



# KNOW YOUR ROOTS

Mary Durland, Author/Researcher

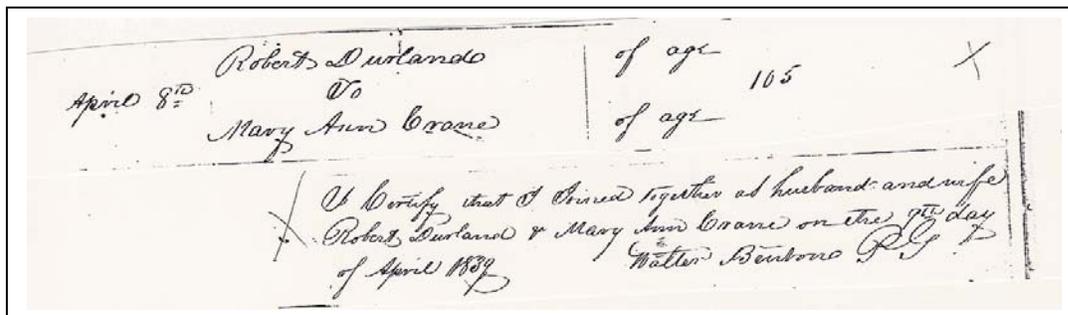
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## THE ROBERT DURLAND FAMILY

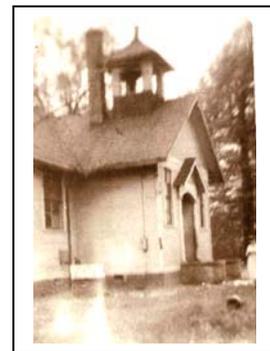
Little has been said about Robert Durland and yet he is a prominent ancestor grandfather of our family. Below on April 8, 1839 is the license and his marriage on April 9, 1839 in Jackson County, Indiana. The bride was our very own Mary Ann Crane.



Now you can see how important he was to the family because through this marriage to Mary Ann Crane she brought the Cranes and their history to us.

However, let me backtrack a little about the story of Robert. He was the son of William Dorland Jr. and Sarah Youngs, and the eighth child of nine. Although he was born in New York, his father, a farmer, moved the family to Jackson County, Indiana. You can read more about the family in the Durland Family Letters written by his brother Nelson under the Special Documents section of the Know Your Roots website.

After his father's death, Robert worked the farm for his mother and in the meantime he and Mary Ann started their family. The first three were girls, Eliza Ann, Amanda Ellen, and Phoebe Jane. It was not until 1847 that William Robert was born, followed by our grandfather James Youngs in 1850 and the last son Maurice in 1854. They were all educated in this one-room school house, which I'm told was on the Durland property, and at times the teacher even lived with the family because country teachers were not paid well.



Sometime after Robert's mother died in 1859, and his children were somewhat grown, he decided to sell the farm and move the family to southern Illinois, to a little town called Flora. Flora at the time was a sleepy little town with very few inhabitants. There is no record as to why Robert decided on Flora but in 1867 he bought several acres of land there and decided that he wanted to be a business man instead of a farmer.

The first thing he did was build himself a beautiful new house for his family of six children. This house was to become a place where the children could bring their friends. In this picture you see evidence of that. Robert and Mary Ann on the porch and the children are playing on the lawn.



Then Robert, to follow his wish to become a business man, in 1868 bought out the stock of a small hardware store. He formed a partnership with the Tonney brothers and as Tonney Brothers and Durland they increased the stock and the business. Through many partners, each time increasing the business, the store finally became Durland and Miller. All the while his sons were taking an active part in the business.

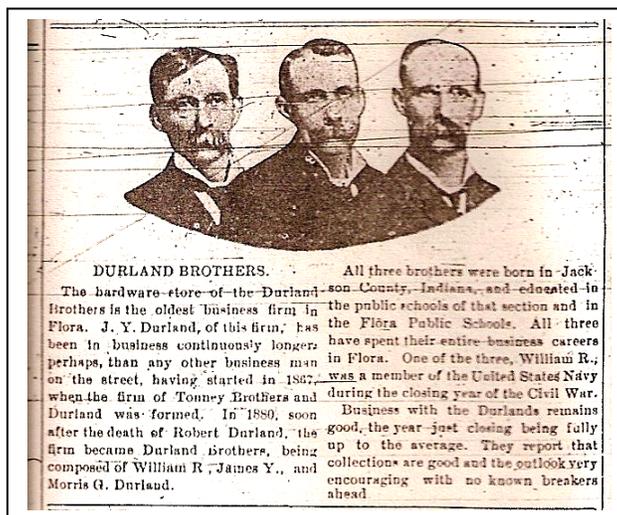


Through its success he was able to become an integral part of the First National Bank when it received its charter in 1872. Its capital was \$75,000 divided into 750 shares of \$100 each and Robert was listed as a Director. Accordingly, the bank was one of the soundest and best

managed financial institutions in Southern Illinois and the business men were among the wealthiest in the county. It is said that at one time when the bank examiner asked for the amount of unpaid loans the answer was \$65.00 and he said it was the best bank he had ever examined. Consequently Robert had achieved his wish to be a successful business man. The hardware store was doing very well and his sons were continuing to help him with the business. Then tragedy struck. Robert died March 25, 1879 after just a few years of prosperity.



Mary Ann, his widow, a most unusual woman for her time, took over her husband's business at the age of 63. She bought out the remaining partner and groomed her three sons to run the business. So the three brothers, who had been helping their father, now helped their mother. When she felt they were fully capable, she allowed them to buy her out and this newspaper article tells the end of Robert's story.



(Webmaster & Technical Advisor: Jerry Larkin)