

History of The Payant Family

My grandfather Joseph Payant De Santo was born in Three Rivers, Canada. When he and his brothers came to the U.S. he decided to keep the name Payant and his brother took the name De Santo. His son, my grandfather, Alphonse came from Canada to the Green Bay area where he met my grandmother Constance Sawyer who was born in Mishicot, WI. She was born Dec. 14th, 1842 and my grandfather must have been born about the same year for at his death in 1892 he was 49 years old. To this union was born two daughters, Clofield and Mae, and four sons, Joseph Alphonse, Charles, Andrew and Vital. They lived much of their married life in the Oconto & Lena area where my father, Charles Payant, was born Nov. 4th, 1885. When he was 4 years old they moved to Wausaukee where his mother who died at the age of 94, lived the rest of her life. My grandfather died in 1892, leaving Constance to raise 5 children under 14, with baby Vital 6 months old. The first legal document in my possession is a warranty deed given to Alphonse and Constance Payant for \$50 on Dec. 28th 1889 from John and Jane Monroe for ½ part of Lot No. 12 in Block No. 2 in the Monroe & Merrill's First addition. Later they mortgaged the property to Felix Paquette for \$200. At this time in Wausaukee lived a prominent citizen, Senator Harlan Bird, part owner of the Bird and Wells Lumber Co. He was the one who signed and recorded the satisfaction. I feel privileged to have the signatures of the Senator as well as those of Constance and Alphonse.

To tell you what a wonderful lady Constance was, after grandpa's death, her mother and father-in-law lived with her and they were not exactly congenial in-laws. And since in those days one had no insurance or social security, her sons left school very early. My father left in the eighth grade to start working for Mr. Bogrand who owned and published the weekly paper, The Independent and he remained there until he was 34 years old. I know I get my love for the written word from him, as he was not only a reporter who met every train and interviewed every stranger but also did reporting. He had married my mother, Anna Benish, a local girl of 20 in 1913 and left the paper because his paycheck would not buy shoes for his 4 little girls. We moved to Loomis where he operated a general store for two years and then came back to Wausaukee and opened his own store.

But to give you the history of Lot No. 6 of Block No. 4 of the Monroe and Merrill First Addition to the Village of Wausaukee- in 1889 title to the lot was assumed to be in the name of James Monroe and Curtis L. Merrill.

On May 25th, 1889 Merrill deeded ½ of the land to Louis Frisque for \$39.50 and on July 24th, 1889 Monroe deeded the other ½ of the land to John O'Callaghan for \$37.50. March 26, 1890, John deeded the land to Louis Frisque for \$63.65. Theodore Van Caster quit claimed to Louis Frisque June 13, 1889 for \$196.85. Louis Frisque conveyed to Benjamin Martin on August 11, 1898 for \$225. On March 28th, 1902 Benjamin Martin Donveys conveys the entire lot to Mrs. Barbara Ullsperger for \$325.

And to tell how this property came into the hands of the Payant family I need tell about my father's brothers. Joseph, born in 1883 and his brother Andrew born in 1888 also left school very early to learn the trade of a tailor. I believe it was Barbara's husband George Ullsperger who taught them the trade and in the house located on Lot 6 of Block 4. The abstract shows that on May 26, 1909 the Ullspergers deeded the lot to J. A. Payant for \$750. At the same time J. A. Payant and his wife Emma took out a mortgage for \$500 from the Wausaukee State Bank, which was satisfied on 1/11/1911. Later Joseph and Emma moved to Iron Mountain, Michigan and deeded the property to Robert L. Thompson on September 18, 1917. At this time Andrew, JA's brother took out a land contract, but before he acquired the property, Thompson sold the lot to Emile Everix may 31, 1919, subject to the land contract. When he moved to Chilton he sold the lot to Andrew Payant on October 1, 1921 for \$500.

When Andrew and his wife Leah also moved to Iron Mountain, Michigan, they deeded the property to my father Charles Payant and his brother Vital Payant on October 10, 1921. On July 14, 1950 Vital and his wife Anna who lived in Kingsford, Mi., for many years, conveyed the property to his brother Charles Payant, who later added his wife Anna's name to the deed. Charles died on Dec. 6th, 1967 and in 1968, Anna conveyed the property to her daughters Luverna Dloski, Monica Dougoveto, and Mary Ann Hamilton, the three oldest children, knowing they would always include their siblings in any decision concerning the property.

And to conclude the Payant story, the only Payant who lived his entire life in Wausaukee was my brother Vital (Bud) Payant. He and his Australian bride, Ailsa Payant, raised their four children there while Bud operated the same store his father built in 1922 and operated till his death. And Ailsa still lives there. As mother and dad had 9 children and 57 grandchildren we number in the 300 today. Fifty-two years ago the four brothers Joseph (J.A.), Charles, Andrew and Vital had a picnic at Goodman Park and decided to meet the next year at the same time. Eventually the site was changed to Lake Nocqueby and the date the last Sunday of July. The event has been held every year since then and now number more than 200 each year.

We only have wonderful memories of that little village of Wausaukee and are always so proud to say it is our Hometown.

Mary A. Hamilton