

Henryk Markusfeld

The city's greatest philanthropist was Henryk Markusfeld. He had a great entrepreneurial spirit in the field of industry and commerce, as well as in communal life. He was a wealthy Jew, the owner of an array of factories and buildings, and also a modest man, who would have dealings with any individual, from small to great.

There was no welfare institution of which he was not the founder, honorary president and the one who contributed colossal sums [towards it]. Henryk Markusfeld was the founder, builder and honorary president of the following institutions:

- the Crafts School for the training of Jewish professional workers at ul Garncarska 8,
- the Jewish Hospital in Zawodzie,
- *Hachnuses Orchim* at ul Garncarska 69,
- the orphanage in Ostatni Grosz,
- founder of the Jewish Craftsmen's Union, the Small Craftsmen's¹ Union, the Industrialists' and Merchants' Union and the municipal Credit Association;
- honorary president of the city's firefighters' organisation, the Zionist Organisation, Keren Kayemeth and Keren Ha'Yesod, and the Gymnastics-Sporting Association;
- founder of Machzikei Ha'Das at ul Nadrzeczna 50,
- donor to the [municipal] Study-Hall and main donor to the large German Synagogue on ul Wilsona and the *mikveh* on ul. Garibaldiego;
- honorary president of the Scouting Organisation - to *Ha'Shomer Ha'Tzair*, he gave over the grounds in his building on Aleja Wolności, where they held their sporting events, *medurot* and *asifot ha'ken*².

He was also co-founder of the Christian *Świętej Rodziny*³ cathedral. [Poor] guests always ate at his table and, when he walked down the street, he gave alms to Jews and non-Jews without exception.

During the First World War, he purchased bread, paying any price, and distributed it amongst the indigent Jewish population. He [also] participated in the operation to supply potatoes and, wherever any aid or monetary support was needed, he was there with an open hand.

During the pogrom in 1919, when a false accusation was invented, to the effect that Jews had killed a *Hallerczyk*, he offered a colossal sum of money to [whoever] would show him the murdered *Hallerczyk*. By so doing, he unmasked the pogrom agitators.

There was not a festive occasion or function in town to which he was not invited and in which he [did not] participate, within the boundaries of his possibilities. For many years, he was also president of the Jewish *Kehilla*.

¹ [TN: As we have found no mention of this union in other sources, "Small Craftsmen" may be a misprint of "Retailers", which are two similar words in Yiddish/German.]

² [TN: Heb., "bonfires" and "meetings of the cell", respectively; in modern Hebrew (viz. Sephardic pronunciation) in the Latin-character original.]

³ [TN: The Basilica of the Holy Family, which is located on ul. Krakowska.]

He died suddenly of a heart attack during the Ten Days of Atonement⁴. His communal activity and merits found their expression at his funeral - the entire population took part - both Jews and Christians, all the Jewish institutions, the firefighters' organisation and also church-related societies.

On the *shloishim*⁵, the *Częstochower Maggid*, [Reb] Josef-Szymon Koblenz, delivered a eulogy and said, "Markus-*felt!*" (Markusfeld⁶). During Nazi rule, when the Jewish cemetery was destroyed, they obliterated his glorious tombstone.

⁴ [TN: The ten days from 1st Tishrei (Rosh Ha'Shanah) and 10th Tishrei (Yom Kippur); Mr Markusfeld died on 5th Tishrei 5682 (7th October 1921).]

⁵ [TN: Heb., "Thirty", viz. the thirtieth day after the burial.]

⁶ [TN: This is explained more clearly in the book "Czenstochow" (1958), in the article "The Jewish Kehilla in Czenstochowa", p.11: "At his eulogy in the Synagogue, one of the municipal preachers said, 'He was a seldom seen Jew, this Markusfeld. Yes, gentlemen, Markus – felt [Yid; is missing] (a word play on his surname) – and the more shall we miss him, as time goes by!'"]