

Research query:Maiming to Avoid Russian Draft?

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I am exploring the question of whether the deliberate maiming of draft-eligible Jewish boys to avoid conscription into the Russian army in the last decades of the 19th century actually took place (i.e. cutting off a finger or crushing a foot) or whether it was a powerful myth within the Jewish community. Are any of you familiar with any rabbinic responsa discussing this, incidental mention in a “saving from conscription” Chasidic story, or critical article on this issue?

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