

## Bella Kisselgof 's Maternal Great-Grandfather Gedalia Dreitser



This is a photo of Gedalia Dreitser, my maternal great-grandfather, taken in Dnepropetrovsk in 1904. My great-grandfather served as a soldier in the army of Tsar Nikolay for 25 years. My great-grandfather's name was Gedalia Dreitser. He was born in the late 1830s. His parents lived in Novo-

Vitebsk. He was the youngest of many sisters and brothers, but I don't know how many children were in their family. When Gedalia reached the age of 18, he went into the tsarist army as a private. The term of service was 25 years. When it was his time to retire he got a house with furniture and all utilities built in Novo-Vitebsk for him, all paid for by the tsarist treasury. It was a usual thing at that time. The soldiers retired when they were about 43 years old and they were to start their life anew. And the tsarist government made all necessary provisions for them to begin their civil life. They could choose where they wanted to settle down. My great-grandfather chose Novo-Vitebsk to be near his family. . After he came to Novo-Vitebsk he married a young girl named Broha. I don't know any details about how they met or about their wedding. They started having children almost every year or every year and a half. The oldest was their daughter Haislova, born in 1875. Then there was another daughter born in 1877. My grandmother Riva was born in 1878, and in 1879 their daughter Luba (Liebe) was born. The youngest was Sonia, born in 1881.