As customery the politice is just me med my dad sitting white he is having his famile doing the words of advice that my did till me see myngettable. He till me to be a good man and freet along in deputy, and respect. Told me to get municid and find a neigh . This anded being the) Ast time I saw my shall because in It's your 2010, my dad was hited by Cattle reallers in our vilege. He distint want to live in Regular compre organice and want to go back home we decided that we should respect his wishes softingly we know the voltages had encurring the wors a man who makes his decision and him by there. Although that we the last time I sow him. I was in passe that my deal abid not pose away begins one some week other . I smewher ruly the good times when I was the or six much the grad stone, he used to potent me figs is what it is . I You have children of my min, I hope my 2 legs han som of the monthis of my shad. There met ret words that describe the love between promits and this chaden to a unreal largue That orangeme feels . I love you chall .

CHABRIEL ATEM DUT

Elyse Gasigwa

Rwanda, November 24, 1958 -

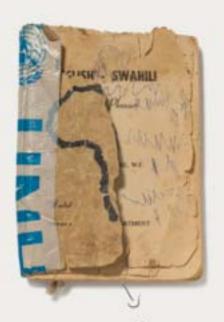
Swahili to English Phrase Book

Rwanda, 1994 On loan courtesy of Elyse Gasigwa

Reflections by Elyse Gasigwa

This "English & Swahili Dictionary" helped me to learn English.

Elyse Gasigwa





This English & Swalin Dictionary" helped me to learn English.

Chin Constant



Kasim, Lincoln, Nebraska, 2018

In 2010, after graduating high school, Kasim began working with the US Army in Iraq as a translator. His work made it possible for him to move as a permanent resident to Nebraska in 2012. Hoping to be the first in his family to graduate college, Kasim began studying biochemistry at the University of Nebraska. In 2017, he became a US citizen, and in May 2018, graduated with his bachelor's degree.

Kasim Hamo

Sinjar, Mosul, Iraq, January 1, 1989 -

Airline Ticket

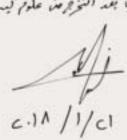
Iraq, 2012 On loan courtesy of Kasim Hamo

Reflections by Kasim Hamo

This is my ticket from when I first traveled from Iraq to the United States on July 4, 2012. I have kept this ticket in my wallet for the past 6 years because it reminds me of when I first left my country. I stayed one day in Jordan and the second day I went to New York then Chicago and finally arrived in Nebraska. Now I study Biochemistry and Pre-Pharmacy at UNL. I will graduate in May of 2018.

Kasim Hamo, 1/1/2018

هذه الغزكرة الطائرة التي سائرة ديما لابل مرة مذالواق الدروليا في بوم ٤/٠/ عن هفائلة هذه الغزكرة في المحفظة على مرور ٦ سنوان لان اول تغذكرة العسفر بالنسبة إي غادرت بلعب العراق وبقية يوم كاملا في الاردن و في المثني البوم سافرة الله في والارق ومن فيوراك و في المثني البوم سافرة الله في والية استقرن لا منواك والما المراك وهالية استقرن فراك والما المراك والما المراك والما المراك والما المراك والما المراك المراك المراك الما المناه المناه المناه الما المناه المناه المناه المناه المناه المناه المناه المناه المناه المراك المراك المراك المناه ال





Diyar, Lincoln, Nebraska, 2017

Diyar Al Khalo

Bozan, Nineveh, Iraq, January 1, 1987 -

Photograph

Iraq, 2013 On loan courtesy of Diyar Al Khalo

Reflections by Diyar Al Khalo

This picture was taken back on Feb 11, 2013 while I was praying at Lalish temple. I prayed for the whole world to be safe and sound. We as Yezidis always pray for all human kind and call for peace and safety.

Diyar Hazim Farhan Al Bozani Lincoln, Nebraska, 2018

(Translation from Arabic)

31 2 1/2 2 15 C. 17/2/1/ at & صعبد لدلشر أنا كنت هزد هتى في العما أنا كنت

اسمبد مخس على بسيع الانهاد العالم نمد ون الله

الاجال إلى جبين العاقم نين الذيبين مُشَعَارِ الاجان

إلى جمع الدن والعلم ... صدة عد المعيد لالش

هو مقيس عدا محفرت نحت التعميم التروديين

التن سن الله الامان إلى جميع الدن والمعلم العالم

1.20.18

ا ثناء ريارتي الى معيد لا لش للا يزيين في المواق



Sala, Goslar, 1946

Sala Lewis

Sosnowiec, Poland, December 25, 1927 - Deerfield, Illinois, June 29, 2018

Photograph

Goslar, Germany, 1947 Gift of Sala Lewis

Reflections by Sala Lewis

Transcription by Evelyn Lewis, daughter of Sala

My name is Sala Lewis and I am the person pictured on the right side of this photograph, taken in 1946. My sister, Dora Winiarz, is pictured on the left. No person was more responsible for my surviving the Holocaust than my sister. As Polish Jews, the war came quickly to our country. Very early on, Jews old enough to work received notifications to report for work and were sent to numerous work camps. My sister, who was the oldest in our family of nine children, was one of the first to go. When the remaining Jews in our town were rounded up in 1942, I was still at home with my parents as were my two younger brother and sister. They, along with my father, mother and baby nephew were among the Jews brought to a school for deportation to Auschwitz. I was not home.

When I found out where everyone had been taken, I went to the school and saw my mother standing in the window. She told me not to come in and sent me on an errand she knew would keep me long enough to avoid being deported. When I returned, the Jews were gone.

Alone, and sleeping on rooftops, I turned myself in when the last roundup of Jews occurred in my town of Sosnowiec. I remembered where I heard my sister had been sent, and when I reached the front of the line, I asked the German officer to send me there. He looked at me and pushed me into a line that then boarded the train. When we reached our destination, the doors to the train opened, and I saw my sister's face looking back at me.

She fed me food and went hungry. She took on extra chores to make life easier for me. She cared for me through typhus and numerous other illnesses and made sure that I had the extra water or food I needed to survive them. And after the war, when I was diagnosed with tuberculosis, it was her face I saw when the doctors thought I would not survive the night. That is why this picture of us together frames the Holocaust for me. I survived because of my sister and she became the mother I lost throughout the remainder of my life.

With my name Sala Lewis

My name is Sala Lewis
and laim the person on
the right side of this
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Thirth my Mame Sale Juis



Ursula (far left) and the Meyer family, Delmenhorst, 1925

Ursula Meyer

Delmenhorst, Germany, December 2, 1919 - Bremen, Germany, May 11, 1982

Teddy Bear

Bremen, Germany, 1945 On loan courtesy of the Walter and Gisela Hesse family

Reflections by Marianne Hesse, niece of Ursula

With storm clouds gathering on the horizon, my aunt's teddy bear was buried in a backyard for safekeeping.

My aunt and grandfather weathered the torrent and returned to Germany after three years in Theresienstadt in Czechoslovakia.

After learning of the damage caused by the deluge, my aunt and grandfather wrote to my mother in America informing her that Tante Regine, Onkel Siegfried, Georg, Tante Toni, Hugo and his two sisters and Onkel Moritz and his family had been engulfed by the surge.

In the aftermath of the storm, my aunt was reunited with her childhood teddy bear.

Marianne Hesse

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Immaculee's daughter Raissa, Gikondo, Kigali, 1994

Immaculee Mukantaganira

Muko, Rwanda, December 3, 1954 -

Raissa Umutoni's Cardigan

London, United Kingdom, ca. 1994 On loan courtesy of Immaculee Mukantaganira

Reflections by Immaculee Mukantaganira

Raissa Umutoni's Dress (6/12/1994)

Raissa was three when the 1994 took her life.

This dress was white and Raissa wore it when she dressed nicely for event that happened in the evenings. This reminds how my husband was a provider to our family. My children were always dressed properly and nicely. Their dad travelled a lot and would buy clothes and shoes for them and I. Today, when I got to the mall, I feel so desperate to not have them and spoil them with nice dresses. At a certain point, I could spend a year without going to the mall. Why go? To do what? Raissa and Clarisse, my daughters were always neat and loved to dress up and enjoyed it. Their dad allowed them to do so; probably God knew they needed that attention. They had 3 years/5 years to be spoiled.

Dear friends attending this exhibit;

Please let your children enjoy your love and presence! Let them know you love them. Spend enough time with them; do not let any occasion without making them happy. They need it, deserve it. Because, there is the thing God never tells us: "How long we have them or we are with them!!"

Thank you Thaddee,

Love you!

Immaculee





Immaculee, Mishawaka, Indiana, ca. 2000

Immaculee Mukantaganira

Muko, Rwanda, December 3, 1954 -

Family Photo Album

Rwanda, 1990s

On loan courtesy of Immaculee Mukantaganira

Reflections by Immaculee Mukantaganira

Dear Thaddee,

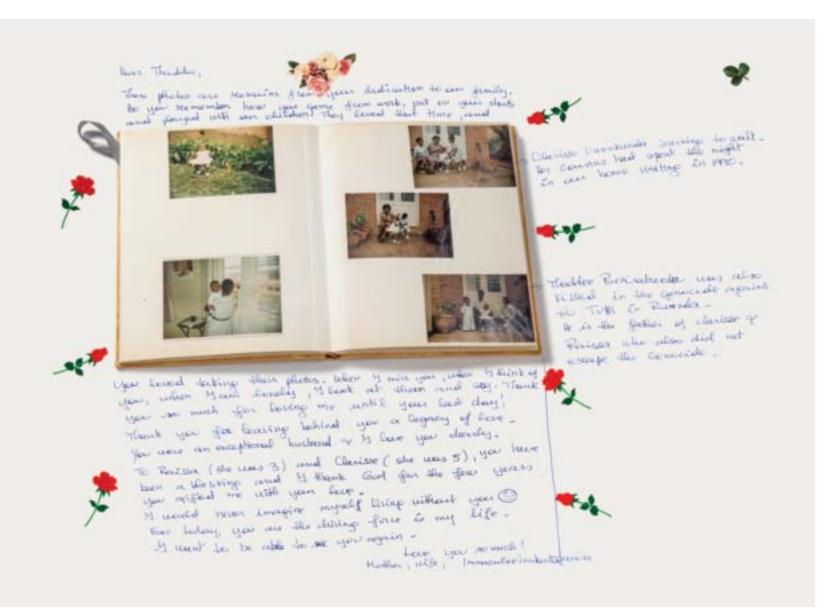
These photos are remains from your dedication to our family. Do you remember how you came from work, put on your shorts and played with our children! They loved that time and you loved taking their photos. When I miss you, when I think of you, when I am lonely, I look at them and cry. Thank you so much for loving me until your last day! Thank you for leaving behind a legacy of love. You were an exceptional husband and I love you dearly. To Raissa (she was 3) and Clarisse (she was 5), you have been a blessing and I thank God for the few years you gifted me with your love. I would never imagine myself living without you. Even today, you are a driving force in my life. I want to be able to see you again.

Love you so much!

Mother; Wife; Immaculee Mukantaganira

Clarisse Uwonkunda learning to walk. Her cousins had spent the night in our home visiting in 1990.

Thaddee Ruzirabwoba was also killed in the genocide again the Tutsi in Rwanda. He is the father of Clarissa and Raissa who also did not escape the Genocide.





lda and her father, Ferid Sefer, on her 5th birthday, Bosanski Novi, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1990

Ida and her family lived in the small town of Bosanski Novi until 1992 when the war began. Ida's father arranged for lda, her sister, and their mother to move in with relatives in Serbia. Shortly after, her father, along with hundreds of other Muslim men, was detained by Serbian militia in a concentration camp in the town. Upon his release, he went back to the family home to grab a few items-photo albums, some clothes, and Ida's doll, Sanja. The family would never return. As refugees, they escaped to Canada and later moved to Chicago where Ida currently resides.

Ida Sefer Roche

Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina, March 23, 1985 -

Doll

Bosnia and Herzegovina, ca. 1992 On loan courtesy of Ida Sefer Roche

Reflections by Ida Sefer Roche

I was seven.





Henry, Dachau, Germany, 1945

Henry was forced into slave labor by the Nazis after the occupation of Poland. He was interned in seven labor and concentration camps throughout the war, and endured a death march. This jacket was issued at Flossenbürg, prior to his imprisonment in Dachau concentration camp toward the end of the war. He hid his Jewish identity in Dachau by wearing a Polish patch on his uniform. Eventually liberated by the US Army in 1945, he immigrated to the Chicago area in 1949.

Henry Stone

Nowy Targ, Poland, March 7, 1924 -

Concentration Camp Jacket

Flossenbürg concentration camp, Germany, 1945 Gift of Henry Stone

Reflections by Henry Stone

To me looking at this picture brings back memories.

I feel like I am reliving a painful past so the world will never forget those that were left in the past.

