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Ms. Strassler  
Keeping History Alive  
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### Artifact

In 1912, my dad's father's family lived in Ukraine. Before hints of WWII, they took a family photo. It included the whole family, but not the father, as he was already living in America working so the rest of the family could come. This artifact connects to history because it shows a Ukrainian Jewish family living in eastern Europe before WWI and Hitler. In 1921, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic established when the Russian Red Army conquers two-thirds of Ukraine. That same year my ancestors left to start life in America.

My great-grandpa, Sender (Sydney) Palatnic (Polatnick), immigrated to the U.S. from Ukraine when he was 17 with his mom and siblings. Their trip began on the back of a hay wagon to Romania where they got fake papers and were able to get a train to France. They needed fake papers because they weren't allowed to leave their country so they pretended they were from Romania. From France, they took a boat to Liverpool, England. Their final boat took them to Ellis Island where then after, they settled in New York.

During World War I the western Ukrainian people were stuck between Austria-Hungary and Russia. Ukrainian villages were regularly destroyed in the crossfire. Ukrainians could be found participating on both sides of the conflict. Over twenty thousand Ukrainians who were suspected of being on Russia's side of the war were arrested and placed in concentration camps in Austria. The cruelty did not stop with the end of World War I for Ukrainians. Fighting escalated with the beginning of the Russian Revolution in 1917. Throughout this terrible time, the family was anticipating their departure from the violent country. Later on, in 1918 Ukraine declared independence. Numerous rival governments compete for control for some or all of Ukraine during their ensuing civil war. I'm surprised they even made it here because between 1921 and 1939, the number of Romanians entering the United States declined after World War I, many regions under outside rule officially became part of Romania, restricting emigration for a time. (BBC) So since my family claimed they were Romanian, (that's what it says on the ship manifest) they probably just made it to the US in time (BBC)(History of Ukraine).

My dad has told me stories about his "poppy". One story is that when my great grandfather was a teenager, his mother had a tea house in their home. The Cossacks would come and raid the homes of the Jewish population there to intimidate them, and he says Sydney stood up to them and he put his hand out against a cossack's sword. It slashed his hand and he got a scar. Another story is that his mother sent him to the neighbor's house who wasn't home to "ransack" that

house himself so it would have looked as if the Cossacks had already been there to trick the real cossacks who will have come to rob the family's home. It sounded like the cossacks were the pre-nazis for Ukranian jews, how they could freely torture anyone they wanted. In early 1919, Ukrainian nationalists unleashed their fury against the Jews. Massacres were perpetrated in Yekaterinoslav, Zhitomir and other cities in the Ukraine. (larry domnitch)

I have learned many things about my family while doing this project. It doesn't sound as dramatic as some European Jewish stories because they got out before the reign of Hitler but still sounds terrifying. Having to travel to a different country with a large family in a wagon sounds like a really hard thing to do. Even though my family immigrated in the 1920s, their struggles and dreams for a better life can still resonate with people today.

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