CRANBROOK, B.C., 19

nay Industrail Res. School

Dept of Mines & Resources
Rev. G. Forbes

ACCOUNT NO.

IN ACCOUNT WITH

CRANBROOK SASH AND DOOR CO., LTD.

. . . MANUFACTURERS OF . . .

SASH, DOORS, FRAMES, MOULDINGS, ETC. ROUGH AND DRESSED LUMBER

PIECES	DESCRIPTION	DIMENSIONS	FEET B. M.	TOTAL FEET	PRICE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
6051'	#1EGC fir flg.	1x3		6051	65.00	393.32	
12 rolls	Scutan paper Medium				3.00	36.00	
100 lbs.	2½" finishing nails				10.00	10.00	
						439.32	
	Our truck to Mission					4.00	
						443.32	$443.32

44/4,38/5,6/6,6/7,9/8,42/923/10,50/11,18/12,10/13,11/14
20/15,23/16,34/18,29/20
Bundles of six.

Order # 6612

5 copies

TRIPLICATE FOR FILE
Voucher in duplicate detached
for Accountant to pay.

21.4.49

Received above
G. Forbes PRINCIPAL
KOOTENAY INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

S-5495-34

15-5-0 - April 15 / 41

Kootenay Indian School,
Cranbrook. B.C.

Dear Mr Phelan:

As you are aware, the Lister Diesel engine was installed about 3 weeks ago. I was going to write to you at that time but was informed that the Department was supplying us with flooring for the dormitories. This flooring has just been unloaded here and I wish to thank you and the Department for the engine & the flooring. Both were very much needed & they are really appreciated.

We intend to start laying the flooring on Monday & that is just the right time as our friend Mr Barry tells me that Le & Mr Doucet will be here on the 25th. They will see the boys at work on the floors. All the boys will not be employed at this work as I shall have to detail a few to look after Barry's rubbers so that the Department will not have to pay, as it was once requested to pay, for 1/2 one pair of rubbers.

I have found a letter here, dated August 1st, 1939, from the Fred M. Beatty Co. of Vancouver, which seems to indicate that the following matter was brought to the attention of the Department at about that time. Some four or five years ago, there was a severe earthquake

shock here one morning & a lesser one that evening. As a result, the foundation (cement) of the barn is severely damaged and there are several cracks in the main building. It is possible that no serious damage was done but I would suggest that a survey of both buildings be made - according to the letter, a survey was at least prepared for the Spring of 1940. In so far as I know nothing was done - as a great deal of cold & draughts come in through these cracks & through the poorly fitting windows, the letter mentioned a survey of the cracks & of the windows also & suggested how the condition might be remedied - Only a rough survey was made at the time - The real survey was to have been made in the Spring - I can find no further correspondence on the matter.

In my annual report, I stressed the fact that there was practically no fire alarm system here - There are a few ordinary door bells which, when they ring, might easily be mistaken for the telephone or door bell - The Department, if I understand a letter on file, had Mr Ward (Modern Electric Co., Cranbrook) & another man make a report & submit estimates for a real fire alarm system & for proper wiring of the building - The thing may have been exaggerated but I am told that the wiring is not in good condition - I believe that the Department, like myself, would feel more at ease if it knew just what danger there is or there is not here.

There is a house, owned by the Oblates here, which has been partly torn down. I am trying to get permission

to use the rest of the lumber to build a blacksmith shop & a jigger. We have to scrape & save here to make ends meet. Even the chickens are rationed at present.

This allowing the Indians to enlist is not to their real advantage if, what I believe, is true. ① Their drinking propensities seem to increase. ② It is a bad thing to take the husbands away from their wives at least in some instances - ③ The money paid to the wives and dependents is not beneficially used - Of course, there may be exceptions to these three objections -

With kind personal regards,

I remain Yours Truly,

G. Forbes Ogilvie

155-0-5

Ottawa,
April 23, 1941.

Dear Father Forbes:

With reference to your letter of the 15th instant I am glad to know that the flooring has reached the Kootenay School. In connection with the electric wiring and fire alarm system Indian Commissioner MacKay was authorized in official letter of the 5th instant to proceed with this work.

The expenditures that have now been incurred will exhaust the amount provided in the current year's appropriation for repairs and improvements at the Kootenay Residential School. Under these circumstances I regret that there will be no further funds available during the current fiscal year for carrying out the other suggestion made in your letter.

Yours truly,

Philip Phelan,
Chief, Training Division.

Rev. G. Forbes,
Principal,
Kootenay Indian Residential School,
Cranbrook, B.C.

155-0-5 April 25/41

H.X.D.

Mr. Philip Phelan,
Chief, Training Div.,
Indian Affairs Branch,
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Mr Phelan: I know that the budget has not been brought down yet but some people are clamoring those their bills paid and, so, I would greatly appreciate it if you would send me whatever part of the grant you can. Some of the bills are rather ancient.

We expect Inspector Barry today for his second visit in two months. Some of the things which I am going to call to his attention are:

① Cracks in the walls of the main building and in the foundation of the barn. These, I am told, are due to an earthquake.

② The curling up of the shingles on the roof of the barn. This is due to lack of paint. (He will likely spot a missing door on the barn).

③ This may have been reported to the Department, as I have found an estimate on the cost of repairs ($113.00) - a hole (gradually growing larger) "in return of hot water heating system in left boiler".

④ The alleged dangerous condition of the wiring & the inadequacy of the fire-alarm system.

I mention all these things not to add to your worries or cares but because I believe that you wish to know

in what condition the school is.

The new Lister engine seems to be working well but it is said to be hard on oil. I will see the man who installed it.

You will recall that I stated that I did not think that Indians enlisting was in their best interests. Well, one of them has just been buried. The story, as I have it, is that he & others, with two Indian women, were out joy-riding. He was driving. He was killed in a smash-up. I have not had time to check upon the story yet but I am told that he had been drinking.

I request that action be taken, if possible, to prevent enlisted Indians from being supplied with drink. Or, I had better put it this way, that it be ascertained whether these apparently truthful stories that they get drink are true & that, if they are true, serious attention be given the matter.

Several years ago, I was at the funeral of an Indian (a returned man) who was run over by a train while he was drunk. There was a large crowd of Indians & fearing a row, the dead man's brother asked me if he had not better ask the policeman to "tighten up" on the bootleggers while all more Indians were present. I asked him what he meant & he told me (truthfully?) that this policeman used his own discretion. Another person told me that the policeman was under the impression that Indians, who were returned men, had the right to drink. Now, all this may not have been true but, in the interests of the Indians, it would be well to find out what is what.

Yours very truly,

G. Lewis O.M.I.

EXTRACT
59-155

Indian Affairs (RC 10 Volume 6453, file 884-5, part 5)

Dr McLeod

155-0-5

Lethbridge Herald 3 5-41

Indians Fight Fire at Mission Near Cranbrook

(From Our Own Correspondent)

CRANBROOK, B.C., May 3—Fire first noticed about 10:30 p.m. completely destroyed the carpenter and blacksmith shop at the St. Eugene Mission, seven miles from Cranbrook.

With no fire fighting facilities in the village the Indians of the school and mission fought it to the best of their ability but it had already gained too much headway. The Cranbrook fire department was summoned but they could not control it either.

The damage is estimated at about $3,000. The buildings were the property of the department of Indian affairs, who have made no decision about rebuilding yet.

155-0-5

Copy sent to Major MacKay

Ottawa,
May 12, 1941.

AIR MAIL

Dear Sir:

Information has just reached the Department that the carpenter and blacksmith shop at the Kootenay Indian Residential School was destroyed by fire on April 29. I have also received today a clipping from the Lethbridge Herald dated May 3 in which the newspaper states that the damage done by the fire is estimated at $3000.00.

No report of this fire has been received from your office. It is difficult to understand why any Indian Agent should not report immediately any damage caused to any of the Departmental buildings in his Agency either by fire or any other cause.

I will expect to receive a complete report regarding this fire from you by return mail and at the same time you should explain fully why you have delayed forwarding this information.

Yours truly,

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

Mr. A. Irwin,
Indian Agent,
Cranbrook, B.C.

Extract from letter written to Mr. Doucet by Rev. G. Forbes, O.M.I., Principal of the Kootenay Indian Residential School.

You may have heard that on the Tuesday night following your visit our carpenter and blacksmith shops were entirely destroyed by fire. At great risk to themselves, Fr. Murray, the carpenter and an Indian saved quite a few of the carpenter tools but none of those in the blacksmith shop. Bro. Cullen looked after those in the school building and I looked after the older boys. All we could do was to stop the fire from spreading. We and the Indian Agent tried to have the Fire Dept. come but they would not. The Agent got two policemen to come with two extinguishers but they came too late to do any good. Finally one fireman and a fire truck came but this was much too late. One good hose with sufficient pressure would have saved at least the carpenter shop together with the tools and the 4800' of flooring all lost. To save as many of the school tools as possible, Fr. Murray and Reiferscheid made no attempt to save the tools owned by the Oblates and Mr. Reiferscheid.

About 20 people came from Cranbrook to see the sight but not one offered to help us. Perhaps they felt that it was useless. The police and the lone fireman did what they could.

What pleased me was that there was no panic -- discipline was perfect and the boys did just as they were told. They wanted to go into the burning building to save tools and lumber and they could have saved some of each but I told them to stay out of the building as I did not want any casualties.

On the whole, we were very fortunate. The wind blew the flames and sparks away from the barn. Fire started on an old play hall but it was put out. Had the wind blown from the opposite direction, there would have been a general clean-up.

I do not know how the fire started. It started in the blacksmith shop. One of the men used the forge, I am told, earlier in the day and two boys told me, during the fire, that they had seen a fire in the blacksmith shop in the afternoon. Against this story is the fact that Bro. Cullen went to the blacksmith shop between 5 and 5:30 p.m. and saw or smelt no fire. He noticed the fire while making his rounds at 10:30. The blacksmith shop had been used as a sort of storeroom. I found cardboard boxes, papers and rags there but had them removed and burned a couple of days after I came here. I had a pile of rubbish, on the other side of the carpenter shop, burned several days before the fire.

I hope that my next letter will carry better news. Anything you can do to get us new shops, to have the lost tools replaced and flooring sent in place of that which was destroyed will be greatly appreciated. The boys would build the shops and lay the dormitory floors as part of their training.

April 30th,I94I

Mr A[illegible]rwin,
Indian Agent,
Cranbrook,B.C.

Dear Sir:

As you are aware,fire completely destroyed our blacksmith and carpenter shops last night.All the contents of the blacksmith shop were destroyed or badly damaged as it was impossible to get into the building. The only thing we could do was to try to save the carpenter shop and its contents.We failed to save the building and about 5000' of flooring,just received from the Department,but we did save some of the tools.A detailed list of the tools lost is being prepared.If any were saved,it was due to what I must call the heroic efforts of Father Murray,Mr Reifferscheid (the carpenter) andToby Morigeau.Mr Townsend,the engineer,worked frantically to save the carpenter shop.Jerome Joseph also rendered valuable assistance.The Chief and other Indians came too late to help.About 20 White people came but did not offer to help.The two policemen and the one fireman rendered what assistance they could but they did not arrive on time.

May I suggest that you request that the Indian Department show its appreciation for the work done by the two Indians,Toby Morigeau(who went into the building several times,with Father Murray and Reifferscheid,and saved many tools although the building was in flames) and Jerome Joseph who did not spare himself?

While making his rounds at IO.30,Brother Cullen noticed the fire and immediately notified me after awaking an employee(Mullins,whose hard work I forgot to mention) and the senior boys.I asked him to telephone to you and to the Fire Department and he did so while I took a look at the fire and decided not to awaken the girls or the smaller boys as the fire was at a distance and the wind was not blowing towards the main building.Brother Cullen turned on all lights in the building,notified the Sisters and took charge of all in the school.He did this without causing any excitement.

With the older boys,I took what fire extinguishers had been left by the men who were already fighting the fire and we did what we could. I am pleased to say that there was perfect discipline,that the boys did exactly what they were told and remained cool.While they might have saved more from the carpenter shop,had they gone in,I ordered them to remain outside.

We soon saw that the buildings could not be saved and,so,we tried to prevent the fire from spreading.The water just dribbled out of our garden hose and so the boys carried pails and pails of water.Fortunately,the wind was in our favor.It did start fires on the roof of the root cellar and on an outside playhall as well as on fences and trees butMr Townsend worked as he had done on the other buildings but,this time,he was succesful.Had the wind been in the opposite direction,it would have been impossible to save the barn,pig pen(such as it is),ice house,chicken coops,horses,cows,pigs,chickens,etc.There would also have been serious danger to the school building particularly on account of a reason I shall give later.

And a real fire hose with plenty of pressure would have saved everything!

I was told that Brother Cullen was in the blacksmith shop between 5 & 5:30 p.m. & that there was no sign of fire then. G.J.

With regard to the origin of the fire, I cannot as yet make a definite statement. An immediate investigation would likely produce no results. I have reason to believe that, if a boy started the fire, the truth will come out later. At present, I do not believe that it was deliberately started. It may have been. I am told that a man used the forge and, although he is careful, he may not have entirely extinguished the fire. Several hours later, a boy was sent to the blacksmith shop (where the fire originated) and was slow returning. If there was fire in the forge (and this is doubtful) he may have fanned the flame. A young boy (truthfully or to make himself important?) told me that he had seen the fire in the afternoon. If this is true, why did I, several employees and the boys not see it as we were within sight of the building until 8 or 9 p.m.? Surely by that time the fire would have been noticeable. I am told that the fire started on the floor and not in the forge. Of course, fanning the flame might have made sparks fall on the floor. I expect that more will come out later.

When I came here, I found that cardboard boxes were stored in the blacksmith shop and I had them removed and burned.

I know of no reason for which anyone would seek to burn down the blacksmith shop (except myself in the hopes of getting a better one) I have not been harsh with the children. I have not cut down on their food. They all seem contented. Sometimes, pupils set fire to a school so that there will be no school and, consequently, they will have to go home. The burning of the blacksmith shop, situated as it is far from the school building, would not accomplish that object. However, if that boy really saw the fire and did not report it, certain things may be possible. But the efforts that they made, the more efforts which they wished to make to save the buildings and contents... Nothing adds up!

It is not necessary to make suggestions. Both you and I saw the lack of fire equipment here and we did what we could to have this remedied. This is not a criticism of "Ottawa". Money IS scarce. But you, I and Ottawa would not like to read the Papers with all the publicity they would give us if there were a holocaust here. I was through a $40.000 fire in a college and I am afraid of fire in an Indian School.

Sufficient protection can be had but it will cost money. If that money is not spent and if there is a fire here, we shall all of us regret not having spent the money.

In addition to the suggestions I made in my recent report to the Department, I now suggest that the gasoline tank, which is now immediately adjacent to the school building, be removed to a safe distance. This is an underground tank but, if the fire had spread to the barn and nearby buildings, the heat might have expanded the gasolene so that it would have risen through the pipes and... goodbye all of us. A second suggestion is that the Department come to an agreement with the Cranbrook Fire Dept. so that they come when needed. I know part of the efforts you made (and suspect the rest) to have them come here last night. They just refused to come until you insisted and insisted and they finally sent one man (who really worked) and a fire engine that, due to their unwillingness, arrived too late. If it did cost money.... well an M.P., a friend of mine, had me give certain details on another case to the Minister and Mr Creara appreciated it. I do not want to

flatter the Department, to tell them that the Indians are the apples of their eyes, etc. but I do know that they take an interest in the Indiand and that they are afraid of a fire and the possible resultant holocaust. They would be heartless and fools if they were not afraid.

I have tried not to say anything of what you did for us last night but I assure you that what you did to try to have the fire department come, to have the policemen with their fire extinguishers come, your coming here and offering all possible assistance are duly appreciated.

Yours very truly,

G. Forbes

G. Forbes.

155-0-5

ORIGINAL ON 75-155

Cranbrook B.C.
May 6th. 1941.

KOOTENAY AGENCY REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL. 1941.

X X X

Between 10.30 and 11P.M. on the night of April 29th, a'phone call was received at the Agency, from Brother Cullen of the Kootenay Indian School, informing me that the School Blacksmith and Carpenter Shops were on fire, and that such protection as they had, was of little or no account, to cope with the growing flames. The Fire and Police Departments were immediately notified, but before they could reach the scene of the fire, the Buildings were completely enveloped and could not be saved.

The Boys of the School were well disciplined, and did excellent work with a few Fire Extinguishers and many Buckets. The Reverend Principal, the Rev. Missionary, Mr. Murray the Carpenter- Mr. Reifferscheid Mr. Townsend- the Engineer, and two of the Indians- Jerome Joseph, and Toby Morigeau, all gave a very fine account of themselves in their efforts to save as many of the tools of the Carpenter shop as possible.

Included in the contents burnt was about 5000 feet Flooring recently provided by the Department to cover the floors of the Boys' and Girls' Dormitories, also quite a number of Tools. When the list has been completed by the Principal, I shall forward the same to the Department.

By great good fortune the wind was in our favour, otherwise the Barn, and all other out-buildings would have been destroyed;

I enclose herewith a most descriptive and very accurate account of the fire, but the Rev. Principal Forbes, which stresses among other things, the well known fact that a fire at the Kootenay Indian Residential School is something far beyond our power and ability to deal with successfully with such hopelessly inadequate protective equipment as we now possess. A fire once started, would be almost certain to result in a Building burned.

I trust, therefore, that the Report submitted by the Principal for the reasons given, at whatever the cost, may receive the most careful and serious consideration.

x x x

p 4 36

Andrew Irwin.

Indian Agent.

The Secretary,
Indian Affairs Branch
Dept. Mines & Resources
Ottawa.

Kootenay Indian Residential
School.Apr.30th.1941

Mr.A.Irwin.
Indian Agent.
Cranbrook.B.C.

Dear Sir:-

As you are aware,fire completely destroyed our Blacksmith and Carpenter Shops last night. All the contents of the Blacksmith Shop were destroyed or badly damaged as it was impossible to get into the building. The only thing we could do was to try to save the Carpenter Shop and its contents. We failed to save the Building and about 5000' of Flooring,just received from the Department,but we did save some of the tools. A detailed list of the tools lost is being prepared. If any were saved it was due to what I must call the heroic efforts of Father Murray,Mr.Reifferscheid (the Carpenter) and Toby Morigeau. Mr.Townsend the engineer worked frantically to save the Carpenter shop. Jerome Joseph also rendered valuable assistance. The Chief and other Indians came too late to help. About twenty White people came but did not offer to help. The two policemen and the one fireman rendered what assistance they could,but they did not arrive on time.

May I suggest that you request that the Indian Department show its appreciation for the work done by the two Indians,Toby Morigeau,(who went into the building several times with Father Murray and Reifferscheid and saved many tools,although the building was in flames)and Jerome Joseph who did not spare himself?

While making his rounds at 10-30,Brother Cullen noticed the fire and immediately notified me after waking an employee (Mullins,whose hard work I forgot to mention)and the senior boys. I asked him to telephone to you and to the Fire Department,and he did so while took a look at the fire and decidednot to awaken the girls or the smaller boys as the fire was at a distance,and the wind was not blowing towards the main building.Brother Cullen turned on all lights in the building,notified the Sisters and took charge of all in the School. He did this without causing any excitement.

With the Older Boys,I took what Fire Extinguishers had been left by the men who were already fighting the fire,and we did what we could I am pleased to say that there was perfect discipline,that the boys did exactly what they were told and remained cool. While they might have saved more from the Carpenter Shop had they gone in,I ordered them to remain outside.

We soon saw that the buildings could not be saved,and so we tried to prevent the fire from spreading. The water just dribbled out of our Garden Hose and so the boys carried pails and pails of water. Fortunately,the wind was in our favor. It did start fires on the roof of the root cellar and on an outside play-hall as well as on fences and trees but Mr.Townsend worked as he had done on the other buildings,but this time he was successful. Had the wind been in the opposite direction,it would have been impossible to save the Barn,Pig Pen,(such as it is)Ice House, Chicken Coops,Horses,Cows,Pigs,Chickens Etc. There would also have been serious danger to the

School Building,particularly on account of a reason I shall give later.
And a Real Hose with plenty of pressure would have saved everything.

With regard to the origin of the fire,I cannot as yet,make a definite statement. An immediate investigation would likely produce no results. I have reason to believe that,if a boy started the fire,the truth will come out later. At present,I do not believe that it was deliberately started. It may have been. I am told that a man used the forge and although he is careful,he may not have entirely extinguished the fire. Several hours later,a boy was sent to the Blacksmith's shop (where the fire originated)and was slow returning. If there was fire in the Forge,(and this is doubtful)he may have fanned the flame. A young boy(truthfully,or to make himself important?) told me that he had seen the fire in the afternoon. If this is true,why did I,several employees and the boys not see it as we were within sight of the Building until eight or nine p.m.? Surely,by that time the fire would have been noticeable. I am told that the fire started on the floor and not in the forge. I expect that more will come out later.

When I came here,I found that cardboard boxes were stored in the Blacksmith's shop and I had them removed and burned.

I know of no reason for which anyone would seek to burn down the Blacksmith's shop(except myself,in the hopes of getting a better one) I have not been harsh with the children. I have not cut down on their food They all seem contented. Sometimes Pupils set fire to a School,so that there will be no School,and,consequently,they will have to go home. The burning of the Blacksmith's shop,situated as it is far from the school building, would not accomplish that object. However,if that boy really saw the fire and did not report it,certain things may be possible. But the efforts that they made,the more efforts which they wished to make to save the Buildings and contents...Nothing adds up:

It is not necessary to make suggestions. Both you and I saw the lack of Fire Equipment here,and we did what we could to have this remedied. This is not a criticism of "Ottawa" Money IS scarce,but you,I,and Ottawa would not like to read the papers with all the publicity they would give us if there were a holocaust here. I was through a $40,000 fire in College,and I am afraid of fire in an Indian School.

Sufficient protection can be had,but it will cost money. If that money is not spent,and if there is a fire here,we shall,all of us regret not having spent the money.

In addition to the suggestions I made in the recent report to the Department,I now suggest that the Gasoline Tank,which is now immediately adjacent to the School Building,be removed to a safe distance. This is an underground tank,but,if the fire had spread to the Barn and nearby buildings,the heat might have expanded the gasoline,so that it would have risen through the pipes and...goodbye,all of us. A second suggestion is, that the

Mr.Andre[illegible] Irwin.
Cranbrook, B.C.

Department come to an agreement with the Cranbrook Fire Department,so that they come when needed. I know part of the efforts you made (and suspect the rest) to have them come here last night. They just refused to come, until you insisted and insisted,and they finally sent one man(who really worked) and a fire Engine that,due to their unwillingness,arrived too late. If it did cost money...well,an M.P., a friend of mine had me give certain details on another case to the Minister and Crerar-appreciated it.

I do not want to flatter the Department,to tell them that the Indians are the apples of their eyes,etc., but I do know that they take an interest in the Indians,and that they are afraid of a fire and the possible resultant holocaust. They would be heartless,and fools,if they were not afraid.

I have tried not to say anything of what you did for us last night, but I assure you that what you did to try to have the Fire Department come, to have the Policemen with their fire extinguishers come,your coming here and offering all possible assistance,are duly appreciated.

Yours very truly,

Signed.....G. Forbes.

P.S. I now find that Brother Cullen was in the Blacksmiths' Shop between 5.and 5-30 p.m.and that there was no sign of fire then.

G.F.

155-0-5

INDIAN COMMISSIONER
BRITISH COLUMBIA

IN YOUR REPLY REFER TO
NO 15/5/1906
ALSO TO DATE OF THIS LETTER

CANADA
DEPARTMENT
OF
MINES AND RESOURCES

INDIAN AFFAIRS
BRANCH

P.O. BOX 70
VANCOUVER, B.C. May 9, 1941.

Dear Sir:

I enclose herewith copy of a report made by the Reverend Principal Forbes regarding the fire which occurred at Kootenay Indian Residential School on the 29th ultimo.

Mr. Indian Agent Irwin has been requested to furnish a detailed report of this outbreak and as soon as same is received I will communicate with you further.

Yours faithfully,

D.M.MacKay,
Indian Commissioner for B.C.

:GR

The Secretary,
Indian Affairs Branch,
Department of Mines & Resources,
Ottawa, Ont.

155-0-5

Ottawa, May 14, 1941.

Memorandum:

DEPUTY MINISTER.

Indian Agent Irwin reports that the blacksmith and carpenter shops at the Kootenay Indian Residential School were totally destroyed by fire on the night of April 29.

In addition to the destruction of these buildings by fire, $436 worth of lumber, necessary to repair the floors in the main school building, was also destroyed. This lumber was recently purchased (see purchase order No. 6612).

The Indian Agent in his report states:-

"The boys of the school were well disciplined and did excellent work with a few fire extinguishers and many buckets. The Principal, a Missionary, the carpenter, the engineer and two Indians, Jerome Joseph and Toby Morigeau, all gave a very fine account of themselves in their efforts to save as many of the tools at the carpenter shop as possible. By great good fortune the wind was in our favour; otherwise the barn and all other outbuildings would have been destroyed".

It is estimated that between $2,500 and $3,000 will be required to replace these buildings. The Kootenay Residential School is operated by the Department in co-operation with the Roman Catholic Church, and has at this date an enrolment of 90 pupils. The origin of this fire has not been determined.

H. Lowney
Director.

RAH

May 15/41

CRANBROOK SASH & DOOR COY. CRANBROOK.B.C. May.14th.1941

DEPT. MINES & RESOURCES.
INDIAN AFFAIRS.

Quotation on Materials Required for Blacksmith's Shop.
At KOOTENAY INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

ALL--F.O. B. THE SCHOOL.

168 Lineal Ft. 2x6 #1 Dim.		168'	@$24.50	4.12
33 Pieces	2x4-8	175'		
40 "	2x4-12	320'		
14 "	2x4-16	149'	645'	@$24.50	15.80
1540 F.B.M.	1x8 #1 Common Boards.	1540'	@$26.50	40.81
968" " "	1x6 #1 Common Siding.	968'	@$26.50	25.65
2 Rolls Tar Paper.			@$1.45	2.90
6000 #1 XXX Shingles.			@$4.75 per M.	28.50
4 only. Sash. 8x10-9 light.			@$2.43	9.72
2000 F.B.M. 1x6-16 #1 Common.		200'	@$24.50	4.90
336 Lin. Ft. 2x4 R.L. #1 Dim.		224'	@$24.50	5.49
50 Lbs. 3½" Nails.			@ .08 pr. lb.	4.00
100 " 2½" Do.			@$7.45 " keg.	7.45
18 " Shingle Nails.			@ .12 " lb.	2.16
				$ 151.50

Not allowed
PO
May 21/41

CRANBROOK SASH & DOOR COY.

CRANBROOK.B.C. May 14th.1941

To [illegible]RTMENT OF MINES.
INDIAN AFFAIRS BRANCH.

Quotation for Material Required for Carpenter Shop etc at Kootenay Indian Residential School.

The Following Prices all F.O.B.the School.

132 Lineal Ft.	2x6 (Sills) #1 Dim.	132'	@$24.50	3.23
152 " "	2x4 (Plates) Do.	101'	@$24.50	2.47
21 Pieces	2x4-10 "	140'		
14 "	2x4-12 "	112'		
14 "	2x4-14 "	131'		
40 "	2x6-16 "	640'		
		1023'	@$24.50	25.06
40 "	2x6-20 "	800'	@$26.50	21.20
1200 Sqr.Ft.	1x8 #2 Shiplap	1200		
1200 " "	1x8 Do.	1200		
		2400'	@$23.50	56.40
1100 Sq. Ft.	1x12#2 Common Lbr.	1100'	@$23.50	25.85
2600 " "	1x6 #1 Common Drop Siding.	2600'	@$26.50	68.90
1200 " "	1x6 Flooring	1200'	@$26.50	31.80
9 Squares, #2 XXXXX Shingles.			@$3.75	33.75
1600 Sq. Ft.	1x4 F.L.V.Joint.	1600'	@$40.00	64.00
1500 " "	1x4 Do. Do.	1500'	@$40.00	60.00
12 only.Window Sashes. 9 Lt. 8x10			@$2.43	29.16
10 Sacks Cement.			@$1.15	11.50
200 Sq. Ft.	1x6 #1 Common	200'	@$24.50	4.90
200 " "	1x12 Do.	200'	@$26.50	5.30
600 Pieces Chimney Brick.			@$32.50	19.50
1 only.Barrel Lime. (200 lb.Bbl.)			@$4.50	4.50
9 Rolls Tar Paper.			@$1.45	13.05
12 Pieces	2x8-14 #1 Dim.	224'	@$24.50	5.49
6 "	2x10-14 Do.	140'		
3 "	2x10-12 "	60'200'	@$25.50	5.10
6 "	2x4- 12 "	48'	@$24.50	1.18
10 Lbs. 5"Common Nails.			@.08 cents	.80
200 " 2½" Do(2¼")			@$7.55 per keg.	15.10
100 " 3½" Common			@$7.25 " "	7.25
30 " Shingle Nails. 1.8" or 1¼"			@ .12 " lb.	3.60
20 " 2½"Finishing Nails.			@ .10 " "	2.00
10 " 2" Do.			@ .10 " "	1.00
10 " 1½" "			@ .12 " "	1.20
2 " 1" "			@ .15 " "	.30
				$ 523. 59

CRANBROOK SASH & DOOR COY.

CRANBROOK.B.C. May 14th.1941

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INDIAN AFFAIRS BRANCH.

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					$ 523. 59

OFFICE OF THE
INDIAN AGENT

CANADA
DEPARTMENT
OF
MINES AND RESOURCES
INDIAN AFFAIRS BRANCH
May.16th.1941

PLEASE QUOTE
FILE 5-10

Dear Sir:-

In replying to your air-mail letter of the 12th,I am at a loss to know why you did not receive any Report of the fire at the Kootenay Indian Residential School before the date mentioned in your letter,having been mailed,as it was,on the 6thinst.,together with a very full and complete Report by the Reverend Principal of the School. Later,a detailed accounting in triplicate,of all Tools Lumber etc., lost in the fire as well as those that were saved,was forwarded to the Indian Commissioner,Major.D.M.Mackay.

I felt that the Reverend Principal's Report which was atta--ched to mine,gave the Department a very full and complete account of the fire,apart from detail in respect of losses in Tools which could not be accurately estimated until later.

When,and after your letter arrived,I was absent on the Reserves for two days,and hence could not answer immediately.

I am sure the Department have long since realized the dire necessity of providing more adequate and dependable fire protection at the School,and the longer it is delayed,the longer the School must continue a constant dread.

What actually caused the fire I do not know;the Principal does not know,although it is stated in his Report that the Forge in the Blacksmith Shop had been used in the afternoon of that day,and that the fire might not have been entirely extinguished. He also state--s that a Boy was sent to the Blacksmith Shop several hours later where the fire originated,and was slow returning.. Inferring that,if the fire was still alive he might have fanned the flames,causing sparks to fall on the floor which, later,might have started the out--break. It is all conjecture;no one actually knows,but what we do know is this,had there been proper fire protection at the School,the buildings could easily have been saved.

OFFICE OF THE
INDIAN AGENT

CANADA

DEPARTMENT
OF
MINES AND RESOURCES
INDIAN AFFAIRS BRANCH

PLEASE QUOTE
FILE 5-10

Cranbrook.B.C.
May 16th.1941

In this respect,as in others,the Principal's statement is correct,when he insists that a REAL FIRE HOSE WITH PLENTY OF PRESSURE would have saved everything.

May I quote from a statement issued by the Acting Chief of the Cranbrook Fire Brigade to his Worship the Mayor,and Members of the City Council,with respect to this fire. He states:

> A very serious fire hazard exists at the Kootenay Indian Resid--ential School. The School itself,a large two storey building is without Fire Escapes,and exposed to danger from several frame out-buildings such as Barns etc,which are quite near. There is practically no fire protection whatever, The pressure is so low in the domestic water supply,that it is of no use for fighting fire. The situation is very dangerous,and should have the attention of those in authority."

So has written the Acting Fire Chief of the Cranbrook Fire Department.

There is not a soul in the Cranbrook district familiar with the School who fails to realize the ever lurking danger of a holocaust. There is grave responsibility somewhere in the event of a serious fire,for the protection of the Children and the Staff,and yet,in the words of the Acting Fire Chief,a very serious fire hazard exists,and needless to say, will continue to exist until there is sufficient equipment and water power to fight a fire.

The Cranbrook Fire Department sent one man and a Fire Engine. They were not too easily pressed into service,but did good work when they got there. The Provincial,Police also turned out with Fire Extinguishers and did their best,which simply was not good enough to make any impression;without a water supply the Buildings just had to go.

If we are to have any protection at all against a recurrence of what happened the other night.I would most respectfully suggest that

OFFICE OF THE
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OF
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INDIAN AFFAIRS BRANCH

PLEASE QUOTE
FILE 5-10

Cranbrook.B.C.
May.16th.1941

an agreement should be arrived at with the Cranbrook Fire Department to respond immediately when called, otherwise we would not have a chance, and even with the fullest co-operation from the Fire Department there can be no guarantee of security or safety from the worst that easily could happen,unless dependable pressure to make the best use of fire fighting equipment is supplied.

I enclose herewith itemized statements from the Cranbrook Sash &Door Co,quoting on the materials required to re-build the Carpenter and Blacksmith Shops at respective costs of $523.59 and $151.50

In addition to this,I would point out as shown in previous reports,about 5000 feet Flooring lost,that had recently been purchased to re-floor the Dormitories. This,also,is urgently needed.

The enclosed statements of cost in respect of all materials required to replace Buildings burned,are furnished only in the hope that they may be helpful to the Department as a means of supplying accurate information as to the cost of re-building,should they decide to do so.

Yours faithfully,

Andrew Irwin
Indian Agent.

I/L

R.A.Hoey Esqr.,
Supt.Welfare &Training,
Indian Affairs Branch,
Dept.Mines &Resources.
Ottawa.Canada.

DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND RESOURCES

REQUISITION FOR SUPPLIES

File No. 155-0-5

May 21 1941

This space for use of Head Office only

Requisition No.

Order No.

To The Departmental Purchasing Agent, Ottawa,

PLEASE FURNISH THE FOLLOWING SUPPLIES FOR USE OF Kootenay Indian Residential School

VOTE 76 Allotment 10-691

SHIP TO Rev. G. Forbes, Principal, Kootenay Indian Residential School, Cranbrook, B.C.

Purpose for which required Repairs to school

NOTE:—Requisition for non-consumable equipment, state if New Issue or Replacement.
" consumable equipment and supplies use columns 1 and 2.

Quantity		Quantity on hand (1)	Quantity used per month (2)	Unit Price	TOTAL
4800	Ft. B.M. No. 1 edge grained fir flooring				
10	Rolls (500 ft. each) Scutan Paper				
100	Lbs. 2½" finishing nails				
	Note: A similar order to the above only in larger quantities was supplied on purchase order 6612. When the material reached the school it was stored in the carpenter shop but before all of it could be used a fire occurred which completely destroyed this building. As a result it is necessary to re-order the above quantities which are required to repair the floors at the Kootenay School.				

I hereby certify that I have personal knowledge that all the above articles are required in the Department and for Departmental purposes only. The expenditure required by this requisition is strictly unavoidable and the public interest will suffer if it is not made.

SIGNED— APPROVED—

Director

Form 37—Req. 193

(SEE OTHER SIDE)

155-0-5

Ottawa,
May 21, 1941.

AIR MAIL

Dear Sir:

In reporting on the fire that recently occurred at the Kootenay Indian Residential School Indian Agent Irwin again brings up the question of fire protection for this building. He quotes as follows from a letter received from the Acting Chief of the Cranbrook Fire Brigade:

"A very serious fire hazard exists at the Kootenay Indian Residential School. The school itself, a large two storey building, is without fire escapes and exposed to danger from several frame out-buildings such as barns etc. which are quite near. There is practically no fire protection whatever. The pressure is so low in the domestic water supply that it is of no use for fighting fire. The situation is very dangerous and should have the attention of those in authority."

I have reviewed our file but we do not appear to have any definite statement regarding the cost of providing what might be considered adequate fire protection. As you are aware, our funds are very limited but the matter is so important that I feel either you or Inspector Coleman should visit this school in the very near future and submit a detailed report on what is required and at the same time give an estimate of its cost.

For your information I might say that the Indian Agent has suggested that arrangements might be made with the Cranbrook Fire Department to

Major D.M. MacKay,
Indian Commissioner,
P.O. Box 70,
Vancouver, B.C.

respond immediately if called. This suggestion might also be considered by whoever visits the school and we should be advised what the Cranbrook Fire Department would charge for their services.

From our experience the supplying of hose is no guarantee that there will be adequate fire protection in case of a fire. In many cases when hose was supplied it was hung up on the wall and when a fire occurred the hose was practically useless.

I trust that, as stated above, either you or Mr. Coleman will have an opportunity of visiting this school in the near future and submitting a complete report.

Yours truly,

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

RAH