

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.



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Cecilia Jeffrey IRS School Narrative

This School Narrative summarizes documents that provide an over-view of the history and administration of the school.

NAME OF SCHOOL AND VARIANTS

CECILIA JEFFREY INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL or

- Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Boarding School [CJC-1293]
- Shoal Lake School [CJC-0348]
- Cecilia Jeffrey Residence [CJC-0585]
- Also spelled: Cecelia Jeffrey, Cecilia Jaffray, Cecilia Jeffray and Cecilia Jefferey

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

- 1899 In 1899, two of the Shoal Lake Bands formally requested the Presbyterian Church to establish a school. Subsequently, the Church asked the Government to "...erect a building suitable for use as a boarding school at or near Keewatin, or some other suitable place..." [CJC-1457, CJC-1458].
- 1901 In 1901, after gaining the approval of the Shoal Lake Indians, the Presbyterian Church began erecting a school building on a plot of land on Rice Bay, near Shoal Lake Reserve No. 40 [CJC-0326, CJC-1377a, CJC-1354].
- 1902 In January 1902, articles were signed by which the Chiefs and Councillors agreed to send their children to the school [CJC-1387] and shortly afterward, a number of children were attending Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Boarding School [CJC-1968a, CJC-1387].
- 1928 Construction of the new school building outside of the town of Kenora, began ca. October 1928 [CJC-1292, CJC-1355].
- 1929 Though the new school had been accepting pupils since September, official opening ceremonies took place on November 6, 1929 [CJC-1374, CJC-1375, CJC-1375a, CJC-1591a].
- 1976 The Cecilia Jeffrey Residence was closed August 31, 1976 due to

decreased enrollment and high maintenance costs [CJC-2009].

MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL

Dates managed by Church

- 1902-1925 The Foreign Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church, later known as the Board of Home Missions, worked with the Women's Foreign Missionary Society (W.F.M.S.), later known as the Women's Missionary Society (W.M.S.) of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, to operate and manage the school [CJC-1591a, CJC-0332, CJC-0343, CJC-1384].
- 1925-1927 The United Church of Canada operated and managed the school until April 1, 1927 [CJC-0604].
- 1927-1969 The Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church managed the school [CJC-1345, CJC-0603].

Dates managed by Government

- 1969-close On April 1, 1969, management was transferred from the Presbyterian Church in Canada to the Government [CJC-0315, CJC-0312]. The Government assumed direct responsibility and continued to manage the institution up until the school closed on August 31, 1976 [CJC-2009].

SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Dates Owned by Church:

- 1902 -1929 On July 27, 1901, the Presbyterian Church, through the Presbyterian Women's Foreign Missionary Society, began to erect the school building, and the building was complete and ready to admit pupils by January 1902 [CJC-0326, CJC-0327, CJC-1387, CJC-1384].

Dates Owned by Government:

- 1929 -1990 In September 1927, the Government began to consider the replacement of the Cecilia Jeffrey school and asked Parliament for funding [CJC-0921, CJC-0922]. Construction on the new student residence began in October 1928 [CJC-1355]. The new school building opened to students in June 1929 [CJC-1357, CJC-1359a].

- 1956 Construction began on a separate building known as the Three Classroom Block [CJC-1854 - CJC-1854d, CJC-0768b].
- 1965 -1973 From September 1, 1965 to June 30, 1973, the entire Three Classroom School Block building was rented to the Jaffray Mellick Public School Board at the rate of \$1 per annum [CJC-1610a, CJC-0295].
- 1976 From September to November 1976, a Student Home \ Kenora Cultural Centre was operated in the school buildings by two band representatives from Grand Council Treaty # 3. The Government closed the Student Home in November due to a high rate of student absenteeism [CJC-1887, CJC-1888].
- 1976 -1980 The Lake of the Woods Ojibway Cultural Centre continued to operate out of the school buildings without a formal lease agreement from 1976 to 1980 [CJC-2013, CJC-2009].
- 1979 The Government demolished the Residence building and outbuildings on the Cecilia Jeffrey Student Residence property as it was not considered viable to carry out the necessary renovations to make the building structurally worthy [CJC-2011, CJC-2019].
- 1980 -1984 A lease agreement was signed between the Government and the Lake of the Woods Ojibway Cultural Centre which permitted rental of the Cecilia Jeffrey property between January 1, 1980 and December 31, 1984, with terms for a 5 year renewal, at a rate of \$1 per annum [CJC-2012b].

Date Turned Over to Band:

- 1990 In October 1990, the Federal Government and Grand Council Treaty #3 began negotiations to transfer the remaining Cecilia Jeffrey buildings [CJC-2014, CJC-2014a].

LAND

Location:

- 1901-1929 The original Cecilia Jeffrey Boarding School was on the west side of Shoal Lake, in western Ontario, near the Manitoba border, and just east of Shoal Lake Reserve No. 40. It was reached by water from Rat Portage or Keewatin, being about forty-five miles from either in a south-west direction. It was also described as land parcel 3794, Div. 492. [CJC-0326, CJC-1591a, CJC-1384, CJC-1293].

1928 - Close The Government negotiated the purchase of farm land from a resident farmer in the Township of Jaffrey, known as parcel 258 P as well as the South and North part of parcel 122P, in order to build the new Cecilia Jeffrey Boarding School [CJC-1292]. The total property consisted of 168 acres of land surrounding Round Lake, three miles outside the town of Kenora [CJC-1387].

1930 The Cecilia Jeffrey property was increased by the purchase of Mining Location 259P for extra farm land [CJC-1293, CJC-2086].

Dates Owned by Church:

1901-1929 The school land was owned by the Church from the opening of the first school building until at least the opening of the second school building.

On July 27, 1901, the Government's Inspector of Indian Agencies reported that the Presbyterian Church had begun to erect a school building on a plot of land on Rice Bay, near reserve No. 40 [CJC-0326]. Documents submitted to the Government for the Annual Reports, stated that the Presbyterian Foreign Mission Committee secured 210 acres of land to build the boarding school [CJC-1293].

1927 On April 01, 1927, the United Church of Canada assigned Parcel 3794, Div. 492 back to the Presbyterian Church [CJC-0604].

Dates Owned by Government:

1928 - Close On December 22, 1928 the Government granted authority to purchase the 168 acre property surrounding Round Lake, three miles outside of Kenora [see *Land: 1928 - Close*] [CJC-1292, CJC-1387].

1930 On May 23, 1930, the Government granted authority to increase the Cecilia Jeffrey Property by purchasing Mining Location 259P [CJC-1293].

1980 A lease agreement was signed between the Government and the Lake of the Woods Ojibway Cultural Centre which permitted rental of the Cecilia Jeffrey property between January 1, 1980 and December 31, 1984, with terms for a 5 year renewal, at a rate of \$1 per annum [CJC-2012b].

Date Turned Over to Band:

1990 In October 1990, the Federal Government and Grand Council Treaty #3 began negotiations to transfer the Cecilia Jeffrey property, approximately 270 acres of Government land surrounding Round Lake, to the Bands [CJC-2014, CJC-2014a].

PHOTOS, PLANS AND OTHER MEDIA

- CJC-1443a Floor Plans of Original Cecilia Jeffrey School. Sketched in 1923, the diagrams also contain information on various additions made to the school.
- CJC-1430 Detailed 1925 plan of original Cecilia Jeffrey School. Contains plan for proposed tubular fire escapes.
- CJC-1323 Plan of Cecilia Jeffrey sewage disposal systems in 1939, and proposed alterations.
- CJC-0764 Letter dated December 17, 1941, provides dimensions of the school.
- CJC-1854c Sketched plan of Cecilia Jeffrey School and grounds Ca. 1955. Plan notes the proposed locations of new school block.
- CJC-0768b Sketched plan of Cecilia Jeffrey School and grounds in 1956.
- CJC-2083b December 12, 1959 plan of a portion of Cecilia Jeffrey land, granted to Township for purpose of building a joint school.
- CJC-1434b 1960 plan of Cecilia Jeffrey School fire protection facilities, including Three Classroom Block addition.
- CJC-2046 1972 Survey Plan of the Cecilia Jeffrey land and buildings

RESERVES FROM WHICH PUPILS WERE DRAWN

Pupils were primarily drawn from Shoal Lake, North West Angle No. 33 and No. 37, Whitefish Bay, Islington, Fort Alexander, Rat Portage, Lac des Mille Lacs, Deer Lake, Lac Seul, Osnaburgh, Pic Mobert, Assabaska, Fort Hope, Fisher River, Long Plain, Seine River, and Martin Falls.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Presbyterian Church:

- The Foreign Mission Committee, later known as the Board of Home Missions
- Women's Foreign Missionary Society (W.F.M.S.), later known as the Women's Missionary Society (W.M.S.) of the Presbyterian Church in Canada
- Foreign Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Canada

United Church of Canada (1925-27)

WRITTEN AGREEMENTS

1911 On April 1, 1911, an Operational Agreement was made between the Government and the Reverend R.P. MacKay D.D., Secretary of the Foreign Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, which stated that the Church was responsible for the management and operation of the school, while the Government was to oversee the Church's management and also to fulfill certain financial obligations [CJC-0317].

Following the 1911 Agreement, Cecilia Jeffrey School continued to be jointly funded by the Government and the Church [CJC-1384, CJC-1385a].

1962 On May 22, 1962 an Operational Agreement was signed between the Government and the Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in Canada whereby the Church was responsible to the Government for the management and operation of the school [CJC-0310a].

1965 On March 09, 1965, an Operational Agreement was signed between Cecilia Jeffrey Residential School and the Jaffray-Mellick Public School Board as part of the Joint Schooling Initiative, in which the Three Classroom Block at Cecilia Jeffrey would gradually be leased to the Public School Board in its entirety [CJC-1610a, CJC-1610a].

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:

Incidents (Sexual)

1939 An O.P.P. report on "Immorality" at Cecilia Jeffrey contains a statement by a male

student, in which he claims to have had sexual intercourse with a female member of the Staff [CJC-0325a].

Incidents (Physical)

1914 An enquiry was made to address allegations of severe punishment of pupils [CJC-0001, CJC-0002]. Though no evidence of mistreatment was found during the enquiry, it was suggested that the Principal should avoid resorting to corporal punishment whenever possible [CJC-0003, CJC-0004].

1917 Government correspondence expressed concern about the lack of discipline at the school and the interference of the parents in this regard [CJC-0837, CJC-0838, CJC-0272b]. Shoal Lake Band members complained about the treatment of children at the school [CJC-0006a] and requested his dismissal [CJC-0006b].

In April, an Assistant Principal was appointed to help “restore discipline at the school.” [CJC-0841] A school inspection was performed in August [CJC-0845], and a Presbyterian Church Committee investigated the school and made a number of recommendations [CJC-0847, CJC-0847a].

1919 Government correspondence in February of 1919 commented on the new Principal’s system of detention [CJC-0869].

1927 A Government report outlining a complaint by the Principal regarding a discharged female pupil, the Matron instructed the Nurse to make the girl “sleep on the floor, and to lock the door” of the room she was staying in [CJC-1338]. The Government Agent also made general comments on discipline at the school [CJC-1339, CJC-1339a, CJC-1339b, CJC-1339c]

1936 The Principal wrote to the Government to complain about the interference of the Indian Agent and the RCMP in the school’s disciplinary tactics [CJC-0722]. Government correspondence notes numerous complaints of “thrashings” [CJC-0716] and two related RCMP reports stated that when two boys were asked why they had run away, they said they had been “thrashed” by a staff member [CJC-0720a, CJC-0716b, CJC-0714a].

1936 Following complaints by some Band members that a fight had taken place between one of the boys at the school and a staff member, the Principal was asked to report on this matter [CJC-0715, CJC-0715b]. Subsequent reporting revealed further details about the incident [CJC-0713, CJC-0709] and the Government requested the dismissal of the staff member in question [CJC-0708,

CJC-0712, CJC-0711]. A Government Report dated July 10, 1939, noted that the above-mentioned staff member was still employed at the school [CJC-0675].

1940 A Government Agent described an incident of discipline applied by a staff member at Cecilia Jeffrey and the way in which it was handled [CJC-0650, CJC-0649].

1944 A former employee of Cecilia Jeffrey wrote to the Government in March of 1944, alleging he resigned his position as a protest against the “brutal treatment” of children by a staff member [CJC-0640b, CJC-0639]. A Government investigation was launched, in which treatment of the children was reported on [CJC-0636, CJC-0636a]. The former employee repeated his complaints in correspondence with the Government in 1957 [CJC-2306, CJC-2306a, CJC-2306b, CJC-2306c].

Another former employee lodged similar complaints regarding discipline at the school, and alleged abuse of children by two staff members on June 07, 1944. [CJC-0634a]. It was later suggested that the letters, written by both former employees, were written for political reasons [CJC-0638, CJC-0638a].

A subsequent investigation into the complaints made on June 07, concluded that there was no validity to the allegations [CJC-0634]. Signed statements were written by the staff to this effect [CJC-0634c through CJC-0634n] and the former employee retracted his allegations [CJC-0634b].

1956 Government correspondence in October 1956, reports on an incident of physical punishment applied by a staff member when four truant boys were returned after running away from Cecilia Jeffrey [CJC-0736, CJC-0736a, CJC-0736b, CJC-0736c, CJC-0736d, CJC-0517].

1965 An investigation into allegations of harsh treatment of students at Cecilia Jeffrey, written about in Weekend Magazine, took place on August 9th by the Government [CJC-0011]. The Principal wrote a letter to Kenora Daily Minor and News refuting some of the allegations, and defending disciplinary measures [CJC-0583a]. A Government letter dated November 30, made assurances that the “disciplinary measures” the staff member had admitted to using would not be repeated in the future [CJC-0584].

Incidents (Student on Student)

1923 The Principal wrote the Government outlining the methods he had used to handle the “common practice” of older pupils having sexual relations with girls to get them discharged from the school [CJC-1440a]

- 1939 During the summer of 1939, a number of reports were written by Government officials and officers of the RCMP regarding “immorality” among students at Cecilia Jeffrey. During the course of the investigation, a number of statements were provided by students alleged to have been involved [CJC-0686, CJC-0686a, CJC-0683, CJC-0682, CJC-0684, CJC-0671, CJC-0673a, CJC-0675].
- 1962 In October 1962, the Principal wrote the Government that he had sent two boys home for bullying the younger boys at the school [CJC-1425a, CJC-1425b]. The Government representative recommended that the older pupils who were “exercising strong-arm tactics with the younger students” be discharged from the school [CJC-1425].
- 1962 The Principal informed the Government that he sent home a boy for bullying one of the younger boys, and recommended his discharge. He noted that the boy also attacked him while he tried to order an end to the fight between the students [CJC-1427b]

CONVICTIONS

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

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Joint Schools Program:

- 1960 On September 1st, an official joint schooling or integration program began with the Jaffray-Mellick Public School Board. It involved approximately 50 Indian pupils who were transported to Rabbit Lake School [CJC-1598, CJC-1631, CJC-1890a, CJC-0464] and approximately 80 non-Indian pupils from the public board [CJC-1630, CJC-1065, CJC-1647, CJC-0726].

The number of Indian pupils within the public school system increased each year until all 150 pupils were integrated in 1966 [CJC-1666, CJC-0585, CJC-1593].

PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS

Reverend Gandier / Principal / Ca. 1902

J. O. McGregor / Principal / 1902 - 1904

Reverend Austin G. McKittrick / Principal / 1904 - Approx. May 1907

Reverend F. T. Dodds / Principal / Ca. June 1907 - September 1918

Reverend A. Matthews / Principal / October 1918

Unnamed Matron and an unnamed Teacher (Interim) / Principal(s) / October 23-29, 1918

Inspector John Semmens (Interim) / Principal / October 29, 1918 - November 29, 1918

Reverend P. T. Martin / Principal / Ca. November 29, 1918 - March 31, 1920

Reverend John T. Ross / Principal / Ca. March 31, 1920 - March 31, 1921

Reverend W. J. Cookson / Principal / Ca. March 31, 1922 - Ca. November 03, 1923

Reverend A. D. Menzies / Principal / November 04, 1923 - June 30, 1929

E.W. Byers / Principal / Ca. May 1929 - Ca. June 1940

Janet A. Carruthers / Principal and Nurse / July 1, 1940 - Ca. August 1940

Reverend Douglas S. Pitts / Principal / Ca. August 1940 - Ca. June 30, 1948

T.C. Ross / Principal / Ca. September 1948 - August 1951

R.S. MacCallum / Principal / September 1951 - Ca. June 1952

Miss K. Stewart (Nurse) / Principal / Ca. June 1952 - Ca. September 1952

Reverend J. Eldon Andrews / Principal / Ca. September 1952 - October 7, 1953

Eric Barrington / Principal / October 7, 1953 - June 06, 1954

Reverend Ivan B. Robson / Principal / Ca. June 30, 1954 - Ca. June 29, 1957

Reverend Howard Neely / Principal / Ca. September 1957 - Ca. June 1958

Stephen T. Robinson / Principal / Ca. July 1958 - August 15, 1966

Colin G. Wasacase / Administrator / August 15, 1966 - August 22, 1969

Reginald Johnston / Administrator / Ca. September 1969 - October 1974

Dennis Wheeler / Administrator / Ca. March 31, 1975 - August 31, 1976

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

