

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.

Ermineskin IRS
IAP School Narrative
[Sep. 15, 2009]

This IAP School Narrative summarizes documents that provide an over-view of the history and administration of the school from opening until the residence closure.

NAME OF SCHOOL AND VARIANTS

Name: Ermineskin Indian Residential School

Variants:

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1877 | Ermineskin School [ERM-007057-0000]. |
| 1894 | Ermineskin's Boarding School [ERM-001910]. |
| 1932 | Hobbema IRS [ERM-001873]. |
| 1947 | Ermineskin Indian School [ERM-002703-0001]. |
| 1955 | Ermineskin Indian Residential School [ERM-003518]. |
| 1961 | Residential-Day School [ERM-004800]. |
| 1969 | Ermineskin Indian Student Residence (RC) [ERM-008157]. |
| 1969 | Hobbema Educational Complex [ERM-008624]. |
| 1969 | Ermineskin Student Residence [ERM-002006]. |
| 1970 | Ermineskin Hostel [ERM-002016]. |
| 1970 | Ermineskin School Residence [ERM-000919]. |
| 1971 | Ermineskin Residential School, Red Deer, Alberta [ERM-003045-0002]. |
| 1972 | Ermineskin Residence [ERM-001181]. |
| 1974 | Erministium School in Hobbema [ERM-007896-0001]. |

Years during which the school was operated solely or in part by the Federal Government as a residence for school age students

At least Jan. 1895 - Aug. 1975

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

- 1894 School established in 1894 [ERM-006225-0001; ERM-800010].
- 1895 Request Oblates of Mary Immaculate to the Government for an Industrial Boarding School on Ermineskin reserve for the Nuns to operate, along with buildings and per capita grants [ERM-001906]. Management by the Sisters of Assumption began in 1895 [ERM-001906; ERM-030920].
- 1934 Management by the Sisters of Assumption discontinued as of Apr. 1, 1934 [ERM-001906; ERM-030920]. School managed by the Order of the Oblate Fathers as of Apr. 1, 1934 [ERM-001572; ERM-030920]. Residence managed by the Order of the Oblate Fathers as of Apr. 1, 1934 [ERM-002010; ERM-030920].
- 1939 New building erected, including an upper floor boys' dorm, the ground floor containing 4 classrooms and the basement including a playroom and gym [ERM-006142-0000].
- 1949 Hobbema Indian Day School opened on Sep. 6, 1949 [ERM-001317; ERM-008461].
- 1950 Ermineskin Day School began operations [ERM-000109; ERM-008654].
- 1954 Contract awarded for construction of a dormitory building at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-001531]. New dormitory block will be owned by the Government [ERM-001537].
- 1955 Management of the school by the Order of Oblate fathers discontinued as of Sep. 1, 1955 [ERM-001572; ERM-030920].
- 1955 Construction begins on a new dormitory, including kitchen, recreation hall, Sisters' residence, and Father's residence [ERM-000686]. Specifications of the building [ERM-002494-0001].
- 1955 Amalgamation of Ermineskin IRS and the Hobbema No. 2 Day School [ERM-000293].
- 1956 New dormitory, including kitchen, recreation hall, Sisters' residence, and Father's residence completed [ERM-000695].
- 1959 A Gr. 12 class was taught at Ermineskin IRS without approval from the Government [ERM-000361].
- 1961 Agreement reached regarding high school program at Ermineskin IRS. General high school diploma pattern only to be offered, and students whose Gr. 9 marks indicate academic ability will be required to attend separate schools at Edmonton or Jasper Place [ERM-008181].

- 1964 Policy of Government regarding High School students, admission, and residency, notes that approval of admission is its responsibility (not the Principal's). High School students can attend on a day basis and may be admitted to residence if required for study purposes [ERM-006217].
- 1965 First kindergarten class started on Nov. 22, 1965 [ERM-000831].
- 1966 Opening of a new gym built by the Government [ERM-000071].
- 1968 Plans to discontinue high school instruction at federal schools [ERM-008120].
- 1968 Separation of the classroom and residence administration to be effective on Sep. 1, 1968. The residence's name will change from "Residential School" to "Student Residence." Person in charge of the Student Residence will be called the Administrator. Person in charge of the School currently designated as the Senior Teacher will be called the Principal [ERM-007295].
- 1969 Difficulties arise from separation of administration of classroom blocks from residence with respect to combined staff whose duties encompass both areas, particularly janitors, caretakers, nightwatchmen, childcare supervisors, etc. [ERM-008601-0000].
- 1969 Ermineskin IRS name changed to Ermineskin Student Residence [ERM-002006].
- 1969 Construction of 16 classroom school and 12 unit staff accommodation officially completed [ERM-008268-0000].
- 1969 Management of the residence by the Order of Oblate Fathers discontinued as of Apr. 1, 1969 [ERM-002010; ERM-030920]. The federal government takes over operation of the residence on April 1, 1969 and all employees of the residence become federal public servants.
- 1971 The school on the grounds of Ermineskin IRS was administratively divided into the following 3 institutions: 1. Ermineskin Kindergarten School; 2. Ermineskin Primary School; 3. Ermineskin Elementary-Junior High School. The Kindergarten and Primary school was administered by one Principal and the Elementary – Junior High School by another Principal [ERM-007236; ERM-007539-0001].
- 1972 Reference to the possible closing of Ermineskin Residence if it is no longer needed for strictly educational purposes [ERM-001181].
- 1972 Letter from the District Supervisor to the Four Band Council regarding consultations about the possible future closure of the Residence [ERM-007187].
- 1975 Government discontinued managing the Ermineskin Residence as of Sep. 1, 1975 [ERM-001164, ERM-007171] Remaining students were either sent home or placed in foster care [ERM-002225; ERM-007312].

- 1979 The Ermineskin Band requested by Band Council Resolution that the Government turn over the old Residence building to the Band for use of the community [ERM-002230] The Ermineskin Band also requested the Government turn over the 6 unit motel, two 3 bedroom bungalows and two 4 bedroom bungalows to the Band [ERM-002227]. These Band Council Resolutions were approved by the Government [ERM-002228], “on the condition that the Band assumes all future responsibility (financial and otherwise) for the buildings” [ERM-002472-0001; ERM-002477-0000; ERM-002477-0001; ERM-007192-0000; ERM-007192-0001; ERM-007192-0002].
- 1980 Band Council Resolution requesting the Government turn over a 12-unit teacherage to the Band [ERM-002231]. Government approved authority to transfer the teacherage at no cost for Band use [ERM-002232].
- 1985 Letter to the Four Band Education from the Government notifying them that direct federal involvement in the operation and maintenance of educational facilities will cease. The Government requests that “the Four Band Education organization consider taking over the operation and maintenance of the Education facilities at the Ermineskin site” [ERM-007021].
- 1987 The last documented references to school activities are dated in the 1986/1987 school year [ERM-008571-0002].

MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL

Dates managed by Church

- 1895 - 1934 Managed by the Sisters of Assumption - from 1895 to Apr. 1, 1934 [ERM-001906; ERM-030920].
- 1934 - 1955 School managed by the Order of the Oblate Fathers, Roman Catholic (R.C.) Church - from Apr. 1, 1934 to Sep. 1, 1955 [ERM-001572; ERM-030920].
- 1934 - 1969 Residence managed by the Order of the Oblate Fathers from Apr. 1, 1934 to Apr. 1, 1969 [ERM-002010; ERM-030920].
- 1937 Deputy Minister gives permission for the interest charged on the debt incurred by the Oblates when they purchased the school from the Sisters of Assumption to be charged against the per capita grants [ERM-006009].

Dates managed by Government

- 1955 Ermineskin IRS became a government-owned school on Apr. 1, 1955 [ERM-000960; ERM-001572; ERM-004363]
- 1969 Residence administration taken over from the Oblates by the Government on Apr. 1, 1969 [ERM-002010; ERM-008157]

- 1975 Government discontinued managing the Ermineskin Residence as of Sep. 1, 1975 [ERM-007171].
- 1985 Letter to the Four Band Education from the Government notifying them that their direct involvement in the operation and maintenance of educational facilities will cease. The Government requests that “the Four Band Education organization consider taking over the operation and maintenance of the Education facilities at the Ermineskin site” [ERM-007021].

Dates managed by Band or other aboriginal group

Please note that specific documents outlining a finalized arrangement whereby the Band took over management of the school have not been located.

- 1970 Submission by the Ermineskin Band Council requesting the Government consider their proposal to assume administrative responsibility for the AErmineskin School Residence” [ERM-000919].
- 1970 Letter and details from the Chief of Ermineskin Band to the Government outlining the Band’s proposal to assume responsibility for the administration of the Ermineskin School Residence [ERM-003050-0000; ERM-003050-0001].
- 1971 Letter notes that discussions were held with the Ermineskin Band with respect to the transfer of the Ermineskin Residence operation to the Indian people. Draft agreement to be prepared [ERM-003040].
- 1971 Letter to the Education Staff at the Ermineskin Residence stating that the discussions were held with the Ermineskin Band members with respect to the transfer of the Ermineskin Residence operation to the Indian people [ERM-003042].
- 1972 Four Band School Committee proposal to set up a school board to set school administration and curriculum policies [ERM-007553-0000].
- 1973 Letter indicates that a Trainee, to be selected by the Four Band Council, will learn the role of a Residence Administrator [ERM-008619].
- 1985 Letter to the Four Band Education from the Government notifying them that direct federal involvement in the operation and maintenance of educational facilities will cease. The Government requests that “the Four Band Education organization consider taking over the operation and maintenance of the Education facilities at the Ermineskin site” [ERM-007021].

SCHOOL BUILDINGS

- 1894 – 1937 The buildings used at Ermineskin IRS owned by the Sisters of Assumption - from 1894 to Nov. 22, 1937 [ERM-000622].
- 1899 Letter refers to the boarding school being the property of the Government [ERM-008723-0001].

- 1937 – 1955 The buildings used at Ermineskin IRS owned by the Order of the Oblate Fathers, Roman Catholic Church - from Nov. 22, 1937 to Mar. 30, 1955 [ERM-000622; ERM-001572].
- 1954 Contract awarded for construction of a dormitory building at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-001531]. New dormitory block will be owned by the Government [ERM-001537].
- 1955 Construction begins on a new dormitory, including kitchen, recreation hall, Sisters' residence, and Father's residence [ERM-000686]. Specifications of the building [ERM-002494-0001].
- 1956 New dormitory, including kitchen, recreation hall, Sisters' residence, and Father's residence completed [ERM-000695].
- 1959 The only Government owned buildings at Ermineskin IRS are the new classroom block and the residence dorm. The previous residence was Church owned, extremely old and not considered for purchase by the Government [ERM-003599].
- 1962 Original dorm building belongs to the Church and records indicate that the Government has not purchased the buildings from the Mission. [ERM-002624]
- 1962 List of Church owned buildings at Ermineskin IRS detailed for insurance purposes [OGP-031829].
- 1965 Letter noting that the Government is unsure of ownership of old school block, but the Oblates believe that this building still belongs to the Order [ERM-000830].
- 1965 Details of insurance held by the church on church owned buildings at Ermineskin IRS [OGP-031911].
- 1966 Letter indicates that the Old School Building and the Family Institute Building are owned by the Oblate order [ERM-007501].
- 1966 List of buildings on the Ermineskin IRS property [ERM-007505-0002].
- 1968 Surplus medical officer's residence to be transferred to Ermineskin IRS to be used for teachers housing [ERM-002797; ERM-002813].
- 1970 Four bedroom Agency dwelling transferred to the Education Housing Inventory [ERM-002726].
- 1971 List of buildings on the Ermineskin IRS property including 5 residences, a 12 unit apartment, a 6 unit apartment, a 44 classroom school, a carpenters shop and residence, and a Student Residence [ERM-008236].

- 1973 Ermineskin Band Council Resolution requesting the transfer of the Superintendent's House to the Ermineskin Band [ERM-002716-0002].
- 1974 Memo mentions an agreement for the Government to pay to the Oblates of Mary Immaculate maintenance costs for use of the Chapel in connection with the Ermineskin School Residence [ERM-003029].
- 1974 Approval of an Ermineskin Band Council Resolution "for the transfer of the former Superintendent's Residence to the Band as it is not required for staff accommodation..." [ERM-002716-0001].
- 1975 Discussion regarding the possible takeover of the old Residence building by the Ermineskin Band "for administration purposes for all four Bands". A suggestion was made that this be done on a rental basis to guarantee funds for up-keep and maintenance of the building [ERM-007207].
- 1975 Letter addressed to the Administrator of the Four Bands states that the building, including the inventory and supplies, are Government property paid for by the Government and the Government can dispose of the equipment and supplies as it sees fit [ERM-007203].
- 1976 Letter outlining the final dispensation of the inventory from the Ermineskin Residence indicates that material was distributed to other residential schools or left at the Ermineskin residence [ERM-007194-0000].
- 1976 A Band Council Resolution outlines the details of the transfer of the Ermineskin Student Residence from the Government to the Ermineskin Band [ERM-002497-0001].
- 1976 Abeyance of approval of Residence building transfer until several issues, including the costs of maintenance and building operations and future uses, are clarified [ERM-002496].
- 1978 Letter notes that "the Band Council wishes the student residence to be officially turned over to Band ownership" [ERM-007193].
- 1979 Band Council Resolution requesting the government to turn over the old Residence building to the Band for operation and maintenance and use for community needs [ERM-002230].
- 1979 Band Council Resolution requesting the Government to turn over the 6 unit motel, two 3 bedroom bungalows and two 4 bedroom bungalows to the Band [ERM-002227].
- 1979 Turn over of the old Residence building, the 6 unit motel, two 3 bedroom bungalows and two 4 bedroom bungalows approved by the government [ERM-002228].

- 1979 Letters approving the transfer of surplus Government owned property to the Ermineskin Band “on the condition that the Band assumes all future responsibility (financial and otherwise) for the buildings” [ERM-002472-0001; ERM-002477-0000; ERM-002477-0001; ERM-007192-0000; ERM-007192-0001; ERM-007192-0002].
- 1980 Government approved authority to transfer the teacherage at no cost for Band use [ERM-002232].
- 1981 Band Council Resolution requesting the government turn over a 12-unit teacherage to the Band [ERM-002231].
- 1985 Letter to the Four Band Education from the Government notifying them that their direct involvement in the operation and maintenance of educational facilities will cease. The Government requests that “the Four Band Education organization consider taking over the operation and maintenance of the Education facilities at the Ermineskin site” [ERM-007021].

LAND

Treaty number/area

- Treaty 6¹

Location

- Reserve: Ermineskin
- Towns: Hobbema, Wetaskiwin, Edmonton [situated about 50 miles south of Edmonton along the west side of Provincial Highway #2A and east side of Provincial Highway #2... located approximately 2 mile west of Hobbema, Alberta. [ERM-007223].

Land Ownership

- 1887 Band Council Resolution states that at “...its foundation in 1887..., Chief Ermineskin gave a piece of land to the Catholic Church for the purpose of setting up and supporting a catholic school” [ERM-007057-0000].
- 1924 As there was no farm connected to the school, the Indian Commissioner recommended that land be acquired from the Indian Reserve to provide some land to the School for farm use [ERM-000197]
- 1931 The Sisters of Assumption and the Ermineskin School agree to pay the Ermineskin Band for the use of the land occupied by Ermineskin IRS [OGP-030167].

¹ Source – “Alberta Indian Residential Schools,” Resource Data Division, Alberta Environmental Protection, 1996.

- 1936 Audit report lists the farm associated with the school as being 875 acres, 65 of which are under cultivation [ERM-000609].
- 1937 Letter notes that the farm in connection with the Ermineskin IRS consists of 845 acres, of which 65 is under cultivation [ERM-006007-0002].
- 1939 The Ermineskin Band agrees to lend land to Ermineskin IRS for as long as the school is in operation [OGP-030242].
- 1946 Terms and payment details discussed at Band Council regarding land rental to Ermineskin IRS [ERM-002705; ERM-004744].
- 1947 Letter refers to an agreement on May 15, 1947 between the Band Council and the Principal of Ermineskin IRS covering 70 acres (for a period of 5 crop years starting from the spring of 1948) [ERM-006240].
- 1947 Reference to the acreage to be leased by the Principal from an Indian resident. The name on lease would be the "Ermineskin Indian School" and the proceeds would be entirely used for school benefit [ERM-002703-0001].
- 1948 Letter indicates that no land had been set aside for school purposes on the Ermineskin Reserve. The Government therefore presumed that when the school began operations, School management was given land on the understanding that it would remain with them as long as the school was operated [ERM-002693].
- 1950 Ermineskin IRS requests from the Agency permission to use a parcel of land under the Calgary Power Line on the Ermineskin Reserve [ERM-004623]. Calgary Power Ltd. gave permission for the school to fence and use the land parcel [ERM-004620].
- 1950 A lease of Ermineskin Band land for school purposes for 5 years. Upon the lease terminating the land will revert back to the Ermineskin Band [ERM-002674].
- 1950 Ermineskin IRS leased additional land for farming purposes [ERM-001349].
- 1950 300 acres leased by Ermineskin IRS from the Government [ERM-000664].
- 1953 Band Council Resolution notes that school officials exchanged 40 acres of school use farmland for 20 acres farmed by an Indian in order to allow room for building the dormitory near the school. The land exchanged is referred to as Oblate Missionary property, and the new land is to be turned over to the Government for school use [ERM-002656-0000; ERM-002656-0001; ERM-002656-0002].
- 1953 Land surrendered to the Government for the building of the dormitory block at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-001510].
- 1955 Ermineskin Band, Band Council Resolution, outlines 20 acres of land for use as a school site [ERM-008833-0002].

- 1956 Ermineskin IRS gave up the lease of 290 acres from the Ermineskin Band and another 22 acre lease. Now leases from private owners [ERM-000695].
- 1956 The operation of the school farm was turned over to the Mission on Sep. 1, 1956 [ERM-000703].
- 1960 Crop Share Lease between Ermineskin IRS and a citizen of Ponoka, AB [OGP-032577].
- 1961 Permission from Oblate Fathers to allow land leased by the Ermineskin Band to the Oblates for religious and educational purposes to be used by the Government to build a motel for teachers [ERM-002921-0002].
- 1964 Memorandum refers to an Ermineskin Band Council Resolution approving allocation of 4.5 acres of land for the construction of a new school which the Government intends to build within the near future [ERM-008839-0002].
- 1965 Ermineskin Band Council Resolution allotting land for school purposes to the Government [ERM-002611-0001].
- 1968 Band Council Resolution to transfer land to the Government for the purpose of constructing a new teacherage [ERM-008714].
- 1969 Memorandum refers to an Ermineskin Band Council Resolution which agrees to set aside land for a proposed kindergarten block at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-007628].
- 1970 Ermineskin Band Council Resolution reallocates land to be set aside for school purposes [ERM-002590-0003].
- 1975 Discussions took place between the Government and the Four Band Administration regarding the sale of Ermineskin IRS land to the Four Band Administration [ERM-008221-0000; ERM-008221-0001; ERM-008280].
- 1975 Band Council Resolution “requesting that approximately 32 acres presently being used by the Ermineskin Schools be turned over to Four Band Administration... The land and buildings will then be used in common by all the Bands at Hobbema” [ERM-008221-0001]. Response from the Government states that the land upon which the school buildings are situated belongs to the Government as long as the buildings are needed for educational purposes. However, the Government would support the possible purchase of 32 acres of land if all Four Bands would send similar Resolutions so that the buildings became vacant. The buildings could then be turned over to the Four Band Administration rather than to one individual Band [ERM-008280].

PHOTOS, PLANS AND OTHER MEDIA

Item #	Date	Description
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Item #	Date	Description
ERM-001379	Unknown	Floor plan for third floor of Ermineskin Indian Residential School.
ERM-003597	Unknown	Sketch titled 'Trailer Site Ermineskin School'
ERM-003616	Unknown	Sketch of Ermineskin School Teacherage - Dwelling Unit #3
ERM-007534	Unknown	Architectural drawings of front and side elevations of the school.
ERM-007766-0003	Unknown	"Ermineskin Indian School, Hobbema, Alberta - Plan of Basement".
ERM-007833-0003	Unknown	Photographs of various school buildings.
ERM-007404-0001	Unknown	Fire Prevention Branch - sketches of Ermineskin Indian Residential School.
ERM-007092-0003	Unknown	Plans for classroom additions.
ERM-007627-0001	Unknown	Map of present school buildings and proposed kindergarten addition.
ERM-008000-0001	Unknown	Map of property reallocation depicting locations of school buildings.
ERM-004643-0001	Unknown	Overview map of school grounds.
ERM-007221-0002	Unknown	Sketch of a classroom, possibly the manual training room.
ERM-001763	1938	Sketch drawings of school.
ERM-007718-0004	Jun. 3, 1938	Photographs of various rooms at the Ermineskin School.
ERM-007767-0004	Nov. 1, 1938	Site photographs of buildings at the Hobbema Indian School.
ERM-007807-0002	Apr. 16, 1946	Plans of entire school grounds.
ERM-007833-0004	Aug. 21, 1948	Ermineskin Indian Residential School floor plans.
ERM-004033	Jun. 15, 1956	Floor plans of Old Building and New Addition.
ERM-006219-0003	Mar. 21, 1960	Document is rough sketch of kitchen at Ermineskin student residence.
ERM-003835	May 30, 1962	Floor plans of School Residence and Furnace Room.
ERM-003394-0002	Jul. 19, 1963	Nurse's examination room.
ERM-003639	Sep. 1, 1963	Fire protection survey - photograph of Ermineskin R.C. Indian Residential School Teacherage.
ERM-003409-0002	Sep. 1, 1963	Fire protection survey - photograph and sketch plans of Ermineskin IRS.
ERM-008278-0001	Jun. 1, 1967	Sketches of existing site plan and new site plan.

Item #	Date	Description
ERM-008328-0002	Feb. 27, 1968	Plans for 16 classroom school at Ermineskin.
ERM-002790-0001	Jan. 29, 1969	Medical Officer's Residence / Teacherage
ERM-007253-0001	Jun. 1969	Plans for classroom additions.
ERM-007953	Jun. 1, 1973	Construction floor plans - second floor.
ERM-007954	Jun. 1, 1973	Construction floor plans - first floor.
ERM-008726	Jun. 1, 1973	Additions and alterations to Industrial Arts and Home Economics at Ermineskin School.
ERM-007967	Jan. 26, 1976	Plan of Second Floor classrooms at Ermineskin.
ERM-008276	Jul. 22, 1977	Architectural drawings of additions to the Ermineskin School.
ERM-007874-0001	Oct. 27, 1981	Photographs of the Ermineskin School site.

GENERAL ENROLMENT STATISTICS OVER TIME

Enrolment statistics chart:

Year	Number of Students
1895	20
1900	54
1907	54-58
1916	55
1922	72
1926	109
1927	123
1928	122
1929	133
1930	152
1931	147
1935	154
1937	153
1938	155

Year	Number of Students
1939	160
1942	Approx 157 ²
1943	Approx 184
1944	Approx 177
1945	Approx 182
1946	Approx 170
1947	Approx 152
1948	Approx 197
1949	Approx 210
1950	Approx 187
1951	Approx 176
1952	Approx 205
1953	210
1954	220
1955	Approx 231
1956	Approx 263
1957	Approx 244
1958	205
1959	216
1960	Approx 219
1961	Approx 206
1962	Approx 177
1963	Approx 195
1964	Approx 199
1965	Approx 207
1966	Approx 208
1967	Approx 203
1968	Approx 176

² Due to the number of references to student enrolment found, the numbers presented here as “Approx” are from Quarterly / Enrolment Returns for September of the year listed. [Please note that as the Sep. QR is missing for 1942, the Mar. QR is used.]

Year	Number of Students
1969	Approx 160
1970	Approx 147
1971	Approx 142
1973	Approx 79
1974	Approx 92

STUDENTS FROM OTHER RESERVES

Students from, at least the following bands attended Ermineskin IRS:

Alexander [ERM-006018-0000];
 Alexis [ERM-006018-0000];
 Beaver Lake [ERM-003030];
 Big Stone [ERM-006018-0000];
 Cold Lake [ERM-006018-0000];
 Enoch [ERM-001737; ERM-002164; ERM-004800];
 Ermineskin [ERM-001737; ERM-002164; ERM-004800];
 Heart Lake [ERM-006018-0000];
 Kehewin [ERM-006018-0000];
 Louis Bull [ERM-001737; ERM-002164; ERM-004800];
 Montana [ERM-001737; ERM-002164; ERM-004800];
 Paul's [ERM-003030];
 Poundmaker [ERM-003030];
 Saddle Lake [ERM-006018-0000];
 Samson [ERM-001737; ERM-002164; ERM-004800];
 Sarcee [ERM-003030];
 Sunchild [ERM-003030];
 Winterburn [ERM-006018-0000]

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Oblate Fathers of the Mary Immaculate [ERM-003098];
 Sisters of Assumption of Nicolet [ERM-030920]

WRITTEN AGREEMENTS

1911 Agreement

1911 Standard agreement for operation of Ermineskin IRS: complete and signed [ERM-000186].

1962 Indianescom Agreement

1962 Agreement for operation of Ermineskin IRS: signed on Sep. 25, 1962 between the Government and Indianescom (Oblate Indian-Eskimo Commission) [ERM-001094].

1969 Federal Employment of Staff

1969 Federal Employment of Staff: “on Apr. 1, 1969... all positions become Civil Service classifications and appointments are subject to Deputy approval...” [ERM-002011; ERM-008157].

Post-1969 Service Contracts and Chaplaincy Agreements

1969 Chaplaincy Services Contract for Ermineskin Student Residence for Sep. 1/1969 - Aug. 31/1970, signed and with details [ERM-001187].

1969 Chaplaincy Services for Student Residence: chaplaincy services to be provided by the Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows Parish at the R.C. Church, signed [ERM-008608].

1970 Chaplaincy service contract for Sep. 1, 1970 - Aug. 31, 1971, signed [ERM-001182].

Other Agreements

1975 “A rather informal local arrangement was made several years ago whereby the children from the Ermineskin School would receive religious instruction at Our Lady of Seven Sorrows Chapel because there was no chapel at the residence. This arrangement was for the use of the students living at the Ermineskin Residential School. It was never intended that any payment would be made on behalf of non-residential students attending the day school. The Administrator of what is now known as the Ermineskin Student Residence, has confirmed that at the present time there are approximately 900 students making use of this chapel, more of whom are day students and do not reside in the student residence.” The above arrangement was terminated when the Government signed a service contract with the parish to provide chaplaincy services to students in residence [ERM-002526; ERM-002528].

DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO SCHOOL INCIDENTS

To date, we are unaware of any convictions for abuse at Ermineskin 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)

1965 Letter from Ermineskin IRS staff member reporting bare-bottom strapping of teenage girls and boys as punishment. The letter states that other staff members know about it and will verify. Request to keep the source confidential. Includes letters from two girls, with descriptions of being strapped in an office with their bottoms bare [ERM-000058].

Incidents (Physical)

1949 Complaint against the Principal for truancy punishment. Truant boys were given two warnings. The 3rd time, they were given a choice between strapping or close hair cut, and the 4th time, they were given a close hair cut. Principal was brought before the Band Council at the Samson Band to explain the case for exceeding his authority. Discussion states that other complaints (not listed) were being corrected by the Principal, and in one instance, that the services of a staff member were terminated and another person was hired [EDH-000379].

1949 Instruction given to the Principal to cease giving students hair cuts as punishment and to keep a log of strappings [OGP-030586].

1965 Letter from Ermineskin IRS staff member reporting bare-bottom strapping of teenage girls and boys as punishment. The letter states that other staff members know about it and will verify. Request to keep the source confidential. Includes letters from two girls, with descriptions of being strapped in an office with their bottoms bare [ERM-000058; ERM-200048].

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Epidemics/Health Issues

1897 Two students died during the school year: one student from a brain disease and another from “consumption” [OGP-032540].

1900 Two students died during the school year: one student from a hemorrhage and another from “consumption” [OGP-032541].

1901 Small pox: reported cases at the school, case details, vaccination/quarantine efforts, school closure and re-opening [ERM-000133; ERM-000137; ERM-000139; ERM-000140].

1917 Measles: 8 cases found by Doctor at the school and students quarantined [ERM-000166].

1921 Smallpox outbreak: “...quarantined with a kind of pox... the 4 children who got sick are well” [ERM-008797]. The quarantine was to be held until at least Jul. 5 or 6, 1921 [ERM-008796].

1927 Chicken pox: “4 cases of mild form of chicken-pox broke out in the school during the month” [ERM-006047].

- 1928 Death: "a boy... died very suddenly at the school, cause unknown" [ERM-006058].
- 1928 Influenza: "a mild form of influenza went through the school during the month and ninety-five of the pupils were ill at one time" [ERM-006059].
- 1937 TB statistics for the students at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-800184; ERM-800186].
- 1938 Death: one pupil died from pneumonia [ERM-001902].
- 1938 Illness: 34 children are sick in bed in the dormitories (31 with mumps, 2 with chicken pox, 1 with pneumonia [ERM-001803].
- 1941 TB statistics for the students at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-800181; ERM-800182; ERM-800183].
- 1943 TB statistics for the students at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-800018].
- 1944 TB statistics for the students at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-007289; ERM-800020]. Health report [OGP-032543].
- 1944 Tuberculosis: 5 pupils reported as sent home [ERM-000395].
- 1944 Blood tests to be carried out on pupils [ERM-007290].
- 1945 TB statistics for the students at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-800021]; Health report [OGP-032542].
- 1946 Polio: school opening postponed from Sep. 3 to Sep. 16 on advice of the Doctor due to cases of poliomyelitis (infantile paralysis) in the district [ERM-002084].
- 1946 TB statistics for the students at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-800023-0001]; Health report [OGP-032544].
- 1948 Measles epidemic - continued into Mar. 1948 [ERM-006189; ERM-006192; OGP-030548].
- 1948 Polio epidemic is over, school opening on Sep. 16, 1948 [ERM-002108].
- 1948 Health report [OGP-032546].
- 1949 Some cases of chicken pox [ERM-006200].
- 1949 Ermineskin IRS cooperated extensively with rehabilitation of TB patients and children of TB families and children returning from Charles Camsell Indian Hospital, who were all accommodated before others and special food and attention was necessary for them [ERM-001315].
- 1950 Health report and a report of a measles epidemic [OGP-032533].

- 1950 Letter indicates that a dentist has not visited Ermineskin IRS for several years [OGP-030642]. Dental care was subsequently arranged for 1951 [OGP-030656].
- 1951 Letter to the Doctor mentions that the fluoride content in water at Ermineskin IRS is 2 ppm. (any amount in excess of 1.5 ppm produces mottling) [ERM-006223].
- 1955 Mar. 8 to 11 - the school was closed under Doctor's orders due to an unknown epidemic [ERM-000577].
- 1956 Diphtheria: school closed to day pupils for 2 weeks on Doctor's orders due to diphtheria cases [ERM-000568]. Ermineskin IRS under quarantine for diphtheria from Feb. 17, 1956 - Mar. 5, 1956 [ERM-004659].
- 1958 A letter contains an accusation that a student was turned away from Hobbema hospital despite requiring medical care [OGP-031475]. An explanation was supplied later [OGP-031484].
- 1960 Results of an inspection of food services at Ermineskin IRS [OGP-031637].
- 1961 Report on the toilet facilities at Ermineskin IRS. The report indicates toilet facilities at the institution were inadequate [OGP-031708].
- 1962 Results of an inspection of food services at Ermineskin IRS [OGP-031806].
- 1964 Diphtheria: 72 children under quarantine last week and presently, 40 are in quarantine due to active cases of diphtheria [ERM-004903].
- 1965 School buildings are served by 3 septic tanks with common short outfall sewer [ERM-002448-0000].
- 1965 Ermineskin IRS has been supplied with water from two distilled wells adjacent to the school [ERM-002431-0001].
- 1974 Meeting minutes mention the effects of the cutbacks on the education budget, and list various recommendations, including that: "a full time nurse is urgently needed as the nurses stationed at the Hobbema clinic make only periodic visits to the School for preventative health services and not for treatment, also there are numerous other needs for diagnosis and treatment of children at school" [ERM-003308-0001].
- 1975 Letter of opinion to the Government from the Nurse in Charge stating that the "lunch program at the Ermineskin School should be continued...I have seen children faint on Monday morning, in some instances, they had nothing to eat since Friday noon" [ERM-007155-0003].
- 1975 Letter from E. W. Ferrance to the Assistant Superintendent of Education expresses the need for a Health unit at the school - there is no room for children to be put down when they are sick, currently there is one bed in the Text Book Store

room, where often there are as many as four children put into the one bed. In addition, a Special Education class is held in this room, and nurses and dental hygienists use this room for when they work at the school [ERM-008369].

Farm

- 1924 At this time, there is no farm connected to the school, only 4 acres of garden and 120 acres of pasture -- recommendation by the Indian Commissioner to get the Indian Reserve to give some land to the School for farm use (to teach the boys agriculture) [ERM-000197].
- 1936 Audit report lists the farm associated with the school as being 875 acres, 65 of which are under cultivation [ERM-000609].
- 1943 Amount of land used for various agricultural uses at the school [OGP-030398].
- 1947 Letter refers to an agreement on May 15, 1947 between the Band Council and the Principal of Ermineskin IRS covering 70 acres for a period of 5 crop years from the spring of 1948 [ERM-006240].
- 1949 Letter indicates a crop failure [OGP-030600; OGP-032092].
- 1950 Permission to lease for 5 years the broken up land 2 section for use by the school, and after 5 years, the land will revert back to the Ermineskin Band [ERM-002674].
- 1950 Refers to Ermineskin IRS leasing additional land for farming purposes [ERM-001349].
- 1950 300 acres were leased by the school from the Government and broken in [ERM-000664].
- 1956 The operation of the school farm was turned over to the Mission on Sep. 1, 1956 [ERM-000703].

Major Renovations and Additions,

- 1914 - 1929 Additions made at the school / residence in 1914, 1922, and 1929 [ERM-001243].
- 1923 Additions made at the school / residence [ERM-000181].
- 1926 Government authority granted for rebuilding of the laundry building's roof at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-001216].
- 1928 Church authorities built an addition to the Ermineskin Boarding School including a 3-story building with a basement [ERM-000182].

- 1929 School was enlarged by adding two-stories for a sewing room and dormitory over the kitchen and classroom at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-000229].
- 1929 Sisters had a power line built to the school [ERM-001234].
- 1930 Letter notes an addition made “by carrying the adjoining one-storey buildings up two storey high” [ERM-002580].
- 1930 Government paid for erection of two fire escape staircases [ERM-001241].
- 1937 Government paid for repairs to Principal’s residence building [ERM-001738].
- 1939 An additional to the building started in May 1939 [ERM-001849], and exterior and roof renovations completed in Jun. 1939 [ERM-001852]. Project completed Aug. 1939 [ERM-002030].
- 1939 New building having been erected including upper floor a boys’ dorm, the ground floor containing 4 classrooms and the basement including a playroom and gym [ERM-006142-0000].
- 1939 Renovations including an upstairs dorm, a remodeled dorm and water pressure tank [ERM-006141].
- 1942 Several small buildings constructed: blacksmith shop, dressing shack for skating rink, and brooder house, and a grant provided by the Government to build a new root house [ERM-00646].
- 1942 Authority given to Principal to purchase materials needed for construction of a new laundry building at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-01367].
- 1943 Construction of a laundry [OGP-030425].
- 1944 Memo notes that work is being done on the installation of six toilets for use of resident girl pupils and to replace an outside privy [ERM-007776].
- 1950 Natural gas was installed at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-001464; OGP-030681; OGP-032129].
- 1951 Start of construction of six-car garage [ERM-005000].
- 1952 New well drilled and pumping unit completed [ERM-001486; ERM-001501].
- 1954 Contract awarded for construction of a dormitory building at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-001531]. New dormitory block will be owned by the Government [ERM-001537].
- 1955 Construction begins on a new dormitory, including kitchen, recreation hall, Sisters’ residence, and Father’s residence [ERM-000686]. Specifications of the building [ERM-002494-0001].

- 1956 New dormitory, including kitchen, recreation hall, Sisters' residence, and Father's residence completed [ERM-000695].
- 1956 Government authority to renovate the old dormitory to provide adequate classroom accommodation [ERM-004041].
- 1958 Construction of new 16 classroom building [ERM-003764].
- 1959 16 classroom building opened Nov. 1959 [OGP-032677].
- 1961 Announcement of the construction of 4-classroom addition and six suite teacherage, at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-003799].
- 1962 Repair work at the residential school including a new pump and cistern hook-up from one well, an extra washroom facilities added in both boys and girls washrooms and a large overhaul of pumps and valves in the furnace room [ERM-004798].
- 1964 Teacherage (6 units), occupied by teaching staff [ERM-001942].
- 1964 Sprinkler system installation at Ermineskin IRS [ERM-008317].
- 1964 Authority for expenditure for construction of a new skating rink [ERM-004270].
- 1965 Contract awarded for construction of a gymnasium [ERM-002457].
- 1965 Unauthorized division of the old Manual Training room into a typing classroom and a music room [ERM-004353-0001].
- 1965 The Government paid to renovate old Church at the Ermineskin IRS site into 2 temporary classes with new floors and partition [ERM-004353-0002].
- 1966 Contract awarded for construction of a 4 classroom extension [ERM-002417]. Project completed Sep. 1966 [ERM-007491-0001].
- 1966 Opening of a new gym built by the Government [ERM-000071].
- 1967 Fire protection improvements and new sprinkler system installation approved for Ermineskin IRS [ERM-007441].
- 1968 Replacement of ceiling tile and interior painting of the school [ERM-007130-0000].
- 1968 Contract awarded for construction of a 16 classroom school and 12 unit staff accommodation [ERM-007381-0001].
- 1968 Plans outlining the new kindergarten building project, a 4 classroom open concept [ERM-008328-0000].

- 1969 Construction of 16 classroom school and 12 unit staff accommodation officially completed [ERM-008268-0000].
- 1971 Construction of a Kindergarten [ERM-008069].
- 1974 Alterations and additions to the Ermineskin School including the installation of garage floor oil and mud interceptor; and revision to roof cantstrip and expansion joints [ERM-007987]. Scope of construction alterations and additions increased to include alterations to electrical service; and repair of expansion tank [ERM-007988-0000].
- 1975 Government authority granted to proceed with work for the repainting of the Ermineskin Elementary School, 4 classrooms at Ermineskin Primary School, and 3 Units of 12-Unit Motel [ERM-008228-0000; ERM-008229]

Miscellaneous

- 1927 Agent's report notes that "on the afternoon of my visit to the school the boys were engaged in shoe mending and the girls in sewing and knitting... very good progress is being made" [ERM-006046].
- 1929 Letter notes that the Government is allowing now two months for holidays for the children's summer vacation [ERM-008790].
- 1936 Boys "are taught a certain amount of carpentering and blacksmithing in the shop the Department helped to set up a year ago" [ERM-006132].
- 1940 Letter notes that "all caskets for funerals of Indians are made by these boys..." as part of their vocational training [ERM-006144].
- 1943 Ermineskin IRS received surplus military clothes while the school provided material to the local military district [OGP-030387; OGP-030389].
- 1947 Food service and dietary inspection of the school [OGP-032537].
- 1949 The practice of using children for farm labour is discontinued and the school subsequently hires labour for the work [ERM-001309].
- 1949 Change of the school work to the Alberta curriculum [ERM-003858].
- 1951 Students went on trip to Edmonton to see the Prince and Princess [ERM-004738].
- 1953 Inspection report lists extra-class activities at the school: cadets, sports, music, student union, concert work, fancy needlework, films [ERM-000041].
- 1953 Newspaper article refers to the school paper: The Moccasin News [ERM-000596].

- 1955 Letter from the Government notes that “I expect that we will be able to secure satisfactory teachers now that the school is considered government owned. We certainly cannot tolerate the engagement of teachers who are not fluent in English” [EDH-000024].
- 1956 Quarterly Return lists several students as being on a “tour in France” [ERM-004589].
- 1962 Agricultural class students to receive their vacation during winter (Dec. and Jan.), while they will have class in Jul. and Aug. due to practical work to be accomplished for the course during that time [ERM-000865].
- 1966 Letter mentions that “we are desperately short of teachers for the Ermineskin school” [EDH-000015].
- 1973 Cultural programs: “Cree language classes are being taught in Grades 5 to 9 in the school... Also, students are being taught stories by older people on the reserve” [ERM-007179-0001].
- 1974 Lunch program: “a hot noon lunch is served to nearly 800 students (inclusive of those in residence) who attend the adjacent elementary and junior high schools. This program is conducted in an orderly and efficient manner... over 45 minute period... students participate in clearing away dishes after the meal” [ERM-008136].

PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS

Name	Position	Tenure Dates
Fr. Gabillon	Unknown	1894
Fr. Lestanc	Unknown	1894
Fr. J.P. Perrault	Principal	1896
Fr. Z. Lizee	Principal	1897
Fr. J. Riou	Principal	1899
Fr. Simonin	In charge of the House	1900 - 1901
Fr. F.L. Dauphin	Principal	1903 - 1905 1909 - 1915
Fr. P. Moulin	Principal/ Acting Principal	1911 1914 - 1934 1915 1935 - 1937 1945

Name	Position	Tenure Dates
Fr. J.E. Pratt,	Father in Charge/ Principal/ Acting Principal/ Temporary Principal	1934 1938 - 1939
Fr. J.B. Boyer	Acting Principal/ Temporary Principal	1937
Fr. Edouard Rheaume	Principal	1939 - 1943
Fr. Camille Schmidt	Principal/ Acting Principal	1943 - 1944 1949 - 1950
Fr. E. Ruaux	Acting Principal/ Principal/ Temporary Principal	1944 - 1945
Fr. Gerard Labonte	Principal	1945 - 1947
Fr. J.J. Adam	Acting Principal/ Principal	1947 - 1949
Fr. A. Rodrigue	Acting Principal	1950
Fr. Allard	Acting Principal	1950
Fr. Georges Marie Latour	Principal	1950 - 1962
Fr. S.R. Gagnon	Principal	1962 - 1963
Fr. Gerry Tetreault	Temporary Principal/ Principal	1963 - 1964
Fr. Guy Voisin	Unknown	1964
Fr. Paul Antoine Hudon	Principal	1964 - 1966
Fr. U. Duchesneau	Principal/Unknown	1964 - 1966
Fr. Louis Clement Latour	Principal	1966 - 1969
Fr. Joseph M. Regnier	Principal	1966 - 1971
Fr. Louis Clement Latour	Administrator ³	1966 - 1969
Fr. Joseph M. Regnier	Administrator	1968
Mr. Denis Servant	Administrator	1969 - 1975

3 NOTE: In 1969, the title and duties related to the position of *Principal* were divided into two positions due to the separation of the school and the residence. The title of *Administrator* refers only to the administration of the residence - Ermineskin Student Residence - and the title of *Principal* refers only to the administration of the school - Ermineskin School.

Name	Position	Tenure Dates
Mr. Edgar Robert Wolf	Acting Principal/ Principal / Principal, Intermediate and Junior High School/ Principal, Elementary-Junior High	1971 – 1978
Mr. A.E. Tetrault	Principal, Elementary School / Principal, Kindergarten and Primary School/ Principal, Elementary-Junior High	1973 1977 - 1981

Narrative Completed: 2009 09 15

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



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