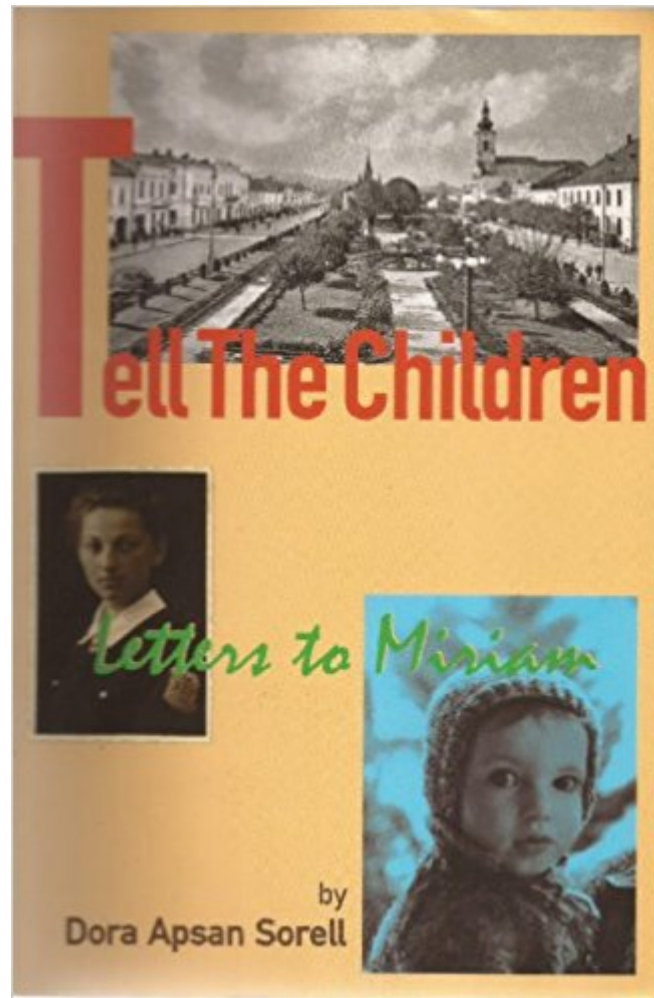




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Tell The Children, Letters To Miriam



Synopsis

For almost forty years after the end of the war Dora struggled to put the past behind her and placed all her energies into building a new life, a family and a career. But the birth of her first grandchild, Miriam, reawakened in her the memories that had laid barely beneath the surface. Dora began to realize that unless she told her story, the new generation, born in America, would grow up not knowing anything about their past, their ancestors, the traditions they followed in a small town in Northern Transylvania, the destruction brought by the Holocaust, and the oppressive life in post-war communist Romania. Dora began to write letters to Miriam whenever something in the present evoked images from the past. Each letter is a vignette, a story about people she has known, family members who have disappeared, events she has witnessed and places she has been. What emerged after a few years was the chronicle of a Jewish family against the backdrop of the main historical events of 20th century Europe.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Even among the charged and eloquent survivor memoirs that-Thank God! still keep appearing, this one is distinctive for its reach and specificity, its clear voice and astonishing recall, its human stamp and spiritual strength. -- John Felstiner, Professor of English, Stanford University; Author of Paul Celan - Poet, Survivor, JewHer autobiography is informative, perceptive and poignant. Its emotional impact is powerful. To read it is to come closer to historical events that will forever haunt mankind's conscience. -- Elie WieselTell the Children-Letters to Miriam is the passionate testimony of a woman who overcomes seemingly insurmountable obstacles to realize her dreams.... This inspiring work is

a must-read book for all who wish to nourish their belief in a better world. -- Micheline Maccario, M.D., President, San Francisco Chapter of the Older Women's League

Dora Apsan Sorell was born in a small town in northern Transylvania. She completed her high school around the time the war started. She spent the war years under Hungarian and Nazi occupation and was deported to Auschwitz in 1944. She lost parents, brothers and numerous relatives in the Holocaust. Upon returning she married and along with her husband she completed her higher education in the new Communist Romania and started to build a family. Dora and her family left Romania in the early sixties and came to New York in 1964 to join brothers and other members of the family. She built a successful career in medicine and recently retired as full professor from a prestigious medical school. In 1995 Dora and her husband moved to California to be closer to their grandchildren, and settled in the town of San Rafael. Dora is active in organizations and projects that educate the public and particularly children about the consequences of hatred and discrimination. She is a speaker affiliated with the Holocaust Center of Northern California, has interviewed for the Shoah Foundation, and was recently honored for her contributions by the Older Women's League of San Francisco.

It's hard to believe that this story could be told in such a way as to find it engaging. But beyond the horrors of the camps, the unfolding of the aftermath and consequences is revealing from a historical perspective. It's part of the history that's not as evident as the inexplicable inhumanity of the camps. Never forget.

These books are difficult to read because of the subject matter.

I happen to have met the writer. A remarkable lady!

Yes, do talk to your children, and especially about this book and its subject. It is the most insightful and informative personal account of the whole problem in Europe during the Nazi period. Not only does Dora Sorell tell us about life before her internment, but also the problems that the end of the war created for those who lived under the communist rule. That is one thing that has been sorely lacking until now. We must never forget, and must tell our children and our grandchildren. Dora Sorell has given us a way to do that in her letters to Miriam.

Tell the Children is a vivid story so well told that it is hard to believe its author is not a professional writer. Dora Sorell was taken by the Nazis from her home in a Romanian village to some of the worst concentration camps, where she managed not only to survive but also to be reunited with her childhood sweetheart, to become a physician, to experience years of almost unimaginable horror under Communist rule, and to escape successively to Italy, Brazil, and finally the United States. Her chronicle, presented as letters to her granddaughter, benefits from sharp perception, a powerful memory, an extraordinary interest in the people around her (including a large and interesting family), and a genuine ability at storytelling. Unpretentious as she is, Dora Sorell is a heroic woman. Her book is unpreachy and unsentimental but deeply felt, and for me it made a lot of modern history seem real for as if the first time.

Ms. Sorell describes life in pre war world two Transilvania and Holocaust events like nobody else. She expresses personal feelings, and at the same time paints the picture of the overall way of life for the Jewish community in the times preceding the war. The Holocaust description is the most moving one I ever read and preserves for future generations the realities of a terrible time through the eyes of a survivor. The book balances the view of a mature person with the feelings and desires of a young lady experiencing terrible events.

I spent two weeks with Dora traveling to Poland and Israel with Shalhevet Bet. Dora is an amazing person and story teller, her book captures much of her inspirational story and memory. Her story is life changing and her voice is calm and unintrusive. She doesn't force her story or her opinions on you, but rather gives you her story as an offering to make of it what you want. A must read for anyone and everyone.

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