

RAYMOND SAPRIEL and MARIE JEANNE DEBUT

07-Oct-2024 – Collated by thomas@helmer.com Please share any additional information and let me have corrections.

Short biography

Raymond SAPRIEL was born on November 4, 1925, in Heliopolis, Egypt. He was the son of Mourad André (Mordekhai) SAPRIEL, who was born on November 29, 1883, in Cairo, Egypt, and Rachel Sapriel, born LAGNADO, who was also born in Cairo, Egypt, on March 4, 1888.

He had four brothers: Benoit (Fils de Mourad), born on February 12, 1920; Charles, born on June 2, 1921; Albert (fils de Mourad), born on June 3, 1923; and André, born on October 23, 1927.

Raymond married Marie Jeanne BEBUT in Rabat, Morocco on 4th October 1955, she was born in Bellerive-Sur-Allier, Allier, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, France on 6th June 1922, daughter of Jean Alphonse DEBUT (1880-1943) and Antoinette Emilie PETIT (1893-1982). She had one sibling (tbc).

They married in Rabat, Morocco on 26th October 1955.

Raymond SAPRIEL passed away at the age of 83 on August 16, 2009, in Brest, Finistère, Bretagne, France. His wife, Marie Jeanne DEBUT, followed him in death a few months later, passing away at the age of 87 on December 10, 2009, also in Brest, Finistère, Bretagne, France.

Historical Context

Raymond Sapriel's birth in Heliopolis, Egypt on November 4, 1925, occurred during a period of relative stability under British colonial rule. His parents, Mourad André (Mordekhai) Sapriel and Rachel Sapriel, née Lagnado, were part of the cosmopolitan fabric of Cairo, which was a melting pot of religions and ethnicities including a significant Jewish community. The interwar years saw Egypt moving towards independence, with increasing nationalist sentiments that would eventually lead to the formal end of the British protectorate in 1936.

The births of Raymond's siblings between 1920 and 1927 coincided with a time when Egypt experienced both economic growth and social change. This era witnessed the rise of new political movements and parties, as well as the gradual emergence of Egypt as a sovereign state. The Sapriel family lived through these transformative times, which also saw the worldwide impact of the Great Depression in the early 1930s.

After primary school Raymond went to the 'Lycée-franco-egyptien' in Heliopolis¹ with his brothers Albert and André. Benoit went to the 'Lycée Français'² in Cairo. Charles went to the 'English Mission College' in Heliopolis³.

As life in Egypt became tougher for Jewish people against the backdrop of post-World War II reconstruction period and upsurge in Arab self-determination in Egypt away from foreign influences, the family Sapriel left Egypt one after the other. Some before and others after the establishment of the modern Egyptian state in 1953 after the revolution of 1952, which led to the abdication of King Farouk and the eventual rise of Gamal Abdel Nasser and followed by the Suez Crisis of 1956.

25th December 2007 Raymond wrote:

I am surprised that André didn't tell you and his daughters our life history from the beginning starting with Egypt and ending where we are at the present time. Probably he thought that the whole thing was with no significant interest to anyone. But if I responded immediately to your request, let's say I was talking to myself to memorise the happy days in the tough moments we are going through at the present.

As you know we were part of a large family, a father and a mother and 5 diabolic male sons. As far as I remember after being born in 1925 in a small city called Heliopolis about 15 miles from Cairo, we all

¹In 1937, a Lycée-franco-égyptien was established in the residential suburb of Héliopolis, Cairo. The curriculum matched the French Bac. See also: Abécassis, Frédéric, 'Les lycées de la Mission laïque française en Egypte (1909-1961) - L'exportation d'un modèle français en Orient et ses contradictions' https://www.persee.fr/doc/inrp_0000-0000_2005_act_28_1_9246

³Lycée Français du Caire (LFC) is the French International School in Cairo.[1] The school is operated by the

²Lycée Français du Caire (LFC) is the French International School in Cairo.[1] The school is operated by the Agency for French Education Abroad: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lycée_Français_du_Caire

³ The English Missionary School was established on April 24, 1936. It was located in Qubba Palace on a 5-acre property bought for 11,000 Sterling pounds. The money was donated by friends from England and Egypt. The name of the school was English Mission College and remained as such until 1956 when the British missionaries handed the school to the Episcopal Church of Egypt: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/As-Salam_College_\(English_Mission_College\),_Cairo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/As-Salam_College_(English_Mission_College),_Cairo)

lived-in an apartment in a red apartment building facing a little kindergarten school and most especially the tracks of the subway leading to the capital of Cairo.

I really can't remember who it was, André or Albert got away and started playing on the tracks, when the metro arrived the conductor stopped his machine and picked the kid and had him sit right next to him while we were conducting his machine to the terminal of Cairo. You can imagine the horrible dramatic moments when my mother couldn't find her missing boy. Well all that ended when the conductor on his return trip left the boy (André or Albert) right where he picked him and hour or so before.

We had some real true friends living on the ground floor; they were a family of Egyptian Muslims called the "Khamis". This family was mainly composed of girls, and one of them in particular called Fardos always kept André while my mother was away on a visit to my grandmother who lived a few miles away. Well Fardos had a liking for André that was a child at that time, I can say he was almost raised by that woman. When we moved from the house that family Khamis followed us and rented an apartment on the first floor.

Talking about more serious matters, that most people try to hide these days, life at that time was really tough for everyone. When someone we said had a good paying job, he wasn't making more that £ 7,00 a month. Of course to give an idea of the cost of living, I used to have a suit made to measure by a real good tailor with the best British material and two pairs of trousers was less than £1,00 that is in our actual money: 1,20 . We had three fittings on top of that.

Schools were not free as they are nowadays, my father was a "FREE LANCE" REAL ESTATE AGENT or I should call it middleman between rich Egyptian Landowners selling their properties. My father managed to get both parties together to conclude the deal. When the deal was made my father was the first person to be eliminated to end up without a penny of commission out of the deal. But he kept insisting to hold that profession that was nothing but frustration to him and all of us. I have to say that he had one real hell of a responsibility, paying school fees and feeding an army of hungry kids was a real ordeal, plus paying the rent of that apartment where we had to find a quick solution.

We moved to another apartment in a building owned by uncle Joseph. It was a 3 bedroom, living dining room and a very large entrance salon on the 4th floor, without elevator. In this apartment I must say that we have spent the best part of our lives in Heliopolis. My father still kept his useless job, and we were all anxious to go to the market for jobs.

QUESTION: Was this the time when their furniture was sold at auction:

10/11 Janvier 1934.

Journal des Tribunaux Mixtes.

Date: Mercredi 24 Janvier 1934, à 10 h. a.m.

Lieu: au Caire, 18, rue Cheikh Abdalla (kism Abdine).

A la requête de la Socony Vacuum Corporation, venant aux droits et actions de la Vacuum Oil Cy.

Contre Soliman Fawzi, propriétaire de la revue « Al Kachkoul », demeurant au Caire, 18 rue Cheikh Abdalla (Abdine).

En vertu d'un procès-verbal de saisie-exécution du 5 Octobre 1933.

Objet de la vente: 1 grande machine (couteau) pour couper le papier, marque H. A. Heddine, Wien XX2.

Le Caire, le 10 Janvier 1934.

Pour la poursuivante,
Malatesta et Schemeil,
Avocats.

778-C-448.

Date: Samedi 27 Janvier 1934, à 10 heures du matin.

Lieu: au Caire, 66, rue Ibrahim Pacha.

A la requête du Sieur Albert Hassoun.

Contre le Dr Hussein Ezzat.

En vertu d'un jugement en date du 30 Novembre 1933 rendu par la Chambre Sommaire du Tribunal Mixte du Caire exécuté par un procès-verbal de saisie en date du 4 Janvier 1934.

Objet de la vente: bureau, bibliothèque, canapé, tapis, fauteuils, armoires;

Date: Samedi 27 Janvier 1934, à 10 h. a.m.

Lieu: au Caire, 5, rue Manzaret El Lokla (Faggala).

A la requête de la Raison Sociale Pallacci, Haym & Co.

Au préjudice du Sieur Barsoum El Alfi.

En vertu d'un procès-verbal de saisie du 27 Décembre 1933.

Objet de la vente: canapé, chaises, portemanteau, table, gramophone, glacière, lustre, armoire, etc.

Pour la poursuivante,
M. Sednaoui et C. Bacos,

763-C-433

Avocats à la Cour.

Date: Lundi 29 Janvier 1934, à 9 heures du matin.

Lieu: à Héliopolis, 19, rue Tewfik.

A la requête de la Raison Sociale Pallacci, Haym & Co.

Au préjudice de:

1.) Le Sieur Mourad **Sapriel**.

2.) La Dame Mourad **Sapriel**.

En vertu d'un procès-verbal de saisie du 8 Octobre 1930.

Objet de la vente: canapés, fauteuils, chaises, portemanteau, armoire, etc.

Pour la poursuivante,
M. Sednaoui et C. Bacos,

762-C-432

Avocats à la Cour.

Then came the war, none of us luckily had to be drafted, oh yes except André, I remember seeing him wearing a British army uniform, honestly, I can't remember what he was doing. He might tell you and tell me as well what in the world was he in a uniform for????

OBSERVATION: Around end 1948 André was drafted in the French army whilst in Egypt and assigned to the 141st battalion of Alpine Infantry two months late. He joined the military service in Aubagne (near Marseillance), Bouches-du-Rhône, France for a period of 10 months. He left military service two months early, ranked Private. He was happy to be discharged as a Private to ensure not to be recalled again. He did like the experience and being in France. He kept good memories of the friends he made in that time.

This may be the photo Raymond referred to with André. On verso is written: "Just a goddamned G.I. Andre Camp la Demande Le 10 Avril 1949".



Then comes Albert, he was my favorite brother, he and I were both very close, where I will tell you a little funny story that I can never forget.

I located a job, but it was far from home, it was at the Suez Canal Zone. But I came home every fortnight. One day I went to my tailor Maurice and have him cut me a suit. I was promised to have the suit ready on a specific day, where I had a hot date. Here comes the day when I returned. The first person I went to see was Maurice my tailor. Once over there the man told me that my brother Albert picked the suit. I said that's real nice of him and rushed back to the house and started looking for my suit and nothing was there. My date was burning hot and I as well. So I started running looking for Albert, he used to stay at a cafe called Amphitryon, and what do I see: Albert all dressed up with my bloody suit! He started telling me that he was only trying to soften the suit for me. Just the king of England who had his butler wear his new suits to make them look soft.

Albert Sapriel Saul Laniado in Cairo, Egypt on 12th July 12, 1945.



The other time where Albert was flirting with a British ATS (sic. Auxiliary Territorial Service) girl making her believe he was a US fellow. One day I hear the door ring and there was a girl in a uniform with sign of her regiment "Palestine" asking me if Al was here? I said who's Al? I said you mean Albert; she said yes. Albert sleeping inside, I went to tell him there was a girl called Myra asking for him. He told me to tell her I am not here, tell I don't live here anymore; tell her anything, all that ended with a big laugh.

Memorising all those things, I honestly believe that we were the happiest people on earth, we had no money but we, the five of us, were the most elegant and well-dressed kids in the block, our apartment was beautifully sunny and well furnished. I would give everything I have and will have now for just to live one month of that old time life, with my mother and father and my other four brothers.

We lived in that apartment for several years until Benoit who was the first to leave the country and go to the USA where my Uncle Sam sponsored him. It was very difficult to immigrate in America at that time. Then followed Albert and André. We stayed in Egypt that is my mother and father Charles and myself until 1952 when things were turning sour in Egypt.

Albert was living in Paris, but he did get a contract with Coca Cola Company to take care of Sales in Port Lyautey Morocco. He wrote to us saying that life in Morocco was very similar to Egypt and that we should come over there, so we did. As soon as we arrived my mother was the unhappiest woman on earth missing her Egypt. Moroccans spoke Arabic of course, but not at all the same Arabic they spoke in Egypt. She died 2 years after in 1954. That was the beginning of a new separate life for every one of us. I will certainly have to go back to our lives in Egypt maybe you can understand the turmoil we went through in my next mail, if you want.

MOROCCO


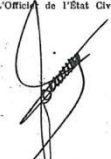
Telling you the story of our 55 years of life together could be great subject for a book. I met Marie Jeanne on the beach in Morocco. In 1952 I was on the beach with some Americans friends and one of them had a pin in his right foot. So I took the fellow to the emergency hut. And guess who was running the "service secour" no one else but Marie Jeanne. She managed to remove that pin from my friend's foot, but she got stuck with another pin ME we haven't left each other ever since.



Marie Jeanne and Raymond Sapriel with her car the Chevrolet and on Témara beach in Rabat.

I was working on a US Air Force Base in Rabat Morocco as assistant manager of a large BX Base Exchange or PX-department store.⁴ We got married in 1955 and as Marie Jeanne was the daughter of a large ranch owner, she insisted that I quit my job and take care of that farm.

⁴ BX Base Exchange and Post Exchange (PX) - Exchanges are a type of retail store found on United States military installations worldwide. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Base_exchange

| BUREAU DE L'ETAT CIVIL D e RABAT | |
|--|---|
| Région d e RABAT (Maroc) | |
| Année I 9 5 5 le vingt-six Octobre mille neuf cent cinquante cinq- | |
| Acte n° 456 | MARIAGE |
| ÉPOUX | ÉPOUSE |
| Raymond, SAPIREL - | Marie, Jeanne, DEBUT - |
| Né le 4 NOVEMBRE 1925 à HELIOPOLIS Le Caire | Née le 6 JUIN 1922 à BELLERIVE-sur-ALLIER |
| Département : (Egypte) | Département : (Allier) |
| Profession : Directeur Commercial | Profession : -sans- |
| Domicilié à RABAT (Maroc) | Domiciliée à RABAT (Maroc) |
| Fils de Mourad SAPIREL - | Fille de Alphonse, DEBUT - |
| Né à | Né à |
| Et de Rachel LAGNADO - | Et de Antoinette, Emilie, PETIT - |
| Née à | Née à |
| Contrat de mariage passé le 4 OCTOBRE 1955 | |
| par-devant M ^e Maurice HENRION, Notaire à RABAT | |
| Détourné le 26 OCTOBRE 1955 | |
| Timbre du Bureau de l'Etat Civil, | |
|  | |
| L'Officier de l'Etat Civil, délégué  Signé : J. GARCIA | |

We had 200 hectares of Citrus trees and 200 other hectares for various crops, and we also had a piece of land about 50 hectares of Geranium Rosa that we distilled twice a year to extract the oil that was used as a base for all soap, perfumes, and even tobacco.

Our orange crop was sold once a year around August when the orange were as small as green marbles. The buyer had to hire his watch guards, and we had to irrigate and treat the trees with all the chemicals against diseases and pests. The buyer picked his oranges, the Navels first around the month of November, sometimes earlier when the market in Europe was high. The oranges were still green and hard as stones, but there was a way of making them turn orange overnight, it was simple by stacking 20 tons in crates and cover them with a canvas, and light up carbon among the crates, I don't really know what carbon is called in English but that was used in old times to light up a place instead of electricity.

We had 24737 fully grown trees, one third of Navel one third-* or sanguine, that is the blooded pulp, and the rest on Valenciate, that variety is ready for consumption around May and June. It happened sometimes that we had the hanging oranges and the new crop blossom at the same time, it is really too bad I can't explain to you how wonderful the whole area 50 to 70 km's smelled the orange blossom.

Enough talking about oranges, I worked for about a year on that ranch but felt it was not my profession. I managed to get my old job back on a base that was only 20 kilometres from our ranch and Marie Jeanne's brother hired as a caretaker. We managed to live like so for several years, while the Moroccans were asking for their independence, the French authorities gave us, in case of real troubles, hand grenades and rifles in case of an attack. We never had any use for that armoury until Morocco finally gained their independence.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Raymond and Marie Jeanne travelled to New York, United States on 10th August 1956.

Let me tell you Thomas, we never had it so good with the Moroccan authorities and Gendarmerie and the police, they were great? much better than the French colonial gendarmes. We stayed in harmony and peace until 1974 when the French and Moroccan government decided to repossess all farms and agriculture properties belonging to foreigners. We had a French and Moroccan commission that came on the farm to take an inventory and give us an estimate. They came up with a figure of 6 million francs in 1974 that was

around 2 million dollars at that time. We turned everything to the new authorities and left for France to wait for payments. BUT there was a wise minister who claimed that France will not distribute millions just like that, he managed to establish a ceiling of 2 million francs. But that wasn't all, He established a time-table of payment of 10 years, for about 10.000 francs every year and the balance at the end of the 10 years. 10.000 francs was equivalent to \$2.500,00.

After 3 years of that Chirac decided to liquidate that debt and paid us off.

FRANCE

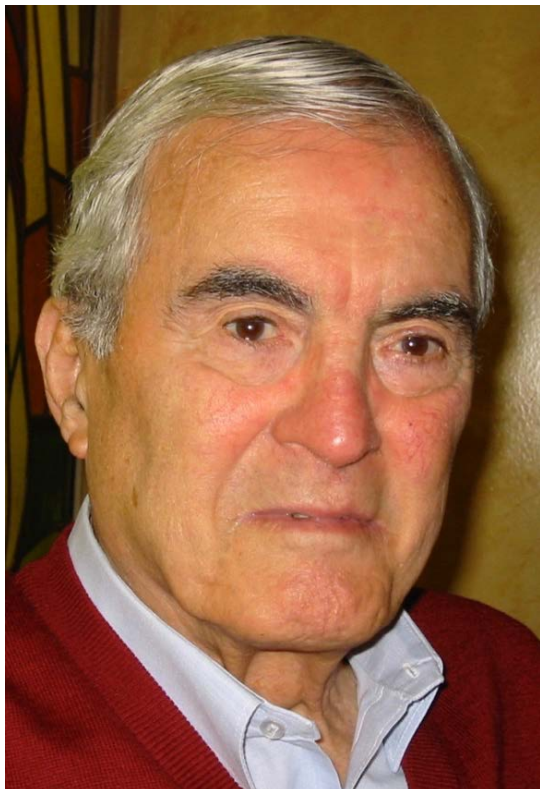
In the meantime I was without a job living in Vichy at the age of 52, I was really in a bad shape until I did find a job at the US Embassy. After a year on that job I fell sick and had to have an open-heart surgery on the 10 of February 1977.

I will be glad to tell a lot more, if that interest you in my next mail.

19 September 2003 AMSTELVEEN Marie Jeanne, André, Kim and Raymond SAPRIEL



I remember the great time Marie Jeanne and I had when we came for your wedding, it was wonderful.



Unfortunately things have changed so drastically, like my wife cannot move around as easy as she used to. I have been married for over 55 years and we had some really wonderful years together.

I had some serious cardiac problems in 1977 where I had to be operated of a heart surgery.

My wife was right beside me at all times, I think it is perfectly normal and it's my duty to be next to her when she is need of a helping hand.

Additional information:

Raymond took care of Marie Jeanne in their flat in Paris for a long time with little to no external support. When we visited them, he had even put on some make-up for her to meet us as he knew how important that was for her.

Marie Jeanne's health turned for the worse and needed much more support. She was relocated to a care home nearer to family relatives in Brest, Finistère, Bretagne, France.

In this period, Raymond got mugged in a carpark near their flat in Paris and lost the photo of Marie Jeanne he kept in there for as long as he could remember. Loosing that photo really hurt him more than the blows he received in the mugging.

Raymond passed away in Brest, Finistère, Bretagne, France on 16th August 2009 and was buried there.

Marie Jeanne passed away in Brest on 10th December 2009 and was buried in the cemetery in Vichy where her parents were also buried.



ÉTAT CIVIL

ACTE DE DECES - COPIE INTEGRALE

N° C 001610 / 2009.

Le seize août deux mille neuf à six heures est décédé à Brest (Finistère), boulevard Tanguy Prigent, Raymond SAPRIEL, domicilié à Brest, 1, rue Théodanis Menot, né à Héliopolis (Egypte) le 4 novembre 1925, retraité, fils de Mourad SAPRIEL et de Rachel LAUMATO, décédés, époux de Marie, Jeanne DEBUT. Dressé le 17 août 2009 à 11 heures 55 minutes sur la déclaration de Mireille CREISMAS épouse TOULLEC, 56 ans, directrice adjointe à Brest, 2, avenue Foch, qui, lecture faite et invitée à lire l'acte, a signé avec Nous, Jacqueline MARGORN épouse LE VAILLANT, agent territorial à la mairie de Brest, Officier de l'Etat Civil par délégation :

Pour copie conforme
Brest le 17 août 2009
L'Officier de l'Etat Civil délégué :



J. LE VAILLANT
Agent territorial



ÉTAT CIVIL

ACTE DE DECES - COPIE INTEGRALE

N° C 002341 / 2009.

Le dix décembre deux mille neuf à deux heures trente minutes est décédée en son domicile à Brest (Finistère), rue Docteur Roux, Marie, Jeanne DEBUT, née à Bellerive-sur-Allier (Allier) le 4 juin 1922, retraitée, fille de Alphonse DEBUT, et de Antoinette, Emilie PETIT, décédés, veuve de Raymond SAPRIEL. Dressé le 10 décembre 2009 à 15 heures 10 minutes sur la déclaration de Bernard SALAMON, 51 ans, opérateur funéraire à Brest, 345, zone du Vern, qui, lecture faite et invité à lire l'acte, a signé avec Nous, Jacqueline MARGORN épouse LE VAILLANT, agent territorial à la mairie de Brest, Officier de l'Etat Civil par délégation :

Pour copie conforme
Brest le 10 décembre 2009
L'Officier de l'Etat Civil délégué :



J. LE VAILLANT
Agent territorial