

Jerzy Pikielny Out For A Walk With His Grandfather, Maurycy Drutowski



I don't know who took this picture. It shows me out on a walk in Lodz with Grandpa Maurycy Drutowski, my mother's father, sometime in the 1920s. 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. I often went to see them and stayed the night. Grandma and Grandpa were wholly

assimilated. I don't recall them observing the Jewish traditions. 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. When he arrived in Lodz Grandpa started work at Rosenblat's Cotton Garments Factory on Karol Street, now Zwirki, as head of the mechanical department. In 1908 Grandpa Maurycy and his brother-in-law Jozef, whom he'd had come to Lodz, opened the Drutowski & Imass Mechanical Repair Workshop at 255 Piotrkowska Street. On 11th April 1924 the company was renamed the Drutowski & Imass Electric Appliances Factory. They manufactured things including electric meters, which were widely used in Lodz. That I can confirm myself, because I worked as an electrician in the ghetto, and while it was usually repairing engines in the workshop, I did sometimes find those meters in people's apartments. At the 1929 Universal National Exposition in Poznan the company received two silver medals. Simultaneously the partners ran a technical office at 111 Piotrkowska Street. Following some arguments with his brother-in-law Grandpa left the company in March 1931. 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. Grandpa liked to play bridge very much. He used to go to a café next to our house at 8 Nawrot Street. The café was located on the corner of Piotrkowska and Nawrot streets and was the property of Mr. Piatkowski. Grandpa had a seat kept for him there. Everyone knew you could always meet him there, or telephone and ask the waiter, 'Is Mr. Drutowski there?' I remember going there with him. He'd drink his small latte and I'd have a cream filled meringue. Grandpa was always spoiling me and was very proud of me. Grandpa also had good relations with the streetcar drivers. A streetcar would approach the house on Radwanska Street, slow to a stop, and Grandpa would step out. He knew how to talk with the drivers.