The Szaja family was considered one of Częstochowa’s oldest families. Mordche “Dreksler” [lathe-turner], the father of the Szajas, ran a large factory with some fifty workers. The factory was run in a primitive manner, according to the circumstances in those times. Some of the workers ate and slept in the owner’s house, and his wife - “Die Mutter” [The Mother], as she was called - took care of them.

Mordche Szaja himself was a skilled professional and he endeavoured to make his children into fine specialists. He encouraged his five sons to open their own factories and took promises from them to the effect that they would never become partners or compete against each other - for only thus would they be able to live in peace. And indeed - the eldest son, Icyk’l, manufactured pins, rings and medals; Herman - spectacles and toys; Szajusz¹ - cigarette cases and lighters; Motusz² - quill pens and quill holders, and Berisz - thimbles. They did, in fact, remain friends and they discussed the running of their factories together and helped one another.

The Szajas employed hundreds of Jewish workers.

Only two of the Szajas emigrated to America. One of them is Mojsze (Morris) Szaja, the writer of these lines, a son of Icyk’l Szaja, who has been in New York since 1920. Here, he married a young lady from Częstochowa - Sarah Win, a daughter of Grojnem Win. The other son [of Icyk’l, Kaufman Szaja,] married [Szymia-Lajb] Mass’ daughter Nettie [Nacha].

So far, there have been no reports from Częstochowa of anyone of the multi-branched Szaja family having been saved from annihilation.

¹ [TN: Diminutive form of Szaja (Heb. Yeshayahu).]
² [TN: As this name is invariably used as a diminutive form of Mordche – the father’s own name – it cannot be that the son was also named thus. There are several other sons of Mordche Szaja in the archival and genealogical records who are not mentioned here, but none had a name similar to Motusz.]
³ [TN: Although spelt here with a P, his sons Sidney and Nathan appear in the “Częstochowians in the Fight Against Fascism” section as “Sharf.”]
⁴ [TN: The words “in Chicago” and the sentence following them were printed out of place in the original, at the beginning of the next page.]
Mendel Szuchter, the child of a poor cobbler from ul. Garnarska in Częstochowa, with his spiritual development, education and his place in the communal life of the Jewish masses in Częstochowa - and afterwards in America - occupied the foremost position amongst his brothers, comrades, friends and sympathisers.

His name became the symbol of idealism, camaraderie, probity to his people, and faithfulness to his ideal to the last minute of his life.

In the midst of all of life’s currents and storms, which swept him to the right and to the left - from the SS to the general Poalei Zion Party, [then] to the left-wing Poalei Zion and finally to the Communist Party - he remained the same - a Prometheus who was bound to the ground of Jewish life, the dreamer of the ghetto, and the fighter for the existence of the Jewish people and for a new, free and healthy Jewish life.

He was the archetype of the Jewish masses, who broke free from the asphyxia and crowdedness of the ghetto to a place on God’s earth, as equals among all the nations of the world.

**

Mendel Szuchter was born in 1890 or 1891. His father was already an older man by then, and his mother died when he was still a boy. He was truly a child of loneliness and want.

Already back in his younger years, Mendel began to learn tailoring. In 1905, when he was fifteen or sixteen, he became one of the pioneers of the SS workers group which Josef Kruk and Icek Gurski had organised. That same year he travelled to London. A year later, he returned to Częstochowa.

In 1908, he was arrested during a police raid on the SS [Party’s] printing press and, in 1909, he was sent away to Siberia. He managed to escape from there and, shortly afterwards, arrived in America and settled in Chicago. Here, he started working in cloaks and, with his armour, threw himself into the activity of the [Cloak-Makers] Union, where he became one of the leaders.

During this same period, he was also active in the American ST [Socialist-Territorialist] organisation, and was one of the first pioneers of the Yiddish radical schools founded by the SS and Poalei Zion. Following the Balfour Declaration, he, along with the majority of the SS organisation in America, joined Poalei Zion – and, after the schism, he went over to the left-wing Poalei Zion and became one of its leaders.

The difficult state of the Jewish masses in Europe, following the First World War and the pogroms in Ukraine and Poland, influenced him to cast himself into the work of organising public opinion in America against pogroms and persecutions. He became one of the most prominent activists of the aid work and occupied a respected position in the People’s Relief Committee. In 1920, he was sent as a delegate to a relief conference in Berlin and visited Poland, bringing aid for a large number of people and communal institutions.

His visit in Europe, where he encountered the misfortune which the First World War had left and the need and suffering of the masses face to face, made a profound impression upon him and pushed him to the leftist faction of the Labour movement. He became one of the organisers of the Jewish Workers Aid Committee [?] and a warm supporter of the Soviet Union. Jewish colonisation in the Soviet Union and the proclamation of Jewish autonomy in the Birobidzhan region inspired him. He was one of the founders of ICOR and a member of the national executive [board].
Yet along with the communal work, he did not stop educating himself. He entered the University of Chicago. At first, he intended to study agronomy, but he later studied law (jurisprudence) - until he graduated in 1924 as a lawyer. During the last years of his study, he was also a teacher in a Yiddish school in a little town near Chicago.

As a lawyer, his popularity as a communal activist and a fighter for the workers increased from day to day. He became the advocate and fighter for the rights of the masses, the trade union, and every single individual in need of Jewish assistance.

In those years, the Jewish masses leaned more towards the leftist movement. Mendel Szuchter, like hundreds of others, went with the flow and, in 1927, he officially joined the Communist Party.

His reputation and name, as a communal activist and loyal comrade, grew along with the waves of the leftist movement. But, in 1929, there came the critical turning point and the beginning of his tragic end.

During the period of the Arab attacks on the Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel, he was to make a public appearance at a mass meeting in order to justify the Communist Party's views on the events there. Yet he refused to do so and was, therefore, banished from the party. As a result, he lost all the communal support and began to fall from his social pedestal.

Nevertheless, he was later re-admitted into the party. Mentally and physically broken, he spent a few months in a sanatorium, ceased to practise as a lawyer and was no longer able to regain his strength.

The last lifeline\(^5\), which he hoped to clutch onto, was his activity as a field-organiser of the ICOR. When he was in a small town near New York, he felt unwell in the street and was taken to hospital, where he died shortly afterwards.

His name and memory as a beloved comrade, who always shone with idealism, comradely love and boundless loyalty to his people will never be forgotten.

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\(^5\) [TN: Rettungsbrett (salvation-plank) in the original, onto which a shipwrecked victim clutches for his life; the expression is also used in Polish, in the form of "ostatnią deską ratunku"];

\(^6\) [TN: The following four individuals were full siblings, as seen from the Częstochowa archives, even if the first three appear here as sons of Mordka and Molly, while the fourth’s parents appear as Mordka-Bejnisz and Matte.]

\(^7\) [TN: This is relatively speaking, as Rozprza is next to Piotrków, at a distance of more than 70 kilometres from Częstochowa.]

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Schumer, Joe
(Szmulowicz, Godel)
(Detroit)

Son of Mordka and Molly; born in Częstochowa in 1906. Came to America in 1921. He is a member of the Jewish National [Workers] Alliance in Detroit.

Schumer, Sam
(Szmulowicz, Szmul)
(Detroit)

Son of Mordka and Molly; born in Częstochowa in 1921. He is a member of the Jewish National [Workers] Alliance in Detroit.

Schumer (Szmulowicz), Szulim
(Chicago)

Son of Mordka-Bejnisz and Matte [Machla née Gruc;] born in Częstochowa in 1901. He married Gitla Gryc. Came to America in 1923. He is a member of the Chenstochover Educational Society in Chicago.

Szwarc, Chaim-Lajb

Born in Rozprza, near Częstochowa, on 15th August 1883. This date, however, is not certain because, in those times, parents neglected registering [births] at the correct moment, due to a variety of reasons.

But Chaim-Lajb’s origins were in Częstochowa. He was born in Rozprza due to the fact that his father Awigdor Brukarz (Paver), just when Chaim-Lajb’s mother was in the last months [of pregnancy], was paving the Rozprzer Rebbe’s courtyard and she travelled there to bring Chaim-Lajb into this world. His bris was, in fact, held at the Rebbe’s court.

Szuldynger, [Aron-]Towja
(Detroit)

Son of Dawid and Fajgla, he was born on 15th September 1901 in Częstochowa and arrived in America in 1920. He is a member of the Chenstochover Rajoner Verein in Detroit.

Schumer⁵, Jack
(Szmulowicz, Jankiel)
(Detroit)

Son of Mordka-Bejnisz and Molly [Machla née Gruc]; born in Częstochowa in 1903. Came to America in 1922. He is a member of the Jewish National [Workers] Alliance in Detroit.

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[1] [TN: Rettungsbrett (salvation-plank) in the original, onto which a shipwrecked victim clutches for his life; the expression is also used in Polish, in the form of “ostatnią deską ratunku.”]

[2] [TN: The following four individuals were full siblings, as seen from the Częstochowa archives, even if the first three appear here as sons of Mordka and Molly, while the fourth’s parents appear as Mordka-Bejnisz and Matte.]

[3] [TN: This is relatively speaking, as Rozprza is next to Piotrków, at a distance of more than 70 kilometres from Częstochowa.]
Chaim-Lajbe’le comes from the Zygas family. One of his uncles was a Cantonist. Part of this family, as well as their brothers - who had received the name Bruder at an investigation in a Russian customs office - emigrated in the 1880s to America, where this offshoot of the clan branched out. This was during the period when the Częstochowa Chasam Sopher Shule and the Young Men’s Society were founded in New York. In the years 1904-05, additional members of the Zygas family came to America, brought over by their relatives and parents. The latter were carried by their children with great respect and deference. Of those who remained in Poland, to this day, there is no trace of life.

Only one - Hercke Zygas, Mendel’s son - was saved, brought over to America by the Jewish Labour Committee and is currently in New York.

Chaim-Lajbe’le grew up in the streets of Częstochowa. Ul. Nadrzeczna was where, already in his childhood years, he displayed his mischievousness and agility. He was given the nickname “Frog”. Aged five, Chaim-Lajbe’le began attending cheder. His melamed was Icek Krasser, a strict, stern Jew. But Chaim-Lajbe’le did not study for long with this Rebbe. Instead of sitting in cheder, he went about in the streets, in the Old Market [Stary Rynek] and hid there from the bahelfer.

This led his father to take him away from Icek Melamed and to bring him to Towja Melamed at the new Talmud Torah [public cheder]. But Towja Melamed had no time to study with the children and Chaim-Lajbe’le, in the meantime, helped the Christian potter make clay whistles. At the age of eight, Chaim-Lajbe’le became a bahelfer for another melamed - Reb Awreme’le. But here, too, he exhibited great mischievousness and got up to a variety of pranks. Aged eleven, he began working in the factories of Mordche Dreksler and Godl Wajnberg for forty-five kopeks a week, for a working day from six in the morning to nine at night.

In 1896, not yet thirteen years old, Chaim-Lajbe’le began working for a house painter, Aron Goldberg. After a year of work, he was already able to paint a house and, by the age of fourteen, was already earning three roubles a week. Shortly afterwards, a master took him to work over in Będzin. Due to an injustice, which Chaim-Lajbe’le suffered from the master regarding his wages, and as a result of the quarrel that arose from it, he stole across the Austrian border and, after a short wandering, came to Kraków. Here, he was detained by the police as being a suspicious-looking character, but was freed following an inquiry with Częstochowa. Despite the harsh winter, he once more set out – this time towards Vienna. On the way, he worked briefly in Blitzi [Bielisko-Biała], after which he arrived in Vienna.

He returned to Częstochowa for Rosh Hashana. Permeated with socialist and liberal ideas from the other side of the border, Chaim-Lajbe’le began seeking out this type of literature. He first headed to Henech Lipades’ [bookshop], where he met Aba Kaufman - his friend to this day. Chaim-Lajbe’le also began to write songs. This kept him from being harassed by the Częstochowa “Good Boys” [criminals]. Besides that, he was also supported by his friends Josef-Hersz Grajer, Kasriel “Stodoła”, Jakow-Ber Zylber, Lipa Goldblum and Mordche’le the Baker.

Chaim-Lajbe’le began to take an interest in Yiddish theatre. He would hold rehearsals and actually put on theatre in gardens. He brought over actors - Piurnik, Ciuwa the Yellow and Akselrod. He then began to write, read and paint. With the money he earned, he supported his ailing father.

In 1904, he married Mojsze Poznański’s daughter Udla and settled in Żarki. Shortly afterwards, he returned to Częstochowa. He led the first painters’ strike and won it. That same year, when the Russo-Japanese War broke out, Chaim-Lajbe’le fled to his wife’s uncle in Katowice. But he was only there for a few days and travelled on - this time to Mährisch-Ostrau [Ostrava, Czechia] (then Austria). Here, he was taken in by a committee for immigrants and, after a short while, he became an involved activist. He helped many of his own landsleit who passed through there on their way to England, America, etc.

However, he did not remain long in Mährisch-Ostrau and, in 1905, he arrived in London. Here, he went through rough days. But, by chance, he came upon several landsleit Stodoła (Rotbard), Jakow-Ber Silver, Dawid Gotlib and others. He began working for Gostyński (a brother of the Gostyński from Częstochowa), at first earning three and later eight shillings a day, and he brought his friend Dawid Gotlib into this work. Although there were already Częstochower landsleit in London at the time - such as Wolf-

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8 [TN: His mother, Brajndla née Zygas, was the daughter of Salomon Zygas and Perla née Dow or Dof.]
9 [TN: A child who was abducted by the Russian authorities and brought up as a military cadet, to go on to serve for a compulsory 25 years in the Tsar’s army.]
10 [TN: The melamed’s assistant in charge of taking the children to cheder in the morning etc. “Belfer” in Polish.]
11 [TN: His mother, Brajndla née Zygas, was the daughter of Salomon Zygas and Perla née Dow or Dof.]
12 [TN: A child who was abducted by the Russian authorities and brought up as a military cadet, to go on to serve for a compulsory 25 years in the Tsar’s army.]
13 [TN: The likely meaning is that – as one who was considered a bit of a rover – were it not for his lyrical inclinations, the local Jewish criminal elements would have tried to pull him into their line of work.]
Jankel Szacher’s son Abram, Abram-Ber Mursyn, Rywek16 Kantor and others - Chaim-Lajbe’le bonded with others and, in 1906, he was one of the co-founders of a Jewish socialist club. Among other activities that the club conducted, it also presented theatrical performances.

In 1906, Chaim-Lajbe’le travelled to Canada. He arrived in Toronto, where he found his friends Mojsze-Dawid and Aron - Częstochower painters. For a short time, he worked in Toronto and, in 1907, he came to New York. At the beginning, he went through very hard times there. Initially, he worked as a bread delivery man and took part in a strike for the inclusion of the bread couriers into the Bakers Union - and was one of those who led the strike to victory.

In 1908, he met Aba Kaufman and, together with him, founded the Arbeiter-Ring Branch 261. In 1914, he was one of the founders of the Częstochover Aid Society and, in 1916, he became its chairman. In 1922, together with L. Szymkowicz, he went as a delegate to Częstochowa, tasked with examining the state of the I.L. Peretz Yiddish school and kindergarten.

After 1925, he moved to Chicago. Here, he was one of the co-founders of the Częstochover Aid Society. He was also in Detroit, on a mission from the Relief Committee in New York.

In 1931, he relocated to Los Angeles. Here, he started his literary activity at the Arbeiter-Ring and18 he was very active in creating a drama section. Along with Joe Szytbel, Dawid and Jochewed Israel, Harry Grauman, Fefer and Lena Szwarc19, he was one of the co-founders of a relief committee for political arrestees in Częstochowa. Later, Dr Zanvil Klein also arrived. The foundation meeting took place on 10th May 1933. He also took part in founding the Food Workers Union [?]. He was arrested for organising a strike, but was released after the trial. He and his wife Laja were active in founding the Częstochover [and Vicinity] Aid Society in Los Angeles. In 1936, he visited Honolulu and wrote a series of songs. Eight weeks later, he returned to [sic from?] Honolulu.

In 1938, he became one of the directors of the Central Jewish Committee20 and became the editor of the newspaper Town Fair Noyes [News].

In 1939, he settled in Portland, here, he continued composing songs. In 1941, he was once more in Chicago. Nowadays, he lives with his [second] wife Laja and his daughter Beverly in Seattle, Washington. Although far away from the Częstochower landsieit, he is nevertheless connected to his hometown with the most tender feelings. He dedicates much of his literary work to it and supports the Częstochowers in any way he can.

Szwarc, Beverly20

Daughter of Chaim-Lajb and Laja [née Malarski]; born in 1930 [in Chicago]. She has completed high school and is now studying in college. Beverly Szwarc shows great lyrical talents. One of her poems is Rosh Hashanah, [which was] written in English and translated [to Yiddish] by Ch.L. Szwarc21:

I
Today is a holiday the world over,
In every heart – is the tremble [of]
Rosh Hashanah;
From every street streams my people,
Wishing “May you be inscribed for
good year!”

II
Pearl-like tears emerge
From a nation fighting for its land;
The testimony remains to this day –
The Kotel Western Wall.

III
The land of milk and honey,
In the land of my sacred ancestors;
In the land where blood has been split,
Slaughtered, burnt without mercy.

Szwarc, Maurice

(pen-name: Maurice Swan)

Son of Louis Szwarc; born in New York on 19th January 1908.

He joined the American army on 22nd May 1943. He was assigned to write the biographies of military leaders for Washington. In 1944, he was appointed editor of the army newspaper Wings. He held this post for seven months. In addition, Maurice Swan [also] wrote the editorials in the paper Keep ‘Em Flying and various articles for the paper Alert.

Maurice Swan’s wife is Nora, an artist, the daughter of a renowned musician [sic painter], Leo Birchansky, and Betty Birchansky [née Tannenbaum], the former headmistress of a secondary school in Odessa.

Maurice Swan was the literary editor of the [paper] News Press in Santa Barbara from 1937 to 1939. He was concurrently editor for the publisher J.F. Rowney in that same city. He was subsequently called to the New York
Times to become the literary critic. He held this position until he was called up to the army.

Maurice Schwartz
with his wife and child

He has recently completed a historical novel [entitled] Margin of Ruin, which is soon to be published.

Świderski, Zanwel
Son of Jakub and Dobra [Goldsztajn]; born in Sieradz (Poland) [c.1859]. He died at the age of seventy-eight, two days before Yom Kippur of 1937, in Częstochowa.

Świderski, Udla

Daughter of Lipman and Faige Lurys [née Wilczek]; born in Praszka (Poland) [c.1856]. Died at the age of eighty-one in 1938, in Częstochowa.

Sztajer, Mordche
(Chicago)

Son of Dawid and Ruchla [née Flatau]; born in Częstochowa in 1887. Came to America in 1911. His son Henry David [Shteier] served in the American army.

Sztencel, Herszlik

The father of Mordche and Kopl. He died in Częstochowa in 1927.

Sztencel, Chana-Itta née Gold

The mother of Mordche and Kopl. She died in Częstochowa in 1927.

Sztencel, Kopl

Son of Herszlik and Chana-Itta [née Gold]; born in Częstochowa on 5th July 1884. Came to America in 1911. He is a member of the Independent Lodsher [Benevolent] Society in Brooklyn.

Sztencel, Mordche-Josef

Son of Herszlik and Chana-Itta; born in Częstochowa on 4th May 1877. In 1902, he married Ruchla Gilksman. Arrived in America on 31st July 1914. He is a member of the Independent Lodsher [Benevolent] Society in Brooklyn. Their son Hyman was a sergeant in the American army.

22 [TN: It is unclear whether the latter is a middle name or a new surname.]
23 [TN: Viz. Łódź; we have rendered the spelling as it appears in English-language historical sources.]
Sztencel, A. 24

(A Częstochower poet celebrates an Oyneg Shabbes25 in London’s Whitechapel)

“It would be a sin for me were I not to give any special honours to the few, numbered individuals in London, who toil, with a tragic drudgery, to keep a literary candle burning in the darkness of Jewish life in England.

One such touching Yiddish toiler is the beloved A. Sztencel. He is both a “Don Quijote” and a lamed-vuvnik26 of Yiddish. He is the water carrier and the wood chopper27 of the Yiddish word in London. He is extremely moving in his love for Yiddish, zealousness for Yiddish, and, being a poet, his misery for Yiddish. [He is] a believer in Yiddish literature, yet, being a poet, he senses the tragedy of the Yiddish language.

With great efforts and financial hardship, he publishes the “Loshn un Leben” [Language and Life] monthly booklets - and, in this publication itself, there already lies a hint of the desperate effort that he, with the aid of Moshheh Oyved28, is putting into the battle to fortify a bit of a position in London for the neglected Yiddish language.

I witnessed an image of his tragic, self-sacrificing devotion to Yiddish and to the Yiddish literature when, on Saturday during the day, in the week of Pesach, we entered by chance the little hall somewhere in ruined Whitechapel, where he, Sztencel, holds a sort of Oyneg Shabbes on a weekly basis.

He has already been holding this curious Oyneg Shabbes for a long time, week in and week out. There can be thunder and lightning, bombs can fall on Whitechapel - he, Sztencel, does not forgo the hour when, influenced by his tenacity, a crowd of a hundred people gathers to spend time with him in an atmosphere of Yiddish language, Yiddish literature and Yiddish melody. He holds lectures on Jewish history before the assembled, celebrates literary occasions with them, and so on. The picture that was revealed before me when we happened to enter there was both moving and distressing.

The crowd - one hundred people, as stated - consisted entirely of older, common-folk types. Most of them sat wearing caps; women—some of whom were practically geriatric - had on headscarves. From this very fact, one can and must, be moved. Simple people, Jewish folk, come on Shabbes during the day to hear a Yiddish word from a Yiddish poet, like they once would come to listen to a maggid [preacher]. May there be as many of these meetings as possible! But it is precisely in the ‘may there’ that lies the trouble. Barely, [just] barely a hundred old people in a large London community. We therefore cannot fill our hearts with optimism as regards Yiddish in London.

I felt a rending pity for our Yiddish. I also feel [sic felt?] this more than once in New York. [But] no longer - in New York, writers sometimes permit themselves, may they be strengthened, to exhibit the inflexibility of humiliated greatness, the obstinacy of captains who do not abandon their ships even when mortal perils loom over their vessels. They still believe in the ships and in the power of their own faith more than in the force of the dangers.

The Yiddish gathering of the old Jews huddled together in the surroundings of destroyed streets seemed to me like a displaced group of fire victims, who try to cheer up one another, each with his own bit of misery. ‘So this, then, is the situation’, I told myself sharply and bitingly.

When I left, with every moment, my heart was filled more and more with profound esteem and limitless reverence for the knight of Yiddish, for Sztencel, who had remained in the little hall - although he had strongly wished to accompany me - to see the lovely but poor, and sweet but miserable Oyneg Shabbes through to the end.”

H. Leivick

24 [TN: The following article, which was originally published in “Der Tog” of 21st July 1946, is about the London-based Yiddish poet Abraham Nahum Stencel (Abram-Nuchim Sztencel), who was born in 1897 in Czeladź, near Sosnowiec. We have as yet not been able to establish his direct connection to Częstochowa.]
25 [TN: Heb., lit. “Delight of Sabbath”; a festive gathering with refreshments held on Saturday.]
26 [TN: One of the generation’s Lamed-Vuvn [36 in gematria] righteous men; said of an extremely modest individual of great virtue who conducts himself like a very simple person.]
27 [TN: In biblical Hebrew in the original; this traditional Jewish expression is used in ref. to a simple person who toils arduously even at the most menial tasks with little reward. It is derived from the verse in Deuteronomy 29:11: “Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the draver of thy water.”]
28 [TN: Pseudonym of the Yiddish writer Morris Edward Good (Gudak), 1885-1958.]
Born in Częstochowa in 1848. When he was twenty years of age, he was taken to the Russian military in the times of Alexander II. There, he graduated from a school for non-commissioned officers and became a Feldwebel\(^{10}\). He participated in the Russo-Turkish War [of 1877-1878].

When he was about thirty-three, he returned home and became the shames [caretaker] at the Old Study-Hall, where he spent forty-five years. He was very fond of discussing military matters and also enjoyed it when people listened to his stories. He took upon himself the obligation of teaching [orphaned] Jewish children to recite the Kaddish [mourner’s prayer]. In this manner, he taught some two hundred and fifty children.

Under the Nazis, he was the "Judenältester" [Eldest of the Jews]. In February 1942, there was still word from him. Since then, there has already been no knowledge of him. He could still have lived many years. He has a son, Michał Szczekacz, in Tel-Aviv.

Son of Grojnem and Celia; born 4\(^{th}\) April 1915, died 30\(^{th}\) June 1940. He was an active member of the Knights of Pythias, George Hamilton Lodge № 456.

Son of Ajzyk and Chana [née Windman]; born in Częstochowa in 1866. His parents were middle-class folk. His father was a tailor. In 1883, his father left Częstochowa and travelled to America.

Lajbel Szymkowicz was born in Częstochowa and he received an elementary education in a Russian primary school. His teachers were Szapocznik and Majerson. Once he had completed this school, he learnt the goldsmith’s trade, in which he worked until he received his call-up papers. Uncle Hajman, having sent passages on a ship, Lajbel, together with his mother Chana, brother Grojnem, and sisters Ruchel and Bencia [Bina?] left Częstochowa and arrived in America in the summer of 1886. Lajbel Szymkowicz belongs to the Częstochower Shul\(^{12}\) on Clinton Street, New York, to which his father also belonged. Lajbel was forced to leave his father’s house due to the fact that he had to work on Shabbes. He worked in jewellery. At 25, he married Chaja [Helen] Gotajner, born in Częstochowa, who died on 26\(^{th}\) February 1920, leaving behind four orphans (two sons and two daughters).

Later, Louis Szymkowicz went into the Yiddish theatre business, heading the vaudeville theatre at the cinema hall on Sutter Avenue in Brownsville [Brooklyn] and, in 1898, the Yiddish theatre on Delancey Street, New York. In 1918-19, he produced benefits in Brooklyn, at the Lira Theatre on Seigel Street. His theatre featured performances by the renowned actors Jacob Adler, Kessler, Schoengold, Bida from Częstochowa, Mr and Mrs Goldberg, Mr and Mrs Jacobs and others. To this day, he is involved in the Yiddish theatre business.

Lajbel Szymkowicz is one of the founders of the Czenstochauer Young Men’s [Society], a member of the Częstochower Shul [and] a founder of the [United] Czenstochower Relief Committee and the Ladies Auxiliary. He was chosen as a delegate to Częstochowa following the First World War, to work out the plan for building the I.L. Peretz House for the kindergartens and the Yiddish primary school. He is a member of the Czenstochauer Yidn Book Committee and past-Chairman of the Relief Committee. His political convictions are socialist and he is also member of the Labour Party.

His two grandsons served in the American army.

Born in Częstochowa in 1877. She married Louis [sic Grojnem] Szymkowicz in 1901.

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\(^{28}\) [TN: Son of Majer and Szajndla née Husman.]

\(^{10}\) [TN: Rank equivalent to sergeant in the British Army.]

\(^{11}\) [TN: Spelt Schimkowitz after arriving in the US; this and the other details we have included in brackets are taken from the family’s headstones in Mt. Zion Cemetery in Queens, NY.]

\(^{12}\) [TN: This is the Chasam Sopher Synagogue.]
Szymkowicz, George [Grojnem]

Son of Louis [Lajbel] and Helen. He died at the age of twenty-one in New York on 15th November 1916.

Szajer [Shier], Chanina

Son of Juda-Majer and Laja Szajer; born in Częstochowa on 15th May 1882. Came to America in 1906. He was married in 1908 to Rileya33 Silver, the daughter of Reb Szaja-Lajzer Silver [Zilber]. He is a member of the Zionist Organisation in Passaic, New Jersey. His son Julius was a physician in the American army.

Szajer, Laja

Born in Krzepice, near Częstochowa, in 1859. Died in 1921. She was the mother of Chanina, Fradel, Mordche, Dawid, Rachel, Ester, Mojsze and Josef. Honoured be her memory.

Szlezynger, Szlama [Schlesinger, Solomon] (Chicago)

Son of Abram-Lejb and Chaja [née Wołnica]; born in Częstochowa on 7th February 1885. He married Hendla [Helen] Przyrowska. He came to America from Germany in 1921. Szlama Szlezynger is a member of the Chenstochover Educational Society in Chicago. His wife Hendla is active in the Bendiner Ladies Auxiliary and is treasurer of the Chenstochover Aid Society in Chicago. She is one of their most active workers. Their two sons, Kurt and Morris, served in the American army.

Szlingbaum, Szlama-Majer (Jackson Heights, NJ)

Son of Szuja-Falek] and Estera-Małka [née Szprynger]; born on 14th December 1893 in Warsaw. For a long time, he lived in Częstochowa, and arrived in America on 28th August 1912. Szlama Szlingbaum is a member of the Częstochower branch of the International Workers Order.

Szmulewicz, Fajtel

In 1904, when he was sixteen or seventeen (a worker in Wajnberg’s factory), he was pulled into the freedom movement and became a member of the SS [Party]. He was distinguished for his seriousness and his commitment to the Jewish socialist ideal.

Szmulewicz, Golda (Chicago)

Daughter of Morton and Alice Sieradzki; born in Radomsko on 18th September 1889. She lived all the years in Częstochowa. Came to America in July 1904. She is a member of the Ladies Support [?] and the Sisterhood B’nai Israel [?].

**Notes:**

33 [TN: Appears as Rela in the Częstochowa archives and as Roe/Ray in the US records; she was the sister of Jakow-Ber Silver, who is mentioned extensively in Częstochowa yizkor books.]

34 [TN: Heb., “Civil Guard”; Jewish militia established in 1939 in Palestine.]
involved members of the Jewish Literary Society and later of the Lira. He helped found the Jewish Library and was its librarian for years. He also extensively aided the creation of the Yiddish press in Częstochowa. One of his feuilletons in the *Częstochower Wochenblatt* was *What Jews Rejoice In*.

F. Sz. was one of the founders and a committee member of the Popular Bakery during the First World War and Secretary of the Educational Society, which was the official front of the SS under the German occupation.

In 1916, he was sent to work by the Germans and arrived in Breslau (Wrocław), where he met with a great many Jewish workers, established a cultural society with a reading room, arranged lectures, and so on.

In 1918, when the Jewish mass emigration via Germany commenced, he put himself in contact with the Jewish delegation in Paris and founded an information bureau for emigrants.

When the ORT was relocated to Berlin, he established, with the aid of Aron Singalowsky, a branch in Breslau.

In 1920, he founded a branch of the Berlin Eastern Jewish Association (?) and became its chairman for many years. He arranged lectures, was elected delegate to all the alliance’s conventions, established a Yiddish newspaper for Eastern Jews *(Unser Leben [Our Life]*)*, took an active part in the *kehilla* elections - in which a *Częstochower Jew* was elected as representative of the Eastern Jews - and he became a member of the cultural commission of the Breslau *Gemeinde*.

In 1922, when the Polish government took away citizens’ rights from some of the emigrating Jews, he took part in the foundation of the Association for Stateless Persons and, with the aid of the representative from the League of Nations, [Leo] Motzkin, the Jewish National Council in Warsaw and by personal intervention with the Polish consul, he was able to restore Polish citizens’ rights back for many Jews in Germany.

In 1933, when Hitler came to power and the deportations of Polish Jews ensued, he travelled regarding this matter to Warsaw to intervene with the Refugees Committee. Upon his return he was also deported and he decided to journey to the Land of Israel.

Being employed in the glass trade, there, he became the longstanding chairman of that section and wrote a series of articles, on the problems of a craftsman, in the only Yiddish newspaper - *Naye Welt [New World]*. He became a member of the Yiddish Writers & Journalists Club, worked with the local *YIVO* committee and took an active part in the activity of the *Częstochower landsmannschaften*, as the secretary of the *Va’ad Ha’Artzi [National Committee]* under the leadership of Dr Josef Kruk.

When the Mishmar Ezrachi national defence group was founded, he was one of the first to join its service and remains there to this day.

His two sons are [also] serving the [Jewish] settlement - one of them as a *ghaffir* and the other as the member of an agricultural *kibbutz*.

As secretary of the *Częstochower Va’ad Ha’Artzi*, he has taken the most active part in the publication of this book, *Częstochower Yidn*, both with his own articles and also by preparing the articles of an entire array of *landseit* in the Land of Israel.

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**Szklarczyk, Louis (Lajzer)** *(Chicago)*

Son of Herszl and Laja; born in Radomsko in 1894. Came to America from Częstochowa in 1912. He is an executive member of the [Częstochower] Educational Society in Chicago.

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**Szpic, Jechiel [Chil]** *(Chicago)*

Son of Josef and Fradel; born in Dzialoszyn. He died in Breslau (Wrocław), Germany.

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**Szpic, Rajca**

Daughter of Icek and Rajzia Chaskel. She died in Krzepice (Poland).

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**Szpiegelman, Wolf & Chana**

Both were born in Częstochowa. Their name was renowned in Częstochowa for their charitable work. Wolf died in 1912 and Chana in 1932.

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**Szpiegelman, [Israel-]Josef [Spiegelman, Joseph]**

Son of Wolf and Chana [née Imich]; born in Częstochowa. He currently lives in Detroit. He received a secondary school education and also studied Yiddish and Hebrew with the well-known pedagogue, Reb [Aron-]Lajzer Klinicki z”l, the author of the books *Hallel Ve’Zimra* [Praise and Melody] and *Ha’Chaim Ha’Chadashim* [The New Life].

He left Częstochowa in 1910, because he did not wish to serve in the Russian army. He visited Częstochowa in 1931.
Szpiegelman [Spiegelman],
Majer [Max]
(Detroit)

Son of Wolf and Chana; born on 5th May 1905 in Częstochowa. Came to America in June 1921. In Częstochowa, he was a management committee member of the Jewish Gymnastics-Sporting Association.