

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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**Elkhorn Indian Residential School  
IAP School Narrative**

**NAME IN THE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT (Schedule E/F)**

Elkhorn (Washakada)

**OTHER NAMES KNOWN AS (AKAs)**

1889 to 1895	Homes for Indian Children; Washakada Home (girls) and Kasota Home (boys) [ELK-000431, pg. 2-3]
1889 to 1918	Washakada (Indian) Home/Industrial School [ELK-000039; ELK-000207; ELK-000438, pg. 2; ELK-000551, pg. 4, 9]
1892	Elkhorn Institution/Institute [ELK-000025]
1895 to 1918	Elkhorn Industrial School [ELK-000436, pg. 26; ELK-000249]
1924 to 1949	Elkhorn Indian Residential School [ELK-000481; ELK-000496; ELK-000160]
1945	St. Mark's Anglican Indian School [ELK-000413]

**LOCATION**

1889 to 1895	The original IRS site was on four town lots in the village of Elkhorn, Manitoba [ELK-000002].
1895 to 1899	A fire in November 1895 destroyed the IRS buildings, with the exception of the Kasota Home for boys. Until 1899, the IRS operated temporarily in rented facilities in the town of Elkhorn. The Kasota Home for boys continued to be used to provide meals for residents during this period [ELK-000436, pg. 22; ELK-000440, pg. 2; ELK-000551, pg. 27].
1899 to 1949	The new Elkhorn IRS was situated about one quarter of a mile from the town of Elkhorn, Manitoba, and 197 miles west of Winnipeg, bounded on the north by the Canadian Pacific railway mainline, and on the south by public road allowances [ELK-000445, pg. 2; ELK-000039].

**PROVINCE/TERRITORY**

Manitoba

**OPERATING DATES AS AN INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL**

These dates represent the time during which the Government of Canada was responsible for the operation of the Indian Residential School, excluding any periods of closure.

August 6, 1889 to June 30, 1949

Interim Closure:

May 1, 1918 to September 1, 1923

## OPERATING DATES CONTEXT

The Elkhorn IRS opened with residents on August 6, 1889 [ELK-000039; ELK-000146-0001]. In November 1895, a fire destroyed all the IRS buildings with the exception of the Kasota Home for boys. The IRS operated temporarily in rented facilities in the town of Elkhorn until the new IRS building opened on September 7, 1899 [ELK-000440, pg. 2; ELK-000436, pg. 9, 22; ELK-000445, pg. 2; ELK-000551, pg. 25-27]. The IRS operated until May 1, 1918, when it closed due to a lack of agreement between the Anglican Church and the federal government regarding financial responsibility [ELK-000249; ELK-000468, pg. 6; ELK-000250]. The IRS re-opened under the auspices of the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada for the 1923/24 school year [ELK-000318; AAC-083007, pg. 6-7; AAC-085160, pg. 4; ELK-000551, pg. 52-53]. The IRS closed on June 30, 1949 [ELK-000160].

## RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Anglican Church

1889 to 1918 Church of England [ELK-000014; ELK-000207; ELK-000236; ELK-000252]

1923 to 1949 Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada [ELK-000306, ELK-000318; ELK-000036]

## CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THE INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

Date	Event	Document Reference
August 6, 1889	The IRS opened with residents. The Principal referred to the IRS as "Homes for Indian Children." The original Elkhorn IRS consisted of a main building, and two residential buildings called the Washakada Home for girls and the Kasota Home for boys.	ELK-000039 ELK-000431, pg. 2-3
November 13, 1895	A fire destroyed the IRS buildings with the exception of the Kasota Home for boys. As a result, the IRS temporarily operated out of buildings in the town of Elkhorn. A former restaurant accommodated the female pupils, while a large store with a stock room was used as a dining hall, kitchen and classroom. The Kasota Home for boys was used to serve meals for residents. The IRS buildings reached "from end to end" of the town.	ELK-000436, pg. 22 ELK-000440, pg. 2 ELK-000551, pg. 25-27
September 7, 1899	The new Elkhorn IRS building was opened and occupied.	ELK-000445, pg. 2
March 1908	A fire occurred at the IRS. No one was injured and both staff and students helped extinguish the fire.	ELK-000217
May 1, 1918	The Elkhorn IRS was closed due to a lack of agreement between the Anglican Church and the federal government regarding financial responsibility and in the "interests of economy."	ELK-000249 ELK-000468, pg. 6 ELK-000250
1923 to 1924	The IRS re-opened for the 1923/24 school year with seventeen pupils. Several students returned to the IRS in January 1924 from trapping with their parents.	AAC-083007, pg. 7 AAC-085160, pg. 4 ELK-000551, pg. 52-53
1947 to 1948	By 1947, the IRS classroom block needed numerous repairs.  In May 1948, one classroom was operating in the main IRS building. The classroom block was also	ELK-000146-0001 ELK-000085 ELK-000426 ELK-000428

	still in use, but an inspector noted that repairs to the classroom block “would be a waste of money.” In July the federal government decided to reduce the pupilage at the IRS to 75 so that use of the classroom block would not be necessary.  By November 1948, the only two classrooms in use at the IRS were located in the main IRS building.	
June 30, 1949	The Elkhorn IRS closed.	ELK-000160

**EDUCATION OF STUDENTS**

**Grades taught at the Indian residential school**

School Years	Grades offered	Document Reference
1890/91 to 1895/96	1 to 5	ELK-000431, pg. 9 ELK-000433, pg. 23 ELK-000434, pg. 40 ELK-000436, pg. 27
1900/01 to 1915/16	1 to 6	ELK-000444, pg. 2 ELK-000465, pg. 26
1923/24 to 1928/29	1 to 6	ELK-000481, pg. 3 ELK-000486, pg. 3
1930/31 to 1931/32	1 to 7	ELK-000488, pg. 3 ELK-000138-0001 ELK-000489, pg. 3
1932/33	1 to 9	ELK-000490, pg. 3
1933/34 to 1934/35	1 to 7	ELK-000491, pg. 3 ELK-000116-0000, pg. 1 ELK-000492, pg. 3
1936/37	1 to 9	ELK-000494, pg. 2
1937/38	1 to 8	ELK-000495, pg. 2
1938/39	1 to 9	ELK-000496, pg. 2
1940/41 to 1943/44	No information found	No information found
1944/45	1 to 7, 9	ELK-000413
1945/46 to 1946/47	No information found	No information found
1947/48	2; no other grades specified	ELK-000082
1948/49	No information found	No information found

While documents indicate that classroom instruction was held at the IRS until the 1948/49 school year [for example, ELK-000428], the specific grades taught could not be located from 1940/41 to 1943/44, 1945/46 to 1946/47, and 1948/49.

**Other Schools Attended by Residents**

School Years	Name of School	Location	Administration	Grades	Document
1940s	Unnamed school in town	Elkhorn	Unspecified	8	ELK-000551, pg. 125
1943/44	Local high school	Elkhorn	Unspecified	8, 10	ELK-000399-0001, pg. 1
1944/45	High School / Elkhorn Public School	Elkhorn	Unspecified	Unspecified	ELK-000396-0001, pg. 1 ELK-000396-0000

**GENERAL ENROLLMENT STATISTICS OVER TIME**

School Years	Number of Residents	If applicable, day scholars	Document Reference
1890/91	49	No information found	ELK-000431, pg. 8-9
1891/92	30	No information found	ELK-000432, pg. 15-16
1892/93	62	No information found	ELK-000433, pg. 22-23
1893/94	69	No information found	ELK-000477, pg. 4-5

1894/95	95	No information found	ELK-000434, pg. 39-40
1895/96	103	No information found	ELK-000436, pg. 26-27
1896/97	86	No information found	ELK-000438, pg. 7-8
1897/98	96	No information found	ELK-000439, pg. 9-10
1898/99	80	No information found	ELK-000440, pg. 7-8
1899/00	86	No information found	ELK-000441, pg. 13
1900/01	83	No information found	ELK-000444, pg. 6-7
1901/02	85	No information found	ELK-000445, pg. 19-20
1902/03	89	No information found	ELK-000447, pg. 8-9
1903/04	80	No information found	ELK-000448, pg. 6-7
1904/05	77	No information found	ELK-000449, pg. 17-18
1905/06	111	No information found	ELK-000451, pg. 16-17
1906/07	105	No information found	ELK-000453, pg. 9-10
1907/08	97	No information found	ELK-000454, pg. 27-28
1908/09	93	No information found	ELK-000455, pg. 14-15
1909/10	72	No information found	ELK-000457, pg. 3-4
1910/11	79	No information found	ELK-000458, pg. 3-4
1911/12	81	No information found	ELK-000459, pg. 3-4
1912/13	84	No information found	ELK-000461, pg. 3-4
1913/14	89	No information found	ELK-000463, pg. 3-4
1914/15	113	No information found	ELK-000464, pg. 3-4
1915/16	125	No information found	ELK-000465, pg. 3-4
1916/17	93	No information found	ELK-000466, pg. 3-4
1917/18	79	No information found	ELK-000467, pg. 3-4
1918/19 to 1922/23	Interim closure	Not applicable	
1923/24	83	No information found	ELK-000481, pg. 3
1924/25	131	No information found	ELK-000482, pg. 3
1925/26	129	No information found	ELK-000483, pg. 3
1926/27	122	No information found	ELK-000484, pg. 4
1927/28	131	No information found	ELK-000485, pg. 3
1928/29	129	No information found	ELK-000486, pg. 3
1929/30	168	No information found	ELK-000487, pg. 3
1930/31	152	No information found	ELK-000488, pg. 3
1931/32	119	No information found	ELK-000489, pg. 3
1932/33	116	No information found	ELK-000490, pg. 3
1933/34	151	No information found	ELK-000491, pg. 3
1934/35	164	No information found	ELK-000492, pg. 3
1935/36	160	No information found	ELK-000493, pg. 3
1936/37	154	No information found	ELK-000494, pg. 2
1937/38	143	No information found	ELK-000495, pg. 2
1938/39	161	No information found	ELK-000496, pg. 2
1939/40	No information found	No information found	No information found
1940/41	No information found	No information found	No information found
1941/42	No information found	No information found	No information found
1942/43	142	No information found	OMI-033196
1943/44	161	No information found	OMI-033196
1944/45	143	No information found	ELK-000399-0001
1945/46	108	No information found	ELK-000415

1946/47	No information found	No information found	No information found
1947/48	No information found	No information found	No information found
1948/49	No information found	No information found	No information found

**SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

School Years	Special Programs Offered	Document Reference
1891	Students worked on a farm used by the IRS. The farm was on 640 acres owned by the federal government, and was located four miles away from the IRS buildings.	ELK-000047 ELK-000070 ELK-000431, pg. 3
1899/00	All athletic sports were encouraged. Football was the most popular sport in the summer. Other activities included skating, hockey, curling, and croquet. Pupils also took long walks with staff members.	ELK-000441, pg. 6
1912	A cadet corps was established at the IRS.	ELK-000240
1937	Students played hockey, skated, went tobogganing and were involved in senior and junior cadets.	ELK-000551, pg. 92
1941	There was a Girl Guide troupe at the IRS.	EK-000551, pg. 106
1945	A boxing program was established and a hockey team was organized. Boys caught rabbits with snares in the bush around the IRS. Dances were held for the pupils.	ELK-000551, pg. 131-132
1947	The IRS had no adequate playroom space, no gymnasium, and no indoor sports equipment. There was an outdoor ice rink at the IRS.	ELK-000417

**INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS**

Date	Event	Document Reference
1891	The original Elkhorn IRS consisted of a main building, and two residential buildings called the Washakada Home for girls and the Kasota Home for boys. The main building contained the classrooms, dining hall, kitchen, Superintendent's quarters, and laundry facilities. The Washakada Home for girls building was connected to the laundry by a passageway. The Kasota Home for boys was located in a separate building at the IRS site. In addition to these buildings there was an industrial building containing a stable, and a carpenter and boot-maker shop.	ELK-000431, pg. 3
November 13, 1895	A fire destroyed all the IRS buildings with the exception of the Kasota Home for boys. As a result, the rest of the IRS had to operate temporarily in rented facilities in the town of Elkhorn.  A former restaurant housed female pupils, while a large store with a stock room was used as a dining hall, kitchen and classroom. The IRS classroom ran on shortened hours in order to prepare the room for dining each day. The Kasota Home continued to be used. The IRS buildings reached "from end to end" of the town.	ELK-000438, pg. 2 ELK-000436, pg. 22 ELK-000440, pg. 2 ELK-000551, pg. 25-27
1897 to	Construction of the new IRS building began in 1897,	ELK-000551, pg. 29

September 1899	and it opened on September 7, 1899. The three-storey IRS building was situated about one-quarter of a mile from the town of Elkhorn on forty-two acres of land bounded on the side by the Canadian Pacific Railway main line.	ELK-000439, pg. 2
1899 to 1900	The federal government constructed a building containing the gymnasium, carpenter shop, paint shop, and shoe shop. Stable buildings and a laundry building were also added.	ELK-000441 pg. 2-4
1901 to 1902	The federal government built an eight room house for the IRS Principal during the year. A granary had also been constructed.	ELK-000445, pg. 2
March 1908	A fire occurred at the IRS, but it was well contained by staff and students.	ELK-000217
September 1912 to 1913	In September 1912, work began on a three storey addition to the west or rear extension of the main IRS building. By March 1913, the addition was almost ready for painting and the plumbing, heating and lighting connections were almost completed.  An extension to the Principal's house was also under construction.	ELK-000461, pg. 23-24
May 1918 to April 1921	The Elkhorn IRS closed in May 1918, and by October 1919, the property was transferred to the Soldier Settlement Board of Canada for use as a military training centre.  The property was transferred back to the Department of Indian Affairs in April 1921.	ELK-000249 ELK-000468, pg. 6 ELK-000250 ELK-000191 ELK-000281 ELK-000283 ELK-000285 ELK-000287 ELK-000289 ELK-000290
1923 to 1924	During the summer of 1923, extensive renovations to the Elkhorn IRS buildings were underway in preparation for the re-opening of the IRS. The IRS re-opened for the 1923/24 school year.	ELK-000318 ELK-000268 AAC-083007, pg. 7 AAC-085160, pg. 4 ELK-000551, pg. 52-53
September 1942 to November 1944	In September 1942, the federal government approved a proposal to remodel the former gymnasium building at the IRS into three 36' x 18' classrooms. A basement would also be added. The classroom block was completed and in use by November 1944.	ELK-000106 ELK-000110 ELK-000088 ELK-000089 ELK-000399-0001, pg. 5 ELK-000094
June 1947 to November 1948	A June 1947 inspection of the classroom block revealed the need for numerous repairs.  In May 1948, one classroom was operating in the main IRS building, and the classroom block was still in use. In July, the federal government decided to reduce the pupilage at the IRS, thereby making use of the classroom block unnecessary.  By November 1948, the only two classrooms in use were located in the main IRS building.	ELK-000146-0001 ELK-000085 ELK-000426 ELK-000428
1949 to 1951	After the IRS closed, the land and buildings were declared surplus and transferred to the Lands and Development Services Branch of the federal government for disposal.  On February 1, 1951, the Village of Elkhorn took over	ELK-000157 ELK-000159 ELK-000160 ELK-000162 ELK-000551, pg. 180-181

	ownership of the property from the federal government. By April 1951, the Village of Elkhorn sold to private owners 19 of the buildings and 22 acres of land formerly associated with the IRS. Most of these buildings were moved to other locations. The remaining IRS land was eventually sold by the Village of Elkhorn to private owners. The main IRS building was sold to private contractors, and was demolished by the Plainsview Hutterite Colony in May 1951.	
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**PHOTOS, PLANS AND LAYOUT**

Date	Description	Document Reference
Undated	Plan of a cottage for the Elkhorn IRS.	ELK-001057
Undated	Map of IRS and Missions.	ELK-000274
1896	Map showing proposed site for the new Elkhorn IRS.	ELK-000059-0001
March 1897	Rough sketch of proposed Elkhorn IRS property.	ELK-000063-0001
June 1897	Land for the new IRS building.	ELK-000071-0001
1900	<p>The main three storey 33' x 113' IRS building fronted the town of Elkhorn and possessed a large back wing measuring 32' x 40' and a smaller 6' x 32' front wing. The basement contained two store rooms, a large boiler room, two bathrooms, a pantry and a large kitchen. On the first floor at each end of the main IRS buildings were two classrooms, each measuring 24' x 32'. The first floor of the back wing contained the dining room, an office, reception room, sewing room and staff sitting room. The second and third floors of the back wing contained two large dormitories, sick rooms, and staff rooms, while the third floor contained a large water tank.</p> <p>Outbuildings included a gymnasium, carpenter shop, and paint shop.</p>	ELK-000441, pg. 2-3
May 1907	Sketch showing the lay of the land and position of buildings at the Elkhorn IRS.	ELK-001056
March 1912	Plan of Principal's Residence at the IRS.	ELK-001055
1914	Pencil sketch outlining additional land for the IRS.	ELK-000189-0001
April 1919	Photograph of former IRS Principal and family.	ELK-000357-0001
March 1929	Blueprints of floor plans for proposed classroom / vocational training building.	ELK-000124-0002 ELK-000124-0003
1944	Photos of buildings at the Elkhorn IRS.	ELK-000144-0002
June 1947	Plans for classroom building and heating system at the IRS.	ELK-001050 ELK-001051 ELK-001052 ELK-001053 ELK-001054

**DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO SCHOOL INCIDENTS**

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

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)

No information found.



Incidents (Physical)

- 1925 A federal Inspector reported that a visiting Nurse at the IRS made allegations that the boys' supervisor mistreated the children. The IRS Principal denied the claim [ELK-000330].
- 1948 The Chief and a Councillor from The Pas Band complained about conditions at the IRS: poor clothing, head lice, and inadequate food. They also alleged that a boy was punished and not fed for two weeks, and that a female pupil's feet froze and had to be amputated. A federal Inspector visited the IRS to investigate the allegations. He noted that two girls who ran away from the IRS suffered frostbite and a boy was punished by the IRS Principal and sent to bed without supper. The Inspector suggested ways to improve the conditions at the IRS [ELK-000082; ELK-000419; ELK-000085].

Incidents (Student on Student)

No information found.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- 1891 The farm used by the IRS was on 640 acres owned by the federal government, and was located four miles away from the IRS buildings [ELK-000047; ELK-000070; ELK-000431, pg. 3].
- 1911to 1912 There were two epidemics of measles at the IRS [ELK-000459, pg. 21-22].
- 1926 A federal Indian Agent reported numerous complaints from parents of residents at the IRS regarding sickness, poor nutrition and lack of sufficient clothing. One parent alleged that one of her children died and she was not notified by the IRS that her child was sick [ELK-000326; ELK-000331; ELK-000332].
- 1936 There was a measles epidemic at the IRS in January 1936 [ELK-000551, pg. 85].
- 1939 There was an influenza epidemic at the IRS [ELK-000551, pg. 101].
- 1944 Parents complained that conditions at the IRS were very poor. A federal inspection report noted that IRS was in bad state and that parents had good reason to complain [ELK-000392-0000; ELK-000381; ELK-000395; ELK-000399-0000; ELK-000399-0001; ELK-000400].
- 1945 A grandmother of pupils at the IRS complained about inadequate food at the IRS [ELK-000406-0000; ELK-000406-0001].

**PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS**

Name	Position	Tenure Dates
C. D. MacKenzie	Superintendent	1889 to 1891
Wilberforce Wilson	Superintendent	February to June 1891
Archie Wilson	Principal	1891 to 1918
Reverend Fred Eley	Acting Principal / Principal	1923 to 1933
Wm. H. Bradley	Acting Principal	1932
Reverend Canon S.J. Wickens	Principal	1933 to 1936
Reverend Arthur Minchin	Principal	1936 to 1942
Gilbert Hicks	Acting Principal	1942
Reverend C.N. Middleton	Principal	June 1942 to April 1944

Last updated January 7, 2013

B. Hodkinson	Acting Principal	April to October 1944
Ralph Hiltz	Principal	1944 to 1945
Reverend B.O.G. Dixon	Principal	1945 to November 20, 1947
Daniel Andrew Bell Stoddart	Acting Principal	1947 to 1948
Reverend W. James J. Woods	Principal	1948 to June 1949

Narrative Completed: November 8, 2012

Narrative Updated: January 7, 2013

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



National Centre for  
*Truth and Reconciliation*  
UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA