

Avrum-Itzhak Korsunski



This is my maternal great-grandfather Avrum-Itzhak Korsunski. The photo was taken in Novoukrainka in the 1900s. My maternal great-grandfather was born into a very poor family in the town of Novoukrainka, Elisavetgrad district, Kherson region, in 1818. My great-grandfather was raised in his aunt's family who also had twelve children of their own. When he turned 20 he decided to leave the family and live on his own. He had to work hard to make his living. When the Crimean War [1853-1856] began he was recruited to the army. His regiment was in Sevastopol. After the war Avrum-Itzhak purchased a small grocery store in Novoukrainka and married Getia, a local Jewish girl. My mother often talked about her paternal grandfather Avrum-Itzhak. He was a strong man with big hands and a large nose. My mother used to say, 'Azoy vi a kartoshke' [it looked like a potato in Yiddish]. My great-grandfather Avrum-Itzhak liked drinking and his nose was always of purple color. He lived in Novoukrainka separately from his children. When my mother brought him borsch or other food, when she was a girl, he always heated it on his Primus stove: he liked his borsch or tea very hot. He loved my mother and always had a small gift for her when she

came to see him. My great-grandfather was tall and big; he had an upright posture and walked a lot. He rarely took his stick with him. Even in his old age, he had strong teeth and a clear sight. When somebody complained of a toothache, he used to comment that it was hard to imagine that a bone could ache. He read without glasses. He was a self-educated man. He read Russian newspapers and was interested in politics. My great-grandfather died in 1921: he was sitting in an armchair when they found him dead in the morning. He died at the age of 103. He was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Novoukrainka.