

OUR PARENTS YAAKOV ISRAEL AND ROZA JAWEC

Our father Yaakov Israel Jawec was born in 1893¹, in Warta (near Sieradz). Son of Golda [born Skórka] and Chanoch Jawec, a descendant of the well-known Rabbi Jawec, in Poland of the time. His grandfather bequeathed to my father a great many books that he authored and covered an entire wall in our home. I still remember the Book of Esther written in his own hand on parchment paper, of 12cm in diameter; the tiny letters could be easily read with the help of a magnifier.

My father, of blessed memory, arrived in Kutno in 1912 and married Mrs. Roza née Jeruchemsohn, my mother. She was only one year younger. He was a wise man, talented, honest and humble, a devoted husband and caring about the education of his children. His influence was by way of logical explanation. He had many friends among Jews and non-Jews. He learned and worked for years, read a lot and worked on his self-improvement. He taught children younger than us in the *yeshiva* and, on winter evenings, Talmud classes were held at our home. They said of him: "to God and to Men"². His voice was tuneful and occasionally he replaced the ill cantor in the synagogue, on holidays. He always used to sing at home and was happy of his role. He gave help to all in need: with money and good advice, and arbitrating a quarrel between friends. If it was necessary to face an official government institution, he could write a fine letter and a request in fluent Polish. In the last years before the breakout of World War II, he was elected as the president of *Agudat Israel* and nominated by it for the Polish *Sejm*³. He aspired to immigrate to Israel and join his daughters and build the country. A cruel fate said otherwise.

He died along with my mother and my 16-year-old brother Abraham [Icek] in the Kutno ghetto, in the year 1943⁴. May their memories be blessed.

Roza Jawec (wife of Yaakov), of blessed memory, was a humble, good-hearted woman, keeping religion and tradition. A daughter, mother and wife dedicated to her family. She always reached out and helped those in need, without hurting their feelings. Her home was open to Jewish soldiers from faraway places who served in our city. They were regularly dining until full at home on Shabbat and holidays. On winter evenings, Torah study classes were held at home and, thanks to her, the home was filled with warmth, light and joy. In secular matters too, she devoted her time between household chores and outside work, in the shop. She was active in the school parents' committee from beginning to end. In the last years before the outbreak of World War II, she aspired to immigrate to Israel but a cruel fate wanted otherwise.

Ryvka FISZER (JAWEC), Leah JAWEC

¹ TN: in 1891, according to our data.

² TN: meaning "generous to God and to men".

³ TN: Polish Parliament.

⁴ TN: father and brother Abram Icek died of typhus in 1941, in the ghetto, the mother probably died in Chełmno, in March 1942.