

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.

Kitimaat IRS
IAP Narrative
September 27, 2010

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

NAME OF SCHOOL AND VARIANTS

Elizabeth Long Memorial Home [KMT-095676-0002¹]

Kitimaat Indian Girls' Home [KMT-095605-0000]

Kitimaat Indian Boarding School [KMT-095658]

Kitimat Boarding Home and Day School [KMT-095680]

Kitamaat Indian Residential School [KMT-095719]

Kitamaat Home for Indian Children [KMT-095731]

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

1893 to June 30, 1941 [KMT-800004-0001, KMT-095750].

Between 1899 and approximately 1909, only girls were at Kitimaat IRS. After 1909 there were always more girls than boys at the IRS and boys were transferred to another school upon turning 12 [KMT-095735]. After 1934, boys were transferred to another school when they turned 10 [KMT-095736].

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

- 1893 Two missionaries begin work in Kitimaat by opening their home to the children in the area. They provide food, clothing and shelter to the children, receiving financial assistance only from other missionaries [KMT-800004-0001].
- 1906 The Girls' boarding school building burns down on May 20th [KMT-095620].
- 1908 The Home is re-built by the Women's Missionary Society of the Methodist Church and re-opens December 10th [KMT-095620].
- 1911 As of April 1, 1911, the IRS is classed as a Boarding School. A new contract for future maintenance and management is entered into between the Methodist Church and the Department; a per capita grant is provided by the Department for 30 pupils. Until this point, the Department only provided a Day School grant [KMT-095629, AEMR-010022].
- 1912 Since Kitimaat IRS opened, girls remain at the IRS until they are married and boys until they turn 12 years old [KMT-095640].
- 1914 The IRS is used mainly for girls with a few small boys as residents. The IRS has capacity for 30 pupils. [AEMR-10024].
- 1928 Summer holidays are extended to two months to allow children to work in the canneries with their families [KMT-095700-0000, KMT-095703-0000].
- 1933 In October, all new staff members are hired at the IRS [KMT-095731]. Only 3 staff members are at the IRS at this time.
- 1934 In response to overcrowding, the Department approves transfer of boys at the age of 10 to Coqualeetza.² Prior to this, boys were transferred to Coqualeetza³ at age 12 [KMT-095735, KMT-095736].

¹ Documents with the prefix 'KMT' are from the Kitimaat IRS Document Collection.

² It is not known if this is making reference to Coqualeetza Indian Residential School or another school at

1941 The Kitimaat Indian Residential School closes on June 30, 1941 because most of the children at the residential school could be educated in a new improved day school in Kitimaat village [KMT-095750].

MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL

Dates managed by Church

Kitimaat IRS was managed by the Women's Missionary Society of the Methodist Church/United Church throughout its operation [KMT-800004-0001, KMT-095750].

SCHOOL BUILDINGS

- 1893 Two missionaries oversee construction of a temporary building between the Mission House and the Village School containing girls' sleeping room, small kitchen, washroom and storeroom. The back of the school room is used for the boys' sleeping room and dining room. The children bring their own dishes and bedding and parents provide some food [KMT-800004-0001].
- 1896 Children sleep in the Mission House and out-buildings which appear to be in poor condition and exposed to winter weather [KMT-800004-0001].
- 1899 The Women's Missionary Society takes over the existing Home. A new residential building is constructed on land provided by the Kitimaat Indians. Parents provide an annual contribution of food, wood or money when available [KMT-800004-0001].
- 1906 The Home burns down on May 20th [KMT-095620, KMT-800004-0001].
- 1909 The Home is re-built by the Women's Missionary Society of the Methodist Church. It opens on December 10, 1909. The three-storey wooden school building has accommodation for 35 students - 25 girls and 10 small boys. It is equipped with running water, indoor plumbing, 2 cooking ranges, a furnace, laundry range, dining halls for staff and students, work/play rooms, dormitories, a sick room and a store room. The third floor is unfinished [KMT-095620, KMT-095621].
- 1913 A new dormitory is built in the attic. A teacher's room adjoins the new dormitory. A new barn is built. The property also has an outdoor playhouse, a dry shed, a root cellar and a stable [AEMR-010024].
- 1929 Sketch plans of the attic and first floor are made. The diagram of the attic indicates a large dormitory with an attached teacherage. The first floor has various girls' rooms, teachers' rooms, a reception room, sewing room, kitchen and storeroom on the first floor [KMT-200049-0001, 200049-0002].
- 1938 A report indicates the United Church of Canada maintains possession of the school buildings [KMT-095739].
- 1939 The playground is on a hillside with a cement wall on two sides [KMT-200136].

DAY SCHOOL

- 1914 Most of the Kitimat Day School students reside in the IRS [AEMR-10024].
- 1917 The Kitimaat Day School is used by residential students from the IRS and by village day pupils. Each group attends class for half of each day [KMT-095669, KMT-095670].

Coqualeetza.

³ It is not known if this is making reference to Coqualeetza Indian Residential School or another school at Coqualeetza.

1931 Use of Kitimaat Indian Day School by residential students from the IRS and by village day pupils leads to overcrowding of the day school. Proposals are made for a separate residential school classroom, however no changes are made [KMT-095726, KMT-095719].

LAND

The Residential School is situated on an acre of land on the Kitimaat Reserve on Douglas Channel in Kitimaat, B.C. [AEMR-010024].

PHOTOS, PLANS AND OTHER MEDIA

Item #	Date	Description
KMT-200049-0001	01/28/1929	Sketch Plan of the attic
KMT-200049-0002	01/28/1929	Sketch Plan of the 1st floor

GENERAL ENROLLMENT STATISTICS OVER TIME

Year	Enrollment	Year	Enrollment
1893	22	1922	30
1896	30	1923	26 girls; 6 boys
1900	29	1924	25 girls; 9 boys
1905	25 girls	1925	25 girls; 9 boys
1906	20 girls	1926	21 girls; 14 boys
1909	18 girls; 3 boys	1927	20 girls; 13 boys
June 1909	15 girls; 6 boys	1928	30
1910	45	1929	21 girls; 12 boys
1911	32	1930	23 girls; 9 boys
1912	22 girls; 7 boys	1931	23 girls; 11 boys
1913	25 girls; 7 boys	1932	23 girls; 16 boys
1914	28 girls; 7 boys	1933	23 girls; 17 boys
1915	30 girls	1934	25 girls; 17 boys
1916	26 girls; 8 boys	1935	29 girls; 13 boys
1917	30 girls; 7 boys	1936	28 girls; 13 boys
1918	30 girls; 10 boys	1937	28 girls; 14 boys
1919	26 girls; 8 boys	1938	25 girls; 13 boys
1920	34	1939	28 girls; 14 boys
1921	28	1940	30

STUDENTS FROM OTHER RESERVES

Students from at least the following bands attended the Kitimaat Indian Residential School:

Kitimaat, Bella Coola, Kemano, Kitlope (Kitelope), Klemtu, Bella Bella

There may be alternate ways of spelling these band names.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Women's Missionary Society of the Methodist Church of Canada 1893 – 1926

Women's Missionary Society of the United Church of Canada 1926 – 1941

- In 1926, the Women's Missionary Societies of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches unified and became the Women's Missionary Society of the United Church of Canada [AEMR-016395].

DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO SCHOOL INCIDENTS

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

No historical documents were found that refer to incidents at Kitimaat IRS.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

School Conditions

In May 1922, parents claim that the school is injurious to their children and only agree to return them if proper food is provided. An inspection reveals that the school is sanitary and the children are clothed and well-fed [KMT-095674, KMT-095676-0002].

Some of the children do not return to the boarding school after the holidays in 1926. The Principal, Indian Agent and Truant Officer visit the parents. The parents indicate unsuitable and insufficient food as the reason for not returning their children. The parents agree to return their children to the IRS with the understanding that in future parents will personally visit the IRS [KMT-095695].

Vocational Training

- In 1900, the girls are instructed in housework, sewing, mending and knitting [KMT-800004-0001].
- In 1909, the girls are taught bread-making, cooking, general housework, sewing, laundry and needle/fancy work. The boys are responsible for cutting and carrying wood, cleaning, gardening and general housework [KMT-095620, KMT-095621].
- In 1912, the small boys at the school tend to the garden and carry wood, while the girls are involved in domestic work, specifically sewing and cooking [AEMR-010024].
- In 1914, the girls make their own clothing as well as the boys' day wear. The girls also knit, crochet and do fancy work. The boys care for their dormitory, cut the firewood and care for the cow [AEMR-010024].

Health at the School

- In 1889, there are serious epidemics of measles, German measles and la grippe at the school [KMT-800004-0001].
- In 1902, an influenza outbreak occurs at the school and lasts for eight weeks [KMT-800004-0001].
- Inspections in 1922 and later in 1926 suggest inadequate food quality and quantity for the residential school pupils [KMT-095679-0001, KMT-095693, KMT-095695].
- In September 1922, the Bella Bella Medical Superintendent visits Kitimaat Boarding School and reports on health at the school. It is suggested that men from the Village cut down the trees behind the Home to allow for more sunlight to enter the dormitories [KMT-200023, KMT-200024].

PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS

Mr. G.H. Raley, Founder	1893
Miss Elizabeth Long, Matron	1896 – 1902, 1904
Miss Baker, Matron	1902
Miss Dorothea Bower, M.D.	1906
Miss Jackson, Principal/Matron	1909
Miss E.J. Donogh (Donough), Principal/Matron	1911 - 1912
Miss M. Scouten, Acting Matron	1912
Miss Ida. M. Clarke, Principal/Matron	1912 – 1926
Miss Hortop, Acting Principal	May 1918
Miss M.E. Butcher, Principal	1919
Miss Theo B. Anderson, Acting Principal	1926 - 1928
Mrs. Sanna Runacres, Principal	1927, 1929
Miss Mary Asson, Principal/Matron	1930
Miss Hazel Guild, Acting Principal	1930

Miss Julia E. Follett, Principal/Matron	1930 - 1933
Mrs E. Howard Durnin, Principal/Matron	1934 - 1941

Completed: September 27, 2010
Updated: October 2010

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



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UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA