

# The DuVal Family News

for the descendants of Daniel DuVal

Volume X, No. 2

Fall 2008

## The DuVal(I) Correspondence Continues, and Bessie Gets the Very Last Emphatic Word

Octo: 21, 1930

*The last issue of The DuVal Family News featured an exchange of letters between Bessie Berry Grabowskii, author of The DuVal Family of Virginia, 1701, and Dr. Wirt Adams Duvall, a founder of the Society of Mareen Duvall Descendants. They disagreed on many things, but primarily whether one or two immigrants with the name of DuVal or Duvall had established families on these shores in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Both letters below were written by Mrs. Grabowskii, one before and one after she had received Dr. Duvall's response to her first letter (note her emphatic handwritten greeting on the second letter). Regrettably, we have been unable to locate a picture of Dr. Duvall.*

Octo: 20, 1930

Dr. W.A. Duvall  
Baltimore, Md.

Dear Dr. Duvall!

Since writing you I have had records sent me of the Keiths and Cashes, with the DuVals, of Ky. From the names they seem to be the children of Claiborne DuVal, the uncle of Govenor [sic] DuVal, and son of Samuel DuVal of Richmond, and his wife Lucy Claiborne, who preceded Govenor [sic] DuVal in going to Kentucky, and settled about where these folks are.

I am writing you, before putting them in my records, to ask if you can tell me definitely whether they are from the Maryland branch, or our lines? There appears the name Claiborn [sic] Keith and Claiborne Cash, and both these men's fathers married DuVals, as my attention has been called to them, and the Claibornes are in our Virginia family, I conclude they are Claiborne DuVal's family, but I have no actual proof of it, as I do not know where to write any of them that may be living, to find out. I will be very grateful if you will help me in this. Thank you.

Yours very truly,  
(signed) Bessie Berry Grabowskii

Bessie (DuVal) Berry Grabowskii.

The record speaks of their renting lands from their cousin Gov: DuVal, and of course Claiborne DuVal's children would be his cousins. Do you think I am right, or do you know I am wrong?

Dr. W.A. Duvall!

*Dear Sir!*

I have your letter of the 17, and I must say it was very illuminating.

Since you are so well satisfied with your references for your records, and I am equally as well satisfied with mine, and since my book is in the printing there will be no changes, I see no reason for my giving my references, save only to say I not only have Parish registers and Court Records, but certified letters from both John Pope and William Pope DuVal and also their father, Major William giving their lineage from Daniel DuVal.

These letters were left to their sons, who certify to their authenticity, to give them their lineal descent. I would think a man would know his own father and grandfather, wouldn't you? Besides I have letters from their granddaughters, still living. I think this is enough. [handwritten:] & I take their word for it.

We feel very proud that you have really heard there was a Daniel DuVal who came to Virginia, however you are misinformed if you think that he went to Manakintowne—Not a list even William Byrd's shows him and the King William Parish Register (which was Manakintowne) does not even show a DuVal—so that is wrong.

Beg to say that the Samuel DuVal I have been speaking of was born in Gloucester County, Va., went then to King William Co., and the records show that Samuel DuVal from King William bought lands at Richmond, Va. He did not have any twin at all, nor even a brother named Mareen. He had no son named John Pierce, which you would also have seen if you had read the will of our Samuel DuVal. I would like also to say that we have no such names as Pierce, Kesia, Cornelius [sic], Gabriel, nor Mareen DuVals in our entire records, so we aren't the same.

As to Daniel DuVal's descendants, you may be surprised to learn then that they are by the hundreds. They are in every County in Va, almost and in ten other States, traced and head from—and they also know their lineage.

Tom Deitrick certainly told me that he had been asked to join your Society and that he understood from them that Mareen DuVal was the ancestor of the DuVals of America. Not knowing his full line back to Daniel, though he does know he is descended from Daniel DuVal, [handwritten addition:] in spite of not having told you, he could not very well give it to you, and I do not think he will know it until he reads the Va Book so soon to be out.

Mrs. Wormeley also wrote me that she did not know very much about her DuVal family since she left Va—and that since

(continued on page 2)

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Dedicated to bringing together the descendants of Daniel DuVal, French Huguenot

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**Letters** (continued)

the Maryland DuVals "Claimed that Mareen was the ancestor of the DuVals of America" that she thought maybe it was all the same and joined. I had all her line up to her own immediate family of children, and I wrote her for them. She is another who I do not think will know their full line, having never looked for it, until she reads it in the Virginia book. However that may be, her sisters do know and Mr. Carter Wormeley of Richmond who was also approached about joining, knew he did not descend from Mareen DuVal and declined.



**Bessie Berry Grabowskii**

DUVAL FAMILY OF VIRGINIA, 1701

This however is not to continue a controversy which my letter was not intended to start. But I still believe that you have the two Samuels mixed, and also their records. The last I heard of a Maryland DuVal coming to Va, and starting lines, it was this Mareen, as you assume twin brother to Samuel, this is reported by Stella Picket Hardy, in Southern Colonial Families, as your Justice Gabriel DuVal having said it had been told him that this was so, by a descendant of Gov: DuVal.

Mrs. ----- Dorsey Richardson of, I believe, Baltimore also wrote that Mareen DuVal was the ancestor of the DuVals of America—and it also has appeared in several other places in print.

You ask me where I found the DuVal who went to Philadelphia.

Look in the Abridged Compendium of American Genealogy and you will see that Samuel Wagner (giving dates) married Emily Obrie, da of James S. DuVal, direct from France to Philadelphia, also giving dates—and their issue was John, Sarah, Samuel, and Daniel—Our family names all the way through, yet even we do not claim all in America. This certainly is proof enough that three DuVals came to America.

I am sorry you have taken exception at my letter, it certainly meant no insinuations. I really believed you had just mistaken records, and I am utterly surprised at your holding to your claims. I still believe that you have the men mixed—but whether or not, I only wrote as one Genealogist to another in perfect good faith, as I had seen these things published and knew by the certified letters of the men themselves, that they

were not descendants of Mareen DuVal, but of Daniel of Va. I do not deal in insinuations, and if I had dreamed it necessary, I would have come right out with what I thought. I must say though that I would never have written you at all, had my cousin not spoken of some of these things to Professor [sic] DuVal, and he advised my writing you, as he believed, as I did, that you would appreciate it.

Our records, like your own have been in the collecting for thirty or more years, and when they knew that I was going to try and put them in book form, all were turned over to me & they are very clear, and perfectly authentic, so we are absolutely satisfied and as it is finished do not need any help. Thank you.

With best wishes,

Yours very truly,  
(signed) Bessie Berry Grabowskii

**IN MEMORIAM**

**JANE EMERSON MACLIN** (S) of San Antonio, Texas, died on April 18 at the age of 77. Jane was a life-master bridge player. She is survived by her husband Sam; her children Nancy, Todd and Molly and their spouses; eight grandchildren; and her sisters, Terry Sawtelle and Nancy White.

**ALFRED THOMAS II**, 73, died in Cape May, N.J., on Oct. 27. "Al" was the husband of DFA Registrar Joan DuVal Thomas for 43 years and the son of the late E. Bruce and Marian Thomas of Drexel Hill, Pa.. He held bachelor's and master's degrees from Drexel University and in retirement enjoyed building and flying remote-controlled aircraft. In addition to his wife, he is survived by their daughters Laura and Robin and their husbands; six grandchildren; and his sister Judith Frysinger and her husband.

**HELP WANTED**

*The DuVal Family News* seeks a designer/production manager to produce three issues a year. Responsibilities include design and layout; working with editor to fit text; possibly arranging for printing and mailing. Use software of your choice; must be compatible with Word. Pay: the gratitude of hundreds of cousins! To apply, send e-mail to the editor at [sblair55@aol.com](mailto:sblair55@aol.com).

## WILLIAMSBURG 2009 BEGINS TO TAKE SHAPE

A preliminary schedule of meetings and activities for the 2009 DuVal Reunion has been drawn up, and we can all look forward to several days of family fun in beautiful, historic Williamsburg. The dates are Thursday, June 25, through Saturday, June 27, with reunion headquarters at The Woodlands, conveniently located adjacent to the Colonial Williamsburg Visitor Center.

Registration will open at 1 p.m. Thursday, and a reception is scheduled for 6 p.m. Starting at 9 a.m. Friday, you'll be able to tour Williamsburg's historic area on foot or via shuttle bus. In the afternoon, back at the hotel, there will be several presentations about DuVal family history and genealogical research. The biennial general meeting of the family association will start at 6 p.m., when a new slate of officers and board members for 2009-2011 will be presented for election. Dinner will be served afterward.

Saturday's schedule is open, and the National Park Service offers free shuttle buses from the visitor center to both Jamestown and Yorktown. Or you can delve deeper into Williamsburg's museums, shops (both historic and contemporary) and old taverns.

Sounds like too much to squeeze into three days? Good news: the special DuVal group room rate at The Woodlands, estimated at this time to be \$130 to \$135 a night, will be available for three nights before and after the reunion dates.

Planning your free time in Williamsburg is an activity the entire family can share through the winter months. At *History.org* you'll find dozens of links to your specific areas of interest, including children's activities and evening entertainment. There's a virtual tour of the historic area at *History.org/visit/tourTheTown* and more information about Jamestown and Yorktown at *HistoryIsFun.org*.

Don't miss this chance to introduce a young generation to national and family history. Your early registration will help us make sure there are enough rooms available at the group rate for all DuVal cousins who want to join the fun next June. Fill out the registration form below and send it with your payment to DFA treasurer Jim Duval.

## To Raise a Tombstone

The DFA has established a Cemetery Committee to assist DFA members who wish to restore the burial sites of descendants of Daniel DuVal.

The committee will offer advice and assistance, but asks that the member proposing the restoration act as project leader and be responsible for evaluating site needs and cost. Because the DFA has limited financial resources, the committee will help the project leader contact other members who might be willing to raise funds to restore a site. Some states have commissions that can be approached for such funding.

Most states have laws that protect graves, even those on private property, and the committee will provide information about what to expect when undertaking a restoration project. It can also help find a local coordinator if the leader doesn't live in the area where the grave is located.

For more information, please contact committee chair Deana Snow via e-mail (*nahm@aol.com*) or by post to P.O. Box 112, Smiths Grove, KY 42171.

### 2009 DuVal Family Reunion Registration Form Williamsburg, Va. June 25-27

**Registration Fee: \$60 per person**  
**Includes Thursday evening reception and Friday dinner**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

NAMES OF OTHERS FOR WHOM YOU ARE PAYING:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DUVAL LINE (please circle): William Daniel 2 Samuel Benjamin

Please make your check payable to DuVal Family Association and mail it with this form to:  
**James P. Duval, Sr. , 3123-B Stony Point Rd., Richmond, VA 23235**

## A Stroll Through Huguenot History

By Susan Blair

While visiting London in August, I made a point (after several previous, unsuccessful attempts) of seeing the beautifully restored interior of Christ Church Spitalfields, designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor, a protégé of Christopher Wren, which was built from 1714 to 1729. It had been closed for almost 50 years because of disrepair.

The church stands at the head of Fournier Street in London's East End, an area that has been settled and resettled by wave after wave of immigrants over the centuries. As you might guess from its name, the street's first residents when the area was developed were refugees from France. Those who settled along this street were predominantly Huguenot weavers and sellers of silk, whose skills and trade had made them prosperous. Well-preserved three-story Georgian houses still line both sides of the street.

The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 brought a great influx of Huguenot refugees to London. We know our ancestor Daniel DuVal was among them, because in late 1700 he was recorded as being a passenger on the ship *Nassau*, which set sail for Virginia from Blackwall Yard on the Thames. What we don't know is when he arrived in London, how long he stayed before seeking his future in North America, and in what Huguenot enclave he lived. Fournier Street was developed after his departure, so he may have been among the Huguenots who settled in the Soho area from the 1670s onward. In 1720, John Strype, a biographer, historian and the son of a Flemish Huguenot silk weaver, described Soho

having an "abundance of French people, many whereof are voluntary exiles for their Religion," who "live in these Streets and Lanes, following honest Trades." Had Daniel been among them before 1700? Perhaps one day we'll find out.

Anchoring the other end of Fournier Street, at the corner of Brick Lane, is a plain brick building with tall arched windows. It was built in 1743 by those well-

to-do Huguenots as their house of worship. In the early 19th century it was a center for teaching Christianity to Jewish immigrants, and then became a Methodist chapel. In 1897 it became a synagogue for a new wave of Jews from Russia and northern Europe. Since 1976 the building has served as a mosque for Brick Lane's latest settlers, immigrants from Bangladesh.

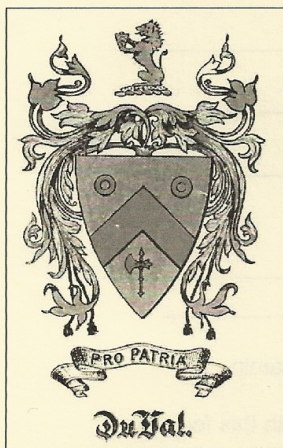
I was touched by the prescience of the chapel's builders. The sundial on the façade of its peaked roof bears the Latin motto *Umbra Sumus*—"We are shadows." The shadows of people seeking a better life have waxed and waned in east London with every new wave of immigration for over 300 years. And the shadows of our Huguenot ancestors inspire us to keep trying to discover who they were.



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The sundial atop the old Huguenot chapel in London's East End

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TO:

