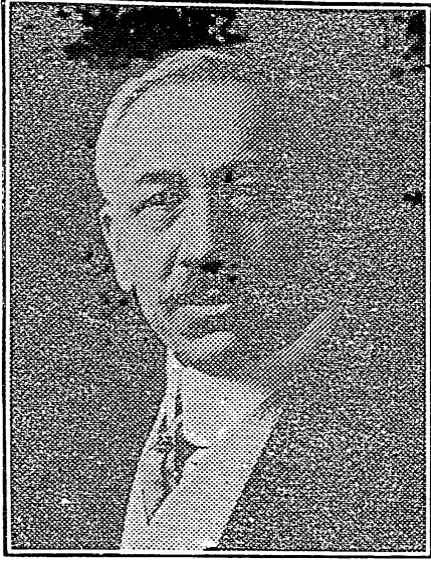


Born **March 4, 1848** Bernard Silberstein **Died Sept. 4, 1922**



B. Silberstein, Oldest Dry Goods Merchant in Duluth, Succumbs

The body of Bernard Silberstein, Duluth's first general store merchant, who died early yesterday morning, will lie in state at the Masonic temple from 12 noon until 2 p. m. tomorrow.

Funeral services will be held at 2 o'clock on that day from the temple. The rites will be conducted by Rabbi Alvin S. Luchs, of Temple Emanuel, in conjunction with the ritual of the Masonic order. Mr. Silberstein died at 5:30 a. m. at his home, 21 North Twenty-first avenue East. He was 74 years of age.

Prolonged Illness.

Death followed a prolonged period of infirmities, due to age, and was expected momentarily for the last month. Mr. Silberstein spent more than half a century in business locally. His record, business associates affirm, stands out for its unusual success and enterprise as that of a citizen and business man.

Coming to Duluth in 1870, he began his business career in the small lake village by selling goods from house to house. And now with his death, he leaves one of the largest mercantile establishments in the northwest. His life story reads like a romance.

Two years ago Mr. Silberstein celebrated his golden wedding anniversary shortly after moving into his newly-erected home at Twenty-first venue East, having been surrounded at that time by all the members of his family, including several grandchildren from New York City. A few months later the Silberstein & Bondy store observed the golden anniversary of its organization and Mr. Silberstein was the recipient at that time of hundreds of letters and telegrams of congratulation from all over the country. And within the same year Covenant lodge, Independent Order of B'nai B'rith, entertained at a golden jubilee banquet and ball in honor of Mr. Silberstein's half century membership in the order. The occasion was the most brilliant ever started by the Jews of Duluth, Superior and northern Minnesota and in a small measure, indicated the esteem with which he was held by the people of his faith everywhere.

Although 74 years of age, Mr. Silberstein had been exceptionally active for a man of his age. Up to a few months ago he was at his desk in the Silberstein & Bondy store daily and busily engaged with the various business duties that fell to his attention. He attended lodge meetings and was often present at public functions. In earlier days he was one of the most active men in Duluth, participating in almost every event of importance in the city. He served on the park board, for many years and for four years, from 1915 to 1919, was a member of the city commission.

Falls in Health.

About three months ago Mr. Silberstein began to fail in health and a visit to the Mayo hospital at Rochester, where he was given personal examination by Dr. William Mayo, failed to help his condition. Because of his advanced age, an operation was prohibitive and shortly after returning to Duluth, where he had appeared to be improving his health again began to fail. He had been confined to his bed for the last month and the end came peacefully, with members of the family at the bedside.

Besides his widow Mr. Silberstein is survived by one son, Edward A. Silberstein, who is associated with the Silberstein & Bondy store and three daughters, Mrs. J. M. Gidding of New York, Mrs. Leonard Traubman of Duluth and Miss Elsie Silberstein of Duluth.

Bernard Silberstein was born at Budapest, Hungary, on March 4, 1848. After finishing grade school and high school, at Vienna he came to America when 18 years of age. Following a short stay at Detroit, he came to Duluth, "only to look around," as he often expressed it but deciding to remain and make this city his future home.

Store Organized.

Mr. Silberstein was 22 years of age when he reached Duluth and started his business career here by selling goods from house to house. A few months of this was followed by the organization of Duluth's first dry goods store by Mr. Silberstein and William Farrell, an uncle of Commissioner J. A. Farrell. It is interesting to note that both Mr. Silberstein and Mr. Farrell were elected members of the city commission at

the same time in April, 1915, while the partnership between the latter's uncle and Mr. Silberstein was started eight years before the present commissioner of public works was born.

Back in those days of '70, Duluth was a small village and the old Silberstein-Farrell store sold every thing imaginable. Shortly after this berstein-Farrell store sold every young merchants were anxious to expand and a Mr. Whitchee joined the organizations. This trio conducted the first big "general store" in this section of the country.

After a few years this partnership was broken up, because of Mr. Silberstein's desire to "spread out" and get into a larger business. As a result he formed the B. Silberstein company, and in 1881 he organized the Silberstein & Bondy company, which is still the firm name. Mr. Bondy died a number of years ago, but the firm name has been retained.

Mr. Silberstein was on the park board for nearly twenty years and to him, it is claimed, is largely due the credit for Duluth's splendid park and boulevard system. With great foresight and optimistic as to the future of Duluth he often advanced the money to the city for the purchase of park property. It was the cash that brought the best deals and in those early days the city had very little money with which to do any high financing. But he took a chance and advanced the money that Duluth might have a park system to be proud of.

Prominent Mason.

Mr. Silberstein was a thirty-third degree Mason and one of the leading men of this fraternity in the northwest. In the earlier days he took an active part in lodge work and was instrumental in the organization of several lodges. His last public appearance was last spring at a weekly dinner of the Scottish Rite, when he participated in the installation of officers in the Lodge of Perfection.

Although 67 years of age at the time of election as city commissioner, Mr. Silberstein was one of the most active men in office and took a prominent part in helping establish the commission form of government, then but two years old. He was given the post of commissioner of public safety, holding this office until the election in 1919, when he refused to run for another term. He also served as president of the commission and often acted as mayor in the absence of Mayor Prince.

Owned City Hall Site.

It is interesting to note at this time that Mr. Silberstein bought the present city hall site at Second avenue East and Superior street for the city, closing the deal for about \$1,800. Previously the city had been doing its business in an old building and an agitation for a new structure had been started when Mr. Silberstein offered to negotiate for the purchase of a site.