

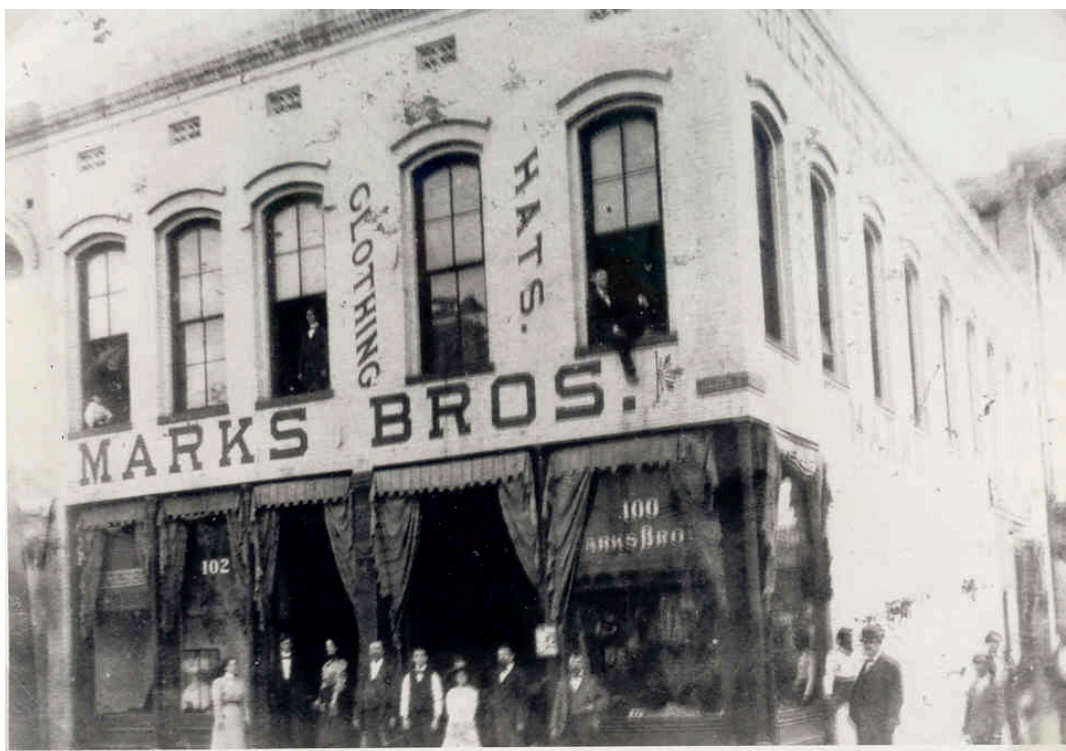
## Philip Marks and Mary Levy Marks



*Philip Marks and Mary Levy were married August 3, 1884 in Nashville*

Philip Marks (born in Pilwiski, Poland, February 10, 1858) was the son of Joshua Marks and Sarah Strasburg Marks. He came to the United States in 1881. Philip Marks lived in Nashville two years and married Miss Mary Levy in 1884 (about a month before they moved to Jackson). He peddled dry goods up to the time he came here.

Mary Levy Marks, was born in Kruki, Poland, March 9, 1860. (Her Death Certificate lists her father as Yehudie Lieb Levy and her mother as Rassah \_\_\_\_). She and Philip Marks had two children, Harry Marks and Ray Marks (married Joseph L. Rosenbloom, Sr.)



Philip and his brother, Louis Marks, opened a retail dry goods and clothing store in partnership under the name of Marks Brothers at 109 N. Liberty Street. They lived upstairs over the store at the time. Their business grew and they moved to 102 E. Lafayette Street (corner of Market). Later, they purchased the three-story building at 113-115-117 W. Market Street (corner of W. Lafayette Street) and added the wholesale line to their ever-increasing retail business. It was the largest and oldest wholesale business in West Tennessee outside of Memphis when they discontinued business on November 1, 1943.

The largest of the three Torahs belonging to Congregation B'nai Israel was donated by Philip Marks and had been in his family for years.

#### Siblings of Philip Marks

Louis Marks  
 Ben Marks, Fort Smith, Arkansas  
 Abe Marks, Greenville, Mississippi  
 Sam Marks, Fort Smith, Arkansas  
 Nathan Marks, Cushen, Oklahoma  
 Sidney Marks, Houston, Texas  
 Mrs. Sol Shatz (Flora), Kenton, Tennessee  
 Mrs. A.J. Altfeld (Tillie), Jackson, Tennessee  
 Dora Marks – a sister living in Europe

## **Newspaper Articles**

### ***Phillip Marks (editorial - Jackson Sun of March 3, 1924)***

In the death Sunday morning of Phillip Marks, native of Poland, but for almost a half century a resident of Jackson, and founder of the oldest mercantile establishment here, this city loses one of its best citizens and most substantial merchants.

Mr. Marks had been in failing health for several years. In fact ever since the death of his brother, Louis Marks, nearly four years ago, he had not been in good health. The loss of his brother, who was his business partner for many years, was keenly felt by him. The attachment between the two was very strong.

Mr. Marks' condition became serious six months ago. Certain that death was approaching, he met it with calm resignation and with perfect confidence that all was well with him. Surrounded by his family and other loved ones, he passed quietly away in the early Sunday hours with the full knowledge that he had wrought well in his earthly career, that he had done a most noble part by his family and his fellowman, that he had achieved a most notable business success wrapped draperies of his couch about him and lay down to pleasant dreams.

When Mr. Marks and his brother, Louis, came to this country 44 years ago they had little this world's goods, but they were fired with a determination to seize business opportunities in this land of equal privileges and to establish a mercantile enterprise that would rank high in the commercial world.

The two brothers bought goods and peddled them. They thus secured sufficient funds for their first business venture. They hustled, met their obligations, and lived frugal lives. They began to accumulate and turned back into their enterprise profits of an ever increasing business. Year after year they expanded, finally entering the wholesale dry goods field. The firm of Mark Brothers, the largest and oldest of its kind in West Tennessee outside of Memphis, stands as a monument to their earnest endeavor and business sagacity.

There is much in the life of Mr. Marks worthy of emulation. He has given pointed demonstration of the fact that opportunity does not come alone to the favored few, but that it may be created by aspiring youth imbued with the right sort of principles and armed with a determination to overcome all obstacles that may face him in his struggle for success.

To have lived 65 years, attained commercial eminence, won and retained the respect and esteem of his fellows and the ardent devotion of his family is a mighty fine record. Such record belongs to Phillip Marks.

***Jackson's Oldest Merchant Passes To His Reward – Phillip Marks Dies at Civic League Hospital Sunday Morning (Jackson Sun, March 3, 1924)***

Phillip Marks, one of the city's leading merchants, died Sunday morning at the Civic League Hospital at 2:20 o'clock following an illness of heart trouble and other complications of more than a year's duration. In the passing of Philip Marks, Jackson loses one of her most substantial citizens, who has contributed greatly to the growth and development of the city. A good citizen, an honest merchant, and a gentleman of the highest character is the tribute paid him by fellow merchants.

Mr. Marks was born in Pilwiski, Poland, 65 years ago, last January and came to the United States in 1881, settling first in Nashville, where he spent two years and later coming to Jackson. He was married in Nashville in 1884 and the next month came to this city where he established the firm of Marks Brothers with his brother, Louis Marks, who died about four years ago.

Mr. Marks came to Jackson when the city was a village and through his system of honest and fair dealings grew up with the town, and at this time the firm of Marks Brothers is the oldest firm in the city and one of the best established, doing a large retail business here and an equally large wholesale business throughout this district. Philip Marks was the founder of the wholesale portion of the business and under the same principle that has made Marks Brothers a store of prominence in the city, the wholesale department became well known and established.

Mr. Marks was not known only through his business, however, for he was a local citizen, and no movement of merit was ever started here but that his name and influence were not found among those of the other leading residents of the city. He was a member and leader in the congregation B'nai Israel and even through the last year, when his health was breaking so fast, he was a regular attendant at the services of the Temple and in the past few months presented the Temple with a handsome Torah which had been in the family for years. He was also a member of the Knights of Pythias, D.O.R.R. and Masons. He was also a member of the B'Nai Brith Lodge, a Jewish charitable organization.

***Mrs. Marks, Ill Several Weeks, Died Last Night [March 28, 1942]***

She was a native of Poland and resided in Jackson the past 57 years.

Mrs. Philip Marks, long-time and beloved resident of Jackson, died in the home of her daughter, Mr. J.L. Rosenbloom, Sr., at 10:45 last night from complications following an illness of several weeks. She was 82.

Born in Kruki, Poland, March 9, 1860, she came to American in 1883 and was married to Philip Marks in August 1884. Immediately after their marriage at Nashville, they moved to Jackson where she has maintained her home since that time.

Mr. Marks preceded her in death on March 1, 1924.

Known throughout the city for her charitable character and benevolent activities, she was a member of the Congregation B'nai Israel, of which her husband was a charter member, and a member of the Temple Sisterhood. For her benevolences, she was made honorary president of the latter organization several years ago.

Only a few weeks ago, Mrs. Marks received much recognition for her work in knitting for the American Red Cross even since passing her 81st birthday.

Survivors are one daughter, Mrs. J.L. Rosenbloom, Sr.; one son Harry L. Marks of Jackson; two sisters, Mrs. Tom Rosenbloom of Denver, Colorado, and Mrs. M. Kissilov, Petah-Tikva, Palestine (now Israel); three grandchildren, Dr. Alvin B. Rosenbloom, Joseph L. Rosenbloom, Jr., both of Jackson, and Irving L. Rosenbloom of Camp Lee, Virginia; and several nephews and nieces.

Funeral arrangements were incomplete last night but will be held sometime Monday with Griffin Funeral Home in charge.

Friends of Mrs. Marks are being asked by the family not to submit floral offerings for the funeral.

#### ***Editorial Jackson Sun – A Beloved Mother in Israel Passes***

Mrs. Philip Marks who had made her home in Jackson for many years, who was prominently identified with the development of the Jewish church here, and was known for her many charities, died Saturday night at the home of her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. J.L. Rosenbloom.

A native of Russia where she was born under the old czarist regime, she came to this country early in life where she enjoyed the liberties and privileges of American citizenship and likewise fulfilled its responsibilities through her long and useful years.

For years Mrs. Marks had been looked upon as the mother of the local Jewish Sisterhood and the Congregation B'nai Israel. Her devotion to her own church did not minimize her devotion to humanity as a whole.

Wherever distress or sorrow came and she had knowledge of it, Mrs. Marks was eager to lend her aid – aid that was given generously by a kind, retiring soul whose chief desire was to be helpful as possible to those who needed her help.

Only recently she had knitted sweaters and socks for American soldiers, even though she had reached her 81st birthday. [Jackson Sun photo caption: A record of more than 50 pairs of socks for soldiers has been established by Mrs. Mary Marks. Mrs. Marks, now past 80 years of age, never passes an idle moment but keeps her knitting close at hand so that she may add a few stitches whenever possible. Mrs. Marks has cooperated with the Red Cross for many years in their programs and now is delighted to assist in this patriotic program.]

A kind neighbor, a loyal friend, a devoted humanitarian, she will be remembered not only in Jewish circles but by many Gentiles and appreciated for her unselfish spirit and noble character.

### ***Memorial – Mrs. Philip Marks***

A woman of valour who can find?  
For her price is far above rubies.  
The heart of her husband doth safely trust her, and he hath no lack of gain.  
She doeth him good and not evil all the days of her life.  
She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.  
She is like the merchant ships; she bringeth her food from afar.  
She riseth also while it is yet night,  
And giveth food to her household, and a portion to her maidens.  
She considereth a field, and buyeth it;  
With the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.  
She girdeth her loins with strength and maketh strong her arms.  
She perceiveth that her merchandise is good;  
Her lamp goeth not out by night,  
She layeth her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle.  
She stretcheth out her hand to the poor;  
Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.  
Strength and dignity are her clothing; and she laugheth at the time to come.  
She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and the law of kindness is on her tongue.  
She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.  
Her children rise up, and call her blessed.  
Her husband also and he praises her.  
Many daughters have done valiantly, but thou excellest them all.  
Grace is deceitful, and beauty is value;  
But the woman that fearest the Lord, she shall be praised.  
Give her of the fruit of her hands,  
And let her works praise her in the gates.

Dearly beloved, Mrs. Philip Marks, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, precious friend and companion of the years, we bid you this morning a tearful and sorrowful farewell.



Our heavenly Father, in his inscrutable wisdom, has called you home at last to your eternal rest. Though we mourn you deeply, there is a healing solace for our wounded hearts in the thought that in your passing you left with us a rich legacy, an immortal legacy of the soul. Our life is sweeter, richer, stronger because we were privileged to share it with you these many, many years.

I can think of no more perfect tribute to your life and character than the magnificent passage we read a few moments ago out of that great book which you knew and loved so well. “A woman of valour,” asks the author of the book of Proverbs, “where can she be found?” Where indeed could she be found but in you? You were a matchless example of the valorous woman, the woman of staunch moral rectitude, of beautiful ideals, of fine loyalties and of high-reaching faith, whose portrait is lovingly painted in the Proverbs. You were a pious and devoted mother in Israel, a mother who strove to be faithful to the noblest standards of Jewish womanhood. You were a woman in whose gentle nature the cup of tenderness and mercy, of sympathy and compassion of cheerful friendliness and patience, was filled to overflowing.

It is, I think, eminently fitting, my friends, that we should seek for the counterpart of Mrs. Marks in the pages of the Bible. I believe that it was in her deep rooted attachment to the Bible, in her respect for all the forms of Jewish tradition and learning – it was in the fact that she moved in a constant atmosphere of religious faith and piety – it was in all this that we find the clue to every aspect of her noble character.

Early in life she learned to heed the admonition of our ancient sages “hafach bo, ve-hafach bo, ki kulay bo,” “Turn the Torah over and over, for it contains everything.” For Mary Marks, religion, religious tradition, and practice, earnest and whole-souled prayer – these were a perennial fountain from whose living waters she drew an unfailing nourishment and strength for her soul, her mind, and her heart.

Mrs. Marks was pious, eminently so. But her piety was something more than mere habitual lip-service to ancient doctrines, something more than mere addiction to routine customs and ceremonies, though she loved these deeply and observed many of them scrupulously. She knew how to translate her piety into the practical conduct and the everyday relationships of life, into the moral obligations of family and friends, into the compelling responsibilities of her congregation, her community and her people. Her whole life bore eloquent witness to Matthew Arnold’s profound assertion that religion consists of one-fourth prayer and three-fourths conduct.

The pages of her long and active life were filled with deeds of quiet human helpfulness and benevolence, not only toward the inner circle of her own family, not only toward the deserving men and women of her own faith. But her ears were attuned, her hands outstretched toward friend, and strangers of every creed and class, and toward the worth-while causes and institutions of the community.

It may have been Mrs. Marks' religion which also inspired within her that tender love of nature which was one of the distinguishing traits of her character throughout her life. One of her chief hobbies was the nourishment and the painstaking cultivation of the fragile, growing things of the earth. She came to possess that which few of us hurried and worried moderns ever seem to achieve – an unfailing sense of simple contentment and joy in life that comes from living in close, loving communion with all the growing life of nature. Plants and flowers seemed to blossom forth as if by magic under the tender ministrations of her hand – and she found moreover a keen delight in sharing with others these fruits of her labor. Perhaps just here was the secret of the constant patience which marked her earthly career, her tolerance of others and their fruits, her remarkable capacity of getting along with all kinds and classes of people.

The religious faith which this beloved soul cherished can bring to us who remain behind the solacing message of earthly immortality. Judaism brings to them who are grief-stricken the comforting knowledge that the final victory of our brief and troubled career on earth does not belong to the cruel grave. Our departed continue to abide with us, as we face the years, sweetening our lives with fragrant memories, hallowing them with tender influences, and blessing them forevermore.



Philip Marks (1889 – 1924)    Mary Levy Marks (1860 – 1942)  
B'nai Israel Cemetery – Jackson, Tennessee



זִכְרוֹנָם לְבִרְכָּה.

Zichronam liv'rachah.

May their memories be for blessing.