

## Eli Alebarde

### B



*Eli Alebarde*

[He was] born in 1880 in Tomaszów Mazowiecki [and], presumably, perished at the end of the summer of 1944 in Warsaw.

He studied at the *yeshiva* in Łódź and was ordained as a rabbi very early on. Sitting by the Talmud, at the same time, he took an interest in the Revolutionary Movement and became a supporter of the Bund.

Following his nuptials, Eli Alebarde settled in Nowo Radomsko, where he had a large colonial goods shop. Despite being affluent and bourgeois, he dressed in orthodox garb and, having a wife and five children, this important burgher remained tied to the Bund all his life. He was loyal in the good revolutionist years and remained so also in the difficult, dark years of reactionism.

In Tsarist times, he carried out the hardest and most dangerous work for the Movement. He was active in the clandestine military organisation and engaged in smuggling illegal literature, weapons and revolutionary activists across the border. His house was a rendezvous point for the latter. This unique revolutionary also arranged the crossing of the border by the delegates to the Bund's 8<sup>th</sup> Convention, which was to be held in the summer of 1914 in Vienna, but did not take place due to the outbreak of the First World War.

During the period of the Revolution (1905-6), on *Shabbosim*, inside his prayer-shawl, he brought a sack of revolutionary communiqués for the soldiers at the Nowo Radomsko garrison. Although he was externally indistinguishable from other orthodox Jews, he made no secret of his affiliation to the Bund and of his heresy. He was active in local communal life and aided the needy.

During the last years prior to the Second World War, Alebarde lived in Częstochowa. When the Germans occupied the city, the old revolutionary put himself completely at the service of the underground Bundist Movement. In connection to the arrest of a Polish woman named Maria Szczęsna, who was carrying communiqués and instructions from the underground Bund's Central Committee, other arrests took place and the Gestapo also came to take away Alebarde. They were unable to find him. The Gestapo demanded of the *Judenrat* that they present him. A session of the Częstochowa Bundist Committee decided, in his presence, not to hand the desired victim over to the Gestapo. He bid his family goodbye and was taken to Nowo Radomsko. From his previous hometown, he set off on foot for Piotrków and the local comrades there saw to his journey to Warsaw, where employment was arranged for him in a soup-kitchen.

In the Warsaw Ghetto, he lived under the name *Alpe* and was connected with the underground Bundist Movement. He managed to remain there until the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising (April 1943). Afterwards, he lived on the "Aryan side". Thanks to the underground Polish Socialist Party (PPS), he managed to survive amongst the Poles to the end of summer 1944 - when the Polish [Warsaw] Uprising ensued, which lasted two months. In that period, all traces were lost of this unique man and revolutionary.