



Left:

Lewis Hine caption: [All in photos worked (even smallest girl and boys) and they went to work at (noon) 12:45. Some of the following boys and girls may be 14, many are not. John Gopen, 189 Elm St. Joseph Stonge, 73 King St. Billie Welch, 178 Union St. Tim Carroll, 310 Salem St. Michael Devine, 64 South Broadway. Jacob Black, 15 Bradford Pl. Binnie Greenfield, 281 Park St. Andrew Pomeroy, 76 South Broadway. Louis Gross, 39 Myrtle St. Arthur Davois, 244 Salem St. Joseph Latham[?], 165 Willow St. Salvatore Quattrito, 48 Union St. Sam Gangi, 82 Pleasant Valley St. These two boys were about the youngest of the boys, others nearly as young.] Location: Lawrence, Massachusetts, September 1911.

Joe Manning caption: Jacob Black, 14 years old, Lawrence, Massachusetts, September 1911.

Left (insert): Jacob Black (boy in middle wearing suspenders).

Below: Jacob Black, 1934.
Bottom: Jacob Black, 1943.

JACOB BLACK (1897—1972)

"The photographs are amazing. I knew he lived in Lawrence then, but I had no idea what his childhood was like. He never talked about it. When he was young, he sold pianos in a music store in Boston. He worked for various furniture stores, and then he had his own business. At one point, he owned a furniture store in Cambridge." ~ Jacob's daughter, Estelle

IN THIS PHOTOGRAPH, JACOB BLACK AND 12 OTHER BOYS WERE NAMED IN THE CAPTION. Lewis Hine took four photographs of this group of children in the same location, but not all of the children appeared in each picture. Nevertheless, Hine wrote the same caption for all of them, including the same 13 names and addresses. But he did not point out which boy went with each name.



Above: Jacob Black with daughters Estelle (next to Jacob), Joan (next to Estelle) and Susan.
Left: Jacob Black and wife Emily.
Below: Jacob Black

After about a month of research, I tracked down one of Jacob's daughters, Estelle Altman. She examined all four of the Hine photos and told me that her father appeared to be the boy noted in the thumbnail photo below the full-size photo. Several weeks later, she sent me more than a dozen pictures of her father, the furthest back being 1934. The family has no pictures of him prior to that time. Then we found two other boys in another of the four Hine photos that also resembled Jacob. I consulted with a former professional photographer, and a well-known collector of historical artifacts including

photographs. We agreed that those two other boys had some similar facial features, but the shape and position of their ears did not match. But every facial feature of the first boy matched.



After searching through censuses and city directories, I was able to gather considerable details of Jacob's early life, much of it unknown to the family. **JACOB WILLIAM BLACK WAS BORN IN THE UKRAINE ON APRIL 10, 1897.** He was the second of five children, the oldest being his brother Samuel, who was born in 1895. His parents were Maurice and Bessie Black, whose original Russian names did not appear in any documents I could find. They were among a great number of Yiddish-speaking Jews who fled Eastern Europe in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Many settled in Lawrence.

Maurice and Bessie married about 1894, and came with their first three children to the US through Ellis Island in 1908.

In 1910, the family lived in a rented apartment at 15 Bradford Place. Morris worked as a peddler, and Jacob worked in a woolen mill. By the time that Jacob

registered for the draft in 1918, he was living in Manchester, New Hampshire, 30 miles north of Lawrence. He and his brother Samuel operated a newsstand. It was owned by their father. His parents were living at 19 Beverly Street in North Andover.

Morris owned the house and was a junk dealer. By 1924, Samuel had left Manchester, but Jacob stayed and worked at the Emerson Phonograph Shop. A year later, he was working in Manchester as an automobile electrician. On October 17, 1926, Jacob (called Jack by then) married New York native Emily Schwartz, in Boston.

In 1930, he and Emily and infant daughter Estelle lived in Boston. Jacob was a salesman in a music store. In 1937, he became a naturalized citizen. At that time, he and his family were living in the Brighton section of Boston. His parents were living in nearby Revere. Jacob owned several furniture stores in the Boston area for a number of years. During WWII, he served as an air raid warden, and later, he was a real estate agent. He passed away in Florida on March 19, 1970, at the age 72. His wife Emily died in 1999, at the age of 95.

THE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM MY INTERVIEW WITH JACOB'S DAUGHTER ESTELLE:

"My parents had three children. I was born in 1929. When I was about 18 years old, they moved to Brookline. At that time, my father owned a store called Black's Furniture. They lived in Brookline for many years, and then they moved to Florida. They lived there about two years, and then my father passed away. My mother stayed in Florida about 30 years after that."

"I attended Boston University for two years. My sister Susan graduated from Boston University, and my sister Joan went to a secretarial school for a couple of years."

"My father was a very jovial, happy-go-lucky, fun guy. He was a loving dad and husband. He had a lot of friends. He loved to play cards, and he loved the horse races, but he wasn't a gambler. He and my mom used to go to Rockingham Park or Suffolk Downs one afternoon a week. He was a wonderful salesman, but not a responsible businessman. He would go into business, and then it would fail and he would open another. He just didn't have good business sense. My father never made a lot of money, so my mother had to work. He was sick with lung cancer for a couple of years before he died. He and my mother lived in my house in Newton for a year, and then he was in a nursing home for several months."

