

# Map Corner

## Mapping the Rohatyn Community

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**LONGTIME READERS OF** *The Galitzianer* will probably recognize my name as the Gesher Galicia digital maps manager. For this article, however, I am writing in my capacity as co-manager of the Ukrainian NGO [Rohatyn Jewish Heritage](#).

This article uses a modern analysis of historical records to map where the Jewish community lived in the eastern Galician town of Rohatyn in the mid-19th century. Many genealogy researchers have paired vital records of births, marriages, and deaths with cadastral (property tax) maps to locate where individual families lived in the past. The analysis described here, on the other hand, graphically represents *community* history, visually depicting neighborhoods of Rohatyn where Jews and Christians lived mostly among their own religious groups, as well as other neighborhoods where the residences were more mixed.

One motivation for conducting this study is the longstanding idea that Jews in Rohatyn lived in a “Jewish neighborhood” or “Jewish quarter,” especially before the 20th century. This concept, shared by Jewish descendants and residents of the modern city, is inherited from other places, including from other settlements in the former Kingdom of Galicia, where Jews may have lived in different economic, legal, and religious circumstances than the Jewish community of Rohatyn, which thrived for more than three centuries.

Rohatyn Jewish Heritage (RJH) has been studying the Jews of Rohatyn and preserving their physical heritage for more than a decade, but even we were surprised by the results of our analysis, as others probably will be as well. The map we use is a simplified snapshot in historical time of an evolving community characteristic, based on one of the most complete data sets available for Rohatyn. Because this map depends on color for meaning, I recommend that print readers of the journal consider viewing this article online.

## Methodology

The analysis presented here uses as its base an 1846 cadastral field sketch prepared by agents of the Habsburg Monarchy in the first stage of a very detailed land survey and property value assessment of Rohatyn. In a previous article in *The Galitzianer*, I explained how, in 2011, Gesher Galicia assembled photographs of rough, individual field-sketch sheets into a complete cadastral map of Rohatyn by using modern satellite images of the town, which has retained its basic road layout despite destructive fires during World War I (“My First Galician Map: Rohatyn,” *The Galitzianer*, [March 2018](#), 21–26). This cadastral map is part of the [Gesher Galicia Map Room](#). In 2016, RJH also published an interactive overlay of the map on modern satellite images.

Every building in Rohatyn is represented on the historical field sketch by an outline of the building’s footprint on the earth. Identifying “home addresses” on the historical map is relatively easy for field sketches like this one: the house number (an older form of an address) of each house is written directly within the house outline or very nearby. Nearly every historical record about individual people in 19th-century Galicia is tied to their house number.

In 1846, most buildings in Rohatyn were numbered houses. Also shown on the map, and



*Two views of the map overlay: the georectified 1846 cadastral sketch (top) and the satellite image of the modern town (bottom). Both show a portion of the town square and a church, labeled as St. Maria on the top map.*

depicted without house numbers, are nonresidential buildings, including religious community buildings (churches and synagogues), parish buildings and schools, local civic and imperial military storage structures, and many farm outbuildings (stables and other storage).

At the time of the 1846 land survey of Rohatyn, property registers were also tabulated that identified the owner of each building and each land parcel. The registers linked owners' names with their numbered parcels (not shown on this map) and their house numbers. All privately owned houses were included, as were imperial and community-owned nonresidential buildings.

Fortunately for Rohatyn, a complete set of property registers has survived from 1846, giving a nearly comprehensive listing of individual owners

and the buildings they owned. Unlike for larger cities, the property records for Rohatyn (estimated total population around 4,000 in 1846) show an almost 1:1 relationship between owners and house numbers, strongly indicating that most families lived in houses they owned. This encourages the use of the property registers as "address books."

Gesher Galicia and the Jewish family history organization Rohatyn District Research Group (RDRG) have researched, acquired, and indexed copies of a wide variety of other historical records about individuals that can supplement the 1846 property registers. Most of this data, gathered from Polish state archives, was recorded by the 19th-century Rohatyn Jewish community, so it omits Christian individuals and families. However, it can be valuable for filling in occasional gaps in the 1846 property data.

For this analysis, we used all this information to establish a key linking house numbers to the names of residents circa 1846. The next step in our analysis was to associate individual names to one of the historical communities in Rohatyn. Ordinarily, it can be challenging to use names to identify religion and ethnicity. However, the 1787 decree (Das Patent über die Judennamen) of Habsburg Emperor Joseph II requiring all Jews in the empire to take Germanic surnames resulted in a sharp distinction between Jewish and Slavic surnames in the 19th century.

Research by RDRG and RJH shows that clear naming patterns and family lines in Rohatyn strongly persisted from the 19th century to the Holocaust and to the present group of Jewish descendant and survivor families researching their ancestors. To enhance the accuracy of our efforts to match religious communities to 1846 surnames, we immersed ourselves in early Rohatyn Jewish records, Jewish Holocaust victims lists, and the modern Christian community of Rohatyn. Patterns of given names often reinforced or clarified our initial assignments.

For example, surnames found in the 1846 property records (usually with German or Polish spellings) that also appear in other Jewish records and victims lists include these well-known Rohatyn Jewish families: Altman, Aufrichtig, Bader, Barban, Bratspis, Cigler, Dub, Einstos, Faust, Garten, Glanzberg, Gold, Goldschlag, Haber, Hader, Horn, Katz, Kirschen, Langer, Leichtling, Löw, Nagelberg, Preiss, Scher, Schnekraut, Stratyner, Teichman, Wald, Weiler, Weisman, Willig, and more.







Christian surnames appearing in the 1846 records (often with unaccented Polish spellings) and known today in Rohatyn or in émigré communities through RJH contacts, social media, and current local newspapers include Baczynski, Bilinski, Boykiewicz, Czarnecki, Demczyszyn, Dzera, Hural, Jankiewicz, Kapral, Krasinski, Kucharz, Kupiak, Lalka, Lewicki, Loboda, Malecki, Nosyk, Okrepki, Pirig, Sikorski, Sliwka, Slusarz, Smerklo, Szmigel, Terebuszka, Tymkow, Wereszczynski, Worobiec, Zamoszczak, Zenczuk, and more.

It was not possible in this analysis to confidently associate Christian names from 1846 with specific historical or current Christian religious communities in Rohatyn. In addition, it was not possible to confidently distinguish by name among the non-Jewish ethnic groups present in Habsburg-era eastern Galicia, including Ukrainians, Poles, Austrians, and Germans.

One reason for our inability to make these distinctions is that there were Ukrainian names written in Polish form by surveyors, as well as Ukrainian and Polish names written in German form by Austrian authorities. Another factor was the mixing of families with Ukrainian and Polish ancestry and different Christian religious identities. (Mixed marriages of Jews and Christians occurred too but were likely quite rare.) Similarly, no attempt was made here to associate Jewish names with any of the separate Jewish religious movements known to have

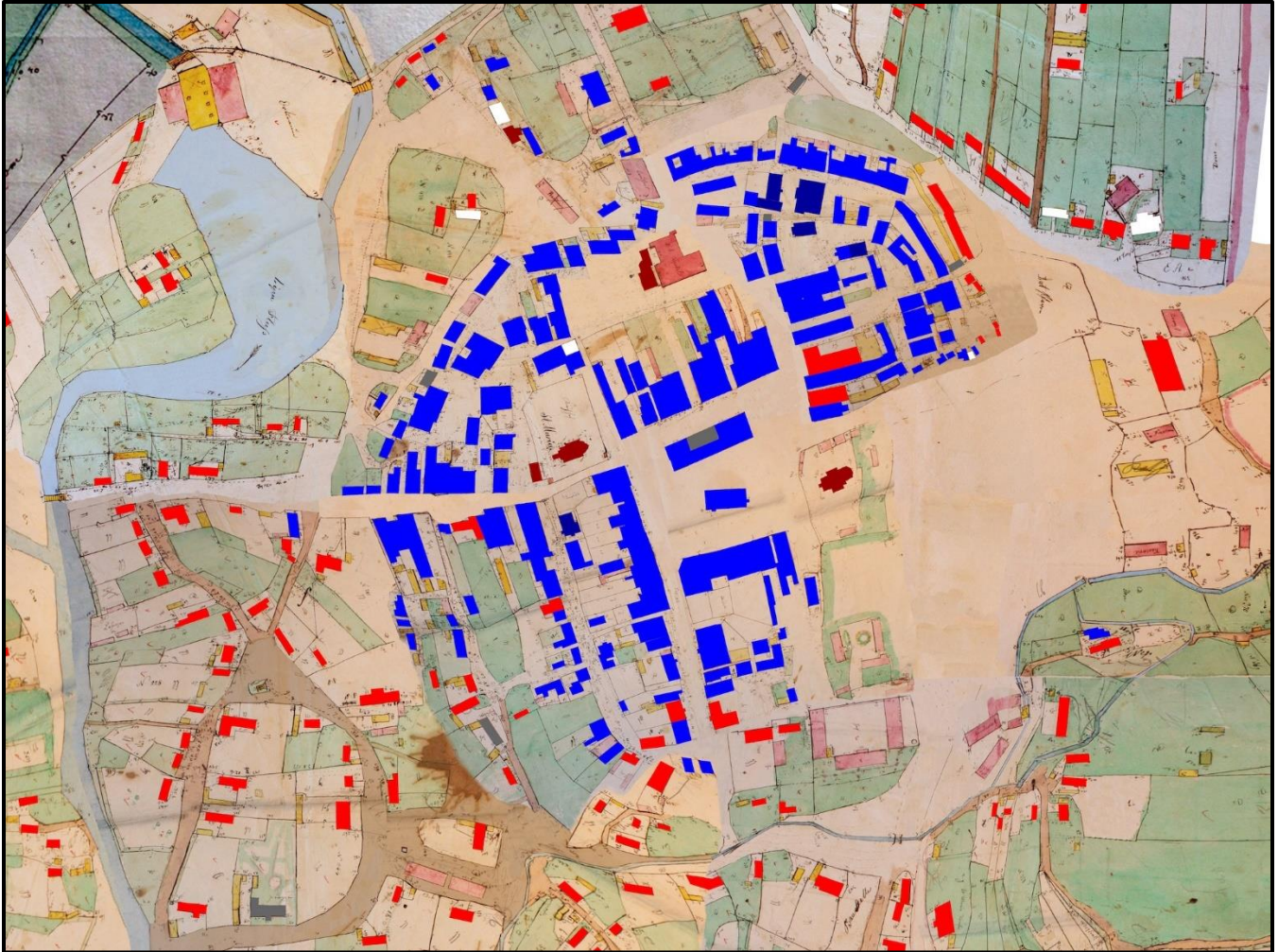
been active in Rohatyn, including Hasidic, Orthodox, and more liberal groups.

With these acknowledged limitations, it was possible to assign certain, or very likely, Jewish or Christian identity to more than 98% of the named resident homeowners in 1846 Rohatyn. As indicated in the key below, numbered residential buildings on our map were outlined and filled in with arbitrarily selected solid colors to represent Jewish or Christian homes; nonresidential religious buildings were filled in with darker shades of the same colors.

	private Jewish home
	private Christian home
	nonresidential Jewish community building
	nonresidential Christian community building
	private home without clear community
	numbered house without 1846 residence data

An excerpt of our map appears on the following page. Among the uncolored structures on the map are several unnumbered buildings that cannot be confidently linked to one of the religious communities. These include two bath houses, the large mill, an Austrian imperial hospital, and several military barracks. Private storage warehouses and farm outbuildings are not colored on the map either.

Omitted on our map are the houses that are numbered 1 through 5 in the property records but not indicated by numbered buildings on the cadastral map. House Number 1 belonged to the landowning noble Piotr Krasinski, likely part of the complex of large buildings southwest of the market square. Houses 2, 3, and 5 were owned by a Rohatyn Christian parish, perhaps for housing priests officially supported by the parish. House Number 4 belonged to a Rohatyn school not tied to the city or to one of the religious communities and may have housed a teacher. These omissions do not represent “ordinary” Rohatyn residents,



*An excerpt from the color-coded map showing central Rohatyn and a portion of surrounding farmlands in 1846*

but they might have given some additional texture to the interpretation of neighborhoods in the city.

## The Interactive Map

As described below, we were able to use the quantitative data and our modified historical map to make several observations about the demographic composition of Rohatyn's neighborhoods and suburban/rural areas in the mid-19th century. The excerpt from the map shown above illustrates some of these findings, but an inspection of the complete online interactive map ([rjhdata.net/maps/overlay-1846-neighborhoods/](http://rjhdata.net/maps/overlay-1846-neighborhoods/)) will make these observations even clearer.

The interactive map can be zoomed and panned using features like other internet maps. One important feature is the opacity slider in the upper right corner of the map window, which can be dragged to reveal the modern satellite image of Rohatyn over which the historical map is overlaid.

## Quantitative Observations

**Numbered houses are unique residences:** The 1846 Rohatyn property registers identify 460 building owners who resided in Rohatyn, meaning that they had Rohatyn house numbers. The registers also indicate a much smaller number of people who owned property in Rohatyn but who officially resided in nearby villages, such as



*Feige and Ze'ev Steinmetz of Rohatyn with their children, circa 1918; Steinmetz family collection*

Babintsi, Perenivka, Pidhoroddia, Zaluzhzhia, and Verbylivtsi. On the 1846 cadastral map, there are only seven legible house numbers that do not have corresponding data in the Rohatyn property registers (1.5%). These are likely either renters or errors in the register.

**In 1846, Jews lived in 203 of the houses indicated on the Rohatyn map and Christians in 245:** Thus, the Jewish community resided in about 44% of Rohatyn houses, with Christian houses making up nearly all the rest. Another seven houses (1.5%) had residents of uncertain ethnicity based on names, and as noted above, an equal number on the map had no recorded name data from which to group the residents into communities.

**Rohatyn exhibited moderate building wealth in the 19th century:** Within the cadastral area of Rohatyn, there are almost 700 buildings listed in the property registers, meaning that more than 200 buildings were counted as property but not as residences. These were the religious community buildings and especially the service buildings described previously.

Among the resident individuals and community organizations that owned more than one



*Christians in traditional and modern dress in Rohatyn during the first part of the 20th century; Opillya Museum photo archive*

nonresidential building were the Krasiński family with 20 buildings, the Greek Catholic parish with 13 buildings, the Roman Catholic parish with 9 buildings, and the Rohatyn Jewish community with 6 buildings. The Rohatyn civic community (the city) owned one nonresidential building.

Private property owners thus held the majority of nonresidential buildings. Some Jews owned service buildings, perhaps to support their trades, but many more service buildings were owned by members of the Christian community.

## Visual Observations

**As of 1846, there were no apparent restrictions on where Jews could live or own property in Rohatyn:** The presence of Jews in Rohatyn was recorded in the 15th and 16th centuries. In 1633, Jews were granted municipal rights to establish a cemetery, to build a synagogue, and to trade in town. Permission to own houses on the market square came a few decades later. Although there were a number of special taxes and restrictions placed on Jewish economic and religious independence in the 18th century (and much later, during the inter-war period), most of these restrictions turned out to be short-lived.

Significantly for our analysis, from the late 17th century until the Holocaust, we are not aware of any historical limitations on where Jews could live in Rohatyn, and our map demonstrates this quite clearly for the mid-19th century. In that period, there was no official or unofficial “Jewish quarter” where Jews were segregated, and there is no geographic evidence of other issues in relations between Jews and Christians. This contrasts with some other places in Europe, even in Galicia, where civic authorities were granted the privilege to exclude Jews or restrict their trade or residency.

**Rohatyn Jews primarily lived on and around three sides of the market square:** With only about 10 exceptions, all the Jewish families of Rohatyn in 1846 resided around the historical central market square, probably because their economic life was generally associated with business, especially trade. Testimony by both Jews and Ukrainians about life in the villages of the Rohatyn district reveals that some Jews who lived outside the city supported themselves partly or wholly through agriculture. But in Rohatyn itself, where 25–30% of the district’s Jews lived, the map shows very few Jews residing outside the urban core of the city. In fact, about 94% of Jewish houses in 1846 were built within a 550-yard-wide (500 meters) circle centered on the market square. The Christian population lived on urban and productive land covering about 375 acres (150 hectares) of Rohatyn’s cadastral area. The Jewish population lived on barely 10% of that area.

**There was almost no area in Rohatyn that was entirely Jewish:** In 1846, even in the areas of the city where Jews were the majority residents, some Christians lived alongside or near Jews, except in the northwestern section of the market square. Likewise, the religious buildings of both communities had at least some neighbors of the other faiths. In contrast, there were large geographical areas of Rohatyn in 1846 that were exclusively settled by Christians.

## Other Notes and Analysis Limitations

This study is a snapshot in time around 1846, for which the best data set of Rohatyn residents’ locations is available. A similar analysis would be more difficult both earlier and later in history. While the visual results of the study are interesting and reveal something important about the Jewish community of the period, other 19th-century records show that residency in neighborhoods and in individual houses was dynamic, even if community trends may have been slower to change. While some houses show evidence of Jewish-only residency over six decades, other houses changed from Jewish to Ukrainian or Polish and back again in one or two generations.

Tragically, most of central Rohatyn was intentionally burned down by retreating Russian troops during World War I. When the city was rebuilt during the interwar period, for the most part, only the roads and a few major buildings, such as churches and synagogues, were preserved. An overlay comparison of the 19th-century map and modern satellite images shows that individual house footprints and neighborhood construction in general were not preserved from before World War I. It is currently unknown how Jews and Christians resettled in Rohatyn during the rebuilding phase of the early interwar period.

Another unknown is when after 1846 Jews began building homes in the “New Town” (*Nowe Miasto*) area to the west of the market square and alongside the Hnyla Lypa River. We don’t have property data for the period between 1846 and World War I. Based on the small number of recorded interwar addresses of Jewish families, all we know is that expansion beyond the town center started after World War I, if not before. A few street maps of interwar Rohatyn exist, but none provide clues to this new mixed neighborhood.