

MARKUSFELD Józef (1870–1942), chemical engineer, industrialist, factory director, city councillor, social activist. He was born on 6th December 1870 in Częstochowa, the son of → Adolf and Ernestyna née Kohn, brother of → Henryk.

He studied at the Berlin Polytechnic and then at the University of Geneva. In 1894, he graduated as a chemist technologist and, later, gained a doctorate in chemistry.

After returning to Częstochowa, he lived at II Aleja 27, on the corner of ul. Teatralna (al. Wolności). He was a co-owner and, from 1928 (after the co-ownership was transferred to his son Antoni), a board member of the Alfred Kohn and Józef Markusfeld Paper Factory and Mill. Together with his brother Henryk, he was a co-owner of the Częstochowa Glue and Gelatin Factory. On the board of the Częstochowa Coloured Paper and Wallpaper Factory, he held the position of director until the end of the 1920s. He was also a member of the board of the “Warta” Spinning and Jute Weaving.

He was a rich man, as Dr. Stanisław Nowak emphasise in his memoirs. He was one of the fifteen richest members of the Jewish community, paying a contribution of 750 zlotys, in 1930, to the Community Council. As one of the most significant industrialists in Częstochowa, he and his brother Henryk were board members of the Częstochowa branch of the Industrialists Association of the Kingdom of Poland, He represented the local branch at national conventions.

Markusfeld was active in local government. From July 1915, he was a member of the City Council’s residential and hospital coal committee. In 1917, in elections to the Częstochowa City Council, he became a councilor representing the 2nd electorate (which encompassed commercial and industrial enterprises). From 1917, as a member of City Council, he worked on the hospital and school committees. At the beginning of 1918, he became a city juror.

He was comprehensively active socially. He contributed to the development of the “Warta” Częstochowa Sports Club. He co-organised and co-hosted the Social Club at the “Warta” CKS. He sat on the management board (for a certain time as treasurer) of the “Dobroczytność” Charitable Society for Jews (TDdŻ). He belonged to the TDdŻ Hospital Construction Committee. At his own expense, he created a park next to the hospital which, as was emphasised, “significantly increased the aesthetic and hygienic values of this area”. In 1913, he became a member of the TDdŻ Hospital board.

He was concerned about spreading education amongst Jews, as well as providing Jewish youth in Częstochowa with a higher education. He belonged to the Welfare Council of the Craft School. From 1917, he joined the board of the local branch of the Society for the Spreading of Knowledge Amongst Jews. In 1922, he co-founded and, later, joined the board of the Częstochowa branch of the “Auxilium Academicum Judaicum” Committee to Aid Jewish Students. In September 1917, he was also co-founder of the Jewish Gimnazjum in Częstochowa. In December 1928, he joined the board of the Society for the Construction and Operation of Theatre in Częstochowa.

In 1941, during the German occupation, Markusfeld was forced to live in the Częstochowa ghetto. He died (murdered?) on 29th September 1942 during the liquidation of the ghetto in Częstochowa.

His wife was Emma Estera née Barcińska (5th August 1874-), the daughter of the famous Łódź industrialist Salomon Barciński and Ruchla née Birnbaum. The couple had three children – two daughters and a son:

- Irena Ludwika (10th March 1898 Częstochowa-),
- Gizela Jadwiga (8th March 1902 Częstochowa-) and
- Antoni Adolf (25th January 1901 Częstochowa - after 1959 Toronto) who, after completing his studies in chemistry, returned to Częstochowa. W 1928, he became a shareholder in the Kohn Brothers and Markusfeld Paper Factory and Mill in Częstochowa. He later joined the board of the factory. In that same year, he was elected as a delegate to the board of the Częstochowa District Health Fund. Together with his wife, Eugenia née Henigsberg, he survived the occupation. He lived in Częstochowa where, as a technical manager, he worked in one of the factories. In 1946, he changed his surname to Ojrzyński. In 1959, together with his wife, he left for Canada. He settled in Toronto, where he died.

Sętowski, *Markusfeldowie*, pp. 230–232. - “Express Częstochowski” 1927, No. 262, p. 3; “Goniec Częstochowski” 1914, No. 212, p. 2. – APCz, MagCz 4998, k. 502.

Juliusz Sętowski