

About the House of my Father z"l

I've been asked to set down, in the Memorial Book for the Częstochowa Jews, a record of my father's house in Mstów. Although a son may not testify in favour of his father, I regard it as an obligation, of personal honour, to commemorate my father, Rabbi Szmul-Nuchim z"l, and my mother. Mrs Zelda-Złata z"l, whose origins were in one of the most magnificent families in Mstów (near Częstochowa).



The writer of these lines by his father's grave (first from the right)

My father z"l was a distinct Torah scholar – one of the prominent *Gerer Chassidim* – and he set aside time for regular Torah study and divided his time thus, that he spent a little of it running his manufactured goods shop and most of it on heavenly matters - Torah [study] and prayer, Chassidism and good deeds.

He was fortunate to find a "*helpmate*" - and not [someone] "*against him*"¹ - and she was my mother z"l, who was one of those "*kosher women who do their husbands' will*" [*Tanna Devei Eliyahu Rabbah*, Ch. 9], and our house was therefore always wide-open to all the needy and distressed in Mstów who found, with my beloved parents z"l, an attentive ear and a heart which felt the troubles of others, as well as the monetary aid they extended in an appropriate manner, so as not to injure the pride of those necessitating the aid and, in this regard, they both held by the method of "*He who desires that he himself should give, and that others should give: [he is a pious man]*" [*Pirkei Avot*, Ch.5, 13], and the entire town acceded to their demand to give abundantly to charity and do many good deeds!

They also set their eyes on the local *yeshivah* lads and supported them, who were mainly the "*sons of paupers, from whom the Torah will issue forth*" [*Talmud Bavli, Nedarim 81a*], and they took care of them lovingly and devotedly.

It is self-evident that they also took the necessary pains to bring up their children to keep the traditions and do good deeds and they had the fortune that they, too, walked in their paths.

At the twilight of his days, my father z"l became paralysed and was bedbound. But his friends and admirers saw to it that a *minyán* should assemble regularly at our house, so that he should be able to participate every day in public prayer, which encouraged him, and he accepted his fate lovingly, like the pious men who are accustomed to saying "*Everything that God does, He does for the best*" [*Talmud Bavli, Brachot, 60b*].

Also my mother z"l, who alone shouldered the yoke of the shop, did not cease doing deeds of charity and goodwill to her last day.

To my great sorrow, of this great household with many children, the sonly survivors are my sister Chana and her husband, the pious Reb Dov Berisz Rozenchwajg - long may they

¹ [TN: See *Talmud Bavli, Yevamot 63a*: "And Rabbi Elazar said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "I will make him a helpmate for him [*kenegdo* in original Heb; i.e. 'against him']" (Genesis 2:18)? If one is worthy his wife helps him; if he is not worthy she is against him."]

live - who live in Tel-Aviv and who have had the fortune to see children, grandchildren and also great-grandchildren; myself and my son Izrael-Dawid Benclowicz; and the son of my eldest brother Józef-Zvi [Hersz] *hy''d*, Chaim-Jakób Benclowicz. The rest were annihilated by the oppressive foe, may his name and memory be obliterated!

These are my beloved ones, who perished in the days of the Jewish Holocaust at the hands of the accursed Nazis, may their name and memory be obliterated!

My eldest brother **Józef-Zvi**, his wife **Itta Laja** (daughter of Reb Nojeh *Shoichet* of Radomsko), their three daughters, two granddaughters, and one grandson *hy''d*!

My sister **Gala-Guczka**, her husband **Józef Kon** (from Lelów), their seven daughters and only son *hy''d*, who lived in Częstochowa.

My brother **Mordche-Szaja**, his wife, and their only son **Izaak** *hy''d*, who lived in Częstochowa.

My brother **Ze'ev-Wolf**, his wife **Ester** (daughter of Reb Icchok Katz), and their three daughters *hy''d*, who lived in Częstochowa.

My brother **Juda-Mojsze** and his wife **Genia** *hy''d*, who lived in Radomsko.

The wife of my youth, **Chaja** (daughter of Reb Izaak and Fajgel-Laja Wolfowicz) *hy''d*, [and] our sons and daughters **Szymson, Judes, Izaak, Józef, Dobra, Henie, and Zvi** *hy''d*.

Deep in mourning and with burning pain,

Jakób Benclowicz
Tel-Aviv