

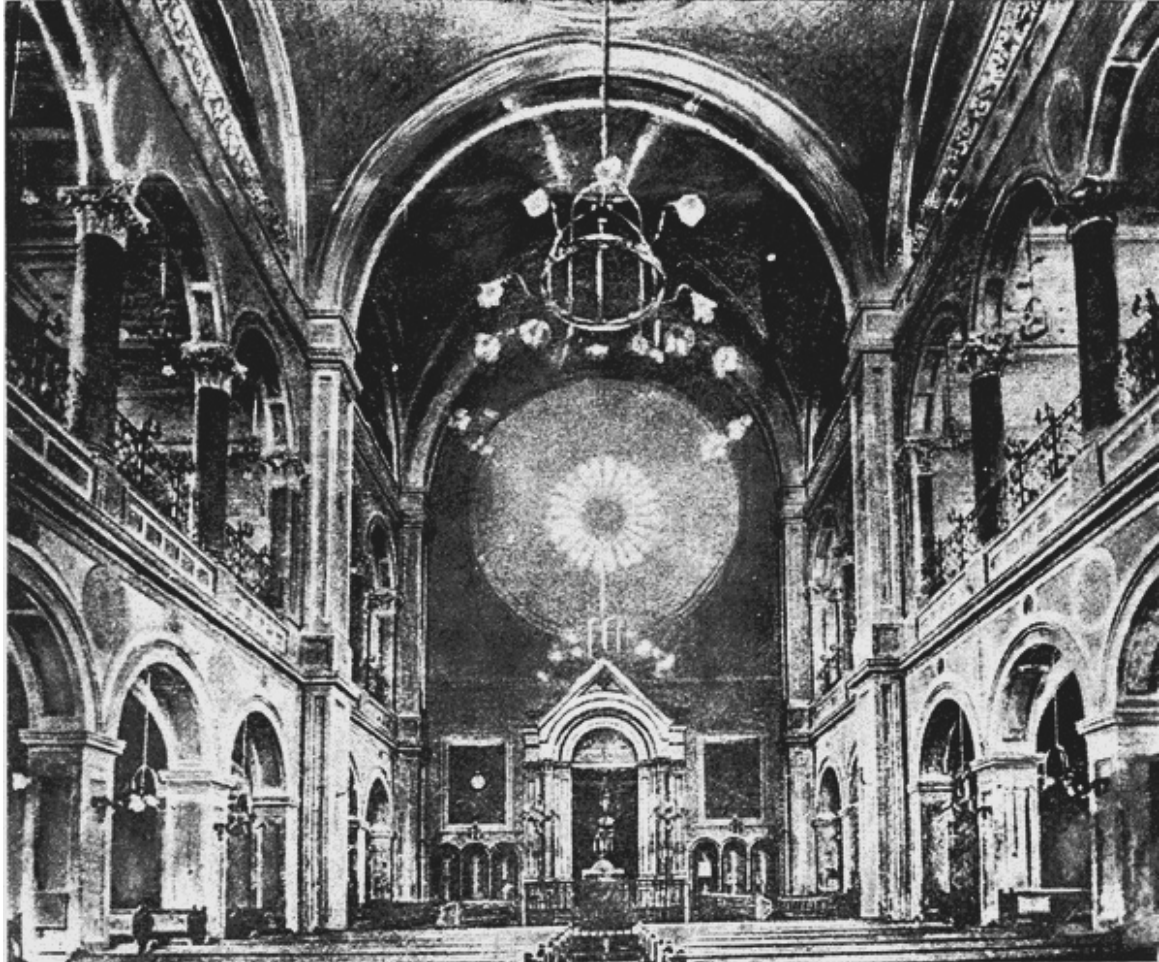
GYULA YEHUDA LÁNG

**THE MEMORIAL BOOK
OF
PÁPA JEWRY**

In Memory of the Jewish Martyrs of Pápa and Surroundings

Translated by Rachel Ágnes Vázsonyi

**The original Hungarian version was published in 1972 by the Memorial Committee of Pápa
Jews living in Israel**



Interior view of the Synagogue, dedicated in 1848

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FOREWORD TO THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With a sense of accomplishment, we offer this translation of the Memorial Book of the Pápa Jewry by Gyula Yehuda Láng. This book gives a unique picture of the life of the Jews of Pápa through several generations. We felt that in order for our descendants to appreciate their historical, religious, and cultural heritage, the book should be translated from the original Hungarian into a language that the majority of future generations would be able to understand.

We express our appreciation to our translator, Rachel Ágnes Vázsonyi who, in addition to her language skills, is well acquainted with Hungarian history and literature, and with Jewish culture and tradition.

The translated text has undergone sequential proofreading coupled with editing by Veronika Kardosh, Stephen Breuer, and Sharolyn Buxbaum. This was followed by repeated checking and editing by Sharolyn Buxbaum and two of the undersigned (EB&AB), after which it was returned to Stephen Breuer in the UK where it received its final book-like format.

We have adopted a number of guidelines regarding the translation. Generally, we have transcribed the Hebrew texts using the modern, Sephardic pronunciation used in Israel, except for cases of direct citation of prayers, or sayings attributed to specific persons in specific cases, where the original Ashkenazi pronunciation used in Pápa is given. In many cases we chose not to explain historic figures, when a quick search in the Internet can fulfill this need. The only place in which we changed the original organisation was when we merged the two adjacent chapters, entitled "Art" (*Művészet*, p. 85) and "The Art of Music" (*Zene művészet*, p. 86) into one chapter entitled "Arts – Music – Sciences – Journalism", while preserving their original content.

This edition does not include the list of martyrs as it already appears on the JewishGen website: <http://www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/Papa/pap901.html> Please check the glossary for the martyrs' list (p. 115) explaining the Hungarian expressions attached to some of the names.

We have not included the Hebrew section of the original edition in this version, as most of it appeared in somewhat modified form also in Hungarian which was translated to English. An exception is the story of *Hashomer Hatzair* in Pápa, which appeared only in Hebrew in the original book and it now appears in English.

We thank the many contributors from all over the world who supported the translation project. We were encouraged by the support and interest they expressed in our endeavour.

We hope this translation, which we will try to distribute worldwide to libraries and organizations, will contribute to the commemoration of the Holocaust, and particularly help in preserving the memory of the Jewish community of Pápa and its Martyrs.

Eli Breuer

Asher Buxbaum

Yehuda Krausz

Israel, August 2009

FOREWORD

In December, 1945, only a few months after my return from deportation, I participated in the congress of the Hungarian Zionist Association in Budapest, representing the Pécs community. In my speech about monuments, I expressed my view that instead of the erection of many monuments, a department should be established at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in memory of the martyrs from Hungary, Each and every Jewish community should be commemorated, together with its history. Subsequently, part of this job was undertaken by Yad Vashem. The Jews remaining in Hungary erected one monument after the other, spending large sums of money on the project. As for me personally, I dedicated thirty one monuments, from Nagykanizsa to Abaújszántó, from Kaposvár to Tállya.

Now I have been asked to write the foreword by the author of the memorial book about the martyrs of my hometown.

Pápa, my birthplace, my parents' home, the scene of my childhood experiences. I had but one grave there, that of my maternal grandmother; I went to visit it several times a year. As a "walking miracle"¹ from Auschwitz, I have experienced all the trials of life. On thousands of occasions I stood at the open grave sharing the grief of the mourners and now I am looking for comfort and strength! I have never felt as weak as now, writing these lines. I must remember the Jews of Pápa! Unfortunately, I have an excellent memory! Should I write about my teachers – about the "little" Mr. Baum, who was always a great man in my eyes, teaching me the Hebrew letters when I was barely four? About Mr. Paneth, who introduced me to the pearls of the Talmud? About my religious education teacher Mr. Marton, who represented a magnificent combination of religious and secular knowledge? About my teachers at the elementary school of the Jewish community? About Elemér Bruder? About Jakab Willner, who shared with me the hell of Magdeburg? About our kind-hearted principal "Uncle" Buxbaum? [In Hungary the male teacher in elementary school used to be addressed as "Uncle" (Bácsi) the translator.] Their names are included in this book, and live forever in my memory. Shall I commemorate our famous rabbi, Sámuel Gottlieb? He noted the fact that I was preparing for the entrance examination of the Rabbinical Seminary's grammar school; sometimes he even "interrogated" me. Shall I write about the temple? In November 1945, I was struck numb by the terrible sight: burnt out walls, missing roof, devastation...I had the feeling that:

*"The temple yard is filled with memories:
Many yesterdays gone by, many distances covered,
A part of your life, a part of yourself".²*

On my visits to Pápa, I could never go near the temple again, just as I was unable to visit my parents' former apartment.

What happened to the people of Pápa, what happened to us? From one day to another we became slaves, beggars stripped of our dignity. Our most beautiful ideals were mocked by the hangman's snigger. The beast in Man was awakened to prevent the divine message of love from

¹ L. Kubovitsky.

² Noémi Munkács.

reaching Man. They did not want to acknowledge that loving God means loving Man – and loving Man means loving the same divine face in all the people. They did not want to admit that the pseudo-science based on racial instincts was a mockery of the unity of the human race created in the divine image.

This book commemorates the faithful and unbeliever alike, observants and non-observants sharing the same faith. They had to die because they belonged to the mother of all monotheistic teachings sanctified by the blood of martyrs – to Judaism. Through its followers, this teaching preached morality to all mankind, and with the help of its prophets dreamt about the time when all people would live in love, peace and understanding. Our beloved ones suffered. Their pain was not the fear of death, but the unprecedented humiliation of being outcast from divine and human rights. Our martyrs were not afraid of death, they rather longed for the end of their suffering. Before they came to that point, mothers' souls died many times for not knowing what happened to their children.

I do not want to speak about the suffering or the horrors. Since 1944, we have been sobbing over all our pains, all our tears have been shed. I would rather think of the sacred work that used to be carried out in Pápa, as you can find it in the book.

Tradition and progress characterized this Athens of the Transdanubia. "To bow in front of the unshakable order of the ethical world, to give in to the word of the law, which calls on the finite, frail man to surrender to his Infinite, Almighty Creator".³

This book commemorates the Jews of Pápa, their history and spirit in a dignified manner. Every chapter, each and every word is permeated with love, faith and loyalty. Its author Gyula Láng, our Uncle Gyula, ⁴מוצל מאש, also escaped from fire and ⁵זרע קדש מבצתה, carried out a sacred job. Gratitude is owed to him for his valuable work. This work, the most beautiful monument to our Martyrs, was accomplished in Israel...

The Book commemorates the 200-year history of our hometown, its special, pleasant and charming customs and traditions, together with the martyrs who lived in this spirit. We think of them with reverence, believing that

"There are stars whose light still shine on earth, when they are already not in their former place. There are people whose memory still shines when they are not among us any more".⁶

We acknowledge this important spiritual heritage with love and believe that only man can be killed because

*"Though you are touched by the wind of fading
Your rich scent, your better self,
The spirit will live".⁷*

Dr. Henry Emmery Kraus
Chief Rabbi from Los Angeles, USA

³ Dr. Ármin Perls

⁴ Zechariah 3:2

⁵ Yeshayahu 6:13

⁶ Channa Szenes.

⁷ János Arany.

THE HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN PÁPA

PAPA (Hung. Pápa), town in N.W. Hungary. A few families first settled in Pápa under the protection of the Esterházy family; by 1714 the first synagogue was built. At that time the tax collector of the city was a Jew. A new synagogue was built in 1743. In 1748 Count F. Esterházy authorized Jews to settle in Papa and organize a community. A Bikkur Holim society was founded in 1770. The first Jewish private school was opened in 1812, and the community school, founded in 1826, had 504 pupils in 1841. In 1899 the first junior high school was founded. The synagogue erected in 1846 was an important step toward the introduction of Reform: space was left for an organ although none was installed; the *bimah* was set in front of the Ark and not in the centre of the synagogue. After the religious schism in Hungarian Jewry in 1869 the Neologists (see Neology) left the community, but returned five years later. During the Tiszaeszlár blood libel case (1882) anti-Jewish riots broke out in Pápa but they were suppressed by the authorities.

The first rabbi of the community was Bernard Isaac, followed by Selig Bettelheim. The Orthodox rabbi Paul (Feiweil) Horwitz initiated the meeting of rabbis in Paks in 1844. Leopold Loew (1846-50) was the first rabbi to introduce Reform. Moritz Klein, rabbi from 1876 to 1880, translated part of Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed* into Hungarian. He was followed by Solomon Breuer (1880-83). The last rabbi was J. Habersfeld, who perished with his congregation in the Holocaust.

The anti-Jewish laws of 1938-39 caused great hardship in the community, and from 1940 the young Jewish men were sent to forced labour battalions, at first within Hungary, but later to the Russian front (1942). The Jewish population in Papa increased from 452 in 1787 to 2645 in 1840 (19.6% of the total population), and 3,550 in 1880 (24.2%). After the beginning of the 20th century a gradual decline began. There were 3,076 Jews in 1910 (15.3%), 2,991 in 1920, 2,613 in 1941 (11%) and 2,565 in 1944. After the German occupation on March 19, 1944, the Jews were confined in a ghetto on May 24 and from there moved to a concentration camp which was set up in a factory in the town. On July 4 and 5 2,565 Jews of the city plus 300 from the vicinity were deported to Auschwitz~ from which less than 10% returned. In 1946 there were 470 Jews in the town (2% of the population) and by 1970 the number had fallen to 40.

THE FIRST JEWISH SETTLERS IN PÁPA

According to Hungarian historical tradition, this Transdanubian settlement at the foot of the Bakony hills beside the river, Tapolca, was founded during the reign of Stephen I, the first king of Hungary. There is a legend about it: "King Stephen was travelling nearby together with his parents, and for the first time called his father, Prince Géza, "PAPA" at this place, so the happy parents decided to call it Pápa".

According to another folk tradition, Abbot Astrik handed over the crown he brought from Rome at this place, uttering the following words: the Pope [*Pápa* in Hungarian – the translator] has sent the royal crown...

Many centuries passed by without a trace of Jews in Pápa.

The first mention is dated from the end of the 17th century: it is a document found in the Sopron municipal archives, containing the register of Jews who delivered brandy to Sopron in 1698 and paid duty on it to the municipal treasury. Among others, it says:

JAKOB HIRSCHEL VON PÁPA

"1 emer Brantwein – 1 Fl". (Probably means 1 Fl duty paid for 1 emer of Branntwein (=brandy).

The Győr archives also contain a relic from Pápa. In a letter from December 14, 1714, regimental judge Lutzenkuchen informed the Municipal Court of Buda that the Jew Hirschel was not obligated to appear in front of the Municipal Court in the suit cited, because at the time the contract was made the above-mentioned Jew was an exciseman in Pápa under the authority of the landowner, the general Count Ferenc Eszterházy.

Thus the yellowed pages from the Győr archives testify that Jews lived in Pápa already 258 years ago. Where, then, were the ancestors of those who carried out the ghettoization, driving the later descendants to their deaths?

A note dated from February 12, 1743, found in the Sopron archives, is also relevant:

Gábor Dávid, a Jew from Lakompak appeared in front of the Municipal Court of Sopron and stated that he had made a contract with Márton Hirschel of Pápa about acting as a middleman for the latter to obtain 50 *lats* [old measure weighing half an ounce – the translator] of silver in return for a fee of one groat after each *lat* of silver. After the delivery of silver, the customer refused to pay the agreed fee.

Hirschel Jew of Pápa said that he had bought the silver for the manufacture of knives, but the delivered silver was of inferior quality so he could not use it for the job. The court accepted the defence, declaring the business null and void.

This note in the Sopron archives proves that there were Jewish silversmiths living in Pápa 230 years ago.

However, there are records about other members of the Hirschel family as well.

In the Sopron archives there is a document from March 31, 1701, testifying to the fact that 100 Ft was paid for Viennese tobacco commissioner August Fortuna at the Sopron municipal court by Pápa exciseman Isac Hirschel.

Apparently, the Hirschels were the most prestigious Jewish family in Pápa because according to an official account, one of them was mentioned as follows: *Mathias Hirschel, Telenialis vegticalis-exator*, proudly mentioning that it was he who saved the town of Győr from famine by managing to deliver grain to the blockaded, besieged city. Another family member Nathan Mihály Hirschel graduated in medicine in Halle, in 1733.

Little by little, Jews started to move to Pápa. Following the long wars against the Turks, a century of national struggles (Bocskay, Rákóczi), and devastating plagues, not only the Great Hungarian Plain became depopulated, but Transdanubia was also in need of settlers and economic development. The estates of the landed aristocracy offered opportunities for Jews to settle and to integrate into the economy. This is how Jews first got to Pápa, to the Eszterházy estate. These Jews were under the authority of Count Eszterházy, while only two families belonged to the manor of another nobleman, that of Szántóházi.

Sámson Löwy, for example, was mentioned among the first Pápa Jews. He was granted many favors on account of his brandy distillery on the estate, and it was he who brought the Pintschof and Krausz families there.

In 1736 the Hungarian Royal Governor's Council ordered a census of Jews. The report by Veszprém County from May 23 of that year included the following Jewish families *in opido* Pápa: Mattias Hussel, Abraham Hussel, Franciscus Moyses, Philipus Jacob, Mattias Hirschel, Joel Löwel, Löwel Hirschel, Josephus Remste, Philipus Marcus, Mathias Marcus, David Wolf. Out of eleven families, five were from Hungary, four moved here from Moravia, the rest from unknown places. In this period many Jewish families moved from Moravia to Hungary; that is how the Hirschel and Wolf families got to Pápa. According to an official report, they were the subjects of a Moravian noble family called Dichrichstein. These Moravian aristocrats obligated the Jews to continue paying taxes to them in return for their patronage even after their departure.

The Jews of Pápa were the subjects of the Counts Eszterházy: they were tenants of the estates, leaseholders of the butcher's shop, the brewery, and measured out beverages...

THE HUNGARIAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE OF 1848/49 AND PÁPA JEWS

March 15, 1848. This is the day when university students and the citizens of Pest achieved national independence and freedom. Although, as the poet wrote: “Crimson blood was not shed – fire was not blazing, except the sacred fire of enthusiasm in the hearts of the patriots”, nevertheless, measures had to be taken for the sake of future safety. Therefore, the National Guard was organized nationwide. On April 11, 1848 the creation of the National Guard was ordered by law. In May of that year, volunteers for the National Guard started to be registered in Pápa as well. The Town Council did not want to accept Pápa Jews, even though the Jewish community of Pápa was already a hundred years old. Since the Council knew that according to the law exceptions could not be made, they decided to appeal immediately to the Ministry, “in order to grant the town exemption from registering and conscripting Israelites among the gentile national guards, since there are some signs of antipathy appearing against Jews in town.”

Soon the Town Council appeared to be contradicting themselves. When László Csányi, government commissioner, ordered some units of the county’s National Guard to the river Dráva to fight against the ethnic minorities that had rebelled, the Town Council of Pápa decided to draft Jews. Eventually, one quarter of the unit marching against the minorities was made up of Pápa Jews, 80 out of 318. On their homecoming after 6 weeks of absence, among others it was duly recorded that the self-sacrifice of the Israelite national guards, “their readiness to defend our homeland should be recorded for posterity to see.” Pápa chief rabbi Leopold (Lipót) Lőw was also among the drafted national guards, boosting the morale of his believers at the Sellye camp in July 1848. This sermon at the camp was published very soon under the title “*Az Isten velünk vagyunk*”, God is with us, recommended to the Pápa national guards, to the highly respected brave comrades. He was accompanied by his loyal friend, Dr. Mór Feitel, and three teachers of the Jewish school: Ignác Blauer, Lipót Ehrenfeld and Manó Singer. On returning from the Dráva, Blauer volunteered for the army and took part in the war of independence from the battle of Schwechat until the surrender of the castle of Komárom, eventually reaching the rank of captain.

Apparently, the emergency caused the people of Pápa to revise their views of the Jewish national guardsmen. When actions took the place of words, the service of Jews was accepted. Moreover, one of the captains in the National Guard demonstrated so much tolerance towards them that, out of consideration for their strict religious observance, he told them on a Friday, after manoeuvres when the Jews were about to go home, to come on Saturday only if they wanted to.

When the Hungarian homeland was in danger, the volunteer National Guard was replaced by the conscript Hungarian Army, the *Honvéd Hadsereg*. Under the influence of a fiery speech by Lajos Kossuth, on July 11, the Parliament voted for the requested 20,000 recruits. Immediately 39 Jewish recruits volunteered in the town of Pápa, all of them young men aged 19-22. When they were sworn in, Leopold Lőw encouraged them to serve the homeland devotedly. On the basis of verified registers and archival data, the following Pápa Jews took part in the War of Independence:

Major József Neumann, Captain Bonyhád Lőwy, Field Rabbi Leopold Lőw, non-commissioned officer Benedek Róth. Rank and file: Lujzi Bonyhád, Jakab Brill, Miksa Deutsch, Sándor Engel, Jonás Fischer, József Fuchs, József Gold, Ignác Goldschmied, Mór Grünbaum, Jakab Haas, Miksa Hercog, Mihály Kohn, Jakab Rosenberg, David Schlesinger, Hermann Gross, Móric Grünbaum, József Herzog, Miksa Herzog, Ignác Klein, Károly Krausz, Ignác Lehner, Móric Lőwy, Móric Salzberger, Paul Schreiber.

The Jewish soldiers and officers from Pápa made a valuable and worthy contribution to the War of Independence.

OUR RABBIS

We are going to light a memorial candle...Let the first flame be lit for servants of the Faith who devoted their life to a profound knowledge of the Torah, propagating the ideas of religion, ethics, and love. Their pious life served as a model for the congregation of believers. They both studied and taught.

In addition to rabbis active in Pápa, we are going to recall the activities of those connected to the local *kehila* of the town by birth or by education, on account of which they all deserve to be commemorated here. The first rabbi of the community mentioned in the register of Jews by the Governor's Council in 1745, was

IZSÁK BERNARDUS.

According to the census there were 73 Jews living in Pápa then.

He was succeeded by R. ZELIG BETTELHEIM.

Among his successors we find WOLF RAPPOPORT

in the 1800s. He was mentioned as the chief rabbi of Pápa in the responsa (Q&A) of his contemporary Yuda Asad. His son

EFRAYIM RAPPOPORT

worked as a *dayan*, and then went to Torna to serve as rabbi. In the 1830s the Paks rabbi

PINCHAS HOROVITZ

was chosen to be the chief rabbi. He was the first to give sermons in Hungarian. In this period, the conflict between progressive and conservative Jews was deepening. R. Horovitz made an attempt at conciliation and called for a rabbinical assembly, inviting rabbis from both sides.

However, the rabbinical assembly of Paks on August 20-21, 1844, was attended by only 25 rabbis. Apart from Lőrinc Schwab from Pest, Schwerin Kohn from Baja, and Oppenheim from Temesvár, there were only rabbis from insignificant communities. The proposal presented by Horovitz might have prevented the schism of Hungarian Jewry... However, it was not accepted. They just decided to continue their discussions in Óbuda in the following year. Due to the unexpected death of Horovitz in 1845, the discussions were cancelled.

The chair of the rabbi in Pápa remained empty.

LIPÓT (LEOPOLD) LÓW

Nagykanizsa rabbi Lipót Lów was elected the rabbi of Pápa in 1846, at the recommendation of Dr. Mór Feitel.

Lipót Lów was born in 1811 in Černahora, Moravia. Despite his foreign (Moravian) roots, he spoke excellent Hungarian. He was one of the first rabbis in Hungary with an academic education and a highly respected authority in Hungarian public life, both in politics and scholarship.



The spirit of Enlightenment had already penetrated ghetto walls when Lipót Lów, a fighter for reforms, moved over with a multitude of believers from the Salétrom Street Schul to the Zsidó Street (called Petőfi Street today) huge "hall temple", marking the occasion with a patriotic sermon in Hungarian. The synagogue, built in the renaissance style of Florence, with two balconies, was constructed with the support of Pápa's patron Count Pál Eszterházy, who contributed 100,000 bricks to the project.

The synagogue was consecrated by the new rabbi. He recited verses from the psalms; however, the basic message to the Lord of Heavens uttered by the Pápa rabbi burst forth from a Hungarian soul, as follows: שבור זרוע רשע "Break the arm of the wicked" (Psalms 10:15), an allusion to Austrian oppression.

The fervent patriotic sermons of the famous rabbi were so influential that on Shabbat even the older students of the Protestant Theological Seminary used to go to the synagogue to listen to him. This is how Lów was remembered by Károly Eötvös, the great defence lawyer of the Tiszaeszlár blood libel and a former Pápa student, who became later the "*Vajda*" [leader, governor]: "He used to teach Hebrew at the Protestant Seminary, and Hungarian language to old and young Jews." (*Magyar alakok* by Károly Eötvös, 1904, pp. 4-9)

In addition to teaching Hungarian language to Jewish youth, as a good rabbi he also set up a modern yeshiva. Among others, he taught the father of Henrik Marcali, the great master of Hungarian historiography: he was called Mihály Morgenstern, and became the rabbi of Marcali. The young rabbinical student had come from the orthodox city of Pozsony/Pressburg [now Bratislava – Ed.] to Pápa, to learn from "the most liberal rabbi" of the age, thereby incurring the wrath of his father.

Lów was a leading campaigner for Jewish emancipation. In April 1848 he met the writer Lajos Kuthy, a departmental head of Batthiány's Ministry, in the reception room of the Székesfehérvár County Hall. They talked about the issue of Jewish emancipation, which had been put off by the government up to that point. Lajos Kuthy, the son of a Protestant minister, listened to the rabbi with growing sympathy: apparently Lów had nothing in common with those pitiful characters drawn by Kuthy in his antisemitic book entitled "*Hazai rejtelmek*". He was amazed to see how Lów, radiating dignity and greatness of mind, listed the demands of Hungarian Jewry: openly, firmly, with a captivating reasoning, and soberness befitting a Hungarian statesman.

There were signs of great historical events to happen. The National Guard was set up throughout the country at the fervent call of Lajos Kossuth. Lipót Lőw was among the mobilized national guards. At the Sellye camp, he boosted the morale of his believers with his sermon, which was immediately published under the title "*God is with us*". In 1849 the Hungarian government fled to Debrecen and in its Declaration of Independence announced their secession from the Habsburg dynasty and the formation of an Independent Hungarian Republic.

On May 31, 1849, celebrating the Declaration of Independence, Lőw in his sermon spoke highly of the great day. In July of that year, General Artur Görgey [1818-1916, Hungarian army officer, who conducted the surrender after the defeat – the translator] asked Captain Vajda for the manuscript of the sermon.

After the defeat, Lipót Lőw, despite his sickness, was taken to Pest and held prisoner in *Újépület* from October 18 to December 15 by the judges of Haynau for his activities as a field rabbi and for his thanksgiving service in honour of the Declaration of Independence. He barely escaped the gallows at the last moment.

After his release he did not return to Pápa; he became the chief rabbi of Szeged instead...

Dr. SALAMON BREUER (1850-1926)

The young scholar was chosen by the Münz community to be their rabbi. While serving there, he kept in lively intellectual contact with outstanding rabbis in Hungary, thereby drawing the attention of the Pápa community which invited the 26 year-old rabbi and elected him unanimously.

Dr. Lehmann, a rabbi and a popular novelist writing about Jews, introduced his young friend to Dr. Samson Raphael Hirsch, the chief rabbi of Frankfurt. Breuer became engaged to the young daughter of Hirsch, and came to Pápa with his wife to occupy the seat of the chief rabbi in 1876.

A large congregation and a huge synagogue with two galleries welcomed him in town. On the one hand, it was a sacred community of excellent Talmud scholars; on the other, reform ideas were on the rise. The pious respected his personality; they knew he would lead his community in the spirit of the Torah. He started his activities by setting up a yeshiva, which brought him nationwide fame. In line with modern thinking, he also decided to start a Jewish secondary school for modern languages and sciences. When it was opened in Pápa in 1878, it was the first modern Jewish school in the country. It had 47 students in its first and last year, since, unfortunately, it closed for lack of funding.

He was an excellent speaker, exerting a profound influence on his audience of believers by his fervent words, imbued with warmth and affection. His achievements were great; the whole community came literally under his spell. They could see for themselves that on the pulpit they were facing a dedicated fighter for the sacred idea of the Torah, permeated by its justice, a man who was not afraid of anything in his pious work, standing up for his principles against all. His opponents considered his activities to be a threat to the unity of the community but noting the unselfish zeal of this strong personality, they surrendered.

When his father-in-law died, the Frankfurt community chose the Pápa rabbi. This honour could not be refused, so to the sorrow of his followers he left Pápa...

MOSHE ARYE ROTH

Eperjes rabbi M. A. Roth was elected to occupy the rabbinical seat that had become vacant. A highly educated rabbi, blessed with a noble, charitable heart, a wide intellectual horizon and experience, he instinctively realized the need for a school where Jewish students could deepen their religious and secular education after the elementary level. So, in addition to maintaining the yeshiva, he set up a school called *Etz Chayim* in 1893, where boys learnt Talmud in the morning and secular subjects in the afternoon, according to a prescribed curriculum. At the end of the academic year, the students took private examinations at the public junior high school.



Chief Rabbi Moshe Arye Roth

Beyond his intensive and blessed local activities, he earned himself nationwide fame by joining the Zionist movement. He appeared at the Zionist Congress, where Herzl showed great sympathy towards him, as is noted in Herzl's memoirs. This led to a series of attacks on him, and on his return home he explained his views and did all he could to dispel misunderstandings in a book on the Zionist idea from an orthodox angle. In this book, published under the title "*Der Zionismus vom Standpunkte der jüdischen Orthodoxie*", he opposed those who refused cooperation with the allegedly non-religious elements, referring to the most highly respected rabbinical authorities abroad in his support. He wrote about his impressions of the Congress, where he had met brothers from all corners of the diaspora. He spoke with enthusiasm especially about those elements of non-religious background who found their way back to Judaism through the movement of Jewish "renaissance". "I had the most intense feeling of joy and jubilation resonating in me when one of the delegates first spoke to me in Hebrew in the Congress hall, giving me the opportunity to answer him in Hebrew. Nevertheless, I was filled with pain realizing the scattered condition of Jewry, when the delegates had to speak different languages. The bond of a national tongue uniting nations had been lost for us. When we meet our brothers, we do not

understand one another. On the other hand, when I saw Talmud scholars, sages of the Torah in the Congress hall, I felt that Israel was not a deserted widow after all."

Great courage was needed for an orthodox rabbi in Hungary to raise the banner of an idea that was a novelty and accordingly, met with suspicion everywhere. However, Chief Rabbi Roth was a man of principles. Before starting to work as a rabbi, Roth was a landowner, refusing to accept the *hetter* from the *Tzaddik* of Sanz concerning work on Shabbat. On a visit to him, the *Tzaddik* asked him: "*Sind Sie das der Jüd, der von mein Heter keinen Gebrauch macht?*" When he replied yes, he was seated at the place of honour and the chassidim were amazed to see what great respect the *Tzaddik* was paying to this *datsch* in a top hat.

The rabbis, referred to by Herzl as *Protest Rabbiner*, came not only from reform circles; after the publication of the pamphlet by the Pápa rabbi, a whole series of protests was launched by the Hungarian orthodox rabbis against Zionism propagated by the visionary Rav Roth. They criticized R. Roth also for the *chutzpah* to write that he was sorry that the Rambam did not include the *mitzva* of *yishuv Eretz Yisrael* in the 613 commandments. The offensive was directed by Joshua Silberstein, the rabbi of Vác; in the homiletical periodical *Tel-Talpiot* he called on orthodox rabbis to make a stand against Zionism. 129 rabbis joined the protest drafted by the Hunsdorf, Huszt and Vác rabbis.

However, Dr. Roth did not despair. In order to counter the campaign, he published a manifesto under the title *kol-kore*, asking the public to support the *Mizrachi* movement. Unfortunately, it fell on deaf ears. Only one rabbi had the courage to join the movement openly: it was the rabbi of Kolozsvár/Cluj, Moshe Glasner.

In 1903, the Congress of the *Mizrachi* movement was founded in Pozsony/Bratislava, at the call of chief rabbi Roth. The executive committee included chief rabbi M. A. Roth, Samu Bettelheim, András Rónai, and Béla Österreicher...

Apparently he took the constant attacks too much to heart (even his students were alienated from him), so in the end he had to follow medical advice and give up attending to the sacred cause in which he had invested all his strength. He died of heart disease on *Marcheshvan* 24, 5666.

His memoirs, informal and interesting as they are, reveal the spiritual events of a beautiful life, with the faith and sincerity that filled the soul of Chief Rabbi Roth.



The gravestone of Chief Rabbi Moshe Arye Roth

SAMUEL GOTTLIEB

The death of Moshe Arye Roth was followed by an interval of two decades in which they were unable to find a suitable rabbi deserving of the rabbinical seat of Pápa. In the meantime *dayanim* fulfilled rabbinical tasks as well; Moshe Link, the former rabbi of Nemesszalók and R. Mihály Pressburger, both members of the rabbinical court, performed that role.



Chief Rabbi Samuel Gottlieb

Following prolonged quarrels in the community, Tolcsva chief rabbi SAMUEL GOTTLIEB occupied the seat of the chief rabbi at Pápa in 1927. He was a scholar and an excellent speaker, first serving as a rabbi at Sebeskellemes, where he published his *halachic* work. His other writings remained unpublished.

The chassidim, who were in the minority at the time Gottlieb was elected, invited the former rabbi of Bánfihunyad, Jakab Grünwald to Pápa, and formed a separate congregation. The separation and the disputes embittered the life of the holy rabbi (Gottlieb) to such an extent that after barely two years of service, he returned his noble soul to the Lord. After his death in 1931, his son-in-law, Jakab Haberfeld was elected. He came to Pápa from a Viennese orthodox community, and was the son of the Nagytapolcsány *rosh bet-din*. He served in Pápa until the Shoah.

He shared the fate of the Auschwitz martyrs, together with his family and community.

RABBIS WITH ROOTS IN PÁPA

Let us remember those rabbis and famous rabbinical scholars that came from Pápa:

JOSHUA BUXBAUM

was the son of Reb Yosef Buxbaum, the *shochet* and *baal t'filah* of Pápa. A *tzaddik* leading a holy life, he was the famous rabbi of Galánta, and head of the Galánta yeshiva, which was well-known all over the country. His great host of students gather each year in Israel for his *azkarah*, to remember their great Rabbi who perished, together with his family and community, in Auschwitz. His memory was commemorated by the book *Pene Yoshua*, published by his students.

MOSHE ECKSTEIN

the rabbi of Vágszered was also a native of our town. He was the son of R. Hermann Eckstein, who was the member of a rabbinical court. He was born in 1891, attended elementary and junior high school in his hometown. He started his religious studies at the Tapolcsány yeshiva, then he continued at the Orthodox Rabbinical Seminary of Pozsony/Pressburg where he was an excellent student, and an outstandingly brilliant speaker. The Talmud scholars and the householders of Pressburg were delighted by his speeches. He was elected to be the rabbi of the long-established community in Vágszereda, where he headed a large yeshiva. When the Upper Province (*Felvidék*) was reannexed to Hungary, he became the chairman of the National Organization of Slovakian Communities. He perished as a martyr at Majdanek. His only surviving daughter is married to Mayor Weinberger of Bne-Brak.

REB ORE PRESSBURGER

served in Pápa as the rabbi of the *Shiur Chevra* for a long time and was a prominent speaker. Later on he was elected by the Bonyhád Orthodox community to be their rabbi.

REB LEML SPITZER

was the teacher and the preacher of the *Etz Chayim Association* at Pápa, elected by the Szepesváralja community to be their rabbi.

Dr. ISAAC PAP PFEIFFER

the chief rabbi of Monor, was also from Pápa. He was a rabbi, a poet, and a leading member of *Maccabee*, first serving at Sümeg, then at Pécs. He was the son of the principal Mór Pfeiffer. In accordance with his father's wish, he did not accept the post of the chief rabbi of Sweden that had been offered to him, since Stockholm did not agree to his conditions concerning ritual practices. He was an excellent translator of the Bible. His name was well known throughout the country because of his numerous articles, such as *Lélekláng*, *Találkozás az Úrral*, etc. The Zionist speeches of the young rabbinical student left their mark on the soul of his young listeners at Pápa.

Dr. ERNŐ DISHON

chief rabbi, the son of Hermann Deutsch from Bástya Street, also brought honour to Pápa. He was born in 1886 in Pápa. His mother was the daughter of Jakob Chayim Schwarcz, the rabbi of nearby Adásztevel and the sister of Dr. Adolf Schwarcz, a world-famous scholar and the Rector of the Rabbinical Seminary in Vienna. He studied and received a *smichah* in the seminary under the auspices of his uncle. He was elected rabbi of Karánsebes, then Brassó. During the First World War he served as a field rabbi. His blessed and selfless work for the cause of Jewish refugees is legendary. He was an ardent Zionist. He wrote several studies about modern Hebrew literature, which were published. At an advanced age, he moved to his children in Israel. He ended his blessed life in Jerusalem.

Chief rabbi JAKOB MOSHE DEUTSCH

was born in Magyargencs, near Pápa. His father had a grocery store there. He studied in Pápa. Already at a young age he showed inexhaustible industry. His teachers in the Pozsony/Pressburg yeshiva spoke highly of his prospects.

First, he was elected rabbi of Nemesszalók near Pápa, and then he became the rabbi of Pásztó, where he set up a yeshiva. After the death of rabbi Jungreis, the Abaújszántó community chose R. Deutsch to occupy their vacant rabbinical seat. He enlarged the yeshiva, which was different from other provincial yeshivas: sons of well-to-do parents were sent here even from far-away places. He pointed out proudly that among his students there was the son of one of their teachers, which was unusual then. He made great efforts to raise the intellectual and ethical standards for members of the community.

Before the outbreak of the Second World War, he may have been the only orthodox rabbi who considered physical education necessary for Jewish youth. Yeshiva students of Abaújszántó could study half a day and train for agricultural labour half a day on one of the nearby Jewish estates. In 1944 he was sent to the Kassa/Kosice ghetto and was rescued from there. However, he did not have the chance to enjoy his freedom for long: in 1945, he passed away in Switzerland. Almost a quarter of a century later, his remains were brought to Israel and put to rest in the hallowed ground of Jerusalem, together with his wife

Chief Rabbi Dr. HENRY E. IMRE KRAUS,

a native of our town, occupies an eminent place among rabbis abroad who came from Hungary. He started his studies at Pápa, continued at the Rabbinical Seminary of Budapest, where he received his *smichah* in 1940. Two years before becoming a rabbi, he had already received a doctorate at the faculty of humanities of the University of Budapest.

While he was still a rabbinical student, the Siklós community elected him to be their rabbi. He served there as the chief rabbi of three and a half districts in Baranya County until the deportation. He went through the death-camps: Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Magdeburg, and Flossenbürg were the stations of his sufferings. In 1945 he was liberated by the American army. He returned to Hungary where he was elected to be the chief rabbi of Kaposvár, town and district both. His excellent qualities were recognized when he was chosen for the five-member Executive Committee of the Rabbinical Seminary and for the Executive Board of the National Bureau of Hungarian Israelites.

In 1956, he left the country and immigrated to the USA. First, he was chosen to be the rabbi of the Beth Torah community of Gardena, Los Angeles; then, in 1969, he was invited by the large community of Temple Beth Ami Covina, which had one of the most beautiful synagogues in California, in addition to splendid community buildings. After three years of zealous and dedicated service he was offered life-tenure, which is a rare honour in the USA. In 1960 he earned an M.A. in Hebrew Literature: it was the first time at that university that someone could earn such a degree after barely 3 years of learning English.

He was elected to be the Vice President for the Association of American Conservative Rabbis in the Western States, in recognition of his intensive work in the field of religious life.

His devotion to Israel was reflected not only in his Friday night sermons, but also in organizing a large group of his congregants for a pilgrimage to Israel, and accompanying them as their guide.

DR. SAMUEL KRAUSZ, professor

He was one of the most significant scholars whose life-work belongs to universal Jewish scholarship. A native of the village Ukk near Pápa, he was connected to Pápa by the years of his religious studies.

He attended the Pápa Yeshiva under the leadership of Rabbi Salamon Breuer. As a result, he had a solid basis in Talmud and Hebrew when he went to the Rabbinical Seminary. In 1893 he became the Hebrew teacher of the National Israelite Teacher Training College (Országos Izraelita Tanítóképző). In 1905, he started teaching at the Rabbinical Seminary of Vienna, where he became the principal in 1936, succeeding Rector Adolf Schwarcz of Pápa. He worked here until the Anschluss. He managed to escape from the hell of hatred and got to Cambridge. In 1948 he passed away.

He did pioneering work in publishing his *Griechische und Lateinische Lehrwörter*, an etymological dictionary of words of Greek and Latin origin in the Talmud and in the Midrash.

The *Talmudische Archeologie*, another often-quoted major work by him, offers an inside view into Jewish life in Eretz Yisrael and Babylon. Anyone wishing to become familiar with the Talmudic period in terms of attire, family life, agriculture, industry, commercial life, entertainment, schools and studies, can find all this in Krausz's book.

He had strong ties to Eretz Yisrael. He first came on a visit in 1905, and in 1933 he gave a lecture at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem as a guest lecturer.

His last book, *Synagogale Altertümer*, is interspersed with nostalgic childhood reminiscences.

RABBI Dr. ANDOR KLEIN

Although he was not a native of Pápa, he was connected to the town through his grandparents who lived there, and for most of his schooling. When it was time to get married, he also took his young wife from here to Abony where he served as a rabbi. However, their happiness did not last for long: the beloved spouse, Bözsi Schossberger from Pápa, died soon and was laid to rest in the Pápa cemetery.

Because of the prevailing anticlerical attitude of the Rákosi period, he left Abony for the USA, where after a few months, he was offered a rabbinical post at the Temple Bnei Yisrael in Kearny, New Jersey. He served here devotedly until his death on July 8, 1967.

Several of his philosophical and theological writings were published, and he was awarded an M.A. from Yale University. He was an active member of the World Jewish Congress. During the massive wave of refugees in 1956, he became the rabbi of Jewish refugees from Hungary in the USA.

He was very popular. At his funeral, the town's mayor also spoke highly of him.

Paying tribute to his memory, we commemorate the grandson of Uncle Franck from Pápa as well.

DAYANIM

The term above was originally applied to judges. The 71 members of the Great Sanhedrin, the 23-member body of the rabbinical court under that, and the three rabbis of the *bet din* on the lower level were all *dayanim*. Later on the rabbi's deputy in charge of ritual matters was called a *dayan*, and his sphere of authority was usually defined by the statutes of the community.

In general, Pápa *dayanim* served in the three-member rabbinical court, and took turns giving popular lectures at the *Shiur* Association (in *Bet Hamidrash*).

The profound learning of these judges or *maggids* (preachers) of Pápa was often recognized by their being offered rabbinical posts at famous communities. For example,

JÓZSEF KUTNA

the author of several *halachic* works, and a Pápa *dayan* until 1830, became the Telek rabbi for 10 years and then served as a rabbi at Tata until his death.

EFRAYIM RAPAPORT

the son of Pápa rabbi Wolf Rapaport, served as a *dayan* at Pápa and became the rabbi of Torna. He was mentioned in the book by Yehuda Asad.

The collection of responsa by this famous rabbi also contains the name of

MOSHE MORDECHAI PSERHOFER

who was a Pápa *dayan*, then got the rabbinical post of Fraukirchen [in Hungarian Boldogasszony, one of the *Sheva Kehilot* – the translator], after which he was chosen to be the rabbi of Szeréd.

The collection of responsa above also mentions Pápa *dayan*

YITZHAK BODANSZKY

who served in the 1880s.

YISRAEL EPSTEIN

is mentioned in a book published by the Chatam Sofer, the founder of the Pressburg/Pozsony rabbinical dynasty.

The memory of Pápa *dayan*

RAV MOSHE YOSEF HOFFMAN

is deeply cherished. He was a *tzaddik* of whom it was said that did not sleep in a bed from one Shabbat to another. He was born in 1843, was a student of the Chatam Sofer, and after 35 years of service at Pápa he left his well-paid job in order to move to Jerusalem at the age of 60. (When he said farewell, he threw his top-hat out of the window of the train, and his wife also threw her hat out, saying they would not need such things anymore.) He lived in the Holy Land until his death, meditating on the Torah day and night. Even at the age of 90, he went to the *Kotel* every night for the midnight prayer, to ask for the redemption of Zion and for the *binyan* of the *Bet*

Hamikdash. His memory is commemorated by the *Bet Hamidrash* founded by him, in one of the buildings in the *Batey Ungarim* of Jerusalem.



Rav Moshe Josef Hoffman

MORDECHAI EHRENGRUBER

was the preacher of the Shiur Association at Pápa. From there he went to Varanno, where he headed a large yeshiva and was called the Popener Rav. His book *Machalot Yosef* was published there.

AVRAHAM STERN

was the son of the secretary of the Stern chevra in Pápa. Avraham became the *dayan* of Érsekújvár and the author of halachic writings.

AHARON (REB ORE) PRESSBURGER

served at Pápa as *Yoshev Ohel*, then became the rabbi of Bonyhád and served there until the deportations.

MOSHE LINK

became the rabbi of Nemesszalók after the death of his father-in-law, when he was chosen to be a *dayan* at Pápa, where he served until his death.

MIHÁLY PRESSBURGER,

the son of a Mattersdorfer/Nagymarton *dayan*, and the son-in-law of Rav Weinberger of Dunaszerdahely, first served as a rabbi at Erdőbénye, and then became the rabbi's deputy at Pápa, where he worked until the deportations.

BAALEY T'FILAH

By chief *chazan* Károly Löwy, London



Chief *chazan* Lazar Löwy

Grandfather was the first *chazan* in my life and my most highly valued teacher of *chazanut*. This is how I remember him: a patriarchal figure, with a flying grey beard, his features possessing an air of noble simplicity, typical of Rembrandt's portraits of rabbis in Amsterdam. He had a natural tenor voice with a very special ring. He was a master of coloratura as well, sounding like pearls.

I always spent school holidays in my grandparents' home and usually stayed with them for the High Holy Days. My grandfather never gave me lessons in *chazanut*, yet I learnt from him more than from my subsequent teachers. Listening to his performances, to his interpretations of prayer texts was the best training possible. The synagogue of Pápa was an awe-inspiring building, and there were not many provincial communities that could boast of having something as majestic as that. It was built in the style of cathedrals, with a double line of columns and many arches.

When my grandfather was leading the service, his voice seemed to echo from all the corners of the temple, although he never had a choir to accompany him. His melodious voice and correct rhythm created such perfect harmony that his audience felt it was listening to several voices simultaneously.

He served the Pápa community for 40 years and in 1931, the Hungarian Royal Ministry of Education and Culture sent him a letter acknowledging his long and faithful service to the Pápa community. The "chief *chazan*", as he was affectionately called, was one of the most popular people in town. When on a Shabbat or a holiday afternoon he put on his white waistcoat with the

gold chain, his fashionable coat (*ferencjóska*) and top-hat, and went for a *walk along the Main Street of the town, he was greeted affectionately by all. His admirers shook his hand and expressed their appreciation for his beautiful singing that day.*

After the Second World War in 1945, I was chosen to be a *chazan* in Budapest. Together with Győr chief rabbi Dr. Akiva Eisenberg (now the chief rabbi of Vienna) we were invited for the re-consecration of the synagogue at Pápa. It was painful to enter the temple that had been defiled by the German hordes. Only the bare walls bore witness to the barbaric destruction. It was a terrible sight to see the gap on the eastern wall, instead of the ark with the holy scrolls of the Torah. The once-flourishing community was destroyed to an even greater extent; there were only a few young men left who had survived the terrors of the forced labour camps, and a few women who returned home after suffering in the death camps.

During the re-consecration ceremony, the small number of believers that were left had to sit on simple wooden benches because the benches of the temple had been burnt. The town mayor and the invited church officials of other religions were deeply embarrassed, trying in vain to look surprised and innocent. It was a simple ceremony. In a passionate speech, Chief Rabbi Dr. Eisenberg recalled the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, a catastrophe that was caused by groundless hatred, as the sages said. I recited the *Yizkor* prayer for the souls of our brethren who had been taken and sanctified the holy name. Sobbing and broken hearted, we left after the sad ceremony which had been interrupted from time to time by gusts of wind, blowing through the gaping holes. Since then the temple has stayed empty. There are no believers.

My grandfather passed away before the Shoah. I will always remember him with feelings of gratitude and admiration.

Besides rabbis and *dayanim*, *chazanim* and *baalei t'filah* also carried out a sacred mission. The melodious voice of REB YOSEF LEB NEUMANN

was remembered by Pápa old-timers for many years. He served in a puritanical era when the precentor was referred to as a *shammash* instead of a *chazan*. The *Shammash* Neumann – really and truly a *shammash*, a faithful, zealous and devoted servant of God. It was recorded about him that during his decades of service he never made a mistake when reading from the Torah. Not only was the recital of the text perfect, the cantillation was also strictly according to the tradition.

He was an expert *mohel*, initiating thousands of Pápa children into the *brit* of Abraham. In addition, he was an expert *sofer*, Pápa householders were competing for his beautifully written scrolls.

In the picture (right) you can see three of his martyred grandsons, Vilmos, Zoltán and Hugó Neumann, the observant children of his son Benő Neumann, with their mother.



Among those *baalei t'filah* who served the community for decades and enjoyed popularity were

VIKTOR SCHIFFER,

who later immigrated to the USA,

DAVID STEIN,

eternally searching for truth, who observed *kashrut* despite starvation while a prisoner of war in Russia during World War I,



Chazan David Stein

ABRAHAM KRAUSZ,

the warm-hearted jester, and

TZODEK STEIN,

our last *baal t'filah*, who literally died of starvation at a forced labour camp.

May these holy *baalei t'filah* intercede on our behalf in Heavens for Divine favor to send peace upon us and upon all Israel.



The last chazzan of Pápa, Tzodek Stein, who starved to death while on labour service

IG. L. MARTON

Iceg Leb Marton was born in the middle of the 19th century in Pápa. He was the first Jew to study at the local Protestant High School (*Ref. Kollégium*), and he passed his final exams there. It created a sensation when at the 50 years' reunion the former students included a Catholic priest, a Protestant minister, and a rabbi, 'Uncle' Marton.



He received his religious education at the *yeshiva* of chief rabbi Dr. Salamon Breuer. He started out in business as an accountant at the flour business of the famous community president Adolf Löwenstein.

When he was appointed by the community to be in charge of the religious education for high school students, he carried out the job with boundless enthusiasm for four decades. Besides being the religious education teacher, he was a real spiritual leader for the Jewish students of the Protestant High School (*Ref. Kollegium*), of the Benedictine High School (*Bencés Gimnázium*), of the Girls' Public School (*Állami Polgári Leányiskola*) and of the Protestant Girls' Educational Institute (*Ref. Nőnevelő Intézet*). It was his achievement, and also attributed to his influence that his students could participate every Shabbat at 11 a.m. in the youth services he organized.

In the upper grades of the Jewish public school, students received intensive religious education, and were required to participate in the services every day. Uncle Marton's name was legendary. His reach went beyond the youth; he also worked with adults. When he found out that someone had desecrated Shabbat by opening his store, he did not stop arguing zealously until the man closed down the shop.

When Chief Rabbi Moshe Arye Roth got back from the Zionist Congress of Basel and founded in Pápa the first religious Zionist association in Hungary called *Chovevei Zion*, Uncle Marton became its first secretary. He organized Zionist ceremonies, he himself reciting poems by Morris Rosenfeld, who was very popular at the time.

Later, when the association of Jewish students was founded in Pápa (*Pápai Zsidó Diákok Egyesülete*), he appeared amongst the circle of his beloved students every Saturday night, lecturing on the Bible.

He remained the president of the *Chevra Kadisha* until his death at the age of 90. It was justly said that he was the most devoted president of the *Chevra* ever. Although already 90 years old, bent with age, he was still present at every funeral, taking special care to proceed with the ceremony according to the sacred tradition. He was not only the leader; he himself took an active part, and when he was collecting for charity with the box in his hand, thundering in his familiar voice *tzedokoh tatzil mimoves*, no eye remained dry.

At Rosh Hashanah he was always the *baal t'filah* of the big temple. Anyone who heard his sobbing voice reciting *Zechor Bris Slichos*, would remember it all his life.

A man of integrity and knowledge, he had a nation-wide reputation, and was elected for the 100-member committee of the National Bureau of Orthodox Jewry; for a time he served as the secretary of the committee as well.

He had no sons; one of his daughters was married to the *dayan* of the Frankfurt orthodox community. His grandson, Shimon Posen, was chosen by the Sopron orthodox community to be their rabbi.

His other son-in-law, Benjamin Buxbaum, was the principal of the Jewish school at Cluj/Kolozsvár. His last years were brightened by the company of his granddaughter Reneé Buxbaum and her husband, *chazan* Géza Stein.

The memory of this *Ish Yehudi Emet* will live forever in the heart of his students and devotees.

AISHET CHAYIL...

Those Pápa women who were the spouses of rabbis, helping their husbands in their work, deserve to be commemorated here:

Nyíregyháza chief rabbi Dr. Béla Bernstein took his wife from the distinguished Korein family.

The wife of Hamburg chief rabbi Dr. Spitzer was the daughter of Nathan Rechnitzer, a *talmid chacham* and a respectable linen dealer in Pápa.

The spouse of Miskolc chief rabbi Sámuel Austerlitz was the daughter of Pápa chief rabbi Moshe Arye Róth.

R. Posen, the chief rabbi of Frankfurt, married the daughter of religious education teacher I. L. Marton.

Abony rabbi Dr. Andor Klein married Bözsi Schosberger, who died young.

Szabadka chief rabbi Dr. Bernáth Singer married his wife from the Weltner family in Pápa.

Budapest rabbi Zev Eckstein married the daughter Pápa *dayan* Zvi Eckstein.

OUR TEMPLE...

**When life is getting harder,
Slumber will be heavy,
For my compensation
Heavens I must levy.**

**The sound of bygone prayers
Summon up the past
I guessed they were all stone dead
But no, just sleeping fast.**

**Now the temple's empty,
My haunted soul is low,
Swarmed by memories
Within, it feels hollow.**

By Sándor Löwenstein, Tel-Aviv

The small community, founded in 1749, had a prayer-house in one of the side streets of Bástya Utca (utca = street). As a temple they used a certain part of the complex that was later known as the Ungár mansion. The spacious complex had an apartment for the rabbi, and another one for the *shochet* or the *melamed*. The community was steadily growing, and the believers thought it was time to build a new temple, leaving the modest prayer-house in Salétrom Utca. A huge plot was purchased in Iskola Utca (today Petőfi Utca). The Protestant Church District had its High School and theological seminary located in the same street.

Count Pál Eszterházy, the patron of Pápa, contributed 100,000 bricks to the project of building a new temple. The temple was built in the neoclassical style, with some Florentine influence. The so-called synagogue chamber was simple, without any ornaments or steeple-like structures. It had entrances on three sides, with the main entrance opening from the temple courtyard. The door in the middle led to the men's section. Above the entrance there was a Biblical quotation:

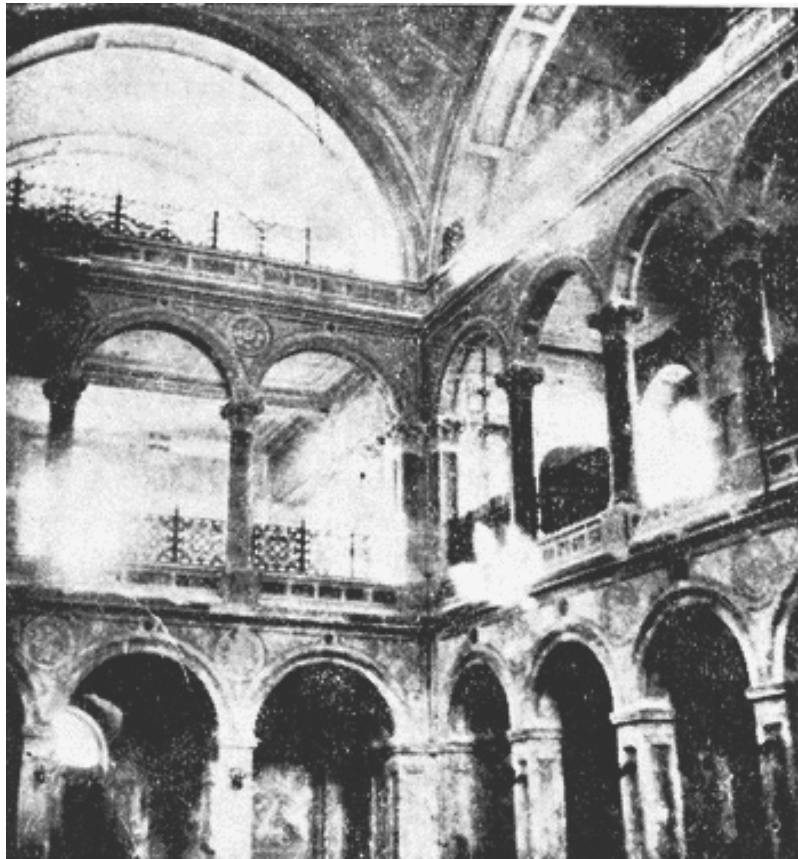
יעשו לי מקדש, ושכנתי בתוכם

"They shall make a Sanctuary for me so that I may live among them." (Exodus 25:8)

Doors on the the left and on the right lead to the *ezrat nashim*, the women's section. Going up the marble staircase, you can get to the women's gallery on the first and second floors. If you enter from Petőfi Utca steps lead to the left-wing of the men's section, with gilded letters above the monumental door-leaf proclaiming:

זה שער השמים צדיקים יבואו בו

"This is the gate of Heaven, the righteous shall enter it."



In addition, there was a third door on the left, but it was kept closed most of the time: the marble stairs leading there served as a cosy place for children's games. (We could not wish for a better place to play our holiday games with walnuts and carob seeds.)

The large synagogue had two galleries and main hall could seat 800 men. It was constructed according to the plans of progressive-minded officials, with the *bimah* in front of the ark and a recess for an organ to be set up later on the second floor. (That point was never reached.) The *bimah* in front of the ark became a bone of contention: it was the *only* orthodox temple in the country with the *bimah* not in the center, as prescribed by the *Shulchan Aruch*. There were rabbis who refused to occupy the position of the chief rabbi at Pápa for this reason. R. Shimon Sofer, an outstanding member of the Pozsony rabbinical dynasty, who became later the chief rabbi of Kraków, wrote a letter to the community of Pápa in 1856, saying: "I cannot accept the offered rabbinical seat because of your failure to fulfil my request to place the *bimah* in the center."

Above the ark, glittering letters proclaim:

דע לפני מי אתה עומד. שיויתי ה' לנגדי תמיד

"Be aware in front of whom you stand. I always keep God in sight."

There were 40-45 Torah scrolls in the ark. To the left and to the right there were niches for the rabbis and the *dayanim*. There were three-four seats on both sides of the ark. The silver bowl and jug for the *kohanim* to wash their hands before blessing the congregation were set on a separate table. The pulpit was placed in front of the ark, and it was covered with white silk for the

mazkir, instead of the usual wine-red silk. Only the elected rabbi was entitled to speak from here; visiting rabbis could preach only from the gallery next to the ark.

The temple was made up of three sections. From the main entrance we got into the vestibule with the memorial tablet of local Jewish heroes from the First World War. Memorial candles were lit here on their *yahrzeit*.

A *Schuldiner* was in charge of silence in the synagogue, his official hat bearing the inscription *Pápai aut. Orth. Izr. Hitközség*, the Autonomous Orthodox Israelite Community of Pápa.

Later on a group of the faithful started a campaign, to change the originally "neolog" arrangement, despite the fact that for seven decades the most pious believers had been happy to pray here, together with their rabbis and *dayanim*. Out of the old guard, only Spitzer Reb. Leml, the later Szepesváralja rabbi – at the time serving at Pápa – was notably avoiding this temple. Finally, in 1919, they resolved the dispute by placing a bench in front of the ark and adding a curtain to the bars of the women's gallery; in this way lending the temple an orthodox character.

The temple was not spared during the Holocaust either. Community officials had already made arrangements in 1942 to mark the 100th anniversary of the inauguration of the temple in 1948, on which occasion the widely respected, then 90 year-old Ig. L. Marton was invited to be the celebratory speaker. The plans to celebrate, however, came to nothing. The temple was turned into a stable by German bandits. The benches were chopped up for firewood, the floor disappeared, and the Torah scrolls were desecrated. Only the bare walls remained.

The temple's attic became the home of bats and owls. Our renowned temple was reduced to a storehouse for textile factories in Pápa

With painful tears, we cry out with the beginning words of Psalm 79:

א' באו גוים בנחלתך טמאו היכל קדשך

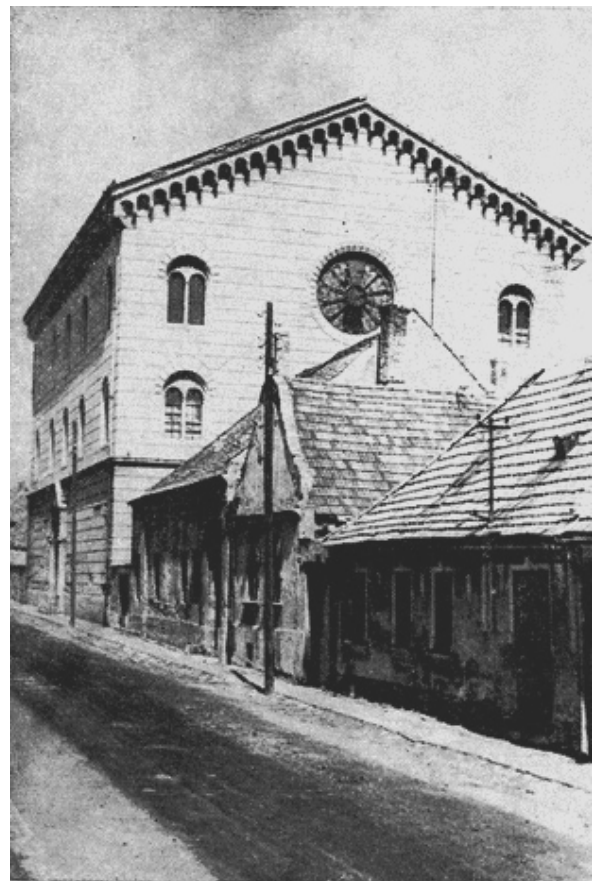
"O God! The nations have entered into Your inheritance, they have defiled the Sanctuary of Your holiness."

Words of lamentation pour forth from us:

על אלה אני בוכה עיני ירדה מים

"For these things do I weep; my eyes flow with tears." (Lamentations 1:16)

Like a rainbow, the unforgettable memory of our beloved sanctuary shines through a cloud of tears.



OUR SCHOOL

There is a story about Yochanan ben Zakkai, whose memory is cherished by ancient tradition. In 70 A. D. he did not beg the Roman general besieging Jerusalem to spare the sacred city, he only asked to be granted the town of Yavne so that he could teach there. Ever since then, Jews living in the Diaspora have considered it their duty of prime importance to set up schools and to teach their children.

There is no record of any public schools that could be found for the first years of the Pápa community. Several decades had to pass for the number of believers to become large enough and their cultural needs to develop. Up to that point, schools were *cheders*, set up by the private initiative and sacrifices of the families concerned. R. Wolf Rapaport, the chief rabbi elected in 1781, already founded a yeshiva, which turned out many famous rabbis.

The first Jewish public school under community supervision was started in 1826. (In Szeged the first Jewish public school was opened on December 22, 1844. The history of the Szentes community boasts of the fact that their school was already functioning in 1841.)

In 1839 members of the community urgently petitioned their officials, stressing the inefficiency of employing only teachers paid by the hour to teach the Hungarian language at the school run by the community. As a result, the officials decided to employ a qualified teacher for teaching the Hungarian language: this is how *Mór Ballagi* got to Pápa. Ballagi, who became later a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the editor of *the* Comprehensive Dictionary of the Hungarian Language, and whose Hungarian-German and German-Hungarian dictionaries appeared in numerous editions, was at the time still called Móric Bloch and as a youngster, had attended the Pápa yeshiva. He continued his studies at the University of Paris. His pamphlet: *About the Jews*, which he wrote there, attracted the attention of the minister Baron József Eötvös, who asked him to come back home, urging him to continue encouraging Jews to get fully Magyarized alongside fostering and developing a religious literature in Hungarian. For this reason, he was assigned the task of Magyarizing the Jewish school in Pápa. His Hungarian prayer book entitled *The Supplications of Israel for the Whole Year* (Izrael könyörgései egész évre) and his Hungarian translation of the Book of Joshua, together with the commentaries, were both written here.

In addition to Ballagi, the nationally famous teacher Béla Vályi was also entrusted with teaching the Hungarian language. In 1840, the community was planning to enlarge the school and Lipót Lőw (the rabbi of Nagykanizsa at the time) was commissioned to set up the school's rules and curriculum. However, the planned project was never realized. In 1846, when Lipót Lőw was chosen to be the chief rabbi of Pápa, he also became the school principal and was striving to invite the best teachers to Pápa. This teaching staff had excellent members: Ignác Baner, Manó Singer. According to contemporary records, he also joined the National Guard. Dr. Samu Zsengeri, the outstanding author on education, who was later commemorated by the memorial tablet on the school wall, was the son of this freedom fighter teacher.

A third teacher, Lipót Ehrenfeld, was also a brave fighter for the idea of Hungarian liberty: he was dispatched to the river Drava to help crush the rebellious minority nationalities.

The innovative ideas of Lipót Lőw failed to succeed, so most parents chose not to enroll their children at the public school, opting for a private school instead, until government commissioner, Antal Hunkár, closed down the private schools. After the defeat of the Hungarian War of Independence, the Bach-era set new directions for the school as well. The Governor's Council in Sopron ordered the school to be reorganized. Specialization was introduced. Teachers were usually employed for only one semester. The language of instruction could have been German, with the syllabus basically supplied by the Austrian curriculum. School fees depended on the parents' financial situation and ranged from 12 kreuzers to 2 forints, determined by the community officials.

A new period in the life of the school began with the 1859/60 school year. From this point on, the practice of employing teachers for only one term stopped. Instead, teachers were employed for three years and after a period of probation, they received tenure.

The Hungarian language regained its previous status. In 1863 an alternating system was introduced, according to which the teacher (form-master) stayed with his class from the first grade until the fifth grade. *Samuel Horovitz, N. Spatz, and Fülöp Klein* were teachers of this period.

From 1875 to 1880, there were two Jewish public schools in Pápa belonging to the two Jewish communities. When the two communities united, the orthodox school took over the teachers from the other school. This is how *Ármin Schor, Mór Öszterreicher, and Franciska Reiner née Rosenthal* got to the schools of the *főhitközség*, the head community, as it was called then.

Apart from the elementary school, the need for a secondary school had long been felt by the Pápa community. This was shown by the first attempt in 1878, at the initiative of chief rabbi Dr. Breuer, to create a Jewish *reáliskola*, a secondary school for modern languages and sciences. In the school year 1878/79 they opened first grade, which had 47 pupils, of which one was Roman Catholic. *Antal Csemegi, Kálmán Vikár, and Ármin Schor* were the teachers. The community could not support the costs of the secondary school so after a year of the experiment the school closed down.

On August 15, 1899, the school board discussed the initiative by Lipót Buxbaum, who "came up with the idea of founding a denominational higher elementary school in the local Jewish community" (*polgári iskola*). Chairman of the school board, József Steiner, made a fine speech supporting the realization of the idea. On August 20, 1899, the board of Pápa Autonomous



**Dayan and religious education teacher
Hermann Eckstein**



Henrick Blau, school principal



Lipót Buxbaum, primary school principal

Orthodox Israelite Community representatives accepted the proposal to set up a denominational higher elementary school for boys, which would accept pupils of other denominations as well, in accordance with the laws of the country. The first teaching staff was: principal Ármin Schor, Henrick Blau, Lipót Buxbaum, József Nussbaum, Mór Pfeiffer, Adolf Shisha (for secular subjects), art teacher David Hercz, *dayan* and religious education teacher Hermann Eckstein, and parish priest Jenő Kriszt, who taught religious education to Roman Catholic pupils. In the first school year, the school had 39 pupils in one class. At this time, that is, in the 1899/1900 school year, there were 169 girls and 206 boys at the elementary school, in separate classes, headed by the following teachers: in the boys' school, Adolf Schischa, first grade, Mór Pfeiffer, second grade, József Nussbaum, third grade, Lipót Buxbaum, fourth grade, while in the girls's school, Mór Öszterreicher, first grade, Róza Seelenfreund née Marton, second grade, Ármin Schor, third grade, and Franciska Rosenthal née Reiner, fourth grade. The children called their male teachers *Tanító úr*, meaning Sir, while addressing women teachers as *Ténsasszony*, meaning Madame.

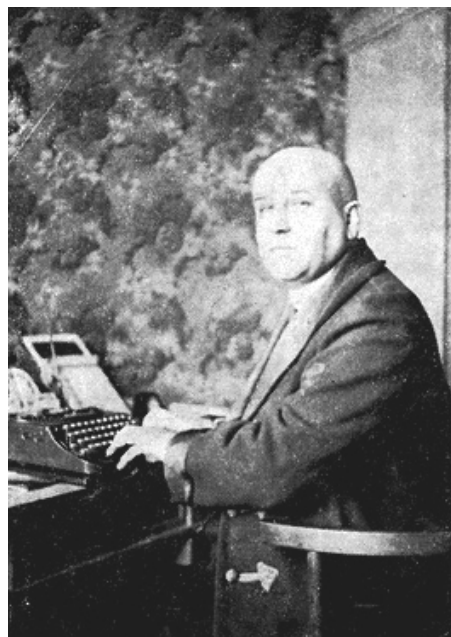
For the purpose of the higher elementary classes, another floor was added to the elementary school building. The school acquired such a good reputation that 40 % of the pupils came from other denominations and in 1913, it had 134 pupils. After the death of Ármin Schor in 1912, Henrick Blau became the principal of the higher elementary school and filled the post until the school closed down. In the school year 1923/24 they had 163 pupils.

The places of teachers paid by the hour were filled by new teachers, who worked as regular teachers from the year in brackets marked after each name: Adolf Faragó (1914), Károly Láng (1918), Lajos Pollák (1921), Izsó Várhelyi (1911), and Andor Bihari (1924). High School teacher Elek Molnár worked here from 1907 until his conscription. In 1926 a one-year special commercial class for boys was added.

Every morning the pupils of the Jewish higher elementary attended the services held in the school's assembly hall turned into a temple, where the *parochet* in front of the ark had a Hungarian text embroidered in Hebrew letters proclaiming that it was a present from the Jewish pupils of the secondary school.

Unjustified absence from services was recorded as a missed class. In order to foster a religious mentality and to advance in Jewish studies, elementary school pupils spent 2 hours a day studying the Bible. In the higher grades, there was an additional two-hour class of Talmudic studies in the afternoon. However, until 1926, elementary school pupils did not cover their heads when learning secular subjects, which was unprecedented on a national scale among orthodox Jewish schools.

Religious education was taught intensively in the higher elementary school as well. They had the following subjects: Bible, with German translation, Psalms, with the classical German translation of Samson Rafael Hirsch, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, Hebrew Grammar, Biblical story in Hungarian, Talmud: *Masechet Beitzah* and *Bava Metzia*. Pupils of the higher elementary school met on Shabbat afternoons in the autumn and winter months, led by their teacher Károly Láng, to read poems on Jewish subjects.



Károly Láng, school teacher

After 30 years, the renowned higher elementary school started to decline. In the school year 1928/29, they had only 103 pupils left. Some of the parents sent their children to – High School, others to yeshiva. As a result, the number of local Jewish pupils barely reached 30 %, so the community deemed the great sacrifice of maintaining the school pointless and decided to close it down. The death knell tolled; around this time teacher Károly Láng wrote to his brother living in the provinces, paraphrasing with resignation the well-known line from Heine: "Keine Messe wird man halten, keinen Kadisch wird man sagen" (*Gedächtnisfeier* by Heine). No mass will be held, and no Kaddish will be said. It was finished. Some of the teaching staff went to the town's vocational school; others went over to the Catholic Higher Elementary School.

However, the elementary school continued until the Shoah swept away the last members of teaching staff, together with their pupils.

The teachers's words teaching love and goodness were silenced; the madness of fascism murdered the children as well. The school building was left abandoned; the prayer after daily studies cannot be heard anymore:

We gratefully thank you, our good God –
 Homewards bound when our feet trod –
 Because we did our job so well –
 Our heart and soul tending as well
 The things we learnt well, grant us,
 God, that at home will be noticed on us,
 So our good parents will be happy and gay,
 And for the glory of your Sacred Name

Amen.

YESHIVAS

Rabbis considered it their sacred duty to educate young people, preparing them in the yeshivas for a strictly religious way of living, teaching them to be pious and well-versed also in the devotional studies. R. Wolf Rapaport, elected in 1781, organized a large yeshiva in Pápa, which turned out outstanding rabbis. Even Lipót Lőw, the great reform-age rabbi had a yeshiva during his short time in Pápa. The father of Henrik Marcali, the great master of Hungarian historiography, was one of his students, and later became the rabbi of Marcali. Mór Ballagi, at the time Móric Bloch, also attended the Pápa yeshiva, later becoming a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

This blessed teaching job of religious education was continued by subsequent leading rabbis Salamon Breuer and M. A. Róth. When the latter made a stand supporting Zionism, the Orthodox rabbis of the period frightened his students away from him, so during his lifetime the yeshiva of Pápa stopped functioning. There was a long interval when the rabbinical seat remained unoccupied and for decades there was no yeshiva in Pápa. Yeshiva life in Pápa was restarted only after the First World War. The yeshiva was reorganized by Ezriel Gestettner, the son-in law of Vilmos Steiner, a respectable community chairman at the time. He was helped by Reb. Avraham Dirnfeld. Both led the yeshiva with great zeal. When the former Tolcsva rabbi Samuel Gottlieb z"l became the chief rabbi of Pápa in 1927, organizing a yeshiva was one of the first things he did. Unfortunately, this Ashkenazi yeshiva ceased to exist after a period of barely two years, when Rabbi Gottlieb died.

When Yechezkel Grünwald z"l, the former Bánfihunyad rabbi moved to Pápa in 1929, he immediately organized a chassidic yeshiva. In a short time, his yeshiva became so famous that the number of students grew to about 300. Strictly chassidic behaviour was required by the superiors, in addition to serious and profound learning. Many of the students continued their studies in Belz, and when they returned to their hometown, they wore chassidic attire. The long coats and beaver hats of the Pápa youngsters attracted great attention in the strictly Ashkenazi community. It is worth recording that when yeshiva students were drafted for forced labour service, Mihály Singer, a clothes dealer in Fő Utca (Main Street) provided for the needs of the destitute free of charge, despite the fact that he himself did not belong to the rabbi's followers. The Holocaust destroyed the Pápa yeshiva as well. Only a handful of the pious students survived, most of who live in Brooklyn with their offspring, devotedly attending the so-called 'Papa yeshiva'.

JEWISH COMMUNITY PRESIDENTS

ADOLF LÖWENSTEIN



He was an outstanding president of the Pápa community for decades.

He was a beloved student of R. Lipót Lów, who served here between 1846-49. When Lów was already in Szeged, they continued to correspond to each other in Hebrew for a long time. The great rabbi called him *ba'al dikduk*.

When Salamon Breuer, later the rabbi of Frankfurt, was in Pápa, Adolf Löwenstein, at the time already holding the post of community president became a most devoted follower of this intransigent orthodox rabbi.

On one occasion the so-called enlightened members of the community achieved majority in a coup, so to say, and gave the rabbi notice. They were afraid that his strictly religious ideals would hinder the realization of their liberal ideas. Adolf Löwenstein led a deputation to minister Trefort, who reinstated Rabbi Breuer in office, under the influence of Löwenstein's convincing arguments. It was rightfully stated by Rabbi Breuer about Löwenstein that the Pápa community president would measure up to the job in Paris as well!

He was an educated man and a strictly religious Jew. However, he wore boots and Hungarian attire. (Why not? If Polish chassids were allowed to wear the rabbit-skin headgear of

Polish nobility, who would forbid the president of the Pápa community, breathing the very spirit of the Hungarian War of Independence, to wear Hungarian attire?)

His wife, the admired Rezl Löwenstein, was a model for pious Jewish women (her grandmother Rochl Tevel founded the first Association of Jewish Women) practising the *mitzvah* of *matan beseter*: when a needy customer visited her flour shop she put the money back into the flour bag of the poor man.

In his last will, Adolf Löwenstein donated a fund for feeding 10 Catholic, 10 Protestant and 10 Jewish destitutes on his *Yahrzeit*, on condition that after the meal the Jews would read out the whole *Birkat hamazon* from the book.

At his funeral, there were six *hajdús* [bailiffs – the translator] with drawn swords, accompanying his coffin.

He brought up his children in a cultured, strictly religious spirit. His son Jakab fulfilled the post of *gabbai* at the community for decades. One of his daughters married Dezső Korein, a committee member and a writer, the founder and the president of the National *Shomrei Shabbat* Association.

His daughter Janka married Vilmos Steiner, the descendent of a famous family in Gyömöre, who was the community president at Pápa for 20 years. His son-in-law Emil Gestettner headed the Pápa yeshiva.

His third daughter married Zsigmond Steiner, a highly respected wholesaler and she presided over the *Hachnasat Kalah* Association until her death. Head of the strictly religious family, Zsigmond Steiner, saved one-tenth of his income for charity. His surviving descendants still respectfully preserve his box for the *maaser*.

His memory is cherished in love and respect by his grandchildren: Sándor Löwenstein (published several memoirs about life in Pápa), his sister Sári, Irma Steiner, the spouse of David Breuer, and László Korein, all of them living in Israel, and Emil Korein, living in South America.

And we, the Jews of Pápa, remember our famous *rashekol* with reverence and blessing.

LÁZÁR BREUER,

befitting the rank of Pápa community presidents, served as such for 10 years.

For him it was not a post, the means of showing off; on the contrary, it meant an opportunity for him to notice concealed poverty and modest distress in the community, which he was appointed to lead by a consensus of general respect and unanimous love. He was a Jew in the Biblical sense; his pious religiousity was most profound. His father was the president of the *Shiur* Association for decades. He gave more than the compulsory *maaser* of his assets. Charity was the focal point of his life. His goodness was supported by a worthy helper in everything; his spouse, who was the younger sister of Dr. Samu Lasz, a Kolozsvár High School principal.

A great blow, the tragic loss of their only daughter together with their young grandchild, broke the parents' hearts and at the same time raised them to the height of human greatness. They saved other people from suffering, this was their only solace.

Everyone who knew him loved him.

CHEVRA KADISHA

It was formed simultaneously with the community in 1749. In the beginning they buried their dead at Németh-Tevel, a small town nearby, which at that time was a fairly large community with a rabbi. Then they had burial plots inside the Roman Catholic cemetery in Pápa, at the Calvary. Later on land for burial plots was purchased to set up a cemetery at the end of Hosszú Utca (now Jókai Utca), so the Jews buried at the Calvary were disinterred and moved to the new cemetery. This explains the fact that we can find here tombstones older than the cemetery itself. Rabbi Horovitz and Rabbi Rapaport were buried here, as well as the the ancestors and other relatives of native Pápa Jews. The cemetery is also visited by those Jews who eventually moved far away from Pápa, for the purpose of fulfilling the mitzva of *Kever Avot At Tisha Beav*, after finishing the *Kinoth* at 11, Chevra Kadisha officials took the carriages waiting for them in front of the temple and came here in order to send their prayers to Heaven from the graves of the holy men.

The grandfather of "the Hungarian G. B. Shaw", Frigyes Karinthy, is also found here, in this old cemetery: Mr. Kohn was a watchmaker and umbrella repairer, living in a humble flat in the courtyard of the Ókollégium [Old Protestant High School – Ed.].

The mortuary at the entrance to the cemetery, the *Beit Tziduk Hadin*, was a unique building from the aspect of Jewish cultural history. There was nothing like this in all of Europe. The walls were filled with harrowing frescos. One of them depicted the ascension of the prophet Eliyahu, flying to Heaven on a chariot of fire. The opposite wall showed the shocking vision of the prophet Yehezkel about the resurrection of the dead. The images of Jews, deathly pale, wrapped in a talit and wearing kitel, stepping out of their graves, leave a shocking impression in the soul of visitors.

At the time of the great plague of Pápa (the history of which was recorded by Dr. Móric Feitel, the head physician of Pápa) two orphans got married at the cemetery under a *chupa* set up over a grave, in the presence of the whole community. Their story came down to us by word of mouth, unfortunately failing to record the name of the young couple, for the sake of historical accuracy. It used to be mentioned as a fact that after the wedding, the dangerous plague weakened and eventually stopped completely.



We must record with regret that the mortuary was sold by the National Bureau of Israelites (Orsz. Izr. Iroda) to a non-Jew, who demolished the building, which should have been considered a historic monument, and the valuable frescos were lost.

At the end of the 19th century the cemetery got filled up completely, so there was a need for new burial plots. Two Hungarian acres of land were purchased for the purpose of the cemetery not far from the old one, next to the Calvinist cemetery. The inscription over the mortuary expressed the hope of resurrection:

עוד קברים יעזבו בהוניו אליהו

Maintenance of the cemetery set a difficult task for Chevra Kadisha officials. The problem of tombstone inscriptions triggered a nationwide dispute. The original Hebrew inscriptions were followed by German, later by Hungarian ones. Among rhymed epitaphs a special place is occupied by the ones in Hebrew, written by Reb Kive Schreiber, Reb Yosef-Leb Neumann, and Chevra secretary Stern, where by connecting the first letters of the lines read out the name of the deceased. On the tomb-stone of Dr. Iván Katona, who died young, and Dr. Lipót Koritschoner, Chief County Attorney, you can read their own poem:

*October lights, you can go on flirting,
Frail human beings, we are to be pitied,
Whose lamenting souls, torn to bits and pieces,
Beg for solace the October lights.*

You can also find here some epitaphs by the poet, Rabbi Dr. Arnold Kiss, the chief rabbi of Buda.



Rabbinnical graves in the Pápa cemetery



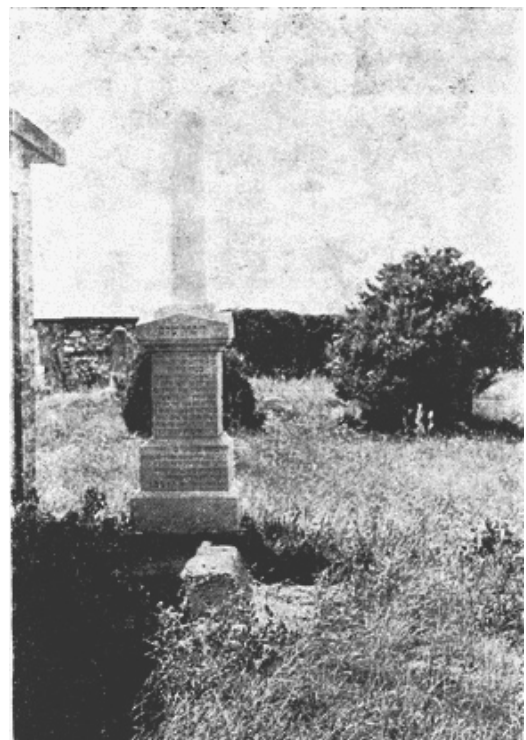
***Ohel* over the grave of R. Yechezkiel Grünwald,**

All the following persons were buried in this cemetery: Moshe Arye Róth, chief rabbi Sámuel Gottlieb, Moshe Link, *dayan* Zvi Eckstein, and R. Yechezkiel Grünwald, whose grave had been covered by an *ohel*, built by his followers. A separate monument marks the place of burial of the Torah scrolls desecrated by the Nazis.

At the entrance to the cemetery there is a notice board of Chevra officials, calling on family members of the dead to plant only green plants on the graves, not flowers...

The Chevra Kadisha in the year of its foundation set up a Jewish hospital, preceding by nine years the hospital of the Brothers of Mercy. It was located in Ispotály (now Eötvös) utca, on the ground floor of the Chevra building; in two rooms there were beds for 4 male and 4 female patients. Later on the hospital was transferred to a building raised especially for this purpose in Korona Utca, where the number of patients was around 30-40. First "*kórház*as Róth" was the caretaker of the hospital [*kórház* means hospital in Hungarian], later on followed by "*kórház*as Schiffer", whose wife was a true guardian angel for patients. Patients were treated by Pápa Jewish doctors free of charge. The Chevra Kadisha fulfilled their sacred task, and carried out the disposal of the dead according to strict rules. These *minhagim* should be recorded, as remembered by our friend, Sándor Löwenstein:

On occasion of *yetziat haneshama* (departure of the soul) Binyamin Zev Baum visited Chevra officials, one by one, calling on each *Yüid –Alef* in Hebrew and German. If it happened at night, he



A monument marks the place of burial of the Torah scrolls desecrated by the Nazis

humbly knocked at the window and reported the case. The book *Mavor Yabok* must always be at its appointed place so that they could find it easily in darkness as well. (This is a prayer book dealing with burial rituals, popularly called *Mayver Yabok*.) The dying person was first visited by a Chevra member to see if he was conscious. Then other members entered. They prayed from *Mavor Yabok*. Near the end of the agony, they lit a candle with a green end. The candles were distributed at the entrance of the temple, at *Zayin Adar*, and the officials received braided *havdala* candles. When the dying person asked for it, they recited together with him the "*Viduy*" confession..

Caring for the dead was called "*mesasek sein*", (*mitasek, caring for, in Hebrew*). Only Chevra officials were allowed to participate in the preparation of the coffin; in exceptional cases male family members were also invited. At the *tahara* (the ritual washing of the dead) the president of the Chevra offered the honour to individual officials to participate in the washing. Before the burial, Mr. Breiner went around the town. He wore a lightweight black cape over his suit and a black top-hat with the letters ך"ן standing for Chevra Kadisha, holding a collecting box bearing the name of the dead and the time of the funeral. He knocked at each and every Jewish house, announcing "*mes mitzvo*", and when the charity was dropped into the collecting box, he said good-bye with the words "*tzedoko tatzil mimoves*", charity saves you from death. The burial took place at a prescribed time. The dead were carried on shoulders all the way to the cemetery. It was an honour, as demonstrated by the fact that those who committed suicide were taken on a wagon.. In front of the mortuary, they stopped three times, placing the coffin on the ground. From here, they carried the dead in their hands. They placed a sand-bag called *Erdzekl*, under the head of the dead. The bag was filled with sand with an upturned hand, and ground from Eretz Yisrael was added for the righteous. There was no board under the head of the *barminan*, the deceased. The first shovel of earth was thrown by the president of the Chevra, followed by the officials, then by the family. They took special care not to hand over the shovel; it had to be thrown down and picked up by the next in line. There was no *chazan* accompanying the procession, and no *El Male Rachamim* said during the burial. On the eyes and mouth of the deceased so called *sharbelach* were placed, while in his hand they put a two-pronged, fork-like branch, as a symbol of resurrection.

Breaking off the review of burial customs, let us insert a memoir by Gyula Láng in connection with the latter *minhag*:

ANNIVERSARY

Marcheshvan 28. Feelings of pain awaken in me. Six decades had passed since then, nevertheless the memory of the sad day stayed with me. I can see my father, a 52 year-old, fine figure of a man, cheerful, everybody's beloved Uncle Náci. In his free time he used his expertise in doing woodwork, using the fretsaw, drawing sketches. We turned to him with a mixture of awe and curiosity:

-Dad, what are you preparing?

-You will find out in a couple of days.

A hidden tear was shining in his eye and he went on drawing letters. In a clandestine manner, the work was getting ready - no other Jews ever did the same, preparing like this. I know that others think of death as well, some buy their graves in advance, others get their funeral

clothes ready. But you Dad, on the other hand, cut out with the saw yourself the *gepelach* and kneaded the clay for the *sharbelach*.

Our burial rite includes a simple, rough wooden coffin, white funeral clothes without pockets, a two-pronged, fork-like piece of wood to place in the hand of the deceased (called *gepelach* because it is like a fork), and shards (popularly called *sharbelach*) for the mouth and the eyes.

While he was cutting with the saw, drawing and creating, his hand and his vision were driven by the fever of his illness and his inspiration, his heartbeat was throbbing in the lifeless wood. He was contemplating death; it was painful for his soul to leave his spouse and four young children. His piety breathed the letters on the carved, smoothly polished forks:

שובי נפשי למנוחיכי כי ה' גמל עליכי

Return, my soul, to your restfulness, for Adonay has rewarded you bountifully. (Psalm 116:7)

Only pure belief in God could radiate towards him the words that he drew on the other piece of wood:

אני מאמין באמונה שלמה שתהיה תחיית המתים

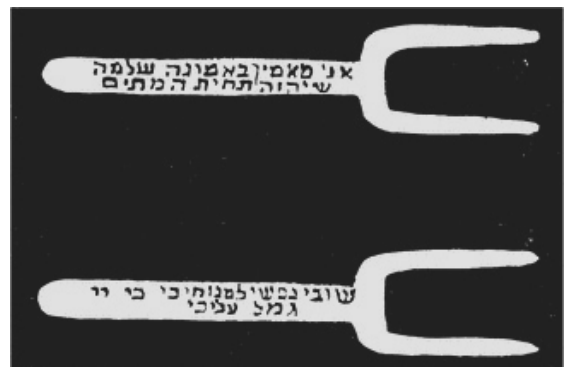
I fully believe in the resurrection of the dead!

What self-control, artistic inspiration, holy feeling came over the man at the zenith of his life, kneading the clay, shaping it nice and round, and painting the holiest confession on the clay for closing the eye:

שמע ישראל ה' אלהנו ה' אחד

So that when the lips cannot move anymore to praise the glory of God, even then he would have the crop he had made himself over the lips, proclaiming: "Blessed is the Name of His glorious kingdom for all eternity"...

Let us return to funeral rituals. Eulogies were rarely given in Pápa; there were no burial chants or wreaths on the coffin. There were eulogies only for outstanding persons. However, when 90 year-old, bent uncle Marton toured the town with the collection box, he was reciting *tzedoko tatzil mimoves* in such a harrowing voice that it, in fact, substituted for the eulogy, because no eye stayed dry at the sound of the trembling words from the lips of the old man, *tzedoko tatzil mimoves*...



“Two wooden forks for the time of the resurrection, to make it easier to rise to the last trumpet.”



“Clay on the eyes, what he saw, he shouldn't. Close his lips – the seal of silence”

During the *shivah*, *minyan* was held at the mourners' house. If there was no *minyan* on Friday night, the mourner went to the temple and prayed in the hall until the *Lecha dodi*. After *Boi Vshalom*, the chazan turned back and said "*likras ovel*", then the mourner passed along the benches and the community recited the usual consolation: "*Hamokaym yenachem eschem*", May the Omnipresent comfort you among other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem. The rabbi or the *dayan* left his prayer-niche in order to approach the mourner...

The Chevra Kadisha organized its annual feast at Rosh Chodesh Nisan. This is how it was reported by *Yeda Am*, a folklore periodical published in Israel:

"First, the rabbi eulogized those who died during the year. In the Chevra room, a coffin was placed with a shovel and a rope used for burial next to it. Earlier they held the feast for the young, called the *melachim* – those serving at the table were dressed as coffin bearers – who were obligated to drink wine that had been poured over a comb used at the *tahara*.

At night they had the feast for senior Chevra members in an intimate atmosphere, at the end of which they drank *krampampuli*, a very special kind of brandy that they were supposed to drink sitting on the floor, singing *zmirot*, religious songs...

After the Shoah, the holy activities of the Chevra came to an end. *Bila hamavet lanetzach*... There was no more Jewish life at Pápa, there was no more death either. Only the cemetery, the world of the dead proclaim that some time ago, maybe not so long ago, there had been such a prospering Jewish life here... No longer... It was finished...

JEWISH ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS IN PÁPA

1. *Chevra Kadisha*. Described in a separate article.

2. *Association for the Support of Artisans (Yael Tzedek)*

The association was founded in 1876 with the aim of supporting its members and their families by providing medical assistance and medication. (At the time social security was non-existent.) In case of illness, the head of the family received weekly aid. According to the humanitarian principle of *matan beseter* (giving in secret), the collection box was sent to the sick member and he could take from it as much as he needed. If he was wealthy, he made a contribution. This association had 200 members, all of them Jewish small artisans in Pápa. The association rose to fame on a national scale when they elected Bishop Dezső Baltazár as an honorary member, at the initiative of the energetic Samu Bóhm, in order to protect Jews. In Debrecen, a large delegation handed over the honorary diploma to the famous cleric, who said the following on the occasion: “Tell the Pápa Jews that although they have no rabbi, they have got a bishop!” (The rabbinical seat of Pápa was unoccupied at the moment.)

3. *The Mór Wahrmann Association. Maskil Dol.*

The association was founded in 1882, with the same purpose, financial resources, and manner of support as the Association for the Support of Artisans. The only difference was that everybody could join, irrespective of profession or social position. The association had about 180 members, their regular and much-loved physician was Dr. Károly Kreisler, followed by Sándor Buxbaum. Jenő Halász was the last chairman of the association, he led the well-established association with great care and zeal.

4. *Israelite Women's Association*

The oldest association of women in the country. It celebrated its centenary in 1925. It was founded by Roch Tevel, the grandmother of renowned community president Adolf Löwenstein. Their aim was providing support for the sick and the needy. For decades this charitable association was led by Mrs. Vilmos Krausz (“tornyos”Krausz), who was followed by a worthy successor Mrs. Lázár Breuer. Not sparing time nor effort, she visited women to get support for the needy. The work of their members increased when the Jewish population of Burgenland and Austria lost their livelihood, as a result of the Anschluss. Every day they were sending parcels packed by industrious hands. After the death of Mrs. Lázár Breuer, in the most difficult times until the very end, the well-established association was led by Mrs. Gyula Fischer, née Margit Blau.

Since the most pious women opposed the annual ball organized by the association, in 1892 they founded a separate organization which was called:

5. *Charitable Organization of Israelite Women*

and in addition to charitable activities, it served the same purpose as the Chevra Kadisha. It was deservedly called the first Women's Chevra Kadisha in Hungary.

6. *Malbish Arumim (Kreuzer Association)*

The association was founded in 1880 with the aim of providing clothes and school equipment for poor students. In 1894 the membership fee was 2 fillérs (2 pence or cents), that is the explanation for the name “Kreuzer Association”. Out of loyalty for the monarchy, they distributed new clothes and winter shoes among poor children every year on the name-day of Queen Elizabeth, with all due ceremony. Later on spectacular ceremonies were abandoned out of regard for the poor parents and the needy received the aid inconspicuously. Aladár Schossberger was the last president of the association. His brother, living in the USA, supported the association.

7. *The Girls' Association*

It was founded by a very energetic teacher, Mrs. Rosenthal née Franciska Reiner. Although the members were all exclusively girls of the Israelite faith, there were hardly any lectures on Jewish subjects. They had lectures on a high level by writers and artists invited from the capital. Several times they had performances in the town theatre, which attracted much attention among the local population. None of the local cultural associations could compete with the Israelite Girls' Association, which fulfilled its mission faithfully – spreading Hungarian culture.

8. *Bikur Cholim. The Association for Visiting the Sick.*

According to the tradition, visiting the sick is one of the sacred precepts, whose fruits a person enjoys in this world, with its assets remaining intact for him in the world to come. The Bikur Cholim Association set for themselves the observance of this commandment. The association was founded in 1770, and reorganized in 1860. In addition to visiting the sick, they also supported the family of the sick breadwinner. In 1894 they helped 80 persons. The association had 200 members.

The chazan Viktor Schiffer, respected by all, fulfilled the post of book-keeper and treasurer for decades, managing the affairs of this humanitarian association with great zeal.

There was a witty remark by Kive Schreiber, a scholarly descendent of the Pozsony rabbinical dynasty, which was widely quoted in Pápa: How come there are still poor people left in Pápa? If a rich man has a new baby, marries off his daughter, or has any other *simcha* in his family, he is in a hurry to send *tzedaka* to the poor, and he does the same if his family is bereaved. The other way round as well, if the poor man has a new baby or is bereaved, the rich man helps at once. Before a holiday, and on the occasion of *Purim*, the rich never fail to send their charity to the poor. The rich always give and the poor always get; however, the difference between them is never levelled. The rich stay rich and the poor stay poor. The scholar gave the following answer to the unpleasant question: "It is because they, in fact, don't give, even if they should." They observe charity only in theory and not in practice. This is the reason for the foundation of the

9. *Gomlei Dalim Association (Helping the poor.)*

in 1836 in Pápa, to replace the alleged individual charity by communal efforts in service of the sacred goal. The association had 150 members, carrying out their sacred mission with the help of weekly membership fees and synagogue contributions.

10. *Kalo Association* (Helping brides.)

It was also carrying out a sacred mission, helping to marry off poor girls. The association was founded in 1862, and the members paid weekly membership fees. In addition to that, they collected money on the occasion of weddings. On an annual basis, they provided financial aid to marry off about 15-20 poor girls. Mrs. Zsigmond Steiner née Ilka Löwenstein headed the association for decades with great zeal.

11. *Shiur Association*

It was a highly popular association, located opposite the temple. At all hours they were busy, either praying or learning. The glowing iron stove made it a warm and cosy place where on Saturday afternoons they devotedly listened to lectures on the Torah by the *maggids*.

They learnt *mishnayot* for deceased relatives of their members during the year of mourning, and commemorated the names of the dead on memorial tablets on the wall.

12. *Association Tiferet Bachurim*

It was the association of religious Jewish youth, aiming at broadening the knowledge of young tradesmen and artisans in religious studies. They got together in the evening to study Torah and on Shabbat to listen to lectures. The lecturers were householders advanced in their scholarly studies or guest preachers. The lectures of David Breuer, a guest preacher from Sopron always raised public interest. Whenever he came to visit his grandfather, the highly respected Reb Yosef Leb Neuman, he always gave a lecture at the Association Tiferet Bachurim, telling about his several trips to the Holy Land in a Zionist spirit and describing the current situation in Palestine.

The annual *Purim spiel*, staged by the youth, was extremely popular as it was interlaced with local references. And of course, there was the paper *Pápai Purim* or Pápa Purim, the witty remarks of which remained the talk of the town for a long time. Only insiders knew that the credit for editing it was due to the teacher Károly Láng. It must be stated with regret, however, that the idea of Zionism was a taboo among young members of the association. They started to make friends with the idea only when dark clouds were already gathering...

13. *Association of Pápa Jewish Students*

Its members were high school students, who got together on Saturday night to get a bit of Jewish culture. Religious education teacher Ig. L. Marton gave them lectures on the Bible. The members read out their essays on Jewish subjects. The association was headed by Artur Linkszt, a tireless youth, who later became a doctor, a renowned eye specialist in the USA. The Association was run without properly approved statutes, on account of which it was banned by the authorities at the end of 1918. In spite of this, it continued its activities underground until 1924. Surviving members of the association remembered happily the good old days; it was a nice experience for them to participate in the meetings on Saturday night.

ZIONIST LIFE IN PÁPA

The monumental plan of Dr. Tivadar/Theodor Herzl, the establishment of a Jewish state, occupied Jewry all over the world. On the one hand, it was opposed by reform rabbis from a patriotic point of view and on the other, orthodox rabbis came out against it because they saw in the movement the denial of the messianic faith.

Pápa chief rabbi R. Moshe Arye Róth was the only Hungarian orthodox rabbi who participated in the Basel Congress, together with attorney Dr. Vilmos Koritschoner. After his return, he related his experiences at the congress to his congregation. He was profoundly moved when he recounted that during the first minutes, they appeared to him as a gathering of the faithless, but when he witnessed the sacred enthusiasm demonstrated by the so-called free thinkers or aufklerists, fighting for Eretz Yisrael, and refusing the Uganda plan even as a temporary solution, he became convinced that Zionism was the Future. All Jews should accept the basic principle of Zionism, considering Jews not only as a religious entity, but a nation as well, a nation which used to have a homeland and which should re-establish its historical homeland.

Following this enthusiastic account, the Association of Chovevei Tzion was founded in Pápa, still in Herzl's days. The attorney Vilmos Koritschoner, who participated in the Congress, became their first chairman, the chief rabbi the honorary chairman, religious education teacher Ig. L. Marton the secretary, and educational board official Ignác Lang the treasurer.

Magnificent gatherings were organized for the propagation of Zionist ideas many times, with guest speakers Dr. Izsák Pfeiffer Pap, Dr. Ármin Bokor and others describing the goals of the movement. The audience was greatly moved listening to the poems of Morris Rosenfeld about the sufferings in the Diaspora. Financial contributions were collected into "*Kupat Leumit*" money boxes. The campaign of buying off the shekel was started. In the periodical of that time, *Zsidó szemle*, Izsák Pap recalled a poor woman going to houses with her basket selling lemons, paying 10 fillérs at a time to the shekel collector for redeeming her shekel.

With the youth, the Zionist idea fell on fertile ground: They founded the *Tzeirei Tzion Association*, led by the Seelenfreund brothers (Viktor and Albert), Jenő M. Kohn and Gyula Láng.

The attack against Zionism was directed by R. Silberstein of Vác, and was joined by most orthodox rabbis. The severe attacks undermined the health of the Pápa rabbi who contracted a serious heart condition and died in the prime of his life. With his death, the Zionist movement came to an end in Pápa. An involuntary ten-year break followed; although the idea survived in the soul, practical realization of it was impossible.

The local branch of the Hungarian Zionist Association was founded in Pápa only in 1932, with Jenő Kaufmann as its president, Sándor Löwenstein secretary, Izsó Várhelyi (teacher), Zoltán Ungár, Jakab Grünwald, Jenő Kohn M., Sári Pfeiffer, Dr. Pál Breuer, Dr. Elemér Gottlieb and Dr. Sándor Buxbaum board members. Legally the association could not function for long.

After barely a year and a half, the police superintendent of Pápa invited the leaders Kaufmann and Löwenstein to his house and showed them letters denouncing the movement. Police Superintendent Vida called on the leaders to make a choice: either they announce voluntarily that they dissolve or he will send the letters to the County Prosecutor's Office. As a result, the movement went underground; mainly through young people getting together at the lumber-yard of the Grünwalds.

The *Keren Kayemet Leyisrael* and the *Keren Hayesod* was headed by Luci Gottlieb.

Government chief councillor Dr. Ádám Kende was the president of the Pro-Palestine Association. The Zionist Girls' Association was founded in 1927. It was organized by Dénes Wittmann from Győr, who came for a visit to Pápa; later on he became a well-known artist and architect, the designer of the Haifa city hall. *Ivrit* was taught by the teacher Várhelyi. Zionist readings were held, contributions to *Keren Kayemet Leyisrael* were collected. The association was headed by enthusiastic, firmly convinced leaders: Erzsi Hacker, Mancsi Kellner, Irén Fürst, Mancsi Köves and Ilus Gerstl. It was a very small association, with only about 25-30 members, because of the serious difficulties they had to face, caused by the chassidim.

The first *hachshara* was established in 1930 under the leadership of Moshe Filip and Moshe Jungreis. In the following years the *hachshara* was regularly held on the Hatvani Deutsch estate at Ihászi, with the financial and spiritual support of Laci Bass, Zoli Goldstein, Jani Weisz, Andi Bachrach, Judit and Jenő Tausz.

The Zionist idea sprung up first in a Hungarian religious community here in Pápa, but because of the harsh attacks of their religious leaders, after a few decades it found fertile soil only in the souls of young people. The youth had no hope of becoming Hungarian through assimilation so they chose to return to the Jewish people. They set out on their way to come Home: to the Ancient Land, to the New Homeland.

THE HISTORY OF *HASHOMER HATZAIR* IN THE PÁPA COMMUNITY

by Amir Yakov Ben-Amram Grünwald,

(The original appears in the Hebrew section of this book).

It started in the 1930s.

We were not the first ones. The branch of *Aviva Brissia* was working already without our knowledge. We were 15-16 years old and they were 20+, in the eyes of kids our age they looked like adults. Apart from the idea of Zionism, there was no connecting link between the groups. They did not organize us and we were not their followers.

Later on it turned out that there had been good Zionists in our community even before *Aviva Brissia*; some of the teachers and principals in the Jewish elementary and high schools, some of the merchants and respectable householders, and also some good Jews. However, it was not they who founded *Aviva Brissia*, and *Aviva Brissia* was not their movement.

There were all kinds of Jews in our community. Orthodox and neolog, chassidic and secular, Zionists and anti-Zionists, cynics and atheists, socialists and even communists. However, like all Hungarian Jews, they were isolated and scattered individuals. The great ideological trends – the chassidism of the Bal Shem Tov and its opponents, the rabbis, the enlightenment, the assimilation and the emancipation, Zionism and Socialism – swept away masses in the agitated communities of Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, in Hungary these ideas were absorbed only by individuals.

There was no great Zionism in Hungary, yet there were great Zionists. Rabbi Moshe Arye Róth of blessed memory was such; he was a famous rabbi in his generation and served the Pápa community for 20 years. He was a *talmid hacham*, a great rabbi and a great Jew. His personal greatness can be appreciated in consideration of the fact that at the end of the 19th century, he not only absorbed the Zionist ideal, but also became its open supporter. He was active and even participated in the first Zionist congresses. In spite of that, he did not establish a Zionist movement either, neither in Hungary, and nor in Pápa.

He had a few followers, individuals who remained faithful to him and his ideas deep in their hearts. The community renounced his path after his death. The blue collection boxes of *the Keren Kayemet* could be seen here and there on the walls of houses, next to boxes of Rav Meir Baal Hanes, but they were usually empty and rusty. Here and there you could find some Zionists, who did not even know one another, since there was no contact between them because there was no chance to identify themselves or reveal themselves to others.

The Jews were all deeply absorbed in their worries about livelihood. The poor were fighting for their daily bread and the rich were struggling to stay rich and to increase their fortune. Jewish life centered around the synagogue and after the prayers, around the *beit hamidrash*, where they were reading the Gemara, to have a break from the worries of livelihood. The life of the community focused on dealing with community affairs. Taxes had to be levied

and collected in order to maintain ritual judges, butchers, precentors, *chazans*, and teachers. There were weddings and *bar mitzvas* and funerals for the rich and the poor. There were boxes for charity and each box had a *gabbai* in charge. There were community leaders and a community president. Elections were held for all the respected positions; with scheming going on among the householders and the candidates for the posts, there was great turmoil. Every Shabbat there were sermons, followed by disputes concerning the sermons. There were local beggars from the town or from the surrounding villages, and there were also "respectable" international beggars, going from one country to another, bringing along news and spicy gossip from the life of other communities that lived the same way, which consequently became the conversational topic of the synagogue and the *beit hamidrash*.

This state of affairs characterized our community when the *ken* of the *Shomer* was born. It is difficult to describe exactly how it was created. In the beginning, we did not know anything about ideology. We did not join the *Hashomer Hatzair* because we knew the differences between the different factions of Zionism. We did not have the slightest idea about the very existence of different trends in Zionism. Only a few of us had certain (rather faint) notions about Zionism at all. On the other hand, there was something in the air that made our souls receptive to the idea.

It was in 1929 or 1930. Fascism in Italy had already consolidated. Since Mussolini was not antisemitic, most Jews did not consider it a bad thing. The Nazis in Germany were already very strong, but the Jews of Hungary still lived in the "Garden of Eden" of economic liberalism. It is true that *Numerus Clausus* was in effect and each year the skulls of many Jewish students were cracked at the universities by members of the antisemitic association "Turul". Our fathers were reconciled to that. Antisemitism was spiritual, "ideological", and not economic. Livelihood was still possible. And as a result, the son could be sent to study at a medical school in Italy or Austria. Nevertheless, we the sons suffered from spiritual antisemitism. In the elementary and high schools, we learnt Hungarian culture, which became our flesh and bone, although our schools were Jewish schools. We were taught in Hungarian. At home our parents spoke Yiddish with each other only when they did not want us to understand. We learnt Hungarian history, literature, poetry. Our heroes were Hungarian; Kinizsi, Toldi, Hunyadi were our heroes. Petőfi, Arany, Vörösmarty, Jókai, Mikszáth, Ady, Attila József were the writers and poets that we admired. Our souls completely identified with the sufferings of the Hungarian people. We used to sing the national anthem with all our hearts, and on March 15, on the Hungarian day of independence, we declaimed the *Talpra Magyar* with firm belief.

Despite that, we were despised by the Hungarians. In their eyes we were "stinking Jews". The non-Jews did not accept us socially, did not befriend us. We felt humiliated, not needed, we did not belong. At the same time, the petty intrigues within the community did not interest us. We did not understand the language of our prayers at the synagogue. We translated the Bible into Hungarian in the two weekly religious education classes much the same as we translated the *Odyssey* from Greek in 6 classes a week. We did not learn Jewish history. We did not have Jewish heroes. We were distressed, yet filled with anticipation of something, we did not know what.

One day an issue of the *Zsidó Szemle* fell into my hands. It was the only Zionist weekly and it was my first encounter with the Zionist idea. It swept me off my feet completely. It was exactly what I was looking for: Jewish consciousness, Jewish pride, identity and belonging. My distress was over. All of a sudden I felt that life was meaningful.

At about the same time I was invited by Elazar Bass (Laci) – may he rest in peace – to a meeting for youth of my age. He said that somebody had come from Szombathely and wanted to talk to us. We went to the meeting wearing pressed Charleston pants and ties, as it behooved young gentlemen from good homes. To our great surprise, the guest was a handsome blond young man with blue eyes, only 2 or 3 years older than we, wearing the Scouts' uniform! A Jewish scout? It made a great impression on us. (We had no chance to be accepted by the Scouts) We had not seen such a thing before and what he said was also brand new for us. He talked about the life of Jewish Scouts in Szombathely, about their social life, meetings, talks, games, lectures, trips and summer camps! He talked about Palestine, the land of our fathers, about the *chalutzim* who immigrate to Israel in order to redeem the land, about the swamps, about malaria, about farmers and Jewish villages. His words were absorbed into our souls yearning for the idea of redemption, with youthful enthusiasm.

And it was only the beginning. Most of us came from orthodox families and we stayed observant for a long time. The following story is a good example to illustrate the beginnings. Once we had a meeting to talk with a *shaliach* from the leadership in Budapest. When it was the time to pray Minchah, we asked the *shaliach* to stop talking so that we could pray in *minyan*. He concealed his surprise but of course fulfilled our request. One of us – Dénes Zommer, of blessed memory – not only did not know how to pray, but was talking and laughing and wanted to make us laugh in the middle of the *shmone-esreh*. The rascal put us to shame in the company of the *shaliach*, and after the prayer we said we were sorry and asked the *shaliach* to forgive him for his behaviour. It was not his fault, his secular parents had not taught him to pray, but we would "educate him".

There is another story about our ardent Hungarian patriotism, while being orthodox. Shortly before the *ken* initiation and our solemn admission into the national movement of *hashomer hatzair*, we received a circular from the top leadership together with the 10 commandments of the movement.

The draft of the commandments coincided exactly with the Hungarian scouts' 10 commandments, with the exception of the third one, which said: "Hashomer is loyal to his country, language and homeland, to *Eretz Yisrael*." We organized a series of talks about each commandment – only he who belonged to the *shomers* knows what it was like. Eventually we came to a decision, which was drafted together with an explanation for our decision, included in a long letter and sent to the top leadership: "We have discussed the 10 commandments seriously and we accept everything in them according to the letter and the spirit, with the exception of the third commandment. Since our country is Hungary, our language is Hungarian, and our homeland is *Magyarország* forever."

This is how it was in the beginning. It was an unforgettable experience for us when the first agricultural *hachshara* reached our town. "*hachalutzim*" materialized. Until then we had only heard stories about them and pictured them to ourselves with the help of our imagination. They were young people the age of our elder brothers and sisters, most of them had already passed the matriculation exam. Instead of going to university to study medicine or law (the accepted professions among Jewish youth from well-to-do families) they put on work clothes and learnt how to work. Moreover, it was the work most despised by our fathers: tilling the land. They lived in a dilapidated house at the corner of Korona and Irhás Streets. We saw them starting off to work with a shovel and a hoe on their back in a dignified manner, singing. We had an

enormously high respect for them. We admired them with all our heart. Jews working in the fields! Turning the soil, ploughing, sowing and harvesting! Preparing for the life in the Land of Israel! We idolized them. We identified with them. They instilled a feeling of pride in us. Because of them, we could walk tall in front of the non-Jews. It was the proof that Jews could do all kinds of work, even work in the fields. We made friends with them and spent the evenings at their place. We learnt Israeli songs from them together with the taste of *horah*. When they returned from their exhausting work, they washed and put on their Scout clothes. They ate supper together, talked quietly and seriously, they lived like a family. Almost every evening ended up in the raptures of *horah*. Nobody knows who started to sing, but they joined in and the song went soaring. Nobody knows who started to dance *horah*, but the circle was getting wider and wider, sweeping everybody along, including us, the guests. It was a cathartic ecstasy.

One of them, Moshe Jungreis of blessed memory, was an activist in the *ken*, he showed/taught us the real line of action of the Zionist *ken* of the *shomer*. The *ken* grew bigger. We made friends and also foes.

We roused Jewish youth and caused a revolution in the Jewish street. Most parents and adults did not understand us. The Jewish public of the provincial town was not ready for the idea of a Jewish national and socialist movement. At our public performances our parents did not recognize us on the stage. We introduced a new atmosphere, which was fresh and electrifying, but also alarming. At our Shabbat parties, dozens were standing outside, near the windows of the "hall", listening to our songs with mixed feelings: chassidic songs, sung by teenagers wearing shorts. There was no tango, no foxtrot, and no Charleston pants. They did not know how to relate to this phenomenon.

In addition to the bustling and lively social life of youth – talks until midnight, lectures, readings, Shabbat parties, games, sport competitions and trips – we also brought new dynamism, unknown so far in our community, to everyday Zionist activities.

We started to remove the dust and the rust from the collection boxes of *Keren Kayemet*. We were not deterred by failures. If we were thrown out through the door, we tried to climb in through the window. We made our appearances at weddings with the blue boxes, and it did not do the community leaders any good that they chased us away. We turned up again and again and we dared to claim the right of representation. We organized fund-raising of the *shekel*. We toured the villages in the area by bicycle. With Papa as the hub, we travelled in a large circle with a radius of 50-60 kilometers, trying to bring the message of Zionism to every Jew. We visited houses. We made acquaintances. We discovered isolated Zionists and linked each one to the chain. We resurrected the Zionist organization of adults, this way creating a legal framework for our movement. And since our activities had an unmistakably clear socialist tint, we also resurrected the opposition party groups: *Hatzionim Haklaliim* and *Hamizrachi*.

At this point two persons should be mentioned from the respectable householders, without whom it is impossible to describe the Zionist activities in our community. The first one was a language teacher called Várhelyi. For us he was a walking encyclopaedia, concerning the Jewish renaissance [meaning Zionism]. Even when he was very busy, preoccupied with his livelihood, he never let us down, never refused our request to give us a lecture, to talk about something, to teach. He refused to accept payment for teaching Modern Hebrew; he taught everybody free of charge. He died sanctifying the holy name. The second person, Alexander Löwenstein was marked for a long life; he ended up in Israel. His soul was responsive to progressive thought; he

belonged to us right from the beginning. We "stole" him from *Tiferet Bachurim*, the association of young orthodox householders, where he was also a co-ordinator, a magnet-like central figure. He could feel the good, the new, the truth in our phenomenon, and being faithful to himself, he dedicated his life fully to the cause and its propagation. He did everything – from organizing and staging programmes in public, through all the activities in the *ken*, to paper work. He organized and founded the local branch of the Zionist association, where he worked as its secretary from the beginning to the very end.

However, even we were unable to break the ice of Jewish indifference. Indeed, we increased in number, succeeded in reaching different groups, youngsters and adults.

At the same time, the number of our enemies was also growing. Fathers who did not understand the message of Zionism, fearing that their sons and daughters would be led astray, and community leaders who were afraid of what the non-Jews would say, wrote letters and reports about us to the police. The secret police started to keep an eye on us and the bitter end was drawing near. One day the president of the local branch of the Zionist association (Jenö Kauffmann, of blessed memory, a wealthy grain dealer) and its secretary (Alexander Löwenstein) were summoned to the police station. The officer showed them the pile of letters of complaint from parents and community leaders and gave them an ultimatum : either dissolve the branch voluntarily, or its dissolution would be ordered within a few days. The secretary asked for a delay, trying to win time in order to prevent the misfortune by the mediation of influential people, so he asked the captain to grant him a few days to assemble the extended leadership. Unfortunately, the president decided differently: he surrendered, without consulting his secretary. He went back to the police commander and told him that he was ready to dissolve the branch. This way a short, lively and stormy period of legal Zionist activities came to an end.

However, the *ken* of *Hashomer Hatzair* did not surrender and did not dissolve. In fact, on that very day, the period of illegal activities started. The club was closed down but the fields were still open. There were benches in the groves, in the Calvary cemetery there were no detectives walking up and down, and in the countryside it was possible to breathe freely. There were also many parents who permitted the friends of their children to enter their apartments. Small groups could meet and talk in apartments while larger gatherings of the *ken* took place in Nature's bosom, on trips. Nobody was missing. We did not give in. What had been done could not be undone. There were police persecutions and arrests, but all the activities continued. The seeds were planted, they struck roots and grew, no force could stop them. We grew up, went to *hachshara*, and immigrated to the land of Israel.

DOCTORS

Priests in Biblical times, the *kohanim* were also doctors. They were in charge of the prevention and cure of infectious diseases. Their knowledge was passed on to doctors of the modern era, taking their place. According to tradition, only a good person can become a good doctor. Medical science continued to flourish in Jewish circles for centuries because of this hereditary goodness. Our coreligionists were court doctors for rulers, often even for the Pope. Rabbi Moshe Maimonides, the Rambam, one of the greatest rabbinical authorities of his age and modern time, was also a doctor, the family doctor of Saladin, the sultan of Egypt.

Dr. SÁMUEL PSERHOFFER

was a health officer in Pápa long before the emancipation. In 1859, he was awarded a gold medal. In 1831, his medical book written in Latin was published in Vienna. His other work entitled *Über die praktische und teorische Beziehung Jüdischen Religion und Medicin* was published in Pápa in 1841. He died in 1879. It is mentioned by the historian of the Hungarian War of Independence as a curiosity that the doctor's daughter Anna Pserhoffer urged her fiance Jónás Fischer of Pápa to join the *Honvéd* Army and fight for the Homeland.

Dr. MÓRICZ FEITEL

was a Pápa health officer. In 1842 his Hebrew book *Meshivat Nafesh* (Restoring the Soul, Psalm 19:8) was published. In 1855 he wrote a religious book entitled *Gotteswort: Gottessegen*. He was an ardent follower of the great R. Löw. It was his suggestion to invite the rabbi serving at Nagykanizsa at that time to Pápa. During the War of Independence, he accompanied the great rabbi on his recruiting trip.

He also wrote the story of the cholera epidemic in Pápa.

Dr. MIKSA MANOVILL

was born in Pápa and returned to his hometown with a medical diploma from Vienna. He joined the freedom fighters and got to Komárom where he worked near Klapka until the surrender. Then he was conscripted into the Austrian army as a regimental surgeon. In 1853 he got to Theresienstadt where he was in charge of the Hungarian political prisoners, including former Treasury Secretary Dusche and future Lord Chief Justice baron Miklós Vay. Dr. Manovill found ways to make the prisoners' lives easier, sometimes even at the risk of his own freedom.

Dr. SAMU FRANK

was born in 1839 in Pápa. His articles in Hungarian and German medical journals attracted attention. In addition, he translated the prayer book. His work entitled *Ájtatos Izr. Hölgy* (Pious Israelite Lady) was published in 1861.

Nineteenth century Jewish doctors had a profound knowledge of Hebrew. It is demonstrated by the fact that they produced religious books, following in the footsteps of their great master, the Rambam.

Dr. SÁMUEL LŐW,

the son of Pápa chief rabbi Lipót Lőw, was born in Pápa in 1846. He became a famous doctor in the capital and the general secretary of the Balneological Institution. From 1891 he was the editor of the Balneological Yearbook. Already as a young man he published several Hebrew articles in the religious periodical called *Ben Chananya*, edited by his father. Many of the epitaphs in the Jewish cemetery of Szeged prove his inspired poetic talent and great knowledge.

Dr. PÁL STEINER,

son of Pápa health officer Dr. József Steiner, won himself an outstanding name among his contemporaries, teaching at the University of Kolozsvár/Cluj, and contributing a medical work of major importance on the surgical treatment of prostatic hypertrophy. During the German occupation he was one of the enthusiastic organizers of the Jewish Hospital in Kolozsvár/Cluj and he was in charge of its urological department without pay.

Jewish doctors served the town of Pápa and the surrounding settlements selflessly, in the interest of public health.

Dr. JÓZSEF STEINER,

a long-time president of the Jewish School Board, at one time was a senior health officer.

After his death,

Dr. SÁNDOR WELTNER became a junior health officer.

Dr. JÓZSEF KÖVI served as a senior district health officer.

Dr. SIMON LŐWY

had a yeshiva education and was much in demand as a doctor among the older generation.

Dr. KÁROLY KREISLER

was a popular doctor at the Aid Association named after Mór Wahrmann.

The younger generation of doctors lived up to their famous predecessors, for whom healing people was not considered a job to make money, but rather as an expression of Jewish humanitarianism.

Dr. LAJOS GROSZ,

born to Pápa parents, was a popular doctor with local peasants.

Dr. SÁNDOR GOTTLIEB,

son of cotton wool manufacturer Gottlieb .who lived under the “kapuszin” arch. As a prisoner of war in World War I, he became the manager of the evacuated Swedish Hospital of the 19th Company in Kiev and sent home thousands of war prisoners.

Dr. SÁNDOR BUXBAUM,

a young and talented doctor, froze to death at the Don-Bend, while on forced labour service.

Dr. ALADÁR BILITZ,
Dr. GYULA DEUTSCH,
Dr. SÁNDOR KOVÁTS,
Dr. FERENC LÁZÁR,
Dr. SÁNDOR GLÜCK (gynaecologist)

committed suicide in the ghetto.

Dr. KORNÉL DONÁTH

set up a maternity ward in the ghetto.

Dr. JÁNOS GOTTLIEB,
Dr. ELEMÉR GOTTLIEB,
Dr. IMRE FRANKL,
Dr. JÓZSEF ROZLI,
Dr. SÁNDOR WEISZ (gynaecologist),
Dr. EMÁNUEL REINER,
Dr. DEZSŐ APFEL,

made an artistically perfect handwritten *Mizrach*-tablet, which was the most exquisite decoration in the *Shiur Chevra*.

Dr. SÁNDOR RÓTH

Dr. VIKTOR KENDE

both served as doctors at the Miseri Hospital.

Dr. IZIDOR LÖWINGER,

an internist, died at a young age in Israel. He got to the land of his dreams at a difficult time. A great number of German refugees filled the jobs in the profession, so he had to earn his bread with the hardest physical labour before he became a doctor for the *Kupat Holim* in Jerusalem.

He was very goodhearted and he was very overworked during the War of Independence, curing and helping people day and night.

Dr. RÓBERT BLUM (dentist)

was accused of being a communist during the counter-revolution and was executed in the forest of Devecser.

Other Pápa dentists were the following: the strictly observant

Dr. ERNŐ BASS,
Dr. LAJOS NEULANDLER,
Dr. SIMON KORÓDY,
Dr. HELLER.

Dr. YOEL PFEIFFER,

the head physician of the Poria Hospital, who died in the prime of his life in Israel, is also considered a Pápa Jew. He was the grandson of school Principal Mór Pfeiffer, and the son of chief rabbi Dr. Izsák Pfeiffer.

Dr. LÁSZLÓ DEUTSCH

of Pápa worked as a doctor at the Pest Jewish Hospital. He perished in forced labour service. He was buried in a mass grave at the Martyrs' cemetery in Kerepesi út, Budapest, which is cared for by the Jewish community of Pest.

Out of Pápa doctors the outstanding psychiatrist

Dr. DÉNES KARDOS, together with

Dr. ASHER BUXBAUM (cardiologist)

continued their blessed work in Israel.

The doctors from Pápa who became famous abroad:

Dr. SÁNDOR RÉVÉSZ

became an outstanding professor at the Stockholm Institute of Cancer Research (Karolinska Institute). His lectures abroad have made his name internationally recognized in the medical profession.

Dr. ARTUR LINKSZ

was the son of the Devecser chief rabbi and finished high school at Pápa. He was the first Jew to become the secretary of the Pápa school literary and debating society (Pápai Kollégiumi Képzőtársulat). As a student he headed the Association of Pápa Jewish Students. Even after several decades, his fellow students remembered vividly the lectures that he gave there. Initially, he wanted to become a journalist, but when he became convinced that medicine was his true profession, he left Budapest law school for the Prague medical school. To escape the Nazis, he moved to America. First he worked in medical research, then started to teach at the ophthalmological department of NYU. He published four scholarly books in his field. He was the president of the Society of Hungarian Doctors in America.

The following doctors also carry on their blessed work abroad:

Dr. VERA KRAUSZ (London),

Dr. VILMA AMBRUS (England),

Dr. GERŐ, née KLÁRA LÁZÁR (Melbourne),

Dr. JÁNOS WEISZ (Australia),

Dr. IMRE NEY (New York),

Dr. ZOLTÁN ROSINGER (Kenya).

Dr. IMRE KRAUSZ

of Pápa died in the prime of his life in America.

Only one doctor was left in Pápa to represent the one-time large and excellent medical community:

Dr. JÓZSEF STEINHOF,

who was the local health officer.

Veterinarians:

Dr. LAJOS PÁPAI (town and district health officer),

Dr. GYÖRGY PÁPAI,

Dr. SÁNDOR RICHTMANN.

Survived:

Dr. ANDOR WELTNER (Canada).

LAWYERS

Theirs is a sublime profession, meaning more than defending the accused: it is a search for *truth*, which is the embodiment of a divine idea.

Their work is the realization of the words of the prophet Ezekiel:

"Do justice and righteousness" (Ez 45:9)

Our jurists, who were born or worked in Pápa, served this sacred ideal. The memory of these champions of truth should be commemorated:

Dr. PÁL BAKONYI

was born in Pápa in 1868. He worked in the capital as the managing director of the suburban train *HÉV* and the editor of the periodical *Magyar Jogélet* (Hungarian Legal Life).

Dr. BÓDOG HALMI

was the son of art teacher and artist Dávid Herz. He was born in Pápa in 1879. After getting his diploma as a lawyer, he became a judge serving on the Court of Appeal. In addition, he wrote several articles on legal and literary matters. He also wrote books: *Marosházi történetek* (Stories from Marosháza), *Ady költészete* (The Poetry of Ady), *Zsidó gyerek* (Jewish Child), *Őszi hervadás* (The Withering of Fall).

YITZHAK BREUER

attorney, the son of the Salamon Breuer, who served in Pápa and subsequently in Frankfurt as a rabbi. He was born in Pápa in 1883. He was a champion of orthodoxy, as seen in his books: *Ein Kampf um Gott* [Frankfurt a. M., 1920], *Judenproblem* [Halle (Saale), 1918], *Messiasspuren* [Frankfurt, 1918]. He was the co-founder and leader of Agudat Yisrael. He worked in Frankfurt, and later moved to Jerusalem.

Dr. KÁROLY KARDOS, attorney of the Pápa Jewish community, also in charge of the *Zsidó Ápolda* (Jewish nursing home).

Dr. ÁDÁM KENDE, government chief councillor, president of the Pro-Palestine Association.

Dr. VILMOS KORITSCHONER, county attorney general, participated in the Basel Congress together with chief rabbi M. A. Róth, president of the *Chovevei Tzion*, which was founded in Herzl's time.

Dr. SAMU LUSZTIG, also president of the School Board of the Jewish community.

Dr. ZOLTÁN BŐHM, president of the financial committee for the Jewish community.

Dr. IMRE GYÖRKI, the only attorney left practising in Pápa. He was in charge of the ghetto's so-called internal defence unit; he had to meet the head of the SS there. It was due to his efforts, that the list of martyrs was successfully compiled.

Dr. BÉLA BUXBAUM, during the Communist dictatorship of 1919 was the town commandant of Pápa. Later he moved to Eretz Yisrael, where he became the defender and legal adviser mainly of the ultra orthodox. He died in Jerusalem in the prime of his life.

Dr. MIKLÓS SHISHA, the president of the Galileo Circle in his youth, a fighter for the ideals of the Radical Party. He died in Milano.

Dr. VILMOS NEUMANN, secretary of the Buda Jewish community, then attorney at the firm Kolozsvári Faipar R.T. (Cluj Wood-Industry Ltd.).

Dr. VILMOS HIRSCH, his son Dr. JENŐ HIRSCH, and his son-in-law Dr. EMIL GUTH, Dr. ANDOR KAUFMANN, Dr. GYÖRGY KENDE, Dr. SÁNDOR GYÖRKE, Dr. SÁNDOR LENDLER, Dr. SÁNDOR HOFFNER, Dr. SÁNDOR STEINER, Dr. JENŐ FEHÉR and his brother Dr. DEZSŐ FEHÉR, Dr. SÁNDOR GOTTLIEB, Dr. MANÓ HERZOG and his son Dr. JENŐ HERZOG, Dr. MIHÁLY TÖRÖK, Dr. MÁRTON RÉVÉSZ and his brother Dr. GUSZTÁV RÉVÉSZ, Dr. NÁNDOR ROHONYI, Dr. LÁSZLÓ STEINHOF, Dr. JENŐ SCHEIBER, Dr. ANDOR WELTNER – a professor at the Law School of Budapest.

While editing this book, the daughter of Margalit Köves, from Pápa, and Sándor Gondos, Haifa, received her diploma as an attorney in Jerusalem.

The tolerant decision of the Pápa District Court must be commemorated: with regard to the great number of Jewish attorneys, there were no court proceedings held on Saturdays.

TEACHERS

Pápa was rightfully called the Athens of the Transdanubia. In terms of culture, it surpassed many larger towns of the area. In a town of 20,000 there were two High Schools, four higher elementary schools, three teacher training institutions, a Protestant theological seminary, and an agricultural training college. It was a cultural town of long standing already in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The Jewish community had an eight-class elementary school, four for boys, four for girls. In addition, they had a yeshiva renowned nationwide and the only Jewish higher elementary school of Transdanubia. Nevertheless, Pápa Jews took most pride in the fact that the major proportion of Jewish teachers came from their town. They internalized the ideal of *torah im derech erez* here and spread it wherever they went. They educated Jewish children all over the country in the spirit of faith and morality. For them it was not just a job, they considered it a profession, a sacred mission: to teach Torah, morality, learning, and humanism.

These were the teachers who came from Pápa, or were connected to the town through their childhood, studies, or professional work:

First, the teaching staff in the four grades of the orthodox elementary school for boys:

Principal Mór Pfeiffer wrote a Hebrew grammar entitled *Mitzpeh*, meaning watchman. It was in fact an acronym for his name. This is what he wrote in the foreword to his grammar, in the tones of a self-respecting Jew:

"A nation lives in his language", but we think that people also live in their language (although for the time being they lack the attribute of a nation, since they are deprived of their ancient homeland), so I compiled this grammar in order that the Jewish people may live in their language as well!

LIPÓT BUXBAUM

taught in Pápa for decades until his retirement. Later he became a principal, and in addition to the elementary school, he also taught in the trade school (Iparos Tanonciskola) and was the religious education teacher of the Public Teacher Training Institute (Állami Tanítóképző). In old age he moved to his children in Israel, and was buried there.

JÓZSEF NUSSBAUM

also worked here. His tombstone in the Pápa cemetery tells that he went to synagogue services every day and also attended the daily *shiur* on Mishna. Together with his wife, the daughter of the Miava rabbi, they brought up their children in a religious spirit.

ADOLF SCHISCHA

taught at the boys' school. He was an outstanding mathematician, and also taught calligraphy at the higher elementary school. His kind heart destined him to become the organizer and leader of *Malbish Arumin* (Kreuzer Association), which provided clothes for the poor.

MERS. ROSENTHAL, NÉE FRANCISKA REINER

the tireless organizer of the Pápa Girls' Association taught at the girls' school, together with

MRS. SEELNFREUND, NÉE RÓZA MARTON

who was known as a deeply pious woman, and

MÓR ÖSZTERREICHER,

MRS. AMBRUS, NÉE RÓZA SCHOR,

FRIDA GUTTSTEIN.

The Torah and Gemara teachers, alongside the teachers of secular subjects, were the following:

rabbinical court member HERMANN ECKSTEIN,

whose witty Biblical commentaries were still remembered by his students 50 years later.

Religious education teacher ARYE PANETH

taught introduction to the Talmud. He was a descendant of the famous rabbinical family of Dés.

ÁRMIN SCHOR,

the principal of the higher elementary school, wrote a religious education text-book for the girl's elementary and a monograph on the town of Pápa, describing in it the history of the Jewish community. After his death,

HENRIK BLAU

became the principal and he remained in that post until the school's closure. Together with his colleague Károly Láng they edited a collection of popular Jewish sayings entitled *Peh el Peh*.

ERNŐ SCHOR

also taught here, later in High Schools at Beregszász and at Buda. Together with principal Blau they wrote an operetta in 3 acts, entitled "Queen Esther", which was performed successfully by the school's students. The songs written on the basis of the ancient text were sung by Pápa Jews for many years.

ELEK MOLNÁR,

until his recruitment into the army, was an excellent science teacher, loved by his students.

KÁROLY LÁNG,

a teacher of History and German, who had previously taught in the status quo school of Bonyhád. After the school's closure, he went to teach at the trade school (Városi Ipari Iskola) and also worked as a correspondent for the news agency MTI.

Other members of the teaching staff were the following:

IZSÓ VÁRHELYI,

an outstanding Hebrew scholar, whose modesty was surpassed only by his knowledge.

ADOLF FARAGÓ and
ANDOR BIHARI taught science.

Teachers of the Protestant High School and the teacher training institute were paid by the hour, with the exception of Lajos Pollák (Pál).

Besides secular subjects, great importance was attached to religious education as well. It was taught 2 hours a day by LAJOS BAUM and ORE WEISZ.

IG. L. MARTON,

or Uncle Marton; the religious education teacher was a household name in Pápa. His biography deserved a whole chapter.

Teachers born and/or educated at Pápa had a good name all over the country, sacrificing themselves for the future generation, working with self-denial in the noble profession. Here is their list of names:

JENŐ ÁBRAHÁM – had a diploma in teaching and became a graphologist. He worked under the pseudonym A. Brahms. Besides analysing character, he could also discern health problems by examining people's handwriting. He lost his life in the Shoah, which he had predicted.

His brother, SÁNDOR ÁBRAHÁM, the principal of the neolog elementary school at Szarvas, perished in forced labour service.

The brothers of Principal Lipót Buxbaum were also excellent teachers:

ÁRMIN BUXBAUM – worked in Pressburg/Pozsony [now Bratislava].

BENJÁMIN BUXBAUM – was the principal of the orthodox school in Cluj/Kolozsvár, the capital of Transylvania.

YEHUDA BUXBAUM – was the principal of the Jewish school in Eisenstadt/Kismarton, one of the so-called *Sheva Kehilot* in Burgenland.

JÓZSEF BUXBAUM (BENCE)- son of the Pápa school principal, taught at the Erzsébet School at Miskolc. He works at the Budapest University Library.

MARGIT BUXBAUM-the youngest member in a family of teachers, and the daughter of school Principal Lipót Buxbaum. Before her marriage, she taught at the girls' school at Pápa. Mrs. Lessinger née Margit Buxbaum lives now in Tel Aviv, where she moved to before the Shoah..

IGNÁC BAUER

belonged to the great old guard of teachers, fought in the 1848 Hungarian War of Independence, ended his service as a captain and returned to the Jewish elementary school to teach.

OLGA BALLA

had a job at Dombóvár. After her marriage, she moved to Szolnok where she died at a young age.

ÁRMIN BOKOR

was born in 1879 and was educated at Pápa. He was the founder and the editor of a Jewish paper called *Zsidó Néplap*. He was a pioneer of the Zionist idea in Hungary. In 1907 he started a new

weekly called *Zsidó Élet*. He also worked as a teacher at a Jewish secondary school for modern languages and sciences at Vágújhely. He gave several lectures in Pápa at the invitation of the *Chovevei Tzion* Association, in the days of chief rabbi M. A. Róth.

PIROSKA BÁTORI

was the last (female) teacher of the Jewish school at Lengyeltóti. Later she married Károly Láng, also a teacher.

ELEMÉR BRUDER

taught at the Jewish school of Jászberény, from where he was taken for forced labour service. He did not return.

ELLA BREUER

opened a private school at Tolnahögyész.

DÁVID CZINCENHEIM

taught at the Jewish school of Mosonmagyaróvár, located at the border, and saved many Austrian Jews.

KLEMENTIN DRACH and

JOLÁN DONÁTH,

both elementary school teachers, were also from Pápa.

GIZELLA EHRENFELD

taught at the higher elementary of Pápa, and later worked in the Department for the Protection of Children at Budapest.

LIPÓT EHRENFELD

taught at the Pápa Jewish school in 1848, volunteered for the National Guard and fought near the River Drava.

JOLÁN FUCHS

was originally from Tapolcafő, and went to teach at Vésztő, Békés County.

IRMA HAAS

taught in Budapest.

S. HOROVITZ

taught at Pápa in the 1860s. His daughter Ilma was a teacher in Debrecen, who taught several generations of pupils together with her husband, principal and teacher Zsigmond Kuti. Their son Dr. Sándor Kuti was a lawyer and a poet.

FÜLÖP KLEIN

taught at Pápa at the same time as Horovitz. His son József was the brother-in-law of Frigyes Karinthy's father.

IGNÁC GÁBOR

taught at Jewish schools at Nameszto and Marcali.

LAJOS KRAUSZ

taught at the Cong. Isr. School of Békéscsaba. He was wounded in World War I.

FRIDA KRAUSZ

taught at the public school of Feketeardó, where a large number of her students were Jewish. After a trip to America, she returned to her hometown, where she taught English. Her students remembered her with gratitude.

MARGIT KRAUSZ

started her teaching career at Büdszentmihály; then she taught at the orthodox girls' elementary school in Budapest. Together with her husband Jenő Paneth, they educated the children of religious families in the capital.

SAMU KARDOS

the principal of the congressional elementary school at Szombathely was the pride of the teaching staff.

VILMA KORITSCHONER

went far from her hometown to teach in Árva County.

MARGIT KELEMEN

opened a private school at Tolnahőgyész.

MIKSA KUTTNER Senior

was the principal and the teacher of Tab, Somogy County.

MIKSA KUTTNER Junior.

worked at the orthodox school of Bonyhád.

ANNUS LÁNG,

daughter of the teacher Károly Láng, worked at the Jewish school of Siófok. She returned from the hell of Auschwitz and became a secretary at the Rabbinical Seminary of Budapest. She died in the capital in tragic circumstances.

GYULA LÁNG

first taught at the Jewish elementary of Vésztő, then at the United Higher Elementary of the same town. After the liberation he discharged rabbinical duties in the neighbouring communities that were left without a rabbi.

LAJOS LANTOS

first taught at Fertőszentmiklós; later he worked in the capital.

IGNÁC KÁLMÁN (LAUFER)

taught at the Jewish elementary of Marosludas.

ARTUR LÁZÁR

worked at Balatonlelle, then at Nagykanizsa.

JENŐ LIGETI (WEISZ)

after getting his teaching diploma, worked as a secretary of the Jewish community and also conducted the choir in the temple at Keszthely, where his wife played the organ.

ALBERT NEUMANN

was the principal of the status quo school at Nyíregyháza, and collected the witticisms of outstanding Talmudic scholar Akiva Schreiber of Pápa under the heading *Kive Pope*. He also published in popular form legends about the prophet Eliya.

SZABIN NUSSBAUM,

the wife of Principal Nussbaum also worked at Nyíregyháza, while her sister

HILDA NUSSBAUM

worked at Erzsébet school before her marriage.

LAJOS PANETH

started his career at Liptószentmiklós, before going to the capital.

EDIT PANETH

taught at the orthodox girls' school in Budapest; she was in charge of the institution that provided food for poor children. She is one of the few survivors from the large number of Pápa teachers. Together with her husband, engineer Jenő Réti and her family, she lives in Bnei Brak.

JENŐ PANETH

in recognition of his excellence as a teacher, Adolf Frankl (MP in the Upper House of the Hungarian Parliament) put him in charge of his grandchildren's education. He moved to his daughter at Kibbutz Nizanim in Israel. There he was very popular and beloved. He succeeded to gather the kibbutz members together during holidays, where he conducted the services.

JANKA PANETH

Mrs. Opman taught at Beregszász.

MANÓ SINGER

taught at Pápa in the days of Lipót Löw, and then, according to the chronicles, he joined the National Guard.

ERNŐ SINGER

worked at Hőgyész, then reached Pápa. He was the only survivor of the teaching staff of the Pápa school. His sister,

BERTA SINGER

taught at Kiskunhalas.

JÓZSEF STERN

started his teaching career at Tolnahőgyész. In World War I, he was taken prisoner by the Russians. After 5 years spent at the Solikama POW camp, he returned home. He worked at the status quo elementary school in Debrecen until the deportation. As an excellent teacher and the manager of the day-care centre, he was very popular. He was awarded the golden diploma for his work. He lives in retirement in Debrecen.

His brother

IMRE (STERN) SZEKERES

Taught at the Jewish school of Kaposvár, after the Shoah he moved to Budapest, working with handicapped children. He was awarded the golden diploma for his teaching.

IZIDOR SCHIFFER

was born in Nagymihály, nevertheless, he considered Pápa his real home town. He had two brothers living in Pápa. One of them had a fine voice and served as a *chazan* for the community. Their parents were also buried there. He worked as a teacher at the school of the Buda Jewish community. He was the first to teach his students modern Hebrew. Later on, he left school and became the owner of a popular boarding-house called *Noémi*. He lives in Nahariya as a retired white-collar worker.

MIKLÓS SCHIFFER

worked at Siklós as perhaps the last *chazan* and teacher simultaneously.

ZILLA STEINER

taught at the Jewish school of Dévaványa, Somogy County.

FRIDA SCHISCHA

taught at the orthodox Jewish higher elementary school for girls in Budapest.

VERA PFEIFFER

also taught in the capital.

SZILÁGYI (SRASSER)

taught Hungarian at the Evangelical Girls' High School of Békéscsaba and remained a pious member of the Neolog Jewish community of Békéscsaba.

His brother

SÁNDOR SZILÁGYI

was a teacher and worked as a comptroller at the rabbinical seminary of Budapest.

ELZA UNGÁR,

a native of Pápa, the beloved Auntie Elza of the orthodox Jewish elementary school in Budapest, even after her retirement continued educating abandoned children and orphans.

DR. SAMU ZSENGERI,

son of Manó Singer who participated in the War of Independence, made a name for himself in the teaching profession. He was born and educated in Pápa. He became the principal of the orthodox Jewish higher elementary in Budapest. He edited the *Ungarische-Jüdische Schulzeitung*, translated and published in 7 volumes the world famous works of Pestalozzi. His religious education book, called *Hittani Hármaskönyv*, or *חוקי המשולש*, became a widely used textbook in all the orthodox Jewish schools of the country. He edited the *Látogatók Lapja* in 3 languages.

MANÓ BEKE (1862)

a university professor and a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, was born in Pápa. His textbooks in mathematics and algebra were used in all the schools of the country.

MÓRIC BECK,

school principal in Bucharest, born in 1848, (according to old yellowed documents) also considered Pápa his hometown. He also edited the periodical *Revista Israelit*.

JÓZSEF MANNHEIM,

a teacher in Baja born in 1820, also came from Pápa. He fought in the War of Independence (1848/49) until the very end.

His works: *A zsidó nemzet története* (The History of Jewish Nation), *Magyar-német-francia köszöntő* (Hungarian-German-French Words of Welcome), *Zsoltárok* (Psalms).

DR. ENDRE KÖRÖS,

an excellent educator, the principal of the Protestant girls' boarding school (higher elementary and teacher training institute), the editor of the *Pápai Hírlap* and a leading member of the Calvinist presbytery, whose Jewish roots became known only during the Holocaust, committed suicide together with his wife, to avoid imprisonment in the ghetto.

ADOLF ÖSZTERREICHER,

born in Pápa in the 1840s, worked as a teacher together with his brother Henrick in Jánosháza.

ADOLF ÖSZTERREICHER,

born in Pápa in 1871, worked as a teacher also in Jánosháza.

ILONA (LEA) KRAUSZ,

the daughter of Adolf Öszterreicher, living in Israel, came from this family of teachers and taught mathematics in the schools of Kiryat Motzkin.

MÓR GOLDMANN,

the outstanding principal of the orthodox school in Sátoraljaújhely also studied in the High School of Pápa.

VILI SZÉKELY (SCHLESINGER)

taught geography at the Jewish High School of Debrecen.

DR. BINYAMIN GAT-RIMON,

the grandson of Fülöp Koritschoner from Pápa, carries on his educational work in Israel as the principal of a high school in Ness Tziona.

Sadly, we must say farewell to the educators of Pápa listed below:

DÁVID GÜNSBERGER, principal

JAKAB WILLNER, teacher

RENÉ BIHARI, née SEELNFREUND, teacher

LINA GRÜNBERGER, teacher,

who perished in the hell of Auschwitz, together with all their students, because they lived in an age

*"when man got so debased
that he killed with lust, out of his own accord, not only when commanded".*

[quoted from *Töredék* (Fragment) by Miklós Radnóti]

There is an ancient Greek saying: "He who is hated by the dwellers of Heaven, will be made a teacher."

According to Hungarians, teachers were considered the day-labourers of the nation.

Bismarck, the Iron Chancellor, stated the following: "It is due to the work of teachers that we could win the war."

However, on a universal level, out of all the nations and their sages, Judaism places teachers on the highest moral standing:

מורא רבך כמורא שמייים

that is, you should respect your teachers as you fear God.

May the memory of those who died, who were murdered, be blessed and may the sun of happiness shine on the life of those that were saved!

ARTS – MUSIC – SCIENCES - JOURNALISM

The biblical Bezalel was the inspired master of art. Inspiration led the children of later generations to reach for the chisel and the brush. Out of painters born in Pápa the following names are recorded:

EMANUEL SPITZER

was born in 1844. His humorous conversation pieces painted in Munich brought him fame. For ten years he worked as a caricaturist for the *Fliegende Blätter*, a satirical German weekly circulated world-wide. He invented a method for duplicating, named after him *Spitzer-tipia*. A complete series of his pictures can be found in the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest. He died in 1919 near Munich.

LAJOS BRUCK,

born in 1846 in Pápa, was an inspired artist. He worked at the side of Mihály Munkácsi in Paris. Later he lived in London, working as a highly popular portrait painter for the English aristocracy. His painting entitled the *Joachim Quartet* is world-famous. In 1885 he moved back to Budapest. In 1899 in Saint Petersburg, he organized an exhibition of Hungarian artists for which he was awarded the Order of Saint Ann's Knighthood by Tsar Nicholas II. He died in Budapest in 1910.

DÁVID HERZ

went to Pápa at the age of 22, where he taught art at the local Protestant High School and the Public Higher Elementary for Girls. Several of his paintings can be found at the local City Hall and High School. He painted two unique frescos for the mortuary of the old cemetery. One of them depicted the ascension of the prophet Elijah, flying to Heaven on a chariot of fire. The other distressing fresco is *The Resurrection of the Dead*, based on the vision of the prophet Ezekiel.

BÉLA FRIEDBAUER,

a pupil of Károly Kernstock, was born in 1887 in Pápa. He worked as an artist in Germany, where he belonged to the society of Käthe Kollwitz. His pictures were a selection of masterpieces...

Yuval, the forefather of musicians playing the harp and the flute, is mentioned in the Bible as early as Genesis 21:3. In the days of King David Jewish music flourished. In the Temple the songs of the Levites were accompanied by instrumental music. Music has been silenced since the destruction of the Temple, as a sign of national mourning. In the Middle Ages even listening to music was forbidden, with the exception of weddings. Nevertheless,

IGNÁC FRANK,

born in 1825 in Pápa, was an outstanding composer. He composed Hungarian songs in the folk style, *csárdás* music, and pieces for the cimbalom.

BÉLA HEGYI,

born in 1858 in Pápa, attracted attention with his first one-act opera, the performance of which was a great success in the Tata theatre of Count Eszterházy. His songs in the Hungarian style were very popular. Several of his operettas are characterized by an abundance of melodies.

KÁROLY GOLDMARK,

a world-famous composer, whose opera *The Queen of Sheba* was included in the repertory of opera houses all over the world, was born in Keszthely, nevertheless, his life was connected to Pápa. His father Ruven Goldmark, the *chazan* of the Keszthely Jewish community, married the daughter of the Pápa *chazan*, so the great composer often came for a visit to see his relatives in Pápa, the family of bookseller Nobel.

Not only composers and musicians were inspired by the love of music. Jewish parents in Pápa readily provided musical education for their daughters, who learnt to play the piano. Piano teachers Mrs. Lendler and Elza Neumann taught many girls to love music.

AVRI SEKEL

son of our co-religionist Mihály Székely of Pápa won himself a distinguished place among contemporary Israeli artists. In 1945, he set out from Pest to bring 40 boys and girls to Kibbutz Matzuba. In addition to being an enthusiastic member of the beautiful kibbutz near the Lebanon border and its chief gardener, he became an internationally recognized artist, whose pictures attracted due attention at exhibitions in Brussels and Paris.

The drawing on the cover of our memorial book attests to his masterful skills as well. (The sad news of his death came while this memorial book was about to be printed.)

JÓZSEF BEKE,

born in Pápa in 1867, was an engineer. He designed the bridge over the Danube at Győr, a major project. Several of his bridge construction plans were published in Hungarian, German, and American technical journals. In recognition of his work, he was made a ministerial councillor.

SIEGFRIED SINGER,

born in Pápa, was a chemist at the Swedish Nobel factory. Later he became the managing director of the *Central de Dinamit* in Paris.

MAX REINITZ,

born in 1851 in Pápa, was an economist. He was a legal adviser for the Austrian Centralboden Bank, and an economic editor of the *Freie Presse*.

Writing has always been a part of Jewish skills. The first Jewish periodical in Hungarian was published in Pápa in 1847, edited by Rabbi Lipót Lőw, entitled

MAGYAR ZSINAGÓGA (HUNGARIAN SYNAGOGUE)

ZSIGMOND SINGER,

born in 1850 in Pápa, became a famous journalist. He worked for the *Neue Freie Presse*, a widely circulated German daily, and was the editor-in-chief of the *Pester Lloyd*. In recognition of his work he was appointed a member in the Upper Chamber of the Hungarian Parliament in 1912.

MIKLÓS RÓZSA,

the son of Mrs. Rosenthal née Franciska Reiner, the highly cultured teacher of the Jewish elementary school in Pápa, was born in 1873 in Pápa. He was a writer, a journalist and a reviewer. For some time he was the editor of a literary weekly the *Hét*. His play *A hit* was performed at the folk theatre. He was the director of the Society for Fine Arts, and as such, he was a recognized authority as a reviewer. On one occasion he came into conflict with the powerful prime minister of the era, Count István Tisza. The Count wrote a dismissive review of *The Majális* by Pál Szinnyi Merse, and Rózsa defended the painting against him.

MARGALIT GONDOS,

nee Mancsi Köves, a talented contemporary journalist and writer from Pápa, continued her literary work in Israel. Her novel *The lady is responsible for everything* is to be published in German. Her ceramics attract favourable attention at exhibitions abroad.

A LAST WALK IN PÁPA

We have already left Vaszar. It is time to get ready to get off quickly because the Győr-Graz express stops at Pápa for only a minute. We have arrived! So this is our home town about which we have so many cherished memories.

PÁPA.

Come brother, let's wander the streets and read the names on the signboards. Come and see the creation of Jewish hands here, let us recall their memory.

Have a look: opposite the railway station you can see the textile factory of the Perutz brothers; it provided livelihood for several hundreds of workers. The founders of the factory came from Bohemia and became taxpayers of the Pápa Jewish community.

The First Mechanical Weaving Mill, founded by Ármin Leipnik is not far from there. It had 250 workers and produced high quality goods well-known all over the country.

The chemical works of Dr. Pál Breuer, a young engineer and the son of the highly respected community president Lázár Breuer, is also in the same neighbourhood. It provided chemical products for the whole of Transdanubia.

Let's walk into town. On one side of Eszterházy Road we go along the garden wall of the Count's castle, lined with ancient trees.

On the other side, there are cottages with beautiful gardens, including the villa of alcohol distributor and wholesaler Steiner from Gyömöre, which houses a temple and a *beit hamidrash* as well. Next to it you can find the tombstone yard and millstone factory of the company Albert Krausz and Son. This is one of the largest workshops in Transdanubia for engraving tombstones. The signature Krausz, Pápa, can be read on a great number of monuments dedicated to war heroes throughout the country, in addition to tombstones in Jewish and Christian cemeteries. The large business is managed by the owner József H. Krausz and his two sons. Despite the size of his enterprise, the owner found time for public affairs as well: he was the president of the school board for a long time, then worked in the Shiur Association as one of its leaders, and participated in the *shiur* in the evening as an outstanding scholar.

As we cross the bridge of *Bakonyér*, we pass the statue of Flórián: Retailer and Wholesaler Samu Grünbaum can be read on the sign of the grocery store. The shop has been kept closed on Shabbat since the doctor Sándor Buxbaum became his son-in-law. You see, brother, this is characteristic of Pápa: the father-in-law observes Shabbat at the request of his son-in-law, who is a doctor.

Just a few steps and we get to the salt-depository of Bodanszky. This business sells nothing but salt. Then we pass the leather shop of János Preisach. Don't be surprised at the name János; the man is a saintly Talmud scholar. Varga [cobbler] Street is nearby, and most of the customers are in the area: shoemakers and cobblers live in this neighbourhood. Leather trade and tanning were Jewish professions. Pelt dealers and tanners were Jewish. The only Jewish Tanners'

Guild of the country used to be here once. In our childhood Uncle Grünbaum used to soak leather in the stream of the *Cinca*, and the Ungárs in Szent László Street worked in the tanners' trade. Kive Schreiber in Szent László Street was also a leather dealer; his shop was in his apartment. Leather dealer! In fact he was such a Talmudic scholar that the Jewish community of Krakow offered him the post of chief rabbi, which he refused. Koth in Corvin Street was also a leather dealer, and he used to be the chief *gabbai* of the community, which entitled him to be called a Temple father. The Hofmann firm had its shop in Kossuth Street, Árpád Steiner opened his leather store in another section of the town. They provided leather for a host of Pápa artisans: cobblers, slipper and shoemakers.

Let's go on. We won't stop at the Schwarcz bar to have a glass of light beer, for fear of memories making the well-chilled drink too bitter. Instead, we are going to pass the large beer and wine store of Goldschmied and the hardware store of Vilmos Rapoch, which was the largest and oldest hardware store. Then we shall walk by the grocery store of wholesaler Vilmos Korein. Carts come and go. Village groceries and country stores get their supplies from here. Although we are not tired yet, we should stop at the *Hungária* Hotel and Café. In front of it there are enough Jews standing around to fill a few *minyanim*. You would think they are a bunch of idle loafers, *Luftmensch*, so to say. In fact, they are hard-working agents, exporters, cattle dealers, exchanging their experiences about markets. Dealers without goods! However, there are no weekly markets or annual fairs without them. They travel from village to village by cart or buggy, buying calves and exporting them to Vienna. At the market, it is enough for them to take a look at the cattle for sale to know exactly how much it weighs. They know which estate needs what young cattle or ox and also which butcher wants what cattle for slaughter. It is also characteristic that none of the Pápa livestock dealers would trade in pigs, even though Jewish livestock dealers in the Great Hungarian Plain do that as well.

Next to the hotel there is a two-storey building, housing the haberdashery of wholesalers Günsberger and Goldberger. A similar store selling buttons, buckles and miscellaneous copperware, can be found in Corvin Street, owned by Zsigmond Steiner, and another one in Bástya Street, owned by wholesaler Zsigmond Beck. They provide goods for marketing retailers and also for Slovak traveling salesmen, loading their goods on small dog-drawn carts. The above-mentioned firms all stayed closed on Shabbat.

From the main square we turn into Corvin Street at Hoffmann's hardware store on the corner. In one of the stores a hard-working Jewish family – the Engels - sells brushes of their own making. (In contrast to the saying – he drinks like a brush-maker - they are most sober.) The products of their craftsmanship are well-known in the country.

The Lunczer bakery is only a few steps from here, next to the private bank of Lówy and the Löwenstein mansion. Adolf Löwenstein lived there, a highly respected man who filled the position of community president for a long time. Later on, his son Jakab Löwenstein, the first *gabbai* of the temple, took over the flour business. We had to go upstairs to the shop where you could buy flour from their own mill for 10 fillérs and finely ground semolina for 11 fillérs. They had many customers because in Jewish houses noodles and pasta were kneaded at home, bread and *challah* for Shabbat were also home-made, so that women could observe the sacred mitzva of taking *challah*...

(Flour dealers ground the wheat, barley, rye and corn themselves. There were water-mills along the Tapolca – there were no steam-mills in Pápa.) Only flour was sold by Benő

Seelenfreund, the Lunczer bakery in Corvin Street, the family of community notary Simon Böhm, Herman Deutsch in Bástyá Street, Herczog in Haltér, and Jakab Guth in Főtér.

The storehouses of Pápa grain dealers were in the yard of the Löwenstein mansion. Jakab Krausz, Adolf Drach and other contractors ordered the corn for the market to be brought here. The large wine-cellar of spirit dealer and wholesaler Steiner from Gyömöre was also in this street. On the other side of the street, customers were attracted by the shop windows of Dezső Apfel's fashion store, which was in the monument-like Lloyd building. (It was a two-storey building in Baroque style, with arcades in its courtyard, and beautiful wrought iron grating.) Lloyd! It was the casino for Pápa Jews. The upstairs room was reserved for members only. Here, old men played tarot, intellectuals read the papers and talked about politics, grain dealers conducted business; it was a miniature stock exchange. And of course, they drank, admittedly the best, coffee in town made by Náci Lang, later by Rosenfeld. The president is József Krausz, court councillor and a bachelor, the only bachelor who is called up to the Torah.

Let us continue our walk. On Fő Tér [Main Square], opposite the old church, you can find the largest provincial glass shop, owned by community president Mór Eisler. The storehouse is under the arcades of Ruszek Street. If you want to enjoy a multitude of colours, you can find it in a Jewish store as well. You should go to the paint shop of the Kardos brothers at the corner.

The office of the cement works owned by József Kohn is in the Elephant House, next to the Eislers. The factory is in Korona Street; they produce tiles, cement-plates, concrete pipes and tombstones there. Later on the management of the factory was taken over by his son M. Jenő Kohn. The textile store of Ignác Pfeiffer and the linen store of Náthán Rechnitzer is also on Fő Tér. Anyway, we should not waste much time here, let's turn into the gateway and we shall find a long series of textile stores in Kossuth Street, or as they say in Pápa dialect, *rőfös-bótok* (drapers). Rosenberg, Walenstein, Tornyos Krausz, Lázár Breuer, Manó Weltner, the Saudek Brothers (the Sas boys), the Willners and Jenő Balogh compete with one another to satisfy their customers ranging from villagers to townspeople with more refined needs.

On Shabbat and holidays you try in vain to buy textile goods. The closed shutters indicate that the owners are Jewish. Lo and behold, businessmen who are made fun of as money lovers leave the golden calf, put on their Shabbat clothes, top hat or bowler hat, and go to the temple for worship. They listen to the singing of the *chazan* Lázár Löwy and to the reading of the Torah. The monotony of textile stores is broken here and there by a fashion shop (Süsz, Sebök, Simon Kiss, Ferenc Kiss) or a furrier (Gutstein-Laufer-Spielmann).

Ready-made clothes can also be found in this street, in the store owned by Bernáth Altmann. In the same street you can pick from the most fashionable footwear if you go to Neumann's shoe shop. Mrs. Neumann gives a hearty welcome to customers in their storehouse full of goods, at the corner of Deák Ferenc Street. In the narrow Kossuth Street, amid an infinite number of business houses, you can find the book and stationery store of Ármin Nobel, and also his printing house. The *Pápai Közlöny* is also printed here – rumour has it that there is a certain column in it that readers look forwards to, feeling curious to find out who is singled out this time by the editor Frici Polacsek for his arrows dipped in irony.

We are not called the People of the Book for nothing: *Pápai Lapok*, a paper of a much higher quality, is also printed in a Jewish printing house, at Goldberger's.

The printing house of Ernő Stern on the Main Square is equipped with the most up-to-date machinery. Their products satisfy the highest requirements and the same can be said about the printing houses of Weisz and Drach.

We have not finished with the stores in Kossuth Street. There's the elegant tailor's shop of Miksa Braun and at the corner of Eötvös Street there's the wild game store of Schlesinger where you can get pheasants, guinea fowl and hare. On the other side, the (carpentry workshop of Samu Böhm maintains its good name; few can compete with the products of this old reputable firm. The glassware store of Lipót Breuer is next to the head post office. Opposite there is a two-storey building on the corner, which houses the Parisien Department Store – since the owner is Jenő Steiner, it is kept closed on Shabbat. Turn at the corner and you will see the second-hand book store of Lajos Baum in Deák Ferenc Street. The personnel is made up of strictly observant girls whose knowledge of world literature can be envied by the educated as well.

If you feel like having something nice to drink while enjoying your book, you can stop by at the bar of Antal Singer for a shot of brandy.

When artisans belonged to guilds, Jews were not allowed to enter these professions. Emancipation opened up this opportunity for them, and in a short time the ridiculed Jews who used to wander around villages with their whistles, collecting rags, bottles or buying feathers, were transformed into hard-working, skilful artisans. In Pápa you could find tailors, shoemakers, woodturners, carpenters, tinmen, locksmiths, stocking-makers, furriers, hairdressers, wig makers, bakers, confectioners, glaziers, butchers and electricians who were Jewish. If you want clothes not made of *shatnez*, you should order them in the workshop of Adolf Schiffer in Bástya Street. The bearded, lean tailor works there together with his two sons until late at night. He stops his work only when the Chevra Kadisha calls him to conduct the ritual of *tahara*, for which he volunteers. He reads the Torah in the *Tiferet Bachurim* Association and on Shabbat also for the *minyán* at the Berger timber yard.

If you need a tailored suit, you should go to Móric Stern in Rákóczi Street, the always cheerful tailor and adept storyteller, who wanted to raise the spirits of those on the death transport with funny tales, even in Kassa, the last railway station in Hungary, when they were about to set out on their way to face almost certain death.

In addition to business and artisanship, the manufacturing industry also profited greatly from Jewish work and talent.

Workshops and factories smaller than the large factories of Perutz and Leipnik were the following:

the chemical plant of Dr. Pál Breuer

the cement factory of József Kohn

the brick factory of Ignác Wittmann in Kéttornyúlak

the brick factory of Steiner in Tapolcafő

the pipe factory of Boskowitz

the calico factory of Blum

the weaving mill of Jenő Balogh

the vinegar factory of József Schönfeld

the soap factory of Horovitz

the locksmith's workshop of József Toch

the soda-water bottling plant of Rapaport

the soda-water bottling plant of Grosz in Kuruc Street

the saddlery and leathersgoods workshop of the Ungárs in Viasz Street

and earlier, the majolica kitchenware factory of Móric Fischer, which was famous all over the country,

They were all founded by Pápa Jews.

We should not forget the timber yards:

The business of Bodanszky and Hirsch selling wood and hardwood is near the River Tapolca, Friebert's is next to the Jókai-house, Imre Grünwald's is in Árok Street, Berger's on Széna Square.

It is not enough to read names from the signs. Feather collectors did not have a sign at all. These Jews made the rounds of villages all week long, stooping under their bundles, rain or shine. Snow and storms did not deter them because they believed that their children would have a better life. They were right; their children became doctors, lawyers and teachers, and even if they had a degree, they were not ashamed that their fathers were hard-working, low-income Jews. We should not forget those who worked in healthcare either: even midwives in Pápa were Jewish. Mrs. Bernstein, Mrs. Blau, Mrs. Donáth and Auntie Singer attended not only to Jewish women in confinement; they were invited to help by most Christians as well.

Let's continue our trip. We turn into a typical Jewish street, named after the immortal poet, Sándor Petőfi, who lived in this street when he was a Pápa student. The sound of hammering in the first house should not disturb you; it is the most beautiful symphony of labour. Samu Mayersberg, the most widely-known plumber and tinman works here, together with his journeymen.

The steeple of the Catholic Church and its roof were re-done by a Jewish master as well. Samu Mayersberg got this job when abbé Kriszt forbade Jewish midwives to take Catholic babies for the christening. However, he did not raise objections to the employment of a Jewish tinman to do the dangerous task of re-doing in copper the roof of the temple.

Come on, let's go further. This street is a Jewish neighborhood, with Jews living in almost every house. Let us remember the great poet who defended Jews in 1848 when the Germans started with their antisemitic attacks. Petőfi, the High School student, lived here. However, the location of the bar owned by the Jew Frommer is wrapped in mystery: there "the comet" used to "sing happily, joke around, make plans cheerfully, encircled by his friends". [the monograph of Gyula Illyés about Sándor Petőfi, p.74 –]

In a second, you will see the bakery of Salzer-Friedmann: in addition to keeping the cholent with stuffed goose-neck hot for Shabbat, they baked kosher pastry here for export as well. There were a lot of Jewish bakers: Lajos Buchsbaum, then József Buchsbaum in Rákóczi Street, Lázár the baker in Kuruc Street, who made excellent potato bread, Pollák and Lunczer in Corvin

Street, the Turms in Jókai Street – they saw to it that people in Pápa had fresh rolls and croissants for their coffee in the morning, and salted crescents and pretzels for their foaming beer.

The bar of former Talmud teacher Ore Weisz is next to the Salzer bakery, willingly frequented by the faithful to have a shot of plum brandy. This bar was not noisy except on Fridays when they had more customers: the kids who were sent to get wine for the *Kiddush*. The *matzah*-house was opposite the bar. Before the age of electricity, the machines were hand driven by peasant lads from Borsosgyőr. After *Pesach*, when the machines were quiet, yeshiva students took over the place. Already at dawn you could hear the sound of "*hai Abaye, hai Rove*" coming from here. Later on the yeshiva was housed in the Chevra Kadisha building where they had more space.

The *matzah* mill was in the home of Blau the *sofer*, next to the *matzo*-house. *Matzo* flour was ground here for the unforgettable *matzo*-ball soup of the *seder* dinner. The *matzoball* soup was called *knédli-leves*; knedle was a familiar term. "*Er meint nicht die Gode (Haggadah), nur die Knedle*", as the saying goes. (He doesn't care for the Haggadah, only for the knedle.)

The left side of the street is lined by kosher butcher shops, under the inspection of Fürszt the powerful *mashgiach* in charge of *kashrut*.

On the upper floor of the Jewish community building, you can find the rabbi's apartment and the community office. Ritual poultry slaughter takes place in the yard. We are in the centre of Pápa Jews, at the temple. Let's sit on the marble steps for a while. It was so nice to play here with carob seeds and it is so good to sit on the cool steps and day-dream. Soft sounding chords reach us from the upstairs room of the house across the street. It is Elza playing, the young and talented piano teacher from the Neumann family, who stayed faithful to the religious traditions of their grandparents' home. She is playing the Moonlight Sonata beautifully. The melody rises through the air and comes to naught... (Maybe at this hour in the capital of Argentina, thousands of kilometers from here, somebody will resonate to the sound of this melody...)

The old song has been silenced. You can no longer hear any piano playing in the Jewish homes of Pápa. Let us return to the present and continue our trip.

The *Bet Hamidrash* (or as they say in Pápa, the *Besemedresh*), housing the *Shiur* Association, is opposite the temple. If you are late for the synagogue, you can always find here a *mingy* (that is, a *minyán*). After the *minchah* prayers, Talmudic scholars like Horovitz, Hoffmann, Rechnitzer, Krausz, Biedermann and others study here, conducting a lively discussion of the text.

We have not yet reached the end of Petőfi Street.

The kosher salami factory of Eisen is near the corner of Bástya Street. Their hot dogs are very popular; at the annual fair even non- Jewish artisans from the provinces eat them with pleasure.

We have arrived at Bástya Street, on account of its spaciousness it is a popular playground for Jewish children. Only Jews live there and nobody disturbs their games. The dry riverbed of the Cinca was the most suitable place for hide-and-seek. Second-hand dealers were selling repaired second-hand clothes to poor cottars, to the proletarians of the neighbourhood here. Also in this street you could buy giblets ("stamps for sale" is announced by a humble hand-written notice-board, not by neon lights or an advertising pillar).

Across the street, the liver dealer Haas bought fat goose-liver and then exported it to Vienna. In nearby Salétrom Street there was another large export firm owned by Mihály and Béla Ungár: in their spacious yard they collected and sorted feathers and hides.

There is a winding street leading down from Bástya Street called Búdös-köz (meaning Stinky-lane): hides are soaked and cleaned here by Jewish tanner apprentices and skin-dressers. In about 1850, there were already so many Jewish tanners and tailors in Pápa that they formed a guild, refuting in this way the antisemitic argument that Jews were reluctant to do hard physical labour.

A typical Jewish trade of Pápa should be remembered here: the copper engraving for pipes. In the Boskovitz pipe factory they engraved the copper pipe-bowl lid with great artistic talent.

Bástya Street leads into Kiss Street. You could find there the large-scale grocery store of S. L. Toch, the salt depot of Süss, the hardware store of Dávid Hoffmann and the machine depot of Antal Weber. The ceramics and porcelain factory of Fischer, whose products are popular all over the country, operated in the Sepauer House, near the Honvéd barracks.

We got tired, had enough of walking – a cab could be ordered here: Ignácz Gold cab owner was nearby. If you needed transportation of goods, Jewish carriers would undertake it: Spiegel in Korvin Street, the Koritschoners in Jókai Street. For smaller cargoes Jakobovits in Petőfi Street was at your service.

We still run up the wooden steps to the Jewish elementary and higher elementary school, and take a short look at the two-storey building of the *Chevra Kadisha* and at *Etz Chayim* next to it.

We do not have much time; nevertheless, we shall pop into Korona Street to see the old people in the Jewish nursing home (Zsidó Ápolda).

From there, passing the winding Zrínyi Street, the Köves store and the Thurms bakery we get to the end of our pilgrimage: the Jewish cemetery of Pápa.

Brother, were you nostalgic about our home town? Well, I have shown it to you, taking you around to see every corner, all the streets and squares. We have been searching in vain along the old and new buildings. We have found only stones. There is not even one familiar face, there is nobody coming to greet us with a friendly *sholem aleichem*. To our question where the old friends have gone – Jewish youths, girls, fathers, mothers, old people - only the echo of Red Bridge in Várkert echoes "where, where?".

Let us turn back and say farewell forever to our home town, from where 2030 brothers and sisters were taken to be killed. Let us preserve and cherish the memory of our dear martyrs.

SOME STATISTICS

The mutual influence of county episcopates founded by King Stephen I and the Benedictine Order hindered the formation of royal towns where Jews could have settled as chamber servants.

Count Antal Eszterházy was the first to permit Jewish settlement in Veszprém County in the first quarter of the 18th century.

The 1736 census mentions 11 Jewish families in Pápa.

In subsequent periods the number of Jews in Pápa was as follows:

In 1740, 73

In 1785-87, 445

In 1830-35, 2645

In 1880, 3550, 24 % of the population

In 1884-94, 3140, 22 % of the population

In 1910, 3076, 15.3 % of the population

In 1941, 2613, 11 % of the population.

The situation of villages surrounding the Pápa community was interesting but sad.

In the village of Tevel in 1830 there were 149 Jews earning their living. They had their own temple, *mikva*, rabbi and *shochet*. Their number gradually decreased to 55, then to 19, and in 1941 there were only 18 left. Most of them moved to Pápa.

In Pápateszér the first census mentions 39 Jews. No one was left.

In Homokbödög in 1880 there were 101. However, in 1941 they numbered only 14.

In Nagydém there was once a large community - the census mentioned 149 Jews at the time of the War of Independence [1848/49] – which finally decreased to 11.

In the villages closer to Pápa things were not different – in Tapolcafő, where once there had been 86 Jews, merely 13 were left in 1941.

In Marcaltő even in 1910 there were 37 Jews, while in 1941 only 15.

Statistics clearly prove that the reforms under the rule of Joseph II the "hatted king" [he was called "the hatted king" because he was never actually crowned as King of Hungary – the translator] opened a new era in the life of Hungarian Jews as well. Jewish settlement was made possible by giving the right to change residence.

Taking into account the proportion of Jews in the country, one comes to the conclusion that Pápa was the largest Jewish settlement in Hungary after Pest and Buda in the beginning of the 19th century.

These are the figures from 1830:

Pest, 6031, 2.5 % of the population

Pápa, 2645, 25 % of the population

Vágújhely, 2495, 57 % of the population

Óbuda, 3130, 42.3 % of the population

Pozsony, 2602, 43.6 % of the population

Nagykároly, 1786, 15.8 % of the population

A SMILE AMONGST THE TEARS...

There lived in Pápa a travelling optician of modest means, the pious Lazar Willner. He was well-known in the community, not so much as a scholar, rather as a widely respected, deeply pious man. He encouraged and persuaded coreligionists on the local train from Pápa to Csorna travelling to the weekly fair to participate in the minyan to be held on board the train. When his call '*yiden zu minyan in the fifth car*' was heard, believers hurried not to miss services. They found it natural that the ticket-inspector allowed only Jews to enter that car and during services he did not even show up to check their tickets. Along the way, Willner kept an eye on people getting on and when he spotted a co-religionist, he immediately invited him to join the minyan.

The following story is told about him:

Collecting charity to marry off a poor orphan girl, he once called at the store on the Main Square, owned by Salamon, a wealthy jeweller and watchmaker.

'I won't give,' the rich man said coldly.

'Listen, Mr. Salamon, I am asking for your modest contribution to marry off a Jewish girl who is an orphan. Do you realize how great the mitzva of *hachnosas kale* is?!' The answer was negative again.

'Mr. Salamon, let me tell you a short story,' the modest, pious man made another attempt.

'As long as there is no customer, I can listen.'

'A faithless and miserly Jew suddenly died,' Willner started to recount. 'When his soul came to the Heavenly Tribunal, his actions on earth were put on scales. The scale of sins was full in no time, while the scale of good deeds remained empty. He was about to be pronounced doomed forever at the proposal of Satan the Accuser, when all of a sudden a *talit* descended from above on the scale of good deeds, tipping the scales in balance. The verdict was acquittal.

The *talit* has a story of its own. On one occasion a poor widow, living in a shack next door, knocked at the door of the miser, who had never given charity for any cause. In a whining voice she complained to him that her daughter was a bride without dowry, and the bridegroom wanted only a festive *talit* to enter the marriage canopy, but she did not have the money to buy it. She was asking for help in order to buy the *talit*.

The miser replied:

'I have never given charity; however, my beautiful wedding *talit* lies in the wardrobe. I have not worn it since my *chuppa*, I don't need it. You know what? You can have it...'

So this is how he helped the poor woman to marry off her daughter and that same *talit* saved his soul from condemnation. That's the end of the story,' Willner finished his parable.

'It is indeed a beautiful story, Willner, but I am not moved at all. I am not going to give a penny for my share in the world to come. Moreover, I would sell it to the first customer for one forint. Ha-ha-ha!!'

Willner the Pious was shocked to hear this blasphemy. 'If you offer it for sale, I shall take it,' he said, reaching for his pocket. He took a forint out of his flat and shabby wallet, muttering 'here you are.'

'*Gemacht*,' said Salamon. 'I take it, it's a deal!'

'Wait a minute, I want a written statement about the deal.'

'If that's what you want, all right.' Salamon started to write at once:

I, undersigned Ferenc Salamon, have hereby sold my share in the world-to-come to Pápa resident Lazar Willner, for the sum of 1 forint, that is one forint, the value of which I have fully received.

At home, bursting with laughter, Salamon told his family about his great joke. However, the family considered it a crude one; friends and acquaintances were shaking their heads in disapproval hearing about this vile *chilul Hashem*. As a result, Salamon started to feel remorseful. He could not even sleep at night. Next day he sent for Willner and said to him:

'Listen, my friend, I have changed my mind. Give the paper back, here's your forint, if you want I can double it, on account of the cancelled business.'

'Oh no, Mr. Salamon. Business is business. I have purchased it, and I won't return it.' The case finally ended up at the rabbinical court, which decided that the statement should be returned for two hundred forints, which Salamon the jeweller had to give in order to marry off the bride.

This is the story of how Aranka R. became a happy bride!

*

Once Dr. Adolf Schwarcz, Rector of the Rabbinical Seminary in Vienna, came to visit his relatives in Pápa at Shavuot. Coming out of the temple he went up to Akiva Schreiber, who was admittedly the most outstanding Talmudic scholar, and greeted him in the traditional way:

- *Güt Yontev Reb Kive!*

-Ah, Guten Tag, Herr Direktor! was the friendly answer.

The rector was surprised by the way he was greeted and turned to Reb Kive attentively. This was R. Kive's reply:

-I have been reading recently about the visit of the German emperor Wilhelm to Vienna to see Franz Joseph. The German emperor put on the uniform of the general of the Hussars from Székesfehérvár, while His Majesty was wearing the full dress uniform of a German *uhlan*. I have learnt that this reciprocity is the highest expression of politeness. So when you greeted me the way that we traditional Jews greet one another – *Güt Yontev R. Kive* – I assumed your attire when in my reply I greeted you like a modern gentleman, *Guten Tag, Herr Direktor*.

*

When the Jewish higher elementary school was opened in Pápa, many students left the Talmud-Torah, the small Yeshiva, and enrolled in the new school.

The head of the Yeshiva, Leml R. Spitzer, who later became the rabbi of Szepesváralja, said the following to the deserting students:

Du gest ach in die Bagerschul – was lernste dort: Kőmives Kálmán, wieviel Agn Vak Béla hat gehat. Küm lern do bei mir – Chümesh, Rashe, ünd Gemora! So you go to the higher elementary. What do you learn there? [Kőmives Kálmán, he mixed up king Könyves Kálmán with Kőműves Kelemen, a bricklayer from a folk ballad – the translator], how many eyes Vak (*blind*) Béla had [he was also a king, who was blinded – *vak* meaning blind in Hungarian – the translator]. Come and learn with me Torah, Rashi and Gemora!

*

Spirit dealer and wholesaler Gyula Fischer, owner of the firm *A. Fischer* was counted among the most distinguished members of the community. There is a story about him that once he ordered pastries for *Pesach* from Frankfurt, on the basis of an ad he saw in the Frankfurter orthodox paper. Although he knew that not far from his home in Petőfi Street, excellent and strictly kosher pastries are baked for *Pesach* in the Salzer bakery, he considered it beneath his dignity to buy cakes from a small Pápa bakery when he had an option to get delicacies from Frankfurt produced under the supervision of the European Orthodox Centre. He was greatly surprised when opening the packet, he found in it excellent pastries bearing the tag of Salzer from Pápa, the baker next door.

*

In those days in Pápa *Tikun* (meaning brandy and pastry) was not served on anniversaries of death (at *Jahrzeit*). Ashkenazi believers were keeping the *minhag* prescribed by the Shulchan Aruch instead, fasting being more appropriate to painful memories. Later on, chassidic customs spread in Pápa as well. When Gyula Fischer had a *Jahrzeit*, a chassidische believer of this kind asked him:

"Nu, Herr Fischer, where is the *Tikun*?" "I will bring it tomorrow."

And he brought along the prayer-book that the pious pray from on the night of *Shavuot* entitled *Tikun leyl Shavuot*. "Here is your *Tikun*!"

*

Principal Henrik Blau was known for his witticisms. Once on a Shabbat morning walk he said to his friends:

Could you wait five minutes for me? I am going to my pupil to give him an hour lesson.

On another occasion, on a Shabbat afternoon after *minchah* he witnessed that one of his friends greeted ironmonger Rapoch with great respect. Now I can see why you pay so much respect. In *Pirkei Avot* it is written: *Maire Raboh k'maire Shomaim*. (Respect your teacher as you fear God.) Or with a slight modification: *Maire Rapoch kmaire Shomaim*.

The witty toast of teacher Károly Láng at the family celebration of Dr. Sándor Buxbaum was recalled several times. He said the following: And I wish our beloved host sickness! (That is, patients to visit his office.)

PURIM IN PÁPA

March 10, 1925

THE NEWS

Items on the agenda:

Adar 13, Monday. Taanit Esther. Rumbling stomach all day long. At 8 o'clock in the evening comedy performance in the Jewish elementary, with superb attractions, first class hospitality, and cheap seats.

Adar 14, Tuesday. PURIM. Community party all day. *Shlachmones* on the way. Feasting on roasted turkey and *kindli* at noon. (Get your sodium bicarbonate ready.)

At 8 in the evening, the second show by Jewish youth. Tidbits of the Wahrmann Association at the café.

At 9.30 in the evening, a *noch nicht dagevezene* [unprecedented, literally unseen] fancy-dress party at the Griff, organized by the Girls' Association.

Wednesday: Polishing off the leftovers.

Thursday: *wieder das schwere, bittere Leben, mit Lad und Tzores.* Again this hard, bitter life with sorrow and trouble.



The cast of the Purim performance of Tiferet-Bachurim

פאפא

קול ופראק נאמא

V KIERESZTES.

5685 Adar 14.

1925 mare. 10



פאפא

„Minden mulandó a világon,

de a zsidó humor: örök.”

(Az. Pónonn XXV fejt. 48 v.)

Lapunk kiband feperect tasevavi Lóttir
Ienre műerectomi haligato rajferta.

A TRUE STORY

I have been liberated...I am at home again. Bending under heavy memories I am walking down the streets, passing houses that I know. There are no familiar faces; nobody stretches out a hand to greet me. It seems like a strange place. Is it really my birthplace?

I am looking for our family home where we used to be happy; I want to see it. Here we are, finally I have managed to find it. I am standing broken-hearted in front of 32 Jókai Street, Pápa.

As if in a dream, I can see my father's face. The head of our family, a man in the prime of his life, worked for us tirelessly day and night. Despite working hard, he was able to contribute his time to public affairs as well; he participated in the leadership of the illustrious community as a representative in the 80-member board of representatives.

I can picture my mother, who was a real *Yiddische Mame*, caring only for the welfare of her children.

The vision has disappeared...I am shaking as I open the gate where carts used to leave one after the other when I was a child: the huge carts of the Koritschoner firm, the screeching of the wheels still ring in my ears...

Entering the yard, I want to see the rooms of our sweet home. After a few steps I begin to sway. I turn back with tearful eyes, sobbing. Our nest has been occupied by strangers, people I have never seen before. Voices of strangers can be heard from our dear old home. Nobody recognizes me. And then...listen! All of a sudden I can hear a familiar voice. Bodri! Bodri! Is that you? You also survived!? My dear dog, can you recognize me?

It is me, Kató-Kató! Do you remember how much we played together?

He is drawn to me, wagging his tail, barking and groaning, licking my hand.

He has recognized me!

What do you want from me? Why are you pulling me? He seems to understand the question and goes on dragging me along. I follow him reluctantly along the huge yard. Where is he taking me?

To the garden at the end of the yard. Stopping under a tree my faithful dog starts digging with all his might. With his paws, he is digging a hole – until the hidden treasure is revealed: a small box, containing valuables, the family jewels hidden by my parents...

I did not know about it, since I lived in Sopron in the years before the deportation. Dear Bodri! You guarded the family jewels and for years you kept the secret from strangers so that you could reveal it to me only, the daughter of your dear master!

Bodri! In an age when humans turned into beasts, you, the beast, behaved like a person!

May these few lines commemorate your fidelity!

(On the basis of the recollections related by Kató Koritschoner, written by Gyula Láng.)

MEMORIES

By Eliezer Shisha

Tel Aviv in the afternoon of August 3, 1910. The shutters of the small single-storey buildings were closed; there was not a living soul in the street. It would have been so nice to be greeted warmly, to have a friendly handshake on the day of my homecoming.

In Achad Ha'am Street somebody was calling to me "*choletz, choletz*". There was a man leaning against the fence of the *gymnasia*, he must have been the caller. Turning to him happily, I wanted to say *shalom* to him, but the irony in his voice held me back from doing so.

"Why did you come, *choletz?*" he asked me in Yiddish. "Palestine is full of *chalutzim*. Where can you find work, what will you live on?" I have not seen this man since; however, his voice can be heard all the time: the voice of stubborn half-heartedness and defeatism. It is the dark shadow of the great faith.

*

The employment agency of the *Hapoel Hatzair* was in Shachar Street. Shengalovsky, the Botany teacher of the *gymnasia* was in charge of allocating jobs. Newcomers turned to him to find out on which road they should work. (There were hardly any other opportunities for work at that time.) Shengalovsky (later Zohar Even) asked everyone a few questions about his occupation, age, and level of Hebrew. Well, in my case he added a question which seemed to be superfluous: he asked me where I had come from. The question seemed superfluous since all the *chalutzim* came from Russia at that time. "I am from Hungary", I answered. "From Hungary?" repeated Shengalovsky in surprise. "Are there Zionists there also?" "Yes, there are", I nodded. "Wait a minute", he said staring at me for a long time, surprised. When he finished allotting jobs, he said: "If you are really a Hungarian Jew, I will introduce you to Yitzhak Epstein, because he has not seen such an oddity." And he took me to Epstein, the great linguist, who was the principal of the teacher training college at the time. There was a large company of people assembled in his office when Shengalovsky introduced me: "Here is a Hungarian *chalutz!*" They stared at me as if I were a queer fish. I felt a bit embarrassed, but I got over it with the help of Epstein's encouraging words. So I was able to answer the multitude of questions about Hungarian Jewry and Hungarian Zionism. Then it was my turn to be surprised. Those present knew as much about Hungarian Jewry as about the Jews of China.

I was trying enthusiastically to save the honour of Hungarian Jewry. Whether my attempt was successful I do not know, but at least I managed to make my first acquaintance in Tel Aviv. It was highly important since *I was the first Hungarian Jew in Tel Aviv...*

"I will not send you to work on the road", Shengalovsky said. "I will assign you to a more important job. In a month or two we are going to open our schools, but we don't have teachers. You should be one!" That is how I became a teacher at the Tachkemoni School in 1920, before the High Holidays.

*

Achad Ha'am Street was closed to traffic. Between the sidewalks, two little wooden posts were set up, holding a wine-red string. Achad Ha'am is sick, he needs rest. The rumble of wheels and the honking of cars should not disturb him. (It was ordered by the municipality of Tel Aviv.)

After 4 p.m. the red string was removed, signalling the end of the great writer's afternoon siesta. So I went to see him in order to disclose my plan. It concerned the bazaar to be organized by *Keren Kayemet* and getting articles for the lottery. Members of the *Vaad* were competing with one another as to the value of the articles. I had the idea of visiting Achad Ha'am and asking for a copy of *Al Parashat Had'rachim* with his autograph. The old man gave me a warm welcome and granted my request with a smile. I left happily with the book, which is connected to the memory of the great intellectual leader. His image is imprinted in my brain with his small feet, huge skull, high brow, and lips with a delicate smile.

*

I had to visit Vladimir Zev Jabotinsky on behalf of the *Vaad* of *Keren Kayemet Leyisrael*, asking him to give a lecture. It was before the foundation of the Revisionist Zionist Alliance. I was sure he would fulfil my request. I was disappointed. Jabotinsky refused. He also gave reasons for doing so: he felt that he did not get the respect he deserved from *Keren Kayemet Leyisrael*. At that point I realized why this East-European, brilliant, highly gifted Jew with European culture running in his blood did not become the ideal of the *chalutzim*.

*

The mother of Chaim Weizmann lived in a single-storey building in Yehuda Halevy Street. It was a quiet little house, with not many visitors crossing its threshold. It was like that all year long, with the exception of the time when Chayimka – as the old lady used to call her favorite child – came home to see his mother. It usually happened before the holidays. This is what happened at *Pesach* 1923, when Weizmann came to have *Seder* together with his mother and siblings. We felt that Weizmann came not only to his family, but to all of us. With this in mind the young people of Tel Aviv set out to greet Weizmann at a late hour on the holiday night. The greeting meant dancing *hora* and singing aloud in front of his house, which drew Weizmann to the balcony to greet us. But we were not satisfied with that. We went in and asked him to come and join in the dancing. At first he showed some reluctance, but then he came and joined us dancing *hora* tirelessly. Since then we have been bragging about having danced *hora* with the president of the State.

*

On Tammuz 14, 1924 I left Tel Aviv to visit my brother in Rome and my parents in Bratislava. In the compartment of the Tel Aviv-Alexandria train I met four men who were also on their way to Europe, to the Congress of *Tzeirei Tzion*. They were Ben Gurion, Shkolnik (Eshkol), Kaplan and Miriminsky. We checked in together at the Hotel de France in Alexandria and travelled together to Naples on a boat called *Europe*. Who could have guessed at the time that three out of the four would become ministers in the Jewish state?

I met Kaplan several times after that. He was the leading engineer of Solel-Boneh, who signed my contract for the construction of a two-room apartment (for 260 pounds!) in the future Chovevei Zion Street, which was a vast expanse of sand in those days. The text of the contract was typed by no other person than GOLDA (Meirsohn) MEIR!

*

I met Bialik on the boat in the summer of 1924 when I was coming home after a trip to Europe. The first meeting was a disappointment for me. Is it possible that this man looking like a business agent is in fact our great national poet? It cannot be. Actually, the silent Bialik was not the real one! I got acquainted with the real Bialik when I listened to him joking around with the *chalutzim*, telling anecdotes. Even his looks changed then. Unfortunately, he liked telling his stories in Yiddish, which I did not understand very well, so I had to ask a *chalutz* to translate it for me into Hebrew. Bialik noticed it, and from that point on, he told us every anecdote twice – first in Yiddish, and then he turned to me, saying “and now for your sake in Hebrew”, repeating the story in our eloquent national language. This method worked beautifully during the voyage, to the satisfaction of all the *chalutzim*. Why not? Laughing twice at the same joke? So much the better!

As a result, I became a frequent visitor at Bialik’s house.

*

The family of the poet Noach Pines, the principal of the teacher training college in Tel Aviv was one of the families in Tel Aviv with whom we became close friends. Noah's wife Elisheva was the daughter of Shaul Pinchas Rabinovits. In 1888 his father translated into Hebrew *The History of the Jewish People* by Graetz. This book was so highly esteemed that a street in Tel Aviv was named after it.

Their house was a true literary center, a meeting place for Bialik, Frischmann, Schneur, Sokolov, and almost all the Hebrew poets and writers in the beginning of the 20th century.

This happened at the beginning of the 1920s: I was taking a walk with Elisheva on Rothschild Boulevard. All of a sudden Elisheva stopped and I noticed that there was a third person in our company. "Meet Rachel Bluwstein from Degania", said Elisheva. I had a look at the girl whose huge, dreaming black eyes dominated her face. We sat down on a bench. Our conversation with Rachel was about trifling everyday matters. One year later she was recognized as one of the greatest poets of the Hebrew literary renaissance.

At the time I seem to have missed out on something: to take a deeper look into the profound poetic soul of Rachel.

*

We got the news that Avigdor Feuerstein had left Odessa and was on his way to the Land of Israel. He arrived, was welcomed appropriately, however, there were no Hungarian *chalutzim* to greet him then. We thought it was not fair. Who can claim Feuerstein but us? We have specific things to tell him: Feuerstein is a Hungarian Jew, he will understand our problems. We can tell him everything; even share our complaints with him.

I decided to visit him, despite the fact that I had never met him personally before. At that time I had no opportunity to go and see him. Later on I had the chance. I heard that he was sick, lying in the Hadassah Hospital. The *mitzvah* of *bikur holim* is valid for all. Therefore, I made up my mind to visit him and if his state of health permitted, I would tell him more than wishing him *refuah shlemah*. I put on my holiday clothes, and on the way to the hospital, I prepared in my mind what to tell him. I arrived at the beginning of visiting hours.

Feuerstein was sitting at his bedside reading. I could recognize the book from its cover, he was holding the *One Thousand and One Miracles* by Moskovsky in his hand. I went up to him, introduced myself, and was about to start what I had to say when he interrupted me. He said that I should believe that Einstein's space had bent; this was the greatest idea of human culture, and the farthest nebula in the starry sky was, in fact, right here. Then he talked about the microcosmos, the macrocosmos, the world of bacilli, the mammoth, Siamese twins, the Pope in Rome, the Gaon of Vilna and a lot more. About Marx, Jesus, Jeanne D'Arc, Freud, Ady, *The Tragedy of Man*...

(When he got to that point, the nurse politely pushed me out of the ward, saying visiting hours were over.)

I left with mixed feelings. I got acquainted with Feuerstein. He always did the talking and I could hardly get a word in edgeways. We were close friends for decades, but *he* talked all the time.

Only on a very sad day in the cemetery of Kiryat Shaul did I have the liberty to recount at the bier of Hameiri who this great Messianistic Hebrew poet really was.

*

Memories...Is it possible not to remember the many enthusiastic *chalutzim* who were building the country, searching for God, searching for truth, who came here from all the corners of the world? People with a great secret in their heart, who came here to forget, just as Christians hide in the seclusion of their monasteries. An infinite number of shining spots in the flood of memories:

Who could forget Darida, the Christian *chalutz*, who was among the first fighting back Arab attackers during the May Day riots in 1921? Where is the Transylvanian *ger*, who came here, led by his new belief? However, he broke down when he had to face secular life, and went into exile.

What happened to Wolf from Bratislava/Pozsony, the patron of the Hungarian group of *chalutzim*, who wanted to see the hill where the Torah had been given, so he went on a pilgrimage to Mount Sinai in the beginning of the 1920s?

Who could forget Moshkovitz, the Tolstoyan artist from Hungary, who used to be the director of the gallery in Florence? Here he first became a simple labourer, then bought a piece of land on Mount Carmel and tilled it with his own hands.

There were so many enthusiasts of Zion, beautiful souls, taken by cruel fate from our ranks. Rabbi Mordechai Asodi came from Debrecen, together with his old parents, wife and five young children, and the next day following his arrival he was killed defending his family from Arab hordes. It happened near the house of Yosef Chaim Brenner, who was also murdered on the same day. [during the Jaffa riots of 1921 – the translator]

Lawyer candidate Dr. Alexander Frisch, a pleasant, cheerful man became a victim of rebuilding the country. He was a worker in the Salpeters yeast factory when the boiler exploded in November 1923, killing him together with Simcha Salpeter and his wife, who was like a mother for the *chalutzim*.

There is a name emerging from the memories of the Jewish *aliyah* after the First World War: the engineer Ármin Winkler, who settled in Jerusalem in 1919 and became the victim of overwork.

There were many more *olim* from Hungary, devoted, enthusiastic and brave people who paid with their lives for their contribution to the awakening to a new life and the realization of the great dream!

OUR OUTSTANDING SONS

Professor Dr. JACOB KATZ, Rector

He was born in 1904 at Magyargencs, near Pápa. He spent his childhood in this village where there were hardly enough Jews for a *minyan*. They lived on the modest income supplied by their grocery store. The rising star of the village child was marked by the following stations: after elementary and higher elementary studies he went to the yeshiva in Pozsony/Pressburg, and then continued his studies at the yeshiva of Frankfurt where he received his *smichah* as a rabbi, but he did not want to work as a rabbi.

He received his doctorate at the University of Frankfurt.

In 1936, he worked in England as a teacher at a high school and a teacher training college, both religious institutions.

In 1950 he taught in the Departments of Sociology and Jewish History of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

In 1956-57 he was a visiting professor at the Institute of Jewish Studies in Manchester.

From 1958 on, he was Dean at the Hebrew University for four years. In 1961, he became a full professor at the department *in memoriam* Bella and Israel Unterberg.

In 1969, he was elected rector of the Hebrew University.

(His books published in Hebrew and English: Tradition and Crisis, Jewish Society at the End of the Middle Ages, Exclusiveness and Tolerance: studies about Jewish-Christian relations, Out of the Ghetto.

DEZSŐ KOREIN

An outstanding figure of Hungarian orthodoxy, he was born in 1870 in Pápa into a distinguished family of the Pápa Jewish community. Even in his youth he gave signs of his ability as an excellent organizer. When he was a student, he organized a torchlight procession of Jewish youth, in honour of the election of Dr. Salamon Breuer, who became a famous chief rabbi. Dr. Breuer later occupied the rabbinical seat of Frankfurt that had become vacant after the death of his father-in-law and the founder of German orthodoxy, Rabbi Samson Rafael Hirsch. Korein remained life-long friends with chief rabbi Dr. Breuer. After finishing his studies, he set out in business; he married the daughter of the highly respected community president, Adolf Löwenstein, and opened a textile business in Szombathely where he soon became the president of the Jewish community. He had connections with distinguished figures in the county and on a national scale. He visited the PM Kálmán Széll several times on his estate in Vas County. His wife, who was the daughter of the great national poet Mihály Vörösmarty, also received him with great respect. The PM honoured his guest and had a great regard for the strictly traditional, educated Jew. Subsequently, he moved to the capital and there also participated in Jewish public life. He was a national dignitary. After the lost war, he was sent to Sopron by the right-wing

government before the referendum [when the citizens of Sopron had the right to decide whether to stay with Hungary or join Austria – the translator], to campaign for the Hungarians. He refused the decoration that he was about to receive for this, saying he would not accept being decorated by Miklós Horthy [Regent and Head of State in Hungary between 1920-1944 – the translator].

For three decades he was a member of the National Central Committee, the top leadership of Hungarian Orthodox Jewry. He had an educated mind, a pleasant appearance, and good manners; moreover, he was an excellent orator and a skilled writer; he had a fortunate combination of all these exceptional qualities. He was militantly orthodox, true to his principles. He was the only orthodox member of the City Council of Székesfehérvár. He fought for decades for the observance of Shabbat, which was in danger. He organized the Alliance of *Shomrei Shabbat*, and edited the almanac *Szombat*. His articles for the observance of Shabbat would fill a whole library. He managed to change payday to Wednesday instead of Saturday for the tens of thousands of workers in the workshops of the capital.

It was adopted by many factories as well. It also helped retailers and stallholders who kept their business closed on Shabbat. In addition to his political and religious activities, he was an exceptional activist of sheer goodness. He was a tireless fighter for the rights of the man-in-the-street, for the stallholder to get back his stall that had been taken away under the White regime, or for the cancellation of an unfair fine. He talked patiently to the poor in trouble. He knew how to encourage people who turned to him and to give back their hope. He was a father-like figure, a patron for little Jews and for all the poor without discrimination of faith. Even during the White regime he managed to ensure that the aid for Jewish communities and charitable associations was paid by the Municipality of Budapest, which would not have been an easy job even in more peaceful times. In the interwar period without this aid, most Jewish charitable associations would have been forced to close down or to cut their beneficial activities to almost nothing.

At the age of 79, in 1949, his noble heart stopped beating. Hungarian Jewry lost a very worthy citizen with his death.

ELIEZER (LÁSZLÓ) SHISHA,

the pride of Pápa Jews, the son of the highly educated elementary school teacher of Pápa Adolf Shisha, was born in 1900. After getting his teaching diploma, he passed the matriculation exams at a secondary school for modern languages and sciences in Kecskemét. Then he was a student at the technical universities of Budapest and Vienna. He could feel early the storm coming to wipe out European Jewry and had immigrated to Palestine in 1920. Only a month following his arrival, he was appointed a teacher at the Tachkemoni School. The following year, in recognition of his excellent professional knowledge, he started to work at the National Institute of Geodesy: there he received an award for his patent of the planimeter from the British mandate government. The College of Geodesy in Holon was founded in 1949; its management was entrusted to him, in addition to his teaching of mathematics.

In the meantime, he was writing books and translating into Hebrew the great mathematical work of Professor Brodetzky. His popular science books written in Hebrew were published by Am-Oved: Archimedes and Newton (two editions), Abao Ziffer Harofe (two editions), Textbook on the Theory of Errors in Measurement.

Dr. MIKLÓS SHISHA,

the son of Pápa teacher Adolf Shisha, was born on November 15, 1893. The highly educated teacher, who also learnt English and French in his spare time, in addition to studying mathematics at an advanced level, gave his son an excellent education. At his bar-mitzva, Miklós gave his audience a surprise with the *drashah* that he had written and his festive address in French, which was understood probably only by his father. After finishing elementary school he was an excellent, eminent student at the local Protestant High School. He showed an inclination to write at a young age. He was in the sixth grade of the High School when one of his short stories was published in the daily paper Pápai Hírlap. He was in the seventh grade when he met the world-famous psychoanalyst Sándor Ferenczi, who was temporarily staying in Pápa as an officer of the seventh *hussar* regiment. He lived in the same street as Miklós, in Eötvös Street; Ferenczi employed the intelligent student who knew Western languages as his secretary. That is how Miklós got acquainted with the teachings of Freud at quite a young age. Later on, he wrote Freudian articles on a very high level, which were published in the *Nyugat*, a social and literary periodical. (War and Psycho-Sexuality, The Soul of the Crowd) Subsequently he had personal contact with Freud as well. After the matriculation, he moved to Kecskemét, where he stayed with his married sister Helén and went to the local law school. The young law student attracted attention with his erudition and original thinking. He was 19 when he won a prize with his 75-page excellent essay “*On the Impact of Darwinism on Philosophy*”. In addition to scholarly work, he was interested in literature, theatre, and the arts. . He was the editor of a student newspaper called *Diáklap*. Later on, his play *Mr. Wry in Heaven* was accepted by the literary advisor of *Vígszínház*, Jenő Heltai, who also paid him for it, but the war prevented the performance of the play.

After the outbreak of the First World War he did his military service in Pozsony/Pressburg/Bratislava, and received his law degree there. Subsequently he moved to Pest, where in 1916 he became the chairman of the radical Galilei Circle. In 1919 he gave the funeral address for Endre Ady [1877-1919, great Hungarian poet, idolized by contemporary radical youth –the translator] on behalf of the Galilei Circle, in front of the bier of the great poet in the assembly hall of the university. The events of the world war plunged him into political life. His socialist views were expressed by the periodical *Szabad Gondolat*, which he edited. He tried to win over Count Mihály Károlyi to the idea of organizing *Békeblokk* (a Coalition of Peace). Mihály Károlyi in his reply on September 23, 1917 wrote that he agreed with the idea propagated by Dr. Shisha and invited him to talk it over together with Oszkár Jászi and Zsigmond Kunfi. The meeting took place, but nothing came of it.

In those days, Shisha was in the centre of an anti-war action organized by the Galilei Circle. They wrote pamphlets. Shisha distributed his pamphlet against bloodshed “*Katona-Testvérekhez*” (To Soldier-Brothers) in the barracks in Üllői Road. The police suspected the Galilei Circle of the action and banned it from January 1, 1918. Dr. Shisha was arrested also. He was imprisoned in Conti Street, then in the transit prison, and was released before the autumn revolution. During the Commune of 1919 Shisha did not ask for an appointment, and did not get any. Nevertheless, he frequently met state leaders then, many of whom made use of his advice. In those days he had to travel to the parents of his wife in Fiume because his wife was ill. The news about the downfall of the Commune reached him in Fiume. At the time Fiume was under the dictatorship of D'Annunzio, the famous poet, who had occupied the town. Shisha got in contact

with D'Annunzio, which was not approved of by the citizens of the town. One day Shisha was kidnapped from his apartment at gun-point by reactionaries; he was forced into a car, and was driven away. D'Annunzio was informed about it, saved Shisha's life, and advised him to leave the town. First, he worked in the organisation of the Italian Socialist Party in Civita Vecchia, and then he moved to Rome where he worked as an official in charge of the press for the Soviet Embassy. In 1927 he was transferred to Milano where he fell mortally ill, and died there at the age of 34 on July 13, 1927.

Dr. Miklós Shisha was an idealist with a pure soul and an amazingly intelligent person. His attitude to being a Jew is demonstrated in his letters written to his brother who settled in Palestine in 1920. He was not religious, but he was a self-respecting Jew who never denied his identity.

He highly valued the building of *Eretz Yisrael*. In his letters, he drew a parallel between his humanistic socialism and Zionism which was building the country. He yearned to see *Eretz Yisrael* being rebuilt, but his dream could not be realized. Fate decided otherwise. The fact that the builders of the new world highly appreciated the activities of Dr. Shisha is attested by the following books written about him:

1. *Galilei per a XX. században* [The Trial of Galilei in the 20th century] by Jolán Kelen, Kossuth, 1957.

2. *Új vizeken járok. A Galilei Kör története* [I Walk on New Waters. The History of the Galilei Circle] by Márta Tömöry, Gondolat, Budapest, 1960.

3. *Sisa Miklós. 'Forrás', Irodalom, Művészet, Tudomány* by Nándor Heltai, Kecskemét, July 1969.

ALBERT SHELLEY

Albert *Seelenfreund*, born in Pápa, was a later successor of the Abaújszántó rabbi *Shemen Rokeach*. He was a student in the days of Herzl when he founded the *Tzeirei Tzion* Youth Association in Pápa. He received his diploma as a teacher and a *chazan* at the National Teacher Training College of Pápa with an excellent record. He was a student at the Teacher Training College and only 19 when, in recognition of his talents, he was invited by the Szeged Jewish Community to take the post of secretary. Chief Rabbi Immanuel Löw loved this musical genius, whose pleasant baritone voice elevated the ritual of the priestly blessing (Albert was a *Cohen*) to an artistic level. While working as secretary at Szeged, several of his poems were published in the most intellectual Jewish periodical, *Múlt és Jövő*, under the name Albert Baráth. During the First World War, in which he was injured, he reached the rank of lieutenant. After the war, he returned to Szeged. He left his secretarial job and worked for a wholesale business firm where he was in charge of exporting paprika

Many years before the Second World War, he travelled with his family to Cuba, then to Mexico, and soon won himself a name as the representative of chemical factories. A series of his articles were published in Spanish in the technical literature. He was in charge of the temple frequented by Hungarians in Mexico City, and his holiday sermons were the highlights of the services.

On the occasion of his 70th birthday, he visited Israel and presented the Bnei Herzl Lodge with a beautiful silver goblet in memory of Immanuel Löw.

With his vast Jewish learning and faithful religious sentiment, he conquered the hearts of Mexican Jews so much that at his funeral, addresses were given in Spanish, Hebrew and Hungarian. The orators from different Jewish communities eulogized his tireless work for the public. It was a great loss for the Jews of Pápa.

DR. MIKLÓS STERN

He was born in Tab, Somogy County. His father was an engineer who died young. His mother married Lipót Buxbaum, who was a teacher and a school principal at Pápa. The young boy found a real home in Pápa; Lipót Buxbaum gave him an excellent education and he was adored by his new siblings, the Buxbaum children.

He attended the local Protestant High School and passed the matriculation exams there. Then he became a student at the Rabbinical Seminary of Budapest, where he attracted great attention by his talent as a young scholar of Eastern studies. In 1939 he made *aliya* and continued his studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

He became an orientalist and went to England. First he was a researcher in a college at Oxford, and then he became a professor of eastern languages at Oxford University. He became world-famous in scholarly circles in 1948 on account of a debate he held with the Arab delegates at a Paris conference. He defeated the Arabs by proving on the basis of a verse in the Quran, that the Al-Aqsa mosque cannot have been in Jerusalem. It must have been in the city of Medina, near Mecca. The Arab delegates from the Middle-East created a scandal, but Muslim scholars from more distant countries congratulated him in private.

He is considered among the best orientalists. Unfortunately, the great scholar died young, in 1969.

If you want to get acquainted with real *talmidei hachamim* from Pápa, you should meet

REV KIVE SCHREIBER,

who was an outstanding Talmudic scholar.

He was the son of the Krakkower rebbe and the grandson of the Chatam Sofer, and dealt with leather. He did not have a shop, his flat was his storehouse. He spoke of it somewhat bitterly, pointing out the rooms in his apartment:

"This is the place where I sleep. This is where my family sleeps. And this is where my business sleeps."

It was recorded that he received a dowry that was considered unusually large in those days, 5000 gold pieces. On the day of his wedding, he distributed one tenth of it among the poor. When his father-in-law found out, he became angry and questioned him, saying that it was his fortune that Kive dissipated. The *chatan's* uncle Ktav Sofer was there; he tried to calm him down, saying "Don't worry about our Kive, he will die a rich man." Later on when he became the owner of a cookware factory and had serious problems because of the bad economic situation, his friends could not see any outward signs of his worries.

On one occasion he was asked by his friend Horovitz (the soap manufacturer he used to study Talmud with in the evenings), how come he gave no signs of worries concerning his serious business difficulties. "I believe in the words of my uncle who said I would not die poor", replied Kive. Indeed, the encouraging prediction of the great rabbi came true: he left a huge

fortune to his son Mordechai Berl, on condition that he would do nothing but study Torah for 10 years.

In fact, Kive himself paid little attention to his business; he lived for the study of the Torah. It was written about him that he knew the 24 books of the *Tanach* by heart. When he was in business, he used to study in the storeroom all year round. He did not even heat his room in the winter, he was so careful not to spend money on himself. When he had to travel on public business, he did not accept costs from the community treasury. (The budget item accepted in Israel indicated by the acronym *eshel* – food, drink, lodging for the night - did not exist then.) As a measure of economy, however, he took only dry bread for the trip. Since his life was dedicated to learning, he did not accept the post of the chief rabbi in Krakow that was offered to him when his father died.

"I know how much my father regretted that public affairs and the private matters of his believers distracted him from learning the Torah", remarked reb Kive.

His folios of the Talmud were filled with marginal notes from his studies.

His letters written to his son, studying at Hunsdorf, were full of witty Biblical commentaries.

It is a credit to his wisdom that he drafted the rules and regulations of the Pápa Jewish community in such a way as to prevent a neolog take-over. According to the rules, the community was to be directed by an 80-member body of representatives and a 23-member religious organization. The first was the result of elections by the community. The 23 members were all learned men in religious studies and they were not chosen by the community. If one of them died or moved to another place, his place was filled by someone invited by the Religious Committee. Candidates for the post of the rabbi, *dayan* and *shochet* were nominated by this organ. The body of representatives or the regular community member was authorized to choose only from the functionaries who were recommended by it.

His witticisms were recorded by Albert Neumann, a school principal from Nyíregyháza, in a book entitled *Reb Kive Pope*.

YECHEZKIEL JENŐ PANETH

He was one of the many excellent teachers who came from Pápa.

He was the son of Talmud instructor Arye Paneth, a descendent of the famous rabbinical dynasty from Dés, who moved to Pápa. Yechezkiel was named after the first Chief Rabbi of Transylvania.

He brought with him the finest virtues and merits of his home town. His work and his attitude towards life were exemplary; he was a truly religious instructor. His self-respecting behaviour and pedantic appearance drew attention in the Jewish teacher training college of Budapest. He remained a stickler for detail inside and outside all his life. He was the favorite student of Professor Bánóczi, the great educator and humanist. He himself was a humanist as well; during 27 years that he spent at the renowned Orthodox School of Budapest, he not only taught the students, he also educated them and provided social care for them. Many of his former students living in Israel remembered how he used to give away his own sandwich to poor students.

Shoah survivors from Pest who were deported together with him told stories about his wonderful behaviour in the camp: how he got for himself new *t'filin* in place of the ones taken from him by sacrificing his bread for it.

After the war and the tribulations he had gone through in the camp on Cyprus, he reached Israel. He settled in Nitzanim where his daughter lived. He lived in the kibbutz during the hard days of the War of Independence, when he was in charge of the weapons. He remained faithful and continued to live a traditional, religious life in the non-religious kibbutz as well, creating for himself the customary religious atmosphere by his conduct.

At the age of 66, this noble instructor left us forever. The memory of this just man is cherished by the circle of Pápa expatriates.

ZEEV SCHÜKK

The grandson of our *dayan* Rav Tzvi Eckstein was educated in the traditional spirit of his parents and grandparents, and studied at various *yeshivas*. After the World War he joined the movement of the *Hashomer Hatzair* and made *aliya*. In Israel he was among the founders of the kibbutz *Lehavot Chaviva* and was active in *Mapam*. He was a gifted poet. For his collections of poems *The Great Night* and the *Eyes of Sinful Times*, he was posthumously awarded the *Charchas* prize in Kibbutz Eilon. The poems in these collections recalled the Shoah.

The following Jews were excellent Hebraists:

Ármin Schor, principal of the higher elementary school and the son of the Alsókubin rabbi. After losing his father at the age of two, he was taken to his maternal uncle rabbi Groszmann, who was the rabbi of Nagybicse and the author of the halachic book *Bet Yakov*. He learnt Hebrew so well that at the age of 12 he could write and speak Hebrew perfectly.

Mór Pfeiffer, principal, author of a Hebrew grammar.

Henrik Blau, principal.

Lipót Buxbaum, teacher.

Izso Várhelyi, teacher, who promoted modern Hebrew, teaching youth the living language.

In the beginning of the 20th century, Hungarian took the place of the German language; Jews became *magyarized* completely. It became their beloved mother tongue, the language spoken at home. You might accidentally find some family heads reading the *Pester Lloyd* or the *Pester Journal*, but soon they were displaced by *Újság* and *Pesti Hírlap*.

In the beginning of the 1900s, the enthusiasm for the Hungarian language triggered a demonstration of Pápa Jewish students against the performance of the *Purim Spiel* in German by yeshiva students; windows were broken to stop the performance. On another occasion, at a service for youth, inaugurating a new Torah scroll, the demand was raised to change the word *Mittelschule* embroidered with gold on the *parochet* for *középiskola*.

At that time, the sermons of the rabbi in German drew only few listeners. The Zionist youth attended Hebrew courses, but the spirit of the Hungarian language accompanied the Jewish survivors of Pápa to all corners of the world. As the Jews expelled from Spain in 1492 took with them the ancient Sephardic language through the Balkans and to South America, and preserved it for centuries, the Jews from Hungary, at least their first generation, became the missionaries of Hungarian language and culture. Even among the believers of *Neturei Karta*, the most fanatical Jews, the Hungarian language dominates. The ghettoization, the bitterness of the Jewish laws, the horrors of the forced labour camps and death camps, and all the painful memories caused negative feelings against people only, but not against the innocent language of Petöfi, Arany, Jókai and Ady. As a result, this commemorative book was written in Hungarian about the life of Pápa Jews.

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF THE PÁPA JEWS

Ever since the letter by Count Ferenc Eszterházy on May 10, 1748, permitting the establishment of a Jewish community in Pápa, for almost two centuries the relationship with followers of other religions was excellent. There are many instances to be quoted in connection with this friendly and intimate state of affairs:

In 1840, the Jewish community raised money for the statue of King Matthias and decided to contribute 400 forints to the local Protestant High School, an excellent Hungarian institution. In 1846 the patron of the town contributed 100,000 bricks to the construction of the new Jewish temple.

In 1848 the patriotic sermons of Lipót Lőw were attended on *Shabbat* by students of the Protestant High School and the Theological Seminary at the Jewish temple. In 1872, a beautiful house was donated by Pál Királyföldi, a landowner of the Lutheran faith, for the purposes of a Jewish school. In his will, the same person also left 500 forints for the school. The annual pages of the Protestant High School always contained the names of Jewish contributors who supported the Relief Association.

Roman Catholic abbé Néger never missed visiting community president Adolf Löwenstein at *Simchat Tora* in order to participate in the party given by the president for the members of his community. Community president Adolf Löwenstein left in his will 500 forints to the town to feed 10 poor Catholics, 10 Protestants and 10 Jews every year at the anniversary of his death.

Lutheran bishop Ferenc Gyurátz greeted the newly elected rabbi by a speech in Hebrew.

Calvinist bishop Géza Antal often went to see the merchant Zsigmond Beck, a respected community member, to talk with him in an intimate, friendly manner.

On pleasant spring evenings we often saw Henrick Blau, principal of the Jewish higher elementary school, walking arm in arm with Baldauf, the Lutheran bishop's secretary (who later became the bishop of Pécs).

Adolf Karlowitz, the secular president of the Catholic Church and the brother-in-law of the bishop of Vác, employed a Jewish woman in his pharmacy, exempting her from work on Shabbat and Jewish holidays.

Jewish students were exempted from writing on Shabbat at the Protestant High School, at the Calvinist Boarding-School for Girls and at the Public Higher Elementary School for Girls.

The Protestant High School made it possible for Jewish students to attend Shabbat morning services for youth at 11 A.M. on a regular basis.

Non-Jews made up 40 % of the students attending the Jewish higher elementary school.

József Kraft, a teacher at the Roman Catholic teacher training college, would carry books for observant Jewish students from the *eruv* [a symbolic fence denoting Shabbat boundaries for carrying objects] to the school gate.

The Pápa district court had no proceedings on Shabbat out of consideration for Jewish attorneys. For decades, Jews filled the posts of the municipal health officer and veterinarian.

The friendliness generally felt towards Jews was not disturbed by the antisemitic wave of the 1880s. When in wake of the Tiszaeszlár blood libel a hired band of György Istóczy organized a demonstration near the Jewish temple in preparation for a pogrom, it was dispersed by Jewish tanner and butcher apprentices joining forces with their Christian friends.

After the Communist rule of 1919, in the days of the White terror, the flames of officially generated antisemitism reached Pápa as well:

three Pápa Jews were executed in the woods of Devecser, the dentist Dr. Róbert Blum, József Steiner and Bienenstock. The teacher Izsó Várhelyi was badly beaten up. When the news came that the lower town was preparing for a pogrom, Jewish youth gathered armed with sticks at the call of the Stern brothers (József, Imre and Géza), under the leadership of Gyula Breuer.

The dark clouds scattered slowly and life became normal again. The rise of the Arrow Cross in the 1940s brought this period to an end. After the showing of the antisemitic film *Jud-Süss*, a riot broke out, windows of Jewish homes were broken, and there was fighting in the streets with the military involved, leaving many wounded by bayonets. Following the German occupation, the end was drawing near: all contacts were severed and no one stood up for Jews. Yesterday's friends became today's enemies. Movie owner Ede Gobbi, the father of actress Hilda Gobbi was a rare bird: he saved a great number of forced labour servicemen. Another rare bird was Lieutenant Csanaky, the principal of Tókert, who remained a human being when people turned into beasts: his forced labour servicemen remember his humanity with gratitude.

However, this chapter should be closed in a sad tone; the words of the psalm came true: *they repay me evil for good* (psalm 35:12).

Only the pages of this book will tell posterity that Jews used to live in peace with followers of other religions in Pápa.

REMEMBERING PÁPA

by Sándor Löwenstein

It was like a dream. Or was it a dream really? They were standing by the entrance, it was a relatively good camp, they were wearing a mixture of work clothes and their Sunday best, with open trench coats, expecting new arrivals with the usual excitement of looking forward to something new: to get updated by the newcomers and to go, or rather to fly to their support.

Rumour had it for some time – spread by kitchen staff and those in charge of slicing bread – that somebody was supposed to arrive from our town. They were restlessly milling around, old-timers humbly pulling together their fully grown wings, while greenhorns fluttering their miniature wings which had hardly started to grow. They were not nervous. At last they did not have to be afraid of a husky voice saying "I have been watching you for a long time!"

They had no feelings of fear or revenge, they were free from vanity. The only ambition left in them was not an earthly drive to get to better housing or camp "where the spoon is stuck in the mush": it was a purely disinterested longing for the higher spheres, to approach absolute purity.

An angel on duty was approaching with a drone like a Stuka. The letter *shin* on his armband identified from a distance his belonging to the guards. Haberdasher Henrik Steiner, who was a pure soul already on earth, called out to him:

"Where are you going, Comrade-in-Joy?" "I am bringing you someone from Pápa. I am in a hurry, I have to go", he shouted down to him and disappeared in the purple clouds.

"I told you it was no rumour", said Tibor Németh. Although Tibi was a newcomer, he was immediately accommodated in the barracks of the purified and was told the news even before the archangels. The tension was growing. At noon Sanyi Vértés angrily slammed down the gold mess-tins in the kitchen, because only a few had come for lunch, due to the excitement and the fast.

The company got together only between *mincha* and *maariv* on the gravelled yard of the temple. There was hardly anybody on the benches, despite the fact that their favourites were supposed to give lectures in the weekly program called *Pele Yoetz*: the names of rabbis Róth, Link, Pressburger, Eckstein, Gottlieb, and Haberfeld possessed no attraction for them that day. The situation in the *Bet Hamidrash* was not any better: rabbis Áron Pressburger, Dirnfeld, and Rapoport were the lecturers there.

Before the appearance of the three stars, Samuel Bodánszky – called Shmuel the Long up in heaven – flew rustling his wings through the trellis gate of the temple yard. Even the saints in the highest circles knew that he had spent his last years and his fortune in support of Polish, Slovak and Austrian refugees. "They will arrive in a second", said he, rushing to the temple to reassure Uncle Stein, who was quite nervous.

The efforts of Tuvia Biedermann, hiding his wings humbly under his cloak, were useless; his believers were too much of a handful for him that day. He had the title of temple father for life, but he did not take it seriously, spending his time with community policies and visiting the nursery school in the afternoon to play with the little ones. Auntie Julcsa had her eyes on him in vain: he stuffed his pockets with candies, stealing out of his store to distribute them among children, most of whom had been killed in the gas chambers. All of a sudden Uncle Marton and Eizig Gestetner sailed in gracefully through the Eötvös Street gate, holding the newcomer under their arms, then with a clever maneuver gliding over the heads of those waiting, put down the frightened-looking *barminan* (corpse) on the temple steps. However, as they tried to take him to Uncle Baum in the entrance hall to get his personal data recorded (a person who is not recorded in the *chevra* book has no name), he was surrounded by a huge crowd. The strict voice of the beadle Deutsch and the attempts to persuade them by Uncle Rosenberg proved futile. The poor soul was harassed from all sides, some were even pulling at his *kittel*, asking what's up in Pápa. "I don't know a lot because I was staying at a hospital in Pest", the newcomer tried to excuse himself, "and then I was not taken home because there is no *chevra kadisha* there anymore, as you probably know."

"What? No *chevra kadisha*? How come?" They were appalled. "Where are you living, in the clouds? ,Even the temple is being used as a storehouse and there is no *minyán*."

They were struck speechless. With tearful eyes, poor souls were walking down the aisle and getting to their seats on the benches, hanging their heads silently in deadly sorrow. Uncle Marton slowly reached his place at the *mizrach* and fussily got seated. *Baal t'filah* Uncle Stein looked back from his pulpit over the *talit* to see if everybody was settled, and in a husky sobbing voice started to pray: "*Vehü rachüm yechaper ovayn, velay yashchis...*" And a dreadful choir wept together with him: "*Ve-hu rachum yechaper ovayn – velay yashchis...*"

FORCED LABOUR SERVICE

I went through a lot of horrors during the blood-soaked years, but the most depressing story I can remember was the following:

After the German occupation, we were languishing in a camp at Újdörög. Our camp commander Captain Gilde, with some traces of aristocratic background, was replaced by an even more dismal character, a neuropathic and sadistic major whose name I cannot remember. (May his memory be erased.) During a search that lasted for an hour, when our glorious guards with the help of gendarmes with sickle feathers on their helmets even robbed us of our stamps for mail and we were close to collapse after standing at attention, this major summoned one of his henchmen and asked him: "Tell me sergeant, how many Jews did I take to the front in 1942?" "225 Jews, Sir, I humbly report." "And with how many did I return?" "16 Jews, Sir, I humbly report." "Did you hear it, Jews? It will happen to you, too", the Hungarian Royal major bellowed, foaming at the mouth.

However, the major did not achieve his purpose. Our thoughts were flying in another direction. For the past few days we were getting farewell letters from our families before the deportation, letters which were passed by Sándor Szilágyi, the cadet with syphilis. First the letters were arriving from the periphery, then the ice-cold hand was reaching up more and more. After such a distribution of mail the amiable Rabbi Sofer, a *dayan* from Sopron who slept next to me, handed over his letter to me with a white face. His family, his children were saying goodbye to

him. This frightened little Jew, this hero who deserves a monument, continued to comfort our frantic comrades, with superhuman self-control, and tearful eyes. At night the choked sobbing under the blankets got stronger. We tried avoiding each other's eyes. Then on a painful day, the first farewell letter from Pápa arrived. It was our turn. Like forlorn lambs sensing danger chassid and non-religious, got together. Without previous consultation, the precentor started spontaneously praying *Avinu Malkenu*. Comrades gnashing their teeth and covering their ears were running up and down in the barrack, like moths flying around the fire; eventually they all ended up in the middle of the howling crowd. The whole barrack was writhing in a terrible frenzy. The *shaliach tzibur* of our community, the gentle and blond Tsodek Stein, with eyes rolling, was beating his breast with one hand, while the other hand was in a cramp, grasping the air. There was no mercy!

Together with his ten gentle and blond children, he became a statistic. When the precentor screamed "*chamol olenü veal alolenü vetapenü*" (take pity on us, and upon our children and our infants), the walls of the barracks were shaking, and from that point, it was sheer madness. There was no mercy! The brave guards were standing at the door astonished, they did not dare enter. The exhausted bodies collapsed on the plank beds; they had no strength left for crying.

Then we were also taken to the wagons, along the looted ghetto, among the mocking remarks of the gloating mob at Tapolca. Our brothers in Pápa were deported on the same day. Through the crowded windows of the wagon, we were watching the bombs flying around us. They failed to hit us. There was no mercy!

Sándor Löwenstein

THE GREAT TRAGEDY

The death sentence of Hungarian Jews was put into effect by the German occupation of the country on March 19, 1944. On April 6 the medieval sign of mockery, the yellow star, had to be sewed on clothing. It was forbidden to go out without it. Those who failed to do so were punished. On one of the first days, clothes dealer Bernáth Altmann stepped out of his store - without the star - in Kossuth Street, Pápa in order to speak to a provincial carter selling firewood. It was only a few steps, it took only a few seconds, but it was enough for his internment in the Sárvár camp, where he met lumber dealer Zoltán Bodánszky, a most pious Jew.

The following Jews were also interned:

M. Jenő Kohn, owner of a cement-plant, because of Zionism

Dr. Lajos Pápai, veterinarian, together with his wife

Lajos Friebert, manager of the *Bacon* meat factory

József Steiner, engineer, brick manufacturer in Tapolca

Ármin Leipnik, textile manufacturer

Dr. Emil Guth, attorney

Lajos Pátkai, landowner.

None of them returned, their fate is unknown.

Pápa Jews were locked into the ghetto on June 1, after the destruction of Jews in the Upper Province (Felvidék) and the deadly blow the hated Nazi army received at Stalingrad. The last service was held in the ancient temple on the second day of *Shavuot*. It was highly dramatic to listen to the *chazan* singing *yizkor*, although they did not know, only felt that it was the last prayer in the old synagogue.

The sermon was given by chief rabbi Jakab Habberfeld, who died a martyr.

The elected community board was disbanded, and a five-member Jewish council was appointed to be in charge of Jewish affairs, for the single purpose of executing the harsh orders.

The ghetto was set up in Petőfi, Eötvös, Rákóczi, Szent László and Bástya Streets; it was monstrously overcrowded. The ghetto had two gates: one in Rákóczi Street near Kossuth Street, the other in Bástya Street near Kis Square. When the Jews were taken away through these two gates, they had their bundles checked: not only their jewelry was taken away, sometimes, at random, their only change of underwear was confiscated as well.

Jews were beaten up, slapped and tortured to reveal their allegedly-hidden fortune and jewels.

There is no use arguing that it all happened at German orders. How can you defend the shameful behaviour of Lord Lieutenant István Buda? When he visited the ghetto with his attendants and saw the maternity ward set up by gynaecologist Dr. Kornél Donáth, he burst out:

"It is much too beautiful for stinking Jews, I will see to it!" This beast in human form had no time for action because the ghetto was liquidated. Dr. Glück and his wife Lucy, the pharmacist, committed suicide to avoid cruel tortures in the ghetto.

Junior civil servant Dr. Pál Lotz was the commander of the ghetto in town. This corrupt figure escaped to the West after the war. In Switzerland he was a hotel manager, but when he was informed that he was a wanted person, he fled to Australia. He lived in an unknown place, under a pseudonym.

Pápa Jews were transferred from the ghetto in town to the fertilizer factory. There the ghetto was under the command of police captain Dr. Zoltán Pap. He executed the orders in such a cruel manner that later he was sentenced for 12 years by a military tribunal.

Two thousand five hundred and sixty-five Pápa Jews were taken to the fertilizer factory, where they were joined by three hundred Jews from the districts of Devecser, Zirc and Pápa. There were two Jews in Pápa who were exempted from the anti-Jewish, fascist decrees: Miklós László, who dealt with technical appliances and Pál Frimm. Both were 75 percent disabled and were awarded the gold medal for bravery. Each had lost a leg in the First World War. They did not have to go to the ghetto, or move to the artificial fertilizer factory: as exempted persons, they were permitted to stay in their apartments. Miklós László had his 13 year-old son with him. They lived in Pápa in constant fear until October 15th. After the Szálasi takeover, the two exempted men and the 13 year-old boy were sent to the internment camp in Komárom castle by junior civil servant János Horváth and Pál Lotz, who first confiscated their cash, jewelry and clothes. The commander of the castle in Komárom, however, respected their exemption, and sent them back to Pápa with a document saying they were exempted from deportation. When they returned to Pápa, they went to report to the police station. The two junior civil servants had the two war invalids and the 13 year-old boy taken out and shot in the street.

This terrible act of horror was only an episode of the Holocaust. Out of the 2565 deportees only 300 returned home. The number of murdered children was 671.

On July 4 and 5, they were crammed into wagons.

The bells were not tolled, neither in the temple of the Catholic vicarage on the Main Square (Főtér), nor in *Anna* chapel. The bells of the new Calvinist church on Jókai Square stayed silent as well, despite the fact that Jews had contributed to their purchase. The bells of the Lutheran church in Gyurácz Ferenc Street were not sounded either. There were no admirers of Ady to run with them, as the great poet foretold it in his poem *A bélyeges sereg* (The Branded Flock):

*My ugly yellow-patched throng,
I run with you and bless you.*

There were no neighbours with tearful eyes to accompany them; the grateful clients, students and the patients saved by Jewish doctors were absent. Only the sound of revels with gypsy music could be heard from the train station restaurant: it was a great day for Pápa gentlemen, the Jews of Pápa were being led to their death.

Gypsy music and the sobbing of the victims blended into a symphony of hatred.

The departing trains arrived at Auschwitz, via Budapest, Hatvan, and Kassa, on July 8, which was *Tammuz* 17 according to the Hebrew calendar: on this historical anniversary of mourning their destiny was fulfilled.

According to the legend, Moses broke the two stone tablets on that day, but only the cold stones were broken: the words of the Decalogue flew into space. Only one word reached the Nazi empire, the last word of the sixth commandment "*Thou shalt not kill*", the word kill! reached the Satanic empire. And they killed murdered, butchered old and young, mothers and babies. And on that day they murdered *the Jews of Pápa* in gas chambers.

And now we, the survivors, can weep and lament with Jeremiah:

"איכה ישבה בדד העיר רבתי עם היתה כאלמנה"

"Alas – she sits in solitude! The city that was great with people has become like a widow."

None of her lovers remained to comfort her; all of them betrayed her, her friends turned into enemies.

We must preserve the memory of this ancient, sacred community.

זכור ואל תשכח!

Remember and don't forget!

GLOSSARY FOR THE MARTYRS' LIST

The list appears on the JewishGen

<http://www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/Papa/pap901.html>

The customary way names are presented in Hungary is family name followed by given name.

Wives were and still are called by their husbands' name with the addition of -né, often followed by the wife's maiden name.

This is seen in the names of the first two martyrs:

“Adler Ignác”,

“Adler Ignácné – Spitzer Jolán”, (p. 119) sometimes presented as for example Stein Davidné, sz., or szül. (short for born) Vogl Sarolta (p. 144).

“Özv., short for özvegy” = Hungarian for widow (or widower), here it is used for women only.

For example on page 119 it appears: Özv. Adler Sámuelné = widow of Adler Sámuel

“Munkaszolg.” short for munkaszolgálatos, a man who served in a forced labour unit called “labour service”. These men were already away from Pápa at the time of the community's deportation.

“(50%-os) hadirokkant” = 50 % invalid resulting from WW I war injuries (p. 124).

“Hadi özvegy = hadi özv.” = WW I war widow (page. 126), also “honv. özv.”

“Eltűnt” = disappeared (p. 127).

In some cases there is an address added to a person, e.g. “Hoffmann Miksa, Petőfi u.” when there is another person by the same name on the list (p 129, see also Stern József, p 142).

“...és családja” = ...and his family (p. 132).

“Anyja” = His mother. (p. 135).

“Mayersberg Zoltán, 1943 május 14-én Dorositsban elpusztult” = Died on May 14, 1943 in Dorosits. (p. 136).

“Fia” = his son, (p 138)

“Reichenberg Johanna – férjezett Tannenbaum Miksáné” (p. 140). married to Tannenbaum Miksa

Sometimes a name is followed by expressions other than family members' names (probably not known).

“2 gyermekével” = with her two children,

“1 fiával” = with her 1 son;

“1 leányával” = with her 1 daughter (p. 147).

“és családja” = and his/her family (p. 157).

“család” = family.

“3 unokája” = with her 3 grandchildren (p. 158).

“és ennek menyé” = and her daughter-in-law (p.158).

“és 3 tagu családja” = and his 3 member family (p. 158).

“3 fia és 3 leánya” = her 3 sons and 3 daughters (p. 158).

“..hitk. metsző hitvese és gyermekei” = wife and children of the community's mohel. (p. 158).

Page 156, right hand column, second block:

“**Felsőborsodpusztán** 1945 Március 9-en kivégzett munkaszolgálatosok” = Forced labour servicemen executed on March 9, 1945 at **Felsőborsodpuszta** is followed by 7 names and hometowns.

אב הרחמים, שוכן מרומים ברחמי העצומים הוא יפקוד ברחמים,
החסידים והישרים והתמימים קהילות הקודש שמסרו נפשם על
קדושת השם, הנאהבים והנעימים בחייהם, וכמותם לא נפרדו.

May the compassionate One enthroned on high, with your bountiful mercy remember the
pious, the good and the innocent; the holy communities who laid down their lives in
sanctification of God's name. Beloved and beautiful in their lives, in their death they were
not parted.



*Oblivion is the way to exile
Remembrance is the secret of redemption.*

(Baal Shem Tov)

*Not the buried one is dead,
Only those are dead who are forgotten.*

(The Blue Bird by Maeterlinck)



This plaque commemorating the martyrs of the Pápa Jewish community in the "Holocaust Cellar" "מרתף השואה" on Mount Zion in Jerusalem

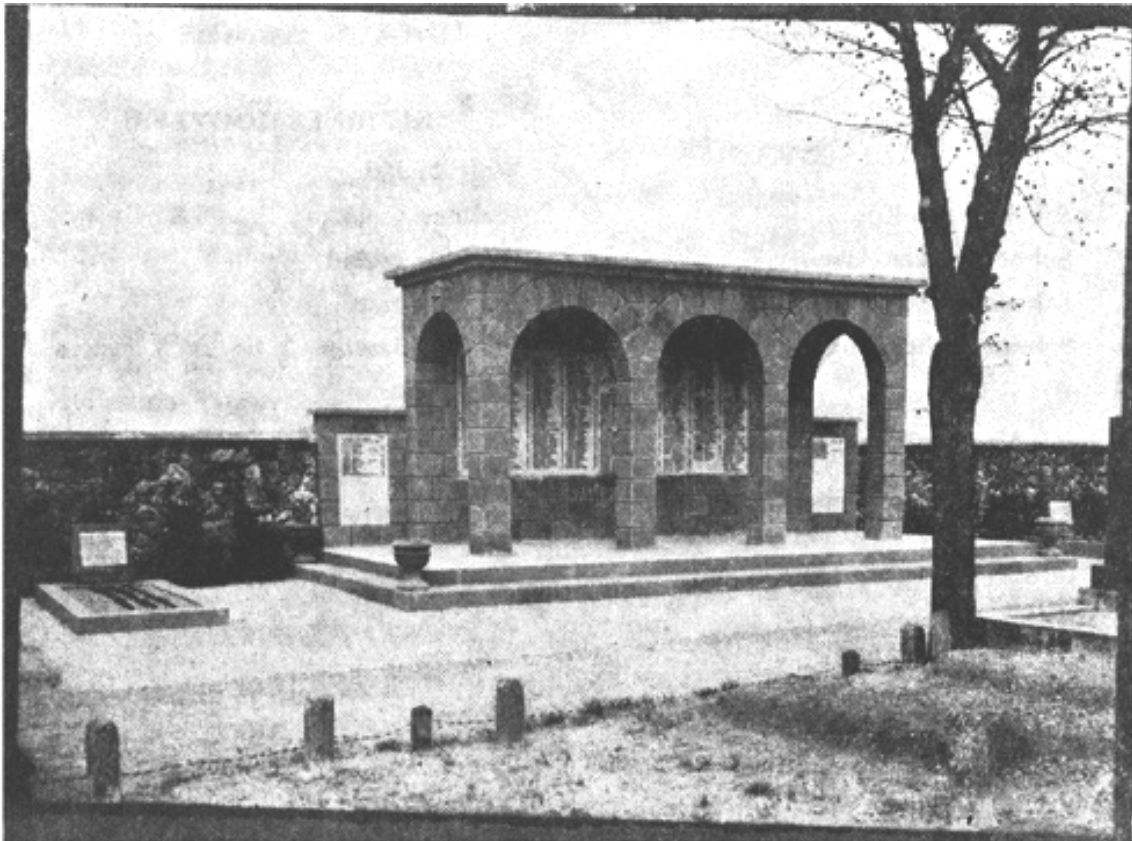
DEVECSER

The Jewish community was founded in this town of 4,000 inhabitants in 1750. József Lówy was their first rabbi. He was succeeded by József Cohen, Mór Stern, Dr. Izsák Links and Dr. Gábor Deutsch, who died a martyr's death.

The *Wisdom of the Fathers* (Atyák bölcs mondásai) and *Family Happiness as the Source of Blessing* (Családi boldogság az áldás forrásai) edited by Dr. Links were popular throughout the country. The outstanding rabbi served in Kőszeg later on, and was taken to his fate from there. The Jewish community maintained an elementary school, which had only 22 pupils in the 1930s.

It was a neolog community, which served as a register for 14 small towns and villages with a few Jewish families; among them only Somlóvásárhely had a larger community.

The Jews of Devecser were taken to the Pápa ghetto. One hundred and eighty of our coreligionists became victims of the madness called fascism. Only 13 Jews survived. The last community president Gyula Komlós lives in Budapest. From the 14 villages no Jews were left.



Memorial to the martyrs from Devecser

NEMESSZALÓK

The Jewish community was founded in this town of 1,500 inhabitants in 1750. Abraham Mayer was their first rabbi, who also died there after a long and blessed service. He was succeeded by Abraham Segall, who was followed by his son-in-law Moshe Link.

Rabbi Link became a *dayan* at Pápa as well. The last rabbi of the community was David Schükk. They had two small temples, a Talmud Torah and mikveh. In the 1930s their membership was around 200, including affiliated towns and villages in terms of register.

This number dwindled gradually.

The following settlements belonged to the register district: Külsővat, Gergőli, Vinár, Mihályháza, Acsád, Nagypirit, Kispirit, Csögle, Egeralja, Nyárad, Mezőlak, Békás, Felsőgörzsöny, Alsógörzsöny, Adorjánháza, Dabrony, Vid, Kiszöllős, Nagyszöllős, Vecse, Magyargencs, Kemeneshögyész, Szergény. In some of these places, there were only 4 or 5 Jewish families. They disappeared without a trace.

IN MEMORY OF OUR BROTHERS FROM PÁPA, BURIED IN THE SACRED SOIL OF ISRAEL

Lipót Buxbaum, school principal

Reb Yosef, Léb Hoffmann, *dayan*

Dr. Ernő Dison (Deutch), chief rabbi

Dr. Béla Buxbaum, lawyer

Dr. Izidor Löwinger, M.D.

Jenő Paneth, teacher

Jenő Eisen, founder of the *Eisen* salami factory (their products were famous all over the country)

Adolf Eisen, *chazan*

Zeev Schück, writer and poet

Dezső Hoffmann

Moshe Berger

Zoltán Goldstein (Joshua Even) and his spouse:

Mrs. Goldstein, née Aranka Eckstein

Mór Salamon, carpenter

Dr. Joel Pfeiffer, head physician at *Poria* hospital

László Rózsahegyi (Rosenberg), merchant

Béla Singer

While our memorial book was being printed, the sad news of the deaths of two more brothers from Pápa reached us:

MIHÁLY SZÉKELY

He was a respected wholesaler in Budapest and participated in Hungarian political life; he played an important role in the Socialist Party. He joined his children in *kibbutz* Nitzanim when he made *aliya* and worked there as a respected *kibbutz* member until his death at the age of 85.

JENŐ GRÜNWALD

was one of the founders and leaders of *Hashomer Hatzair* in Pápa. In Israel he earned himself a name as an architect. On account of his goodness and honesty, he was loved by all.

Blessed be their memory.

THE LIGHT WENT OUT...

After the Shoah, a few former forced labor servicemen and some survivors from Auschwitz and other death camps returned to Pápa. They were looking for their families, waiting for their beloved. Only one child of school age returned. Religious life was restarted with difficulty. Posen - the former Sopron rabbi and the grandson of Uncle Marton – tried to raise the spirits of the despairing, abandoned believers, whose number was slowly decreasing. Most people could not bear staying where their parents or other relatives had been so cruelly destroyed. The houses, each and every stone, reminded them of the dead. They could not bear for long this depressing mental state. The harrowing shadow of the past sent them in search of a new Homeland. Some of them moved to the capital, but the majority set out for the Holy Land of Israel, to find comfort for their painful memories in the land where the hopes of 2000 years were realized. Others left for America or Australia in order to forget the past in their work or business. In Brooklyn, there is a holy congregation, led by the *Popener Rov*, made up of former members of *Adas Yisroel* in Pápa and their descendents. Migrating Pápa Jews reached Paris, Stockholm, Canada, Mexico, Chile; even in Kenya you can find Jews with memories of Pápa.

The number of believers in Pápa decreased. Even Rabbi Posen left his congregation. He was succeeded by Rav Michael Löwinger from Jánosháza, then by an Israeli rabbi, after whose return to Israel there was no longer a need for a spiritual leader. The community was abandoned. Please do not ask me questions; it is painful for me to write down the facts. The big temple was turned into a storehouse for the textile factory; our school became an apartment for workers. In the 1970s, 20 Jewish families lived in Pápa, about 50 people, they did not have a *minyan*, not even for Shabbat. Jewish education also became history. On holidays, three men and the precentor had to come from Budapest in order to have services.

The holy congregation of Pápa, which had been a light guiding us on our way, ceased to exist, the light of the Torah went out in Pápa.

Even though Jewish life came to an end in our home town, the light of the Torah and the torch of secular sciences still show the way to Jewry and to the benefit of mankind, thanks to the descendants of Pápa Jews.

OUR WAR HEROES IN ISRAEL

JACOB HALEVY

The grandson of Pápa *chazan* Lázár Lówy was born in 1928 in Pozsony/Pressburg. At the age of 14 he served in the *Hagana* together with his father. He worked for them as a messenger, fulfilling faithfully his task which sometimes meant risking his life.

In 1945 he left the parental home to join the *Palmach*. His base was in Ginosar, on the shores of the Kinneret. He worked half days, and spent the rest of the time studying. He participated in 6 special courses as a platoon commander. He served in the *Yiftach* regiment under the command of Yigal Alon, and led many patrols on reconnaissance missions on the northern border. He also participated in the liberation of Tzfat.

In the War of Independence he was wounded; for years he carried the bullet splinters in his body, he did not want to set aside time for an operation. Putting it off had sad consequences: he got lead poisoning because of the splinters, which caused his untimely death. In an appendix to the memorial book edited by Yonatan Lurk, you can see the young hero standing next to a burnt-out tank of the Arab Legion, destroyed by him from 40 meters.



Jacob Halevi

In 1947 his father complained to him that he had not received mail from him for 6 months, since his joining the underground movement. "Sorry, Dad", he wrote, "everything I do, the work of my life is for the Land, and it is the product of the spirit you instilled in me!"

He sacrificed his young life for the people of Israel, in the holy land of the forefathers. Blessed be his memory!

BENJAMIN KLEIN

May 28, 1921 – June 11, 1948

The son of Fülöp Klein, of Pápa Jews lived in Israel. His father was born in Pápa, worked there in the butcher's trade in his youth, and had vivid memories about the life of Pápa Jews at the end of the 19th century. Later he moved to Vienna where his son Frigyes was born. The young student soon became disillusioned with his studies in philosophy and joined the Zionist movement together with his friends. With all his heart, he chose the road of practical Zionism.

In 1940 he left for the land of Israel. He arrived on the boat *Patria*, and jumped from it into the sea, this is how he was saved.

He was interned by the British in Atlit. After his liberation, he joined the *kibbutz* Kfar Gileadi at the foot of Mount Hermon, near the Lebanese border. He was a most enthusiastic member of the movement. This is what he wrote about the first years in his biography:

"I wanted to find my happiness in the knowledge that I worked and built in the interest of the kibbutz. This thought gave me strength to get over the difficulties in putting down roots. I worked, exhausted myself, and was satisfied after the hard work because I believed firmly in the victory of Truth over the forces of Evil."

He was in love with nature, visited Arab villages to learn the language and to see the conditions of life there. Learning was his purpose in life. He had a thirst for knowledge and took along books on all his trips.

His last job was working on the dairy farm of the *kibbutz*. He left this work only when he was called by his beloved Homeland and he obeyed the call. This is what he said before setting out for his last mission: "We have got but one path ahead, the path of victory. Huge forces are against us, but we can beat them." On June 11, 1948 he was killed by an enemy bullet.

He was a kind and brave man with extraordinary spiritual riches, commemorated by the memorial book published by the *kibbutz*.

His memory was cherished by his parents for whom he was their only hope.

He died for us, sacrificing his young life for Eretz Yisrael.

Blessed be his memory!

ARYE STEIN

The son of our chazan David Stein. He sacrificed his young life for Eretz Yisrael at the age of 29, on September 23, 1948 in the War of Independence. He left a wife and a three-month old baby boy.

AVRAHAM BERGER, the son of lumber dealer Berger,

JENŐ KATZ

ZOLTÁN KATZ

were all killed in the War of Independence.

YAKOV SHIMON STEIN

lost his life during the liberation of Jerusalem, on June 6, 1948.



Benjamin Klein



Arye Stein

THOSE WHO SURVIVED...ONE OF THE FEW

Carpenter Vilmos Rosinger lived in a little one-storey house at the corner of Bástyá and Major Streets, opposite the firemen's barracks. This is where he brought up his children Lajos, Elza and Zoltán and he also had his workshop there. He was a hard-working and honest artisan, who lived for his family and work. His son Lajos, born in 1893, continued his father's trade. In the First World War he was severely injured and was awarded a gold medal for bravery. He could not continue his trade and as an exempted person, he was given a licence for a tobacconist store, which he opened in Kossuth Lajos Street, next to the grocery store of Mór Kohn. In 1944 the exempted war invalid was interned. Colonel *Vitéz* Karsay did everything in his power for his return, but the police commander of Pápa threatened him that he was exposing himself for Rosenberg by petitioning for him and would eventually end up in the same place . . . Where was the reward for the bravery of Lajos, the war invalid? His relatives did not even know where he was taken. He simply disappeared from the scene.

The 80-year old father of the war invalid was taken to Auschwitz. Only the sister of Lajos, Elza, with her young daughter Éva, were permitted to stay in Pápa; they were exempted from the ghetto.

The older daughter of Elza, Zsuzsa was already married. Her husband was a doctor in Vienna. They fled from the Nazis to Antwerp, and were awaiting the opportunity to sail to America when the cursed hand of Hitler reached them. After the German occupation of Belgium, Zsuzsi as a Hungarian [Jew] was taken to a death camp, while her husband, as a German, was interned.

Elza and her little daughter were permitted to stay in Pápa. After the Szálasi takeover they were placed under house arrest, and then were taken to the *Csillag* fortress in Komárom where they were confined in an underground tunnel with food only once a day. After that, the Germans sent them to Dachau, where they had some bread and facilities for washing. They were not allowed to stay there for long. After 3 days' difficult journey in a wagon filled with 60 people, they ended up in Bergen-Belsen. They were given bread only during the first days, 8-10 persons sharing one loaf. Later they had only half-cooked turnips to eat, once a day. Most of the deportees became sick and perished. An epidemic of typhus spread through the camp lacking medicine or food fit for human beings. They were all threatened by the shadow of death. Elza Rosinger and her little daughter also contracted the serious illness. They were so weak that 3 months after the liberation, they were unable to stand on their feet. The British army liberated them, saving their lives. The brother of Elza, Zoltán, who got to Kenya, came to their help; that is how they managed to get to Australia. Éva became a fashion designer in Melbourne, with a famous dressmaker's showroom of her own.

THE LIGHT FLARES UP AGAIN

When Jerusalem was destroyed by the barbaric soldiers of the Roman legions, the holy city and the temple were ravaged, the eternal light of the Torah went out. Jewish faith was already considered dead by the pagan world when all of a sudden the light of the Torah flared up again. Jewish life resurrected in Yavne and the sacred Torah found a new home to declare the victory of the divine idea.

History repeated itself.

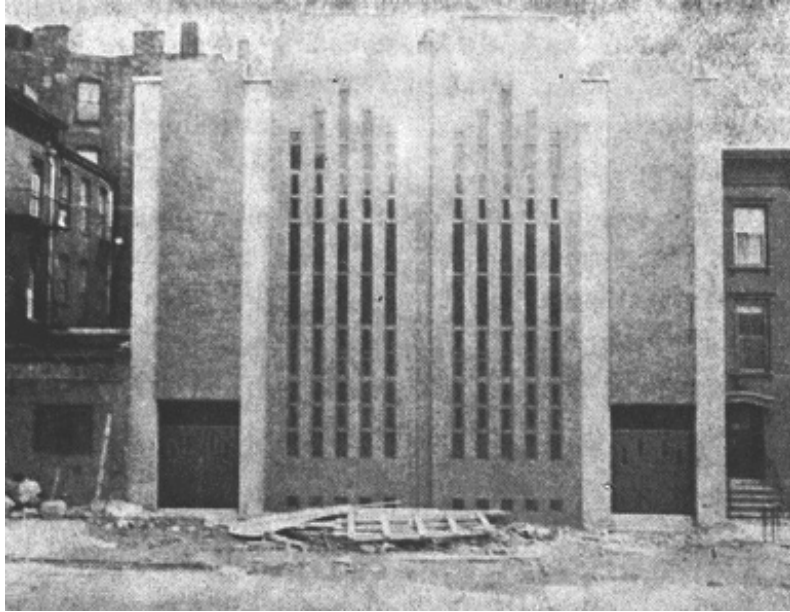
Our beloved community was destroyed by cruel hands. Jewish life came to an end in Pápa: there was no temple, no Jewish school, no *yeshiva* left. Out of divine grace, however, we had the privilege of witnessing the mystery of resurrection.

The Pápa community was resurrected in Williamsburg in New York City. A newly-built grand temple, a huge yeshiva building, and a girls' *yeshiva* for 600 students all prove the fact that the light of Torah, which was shining in Pápa for 250 years, flared up again declaring that the memory of the Pápa community was not only preserved, but had turned into a living reality. The inscription "Pápa" can be seen not only on the facade of the *yeshiva*; it is on the huge bus as well.



The Pápa Yeshiva in Brooklyn

Not only does the New World bear witness to the love of Torah by Pápa Jews but Pápa Jews in Israel and around the world have all stayed loyal to the spirit of their upbringing. The son of *dayan* Dirnfeld from Pápa became *rosh yeshiva* for the Belzer chassidim in Jerusalem, Rabbi Lőwinger who had earlier served as a rabbi in Pápa became the rabbi of Har Tzion, Rabbi Imre Kraus served as a rabbi in a Los Angeles district, the grandson of chief *chazan* Lőwy from Pápa worked as a *chazan* in a London district, and David Baum, the son of Uncle Baum, the knowledgeable secretary of the Pápa *Chevra Kadisha* worked as a *chazan* in the orthodox community of Baltimore.



The new Pápa Synagogue in Brooklyn

The financial manager of the Ponovitz *Yeshiva* in Bnei Brak was the grandson of *Tornyos Krausz*, and one of the most devout Talmudists of the same yeshiva was the grandson of *Pápa Jews*. In the Litvak yeshiva of Baltimore and also in Israeli yeshivas the descendents of *Pápa* parents can be found devotedly submerged in Torah studies.

May the light of the Torah shine and illuminate, in order to help us reach

GEULAH SH'LEMAH.

EPILOGUE

ברוך אתה ה' הנותן ליעף כח

Blessed are You HASHEM, Who gives strength to the weary. I pronounce this blessing with a grateful heart before writing the final lines for the Memorial Book of Pápa Jewry and handing it over to our brothers.

Thanks to the grace of the Creator, I have been provided with strength and perseverance to compile this memorial book.

I did not write a story, I only invited you for a trip through the world of Memories, reviving a host of sweet and unforgettable memories of student years, youth. It is a great happiness to recall what was beautiful and good.

I wanted to show you the life of Pápa Jews. When taking a trip to the past, we intended to commemorate the historical community, our forefathers, parents, siblings and other relatives. All I wanted to do was remember, I was not writing out of nostalgia.

We should remember the beauties of the past. Distance and the time that elapsed make life appear even more beautiful than it actually was then. However, the destruction of Pápa Jews should be remembered as well, even if it is painful.

Together with the Jewish population, the community archives with historical data, the protocols were also destroyed. Without them it is difficult to draw a true picture about the past. The words of the Bible may have given us the direction:

"Ask your father, and he will tell you, your old men will tell you."

But unfortunately we lost our fathers in the Holocaust. Where are our old men?

After much difficult research, we managed to get material concerning Jews from the archives of the Protestant church in Pápa. Our work was helped by Pápa historian Antal Szalai, who looked up the necessary data for us. I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for his generosity.

We were unable to get the letter by Count Pál Eszterházy, patron of Pápa, from 1749, permitting Jewish settlement in Pápa, authorizing Jews to form a community, to have a kosher butcher's shop, to sell kosher wine by measure and to set up the *eruv*. In response to my request, searches were made for this ancient letter in the National Archives of Budapest, in the Széchenyi Library, in the Pápa Municipal Museum, and in the Veszprém County Archives. I wanted to present a copy of the historical document in this book. Unfortunately, it could not be traced.

Thanks are due to

DR. IMRE GYÖRKI, the only survivor of the excellent Pápa lawyers, who compiled the list of names of our sisters and brothers in the Pápa ghetto, which helped us to assemble the list of our Martyrs in this book. From this we estimate that about 2030 of our coreligionists had become martyrs.

Thanks are also due to the members of the Preparatory Committee, who helped the publication of this book:

ELIEZER SHISHA,

BÉLA KOHN,

DR. DÉNES KARDOS,

SÁNDOR LŐWENSTEIN,

JÁKOB (AMIR) GRÜN WALD.

JÓZSEF STERN, the retired teacher of the Jewish school in Debrecen (who was awarded the gold diploma for his educational work) and his brother IMRE SZEKERES (Budapest), the retired teacher of the orthodox school in Kapuvár also contributed to the project.

My dear relatives, I want to thank you, too, for your contribution, enriching the book by sharing your cherished memories, providing much valuable material in your letters.

We are ever so grateful to our brothers living in Israel and abroad, who made the publication of our memorial book possible by sending their contributions in advance.

May this book be the Book of Tears and the Book of Recollections at the same time.

Take the *Memorial Book of Pápa Jews* with love and reverence.

Haifa, Marcheshvan 28, 5732 / November 5, 1972.

On the 70th anniversary of my father's death. Blessed be his memory.

A magyar királyi vallás- és közoktatásügyi ministertől

000- 7 eln. szám
192- 1931.



Ö n n e k a pápai autonóm orthodox izraelita hitközség-
nél főkántori minőségben eltöltött 40 évi buzgó és hűséges szolgál-
lataiért elismerésemet fejezem ki.

Budapest, 1931. évi június hó 9.- én.

A miniszter helyett:



Géva-Looy
államtitkár.

Tekintetes

L ö v y L á z á r urnak,
pápai izraelita főkántor.

P á p a .

Official, Government recognition to Chief *chazan* Lázár Löwy for 40 years of loyal service to the Jewish community, 9 June 1931.