

# Stern

This small bronze menorah has been in my family since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. We know little about its history other than that it survived the Nazi era-much like my immediate family. It belonged to my great- great grandparents who lived in the Erlangen/Nürnberg area.



This family heirloom ended up being used by my father, uncle, and grandparents in the late 1930s for Hanukkah celebrations. Unfortunately, in late November 1941, the family was forcefully transported to Riga along with 1,000 Jewish residents of the Nürnberg region. As a result, they could not take many belongings with them. Many valuables were given away or taken by German soldiers or citizens. This menorah was given to my grandfather's sister for safe keeping. She had married a Christian man and had converted to Christianity. An intentional move that probably helped saved her life.

By good fortune my father, uncle and grandmother survived and returned to Nürnberg sometime in 1946 after being liberated from Bergen-Belsen on April 15, 1945. Upon their arrival in Nürnberg, several of the belongings they were forced to part with were returned. This small and precious menorah being one of those few items.

Today, this menorah sits atop our fireplace mantle- holding a prominent place in our household. Every Hanukkah, we light candles for eight straight nights – while remembering the sacrifice of so many loved ones before us. May all their memories be

for a blessing, and may this brilliant object continue to illuminate this connection we all have to family and survival.

*-Alan Stern*

