

For The Jacksonville Historical Society  
The History of The Dzialynski Family

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(with Hope Leon (nee Ruth Hope Dzialynski))

Phillip Dzialynski was the first of the Dzialynski family to come to America. He was born in Posen, Prussia, on June 15th, 1833 and as a young boy left home and landed in New York City in 1846. His parents were Abraham Samuel and Rosalie Diamond Dzialynski. The father fought in the Polish Revolution of 1848.

Phillip Dzialynski came to Jacksonville soon after arriving in New York and in 1850 sent for his parents, four brothers and four sisters. The family was fifty-seven days at sea on the way over. The mother was taken ill on the long voyage and died soon after landing in New York, where she was buried. Abraham Samuel Dzialynski and his large family came on to Jacksonville. His children were, Dora (who married Jacob Burkheim) Phillip, Morris A; Hannah (who married Harris Berlack) .elena, (who married Robert J. Williams) John, Augusta (who married Sol. Hertz) and Jacob, aged twelve, and Henry, aged nineteen, who died with their father, aged fifty-two, during the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1857 and are buried in the old city cemetery on Union Street

Phillip Dzialynski and Miss Ida Ehrlich, who was born on March 15th, 1834 at Neustadt, Prussia, were married at Suwannee Shoals (just north of Lake City in Columbia County) on August 11th, 1856. Phillip brought his bride to Jacksonville, to his home at the corner of Adams and Ocean Streets, where his son, George I. P. Dzialynski, the first Jewish male child born in Florida, and his daughter, Regina (later Mrs. Louis Herzog) were born.

In 1862 upon the invasion of Jacksonville by the Union Forces, Phillip Dzialynski and his family fled to Madison, Florida, where his wife, Ida Ehrlich Dzialynski, died in childbirth at the age of twenty-nine, on January 1st, 1864. As a widower of thirty-two years of age, Phillip Dzialynski took his two small children, George and Regina, to Savannah, Georgia, and entered into the cotton brokerage business there. On May 28th, 1865, he married Miss Mary Cohen of Savannah. They raised a family of four daughters, Frances, Miriam, Gertrude and Etta, and one son, Abraham Samuel. After several successful years in business in Savannah, Phillip Dzialynski moved his family to Fort Weade, Florida, where he operated a large general merchandise store and extensive citrus groves. He was among the first citrus fruit shippers of Florida. Walter Coachman, who later became prominent in Jacksonville, and Tom Wilson, who was later State's Attorney General, were both employed in the Dzialynski store in Fort Weade. During these years Phillip Dzialynski wrote in his fine German hand two volumes of poems, which were destroyed in the city-wide fire of Jacksonville on May 3rd, 1901. While living in Fort Weade, where he remained for nineteen years, he donated the ground and helped finance the building for the First Methodist Church. He also donated the acreage for a city cemetery. He named the river, "Sholom", the Hebrew word for peace and it is known today as Peace River.

In the big freeze of 1888, followed by the Yellow Fever Epidemic in March of that year and in the freeze of 1891 when the citrus groves were completely destroyed, Phillip Dzialynski was financially ruined. Broken in health and spirit, he brought his family back to Jacksonville, where he died on January 15th, 1896 and was buried next to his father and two younger brothers in the old city cemetery on Union Street.

George I.P. Dzialynski, son of Phillip and Ida Ehrlich Dzialynski, was born in the family home at the corner of Adams and Ocean Streets in Jacksonville, Florida, on June 8th, 1857. He was educated in Savannah, Georgia, and graduated from Chatham Academy as valedictorian of his class.

On May 7th, 1882 he married Miss Bertha Zadek at Gainesville, Florida. Bertha Zadek was born near Neustadt, Germany, on July 10th, 1854. She was the daughter of David and Caroline Braun Zadek. Her grandfather Zadek was a Jewish rabbi. Her parents died when she was very young and after graduating from Marinen Seminary, she came to Gainesville in 1880 to live with her mother's sister, Mrs. Tobias Brown. George took his bride to Fort Meade, Florida, where their children, Douglas, who died in infancy, Ida Clare, who married William Coleman and Ruth Hope, who married David A. Leon, were born. They moved back to Jacksonville on January 1st, 1900. George and Bertha Dzialynski and their daughter, Ida Clare, are buried in the Temple Cemetery.

Gertrude Dzialynski, daughter of Phillip and Mary Cohen Dzialynski, was born in Savannah, Georgia, on October 17th, 1874. Her early education was under a governess. She later graduated from Summerlin Institute at Bartow, Florida. As a young woman she wrote a number of short stories and plays. She became the first woman faculty member of East Florida Seminary, now the University of Florida and was among the first women lawyers of Florida. Gertrude Dzialynski was always interested in politics. She became the personal secretary to Governor Napoleon B. Broward and aided in his campaign. When Governor Broward appointed William J. Bryan of Jacksonville to fill a vacancy in the United States Senate, she went to Washington with him to handle his political correspondence. During President Woodrow Wilson's administration she served four years as Deputy Collector of Internal Revenue for the District of Florida in the Income Tax Department and was later placed in charge of the Inheritance Tax Department. She was Democratic National Committee-woman from Florida. Gertrude Dzialynski was president of the Jacksonville Business and Professional Women's Club. President of the Martha Reid Chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy, President of the Temple Sisterhood, President of the Duval County League of Democratic Women Voters. She married John Archibald Corbet, whom she survived. On January 24th, 1931 at the age of fifty-six Gertrude Dzialynski Corbet died and was buried in Temple Cemetery.

Morris A. Dzialynski, second son of Abraham Samuel and Rosalie Diamond Dzialynski and brother of Phillip Dzialynski, was born in Posen, Prussia, in 1841. He came with his father and sisters and brothers to Jacksonville and was educated in the public schools of this city. He served in the Confederate Army in Langford's Company, Perry's Regiment and was wounded in the First Battle of Manassas. He re-enlisted in the 3rd Florida Regiment commanded by Colonel Dilworth and took part in the battles of Murfreesboro, Tennessee and Perryville, Kentucky. At the close of the war he returned to Jacksonville and was in business until 1877 at 72 East Bay St.

Morris A. Dzialynski organized the first volunteer fire department of this city and served as chief. He organized the first reform Jewish Congregation, Congregation Ahavath Chesed in 1882 and served as the first president. The Temple now stands at the corner of St. Johns Ave. and Mallory Street. He was one of the founders of The Children's Home Society of Florida and served on its Board for many years. He helped organize the first baseball club of Jacksonville and was its first president. An enthusiastic Mason, he was Master of the Duval Lodge of Masons. Served as Alderman for six terms; was president of the City Council for two terms. City Tax Assessor for two terms, city treasurer for two terms. County Treasurer during the administrations of Governor Drew and Governor Bloxham. In 1880 he was elected Mayor of Jacksonville and served two terms, refusing renomination. Was elected Municipal Judge in June 1895 and remained in that office until his death in 1907.

Judge Morris A. Dzialynski married Miss Rosa Slager. Their only daughter, Rosalie Dzialynski, married Mr. Sol Isernan, both now deceased.

Judge Dzialynski, a man gentle in his bearing, direct, but kindly in his judgments, was prominently connected with the cultural and political life of Jacksonville, and until his death on May 7th, 1907. His body lay in state in the City Building, with all city offices closed and flags at half mast and was buried the following day in Temple Cemetery.