The year 1904 marked a high point for the Prudent Vient family. Prudent and Phelonise celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary, their big family was flourishing, and they all gathered in Minneapolis to celebrate.

## WILL CELEBRATE THEIR GOLDEN WEDDING TODAY

Mr. and Mrs. P. V. Cummings, Pioneers, Married for Half a Century

The golden wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Prudent Vien Cummings will be celebrated today at 624 University avenue northeast. The principals in the function have been residents of the East side for the past thirty-one years. Nine children, twenty-six grandchildren and numerous near relatives will attend.

The couple were born in Canada, the husband eighty-four and the wife seventy-six years ago. Two brothers and a sister of the husband were married when older than Mr. Cummings and are still alive. His father died at the age of 108 years. Although an old man, Mr. Cummings is very well preserved, and personally manages all his real estate along University avenue and pays as close attention to business transactions today as

when in his prime.

The golden wedding services will begin at 9:30 this morning at the Church of Notre Dame des Lourdes, on the East side, where high mass will be celebrated, the trip to and from the church to be made in tally-hos. After the mass the entire family will pose for a group picture, after which the festivities will be continued at the home of the aged couple. The children are scattered between Minneapolis and Salt Lake City and the old couple are particularly happy in the thought that they will gather for the fiftieth anniversary of their father's and mother's wedding today.

St. Paul Globe, July 4, 1904

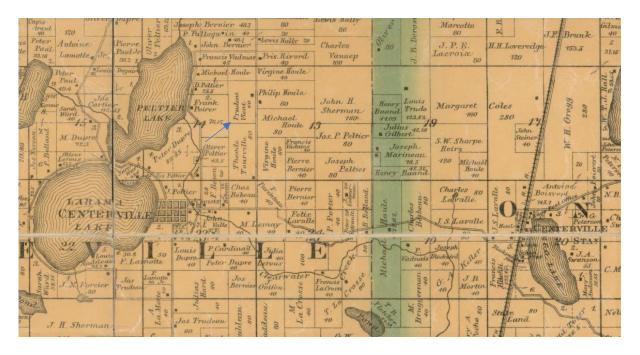
Cummings family genealogist Ray Cummings documented for us these basic details about the lives of this amazing couple who carried on the spirit of their hardy French-Canadian ancestors by becoming successful pioneers in what was at the time the western frontier of the United States.



**Prudent and Phelonise Vient** 

¬Prudent was born on March 5, 1829, in Bellechasse, Quebec, and was baptized as Joseph Prudent Viens. His ancestors bore the name of Jean in France. The family name Jean was soon changed to Viens in Canada, and Prudent changed it to Vient in Minnesota. Prudent married Phelonise Lebel on July 4, 1854 in St. Edouard's Church in Gentilly, Quebec. Phelonise was born Feb. 10, 1834 in Gentilly, Quebec

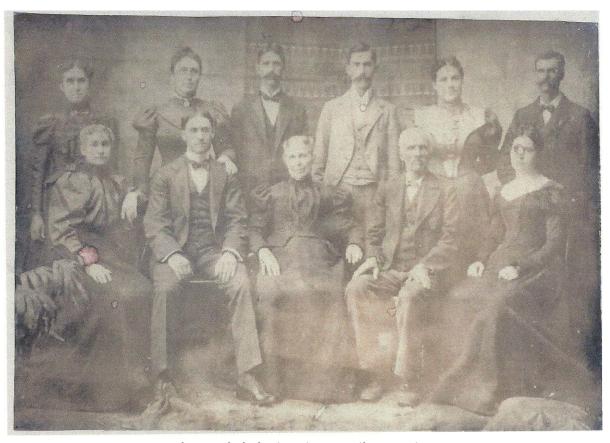
Prudent Vient emigrated about 1867 from Quebec with his wife Phelonise and five children to Mendota, MN, just across the Mississippi River from St. Paul. The 1870 census lists Prudent as a laborer, and his household included the five children born in Canada – Ida, Charles, Flora, Clara, Abraham, and Adeline, the first child born in Minnesota. In 1876, his occupation was carpenter, and his residence was in Minneapolis. In 1880, Prudent was a farmer on his 60 acres of land and a big white house near Centerville, MN, on the Old Forcier Road (now 20th Ave. N) just north of the Hugo/Centerville Road. His family now had three more children: Mamie, Telesphore, and Calix.



Prudent Vient Farm between Centerville and Oneka Township (Hugo)

In 1900, Prudent and Phelonise were living in their house at 624 University Avenue NE, Minneapolis. Prudent died on Oct. 14,1910 of general paralysis and senility. He was buried in St. Mary's Cemetery in South Minneapolis under the name "Wient". Phelonise died four days later on October 19, 1910.

Below is the portrait of Prudent and Phelonise with their children taken on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary.



Prudent and Phelonise Vient Family Portrait, 1904
Standing from left to right: Ida, Flora, Abraham, Telesphore, Mamie, and Charles
Sitting from left to right: Clara, Cal, Phelonise, Prudent, Adeline

Phelonise's family name was Lebel in Quebec, but often spelled Labelle in the U.S. Phelonise was born in 1834, and her birthplace is listed as Montreal on her son Charles' death certificate. She died in Minneapolis on a Wednesday and her funeral was at 9 a.m. the next Monday at our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, also in Minneapolis. As with her husband Prudent, St. Mary's Cemetery had no record of her burial. It was found later under the name of "Wient". It is curious to note that no monument or headstones mark Prudent's or Philonise's gravesites. A recent discussion with the Rainville Mortuary in Minneapolis, which is still in business and which still has the original business ledger from 1910, revealed that the costs of Prudent's funeral (approximately \$149) and Philonise's funeral (approximately \$163) were above average costs for funerals in 1910. Yet, no one saw fit to put up a family monument at the site nor put headstones marking their parents graves.

Prudent and Phelonise had eleven or twelve children, the exact number is not known, but only nine reached adulthood:

- 1.) Ida Adele Vient (Cummings) was born about 1856 in Quebec Province, Canada and died of cervical cancer in 1910 in Minneapolis.
- 2.) Charles Vient (Cummings) was born on May 1, 1859 in Quebec and died on August 5, 1948 in Hugo, Minnesota.
- 3.) Flora J. Vient (Cummings) was born about 1860 in Quebec and last heard of in 1930 living with her sister Addie in Seattle.
- 4.) Clara Vient (Cummings) was born on June 15, 1863 in Quebec and died on Aug. 18, 1947 in Minneapolis.
- 5.) Abraham Joseph Vient (Cummings) was born in May 1865 in Quebec and last heard of in 1917 as living in northern Minnesota. Family reports say he eventually moved to Pennsylvania, his wife's home state, where he died shortly thereafter.
- 6.) Adeline A. Vient (Cummings) was born on Oct. 1, 1869 in Minnesota and died in January 1943 in Los Angeles.
- 7.) Mamie Salomie Vient (Cummings) was born about May 1870 in Minneapolis and died on March 29, 1946 in Minneapolis.
- 8.) Telesphore Joseph Vient (Cummings) was born on June 19, 1872 in Minneapolis and died on Aug. 19, 1953 in Detroit Lakes, MN.
- 9.) Caliste Vient (Cummings) was born in April 1874. Family reports that after 1907 he moved away from Minnesota, perhaps to Utah or Pennsylvania, and died shortly thereafter.



**Ida Adele Vient (Cummings)** 

Ida Adele was born about 1856 in Quebec. Adele's death certificate says she was born on March 28, 1860 in Wisconsin. If this is true (it differs from census data which says she was born in Quebec), it gives rise to the possibility that Prudent and Philonise were in the U.S., eight years or so earlier than thought, probably in the Green Bay, WI area where Philonise's father and at least one brother were staying at one time.

She married Telesphore Labelle on April 10, 1872 in St. Paul, Minnesota at the age of 14. He was the son of Joseph Labelle and Eulalie Vezina and a distant Labelle cousin. He was born in February 1851 in Canada and died between 1880 and 1900 in Minnesota. In 1880, Ida and Telesphore farmed in Washington County, MN's Oneka Township. Family reports say Telesphore left Ida and the children between 1890 and 1900. In 1900, Ida was a nurse in Minneapolis and a widow.

Telesphore and Ida had ten children, of whom only three were alive in 1910. Their first child was George, born about 1876 in Minnesota. Next was Josephine M., who was born on September 13,1877 in the Hugo and who died on December 21,1932 in San Francisco, California. Josephine married Joseph P. Cartier on July 14, 1902 at Ste.

Genevieve's Church in Centerville, Minnesota. Joseph was the son of Joseph Cartier and Matilda Houle. He was born on December 25, 1870 in Centerville, Minnesota and he died on December 25, 1932 in San Francisco, California. Their third child was Edmond, born about 1880. Eddie married a woman named Wilhelmina who was born in 1888 in Minnesota. In 1920 Edmond and his wife lived with William and Addie Theberge (Edmond Cummings' Aunt Addie) in Los Angeles. Telesphore and Ida's son Francis was born about 1890 in Minnesota.

Adele died on January 11, 1910 of uterine cancer. She was buried in St. Mary's Cemetery in Minneapolis, and her grave was moved from its original spot to where her parents were buried in October 1910. A headstone marks her gravesite.



Flora J. Vient (Cummings)

Flora J. was born about 1860 in Quebec. She married a Mr. Schram. In 1920, Flora was a boarder at 4003 Court Street in Seattle, Washington. She was a widow and a practical nurse. In 1930, Flora lived with her sister Addie in Los Angeles and was listed in the U. S. Census as divorced. She was 66 years old and a practical nurse for a private family. Flora had one child named Ella.



**Clara Vient (Cummings)** 

Clara was born on June 15, 1863 in Quebec. She married Frank Grant around 1880 in Minneapolis. Frank was the son of George Grant and Unity Sweeney and was born on August 9,1861 in Canada. Frank had immigrated from Canada in 1875. He was a firefighter for the city of Minneapolis. He was assigned to Engine Company Number 12. Frank died at St. Mary's Hospital in Minneapolis at 10:15 p.m. on November 19, 1930. He died of pancreatic cancer, which he had been fighting for two years. Frank was buried by the Rainville mortuary in St. Mary's Cemetery in South Minneapolis.

Frank and Clara had one child, a girl named Adele Una who was born on March 19, 1893 in Minnesota and who died on September 17, 1966 in Minneapolis. Adele married Anthony Greisen in 1925 in Minneapolis. Anthony was born on March 2, 1896 in Minnesota and he died on August 5,1974 in Minneapolis. In 1930, Adele lived in Minneapolis at 1255 6th Street Northeast, where she was renting for \$40 a month. Anthony's parents were born in Luxembourg. Anthony's occupation in 1930 was a purchasing agent for a bedding factory. Adele and Anthony had one boy, Donald G., born in 1926 in Minneapolis. Donald was killed in action in World War II in 1944. He was a private first class in the

U. S. Army. He enlisted at Fort Snelling, Minnesota on May 10, 1944. Family reports say that he was a very brilliant young man, who started college at the University Minnesota at the age of 16.

Clara died at 3:50 a.m. on August 18, 1947 from hardening of the arteries complicated by diabetes. She was living at 1205 Monroe St. N.E.in Minneapolis at the time. Clara was buried at St. Mary's Cemetery in Minneapolis on August 20,1947.



**Abraham Joseph Vient (Cummings)** 

Abraham Joseph (A.J.) was born May 15, 1865 in Quebec. He married Josephine McHale on Dec. 24 1888 in Pennsylvania. She was born Dec. 23, 1867 in Stillwater. Abraham, or A. J. as he was known, and Josephine had three children: Mary Irene, Alden and Roy. About 1890, A. J. was in Pittsburgh working as a telephone operator.



A J. formed the Cummings Commission Company. It was a brokerage firm that dealt in stocks and commodity futures. Its offices were in downtown St. Paul at 110 Dispatch Building and in South St. Paul at 7 Exchange Building. A J. was the president of the company and his brother Cal was the vice president. William McHale was the secretary-treasurer. It is very possible that William was AJ.'s father-in- law. The company went bankrupt in 1907; possibly due to the panic of 1907.

## BIG BROKERAGE FIRM SUSPENDS.

Cummings Commission Company of Northwest Quits Business.

St. Paul, Minn., Dec. 14.—The Cummings Commission company, one of the largest and best known brokerage houses in St. Paul and Minneapolis, suspended business Thursday. Falling off in business is given as the cause of the suspension. The company had branches throughout Minnesota, the Dakotas and at Winnipeg.

A statement was given out by the Cummings Commission company as follows:

"The systematic 'knocking' that has been going on against this company for some time has created such a condition of affairs that our attorneys advise us to close up all accounts at the close of Thursday's market, so as to protect in a measure all alike. It will be a few days before we can give results.

"CUMMINGS COMMISSION COM-PANY,

"By A. J. Cummings."

The Cummings Commission company is what is known as a private-wire house, with a multitude of offices in the towns and cities of the north-west, catering to the country speculative trade. Mr. Cummings stated that his liabilities were comparatively small, he having in the past few weeks paid off a large number of accounts and in doing so had exhausted every resource, even selling his home. "I owe no brokers or bankers," he said.

Mr. Cummings is a member of the Minneapolis chamber of commerce and the Duluth grain exchange.

## THE SIOUX CITY JOUR

## ANOTHER FIRM TO THE WALL

THE CUMMINGS COMMISSION CO. CLOSES ITS DOORS.

LIABILITIES HERE, \$10,000

Manager of Local Office Refuses to Make Any Statement in Matter— Failure Is Latest of Several in the Same Line of Business.

A mild sensation was created among business men yesterday morning when it became known that the A. J. Cummings Commission company, of St. Paul, which maintains an office on the first floor of the Iowa bullding, in charge of L. McKendrick, had closed its doors and would be unable to continue in the grain brokerage business.

Beyond admitting that the company had gone to the wall, Mr. McKendrick, local manager for the company, declined to make a statement for publication. He said the liabilities of the Sioux City office would come under \$10,000, although he had not yet checked up the books and could make

no definite estimate.

The Cummings Commission company has maintained an office in Sloux Clty since August, 1905; its president, A. J. Cummings, has been a member of the Minneapolis chamber of commerce for a number of years, and also of the Winnipeg board of trade. The company maintained over 100 offices in the Dakotas, Minnesota, Canada and Iowa. Sloux City was the most southerly town in which an office was established. Other offices are located at Waterloo, Io., Sloux Falls, S. D. and Mitchell, S. D.

Among commission houses which carried on a brokerage business through branch offices the Cummings Commission company was considered one of the most reliable. It was a member of the Minneapolis chamber of commerce, and did its business through regular channels. Mr. Mc-Kendrick has made many friends who will regret to hear of the failure of his company.

The failure is the latest of several in which other grain commission houses have closed their doors in Sioux City.

It was a very unfortunate event for the Vient/Cummings family. A. J. and his wife had gone to Europe on a vacation. Having been sickly for some time, Josephine was concerned that she would never get to Europe. While they were in Europe, brother Cal as Vice President was in charge of the company dealings. Apparently at that time, the company

suffered a tremendous business setback and went bankrupt. After this unfortunate event, A. J. and Josephine, who had lived in a marvelous house with an elevator at 675 Goodrich Avenue in St. Paul, had to move to an apartment nearby. They eventually moved to northern Minnesota to a place called Germantown which was near where his brother Telesphore lived in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. A. J. may have suggested that T. J. move his family to a farm near Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, and apparently also assisted T. J. by sending boxcar loads of farm implements and other materials to help T. J. set up his farm. T. J. had purchased a pig farm. Family reports say he liked to feed the pigs fish, so his pig meat had a fishy smell and taste to it. He didn't mind because he sold that meat to city folks who didn't know the difference.

In 1905, a Mr. McHale, who was 87 years old, was living with A. J. and Rose. Mr. McHale had been born in Ireland.

Their children were Irene, born in October of 1889 in Pennsylvania, Alden J., born May 18, 1897 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Roy, born about 1897. In 1920, Irene lived with her brother, Alden in Munro, Michigan. She was single and not working. Alden married a Mary J. about 1918. Mary J. was born in about 1896 in Ohio. In 1917 or 1918, Alden registered for the military draft in Toledo, Ohio. He reported that he lived at 366 Irving St. in Toledo, Ohio. He said that he worked as a manager at the Penny Truck Company's office on S. Erie St. in Munro, Michigan. In 1930, Alden was a sales manager at a paper box manufacturer. In that year, he lived at 446 Victoria Place in Toledo, Ohio. Alden and Mary had a daughter named Anna Mae who was born about November of 1918 in Ohio. Curiously, Anna is listed with the family in the 1920 U.S. Census, but not with the family in the 1930 Census.



Adeline A. Vient (Cummings)

Adeline was born on October 1,1869 in Minnesota and died on January 23,1943 in Los Angeles, California. She married William Theberge on June 14. 1888 in St. Paul, Minnesota at St. Louis Catholic Church. The parish register at St. Louis Church in St. Paul shows that the marriage took place there. William was born about 1864 in Quebec. He immigrated from Canada in 1872 to the United States. In 1886, Addie was an employee at the dry goods company of Shotwell, Clerihew and Lothman.



**Mamie Salomie Vient (Cummings)** 

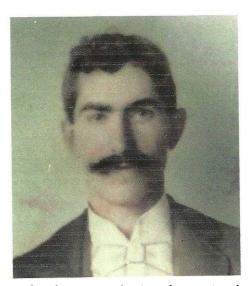
Mamie Salomie was born in about May of 1870 in Minnesota and died on March 29, 1946 in Minneapolis. She married Charles Joseph Bissonnette on September 24, 1890 in Minneapolis. Charles was a son of Pierre Bissonnette and Leocadie DeMars. Charles was born on November 29, 1862 in Little Chute, Wisconsin and died on January 22, 1950 in Minneapolis. Charles was buried at St. Mary Cemetery in Minneapolis on about January 25, 1950. In 1887, Mamie worked for the Ingram, Olson and Company in Minneapolis. She lived at the rear of 201 Second Avenue Southeast in Minneapolis.

Charles and Mamie had many children. The oldest was Philonise born on January 2, 1892. She died very young. William was born December 1892. He married Gladys Manske Daniels first and then later he married Emily Beaudon on June 25,1916. The next child was Arthur T., born on September in 1894 in Minneapolis. He married Edith Anderson. Then carne Florence M., born in May of 1896 in Minnesota.

Thomas R. was born in 1898 in Minneapolis. He died on May 30, 1968 in Hennepin County, Minnesota. He married Dora Doran. In 1930 Thomas lived with his sister Florence and her family. In 1930, he was employed as a policeman for the City of Minneapolis. He lived at 1122 Arthur St N.E. in Minneapolis.

The next child was Leocadie, born on July 21,1903. Leocadie first married Harold C. Nelson on June 5, 1924 in Minneapolis. He died in 1954 in Minneapolis. She then married Raymond L. Brouillard on October 23, 1959, most probably in Minneapolis. Leocadie and Harold had at least six children. Donald Wayne was the oldest, born on October 22 in 1925 in Minneapolis. Thomas Lloyd was next born on January 9, 1927 in Minneapolis and died on May 24,1992 in Chesapeake, Virginia. Richard H. was born on January 14, 1928 in Minneapolis and died on April 3, 1928 in Minneapolis. Gerald L. was born on July 5, 1929 in Minneapolis. He married Betty Champlain. Gordon C. was born on November 7, 1931 in Minneapolis and died on March 23, 1953 in Korea. He was in the military. And finally, Carolyn M. was born on May 5, 1939 in Minneapolis. She married Donald McArdle on August 19, 1959 in Minneapolis.

Charles and Mamie's next child was Lucille or Cecelia born on May 12, 1907. She married John Ellers. And finally, Louis A. was born on September 1912 and died in 1982, probably in California.



**Telesphore Joseph Vient (Cummings)** 

Telesphore Joseph (T. J.) was born on June 19, 1872 in Minneapolis. He died on August 19, 1953 in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. He married Lucinda Evangeline Auger on August 28, 1894 in Minneapolis at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church. Lucy was the daughter of Thomas and Cecelia Auger. Lucy was born on January 31, 1873 in Lotbiniere, Quebec and died on October 22,1945 in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. She emigrated from Quebec in 1877. Lucy played the organ for two different churches at the age of 14 while living in Minneapolis.

In the 1890s T. J. worked for the Salisbury, Ralph and Company mattress, which made mattresses, spring beds, and parlor furniture. The factory was located from 119 to 215 Main St. Southeast in Minneapolis. As late as 1982, the old factory building still stood. Its water tank atop the building still showed the faded letters of "Salisbury Mattress." T. J., his new wife Lucy, and their four kids lived with his in-laws, Thomas and Cecelia Auger, in Minneapolis. T. J. had worked for the Salisbury Mattress Co. for a long time and risen to be a foreman. He and Lucy even moved to Chicago in about 1904 apparently for that same company. They moved back about the time of the Cunmings Commission

Co.'s bankruptcy in 1907. It was then that he moved the family to Detroit Lakes, MN. Family reports say that he and brother A. J. worked this out in concert.

T. J. died from senility. He was buried on August 22,1953, at Holy Rosary Cemetery in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. He had been a farmer for big part of his life and from 1907 to 1953 in the Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. Lucy and Telesphore had many children. Their oldest was Calice Charles, born on May 28 in 1895 in Minneapolis. Cal died on June 25,1975. He married Rose Delphine Vollrath on Dec. 30, 1931 at St. John's Church in Wahpeton, ND. Rose was born on May 30,1901. Cal was one of the first Minnesota State Troopers. He wrote a book on the subject entitled "Memoirs of Badge #8." It was published by Comet Press (NY) in 1956. When a young man, Cal went to Alaska to look for work. While there, he found a mastodon bone fossil. Cal and Rose had two children: Paul and Rita. Paul was born on Jan. 24, 1933 in Detroit Lakes, MN. He died of stroke complications on Feb. 7, 1997 in New York City. Paul was an art appraiser in New York City. He loved to vacation in the Miami, FL area, where he was an active participant and donor to the arts there. Rita was born on June 21,1935. She married Sam Yankasammy. Rita and Sam lived at 14701 Flower St. (#5), Garden Grove, CA in 1997.

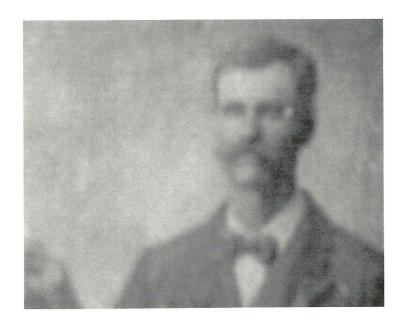
T. J. and Lucy's second child was Marie Evangeline Philinese. She was born on October 31,1996 in Minneapolis and died on June 24,1975 in Thief River Falls, Minnesota. She married Louis Courneya on May 19, 1920 at Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Detroit Lakes, MN. Louie was born on Oct. 23,1892. Next came Aglon Joseph Cummings, born on April 4, 1901 in Minneapolis and died on October 12, 1975. Eleanor Gertrude was born on September 29, 1902 in Minneapolis and died on February 27th 1979. Franklin Lewis was born on August 19, 1904 in Chicago, Illinois. He married Grace Klein on February II, 1942.

The next child of T. J. and Lucy was Wilhelmina Proxides born on September 7, 1906 in Aitken, Minnesota and who died in Ocala, Florida. Then came Joseph Merton, who was born on July 27,1908 in Detroit Lakes and who died on July 13, 1997 in Kentucky. And then, Leonard Ernest was born on June 13, 1910 in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota and died on January 29, 1972. Bernard Charles was born on Fairbury 9,1913 in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. Julius Raymond was born on January 201h, 1915 in Detroit Lakes and died that same month. James Donald was born on May 17, 1917 in Detroit Lakes and died on August 23, 1971 in Hawaii.



**Caliste Vient (Cummings)** 

Cal married a woman whose first name was Mackie in 1900 in Minnesota. She was born in February 1880 in Pennsylvania. In the 1890s, Cal worked as a paper hanger for the R. J. Rickey Company, which was a wallpaper business located at 620 Nicollet Avenue in Minnea- polis. Cal may have moved to Salt Lake City, Utah or Pennsylvania after the bankruptcy of 1907. According to his niece Rose Cummings Bemlott, he had served as the vice president of the Cummings Commission Company until it went bankrupt in 1907. He died shortly thereafter. In 1900 Cal's occupation was broker of stocks and grain, with offices in St. Paul and South St. Paul, Minnesota. His residence in June of 1905 was apartment #2 at the Virginian in St. Paul, Minnesota.



**Charles Joseph Vient (Cummings)** 

Charles lived most of his life in Hugo, MN. He was known there not only as Charles Cummings, but also as "Charlie Vient" and as "C.V." It seems that for business purposes (he and a Mr. Griffiths had a wallpaper business in the early 1890's in Minneapolis at 309 Wright Block) Charles adopted the last name of Cummings. But when he was among his family and the French-Canadians from Hugo, he was known as Charlie Vient. He often signed his name as "C. V. Cummings." He inserted the "V" to indicate that his name had been Vient. Interestingly, his parents, his siblings and at least one of his children vacillated between using Vient and Cummings.

Charles was born on May 1, 1859 in Quebec. He died on August 5,1948 in Hugo, Minnesota. He married Catherine Novena Belland on May 19, 1884, at St. Genevieve's Catholic Church in Centerville. Catherine was the daughter of Pierre and Lucie (Bibeau) Belland. She was born on December 14, 1864 in little Canada, Minnesota, and she died on June 4, 1953 in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Charles and Catherine had nine children. Rose was born on May 1, 1885 in Hugo. She died on December 29, 1980 in West St. Paul, Minnesota. George H. was born on January 22, 1886 in Hugo, and died on July 11, 1936 in Hennepin County, Minnesota. William was born on October 9, 1887 and died on December 5, 1926 Alexander C. was born on March 7, 1889 in Centerville. Lewis was born on November 30, 1890 in Centerville and died on January 26, 1959 in Minneapolis. Alfred was born on October 19, 1892 in Hugo, and died in 1918 in Minnesota. Clara Sophie was born on September 2,1894 in Hugo and died on July 19, 1990 in Ramsey County, Minnesota. Irving Joseph was born on September 13, 1896 in Hugo and died on December 29,1988 in Hugo. Genevieve or Jenny was born on July 30, 1898 in Hugo and died about the same day.