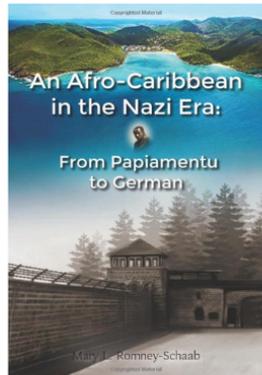


Second Generation: Mary Romney Schaab



An Afro-Caribbean in the Nazi Era: From Papiamentu to German is the true story of Lionel Romney's wartime experiences as told by his daughter, Mary L. Romney-Schaab. He was one of relatively few Black people to be imprisoned in the Nazi concentration camp system and even fewer who survived to tell about it.

Lionel Romney was an Afro-Caribbean (West Indian) merchant sailor who by chance was trapped in the politics, chaos, and deadly violence of World War II. As a non-combatant, he spent the four years from 1940 to 1944 in Italy, and the final year of the war, 1944-45, in the notorious Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. There, he was subjected to inhumane treatment and near-starvation. He routinely witnessed atrocities that traumatized him so deeply that he was virtually silent about the experience for over four decades.

After over 20 years of trying, Mary was finally able to get her father to talk about his experience during a series of oral history interviews. These form the centerpiece of her book, which also chronicles her experience of visiting Mauthausen and Italy after her father passed away. As such, it is a story of an ordinary man caught in extraordinary circumstances; a father's survival and a daughter's journey.

Mary Romney-Schaab was born in New York City, but her roots are in the Caribbean island nation of St. Maarten. A retired educator, she spent over 40 years teaching English as a second or foreign language in Madrid, New York, Barcelona, and Connecticut. She has an Ed.M. in Instructional Technology, and an M.A. in the Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), both from Columbia University; an M.A. in Spanish, and a B.A. in Spanish, both from Middlebury College. She is interested in languages, culture, and African Diaspora history.