

Alexander Paskov's Maternal Grandfather Moisei Levitin



My grandfather on my mother's side, Moisei Beniaminovich Levitin, was born in 1865 in the city of Pogar, Bryansk Region.

He finished Hebrew school and was an orthodox Jew. His native tongue was Yiddish.

He lived with his wife and children in the village of Starodub, formerly of the province of Chernigovski (now the Oryol region).

He was a minor trader and handicraftsman. He made honey, wine, and artificial fish fat and other lubricants,

which he then sold at a stall. His wife, Sosya Shaevna, was a housewife. They had five children.

Grandmother died young, in 1914,

when my mother, the youngest in the family, was only eight. They had a one-story stone house with a high porch and a garden.

After Grandmother's death, Grandfather Moisei lived with his oldest son, who was a shop assistant.

After the death of that son in 1920 he lived with other children.

In 1921 the entire family began organizing the Jewish agricultural commune 'Unity' on a farm in Starodub Uyezd.

Grandfather worked there until 1924, until he lost his ability to work at the age of 60.

After this he became dependant on his son Zinovi, the former chairman of Unity. Grandfather died at age 70 in 1935.

I was visiting Starodub at that time. I was only four years old and therefore wasn't brought to the cemetery.

I remember, however, that Grandfather was buried according to Jewish tradition.

I watched everything from the high roof of the house.

This photograph was taken just before Grandfather's death.

I remember him in exactly this way, with sideburns, mustache and beard, and a skullcap on his head.