

The war ended when my grandmother was very young. The only memory she has of the war was when B-29s flew overhead from the southern sky, with the sound of explosions, and she ran into an air-raid shelter with air raid sirens blaring. She was only three years old at the time, yet she still has memories of war.

If you were told of your father's death on a piece of paper, would you be able to accept it? About 80 years ago, the Japanese Army mobilized many soldiers under operation Imphal, and it ended in a crushing defeat and came to be known as the worst operation in history.

My grandmother told me the sad story of the battle. Until I heard her story, I had never heard of the Anglo-Burmese War, nor that my great-grandfather had lost his life there. My great-grandfather was conscripted before my grandmother was born, so before he left for the front, he gave my great-grandmother a list of possible names for his newborn child, whether she was a boy or a girl. When my grandmother turned three, the war came to an end. She and my great-grandmother waited for my great-grandfather to return. However, their wish didn't come true. There was only this bulletin, "Killed in action in the Burma area on June 18, 1945," and one pebble from the field of battle. In March 2003, my grandmother visited Burma, the final place of my great-grandfather's death. She told me that it was really hot in Burma, and that she felt helpless to think that her father had fought for his country with his comrades in arms there.

I have not experienced war and have no way of really knowing what it is really like. War was not just a story. If I had lived during this time, I would not be able to live the way I do now. Unimaginably painful events were the norm during the war. However, today we have a peaceful life with our family, friends and loved ones because of the people who desperately lived through the fierce war years, and the bereaved families who strongly survived the difficult post-war years. This must not be forgotten. Among the bereaved there are those who are willing to recount their painful experiences to those of us who do not know the reality of war. Without them, would we have ever thought about the true hardships of war?

Are we not trying to live in a small world? Maybe you have unspoken worries and struggles. Maybe some of you are tired of letting your lives shine. But I want to tell you - There is only one life, and no life that can be replaced. So, live! There are people who wanted to live but could not, and there are many people whose dreams and hopes were taken away. War takes away peace, happiness and the normal things we have now. I wonder if you are not as, like me, paralyzed by the word "peace" today as I was in the past. But we must keep going, and let the sparks of our lives shine. No matter how small the spark is. That small spark will become a big spark. That small spark will change the world. Now is the time to hold hands. So, live for our future.

高森 世風

徳島県立富岡東中学校

So, Live