

Maurycy Drutowski



I don't know who took this photograph. It shows my maternal grandfather, Maurycy Drutowski. It was taken in Lodz in the 1930s. 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. As far back as I can remember, Grandpa never actually had a job. He was, however, an active expert for the Polish Mechanical Engineers' Association, an expert legal witness in the fields of mechanics and technical appliances, and a member of that Association. 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. 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.