

Faina Gheller's Uncle



My uncle, whose name I don't know, my father Naum's older brother, born in Grodno in 1898. He emigrated to Canada in 1917.

This photo was made in Canada after he arrived there and sent to his parents for good memory.

My father's family lived in Grodno [in Belarus, over 1000 km from Moscow] in a wooden house with three small rooms. Their biggest value in the family was a sewing machine.

There was a well in the yard from where they fetched water. Here was a wood stoked stove in the house. They didn't have a garden, but there was a shed where they kept chickens. They were not wealthy.

The family wasn't religious. They observed Jewish traditions, but it was most likely their tribute to traditions and provincial way of life. They went to the synagogue on Friday and on Jewish holidays. They celebrated Sabbath, but didn't follow kashrut. They celebrated all holidays at home.

My grandfather Israel Zelvianski had progressive opinions, he was a Soviet person believing religion to be something obsolete and disappearing, something that was on the way of life and progress, but he never joined any political parties or public or cultural organizations.

There were 5 children in the family. My father's older brother whose name I don't know was born in Grodno in 1898.

In 1917 he emigrated to Canada. From there he sent one photograph and there was no more information about him.