

ALGONQUIN TRIBUNAL

Responding Submission by the Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nation **Disputed Ancestor: Hannah Mannell (RIN #18786)**

POSITION STATEMENT

This document is a follow-up to our original submission last month. Here are the instructions for responding submissions published on the Algonquins of Ontario website: “The primary purpose of responding submissions is to provide information and submissions responding to, or commenting on, the materials submitted by another person.” As such, our responding submission comments on the following four documents available on the Tribunal website:

- Initial Submission by R. Nicolas;
- Initial Submission by L. Hanley;
- Initial Submission by T. Vincent on behalf of C. Vincent; and
- Initial Submission by L. Hanley.

For our analysis, we only address the submissions that argue in favour of retaining Hannah Mannell on the Schedule of Algonquin Ancestors. None of the arguments forwarded by these parties are supported by the historical record. **It is our continued position that Hannah Mannell is not an Algonquin Ancestor according to Article 1 of the Special Resolution of January 22, 2020.**

Analysis of Submissions in Favour of Hannah Mannell’s Continued Inclusion

The first document was compiled by Ron Nicolas, Teresa Stokman, and Lynn Hanley and includes a variety of documents, including maps, Hudson’s Bay Company material, excerpts of regional histories, census records, and other miscellanea. Lynn Hanley made a short submission with information about her family. The next submission is by Anthony Vincent and contains some writing about regional territorial boundaries and an excerpt from a PhD dissertation. Lynn Hanley made a second submission, this one contains personal anecdotes, Hudson’s Bay Company journal entries, the transcript of the 2013 Chadwick decision regarding Hannah Mannell, AOO maps, excerpts from websites, and other miscellanea. The arguments used to further the authors positions can be grouped into two different, interrelated themes. The following discussion is representative of the arguments made by the authors, it is not an exhaustive list.

Family Lore Versus Oral History

The authors writing in favour of securing Hannah Mannell’s place on the Schedule of Ancestors rely heavily on family lore in their submissions. Family lore can be understood as a form of inter-generational communication that imagines historical events and relations in a manner that positions a given family as having unique customs or values. In their creation of lore, families focus on stories about overcoming adversity and injustice. The submissions in this section often confuse family lore with Indigenous oral history,

which has legal requirements and specific Indigenous protocols, and at times, ceremonies attached to it.

Lynn Hanley claims that her grandfather's good friend was Basil Partridge, a citizen of the Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nation (AOPFN). That may have been the case, but having a First Nation friend does not make somebody First Nation. If her grandfather was considered Algonquin by the Algonquin people at AOPFN, as Hanley maintains, then why is she referring to him as having only *one* Algonquin friend and not a network of kinship relations that stretch across Algonquin territory? Families often interpret any form of proximity, such as friendship with a First Nation person in the past, to mean that their own ancestor was a member of the same First Nation.

Hanley recounts the family lore about Hannah Mannell in this manner:

Hannah Mannell spent the better part of her life at Golden Lake running a small stopping place on the lake from 1832 to her death in 1868. She lived and kept friend with Algonquin people and the women from the South shore even before Pikwakanagan became a reserve in 1873. Her husband kept a journal of life at Golden Lake and Hannah was well known for her fishing skills and often it was journaled that women from the South part of the lake in what was still not a reserve including the mother of Chief Stoqua came up the lake to fish and visit with Hannah.

Some of this story is likely truthful, but some of it is a misrepresentation of the social and political environment surrounding the Thomas-Mannell family. Charles Thomas was a favoured son of the HBC, who had a close relationship with Governor George Simpson. From his position at HBC headquarters outside of Montréal, Thomas moved his family to Golden Lake to set up an HBC post. From the outset, Chief Makwa vehemently opposed the Thomas family's incursion into his family's hunting territory. HBC factors had immense power in nineteenth century Canada. According to the document produced in the EO's report, Charles Thomas refused to abide by the Algonquin request that he move away from Golden Lake and insisted that he would take the Chief's territory. The Chief even refers to the Thomas family as white people in the letter presented to the Crown.

Further, the evidence that Hanley shares, about a year of Charles Thomas's HBC Post Journal, does not corroborate her claims about Hannah's friendship with Algonquin women. An HBC post was a place of business primarily, where the Company tried to make a profit off the labour of Indigenous peoples. They did so by offering trappers and other labourers such as seamstresses and canoe-builders as little in terms of remuneration as possible. They preferred to pay in provisions such as ammunition, tobacco, dry goods (flour and sugar), and other foodstuffs. It was an exploitative situation whose harm to First Nations people has been extremely well documented by historians for several decades. While Hannah Mannell may have been friends with some local Algonquin women according to family lore, nothing that Hanley has provided suggests that that was the case. There is one reference in Thomas's Post Journal that suggests that

at least one Algonquin woman went fishing with Hannah. They could have been friends, but the HBC post may have owed this Algonquin woman some food or she may have owed the HBC post her labour. In other words, going fishing with Hannah could have been part of a transaction that was part of the daily affairs of the Post. Whatever the case, the HBC post was often the centre of political tension in a region and represented the vanguard of the dispossession and displacement of Indigenous peoples, which appears to have been the case with Charles and Hannah's arrival at Golden Lake as HBC agents.

Misreading of Evidence or Documentation

The Nicolas et al., Vincent, and Hanley (2) submissions all focus intently on refuting the claim that Hannah Mannell's mother was Cree. They present an alternative reading of HBC archives than that offered in the Enrolment Office's report. In their argument, John Mannell, Hannah's biological father, was at Frederick House when Hannah was conceived. In their reading of the boundaries between Algonquin and Cree territory, Frederick House was in the former's territory, which means Hannah's mother was Algonquin. However, at no time do any of the authors engage with the historical documentation presented in the EO's report that clearly places John Mannell at the HBC's Kenogamissi Post from four to five months prior to Hannah's conception to after her birth. The EO's report presents a detailed overview of Mannell's HBC Post Journals, one that provides us with a detailed understanding of his whereabouts, which the authors' scattershot approach fails to do.

For example, in concluding their arguments about Mannell's identity, Nicolas et al. state that "Mannal has no experience to the South towards Mattagami. Earlier document says that Mattagami people trade mainly at Temiskaming. All traders seem to pass between Abitibi, Frederick House, Nighthawk Lake to Matachewan. This is all Algonquin area. Therefore, it is Algonquin people who control this area." Their claim here that John Mannell had never been south is false. The EO's report, which includes Mannell's complete HBC biographical sheet, indicates that he was at Brunswick House as a clerk from 1788 to 1792, before he was at Frederick House and Kenogamissi Post. Brunswick House is south of Frederick House and slightly west of Mattagami. Further, Mattagami First Nation and Matachewan First Nation are mixed Ojibway and Cree communities that lie in Ojibway territory. There are some kinship relations with Algonquins, as one would expect given their geographical and cultural proximity, but there is no confusion about the boundaries of Algonquin territory lying further east.

The Enrolment Office produced a detailed report on Hannah Mannell's identity that included an impressive collection of Hudson's Bay Company archives and other primary historical documents. Unfortunately, none of the authors engaged with any of these documents, choosing instead to make speculative claims based on flawed research. Had the authors engaged with the actual documents produced by the EO, they would have confronted the reality that Hannah Mannell is not an "Algonquin Ancestor" as defined in Article 1 of the Special Resolution of January 22, 2020.