

## Descendants of the Dumonts of Vevay\*

LUCILLE DETRAZ SKELCHER

and

JANE LUCILLE SKELCHER

The seven children of John and Julia L. Dumont who grew to maturity were: Ebenezer, Martha, Mary, Peter Cory, Aurelius, Marietta, and Julia. Three boys, John, Henry and Cornelius, each lived to be about ten years of age, and a fourth, Edgar, was drowned at the age of thirteen.<sup>1</sup> The parents were married in 1812, and, after living in Cincinnati for a short period, they came to Vevay some time before the birth of the first son on November 23, 1814.

### EBENEZER DUMONT

Ebenezer Dumont was a teacher, lawyer, banker, soldier, and member of the national House of Representatives. He taught school while studying law. He married Mary Ann Cheek in 1838 or 1839. During the Mexican War he served as a lieutenant colonel. From 1852 until the institution wound up its business, Mr. Dumont served as the President of the Indiana State Bank. At the beginning of the Civil War, he became the colonel of the Seventh Indiana Regiment, but, in September, 1861, was promoted to the rank of brigadier general. His brigade was often commended by superior officers. In 1863, when stationed at Nashville, he led a force in pursuit of John Morgan who barely escaped at Lebanon, Tennessee. Having been elected to Congress in 1862, General Dumont resigned from the army in February, 1863. He was an experienced legislator having earlier served in the Indiana legislature. He was well read and quite a student of the Bible. He was an entertaining speaker and popular with his colleagues. When it was known that he was to speak, seats were sure to be filled. His drawling humor was much in evidence in his speeches.<sup>2</sup> He served two terms in the House,

---

\* This article is a sequel to "Julia L. Dumont of Vevay," by the same authors, which appeared in the September, 1938, issue.

<sup>1</sup> See "Julia L. Dumont of Vevay," *Indiana Magazine of History* (Sept., 1938), XXXIV, 306, Note. 9.

<sup>2</sup> His speeches as printed in the *Congressional Globe* bear out this statement. For example, see his speech of Feb. 16, 1867 (*Cong. Globe*, 39 Cong., 2 Sess., Appendix, 162-166.) This was a speech in which the Representative from Indiana criticised the Supreme Court for the decision in the Garland case, "to the effect that the act of Congress requiring attorneys-at-law to take what is familiarly called the iron-clad oath is unconstitutional and void and cannot be enforced. . . ." (*Ibid.*, 162). It is not the purpose here to indicate the content of the speech, but to illustrate the

but was not a candidate for a third term in 1866. He was appointed governor of Idaho Territory in 1871, accepted, and was preparing to leave to take up the duties of the office when he died in April of that year.

Ebenezer Dumont had a family of seven daughters, towards whom he is said to have played the part of a strict Victorian father. His eldest daughter was Fanny. She married David Braden in 1858, who became a captain in the Civil War. She lived to be ninety-four years old, dying in 1934. During the Civil War, she took her two children to Nashville, Tennessee, to be near her husband who was ill. At the time of her death, she was survived by two daughters, Mrs. William Caldwell, and Mrs. H. T. Dwiggin, and two sons, David and James Braden. James Braden was killed in an airplane crash early in 1937. Her grandchildren are said to have numbered seven and her great-grandchildren ten. At least one son, Frederick Braden, died before his mother. Her daughter, Mrs. William Caldwell, had three sons, Dumont, Braden, and Wallace Caldwell.

Ebenezer's second daughter, Julia Dumont, was given the name of his mother. In 1862, she married Major Jonathan W. Gordon. He served in the Mexican War and also in the Civil War for about three years. Julia was Major Gordon's second wife. They had five daughters, and one son named John C. Gordon. Mrs. Gordon died in 1928.

Ebenezer's third daughter was Martha Cory Dumont, who married H. E. Drew. The fourth daughter, Emma Dumont married Matthew D. Watson. They had at least two children, a daughter who married George M. Cole, and a son, Lieut. Thomas Dumont Watson. The fifth daughter of Ebenezer, Isabelle Dumont, married John W. Williams. She was still living in 1934. The sixth daughter, Anna Dumont,

---

humor of Dumont. The whole speech abounds in humorous sallies which there is not space to quote. Before opening his remarks, the gentleman from Indiana asked the Clerk of the House to read the following paragraph:

"A hotel keeper in Washington posted this notice: 'Members of Congress will go to the table first, and then the gentlemen. Rowdies and blackguards must not mix with Congressmen, as it is hard to tell one from the other.'" The quoted notice is not related to the speech that followed, and was evidently used to wake up the audience as the Congressman intimated.

In another part of the speech, Dumont told a story from back home in Indiana, which is worth repeating. Here it is:

"A constituent of my colleague [John H. Farquhar], in whose district I once lived, was elected justice of the peace, and thereupon, believing his was one of the few immortal names not born to die went to the clerk of the court to file his bond and be sworn into office. He exhibited his commission and said he had come to file his bond and be qualified. 'Hold up your hand,' responded the gruff old clerk, who, when enraged and indignant, was a little rough and profane; 'I'll swear you in; all h—l can't qualify you.'" (*Ibid.*, 165).

married R. E. Springeteen. The seventh and youngest, Jessie Dumont, married William S. Whitney. She also was still living in 1934.

#### MARTHA DUMONT

Martha Dumont, eldest daughter of John and Julia L. Dumont, married William B. Campbell in 1834. He was one of the early teachers of Switzerland County. While studying law at Oxford, Ohio, William's father died during the great Ohio River Flood of 1832. The young man soon after went with his brother-in-law, William Protsman, to Cincinnati to buy the Protsman farm north of Vevay. Making the trip on horseback, they beat Joseph Malin who traveled by steamboat bent on purchasing the same farm. William Campbell built the brick house on **Main Street in Vevay** where Nelson Haskell now resides. He kept a store and sold the first lucifer matches put on the market in the town. He became prosperous and at one time owned considerable property in Vevay. He lost most of it through signing surety bonds. After meeting reverses, the Campbell family moved to Lawrenceburg, where Mr. Campbell practiced law and collected taxes. He died about 1846, and Mrs. Campbell returned to Vevay with her children. She kept house for her father, John Dumont, after the death of her mother. She died in 1869, about a year before her father passed away.

William and Martha Dumont Campbell had five children. One of the daughters was Annette Campbell, who died when a young woman. She was a school teacher and wrote poetry, some appearing in the *Philotheamean Gem*, an early Vevay high school paper. The only son, William Lamb Campbell, was born in 1836. He became a lawyer and was also a newspaper man. He was extremely well versed in the law, so that other lawyers consulted him on doubtful points connected with their cases, and called him the "lawyer's encyclopedia." He was, however, quite impractical and gave much of his legal advice without charge. He served in the Civil War and figured in *The First of the Hoosiers* and *The Last of the Flatboats* by George Cary Eggleston.<sup>8</sup> In the eighteen-eighties he went to California for his health and edited a paper in Los Angeles

<sup>8</sup> *The First of the Hoosiers* (Philadelphia, 1703), 188-186; *The Last of the Flatboats* (Boston, 1900). William L. Campbell, Edward Eggleston, and George Cary Eggleston were the originals of "Irving Strong," "Ed Lowry" and "Phil Lowry," respectively, in *The Last of the Flatboats*.

for some time. He died there in 1922. He was married twice, his first wife being an Indianapolis woman. They had one daughter, Mary Louisa. She married a man named Bigelow and they had three children, May, Fran, and Lawrence Campbell. After his separation from his first wife, William L. Campbell married again. His second wife's Christian name was Mary. They had one daughter, Juliette Dumont Campbell, born in 1890. She also evidenced talent in writing. She married a man by the name of Armstrong, and had five children: Mary Janet, Ethel Pearl, Ruth Loretta, John Forrest, and William Campbell.

Juliette Dumont Campbell, another of the daughters of William and Martha (Dumont) Campbell, married Joseph Shipp, an Indianapolis business man. She died in 1891, leaving two daughters, May Louisa and Margaret Shipp. May Louisa did some writing, delivered occasional lectures and gave private lessons at her home in language and history. Margaret also did some private tutoring and was a teacher in a private school. She is a Vassar graduate. Both of these sisters are still living in Indianapolis. Neither ever married.

Eliza Maria Campbell, a third daughter of William and Martha Campbell, married a physician, a Dr. Henderson. Their only child, a daughter, Juliette Cory, married Frank Leslie. Three children were born to the Leslies. One, a daughter, Eliza Maria, died in infancy. The elder son, William Leslie, born in 1903, became a doctor. The younger son was named John Dumont Leslie. About ten years ago he left home and has not been heard from since. Eliza Maria Henderson died in 1929.

Mary Louisa Campbell was the eldest daughter of Martha and William Campbell. In 1855, she married Francis Rodolph Detraz, a builder and cabinet-maker of Vevay. At one time, he was also Vevay's principal ice dealer. He built the house now occupied by Lincoln Means. Mary Louise Detraz died in 1874, leaving five children, a daughter and four sons. The daughter, Martha Antoinette, was the eldest, and after her mother's death took her place in looking after and caring for her father and three of her brothers. Next to the youngest brother, having made his home with his Grandmother Detraz for several years, due to his mother's ill health, continued to do so after her death. Martha Detraz never married.

The eldest brother of Martha Detraz, William Benjamin, died in 1888 at the age of twenty-nine. The second brother, Eugene Rodolph, and the youngest or fourth, Clarence Aime, made up the firm of the Detraz Brothers who were in the lumber, building, and planing-mill business in Vevay for over thirty years. Many of the buildings in and around the little city were planned and built by them. These include the present *Reveille* building, the Dickason & Weales Garage, the Frank Riley and Forrest Griffith homes, and also the house where they themselves lived so long, now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Herman L. Fox. The third of the four brothers, Samuel Francis Detraz, married Amy Lewark in Pendleton, Indiana, where he and his brothers had gone to build and establish a planing mill. Samuel's brothers never married. This Samuel F. Detraz was an architect and builder. He planned the Vevay Deposit Bank building, which his brothers erected. Martha Detraz died in 1927, Eugene in 1933, Clarence in 1935. Samuel Francis Detraz died earlier, in 1911. He was generally known as "Frank" Detraz. He left three children, Lucille, Louisa and Orville Detraz. Orville married Mildred Bliss in 1927. They have two sons, David Francis and Orville Richard Detraz, and at the present time they reside in Rock Island, Illinois, where the father is the head of the contract section of the Rock Island division of the United States River Survey. Louisa Detraz is the wife of Herman L. Fox, a grain dealer. They reside in Vevay with their sons, Jack Warren and Newell Fox. Lucille Detraz married Sydney Palmer Skelcher, a florist, in 1916. There is one daughter, Jane Lucille Skelcher. Since Mr. Skelcher's death in 1935, the widow and daughter have resided in Vevay.

#### MARY DUMONT

The second of the Dumont daughters was Mary, who married William S. Lamb in 1837. He became county clerk of Perry County, Indiana, in 1840 or 1841. This daughter died before her mother, Julia L. Dumont, whose death occurred in 1857.

#### PETER CORY DUMONT

Peter Cory Dumont was the second son. He outlived both his father and mother. He married but his wife's name has not been discovered. There were seven children, two

sons and five daughters. A daughter Abbie married a man named Farwell, and they later lived in Texas. One of her brothers was John F. Dumont and the other William Dumont. The latter died in early manhood, but was married and left two children. The daughters of Peter Cory Dumont besides Abbie were: Mary A., who married a Mr. Parks; Julia Louise, who married a Duffy; Mary; and Eunice. No information can be furnished about the last two.

#### AURELIUS DUMONT

Aurelius Dumont was the third and youngest of the sons of John and Julia L. Dumont to reach maturity. He was graduated from Hanover College and elected to the office of county auditor soon thereafter. He was just well started on what promised to be a brilliant career as a lawyer, when he died at the age of twenty-six. He married Harriet Dufour, a refined young woman of Vevay who died soon after her husband.<sup>4</sup>

#### MARIETTA DUMONT

Marietta Dumont, the third daughter, married Robert N. Lamb in 1847, who was the original of "Lawyer Barlow" in Edward Eggleston's novel *Roxy*, in which Aurelius and Harriet Dufour Dumont were made the leading characters.<sup>5</sup> When elected county auditor, Aurelius Dumont invited Robert Lamb to serve as an assistant in the office for a part of each day and read law with him during his time off. It was not long until the assistant was practically placed in charge of the auditor's office, while the man chosen to fill the place devoted his time to his growing law practice. The young attorney was instrumental in obtaining for his assistant the position as deputy sheriff. Though his duties were doubled, Lamb still read law at intervals and was admitted to the bar. He then became a law partner of his friend Dumont. In 1848, Mr. Lamb was elected to the office of prosecuting attorney, and, following the death of young Dumont was appointed to complete his term as auditor. In 1850, Mr. Lamb was defeated, but in 1855 he won the race for auditor. He held the office till 1859, while he continued to practice law.

<sup>4</sup> For further matter relative to Aurelius Dumont and his wife, see "Julia L. Dumont of Vevay," *loc. cit.*, 306.

<sup>5</sup> Harriet Dufour Dumont, was the original of "Roxy" and Aurelius Dumont was the original of "Mark Bonamy."

In July of 1861, Robert N. Lamb was appointed assistant quartermaster with the rank of captain and served in the Union army until discharged on account of ill health in the fall of 1862. He was then sent to the legislature. In 1864, he became judge of the local circuit court. In 1868, he ran for Congress but was defeated. Later the family moved to Indianapolis where Mrs. Marietta (Dumont) Lamb died in 1876. A few years later Mr. Lamb became president of the First National Bank of Indianapolis.

Robert N. and Marietta (Dumont) Lamb had two children who died in infancy, a third child, Laura who died at the age of nine, and two daughters that grew up. The eldest of the two, Elizabeth Lamb, married a lawyer named Thompson. He later became a judge. She, like her grandmother, wrote some poetry. She also used to lecture at women's club meetings and was a very gifted, but eccentric woman, especially in matters of dress. She had one son, Mac (or Max) Thompson. The second daughter of Robert and Marietta Lamb to reach maturity was named Marietta. She married a Dr. Charles E. Ferguson, an Indianapolis physician. Mrs. Ferguson died within the past year, but Dr. Ferguson is still living. They had one daughter, also named Marietta, who was married twice, first to a man named Holloway, and later to a Mr. Covall.

#### JULIA DUMONT

Julia, the fourth and youngest of the four Dumont sisters was her mother's namesake. She was a teacher, holding forth in the old schoolroom after the death of her mother. In fact, she had served an apprenticeship by helping her mother. In 1859, she married the Rev. Archibald S. Reid, who was both a teacher and preacher. As late as 1870, Mrs. Reid advertised the opening of a school. School terms were often quite short even after the establishment of a public system, and it was not uncommon for extra subscription schools to follow. Mrs. Reid collected all of the unprinted writings of her mother, Julia L. Dumont, intending to have them published, but after the Reid family left Vevay, most of the collected manuscripts were destroyed in a fire. The Reids had one son, John Dumont Reid, who became a minister. In 1891, this son married Bessie Gertrude Bayse in

Minnesota. Two children were born of this union, a son Kenneth Dumont Reid (1892), and a daughter, Margaret Reid (1896).<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Information regarding the descendants of John and Julia L. Dumont was found on the gravestones of the Vevay Cemetery, in the records of Switzerland County, in the files of the Vevay *Reveille*, and in Perret Dufour's *History of Switzerland County*. Other facts were obtained from clippings in scrap-books belonging to Julie LeClerc Knox and the Switzerland County Historical Society. A letter from William Lamb Campbell to his nephew, Clarence A. Detraz, written at Los Angeles on Mar. 2, 1901, contains much data relative to the ancestry of Julia L. Dumont and her descendants. Many of the statements in the above article are based on carefully preserved and oft repeated family traditions.