

Josefow

{Bilgorajski}

Poland

1715 - 13/7/1942

כ"ח תמוז תש"ב - תצ"ה

יוז'ף

{בילגורייסקי}

פולין

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My family on my mother's side Hava Avni of the Majmon Family

- **Great Great Grandfather Efraim Majmon - Great Great Grandmother Esther Lam.**
- **Great Grandfather Menashe of the Majmon Family - Great Grandmother Hanna of the Zilberstein Family (Her parents Lipa and Chaya).**
- **My Grandfather Joseph Zvi Hershele of the Majmon Family - My Grandmother Chaya of the Bleicher Family from Tomashow Lubelski.**

They had six children:

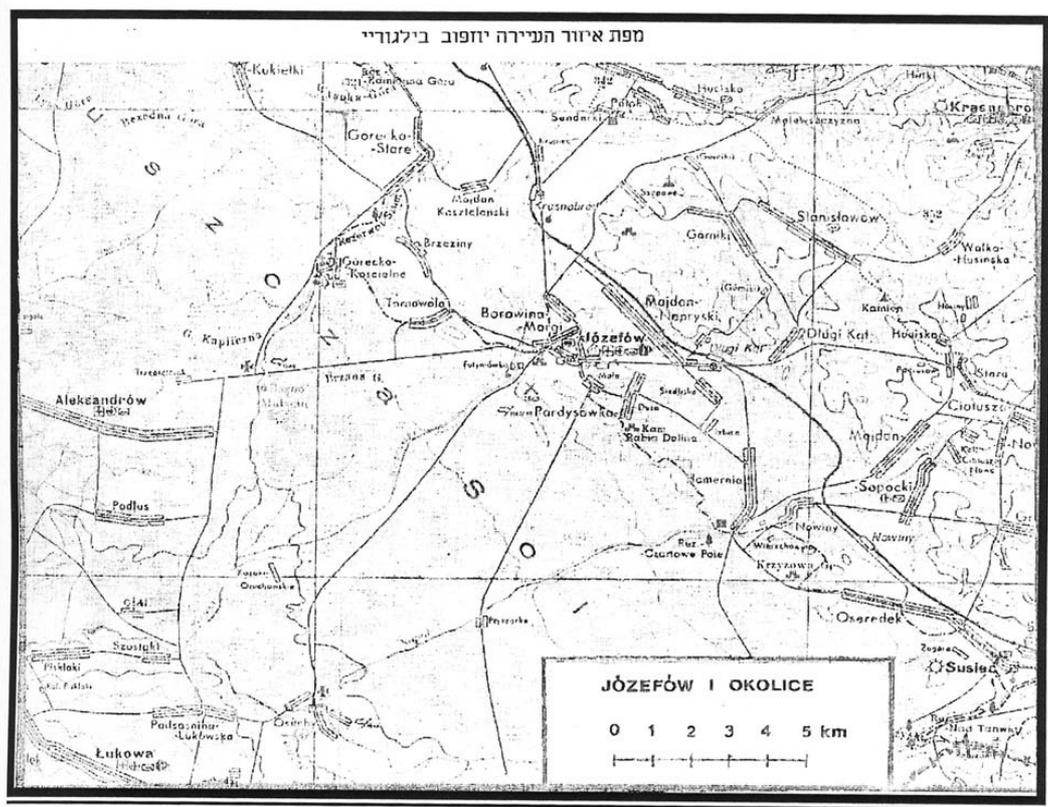
Rivka, Efraim, Hava, Menashe, Lipa and Hanna.

- **Lipa and Hanna'le were murdered by the Nazis on July 13,1942.**
- **Menashe was last seen in the Town of Lucek in the beginning of 1940.**
- **Rivka immigrated to Israel in 1934.**
- **Efraim escaped to Russia and immigrated to Israel in 1948.**
- **My mother Hava immigrated to Israel in 1940.**

Introduction

After many years of hearing stories from my mother and her family members about the Town of Jozefow in Poland, where they were born, and as in recent years I visit Poland and Jozefow, I decided to concisely write down the memory of the Town and the Family since its establishment and until today.

After starting to write the "Family Tree" and from conversations with the family members, I reached the distant past of the Family and the Town. Every time new information emerges, which pushes me to explore and know more and more about the Family and the Town. A map, photos of the town and photos of my family members and others who were born and lived in it are attached hereto.



Map of Jozefow area

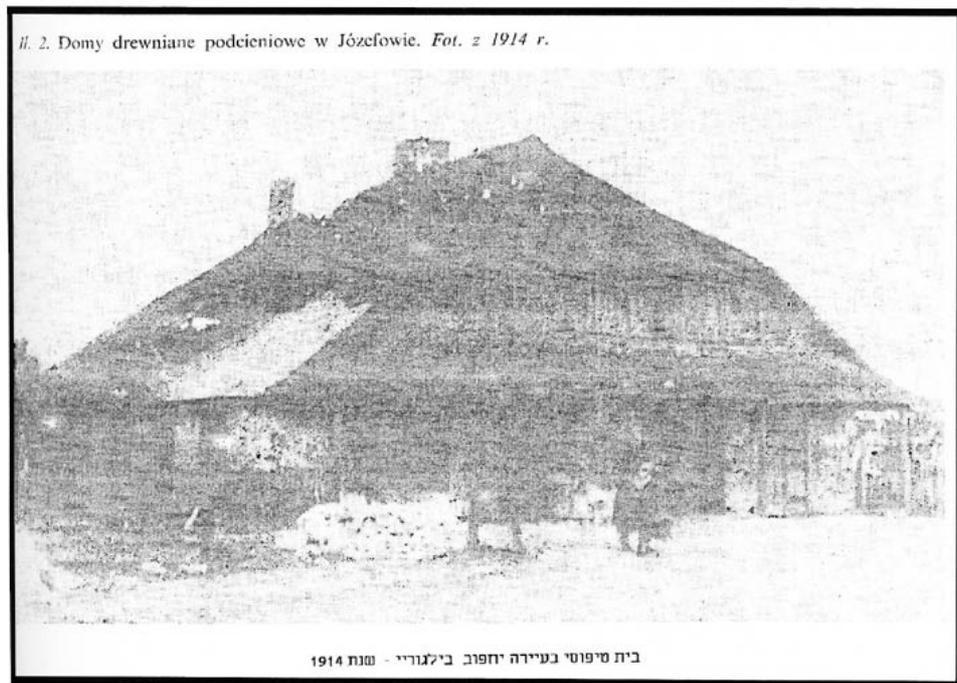
Town's location and arrival to it

- The Town is located about 40 kilometers southwest of Zamosz.
- Arrival to it from Zamosz through Road No. 849.
- From Belzec through Tomashow Lubelski on Road No. 853 westward.
- Arrival from the west through Bilgurei on Road No. 853 eastward.



II. 3. Domy drewniane podcieniowe w Józefowie. Fot. z 1914 r.

מבנים בעירייה יחפוב בילגוריי - 1914



II. 2. Domy drewniane podcieniowe w Józefowie. Fot. z 1914 r.

בית סיפוטני בעירייה יחפוב בילגוריי - שנת 1914

Houses in Jozefow - 1914

The Majmon Family

In order to find the roots of my family in Poland, I had to search in the archives, in various documents and in many Internet sites.

The name Majmon makes one wonder about the presence of the Majmon Family in Poland. It is known that this family name is Sephardic (The Rambam - Rabbi Moshe Ben Majmon). How does this name appear in the Ashkenazi Poland?

And indeed, the history of the "Majmons" in Poland extends to the days of Spain during the period of the Jewish Exile.

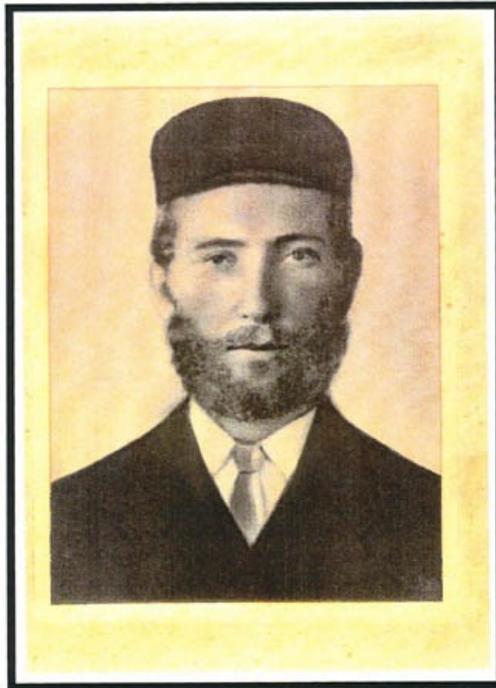
The Jewish Exile from Spain in 1492 brought their Diaspora throughout the European Continent, and thus they arrived to Holland, Belgium, Italy, Turkey, Germany and additional countries.

One opinion is that the kings of Poland in the 15th and 16th Centuries brought Jewish People from Turkey who assisted them in various financial matters of the Kingdom. It may be possible, that among them were Jewish People who bore the name Majmon.

In addition, the movement of the exiled Jewish People is known, from Italy northward to Germany and from there to the south of Poland around the City of Krakow.

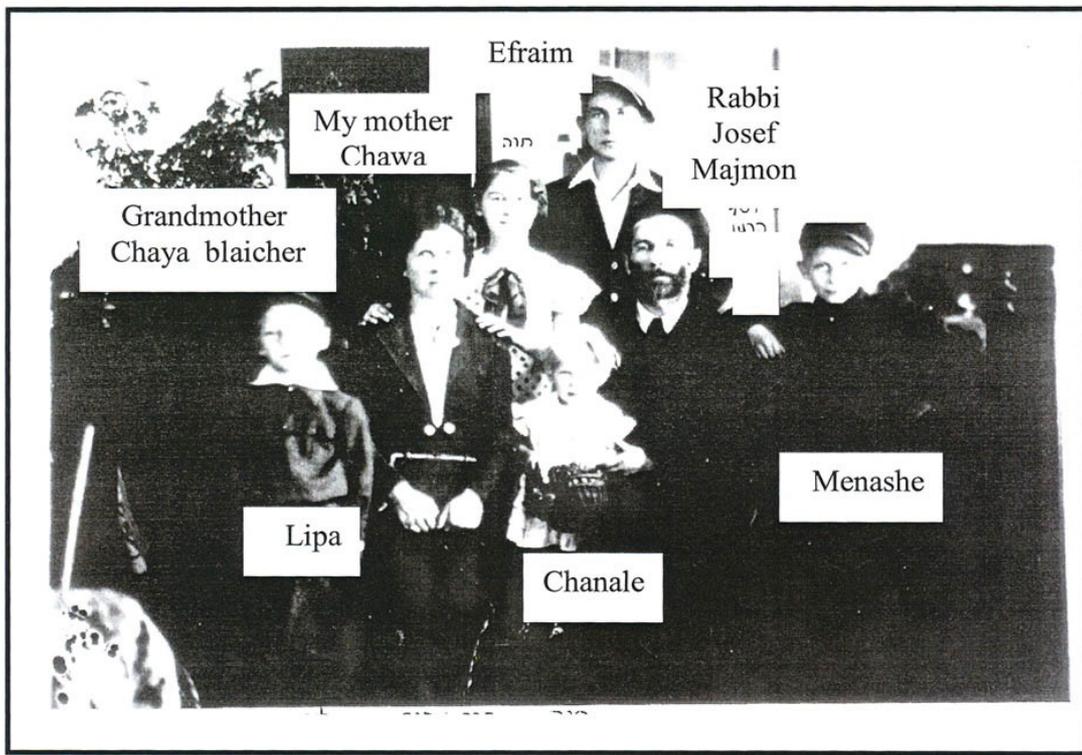
My family on my mother's side, the "Majmons", was dispersed throughout East Poland and Majmon Families can be found in many places: Cities, towns and villages.

My grandfather, my mother's father, was born in Jozefow in 1890, my mother's grandfather, Menashe Majmon, was born in 1865 in the Town of Krasnystaw - north of Zamosz - to his father Efraim, born in 1836 and his wife Esther, and he had a number of brothers and sisters. I know only of one of them. His name was Gershon Majmon who was born in 1862 and lived in Krasnystaw. In the JRI Internet name site additional names appear next to Gershon's name and they may be his brothers and sisters. Gershon was married to Masha and they had a number of children, most of whom moved to USA and Canada at the end of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th. Many of his descendants who live today are dispersed throughout USA and Canada and also in Israel.



My Grandfather Rabbi Josef Majmon

The Majmon's



A picture of Rabbi Josef Majmon family was taken in 1936 in Jozefow and sent to my aunt Rivka Majmon in Kibbutz Shefaym Israel



**Rabbi Shmuel Ha'cohen Fersht and his wife Frieda Malka of
The Majmon**



**Standing from right to left: Lea, Sara, Moshe, Rivka
Sitting: Father Shmuel and Mother Frida Malka
Standing in front from right: Mirel, Menashe and Rachel**

The Establishment of the Town

The Town of Jozefow (Bilgorajski), near Bilgoraj, is located in the Metropolitan Country of Lublin. The Town was established in the beginning of the 18th Century (1715) by the Zamojski Dynasty, who was a family of noblemen known and governing the area of Eastern Poland: Lublin - Zamosz.

In 1715, King August the 2nd authorized the establishment of the Town as a Polish Town based on the request of the Noblemen Zamoyski. Until the year 1725, Jozefow was a village owned by the Zamoyski Dynasty, but that year it received a status of a city, had a right to hold markets and fairs and since then it developed rapidly.

In 1772, due to the first division of Poland, it was included in the borders of Russia and lost its urban status.

In the 19th Century, during the Congressional Kingdom of Poland, the number of residents in Jozefow became smaller. In those days, most of them engaged in small trade and craftsmanship.

At the end of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th the residents of Jozefow engaged in wood trade from the forests around the Town. In 1869, a sugar factory and warehouses connected to this branch of manufacture were established in the place.



1899 - 1827 Houses in Jozefow

TOTAL HOUSES	WOODEN HOUSES	STOE HOUSES	YEAR
133	118	15	1827
174	157	17	1834
166	146	20	1860
128	97	31	1865
121	94	27	1887
135	-----	-----	1899

Jewish People in Town

The Town's documents start from the beginning of 1730.

In a document from 1731 there is an application to Count Zamoyski from the Area's Jewish People allocate land for them in order to establish a Jewish rural settlement on it.

In 1734, the Jewish People of Jozefow probably asked for a loan in order to erect a synagogue in Town. In a document recorded in the "Book of the Council of the Four Lands" which proves it, the date of October 5, 1734 appears. The distribution of the reimbursement of the loan of 400 gold coins which was rescheduled over a number of years is described later on in the Book.

The first Jewish families who settled down in Town first engaged in exchange trade and loans and in later years in the free professions. Their reputation became widely known in the fields of carpentry, shoe-making, tailoring and hat making. The first Jewish People came to Jozefow probably at the end of the 17th Century and the beginning of the 18th.

Jozefow appears for the first time in documents from 1725, but there is no reference to it that it is indeed the Town I am writing about.

There were first evidences about the existence and sale of haberdashery. In the beginning of the 19th Century and up to the beginning of the 20th, many Jewish People from Jozefow engaged in wood trade from adjacent forests and this was their main source of livelihood. In 1835, a group of Jewish People asked to establish an agricultural settlement around Town. They received land from the Town's owners, but eventually did not succeed in accomplishing this plan. In the 19th Century, the Town's Jewish People were in charge of alcohol and the marketing of beer and regular wine. In 1886, Israel Frenkel established a glass production factory. In the period between the two World Wars, no significant changes occurred in the professional make-up of the Jewish People of Jozefow. The main sources of livelihood continued to be: Small trade and peddling in the villages, the markets and the fairs. In addition, the Jewish People engaged in craftsmanship and mainly tailoring, hat making and shoemaking. A few families made their living from wood trade. Beer distilleries and factories for the production of alcohol were also owned by the Jewish People.

The financial situation of most of the Jewish People in Jozefow was bad. At the end of World War I, a soup kitchen was established in the place for the needy, based on the funds of the Joint. In 1927, a "charity fund" opened with a basic capital of 2,000 Zlots and in 1929 a Jewish Cooperative Bank was established called "The Traders' Fund". The Town's matters were supported by the Organization of the ex-residents of Bilgoraj and its Vicinity. Yet in spite of this aid, a fund-raising campaign was necessary in the adjacent towns to protect the existence of the Town's assisting institutions.

The Jewish people of Jozefow were mostly religious and traditional, and the public life was mainly about the "Stieblech" of the Hassidim of Alexander Worki and Amshinov.

The Hassidim of Gur was the largest and most influential group of Hassidim. Due to the Jewish Community's traditional character, the establishment and development of modern political and social organizations came later on. Only by the 1920s, branches of "Hehalutz" (for young people) and of "Haoved" Organization (for adults) were established in Jozefow, where also branches of "The General Zionists", "Hamizrahi" and "Poalei Zion" operated during the years. About 100 shekels were sold in Jozefow toward the elections for the Zionist Congresses in 1930.

Non Zionist movements, such as "Agudat Israel" also operated in Jozefow - my grandfather, Joseph Zvi Hershele Majmon, was its founder - and the "Bond". The "Bond" did not have many members, but diverse cultural activities were carried out in its club. The Community's leadership was in the hands of the members of "Agudat Israel".

Until 1924, Rabbi Shalom Joseph Hertzstark occupied the seat of the rabbinate. After he passed away, Rabbi Shimon Parzenczewski was elected, who served in this position until his death in World War II.

The Community of Jozefow implemented the Torah Study and it also had a Yeshiva where about 50 young men were studying, some from other towns. In 1926, the members of "Hamizrahi" opened a "Yavne" Chain elementary school and in 1928 the members of "Agudat Israel" established a school for girls of the "Beth Yaakov" Chain.

No of Jews relatively to the total No of residents

%	JEWS	NO OF RESIDENTS	YEAR
	392	UNKNOWN	1778
57	480	834	1789
65	692	1069	1827
67	656	973	1867
78	1056	1344	1921
			1939

Professions in Jozefow No of professionals in different years

1865	1860	1832	1820	Profession
1	-	1	2	Barrel maker
2	1	-	-	Teachers
1	2	1	-	Wooden makers
-	-	4	-	Hat makers
2	1	1	-	Hebrew printer
1	1	-	-	Coachman
1	1	2	-	Leather makers
-	1	-	2	Pots makers
7	5	3	1	Bookbinder
3	1	-	-	Chimney cleaners
2	1	1	-	Blacksmiths
20	29	6	27	Shopkeeper
8	8	8	8	Tailors
-	-	-	2	Furrier
-	1	-	-	Material painters
2	2	-	-	Construction worker
1	1	-	2	Soap & candles makers
1	-	-	-	Oil makers
8	7	3	4	Baker
8	4	13	13	Weavers
30	16	16	-	Farmers
6	2	4	-	Butchers
2	1	-	1	Carpenters
6	3	8	6	Shoemakers
1	1	-	-	Glaziers
-	1	-	-	Travel merchant
3	3	4	-	Owners of public houses
7	6	-	-	Salt makers
1	1	5	4	Weavers
1	-	-	-	Cotton wool makers
10	130	-	-	Workers

MAIN PROFESSION IN JOZEFOW IN THE YEARS 1820 – 1865

1865	1860	1832	1820	Profession
30	16	16	-	Farmers
67	50	55	45	Craftsmen
30	38	10	27	Merchants
24	141			Others



חבורת הכשרה

מיחפוב בילגוריי

שורה ראשונה מלמעלה מימין : אונטרבוך לאה, לוכטפלד יוסף, קונשטוק, מישל יעקל,
קלנר יהושע, אונטרבוך נתן — ווקס שמואל, רפופרט שאול, דך מרים, גרוסהיים יהודה,
פרינץ שמואל

שורה שניה מימין : שפרינגר, איילבוים, פיינגולד אהובה, חיים-יואל וולטשר, שטיך אהרן
לרנר רבקה, אונטרבוך יהושע

שורה שלישית, מימין : פרנקל רגינה

שורה רביעית : ביהן חנה

First row on top from right: Unterbuch Lea, Luchtfeld Josef, Kunshtok, Fishel Jaakov, Kelner Jehoshua, Unterbuch Natan, Waks Shmuel, Rapoport Shaul, Dach Miriam, Grosshaim Yehuda, Printz Shmuel.

Second row from right: Shpringer, Elbaum, Faingold Ahuva, Welczer Haim-Yoel, Sztich Aharon, Lerner Rivka, Unterbuch Yehushua

Third row from right: Frenkel Regina

Forth row: Bihan Hana



אנשי "החלוץ" יחפוב בילגוריי
וולצר, סימה ופוניזובסקי



אנשי "החלוץ" יחפוב בילגוריי – למעלה שני מימין אפרים מימון

**On top
from left: Ponizowski, Sima and Welczer**

Bottom picture Jozefow "Hachhitz" on top second from right Efraim Majmon

הסתדרות "החלוץ" יחפוב בילגוריי - 1930



מימין עומדים - יהושע קברשטוק, קלמן נירנשטיין, לאה אונטרבוך, פרידה פישל, שחורה ליסטינברג, יהושע ל.י, ביילה פרשט, מרים ל.י כורעים - עקיבא, ל.י, לרנר, שמואל ווקס יושבים - רבקה הילף, שלמה ומרשטיין, לאה פרשט



ועד "החלוץ"
מימין - שמואל ווקס, עקיבא ל.י, קלמן נירנשטיין, יהושע קלנר

Top picture

From right standing: Yehosua Kobersztok, Kalman Nirenstien, Lea Unterbuch, Frida Fiszal, Shchora Listenberg, Yehosua L.Y, Sara Beila Ferszt, Miriam L.Y,
Kneeling: Akiwa L.Y, Lerner, Shmuel Waks
Sitting: Rivka Hilf, Shlomo Waremstain, Lea Ferszt

Bottom Picture

From right: Shmuel Waks, Akiwa L.Y, Kalman Nirenstain, Yehosua Kelner



ריבקה הילף
 שחורה ליסנברג
 ליהודית זימערמאן
 עטל וואקס
 לעא פערשט
 בנות יחפוב בילגוריי



1937
 יחפוב
 ריבקה הילף
 שחורה ליסנברג
 לעא פערשט
 ליהודית זימערמאן
 עטל וואקס
 רחל וואלדמאן
 חנה לאנדא
 גוטא קלייכמאן
 הערצמאן
 פייגאל שארף
 לעא פלעמבוימ
 חוה מאימאן
 חוה אילבאום
 חוה אילבאום

Top picture

From right: Beila, Lea Ferszt, Rivka Majmon, Riwka Hilf, Shchora Listenberg

Bottom picture –1937

Standing right; Yehudith Zimerman, Etel Waks, Rachel Waldman, Chana Landau

Kneeling: Gutah Klaichman, Herzman, Feigale Sharf, Lea Flamenboim

Sitting: Chawa Majmon, Chaja Elbaum



על בירכיהן לאה מימין
ונשרה משמאל לבית פרשט



מימין - פרידה מלכה לבית מימון
עם חברות



שרה פרשט ושלמה ומרשטיין משמאל

Top right: Frida Malka Ferszt with friends

Top left; On their knees - Lea from right and Sara Ferszt

Bottom: Sara Ferszt center and Shlomo Wamerstien on left

קבוצות של בנות יחפוב בילגוריי



מימין עומדות – ל.י , רחל למר, לאה פרשט, אסתר רובינשטיין
 כורעות – רבקה הילף, ביילה פרשט, מחורה ליסטינברג
 יושבות – אסתר לנדאו, חיה פרשט



מימין עומדות – מרים לוכספלד, ל.י , אסתר לנדאו, רחל למר, ביילה פרשט,
 מרים בת השוחט
 כורעות – לרנר, שושנה אלביט, רבקה הילף, רבקה מימון
 יושבות – לרנר, לאה פרשט, רחל למר

Top picture

Standing from right: ?, Rachel Lemer, Lea Ferszt, Ester Rubinstien, Kneeling: Rivka Hilf, Shoshana Elbaum, Sara Beila Ferszt, Shchora Listenberg L Sitting: Ester Landau, Caya Ferszt

Bottom picture

Standing from right; Miriam Luchtfeld, ?, Estaer Landau, Rachek Lemer, Sra Ferszt, Miriam the

**butcher daughter
 Kneeling: Lerner, Shoshana Elbaum, Rlvka Hilf, Rivka Majmon
 Sitting: Lerner, Lea Ferszt, Rachel Lemer**

תמונה קבוצתית
של תלמידי בית הספר
ביחפוב בילגוריי



עומדים מימין: שטייען פון רעכטס: איצי (מלמד) שליכר, הבן של הרש לייב פרינץ
נכדו של קרפ, הבן של איצי (השו"ב) נדלר, טאצה (המורה לעברית), הבן של ישראל
שליכר, הבן של מ. לייטר, מאיר איילבוים, יעקב חורמשטיין, יוסף אבי (הרש"ל) מיימן.
שורה שניה מימין: צווייטע שורה פון רעכטס: הבן של מלך שחלב (היחיד שנשאר בחיים),
הבן של וולויש מיטלער, הבן של יוסף נדלר, הבן של שלמה חולדמן (ה"פּלשער"), הבן
של שלום ברגמן, הבן של שלום שליכר.
שורה שלישית מימין: דריטע שורה פון רעכטס: הבן של יוהשע קאליקשטיין, הבן של
דוד קאליקשטיין, ילד ממשפחת קרפ.

Students from Jozefow with **Rabbi Josef Tzvi Majmon** standing on the left side



הקורס לעברית על יד ביה"ס „תרבות" ביוזעפאף
שורה ראשונה מימין, עומדות: שוסנה אונטרבוך, דבורה פעכער, לאה טיער, דבורה
אוכרבען, צפורה בויטוול
יושבים, משמאל: חנה"טעי לרנר, אביהם כהן (המורה) ואסתר איטי פרינץ
על הברכיים: ערה פרשט, פיל אוברבון, חנה הילף

The Hebrew course of "TARBUT" school in Jozefow
STANDING: Shoshana Unterbuch, Dvora Pacher, Lea Taier, Dvora Oberbaden, Tzipora Boimole, Kneeling: Chana Lerner, Avraham Cohen (teacher) Ester Printz, Sara Ferszt



בית ספר עברי "תרבות" ביחפוב בילגוריי
כ"ח אדר תרפ"ו - 1926



כיתה ג' מבית הספר "תרבות" ביחפוב בילגוריי
במדכו המורה כהן רביעי משמאל למטה משה פרשט
1925

On top: The Hebrew school "TARBUT" IN Jozefow 1926
Bottom: Third grade of "TARBUT" school 1925

The Synagogue

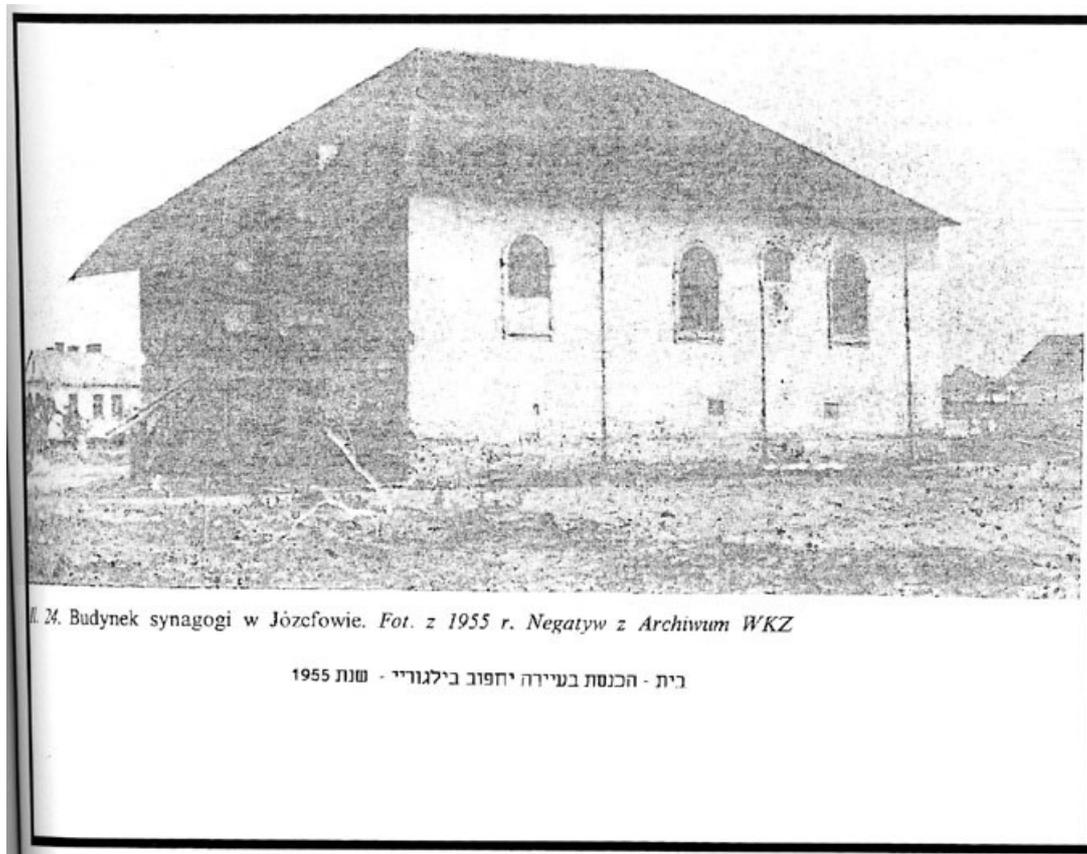
At the end of the 17th Century, the Community of Jozefow became established and public and religious institutions were erected in it. In the beginning, the public prayers were held in the rented building in the market square.

The first evidence for an interest to build a synagogue in Jozefow appears in the "Book of the Council of the Four Lands" where an application by the Jewish People for a loan to build a synagogue is mentioned. In addition, there is a document dated October 5, 1734 where it is written that a loan in the amount of 400 gold coins was given to the residents of Jozefow which was probably designated for building a synagogue. The first synagogue was probably erected in 1735.

As we know, the present synagogue was built in 1768, was partly burnt in 1830 and rebuilt at the end of that Century, with funds provided by the authorities.

In 1942, during World War II, the synagogue was damaged again and only lately, in 1990, it was renovated, but its purpose is different. A public library was established in the prayer hall and a hostel in the second floor, where the ladies section was.

The synagogue is located near the Town's central plaza and its difference from the other buildings in the Town can be seen.



A picture was taken in 1955 of the synagogue

The synagogue today use as library



בית הכנסת בעיירה

יזנוב בילגורי - 1992



The Cemetery

The cemetery is in the southern side of the Town on a hill which observes the houses.

It was established in 1725 and, apart from the residents of Jozefow, also Jewish people from adjacent towns were buried in it.

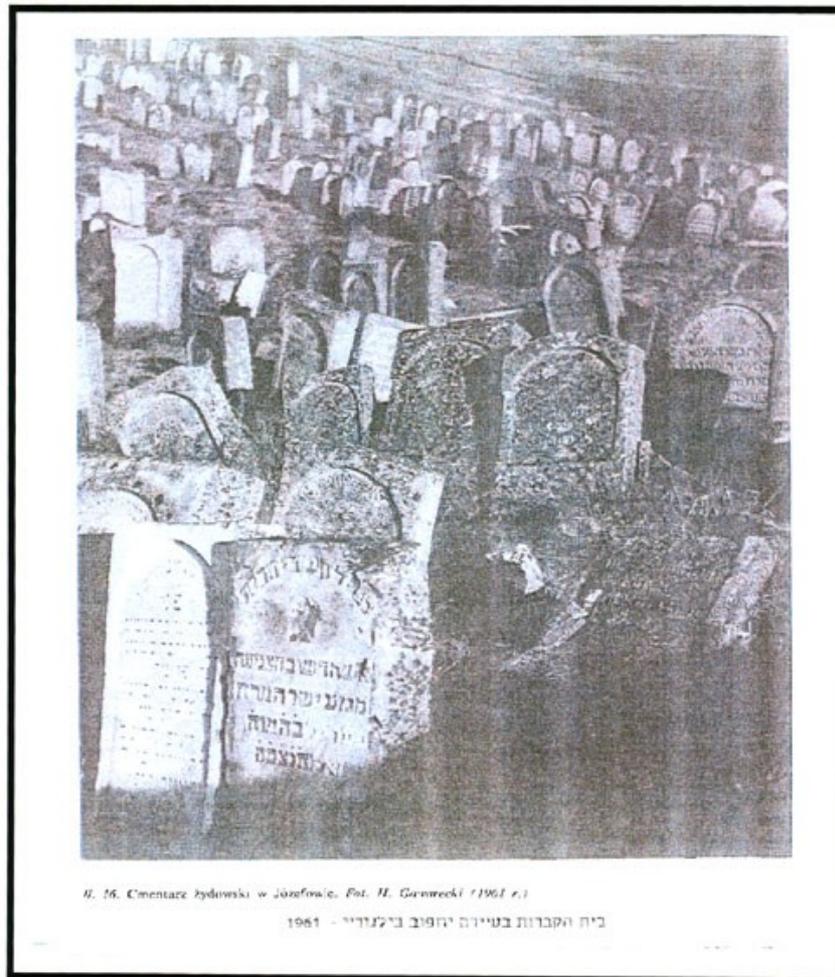
There are about 500 tombstones in the cemetery and some are broken, but many are in their original location. The letters carved on the tombstones are from the years 1762-1943.

According to the Internet Site 'International Jewish Cemetery Project', the last burial carried out there was in 1943.

Since World War II, many tombstones were taken from the Cemetery and served the Town's residents for building streets and other private needs.

In a photo from the year 1961 hundreds of tombstones are seen around the Cemetery, but in recent years, the whole cemetery was covered with thick vegetation which causes heavy damage to the tombstones.

In the back of the Cemetery there is a quarry, where the stones were quarried for the tombstones.





מראה מרחוק על בית הקברות של העיירה יחפוב בילגוריי – 1992



מראה בתוך בית הקברות של העיירה יחפוב בילגוריי – 1992

Photos of the cemetery – 1992

The Cemetery today

The Cemetery of Jozefow is cared today by the teachers and students of the "Reut" School in Jerusalem, headed by Dr. Arie Geiger, who cleaned the section which is near the entrance (where recent burials took place) and thus, new tombstones were exposed, of which two are my family's:

- The grave of my grandfather, my mother's father, Joseph Zvi, Son of Menashe Majmon, of blessed memory, from 1938
- The grave of my grandfather's sister, my mother's aunt, Freida Malka Fersht, of blessed memory, 1940.
- In addition, the foundations of "The Tent" of Rabbi Shalom Joseph Hertzstark, of blessed memory, the Rabbi of the Community of Jozefow until the year 1924, were found.





The gravestone of
 Rabbi Josef Tzvi
 Hersheli the son of
 Rabbi Menashe
 Majmon and his
 wife Chana of the
 Zilberstien's
 husband of Chaya
 Blajcher Father of my
 mother /my grandfather

*

Died
 1/4/1938
 כ"ט אדר ב' תרצ"ח



The renewal of the gravestone - 2006



The gravestone of
 Rabbi Shmuel
 Ha'cohen Ferszt
 Husband of Friede
 Malka of the
 Majmon's

*

Died in 1940

תי"ש



The gravestone of
 Friede Malka
 Ferszt the daughter
 of Menashe
 Majmon and
 Chana of the
 Zilberstien's
 Family

*

Died in 4/1/1941

ט' סיון תשי"א

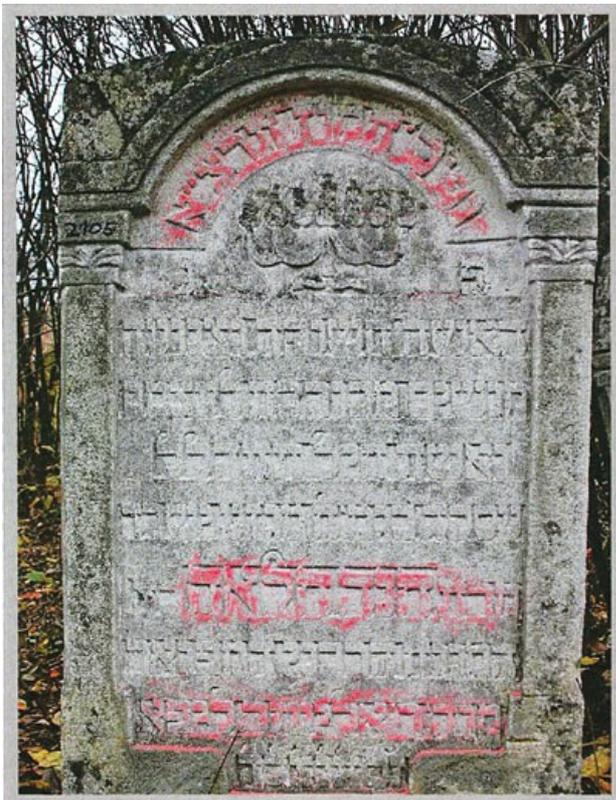


The gravestone of
Sara Beile the daughter
of Rabbi Shmuel
Ha'cohen Ferszt
And fride Malka of the
Majmon's family

*

Died in 1940

ת"ש



The gravestone of
Chana Chlea
Daughter of Rabbi
Eliezer Lipa Zilberstien
and his wife Chaya
Wife of Rabbi Menashe
Majmon

*

Died in
14/7/1931

כ' תמוז תרצ"א



The gravestone of
Rabbi Menashe Majmon
The son of Rabbi Efraim
and his wife Ester

*

29/11/1922

ט' כסלו תרפ"ג

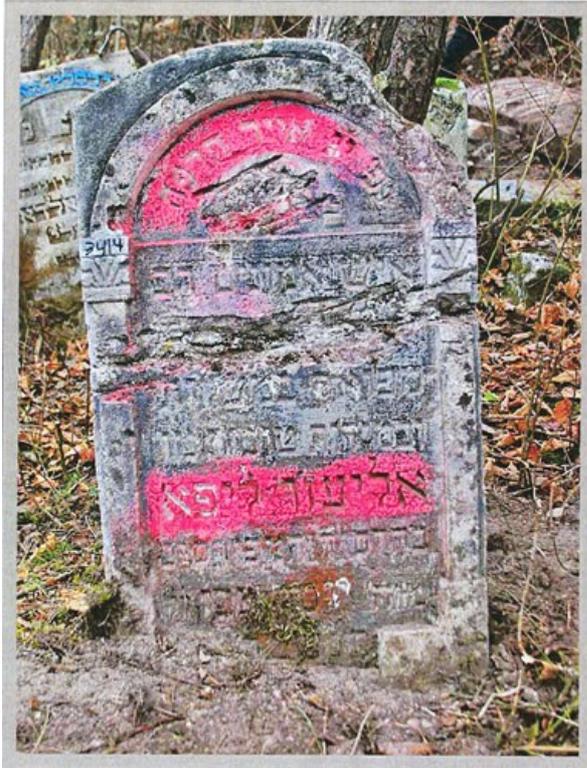


The gravestone of
Chaya Zilberstien
Daughter of Chaim
Mendel the wife of
Rabbi Eliezer Lipa
Zilberstien

*

6/9/1933

ט"ו אלול תרצ"ג



The gravestone of
Rabbi Eliezer Lipa
Zilberstien the son of
Josef Tzvi Hersheli

*

7/5/1925

י"ג אייר תרפ"ה



The gravestone of
Mirel The daughter of Rabbi
Eliezer Lipa and his
wife Chaya Zilberstien

*

26/7/1903

אב תרס"ג

The first printing house

In the 19th Century, Jozefow was a center for printing Hebrew books. In 1824, the first printing house was established in the Hebrew language for printing prayer books and books in Yiddish. The printing house was established by David Seadya Yeshayahu and Bezalel waks.

Many books were printed in this printing house and it provided a source of employment and livelihood for many Jewish People as typesetters, printers (people whose job is to print), proofreaders, bookbinders etc. The printing house operated for about 35 years and was considered the largest in East Europe at that time. Books from the printing house even reached Turkey.

In 1860 the printing house was closed. The publishing of each book took too long because of the censorship practiced in Warsaw due to competition with the printing houses in Warsaw and a lack of economic profitability.

In 1865 the brothers Baruch and Shlomo Zetzer, with the help of Yehezkel Rener, erected an additional printing house which was even better than the previous one (later, the first printing house was also owned by them). At a certain stage, the printing house was transferred to Lublin, the County City.

Jozefow's printing houses are mentioned in "The Slave", a book by Beshvis Singer. Haim Nahman Bialik writes in one of his letters, that he enjoyed reading the books coming from the Town of Jozefow in Poland.

Attached hereto is a photo of a "praying book" which was printed in Jozefow in 1881.

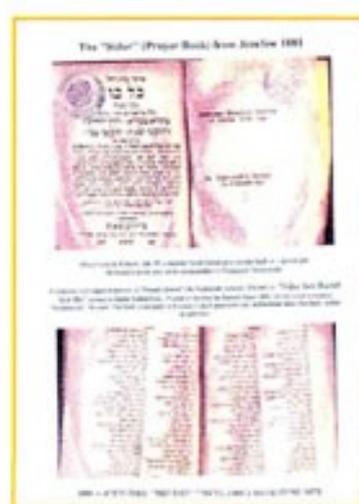
Books printed in Jozefow:

"The Decent will have Glory" by the Italian writer Moshe Haim Luzato - Ramhal.

"Amendments to the Book of Zohar"

"The History of Adam"

"The Work of Israel" - a book by Rabbi Israel (Hofstein), the Preacher from Koznitz Below is a list of additional books which were published by the printing press of the Town of Jozefow.



**Books that printed in
the printing house of
Jozefow**

The Greatest Rabbies in Jozefow

The community of Jozefow is mentioned a number of times in the discussions of "The Council of the Four Lands" and it seems that it was one of the important communities in the area.

Although it was a small town, its Rabbi Seat was considered very important and famous rabbis were occupying it. Jozefow was honored that great rabbis served in it or passed through it. Due to the Town's size, the great rabbis did not stay there for many years. There were always larger communities which opened their gates to those rabbis and gave them offers which were impossible to refuse.

The Rahag, Shlomo Kluger, "The Preacher from Brody" (The Maharashak) 1775-1869

One of the great rabbis in the middle of the 19th Century; a son to a rabbi family of distinguished lineage; was educated in his father's house, who was the Rabbi of Komirov. After his father died, he moved to Zamosz where he was taught by Rabbi Yaacov Krantz. He became famous as a genius and was qualified as a young man for teaching by the country's leaders.

After not succeeding in business, he accepted a rabbinic position, first in Kolkov and later on in Jozefow.

From 1815 and until 1821, he served as the Rabbi of the Town of Jozefow and later on he moved to the Town of Brody where he served as the President of the Court and a preacher.

The legend says that Rabbi Meir Margaliyot of Brody came to Jozefow in order to listen to the Town's Rabbi after his reputation reached far places. After spending a whole day with him, he decided to take him to Brody.

When the residents of Jozefow heard about his decision to move, they offered him a significant status improvement, but he said that he made a promise to Rabbi Meir Margaliyot and the townsmen of Brody, and therefore he would move there.

When the carriage arrived to take Rabbi Shlomo Kluger to Brody, the townsmen damaged it. The Rabbi's departure was delayed, but not cancelled, and a few days later he went on his way.

Rabbi Shlomo Kluger was a great Talmudic Scholar and was famous for the answers he provided. The number of his answers reached thousands, some say about 8,000.

According to the tradition, "The Preacher of Brody" wrote about 375 books in all the subjects of the Torah, like the number of the numerology of his name "Shlomo" in Hebrew, and only 30 books came to print.

Three famous books of the Maharashak:

1. "Good Taste and Wisdom" (5700-5660).
2. "Famous People will Renew" (5700).
3. "The Thousand is Yours, Shlomo" (5691-5692).

Rabbi Shlomo Kluger was a very radical conservative in his religion, and was very much against religion. He fought against any change in the practices of Israel and expressed his dissatisfaction from Hassidim and Rabbis who did not follow "Shulchan Aruch".

Rabbi Yaacov Itzhak Halevi Horovitz ("The Seer of Lublin). Jozefow. 1745-1815, Lublin

Rabbi Yaacov Itzhak Halevi Horovitz was born and married in the Town of Jozefow and was its Rabbi for a number of years.

He was called "The Seer" or "The Prophet" of Lublin and was one of the heads of the Hassidism of Poland.

He studied and was educated by Rabbi Dov Bar of Mazritz - the substitute of Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov (The Baasht), stayed with Rabbi Levi Itzhak of Berditchew and a long time with Rabbi Elimelech from Lizensk and was one of his best students.

Close to the year 1780, he moved to Luncut and started to practice as a rabbi there.

After wandering in various towns, and as the number of his Hassidim increased, he settled down in the City of Lublin in 1800.

Hassidim from various social strata were attracted to his court in order to be advised in personal and financial matters. They believed in his power to predict, to see the past and to expose the genealogy of the soul and how it reforms in each reincarnation.

As Rabbi Yaacov Itzhak Halevi Horovitz was born to a family which had little means of livelihood, he was match made to a woman of good lineage whose father was a very rich nobleman in the area. The engagement was carried out, but he was not in love with that woman. Nevertheless, the wedding was carried out and he married her. After the ceremony he was expected to commune with his new wife, but disappeared from town that very night.

After he was found a few days later he said that during his participation in the ceremony he saw on the forehead of his future wife two lines crossing each other; a symbol of the Cross?!

And indeed, after the matter was checked, it was found out that that woman married a gentile man before and converted to Christianity for him. She divorced the gentile man and her father, who was a rich Jewish man, was trying to make her marry the scholarly Rabbi.

Since then, Rabbi Yaacov Itzhak Halevi Horovitz was called "The Seer".

Additional rabbis in the community

Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Mintz

Rabbi Zeev Itzhak, the follower of "The Seer of Lublin" and "The Preacher of Kuznitz".

Rabbi Nehemia.

Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Ben Yaacov.

Rabbi Nathan (in the year 1885)

Rabbi Yehiel Yeshaya Mintzberg and his son Rabbi Avraham Eliezer who immigrated to Israel and died in 1904

Rabbi Shalom Josef Hertzstark who was famous in Poland and died in 1924

Rabbi Shmon Parzenczewski, the son in law of Rabbi Hertzstark, was the last Rabbi in Jozefow and was killed in the Holocaust.



רבה של יחפוב בילגוריי עד 1929 - הרב ר' שלום יוסף הרצשטרק ז"ל

Rabbi Shalom Josef Hertzstark

The Days of the Holocaust - September 1, 1939 - July 13, 1942

- In the beginning of September 1939, Jozefow was bombed by German airplanes and most of the Town's houses were caught on fire. Most of the Town's Jewish people escaped to adjacent towns and returned to Town after a week. The Jewish people resided in a number of houses that survived the bombings. In the middle of September, the Germans occupied the Town, but on September 29 they retreated and the Russians came instead. During the short period that the German's stayed in town, Jewish people were kidnapped to forced labor and were employed in clearing the ruins caused by the bombings.
- In October 1939, the Russian forces informed the Town's residents, that the Germans were about to return to Town, and everyone who wants to leave can go with them to Russia. Russian trucks came to the Town's square (The Rinek) and the people who wanted to leave mounted them. Many families took advantage of the Russian offer. The Bachar Family, my mother's uncle and aunt (Getzel and Sarah, the sister of my grandfather) and their children Menashe and Hantche.
- During that period many Jewish people from the surrounding areas were brought to live in Jozefow, and among them were citizens of Austria, the Czech Republic and Germany.
- The genocide of the Town's Jewish people occurred in 1942. On Monday, July 13 (28 in the month of Tamuz, 5702) about 1,800 of the Town's residents were gathered in the market square, some of them (about 400 men) were taken to labor camps in the Lublin area and the rest - women, old people and children - were executed in Town, in their homes, in the local hospital and in the home for the elderly, and some were taken from the Town to the Woods, about 2.5 km. westward, which was the way to Alexandrov, and were shot by the Germans.
- In his book "Ordinary Men", Christopher Browning mentions the genocide carried out in Jozefow by Reserve Police Battalion 101 as the first of the dozens of additional mass genocides which occurred in the area of "General Guberman" during the Nazi period.
- Below, there are two chapters from Christopher Brownings research book which deal with the massacre in the Town of Jozefow Bilgorai according to testimonies taken from the German policemen who participated in it.
- In 1975, a monument was erected on the main road west of Jozefow on the way to Alexandrov in the memory of the Town's Jewish people.

Mass graves

- Not far from the monument, in the forest, there are a number of mass graves where about 1,200 of the Townsmen are buried, two of which are clearly identified:
 1. Behind the monument, in a distance of about 15 m.
 2. In front of the monument, in a straight line southward, on the other side of the road, in a distance of about 100 meter into the forest. Its diameter is between 8-10 meters and its depth about 1 meter.



The memorial for Jozefow Jews



1992 - Chava Avni (Majmon) light a candle



"קבר אחים" של יהודי יזרעב בילגוריי שנרצחו ב- 13 ליולי 1942 - 1992

Mass graves
of Jozefow Jews
Murdered
on 13/7/1942



סקם זיכרון ליד "קבר האחים" ביזרעב ליד יזרעב
עם בנות כולל ירושלים - 2000

Preface

Two chapters are brought below from the Book Ordinary Men Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland

**By
Christopher Browning - PhD.**

The book describes the genocide of the Jewish Community in the Town of Jozefow Bilgorai and the murder of additional Jewish people brought to it from Germany, the Czech Republic, Austria and more countries on Monday, July 13, 1942.

The book is based on researches and testimonies of about 210 members of Reserve Police Battalion 101, out of about 500 who served during World War II, when "the final solution" of the Jewish People of Poland was decided upon. After the war, they were interrogated by the Attorney General of Hamburg, and the prosecution documents were filed to the German Court of Justice.

Most testimonies were handed in almost 20 years after the murder acts performed by this Battalion throughout Poland. 125 documents of more detailed testimonies were preserved, and the writer used them to show the operations of the German Murder Machine.

The reason for adding chapters to the booklet is that the referenced Town of Jozefow Bilgorai is the Town where my mother's family lived. My family members and the rest of the Town's Jewish people came to it from all over Poland and settled in it many decades before World War II. This Town was chosen to be the first where Reserve Police Battalion 101 started its journey of massacre, which caused the murder / genocide of about 1,800 of its Jewish People.

One morning in Jozefow
The first chapter from a book by Christopher Browning
Ordinary men Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in
Poland
First chapter

In the very early hours of July 13 1942, the men of reserve police battalion 101 were roused from their bunks in the large brick school building that served as their barracks in the Polish town of Bilgoraj. They were middle-aged family men of working -and lower middle- class background from the city of Hamburg. Considered too old to be use to the German army, they have been drafted instead into the order police. Most were raw recruits with no previous experience in the German occupied territory. They had arrived in Poland less than three weeks earlier.

It was still quite dark as the men climbed into the waiting trucks. Each policeman had been given extra ammunition, and additional boxes had been loaded onto the trucks as well. They were headed for their first major action, though the men had not yet been told what to expect. The convoy of battalion trucks moved out of Bilgoraj in the dark, heading eastward on jarring washboard gravel road. The pace was slow, and it took an hour and a half to two hours to arrive at the destination - the village of Jozefow- a mere thirty kilometers away. Just as the sky was beginning to lighten, the convoy halted outside Jozefow. It was typical Polish village of modest white houses with thatched straw roofs. Among its inhabitants were 1,800 Jews. The village was totally quiet. The men of reserve police battalion 101 climbed down from their trucks and assembled in a half- circle around their commander, Major Wilhelm Trapp, a fifty-three- year-old career policeman affectionately known by his men and inform them of the assignment the battalion had received.

Pale and nervous, with choking voice and tears in his eyes, Trapp visibly fought to control himself as he spoke. The battalion, he said plaintively, had to perform a frightfully unpleasant task. This assignment was not to his liking, indeed it was highly regrettable, but the orders came from the highest authorities. If it would make their task any easier, the men should remember that in Germany the bombs were falling on women and children. He then turned to the matter at hand. The Jews had instigated the America boycott that had damaged Germany, one policeman remembered Trapp saying. There were Jews in the village of Jozefow who were involved with the partisans, he explained according to two others. The battalion had now been ordered to round up these Jews. The male Jews of working age were to be separated and taken to a work camp. The remaining Jews-the women, children, and elderly-were to be shot on the spot by the battalion. Having explained what awaited his men, Trapp then made an extraordinary offer: if any of the older men among them did not feel up to the task that lay before him, he could step out.

Initiation to mass murder: The Jozefow massacre

I was probably on July 11 that Globocnik or someone on his staff contacted Major Trapp and inform him that Reserve Police Battalion 101 had the task of rounding up the 1,800 Jews in Jozefow, a village about thirty kilometers slightly south and east of Bilgoraj. This time, however, most of the Jews were not to be relocated. Only the male Jews of working age were to be sent to one of Globocnik's camps in Lublin. The women, children, and elderly were simply to be shot on the spot.

Trapp recalled the units that were stationed in nearby towns. The battalion reassembled in Bilgoraj in July 12, with exceptions: the Third Platoon of Third Company, including Captain Hoffman, stationed in Zakrzow, as well as a few men of First Company already stationed in Jozefow. Trapp met with first and Second Company commanders, Captain Wohlauf and lieutenant Gnade, and informed them of the next day's task. Trapp's adjutant first lieutenant Hagen, must have informed another officers of the battalion, for lieutenant Heinz Buchmann learned from him the précis details of the pending action that evening.

Buchmann, then thirty-eight years old, was the head of family lumber business in Hamburg. He had joined the Nazi Party in May 1937. Drafted into the Order Police in 1939, he had served as a driver in Poland. In the summer of 1940 he applied for a discharge. Instead he was sent to officer training and commissioned as a reserve Lieutenant in November 1941. He was given command of the First Platoon of First Company in 1942.

Upon learning of the imminent massacre, Buchmann made clear to Hagen that as a Hamburg businessman and reserve Lieutenant, he "would in no case participant in such action, in which defenseless women and children are shot". He asked for another assignment. Hagen arranged for Buchman to be in charge of the escort for male "work Jews" who were to be selected out and taken in Lublin. His Company captain, Wohlauf was informed of Buchmann's assignment but not the reason for it.

The men were not officially informed, other than that they would be awakened early in the morning for major action involving the entire Battalion. But some had at least a hint of what was to come. Captain Wohlauf told a group of his men that an "extremely interesting task" awaited them the next day. Another man, who complained that he was being left behind to guard the barracks, was told by his company adjutant, "be happy that you don't have to come. You'll see what happens." Sergent Heinrich Steimenz warned his men of Third platoon, Second Company, that "he didn't want to see any cowards". Additional ammunition was given out. One policeman reported that his unit has given whips, which led to rumors of a *judenaktion*. No one else, however, remembered whips.

Departing from Bilgoraj around 2:00 a.m, the truck convoy arrived in Jozefow just as the sky was beginning to lighten. Trapp assembled the men in half-circle and addressed them. After explaining the battalion's murderous assignment, he made his extraordinary offer: any of the older men who did not feel up to the task that lay before them could step out. Trapp paused, and after some moments a man from Third Company, Otto-Julius Schimke, stepped forward. Captain Hoffmann, who had arrived in Jozefow directly from Zakrzow with Third Platoon of Third Company and had not been part of the officer's meetings in Bilgoraj the day before, was furious that one of his men had been the first to break ranks. Hoffmann began to berate Schimke, but Trapp cut him off. After he had taken Schimke under his protection, some ten or twelve other men stepped forward as well. They turned in their rifles and were told to await a further assignment from the major.

Trapp then summoned the Company commanders and gave them their respective assignments. The orders were relayed by the first sergeant, Kammer, to First Company, and by Gnade and Hofrman to Second and Third Companies. Two Platoons of Third Company were to surround the village. The men were explicitly ordered to shoot anyone trying to escape. The remaining men were to round up the Jews and taken them to the marketplace. Those too sick or frail to walk to the marketplace, as well as infants and anyone offering resistance or attempting to hide, were to be shot on the spot. Thereafter, a few men of First Company were to escort the " work Jews" who had been selected at the marketplace, while the rest of First Company was to proceed to the forest to form the firing quads. The Jews were to be loaded onto the battalion trucks by Second Company and Third Platoon of Third Company and shuttled from the marketplace to the forest.

After making the assignments, Trapp spent most of the day in town, either in schoolroom converted into his headquarter, at the homes of the polish mayor and local priest, at the marketplace, or on the road to the forest. But he did not go to the forest itself or witness the executions; his absence there was conspicuous. As one policeman bitterly commented. "Major Trapp was never there. Instead he remained in Jozefow because he allegedly could not bear it either".

Indeed, Trapp's distress was a secret to no one. At the marketplace one policeman remembered hearing Trapp say, "oh, god, why did I have to be given these orders", as he put his hand on his heart. Another policeman witnessed him at the schoolhouse. "Today I can still see exactly before my eyes Major Trapp there in the room pacing back and forth with his hands behind his back. He made a downcast impression and spoke to me. He said something like, "man.. .such jobs don't suit me. But orders are orders". Another man remembered vividly "how Trapp, finally alone in our room, sat on a stool and wept bitterly. The tears really flowed". Another also witnessed Trapp in his headquarter. "Major Trapp ran around excitedly and suddenly stopped dead in front of me, stared, and asked if I agreed with this. I looked him straight in the eye and said," no, Herr Major! He then begun to run around again and wept like a child." The doctor's aide encountered Trapp weeping on the path from the marketplace to the effect that everything was very terrible". Concerning Jozefow, Trapp later confided to his driver, "If this Jewish business is ever avenged on earth, then have mercy on us Germans.

While Trapp complained of his orders and wept, his men proceeded to carry out the battalion's task. The noncommissioned officers divided some of their men into search teams of two, three or four, and sent them into the Jewish section of Jozefow. Other men were assigned as guards along the streets leading to the marketplace or at the marketplace itself. As the Jews were driven out of their houses and the immobile were shot, the air was filled with screams and gunfire. As one policeman noted, it was a small town and they could hear everything. Many policemen admitted seeing the corpses of those who had been shot during the search, but only two admitted having shot. Again, several policeman admitted having heard that all the patients in the Jewish "hospital" or "old people's home" had been shot on the spot., though no one admitted having actually seen the shooting or taken part.

The witnesses were least agreed on the question of how the men initially reacted to the problem of shooting infants. Some claimed that along with the elderly and sick, infant were among those who shot and left lying in the houses, doorways, and streets of the town. Others, however, stressed quite specifically that in this initial action the men still shied from shooting infant during the search and clearing operation. One policeman was emphatic "that among the Jews shot in our section of town there were no infants or small children.

I would like to say that almost tacitly everyone refrained from shooting infants and small children". In Jozefow as later, he observed, " even in the face of death the Jewish mothers did not separate from their children. Thus we tolerated the mothers taking their small children to the marketplace in Jozefow.

Another policeman likewise noted, " that tacitly the shooting of infants and small children was avoided by almost all the men involved. During the entire morning I was able to observe that when being taken away many women carried infants in their arms and led small children by the hand.

According to both witnesses, none of the officers intervened when infants were brought to the marketplace. Another policeman, however, recalled that after the clearing operation his unit (Third Platoon, Third Company) was reproached by captain Hoffman. "We had not proceeded energetically enough.

As the roundup neared completion, the men of First Company were withdrawn from the search and given a quick lesson in the gruesome task that waited them. The Battalion doctor and the company's first sergeant instructed them. One musically inclined policeman who frequently played the violin on social evening along with the doctor, who played a "wonderful accordion", recalled.

I believe that at this point all officers of the Battalion were present, especially our Battalion physician, Dr. Schoenfelder. He now had to explain to us precisely how we had to shoot in order to induce the immediate death of the victim. I remember exactly that for this demonstration he drew or outlined the contour of a human body, at least from the shoulder upward, and then indicated precisely the point on which the fixed bayonet was to be placed as an aiming guide.

After First Company had received instructions and departed for the woods, Trapp's adjutant, Hagen, presided over the selection of the " work Jews". The head of a nearby sawmill had already approached Trapp with a list of twenty-five Jews who worked for him, and Trapp had permitted their release. Through an interpreter Hagen now called for craftsman and able-bodied male workers. There was unrest as some 300 workers were separated from their families. Before they had been marched out of Jozefow on foot, the first shots from the woods were heard." After the first salvos a grave unrest grew among these craftsman, and some of the men threw themselves upon the ground weeping.... It had to have become clear to them at this point that the families they had left behind were being shot.

Lieutenant Buchmann and the Luxembourgers in First Company marched the workers a few kilometers to a country loading station on the rail line. Several train cars, including a passenger car, were waiting the work Jews and their guards were then taken by train to Lublin, where Buchmann delivered them to a camp. According to Buchmann, he did not put them in the notorious concentration camp at Majdanek but in another camp instead. The Jews were not expected, he said, but the camp administration was glad to take them. Buchmann and his men returned to Bilgoraj the same day.

Meanwhile, First sergeant Kammer had taken the initial contingent of shooter in First Company to a forest several kilometers from Jozefow. The trucks halted on a dirt road that ran along the edge, at a point where a pathway led into the woods. The men climbed down from their trucks and waited.

When the first truckload of thirty-five to forty Jews arrived, an equal number of policemen came forward and, face-to-face, were paired off with their victims.

Led by Kammer, the policemen and Jews marched down the forest path.

They turned off into the woods at a point indicted by captain Wohlauf, who busied himself throughout the day selecting the execution sites. Kammer then ordered the Jews to lie down in a row. The policemen stepped up behind them, placed their bayonet on the backbone above the shoulder blades as earlier instructed, and on Kammer's order fired in unison.

In the meantime more policemen of First Company had arrived at the edge of the forest to fill out a second firing squad. As the first firing squad marched out of the woods to the unloading point, the second group took their victims along the same path into the woods. Wohlauf chose a site a few yards farther on so that the next batch of victims would not see the corpses from the earlier execution. These Jews were again forced to lie face down in a row, and the shooting procedure repeated.

Thereafter, the "pendulum traffic" of the two firing squads in and out of the woods continued throughout the day. Except for a midday break, the shooting proceeded without interruption until nightfall. At some point in the afternoon, someone "organized" a supply of alcohol for the shooter. By the end of a day of nearly continuous shooting, the men had completely lost track of how many Jews they had each killed. In the words of one policeman, it was in any case "a great number".

When Trapp first made his offer early in the morning, the real nature of the action had just been announced and time to think and react had been short. Only a dozen men had instinctively seized the moment to step out., turn in their rifles., and thus excuse themselves from the subsequent killing. For many the reality of what they were about to do, and particularly that they themselves might be chosen for the firing squad, had probably not sunk in but when the men of First Company were summoned to the marketplace, instructed in giving a "neck shot", and sent to the woods to kill Jews, some of them tried to make up for the opportunity they had missed earlier. One policeman approached first sergeant Kammer , whom he knew well. He confessed that the task was "repugnant" to him and asked for a different assignment. Kammer obliged, assignment him to guard duty on the edge of the forest, where he remained throughout the day. Several other policemen who knew Kammer well were given guard duty along the truck route. After shooting for some time, another group of policemen approached Kammer and said they could not continue. He released them from the firing squad and reassigned them to accompany the trucks. Two policemen made the mistake of approaching captain (and SS-Hauptsturmführer) Wohlauf instead of Kammer. They pleaded that they too were fathers with children and could not continue. Wohlauf curtly refused them, indicting that they could lie down alongside the victim. At the midday pause, however, Kammer relieved not only these two men but a number of other older men as well. They were sent back to the marketplace, accompanied by a noncommissioned officer who reported to Trapp. Trapp dismissed them from further duty and permitted them to return early to the barracks in Bilgoraj.

Some policemen, who did not request to be released from the firing squad, sought other ways to evade. Noncommissioned officers armed with submachine guns had to be assigned to give so-called mercy shots " because both from excitement as well as intentionally (italic mine)" individual policemen "shot past" their victims. Others had taken evasive action earlier. During the clearing operation some men of First Company hid in the Catholic priest's garden until they grew afraid that their absence would be noticed.

Returning to the marketplace, they jumped aboard a truck that was going to pick up Jews from a nearby village, in order to have excuse for their absence. Others hung around the marketplace because they did not want to round up Jews during the search.

Still others spent as much time as possible searching the houses so as not to be present at the marketplace., where they feared being assigned to a firing squad. A driver assigned to take Jews to the forest made only one trip before he asked to be relieved. "Presumably his nerves were not strong enough to drive more Jews to the shooting site". Commented the man who took over his truck and his duties of chauffeuring Jews to their death.

After the men of first company departed for the woods, Second Company was left to complete the roundup and load Jews onto the trucks. When the salvo was heard from the woods, a terrible cry swept the marketplace as the collected Jews realized their fate. Thereafter, however,

a quite composure indeed, in the words of German witnesses, an "unbelievable" and "astonished" composure - settled over the Jews.

If the victims were composed, the German officers grew increasingly agitated as it became dear that the pace of the executions was much too slow if they were to finish the job in one day. "Comments were repeatedly made, such as, 'it's not getting anywhere!' and 'it's not going fast enough!'" Trapp reached a decision and gave new orders. Third Company was called in from its outposts around the village to take over close guard of the marketplace. The men of Lieutenant Gnade's Second Company were informed that they too must now go to the woods to join the shooters. Sergeant Steinmetz of Third Platoon once again gave his men the opportunity to report if they did not feel up to it. No one took up his offer.

Lieutenant Gnade divided his company into two groups assigned to different sections of the woods. He then visited Wohlauf's First Company to witness a demonstration of the executions. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Scheer and sergeant Hergert took the First Platoon of Second Company, along with some men of Third Platoon, to certain points in the woods. Scheer divided his men into four groups, assigned them each a shooting area, and sent them back to fetch the Jews they were to kill. Lieutenant Gnade arrived and heatedly argued with Scheer that the men were not being sent deep enough into the woods.

By the time each group had made two or three round trips to the collection point and carried out their executions, it was clear to Scheer that the process was too slow. He asked Hergert recalled, "that it would suffice if the Jews were brought from the collection point to the place of execution by only two men of each group, while the other shooter of the execution commando TOuld already have moved to the next shooting site. Furthermore, this shooting site was moved somewhat forward from execution to execution and thus always got closer to the collection point on the forest path. We then proceeded accordingly. Hergert's suggestion speeded the killing process considerably.

In contrast to First Company, the men of Second Company received no instruction on how to carry out the shooting. Initially bayonets were not fixed as an aiming guide, and as Hergert noted, there was a "considerable number of missed shots" that "led to the unnecessary wounding of the victims". One of the policemen in Hergert's unit likewise noted the difficulty the men had in aiming properly. "At first we shot freehand. When one aimed too high, the entire skull exploded. As a consequence, brains and bones flew everywhere.

Thus we were instructed to place the bayonet point on the neck. According to Hergert, however, using fixed bayonets as an aiming guide was no solution. "Through the point blank shot that was thus required, the bullet struck the head of the victim as such a trajectory that often the entire skull or at least the entire rear skull was torn off, and blood, bone splinters, and brains sprayed everywhere and besmirched the shooters.

Hergert was emphatic that no one in first platoon was given the option of withdrawing beforehand.

But once the execution began and men approached either him or Scheer because they could not shoot women and children, they were given other duties. This was confirmed by one of his men. "During the execution word spread that anyone who could not take it any longer could report". He went on to note, "I myself took part in some ten shootings, in which I had to shoot men and women. I simply could not shoot at people anymore, which became apparent to my sergeant, Hergert, because at the end I repeatedly shot past. For this reason he relieved me.

Other comrades were also relieved sooner or later, because they simply could no longer continue.

Lieutenant Drucker's Second Platoon and the bulk of sergeant Seinmetz's Third Platoon were assigned to another part of the forest. Like Scheer's men, they were divided into small groups of five to eight each rather than large groups of thirty-five to forty as in Wohlauf's First Company. The men were told to place the end of their carbines on the cervical vertebrae at the base of the neck, but here too the shooting was done initially without fixed bayonet as a guide. The results were horrifying. "The shooters were gruesomely besmirched with blood, brains, and bone splinters. It hung on their clothing.

When dividing his men into small groups of shooters, Drucker had kept about a third of them in reserve. Ultimately, everyone was to shoot, but the idea was to allow frequent relief and "cigarette breaks". With the constant coming and going from the trucks, the wild terrain, and the frequent rotation, the men did not remain in fixed groups. The confusion created the opportunity for work slowdown and evasion. Some men who hurried at their task shot far more Jews than others who delayed as much as they could. After two rounds one policeman simply "slipped off" and stayed among the trucks on the edge of the forest. Another managed to avoid taking his turn with the shooters together.

It was in way the case that those who did not want to or could not carry out the shooting of human being with their own hands could not keep themselves out of this task. No strict control was being carried out here. I therefore remained by the arriving trucks and kept myself busy at the arrival point. In any case I gave my activity such an appearances. It could not be avoided that one or another of my comrades noticed that I was not going to the execution to fire away at the victims. They showered me with remarks such as "shit head" and "weakling" to express their disgust. But I suffered no consequences for my action. I must mention here that I was not the only one who kept himself out of participating in the executions.

By far the largest number of shooters at Jozefow who were interrogated after the war came from the Third Platoon of Second Company. It is from them that we can perhaps get the best impression of the effect of the executions on the men and the dropout rate among them during the course of the action.

Hans Dettelmann, a forty-year-old barber, was assigned by Drucker to a firing squad. "It was still not possible for me to shoot the first victim at the first execution, and I wandered off and asked... Lieutenant Drucker to be relieved". Dettelmann told his lieutenant that he had a "very weak nature", and Drucker let him go. Walter Niehaus, a former Reemtsma cigarettes sales representative, was paired with an elderly woman for the first round. After I had shot the elderly woman, I went to Tony (Anton) Bentheim (his sergeant) and told him that I was not able to carry out further executions. I did not have to participate in the shooting any more... my nerves were totally finished from this one shooting.

For the first victim August Zorn was given a very old man. Zorn recalled that his elderly victim.

Could not or would not keep up with his countryman, because he repeatedly fell and then simply lay there. I regularly had to lift him up and drag him forward. Thus, I only reached the execution site when my comrades had already shot their Jews. At the sight of his countryman who had been shot, my Jew threw himself on the ground and remained lying there. I then cocked my carbine and shot him through the back of the head. Because I was already very upset from the cruel treatment of the Jews during the clearing of the town and was completely in turmoil, I shoot too high. The entire back of the skull of my Jew was torn off and the brain exposed. Parts of the skull flew into sergeant Seinmetz's face. This was grounds for me, after returning to

the truck, to go to the first sergeant and asked for my release. I had become so sick that I simply couldn't anymore. I was then relieved by the first sergeant.

George Kagler, a thirty-seven-year-old tailor, made it through the first round before encountering difficulty. "After I had carried out the first shooting and at the unloading point was allotted a mother with daughter as victims for the next shooting, I began a conversation with them and learned that they were Germans from Kassel, and I took the decision not to participate further in the executions. The entire business was now so repugnant to me that I returned to my platoon leader and told him that I was still sick and asked for my release". Kagler was sent to guard the marketplace. Neither his pre-execution conversation with his victims nor his discovery that there were Germans Jews in Jozefow was unique. Schimke, the man who had first stepped out, encountered a Jew from Hamburg in the marketplace, as did a second policeman. Yet another policeman remembered that the first Jew he shot was a decorated World War I veteran from Bremen who begged in vain for mercy.

Franz Kastenbaum, who during his official interrogation had denied remembering anything about the killing of Jews in Poland, suddenly appeared uninvited at the office of the Hamburg state prosecutor investigating Reserve Police Battalion 101. He told how he had been a member of firing squad of seven or eight men that had taken its victims into the woods and shot them in the neck at point-blank range. This procedure had been repeated until the fourth victim.

The shooting of the men was so repugnant to me that I missed the fourth man. It was simply no longer possible for me to aim accurately. I suddenly felt nauseous and ran away from the shooting site. I have expressed myself incorrectly just now. It was not that I could no longer aim accurately, rather that the fourth time I intentionally missed. I then ran into the woods, vomited, and set down against a tree. To make sure that no one was nearby, I called loudly into the woods, because I wanted to be alone. Today I can say that my nerves were totally finished. I think that I remained alone in the woods for some two to three hours.

Kastenbaum then returned to the edge of the woods and rode an empty truck back to the marketplace. He suffered no consequence; His absence had gone unnoticed because the firing squads had been all mixed up and randomly assigned. He had come to make this statement, he explained to the investigating attorney, because he had had no peace since attempting to conceal the shooting action.

Most of those who found the shooting impossible to bear quit very early. But not always. The then in one squad had already shot ten to twenty Jews each when they finally asked to be relieved. As one of them explained, "I especially asked to be relieved because the man next to the shot so impossibly. Apparently he always aimed his gun too high, producing terrible wounds in his victims. In many cases the entire backs of victims' heads were torn off, so that the brain sprayed all over. I simply couldn't watch it any longer. At the unloading point, sergeant Bentheim watched men emerge from the woods covered with blood and brains, morale shaken and nerves finished. Those who asked to be relieved he advised to "slink away" to the marketplace. As a result, the number of policemen gathered on the marketplace grew constantly.

As with First Company, alcohol was made available to the policemen under Drucker and Sinmetz who stayed in the forest and continued shooting. As darkness approached at the end of a long summer day and the murderous task was still not finished, the shooting became even less organized and more hectic. The forest was so full of dead bodies that it was difficult to find places to make the Jews lie down. When darkness finally fell about 9:00 P.M. - some seventeen hours after Reserve Police Battalion 101 had first arrived on the outskirts of Jozefow - and the last Jews had been killed, the men returned to the marketplace and prepared to depart for

Bilgoraj. No plans had been made for the burial of the bodies, and the dead Jews were simply left lying in the woods. Neither clothing nor valuables had been officially collected, though at least some of the policemen had enriched themselves with watches, jewelry, and money taken from the victims. The pile of luggage the Jews had been forced to leave at the marketplace was simply burned. Before the policemen climbed into their trucks and left Jozefow, a ten years old girl appeared, bleeding from the head. She was brought to Trapp, who took her in his arms and said, "you shall remain alive".

When the men arrived at the barracks in Bilgoraj, they were depressed, angered, embittered, and shaken. They ate little but drank heavily. Generous quantities of alcohol were provided, and many of the policemen got quite drunk. Major Trapp made the rounds, trying to console and reassure them and again placing the responsibility on higher authorities. But neither the drink nor Trapp's consolation could wash away the sense of shame and horror that pervaded the barracks.

Trapp asked the men not to talk about it, but they needed no encouragement in that direction. Those who had not been in the forest did not want to learn more. Those who had been there likewise had no desire to speak, either then or later.

By silent consensus within Reserve Police Battalion 101, the Jozefow massacre was simply not discussed. "The entire matter was a taboo". But repression during waking hours could not stop the nightmares. During the first night back from Jozefow, one policeman awoke firing his gun into the ceiling of the barracks.

Several days after Jozefow the Battalion, it would seem, narrowly missed participation in yet another massacre. Units of First and Second Company, under Trapp and Wohlauf, entered Alexzandrovw - a so-called street village composed of houses strung out along the road twelve kilometers west of Jozefow. A small number of Jews was rounded up, and both the policemen and the Jews feared that another massacre was imminent.

After some hesitation, however, the action was broken off, and Trapp permitted the Jews to return to their houses. One policeman remembered vividly "how individual Jews fell on their knees before Trapp and tried to kiss his hands and feet. Trapp, however, did not permit this and returned away". The policemen returned to Bilgoraj with no explanation for the strange turn of events. Then, on July 20, precisely one month after its departure from Hamburg and one week after Jozefow massacre, Reserve Police Battalion 101 left Bilgoraj for redeployment in the northern sector of the Lublin district.

Ordinary Men
Reserve Police Battalion 101
And
the Final Solution in Poland
By
Christopher Browning
New York: Harper perennial 1992

The horrible consequences

Of July 13, 1942

**Out of about 1,800 of the Town's Jewish
People**

About 400 were taken to labor camps

In the Lublin Area

**About 1,200 of the Town's Jewish People
were murdered**

In the forest, 2.5 km. west of Town

And were buried in mass graves

The rest were murdered in their homes or

In other places of Town

List of Families

(A to Z)

The names of the heads
Of Jewish the families who lived
In Jozefow Bilgorai until the beginning
Of World War II.

This list includes only the families registered in the Bilgorai District.

Additional Jewish families lived in the Town but there were not registered in the District's books as they lived in other households in Town.

The Source: The Archive of the Bilgorai District

**The evidence of the Jewish nationality lived in Jozefow near Bilgoraj till
the beginning of the second world war
(in alphabetical order)**

- 1. Aks Herszko**
- 2. Aks Gitla**
- 3. Auslander Jankiel**
- 4. Auslander Herszko**
- 5. Baumfeld Smill**
- 6. Baumfeld Josef**
- 7. Baumwolf Krandla**
- 8. Bergier Rechta**
- 9. Borgier Josef**
- 10. Bergman Szmul**
- 11. Bin Mindla**
- 12. Bin Symcha - His children and grandchildren living in Haifa-**
- 13. Blicht Icek**
- 14. Blikeman Bajmus**
- 15. Bojgiem Chaim**
- 16. Borek Jonta**
- 17. Bristman Moszko**
- 18. Bronsztajn Azral**
- 19. Cober Jankiel**
- 20. Ceber Moszko - The grandchildren lives in Haifa**
- 21. Dach Chaja**
- 22. Dach Jankiel**
- 23. Dach Szloma**
- 24. Dach Szyja**
- 25. Dach Szymon**
- 26. Dosal Chaim**
- 27. Dyksztajn Majlach**
- 28. Dyksztajn Mola**
- 29. Elbaum Bojla**

30. Elbaum Jankiel
31. Edelman Jokob
32. Ferszt Choma
33. Ferszt Lejzer
34. Ferszt Moszko
35. Ferszt Szmul - The father of Lea Tokarski and Moshe Ferszt
36. Faingold Jankiel
37. Fersztman Mortko
38. FinkJosef
39. Fiszel Heimoch
40. Fiszel Szprina
41. Fiszler Grul
42. Fecher Czarna
43. Foig Moszko
44. Fuchtel Choma
45. Fuchtel Jankiel
46. Fuchtel Ksyl
47. Fuchtel Pesla
48. Fuks Froim
49. Flomenbaum Pinkwas - The butcher of Jozefow -
50. Gilf Icek
51. Gnoschaim Judka
52. Goldberg
53. Goldsztain Szymtza
54. Goldgrober Chaim
55. Golsztain Boruch - He was the judenrat in Jozefow
56. Gortler Fiszel
57. Gortler Leiba
58. Gortler Herszko
59. Gortler Abram
60. Gortler Golda
61. Graf Albus
62. Graf Icek
63. Graf Lejzer
64. Grinberg Jura
65. Grinberg Szura
66. Grinberg Josef
67. Grinberg Leizer
68. Groschain Majew
69. Ginberg Suna
70. Greschaim Ita
71. Gupel Szymon
72. Gupel Modke
73. Herberg Majer
74. Herman Mindla
75. Hofman Moszko

76. Hus Icek
77. Honigsfeld Icek
78. Katekgise Here
79. Kaliksztain Lejba
80. Kaliksztain Gawid
81. Kalichman Pinkwas
82. Kalichman Szaja
83. Kalichman Ita
84. Kandel Herszko
85. Karp Fiszela
86. Karp Rejza
87. KarpMechel
88. Karp Kochman
89. Kelner Szndla
90. Kelner Dawid
91. Kelner Jankiel
92. Kechner Tewel
93. Kesel Noach
94. Klejner Szaja
95. Klendl Frenc
96. Klaner Wolf
97. Klajner Szaja
98. Kochan Zojwel
99. Kopf Moszko
100. Korn Moszko
101. Korn Rywa
102. Kramer Froim
103. Kramer Serla
104. Kramer Majer
105. Krimer Kopf
106. Krygzmer Mechel
107. Krygzner Jankiel
108. Kornfeld Szymon
109. Kupferberg Chawa
110. Lagierbaum Jankiel
111. Lajter Chaja
112. Laj ter Abram
113. Landau Josef
114. Langier Lejba
115. Lechter Herszko
116. Lefler
117. Lej cher Herszko
118. Lerner Lajba
119. Lerner Szulim
120. Lerner Benjamin
121. Lder Icek

122. Lerer Icek
 123. Listenberg Nesza
 124. Listenberg Izrael
 125. Listenberg Szulim
 126. Lobert Jankiel
 127. Luchtfeld Abram - The grandfather of Beverly
 128. Majzels Awdja
 129. Merensztajn Nuchim
 130. Mile Dawid
 131. Milc Szaja
 132. Mitler Berko
 133. Mitler Wolf
 134. Mojmon Josef - (Majman Josef) My grandfather. Father
 of Rivka Ben-Avigdor,
 Efraim Majmon and Chava Avni.
 135. Morcen Gitla
 136. Nadler Tewel
 137. Nadler Icek
 138. Nadler Feiga
 139. Nadler Josef
 140. Nnikielsberg Icek
 141. Nysel Szyja
 142. Nysel Lejba
 143. Orbuch Chaim
 144. Parzenczewski Szymo - The rabbi of Jozefow till w.w.2
 145. Peich Berko
 146. Pole Herszko
 147. Peszer Mpszko
 148. Pozer Cala
 149. Porter Josef
 150. PrincMojer
 151. Prezer Berko
 152. Prezer Alf er
 153. Prezer Josef
 154. Paner Berko
 155. Rejter Jankiel
 156. Rychter Szmul
 157. Rytman Dawid
 158. Spodek Genandla
 159. Spizajzen Gidola
 160. Struc
 161. Sichanfeld
 162. Szachter Szmul
 163. Szejer Beniamin
 164. Szlajcher Herszko
 165. Szlajcher Josef

166. Szlajcher Choma
167. Szlajcher Judka
168. Szlajcher Fejwel
169. Szlajcher Grud
170. Szlajcher Ksyl
171. Szlajcher Grul
172. Szlajcher Ira
173. Szlajcher Icek
174. Szlajcher Loja
175. Szlajcher Jankiel
176. Szlejcher Ludwig
177. Szlecher Szczepan
178. SzlejerJan
179. Szpringier Lejba
180. Szpigler Nachinan
181. Szlajer Szloma
182. Sznajdermesser Fewel
183. Sznajder Szulim
184. Szor Choma
185. Sztylfus Szmul
186. Sztemer Froim
187. Szyjer
188. Szyjer Szefer
189. Szwalb Mejlach
190. Szwarc Fejga
191. Szwarc Lejba
192. Szwarc Ginq
193. Szwarc Loja
194. Szwarc Choma
195. Szwarc Szloma
196. Szwarc Berko
197. Szwarc Finkla
198. Szwarc Icek
199. Szwarc Moszko
200. Szwarc Lipa
201. Szwarc Motyl
202. Szwajcer Fejwel
203. Tajer Szaja
204. Unterbuch Lejba
205. Unterbuch Mariam
206. Unterbuch Jankiel
207. Unterbuch Abram
208. Unterbuch Lejzer
209. Unterbuch Josef
210. Unfasong Zebman
211. Unfanung Ela

212. Wajc Szloma
213. Waks Jankiel
214. Waks Mechel
215. Waks Szura
216. Wajmajster Icek
217. Wakslich Ilerech
218. Waremsztain Etl
219. Waldman Szloma
220. Welc Chaja
221. Welczer Sana
222. Werman Szulim
223. Wertman Beniamin
224. Weremsztain Moszka
225. Weremsztain Icek
226. Weremsztain Frani
227. Wejber Lejba
228. Winder Moszko
229. Zceer Srul
230. Zeceer Piwna
231. Zylbersztain Abram
232. Zylbersztain Herszko
233. Zylbersztain Szulim
234. Zylbersztain Josef
235. Zysmilach Majer

- The grandfather of Sarita Haineman and Anita

To the Memory of

Our Families

Majmon

Zilberstein

Fersht

Luchfeld

And the rest of the families Who lived in

Jozefow

Sources

My Mother Hava Avni of the Majmon Family

•

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The photos in the booklet were collected by:
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We thank the teachers and students of the "Reut" School in Jerusalem who enabled
the exposure of my family members' graves
My Grandfather Joseph Zvi Meimon and his parents Menashe Meimon and Haya of
the Zilberstein Family

My grandmother's grandfather Rabbi Lipa Zilberstein and his Sister Miryl
My grandfather's sister Freida Malka Prescht, her Husband Rabbi Shmuel Hacohen
and their daughter Sarah Beila And the grave of Rabbi Shalom Joseph Hertzstark



