

April 22, 2023 - Lynn Hanley

I am writing to take issue with information and remarks made by both Joan Holmes and Chief Sarazin in the last round of entries into the Tribunal site.

Joan Holmes:

May we remind all who read this that this issue is not about Charles Thomas so the continued practice of implying something about him as if to cast a veil of suspicion on his family and wife Hannah must stop. Trying to erase Indigenous women has gone on for hundreds of years and the current population of both non indigenous and Indigenous people must stop this colonialist practice of sexism, racism and ageism and begin abiding by the TRC and Call to Action report and not marginalize and erase Indigenous women.

The reference to Charles and Hannah's children all being baptized in an Anglican Church is offensive and unwarranted. Charles Thomas was baptized in St. Benet(dicts) Anglican church in London England on December 22, 1800 when his father John took him to England for school. His father was Protestant and the witnesses and godparents to that baptism were Alex Lean and his wife Elizabeth. Lean was a principal secretary to the HBC in London.

https://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/_docs/hbca/biographical/l/lean_alexander.pdf

Charles and Hannah and other family members left Moose Factory with his father John Thomas who decided to settle in Vaudreuil Quebec as it was known as an enclave to former and retired HBC employees. It seems John Thomas felt more secure there. This was in the Spring of 1814 and Joan and others can check all this information in previous documents and the HBC archives. Upon arrival Charles and Hannah were married in a Protestant Anglican Church as Joan Holmes has already stated and Hannah was also baptized there.

Joan Holmes questions why Charles and Hannah would not get their children all baptized at Lake of Two Mountains mission church. The insinuation is if she was Algonquin why not an Algonquin based church in the Lake of Two Mountains locale? Why would an Anglican man and his Anglican wife get their children baptized in a Catholic Church, which it was? The Sulpician order of Catholic monks and church operated the Lake of Two Mountains church. This is not Joan Holmes or anyone else's business to allude to some neglect for not having children baptized in this particular church. Joan provides the baptism dates for all his children at the same Anglican church that Charles and Hannah were married in when they arrived in Vaudreuil and that Hannah was baptized in. This entire reference of insinuation should be stricken from the record.

By 1815 Charles and Hannah were in the Athabasca and when his father John died in 1822, Charles and Hannah returned to Vaudeville, presumably for Charles to take care of his father's affairs and directly afterwards Charles was moved to Lake of Two Mountains where he remained working for nearly 10 years. He also served at Chats for 1 year and was an inspector of other locations in the area including one called Bon chere which was run by a number of HBC men

and located just a few kilometers from Chats near present day Arnprior. **(See Key people involved with this site below.)** He never opened the post. In fact, it was burned down in 1840. Charles and Hannah moved to Golden Lake upon his retirement from the HBC in 1832 where they built a stopping place called “Charlies Hope” used for travellers from Bytown (Ottawa) to the Basin Depot (Algonquin Park) for the lumbering trade going on.

Hudson's Bay Company. Bonne Chere (Chats)

Key People involved with this Entity

McLean, John, 1799-1890	1825	
Siccard, Antoine	1830-1838	Postmaster
Onawanoron, Joseph	1830-1831	Labourer
Rainville, Paul	1830-1831	Labourer
Soatsione, Joseph	1830-1831	Temporary Servant
Cuirier, André	1836-1837	Labourer
McDougall, John Lorn	1831-1840	Clerk
Fleury, Isidore	1836-1840	Labourer
Lacroix, Marcien	1836-1837	Labourer
Lamonthe, Leandre	1838-1839	Labourer
Charpentier, Pierre	1839-1840	Labourer
Proulx, Charles	1839-1840	Labourer

Ms. Holmes also criticizes Charles description of Algonquins at the south of end of the lake being called “Indians” Ms. Holmes we were all called and still do call ourselves Indians in many places. Was he supposed to refer to the party or celebrations or the Algonquin people as the “non-Caucasians” having a gathering? Or perhaps call them the “Indigenous people” These terms, now apparently supposed to be politically correct were never known at that time. For years, my family referred to ourselves as “Indians”

She then goes onto talk about proof of John Joseph Sunstrum being born at Pik. This reference is found in Ancestry and was placed there by a family member but you cannot help but add one more sentence implying somehow that his mother Francis Anne Thomas Sunstrum, daughter of Charles and Hannah and his father William Sunstrum were all “Swedish” What does that have anything to do with Hannah’s mother being Algonquin? So Francis Anne married a Swedish man. Who really cares and when we look at surnames of Algonquins throughout the regions we see a wide variety of surnames, both English and French so obviously intermarriage has gone on for a long time.

I also note Hannahs signature on her wedding certificate. It was eloquent and formal and no doubt taught to her by Charles and so Charles would have learned Algonquin from her and living and working with Algonquins for 10 years at Lake of Two Mountains and being consulted when it came to arranging

logging deals between English speaking investors and the Algonquins. That he spoke French is a well known fact in my family as my grandfather often told us about his language schools which would have been English, French, Cree and Algonquin.

How do you prove your language? What government documents ever existed in that time to prove language? Not even census returns ask for language so if I die, my grandchildren will say their grandmother spoke English, some French, some Italian and some Algonquin. These are not “folk tales” as the hired hand for Chief Sarazin continues to say. This is fact. This is what we have learned as oral history and oral history must be considered in these deliberations.

As for the comments about Mannal traveling to Kenogamassi with supplies and men and likely women since they too worked for the HBC – of course they would likely be Cree and not Algonquin so what was the point of the comment?

With respect to the Sunstrums and my grandfather being baptized at the Mission Church, now the reserve, I must insist everyone stop trivializing our ancestors who lie in that cemetery or who were baptized there. If other people outside of the indigenous community used it that is their business but my Great grandfather – John Mannal Thomas converted to the Catholic faith to please my Great grandmother, Lucy Skelly whose family belonged to St. Andrews church in Killaloe and he did that because she would agree to my grandfather being baptized on Algonquin territory. Her mother and father travelled what would be an arduous trip to be the witnesses as Lucy Skelly insisted upon. I do not need to go into the details of a lot of religious conflict in the family but that is the truth so the relationship to that church should never be trivialized and my grandfather James Joseph Thomas remained Roman Catholic and died Roman Catholic.

Chief Sarazin:

The reference to all the trading and social life between Hannah and the women from the Algonquin community is not based on trading for HBC purposes. These people regularly traded furs for clothing, moccasins and shelter. The reference to this suggests it was HBC post trading at Golden Lake but the post at Arnprior, not run by Charles Thomas burned to the ground in 1840 and his diary entries about the interaction of themselves, Charles and Hannah were done between 1850 and 1852. I have a photo of my great great grandfather Edward Thomas, son of Charles and Hannah sitting in a chair with a rumpled suit and long black hair and his moccasins on his feet. It was taken in Eganville and I have no doubt those moccasins were made by his mother Hannah.

The reference to Charles Thomas working for George Simpson who praised his work is unnecessary and displays a desperation somehow of trying to paint Charles Thomas in a bad light – again no relationship to Hannah and her mother. If he praised his work fine but Simpson was an evil man who hated the Indigenous people and by the time Charles retired Simpson called him an “insolent half breed” (Simpsons Athabasca Journal – Champlain Society.) Simpson had 12 children by 7 different women and who by all accounts were often raped. He represents that element of HBC men including Aeneas Cameron, John George McTavish and the other fur traders James Grant and Richard Dobie who trafficked the women. Dobie, Grant and Cameron were all slave traders in Jamaica before they got into the fur trade business in 1788 and 1792 and operated in the whole territory including the famous “Frederick House” copy on Devils Island right near the HBC Frederick House. These men were all on comfortable terms with HBC employees including John Mannal but business was business and the threat of

intervention into HBC territory changed the whole region so Algonquins who occupied huge areas of Abitibi and Fort Temiskaming came into contact with many fur traders and Cameron was especially eager to traffic the women into HBC and NWT men's hands as these women were chattels to the fur trade, preparing furs, cooking, portaging and carrying heavy loads. Any reference to Simpson or even John Thomas's father is of no relationship to Hannah's mother's Algonquin blood. Charles was a descent man as evidenced by his comments about Hannah who he lived with on Golden Lake for 36 years until her death.

The Despicable George Simpson by Lawrence Barkwell

<https://www.scribd.com/document/149140606/The-Despicable-Sir-George-Simpson>

I also take issue with Chief Sarazin's comments about folk tales or folk lore versus Oral History. Chief Sarazin and anyone else who is writing this information has made such comments offensive and again absolutely uncalled for. What my grandfather told me or my father and what was handed down as oral history in my family is not some folk story. This term family lore appears to come from the mouth of someone hired to make up such nonsense because of their own prejudice against Metis people and Chief Sarazin should be cautious about challenging the living narrative of our family members.

My grandfather, his baptism, the Sunstrum connection, Charles and Hannah, life at Golden Lake and daily recorded occurrences from an educated man who spoke 4 languages and who was very meticulous in his work plus our lives living in the area and working there and the oral history that is recorded are as important, relevant and absolutely imperative to include and above all truthful. I believe Chief Sarazin needs to reflect on relying on others who perpetuate such animosity to native people. None of it is misrepresentation of anything. I also doubt that when this is submitted on behalf of Pikwakanagan it does not represent the opinion of all members of the community. There are those who are disgusted by our treatment. My grandfather had numerous friends in the Algonquin community but how many of you out there can constantly count numerous friends? I mean the ones you count on and associate with continuously. Very few. In fact most of us have 1 or 2 close friends and Basil was his best friend so why wouldn't he talk about him? These comments are insulting and offensive.

This issue is about Hannah Mannal's mother and her Algonquin blood line which has no connection to where Hannah was born, her conception or birth. Hannah Mannal's mother came from the Temiskaming community of Algonquins and was, on the balance of probabilities, Algonquin. The introduction to Mannal came from Aeneas Cameron who knew Mannal as far back as 1788. (See R. Nicholson report).

I also note, though not connected to Hannah, that Charles Thomas's sister Charlotte became the country wife of John George McTavish in 1804 and had 3 children with her. He was a terrible man and from family oral history he was cruel and abusive to her culminating in his abandonment of her in 1806 when he returned to Quebec. It is understood he took her as his wife at Fort Timiskaming where he worked as part of the North West Company. Relations with HBC people were cordial so a country marriage to John Thomas's daughter was not opposed. He was a fur trader so yet another connection with Algonquin traders.

The Duty to Consult, the Call to Action and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

With respect to this process, one of complete and utter colonialist procedure there is no evidence of any adherence to the Call to Action, the TRC recommendations or any kind of considerate accommodation.

The entire process is based on demands for government or similar proof which has historically been written by colonialist non indigenous people and where names, dates and records are often changed and that even includes boundaries to territories, cities, townships and villages. This tribunal has a moral obligation under the TRC to allow Oral history accounts. The truth has been spoken by many who are Algonquin but whose voices are muzzled or criticized.

- No Accommodation has been made for oral evidence.
- No Accommodation has been made for disabled members who may not be able to attend hearings or have access to a computer or internet or even use one and there are elders in the community and my family in that position.
- We do not have paid staff to work for us like the Chiefs or Joan Holmes or the Tribunal
- No Accommodation has been made for those of us who work on our own and who have no time to continually provide government proof, much of which was written by privileged white employees and most of the information presented is also written by privileged non indigenous people as well.
- Questioning one's religious affiliations, place of origin and discriminating against elders (who happen to supply oral information) is a violation of the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Lynn Hanley – April 22, 2023.