

**BERLINER** Natan Dawid (1883-1943), financier, Jewish and general local government activist. He was born on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1883 in Częstochowa, the son of Berek and Gitla Chana Gizela née Berliner. He was the head and co-owner of → Joachim Weksler's *Kantor Wymiany* [Currency Exchange] at I Aleja 6. He lived at ul. Szkolna (Dąbrowskiego) 12.

Prior to 1914, he was on the board (he was the cashier) of the Częstochowa branch of the "Gemilas Chesed" *Tow. Wzajemnej Pomocy Kupców i Rzemieślników Żydów* [Mutual Aid Society for Jewish Merchants and Craftsmen], with its offices at ul. Mikołajewska 11, now ul. Katedralna 10.

Over many years, he was an active board member of the *Tow. Żydowskich Szkół Średnich (TŻSzŚ)* [Association of Jewish Secondary Schools] in Częstochowa, which ran the Jewish *Gimnazjum*. His daughters also attended this school. In 1927, he joined the TŻSzŚ committee to promote a building plan for the *Gimnazjum*. He soon became a member of the Construction Committee, a position he held until 1938.

In the 1930s, he belonged to the "Achiezer" *Tow. Wzajemnej Pomocy* [Mutual Aid Society]. In 1939, he was a board member of the Częstochowa *Gmina* [Jewish Community Council]. In May 1939, on the list of the United Jewish Electoral Bloc, he stood for the Częstochowa City Council - however, he was unsuccessful.

On 16<sup>th</sup> September 1939, he participated in a meeting of Jewish communal activists, convened by the local Gestapo's Commissar for Jewish Affairs, who appointed him as a member of a six-person representation. When, on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1939, at the order of the German *Stadthauptmann*, it was converted into a 24-member Council of Elders (*Judenrat*), he became a member of its executive, serving as treasurer. Until the liquidation of the ghetto (in the autumn of 1942), he played a key role in the Council of Elders' financial economy in the allocation and payment of funds to communal organisations. The underground magazine "Rasta" accused him of personal gain in these operations. From 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1942 (during the great deportation from the Częstochowa ghetto), he served on the truncated Council of Elders and worked at the temporary camp in the "*Metalurgia*" factory. He was later in the "Small Ghetto", but no longer played any significant role. On 20<sup>th</sup> March 1943, he perished in the mass execution, at the Jewish cemetery, of representatives of the Jewish intelligentsia. He was buried in a mass grave (28–31 III).

His wife was Rała née Gotlib (26<sup>th</sup> December 1882 Częstochowa – 20<sup>th</sup> January 1939 Częstochowa), the daughter of Dawid and Hinda Laja née Berliner. She was a long-term board member of the “Ezra” Jewish Women’s Circle. She occupied herself with helping the poor. She was attributed with dedication, modesty and other moral values.

The Berliner couple had two daughters - Dobra (31<sup>st</sup> October 1913 Częstochowa -) and Halina (15<sup>th</sup> August Kraków -) married and, after the war, lived in Israel.

Brener, *Widersztand*, pp. 12, 13; Paszkowski, *Budynek Żydowskiego Gimnazjum*, p. 159. – Kromołowski, *Wspomnienia*, p. 257. “Częstochower Cajtung” 1926 No. 54 p. 1, 1939, No. 4, pp. 1 and 5 (regarding his wife); “Nasz Głos Powszechny” 1936, No. 3, p. 4. – *Handlowiec. Kalendarz 1913*, p. 205; *Handlowiec. Kalendarz 1914*, p. 313. - APCz, AmCz 8803; MCz, Zaśw. rab. No. 7 dated 29<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

**Wiesław Paszkowski**