

The DuVal Family News

for the descendants of Daniel DuVal

Volume VI, No.1

Spring 2004

Immortalized in Fiction: William Pope DuVal, Prominent Citizen and Raconteur

By Deana Snow

Each and every one of us loves a good story, and we all have a favorite family story. What is yours? Is it one about someone in your family, or a certain book that was read to you, little by little, each night? Have you searched for a copy of this story from a living relative or at an antique or bookstore, because it was lost or your family had only one copy? Did you know that we have an ancestor who was considered a great storyteller?

He was William Pope DuVal (1784-1854), frontiersman, lawyer, U.S. Congressman, military officer, federal judge and Governor. He organized and commanded a group of soldiers called the Yellow Jackets during the War of 1812, represented Kentucky in Congress and became the federal judge and Governor of the Florida Territory (1822-34) under Presidents Monroe, Adams and Jackson. His varied career gave him much to draw upon in becoming well known as a storyteller. The great American essayist and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote in his notebook in 1827, "Governor DuVal is the button on which all things are hung." According to Lucius Little's book *The Life and Times of Ben Hardin*, "DuVal was a fascinating and fluent talker. One informant relates that whenever he stopped on the street or elsewhere, a crowd gathered to listen."

William did not write his stories down, but some survive to this day, having been recorded by Washington Irving, one of the most popular writers of his time. Irving (1783-1859) was a close friend of Gov. Charles Anderson Wickliffe of Kentucky, a very good friend of William DuVal. According to the Wickliffe family, this friendship resulted in Gov. Wickliffe's giving the details of William's life to Irving and arranging for them to meet. If this is correct, it seems that William went to Philadelphia in 1833 and met Irving personally. It has been a DuVal family tradition that the two met on a stagecoach ride. Although accounts vary on how they met, we find that Washington Irving took notes during this meeting in a manuscript called "Notes of Conversations with William P. DuVal the Original of Ralph Ringwood."

William's son, John Crittenden DuVal, known as the first Texas man of letters and a great storyteller in his own right, also recorded his father's stories, as did William's granddaughter, Mrs. T. P. O'Connor, in her book *My Beloved South*. Although in each account the storyline is the same, Irving, John C. DuVal and Mrs. O'Connor (née Betty Paschal) each tell of William's early experiences in distinctly different details.

Irving's sketch, titled "The Early Experiences of Ralph Ringwood," was first published in 1845 in *The Knickerbocker Sketch-Book* (Burgess Stringer & Co.; New York) under the pseudonym of Geoffrey Crayon. Evidently not wanting to reveal DuVal's identity while he was still living, Irving refers to him only as "... the worthy original ... now living and flourishing in honorable station."

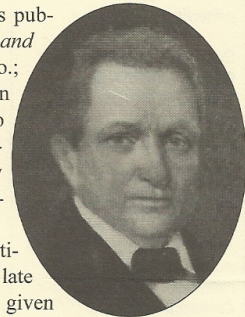
Ten years later the sketch was published again, in *Wolfert's Roost and Other Papers* (G. P. Putman & Co.; New York). William had died on March 19, 1854, on a trip to Washington, D.C., and at the beginning of the 1855 edition, "Geoffrey Crayon" makes an important footnote:

"Ralph Ringwood, though a fictitious name, is a real personage—the late Governor DuVal of Florida. I have given some anecdotes of his early and eccentric career in, as nearly as I can recollect, the very words in which he related them. They certainly afford strong temptations to the embellishments of fiction; but I thought them so strikingly characteristic of the individual, and of the scenes and society into which his peculiar humors carried him, that I preferred giving them in their original simplicity. —G.C."

One part of the Ralph Ringwood (William DuVal) story is the famous kiss in Bardstown:

"I had taken my breakfast, and was waiting for my horse, when, in pacing up and down the piazza, I saw a young girl seated near a window, evidently a visitor. She was very pretty; with auburn hair and blue eyes, and was dressed in white. I had seen nothing of the kind since I had left Richmond; and at that time I was too much of a boy to be much struck by female charms. She was so delicate and dainty-looking, so different from the hale, buxom, brown girls of the woods; and then her white dress!—it was perfectly dazzling! Never was poor youth more taken by surprise, and suddenly bewitched. My heart yearned to know her; but how was I to accost her? I had grown wild in the woods, and had none of the habitudes of polite life. Had she been like Peggy Pugh or Sally Pigman, or any other of my leathern-dressed belles of the Pigeon Roost, I should have approached her without dread; nay, had she been as fair as Schultz's daughters, with their looking-glass lockets, I should not have hesitated; but that white dress, and those auburn ringlets, and blue eyes, and delicate looks, quite daunted, while they fascinated me. I don't know what put it into my head, but I thought, all at once, that I

(story continues on page 3)



William Pope DuVal

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Contributors: Deana Snow (S), Pat Koenig, Joseph Hays, Molly O'Leary (S), Gina Thompson. Special thanks to Nancy Blair Norman (B) for proofreading.

DuVal Book: Update on the Update

Hello, DuVal Cousins,

The deadline has come and past for getting information into the revised DuVal family-history book, and I continue to get new information on a sporadic basis. I have received enough data since the Dec. 31 deadline to consider postponing the next stage of compiling the book. I am behind in entering information into the computer program that will ultimately be used to generate the book before the editing process.

As I am running behind, so is everyone else. I have gotten in the last month several requests to submit more information. I can say everything so far received will be included in the book, and I will take anything you may wish to send if you will let me know you intend to do so. Call me (270-563-9524) or drop me a line by e-mail (allenhurst@premier.net), and I will see that your information is included.

What really is needed at this time is more personal information. A sentence or two on individual accomplishments, education, work, religious and civic affiliations will make much more enjoyable reading. Pictures of a formal nature are preferred. We do not have nearly as many as I would like to see when the book is published.

—Joseph Stephen Hays

IN MEMORIAM

BOBBY DEAN SNOW (S) of Fort Worth, Texas, father of DFA member Deana Snow, died on Nov. 26, 2003, at the age of 69. Mr. Snow was born in Breckenridge, Texas. He served in the National Guard and on board the USS *Southerland* during the Korean War. Mr. Snow later worked for the Fort Worth & Denver Railroad for 14 years. He started a business called Snack Boy Vending in the Fort Worth area and was a partner in another vending company until he retired.

In addition to Deana, Mr. Snow is survived by Fay Ellen Nahm Snow, his wife of 48 years; and his son and daughter-in-law, Edward and Renee Snow, and their sons Brian and Gary.

ESTHER HAMILTON MONTGOMERY, 87, of Gilmer, Texas, died on Dec. 1, 2003. Born in Morringsport, La., she was a descendant of Samuel DuVal and Deana Snow's great-aunt.

Mrs. Montgomery is survived by a son, H. Clay Montgomery; three daughters, Emma Lou Mayers, Esther Charlene Hart and DFA member Peggy Ann Holder; two brothers; 13 grandchildren; and 27 great-grandchildren.

DFA Financial Report

DFA treasurer Pat Koenig submitted the following financial statement for calendar year 2003. If you have questions about the information, please direct them to Pat or to DFA president Judy Hamby.

Income

Dues Paid	\$1,713.00
Application Fee	30.00
Miscellaneous Income	1.00
2003 Friday Luncheon	1,120.00
2003 Friday Bus Tour	1,139.00
2003 Saturday Tour	1,579.00
2003 Saturday Tour w/o Bus	196.00
2003 Hargrove Reception	30.00
2003 Friday Tour w/o Bus	70.00
2003 Magnolia Grange Tour	42.00
2003 Benjamin Pottery Shards	384.00
2003 Tuckahoe Tour	8.00
2003 Bus	4.00
Coat of Arms	53.00
Cookbook	72.00
Registration Fee	10.00
Donations	125.00
Interest Earned	9.03
Total Income	\$6,585.03

Gross Profit \$6,585.03

Expenses

Family Item Purchased	\$10.00
2003 Saturday River Cruise	1,260.50
2003 Omni Equipment Rental	156.69
2003 Omni Luncheon	702.72
2003 Friday Tuckahoe Tour	192.50
2003 Magnolia Grange Tour	30.00
2003 Reunion Postage	89.03
2003 Hargrove Reception	598.40
2003 Bus Rental	1,240.00
Service Charge	16.00
DFA Library Books	63.00
Corporate State Fee	25.00
Newsletter	1,139.41
Bank Charge	2.00
Total Expenses	\$5,525.25

Operating Profit \$1,059.78

Other Income

Interest Income	\$5.75
Total Other Income	\$5.75

Net Profit / (Loss) \$1,065.53

Immortalized (continued from page 1) would kiss her! It would take a long acquaintance to arrive at such a boon, but I might seize upon it by sheer robbery. Nobody knew me here. I would just step in, snatch a kiss, mount my horse, and ride off. She would not be the worse for it; and that kiss—oh! I should die if I did not get it! I gave no time for the thought to cool, but entered the house, and



Washington Irving

stepped lightly into the room. She was seated with her back to the door, looking out at the window, and did not hear my approach. I tapped her chair, and as she turned and looked up, I snatched as sweet a kiss as ever was stolen, and vanished in a twinkling. The next moment I was on horseback, galloping homeward; my very ears tingling at what I had done.”

The fair lady he saw in the window was none other than Nancy Hynes, the daughter of Andrew and Elizabeth Worford Hynes, whom DuVal married on Oct. 3, 1804, in Bardstown, Nelson County, Ky.

Another interesting twist to this tale involves James Kirke Paulding, Washington Irving’s brother-in-law. For a contest, Paulding wrote a sketch called *The Lion in the West* in 1830, and it later became a play. It has been said that William was the model for the main character, Nimrod Wildfire, although Paulding would never confirm this. Others have argued that the play was the beginning of the character Davy Crockett, fashioned after David Crockett, frontiersman, member of Congress and defender of the Alamo. The similarities in William and David’s careers may have contributed to the confusion.

Other Irving sketches inspired by William DuVal were *The Origin of the White, the Red, and the Black Men* and *The Conspiracy of Neamathla*. In the

Henry E. Huntington Library in San Marino, Calif., there is a copy of a manuscript written by Irving: a fourth sketch, never published, about William, telling of his experiences in the War of 1812.

In addition to the sketches related by Irving, there were others who recorded the stories of William DuVal. Ellen Call Long (daughter of Gov. Richard Keith Long) tells in her manuscript *Sketches of Well-Known Floridians* how William and Prince Achilles Murat, Napoleon’s nephew, often shared dinner and a bottle. On one occasion William was invited to a “state dinner” at Prince Murat’s plantation. William, having ridden his horse 16 miles, was very hungry after the journey. He was seated at a grand table of silver and gold plate with three covered dishes.

The Prince opened one of these dishes to reveal a very large owl that had been baked with its head on! The Prince said, “Let me help you, Governair, to a piece of ze fowl. What part you will take, eh?” “Any part,” William replied, “except the head—I don’t fancy the stony stare of those big eyes.” The Prince tried to serve William the leg, but it was too tough and would not come off. The Prince said apologetically, “He is not quite ripe, bote in a few days ze gout and den hees leg come quick.” Next he served William some fried “frog stools” (toadstools) that bounced off William’s plate each time he tried to impale one with a fork. Once in his mouth it began to swell, until he found it impossible to chew or spit out. He used his finger to pry it from his mouth, “from which it flew like a wad out of a pop gun,” sticking to the far wall of the room. The last dish was revealed as being the “overbits” and “undercrops” of cattle and hogs’ ears, which William ate, as he was so hungry!

So the next time you are looking for a family story for a reunion or to read at the campfire on your next camping trip, you have not far to go to reach for one. Our family has some very interesting legends to pass on to future generations!

Deana Snow also sent a poem by William Pope DuVal, which appears in the next column.

To Miss Lizzie Brown

May 11, 1839

*Thy eye is not of chilling blue
That minds one of the cold deep sea,
But of a bright yet darker hue,
Burning with love and constancy.*

*The blue eye like the cold moon beams
May sooth my heart, but ne'er can melt it,
But thine like lightning brightly gleams,
And truly, I can swear I felt it.*

*'Tis said the blue eye speaks of love,
And that it beams with tenderness,
Making us gentle as the dove,
With feelings of pure happiness.*

*But I like best the darkest glance,
Burning bright neath silken lashes,
Darting its light like a warrior's lance
That fiercely through the battle flashes.*

*When first I felt the magic power
Of thy dark eye that meets the soul,
E'en then I dreamed in lady's bower,
I loved a heart that was not cold.*

*But what a change, when thy soft glance,
Fell on a heart that only dreamed,
And woke it from a lifeless trance,
To feel a dark eye brighter beam.*

(Signed)

William P. Duval

Mrs. William S. Manning of Jacksonville, Fla., presented the poem in a typewritten version she identified as a copy of a poem “written by William P. Duval, Territorial Governor of Florida, to Miss Lizzie Brown (afterwards Mrs. Samuel James Douglas). Mrs. Douglas was the daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Simpson Brown. Thomas Brown was the second Governor of the State of Florida, 1849-1853. Copied from the original which is written in his own hand.” Mrs. Manning was Mrs. Douglas’



Sunshine Corner

By Molly Dunscombe O’Leary

MARRIED: **Christiana Courtney Heilman**, daughter of Lynne DuVal Heilman (B) and Richard Lloyd Heilman of Pinehurst, N.C., to **Patrick Paul Mastandrea**, son of Pat P. and Freddy Mastandrea of Pinehurst, on Oct. 18, 2003, at the Village Chapel in Pinehurst.

Library Expands, Board to Meet

Thanks to the generous loan of a book by Jim Adams (S) of Cotuit, Mass., the DFA library has grown. The new volume is *Mount Comfort Plantation* by Richard Guild.

The library is in the keeping of DFA president Judy Hamby, but all the books are available for DFA members to borrow for up to a month. The books are:

The DuVal Family of Virginia, 1701, Bessie Berry Grabowskii

DuVals of Kentucky from Virginia, Margaret Buchanan
Adventurers of Purse and Person, Virginia 1607-1624/25, Virginia Meyer and John Dorman, eds.; 3rd edition, 1987

Huguenot Emigration to America, Charles W. Baird

Huguenot Emigration to Virginia, R. A. Brock

Burke's American Families with British Ancestry: The Lineage of 1,600 Families of British Origin Now Resident of the United States of America, Burke's Peerage, reprinted from 16th edition, 1939

John C. DuVal, First Man of Letters, J. Frank Dobie

Early Times in Texas, or The Adventures of Jack Dobell, John C. DuVal

Richmond During the Revolution, 1775-83, Harold E. Greer, Jr. and Harry M. Ward

Richmond in By-Gone Days, Samuel Mordecai

The First Seventeen Years, Virginia 1607-1625, Charles E. Hatch, Jr.

Civilizers: The DuVals of Texas from Virginia Through

Kentucky and Florida, Roy L. Swift

Huguenots in Britain and Their French Background, 1550-1800, Irene Scouloudi, ed.

The association will pay postage to send a book to a borrower; the borrower is asked to pay return postage. If you'd like to take advantage of this collection to further your research into our family history, please contact Judy Hamby by telephone (828-754-7363) or e-mail (dhamby@twave.net).

Here are some other DFA news items and reminders:

> The DFA board will meet in Asheville, N.C., in June, and a major item on the agenda will be the Richmond reunion in 2005. Your input is needed to make it a success! Please contact Judy Hamby or Katherine Lewis with your ideas.

> Assistance is urgently needed to maintain and update the DFA website. If you can help, please get in touch with Judy Hamby.

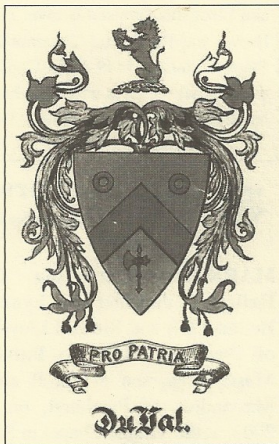
> Do you buy books from Amazon.com? If you enter Amazon via the link on the DFA website (www.duvalfamilyassociation.com), the DFA will receive 5% of all order totals. A small amount, perhaps, but it helps pay postage!

> Joseph Hays is working with the Tennessee Historical Commission to have Mockingbird Hill, a house built circa 1840 by Dr. James Clay DuVal, added to the National Register of Historic Places. A full report will appear in a future newsletter.

Cousins Clue Chart

When DFA members are mentioned in the *DuVal Family News*, their line of descent from the sons of Daniel DuVal, French Huguenot, is indicated after their names as follows: W=William; D=Daniel; B=Benjamin; S=Samuel

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TO:

ERRATUM, page 3, column 3:

Because of a printing error, the last word in the "To Miss Lizzie Brown" box was dropped. Mrs Manning was Mrs. Douglas' granddaughter.