

Dennise Drutowska



This picture shows Dennise, the first wife of my uncle Lolek (proper name Leon Drutowski). It was taken somewhere in Belgium in the 1930s. Uncle Lolek was two years younger than my mom. He was born in 1899 in Lodz. As soon as the Legions were formed, Lolek, who was still underage, ran away to the army and so Grandpa went to look for him. He found him brushing horses in some unit. Lolek was a co-founder of the Polish scouting organization in Lodz. The troop was named after Tadeusz Kosciuszko and Lolek was its scoutmaster. He probably served in the army in the 1920s. First he studied at Warsaw University of Technology and later at the mechanical and electrical faculty in Liege, Belgium. After graduation he returned for a short time and started to work at his father and uncle's factory. But, just like his father, Lolek didn't get on well with Uncle Jozef and

soon went back to Belgium. In Belgium he met his first wife, Dennise. At first he worked in Cologne, Germany, and commuted there from Liege by motorbike every week, coming back home for Sundays. Every time he crossed the German-Belgian border the Germans would halt him and order a personal search. He said that later he'd head straight for the control point himself. Later on Lolek owned an oil boiler factory in Belgium. After the outbreak of the war he left Belgium and lived somewhere in France, in the unoccupied zone. His departure was partly caused by the fact that Dennise's family strongly opposed their marriage, mainly because of his Jewish origins - something which I learned of from Uncle Lolek's second wife. Lolek was only intending to be away for a short time. Apparently, when he returned in 1944 or 1945 Dennise was already with someone else.