
Surville Jean de Baptiste DeLanois

by Robert DeLan Lane

S. J. DeLan

My Great Grandfather was married to Margaret Anna Donnelly and they had three children, Anna Elizabeth DeLan, Eugene A. DeLan, and Louise DeLan. Louise DeLan was the mother of Margaret Smith, who married Lester Dewey Lane and had five children, Peg, Phyllis, Bud, Bob, and Beth.

As a little boy in Denver, Colorado, I christened my grandmother "Weezer" because that was the closest I could get to pronouncing "Louise." The name stuck and for the rest of her life her name was Weezer.

On a recent trip to Glenwood Springs my sister Peg helped me to find information on my mother's family. Her grandfather, S. J. DeLan, was the mayor of Glenwood Springs in 1900. By that time he was known as S. J. DeLan having dropped the "ois" from his beautiful French name. It is from him that Bob, Craig, and Alexander get their middle name of DeLan. In the historical museum in Glenwood Springs, Peg and Karen and I found information from the 1900 census about the DeLan family plus some newspaper articles. We went to the City Hall and found S. J.'s picture on the wall in the council chambers in the series of pictures of mayors.

In the folder in the archives we also found a small book of poems published in the 1890's and written by S. J. Lane. It was published in New York and is dedicated to the family that owned the house that is now the museum in Glenwood Springs. Here is one of the articles from the archives.



French, Irish and English roots

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S.J. DeLan is a native of the West Indies and came to the United States in 1849. He early started to become a navigator of the high seas, but after a few trips his parents, not liking his chosen occupation, put him to school in Richmond, Virginia. Before he arrived at maturity he started a business as a jeweler and for a quarter of a century owned a large jewelry store on Grand Street in New York. During his residence there he became intimate with the leading men of New York and the nation, and was prominent in politics, although he never asked for political preferment.

In the year 1879 he visited Leadville on a pleasure trip and also acted as an honorary member on the staff of the New York Star while there. He wrote the first articles on Leadville that appeared in the eastern papers. After his return to New York he was solicited by J. Lorillard and other prominent capitalists to return to Leadville and examine certain mining properties, which he did. On Mr. DeLan's recommendation the properties were purchased and he was installed as manager. He also practiced law before the land office there and won many important mining cases.

Mr. DeLan built the street railroads of Leadville and intended ultimately to extend them to the mines and thus reduce the cost of hauling ore, but the opposition of the ore-haulers was so strong that he was forced to abandon the scheme.

Since that time the ore-haulers have forced the railroads to abandon a scheme having for its object the same result.

In 1884 Major DeLan moved to Denver and was appointed marshal of the Supreme Court of this state and resigned that position to accept the appointment of register of the land office at Glenwood Springs.

Mr. DeLan is president of the board of trade here and is a very hard, active, and conscientious worker for Glenwood. He has done much good by bringing this country to the attention of eastern people by writing articles for the magazines and other eastern publications and the effect of his work will be felt for many years. Mr. DeLan has expended considerable time in an effort to secure a public building for Glenwood to accommodate the post office and land office.

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