

ELISE TAFT

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE



Elise Taft (née Hagopian) was born in 1906 to two Armenian parents. She was among those targeted by the Ottoman government and forcibly displaced from Ottoman-controlled territories. For Elise, this meant exile from her home in Bandirma, Ottoman Empire (today Turkey) alongside her parents and siblings. In her testimony, she describes the hardships both she and her family endured while in transit—the death of her four-year-old sister, the living conditions during forced marches into the desert, and the endless abuse those around her suffered at the hands of government soldiers. Years later, Elise was able to relocate to Greece with help from American rescuers. She would then go on to author a memoir titled *Rebirth: the Story of an Armenian girl who survived the Genocide and found Rebirth in America* (1981). As a mother to three sons, she was determined to preserve and share her experiences with future generations. She was interviewed on April 22, 1984, in Syracuse, NY, USA.