Mordecai Myers (1794-1865) is a bizarre character in the history of Savannah. He appears in many newspaper articles in name only, participates in many organizations, committees, and even as a member of the House of Representatives. He had a large family with a great, great-grandson as a modern day descendant. He owned land in Chatham County and outside the county. He is a sketchy figure with still many questions to be answered.

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History 500
Summer 1976
Dr. Warlick

Scanned from The Savannah Biographies Volume 3
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This research paper on Mordecai Myers (1794-1865) is incomplete. With limited time and unlimited resources it has been impossible to establish a full history of this man and his family. A modern-day descendant has been interviewed. All the information has not been researched because of the time limitation, but it is reported in this paper the family history as told by its various members.

There are discrepancies and areas of doubt that have not been looked into. The author of this paper hopes that some day one will pick up the rest of Mordecai Myers' fascinating life and complete this puzzle.
I. Family Tree

The book used is located at the Mickva Israel Temple, Savannah, Georgia:

*Americans of Jewish Descent*
*A Compendium of Genealogy*
Hebrew Union College Press;
Cincinnati 1960

II. Family Tree of Frank Myers (son of Mordecai)
Told by Dr. Richard L. Schley, Jr. (great, great-grandson)
Savannah, Georgia
Mordecai Myers

In researching, one has found it easier to start from the end and work toward the beginning. According to the death certificate located at the Chatham County Health Department, Myers was born in South Carolina. His wife, Sarah Henrietta Cohen Myers, documented by the same source, was to have come from Georgetown, South Carolina. It is surmised that Mordecai was also from Georgetown, as was his father and grandfather. In the book published by the Daughters of the American Revolution, it is written that Frances Minis married Dr. Levy Myers from Georgetown, South Carolina.\(^1\) There has not been documented proof, except for the Hebrew College book, but it is understood that these were Mordecai's parents.

Also from the Hebrew Union College book, it has listed members of Mordecai's family who died or were buried at sea. The descendent, Dr. Richard Schley, stated that Mordecai's father, Dr. Levy Myers had owned land on an island off of the South Carolina coast. There was a hurricane or tidal wave which drowned these siblings and supposedly his parents.

It was said that Mordecai was the only survivor and buried his family.\(^2\) Dr. Schley also mentioned that Mordecai, like his father Levy, graduated from Princeton in 1812. This has not been proven.

It has not been found as to when Mordecai and Sarah Henrietta, his wife, moved to Georgia. There is no
marriage certificate of their union at the Chatham Courthouse. It is surmised that they were married outside the state of Georgia, presumably Georgetown, South Carolina.

Mordecai Myers is listed in the Chatham County 1830 census having the title General M. Myers. He was listed as having five males—two under five years of age, two between five and ten years of age, and one between thirty and forty years of age; and two females between the ages of twenty and thirty. There was nothing more written down.\(^3\) Then, in the 1850 census, Mordecai Myers is listed in Cobb County as (#235) being a white male, a farmer, owning 20,000 acres value of real estate. His place of birth was listed as South Carolina.\(^4\)

But Mordecai is recorded in the Tax Assessments and Tax Digest in the years between 1830-1850 as paying taxes in Chatham County. It is surmised that while living in Cobb County, Mordecai owned and paid taxes on real estate in Chatham County.\(^5\)

The following are documented accounts of taxes he paid in Chatham County during various years:

*Register of City Lots 1832:*

Land in Franklin Ward which was transferred to John Boyle on March 11, 1844. On April 10, 1845, Mordecai Myers sold land in Franklin Ward to Abram Minis.
Tex Assesments 1854:
#27 Mordecai Myers—Liberty Ward, $500 amount due,
$25 Ground Rent, $2000 value of lots.

Tax Digest 1850:
Mordecai Myers, L. J. Myers made returns: $3500
$4000, land in two wards, #26 and #27 Liberty Ward
and #3 Percival Ward.

Note: This information of Tax Digest is repeated
in the 1849, 1851, 1852, and 1853 Digests.

Mordecai's occupation, property ownership in total,
and number of children has not been verified by either
one of the census.

Place of residency in Savannah is verifiable up to
the 1850 census. In 1825, Mordecai was elected a member
of the Union Society in Savannah. This society was to
support orphan boys. In 1826, in the Savannah Georgian
Mordecai is announced to make an Oration for the Union
Society on April 24, that year. In 1828 Mordecai was
on the Board of Directors for the State Bank elected by
the state legislature. In 1828, Mordecai is elected
Secretary of Association of Friends of Ireland in
Savannah. And in 1830, Mordecai is making city council
announcements.

The address written down where Mordecai died has
some discrepancy. In 1833, June 19 (259) Mordecai
Myers sold to George Millen lots 36, 37, 38 for $4000.
1831—Tax Digest—land is not under Mordecai Myers
1832—Tax Digest—land is not under Mordecai Myers
1832—Tax Digest—George Millen lots 36, 37, 38
1833—Tax Digest—missing
1833—June 20 (2311) George Millen to Henry McAlpin for
$5500
1834—Tax Digest—Henry McAlpin lot #36, $2500 improvements.
   This is in Jackson Ward—west ½ lot 36—111 West Perry Street.
   It is supposed that since Henry McAlpin paid $5500
   for this property, the house had already been built by
   George Millen, but the fact Millen had only just bought
   the property himself suggests that perhaps Myers had
   built the house. It is probably safe to say the house
   was completed by 1833.¹¹

   But as mentioned before, Mordecai Myers was to have
died at the residence on Perry Street (no number mentioned).¹²
   But since the family was related to the Minis family
   in Savannah, who lived on Perry Street at the time, it
   is surmised that Mordecai Myers did not die at 111 West
   Perry Street, but at relatives' house.¹³

   In the fall of 1831, at Eatonton, certain delegates
from every part of the state assembled for the purpose
of discussing the subject of internal improvements.
The main question was whether canals or railroads should
be built. Mr. Irby H. Hudson of Putman was a proponent.
Hon. Thomas Stocks of Greene was made president of the
collection. From Chatham County four men were listed,
one of whom was Mordecai Myers. This also suggests
Mordecai's residence in Chatham County.

In 1837, from Chatham County, Mordecai Myers was
selected to the House of Representatives. But nothing
is mentioned of any special notice to this representative.

In 1838, Mordecai was listed in the Daily Georgian
as being a stockholder of central railroad and Banking
Compact. Then in 1840, Mordecai is on the committee
to prepare business. On May 25, 1838, Mordecai Myers
was elected unanimously as chairman of the Board of Health.

In 1839, it is found that M. Myers among several
other names was a charter member for chartering the
Georgia Historical Society by Georgia's Legislature
on December 19, 1839, in Savannah. Hence forth, more
evidence of Mordecai's residence in Savannah.

Not much research has been made in the years of the
1840's, but in 1851, an act in Legislature was approved
to charter the famous Georgia Military Institute at
Marietta (Cobb County). This was a private enterprise under
control of certain well-known citizens. Among a few
names is Mordecai Myers. The story of the Institute
is interesting. It was a feeder for the Confederate
ranks and it became famous throughout the land. It was
modeled after the United States Military Academy at
West Point. It defended Marietta in Sherman's march across Georgia. They constituted the last organized body of the Confederate soldiers on duty east of the Mississippi River. The institute lasted only fourteen years—Sherman had ruined it.20

To the disappointment of the researcher of this paper, and regrettably to many other researchers, the newspapers between the years of the Civil War are nowhere to be found. Mordecai Meyers died in February, 1865. There was hope that an obituary would seep more information about this man's life. He appears on many boards, committees, etc., but nothing of a biography has been found. Mordecai's will does not tell us much either. He only mentions three daughters, one grand-daughter (daughter of the son, Frederick) and his wife Sarah Henrietta. The will was executed in Chatham County on January 6, 1865.21 Mordecai died on February 21, 1865. He was buried in the Laurel Grove Cemetery, plot 1424. He was seventy years old. In the same plot appears these names: Frances Myers, Frederic Myers, Levy Myers, Sarah Henrietta Myers, Etta Phillips, and Etta N. Smith.22 It is presumed that Frances and Levy Myers were Mordecai's parents as was indicated in the cemetery records. Their bodies were removed from Georgetown, South Carolina on March 19, 1856 to this plot. The identities of Etta
Phillips, Etta M. Smith, and Frederic Myers are not definite. Sarah Henrietta, Mordecai's wife, died on June 19, 1886, at the age of eighty-seven. It is in her will that the names of the children are mentioned: Henry Myers, living in Jacksonville, Florida Octavius Myers, living in Brooklyn, New York Julian Myers, Brooklyn, New York Frank M. Myers, Atlanta, Georgia Josephine M. Myers, Brooklyn, New York Levy J. Myers, Savannah, Georgia Annabella M. Levy, Savannah, Georgia Robert P. Myers, Savannah, Georgia Frederick Myers, Savannah, Georgia

Very little is known as of the time of this report, of the individual children. Levy J. Myers and Annabella M. Levy left no descendents, as mentioned in their obituaries and wills.

Frank M. Myers is the living descendent's great-grandfather. It is said that Frank was a law clerk in Atlanta and very well liked. Frank's wife, Fairlie Cooper, came from a prestigious family in New York. So it is said that her father, Major James F. Cooper, was in the class of the first graduates of West Point, Dr. Schley, the descendent, has told the author very interesting stories which have not been researched and therefore shall not be expounded upon.

In the obituary of Caroline Phillips Meyers, it is
3, 1838. Then on November 6, 1915, as surviving administrator, Robert P. Myers petitions to the authorize the selling of lands belonging to Mordecai Myers.29

The odd thing about Robert P. Myers is that he disappears after 1889. He is not found in the City Directories of 1890 and later. There is no mention of his name in will abstracts or cemetery records. There is an article about Dr. Robert P. Myers in the book History of Savannah Georgia which was published in 1890. Hence forth, Robert moved between the writing of the article and its publication date. The article reads:

Dr. Robert P. Myers was born in Savannah January 20, 1839, but received his literary education in county schools of Cobb County. In 1857 he commenced the study of medicine under Dr. R. E. Arnold of Savannah, supplemented by a course of lectures in the Savannah Medical College, graduating in 1860. After one year practice he became assistant surgeon in the Confederate Army, remaining in this capacity until the final surrender of the Southern forces at Appomattox. After the war he returned to Savannah and in 1866 was elected coroner, being the first physician to serve in that capacity in Savannah. He was demonstrator of anatomy in the Savannah Medical College; has been permanent Secretary of State Medical Association and for thirteen years has been Recording Secretary of the Georgia Medical Society. For the last eight years he has been superintendent of the Georgia Infirmary. Dr. Meyers' practice has been general in its character and his standing in his profession is deservedly high. Personally, he is a pleasant, genial, gentleman and is highly esteemed.30

In the Hebrew Union College Book, there are parentheses around the word "Honoolulu" under Robert's name.
It is concluded that Mordecai Myers was an enterprising individual. He was a member of many organizations, but perhaps not an outspoken person. He owned land in Chatham County and outside the County. He is still a mysterious character, with a living descendant who knows many family stories. Perhaps one day, another researcher will continue the story of Mordecai Myers.
Footnotes

1 Historical Collections of the Joseph Habersham Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution. VII.

2 Dr. Richard Schley.

3 Georgia Historical Society. Index to the 1830 Census, Chatham County.

4 Georgia Historical Society. Index to the 1850 Census, Cobb County, #235.

5 Georgia Historical Society. Tax Digest 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853; Tax Assessments 1854; Register of City Lots 1837-1859, 1852.

6 Minutes of the Union Society 1750-1858. Georgia Historical Society.

7 Savannah Georgian. April 22-24, 1826. p. 2; C-1 and
   p. 2; C-1.

8 Savannah Georgian. May 6, 1828. p. 2; C-1.

9 Savannah Georgian. September 27, 1828. p. 2; C-3.

10 Savannah Georgian. January 22, 1839. p. 3; C-4.


12 Death Certificate, Chatham County Health Department.


14 Lucian Lamar Knight, Georgia's Land Marks, Memorials and Legends. p. 671.


20 Lucian Lamar Knight. Loc cit. p. 673.

21 Mordecai Myer's Will #421. Chatham County Courthouse.

22 Laurel Grove Cemetery Records.
23 Sarah Henrietta Myers' Will #654, Chatham County Courthouse.

24 Levy J. Myers' Will #823, Chatham County Courthouse.


27 City Directories from the beginning to 1908. Georgia Historical Society.


29 Mordecai Myers' Will #421.

30 History of Savannah, Georgia. Jones; Charles C., Jr., LL.D. p. 449.
Bibliography

City Directories, Savannah, Georgia found at Georgia Historical Society.


*Daily Georgian* Newspaper
- May 25, 1838 p.2 c.7
- June 2, 1848 p.2 c.4
- July 19, 1848 p.2 c.3
- June 26, 1887
- August 21, 1929
- March 14, 1941

Death Certificates, Chatham County Health Department

Georgia Historical Society
- Index to 1870 Census, Chatham County
- Index to 1850 Census, Cobb County
- Register of City Lots
- Tax Assessments
- Tax Digests
- Minutes of the Union Society 1750-1850
- Jackson Ward Notebook

*Georgia Official and Statistical Register* 1973-74
- Department of Archives and History p.1441

Historical Collections of the Joseph Habersham Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution, Atlanta, Georgia, 1902.


Laural Grove Cemetery Records

*Savannah Georgian*
- April 22-24, 1826 p.2 c.1
- May 6, 1828 p.2 c.1
- September 27, 1828 p.2 c.3
- January 22, 1830 p.3 c.4

Schley,Richard L., M.D. (Descendent)
No name
House
1828

33 West Perry Street
At one stone - This was Eliza Moser
Same - 1832