**INQUIRIES INTO STUDENT DEATHS**

**BIRTLE INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL**

**1937**

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Indian Affairs
School Files
(RG 10, Volume 6255)

| | |
|---|---|
| File 575-14, part 1 | Birtle Agency - Birtle Residential School - Presbyterian - Livestock. 1927 - 1945 |
| File 575-23, part 1 | Birtle Agency - Birtle Residential School - Presbyterian - Deaths of Pupils. 1937 |
| File 576-1, part 1 | Brandon Residential School - Methodist - General Administration. 1888 - 1918 |
| File 576-1, part 2 | Brandon Residential School - United Church - General Correspondence. 1918 - 1935 |

Indian Affairs. (RG 10, Volume 6255, File 575-23, part 1)

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No. ~~106-1-23~~

INDIAN AFFAIRS BRANCH

DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND RESOURCES

# BIRTLE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

## DEATH OF PUPILS.

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# DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

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Memorandum of an inquiry into the cause and circumstances of the death of

Earl Pratt, Pupil No. 306

of the Birtle Indian Residential School at Birtle Man.,

who died at Birtle Manitoba (place) on 1st November 1937.

## INSTRUCTIONS

When a pupil of an Indian Residential School dies, the Principal is required to inform the Indian Agent at once.

On receipt of the Principal's notice the Indian Agent shall convene a Board of Inquiry, consisting of himself as Chairman, the Principal of the Residential School, and the Medical Officer who attended the deceased pupil. These members of the Board shall, in each other's presence, complete this memorandum, which shall then be forwarded to the Department of Indian Affairs, Ottawa in one copy.

The Board of Inquiry shall, if at all practicable assemble within 48 hours of the pupil's death.

The parents or guardians of the deceased pupil shall be given notice of this inquiry and be permitted to attend it or to send a representative. They or their representative shall be asked if they wish to make a statement. In the event of their so wishing, their statement shall be attached to the report. The inquiry, however, shall not be delayed more than 72 hours after the time at which it would otherwise be held, to enable them to attend it.

If the Indian Agent is located at such a distance from the school as to make it impracticable for him to attend the Board, he shall request a responsible local resident to act for him. A suitable person for this duty would be a Justice of the Peace or a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted or Provincial Police. A more or less permanent arrangement of this kind might be necessary in some cases. The Department is prepared to pay a reasonable fee for this duty, on the Agent's recommendation. The report of the Board, in any case, must reach the Department through the Indian Agent's office.

This inquiry is not designed to take the place of, or prevent, any other inquiry, including an inquest, which may be required by law.

If the pupil died as the result of an accident, the Indian Agent is required to take the statements of the witnesses of the accident, and attach them to this memorandum.

FORM No. 414.

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K.J

## A. STATEMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL OF THE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

1. On what date did this pupil fall sick or suffer injury? Was ill at time of admission Sept 13th 1907

2. At what time of day?

3. When and to whom did he or she report this illness or accident? He reported to the Nurse whenever he was suffering

4. What means were taken to afford relief? Nurse gave attendance the day of admission and until time of death

5. What medicines were used for this purpose and in what dose or quantity?

6. When was the doctor called? Very soon after his admission and he made frequent calls in the boy's behalf

7. If the pupil was removed to hospital, at what time was this done and by what means of transport?

8. If the pupil was not removed to hospital, what measures were taken for his or her care at the school? Care given in our School Hospital Ward

9. Add any other useful information here.

The terminal phase of his illness began about noon November 1st

E. A. Lockhart
*Principal.*

NOTE: If the deceased pupil dies in hospital at a distance from the school, under the care of the physician or surgeon who attends him at the hospital, a clinical report of the patient's illness and death in the hospital is to be secured and attached to this memorandum.

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## B. STATEMENT OF THE PHYSICIAN WHO ATTENDED THE DECEASED PUPIL

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I attended Earl Pratt from Sept 13th 1937 to Nov 1st 1937. The immediate cause of death was Brain Tumor.

The contributory cause of death was cachexia

Do you consider that the Principal of the School, and the members of the School staff exercised reasonable care and judgment in regard to the illness and death of this pupil? Yes.

Did they follow out your professional instructions? Yes.

If in either respect, you consider them to have been at fault, it is required that you express your carefully considered views as follows:

W. L. Edwards M.D.

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## C. STATEMENT OF INDIAN AGENT

1. Having heard and read over the statements of the Principal and the Physician, do you consider that all essential circumstances relating to the death of ..... Earl Pratt .....

have been recorded? ..... Yes ..... If not, you are required to add here any further particulars which strike you as essential.

2. In this space record any recommendations which the Board consider should be made to the Department in relation to the health or safety of the pupils of this School.

..... D. J. Lamothe .....
*Chairman—Indian Agent.*

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DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
CANADA

OFFICE OF
INDIAN AGENT

Dept. of Mines & Resources
Indian Affairs Branch.
NOV 5 1937
RECORDS

E/12

Birtle Manitoba
2nd November 1937

Dear Sir:-

I am enclosing herewith the Memorandum of an inquiry into the cause of the death of Earl Pratt, a pupil at the Birtle Residential School, who died yesterday.

This boy was very ill by 3 p.m. yesterday afternoon and died about 7 p.m. Owing to the absence of the Principal during the afternoon, the boys relatives on the Bird Tail Sioux Reserve, were not notified of his condition, or of his death, until I did so about 12 p.m., although they live only fourteen miles from the school, on a fair road.

The Principal did not return home until shortly before the boys death, and I was absent on the Waywayseecappo Reserve until 10 p.m., when I was notified of the death of this boy.

I would suggest that a member of the school staff, should be given authority to act as principal, when the principak is absent, in case the need should arise.

Your obedient servant

A.G. Smith

A.G. Smith
Indian Agent

The Secretary
Indian Affairs Branch
Dept. of Mines and Resources
Ottawa

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R/15

Ottawa, November 9, 1937.

Dear Sir:-

The Department is in receipt of your letter of November 2, enclosing memorandum of inquiry into the cause and circumstances of the death of Earl Pratt.

You should notify the Principal that, when he is absent from school, some other member of the staff should have authority to act in urgent matters.

Yours truly,

R.A. Hoey,
Supt. of Welfare & Training.

A.G. Smith, Esq.,
Indian Agent,
Birtle, Man.

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FILE NO. 575-23

DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND RESOURCES

INDIAN AFFAIRS BRANCH

# BIRTLE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

## DEATHS - PUPILS AT RESIDENT SCHOOLS

DORMANT

DORMANT

CROSS REFERENCE

106-1-23

DORMANT

575-23

FILE NO.

| CENTRAL REGISTRY | P.A. OR B.F. | DATE | INITIALS | REFERRED TO | FOR REMARKS | INITIALS | DATE |
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| | | (If purpose for which referred cannot be expressed on one line, add minute to file, and enter here "With Minute") | | | | | |

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