

ELIJAHU-ELIEZER-MORDECHAI ELBERG

(David TIDHAR – Encyclopedia of the Pioneers and Builders of the Yishuv, Tel Aviv, 1952, p. 2145).

Born in Kutno, Poland, on the 25th of Kislev 5651, (13/12/1890), the youngest son of his father, Mr. Ze'ev Zvi, and his mother, Esther, daughter of Menachem (Menche) Pryn. (He was named Eliezer-Mordechai after his father's brother, who was a rabbi in Służewo, Aleksandrów Kujawski and Ciechocinek, and his father added the name Eliyahu because he was born on Saturday night, when his father sang the song in hymns ("Eliyahu the Prophet"). He grew up in his brother's house, Mr. Aharon Shlomo (Rosha Vol. IV, p. 1685), received a national-religious education and was known from childhood as a sharp-witted and fast-paced accountant. He worked as a bookkeeper in Bromberg bank and then in the bank of Emanuel Hirsberg.

During the First World War, he was recruited by the German occupation leader to serve in the municipal offices, and was appointed to the tax department, and his influence was great in the other departments as well. He often helped and benefited the residents, and especially the Jews, who approached him in matters related to municipal government. During the Passover deployment in 1917, when the Allied naval siege forced the Germans to severely reduce the rations of food for the residents, he complied with his brother's request to run affairs in the community, and the wheat flour for Passover matza was doubled. The German government learned of this. And he sat in jail until near the end of the war, when the Germans stumbling on the Western front were forced to withdraw from Poland as well.

After the liberation of Poland, he resigned from his position in the municipality, handed over matters to the new superiors and helped them with advice and guidance and then turned to the grain and bran trade, his brother's business, and succeeded in it. For a time, he sat for his trade in Bydgoszcz (Bromberg) in Pomerania, which was annexed from Prussia to Poland, and there, too, he was liked by the inhabitants.

In the Kutno municipality elections, his brother was elected at the top of the *Mizrahi* list and he was at the top of the *Poalei Zion* list.

He married Ryvka living in a twin house in Włocławek.

When his brother immigrated to Israel in 1925, he also tried to immigrate out of longing for redemption, but he was not helped¹. In 1935, he came to Israel as a tourist, with the idea to remain in the country illegally, and to get a visa, he paid a third bail at the British Consulate in Warsaw as a guarantee he would return to Poland. In Israel, his party members advised him to return, lest he lose his bail, and promised to obtain a legal immigration permit for him and even give him an honorary position when he came back. But because of the outbreak of World War II, he could no longer come and died and was buried in the Łódź ghetto.

¹ TN: by *Poalei Zion*.