

Addendum to the Pinter Family History Book

Marquette, Illinois

by Ken Pinter
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Marquette, Illinois, has been listed as a Ghost Town in some publications. It was a town that was created by the coal industry, thrived for a while, and ultimately passed away as the coal mining industry in northern Illinois declined.

Marquette has a connection to the Pinter family of Bureau County because a few members of the family lived there. Those people cannot point to a place and say “that’s where I was born” because today Marquette exists only on older maps. Those people include:

- 1) Lillian Harris who married Lester Pinter – Lillian said she met Lester at the Marquette dance hall. Lillian was born in Marquette.
- 2) Lena Bartoluzzi who married Gilbert Pinter – it is believed that Lena’s father was a miner at the Marquette coal mine until it closed. He then worked at the Zink plant near DePue.

Location of Marquette

Marquette was built in an area between DePue and Spring Valley, Illinois, of course where the mining company thought they could sink shafts to hit the vein of coal that was underneath. The few old pictures available show that the mine itself was very near to the Illinois River, between the river banks and the railroad tracks. The village was situated between the tracks and what is now US route 29. This map shows the approximate location. Marquette physically no longer exists. All of the mine and town structures (except for maybe one or two) have been removed as has the slag pile that was created by the mining process.



Brief History of Marquette

Note that Marquette was first called Loceyville. Very little has been written about Loceyville/Marquette. The most detail found so far is in the book The Promise of a Better Life: The Coal Mines of Eastern Bureau County, Illinois, by Jim Piacenti.

Here is a very simplified timeline of the village from the above book:

- 1877 – first mine shaft sunk by George Locey
- 1883 – Loceyville Post Office established
- 1899 – company houses for workers had been built, plus ice house, butcher shop, railroad depot, company office, doctor's office, saloon, school, and some private residences
- 1898 – town had grown to about 2000 residents with 361 being miners
- 1883 and 1910 – churches had been established but each was short lived
- 1895 – Loceyville renamed to Marquette
- 1906 – Interurban electric line extended to Marquette
- 1907 – town incorporated
- 1914 – the mine failed and shut down leaving 400 miners without work
- 1916 – city government dissolved
- 1945 – school closed
- 2007 – Hall Township took over the site for a park now known as Echo Bluff Park

From the Echo Bluff Web Site

Here is an article from the web site www.echobluff.org/history

The history of Echo Bluff is a lively and varied one. Echo Bluff lies on the grounds of what was once a booming mining town named Loceyville (founded in 1877) and later renamed Marquette. Loceyville/Marquette was really a "Mine Camp" and the owners of the mining companies built stores, taverns and a school for the exclusive use of their employees. Row Houses were built, and the population reached 2000 during the town's peak.

After the mines failed, Marquette had few townfolk. The schoolhouse, the two towns only remaining structure, held classes until the 1950's. A 1914 a fire of "suspicious" nature destroyed most of the buildings. With no hopes for a mine to reopen and no other means of work, the few village residents who remained voted to dissolve the village government in 1916.

The only remaining building of the two communities is the school house which held classes until 1950's. The school house has been partially renovated by Hall Township for educational programs and rentals by the public.

Description and History of the Mine

Marquette Coal Mine



The legal description lists this as : Bureau County -
Township 16 North, 11 East, Section 31, SW NW SE
An Underground Shaft Mine at a depth of 280 feet with an average coal seam of 3½ feet in
thickness.

Mine Name	Operated By	Years
Locey Coal Mine	George H. Locey	prior to 1881 - 1887
Locey Coal Mine	A. O. Marshall (receiver)	1887 - 1889
Loceyville Coal Mine	Chicago, Wilmington & Vermilion Coal Company	1889 - 1894
Marquette Coal Mine	Marquette Third Vein Coal Company	1894 - 1914

[Source - No. 1, Index # 8]

The last production was reported in March 1914.

Notes

1883² G. H. Locey, at Depue, operated an underground shaft coal mine at a
depth of 300 feet with a coal seam of 3 feet in thickness.
Bureau County - Notes By The Inspector
Locey coal mines now taking bids for contracts to sink escapement shaft.

1884³ Bureau County
The most important mine in this county is known as Locey's mine,
located at Loceyville on the C. R. I. & P. R. R., about six miles north from
Peru. The shaft is 300 feet in depth, the seam is No. 2, of good quality and
three feet thick, and the coal is mined on the long-wall system. The
machinery, engine house and boiler sheds are old and worn, but it is likely
that a new engine house will be built of brick and double engines put in
soon. The shaft is too small for the capacity of the mine. The workings are
ventilated by fan of the Guibal pattern, but the up-cast or air chamber is far
too small for the capacity of the fan. An escapement has been sunk and
ladders put in during the year. The fan will be moved and placed over the
escape shaft, when the ventilation will be good. Covers have been put on the
cages and a brake on the drum; safety catches have been tried but failed to
work satisfactorily owing to the size and construction of the cages.

To make this a mine of the first class it will be necessary to enlarge the

shaft from top to bottom, build new engine and boiler rooms and put in new machinery. The mine is under the management of Edward Lewis.

1885 ⁴ George H. Locey, at Loceyville, operated an underground shaft coal mine at a depth of 300 feet with a coal seam of 3½ feet in thickness.

Loceyville

The mine at this place, owned and operated by George H. Locey, has undergone some important improvements during the year. Especially is this true in regard to the ventilation ; the escapement shaft is being used was a downcast and the fan changed to a "blower." By this arrangement the ventilation has been changed from defective to first-class. The engine and boiler house has been rebuilt ; it is now roofed and sided with fire-proof material.

Safety catches have not yet been put on the cages, but a set has been ordered that will -- it is thought -- suit the peculiar construction of the cages. To avoid accidents, however, from the cable breaking, a pair of new ropes are put on every year. The shaft is 300 feet deep. The coal is nearly 3½ feet thick, seam No. 2 of the general section, and is fully up to the standard of excellence usually attained by that seam. It is worked on the long-wall system, and is well adapted to this method of mining. The underground workings are in good condition, and bear witness to good management. If the hoisting machinery and shaft were equal to the capacity of the underground workings, the present maximum out-put could be doubled, Edward Lewis, Mine Manager.

1887 ⁵ Geo. H. Locey, at Loceyville, operated an underground shaft coal mine at a depth of 300 feet with a coal seam of 3½ feet in thickness.

1890 ⁶ Improvements

The Loceyville mine, which has been in the hands of a receiver for the last three years, has been purchased by the Chicago, Wilmington & Vermilion Coal Company. The shaft has been enlarged and a new 12-foot fan has been substituted for the small one; a new tower is being erected. larger pit-cars will be put in, and the capacity of the mine, at the very lowest estimate, will be doubled.

1895 ⁹ Improvements

The Marquette Coal Company has purchased the mine formerly run by the C. W. & V. Coal Company, at Laceyville, Bureau county. They have changed the name of the town to Marquette; have the mine in first-class condition, and are now busy grading for railroad tracks on top, and no doubt expect to mine coal extensively in the near future.

1899 ¹³ Improvements

The Marquette Coal Co., of Marquette, Bureau county, has also made some very substantial improvements during the year. The main or hoisting shaft has been enlarged so that a larger mine car can be used, a new and more powerful winding engine and three new boilers are being set up, so that it is quite natural to expect a very respectable increase in the output of

this mine in the very near future. An overcast has also been erected below, for the purpose of increasing and obtaining a better distribution of the ventilating current.

1907 ²¹ The Marquette Coal Company's mine, located at Marquette, Bureau county, the top works and shaft of which were destroyed by fire in December, 1905, have been thoroughly renewed. The shaft has been resunk and retimbered, a new tower erected and coal hoisting was again resumed in October, 1906.

1915 ²⁹ Abandoned Mines.

The following mine was not reported this year and is either temporarily closed or permanently abandoned -- Marquette Third Vein Coal Co., Spring Valley Coal Co. No. 4.

Marquette Photo Album



Locey Mine next to the Illinois River at Marquette, ca 1910



Unknown building on the site



Renovated Schoolhouse



No. 14. Marquette, Ill. View of bluff from the dump.

The top of the bluff at Marquette. This photo was taken about 1910 from the slag pile. In the middle of the photo is the Marquette Mercantile Co. The building in the foreground is a depot.