

## [Our] Losses

Ove the course of its existence, the Czenstochover Landsmanshaft of Montreal has suffered painful losses of still young enough and active members - most of them newcomers, who lived through all the horrors and tortures during the times of Nazi tyranny. With their untimely demise, the pantheon of victims, annihilated by the Nazis, has increased. They are:

**Rywka Bednarz z"l** - an involved activist of the Aid Society;

**Abe Goldman z"l**;

**Szlojme Dilewski z"l** - former Chairman and a devoted, active figure of the Society;

**Josef Zylberberg z"l** - former Member of the Board of Directors and involved activist of the Society;

**Josef Rajnherc z"l**;

**Chaim Klajman z"l**;

**Pinchas Birencwajg z"l**;

**Rena Waga z"l** - involved activist of the Ladies Auxiliary;

**Yecheskel Silver z"l** - longstanding President of the Society and active co-worker to the last minutes of his life;

**Dr Henryk Lazarowicz z"l** - former Chairman and devoted activist of the Society;

**Perl Prokosz z"l** - devoted and involved activist of the Ladies Auxiliary;

**Felicia Wallace z"l** - devoted and involved activist of the Ladies Auxiliary;

**Abram Wajskop z"l** - one of the founders of the society which was called the "Czenstochover [and] Vicinity Aid Society of Montreal".

**Chana Brzezińska z"l** - worked together with the Ladies Auxiliary;

**Aron Jarost z"l**;

**Szlojme Lerner z"l** - involved activist of the Society;

**Liber Segal z"l** - involved activist of the Society.

The Society took official part in all their funerals and headstone unveilings, published condolences in the press and called upon the *landsleit* to participate in paying the deceased *landsleit* their last respects.

## Ancestral Tombs

A custom has been established that, every year, on the Sunday that falls between Rosh Ha'Shanah and Yom Kippur, the Society organises a collective tz"l at the cemetery in [the borough of Ahuntsic-]Cartierville, and the graves of the deceased male and female *landsleit* are visited.

## The Funeral of Mrs Rena Waga z”l

On Friday, 31<sup>st</sup> October 1958, the President of the Society received telephone notification that Rena Waga had passed away and that the funeral procession would leave on Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> November at 10:00 am, from the funeral parlour at 331 College St. in Toronto. By telephone, the President an extraordinary meeting, at which it was agreed to:

- 1) Send a delegation, comprised of President Yechezkel Silver (no longer living – died on 13<sup>th</sup> September 1959), General Secretary Dr Benjamin Orenstein and Treasurer Harry Klein;
- 2) Assign to Dr Benjamin Orenstein the eulogy for the deceased lady;
- 3) Publish notices in the *Keneder Odler* and the *Star*;

The delegation left on Saturday night and arrived on Sunday morning - exactly on time.

After rising from the *shiva*<sup>1</sup>, Sz. Waga sent out three letters. As the contents of said letters are almost identical, we only reproduce the text of one of them here:

*“Sz. Waga, Toronto, 7<sup>th</sup> November 1958  
To the Management of the Czenstochover Landsmanshaft of Montreal.*

*My dear landsleit,*

*I express to you my gratitude for the delegation made up of President Ch.<sup>2</sup> Silver, General Secretary Dr Benjamin Orenstein and Treasurer Harry Klein, which you delegated to Toronto for my wife’s funeral, and for the great respect you paid with your presence and with the eulogy which Dr B. Orenstein delivered.*

*Your rallying round me in days of grief has made a great impression in the ranks of the local landsleit here, as well as in the Jewish ranks in Toronto in general. Your participation in my sorrow is a proof that the sentiment of the Society for each member is a strong one. This action has, once again, affirmed that the Society is beneficial for all the members not only in day-to-day life, but also in times of trouble, when a landsmann needs, the most, the warmth of relatives and friends.*

*May this action be inscribed along with all your good deeds, which all of us have set ourselves as a goal.*

*Once more, I ask you to accept my heartfelt thanks for your delicacy. Yours,*

*Sz. Waga”*

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<sup>1</sup> [TN: Heb., lit., “seven”, viz. seven days of mourning after a direct family member, during which the mourner (among other halachic restrictions) is not allowed to sit comfortably on a normal chair, settee, etc. but only on a low stool or crate; thus, once the “shiva” ends and one is permitted to rise from one’s crouched position and sit upright once again, it is colloquially said that one has “risen from shiva”.]

<sup>2</sup> [TN: Although Silver’s full name was Jechaskiel (later spelt “Yechezkel” in Canada), this name was usually shortened to “Chaskel” in Yiddish.]

## **The Reply to Waga's Letter**

***"Czenstochover Landsmanshaft of Montreal***

***16<sup>th</sup> November 1958***

***Dear friend and cherished landsmann Szlojme Waga in Toronto,***

*We have received your letters and they were read at a meeting of the Executive, held on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> November 1958.*

*Only a man such as yourself, who possesses such great sensitivity, could have expressed in your letters so many feelings, based on very high ethical concepts and moral principles.*

*On our part, we receive your letters with great satisfaction. It is our belief that we have only fulfilled a moral obligation - our duty as landsleit - and we wish upon ourselves that none of us should ever know any more sorrow and grief.*

*We advise you that the Executive has agreed to hold a 'Shloishim' in honour of the memory of your late wife Rena, which is to take place on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1958.*

*Be consoled, yet again, in your sorrow and grief.*

***The Executive:***

***Yechezkel Silver, President***

***Dr Benjamin Orenstein, General Secretary***

***Harry Klein, Treasurer"***

### ***Shloishim for Mrs Rena Waga z"l***

According to article 7 of the Society's constitution, all the *landsleit* must participate in the funeral of a male or female member.

Due to the fact that Mrs Rena Waga died and was interred in Toronto, the *landsleit* did not have the possibility of taking part in the funeral. [Therefore,] the Executive decided to hold a *shloishim*, which was held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1958 at the Jewish Public Library, and in which, besides the *landsleit*, a considerable number of friends of the Waga family participated.

The programme of the memorial service was [as follows]:

A cantor recited [E] *Moleh* [*Rachamim*] and sang a psalm. Candles were lit and *Kaddish* was said.

The personality and communal activities of the deceased lady were expressed in Dr Benjamin Orenstein's detailed speech. The poet Ida Maze z"l (dec. 14<sup>th</sup> June 1962) gave a brief address and read a series of poems. The actress Yetta Feldman featured in an appropriate, specially-prepared programme.