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Oxford Scholars Part 2

7 April 2017

### Oxford Scholar: WW1 Family Connection

The United States of America and many other nations face times of turmoil such as war and distress. History has a tendency to repeat itself and therefore we must learn from our past. With the 100th year anniversary of World War 1 approaching we, Americans, must take the time to reflect and connect.

Having a family history that partially stems from North Korea, I have always been bestowed with fascinating information. Therefore, I have decided to focus my energy on North Korea during World War 1. After some research and interviewing my grandmother, Soon Ok Lim Scalercio, I came upon some unique discoveries.

North Korea was, and still is, a communist country- meaning whatever information is given to the public is first approved and altered by the ruler (or dictator). Therefore the ruler has the ultimate power to brainwash their citizens. During WW1, most adults in North Korea knew what was going on- but they knew the bare minimal and what their dictator was telling them at the moment. Although my grandmother was not born yet, she claims that her parents knew about WW1, but she did not. In school in North Korea, they never educated the youth on the events that occurred during WW1 and parents did not discuss it with their children. My grandmother believes this is due to the fact that the communist country did not want the youth being brought up with and

fed ideas of war, disruption, and rebellion; it would present them with a sense of hope and plant a seed for the need and want of freedom. She told me that they never talked or were educated about war of any sorts- the adults might have known about war, and if so, they never spoke about it- the unwritten rule in North Korea. Therefore, my grandmother and her family were never directly affected by World War 1 at the time- simply because they did not know about it; the government withheld information.

Unlike most family immigration stories, my grandmother and her family never did immigrate to America due to World War 1. Instead, their immigration did not take place until The Korean War broke out. In 1950, my grandmother was put on a boat by her mother in order to escape North Korea and begin a new life in South Korea. Truly believing her family would accompany her and meet her in South Korea, she held onto hope but was only left with disappointment when they were never reunited. Her immigration continued- but this time to the United States of America in 1961. She accompanied her husband, my grandfather Frank Scalercio Jr, to Santa Rosa in order to begin a new life and create a better future for their family.

Moreover, the American Dream and the desire to start a new and improved life in “the land of opportunities” was first stemmed from the conclusion and victory of World War 1. This victory encouraged not only freedom, but many to immigrate to the US- thus leaving us with the culturally diverse country we have today.