

Copy to Dr.Cormie.

August 20th 1941.

Rev.R.B.Cochrane, D.D.  
TORONTO, Ont.

Dear Dr.Cochrane,

I returned recently from a trip to Cross Lake, being there while the treaty was paid. I went there at the request of Mr.F.W.Stevens to look into the matter of the acceptance of United Church children in the R.C. School at Cross Lake. Mr.Stevens has been exercised about this matter for some time, but I wished to determine the attitude of the Cross Lake people before any action was taken, and, particularly, it was my desire that, if any action was taken, the initiative should come from the Cross Lake people, and not directly from the United Church.

I find it necessary to say, in beginning my report, that my visiting with the Cross Lake people and any discussion I have had with them, was conducted in the company of our Missionary, F.W.Stevens, and that no other influence was accepted, nor, indeed, offered, in the making of this report.

I am sending a list of children who have been admitted to the Cross Lake School within the last two years, some of definitely Protestant parents, some of parents who have changed their affiliation to the Catholic Church after their children were admitted to the school.

It can be taken for granted that the children have been baptized Catholic since entering the school, and that this argument may be used as sufficient warrant for their continuing residence there. The wording of Sec 10, sub-sec 2 of the Indian Act, leaves doubt as to interpretation. In effect it reads " No Protestant child shall be accepted into a Catholic School-----". What is the definition of a " Protestant child"? The Catholic Church would no doubt claim that a Catholic child was one that had been baptized Catholic, but I think I am right in saying that the Civil Law definition is that a Catholic child is the child of Catholic parents. Similarly, of course, a Protestant child is the child of Protestant parents.

Whether a trap was set at Cross Lake I do not know, but it is remarkable that I had two applications made to me while there to accept children of Catholic parents into the Norway House School. If it was a trap, it gave us a very good opportunity. I turned down the applications on the ground that acceptance would be a contravention of the Indian Act, and took the parties before the Indian Agent and the Chief and Council to have the Agent verify my stand by reading the



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Dr. Cochrane.

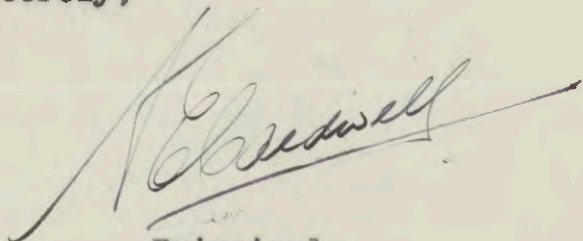
section of the Indian Act quoted above. The Chief then brought before the Agent the whole situation, naming the parents who have been induced to place their children in the Catholic School ( the parents being Protestant). Thus the matter was officially taken notice of at the treaty meeting and will be reported upon by the Indian Agent upon the initiative of the Indians themselves. I may say that, since returning to Norway House, it is rather significant that I have had a personal request from a Cross Lake Indian mother ( a Catholic) to take her child into this school. The request, of course, was refused.

Shortly after the meeting at Cross Lake referred to above, a man, Albert [REDACTED], and his wife came to me to ask me to take two of their children whom they had placed in the Catholic School, to Norway House. They already have an older daughter in the Norway House School. I had the man come over to the United Church Mission, called the Indian Agent to come and listen to his story and officially report it to the Department, and took a statement from him (which I enclose a copy).

The Indian Agent obtained from the Band the same information which I enclose herewith. I feel, however, that the Department should know that we are intending to follow this matter up, otherwise I am afraid that there would be no action on the report of the Indian Agent alone. Shall I take the matter up from this end or leave it with you? As it is getting rather late in the season, and it would be advisable to get a decision immediately, especially if some of the children in question are to be transferred to this school.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,



Principal.

PROTESTANT CHILDREN IN RESIDENCE AT THE CROSS LAKE ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL.

- 1. Children whose parents are Protestant, and were so at the time of the admission of their children to the Cross Lake School:-

FATHER. Child.
Jeremiah [redacted].....Thomas Albert.
Solomon [redacted].....Betsy.
Albert [redacted]..... William
Walter Clarence.
(a child, Kitty, now at Norway House School)
George Magnus [redacted]..... Tommy
Eleanor.
(this family had three children graduate from Norway House school).

- 2. Children whose fathers are Protestant, and were so at the time of the admission of the children to the Cross Lake school:-

Father. Child.
McKay [redacted]..... Victoria,
Luke.
(A girl, Lucy, graduated from Norway House)

- 3. Children whose parents were Protestant, but who, it is claimed, have changed to Roman Catholic Church allegiance SINCE their children were admitted to the Cross Lake School.

Norman [redacted]..... Andrew James.
( One child, Rebecca, in the Norway House school)
Edmund [redacted]..... Jane Esther Evangeline.
Nicodemus.
( one child, Margaret, in Norway House school)

[Handwritten signature]

Principal.
Norway House Indian Residential School.



COPY.

STATEMENT OF ALBERT [REDACTED], TREATY INDIAN, CROSS LAKE BAND,  
taken this 11th day of August 1941.

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I am, and alwsys have been, Protestant, a member of the United Church of Canada. My wife was Catholic but was received into membership of the United Church of Canada in 1933. My wife and I have six children, three being of school age. In August 1938 I placed one child ( my oldest) in the Norway House Residential School. In 1940, I placed two children in the Cross Lake Roman Catholic School, having been sent for by the Principal and requested so to do at the Catholic School.

It is the wish of myself and my wife that our children should be raised in the Protestant Faith and attend a Protestant school. I hereby voluntarily make the request that my children, at present in the Cross Lake Roman Catholic School, be transferred immediately to the Norway House Residential School.

No inducement has been offered and no influence brought ot bear by anyone connected with the Norway House Residential School or with the United Church of Canada to require me to make this request.

Dated at Cross Lake Indian Reserve this 11th day of August 1941.

Signed. ( Albert [REDACTED] )  
( Sarah [REDACTED] )

Witnessed: (F.G.Stevens.)  
Read over and interpreted to the signatories:  
(Fred W.Stevens)

This statement was taken withn the knowledge and consent of the acting Indian Agent .