

Alexandr Meitin



This is my father Alexandr Meitin when he was young. He was on military service during World War I. This photograph was taken near Stara Russa, Russia, in May 1917 by photographer Kriger. My father Tsala Meitin was born in 1878. My paternal grandmother Gelia Meitina emigrated to New York with four of her children before 1915. My father didn't want to go there since he was actively involved in the revolutionary movement here in Russia. My father Tsala Meitin was a member of the Bolshevik Party, propagated revolutionary ideas and was even exiled for this to the town of Beryozov, about 2,000 kilometers from Moscow. Inmates in Beryozov called him Alexandr and when he obtained his documents later he had this first name written in there. He was exiled in 1905 during the tsarist regime and served his term until 1917, the October Revolution. My father

finished cheder, but didn't continue his studies in any institution afterward. He was self-educated but an intelligent man. My mother, Fania Meitina, nee Kazarnovskaya, and my father met in Vitebsk, probably during some [revolutionary] activities, that they were both involved in. They got married in Vitebsk in 1912. I don't know whether they had a wedding at the synagogue or just a civil ceremony at the registry office. I know that they were both atheists. In 1917 my father was mobilized to the army. I know very little about this period of his life. I have a photograph from the time when he was in the army before the Revolution of 1917. He served in the tsarist army that didn't exist any longer after the Revolution. My father returned home because of the Revolution. My father was very cheerful and witty. He was the heart and soul of all gatherings. He was very sociable and easy-going. He was very intelligent and well read. It was amazing considering that he actually only had elementary education.