

Lazar Sherishevskiy With His Father Veniamin Sherishevskiy, Uncle Teviy Sherishevskiy And Cousin Abram Sherishevskiy



From right to left: my uncle Teviy Sherishevskiy, my father's favorite brother, my father Veniamin Sherishevskiy, I, Lazar Sherishevskiy and my cousin Abram Sherishevskiy, who was raised in our family after his father's death and later entered a Navy school in Leningrad. This photo was taken on the occasion of Abram visiting us in Kiev on his vacation in 1935.

My father Veniamin Sherishevskiy was born in 1892. I was named after the my fathers brother, whose name was Lazar (Leizar) Sherishevskiy. He died before the revolution. He had sons Isaac and Abram Sherishevskiy. Since their father died young and their mother could not raise them, they were raised by their uncles. Isaac went to stay with his uncle Samuel in Nizhniy Novgorod region, and Abram stayed with us. Abram finished a vocational school in Kiev. He worked at the shipyard. When he turned 20, he decided to enter a Navy School in Leningrad. My uncle Teviy Sherishevskiy, who had been in exile during the czarist regime and was a respectable revolutionary during the Soviet time, gave him. Abram entered the School in 1933. After finishing it he became a Navy artillery man. He retired in the rank of captain in the early 1960s.

My father's brother Teviy Sherishevskiy was born in 1886. He became fond of revolutionary ideas, when he was young. At the age of 19 he took part in the revolutionary uprising in 1905 [leading ultimately to the 1905 revolution], was arrested and spent 10 years in the czarist exile. Unfortunately, I don't know any details of his exile, but I know that he was involved in hard work in Siberian mines. His living conditions were unbearable and he was in irons, but he never complained about it he said he met wonderful people there driven by revolutionary ideas and ready to give their lives for them. He was released by the revolution of 1917, the newly established Soviet

regime released all political prisoners. He became a member of the association of political exiles. He married Maria Gutman, a Jewish widow. She had two children from her 1st marriage: Misha and Vera Gutman. My uncle raised them. Uncle Teviy died at the age of about 55. The exile had a severe impact on his health condition. He showed me bruises on his legs - traces of irons. He had liver problems. He was a worker.

My father after finishing cheder could study at a gymnasium with his older brothers' support. My father was well educated: he knew Hebrew and Yiddish (they spoke Yiddish in the family), and French and German. After finishing his gymnasium he took an accounting course and went to work as an accountant. In 1913 he was recruited to the czarist army and served in Siauliai at the border of the Russian Empire and Eastern Prussia. When my father returned, he was mobilized to the Red army. My father took part in combat action fighting against the White army near Kiev. He returned home in 1920. My father went to work as an accountant in Mostootriad, a bridge construction and renovation company. Later he went to work at the instrumentation plant 'Leninskaya Forge' where he worked as an accountant till he perished. Papa earned 600 or 700 rubles at the time - this was a good salary and he was a valued employee at his plant. In 1938 during the period of arrests, my father was arrested and executed. I got to know that he was executed only 50 years later.

My father loved literature and taught me to like it. I knew many of Pushkin and Lermontov's works by heart. My father also knew Jewish antiques and Jewish literature. He told me Biblical stories with no reference to religion or Jewish traditions. My father also taught me to read Sholem Aleichem and he knew the works by Mendele Sforim. He was well aware of Russian, Jewish and foreign classical literature. My father taught me culture. Only when I grew up I understood what an interesting man he was.