

KON (KOHN) Jakub (1869-1938), industrialist, fire brigade activist. He was born on 15th July 1869 in Częstochowa, the son of → Wilhelm Wolf Kohn and Rozalia Róża née Litauer (circa 1842 – 16th August 1872 Częstochowa).

Kohn graduated from the state grammar school in Częstochowa and, later, began studies at the School of Fine Arts in Kraków. After graduating in 1896, he continued his arts studies in Nuremberg and Fürth. From 1912 (after the death of his father), he became a director and co-owner of a printing house and paper factory (later known as “Graphics-Paper Plant”).

From 1890, he became active in the Częstochowa Volunteer Fire Brigade. In 1894, he was promoted to head one of its divisions and, in the following year, he was elected to the board of the Brigade. During the Częstochowa Industry and Agriculture Exhibition in 1909, he organised nationwide firefighting training and firefighting competitions. In 1913, he co-founded nationwide firefighting courses. Kohn was also co-founder and Board member of the Florian Union – a nationwide association of firefighters.

Following the death of Stanisław Jełowicki, on 12th October 1917, he assumed the position of president of the Volunteer Fire Brigade, a position he held until 1938. From 1924, he was also president of the Kielce Provincial Fire Brigade Association. He later became a member of the Central Board of the Fire Brigade Association. He was also a member of the Association’s Museum Committee. In 1925, he took part in the creation of the District Fire Brigade Association. During the period when he led the Częstochowa Fire Brigade, modern firefighting vehicles, a library, a brass band a theatre company and sports teams were among the things that were organised.

He was also active in other associations, as well as financial institutions. From 1913, he was president of the Częstochowa Municipal Commercial and Industrial Workers Mutual Aid Society, as well as a board member of the Częstochowa Mutual Loan Society and a member of the Supervisory Board of the Industrialists and Merchants Bank.

Kohn converted to Roman Catholicism. He died on 22nd October 1938 in Częstochowa and was buried in the Kule cemetery (section 1, row I, grave 5). His awards included the Knight’s Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta (1929) and the Gold and Silver Crosses of Merit.

In 1905, he married Józefa Ludwika née Rachalewska. They had three daughters: Wanda Róża (1907-), Janina Barbara (1910-), Maria Antonina (1910–1917).

Łoza, *Czy wiesz kto to jest?*, p. 354 (photo.); *Słownik biograficzny ziemi częstochowskiej*, vol. I (J. Kapsa), pp. 59–60. – Nowak, *Z moich wspomnień II*, p. 190; – Szatkowski, *Monografia przemysłu częstochowskiego*, p. 19. – “Gazeta Częstochowska” 1996, No. 39, p. 12 (biographical not and photo.); “Gazeta Urzędowa Wydziału Powiatowego Powiatu Częstochowskiego” 1925, No. 10, p. 3; “Goniec Częstochowski” 1918, No. 215, p. 2, 1919, No. 232, p. 3, 1927, No. 127, p. 4, 1938, No. 245, p. 1, No. 246, p. 4; “Handlowiec”. *Kalendarz 1914*, pp. 301, 303, 310; “Kurier Codzienny” 1927, No. 45, p. 2, No. 53, p. 3; *Rocznik polskiego przemysłu i handlu 1938*, line No. 13297; “Ziemia Częstochowska”, vol. XI, 1976, pp. 249, 264. – APCz, Mag Cz 3619 (also re Wilhelm); USC Częstochowa, death record No. 75/1938. – Materials (extracts from registers) in the ODDC collections.

Juliusz Sętowski