

This narrative history of a Residential School was researched and produced by the Government of Canada as part of its response to litigation and the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation has not verified the content of this document. It is provided here for reference purposes only. Documented incidents of sexual and physical abuse are based on the documentary record and do not take into account survivor testimony.



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**St. Cyprian's IRS
School Narrative**
[April 18, 2005]

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

NAME OF SCHOOL AND VARIANTS

- 1890 Peigan Mission Home [Item# ANGDC 80793]¹
- January 9, 1880 Victoria [Item#04862²
- January 27, 1899 Church of England Boarding School [Item#04996]
- March 22, 1890 Episcopalian School House [Item# 06204]
- December 1, 1890 Peigan Indian Home [Item#s 04962, 04962A]
- September 6, 1894 Peigan Boarding School [Item# 04977]
- September 24, 1895 St. Peter's Boarding School [Item# 04985]
- September 1897 Queen Victoria Jubilee Home
- For Indian Children [Item#ANGDC 80793]
- February 15, 1898 Protestant Boarding School [Item# 04200]
- October 21, 1899 Victoria Home for Indian Children [Item# 04219]
- September 24, 1901 C of E Boarding School [Item# 04587]
- October 4, 1907 Victoria Indian School [Item# 05001]
- February 15, 1913 Victoria Home [Item# 05032]
- February 20, 1922 Peigan C.E. Boarding School [Item# 05099]
- November 22, 1925 St. Cyprian Indian Residential School [Item# 05136]

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

- 1880** A government Memorandum mentions the Victoria School, although it does not give the location of this school. It states that nothing has been paid to this school since **1876** because it has not complied with department regulations to provide a quarterly return. [Item# 04862]
- 1888** Mention of an existing Episcopal School for Red Crow's Band and the need for a boarding school on the Blood and Peigan Reserves. [Item# 04079]

¹Documents with the prefix ANGDC are from the Other Party - Anglican collection. These are not Crown-sourced documents.

²This document refers to grants for schools at Whitefish Lake, Morley, and **Victoria**. No payments have been made because none of the schools have complied with Department of Indian Affairs regulations that Quarterly Returns be sent to the Department.

- 1889** The Bishop of Saskatchewan and Calgary requests assistance to establish a boarding school on the Reserve. The requirements are: a boarding school with dormitory accommodation for ten boys and ten girls, and a school room for day pupils. [Item# 04677, 04677A]
- 1889** The new boarding school will be ready in a month. [November 25, 1889, Item# 06202].
- 1890** Boarding school opens April 18, 1890. [Item#s ANGDC 80793]
- 1893** A dormitory for 24 boys and a dining room to accommodate 36 pupils is erected. [Item# ANGDC 80793]
- 1896** The Church wishes to move the school off the reserve to the other side of the river. On August 31, 1896 the government grants permission but states that it is not willing to offer any assistance. [Item# 06212] .
- 1897** The new school is nearly ready. Heavy rains have prevented the roof from being completed but the agent reports that the work done is satisfactory. [July 7, 1897, 06215] .
- The school is opened in September by Governor General and Lady Aberdeen and called the Queen Victoria Jubilee Home for Indian Children. [Item# ANGDC 80793]
- On July 26, 1897, the government provides financial assistance towards the cost of the new building [Item# 06213, 06213A]
- 1912** After an inspection, the government informs the Indian Agent that the Church of England School on the Peigan reserve is not being conducted according to contract. [October 24, 1912, 04184]
- 1913** Proposed cancellation of contract rescinded because improvements to the condition of the school have been made. [August 18, 1913 05043A]
- 1921** The General Secretary of the Missionary Society of the Church of the Anglican Church of Canada informs the government that following a failed experiment, one principal will no longer be responsible for both Blood and Peigan schools. As well, there will be no reversion to the practice in which the missionary on the Peigan Reserve was Principal of the school with the Vice-Principal acting under him. [Item# 05086]. The government agrees that this practice will result in better management. [Item# 05087]
- 1926** The government approves the new name for the Church of England school on the Peigan reserve – St. Cyprian’s IRS.[Item# 05136]

Fire destroys the Principal's residence. [December 15 1925, Item# 00544]

Plans to build a new school are announced. [Item# 04339; Item# 04337] The government assures the Missionary Society that no final decision on the location will be made without their approval. [Item# 04336]

1927 The new St. Cyprian's Indian Residential School is completed.[March 4, 1927, Item# 05140]

1928 Telephone lines installed. [Item#05631]

1946 The horse and cattle barn is burned to the ground. As well as damage to the building, four head of cattle, 80 tons of hay, and equipment are lost. [Item# 00862]

1950 A day school is opened on the reserve. [Item# 04909A]

1957 The government recommends the school's closure. [Item# 04002]

1959 A government memorandum states that Indian parents have come to rely on residential schools to take responsibility for their children. Peigan Band parents protest the proposal to close St. Cyprian's Indian Residential School [Item# s 04004; 04006]

1961 St. Cyprian's IRS closes June 30, 1961 [Item# 04054]

MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL

Dates managed by Church

1876 – 1961 From at least 1876, a day school was operated under the auspices of the Church of England in Canada..[Item#s 04862, 04862A] Other documents indicate that from approximately 1889 the Church managed the educational and boarding services at St. Cyprian's IRS. [Item#s 06215, 05079]

1920 In *approximately* 1920, the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada takes over full responsibility for the school from the various dioceses. [Item# 05079]

Dates managed by Government

1890 A 1947 report states that St. Cyprian's IRS was government owned from 1890. [Item# ANG 81366]

- 1914** The school is in “Class C” and the hours of tuition (three hours) are not sufficient for a school in this class. [January 20, 1914, 05044]
- 1960** The government issues a press release explaining responsibility for education on the Peigan reserve. Along with the Treaty 7 agreement to pay the salary of teachers on the reserve, legislative authority to provide and operate schools is contained in the Indian Act R.S.C. 1952 Chapter 149, as amended by 1952-53 Chapter 41 and 1956 Chapter 40 . [Item#s 04909, 04909A]
- 1969** No documents were found to confirm that, as with other Indian Schools in Canada, Employees of St. Cyprian’s IRS came under the Public Service Act and became Government staff at St. Cyprian’s IRS.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS

- 1889** The new Church of England boarding school is almost completed. Construction on one part of the building is of lumber - rough and clapboard on the outside, rough lumber and dressed siding on the inside. On the other part, the construction is of logs hewn on the inside. [Item# 06202]
- 1890** Boarding school opens April 18, 1890. [Item#ANGDC 80793]
- 1893** A dormitory for 24 boys and a dining room to accommodate 36 pupils is erected. [Item#ANGDC 80793]
- 1897** The new school is nearly ready. The completed work is satisfactory. [Item# 06215]. The school is opened by Governor General and Lady Aberdeen in September. [Item#ANGDC 80793]
- 1902** Furnaces are submerged in a flood which damages the building’s foundations. The Principal requests permission and financial assistance to move the school to higher ground. [Item# 04582A] No documents have been located regarding the government’s response.
- 1908-1909** “Fresh air” dormitories erected as an addition to the east and west wings. [Item#ANGDC 80793]
- 1917** A report states that the buildings are old and the outbuildings not worth repairing. [Item# 04808]
- 1923** Permission to build a new laundry building granted. [Item# 00475]
- 1926** Funds are provided in the department budget for a new school. [Item# 00700] By August, excavation for the basement is complete but the contractor, P. W.

Graham and Sons, has not started work on the building. [Item#s 06142, 06142A].

A contract is signed to build a stock barn, hen house, and implement shed. [Item# 06164]

1927 The contractor's work on the new school is completed. [Item#s 00632, 05140]

1928 Granary and hog house built. [Item# 00695]

Root cellar built [Item# 00708]

1930 Permission granted to build a combined workshop, storeroom and coal shed [Item#s 05539, 05535B]

1932 When the school was built, fire escape ladders were nine to eleven feet off the ground. Principal requests and is granted permission to extend the ladders. [Item#s 00748, 00749]

1935 Cattle shed erected.[Item# 06105]

1941 Emergency repairs required to sewage system because the toilets would not clear. The system had not been cleaned for five years. Principal and staff reminded to clean the system twice a year. [Item# 05784]

1944 Government approval to build a wooden staircase as an extension to the fire escape on the girls's side of the building [Item# 00835]

1945 Problems with the water supply result in problems with leakage and cloudy water. A report on the system is commissioned. [Item#s 05884, A to B; 04147A; 00852]

1946 The horse and cattle barn is burned to the ground. [Item# 00862]

1948 Principal's living quarters renovated. [Item# 04440]

1957 Classrooms at St. Cyprian's are inadequate. The government recommends that the school be closed. [Item# 04002]

LAND

1897 The new school building is situated on a site 10 miles west of the old station and off the Reserve, on 40 acres of land donated to the Diocese by the government for church purposes. The balance of the quarter section is later purchased by the diocese – the location is immediately West of the Reserve, on Pincher Creek within easy distance of the Railway Station at Brocket and the site chosen for the new Agency buildings. [Item# ANGDC 80793]

- 1903** The Synod of the Diocese of Calgary purchases land for the Residential School on the Peigan Reserve. The Principal, W.R. Haynes requests additional land. [Item#s 04365, 04364]
- 1907** Attached to the Church of England Indian Boarding School are 38.5 acres of land, sub-division of 9, section 12, township 7, Range 29, W.4.M. This land was purchased by the Church authorities in **1898**. The Principal of the school applies to have the remaining 120 acres of section 12 allotted for the use of the school. The land has been fenced by the school and has been in use for a number of years. Since the land presently occupied by the school is flooded annually this additional land is a necessity. [Item# 04361]
- 1908** The land the School now has is owned by the Church of England. Additional land may be purchased by the Church for the purposes of the school. The Chief Surveyor writes that if the land is to be held in trust by the Superintendent General for the use of the Peigan Boarding School he presumes that an Order in Council will be all that is necessary. No documents have been found to confirm this transaction. However, it appears from the documents cited below (1957) that such a transaction took place.
[Item# 04354]
- 1947** Request for improvements to the road leading to the school [Item#04319]. The request is granted [Item#04313]
- 1951** The road leading to St. Cyprian's IRS is often impassable. [Item#04319] It travels two miles along the Fishburn road, which is a Provincial Government road, and from there it is two and one half miles to the school. This road is the responsibility of the Federal Government. [Item# 05516]
- 1957** Sketch and description of land occupied by St. Cyprian Indian Residential School: East half of Section 33, Township 7, Range 27, W-4-M, and the West half of Section 34, Township 7, Range 27, W-4-M. The sketch also show the location of the school itself and the barn, and of the smaller buildings such as implement sheds, chicken houses, granaries. [January 3, 1957, Item#s 04527, 04527A]
- In early 1957 discussion begins regarding a plan to return land not being used by the Church to the Peigan Band to use or lease as they see fit. [Item# 04522] A letter from the government states that the land was given to St. Cyprian School for use only and that no formal lease was made. [Item# 04520] [See entries for 1907, 1908 under this heading]. On March 6, 1957, a Band Council Resolution is signed giving conditions for leasing the land and purchasing farm equipment [Item#s 04284, 04286, 04286A, 04286B, 04286C]

ASSOCIATED DAY SCHOOLS

- 1889** A new boarding school is proposed and the present day school teacher, Rev. Mr. Bourne is proposed as principal with his wife acting as Matron. [Item# 04083]
- 1951 -1952** Agent's Quarterly Report mentions that a day school with 37 pupils and a Home and School Association has had a successful year. [Item# 04691].
- 1960** Plans for a new Indian Day School on the Peigan Reserve have been delayed because of a controversy over the location of the new school. As a result the school will not be ready until September 1, 1961. [June 1, 1960, Item# 04027]
- 1961** Government plans to close St. Cyprian's Indian Residential School remain in place and the file for establishment #715 (Peigan Indian Day School - Anglican Church of Canada) is reactivated. [June 2, 1961 Item# 04054]

PHOTOS, PLANS AND OTHER MEDIA

Please note that the cover letters for these documents have been included

Item #	Date	Description
06202, 06202A, 06202B, 06202C	1889 November 25	Three rough sketches for the new Church of England Boarding School
06208B, 06208C, 06208D, 06208E,06208F	1893 October 31	Sketches of the Church of England Boarding School
ANGDC 81377	1902 November 3	Sketch of a floor plan
ANGDC 81377	1911 or 1912	Rough sketch of floor plan
06143, 06143A, 06143 B	1926 September 14	Diagrams - roofing repairs
05708, 05708A	1936 December 2	Request for a table to be built - diagram
04140A, 04140B, 04140C	1945 March 28	Re: report on School's water supply

06239, 06239A, 06239B, 06239C, 06239D, 06239E, 06239F, 06239G	1945 April 11	Photographs - Re: report on water supply
05980, 05890A, 05890B	1947 June 3	Sketch for a barn proposed for the school
04175, 04175C	1948 November 30	Photographs of school - two pages
05641, 05641D	1950 June 14	Sketch of the School's Chimney
04302, 04302B	1951 July 13	Photograph of the road leading to the school
04527, 04527A	1957 March 1	Diagram of St. Cyprian's Land
04517, 04517A	1957 April 1	Diagram of St. Cyprian's Land

GENERAL ENROLLMENT STATISTICS OVER TIME

Year	Number of Students
1893	32 children in residence
1894-1895	32 children in residence
1899	24 children in residence
1903	27 children in residence
1906	31 children in residence
1915	36 pupils in residence
1923	31 children in residence
1935	42 children in residence
1942	47 children in residence
1943	46 children in residence
1944	43 children in residence

1945	46.6 children in residence
1946	48 children in residence
1947	51.6 children in residence
1948	58 children in residence
1949	59 children in residence
1950	57 children in residence
1951	57 children in residence
1952	61 children in residence
1953	59.6 children in residence
1954	58.4 children in residence
1955	60 children in residence
1956	62 children in residence
1957	61.98 children in residence
1958	59.24 children in residence
1959	58 children in residence
1960	42 children in residence
1961	35 children in residence
1962	90 [Day School Enrollment]
1963	50 [Day School Enrollment]
1964	68 [Day School Enrollment]

STUDENTS FROM OTHER RESERVES

Students from, at least the following band attended St. Cyprian IRS:

Peigan Band

There may be alternate ways of spelling this band name.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

The following religious groups were associated with St. Cyprian's IRS:

- 1899** The Church of England [Item# 04996]
- 1921** Missionary Society of the Anglican Church of Canada [Item# 05086]
- 1961** The Indian School Administration of the Anglican Church of Canada [Item#
04645]
- The Diocese of Calgary [Item#04645A]

WRITTEN AGREEMENTS

- 1911** A letter enclosing duplicate copies of the agreements for the Peigan, Blood, and Sarcee Boarding has been located [April 22, 1911 04188]. Attached to this document is a 1911 Contract between the Department of Indian Affairs and the Diocese of Calgary for the Sarcee Boarding School. At this time, it is not clear whether this document also refers to St. Cyprian's IRS [April 5, 1911, 04188A]
- 1912** Copies of the 1911 Agreement describing conditions under which the schools are to be operated are sent to Archdeacon Tims, Church of England. [October 24, 1912, 05026]

DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO SCHOOL INCIDENTS

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

The following suggestions of abuse, listed chronologically, comprise all known identifiable complaints and/or allegations received by government officials and all available information regarding the follow-up and outcome.

Incidents (Sexual)

No information found

Incidents (Physical)

- 1920** A report from the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada mentions that on a visit to the school "two or three years ago" two of the older

boys were chained together as a punishment for desertion [November 25, 1960 05079]

1947 Parents complain about the punishment their children receive. [Item#s 04685, 00836]

Incidents (Student on Student)

No information found

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Accidental Death

1895 Parish record indicates that another accidental death occurred during the year. [Item# ANGDC 80793]

1899 Two boys killed in a snow slide (avalanche) at the back of the school [Item#s 04994, 04995, 04996]

Disease/Health

1895 The parish record states that many residential school children died during the year. [Item# ANGDC 80793]

1921 The building is old and in a dilapidated condition, the dormitory accommodation poor, folded quilts were used instead of mattresses. The milk supply for 37 people is limited to one cow. The health of the children is poor. [October 1921 05094C]

1925 Female staff members make it difficult to maintain quarantine during an outbreak of Scarlet Fever at the school. [March 16, 1925, Item#s 05118, 05120]. Later that year, a nurse's report raises concerns that windows are nailed shut, food is inadequate and unclean. [July 21, 1925, Item# 05124]

Fire

1925 In December 1925, fire destroys the Principal's residence. The contents of the house are not insured. [December 15, 1925, Item# 00544]

1932 When the school was built, fire escape ladders were nine to eleven feet off the ground. Principal requests and is granted permission to extend the ladders. [Item#s 00748, 00749]

1938 An inspection report raises concerns about the poor lighting on the steel stairs on either side of the building [probably fire escape stairs]. His concern is that in

event of a fire there is danger of missing the steps and falling. He is also concerned that the girls have to jump from the fire escape to a porch roof and from there, seven feet to the ground. [Item# 00798]

1939 Requests for an extension to the fire escape, and for repairs to the chimney stack which is cracked and could become unstable in a windstorm. [Item#s 00808, A to B]. Due to lack of funds the request for an extension to the fire escape is denied, a further inspection is required regarding repairs to the chimney. [Item#s 00809 and 00810]

1944 Further requests for extension to fire escape ladders. In March, the government instructs the Indian Agent to discuss the matter with the Principal. [Item#s 00828, 05862] In April, because of the exorbitant cost of steel ladders, a wooden staircase is suggested. [Item#s 00831, 00832] In October, approval is granted for a wooden staircase extension to be built. [Item# 00835]

Parents' Complaints/Administrative Issues

1906 Parents complain that a little boy was given only bread to eat and that he was not allowed to come home. [Item# 04577]

1921 Parents sign a petition requesting the removal of Principal S. H. Middleton from the school [January 27, 1921 Item#s 05084, 05084A, 05084B, 05084C, 05084D, 05084E]

1935 A report describes a number of complaints from parents regarding a number of issues including insufficient food, inadequate clothing, the death of one pupil and the serious illness of another. [ANGDC Item# 80824]

1945 The Indian agent complains about the school. [Item# 00853]

Truancy

1920 There are serious problems with truancy at the school. The government calls for better cooperation between the staff and the Indian Agent in order to solve the problem. [Item #s 05080, 05081, 05083, 04251 and 05079 A to D]

PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS

Name	Position	Tenure Dates
Rev. Mr. Bourne	Day School Teacher - proposed as Principal for the Boarding School	February 5, 1889 to August 25, 1891

Rev. J. Hinchcliffe	Peigan Boarding School Principal	October 26, 1894 to December 1898
Mr. A. Mason	Principal ³	November 21, 1894 to March 21, 1895
Rev. W.R. Haynes	Principal	January 10, 1899 to September 12, 1912
A.R. Collins	Principal	From 1911 to July 1912
Captain Fisher	Principal, Victoria Home, Brocket	September 12, 1912 to March 1913
H.W. Reeder	Principal, Victoria Home, Brocket	March 16, 1914 to June 12, 1914
Rev. W. R. Haynes	To be a temporary position until a new principal can be appointed	May 8, 1913 to April 5, 1918
Mr. Owen ⁴	Assistant Principal [Reserve Missionary Rev. Haynes is Principal	February 10, 1913 to April 7, 1917
M.H.W. Reeder	Principal	January 15 , 1914 to June 30, 1914
Mr. Giggle	Acting Principal, Victoria Home	Easter 1918 to 1919 1918 - dies at the school in July 1922
Rev. W. R. Haynes	Principal	1919 to May 29, 1920
Rev. S.H. Middleton	Principal	May 29, 1920 to April 5, 1921- also mentions Middleton principal of two schools
Mr. Giggle	Acting Principal, Victoria Home	August 6, 1921 to February 20, 1922
Mr. C.A. Roe [or G. A. Roe]	Acting Principal, Victoria Home	January 16, 1923 to September 1, 1925

³As a replacement for Rev. J. Hinchcliffe during his four month absence. It is unclear how long he remained in this position.

⁴The beginning and end of his tenure is unconfirmed but the documents mention his presence at the school as Assistant Principal during this period.

Rev. W. Barlow ⁵	Principal	September 1, 1925 to August 17, 1926
Rev. Vivian S. Lord	Acting Principal	August 17, 1926 to August 6, 1931
Rev. W. Barlow	Principal	June 6, 1930 to September 30, 1943
Rev. B.S. Greene	Principal	October 22, 1943 to December 31, 1945 ⁶
Chas. S. Middleton	Acting Principal	January 9, 1945 to February 7, 1946
Rev. E.S.W. Cole	Principal	March 9, 1946 to July 1948 [appointed to Gleichen in July, visits St. Cyprian's every two weeks during the summer of 1948]
Robert T. Cathcart	Principal	December 31, 1948 ⁷ to June 30, 1949
W.J.J. Woods	Principal	September 30, 1949 to June 30, 1955
Harry B. Miller	Principal	August 22, 1955 to December 31, 1956
Rev. C.T. Stanger	Principal	September 1956 to July 28, 1959
J.F. Orman	Principal	September 1959 to June 30, 1961
G.N. Hosking	Senior Teacher -Peigan (Prot.) Indian Day School [also known as Peigan A.C.C. Indian School]	April 17, 1960 to June 1962
Irwin Gemmell	Principal, Peigan (Prot.) Indian Day School [also known as Peigan A.C.C. Indian School]	September 1962 to June 1964
P.R.E. Lethbridge	Principal, Peigan School	September 1972

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⁵It is unclear whether Rev. Barlow was principal for this entire period however the December 31, 1925 quarterly report for teachers' salaries notes that Rev. W. Barlow was appointed Principal.

⁶In an agent's report for the quarter ending December 31, 1945 the agent notes that the Principal of the school during the quarter and was replaced by Chas. S. Middleton.

⁷It appears that since the December 31, 1948 document is a Quarterly Return, Cathcart became Principal of St Cyprian's IRS in September, 1948.

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



National Centre for
Truth and Reconciliation

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA