

Georgia Southern University

Digital Commons@Georgia Southern

Savannah Biographies

Special Collections at Lane Library (Armstrong)

Summer 1975

Emanuel Drufus and His Sons: a Biographical sketch and Geneology

Herbert L. Victor

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/sav-bios-lane>

This book is brought to you for free and open access by the Special Collections at Lane Library (Armstrong) at Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. It has been accepted for inclusion in Savannah Biographies by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu.

EMANUEL DRYFUS AND HIS SONS
A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND GENEALOGY

By Herbert L. Victor
For History 500
Dr. Roger Warlick

Scanned 2011 from The Savannah Biographies Volume 1. Special Collections. Lane Library.
Armstrong Atlantic State University. Savannah, GA 31419-1997.

Moses was born in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1864. While his two brothers discussed above, were somewhat prominent as leaders in their youth, Moses seems to have been the businessman the "hard-working type" of the family. He, like his brothers and fathers, was in dry goods, clothing, and the like, and he seems to have been somewhat successful (so far as can be determined until 1903); however, at some time before World War I, he went into insurance. (The firm which he founded continues today under the ownership of his grandson.) Moses married Henrietta Byck in 1893 and she died in 1917. He re-married in 1921 to Maude Rice. He died in 1946.

Solomon, the youngest Dryfus son, was born in 1870 in Savannah. Not much information can be found about him through the sources available. He seems to have been unsuccessful in business, moving from job to job for several years. Finally he moved to Nashville, Tennessee where he married Rose Levinthal. His death date is unknown.

THE EMANUEL DRYFUS FAMILY

1819-Emanuel Dryfus was born in France on September 27.¹

1829-Henrietta Levy was born in Alsace.²

1856-Emanuel Dryfus married Henrietta Levy, June 15.³

1857-Rebecca Dryfus was born in Mississippi.⁴

1860-Benjamin H. Dryfus was born in Mississippi.⁵

1862-Leonie Dryfus was born in Mississippi.⁶

1864-Moses Dryfus was born in Cincinnati, Ohio.⁷

1867-Abraham E. Dryfus was born in Savannah.⁸

1870-Solomon Dryfus was born in Savannah.⁹

1870-In the Federal Census, the following people were named:

Emanuel	49 years	retail clothing	born in France
Henrietta	39 years	housekeeper	born in France
Rebecca	12 years	school	born in Mississippi
Benjamin	10 years	school	born in Mississippi
Leonie	8 years	----	born in Mississippi
Moses	6 years	----	born in Ohio
Abraham	3 years	----	born in Georgia
Solomon	6 months	----	born in Georgia ¹⁰

1870-No taxes were paid by the Dryfus family.¹¹

1871-Taxes were paid by Mrs. Henrietta Dryfus on merchandise.¹²

1874-Benjamin (B. H.) Dryfus was a clerk and Emanuel Dryfus had a general store. Both lived at 138 St. Julian Street.¹³

1874-Benjamin Dryfus was elected president of the Eureka Baseball Club.¹⁴

1876-B.H. Dryfus wrote an essay for the Youth's Historical Society on the subject

"Were the greatest inventions of the 19th century made by Americans?"¹⁵

1876-B.H. Dryfus debated for the Youth's Historical Society on the subject "Was the attack of General Custer on the Indian camp justifiable?"¹⁶

1877-Mrs. E. Dryfus signed a petition to the Board of Adjunta of the Congregation Mickva Israel, requesting that Reverend Harris (rabbi) be retained.

*The petition was in response to an attempt by the congregation leadership to depose the rabbi because he left the city during an epidemic instead of caring for his congregation.¹⁷

1877-1878-The Dyfus family resided at 208 Broughten Street. They owned a clothing and dry goods store at 186 Bryan Street. B.H. Dryfus was working as a clerk.¹⁸

1879-B.H. Dryfus worked as a clerk for a clothing store, Lillienthal and Kohn. Emanuel and Henrietta Dryfus owned the clothing and dry goods store. Moses Dryfus worked as a clerk for S. Guckenheimer, a wholesale grocery and liquor store.¹⁹

1880-The Federal Census shows the following people living at 208 Broughton Street:

Emanuel Dryfus	58 years	clothing store	born in France
Henrietta Dryfus-wife	48 years	housekeeper	born in Alsace
Benjamin Dryfus-son	20 years	clerk	born in Mississippi
Leonie Dryfus-daughter	18 years	home	born in Mississippi
Moses Dryfus-son	16 years	grocery clerk	born in Ohio
Abraham Dryfus-son	13 years	dry goods	born in Georgia
Solomon Dryfus-son	10 years	school	born in Georgia
Benjamin Levy-son-in-law	29 years	clothing clerk	born in Alsace
Rebecca D. Levy-daughter	21 years	home	born in Mississippi
Moses Levy-grandson	1 year	----	born in Georgia
Max Eisenman-boarder	24 years	clothing store	born in Alsace ²⁰

1880-B.H. Dryfus was on the arrangements committee for the "phantom hop" of the Youth's Historical Society which was to aid a library fund. "The committee were dressed in colored cambric suits, nine...ladies...dressed in black domino, all others in white. The nine young ladies retained their incognito until the hour of unmasking " at which time was an "indescribable and amusing scene."²¹

1880-Emanuel Dryfus contributed to the Irish relief fund (which probably served to aid victims of a potato famine in Ireland in 1879-1880).²²

1881-Abraham Dryfus worked for his father. B.H. Dryfus worked as a clerk for B.H. Levy in his clothing store. Moses Dryfus worked for S. Guckenheimer as a clerk.²³

1881-B. H. Dryfus was on a Grand Jury investigating the death of a black prisoner, John Andrews, at the Cuyler Camp. He voted to request that such changes be made so as to ensure the humane treatment of prisoners.²⁴

- 1883-The Dryfus family had moved to 159 Jones Street.²⁵
- 1884-Leonie Dryfus married Henry Levy on February 6. Reverend (rabbi) Isaac Mendes officiated.²⁶
- 1884-B. H. Dryfus was elected president of the Joseph Lodge, No. 76, of the Independent Order of B'nai Brith.²⁷
- 1885-Abraham and Moses Dryfus worked for B.H. Levy and Bro. Solomon Dryfus worked for his father, Amil Dryfus (who is a complete mystery - this is his only mention) also worked for B. H. Levy and Bro. and lived with the Emanuel Dryfus family.²⁸
- 1886-Moses Dryfus opened his own clothing and dry goods store, apparently with B. H. Levy and Bro., at 191-193 Congress Street. The store was called M. Dryfus and Co. The old store of Emanuel and Henrietta Dryfus remained opened but moved to 189 Congress Street.²⁹
- 1886-Abraham E. Dryfus debated for the Youth's Historical Society on the negative side of the issue "Is Prohibition beneficial to the country?"³⁰
- 1887-The store was owned by Emanuel and Henrietta Dryfus and was not taxed. Presumably, it was dissolved. Only M. Dryfus and Co. was taxed.³¹
- 1887-Abraham Dryfus was on the arrangements committee for the Purim Ball of the Youth Historical Society.³²
- 1887-Moses Dryfus Dryfus and B.H. Dryfus form Dryfus Brothers.³³
- 1887-B.H. Dryfus married Josephine Hayman on November 23 in Grand Rapids, Michigan.³⁴
- 1888-Dryfus Bros. employed Abraham, B.H., Emanuel, Moses, and Solomon Dryfus. The store was at 189-193 Congress Street.³⁵
- 1889-Dryfus Bros. moved to 181-183 Congress Street.³⁶
- 1890-Dryfus Bros. employed all male members of the family except Solomon. He worked as a clerk for Savannah Grocery Co.³⁷
- 1890-Abraham Dryfus was elected as a director for the Young Men's Hebrew Association. (YMHA).³⁸
- 1890-A black man was arrested for breaking a pane of glass at Dryfus Bros., presumably in an intended burglary.³⁹

1890-Moses Dryfus was appointed to a standing committee for the YMHA, the Amusement Committee.⁴⁰

1890-B.H. Dryfus was on the arrangements committee for a charity ball. The proceeds were to go the Hebrew Orphans' Home in Atlanta.⁴¹

1890-Moses Dryfus was elected as a director of the Southern Home Building and Loan Association.⁴²

1891-All the males in the Dryfus family except Solomon were employed by Dryfus Bros. He was with A. Einstein and Son. All the males of the family lived at 159 Jones Street except B.H., who lived at 96 Jones Street.⁴³

1891-Dryfus Bros. installed a "telephone station" at the store.⁴⁴

1891-Moses Dryfus and others were in charge of a Purim masque ball for the YMHA. The ball was "a decided success" with four hundred present and music until 3:00 a.m. Many costumes were elegant, but "most leaned toward the ridiculous".⁴⁵

1891-A "colored girl" carrying some cloth patterns for Mrs. B.H. Dryfus was robbed in the park extension.⁴⁶

1891-Dryfus Bros. unveiled an exact replica "of large size" of the Statue of Liberty. The work was done by Moses Dryfus and "is a creditable work of an amateur artist."⁴⁷

1892-Mrs. Henrietta Dryfus died at the age of sixty-three on June 14.⁴⁸ She left an estate of about \$2000 to be split equally between her husband and children. Moses was the administrator.⁴⁹

1893-Dryfus Bros. was dissolved. B.H. Dryfus formed with J.M. Rich to form Dryfus and Rich, a liquor and cigar store at 161 Congress Street. Abraham Dryfus worked with Dryfus and Rich. Solomon Dryfus worked with the Specialty Company. B.H. Dryfus moved to 64 Bull Street.⁵⁰

1893-Moses Dryfus married Henrietta Byck on August 24. Rev. (rabbi) Isaac Mendes officiated.⁵¹

1894-Abraham Dryfus worked for Meinhard Bros. and Company, selling boots, shoes, and clothing. B. H. Dryfus worked with Smith Bros. Emanuel Dryfus was a cashier with

Moses Dryfus. Solomon Dryfus was a traveling agent.⁵²

1897-Abraham Dryfus worked for E. A. Weil and Co. and lived at the Screven House, B. H. and Josephine Dryfus lived at 107 W. Jones Street. Emanuel Dryfus lived at 5 W. Charlton Street. Moses and Henrietta Dryfus lived at 113 W. Huntingdon Street. The store of Moses Dryfus had been moved to 127 W. Congress Street. Solomon Dryfus lived at 10 E. Taylor Street. He worked as an agent for the Hartford Life and Annuity Insurance Company.⁵³

1899-Only Moses, Solomon, and Emanuel Dryfus lived in the city.⁵⁴

1899-Abraham E. Dryfus died in Joplin, Missouri at age thirty-two on September 3.⁵⁵

1906-Emanuel Dryfus died at the age of eighty-six on March 1 of "senile decay".⁵⁶

1917-Henrietta B. Dryfus, wife of Moses, died at the age of forty-nine on October 4.⁵⁷

1921-Moses Dryfus married Maude Rice on December 20 in Birmingham, Alabama.⁵⁸

1931-B. H. Dryfus died on April 22 at the age of seventy-one.⁵⁹

1931-Josephine Dryfus, the widow of B. H. Dryfus, died on May 8 at the age of sixty-eight.

1946-Moses Dryfus died on May 3 at the age of eighty-two.⁶¹

1950-Leonie Dryfus Levy died on August 20 at the age of eighty-eight.⁶²

1966-Maude R. Dryfus, widow of Moses, died on December 6 at age ninety.⁶³

GENEALOGY OF EMANUEL AND HENRIETTA DRYFUS

WILL OF HENRIETTA DRYFUS (1892-File No. 394)

Mentioned as heirs are:

Emanuel Dryfus - husband, Rebecca D. Levy - daughter, Benjamin H. Dryfus-- son,
Leonie D. Levy - daughter, Moses Dryfus - son, Abraham E. Dryfus - son, and
Solomon E. Dryfus - son.

RECORD OF MARRIAGES - HEBREW CONGREGATION MICKVA ISRAEL (No. 126)

Moses Dryfus married Henrietta Byck in 1893.

FAMILY PRAYERBOOK (Owned by Mrs. L. M. Steinheimer)

Rhetta Dryfus was born to Moses and Henrietta, July 11, 1894.

MARRIAGE RECORDS (Book 2G, Folio 527)

Rhetta Dryfus and Lawrence M. Steinheimer were married on August 25, 1919.

RECORD OF BIRTHS - HEBREW CONGREGATION MICKVA ISRAEL

Henrietta I. Steinheimer was born to Lawrence and Rhetta on July 14, 1920.

Lawrence M. Steinheimer, Jr. was born to Lawrence and Rhetta on August 26, 1924.

RECORD OF MARRIAGES - HEBREW CONGREGATION MICKVA ISRAEL

Henrietta I. Steinheimer married Gilbert J. Victor on March 29, 1953.

RECORD OF BIRTHS - HEBREW CONGREGATION MICKVA ISRAEL

Herbert L. Victor was born to Henrietta and Gilbert on May 7, 1954.

Rhonda S. Victor was born to Henrietta and Gilbert on September 17, 1955.

*Those names underlined show the direct bloodline from the person being studied to the modern descendent.

ENDNOTES

- ¹Family Prayerbook, owned by Mrs. L. M. Steinheimer.
- ²1880 Federal Census. Household No. 320 in Chatham County.
- ³Family Prayerbook.
- ⁴Ibid. See also: 1870 Federal Census, Household No. 1979 in Chatham County for endnotes 4-9.
- ⁵Ibid.
- ⁶Ibid.
- ⁷Ibid.
- ⁸Ibid.
- ⁹Ibid.
- ¹⁰1870 Federal Census, Household No. 1979 in Chatham County.
- ¹¹Tax Digest, (1871).
- ¹²Ibid., (1872).
- ¹³Savannah City Directory, (1874), p.62.
- ¹⁴Savannah Morning News, September 5, 1874, p. 3, c. 2.
- ¹⁵Ibid., May 21, 1876, p. 3, c. 1.
- ¹⁶Ibid., July 23, 1876, p. 3, c. 1.
- ¹⁷Minutes of Congregation Mickva Israel, Vol. II, p. 265.
- ¹⁸Savannah City Directory, (1877-1878), p. 80.
- ¹⁹Ibid., (1879), pp. 203-204.
- ²⁰1880 Federal Census, Household No. 320 in Chatham County.
- ²¹Savannah Morning News, February 12, 1880, p. 3, c. 3.
- ²²Ibid., February 25, 1880, p. 3, c. 6.
- ²³Savannah City Directory, (1881), p. 221.
- ²⁴Savannah Morning News, June 2, 1881, p. 4; c. 4 and 5.
- ²⁵Savannah City Directory, (1883), p. 277.
- ²⁶Marriage Records, Book D, Folio 579.

- 27 Savannah Morning News, December 12, 1884, p. 4, c. 1.
- 28 Savannah City Directory, (1885), p. 160.
- 29 Ibid., (1886), p. 155.
- 30 Savannah Morning News, November 25, 1886, p. 8, c.2.
- 31 Tax Digest, (1888).
- 32 Savannah Morning News, February 20, 1887, p. 8, c. 3.
- 33 Morning News, October 7, 1887, p. 2, c. 5.
- 34 Ibid., November 17, 1887, p. 8, c. 3.
- 35 Savannah City Directory, (1888), p. 173.
- 36 Ibid., (1889), p. 184.
- 37 Ibid., (1890), p. 208.
- 38 Savannah Morning News, January 15, 1890, p. 8, c.2.
- 39 Ibid., January 20, 1890, p. 8, c. 2.
- 40 Ibid., January 26, 1890, p. 8, c. 3.
- 41 Ibid., February 6, 1890, p. 8, c. 3.
- 42 Morning News, November 11, 1890, p. 8, c. 4.
- 43 Savannah City Directory, (1891), p. 214.
- 44 Savannah Morning News, February 17, 1891, p. 8, c. 2.
- 45 Ibid., March 4, 1891, p. 8, c. 1 and 2.
- 46 Ibid., July 2, 1891, p. 8, c. 3.
- 47 Ibid., July 19, 1891, p. 8, c. 4.
- 48 Chatham County Health Department Death Certificate.
- 49 Will of Henrietta Dryfus, (1892), File No. 394.
- 50 Savannah City Directory, (1893), p. 206.
- 51 Record of Marriages - Hebrew Congregation Mickva Israel, No. 126.
- 52 Savannah City Directory, (1894), p. 202.
- 53 Ibid., (1897), p. 222.
- 54 Ibid., (1899), p. 290.

- 55 Record of Deaths - Hebrew Congregation Mickva Israel, No. 286.
- 56 Chatham County Health Department Death Certificate.
- 57 Chatham County Health Department Death Certificate.
- 58 Interview with Henrietta S. Victor, Savannah, Georgia, July 30, 1975.
- 59 Chatham County Health Department Death Certificate, Book 50, Folio 550.
- 60 Ibid., Book 50, Folio 628.
- 61 Ibid., Book 109, Folio 499.
- 62 Record of Deaths - Hebrew Congregation Mickva Israel,
- 63 Ibid.

REFERENCES EXAMINED BUT NOT USEFUL

Because the subject of this study was my family, I had the advantage of knowing some of the sources which would be helpful. I also had the pleasurable use of several relatives whose recollection of the past was not only useful but gave the study a flavor which brought the subjects of the study much closer.

Because I was somewhat familiar with the subject of the study, I was able to use only sources which proved in some way useful. Often they proved repetitious but could still be used to verify information. The Laurel Grove and Bonaventure Cemetary Records served this purpose, as did the Tax Digests (1864-1903).

GROUNDS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

For future researchers, a more in-depth examination of the Minutes of Congregation Mickva Israel may shed light on the religious activity of the Dryfus family. The deeds at the Chatham County Courthouse should be more carefully examined in order to study in detail the business activities of the family. A letter to Brookhaven, Mississippi may give some information as to the Dryfus family before they came to Savannah. Also, when more digests and indices become available, an examination of newspapers between the 1890's and 1930's will fill in a huge gap in the family history.