

**HISTORIC METIS COMMUNITIES OF ONTARIO: AN EVALUATION OF
EVIDENCE**

**Prepared by Jennifer Adese, Darryl Leroux and Darren O'Toole
For the Manitoba Métis
Federation
October 9, 2020**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Historic Georgian Bay Métis Community

- a. The OMNR's Georgian Bay Report (2000)

2. Historic Mattawa Métis Community

- a. The OMNR's Mattawa Report (1999)
- b. The OMNR's Sudbury/Espanola Report (2001)
- c. The OMNR's North Bay/Sturgeon Falls Report (2000-2002)

3. Historic Sault Ste Marie Métis Community

- a. The OMNR's Sault Ste. Marie Métis Report (1996)
- b. Lytwyn's Report on the Métis Community at Sault Ste. Marie (1998)
- c. Ray's Report on the Economic History of the Robinson Treaties Area Before 1860 (1998)
- d. The OMNR's Report on Characteristics of Metis Families in the Vicinity of Sault Ste. Marie, 1860-1925 (1998)

4. Scoping Review

- a. Secondary Sources Cited in Reports
- b. Secondary Sources Published After Reports

5. Short Report on Scrip and Ontario Claims

6. A Sketch of Ontario Archival Research: Precursor to Phase II

INTRODUCTION

This study is a follow-up to a previous report we wrote for the Manitoba Métis Federation earlier in 2020. In this report, our broad objective has been to analyze a series of reports and studies on the purported existence of “historic Métis communities” in Ontario. We’ve honed in specifically on three communities selected by the MMF that were first formally recognized by the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and the Government of Ontario in 2016: Georgian Bay, Mattawa, and Sault Ste-Marie. What follows is an examination of the reports produced for the government prior to the 2016 recognition process on these three “historic communities.” Most of these reports were produced for the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources’ (OMNR) Native Affairs Unit in the context of legal victories by the MNO in Ontario courts in the *Powley* case (between 1999 and 2002). Besides these reports, we’ve surveyed a few hundred studies cited in these reports in order to assess their merits. Our analysis of these secondary sources appears under the rubric “scoping review” in this report. In addition, we’ve surveyed a few dozen studies published since the OMNR reports (post 2001) related to these three communities, in order to add to our assessment of the evidence for the existence of “historic Métis communities” in Ontario.

Following our research, we have come to the following three main conclusions about the OMNR reports:

1. The OMNR reports rely exclusively on a narrow “Métis-as-mixed” framework that simply identifies mixed-race individuals in the past and builds a “community” on that basis. At no point do any of the authors develop and apply a framework that considers the ethnogenesis of a historical community. More importantly, the Métis Nation is never considered in a peoplehood framework.
2. The OMNR reports display an incredible lack of consistency. Whether internal to the same report or external to the other reports, there’s a complete lack of consistency in the use of terminology (“métis,” “mixed ancestry,” “Métis,” “halfbreed,” “bois-brûlés,” and “voyageur”). The fact that there are no dedicated attempts at defining terminology in the reports ensures that their conclusions are faulty. In addition, the overarching desire to identify historical Métis communities is facilitated by the absence of precision.
3. The OMNR reports display a general disregard for First Nation and Métis self-determination and sovereignty and understandings of citizenship and belonging. At no time do any of the Reports engage with Anishinaabe or Métis legal orders in their consideration of historical records.

The report concludes with a short section addressing the Northwest Halfbreed Scrip Commission claims. In particular, family names identified within the OMNR Reports and by the Métis Nation of Ontario as being linked to “historic Métis communities” were inputted into scrip databases for cross-referencing. We also searched for regions identified in the OMNR Reports for any mention within the scrip archives. As the section demonstrates, many of those who received scrip did so because they resided in Keewatin District, a region that would eventually come to be split into three comprising parts of Manitoba, Ontario, and Nunavut; a large swath of the former Keewatin District region is now a part of Ontario. A number of family names we discovered in the Northwest Halfbreed Scrip Commission claims reflect ties to northern Manitoba Métis communities. Therefore, claims from what was formerly known as Keewatin warrant greater

research to verify any potential ties to the Métis Nation. Because certain families who moved westward became eligible for scrip during the required periods, there are a few records for families, such as the Linklater and Vincent families, who are identified by the MNO as “Verified Métis Family Lines” for the “Historic Abitibi Inland Métis Community.” There appears to be no clear representation of families from Sault Ste. Marie, Mattawa/Nipissing, or Georgian Bay within the scrip records. The report concludes by providing a sketch into archival resources available for study in Phase II as proposed by the Research Team. Possible documents to be studied include the archives of the Ontario Métis and Aboriginal Association and the MNO in their early years, along with documents related to what was referred to already in the mid-1990s by the Province and these organizations as the “Great Lakes Métis Communities.” There are also a notable set of files pertaining to what is referred to as the “Moose Factory Métis” land claim that merit further examination.

1. HISTORIC GEORGIAN BAY MÉTIS COMMUNITY

A closer examination of the OMNR Report, “Historic Métis in Ontario: Georgian Bay,” written by Gwen Reimer and Jean-Philippe Chartrand for PRAXIS Research Associates, along with a review of the secondary sources cited in the report, reveals the use of a very limited set of sources supporting the claim that a distinct Métis community historically existed – with an ongoing presence – in Georgian Bay/Penetanguishene. The authors clarify in their subsequent “Review of Reports and Cartographic Representation Pertaining to Historic Métis in Ontario” submitted to the OMNR in 2002 their basis for determining what constitutes a historic Métis community. Their criteria are derived wholly from their own prior research, which they legitimize as representing “social scientific criteria.”¹ The problem with such a foundation is apparent. It immediately positions the researchers and their lens for analysis *outside* of Indigenous peoplehood models of understanding Métis existence.² The authors further write that “the criteria presented here are an attempt to provide an operational definition of community that is both consistent with social science and appropriate to the types of documentary evidence available on historic métis populations.”³ In other words, their approach for establishing the existence of a historic “métis” community is whatever fits the evidence they find. Contrary to their claims, their approach is counter to social scientific methods. Allow us to expand below.

a. The OMNR’s Georgian Bay Report (2000)

In their “Review of Reports,” Reimer and Chartrand outline the criteria by which they determine that Penetanguishene constitutes a historic Métis community. First, they state that there is evidence that they meet the criteria of an “ethnic community” that they outline in an earlier table.⁴ Within this criterion they approximate the existence of people of mixed ancestry with “métis.” Drawing on a preponderance of evidence that identifies the existence of half-breed families that migrated to the Penetanguishene area, the authors take this directly to mean that métis = mixed ancestry, irrespective of the specific Indigeneity or Europeanness involved in such admixture. They then assert that living alongside, practices of intermarriage among families, and common labour practices constitute a pre-existing métis community that was simply transplanted to Penetanguishene primarily from Drummond Island. Besides these clear leaps of logic, they also resignify *voyageur* in historical records to mean *métis*, without any effort to explain the slippage between terms. With respect to the existence of collective recognition or other ascription, they assert that an “1855 document identifies [the] ‘halfbreed’ population at Penetanguishene.”⁵ They also note, however, that there is no direct evidence “of métis self-identity prior to 1901; voyageurs refer to themselves as ‘Canadian inhabitants’.”⁶ In 1832, a petition was made by people who referred to themselves as “Canadian Inhabitants” neither identifying themselves as métis nor as entitled to any distinctive set of rights on the basis of Métisness. Despite no apparent history of self-ascription and actual evidence for identification as

¹ PRAXIS Research Associates, 2002. “Review of Reports and Cartographic Representation Pertaining to Historic Méris in Ontario,” p. 4.

² See Chris Andersen. 2014. *Métis: Race, Recognition and the Struggle for Indigenous Peoplehood*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

³ PRAXIS Research Associates, “Review of Reports,” p. 4.

⁴ PRAXIS Research Associates, “Review of Reports,” p. 10.

⁵ PRAXIS Research Associates, “Review of Reports,” p. 54.

⁶ PRAXIS Research Associates, “Review of Reports,” p. 54.

French-Canadien or Canadian, they interpret 1901 census returns as evidence of 326 métis (who are identified as “French Breeds” or FB) within Tiny and Tay townships.⁷

In their summary of data, they note, as well, that there is no data available to identify a distinctive presence via material culture.⁸ There is as well no direct evidence presented within local histories claiming any sort of métis origin.⁹ While organizations would emerge in the late 20th century, no evidence is presented as to the longstanding existence of consciousness and self-ascription as métis, Métis, Michif, Metif, and etc. In their further evaluation of criteria, they summarize the evidence presented regarding effective control in the area – noting surrenders of tracts of land in 1798 and the Lake Simcoe/Nottawasaga Purchases in 1815-1818 that included the entire Penetanguishene peninsula, along with the establishment of an operating, permanent British naval station. This aligns with that outlined in Darryl Leroux and Darren O’Toole’s report wherein Drummond Island voyageurs migrated *as* loyalists to territory claimed by Britain and retained a clear sense of identity *as* British subjects *after* effective control.¹⁰

In a reflection on the limitations of their own evidence, PRAXIS writes that they have relied on substantial published and secondary materials with specific reference to diaries, local histories, archaeological studies, and the like. They also make an important note as to the existence of such vital sources as A.C. Osborne’s 1901 publication *The Migration of Voyageurs from Drummond Island to Penetanguishene in 1828* on behalf of the Ontario Historical Society. In this book, the reader is presented with a number of recorded accounts from voyageurs and their descendants, giving rich cultural depth to the particular history of the voyageurs. As will be discussed later on, what is absent from this notable source is any articulation of a distinctive métis identity. However, this book, along with the 1901 Census – which itself does not make use of the term “métis” and relies on the racial-biological categorization de rigueur at the time – are held up as vital primary sources. PRAXIS notes that there is an overall lack of evidence, in that there exists no fur trade records – neither HBC nor NWC established posts in the area – and other kinds of primary source material are sparse or simply non-existent. In spite of this, however, they argue that the small community of people in Penetanguishene nevertheless constitute a historic Métis community. According to Reimer and Chartrand, of the 75 “voyageur families reportedly migrated from Drummond Island to Penetanguishene in 1828, [...] it is estimated that 40% were métis; [the] métis population is estimated to be between 65-80 [people].”¹¹ Their conclusion is that in 1828 there was a “socially distinct metis settlement at Penetanguishene” and that there is “evidence of families still resident in the area in the 20th century.”¹²

The basis of the claim to Penetanguishene as a historic Métis community hinges on the argument that a collective of voyageurs, a minority of whom were of mixed non-Indigenous/Indigenous ancestry, made a series of migrations (somewhat) together, arriving in/to the Georgian Bay/Penetanguishene area in 1828, thus forming a distinctive Métis community in that area. The

⁷ PRAXIS Research Associates, “Review of Reports,” p. 54.

⁸ PRAXIS Research Associates, “Review of Reports,” p. 54.

⁹ PRAXIS Research Associates, “Review of Reports,” p. 54.

¹⁰ Darryl Leroux and Darren O’Toole. 2020. “An Analysis of the MNO’s Recognition of Six New Historic Métis Communities: A Final Report,” p. 26–30.

¹¹ PRAXIS Research Associates, “Review of Reports,” p. 54,

¹² PRAXIS Research Associates, “Review of Reports,” p. 54.

prevailing research confirms that no such pre-existing Métis community existed prior to the arrival of such émigrés.¹³ According to the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), the “Historic Georgian Bay Métis Community” (HGBMC) underwent four stages of development: the initial stage at Fort Michilimackinac (1720–1780) and the following period at Fort Mackinac (1780–1796); 2) St. Joseph Island (1796–1812); 3) Mackinac Island (1812–1815); and 4) Drummond Island (1815–1828). The MNO has put forth the claim that there exist twenty-one “Verified Métis Family Lines” (VMFL) connected to the HGBMC, each with its own legacy as part of this multipronged migration. Leroux and O’Toole write about the fault lines in this argument at length.¹⁴

Reimer and Chartrand draw from Marchand’s work for the MNO, writing that Penetanguishene constituted a somewhat insular métis community.¹⁵ A notable proportion of locally-derived evidence for this argument comes from interviews that Reimer conducted with Gwen Patterson, a local genealogist. In personal communications with Reimer and Chartrand, Patterson stated that there was a separate métis community, that of the 75 voyageur families Osborne noted to have migrated from Drummond Island to Penetanguishene, that 35 could be identified as having mixed-ancestry, defined as men who were mainly French-Canadian born in and around Montréal and “wives [who] would have been Aboriginal or métis women and their children [who] would have all been métis.”¹⁶ Patterson argues that in some cases “family lines” continue through different names as ancestry is passed down through subsequent generations.¹⁷ Yet, the Report offers little concrete evidence as to how people may identify as or be identified as Métis. Likewise, Patterson’s interviews simply re-narrate mixed-ancestry families as Métis.¹⁸

At the same time that Reimer and Chartrand present literature that tries to pin down a métis community and identity, we find out through Macrae’s family history work that individuals and families of mixed ancestry were not particularly concerned with articulating “a distinct metis identity.”¹⁹ Reimer and Chartrand identify a number of problems with identifying a métis community beyond this – therefore, the purpose of this intervention is to offer a more focused evaluation of some of the core sources presented by Reimer and Chartrand in the forthcoming scoping review.

2. HISTORIC MATTAWA MÉTIS COMMUNITY

Three reports were commissioned as part of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources’ (Native Affairs Unit) investigation into potential historic Métis communities in Ontario for the Mattawa-Nipissing region. Gwynneth Jones submitted two reports, the first on Mattawa and Environs in 1999 and the second on the Sudbury/Espanola region in 2001. David Calverly submitted the third report on the North Bay/Sturgeon Falls region (undated). The following analysis reviews

¹³ See Leroux and O’Toole, “An Analysis of the MNO’s Recognition of Six New Historic Métis Communities.”

¹⁴ Leroux and O’Toole, “An Analysis of the MNO’s Recognition of Six New Historic Métis Communities,” p. 20–30.

¹⁵ Gwen Reimer and Jean-Philippe Chartrand. 2000. “Historic Métis in Ontario: Georgian Bay,” p. 91.

¹⁶ Reimer and Chartrand, “Historic Métis in Ontario: Georgian Bay,” p. 97.

¹⁷ Reimer and Chartrand, “Historic Métis in Ontario: Georgian Bay,” p. 100.

¹⁸ Reimer and Chartrand, “Historic Métis in Ontario: Georgian Bay,” p. 101.

¹⁹ Reimer and Chartrand, “Historic Métis in Ontario: Georgian Bay,” p. 126.

these three reports with the help of PRAXIS Research Associates' "Review of Reports," which was submitted to the OMNR in 2002.

a. The OMNR's Mattawa Report (1999)

At the beginning of her report on Mattawa and environs, Jones explains the criteria for identifying a historical Métis community. She explains that, "Persistence of a population over time is one element to be considered in assessing the existence and continuity of a 'community.'"²⁰ Besides persistence over time, Jones lists the following factors as indicative of a historical Métis community: "residence patterns; endo/exo-gamy; occupational, educational, class and social ties; religion, language retention, the persistence of cultural observances such as the celebration of holidays and food preferences, home decoration and dress; and self-identification."²¹ Despite Jones' development of a framework for identifying a historical Métis community, she mostly abandons it by the second half of her report, relying instead on the "Métis-as-mixed" framework used extensively in the OMNR reports. This approach, as we've covered previously,²² involves simply identifying mixed-race individuals in the past and "building" a community from there.

As such, the majority of Jones' labour in the report went into creating a sortable genealogical database of "mixed-ancestry" families in the Mattawa area. From that database, Jones claims that there are four founding families for what she calls the Mattawa mixed-ancestry population, as she avoids using the term "Métis" in her study. These four families are traceable to the time of the first permanent settlement of Europeans in Mattawa (circa 1840s) and represent between 25%–33% of the mixed ancestry individuals in Jones' database.

The first family is the Laronde family. Jones provides a lengthy discussion of Laronde family history, particularly on the Nipissing Reserve. Most of the discussion follows the tribulations of one Joseph Laronde, who between 1885 and 1891 sought to continue living on the Nipissing Reserve. Eventually, Joseph was forcefully evicted following many complaints by family members and/or band members, in 1891. The decision seems to have been made because Joseph's mother had married a non-status, mixed-race man. In any case, Jones' discussion follows several Larondes through their lives primarily on the Nipissing Reserve, but also at the Dokis Reserve, in and around Mattawa, and further down the Ottawa River Valley near Pembroke. Through her research, Jones confirms that "the Indian component of the Laronde family identity in those families located [in this study] was strong around the turn of the century, even if the family was living off-reserve and intermarried with non-Indians."²³ Given her assessment that the Laronde family was identified and identified itself as Nipissing/Algonquin up until at least 1900 and that much of the family actually integrated into local First Nation communities by then, the basis for their inclusion as one of the four founding families of the "mixed-ancestry population of Mattawa" appears to come solely from the fact that the original

²⁰ Gwynneth C.D. Jones. 1999. "Historic Populations of Mixed Aboriginal / non-Aboriginal Ancestry in Ontario: Mattawa and Environs," p. 1.

²¹ Jones, "Historic Populations of Mixed Aboriginal / non-Aboriginal Ancestry in Ontario: Mattawa and Environs," p. 1.

²² Leroux and O'Toole, "An Analysis of the MNO's Recognition of Six New Historic Métis Communities."

²³ Jones, "Historic Populations of Mixed Aboriginal / non-Aboriginal Ancestry in Ontario: Mattawa and Environs," p. 34.

Laronde was a French man (born 1763) who married an Ojibway woman, Madeleine Pewadjiwonokwe, around 1797. Notably, the MNO includes three Larondes as “Verified Métis family Lines” for membership in the “historic Mattawa Métis community,” including one line (Laronde-Sauvage) that was used by nearly 600 members to join the Algonquins of Ontario land claim.

The second family listed by Jones is the Antoine family, a family that featured prominently in Department of Indian Affairs correspondence. The family is descended from the union of Antoine Nishkwiwisens and Elisabeth Gagnon, both Nipissing/Algonquin, who married at the Oka mission on July 16, 1832. Their four children and at least nine grandchildren were enumerated in Mattawa in the 1881 census, all listed as “Indian.” In the 1901 Census, at least two of the households were listed as speaking Algonquin at home. In the same census, three generations of the Antoine family were listed as “Algonquin French Breed” under the designation for “Colour.” In 1910, twenty-nine members of the Antoine family, mostly living in Mattawa, were reinstated to the Robinson-Huron Treaty annuity paylists with arrears covering 1851 to 1909 as Nipissing Band members. Despite the fact that the Antoine family clearly sought to be recognized as Nipissing/Algonquin in its known correspondences with authorities, Jones nonetheless takes the fact that census workers listed them as “Algonquin French Breed” in one classification in the 1901 census and lived in Mattawa as evidence that they were a founding “mixed ancestry” family in the region. About 420 members of the Algonquins of Ontario land claim use this family as “root ancestors” for membership (MNO’s Bernard-Papineau line).

The third family listed by Jones is the Bastien family, another family that featured prominently in Department of Indian Affairs correspondence. The family is descended from the union of Charles Colton (said to be white British-American, born around 1807) and Marie Josephte Sibikwe (born about 1811), Antoine Nishkwiwisens’ sister (see above). Sibikwe remarried French-Canadian Louis Bastien in 1844. The Sibikwe-Bastien family mostly resided in the Mattawa region throughout the 1800s and are also listed as “Algonquin French Breed” by the census enumerator in 1901 under the designation for “Colour.” Sibikwe’s sons Ignace Bastien and Antoine Bastien applied for reinstatement to the Robinson-Huron Treaty rolls in 1910 but their request was denied, since the Department ruled that their Indigenous ancestry was solely derived from the maternal side. Again, given the evidence provided by Jones, it’s unclear why she doesn’t consider the Bastien family a Nipissing-Algonquin family. About 270 members of the Algonquins of Ontario land claim use the same ancestral line for membership as the MNO (Bastien-Sibikwe line).

The fourth family listed by Jones is the Grandlouis family, another family featured prominently in Department of Indian Affairs correspondence. The review of this correspondence confirms once again that members of the Grandlouis were often considered members of the Nipissing Band, living in and around the reserve. Several second-generation family members lived in Mattawa and married into prominent mixed-race, Algonquin/Nipissing families. Jones provides no evidence that this family considered itself anything other than Algonquin/Nipissing. The only potential evidence to a “Métis” identity is that some of the family members were listed as “Chippewa French Breed” or simply “French Breed” in the 1901 census under the designation for “Colour,” though Jones herself was unable to find any evidence of French ancestry in this

family. Regardless, about 200 members of the Algonquins of Ontario land claim use the MNO's Commandant-Kijikasowekwe "Verified Métis Family Line" to become members.

In summation of her research on the "four founding families," Jones concludes that "in the period up to 1901 there is little observable repudiation of Indian identity in the records relating to all mixed-ancestry families under study."²⁴ Therefore, one is left wondering why these families were chosen as the "four founding families" of a historic mixed-ancestry population in Mattawa in the first place. The only discernible reason is that they featured mixed-race individuals back to the first part of the 1800s, though it does appear that even that feature is missing from the Grandlouis family.

The final section of Jones' report concerns the "modern mixed-ancestry population in Mattawa." To conduct this part of the study, Jones spoke with a few people involved in research and claims in and around Mattawa at the time. David Joannis claimed that two separate Algonquin organizations were organized in the region, the "Mattawa Algonquin Band" (based in North Bay) and the "Antoine Algonquin First Nation" (based in Mattawa). According to Jones, Joannis explained that these organizations represented Algonquin people in the region; none of them identified as Métis. Jones then cites Brian Cockburn (from the MNO) and an anonymous genealogical researcher, who both claim that there was a historic and still is a present-day Métis community in Mattawa. The researcher claimed that the Métis in the region descended from families who stayed at Maniwaki (Kitigan Zibi FN) and Lake of Two Mountains (Oka) and that some of the Métis families had been absorbed by Kitigan Zibi. The anonymous researcher then claimed that most "Mattawa Métis" now lived on the Timiskaming, Nipissing and Golden Lake Reserves, because "at the time of the signing of the Robinson Treaties, the Metis were forcefully taken from their homes and placed on Reserves."²⁵ Jones advances no evidence to corroborate such a claim, and in fact, provides ample evidence that at no time were mixed-ancestry families forced to live on reserve. Besides this unsupported claim, it appears that the anonymous genealogist is stating that mixed-race Algonquin/Nipissing individuals living on/registered at four of the region's largest reserves were in fact "Métis."²⁶ Again, the "Métis-as-mixed" framework violates Algonquin/Nipissing forms of belonging and self-determination.

Finally, Jones ends the report by citing Annette Chrétien's Master's thesis research on "Métis" music in Mattawa. Jones takes Chrétien's claims at face value without regard for her own framework for establishing the presence of a historic Métis community. As is with broader research on the "Eastern métis," what counts as evidence are the statements of individuals involved in the movement itself. In any case, the only "evidence" provided by Jones for a contemporary "Métis" community are Chrétien's statements and those of an MNO organizer and anonymous genealogical researcher.

²⁴ Jones, "Historic Populations of Mixed Aboriginal / non-Aboriginal Ancestry in Ontario: Mattawa and Environs," p. 41.

²⁵ Jones, "Historic Populations of Mixed Aboriginal / non-Aboriginal Ancestry in Ontario: Mattawa and Environs," p. 49.

²⁶ Timiskaming First Nation has 2,200 members and about 650 residents. Nipissing First Nation has 2,200 members and about 900 residents. Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation has 3,500 members and about 1,600 residents. Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nation has 2,000 members with about 400 residents.

b. The OMNR's Sudbury/Espanola Report (2001)

Gwynneth Jones submitted the Sudbury/Espanola report for the OMNR in 2001, about two years after completing the “Mattawa and Environs” report discussed above. While the Sudbury/Espanola report deals with events significantly west of Mattawa (in some cases, nearly 300 kilometres west), its focus on the Killarney area warrants its inclusion here. The MNO and Government of Ontario recognized the “Historic Killarney Métis Community” separate from both the Georgian Bay and Mattawa communities in 2016, though there is significant overlap in the root ancestors for the three communities, as established by the MNO’s own “Verified Métis Family Lines.” In this section, we’ll point to some of these overlaps, though our arguments about Georgian Bay or Mattawa are developed elsewhere.

First, unlike her first study, Jones doesn’t explicitly develop any framework for identifying historic “Métis” communities. Instead, she uses the “Métis-as-mixed” framework that she used previously in her Mattawa report as the default approach. As such, most of this report involves identifying mixed-race individuals in the past; there’s no effort to connect these ancestors to individuals in the present, except when Jones acknowledges that many of their current descendants are Algonquin/Anishinaabe/Nipissing living on reserves in the region stretching from Georgian Bay to Lake Nipissing, including Dokis First Nation, Henry Inlet First Nation, Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory (Wikwemikong and Point Grondine bands), and Thessalon First Nation.²⁷ Among common patronyms still associated with Anishinaabe families in the region that she identifies are McLeod, Flammand, and Rastoule/Restoule.²⁸ Further, while Jones uses the term “people of mixed ancestry” to differentiate mixed-race individuals in the study, it is notable that on one occasion she uses the term “Métis” instead.²⁹ There’s no discussion of this change in terminology, nor does it occur again.

Second, Jones focuses closely on the arrival of mixed-race individuals in the study area, as she did previously. However, unlike the Mattawa report, the basis of her examination is less organized. It appears that the main basis for her identification of a community in the region was the arrival of members of the Solomon, Lamorandière, and Rocque families in Killarney between 1830s and 1860s. We discussed the Solomom family in some depth in our previous report, arguing that it didn’t represent a Métis family.³⁰ The Rocque family arrived from Wikwemikong, where 11-year-old Ferdinand Rocque had first lived from a young age supporting Catholic authorities. He later moved across the channel to Killarney with his mixed-race, Anishnaabe wife Marguerite Recollet, in 1865.³¹ By the mid-point of her report, Jones argues that by 1871 Killarney was composed of three “apparent” groups:

²⁷ PRAXIS Research Associates, “Review of Reports,” p. 12.

²⁸ Gwynneth C.D. Jones. 2001. “Historic Populations of Mixed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Ancestry in Ontario, Sudbury/Espanola Region: Historical Report,” p. 8

²⁹ Jones, “Historic Populations of Mixed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Ancestry in Ontario, Sudbury/Espanola Region,” p. 10.

³⁰ Leroux and O’Toole, “An Analysis of the MNO’s Recognition of Six New Historic Métis Communities,” p. 49–50.

³¹ Jones, “Historic Populations of Mixed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Ancestry in Ontario, Sudbury/Espanola Region,” p. 6.

- Solomons, Lamorandières, Rocques and a few other families who were “mostly identified as ‘French’; occasionally ‘Indian’ [...] This was the largest group, numbering about 95 people;”
- An English-Scottish component (including one prominent German family); and
- A group of “Indians” under Chief Anaweigonce.³²

At no point does Jones properly justify her claim about the existence of these three groups, nor does she explain the internal constitution of the “French-Indian” group. The slippage between “French” and “Indian” is reminiscent of the wider problem with the reports on the existence of the Georgian Bay Métis Community discussed previously. In their analysis of Jones’s report, PRAXIS Research Associates demonstrates that most of the individuals identified as “mixed-ancestry” by Jones are in fact enumerated as “French” in the 1901 census, the same census often used in a manner that confuses racial identity (“half-breed”) with “community.” The households that were enumerated with variations of the word “breed” under the designation for “Colour” in the 1901 census were located on reserve lands in the region, further suggesting a concern with race and biology and not with questions about social and political identities.³³ Relying singularly on racial designation (the “Métis-as-mixed” framework), at no point does Jones bring forth any evidence that the so-called mixed-ancestry community has a distinct political identity.

Broadly speaking, besides a rather informative section on the history of Euro-settler development in the city of Sudbury, this second report by Jones repeats many of the same shortcomings of her previous government-commissioned work: a narrow focus on the “Métis-as-mixed” formula for the identification of historic communities; a general slippage between ethnic and/or social categories, particularly between French and Indigenous; and a general disregard for First Nation and Métis self-determination, sovereignty, and/or citizenship/belonging.

c. The OMNR’s North Bay/Sturgeon Falls Report (2000–2002)

A third report was commissioned by the OMNR in the Mattawa region, this time in the North Bay/Sturgeon Falls area to the north of Lake Nipissing. The report was written by David Calverly and is undated, though it was submitted between 2000 and 2002. Calverly’s report is the thinnest of the three that pertain to Mattawa, and thus, contains the least amount of evidence for its claims.

Notably, Calverly adopts the “Métis-as-mixed” formula by focusing intently on known mixed-race individuals along Lake Nipissing. In fact, given the large Nipissing reserve on the boundaries of both North Bay and Sturgeon Falls, it’s unsurprising that most of the families that Calverly focuses on resided on reserve in the 1800s. Whether in his focus on the McLeods, Larondes, Goulais, Rastoules, GrandLouis or Beaucages, Calverly is simply identifying mixed-race *Anishinaabe/Nipissing* families in his analysis. As an example of a well-known mixed-ancestry individual who was *not* considered “Métis,” Michel Dokis became the chief of the French River Anishinaabe band during the Robinson-Huron treaty negotiations. He now has a reserve named after him in the region (Dokis First Nation) with many of his direct descendants

³² Jones, “Historic Populations of Mixed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Ancestry in Ontario, Sudbury/Espanola Region,” p. 14

³³ PRAXIS Research Associates, “Review of Reports,” p. 13.

living there. How is it possible then that Calverly uses Dokis as evidence for a distinct mixed-ancestry community in the region?

Further analysis by PRAXIS of census records confirms the fact that mixed-race individuals in the Lake Nipissing area were by and large integrated into Nipissing families and communities: of the 99 “breeds” identified in the 1901 census under the designation for “Colour,” 75 were enumerated on the Nipissing reserve and 24 were enumerated in the census division directly adjacent to it. As we discussed in our previous report, these individuals were disenfranchised due to the sexist provisions of the Indian Act.³⁴ Nevertheless, PRAXIS argues that, “Evidence of a sizeable [*sic*] métis group living [adjacent to the Nipissing reserve] by 1901 may indicate that a community developed after the Robinson-Huron treaty [...]. As was the case in Mattawa, it appears that some métis were compelled to live off reserve due to disputed annuity rights, and this may have resulted in the development of a métis community nearby.”³⁵ The strongest argument that both Calverly and PRAXIS are able to muster is that *perhaps* a “métis” community developed, though neither seem to consider that disenfranchised Nipissing individuals continued to identify as Nipissing. Also notable is that neither Calverly nor PRAXIS explicitly name the sexism of the Indian Act as leading to the creation of a group of disenfranchised Nipissing families living next to their kin on reserve.

Another key limitation of Calverly’s study is the complete lack of consideration of a contemporary “Métis” community in the region. The lack of research on a contemporary community might be related to the terms of reference provided by the OMMR, but regardless, it does require mention that Calverly makes no effort to connect any potential historical community with a present-day community.

Overall, Calverly engages in the same kind of faulty logic by now common in studies that aim to identify a historic Métis community in southeastern Ontario.

3. HISTORIC SAULT STE MARIE MÉTIS COMMUNITY

The purpose of this section is to evaluate four historical reports that were carried out with regard to the existence of a Métis community in Sault Ste. Marie during the *Powley* case from 1998 to 2003.

a. The OMNR’s Sault Ste. Marie Métis Report (1996)

The Holmes Report is the most thorough of the four reports we consulted and the only one that actually identifies the residents of mixed ancestry who were not included in the treaty in 1850. As the authors of the “Review of Reports” point out, the “report is not focused on sociological or anthropological factors regarding métis ethnicity.”³⁶

In the report, Holmes writes that, “Often described as a ‘forgotten people,’ Métis people tend to be invisible or unidentifiable in official records and other primary sources upon which historians

³⁴ Leroux and O’Toole, “An Analysis of the MNO’s Recognition of Six New Historic Métis Communities,” p. 16–19.

³⁵ PRAXIS Research Associates, “Review of Reports,” p. 20.

³⁶ PRAXIS Research Associates, “Review of Reports,” p. 34.

rely to reconstruct the history of aboriginal groups in Canada. As such, it is very difficult to provide a continuous, well-documented and authoritative history of their communities.”³⁷

This statement is problematic for two reasons. First, we are not described as a “forgotten people” for the reasons that Holmes states. In their book entitled *The Métis: Canada’s Forgotten People*, authors D. Bruce Sealey and Antoine Lussier state that, “Much has been written about the Métis but such efforts tend to center around Louis Riel, the insurrection in Red River in 1869-70 and the 1885 rebellion in the Northwest. To the student, the Métis and Louis Riel *suddenly appear and as quickly disappear in most histories of Canada.*”³⁸ The notion of “forgotten” refers to the silence in Canadian historiography after 1885, not to a lack of documentation of our existence in the archives. Second, with regard to official records and primary sources, the Métis are neither invisible nor unidentifiable. By appropriating the term “forgotten people,” Holmes is drawing a false analogy between a lack of acknowledgement in historiography with a lack of documentation in the archives.

According to Holmes, the French regime seems to have left little impact on the area, since by “1761, Alexander Henry the Elder found only four houses at Sault Ste. Marie.”³⁹ The only name that seems traceable to the area prior to the assertion of British sovereignty is that of Jean-Baptiste Cadotte. While Holmes also notes ten log houses in 1777 and “ten or twelve independent traders and their families”⁴⁰ in 1789, she also notes that it wasn’t until after the Jay Treaty of 1794 that settlement began on the British side. However, some of those living on the U.S. side did relocate to the Canadian side. In any event, if there was ethnogenesis of a Métis community in the Sault Ste. Marie vicinity, it did not really begin until the early 19th century. As the Supreme Court of Canada set the period of effective control at “just prior to 1850,”⁴¹ this does not leave much time for the successive generations of endogamy between descendants of mixed ancestry that is necessary to produce a distinct Métis community.

Fortunately, we have a fairly precise idea of who settled in the region. In 1846, Alexander Vidal surveyed the settlement and compiled a list of forty-three heads of households (which Holmes provides in Appendix A). There is also a petition for the quieting of titles that contains fifty-five signatures, forty-nine or fifty of whom are identified as “of mixed Indian Blood” while the remaining five or six were married to Indigenous women. When the chiefs were unsuccessful in securing 100-acre grants for certain half-breeds, they sent a petition to the Governor General. There are two lists in the petition, one for the quieting of titles for residents of Sault Ste. Marie with forty-six names and another for 100-acre grants with thirty-four names.

³⁷ Joan Holmes and Associates. 1996. “Sault Ste. Marie Métis Historical Report,” p. 2.

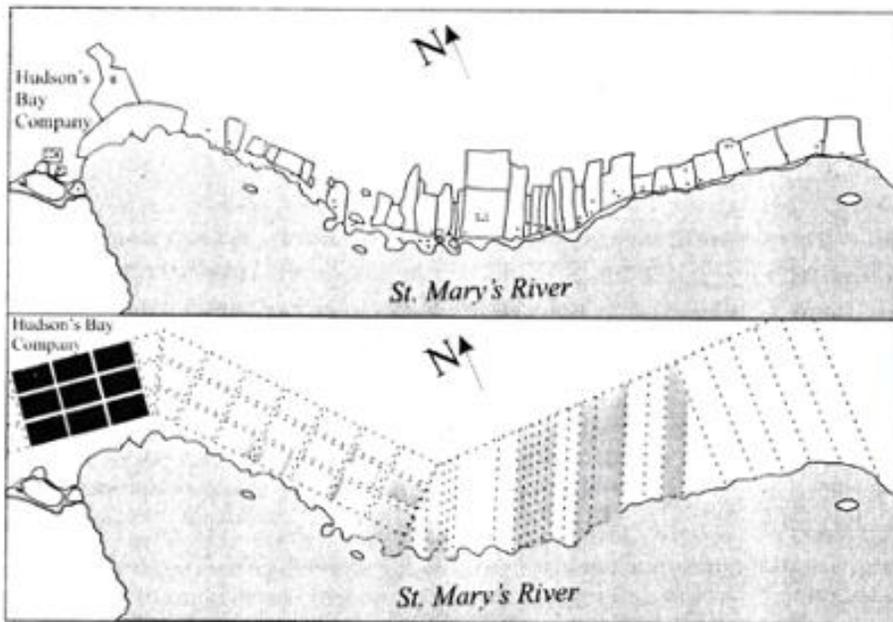
³⁸ D. Bruce Sealey and Antoine Lussier. 1975. *The Métis. Canada’s Forgotten People*. Winnipeg: Manitoba Métis Federation Press, p. iv, emphasis ours.

³⁹ Holmes and Associates, “Sault Ste. Marie Métis Historical Report,” p. 6.

⁴⁰ Holmes and Associates, “Sault Ste. Marie Métis Historical Report,” p. 6.

⁴¹ *R v Powley*, [2003] 2 SCR 207 at para. 40: “The trial judge found, and the parties agreed in their pleadings before the lower courts, that “effective control [of the Upper Great Lakes area] passed from the Aboriginal peoples of the area (Ojibway and Metis) to European control” in the period between 1815 and 1850 (para. 90). The record fully supports the finding that the period just prior to 1850 is the appropriate date for finding effective control in this geographic area, which the Crown agreed was the critical date in its pleadings below.”

However, Holmes recognizes that “of 55 heads of families listed, 21 or almost half have no easily identifiable family descendants on the treaty paylists. The families either left the Sault, integrated into the non-aboriginal community or formed a core of Métis separate and distinct from those associated with bands.”⁴² This would seem to suggest that of the fifty-five heads of families, the remaining thirty-four heads of families *do* have identifiable family descendants on treaty lists and therefore that members of these families or their descendants integrated into the neighboring Ojibwe bands. Holmes also mentions that several individuals of mixed ancestry listed on the chiefs’ memorial of 1850 also signed the 1859 land surrenders of the Batchewana and Garden River bands known as the “Pennefather Treaties.” Holmes provides pertinent information on the percentage of band members who were of mixed ancestry, demonstrating that a large majority of mixed-ancestry families were in fact fully integrated band members. Despite the uncertainty of their self-identification beforehand and their subsequent integration into First Nation bands, Holmes insists on calling them “Métis” throughout, a practice common to all reports commissioned by the OMNR.⁴³



Map 3.1 Sault Ste. Marie settlement in 1846 (top) and ca. 1866 (bottom).
Source: Prepared by Ted Binnema.

The map above provides a clearer picture of the residents who were seeking a quieting of titles rather than a 100-acre grant.⁴⁴ To be sure, the two lists reveal that the groups were not mutually exclusive. A few of the names among those who were requesting a confirmation of their title are

⁴² Holmes and Associates, “Sault Ste. Marie Métis Historical Report,” p. 32.

⁴³ Holmes and Associates, “Sault Ste. Marie Métis Historical Report,” p. 44.

⁴⁴ Victory Lytwyn. 2007. “Echo of the Crane: Tracing Anishnawbek and Métis Title to Bawating (Sault Ste. Marie).” In *New Histories for Old: Changing Perspectives on Canada’s Native Pasts*, eds. Ted Binnema and Susan Neylan. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, p. 60.

also in the list for those who were claiming a 100-acre grant.⁴⁵ In any event, many carry the same surnames and are undoubtedly related. Given the small number of residents in the first place and that some of their descendants integrated into the neighbouring Ojibwe bands, it would have been difficult for them to have survived as a distinct community as settlers numerically overwhelmed them. Furthermore, Holmes' report suggests that many "half-breeds" apparently died during the smallpox epidemic in 1852.⁴⁶

In the latter section of her report, Holmes places a lot of emphasis on the treaty paylists in Batchewana and Garden River. However, she doesn't distinguish between the two groups of "half-breeds" that are evident in Robinson's report on the treaty negotiations. Her analysis is also convoluted by her presumption that all those of mixed ancestry, despite being band members and living on the reserve, were "Métis." The underlying assumption here is that only "full-bloods" are counted as Ojibwe, despite much evidence to the contrary. This runs the risk of inflating the number of "métis" in the area and possibly even outright fabricating a métis community by transforming Ojibwe of mixed ancestry into "Métis."

It does appear that some of the original settlers of mixed ancestry did get onto the band lists. However, four Ojibwe chiefs claimed that "very many" of the half-breeds listed in the 1850 petition were "the children of the sisters and the daughters of your memorialists."⁴⁷ In other words, they were immediately related to neighbouring Ojibwe families. However, the presence of surnames is not simply due to residents of Sault Ste. Marie getting onto band lists – some of the descendants, such as the Cadottes, married into bands. It is impossible to draw any conclusions based on the information provided in the reports and would require a more thorough investigation of the names on the band lists. It would also require an investigation into the original residents of mixed ancestry who integrated into the Batchewana and Garden River bands and whose descendants are still members today. For example, while the surname Sayer is found among 3 of the 43 households in Sault Ste. Marie in 1846, it is still an Ojibwe surname in the Batchewana First Nation of Ojibways today.

What Holmes' study lacks, as with the other studies we review in this report, is an analysis of the ethnogenesis of a Métis community in Sault Ste. Marie. Furthermore, none of the studies explore marriages between the mixed-ancestry offspring of mixed marriages in the period just before 1850. Unlike the Lytwyn and Ray reports, Holmes does however provide the documentation that makes such an analysis possible. Further research would be necessary to analyze marriage patterns in order to determine whether there was a pattern of endogamy both before and after 1850. Interestingly, of these 50 or so households, the Métis Nation of Ontario website only lists 13 root ancestors.⁴⁸ It's unclear how the MNO chose these thirteen "Verified Métis Family

⁴⁵ Alexis Biron, Joachim Biron and Pierre Boyer, for example. It is possible that they may not be the same individuals, but a second generation who carry the name of their fathers or uncles.

⁴⁶ Holmes and Associates, "Sault Ste. Marie Métis Historical Report," p. 40.

⁴⁷ Holmes and Associates, "Sault Ste. Marie Métis Historical Report," p. 32.

⁴⁸ The MNO's "Verified Métis Family Lines" for Sault Ste-Marie are: Boissonneau, Cadotte, Cadrant-Clermont, de Lamorandière-Sheperd, King-Prisque Legris, Roussain-Turner, Sayer, Corbiere-Roy, Corbiere-Nolin, Lesage-Schwink, Desjardins-Prisque, Lesage-Legarde, Causley-Riel. According to Holmes, a few of these names appear on Vidal's list of 43 households when he surveyed the settlement in Sault Ste. Marie in 1846 (Appendix B). Again, more research would be required to confirm the genealogical connections.

Lines,” though we have suggested that it was due to present-day descendants from these families seeking MNO membership.⁴⁹

According to Holmes, the titles of the residents in Sault Ste. Marie were not quieted, but they were given the opportunity of purchasing them (possible at one shilling per acre). While Holmes did not do so, James Morrison traced the landholding patterns of the descendants of the roughly fifty households. According to Morrison, few “métis” obtained patents. Of the 114 property transactions between 1858 and 1871, individuals of mixed ancestry were only involved in 18 of them. By 1900, only half a dozen “métis” still owned property in Sault Ste. Marie.⁵⁰ It is unclear whether the second petition requesting 100-acre grants was granted.

b. Lytwyn’s Report on the Métis Community at Sault Ste. Marie (1998)

The Lytwyn Report starts with a few eyewitness accounts that, in his view, provide “clear evidence of a distinct and cohesive Métis community at Sault Ste. Marie prior to 1850.”⁵¹ His report is then divided into sections on “Resource Harvesting,” “Métis involvement in the 1850 Treaties,” “Métis Land at Sault Ste. Marie after the 1850 Treaty,” and “Aboriginal Hunting and Fishing Rights not Interfered with by Treaty.”

Lytwyn’s report has the usual fault of automatically presuming any and every reference to “half-breed” is automatically translatable to “Métis.” In one instance, he inserts “Métis” in a document that explicitly refers to “Freemen.”⁵² In another primary source that refers to “Canadians and other squatters,” Lytwyn carelessly interprets this as meaning “Métis.”⁵³ While Lytwyn claims that a certain Thomas McKenney described a “Métis community” in Sault Ste. Marie in 1826, the quotation merely mentions eighty houses and provides no information about their inhabitants. Likewise, a quotation from Lieutenant James Harper that simply mentions “250 souls, occupying 50 houses” in 1845 is used as evidence of a “Métis” community. He also mentions the description of river lots in a survey carried out by Alexander Vidal in 1846 as evidence of a “Métis” community, but provides no quotation from Vidal’s description that supports this conclusion.⁵⁴ He does cite the 1850 petition wherein the petitioners state that, with few exceptions, “the whole of the inhabitants of the Sault are what are termed ‘half-breeds’.”⁵⁵

However, Lytwyn’s report doesn’t contain an account of ethnogenesis. Foster, for example, would have labelled many of the couples whom Lytwyn takes to be “Métis” as “proto-Métis.”⁵⁶ Whether or not they would become the root ancestor of a mixed-race community depends on, among other factors, the marriage choices of their children and grandchildren. Assessing whether

⁴⁹ Leroux and O’Toole, “An Analysis of the MNO’s Recognition of Six New Historic Métis Communities.”

⁵⁰ Morrison as cited in Victor P. Lytwyn. 1998, “Historical Report on the Métis Community at Sault Ste. Marie,” p. 30. Morrison uses the term “métis”

⁵¹ Lytwyn, “Historical Report on the Métis Community at Sault Ste. Marie.” p. 2.

⁵² Lytwyn, “Historical Report on the Métis Community at Sault Ste. Marie.” p. 5.

⁵³ Lytwyn, “Historical Report on the Métis Community at Sault Ste. Marie.” p. 9.

⁵⁴ Lytwyn, “Historical Report on the Métis Community at Sault Ste. Marie.” p. 1.

⁵⁵ Lytwyn, “Historical Report on the Métis Community at Sault Ste. Marie.” p. 27.

⁵⁶ John Foster. 1985. “Some Questions and Perspectives on the Problem of Métis Roots.” In *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America*, eds. Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer Brown, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, p. 87.

ethnogenesis took place would require a detailed genealogical analysis, something Lytwyn does not carry out in his report.

It is worth noting that Lytwyn's report was severely criticized by Justice Vaillancourt during the Powley trial.⁵⁷ While Vaillancourt stated that, under "normal circumstances, the evidence of a witness with the aforementioned frailties would be of little or no value," he nevertheless concluded that "in the case at bar, much of the evidence given by witness number two was not markedly different from Dr. Ray and Ms. Gwynneth C.D. Jones in its general support of a Métis presence in the Sault Ste Marie area."⁵⁸

c. Ray's Report on the Economic History of the Robinson Treaties Area Before 1860 (1998)

The Ray Report begins with the difficulty of identifying Aboriginal identity in the archival records. While it is true that "freeman" or "Canadien" may refer to an individual of mixed ancestry, this is not *necessarily* the case and may not be the case most often. Given that the term "half-breed" was also in common use, one could wonder why the author would choose to use "Canadien" or "freeman" to describe an individual of mixed ancestry rather than simply using the term "half-breed." While "freeman" may be preferred when the author wished to emphasize the occupation of the individual, this is far more difficult to argue with "Canadien."

Ray also claims that "the meaning of the term 'half-breed' is clear, [but] the use of the word 'Indian' in the records is not."⁵⁹ In Ray's view, the term "Indian" was used "in the same sense as we presently use the expression 'Native people' [or Aboriginal] to include 'Métis' and 'Indians' alike."⁶⁰ First of all, the only reason the term "half-breed" seems clear is because Ray works from the assumption that it can only ever mean "Métis" in the contemporary sense of a people. Contrary to what Ray claims, the use of the term "half-breed" in the 19th century is not at all clear. It simply referred to the *racial* origins of an individual or a group of individuals. It may be an indicator of self-identification, but the individual so designated may also have self-identified as *Canadien* or Anishinaabeg/Ojibway. Without further evidence, it is impossible to draw any hard and fast conclusions in this regard. Yet, Ray almost systematically substitutes the term "Métis" wherever he finds "freeman," "Canadien," or "half-breed."

Second of all, with regard to the term "Indian," Ray implicitly relies on the assumption that only "racially pure" First Nations are truly "Indian." Therefore, labelling anyone with mixed ancestry as "Indian" is a case of misrecognition. This also has the ramification that simple hybridity is in itself a sufficient condition to conclude the existence of a distinct Métis identity. In other words, no intergenerational process of ethnogenesis is necessary for the emergence of a distinct ethnic group.

Ray recognized that,

⁵⁷ *R v Powley*, [1998] O.J. No 5310, para. 27.

⁵⁸ *R v Powley*, [1998] O.J. No 5310, para. 29.

⁵⁹ Arthur J. Ray. 1998. "An Economic History of the Robinson Treaties Area Before 1860," p. 7.

⁶⁰ Ray, "An Economic History," p. 7.

the vast majority of the post visitors of the Robinson Treaties area *who identified themselves as 'Indians' had some Ojibwa ancestry* and, in the period 1821–50, they continued to use their traditional Ojibwa names. This means that the family names that appear in the journal records can provide strong clues about the cultural affinities of the people mentioned. In the period 1821–50, Natives with French-Canadian and English/Scottish surnames likely were people of mixed ancestry and Métis cultural orientation. Those who used Native names had strong Ojibwa, or Ojibwa-Cree cultural ties.⁶¹

Here, Ray admits that individuals with “some Ojibwa ancestry” – in other words individuals of mixed ancestry – could very well *self-identify* as “Indian.” Yet, despite the assumption here that a “Native” name is an indication of strong Ojibwe cultural ties, he nevertheless claims that the Ojibwe name Meenokeeshic or Minakeeschick (*Mino-giizhik*) in the Flying Post censuses of 1825 and 1826 is a “Métis” name.⁶² Furthermore, he provides no explanation as to why those who used European surnames were not only “likely” of mixed ancestry but also had a “Métis” cultural orientation rather than an Ojibwe or Canadien cultural orientation.

An example of Ray turning voyageurs and Canadiens into “Métis” is when he insists heavily on Johann-Georg Kohl’s prior ethnographic account in the region. In an oft-cited passage, Kohl mentions a “voyageur” in a “Canadian fishing hut.”⁶³ The individual self-identifies as both “voyageur” and “chicot” – not as “métis,” “bois-brûlé,” or “half-breed.” While Kohl observed that “my Canadian has some Indian blood in his veins,” it was only “*jestingly* [that he] calls himself ‘Chicot’.”⁶⁴ While Kohl claims that *chicot* “has become a nickname for the half-breeds,” it is the only known occurrence of the term. As Jacqueline Peterson has pointed out, “[a]ll subsequent historical usages of *chicot* as *bois brule* or *Metis* can be traced to Kohl. *There are no other known examples.*”⁶⁵ In addition, according to Peterson, from “Kohl’s footnotes, we learn that some French Canadian voyageurs were classified as *chicots*, even if they had no Indian ancestry.”⁶⁶

While Kohl claims that *chicot* refers to “half-burnt stumps,” this is not entirely accurate. In a recent version of the leading Québécois French dictionary, it is defined as: “Reste d’une branche, d’un tronc d’arbre cassé ou coupé. *Ramasser les chicots.* [...] *Être maigre comme un chicot, très maigre.*”⁶⁷ While *chicot* can refer to the remaining part of a branch or stump that has been cut off

⁶¹ Ray, “An Economic History,” p. 7–8, underlined in original, italics ours.

⁶² Ray, “An Economic History,” p. 27. Moreover, he claims that it appears as Meenoojishisk on the Annual Payment Lists for the Michipicoten Post. Charles Lippert explains that, “the final ⟨sk⟩, which is extremely rare in Ojibwe, but [is] common in Cree.” Lippert thought that “Meenoojishisk” looks like East Cree cognate to the Ojibwe “minogiiizhik” – “minuciishisk”. However, Michipicoten would likely have Moose Cree and not East Cree. East Cree might go to Abitibi and Temagami but more likely along the Harricana and Eastmain rivers. These two rivers are absolutely nowhere in the neighbourhood of either Flying Post or Michipicoten. It also seems strange that the same person would give his name in Ojibwe at Flying Post in 1825/26 but give it in Cree at Michipicoten in 1850. Personal communication, 12 July 2020.

⁶³ Johann Georg Kohl. 1985. *Kitchi Gami. Life Among the Lake Superior Ojibway*. [originally published in 1860]. Minneapolis: The Minnesota Historical Society Press, p. 260.

⁶⁴ Kohl, *Kitchi Gami*, p. 260, emphasis ours.

⁶⁵ Peterson. “Red River Redux,” p. 26, emphasis ours.

⁶⁶ Peterson. “Red River Redux,” p. 26.

⁶⁷ Jeans Claude Bélanger, ed. 1992. *Le Robert. Dictionnaire Québécois d’aujourd’hui*. St-Laurent, QC: Dicorobert Inc., p. 192. See also Chiara Bignamini-Verhoeven. 2008. “Analyse linguistique et stylistique

or broken, there is no implication of it being burnt (although it can refer to a dried-out tree – *un arbre sec*). It is possible that Kohl read the connotations of *bois-brûlé* (i.e., literally “burnt wood”) into *chicot* as both refer to wood. Interestingly, when it is used to refer specifically to persons, *chicot* means someone who is very thin (*très maigre*), like a fallen branch. Perhaps the interlocutor was jestingly referring to his life as a voyageur as a branch that had been cut off from its source – the St. Lawrence Valley. This is suggested by Kohl’s citation of the voyageur as wishing to return to Lower Canada:

*They regarded themselves as exiles – indeed, as doubly banished, first from France, and then again from Lower Canada. Their life is a very hard one, the natives that surround them rough and wild... Their mode of life exposes them to countless dangers and wants, and though they all say that they will soon return to Lower Canada, their real home, very few of them carry this into effect. And there are whole families of Voyageurs here on Lake Superior, who, from father to son, have sung of the 'return to Canada,' but who have all perished here.*⁶⁸

The clear emphasis here is on a French-Canadian identity, not a Métis one. Kohl does comment that “they” also call themselves “Bois-brûlés” or “Bois grillé,” but he explicitly states that it is “in reference to *the shades of colour that bronze the face* of a mixed breed.”⁶⁹ Despite this explicit textual reference to skin colour, Ray goes off on a conjectural tangent that associates “bois-brûlé” to the “people of ‘burnt stump’ farms.”⁷⁰ It is true, as Ray claims, that Kohl makes an association between the French place name “Rivière au Désert” (Garden River) and a “desert of half-carbonised tree stumps and skeletons” where Canadiens have “patches of oats and barley sown among the tree stumps.”⁷¹ But Kohl explicitly refers to Rivière au Désert as “an Ojibway village, an Indian mission,”⁷² and not a Canadien settlement.

Ray also confuses two distinct families and places when writing of “Kohl’s experience with the Métis,”⁷³ claiming that “Kohl regarded the traditions and ethnography of the Ojibwa as distinct from that of the Lafleur’s.”⁷⁴ Ray cites Kohl’s brief stay in Sault Ste. Marie in 1855 – only five years after the Robinson Treaties – where Kohl first refers to his “Canadian hosts” and speaks of the “hospitality of the French-Canadians of the old school.”⁷⁵ Kohl also explicitly states that this “family of hospitable Canadians” lived on and “had cleared the forest around to a considerable extent” on *Île au Sucre* (Sugar Island) and not at Garden River.⁷⁶ While Ray confirms this by citing the passage that after “mass every morning, [we] then took to our canoe, and made excursions to the Ojibbeway [*sic*] village opposite in search of Indian traditions and

des franco-canadianismes dans La Montagne secrète de G. Roy ». Dans Brigitte Horiot dir. *Français du Canada – Français de France VII. Acte du septième colloque international de Lyon, du 16 au 18 juin 2003*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, p. 115.

⁶⁸ Kohl, *Kitchi Gami*, p. 259–60, emphasis ours.

⁶⁹ Kohl, *Kitchi Gami*, p. 260, emphasis ours.

⁷⁰ Ray, “An Economic History,” p. 61.

⁷¹ Ray, “An Economic History,” p. 60.

⁷² Kohl, *Kitchi Gami*, p. 303.

⁷³ Ray, “An Economic History,” p. 59.

⁷⁴ Ray, “An Economic History,” p. 60.

⁷⁵ Kohl, *Kitchi Gami*, p. 312.

⁷⁶ Kohl, *Kitchi Gami*, p. 312.

ethnography,” he presumes Kohl’s party is leaving the Lafleur’s dwelling.⁷⁷ Once in Garden River, the missionary “pitched his hut” while Kohl watched “Indian life more closely.” Kohl writes that “at night we returned to our French Canadian on the opposite shore.”⁷⁸

What may have confused Ray is that Kohl immediately mentions meeting a “half-breed in the village” named Lafleur who has an Indigenous wife (“his squaw”). It is here that Ray presumes that Lafleur is the same French-Canadian previously mentioned who cleared a garden on Sugar Island. However, Kohl mentions Lafleur’s mother-in-law as being “from the far west on the Mississippi” and giving “an unhesitating preference to *this eastern Garden River*.”⁷⁹ The “village” Kohl finds the “half-breed” in is Garden River, not Sugar Island. Furthermore, Kohl refers to “their most cleanly and neat dwellings”⁸⁰ when he speaks of his Canadian hosts on Sugar Island but refers to Lafleur’s “wretched little Indian cabin.”⁸¹ Kohl was not at all distinguishing between a “Métis community” on Sugar Island and an Ojibwe village in Garden River, as Ray seems to contend. Kohl consistently identifies Sugar Island as “Canadian” and simply refers to an individual “Canadian half-breed” who is married to an Ojibwe woman and lives among the Ojibwe in Garden River, not among other *métis* in a distinct *métis* community on Sugar Island. Even if we were to define “métis identity” in terms of hybridity, a single individual is hardly evidence of a collective “métis” identity, much less a “Métis” one.

Contrary to what Ray claims, nowhere in his book does Kohl ever mention a “Métis” community or even groups of “half-breeds” fishing or hunting together when he pursues his ethnographic study of the Ojibwe. The only other “half-breed” Kohl explicitly mentions is the Ojibwe chief, Zhingwaakoons, whose mother “educated him among the Indians and in the Indian way.”⁸² When taking leave of the Sault, Kohl does mention, “our kind Canadians, Indians and half-breeds,”⁸³ but it seems that Kohl is referring to specific individuals such as Lafleur rather than a distinct cohesive group.

d. The OMNR’s Report on Characteristics of Metis Families in the Vicinity of Sault Ste. Marie, 1860–1925 (1998)

In the “Review of Reports,” the authors note that the “Jones report begins with the period of negotiation of the Robinson-Huron Treaty, and does not present any analysis of a métis community development prior to this period.”⁸⁴ Given the importance of the period of effective control in the MNO and Government of Ontario’s 2016 recognition process, the Jones report’s focus on the period *following* effective control in the region means it’s of limited use.

Much like the other reports, including her OMNR reports for the Mattawa region, Jones does not account for the ethnogenesis of a métis community in Sault Ste. Marie. The emphasis of her

⁷⁷ Kohl, *Kitchi Gami*, p. 313.

⁷⁸ Kohl, *Kitchi Gami*, p. 314.

⁷⁹ Kohl, *Kitchi Gami*, p. 316–17, emphasis ours.

⁸⁰ Kohl, *Kitchi Gami*, p. 312.

⁸¹ Kohl, *Kitchi Gami*, p. 317. Furthermore, the surname Lafleur is neither among the list of settlers in 1846 nor in the 1850 petitions. See Holmes and Associates, “Sault Ste. Marie Métis Historical Report,” p. 30–35 and Appendix B.

⁸² Kohl, *Kitchi Gami*, p. 374. See also p. 377.

⁸³ Kohl, *Kitchi Gami*, p. 426.

⁸⁴ PRAXIS Research Associates “Review of Reports,” p. 35.

report seems to be more on the persistence of a métis community after 1850 by relying on census materials from the 1861–1901 period. However, when Jones surveyed the so-called Métis in the 1901 census, she included fifty-six “métis” (presumably, the term used in the census was actually “breeds”) in Batchewana, 419 in Garden River and 202 in the Town of Sault Ste. Marie. Again, the number of “métis” are artificially inflated by including individuals of mixed ancestry who are clearly status Indians living on Ojibwe reserves, which according to Jones’ own numbers likely represents *at least* 70% of those individuals enumerated with the term “breed” under the designation for “Colour.” However, since it is unclear how many of the 202 of the “breeds” living in the Town of Sault Ste. Marie are also status Indians or Indians who lost their status due to the sexist clauses in the *Indian Act* at the time, then it is possible that 100% of the “Métis” individuals identified by Jones are in fact status Indians. While the census may be an indicator of *racial* identity, further information is required to understand how the term “breed” was used at the time and how individuals understood that term before drawing any conclusions about their social and cultural identity.

The Jones Report would seem to be similarly marred by the presumption that any use of the term “half-breed” in the archival record can automatically be translated as “Métis” and taken as evidence of a Métis community.

4. SCOPING REVIEW

a. Secondary Sources Cited in Reports

Osborne, A.C. 1901. The Migration of Voyageurs from Drummond Island to Penetanguishene in 1828. *Ontario Historical Society Papers and Records*. Vol. III, p.123–166.

Osborne offers a series of interviews with original voyageurs and some of their descendants. This document is used by Reimer and Chartrand as primary source material to establish the unequivocal existence of a Métis community at Penetanguishene. However, a thorough reading of the source itself reveals that none of the voyageurs use the word Métis to describe themselves or their families, and none demonstrate a clear sense of a Métis identity as separate and distinct – let alone a clear and present self-ascription as belonging to a distinct Indigenous nation. If anything, the voyageurs at Penetanguishene appear to be part of a multi-ethnic, loosely defined community with only *some* having any Indigenous ancestry.

For example, Antoine Labatte recounts that “I am three-quarters French and one-quarter Indian,”⁸⁵ with little distinction as to what *kind* of “Indian.” Angelique Langlade refers to herself as a “Chippewa half-breed; ma mudder Josephine Ah-quah-dah, Chippawa squaw, Yankee tribe; mad fadder Charles Langlade, French-half-breed, hees born Mackinaw, an move Drummon Island wid Breeteesh.”⁸⁶ Meanwhile some were not Indigenous at all, as Joseph Freismith and James Farlinger were “reputed to be Germans, though speaking French and married to half breed women.”⁸⁷ Joseph Fleury, “was said to be a Spaniard. He married a half breed woman and spoke

⁸⁵ <http://www.bussineau.com/penetanguishene.htm>

⁸⁶ <http://www.bussineau.com/penetanguishene.htm>

⁸⁷ <http://www.bussineau.com/penetanguishene.htm>

French.”⁸⁸ While some were seen as coming to Penetanguishene by way of Red River, such as Françoise Clermont (as the wife of Francis Dussaume Sr.), the extent to which Clermont was Indigenous is not clearly established by Reimer and Chartrand. In addition to using the personal family narratives collected by Osborne to establish the existence of a Métis community at Penetanguishene, Reimer and Chartrand also use this work to argue that these root ancestors give rise to an ethnogenesis that essentially happens later – that the root ancestors are “initial intermarriages” that provided a foundation for later identity formation. Where a distinct identity might be identified, it lies in their continual reference to half-breedness, however, as discussed by Leroux and O’Toole, initial petitions for land on behalf of the voyageurs made no appeal on the basis of half-breedness but only on the basis of being loyal British subjects.⁸⁹ It remains that no clear articulation of a distinctive Métis identity is presented in Osborne’s original work.

Clifton, James A. 1978. “Personal and Ethnic Identity on the Great Lakes Frontier: The Case of Billy Caldwell, Anglo-Canadian.” *Ethnohistory*, 25(1), 69–94.

The use of James Clifton’s article in the context of “Great Lakes Métis” claims as well raises questions. First of all, Clifton does not take pains to explain what he means by or to identify Métis, he simply uses the term. At the same time, he also makes the argument that people changed their identities on the basis of need.⁹⁰ Reimer and Chartrand however use his argument about changing identities to contend that rather than fixedness, métis in the Great Lakes engaged in a practice of “situational ethnicity,” for which they use Clifton’s work to demonstrate. Their interpretation simply sees the various maneuvers of mixed ancestry people as akin to métisness, even when such a form of identification and the application of the French-language term makes little sense. For instance, they cite Clifton’s discussion of Billy Caldwell, also known as Chief Sauganash, who was born to a Mohawk mother and British military father at a Mohawk village near the British base of Niagara in 1780. He was raised from the age of 7 to 11 at Six Nations where his grandfather Rising Sun was a chief and where he exclusively spoke Mohawk, before being sent to live with his British father in Amherstburg.⁹¹ This is revealing of how both Clifton and Reimer and Chartrand apply métis to someone who – by matrilineal descent *and* by his early upbringing was unequivocally Mohawk – later transitioning to live among his Anglo-British paternal line and eventually intermarrying and moving through other Indigenous and non-Indigenous contexts. At no point does Caldwell’s life demonstrate anything related to métis identity and it offers no proof – to whatever ends – of a so-called *métis* situational ethnicity. For whatever identities he may have oscillated between, no evidence has been presented that métis or Métis identities are appropriate to Caldwell’s lived reality. Again, the “Métis-as-mixed” framework predominates in Reimer and Chartrand’s works.

Peterson, Jacqueline. 1978. “Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great Lakes Métis.” *Ethnohistory*, 25(1), 41–67.

Peterson’s earlier work is still often used to provide a legitimate scholarly basis for the recognition of Penetanguishene as one of the Great Lakes “Métis” communities. In her work, she

⁸⁸ <http://www.bussineau.com/penetanguishene.htm>

⁸⁹ Leroux and O’Toole, “An Analysis of the MNO’s Recognition of Six New Historic Métis Communities,” p. 26–30.

⁹⁰ Clifton, “Personal and Ethnic Identity,” p. 82.

⁹¹ Clifton, “Personal and Ethnic Identity,” p. 71–74.

plainly states that Métis simply means mixed race.⁹² In this article, Peterson hinges her definition of Métis on a 1976 edition of the *The New Nation*, a monthly Indigenous newspaper printed in Winnipeg and widely distributed in Manitoba. In other words, Peterson extrapolates this site-specific Métis *Nation* identity and applies it to the Great Lakes, arguing that Métis represents an “incipient ethnic identity” rather than a “racial identity.”⁹³ To this she argues that Johann Georg Kohl’s *Kitchi-Gami* and its observations about voyageurs and half-breed populations support her recasting of such populations as “métis” communities. Peterson provides no evidence of historical consciousness as métis, noting that “self-denominators are rare in the literature (some Metis residents of Green Bay referred to themselves as French ‘creole,’ i.e., native born), [but] one can infer from the labels attached to outsiders, whether ‘Indians’ or ‘Whites,’ that Metis community members considered themselves distinct.”⁹⁴ For Peterson, the so-called Great Lakes Metis “drew a line between themselves and their sauvage [Indian] clients...just as others would distinguish between themselves and ‘Whites’.”⁹⁵ Ultimately, it is this sense of distinction that establishes a foundation for setting the voyageur community apart as Métis. She single-handedly dismisses the fact that the term was apparently unappealing to those who instead preferred to call themselves “French creole” or “native born.”

This projection into the archives is further reinforced where Peterson notes that “even in the French correspondence” the word Metis was infrequently used – instead “chicot, bois brule, gens de libre [*sic*], and even Canadese or Canadien” were the terms gaining traction toward the end of the War of 1812.⁹⁶ Peterson notes that Robert Dickson referred to those she calls the “Green Bay Metis” as simply “the people;” something that more closely mirrors the English translation of Anishinaabeg.⁹⁷ Peterson then argues that terms are often used that identify people by their occupation or mobility patterns. She nevertheless reduces this complex terminological practice to insist that rather than being modes of identification they were simply adjectives applied to “Metis” people/person. She disregards that there is evidence of how these individuals themselves identified, in that they wrote some of the French language correspondence she cites. The evidence she draws on for her claims that certain people were Métis is contradicted by the fact that in the materials she references *they* in fact use other terms for themselves – they do not use Métis.

Her other rationale for recasting the people as Métis is less to do with the expression of material culture or a distinctive culture, but because of their role as “intermediaries...between Indian and European societies...as portage and ferry tenders, mail carriers, guides, interpreters, negotiators, barge and oarmen [*sic*], officers and spies in the Indian service, as well as tribal business agents and employees of missions and Indian agencies. In each case, they functioned not only as human carriers linking Indians and Europeans, but as buffers behind which the ethnic boundaries of antagonistic cultures remained relatively secure.”⁹⁸ In stark contrast to the distinct emergence of the Métis Nation as people who were their own bosses – and as a distinct *nation* that existed in

⁹² Peterson, “Prelude to Red River,” p. 45.

⁹³ Peterson, “Prelude to Red River,” p. 46.

⁹⁴ Peterson, “Prelude to Red River,” p. 54.

⁹⁵ Peterson, “Prelude to Red River,” p. 54.

⁹⁶ Peterson, “Prelude to Red River,” p. 54.

⁹⁷ Peterson, “Prelude to Red River,” p. 54.

⁹⁸ Peterson, “Prelude to Red River,” p. 55.

relation to other Indigenous nations – she instead sees cultural fluidity, flexibility, and ethnic mobility as characteristic of what she calls here Great Lakes Métis identity.

Brown, Jennifer S.H. 1980. *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

The OMNR Report for Georgian Bay also draws on the work of another scholar considered prominent in relation to Métis history, Jennifer Brown. With Brown, Reimer and Chartrand draw from her work distinguishing between “small m” and “big M” M/métis. In particular, they crucially note that small “m” métis connotes “mixed parentage but not ethnic identity,” while a capital “M” Métis denotes the “name of an identifiable ethnic group.”⁹⁹ To this end, Reimer and Chartrand clarify that they elect to use “métis” with a small “m” throughout the Report because they recognize that the latter has political and legal implications. Their hesitation is telling. As they note, “criteria of métis ethnicity are multifaceted and somewhat ambiguous, especially when considering the development of a distinct métis population in the Great Lakes region. No consensus exists concerning which should be used in measuring métis identity, as an ethnic entity distinct from their heritage in either European or Aboriginal parentage.”¹⁰⁰ Beyond this, Brown’s work is invoked for cross-purposes – meaning that although she makes no mention of Penetanguishene, Drummond Island, or Michilimackinac, her research itself (and the article cited) argues that in the cases of people of mixed ancestry outside of Red River, they assimilated into the settler colonial population. Brown writes, “For the métis, in contrast, their efforts to seek and protect their rights in the Red River region helped to lead to their survival as an entity in Western Canada, albeit with persisting economic and political problems.”¹⁰¹ The use of Brown does little to support the arguments made by Reimer and Chartrand and in fact works to clarify the precise limitations of the larger claim made as to the distinctive existence of a cohesive métis people in the Great Lakes region.

Gauvreau, Danielle, Francine Bernèche, & Juan A. Fernandez. 1982. *La population des Métis et des Indiens sans statut: essai d’estimation et de distribution spatiale. Recherches amérindiennes au Québec*, 12(2), 95–103.

This article was cited by Guillaume Marcotte in his MA thesis (see below) to support the idea that “Métis” people were recognized in the 70s in Québec. However, what the authors actually argue is that the term “Métis” is used in Québec to refer to individuals who are mixed-race. In the authors’ own words:

The application of the [Indian Act] therefore reveals a category of women who were born Indian, were registered on the band lists but lost their status because of their marriage: they are ‘Indian women without status.’ Their children are Métis to whom the law does not grant Indian status, unlike Métis born to a registered Indian father and a non-Indian mother, who are automatically registered on the band lists and are therefore considered full Indians.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Reimer and Chartrand. “Historic Métis in Ontario: Georgian Bay,” p. 3.

¹⁰⁰ Reimer and Chartrand. “Historic Métis in Ontario: Georgian Bay,” p. 3.

¹⁰¹ Brown, *Strangers in Blood*, p. 220.

¹⁰² Gauvreau, Bernèche, & Fernandez, “La population des Métis et des Indiens sans statut,” p. 95, our translation.

Clearly, the authors are not using “Métis” to mean a distinct Indigenous people in Québec.

Moore, Kermot A. 1982. *Kipawa: Portrait of a People*. Cobalt, ON: Highway Book Shop. This book is cited extensively by researchers arguing for the existence of a historic Métis community in the Mattawa region. Among those who cite it are Siommon Pulla, the expert witness in the *Tremblay* case (2018) and Stone Circle/Know History, in the report used in the MNO/Government of Ontario’s 2016 recognition of the “Historic Mattawa Métis Community.” Unfortunately, both reports use Moore’s work in a manner that’s completely inconsistent with his arguments.¹⁰³

Moore was the founder of the Laurentian Alliance of Métis and Non-Status Indians (LAMNSI) in 1972. LAMNSI evolved to become the most prominent organization in Québec representing the interests of non-status Indigenous people. Despite many claims to the contrary in the so-called Eastern métis literature, at no point does the LAMNSI ever advocate for a distinct Métis people in Québec. In fact, as Leroux has demonstrated, the LAMNSI repeatedly takes an explicit public position against the existence of a distinct “Métis” people in Québec throughout the 70s and 80s.¹⁰⁴

As the title of Moore’s book informs us, he’s writing about the people of Kipawa, an Algonquin community now known as Kebaowek First Nation. Kebaowek is the nearest Algonquin community to Mattawa, which is across the Ottawa River, hence why it factors into debates about the existence of a “Métis” community in Mattawa. In his report, Pulla cites many individuals/families identified as Algonquin by Moore as “Métis” for the purpose of his arguments. As we explained in our previous report for the MMF, turning mixed-race Algonquin people into root ancestors for a “historic Métis community” is by-now commonplace in the “Eastern métis” literature.¹⁰⁵

Moore is himself mixed-race and throughout his book he refers to himself proudly and without hesitation as Algonquin/Anishinaabe. Under these circumstances, Pulla’s misuse of Moore’s work to point to a distinct, rights-bearing “Métis” people in Algonquin territory is egregious. At the very beginning of his book, Moore defines what he means by “Métis”: “I use the word Metis to describe people of mixed European and Native blood. Since 1967, Metis has become synonymous with the word half-breed and accepted nationally by people of that lineage. Since half-breed was commonly used in the Kipawa territory in times past, however, I will use it wherever it is historically correct to do so.”¹⁰⁶ On several occasions in his book, Moore does refer to “Métis” individuals, but it’s clear that in every case he means mixed-race Algonquin individuals, most of whom have been disenfranchised by the Indian Act.

¹⁰³ See Siomonn Pulla, 2016, “Expert Report on the Historic Métis Community in the Mattawa Region;” Stone Circle/Know History, 2015, “Mattawa Nipissing Métis Historical Research Project, Final Synthesis Report.”

¹⁰⁴ Darryl Leroux. 2019. “Eastern métis’ Studies and White Settler Colonialism Today.” *aboriginal policy studies*, 8(1): 104–14.

¹⁰⁵ Leroux and O’Toole, “An Analysis of the MNO’s Recognition of Six New Historic Métis Communities,” p. 15–16.

¹⁰⁶ Moore, *Kipawa*, p. iii.

Peterson, Jacqueline Louise. 1982. “The People in Between: Indian-white Marriage and the Genesis of a Metis Society and Culture in the Great Lakes Region, 1680–1830.” PhD Diss. Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago.

Peterson’s work is foundational to Reimer and Chartrand’s Georgian Bay analysis in that her work is held as providing (along with John Foster) a legitimate basis for relabeling mixed ancestry communities as métis (a small “m” conflated to big “M”). In Peterson’s dissertation, she essentially argues that métis is a term preferable to half-breed because it simply means “to mix,” stemming from the Latin “mixticius.”¹⁰⁷ Half-breed is, by contrast, seen as explicitly derogatory. At this point in her trajectory, Peterson was using the “Métis-as-mixed” framework.

Driben, Paul. 1983. “The Nature of Metis Claims.” *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, 3(1), 183–96.

Some of Driben’s unpublished work is cited in Jones’ work for the OMNR as a way to support the idea that there exists a distinct Métis population in Ontario. This specific article was cited in the OMNSIA report written by Peters et al. in 1991. In it, Driben makes the case for the Métis having Aboriginal rights under the constitution and having Aboriginal title in regions where title wasn’t extinguished or was extinguished illegally. In some ways, his argument presages future court decisions (*Powley* and *Daniels*).

While he doesn’t explicitly call for recognition of “Ontario Métis,” he does seem to suggest that there’s an unrecognized “Métis” population in and around James Bay. That’s about as far as Driben’s work here goes.

Sawchuk, Joe. 1985. “The Metis, Non-status Indians and the New Aboriginality: Government Influence on Native Political Alliances and Identity.” *Canadian Ethnic Studies/Etudes ethniques au Canada*, 17(2), 135–46.

In this article, Sawchuk gives an overview of his research among and for Métis organizations since 1969. He describes a political environment in which Métis and non-status Indian activists worked closely together until the 1980s. As a result, core funding from the federal government to the Native Council of Canada was granted on the condition that it represent both Métis and non-status Indians.¹⁰⁸

Overall, one gets the impression that Sawchuk longs for the period before the constitutional changes of 1982: “The constitutional definition of aboriginality has subverted a significant political alliance between the Metis and non-status Indians. Together, they made up the largest bloc of native peoples in the country.”¹⁰⁹ While Sawchuk’s work here doesn’t explicitly support the claims to distinct “Métis” people(s) in Ontario, it is nonetheless cited to illustrate the changing political terrain of Indigenous identity.

Giraud, Marcel. 1986. *The Métis in the Canadian West*. Vol. 2. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press.

The authors of the OMNR’s Georgian Bay Report also reference Giraud’s seminal study but appear unable to find anything to corroborate their research specifically regarding the emergence

¹⁰⁷ Peterson, “The People in Between,” p. 6.

¹⁰⁸ Sawchuk, “The Metis, non-status Indians and the new Aboriginality,” p. 140.

¹⁰⁹ Sawchuk, “The Metis, non-status Indians and the new Aboriginality,” p. 144.

of métis communities in the Great Lakes. There is no use of Giraud that supports their overarching claim.

Burley, David, Gayel A. Horsfall, & John D. Brandon. 1991. *Structural Considerations of Métis Ethnicity: An Archeological, Architectural, and Historical Study*. Vermillion, SD: University of South Dakota Press.

With a large Métis population of several thousand people at Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians just south of the border with Manitoba in North Dakota, scholars in the Dakotas have often turned to the history of the Métis. This specific study relies heavily on Peterson's earliest work, though it veers away from it in some ways. Burley *et al.* offer an in-depth discussion of the origins of the Métis *people* through employing an ethnogenesis framework. It is their conclusion that the Métis people's origins can be traced "only through reference to social, political and economic circumstances in the Red River settlement."¹¹⁰

Morris, Alexander. 1991. *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the North-West Territories including the negotiations on which they were based*. 1880. Reprint, Toronto: Fifth House.

Several report authors refer to Alexander Morris' first-hand observations during his travels and work on the subject of treaties, along with those of William Benjamin Robinson, primarily appointed to negotiate what became known as the Robinson-Huron and Robinson-Superior treaties of the Great Lakes. According to Morris' account, Robinson observed a number of (who he refers to as) "half-breeds" living around the Great Lakes. Morris cites that living alongside First Nations they were, "on Lake Superior...84 half-breeds; and on Lake Huron...200 half-breeds."¹¹¹ This work is referenced to firm up the claim that there were discernible populations set apart from First Nations and European settlers in the Great Lakes region.

Further, Morris writes that, "The relations of the Indians and half-breeds have long been cordial; and in the negotiations as to these initial treaties, as in the subsequent ones, the claims of the half-breeds, to recognition, was urged by the Indians."¹¹² In particular, Morris' accounts regarding First Nations treaty negotiations by bands around Sault Ste. Marie are used in the reports to demonstrate that First Nations leaders such as Shingwaukonce and Nebennigoebing *recognize* the half-breed population around Sault Ste. Marie as *distinct*; it shores up the claim that not only does such a community exist, but it is recognized by *other* Indigenous people as existing. As evidence in their Georgian Bay Report, Reimer and Chartrand zero in on Shingwaukonce and Nebennigoebing's request that their treaty should include "a condition securing to some sixty half-breeds a free grant of one hundred acres of land each."¹¹³

Morris' work is used to give context to the population at Sault Ste. Marie, but it does not and could not be used to offer context for "métis" participation in treaty-signing around Lake Huron. This is reinforced by the fact that, according to Morris, aside from the 1,422 First Nations individuals and roughly 200 half-breeds accounted for during the administration of treaty, local First Nations did not know of any other families than those already accounted for. It is clear that

¹¹⁰ Burley, Horsfall, & Brandon, *Structural Considerations of Metis Ethnicity*, p. 15.

¹¹¹ Morris, *The Treaties of Canada*, p. 19.

¹¹² Morris, *The Treaties of Canada*, p. 18.

¹¹³ Reimer and Chartrand. "Historic Métis in Ontario: Georgian Bay," p. 69–70.

Morris and Robinson had a thorough understanding of community existence and dynamics at the time of treaty through negotiations with various First Nations. Importantly, Reimer and Chartrand don't advance any evidence to the contrary.

All of this leads Reimer and Chartrand to conclude that while Robinson dealt “with métis claims at Sault Ste. Marie and that métis individuals participated as interpreters during the negotiations at both Sault Ste. Marie and Penetanguishene in 1850,” that there is no primary evidence that “métis from the Georgian Bay region attempted to have claims recognized during the negotiations of the Robinson-Huron treaty.”¹¹⁴ This reinforces the assessment made by Leroux and O'Toole that people of mixed-ancestry within the area of Georgian Bay (the Drummond Island voyageurs) saw themselves as British loyalists and British subjects entitled to rights and land via their existence as such – and that it was not until such recognition failed to manifest that claims were modified in pursuit of half-breed annuities.¹¹⁵ Reimer and Chartrand therefore produce a paradox in referring to Morris' work, for while they acknowledge the lack of evidence of such self-conscious identification, they nevertheless argue that “a significant métis population” migrated from Drummond Island to Penetanguishene.¹¹⁶

Where the problems in such use of Morris' work and their analysis becomes apparent is that they seem to take further liberty in defining a population that they have not established has any affiliation or identification as métis *as* métis. With respect to Morris' writing, however, he makes it clear that he is perfectly able to distinguish from and recognize Métis existence. In his turn to the discussion of who he calls the “Half-breed population of the North-West Territories,” he explicitly and repeatedly uses the term “Métis.” He writes that “In Manitoba there is a large population of French Metis and Scotch Half-breeds, and they are proud of their mixed blood.”¹¹⁷ Further, on the prairie he distinguishes between three classes of “Half-breed” on the basis of ways of living. He writes that they are “the wandering Half-breeds of the plains, who are chiefly of French descent and live the life of the Indians. There are a few who are identified with the Indians, but there is a large class of Metis who live by the hunt of the buffalo, and have no settled hopes.”¹¹⁸ While his statements are undoubtedly problematic and reveal the limitations of his own thinking (along with the racism inherent to an outsider view, as he later advocates for “settling” buffalo hunting Métis), where this is of relevance to this discussion is that Morris had the full capability to *distinguish the Métis as such* – which he did not do in relation to Lake Huron people of mixed-ancestry.

Peters, Evelyn, Mark Rosenberg, & Greg Halseth. 1991. “The Ontario Métis: Characteristics and Identity.” The Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg.

The reference to this report appears in PRAXIS Research Associates “Annotated Bibliography” produced for the OMNR in 1999 and Annette Chrétien's 1993 Master's thesis “Mattawa, Where the Waters Meet.” The report was commissioned by the Ontario Métis and Non-Status Indian Association (OMNSIA), which was a member organization of the Native Council of Canada in

¹¹⁴ Reimer and Chartrand. “Historic Métis in Ontario: Georgian Bay,” p. 72.

¹¹⁵ See Leroux and O'Toole, “An Analysis of the MNO's Recognition of Six New Historic Métis Communities,” p. 26–30.

¹¹⁶ Reimer and Chartrand. “Historic Métis in Ontario: Georgian Bay,” p. 72.

¹¹⁷ Morris, *The Treaties of Canada*, p. 293.

¹¹⁸ Morris, *The Treaties of Canada*, p. 294–95.

the 1980s. The OMNSIA administered a questionnaire to its membership in 1985. As the authors explain, the OMNSIA sought to assess the potential effect of Bill C-31 on “the size and nature of its constituency.”¹¹⁹ About 2,000 of its members participated, 36% self-identified as Métis, 41% as “Non-status Indians” and 13% as “Status Indian.”

In terms of claims to a Métis population in Ontario, the authors rely solely on self-identification as a gauge in the report. They cite the work of Driben, in a report he wrote for the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture in 1987, as evidence that “Metis people first emerged as distinct cultural groups in Ontario rather than in the West.”¹²⁰ They also cite David McNab’s work in Northwestern Ontario as further evidence that Métis people first emerged in Ontario.¹²¹ Neither Driben nor McNab provide any concrete evidence as to the potential existence of distinct Métis people in Ontario outside of the Northwest, though the authors of the report suggest otherwise. They confirm in their analysis that the Métis respondents to the survey were largely born in Ontario (86%) and “appear to represent a group distinct from the Métis who trace their heritage and identity to their experiences at Red River.”¹²² Some of the survey results seem to suggest that self-identification as “Métis” in Ontario predates the creation of the MNO.

There are several notable findings from the report that are worth mentioning. First, a majority of the “Métis” respondents were men (53.4%) and a majority of the non-status Indian respondents were women (58.1%).¹²³ The findings also confirm that there are considerable differences in the origins of the two groups represented by the OMNSIA: those identifying as Métis are less likely to have family members who are Status Indians and are less likely to want to gain Indian status than non-status Indians,¹²⁴ as one might expect since non-status Indians were created as a category by and large due to (dis)enfranchisement under the Indian Act. As the authors explain, “Very few of the individuals identifying as Metis had themselves lost their Indian status, or could identify a relative through whom status was lost. Non-Status Indians were much more likely to have lost Indian status themselves, primarily through marriage, or to have lost it through a relative.”¹²⁵ All in all, individuals self-identifying as Métis in the survey were less likely to be able to identify their Indigenous “root ancestor” than non-status Indians, likely because their Indigenous ancestry came from before the Indian Act.¹²⁶

Another aspect of the study that is notable are the questions about status or recognition. The authors explain that 60% of “Métis” respondents wished to be registered under the Indian Act through the Indigenous nation of their ancestry, though 76.9% wished to have legal status as Métis “apart from Status Indians.”¹²⁷ The authors interpret this data in the following manner: “A likely interpretation of these responses is that the first two questions reflect a desire for legal status of some kind, but that given the choice, most Metis would prefer to have that status as

¹¹⁹ Peters, Rosenberg, & Halseth, “The Ontario Métis,” p. 11.

¹²⁰ Peters, Rosenberg, & Halseth, “The Ontario Métis,” p. 23.

¹²¹ Peters, Rosenberg, & Halseth, “The Ontario Métis,” p. 23 & 25.

¹²² Peters, Rosenberg, & Halseth, “The Ontario Métis,” p. 13.

¹²³ Peters, Rosenberg, & Halseth, “The Ontario Métis,” p. 49.

¹²⁴ Peters, Rosenberg, & Halseth, “The Ontario Métis,” p. 53.

¹²⁵ Peters, Rosenberg, & Halseth, “The Ontario Métis,” p. 59.

¹²⁶ See also Chrétien, “From the ‘Other Natives’ to the ‘Other Métis,’” p. 109.

¹²⁷ Peters, Rosenberg, & Halseth, “The Ontario Métis,” p. 37.

Metis rather than as Indian.”¹²⁸ Another likely interpretation, not considered in the report, is that those self-identifying as Métis sought to distance themselves from “Status Indians.”

Overall, the report provides a useful snapshot of the self-identified Métis and non-status Indian population in the lead-up to the implementation of Bill C-31. Given the limits of the questionnaire and the authors’ bias towards self-identification, the basis for these claims to an Ontario Métis identity remain obscure. Were individuals relying on 300+ Indigenous ancestry, as tens of thousands are today, to self-identify as “Métis”? Were they relying on the Indigenous “root ancestors” identified by the MNO in 2016? Whatever the case, it’s clear that survey respondents who identified as “Métis” were largely not relying on ancestry with actual Métis individuals.

Chrétien, Annette. 1996. “Mattawa, Where the Waters Meet.” Master’s thesis. University of Ottawa.

This Master’s thesis was extensively cited in the OMNR’s 1999 Mattawa Report written by Gwynneth Jones. In fact, it was used as the only evidence of contemporary research on the Mattawa “Métis.” However, like much of the research on the “Eastern Métis,” Chrétien’s thesis lacks academic rigour and relies on the usual tropes in this sub-field. For instance, Chrétien relies heavily on a differentiation between East and West, suggesting that “Métis” communities in Ontario are “more widespread and closeknit than the larger ones in Manitoba.”¹²⁹ At no point in her research does Chrétien bring forth any evidence to support such a claim. In fact, only a few pages later, Chrétien then states that “Métis ancestry [in Ontario] has been denied or hidden,”¹³⁰ repeating another common trope in the “Eastern métis” literature. Chrétien never answers how Métis identity can be at once hidden and widespread at the same time. Through it all, Chrétien admits that no in-depth study on Ontario “Métis” culture had occurred at the time, though she rejects the possibility that this lack of research could be linked to the fact that such communities simply don’t exist in central Ontario. Chrétien herself is from the Sudbury area and claims to be Ontario Métis with no connection to the Métis Homeland.

Chrétien makes a number of bizarre historical claims about the Mattawa region in the first part of her thesis, including by identifying four “First Nations tribes”¹³¹ around Mattawa in the 1800s. Two of the chiefs that she names overlap with the four “founding families” identified by Jones in her first OMNR report, but Chrétien mis-identifies a third chief as Innu and claims that he “immigrated” from the “Two Lakes Region” to the Mattawa region. This Algonquin man lived in the Algonquin/Nipissing community at Lake of Two Mountains and moved away from the mission community at a time when many Algonquin families were returning to their homelands in the Ottawa River watershed. Overall, Chrétien demonstrates a poor understanding of Algonquin history.

The most relevant part of her thesis is the second part, which focuses on interviews with three “Métis” musicians born and raised in Mattawa. It is this part of the thesis that is outlined as “oral history” by Jones. Chrétien relies solely on the words of her informants; self-identification as

¹²⁸ Peters, Rosenberg, & Halseth, “The Ontario Métis,” p. 37.

¹²⁹ Chrétien, “Mattawa, Where the Waters Meet,” p. 53.

¹³⁰ Chrétien, “Mattawa, Where the Waters Meet,” p. 61.

¹³¹ Chrétien, “Mattawa, Where the Waters Meet,” p. 69.

“Métis” is all it takes to be accepted as such in her research. Nothing in the thesis, beyond the informants’ own self-identification and Chrétien’s desire for them to be “Métis,” suggests that she is documenting a distinct Métis people in Mattawa. Instead, much of it reads like her informants are actually French-Canadian men practicing French-Canadian culture. One of the men is an “Elder” with the Métis Nation of Ontario and the other two are members and activists with the Ontario Métis and Aboriginal Association. As we now know, one could belong to either organization in 1996 on the basis of self-identification alone.

As we indicated in our last report for the MMF,¹³² the entire basis for the MNO’s current recognition of the “Historic Mattawa Métis Community” appears to be a range of potential non-status Algonquins whose Algonquin ancestry goes back about 200 years. Added to this group are without a doubt a number of French-descendants who seek an “Indigenous” identity. By cross-referencing the Algonquins of Ontario’s membership database (2015), it seems that we found at least one of Chrétien informants. A man named Victor Groulx, member of the Mattawa-North Bay Algonquin First Nation, is registered as “Algonquin” using ancestry dating back to the mid-1600s. While we’re not certain that this is the same Victor Groulx named as an “Métis Elder” and MNO citizen in Chrétien’s thesis, we believe it’s a very strong possibility. In the case of the second “Métis Elder” named in Chrétien’s thesis, Ed Bélanger, there are nearly 100 Bélangers registered with the AOO, the large majority based in Mattawa and using ancestry in the 1600s. While we can’t definitively confirm that Chrétien’s informants were in fact French-descendants at one time claiming “Métis” identities and then later claiming “Algonquin” identities, Chrétien confirms that her vision of the “Ontario Métis” is one based in French-descendant race shifting: “There is a rich legacy which has been passed down from early in the 17th century to the Métis descendants of today.”¹³³ Of course, the legacy she’s referring to from the 17th century is French-Canadian culture.

Morrison, James. 1996. “The Robinson Treaties of 1850: A Case Study.” Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

James Morrison’s Report was prepared for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples’ Treaty and Land Research Section and involves a case study of the Robinson Treaties of 1850. Morrison’s Report is used to affirm Reimer and Chartrand’s choice of the unequivocal use of the word “métis” in reference to people of mixed ancestry who nevertheless possess a distinct identity. In particular, Morrison’s Report is used to make many arguments as to the legitimate identification of people such as Pierre Lesage and Charlot Boyer¹³⁴ as definitively métis. Morrison’s main sources for interpreting and writing about Métis is Jacqueline Peterson’s “Prelude to Red River” and “Many Roads to Red River,” a scholar whose sources have already been discussed.

Morrison asserts that by 1850, Métis settlements “dotted” the Great Lakes, where “such species as whitefish, lake trout and sturgeon were also a primary source for metis people, whose settlements by the mid-nineteenth century, dotted the entire arc of the upper great lakes from

¹³² Leroux and O’Toole, “An Analysis of the MNO’s Recognition of Six New Historic Meetis Communities,” p. 11–16.

¹³³ Chrétien, “Mattawa, Where the Waters Meet,” p. 194.

¹³⁴ Boyer is discussed in Leroux and O’Toole, “An Analysis of the MNO’s Recognition of Six New Historic Métis Communities,” p. 55.

eastern Georgian Bay to the headwaters of the Mississippi River. These people of mixed European and Native ancestry served the various fur trading companies, military and government settlements and mission stations along the lakes not only as fishermen but as skilled tradesmen, voyageurs and boatmen, camp traders, interpreters and guides.”¹³⁵ Inasmuch as he characterizes the manner and mode of living of those he designates as métis, he writes that a review of current band lists for Lake Huron and Lake Superior First Nations will show that “many metis did indeed become Indians”¹³⁶ because of what, he argues, was Canada’s indifference to Métis people and identities.

He ultimately contends that it was better to be First Nations in Canada, while preferable to be Métis in the United States. Whereas in the United States, he writes, métis became “property owners, mayors” and even U.S. Congress representatives, in Canada “it was arguably better to be Ojibway in Canada West, then it was clearly better to be metis in the United States of America.”¹³⁷ Morrison is oblivious to the contradictions inherent in this statement – as are Reimer and Chartrand in drawing from his work. Morrison ignores the way in which *assimilation* into Euro-American society marked, rather than a distinct form of Métis prosperity, the success of the colonizing mission and the disappearance of Métis as a distinct people in parts of the United States. He likewise positions individualistic property ownership (and modes of living) as a naturally preferable state for those he calls Métis. What he actually establishes are the poles between assimilation and Indigeneity – that in Canada those of mixed ancestry elected to continue living in collective and communal ways with *other* Indigenous people. His observations reflect the existence of distinct forms of consciousness of a Métis people north of the border, and the decisions made by those of mixed ancestry living within spaces that have not given rise to a distinct identity as Métis.

Our point is further reinforced by his acknowledgement that it is “still a matter of debate” as to whether there is sufficient evidence to show that those he calls “Great Lakes metis” formed a self-conscious identity independent entirely of First Nations or European ancestry. As he writes, many prominent individuals in the Great Lakes region who were of mixed ancestry (such as George Ironside, Manitoulin Island Indian Superintendent, who was Shawnee and Huron through his mother), “clearly thought of themselves as white men.”¹³⁸ He juxtaposes this example against that of Lake Nipissing Chief Michel Dokis, who signed the Robinson-Huron Treaty, and who always saw himself as Anishinaabe, “even though one of his parents was French-Canadian.”¹³⁹ What Morrison highlights is that while outsiders used a variety of terms (often derogatory ones at that) to refer to individuals and families of mixed ancestry (“halfbreeds, chicots or bois brules”), what did not emerge with any clear visibility was a distinct Great Lake Métis people or nation that identified *itself* as such.

One of the most revealing aspects of Morrison’s work that also poses issues with Reimer and Chartrand’s use of it, is the way he reframes self-identification, arguing that it was “a matter of culture, not race – and the metis should be seen as an incipient ethnic group, not a racial

¹³⁵ Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 23.

¹³⁶ Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 6.

¹³⁷ Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 206.

¹³⁸ Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 41.

¹³⁹ Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 42.

category.”¹⁴⁰ Morrison argues that as an incipient ethnic group they are thus an “early stage” ethnic group and that there existed four settlements that, “could be classed as actually or incipiently – metis. That is to say, their residents used both the French and [A]nishinabe languages, had kinship and cultural ties to aboriginal societies (as well as to similar metis communities in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and the Red River) but *were individualistic, rather than tribal, in their socio-political structure.*”¹⁴¹ Of these, he identifies Penetanguishene as one such community writing that the,

historic Franco-Ontarian community on eastern Georgian Bay has predominantly metis roots. When the British garrison was transferred from Drummond Island to Penetanguishene in 1828, some seventy-five families of voyageurs – between three and four hundred people – who had then been living on the island removed as well. Most of the heads of families – with surnames like Boucher, Cadotte, Corbiere, Labatte, Langlade and Sylvestre – had been born at Michilimackinac or Drummond Island, of mixed French and [A]nishnabe parentage.¹⁴²

He likewise asserts that Killarney, discussed elsewhere in this Report, is also one such incipient metis community, while Sault Ste. Marie is another. To this end he makes an interesting claim that ultimately First Nations’ various attempts to include “half-breeds” was largely a strategy intended to enlarge bands and thus the size of land claimed under treaty negotiations. Morrison writes that Shingwaukonse “attempted to use the incentive of a future treaty to persuade metis people to join him in his dispute with the government and the mining companies.”¹⁴³ Morrison writes,

In 1893, Joshua (Joachim) Biron remembered that, a few years before the treaty, the chief had called a council at Garden River to which the half-breeds of Sault Ste Marie were all invited. Shingwakonce told them, that if they would ‘join his Band and be his men or soldiers,’ that he would work for them, that ‘some day he might sell his land, and that if so, his claim should be our claim – and that we halfbreeds would have a right to a share of what he, the Chief, might get for it.’ Only four of them, however – Joshua and his brother Alexis Biron, John Bell and Louison Cadotte – agreed to join the band. ‘All the other half-breeds’ Joshua remembered, ‘said that they were already Indians enough without binding themselves to be under an Indian Chief, and they all left the council room.’¹⁴⁴

This statement as well produces an interesting contradiction that has ripple effects for communities other than Sault Ste. Marie that Morrison frames as metis. Given the intertwined relations of some through intermarriage and that some people clearly voiced that they saw themselves as *Indians* and as *Indian enough* without needing to be “bound” under an Indian Chief, we see two things: the way that such people of mixed-ancestry might conceive of themselves *as* Indians, but also how Morrison’s interpretation that such identification was very

¹⁴⁰ Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 23.

¹⁴¹ Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 24, emphasis ours.

¹⁴² Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 23–24.

¹⁴³ Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 168.

¹⁴⁴ Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 168.

much about *individual* identity, and not one born from a collective sense of identity – they did not insist, for instance, that they were already an organized community with their own autonomous leadership, but reified their *individualism*. This is perhaps why, Morrison notes elsewhere, that other Chiefs, in contrast with Shingwaukonse, saw these Canadiens and half-breeds as white – they lived in a way entirely counter to what it meant to *be* an Indigenous people.¹⁴⁵

Morrison argues that other (who Morrison calls metis) families joined the Garden River and Batchewana/Sault Ste. Marie bands – Boissoneaus, Belleaus, Lesages, Perraults and Cyrettes – because they were unable to secure land titles at Sault Ste. Marie as “half-breeds,” resulting in the appearance of those otherwise framed as “metis” on Robinson Treaty annuity paylists.¹⁴⁶ While this may have been the case for bands around Sault Ste Marie, Morrison notes that Lake Huron bands did not approve inclusion of so-called “metis people.” In particular, Wagemake and Papasance, treaty signatories, sent a petition in August 1851 after annuities were first distributed at Manitoulin Island, to the Governor-General rejecting the inflation of annuities and lands in individual shares – “but should have been given out in proportion to the land actually owned by each tribe or band.”¹⁴⁷ They rejected both the attempts of “half-breeds” and the use of “half-breeds” by other First Nations to enlarge a Chief’s claim: “Half Breeds and other Indians coming to reside on a tract either with or without leave cannot increase the right of a Chief to receive a larger sum than that which the size of the territory his people own entitle him and them to.”¹⁴⁸ This further reveals the contradictions inherent in both Morrison’s analysis and Reimer and Chartrand’s use of Morrison’s study to affirm the existence of distinct, recognized (both internally and externally) communities of metis within the Great Lakes. Again, the narrative provided simply reimagines mixed-ancestry families as metis and thus Métis, with little evidence to support such a claim.

Bakker, Peter J. 1997. *A Language of their Own: The Genesis of Michif, the Mixed Cree-French Language of the Canadian Métis*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Peter Bakker is a linguist who has written a great deal about Michif. While he ties the origins of mixed-race people to New France and the Great Lakes, in following Peterson’s earliest work on the subject, he nonetheless maintains that a distinct Métis culture only developed in the Red River area in the 1800s. He makes a distinction between “pan-Métis” (i.e., mixed-race individuals with no *group* identity) from “historical Métis” (mixed-race individuals forming a distinct ethnic identity at Red River),¹⁴⁹ a distinction that closely resembles Foster’s development of the concept of “proto-métis” discussed previously.

¹⁴⁵ Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 211.

¹⁴⁶ Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 170.

¹⁴⁷ As cited in Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 170–71.

¹⁴⁸ As cited in Morrison, “The Robinson Treaties of 1850,” p. 170–71.

¹⁴⁹ Bakker, *Language of their Own*, p. 62–63.

Chute, Janet. 1998. *The Legacy of Shingwaukonse. A Century of Native Leadership*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Chute's book is on several generations of the Ojibwe chiefs of Garden River in Sault Ste. Marie. As such, it notably covers the negotiation of the Robinson Treaties in 1850 and several individuals who were mixed-race and identified as Ojibway/Anishinaabeg.

Gale, Alison E. 1998. *Robinson Treaties Métis Historical Report*. Ottawa: Department of Indian & Northern Affairs Canada.

While this report does not focus on Sault Ste. Marie, it covers the question of the increase in Robinson Treaty annuities. It notably contains full citations of E.B. Borron's reports and correspondence with regard to removing "half-breeds" from the treaty payment lists and covers the issue of non-transmissible titles. Borron's reports are often referred to in the OMNR Reports.

PRAXIS Research Associates claims the report presents "evidence [that] supports the contention of the Metis settlement at Fort William [Thunder Bay] as one of the two first Metis settlements in Canada," but then clarifies in a footnote that it was unable to locate the book that provides the aforementioned evidence.¹⁵⁰

b. Secondary Sources Published After Reports

Schenck, Theresa. 2002. "Who Owns Sault Ste. Marie?" *Michigan Historical Review*, 28(1), 108–120.

Schenck's article is about a land grant that was allegedly made by Ojibwe chiefs to Jean-Baptiste Cadotte Sr. in Sault Ste. Marie. What is interesting about the grant is that Indigenous ancestry was never evoked as a source of their claim. The grant itself is also of limited interest to the "métis community" in Sault Ste. Marie as it was located on the south shore. Schenck mentions that Janette Piquette, Jean-Baptiste Jr.'s wife with whom he had five children, was living there in 1808. The article does not allow one to determine how the Cadottes on the south shore were related to the Cadottes who are later found among the names of residents in the Vidal survey of 1846 or the petitions of 1850 detailed in the OMNR's Sault Ste. Marie Report.

Reimer, Gwen and Jean-Philippe Chartrand. 2004. "Documenting Historic Métis in Ontario." *Ethnohistory*, 51(3), 567–607.

This article is principally concerned with identifying historical methods for documenting "historic Métis communities" in Ontario. Reimer and Chartrand are the two-person team behind PRAXIS Research Associates, which wrote the "Review of Reports" and "Annotated Bibliography" for the OMNR. They also conducted research for the Department of Justice's *Powley* project in 2005, writing the report on James Bay's "Mixed European-Indian Ancestry Community" as they called it. This article is largely based on research conducted for these previous projects.

It begins with an epigraph by Tony Belcourt, claiming that Ontario Métis are a "matter of historic record."¹⁵¹ They also provide the MNO's membership criteria in 2002: "Anyone of

¹⁵⁰ PRAXIS Research Associates. 1999. Annotated Bibliography – Métis in Ontario," p. 6.

¹⁵¹ Reimer and Chartrand, "Documenting Historic Métis in Ontario," p. 568.

Aboriginal ancestry who self-identifies as Métis as distinct from Indian or Inuit; has at least one grandparent who is Aboriginal; and whose application for admission as a citizen is accepted by MNO.”¹⁵² It’s clear that the MNO’s definition of a Métis citizen extended beyond what became the Métis Nation’s understanding at the time.

The authors explain that the 1901 Census was the first to officially document mixed-race identity. Enumerators were provided with instructions on how to code individuals according to colour and racial/tribal origin. When it came to mixed-race individuals, the term “Breed” was used under colour (at times, Métis in French-speaking areas). They explain that, “The 1901 census records are significant in that they are presumably based on individuals’ self-identification.”¹⁵³ Yet, they quickly acknowledge a number of inconsistencies in census returns that put into question the idea of self-identification. Whatever the case, the census recorded a racialized understanding of identity based on mixedness and not on peoplehood and they provide no evidence that individuals were self-identifying as “Métis,” whether by using the term “breed” or not. Given that much of the documentary evidence identified by the MNO in its Verified Métis Family Lines produced in 2017 relies almost exclusively on 1901 census returns, acknowledging the limitations of these records is crucial.

The authors close out the article calling for applied researchers to take on the task of identifying historic communities: “Studies of historic Métis populations in Ontario represent uncharted academic territory and provide applied researchers with the opportunity to develop analytic methods appropriate to this new subject area. The door is also open for applied researchers to initiate scholarly debate on what sociological and anthropological criteria may be applied to the definition and evaluation of such historic communities.”¹⁵⁴ In many ways, Reimer and Chartrand are at the forefront of the academic arm of the “Eastern métis” sub-field.

Hele, Karl. 2005. “The Anishinaabeg and Métis in the Sault Ste Marie Borderlands: Confronting a Line Drawn Upon the Water.” In *Lines Drawn Upon the Water. First Nations and the Great Lakes Borders and Borderlands*. Karl Hele, ed. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, p. 65–84.

This chapter is more about the Anishinaabeg than the mixed-ancestry community in Sault Ste. Marie. One of the interesting things the analysis of Sault Ste. Marie as a borderland brings out is that a community first developed on the U.S. side and only developed on the Canadian side relatively late. Contrary to what the courts decided in Powley, Hele asserts that “the American and British authorities remained unable to exert effective control over the entire region’s population until after the 1870s.”¹⁵⁵ However, according to Hele himself, the commissioners agreed on a boundary in 1828 that simply confirmed previous agreements.¹⁵⁶

When Hele mentions the Métis, it’s in the context of the “half-breeds” and “quarter-breeds” recognized in US treaties in 1836 and 1855.¹⁵⁷ While Hele does use the term “mixed-blood” on a

¹⁵² Reimer and Chartrand, “Documenting Historic Métis in Ontario,” p. 570.

¹⁵³ Reimer and Chartrand, “Documenting Historic Métis in Ontario,” p. 578.

¹⁵⁴ Reimer and Chartrand, “Documenting Historic Métis in Ontario,” p. 598.

¹⁵⁵ Hele, “The Anishinaabeg and Métis,” p. 67.

¹⁵⁶ Hele, “The Anishinaabeg and Métis,” p. 68.

¹⁵⁷ Hele, “The Anishinaabeg and Métis,” p. 72.

few occasions, he seems to see it as sufficient to qualify individuals as “Métis,” since he refers to those who benefitted from the “half-breed” clauses in the treaties as “Métis.” He initially refers to two of the treaty beneficiaries, John Bell and one of the Cadotte’s as “mixed-bloods” but then calls them “Métis” in the following sentence.¹⁵⁸

Despite the title of the article, it provides surprisingly little information on the mixed ancestry community in Sault Ste. Marie. Similar to Lytwyn’s article “Echo of the Crane” (see below), the focus of the article is actually on the Ojibwe.

Knight, Alan and Janet E. Chute. 2005. “In the Shadow of the Thumping Drum: The Sault Métis – The People In-Between.” In *Lines Drawn Upon the Water. First Nations and the Great Lakes Borders and Borderlands*. Karl Hele, ed. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, p. 85–106.

Following Peterson and Brown’s distinction between “Métis” and “métis,” Knight and Chute use the term “métis” to qualify the community in Sault Ste. Marie. They define it as a “population of mixed Native and European ancestry” and reserve “Métis” for “the New Métis Nation that burst upon the Red River scene in 1816.”¹⁵⁹

When referring to métis individuals, the article relies on the usual mixed ancestry families – the Cadottes, Johnstons, Ermatingers, Birons, Nolins and Boissoneau – that one finds in the Reports. However, they also count Ojibwe chiefs of mixed ancestry such as Zhingwaakoons (Shingaukonse) and Nebenaigooching among the “métis.”¹⁶⁰ It is well known that they were of mixed ancestry, but to the extent that the authors are arguing in favour of a distinct community, it is somewhat dubious to include them.

While Hele noted the boundary was fixed in 1828, Knight and Chute call it “the end of an era” because “after 1828, only a few belonging to the old order remained.”¹⁶¹ This poses problems in terms of both the ethnogenesis of a distinctive community prior to effective control and continuity from the pre-effective control era to the present-day community. Nevertheless, Knight and Chute claim that by “the middle of the nineteenth century, the majority of elderly traders and retired métis voyageurs who headed families at the British Sault had coalesced into a tight-knit community.”¹⁶² They further claim that due to conflict between Protestants and Catholics in 1835, if “métis identity had been merely inchoate before, it now crystallized under these new pressures into a distinctive community consciousness.”¹⁶³ Evidence for the latter, however, is a petition demanding compensation for their river lots should they be removed.¹⁶⁴ Generally speaking, Knight and Chute do provide some evidence of intermarriage between the resident mixed-ancestry families. With regard to social organization, the authors admit that the “fact that a few young men, mostly related by descent or marriage to the [Ojibwe] chiefs, joined in taking

¹⁵⁸ Hele, “The Anishinaabeg and Métis,” p. 85–86.

¹⁵⁹ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 86.

¹⁶⁰ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 90.

¹⁶¹ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 94.

¹⁶² Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 95.

¹⁶³ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 100.

¹⁶⁴ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 100.

over [...] demonstrates that Great Lakes Ojibwe rather than Plains tribal organizational principles were operating.”¹⁶⁵

The problem with identifying a distinctive community is that the authors admit that almost “all of these métis could adopt an Ojibwe identity if such promoted their interests.”¹⁶⁶ With regard to the métis on the south shore in the U.S., the authors recognize that since “they all evidenced greater attachment to Native than White society, they and their descendants came to be assimilated into Ojibwe bands.”¹⁶⁷ According to the authors, if “one were pressed to pinpoint a date when the time-honoured métis intermediary role north of the Great Lakes finally disappeared once and for all, it would have to be 1853.”¹⁶⁸ Like others, Knight and Chute note that the métis were unable to maintain their neighbourhood as “soon most of the offshore waters fell into the hands of others.”¹⁶⁹ Moreover, just as with those of mixed ancestry in the U.S., the métis families on the Canadian side “began to drift slowly towards Garder River or onto the Batchewana tract north of the Sault reserved for Nebenaigooching’s people in 1850. [...] By 1855, a large number of métis, after exercising prior kinship ties in their choice of which group to join, had become full legal members of the Garden River and Batchewana bands.”¹⁷⁰

Knight and Chute’s article greatly clarifies the removal of some of the “métis” from the band lists that is alluded to in the various Reports. In 1855, “the Indian Department revised annuity distributions so that payments under the Robinson Treaties would henceforth be made directly to individuals, rather than lump sums being paid to chiefs to distribute as [*sic*] their discretion. The new system, for the first time, allowed monitoring of annuitant numbers.”¹⁷¹ When Simon James Dawson succeeded in getting the annuity payments increased according to the terms of the Robinson Treaties in 1875, it created an impetus for the government to decrease the number of recipients. Around 1890, Edward Barnes Borron was sent in to reduce the lists. In order to do so, he had a Garden River band member, John Driver Jr., conduct interviews enquiring who in 1846 lived a métis lifestyle. However, according to the authors, because several “métis” families had risen to political and social prominence, raising their political ire would have been “a political faux pas. The annuity lists would remain as they were.”¹⁷² It would appear then, that none of those identified as “métis” by Borron lost their Indian status.

Strangely, the authors do not conclude the existence of a contemporary métis community outside the Ojibwe reserves, but within the reserves. They remark on how members of Garden River make “distinctions between those who consider themselves predominately Ojibwe and those who retain some knowledge of the French language.”¹⁷³ According to Knight and Chute, despite their

¹⁶⁵ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 106.

¹⁶⁶ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 98.

¹⁶⁷ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 101.

¹⁶⁸ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 107.

¹⁶⁹ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 107.

¹⁷⁰ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 108.

¹⁷¹ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 108.

¹⁷² Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 111.

¹⁷³ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 112.

interacting and merging with the Ojibwe, the “formerly independent métis community ultimately lost little culturally.”¹⁷⁴

Lytwyn, Victor. 2007. “Echo of the Crane: Tracing Anishinawbek and Métis Title to Bawating (Sault Ste. Marie).” In *New Histories for Old: Changing Perspectives on Canada’s Native Past*. Ted Binnema and Susan Neylan, eds. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, p. 41–65.

Lytwyn’s chapter reviews the origin and termination of the Métis settlement at Sault Ste. Marie. The first ten pages are more about Anishinaabeg than about any distinct mixed ancestry population. The article repeats much of what is in the Holmes, Ray and Lytwyn reports.

As in his own report, Lytwyn continues to conflate “Métis” and mixed ancestry. He makes the claim, for example, that chief Nebenagoching “was also a Métis on his mother’s side.”¹⁷⁵ It is well known that Nebenagoching was of mixed ancestry, but nonetheless Ojibwe.

He does add a few notable details that were not in his report. In the 1861 census, only three names remained from the 1846 Vidal survey (Jollineau, Miraux (Miron), and Xavier Biron).¹⁷⁶ With regard to the 1846 survey, Lytwyn claims that Joseph Wilson and John Driver “identified thirty-four additional heads of households” at a later date.¹⁷⁷ This would mean there were some seventy-seven households in Sault Ste. Marie in 1846, which does not coincide with the fifty-five families listed in the 1850 petition.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, the following passage that there “were obviously many other Métis whom Vidal ignored” suggests Lytwyn jumps to the conclusion that all families were Métis.¹⁷⁹

Reimer, Gwen and Jean-Philippe Chartrand. 2007. “L’ethnogenèse des Métis de la Baie James en Ontario et au Québec.” *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec*, 37(2–3), 29–42.

Essentially, the PRAXIS team used its research for the federal government to publish this article. This specific article is about the “ethnogenesis” of the James Bay “Métis” in Ontario and Québec. It’s worth noting that the MNO recognized the “Historic Abitibi-Inland Métis Community” in 2016, which corresponds to the James Bay region under study here.

In the first part of the article, Reimer and Chartrand cite census records for Moose Factory illustrating the existence of a significant number of mixed-race, Cree individuals. Combined with the fact that the Treaty #9 commissioner refused to enrol (some) mixed-race families on the treaty annuities payroll and that five “halfbreeds” from Moose Factory wrote a petition to the federal government requesting their inclusion in Treaty #9, the authors explain that “the preliminary analysis in this article identified several factors that suggest Métis ethnogenesis in Moose Factory to a region stretching to the east of James Bay.”¹⁸⁰ Yet, the authors do

¹⁷⁴ Knight and Chute, “The Sault Métis,” p. 112–13.

¹⁷⁵ Lytwyn, “Echo of the Crane,” p. 64 n80.

¹⁷⁶ Lytwyn, “Echo of the Crane,” p. 60.

¹⁷⁷ Lytwyn, “Echo of the Crane,” p. 56.

¹⁷⁸ See Holmes and Associates, “Sault Ste. Marie Métis Historical Report,” p. 31.

¹⁷⁹ Lytwyn, “Echo of the Crane,” p. 56.

¹⁸⁰ Reimer and Chartrand, “L’ethnogenèse des Métis,” p. 39, our translation.

immediately acknowledge that “considerable additional research must be undertaken to definitively confirm this hypothesis.”¹⁸¹

One major weakness of their analysis is their reliance on the “Métis-as-mixed” formula. For example, they claim that William Polson, a well-known HBC official in and around James Bay, is the “patriarch of one of the principal métis families in Abitibi.”¹⁸² Yet, as we demonstrate in our previous work for the MMF,¹⁸³ the Polson family was integrated into their Algonquin maternal relations and remains a key Algonquin family today. In this case, pointing to the existence of mixed-race Polsons as evidence of a “Métis community” in Algonquin territory shows a lack of respect for Algonquin kinship relations and self-determination.

Another major weakness of their argument is that they’re unable to point to the basis of a community, which they acknowledge when explaining that they were unable to find any evidence of collective action on the part of mixed-race individuals along James Bay, besides the petition to be accepted as Cree in 1905.¹⁸⁴ Again, the 1905 petition to be recognized as Cree appears to *counter* their claims to be somehow representative of a distinct Métis people.

Stewart, W. Brian. 2007. *The Ermatingers. A 19th Century Ojibwa-Canadian Family*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

In the Holmes, Ray and Lytwyn Reports, the Ermatingers are often referred to as “Métis.” For example, Ray plainly claims that Ermatinger “belonged to a Métis family.”¹⁸⁵ Holmes refers to the family of Charles Oakes Ermatinger as one “of the most renowned Métis families of Sault Ste. Marie.”¹⁸⁶ Lytwyn goes so far as to call Charles Oakes Ermatinger himself “a prominent Sault Métis.”¹⁸⁷ He also mentions William Ermatinger (Charles’ son) as “a member of the prominent Ermatinger Métis family.”¹⁸⁸

In fact, Charles Oakes Ermatinger himself had no Indigenous ancestry. He was a fur trader who married Manaowe Katawabidai, the daughter of an Ojibwe chief near Sandy Lake, Minnesota in 1800. In 1807 or 1808, the couple settled in Sault Ste. Marie. They had twelve children, but only seven of them reached adulthood. When his brother, Frederick, died in 1827, Charles inherited his property in Montréal and he retired there with his family. While the Ermatinger children were of mixed ancestry and did grow up in what would seem to be a community whose members were predominantly of mixed ancestry, the family only resided in Sault Ste. Marie for 20 years, or less than a generation. All three sons – Charles Jr., James and William – would later briefly return to the Sault, especially during the negotiations of the Robinson Treaties, but never again took up

¹⁸¹ Reimer and Chartrand, “L’ethnogenèse des Métis,” p. 39, our translation.

¹⁸² Reimer and Chartrand, “L’ethnogenèse des Métis,” p. 34, our translation.

¹⁸³ Leroux and O’Toole, “An Analysis of the MNO’s Recognition of Six New Historic Métis Communities,” p. 33–34.

¹⁸⁴ Reimer and Chartrand. “L’ethnogenèse des Métis,” p. 38.

¹⁸⁵ Ray, “An Economic History,” p. 51

¹⁸⁶ Holmes and Associates, “Sault Ste. Marie Métis Historical Report,” p. 14.

¹⁸⁷ Lytwyn, “Historical Report on the Métis Community at Sault Ste. Marie,” p. 10.

¹⁸⁸ Lytwyn, “Historical Report on the Métis Community at Sault Ste. Marie,” p. 13.

residence there. One of Charles Sr.'s brothers, George, and his family did remain in the area on the U.S. side, but seem to have already been estranged from their Canadian cousins.¹⁸⁹

As early as 1814, Ermatinger took most of his family with him to Montreal. "Anne, aged fifteen, Charles Jr., thirteen, and George, nine, who had all attended school there since February, stayed in the city under the care of their uncle Frederick. Frances had joined them by 1818, aged fourteen. William followed in 1821, aged ten, and James in 1825, also at ten. Jemima, eighteen, was living with her uncle Frederick in 1826. Jane and Anna Maria apparently started schooling in Montreal only when their father retired there in 1828, when they were twelve and nine years old."¹⁹⁰ Anne and George died in Montreal in 1817 and 1822, respectively.¹⁹¹ Charles Jr. returned to Sault Ste. Marie in 1819 when he was seventeen as did his brother, Frances, in 1822 and William in 1826. However, Frances and William joined their father when he retired to Montreal in 1828 and Charles joined them seven months later.¹⁹² According to Stewart, of the seven children out of twelve "who lived to adulthood, Charles Jr. never married. James, Jane, and Anne (Anna Maria) married but had no children. Of William's six children, three never married and three married but had no issue. Jemima's only surviving child was taken to Britain by his father."¹⁹³ Moreover, according to Stewart, on "the male side the last known surviving grandson died, and any descendants through the daughters disappeared."¹⁹⁴ In any event they had no connection to Sault Ste. Marie. Therefore, none of those claiming a "Métis" identity in Sault Ste. Marie today can claim to be a descendant of the Ermatingers.

As the title of Stewart's book indicates, he doesn't classify the Ermatingers as "Métis." Following Jennifer Brown's study,¹⁹⁵ Stewart mentions that bicultural "children who reached adulthood generally followed one of three life paths: they could attempt to assimilate in white, Canadian society; they could try to return to their Indian roots; or they could combine elements of both heritages in a third, or Métis, culture."¹⁹⁶ However, based on "Harriet Gorham's study of mixed-descent families in the western Great Lakes region,"¹⁹⁷ Stewart situates the Ermatingers in a "fourth path." According to Stewart, Gorham:

finds that these families had very little shared sense of a separate Métis identity. In this region, Gorham finds "a sliding ethnic and social 'category'" wherein people of mixed descent moved back and forth between their Indian and their white backgrounds. This group functioned "as a moving bridge between the two larger societies, unencumbered by rigid ethnic identities [and] may have been crucial to

¹⁸⁹ Stewart, *The Ermatingers*, p. 71–72.

¹⁹⁰ Stewart, *The Ermatingers*, p. 56.

¹⁹¹ Stewart, *The Ermatingers*, p. 57.

¹⁹² Stewart, *The Ermatingers*, cp. 60.

¹⁹³ Stewart, *The Ermatingers*, p. 140–41.

¹⁹⁴ Stewart, *The Ermatingers*, p. 147.

¹⁹⁵ Jennifer Brown. 1985. "Diverging Identities: The Presbyterian Métis of St Gabriel Street, Montréal." In *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America*, ed. Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S.H. Brown. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, p. 195–296.

¹⁹⁶ Stewart, *The Ermatingers*, p. 6.

¹⁹⁷ Stewart, *The Ermatingers*, p. 8. See also Harriet Gorham. 2002. "Families of Mixed Descent in the Western Great Lakes Region." In *Native People, Native Lands: Canadian Indians, Inuit and Metis*, Bruce Alden Cox, ed. Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, p. 37–55.

successful transactions between Indian and White interest groups.” She argues that the sense of identity of such individuals may, as the social context demanded, similarly have swung back and forth between the two cultures.¹⁹⁸

Not only is it certain the Ermatingers were not “Métis,” but the application of Gorham’s “fourth path” is also problematic. Stewart focuses on the three sons, but all of them remained in Montréal and, except for one son who briefly returned to Sault Ste. Marie late in life, there was little movement toward their Ojibwe kin. Stewart’s thesis is that all three sons’ choices of profession were guided by their Ojibwe “warrior culture.” Stewart based this on finding in Ojibwe society a functionally similar role to the professions the three sons chose. The problem in such speculation is that no matter what function the brothers filled in settler society, one could find a more or less functional similarity in Ojibwe culture. Indeed, Stewart resorts to the Midewiwin in reference to a younger brother who died when he was studying for the Anglican priesthood. Other than his speculation on the unconscious influence of Ojibwe culture on their professions, Stewart presents little evidence of their Ojibwe culture.

In summary, there is no ethnological or historical reason for applying the ethnonym “Métis” to the Ermatinger family insofar as this implies the ethnogenesis of a new people and not simply individuals of mixed ancestry.

Chrétien, Annette C. A. 2008. “From the ‘Other Natives’ to the ‘Other Métis’.” *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, 28(1), 89–118.

Chrétien’s article is part of the early post-*Powley* glut of academic material published to support the advent of “Eastern métis” claims. Chrétien, who herself identifies as “Ontario Métis” from the Sudbury region, claims that legal recognition of the Métis in the Constitution led to “dramatic political changes in political alliances.”¹⁹⁹ According to her, section 35 recognition has led to the rise of “many Métis Nations.”²⁰⁰ Her support for the idea of distinct “Ontario Métis” communities requires no evidence; it’s a matter of faith.

One element of this article stands out from the sub-field: Chrétien provides a detailed overview of the history of Métis organizations in Ontario from the 1960s onwards. We’ll provide an overview of this history, since it may be useful.

The Ontario Métis and Non-Status Indian Association (OMNSIA) was created in 1969, capitalizing on the longstanding relationship between Métis and non-status Indians. It was later renamed the Ontario Métis and Aboriginal Association (OMAA) and affiliated with the Native Council of Canada. OMAA membership relied solely on self-identification.²⁰¹ Chrétien explains that by 1987, the OMAA expanded its mandate to include all “off-reserve Native people,” putting it even more at odds with the MNC.²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ Stewart, *The Ermatingers*, p. 8.

¹⁹⁹ Chrétien, “From the ‘Other Natives’ to the ‘Other Métis,’” p. 93.

²⁰⁰ Chrétien, “From the ‘Other Natives’ to the ‘Other Métis,’” p. 95.

²⁰¹ Chrétien, “From the ‘Other Natives’ to the ‘Other Métis,’” p. 95.

²⁰² Chrétien, “From the ‘Other Natives’ to the ‘Other Métis,’” p. 97.

By 1994, Chrétien argues that the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) was formed because its founders didn't believe that the OMAA was fairly representing the Métis.²⁰³ The MNO's original membership criteria included "proof of Aboriginal ancestry," but nothing specific to the Métis Homeland. Chrétien notes, "Equally notable is the fact that, despite its affiliation with the MNC, MNO does not impose the Red River ancestry criterion for membership."²⁰⁴

Chrétien outlines the creation of a third "Métis" organization in Ontario, the Canadian Métis Council (CMC), which was formed after an internal struggle within the MNO over the definition of "Métis" identity.²⁰⁵ Initially, the Southwest Regional Métis Council seceded from the MNO in 1997, and later expanded to a provincial organization called the Ontario Métis Council. After receiving many out-of-province requests for membership, it expanded its mandate and became the Canadian Métis Council. Strangely, Chrétien claims that the CMC branched out to the northeastern United States,²⁰⁶ which suggests that it sought out French-descendants as members. Overall, it appears that Chrétien is favourable to the CMC, which she claims is more inclusive, more culture-based, and less political than either the OMAA or the MNO.²⁰⁷

The final organization that she mentions is the Métis Women's Circle (MWC), which branched out from the CMC in 1999 and formed as a separate organization in 2000. She claims that the MWC represents women mostly from Southwestern Ontario.

Gagnon, Denis. 2008/2009. "La création des 'vrais Métis': définition identitaire, assujettissement et résistances." *Port Acadie: revue interdisciplinaire en études acadiennes / Port Acadie: An Interdisciplinary Review in Acadian Studies*, (13–14–15), 295–306.

Anthropologist Denis Gagnon at Université Saint-Boniface in Winnipeg is without a doubt the founder of the post-*Powley* academic sub-field of "Eastern métis studies." In his previous position as Canada Research Chair in Métis Identity, he worked closely with the three largest self-identified "métis" organizations in Québec, including in at least two prolonged court cases. He has also overseen several graduate students who have gone on to publish material in this subfield, including two whose work is discussed in this report, Émmanuel Michaux and Guillaume Marcotte.

This is the first major article that Gagnon published on the topic. As in all of his published work, Gagnon fails to bring forth any empirical evidence to support his broad claims; instead, he offers opinions and speculation as fact. There are two main arguments advanced in this article: 1) the Métis nation's origins lie in the eastern provinces; and 2) the English-speaking Western Métis are unfairly discriminating against their French-speaking Western cousins, and especially, the French-speaking "Eastern Métis."

On the first point, the following statement represents Gagnon's argument:

²⁰³ Chrétien, "From the 'Other Natives' to the 'Other Métis,'" p. 97–98.

²⁰⁴ Chrétien, "From the 'Other Natives' to the 'Other Métis,'" p. 98.

²⁰⁵ Chrétien, "From the 'Other Natives' to the 'Other Métis,'" p. 101.

²⁰⁶ Chrétien, "From the 'Other Natives' to the 'Other Métis,'" p. 102.

²⁰⁷ Chrétien, "From the 'Other Natives' to the 'Other Métis,'" p. 105.

Métissage between European settlers and First Nation and Inuit women in the Eastern part of the continent began in the seventeenth century, and probably before then. Some of these mixed-race individuals identified themselves as Métis and populate regions on the margins of the official state (Gaspésie, Abitibi, Saguenay, Labrador, Maritimes). Some assimilated into French or English Canadian society, and others still among First Nations or Inuit. The development of the fur trade encouraged the migration of several individuals, some of whom were already Métis, to the Great Lakes and out west, where they formed a distinct nation in what was then called Rupert's Land.²⁰⁸

Again, Gagnon does not bring forth any evidence to back up his claims, whether it be that "métissage" occurred "probably" before the 1600s or that mixed-race individuals identified themselves as Métis in the 1600 and 1700s or that individuals identifying themselves as "Métis" migrated west from the eastern provinces and founded the Métis Nation. These are all claims that go against the historical consensus in a range of academic fields, but Gagnon simply states them as fact and they are repeated as such by a number of scholars today.

On the second point, Gagnon takes umbrage with the MNC's political position on the definition of Métis people: "It's the Métis descendants of the former francophone Métis who now claim only to themselves a Métis identity."²⁰⁹ Strangely, Gagnon focuses on the fact that most of the descendants of 19th century French-speaking Métis no longer speak French as somehow diminishing Métis claims to indigeneity. He continues, "It should be noted that a process that has been ongoing for a few years now is for the Western Métis to highlight their Indigenous heritage and to pass over in silence, perhaps in an involuntary way (but one may doubt it), their French-Canadian heritage. It is a process that could be called the *Indigenization* of the Western Métis."²¹⁰ So, according to Gagnon, any white French-descendant who speaks French can legitimately claim to be Indigenous, while actual Métis people who don't speak French are unfairly claiming to be Indigenous. The French-Canadian nationalist tinge of his argument is clear.

While his work has yet to be taken up widely in claims about "Ontario Métis," we do see that at least in Papan's work (below) his focus on the French language and French-Canadian marginalization has been well received.

Élise Bégin. 2010. "Les dynamiques identitaires chez les Métis-autochtones en Abitibi-Témiscamingue." Mémoire de maîtrise en Ethnologie des francophones en Amérique du Nord, Université de Laval.

Bégin's field research for her Master's thesis took place between 2007 and 2008 among individuals identifying (in her terms) as "Cree-Métis" and "Algonquin-Métis" in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region of Québec that borders Ontario and straddles Algonquin and Cree territories. Bégin explains that these individuals, who organized together in the 70s and 80s with the LAMNSI, are closely associated with their Cree or Algonquin origins. They are mixed-race individuals in the same register as those in the region discussed by Kermot Moore (see above). In other words, they are non-status Cree or Algonquin individuals, many of whom regained their

²⁰⁸ Gagnon, "La création des 'vrais Métis'," p. 300, our translation.

²⁰⁹ Gagnon, "La création des 'vrais Métis'," p. 305, our translation.

²¹⁰ Gagnon, "La création des 'vrais Métis'," p. 305, our translation.

status in the 1980s following the ratification of Bill C-31. Despite being closely associated with Algonquin or Cree communities, Bégin claims that some of these individuals continue to identify themselves as “Métis” in the strictest French-language sense of “mixed.”²¹¹ However, Bégin is careful to say that this doesn’t in any way represent claims to a distinct, rights-bearing Métis identity. Nonetheless, her work highlights the confusion brought forth by the use of the term “métis” in French, which in the 70s and 80s in this region literally meant a mixed-race individual whose mother or grandmother was (dis)enfranchised by the Indian Act.

During her research she came across another group of individuals claiming to be “Métis” that she calls “neo-Métis” to differentiate from the Algonquin and Cree individuals above. These are individuals descending from the first major wave of Québécois colonizers to the region in the first half of the 20th century who are relying on Indigenous ancestry prior to their arrival in the region for their new “Métis” identities. These “neo-Métis” correspond to the movement taking place post-*Powley* throughout the eastern provinces. She explains that this latter group has largely obtained membership in the Alliance autochtone du Québec/Native Alliance of Québec (AAQ), further evidence that the AAQ represents white French descendants today. She explains that by 2008, twenty-nine AAQ members in the region were charged with nearly sixty different hunting or fishing offenses in provincial court,²¹² suggesting that the “Eastern métis” movement in the region mirrors that which is going on in the rest of the province: a movement largely led by men seeking greater hunting, fishing, logging and/or building rights on the land. Bégin explains most of these individuals grew up without any knowledge about their (supposed) Indigenous ancestry.²¹³ She gives the example of two brothers who claim to be “Métis” on the basis of one Indigenous ancestor born around 1610,²¹⁴ the same one that shows up in Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s genealogy.

To her credit, Bégin documents First Nation opposition to these “neo-Métis” claims in some detail: “Claims to Métis ancestral rights are causing real problems for First Nation peoples who have ancestral title to the land. The majority of Cree and Algonquin people I met in Abitibi-Témiscamingue don’t recognize these Métis communities as Indigenous. Should the Métis obtain rights in Algonquin and Cree territories it would cause serious tension between them.”²¹⁵ In interviews with Algonquin and Cree individuals, Bégin consistently uncovers the general belief that the “Métis” in the region are seen as white interlopers causing harm to actual Indigenous peoples in the region.

One of the key takeaways from this work is Bégin’s discovery of the importance of self-identification in the “Métis” movement in the region and in the province. Bégin explains,

During the interviews, members of [Métis] communities insisted strongly on the importance of ‘feeling Métis:’ individuals believe that biological métissage is widespread among Québécois and First Nations people and some of them claim that about 80% of Québécois have Indian blood [*sic*]. Nonetheless, the Métis distinguish those who have

²¹¹ Bégin, “Les dynamiques identitaires chez les Métis-autochtones,” p. 79.

²¹² Bégin, “Les dynamiques identitaires chez les Métis-autochtones,” p. 54.

²¹³ Bégin, “Les dynamiques identitaires chez les Métis-autochtones,” p. 99.

²¹⁴ Bégin, “Les dynamiques identitaires chez les Métis-autochtones,” p. 88.

²¹⁵ Bégin, “Les dynamiques identitaires chez les Métis-autochtones,” p. 55, our translation.

Indian blood, mixed-raced individuals, from those who are truly Métis due to the fact that they self identify as such. [As one of my informants explained], ‘Being Métis represents a choice. You either are or you’re not. I am or I’m not.’”²¹⁶

Besides identifying a strong individual belief in self-identification in the region, Bégin also explains that the AAQ accepts members on the honour system, meaning that one can become a member without any proof of ancestral origins at all.²¹⁷ Overall, turning Indigenous identity into a choice has become fruitful for the “Métis” movement in the region around Mattawa.

Michaux, Emmanuel and Denis Gagnon. 2012. “Redécouverte de la continuité historique et culturelle des communautés métisses canadiennes-françaises.” In *Impenser la francophonie: recherches, renouvellement, diversité, identité*. Pamela Sing and Estelle Dansereau, eds. Edmonton, AB: Campus Saint-Jean, p. 195–213.

Robert Papen (below) refers to this chapter as the only academic study that demonstrates that historical Great Lakes “métis” communities attained a degree of independent self-identification or ethnic consciousness necessary to be recognized as “Métis” today. However, Michaux and Gagnon provide no actual evidence to support their main argument, encapsulated in their title: “Rediscovery of the historical and cultural continuity of French-Canadian Métis communities.” Instead, the authors speculate about a range of topics that have been taken up with enthusiasm in the growing “Eastern métis studies” academic subfield.

Much of this chapter is concerned with developing the argument that French-speaking Métis individuals are oppressed by English-speaking Métis individuals, in following the authors expressly French-Canadian nationalist lens. They do so by conflating language and ethnicity in their definition of “French-Canadian Métis,” which they define as follows: “When we say French-Canadian Métis, we mean Métis in Canada who speaks French. In this article, ‘French-Canadian Métis’ and ‘Francophone Métis’ are considered synonyms.”²¹⁸ We can see here how Michaux and Gagnon centre normative French-English language concerns in their work.

Michaux and Gagnon build an argument that French ancestry, French culture, and/or the French language are devalued by the Métis, gesturing to how “Eastern métis” studies is trapped inside the normative French-English binary, which makes no space for the possibility that Métis individuals and communities may speak or desire to speak Indigenous languages (e.g., Plains Cree, Michif, Dene, Anishinaabemowin) and maintain practices of kinship relations that do not revolve primarily around blood. Where they see exclusion of (another) set of Euro-settler cultural practices (French language and/or culture), the Métis may see forms of Indigenous resurgence. Whatever the case, their efforts to delegitimize the Métis are in keeping with their work of *Indigenizing* the so-called Eastern métis.

Their French-Canadian nationalism takes them as far as critiquing the Métis National Council and its affiliates for “denying their francophone heritage” and “valuing their Indigenous

²¹⁶ Bégin, “Les dynamiques identitaires chez les Métis-autochtones,” p. 102–103, our translation.

²¹⁷ Bégin, “Les dynamiques identitaires chez les Métis-autochtones,” p. 52.

²¹⁸ Michaux and Gagnon, “Redécouverte de la continuité historique et culturelle,” p. 196n2, our translation.

heritage.”²¹⁹ In other words, Michaux and Gagnon attempt to *indigenize* francophone white French-descendants and de-legitimize Métis claims to indigeneity. As they explain, “Another problem is the indigenization of the Anglophone Western Métis.”²²⁰ In their argument, French-speaking individuals who self-identify as “Métis” are more Indigenous than English-speaking Métis individuals, simply because they speak French.

Playing on the victimhood of the French-speaking, white settler population of Quebec, Michaux and Gagnon’s argument has proven fruitful to a range of academics and organizations.

Ray, Arthur J. 2012. “Witnessing on Behalf of a Forgotten People.” In *Telling it to the Judge. Taking Native History to Court*. Montréal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, p. 88–104.

Ray narrates his personal experience as an expert witness in the *Powley* case. He recounts how he was hired and what research questions he was given. He also uses the “Métis economy” from his Sault Ste. Marie report and MacTavish’s letters as proof of “a distinctive identity well before 1850”²²¹ around Sault Ste. Marie. Ray insists that he resisted the Crown’s attempt to reduce hunting rights to a specific species (moose). As there was a scarcity of moose in the area for an extended period of time, this would have meant it was not “integral to their distinctive culture” as per the *Van der Peet* test.

Belcourt, Tony. 2013. “For the Record...On Métis Identity and Citizenship Within the Métis Nation.” *aboriginal policy studies*, 2(2), 128–41.

This is Tony Belcourt’s recollection of about thirty years of activism for Aboriginal rights, through his involvement with the creation of both the Native Council of Canada in 1970 and the MNO in 1994. By the end of the article, Belcourt argues that all current citizens of the MNO who don’t meet the MNC’s citizenship criteria should be “grandfathered” into the MNO.

Overall, Belcourt provides a useful history of the MNO. Belcourt points out that the MNO became part of MNC in 1994. At the time, the MNO’s citizenship criteria were as follows:

Anyone of Aboriginal ancestry who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from Indian or Inuit and who is accepted by the Métis Nation of Ontario, is Métis. A person is entitled to be registered as a citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario who:

is alive,

self-identifies as Métis,
is distinct from Indian or Inuit,
has genealogical ties to Aboriginal ancestry,
is accepted by the Métis Nation of Ontario,
is not enrolled on any other Aboriginal registry.²²²

²¹⁹ Michaux and Gagnon, “Redécouverte de la continuité historique et culturelle,” p. 196–97, our translation.

²²⁰ Michaux and Gagnon, “Redécouverte de la continuité historique et culturelle,” p. 211, our translation.

²²¹ Ray, “Witnessing on Behalf of a Forgotten People,” p. 96.

²²² Belcourt, “For the Record....” p. 132.

Belcourt maintains that, “The MNO definition at the time was not a bar to its admission as a member of the MNC, nor was it ever brought up.”²²³ He then explains that the first registrars of the MNO were Patsy McArthur, Aline Sabourin, and Karole Dumont Beckett. It’s worth mentioning that Dumont Beckett has become a leading voice of the “Eastern Métis” movement. She was a founding member and lead genealogist for the Métis Federation of Canada [*sic*], then went on to be the founding “chief” of the Council of the First Métis People of Canada [*sic*], an organization that brings together “Eastern Métis” organizations from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Québec, and Ontario.

Belcourt argues that the “distinct Métis Communities of Ontario,” including at Burleigh Falls (near Peterborough in southern Ontario), Moose Factory (James Bay), Sault Ste. Marie, and Rainy River, “have long and unique histories, as well as indisputable claims to recognition of Aboriginal rights and entitlements.”²²⁴ From there, he argues that the Métis are not a “single homogenous group” and that, “we now consider the geographic or territorial extent of the Métis Nation Homeland, not in terms of fixed positions taken at various points in our history, but on the basis of our evolving experience and knowledge.”²²⁵

Murphy, Lucy. 2014. *Great Lakes Creole. A French-Indian Community on the Northern Borderlands, Prairie du Chien, 1750–1860*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Murphy’s book is about the mixed ancestry community in Prairie-du-Chien in present-day Wisconsin. Despite the intermarriage between French voyageurs and Sioux and even endogamy between those of mixed ancestry, Murphy wonders “why the mixed ancestry peoples south of the Canadian border did not develop an identity as Métis, like their northern cousins.”²²⁶

In order to describe the population in Prairie du Chien, Lucy Murphy uses the term “Creole” as a term. As Murphy notes, the residents of Prairie du Chien “did not call themselves or each other Métis.”²²⁷ Although it was not used for self-ascription, Murphy settles on “Creole” because she is trying to capture something larger than a population of mixed French and Indigenous ancestry. For Murphy, “Creole” “might include people of purely European, Native, or African ancestry, or any mixture of these, based upon culture and community membership.”²²⁸ To be sure, Murphy is dealing with the population of Prairie du Chien that is not Métis.

St-Onge, Nicole. 2015. “Familial Foes? French Sioux Families and Plains Métis Brigades in the Nineteenth Century.” *American Indian Quarterly*, 39(3), 302–337.

In her own study on Prairie du Chien, Nicole St-Onge prefers the older term *Canadien* to describe the community as opposed to Murphy’s use of the term *Creole*. In St-Onge’s view, the *Canadien* identity that developed in the St. Lawrence Valley was itself the result of ethnogenesis as the French colonists gradually developed an identity distinct from that of the Imperial metropole. As she notes, tens “of thousands of men from the St. Lawrence Valley’s Montreal-to-

²²³ Belcourt, “For the Record...” p. 132.

²²⁴ Belcourt, “For the Record...” p. 137.

²²⁵ Belcourt, “For the Record...” p. 141.

²²⁶ Murphy, *Great Lakes Creole*, p. 303.

²²⁷ Murphy, *Great Lakes Creole*, p. 19.

²²⁸ Murphy, *Great Lakes Creole*, p. 20.

Trois-Rivières corridor were involved in the peltry trade”²²⁹ and most “fur trade employees eventually returned permanently to their St. Lawrence Valley home villages, bringing with them the life-changing experiences they had had in the fur trade country, thus further transforming the culture of their home communities.”²³⁰ For this reason, St-Onge suggests that “the French-Indian families examined here were another variation on the edges of trade and empire of the core Canadien identity, which had taken shape over generations of contact between French-Catholic colonists and nearby Indian communities, as extensively documented in the St. Lawrence Valley during the colonial period.”²³¹

Similar to Peterson’s early work, the process of Canadien identity development only continued “as long as the trade linked all these communities through their work, family and culture.”²³²

After citing recent scholarship on French North America, St-Onge observes that these scholars “neither argue nor demonstrate in their analysis the rise of a ‘distinct’ Métis identity in the Great Lakes and Mississippi Valley. [...] None argue for a process of ethnogenesis outside of the Great Plains environment. What they do document is an ever-more-distinct North American French-Catholic, or Canadien, identity arching crescent like from the St. Lawrence Valley into the interior and down the length of the Mississippi.”²³³

St-Onge found that, “unlike the Plains Métis, the French-Sioux population seemingly never developed a clearly distinct identity from either their Sioux or their Canadien relatives.”²³⁴ St-Onge concludes that “only in the interior plains region did a truly distinct new ethnic identity coalesce, one notably separate from both paternal Canadien origin and maternal Indian origin, the result of unique confluence of economic, geographic, and historical factors.”²³⁵

Inksetter, Leila, Jérôme Morneau & Louis-Pascal Rousseau. 2017. “Rapport produit dans la cause D.P.C.P. c. M. J. Tremblay et P.G.Q.”

This is an expert report produced for the Attorney-General of Québec in the *Tremblay* case. The case involves an MNO member, Michel Tremblay, who lives in Ottawa but has property across the provincial border from Mattawa in Québec. He’s charged with dozens of environmental offences, involving large-scale building projects that harmed waterways upstream from Mattawa. As this report points out, Tremblay has a 6th generation Algonquin women ancestor named Marie Kakwabit, who’s included among the MNO’s root ancestors for the “Historic Mattawa Métis Community.” Tremblay’s direct ancestor, Théophile Montreuil, is also used as a root ancestor by 275 members of the Algonquins of Ontario land claim to be recognized as non-status Algonquin through that process. As we discussed in our previous report, what the MNO calls a “historic Métis community” is in fact a number of disenfranchised Algonquins living in and around Mattawa. Inksetter *et al.*’s report makes this last point extremely clear.

²²⁹ St-Onge, “Familial Foes?,” p. 318–19.

²³⁰ St-Onge, “Familial Foes?,” p. 319.

²³¹ St-Onge, “Familial Foes?,” p. 317.

²³² St-Onge, “Familial Foes?,” p. 317.

²³³ St-Onge, “Familial Foes?,” p. 319.

²³⁴ St-Onge, “Familial Foes?,” p. 303.

²³⁵ St-Onge, “Familial Foes?,” p. 324.

The authors' approach to establishing whether a historic Métis community existed in the past or not is based on three factors:

- Critical mass
- “The systematic cohabitation of this critical mass of mixed-race individuals in a centralized location removed from European colonial centres, where one could find the necessary infrastructure to maintain a resident population” and
- “The possibility for this critical mass of mixed-race individuals to live a common experience over several generations.”²³⁶

In addition to these broad strokes, they list several indicators, based in the literature on ethnogenesis, that can aid in the identification of a historic community:

- Geographic isolation
- The appearance of endogamous (in-group) marriage practices
- The establishment of a social organization that's internal to the emerging group
- The establishment of an elite representative of the group
- The development of intercommunity relations
- Signs of self-identification
- Signs of recognition by outsiders.

Following their archival research, the authors conclude that they found no evidence of any of the indicators mentioned above:

The analysis of social relations made by the authors of the Stone Circle/Know History report [the Government of Ontario/MNO report] shows that marriages of people of mixed descent were not endogamous. No internal social organization within the group can be observed. There are no elites or political representatives of people of mixed descent. Finally, there is no sign of self-identification of a Métis community that has conceived of itself as such in the historical documentation. Moreover, no historical observer has recognized the existence of such a community in Mattawa.²³⁷

Later in the report, the authors analyze the report submitted by the defendant's expert witness, anthropologist Siommon Pulla. In his own report, Pulla – who relies heavily on the Stone Circle/Know History report commissioned by the Government of Ontario and the MNO – claims that the ethnogenesis of a historical Métis in Mattawa occurred between 1784 and 1821. For Pulla, the indicators of ethnogenesis include the following four interrelated factors: individuals with mixed European-Indigenous parentage; individuals born in the study area (Mattawa and its environs); a continued presence in the area under study; and descendants in the area under study.²³⁸

²³⁶ Inksetter, Morneau & Rousseau, “Rapport produit dans la cause D.P.C.P. c. M. J. Tremblay et P.G.Q.,” p. i–ii, our translation.

²³⁷ Inksetter, Morneau & Rousseau, “Rapport produit dans la cause D.P.C.P. c. M. J. Tremblay et P.G.Q.,” p. iv.

²³⁸ Inksetter, Morneau & Rousseau, “Rapport produit dans la cause D.P.C.P. c. M. J. Tremblay et P.G.Q.,” p. 147.

Remarkably, Inksetter *et al.* point out that only *six* of the men listed in either Pulla or Stone Circle/Know History's respective reports are born *before* 1821, the time that the "Métis" community is said to have already existed. Of those six men, only one fulfills the criteria set out previously by Pulla. In other words, by reviewing the actual evidence put forth by Pulla and Stone Circle/Know History, the authors discover that the basis for a "Métis" community in Mattawa prior to 1821 is *one* mixed-race family (two men). Notably, most of the descendants of that mixed-race family (McKay) end up being integrated into the Mattagami First Nation, a mixed Ojibwe, Oji-Cree and Odawa community signatory to Treaty #9, outside the study area. Thus, the authors completely debunk claims that a "Métis" community existed prior to 1821 in the Mattawa area.

For instance, Inksetter *et al.* point out that Pulla must change several French-Canadian men with no known Indigenous ancestry into founders of the "Métis" community. Included among these men are two of the first three settlers in Mattawa (Narcisse Dorion, born 1807 and Louis Bastien, born in 1819), plus several other white men married to Indigenous women (Joseph Langevin, born 1823; John England, born 1812; Charles Colton, born 1807). The authors point out, as we did in our previous work for the MMF,²³⁹ that the children of these unions, mostly born between the 1840 and 1860s, are most often identified as Algonquin in the records at the time.

Overall, the Inksetter report is an incredibly useful document that opposes the claims made by researchers such as Pulla and Stone Circle/Know History as to the existence of a "historic Métis community" in Mattawa. We recommend that the MMF have the report translated moving forward.

Papen, Robert. 2017. "Une communauté métisse francophone en Ontario: lubie ou réalité?" *Revue du Nouvel-Ontario*, (42), 53–109.

Papen's article uses the "Métis-as-mixed" framework exclusively in his efforts at identifying a French-speaking Ontario "Métis" community. As he explains, "In this article, the term 'Métis' refers to all persons with mixed Euro-Canadian and First Nation/Inuit ancestry."²⁴⁰ At no point does he acknowledge that his definition likely includes upwards of 8 million white French-descendants in Canada. Regardless, Papen provides a fair review of the academic literature on Métis ethnogenesis. By doing so, he must acknowledge that historians working on Métis history are all in agreement that Great Lakes "métis" communities never attained a degree of independent self-identification or ethnic consciousness to a distinct identity required to be recognized as "Métis" today.²⁴¹ The only exception, according to Papen, is a book chapter by anthropologists Emmanuel Michaux and Denis Gagnon (see above), which actually provides no empirical analysis whatsoever. Instead, it starts from the point that the Métis were born in 17th century New France.

One of the major limitations of Papen's work is his reliance on old nationalist tropes common in Québec/French Canada. For instance, he claims that the majority of French-speaking Métis in

²³⁹ Leroux and O'Toole, "An Analysis of the MNO's Recognition of Six New Historic Métis Communities," p. 12–16.

²⁴⁰ Papen, "Une communauté métisse francophone en Ontario," p. 56.

²⁴¹ Papen, "Une communauté métisse francophone en Ontario," p. 76.

Ontario have *disappeared*.²⁴² This line of thought is common in French-language academia: if you no longer speak French, you no longer exist. It's part of what's called the *survivance* model (without French, people disappear entirely), a common ideological basis for Québécois/French Canadian nationalism. The solution to the problem is to promote the French-language, which Papen's article seeks to accomplish. Not surprisingly, Papen also promotes the "hiding-from-sight" narrative that suggests that "Eastern métis" people hid their identities for fear of repercussion.²⁴³ At no point does Papen consider that French-descendants may simply not have been informed about their Indigenous ancestry because it goes back nearly 400 years.

In particular, by focusing so narrowly on language issues, he seems prepared to accept any and all claims to an "Indigenous" identity. He even suggests that Étienne Brûlé and Jean Nicolet, two French men who lived in present-day Ontario in the first 2–3 decades of the 17th century, be remembered as the "fathers of the Métis Nation in Ontario," even though both of them were European and neither of them raised children in Ontario.²⁴⁴ It's a bizarre statement, but representative of the type of mythical revisionism that is central to "Eastern métis" studies, one that places French men at the front and centre of history.

In the end, Papen must admit by the end of his article that there's no "tangible proof" for the existence of historic Métis communities in Ontario,²⁴⁵ despite his best efforts.

Marcotte, Guillaume. 2018. *De Freeman à Métis: une ethnohistoire des gens libres dans la traite des fourrures entre la Baie James et Montréal au XIXe siècle*. Master's thesis. Université Saint-Boniface.

Guillaume Marcotte collaborates frequently with other prominent writers in "Eastern métis studies," such as Sébastien Malette, Michel Bouchard, and Denis Gagnon. Marcotte is the only author in this sub-field that interacts in any depth with historical records, in particular, Hudson's Bay Company archives from Algonquin territory, including in and around Mattawa. He's not a trained historian; this MA thesis was completed under the supervision of anthropologist Denis Gagnon at Université St-Boniface in 2018. As such, Marcotte has adopted many of the same analytical tendencies as his mentors: using a "Métis-as-mixed" approach that undermines Métis nationhood and identifying the use of terms that are often associated with Métis ("freemen," "voyageur," HBC "servants," or "Bois-brûlés") and claiming that their presence in the historical record is proof for the existence of a distinct, rights-bearing "Métis" people in western Québec. Again, what counts as "proof" in this sub-field is speculative at best.

It's also noteworthy that Marcotte was part of the team that submitted an expert report in the *Séguin* case, which argues that there's a distinct, rights-bearing Métis community in a region stretching north and west of Ottawa (almost as far west as Mattawa). Along with the other members of that team, Michel Bouchard and Sébastien Malette, Marcotte published *Les Bois-Brûlés de l'Outaouais*, in 2019. The University of British Columbia Press republished the book as *Bois-Brûlés: The Untold Story of the Métis of Western Québec* in 2020. It's clear in reading Marcotte's thesis that his research formed the backbone of that book. His MA thesis was

²⁴² Papen, "Une communauté métisse francophone en Ontario," p. 87.

²⁴³ Papen, "Une communauté métisse francophone en Ontario," p. 90.

²⁴⁴ Papen, "Une communauté métisse francophone en Ontario," p. 95.

²⁴⁵ Papen, "Une communauté métisse francophone en Ontario," p. 103.

published in September 2020 as *De Freeman à Métis: L'histoire retrouvée des gens libres entre la Baie James et Montréal* by the Presses de l'Université Laval.

The geographical scope of his thesis stretches from James Bay (Cree territory) to Montréal (mostly Algonquin territory). For the purpose of this discussion, we've focused on the parts of the thesis that touch upon Algonquin territory. Evidence of Marcotte's fondness for the "Métis-as-mixed" framework is plentiful; for instance, he refers to William Polson as "métis" (presumably "mixed" in French) and suggests that his family's presence on the Timiskaming Reserve in 1856 is somehow proof for the existence of a distinct Métis people. However, as we've argued previously, the Polsons are an example of a well-known Algonquin family that still exists as such throughout Algonquin territory. All in all, Marcotte fails in his efforts to advance the argument that fur trade retirees to the region are somehow indicative of the creation of a distinct Métis people. Sure, fur trade retirees and their families *could* be indicative of the presence of a Métis community, if those retirees were Métis and married Métis people. But, in this case, we have plenty of evidence, brought forward by Marcotte himself, that these retirees were not Métis and didn't marry Métis individuals (they married Euro-Canadian settlers or Algonquins, as in the case with Polson's daughters).

In a telling example of Marcotte's interpretative approach, he cites Lord Dalhousie, in an account of his 1821 sojourn at the new HBC post at Fort-Coulonge, about 150 kilometres upstream from Ottawa: "Here Shaw had promised us all sorts of supplies. We find nothing, not even a bag of biscuits. It appears a resort of bad Indians & all sorts of the cast-off Red River servants & voyageurs."²⁴⁶ Marcotte interprets what seems like a clear example of Dalhousie's racism as proof that Métis people were living at Fort Coulonge, even though at no time does Dalhousie say as much. Somehow, "Red River servants and voyageurs," which is speculation on the part of Dalhousie ("It appears..."), becomes definitive evidence of a "Métis" presence. "Voyageur" and "Red River" both seem to equate to the presence of "Métis" people, even though most voyageurs at Red River in the early 1800s were Québécois men.

In another example of his speculative interpretative framework, Marcotte highlights the use of the term "Bois-brûlés" on a few occasions in the first half of the 1800s in Algonquin territory as proof that there was a historical "Métis" community there. Again, if we properly consider the context, we can see that in each case, the speaker is either referring to a mixed-race presence or is guessing at a potential mixed-race presence in a given location. For instance, Marcotte refers to the statement made by Alexander Shirreff, the well-heeled son of a Scottish lumber merchant, published in a report in 1831 following a trip up the Ottawa River. In the following excerpt, Shirreff is describing a small settlement near present-day Beachburg, Ontario, about 125 kilometres upstream from the city of Ottawa:

On this shore, a little above the division of the waters, is the la Bosse [La Passe] settlement, consisting of a narrow entrance, about a mile in length, with eight or ten huts. The poor unprogressing appearance of the place, at once marks it as a nest of old trading people, French, or Bois Brulées [*sic*].

²⁴⁶ Marcotte, "De Freeman à Métis," p. 121.

To be clear, Shirreff is using the term “Bois-Brûlés” as a way to speculate about the origins of what he identifies as a run-down settlement, not to describe individuals whom he encounters. He ultimately doesn’t know who used to live or lives in those “huts.” Read differently, Shirreff illustrates his own disdain for non-British people when he uses the term “nest” to describe the abandoned settlement, dehumanizing the former residents, whom he can only assume are French or, perhaps, mixed-race. One is reminded of a rat’s nest or bird’s nest, both of which suggest an unhygienic burrow strewn with animal waste and debris, generally unfit for human habitation. In any case, a bit further in his account when he reaches the Hudson’s Bay Company’s trading post at Fort-Coulonge, Shirreff writes eloquently about what he encounters, juxtaposing its “double row of neat white-washed buildings” with his previous description of the French or Bois-Brûlés “nest” of huts at La Passe. Nonetheless, Marcotte transforms Shirreff’s racially-charged description of La Passe into “proof” that a thriving Métis community exists in the region as early as the 1830s.

In their report in the *Séguin* case, Goudreau *et al.* explain that at least three other commentators each refer to Algonquin, Irish, Scottish, American, and French-Canadian individuals, but never to a Métis group or settlement at La Passe during the same time frame as Shirreff.²⁴⁷ Marcotte doesn’t discuss any of these other commentators in his thesis, choosing instead to focus on Shirreff’s singular use of “Bois-Brûlés” as a key node of documentary evidence for his claims. This is precisely the type of interpretive blunder that is the norm throughout his analysis: the author jumps to conclusions that are not supported by the broader documentary evidence.

In the final chapter, Marcotte includes interviews that were conducted with individuals who are members of the Communauté Métis autochtone de Maniwaki, which is headquartered about 150 kilometres north of Ottawa. The major takeaway from Marcotte’s analysis is that individuals in the region were forced to hide their Métis identities, much like Métis in the Prairies did during the middle of the twentieth century. According to him, anybody who claims to be Métis today, whether based on an Acadian heritage going back to the 1600s or Algonquin ancestry going back five generations, is Métis.

Silbernagel, Robert. 2020. *The Cadottes. A Fur Trade Family on Lake Superior*. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press.

While Holmes refers to “Cadeau’s Métis descendants” in the OMNR Sault Ste. Marie Report,²⁴⁸ Silbernagel’s biography of the Cadotte family does not bear that out, at least in regard to the branch of the family he explores. Interestingly, Silbernagel does not identify the Cadottes as “Métis,” but simply as “French-Canadian.” The family was certainly of mixed ancestry – Jean-Baptiste Cadotte Sr. married Athanasie Equawaice who was of Ojibwe origin. Cadotte first moved to Sault Ste. Marie in 1750, shortly before the end of the French regime. While Cadotte based his headquarters at Sault Ste. Marie, he established fur-trading posts along the south shore of Lake Superior as far as Chequamegon Bay.²⁴⁹ Silbernagel’s book follows the fortunes of two of his sons, Jean-Baptiste Cadotte Jr. and Michel Cadotte, but mostly focuses on the latter. Both also married Ojibwe or mixed ancestry women. The former died near Fort George, Ontario in

²⁴⁷ Goudreau, Serge, Leila Inksetter, Jérôme Morneau, & Louis-Pascal Rousseau. 2018. “Rapport produit dans la cause P.G.Q. c. Royal Séguin et Communauté métisse autochtone de Maniwaki,” p. 157.

²⁴⁸ Holmes and Associates, “Sault Ste. Marie Métis Historical Report,” p. 6.

²⁴⁹ Silbernagel, *The Cadottes*, p. xiv.

1818. While the author mentions that he abandoned his second wife of mixed ancestry, Janette Piquette, and five children in 1810, he doesn't follow up on their fate.²⁵⁰ Michel and his Ojibwe wife Equwaysaway established themselves on Madeline Island in the 1790s. From there, it would seem the descendants of this branch of the Cadotte family were tied to the history of Minnesota and Wisconsin. Their connection to Sault Ste. Marie seems to have been limited to the lifetime of Jean-Baptiste Cadotte Sr.

5. Short Report on Scrip and Ontario Claims

This short report covers research related to the examination of the presence of Ontario-related claims within the archives of the Northwest Halfbreed Scrip Commission, generally referred to in the present as Métis scrip records. Scrip was in essence a certificate or a promissory note to be exchanged for acreage of land or cash, issued to eligible applicants. It was commonly used as a compensatory mechanism for those who engaged in military service but in the context of Métis people it was used specifically to extinguish land rights, couched in the language of Indian title. The Federal Government contended that Métis people from outside of the Red River area had a potential claim on Indian title by virtue of their purported mixed ancestry and so-called proximity to Indianness.

The research conducted for this report examined the scrip archives with an eye towards developing an understanding of the relationship between those of mixed ancestry in the Great Lakes region and scrip. This research involved three stages: 1) searching the publicly available scrip records archived through Library and Archives Canada (LAC) for reference to the areas named by the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) as constituting historic Métis communities; 2) cross-referencing the names of Root Ancestors identified by MNO's research as constituting their Verified Métis Family Lines (VMFL); and 3) identifying the birth places of applicants and nodes of family networks connected to the Métis Nation homeland.

Although rare, in some cases those with no direct connection to the Red River were able to access scrip on the basis of being "half-breed" within the District of Keewatin. When Rupert's Land was transferred to Canada, it and the North-Western Territory beyond Rupert's Land were largely renamed as the Northwest Territories; in 1876 the *Keewatin Act* would carve out the District of Keewatin as a distinct administrative district. In 1905, however, it was reorganized and placed back within the Northwest Territories. In 1912, the southern portions were divided across Manitoba and Ontario, with the Northern part later incorporated (1999) as part of Nunavut. Keewatin covered much of what is now Manitoba, along with Northwestern Ontario, stretching across to the lower basin of Hudson Bay. It was largely created at the urging of Alexander Morris. As previously mentioned, Morris was actively involved in treaty negotiations with Indigenous people, present at Treaty 3, Treaty 4, Treaty 5, and Treaty 6, and was involved in revising Treaties 1 and 2. Morris felt that the reorganization of the territories and the creation of the independent Keewatin district would lend itself to easier transactions regarding land.²⁵¹ According to a document produced by the Department of the Interior on the 19 February, 1886, in light of section E of clause 81 of the Dominion Lands Act of 1883, "the District of Keewatin is to be considered as forming part of the North West Territories in so far as the Indian title

²⁵⁰ Schenck mentions her occupying part of the original Cadotte lot on the south shore in 1808. Schenck, "Who Owns Sault Ste. Marie?," p. 119.

²⁵¹ "Keewatin." *The Daily Free Press*. December 1, 1876. p. 1.

thereto has been extinguished by treaty with the Indians.”²⁵² The claims of those who were excluded from treaty would thus also have to be contended with – and in this case it was so that those considered “half-breeds” would be able to apply for scrip as any others living within the Northwest Territories.

The case of Maria King raises generative questions; as someone with no clear ties to Red River she was given access to scrip on the basis of living within Keewatin District prior to or on 15 July, 1870. King, of Moose Factory, was the daughter of French-Canadian fur trader James King and Sophia Garton (listed as half-breed on Maria’s scrip) and was married to Charles Stewart Crowe, a Norwegian fur trader. She applied for and received scrip as a “Half-Breed living in Kewatin.” Crowe and King’s children were born in different communities across Northwestern Ontario such as Moose Factory, Lac Seul, Fort Alexander, Fort Frances, and Rat Portage. At the time of her application on 7 September, 1893, she and her witnesses attested that she was both “a half breed woman sure” and that “she lived with her family at Lac Seul H.B Co Fort on 15th July 1870 they lived there for about 10 years in H.B. Co service.”²⁵³ But there was, at the time, a great deal of migration between Keewatin District and the Province of Manitoba, as of course much of Keewatin would become, in fact, part of the larger Manitoba. Given the massive district would become a large part of Manitoba, it makes sense, then, that there was a fluidity of movement and migration across the region. While in King’s case she was not directly connected to the Red River community, by virtue of her living amongst other people and communities that *did* share those ties in Northwestern Ontario, it remains a question to what extent she might be considered “properly Métis.” This would require further research into the precise nature of scrip claims and other primary and secondary documents related to the various families and communities within Keewatin District.

That said, she and her family are identified by MNO as constituting root ancestors for one of their VMFL. They assert on the basis of her mixed ancestry that she is a “verified Métis.” But the fact that King was included in scrip relates largely to a combination of location and the extension of scrip to all persons of mixed ancestry in applicable regions and on applicable dates. That the Crowe-King family is listed as a VMFL is reflective of the fact that of all the VMFL names produced by MNO in relation to historic communities, the only ones that appear within the scrip archives with any frequency are those names found in what they refer to in shorthand as the Northwestern Ontario/Treaty 3 Métis Community – namely the Rainy Lake/Rainy River, Lake of the Woods/Lac Seul and Treaty 3 Halfbreed Adhesion Harvesting Areas. A number of the root ancestors identified by MNO appear as Keewatin District scrip claims – Begg-Spence, Crowe-King, Finlayson, Loutit, Sinclair, Swain, Young, Thompson, Linklater – to name but a few. A number of scrip records identified in the files related back to the community of Rat Portage. A preliminary search revealed no less than 40 results for associated names and families with Rat Portage – people including Hugh Linklater, Peter Finlayson, Mary Young, Charles Begg, and James Arthur Swain. Roughly 25 names appear in searches for Lac Seul, while 13 turn up with

²⁵² “That for the purposes of Sec. ‘E’ Clause 81 Dominion Lands Act 83 The district of Keewatin is to be considered as forming part of the NWT so far, as the Indian title has been extinguished by treaty with the Indians.” 1885–1887. Library and Archives Canada. <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/CollectionSearch/Pages/record.aspx?app=fonandcol&IdNumber=1494426&new=-8586035434055117123>

²⁵³ Untitled. 1883. Métis Archival Project. https://apps.srv.ualberta.ca/ns/mnc/view.php?file_path=nw-scrip/LAC_RG15_Vol693_MNC-HODB_enhanced/LAC_RG15_Vol693_File339129_P1070123.JPG

the precise spelling of “Keewatin” (a few additional records appear under “Kewatin”). There are a very small number in relation to Michipicoten. Some other names appear in relation to what MNO term’s the Northern Lake Superior Métis Community (the Lakehead, Nipigon, and Michipicoten Harvesting Areas), such as Rose and Weigand, but as with Maria King mentioned above, the Weigand family, although having long been active MNO members within and around the Thunder Bay area, derived their claim within Keewatin District – their Weigand-Corcoran Irish, English, and Cree mixed ancestry bears no direct ties to other Métis communities further westward.²⁵⁴

There are some applicants for scrip who although having been born further west and having parents that received scrip in Manitoba, were denied on the basis of being born outside of the Northwest Territories. This was the case for James Arthur Bruce, the son of Patrick Bruce and Elizabeth Garroch. For Eugenie Matheson, her claim was denied because although born within the Northwest Territories, she moved to Ontario prior to 15 July, 1870. On the other hand, those moving from Ontario *into* the Northwest Territories, such as George Maxwell Hamilton who lived at Lesser Slave Lake and was born in Peterborough, Ontario, received scrip despite having no demonstrable connection to the hub of Red River or surrounding communities. Hamilton was born to Robert Hamilton (Irish) and Annie Seaborn (identified as Half-breed) and applied for and received scrip; however, his sister’s claim was initially denied. She applied from Belleville, Ontario, on the basis that her parents had been residents in Fort Garry. However, she was born in Ontario while they were living away for a time and thus her place of birth formed the base rationale for the denial of her claim. Because her brother’s claim had been approved in 1899, however, a debate ensued over whether she should properly qualify. Again, while the family had no sustained connection to Red River, it raises questions as to the possibilities/limitations of scrip in relation to Ontario-based claims to Métis identity.

The issuance of scrip in those in areas within Keewatin District that are now a part of Ontario and thus MNO’s purview, warrants further research. So, too, does the issuance of scrip to those as designated as half-breed and in possession of some potential claim to Indian title, who are living far from their places of birth (such as Hamilton and his Peterborough origins). Additional research into selected families – such as Linklater and Vincent – from the Abitibi Inland area would also be worthwhile, for while no clear claims for scrip could be made in those regions, there may have as well been migration further westward that would have qualified some applications. For the other areas, there appears no clear representation of families from Sault Ste. Marie, Mattawa/Nipissing, or Georgian Bay within the scrip records.

6. A Sketch of Ontario Archival Research: Precursor to Phase II

An additional portion of archival research included a review of databases for sources pertaining to MNO’s political activities, claims to rights and lands, and tracing the gradual political articulation of Métis identity in Ontario. This portion of the research involved a review of roughly 426 documents identified within the Archives of Ontario database, those which directly identify a connection to MNO and to its precursor of OMAA. From within that, a total of 90

²⁵⁴ This comes from both the archival research, but also personal research undertaken on the Weigand-Corcoran families, along with extensive review of their genealogical files and claims. The only Weigand that has been identified in the scrip records in fact intermarried into the Weigand family – Jane (née Rose) Weigand.

separate files indicate some relevance to the study contained within this Report, and to, as mentioned, exploring how MNO has presented itself within Ontario, to the provincial government in particular, and to what extent it has relied on its affiliation with MNC for legitimacy, versus the extent to which it began marketing and promoting a sense of its own, separate identity relative to the so-claimed historic Métis communities.

A number of the documents are split across three primary foci within the provincial government: 1) Ontario Native Affairs Secretariat economic and resource development policy; 2) Native Affairs records of the Ministry of Community and Social Services; and 3) Ontario Native Affairs secretariat: governments, Native organizations and committees policy files. Of worthwhile note is the number of files relative to mid-1990s that refer to “Great Lakes Metis Communities” along with a notable set of files pertaining to what is referred to as the “Moose Factory Métis” land claim. What stands out about this land claim is that while it may present a significant opportunity for MNO – in that promises made by the federal government during treaty-signing in the area indicated that so-called “half-breed” families would receive 160 acres of land – MNO does not appear to have had much involvement with the claim itself. A cross-reference with the report written by PRAXIS Research Associates specifically focused on the region broadly makes minimal use of the term “Métis” and appears to work less directly to establish it as a distinctly Métis community as such – a marked and notable difference from their work pertaining to the Great Lakes region.