

**Enrolment Officer's Reply Submission in response to a Responding  
Submission by an Interested Party:**

**Report Regarding Ancestor  
Cecile McDonnell dite Mawishk  
(RIN #14687)  
dated March 15, 2023**



**Joan Holmes, Enrolment Officer for AOO  
Prepared for the Algonquin Tribunal  
March 2023**

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## 1. Introduction

The Tribunal received a responding submission from one individual in support of removing the ancestor Cecile McDonnell dite Mawishk (RIN #14687) from the Schedule of Algonquin Ancestors. The submission is posted on the Tribunal's website at:

<https://www.tanakiwin.com/tribunal/cecile-mcdonnell-mawishk/>

The submission appears on the website as:

- Document 7 – Submission by V. Coburn regarding Cecile McDonnell Mawishk. It was dated February 22, 2023.

Dr. Coburn's submission is responding to the Enrolment Officer's Report which appears on the Tribunal website as:

- Document 1 – Enrolment Officer's Report Regarding Ancestor Cecile McDonnell dite Mawishk (RIN #14687). It was dated November 2022.

This reply report addresses the content of the responding submission that is relevant to the Tribunal's inquiry, which is to determine whether Cecile McDonnell dite Mawishk (RIN #14687) is identified in a historic record or document dated on or before December 31, 1921, in such a way that it would be reasonable to conclude that she was considered to be an Algonquin or Nipissing, or a sibling of such a person. A "sibling of such a person" means a person with a common Algonquin parent.

This reply does not comment on sections of the submission that pertain to the history of enrolment, research methodology, the application of oral history or circumstantial evidence. Nor does it comment on information submitted or conclusions drawn by the respondent regarding descendants of the subject ancestor or family lines intermarried with her line as these are not issues before the Tribunal.

The responding submission refers to some documents and facts that are contained in the Enrolment Officer's Report (Document 1) and the Enrolment Officer's Reply Report (Document 6). As noted in the Enrolment Officer's Report, archival documents recording a family's life events have been assigned ALG document numbers; RIN numbers have been assigned to individuals discussed in the report to aid in identification. RIN numbers, ALG document numbers, and/or page numbers of existing reports will be referenced in this report for ease of discussion.

## 2. Document #7 – Responding Submission by V. Coburn

The respondent, V. Coburn, submitted a report to the Tribunal in support of removing Cecile McDonnell dite Mawishk (RIN #14687) from the Schedule of Ancestors. The submission was sent under cover of a letter dated February 22, 2023. The Respondent's submission consists of a covering letter and a 113-page report dated July 28, 2021 regarding ancestors Marie Cecile McDonnell dite Mawishk and her daughter Caroline Marianne Dorion. The report included written text, a genealogical chart, and supporting documents.

This reply report comments on the content of the submission that is within the purview of the Enrolment Officer to address and is germane to the issues before the Tribunal. The issues raised by the respondent are organized into sub-sections. Some individuals discussed by the respondent are identified by RIN numbers for ease of identification.

### ***2.1 Genealogical Chart for Caroline Marianne Dorion Lorion***

This genealogical chart provides a family tree for Caroline Marianne Dorion (1845-1916, RIN #13764). The chart shows her as the daughter of the subject ancestor Cecile McDonnell (c. 1807-1875, RIN #14687) and Cecile's spouse Narcisse Dorion (1807-1887, RIN #14686). The ancestors of Narcisse Dorion are shown; no ancestors are shown for the subject ancestor, Cecile McDonnell. The identity of the ancestors of Narcisse Dorion is not an issue before the Tribunal; nor is the identity of Caroline Marianne Dorion. Information specific to the identity those two individuals is not commented upon in this reply report.

The Enrolment Officer's Report (Document 1) included a genealogical chart at Appendix 1 showing the children of Cecile McDonnell and her spouse Narcisse Dorion, as well as the children's spouses. The chart notes that the parents of Cecile are not known.

The Enrolment Officer's Report (Document 1) discussed parents that have been alleged and investigated for Cecile McDonnell at Sections E.4 and E.5. The Enrolment Officer's Reply Report (Document 6) discussed alleged parents in Section 3.2. No parents were identified for subject ancestor Cecile McDonnell.

### ***2.2 Introduction and Comments on the Algonquins of Ontario (AOO) Proposed Enrolment Criteria, and Methodology (Respondent's sections 01 to 05, 07, 08)***

Much of the content of the initial seven sections of the respondent's report is taken from information posted on the AOO's website. In those sections, the respondent provides commentary and his understanding of the history of AOO enrolment process, commentary regarding Métis organizations and commentary regarding the use of oral history and circumstantial evidence. He also submits that genealogy is the most reliable means by which to determine ancestry. This reply report is not commenting on these sections as they are not directly germane to the issue before the Tribunal which is to determine whether Cecile McDonnell dite Mawishk (RIN #14687) is identified in a historic record or document dated on or before December 31, 1921, in such a way that it would be reasonable to conclude that she was considered to be an Algonquin or Nipissing, or a sibling of such a person. A "sibling of such a person" means a person with a common Algonquin parent.

### ***2.3 Métis and Scottish/Manitoba Saulteaux origins of Cecile Mawishk (Respondent's Sections 06 and 09)***

The respondent cites four documents that identify Cecile as being of mixed Indigenous-non-Indigenous heritage. These documents are all cited in the Enrolment Officer's Report (Document 1) and appended to that report:

- ALG-07289: The 1837 marriage document of Cecile in which she was identified as "Metisse," meaning a woman of mixed Indigenous and European heritage. This record is discussed on page 6 of the Enrolment Officer's Report and appended in Appendix 4.
- ALG-22371: The 1836 baptism of Cecile's son Narcisse in which she is identified as Saulteaux. This record is discussed on page 5 of the Enrolment Officer's Report and appended in Appendix 4.
- ALG-00421: The 1871 census for Mattawa North in which Cecile is listed as having been born in Manitoba and of Scottish origin. Her husband and children were identified as French. As Cecile died in 1875, she is not enumerated on any later census tracts.
- ALG-40198 and ALG-40199: The enumerations on the 1891 census for Cecile's daughters Sophie and Caroline list Cecile as having been born in Manitoba. The enumeration for her daughter Marie Cecile lists Cecile as having been born in the North West Territories. This document (ALG-22387) was not cited by the respondent. It appears in the Enrolment Officer's Report on page 10.

The Respondent did not report on the 1861 census (ALG-22375) in which Cecile was enumerated as having been born in Upper Canada. This is noted in the Enrolment Officer's Report on page 7 and appended in Appendix 4.

The geographic location of Manitoba prior to 1870 and the traditional area of the Saulteaux are discussed in the Enrolment Officer's Report on pages 5, 9, 10, and 17. In addition, the Enrolment Officer's Report comments on pages 5 and 6 on the identity and experience of the missionary who identified Cecile as both Saulteaux and Metisse.

The Enrolment Officer's Report provided a chart of the ethnic identities and places of birth attributed to Cecile's children on census records in Section E.3.

The respondent did not review or consider evidence that ties Cecile McDonnell to the Algonquin community at Mattawa, such as identifying the witnesses to her family's life events or co-residence with other Algonquins. This is covered in the Enrolment Officer's Report at Section E.1, E.2, and F.

#### ***2.4 Respondent's Conclusions***

The respondent concludes that records identifying the parents of Cecile McDonnell are unknown, that she has been identified in primary records as being of mixed Saulteaux and Scottish heritage, was born in Manitoba, and was not Algonquin.

Conclusions regarding Cecile's spouse Narcisse Dorion and her daughter Caroline are not relevant to the issue before the Tribunal.

As noted in the Enrolment Officer's Report, dated September 2022 (Document 1) and the Enrolment Officer's responding report of January 30, 2023 (Document 6), the Enrolment Officer was unable to identify the parents of the subject Ancestor Cecile McDonell. Although clearly of Indigenous descent, records explicitly identifying her as Algonquin or Nipissing have not been located.