

# SWISS CRYPTO JEWS

סודות כי אמר בשאר הבריות תוצא  
הארץ תרשא הארץ ישראל המים  
ובאדם רצה לתת בו רוח עליונה לפיכ  
אם נעשה וכן בעלמנו הרוח בעלם  
עליונים והנוף בעלם התחתונים וכן  
יבא בלשון תפארת בארמי ופשריד  
נאמר קרם מלכא ואחיהם זולתו וכן  
מנהג בשאר הלשונות לדבר בלשון  
תפארת ליחיד ויש שיבא ללשון  
יחיד על רבים והוא אדרך כלל כמו  
ויהי לישוד וחמור כי אסחוס אסור  
והחמור אסור וירכנס על החמור  
ותעל הצפרדע ותהיה חכמה כרה  
תאמרו לאיש יבש גלעד ואיש  
ישראל נבש ויליד ביתו הם אכלו בלחם  
מכור בני ישראל לקח את הכסף סוחו  
צידון עבדים מלאוך כי נשמרה  
מבנמאשה לתת חרב בידם קבר  
פתח גרונם לשונם יחליקון נפישם  
לאישבע לא יקדחה קדחה

היורבים כמו שאמר להם ויושב את מש  
ואת אהרן וצדיקים ככפיד יבטרו  
וערקת צדיקים יסירו מכנו ויבא אלי  
אנשים נלכדה הקריות והמצרות  
נתפשה לא תכעד אשוריו כי מצפון  
יבא לה היטורדים וחטאתנו יצתה בנו  
וייענו קמה חכמות בהוץ תנה יהיה  
כמו תרוץ חכמות שרותיה תעננה וערו  
עלה בעת מצדה עלי שור והדומים  
להם וכן לשון רבים על יחיד מפני  
המלחמה אשר סבבוהו כי תקראנה  
מלחמה ברגלים תרמסנה עטרת גאון  
ידה ליתד תשלחנה יחפרו בעמק  
וישיש בכה נסו ואין דרך רשעים הר  
בננים מהנמלצו לחם אמרתך והרו  
להם ויש לתת טיפס בהם למה באו כן  
כמו שאני עתיד לבאר במלתות עפנו  
בשרשו בחלק ההענין והמשכיל יבין  
כל אהרן ואחד לפי מקומו ויש  
שיבאו בלשון תפארת ליחיד כמו

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# Introduction

My family did not actively practice any religion. The only time we went to church was for the occasional wedding or funeral. I grew up in a religion-free home. My parents were not against religions; they just did not factor into our daily, weekly, or yearly life.

At the age of 13, I found myself powerfully drawn to Judaism. I got all the books I could find on it at my local library and read them. I signed up for Hebrew classes at a nearby synagogue. I decided my religion was Judaism. I grew up in Virginia which at the time had a tiny Jewish community. I purposefully went to college in New York because I wanted to be around a larger Jewish community. I went to NYU and got a degree in Jewish history, language, and literature. I lived life as a Jew.

When I became actively involved with genealogy, I got a big surprise. All four of my grandparents were of Jewish ancestry. This fact was not part of my family story. All four of my grandparents had hidden Jewish ancestry. Their families had all immigrated from Switzerland, so more specifically, they had hidden Swiss Jewish ancestry. It seems my attraction to Judaism was in my blood.

## Swiss Crypto-Jews

I dare say, my interest in DNA ancestry testing, and the interest of millions of others, is on the rise. As of 2022, it has been estimated 26 million people have submitted DNA to discover their ancestral origins.

The “where is my family from” question and the interest in ancestry DNA testing it inspires is especially popular in the former colonies (i.e. North America, South America, South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, etc.). Those of us from the colonies, especially if our families got there before 1900, have only a vague notion of our origins. As in, "My family came from Italy," or "My family came from Germany," or "One side of my family came from Italy and the other side of my family came from Germany." Our family origin story is shadowy.

We know what we were told. We take what we are told, make assumptions, deductions based on that information, and fill in the blanks. But in real terms, most of us from immigrant nations may not know as much as we think we do about our origins.

Surprisingly, DNA testing in old world countries, Europe as an example, is gaining popularity. Interest in people who are from France, whose parents and grandparents are from France, is intriguing. One would think Europeans would have a good idea from whence their ancestors came. But, based on the growing number of Europeans using ancestry DNA testing services, it seems even Old World folks have some questions about their ancestry.

Whether in the New World or the Old World, genetic testing really throws some facts at what we thought we knew about ourselves and our origins. Sometimes the ancestry reports are exactly as expected. But just as often, there are surprises in the “ethnic origin” pie charts provided by the ancestry testing companies. I have heard of all

manner of surprises from ancestry testers. "I'm white, where did this 11% Sub-Saharan African come from?" "I'm Black, where did this 34% Scottish come from?" "I'm Latin where did this 23% Ashkenazic-Jewish come from?"

All testing companies warn testers they may have a surprise in store. After reading these warnings, what comes to mind is a surprise sibling or discovering your father is not your father. That doesn't happen often. What does happen quite often is a DNA history and a family history that do not match up.

When I got my first ancestry results, they did not match my family story. Perplexed, I had my DNA tested by My Heritage, Family Tree DNA (FTDNA), and Ancestry. In all four cases, my DNA ancestry results did not agree with my family story in the same way. My family story, as handed down to me by my parents, as handed down to them by their parents, was wrong. The disconnect between my family ancestry story and the hard, cold scientific DNA ancestry results raised some interesting questions: Questions I wanted answered.

To get a better handle on the situation, I had my mother, sister and my niece and nephew take the 23andMe ancestry test. Their results, like mine, did not jive with our family story.

My family story was as follows. My father is Colonial English on his mother's side and Swiss on his father's side. My mother is Mennonite German on her mother's side and German or German-Jewish on her father's side.

My DNA results, and those of my family mentioned above, revealed that all four grandparents were of mixed Jewish and European ancestry. The European bit of their ancestry came as no surprise. They had immigrated from Europe. The fact they all were of Jewish ancestry was the surprise.

To make sense of my DNA results, I dove into the world of genetic genealogy. The term means a lot of things to a lot of different people. To me, it means using history, genealogy, DNA ancestry reports and ancestry DNA research to get a more accurate view of ancestry.

To get to the bottom of my surprising DNA results, I built an ancestral tree that came to contain 60,000 people. I started it using the Ancestry.com family tree building tool, outgrew that service, and then moved to the online My Heritage family tree builder. I then took it offline and used Geneat.com, Geni.com, JewishGen.com and FamilySeach.org to fill in the missing pieces, using online genealogy resources to build my tree. To the genealogy purist, working online is not as good as going from courthouse to courthouse, but it fulfilled my objective: The collection of more information.

My family tree grew so large I had to chop it into four parts, one for each of my grandparents! Through building those four family trees, I discovered more surprising facts.

## Family Story versus Family Facts

Genealogy revealed that my family story was, at times, factually correct and, at times, as wrong as can be.

My paternal grandfather, Walter Schar, is said to have been of Swiss heritage. **Fact:** Walter Schar descended from parents and grandparents that immigrated from Switzerland.

My paternal grandmother, Mary Lawton, is said to have been of Colonial English ancestry. Some of her family is said to have arrived on the Mayflower. **Fact:** Mary Lawton's ancestors were a mix of Swiss and New England Colonial English immigrants. One of her ancestors did arrive on the Mayflower, in a manner of speaking. Her seventh great-grandfather, Peregrine White (b.1620-d.1704), was born ON the Mayflower while it was docked in the Boston Harbor.

My paternal grandfather, Paul Winkler, was said to have been of German ancestry, with some German-Jewish thrown in. **Fact:** Paul Winkler's ancestors were a mix of Swiss (probably Jewish) and Virginia Colonial English immigrants. His English ancestors landed in Virginia in 1607.

My maternal grandmother, Lillian Schrock, was said to be of German Mennonite ancestry. **Fact:** Almost all of Lillian Schrock's ancestors immigrated from Switzerland. Fifteen of her 16 great-great-grandparents came from Switzerland, with one great-great-grandfather from Scotland.

It was surprising to discover all my grandparents had Swiss ancestors. It was even more surprising to discover my mother and father are related to each other. And I mean closely related to each other. As it turns out, they both descend from a close-knit clannish group of intermarried Swiss people that immigrated to America. The only difference is this. My father's Swiss family immigrated to Pennsylvania. My mother's Swiss family immigrated to North Carolina. And like two blobs of mercury, the descendants of this Swiss clan found each other and came back together in Ohio when they married each other: Which officially makes me inbred.

My parents were following a family tradition. My maternal grandparents were distant cousins. My paternal grandparents were distant cousins. And my maternal and paternal grandparents were distant cousins.

In fact, the two blobs of mercury met as children. My father's grandfather, Isaac Yates Lawton, married my mother's aunt, Miriam Winkler. This was a second marriage for Isaac Yates Lawton. My father's mother comes from Isaac's first marriage. So, they met as children when their families intermarried. But they were already related by blood and by marriage.

The third interesting discovery was this: Many of these Swiss ancestors were not so Swiss. They were what I like to call Swiss-not-Swiss. What do I mean by this? While it is true that they lived in Switzerland for some undetermined period of time and immigrated

FROM Switzerland to America, it is not true that they match common Swiss DNA (Northern European).

In fact, a significant portion of my Swiss immigrant ancestors, both my mother's and my father's, given that they descend from the same intermarried family group, were of Jewish descent. As it is not part of the official story, I call this "Hidden Jewish" ancestry.

Since all four of my grandparents were of mixed European-Jewish descent and most of their families immigrated from Switzerland, it made sense to take a close look at Switzerland, the source of their Hidden Jewish ancestry.

Using history, genealogy, and DNA science, I got a handle on how I inherited so much Jewish ancestry. I discovered the potential sources of my hidden Jewish ancestry and got a big dose of European history, specifically, Swiss history and Swiss immigrant history.



# Swiss Immigration to America

I can't say that I was particularly interested in Swiss people or Swiss immigration to the American colonies, nor did I expect either subject to be particularly fascinating. I could not have been more wrong. There is quite a story here and it's not a pretty one.

Some white Americans like to imagine their immigrant ancestors were of some desirable class of European who made a lifestyle choice and came to America. Not me. I've always assumed that anyone, at any time, that got on a boat and came to the colonies had to be desperate to get away from something. Early on, if you came to America, you had a better than average chance of dying on the voyage or in the first few years of living in the colonies. It was a death sentence. Your chances of making it were not good. So, logic dictates life in Europe had to be pretty bad to risk making the journey. Your odds of making it in Europe had to be worse than taking your chances with long sea voyages, snakes, disease, hostile indigenous folk and more. Life in Switzerland had to be horrendous if immigration to the Americas looked like a preferable option.

As it turns out, this most certainly was the case with the Switzerland my ancestors left. They were escaping an impossible situation. Impossible. It included unending, incomprehensibly barbaric persecution by the Swiss establishment. My ancestors were literally running for their lives. Death on a boat or by snake bite was an upgrade compared to life in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Switzerland.

Today we think of Switzerland as the land of good chocolate, fine watches, excellent skiing, secretive banks, and neutrality. As I learned more about my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors, that notion got tossed in the dust bin. For my ancestors, 18th-century Switzerland was a house of horrors reminiscent of life during the Spanish Inquisition, the Czarist pogroms, Nazi Germany, and any other period of history marked by hate driven unspeakable behavior.

Before I introduce the fascist reality of the 18th-century Switzerland that my ancestors fled, a basic understanding of Swiss history would be helpful. In America, you will find books entitled "Lists of Swiss Immigrants in the 18th Century to the American Colonies"<sup>1</sup>. These would give you the impression Switzerland was a country in the contemporary sense of the word. It was not. The Switzerland my ancestors lived in was a loose federation of 13 cantons. The original Swiss federation dates to 1291 and included the Cantons of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden. Their claim to fame was that they controlled the Gotthard Pass, thereby controlling trade transiting from Southern Europe to Northern Europe and vice versa. In 1353, the Cantons of Lucerne, Zurich and Berne joined the federation. In 1513, Fribourg, Appenzell, Schaffhausen, Solothurn, and Basel were added. The Federation thus became one of 13 cantons.

The Swiss Federation of Cantons included rural and urban Cantons. They were independent of each other, hence the term "loose federation." They disagreed with each

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<sup>1</sup> Albert Bernhardt Faust and Gaius Marcus Brumbaugh, *Lists of Swiss Emigrants in the 18th Century to the American Colonies* (Washington, D.C.: Genealogical Publishing Co, Inc., 1920)

other at various times over various things. The one thing they had in common was this: In each canton, a small number of families held absolute power over a larger number of people who had no power. There are many books and PhD dissertations on the subject, but, in short, the families that controlled the cantons maintained their power by inflicting huge misery upon and/or killing anyone who stepped out of line.

Breaking news: My ancestors were not from a ruling family. They were from the powerless class, the many who lived at the whim of the few. Worse, they were people who stepped out of line.

My Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors were a clannish group of intermarried families that did not play by the rules of the cantons in which they lived. The various Swiss cantons directed a cruel, vicious attack on them. They were tortured and tormented, burned alive, decapitated, and drowned. They were the Swiss cantons' scapegoats. What is a scapegoat? Someone you blame for everything and anything that goes wrong. No rain? They blamed my ancestors. Disease rolled into town? They blamed my ancestors. Dip in the economy? They blamed my ancestors. It is no exaggeration to say that the cantons blamed all that went wrong in those days on my ancestors.

This very dark period in Swiss history (1700-1790) reveals atrocities were perpetrated against very specific groups of people. My ancestors were one of the groups of targeted people. These were the people who immigrated to America, and this is what they were trying to escape. Those that immigrated from Switzerland to America were desperate people, escaping a desperate life.

Immigration from Swiss hell to America happened in two waves. The first wave was between 1710 and 1790. The second wave occurred between 1850 and 1920. My ancestors came to America in the first wave. The first wave of immigration can be divided into two periods: state-encouraged emigration (1710-1720) and state-discouraged emigration (1720-1790).

## State-Encouraged Immigration

Around the year 1710, the Swiss Cantons, in particular Berne, came to see the American Colonies as a great way to get rid of the people they found undesirable. The Swiss authorities referred to them as paupers, squatters, and non-conformers. I think it was meant as an insult, but I rather like the phrase and have adopted it to describe my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors. Paupers, Squatters and Non-Conformers!

*The only occasion when the Swiss government ... encouraged emigration was at the very beginning, and by the Council of Berne ... It is of importance to note the motives that impelled the government of Berne to take up the matter. Emigration of the virile and well-to-do elements of the population was not what they intended, but they saw an opportunity of ridding themselves of what seemed to them two very undesirable classes of people. One of these was a pauper element, the homeless Landsassen, squatters not citizens. The other was the sectarian class, Baptists, Anabaptists, or Mennonites (Wiedertäufer, Täufer). The latter particularly were considered a source of danger to both Church and State: their refusal to bear arms or hold office, their simplicity of worship and*

*communistic tendencies, seemed to undermine the foundations of civil governments, of the Protestant and Catholic Churches alike.<sup>2</sup>*

For a very brief period of time, Berne actually paid these people to leave. Well, Berne paid for their voyage to America. Very quickly, the Berne government had a stampede of paupers, squatters and non-conformers making their way to the colonies. And, as much as they hated the undesirables, and they did hate them, the prospect of de-population became an even greater concern.

## State Discouraged Immigration

Thus we enter into the second period of immigration (1720-1790). This time in Switzerland was just psychotic. The Swiss cantons displayed full crazy in ways I will enumerate.

For starters, between 1720 and 1790, the various cantons intermittently allowed emigration and then forbade emigration. Some years, it was legal to emigrate from Berne but not from Luzern or the other way around. The Swiss cantons changed their policies from year to year. Swiss immigration policy had no consistency.

And then there would be this: By and large, the people who wanted to emigrate were non-conforming members of Swiss society. Some were social non-conformers. Some were religious non-conformers. Religious non-conformers would not submit themselves to either the Protestant or Catholic church. The Cantons hated these people. But rather than let them leave the country, they used loss of property, confiscation of children, torture and death by drowning, fire or hanging to bring non-conformers into compliance.

The Cantons were incredibly sadistic. Here is a choice example: Some of the religious non-conformers refused Protestant and Catholic baptism. So, the Swiss Cantons, Protestant or Catholic, drowned them. "You don't want to be baptized, fine. We will give you a watery death baptism." Sick, sick, sick. In the years immigration was illegal, Swiss immigration policy can be best described as "we hate you, but don't leave".

While refusing to let people leave, the Cantons were deadly serious about bringing the non-conformers into conformity. Unfortunately, the non-conformers were equally serious about not conforming.

*The most terrible and relentless persecution by courts specially appointed (Täufer-Kammer) and spies tracking the suspected to their homes (Täufer-Jäger), executions by fire and water (drowning, with intended irony), compulsory service in foreign armies or on the galleys of the Mediterranean, could not stop the ... sectarian doctrines.<sup>3</sup>*

It will come as no surprise, that torturing, burning alive and drowning people, did not lessen would be emigrants desire to leave. It only gave them more and more reasons to emigrate. In fact, it encouraged what I would call "run for your life" emigration.

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<sup>2</sup> Faust and Brumbaugh, *Swiss Emigrants in the 18th Century*, p.2

<sup>3</sup> Faust and Brumbaugh, *Swiss Emigrants in the 18th Century*, pp.2-3

Between 1720 and 1780, immigration was made very difficult. People had to pay an exit tax, leave their property to the state, and faced imprisonment or execution if they ever returned. If you left, it was a one-way trip.

Despite all the hardship thrown in their way, Switzerland was so bad for people that did not conform, they did make their way out at whatever cost. Historians estimate from 1720-1780, between 25,000 and 30,000 people escaped to freedom.

The amazing part of this totally schizophrenic and despotic 60-year period is this: It was recorded in detail and survives in detail in the Swiss archives. The historical record is so obscene, one would think the Swiss would have destroyed it to cover up their sordid history. But, oh no, it survives. Several thought-provoking stories can be ripped directly from the historical record.



## The Swiss Neighborhood Watch: *18th-Century Swiss version of the Inquisition, Gestapo, or KGB*

For you to understand these stories, I should make one fact clear. The Swiss were all about the neighborhood watch. The cantons cultivated a culture where neighbors ratted out neighbors, very similar to the way the Spanish Inquisition, Gestapo, Stasi and KGB operated. It seems each community, no matter how small, had someone watching everyone and reporting their observations back to the authorities. There were paid spies for sure, but people, ministers, priests, and/or just villagers, were all too happy to turn in non-conformers and or would-be emigrants. The Swiss authorities were diabolical, but the townspeople were complicit in this widespread evildoing. Paid professionals and volunteers alike kept tabs on people, turning them in without a second thought. These were written reports and they survive to this day.

A key point can be found in this part of the history. There were Swiss people who were a part of the mainstream and people who were outside the mainstream. The conformers hated the non-conformers to such an extent they had no problem consigning them to torture and death. This indicates there was a real social divide in the Swiss cantons.

The informants watched people for any signs of non-conforming behavior, religious or otherwise. If any was detected, people were turned in and tortured. The neighborhood watch also kept an eye out for anyone who was making any moves to leave, like selling farm implements, or not restocking supplies necessary for a person's trade. People thinking about leaving were also turned in for rigorous torture rehabilitation. My favorite part of these records is how specific the watchers were in their notes and observations. Here are some examples from research into my ancestors:

*Just at the same time there went away from here, to go to Carolina:*

*Hans Jacob Bachofen, baptized November 25, 1703.*

*Cleophela Wolgemuth, baptized August 16, 1707.*

*Married couple wedded here December 13, 1735.*

*At Basel they were dissuaded from their purpose. The woman came back, the man, however, sought a livelihood elsewhere, and found it with a charcoal-burner in Alsace, where he remains in a wretched condition.*

*This honest and pitiable man might have very well earned his bread here with weaving woolen fabric. But his wife in her evil ways not only deprived him of his food and household goods, but even abstracted some of the wool-yarn, so that he could not return the full weight, and finally lost him employment, which reduced him to this sad extremity. The above-mentioned woman has now*

*become vagrant, so in spite of all inquiries, I do not know where she may be ...  
Fehraltorff, April 2, 1744. Thus testifies Hans Jacob Wirtz, p.1.<sup>4</sup>*

Well, that is quite a story. Let me translate. A husband and wife decided to emigrate to Carolina. They were “dissuaded” from emigrating. Dissuaded in 17th-century Switzerland could have been whipping, a little time on the rack, maybe a little time in the stocks, a little thumb screw application. After being “dissuaded”, the wife and the husband go their separate ways. The evil wife sells the wool consigned to her husband for weaving. And then, poor Mr. Bachofen ends up making charcoal in Alsace. Mr. Wirtz knew quite a lot about one couple from one village; the neighborhood watch kept track of everything.

The joke may have been on Mr. Wirtz. This couple very likely made their way to the colonies, and just left a string of evidence that threw the authorities off their trail. Recall that there was a tax to be paid if you attempted to immigrate. This couple very well could have split up, lost the authorities, skipped paying the exit tax, and made their way out of Switzerland. When the Swiss made it tough for people to leave, people came up with work arounds. They left in the night.

Here is more evidence of the neighborhood watch in action. In this case, the local pastor, Caspar Brunner, was the witness informant.

*Martj Zehender, a young unmarried man, petitioned his older brother Hans Ulrich, he should give him 18 pounds, so that he might on Easter Monday go forth with those from Andelfingen to Carolina, and he would no longer then as before come to him in bad clothes and be a burden to him, and would also make no further claim to his inheritance. On that he would give a written pledge.*

*I said, that if he wished to give up his citizen's rights, he could apply at the proper place, but if not, his honest brother should not spend money as for the interest, and let the good-for-nothing waste it. After squandering it, he would come back, and then he would have to support him again." April 25, 1744. Paster Caspar Brunner.<sup>5</sup>*

Pastor Caspar had quite an opinion about Martj Zehender. Not only did he have bad clothes, if his brother assisted him in getting out of Switzerland, it would be a waste of good money. Pastor Caspar made notes on Martj and sent them into the authorities. He also he shared his opinion with Martj's brother.

Here, we get a great window into early immigration from Switzerland. Pastor Caspar held the would-be immigrant Martj Zehender in contempt because he had bad clothes. He had bad clothes because he was poor. A Christian pastor that holds the poor in contempt, that's a bit telling. But more telling, Pastor Caspar did what he could to keep him poor. He attempted to prevent Martj from going to a land where he might have good clothes.

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<sup>4</sup> Faust and Brumbaugh, *Swiss Emigrants in the 18th Century*, p.91

<sup>5</sup> Faust and Brumbaugh, *Swiss Emigrants in the 18th Century*, p. 89

Good news. Martj Zehender did make it to America. He appears in the passenger lists of Swiss immigrants to America. Though he does not appear on my family tree, I have Zehenders in my ancestry. As these people were clannish, married amongst themselves, acted as one and moved as one, he is probably a relative. And if history serves, the brother probably immigrated, too!

There are more of Pastor Caspar's words, and these are very revealing.

*This report I am glad to furnish, so that our poor people be spared needless governmental expenses. If the saving were only carried through in all things, particularly as concerns widows and orphans. For if despair once adopts another road, conditions would really be very bad, because God's severe judgment is to be feared.<sup>6</sup>*

Let me translate that gem. Good Pastor Caspar wants the poor people to be spared the indignity of government help? And he especially hopes widows and orphans could be spared the shame of government subsidy? He sincerely hopes the people with bad clothes take the right road, that they stay in their wretched condition in Switzerland, because, well, leaving a bad situation for a better situation would no doubt bring down the wrath of God on them. And this guy was a man of God? Root around the Swiss archives, there is lots of "good Christian" compassion to be found.

In the times when emigration was banned, encouraging people to emigrate was really banned. If you got caught inciting, promoting, or facilitating emigration, it could cost you your life. But people did go to the colonies, earn some money, and then sneak back to Switzerland to guide their relatives out. There were also paid "emigrant agents". If you think the Mexican coyotes guiding central Americans to safer lands is something new, think again. Many a Swiss pauper, squatter, or non-conformer, got out of Switzerland by paying "emigrant agents" to guide them out. But offering to help people escape Switzerland, either to save your relatives, or for pay, was a dangerous undertaking. To evade the local neighborhood watch, they had to be smart operators.

*The archives of Switzerland throw new light on the character and methods of the emigrant agent. Owing to the severe penalties placed upon the trade, he appears as a far more subtle individual than the traditional Neuländer.<sup>7</sup> ... Watchful eyes would have been upon him, and the reward would have been collected for his capture twice before he could have earned a single fee for bringing an emigrant to port. The successful emigrant agent was a person of an entirely different description, shrewd, tactful, inconspicuous, denying any purpose of his visit, except to collect a debt or inheritance for a friend in America. He was careful not to arouse suspicion and gave information only when asked for it. A good view of his methods can be derived from the records at Bern and Basel of trials (Verhöre) of persons suspected of enticing emigrants.<sup>8</sup>*

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<sup>6</sup> Faust and Brumbaugh, *Swiss Emigrants in the 18th Century*, p.89

<sup>7</sup> Person who came back to retrieve family

<sup>8</sup> Faust and Brumbaugh, *Swiss Emigrants in the 18th Century*, pp.12-13

When a 17th-century Swiss coyote got caught, they were subject to Inquisition-styled trials that did not end well. Once again, thanks to the Swiss archives, we have a detailed view of the undertakings through transcripts of the trials. Peter Huber, in 1742, got caught trying to help a dozen or more people escape Switzerland. The records of his trial are quite revealing. It appears in the Swiss Court. The Court asked and answered the questions. They also left no stone unturned. Huber's personal effects were searched top to bottom, looking for any evidence that he was in Switzerland to help people get out.

*New evidence was now brought against him; his baggage had been examined and a most interesting device for concealing letters was found therein.*

*Q.: Was he [Huber] not in possession of a wooden vessel [hölzernes Geschirr], the top of which would hold drink, and the bottom of which could be used for concealing letters?*

*A.: Yes, such a one was made for him by Hans Roth in Carolina, and could be found in his baggage."<sup>9</sup>*

Very cloak and dagger. Huber had a suitcase with a concealed secret compartment. And the Swiss deputy dogs found it.

*Q.: Since he [Huber] had thus far been very obstinate in denying answers to questions, at the same time had assured the court, that he would gladly confess all that was true, they wished now to see how earnestly he loved the truth: Did he not, the day before yesterday, throw [from his prison window] toward a woman of his part of the country [Oberland] , a piece of paper, on which was written, that those that still had a desire to travel with him, should go to Neufchâtel and tarry there a while, that he hoped his case was not so bad that he might not soon be free, and when at liberty he would come and in passing take them with him, they would then directly be in Burgundy, and could pass on unhindered.*

*A.: At this question he seemed altogether terrified, looked about him to one side and another, and for some time did not know what to say, and the tears came to his eyes. Finally he answered; Yes! He could not deny this; he had thought, that once free and finding these people outside the jurisdiction of Bern, he could take them along without doing any wrong, but he confessed being grievously at fault in this, and humbly besought God's and Their Graces' pardon ... March 21, 1742."<sup>10</sup>*

If I was a guest in one of the Swiss Hotels de Torture, I would have thought twice about throwing a note out the window to my relatives detailing future illegal immigration assistance services. Not the brightest move on the part of Huber the Coyote.

Somehow Huber wriggled out of the Swiss Torture Hotel in one piece. Not all coyotes were so lucky. And Huber and his collection of refugees made it to Carolina. He is one of my ancestors.

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<sup>9</sup> Faust and Brumbaugh, *Swiss Emigrants in the 18th Century*, pp.15-16

<sup>10</sup> Faust and Brumbaugh, *Swiss Emigrants in the 18th Century*, p.16



The Swiss neighborhood watch watched. They watched the paupers, squatters, and non-conformers. If they were suspected of practicing a non-state approved religion, the authorities tried to burn it out of them. If they had strange ways of being or doing, they were burned or hanged. If they were suspected of making plans to leave, they were “dissuaded”. It’s hard to imagine 30,000 people made it out, considering how difficult the Swiss establishment made leaving, but they did.

## My Paupers, Squatters, and Non-Conformers

I have 82 great-grandparents that emigrated from Switzerland, either to Carolina or to Pennsylvania, between 1720 and 1780. Having researched their four grandparents (328x4 of them) and their four grandparents (1312x4 of them) several things become clear to me.

My Swiss immigrant ancestors were from tight-knit family groups that married amongst themselves. They were all related to each other. To say they were clannish would be an understatement. They were social and religious non-conformers. They lived outside the establishment, were identifiable as a cohesive group, and were thus easily targeted. Some of them moved directly from Switzerland to North America. Some of my Swiss-not-Swiss undesirable ancestors made their way to France or Germany, and then to America.

### 82 Grandparents that immigrated from Switzerland to America 1720-1780

Name	Born Died	Resided In	Emigrated From
Bar, Anna Margaretha	1703-1759	Ratlisberg, Zurich, Switzerland	Switzerland
Beiler, Barbara	1723-1781	Guggisberg, Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Blankenberg, Johann Melchior	1744-1816	Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Blauch, Christian Gostelli	1743-1777	Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Boyer, Samuel	1700-1737	Switzerland	Switzerland
Breneman, Adam	1700-1760	Kreigsham, Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany	Germany
Brenneman, Melchior	1665-1737	Oberdiecsbach, Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Brolly, Catherine	1774-1836	Benfeld, Bas-Rhin, Alsace	France
Burkholder Sr, Jacob	1741-1823	Hasle, Bern	Switzerland
Conrad, Jacob	1757-1829	Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Ebesohl, Johannes	1710-1892	Oberhoffen, Thun, Bern	Switzerland
Eichelberger, Valentine	1748-1827	Bockenheim, Bad Durkheim, Rheinland-Pfalz	Germany
Forry, Cathrine	1712-1772	Basel, Switzerland	Switzerland
Frick, Magdalena	1800-1878	Sennwald, St.Galen, Switzerland	Switzerland
Geetha, Margaret	1685-1770	Switzerland	Switzerland
Gerber, Elizabeth	1843-1897	Raperswill, Bern	Switzerland
Gerig, Joseph	1800-1877	Melhausen, Switzerland	Switzerland
Glatfelder, Barbara	1725-1794	Glatfelden, Zurich, Switzerland	Switzerland
Gnaegi, Johannes	1720-1772	Bern, Switzerland	Germany
Grettler, Verena	1740-1796	Zell, Lucerne, Switzerland	Switzerland
Groff, Hans	1695-1749	Switzerland	Switzerland
Guth, Peter Leuenberger	1660-1730	Klottenm, Buelach, Switzerland	Switzerland
Herr, Barbara	1702-1742	Zurich, Switzerland	Switzerland
Hess, Johannes	1683-1733	Wald, Hiniwil, Zurich, Switzerland	Switzerland

Hildebrand, Johannes	1715-1782	Eschenmosen, Zurich, Switzerland	Switzerland
Hochstedler, Anna	1732-1782	Switzerland	Switzerland
Hochstetler, Jacob	1712-1776	Alsace, France	Switzerland
Hooley, Magdalena	1739-1820	Basel, Switzerland	Switzerland
Horst, Jacob	1715-1759	Wahlern, Berne, Switzerland	Switzerland
Huber, Johan Freidrich	1737-1779	Pfalz, Germany	Germany
Joder, Sweitzer Christian	1728-1816	Steffisburg, Switzerland	Switzerland
Joder, Christene	1797-1870	Alsace, Loraine, France	Switzerland
Joder, John	1732-1813	Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Joder, Magdalena	1715-1796	Switzerland	Switzerland
Joder, Magdalena	1726-1772	Steffisburg, Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Joder, Yost	1679-1742	Steffisburg, Switzerland	Switzerland
Jost, Eve	1694-1753	Germany	Germany
Kauffman, Barbara	1777-1844	Alsace, France	France
Kulwein, Elizabeth	1690-1760	Steffisburg, Switzerland	Switzerland
Kurtz, Johan Christoff	1694-1763	Haid, Altotting, Bayern, Germany	Germany
Kurtz, Johann Philips	1700	Slovakia	Slovakia
Liebenguth, Magdalena	1688-1767	Switzerland	Switzerland
Liechti, Daniel	1710-1763	Biglen, Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Lorentz, Anna	1701-1757	Thurgau, Switzerland	Switzerland
Martin, David	1691-1784	Zurich, Switzerland	Switzerland
Massa, Christine	1710-1783	Otterberg, Rheinland, Pfalz	Germany
Mast, Anna	1734-1781	Basel, Switzerland	Switzerland
Mast, Jacob	1737-1808	Guggisberg, Berne, Switzerland	Switzerland
Miller, Nicholas	1754-1784	Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Nissley, Joseph	1675	Switzerland	Switzerland
Oyster, John George	1706-1789	Baden-Württemberg, Germany	Germany
Pfluger, Hans Georg Friedrich	1701-1759	Wiernsheim, Baden-Wurtenberg	Germany
Ramseyer, Johannes	1780-1853	Einkenweil, Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Reich, Jacob	1735-1795	Rheindurkheim, Worms, Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany	Germany
Reich, Jacob	1796-1885	Sennwald, St.Galen, Switzerland	Switzerland
Rickenbacher, Hans Adam	1726-1802	Basel, Switzerland	Switzerland
Ritter, Francis	1710-1785	Switzerland	Switzerland
Rohrer, Johannes	1701-1771	Markirch, Alsace, France,	France
Roos, Barbara	1685	Germany	Germany
Schar, Nicholas	1836-1915	Raperswill, Bern	Switzerland
Schmidt, Anna	1730-1815	Alzey-Worms, Rheinland-Pfalz	Germany
Schmucker, Barbara	1770-1825	Montebeliard, France	France
Schnader, Margaret	1749-1816	Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Schrag, Caspar	1745-1814	Saales, Bas-Rhin, Alsace, France	France
Sherk, Joseph	1710-1770	Sumiswald, Berne, Switzerland	Switzerland
Showalter, Ulrich	1743-1816	Schafbusch, Alsace, France	France
Snavely, Elizebeth Hester	1710-1787	Noord Brabant, Holland	Holland
Sommer, Regula	1712-1767	Zell, Lucerne, Switzerland	Switzerland
Stauffer, Jacob	1712-1768	Eggiwil, Signau, Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Steck, Magdalena	1710-1760	Switzerland	Switzerland
Stehli, Heinrich	1713-1801	Zurich, Switzerland	Switzerland
Stehlman, Elizabeth	1670-1737	Oberdietsbach, Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Stucki, Johannes	1710-1786	Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Stutzman, Johann Jakob	1705-1775	Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Watterson, John	1720-1756	Grenoble, Isere, Rhone-Alpes, Alsace	France
Welsch, Johan	1721-1789	Sankt Wendel, Saar, Germany	Germany

Widmer, Elsbeth	1715	Biglen, Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Winkler, Condradt	1708-1790	Zell, Lucerne, Switzerland	Switzerland
Zahler, Anna	1717-1800	Meiringen, Bern, Switzerland	Switzerland
Zug, Moritz	1715-1808	Baden-Württemberg, Germany	Switzerland

The Swiss establishment called my ancestors paupers, squatters, and non-conformers. Looking at these three terms individually tells you a lot about my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestry.

## Paupers

Who were the paupers? My research reveals the paupers were often tradesmen of various sorts. My pauper ancestors were bakers, barrel makers, blacksmiths, carpenters, leatherworkers, glass makers, glaziers, hedge and scabbard makers, joiners, knife makers, goldsmiths, locksmiths, masons, menders, millers, peddlers, resin scrapers, ropemakers, shoemakers, tanners, tailors, tilers, turners, wagon makers, weavers, and wheelwrights.

One could question why people with skills were paupers? The answer is pretty simple. They were neither landowners nor peasants. They did not fit into the agrarian system. Their contribution was not valued, and, in fact, tradesmen were looked down upon. Religious scruples did not allow Jews and other non-Christians to be involved in food production. They lived at the sufferance of the aristocrats. They were taxed heavily and paid poorly. Because they did not earn enough money to have savings, when there was no income, there was no food. If a weaver died, and left a wife and children behind, they became paupers. The Swiss Aristocracy kept tradesmen paupers.

*In Bern, Zürich, Basel, Luzern, Appenzell, Fribourg, Vaud, and elsewhere, the ruling classes often composed of a few patrician families, bore down heavily upon the city and country folk, depriving them of all possibility of rising above their wretched condition, and enacting offensive laws, such as those forbidding artisans to carry wares under the arcades (Lauben) of Bern, so that the patricians might walk through them in comfort, or closing the vegetable market to all but the noble class until 11 am.<sup>11</sup>*

“Depriving them of the possibility of raising above their wretched condition” is a complete and telling sentence. People, my people, were made paupers by the system in which they lived. They had been paupers, they were paupers, and were always going to be paupers. As long as the power structure remained in place, they were going to have “bad clothes”

## Squatters

This is a really interesting term. When we think of squatters, we think of people who move into a vacant home and stay without permission. In the context of my Swiss ancestors, the meaning is more profound. There were three kinds of squatters.

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<sup>11</sup> Faust and Brumbaugh, *Swiss Emigrants in the 18th Century*, p. 6



In one sense, it meant foreigner. People who did not belong. They were squatting in Switzerland and did not belong in Switzerland. And indigenous people knew it. Their names often told the story. One of my family names is Welsch (Johan Michael Welsch, 1721-1789). In Swiss German, Welsch meant foreigner from Southern Europe. Another family name, Gallati, comes from a town in Romania of the same name. These two undesirable ancestors are examples of squatters. The Swiss did not see them as Swiss.

It should be remembered that residence in a town or a country, even long term, did not remove your squatting status. Throughout Europe, including Switzerland, Jews that lived continuously in the same town or city, from the seventh century until the 19th century, were seen as squatters. Jews were not granted citizenship in Switzerland until January 1866! They were always seen as aliens and never as citizens. Thus, squatters were not necessarily recent immigrants to Switzerland. They were just seen as "Not Swiss" regardless of how long they resided there.

In another instance, squatters were people who had previously been homed, but had been made homeless: The homeless Landsassen or country people. These people had been tenants of an aristocrat and had been kicked out or off their rented premises. And thus they were made homeless. These folks rented the land on which they farmed or worked, were unable to pay or got on the wrong side of the aristocracy and were kicked out of their homes.

Squatters of this variety, homeless people, had to live in wagons and had to move around. They were continuously kicked out of wherever they parked their wagons and were moved along. They lived where they could as long as possible, and then rolled their wagons to their next campsite.

Then there were the Radgenossenschaft der Landstrasse, the people of the country road. These were people who lived in wagons, moved from town to town, and chose to live a nomadic lifestyle. It is likely these were Romani people.

It is hard to distinguish between who chose to live in wagons as a way of life and those that were forced to live in wagons because they had no home. But it does appear they were two different groups of people and they both existed in Switzerland at the time my family fled the country.

## Non-conformers

The non-conformers of 18th-century Switzerland were either social non-conformers, religious non-conformers, or both. Social non-conformers would include revolutionaries, witches, and gypsies. Religious non-conformers would include non-conforming Christians (not Catholic, not Protestant) and Jews. If you fell into any one of these groups of non-conformers, you had a bullseye target on your back. The neighborhood watch was watching you and the authorities followed through with torturing, burning, and drowning the non-conformer out of you. And my ancestors fell into all five categories.

## Revolutionaries

The Swiss cantons, ruled by the elite, kept the people down. The cantons did not tolerate any dissent. Occasionally, people did step out of line, demand more than the scraps the rich families threw them, and they were suppressed in the most vicious manner imaginable. Despotic repression was episodic in the period between 1291 and 1800. In the 1700s, as oppression increased, revolts became more common. Some ill-fated attempts of the powerless to get some power include:

- The revolt of Toggenburg against the abbot of St. Gallen (1707)
- The revolt of Geneva against the aristocrats of the city (1707-1738)
- The revolt of Wilchingen against Schaffhausen (1717 - 1729)
- The revolt of Werdenberg against Glarus (1719 - 1722)
- The revolt of Major Abraham Davel in Lausanne (Vaud) against Bern (1723)
- The revolt of the peasants of Jura against the prince-bishop of Basel (1726 - 1739)
- The "Henzi Conspiracy" in Bern (1749)
- The revolt of the Leventina (Ticino) against Uri (1755)
- The revolt of Chenaux (Fribourg) against Fribourg (1781)

Most of these revolts had to do with people with being taxed to death. At a point, they demanded a reduction in taxation. More breaking news: These revolts ended badly for the revolutionaries. The revolutionaries were decapitated, cut into four pieces, and their body parts nailed to public places. The Swiss cantons may not have agreed on all things, but they did agree that if anyone at any time challenged their authority, their head was coming off. If they were lucky to escape beheading it was because the sadistic Swiss also liked to burn people alive. Suffice it to say, anyone suggesting a reduction in taxes had too much head above the neck and the Cantons did what they could to rectify the situation.

Despite the risks, revolutionaries did rise up. The wealth disparity between the aristocrats and the "others" was so great that the poor developed radical views towards the church, the aristocracy, wealth, government, and authority.

One such man and relative was Rudolph Goldschmid. There is not much information available about him. What is known is that he came from the Goldschmid family of Richterswil, Zurich. Just as in all the other cantons, the Zurich aristocracy taxed people to starvation. Rudolph had had enough, and said, "Let's refuse to pay our taxes." He organized the "1645-1646 Wadenswil Tax Revolt". He was known as the Richterswiler Weibel Rudolf Goldschmid. The revolt failed and the aristocracy had Rudolph decapitated.

The Goldschmids of Richterswil had various spellings of their name Goldschmid, Goldschmidt and Goldschmit included. Goldschmid is an occupational name and indicates that when the family got a name, they were goldsmiths. The first recorded family member was Karli Goldschmid (b. 1400) of Winterthur, Switzerland. In 1400, goldsmithing was a Jewish profession. As such, there is a better than average chance the Goldschmid family were Jewish goldsmiths living in Winterthur.

When the plague came to Winterthur in 1350, as per the usual, the Jews were accused of causing it. An anti-Jewish mob attacked the Jewish community, and the Jews of Winterthur took refuge in the Castle Kyburg. There, they were protected by their benefactor Duke Albrecht of Austria. They were safe behind the castle wall for a while. But the mob continued to demand the Jews be burned at the stake for causing the plague. Duke Albrecht held out but eventually succumbed to the mobs demands. On September 18, 1349, 330 Jews were burned at the stake. Some Jews opted for baptism and avoided being burned at the stake. That was the get-out-of-the-pyre card.

Shortly after the Jews of Winterthur either converted or were burned alive, the Goldschmid family moved 52 kilometers south to Richterswil. Johan Rudolf Goldschmid, Karli Goldschmid's grandson, was born and died in Richterswil. The family lived in Richterswil for 100 years. In that time, they became Mennonites and produced one revolutionary.

Following the revolt engineered by Rudolph Goldschmid, and his execution, several Goldschmid brothers decided to leave Richterswil. Probably a smart decision as they would have been under the watchful eye of Zurich canton inquisitors. Being related to a revolutionary and belonging to a non-conforming religion was strong incentive to move on. The brothers made their way to Markirch, Alsace, France. My seventh great-grandfather, Heinrich Goldschmid, was born 1691 in Richterswil, and died in 1755 in Markirch, Alsace. His son, Jacob Goldschmid (b.1722-d.1771), lived and died in Markirch. His daughter, my fifth great-grandmother, Maria Elisabeta Goldschmid (b.1752-d.1846) married Christian Gerig (b.1749-d.1801) and they immigrated to Pennsylvania. The Richterswil Goldschmids made their way out of Richterswil and on to Germany, France, and America.

One revolutionary in the family is bad enough. My family tree is graced with yet another ancestor that opened his mouth and lost his head. Niklaus Leuenberger (b.1615-d.1653), another relative, led the famous "Swiss Peasant War of 1653". I did not know about the revolt until I started reading Swiss history. In Swiss history this revolt was famous, as was its leader.

This "war" was a popular revolt that nearly took the aristocracy down. A devaluation of the Bernese currency caused a tax revolt, spreading from the Entlebuch Valley in Canton Lucerne to the Emmental Valley in Canton Berne and then into the Cantons of Solothurn, Basel, and Aargau. In short, the people's money was worth less and they demanded their taxes be reduced accordingly. The Cantons refused. The peasants from the various Cantons united and formed the "League of Huttwil". They took up arms and threatened to surround the cities and blockade them. The Cantons would not budge. And then the surprise came. The peasants attacked Bern and Lucerne. And they attacked both with such ferocity that the Cantons were suddenly willing to negotiate. Cousin Niklaus, rebel leader, negotiated a settlement with the Cantons. Happy ending? Not in Switzerland.

The Cantons used the peace treaty, and the retreat it caused, to double cross the poor. They used the temporary peace to gather their resources and massacre the rebels. Breaking news: In Swiss aristocracy versus poor Swiss minorities, the minorities lost. Cousin Niklaus was handed over to the Berne authorities on August 27, 1653. Berne

decapitated him. He was then drawn and quartered. To send a clear message to anyone who might question authority and think about acting up, Niklaus's head was nailed to the gallows. His four body parts were exhibited on the four highways that lead in and out of Berne. The message to his relatives and people from his minority group was, "Keep your mouth shut and stay in line or we will cut you into pieces." While it lacked subtlety, the Berne authorities made themselves clear.





Who were the Leuenbergers? Well, the Leuenberger family appeared in Switzerland in the 16th century. The first known progenitor of the family, Niklaus Leuenberger, Senior, was born in Rüderswil, Signau, Berne in 1511. The name is likely a Swiss variant of Lowenberger. Lowen, Lowenberger, Lionberger, all traditionally German-Jewish surnames and can be found in "A Dictionary of German-Jewish Surnames".<sup>12</sup> Their last name indicates they were likely of Jewish origin. Where they came from before they appear in Switzerland is unknown. A telling fact regarding the family is Niklaus Leuenberger, the revolutionary, was literate. This suggests the family was literate and that was unusual for people of this lower socioeconomic bracket of the time.

Fortunately for Niklaus Leuenberger, Senior, he had other children besides Niklaus Junior. Niklaus Senior's other children are my ancestors. While his surviving children did manage to avoid being decapitated and cut into four pieces, one can imagine life in Switzerland, after your brother staged a revolt was, to say the least, a little tense. At about this time, the surviving Leuenbergers began to immigrate to America.

The fact my intermarried clannish family produced two Swiss revolutionaries is telling. One revolutionary in a family group would mark that family for persecution, but two in the same family group spelled trouble. It also indicates these family groups thought differently from most local people. They thought to revolt.

## Witchcraft and Witches

Swiss witches are a very interesting category of social non-conformer. I have found no evidence there was any active witchcraft in Switzerland in the 18th century. Basically, there is no evidence there were any self-proclaimed witches in Switzerland. Despite this, the Swiss executed more witches than any other country in Europe. No active witchcraft community combined with more witch executions than any other country, is perplexing. If the Swiss Cantons accused someone of witchcraft, convicted them, and executed them, you know only one thing. He or she was not a witch.

It turns out, accusations of witchcraft were a very handy way for the Cantons to dispose of anyone, at any time, for any reason. If you were a religious non-conformer, be it Mennonite or Jew, or a social non-conformer, say a poor woman or a woman with an opinion or successful businessperson, you were vulnerable to accusations of witchcraft and being burned at the stake. If someone simply accused a person of witchcraft, they were done. Finished. Dead. The Swiss authorities had a 100% conviction rate for accused witches. A person was accused of witchcraft, they were tortured until they admitted to being a witch, and then they were decapitated or burned alive. History reveals they were guilty of something, but it was not witchcraft. In short, they didn't follow the rules.

One of my Swiss-not-Swiss relatives was the last witch executed in Europe. Quite an honor. Anna Göldi (b.1734-d.1782) led an interesting life, which obviously ended badly. First, she had an affair with a Swiss mercenary, became pregnant, and gave birth to a child out of wedlock. The child died at birth, and conveniently Anna was charged with murdering the child. She was put under house arrest. Being trapped in the house did

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<sup>12</sup> Lars Menk, *A Dictionary of German-Jewish Surnames*, (Bergenfield, New Jersey: Avotaynu, 2005)

not work for Anna so she escaped and went to work for the Zwicky family. She gave birth to yet another child, this time the son of her employer. I suspect this did not thrill Mrs. Zwicky. Anna was forced to find work elsewhere. She then went to work for a certain Jakob Tshudy.

Jakob Tshudy and Anna had quite a good working relationship, indeed too good. They began an extra-marital affair. History reports that when Anna threatened to reveal the affair, Jakob Tshudy accused her of witchcraft. Under torture, Anna admitted to being a witch. When she was not being tortured, she recanted. The Swiss courts would not admit her recant into evidence, only admitting her admission under torture into evidence. On June 13, 1782, at the age of 48, she was sentenced to death and decapitated. A historian of that time, August Ludwig Von Scholzer, called it a judicial murder, "the murder of an innocent, deliberately, and with all the pomp of Holy Justice".

Anna Göldi was one of many "witches" executed in Switzerland. In an a very revealing article entitled, "No One Tortured Witches Like the Swiss", Isabelle Eichenberger reports the Swiss were just crazy about witch killing. Remember, there were no witches in Switzerland. They burned more witches per capita than any other country in Europe. Between the 15th and 18th century, the Swiss burned 6,000 people accused of witchcraft.

*From the Middle Ages, there was always a need to find someone to blame for disasters or epidemics. The scapegoat was accused of performing witchcraft or being in league with Satan.*

*A rebellious attitude or simply being outside the norms of society was enough to attract attention of the authorities at the time.*

*The next stage was torture, using methods-included simulated drowning-that would have made anyone admit they had murdered their mother and father, right or wrong.*

*For researchers, it was torture and religious fanaticism that created witches.*

*The political authorities used witchcraft trials to assert their position and tighten their grasp on the population, particularly in the country-side.*

*During the 15th century, most of the trials involved men who refused to submit to the religious or political authorities.*

*But, in the 16th, and even more in the 17th centuries, once secular power was well established, accusations of witchcraft were used to regulate law and order and impose social discipline.*

*Woman made up to 70 to 80 percent of those executed. They were mainly guilty of being poor, single, and female.<sup>13</sup>*

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<sup>13</sup> Isabelle Eichelberger, *No One Tortured Witches Like the Swiss*, Swissinfo.ch, September 14, 2009  
<https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/culture/no-one-tortured-witches-like-the-swiss/32908>

Basically, if the neighborhood watch caught you breaking the rules, local people found your behavior not to their liking, or you weren't conforming, you were accused of witchcraft. You were tortured. You admitted you were a witch, and had your head chopped off or were burned alive. This was especially true if you were a woman. Women with an opinion were popular targets.

Anna Göldi, executed witch, was the cousin of my sixth Great-Grandmother Anna Göldi (b.1729) and the second cousin of my fifth Great-Grandmother Magdalena Göldi (b.1761-d.1822). My sixth Great-Grandmother Anna Göldi married Adam Roduner (b.1718-d.1772) who was also a cousin of the executed witch Anna Göldi. Due to the rampant cousin marriage in the family, the executed "not witch" Anna Göldi is related to my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors in many other ways.

The last name Göldi may indicate the family was in trouble before they had a witch in the family. The family last name Gold (i) is derived from Gold. Gold, attached to any ending, Goldblum, Goldfarb, Goldstein, Goldman, was a historically Jewish surname. Even more interesting, my sixth Great-Grandmother's mother, Anna Göldi, had "Gold" on both sides of her family. Her mother was Elsebeth Auer (b.1705). Aur is derived from the Latin Aurum, or gold. Auerstein is another traditionally Jewish last name. Thus Aurer or Gold-er, was another last name referring to gold. Thus, my Anna Göldi's parents both had a last name indicating gold. The family well may have been converted Jewish goldsmiths or Jewish people in the gold business in some capacity.

My family tree has at least four people who were burned as witches, Anna Göldi being one of the more famous victims. Most of these victims, my family members included, are just forgotten, nameless faceless victims of 18th-century Swiss injustice.

My mother always got after my sisters if she thought they were being "mouthy". Well, it appears her concern comes from her heritage. Mouthy women got burned alive in the land of her forebears.

I grew up in big houses on big plots of land. My mother could have chopped us up with a chain saw and no one would have heard the screams. But if we raised our voices, she would say, "Lower your voices, the neighbors will hear." I always thought, "How? How would they hear?" Three hundred years after her ancestors fled the neighborhood watch, and the pyre, she was still concerned about the neighbors hearing anything.

My father, on the other hand, told us we were not allowed to tell anyone anything about anything. I suspect both the "keep your voice down" policy and the "don't tell anyone anything" policy were legacies of their ancestor's precarious life in Switzerland. In Switzerland, if you made noise, or told anyone anything about yourself, you were likely to be the victim of "judicial murder". My ancestors learned to keep their voices down and to say nothing to the people outside the family circle. Those traditions were passed generation to generation from 1770 until 1970!

On the bright side? September 20, 2007, 226 years after Anna Göldi's judicial murder, the Swiss parliament acknowledged that Anna Göldi was the victim of a miscarriage of justice. Fritz Schiesser, the representative for Glarus, called for Anna Göldi's exoneration. It was granted August 27, 2008, on the grounds she had been subjected to

an illegal trial. The Swiss establishment finally admitted the truth: Jakob Tshudy, Anna's employer, and lover, turned her in for being a witch when she threatened to expose their affair.

Let us not forget, Anna Göldi gave a confession while being tortured. She retracted her confession when she was not being tortured. The evangelical court would only admit her torture-extracted confession. It only took the Swiss 226 years to apologize for their crime.

Glarus dedicated a memorial for Anna Göldi in 2014. Two lamps were installed on either side of the Glarus courthouse, meant to be an eternal light and life for the falsely accused and murdered woman. She also got a plaque. The two lamps are meant to draw attention to the injustice that befell her at the hands of the government.

Walter Hauser, author of a book on the life of Anna Göldi said this in an interview for the online magazine Swissinfo.ch, *"The memorial is an expression of atonement for the injustice that took place here. It will be an eternal light for Anna Göldi."*

August 20, 2017, the Anna Göldi Museum was opened in the Hänggiturm building. She has been the subject of a novel, a film, and a musical. (The musical does raise some interesting questions. I'm thinking dark musical.) This was justice of a sort for Anna Göldi, but it did nothing for the thousands of nameless, faceless people who were accused, convicted, and murdered by the Swiss on grounds of witchcraft. By all accounts, these men and women were mostly guilty of not "fitting into" the Swiss cultural norms.

## Gypsies (Romani People)

My mother, rather inexplicably, carries 2% Indian-Subcontinent Indian DNA. How Indian DNA entered her ancestry story is a real mystery. But there are some possibilities. It turns out there was a Gypsy (Romani) presence in Switzerland in the 15th century. The Romani were and are a travelling/nomadic people that left India at some undetermined time and began migrating west. A proposed Romani timeline is as follows:

600-1000 AD----- Romani left Northwest India to work in Middle Eastern Courts  
They apparently lived for some time in Egypt before migrating to Europe. The term Gypsy comes from a corruption of "Egyptian".

1100 AD----- Romani made their way to the Byzantine Empire

1300-1400 AD----- Romani settled in Serbia

1407 AD----- Romani entered Germany but were expelled 10 years later

1418 AD----- Romani entered France

1422 AD----- Romani entered Rome

1425 AD----- Romani entered Spain

One of the world's leading experts in Romanies, Donald Kendrick, had to this say about Switzerland and the Gypsies:

*Between 1418 and 1422 Gypsies came to Basel, Bern, and Zurich as pilgrims with letters of recommendation. They were given food and wine and then escorted of the towns. In 1471, however, the Parliament of the Swiss Confederation, meeting in Lucerne, expelled Gypsies from the land. In 1510 the*

*penalty of hanging was introduced for any Gypsies found in Switzerland. This edict was repeated six times in the years up to 1530. Nevertheless, in 1532, a company of 300 Gypsies appeared on the outskirts of Geneva. It evidently took some years before all the Gypsies were finally expelled, as is indicated by a decree in Graubünden in 1571 ordering any Gypsies who were captured to be sent to be galley slaves (one wonders whose galleys these would be). During the following centuries, very few Romani came to Switzerland, and as late as the middle of the 20th century they were still being turned back at the borders-even Romanies in cars intending to pass through the country in transit.<sup>14</sup>*

The only people 18th-century Europeans hated more than the Jews was the Romani. They had their own language, customs, variable religion, and were not interested in fitting in. The basic Swiss policy towards non-conformers, was, as ever, "Kill them." And it seems the Swiss did, in fact, kill a fair few Romani. But apparently, they did not kill all of them because my family carries Indian DNA.

## Gypsies (Jenisch People)

I cannot leave my undesirable Swiss ancestry without mentioning my link to the Jenisch people. The people derive their name from their language, Jenisch. A nomadic clan, over 35,000 Jenisch make their home in Switzerland. There are various theories as to their origins. Some say they came into being in the 18th century, about the time my ancestors were leaving Switzerland. They were made homeless for reasons unknown; they took to living in wagons and travelling from town to town. Others suggest they are a branch of the Romani people that took up residence in the Rhine, Switzerland, and northern France. No one seems to know for sure from whence they came.

Professionally, they lived and worked out of the Swiss mainstream. They made their living working as tinkerers, broom makers, blacksmiths, knife makers, glass grinders, and show people. They peddled their goods door to door. They danced and sang for their supper.

The secret of their origins may be revealed by looking at their language. Jenisch is a mixture of Rotwelsch (Foreign beggars' language), Kochemer Loshn (from the Yiddish, "tongue of the wise" (חוכמער לשון), Yiddish, Judeo-Latin, German, Hebrew, Gaunersprache (crooks' language) and Romani (Sintitikes). It is a secret language known only to the Jenisch people.

Considering their language is a blend of at least two Jewish dialects, Judeo-German and Judeo-Latin with a dash of Romani thrown in, logic dictates the Jenisch are a mixture of Jewish and Romani people. What is the likelihood non-Jews would know two distinct Jewish dialects?

From an early day, they have been persecuted by the Swiss. Sadly, this persecution did not stop in the 18th century. As recently as 1973, the Swiss government abducted Jenisch children and placed them in foster homes, orphanages, and asylums. The

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<sup>14</sup> Donald Kendrick, *Historical Dictionary of the Gypsies (Romanies)*, 2nd Edition (Maryland: Scare Crow Press, 1998), p.271

Swiss have stopped stealing Jenisch children, but they continue to harass them whenever they can.

Daniel Huber, vice president<sup>15</sup> of the umbrella organization representing the Jenisch people, Radgenossenschaft der Landstrasse (people of the country road), said this to the online magazine SwissInfo.Ch: *"We have been here since the beginning of the Confederation in 1291, we have gained citizenship and we pay taxes. But if we can't carry out our nomadic lifestyle, how are we going to be able to keep our culture alive?"* said Huber. *"We have the same duties as any other Swiss does,"* he adds, *"but not the same rights."*<sup>16</sup>

The reason the Jenisch are relevant to my family story is this: Common Jenisch surnames can be found in my family tree. In fact, I have more than one Daniel Huber in my tree! Stephan Eicher is a famous Jenisch Musician. Venanz Nobel is a famous Jenisch writer. Huber, Eicher, and Nobel appear over and over again in my ancestry. Some of my immigrant family were Jenisch people.

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<sup>15</sup> Vice President at the time this article was published.

<sup>16</sup> Luigi Jorio, *Swiss gypsies relive a painful past* (swissinfo.ch, February 23, 2008)  
<https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/swiss-gypsies-relive-a-painful-past/6457302>

## Non-conforming Christians

A significant proportion of my Swiss-not-Swiss immigrant ancestors were Christian “non-conformers”. One can deduce from this that the Swiss Cantons hated these non-conformers and persecuted them with great zeal. Lots of persecution resulted in lots of immigration. I have come to see they were an interesting group with a religious and philosophical tradition rooted in early history.

We now see most of the world as being Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox because these churches did an effective job exterminating most other forms of Christianity. There was a time when many more branches of Christianity existed. Indeed, there was a not-Catholic-not-Protestant-not-Orthodox group of Christians in Switzerland. Swiss “non-conforming” Christians and all other “non-conforming” Christians from around Europe have a history that dates back to the very beginning of Christianity.

Early Christians were either Jews or Proselytes, but all early Christians were Jewish first and Christian second. As such, early Christianity spread from the Holy Land to the far reaches of Jewish migration. Many early Jewish Christians were merchants who travelled to North Africa, Asia Minor, Arabia, and the Balkans. As a result, early Jewish-Christian centers could be found in Anatolia, Armenia, Greece, and Syria. Merchant communities served as the springboard for the spread of early Jewish Christianity. By 300 AD Jewish-Christian enclaves were found throughout the former Roman Empire, from Britain to Germany, France, and Spain.

Some say Christianity came to Switzerland with Roman soldiers, slaves, and artisans. Others say it came with Jewish merchants that traded and travelled the Jewish trade route stretching from Rome to Switzerland and on to Germany. The prevailing thought is that whoever brought it, an early form of Jewish Christianity/Christianity/monotheism was in Switzerland before the third century. The first written record of Christianity in Switzerland dates to the fourth century AD.

When Christianity arrived in Switzerland, the resident Gallo-Roman people practiced a fusion of religious practices from Gaul, Rome, and Greece. They came to embrace some form of Christianity in the fourth and fifth century. In the fourth century, Switzerland got its first bishop, Bishop Isaac. Isaac has always been a Jewish name and this early bishop may have been from the Judeo-Christian tradition. When the Alemanni tribe overwhelmed Switzerland, Christianity was suppressed. The Alemannis accepted Christianity in the sixth and seventh century through the missionary work of Irish and Frankish monks. When Roman-Catholic Christianity took hold of Switzerland, Swiss allegiance was at times to the Roman Pope and at other times to the Pisan Pope.

At the beginning of the 13th Century, the old Swiss Confederacy became entirely Roman Catholic. The Swiss Confederacy, the cantons of Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, Zurich, Basel, and Berne, remained Roman Catholic until the 16th Century. In the 16th Century, some of the Cantons adopted Protestant Christianity. That would be a concise view of Swiss religious history.

To understand my non-Catholic/non-Protestant, non-conforming Swiss ancestors, one has to look back in time. Early in history, Switzerland was home to Jewish Christians, proto-Christians/Christians, people who were not part of this Swiss-Roman-Catholic-Christian story: People who had never been a part of the Roman-Catholic Christian story, people who wanted nothing to do with the Roman Catholic story.

When Protestantism came to the Swiss Cantons, this same group of “never Catholic” people wanted nothing to do with the Protestants either. These non-conforming Christians diverted from both the Roman and the Protestant church in very specific ways. So specific, their origins, genetic and philosophical, may date back to Israel. They may be a source of my Jewish ancestry.

## The Essenes

Bear in mind, all early Christians were Jews, BUT not all Jews were the same. At the time of Christ, there were three main Jewish sects in Israel: the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes. As such, early Jewish Christians came from different Jewish sects.

The Essenes were most unlike the other Jewish sects. The word Essenes itself is said to have come from the Greek "essaioi", or "holiness/purity". The Essenes chose a communal life which espoused poverty, daily immersion in water for spiritual purity, eating meals together after prayer, charity and benevolence, and collective ownership. They banned angry language, swearing of oaths, weapons, violence, sacrificing animals or eating of animals, and participating in government. Membership in the sect was a choice and could only be achieved through a three-year probational period. You had to choose to live the Essene lifestyle.

The Essenes and their unique and easy to spot lifestyle appears in several early Christian sects. Specifically the religious non-conformers found in Switzerland. This could be coincidental or could suggest these sects were the descendants of Essene Jewish Christians, genetically or philosophically, or both. The basic flow, from Jewish Essenes to Swiss non-conforming Christians seems to look like this.

First stop, the Gnostics. The Gnostics were a Jewish Christian group that originated in the first century AD in non-rabbinical Jewish sects and Christian sects. Gnostic is derived from the Greek "gnostikos", "having knowledge". They believed in personal spiritual knowledge (gnosis) and rejected orthodox teaching, traditions, and the authority of religious institutions. They rejected the idea of good and evil and exchanged that for enlightened and unenlightened. They emphasized a personal relationship with God and rejected intermediaries like priests or rabbis. Their ideas were passed to various proto-Christian sects throughout Europe.

One such group would be the Bogomils. Bogomilism was a Christian Neo-Gnostic and dualistic sect founded in the first Bulgarian Empire, in the tenth century by the priest Bogomil. The movement contained many ideas that come straight from the Essenes. Bogomils called for a return to the early spiritual teachings, rejected Church hierarchy and state and church authority. They did not use the Christian cross and did not believe in Churches. Bogomilism eventually spread from Macedonia to the Balkans, the



Byzantine empire, Russia, Bosnia, Dalmatia, Serbia, Italy, and France. They have the unique distinction of annoying both the Roman-Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. In return, both churches pursued a Bogomil extermination campaign. However, not before some Bogomils or their ideas spread further West.

The Kathars would be an example of a sect that followed on directly from the Bogomils. The Kathars were Christian sect living in Southern France. Some think Bogimilism spread to the Kathars via trade. As in trade between Bulgaria and the southern ports in France brought the people or the ideas to southern France. The Kathars rejected resurrection, baptism, crosses, and the Trinity. They also rejected war, capital punishment, and the swearing of oaths. They did not eat animal or animal products, although they did eat fish. This may harken back to the Jewish dietary laws that prohibited mixing meat and dairy, fish being considered neutral. The outside world called them Kathars. They self-identified as the good men (Bonnes Hommes), the good women (Bonnes Femmes), and good Christians (Bons Chretien). Kathar comes from the Greek "Katharoi" (the pure ones). Sounds rather Essene-like to me!<sup>17</sup>

The fact that the Kathars designated themselves as good men, Bonnes Hommes, and good woman, Bonnes Femmes, is intriguing. A very famous European Jewish family was the Shem-Tov family. In Hebrew, Shem Tov translates to Good Name. The family was said to be direct descendants of the house of King David. The name morphed into the Greek name, Kalonymous. Kalonymous is derived from Kalon (good) and onymous (name). The "Good Name" name changed as the family moved around Europe and was translated into other European languages.

*The Greek Kalonymous would vary as the family moved from place to place, appearing in German as Kalonomous, Kalma, Kelman, Kalma, or Kalm, in Polish Kalmanowicz, Kalmanski, Kielmanski, Kielminski, and Kielmanson and in Russian Kalmanson, Kalmanov, Kalmanovich, Kalmanok, and Kelmanskij. Many of these were names of prominent rabbis.*

The word good (Bon) would morph into a myriad of different Jewish surnames. It was especially common amongst Spanish Jews.

*The adaptations of Bon can be glimpsed in the following surnames, all used by Sephardim<sup>18</sup> in Spain: Bon, Bona, Boned, Bonet, Bonet de Lunel, Boneri, **Bonhom**, **Bonhome**, Bonjorn, Bonnin, Bono, **Bonomo**, **Bonsenior**, **d'en Bonsenior**, **Bonsenyor**, and Bonus.*

*Related surnames documented as Sephardic include: De Bonaboya, Bonacosa, Bonafe, Bonafed, Banafeu, **Bonafil**, **Bonafilla**, Bonofos, Bonafoux, Bonafus, Bonafux, Bonagua, Bonaloc, Bonan, Bonananch, Bonansac, Bonanasch, Bonanat, Bonanet, Bonastre, Bonastruc, Bonastruch, Bonaventura, Bonavia, de Bonavida, Bondavin, Bondia, d'en Bondieta, Bondoga, Bondogas, Bonfed, Bonfev, **Bonfil**, **Bonfillet**, Bonguha, Bonhe, **Bonhome**, Bonhorn, Boni, Boni, Boniach, Boniel, Bonifant, Bonino, Bonirac, Bonisac, Bonisach, Bonito, Bonitto,*

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<sup>17</sup> The German word for heretic (Ketzen) comes from Kathars.

<sup>18</sup> Spanish Jews

*Bonjom, Bonjua, Bonjudio, Bonjuha, Bonmacib, Bonmacib, Bonnin, Bono, Bono, Bonom, Bonomo, Bononat, and Bonsucesso.*<sup>19</sup>

The highlighted names are variants of “Bon Homme” or good man. It could be coincidental that the Kathars called themselves “good men and good woman”, lived a very Essene-like life, lived near the Spanish border, and that Bonhomme was a distinctly common Jewish last name in Spain. Or it could suggest the Kathars were of a Jewish origin and perhaps from the “good name” family. The Kathars practiced a form of Christianity more similar to Judaism than Roman Catholicism, and in particular, very similar to Essene Judaism.

Either way, Katharism arrived in Languedoc, France in the 11th century. Kathars are sometimes called the Albigensians because the movement first took root in Albi, France. It thrived in Southern France and Northern Italy between the 12th and 14th century. They rejected the Roman-Catholic Church and all its beliefs. As a result, in 1233, an Inquisition was established by the Roman-Catholic Church to root them out and exterminate them. They were found, tried, and burned alive. The Roman-Catholic Church went full tilt on the Kathar eradication campaign. Those that survived went underground. Kathars disappear from the Inquisition records in the 1330s which suggested Katharism had been successfully suppressed by the church. Basically, when records of Kathar trials and burnings disappeared from Church records, it meant the Kathars were “disappeared”.

How successful was the Kathar eradication? Maybe not as successful as the church had hoped. In 1173, a wealthy French merchant, Peter Waldo, gave away all his worldly possessions and dedicated his life to living a “good life”. Born in 1140 in Lyon, France, Waldo espoused a form of Christianity that was very Essene-like. He focused on teaching “real” Christianity as compared to that offered by the Roman-Catholic Church. He believed apostolic poverty was the way to spiritual perfection. He attracted followers who became known as the Waldenses, Waldensians, Vallenses, Valdensi, or Vaudois.

The Waldensians believed clergy should not hold governing positions, or be in governing positions, that relics were no more holy than any other bone. Pilgrimages to Rome only made Rome rich and did nothing for the soul. Holy water had no more power than rainwater. Prayer offered in a field was just as effective as one offered in a church. They rejected transubstantiation, saints, idolatry, infant baptism, and the swearing of oaths. They would not appear in secular courts or participate in wars. They practiced a simplified biblicism that focused on rigorous moral behavior. That constituted a pretty complete rejection of the Roman Catholic program. However, they went one step further.

The Waldensians called the Roman-Catholic Church the “Harlot of the Apocalypse” and referred to the Pope as “the Anti-Christ of Rome.” As you can imagine, this got them in trouble with the church -- increasing trouble as the Catholic church consolidated its power in Europe. From 1215 forward, the Roman-Catholic Church called the

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<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth Caldwell Hirschman and Donald N. Yates, *Jews, and Muslims in British Colonial America* (London: McFarland and Co. 2021) p. 196

Waldensians heretics, and they were subject to the Inquisition, burning at the stake, and Edicts of Expulsion.

Yet another Essene-like sect popped up in 12th century Italy. The Humiliati (Umiliati) was founded by a former wool merchant. They existed in small communities in France and Italy. They opposed land ownership and the accumulation of money, the wealth, and the corruption of the Roman-Catholic Church, lying, taking of oaths, and participating in lawsuits. They believed in simple living, sharing of material goods, and only wearing plain, unadorned, simple dress. They were deemed heretics in the 13th century and were banned by a Papal Bull of 1571.

Traces of the Essene Jewish sect can be seen in all these early Christian “not-Catholic-not-Orthodox” movements.

## Essene-Like Christians in Switzerland

Early in history, Switzerland was home to a distinct group of people who practiced a very simple form of Christianity, focused on the Old Testament, who lived communally, rejected infant baptism, the swearing of oaths, participation in government, participation in war, saints, saint worship, idol worship, and crosses. They believed in wearing simple, unadorned clothing. All in all, pretty much textbook Essene philosophy.

Switzerland was the highway between southern Europe to northern Europe. It appears the Kathars, the Waldensians, and Humiliati used it. The Swiss “non-conformers” may have gotten their unique thoughts and philosophies from Kathars, Waldensians, or Humiliati that passed through. Alternatively, they may have been a remnant of a very early Judeo-Christian community that survived in Switzerland, from the Roman days forward, that practiced a more Jewish form of Christianity, or both. Whatever their origin, from 11th century to the 19th century, a Swiss non-conforming, Essene-like Christian community existed in Switzerland. The group rejected both the Catholic church and then later, the Protestant church.

They first got into hot water with the Roman-Catholic Church. They did not conform with the Catholic Church’s rules and regulations. They were known for one of their more egregious beliefs, adult baptism. They believed that one should choose baptism and membership in the religion, and one could only make that choice as an adult. They opposed infant baptism and became known as Anabaptists. From the Greek *ana* (again) and *baptized*.

The Swiss establishment wanted and expected its people to conform to the Catholic Church, and those who did not, were seen as a threat to social stability.

*In the 11th century, the question of infant baptism and transubstantiation gave rise to furious persecution by the main Christian Church upon the separatists who refused to adhere to either of those doctrines. Many of these separatists*

*were convicted of heresy and were executed. By the middle of this century the Holy Roman (German) Empire controlled Switzerland.<sup>20</sup>*

Still later, we read, the Swiss people who did not buy into the Roman-Catholic Church paid a price.

*In 1525 the Anabaptists first formed near Berne and Zurich in Switzerland. These Anabaptists were persecuted for their beliefs of non-resistance and refusal to bear arms. They were tortured, jailed, beheaded, drowned, and burned at the stake. Any dissent from the "one church" was a crime against the state, since for all intents and purposes, they were one and the same. The state supported the church and the church supported the state.<sup>21</sup>*

Suffice it to say, in the Swiss cantons, failure to comply with the State and the Church, got you in trouble with both.

According to H. Frank Eshleman, historian of the Swiss immigrants to America, this group of non-conformers got their ideas from the Waldensians.

*About 1159 those who opposed the doctrines of the Holy Church which we have mentioned, began to have strong and able supporters in deposed Roman bishops and others. One of these was Peter Waldo of Lyons, who separated in 1160. His adherents were first numerous in the province of Albi. They were called Lyonites, Albigenes, and finally nearly all Waldensians. They spread into every province and were objects of persecution during four centuries and more. The Roman Church began to call them Anabaptists; and by that name their descendants in faith were called down to 1710 at least, as we shall show later. Their doctrine was essentially the same as that of the pioneers who in 1710 first settled in Lancaster County. Their creed contained the following principles among others-opposition to infant baptism, to transubstantiation, to war, to participation in government, to oaths, etc. They early reached Northern Italy and the border of Switzerland ... By 1203 the Waldenses or Anabaptists had the Holy Scriptures translated into their own language, and they did not practice any other doctrine. The parts of the Bible most carefully followed by them were the commandments and the sermon on the Mount.<sup>22</sup>*

One Waldensian stronghold was the Piedmont region of Italy and they moved amongst like-minded folk from the Piedmont region of Italy through Switzerland and to Germany. But they moved in total secrecy, to avoid detection. From their earliest day, they were under the watchful eye of the Roman-Catholic Church.

*Waldo and his followers developed a system whereby they would go from town to town and meet secretly with small groups of Waldensians. There they would*

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<sup>20</sup> H. Frank Eshleman, *Historic Background and Annals of the Swiss and German Pioneer Settlers of South-Eastern Pennsylvania, and of their Remote Ancestors, from the Middle of the Dark Ages, Down to the Time of the Revolutionary War*, (Washington, D.C.: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1969), p.2

<sup>21</sup> Roland John Lyndaker, *Beginnings, The History and Genealogy of an Amish-Mennonite Family from New York*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Family History Library), p.9

<sup>22</sup> Eshleman, *Swiss and German Pioneer Settlers of South-Eastern Pennsylvania*, pp.3-4

*confess sins and hold service. A traveling Waldensian preacher was known as a barba. The group would shelter the barba and help make arrangements to move on to the next town in secret.*<sup>23</sup>

The word "barba" is interesting. Barba comes from the Latin word beard. But it also connotes a man of wisdom or authority. Judaism prohibits shaving with a razor on the basis of Leviticus 19:27. Rabbis kept/keep beards. The Waldensian religious leaders were called "Beard" because they kept beards. Sounds like a Rabbi to me.

Between the 12th and 15th Century, Switzerland was home to Waldensian communities. In each of those centuries, the Roman-Catholic Church did what they could to extinguish these non-conformers.

*From the year 1382 to the year 1393, Müller tells us that by order of Pope Clement VII the Minorite Franz Borell burned about a hundred of these Waldenses, or antecedents of the Mennonites round about Lake Geneva in Switzerland on account of their religion, the papal church declaring them heretics worthy of death.*

*The Waldenses who lived in the Catholic Bishopric of Basil where they began to be numerous about 1487 were one of the most zealous congregations in all Switzerland, and the authorities of the papal church were at their wits' end to know how to suppress them. As we shall show later the authorities of Basil and Berne in the 16th century held a convention to devise some plan to get rid of as they called them "these unchristian and damned heretics."*<sup>24</sup>

Here we see a really twisted feature of the Roman-Catholic Church. They thought they were doing religious non-conformers a favor by killing them. They actually said they were worthy of death. Not my idea of a favor! I think of a favor as like a ride to the airport, a cup of sugar, etc. Very strange.

Beyond a display of the obscenity of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Roman-Catholic Church, lurking here is something significant. The Church did not see the Swiss non-conformers as Christian. They were something else. They were un-Christian. That is a telling designation. So, if they were not Christian, then what were they?

Some of my ancestors, the Eby or Aeby family, were Waldenses who moved to Switzerland to evade persecution by the Catholic church. This account comes from Ezra Eby, a relative with whom I share Aeby ancestors.

*The Ebys ... an ancient race of people of Asiatic origin, who formerly inhabited southern, central, and western Europe. During the early ages they lived in the northern part of Italy, where they were brought from heathendom to the worshiping of the true and living God through the labors of the Vaudois (Waldenses) with whom they came into contact with at a very early date. They soon became strict adherents of the Vaudois faith. While the Church of Rome*

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<sup>23</sup> Emilio Comba, *History of the Waldenses of Italy, from their origin to the Reformation*, (New York: AMS Press, 1978)

<sup>24</sup> Eshleman, *Swiss and German Pioneer Settlers of South-Eastern Pennsylvania*, pp.5, 7

*was gaining power and extending her influence over western and northern Europe, these Vaudois, in their mountainous homes, were for some time left unmolested. From the eighth to the eleventh centuries these primitive worshipping and God-fearing people (Vaudois) became very numerous, and were becoming quite a power to resist the influence of the Church of Rome. In order to gain full sway over civilized Europe, the Church of Rome adopted means whereby these Vaudois were to be either subdued or expelled from their homes. But these people (Vaudois) were not so easily subdued or brought under the sway of Rome. The ministry, known as the Inquisitors, were first sent out to bring these people over from their faith to that of the Roman Catholic. This was as early as 1308. The Vaudois would not yield to the Inquisitors, and the result was, that in 1453 the whole Valley of Luzerna and all the country of North Italy and Savoy were laid under an interdict. Between the years 1400 and 1500 the Vaudois were most bitterly persecuted by their enemies, for not renouncing their primitive faith. History tells us that in 1487, Innocent XIII fulminated against these Vaudois a Bill of Extermination. In 1560 the persecutions became so fierce, that quite a number fled from their homes and went to the northern parts of Switzerland, where they led a wandering life for some time. They finally settled in Cantons Bern, Luzerne, Zurich, and Schwyz. Among those Vaudois who thus settled in these Cantons we find the name Eby, then spelled Ebee. Here they led a God-fearing life, and were rigid in the keeping of their primitive faith and forms of worship ...*

*After the founding of the Mennonite Church in A.D. 1537 by one of the early reformers named Menno Simon, a native of Holland, these Swiss Vaudois or Swiss Protestants, as they were then called, united with the Menno Simon party, now known as Mennonites. Among the parties who thus joined the Mennonites we find the names Herr, Graaf, Mylin, Shank, Witmer, Landis, Eby, and others.<sup>25</sup>*

This account of the Eby family is interesting on many levels. Firstly, it lays out how some of my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors ended up in Switzerland. Ezra states the Eby family were of Asiatic origin. They were not Italian. Israel is officially part of Asia and is relatively close to Italy. If the Ebys started out in and around Israel, it could explain my Jewish Swiss-not-Swiss family. That's speculative, but Ezra Eby goes out of his way to say the family were Asiatic and were late coming into Christianity (13<sup>th</sup> century).

As Ezra indicates in his story, at a point, the Swiss non-conforming Christians enjoined with various non-conforming Christian groups under the leadership of Menno Simons, a Dutch Priest. In 1536, Simons rejected the Catholic Church, and cast his lot with the primitive non-conforming Christians. Simons was born in 1496, in Witmarsum, Friesland. Little is known about his family, but due to Dutch naming practices, we know he was the "son of Simon". Simons consolidated Waldensian and primitive Christian thought and his "teachings" spread throughout the Swiss non-conforming Christians.

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<sup>25</sup> Ezra Eby, *A Biographical History of the Eby Family: Being a History of Their Movements in Europe During the Reformation and of their early settlement in America: As also much other unpublished information belonging to the family.* (Ontario: Hett and Eby Publishers, 1889), pp.3-4

From the middle part of the 16th century forward, Swiss non-conforming Christians became known as Mennonites.

Hirschman and Yates had this to say of Menno Simons,

*In 1496, four years after the Inquisition began and Jews were banned from Spain, a man named Menno Simons was born in Holland. As both his given name and surnames indicate Hebrew affiliation, we believe it is very likely that Menno Simons was of Sephardic descent. By 1525, he had founded the Mennonites, a sect that plays a prominent role in German, Dutch, and Hungarian Protestantism.*<sup>26</sup>

Simons may have been a Spanish-Jewish convert to Christianity! This would explain his comfort in a simplistic, no saints, no idols, no crucifixes, not so Catholic religion largely based on the Old Testament. It is known that converted Spanish Jews, that hopped the border into France, found a comfortable home in the Huguenot faith. So, he would not be the first converted Spanish Jew to find a spiritual home in a not-Catholic movement without crosses in the house of worship!

The Reformation came to Switzerland in 1519. By 1528, Canton Berne had adopted Calvinism Protestantism. As Switzerland was really an association of Cantons, each Canton that adopted Protestantism, adopted some form of Calvinism, and created its own Protestant church. One might think this would have been a reprieve for the Swiss non-conforming Christians.

Oh, happy day. The Catholic Church was gone. But it was not a happy day. The Swiss non-conforming Christians were as interested in the new Reform Church as they had been with the old Roman-Catholic Church. And the Reform church was just as annoyed by their refusal to pledge allegiance to the new church. Both churches dealt brutally and ruthlessly with the non-conforming Christians. Or Mennonites as they were then called.

With the advent of Menno Simon, the fury against the “non-conformers” became anti-Mennonite fury. The previously no-name Swiss non-conformers had a name with which they could be identified, and at whom both the Catholic and the Protestant church could aim their sadistic zeal. At times persecution was subtle, at times it was violent. But it was persistent. Here is an example of low-grade hostility.

*About 1567 it was decided that if married couples do not go to the state church they shall be considered as living together illicitly as if the marriage had never been performed; and their children should be illegitimate, the right to inherit should be denied them. This remained an edict not carried out for 12 years; but in 1579 messengers were sent among the Mennonite congregations warning them the old edict was to be enforced and that those who do not choose to obey shall leave within three months or be punished in their possessions and lives.*

Here is an example of a slightly more energetic response to the Swiss Mennonites:

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<sup>26</sup> Hirschman and Yates, *Jews and Muslims in British Colonial America*, p.117

*1599-Berne Edict Against Anabaptists. This year there was a mandate promulgated by Berne, demanding that the Mennonites must leave without their property. Their real estate was confiscated to the government. If they sold it before going, the purchaser would be compelled to pay it again. This was a severe edict. This ends the annals of the sixteenth century.<sup>27</sup>*

The following pretty much sums up the Swiss Mennonites circumstance:

*1527. Berne Asks Zurich How They Exterminate the Mennonites There. On the 14th of September, of this year, the Berne authorities wrote to Zurich and informed them that they had published a decree against the Anabaptists or Mennonites to the effect that they must stop practicing the faith, and warning them that if they went into any other part of Switzerland and keep on their doctrine, they would be punished wherever they are. About the same time Berne asked information from Zurich how they managed to reduce the Baptists to such a small number so early, stating that they wished to follow the same method. Zurich said the best method they found was to **kill them**.<sup>28</sup>*

“Kill Them.” Yes, that would have taken care of the problem.

The persecution of non-conforming Christian sects, in Switzerland, France, and in Italy was persistent. In fact, as the 16th century came to a close, it became more vicious in those countries. As an example, on January 25, 1655, an edict of expulsion was ordered for the Piedmont Waldensians. They could conform or leave. If they left, they left all property to the Roman-Catholic Church. Some made their way to Switzerland. Some opted to stay, which proved a tragic mistake. The Duke of Savoy set his army upon them, and the end result was a massacre that would become known as “Piedmont Easter”. I would call this an example of high-grade hostility. Here is a firsthand account from Peter Liege.

*Little children were torn from the arms of their mothers, clasped by their tiny feet, and their heads dashed against the rocks; or were held between two soldiers and their quivering limbs torn up by main force. Their mangled bodies were then thrown on the highways or fields, to be devoured by beasts. The sick and the aged were burned alive in their dwellings. Some had their hands and arms and legs lopped off, and fire applied to the severed parts to staunch the bleeding and prolong their suffering. Some were flayed alive, some were roasted alive, some disemboweled; or tied to trees in their own orchards, and their hearts cut out. Some were horribly mutilated, and of others the brains were boiled and eaten by these cannibals. Some were fastened down into the furrows of their own fields, and ploughed into the soil as men plough manure into it. Others were buried alive. Fathers were marched to death with the heads of their sons suspended round their necks. Parents were compelled to look on while their children were*

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<sup>27</sup> Eshleman, *Historic Background and Annals of the Swiss and German Pioneer Settlers of South-Eastern Pennsylvania*, pp.68, 20

<sup>28</sup> Eshleman, *Historic Background and Annals of the Swiss and German Pioneer Settlers of South-Eastern Pennsylvania*, p.27



*first outraged [raped], then massacred, before being themselves permitted to die.*<sup>29</sup>

This quote demonstrates the diabolical, inhuman manner in which non-conforming Christians were treated throughout Europe, Switzerland included. Swiss Mennonites were subject to inquisitions of faith, surveillance by local people, church representatives, and state officials. They were spied on, entrapped, tortured, had their children taken from them, were deprived of their property, burnt at the stake, drowned, and hanged.

It would have been easier for the Swiss Mennonites to conform. Give up their old ideas and embrace the state sanctioned church. But they did not. They clung to their religious practices with all their might. Nothing budged these people.

The religious beliefs of the religious non-conformers, at a minimum, descended philosophically from the Essene Jewish movement. But it may have come from converted Jews. The Mennonite religion, with its rejection of saints and idols, simplicity of worship, reliance on the Old Testament is not far from Judaism. But the Essene-like Mennonites, of whatever origin, were not letting their beliefs go and converting to either the Protestant or Roman Catholic Church.

The persecution resulted in the Swiss Mennonites becoming a secretive community. You were either an insider or you were an outsider. If you were an outsider, you could not be trusted. If you were an insider, you could be trusted. Mennonites had rules that prohibited them from even eating with outsiders. Bearing in mind an "outsider" could bring ruin and death to you and your family, suspicion of outsiders was warranted. Avoidance of all outsiders was enforced by the community.

With each passing year of oppression and repression, these Mennonite communities became increasingly insular and communistic. They maintained law and order amongst themselves. Banishment was a powerful tool within the community to keep people in line. If you broke the rules, you faced being expelled from the community. When possible, they moved further into the mountains to avoid contact with the local authorities and outsiders. Switzerland is filled with a lot of great places to hide.

Curiously, the story of the Mennonites in Switzerland is very similar to that of the Jews in 15th century Spain. At first the Jews were allowed to leave Spain. Then, the Jews were forced to convert to Catholicism (conform) and were not allowed to leave. The new Christians or Conversos, were watched, monitored, spied upon by the neighborhood watch. Any sign that they were straying from Catholic practices, or reverting to Jewish practices of any sort, was reported to the authorities and led to torture and death.

In theory, the Catholic Church and Spanish aristocracy used the Inquisition, torture, burning at the stake, and the stealing of children to enforce compliance with Catholic Church doctrine. But, in fact, it was anti-Semitism masquerading as religiosity. The Inquisition was about "old Christians" (non-Jews) persecuting "new Christians" (Jews) and using the Catholic Church as their club. It was racial more than religious. I believe the Swiss Cantons attack on the Mennonites was more racial than it was religious. The

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<sup>29</sup> J.A. Wylie, *The History of the Waldenses*, (London: Cassell and Company, c1860) p.132

Mennonites were an intermarried clan of families that stood apart from the general Swiss society.

In Spain and in Switzerland, you either submitted to the church or the church submitted you to the stake. And sometimes, submitting to the church was not good enough. The stain of your family's history, Jewish or Mennonite, was enough to get you killed. It was a no-win situation for both the Spanish Jewish converts and for the Mennonites, and both escaped from their land of persecution whenever and however they could.

## Jews

Non-conforming Christians in Switzerland were in the hot seat for sure, but they were not alone. Jews living in Switzerland had an equally hard time of it. Archeology reveals a Jewish presence in Switzerland from the Roman days forward. In the early years (300-1000 AD) the communities were small and were likely bands of traders with semi-permanent residences in Switzerland. The first notable settled Jewish communities in Switzerland could be found in Basel in 1213, Bern in 1259, St. Gall in 1268, and Zurich in 1273.

The Basel community flourished until 1348, when the black plague arrived. The Basel residents blamed the Jews for the malady. The church said it was spread intentionally by Jews and blamed them for poisoning wells with the disease. Ultimately, 600 adult Jews were burned alive, along with their rabbi, and 140 children were forcibly converted to Christianity.

Thereafter, the Jews in Switzerland were subject to an erratic pattern of being granted residency in a Canton, forced to either convert, be burned or face expulsion, and then renewed granting of residency. In 1620, Jews were banished from the Swiss Cantons entirely. They were forced to live in caravans, residing where they could for as long as they could. In 1776, Jews were granted permission to live permanently in two villages, Lengnau and Oberendingen (Endingen). Some of my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors were Jews from these two villages.

Not only were they forced to live in these two villages, Lengnau and Endingen, but their professional lives were also mandated by Canton Aargau. They were allowed to work as livestock dealers, in particular, cattle dealers. Indeed, they developed their own language, Lekoudesch, known only to themselves, to conduct livestock sales. It is bewildering mix of Hebrew and German words, thrown together to create a dialect that could only be understood by them. Lekoudesch is one of the obscure languages facing extinction in the modern age. Oddly, Lekoudesch is very similar to Jenische. In Yaron Matras's "Archive of Endangered and Smaller Languages"<sup>30</sup> there is an entry for this language.

Lekoudesch: Jewish Cattle Traders Jargon.

*Lekoudesch (also Lechoudesch, Lottegorsich, Lothekolisch, etc.) is the name given by users to a special vocabulary mainly of Hebrew origin that was used as*

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<sup>30</sup> Yaron Matras, *Archive of Endangered and Smaller Languages*, <http://languagecontact.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/ELA/>

*means of in-group and secret communication among Jewish traders in rural areas in Germany and neighbouring countries and regions (the Netherlands, Alsace and Lorraine, Switzerland). The most frequent use of Lekouesch was in the context of the cattle trade, at cattle markets and among butchers. The original group of users were Jewish merchants who had access to the vocabulary of Hebrew scriptures through religious education and who drew on this knowledge to replace everyday expressions in order to conceal their communication from group-outsiders. In part, secret communication among partners in the presence of a client provided an advantage during trade negotiations. But the function of the in-group code was social as well as. The Hebrew words, pronounced in the so-called Ashkenazic way (that is, integrated into German phonology), were simply inserted into local and regional varieties of German. While there is some evidence of local varieties, by and large the same Hebrew-derived vocabulary was used by Jewish traders in various regions, indicating a kind of multi-regional speech community. The name of the speech form is a euphemism based on Hebrew loschen ha-kouesch 'the holy tongue', the traditional term for the Hebrew language of the scripture.<sup>31</sup>*

In certain regards, the Jews of Emdingen and Lengnau were severely restricted, in particular, where they lived and what they did. On the other hand, they had their own towns and ran them as they saw fit. The towns had no churches. Jews from these two villages, became known as Landenjudentum, or country Jews. These villages produced many notable Jews, Meyer Guggenheim being a prime example. Born in Lengnau in 1828, he went on to become one of the richest men in the world.

Both Catholic and Protestant Cantons alike did their best to force conversion onto the Jewish community and they did so over many centuries. Sometimes as a means of being spared the pyre, sometimes as means of securing a better future for their children, Jews did convert. But just like in Spain, converted Jews were never trusted. If something bad happened in any place or at any time, if a Jew was unavailable for blame, the converted Jews took the hit. My genealogical research indicates some of my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors were converted Jews, people who were only able to lose the stigma of their Jewish past by moving to the new world.

## My Undesirable Ancestors

Non-conforming folks in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Switzerland had it rough. Anyone who was different in any way was a target for persistent, systematic, and sadistic abuse by the Swiss cantons. This could be failing to conform to dominant religious doctrine, social norms, or government expectations. Mennonites, Jews, Gypsies, and “Witches” are classic examples. There was a full-on fit in or die campaign in Switzerland for several centuries. The 17<sup>th</sup>-century Swiss establishment was engaged in an ethnic cleansing.

The people who appear in the Swiss Archive records as having been hunted, tortured, burnt, and/or drowned come from recurring families. It seems certain families lived outside the law and the social norms. They persistently fell afoul of the social norms, be

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<sup>31</sup> <http://languagecontact.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/ELA/languages/Lekouesch.html>

they religious or cultural. They were paupers, squatters, social or religious non-conformers, revolutionaries, Jews, Mennonites, “witches”, tradesmen, and craftsmen. This “undesirable” list, people who were persecuted by the Cantons and the people who immigrated, coincided with a group of intermarried related people. My Swiss-not-Swiss immigrant ancestors came from a group of really unpopular related people.

It would be remarkable for an intermarried family group to produce one revolutionary. This family group produced two: Niklaus Leuenberger and Rudolph Goldschmid. Again, remarkable if one family produced a single woman charged and executed for witchcraft. This family produced many. It would be remarkable if one family member had one foreign last name, but this family group had many foreign last names. It would be remarkable if one family member was linked to the Jewish community or the Jenisch people. This family had many. The intermarried family group that were my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors, that fled Switzerland, were an interesting collection of social undesirables.

My ancestors, paupers, squatters, and non-conformers did not fit into the Swiss social system, Catholic or Protestant, Berne, or Luzerne. They were seen as “other” and were treated that way. They saw themselves as “other” and went to great lengths not to mix with the local people. Some even had internal laws that prohibited them from eating with “outsiders”. My ancestors that left Switzerland for the colonies had more in common with each other than they did the Swiss people they lived amongst and who persecuted them. They had a social cohesion amongst themselves and social disconnect with the dominant society.

## Get Me Out of Here

My paupers, squatters, and non-conformers endured Swiss abuse until there was an alternative. Two historical events gave them alternatives:

The first was The Thirty Years' War. It lasted from 1618-1648 and is said to have been one of the most destructive wars in European history. The death toll was estimated to be between 4.5 and 8 million souls. The German states are said to have lost up to 50% of their population. When the war came to France in 1635, Alsace-Lorraine was said to have lost 60% of its population. Whole villages in Germany and in France were left abandoned.

As a result, my paupers, squatters, and non-conformist ancestors were welcomed to both Germany and France. And from 1651, they went. The Duke of Lorraine and the King of France welcomed immigrants to re-populate Alsace-Lorraine. And all sorts of people were made welcome. Non-conforming Christians and Jews alike were offered safe haven. If you had skills, you were especially welcomed. Glass makers, weavers, metal workers, goldsmiths, were especially welcomed by the Duke of Lorraine. For a while, they were offered the autonomy to do their own thing.

The second historical event that gave my ancestors an alternative was the creation of the American colonies, several of which promised religious freedom. My paupers, squatters, and non-conformers made their way to two principal locations, North

Carolina, and Pennsylvania, in the hope of finding a home where they would be treated like human beings.

My ancestors that had the money to get to the American colonies, got to the American colonies. The ones that did not, went to Germany or France. Most did not linger in either for more than a generation. As soon as they could afford to make the move, they followed family members to the American colonies. This is the reason I have Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors that immigrated FROM Germany and France.

The fascist Swiss cantons never changed their stance on my intermarried clannish family. They consistently hated them. The despised chose to leave. When it was legal, they went legally. When it was illegal, they went secretly. But as soon as they had some options, they used them. My ancestors were happy to get out of Switzerland where they had no hope of “rising above their wretched circumstance”.

Intentionally or unintentionally, the 18<sup>th</sup> century Swiss Cantons perpetrated a persistent ethnic cleansing. The cleansed may have been racially different to the Swiss establishment. Or they may have just been philosophically different. But the Cantons did a good job of chasing out anyone who did not conform. You can add burning, drowning, and hanging to their ethnic cleansing techniques.

# Modern Science Confirms my Swiss Ancestors' "Otherness"

I suspect my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors were a minority group. Also, I suspect they were also genetically different from their Swiss neighbors. Again, my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors do not match the northern European genetic profile you would expect to find in northern Europe (Switzerland). In fact, they have a distinctively Jewish genetic profile.

Recall the Aeby family. They were "heathens" from Asia and in Italy in the 13<sup>th</sup> century adopted a primitive form of Christianity. They were evicted from Italy and made their way to Switzerland. Based on my DNA results, they were not the only Asian foreigners amongst my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors.

In the world of DNA, much research has been done in the last 20 years. As I mentioned before, scientists have sampled specific populations of people around the world, Algerians, Syrians, Italians, French, etc. These studies have resulted in a list of regionally-linked male or female DNA groups. These groups are known as haplogroups. When you submit your specimen to one of the many ancestry companies, they will give you your male haplogroup. If you look up your male haplogroup, you will find out where that haplogroup originated. You will find out where your earliest male ancestor came from.

Male DNA passes from father to son with almost no deviation. As such, when I got myself tested, I also discovered my father's, his father's, his grandfather's, and his great-grandfather's haplogroup. My haplogroup is E-M35. This haplogroup originated in North Africa. As such, I know my earliest known male ancestor was from North Africa. My ancestors' native land is somewhere in between Morocco, Algeria, or Tunisia. Not Switzerland.

Here is a list of some of my Swiss-not-Swiss Ancestors, their male haplogroups, and their haplogroup origins. As will be seen, they are decidedly not northern European, and always associated with Jewish populations.

## Schar: E-M35

This haplogroup is from North Africa, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Egypt. From there it spread northwards towards Western Asia and Europe. It is a minor haplogroup in northern Europe. Interestingly, haplogroup E-M35 accounts for approximately 18-20% of Ashkenazic Jews and 8.6-30% of Sephardic Jews. It is one of the major founding lineages of the Jewish population. Many of the people in Europe belonging to this haplogroup arrived with the Jewish migration into Europe.

## Gerber: G-M201

G-M201 is thought to have originated in the Caucasus. Today it is most commonly found in Georgia. It is also widely distributed at low frequencies among ethnic minority groups of Europe, South Asia, Central Asia, and North Africa. One such minority group

in Europe would be Jews; 10-20% of European Jewish men belong to this haplogroup. Jewish migration into Europe explains its presence in Europe.

## Leuzinger: Haplogroup J-M267

Haplogroup J-M267 or J1, is thought to have originated in or near Western Asia (Arabia, Syria, Lebanon, Israel). It is considered a Semitic haplogroup. It spread from Western Asia in all directions. It is common in North Africa (Algeria = 35%) and the Caucasus (Chechens= 25%). It is a common haplogroup amongst European Jews (Ashkenazim 14%, Sephardim 12.3%, Cohanim 46%).

## Schrag: J-M172

Haplogroup J-M172, or J2, is a sister haplogroup to J-M267. It is found largely in the northern Middle East but also occurs in significant percentages in the southern Middle East. It is thought to have originated in Syria and the Levant. It is called a Syrid-Arabid haplogroup originating in the Arabian Peninsula. It is a common haplogroup amongst European Jews; 15% of Ashkenazic Jews and 15-29% of Sephardic Jews belong to this haplogroup.

## Gut: L-M20

The presence of L-M20 has been observed at varying levels throughout South Asia, peaking in populations native to Balochistan (28%), Northern Afghanistan (25%), and Southern India (19%). It also occurs in Tajikistan and Anatolia, as well as at lower frequencies in Iran. It has also been present for millennia at very low levels in the Caucasus, Europe, Central Asia, and North Africa. Between 3-45% of Berbers carry this haplogroup. It is found in North Africa: Jews from Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya carry it.

Ok, clearly some of my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors were NOT from Switzerland. They may have immigrated FROM Switzerland, but they were not Swiss. While there are other explanations for North Africa, Semitic, and Caucasian people in Europe, the most likely explanation is Jewish migration. I can find no record of North Africans migrating to Northern Europe. On the other hand, there are lots of records of Jews who carry North African haplogroups migrating to Northern Europe.

Today, there is a whole world of tools that help people dig a little deeper into their genetic ancestry story. One such tool is the website GEDmatch<sup>32</sup>. GEDmatch hosts genetic ancestry databases, but very specific ancestry databases. Researchers have uploaded DNA samples from different specific parts of the world. One researcher may have uploaded DNA from samples from specific parts of Europe, another from the Middle East, another still, from the Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, etc.). You plug your DNA into one of the region-specific databases and out comes a more accurate DNA ancestry report. On one of the commercial sites, your report might read 40% Mediterranean. Using the GEDmatch calculators, your result would be something like 20% Sardinian and 20% Sicilian.

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<sup>32</sup> [www.gedmatch.com](http://www.gedmatch.com)

As an example, I ran my DNA through one of the GEDmatch databases, Eurogenes K13, and I got a more specific read on my ancestry. Here was my result:

Western Mediterranean ----- (Spain, France, Malta, Morocco, Algeria)  
Western Asia ----- (Middle East, Anatolia, Arabian Peninsula, Iran, Levant, Cyprus, Israel, Sinai Peninsula, Caucasus)  
East Mediterranean ----- (Cyprus, Israel, Lebanon, Jordan)  
Red Sea ----- (Arabia, Egypt, Sinai Peninsula, Israel)

When it comes to Ancestry, the more specific the database, the more the specific the result. GEDmatch hosts the Dodecad database which was designed to look at DNA testing done by 23andMe. So, when I ran my 23andMe results through the Dodecad V3 database, I got the following result.

Mediterranean ----- (Italy, France, Spain, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Greece)  
West Asian ----- (Middle East, Israel, Anatolia, Iran, Arabian Peninsula, Levant, Cyprus, Sinai Peninsula, Caucasus)  
Southwest Asian ----- (Turkey, Israel, Iran, Saudi Arabia)  
North West African. ----- (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya)

These results make sense, because my immigrant Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors belonged to male haplogroups from North Africa, Israel, and the Caucasus.

Being obsessive, I ran my DNA through all the DNA databases available on GEDmatch.com, and averaging up all the results, I get the following result.

West Mediterranean ----- (Spain, Portugal, North Africa)  
West Asia-East Mediterranean -- (Israel, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia)  
Red Sea ----- (Israel)  
Northwest Africa ----- (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia)  
Caucasus ----- (Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan)

Who were the people from the Middle East, who sojourned in North Africa and the Caucasus, then made their way to Northern Europe? The answer is Jews. Jewish groups slowly migrated from Israel into Europe, by way of either Italy (Ashkenazic Jews) or Spain (Sephardic Jews). My genetic profile matches that of both Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews. As Jews were a trading and travelling people, meaning mobile, it appears my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors were of Jewish origin. I do match with some Berber tribesmen, but not many Berber tribesmen are known to have moved from southern Europe to Northern Europe. They pretty much stayed in North Africa.

Family Tree DNA is one of the popular DNA testing companies. They are expensive, slow, and their customer service is appalling, but they provide you with Y DNA matches to modern, living men, who have tested with Family Tree DNA. In other words, they connect you with men from around the world with whom you share matching DNA.



Confirming my theory that my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors were originally of Jewish origin would be the fact I have DNA matches to living men of known Jewish ancestry. Meaning I am related to living Jewish men. This is a list of living men, who tested with Family Tree DNA, with whom I match genetically:

Italy (8)	Czech Republic (Ashkenazi) (1)
Russian Federation (Ashkenazi) (4)	Greece (1)
Poland (3)	Georgia (1)
Portugal (3)	Hungary (1)
Albania (1)	Kosovo (1)
Belarus (Ashkenazi) (1)	Spain (1)

My Heritage, another DNA testing company, reports I am a DNA match to people with the following Jewish ethnicities:

Ashkenazi Jewish 431	Mizrahi Jews 13
Sephardic-Jewish/North African 58	Yemenite Jews 1

Another fascinating DNA analysis company is DNA Consultants. If you suspect you have Jewish ancestry, this company and their test should be your first stop. DNA Consultants produce a very interesting report on deep genetic ancestry. According to their analysis, I inherited Jewish DNA markers from both my parents. This makes sense as my parents are related to each other. Here are the results provided by DNA Consultants.

Jewish Marker 1: Both parents carry this one.

*This is the most common of the three markers. It can occur without known Jewish ancestry for a variety of reasons include an ancestors conversion to Christianity during the centuries of persecutions against Jews in Europe. Its frequency is highest in Poles, Russians, Germans, Hungarians, Romanians, and Slavic people who intermarried with Ashkenazic Jews. It also appears in Spanish, Portuguese, and Moroccan Jews (Sephardim).” (DNA Consultants literature)*

Jewish Marker 2: One parent carries this one.

*This marker is the strongest. It is found in Jewish families who have intermarried with other Jews down through the centuries. It is characteristic of Ashkenazic Jews.” (DNA Consultants literature)*

Jewish Marker 3: Both parents carry this one.

*This marker is an indication of Middle Eastern roots. Preserved by Jews, it is also borne by Kurds, Syrians, Arabs, Berbers, Basques, Turks, Greeks, Italians, and other populations from the ancient world. It is particularly common among Sephardic Jews.” (DNA Consultants literature)*

Jewish Marker 4: One parent carries this one.

*A marker indicative of Tatar or Khazar heritage. The Khazars were a Central Asian people of Turkic, Hunnish, and Iranian elements that arose in the Caucasus region. After converting to Judaism in the early Middle Ages, they moved westward into Russia and the Ukraine under the pressure from Islam, eventually becoming a large component of Eastern and Central European Jewry. Many Ashkenazi Jews now find they have some Khazar (or intermingled Tatar) ancestry.” (DNA Consultants literature)*

GEDmatch, the website that provides sophisticated databases, also has a feature that provides you with admixture results. Simply put, another tool to get a better idea of your genetic ancestry, if you are of mixed ancestry. If both your parents are Algerian, you are not of mixed ancestry. If you come from the colonies, in all likelihood, you are of mixed ancestry! When I plug my DNA into the various databases, I get a consistent result. Again, my DNA indicates Jewish ancestry. Here is one such result.

25.3 % Ashkenazi Jewish (Behar)	14.3% Turkish (Dodecad)
24.6% Ashkenazi Jewish (Behar)	13.3% Georgian Jewish (Behar)
23.7% Ashkenazi Jewish (Dodecad)	13% Azerbaijani Jewish (Behar)
23.47% Ashkenazi Jewish (Behar)	12.7 % Iranian Jewish (Behar)
22.9% Druze (HGDP)	12.5% Iraqi Jewish (Behar)
20.3% Ashkenazi Jewish (Behar)	11.6% Assyrian (Dodecad)
17.8% Sephardic-Jewish (Behar)	

One thing is for certain, my ancestors started out in North Africa, the Middle East, and the Caucasus. Based on my DNA matches to living Jewish men, it seems these “Not Swiss” genes came into my Swiss ancestors with the Jewish migrations through Switzerland. Trading and travelling Jews that wandered into Switzerland and stayed. Or Jews forcibly converted to Christianity and compelled to stay. Or converted by choice and intermingled with other like people in Switzerland.

On a basic level, Switzerland was a highway that connected Southern Europe and Northern Europe. The trade routes from Southern Europe extended east to the far reaches of Asia, India and China included, and to the south well into Africa. While the Swiss may have been hateful about strangers living in their midst, they did not mind the fine things traders brought from far and wide. Everybody likes a bauble, and they were no exception. Switzerland was a trade route. Trade routes bring foreigners and semi-permanent and permanent communities of foreigners.

Switzerland was also an escape route. If you were running from Northern Europe, or running from southern Europe, to a safer place, chances are you ran through Switzerland. Escaping through Switzerland, made famous by “The Sound of Music”, is nothing new.

There were at least five migrations of people into or through Switzerland through which Jewish DNA could have entered my family tree.

# Romans in Switzerland

Switzerland, from an early day, was a highway connecting southern Europe to northern Europe. The Romans made roads from Rome, through the Alps, and to the Rhine River. The Rhine River acted as a watery route into northern Europe. Switzerland served the travelling merchants that moved from south to north, and north to south. From the Roman days forward, lots of people in Switzerland worked in the hospitality business. An ancient version of the modern AirBnB. Switzerland provided accommodation, fresh horses, money exchanging, and provisions to the travelling merchants.

People do not realize that people were moving goods around the known world as early as they were. Trade routes, like the silk road and the spice routes, predate the Romans by hundreds of years. The second temple in Jerusalem (500 BC) was anointed with 2,000 pounds of cinnamon hauled all the way from Sri Lanka. People were moving precious goods from the far east to the north of Europe early in history. One route from southern Europe to northern Europe was through Switzerland. Thus, it was an important piece of real estate.

The Swiss-Roman outpost, Augusta Rauragorum, dates to the first century AD. It is located in present day Augst, Switzerland. It was founded by Lucius Munatius Plancus in 44 BC. It had its heyday between the first and third century and was a very active Roman commercial center. At its height, it had a population of over 20,000 people. The archeology of this former Roman capital revealed Jewish artifacts indicating a Jewish presence in in Augusta. Augusta Rauragorum was home to Roman soldiers of Syrian, Caucasian, and Jewish descent. So, it is possible my undesirable ancestors descend from these soldiers.

Thus, my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors could be explained by genetic deposits made by Syrian, Caucasian, and Jewish men during the Swiss Roman days. Indeed, many people involved with genetic genealogy, and specifically people interested in the people who immigrated from Switzerland to America, are of this belief. They say things like, "Our middle eastern haplogroup comes from a Roman soldier that came to Switzerland and stayed."

They have academic support for this notion. In Jean Manco's amazing book, "Ancestral Journeys, the peopling of Europe from the first adventurers to the Vikings", Manco makes this point.

*Men who find themselves carrying an unexpected Y-DNA signature may wonder if it arrived in their homeland (or homeland of their ancestors) with a Roman soldier. That is perfectly possible, but not the only option.*

The Romans recruited soldiers from diverse parts of the Roman empire. In some cases, soldiers started out as slaves from conquered lands. This would be the case with the Jewish men taken as slaves when Rome decimated Israel. In other parts of the Empire, like Syria and the Caucasus, the army offered men a chance to advance themselves.

Later in his book, Manco explains the “but not the only option. He makes the point that Romans kept foreign slaves and transported them around the Roman empire with them. In other words, slaves taken from Israel and sold in the slave markets of Rome, might end up working in a Roman household in Switzerland, or in any other Roman settlement. For sure, the Roman presence in Switzerland could explain my probably Jewish Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors that originate in North Africa, Israel, and the Caucasus.

## More Than a Roman Artifact

And yet, this does not entirely explain my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors. Why? Because ancestry testing reveals when certain ethnicities entered into you DNA and how recently it got added to your genetic mix. In my case, at least some of my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors entered into my genetic stream long after the Roman period.

As an example, my DNA, my sister's DNA, and my mother's DNA, timelines indicates that we have the following ancestry, and it entered our gene pool in the last 6-8 generations. The list would include:

- Ashkenazic Jewish
- Southern Indian Sub-Continent Group
- Sephardic-Jewish (North Africa, Spanish)
- Mizrahi Jewish (Iranian, Caucasian, Anatolian, and Mesopotamian)

The fact that my squatter, pauper, and non-conformer ancestors were of Ashkenazic Jewish, South Indian sub-continent, Sephardic-Jewish, and Mizrahi-Jewish descent, within in the last 6-8 generations, rules out my non-Swiss male haplogroups as being merely remnants of Roman genetic deposits. There were foreign, not Swiss genetic inputs into my family tree well after the Roman period.

Yates and Hirschman, in their trilogy of books that detail Anglo-Crypto Judaism, in the UK and the American colonies, “Jews and Muslims in Colonial America”, “When Scotland Was Jewish”, and “The Early Jews and Muslims of England and Wales”, make the following point: The movement of Jews into the British Isles occurred in waves. In these fascinating books the authors demonstrate that Jews made their way to England before the Roman days. Tin ingots from Western Britain have been found in Israel dating to 13th century BC. Jews came with the Romans as soldiers and traders (87 AD). Later they came with William the Conqueror to act as accountants and estate managers (1066 AD). Later still with as Spanish-Jewish refugees fleeing Catholic Spain (1500 AD).

Using the Yates/Hirschman model, it is possible my Swiss-not-Swiss Jewish ancestors made their way to Switzerland in successive waves. The Roman outposts would have provided the first wave. But not the last.

# Rhadhanites

The Radhanites, or Radhanites, Arabic: الرذنية, Romanized: ar-Raḏaniyya; Hebrew sing. רדני Radhani, pl. רדנים Radhanim) were medieval travelling merchants. It is unclear if they were a guild of travelling Jewish merchants, a clan of travelling merchants, or if the term just referred to Jewish merchants that moved goods along the trans-Eurasian trade network. These merchants moved goods between the Christian and Islamic worlds between 500 AD and 1500 AD. They bridged the divide between the warring Christian and Islamic world. They could go to places neither a Christian nor a Muslim could go.

Many of the trade routes established during the Roman Empire continued to function as a result of the Rhadhanite Jews. Their trade network covered Northern Europe, Southern Europe, North Africa, the Middle east, Central Asia, and China and India. As they are known to have traded in Germany, they would have passed through Switzerland to get there. They may have stayed and created a permanent settlement, or just left a genetic deposit.

Switzerland would have been on the far reaches of the Radhanite trade route. The other extreme would have been China. What happened on the eastern extreme of their trading route may shed light on what happened on the western extreme.

*Jewish Merchants played a leading part in the trade after the fall of the Roman Empire. A Persian writer in about 850 AD recorded the journeys of the Jewish traders known as "Radhanites" who linked the Frankish and Chinese Kingdoms by land and sea. Their name probably comes from a Persian phrase meaning "knowing the way".<sup>33</sup>*

*According to the Babylonian Talmud, the Jews settled in cities along the Silk Road in the fourth century AD at the latest. The common Aramaic language encouraged the settlement of Jews and their involvement in the international trade of silk and silk dying. The Tang dynasty in China was receptive to foreign religions and invited the Jews to settle in the country. A Chinese document of the ninth century CE notes that the Jewish merchants spoke many languages: Arabic, Persian, Latin, French, Spanish, and Slavic. During this period, the Chinese used bilingual coins with Chinese inscriptions on one side and the Semitic letters on the other side.<sup>34</sup>*

The Jewish community in Kaifeng, China, was created in the fourth century AD when Rhadhanite traders established an outpost. They came as traders but stayed and became the eastern most Jewish outpost of the Silk Road. The Jews of Kaifeng still survive in China today. The current census indicates there are 500 Jews living in Kaifeng, made up of 100 families. They have long married Chinese women, and apart from their Jewish practices, are indistinguishable from local Chinese.

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<sup>33</sup> Martin Gilbert, *The Atlas of Jewish History* (New York: Dorset Press, 1984),

<sup>34</sup> Menashe Har El, *In Ariel*, No. 84 (1991)

If the Rhadanites set up a permanent community on the Eastern edge of their trade routes, it is only logical they would have set up permanent communities on the Western Edge. It is reasonable to suspect there were Rhadanites settlements in Switzerland and further up the Rhine long after the fall of the Roman Empire.

# Ashkenazi Jews

In Hebrew, the word for Germany is Ashkenaz. So, simply put, Ashkenazi Jews were from Germany. However, the origins of Ashkenazi Jews are currently hotly debated.

One theory is this. DNA research indicates Ashkenazi Jews started out in Israel. When the Romans destroyed Israel, Israelite men were taken to Rome as slaves. Maybe some Israelite women. There the Israelite men met, married, and converted Italian women. These Israelite plus Italian DNA Jews began moving north and west of Rome. There they encountered Southern European Jewish communities that predated the Roman destruction of Israel. Then these Israelite plus Italian plus pre-existing Jewish community mixes began moving north. Eventually they made their way to Germany, or Ashkenaz. Germany was a home for 300 years or so. German became their language. And, it was a good life, until it was not.

In the 1300s German Jews were expelled from Germany. Fortunately for them, in 1343 King Casimir the Great welcomed them to Poland. Poland became a magnet for the Jews expelled from various parts of Europe during the black plague days. In 1453, Casimir IV legalized Jewish residence in Poland. By the middle 16th century 80% of the world's Jewish population lived in Poland. The Jews from Ashkenaz, even while living in Poland, continued speaking German. German plus some Hebrew words. The longer they lived outside of Germany, the more their form of German became obsolete. German in Germany had moved on as a language. The German of the German Jews became known as Yiddish. When the Polish Kingdom grew, these Ashkenaz Jews migrated into the Polish acquisitions: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Romania, Ukraine, etc.

Because a limited number of Jews migrated from Germany to Poland, Ashkenazi Jews all descend from a small genetic pool. Thus, the Jews that migrated from Germany, to Poland, to Ukraine, to Romania, are genetically quite similar. Their DNA fingerprint is fairly homogenous and easy to detect. My family carries Ashkenazi-Jewish ancestry.

My family never went further than Switzerland, so, how we got Ashkenazi DNA is interesting. It appears some Ashkenazi Jews migrated their way back from Poland to Switzerland. One of my Swiss ancestors was Sarah Rifke Wendum (b.1530-d.1586). She was a Ashkenazi Jew born in Krakow. She made her way back to Germany. Her children made their way to Switzerland and mixed with the clannish family that would become my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors.



## Swiss Jews

Jewish communities were established in most of the Swiss Cantons in between 1213 and 1273. The Swiss-Jewish communities flourished until the Black Plague days of the 1350s. As the plague spread across Switzerland, Swiss Jews were accused of intentionally infecting Christians with the plague or more specifically poisoning the wells which caused the plague. It will come as no surprise the Roman-Catholic Church and the Swiss aristocracy were behind these anti-Jewish conspiracy theories. Once again, the various Swiss cantons used torture to extract "confessions" of such crimes from Jews. However ridiculous the claims seem today; the Cantons whooped the "the mob" i.e. peasants into a frenzy and this led to widespread attacks on the Swiss Jewish community. Members of the Jewish communities throughout Switzerland were burned alive, expelled from the towns, and significantly, their children were taken and forcibly converted to Christianity.

What happened to the children after they were forcibly converted? They disappeared from the written record. But people do not disappear. These children continued to live in Switzerland.

However, it appears at the time of the Swiss plague persecutions, there were already Jewish converts to Christianity living in Switzerland. In the paper, "The Approach of the Black Death in Switzerland and the Persecution of the Jews, 1348-1349", Albert Winkler, speaks of 14th-century Jewish converts and how they were treated during the Swiss plague days. His mention of them alone lets us know conversions were taking place.

*The persecution of the Jews in Solothurn was probably instigated by a report from the city councilors of Bern, which stated that a Jew in their city had given testimony that he saw two other Jews, named Koppli and Kursenner, place poison in a fountain in Solothurn. While the statement that "all the Jews were burned" in Solothurn presented few details on the actual persecution, a judge, Burkart Senn Von Munsingen, related how three former Jews, who had converted to Christianity, were treated in court. This adjudicator stated that two of them, a converted man, and his wife, confessed in open court that they had carried poison and put it in a number of public fountains. The judge then gave the man, woman, and the other accused convert the choice of dying as Christians or Jews. Each wanted to die in the Jewish faith. When these three people were tortured by being broken on the wheel, they confessed that they had been paid to carry the poison and that other Jews were involved in the crime. They also told the judge to warn the Christians that no one should trust any baptized Jew because all of them changed their religion because of evil motives. Apparently even conversion to Christianity was no assurance that a former Jew would be safe from vicious and unfounded accusations.<sup>35</sup>*

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<sup>35</sup> Albert Winkler, *The Approach of the Black Death in Switzerland and the Persecution of the Jews, 1348-1349*, (Swiss American Historical Society Review, 43(3), 4-23, 2007), p.12

Thus, converted Jews, either children seized and converted, or people converted to save themselves from being burned alive, or Jews that simply converted because they wanted to convert to Christianity, were still Jews in the eyes of Christian society. A subset of Jews that would have formed their own outwardly Christian, inwardly Jewish society. Despite converting, they were socially undesirable. No local Christian would marry them. They would have had no choice but to associate with people from the same background. Following the plague days (1350s) Switzerland was home to a community of Crypto-Jews.

Oh there is so much more to what went down in Basel. Albert Winkler gives us a window into what was really going down in Basel. Or more specifically who was behind inciting the mob to violence. The city managers knew the Jews has not poisoned wells.

*Members of the governing body of Basel were unwilling to destroy the cities Jewish community or persecute its members. The city council likely doubted the truth of the reports of Jews infecting public fountains, and the ruling assembly took steps to protect them. Apparently, a number of knights had been guilty of some kind of violence towards the Jews, and the ruling body took action and banished these men from the city. By doing so, the leaders had unwittingly set in motion a backlash that led to the persecution of the people the council was trying to protect.<sup>36</sup>*

After being kicked out of town for abusing Jews, some punished knights returned to town. This time with a mob and demanded that the Jews of Basel be burned alive. The city council, concerned for their own survival, agreed.

*A new house was built on a sand bar near the mouth of the Birs Creek, where it emptied into the Rhine River east of Basel, for the purpose of killing the Jews of the city by burning them alive in the structure. Friday, 16 January, 1349 was selected as the date for the execution. This choice of dates was probably no coincidence because this was the day of the week when Jesus was crucified, and many towns and cities killed their Jews on a Friday, Sunday, or on other religious holidays. The executions on Fridays probably meant that many Christians were taking symbolic revenge on the Jews whom many blamed for the death of their Savior. Also, the killings on religious holidays made it appear that the murders were part of the holy celebrations, which indicated that many Christians believed they were doing the work of their lord by burning Jews alive. The Jews were brought to the place of execution, and neither an official investigation had taken place, nor a legal procedure had been undertaken. Clearly old hatreds and prejudices were sufficient causes for the mass murder of the Jewish community.*

*The only Jews who were able to escape death in the conflagration were those who chose to convert to Christianity at the last minute or those who were snatched from the flames before they were killed and baptized. A chronicler, Christian Wurstisen, writing over two centuries later affirmed that many small*

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<sup>36</sup> Albert Winkler, *The Approach of the Black Death in Switzerland and the Persecution of the Jews, 1348-1349*, (Swiss American Historical Society Review, 43(3), 4-23, 2007), p.12

*children were taken from the flames and forcefully baptised against the desires of their parents. The fact Jews could be saved from execution by being baptised as Christians meant that their real crime was being Jewish and had nothing to do with the suspicion of poisoning wells. If the city authorities actually believed the Jews were attempting to kill Christians, then baptism would be insufficient to free them from the punishment for their crimes.<sup>37</sup>*

Winkler informs us that in 14th-century Switzerland there were already Jewish converts to Christianity. The Black Plague persecution of the Swiss-Jewish community led to more Jewish converts to Christianity. All this proves there was a Crypto-Jewish or hidden Jewish community in Switzerland in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. My family's Jewish DNA could have joined the family tree in those dark days.

One example of this would be the Goldschmid family. The Goldschmids lived in Winterthur at the time of the Black Plague Libel and were Jewish. The only way the Goldschmid's survived the anti-Jewish riots was to convert. During the libels, all Winterthur Jews were converted or were burned alive. A generation later my Goldschmids moved from Winterthur to Richterswil as Christians. This is one example, but there are more lurking in my family tree.

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<sup>37</sup> Winkler, *The Approach of the Black Death*, p.12

## Spanish Jews

Before Poland hosted the world's largest Jewish population, Spain was home to the world's largest Jewish population. The Golden Age of Spanish Jewish Culture was between 711 AD and 1495 AD. In 13th century in Spain, there were 120 Jewish communities scattered around the Iberian Peninsula and a population of 500,000 or more Jews. In 1492, when Ferdinand and Isabella issued the 1492 Edict of Expulsion of all Jews, a huge number of Jews had to flee. Many of them fled to Turkey where they were made welcome by the Ottoman Empire. Many fled along with their Muslim neighbors to North Africa. Some were welcomed to Italy by the Medicis.

Some Jews stayed in Spain and converted to Christianity. Despite having converted, the Spanish never accepted them. They were called "new Christians" or "Conversos". The sincerity of their conversion was ever more questioned by the Spanish authorities. Like the Mennonites, they were watched and were persecuted. The Inquisition, that attempted to exterminate the Kathars, the Waldensians, and the Mennonites, came to Spain in search of bad "New Christians". In fact, the Spanish used the Inquisition to persecute New Christians for the crime of coming from Jewish families. It was racial more than it was religious.

Even the most Catholic compliant "New Christian" lived in fear of being turned into the Inquisition by anyone who cared to do so. The anti-Jewish discrimination continued to such a degree, Conversos fled from Spain when they could. According to Genie Milgrom, a leading expert on the topic, Conversos usually moved west. They moved to Holland, England, Germany, Mexico, the Caribbean, and south America. Sometimes they reverted to Judaism, sometimes they remained Christian.

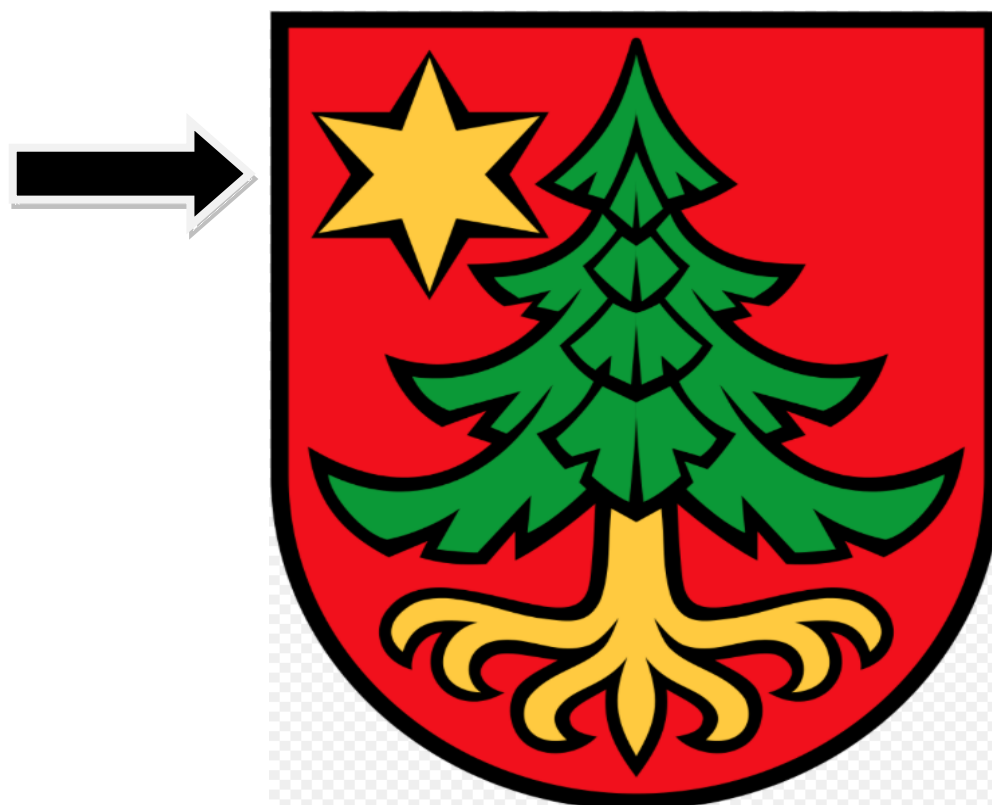
Family lore has it that one branch of my Swiss family tree (The Trachsels) were expelled Spanish Jews.

*Notes for Stephen Trchsel: According to legend, the Trchsel family came to Switzerland from Turkey. They were probably Sephardic Jews fleeing the Spanish inquisition. According to descendent Rinnah Bonnie Burns, there were several Jewish communities in the southern part of Emmental, Switzerland (Canton Berne) from 1385, when her Yoders came into contact with the Trachsels of Trchselwald, who migrated from Turkey to Greece to Austria then Switzerland. Other Swiss Jewish surnames are Zook or Zaug, Kauffman, Amman (founder of Amish religion), Schrock or Schrag.*

I investigated this bit of family lore to see if there was anything to it. Sephardic Jews have their own unique genetic history. When Israel was destroyed by the Romans, many Jews fled to north Africa. Once there, they married converted North Africans. Later in history, these Israelite plus North Africa Jews moved to Spain. Again, they married and converted people from the Iberian Peninsula. So Spanish, or Sephardic Jews, tend to be a mix of Israelite, North Africa, and Iberian DNA. Since my Swiss-not-Swiss mix includes straight up Sephardic Jews, plus Israelite, North African and Iberian

DNA, it is quite possible Spanish-Jewish refugees are, in fact, in my Swiss-not-Swiss family tree.

The Trachsels are said to have made their way from Turkey to Trachselwald. A good question would be, "Why?" No answer there. But they "appear" in Switzerland in the 16th century, at the exact moment when converted Spanish-Jews were on the move. Their name is derived from the town in which they appeared, Trachselwald. Coincidentally, a Church was built in 1525 in Trachselwald. The Trachselwald Church (Kirche Trachselwald) is very beautiful, and oddly very similar in design to many Synagogues, no Saints, no crucifix, and a ceiling painted with Stars of David. If you did not know better, you would think it was a synagogue. Here is coat of arms for Trachselwald. Notice anything interesting about it?



Though I could not find anything connecting the Trachsels to Turkey or to Spain, I did find an ancestor whose path did start in the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) and was intermarried into Spanish-Jewish families. Heinrich Flory. Heinrich and his descendants ended up in Switzerland and married into the Spanish-Jewish Marti family. Heinrich's cousin, Hernan Juan de Flores, was born in Spain, married into Converso families, and then fled Spain with other Conversos to Mexico. The Flory family have a remarkable story. They started out as administrators in the Crusader-held Holy Land and ended up in my family tree.

<b>Viscount Gilbertus de Flory</b> <i>father/son</i>	b.1135, Israel d.1189 Israel
<b>Viscount of Acre, Jean de Flory</b> <i>father/son</i>	b.1170, Israel d.1235 Acre, Israel
<b>Raymond Blondeau de Flor</b> <i>married</i>	b.1204, Israel d. Jerusalem
<b>Hodierne de Caiphas</b> <i>Parents of</i>	b.1218, Jerusalem d. Jerusalem
<b>Simon de Flor</b> <i>father/son</i>	b.1238, Israel
<b>Raymon de Flory</b> <i>married</i>	b.1306 Israel d.1344, Cyprus
<b>Lucy Ibelin</b> <i>Parents of</i>	b.1303 Israel
<b>Viscount de Nicosia Raymond du Flory</b> <i>Father/son</i>	b.1306 Israel d.1348 Nicossia, Cyprus
<b>Pierre de Flory</b> <i>Father/son</i>	b.1345 Nicossia, Cyprus d.1398 Nicossia, Cyprus
<b>Comte de Jaffa, Jacques de Flory</b> <i>Father/son</i>	b.1418, Nicossia, Cyprus d.1463, Nicossia, Cyprus
<b>Jacques de Flori</b> <i>married</i>	b.1418 Nicossia, Cyprus d.1463 Istanbul, Turkey
<b>Zoe Kantakuzene</b> <i>Parents of</i>	b.1425 d.1470
<b>Hercules Kantacuzne De Flori</b> <i>Father/son</i>	b.1446 Nicossia, Cyprus
<b>Christian Cantacuzene Flory</b> <i>Father/son</i>	b.1480 Schletau, Germany
<b>Heinrich Flory</b> <i>Father/son</i>	b.1532 Germany--d.1571 Switzerland
<b>Hans Flori</b> <i>Father/son</i>	b.1562 Solothurn, Switzerland
<b>Hans Fluri</b> <i>Father/daughter</i>	b.1592 Solothurn, Switzerland d.1674 Glarus, Switzerland
<b>Elisabet Fluri</b> <i>married</i>	b.1630 Glarus, Switzerland d.1666 Glarus, Switzerland
<b>Albrecht Luchsinger</b> <i>Parents of</i>	b.1630, Glarus, Switzerland d.1675, Glarus, Switzerland
<b>Anna Maria Luchsinger</b> <i>married</i>	b.1664 Glarus, Switzerland d.1732 Glarus, Switzerland
<b>Meinrad Blumer</b> <i>Parents of</i>	b.1669 Glarus, Switzerland
<b>Rosina Blumer</b> <i>married</i>	b.1701 Glarus, Switzerland d.1762 Glarus, Switzerland
<b>Rudolph Marti</b>	b.1688 Glarus, Switzerland d.1753 Glarus, Switzerland

The Marti family appear to be Spanish-Jewish refugees from Mallorca, Spain, living in Switzerland.

This is a good example of how intermarried my Swiss-not-Swiss family were. Not only am I related to Rosina Blumer, but her husband Rudolph Marti, like myself, is a direct descendent of Matheus Marti (b.1577-d.1659)

Here we find one ancestor that started out in the Ottoman empire (Cyprus) and ended up in Switzerland. If the Fleury-Flori-Flory family made that trek from Turkey, the Trachsels could have done the same. People tended to move in flocks. If one family made a trek, usually other families did the same.

This family is directly connected with Spanish Jewry from a different direction. Jacques de Flori (b.1418-d.1463) had a brother. When Jacques left Cyprus and moved to Istanbul, his brother Bernardo moved to Italy. Bernardo de Flori went to Italy and then to Spain. His son was born in Spain.

<b>Bernardo de Flori</b> <i>Father</i>	b.1420 Nicossia, Cyprus d.1460 Firenze, Italy
<b>Hernan Juan de Flores</b> <i>Son</i>	b.1460 Encinsola, Huelva, Andalucia, Spain d.1543 Federal District, Mexico

For one reason or the other, Hernan Juan de Flores fled Spain for Mexico along with many Spanish Jews on the run. In Mexico, Hernan married into the Converso families de la Cueva and Carballo. He and his descendants living in Mexico consistently married amongst the Converso/ Crypto-Jewish families.

In addition to the Flory family marrying into Spanish Converso families in Mexico, and in Switzerland, they pop up in Amsterdam. In the truly remarkable book, "Jewish Marriages in Amsterdam, 1598-1811", we see them again. The book records 200 years of Jewish marriages, one by one. Incredible. The Flory family married into Spanish-Jewish families living in Amsterdam. However, after these marriages, the family disappears from the historical record.

Isaac Flory marries Dina de Costa de Messiana in 1772.

Jacob Flory marries Rachel Abenator in 1731.

Jacob Flory marries Ester Enriquez Garcia in 1745.

Beyond family lore, there is evidence Spanish Jews did make their way to Switzerland. They made their way to a lot of places because the Edict of Expulsion resulted in between 40,000 and 100,000 Spanish Jews looking for a new home. And in the years that followed the Edict, converted Jews fled Spain in second wave of immigration. Spanish Jews and Spanish conversos ended up all over Europe and that included Switzerland. There is a word game here that has to be explained.

When the Spanish Edict of Expulsion was issued, the Portuguese monarchy saw an opportunity for themselves. They welcomed Spanish-Jewish refugees that could pay an entrance fee. Thus, many Spanish Jews moved to Portugal. However, the Spanish Jews living in Portugal, did not have a long reprieve from persecution. Pretty quickly

they became subject to a forced mass conversion/expulsion. On December 5, 1496, King Manuel I of Portugal issued a convert or leave order to the visiting Spanish Jews. This led to whole unhappy conversion of "Spanish" Jews. Over time, the converted Jews fled Portugal when they could. When they moved onto to happier hunting grounds, they left as Portuguese Conversos or Portuguese merchants. Portuguese merchant was kind of a wink wink nod nod nationality. Portuguese merchants could get into countries that prohibited the entry of Jews. But everyone knew Portuguese Merchants were converted Jews. The important fact here is that Spanish Jews became Portuguese Conversos and Portuguese merchants.

In the paper, "Portuguese Conversos on the Upper Rhine and the Converso community of Sixteenth Century Europe", we find a very interesting story which shows Portuguese Conversos trying to make their way to Switzerland.

So, it seems three groups of Portuguese Conversos made the journey from Portugal to Antwerp. However, they were not welcome in Antwerp and needed to move on as fast as they could. They were not long off the boat when they were on the run from local authorities that did not want any Jewish refugees staying in Antwerp.

*Such, then, in a nutshell, was the climate surrounding the arrest of three groups of Portuguese Conversos on the Upper Rhine in 1547. The great majority of them had left Lisbon in January or February of the same year. In Antwerp, they were apparently told that they could not be allowed to stay and settle. They travelled in three different groups, consisting of thirty-five members each, in two separate parties later arrested at Colmar and Heiligkreuz, and one of forty one members in the group to be stopped at Herrlisheim; all in all twenty-nine men, thirty-seven women, and forty-three children from a few months to fifteen years of age. They had chartered two horse drawn carts per group and carried with them only laissez-passer (documents granting unrestricted access or passage to its holder.) issued by the Regent of the Low Countries, money, some bundles of clothes and personal belongings. Hot on the heels of these groups was the imperial vice commissary, Johann Vuystinck from Utrecht, intent on arresting them before they reached the relative safety offered by the Swiss cities of Mulhouse and Basel.<sup>38</sup>*

What happened to these three groups of Conversos once they got to Switzerland is unknown. They disappear from the written record. But, again, no one disappears. Presumably, they disappeared themselves as best they could amongst local people in Switzerland. That there is no record of them comes as no surprise. They were hunted out of Spain, then Portugal, and after a sea voyage, had to move as fast as they could overland to safe harbor cities in Switzerland. Breaking news. These Jews on the run did everything they could to keep their origins a well-kept secret. DNA analysis indicates Spanish Jews did enter my family tree at some point. The "where" and the "when" is a bit of a mystery.

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<sup>38</sup> Kaspar Von Greyerz, *Portuguese Conversos on the Upper Rhine and the Converso Community of Sixteenth Century Europe*, Social History Vol 4, No 1, January 1989, pp 59-82



A recent encounter with a DNA relative makes the point people do not disappear! I am in contact with a Swiss relative that is very much from Switzerland. His parents, grandparents, great grandparents, all the way back are from one town in Switzerland. And yet, his ancestry DNA report indicates he is 35% Sephardic Jewish. He has no clue how this would be the case. I think the referenced groups of Portuguese conversos, on the run, who “disappeared, may provide some answers!

There is another family that appears in the family tree of my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors, that may well have been Spanish Jews. Fidel Weinman (b.1430) and his wife Catarina Buz (b.1430) appear out of nowhere in 15th-century Germany. Fidel’s first name is unusual for Germany at that time and indicates a Spanish origin. Catarina has a Hebrew last name, Buz. In Hebrew, Buz means despised or plundered. Weinman literally means wine man and indicates Fidel was a wine merchant.

Many expelled Spanish Jews ended up trading in wine. Wine was shipped by Converso relatives in Spain, to Converso relatives in Bordeaux, and from there to Converso relatives in Germany. When it was convenient, Christians had an incredible ability to look the other way. The wine trade, which literally moved wine from converted Jews in Spain through a network of converted Spanish Jews dotted along to the far reaches of Europe, would be one example. Everybody knew there “Portuguese Merchants” were Spanish Jews. But they liked wine. If people liked something or wanted something, they had a great capacity to look the other way. I have met many Americans who oppose illegal immigration but happily employ illegal immigrants to care for their children or cut their grass. Same deal here. This Weinman family ended up marrying the Schwyzer family, or the Swiss-er family, and become blended into my Swiss-not-Swiss family mix. That they were Spanish Jews is entirely conjecture. But they are a possible Spanish couple that does appear in my family tree.

Other sources for Swiss-not-Swiss DNA? Surprisingly, the Huguenots.

# The Huguenots

The Huguenots were a group of non-Catholic Christians that lived in the south and southwest of France. Their origins are somewhat obscure. The French Huguenots were preceded by the Waldenses and were later influenced by the Calvinists. They opposed the Catholic Church in all ways. Because the royal family of France was Catholic, this made them an enemy of the French establishment. Curiously, most of Huguenots were tradesmen, goldsmiths, silversmiths, blacksmiths, leather makers, shoemakers, tanners, glass blowers and cutters, weavers, and tailors. Many of them were merchants; cloth makers and silk merchants.

In “The Huguenots and the Jews Entwined in the Pathways of History”, By Anthony Steele (Anthony Sassienie), Sassienie Worldwide Family Website<sup>39</sup>, we find expelled Spanish Jews and Conversos found a home in the Huguenot movement. Steele makes the point that while much attention has been paid to the Spanish Jews that fled to Portugal and Morocco, the Spanish Jews that fled to France, also a nearby neighbor, have received less attention.

*The Sephardim (Spanish Jews) that went to France, as either overt or secret Jews, found a religious situation very different from that in Spain and Portugal, particularly because of the rise of Protestantism in France. The rise of Protestantism (French Protestants were called Huguenots) in France was significant for Jews. Protestantism had several factors that would make it more attractive than Catholicism for secret Jews who wanted a Christian outward identity and for Sephardim actually accepting Christianity, over a period of decades.*

*First, Protestantism, like Judaism, had a mutual enemy in Catholicism because of the Inquisitions attack on both. The rise of Protestantism in Western Europe added to the insecurity of Catholicism and was one fact leading to the Inquisition. In Spain, Huguenots were persecuted.*

*Second, Protestantism, like Judaism, had a special appeal to merchants and to the financially well off and well-educated segments of society.*

*Third, related to the second point, Protestantism had special appeal in seaports and shipping areas of France, especially LaRochelle are of western France, on the Bay of Biscay about two hundred miles from the Spanish border and about eight miles from Bordeaux. The Sephardic and Huguenot areas of settlement overlapped to a noticeable extent.*

*Fourth, at its height, before their most severe persecutions under Louis XIV, Huguenots comprised one-tenth of Frances population. The largest numbers were in western and southern France, areas closest to Spain.*

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<sup>39</sup> <http://sassienie.com/>

*Fifth, in removing many of the trappings of Catholicism (rituals, liturgy, saints, a church hierarchy, etc.) Protestantism returned to a more original Christianity, which was closer to Judaism. Customs such as naming of children also followed this pattern with Old Testament (Holy Scriptures) names, instead of New Testament Saint names, being used much more frequently by Huguenots than by Catholics.*

*There were times when it was safer to be a Crypto-Jew overtly practicing Catholicism than to be a Huguenot but in earlier years (up to 1575) it was safer to be a Crypto-Jew overtly practicing Protestantism than to be an overt Jew.<sup>40</sup>*

When the Spanish Jews and later Spanish Conversos fled Spain, many of them crossed the border to France. Those that had been forcibly converted to Christianity in Spain, only to be persecuted by the same Catholic church, despised the Catholic church. A “reform” church with the Roman Church as its enemy, would have been a comfortable fit for Conversos. The Huguenots were the heirs to the Waldenses primitive Christian practices, opposing saints and saint worship, idolatry, transubstantiation, and organized churches included. This too would have been a more comfortable fit for former Jews.

*Jews had begun trickling back into France as soon as the series of expulsions in the fourteenth century were over. However, their numbers were not significant until the mid-1500’s, when they were joined by the New Christians, or “Portuguese” to whom King Henri II granted the right to live anywhere they pleased. Most of the new-comers, who did not necessarily want to revert to Judaism, settled in southwest France, some venturing as far north as La Rochelle on the Atlantic coast.<sup>41</sup>*

So, some of the converted Jews chose to remain Christian, they just chose the Huguenot option. The Huguenots were merchants and skilled craftsmen. The Conversos that fled Spain for France were merchants and skilled craftsmen. They lived in the same towns. Socially and culturally, the Huguenots and the Spanish Jews had much in common. At that time, skills were coveted family secrets. As such, glass makers married glass makers, goldsmiths married goldsmiths. In all probability, a Conversos Jewish origin would have been secondary to their coveted professional secrets, trade skills, and trade connections.

Elizabeth Hirschman, in her paper, “Investigating the Sephardic-Jewish Ancestry of colonial French Canadians through genetic and historical evidence”, found some of the Huguenots that immigrated to America were of Sephardic-Jewish origin. Hirschman compared DNA from the Huguenots in America to known men of Sephardic-Jewish ancestry. Her research revealed DNA matches between the two groups. She thus proved that some Spanish conversos, hopped over the French border, and joined the ranks of the Huguenots.

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<sup>40</sup> <http://sassienie.com/archivelinks/Who%20were%20the%20Huguenots.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Josephine Bacon, *The Illustrated Atlas of Jewish Civilization. 4000 years of History*, (London: Quantum Books) p.89

Perhaps not the best pick, as the Huguenots ultimately had their own problems in France. Specifically, the Huguenots were a problem for the French Catholic Monarchy. The Edict of Nantes (1598), issued by Henry IV of France, gave Huguenots the right to live and worship as they pleased in France. That permission was later revoked by Louis the XIV, in the Edict of Fontainebleau (1685). The Edict of Fontainebleau gave the Huguenots the option of converting to Catholicism or leaving the country. Immediately.

At the time of the eviction edict, the Huguenot population in France was estimated to be around one million persons. After the Edict, it was reduced to 3,000 souls. 850,000 were thought to have converted to Catholicism and at least 150,000 fled France. A huge number of Huguenots made their way out of France through the land that connected Southern Europe and Northern Europe.... the old Swiss highway.

Swiss history reports that between 1680 and 1690, 140,000 to 160,000 Huguenots passed through Switzerland. Switzerland had no intention of offering the refugees a home. Simply a transit route out of France and to Germany, England, and the United States. MuseeProtestant.org, on their webpage "The Huguenot Refuge in Switzerland" had this to say about the wave of Huguenot refugees.

*Protestant Cantons received the Huguenots, helped them, but only as passing guests. All the more as political and economic situations, with scarcity of wheat, became strained. In spite of the common religion, the archives unveil jealousy, xenophobia, the "worthless mouth to feed" the professional competitor; even the Swiss pastoral circles were afraid of competition with French pastors. In 1687 Lausanne was full of refugees and asked the Bern authorities to direct them to other passages, in spite of the risks.*

*In 1694 Bern ordered all refugees to leave the territory, and sent them to German states, to the Netherlands, or to England. The effect of this decision was minimized after the English envoy to Switzerland obtained that, by sorting, some were allowed to stay and be naturalized. In 1698 the situation had not evolved, so Bern made the decision to coordinate the departure orders all over the territory, cities were asked to contribute to expel the refugees and thus definitively solve the problem. New host countries had to face the flow of this population, mostly poor people.*

So, about the time Berne was giving the Huguenots the boot, my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors were also on the move. It is not only likely that some refugee Huguenots ended up in my Swiss family tree, but indeed they did. The list of my Huguenot ancestors that mixed it up in my Swiss family tree include:

Ester Baugeo (b.1651-d.1687) and her husband Lorent Massa (b.1647-d.1687)  
Mathieu Blanco (b.1600-d.1688)  
Jacque Faure (b.1600) and his wife Anne Elizabeth Bondurant-Amat (b.1600-d.1665)  
Dr. Pierre Chastain (b.1659-d.1728)

Three of these ancestors have Spanish last names. That is a bit telling. Moreover, these Spanish last names can be found in the "Dictionary of Sephardic Surnames" indicating they were Spanish-Jewish names. They were Spanish Jews, who crossed over into

France, became Huguenots, and then migrated through Switzerland as Huguenots. The Huguenots in my family tree are a clear source of Spanish-Jewish ancestry.

## Sources of Jewish Swiss-not-Swiss Ancestry

Switzerland was a highway that connected northern Europe to southern Europe and from there, to Africa and Asia. And it was a travelled highway. My Jewish Swiss-not-Swiss ancestry could have come to Switzerland with any one of the many waves of Jews who passed through this highway. Jewish Roman soldiers, Rhadanite traders, Ashkenazi Jews, Swiss Jews, Spanish Jews, or Huguenots. From the Roman times through the Huguenot exodus, Jewish genetic deposits could have made their way into my family tree. With each wave of Jewish migration through Switzerland some appear to have stayed. And based on the fact my family only married amongst themselves, it appears Jewish immigrants married Jewish immigrants.

But they were Crypto-Jews. Secret Jews. Jews that hid their origins and kept it private and amongst themselves. Did they know they were of Jewish ancestry? When they first arrived, or converted, they would have known. In successive generations, they may have known less. Remember my Swiss relative whose family has lived in the same village since the 16<sup>th</sup> century and has no idea why he has so much Sephardic ancestry. Perhaps they knew, perhaps they did not. But, based on their marriage patterns, if only on an unconscious level, Crypto Jews married Crypto Jews. If they came in successive waves, successive waves married into the families of earlier waves of Jewish migration.

The evidence my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors were in fact Swiss Crypto-Jews is so compelling, I felt like more research was warranted.

## Hirschman-Yates Crypto-Jewish Formula

In their various books, researchers Elizabeth Hirschman and Donald Yates establish a formula for examining Crypto-Jewish communities. Crypto (hidden) Jews were Jews that either through forced conversion or self-preservation adopted a Christian outward identity while maintaining a Jewish internal identity. Or at least preserved some Judaic practices.

The Hirschman-Yates work suggests if you are looking for Crypto-Jews, look for the following:

1. Endogamous marriage patterns. Crypto-Jews married in an endogamous manner, meaning, they married amongst themselves rather than marrying outsiders.
2. Naming patterns. Crypto-Jews used names and naming patterns that differed from the general population.
3. DNA matches to men of known Jewish identity. Crypto-Jews will have DNA matches to men of known Jewish ancestry. Their family may have converted to Christianity, but other family members would have stayed in the faith.

I thought it would be fun to run my Jewish Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors through the Hirschman/Yates screening process to find evidence supporting the idea my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors were, in fact, Crypto-Jews.

## Endogamous Marriage Patterns

Endogamy, or marrying within the family, is extremely common in Crypto-Jewish families and communities. When you were a hidden Jew, marrying an outsider exposed you to risk of discovery. Crypto-Jews married people who had as much to lose as they did if they were discovered. Also, Crypto-Jews shared a culture, and often times professions, which meant they were naturally more inclined to marry amongst their own kind. They had a common history and would have been comfortable amongst their own kind. Research done by Hirschman and Yates, and many others, show Crypto-Jews, when given the chance, married their own kind.

Suffice it to say, my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors married amongst themselves. In both Switzerland and in America, my ancestors preferred to marry amongst their own. And when I say they married within the family, I mean within the family, and over and over again. First cousins married first cousins, and then first cousins married first cousins. In many instances I am talking about the bad kind of first cousins, i.e., two brothers married two sisters and their children, first cousins, married amongst themselves.

# The Marti Family

Let's start the search for endogamous marriage patterns with my Marti ancestors. My ninth great-grandfather, Matheus Marti (b.1577-d.1659) appears in Engi, Switzerland in 1577. Where his family came from is uncertain, but he is the first Marti to pop up in my family tree in Switzerland.

In "On the History of the Citizen Families of Engi and Their Development", Matheus Marti descendent Martin Baumgartner (b.1923), the author and one of my relatives, gives us a full history of the Marti family. Baumgartner goes out of his way to proclaim that the family were notable citizens of Engi. He also mentions the family first appears on the tax rolls in Engi in 1525 and 1536.

They appeared in Switzerland at a time which coincides with the exodus of the Martis from Spain! According to the very proud Martin, Mathaus Marti was a federal councilor and judge. But he does not mention Mathaus' origins. And there could be a reason for this. Baumgartner may have not known or may not have wanted to know.

Marti is a Sephardic-Jewish name. More specifically it is a Mallorcan-Jewish last name. Marti means Tuesday. To the modern reader, that does not sound like an awful last name, but it was indeed. When Spanish Jews were forced to convert, they were often given terrible last names by the clergy. Two great examples would be the Converso surnames Cerdo (pig) and Zapato (shoe).

So, in Spanish, Tuesday = Martes. In French, Tuesday = Mardi. In Mallorca, Minorca, and Ibiza, Tuesday = Marti. They all come from the same Latin root referring to Mars. As Tuesday was once sacred/dedicated to Mars. So far so good. But Tuesday-Martes-Marti is considered an unlucky day in Spain. The unluckiest day being Tuesday the 13th. There is this saying "Martes, ni te cases, ni te embarques, ni de tu casa te apartes. "On Tuesdays, don't get married, don't travel, don't leave your house."

Why is it an unlucky day? That is a good question. I had been told by friends in the north of Spain Tuesday was unlucky because it was the day Jesus was crucified. But it seems most Christians believe Jesus was crucified on Friday, not Tuesday. I'm not sure why people in the north of Spain think it was a Tuesday, but they do. Tuesday may have been considered unlucky because it was sacred to Mars, God of War, and perhaps the day was inclined to be war-like? Also, The Last Supper was supposed to have been held on a Tuesday, which makes it an unlucky day. There are lots of vague and changing reasons why Tuesday is said to be unlucky. But the consensus in Spain was and is that Tuesday is an unlucky day.

So, no Christian would choose Tuesday (Marti) as a last name any more than they would choose to get married on a Tuesday. Marti was a questionable last name. The same logic applies to the common Converso surname Gato. Gato means cat in Spanish, which is considered a bad luck animal and therefore a bad choice for a last name. Not only were names such as Marti, Gato, Cerdo, or Zapato insulting, but they were also markers. They marked the bearer with the stain of a former Jewish past.



The Martis were an ancient Jewish family in Palma, Mallorca. When the order of expulsion occurred in 1492, some Martis left Mallorca, and some converted and stayed. The ones that stayed were part of a network of Converso families that lived in the former Jewish ghetto known as “La Calle”. They only married amongst themselves. They are one of the “Quince Linajes” or 15 lines of ancient Mallorcan Jews that became Mallorcan-Converso families. The Quince Linajes included Aguilo, Bonnin, Cortes, Fortza, Fuster, Marti, Miro, Pico, Pina, Pomar, Segura, Valls, Vallenti, Valleriola, and Tarongi.

*In families such as the Cortes, Forteza, Aquilo, Tarongi, Valls, Pomar, Miro, Marti, and Bonnin, as well as in all other Converso families of ancient lineage, marriages took place almost exclusively between relatives (often so close that they needed dispensation), so that by the end of the century, one could hardly find in the whole city a single marriage between someone from the la Calle and a person from outside.*

*As the danger increased for the inhabitants of the barrio de Sagell, the sanctions adopted by the community against those engaging in mismatched marriages grew even more and more severe. Where formerly such persons had been merely looked upon with disapproval and their unions considered undesirable, later, in the period we are considering, they were not only excluded from the family circle, but according to a witness who testifies in 1673, they were refused entry to their commercial activities and trade connections, which could well mean a total ruin for the person so punished.<sup>42</sup>*

So, the Martis that remained in Mallorca, not only married amongst themselves and a limited number of Converso families, but they penalized members of the family that married outside the Quince Linajes (15 families).

Martin Baumgartner observed that the Swiss Marti family adhered to the same endogamous marriage pattern. Martis married Martis most of the time. If not a Marti, there was a short list of families acceptable for marriage.

*A few numbers, in addition, concerning the heading, marrying into other Engi families. Of the 528 wives of the Engi Martis, 260 came from Engi, and they are distributed among civic families as follows:*

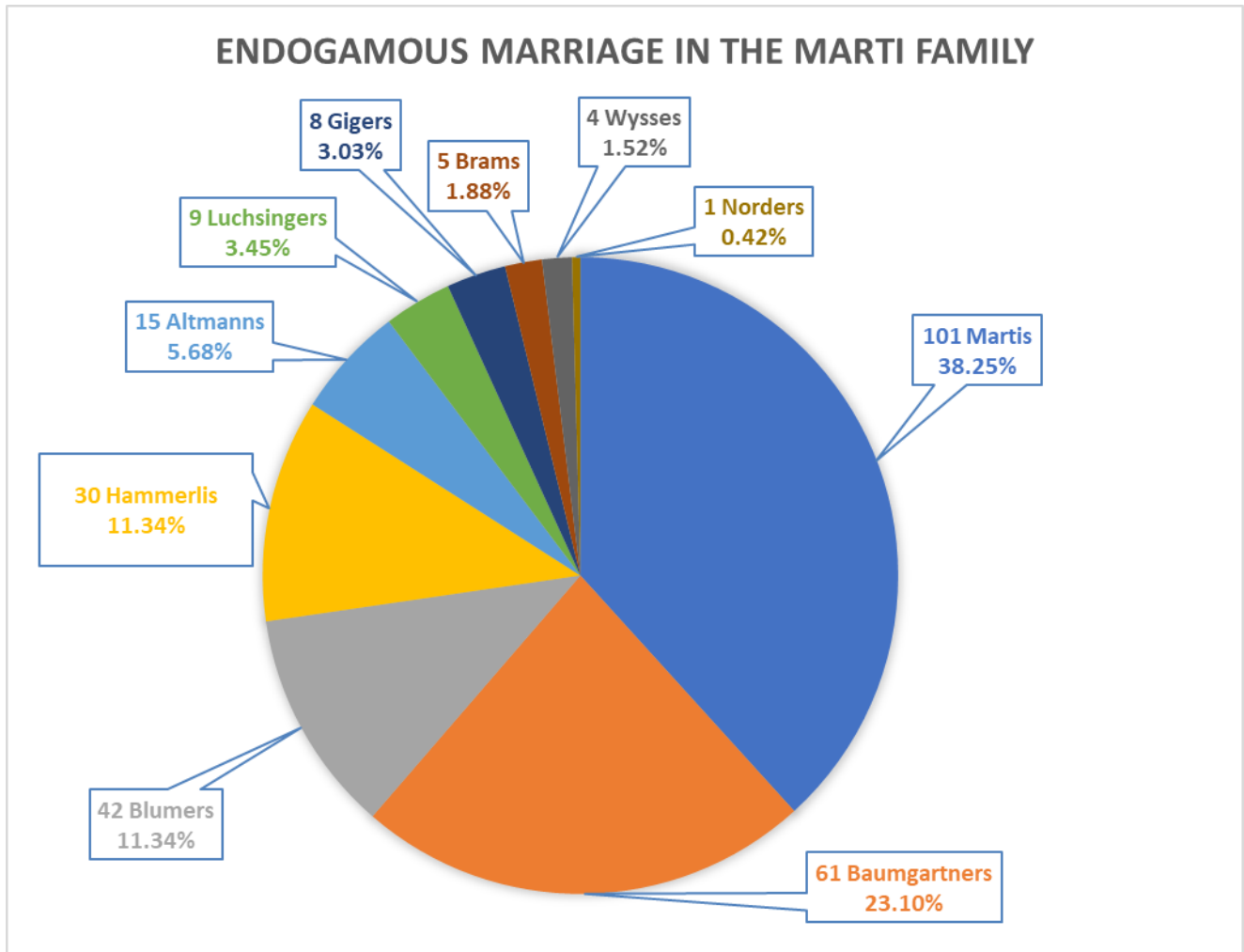
*To their own family, the Martis themselves, were allotted the most, namely:*

<i>101 = 36.6% to the Martis</i>	<i>9 = 3.3% to the Luchsingers</i>
<i>61 = 22.1% to the Baumgartners</i>	<i>8 = 2.9% to the Gigers</i>
<i>42 = 15.2 to the Blumers</i>	<i>5 = 1.8% to the Brams</i>
<i>30 = 10.85% to the Hammerlis</i>	<i>4 = 1.45% to the Wysses</i>
<i>15 = 5.43% to the Altmanns</i>	<i>1 = 0.4% to the Norders</i>

*This compilation is important in that it is able to give us information about the intermixing of the families blood, one with another.*

<sup>42</sup> Angela Selke, *The Conversos of Mallorca. Hispania Judaica 5* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1986), pp.41, 90, 103, 212

## ENDOGENOUS MARRIAGE IN THE MARTI FAMILY



To summarize, the Martis mostly married Martis! My genealogical research reveals when they did not marry Martis, they married close relatives, from the same eight families, repeatedly, like the Baumgartners, Blumers, Hammerlis, Altmans, and the Luchsingers. The Mallorcan Martis and the Swiss Martis adhered to the same endogenous marriage pattern.

# The Yoder-Trachsels

That is just the beginning of my ancestors' endogamous marriage pattern. In fact, I have seven Swiss-not-Swiss great-grandparents that descend from two brothers that married two related women with the same name on the same day. This brings us back to family Trachsel that may have originated in Spain.

Jost Joder (b.1607-d.1680) and his brother Niclaus Joder (b.1609-d.1680) married two woman named Anna Trachsel on October 14, 1642. The two Anna Trachsels were not sisters, but likely cousins. Both couples had big families, one had 10 children and one had nine children. Their children and grandchildren married amongst themselves. Which is why I have seven great-great-grandparents that descend from these two couples.

My maternal great-grandfather Alvin Schrock's great-grandparents include:

## **Descendants of Niclaus Joder and Anna Trachsel**

Susana Joder (b.1791-d.1855)  
Mary Martha Joder (b.1771-d.1850)  
Christian Mast Hochstettler (b.1801-d.1875)

## **Descendants of Yost Joder and Anna Trachsel**

Susana Joder (b.1791-d.1855)  
Christian Joder (b.1797-d.1870)  
Elizabeth Joder (b.1799-d.1890)

Susana Joder's (b.1791-d.1855) parents were first cousins, one descended from Yost Joder and the other from Niclaus Joder. Elizabeth Joder (Yost Joder's descendent) married her first cousin Christian Mast Hochstettler (b.1801-d.1875) (Yost Joder's descendent)

Maternal great-grandmother, Mary Viola Ramseyer had one great-grandparent that descended from this marriage.

Catherine Zugg (b.1801-d.1875), Descendant of Yost Yoder married Anna Trachsel

My maternal great-grandfather Alvin Schrock had six great-grandparents that descended from Yost Yoder and Anna Trachsel and from Niclaus Joder and the other Anna Trachsel. My great-grandfather Alvin married a woman, Mary Viola Ramseyer who had that one great-grandparent that descended from Jost Joder and Anna Trachsel. Thus my maternal grandmother Lillian<sup>43</sup> Schrock, descended from seven great-grandparents that descend from these two marriages. Confirmed endogamy!

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<sup>43</sup> A popular Jewish name, corruption of Juliana after Julius Caesar, protector of Jews

# The Leunbergers

The Leunberger family was made famous by one member, peasant revolt leader Niklaus Leunberger (b.1536-d.1653). Fortunately, his grandfather, Niklaus Leunberger (b.1511), had some grandchildren that kept their heads and limbs intact. Niklaus Leunberger (b.1511), his children and grandchildren, appear in my family tree. Both on my mother's and my father's side of the tree. I am the direct descendant of Nicholas via four of his children. I am related to four of his children through marriage. My family tree is wallpapered with Leunbergers.

## Maternal side

Direct descendant: Martin Brenneman Horst (b.1789-d.1868) = Maternal grandfather Winkler.<sup>44</sup>

Anne Marie Stuffer (b.1759-d.1796), John Horst (b.1813-d.1894) = Maternal grandfather Winkler

Caspar Schrag (b.1685-d.1797) marries Elisabeth Leunberger (b.1690-d.1789) = Maternal grandmother Schrock

Rebecca Smiley (b.1856-d.1932) Ramseyer = Maternal grandmother Schrock

By marriage: relative David Yoder (b.1763-d.1850) marries direct descendant Jacobina Eash (b.1765-d.1814) = Maternal grandmother Schrock and maternal grandfather Winkler.

## Paternal side

By marriage: Barbara Schar (b.1677-d.1756) married direct descendant Jakob Leunberger (b.1672) = Paternal grandfather Schar.<sup>45</sup>

By marriage, Abraham Steiner (b.1550) had two wives. Magdalena Leunberger (b.1554) and Anna Danner (b.1554). Direct descendent Elisabeth Gerber (b.1843-d.1897) descends from the marriage of Abraham Steiner to Anna Danner = Paternal grandfather Schar.

By marriage: relative David Yoder (b.1763-d.1850) marries direct descendant Jacobina Eash<sup>46</sup> (b.1765-d.1814) = Paternal grandfather Schar.

Many of my ancestors were descendants of Niklaus Leunberger (b.1511) the senior, and many of my ancestors married descendants of Niklaus Leunberger. As a rule, the Leunbergers' married into the following list of my ancestors: Schar, Gerber, Gnaegi, Horst, Schrag (Schrock), Marti, and Gut included. Over and over again.

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<sup>44</sup> Winkel can also (and usually) mean window, so a Winkler or Winkelmann is a glazier

<sup>45</sup> This usually means "host"

<sup>46</sup> Probably the same as English "Ashe"

## The Gerbers

Another Swiss-not-Swiss branch of my family tree is the Gerbers branch. The name Gerber means tanner in German so at one point in time, the family were tanners. This was a Jewish profession. The family first appears in Switzerland in the 15th century with Hans Gerber (b.1407-d.1437) and his wife Barbara Langenegger (b.1410-d.1442). They lived and died in Steffisburg, Berne. They gave rise to a family that weaves in and out of my Swiss-not-Swiss family tree.

My paternal great-great-great-grandfather Ulrich Gerber (b.1814-d.1879), like everyone, had 16 great-great-grandparents. But, in his case, 11 of his great-great-grandparents were direct descendants of Hans Gerber (b.1407-d.1437) and Barbara Langenegger (b.1310-d.1442). We are talking about Gerbers marrying Gerbers repeatedly. Lots of first, second, and third cousins marrying each other. Some of the brides and grooms were first, second, or third cousins at the same time. All of this was abhorrent to canon law.

The descendants of Hans Gerber (b.1404-d.1437) can also be found on my maternal side of the family. My maternal great-grandfather Alvin Shrock, descends from Hans Gerber and Barbara Langenegger's direct descendants Barbara Gerber (b.1698-d.1742), Christian Gerber (b.1460), and Anna Barbara Gerber (b.1705-d.1786). His wife, my maternal great-grandmother, Mary Viola Ramseyer, descends from Hans Gerber direct descendants Barbara Elisabeth Gerber (b.1720-d.1821) and Barbara Gerber (b.1705-d.1782). So my mother and my father are both direct descendants of Hans Gerber and Barbara Langenegger!

### Could it Get Worse?

Yost Joder and Anna Trachsel's great-grandson (Yost Joder, b.1675) married one of Hans Gerber's and Barbara Langenegger's great-great-grandaughters (Magdalena Gerber, b.1679). My mother and father both descend from that marriage. In fact, four of Yost Yoder and Anna Trachsel's great-great-grandsons married Gerber girls that descended from Hans Gerber and Barbara Langenegger.

My maternal grandmother, Lillian Schrock descends from Yoders who married Gerbers who married Schrocks. My paternal grandfather, Walter Schar, descends from Gerbers who married Yoders who married Schrocks. And my mother and father married each other. So, intermarried families intermarried again, both in Switzerland and in America. This is the definition of an endogamous marriage pattern. The genealogical significance of an endogamous marriage pattern is twofold.

First, it tells you that my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors preferred to marry amongst themselves rather than to marry outsiders. They came from a closed society. They were separate and different to other people and appear to have been a minority group. Like the Marti family in Mallorca, who married the same 14 families, over and over again, my ancestors married within the same 14 families, over and over again.

Second, it tells you they disobeyed the Catholic Church in a big way. For much of my ancestors' tenure in Switzerland, they were under Roman Catholic control and the Roman-Catholic Church prohibited marriages between cousins. The ban went out as far as sixth cousins. That means you could not marry anyone who was closer than a sixth cousin. To marry anyone closer than a sixth cousin was illegal, and the ban could only be overcome with a big, old bribe to the church. Aristocrats got away with it, but only with permission from the church, which was bought with a bribe. Such bribery was out of reach for common people. Thus, my ancestors married outside church law.

Marrying first cousins was risky. Any marriage between persons closer than sixth cousins was illegal and subject to annulment. My ancestors, with their endless first cousin marriages, were operating way outside church rule. This is just one of the Roman-Catholic Church rulings they ignored. Blatant disregard for Roman-Catholic Church canon law did not endear you to the church. It could mean the children of such a marriage were illegitimate and did not have rights to inheritance and the like.

Using the Hirschman/Yates Crypto-Jewish model, my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors married in an endogamous pattern commonly seen in Crypto Jewish communities.

# Naming Patterns

Crypto-Jewish families used the same names, over and over again and in the same pattern. This makes the genealogy of these families a nightmare.

Let's say Jacob Gerber and Sarah Erb get married and have ten children. They name the children Jacob, Abraham, Isaac, Levi, David, Sarah, Rebecca, Judith, Hannah, and Barbara, in that order. Then each of the five boys marry related women, and they each have ten children, and name them Isaac, Jacob, Abraham, Levi, David, Sarah, Rebecca, Judith, Hannah, and Barbara. And this happens generation after generation. So my family tree has dozens and dozens of Jacob Gerbers, born between 1500 to 1800! Keeping them straight is a challenge for me and other genealogists.

Going back to Martin Baumgartner, relative and family raconteur, and Marti family historian, we find quite an interesting testimony regarding the Marti family and the way they named their children.

*It is interesting how the first names are inherited in each individual family. Even until the 70's and 80's", (as in 1870s), "of the previous century it was still a strict tradition with us that, in a family, the names were given to children according to the sequence as follows; to the first son, the name of the grandfather on the father's side, to the second, that of the grandfather on the mother's side. To the first daughter, the name of the father's mother, to the second, that of the grandmother on the mother's side. Then the following children were named after the brothers and sisters of the father and the mother. I have met very few examples with our families, until in the 70's that deviated from this rule. Now of course, things have also changed in this respect, and a beautiful and honorable custom has been lost, to some extent. Even so, it happens that, in all our families, particular names are represented especially frequently. With the names of heads of family in the Marti family, the following stands in first place:*

1. Jakob<sup>47</sup> 75 representatives = 15.5%,
2. Mathias 63=13%,
3. Johannes or Hans 56=12%
4. Mathaus 51 =10.5 %
5. Fridolin 42 = 9%

*Then follows Kaspar and Heinrich, 16 each, Jost 15, Sebastian and Samuel 12. These are, then, the so-called Marti names.*

On one of the Sephardic information websites, Sephardicgen.com, one can find the Spanish-Jewish naming tradition or convention.

*Common Sephardic Naming conventions:  
Firstborn son named after the paternal grandfather,  
Second male child after the maternal grandfather*

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<sup>47</sup> Jacob meant merchant

*First daughter named after the paternal grandmother,  
 Second female child after the maternal grandmother,  
 Next child after the paternal uncle or aunt,  
 Next after maternal uncle/aunt, etc.<sup>48</sup>*

Interesting. Long-dead Cousin Martin Baumgartner said this was the Swiss Marti family naming tradition. The Swiss Marti family's naming pattern is identical in every way to the Mallorcan Marti Family's naming pattern (Sephardic-Jewish naming pattern). The fact that he went out of his way to present the Marti family naming pattern, indicates it was something noteworthy or unusual in Engi, Switzerland. However, this same naming pattern can be found among my ancestors who intermarried with the Martis. In Switzerland, my intermarried clan used the naming pattern common amongst Sephardic Jews, in and out of Spain, Jewish or Converso.

Beyond my ancestors following the Sephardic-Jewish naming pattern, the names parents gave children is also very telling. Catholics named their children after the saints. Jews, Crypto-Jews, non-Catholic Christians (Mennonites and the Huguenots), chose names that came from the Old Testament. However, Jews and Crypto-Jews used Hebrew names that suggested they had actual knowledge of Hebrew, like Ori (light), Shem (God), and Benoni (son of my sorrow). Jews and Crypto-Jews also gave their children names that were not biblical and not from location in which they lived. Jews moved around due to all the expulsions. Family lore states the Trachsel family immigrated from Spain to Turkey and then to Switzerland. Some of the family names are Spanish and Turkish names. My family's use of Greek, Latin, Arabic, and Turkish names suggests that they may have lived in Greek, Arabic, or Turkish speaking lands within recent generations.

My Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors often used Christian<sup>49</sup> or Ulrich as a male first name, followed by an Old Testament name like Jacob or Ezra. With daughters, they often used Maria, Magdalena, or Margaret as a first name followed by Rebecca, Sarah, or Leah. In communication with Elizabeth Hirschman about this naming pattern, i.e., a Christian name followed by a Hebrew name, Hirschman said something interesting. When Crypto-Jews “registered” their child with the Catholic church, which they were obliged to do, they would use a church approved name, like Christian or Maria, as a first name, and then a familial/Hebrew name like Jakob or Rachel, as the second name. One name for public life, one name for family life.

Below are the common first names used by my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors. The not so common names they used follow.

<b>Common male names</b>			
Adam	David	Jeremiah	Saul
Benjamin	Elias	Nicholas	Solomon
Christian	Isaak	Moses	Tobias
Daniel	Jakob	Samuel	Ulrich

<sup>48</sup> It was different for Ashkenazi. They would only name their children after a dead relative.

<sup>49</sup> Typical Converso name and double names like Christian Alford were common.



<b>Unusual Male Names and Their Origins and Meanings</b>	
Adrieli:	Hebrew, Gods flock
Baschig:	Turkish, official of government
Benoni:	Hebrew, son of my sorrow
Bartel:	English, son of a farmer
Blasius:	Latin, someone with a defect, speech or gait i.e. stammerer
Caspar:	Persian, keeper of treasure
Christianus:	Latin, follower of Christ
Christophorus:	Greek, bearing Christ
Chrysostomous:	Greek, golden mouth
Ciprianus:	Latin, from Cyprus
Constantin:	Latin, steadfast
Cyriacus:	Greek, of the lord
Danivom:	Hebrew
Desiderius:	Latin, desirous
Durion:	Unknown
Egidus:	Greek, small goat
Elam:	Hebrew, forever, eternal, tree
Emanuel:	Hebrew, god is with us
Enoch:	Hebrew, chanoch, experienced or dedicated
Esaias:	Hebrew, God is salvation
Felix:	Latin, lucky, fortunate, popular Ashkenazi name
Fernando:	Spanish and Portuguese, German origin
Fidel:	Latin, faithful
Galli:	Italian, from Gallo, male name
Gallus:	Latin, rooster
Gideon:	Hebrew, one who cuts down.
Gilgen:	German and Swiss German, house name, at the lily
Gotfried:	Ashkenazic Jewish, God+Peace
Hieronymous:	Latin from the Greek, with a sacred name
Hiram:	Hebrew, high born
Jacobus:	Hebrew, he who supplants
Jepthah:	Hebrew, to open or release
Jeremiah:	Hebrew, Yirmeyahu, appointed by God
Jeltie:	Unknown
Joachim:	Hebrew, personal name Yoyakim, god has granted a son
Jodoc:	Celtic, lord
Jonas:	Hebrew, personal name Yona or dove
Leodegar:	Old High German Leudager, leuda/man and daggar/spear
Leodegarius:	Old High German Leudager, leuda/man and daggar/spear

<b>Unusual Male Names and Their Origins and Meanings (Cont'd)</b>	
Levi:	Hebrew: joined in harmony
Lorenzo:	Latin, laurentum, laurelled, acclaimed, appointed with laurel leaves
Manasses:	Hebrew, making forgetfulness, reason to forget
Markus:	Latin, war like
Mathias/Mathaus:	Hebrew, gift of god
Ori:	Hebrew, light
Othmar:	German, wealthy or prosperous
Petrus:	Latin, rock
Pharis:	Arabic, knight, horseman, cavalier
Salman:	Arabic, obedient, disciplined, humble, loyal, devoted
Saul:	Hebrew, sha'ul, ask a question
Serrais:	Turkish and Persian, mansion
Shadrach:	Hebrew, tender
Shem:	Hebrew, first of Noahs three sons
Simeon:	Hebrew, to hear, to be heard, reputation
Sixtus:	Roman name, corruption of Greek polished
Sylvester:	Latin, forest
Theophilus:	Greek, loved by god
Urban:	Latin, from the city
Xavier:	Basque
Zacharias:	Hebrew/Aramaic, Zecher (remember) + Ya (God)

<b>Common female names</b>			
Anna/Hanna	Leah	Rachel	Sarah
Barbara	Magdalena	Rebecca	Susanah
Esther	Maria	Regula	Verena

<b>Unusual Female Names and Their Origins and Meanings</b>	
Afra:	Hebrew, young deer
Adrili:	Hebrew, God's flock
Amalia:	Hebrew, Gods work
Apollonia:	Latin, Apollo
Bat:	Hebrew, daughter
Beriah:	Hebrew, fellowship
Beulah:	Hebrew, promised land
Cleophylla:	Greek, he who loves glory
Dina:	Hebrew, God has judged
Dorothea:	Greek, gift of God
Edia:	Hebrew, gift from God
Elvina:	Old High German, friend of elves
Etha Ora:	Hebrew, light
Etna:	Gaelic, grain or kernel
Euphemia:	Greek, well spoken
Gertrudis:	German, strong spear
Hepzibah:	Hebrew, in her is my delight
Hilaria:	Latin, happy
Ida:	Hebrew, Ada, Jewel; also Itta, from Judith
Jacomina:	Hebrew, female form of Yakov
Jemimah:	Hebrew, dove
Judit Raquet:	Hebrew, Judith Rachel
Juliana:	Latin, youthful or Jove's love; form of Julius after Julius Caesar
Leonora:	Greek, light
Livelinia:	Unknown
Lucia:	Latin, light, lux, Spanish
Otilia:	Greek, acute hearing
Petronella:	Latin, little stone
Philippina:	Greek, lover of horses
Rhoda:	Greek, rose, especially the Hebrew rose or lily
Rosina:	Germanic, Rose
Salome:	Hebrew, peace
Saviah:	Arabic, nice or beautiful
Sibylla:	Greek, prophet
Symphorosa:	Greek, bring together
Thyas:	Anglo-Saxon, someone who is dear
Vallah:	Turkish, in the name of God
Vida:	Latin, Life; Spanish

Using the Hirschman-Yates model, my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors used Jewish and Crypto-Jewish naming patterns. Very specifically, my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors named

their children in the Sephardic-Jewish naming traditions. They preferred names from the Old Testament and used names that indicate they had a recent knowledge of Hebrew -- this at a time when Hebrew was unknown in the general public and hardly in Jewish circles. They used foreign non-Swiss names, which indicates they may have lived in different countries in recent generations.

## DNA matches to Known Jewish Men

The third element of the Hirschman-Yates formula is this: Does a potential Crypto Jew or Crypto-Jewish community have DNA matches to known Jewish men?

Commercial DNA testing companies such as 23andMe, Ancestry, My Heritage, and Family Tree DNA indicate that I, my mother, my sister, my niece and nephew have DNA matches to living people of known Jewish ancestry. So my immediate family does have DNA matches to people living in Judaism. But what about the intermarried, clannish family group from whence my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors come? Are there DNA matches to men of known Jewish ancestry?

First, I created a list of my known Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors with known and available DNA. I found their DNA using the various Swiss immigrant groups on Family Tree DNA. The list of ancestors that for whom I was able to track down DNA included the following:

Beyler	Blankenberg (Plank)	Erb
Gerber	Gnaegy	Gut
Hochstettler	Jagi	Joder
Klopfenstein	Leuenberger	Oesch (Eash, Esh, Osh)
Neucommet	Schar	Scnebeli (Snavely)
Schrag (Schrock)	Winkler	

My object was to compare these ancestors' DNA with a large number of living men of known Jewish ancestry. To do this, I used the public FTDNA Jewish heritage groups as a source of DNA matches. The DNA projects I used included:

Anusim Project	Iberian Ashkenaz Project
Jewish E Project	Jewish R1b Project
Jewish Ukraine West Project	JewishGen German SIG Project
Mallorcan Jews Puerto Rico Sephardic Project	

To find matches between my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors and men participating in the FTDNA Jewish DNA groups, I had to get tech support. Comparing my ancestor's DNA to large numbers of Jewish individuals lay outside my skill set. We developed a spread sheet comparison formula that identified any close matches between my ancestors and men of known Jewish ancestry. We also used the Phylogen Geographer Y comparison tool to identify any close matches between my ancestors and Jewish men.

Comparing my DNA and that of my ancestors to men in the FTDNA Jewish heritage groups, I found my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors had a ton of close DNA matches to Jewish men.

## Summary of DNA Matches to Known Jewish Men

Erb, R-M269 -----	561
Hochstetler, R-M269-----	422
Winkler, R-M269-----	338
Schar, E-M35-----	106
Snavely (Schnebele), R-M269-----	88
Klopfenstein, I-M253-----	79
Jagi, Q-M242 -----	59
Oesch, J-M172-----	54
Schrag, J-M172 -----	53
Gerber, G-M201 -----	52
Gnaegy, E-M35 -----	43
Beyeler, G-M201 -----	36
Plank (Blankenberg) , E-M35 -----	31
Neucommet, J-M172 -----	27
Leuenberger, I-M223-----	26
Joder, I-M223-----	21
Gut, L-M20 -----	17

\*See Appendices A-D for greater details.

## DNA Connections to Living Men of Known Jewish Ancestry

My Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors are genetically related to Jewish men from around the world living today. Looking at my ancestors' matches to Jewish men, I found a pattern. Some ancestors had strong DNA matches to Ashkenazic Jewish men, some ancestors to strong matches Sephardic-Jewish men. Some had equally strong matches to Ashkenazi and Sephardic-Jewish Men.

The distribution of my ancestors' DNA matches to Jewish men is consistent with Jewish migration. My matches to Ashkenazic-Jewish men include German Jews and all the countries German Jews migrated to after 1550, Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Romania, Russia included.

My matches to Sephardic-Jewish men are to Spanish Jews and Spanish-Jewish men who migrated to the colonies, Peru, Columbia, Venezuela, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic. Ancestors with matches to Portuguese-Jewish men also have matches to Jewish men in Brazil.

According to an expert in all things Spanish-Jewish, Genie Milgrom, the first wave of Jewish refugees from Spain, which occurred after the Edict of Expulsion was issued, went east as Jews, to North Africa, Italy, and Turkey. The second wave, which occurred 100 years later, involved Conversos or converted Jewish fleeing Spain to escape the Inquisition. These people moved West. They moved to Mexico, Columbia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, etc. My DNA matches to Spanish-Jewish men are primarily to men from the Spanish colonies. This suggests my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors stayed in

Spain after the Edict of Expulsion, converted to Catholicism, and then fled Spain as converted Jews. Some fled to South America, and some fled to Switzerland.

Responding to the Hirschman-Yates criteria, "Does the potential Crypto-Jew, have DNA matches to men living in Judaism?" The answer, regarding my ancestors, is a resounding, "Yes." Looking at my ancestors, and their DNA matches to living men of known Jewish ancestry indicates one thing. They are related to both Sephardic and Ashkenazic men. Curiously, all the ancestors from the haplogroup R-M269 are DNA matches to Sephardic-Jewish men. But, in short, my ancestors share DNA with a lot of people living as Jews.

# Conclusion on the Hirschman-Yates Formula

I began this work with a question. What is the deal with my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors? Looking at the history, genealogy, and DNA evidence, there is strong evidence my Swiss-not-Swiss ancestors were Crypto-Jews -- Jewish people who by force or choice converted to Christianity at some stage in history and then lived in Christianity.

Using the Hirschman/Yates formulae, my ancestors appear to be a group of Crypto-Jews. They practiced endogamous marriage. They used Jewish naming patterns, and they have DNA matches to men of known Jewish ancestry.

## In Summary

When I went to NYU and got a degree in Jewish history, in 1982, we were taught Ashkenazic-Jewish history. The history of the migration of German Jews to Poland in the 16th century, their movement into Eastern Europe, and the subsequent demise of that culture at the hands of the Nazis. That was it. The program was 100% based on Ashkenazi history.

Unfortunately, my primary interest was Sephardic Jewish history. There were no classes offered on Spanish Jews, Spanish-Jewish history, Spanish-Jewish language, or Spanish-Jewish culture.

If Sephardic-Jewish history was not on the academic menu when I was in college, Spanish-Crypto Jewish history was really not taught at all. Indeed, there was nothing taught about any Crypto-Jews, Spanish or otherwise. As Jews have been persecuted for at least 2000 years, and all of those years Crypto-Jews were created, one would think academia would have touched on the topic of Crypto-Jews. I can testify in the 1980's at a reputable department of Jewish history, the word never even came up.

Times change. In the 35 years since I left University, interest in Spanish-Jewish history, and Spanish-Crypto Jewish history, has exploded. There are dozens of books written on both subjects, societies organized to celebrate Spanish-Jewish heritage and Spanish-Crypto Jewish heritage.

Indeed, Spanish-Crypto Judaic studies is an actual study and discipline. There are DNA groups for people who think their ancestors were converted Spanish Jews. Scholars like Genie Milgrom have traced their hidden Jewish roots back to the Inquisition and earlier. If you suspect you have Sephardic Jewish ancestry, you can go to a dozen websites and buy books, to discover your family's hidden past.

Interestingly, Crypto-Jews from northern Europe get very little attention still. From the 12th century to the 20th century, Jews in Northern Europe were subject to forced conversions, lifesaving conversions, and edicts of expulsion. Converted Jews in northern Europe were just as persecuted as converted Jews in Spain. All the factors that created Spanish-Crypto Jews created Northern European Crypto-Jews. And yet Northern European Crypto-Jews have no books or websites. I think they deserve the same attention given to Spanish-Crypto Jews.



This book started as an exploration of a family story that did not correspond to our DNA reality. It has concluded in a new thought: Most of the hundreds of thousands of Northern European Jews, over 2,000 years, were forced to convert to Christianity to survive. I know a lot of them ended up in my family tree. My family tree is not the only family tree loaded with Northern European Crypto-Jews.

The story of the Crypto-Jews of Northern Europe needs to be told. The phenomenon deserves investigation and research. Certainly, more than it is currently getting.

## Appendix A: Ancestor DNA Matches to Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jewish Men

Ancestors with DNA matches to Ashkenazic Jewish men				
Beyeler	Gnaegy	Jaegi	Leuenberger	
Blankenberg	Gut	Joder	Neucommett	
Ancestors with DNA matches to Sephardic-Jewish men				
Erb	Hochstettler	Schenebili	Winkler	
Ancestors with DNA matches to both Ashkenazic and Sephardic-Jewish men				
Gerber	Oesch	Schar	Schrag	Kloppenstein

## Appendix B: Ancestor DNA Matches to Jewish Men by Haplogroup

E-M35	
Blankenberg: Gnaegi:	Ashkenazi men
Schar	Ashkenazi and Sephardic men
G-M201	
Beyeler:	Ashkenazi men
Gerber:	Ashkenazi and Sephardic men
I-M223	
Joder:	Ashkenazi men
Klopfenstein:	Ashkenazi and Sephardic men
Leuenberger:	Ashkenazi men
J-M172	
Neucommett:	Ashkenazi men
Oesch: Schrag:	Ashkenazi and Sephardic men
L-M20	
Gut:	Ashkenazi men
Q-M242:	
Jagi:	Ashkenazi men
R-M260	
Erb: Hochstettler: Schnebeli: Winkler:	Sephardic men

## Appendix C: Ancestor DNA Matches to Known Men of Jewish Origin

Beyeler DNA Matches by Country - G-M201				
Spain	5		Switzerland	2
Lithuania	4		Turkey	2
Belarus	2		Moldova	1
Bulgaria	2		El Salvador	1
England	2		Portugal	1
Germany	2		Romania	1
Italy	2		Russian Federation	1
Mexico	2		Ukraine	1
Netherlands	2		United Kingdom	1
Poland	2			

Beyeler (Weiler) is listed in the Dictionary of German Jewish surnames. It is found amongst Alsatian Jews. The Beyelers lived in Alsace before they immigrated to America

Plank (Blankenberg) DNA Matches by Country - E-M35				
Germany	7		Spain	2
Puerto Rico	3		Belarus	1
Brazil	2		Czech Republic	1
England	2		France	1
Lithuania	2		Greece	1
Poland	2		Ireland	1
Russian Federation	2		Italy	1
Scotland	2		Netherlands	1

Blankenberg is listed in the Dictionary of German Jewish Surnames. It is a common Jewish surname in Latvia, Austria, and Hungary. Many Blankenbergs were deported from Germany and Hungary, sent to the death camps, and were murdered by the Nazis. They are listed as Holocaust victims by Yad VaShem.

### Erb DNA Matches by Country - R-M269

Spain	120		Latvia	4
Germany	43		Dominican Republic	3
United States	40		Greece	3
Ireland	37		Algeria	2
England	36		Belgium	2
United Kingdom	31		Bulgaria	2
Portugal	30		Canada	2
Scotland	26		Columbia	2
Ukraine	18		Costa Rica	2
Brazil	17		Cuba	2
Poland	15		Hungary	2
France	14		Romania	2
Mexico	13		Venezuela	2
Puerto Rico	12		Argentina	1
Netherlands	11		Denmark	1
Wales	11		Finland	1
Russian Federation	9		Haiti	1
Lithuania	7		Jamaica	1
Peru	7		Lebanon	1
Belarus	5		Nicaragua	1
Iran	5		Northern Ireland	1
Italy	5		Norway	1
Sweden	5		Palestine	1
Switzerland	5		Slovakia	1

Erb is listed in the Dictionary of German Jewish Surnames as a Jewish surname. JewishGen has 257 records for Jews bearing this surname. Erb is listed in the Family Tree of the Jewish People. The German Jewish burial society lists 43 burial records for Erbs. Shoah records contain 48 interviews of Erbs who survived the Nazi death camps.

### Gerber DNA Matches by Country - G-M201

Spain	12		Netherlands	2
Germany	11		Ukraine	2
Portugal	6		United Kingdom	2
Mexico	4		Brazil	1
France	3		Poland	1
Switzerland	3		Romania	1
England	2		Turkey	1
Lithuania	2		Venezuela	1

Gerber is listed in the Dictionary of German Jewish surnames. JewishGen's Family Tree of the Jewish People lists 4960 records for Gerbers. JewishGen also holds 2525 records for Jewish Gerbers living in Lithuania. Sixty-seven Gerbers were deported from Austria to Nazi concentration camps; 39 Gerbers had their German citizenship revoked and their property seized by the Nazis; Shoah records contain 371 interviews with Gerbers who survived Nazi death camps.

### Gnaegi DNA Matches by Country - E-M35

Ukraine	9		Lithuania	2
Germany	5		Switzerland	2
Poland	5		Belarus	1
Italy	4		Greece	1
Puerto Rico	3		Netherlands	1
Iraq	3		Spain	1
Israel	3		Syrian Republic	1
Austria	2			

Gnaegi is an unusual surname and may be derived from the Hebrew Nago (carpenter). JewishGen has 871 records for the Gnaegi family, this includes 443 birth records for Hungarian Jews, seven records for Lithuanian Jews, 50 Hungarian holocaust records, and 74 Dachau death camp records. There 1239 Shoah records for members for this family that survived Nazi death camps

### Gut DNA Matches by Country - L-M20

Ukraine	6		Kuwait	1
Germany	3		Moldova	1
Lithuania	2		Poland	1
Belarus	1		Switzerland	1
Columbia	1			

Gut is listed in the Dictionary of Jewish Surnames. JewishGen lists 3385 records for the Gut family, 318 in Vienna, 418 in Hungary, 64 burial records in Germany, 35 burial records in Switzerland. The Gut family is recorded as being inmates in the Krakow Ghetto. 21 Gut family members survived the Nazi death camps and remained in Germany after the war. 64 Gut family members were sent to Dachau.

### Hochstettler DNA Matches by Country - R-M269

Spain	111		Belarus	3	
Ukraine	15		United States	3	2
Germany	41		Columbia	3	1
Poland	14		France	3	1
England	33		Dominican Republic	3	1
Germany	9		Hungary	3	1
United Kingdom	26		via	3	1
England	3		Jamaica	3	1
Ireland	20		Puerto Rico	3	1
Romania	3		Switzerland	3	1
Scotland	19		Russian Federation	2	1
Italy	2		Belgium	2	1
Mexico	17		Latvia	2	1
Lithuania	2		Canada	2	1
Poland	16		Spain	2	1
Switzerland	2		Costa Rica	2	
Portugal	16		Cuba	2	
Puerto Rico	13		Greece	2	
Ukraine	13		Romania	2	
France	10		Algeria	1	
Brazil	8		Argentina	1	
Netherlands	8		Haiti	1	
Lithuania	6		Honduras	1	
Peru	6		Lebanon	1	
Russian Federation	6		Moldova	1	
Iran	5		Northern Ireland	1	
Italy	4		Slovakia	1	
Latvia	4				
Austria	3				

Listed in the Dictionary of Jewish Surnames. JewishGen lists 114 marriage records from Romania. Alternative spellings include Avache and Gnaevke. JewishGen has records for the Gnaevke family in Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovakia. There are 96 Gnaevke family members in Romania. The family maintains 96 Gnaevke family members in Romania. Holocaust survivor interviews.

Hochstettler (Hochstatter) is listed in the Dictionary of German Jewish Surnames. JewishGen lists 345 German Jewish burial records for the family and records of 10 Hochstettlers who had their German citizenship revoked by the Nazis. Yad VaShem holds 222 records for family members killed in the holocaust.

#### Joder DNA Matches by Country - I-M223

Germany	6		Portugal	1
Italy	2		Slovakia	1
Mexico	2		Spain	1
Norway	2		Switzerland	1
Brazil	1		United Kingdom	1
England	1		United States	1
Ireland	1			

JewishGen has 387 records for the Joder family including the spellings Yoder, Hoder, Hader, Jodmann, Judeman.

#### Klopfenstein DNA Matches by Country - I-M253

England	12		Northern Ireland	2
Germany	11		Philippines	2
Spain	8		Puerto Rico	2
United States	8		Romania	2
Hungary	4		Slovenia	2
Russian Federation	4		Sweden	2
Finland	3		Czech	1
Switzerland	3		Mexico	1
Ukraine	3		Poland	1
Austria	2		Scotland	1
Brazil	2		United Kingdom	1
Italy	2			

JewishGen lists seven Klopfenstein family members on the Family Tree of the Jewish People.

#### Leuenberger DNA Matches by Country - I-M223

Germany	6		Italy	1
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United States	4		Poland	1
Switzerland	3		Portugal	1
Norway	2		Russian Federation	1
Austria	1		Slovakia	1
Brazil	1		Spain	1
Hungary	1		Ukraine	1
			United Kingdom	1

Listed in the Dictionary of German Jewish Surnames. Alternative spelling includes Lowenberger. JewishGen has 53 Leuenberger listings on the Family Tree of the Jewish People. The Leuenberger family were victims of the Nazi murder; There are four Dachau death camp records for the Leuenberger family members.

### Oesch DNA Matches by Country - J-M172

Poland	8		Lithuania	2
Ukraine	8		Puerto Rico	2
Germany	6		Saudi Arabia	2
Romania	4		Spain	2
England	3		Belarus	1
Russian Federation	3		Dominican	1
Austria	2		Peru	1
Bulgaria	2		Portugal	1
Hungary	2		Scotland	1
Italy	2		United States	1

Listed in the Dictionary of German Jewish Surnames: Alternative spellings include Ash, Asche, Asch. JewishGen lists 8716 entries in The Family Tree of the Jewish People, 147 Vienna Births, 77 Vienna marriages, and 459 Hungarian births for the family. It also lists records for the family in Belarus (20), and Lithuania (78). There are 81 records of family members interned in the Dachau death camp.

### Neucommet DNA Matches by Country - J-M172

Germany	6		Spain	2
Poland	3		Austria	1
Romania	3		Belarus	1
Switzerland	3		Lithuania	1
Greece	2		Puerto Rico	1
Guatemala	2		Serbia	1
			United States	1

The Neucommet family is mentioned once on the JewishGen Family Tree of the Jewish People.

### Schar DNA Matches by Country - E-M35

Germany	18		Italy	3
Spain	15		Austria	2
Poland	12		Bulgaria	1
Brazil	11		Czech Republic	1
Ukraine	11		Greece	1
Lithuania	8		Netherlands	1
Belarus	7		Puerto Rico	1
France	4		Russian Federation	1
Slovakia	4		Scotland	1
England	3		United Kingdom	1

The name Schar has various spellings which include Shar, Sahar, Schaar. JewishGen has 4199 entries in the Family Tree of the Jewish People for the Schar family. They are found in Holland, Latvia, and Lithuania. Three records for Schar family members perishing in the holocaust can be found at Yad Vashem

### Snavely (Schnebele) DNA Matches by Country - R-M269

Ireland	15		France	1
Spain	15		Jamaica	1
United States	14		Latvia	1
Portugal	8		Moldova	1
Scotland	8		Northern Ireland	1
England	5		Poland	1
Columbia	4		Russian Federation	1
Netherlands	4		Switzerland	1
Puerto Rico	4		Turkey	1
Denmark	1		Ukraine	1

Schnabel is listed in the Dictionary of German Jewish Surnames. Schnabel means the beak of a bird. Fritz Schnebele is listed in the Mathausen/Gusen death book as a victim of Nazi Murder.

### Schrag DNA Matches by Country - J-M172

Spain	12		Netherlands	2
Germany	11		Ukraine	2
Portugal	6		United Kingdom	2
Mexico	4		Brazil	1
France	3		Poland	1
Switzerland	3		Romania	1
England	2		Turkey	1
Lithuania	2			

Listed in the Dictionary of German Jewish Surnames. JewishGen has 262 listings for the Schrag family in the Family Tree of the Jewish People. There are Schrag Jewish marriage records from Vienna, Hungary, birth, and death records from Lithuania. Yad VaShem records 723 Schrag murders during the holocaust from Poland, Romania, and Latvia. Shoah records contain 14 concentration camp survivor interviews for Schrag family members.

### Winkler DNA Matches by Country - R-M269

Spain	94		Lithuania	4
Germany	26		Sweden	4
United Kingdom	23		Moldova	3
United States	21		Russian Federation	3
Ireland	19		Belarus	2
Portugal	17		Bulgaria	2
Puerto Rico	11		Columbia	2
Ukraine	10		Costa Rica	2
England	9		Italy	2
Netherlands	9		Slovakia	2
Peru	9		Algeria	1
Poland	9		Austria	1
Mexico	8		Denmark	1
Scotland	8		Dominican Republic	1
Brazil	7		Finland	1
Iran	6		Haiti	2
France	5		Hungary	1
Greece	4		Northern Ireland	1

Winkler is listed in the Dictionary of German Jewish Surnames. JewishGen records the family living in Austria/Vienna, Hungary, Romania (Bucovina), Poland (Krakow), Czechoslovakia. Yad Vashem holds records of 2920 Winklers murdered by the Nazis, and Shoah has 290 interviews of Winkler holocaust survivors.

## Appendix D: The Winkler Neptune Tay Sachs Story

The boat Neptune, captained by John Mason, sailed from Rotterdam, Holland on September 24, 1753. It arrived at the North Carolina shore, New Berne as it was known, a month later. The ship manifest lists the passengers Thomas Winkler, Conradt Winkler, and Jacob Winkler as being on board. All three men survived the boat trip, the wilderness, and lived long enough to deposit children in America. Children that would have children that would spread out in the developing new country. Genealogists could never figure out if these three men were related or just three random guys with same last name that happen to catch the same boat from Europe. Descendants of these men were DNA tested, their results compared, and science answered the question only long dead men knew the answer to. The two Neptune Winklers, Thomas and Conradt, were identical DNA matches. They were related. Because of their ages, they were likely brothers or possibly uncle and nephew. I descend from Conradt Winkler. He was born in Zell, Switzerland in 1708, and died in Burke, North Carolina in 1797.

The third Winkler on the Neptune, Jacob, remains a mystery. To my knowledge, his descendants have not been tested. His descendants ended up in Savannah, Georgia, and many are buried in the famous Bonaventure Cemetery. However, because two of the Neptune Winklers were relatives, it is likely Jacob was related.

Like many of the Swiss-not-Swiss immigrants, not much is really known about the pre-Switzerland origins of the Winklers. The name is telling. It means “the man who owns the shop on the corner”. So, at some point, the progenitor of the Winkler family had a shop on a corner. So, the family were shop keepers.

When I compared Conradt Winkler's DNA to that of men found in Jewish DNA groups, he has quite a few matches. For the most part, to Jewish men from Spain. In fact, he matches to 93 Sephardic-Jewish men. He also has matches in the locations Sephardic Jews sought refuge after the Expulsion from Spain including Brazil (7), Columbia (2), Costa Rica (2), Dominican Republic (1), England (9), Greece (4), Ireland (19), Mexico (8), Netherlands (9), Peru (9), Portugal (17), Puerto Rico (11), and United Kingdom (23).

Conradt also matches Jewish men from Germany (24) and the countries German Jews ultimately resided in including Austria (1) Belarus (2), France (5), Hungary (1), Lithuania (4), Moldova (3), Poland (9), Russian Federation (3) and Slovakia (2).

But the overwhelming number of matches indicate the Winklers were Spanish Jews that ended up in Zell, Switzerland. How and when this happened is a complete mystery. But their DNA trail leads straight to Jewish Spain.

### Winklers and Tay-Sach's Disease

Tay-Sachs Disease is an autosomal recessive disease characterized by neurological degeneration that leads to death in childhood. One can carry one copy of the gene and live a normal life. But, if a child inherits two copies, the prognosis is grave. It is a disease most associated with Ashkenazi Jews. The incidence of Tay-Sachs disease is

.015% in Ashkenazi Jews and .0015% in the general population. Medically speaking, it is considered a Jewish disease, and Jewish couples are encouraged to be tested for the gene.

And here is where things get interesting. Tay-Sachs Disease is also found in the Amish community. In a study of one Amish community, 98 of the 333 members tested were found to carry the Tay-Sachs gene. The incidence in the Amish community is reported to be at least .0051% of the population.

Who were the ancestors of the Amish community? My Swiss-not-Swiss paupers, squatters, and non-conformists that fled persecution in Switzerland and came to Pennsylvania. The Amish people and my family descend from the same intermarrying clan of Swiss-not-Swiss people.

The gene mutation that causes Tay-Sachs Disease is very rare. So rare it is only logical the Ashkenazi Jewish community and the Amish community each got a copy of the gene from a common ancestor. Or common ancestors. And both communities do the worst thing you can do when you carry a lethal gene mutation, they marry within the family. My ancestors married within the family, both in Switzerland and in America.

The Tay-Sachs gene, discovered in the Swiss-not-Swiss community, was of great interest to me. Paul Winkler, my grandfather, descendant of Conradt Winkler, came from a fairly large family, nine children in total, but only three survived to adulthood. Six children died at various times in childhood. Family lore held that the family well went bad and caused the death of these six children. But on a visit to the family graveyard in Ohio, I realized these children all died at different times. The “well gone bad” story did not make sense. When I asked a very old relative about the death of these children, I was told they began to lose vitality and slowly died at an early age. This is the exact clinical presentation for Tay-Sachs Disease.

My great-grandparents, John Winkler, and Rebecca Horst were related to each other. They both came from this same Swiss-not-Swiss intermarried closed gene pool. The way these children died strongly suggests they suffered from Tay-Sachs Disease.

<b>The Children of</b>	
John Winkler	b.1868 - d.1942
<b>and</b>	
Rebecca Horst	b.1872 - d.1951
Floyd Winkler	b.1893 - d.1900
Esther El-Mina Winkler	b.1896 - d.1898
Emerson Winkler	b.1898 - d.1904
Maurice Winkler	b.1899 - d.1976
Miriam Winkler	b.1902 - d.1980
Alma Winkler	b.1904 - d.1922
Ruth Winkler	b.1904 - d.1908
Jay Winkler	b.1908 - d.1914
Paul Winkler	b.1912 - d.1995

The article that describes Tay-Sachs research in the Amish community is entitled, "Tay-Sachs Disease: High Gene Frequency in a Non-Jewish Population". One has to ask the question, are the Amish a non-Jewish Population? My family descends from the same Swiss immigrants as do most of the American Amish and Mennonites. They may be Amish/Mennonite by religious affiliation, but facts presented here suggest they had a Jewish origin.

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