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LeBlanc's Cleaners Charlotte Michaud

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LeBlanc's Cleaners History with Notes

Charlotte Michaud

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The Lewiston Steam Dye House was founded in 1860 by the late Henry [?]yas's father and purchased in 1884 by Joseph Leblanc grandfather of Alfred S. and Julien O. Leblanc co-owners of the establishment today.

Joseph LeBlanc was a pioneer Franco-American business man and inventor and one of Lewiston's most respected citizens, a native of St Leonard P. Q. The establishment was at 139 Main Street opposite the Empire Theater where LeBlanc's stille have a branch store today. Originally the business was exclusively for dyeing of garments and Mr Leblanc started Dry Cleaning which in those days was called steam cleaning.

In 1909 the business was incorporated with Joseph LeBlanc President. Alfred J. LeBlanc Treasurer and Philippe LeBlanc secretary. (2 sons)

In the year 1911 a small plant was erected on Lafayette Street where the new plant stands today, after doing business where a few years until 1924 when Mr Alfred J. LeBlanc father of Alfred S. and Julien O. bought the shares belonging to Joseph and Philippe became (to become) sole owner.

Mt Alfred J. LeBlanc (son of Jos.) was born in St John New Brunswick in 1880 and educated in public schools later graduating from a commercial Academy at Nicolet Canada. Mr. A. LeBlanc was prominent in an enterprising and progressive circle of young Franco-American business men who were earnestly engaged in maintaining and advancing Lewiston's position as the most advantageous industrial and mercantile center in Maine. He was also deeply interested in civic affairs and wielded considerable influence politically, always with the best interests of the city and its people as a first consideration. He represented ward 4 in the city council of 1912 and ward 5 as alderman in 1915. Mr A.J. LeBlanc was always highly respected in the Dry Cleaning Industry in the State of Maine, always making progressive steps in increasing the quality of Drycleaning solvent, soaps, etc. Fraternally, Mr. LeBlanc was affiliated with the Jacques Cartiers, the Montagnard, the Lewiston Lodge of Elks, and the Musical Litterary Club. After his death in 1949 the business was carried on by Alfred S. and Julien O. Leblanc his two sons now co-owners of the business.

In 1948 a new department was incorporated in the business which is the cleaning and reconditioning of all types of athletic equipment, another pioneering enterprise at LeBlanc's Cleaners.

Alfred S. LeBlanc (retired 1979) co-owner was born in Lewiston and educated in parochial and public schools graduated from Roberts academy, is known locally in sporting circles as a former Junior League baseball player and later in softball circles. He is also a member of the Elks and Musical Literary Club. He now resides at 35 Central Avenue is married to the former Jeanette Mailhot, and they are blessed with a family of three daughters Lorraine, Rita, Diane and a boy Alfred (3d pres of firm?)

Julien O. LeBlanc was also born in Lewiston, educated in Parochial and public schools graduating from Lewiston High and was prominent in the sports world as a Hockey player and coach, having played with the old Cyclones. [over]

[cont'd]

He served in the armed forces for three years during World War 2 in which 2 years were served overseas in Europe. Upon discharge he returned to work in Drycleaning with his father. Julien is married to the former Muriel Hauter[?] and resides at 7 Sylvain avenue, has two boys Julien Jr and Ronald and a daughter Jeanne. Julien also is a member of the Elks and the Musical Literary Club.

[Charlotte Michaud, c.1980]