

Memorial Tribute to Congregation

“Adat Yeshurun”

Kezmarok, Hungary 1858

Ashkenazi Manuscript

Note: The transcription of this document from the original manuscript into Hebrew and the subsequent translation were performed by Hagit Tsafriri of Rehovot, Israel and Madeleine Isenberg, of Beverly Hills, California over a six month period, approximately from July 2009 – January 2010. As small as this document is, it took hundreds of hours of effort, but the translators, whose ancestors once lived in Kezmarok, felt that it was important to share the information. The original document is in the Rare Books Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City, NY.

There were many difficulties in this effort because the document is understandably in poor condition, with torn pages and faded ink. The best effort was made to read and where possible to make best guesses at missing letters and words. Ellipses (i.e. ...) have been used where nothing further could be discerned from the document. The style of writing with long, run-on sentences has been modified where necessary for better readability. Footnotes have been added for further clarification. Any errors or misinterpretations are solely our responsibilities.

Madeleine Isenberg

Hagit Tsafriri

The following is a list of names of persons that appeared in this document:

King Ferdinand V of Bohemia

Yonatan Kircz

Ber Loewenstein

Salomon Perlstein

Aharon Pollatschek

Chaim Richtman

Yehuda Rosenberg

Yonatan Rosenthal

Franz Roth

Zalman Wolf Roth

Nathan (Netel) Venetianer

These are the names of the people

who lived here at the time that H'shem stirred their spirits to build a house of G-d, a house of prayer, and they girded themselves with all their hearts and souls, each one contributed to bring immense effort to the construction, their good deeds should be remembered forever.

And they should be in a *good*¹ Minyan.

In addition those people from the area who each contributed, their names should be designated.

Because it is good for Israel²

¹ Dots above the letters, טוב, perhaps referring to numerical equivalent of 17 men. Reference later to 17 men..

² This is translated from כי טוב לישראל . Below that line were the letters, לפק, for lifrat katan, which gave the hint that there was a date somewhere, probably in the line above. Adding up the numerical equivalent of that line, came to 618, which is the numerical equivalent of the secular year, 1858.

May His help be exalted and His name be sanctified³ for his people Israel from all their troubles even ... not ... under their enemies ... to remember them ... before their king and officers

To grant them the grace and mercy in the eyes of all who see them.

If you should ask your ancestors, your parents and grandparents, they will answer and tell you how their fathers of the previous generation told them, about their days of poverty that they experienced from earlier days, and how we arose from our fathers, the yoke of the Diaspora on our shoulders, considered as strangers everywhere we settled, and having been discriminated against in all citizenship matters, as if we were foreigners and not as native-born, because of the hardened heart of the king's realm upon us and our Jewish brethren under their rule in every state, that closed every gate and walls of most of the "free cities" in all the states of the realm, so that no Jew could settle within them, and there was no one who would give the seed of Jacob a place to stay one night, and those, who would not allow the seed of Abraham to enter their borders, they closed the open areas to Israel.

Also this town of Kezmarok was among these towns, and an Israelite could not enter for trade and penalties. In the morning he could come and in the evening he returned. With his comings and goings, when G-d saw from above their poverty and their separation from the ways of the country, then the King's heart became like G-d's good hands to us and aroused his spirit and that of the princes under whose shadow we live. They focused their eyes on us favorably to break the yoke and remove all screens between them and us.

And it was

In the year 1841 under the rule of

F E R D I N A N D I

(aka Ferdinand V* 4) and the decree given in the kingdom of Hungary, with the command of the king and those who sit in judgment, to remove the gate-bolts from the walls of the open cities and to open the gates of the cities for the sake of Israelites to settle their homes within the walls and borders of the cities as good in their eyes. And afterward Jews came to the free cities one family at a time, one city at a time, and conducted business and paid penalties. And each according to his means and blessings of G-d, bought fields and vineyards.

And there was one man from the Richtman family and he was a Levite, named R' Chaim Richtman, educated in all ways and wealthy. And he was the first to buy a home here in Kezmarok but barely managed to do so before he was taken by the L-rd and was no more; and his descendants, his son's in-law and daughters of his daughters inherited his home and came to reside in the city in security and the town officials dealt with them favorably as with the other citizens of the town and they became highly respected.

*(original note, could not be deciphered, but see footnote 4 below)

The name of the first was R' Yonatan Kircz and the name of the second was R' Yonatan Rosenthal

The beloved and pleasant. And they began to establish the faith in our city, may they be blessed and G-d give them the ability to increase those who will come after them for eternity;

And after them came two more men of the highest level to help the town, each man and his household. **The name of one was R' Aaron Pollatschek and the name of the second was R' Zalman Wolf Roth:** And these four heads each lovers of peace and truth, established and maintained the settlement of those who came after them as people who are pledged to truth and peace and love. And will come to pass for them as is written in the Torah our brothers, I planned⁵ and returned to benefit you and to increase your seed for their sake for all days".

In those days and at that time there was a Jew who lived there, and his name was **R' Yehuda Rosenberg** he was a hero ...

Ashekanzi (i.e., German) language... to support a woman and her three children and afterward he was made the head ... of here in Kezmarok and it wasn't long, three... and G-d took him to eternal life and the woman... each one like most all from Hungary and settled and were given power and judgment...in commerce and property... and live here like people in a foreign land:

And upon this small root a tree with many branches grew big and this tree will squeeze through the good earth that G-d blessed, from a rivulet of water will his laws spread afar and will become ...multiplier and will be a house of G-d ... and spirit **Amen**

And when they settled here in our places then those passing through the city near her ...from every corner and **whenever** the inhabitants of Leibitz and here will reach the number 10, they will gather in our city in the house of our generous teacher and Rabbi Noach Kircz on Shabbatot and Holidays to spill joy and prayer there and read the Torah of Moses according to the law of Israel, when a quorum of 10 gathers, that was how they managed when there were very few who lived there.

And when G-d increases them, they will increase and spread out. And the number of houses here and Leibitz reached to the number 17⁶ then they all came together as one and said how much longer should we sit in the land as a tent and tabernacle?

Let us build a house of prayer for the glory and beauty and put our hearts into it.⁷

³ The beginning of this prayer sounds like the beginning of the Kaddish prayer.

⁴ To clarify, Ferdinand I, an epileptic, was convinced to abdicate in favor of his nephew, Franz Joseph. Franz Joseph sat on the Austrian throne for the next 68 years. Ferdinand was the last King of *Bohemia* to be crowned as such. Due to his sympathy with Bohemia (where he spent the rest of his life in Prague Castle) he was given the Czech nickname "Ferdinand V, the Good" (Ferdinand Dobrotivý). In Austria, Ferdinand was similarly nicknamed "Ferdinand der Gütige" (Ferdinand the Benign), but also ridiculed as "Gütinand der Fertige" (Goodinand the Finished). (based on information in Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferdinand_I_of_Austria).

⁵ The expression, "I planned" is found in the book of Zechariah 8:15, "...So have I turned back these days and planned to benefit Jerusalem and the House of Judah. Do not fear."

⁶ Numerical equivalent of ט"ז.

⁷ From the book of Eichah (Lamentations) 3:41: "Let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto G-d in heaven."

There to the joy and to the prayer we will pour ... that we will be graced...holy...we will come together with our sons and daughters all together ... our G-d.

And whenever they talked to one another daily their thoughts were toward the work and their promise for everyone to bring donations as pledged for the construction of the house (of prayer). The rich did not skimp and the poor as much as he could.

And G-d gave grace to this people in the eyes of the King's officers (ministers) and gave them irrevocable⁸ permission to build a house of prayer to their soul's desire. **And for the good** a man is remembered there who was an officer and judge in our city who was wise in the ways of the world and a lover of Israel and his name was

FRANZ ROTH

who with their help undertook the construction of the house of prayer from beginning to end.

And from the day they arrived to settle here until they built the synagogue, no small number of holy communities called upon them in the name of community and congregation ... residents of Hungary will call and the communities under their jurisdiction permission to build the house of prayer another gift ... together with our brothers in Hunsdorf ...to encircle them to call them a community (Kahal) like the rest of the communities in all the places that they settle: Life to them **Covenant**⁹ of the first ones before they were hidden they began the physical construction, the officers of the mishemeret hakodesh (Chevra kadisha?) undertook their holy work:

And in the month of Elul the house of prayer was dedicated with the glory of a king, with musical instruments, song and voices of thanks to G-d for his goodness;

And for the sake of teaching the people to fear and honor G-d and to preach for the well-being of the King and the city in which we, the people of Hungary live, the famous Gaon, our rabbi and teacher Salomon Perlstein, head of our holy community of Hunsdorf and the surrounding district, stood in front of the holy curtain, and spoke words like dew-drops, blessing the people and teaching them ways of peace and the straight path, in a spirit of love and brotherhood, and in blessing to G-d for all the goodness he has bestowed on our fathers and our people.

And to increase the honor of this house of prayer at the dedication, they called upon R' Ber Löwenstein to speak in German for non-Jewish people to hear, because ministers had come to join in the festivities. And since the establishment of the city of Kezmarok, there had not been a day like this, hearing the voices of the crowds of people celebrating a house of the L-rd with such feeling, and the entire city celebrated with the musicians who entertained with all kinds of songs. And a splendid person, R' Yonatan Rosenthal got up and sang with his sweet and pleasant voice and there was great joy on that day of dedication, and they had a great party, eating and drinking and blessing G-d with the "Shehechyanu" blessing to continue to bring benefits to the people of Israel, our brothers, that G-d should hear and accept our prayers. May the blessing of our L-rd our G-d, be upon us and the work of our hands, as in days gone by, and that our supplication should be like an offering of thanks. And we should build and merit to see the reconstruction of our Holy Temple and our L-rd will make us rejoice in returning to Zion speedily in our days. **Amen.**

⁸ The phrase, חרות על לוח, implies something that is "carved in stone" and cannot be taken back.

⁹ Hebrew word ברית with dots over it has numerical equivalent of 612, or in the year 1852. The assumption was that in 1852, they first established the Chevra Kadisha.

Memorial Tribute

In Tribute to The Brotherhood The Friendship

In Honor of

Congregation Adat Yeshurun

Here in Kezmarok

From One Who Loved Them The Scribe

Netel Venetianer

A History of the Times and the Chain of Events

About

The few Jews who came one-by-one
To settle here in Kezmarok until
They were able to build the Synagogue
In honor and beauty during the years 1842¹⁰ until
1853¹¹, knowing that “from the roots of charity will grow
salvation.”

Written

in the year 1858¹²

¹⁰ Calculated from Hebrew year, 1842=5602

¹¹ Calculated from Hebrew year, 1853=5613

¹² The year was calculated from the words, בינו לעיתים, that had dots on top corresponding to the Gematria value 5618, followed by the Lifrat Katan. Note that these words are a variation of the phrase בינה לעיתים, appropriately meaning *knowledge of the times*. It was also the name of an ancient book.

BOOK

History of the founders of the congregation who counted

Here in Kezmarok a free city in the state

When and how they settled here at the beginning

With the help from Above and His timely provision

For the permission of the King and the ministers of state

Who presided during the first monarchy

And its Contents

Strictly recorded in writing truth and belief

The standards and practices for every day of the year

According to the law of Israel and the courts of the city and state

So that the generations that will follow will know

That which our fathers initiated at the beginning

And that their children will act correctly

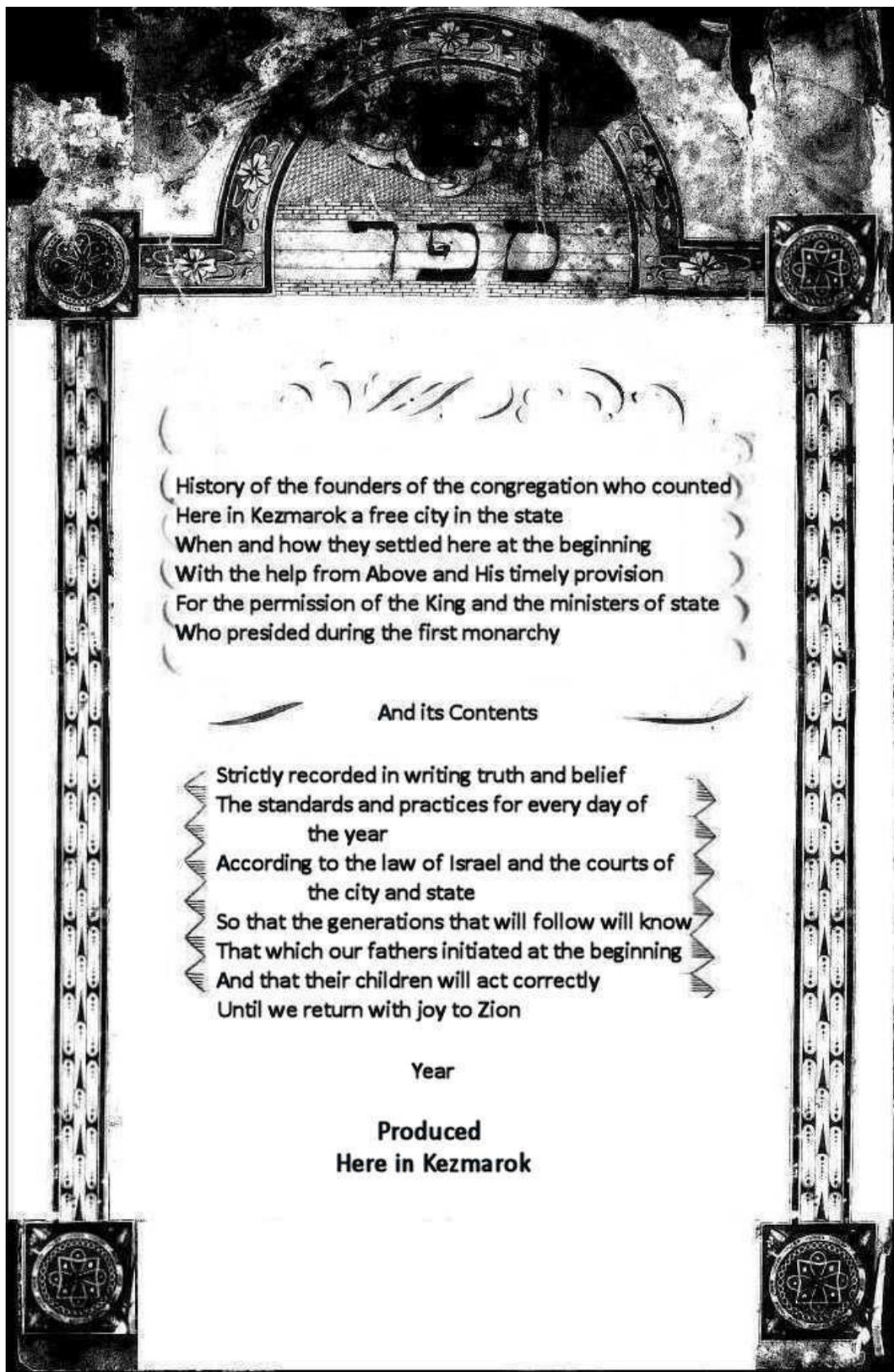
Until we return to Zion with joy

Year¹³

Produced

Here in Kezmarok

¹³ The combined symbol of the three letters, Lamed, Peh, Kuf, standing for lifrat katan, is an indication that a shortened form of the Hebrew year is represented. However, on this page, whatever was supposed to be transformed into a “year” is not clearly indicated.



(History of the founders of the congregation who counted
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Year

Produced
Here in Kezmarok

A History of the Times and Chain of Events

From the time our community and congregation was established here until they built the synagogue

Exalted is G-d's help and sanctified is the Savior¹⁴ and his people Israel from all their troubles and even while they were not in their own land, He remembered them for the good, before the ministers and their king, and was merciful in the eyes of all who saw them; If you should ask your ancestors, your parents and grandparents, they will answer and tell you how their fathers, of the previous generation told them, about the days of poverty that they experienced from earlier days, and how we arose from our fathers, the yoke of the Diaspora on our shoulders, considered as strangers everywhere we settled, and having been discriminated against in all citizenship matters, as if we were foreigners and not as native-born, because of the hardened heart of the king's realm upon us and our Jewish brethren under their rule in every state, that closed every gate and walls of most of the "free cities" in all the states of the realm, so that no Jew could settle within them, and there was no one who would give the seed of Jacob a place to stay one night, and those, who would prevent the seed of Abraham from entering their borders, they closed the open areas to Israel.¹⁵

Also

This town of Kezmarok was among these towns and its settlers...

¹⁴ In the Hebrew version, the first four words have enlarged letters at the beginning of each word. They spell out G-d's name, the tetragrammaton, the unpronounceable name.

¹⁵ This paragraph is almost exactly the same as the opening paragraph on page 3 of this translation. It looks like the scribe began to rewrite this in block letters instead of script, and then did not complete it.