



Rip Van Winkle

Washington Irving (1783 - 1859)

Read by:	Bob Neufeld	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case, jewel box, or paper sleeve; MP3 download
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Rip Van Winkle is a Dutch-American villager living in the Catskill Mountains in the era before the Revolutionary War in the story of the same name. Beloved by all, he shirks hard work, and is harangued by a nagging wife. He takes to the mountains for some peace and quiet and meets a group of silent, bearded men playing nine-pins and drinking moonshine. He joins in and falls asleep. When he awakes, everything is changed: his musket is rusty, his beard is a foot long, his dog is gone, his wife is dead, his son is grown, and America has become a country. He has been asleep for at least twenty years. The story was the first in

The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, Gentleman. It was an immediate hit when first published and has remained a staple of children's literature ever since.

Washington Irving (April 3, 1783 – November 28, 1859) was an American author and diplomat best known for his stories “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” and “Rip Van Winkle”. He was born in Manhattan the youngest of eight children of Scottish-English immigrant merchants. He found early fame submitting commentaries to the *New York Morning Chronicle*. His first book was *A History of Old New York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty by Diedrich Knickerbocker*, a fictional historian (1809). Prior to publication Irving placed a series of missing person ads seeking the return of the missing Knickerbocker, which generated public interest and helped make the book a hit. Irving went to England in 1815 to save the family trading company, which was badly damaged by the War of 1812. It failed and he started writing. The result was *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (1819-1820), a series of short pieces that began with “Rip Van Winkle”, included “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow”, and brought him international recognition. He remained in Europe for 17 years, ending with a term as Secretary to the American legation in London before returning to America in 1832, where he settled in Tarrytown, New York in a property he named Sunnyside. He was appointed Minister to Spain in 1842, serving for four years. His last work was a five volume biography of George Washington the he considered his masterpiece and finished shortly before his death. Irving was the first American Man of Letters, an important voice in the emergence of a uniquely American literature and one of the first Americans to achieve recognition and respect in Europe.