

Aniuta And Maurycy Drutowski In Venice



I don't know who took this photograph. It shows Grandma Aniuta Drutowska, nee Imass, and Grandpa Maurycy Drutowski in Venice, Italy in the 1930s. I remember Grandma and Grandpa Drutowski, my mother's parents, well. I was their single, beloved grandchild and that gave me, of course, many privileges. Grandma and Grandpa were wholly assimilated. I don't recall them observing the Jewish traditions. I don't know if my grandparents spoke Yiddish. Grandpa was born in 1869 in Czestochowa as Moszek, but he always used the name Maurycy. He went to a Russian school. His hometown, Czestochowa, was under Russian rule at the time. It wasn't a Jewish school

but a state-run one, and with a classical curriculum, with Greek and Latin classes. Grandpa, according to his own words, was, however, a very good mathematician. After graduation he studied in Zurich, Switzerland, at the technical university there, and graduated as a mechanical engineer. It was there he met his future wife, my grandmother, who lived in Zurich at a boarding school for young ladies. Grandma's name was Aniuta, nee Imass. She was from Chisinau. She was born in 1877 - she was eight years younger than Grandpa. My grandparents settled in Lodz after they got married. Their last apartment was at 25 Radwanska Street. They had two children: a daughter named Czeslawa, my mother, born in 1897, and a son named Leon, born in 1899. Grandpa was quite tall, and he had a moustache. He was often mistaken for a nobleman because of his dignified appearance, that and his name of course. Grandma was rather small, quite thin, you could call her petite. Perhaps it had something to do with the angina pectoris she suffered from. Apart from the education she'd earned in Switzerland she didn't go to any school. She never worked. Grandma Drutowski died on 7th November 1940 and was buried in the cemetery on Bracka Street, the same one where we later buried Grandpa. Her funeral was my first exposure to the cemetery and the ceremonies. I don't recall any prayers being said. Grandpa died in the Lodz ghetto on 1st April 1942 and was buried in the Jewish cemetery on Bracka Street. Ghetto Jews were buried in a specially allotted part of the cemetery but my grandparents are buried outside that area - I don't know why. I don't remember the cause of his death but he'd probably got pneumonia, and he also suffered from Graves-Basedow disease. The more important cause of his death was, however, the fact Grandma had died a year earlier and he couldn't bear it.