

Isabelle “Oh-tah-wah-quay” Bazille Delauney wife of Michel Delauney

Isabelle Bazille; was the daughter of Therease Cotte; who was married to a full-blood Indian named Kah-we-tah-wah-mo (b. 1775), a member of the Fond du Lac band of the Chippewas of Lake Superior. Isabelle married Michel Delauney (b. 1797).

Isabelle’s husband, Michel Daunais, appears in the Red River Census (1829-1843). In the 1843 census he is shown as age 46, a Roman Catholic, with his wife and one son under 16, and one daughter under 15. They have a house, stable, and four sheep on three acres. In 1838, they had one horse, one mare, one ox, one canoe, on four acres.

Isabel, was at the age of 14 married to Michael Delaney, a French Canadian who was by occupation a mason. Mrs. Delaney was one-half to three fourths Chippewa of Minnesota. She frequently went from Fond du Lac to the Red River to make maple sugar before and after her marriage; she lived in a tipi.

Shortly after her marriage, there being substantially no work in Mr. Delaney’s line in Fond du Lac, they went up on the Red River in Canada near Fort. Garry or Winnipeg, and he worked there on the fort and made some tombstones. When they started from Fond du Lac to Red River, they first travelled with a dog team, and when they came to the river they crossed it in bark canoes, and then carried the canoes to the next lake until they got through. Eight children were born to them while they were living in Canada; Elizabeth being, probably the third. She was born about 1828 or 1829 [1828-1922]. When Elizabeth was about 19 her father moved back, about 1850, to Minnesota and secured work on Fort. Snelling. Two years later, his wife joined him and there bore him two more children.

Elizabeth remained about two years longer with her aunt, until her parents were settled at St. Paul, and then by their direction she joined them and remained with them a couple of years, when she was married to Joseph Vezina (1807-1878), a French Canadian, a carpenter, millwright, railroad bridge builder, and farmer, and they moved to Mendota, and later to Minneapolis.

Story: Land Rights-The Saga Of Elizabeth Delaney Vezina By Beverly Bourque

Source: <http://www.mundia.com/us/Person/14910612/18226516105>

The Saga of Elizabeth (Delaney) Vezina

On January 14, 1889, Congress passed; “An act for the relief and civilization of the Chippewa Indians in the state of Minnesota”. This act provided for the appointment, by the President, of three commissioners to negotiate with all the different bands and tribes of Chippewa Indians in the state of Minnesota. This for the relinquishment of all their interest in the state, except in the White Earth and Red Lake Reservations.

In section 3, of this act provided that all Chippewa Indians, except those in the Red Lake reservation, be removed to and take up their residence at the White Earth reservation. On March 15, 1889, at the age of 60 years, Elizabeth Vezina, along with her husband, moved to the Town of White Earth where they lived for 13 years in a house built by Mr. Vezina. At this time, many middle aged Chippewa Indians moved to the

reservation, and for the first time in their lives, lived with their people. In 1902 or 03, Elizabeth's husband moved back to Minneapolis where he died.

Elizabeth stayed at White Earth reservation and in 1903 moved to a new location. The description of her land being, the west half of the northeast quarter and the southeast quarter of the northwest quarter and the south half of the north half of government lot 3 in section 2, township 146, range 40, west of the fifth principal meridian.

At the age of 74, Elizabeth made improvements on her land consisting of a house, two barns, which burned down, built a barbed wire fence, and grubbed the timber and brush from about 1 1/2 acres. Her improvements were worth about \$800.00. She remained on these lands until the lawsuit of 1917. About 1909 these lands were allotted to Pah-dub and subsequently sold to S.E. Mooers who was a defendant in the case.

Commissioners and Allotment History

In the 1st section of the Act of 1889, provided that for the purpose of making allotments (and for other purposes) the commissioners should make a census. The law did not call for the consent of the Indians to the making of the list for allotment. That power was solely vested in the commissioners, but they wisely in the main decided to take the advice of an Indian council, not with the old White Earth Indians, but of the new and old occupants of that reservation.

There was considerably more land in the reservation than was required for allotment. The act provided for the sale at public auction of the pine lands of the reservation, at not less than their appraised value, and the entry of the agricultural lands under the homestead law, but required each homesteader to pay \$1.25 per acre for his land.

The act further provided that the proceeds of the sale of pine lands and agricultural lands should all be to the ultimate benefit of the Chippewas of Minnesota. Thus every member of the council acquired a direct personal interest, adverse to any claimant to an allotment, in the loss which would result to the residue, if allotments were allowed which would reduce the lands which belonged under the act to the Indians in common.

The Indians were much divided as to Mrs. Vezina's claim to be listed with the commissioners and to giving her an allotment. White Cloud, the principal chief, after making personal investigation, was in her favor, as were many more of the Indians, and the proceedings of the first council, if ever recorded, are not in evidence. Suffice it to say they never voted to recommend that Mrs. Vezina be put upon the list. The council of June 1, 1907, rejected her, and in later years the council constantly referred the matter back to the government.

After living at the town of White Earth on the reservation, in a house which they had been expressly permitted to build by the chief, and apparently at least with the acquiescence of the Indian agent and commissioners, for 13 years or more, she moved to the land in question about the time of her husband's death. The description of the land upon which she located was furnished her by Joseph Perrault, who was employed at the government agency.

Between 1892 and 1907 the following government officials became involved in Elizabeth's attempt to get her allotment. Simon Michelet, U.S. Indian agent at White Earth; Darwin S. Hall, Assist. Commissioner of Indian Affairs; Several Acting

Commissioners of Indian Affairs; Acting Secretary of the Interior; Congressman Loren Fletcher; and culminating in 1907 with a letter from Elizabeth to the President of the United States.

By 1911 there was discussion of removing Elizabeth's family from the reservation because they were not enrolled with the Chippewa tribe. The following affidavit was filed at the office of Indian Affairs on December 13, 1911. Margaret Roy, 93 years old, a cousin of Elizabeth, made the affidavit swearing that from common report in the family Elizabeth was a mixed-blood Indian belonging to the Mississippi band of Chippewas of Minnesota and a granddaughter of Kah-we-tah-wah-mo, who was a fullblood member of said tribe.

As early as 1863, Elizabeth had been recognized by the government as a mixed blood Chippewa, when she was issued certificate No. 119, for 80 acres of land. Even though this was later declared void, it had established her status as a mixed blood Chippewa Indian.

Now, in 1917 at the age of 88, Elizabeth found herself in a court of law, having to prove that she was, in fact, an Indian. The following is evidence that was shown in the case. The testimony was given by various witnesses and Elizabeth herself, concerning her pedigree and family history. It is remarkable in that it relates to people born in the late 1700s and early 1800s. I am presenting it exactly as it was taken from the record and appears in the Federal Reporter. Elizabeth being the plaintiff.

“We have no doubt the evidence shows the plaintiff was born on the Red River, in Canada, near Ft. Garry or Winnipeg, to Michael Delaney and his wife, Isabel Delaney; her mother, Isabel Delaney, was born about the first of the nineteenth century at Fond du Lac, Minn.; Mrs Delaney's maiden name was Isabel Bazille; the maiden name of the plaintiff's grandmother, the mother of Mrs. Delaney, was Therease Cotte; she was married to a full-blood Indian named Kah-we-tah-wah-mo, a member of the Fond du Lac band of the Chippewas of Lake Superior. For aught that appears he and his wife were always fully recognized as members of that band and tribe. It seems probable that Mrs. Bazille had Indian blood as well as her husband. She looked like an Indian woman; she had black hair, which she wore down her back, wore moccasins, and, besides doing her domestic duties, did a great amount of bead work and was an Indian doctor. They lived in a tepee. Mrs. Bazille died at Fond du Lac.

Their daughter, Isabel, was at the age of 14 married to Michael Delaney, a Canadian Frenchman who was by occupation a mason. Mrs. Delaney was one-half to three fourths Chippewa of Minnesota. She wore her hair down her back, made moccasins for sale, did bead work and sold the same, and like her mother, aside from domestic duties, was an Indian doctor and midwife; she walked pigeon-toed, as most Indian women do; she frequently went from Fond du Lac to the Red river to make maple sugar before and after her marriage; she lived in a tepee.

Shortly after her marriage, there being substantially no work in Mr. Delaney's line in Fond du Lac, they went up on the Red River in Canada near Ft. Garry or Winnipeg, and he worked there on the fort and made some tombstones. When they started from Fond du Lac to Red river, they first traveled with a dog team, and when they came to the river they crossed it in bark canoes, and then carried the canoes to the next lake until they got through. Eight children were born to them while they were living in Canada; the plaintiff being, probably the third. She was born about 1828 or 1829. When plaintiff was

about 19 her father moved back, about 1850, to Minnesota and secured work on Ft. Snelling. Two years later his wife joined him and there bore him two more children. Plaintiff remained about two years longer with her aunt, until her parents were settled at St. Paul, and then by their direction she joined them and remained with them a couple of years, when she was married to Joseph Vezina, a Canadian Frenchman, a carpenter, millwright, railroad bridge builder, and farmer, and they moved to Mendota, and later to Minneapolis.

In the meantime, and about ten years after they had settled at St. Paul, the Delaneys moved to Rice Lake, about 18 miles from St. Paul, and to a farm. There they remained several years, when they moved to Minneapolis, where Mr. Delaney died, and his wife followed him about 1875. She also looked like an Indian squaw; she wore no stockings, but in winter wore cloths wrapped about her legs to protect her from the inclemency of the weather. While the plaintiff and her family were living at Mendota, her mother received an allotment of goods from the government, consisting of blankets, gingham, and calico, which she divided with the plaintiff. One witness says Mrs. Delaney was about three-fourths Indian by blood, more like a full-blood than three-fourths, and she acted like a squaw.

At one time Mrs. Delaney showed Louis Hamlin what she claimed was some scrip issued to her by the government. Nearly all of Mrs. Delaney's and the plaintiff's brothers and sisters married Indians or mixed-bloods. In her youth Mrs. Delaney frequently went out with others on buffalo hunts, carrying a pack on her back; she smoked a red clay pipe... Mrs. Delaney talked Chippewa and broken French. Through their lives, and in the various places where they have lived, Mr. and Mrs. Delaney and Mr. and Mrs. Vezina lived the greater portion of the time since they quit the tepee stage in log cabins...Mrs. Vezina talked French and broken Chippewa.

note: The Circuit Court of Appeals, Aug. 15, 1917 ordered that the decree of the District Court be reversed, and the cause remanded, with directions to enter a decree..in favor of the plaintiff.

source: Federal Reporter, Vol. 245, p. 420, case: Vezina v. United States et al, Circuit Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit. August 15, 1917. No. 4725

Submitted by
Beverly Bourque

Scrip affidavit for Marchand, Nancy; born: 1829; wife of Benjamin Marchand; father: Michel Daunais (French Canadian); mother: Isabelle (Métis); claim no: 466; scrip no: 3616 to 3623; date of issue: June 8, 1876; amount: \$160.



Compiled by Lawrence Barkwell
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