

Harry Berkowicz



Harry Berkowicz¹, the son of Mojsze-Aron and Ruchel *née* Szpic, was born in Częstochowa. He comes from a wealthy family. His father, Reb Mojsze-Aron z"l, was president of the Berkowicz, Spitz & Kinstlicher² celluloid firm.

In the immediate aftermath of the First World War, when Poland became embroiled in a war with Russia, Harry Berkowicz left his hometown of Częstochowa and travelled to America where, for eight or nine years, he lived in New York.

In 1930, he arrived in Montreal and became a permanent citizen here. In 1935, he married Bessie, who gave him three children – two daughters and one son, who is a mechanical engineer.

Following the Second World Slaughter, once the facts became known of the Nazis' barbaric massacres, how Częstochowa Jewry had been annihilated and how the, once glorious, Częstochowa Jewish community had been utterly destroyed, and that the few surviving Częstochowa Jews found themselves in the DP camps - sick and helpless like a foundering, rocking ship in a stormy sea - Harry Berkowicz, along with other established *landsleit* in Montreal, founded the Czenstochover Aid Society to help the suffering *landsleit* in the DP camps.

Harry Berkowicz occupied the position of president of the Society and has always contributed generously to all relief causes.

Harry Berkowicz is a well-known personality in Montreal and there is practically no institution to which he does not contribute, aiding in this manner all national, local, religious, cultural and educational institutions in town.

Harry Berkowicz is one of those who always helps the Society with advice and action³ and has been instrumental in the publication of this book.

¹ [TN: Later changed to "Berk".]

² [TN: It is thus that the name of the firm is spelt in the 1929 Częstochowa Business Directory.]

³ [TN: This expression, which recurs throughout the book, is very popular in Yiddish because it rhymes – "mit rat un tat" (lit. "with council and deed").]