

Hava Goldshtein's Father Leiba Goldshtein



My father Leiba Goldshtein photographed in Poltava in 1918. In 1914 when WWI began my father went to the Romanian army. He was at the front and was captured and sent to a camp for prisoners-of-war in Poltava, a provincial town in the center of Ukraine in 300 kms from Kiev. My father was in captivity between 1915 and 1917. I do not know about a life of the father in the conclusion, he did not like to tell about it. Inmates of the camp worked at road construction. A young girl often came to sell cigarettes to prisoners. This was Sonia Epelbaum, my mother. My

father got married in Poltava in 1918 after he was released from captivity. My father told me that they had a traditional Jewish wedding under a chuppah at the synagogue and then had a civil ceremony at the registry office. Only grandfather Moisey attended the wedding ceremony since there were no other relatives of my parents in Poltava. My parents didn't tell me any other details. My parents couldn't go to Romania where my father's family lived since after 1917 the Soviet authorities didn't allow Soviet citizens to leave the country. My parents rented a room in a basement in the center of Poltava. My parents were very poor. This was a period of famine and unemployment. My mother sold cigarettes and my father got occasional jobs at construction sites.