

This narrative history of a Residential School was researched and produced by the Government of Canada as part of its response to litigation and the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation has not verified the content of this document. It is provided here for reference purposes only. Documented incidents of sexual and physical abuse are based on the documentary record and do not take into account survivor testimony.



You are welcome to contact the NCTR if you wish to add, comment on, or challenge any versions of the history presented herein.

Carcross IRS School Narrative

This School Narrative summarizes documents that provide an overview of the history and administration of the school.

NAME OF SCHOOL AND VARIANTS

Carcross and Chootla are used interchangeably from 1903 to 1969. No documentation has been located that explains the common use of the two names.

Name	Item No.	Date
Carcross Indian School	CA011050	03/18/1907
Carcross School	CA001056	01/20/1908
Carcross Boarding School	YS009114	07/15/1912
Chootla Indian School	CA011111	08/00/1914
Carcross Indian Boarding School	CA011116	12/21/1914
Carcross Indian Residential School	CA011233	07/09/1929
Carcross (Chootla) Indian Residential School	CA011261	02/19/1931
Carcross Residential School	CA011279	08/29/1947
Chootla Indian Residential School	CA011315	09/30/1942
Carcross Indian Mission School	YS000941	06/06/1960
Chootla (Carcross) Indian School	CA011280	01/29/1964
Choutla School	YS004084	01/02/1969
Choutla Indian Residential School	YS005157	05/22/1980

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

1903 The first Carcross School was established in the spring of 1903 by an Anglican Bishop [CA011225].

1907 A request is made to the government to build an adequate building for the Carcross Indian School [CA011050].

1908 The government establishes the current school as an Indian Residential School [YS004084A].

1910/11 Site for a new school was purchased [YS004084A].

1913 New school was built about two miles from community of Carcross [YS004084].

- 1939 On April 17, 1939, the school burned to the ground [CA011309]. Because of the war, the government could not immediately re-build the school, and small rented buildings were used [CA010223].
- 1942 The school buildings are condemned by the medical health officer [CA011315].
- 1944 The Anglican church re-builds the Carcross Indian Residential School [CA011328] and the school is opened in the fall of 1944 [CA011330, CA011331].
- 1950 The government begins a consultation process with reference to the relocation of Carcross Indian Residential School [YS000737].
- 1954 When the new school opens, it is anticipated that students will be transferred in from the Whitehorse Day School [YS003428]
- 1954 New school opens some time soon after September 1954 [YS000715]
- 1955 Student enrolled in the Carmacks Day School and the Whitehorse Indian Day School are to be accommodated in the newly built Carcross Residential School [CA010319]
- 1956 The Mayo Indian Day School was closed on November 1, 1956, and children were transferred into Carcross [CA010393]
- 1960 Students from Grades 5 up were transferred out of Carcross IRS and into the Whitehorse Hostels, leaving Carcross IRS with students in Grades 1 - 4 [YS003830A].
- 1966 There was a fire in the boiler room of Carcross IRS on June 5, 1966. [CA011275].
- 1967 Classrooms for the public school children and the residence children were integrated in September of 1967 [YS004110].
- 1968 There was a fire in the boiler house on March 4, 1968 [CA011276, CA011276A].
- 1968 With the proposed closing of the school in 1969, enrollment is limited, keeping in residence only students in Grades 1 - 4 and a small number in Grade 5 [YS000468].
- 1969 Carcross IRS closes June 30, 1969. Land and buildings are transferred to the Yukon Territorial Government [CA011355, CA011355A, CA011355B, CA011355C].

Dates managed by Church

From the time of the original boarding school in 1903 to the closing of Carcross Indian Residential School in 1969, the school was managed by the Anglican Church.

- 1903 Bishop Bompas, of the Anglican Church, operated the first school at Carcross [CA011302].
- 1908 The school is under the management of the Church of England [CA011056].
- 1921 Carcross IRS was added to the schools administered by the Indian and Eskimo Commission of the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada (M.S.C.C.) [CA011033, p.3]
- 1960 The Carcross School is described as being operated by the Anglican Church under an agreement with the Department by which appointments to the non-teaching staff are the prerogative of the Principal [YS000503].
- 1967 The education of Indians in the Yukon Territory is transferred to the Yukon Territorial Government, commencing April 1, 1967. However, Carcross IRS “is an Anglican operation” and “[t]he Territorial Government does not wish to become involved in the operation of a denomination school.” [YS005118]
- 1968/69 The transfer of the classroom operation of Carcross Residential School to the Yukon Government for 1968/69 was approved in principle [YS005127] but this does not occur, and the 1968/69 school year was treated as a phasing out period for the school [YS000468].

Dates managed by Government

Although there was discussion about the government taking over the management of the school in 1968, the Church continued to manage the school until its closure in 1969.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS

The Anglican Church owned the original school at Carcross, until a government-owned school was built 2 miles from Carcross around 1911 or 1912. When that building was destroyed by fire in 1939, the Anglican Church housed the school in rented buildings as well as a church-owned building until the government re-built the school in 1954. The government continued to own the school buildings until the school closed in 1969.

- 1903 The first Chooutla Indian Residential School consisted of two shacks, one of which was constructed of logs [CA011302, YS004091].
- 1913 The government built a new residential school about two miles from the community of Carcross [YS004104].
- 1914 The government built a new workshop and septic tank [CA011113, CA011116].
- 1939 The school building and workshop burned to the ground [CA011309], and various buildings were rented for the use of the Carcross IRS [CA010223].

- 1942 The main church-owned building of the Choooutla Indian Residential School is condemned by the Medical Health Officer [CA011315].
- 1944 Pre-fabricated buildings were assembled [CA010225].
- 1949 New Principal's residence is built by the government, and a new lighting plant is installed [CA011364 , p. 2].
- 1952 The government is negotiating a purchase of the Carcross IRS buildings from the Anglican Church and provides a history, including the 1910 purchase of land, the fire and various evaluations of the buildings [YS001079].
- 1954 New government-owned school buildings are completed in the fall [YS000259].
- 1954 The government purchases the four church-owned buildings, including the inventory of equipment and furnishings therein, from the Anglican Church. Buildings had been used as the Carcross Residential School since 1944 [YS000259, YS001089].
- 1957 Sewing room was turned into classroom [YS003816, YS003817].
- 1960 A warehouse, garage and root cellar were put into use, and a new furnace installed in the Principal's Residence [CA010207].
- 1963 New dormitory doors are installed [CA011344, CA011344A].
- 1964 New principal's residence is built [YS003001, CA011339].
- 1969 Land and buildings are transferred to Yukon Territory; and the buildings become an addition to the territorial education program, effective 1st July, 1969 [YS004203].

Day and Joint Schools

While the Anglican Church owned, operated and managed a number of day schools, including Moosehide IDS, Mayo IDS, and the Selkirk Joint School, documents have not been located which suggest they were associated with Carcross IRS, other than being managed by the Anglican Church.

LAND

Land was purchased by the government for the site of the new school in 1910. The land was 2 miles north of Carcross and about 50 miles from Whitehorse.

The government continued to own the land upon which various buildings for the School were erected until the school closed in 1969. The exception to the government owning the land was from 1939 to 1944 (following the fire which destroyed the School) until the new Anglican-built school was erected on the same site in 1944.

- 1903 - 1910 The Anglican Church had operated a small school at Carcross since about 1903 but was unable to purchase the school site [YS005157].
- 1910 The government purchased land from a homesteader as a site for the Indian Boarding School at Carcross. The location was approximately 2 miles from Carcross [YS003343, YS003343A, YS003341, YS003339, CA011072, YS003336, YS003335].
- 1912 Land is referred to as “Government Indian School reserve at Carcross” and “Indian Reserve of 160 acres on which the Carcross Indian Board School is located” [YS003333].
- 1954 An Indenture between the government and the Anglican Church states that “the four buildings on the Carcross Indian Reserve at Carcross, being land the title to which is vested in Her Majesty” [YS001090].
- 1956 Territorial Lands were set aside “for the purpose of having a restricted area around the domestic water reservoir serving the Carcross Indian Res. School” [YS003325].
- 1957 The repairs to the upper and lower dam serving the water supply system at the Carcross IRS were completed; a new bridge over Nares Creek on the entrance road is required [CA010216].
- 1959 Repairs are made to the dam [YS001043] and the bridge [CA011338].
- 1961 Land was reserved in the name of the Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of Citizenship & Immigration in order to protect the water supply for Carcross Indian Residential School [YS005158, YS005158A].
- 1962 Repairs are made to the Chooutla Creek Dam [CA011342, CA011343].
- 1962 The land upon which the school exists is referred to as ‘Carcross Residential School Indian Reserve’ [YS005157D].
- 1969 Order in Council transfers the administration of the land and buildings to the Yukon Territory effective July 1, 1969 [CA011355].

PHOTOS, PLANS AND OTHER MEDIA

Date	Item #	Description
Undated	CA011368	Photograph of a classroom at the ‘old school’
1907	CA011050A	Photograph of the ‘building in which the School is being carried on and in which two teachers and ... sixteen children reside’

Date	Item #	Description
Circa 1910	YS005157E	Sketch of the 160 acres formerly homesteaded by Mr. Wiley Shermer
1938	CA011369	Photograph of 'School from the point'
April 17, 1939	CA011370	Photograph of school on fire
August 23, 1947	CA011332	Map of Yukon
Jan 27, 1948	CA010242B	Diagram of Principal's residence completed in 1949
April 29, 1952	CA011387	Map re: Installing Inside Fire Line
1952	CA010131	Blueprints
May 14, 1952	YS001076, YS001076A	Map of Carcross IRS area: Past, present and future buildings
1953	CA010117 CA010117A	Various Photographs of Chooutla Indian Residential School
Circa 1956 - 1960	CA010180	Photograph of Chooutla School printed in a brochure of The Indian School Administration, Church of England in Canada
March 1, 1960	CA011649	Plan of the Principal's Residence
Nov. 10, 1960	YS004107	Newspaper Article, The Whitehorse Star
Feb. 22, 1961	YS005158A	Map of "Proposed Reserve for Chooutla Indian School Water Supply"
Circa 1962/67	CA011371	Photograph - Dining Room inside the School
Circa 1962/67	CA011372	Photograph - Grad. Dinner
Circa 1962/67	CA011373	Photograph - Children who could not go home
Circa 1962/67	CA011374	Photograph - Nurse in dispensary
Circa 1962/67	CA011375	Photograph - Set of toys
Circa 1962/67	CA011376	Photograph - The Junior Boys Basketball Team
Circa 1962/67	CA011377	Photograph - Girls Dorm
Circa 1962/67	CA011378	Photograph - Seniors Boys Dorm
Circa 1962/67	CA011379	Photograph - Local help in kitchen
Circa 1962/67	CA011380	Photograph - Grade classroom

Date	Item #	Description
Circa 1962/67	CA011381	Photograph - Playroom
Circa 1962/67	CA011382	Photograph - Staff home at Carcross
Circa 1962/67	CA011383	Photograph - The School Newspaper
Circa 1962/67	CA011384	Photograph - Carcross Residential School
June 2, 1966	YS004099	Letter to the Editor, Whitehorse Star
June 1968	CA011386A	Map: Installations of Water Supply & F.P. System
March, 1968	YS004110	Article and Photographs from The Living Message publication
February 1969	CA011354	Newspaper article from Whitehorse Star - Carcross School To Use Residential Buildings
July 1969	YS004104	Photographs and Article, Whitehorse Star
June 23, 1971	CA011385	Photographs sent to Crown Assets Disposal Corp.

GENERAL ENROLLMENT STATISTICS OVER TIME

Enrollment statistics are taken, where available, from Quarterly Returns. If Quarterly Return is not available, correspondence has been located that describes enrollment and/or per capita grant.

Year	# of Students	Year	# of Students
1908	18 pupils of the Boarding School	1952	65 children in residence
1910	30 children in residence	1954	120 children in residence
1919	35 children in residence	1957	130 children in residence
1923	40 children in residence	1958	158 children in residence
1940	43 children in residence	1959	156 children in residence
1941	40 children in residence	1960	161 children in residence
1942	36 children in residence	1961	148 children in residence
1943	20 children in residence	1962	161 children in residence
1945	48 children in residence	1963	116 children in residence
1946	52 children in residence	1964	161 children in residence
1947	69 children in residence	1965	135 children in residence
1948	50 children in residence	1966	109 children in residence
1949	45 children in residence	1967	83 children in residence
1950	49 children in residence	1968	94 children in residence

Year	# of Students	Year	# of Students
1951	52 children in residence	1969	42 children in residence

STUDENTS FROM OTHER RESERVES

Other reserves that sent children to the IRS include at least the following:

Aishihik, Atlin, Big Salmon, Burwash Landing, Carcross, Carmacks, Champagne, Coffee Creek, Crow, Dawson, Dawson-Moosehide, Elsa, Fort Selkirk, Frances Lake, Kluane, La Berge, Leduc, Little Atlin, Loucheux [Loucheux], or Vunta Kuchin, Moosehide, Mayo, Old Crow, Peel River, Pelly Banks, Pelly Lakes, Ross River, Selkirk, Snag, Snag Creek, Stewart River, Stikine, Tagish, Tahltan, Teslin, Tetetlekwechen [ttetledskwechen], [Blackstone River], Whitehorse, Watson Lake, Whitehorse,

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Church of England [CA011056]

Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada [CA011238]

WRITTEN AGREEMENTS

1912 Agreement for the Operation of a School, between His Majesty the King, represented by the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs and Isaac O. Stringer, Bishop of Yukon [YS009114].

1954 An Indenture is signed between the Church and the government for the government to purchase the buildings erected by the Church on the government-owned land 'Carcross Indian Reserve' at Carcross [YS001090].

1962 Original Agreement between the Department and the Missionary Society of the Anglican Church regarding Carcross Indian Residential School [YS003444, YS003444A].

DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO SCHOOL INCIDENTS

The following suggestions of abuse, listed chronologically, comprise all known identifiable complaints and/or allegations received by government officials and all available information regarding the follow-up and outcome.

To date, we are unaware of any convictions for abuse at Carcross IRS or of any convicted abusers present at the school.

Incidents (Sexual)

- 1942 Two U.S. soldiers “were caught in the girls dormitory ... during the early morning hours of December 22nd” and were subsequently charged with indecent assault [CA011318, CA011311, CA011319A, CA011360A].
- 1943 A document states that Indian children in residence at the Carcross Indian Residential School were molested, likely a reference to the incident regarding U.S. soldiers found in the girls’ dormitory [CA011283].

Incidents (Physical)

- 1940 Several incidents of physical abuse, such as strapping, cutting hair and ‘corporal punishment,’ are described by the Principal as punishment for allegations of theft [CA011309].
- 1956 The principal of the school is requesting authority to discharge a student from the school. The principal writes that he at first strapped the student for infractions of the rules, when the student failed to respond to loss of privileges [YS003442, YS003442A]. After many attempts to work with this student, he was transferred to Whitehorse Indian Day School [YS003443, YS003482].
- 1958 There was a complaint that a member of the staff at Carcross IRS was “...striking some of the boys over the head in order to discipline them.” The Principal informed the Yukon Agency that “... the [staff member] was relieved of [] duties as soon as the matter came to his attention” [YS003314].
- 1959 A female student’s hair “was cut as a punitive measure following her third instance of running away” [YS003318].
- 1960 The Principal of Carcross is accused of forcibly removing a student from the Whitehorse Baptist Mission School and there is a significant controversy between the Principal of the School, the Baptists and the Anglican Church [CA010169, CA010176].
- 1964 A former teacher from Carcross IRS alleges various incidences of abuse by staff towards the students [CA010114].

Incidents (Student on Student)

- 1956 The principal of the school is requesting authority to discharge a pupil who appeared in Juvenile Court on two occasions for breaking and entering, and in connection with a fire. While at the school, the student repeatedly beats up on the younger boys [YS003442, YS003442A]. After many attempts to work with this student, he was transferred to Whitehorse Indian Day School [YS003443, YS003482].

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Complaints or Concerns Regarding Care of Students

- 1912 A representative from the Office of the Auditor General of Canada expresses concern with regard to stories he was told by ‘various parties’ about the care children are getting at the Carcross Indian School [CA011092].
- 1912 The Inspector for the Office of the Auditor General reports on a number of complaints he heard during his visit to Carcross, including a lack of nourishment, possibly leading to tubercular troubles. The School was alleged to be selling milk and eggs that may not have been ‘surplus’...local ‘indians’ were taking their children away from the school, and recruiting “was coming from the indians who are a long distance from Carcross.” [CA011098].
- 1929 The Indian Superintendent noted in his report that “Staff appear to be unsettled...” and note is made of “considerable changes in the staff at this school....which are detrimental to the work of the school...” [CA011233A and CA011237].
- 1929 The Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada responds to complaints of staff turnover suggesting the impact is not as bad as it appears from afar [CA011238].
- 1931 The Indian Superintendent reports on much better conditions at the Carcross Indian Residential School, agreeing that there had been a decline in general. Also, an Indian from town had entered the girl’s dormitory at night but was discovered “before any real harm had been done” [CA011264].
- 1940 Several incidents of theft are described by the Principal to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, considered to be “an epidemic of stealing in the school.” Responses to the abuse, e.g., cutting off students hair, resulted in “quite a bit of resentment [arising] amongst the Indians regarding this form of punishment” [CA011309].
- 1960 The President of the Yukon Baptist Missionary Society (Mr. Montgomery) alleges mistreatment of Baptist children attending Carcross IRS. The Principal refutes these charges [YS000951, YS000952, YS000953].

Health at the School

- 1929 An epidemic of influenza was prevalent since the beginning of the year resulting in the deaths of two pupils [CA011233A].
- 1931 Two students died in the Whitehorse hospital in January 1931 from tuberculosis and a third student was discharged from the school ‘suffering from the same disease’ [CA011293].
- 1936 An outbreak of measles affected “practically all of the pupils” - all had recovered by the time of the Superintendent’s visit [CA010617].

1942 The Medical Health Officer reports poor health conditions at the school and the school buildings are condemned [CA011315, CA011315A].

Accidents and/or Deaths of Students or Staff

1933 A teacher has an accident at the school [CA011300].

1940 A student was badly injured in an accident while 'driving one of the school teams down a hill' [CA011358].

1946 A student was accidentally drowned [CA011284, CA011362, CA011362A].

1953 A female student dies of "lymphacitic leukemia" [CA011296, CA011297, CA011298].

1960 A car accident claimed the life of a teacher from Chooutla School and a 13-year old student [YS004107, CA010207].

Activities at the School

1914 The Anglican Church newsletter 'Northern Lights' was published at the school by students [CA011111].

1931 'Scouts and a Social Club' were initiated [CA011357].

1957 Students have a full size skating rink [CA010216].

Other

1926 Member of the staff assaulted the Principal; police report was filed and individual was ordered off the premises [CA011196A].

1932 Two boys had run away from the school; they were found the next day, but escaped a second time, and were soon found and escorted back to the school by the Principal [CA011295].

1940 A labourer from Whitehorse attempted to crawl into the girls' dormitory, breaking a screen window. He was charged with the offense of Vagrancy (Disorderly conduct) [CA011310A, CA011310B].

1947 Two male students ran away from Carcross Residential School; one was returned to the school, the other was older and was allowed to leave the school [CA011279].

1960 Two 'Runaway Boys from Carcross Indian Mission School' were found residing with the mother of one of the boys [YS000941].

PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS

Name	Position	Year
Bishop Bompas	'Ran' the school at Carcross	1903 - 1906
Miss Ellis	Matron	1903 - 1909
Rev. J. Hawksley	Principal	1906 - 1910
Miss Collins	Matron	1906
Miss F. Hutchison	Principal	August 1911
E. Dyfed Evans	Principal	1911/1912 - February 1913
Archbishop Canham	Acting Principal	February - October 1913
Rev. W. T. Townsend	Principal	1913 - 1917
Rev A.C. Fields	Principal	1917 - 1918
Dr. Grasset-Smith.	Principal	1919 - May 1921
Miss Carrie E. Bennett	'Is temporarily in charge'	May 1921 - July 1921
Rev. W. Barlow	Principal	July 1921 - August 1923
Rev. G.A. Bagshaw	Principal, and Acting Principal	August 1923 - 1926
Rev. W.H.L. West	Acting Principal	December 1926 - February 1927
Rev. W. Tinney	Principal	March 1927 - September 1929
Rev. J.H. Bryne	Acting Principal Principal	September 1929 - August 1930
Ven. H.C.M. Grant	Principal	1930 - 1947
Rev. J. W. Ellis	Principal	1947 - January-February 1951
Mr. Orman	Acting Principal	March 1951
Rev. Stanger	Principal	April 1951 - 1953?
Rev. Cole	Principal	1954? - 1958
W.A. Jackson	Acting Principal	August 1958
Mr. Buckle	Grade 1 Principal	He signed Principal's Monthly Reports in 1956, 1957, 1958
Mr. Huestis	Grade 1 Principal	He signed Principal's Monthly Reports in 1958
Rev. George Bullen	Principal	September 1958 - June 1962
Mr. David Wesley George Cook	Acting Principal	1962
Mr. Lawson	Principal	September 1962 - March 1964

Name	Position	Year
A. Richard King	Senior Teacher	Signs Principal's Monthly Reports in 1962, 1963
Mr. M. C. F. Gibbs	Principal	April 1964 - June 1969

Narrative completed: June 22, 2004

Narrative updated: August 19, 2004

The original school narrative document produced by Canada also contains a number of records that have been separated pending review.



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