

Engelina Goldentracht's Uncle Abram Pavlov



My mother's brother Abram Pavlov. The photo was taken for his student identity card in Ekaterinoslav in 1915. My grandfather, Aron Stravets, believed that it was very important for his children to get an education. All of them had teachers at home; they studied to read and write, French and German, manners and literature, and finished grammar school. They had many books at home: fiction, Russian and foreign books on philosophy and economy. They read books by Gertzen and Maxim Gorky. There were quite a few of Karl Marx's works in their collection of books. There were also other books about revolutionary movements and communist ideas. Those were read with great interest and discussed in the family. The result was that their oldest and favorite

son, Abram, became a revolutionary. After finishing grammar school Abram graduated from the Law Faculty of the University in Ekaterinoslav - he took an external degree. He was a very intelligent and talented man and finished the whole law course in two years. He became a lawyer at the age of 19. But he didn't work - he became overwhelmed with revolutionary ideas. Abram organized an underground Bolshevik unit in Ekaterinoslav that published flyers and a newspaper. Abram's name in the party was Pavlov; it was a pseudonym. Abram corresponded with Bolshevik leaders. He also wrote books about the poor, their hard work and misery, about the revolution and happy life in Russia in the future, and sent them to Maxim Gorky for review. Gorky sent him very warm recommendations. My grandfather was against Abram's revolutionary activities. He argued with him and even stopped communicating with him for some time. My grandmother Matlia was on her husband's side, but she also supported Abram. She even helped her son with the distribution of the newspaper. He also asked her to go to the market square to see whether people were reading his newspaper and flyers. Abram's underground group was about to be exposed to the authorities and, in order to continue their revolutionary activities, they moved from Ekaterinoslav to Kharkov. But there Abram's group was reported, and all of its members were taken to court in 1916. My grandfather found out about the court sitting and came to Kharkov. The judge sentenced Abram and his assistant to execution by hanging. Grandfather was near Abram during the execution. The executioner offered to blindfold them both, but they refused, and grandfather was looking into the eyes of his beloved son until the last minute.