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Sarcee IRS
School Narrative
04 06 2006

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

NAME OF SCHOOL AND VARIANTS

- 1893** Sarcee Boys' Boarding School [Item# 00102]¹
Sarcee Boarding School [Item# 00117]
1895 St. Barnabas Mission Boarding School [Item# 00204]²
1906 St. Barnabas [ANGDC Item# 80806]³

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

- 1892** The Indian Agent's report on the Sarcee Indian Agency notes that a "boarding school has been in successful operation since May on the Sarcee Reserve and pupils were obtained without difficulty" [DIA AR 1892]⁴

The Indian Agent also wrote "None of the children can speak anything but Sarcee in this school, so English only is spoken to them." [Item# 00032]

- 1894** The Government requested that the Indian Agent perform separate inspections and write separate reports on the Sarcee Boarding and Day schools. [BSSD Item# 02361]⁵

The Boarding school was closed for July with consent from the Indian Agent. [Item# 00156]

- 1901** The Indian Agent writes that "I had to bring pressure to bear on the Sarcees before they would allow any more children to enter the School, I shut down rations on the whole band for the space of eleven days, and suspended the issue of permits until they would comply with the wishes of the Dept... I trust the Dept. will approve of my action..." [Item# 00406]

The Indian Commissioner later responds on behalf of the Government: "I would have thought it sufficient to apply the stoppage to those families who had children and refused to send them to school... Such extreme measures should be sparingly resorted to, and generally only after permission from this office or the Department". [Item# 00407]

- 1920/** Continued health epidemics and rampant tuberculosis prompted the Deputy

¹ Documents cited with the prefix 'Item#' only are from the Sarcee Boarding School Document Collection.

² Sarcee Boarding school was referred to as St. Barnabas during the late 1800s until approximately 1906. Staff lists from the time confirm that St. Barnabas was a reference to Sarcee Boarding School.

³ Documents with the 'ANGDC' prefix are from the Church of England Other Party Document Collection. These are not Crown-sourced documents.

⁴ Documents with the 'DIA AR' prefix are from the Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports on-line collection. These reports are available on the internet at: www.collectionscanada.ca/indianaffairs.

⁵ Documents cited with the prefix 'BSSD' are from the Blackfoot Stony Sarcee District Collection.

- 1921** Superintendent General to propose the transformation of the Sarcee Boarding School into a hospital and to treat the entire reserve as a hospital area, as per the assessment of a visiting doctor. [Item# 00470] The report from Dr. Corbett upon inspecting Sarcee School noted that the condition of the pupils is ‘bad in the extreme. All the children except four show the presence of tuberculosis in a state that requires active treatment...’ [Item# 00470B, Item# 00470C]

The Indian Commissioner calls for a staff of doctors and nurses to immediately replace the education staff currently employed at the school [Item# 00472]. A letter from Deputy Superintendent General Duncan C. Scott suggests that pupils from the Sarcee Boarding school were not transferred to the nearby Old Sun IRS due to the prevalence of similarly poor conditions at that school [Item# 00473]. However a report from the Missionary Society of the Church of England [MSCC] General Secretary dated January 14, 1921 notes that the Deputy Superintendent General requested “that the few healthy children should be transferred to the enlarged building at Old Sun’s.” [Item# 00475]

- 1922** A report to Duncan C. Scott from unknown author notes that the Sarcee Boarding school was closed and converted to a hospital with “much time and attention [devoted] to the care of all the Indians of the Reserve from a Medical stand point”. [Item# 00527]

The 1922 Departmental Annual Report confirms that the Sarcee Boarding school “is now being used for hospital purposes”. [AEDC Item# 010033]⁶

No post-1922 documents suggest that the Sarcee Boarding School ever resumed operation. A 1948 Quarterly Report from the Superintendent of the Indian School Administration notes that there is no residential school on the reserve. [ANGMSCC 82728]⁷

However, Sarcee Day School remained in operation during the closing of the Boarding school. [AB Regional Item# 00052]⁸ The Sarcee Day School building was replaced in 1949 [AB Regional 01926] and remained in operation until at least 1956 [AB Regional 06150A].

- 1945** Reference is made to a small Departmental hospital operating on the Sarcee reserve. [Item# 00474]
- 1964** Correspondence notes efforts to provide kindergarten accommodation for children on the Sarcee Reserve. [BSSD Item# 03439]

MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL

Dates managed by Church

⁶ Documents with the ‘AEDC’ prefix are from the AEDC Master (National) document database collection.

⁷ Documents with the ‘ANGMSCC’ prefix are from the Anglican Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada List within the Anglican Other Party Document Database. These are not Crown-sourced documents.

⁸ Documents with the ‘AB Regional’ prefix are from the Alberta Regional Document Collection.

1920 An MSCC resolution notes that the MSCC, “having brought the physical condition of the children in the Sarcee Boarding School to the notice of the Department, as long ago as last May, renewed its grant to that institution for the current year with great reluctance, and only as an interim measure, pending the taking by the Department of the action recommended that the Institution be disestablished as a Boarding School and provided with the staff and equipment necessary for the efficient medical treatment of the children.

Further, that this Committee now earnestly requests the Deputy Superintendent to put this change into effect at once, relieving this Committee of responsibility for the Sarcee Boarding School at a date to be set, which date should not be later than April 1st of the present year.” [Item# 00475]

1921 Similar correspondence from the General Secretary notes that the MSCC believed that the Sarcee Boarding School “should be placed entirely under a medical regime – a regime which must of necessity involve considerable expenditure and require the services of specially trained agents and, therefore, should be, we think, conducted directly by the Department, though as a Missionary Society we should be glad to co-operate in any way possible”. [Item# 00476]

1949 A memorandum concerning Diocese of Calgary Indian Missions notes:

“SARCEE is unique in that during the past three decades the Church work has experienced a transition of passing from a purely Indian Mission with a Residential School to what might almost be called a parish in which about two thirds of the work is among white people. At the request of I.S.A. and with the concurrence of the Bishop of Calgary the M.S.C.C. Executive passed the following motion... of May 10th, 1949:

That in view of the changed status of St. Barnabas Mission, Sarcee Reserve, responsibility for the operation of the Mission be transferred from the Indian School Administration to the Diocese of Calgary...

The terms of the above motion have now been executed and the I.S.A. no longer has responsibility on the Sarcee Reserve”. [ANGDC Item# 81900A]

Dates managed by Government

1900 The Indian Commission noted “... the majority of the pupils of the Sarcee Boarding School are either 12 years old or more, and it [is] the wish of the Department that they should be removed to an Industrial School when they reach the age of 12...”[Item# 00379] Subsequent annual reports suggest that at least some male Sarcee Boarding School pupils were transferred to the Calgary Industrial School [DIA AR 1901] The 1904 Annual Report notes that all boys over 14 years of age have been “drafted into the industrial school”. [DIA AR 1904]

SCHOOL BUILDINGS

1892/ Due to an addition being made to the Sarcee Boarding school [Item# 00132], boarding
1893 school pupils were temporarily taught in Sarcee No. 1 [Day] school. [Item# 00069]

- 1898** The Indian Agent notes that “the Sarcee Boarding School has no fire protection...” [Item# 00320]
- 1899** A departmental annual report from 1899 contains an update from the Principal which notes “The school is under one roof, the boys’ and girls’ wings being separated by school-room, dining-room and kitchen. The boys’ wing, 24x50, consists of work-room, lavatory, store-room, office, bed-room and school room, 24x20, downstairs; and boys’ dormitory, bed-room and clothes-room upstairs.
- The girls’ wing, 22x24, consists of work-room, lavatory, sitting-room and bedroom downstairs; and girls’ dormitory upstairs.
- The dining room is 18x25, and the kitchen 18x18.” [DIA AR 1899]
- 1900** Inspector notes that the foundation of the Sarcee Boarding School’s main building has sunk and urgent remedial work is approved by the department. [Item# 00389]
- An inspection of the school notes “[t]hrough a re-arrangement of the offices, the school is now held in a well-lighted room of sufficient size to accommodate comfortably all the pupils; it is furnished with patent desks, blackboards, maps, lesson-cards, teacher’s chair and table; also an organ.” [DIA AR 1900]
- 1908** An inspection of the Sarcee Boarding school comments that “the building is unfit for school purposes. It is an old building, a shell at that, cannot be properly heated or made modern in any way, and if this school is to be continued a new building is a necessity.” [AB Regional Item# 08623]
- 1910** The Sarcee school building is noted as Government owned. [ANGMSCC Item# 90237]
- 1911** In a school inspection, the Indian Agent writes “the buildings are very much out of repair and in the winter are very cold... new buildings should be erected at once. It is on these grounds that many of the Indians are averse to sending their children to school.” [DIA AR 1911]
- A subsequent report of the same year notes “[t]enders are now advertised for with a view of replacing this dilapidated old building with a new and modern-designed one.” [DIA AR 1911]
- 1912** The inspector again notes that “[i]t is very much regretted by the staff, children, Indians and all concerned, that the new school planned to be built during the past summer was not proceeded with”. [DIA AR 1912]
- 1914** The annual report from 1914 notes that a “new building was erected here during the past year. It is well furnished and modern in every respect.” [DIA AR, 1914]
- 1915** “Main building 60x40 feet frame, concrete foundation, a chicken house, stables and coach shed, 40x20 feet and storehouse”. [DIA AR 1915]
- 1920** “The building is reported to have been very cold in previous winters but a new furnace

has been installed and the outside of the main buildings have been covered with shingles so there should be no further trouble from this source. The inside of the house and school room is neither clean, tidy nor sanitary, and in its present condition and management is unfit for carrying on the work of a boarding school". [Item# 00470B]

LAND

1899 "The school is situated on the south-east corner of the reserve, and near the agency buildings. It has about eight acres of land in connection with it". [DIA AR 1899]

1910 The school is noted as "situated on Fish Creek" [DIA AR 1910]

PHOTOS, PLANS AND OTHER MEDIA

| Item # | Date | Description |
|----------------------|-------------|---|
| DIA AR 1902, pg. 112 | 1902 | Exterior photo of the Sarcee Boarding School with pupils and staff in front of building |
| DIA AR 1902, pg. 128 | 1902 | Matron with female pupils of the Sarcee Boarding School |
| DIA AR 1904, pg. 369 | 1902 | Exterior photo of the Sarcee Boarding School with pupils and staff in front of building |

GENERAL ENROLLMENT STATISTICS OVER TIME

| Year | Number of Students |
|-------------|--|
| 12/1893 | 6 Boarders |
| 09/1894 | 13 Boarders |
| 07/1895 | 15 Boys (school referred here as St. Barnabas Boarding School, Sarcee Reserve) |
| 1897 | 10 boys, 7 girls |
| 1898 | 10 boys, 8 girls |
| 09/1899 | 7 boys 8 girls |
| 09/1900 | 7 boys, 9 girls |
| 09/1901 | 3 boys, 8 girls |
| 09/1902 | 7 boys, 8 girls |
| 09/1903 | 7 boys, 7 girls |
| 09/1904 | 10 boys, 9 girls |
| 09/1905 | 8 boys, 6 girls |
| 09/1906 | 8 boys, 7 girls |
| 09/1907 | 5 boys, 7 girls |
| 1908 | 5 boys, 7 girls |
| 1909 | 10 boys, 6 girls |
| 1910 | 5 boys, 5 girls |

| | |
|---------|-------------------|
| 1911 | 8 boys, 7 girls |
| 1912 | 18 pupils |
| 1913 | 9 boys, 7 girls |
| 1914 | 16 pupils |
| 1915 | 23 boys, 14 girls |
| 12/1916 | 34 pupils |
| 12/1920 | 17 boys, 16 girls |

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada [Item# 000475]

WRITTEN AGREEMENTS

1912 Secretary of the MSCC requested that the Government send a copy of the contract “entered into between the Bishop of the Diocese” and the Government with regards to 4 schools, including the Sarcee school. [ANGDC Item# 81280] The Government’s reply references “the contract for the future maintenance and management of the... Sarcee... Church of England Boarding school... entered into between the Right Reverend Cyprian Pinkham, D.D. Bishop of the Diocese of Calgary and this Department”. [ANGDC Item# 81279] This specific agreement between the Church and the Government has not been located.

DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO SCHOOL INCIDENTS

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

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 1893** Children from the ‘No. 1 school’ [Day School] attended the Boarding School. [Item# 00125]
- 1897** There is a measles epidemic at the Sarcee Boarding School [Item# 00285]
- 1899** The Sarcee Boarding School Document collection contains attendance lists in the form of Quarterly Returns covering the period from 09/1899 to 12/1907.
- 1902** The Indian Agent writes the Sarcee Boarding School Principal to inquire into the circumstances surrounding the death of a pupil. [Item# 00411]
- 1908** A letter from the Indian Agent notes a recent epidemic of chicken pox in the Sarcee Boarding School. [Item# 00467]
- 1918** A telegram from the Bishop of Calgary to the Hon. Duncan Scott, DIA notes that ‘Thirty one children and four members of staff Sarcee School down with influenza’. An emergency grant to cover the cost is requested and approved. [ANGDC Item# 81275]

PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS

| Name | Position | Tenure Dates |
|-------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Rev. H.W.Gibbon Stocken | Teacher, Boarding School | 1892-1896 |
| Percy E. Stocken | Acting Principal, Vice-Principal/Teacher | At least July 1895 to 1910 |
| Venerable J.W. Tims | Principal | 1896 to 1916 |
| Mr. Grevett | Assistant Principal | 1911, 1912 |
| Mr. Sydney Tims | Assistant Principal | 1913-1915 |

Narrative Completed: April 6, 2006

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



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