

Liza Usherenko's Father Moisey Usherenko



My father Moisey Usherenko.

My father Moisey Usherenko was the second son in the family. He was born in the town of Chernobyl in the vicinity of Kiev in 1874.

My father left his parents' home when he was 9 years old to become an apprentice in Kiev. He was working at the fish storage facilities. He didn't study, but he was learning from his skilled tutors. Before WWI my father served in the tsarist army. He was recruited from Kiev along with other young men at the age of 17. He wasn't recruited during the war, because he had 3 children to provide for. My father had three children in his first marriage, but only two survived. My father didn't get any profession. He worked as a laborer his whole life. He didn't have an opportunity to

study. He always had to work to provide for himself and his family. Yakov and Sonia are my paternal brother and sister. His first wife, a Jew, was a very poor but pretty seamstress in Kiev. He was very much in love with her and wasn't looking for a marriage of convenience like his brothers. He married this girl, but she died when giving birth to her third child. My father had to raise Yakov and little Sonia.

When I was born my father was working at the fish storage facility of Falkovich. Falkovich owned a two-storied house in 42, Verhniy Val street at Podol. My parents lived in the deep basement of the house. Their landlord's family lived on the first floor, and there was also another family renting few rooms. My father worked as a clerk, loader and cooper for them. He also went with his master to purchase fish in Astrakhan and Revel. He was a great fish expert. He couldn't write, but he could calculate well. My father told me that he was enthusiastic about the revolution of 1917 at first, but in due time he became more reserved about it. My father was always exploited - before and after the revolution. He was the most honest and decent man, but he was no good at making money. He used to say "I work my fingers to the bones, but is it my fault that they pay me only 30 rubles?" My parents loved each other, but they did have arguments, because of their financial situation.

Papa worked as a shop assistant at a grocery store and returned home very tired. But still, he made a bench at the gate and always grew flowers in the yard. He always enjoyed doing something for the community.