

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.

## **Lac la Ronge Indian Residential School (1906-1947)** **School Narrative**

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

### **NAME OF SCHOOL and VARIANTS**

Lac la Ronge Indian Residential School  
Lac la Ronge Indian Boarding School  
Lac la Ronge Residential School  
Lac la Ronge Church of England Residential School  
Anglican Indian School, Lac la Ronge  
All Saints School

### **CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY**

- 1889 Day school in operation at Little Hills near Lac la Ronge. [PAR-7528, PAR-7519]
- 1897 The Department, in association with Archdeacon Mackay, was sending supplies to the Day school and attempting to acquire the services of qualified teachers at Little Hills or Lac la Ronge. [PAR-7451, PAR 7453]
- 1906 Day school closes in May 1906. [PAR-7462]
- 1907 The Lac la Ronge Indian Boarding School was opened on January 1, 1907. [PAR-09300]
- 1909 Surveys conducted and land allotted to the Lac la Ronge Indian Boarding school.
- 1911 Maintenance and management of the Lac la Ronge and Onion Lake Boarding Schools were to be performed by the Church of England. [PAR-7518]
- In 1911 it is noted that certain alterations and improvements were necessary to bring the school up to standard. [PAR-7518]

- 1915 A swamp is cleared out in connection to the school for cultivation.
- 1920 First Lac la Ronge School destroyed January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1920 by fire. [PAR-9212]
- 1921 School rebuilt with the assistance of Indian Affairs Department and the Women's Auxiliary of the Anglican Church.
- 1923 It is the Decision of the Government that the Church of England has no claim to the Land or buildings at Lac la Ronge. When the Government handed over the school to the church it was only the management and no property was transferred. [PAR-7642]
- 1925 Lots 12 and 9 (76.70 acres and 8.10 acres) in the Lac la Ronge settlement have been transferred to the government for the purposes of Lac la Ronge Indian Residential School. [PAR-8749]
- 1936 May 24<sup>th</sup> 1936 - Death of student at Lac la Ronge Indian Residential School. Presumed cause of death was Tubercular Meningitis. [PAR-7660]
- 1937 A measles epidemic infects the school causing the tuberculosis in a lot of students to become active.
- 1938 Sewage system begins to become a problem and will remain so for years.
- 1939 School water supply is deemed dangerous. A sample of water is tested at the school. [PAR-8482]
- 1946 The Department of Natural Resources requests that the lands transferred to the Department of Indian Affairs in 1925 be transferred back to their control so that certain developmental changes can occur on the property. In 1946, 28.4 acres of land is transferred to the Provincial government of Saskatchewan from the land which is currently put aside for the Lac la Ronge Residential school, but which is currently not being used.
- 1947 School Fire at Lac la Ronge Sunday February 2, 1947. [PAR-9196] Principal Rev. Wickenden wires the Department and states that the school was completely destroyed Sunday afternoon and all the pupils are safe and accommodated. [PAR-9202] Fire destroys Lac la Ronge IRS. Youth charged with arson and sentenced to reformatory school. Some pupils are relocated to Gordon's but majority moved to Saint Alban's in Prince Albert. A student confesses to striking

the match that started the fire at Lac la Ronge. Another is named as the boy who supplied the matches. [PAR-9229, PAR-9230, PAR-9231, PAR-9233, PAR-9238, PAR-9241, PAR-9239, PAR9240]

1948 The school was reopened at the Prince Albert Basic Training Centre No. 122 for Fall classes in 1948 under the same names. (See Prince Albert Indian Residential School Narrative)

The Children involved in the fire at Lac la Ronge are prosecuted. [PAR-9253, 9258, 9259, 9276]

1949 A day school is opened in Lac la Ronge [PAR-9278]

## **MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL**

### **Dates managed by Church**

Maintenance and management of the Lac la Ronge and Onion Lake Boarding Schools were to be performed by the Church of England as per the 1911 operating agreement. [PAR-7518]

It is unclear who managed the school prior to 1911, but in 1922 the Archdeacon of Lac La Ronge commented that the school was originally setup by church authorities. [PAR-7608]

### **Dates managed by Government**

Sometime in the 1920's, the school was managed by the Indian and Eskimo Commission (a.k.a. Indian School Administration) of the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada.

## **SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

The buildings of the school were considered mission property and belonged to the Church of England. [PAR-9306, PAR-9312]

The second Lac la Ronge Residential School was built and owned by the government in approximately 1920. [PAR-9197]

The main school building was a large three storey frame structure and contained one boys dormitory, two girls dormitories, classrooms, playrooms, dining halls, staff rooms, offices, laundry and a kitchen. [PAR-9202, PAR-9202a, PAR-9189, PAR-9190]

### *Original Boarding School*

1907 An annual Report in 1907 states that the school will accommodate 50 students. [PAR-09300]

1910 An annual report in 1910 states the school will accommodate 60 children. [PAR-09306]

1920 First Lac la Ronge School destroyed January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1920. [PAR-9212]

### *Second Boarding School*

1923 A boat launch is purchased at the Lac la Ronge Boarding school to transport workers back and forth to arable land 2 1/2 miles across the bay from the school. [PAR-7572, PAR-7578]

Letters indicate that an unsatisfactory fire escape system was in place at the school. [PAR-7641, PAR-7646]

Verandahs are needed at the school and would help with the fire escapes. They are to be used for fire escape purposes [PAR-8607, 8618, 8655]

New cement basement floor is built at the school. [PAR-8615]

1924 A plan is developed of Indian boarding school showing verandah. [PAR-8651]

A request is made to move saw mill from directly in front of the school to another location. The mill is eventually moved and reinstalled [PAR-8628, PAR-8688]

1925 Request for a septic tank at Lac la Ronge due to growing attendance of pupils to the school and for sanitary reasons. Unknown whether tank was acquired. [PAR-8716, PAR-8778]

A movie projector is purchased for the school [PAR-8786, PAR-8789]

1927 A bush fire caused by lightning hits the school. The buildings were narrowly saved by fire fighters who doused the buildings with water. [PAR-8128]

Lac la Ronge Indian Residential School is heated by hot air furnace and lighted by electricity [PAR-8139]

Three brass sliding poles are needed to replace the three spruce poles that are installed at the school now. The spruce poles can be dangerous to the smaller children as they can become too slippery. They eventually get steel poles which are seen as cheaper. [PAR-8144, PAR-8175]

1928 Inspection Report notes that a laundry has just been built. The building is heated by hot air furnaces, is lighted with electrical light and has good quality of water. The fire escapes are in good locations. There is also a garden for cultivation. [PAR-8200]

1934 On March 28, 1934 the Principal's Residence at Lac la Ronge is totally destroyed by fire because of a defective chimney. [PAR-8945, PAR-8946, PAR-8949, PAR-8955]

School still has no infirmary [PAR-8955, PAR-8967]

Furnaces at the school are considered a fire hazard by government officials and the fire alarm system is considered inadequate. [PAR-8957]

1935 Water quality at school is not considered good. [PAR-8993]

Sewage system is giving off an offensive odour. [PAR-8977]

\$2,500 is provided for the erecting of a new Principal residence. [PAR-8996, PAR-8998, PAR-8999]

Letter from Indian Agent referring to Lac la Ronge as a "regular fire trap". He also notes that the alarm would probably not wake sleeping children. [PAR-9010]

1938 Doctor Simms, a government inspector for the Department found that the Sewage system is not working and the drinking water is contaminated. [PAR-8398, PAR-8401, PAR-8405]

1940 Sewage Disposal System and water supply at Lac la Ronge were investigated.

There is not adequate water for the needs of the school.[PAR-8516]

- 1941 The School at Lac la Ronge was inspected and it is found that it "...is nothing more or less than a fire trap" and it would be impossible to save all the pupils without loss of life if a fire started. [PAR-8545, PAR-8546, PAR-8547, PAR-8548, PAR-8549, PAR-8550]
- 1944 Letter from Principal Reverend Fisher requesting that the school be inspected as it has not been done for 15 years. [PAR-8562, PAR-8563] The school is eventually inspected and found to be adequate despite being very old and outdated. [PAR-8564]
- 1946 The Mill at the school was purchased with Church funds. [PAR-9110, PAR-9111]
- 1947 School Fire at Lac la Ronge Sunday February 2, 1947. [PAR-9196] Principal Rev. Wickenden wires the Department and states that the school was completely destroyed Sunday afternoon and all the pupils are safe and accommodated. The fire is believed to have originated in the basement and spread to the boys playroom before it was discovered.

## LAND

When the Government agreed to operate the school with the church all that was handed over was the control. No property was handed over. [PAR-7642] The land was located at Lac la Ronge, Saskatchewan. A tract of land "having a frontage on the lake a half mile wide and quarter mile deep, is allotted to the Lac la Ronge Indian Boarding School. [PAR-7511, PAR-7512] The school lands were situated on the western shore of Lac la Ronge. [PAR-09300, PAR-7572]

- 1909 Survey of the school lands conducted.
- 1923 There is a garden in connection with the school. [PAR-7631a]
- 1925 Additional lots are acquired for the purposes of education by the government from the reserve. [PAR-8749]
- 1928 A request is made that land should be cleared from around the school because a bush fire could destroy the school. [PAR-8194, PAR-8241, PAR-8245]

- 1931 The Lac la Ronge Indian Residential School requests an increase in land from 75 acres to 640 acres and another 25 acres to grow stock feed. [PAR-8333, PAR-8334, PAR-8336, PAR-8337, PAR-8340, PAR-8339, PAR-8344] There is very little land under cultivation at the school or land fit for cultivation.[PAR-8341]
- 1946 28.4 acres of land is transferred to the Provincial government of Saskatchewan from the land which is currently put aside for the Lac la Ronge Residential school, but which is currently not being used.[PAR-9149]
- 1947 Following the fire at Lac La Ronge discussion begins regarding the selling of the remaining Land used by the school to the Province and to obtain land elsewhere. [PAR-9172]

**PHOTOS, PLANS and OTHER MEDIA**

- |           |         |  |
|-----------|---------|--|
| PAR-8651  | Diagram | Plan of Indian Boarding School.  |
| PAR-7515a | Diagram | Plan of Indian School lands at Lac La Ronge, Saskatchewan.                                       |
| PAR-8960  | Diagram | House plan.  |
| PAR-7714a | Diagram | Proposed plan of engineer's cottage residence for Lac La Ronge IRS.                              |
| PAR-8553a | Diagram | Plan of the ground floor.  |
| PAR-8553b | Diagram | Plan of the second floor.  |
| PAR-8553c | Diagram | Plan of the third floor.   |
| PAR-9100a | Diagram | School site plan.  |
| PAR-8379a | Map     | Sketch of the location of the buildings and the tanks at Lac La Ronge Indian Residential School. |
| PAR-8443a | Map     | Plan of Lac La Ronge Indian Residential School Property & proposed Water & Sewer Systems.        |



## **WRITTEN AGREEMENTS**

There was an operating agreement between the Diocese of Saskatchewan and the government to operate the Lac la Ronge Boarding School made in 1911. [PAR-7518]

## **CONVICTIONS**

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

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- 1928 There are two teachers being let go for reasons other than their teaching. [PAR-8243]
- 1942 There were allegations that bread and fish served at the school were spoiled. [PAR-8553]
- 1943 Report that the children are not as well fed as in other schools because their diet consists mostly of fish, very poor bread and a small quantity of vegetables. [PAR-8560]

## **PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS**

1907 - 1909	Rev. James Brown, Principal	[PAR-09300]
1910 - 1914	Rev. M. B. Edwards, Principal	[PAR-09306]
1915 - 1916	Archdeacon J. A. Mackay, Principal	[PAR-09316]
1916 - 1929	Reverend Chas. F. Hives, Principal	[PAR-7553]
1930-1942	Reverend G.W. Fisher:	[PAR-8251]
1947	Reverend D. C. Wickenden	[PAR-9202]

Research completed: March 20, 2004  
Research updated: June 7, 2004

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  

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UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

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## **All Saints Indian Residential School at Prince Albert (1947-1953)** **School Narrative**

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

### **NAME OF SCHOOL and VARIANTS**

Lac la Ronge Indian Residential School

Prince Albert Indian Residential School

All Saints Indian Residential School

### **CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY**

- 1947 Original Lac la Ronge Indian Residential School at Lac la Ronge, Saskatchewan was destroyed by fire on February 2, 1947 (See Lac la Ronge IRS Narrative 1906-1947). After a search for a new residential school facility in Northern Saskatchewan the school was reopened at the Prince Albert Basic Training Centre No. 122 for fall classes in 1948. However, the school had still been receiving moneys from Parliament even while it was physically nonexistent. [PAR-3657]
- 1948 School opens on September 7, 1948. Classes start on September 13, 1948. [PAR-0390, PAR-3718]
- 1949 Principal Reverend Fisher dies, Mr. Mayo takes charge of school temporarily. Reverend Scrase becomes principal of Lac la Ronge IRS.
- 1950 29 students are transferred from Gordon's IRS to Lac la Ronge IRS as water well problems have temporarily forced the school to shut down.
- 1951 St. Alban's IRS is shut down and the students are sent to Lac la Ronge IRS. [PAR-3662] The school is unofficially called Prince Albert Indian Residential School by local officials. [eg. PAR-0760 and attachments a-m]
- 1953 The name was not officially changed until 1953, when Reverend Scrase

complained of confusion in mail between Lac la Ronge and Prince Albert at the Branch. [PAR-0600, PAR-0601, PAR-0603] The Public Accounts of Parliament do not reflect the new name until the 1953-1954 period as well. [PAR-3653]

## **MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL**

The school was managed by the Indian School Administration of the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada. The school was located in the Diocese of Saskatchewan and Bishop Martin was involved in the site selection of the new school (circa 1947). [PAR-0349, PAR-3673]

## **SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

The barracks were comprised of many different buildings and the acquisition of these buildings for the residential school did not occur simultaneously, but piecemeal. In general, all of the buildings used for the residential school were owned by the government. Some of the buildings were also used by the provincial government and a Roman Catholic orphanage. [PAR-3665, PAR-3664, PAR-3689, PAR-0404, PAR-3751]

Inspections of the school's facilities were conducted by fire inspectors from the City and the Province. [PAR-3779, PAR-0512, PAR-0513a, PAR-0516]

Inspectors from the Department of Indian Affairs also wrote several reports over the period of the school's existence. [PAR-0404, PAR-3776, PAR-0235a, PAR-0745a]

Fire extinguishers were checked and recharged by school officials on several occasions. [PAR-3773, PAR-3793, PAR-3776, PAR-3756, PAR-3755]

Fire drills were regularly carried out at the school. [PAR-3772]

1948 The residential school buildings were acquired from the government over a lengthy period. Some of the principal buildings in use were:

Buildings #32 (Principal's Residence) and Building #21 (Married Staff, Infirmary, Isolation Ward, and Library). [PAR-0385]

The chapel space was originally in Building #30. [PAR-3726]

Building #29 was a boy's dormitory and so was building #30. [PAR-3727]

Buildings #33 and #34 were drill halls at Lac la Ronge. Building #33 was used as a laundry, chapel and boys playroom. Building #34 was being used as a kitchen, dining hall, and girls playroom. [PAR-3733]  
Building #23 was the classroom building. [PAR-0402a]

Building #31 was a girl's dormitory as well, with some staff accommodation. The school also utilized the old army drill hall as the engineer's quarters and shop, a 2 car garage, an ironing room and sewing room, and a store room. [PAR-0404]

Building #5 and #6 were acquired for the school's use on November 3, 1948. [PAR-3732]

There was a swimming pool at the residential school, presumably built by the army. [PAR-3792]

According to a telex dated December 7, 1948, staff accommodations and heating were inadequate and the government was asked to place radiators in staff rooms. [PAR-3739]

1949 A roothouse was raised at the school during November 1949. [PAR-3770]

Building #22 became a staff residence after transfer from Province. [PAR-3777]

Building #30 became a boy's dormitory in late 1949-early 1950. [PAR-3778]

The Principal's residence was burnt down on January 24, 1949. [PAR-1147, PAR-3744]

1950 The swimming pool was leaking "quite badly" in June 1950. [PAR-3792]

There were complaints from teachers about the heating of the classroom building (#23) in February 1950. [PAR-3780]

## **LAND**

The barracks of the No. 122 Basic Training Centre were located on the outskirts of the city of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. At the time it was located on Twentieth Street West. [PAR-0553, PAR-1147]

The land that comprised the Basic Training Centre was held by the Department of Public Works. The Basic Training Centre began construction in June 1942 and ceased to function as a training centre for infantry in September 1944. Previously, it was an RCMP

barracks site. [PAR-3450, PAR-3451, PARs-3449]

This land was not transferred to the Department of Indian Affairs until 1967. [see PAR-1395d, PAR-1657, PAR-1658, PAR-1659, PAR-1198. For more details on land transfer to DIAND as well as the Prince Albert Indian Residential School Narrative]

### **PHOTOS, PLANS and OTHER MEDIA**

PAR-3673a	Diagram	Diagram of Ex-Training Centre/Army barracks in Prince Albert
PAR-0385a	Diagram	Diagram of gymnasium
PAR-0385b	Diagram	Diagram of dormitory
PAR-3710a	Diagram	Diagram of agricultural land
PAR-3775	Diagram	Diagram of building 20
PAR-3730	Diagram	Sketches of dormitory hut 21, building 21, building 30, and plumbing system for hut 21

### **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)**

There are two documents which allude to sexual misconduct among students in November 1948. [PAR-0396, PAR-0397]

#### **Incidents (Physical)**

A letter from C.A.F. Clark to Reverend Scrase on June 20, 1949 also recounts the matter of corporal punishment and the use of straps at the school. [PAR-0448]

### **CONVICTIONS**

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

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The Regional Supervisor of Indian Agencies wrote to Indian Affairs Branch on December 14, 1948, and relates the story of a teacher who was wearing an overcoat in class because it was too cold while his students remained in short sleeves and light dresses. He hoped that the staff person would resign noting that as of December 4, the staff member had done exactly that. [PAR-0402a]

There are several reports throughout the period of government officials complaining about the quality of the teachers and supervisors at the school. [PAR-0390, PAR-2925, PAR-3763, PAR-3764, PAR-0518, PAR-0521, PAR-0557, PAR-0560, PAR-0760a]

A resignation letter from two ex-teachers to the Indian School Administration and the Primate of the Church of England, dated November 29, 1952 echoed the same concerns. [PAR-1992]

## **PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS**

In its short period of existence the school only had three principals:

**Reverend Geo. W. Fisher** - Even before the school opened in September 1948 Reverend Fisher was making arrangements for the opening of the school. He was Principal of the school from May 31, 1947 until his death on/or around December 31, 1948. [PAR-1581, PAR-0406]

**Frederick Mayo** - Frederick Mayo was the temporary Principal of PAIRS between the death of Reverend Fisher and the arrival of Reverend Scrase. He was at PAIRS from early January 1949 to at least March 1949. He remained at school for an unknown period of time after Reverend Scrase arrived. [PAR-0442]

**Reverend Archer J. Scrase** - Principal at the school from March 1949 to September 1951. [PAR-0442]

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