

Jakóbowicz (Jakobowicz, Jakubowicz)
Surname Variants in Holocaust Records
(ghettos, trains, camps, survivors, profiles)
and
Surname History, Emigrations, Descendants



Buchenwald Concentration Camp after liberation; Germany, 1945 (Source: USHMM)

By Mike Jackoboice (Jakóbowicz), from research 2008-16

Jakóbowicz (Jakobowicz, Jakubowicz) Surname Variants in Holocaust Records

By Mike Jackoboice (Jakóbowicz) of Grand Rapids, MI and Las Cruces, NM, USA; 2016

The world's largest population of Jewish people lived in Poland - for hundreds of years. The very old town of Kalisz had a very old Jewish community - officially from the year 1139 forward. In 1264, the "Statute of Kalisz" became the legal foundation for Jewish rights in the country: settlement, travel, trade and worship. By the mid-1500s, about 80% of the world's Jews lived in Poland. By the 1930s there were over three million Polish Jews - of 9.5 million Jews in Europe and 15.3 million worldwide. Described in the online encyclopedia *Wikipedia*, "Poland was home to the largest and most significant Jewish community in Europe and served as the center for Jewish culture."

Records show that the surname spelling variants Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz (each meaning "son of Jacob") were common Jewish family names in Kalisz and across Poland. Yes, same big family, different preferred spellings (some preferred "o", and the Polish ó = u). Non-Jewish Poles have used these surnames too, but pre-Holocaust and post-Holocaust ratios and numbers are unknown.

The once very Jewish town of Kalisz is in west-central Poland, 207 km west-southwest of Warsaw. For a comprehensive history, read *The Kalish Book* (published in Israel in 1968). The book states that by the year 1800, a recorded 41% of the city population was Jewish (about every other person on the street). My great-great grandfather, Józef Jakóbowicz (eventually known as Joseph Jackoboice) said he was born in 1824 in Kalisz. There he trained and worked as a machinist, from 1840-1844. He then emigrated to Germany, and later to America (1852). Archival research is underway to confirm his ethnicity.

Worldwide, use of the Hebrew name Yaakov (in Latin: Jacobus, Jacob) as a surname root has been typical of Jewish families (root variants include Yakov, Jacov, Jakob, Jack, Jakob, Jacob, Jakub). For example, consider the Holocaust of World War II (1939-1945). The Nazis beat, burned, shot, hanged, gassed or starved anyone with the family name Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz or Jakubowicz. A surname meaning "son of Jacob," common to those of Jewish heritage, was a death sentence. At the infamous Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration/death camp in southern Poland, in a list of 30 Jakubowicz victims, 24 were recorded as Jewish, four as Roman Catholic, one as Greek Orthodox and one as "unknown."

Jewish or otherwise, we lost family members in the Holocaust.

During World War II, the Nazis and collaborators killed 90% of Polish Jews (three million victims). For Holocaust history and photos, see the H.E.A.R.T. website at www.HolocaustResearchProject.org

The Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Museum in Jerusalem, Israel (website www.yadvashem.org) has recorded up to 797 Jewish victims named Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz. The actual total was higher, as only about two-thirds of all victims have been identified by name so far (about 4.5 million of about six million Jews). We can extrapolate conservatively to about 1,200 victims named Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz. There were probably many more, based on the Lodz Ghetto population alone (2,497 residents recorded as Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz). A researcher at Yad Vashem e-mailed (in the year 2013) that they have recorded 16,692 victims with "Jacob"-root surnames (many root spelling variants). Yad Vashem is also known as The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority.

To see the large number of people with the abovementioned surname spellings, one can go to the Internet websites Ancestry.com and JewishGen. One sees all three surnames in a variety of categories.

For example, The Ancestry.com category “Stories, Memories & Histories” includes records from Krakow, Poland of ID Card Applications for Jews During World War II (written in German, 1940-41). Among these records are two Jakóbowicz Jews and two Jakobowicz Jews. Source of the records: the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, located at 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW, in Washington, D.C.

JewishGen is “An affiliate of the Museum of Jewish Heritage – a Living Memorial to the Holocaust” (New York City; www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl). The reference “jri-pl” signifies the database “Jewish Records Indexing – Poland.” A search for the **Jakóbowicz** surname takes one to a page which reads, “Searching for Surname (phonetically like) **JAKOBOWICZ**” [*caps can't show ó*]. Because the Polish letter “ó” is pronounced “oo” and is often replaced with “u”, results show *many* **Jakubowicz** individuals. This search illustrates the related interchangeability of these surname spelling variants (more later). In the upper right corner of this web page, a pop-up declares: “Found 2,527 matches for “Jakobowicz” at Ancestry.com.”

Nazi methods towards Extermination of the Jewish People

On the Internet at “Purim in Zdunska Wola, 1942,” there is a photo of a public execution with randomly selected Jewish victims. Of the 10 men hanged, one was a Jakubowicz. His first name was Szymon, born 1/5/1892 in the town of Zdunska Wola in the Kalisz region. His parents were Mendel and Hendel. Szymon eventually married Chaja. We do not know if Szymon’s survivors survived the Holocaust. But at the hands of Nazi Germany, we do know the fate of most Polish Jews.

In the early years of World War II and the Holocaust, in countless towns of Eastern Europe, the Ukraine and Russia, the Nazis rounded up hundreds and thousands of Jews and shot them *in* or *into* mass graves - also called “death pits” (see www.yahadmap.org/#map). Shooting so many boys, girls, teens, adults and elderly was gruesome work. In one instance, a shot to the back of a head splattered blood and brain matter onto the uniform of SS/Gestapo chief Heinrich Himmler. He reportedly “turned green.” The ongoing slaughter was said to be mentally and physically taxing for soldiers using pistols, rifles and machine guns. So the Nazis developed large, mobile gassing vans... and then death camps with large gas chambers for industrial scale mass murder.

Gathering victims, the Nazis established 1,150 urban ghetto districts to confine and crowd up to hundreds of thousands of Jewish people. The largest ghettos were in Warsaw, Lodz, Vilna, Minsk and Terezín, a.k.a. Theresienstadt. The Germans removed up to hundreds or thousands of people at a time for “Aktion” mass shootings in fields and forests. Nazi monsters shoved many more Jews into train cattle cars for days-long “deportation” and so-called “resettlement” to large extermination/death camps.

In a well known example, at Auschwitz-Birkenau, German officers and doctors selected young, strong males and females for forced labor (many to die by starvation and exhaustion). Most men and women, all children and the elderly were doomed. The Nazis robbed everybody of their last valuables, even cutting off their hair. The killers ordered their weary victims to strip naked, and crammed them into fake shower rooms (gas chambers). Gassed with Zyklon B hydrogen cyanide gas (or with tank or truck exhaust fumes elsewhere), many people died standing and screaming. When the screaming stopped, forced laborers entered and extracted any gold teeth. Then the laborers burned the bodies in crematoria ovens... and outside in flaming pits. The smoke rose and ash drifted for miles – coating rooftops like snow.

During this “Final Solution” many of the Nazis’ victims vanished from history. Among the victims, the Nazis shot, gassed and buried alive 1,500,000 children, toddlers and babies. One wonders how many families were slaughtered through the last male. Many family lines were extinguished forever.

A. Jakobowicz and J. Lewkowicz distribute candy, Lodz Ghetto



Caption: The original photo caption reads, "Memento for distribution of candy to children." J. Lewkowicz and A. Jakobowicz (at right) distribute candy for the holidays to the children in the Lodz ghetto.

Date: September 23, 1941 **Locale:** Lodz, Poland

Photo: Photograph by Lodz ghetto photographer Mendel Grosman (1913-45).
Photograph #46394/89759

Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Izak Lewkowicz

This photo, and the cover photo, are from the Photo Archive of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington, D.C. The cover photo features a Shavuot service on May 18, 1945 "... for Buchenwald survivors shortly after liberation" ("... the youth sitting in front of the lectern [lectern], looking back at the camera, is Stefan Jakobowicz"). At this concentration camp, there were a *recorded* 18 Jakobowicz prisoners and two Jakobowicz prisoners. Cover photo credit: USHMM, courtesy of National Archives and Records Administration, College Park. The views or opinions expressed in this research, and the context in which the images are used, do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of, nor imply approval or endorsement by, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz Surname Variants in Ghetto Records

In the large Lodz Ghetto of Poland there were at least 31 Jakobowicz residents (a teenager named A. Jakobowicz was featured in the previous USHMM photo). There were an astonishing 2,466 Jakubowicz residents (one could deduce that approximately 90% eventually died). Ghetto resident Leon Jakubowicz made a model of the ghetto now displayed at the Holocaust museum in Washington, D.C. In the ghetto, of 11,000 recorded schoolchildren, at least 74 were named Jakubowicz (many were later assumed gassed at the Chelmno death camp). We know that members of one Jakubowicz family died in the Lodz Ghetto in 1942: Josek, Ajzyk and Chaim. The underrabbi of Lodz, Salomon Jakubowicz, vanished.

The JewishGen website/database provides records from other ghettos:

In the Lwow Ghetto there were 10 Jakubowicz residents.

In the Wodzislaw Ghetto there were four Jakobowicz residents: Yaakov, Chala, Shmuel and Breina.

In the Krakow Ghetto (portrayed in the movie "Schindler's List") there were seven Jakóbowicz and 33 Jakubowicz residents.

The Warsaw Ghetto was the largest of the Nazi-established ghettos (approximately 445,000 Jews). One resident, the beloved Jewish poet and author Rosa Jakobowicz (of Kalisz), died there. The Polish Center for Holocaust Research provides its Warsaw Ghetto Database and lists 30 *known* residents with the family name Jakubowicz (including three females as married name). One can check the website http://warszawa.getto.pl/en/site/wyszukiwanie_db/ - to see individual names and profile information. For example, Abram Jakubowicz "came from Kalisz." And the boy Szymonek Jakubowicz was "a child in Korczak's Orphanage" (when the Nazis came for these 192 orphans, old Dr. Korczak went with them to Treblinka).

Countless Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz Jews experienced ghetto life in many other locations. Many ghetto residents died of disease and starvation.

Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz Surname Variants in Death Camp Records

There were six large Nazi extermination camps in Poland, also known as "death camps":

- 1) Auschwitz-Birkenau (killed over one million people)
- 2) Belzec (killed approximately 600,000 people)
- 3) Chelmno (killed up to 340,000 people)
- 4) Majdanek (killed 235,000 – 360,000 people)
- 5) Sobibor (killed 167,000 – 300,000 people)
- 6) Treblinka (killed 750,000 – 950,000 people)

See these death camps in the map on the next page. Extensive research to find camp prisoners named Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz revealed the subsequent information.



“Map of the Holocaust in Poland during the Second World War (1939-1945) at the time of German occupation of Poland. This map shows all German Nazi extermination camps (or *death camps*), most major concentration camps, labor camps, prison camps, ghettos, major deportation routes and major massacre sites. [This helpful map has been provided by its author for the public domain, via [Wikipedia](#).]”

“*Extermination camps* were dedicated death camps, but all camps and ghettos took a toll of many, many lives. *Concentration camps* include labor camps, prison camps and transit camps. Not all camps and ghettos are shown. Borders are at the height of Axis domination (1942)... 2007 borders are dotted.”

The Holocaust is also known as the Shoah (a Hebrew word for devastation, catastrophe, destruction). “The Jewish people alone were targeted for extermination” (FOI’s *Israel My Glory* magazine - 3/4, 2016).

The most notorious Nazi camp was **Auschwitz**, in operation from July 14, 1940 to January 27, 1945. It was/is located at Oswiecim, Poland (45 miles west of Krakow and its former Nazi "General Government" administrative center). More than one million people died in Auschwitz-Birkenau gas chambers and departed through its ovens, chimneys and fires - and 90% were Jews (900,000+ victims). According to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, "The vast majority of Polish Jews... perished anonymously with estimated figures ranging from 300,000 to 380,000 [*the majority immediately gassed*]. Most Polish Jews were murdered elsewhere: in the extermination centers of Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka and Majdanek [*and Chelmno*], as well as in mass executions nearby or in their places of living [*towns, cities of residence*]. Approximately 150,000 died of starvation or as a result of epidemics in ghettos." The earlier mentioned Auschwitz-Birkenau list of 30 Jakubowicz victims was from a record of 68,864 death certificates including about 30,000 Jews (names *were* available from <http://houston.indymedia.org/news/2007/03/56666.php>). Extrapolation indicates that hundreds of people named Jakubowicz may have died at Auschwitz. The Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum has *records* of 108 Jakubowicz prisoners. And I've found two: Joseph Jakubowicz (prisoner #157091, died 1/2/1944) and Nuchem Jakubowicz (prisoner #50394, USHMM reference 55930). The Auschwitz museum has *records* of one Jakóbowicz (Beni Israel, prisoner #117573) and seven Jakobowicz prisoners. Another, David Jakobowicz, was recorded by the JewishGen website (prisoner #172843, died 1/20/1944). Lazar Jakobowicz was a forced laborer (a tailor) at Auschwitz. He apparently survived along with 13 Jakubowicz forced laborers: a barber, a cobbler (shoe repairman), a carpenter, an electrician, tailors and locksmiths.

In the **Belzec death camp**, there was a victim with a familiar maiden name: Chana Jakubowicz Olmer of Sosnowiec, Poland. And there was a recorded "Jakubowicz" victim – a doctor from the Przemyśl area. He is identified with a spelling variant in Yitzhak Arad's book: *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka – The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (pg. 207). Belzec prisoner Rudolf Reder referred to the multitude of victims: "It was meaningless for me to know who a man was or what his name was. I know that the doctor was a young man from the Przemyśl area; his name was Jakubowitz." Seeing these spelling variants, the correct spelling could just as easily be Jakubowicz or Jakóbowicz.

At the **Chelmno death camp**, notorious for its mobile gassing vans, the Nazis murdered 4,953 Jewish residents of the city of Belchatow - including 22 Jakobowicz families. In August of 1942 the Nazis murdered 593 Belchatow children - and 25 of them were named Jakubowicz. The oldest was 11 year-old Jakób Jakubowicz. The youngest were one year-olds. Of all the adults killed, only one gassing van victim was known to be (barely) alive on arrival at a mass grave: male Chazkel Jakubowicz.

The **Majdanek death camp** was located (and remains) just outside of the city of Lublin. Some deported/transported Kalisz residents spent their final days in the Lublin Ghetto. One wonders how many Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz individuals were taken to the Majdanek death camp for extermination. There are very few available records there. A Jewish contact with JewishGen wrote the following in 2014: "I tried some years ago to get info from Majdanek about my uncle Dr. Markus Perlis, who died in Majdanek along with his family.... Received almost immediately a letter indicating that there were no records available. That the Nazis had taken everything with them when they withdrew" [*as the Soviet Red Army advanced towards the camp*]. An Internet website provides Majdanek history, photos and some record material (google Majdanek Death Camp: topic, pictures and information – Fold3.com). A Majdanek museum booklet (circa 1998) stated that, "most of the files from Majdanek were stored in the Soviet Union and have never been released."

A 10/24/2014 update from R. Magid, the Lublin Archives Project Coordinator for Jewish Records Indexing – Poland: "I have researched my family lost at Majdanek and can tell you that there are very few camp records, and very few lists of names; however, there is a fragment of a death register that was found (covers about three months of murders of men) and it was published by Majdanek recently."

The **Sobibor death camp** is featured in a DVD movie titled, *Escape from Sobibor* (color, 119 minutes; 2013; www.ECHOBIDGEHE.COM). This planned prisoner revolt and mass escape (of 600 prisoners) is a true story. Its planner and leader was a Jewish, Russian P.O.W. named Alexander "Sasha" Petchorski, who survived the escape and continued fighting the Nazis as a forest partisan. He later wrote a detailed account of the October 14, 1943 escape from Sobibor, included in the book, *A Tower from the Enemy* (by Albert Nirenstein; The Orion Press, 1959; pp. 303-347). In recent years archaeologists have uncovered camp foundations, etc., and many personal items of victims. Construction of an on-site museum and visitor center was scheduled for completion in 2015.

As for records of Sobibor prisoners, post-war author and Nazi hunter Serge Klarsfeld wrote, "Almost nothing remains in the way of archives...." A Google search for Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz or Jakubowicz victims at Sobibor revealed that train convoy "transport" lists (www.ushmm.org) probably contain the names of many. We do know of some Jakubowicz individuals taken to Sobibor:

1. Found on the Internet, Estera Liba Jakubowicz-Nachmanowicz (born 11/14/1905 in Lodz) and Sonja Jakubowicz (born 9/21/1935 in Rotterdam)... both died on July 16, 1943 at Sobibor death camp.

2. A Jakubowicz married couple departed from France on March 4, 1943, in a cattle car of train convoy #50 to Sobibor in eastern Poland. Five days later they were murdered at Sobibor. Beniek Jakubowicz (born 8/24/1909 in Warsaw) and Sura(h) Jakubowicz (born 12/10/1909 in Chmielnik, Poland) both died on March 9, 1943. They are memorialized with a rock/plaque aside Remembrance Lane at Sobibor; see photo image 89 of 133 (of 250 plaques) at www.stichtingsobibor.nl/gedenkiaan-rechterkant/ This Jakubowicz plaque was written in French and was signed, "With all our love, your children."

3. Author Serge Klarsfeld wrote of a Nazi roundup of Jewish people in Marseille, France in January, 1943. "One of the deportees reported" that the Germans "... hurried us along and with blows from their clubs, made us to board freight cars" [*en route to Compiègne, France; then on March 10 to Drancy, France*]. One of these arrested Jews was a Pole named Lajter Jakubowicz (born 4/10/1917 in Redzin, Poland). In Drancy on March 23, 1943, Lajter and 996 other Jews climbed into the cattle cars of train convoy #52. At 9:42 a.m., the train started rolling towards Cholm, Poland and on to the Sobibor death camp. Long after the war, author Klarsfeld wrote, "There were no survivors from this convoy in 1945."

The **Treblinka death camp** was the final destination for most Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto. This large, very crowded ghetto contained approx. 445,000 people, certainly including *many* named Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz (we know of one recorded Jakobowicz, and 30 named Jakubowicz). During World War II, of the estimated 700,000 Jews forced onto trains to Treblinka, most were gassed. The Holocaust website "www.deathcamps.org" quotes a Treblinka prisoner (apparently a forced laborer) named Jacob Jakubowicz: "The Doll' couldn't sit down to breakfast or dinner without having knocked off at least two Jews" (deputy camp commandant Kurt Franz was given this moniker, was described as a sadist, and was later sentenced to life imprisonment). Jacob Jakubowicz survived Treblinka (he escaped). The online encyclopedia, *Wikipedia*, may provide the scenario for Jacob's escape: "In August 1943, the prisoners in the work details rebelled. They seized small arms, sprayed kerosene on all the buildings and set them ablaze. In the confusion, a number of German soldiers were killed but many more prisoners perished: of 1,500 prisoners, only 40 are known to have survived the revolt. These survivors are almost all of the known survivors of Treblinka camp. The camp ceased operation." One escapee's account of planning and the revolt is in the book, *A Tower from the Enemy* (1959; pp. 296-302).

At infamous **Plaszow labor/concentration camp** near Krakow, there were at least eight Jakubowicz prisoners. Five of these became factory workers on Schindler's List(s). Oskar Schindler literally purchased them and saved them from gassing at Auschwitz. (More later on these eight survivors.)

The **Dachau labor/concentration camp** near Munich in the state of Bavaria, Germany was the first concentration camp established by Adolf Hitler (and Heinrich Himmler) in 1933. Eventually there were more than 30 sub-camps using forced laborers. I visited Dachau in the summer of 1976, while based in nearby Fribourg, Switzerland as a high school exchange student. I remember seeing Dachau guard towers... once-electrified barbed wire perimeters... prisoner barracks... brick ovens for cremations... and a building with displays/photos of medical experiments on prisoners. At the time I did not know that at least 53 Jakobowicz individuals had been imprisoned at Dachau, and at least 13 named Jakobowicz: Eugen, Heinrich, Henryk, Hermann, Jakob (2), Jenó, Josef, Lazer, Miklos, Mor, Schmuel and Szandor. Initially intended for political prisoners, Dachau housed many others and *documented* 32,000 deaths. American soldiers who liberated the camp in 1945 found appalling conditions and many corpses – and then executed approximately 30-50 camp guards and “SS men.”

The **Mauthausen labor/concentration camp** was/is located in Austria. It contained an estimated 200,000 prisoners (and 100,000 died). The dead (listed in the Mauthausen-Gusen Death Book) included: Herman Jakobowicz and 11 prisoners named Jakobowicz: Abram, Adam, Beno, Fisches, Henrik, Ignac, Juden, Morses, Moses, Selig and Szymon. I've spoken by phone with the wife of a survivor of Auschwitz-Birkenau and Mauthausen-Gusen: Mendel Jakobowicz (a.k.a. Mike Jacobs). After the war he moved to Dallas, Texas where he has spoken publicly of his Holocaust experiences. Mrs. Jacobs said that due to Nazi brutality (slapped ears), her husband was hard of hearing and was unable to speak on the phone.

Theresienstadt (a.k.a. Terezín) was a Nazi ghetto and transit/labor/concentration camp located near Prague, Czechoslovakia (now Czech Republic). The Nazi SS operated it from November 24, 1941 to May 8, 1945. They shipped about 130,000 to 140,000 Jews there - many from Czechoslovakia, Austria, Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands. The Nazis falsely promoted Theresienstadt as a pleasant resettlement camp – while killing 33,000 people there (most by starvation, disease). And over time they put over 87,000 children, teens, adults and elderly on 63 transports (train convoys) to the gas chambers and ovens - some to Treblinka, most to Auschwitz-Birkenau. One victim was the famous conductor Rafael Schacter (see *Wikipedia*), who directed (and replenished) a prisoner chorus for 16 performances of Verdi's Requiem (performed again in 2014 by the El Paso [Texas] Symphony Orchestra and UTEP Chorale at the old but elegant Plaza Theatre, downtown). One can find a database of Theresienstadt victims at the following website: <http://www2.holocaust.cz/en/main> One victim was Lipe Jakobowicz, who was, “Born 24-10-1924 [in] Piaseczno [a suburb of Warsaw, Poland]. Last residence before deportation; Warszawa [Warsaw]. Murdered 30-4-1945 Terezín.” Note that Lipe died on the day that the defeated Adolf Hitler committed suicide – April 30th, 1945. Just two days later the International Red Cross took control of the Theresienstadt Ghetto/camp. Its 7,000 survivors were liberated by the Soviet Red Army on May 8, 1945. One of those survivors is listed in the JewishGen database, recorded in the 1946 *Sharit haPlatah* records of Holocaust survivors: Jakobowicz, Kathe... “Born Berlin. Last Known Location: Theresienstadt. ID 741. Page 140. Line 0.”

Other Nazi concentration camps and prisoners appear in the websites Ancestry.com and JewishGen. There are records for the **Flossenbug camp** (from 1938-1945 there were 49 Jakobowicz prisoners, and seven Jakobowicz prisoners named Abraham (two), Alta, Josef, Pire, Sandor and Wolf). There are records for the **Bergen-Belsen camp** (43 Jakobowicz prisoners, 15 Jakobowicz). There are records for the **Gross Rosen camp** (27 Jakobowicz prisoners). There are records for the **Buchenwald camp** (18 Jakobowicz prisoners, two Jakobowicz). The **Muhldorf camp** listed one Jakobowicz prisoner. And the **Neustadt camp** listed prisoner Josef Jakobowicz of Kalisz, Poland.

There were many other lesser known concentration camps and slave/forced labor camps in Europe with unknown numbers of Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakobowicz prisoners.

Ancestry.com shows six *Jakobowics* prisoners at the Flossenburg concentration camp (this was the Germanic/Slavic spelling our immigrant ancestor Józef Jakóbowicz used when signing his 1858 marriage record). There was at least one Jakobowics prisoner at the Dachau concentration camp. The JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry lists an Elise Jakobowics who died "about 1879" (location unknown). A Bela Jakobowics was born in 1880 at Miskolc, Hungary and is listed under "Hungary, Birth Records collected by Rabbis in Various Countries, 1791-1914." An Edward Jakobowics was listed under "U.S. World War II Navy Muster Rolls, 1938-1949" and under "Military: 1 Jan. 1946."

When our Józef Jakóbowicz married and signed his name as Joseph Jakobowics, his Prussian bride signed the surname as *Jackobowics* (another established Jewish surname). This surname is found under the Ancestry.com website category, "Hungary, Jewish Names from the Central Zionist Archives." Listed Jackobowics individuals include birthdates: Adolf (1901), Zali (1909), Helen (1934), Lili (1934), Lajos (1935), Dora (1936), Gizela (1937), Salamon (1938), Bernat (1939), Josef (1941), Eva (1950).

During the Holocaust, many Jewish people died while being deported and transported in train cattle cars (at times in extreme heat or extreme cold) to the ghettos, concentration camps and death camps. The JewishGen website category "Deaths During Deportation" lists 18 Jakubowicz victims and one Jakobowicz victim (named Rywka, of Belarus). Some train arrival photos show heaps of corpses below train doors. Unrecorded victims?

Ancestry.com records that a train transport from Auschwitz to the Buchenwald camp on January 26, 1945 carried prisoner Jozef Jakubowicz, but we do not know his fate. Born 9/16/1909, he was from Kalisz and was a Polish Jew.

Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz, Jakubowicz Jews Deported from France in Train Cattle Cars

Picture yourself on the street in Paris in 1942, speaking with a German soldier or officer. You ask him if your surname Jakóbowicz sounds Jewish. He says "Absolutely" and demands your ID. Europeans know that the surname "Yah-koob-o-vitch" translates as "son of Jacob." Jewish or not (suspected to be Jewish), you are under arrest....

In the Study Center (library) of the Holocaust Museum in El Paso, Texas, on February 24, 2012, I found the book, *Memorial to the Jews Deported from France 1942-44*, by Serge Klarsfeld, NY, 1983. Subtitle: *Documentation of the deportation of the victims of the Final Solution in France*. "The people were deported in cattle cars, most of them from the central staging camp at Drancy, and most headed for immediate gassing in the death camp of Auschwitz. The oldest was 93, the youngest newborn."

The Nazis usually packed about 1,000 people into a typical train convoy of 10-15 cattle cars - with approximately 100 people in each of the cars. Conditions were horrendous for days en route (sanitation, ventilation, thirst, hunger...).

Recorded numbering of these train convoys is a bit inconsistent, but related calculations put the actual number at 74. Of these train "transports," 68 left France to Auschwitz... two to the Sobibor death camp... two to death camps Majdanek and Sobibor... one to Buchenwald... and one to Kaunas/Reval.

The total number of the transported deportees/victims was 75,721. Ten of the deportees/victims were American Jews... 22,193 were French Jews... and 14,459 were Polish Jews.

Of all transported passengers, 16 were named **Jakóbowicz/Jakobowicz** (in train convoys #3, #5, #6, #15, #25 and #38). Their given names: Herszlick, Moszak, Kalma, Szylawis, Suzanne, Rywka, Eve, Frieda, Golda, Henri, Madeleine, Maurice, Lucien, Basie, Claire and Simon.

Studying all 74 train transport passenger lists, one sees a number of similar surnames of different nationalities – many with the same meaning: “son of Jacob.” All of the following Jews left France to the labor and death camps: various numbers of people with the surnames Jack, Jackowicz, Jackson, Jacob, Jacobovitch, Jacobowicz, Jacobowitz, Jacobs, Jacobsohn, Jacobson, Jacobus, Jacoby, Jacobovitz, Jacobowicz, Jacobowitz, Jakob, Jakobweg, Jakobowits, Jakobowska, Jakobson, Jakubovitch, Jakoubson, Jakson, Jakubowicz, Jakubovitch, **Jakubowicz** [a total of 70 *Jakubowicz* deportees in various train convoys, including two Jews born in the city of Kalisz: *Szlana* (1892) and *Jacques* (1922)], Jakubowicz, Jakubowitz, Jakubowski....

The fate of the deportees? Upon arrival, a recorded 42,746 Jewish people were gassed... and 28,754 were selected for slave/forced labor (for most, a slow death from starvation, exhaustion). At the end of World War II, of all the deportees from France, there were 1,653 male survivors and 913 female survivors.

Completing research at the Holocaust Museum in El Paso, I returned home.

The next day I happened to do something I had been inclined to do for years. I had wanted to visit a service of a Messianic (Jewish Christian) congregation. Early in the service, an elderly woman arrived and sat down near me. Hannah introduced herself as Hungarian, and said she had just flown in from Europe. She asked my name. As I thought it might be interesting to provide the Polish pronunciation of our Polish surname, I said, “Michael ‘Yah-koob-o-vitch.” And she replied, “Oh, you must be Jewish, and Polish or Russian.”

The Story of a Jakubowicz (a close cousin?) in Warsaw, Poland

Let’s do some time travel to Warsaw during World War II and imagine the experience of a Jakubowicz. It is possible that he was a close cousin named after our immigrant ancestor Józef Jakóbowicz (Joseph Jackoboice). Our cousins in Poland could have easily used the spelling variant Jakubowicz (as ó = u).

A “Joseph Jakubowicz,” born in 1890 in Warsaw, died during the Warsaw Uprising of 1944. His son Andrew’s wife, Anna, provided this information (via translator) for the Jackoboice family in 1986 (this Jakubowicz couple was living in the city of Poznan at ul. Gtógowska). Their Joseph Jakubowicz “told that a person from his family left Poland and emigrated to America and worked with steam engines for locomotives....”

Steam engines for locomotives? Interestingly, our immigrant forefather Józef Jakóbowicz, a machinist, was known for building steam engines. We know that he worked circa 1857 to 1860 in Grand Rapids, Michigan for Ball & Butterworth - also known as Grand Rapids Iron Works. This company was known for manufacturing “*Land and Marine Steam Engines*” and “all sorts of heavy castings... and *logging cars*.”

We do not know details of Mr. Jakubowicz’s wartime experience. However, as a Warsaw native, it is possible that he was confined in the Nazi-developed Jewish ghetto of Warsaw (population 445,000). Typical of other ghettos around Poland, it was a collection point for concentrating large numbers of Jews – for eventual extermination during “The Final Solution.” In mid-1942, the first mass deportation from this ghetto sent approximately 300,000 Jews on a 62 mile trip to the Treblinka death camp.

Fiercely resisting continuing extermination in 1943, the Jewish Military Union/Jewish Combat Organization battled German SS and Wehrmacht troops – during the Jewish Ghetto Uprising. The heavily armed Germans killed over 5,000 Jewish fighters and residents, and summarily executed 7,000. They transported about 50,000 to concentration and extermination camps – most to Treblinka.

The dramatic scene in the following photo (Courtesy of the Holocaust Education & Archive Research Team, www.HolocaustResearchProject.org) is described in a magazine/book entitled, *The Holocaust*, of “The Holocaust Exhibition at Imperial War Museum London.” It states: “Survivors of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising are led through the burning ghetto to waiting deportation trains.” Most to Treblinka....



We do know that Mr. Jakubowicz survived 1943.

Hundreds of Ghetto Uprising survivors took part in the general Warsaw Uprising of 1944. Part of a nationwide rebellion, this insurrection was led by the Polish Home Army to oust the Nazis from Warsaw. Mr. Jakubowicz, age 54, died during this struggle. Ultimately the struggle was futile; the Germans killed 16,000 Polish soldiers and up to 200,000 civilians. The Nazis destroyed about 85% of the city, which was finally liberated by the Russians in January, 1945.

Fighters and other Holocaust Survivors

We have seen that only one of ten Polish Jews survived the onslaught of the genocidal, diabolical Nazis. Some survived by hiding, others survived by fighting. And some actually survived the horrific conditions and brutality at labor camps, concentration camps and even extermination camps.

A small percentage of Jews managed to hide in rural, urban and ghetto buildings – in barns, in basement holes, behind walls, in lofts and attics, etc. Those who hid them and fed them risked their lives, as the Nazis and local collaborators hunted Jews and shot their helpers too. Those who rescued Jews during the Holocaust have been honored as the “Righteous Among the Nations” by the post-war, modern State of Israel.

Other Jews escaped to the large forests and swamps of Poland, Lithuania, Belarus (Belorussia), Russia and the Ukraine. Young and old, their numbers were estimated at 100,000 to 365,000 or more. Some male and female adults and teenagers became partisan fighters – about 30,000 in Belarus and the

western Ukraine by 1944. They often teamed with Soviet partisan brigades to fight the Nazis. And sometimes they fought anti-Semitic Soviet, Polish and Ukrainian partisans. It was a chaotic battle for survival with huge losses – especially during Nazi blockades of the forests and attacks.

Evidence of the Nazis' struggle and *fear* of the partisans is found in a post-war report (39 page and 53 page versions) written by German generals and general staff officers: *Combat in Russian Forests and Swamps, Historical Study* [Dept. of the Army Pamphlet 20-231]. In the chapter, "Combat Under Special Conditions," one sees the following excerpts:

"In World War II the large forest and swamp regions of European Russia were the natural sanctuaries for growing partisan cells and provided ideal conditions for their purposes....

"Remnants of Red Army units, having escaped capture or annihilation in earlier engagements, were able to hide in almost inaccessible places and often formed the nuclei around which the partisans rallied. Bands of hardy individuals... were combined into a substantial fighting organization and conducted ruthless guerilla warfare against the German forces in the woods and swamps within and behind the combat zone.... Ordinary combat units are not particularly well-suited for partisan warfare. As a rule, they lack the necessary flexibility and thus are not equal to the combat methods of a tough and ruthless enemy who is usually invisible, difficult to apprehend, and who attacks without warning....

"Railroads and highways leading through partisan-infested areas had to be protected in two ways. First, it was necessary to establish an effective network of strong points and fortified blockhouses, and then highly mobile patrols had to operate at irregular intervals along the threatened routes. Through many areas vehicles could only move in convoy and, on numerous occasions, the Germans had to use tanks, armored cars, or armored railroad trains to avoid heavy casualties from partisan attacks....

"Under German occupation in World War II the villages in the Russian forests and swamps required constant surveillance. Their inhabitants - some voluntarily, some under pressure - cooperated with the partisans and gave them valuable support, not so much as combatants but, at the least, as agents and informers....

"Toward the end of the war the vast Russian forest areas were becoming so insecure that a special warning radio channel had to be included in the signal operation instructions of higher headquarters, to be used exclusively for urgent calls for assistance in case a unit or strong point was attacked or threatened by partisans."

Jewish partisans and other Jewish fugitives living in the forests and swamps traveled by foot and by horse. They ate wild berries and mushrooms... and beans, potatoes and other crops from surrounding farms (also the source of beef, chicken, etc.). They lived in primitive "bunkers" above/below ground through snowy, freezing winters... and through hot, humid, buggy summers.

Along with partisans, Jewish women, children and the elderly lived in "family camps." The largest camps, in the Naliboki Forest, contained hundreds of Jewish people. Camps were led by Shalom Zorin (he saved 800 people)... and led by Tuvia Bielski and his brothers (they saved 1,200 people). The Bielski story, *Defiance*, is available as a book (by Nechama Tec; Oxford University Press, 1994)... and as a movie/DVD starring Daniel Craig and Liev Schreiber (2009). Another book, *A Tower from the Enemy* (by A. Nirenstein; 1959) includes a personal account of Tuvia Bielski: "In the Forests" (pp. 352-72).

Read the complete story in author Allan Levine's book, *Fugitives of the Forest... The Heroic Story of Jewish Resistance and Survival During the Second World War* (published 1998 and 2009 – by Lyons

Press). On page 226 there is a glimpse of partisan sabotage, including the use of explosives and anti-tank guns:

“According to historian and former partisan Dov Levin, about 850 Jews participated in 22 of the 92 detachments that made up the Soviet-Lithuanian [*partisan*] movement.... Fighters in these 22 detachments were responsible for derailing 461 trains... destroying 288 locomotives... and injuring or killing 6,633 enemy soldiers (of a total of approximately 14,000).” In 39 operations from October, 1943 to July, 1944, three Jewish units “destroyed 315 telephone and telegraph poles, collapsed five bridges, derailed 33 train cars, and destroyed more than 300 kilometers of railway track.”

The advancing, Soviet Red Army pushed the Germans out of Russia and out of the forests in the summer of 1944.

Nazi Germany's leader, Adolf Hitler, was closer to the action than many realize – in East Prussia (today's northeastern Poland) near the borders of Lithuania and Belarus. He used his “Wolf's Lair” for more than 800 days during 3.5 years of the war (until November, 1944). During that time, Poland's perishing Jews hoped for his demise. But a mere 200,000 to 335,000 Polish Jews lived long enough to learn of Hitler's death on April 30th, 1945. Underground in his Berlin bunker, knowing that the Russians would arrive soon and capture him, the man who killed millions killed himself.

By the end of the war and the Holocaust, about 25,000 surviving Jews walked out of the forests and swamps. As for the 1,200 Bielski survivors who lived to see the end of the war, “There are probably more than 13,000 descendants,” writes Allan Levine, “and the numbers grow each year.”

Ancestry.com and JewishGen websites provide a variety of Holocaust survivor records. Examples follow. The 1945 Register of Jewish Survivors in Europe, printed as *Pinkas HaNitzolim I & II*, shows 38 male and female “Jakobowicz” survivors. The 1946 *Sharit Ha-Platah* (also known as *haPlatah*) list shows 156 “Jakobowicz” survivors. The 1944-46 *Aufbau Newspaper* of New York listed three female survivors named “Jakobowicz.” The JewishGen website features the “1948 Warsaw Survivors List” and its nine “Jakobowicz” individuals (many on this list of 5,680 Warsaw survivors fled to the Soviet Union in 1939 and returned in 1946-47). From these sources alone, we see as many as 206 “Jakobowicz” survivors (there may be some duplication of names). We also know of 241 (possibly up to 273) Jakubowicz survivors listed in the *Pinkas HaNitzolim* records. For survivor stories, see: www.holocaustsurvivors.org

Most Polish Jews, due to post-war discrimination and persecution (local and Russian), eventually moved to other European countries, to North and South America, and to Israel. Google the “White Pages” for Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and other cities in Israel to find Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz residents. The Shoah Foundation provides testimonies too: www.usc.edu/schools/college/vhi/

One Holocaust survivor in Poland, Tadeusz Jakubowicz, was serving as president of the Jewish Community in Krakow in 2007. The *Washington Post* quoted him as saying that 31 of his relatives were killed during the Holocaust. The *Post* wrote, “Jakubowicz, 67, was imprisoned by the Nazis in the nearby Plaszow concentration camp as a child” [*10 km outside Krakow*]. This labor/concentration camp was featured in the graphic film “Schindler's List.” In 1944, the Plaszow camp held 12,000 to 25,000 people *at a time*. Over the years, at least 8,000 people were shot there and many more were put on cattle cars to Auschwitz-Birkenau gas chambers.

Mr. Oskar Schindler was a factory owner in Krakow and used some Plaszow camp Jews as workers. Over time, he developed compassion for them (e.g., provided extra food; built on-site barracks). In 1944 Schindler literally purchased over 1,100 of these Jews in order to prevent their deaths at Auschwitz. The genealogy website JewishGen credits the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Israel with recording *five*

Jakubowicz survivors on "Schindler's Lists": Chaim (mason, brick & stone), Dawid (mason, brick & stone), Hersch (plumber), Jakob (builder) and Kurt (installer).

There were many other non-Jews who saved Jews during the Holocaust. Some saved hundreds of people or more. One of the better known rescuers was a Japanese diplomat/Vice Consul named Chiune Sugihara, serving in Lithuania. He worked tirelessly to issue 2,139 transit visas to Jews who escaped Europe to Kobe, Japan and Shanghai, China. One was a Polish Jew named Boleslaw Jakobowicz (visa date August 2, 1940). And there was Moszek Jakobowicz of Lithuania (visa date August 17, 1940). Of those saved, 91% were from Poland, 5% from Lithuania, 2% from Germany, 1% from Czechoslovakia, and 1% from Russia and Holland.

Other known Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, from various labor, concentration and death camps, include the following: Josef Jakobowicz of Kalisz, Poland (Neustadt camp)... Stefan Jakobowicz (Buchenwald)... Dina Jakobowicz (Freiburg, Mauthausen, Auschwitz II-Birkenau camps)... Jakob, Henry and Mojsze Jakobowicz (the latter in labor camps Czestochowa and Skarzyska Kamienna)... Tadeusz Jakobowicz and his parents Maciej and Maria Jakobowicz (Plaszow)... Abram Jakobowicz (Auschwitz, Buchenwald)... Josef Jakobowicz (author of book, *Auschwitz is Also a City*)... author Berek Jakobowicz (a.k.a. Benjamin Jacobs), "The Dentist of Auschwitz"... Fela Jakobowicz (Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen)... Bella Jakobowicz Tovey of Sosnowiec, Poland (describes Bergen-Belsen conditions in a 1990 oral history interview – accessible at www.ushmm.org)... and five Jakobowicz women liberated from Bergen-Belsen: Emmy, Lena, Genia, Nuta and Henia. Mr. & Mrs. Rachmil Jakobowicz and his siblings Sara and Israel (all of Poland) survived Soviet forced labor camps in Siberia and the Caucasus Mountains.

It does not appear that there were any Jakóbowicz or Jakobowicz survivors in our "ancestral hometown" of Kalisz, Poland. Nor were there any Jakobowicz residents as of 1986. However, as of 2013 there were eight Jakobowicz individuals there (according to Polish-American Robert Strybel in Warsaw).

At this writing in 2016, this Jakóbowicz (Mike Jackoboice) had been living in the American Southwest for nearly two decades - in Las Cruces, New Mexico. A highlight was discovery of the nearby El Paso Holocaust Museum and Study Center (library), founded by one Holocaust survivor (Henry Kellen, 1915-2014) among many in west Texas. The museum is located just a 10-minute walk from the downtown plaza, and it is considered one of the best Holocaust museums in the United States. It contains many artifacts from World War II, including German weapons... and victims' personal items from the concentration camps. As one enters the museum, one sees the dining room of a typical Jewish home prior to the war. Then one steps into dimly lit passages transporting one to Europe of the 1930s and 1940s: to the Kristallnacht "night of broken glass"... into a waiting train cattle car... to a guard tower with machine gun... and into a death camp with oven. The walls display many large and small photos and texts (in English and Spanish). There are audiovisuals too. Lastly, one learns of the war's end, the liberation of the camps, and continuing remembrance. One will see many families' memorial plaques honoring Holocaust victims - including those named Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz. Finally, there are many superb and available Holocaust books and DVDs for continuing study.

At this museum, during its events and programs, I've met several survivors in their 80s and 90s - including a female Polish Jew who worked in the Belgian underground (resistance against the Nazis). Sara Hauptman (1918-2014) was known as *The Lioness of Judah* (title of her book). Arrested and sent to Auschwitz, she survived medical experiments by the notorious Dr. Josef Mengele ("the Angel of Death"). In the year 2010, I asked Sara if she remembered the day when the Nazis tattooed the (still visible) prisoner number on her left arm. Sara said, "Oh yes, there were 3,000 people in line and they used the same needle." I said, "Not very sanitary." And she said, "Oh, they didn't care about that."

Berek Jakubowicz, a.k.a. Benjamin Jacobs: "The Dentist of Auschwitz"



Josek, Pola, Berek, and Uncle Schlomo, 1934, on one of Schlomo's annual visits to Dobra, Poland

By Melissa Driessche, Staff Writer for *The Pleiad* [Albion College newspaper], 10/10/1997

Benjamin Jacobs cannot erase the memory of pulling the gold teeth and dental bridges from dead bodies.

Extracting the valuable gold teeth from the dead Jews for the Nazi regime was only one of the horrific duties performed by Benjamin Jacobs during his four year internment in various concentration camps in Europe during World War II. Nonetheless, it was a job that most likely saved his life.

Jacobs, who was born Berek Jakubowicz, lived in Dobra, Poland until 1941 when he was sent to a concentration camp because of his Jewish heritage. For four years he lived the nightmare forced upon him by Nazi hatred.

Today Jacobs uses his experiences to educate audiences about the past, in hopes that nothing like the horror of the Holocaust will ever happen again. Jacobs, who now resides in Boston, travels the country to share his stories with people of all ages.

He tells how his basic knowledge as a dental student and a bag of dental tools helped him avoid some of the rigorous labor at the work camp at Auschwitz. While his duties were gruesome, they were essential to saving his life. Jacobs describes how he was expected "to save whatever could be saved from Jews who had nothing else to give but their gold fillings, teeth and bridges."

He was rewarded with a little extra food, which he shared with his father and brother, who were also inmates at Auschwitz. Jacobs and his brother were survivors, but their father perished after a beating at the camp.

Jacobs also describes a little known horror that occurred shortly before the end of the war. In May 1945, over 15,000 Jews, including Jacobs and his brother, were herded onto large ocean liners. The ships were bombed by the British Royal Air Force just four days before the surrender of Nazi Germany. Only 1,600 Jews survived the tragedy. Jacobs was pulled into a life raft that was already full beyond capacity because someone from Auschwitz recognized him as "the dentist."

Jacobs appears to be living proof that even in a time of suspicion and hatred, humanity was still evident, especially when tragedy struck, and that strength breeds survivors.

Jakubowicz Survivors of the Holocaust

Multiplying in Poland for hundreds of years, Jakubowicz families extended across the country. It is impossible to say exactly how many Jakubowicz men, women and children lived in Poland prior to World War II and the Nazis' genocidal Holocaust, but it is conservatively realistic to say "well over 1,000." Why?

Based on the number of registered Jakubowicz survivors of the Holocaust, we can attempt to extrapolate the pre-war population. To extrapolate, according to *The Oxford Essential Dictionary*, is to "calculate or derive approximately from known data, etc." The *known* data is found on the website Ancestry.com: the individual names of Jakubowicz Holocaust survivors printed in *Pinkas HaNitzolim I & II, 1945*. Translation? The website's database "contains a name index to Volumes I & II of the 'Register of Jewish Survivors.' The volumes were published in Jerusalem in 1945..." by the Jewish Agency for Palestine, Search Bureau for Missing Relatives.

As we commence extrapolation, remember that before WWII there were approximately 3 to 3.5 million Jews across Poland (the largest Jewish population in Europe). Germany's Nazis slaughtered about three million of these Polish Jews. Only about *one of ten* survived.

The two abovementioned volumes "contain lists of Jewish survivors in various European countries (about 50% of the total in Poland), saved from (concentration) camps and the ghettos, who have been registered wherever they were found following the liberation of Europe..." These two volumes contain approximately 118,000 names, including 241 Jakubowicz survivors.

If about 50% of these survivors were in Poland (120), and *one of ten* survived, we can conservatively extrapolate to about 1,200 pre-war Jakubowicz residents – and over 1,000 killed. Then consider the Lodz Ghetto and its 2,466 Jakubowicz residents - which doubles the figures. Add other ghetto, camp and town populations - and triple or quadruple the figures?

And then consider the following. Based on varying estimates of the survivors in Poland alone (200,000 to 350,000) many of Europe's surviving Jews were simply not registered after the war.

A final conclusion? The more the number of Jakubowicz survivors, the more the number slaughtered.

The Axis of Evil: Berlin and Rome

Many people know that Germany and Italy were very close Axis allies during World War II and the Holocaust. Berlin and Rome were equally culpable for the genocidal slaughter of millions.

Few people know that the Vatican's Cardinal Secretary of State, Eugenio Pacelli, negotiated a concordat (the "Reichskonkordat") with Nazi Germany which lasted from 1933 *through* 1945 (to the end of the war). It is chilling to ponder this long complicity. It would explain silence and inaction of wartime pope Eugenio Pacelli (Pius XII) during the Holocaust. For example, he did not endorse the U.S./British/Allies' 1942 "Joint Declaration by Members of the United Nations" condemning the genocide of the Jews. To quote the Declaration: "... this bestial policy of cold-blooded extermination."

And few people know that many Nazi leaders were lifelong Roman Catholics, including the chief propagandist, Joseph Goebbels... SS and Gestapo chief Heinrich Himmler... *his Jesuit uncle*, SS officer J. Gebhard Himmler... the notorious Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Hoess (Hoss)... and the Fuhrer, Adolf Hitler. The Vatican *never* excommunicated any of these men for crimes against humanity.

In the book, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches* (1968; pages 25, 26, 162), author J.S. Conway quoted Adolf Hitler: "As a Catholic I never feel comfortable in the Evangelical Church or its structures. That is why I will have great difficulty if I try to regulate affairs of the Protestant churches. The evangelical people or the Protestants will in any case reject me...."

"As for the Jews," said Hitler, "I am just carrying on with the same policy which the Catholic Church has adopted for fifteen hundred years, when it has regarded the Jews as dangerous and pushed them into ghettos, etc., because it knew what the Jews were like...."

Secular French author Edmond Paris quoted Nazi Germany's Vice-Chancellor, Franz von Papen, who declared, "The Third Reich is the first world power which not only acknowledges but also puts into practice the high principles of the papacy."

Paris also quotes Hitler's Intelligence Chief, SS General Walter Schellenberg: "The S.S. organization had been constituted, by Himmler, according to the principles of the Jesuit Order...." (from the book, *The Secret History of the Jesuits*; 1975).

The SS oversaw the "displacement of Jewish people... seizing their assets and imprisoning them in concentration camps and ghettos where they would be used as slave labor, pending extermination," according to *Wikipedia*. "Chosen to implement the Final Solution... the SS carried out the killing, torture and enslavement of approximately twelve million people. Most victims were Jews and/or of Polish and Slavic extraction...."

Among the survivors of World War II and its horrific Holocaust, countless Nazi war criminals hid, ran and escaped justice. Many enjoyed Rome's assistance and escaped via its "Ratlines" – an underground network providing shelter, false identities and passage to South America and beyond. See the Internet for photos and more. For details, read the book *Ratlines* by Aarons and Loftus. Another book provides three informative chapters on this subject - and a comprehensive exposé of the dark history of Roman Catholicism (by Evangelical/Protestant author Dave Hunt and Harvest House Publishers in 1994: *A Woman Rides the Beast*). Relatively few Nazis were caught, convicted, imprisoned or executed.

As Rome and Berlin stood together during the Holocaust, one can picture them standing together before God - *the God of Israel*.

Kalisz, Poland and the Nazi Holocaust of World War II

Across Poland for centuries, Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz men, women and children settled, struggled, prospered and multiplied. In the end, during World War II and the Holocaust, most were slaughtered. Many had lived in and around the city that many consider to be the oldest in Poland. This city was first chronicled in the 2nd century: Kalisz.

For photographs of pre-Holocaust and Holocaust era Jewish people surnamed Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz, see the website of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. (USHMM, at www.ushmm.org). Featured articles highlight the “Jewish Community of Kalisz in the Interwar Years,” its “Economy, Politics, Government” and “Youth, Culture, Religion.” Excerpts describe pre-Holocaust life in Kalisz (in German, "Kalisch"), and include a well known Jakobowicz:

“The Jewish neighborhood of Kalisz was in the northwest area of the central city, along the main boulevard – Nowa Street [*site of the Great Synagogue and the House of Study*]. The bridge that carried Nowa Street over a branch of the Prosna River was the heart of Jewish activity.... Kanonicka Street was also a heavily Jewish area.... In 1921, of the over 500 Jewish-owned factories and enterprises, 400 produced clothing or textiles (other products included metals, lumber [*historically, Kalisz was known for “wood products”*], and leather...). The leading figure in Jewish literary life in Kalisz was poet and author Rosa Jakobowicz (Jacobson). The daughter of a rabbi, she studied Hebrew... Jakobowicz died in the Warsaw ghetto in 1942....” The pre-war population of Kalisz was 89,000, which the Nazis reduced by 50%.

The Germans invaded Poland on September 1, 1939 and in just five days entered Kalisz – home to Jews with Jakóbowicz surname spelling variants (www.jewishgenealogy.com.ar/kalisz/ancestors_j.html). The Nazis shot and gassed some of 20-30,000 Jewish Kalishers (“Kaliszers”). They transported most (by truck and by train) to labor camps and to ghettos (in the cities of Lublin, Kielce, Lodz)... and eventually to Nazi extermination/death camps (specifically to Belzec, Chelmno, Majdanek and Treblinka).

The Germans used one especially heinous, genocidal practice to murder nearly 100,000 Jews and Russians during the Holocaust of World War II. It was used in Kalisz too. Designed by SS officer Walter Rauff, the method is described in a day-by-day timeline of the war at: www.holocaustchronicle.org:

“**October 26, 1941** [*other sources, 1940*]: Germans inform Jews of Kalisz, Poland that elderly Jews in convalescent homes are to be moved to another home the next day. **October 27, 1941**: A black van that stops at the Jewish old people’s home in Kalisz is loaded with elderly and driven off. The van is specially outfitted to route carbon monoxide into the cargo area. **October 28, 1941**: More elderly Jews from a convalescent home in Kalisz are taken away in gassing vans....”

Contemplate generational timing. Our Polish immigrant ancestor Joseph Jackoboice’s friends’ and relatives’ “children” could have been in their 80s and early 90s in 1940/1941. Joseph’s nephews, nieces (our “first cousins”) may have been victims. It is a shocking realization. One wonders what happened to *their* children. In the book *Jewish Roots in Poland*, we learn the fate of the last 612 Jews in Kalisz, by 1942: the local Nazi gassing vans, the Lodz ghetto, and the Chelmno death camp (more gassing vans).

Current records show that during the Holocaust the Nazis killed up to 555 Jews named Jakóbowicz and Jakobowicz, and up to 242 Jews named Jakubowicz. The Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Israel lists up to 108 Jakubowicz victims of Kalisz, and 11 Jakóbowicz and Jakobowicz victims of Kalisz. How many more victims died unrecorded deaths? Seventy years after the Holocaust, as of 2013, there was not one Jakóbowicz resident in Kalisz.

During World War II, across Poland and Europe, a surname meaning “son of Jacob” was a death sentence. And recent documentation shows, “There were more than 42,500 ghettos and camps throughout Europe from 1933 to 1945. There were 30,000 slave labor camps; 1,150 Jewish ghettos; 980 concentration camps; 1,000 prisoner of war camps; 500 brothels filled with sex slaves; and thousands of other camps used for euthanizing the elderly and infirm, performing forced abortions, “Germanizing” prisoners or transporting victims to killing centers” (reported by Benjamin Blech of *Virtual Jerusalem*; his article featured in the superbly informative, 16-page Holocaust newspaper *Martyrdom & Resistance*, May/June 2014, published regularly in New York City by the American Society for Yad Vashem).

It seems *rather* significant that the Jackoboice (Jakóbowicz) family in America has never heard from any Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz or Jakubowicz relatives in Kalisz... in Poland... in Europe.

Walter Rauff and Nazi Gassing Vans

According to the online encyclopedia, *Wikipedia*: “Walter Rauff [6/19/1906 – 5/14/1984], was an SS officer in Nazi Germany, attaining the grade of Colonel (Standartenführer) in June 1944^[1]. From Jan. 1938 he was an aide of Reinhard Heydrich... [ultimately] in the Reich Security Main Office, a department created by Himmler in 1939 grouping the Gestapo, SD and Kripo, the criminal police. Rauff is thought to be responsible for nearly 100,000 deaths during WWII. In the late 70s [1970s] and early 80s, he was arguably the most wanted Nazi fugitive still alive.



Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal holding a picture of Nazi war criminal, Walter Rauff, in May 1973. Photo and excerpts from *Wikipedia*, the free encyclopedia.

“In 1941-1942 Rauff was involved in the development of Gas vans, mobile gas chambers used to fatally poison Jews, persons with disabilities, communists, etc., who were considered by the SS as enemies of the German State. According to declassified CIA documents: "As an official of the Criminal Technical Institute of the Reich Security Main Office, Rauff designed gas vans used to murder Jews and persons with disabilities." The MI5 file looks more explicit concerning Rauff's "technical" skills: "Rauff supervised the modification of scores of trucks, with the assistance of a Berlin chassis builder, to divert their exhaust fumes into airtight chambers in the back of the vehicles. The victims were then poisoned and/or asphyxiated from the carbon monoxide accumulating within the truck compartment as the vehicle travelled to a burial site. The trucks could carry between 25 and 60 people at a time."^[5]

“According to Rauff's declassified C.I.A. file: ‘Near the end of the war Rauff, then the senior SS and police official in northern Italy, tried to gain credit for the surrender of German forces in Italy, but ended up only surrendering himself. After escaping from an American internment camp in Rimini, Rauff hid in a number of Italian convents, apparently under the protection of Bishop Alois Hudal. Rauff remained an unrepentant Nazi until his death, aged 77 (in Chile). According to his MI5 file, ‘he never showed any remorse for his actions....’”

In the book, *Nazis on the Run: How Hitler's Henchmen Fled Justice* (2012), it is reported that after the war, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Genoa (Giuseppe Siri) was the first to hide Rauff. In 1947, Rauff fled to Damascus, Syria. In late 1949, Rauff used Red Cross documentation to move to Ecuador – where he worked for Bayer (a German pharmaceutical company). In the early 1960s, Rauff retired to Santiago, Chile. He died in Santiago in 1984 – of lung cancer and heart attack.

Gassing Vans and Jakubowicz Victims: one or many?

Adolf Eichmann was a leading Nazi manager of the Holocaust. After the defeat of Nazi Germany, Eichmann fled and eventually escaped to South America. Israeli agents captured him in 1960. Witnesses at his trial in Israel (District Court Session 65, 6/5/1961) included Michael Podchlewnik. A prisoner at the Chelmno death camp, he eyewitnessed the Nazi use of gassing vans and he buried the victims – including his own wife and two children. The following transcripts of the Eichmann trial were found on the Internet at “Chelmno, Jakubowicz,” and quote Mr. Podchlewnik:

“When they saw the truck, the people did not want to get on. The SS men stood there with sticks and started beating them and drove them into the truck... These were trucks into which they placed the people, locked the doors, and let in gas... We heard the screaming from inside the trucks. When they started the motor and let in the gas, gradually the screaming subsided, until they were no longer heard outside, and the truck drove away. So it went on the whole day...”

“In the forest, the pits were being dug... this was... at the end of 1941... When the trucks arrived, we were not yet allowed to go near them. We had to wait two or three minutes. Fumes came out of the truck, from the people that were inside. We had to wait. Then five or six men came up and opened the doors and laid the bodies on the ground... None of the people who had been inside the trucks were still alive, except in one case. That was a man from my town who was hefty and strong. He was still jerking. That was the only one, during the whole time that I worked there. His name was Chazkel Jakubowicz....”

More on Eichmann.... From *Wikipedia*, “Otto Adolf Eichmann [3/19/1906 to 5/31/1962] was a German Nazi *SS-Obersturmbannführer* (lieutenant colonel) and one of the major organizers of the Holocaust. Eichmann was charged by [SS *General*] Reinhard Heydrich with facilitating and managing the logistics of mass deportation of Jews to ghettos and extermination camps (where the victims were gassed) in German-occupied Eastern Europe during World War II... After Germany invaded Hungary in March, 1944, Eichmann oversaw the deportation and extermination of that country's Jewish population. Most of the victims were sent to Auschwitz....”

In 1946 a POW, Eichmann escaped. He was in Austria until 1950. *World War II* magazine (5/6, 2016 issue) reported on Eichmann's intrigues: “With assistance from Vatican officials, he fled to Argentina to live under false names.” More from *Wikipedia*: “In 1960, he was captured in Argentina by the Mossad, Israel's intelligence service.” Eichmann was “tried in an Israeli court on 15 criminal charges, including crimes against humanity and war crimes. He was convicted and executed by hanging in 1962....”

Finding a Nazi leader in Switzerland, 1976

In the summer of 1976, I was a 17 year-old, American "high school exchange student" living in Fribourg (a city with French and German cultures, languages). A surviving Nazi leader was living there too. Locals informed me of the (temporary) residence of this former member of Adolf Hitler's inner circle.

This man, known as Hitler's favorite, became one of the most powerful leaders of wartime Germany. For some time, he was expected to succeed Hitler. The longtime architect for the Third Reich, he was eventually promoted as Reichsminister of Armaments & Munitions/War Production (1942-45). Albert Speer testified at the Nuremberg War Trials: "If Hitler had any friends at all, I certainly would have been one of his close friends." Speer was convicted, mainly for widespread use of millions of people as slave laborers (he was once photographed at the Mauthausen labor/concentration camp). After the Nuremberg trials, many of his co-defendants were hanged. Speer was sentenced to 20 years, mainly in Spandau Prison in West Berlin, where he drafted his memoir *Inside the Third Reich*.

Gitta Sereny's book, *Albert Speer: His Battle With Truth*, revealed information pertinent to my visit with Speer....

In 1963, W. J. Siedler of German publisher Ullstein's wrote to Mrs. Speer suggesting that Albert write a book. Sereny described the suggestion: "Perhaps once Speer was released, he and she would like to go live in Switzerland – he was prepared to finance the rental of a chalet there, he wrote, and a long period for 'writing slowly'" (pg. 669). Sereny said Siedler "had later managed to get a letter directly to Speer in Spandau...." Siedler said, "I told him that I had already written to his wife that Ullstein would finance him for six months after he left Spandau, to sit and write in some Swiss village. I had heard that he loved mountains, and I did think it might be useful for him to start the work away from everyone and outside Germany...." Just before Speer's release in 1966, "Siedler offered a country house in Switzerland as soon as he wanted to start writing. He [*Speer*] said perhaps" (pg. 658). Sereny said that from 1966-68, Speer "... concentrated almost entirely on the book." *Inside the Third Reich* was published in 1969/1970.

Speer continued writing Reich-related books through the 1970s. Based at his family home in Heidelberg, Germany, he traveled Europe. He did some writing while staying in Portugal, and was known to rent a house in France. Author Sereny noted (in 1978) that Speer saw everybody who phoned or rang the doorbell and commented to his wife, "He seems to make himself available to everybody." Margaret replied, "Yes, he feels he must. All the more now, because most of the others are dead, or dying" (pp. 688-89). Sereny quoted Speer saying, "Any man who has once been in the center of public life misses it, needs the recognition. It becomes very much part of one's lifeblood... I am always glad when young people come to see me...."

Sereny made other notes pertinent to my visit with Speer (namely, he spoke French). In a letter from prison to a son-in-law, Speer wrote that he had "started to translate a two-hundred-page book from French to German. When it's finished, I'll translate it back into French" (pg. 659).

Finally, note Speer's moniker amongst family members. On September 18, 1947, two months into his 19 years at Spandau Prison, he wrote his wife, "Above all, do not let the children worry about me. Tell them their papa is becoming wonderfully domesticated..." (pp. 605 and 636...). In 1953 he wrote to his daughter Hilde (then an exchange student in America) and signed the letter, "your Papa."

Many years later, in 1976 in Fribourg, Switzerland, locals gave me the address of Speer's apartment building. I went and found a posted list of tenants including: "A. Speer." Knocking at his door, an elderly lady appeared and smiled. I asked if I could speak with Albert Speer. She turned and called: "Papa."

He walked around a corner, hesitant of step. I remember him as tall (6'0") and slim, with a stern visage (my impression based, I later concluded, on his pronounced, dark eyebrows). I introduced myself as an American, and as a student of World War II history, and we chatted briefly (in French). Parting, I shook a hand that had shaken the hands of Adolf Hitler, Joseph Goebbels, Hermann Goring, Heinrich Himmler and other notorious Nazis. So while leaving, I felt a strong urge to wash my hand - and I did so.

Five years later, at age 76, Albert Speer died of a stroke during a trip in London, England.

Memorial Plaques for Holocaust Victims

As a tribute to the hundreds of people named Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz who perished during World War II and the Holocaust, I have memorialized these family names in stone. In 2012 and 2014, their names were engraved on memorial plaques which adorn the walls of the El Paso Holocaust Museum (in west Texas). Every Holocaust victim deserves a gravestone, but this will have to suffice. One memorial plaque reads (in three lines): "Children, Teens, Adults, Elderly... Hundreds, surname Jakubowicz... Many murdered at Auschwitz." Beside it, the other plaque reads: "Jakóbowicz & Jakobowicz families... Hundreds of victims... Three million Polish Jews killed."

Surviving Immigrant Descendants and Surnames

As the Nazis considered anyone named Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz or Jakubowicz to be Jewish, it was a good thing that Józef Jakóbowicz left Europe in 1852 - long prior to World War II (1939-45). If he hadn't, his family line could have been extinguished during the Holocaust. Fortunately, in the centuries prior to the Holocaust, many emigrated from Europe to America.

Some Polish immigrants continued to use their original surname spellings (for examples: Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz, Jakubowicz). Many translated and/or modified their family names. Some examples? Our surname root translates as "Jacob"... and the suffix as "son of." So the surname Jakóbowicz and its European variations, carried to America by immigrants, were typically translated to Jacobson, Jacobs, Jackobson, Jackson, Jakobs, Jakobson, etc. (among them some more cousins). Some immigrants made more significant surname changes in spelling and pronunciation to conceal ethnoreligious identity. Author Benzion Kaganoff adds, "In the process of name changing Jews appear to have shown greater activity and ingenuity than other ethnic groups." Consider the name change from Jakób-owicz to Jacko-boice.

Jewish men had the highest rate of literacy among *all* immigrants, according to Jewish historian, author and professor Hasia Diner of New York University (NYU). According to 1800s historian M.A. Leeson, our immigrant forefather Józef Jakóbowicz was "reared and *educated* in his native land, *and* when 16 years of age learned the machinist's trade..." As for the educational scene, the book *Auschwitz is also a City* states that there was no compulsory schooling during Russian rule in Russian Poland - and up to 80% of Poles were illiterate. But every Polish Jew could read and write. The Jewish communities in Poland emphasized the importance of education.

Interestingly, Józef Jakóbowicz chose four years of formal training and work in the machinery trade. Highly literate - fluent in Polish, German and English - he built his career in three different countries and cultures and became a successful businessman.

Józef Jakóbowicz settled in Grand Rapids, Michigan by 1855. He manufactured and sold steam engines and woodworking machines (bandsaws, etc.). In 1880 he founded the West Side Iron Works, which eventually transitioned into the Monarch Road Machinery Co. (renamed Monarch Hydraulics, Inc.). During WWII this company produced hydraulic systems and torpedo propellers to defeat Axis enemies.

Historians described Józef Jakóbowicz as a master craftsman. However, in crafting a unique new surname, this iron worker forged an endless irony. Countless Americans would forever continue to spell and pronounce "Jackoboice" countless different ways!

Jewish Emigration Motivations and the Jakóbowicz Name

Defined by the online encyclopedia *Wikipedia*: "A Jew is a member of the Jewish people, an ethnoreligious group originating from the Israelites or Hebrews of the ancient Middle East." Subgroups of Jews with different cultures and traditions are outlined in "Judaism 101" at www.jewFAQ.org. In the book *Polish Roots*, R. Chorzempa writes, "The Ashkenazim [*Jews of Germany/Eastern Europe*] emigrated from Babylonia to Mesopotamia to southern Russia, and then on to Germany, Poland, and the rest of Europe." In the 1800s and early 1900s, millions of these European Jews emigrated and became the forefathers of today's American Jews.

Ancestry.com lists several Jewish people with name and surname spellings equivalent to our Józef Jakóbowicz (Joseph Jackoboice). Jewish Records Indexing-Poland reported a Jozef Jakobowicz born in 1829 in Izbica Kujawska, Poland. A Józef Jakobowicz was born in 1855 in Wielun, Poland. A Jozef Zalman Jakobowicz died in 1855 in Belchatow. A Jozef Jakobowicz was born about 1890 and lived in Galicia, Poland prior to Bremen departure for New York City in 1907. A Jozef Jakóbowicz was born in 1889 in Stanislawow, L'viv, Ukraine. A Joseph Jakobowicz was naturalized in New York in 1918 and a man by the same name (same person?) married in 1919 at St. Joseph, Indiana. A Josef Jakobowicz was born in 1912 in Kalisz, Poland and during World War II was imprisoned at the Neustadt camp, listed as a Holocaust survivor in the publication *Sharit Ha-Platah*, 1946.

Hasia Diner is a professor of American Jewish History (with research interest in American immigration history), and of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at New York University (NYU). In the year 2012, she gave a lecture in Las Cruces, New Mexico at the campus of New Mexico State University (NMSU). She shared the following information and much more. From 1820 to 1870 there were approximately 250,000 Jewish immigrants to America. From 1870 to the 1920s, *three million* Jewish immigrants arrived in America. About 75% of these immigrants were from 16 to 40 years old. Many emigrated to escape homeland discrimination, persecution, pogroms and sporadic violence. And they were attracted to the generally dynamic, growing U.S. economy - relatively free of discriminatory regulations/barriers/limitations.

Our American line of the family has always wondered why our immigrant ancestor Józef Jakóbowicz (Jackoboice) left Poland (at age 20 in 1844) for Germany and later to America. From extensive research, we may *now* know why he left and never returned. The following paragraph alone could explain his motivation - and confirm ethnicity.

In the book *Polish Roots*, author R. Chorzempa writes that the partitioning powers occupying Poland, especially Russia, persecuted Polish Jews. In Russia's "Pale of Settlement" there were 24 districts for Jews - including Kalisz in "Russian Poland." Russia decreed that military conscription of Jewish males aged 12 to 25 was scheduled to commence in 1844. To evade 25-year terms in the Czar's army - and its ethnic persecution and brutality - some young Polish Jews emigrated. It is interesting to note that Józef

Jakóbowicz was 20 years old in 1844 - when he left Russian Poland forever. If he evaded the draft, it is possible there was a long-term threat of dire (*grave*) consequences. He emigrated to Germany, where he may have faced military conscription too (he departed in 1852 to America). Historian Hasia Diner: "... Jewish male migrants from various European countries left for America to escape military service. As Jews had become emancipated, they also became liable for the draft. Some men leaving Wurttemberg in the 1850s, for example, listed 'fear of conscription' as their motive."

Jewish emigrants departed for other reasons too. In an August, 2004 article in the *Jewish Magazine*, J. Klinger writes that as early as 1813, Bavaria "established a Matrikel, or quota system, to force Jewish emigration. Severe restrictions were placed upon the Jews living within its borders to find work, marry, establish businesses, get an education etc. A Jew's life was made as difficult as possible. The alternatives were conversion or emigration... By the tens of thousands, German Jews emigrated... The flood of German Jews changed the American Jewish complexion from Sephardic to Ashkenazic..." There was a flood of Polish Jews too.

Hasia Diner concurs in her book, *A Time for Gathering: The Second Migration, 1820-1880*: "The retention, throughout much of the mid-continent, of restrictions on Jewish marriage through the enforcement of the Matrikel set in motion a process whereby young men, first, left their home towns to go to America to work and marry.... The inability to make a living, get married, and raise a family pushed tens of thousands of Jewish men and women out of Europe in the mid-nineteenth century. Their hunch that in America they could do all of these things pulled them over and led them to New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cincinnati, San Francisco, and indeed to every region of the expanding country." [*Józef Jakóbowicz (Joseph Jackoboice) first lived in New York City for 2.5 years, then settled in Michigan - where at age 32 he married a Roman Catholic woman.*] Diner adds "... to marry a non-Jew also meant becoming one.... To be sure, in the years 1820-80, individual Jews, primarily men, married across religious lines, although no real numbers are available.... In America, the non-Jewish spouse was usually a woman, since Jewish men did most, although not all, of the out-marrying."

Another motive for departure? The Roman Catholic Inquisition of western Europe and its influence spread afar - and to Poland in the form of Anti-Semitism. For example, in *The Kalish Book* [i.e., a history of *Kalisz*], a Dr. Gelber writes that in the 1400s "a convocation of the Catholic Church led to the imposition of anti-Jewish regulations, including the wearing of the Jewish badge." [*As the same regulation returned during the Holocaust of World War II, one might ponder the Reichskonkordat between the Vatican and Nazi Germany - maintained from 1933 through the end of the war in 1945.*] Author Alexander Beider writes that legal restrictions caused migrations: "In the early 1800s, dozens of towns and cities in Poland boasted of the ancient privilege called (in Latin) *De non tolerandis Judaeis*. This privilege allowed urban authorities not to tolerate the presence of Jews. This was the case for almost all towns that belonged to the Catholic clergy; it was illegal for Jews to live in those towns...." Across Europe some Jews emigrated, some converted, some changed their names... and some did all three.

Another reason for departure? An "exclusivist Polish nationalism" of the mid-1800s is described in Yehuda Bauer's book, *The Death of the Shtetl*. "Although external economic and political circumstances contributed substantially to the increasingly disastrous situation of Polish Jews, the major factor affecting them was probably the growth of an exclusivist Polish nationalism, which developed from about the middle of the nineteenth century [i.e., mid-1800s. *Józef Jakóbowicz (Joseph Jackoboice) left Kalisz, Poland in 1844.*] In [*the book*] *Poland's Threatening Other*, Joanna B. Michlic describes and analyzes the growth of this extreme form of nationalism, which was based on Catholic antisemitism but which developed the idea of Jews as the ultimate foreigners, the source of an unassimilable negative influence on Polish life, the reason for the suffering of the Polish people."

Author Hasia Diner writes, "In the non-German regions of Bohemia, Moravia, Galicia, Alsace, Slovakia, western Russia, and Poland – Suwalk as well as Posen – Gentile emigration fell far below the Jewish emigration rate. In most places, a larger proportion of the Jews than non-Jews left for America.... Most of the Jews who migrated to the United States from Prussia actually came from Posen [*a.k.a. Poznan, Polish ground in "Prussian Poland" near Kalisz in "Russian Poland"*], but historians and others have considered them as German as the Rhinelanders or the Bavarians. Yet the distinction in Posen between "real" Prussians and the *Hinterberliner*, the Jews of the Polish lands, meant a great deal legally, politically, and culturally.

"Tens of thousands of Jews also migrated from various parts of Poland, including those Polish regions gobbled up by Prussia, those lands that became part of Russia, and those annexed by Austria.... It is impossible to specify the number of Polish, Polish-Prussian, Polish-Austrian, Polish-Russian, Russian, and other eastern European Jewish immigrants to the United States before the 1880s. Only guesses can be hazarded. One source, for example, estimated that by 1880, and the beginning of the mass immigration from eastern Europe, some 15,000 eastern European Jews lived on New York's Lower East Side alone [*One of its districts was "Little Germany" where German-speaking Józef Jakóbowicz (later Joseph Jackoboice) may have worked in a factory or machine shop.*].... The Jewish Lower East Side in New York or the Maxwell Street area in Chicago existed as the Jewish counterparts to Little Italy... Sources from the European side also confirmed a significant Jewish emigration to America from Poland well before the 1880s. The Hebrew magazine *Ha-Melitz* in Odessa wrote in 1869 that, 'The number of families emigrating from here to America year by year is apparently very large. There is virtually no family in Poland which has no relatives in America.'"

Jakóbowicz and Jakubowicz Cousins in America and Europe: Jewish or otherwise

Józef/Joseph pronounced his original surname Jakóbowicz the way most journalists and historians misspelled it: "Jakubowicz" (the Polish "ó" is pronounced "oo", so it *was and is* often spelled "u"). Fortunately, these journalists and historians revealed surname pronunciation - and confirmed the correct spelling with the diacritical/accent mark "ó" rather than "o." The Polish letters "ó" and "u" are so *equal* that they are *interchangeable*. So we have a bit of a twist. Joseph and his Polish family chose to use "ó"... but could have used "u." Descending family lines could use either Jakóbowicz or Jakubowicz... in time choosing to maintain one spelling. Same family, different spellings.

In *A Dictionary of Jewish Surnames from the Kingdom of Poland* (1996), author Alexander Beider writes, "The most frequently used Jewish surnames fall into several distinct groups" (rabbinical surnames, artificial compounds, Polish patronymics). As examples of patronymics, he used the following surnames and commented on geographic usage (*his* parenthesis follows): "Abramowicz, Jakubowicz (Jakóbowicz), Lewkowicz and Wolkowicz. These names were common in Kalisz, Piotrków and Warsaw guberniyas..." [*a guberniya is a geopolitical region*].

"Jakóbowicz" and "Jakubowicz" are distinct but very closely related Polish surname variants. As the Polish "ó" *equals* the Polish "u," both variants are pronounced "Yah-koob-o-vitch." In personal correspondence with Alexander Beider, he said that the root names "Jakób and Jakub are equally Polish." He explained, "Several centuries ago, the male biblical name Jacob was mainly spelled Jakób, though Jakub was also used as its spelling variant. I think in the past, the form Jakób was preferred because it reflected the "o" present in the Latin Jacob. During the 18th-19th centuries both forms were used as interchangeable... Yet, gradually the tradition changed and in modern Poland the standard spelling is already Jakub." Similarly, he added that Jakóbowicz and Jakubowicz "are just variant spellings

of the same surname” and “were also interchangeable” (for example, one person could have used both spellings; siblings and parents too). Though Jakóbowicz is the original surname spelling, the modern Polish preference is the widespread spelling variant Jakubowicz (as of 2013, there were 2,501 individuals with this spelling in Poland). We could summarize by saying that in the Polish language, a Jakóbowicz can opt to spell his/her surname as Jakubowicz – and most families have chosen to permanently spell it Jakubowicz. There have been, and there are, many Jakóbowicz and Jakubowicz cousins.

Another twist? The given name “Jacob” (as Jakób and Jakub) became popular among non-Jewish Poles too. Because some *sons of men named Jacob* became known as “given name... son of Jacob,” they used the surnames Jakóbowicz and Jakubowicz. So, both Jewish and non-Jewish families have used these surnames. These were very common, widespread Jewish surnames prior to World War II (1939-1945) and the Nazis’ slaughter of Polish Jews during the Holocaust. Considering the magnitude of this genocide (three million victims - 90% of the Jewish population), there are probably more non-Jewish bearers of these surnames in Poland today. Unfortunately, as mentioned, the ratios are unknown (pre-Holocaust *and* post-Holocaust numbers).

As for Jakubowicz cousins? Among Jewish families, there have been family lines preferring the Jakóbowicz spelling and other families preferring the Jakubowicz spelling. If we are Jewish, we have a lot of Jewish cousins named Jakubowicz. Among non-Jewish families, there have been family lines preferring the Jakóbowicz spelling and other families preferring the Jakubowicz spelling. If we are not Jewish, we have a lot of non-Jewish cousins named Jakubowicz.

See “American Family Name Origins” and “Jakubowicz” at Answers.com. You will see the following from the *Oxford Dictionary of American Family Names*: “Jakubowicz – Polish and Jewish (from Poland): patronymic from the personal name Jakub, vernacular form of Latin Jacobus.”

The Jakubowicz surname is of the Junosza Clan of Poland, established in the year 1304. The earliest known Jakubowicz was a Polish war hero in the year 1410. Rafal Jakubowicz fought in the epic Battle of Grunwald for the Kingdom of Poland - victorious over Rome’s crusading, Prussian, Teutonic Knights. Rafal’s battle shield “coat of arms” featured an emblem of ancient Hebrew patriarchs and Jewish heritage – a ram.

Of note, in Krakow, Poland, there is an historic Jewish synagogue in the Kazimierz District - located at ul. [street] Kupa 16. It is commonly known as the “Izaak Synagogue” – but originally and formally known as the Izaak Jakubowicz Synagogue. It was financed and constructed circa 1638-44 by Izaak Jakubowicz, also known as “Izaak the Rich,” a banker for King Wladyslaw IV.

Polish national voting records for 1906 and 1912 indicate that the family name Jakubowicz was the fifth most common Jewish surname in Poland (estimated proportional frequency). Voting records indicate that in the Kalisz region, the surname Jakubowicz was the predominant, most common, “number one” Jewish surname.

For 19th, 20th and 21st century information and updates on the Jakubowicz family name, the genealogy company Ancestry.com offers a nicely designed, paperback “coffee table book.” It is appropriately entitled, *The Jakubowicz Name in History* (published in 2007... and available online from Amazon.com).

Across America today, there are likely over 500 immigrant descendants surnamed Jakubowicz (Jewish and otherwise; see website Answers.com, search Jakubowicz). According to Ancestry.com, they live in at least 196 Jakubowicz households. As most of these households are in New York and Florida, we could

deduce that many of these descendants are Jewish. There are a number of Jakubowicz descendants in Illinois, primarily in Chicago. Two names attracted attention: 1) Edward Jakubowicz: 5/27/1914 – 5/21/1993... died in Illinois; 2) Joseph Jakubowicz: 10/27/1922 – 3/11/2004... died in Illinois. And there are Jakubowicz residents in Michigan (mainly in the Detroit area, particularly Dearborn and Redford).

The website Ancestry.com shows that many *Jakóbowicz* and *Jakobowicz* immigrants came to America too. Research “results” (individual records) come from immigration records... federal census records... school and church records... birth, marriage and death records... and from phone books, family trees, city directories and other sources. In December of 2013, researching the surname *Jakóbowicz*, there were 2,494 “results” under “All results for *Jakóbowicz*.” As expected, most results show the spelling *Jakobowicz*. (Expecting some redundancy, I also viewed all of the results for the surname spelling variant *Jakobowicz*.) From these records it is virtually impossible to determine the exact number of *Jakóbowicz* and *Jakobowicz* immigrants and descendants. But one can deduce that there are hundreds of descendants in America today.

Alexander Beider states that the spelling “*Jakobowicz*” is “just a spelling variant of *Jakóbowicz* in which the scribe [*a writer, typist, computer keyboardist, or the individual surname bearer*] did not write the diacritical sign.” Some Poles who preferred the original spelling *Jakóbowicz* became victims of the typewriter and even the modern computer keyboard - to become known temporarily or permanently as a *Jakobowicz*. Most such machines do not provide a key for “ó” (on computers, try pressing and holding “Alt” and then on the numerical pad at right press numbers 1-6-2 to get “ó”). When *Jakóbowicz* is typed in capital letters as JAKOBOWICZ, it is typically impossible to add the diacritical/accent mark. Maybe out of frustration, some have dropped the diacritical/accent mark over the “ó” to permanently spell their surname as *Jakobowicz*. All of this makes it all the more special to discover an old record of someone with name spellings like *Jakób Jakóbowicz*, who died in 1903 at Sambor, L’viv, Ukraine.

The family name *Jakóbowicz* is a very, very old surname (estimated to be from the era 1000-1453). A researcher with the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Israel casually “dated the name” in reply to an e-mail inquiry about *Jakóbowicz* victims. On September 29, 2013, Mark Shraberman wrote “... in modern Polish, it is written “*Jakubowicz*” from “*Jakub*.” The version “*Jakóbowicz*” as you put it, seems to be a medieval archaism...” The dictionary definition of the word *archaism*: “the retention or imitation of the obsolete, especially in language or art.” The definition of the word *archaic*: “antiquated; no longer in ordinary use, though retained for special purposes.”

Robert Strybel has a “Polish-American surname analysis service” in Warsaw, Poland (e-mail: research60@gmail.com). He describes the old, root name *Jakób* as “obsolete” with “an impact on its surname offshoot.” Strybel writes that it is “no exaggeration to call the *Jakóbowicz* surname rare.” And he comments on pronunciation: “... the letters “u” and “ó” are pronounced exactly the same in Polish, so whether one writes *Jakób* or *Jakub* it is pronounced YA-koob. In German it is written without the Polish accent mark *Jakob* and pronounced YA-kob.” Others pronounce “YA” more softly as “Yah.”

“*Jakóbowicz*” is one of many family names in the Luk Clan of Poland, a clan formed in the 1500s. “Luk” means “bow” and a crossbow is featured in the Luk coat of arms (see *Wikipedia*).

The founder of our family, Józef *Jakóbowicz*, lived at a time (the 1800s) when many Poles known by the *old* family name *Jakóbowicz* were changing the surname spelling to *Jakubowicz* – and maintaining it permanently. As the “ó” is pronounced “oo” and spelled “u”... it was a rather inevitable transition that would grow in popularity into the future (again, there are over 2,500 “*Jakubowicz*” individuals in Poland today). But our ancestor Józef maintained the original Polish spelling of the root name *Jacob*. Naturally, it was the way his immediate family in Poland spelled the surname. And he might have realized that

someday the once common spelling Jakób would become a rare spelling. Indeed, today, Jakóbowicz is a rare spelling.

It is good to remember that whether one spells the surname as Jakóbowicz or Jakobowicz or Jakubowicz, one can consider people with the other spellings as family (close and distant relatives). Again, different family lines prefer and maintain the different spellings. This is the case for Jews with these surnames, and this is the case for non-Jews with these surnames. Because the surname meaning is very Jewish ("son of Jacob"), the always suspicious Nazis were always inclined to execute *anyone* named Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz or Jakubowicz. So, again, Jewish or otherwise, people with our family name were killed during the Holocaust.

William Hoffman's book, *Polish Surnames: Origins and Meanings* (Third Edition) reported only 39 Jakóbowicz residents in Poland as of 2012. Some could be Holocaust survivors, some could be survivor or victim descendants. Where are these individuals located? Polish-American surname specialist Robert Strybel in Warsaw reports that "the largest single cluster" (9) is in former East Prussia/now northeast Poland's Mazurian Lake District. There are another 6-7 in "Greater Warsaw"... two in the neighboring Plock area... two in the Lodz region... six in southeast Poland's Rzeszów area... three in eastern Poland's Biala Podlaska area along the Belarusian border... one in the Bialystok area... one in Katowice... and one in western Poland in the area of the towns Legnica and Zielona Góra.

More History, Heritage: Jakóbowicz Surname and Variants in Kalisz/Poland

For several centuries people in and around the town of Kalisz in west-central Poland were familiar with the Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz family names – until World War II and the Holocaust. A locally beloved Jakobowicz appears in one of several online articles published by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington, D.C. In the article entitled, "Jewish Community of Kalisz: Youth, Culture, Religion," the section on culture includes Rosa Jakobowicz:

"Kalisz had a flourishing Jewish cultural life. In the late 1920s and 1930s, two Yiddish weeklies kept the community abreast of local, national, and international news: the Agudah-leaning *Kalisher lebn* ("Kalisz Life") and the Zionist-leaning *Kalisher vokh* ("Kalisz Week").... A group of young people established a branch of YIVO, the Jewish Scientific Society, and conducted research on Jewish folklore and linguistics.... The writer Shimon Horonecki (Horonski) (1889-1939) lived in Kalisz for some years and wrote novels in which can be found descriptions of working class Jewish life in Kalisz.

"The leading figure in Jewish literary life in Kalisz was poet and author Rosa Jakobowicz (Jacobson). The daughter of a rabbi, she studied Hebrew and religious subjects in her youth. After moving to Kalisz as a newlywed, she published her poetry in various journals and periodicals, including a cycle of poems on biblical women, the first of its kind in Yiddish. A collection of her poetry was published in 1924, entitled *Mayne gezangen* ("My Songs"). Jakobowicz died in the Warsaw ghetto in 1942.

"The performing arts were also cultivated in Kalisz. Jews could enjoy performances of a Jewish orchestra, a brass band, and a theatrical troupe. Local Bund members were especially active in this arena, creating a cultural club, a drama club, a Working Women's Club, and the Comet Amateur Theater."

Seeking the abovementioned Rosa Jakobowicz amongst Holocaust victims' names, one finds others named *Roza*. According to Yad Vashem's database in Israel, a Roza/Roiza Jakobowicz "was born in Osiakow, Poland to Avraham and Beila. She was a housewife and single. Prior to WWII she lived in

Kalisz, Poland. During the war she was in Kalisz, Poland. Roza was murdered/perished in Kalisz, Ghetto at the age of 25. This information is based on a Page of Testimony submitted by her relative.”

The Yad Vashem, Ancestry.com and JewishGen websites contain numerous records of the surname variants Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz (in many categories). There are so many Jakóbowicz-related Holocaust records that it is impossible to display all of them here.

Searching the JewishGen website for Jakóbowicz references (“results”), one finds the “Family Finder” page. In October, 2013, this page listed 281 records (individuals with surname variants Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz). Under the category “The JewishGen Yizkor Book Necrology Database – Kalisz” for Kalisz region victims of the Holocaust, there are six Jakobowicz listings which follow: 1) Abram Mendel of the town of Turek; 2) Aron and family of Turek; 3) Beila and children of Turek; 4) Dora of Turek; 5) Jakobowicz “family” of Rychwał; 6) Jakobowicz “family” of Tuliszków. Many more named Jakóbowicz and Jakobowicz perished in the region, and across Poland, and across Europe (up to 555 or more are listed in the Yad Vashem website).

Where can we find some other Jakóbowicz and Jakobowicz individuals of the Kalisz region? The JewishGen website features a section called “JRI-Poland” (Jewish Records Indexing – Poland). For the Kalisz Gubernia [*region*], JRI lists 1,599 Jakóbowicz records (as of November 16, 2013). One can scroll through numerous JRI-Poland towns and cities... and to Kalisz and its Jewish vital records for *some recorded* Births (B; 1809-92), Marriages (M; 1809-92) and Deaths (D; 1809-83, 1885-92). Known vital records for Jakóbowicz and Jakobowicz individuals follow:

Jakóbowicz: Ester, M 1887... Leontyna, B 1888... Gryna, B 1891... Krajdel, B 1869... Szarne, B 1871... Szamsze, B 1871... Chae, B 1872... Abelle, B 1872... Jakób, B 1872... Frajdel, B 1874... Szamsie, D 1871... Fraide, D 1872... Rozalja, D 1872... Maer, D 1890... Gabriel, M 1871... Juda Lajb, M 1871... Mariem, M 1871... Josek, M 1873... Chane, M 1874... Laer, M 1874... Dwore, M 1881... Chindele, M 1892.

Jakobowicz: Johan, D 1815... Welda, D 1837... Jakób, M 1840 [*married Brayne Sztern in Kalisz*]... Marla, M 1840... Szmul, B 1847... Szlama, D 1859... Rachel Laje, B 1862... Hinde, B 1865... Icek, M 1876... Szmul, B 1877... Michalina, B 1877... Gabriel, B 1877... Henoch, B 1881.

One would think that there would be more people of these families in the town/city of Kalisz. But some Jewish parents chose not to record the births of their children – for fear of future discrimination, persecution, or conscription into the Russian military (which may have been the case for the parents of our ancestor Józef Jakóbowicz). In addition, many with these “archaic, medieval” surnames had changed the spelling to Jakubowicz. In the JRI-Poland database for the Kalisz *region* (as of April 18, 2015), there were “1,952 matches for that [*Jakubowicz*] search”... and “1,610 [*Jakubowicz*] records from Kalisz Gubernia [*region*].” These records include 91 Jakubowicz vital records dated from 1809 to 1892.

Joseph Jackoboice and his immediate Jakóbowicz family members lived *in or near* the old city of Kalisz. Joseph (Józef) had two brothers (Pawel and Franciszek), and a sister (Helena). None of these siblings appear in the above records (nor does Józef appear in 1824 records of the two Roman Catholic churches in the city of Kalisz). If actually born *in* Kalisz, Józef’s birth went unrecorded. The listings above are additional indicators that Józef could have been born outside of (near) Kalisz. As for his family, he had an unknown number of nephews, nieces. As well, an unknown number of Jakóbowicz uncles, great uncles and their descendants as cousins.

It is possible that some of the above-listed Kalisz residents were our close or distant relatives. Some of them could have perished in the Holocaust, along with their children and grandchildren. Again, today, there is no known Jakóbowicz or Jakobowicz living in Kalisz.

The following information, says Robert Strybel, "... is not to suggest that your line of the Jakóbowicz family was of noble birth, because only 10-12% of Old Polish society belonged to the szlachta (gentry), and most of the immigrants that flocked to America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries had been of good peasant stock. The fact remains that there indeed were members of the gentry amongst the bearers of the Jakóbowicz surname, entitled to stamp their documents and possessions with the Luk (archery bow) coat of arms."

Strybel continues, "To explain what all that means, most Polish coats of arms had clan-names all their own that usually differed from their bearers' surnames. That clan-name and its attendant heraldic emblem indicated *the clan someone held membership in* through patrilineal inheritance (from the father's line), ennoblement, adoption or marriage. Many variously surnamed and mostly unrelated individuals shared the same clan-name. For instance more than 70 noble families from Assanowicz to Zabolocki were entitled to use the Luk heraldic device. In the 19th century some nobles began including their clan-name in the signatures, so a Stanislaw Jakóbowicz of the Noble Clan of Luk could have signed himself: *Stanislaw Luk-Jakóbowicz.*"

Author's related notes.... We have learned that most Polish peasants were illiterate. In contrast, the gentry/nobles of Poland were educated, literate and fluent in other languages. Some became engineers and businessmen. So I shall suggest that Józef Jakóbowicz (Joseph Jackoboice) could have belonged to the szlachta (gentry/nobility). We do know of a 1400s knight named Rafal Jakubowicz who fought (and was severely wounded) in the Battle of Grunwald, in the year 1410. Polish knights were members of the nobility, and their status transferred to family members and descendants. And we do know, from an 1881 history book and the 1880-81 GR city directory, that Joseph was a lodge member of the *Knights of Honor*.

Our immigrant ancestor made a point to use his original surname spelling Jakóbowicz, which was mistyped and misrecorded by others as Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz. The difference in spelling was significant for Józef. Maybe he considered it *ethnically appropriate* to continue using the *old*, original Polish surname root Jakób - from the old Latin name Jacob(us) and very old Hebrew name Yaakov.

Józef Jakóbowicz - Additional Indications of Jewish Heritage

From the 1200s to World War II, many Jews in Poland owned and/or worked in small workshops in a variety of trades – from tailoring to metalworking. So, naturally, for Jewish immigrants, "Self-employment was *the* goal, the model, and the defining characteristic of American Jewish economic behavior," notes historian Hasia Diner. Jewish author Josef Jakubowicz, in his book *Auschwitz is also a City*, writes that many pre-Holocaust Polish Jews were educated, trained engineers [*some built engines*] and businessmen. Of note, educated businessman and trained metalworker Józef Jakóbowicz built steam engines. After settling in Grand Rapids (by 1855) he opened his own machine shop just five years later (making machinery). He was self-employed (and employing others) for the next 35 years.

Hasia Diner adds, "... A good secular education required mastery of German, which in turn was essential for entry into the higher echelons of business and the professions.... In central Europe, German had been considered the language of refinement and cultural sophistication.... Even in the towns and cities of eastern Europe, where German was not the native language, German spoken without a Jewish

accent marked a woman or man as someone who traveled with ease in the two worlds.” It seems we are reading of Józef Jakóbowicz (a.k.a. Joseph Jackoboice).

Hasia Diner’s book, *A Time for Gathering*, presents Jewish life in the cultures of Europe and America from 1820 to 1880. This era covered most of the lifetime of Joseph Jackoboice (1824-1899). This is one of five books in “A Series Sponsored by the American Jewish Historical Society” entitled “The Jewish People in America.”

In the book’s Introduction we learn, “The familiar figure of the mid-nineteenth-century American Jew portrayed a successful man of German origin who, devoted to German language and culture, participated fully in German American life. His connection to Judaism and the Jewish people eroded dramatically as he became integrated into the staid comfort of Victorian America.... The fact is that “Germans” made up perhaps a slim majority of the Jewish immigrants of this period. They arrived together with other Jews from Poland, Bohemia, Moravia, Galicia, Alsace, and even parts of Russia and Lithuania.... In 1852, Polish Jews formed a congregation in Chicago.

“Dozens of community histories and voluminous personal narratives of this era testified further to the numerical significance and cultural distinctiveness of the Polish Jews in America during this apogee of ‘the German era....’ Jewish German speakers could have been very easily confused with ‘Germans.’ Since in the mid-nineteenth century Jews from Slovakia or Bohemia would have known some German, they would appear to others as Germans rather than Slovaks or Czechs.... Additionally, many American Jews who themselves – or their parents - had hailed from the lands of the east described themselves as ‘Germans,’ an identity thought to be prestigious, and ignored their Polish or other roots.”

Author Diner adds, “The fact that individual [*Jewish*] men and women chose to migrate to Nebraska or Oregon or Michigan, far from the safety net of religious services, proved that they had no real concern for Jewish life. Had they been truly committed to living as Jews and observant of tradition, they would never have picked such places, bereft as they were of the synagogue, circumciser, *shokhet* (kosher slaughterer), and *mikvah* (ritual bath). Some of these assertions are indisputable. The American political structure *did* make the nature of religious behavior a matter of personal choice rather than communal control. That freedom allowed individuals to decide how, if at all, they expressed their Judaism.... Jewish immigrants from nineteenth-century central and eastern Europe were not the most pious or most Judaically learned of their peers. Certainly, the mere act of migration announced their willingness to break with the past.”

Observing the life of Polish-American “Joseph Jackoboice,” we have seen a number of factors indicating Jewish ethnicity. And one sees that Joseph maintained his original surname root “Jacob” through decades of variant spellings and pronunciations. We know that he was born with the Jewish family name Jakóbowicz, and by choice used the Germanic/Slavic, Jewish surname Jakobowics. A church priest’s translation at the time of marriage in 1858 assigned the established, Jewish family name Jacobowicz. Joseph modified these three European surnames to his two new “German/Polish/American” surnames with the root Jacob: Jacoboice and Jackoboice.

In the book *Jewish Family Names & Their Origins* (1992), authors H.W. & E.H. Guggenheimer write, “Jewish family names are ‘chronicles written in code,’ as one historian put it, and reflect the history of the Jewish people, from the world of the Biblical patriarchs through the many countries and languages of the Diaspora [*dispersion*], to the newly Hebraized setting of present-day Israel.”

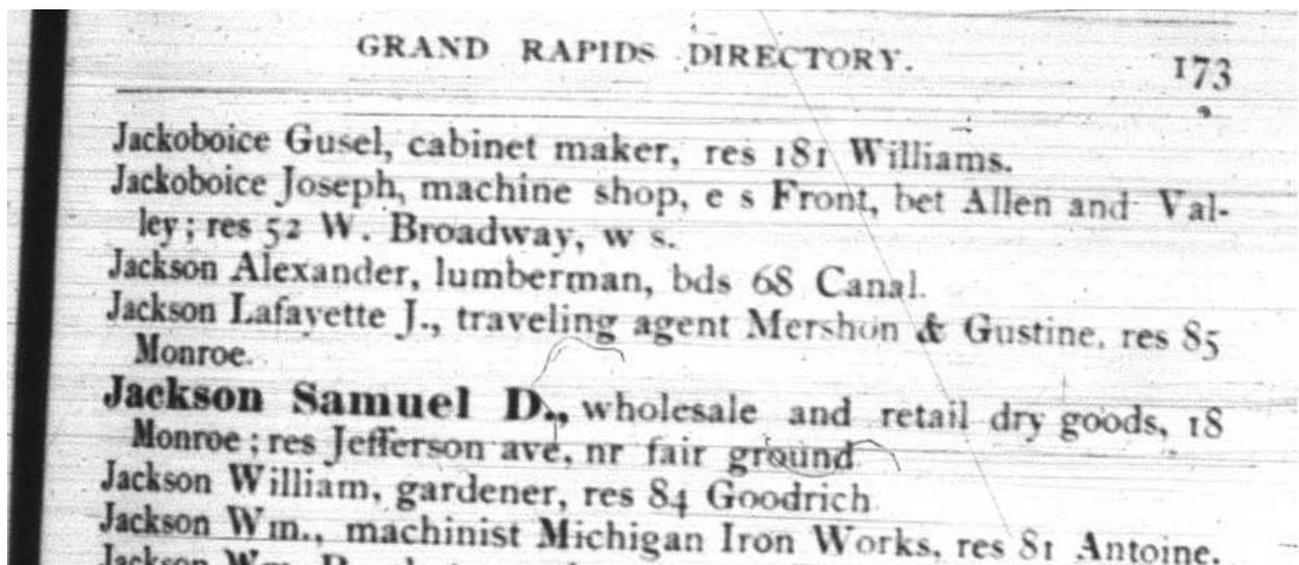
More food for thought? If you ever travel to our ancestral homeland, visit an impressive museum in Warsaw that opened in the year 2013: the Polin [*Poland*] Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

Discovery of a previously unknown "Jackoboice"

Immigrants to America often wrote and encouraged friends and relatives in the Old Country to visit or settle too. One apparent visitor was a temporary resident who persuasively confirms the ethnicity of Józef Jakóbowicz (Joseph Jackoboice). A previously unknown "Jackoboice" has been discovered in the 1875-76 Grand Rapids [City] Directory, listed next to Joseph Jackoboice on page 173. This one-time listing reads: "Jackoboice, Gusel, cabinet maker, res 181 Williams." This is an astonishing discovery for two reasons. First, our family's old vital records in Grand Rapids (Birth, Marriage and Death records) do not show anyone with the name Gusel. Second, we have always had the impression that we are the only Jackoboice family on earth (a unique surname of one family). So who was this Gusel Jackoboice? He lived in town for a year or so. He could have been one of Joseph's *known* cousins from Poland. Or he could have been an *unknown* cousin who came and learned of another Jakóbowicz in town. Gusel evidently borrowed Joseph's new "American" surname Jackoboice to express the family connection.

The surname Jakóbowicz has a Polish root and a Polish suffix. This family name translates as "son of Jacob." The name Gusel has a Jewish ring to it. A Polish Jew? Curious, in 2013 I posted the following question to the online "chat room" of the Jewish genealogy website JewishGen: "*Is the first/given name Gusel a Polish Jewish name?*" Response #1 came from someone using Hebrew script for his name, and he wrote, "Gusel. Sure." Response #2 came from a man named Jan in Poland: "Not *Polish* for sure. We have similar. Gustaw. It [*Guse*] is rather Jewish." Response #3 came from Irwin G. in the state of New York: "Gusel is a variant pronunciation for Kusel = Yekusiel." Googling the name Kusel, the first page features the title, "Kusel – Kusel meaning – Jewish Genealogy." Googling the name Yekusiel, one finds the following *Wikipedia* profiles: 1) "Yekusiel Yehudah Halberstam (1905-1994) was an Orthodox rabbi and the founding rebbe of the Sanz-Klausenberg Hasidic dynasty...." and 2) "Rabbi Yekusiel Yehudah Teitelbaum (1808-1883)... was a Hasidic Rebbe in Austria-Hungary." In summary, the name Gusel is a variant pronunciation for the Jewish name Kusel (Yekusiel) – three Jewish names for this Jackoboice.

This may be all we ever learn of the Jewish cabinet maker Gusel Jackoboice, a.k.a. Kusel (Yekusiel) Jackoboice. Maybe he returned to Poland. Or maybe someday we will find an 1800s-vintage kitchen cabinet marked with this business slogan: *Quality Cabinetry Since 1875 – by Jackoboice*



Chronological Development of our Family Name - from Jakóbowicz to Jackoboice

Jakóbowicz is the way our Polish immigrant ancestor spelled our original family name (pronounced "Yah-koob-**o**-vitch"). He was born 3/16/1824 *in or near* Kalisz, Poland. **Józef** gave these exact spellings of his name and surname (with extra effort to add Polish diacritical/accent marks) with his 1877 and 1881 donations towards construction of the first *Polish* church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Józef died at age 74 on 2/8/1899 in Grand Rapids.

His name was also recorded as "Joseph Jakobowicz" (in an 1876 pew rental ledger). He signed an 1864, Polish language letter to the "New York Polish Committee" (later typed) as "Jos. Jakobowicz." With diacritical mark, Jakóbowicz is pronounced "Jakubowicz" - as journalists and later historians misspelled the surname (but confirmed the correct spelling with "ó" rather than "o"). Very common Jewish surnames before World War II and the Holocaust, non-Jewish Poles have used these Jakóbowicz, Jakobowicz and Jakubowicz surname variants too (pre-Holocaust and post-Holocaust ratios and numbers unknown).

Jakobowics is the way Joseph signed his surname when amongst Germans (pronounced "Yah-kob-o-viks"). A Jewish historian writes that some "enlightened" (secular, westernized) Polish Jews of the era considered German as their cultural language and developed Germanic/Polish surnames. When Joseph moved from Poland to Germany (there 1844-1852), he could have chosen one of three root spellings to replace the original Polish root "Jakób": the German alternate spellings "Jakob" or "Jackob", or the Latin "Jacob(us)". Obviously, "Jakob" was most similar. It was culturally advantageous to use the Germanic spelling "Jakobowics" in Grand Rapids too (there were many Germans - and very few Poles from 1854 to 1870). When Joseph married a German-speaking Roman Catholic at German-speaking St. Mary's Church in a German-speaking district of Grand Rapids in 1858, he signed the marriage record with his Germanic/Slavic spelling "Jakobowics." In German the letter "s" can be a possessive suffix ending used to create patronymic (name-based) surnames. Of note, the Internet shows the surname "Jakobowics" as an established Jewish family name in Hungary and Czechoslovakia (used by a Chief Rabbi and others).

Jackobowics is the way Joseph's Prussian, German-speaking, immigrant bride, Frances Rasch, signed their entry in the church marriage record book. Below Joseph's fresh ink signature, she added a "c" to his surname spelling (likely her natural preference when "thinking Jacob" - in German also spelled Jackob). Interestingly, in the old city of Munich, Germany there is a Jewish synagogue at Jackobsplatz Square (translated "Jacob's place Square"). "Jackobowics" is also an established Jewish surname in Europe.

Jacobowicz is the way Joseph's Polish surname was officially translated on the 1858 marriage record by priest Mathias Marco (who officiated from 1857 to 1861). This linguist wrote the record in Latin, in a German-speaking parish, in an English-speaking country. Working from the Polish "Jakóbowicz," he translated the root to Latin as sometimes seen in Poland and Germany (and clearly understandable in English): "Jacobowicz." This is an established Jewish surname in Europe too. The Polish suffix "owicz" means "son of," forming a patronymic surname meaning "son of Jacob." Writing this marriage record near the end of Rome's long, anti-Semitic, Inquisition era (1184-1860), this priest appeared keen to emphasize Joseph's ethnicity by abbreviating his bride's new surname as "Jacob." Joseph rejected the newly official and very Jewish family name "Jacobowicz" (with its historical, very common suffix of Polish Jews) by signing the record with his more obscure Germanic/Slavic variant *Jakobowics*.

Jacoboice is the way Joseph soon modified the family name, limited to the only English option for the Polish root Jakób and the German root Jakob: "Jacob." Jacoboice was the spelling used in most church records from the 1860s to 1906, including eight of nine extant, infant baptismal records... was the spelling in city directories' (none 1860-64) listings for 1865-66, 1868-69 and 1872... was the spelling in City Tax

Rolls of 1867 and 1872... and was the spelling in the 1870 Federal Census ("Jacobvia," *sic*). The IRS spelled the surname as "Jacoboise" in 1865-66.

Related notes: In the Federal Census of 1860, the family's surname was handwritten as "Jacobies" - an example of a census taker's stereotypical aural error and hurried misspelling. This "ies" was similar to the misspelling "Jackaboies" as seen in the 1859 "Williams Grand Rapids Directory/City Guide" (regarding this misspelled root, Joseph pronounced Jacob in a semi-European manner as the more obscure "Jakob" - which was heard and often misspelled as either Jakob, Jacab, Jackab or Jackob). The suffix misspellings show that Joseph modified 1858's "Jacob-o-wicz" to "Jacob-o-ice" by 1859. Basic details follow. Pronounced in English, "owicz" and "owics" can be spelled "o-witz" or as "o-wice" (and dropping the silent "w", "o-ice"). Joseph's European pronunciation of "o-ice" sounded like "o-iss" and "o-eese" to others who spelled it -oiss, -oies, -ies, -oise and -oice (in various records from 1859 to 1870). A shift to single syllable pronunciation as "oyce" and added "k" led to "Jakob-oice" and the easier "Jacko-boice." (Additional census information: Machinist Joseph was noted as from "Russian Poland," and his wife Frances from "Prussia." In the column "Married within the year," there was *no* checkmark (negating 1860 as the year of marriage). Evidence of the year of their wedding? Their titled 1858 marriage record shows Frances' maiden name Rasch, and her own signature *Jackobowics*.)

Jackoboice was first seen as a *misspelling* of Jacoboise in the 1864 baptismal record of Edward Joseph Jackoboice. This misspelling next appeared in the 1867-68 city directory. It appeared again in the 1873-74 city directory, though Joseph Jacoboise could have inserted the "k" to obscure the Jewish-looking root "Jacob." Joseph could have sensed or experienced the growing anti-Semitism of the era - and changed his name to deflect discrimination against his family and business. In fact, the public blamed Jewish industrialists and financiers for the nationwide, economic "Panic of 1873." Whether "Jackoboice" was another misspelling or Joseph's preferred spelling in 1873, he added the letter "k" *permanently* - as seen in all city directories through 1900. As for the Federal Census, "Jackoboice" first appeared in 1880.

The Beginning and the End of a Name: from Jakób-owicz to Jacko-boice

Family names often change when a surname bearer moves to a new country, culture and language. Our original and actual family name, Jakóbowicz, changed in *various ways*. Naturally, one wonders why.

Our original Polish surname root Jakób is the oldest Polish spelling of the Hebrew name "Yaakov" and its Latin translation "Jacob(us)." Simply seeing the root name *Jacob* in all of our surname variants (Polish *Jakób*, German *Jakob*, Latin *Jacob(us)* and German *Jackob*), one could conclude that we have Jewish heritage (in the biblical family line of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob). In the book, *Jewish Family Names and Their Origins* (Katv, 1992), one learns that "Biblical male proper names..." are "a major source of Jewish family names." Notably, Joseph J. always maintained the root "Jacob" in our surname variants.

And the suffix? Author and surname specialist Alexander Beider states that in Polish records of the 16th through the 18th centuries, the majority of Polish-Jewish patronymics (name-based surnames) ended in the suffix "owicz". According to author Rosemary Chorzempa, the surname endings -icz, -wicz and -owicz are Belarussian (of Belarus) or Ukrainian (of Ukraine) in origin - "first used in eastern Poland." This could mean that we could trace our patrilineal heritage as far back as the old region of Volhynia (covered all three modern borders). Through the centuries Volhynia suffered episodes of violence - particularly when Cossacks and Nazis attacked and invaded hundreds of Jewish towns and villages and slaughtered countless Jews. Many may have been named Jakóbowicz (i.e., "son of Jacob").

We have seen that in the course of our surname development, the first four spellings were established Jewish surnames in Europe. Between the years 1858 and 1873, when our immigrant ancestor changed his European surname variants from Jakóbowicz, Jakobowics, Jackobowics and Jacobowicz to “Jacoboice” and “Jackoboice,” he was starting a new American family line. By making significant modifications to his Jewish-looking, Jewish-sounding surnames, it appears he wanted to ensure that his children and descendants wouldn’t be viewed as Jews.

Over time, immigrant Józef Jakóbowicz modified his original, typically Jewish surname root and suffix by spelling *and* pronunciation. In *A Dictionary of Jewish Names and their History*, author Benzion Kaganoff writes that Jewish immigrants changed their surnames for various reasons, including: “a desire to hide one’s ethnic and religious background (... to overcome anti-Semitism... discrimination)”... and “a desire to eliminate a difficult name....” Considering the transformation from “Jakób-owicz” to *yet another* difficult name, “Jacko-boice,” it appears that Joseph instead wanted to hide his background (prevent visual and aural linkage to Jewish ethnicity).

Kaganoff writes that many “enlightened” (secularized and westernized) Polish Jews considered German their cultural language, so they often used a German or blended German-Polish spelling for their new “American” surname. Note this classic example: “Jacob-oice.” A genealogy website affirms that “Jews often combined elements of languages, such as... German or Slavic roots with Yiddish or Slavic endings.” Kaganoff adds that among German-speaking Jews who settled in America, new surnames usually contained “an echo of the original surname.”

Upon leaving Poland, German-speaking Józef Jakóbowicz lived amongst Germans for the rest of his life - in Germany and in America. The 20 year-old machinist first moved to Germany, in 1844. He lived and worked there for eight years - which was long enough to assimilate and self-identify as “a German.” Józef fit the description of a typical “enlightened” (secularized and westernized) Polish Jew who enjoyed German culture, considered German his cultural language, and developed a Germanic/Polish surname.

First let’s look at his first, given name. We find the spelling Józef in church records... and in a death announcement of February 10, 1899 (written by the Polish National Aid Society of Grand Rapids).

In Poland the given names Józef (Polish) and Josef (European) are both used by Poles and by Polish Jews. Genealogist K. Mazurek states, “Polish first names among [*used by*] Jews can be found fairly often, usually in non-Orthodox families” (from article “Jewish Genealogy, oy vay!” in the *Polish Eaglet* magazine of the Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan; Spring issue, 2015).

The name Józef is pronounced “You-zef.” When Józef moved to Germany, this name sounded *extremely* Jewish. Why? The pronunciation “you” is common to the two German words for Jew: *Ju* (“You”) is short for *Jude* (“You-dah”). To mitigate discrimination, Józef could easily change his name from “You-zef” to the German translation Joseph.

Emigrant Józef Jakóbowicz (Polish pronunciation “You-zef Yah-koob-**o**-vitch”) used a German root for a new surname spelling. It was appropriate while living in Germany. It was socially and professionally advantageous. To give his surname a Germanic appearance, he dropped the Polish diacritical mark (“ó”)... and replaced the Polish “z” with the German possessive “s.” Thus “Jakóbowicz” became “Jakobowics”. But any German seeing the suffix “owics” will say it is not Germanic. It is Slavic in nature (Eastern European). It is found in records of Czechoslovakia and Hungary (in the surname Jakobowics). Joseph was likely pleased to know that the *Hungarian* “cs” is pronounced “ch” as in his Polish suffix “**o**-vitch” (though in Germany “owics” was/is pronounced “o-viks”). Polish emigrant Joseph surely preferred

having a Slavic/Hungarian suffix while living in Germany amongst Germans. Why? For over 400 years, Germans resented the Poles for Poland's victory over Prussia's crusading, Roman Catholic, Teutonic Knights at the Battle of Grunwald (in 1410). Germans would have looked more kindly upon an *apparent* "descendant" of the Habsburg Empire... upon someone named Joseph "Yah-kob-o-viks."

At age 28 in 1852, "Joseph Jakobowics" and some friends voyaged the Atlantic Ocean to America. Old friends in Germany may have provided contacts for lodging and work (approximately one million Germans immigrated through New York in the 1850s). Joseph lived in New York City for 2.5 years, possibly working in a German factory or machine shop in "Little Germany" on the Lower East Side.

In multi-cultural New York City, Joseph could have reverted to his original Polish name Józef. But in English the name Józef would be spelled and pronounced "Juzef." To Americans this *sounds* like "Jew-zef." And to German immigrant neighbors, "Juzef" would *look* like "Jew-zef." Conveniently, his name translated the same way in German and English. So not surprisingly, we know him as Joseph.

He then became the first Polish immigrant *to settle in the city* of Grand Rapids, Michigan by 1855. He settled amongst Germans in a German-speaking district. He attended a German-speaking church (built in 1857)... he married German-speaking, Prussian immigrant Frances Rasch (in 1858)... he moved his workshop to "Germantown" in downtown Grand Rapids (in 1862)... he joined a German-speaking lodge (in 1870)... and he eventually acquired the old German-English Schoolhouse for his West Side Iron Works (in 1880). He had German-speaking friends at Immanuel Lutheran Church (built 1857, rebuilt 1890), where he gifted a "golden candlestick." The local, German, Rasch family's genealogy website states, "Frances was part owner of 'The Rasch House,' an early Grand Rapids hostelry [*replaced by the Rasch Hotel*]. The hotel was located in an area described as Germantown because of the Germans dominating the scene."

Research reveals that German-speaking immigrants Józef Jakóbowicz and Frances Josephine Rasch likely noted they had something Germanic in common: the very same German/Silesian dialect. *The Kalish Book* states that Joseph's "hometown" of Kalisz, as early as the 13th century, was home to "Poles, Jews and *Germans from Silesia*." Frances was born in the region of "Silesia, Prussia" (November 26, 1833). Author Josef Jakubowicz, in his book *Auschwitz is also a City*, describes Silesians as being of German descent. "They spoke, not Polish, but a Silesian dialect [*of the German language*]." In addition, Jakubowicz stated that the non-Jewish Silesians "... were not usually anti-Semites... They were perfectly friendly towards their Jewish neighbors."

When Roman Catholic immigrant Frances Rasch married immigrant Józef Jakóbowicz in 1858, the officiating Catholic priest exposed Joseph's European surname root for all to see. In writing the marriage record, he aptly translated the Polish "Jakób" and the German "Jakob" to Latin and English: Jacob. He even referred to the new bride with the abbreviated surname notation "Jacob." Why? Perhaps he was perturbed, as a priest was known to be, that a Catholic woman was marrying a Jewish man - and thus emphasized his ethnicity and her decision. The priest added the original, common Polish/Jewish suffix for his preferred, "official," new surname variant "Jacobowicz" (the Latin root and Polish suffix seen in Poland and Germany as a common Jewish surname meaning "son of Jacob").

Immigrant Joseph "Jacobowicz" could have accepted this official translation for a new, permanent English/Polish/Jewish family name. But he rejected it. He may have been weary of discrimination and persecution and wished to prevent it in the future - for his new family and generations of descendants. This would explain why he signed the marriage record with his more obscure, Germanic/Slavic surname variant "Jakobowics."

There is actual "signature evidence" that Joseph's bride Frances Rasch was first to write the alternate German root spelling "Jackob" into the family name (onto a page of the marriage record book, in 1858). Though Joseph had just penned his surname as *Jakobowics*, she was likely nervous and spelled the name as a German-speaker could when "thinking Jacob." She signed the marriage book entry as *Jackobowics* (a one-time, short-lived surname spelling variant). As this root spelling eventually became permanent, we can see clearly that a Prussian and the German language influenced development of our family name.

Observing this marriage, it is pertinent and appropriate to mention norms of two religious cultures in the mid-1800s. A Jewish man or woman marrying a non-Jew then "ceased being Jewish." In other words, he or she was rejected and ejected by those of his, her religion and culture... but ethnically, obviously, remained a Jew. Such an outsider marrying a Roman Catholic also "married the church," i.e., converted to Roman Catholicism and raised one's children in its doctrines, rituals and practices. As for "Joseph and Frances Jacobowicz," we know for certain that from the time of their marriage forward... several generations of the family have been raised under Roman Catholicism. Ingrained from childhood, it is typically passed along to one's children and their children.

(This writer was raised under Roman Catholicism for 18 years. After college graduation he worked as a broadcast journalist. With growing interest in the Bible and in history, he began to question Rome's violent Crusades and its other bloody massacres. And he questioned the sadistic, murderous Inquisition against Jews, Christians and Jewish Christians worldwide. Then, comparing biblical teachings against Rome's teachings, this Jackoboice fully understood the *protest* of millions of formerly Catholic *protestants*. So he left Roman Catholicism too, at age 28, in 1987 becoming the first of the family to do so. Naturally, those who become biblically Christian *love* their Jewish savior, the Jewish people, and the God of Israel.)

The first three generations of the family lived in the German cultural atmosphere of downtown Grand Rapids in the old days (mid 1800s to early 1900s). Joseph and Frances' son Edward Joseph and his wife spoke fluent German too, and their children uttered a little German from time to time in their later years. This led to some confusion regarding our patrilineal heritage - as we actually have Polish roots.

Author William F. Hoffman writes, "Once a Pole reached America he often found it expedient to let his name be spelled the way it sounded according to English phonetic values." Józef Jakóbowicz learned, by the time of his wedding, that the *only* English option for his surname root Jakób/Jakob was *Jacob*. By 1859 he modified his surname from the "official" Jacobowicz to Jacoboice. Interestingly, he obscured the root with the semi-European pronunciation "Jah-kob". For the suffix he used English phonetic values for spelling "owicz" as o-(w)ice. But he used European pronunciation for "o-ice" (o-iss/o-eese), eventually shifting to the single syllable, English pronunciation (oyce). The following, vertical listing of surname variants helps one to easily see chronological development of the family name:

SURNAME DEVELOPMENT by ROOT and SUFFIX

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Jakób-o-wicz | Joseph's original Polish surname, suffix "owicz" meaning "son of" and the root "Jacob" |
| Jakob-o-wics | 1844 Germanic/Slavic spelling: replaced Polish diacritical "ó" and "z" (possessive "s") |
| Jackob-o-wics | Bride Frances' signature on marriage record, 1858 (Joseph signed <i>Jakobowics</i>) |
| Jacob-o-wicz | Also on the marriage record - the priest's Latin/English/Polish/Jewish version |
| Jacob-o-ice | By 1859 Joseph phonetically modified suffix [o-(w)ice], but maintained the root Jacob |
| Jackob-o-ice | In 1873 Joseph added permanent "k", possibly to deflect "Panic of 1873" discrimination |
| Jackob-o-ice | 1870-73+ shift to single syllable -o-ice ("oyce")... and easier pronunciation Jacko-boice |

All considered, Joseph knew local German speakers would consider his surname root modifications to be Germanic: "Jacoboice" (used 1859-1872) and "Jackoboice" (from 1873 forward). More details....

After his 1858 wedding, Joseph "Jacobowicz" changed his historically common Jewish suffix a *second time* (by, or in, 1859). This time he completely dismantled it. The Polish "owicz" is pronounced "o-vitch" and the modified, Slavic "owics" as "o-viks." But in English, "owicz" and "owics" are pronounced the same way and can be spelled "owice" (inspiring memories of home, as many town names in Poland end in the suffix "owice" like Katowice, Prochowice, Wadowice, Jackowice, etc.). Our family name could have become Jacobowice and then Jackowice. But in English, the suffix variants "owicz," "owics" and "owice" sound and look equally "Jewish." It appears that Joseph wanted to sever aural and visual linkage to Jewish heritage. He dropped the typically Jewish "w", somewhat silent in the English "o-wice," for "o-ice." The typically Jewish "z" had become the silent English "e" in Jacob-o-ice. This new suffix "o-ice" was Polish in nature, as in town names Barwice, Gliwice, Gorlice, Losice, Ziebice, etc.

Joseph could have easily translated the suffix "owicz" meaning "son of" into the surname Jacobson ("Jacob's son"), as did many Jewish immigrants. But he chose to render "owicz" meaningless as "oice."

Joseph effectively altered the suffix *spelling*, but the English pronunciation of "o-ice" still *sounded* like the "Jewish-sounding" "o-wice." So, notably, just as he used a semi-European pronunciation for the surname root Jacob ("Jah-kob," which others spelled Jakob, Jacab, Jackab, Jackob), he used a European pronunciation for the suffix "o-ice." It sounded like "o-iss" and more like "o-eese," apparently spoken so quickly at times that one couldn't hear the "o-" (heard as "eese" and spelled "ies"). (Note that a *German* language university professor, at New Mexico State University in 2014, pronounced Jacoboice as "Yah-kob-o-eese."). In Grand Rapids from 1859 to 1870, government workers, city directory workers and others tried to spell "o-ice" for records and wrote -oiss, -oies, -ies, -oise and -oice. A shift from "o-ice" to the single syllable "oice" (pronounced "oyce") achieved a divergent and final modification of the suffix. It finally silenced any trace of the historically common Jewish suffix "owicz."

This syllabic shift *may* have occurred between 1870-72, from Jacob-o-ice ("Jah-kob-o-eese") to Jacob-oice ("Jah-kob-oyce") or the easier Jaco-boice ("Jah-ko-boyce"). Or it occurred in 1873, from Jackob-o-ice (Jackob-o-eese) to Jackob-oice ("Jackob-oyce") or the easier Jacko-boice ("Jacko-boyce").

How did Joseph's new surname "Jacoboice" become "Jackoboice"?

As we have seen, in Germany the Latin given name Jacob is also spelled with German variants Jakob and Jackob. These three spellings become roots for patronymic surnames. Again, Joseph's German-speaking bride was first to write the German variant "Jackob" into the family name (*Jackobowics*). Putting purely German roots aside (Jakob and Jackob), Joseph maintained the newly official Latin/English root of Jacob-o-wicz. But he modified the suffix through "Jacob-o-(w)ice" to Jacob-o-ice. Again, records from 1859 to 1870 show that when others heard Joseph's semi-European pronunciation of the root Jacob, they spelled "Jah-kob" as Jakob, Jacab, Jackab and Jackob. So misspellings of "Jacoboice" appeared in various recordings. The most striking misspelling, "Jackoboice," first appeared in the year 1864 (on one of nine extant baptismal records, as the spelling error of a Belgian priest at St. Andrew's who was known for misspellings). The misspelling "Jackoboice" appeared a second time in 1867 - in the Grand Rapids city directory for 1867-68 (while spelled Jacoboice in 1867 and later in 1872 City Tax Rolls). *Jacoboice* remained the correct spelling in the 1868-69 and 1872 city directories... and in church records, etc.

Eventually problematical, the Jewish/Latin given name "Jacob" was the visible root in the surname "Jacoboice." Anti-Semitism grew nationwide through the 1860s, in part due to envy of Jewish success

and upward mobility. People probably asked Joseph about his unusual pronunciation of his surname root Jacob as "Jah-kob" - and about his ethnicity. In 1873 the public blamed Jewish industrialists and financiers for the nationwide, economic crash called "the Panic of 1873" - including protests, strikes and violence. As of that year, Joseph Jacoboice became and remained Joseph Jackoiboice (in 1873-74 city directory and following years). Most English speakers do not see "Jacob" in "Jackob." Conveniently, this was a German, alternate spelling of Jacob. So Joseph was able to maintain his "roots." And "Jackob" contained the nostalgic "k" of the early, longtime surname spellings Jakobowics and Jakóbowicz.

Joseph could have continued using his semi-European pronunciation "Jah-kob" for the new root Jackob. But with the new "k" he gained visual obscurity and a new, English, aural obscurity. English pronunciation of the root "Jackob" would entail English pronunciation of the suffix "oice." And English pronunciation could provide *additional* obscurity. Joseph began pronouncing his new surname "Jackob-oice" as the easier "Jacko-boice" (Jacko-boyce). Note the final, split root - and its additional obscurity.

One sees the permanent spelling Jackoiboice in all city directories from 1873 through 1900. And it was the official spelling in the Federal Census of 1880.

The final surname Jacko-boice ("American" by pronunciation) is actually German and slightly Polish in nature. With its modified suffix ("owicz" to "oice"), it is only remotely Jewish in appearance. It appears that master craftsman Józef "Jackoboice" wanted it that way, as did many Jewish immigrants.

For six generations, our unique family name has remained the same. We have pronounced it with a split root as "Jacko-boice" rather than "Jackob-oice" or "Jackob-o-ice." This prevents recognition of the obscured, actual, German root "Jackob" and the original root "Jacob." So very few would imagine a "Jacko-boice" to be a "son of Jacob" - and even fewer would imagine a "Jackob-oice" to be a Polish Jew. But a Jackoiboice is *actually* a Jakóbowicz - an historically common family name of Polish Jews.

Our Germanic/Slavic variant Jakobowics is a Jewish surname too. Interestingly, in Munich, Germany there is another Jewish synagogue - at Sankt-Jakobs-Platz.

Finally, some irony - maybe inevitable for a family that worked with iron for 167 years.

It is rather ironic that the oft-misspelled surname Jackoiboice first appeared as a misspelling.

It is extremely ironic that after all surname modifications, the final suffix in "Jacko-boice" is pronounced with the Jewish/Yiddish "oy" of "oyce." Fittingly, "oy" is an expression of exasperation. If Joseph noticed it, *oy*, he may have thrown up his hands! He may have concluded that a Polish/Jewish surname was inevitably destined to look and/or sound Jewish one way or another.

And while our painstakingly modified surname suffix "oice" no longer means "son of," the German root Jackob still means Jacob.

* * *

Jacob has a very special place in the history of Israel. See the Old Testament book of Genesis, chapter 32, verse 28: "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

A "son of Jacob," in keeping with Jacob's name change, is a "son of Israel."

