

Jemma Grinberg's Father's Older Brother Yevsey Grinberg



Yevsey Grinberg, my father's older brother. The photo was taken in Simferopol, Ukraine in 1916, when Yevsey was about 18. My grandparents' oldest son, Yevsey was born around 1898, and after finishing grammar school, did not want to follow in his father's steps to become a shoemaker. He was a very educated and intelligent boy.

After grammar school, he went to Simferopol and stayed there with distant relatives. I don't have any information about what he was doing there. We only have this photo which he sent to his mother from Simferopol in 1916. He became a member of the Bolshevik Party and fought against the White Guards during the Civil War of 1913-1918. Yevsey's Party nickname was 'Elegin,' and this soon became his last name. He was an outstanding Party activist, and a high Party official. From the mid-1930s Yevsey was Head of the Belaya Tserkov Party Committee. Belaya Tserkov is a district town not far from Kiev. Yevsey had a daughter named Stella, who was born in 1930. Yevsey's wife died in childbirth in 1935. She suffered a hemorrhage resulting in the blood infection which killed her. Yevsey sent her to the Kremlin Hospital in Moscow, but the doctors there couldn't save her. Stella stayed with some distant relative of her mother's in Moscow and Yevsey returned to Belaya Tserkov. In 1938 when the repression against the most outstanding Party and Soviet activists was at its height, Yevsey was accused of not revealing the names of enemies of the people, which prevented their delivery to the Soviet punitive authorities. Although he was 1st Secretary of the Party's town committee, they didn't allow him to attend the meeting, and closed the door in his face. Yevsey, realizing that he was going to be arrested, came home and shot himself. The farewell message he wrote to his daughter Stella on a photograph in which he appeared with her, read, 'Don't believe anything bad about me. Continue on the road to communism.' Despite the violence and anarchy of his time, until his last moment Yevsey remained a devoted fighter for the cause of communism