

ROBITAILLE, LENA.

SECOND INTERVIEW

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Mr. Grant Foreman  
Muskogee, Oklahoma

Wyandotte, Oklahoma.  
September, 1938.

Interview with Lena Robitaille  
Wyandotte, Oklahoma, By letter.

About a year ago Miss Nannie Lee Burns came to me for our geneology. She said, she was writing for you. She gave me a copy several months later, I asked her to correct some parts. She would change the subject when I requested her to write it correct, misconstruing in several places. I desire you to correct what she wrote. I am sending you the truth.

Our great grandfather was Robert Robitaille from Montreal who married Isaac Zane's ( Englishman ) daughter, Elizabeth Zane. Robert Robitaille and Elizabeth Zane Robitaille had two sons who were our grandpas, Robert Grant Robitaille, born in Logan County, Ohio, in 1804, who was our mamma's father, and James Narcissa Robitaille who was our papa's father. They had one sister who married Isaac Gardner, English officer. James Narcissa Robitaille was born in Logan County, Ohio, in 1806. I have mamma's father's Bible published in 1832 with all our records of Robitailles born in the United States.

Robert G. Robitaille was educated as a lawyer and James Narcissa Robitaille was educated as a doctor and remained in

Canada. The history said, he came to Ohio to find his father's grave. Our great grandfather came to Logan County, Ohio, as early as 1793 ( first merchant of Zanestown, south part). He and Isaac Zane were first settlers in Logan County. Isaac Zane built his fort here for trouble and distress during the Revolutionary War; he was married about this time. Isaac Zane bought 1800 acres of land in that county, remained there until he died. As late as 1876 General Kennedy informed the writer he and Dr. James Robitaille visited this burial ground and discovered the grave of the first merchant, Mr. Robitaille.

Isaac Zane was taken by Wyandottes when nine years old.

Robert Gardner was an Englishman, who came on the Mayflower from England about 1607. I knew three generations of Robert Gardners ; first was an Englishman who was a cousin to papa and mamma. He was a large man and had my blue eyes and gray hair. He was Indian Commissioner when I was 5 years old. He desired to take me in the East with him, His son, Robert Gardner, was in the Government service at Haskell Institute. Then the third Robert Gardner was a decided blond as his mother was- all had blue eyes.

I believe papa's mother was Robert Grant's sister; he was an English Educator at Winnepeg. I believe Grants were English-Scotch. He gave a letter of recommendation to our grandfather,

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Robert Grant Robitaille, saying he was free from all vice and of amiable disposition. It was addressed to Reverend Pierre Robitaille, Montreal, written June 5, 1818. It is 120 years old. I retain this letter. Mamma's father and papa's father were brothers. Papa told me his forefathers came on an English sailing vessel in the early history of this New World, America. The Captain of the English vessel changed Robeteau to Robitaille. He knew Jim and George McGannon who went to school with papa and his folks said they were the best class of people that he knew in Canada. Jim told W. A. and my husband the same. Jim McGannon desired to marry our sister Julia. Jim talked of papa's renowned folks everytime we seen him.

Isaac Zane and his brother Jonathan Zane were taken by Wyandottes as they returned from school at Morrisfield, Virginia. Their father was an English gentleman, who came with William Penn to Pennsylvania in 1682 from England, he later married a school teacher and moved to Virginia near the Potomac River. In Howe's Historical Collection of Ohio, Muskingum Company, Lyman C. Draper says Zanes Family were gentlemen, descendants of a Mr. Zane, who accompanied Wm. Penn from England of his province to Pennsylvania

in 1682. Robert Grant Robitaille was mamma's father who married Julia Barnard. She was an English girl.

About the Wyandotte Mission here, Wyandottes laid out 160 acres for Wyandotte Mission ( not papa). It was Will Darraugh not John Darraugh that was one of Town Company here, John had first hardware store here. Silas Armstrong was one of Company; he was a descendant of this Zane family. The Quakers were the first missicnaries here on the 160 acres of land above mentioned. I went to school there. Dr. Kirk was superintendent, his wife Rachel and daughter Ethel were with him. Lizzie Test was teacher. Their works were good. The United States took over this mission afterward and did good work also. I was in school there also then.

I didn't say, "You see we are mostly French and Wyandotte". We are as much English as French and only 1/32 Wyandotte through Isaac Zane's wife, who was one-half French and one-half Wyandotte. Isaac Zane's wife was Chief Forbe's daughter, who captured Cavalier La Durante's wife and daughter; he kept the daughter and married her. Myerrah was their only child. La Durante's daughter was all white, she died after Myerrah was born.

Isaac Zane was captured by another tribe who was about to burn him at the stake, Myerrah saved him. He said, "If you live among my people I'll marry you." She went along with him to Ebenezer Zane's and were married next day.

Read "Betty Zane", Zane Gray's first book. Inspired by repeated stories of his grandmother, Betty Zane, the heroine of Fort Henry who carried the powder to the fort from Ebenezer Zane's home. He was Colonel Ebenezer Zane, the English officer at the Fort Henry. When we had this in history, I jumped out of my seat and said, "This is our Aunt Elizabeth Zane, who carried that powder through the battle". Teacher said, "Tell us about it." I said, "She is our great great grandpa's sister, Elizabeth Zane, Grandpa said she put the powder in a table cloth and carried it in her apron through the battle to save her people and their country. Elizabeth Zane who married the first Robitaille in Ohio was one quarter Wyandotte, and white through her grandma, Cavalier Durante's child and white through Isaac Zane, all white. Elizabeth Zane was one fourth and our grandpas one-eighth and papa and mamma one-sixteenth, leaving us 1/32 Wyandotte. I never deny my forefathers' English and French. Papa didn't, why should I but we are all born Americans. We don't have to be be Indians to Americans, do we?"

It was through Robitailles and not Zanes, we were connected or special friends of Queen Victoria. Zanes were never in Canada as I know of-- Queen Victoria gave papa's sister Mrs. U. E. Archambeau a trunk full of doll clothes she made herself and a doll to go with it as a remembrance.

Many of papa's people in Canada were missionaries. I heard Queen Victoria came on a secret mission to Canada. Mr. Archambeau was principal of the Montreal schools in 1880. We have three pictures of Mr. Archambeau, his wife and children; also, Prevost's people, they were English people. Papa said his people built missions in Canada in northeast, Indians were housed, clothed, fed and schooled in early days, especially the Hurons now called Wyandottes.

Robert Robitaille, grandpa, as lawyer wrote three or four treaties for Wyandottes from Ohio about 1842 or after, where mama was born in Logan County at Bellefontaine, Ohio, in 1842. Grandpa did much writing for white people also that were near.

I kept several of his letters written in 1850 some years later.

We have in our family album a Mr. Marquette, who papa said was well respected and a good man. He is dressed as a priest.

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in citizens' clothes. I found an item of Father Marquette who as a missionary built many schools in Canada and the United States and where the canal was built. Lately I just glanced in our family album--This picture mentioned is Mon. Marquette.

The Zane's settled along the Ohio River. They are a noted family back East. I've received letters from authors who desired some history of them in Ohio. Aunt Mary Ann Long who was English also, who married her cousin, Jim Zane, told me considerable of our relations in Virginia and West Virginia, where they were born and raised. I know their son who is now over 80 years old, still alive and quite active. He has blue eyes and dark brown hair, not very gray. I knew Aunt Mary Ann's brothers also, Jim, Irwin and William Long's families. I read Long's were a noted family in England. Aunt Mary Ann gave me a dish brought from England by her grandma. It may be 300 years old. It is of several colors like an agate. Mamma had a lamp similar, English ware. I have an English ware plate with the Crown on back. Beneath (Blue Crown) is J. M. and another place a circle Mehlem Rhein Franzant FAM

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Ildress A. B.

This blue English ware plate was given <sup>me</sup> when I was 14 years old.



Our matron, Mrs. Lultain gave it to me for taking charge of girls in school, for good service. They told me it was a valuable plate, to take good care of it. It's not cracked or nicked nowhere yet. I've used it for several years. It is 47 years old.

The letter of recommendation is 120 years old. Isaac Zane built Zanesfield and his brother Colonel Ebenezer Zane built Zanesville in Ohio. These are on the new travel maps. Every year the tourists visit Zanesfield for a play the neighbors give, representing Isaac Zane and his wife and their romance in Zanesfield, Ohio.

Monument of Isaac Zane was hewed from a bolder Rock and a brass plate is attached telling history; also, of great grandpa Robitaille first merchant and other famous builders there. Elizabeth Zane's monument is at the ling as the heroine of that place and Fort Henry.

Doctor Vigers and Maud Vigers are pictured in our family album also... Dr Vigers' eyes are very blue and his hair is light or very gray.

The Prevosts all seem to have blue or gray eyes. The Zanes that were old all were tall and slender with bluest blue eyes. I knew three of the Zanes men, Willfam, Ebenezer O. and Uncle Isaac. They showed their English every way--all nice looking.

I never denied my United States Citizenship, neither did our parents. I say we have God over us and "In God we Trust", our tribute. The Faith of our Fathers and Our Forefathers-

Respectfully

Lena Robitaille.

I've been gleaning geneology and history of our forefathers since 1931. Do you buy history of above? I can write of early times as I've read considerable and have history of same. I'll sell you writings or history of early days. No one else takes the interest but I. What would you pay? Of early Canada and United States. I've 4 or 5 books belonging to our parents.

Papa and mamma came from Kansas about 1872. They had a 9 room plastered frame house then. They sold their farm and home and came here to buy land. They bought 300 acres from Henry Charles, Wyandotte Indian. They made improvements, built 8 room frame plastered house, big double barn, corn barns and chicken house, later a smoke house to keep meat and vegetables and store room. Orchard set out, farm all in. They were considered some of the best farmers here. They raised lots of cattle, hogs and plenty of horses and once had 800 head of sheep, chickens, ducks and turkeys, all kinds of vegetables needed.

Papa set our wild blackberries along our fences. They were immense and best flavored- he fertilized and cultivated them. When we were children hazelnuts were plentiful. We gathered them by the bushels near home. Also walnuts and hickorynuts. Papa would sometimes give apples away by wagon loads. He would sell them in big towns to merchants.