



[Minnesota Geographic Board.
Records.](#)

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DEC 22 1937

JAMESTOWN

This half township occupies the extreme Northeast corner of the County. It is noted for the number and picturesqueness of its lakes. Portions of Madison, Washington, Gilfillan and Eagle Lakes are within its borders and the whole of Lakes Ballantyne, Duck, George and two or three others are found within it. Blue Earth County has about twenty-one sections or 13,440 acres of its surface covered by meandered lakes, and Jamestown, though but half a township, has the largest area so covered of any town in the county -- being about 1,665 acres. The surface of the land is quite rolling and originally was covered with a dense forest of valuable timber. The Indian name for Lake Madison was "Waukenseche" or "Waukensica" (The "Evil Spirit" or "Abundant Mystery", or "The Sacred Shade"). The Indian name of Lake Washington was "Okapah" (The Choke Cherry Lake). Their present names were given by the government surveyors. The name "Jamestown" was suggested by Enoch G. Barkhurst in honor of the first English Colony in Virginia. The town was at first included in Kasota precinct. When on April 1, 1855, that precinct was added to LeSueur County, Jamestown, also, was lost to Blue Earth County until June 1, 1856, when it was restored to it.

Taken from the "History of Blue Earth County" by Thomas Hughes, life member of Minnesota Historical Society, and member of the "Blue Earth County Historical Society".

DEC 22 1937



HOTEL BEN PAY

FIREPROOF

MANKATO, MINN.

Dec. 20, 1937

Theodore Bligen, Supt.
State Historical Society
Old Capitol Bldg.
St. Paul, Minn.

Dear Mr. Bligen:

I was very much interested in reading in the Pioneer Press a few days ago about changing the names of lakes in Minnesota that are duplicated.

With reference to Lake Washington, located in LeSueur and Blue Earth Counties, I am taking the liberty of enclosing you a copy of a paragraph taken from the "History of Blue Earth County" by Thomas Hughes, with reference to the original name of Lake Washington which was "Okapah".

I trust that when your Board is in session you may give some consideration to the original name of this lake.

With very kindest remembrance and wishing you the Compliments of the Season, I am

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "D. J. Pay".

BFP:MEG

December 31, 1937

Mr. B. F. Pay
Mankato, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Pay:

We shall be very glad to put before the State Geographic Board the problem of the possible change of name that you have written about in your letters to Mr. Elsborg and myself. It may be that the desirable procedure would be, first of all, a petition to the county board as provided under the statutes, so that the matter could come before the state board backed and supported by official action within the county.

We are just now working out forms for such local petitions and as soon as we are able to do so, we are planning to communicate with all the county boards within the state, setting up a general procedure. I shall be glad to write you again as soon as this procedure has been finally worked out. Meanwhile I can assure you that we shall keep this matter in mind.

Sincerely yours,

TCE/H

Superintendent

DEC 29 1937

O. L. KIPP
CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER

N. W. ELSBERG
COMMISSIONER OF HIGHWAYS

L. L. ALLEN
MAINTENANCE ENGINEER

M. J. HOFFMANN
BRIDGE ENGINEER

J. T. ELLISON
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER
AND CHIEF ENGINEER

W. F. ROSENWALD
TRAFFIC ENGINEER



Geo. Board

STATE OF MINNESOTA
ELMER A. BENSON, GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS

1246 UNIVERSITY AVENUE
SAINT PAUL, MINN.

December 28, 1937.

Mr. Theo. C. Blegen,
Secretary, State Historical Society,
State Capitol,
St. Paul, Minnesota.

Dear Sir:

Re: State Geographic Board.

I am attaching a letter and statement received
from B. F. Pay, Mankato, relative to Lake Washington in
LeSueur and Blue Earth Counties.

Yours very truly,

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS

N. W. Elsberg
Commissioner of Highways.

NWE/MN

January 17, 1940

Mr. C. L. Huebl, County Auditor
Le Center, Minnesota

My dear Mr. Huebl:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter to Mr. B. F. Pay
of Mankato concerning the changing of the name of Lake
Washington.

Sincerely yours,

Arthur J. Larsen, Secretary
State Geographic Board

AJL/b

January 17, 1940

Mr. Berton E. Lee, County Auditor
Mankato, Minnesota

My dear Mr. Lee:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter to Mr. B. F. Pay
of Mankato concerning the changing of the name of Lake
Washington.

Sincerely yours,

Arthur J. Larsen, Secretary
State Geographic Board

AJL/b

January 17, 1940

Mr. B. F. Pay
Hotel Ben Pay
Mankato, Minnesota

My dear Mr. Pay:

From the files of the State Geographic Board it appears that in December, 1937, you had some correspondence with the Board concerning renaming Lake Washington in Blue Earth and Le Sueur counties. At the time of your correspondence action on such matters was deferred until the Board should be fully organized and its policies determined.

Chapter 35 of the Session Laws of 1937, which defines the procedure to be followed in changing the name of a lake or stream by petitioning the board of county commissioners in the county wherein the body of water lies, provides that "no name of any lake, river, stream or other body of water, which name has existed for forty (40) years shall be changed under the provision of this act." Lake Washington falls under this provision, for it was named by the government surveyors in the 1850's.

The act establishing the State Geographic Board (chapter 63 of the Session Laws of 1937), however, under section 2, paragraph c, empowers the state board, in co-operation with the county boards and with their approval, to change the names of geographic features in order to eliminate duplication of names within the state. Since Meeker and Mahnomen counties each have a Washington Lake, it would be permissible under this law to change the name.

The procedure for you to follow under the circumstances is to forward to the State Geographic Board a petition containing:

- (a) The location of the lake by section, township, and range.
- (b) The name by which the lake is now known.
- (c) The name which it is desired to give the lake.
- (d) The reasons why the change is desired, and why the new name is appropriate.
- (e) The signatures of 15 legal voters residing in the county. Signers must also give their addresses.

When the petition is received by the State Geographic Board, the county boards of Blue Earth and Le Sueur counties will be asked to hold a joint hearing on the question. After the hearing is held the state board will act upon the matter.

I am enclosing a blank petition which you may wish to use.

Sincerely yours,

Arthur J. Larsen, Secretary
State Geographic Board

AJL/d

Blue Earth
Lake Washington

Re changing name of Lake Washington, Le Sueur and Blue Earth
counties.

See

B. F. Pay to T. C. Blegen, 12/20/37

B. F. Pay to N. W. Elsberg, 12/20/37