

COQUALEETZA INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, SARDIS, BC

21 students were listed on the NCTR website in 2021 as having died at the former Coqualeetza Industrial School:

<https://nctr.ca/residential-schools/british-columbia/coqualeetza-chilliwack-home/>

Remembering the Following Students:

Name	Date of Death (Year/Month/Day)
Abel Ward	ca. 1936
Alec Sam	1937-03-31
Alice Dick	1926-01-01
Amelia Jim	1900-07-24
Andrew F. Johnston	1902-04-30
Annie Charley Short	1898-10-23
Belinda James	1909-06-05
Cyril Edgar	1937-10-01 – 1937-12-31
Hannah [Coq]	1898-10-23
Hannah Wilson	1901-05-28
Harry Late	1903-05-02
Ida Inlsey	1901-06-22
Jonah Ebbstone	1909-07-14
Josephine Mckay	1918-12-04
Laurence Hall	1935-07-01
Lloyd George David Quocksistala	1930-02-15
Louis Naas	1904-04-30
Mary Camsell	1936-01-01
Paul Legace	1902-02-26
Susan D. John	1901-06-22
Willie Mckay	1936-01-01

The above-referenced 21 students are not ‘missing’. They are listed below in the order in which they appeared on the NCTR website with the following indications as to the federal and provincial government and residential school records which have information concerning the date of death, cause of death, and place of burial for each student.

THE TYPES OF RECORDS CONSULTED

(1) Provincial Government Death Certificates

The letter [C] following a name indicates that a microfilmed copy of the provincial death certificate is available online at the BC Archives at:

<http://search-collections.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/Genealogy>

An asterisk following a name indicates that the microfilmed copy of the provincial death certificate is not available online, but can be accessed free of charge at the BC Archives and at major BC public libraries.

(2) Inquiries Into Student Deaths

The Department of Indian Affairs mandated, on Form No. 414, that there be an inquiry into the death of any student who died at a residential school:

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. . . .

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 attached them to this memorandum.

Although Library and Archives Canada microfilmed inquiries into student deaths for some residential schools, unfortunately none were microfilmed for the Coqualeetza Indian Residential School.

(3) Quarterly Returns

A unique register number was used to meticulously track every student from the time the student was admitted to a residential school until the time the student ceased to attend and was formally recorded as 'discharged'. In the entries below the student's unique register number at the Coqualeetza Indian Residential School has been added where available.

Quarterly returns which included student names, register numbers and attendance data were sent to Ottawa by school principals via the local Indian Agent every quarter in order for the school to qualify for the per capita grant paid by the federal government for each eligible status Indian student.

Although Library and Archives Canada microfilmed quarterly returns for some residential schools, unfortunately none were microfilmed for the Coqualeetza Indian Residential School.

(4) Application Forms Signed By Parents

The local Indian Agent was required to submit an individual application form signed by a parent to the Department of Indian Affairs in Ottawa for each student for whom admission to a residential school was requested, and each application was then formally approved or rejected in writing by Department officials in Ottawa.

Similarly, the Indian Agent was required to submit an application to Ottawa before any student could be discharged from the school, and each discharge was also formally approved in writing by Department officials in Ottawa. In addition, a form summarizing the applications for admission and discharge of students was sent to Ottawa by school principals through the Indian Agent every quarter along with the quarterly returns.

Applications for admission and discharge as well as the quarterly summaries for the Coqualeetza Indian Residential School for the years 1936-1938 were microfilmed by Library and Archives Canada. To access them, go to this link for LAC c-8766 and insert the page number 1179:

<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/mass-digitized-archives/school-files-1879-1953/Pages/item.aspx?PageID=2486270>

(5) Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports

Until about 1915, annual reports by principals, which included information on school health conditions and student deaths, were printed in the Department of Indian Affairs Annual Report. DIA Annual Reports can be accessed at the Library and Archives Canada website at this link:

https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Home/Search?DataSource=Library|IndAffAnnRep&q_exact=for%20the%20year%20ended&DateBucket=%7C1864-1969&

See also:

<https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.846380/publication.html>

STUDENT BIOGRAPHIES COMPILED FROM THE ABOVE RECORDS

Abel Ward (c. 1936), Register #781, 9 yrs old [NB: discharged 9 March 1936, at school 1 year 3 months: 'Ill health, deceased' (see LAC c-8766, pp. 1209, 1211)]

Alec Sam* (1937/3/31), Register #853; 7 yrs old; Soowahlie Band; born Soowahlie Reserve; parents Isaac Sam, born Soowahlie Reserve, Christine, birthplace unknown, both deceased; d. Chilliwack General Hospital; tubercular meningitis; death certificate signed by doctor; buried Soowahlie Indian Reserve [NB: death certificate states name was **Aleck** Sam] [NB: death certificate states date of death was 1937/2/14] [NB: 'Alex. Sam' discharged 31 March 1937, at school 5 months 14 days: 'Deceased' (see LAC c—8766, pp. 1400-1)]

[NB: death certificate for father, Isaac Sam, labourer; Soowahlie Reserve; born Hope; parents unknown; widowed; d. 28 September 1936, Soowahlie Indian Reserve, aged 58; death certificate signed by doctor; buried Soowahlie Indian Reserve]

Alice Dick* (1926/1/1), 8 yrs old; Nitinat Band; born Clo-oose; parents Chief Dick, Susie, both born Nitinat; d. Coqualeetza Indian Residential School, Sardis; epileptic fit and smothering or asphyxiation while in the fit; buried Clo-oose, West Coast of Vancouver Island; death certificate signed by Indian Agent (informant Reverend G.H. Raley, principal) [NB: death certificate states date of death was 1926/3/1]

Amelia Jim (1900/7/24) [NB: DIA Annual Report for year ended 30 June 1900: 'The total attendance during the year has been one hundred and ten pupils, with an average for the year of over eighty-four. Fifteen were received, twenty-four discharged and **three died**, leaving a present attendance of eighty-three. Of these, forty-two are boys and forty-one are girls.']

Andrew F. Johnston (1902/4/30) [NB: DIA Annual Report for year ended 30 June 1902: 'One hundred and five pupils have been in attendance during the year, the average has been eighty-two plus, fourteen were admitted, sixteen were discharged, and **two died**. Present attendance is eighty-seven, of whom sixty are boys and twenty-seven are girls.']

Annie Charley Short (1898/10/23) [NB: DIA annual report for year ended 30 June 1898: 'The aggregate attendance is one hundred and thirty-three, seventy boys and sixty-three girls. Twenty-eight were admitted during the year. Twenty-one were discharged and **four died**.']

Belinda James (1909/6/5) [NB: DIA Annual Report for year ended 31 March 1909: 'One hundred and ten pupils have been in attendance during the year. Of these 85 are now in the school, 15 have been discharged, 8 are away on holiday, and **2 have died**. The average attendance has been a small fraction over 80. There were 26 new pupils admitted to the school.']

Cyril Edgar (1937/1/1 – 1937/12/31), Register #880, 7 yrs old; Clo-oose Band (Nitinat); admitted 8 September 1937; parents Ralph Edgar deceased, Effie Edgar (for application for Cyril **George** Edgar signed by mother, medical exam, admission, approval see LAC c-8766, pp. 1482-3, 1497-8, 1563) [NB: discharged December 1937, at school 2 months 24 days: 'Deceased' (see LAC c-8766, pp. 1624, 1629)]

[NB: application states father was Ralph Edgar, deceased; admission form states father was **Joshua** Edgar, **living**]

[NB: death certificate for brother, Leonard Edgar, 15 yrs old; Nitinat Band; born Sooke; parents Ralph Edgar, born Whyac, Effie Tate, born Victoria; d. 18 May 1937, heart attack (primary cause rheumatic fever); death certificate signed by Indian Agent; buried Whyac]

[NB: death certificate for mother, Effie Tate; residence 3841 8th Avenue, Port Alberni; born 9 October 1900, Victoria; father George Maquinna Tate, mother unknown; widowed (husband Kelly Peters); d. 27 April 1992, Extended Care, West Coast General Hospital, 3841 8th Avenue, Port Alberni; aged 91; death certificate signed by daughter, Mrs. Julie Johnson, 3754 18th Avenue, Port Alberni, and doctor; buried Nitinat Cemetery]

[NB: death certificate for stepfather, Kelly Peters, fisherman; residence Nitinat; born 17 June 1889, Port Renfrew; parents Chief Peters, born Port Renfrew, Isabel Hedeuksa, born Nitinat; married (wife Effie Tate); d. 13 March 1984, West Coast General Hospital, Port Alberni, aged 94; death certificate signed by wife, Effie Tate, Nitinat, and doctor; buried Nitinat Cemetery]

Hannah [Coq] (1898/10/23) [NB: DIA annual report for year ended 30 June 1898: 'The aggregate attendance is one hundred and thirty-three, seventy boys and sixty-three girls. Twenty-eight were admitted during the year. Twenty-one were discharged and **four died.**']

Hannah Wilson (1901/5/28) [NB: DIA Annual Report for year ended 30 June 1901: 'One hundred and fifteen pupils have been in attendance for a longer or shorter period during the year; the average has been eighty-eight plus; thirty-two were admitted, twenty-three discharged, and **one died.** Present attendance, ninety-one, of whom fifty-six are boys and thirty-five are girls.']

Harry Late (1903/5/2) [NB: DIA Annual Report for year ended 30 June 1903: 'One hundred and four pupils have been in attendance during the year; the average has been over seventy-eight; seventeen were admitted; twenty-one discharged; and **one died.** Present attendance, eighty-two, of whom fifty-four are boys and twenty-eight are girls.']

Ida Inlsey (1901/6/22) [NB: DIA Annual Report for year ended 30 June 1901: 'One hundred and fifteen pupils have been in attendance for a longer or shorter period during the year; the average has been eighty-eight plus; thirty-two were admitted, twenty-three discharged, and **one died.** Present attendance, ninety-one, of whom fifty-six are boys and thirty-five are girls.']

Jonah Ebbstone (1909/7/14), 14 yrs old ('14 March 10'); born Bella Bella; d. 14 July, Coqualeetza Institute; hemorrhage of lungs (six weeks); death certificate undated and unsigned; physician listed as Dr. R. McCaffrey; informant listed as Mrs. R.H. Cairns, Sardis [NB: DIA Annual Report for year ended 31 March 1910: 'Attendance. - One hundred and three pupils have been in attendance during the past

year. Of these 85 are now in the school, 12 have been discharged, 5 are away on holiday, and 1 has died.’]

Josephine Mckay (1918/12/4) [DEATH CERTIFICATE NOT YET LOCATED]

Laurence Hall* (1935/7/1), 15 yrs old; Bella Bella Band; born Bella Bella; parents Louis Hall, Sarah Vickers; d. Bella Bella (R.W. Large Memorial Hospital?); pulmonary tuberculosis; death certificate signed by doctor; buried Bella Bella [NB: death certificate states name was **Lawrence Hall**]

[NB: death certificate for father, Louis Hall, fisherman; residence Bella Bella #1 Reserve, Campbell Island; born 12 December 1883, Bella Bella; father surnamed Hall, mother unknown; married (wife Sarah Vickers); d. 17 August 1968, R.W. Large Memorial Hospital, Bella Bella, aged 84; death certificate signed by daughter-in-law, Maggie Hall, Bella Bella, and doctor; buried Bella Bella Indian Cemetery]

[NB: death certificate for mother, Sarah Vickers; Bella Bella Band #28; residence Bella Bella; born 23 December 1893, Bella Bella; parents Joe Vickers, Cecilia, both born Bella Bella; d. 6 February 1976 at son’s home, Bella Bella, aged 82; death certificate signed by son, Willie Hall, Waglisla [Bella Bella], and doctor; buried Grave Island, Bella Bella, by Pastor C.B. Personeous, Bella Bella]

Lloyd George David Quocksistala* (1930/2/15), 11 yrs old; Weiweckum Band; (now We Wai Kai First Nation); born Quathiaska Cove; parents George Quocksistala, born Quathiaska Cove, Mary, birthplace unknown; d. Chilliwack General Hospital; tubercular meningitis; death certificate signed by doctor; buried Quathiaska Cove, Quadra Island [NB: death record states named was David Quocksistala]

Louis Naas (1904/4/30) [NB: DIA Annual Report for year ended 30 June 1904: ‘One hundred and two pupils have been in attendance during the year, the average has been over eighty-one; twenty were admitted, ten were discharged. The present attendance is ninety-two, of whom sixty-two are boys and thirty are girls.’] [NB: does not appear to have been a student as no deaths at school recorded for that year]

Mary Camsell (1936/1/1/) [NB: possible error for May Parnell, Register #533; 12 yrs old; discharged March 1936, at school 2 years 9 months 5 days: ‘Deceased’ (see LAC c-8766, pp. 1210-11)]

[NB: death certificate for May Parnell; Masset Band; born Masset Reserve; parents Isaac Parnell, deceased, Lydia Russ; d. 13 July 1935, Masset, aged 11; pulmonary tuberculosis; death certificate signed by Indian Agent (informant Walter Parnell, Masset Reserve), and doctor; buried Masset Reserve Cemetery]

[NB: death certificate for Lydia Parnell states d. 22 November 1972, Queen Charlotte City, aged 90]

Paul Legace (1902/2/26) [NB: DIA Annual Report for year ended 30 June 1902: ‘One hundred and five pupils have been in attendance during the year, the average has been eighty-two plus, fourteen were admitted, sixteen were discharged, and **two died**.’]

Present attendance is eighty-seven, of whom sixty are boys and twenty-seven are girls.’]

Susan D. John (1901/6/22) [NB: DIA Annual Report for year ended 30 June 1901: ‘One hundred and fifteen pupils have been in attendance for a longer or shorter period during the year; the average has been eighty-eight plus; thirty-two were admitted, twenty-three discharged, and **one died**. Present attendance, ninety-one, of whom fifty-six are boys and thirty-five are girls.’]

Willie Mckay (1936/1/1), Register #794; 16 yrs old [NB: extract from letter dated 7 August 1936 from Dr. D.J. MacDonald, Kincolith, BC: ‘I am advising against the return to Coqualeetza Indian Industrial School of Philip and Dorothy Clarke as they have both developed tubercular glands. Willie McKay has also developed pulmonary tuberculosis while there and will not be returning.’ (see LAC c-8766, p. 1252)] [NB: letter dated 10 September 1936 from Acting Superintendent of Indian Education to Ottawa: ‘The Department is in receipt of letter from Dr. D. J. Macdonald, Kincolith, B.C., in which he states that, owing to unsatisfactory physical condition, the undermentioned children will not return to the Coqualeetza Residential School for the academic year 1936-37: Philip Clarke, Dorothy Clarke, Willie McKay. Their names should be included on the discharge sheet for the quarter ended September 30th. If their health improves by next year, application can be made for their return.’ (see LAC c-8766, p. 1251)] [NB: discharged September 1936, at school 2 years: ‘Deceased’ (see LAC c-8766, pp. 1308, 1312)]

[NB: death certificate for **William** McKay states d. 14 September 1936, Arrandale Country, aged **15**]

Excerpts from DIA Annual Reports on attendance and student deaths:

1898

Attendance. - The attendance is three more than at the time of our last annual report, but the average attendance for the year is about seven and one-third more than for the previous year, viz., over ninety-nine. The aggregate attendance is one hundred and thirty-three, seventy boys and sixty-three girls. Twenty-eight were admitted during the year. Twenty-one were discharged and **four died**.

1899

Attendance. - There have been in attendance during the year one hundred and twenty-three pupils, with an average for the year of over ninety-five. Fifteen were received, twenty-six discharged and **two died**, leaving a present attendance of ninety-five. Of these, forty-seven are boys and forty-eight are girls.

1900

Attendance. - The total attendance during the year has been one hundred and ten pupils, with an average for the year of over eighty-four. Fifteen were received, twenty-four discharged and **three died**, leaving a present attendance of eighty-three. Of these, forty-two are boys and forty-one are girls.

1901

Attendance. - One hundred and fifteen pupils have been in attendance for a longer or shorter period during the year; the average has been eighty-eight plus; thirty-two were admitted, twenty-three discharged, and **one died**. Present attendance, ninety-one, of whom fifty-six are boys and thirty-five are girls.

1902

Attendance. - One hundred and five pupils have been in attendance during the year, the average has been eighty-two plus, fourteen were admitted, sixteen were discharged, and **two died**. Present attendance is eighty-seven, of whom sixty are boys and twenty-seven are girls.

1903

Attendance. - One hundred and four pupils have been in attendance during the year; the average has been over seventy-eight; seventeen were admitted; twenty-one discharged; and **one died**. Present attendance, eighty-two, of whom fifty-four are boys and twenty-eight are girls.

1904

Attendance. - One hundred and two pupils have been in attendance during the year, the average has been over eighty-one; twenty were admitted, ten were discharged. The present attendance is ninety-two, of whom sixty-two are boys and thirty are girls.

1905

Attendance. - One hundred and seven pupils have been in attendance during the year; the average has been seventy-seven plus; seventeen have been admitted and twenty-one discharged. Present enrolment, eighty-six; fifty-five boys and thirty-one girls.

1906

Attendance. - Ninety-eight pupils have been in attendance during the year. The average attendance has been a fraction over 75. Twelve pupils have been admitted and 25 have been discharged, leaving 73 pupils on the roll.

1907

Attendance. - Ninety-three pupils have been in attendance during the year. The average attendance has been nearly 82. Ten have been discharged and 27 admitted, leaving 90 pupils on the roll.

1908

Attendance. - One hundred and five pupils have been in attendance during the year. The average attendance has been over 85; 18 were admitted; and 9 were discharged early in the year; 3 were allowed home on holiday and never returned. Others were very dilatory about returning, thus lowering the average attendance. There are now 96 pupils on the roll.

Class-room Work. - The hours of study in the school-room are from 9 to 12 a.m. and from 1 to 4 p.m. Each pupil is in the school-room one-half of each day, attending in the forenoon one month and in the afternoon the following month. **The regular course of study of the schools of the province of British Columbia is followed.** Good faithful work has been done and the standing of the school is excellent. There are 6 pupils in the school at the present time who have nearly completed the course of

study. **They are bright and intelligent. The pupils that come in at 10 years of age soon learn to use the English language with accuracy.** In a remarkably short time they are able to write interesting letters home to parents and friends.

1909

Attendance. - One hundred and ten pupils have been in attendance during the year. Of these 85 are now in the school, 15 have been discharged, 8 are away on holiday, and **2 have died.** The average attendance has been a small fraction over 80. **There were 26 new pupils admitted to the school.**

Class-room Work. - The hours of study in the school-room are from 9 to 12 a.m., and from 1 to 4 p.m. Each pupil is in the school-room one-half of each day, attending in the forenoon one month and in the afternoon the following month. The regular course of study of the schools of the province of British Columbia is followed. Good faithful work has been done and the standing of the school is excellent. **Two of the pupils will try the examination for entrance to a high school in June.** The parents are delighted to receive the monthly letter sent by each child. **For only one reason is a pupil kept from the class-room and that is illness.** Many of the pupils make rapid progress in the class room.

Compiled by Nina Green 24 November 2021, updated 13 April 2023.