

“Don't Let Fear Take Over”

The Space and Memory of Indian Residential Schools

by
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A thesis
presented to the University of Waterloo
in fulfilment of the
thesis requirement for the degree of
Master of Architecture

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2015

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This thesis deals with subjects that may be disturbing to some, particularly Indian Residential School Survivors. The National Indian Residential School Crisis Line for Former Residential School Students [Survivors] at 1-866-925-4419 is available twenty-four hours a day for anyone experiencing pain or distress as a result of his or her residential school experience.

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that this thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

MAGDALENA MILOSZ

Abstract

The Indian Residential School (IRS) system in Canada directly affected 150,000 Indigenous children who were taken to state-sponsored and church-run institutions to separate them from their families and cultures. During the century and a half leading up to around 1970, over 130 IRS were scattered throughout the country. The role of architecture in this genocidal system is a crucial, but overlooked aspect of its realization. In the first decades of the twentieth century, the Canadian government became increasingly involved in building and rebuilding the IRS, as a dedicated arm of the Department of Indian Affairs in Ottawa became a centrally controlled apparatus of architectural production. Passing from utopian space to evolving memory, the architectural remnants of the IRS system tell many stories, which are among those that need to be heard and acknowledged by contemporary Canadian society as part of its troubled relationship with Indigenous peoples.

Through archival research, documentation, narrative, and critical analysis, explorations of four former IRS sites configure this thesis, each providing a lens on the space and memory of this difficult and often traumatic past. Located in Ontario and Manitoba, they were designed, fully or in part, by the little-known R.G. (Roland Guerney) Orr, Chief Architect of Indian Affairs from 1921 to 1935. Mapping architecture to ideology, I examine the development of the Mohawk Institute in Brantford, Ontario in the legal and political contexts of Indigenous-Canadian relations. At the abandoned Birtle IRS in southwestern Manitoba, the institutional intricacies of this broad view come into focus through a critique of the architectural program and its intentions. Nearby, at the site of the demolished Brandon IRS, the heap

of leftover debris calls forth questions of collective memory, explored through conventional representations and their transformations in the art of survivors and post-residential school Indigenous artists. I consider the archive and its role in bringing forth the future at the former Shingwauk Hall in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, now the site of Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig, an Anishinaabe post-secondary institution, and Algoma University. Finally, I return to the Woodland Cultural Centre, located next to the Mohawk Institute building and whose staff are currently reimagining the former IRS based on feedback from the community. Rather than resting on conclusions, this thesis probes these difficult histories as an opening up towards the future, propelled by the past but open to spaces of divergence.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge that the greater part of this thesis was completed on historical Six Nations territory, which extends six miles deep from either side of the Grand River. The spaces and nations in this thesis are also part of the treaty lands of Treaty 1, Treaty 2, Treaty 4, Treaty 5, and the Robinson Huron Treaty (Crown Treaty Number 61). Let us remember that all of the land in what is now Canada, the land we build on, has deep traditional connections to diverse Indigenous peoples.

Thank you to my supervisor, Andrew Levitt, for your ongoing and unhesitating support, and to my committee members, Dr. William Woodworth and Dr. Robert Jan van Pelt, for the engaging discussions and thoughtful contributions. I am grateful to my entire committee for the learning experiences you facilitated through coursework, which have influenced the shape of this thesis in many ways. A heartfelt thank you | *nia:wen* to Paula Whitlow, Museum Director of the Woodland Cultural Centre, for taking the time as my external reader to engage with this work and offer your input. I greatly appreciated your presence and questions at the defence. Thank you also to John McMinn, my M1 studio instructor, who initially suggested residential schools as sites worthy of further investigation.

I received further assistance from many individuals. In particular, I am grateful to Janne Janke of the UW Writing Centre for your keen editorial eye and enthusiastic encouragement. I would also like to thank Virve Wiland of the Woodland Cultural Centre, Professor Don Jackson and Krista McCracken of Algoma University and the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre, Jamie Harvey of Parkland Crossing, Kristin

Nuytten of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, Chris Kotecki of the Archives of Manitoba, David Horky of the Manitoba Region Federal Records Centre, staff at Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa, Chris Tossell, and Dr. Susan Roy of the University of Waterloo. To the Six Nations Council Research Ethics Committee, although limits on time and resources did not permit me to fully follow through on your recommendations, thank you for challenging me to be rigorous with care and support in my research.

Thank you to my friends and past and present colleagues at the University of Waterloo School of Architecture—you have all helped to shape who I am today. To Michelle, thank you for your friendship and pleasant days spent in sunny cafés. And Kat, thank you for your encouragement and engagement with this thesis. To Barbara, for putting me up and putting up with me in Ottawa, thank you; I have fond memories.

To Richard, thank you for your love and support. To mama, tata, and Julia, I could not have done this without you.

For the future.

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We go into the museums, where we muse. We muse about the time before, we muse about the something that was done, we muse about the Native inhabitants, who had a bad time of it at our hands despite arrows, or, conversely, despite helpfulness. They were ravaged by disease: nobody painted that. Also hunted down, shot, clubbed over the head, robbed, and so forth. We muse about these things and we feel terrible. *We did that*, we think, *to them*. We say the word *them*, believing we know what we mean by it; we say the word *we*, even though we were not born at the time, even though our parents were not born, even though the ancestors of our ancestors may have come from somewhere else entirely, some place with dubious hats and with a flag quite different from the one that was wafted ashore here, on the wind, on the ill wind that (we also muse) has blown us quite a lot of good. We eat well, the lights go on most of the time, the roof on the whole does not leak, the wheels turn round.¹

MARGARET ATWOOD, "Post-Colonial"

Any genuine attempt at the recognition of the other calls for the questioning of the self.²

GÜLSÜM BAYDAR NALBANTOĞLU and WONG CHONG THAI,
Postcolonial Space(s)

Preface

The little girl watches the green forests and wide waters of her new home from the small window of an airplane. Her parents sit beside her, but the girl, lost in her own thoughts, does not notice their fear and excitement. She placidly takes in this new place, this giant landmass sprawling in all directions, converging with the bright blue sky at the distant, curving horizon. It is, in some sense, the same horizon the three of them left behind: a temporary place of refuge where their welcome had run out. A choice emerged either to return to their own newly liberated country or to go someplace entirely new. Because they were young, because they shared the wanderlust and the sense of necessity of so many others moving across the globe, and because they couldn't fathom returning to a familiar place turned foreign, they decided to take their only child and see what they would encounter across the ocean.

For a long time, the girl feels ungrounded in this new place, as though she were still high up in the sky, watching it from that tiny window. Her parents send her back on the plane to visit her extended family each summer. They have another child, and the girl wonders whether her sister, having been born in this land, will feel more like she belongs.

When she grows up, the girl, now a young woman, decides to become an architect, perhaps unconsciously wishing through this vocation to root herself down, to carve a place in the world. But in architecture school, they talk about other places and other times. The young woman tries to steady herself in the ever-changing intellectual landscape she has thrown herself into, moving constantly between cities and continents in the hope of gaining an understanding as to how she should live.

What was it that caused people to move here and yet continue to look back over their shoulders to where they came from? It was as if

they had overlain the old world on what, to them, was new. Were there no people here who could teach the newcomers how to be on this land? There were, but the newcomers, coming in greater and greater waves of migration, had overwhelmed them with the ways they had brought with them. They refused to listen, the cacophony of their own ideas drowning out the voices of the people, the land, the animals. Soon, it was not enough that the newcomers had come, that they had to do things their way, but they insisted that the original inhabitants do the same. That is when the trouble really began.

This thesis is a way of tracing through the past, to begin to understand some of the undercurrents of the society in which I live. I came to study Indian Residential Schools (IRS) by accident, but I could not back away from my ignorance of this era, once discovered, and which mirrored the collective Canadian amnesia. These places had existed, they were built, so why were they so invisible?

One may question why this subject is of any significance—not residential schools themselves, but their architecture. Architects tend to promote the importance of architecture, but that advocacy is usually directed to the discipline in its positive sense. What is not often discussed is the way that architects may contribute, through the realization of their designs, to forms of systemic oppression. Why have I focused so much on the architect, Roland Guerne Orr? I have asked myself this question many times. Surely his life and work is not worthy of any great deal of attention. But I felt I needed to know something more about how the IRS came to be; as a student of architecture, I have always been interested in the roles architects play and the responsibilities they bear.

It is within the purview of architecture to impose and restrict, to produce space according to the aims of those who wield power. It is difficult and perhaps impossible to extricate architecture from its social and political factors, from the ways in which it is created and used, and its role in remembering important events. This is why the following thesis has focused on so much that is not, at first glance, architectural. Through

these detours I hope to show how architecture acts and is acted upon, ultimately unfolding in ways that deviate from designed intentions.

The chapters of this thesis are not intended as complete histories but, rather, as lenses through which to view aspects of the IRS apparatus. Neither does this thesis aim to represent all survivors' experiences of residential schools (which vary greatly) but to focus on the racism embodied in the spatial practices used to bring them into being, and the subversion of these practices through Indigenous resistance, survival, and transformation.

My perception of myself and the space I occupy in Canadian society has been profoundly reshaped through this work. I use stories to express this process of discovery, as well as the ubiquitous but evolving self that cannot be untangled from the research and its implications. The American historian Dominick LaCapra poses some interesting problems for those of us inclined to muck around in difficult histories, referring to a "tragic grid" of relations between perpetrators, collaborators, victims, bystanders, and resisters in limit-events, those traumatic occurrences at the limits of representation:

The historian must work out a subject-position in ... coming to terms with his or her implication in the tragic grid of participant-positions. The conventional stance for the historian is often closest to that of the innocent bystander or onlooker. But this safe position is particularly questionable in the case of ... limit-events. The most tempting position is probably that of the resister with marked sympathy for the victim and antipathy for the perpetrator or collaborator. This stance is, however, too easily taken up, especially by someone who has not earned it or been tested by limit-events. I think the historian should attempt to work out a complex position that does not simply identify with one or another participant-position.³

My aim has been to question my own position vis-à-vis what I have been studying, without resorting to the defaults LaCapra describes. Canadian art historian Geoffrey Carr, one of the few scholars I am aware of who has been explicitly concerned with the architecture of residential schools, suggests that one way of complicating LaCapra's "tragic grid" in colonial contexts is

by considering that most Settlers in nations like Canada ... have been subjectivated (made a subject and been subjected to) in institutions con-

ditioned by colonial history: hospitals, schools, government bureaucracies, workplaces, and so on. Clearly, such institutionalization has a profound impact on the lives of each Settler subject, at times beneficial but at others ... dehumanizing.⁴

As a non-Indigenous person, I am a beneficiary of the privilege produced by settler colonialism. I also experienced some sense of the complexity Carr describes while listening to a survivor of the Spanish IRS who spoke at the Shingwauk Gathering and Conference in 2013. I listened carefully, but felt no exceptional connection to her story until she mentioned inventing sins to disclose during the Roman Catholic observance of confession. I felt displaced in time as I recalled my own confusion as an eight-year-old going to confession for the first time, remaking innocuous events into grave errors for which I would require the absolution of a priest. Elise Charland, who attended the Onion Lake IRS in Saskatchewan, writes ominously of a similar experience: “We had to pray morning, noon, and night, for all the sins we were committing. I even made up sins when I went to confession. I learned to lie.”⁵ Recognizing myself in this testimony, in however a small way, has reminded me not to rely too fully on dualities when it comes to trying to understand others’ experiences.

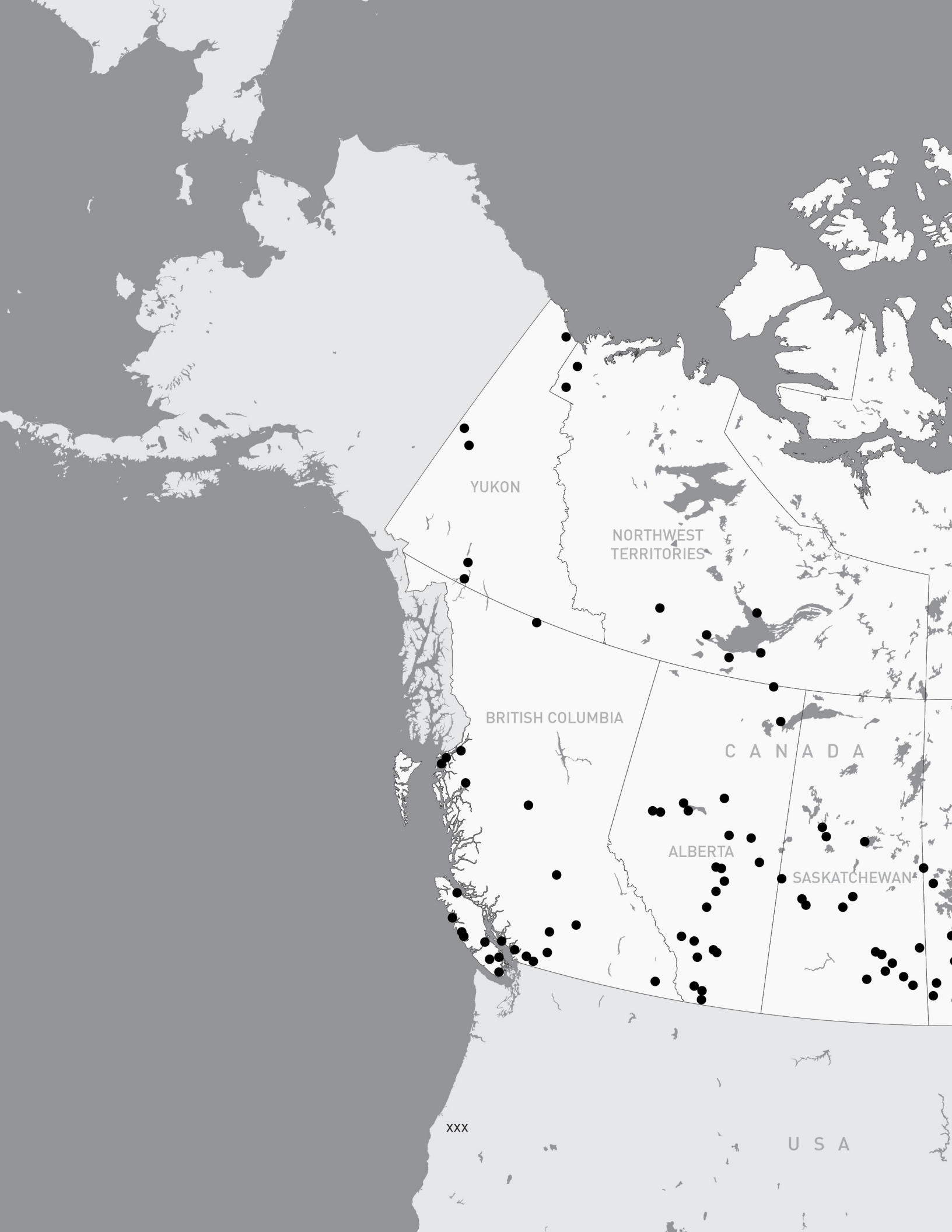
On the other hand, limit-events are so called because of the difficulty of rendering them comprehensible: they are at the limits of understanding. Survivors’ accounts of the loss of their native languages and the difficult journey of their reclamation touched me because I could not imagine what it would be like to be forbidden to speak. When I moved to Canada with my family, I was able to continue speaking Polish at home, during summers in Poland with cousins and grandparents, and in (often-dreaded) Saturday-morning classes—for which I’m now indescribably grateful. The irony of being able to freely speak my language in a place where generations of Indigenous children were deprived of the same continues to confound me. These are some of the complexities that have informed me as I have worked through the thesis that follows.

In order to understand the past, one must inevitably change it.

LaCapra argues that the tragic grid needs to be considered, but then “overcome” to “counteract victimization and allow for different subject-positions and modes of agency.”⁶ This overcoming would be not a completed state, but a process of working through the past in order to relate it to the present. The past becomes malleable when this happens, because it must be shaped to fit the needs of the present. Out of this malleable past, a future comes into being. This is what it means to remember. The past is always the same, yet always changing. Static, yet cyclical; dynamic, yet linear. Just as light can be understood as both a particle and a wave, the past can be conceived of both as a point and as a flow. This is my way of witnessing, of educating myself and being educated, of listening.

Notes

1. Margaret Atwood, “Post-Colonial,” in *The Tent* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006), 98-99.
2. Gülsüm Baydar Nalbantoğlu and Wong Chong Thai, introduction to *Postcolonial Space(s)*, ed. Gülsüm Baydar Nalbantoğlu and Wong Chong Thai (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997), 8.
3. Dominick LaCapra, *History and Memory After Auschwitz* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 41.
4. Geoffrey Carr, “‘House of No Spirit’: An Architectural History of the Indian Residential School in British Columbia” (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2011), 7.
5. Elise Charland, “Courage to Change,” in *Residential Schools: The Stolen Years*, ed. Linda Jaine (Saskatoon: Extension Division Press, University of Saskatchewan, 1995), 30.
6. LaCapra, *History and Memory After Auschwitz*, 42.



YUKON

NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES

BRITISH COLUMBIA

C A N A D A

ALBERTA

SASKATCHEWAN

XXX

U S A

G R E E N L A N D



NUNAVUT

MANITOBA

ONTARIO

QUÉBEC

NOVA SCOTIA

xxxi



LEGEND

Roman Catholic †

Anglican ○

Methodist □

Presbyterian ▲

After 1925, all Methodist and most Presbyterian schools were run by the United Church of Canada.

(previous pages)
1.1 Map of federally supported Indian Residential Schools in Canada

(facing page)
1.2 Map of federally supported Indian Residential Schools in Manitoba and Ontario according to the denominations that ran them, with schools addressed in this work marked in red



NUNAVUT

CANADA

MANITOBA

QUÉBEC

ONTARIO

USA

- Guy Hill, The Pas
- MacKay, The Pas
- Norway House
- Pine Creek, Camperville
- Waterhen
- Lake St. Martin, Fisher River
- MacKay, Dauphin
- Sandy Bay
- Birtle
- Brandon
- Elkhorn
- Portage la Prairie
- St. Boniface
- Assiniboia, Winnipeg
- Fort Alexander
- St. Paul's
- Cross Lake
- Cecilia Jeffrey, Kenora
- Kenora, McIntosh, St. Mary's
- Fort Frances
- St. Joseph's, Fort William (Thunder Bay)
- St. Anne's, Fort Albany
- Albany Mission, Fort Albany
- Bishop Horden, Moose Factory
- Saint John's, Chapleau
- Shingwauk/Wawanosh, Sault Ste. Marie
- Spanish
- Wikwemikong, Manitowaning
- Atnwick, Alderville
- Mohawk Institute, Brantford
- Mount Elgin, Muncey



1.3 Roy Thomas, *Communicating with Nature*

I want to share a story with you. When I was young, I was staying with my grandfather, my grandparents. Springtime ... I heard this little bird in the back of our tent and ... sure enough, it was a robin's nest, and I climbed up that tree, and that robin was coming close, darting at me, and I looked inside the nest; there was this ugly looking little bird with big eyes, no feathers ... so I grabbed it and put it in my hand, and I climbed down this tree. My grandfather was there; he was filing his axe. I says, *mishomis, mishomis*, grandpa, look ... I showed it to him. He said, what do you got there? I said, lookit ... I got a little bird, and he says, you put that right back, right now; he says, don't you ever, ever take that again. Put it back. And when you put it back, you come back, right here. So I climbed up that tree and took it back.¹

ROY THOMAS, *Muffins for Granny*

Introduction

The architectural strategies used to implement the Indian Residential School (IRS) scheme in Canada are a crucial but often overlooked aspect of the overall system, which separated 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children from their families and communities over the span of a century and a half. The school buildings were the sites of forced assimilation, repeated as if with a rubber stamp across the land, but their spaces were not simply a backdrop for the sorrowful tale of the loss of Indigenous culture. Their method of production, the ways in which they functioned, and the symbolism they carried were all integral components of the structure of colonial control over Indigenous peoples. As architecture in the service of colonialism, residential schools enabled Christian missionaries and governments to remove Indigenous children from their communities to assimilate them under the guise of education.²

For missionaries, the primary purpose of residential schooling was to convert young people to Christianity away from the influence of their parents and elders. The state, on the other hand, sought variously to “civilize,” assimilate, or segregate them, but the two programs, religious and secular, often went hand in hand. Residential schools were, in certain instances and for specific reasons, sought out by Indigenous communities. Varying degrees of resistance to and acceptance of aspects of residential education by these groups also played a role in how residential schooling developed in different areas. As Canadian historian J.R. Miller suggests, missionaries, governments, and Indigenous people themselves had various, often conflicting positions within the evolution of residential schools.³ Overall, however, the schools can be placed along a continuum of colonizing encounters between Indigenous peoples and settlers, as enumerated by Inuit politician and writer John Amagoalik:

Since Europeans arrived on our shores more than five hundred years ago, there has never really been a harmonious relationship between the new arrivals and the original inhabitants of North America. The history of this relationship is marked by crushing colonialism, attempted genocide, wars, massacres, theft of land and resources, broken treaties, broken promises, abuse of human rights, relocations, residential schools, and so on.⁴

Many of these grievances are characterized by the reorganization of space, which was a key method of materializing the colonizing ideologies structuring power relationships between Indigenous peoples and settlers in Canada (1.4). As a spatial tool, architecture collapsed the gap between ideology and practice, and through its materiality was used by both religious and secular forces in an attempt to restructure the consciousness of Indigenous peoples. Palestinian-American literary theorist Edward Said suggests that

neither imperialism nor colonialism is a simple act of accumulation and acquisition. Both are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination, as well as forms of knowledge affiliated with domination.⁵

The IRS were particular spatial tools, physical expressions of the “impressive ideological formations” of colonialism, which were used to facilitate practices of authority across Canada. Both the mode of production of the schools’ architecture and the way the schools enabled the implementation of policies fit into a larger framework of governmental control of Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, the transformation of the school buildings and their current condition reveal tensions between past and present through the contested histories of Canadian (post) colonial society. The remnants of the school system, scattered across the landscapes of the country, quietly tell of a now-failed vision; abandoned, demolished, or variously reused by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups, the schools as physical places are on the periphery of a divided collective memory.

The far-flung locations of the schools, which concealed them from the broader Canadian society while they were in operation, have also minimized the visibility of their traumatic aftermath. Paulette Regan, a



1.4 Reverend Albert Lacombe, O.M.I., *Tableau-catechisme = Pictorial catechism*, detail, 1874. This is one example, from the religious side of settler colonialism, of how space was ideologically reimagined in North America. On the middle right, Columbus' ship sails away from the "Way of Good" towards America, the "Way of Evil," where Indigenous people await conversion. Some of them eventually cross over to the "Way of Good" (i.e. Roman Catholicism).

Euro-Canadian and the director of research for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, evokes this lack of perceptibility by suggesting that “the schools, some of which are still standing, remain comfortably invisible to Canadians, as do the former inhabitants themselves.”⁶ In this way, she links the invisibility of the schools with a societal forgetting overlaid onto their history. Differences in experience and conceptions of history also inform how the schools are remembered by different communities of memory. As the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs has defined it, “collective memory endures and draws strength from its base in a coherent body of people.”⁷ Furthermore, he acknowledges that

each memory is a viewpoint on the collective memory, that this viewpoint changes as my position changes, that this position itself changes as my relationships to other milieus change. Therefore, it is not surprising that everyone does not draw on the same part of this common instrument.⁸

But the power of the physical sites of the residential schools is inherent—they are reminders of how narratives splinter and visions give way to alternate realities. The architecture is both an integral part of the story and a potent metaphor for an ideal of sameness disintegrating into difference.

Colonial Projects and the Transformation of Indigenous Space

The history of residential education for Indigenous children extends to the beginnings of contact between the original inhabitants of North America and the newcomers from Europe (1.5). The first boarding school was started in 1620 by the Recollects, a Franciscan order of friars who arrived in New France with Samuel de Champlain in 1615.⁹ At this early stage, separating Indigenous children from their parents was a central tenet of the education provided by missionaries. The Recollect friars decided that “none could ever succeed in converting them, unless they made them men before they made them Christians.”¹⁰ In other words, the potential converts had to be indoctrinated into the European culture before they could be made to take up the religion, a process that was certainly aided



1.5 Father Chrestien Le Clerq teaching prayers with Mi'kmaq script, detail, originally appearing in LeClerq's *Nouvelle relation de la Gaspesie*, 1691

by the youth of the pupils and their separation from their parents. By the 1680s, however, the Jesuits, who replaced the Recollects, concluded that the best way to convert Indigenous people to Christianity “was to avoid Frenchifying them.”¹¹ While populations of Indigenous and settler peoples were relatively balanced, the relationship between the two societies was characterized by interaction and cooperation, with a social distance that maintained differences of culture and politics.¹²

The early administration imported by the British was, at least in theory, respectful of the right of First Nations to self-governance. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 recognized three ruling elements in British North America: the Imperial Crown, the colonies, and “Nations or Tribes of Indians with whom We [the Crown] are connected.”¹³ A foundation of this approach was “the recognition of Indian land tenure within an over-arching Crown sovereignty,” a recognition that would be “alienable only to the Crown by purchase.”¹⁴ Upon Confederation in 1867, this recognition officially remained for a short time until the 1869 Gradual Enfranchisement Act and further Indian Acts spread their continuously growing mantle of federal control.



1.6 Elizabeth Simcoe, *Mohawk Village on the Grand River*, 1793.
Brant's house is the one with the flag.

Between the periods of cooperation and forced assimilation, certain First Nations' response to the increasing influence of European cultures was the adoption of some of their elements, such as the development of European-style communities. Moving down from the conceptual plane to the level of the architectural intervention, the built environment of many Indigenous communities changed radically during this time. The Mohawk Village (1.6), for example, was established in the 1780s under the leadership of Captain Joseph Brant, a Mohawk leader with strong ties to Britain. Aside from the precursor to the Mohawk Institute residential school, the village contained the 1785 Mohawk Chapel, currently the oldest church in Ontario and the only remnant of the village, an early example of an Indigenous-initiated settlement with European features.¹⁵

In 1830, the Colonial Office in London began promoting such development in British North America by assuming "the settled purpose of gradually reclaiming [Indigenous peoples] from a state of bar-

barism and of introducing amongst them the industrious and peaceful habits of life.”¹⁶ In the nineteenth century, anthropological theory was dominated by such evolutionist thinking, which positioned human societies along a scale defined by the three stages of savagery, barbarism, and civilization.¹⁷ European societies located themselves at the complex, “civilized” end of this scale. The “civilized” groups involved in political or religious imperialism took on the task of bringing the simple “savage” or “barbarous” societies up to their level.

Colonists in North America deeply associated “civilization” with the reorganization of space and what Canadian historian John Milloy has termed “the infrastructure of ‘civilization’ – villages with day schools, churches, European houses and ploughed fields.”¹⁸ Susan Neylan, another Canadian historian writing about the British Columbian context, notes that “as with the material version of the ‘before and after conversion’ portraits of individuals, missionaries took the physical transformation of an entire village as proof of the community’s acceptance of Christianity and Western modes of civilization.”¹⁹ Neylan and other scholars have shown that the adoption of European customs by Indigenous peoples, whether religious, cultural, or architectural, was often a strategic move of adaptation rather than a wholesale cultural replacement as the colonists imagined.²⁰ Nevertheless, architecture played an important role in the attempt to displace Indigenous cultures and replace them with European customs and values in a newly formed Canada.

The Bureaucracy of “Indian” Architecture and its Spatial Products

Through the Indian Act of 1876, the young Canadian state consolidated its various laws pertaining to Indigenous peoples and the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) took on all matters pertaining to the relationship between Canada and First Nations. The government took over education by establishing day schools on reserves and financially supporting residential

schools beginning in 1880. Writing in 1969, Cree leader Harold Cardinal provides a strong image of the extent of Indian Affairs' control:

These faceless people in Ottawa, a comparatively small group, perpetually virtually unknown, have sat at their desks eight hours a day, five days a week, for over a century, and decided just about everything that will ever happen to a Canadian Indian. They have laid down the policy ... on all matters affecting native peoples. They have decided where our sons will go to school, near home or hopelessly far from home; they have decided what houses will be built on what reserves for what Indians and whether they may have inside or outside toilets; they have decided what types of social or economic development will take place and where and how it will be controlled. If you are a treaty Indian, you've never made a move without these guys, these bureaucrats, these civil servants at their desks in their new office tower in Ottawa saying "yes" ... or "no."²¹

Federal rule of Indigenous people's affairs eventually extended to the design and construction of built environments. A corresponding apparatus of centrally controlled architectural production was developed to set the stage for the implementation of assimilative policies. The "faceless people" of Indian Affairs therefore included the architects who for decades produced an incredible number of architectural projects for Indigenous people, both on and off reserve. For several years after the creation of the DIA, architectural services were funded by the government but outsourced to external architects, who designed schools and council-houses for construction on reserves. The first record of an architect in their employ is from 1881, when the firm of Paul & Son worked on a new school house for the Mississaugas of Alnwick, Ontario.²² In 1886, a government architect designed several small structures at the St. Joseph Industrial School in High River, Alberta, as noted in the DIA annual report:

Some new buildings have been erected this spring and the drainage repaired. The garrets have been transformed into splendid dormitories for the girls, an ice house, a wash room, a coal-shed, a root house built under the supervision of the Government architect, Mr. Henderson; new closets for the boys have been also erected by our carpenter and the children committed to his care.²³

These were the beginnings of direct federal involvement in “Indian” architecture, as well as the use of student labour in constructing and maintaining residential school buildings. The impetus for the design of schools was varied and, sometimes, originated directly from those running a school. At the Methodist Mount Elgin Institute in Ontario in 1896, for example, “the arrangement of the new building was laid down by the Rev. Principal Shepherd, based upon his long experience of what is needed for the successful and economical conducting of such an institution, and carried into effect by the architects.”²⁴ And in 1913 at the Roman Catholic Garnier school for boys in Spanish, Ontario, “Father Paquin, a builder of note, designed the building, drew all the plans and supervised the construction.”²⁵ It is likely that amateur architects like Principal Shepherd and Father Paquin knew their way about designing residential schools from lived experience of similar institutions.

Increasingly, however, the government took on the design of new schools and renovations to existing buildings. The residential schools were the largest projects undertaken by Indian Affairs, most often located away from reserves. The choice of locations depended on a variety of factors, among them centrality to (but also distance from) First Nations communities, proximity to a rail line, a perceived need for new economic activity, and availability of land. They were often started on the initiative of religious denominations, which later petitioned the government for funds. With the residential schools, Indian Affairs created their ideal environment for Indigenous children and, with the rest of their projects, attempted to control the way the built spaces of reserves developed across the country. In the estimation of Indian Affairs, Indigenous adults were also in need of “civilizing,” and Cardinal’s statement about bureaucrats deciding whether houses on reserves “may have inside or outside toilets” was not an exaggeration.

Names like William Augustus Austin, J. Dosithe Chene, Robert Mitchell Ogilvie, Roland Guerney Orr, or Charles Herman Buck are not well known but they were, literally, the architects of the residential school system. As employees of Indian Affairs, they collectively developed hundreds of plans

for residential schools and different building types for reserves, such as day schools, council houses, cottages, and hospitals.²⁶ One of the more prolific of these government architects was Roland Guerne Orr. During a career spanning almost thirty years, he was the architect of at least twenty-five Indian residential schools, several of which still stand today (Table 1).

R.G. Orr and the Second Generation of Indian Residential Schools

Roland Guerne Orr's father, William A. Orr, held many different roles within Indian Affairs in Ottawa. At the time of his son's birth in 1888, he was the Chief Clerk of the Land and Timber Branch. R.G. Orr was educated at Ottawa Collegiate and Ashbury College, a private boarding school in the city. Although it is unclear whether Roland himself boarded at Ashbury, his experience of the institution no doubt influenced his later practice, especially the design of residential schools. In 1907, at the age of nineteen, he followed in his father's footsteps and began his tenure at the DIA working as a draftsman under the supervision of Chief Architect Robert Mitchell Ogilvie.²⁷ Among many projects, Ogilvie supervised the construction of new buildings at the Qu'Appelle Industrial School in Lebret, Saskatchewan after the existing school was destroyed by fire; he was also involved in the design of the Alberni school in British Columbia.²⁸ His protégé, Orr, had no formal architectural training but, rather, learned the profession under Ogilvie.

Orr became a staff architect in 1913.²⁹ In 1919, he produced, in collaboration with Ogilvie, his first known residential school design, for the Anglican St. John's school in Chapleau, Ontario (1.7). In 1920, his responsibilities increased as he began to travel for work, sometimes extensively. Following Ogilvie's death in 1921, Orr was promoted to Chief Architect of Indian Affairs.³⁰ The 1920s and 30s were marked by extensive construction of new residential schools, mainly replacements for older buildings. This



1.7 A generic "Plan of Indian Boarding School," 1919, R.M. Ogilvie and R.G. Orr, architects, was later earmarked for Chapleau, Ontario, according to a note in the upper-right corner.

School	Location	Den.	Opened	Orr's Design	Closed	Current State
Chapleau (St. John's)	Chapleau, ON	○	1907	1919 (built 1921)	1950	Closed in 1948 and students transferred to other schools. The property was sold to a local businessman who cleared the site for development.
Lejac	Stuart Lake, BC	†	1910	1919 (built 1922)	1976	Buildings demolished by the Nadleh First Nation. A cemetery and memorial exist on the site, to which an annual pilgrimage is made in support of the beatification of Rose Prince.
All Saints (Lac La Ronge)	La Ronge, SK	○	1914	1920 (built 1922)	1947	A fire destroyed the 1922 building in 1947. The next year, All Saints was amalgamated with St. Albans IRS and moved to Prince Albert, SK.
Sechelt	Sechelt, BC	†	1912	school 1920 residence 1923	1975	Main building burned down in 1975. In 2008, a ceremonial demolition of the last structure on the site took place.
Coqualeetza Institute	Chilliwack, BC	□	1886	1921	1937	Building used for Coqualeetza Hospital after school closure. Currently houses the Coqualeetza Cultural Education Centre run by the Sto:lo.
Gordon's	Punnichy, SK	○	1889	1921 (built 1922) 1929	1996	Building from 1922 destroyed by fire. After closure, the main building was demolished by the government. Gordon First Nation's band offices and the George Gordon Education Centre (elementary school) are located on the site.
Mohawk Institute	Brantford, ON	○	1833	additions and alterations 1922	1969	1904 building is the site of the Woodland Cultural Centre, established in 1972 and run by Six Nations. A current campaign aims to raise money for renovations and its recognition as a National Historic Site.
Portage la Prairie	Portage la Prairie, MB	□	1891	principal's residence 1922	1975	Designated a Manitoba Provincial Heritage site in 2005, the main building is used as a resource centre by the Long Plain First Nation.
Edmonton (formerly Red Deer Industrial)	St. Albert, AB	□	1919	1923	1960	In the 1970s, reused as the Poundmaker Lodge rehab facility. Designated an Alberta Provincial Historic Resource in 1983. Main building burned down in 2000. Site is used for Nechi Centre, a training facility for addictions counsellors using Aboriginal healing.
Kamloops	Kamloops, BC	†	1890	school 1923 girls' dorm 1924 boys' dorm 1928	1978	School building is used by the Secwepemc Cultural Education Society for cultural and community purposes.
Norway House	Norway House, MB	□	1900	hospital at school 1923	1974	Unknown
McIntosh	Kenora, ON	†	1924	school 1924 dormitory 1924	1969	Unknown
St. Anthony's	Union Lake, SK	†	1891	1924	1968	Building demolished in 1972.
St. Michael's (Duck Lake)	Duck Lake, SK	†	1892	1924	1964	Unknown
St. Paul's	Blood Reserve (Cardston), AB	○	1889	1924 (built 1925)	1975	Run as a hostel since 1965, it was closed in 1975. Title to the site and buildings was transferred to the Kainai Nation, who converted the main building into student housing for Red Crow Community College in 2006.

File Hills	Okanese Reserve (Balcarras), SK	▲	1889	principal's residence 1924	1949	Indian Affairs closed the derelict school in 1949 and replaced it with a day school. By the late 1950s, the buildings had been removed and most of the land sold off, except 102 acres that were added to the Okanese Reserve.
Sioux Lookout (Pelican Lake, Pelican Falls)	Sioux Lookout, ON	○	1911	1925	1973	Demolished; high school operated by Northern Nishnawbe Education Council on the site.
Sturgeon Landing	Sturgeon Landing, SK	†	1926	1925	1952	School burned down in 1952; students moved to Guy Hill IRS in The Pas, MB.
Morley (Stoney, McDougall)	Morley, AB	□	1886	1925	1949	Unknown
Keesekoose (St. Phillip's)	Kamsack, SK	†	1899	1926	1965	Unknown
St. George's (Lytton)	Lytton, BC	○	1901	1927 (built 1928)	1979	Building destroyed by fire in 1982; site redeveloped as senior residence, school, and machinery yards.
Shubenacadie	Shubenacadie, NS	†	1922	1928 (built 1929)	1968	School was demolished and burned in 1989; site was redeveloped for industrial use.
Brandon	Brandon, MB	□	1895	1929 (built 1930)	1972	Demolished in 2000 by Sioux Valley Dakota Nation; debris still on site.
Old Sun	Gleichen, AB	○	1886	1929	1971	Old Sun Community College established in former school in 1971 as satellite campus of Mount Royal College. In 1978, it became an independent institution run by the Blackfoot Band and still operates as such.
Birtle	Birtle, MB	▲	1888	1930	1972	Abandoned; owned by unidentified private individual.
Muscowequan	Lestock, SK	†	1932	1930	1981	Unknown
Shingwauk	Sault Ste. Marie, ON	○	1873	1932 (built 1934-1935)	1970	Building is part of Algoma University, which took over the site in 1971; location of Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre.
Qu'Appelle (Fort Qu'Appelle, Lebret)	Lebret, SK	†	1884	school pavilion 1935	1969	Operated as White Calf Collegiate (a boarding school) by Star Blanket First Nation from 1973 to 1998; building demolished in 1999.

Denominations: † Roman Catholic ○ Anglican □ Methodist* ▲ Presbyterian*

*After 1925, all Methodist and most Presbyterian schools were run by the United Church of Canada

(this page and facing page)
Table 1 IRS buildings designed by R.G. Orr

period resulted in what Geoffrey Carr has termed the “second generation” of IRS. These “generations” can be distinguished as follows:

Day schools and industrial schools could be described as belonging to the first generation of Indian schools, industrial schools designed to hasten full assimilation. Conversely, second generation Indian Residential Schools, mainly built between the 1910s and the early 1930s, served a segregationist program.³¹

The segregationist program was served by all of the buildings designed by Orr as Chief Architect, a role in which he remained until 1935. He spent the entirety of his career at the DIA, from his earliest training up to his position of greatest responsibility. The meticulously kept records of his annual salaries and travel expenses give a fuller sense of his professional life, as well as the significance of accounting practices within the production of “Indian” architecture (Table 2).³²

In his last year at Indian Affairs, Orr travelled to oversee construction of the new Shingwauk IRS in Sault Ste. Marie. He also visited the site of the new hospital and residential school in Qu’Appelle, Saskatchewan, which replaced the school Ogilvie, Orr’s mentor, had built in 1905. Orr left Indian Affairs in 1936, soon after completing these final projects. He died of coronary thrombosis at Otty Lake near Ottawa on July 10, 1937. He was forty-nine years old. Orr was succeeded at Indian Affairs by Chas H. (Charles Herman) Buck.

The Space and Memory of Indian Residential Schools

The considerable role of architects and architecture in creating the residential school system is a facet of its history and memory whose study has been quite limited.³³ This thesis provides an enhanced understanding of the topic by locating a history of the residential schools within their architectural settings. An investigation of three schools designed by Roland Guernev Orr, as well as one for which he designed an addition, forms the core of this work. The four schools I examine were quite similar in aes-



1.8 Edmonton IRS, AB, built 1923

thetics, intention, and function. Within the thesis, each school acts as a scaffold for one chapter, and its architectural story is interwoven with the larger stories of the development and decline of the IRS system. Broadly speaking, this work documents the breakdown of an ideal of sameness imposed upon its inmates, evident in the structures of the schools, into difference, gauged by the various fates of the schools' remnants and the resurgence of the Indigenous communities they affected.

These four sites are the Mohawk Institute in Brantford, Ontario; the Birtle and Brandon Indian Residential Schools in Manitoba; and Shingwauk Hall in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. Although the Mohawk Institute was constructed before Orr's tenure at the DIA, his designs closely followed the template set by this building, for which he also designed alterations and additions in 1922. Orr's project for additions to the Mohawk Institute proposed a new dining room with an assembly hall over it; it was only partially realized because the school used the nearby Mohawk Chapel for religious purposes and assembly. All four institutions existed prior to Orr's interventions and these earlier "first generation" residential

Title	Year		Annual Salary	2013 dollars
Draughtsman	1908	Salary for 154 days	\$231.00	N/A
Draughtsman, Surveys Branch	1909		\$687.50	N/A
Unnamed	1910		\$900.00	N/A
(potentially as	1911		\$950.00	N/A
above or	1912		\$1000.00	N/A
below)	1913		\$1050.00	N/A
	1914		\$1100.00	\$22,180.33
	1915		\$1150.00	\$22,452.38
	1916		\$1200.00	\$20,788.73
	1917		\$1200.00	\$18,000.00
	1918		\$1250.00	\$16,356.38
	1919		\$1300.00	\$15,831.68
		+ Provisional Allowance and War Bonus		+ \$3044.55
			\$250.00	\$18,876.23
			\$1550.00	
	1920		\$1300.00	\$14,150.44
		+ Cost of Living Bonus	\$396.00	+ \$4310.44
			\$1696.00	\$18,460.88
		Travelling Expenses	\$159.15	\$1732.34
Junior Architect	1921		\$1800.00	\$23,553.19
		+ Arrears 1919 - 20	\$380.00	+ \$4972.34
		+ Cost of Living Bonus	\$276.00	+ \$3611.49
			\$2456.00	\$32,137.02
		Travelling Expenses	\$1030.36	\$13,482.37
Architect	1922	6 months at \$1920.00	\$960.00	\$12,834.78
		+ 6 months at \$2700.00	\$1350.00	+ \$18,048.91
		+Bonus Allowance	\$184.50	\$2466.68
			\$2494.50	\$33,350.37
		Travelling Expenses	\$169.85	\$2270.82
	1923	6 months at \$2700.00	\$1350.00	\$18,048.91
		+ 6 months at \$2820.00	\$1410.00	+ \$18,851.09
			\$2760.00	\$36,900.00

Title	Year		Annual Salary	2013 dollars
Architect	1924	6 months at \$2820.00	\$1410.00	\$19,058.24
		+ 6 months at \$2940.00	\$1470.00	+ \$19,869.23
			\$2880.00	\$38,927.47
		Travelling Expenses	\$1125.81	\$15,216.99
	1925	6 months at \$2940.00	\$1470.00	\$19,653.26
		+ 6 months at \$3060.00	\$1530.00	+ \$20,455.43
			\$3000.00	\$40,108.69
		Travelling Expenses	\$366.85	\$4904.63
	1926	None/Unknown		
		Travelling Expenses	\$1390.76	\$18,583.70
	1927		\$3180.00	\$42,982.42
	1928		\$3300.00	\$44,119.57
		Travelling Expenses	\$793.20	\$10,604.74
	1929		\$3300.00	\$42,645.16
		Travelling Expenses	\$859.00	\$11,360.97
	1930		\$3300.00	\$45,606.74
		Travelling Expenses	\$1220.00	\$16,860.67
	1931		\$3300.00	\$51,379.75
		Travelling Expenses	\$1096.15	\$17,066.64
	1932		\$3300.00	\$55,602.74
		Travelling Expenses	\$856.95	\$14,439.02
	1933		\$2970.00	\$51,452.11
		Travelling Expenses	\$276.90	\$4797.00
	1934		\$2970.00	\$50,737.50
		Travelling Expenses	\$399.20	\$6819.67
	1935		\$2970.00	\$49,366.22
		Travelling Expenses	\$1081.89	\$17,982.77
	1936		\$3135.00	\$51,414.00
		Travel Expenses	\$868.76	\$14,247.66
		+ Qu'Appelle Hospital Travel	\$146.15	+ \$2,396.86
		+ Qu'Appelle Residential School Travel	\$145.95	+ \$2,393.58
		+ Shingwauk Home Travel	\$29.35	+ \$481.34
		Total Travel Expenses	\$1190.21	19,519.44

(this page and facing page)
Table 2 R.G. Orr's salaries and travel expenses, 1908-1936



1.9 Kamloops IRS, BC, built 1923 (photo 1970)

schools are taken into account as foundations for their later iterations.

The design of Shingwauk Hall, with its Collegiate Gothic elements and pitched roof, echoes some of Orr's earlier work from the 1920s, such as the IRS in Edmonton, Kamloops, and Cardston (1.8-10).³⁴ In contrast, the severe, flat-roofed designs and Classical Moderne details of the schools at Birtle and Brandon are nearly identical to the Qu'Appelle IRS in Lebret, Saskatchewan (1.11).

In the 1950s and 1960s, a "third generation" of IRS followed Orr's "second generation" of the preceding decades. They were built when the number of schools was on the decline and the system as a whole was less than twenty years away from being phased out. These institutions are beyond the scope of the current text but possess interesting characteristics and an affiliation with modernism that would merit consideration in future work (1.12). Whereas IRS shared many characteristics with early industrial schools for non-Indigenous children, the major difference was that in the realm of educational institutions, they outlasted industrial schools by half a century. A slippage thus occurred in which Indigenous people in twentieth-century Canada were experiencing nineteenth-century institutional conditions.³⁵



1.10 St. Paul's IRS, Cardston, AB, 1925

This thesis is structured in two parts, Space and Memory. Part I, “Space,” comprises two chapters focusing on the ideological and physical spaces of the IRS as well as their overlap. In conjunction with the political framework that the IRS system was built on, a closely linked material infrastructure was brought into being through the quotidian acts of building and maintaining architecture. The first chapter therefore focuses on the architecture of the Mohawk Institute in Brantford, Ontario, the longest-running residential school in Canada, in tandem with the ideological, political, and legal circumstances imposed on Indigenous peoples throughout the IRS era. The spatial and architectural strategies of the system are placed in the context of larger systems of control.

The second chapter examines the Birtle IRS in Manitoba and uses the now-abandoned shell of the building to frame a discussion of how it, and by extension, residential schools in general, were connected with the various architectural types that functioned as “total institutions.”³⁶ A close reading of two spaces typical in IRS but which distinguished them from other institutions, the “Indian parlour” and the monitor, inform an understanding of how the design of the schools served to control Indigenous children and their families. The chapter also meditates on the ruin, which, frozen in time, offers an intact view of the spatial arrangement of the building, but also functions as an in-between space

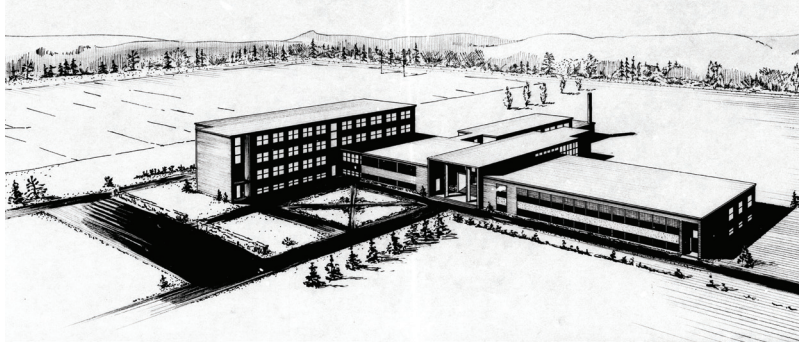


1.11 Qu'Appelle IRS, Lebert, SK, built 1933 (photo 1973)

that invites reflection rather than action.

The chapters of part II, “Memory,” mirror the first two by examining more specifically the relationship of the architecture of the IRS to memory and time. The third chapter considers the demolished Brandon IRS in Manitoba as a site of agency, the presence of the demolished building on the site interpreted simultaneously as an erasure and a commemoration. The dematerialized quality of the school leads to an exploration of how its space, representations, and physical remnants can be transformed through works of art by survivors and post-residential school Indigenous artists, which transpose its isolated reality and traumatic individual, collective, bodily, and psychic experiences into spatial stories that evoke empathy.

The fourth chapter centres on Shingwauk Hall, now part of Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig, an Anishinaabe post-secondary institution, and Algoma University, in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. This site has a complex history of participation from the Garden River First Nation, whose leader, Chief Shingwauk, developed the concept of the “teaching wigwam” as part of a philosophy of limited acculturation as an augmentation of tra-



1.12 MacKay IRS, Dauphin, MB, 1955. This building still exists and is used by a religious organization as a food bank, clothes store, and low-income housing.

ditional ways. It is also the site of settler appropriation and forgetting, and its current state renders its memory unable to affect the inhabitants of the building. This site demonstrates the difficulty of non-Indigenous ownership of residential school buildings and the continued existence of the structure with a concurrent erasure of its past, representing a divided collective memory. The complex functions of the building as a site of remembrance for survivors of the school, an archive, and contemporary universities, as well as the concern of the archive for the future, is explored.

The conclusion returns to the Mohawk Institute where, since 1972, the Six Nations of the Grand River and other First Nations have reused the buildings to house the Woodland Cultural Centre (WCC). The realization of the WCC's proposal to turn the Mohawk Institute into a National Historic Site would itself be historic, as no IRS is so recognized despite the national character of the system. Over 130 federally supported institutions existed throughout the Indian Residential School era. Although they each have their own intricate history and troubled relationship with different Indigenous communities meriting careful study and reflection, the four featured in this thesis serve as viewpoints towards an understanding of the space and memory of this tragic era. Each brings forward different questions and addresses the wide-ranging responsibilities of architecture in perpetuating the system and, conversely, whether it, as a discipline, has a role in its memorialization—meaning its future.

Notes

1. Roy Thomas, interview by Melanie McLaren, in *Muffins for Granny*, directed by Nadia McLaren (Toronto: Feather Productions, 2009), DVD, my transcription.

2. I use the term “Indigenous” rather than “Aboriginal” in light of Kahnawake Mohawk author and educator Taiaiake Alfred’s critique that “[aboriginalism] is purely a state construction that is instrumental to the state’s attempt to gradually subsume Indigenous existences into its own constitutional system and body politic.” In this way, it can be seen as a form of the “institutionalization of difference” as described by Eva Mackey, which I discuss in the first chapter of this thesis. Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Corntassel, “Being Indigenous: Resurgences Against Contemporary Colonialism,” *Government and Opposition* 40, no. 4 (2005): 598. See also Geoffrey Carr, “‘House of No Spirit’: An Architectural History of the Indian Residential School in British Columbia” (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2011), 8.

3. J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk’s Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), ix.

4. John Amagoalik, “Reconciliation or Conciliation? An Inuit Perspective,” in *“Speaking My Truth”: Reflections on Reconciliation & Residential School*, ed. Shelagh Rogers et al. (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2012), 35.

5. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage Books, 1993), 8, quoted in Dean Neu and Richard Therrien, *Accounting for Genocide* (Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2003), 14.

6. Paulette Regan, *Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 6.

7. Maurice Halbwachs, “The Collective Memory,” in *The Collective Memory Reader*, ed. Jeffrey K. Olick et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 142.

8. Ibid.

9. The Recollects were referred to in French as the Récollets.

10. Christian [Chrestien]Le Clerq, *First Establishment of the Christian Faith in New France*, 2 vols., ed. J.G. Shea (New York: J.G. Shea, 1881), 1:110-11, quoted in Miller, *Shingwauk’s Vision*, 39-40.

11. P.-F.-X. de Charlevoix, *History and General Description of New France*, 6 vols., trans. J.G. Shea (1743; Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1870), 4:198, quoted in *ibid.*, 55.

12. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *Looking Forward, Looking Back*, vol. 1, *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (Ottawa: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996), 38.

13. The Royal Proclamation, October 7, 1763, quoted in John Milloy, "Indian Act Colonialism: A Century of Dishonour, 1869-1969," research paper for the National Centre for First Nations Governance, May 2008, 3, http://fngovernance.org/ncfng_research/milloy.pdf.

14. Ibid., 4.

15. The Iroquoians, of which the Mohawk people are a part, already had a long tradition of agriculture prior to contact with settlers.

16. NAC, C.O. 42/27, G. Murray to J. Kempt (No. 95), January 25, 1830, quoted in Milloy, "Indian Act Colonialism," 5.

17. Fred W. Voget, "Anthropological Theory and Iroquois Ethnography: 1850 to 1970," in *Extending the Rafters: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Iroquoian Studies*, ed. Michael K. Foster, Jack Campisi, and Marianne Mithun, 343-57 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 343-44.

18. Milloy, "Indian Act Colonialism," 5.

19. Susan Neylan. *The Heavens Are Changing: Nineteenth-Century Protestant Missions and Tsimshian Christianity* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), 235.

20. See, for example, Hope MacLean, "Ojibwa Participation in Methodist Residential Schools in Upper Canada, 1828-1860," *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* XXV, no. 1(2005): 93-137. One of the better-known examples of this type of strategic adaptation is that of Chief Shingwauk and the Garden River First Nation, who adopted the Anglican religion and residential schooling with a view to adapting to the changing society around them. This story will be elaborated in the fourth chapter of this thesis.

21. Harold Cardinal, *The Unjust Society* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1999), 7-8.

22. Government of Canada, *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended 31st December, 1880* (hereafter Annual Report), Part II, 32.

23. Annual Report, 1886, 143.

24. Annual Report, 1896, 365.

25. "The Garnier Residential School for Indian Boys," school brochure, 1950, quoted in Basil Johnston, *Indian School Days* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1988), 9.

26. This is an area of architectural history that I believe deserves much further study. For an introduction, see a short essay I wrote during the course of my thesis research: Magdalena Miłosz, "Houses, Schools, Hospitals: 'Indian' Architecture and the Design of Genocide in Canada," *Unmaking Things*, June 26, 2014, <http://unmakingthings.rca.ac.uk/2014/houses-schools-hospitals-indian-architecture-and-the-design-of-genocide-in-canada/>.

27. Robert G. Hill, "Ogilvie, Robert Mitchell," in *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800 – 1950*, accessed September 16, 2013, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/114>.
28. Annual Report, 1905, 345; 1908, 405.
29. Robert G. Hill, "Orr, Roland Guerney," in *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800 – 1950*, accessed September 16, 2013, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/123>.
30. Annual Report, 1921, AG Report, Part I, 4.
31. Carr, "House of No Spirit," footnote 3, 42.
32. The figures for 2013 dollars were obtained using the inflation calculator on Bank of Canada, "Inflation Calculator," accessed January 18, 2014, <http://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator/>.
33. The bulk of scholarship done specifically on the architecture of IRS is found in graduate theses and dissertations, as well as a few papers. See Carr, "House of No Spirit" and Anna Brace, "Heritage Alternatives at Sites of Trauma: Examples of the Indian Residential Schools of Canada" (master's thesis, University of York (UK), 2012). For a discussion about the architecture and material culture of a school from an archaeological point of view, see Sandra U. Dielissen, "Teaching a School to Talk: Archaeology of the Queen Victoria Jubilee Home for Indian Children," master's thesis, Simon Fraser University, 2012.
34. Hill, "Orr, Roland Guerney." Collegiate Gothic was a substyle of Gothic Revival architecture. See John J.-G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945* (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1981), 31.
35. I credit this observation to my thesis committee member, Dr. Robert Jan van Pelt.
36. Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co., 1962).

I: SPACE

Who could these men be? What were they talking about? What authority could they represent? K. lived in a country with a legal constitution, there was universal peace, all the laws were in force; who dared seize him in his own dwelling?¹

FRANZ KAFKA, *The Trial*

The first time I step through the door of a former residential school, I feel an energy that bids me be silent. In imagining the children who had crossed over the same threshold for so many years, nervous, afraid, excited, angry, confused, lonely, and homesick, a heaviness descends over the place. But through the weighty veil of the building's past and the accumulation of the traces of the lives lived here, I must contend with the present: people going about their daily routine, working at desks, reading, or having lunch. An incongruity emerges from this clash of memory and presence, and now, I, a stranger, have come to leave my own traces.

Take, for example, the bird. On the summer day when I first go inside the school, the librarian at the cultural centre that is now housed in the building gives me a tour. We linger on the first-floor landing of the central staircase, looking out from a large window towards the back of the site. A low portion of the building extends away from the rear façade, a dis-used basement wing containing kitchens, cafeterias, laundry, and the boiler room. Behind the edge of the building, there is a field of grass, and behind the grass, a stand of tall trees. It is the middle of July, and the sun fills the sky with a brilliant light that wipes clean the passage of time.

We follow the rest of the stairs up to the attic. The language and publishing departments of the cultural centre had been located here, but recent

roof leaks had forced them to move to the second floor. In what was once the senior girls' dormitory, we see a bird thrashing against a dormer window. The rest of the space, with its sloping ceilings, is in shadow, sparsely filled with cardboard boxes and old furniture. But the window the bird is up against is full of midmorning sun.

Expressing some reluctance about handling the bird, the librarian asks if I can catch it. Not knowing what else to say, I agree. It doesn't take long to gather in the wildly flapping wings to its body. Cupping my hands together, I try to hold on to the trembling creature gently, but firmly. The librarian opens the window to release it, but there is no way out through the screen between inside and out. As she shuts the window, the bird, frightened by the sudden sound, escapes my grasp and resumes its frantic flapping against the glass. When I have once again enveloped it with my palms, the librarian and I make for the ground floor. I carry the bird down three storeys, turning clockwise with the wooden banister at each landing of the staircase. The bird, of a type unknown to me, all grey, opens and closes its beak. The heart inside the tiny body beats furiously. At the bottom of the stairs, we step through the dark front entry, across the verandah, and down the steps into the sun, where I throw the bird into the air. It flies away, unharmed.





+43° 7' 39", -80° 14' 26"



2.2 George Romney, *Joseph Brant (Thayendanegea)*, 1776

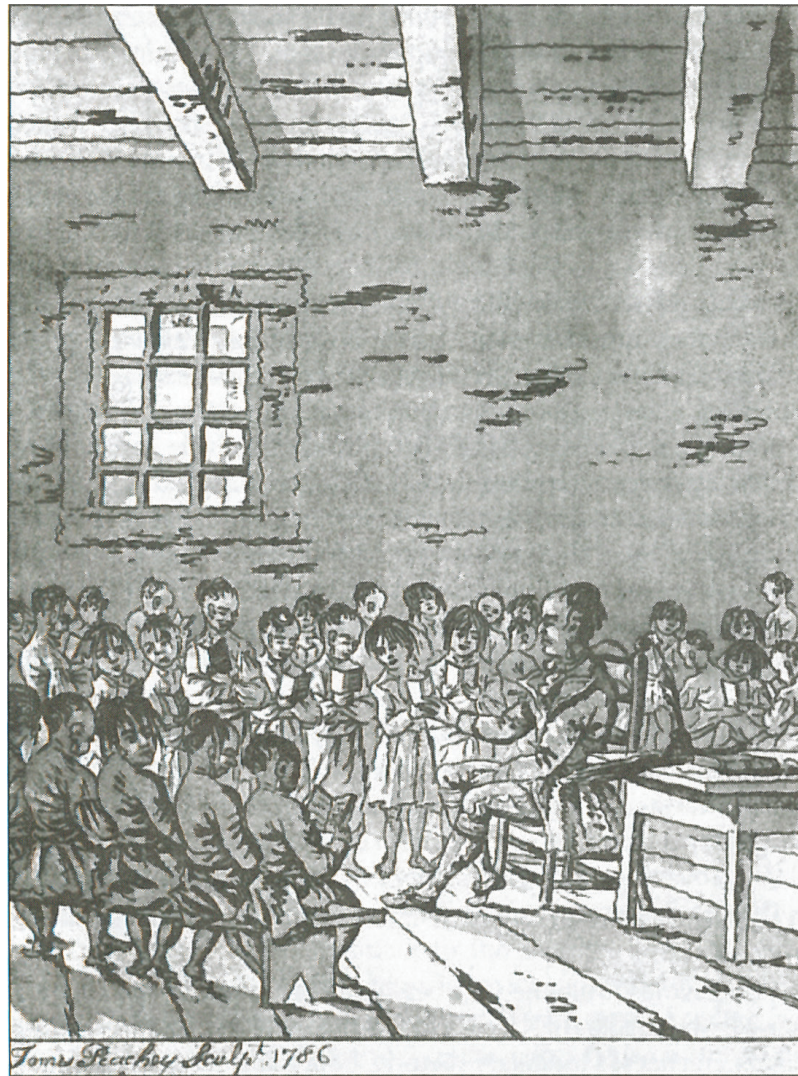
(previous pages)
2.1 Aerial image of former Mohawk Institute, now Woodland Cultural Centre, and environs, Brantford, ON

Mohawk

The Mohawk Institute was one of the earliest settler-run educational institutions and the longest-operating residential school for Indigenous children in Canada. It was part of the extensive physical infrastructure used by settler society to attempt to impose its ideological, political, and legal codes, as well as cultural and religious values, on Indigenous peoples. Although a predecessor to the residential school was initiated from within the Six Nations community and intended to provide cross-cultural education, settler religious and government entities appropriated it as a vehicle for promoting spiritual and cultural assimilation. The context of larger systems of control is rendered more readily visible when its spatial and architectural strategies are seen as its particularizations and, conversely, when the architecture of control is situated squarely as the product and tool of racist ideologies.

Mohawk Institute, 1829-1854

The Mohawk Institute was established in 1829 by the New England Company, a non-sectarian Protestant missionary organization, in Mohawk Village near present-day Brantford, Ontario as a “mechanics’ institution” for male students from the nearby Six Nations community.² Its predecessor was a day school started in the 1780s by the Mohawk leader Thayendanegea, also known as Captain Joseph Brant (2.2). In his youth, Brant had experienced European-style education at Moor’s Indian Charity School in Lebanon, Connecticut, where he had practiced cultural exchange by teaching the Mohawk language to others while himself



2.3 A class of children at the Mohawk Village school, from the frontispiece of Daniel Claus' *A Primer for the Use of the Mohawk Children, in English and Mohawk*, London, 1786, engraved by James Peachey

learning English. The aim of the school, conducted in a house by the Reverend Eleazar Wheelock, was to train Indigenous and settler students as missionaries, diplomats, and translators.³ This experience no doubt influenced the character of the school he established when the Six Nations resettled on the Grand River following the loss of their lands in the American Revolutionary War. Rather than replacing Mohawk culture with that of European settlers, the school was intended as a site of productive cultural combination (2.3). Brant's own name, *Thayendanegea*, reflected this synthetic approach to cultural differences in its meaning, "Two sticks of wood bound together" or "Two arrows bound together."⁴

Disrupted by the War of 1812, the replacement school established in 1824 eventually became the Mohawk Institute with the backing of the New England Company. The Company's previous experience with running schools for Indigenous youth was one of incompetence. Started in late eighteenth-century New Brunswick, the last of their institutions closed in 1826 amid complaints of exploitation and poor treatment of students. The school was also criticized for failing "to retrain Indians to function in non-Indian society or to convert them to non-Indian ways."⁵ This reproach betrays the unquestioned goal of assimilation and echoes the lack of success of the Recollect and Jesuit orders in New France. Despite these failures, the missions and residential schools continued to expand following the westward migration of settlers.

The Mohawk Institute had a mechanics' shop and taught tailoring and carpentry to the boys, whereas girls were taught spinning and weaving. The curriculum also included academics, but as in later IRS, the emphasis was on industrial training for the children's anticipated future participation in the settler economy. This meant trades and farming for the boys and housekeeping for the girls, whether they were to run their own homes or work as domestics. The first major change in the physical form of the school was the provision of residences for ten boys and ten girls in 1833.⁶ These twenty boarders were taught in tandem with day students, and by 1850, the school had fifty residents and fifty awaiting admittance.

In 1846, head of Indian Affairs Thomas G. Anderson addressed an

assembly of Indigenous representatives and missionaries at a conference in Orillia, including leaders from the Mississauga, Mohawk, and Ojibwe nations. The superintendent had sought their participation “for the purpose of taking their sentiments on the subject of establishing Manual Labour Schools for the Education of their Children, and other matters connected with their Temporal and Religious Advancement in Civilized Life.”⁷ The conference represented a formal statement of the changing economic relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in British North America and linked these economic circumstances to the provision of education. A rapidly spreading settler population saw Indigenous people who were not integrated into the new economy as a hindrance to its ends.⁸ Most of the delegates supported the schools, with some stating that the institutions would be vital in attaining a degree of necessary cultural adaptation. In contrast to Anderson’s interpretation of this support, however, they “had no desire to assimilate.”⁹

Because of this conditional assent and the settlers’ vision of the institutions’ assimilative power, industrial and boarding schools proliferated in Upper Canada in the decades following the Orillia conference. They were founded mostly by religious organizations, which had the missionary zeal and funding to establish schools in far-flung locations. In 1850, the Methodists established the ambitious Mount Elgin school to rival the Anglican-supported Mohawk Institute. William Case, a Methodist leader and advocate for residential schools, had told the chiefs at the Orillia conference that “you may, indeed, live to see some of your sons doctors, attorneys and magistrates. This is a thing not at all improbable.”¹⁰

Yet the quality of education provided at the schools, regardless of denomination, rarely led the students down a path of significant academic achievement. There were, however, exceptions. From 1851 to 1854, Oronhyatekha, or Peter Martin, attended the Mohawk Institute where he learned the English language. He later pursued medical studies at Toronto and Oxford, becoming a doctor in 1866. Throughout his career, Dr. Oronhyatekha successfully navigated the world of his white colleagues and their Victorian values while maintaining his Mohawk

identity, most visibly through the persistent use of his Mohawk name. He also contributed to the preservation of Indigenous cultures through his library and collection of objects.¹¹

Although success stories like that of Dr. Oronhyatekha occasionally surfaced from the residential schools, the disproportionate emphasis on “vocational training” prevented students from flourishing in the academic sphere. The typical curriculum was based on the half-day model, which split the day into academic and vocational training. The latter often wound up being of significant economic benefit to the operation of the school and of less benefit to the students themselves, who missed half a day of academic instruction to perform manual labour.

The residents’ activities included sewing or tailoring of school uniforms, cleaning, and even constructing and repairing school buildings. Some schools had “outing” programs where students would be sent into nearby settler communities to work, for example, as domestics or farmhands, which J.R. Miller has called a “pernicious” form of “involuntary servitude.”¹² The aspirations that missionaries and colonial officials had for Indigenous children in the middle of the nineteenth century did not include achievements like those of Dr. Oronhyatekha, but equipped graduates almost exclusively for roles in the working classes of settler society.

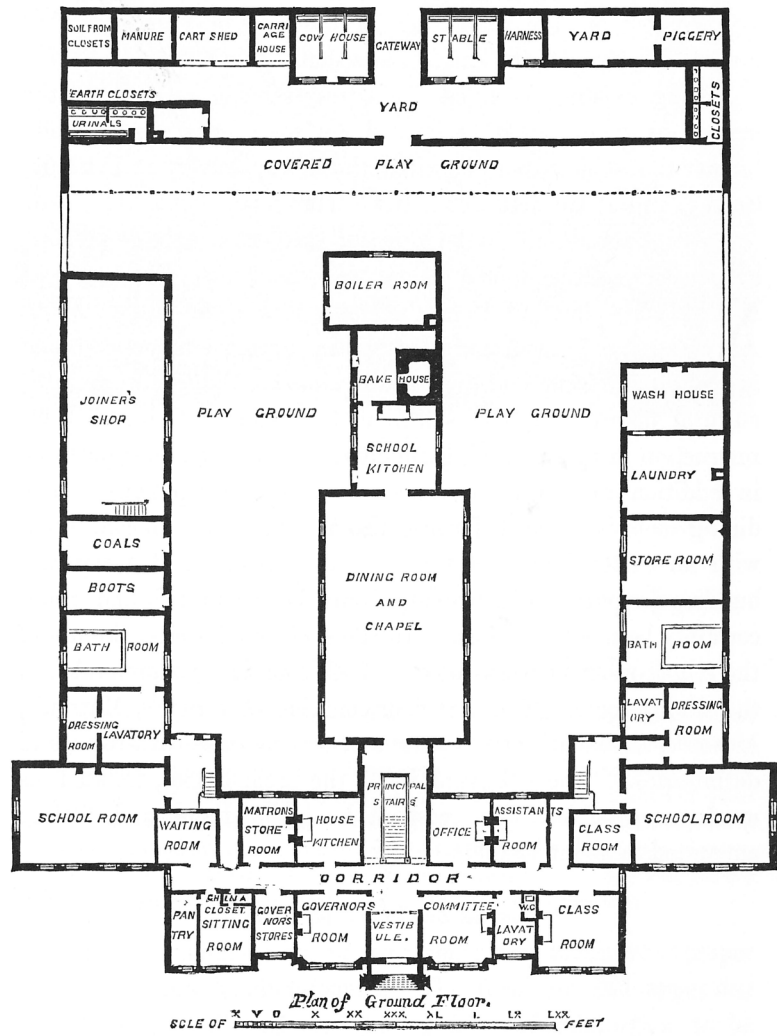
State Formation, Education, and the “Civilizing Process”

From the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth century, day schools in Indigenous villages were more common instruments of “civilizing” efforts than residential schools. The communities had more control over how these schools were run and could more easily withhold their children from attending. Starting in the mid-nineteenth century, however, residential schools proliferated as the result of “a peculiar new relationship” between Indigenous peoples and newcomers.¹³ A rapidly spreading settler population and changes in their economic activities, from fishing and furs to farming and industry, required fewer traditional skills possessed

by Indigenous people and, instead, large amounts of land and bodies to work it. The value of Indigenous peoples' military skills also waned since, as German sociologist Max Weber has observed, the formation of the state meant a government monopoly on the exercise of physical force.¹⁴

As Canada defined itself as a country, its government perceived a need to homogenize the population living within its borders. Not by coincidence, IRS were developed in the context of widespread efforts to expand state-run primary education in North America and Europe. The growth of nation-states as well as the industrial revolution converged to shift control of education away from churches and toward governments, which used it increasingly as a political tool.¹⁵ A subset of these efforts was dedicated to the development of industrial schools, whose typology the residential schools adopted. According to the British architect E.R. Robson, who played a significant role in expanding London's public schools in the late nineteenth century, industrial schools stood "on the border land between vice and virtue," an intermediate option on the continuum between regular schools on the one hand and reformatories or prisons on the other (2.4).¹⁶ Architecturally, IRS resembled early industrial schools and continued to do so long after industrial education was a thing of the past for settler children. Like industrial schools, IRS were used to promote political stability through training in manual labour, which, along with other aspects of the curriculum, aimed to assimilate Indigenous children.¹⁷

Among other colonial institutions and policies, the IRS aimed to speed the "civilizing" process of peoples the colonists viewed as having "fallen behind." The German-British sociologist Norbert Elias suggests that "the structure of civilized behavior is closely interrelated with the organization of Western societies in the form of states."¹⁸ He suggests that states took over formal education as a means of folding young citizens into themselves, contending that "the specific process of psychological 'growing up' in Western societies ... is nothing other than the individual civilizing process to which each young person, as a result of the social civilizing process over many centuries, is automatically subjected from



2.4 Plan of industrial school at Ardwick, UK, ca. 1870

earliest childhood.”¹⁹ Proponents of assimilation believed that this process could be enacted on Indigenous children if they were to undergo formal education in a manner similar to Euro-Canadian children.

But Geoffrey Carr cautions against developing too close an affinity between the IRS and other institutions. Despite residential schools’ aims of isolation, classification, surveillance, and imposition of “stan-

dards of moral and bodily hygiene on inhabitants,”²⁰ Carr insists that the specificity of the IRS’ colonial context renders them apart from other modern institutions that shared these objectives. The twofold purpose of the IRS, the production of citizens and the production of workers, was not dissimilar to that of non-Indian public schools. However, Indigenous societies differed to a greater degree from Canadian culture than even that of recent immigrants, so the measures taken by the state to ensure conformity were all the more drastic. In the case of the Indigenous populations, Canada adhered vehemently to the Benthamite adage of using “the powers of Government widely and purposefully to make people see for themselves that what was happening through legislation was in their own interest.”²¹ Architecture was used extensively as a tool to further this aim, and residential schools specifically were used to transform Indigenous children to function both as Canadian citizens and as workers in the new economy. But the schools were not introduced into an educational vacuum—they sought to displace traditional education systems, which prepared children for life in their own societies,²² thus rendering them instruments of cultural genocide.

On the other hand, the IRS must also be considered within what French philosopher Michel Foucault has termed the “carceral archipelago”—a “series of institutions . . . well beyond the frontiers of criminal law,” which aimed to control various types of “deviancy.”²³ In the case of the IRS, an analogy could be made that the inmates were punished for the “crime” of being Indigenous. This specificity of the colonial agenda must be remembered when comparing the IRS with other modern institutions, notwithstanding any superficial resemblance in their architectures.

Mohawk Institute, 1859-1903

The Mohawk Institute was destroyed by fire, possibly set by students, in 1854. Arson was a frequent occurrence in IRS, particularly when



2.5 Mohawk Institute, built 1859 (photo 1884)

they were going through a period of trouble.²⁴ In 1859, the school was moved from the Mohawk Village, which had been abandoned in 1841 when the government moved the Six Nations to part of their land to the south. The institution was rebuilt on a ten-acre lot originally purchased by the New England Company from individual Six Nations members.²⁵ The new building was a plain, symmetrical two-storey box of white brick with Georgian elements, including chimneys on either side, a hipped roof, and a row of five unpaired windows on the second floor (2.5). A verandah spanning the width of the building with a large staircase descending to the ground completed the whole. These features furnished the building with a domestic character that was integral to the first generation of residential schools, whose primary aim was to assimilate the children.

Some of these institutions were called “homes” rather than schools, and the administrative hierarchy was often modelled on the nuclear family.²⁶ The principal, generally a man, was the head of the “household,” whereas his female counterpart, usually his wife, was the matron. This model was, of course, common in Euro-Canadian domestic and

institutional spheres, but it makes sense to draw attention to it in the context of the residential schools as part of the “hidden curriculum” aimed at inculcating Indigenous children with particular values.²⁷

The Iroquois, of which the Mohawk people are a part, refer to themselves as the *Haudenosaunee*, meaning “People of the Longhouse” or “They Are Building a Longhouse.”²⁸ The Haudenosaunee are a matrilineal society. Children belong to their mother’s clan and traditionally, a couple and their children would reside in the longhouse of the wife’s family. Even such basic cultural practices were disrupted in the residential schools, which implicitly taught that women have much less power and agency than men.

In 1857, the Fifth Parliament of the Province of Canada passed the Gradual Civilization Act.²⁹ This law sought to assimilate Indigenous people by promoting enfranchisement, which involved relinquishing the legal rights of an “Indian” and instead becoming a regular British subject. Enfranchisement was mandatory for any male Indian who was fluent in either English or French and was “sufficiently advanced in the elementary branches of education and...of good moral character and free from debt.”³⁰ Voluntary enfranchisement was available to those outside this definition; however, only one person voluntarily sought enfranchisement under the provisions of the act.³¹ Most Indigenous people were not interested in becoming assimilated, nor in having their children assimilated, but it is clear that the curriculum of the schools and the forced “enfranchisement” of the Gradual Civilization Act were intended to work in tandem to hasten assimilation. The goals of parents who sent their children to residential schools and those of the government were divergent.

In 1858, the New England Company was operating five numbered schools at Six Nations, including School No. 1, the Mohawk Institute. Only 150 inmates of a potential 400 in the community were accommodated at these institutions, so arrangements were made to increase the Institute’s population.³² The “pupilage,” or authorized attendance, was raised to ninety. The school became involved in agriculture, with the administration subsidizing graduates in starting farms near the school so that they could apply their training rather than returning to their



2.6 Mohawk Institute farm, acquired in 1860 (photo 1917)

territory. In 1860, the New England Company acquired a large farm that became a profitable vocational exercise for residents of the Mohawk Institute (2.6). Produce could either feed the inmates and staff or be sold at a profit. By 1895, training in occupations such as blacksmithing and carpentry was discontinued, and the focus shifted to farming and gardening. According to the DIA, these pursuits “were considered more valuable to the Indians and were certainly more important to the financial maintenance of the Institution.”³³

The same year as the acquisition of the farm, the Prince of Wales made an appearance at the Mohawk Institute as part of his tour of British North America. Amid this atmosphere of growth and success, Superintendent and Commissioner of Indian Affairs J.T. Gilkison noted in 1864 that “a substantial addition has been made to the Mohawk Institute, which now affords accommodation for one hundred children.”³⁴ The expanding building embodied the increasingly pressing ambitions of the authorities for Indigenous people’s assimilation.

The British North America Act of 1867, later renamed the Constitution Act, gave the fledgling Canadian state the authority to legislate for “Indians and lands reserved for the Indians.”³⁵ In many ways, Confedera-

tion marked the beginning of an attempt at full legislative control of Indigenous peoples, although administrations of Indian Affairs had existed under imperial and colonial rule.³⁶ In 1868, the newly formed government began to allocate resources from the Indian Fund “to schools frequented by...Indians.”³⁷ Of the fifty-seven schools that received funding, only Mount Elgin and the Mohawk Institute were residential schools; the remainder were day schools on reserves. This funding arrangement indicated the beginning of a shift in the education of Indigenous peoples, a process that had thus far been undertaken largely by religious organizations. The Gradual Enfranchisement Act of 1869 established the current system of elective band councils and gave the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs control over the lives and lands of status Indians. Finally, the Indian Act of 1876 consolidated existing federal legislation and defined two main issues: how reserves were to be governed and who was or was not a status Indian. This assumption of control was based on ideas of racial hierarchy, which residential schools played a large role in executing. According to a government report:

From what may be called natural defects, Indian children, in general, not being of propriety and obedience become wayward; but the [Mohawk] Institute, to some extent proves a corrective to those who are happily there. I submit, far greater benefits would be conferred could the Institute be enlarged and the arrangements such as to admit children at the earliest age.³⁸

The increasing severity with which government officials pushed residential schooling corresponded with the formation of the Canadian state and an increasingly nationalistic attitude, which formed the ideological framework upon which the Indian Act was built. The Act, with over twenty major amendments, is currently still in force. It still defines how reserves are to be governed and who is or is not a status Indian.

An undated photograph of the Mohawk Institute shows additions to the white-brick building that widened it considerably and introduced Victorian Gothic detailing to the plain silhouette, including a turret, dormers with finials, and gable trim (2.7). Reports of five additions made in the 1870s and 1891 indicate that the restyling was likely done at this



2.7 Mohawk Institute with additions, ca. 1890

time.³⁹ In 1879, the Mohawk Institute “was greatly improved by a hidden addition to the main building, and the number of resident pupils now at that Institution is ninety.”⁴⁰ At the renovation fifteen years earlier, the superintendent had noted that the capacity was one hundred students; these numbers seem to indicate that the school building was being continuously expanded despite stagnant or decreasing enrollment rates.

The expansionist approach to residential schools was not solely a Canadian phenomenon: 1879 was also the year that the well-known Carlisle Indian Industrial School opened in Pennsylvania.⁴¹ At the same time, Nicholas Flood Davin was commissioned by Canadian Prime Minister Sir John A. MacDonalld to investigate industrial schools for Indigenous children in the United States.⁴² Davin found that in the US, “the industrial school is the principal feature of the policy known as that of ‘aggressive civilization.’”⁴³ The product of his visit was the “Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds,” which proposed a similar scheme for Canada. The emphasis of the recommendation was on the need for boarding schools where children would not only be educated, but work and sleep as well. The Americans had found that “the influence of the wigwam was stronger than the influence of the

school” on children who were educated in day schools.⁴⁴ This culturally imperialistic architectural metaphor reinforces the association that settlers imagined between “civilization” and the built environment.

In his report, Davin made recommendations regarding the architecture of the schools, including that dormitories be separated from the school to keep the children “from spoiling the building.”⁴⁵ He also attached “a design for one of the schools of the cheapest kind,” although this plan is not in online versions of the report, and I have been unable to locate it.⁴⁶ Davin related that the cost of such a school would be no more than \$1000, and because of the availability of timber in Canada, could be reduced to \$800. He also suggested that the government, in establishing its own system of schools, use existing mission schools as often as possible, partly for reasons of economy, and partly because he believed that religious conversion ought to go hand in hand with cultural assimilation.

The latter part of the report is riddled with racial commentary and proposes that the schools will be a primary means to assimilate Indigenous peoples into settler society, “in which it should be their ambition to be merged and lost.”⁴⁷ He wrote of the “circle of civilized conditions,” within which he thought Indigenous children should be “constantly” kept in order to ensure their assimilation.⁴⁸ This “circle” was a conceptual space of Euro-Canadian culture and values, but it could easily apply to the physical space and boundaries of the IRS.

At the time Davin tabled his report, twelve mission boarding schools already existed in four Canadian provinces. Indian Affairs reported that the Mohawk Institute, one of these twelve, received “numerous applications for admission, which it is to be regretted cannot be complied with,”⁴⁹ but also that for the entire school system at Six Nations, “the attendance is not as numerous or as regular as it should be.”⁵⁰ These somewhat contradictory observations imply that the continued expansion was largely fuelled by ideology rather than any kind of demand from the community or even “success” in the eyes of the assimilators.

In the decade following Davin’s report, seventeen new residential schools were added to the government’s roster for a total of twenty-

nine across the country.⁵¹ In 1885, children from as far away as Quebec began to attend the Mohawk Institute, a change likely influenced by increased federal involvement and an assimilative agenda that favoured large distances between residents and home communities.⁵² The school began receiving per-capita funding from the federal government in 1891. This system, which allocated funds to residential schools in proportion to the number of children in attendance, is well documented to have negatively impacted their lives. One of the reasons is that it motivated administrators to overcrowd facilities to receive as much funding as possible.⁵³ Canadian historian John Milloy identifies inadequate funding and the structure of funding mechanisms, both the per-capita system and later arrangements, as the greatest contributors to the ineffectiveness and harmfulness of the residential school system.⁵⁴

For those subjected to residential schools, desertion or the destruction of the physical structure were common forms of resistance. Tom Longboat, a world-renowned Onondaga marathoner, attended the Mohawk Institute at age twelve and twice attempted to run away. The second time, a family member hid him from the authorities, and he did not return after 1901. Longboat remembered the Mohawk Institute with resentment and refused an invitation to speak at the school following his athletic successes.⁵⁵

Along with desertion, arson was the most explicit way for students to protest, because it directly affected the institution's ability to function. Residents of the Mohawk Institute twice attempted to burn down the school on April 19, 1903; the second attempt was successful, and the building perished, just as the previous one had nearly fifty years earlier. The blaze at the school was followed by the burning of barns, together with cows and horses. Finally, in June, inmates set fire to the playhouse, which had become their temporary residence. Eight boys from the school were arrested in connection with these incidents. Four confessed to arson and received sentences of three to five years at the Mimico Industrial School, a reformatory in Toronto that recruited most of its "students" through the Truancy Department of the local school

board.⁵⁶ The irony of transferring these boys from one carceral institution to another was apparently lost on bureaucrats, who no doubt did not see the similarities between the two spaces.⁵⁷

Colonial-Utopian Spaces of Exception

The paternalistic preoccupation by settlers with Indigenous lives and the resulting control mechanisms continued to expand towards the end of the nineteenth century. John Ralston Saul argues that in this period, the North-West Rebellion was “a major crisis in how Canadians would think of themselves and, therefore, how they would act ... because 1885 saw the fullest expression of the European-U.S. monolithic view of how to run a country. It was all about applying old European prejudices in a new place.”⁵⁸ Canadian politicians and Indian Affairs bureaucrats continued to refer to the “Indian question” or “Indian problem,” positing the residential schools as one of the key “solutions” to achieving a homogenized population.

Harold Cardinal inverts the notion that Indigenous people needed “solving” by questioning instead the “Indian-problem problem,” thus placing the burden of the “problem” back on the colonizers.⁵⁹ In a similar vein, Aimé Césaire, a Francophone and French poet and politician from the Martinique, alerts us to how the measures taken by colonizers to force “civilization” on other cultures can ironically render them outside the very civilization they are seeking to impose:

We must study how colonization works to *decivilize* the colonizer, to *brutalize* him in the true sense of the word, to degrade him, to awaken him to buried instincts, to covetousness, violence, race hatred, and moral relativism.⁶⁰

The policies associated with residential schools indeed became more aggressive. In 1889, Indian Commissioner Hayter Reed emphasized that “every effort should be directed against anything calculated to keep fresh in the memories of children habits and associations which it is one of the main objects of industrial institutions to *obliterate*.”⁶¹ The

moral relativism and race hatred cited by Césaire were continued by Reed's successor, T.J. Morgan, who stated:

I do not believe that Indians...people who for the most part speak no English, live in squalor and degradation, make little progress from year to year, who are a perpetual source of expense to the government and a constant menace to thousands of their white neighbors, a hindrance to civilization and a clog on our progress have any right to forcibly keep their children out of school to grow up like themselves, a race of barbarians and semi-savages.⁶²

When rhetoric ceased to be effective in increasing attendance at residential schools, an Indian Act amendment passed in 1894 authorized the government to require children to attend school, forcing reluctant parents to relinquish their children to the state-run institutions. Since the only schools available in many areas were residential schools, it essentially legislated the separation of children from parents by permitting the cabinet to

make regulations, *which shall have the force of law*, for the committal by justices or Indian agents of children of Indian blood under the age of sixteen years, to such industrial school or boarding school, there to be kept, cared for and educated for a period not extending beyond the time at which such children shall reach the age of eighteen years.⁶³

That compulsory education was mandated by “force of law,” as opposed to actual law, is significant. The idea of the “force of law” has been discussed extensively by Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben in relation to the notion of the “state of exception,” which “defines a ‘state of the law’ in which ... the norm is in force [*vige*] but is not applied ... and ... acts that do not have the value [*valore*] of law acquire its “force.”⁶⁴

The “regulations” permitted by the 1894 amendment were of such an exceptional type, neither in support of the application of norms nor possessing the value of law, but rather the “force of law”—something akin to, but not, law. For Agamben, the state of exception is a means of enacting “modern totalitarianism,” the establishment of “a legal civil war that allows for the physical elimination not only of political adversaries but of *entire categories of citizens* who for some reason *cannot be integrated into the political system.*”⁶⁵

The Canadian government attempted to fit Indigenous peoples into such a category of unintegrated citizens, with the long-ignored acknowledgment of self-government in the Royal Proclamation as well as an oppressive Indian Act that applied only to status Indians. Just as this political apparatus was exceptional, so too were its various spatial manifestations. Mark Rifkin, an American professor of English and Women's and Gender Studies, spatializes Agamben's biopolitical critique to include the geopolitical aspects of colonial states dealing with the space occupied by indigenous populations.⁶⁶ This notion of exceptional spatiality can be extended "to consider in particular the geopolitical implications of institutional structures of Indigenous education in Canada."⁶⁷ The exceptionality governing law-making concerning Indigenous people also regulated the architecture deployed by the government to further its assimilative goals.

Residential school architecture is but one example of the exceptional constructed environments that were used in implementing policies of assimilation, segregation, and control of Aboriginal people. The space of the schools and other buildings constructed by Indian Affairs can be interpreted as exterior to the *civitas* of Canadian society, represented by normative urban development and conventional notions of historical value, and therefore outside mainstream architectural discourse.⁶⁸ In discussing the concentration camps of World War II, Agamben notes that what happened in the space of the camps, "opened when the state of exception begins to become the rule...so exceeds (is outside of) the juridical concept of crime that the specific juridico-political structure in which those events took place is often *simply omitted from consideration*."⁶⁹ Because the residential schools, as both physical and conceptual spaces, are so exceptional, they become, in a sense, invisible, affecting only a subset of the population with qualities so foreign to the majority that they cannot be seen as real.

The exceptionality of residential schools can also be seen through the lens of utopias, which, according to Australian philosopher Elizabeth Grosz, "are the spaces of phantasmically attainable political and personal

ideals, the projection of idealized futures.”⁷⁰ Although the creation of utopias, like residential schools and other spaces governing Indigenous subjects, often involves very explicit architectural formulas, “embodiment ... is that which has never had its place within utopias.”⁷¹ This is because utopic thinking and its attendant “slippage into the dystopic ... almost invariably produces an architecture of direct control ... an architecture of political inflexibility.”⁷² The rigidity with which architecture based on utopic principles is expressed renders it unable to function in time; instead, a utopia “is commonly fantasized as the end of time, the end of history, the moment of resolution of past problems.”⁷³ Through these inflexible institutions, the regulation of Indigenous people’s lives was likewise intended to lead to an absence of their future, the “resolution” of the “Indian question” in the form of their forced absorption into settler society.

The consideration of a residential school as architecture, and particularly as architecture based on utopic ideals, thus reveals the problematic possibilities underlying mainstream architectural production. These have real ethical implications for the practice and discourse, as well as the use and experience, of architecture as a whole.

Mohawk Institute, 1904-1969

After the fires of 1903, the Mohawk Institute was rebuilt in 1904 as the imposing, red-brick building that still stands today (2.8). Constructed behind the school that had burned down, it was set well back from the street at the end of a long drive, emphasizing its separation from the nearby community. The new building was one of the earliest examples of a second-generation residential school, the most obvious feature of which was a heavier massing that departed from the residential scale of the first generation. Built in a Neoclassical style with a central verandah composed of two-storey-tall Doric columns, the new Mohawk Institute seemed designed to lend legitimacy to the increasingly harsh conditions and growing absurdity within.



2.8 Mohawk Institute, built 1904 (photo 1909)

The plan by the principal, the Reverend R. Ashton, and his son, Ernest, was likely one of the last residential school designs to originate outside the DIA.⁷⁴ The late 1900s signalled a changeover to heavy involvement from government architects, including Robert Mitchell Ogilvie and Roland Guernev Orr, who came to the Department in 1905 and 1907, respectively. The development of the segregationist strategy of the second generation of IRS began with a shift in thinking about their purpose. The year the new Mohawk Institute was built, Indian Affairs minister Clifford Sifton

heralded the end of industrial schools. They had not been ‘the best, or most effective, or most economic way of improving the condition of the Indians.’ He stated: ‘[In their place] we have substituted a less elaborate system of what we call boarding schools where a larger number of children can for a shorter time be educated more economically and generally more effectively.’⁷⁵

Years before proclaiming the end of industrial schools in favour of the more modest boarding schools, Sifton, then superintendent of Indian Affairs, declared that the administration was “educating Indians to compete industrially with our own people ... which seems to me a very undesirable use of public money.”⁷⁶ This racist outlook conflicted with the more positive view of Indigenous people’s participation in the

settler economy, which in 1911 the superintendent of Indian education linked with the IRS, suggesting “the uplifting effect of education” as a contributing factor to their net annual industrial earnings of over half a million dollars.⁷⁷ Aside from economic gains, he suggested that the residential schools promoted

the general spread of intelligence throughout the many reserves[, which] enables the Indian to better understand the law of the country and so increases his respect for authority. His individuality is causing him to break away from the idea of holding everything in common, and each year sees him enter more fully into the competition of the white man.⁷⁸

Fostering a capitalist mindset among Indigenous people was a core purpose of the schools but, due to rising costs and a negative view of perceived competition with settlers, the focus on industrial training shifted to a more general indoctrination into mainstream culture. The contradictory bureaucratic views on the benefits and costs of industrial education demonstrated the lack of a respectful relationship with Indigenous peoples, where policy decisions seemed to be based on the whims of those in power. Whether Indigenous people were successful in the industrial economy or not was almost beside the point, since Indian Affairs attempted to predetermine almost every aspect of life for them.

Almost since its foundation, the Mohawk Institute had been referred to as a “model” or “pattern” institution, and this designation continued to reflect the architectural development of the second generation of residential schools. Following the example of the Mohawk Institute, the architectural template for IRS during the early twentieth century became the symmetrical, H- or E-shaped plan with strict gender segregation of dormitories and other areas, often with girls to the right and boys to the left, and a back wing with service and assembly spaces such as cafeteria and chapel.⁷⁹ This type was grander in scale than the previous generation of schools and departed significantly from the domestic model.

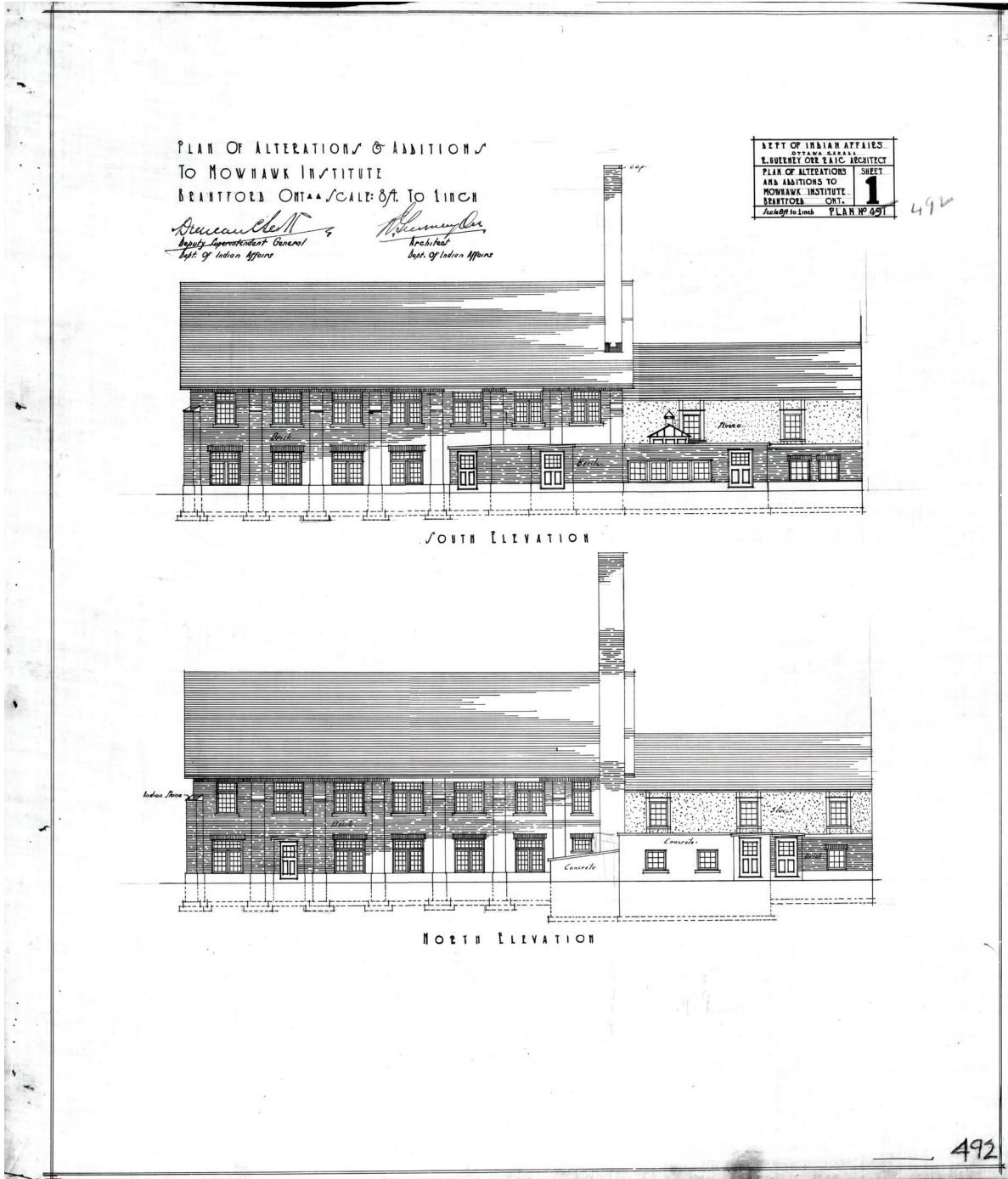
The announcement by Sifton in 1904 was followed in 1911 by a formal termination of the industrial school program, along with the introduction of contracts between government and religious denomina-

tions for the management of residential schools.⁸⁰ That such agreements had not been in place indicates that the demarcation of responsibility for the welfare of the children within the schools, as well as the results of their education, would have been nearly impossible. The annual report of that year proclaimed, “under the new contract arrangement improvements have been undertaken at the Mohawk Institute and at Mount Elgin, which are designed to make these institutions model ones in every respect.”⁸¹ The phasing out of industrial schools also meant that the focus of the system would shift from assimilation through training in industries and farming to a simple segregationist program. The eradication of Indigenous culture was still the goal, although the aspiration of replacing it with settler culture was no longer as strong as it had been during the first generation of residential schooling.

An amendment to the Indian Act, made in 1920 under the direction of Duncan Campbell Scott, head of Indian Affairs, made schooling compulsory for children between ages seven and fifteen. This measure was taken for the express purpose of hastening assimilation:

I want to get rid of the Indian problem. I do not think as a matter of fact, that the country ought to continuously protect a class of people who are able to stand alone ... Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department, that is the whole object of this Bill.⁸²

Although Roland Guerney Orr had not been involved in the new Mohawk Institute’s initial design in 1904, he nevertheless played a role in its expansion. In 1922, he developed plans for the rear wing addition, which were only partially realized (2.9).⁸³ The design called for a two-storey block extending out from the rear elevation, with a dining room in the basement and an assembly hall on the second floor with an “altar to be supplied by [the Department].”⁸⁴ Only the basement portion of the project was built; the second-storey assembly hall was likely left out because the school used the nearby Mohawk Chapel for religious services and assemblies (2.10).⁸⁵



2.9 "Plan of Alterations and Additions to Mohawk Institute, Brantford, Ont.," 1922, R.G. Orr, architect, showing elevations of the addition connecting to the rear of the main building on the right (not shown). Only the first level, with a flat roof, was constructed.



2.10 Rear addition, former Mohawk Institute, 2013 (photo courtesy Woodland Cultural Centre)

The Institute continued to expand its sphere of work with new greenhouses in 1921 and a new barn in 1928.⁸⁶ The site can thus be understood as a kind of self-feeding entity, segregated from the children's own societies and settler communities alike, and providing little of value to be applied in either setting. Edward S. Groat, a student of the Mohawk Institute during the 1930s, reveals just how totalizing the environment of the school was:

We were handicapped in that we didn't mix with the general public so that we knew what was going on. When I went to [public] high school in 1936 ... I didn't even know what the world news was ... when I came out of that school I was lost – I didn't have any idea what the world was like.⁸⁷

As of 1922, the government provided a grant for each pupil attending public high school while living at the Mohawk Institute.⁸⁸ This funding marked the beginning of tentative federal attempts at integration of Indigenous youth into mainstream educational institutions; however, Groat's testimony demonstrates how difficult the transition from residential to public school was for them, particularly when the residential school continued to serve as a surrogate home environment.

In 1931, the number of IRS reached its peak at eighty, with 8,213 children enrolled. The number of children within the system reached its maximum of 11,090 two decades later, in 1953.⁸⁹ Between the highest number of schools and the highest number of children, the 1930s to the 1950s represented the residential school system at the height of its authority and the deeply enmeshed bureaucratic apparatus of architectural production within Indian Affairs at its most expansive.

In 1936, the Department of Indian Affairs was absorbed into the Department of Mines and Resources, where a separate section in the Lands and Development Services Branch known as the Engineering and Construction Division was the body responsible for residential school and reserve architecture. Indian Affairs ironically became part of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration in 1950, where "Indian architecture" became the domain of the Engineering and Construction Division of the Indian Affairs Branch.⁹⁰ The inconspicuous character

of government departments and the relative anonymity of government architects belies the incredible influence these bureaucrats had in reshaping Indigenous space in Canada.

Corresponding to the proliferation of federal architecture aimed at Indigenous peoples, the matrix of residential schools was still expanding during the 1950s. This “third generation” of modern schools was being built in some areas, while existing schools were renovated and added to extensively. The non-Indigenous perspective on the schools was optimistic as relayed by the CBC in 1955, which touted that “instead of the isolation and neglect of the past,” the schools provided “a free and equal chance with children in urban centres ... for the oldest Canadians, a new future.”⁹¹

Even government officials, however, began realizing that the IRS system had created many of the problems it was purportedly aiming to solve. Canadian economic activities and the government’s own assimilative policies had left Indigenous people with “broken communities, dysfunctional families, and their ‘neglected’ children.”⁹² In the post-war years, a high proportion of IRS inmates was made up of children who had nowhere else to go, and the institutions became part of a growing welfare system. This new purpose prolonged their existence and encouraged their expansion just as the government was scrambling to integrate Indigenous children into public schools.

The Mohawk Institute continued to be enlarged throughout this era. In 1949, the attic floor was renovated to increase dormitory space⁹³ and in 1950, partitions in the second floor dormitories were removed, presumably to render it larger and more flexible.⁹⁴ In 1952, the principal’s residence was moved from the second floor of the main building to a small house in front of the school, symbolic of the distance being created by the government between itself and its “wards.”⁹⁵

In 1959, the Indian Affairs minister officiated “at the opening of the new educational block at Mohawk Institute,” after which the main building did not contain classrooms.⁹⁶ Four day schools were also added at Six Nations.⁹⁷ A year later, an extensive addition was built, “designed to make it a modern residential school. The new kitchen and dining-

room alterations which cost more than \$100,000 provide facilities for feeding all students”⁹⁸ (2.11). In the early 1960s, stairwells were constructed on either end of the building, increasing means of egress, particularly for the isolated attic dormitories.⁹⁹ These additions also widened the building considerably.

Major alterations to the Mohawk Institute ceased almost entirely during the remainder of the 1960s, signalling a growing restraint on previous expansionism. The integration of children into mainstream schools and the dismantling of the IRS system was one facet of the government’s plan to concurrently eliminate discrimination and revoke special status for Indigenous people.

Prime Minister John Diefenbaker extended the franchise to status Indians in 1960, although some resisted this move, because they recognized their own nations as separate from Canada.¹⁰⁰ Such unilateral action seemed like a continuation of the old assimilative agenda through which Indigenous peoples’ lives were legislated without their permission or consultation. More recently, political science professor Alan Cairns has suggested that Diefenbaker extended voting rights because, in the course of international relations, he could no longer “defend a situation in which Indigenous peoples in Canada don’t have the vote,” particularly in “a Commonwealth in which most of the members were not white.”¹⁰¹ That something as commendable as the extension of voting rights was seen by some on the receiving end as a cause for protest reinforces the need to reexamine hegemonic power structures and the ways in which their attendant spatial products enabled that power to be actualized.

Canada celebrated its Centennial in 1967, and with this milestone came an examination of national identity and the place Indigenous peoples should occupy in “the Canadian image.”¹⁰² In the government’s view, this image was composed of “the two ‘founding races’ of Canada (the French and the English),” and increasingly included “the ‘third area’ (immigrant/ethnic groups).”¹⁰³ But bureaucrats were confused about how Indigenous people fit into this scheme. A policy document from 1964 suggested that “the Indians’ could not be ‘lumped with the rest of the citizenry,’” but that

it would also “be *dangerous* for the [Centennial] Commission to declare the Indian a *special* group’ without good rationale for doing so.”¹⁰⁴ Whereas the Centennial celebrations did focus on the inclusion of Indigenous people, this inclusion was based on the belief that they needed assistance due to poverty and marginalization, not in recognition of their contributions to Canada or as a distinct cultural group within the country.

John Ralston Saul describes Canada’s history as built upon long-forgotten Indigenous foundations, which once allowed the inclusion of difference and multiple perspectives to exist side by side.¹⁰⁵ Canadian scholar Eva Mackey argues that the perceptual change about culture in 1960s Canada was not a return to these foundations but, rather, “the *institutionalisation* of difference,” which included the creation of official multiculturalism and the construction of “Native people as political clientele.”¹⁰⁶ This institutionalization can be seen as a preemptive act to neutralize the political power of self-defined, as opposed to government-defined, difference.

The government’s changing stance was reflected in a series of rapid restructurings of the bureaucracy looming over Indigenous people. The Indian Affairs portfolio went to the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources in 1966, then on to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, where it has remained to this day. The word “Indian” was replaced with “Aboriginal” in the name of this department in 2011, again to the consternation of some, particularly status Indians, because “Indian” has a legal meaning that is obscured by the “state construction” that is “Aboriginalism.”¹⁰⁷

When Pierre Elliott Trudeau became Prime Minister in 1968, his concept of the Just Society focused partly on the creation of a different relationship between Indigenous peoples and the state:

The Just Society will be one in which our Indian and Inuit population will be encouraged to assume the full rights of citizenship through policies which will give them both greater responsibility for their own future and more meaningful equality of opportunity.¹⁰⁸

The year of Trudeau’s election, Minister of Indian Affairs Jean

Chrétien visited Mexico, where he allegedly met a government minister who believed apartheid was being practiced in Canada.¹⁰⁹ This seemingly shocking comparison rang true since status Indians were governed by an additional set of laws that did not apply to other Canadians. In response to this viewpoint and in line with Trudeau's Just Society, Chrétien developed his controversial policy paper, the "Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, 1969." Popularly known as "The White Paper," it proposed to abolish the Indian Act and dismantle the federal apparatus of Indian Affairs, with the aim of reducing inequality and its resulting marginalization. "Such a goal," wrote Chrétien, "requires a break with the past" and with "the authoritarian tradition of a colonial administration."¹¹⁰ The ambitions of Trudeau and Chrétien were, like Diefenbaker's extension of the franchise nine years earlier, seen by many as unilateral and perpetuating an old colonial attitude. Grosz highlights the problematic character of such ambitions, despite their positive surface:

Egalitarianism consists in extending to ... cultural minorities ... the rights accorded to the dominant group; it does *not* consist in rethinking the very nature of those rights in relation to those groups whom it was originally design to exclude or constrain.¹¹¹

An Indigenous response to Trudeau's Just Society came in the form of *The Unjust Society*, first published in 1969, in which Cree leader Harold Cardinal criticized the political framework used by Canada to deal with Indigenous peoples.¹¹² The Indian Chiefs of Alberta responded to the White Paper in 1970 with "Citizens Plus," commonly referred to as "The Red Paper."¹¹³ "Citizens plus" was a term coined by Cairns in 1964 to express the desire of Indigenous peoples to maintain their collective identities. If they were to become Canadian citizens, the treaty and Indigenous rights that had been negotiated nation to nation and that they felt distinguished them from the rest of Canadian society would need to be legally acknowledged.¹¹⁴ These documents, along with activism by organizations such as the Indian Association of Alberta and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, propelled the cause of Indigenous rights

and self-determination. The movement also resulted in the establishment of the National Indian Brotherhood under Walter Dieter in 1968, which eventually became the Assembly of First Nations.

In 1969, the federal government took operational control of residential schools away from the churches in order to turn them into residences, with the children being sent to mainstream schools in nearby communities.¹¹⁵ This change in purpose also occurred at the Mohawk Institute, and came with programs in Indigenous languages and traditions that had once been suppressed by the schools. In the White Paper, Chrétien wrote that preserving languages meant “ensuring the continuity of a people by encouraging and assisting them to work at the continuing development of their inheritance in the context of the present-day world.”¹¹⁶ In the context of the residential schools’ long history and a lack of acknowledgment of the government’s role in decimating Indigenous cultural heritages, the assertion seems dubious at best. No significant break existed between the federal administrations of the past and present,¹¹⁷ so this new approach could be seen as an extension of the institutionalization of difference.

The federal ownership of the schools did not last long; control of many schools was relinquished to nearby Indigenous communities, regardless of the community’s relationship to a particular school. The Mohawk Institute reverted to the Six Nations of the Grand River, whose elected council still owns the building today. At its foundation, the school operated to serve children from Six Nations, but in 1965, only fifteen residents from that community remained. The rest, including over one hundred from Quebec, came from sparsely populated northern locations where day schools had not yet been built.¹¹⁸

Upon the full-fledged closure of the Mohawk Institute in 1969, G.D. Cromb, Director of the Education Branch of Indian Affairs, commented that “it is the firm opinion of this Department that the children will receive better care in their own homes under the guidance of their parents than they would in residence.”¹¹⁹ This attitude was an about-face from the views of the system’s entire history, with no special

explanation or acknowledgment. The same year, the former Mohawk Institute was repurposed by the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians as the Woodland Cultural Centre (WCC), which has developed a museum and library and offers programming in arts, Indigenous languages, and education.

Because the WCC is housed in the former Mohawk Institute, tours of the building are given regularly, often by survivors. Over its history, its physical structure was defined by the residential school policies and the broader political landscape of Indian Affairs. In turn, the architecture of the school had a profound impact on its inmates and was the site as well as the object of Indigenous peoples' resistance to the bureaucratic machinery aimed at controlling them. This machinery failed, and since the establishment of the WCC, the space of the former institution has taken on meanings that diverge from its original intentions. The cultural centre's aim to renovate the building and turn it into a National Historic Site¹²⁰ brings about questions of representation, of the relative importance and adequacy of conventional architectural history within such a process. And whereas not every aspect of the Mohawk Institute's complex spatial development may be a relevant story to tell, it is a reminder of the concreteness and embodiment of the ideology used against Indigenous peoples and the potential for ideologies to be overcome.



2.12 The grounds of the Woodland Cultural Centre, 2013 (photo courtesy Woodland Cultural Centre)

Notes

1. Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (New York: Modern Library, 1956), 7.
2. J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 73.
3. Wheelock later moved the school to New Hampshire, where it became Dartmouth College. Isabel Thompson Kelsay, *Joseph Brant, 1743-1807: Man of Two Worlds* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1984), 71-72.
4. The first definition is found in *ibid.*, 43, and the second was provided by my thesis committee member, Dr. William Woodworth.
5. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*, 65.
6. *Ibid.*, 73.
7. Quoted in Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*, 61.
8. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*, 62.
9. Hope MacLean, "Ojibwa Participation in Methodist Residential Schools in Upper Canada, 1828-1860," *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* XXV, no. 1(2005): 106.
10. Indian Chiefs and Principal Men, General Council, Orillia, *Minutes of the General Council on the Proposed Removal of the Smaller Communities and the Establishment of the Manual Labour Schools* (Montreal: Canada Gazette Office, 1846), 10, quoted in MacLean, "Ojibwa Participation," 107.
11. Brendan Frederick R. Edwards, *Paper Talk: A History of Libraries, Print Culture, and Aboriginal Peoples in Canada before 1960* (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2005), 83-84.
12. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*, 253.
13. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*, 61.
14. Max Weber, quoted in Norbert Elias, *The History of Manners*, vol. 1, *The Civilizing Process*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), xv.
15. Ellwood P. Cubberley, *The History of Education: Educational Practice and Progress Considered as a Phase of the Development and Spread of Western Civilization* (Cambridge: Riverside Press, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948), 711.
16. E.R. Robson, *School Architecture* (New York: Humanities Press, 1972), 351.

17. E.G. West, *Education and the Industrial Evolution* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1975), 121.
18. Elias, *The History of Manners*, xiv-xv.
19. Ibid., xiii.
20. Geoffrey Carr, "House of No Spirit: An Architectural History of the Indian Residential School in British Columbia" (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2011), 74.
21. West, *Education and the Industrial Evolution*, 127.
22. Miller, "'The Three Ls': The Traditional Education of the Indigenous Peoples," in *Shingwauk's Vision*, 15-38. For a précis on traditional Ojibwe education, for example, see D. Bruce Sealey, *The Education of Native Peoples in Manitoba*, vol. 3, *Monographs in Education* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1980), 6-9.
23. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 297.
24. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*, 368.
25. Government of Canada, *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended March 31 1930* (hereafter Annual Report), 16.
26. This was moreso the case in Protestant institutions; Roman Catholic establishments were usually run with a gender-segregated administration, or else a male religious at the head of a staff of male or female religious.
27. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*, 193-94.
28. Haudenosaunee Confederacy, "About the Haudenosaunee Confederacy," accessed December 8, 2014, <http://haudenosauneeconfederacy.com/aboutus.html> and Kahnawake Branch of the Mohawk Nation, "The Longhouse; symbol of the Iroquois League," accessed December 8, 2014, <http://www.kahnawakelonghouse.com/index.php?mid=1>.
29. The full title of this law was "Act to Encourage the Gradual Civilization of Indian Tribes in this Province, and to Amend the Laws Relating to Indians."
30. The Province of Canada, *The Statutes of the Province of Canada* 1857, 20 Vic., 3rd Session, 5th Parliament (Toronto: Printed by Stuart Derbishire & George Desbarats, 1857), 85, <http://signatoryindian.tripod.com/routingusedtoenslavethesovereignindigenouspeoples/id10.html>.
31. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *Looking Forward, Looking Back*, vol. 1, *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (Ottawa: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996), 250.
32. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*, 85.

33. Annual Report, 1930, 18.
34. Annual Report, 1864, 27.
35. Government of Canada, "Constitution Acts, 1867 to 1982," last modified December 4, 2014, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-4.html>.
36. Duncan Campbell Scott, "Indian Affairs, 1867-1912," vol. 1, Part II, *Canada and its Provinces: A History of the Canadian People and their Institutions*, ed. Adam Shortt and Arthur G. Doughty (Toronto: Printed by T. & A. Constable at the Edinburgh University Press for the Publishers' Association of Canada Limited, 1913), 591-626.
37. The Statutes of Canada, 1868, 31 Vic., c. 42, 22 May 1863, quoted in John S. Milloy, "A National Crime": *The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879 to 1986* (Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press, 1999), 52.
38. Annual Report, 1876, 15.
39. Annual Report, 1877, 18; 1879, 7; 1930, 17-18.
40. Annual Report, 1879, 7.
41. Jacqueline Fear-Segal provides an excellent spatial analysis of the Carlisle school, demonstrating how similarly it operated to Canadian IRS from a spatial standpoint. See "Carlisle Campus: Landscape of Race and Erasure" in *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 184-205. See also Richard Henry Pratt, *Battlefield & Classroom: An Autobiography*, ed. Robert M. Utley (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003).
42. Milloy, "A National Crime", 7.
43. Nicholas Flood Davin, "Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds" (Winnipeg, MB: 1879), 1, http://archive.org/details/cihm_03651/.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid., 2.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid., 11.
48. Ibid., 12.
49. Annual Report, 1882, 2.
50. Annual Report, 1884, xiv.
51. Thomas A. Lascelles, "Indian Residential Schools," *The Canadian Catholic Review* 10, no. 5 (May 1992): 8.

52. Annual Report, 1930, 17.
53. Milloy, "A National Crime", 87.
54. Ibid., 273.
55. Bruce Kidd, *Tom Longboat* (Don Mills, ON: Fitzhenry & Whiteside Limited, 1980), 12.
56. Ibid., 369.
57. For more on the carceral history of the Mimico Industrial School, currently the site of the Toronto South Detention Centre, see Magdalena Milosz, "Ghosts of Prisons Past: A Prehistory of the Toronto South Detention Centre," *Scapegoat: Architecture / Landscape / Political Economy* 07 (November 2014): 47-67.
58. John Ralston Saul, *A Fair Country: Telling Truths About Canada* (Toronto: Viking, 2008), 18.
59. Harold Cardinal, *The Unjust Society* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1999), 1.
60. Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), 35. Emphasis original.
61. PAC RG 10, vol. 3818, file 57,799, Hayter Reed to the superintendent general, May 14, 1889, quoted in E. Brian Titley, *A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986), 78. Emphasis mine.
62. T.J. Morgan, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1889-1893, quoted in *Unseen Tears: The Impact of Native American Residential Boarding Schools in Western New York*, directed by Ron Douglas (Buffalo, NY: Squeaky Wheel, 2009), DVD.
63. Quoted in Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*, 129. Emphasis mine.
64. Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 38. Emphasis original.
65. Ibid., 2. Emphasis mine.
66. Mark Rifkin, "Indigenizing Agamben: Rethinking Sovereignty in Light of the 'Peculiar' Status of Native Peoples," *Cultural Critique* 73 (2009): 94.
67. Geoffrey Carr, "Atopoi of the Modern: Revisiting the Place of the Indian Residential School," *ESC: English Studies in Canada* 35, no. 1 (March 2009): 112.
68. Geoffrey Carr reports that "an extensive survey of major architectural journals published in Canada in the first half of the twentieth century uncovered only one mention of IRS construction," noting that "the journal *Construction* briefly discusses

the logistical problems of building All Saints School at Lac la Ronge,” Saskatchewan, in its March 1922 issue. Carr, “‘House of No Spirit,’” footnote 5, 43.

69. Giorgio Agamben, “The Camp as the *Nomos* of the Modern,” in *Violence, Identity, and Self-determination*, ed. Hent de Vries and Samuel Weber (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 106. Emphasis mine.

70. Elizabeth Grosz, “Embodied Utopias: The Time of Architecture,” in *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001), 131.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid., 136.

73. Ibid., 138.

74. Annual Report, 1930, 18.

75. Milloy, “*A National Crime*,” 72.

76. Clifford Sifton, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, House of Commons Debates, June 4, 1897, quoted in John Sutton Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 284.

77. Annual Report, 1911, 337.

78. Ibid.

79. For more on the E-plan, see chapter 4 in this thesis, “Shingwauk.”

80. Milloy, “*A National Crime*,” 71.

81. Annual Report, 1911, 314.

82. Quoted in Titley, *A Narrow Vision*, 50.

83. Annual Report, 1923, 11.

84. R.G. Orr, “Plan of Alterations & Additions to Mohawk Institute, Brantford, Ont., Plan No. 492, Sheet 1, South Elevation and North Elevation”, scale 8 feet = 1 inch, 1922, Library and Archives Canada, RG22M 912016, item number 591-599.

85. Annual Report, 1930, 19.

86. Annual Report, 1921, AG Report, Part I, 48; 1928, 17.

87. Elizabeth Graham, *The Mush Hole: Life at Two Indian Residential Schools* (Waterloo, Ontario: Heffle Publishing, 1997), 363-64.

88. Annual Report, 1930, 19.
89. Milloy, "A National Crime," 52.
90. Also referred to as the Engineering and Construction Service in some documents.
91. CBC, "A new future' for residential school students," *CBC Newsmagazine*, March 13, 1955, *CBC Digital Archives* video, 2:44, <http://www.cbc.ca/archives/categories/society/education/a-lost-heritage-canadas-residential-schools/a-new-future-for-children-at-james-bay-residential-school.html>.
92. Milloy, "A National Crime", 190.
93. Chas H. Buck, "Alterations to Attic Floor, Mohawk Institute, Brantford, Ontario, Plan No. 876-A, Sheet No. 1, Plan & Details," scale as noted (various), November 1949, Library and Archives Canada, RG22M 912016, item number 2405-2418.
94. "Mohawk Institute – Brantford, Ontario, Plan No. 876-B, Sheet No. 1, Basement Plan," scale 1/8" = 1'-0", June 1950, Library and Archives Canada, RG22M 912016, item number 2405-2418.
95. Annual Report, 1953, 70.
96. Annual Report, 1959, 82.
97. Ibid.
98. Annual Report, 1961, 90.
99. "Proposed Concrete Curbing & Asphalt Paving of Driveways & Parking Areas of Mohawk Indian Res. Sch. Brantford, Ont., Plan No. 2518, Sheet 1 of 1," scale 1" = 50', June 30, 1966, Library and Archives Canada, RG22M 912016, item number 4639.
100. Walter Rudnicki, interview by Paul Kennedy, "White Paper / Red Paper," Part I, *Ideas with Paul Kennedy*, CBC, February 22, 2010, <http://www.cbc.ca/ideas/episodes/2010/02/22/white-paper-red-paper-cd/>.
101. Alan Cairns in *ibid.*
102. A.J. Courmier, "Participation in Canada's centennial by people of Indian ancestry – some policy considerations," 1964, National Archives of Canada, quoted in Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada* (London: Routledge, 1999), 61.
103. Mackey, *The House of Difference*, 62.
104. Courmier, "Participation in Canada's centennial," quoted in *ibid.*, 61. Mackey's emphasis.

105. Saul, *A Fair Country*.
106. Mackey, *The House of Difference*, 62.
107. Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Cornstassel, "Being Indigenous: Resurgences Against Contemporary Colonialism," *Government and Opposition* 40, no. 4 (2005): 598.
108. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, "The Just Society," in *The Essential Trudeau*, ed. Ron Graham (Toronto: M&S, 1998), 19.
109. Kennedy, "White Paper / Red Paper."
110. Jean Chrétien, *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, 1969* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1969). Available at "Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy (The White Paper, 1969)," last modified September 15, 2010, <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100010189/1100100010191.5>, 7.
111. Grosz, "Embodied Utopias," 146.
112. Cardinal, *The Unjust Society*.
113. Indian Chiefs of Alberta, *Citizens Plus* (Edmonton: Indian Association of Alberta, 1970). Reprinted in *Aboriginal Policy Studies* 1, no. 2 (2011): 188-281.
114. Cairns in "White Paper / Red Paper."
115. CBC, "Government takes over schools," *CBC Television News*, May 1, 1969, *CBC Digital Archives* video, 3:32, <http://www.cbc.ca/player/Digital%2BArchives/Society/Education/Residential%2BSchools/ID/1423591585/>.
116. Chrétien, *Statement of the Government of Canada*, 9.
117. Matt James, "Uncomfortable Comparisons: The Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission in International Context," *Les ateliers de l'éthique/The Ethics Forum* 5, no. 2 (Autumn 2010): 23-35.
118. Milloy, "A National Crime", 204.
119. INAC File 479/1-1, G.D. Cromb, Memorandum to File, March 6, 1970, quoted in *ibid.*, 205.
120. Woodland Cultural Centre, "Save the Evidence," YouTube video, 2:32, August 14, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66WWQp8anfU>.

The victory of non-authenticity is fulfilled in philosophical activity, that complacency in “one,” and in prophetic activity [whether religious, moral, or political], that apotheosis of “we.” *Definition* is the lie of the abstract mind; *inspired formula* the lie of the militant one; a definition is always the cornerstone of a temple; a formula inescapably musters the faithful. Thus all teachings begin.¹

E.M. CIORAN, *A Short History of Decay*

The small town has a strip of houses, a grocery store, a gas station. Passing these, I turn right and drive across the bridge over a narrow river, which brings me to a neighbourhood where the trees dapple the street with sunlight and shadow. The road climbs up slowly to the northern edge of the river valley and, as the houses thin out, I find the nearly hidden gravel driveway and turn right again. I let up on the gas, slowing down to navigate the uneven ground. The wheels of the car settle into two deep ruts, and the grass in the middle grazes the underside with a rustle that penetrates the sealed interior. I round the driveway and the back of the building comes into view.

I pull up close, onto the old tarmac, and get out of the car into the raw heat of the day. My head clears as the music from the country station fades and the ambient sounds filter in: crickets hiding in the grass and birds flying around, pigeons and swallows. Junk lies strewn on the ground: metal parts, sinks, a bed frame. The building is overwhelming in this particular noisy silence. Wooden window frames and doors, with layers of peeling paint, have been neatly stacked against the red-brick wall. On the block extending back from the main part of the building, the top of the wall and the chimney are falling apart. Most, but not all, of the glass in the windows has been knocked out. This toothless grin disturbs me, and, unprepared to go inside, I turn first to the fields littered with outbuildings and abandoned cars half hidden in the tall grass.

Walking towards the dilapidated structures, it becomes apparent that people come here often. Paths in the grass lead straight to the two small wooden buildings, with their weathered siding and peeling shingles. The wind makes the trees talk softly, calming me before I disappear under the roof of the carport. An assortment of old building materials lies stacked on the ground. Slipping in through the door, I enter a room with shelves across its walls and pairs of scissors hanging on nails. Inside a further labyrinth of spaces are a dusty old furnace, rusted paint cans, stacks of lined paper and file folders, empty cardboard boxes, rags, a stove. The banal remnants of another time. The light, though piercing outside, washes these objects with a pale, scattered luminosity coming in through the dusty windows.

I find my way outside again through the back door. Beyond a low, rusted barbed-wire fence, the deep blue sky meets the earth. The flat, verdant expanse eventually rolls down to meet the river and the town below. Nearby is a small structure which could have been, but wasn't, a house. Inside it, slivers of bright light splay across the naked wood of the framed wall. The floor heaves as though something large has moved through the ground beneath it.

Onward, past a collapsed metal shed, I am drawn to a large barn. Walking through an open gate, I approach the majestic structure with its tall gambrel roof, suddenly stopped by the sight of a brown cluster near it. The cluster moves and gradually reveals itself to be a herd of horses, standing close together. Their coats glisten with reflected sunlight. I am moved by a desire to get close to them, but a simultaneous and overwhelming fear of their power keeps me away.

On the way back to the main building, I notice something I had not seen before. The silvery-grey wood wall of the garage carries a message, spray painted in red.

“Don’t let fear,” I whisper, unable to decipher the final words. Then I finally understand: “Don’t let fear take over.”



$+50^{\circ} 25' 55''$, $-101^{\circ} 2' 30''$





3.2 Photograph of the Birtle School, built 1893, from the 1904 report of the DIA. Thirty-two children lived here in a setting that mimicked Euro-Canadian domestic practices.

3.1 (previous pages)
Aerial image of former Birtle IRS, now abandoned, and environs, Birtle, MB

Birtle

The now-abandoned shell of the residential school in Birtle remains largely unchanged from the days when it housed dozens of children taken from near and far. Even in, and perhaps emphasized by, its dilapidated state, the building offers concrete evidence of the isolation and strict routine that governed the inmates' lives. In the words of Foucault, the structure is an expression of

an architecture that is no longer built to be seen (as with the ostentation of palaces), or to observe external space (cf. the geometry of fortresses), but to permit an internal, articulated and detailed control – to render visible those who are inside it ... an architecture that would operate to transform individuals: to act on those it shelters, to provide a hold on their conduct, to carry the effects of power right to them, to make it possible to know them, to alter them.²

The nature of the power that this type of architecture transmits, its intricacies, reasonings, and relationships, vary greatly, which requires acknowledgment and complex readings. Geoffrey Carr uses Jamaican scholar David Scott's framework of *targets*, *projects*, and *points of insertion* to differentiate between European governance and "colonial governmentality."³ Carr argues that these three specificities of colonial rule as distinct from the general concept of governmentality can be read in the design, aim and function of the IRS. The wide net of colonial governmentality, which stretches across what is now known as Canada, aimed to directly affect the bodies and conduct of its Indigenous targets using the materially concentrated nodes of individual sites as its points of insertion.

Birtle Indian Boarding School, 1888-1930

A school targeted to Indigenous children was established at Birtle, Manitoba, in December 1888 under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church. Eight residents were enrolled and officials expected the new institution to absorb students attending a day school at the nearby Birdtail Sioux reserve.⁴ Although the residential school was initially located in leased buildings, “in many respects not suitable” because “they were not erected for the purpose,” the day school was closed just a year later.⁵ This closure demonstrated the government’s conviction of the need to separate children from their parents in order to educate and assimilate them; despite the cost of lodging and boarding students who had already had access to a day school, as well as protest from parents, Indian Affairs was optimistic about the school:

Considerable opposition was found to exist against it at first by many of the Indians, but you will be glad to know that this is fast disappearing, and some of those who at first showed most opposition are now gradually yielding, as they see the children who have been attending the school are in much better circumstances than those at home.⁶

What these “better circumstances” were was not made clear. Forty pages later in the same report from 1889, another bureaucrat shares a more ambiguous point of view, suggesting that

the institution is too new to be commented upon. ... The building is a very handsome one of greystone, but not very well suited for boarders. Difficulty has been found in obtaining pupils and this both the Principal and Indian Agent seem to attribute to denominational rivalry.⁷

The refrain of opposition by parents went unheeded as officials did not ask whether it was, perhaps, warranted. A year later, however, Birtle’s population had tripled; the school now had “twenty-four pupils within its walls, eight boys and sixteen girls; they belong to four different bands ... and range in age from four to sixteen years.”⁸ The inappropriateness of the building and its furnishings continued to be noted by inspectors⁹ and the lack of space was lamented:

The attendance has been much more regular than in former years, and if the



3.3 Postcard of the Birtle School, ca. 1908. Families of residents have set up camp, most likely in the course of visiting their children.

school were only able to accommodate more it would very soon be more largely patronized, as the convenience of the situation and good management have been greatly appreciated by the Indians within reach of it.¹⁰

In 1893, the agent reported that “a splendid stone structure is now almost ready for occupation ... The site is a beautiful one on a hill over looking the town.”¹¹ The combined school and residence was situated on thirty acres of land north of the Birdtail River and the plans for the building were “of modern design,” prepared by an unnamed architect in Winnipeg.¹² In 1894, thirty-two students, evenly split between girls and boys, moved into the new school along with staff.¹³ It was a symmetrical stone building, with a basement, two storeys, and an attic with dormer windows, as well as a central projecting pavilion crowned with a gable end (3.2-3). The school included spaces for work, sleep, and recreation, which comprised the bulk of the residents’ daily lives.

The building represented a small, controlled world in which the aim of the daily routine was the children’s assimilation. Despite this goal, the inmates of the school and others like it were paradoxically cut off from the settler communities into which they were supposed

to integrate. The architecture and the routines it facilitated permitted the “internal, articulated and detailed control” of inmates, which was supposed “to carry the effects of power right to them” and “to alter them” to be more like settlers. Each of the schools thus functioned as a “total institution,” defined by sociologist Erving Goffman as

a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life. Prisons serve as a clear example, providing we appreciate that what is prison-like about prisons is found in institutions whose members have broken no laws.¹⁴

Goffman lists as examples of total institutions places such as homes for the blind, aged, orphaned, or indigent; sanitarium, leprosaria, and mental hospitals; jails, penitentiaries, P.O.W. and concentration camps; army barracks, ships, boarding schools, work camps, colonial compounds, and large mansions (from the servants’ point of view); as well as religious cloisters of all types. Because of the enclosed nature of total institutions, their architectural expression often corresponds closely with their social organization, with a single building or cohesive set of buildings, forming the physical boundaries of the inmates’ world. This correspondence of social and architectural aspects was certainly the case at residential schools, which combined facets of boarding schools, orphanages, sanitarium, penitentiaries, and work camps. Additional outbuildings such as barns or principal’s quarters often rounded out the landscape of the institution; at Birtle, a frame barn, stone stables, and root-house comprised the buildings in which children toiled.¹⁵

The Birtle school was “of the semi-industrial type”¹⁶ among the different classes of residential institutions, which included the industrial, semi-industrial, boarding, and semi-boarding schools. The semi-boarding schools were those on reserves that lodged some, but not all, of their students. Comparing the industrial and boarding schools to on-reserve day schools in the Birtle Agency, the Indian agent commented that “as a rule the day school pupils attend irregularly, the home influence is not of a high standard, little or no home studies

are done, and all conversation is carried on at home in the native language.”¹⁷ These observations served as justification for establishing off-reserve boarding or industrial schools over day schools. Specific trades were taught at the large industrial schools, which were funded entirely by the government. The other types were “carried on at the joint expense of the denominations by which they were inaugurated and of the Government.”¹⁸ The school at Birtle was jointly funded, and the school’s semi-industrial designation indicated a smaller institution where no formal instruction in trades took place. Like the Mohawk Institute, Birtle operated on the half-day model, through which inmates were engaged in a manner of “vocational training” that was of great economic value to the school:

The older children only attended classes alternately, mornings and afternoons. When not in the class rooms they are engaged in industrial pursuits; the girls in the kitchen, sewing room, laundry, dairy, or in other household duties, and the boys at gardening, etc.¹⁹

Of the thirty acres of the Birtle school grounds, about four were planted with a garden, both for the use of the school and to instruct (male) residents in cultivating produce. For the girls, little changed from season to season and year to year. Most annual reports repeat the same string of domestic tasks, which the female students performed under the guise of education: “general housekeeping, sewing, knitting, laundry work, dairying, & c.”²⁰ In 1904, however, the principal reported that in “the winter they did considerable bead-work, making belts and chains,” which “supplied them with pocket money.”²¹ The girls began to assist with milking and gardening, outdoor activities which until then seem to have been the exclusive domain of boys. The male and female spheres of activity and the spaces in which they were located were kept quite separate. Along with the formal curriculum and the manual labour the children were subjected to, they were implicitly taught the male and female roles thought proper in Euro-Canadian society. For this purpose, “the internal organization of the school building was a silent reminder of racial barriers as well as gender differences.”²²

Some students managed to escape, at least briefly, the tedium of the typical routines. The name of one of Birtle's first residents, Hugh McKay, appears in several DIA annual reports. Sometimes referred to as pupil number 22, by 1897, the Indian agent lauded Master Hugh McKay as "a beacon that so far has not proved to be a false light, but one who, I believe, is illuminating the shoal and rocky waters for his race to follow through into a secure harbour."²³ He came from the Wayway-seecappo Band, eighteen miles north-east of Birtle along the Birdtail River, and was reportedly unable to speak English when he first arrived. Within a few years, he was working for the printer of the *Birtle Eyewitness* newspaper to the great satisfaction of his employers, who remunerated him with "a small salary."²⁴ Hugh learned to set type and the Indian agent J.A. Markle reported that he enjoyed the work.²⁵ His position was considered of such value that he was permitted to be absent from class in order to attend to his duties.²⁶

In 1894, he continued his work as a printer and had used part of his salary to buy shares in the printing company. "This to my mind," wrote the agent, "is an indication of the possibilities of many of the Indian youths that are growing up, and I am fully satisfied that the Compulsory Education Act lately enacted was opportune and that it will be a blessing to many of these Indian youths."²⁷ The next year, McKay transferred to the Regina Industrial School, a common next step for students at Birtle, which acted as a "feeder" for the industrial school. Despite for a time moving outside the institution's totalizing influence, Hugh was relegated to taking the typical path of students before and after him. What became of his career as a printer is not known. He remained at Regina for two years before returning to the Birtle school to take up the positions of teamster, general assistant, outside worker, and instructor.²⁸

The authority figures in McKay's life wrote much about him, but his own voice was missing from these accounts. Furthermore, as much as he was praised by government officials for success in his endeavours, these statements had an undertone of derision for the culture and beliefs of his people. In 1898, McKay temporarily took up the post of missionary at

his reserve community, of which the agent wrote that “the pagan beliefs of this band are, I believe, gradually being eradicated.”²⁹ The following year, McKay was back at Birtle as general assistant and “in care of the cattle.”³⁰ The last mention of him was in 1903, when his salary of \$50.00 for two months’ work as an interpreter was listed under “Salaries and Travel, Outside Service.”³¹ It is impossible to know, from these bureaucratic records, his own impressions as an Ojibwe boy growing into a man whose life spanned both the reserve and the mission, and who acted as a link between these two worlds. What did Hugh McKay think of it all?

Between 1895 and 1896, the Birtle school population jumped from thirty-five to forty-seven students, then levelled out to forty-two by 1900.³² This dip likely occurred because the school was receiving per-capita funding for only forty students.³³ The Presbyterian Church paid for the needs of students beyond that number, and the administration would likely have been cautious about admitting too many pupils. Because of the compulsory education regulations of 1894 and possibly some genuine interest in the schools by parents, many children were usually awaiting admittance. Some parents supported the school as a compromise: Kakewayasit, a member of the Rolling River Band, requested that the Department enlarge the Birtle school so that children from his community would not have to be sent all the way to Regina. The agent noted that “this request was made when I was pressing him hard to give up a boy for the Regina Industrial [School], and it goes without saying that [Kakewayasit] would prefer no school, but would choose a day school on the Reserve in preference to the Birtle Boarding School.”³⁴

Coercion thus played a significant role in getting children into the schools. At the Birdtail Reserve in 1896, “every child of school age and in good health, belonging to this band [was] either at the Birtle Boarding or the Regina Industrial-school.”³⁵ Two years later, the situation had not changed: all healthy, school-aged children had been brought to one of those two institutions.³⁶ This continual absence of children in the communities they left behind is one of the most poignant aspects of the IRS scheme, an issue often brought up by survivors. “Can you imagine a community without

children?” writes Interior Salish and Métis author Nicola I. Campbell. “Can you imagine children without parents?”³⁷ The removal of children to Birtle continued despite the pledge in Treaty No. 4, to which many of the children’s nations had been signatories, to provide schools on reserves.³⁸

In 1899, an increased number of pupils could be accommodated at Birtle due to improvements to the building.³⁹ A detailed description of the reconfigured building in the annual report of 1900 indicated sizes and locations of all the rooms within the school. Of particular interest is the high number of dormitory rooms, fifteen in all. Even assuming that the six small dormitories were actually staff bedrooms, that would have left nine student dormitories. With a student population of forty, four or five students would have occupied each dormitory, or six with an anticipated population of fifty. This relatively low occupancy was a stark contrast to the large dormitories that would replace them later on. Until then, the building was still “the most imposing in the town of Birtle.”⁴⁰

Architecture and (Un)Health

Despite the improvements made to the Birtle school and others, administrators became increasingly aware of a link between the buildings and an alarming rate of illness among residents of boarding institutions. This connection between environment and health was particularly strong in regions where tuberculosis was rampant; poor ventilation and overcrowding were factors that aggravated the disease.⁴¹ In 1904, the principal of Birtle wrote that “we have had comparatively little Sickness during the year. During the spring a number of the more delicate [residents] have been sleeping out in tents and it has improved them very much. On account of the favourable situation of the school the sanitary conditions are good,”⁴² and a year later, he reported that “half of the boys sleep in tents from May to October. The sanitary conditions are good.”⁴³ I wonder how good the sanitary conditions truly

were, considering the number of students who slept outdoors and the fact that they became healthier when they were lodged in tents.

Two important studies confirmed an association between the physical structures and ill health. The first was described in a 1907 report by Dr. P.H. Bryce, who had been appointed the “Medical Inspector to the Department of the Interior and of Indian Affairs” in 1904.⁴⁴ The report was based on questionnaires about pupil health received from fifteen boarding schools and detailed the practice of admitting ill children as well as the conditions within the schools that promoted the spread of disease. Tuberculosis was spread by direct contact and environmental vectors such as “the infected dust of floors, school rooms and dormitories,” as well as polluted air from improper ventilation.⁴⁵

A century and a half before these problems surfaced in the residential schools, treatises on ventilation in buildings had been written in Europe.⁴⁶ These texts, however, focused on hospitals and infirmaries, and the residential schools were never designed to function as hospitals—though many of them ended up serving this purpose. Dr. Bryce found that twenty-four percent of the students represented in the survey of fifteen schools had died while enrolled. An estimate suggested that, when those who had died within three years of leaving school were included, a total of forty-two percent had died. The appalling death rates were proclaimed by news headlines such as “Schools Aid White Plague – Startling Death Tolls Revealed among Indians – Absolute Inattention to Bare Necessities of Health.”⁴⁷ A report by F.H. Paget, a Department accountant, “which was highly critical of the condition of school buildings,” came to hand in 1908. The following year, statistics from a further thirteen schools were found to match Bryce’s original findings.⁴⁸

The only discernible action taken by officials in response to the tragedy taking place on their watch was the inclusion of requirements for acceptable levels of sanitation and health of the students in the 1911 contracts negotiated with the churches that ran the schools. S.H. Blake, a lawyer influential in the contract negotiations, asserted that “in doing nothing to obviate the preventable causes of death, brings the

Department within unpleasant nearness to the charge of manslaughter.” He further noted that the death rate among younger children “was the result of removing [them]...from a healthy ‘out of door life’ to the confines of badly constructed schools made worse over time by neglectful and inadequately funded maintenance programs.”⁴⁹

In July 1909, a tent hospital which had since 1906 been operated at the Waywayseecappo Reserve was moved to the Birtle school grounds, “being more central for all the reserves in the agency.”⁵⁰ The next year, the tents were replaced “by lumber cottages, two for the patients, and one for the nurse.” Few adults from the surrounding reserves used the hospital, and “the greater number of patients [were] pupils”⁵¹—the hospital had “in practice become merely the infirmary of the school.”⁵² In line with this approach, Bryce recommended the use of “fresh air methods” to treat tuberculosis cases, an approach that meant conversion of schools to sanatoria.⁵³ Bryce was dismissed from his position in 1912. The cause was unclear, but may have had to do with the cost and ambition of his proposals or protest from the churches against his idea to put the schools under complete federal control.⁵⁴

The bottom line was that funding for the maintenance of residential schools was totally inadequate, and owing to the shared responsibility for them by the federal government and churches, good management was neglected. In addition, “no clear line of command” existed regarding public health, normally under the jurisdiction of the provinces, which had no authority over Indigenous communities.⁵⁵ The buildings did not receive the necessary maintenance or upgrades to preserve health, instead compounding existing illnesses and aiding in infecting healthy children.

By 1912, only one case of tuberculosis remained in fifteen patients at Birtle,⁵⁶ although it is not clear whether this was due to children recovering from or succumbing to the disease. After twenty-five years of operation, the Birtle school was extensively renovated in response to the sanitation and health stipulations in the 1911 contracts, which included a rating system that rewarded the better-kept schools with higher per-capita grants from the government. The renovations enabled

Birtle to be rated a class A institution, meaning that it could draw the highest annual grant of \$125 per child.⁵⁷ The improvements included “enlarged and ... thoroughly modern” sewerage, plumbing, lavatories, and steam heating.⁵⁸ Others were a new bake oven, a cold storage plant, and a concrete cistern. The principal emphasized these technical innovations when he wrote that “the school will be in a position to do its part for the education of the Indian race.”⁵⁹ These appliances were also likely shown to any visitors the school had in what Goffman calls “institutional display,” a typical practice within total institutions:

Display certainly need not be connected with frankly ceremonial aspects of the institution, such as flower beds and starched curtains, but often stresses utilitarian objects such as the latest kitchen equipment, or an elaborate surgical suite; in fact the display function of such equipment may be part of the reason for acquiring it.⁶⁰

An addition provided a new classroom as well as a basement gymnasium,⁶¹ and a verandah was added to the front. The existing combination of gable and hip roofs over the attic was transformed into a full third storey with a gambrel roof. This was topped by a “handsome tower”⁶² with a cupola, a common feature intended to communicate the building’s authority (3.4). Inside, prismatic glass windows were used to increase light, and newly refinished surfaces could now be washed and disinfected. Existing rooms were reconfigured to include more playrooms, storerooms, and restrooms. Separate classroom entrances, lobbies, staircases and cloakrooms for boys and girls were built. An anticipated eighty-four children now inhabited six dormitories. Dustbane, a sweeping compound, was used to prevent dust.⁶³

In terms of education, the progress of the school had been “greatly retarded by the alterations being made and by sickness.”⁶⁴ Nevertheless, the principal reported that children of older graduates were now being enrolled, their parents “anxious to have their children educated.”⁶⁵ He also noted that “none of these graduates have so far been implicated for breaches of the Indian Act.” Although ending his report on these hopeful notes, he acknowledged that of the 234 students who had



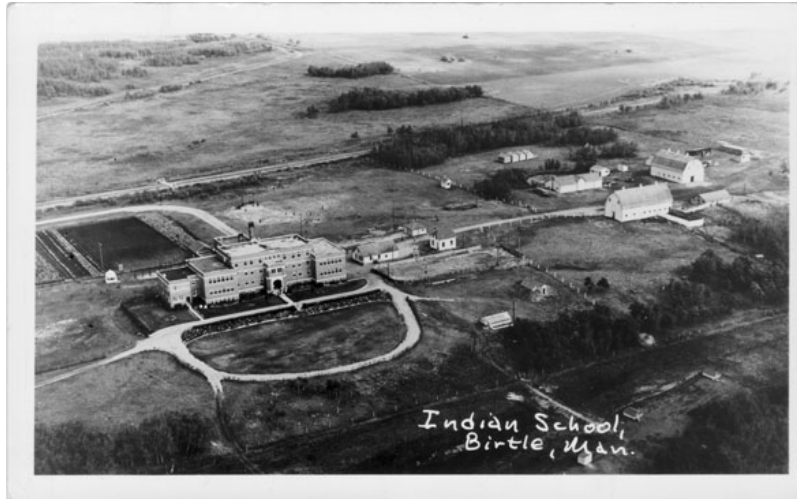
3.4 Birtle School with additions and renovations, ca. 1912

attended the school since its establishment, at least seventy had died.⁶⁶

In 1922, P.H. Bryce produced an account of his involvement with Indian Affairs in *The Story of a National Crime: Being an Appeal for Justice to the Indians of Canada*. He recalls that Duncan Campbell Scott, then Deputy Minister of Indian Affairs, prevented his reports from becoming “a matter of critical discussion” at the annual meeting of the National Tuberculosis Association in 1910, promising that “the Department would take adequate action along the lines of the report.”⁶⁷ But along with a complaint about his unceremonious dismissal, Bryce criticized the slow and inadequate “action” that resulted in many unnecessary deaths.

Birtle Indian Residential School, 1931-1972

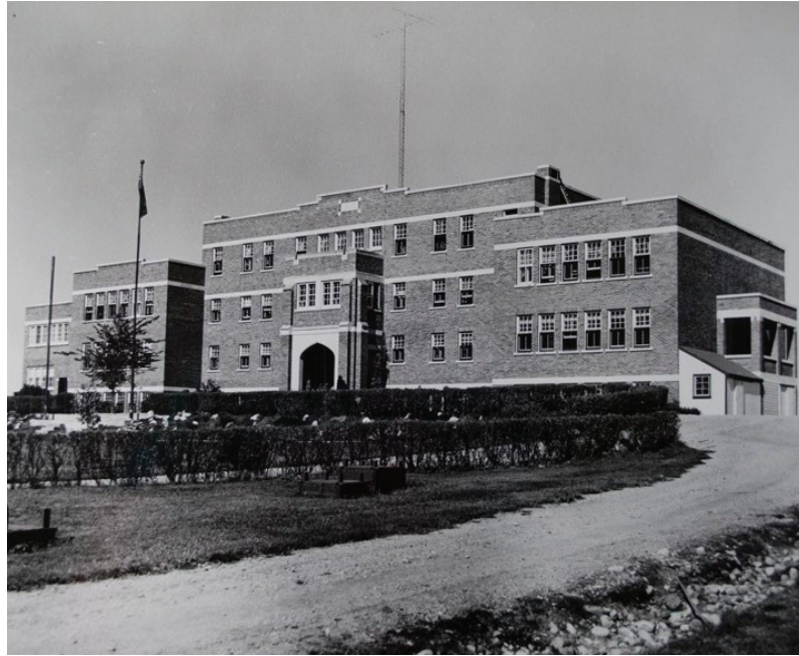
The year of Bryce’s publication, a DIA survey concluded that most of the seventy-five IRS across Canada were not “modern up to date buildings in good condition,” and some were considered “dilapidated.”⁶⁸ Certain



3.5 Postcard of Birtle IRS, after 1930

institutions were replaced at this time, but a new building at Birtle was completed almost a decade later, in 1931. With eighty-five students enrolled in 1930,⁶⁹ the school was at capacity, and administrators decided that the building “had outlived [its] usefulness.”⁷⁰ Now referred to as the Birtle IRS, the second building was built on the same site and presented an even more imposing image (3.5-6). The school received \$180.33 from Indian Affairs to cover the costs of “blue prints and specifications” and funds to make progress payments to the contractor and barn builder.⁷¹ Roland Guerney Orr developed the plans for both the school (3.7) and the barn (3.8-9). The same year, new buildings were constructed at three other residential schools in Saskatchewan and Alberta.⁷²

In 1943, the youngest students at Birtle began to attend full-day classes, and the older children were phased in over the next few years. By the late 1940s, “vocational training” in the form of manual labour had been discontinued.⁷³ Like the Mohawk Institute, the Birtle IRS began sending students to high school outside the confines of the building in the 1950s. The children continued to live at the school, which served increasingly as a residence rather than an educational institution.⁷⁴ In addition, as more on-reserve day schools were established, fewer local

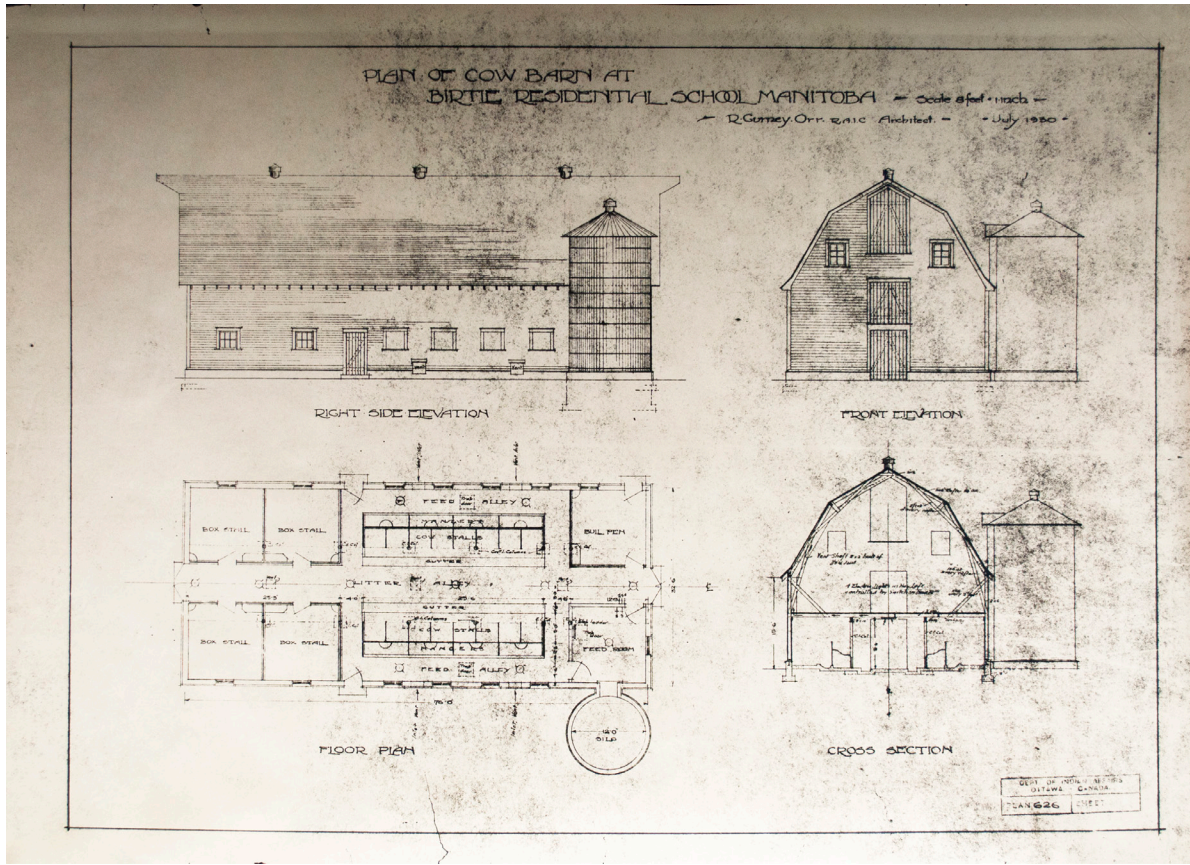


3.6 Birtle IRS, 1957

children attended Birtle and students from more distant areas filled the building. In 1962, residents in grades one to eight began to be integrated into the local public schools, a process that was largely complete by 1966. The involvement of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in its two schools, Birtle and Cecilia Jeffrey in Kenora, Ontario, ended in 1969. Birtle was transferred to the federal government and, by 1972, the building was abandoned.⁷⁵



3.7 Elevations, Birtle IRS, 1930, R.G. Orr, architect



3.8 Plan of Cow Barn for Birtle IRS, 1930, R.G. Orr, architect



3.9 Barn, Birtle, 2013



3.10 Birtle IRS, 2013

The year 1930 is etched in a stone high above the entrance. The front of the building is severe, with two symmetrical projections on either side and a smaller, central porch. Aside from the basement, which sits partially above ground, the centre block of the building has three stories, the projections two. I step up six concrete stairs to pass under a shallow, pointed limestone arch, the last pause before the entrance. The bricks have a brushed texture and appear not the uniform red I had seen from further away, but dusty red, coral, and brown fading into yellow. A spray-painted arrow points towards the door.

My first steps inside take me out of the oppressive heat and into a shady interior, cool drafts wafting down long corridors. On the left wall of the vestibule is a peeling mural depicting four men, wearing elaborately beaded clothing and war bonnets, sitting in a circle. Behind them, among rolling hills green with grass and conifers, is a clear blue lake. Up a further six steps and I am on the main floor. Straight ahead, a corridor leads towards the back wing; to the left and right are hallways with rows of doors. To the right, there is a small library, its shelves long empty.

At the end of the hallway is a frame, the door removed, leading into a classroom where the missing chalkboards have left outlines on sea-foam green walls. Swallows fly around in circles, shrieking in irritation at my presence, protective of the nest they've built somewhere within. One of the walls has degraded, revealing layers of paint, concrete parging, and a block that says WESTILE in upside-down letters. Through a hole, I see across the adjacent classroom to an exterior door with a fire escape, its door wide open to the summer air.

Returning down the hallway, past the front entrance, I enter the office, evidence of a failed arson attempt within: a pile of books with burnt edges

in the corner, charred pieces of lumber, soot stains up the wall and across the ceiling. But the fire was not ravenous enough to consume the building. Down the hall, in another classroom, is a newspaper from 1987 among piles of NDP election signs. On a countertop lies a book, a boy in plaid and his father in khaki gracing the cover, both looking across a turquoise lake towards the Rocky Mountains. Beyond this room lie the principal's quarters, a single-family house tacked onto the side of the building.

Up one flight of stairs lies the open space of the boys' dormitory. A wash-room occupies one corner. In another is a staff bedroom with a sash window looking out over what would have been fifty sleeping children. The arrangement of dormitory and monitor spaces is duplicated on the other end of the building for the girls. The school was divided in half according to sex: girls to the east and boys to the west, right and left. This pattern of division is continued on the third floor. Up here, there was no passage between the two sides, but someone has made an opening in the wall. Crouching down, I get through it and emerge on the boys' side.

The basement is cool and quiet, though the air feels oppressive, like it hasn't moved in years. I wander through the boys' recreation room and into the dining room. Past that, the girls' recreation room mirrors the boys', their dormitories stacked above. The back wing holds the scullery, kitchen, laundry, and a large boiler room at the very end. The back wall is caved in; the opening lets in a landslide of bricks, trusses, and other junk. The light only reaches so far inside before dissipating into darkness. The last room I go into is the chapel above the service areas. Defaced as it is with graffiti, the small

stage at one end falling apart, there seems nothing sacred left about this space. Perhaps there never was to begin with.

At the gas station on my way out of town, I tell the people working there that I had been looking at the abandoned residential school. The older woman cautions me about the dangerous state of the dilapidated building. The young man asks whether I saw the graffiti, the swastikas on the walls. The woman hesitates, then says she knows someone who might be willing to talk to me about the school—a former student, a survivor, who attended the school but lived as a boarder with the woman's family in town. I leave her my name and phone number to pass along, wondering whether I will hear from him.

Days later, I stumble upon an Idle No More gathering in front of the parliament in Winnipeg. Drums sound, people speak, then a line of dancers link hands and begin arranging themselves in a large circle on the lawn. I take someone's hand, somebody else takes mine, and we are all drawn into the round dance. The faces of the people across the circle are so far away that they are indistinguishable.

After the circle disbands, I am sitting on the grass when I get a call from the man who went to the school. He seems interested in sharing his experiences and his ideas for the site of the abandoned building, and I am eager to listen. We end by agreeing to continue our discussion but, unfortunately, this does not happen. It makes me think of all the unrealized plans floating around in peoples' heads, bound up with memories and hopes of reshaping a difficult past into a better future.



3.11 Mural, Birtle, 2013



3.12 Principal's residence, Birtle, 2013



3.13 First-floor corridor, Birtle, 2013



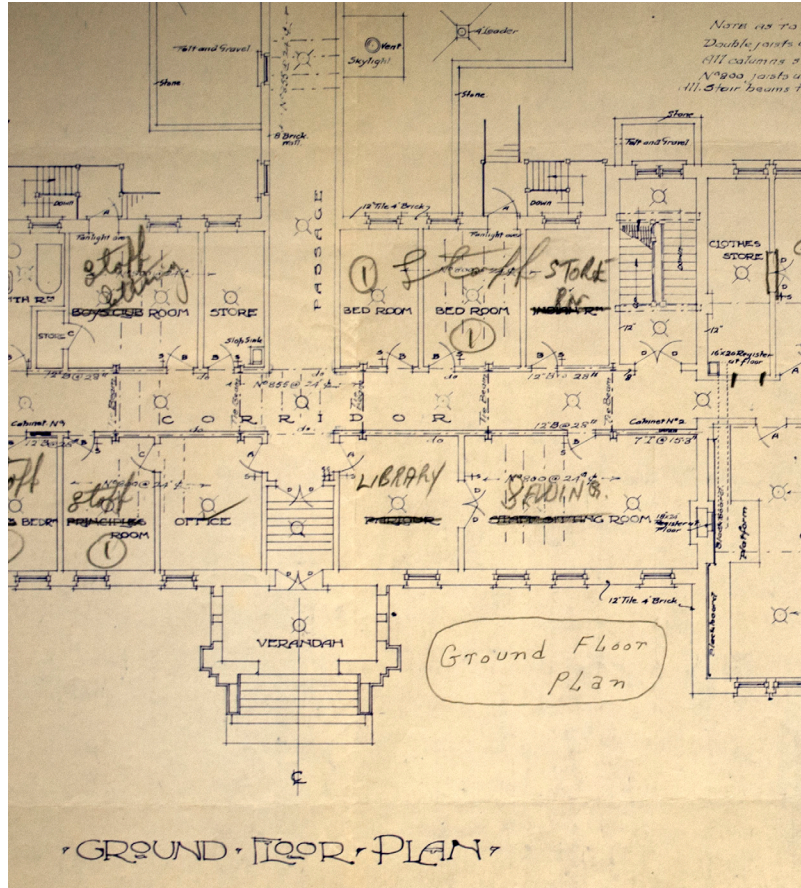
3.14 Between the third-floor girls' and boys' dormitories, Birtle, 2013

Institutional Intricacies: Indian Parlours and Monitor Rooms

Many IRS survivors have compared the schools to explicitly carceral institutions. Solomon Pooyak, a former student in Delmas, Saskatchewan, remarked that the school “was like a jail.”⁷⁶ Tom Wassaykeesic notes that “in many ways, Shingwauk Hall was like a prison. The supervisors were paranoid about kids running away. Life was regimented, everything had to be done at a certain time and day.”⁷⁷ In 1940, Métis organizer Malcolm Norris wrote that “inferior staffs, inadequate food, constant overwork, military and religious routine, together with genuine cruelty, have caused those who have attended them to term these schools ‘Penitentiaries.’”⁷⁸ Basil Johnston recalls that the inmates of St. Peter Claver’s School in Spanish, Ontario, “came from broken homes; some were orphans, having lost one or both parents; others were committed to the institution as punishment for some misdemeanor; and a few were enrolled by their parents in order to receive some education and training.”⁷⁹

This punitive and carceral lens on residential schools recalls Goffman’s caveat that “what is prison-like about prisons is found in institutions whose members have broken no laws.”⁸⁰ Foucault notes that at a certain point in Western history, about 200 years ago, the focus of punishment went from the body (torture or death) to the soul (prisons and other architectures of control), acting “in depth on the heart, the thoughts, the will, the inclinations.”⁸¹ Whereas the IRS were not, in the minds of their creators, inherently punitive (although they were certainly, also, sites of explicit punishment for cultural transgressions), they belonged to the previously mentioned “carceral archipelago” based on the idea of the changeability of humans. If the soul could be altered to align with the requirements of the entity in power, the body could then be appropriated, “a slave at the service of all.”⁸²

Although the entire IRS building at Birtle was configured for control, two areas in particular demarcate spaces of concentrated surveillance believed to be critical to the program of transformation enacted upon



3.15 Ground floor plan of Birtle IRS, detail, 1930, R.G. Orr, architect, with ephemera ca. 1961

the children. This surveillance was at work in parlour, known in similar institutions as the “Indian parlour,” a room where parents could visit their children (3.15). At the Mohawk Institute, it was called the “Indian reception room.” At another school in Saskatchewan, a former resident recalls that “when parents came they either stayed in the log hut next to the school or the visiting was done under supervision in the Indian Parlor,” which “had benches, hard chairs, and a wooden floor. The white man’s parlor, in another part of the residence, had sofas, stuffed chairs, and carpet.”⁸³ Here, both children and their visitors were subject to observation. The parlour

also served as a space of institutional display that permitted the staff to reveal a strictly controlled view of the institution to parents.

At Birtle, the parlour was located in a typical spot, directly to the right inside the main entrance. Some schools had these rooms configured so that parents had to enter through an exterior door, whereas children entered through an adjacent hallway or room.⁸⁴ In this way, the visiting family's view of the school was reduced to one room in the entire building. This manipulation of space, which limited the overlap between students and parents, demonstrates the powerful work of ideology on architecture and, conversely, the way the built space of the residential school reinforced the behavior desired by staff and officials. The parlour at the Birtle IRS has an arrangement that suggests family entered through the main entrance and into the parlour immediately to the right, whereas children came in with staff from the adjacent staff sitting room through a set of double doors on the other side of the parlour. This space was turned into a library at some point, likely in the second half of the twentieth century, as discerned from marked-up plans archived in 1961.

The monitor is another room that, through its particular arrangement, enabled staff to scrutinize the behaviour of children in the dormitories without being seen to do so.⁸⁵ At Birtle, as was typical in the second generation of IRS, these rooms appeared as insertions in one corner of each of the dormitories (3.16). Ostensibly staff bedrooms, they also had a window that would allow its occupant a view of the entire dormitory. Carr suggests that the monitor reflects Jeremy Bentham's panopticon in that "the power enabled is both 'visible and unverifiable,'"⁸⁶ but that it differs in key ways such as the uneven distribution of surveillance throughout the building. For example, the second-floor monitors at Birtle had to be entered through the dormitory, so that children would be aware of the comings and goings of its inhabitant. On the third floor, however, the door to the monitor was in the adjoining hallway, meaning the residents of those dormitories would be unaware of when the monitor was and was not occupied. Carr also nuances the



3.16 Monitor overlooking second-floor boys' dormitory, Birtle, 2013

power relationships within these spaces in noting that similar ones in English boarding schools were occupied by senior students rather than staff members as at the IRS.⁸⁷

The monitor room's purpose of constant surveillance is a significant element in the organization of all total institutions, where personnel are assigned to ensure "that everyone does what he has been clearly told is required of him, under conditions where one person's infraction is likely to stand out in relief against the visible, constantly examined compliance of others."⁸⁸ In relating these spaces to Foucault's architecture of transforming individuals, Elizabeth Grosz notes that utopic architectures

function as the exercise of fantasies of control over what Foucault has called 'the event,' that which is unprepared for, unforeseeable, singular, unique, and transformative, the advent of something new. Indeed it is precisely against this idea of newness, creation, or advent that the fantasy of utopia, of a perfect and controlled society, is developed to reassure us.⁸⁹

The Indian parlour and monitor rooms were two key points in the institutional field of the IRS, targeted at assimilating Indigenous children through the attempt to contain and discipline them. In his book *Hanaway*, Edmund Metatawabin describes how he was incarcerated at St. Anne's IRS in Fort Albany from the age of seven, referring to the IRS system as "the state of First Nations in total institutions."⁹⁰ These spaces of control proliferated across Canada, going beyond the management of individuals to the attempted regulation of entire peoples.

Present Pasts

Today, the Birtle IRS sits, mostly empty, on a hill overlooking the small town. Like any abandoned place, it seems to have become a repository for the past, for different pasts, accumulating the signs of what it used to be together with what it no longer is. The cupola of the "handsome tower" installed on top of the first building in 1912 still endures on the site (3.17). For a time, it functioned as the roof of a gazebo behind



3.17 Dome, Birtle, 2013

the school, which was later dismantled. The dome seems foreign now, appearing strangely to have grown out of the tall grass that surrounds it.

The former school is privately owned by a non-resident, and the administration of the Town of Birtle is unaware of any plans for the building.⁹¹ Its story seems to come to a dead end, but the school's indeterminate state invites reflection as opposed to action. People come here often, leaving tracks in the grass. There are online videos of forays into the building. One of them depicts three survivors returning in the winter, the women approaching the school steadily, two of them holding hands for support. The structure clearly makes an impression, invoking the troubled past into the present. The filmmaker accompanying them asks whether compensation for survivors will "help to heal the past." One of the women looks away, then looks back at the camera. "No, not with me. No."⁹²

The space of the school is bound up with countless stories of pain and survival. As German scholar Andreas Huyssen puts it, "the strong marks of present space merge in the imaginary with traces of the past, erasures, losses, and heterotopias."⁹³ The building serves as testimony alongside that of survivors and, for those of us who were not there, locates that memory, fuses it with a place, augmenting an always inadequate, but hopefully evolving, understanding.



3.18 Towards the Birdtail River valley, 2013

Notes

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40. Annual Report, 1901, 384.
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II: MEMORY

Since the only test of truth is length of life, and since words survive the chops and changes of time longer than any other substance, therefore they are the truest. Buildings fall; even the earth perishes. What was yesterday a cornfield is to-day a bungalow. But words, if properly used, seem able to live for ever.¹

VIRGINIA WOOLF, "Craftsmanship"

The sun hangs low in the sky, and the air is warm. On a hilltop on the outskirts of a small city, I walk around a pile of rubble. This huge heap of bricks, broken-up concrete, rusted steel, and fragments of wood and stone is what remains of the building. Where the entrance would have been lies a large piece of limestone that once formed the entry arch. South of the hill, the view is of flat stretches of green farmland extending towards darker stands of trees, the river hidden in the distance. To the southeast, the city edges into shadow. It goes about its Sunday-afternoon business, seemingly oblivious to this wreckage just outside its limits.

At first glance, the pile of abject building material looks peaceful. It looks as if it is resting, as if perhaps the building it once constituted simply sighed and fell apart, relieved of a longstanding burden. Sunlight gently bathes the debris, casting long, lazy shadows that reveal the contours of its jagged forms and rusted steel trusses. The edges of the pile fade into the surrounding tall grass, humming with crickets, which has begun to reclaim the land as its own. Somewhere down the hill, the sound of an engine interjects but is swiftly overwhelmed by a bird calling nearby. Grass infiltrates the cracks of a broken-up piece of pavement to the east. Behind the remains of the school, the ground rises further up to where the root house once stood. Its only remnants are two concrete walls perpendicular to one another, the tall-

er of the two penetrating the hill. I clamber on top of it to get a better view.

Walking on top of the wall, the ground below recedes further and further away. The wall is half a metre thick and has withstood the demolition of others near it, but the giddiness of vertigo creeps into my body anyway. When I reach the end, I can see the footprint of the building delineated by the material of which it was once composed. Where the stones fell, there they lie. Trees have inched up from between the fragments. The pile is shaped like the school it used to be but, flattened against the land, it is only its faint echo, a fading outline. I cannot imagine the walls standing up; it seems that this pile of rubble must have always existed, untouched in its silence.

I descend back to the ground, the air darkening as the sun dips below the treeline. A barely perceptible chill develops, hanging in the dusk. I climb carefully onto the debris I have just surveilled from above. A fire pit built with bricks taken from the remains of the school lies just beyond the sprawling wreckage. The silence of the place does not last, for it fills with questions. Who burned the fires here? Their presence is registered as this trace, in a void full of other traces accumulated over time. The hollow sound of clay brushing against concrete follows me around, reminding me that that my presence is not neutral.



+49° 52' 10", -99° 59' 23"





4.2 *Nah-wee-kee-sick-quah-yash*, Chief of Saulteaux (Chief Jacob Behrens), 1909

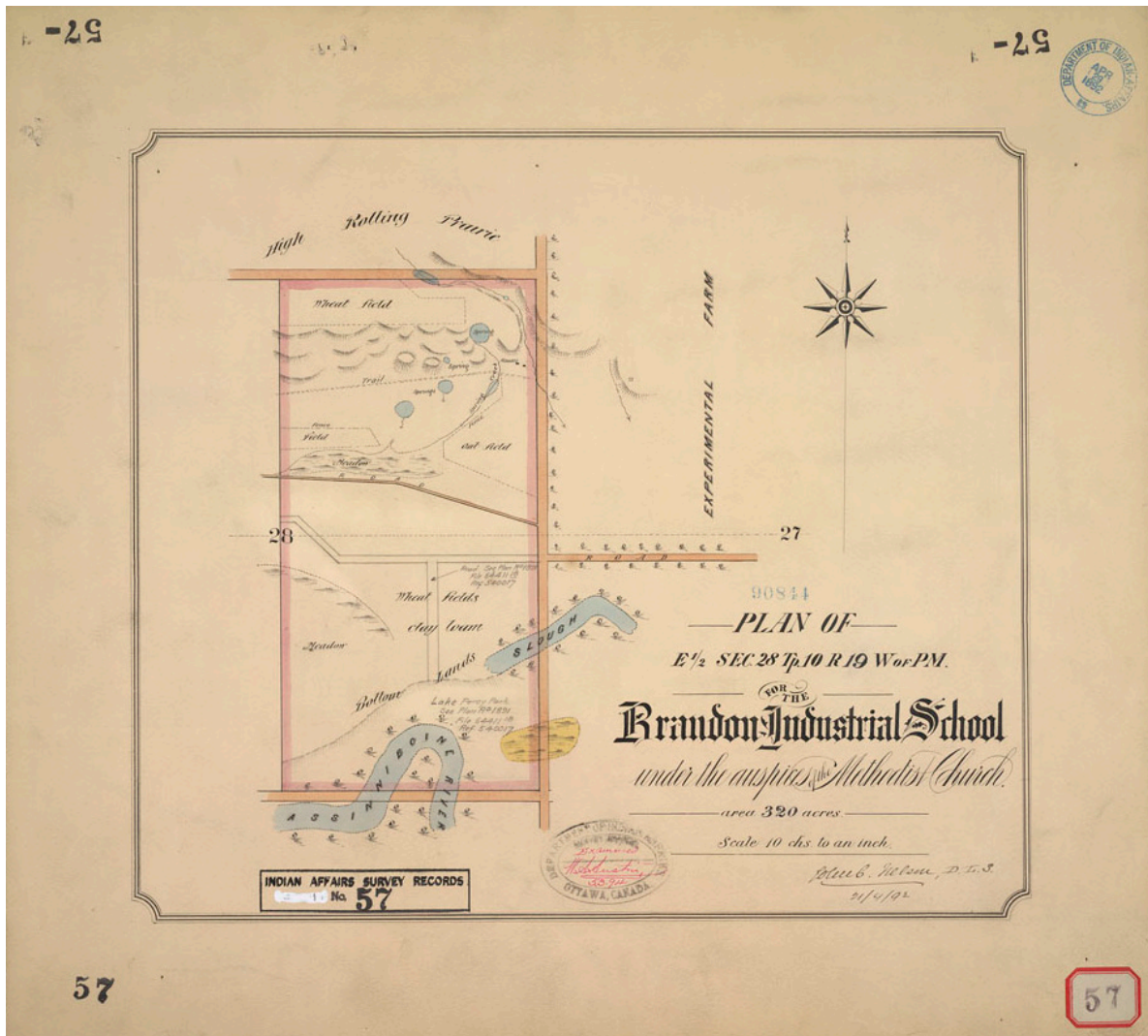
- (previous pages)
- 4.1 Aerial image of former Brandon IRS, now demolished, and environs, with the Assiniboine River flooded, Rural Municipality of Cornwallis, MB

Brandon

When an architectural demarcation is erased, its impression nonetheless persists as a variegated echo. Its forms may be oriented towards the past, such as representations in documents filed away in an archive, or the memories of those who once inhabited it. They may be re-creative, transforming images of the assumed neutrality of mute walls to create *representations of space* that are simultaneously *representational spaces* of transgressive power. In this chapter, I contrast conventional, historical representations of residential school architecture with spatially focused representations of traumatic residential school experience in the art of survivors and post-residential school Indigenous artists. Many of the latter focus on the spaces in which these events took place, yet they are themselves removed from the site of trauma. As noted by British philosopher Dylan Trigg,

the notion of the traumatic event as having a spatio-temporal after-life, independent of its original location, leads us to the ... form of voided traces. Peculiar to the spatial memory of trauma is the role ruins play in housing what is absent. Such a fundamentally altered form testifies to the negative spatiality of the ruin, and ultimately to its significance.²

In other words, the ruin is a signifier of something beyond itself, prompting a search for its meaning other than where it is located. This is the impetus for examining how the space of the residential school finds expression in other forms. These representations aim to transform images easily equated with benign forms of inhabitation to reveal the problematic realities of the IRS. Furthermore, their physical remnants are increasingly being reappropriated as materials for representing vicarious memories, serving to reimagine these oppressive institutions into critical spaces.



4.3 Proposed site of the Brandon Indian Industrial School, north of the Assiniboine River and next to the Brandon Experimental Farm, 1892

Brandon Indian Industrial School, 1895-1929

In 1890, Methodist missionaries followed the example of other denominations and petitioned the Canadian government to finance a school for Indigenous children as part of their conversion efforts in Manitoba.³ The targets of their work were the children of the Treaty 5 area around Lake Winnipeg, hundreds of kilometres away from the proposed school site. That this was a deliberate maneuver to separate the children from their families was substantiated by the secretary of the mission board, who wrote, “knowing the serious disadvantage of having such an institution in or near an Indian Reserve, we asked that this one might be located in southern Manitoba.”⁴ Chief Jacob Berens (Nah-wee-kee-sick-quah-yash) (4.2), one of the leaders who had negotiated Treaty 5 in 1875 and himself a Methodist, expressed concerns over the school’s location:

When first the matter of the institution was mentioned to our people we were in the hopes to see not only one but two or three such buildings erected in Berens River Agency where they would be a benefit not only to our children but to all of us, old and young, as our people seeing the young ones taught the art of agriculture, carpentry etc. could observe and learn also.⁵

However, the government agreed with the missionaries that the adults should be deprived of both their children and any benefit from a school in the community, breaking the Crown’s treaty promise “to maintain schools for instruction in such reserves ... whenever the Indians of the reserve shall desire it.”⁶

The Brandon Indian Industrial School, the first incarnation of the later IRS, was thus established in 1895 with thirty-eight children in attendance and seventeen more on the way. It was located on a hill that once formed the north bank of the Assiniboine River outside the city of Brandon, whose administration offered a 320-acre site in exchange for Crown lands elsewhere (4.3). The bucolic setting, already under agricultural cultivation prior to the school’s establishment,⁷ was admired by the principal for its potential to become an exemplar of “civilized” site use:

Ravine and hill alternate, and spring creeks supply all the water needed

and give a delightful diversity to the scenery of the farm. . . . Many trees have been planted, roads laid out and gravelled, and it will be our purpose to continue the work of improvement until we have reached our ideal of what such a location as ours demands.⁸

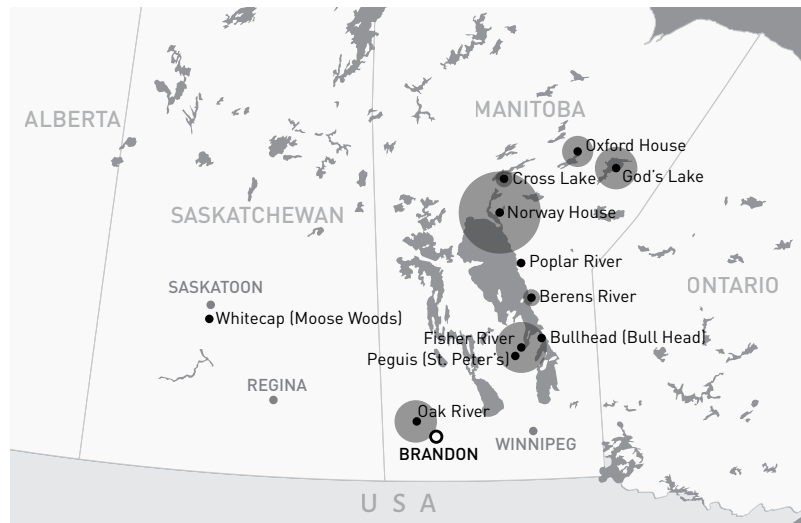
The administration was very conscious of the school's appearance to the "outside," which they strove to constantly improve so that, according to the principal, the school would

present the creditable appearance which our nearness to the Experimental farm and the city of Brandon would seem to demand. . . . We are endeavouring to have every plot on the perfect square so that our work may commend itself to the numerous observers passing this way.⁹

The building itself was patterned on a domestic model, reflected in the architecture and permeated the social space of the institution, which staff were endeavouring to make "a 'home' in the true sense of the word."¹⁰ Its features were typical of the late nineteenth-century Second Empire style, which embodied the grandiosity of public works under Napoleon III in France. In North America, it was used in the design of large government buildings, but also houses.¹¹ This versatility was ideal for residential schools since they incongruously combined elements of institutional grandeur with surrogate domesticity, conveying, at least in the administrators' eyes, a "true" sense of home along with the patterns of institutional life.

The building program was dominated by nine staff bedrooms and two student dormitories, one each for fifty girls and fifty boys. Classrooms, playrooms, a dining room for ninety, and hospital accommodation rounded out the interior. As at the first Birtle school, the building was served by a full complement of modern conveniences.¹² Water from a hillside well fed by the spring creeks was pumped in by a "powerful air-motor wind-mill sixty feet above the ground."¹³ From two thousand-gallon tanks on the roof, it was distributed throughout the building by lead pipes. As demonstrated through examples in the previous two chapters, the display function of these utilitarian articles likely played a role in their acquisition.¹⁴

The grounds of the school accommodated residences for the staff and



4.4 Map of home communities of the 108 children at Brandon in 1900 (one each from Whitecap and Bullhead, up to twenty-nine from Norway House)

principal, whose house had twelve rooms and was “very much admired by ... numerous visitors.”¹⁵ There was also a “good playground ... furnished with suitable games and gymnastic appliances,”¹⁶ which was used during the two hours each day and Saturday afternoons devoted to recreation. Activities included swings and croquet for the girls, and football and lacrosse for the boys.¹⁷ These and other amusements no doubt appealed to the children and contributed to their positive depiction of the school in letters sent home.¹⁸ Attendance at the school increased following further “procurement” trips by the principal to Lake Winnipeg. By 1900, 108 children from eleven distant communities lived at the school (4.4).¹⁹

In response to a proposed acquisition of 320 acres of farmland adjoining the school in 1902, the secretary of the Indian commissioner noted that “out of the 104 pupils now in this school, nearly all come from the neighborhood of Lake Winnipeg, where farming cannot be successfully carried on.”²⁰ Taking the children away from their communities was the first step in keeping them from returning, since the agricultural training they received at school would be useless in their home environment. Despite this caveat but, also, clearly because of it, the

farming venture continued to be enlarged. The projects included a pig-gery for sixty pigs with “the latest ideas in pens and feeding installed,”²¹ a slaughterhouse with feed room and loft, and a granary and implement shed.²² Aside from the production of necessities for the school, administrators pushed ahead with agriculture because of Indian Affairs’ plan to develop an agrarian class out of Indigenous populations that could then be isolated on reserves.²³

Following the move from industrial training to a more generalized curriculum and segregationist objective, the Brandon Indian Industrial School became the Brandon Indian Residential School in 1923.²⁴ Two years later, it was taken over by the missionary body of the United Church of Canada.²⁵ Although the principal had reported that the main building was in need of repairs as early as 1912,²⁶ DIA reports show that little was done until administrators lobbied for a new school to replace the now-dilapidated Second Empire building in 1927:

The location of the school is strategically situated for visitors. Every year they come from all parts of Canada, as well as from other lands. The usual comment is that our main building is not in keeping with the beautiful farm, lawns, and outbuildings.²⁷

The emphasis on impressing visitors echoed the sentiments of the first principal, who had striven for the “creditable appearance” of the school to outsiders. In this context, the architecture and landscape of both the old and new Brandon schools performed a display function intended to communicate the purpose of the institution and, by extension, religious dogma and government policy.

The Exhibitionary Complex: Representing Indian Residential Schools

As the flagship of Methodist residential schools, the institution at Brandon became a popular tourist destination at the turn of the century.

Whereas parental visits were frustrated by the deliberate distance created between home and school, the railway running through Manitoba's second-largest city enabled strangers to come through the institution en masse. Brandon's principal noted that a thousand guests from around the world had signed the roll in 1901—in his estimation representing only a quarter of all visitors.²⁸

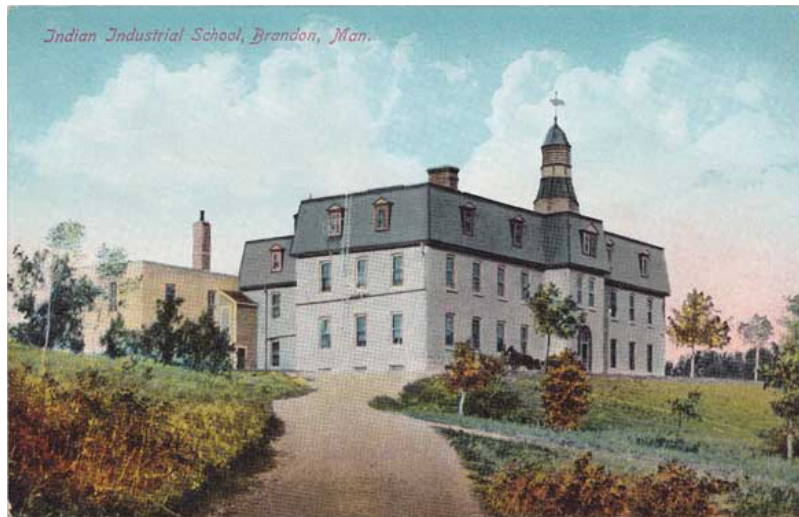
The popularity of Brandon and other residential schools in the Canadian imaginary emerged out of a confluence of factors: ease of travel by rail, a public concern with educational reform, and a fascination with “disappearing” Indigenous cultures. Public familiarity with “Indian schools” was compounded by the dissemination of postcards bearing their images across the country and around the world. Numerous such images of the Brandon school were produced in the first two decades of the twentieth century, a sample revealing that each represented its subject in a consistent way (4.5-8). The building is seen from a distance, emphasizing its setting on top of the hill: distant yet familiar. Other than the cupola, it easily resembles a comfortable mansion. Only one of them portrays children, a group of three in settler dress, and two appear to show the same image colourized in different ways.

These postcards were products of the global “exhibitionary complex” that emerged in the late nineteenth century, a strong focus of which was the culture of colonized peoples, put on display in order to strengthen popular support for imperial policies.²⁹ Further manifestations of the exhibitionary complex were world's fairs and other exhibitions, many of which portrayed peoples geographically or culturally distant to their European or Euro-colonial audiences. As with postcards of “Indian schools,” exhibits on assimilative education fused depictions of Indigenous people with the possibilities of “civilization” suggested by education.³⁰ At the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, for example, visitors were presented with exhibits that demonstrated the assimilative impacts of education on Indigenous cultures “under the fostering care of Christian intelligence.”³¹

These exhibitionary products formed part of the overall representa-



4.5 Postcard, "Indian Industrial School, Brandon, No. 979," ca. 1908



4.6 Postcard, "Indian Industrial School, Brandon, Man.," ca. 1910



4.7 Postcard, "Indian Industrial School," ca. 1920, produced by Christie's Book Store



4.8 Postcard, "Indian School, Brandon, Man.," n.d.

tion of the Brandon school to those outside the institution, complementing residential school tourism in a form of “institutional display” addressed to members of the public rather than relatives of the children.³² In 1918, the governor general of Canada visited the institution and in 1920, the school was featured in an educational film commissioned by the Hudson’s Bay Company. The school’s popularity seems to contradict the convention that IRS were located to be invisible to settler society. To begin to understand this seeming contradiction, I turn to Rothman’s description of how, in the context of insane asylums in the United States,

Some kind of balance had to be struck between isolation and publicity. Superintendents dared not seal off the institution from society.

The most common solution was to allow, and even encourage, tours of the asylum by the ordinary public while making every effort to curtail contact between the patient and the family. This arrangement would exhibit the institution to the largest number of persons at the least personal cost to the patient.³³

Recalling Goffman’s thoughts on institutional display, the aspects of the institution available to be seen by visitors were typically the “new, up-to-date” spaces, practices, or equipment.³⁴ Furthermore, only IRS that were easily accessible by rail were visited with any frequency, and the majority were located far away from urban centres. Aside from its aim of assimilating Indigenous children, the institution functioned as a living demonstration of the federal government’s ambitions regarding Indigenous peoples, an endorsement that was entirely malleable in the hands of school administrators. The building itself performed as an ambassador for those in power, acting as the government’s proxy in its absence. When the existing building began to project an image “not in keeping with the beautiful farm, lawns, and outbuildings,”³⁵ the administration anticipated that the government would be interested in keeping up appearances and therefore lobbied for a new structure. The ability of the Brandon IRS to continue to participate in the exhibitionary complex thus provided the rationale for the construction of a new building.

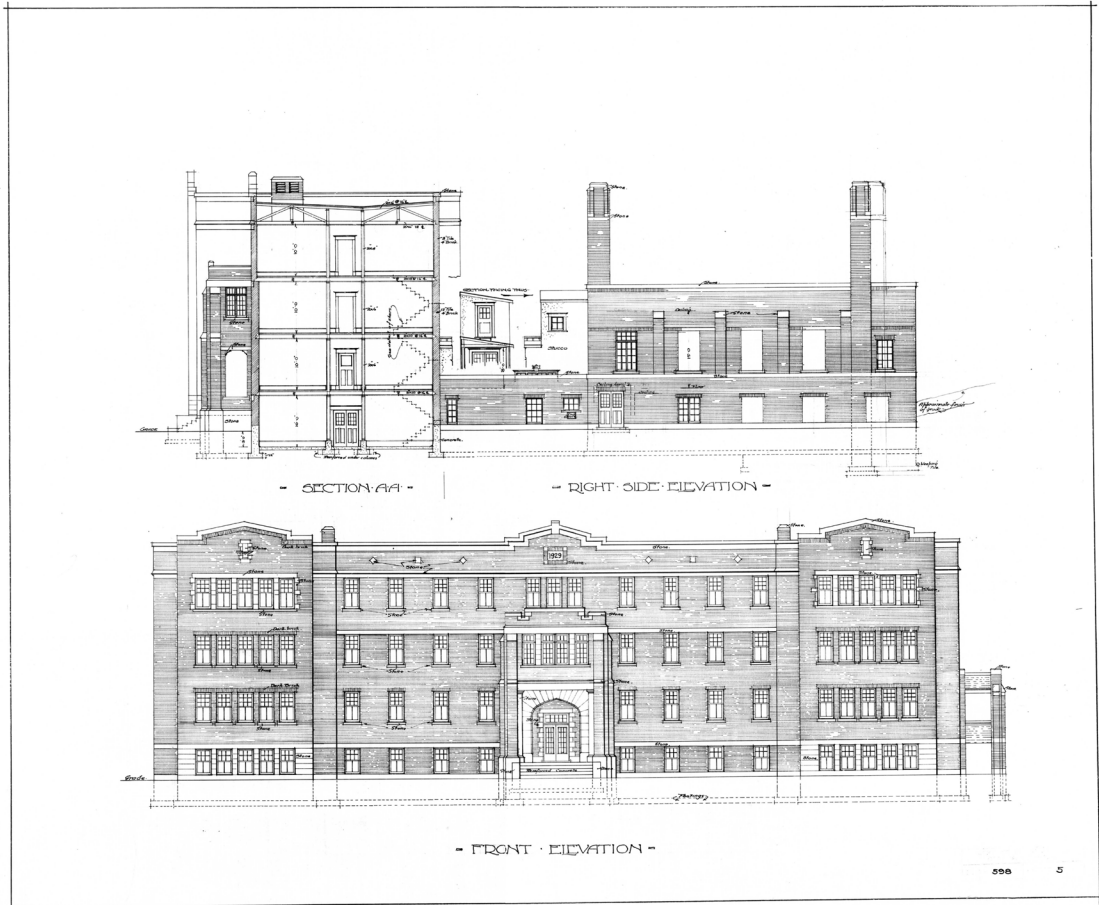


4.9 The new Brandon IRS constructed in 1930

Brandon Indian Residential School, 1930-1972

The original Brandon Indian Industrial School was demolished in 1929 to make way for a larger one that departed from the domestic character of its predecessor (4.9-10). The design by Roland Guerney Orr was finalized that year and resembled other recent IRS projects from coast to coast, including St. George's in Lytton, British Columbia and Shubenacadie in Nova Scotia (4.12). The outlay for the school was substantial. Everything was new, from the building and its furnishings to the farm animals and equipment (Table 3).³⁶

Construction was completed in 1930, the same year Orr developed the design for the new Birtle IRS discussed in the previous chapter. That school, too, was to resemble the projects that came before it. A methodical arrangement of punched apertures, the same on each level, surrounded a limestone entry arch in a symmetrical, red-brick façade. The three- to four-storey buildings bore elements of Orr's earlier Collegiate Gothic schools (1.8-10), such as the arches, but now exemplified a Gothic-tinged Classical Moderne. This style echoed the



4.10 Elevation, Brandon IRS, 1929, R.G. Orr, architect

	Item	Cost (1930)	Cost (2013)
Grants	Grant in lieu of per-capita grant, prior to the reception of pupils	\$13,256.29	\$175,182.59
	Grant, 3 months to Dec. 31 at \$170 per capita	\$6,074.52	\$80,275.11
	Grant for pupils attending high school	\$175.00	\$2,312.63
	TOTAL	\$19,505.81	\$257,770.33
Construction	J.H. Simmons, contract	\$147,742.00	\$1,952,418.47
	J.H. Simmons, extras	\$6,694.69	\$88,470.69
	J.H. Simmons, final payment	\$24,883.49	\$328,836.66
	Inspector of construction, W.H. Shillinglaw	\$288.00	\$3,805.94
	Sundry material, plumbing and repairs	\$1,307.36	\$17,276.83
	TOTAL	\$180,915.54	\$2,390,808.59
Furniture	Desks	\$1,272.41	\$16,814.97
	Beds and bedding	\$4,068.38	\$53,763.86
	Furniture, furnishings and utensils	\$2,457.53	\$32,476.39
	Installing cupboards and fixtures, A.R. McDiarmid, Ltd.	\$3,837.30	\$50,710.13
	TOTAL	\$11,635.62	\$153,765.35
Household	Range installed	\$508.45	\$6,719.19
	Sewing machines	\$217.50	\$2,874.27
	Laundry machinery	\$2,056.94	\$27,182.57
	Various supplies and equipment	\$306.44	\$4,049.62
	Flag pole	\$198.00	\$2,616.58
	TOTAL	\$3,287.33	\$43,442.23
Farm	Cattle	\$3,620.00	\$47,838.49
	Farm equipment	\$203.70	\$2,691.91
	Freight, transporting cattle, etc.	\$156.69	\$2,070.67
	TOTAL	\$3,980.39	\$52,601.07
Medical	Nurse	\$75.00	\$991.13
	Drug supplies	\$281.86	\$3,724.80
	Medical services	\$476.00	\$6,290.37
	Hospital fees	\$320.00	\$4,228.82
	TOTAL	\$1,152.86	\$15,235.12
Miscellaneous	Travel	\$1,362.19	\$18,001.41
	Inspection	\$30.00	\$396.45
	TOTAL	\$1392.19	\$18,397.86

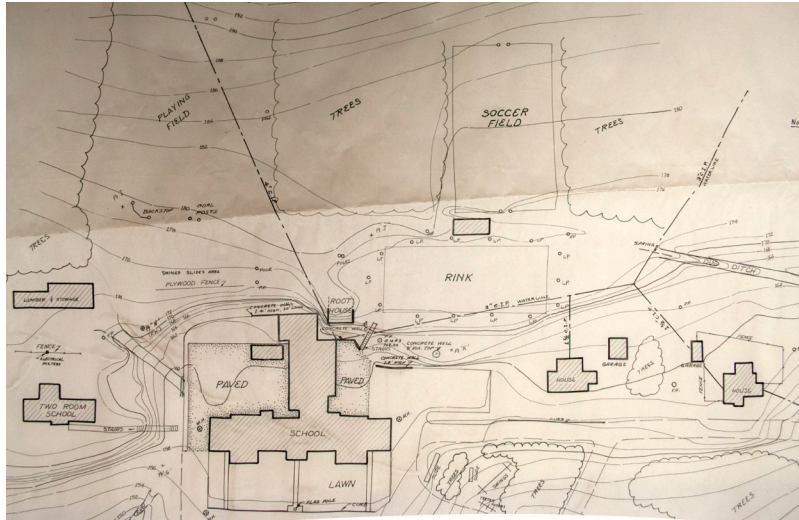
Table 3 Construction costs and other expenses at Brandon IRS, 1930

grandiosity of the “Public Works Administration,” or PWA, Moderne style being applied to government buildings in the United States. The IRS built at this time all featured flat roofs and stylized pediments and, aside from minor differences, appear to have all been based on the same architectural formula and programmatic principles. The same year the new Brandon school was built, Indian Affairs built six other residential schools and made extensive improvements to three existing ones, chiefly in the prairie provinces. Outbuildings, residences, and a chapel were built at seven different schools.³⁷

At Brandon, a new cattle barn was built in 1954³⁸ and a two-classroom block was added in 1958,³⁹ only to be closed three years later when the last of eighty-five residents were integrated into the public schools of Brandon.⁴⁰ Throughout the 1960s, the main building served as a residence only, and the institution began to board students in non-Indigenous homes in the city. This move was a return to the first-generation residential school principle of instilling the values of Euro-Canadian domesticity, particularly the functioning of the nuclear family as separate from the rest of society. In 1960, the principal wrote that “in this way the children are learning how families live together in consideration and love, one for the other and how a family, through its loyalty endeavours to work as one complete unit.”⁴¹ He neglected to mention, of course, that the children were taken away from their own families in order to be placed in these arrangements.

Not all students at this time were boarders, however, and many remained in the dormitories at the school. In order to keep accommodating these children, significant alterations were made to the school in 1964. These were washroom and stair additions on all four levels at either end of the building, likely done to conform to building code requirements for washrooms and egress.⁴² The additions were similar to the ones made at the Mohawk Institute in the 1960s, and widened the building by twenty-five feet on either side.

In 1963, graves were found south of the Brandon IRS in what was then Curran Park, a popular municipal recreation area. They belonged



4.11 Site plan of Brandon IRS, 1971

to children who had attended the school in the early 1900s, and were located and marked with white stakes by an employee of the Dominion Experimental Farm next door.⁴³ Given the age of the graves, these children had likely succumbed to tuberculosis, their families perhaps completely unaware of their fate. The rediscovery of the graves presaged the detection of unmarked burials at numerous residential schools, and revelations of thousands of children's deaths over the decades they were in operation. These deaths and disappearances are currently being investigated by the Missing Children Project, started in 2008 as part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.⁴⁴

In 1969, the management of Brandon was turned over to the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who continued to run it as a residence until 1972. It was then closed by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Like many residential schools, the one at Brandon was abandoned after its closure and proposals for the building came and went, unrealized.

Memory and Spatial Narratives of Survival

As site and symbol, the architecture of residential schools features prominently in survivor testimonies, whether in verbal or visual descriptions. The place of trauma plays a central role in the memory of events that transpired there. In the words of American philosopher Edward S. Casey,

Place is a *mise en scène* for remembered events precisely to the extent that it guards and keeps these events within its self-delimiting perimeters. Instead of filtering out (as place can do for inappropriate, ill-placed memories), place *holds in* by giving to memories an authentically local habitation: by being their place-holder.⁴⁵

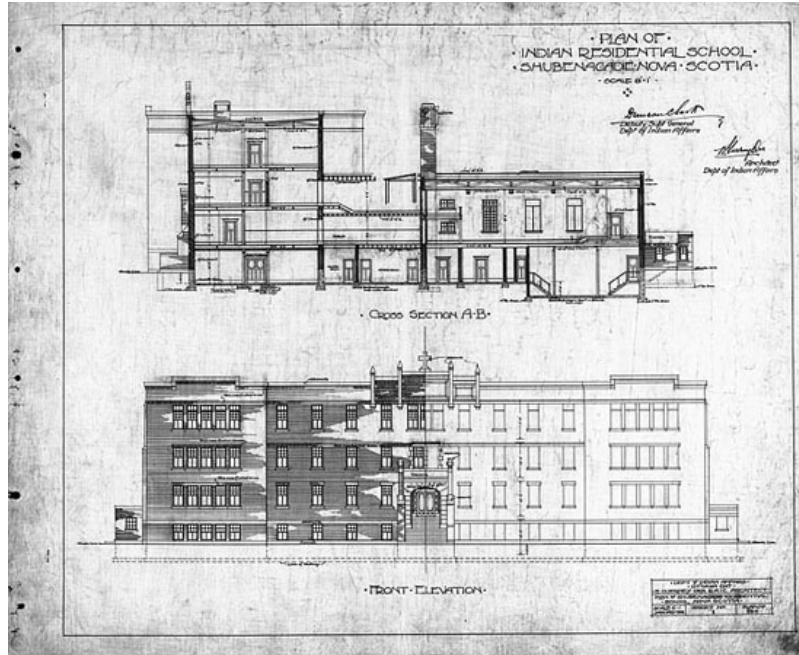
Returning to Trigg's remarks about the spatiality of ruins, however, rather than simply being *held in* place, the memory of trauma can have "a spatio-temporal after-life, independent of its original location."⁴⁶ This unmooring initiates a dialectic between the physical site of traumatic events, in Casey's understanding "place as leveled down to metrically determinate dimensions...indifferent to what might occupy it—and to what we might remember about it,"⁴⁷ and the elements of place that reside elsewhere. The leveled-down site of the residential school (described, in Lefebvre's terms, by *representations* of space such as architectural drawings, maps, postcards, or institutional visits) is utilized symbolically within the *representational*, or *lived*, space of inhabitants that overlays represented space and "which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate."⁴⁸

Survivors' representations of IRS architecture are imbued with symbolic significance and "tamed," or, in this context, *transformed*, "to the point where they become [their] own *re-creation*."⁴⁹ This transformation is not, as implied by Casey's word "tame," necessarily a benign rendering of troubled memory. Their representations in the work of survivors are disturbing subversions of the ways these architectures were typically "drawn." These are renderings of illegible genocidal intentions and the negative personal and political consequences of those intentions

in otherwise silent walls. Although the creators of these works come from diverse cultural backgrounds and use different media to address their residential school experiences, they share in their return to sites of trauma agency over the meanings of these spaces. The persistence of the transformed architectural image beyond the architecture itself raises questions about its role in the development of a collective memory of the residential schools, which I will pursue further in the next chapter. I will investigate this strategy of transformation through an exploration of three works: “Hated Structure,” a poem by Rita Joe; *What Was In The Mush*, a painting by R.G. Miller-Lahiaaks; and a group of drawings titled *Sandy Bay Residential School Series* by Robert Houle.

Rita Joe uses her poem “Hated Structure” to generate a transformed image of the residential school she attended as a child. The poem was originally published in the collection *Song of Eskasoni* from 1988, and also appeared in her autobiographical work from 1996.⁵⁰ As Joe herself has stated and Canadian literary scholar Sam McKegney has elaborated, her work takes an “affirmatist” stance towards her residential school experience, purposefully focusing on the positive to the near-exclusion of the negative.⁵¹ Significant to her literary approach is that Joe admitted herself to the school, an uncommon occurrence that highlights the author’s particularly difficult childhood circumstances. Joe attended the Shubenacadie IRS in Nova Scotia for four years, between the ages of twelve and sixteen.

Shubenacadie was operated by the Roman Catholic Church from 1929 to 1968, the only IRS east of Quebec.⁵² Its relatively late foundation and brief existence stems, ironically, from the Mi’kmaq people’s long-standing history of encounters with Europeans—first the French, then the British.⁵³ Given the early incorporation of Christianity by the Mi’kmaq, a residential school would not have had any proselytizing function and was thus started in the second-generation era in concert with the federal government’s other racist policies in Atlantic Canada, as what was essentially an orphanage.



4.12 Section and Elevation, Shubenacadie IRS, 1928, R.G. Orr, architect

Roland Guerney Orr designed the new building for Shubenacadie in 1928, and construction was completed the following year.⁵⁴ The building was, like the Brandon and Birtle schools, designed in a Classical Moderne style, with a flat roof and raised, stylized parapets (4.12). Like these other schools, the building was rigidly symmetrical, with identical windows marching across the main façade and two dormitory wings. A stone cross was placed at the apex of the front elevation. The school was closed in 1968, after which it stood abandoned for twenty years. “Hated Structure” conveys the author’s encounter with the empty building as an adult.

Hated Structure: Indian Residential School, Shubenacadie, N.S.

If you are on Highway 104
In Shubenacadie town
There is a hill
Where a structure stands
A reminder to many senses
To respond like demented ones.

I for one looked in the window
And there on the floor
Was a deluge of misery
Of a building I held in awe
Since the day
I walked in the ornamented door.

There was grime everywhere
As in buildings left alone or unused.
Maybe to the related tales of long ago
Where the children lived in laughter, or abuse.

I had no wish to enter
Nor to walk the halls.
I had no wish to feel the floors
Where I felt fear
A beating heart of episodes
I care not to recall.
The structure stands as if to say:
I was just a base for theory
To bend the will of children
I remind
Until I fall.⁵⁵

RITA JOE, *Song of Eskasoni*

The poem moves between present and past in a rhythm that alternates the speaker's contemporary return to the site of childhood trauma with the memories it brings to the fore. Each of the first three stanzas begins with a line rooted in the present and moves back in time, through the mnemonic quality of the architecture, to conclude with an image of the past. Observing the abandoned state of the institution, the speaker is pulled by its emptiness into recollections of what it used to be, only to pull herself back into the present at the beginning of the next stanza. The fourth stanza, however, breaks this flow by combining the present-day observation with a critical stance and sense of agency toward the structure: "I had no wish to enter / Nor to walk the halls," the speaker proclaims in clear contrast with the lack of choice inmates had about entering the building as children. Like before, the image of the building brings about a recollection: "I had no wish to feel the floors / Where I felt fear / A beating heart of episodes," which, this time, is interrupted by the assertion: "I care not to recall." The poem thus encompasses a movement between past and present that culminates in the speaker's decision not to enter the building, "preferring to expostulate its lingering meaning from outside its oppressive walls,"⁵⁶ thereby remaining grounded in the present. The poem concludes with a personification of the building, taking on its "voice" and thus deflating the powerful hold it has on the speaker's memory; it is only capable of reminding "until [it] falls." The poem's final lines also touch on the entire residential school system of which this particular structure was a single manifestation, its imaginary destruction a powerful act of premonition. In 1989, a year after *Song of Eskasoni* was published, the abandoned Shubenacadie IRS was demolished, and its site was redeveloped for industrial use.⁵⁷ In the absence of the physical structure, Joe's re-creation of the residential school renders it as a crumbling edifice, gradually losing its hold on the people it oppressed. Although the building no longer exists, the site is still a place of significance to survivors and revisited on important occasions.⁵⁸ The complex relationship the space has to time, revealed by the interplay of agency and change as well as endurance and



4.13

R.G. Miller-Lahiaaks,
*What Was In
The Mush*,
2008

repetition, is expressed by Joe in a passage that recalls the idea that ruins house “what is absent”:⁵⁹

While I lived there, spirits roamed the school building and we children had a lot of encounters with them. Today, I think of spirits that appear anywhere on this earth as being the result of trauma. If there was trauma in a building, the spirits associated with the trauma would live there. Over the years, so much trauma had happened in the residential school – so many people were hurt – that it played itself over and over again through the spirits.⁶⁰

The persistence of traumatic experience described by Joe is echoed in a series of paintings from 2008 by R.G. Miller-Lahiaaks (Mohawk, Six Nations) entitled *Mush Hole Remembered*. The paintings represent, in the words of the artist, “the strongest memories I could approach without descending into a place I would not be able to emerge from.”⁶¹ The Mohawk Institute’s epithet “Mush Hole” is a reference to the gruel served to inmates. *What Was In The Mush* (4.13), a painting in oil on canvas that is part of the series, depicts two young children holding a bowl together, the older with his arm around the younger as he eats. An image of the school building, saddled on top of a skull, floats behind them. Though clearly symbolic of death, the proximity of the image to the children reinforces the persistence of this reminder in relation

to ordinary events such as meals. It relates the overwhelming burden experienced by children at the Mohawk Institute, emphasized by its constant, enveloping presence.

The continued existence of the former school complicates my reading of the painting, particularly because it has been exhibited several times at the Woodland Cultural Centre, which now occupies the space of the former residential school. This layering of past and present, like in Joe's "Hated Structured," results in a complex re-creation of traumatic space. Miller-Lahiaaks has avoided the term "survivor," stating, "I haven't survived residential school. I'm still there. We are all still there. It's an ongoing process of maintenance, maintaining, learning to fall and then to get back up."⁶² This statement reveals the coexistence of past and present for the artist and the necessity of process in addressing traumatic experience.

The *Sandy Bay Residential School Series*, a sequence of twenty-four drawings from 2009 by Anishnabe Saulteaux artist Robert Houle, is emblematic of this need for process and its expression in art. The institution Houle was taken to, Sandy Bay IRS in Marius, Manitoba, no longer exists, but its impression endures in the artist's memory and seeps into the visual realm of his drawings, focusing on particular places where memory has coalesced most forcefully (4.14). The drawings, in oilstick on paper, represent residential school space and transform it, in the words of one critic, into images of "the artist's own traumatized psychic space."⁶³ The access afforded to such memory through the analogy between space and mind is troubled by the potential consequences of re-entering the traumatic space: "As he drew with his floating eye, [Houle] moved through remembered space to peer inside of and behind the visualizations of his memories in each successive drawing, almost like key frames in an animated film, crucial moments in a full-motion version yet to come."⁶⁴ But the possibility also exists for confronting and overcoming the experience within the parameters of this dynamic remembered space.⁶⁵

Like Rita Joe's "Hated Structure," Houle's *Series* is the product of a literal return, as well as one in memory, in space and in time, to the site of childhood trauma.⁶⁶ The drawings transform the interior and exterior



4.14 Robert Houle, *night predator*, from *Sandy Bay Residential School Series*, 2009



4.15 Robert Houle, *schoolhouse*, from *Sandy Bay Residential School Series*, 2009

spaces of the school into fragments of a larger whole. The single image of the school's exterior is also partial, disintegrating at the edges and revealing the artist's exhaustion with his subject (4.15). In using personal memories and an automatic, loose style that is both "figurative and gestural,"⁶⁷ Houle's drawings convey what Canadian writer Sarah de Leeuw describes as "the nested relationships between the school structures, body-places of subjects who occupied them, and the thoughts and subjective places of First Nations students."⁶⁸ The drawings function as testimony, but also as visual manifestations of a process of re-creating past and present at the site of trauma.

The American art critic Lucy R. Lippard, writing about old photographs of Native Americans taken by non-Natives, suggests that re-interpretations of colonial artifacts, particularly by Indigenous people, can facilitate a release of their negative representational power "from the prisons of the colonial past into a shared present."⁶⁹ Likewise, the architecture of residential schools, devised by non-Indigenous architects in the service of a colonial agenda, has the potential to be not just re-interpreted but also re-created in ways that claim agency by those formerly oppressed within its walls. The works by Joe, Miller-Lahiaaks, and Houle represent some of the creative and critical interventions on the colonial project of the IRS, performing simultaneously as testimony and creative work in its own right.

Abandonment, Demolishment, Ruin: Brandon, 1973-2014

In 1974, a tentative proposal for the former Brandon IRS was its conversion by the provincial government into a firefighter training academy, a plan which was never realized.⁷⁰ Six years later, the Rural Municipality of Cornwallis negotiated with the federal government to purchase the property, but the nearby Sioux Valley Dakota Nation ultimately obtained ownership of the site.⁷¹ In 1982, Sioux Valley proposed replacing

the abandoned building with residential units in response to a student housing shortage in Brandon.⁷² This plan also went unrealized, and the site remained unused. Finally, in 2000, the building was demolished by the Nation in preparation for new development.⁷³ The property, reduced from its original 320 acres to sixteen and registered to Sioux Valley Development Inc., was then earmarked for a casino and gaming complex.⁷⁴ In 2010, it was slated to be auctioned for a tax sale because of arrears on the property, but the costs were paid and Sioux Valley retained ownership.⁷⁵ The parcel of land was also caught up in a long-standing bid to convert it to reserve status through the federal addition-to-reserve process, which Sioux Valley abandoned because it was too lengthy.⁷⁶

More recently, there has been a return to the idea of using the site for affordable housing. The numerous plans for the redevelopment of the site show how complex the story of a residential school can become following its closure. Caught between the need to remember, the need to heal, and pressing practical needs such as housing and economic development, residential schools continue to be sites of divergent imperatives, as suggested by Elsie Catcheway, who expressed that “it hurt to see the picture of the school gone and know there is nothing there to speak of all that history.”⁷⁷ Catcheway does not see the commemoration of the site as mutually exclusive from its potential to address practical needs, proposing that it could become an urban reserve.⁷⁸

A redevelopment at some former IRS sites has been preceded by a ceremonial demolition that addresses the healing required by survivors and others affected by a particular school. This type of ritual occurred at the Alberni IRS in British Columbia, the site of particularly brutal abuse. A ceremony was held during which survivors pulled siding off the building and then burnt it.⁷⁹ This strategy does not appear to have been the case at Brandon, although the demolition could be interpreted as an act of transformation that reduces the building’s negative power. However, the question remains as to what should be done with the debris left over from the destruction. The deluge of bricks has witnessed everything that happened there since 1930, and its future remains uncertain.⁸⁰

Quotations subject to change without notice. All agreements are contingent upon strikes, accidents and other delays unavoidable or beyond our control.

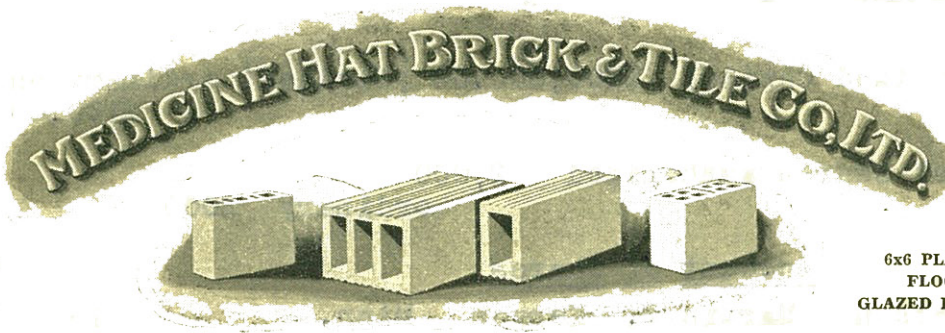
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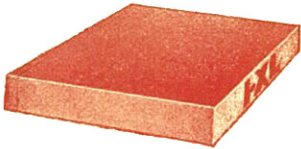
WIRE CUT COMMON BRICK
HOLLOW BUILDING TILE
MEDICINE HAT UNIT TILE



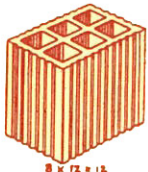
FACE BRICK
MANTLE BRICK
TAPESTRY BRICK
CHIMNEY BRICK
FIRE BRICK
DRAIN TILE
FLUE LINING

6x6 PLAIN RED OR GLAZED
FLOOR OR WALL TILE
GLAZED FACE BRICK, IN COLORS

MEDICINE HAT, ALBERTA



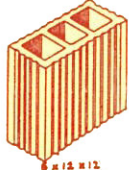
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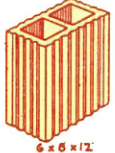
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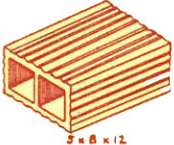
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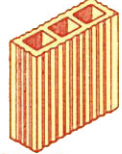
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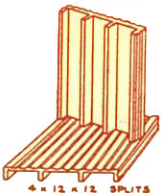
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4 x 12 x 12



3 x 12 x 12



4 x 12 x 12 SPLITS

HERE THEY ARE, THE FULL LINE OF I-XL BRICK, LOW IN PRICE, HIGH IN QUALITY.



Oriental Rough Texture



Pressed Corduroy



Smooth Pressed



Wire Cut Common



Hollow Insulating

Claiming Remnants:
Intergenerational Representations and Vicarious Past

Continuing the transformative processes of survivors is a generation of post-residential school artists committed to exploring the ongoing impacts of the IRS system. In encountering their work, I refer to American scholar James E. Young's analysis of art concerned with the "post-memory"⁸¹ of the Holocaust in *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture*, in which he writes:

By portraying the Holocaust as a "vicarious past," these artists insist on maintaining a distinct boundary between their work and the testimony of their parents' generation. Such work recognizes their parents' need to testify to their experiences, even to put the Holocaust "behind them." Yet by calling attention to their vicarious relationship to events the next generation ensures that their "post-memory" of events remains an unfinished, ephemeral process, not a means toward definitive answers to impossible questions.⁸²

A similar negotiation emerges between the "testimonial" art of IRS survivors and the work of those portraying residential schools "vicariously"—although as the works themselves demonstrate, it is difficult to draw a hard and fast line between them. One aspect that ties the post-memory pieces together and perhaps distinguishes them from the testimonial work is that they represent a concern with the physicality of the material remnants of the IRS. Whereas the works by Joe, Miller-Lahiaaks, and Houle were profoundly intertwined with residential school space through their authors' first-hand experience, the younger artists use the schools' materiality directly in their work. A range of experiences with IRS informs their practices.

Adrian Stimson, a member of the Siksika (Blackfoot) Nation and an interdisciplinary artist known for his performances that critique the colonial narrative of the West, "grew up in and around residential schools."⁸³ His father, an IRS survivor, was trained as a Native child-care

(facing page)
4.16 Medicine Hat Brick & Tile Co. Ltd. was one manufacturer whose bricks were used to construct the Brandon IRS. Letterhead used 1936-42..



4.17 Adrian Stimson, *Sick and Tired*, 2004

worker while the system was being dismantled, and Stimson himself attended residential school as a day student. The work of Lara Kramer, a First Nation dancer and choreographer, is informed by the stories of her mother, an artist and survivor of two IRS. And Kwagiulth artist Carey Newman took inspiration from his father's experience with residential school for his current piece, *Witness Blanket*.

Along with their use of residential school materiality and an inter-generational sensibility, these artists are concerned with the time and process, rather than solely with the product, of their work. This outlook is relevant to the ongoing transformation of residential school buildings, influencing their fluidity and their understanding within Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities of memory. In relating process to space, British scholar David Harvey argues that “there is no such thing as space outside of the processes that define it. The processes do not occur *in* space but define their own spatial frame. The concept of space is embedded or internal to process.”⁸⁴



4.18 Old Sun IRS, Gleichen, AB, 1929 (photo ca. 1950)

Each of the three works I examine below is a process that clears or creates a new space by disrupting the spaces of the colonial project, using the material remnants of residential schools, their physical location, or both, to do so. Adrian Stimson's 2004 installation, *Sick and Tired*, repurposes architectural elements from the Old Sun IRS at the Siksika Nation in Alberta, designed by R.G. Orr in 1929 and which is now the Old Sun Community College (4.17-18). On a white wall hang three twelve-paned windows, filled with feathers and backlit with neon lights, the artist's reference to "confinement similar to being smothered by a pillow."⁸⁵ The greenish light from the windows illuminates an old infirmary bed bearing a human-shaped, folded bison robe on its springs. The shadow cast by the robe and springs resembles a stretched hide, and these natural elements, references to Indigenous culture, and architectural remnants have been re-created into a meditative space on history and (counter) memory.⁸⁶

Lara Kramer is a dancer and choreographer whose work explores how "life experiences affect the state of the body."⁸⁷ Her dance creation from 2009, *Fragments*, uses the architecture of the residential school in its embodied totality by referencing "movement research" she performed at the Portage la Prairie IRS. This is one of the institutions attended by her mother, Ida Baptiste, a visual artist and Ojibwa language



4.19 Lara Kramer, still from performance of *Fragments*, 2009

teacher who is also a survivor of the Brandon IRS. *Fragments* was inspired by Baptiste's stories of residential school and developed through a weeklong visit to the Portage school. Kramer spent time in its empty spaces and explored how the architecture influenced her movement, allowing it to shape the content of her work (4.19).⁸⁸

This intuitive and embodied process of spatial documentation can be understood, according to American sculptor and scholar Kent C. Bloomer and architect Charles W. Moore, as one in which “the dancer and the space animate one another as partners,” which in turn permits the dancer to develop a “critical relationship” with the space.⁸⁹ The result of Kramer's work was synthetic and, according to the artist, expresses

the silent emotions and experiences of the young girls who attended the schools. It is not an attempt to retell any one story, but rather to process the knowledge of these schools. The project aims to build a dialogue around a history too often ignored.⁹⁰

By moving freely within the structure, historically restrictive of the bodies of young Indigenous children, Kramer was able to simultaneously interpret the space without these restrictions and to re-create it in a critical way. Kramer's work is productive of “body memories”⁹¹ that critically disrupt those acquired by the children in

the same spaces. Routine, habit, and restriction are reconfigured into dramatic movements expressive of what the inner life of a residential school inmate could be like.

The centrality of the residential school's physical space to *Fragments* taps into the mnemonic quality of architecture, which, as Bloomer and Moore suggest, makes accessible previous experiences within the space through its accretions over time.⁹² According to this idea, Kramer was able to distill the perceived and conceived spaces of the school into the lived, representational space of her performance, not only through the movements she designed but through the incorporation of her mother's stories and paintings of residential school life. Whereas in Lefebvre's terms, representational space overlays physical space, in this case it overlays not the physical space of the residential school, but the space of the performance area, temporarily conjuring an expression of the faraway institution to narrate its memories.

Where the works of Stimson and Kramer each address a specific location and its memorial vestiges, an installation recently completed by Carey Newman integrates material remnants and artifacts from residential schools and other sites across Canada.⁹³ Amassed by collaborators on "gathering trips," over five hundred of these disparate remains are gathered up into a collective *Witness Blanket*, displayed on carved wood elements strung on flexible steel cables. The metaphor of the blanket suggests protection, as well as unity, through its weaving together of different items and its participatory method of creation (4.20). Newman references the objects' ability to witness the events around them and in this way asserts the importance of their origins, of being from a particular time and place.⁹⁴ The laborious process of collecting the artifacts, which involved considerable travel, consultation, and acknowledgment of donors, brings to the forefront the geographical scale and widespread impact of the IRS system. The pieces incorporated into the installation include various parts of buildings, demolished and standing, such as bricks, but also dishes (Mohawk), a strap used to punish children (Birtle), photographs (Brandon), and architectural plans (Shingwauk).⁹⁵



4.20 Carey Newman, *Witness Blanket*, 2014

The mediums of installation and performance, which emphasize spatiality and bodily experience, are used by Stimson, Kramer, and Newman to displace and re-create the space of the residential school in order to bring it to the attention of a wider public. Their work complements that of Joe, Miller-Lahiaaks, and Houle in addressing the invisibility of IRS sites and a corresponding lack of knowledge of their history within wider communities of memory.

The importance of process and processing is evident in art that attends to the space of residential schools, particularly in the absence of a physically demarcated architecture. Can a similar approach be used towards the extant structures of the IRS? French historian Pierre Nora notes that memory, unlike history,

remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being dormant and periodically revived.⁹⁶

I argue that architecture has the potential to participate in this evolution, and that its ability to do so is dependent on openness to

process. A plurality of overlapped visions are necessary to continue, an idea elucidated by Chief Robert Joseph in response to an exhibit of art on the theme of the IRS, including that of Adrian Stimson:

There are so many different ways to give expression to our reality. The exhibit ... helps to define how these artists perceive the unreconciled, and how they see it becoming reconciled through various art forms. ... For the curators ... to organize this exhibition of artists, and for the artists to agree to show their work – that’s reconciliation right there.⁹⁷

An alternative perspective on reconciliation was elaborated by David McIntosh, a friend of Robert Houle, in the context of discussing Houle’s *Sandy Bay Residential School Series*. It is a reminder of the complexity of negotiating between needs of remembering and forgetting, and the opened interplay of the personal and political:

Robert has chosen not to participate in the work of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada] largely due to the prominence of the concept of “reconciliation” in the Commission’s process, a concept Robert describes as “an imposed Judeo-Christian concept of forgiveness” that elides and excludes indigenous people’s concepts of memory and transformation. For Robert, a more meaningful concept than forgiveness is *pahgedenaun*, an Anishnabe term that translates roughly to English as “let it go from your mind” ... *Pahgedenaun* is a self-defining and self-determining act while forgiveness is an act of submission to the will of others.⁹⁸

In *At Memory’s Edge*, Young recognizes that art dealing with traumatic pasts has the potential to act in a redemptory fashion, smoothing over histories that should, instead, continue to be questioned.⁹⁹ This is part of the ongoing, embodied, and participatory work currently being done in the “post-memory” of residential schools, and the work that Canadian society needs to see to deal with its own redemptory view of “reconciliation.” Through the tactility of the remnant, and through everything that it focuses, images are returned to place, bound by an invisible cord of diverse memory, immediate, vicarious, and, potentially, collective.



4.21 Root house walls, Brandon, 2013



4.22 Debris, Brandon, 2013

Notes

1. Virginia Woolf, "Craftsmanship," in *The Death of the Moth* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1942), 201.
2. Dylan Trigg, "The Place of Trauma: Memory, Hauntings, and the Temporality of Ruins," *Memory Studies* 2, no. 1 (2009): 95.
3. The other major denominations were already operating residential schools in Manitoba: the Anglicans had Lake St. Martin (1874), St. Pauls (1886), and Elkhorn (1888); the Presbyterians had Birtle (1888); and the Roman Catholics had Waterhen (1890), St. Boniface, and Pine Creek (both 1891). The Methodists established their second school in Manitoba at Portage la Prairie a year later in 1896.
4. Library and Archives Canada, School Files Series, RG10, volume 6255, file 576-1, part 1, A. Sutherland, General Secretary, Mission Board, to Secretary General Indian Affairs, January 18, 1890, microfilm reel C-8647, quoted in United Church of Canada, "Brandon Industrial Institute," accessed November 28, 2013, <http://thechildrenremembered.ca/school-locations/brandon/>.
5. Library and Archives Canada, School Files Series, RG10, volume 6255, file 576-1, part 1, Chief Jacob Berens, Berens River, to A. Sutherland, General Secretary of Missionary Society, August 12, 1891, microfilm reel C-8647, quoted in United Church of Canada, "Brandon Industrial Institute."
6. Government of Canada, "Treaty 5 between Her Majesty the Queen and the Saulteaux and Swampy Cree Tribes of Indians at Berens's River and Norway House with Adhesions," last modified August 30, 2013, <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100028699/1100100028700>.
7. United Church of Canada, "Brandon Industrial Institute."
8. Government of Canada, *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended 30th June 1897* (hereafter Annual Report), 203.
9. Annual Report, 1897, 233.
10. Annual Report, 1903, 343.
11. John J.-G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945* (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1981), 53.
12. Service spaces in the school included the kitchen, buttery, pantry, storeroom, wood room, and coal room; and two each of washrooms, bathrooms, closets, and cold-air rooms. Furnaces in three boiler rooms heated the building by forced air. However, fuel requirements for heating the school grew rapidly because, the principal speculated,

“as the building grows older, cracks and openings increase, making it more necessary to run the furnaces at high pressure.” Annual Report, 1898, 269.

13. Annual Report, 1896, 316.

14. Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co., 1962), 104-5.

15. Annual Report, 1897, 233.

16. Annual Report, 1896, 313.

17. Annual Report, 1898, 269.

18. Annual Report, 1896, 316.

19. Annual Report, 1900, 407.

20. Library and Archives Canada, Indian Affairs, RG 10, Volume 3567, File 82, pt. 41.

21. Annual Report, 1909, 307; 318.

22. Annual Report, 1916, 146.

23. Annual Report, 1910, 307.

24. Annual Report, 1923, Part I, 90.

25. This organization was known as the Board of Home Missions. The Methodist Church of Canada amalgamated with two-thirds of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Congregational Union of Ontario and Quebec to form the United Church in 1925.

26. Annual Report, 1912, 349.

27. Library and Archives Canada, School Files Series, RG10, volume 6255, file 576-1, part 2, C.E. Manning, Board of Home Missions, to Scott, December 16, 1927, microfilm reel C-8647.

28. The school therefore entertained an average of eleven visitors a day. Annual Report, 1901, 313.

29. Robert W. Rydell, “Souvenirs of Imperialism: World’s Fair Postcards,” in *Delivering Views: Distant Cultures in Early Postcards*, ed. Christraud M. Geary and Virginia-Lee Webb (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998), 47.

30. Likewise, there existed postcards that demonstrated a penchant for proudly publicizing new brick schools for settler children, representative of ideas of reform and progress. Ken Tingley, *The Last Best West: Glimpses of the Prairie Provinces from the Golden Age of Postcards* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Libraries, 2011), 16.

31. J. George Hodgins, *Special Report to the Honourable the Minister of Education, on the Ontario Educational Exhibit and Educational Features of the International Exhibition at Philadelphia, 1876* (Toronto: Hunter, Rose and Co., 1877), quoted in Kai Wood Ma, "Sites of Learning: The Architecture of Educational Reform in Toronto, 1847-1917" (PhD diss., McGill University, 2009), 61.
32. Goffman, *Asylums*, 101.
33. David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1990), 142.
34. Goffman, *Asylums*, 104.
35. Library and Archives Canada, School Files Series, RG10, volume 6255, file 576-1, part 2, C.E. Manning, Board of Home Missions, to Scott, December 16, 1927, microfilm reel C-8647.
36. Annual Report, 1930, Part I, 30.
37. Annual Report, 1930, 43.
38. Annual Report, 1954, 66.
39. Annual Report, 1958, 76.
40. Annual Report, 1961, 85.
41. Ford Bond, principal, "Indian Residential School," newsletter, Nov. 16, 1960, 509/2/2-5, box J, file 5, UCC Conference of Manitoba and N.W. Ontario Archives, quoted in The United Church of Canada, "Brandon Industrial Institute." In a similar vein, activities like the formation of a Cub Pack at the school in 1961 ironically repackaged traditional Indigenous skills in a Euro-Canadian format. Cathy Arthur, "Looking Back," *Brandon Sun*, January 15, 2011, <http://www.brandonsun.com/calendars/looking-back---jan-15-2011-113693089.html>.
42. "Alterations and Additions to Brandon Indian Residential School, Brandon, Manitoba, Phase (1), Plan No. 2121," scale 1/8" = 1'-0", 1964, Library and Archives Canada, RG22M 912016, item number 3867-3893.
43. Cathy Arthur, "Looking Back," *Brandon Sun*, June 5, 2013, <http://www.brandonsun.com/calendars/looking-back---june-5-2013-210216711.html>.
44. The Canadian Press, "At least 3,000 died in residential schools, research shows," *CBC News*, February 18, 2013, www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2013/02/18/residential-schools-student-deaths.html. Less than a year later, the count had risen to at least 4,100 documented deaths. See Connie Walker, "New documents may shed light on residential school deaths," *CBC News*, January 7, 2014, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/new-documents-may-shed-light-on-residential-school-deaths-1.2487015>.

45. Edward S. Casey, *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 189.
46. Trigg, "The Place of Trauma," 95.
47. Casey, *Remembering*, 184-85.
48. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 39.
49. Casey, *Remembering*, 157. Emphasis original.
50. Rita Joe, *Song of Rita Joe: Autobiography of a Mi'kmaq Poet* (Charlottetown, PEI: Ragweed Press, 1996).
51. Sam McKegney, *Magic Weapons: Aboriginal Writers Remaking Community after Residential School* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2007), 106-9.
52. As with many residential schools, sources vary on exact opening and closure dates of the Shubenacadie school. The Aboriginal Healing Foundation's directory of residential schools lists 1922 as the opening date, whereas other sources list 1929 or 1930. The date of R.G. Orr's architectural drawings is January 1928.
53. In 1610, Grand Chief Membertou embraced Roman Catholicism, prompting the conversion of the majority of Mi'kmaq in the following century and a half. Rita Joe commemorates this event in her poem "Mouipeltu' (Membertou)," describing it not as a colonial imposition but a commingling of Indigenous and Christian practices. Rita Joe, *Song of Eskasoni: More Poems of Rita Joe* (Charlottetown, PEI: Ragweed Press, 1988), 42.
54. Canadian writer Chris Benjamin provides a detailed account of the site selection and construction of Shubenacadie IRS, including R.G. Orr's role in its realization. The institution was part of a relocation and centralization plan the government had for the Mi'kmaq, and was built over a sacred Mi'kmaq burial ground. See Chris Benjamin, *Indian School Road: Legacies of the Shubenacadie Residential School* (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 2014), 36-44.
55. Joe, *Song of Eskasoni*, 75, and *Song of Rita Joe*, 57-58.
56. McKegney, *Magic Weapons*, 131.
57. Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat, "Indian Residential School," accessed July 7, 2014, <http://www.apcfn.ca/en/community/indianresidentialschool.asp>.
58. As they did, on the day of the 2008 federal apology, for a "letting go" ceremony. See "Residential school survivors gather on apology day," *CBC News*, June 11, 2008, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/residential-school-survivors-gather-on-apology-day-1.730580>.
59. Trigg, "The Place of Trauma," 95.

60. Joe, *Song of Rita Joe*, 57.
61. Algoma University, "Serving Time at the Mush Hole," accessed October 1, 2014, http://algomau.ca/news_and_events/latest_news/servingtimeatthemushhole.html.
62. R.G. Miller-Lahiaaks, quoted in Elizabeth Yates, "MushHole horror," *Brantford Expositor*, October 23, 2008, <http://www.brantfordexpositor.ca/2008/10/23/mushhole-horror>.
63. Sarah Swan, "Robert Houle's Residential-School Works Prove Art's Power," review, *Canadian Art*, October 10, 2013, <http://www.canadianart.ca/reviews/2013/10/10/robert-houle/>.
64. David McIntosh, "uhpé guhnoodezowan – when i speak to myself," in *Robert Houle: enuhmo andúhyaun (the road home)* (Winnipeg: School of Art Gallery, University of Manitoba, 2012), 3-4, https://umanitoba.ca/schools/art/media/Gallery_Houle_catalogue.pdf.
65. "With these drawings [Houle] confronted and overcame, in his words, the 'fear and shame' of his residential school experience that he had held inside since he was a young boy." McIntosh, "uhpé guhnoodezowan," 3.
66. Leah Sandals, "York Wilson Award Honours Robert Houle's Residential School Art," *Canadian Art*, September 24, 2013, <http://canadianart.ca/news/2013/09/24/robert-houle-york-wilson-prize/>.
67. McIntosh, "uhpé guhnoodezowan," 3.
68. Sarah de Leeuw, "Intimate Colonialisms: The Material and Experienced Places of British Columbia's Residential Schools," *The Canadian Geographer* 51, no. 3 (Autumn 2007): 349.
69. Lucy R. Lippard, introduction to *Partial Recall: Photographs of Native North Americans*, ed. Lucy R. Lippard (New York: The New Press, 1992), 14.
70. Cathy Arthur, "Looking Back," *Brandon Sun*, March 19, 2014, <http://www.brandonsun.com/calendars/looking-back---march-19-2014-250946331.html>.
71. "Looking Back," *Brandon Sun*, April 17, 2010, <http://www.brandonsun.com/opinion/columns/looking-back---april-17-2010-91463424.html> and Cathy Arthur, "Looking Back -- May 2, 2010," *Brandon Sun*, May 2, 2010, <http://www.brandonsun.com/opinion/columns/looking-back---may-2-2010-92611704.html>.
72. Cathy Arthur, "Looking Back," *Brandon Sun*, January 20, 2012, <http://www.brandonsun.com/calendars/looking-back---jan-20-2012-137747528.html>.
73. Gordon Goldsborough, "Historic Sites of Manitoba: Brandon Indian Residential School (RM of Cornwallis)," *The Manitoba Historical Society*, last modified September 15, 2013, <http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/brandonresidentialschool.shtml>. Cathy Arthur, "Looking Back," *Brandon Sun*, August 28, 2010, accessed May 1, 2013, <http://www.brandonsun.com/opinion/columns/looking-back---aug-28-2010-101707103.html>.

74. Goldsborough, "Historic Sites of Manitoba: Brandon Indian Residential School," and Cathy Arthur, "Looking Back," *Brandon Sun*, August 28, 2010, <http://www.brandonsun.com/opinion/columns/looking-back----aug-28-2010-101707103.html>.

75. Ian Hitchen, "Property owners pay up, escape tax sale," *Brandon Sun*, October 21, 2010, <http://www.brandonsun.com/local/property-owners-pay-up-escape-tax-sale-105426573.html>.

76. Matt Goerzen, "Sioux Valley has new plan for former residential school site near Wheat City," *Brandon Sun*, December 19, 2010, <http://www.brandonsun.com/local/sioux-valley-has--new-plan-for-former-residential-school-site-near-wheat-city-112143319.html>.

77. Elsie Catcheway, "Destroying the evidence of our past," *Grassroots News*, April 18, 2006, reproduced in "Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada Media Clips," April 19, 2006, accessed April 30, 2014, http://archives.algomau.ca/main/sites/default/files/2010-061_003_076.pdf.

78. Ibid.

79. Quintin Winks, "Former students feel 'closure' tearing down residential school," *CanWest News*, February 11, 2009, <http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.uwaterloo.ca/docview/461145708?accountid=14906>.

80. One story to consider is the way the bricks themselves connect the colonialist project of the residential schools to sagas of early industry, dynasties which have continued, in different ways, to this day. Bricks produced by at least three different companies, each located in a different city, province, and country, and each still operating, were used to construct the school.

81. Marianne Hirsch, "Family Pictures: *Maus*, Mourning, and Post-Memory," *Discourse* 15, no. 2 (1992-1993): 8-9, quoted in James E. Young, *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 2.

82. Young, *At Memory's Edge*, 2.

83. Lynne Bell, "Buffalo Boy at Burning Man: Camp, Mourning and the Forgiving of History in the Work of Adrian Stimson," *Canadian Art* (Summer 2007): 44-48, accessed October 1, 2014, http://canadianart.ca/features/2007/06/01/buffalo_boy/.

84. David Harvey, "Space as a Key Word," Paper for Marx and Philosophy Conference, Institute of Education, London, May 29, 2004, accessed October 3, 2014, <http://frontdeskapparatus.com/files/harvey2004.pdf>.

85. Adrian Stimson, untitled, in Scott Watson, *Witnesses: Art and Canada's Indian Residential Schools* (Vancouver: Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, 2013), 54.

86. Ibid.

87. Lara Kramer, "Artistic Statement," *Lara Kramer Danse*, accessed April 11, 2014, <http://www.larakramer.ca/artistic-statement>.
88. Rob Swystun, "Artist to research Portage Residential School," *Central Plains Herald Leader*, March 12, 2009, accessed August 26, 2013, <http://www.portagedailygraphic.com/2009/03/13/artist-to-research-portage-residential-school>.
89. Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore, *Body, Memory, and Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 58.
90. Lara Kramer, "Fragments," *Lara Kramer Danse*, accessed April 11, 2014, <http://www.larakramer.ca/fragments>.
91. See Edward S. Casey, "Body Memory," in *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 200), 146-80.
92. Bloomer and Moore, *Body, Memory, and Architecture*, 50.
93. Carey Newman, "Witness: Pieces of History," accessed May 5, 2014, <http://witnessblanket.ca/>.
94. Marsha Lederman, "Carey Newman confronts the painful legacy of residential schools," *The Globe and Mail*, August 7, 2013, updated October 8, 2013, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/art-and-architecture/carey-newman-confronts-the-painful-legacy-of-residential-schools/article13654569/>.
95. Rosy Hartman, e-mail message to author, October 10, 2014, with attachment "Witness – Pieces of History – Archive of Pieces," September 3, 2014.
96. Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History," *Representations* 26 (Spring 1989), 8.
97. Chief Robert Joseph, "Interview with Chief Robert Joseph," by Geoffrey Carr, in Scott Watson, *Witnesses: Art and Canada's Indian Residential Schools* (Vancouver: Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, 2013), 30.
98. McIntosh, "uhpé guhnoodezowan," 3.
99. Young, *At Memory's Edge*, 5-7.

The man shook his head. “No, no,” he said. “I’m not being clear. It’s not my past, not my childhood that I must transmit to you.”

He leaned back, resting his head against the back of the upholstered chair. “It’s the memories of the whole world,” he said with a sigh. “Before you, before me, before the previous Receiver, and generations before him.”

Jonas frowned. “The whole world?” he asked. “I don’t understand. Do you mean not just us? Not just the community? Do you mean Elsewhere, too?” He tried, in his mind, to grasp the concept. “I’m sorry, sir. I don’t understand exactly. Maybe I’m not smart enough. I don’t know what you mean when you say ‘the whole world’ or ‘generations before him.’ I thought there was only us. I thought there was only now.”¹

LOIS LOWRY, *The Giver*

The gas station owner says that the girls' school belongs to an old woman in town. I follow his directions towards the water. The building stands against the grey sky, its shell infiltrated by trees. A fence surrounds it, a sign at the gate declaring the owner's name. Across the road, the grounds of the boys' school are empty. The abyss between the two is the separation of brothers from sisters, sisters from brothers, how close they were yet how far apart they must have felt.

Closer to the river, the density of boats and trailers increases until the marina signals the transition from land to water. A few markers of what used to be interrupt the certainty of the landscape. On the boys' side stands a dark granite memorial, as well as the large remnant of a tree carved into the figures of people wearing feathers, hands outstretched towards the sky. Flying out of the same tree is a large bird emerging under the skilled hand of its carver. Beyond, the only remainders of the school are a concrete surface and, further away, an old shack. When I cross the road to look at the girls' school once more, the sky opens with rain.

Hours later, the clouds have scattered and let through the afternoon sun. I have travelled to a university strangely devoid of students; yet, not so strange, given the time of year. The former school sits at the centre of the campus. This weekend, past residents, survivors, are revisiting their former abode.

These two groups of people rarely overlap, and the expansive breach in their perceptions of the school seems nearly impossible to reconcile.

I approach the opening ceremony slowly, for it is already in progress. About thirty people are gathered around the sacred fire under a large arbour next to the school. The group is composed of old and young, Anishinaabeg as well as others. Three elders lead the ceremony, beginning with smudging. The old woman invites each person to take the smoke of the burning sage she holds and cleanse themselves. I waft the delicate smoke up my body and over my head, as I saw the others do. A peaceful feeling washes over me, and I become more alert. Another elder passes a pipe to the men of the group, followed by strawberries that are shared by all. Everyone takes a drink of spring water. We finish by taking a bit of tobacco and, one by one, offering it to the fire, watching the smoke rise.

The people disperse. I walk around the school to look at it more closely. It is preserved as if it were a museum. The bright sunlight and clear, blue sky render the brick walls pristine, erasing their shadows. Day to day, it is just another campus building. I lie down on the large front lawn, relishing the quiet warmth of the sun on my face.



1178



+46° 30' 4", -84° 17' 14"

1179



5.2 Chief Augustine Shingwauk and his wife, ca. 1880

(previous pages)
5.1 Aerial image of former Shingwauk Hall, now Algoma University and Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig, and environs, Sault Ste. Marie, ON

Shingwauk

Canadian historian J.R. Miller opens *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* with an account of the second gathering of Shingwauk Indian Residential School survivors in 1991. Then known as the Shingwauk Reunion, the meeting took place sporadically but has developed into an annual event that includes an academic conference. I attended the 2013 Shingwauk Gathering and Conference, the theme of which was “Healing and Reconciliation Through Education.” The presentations highlighted the importance of language and cultural revitalization programs in working through the ongoing impact of residential schools. It therefore made sense that this gathering occurred at a place of learning. What was more challenging to come to terms with was that the centrepiece of Algoma University, where these discussions were taking place, is the former Shingwauk IRS itself.

Twenty-two years after the meeting he wrote of in *Shingwauk's Vision*, I saw Miller walking the halls of Algoma among the large group of survivors, family members, friends, and academics. Garden River Ojibwe Chief Shingwauk's dream of a “teaching wigwam” features prominently in Miller's book as a reminder of the original intent Indigenous leaders had in supporting formal education on the cusp of mass European settlement—learning in order to “adapt to and thrive in the new age that was coming to their lands.”² Chief Shingwauk is thus celebrated as the founder of Shingwauk Hall and Shingwauk Kinomaage Gamig, the recently established Anishinaabe university affiliated with Algoma. He is the namesake of the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association; the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre, an on-site archive and research facility; as well as the now-annual gathering and conference. The Shingwauk site, with its archival qualities and attendant ritu-

als, appears emblematic of Pierre Nora's concept of *lieux de mémoire*. These *lieux*, Nora explains,

originate with the sense that there is no spontaneous memory, that we must deliberately create archives, maintain anniversaries, organize celebrations, pronounce eulogies, and notarize bills because such activities no longer occur naturally. The defense, by certain minorities, of a privileged memory that has retreated to jealously protected enclaves in this sense intensely illuminates the truth of *lieux de mémoire*—that without commemorative vigilance, history would soon sweep them away.³

Nora posits that, with “the acceleration of history,” *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory, have displaced *milieux de mémoire*, real environments of memory. In the context of the residential schools, at least two different problems of collective memory are at play: the resurgence of “enclaves” of Indigenous memory which it was the deliberate aim of IRS to “sweep away,” and the memorialization of historical injustices wrought by the Canadian state against Indigenous peoples. Both questions, as well as their inevitable intersections, are evident at the Shingwauk site.

According to Nora, the reclamation of minority memories, in this case those of Indigenous nations, can be traced through *international*, *domestic*, and *ideological* decolonization.⁴ Andreas Huyssen also suggests that decolonization and its attendant search for alternative and revisionist histories spurred new kinds of memory discourses after the 1960s.⁵ These are some of the ways in which the past is bound up with the future; how decolonization, which is projective, simultaneously requires a leap into history. These still ongoing processes are yielding, once again, something akin to *milieux de mémoire*, which are now not so easily separable from the *lieux*.

At the Shingwauk site, these two paradigms, the *lieux* and the *milieux*, come together, their convergence illuminated by a story shared with me by Professor Don Jackson of Algoma University. He recounted that Dan Pine, an elder from Garden River and the great-grandson of Chief Shingwauk, had understood the residential school and the university not as a rupture, but as a continuation of Shingwauk's concept

of the “teaching wigwam.” This philosophy led to the first Shingwauk Reunion in 1981, just ten years after the residential school closed. In response to the question of how he knew what Chief Shingwauk wanted, the elder simply responded, “because I *am* Shingwauk.” Jackson’s interpretation of this statement is that Pine’s sense of identity was

not as an individual, but as a person who embodied everything essential about his ancestors, which is very different from European people, who see themselves as separate first, and then they have to connect . . . he was always connected.⁶

The Shingwauk site thus harnesses both “spontaneous,” living memory and “deliberate” or “artificial” memory. But if so, if these temporal modes can be entangled together and if the past and present can coexist, is it necessary to separate them in order to understand them? Perhaps a more holistic view of time can better serve us in developing the cross-cultural understanding that is so deeply needed. As Huyssen suggests,

this conservative argument about shifts in temporal sensibility needs to be taken out of its binary framing . . . and pushed in a different direction, one that does not rely on a discourse of loss and that accepts the fundamental shift in structures of feeling, experience, and perception as they characterize our simultaneously expanding and shrinking present.⁷

I do not mean, by considering this statement, the relinquishment of responsibility and acknowledgment that the IRS and other policies precipitated a grave loss among Indigenous nations. Rather, I suggest that we should not completely depend on dualities, on opposing concepts of memory/history, indigenous/settler, *milieux/lieux*, but instead seek new ways of engagement and understanding—ways that are already emerging at the Shingwauk site. The interaction of dualities embodies neither the repetition of the *milieu* nor the inertia of the *lieu* exclusively, but both at the same time, and also something new altogether, something as yet unknown—something, perhaps, to come in the future.

PA-182262



SHINGWAUK HOME

PA-182263



SHINGWAUK HOME
THE CHAPEL

See Ste Marie
Garden Kwan Roseau

5.3 Shingwauk Home (top) and Bishop Fauquier Memorial Chapel, ca. 1885

Shingwauk and Wawanosh Homes, 1873-1934

The first precursor to the Shingwauk IRS was the small day school of St. John's Mission established in Ketegaunseebee (Garden River), near present-day Sault Ste. Marie, in 1833. The one-room schoolhouse was the result of efforts by Chief Shingwauk, "The Pine," to establish "teaching wigwams" throughout Anishinaabeg lands. These schools were to provide European-style education as part of a self-determination strategy that included limited acculturation. According to Canadian historian Jean Manore, "for Shingwauk and his followers, English education was intended to augment traditional skills, not to replace major aspects of their own way of life."⁸

The first teaching wigwam was replaced by a larger school in 1854, the year of Chief Shingwauk's death. When the second school closed in 1871, his son, Chief Augustine Shingwauk, travelled to Toronto with missionary Edward Francis Wilson to petition the Anglican bishop for a new school to carry on his father's vision. In 1873, E.F. Wilson became the first principal of the Shingwauk Home, established on 300 acres of the Garden River reserve in a "long frame building with accommodation for about 40 scholars."⁹ It burned down just six days after opening, with one report claiming arson by band members opposed to English schooling. Rebuilding began immediately eight miles away in Sault Ste. Marie. Wilson held the title to the property, likely because status Indians were not allowed to own land in fee simple. The Shingwauk Home, a stone building with a pitched roof, similar to the first building at Birtle, was completed in 1875 (5.3). The title was then transferred to the first bishop of the newly formed Anglican Diocese of Algoma, Frederick Faquier, who held it "in trust...for the use of the Indian Industrial Institution."¹⁰

Manore argues that a legal trust relationship was thus established over the school between the Garden River band and the church. This legal responsibility was supported by the governor general, Lord Dufferin, with the declaration of a moral responsibility on the part of the government. In his speech on the occasion of laying the cornerstone at Shingwauk, he con-



5.4 Drawing of the Wawanosh Home

firmed that the Crown was “under the very gravest obligations toward [the Anishinaabe]” and had “the duty of providing for their future welfare.”¹¹

The trust relationship was troubled from the beginning, however, because it was interpreted differently by the various parties. The Anishinaabeg wanted settler education to augment traditional knowledge and to assist them in adapting to new economic conditions; the church and government took it as a paternalistic opportunity for assimilation. The Anishinaabeg wanted to be involved in planning a school on their land; E.F. Wilson and the church located the new school eight miles away, “possibly for security reasons,”¹² and excluded the community it was intended to serve from the rebuilding process. The first students were not from Garden River but Sarnia and Walpole, “indicating a growing lack of interest in the school on the part of the Garden River community.”¹³

In 1877, Wilson started a girls’ school two and half miles from Shingwauk, in part due to objections from townspeople that boys and girls were being lodged together.¹⁴ The Wawanosh Home opened with eight pupils being taught in the back wing while the rest of the building was still under construction, although its capacity was eventually enlarged to

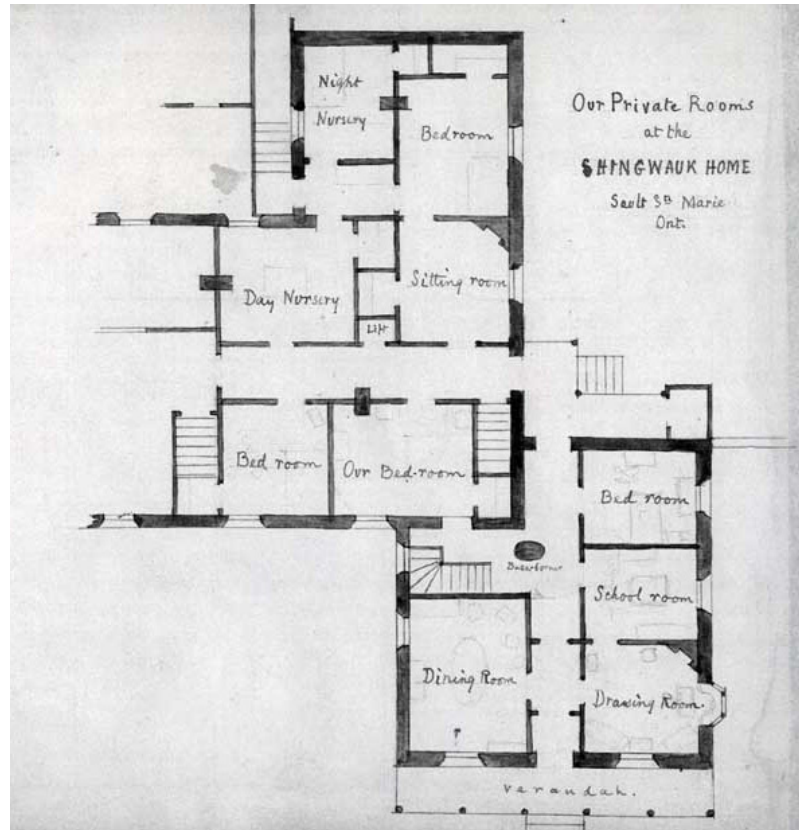
twenty-six and included a playroom (5.4).¹⁵ The property of five acres had a stable, laundry, and laundresses' cottage.¹⁶ The girls' school looked very much like a smaller version of Shingwauk, and thus more domestic in character. In 1879, both Homes became part of the government's growing network of federally funded institutions for Indigenous children.

Like the first-generation schools of Mohawk, Birtle, and Brandon, the small Shingwauk school was expanded considerably in its first decades.¹⁷ An entrance hall for visitors was constructed and a newly completed wing became a residence for the principal and his family in 1882.¹⁸ Wilson had a keen interest in architecture and kept a journal illustrated with his own watercolours and drawings, including one of his home in England, as well as scenes of missionary work in Canada. A plan titled "Our Private Rooms at the Shingwauk Home" shows his family's living quarters, with pencilled-in furniture revealing an enthusiasm for design (5.5). Although the dwelling was connected directly to the rest of the school, the drawing shows its walls extending towards nothingness, hinting at a link, but stopping short.

The Shingwauk Home was located on a property of ninety acres, eighteen of which were farmed, and the outbuildings demonstrated the range of vocational training the boys were engaged in: carpenter's shop and cottage; printing office; industrial building for shoemaking, tailoring, and weaving; and farm buildings, including dairy, storehouse, barn, and stable.¹⁹ The main building comprised dormitories, dining hall, kitchens, and staff quarters, including Wilson's family residence. A six-patient hospital also stood on the site.

The school's evangelical premise led to the construction in 1883 of the Bishop Fauquier Memorial Chapel, a freestanding building to the southeast of the Home (5.2). It was built in part using student labour and named after the man who had selected the site of the chapel but did not live to see it completed.²⁰ The chapel still stands and is being restored by the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association to serve as a reminder of the respite it provided from the struggles of residential school life.²¹

Further south towards the St. Mary's River, a tramway used to transport



5.5 Drawing of principal's residence at Shingwauk by E.F. Wilson, ca. 1882

the school's water supply as well as goods coming by boat led to an extensive industrial complex, built in 1889 through an annual \$2,500 new construction grant. The addition included a "sash and door factory, with facilities for manufacture of furniture, etc.," along with a stone-veneered cottage for the foreman. Inmates of the school worked at the factory to produce materials for future building projects, which Wilson also imagined would be done by students, thus minimizing the costs of new construction.²²

The factory was used temporarily as a dormitory until the following year, when the annual building grant permitted the addition of a west wing to the Shingwauk Home (5.6). This addition contained a kitchen and boys' bathrooms and lavatory on the first level, and a dormitory and reading room on the second. Principal Wilson estimated



5.6 Shingwauk Home with new west wing to the left and the Wilson family's residence on the right, ca. 1890

that the institution could accommodate seventy-four inmates, increasing the combined capacity of Shingwauk and Wawanosh to 100.²³ That year, too, a new frame building, which Wilson called “Shingwauk Hall,” was built east of the Home, with a drill shed and recreation room on the lower level and an assembly and schoolroom upstairs. Wilson writes,

This ... building occupies the highest part of our property and has a small observatory on the roof, from which a splendid view is obtained of the surrounding country. All the buildings are connected by telegraph wires, and five or six boys are able to operate the instruments.²⁴

This element of technology serving double duty as institutional display, along with the farm, workspaces enabling the school to avail itself of student labour, and a place of worship were all to be found at most other residential schools. One such institution was the school at Elkhorn, Manitoba, which was established by Wilson and run by his son; like Shingwauk, it had separate facilities for boys and girls. Throughout the 1880s, Wilson made many trips to western Canada, where he intended to convert Indigenous people and recruit new students for Shingwauk, hoping also to establish new schools in these regions.²⁵ Seven “teaching wigwams” were established over a twenty-year period, but a school he built in Medicine Hat, Alberta, never opened.²⁶

During his two decades as principal of the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Homes, E.F. Wilson was of the same mind as other church officials and the federal government in his views that Indigenous people

needed to be “civilized.” He proposed that in addition to a five-year stay at residential school, youth “should be placed out with white people for another five years before returning to live with [their] people, so as to eradicate thoroughly the old Indian habits.”²⁷ Over time, however, the contact he made with Indigenous communities in western Canada and the United States, as well as his disillusionment with government policy and the handling of the North-West Rebellion, transformed his unquestioning support of assimilation into advocacy for Indigenous self-determination and cultural preservation.

Rather than abandoning the residential school project, however, Wilson’s ideological shift altered the motivation behind his ambitions. A return to the ideals of Augustine Shingwauk, whom he had helped establish the first ill-fated school at Garden River, reinforced his commitment to expanding the residential school system. In 1890, he wrote of his hope to “dispose” of the first Wawanosh Home and build a larger girls’ school closer to Shingwauk.²⁸ However, his changing political views, ill health, and conflicts with superiors ultimately led to his resignation in 1893.

In 1895, the Wawanosh Home was closed because the church could no longer afford to operate two separate schools.²⁹ Even after the amalgamation, Shingwauk continued to suffer from a lack of funds. The mounting deficit caused the church to consider closing it and selling the lands in 1910. The bishop, Edward Sullivan, asked E.F. Wilson to “alter the terms of the transfer” that had occurred in 1874 between him and Bishop Fauquier to have them released from “all restrictions, trusts and conditions”³⁰—specifically those stipulating that the land be used for Indigenous education. Wilson acquiesced, despite his firm belief in the trust; Don Jackson has conjectured that “Wilson believed that the alteration only lifted the substance of the trust that related to his personal relationship with the Synod” and not the trust relationship itself.³¹ Regardless, the land was never sold as a result.

The school’s debt was eliminated by 1914 through a combination of reductions in enrollment and other cutbacks, a ten-dollar increase in the per capita grant, and assistance from community organizations. Re-

lief from fiscal precarity was temporary, however, and a lack of funds for maintenance led to the building's deterioration. The need for extensive repairs at Shingwauk was noted in a report to Indian Affairs in 1919,³² and in 1931, the "flagship school" was condemned. Bureaucrats blamed the "wartime freeze" and Depression-era "reductions in funding," although as John Milloy has shown, underfunding was a notoriously chronic problem in the IRS that persistently affected not only the condition of the building stock, but the wellbeing and survival of children in the system.³³

In *Shingwauk's Vision*, Miller assesses the residential schools as a distortion of Chief Shingwauk's original vision of cross-cultural education. Rather than synthesizing two different ways of life, the teaching wigwams became places of cultural annihilation and assimilation under federal control. This deformation was already evident in the conditions of Shingwauk's foundation and continued throughout the existence of the first-generation school.

Archive Fever: Actual and Potential Memories

The first generation of residential schools is on the verge of living memory, known through the archive rather than the stories of those who were there. In this sense, it increasingly belongs to history instead of memory and with each passing year, the archive grows, even with the testimony of those still living. The stories of survivors who attended residential schools more recently have now become part of this record.

In March 2014, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada completed four years of public hearings, which resulted in 17,500 hours—two years—of video recordings comprising 6,500 statements by residential school survivors.³⁴ Among the seven stated goals of the TRC is to "identify sources and create as complete an historical record as possible of the IRS system and legacy ... [which] shall be preserved and made accessible to the public for future study and

use.”³⁵ Both the newly recorded testimony and materials gathered by the TRC from government and church archives will be moved to the National Research Centre (NRC) that is, at the time of this writing, being planned at the University of Manitoba.³⁶

The TRC’s mandate is to address the past, but its process of gathering an archive is also deeply concerned with the future. French philosopher Jacques Derrida proposes that “as much as and more than a thing of the past...the archive should *call into question* the coming of the future,”³⁷ an imperative made possible by the fluidity of the memory subsumed by the archive, despite the stasis of the archive itself. This interplay between collective memory and the historical record is illuminated by Wulf Kansteiner as the interaction between actual and potential cultural memories:

Cultural memories occur in the mode of potentiality when representations of the past are stored in archives, libraries, and museums; they occur in the mode of actuality when these representations are adopted and given new meaning in *new social and historical contexts*. These distinctions suggest that specific representations of the past might traverse the whole spectrum, from the realm of communicative memory to the realm of actual cultural memory and finally potential cultural memory (and vice versa). But in the process they change their intensity, social depth, and meaning.³⁸

The potentiality and volatility of archived events, through interpretation in *new social and historical contexts*, demands that the archive remain open in the face of the future.³⁹ Like Nora, Derrida considers the archive as a *lieu de mémoire* that “will never be either memory or anamnesis as spontaneous, alive and internal experience. On the contrary: the archive takes place at the place of originary and structural breakdown of the said memory.”⁴⁰ But the memories moving towards history, archive, or *lieu* can be understood as something other than inert “shells on the shore when the sea of living memory has receded.”⁴¹ The historical record being compiled at the NRC “for future study and use” anticipates a radical shift in historical production, which, perhaps, may participate in the very creation of new social and historical contexts. The historical record is being brought into being as much for the past and the present as for the future, when we will “know what [it] will have meant,” that is, “only ... in times to come.”⁴²

Outside, downtown Winnipeg seethes with heat, racial striation, protest. But the beautiful reading room at the Manitoba provincial archives, with its tall, arched windows, is cool and quiet. A set of drawers in the corner contains an abundance of black-and-white photographs. Organized alphabetically according to subject (Indians – Education), they are bracketed by other images of Indigenous life and interspersed with many more of settler activities. The purpose of these images seems to be simply to say that these people, these places, existed, to record them for a posterity that might deem a knowledge of them important.

The archivist tells me I will have to consult federal records to find architectural drawings. It was, after all, the Canadian government that was responsible for building the schools. In an industrial area outside the city core is the nondescript Manitoba Region Federal Records Centre. This branch of Library and Archives Canada (LAC) holds government documents generated in Manitoba and northwestern Ontario, including, as I discover, rolls upon rolls of plans for residential schools. The most banal drawings of parapet details, plumbing, fire escapes—quotidian matters of building construction and maintenance—dominate the material pulled for me by the archivist. Among them is a full set of plans for the school in Birtle, its large sheets softened by time, curling and crumbling at the edges. It is a

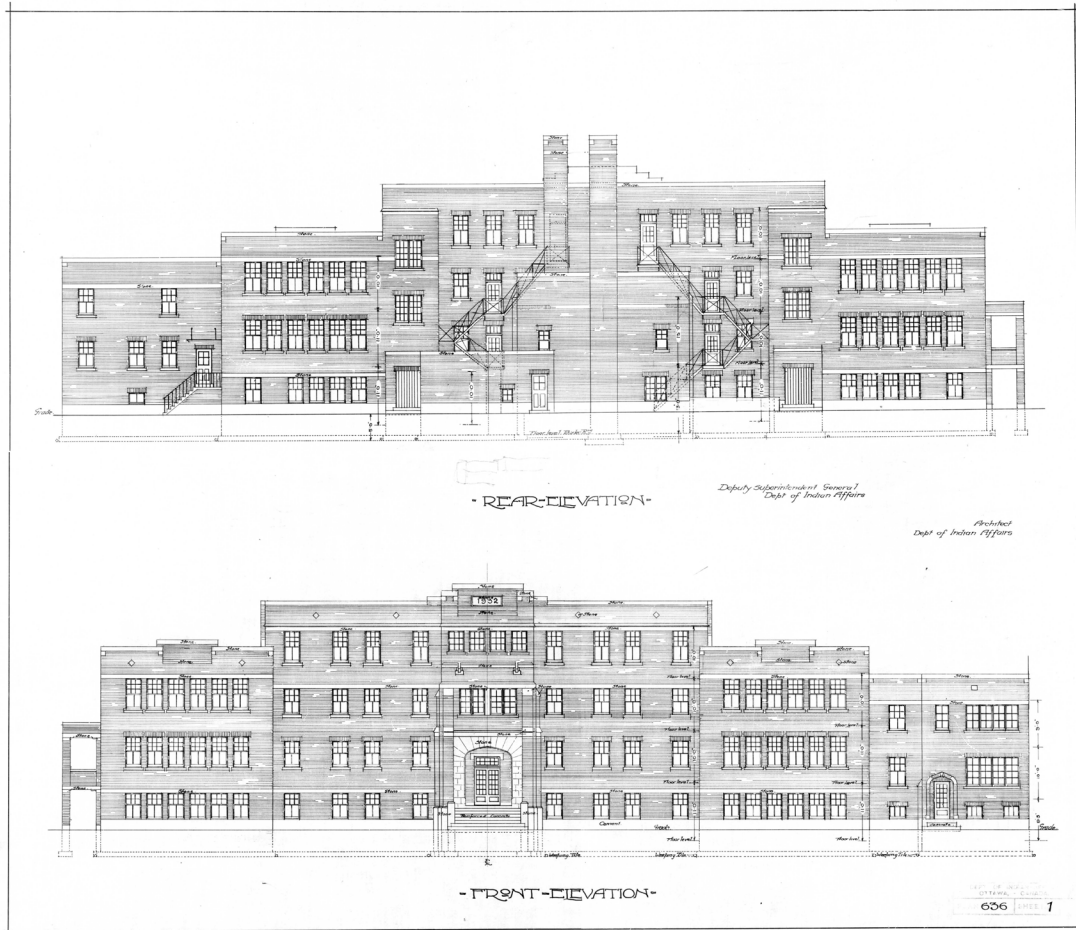
blueline copy of the original drawings from 1930, carrying the signatures of Roland Guernev Orr and Duncan Campbell Scott. Bearing pencilled-in ephemera on proposed renovations, they were archived in 1961. Looking at these drawings, and especially the signatures, the calculated nature of these architectural productions begins to become clear.

For drawings of residential schools outside the Manitoba Region, I have to look further afield. I travel to Ottawa, where I spend several days at the officious LAC building on Wellington Street. Its mostly empty, double-height lobby, lined with marble and gold mosaic tile, greets me each morning before I ascend to the various levels above. I spend the greater part of my week scanning microfiche files arranged in tiny drawers in a dim room on the top floor. The original plans are housed in a facility across the river in Gatineau.

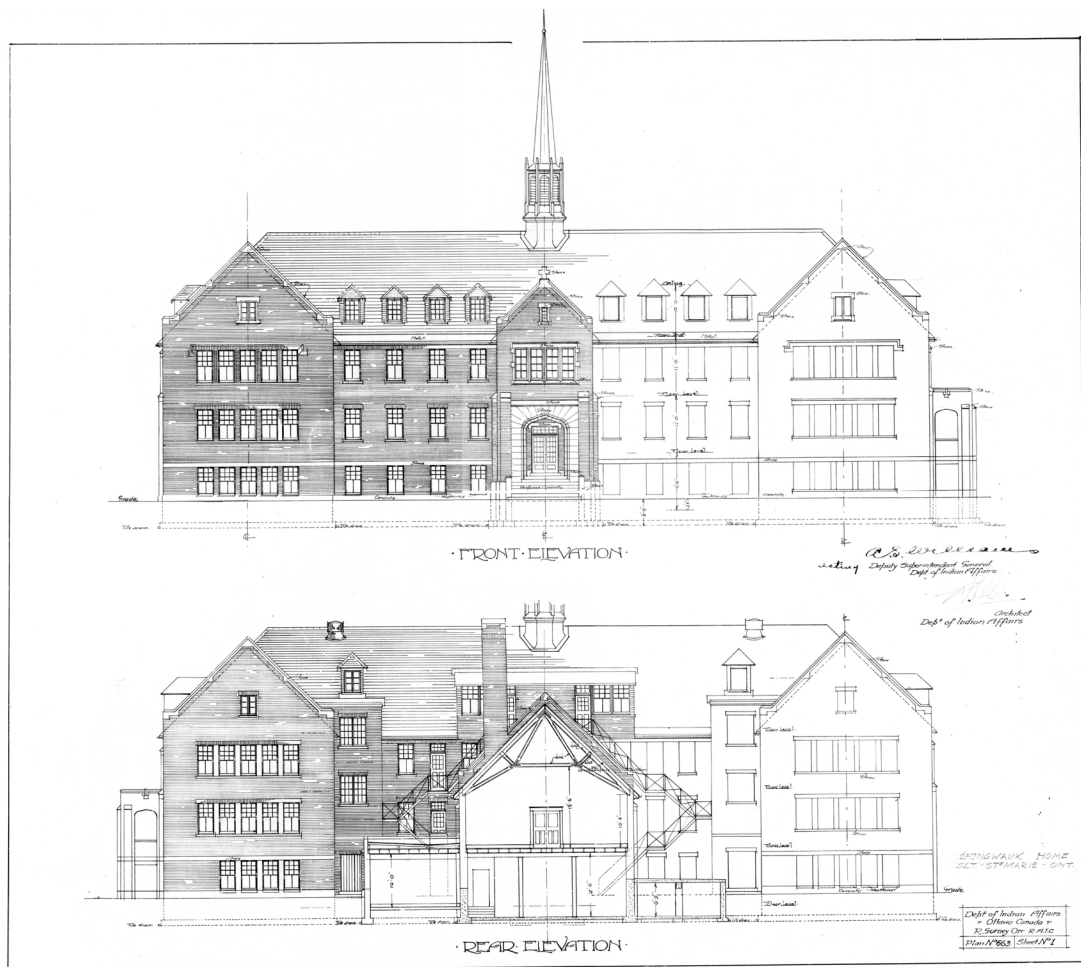
I look for specific buildings and architects, especially Orr, whose name comes up more and more often. But beyond individual specimens, I hope to find a systematically organized collection of architectural records produced by Indian Affairs. After a prolonged search with the help of several staff members, we turn up a finding aid, identified as FA RG22M 912016: a list of hundreds of residential schools, day schools, council houses, cottages, hospitals. An online search reveals that this represents only a fraction of Indian Affairs' output. The full extent is collected in a sub-series of the Technical Services Branch, which includes "records pertaining to the construction and maintenance of buildings, homes, schools, roads, bridges and water systems on Indian reserves throughout Canada"—entire built worlds. Created between 1913 and 1982, the material contains six maps, 8,687 architectural drawings, 3,166 technical drawings, and four colour pencil sketches on two tracing paper sheets.

In the tiny drawers of the dim room, I find drawings of Shingwauk. Someone had faithfully reduced the paper sheets to transparent microfiche, each the size of a photograph. I need a machine to magnify the lines, which shows only small, abstracted portions of the drawings. Eventually, I reconstitute these fragments into complete images. What emerge are two different designs for the new Shingwauk Home, the first a virtual copy of the school built at Birtle two years earlier. The only discernible difference is the date stone on Shingwauk's front elevation, which reads 1932 instead of 1930. The second design, however, is the one that was actually built.

Although an architectural drawing is representational, it sometimes takes on a life of its own, unhinged from the utilitarian function of signifying a thing beyond itself. This may happen when the artifact it signifies is demolished or, in this case, never built. The drawing thus represents a virtuality that was never actualized. The change recorded in the archive reveals a hesitation, an uncertainty that unfolded over several years.



5.7 Original elevations for Shingwauk IRS, 1932, R.G. Orr, architect



5.8 Final elevations for Shingwauk IRS, 1934, R.G. Orr, architect

Shingwauk Indian Residential School, 1935-1970

In July 1930, *The Globe* reported that construction of the new Shingwauk IRS was to begin that autumn: plans “received from the Department of Indian Affairs at Ottawa call for a four-story building of brick construction with stone facing ... [and] a frontage of 174 feet, this taking in the principal’s residence, which ... will be placed at the east side of the new home”⁴³ (5.9). This referred to the first design, with its flat roof and three-storey principal’s apartment, which, as at Birtle, was connected to the school at ground level (5.7). Indian Affairs was confident enough to send the drawings to a national newspaper, anticipating that construction would commence within a few months. However, it was delayed for several years, likely due to budget cuts at the start of the decade.

The second version of the design was produced in the interim and came to look much like the Edmonton and St. Paul’s schools, both in Alberta, both built ten or more years earlier (1.8, 1.10). Shingwauk gained the peaked roofs and tall, pointed tower that had not been deployed by Orr in his designs in over ten years (5.8). Perhaps administrators at Shingwauk wanted something that more closely resembled the first building. Perhaps someone at Indian Affairs, maybe Orr himself, felt that the flat-roofed schools had started to look too imposing, too much like an institution. Perhaps the Collegiate Gothic style was meant to imbue the school with a more distinguished, or even domestic, character. On the other hand, the change may have been made simply to provide a pitched roof to accommodate the large snowfalls of northern Ontario.⁴⁴

Construction finally began in 1934, speeded by funds obtained through the recently legislated Public Works Construction Act. The Act provided \$40 million in aid to public-sector construction projects across Canada, chiefly national parks and historic sites, as a measure to stimulate the economy during the Great Depression. By May 1935, the new building was “near completion” (5.10).⁴⁵ Despite having been

Work Will Be Hastened On New Shingwauk Home

(Special Despatch to The Globe.)

Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., July 22.—
Work on the building of the new Shingwauk Home will commence early this fall, according to plans formulated. While no tenders have been asked for yet, it is hoped that the first floor or basement will be completed before the cold weather sets in. This much in itself will be a good start on the \$150,000 building which is to replace the structure built in 1874. Plans of the building received from the Department of Indian Affairs at Ottawa call for a four-story building of brick construction with stone facing. It will be fireproof as far as possible. The home will have a frontage of 174 feet, this taking in the principal's residence, which is included in the plans and which will be placed at the east side of the new home.

5.9 *The Globe*, July 23, 1930

Sault Indian Home Near Completion

Sault Ste. Marie, May 17 (CP).—
Construction of the new \$150,000 Shingwauk home for Indians is near completion. It is expected to be opened in a few weeks. The home replaces one of this district's most historic buildings. The old structure has been in use for more than half a century.

5.10 *The Globe*, May 18, 1935



5.11 The new Shingwauk IRS being constructed behind the old, 1934-35

	Cost	Less prev. paid	Extras	Cost (1936)	Cost (2013)
Contract, J.J. Fitzpatrick	\$151,784	\$126,241 (1934-35)	\$2,144.03	\$153,928.03	\$2,560,613.58
Architect, T.R. Wilks	\$3,415.14	\$2,840.42 (1931-35)		\$3,415.14	\$56,811.32
Travel, R.G. Orr				\$29.35	\$488.24
Materials, fuel, etc.				\$2,082.21	\$34,637.84
			TOTAL	\$159,454.73	\$2,652,550.98

Table 4 Construction costs and other expenses at Shingwauk IRS, 1936

condemned, the existing Shingwauk Home had continued to operate while the new school was built behind it (5.11). Once it was finally demolished, some of its stones were used to build a cairn commemorating E.F. Wilson where his residence had stood.

The example of Shingwauk serves to suggest a nationwide network of local architects who worked in conjunction with those stationed centrally in Ottawa. At Shingwauk, it was Thomas Raybould Wilks, who worked on the project from 1931 to its completion (Table 4). Wilks designed dozens of schools and other buildings, mainly in Sault Ste. Marie and the surrounding region, during a career that spanned the first half of the twentieth century.⁴⁶ It is likely that numerous architects from across Canada worked with Indian Affairs in similar situations.

Shingwauk's replacement, which was fireproof and had accommodation for 150 children and staff, was completed in 1935.⁴⁷ At this time, the diocese negotiated an agreement for increased funding in exchange for giving the government title to the property, to be returned if Shingwauk was ever closed.⁴⁸ In 1937, a new principal's house was built southeast of the main building since, unlike the first design described in the *Globe* article, the final plan did not have an attached residence.⁴⁹

In the 1950s, the government transferred a portion of the Shingwauk property back to the Synod, which transferred it to what was then the Sault Ste. Marie Board of Education.⁵⁰ Shingwauk became a hostel for Indigenous students attending two integrated institutions, Anna McCrea Public School and Sir James Dunn Collegiate and Vocational School, built on this severed property directly north of Shingwauk in 1957.⁵¹ A "teacher-adviser" was employed for assisting students with the transition to mainstream schools, part of a policy adopted by Indian Affairs in 1960 that saw seven such positions filled at six different residences. "Many of these pupils," explained the Department,

coming as they do from remote, isolated areas where they had little contact with the non-Indian culture into which they have been plunged on enrolment in a non-Indian school, require assistance not only to make the necessary emotional and social adjustments, but also to keep up with their academic studies.⁵²

THE SAULT DAILY STAR

ALGOMA'S OWN NEWSPAPER « PUBLISHED BY SAULT STAR LTD.
R.L. CURRAN, President and Managing Director, J.A. CURRAN, Managing Editor

369 QUEEN STREET, EAST
SAULT STE. MARIE, ONT

July 12, 1966

R.F. Davey,
Director, Education,
Indian Affairs Branch,
Government of Canada,
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Mr. Davey:

Could you give us some information regarding government responsibility towards Indian residences. Have you any plans for a major refurbishing of the Shingwauk Residential School here?

Apparently this residence is run by the Anglican Church for the department of Indian Affairs. Is the upkeep of the building the job of the department?

It is a fine building, but since it is 34 years old, it is badly in need of face lifting. Last year we pointed out that the plaster was dirty, cracked and falling some places [*sic*]. The bathrooms are ancient.

In June this year, a Star reporter was served cold potatoes at the dinner for graduating grade eight pupils. Apparently the kitchen is incapable of keeping food hot until it is served – even to the Archbishop!

At first the new principal, Dave Lawson, promised to let us photograph the dilapidation. Now he says he has no definite word on repairs and so doesn't want publicity at this time.

The principal last spring was also assured major repairs would be made.

Our idea was that people here would like to help make the school cheery for the kids, but it's a bigger job than gay pictures and games will cure.

We think the department is doing a wonderful job of encouraging Indian children to go to school and continue on to college.

Its task would be easier if residences were pleasanter places.

Any information you can give us would be appreciated.

If there are plans for a major renovation would you let us know what they are?

Sincerely,

NAN RAJNOVICH, Mrs.
Women's news editor⁵³



5.12 Dormitory, Shingwauk Hall, 1965

The recognition of the challenges long faced by residents of IRS, whether they attended a segregated school or not, was one indicator of the changing context of Indigenous-Canadian relations in which these institutions continued to function. The program of transitioning schools to residences involved a great deal of construction and the resources put into the facilities in the early 1960s suggest that the hostel program was not seen as a temporary measure, but a feasible long-term alternative to the IRS. But while these moves desegregated Indigenous youth from the rest of society and gave some consideration to the problems of separation from home and culture, the system remained the vestige of an old, colonial mindset that saw incarceration and discipline as integral to the nation-building project. By the middle of the decade, the government had changed its mind and clearly stopped investing in the IRS, leading to decay once again. The Shingwauk hostel was closed in June of 1970.

Speculative Spaces of Remembering

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) was formed in 1991 in response to contestations of Indigenous status brought up by events such as the Oka Crisis and the Meech Lake Accord. At the same time, survivors began to publicly disclose the abuse they had suffered within the IRS system. Phil Fontaine, then Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, was one of the first to do so, stating that he made his story public “to give hope to people and to give them strength. To tell people there is a way out.”⁵⁴

Five years later, coinciding with the closure of the last residential schools,⁵⁵ the Commission produced its landmark five-volume report on government policy regarding Indigenous peoples in Canada. It roundly condemned the legacy of cultural genocide, neglect, abuse, and poor education manufactured by the IRS system.⁵⁶ It also addressed the historic relationships among Indigenous peoples, the Canadian government, and the wider society, finding that differences in conceptions of history and time play a profound role in how the two societies understand the relationship:

The Aboriginal tradition in the recording of history is neither linear nor steeped in ... notions of social progress and evolution. ... Moreover, the Aboriginal historical tradition is an oral one ... It is less focused on establishing objective truth and assumes that the teller of the story is so much a part of the event being described that it would be arrogant to presume to classify or categorize the event exactly or for all time.⁵⁷

Yet this has, until quite recently, been the aim of history in the West, in the words of Huyssen characterized by “teleological master-narratives” and “nationalist framings,”⁵⁸ intolerant of otherness and change. This difference between understandings of time is frequently interpreted, as it is by Romanian historian and philosopher Mircea Eliade, as a distinction between a “cyclical” temporality, found in so-called premodern or archaic societies, and the “linear,” historical temporality of modern ones.⁵⁹ In the former, the present and future are connected to the past and can even be conflated with one another. The latter, however, views the past, present, and future as separate, with each succeeding the previous.

The RCAP found that these differences persist, however subtly and variably; they therefore must be acknowledged when addressing the history of the IRS. Many Indigenous people see these institutions as having consequences that still resonate today, requiring not just commemoration but active involvement; by contrast, the non-Indigenous view of residential schools is often as something that must be “overcome.” Furthermore, the settler view tends to emphasize the development of a “new” relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, whereas the Indigenous outlook seeks the renewal of a previous, harmonious one.⁶⁰

These distinct temporalities can be loosely transposed to conceptions of space, with the linear view of time corresponding most with absolute or conceived space—the objective space measurable through fixed mathematical systems.⁶¹ In the linear and absolute notions, space and time can be separated and measured as distinct from one another. The relational, lived space of imagination, metaphor, and symbols, on the other hand, is closely related with the cyclical view of time, which encompasses continuous change and renewal. As David Harvey suggests, “the relational view of space holds there is no such thing as space outside of the processes that define it...it is impossible to disentangle space from time.”⁶² From this perspective, the spaces of residential schools continue to be affected by their traumatic past as well as the moments of change they have absorbed over time: “a wide variety of disparate influences swirling over space in the past, present and future concentrate and congeal at a certain point to define the nature of that point.”⁶³

The RCAP suggests that these diverse ways of engaging with time are not irreconcilable, but “different ways of expressing ideas that, at a deeper level, may have much in common.”⁶⁴ What are these commonalities, or what areas of hybridity are conceivable? Returning to the spaces of this thesis, what implications does an emerging understanding of time, even multiple understandings, have for the future of residential school sites? One possibility is a consideration of the simultaneity of past and present (a facet of cyclical temporalities) together with an openness to future divergence (one of linear temporalities). The former

has been described by French philosopher Henry Bergson and is thus interpreted by another, later French philosopher, Gilles Deleuze:

The past and present do not denote two successive moments, but two elements which coexist: One is the present, which does not cease to pass, and the other is the past, which does not cease to be but through which all presents pass.⁶⁵

In other words, duration is multiple and heterogeneous, encompassing not just the *actuality* of the present, but also the *virtuality* of the past as well as the future. In her essay, “The Future of Space: Toward an Architecture of Invention,” Elizabeth Grosz elaborates that

the past does not come after the present has ceased to be, nor does the present become or somehow move into the past. Rather, it is the past which is the condition of the present; it is only through a pre-existence that the present can come to be.⁶⁶

Grosz indicates the intertwined nature of time and space when she suggests that under these conditions, remembering requires “placing” oneself in this virtual or latent past, “which can only occur through a certain detachment from the immediacy of the present.”⁶⁷ Bergson developed this notion of duration in contrast to his concept of space and spatiality, which he viewed as homogeneous and constituted only of quantitative differences. Grosz interrogates Bergson’s dualized view of time and space and finds that, “in a rare moment, Bergson contemplates the possibility of thinking space otherwise,” suggesting that

we can reinvent, or rather, return to a conception of space that does not so much underlie or subtend matter, functioning as the indifferent coordinates of the placement of matter, as function as an effect of matter and movement. It is not an existing, God-given space, the Cartesian space of numerical division, but an unfolding space, defined, as time is, by the arc of movement and thus a space open to becoming, by which I mean becoming other than itself, other than what it has been.⁶⁸

Here we return to the idea of the production, in contrast to the pre-existence, of space, discussed previously with reference to Lefebvre and Harvey. Huyssen reminds us of Harvey’s notion of the interrelatedness of time and space, indeed the embeddedness of space in time,

cautioning that “we would separate time and space at great peril to a full understanding of either modern or postmodern culture.”⁶⁹ Grosz develops this entrenchment of time and space as an analogy between the two, positing that

if time is neither linear and successive nor cyclical and recurrent but indeterminate, unfolding, serial, multiplying, complex, heterogeneous, then space too must be reconfigured not as neutral, nor as singular, and homogeneous but as opening up to other spaces, not regulating processes and events so much as accompanying them.⁷⁰

She considers this speculative approach to space through architecture’s “logic of invention,” which “has yet to be invented” and is “necessarily expansive, ramifying, and expedient, producing not premises so much as techniques, not conclusions so much as solutions, not arguments so much as effects.”⁷¹ The complex layering occurring at the Shingwauk site is an expression of this logic, characterized by blunders and crossed motives and unexpected turns, “functioning in excess of design and intention.”⁷² The manifestation of a virtual past in the present and an unfurling of predetermined plans has been inscribed on this place, propelling it through a state of becoming towards an unknown future.

Changing Places:

Keewatinung, Algoma, Shingwauk, 1971-2014

In 1970, the Shingwauk IRS was closed by the federal government and, in accordance with the agreement made in 1935, the property reverted to the church. Minister of Indian Affairs Jean Chrétien announced that he was

most anxious to ensure that, in the disposal of this property, a future use is found which would permit the facilities to be accessible to the Indian people to some extent. Ideally, it would continue to be used for an education-oriented purpose and it was with this in mind that [he] was prepared to favourably consider the transfer of the facilities to the Algoma Synod.⁷³



5.13 East Wing, Algoma University, 2013

The Keewatinung Institute, founded during Shingwauk's last years, thereafter agreed to share the site with Algoma University College, a new, local post-secondary institution affiliated with Laurentian University in Sudbury. The Institute involved a small number of individuals from Anishinaabeg First Nations (Ojibwe, Cree, Potawatomi, and Odawa) in the study of their communities with the aim of cultural revitalization. Their collaboration with the college was based on "Principles of Association" that stipulated the sharing of the site and its continued use for the development of Indigenous education and culture. For the symbolic sum of one dollar, Indian Affairs transferred the land and buildings to the church, which then leased part of the property to Algoma.

Keewatinung and Algoma cooperated on some cross-cultural initiatives, but those decolonizing efforts were derailed in 1975. In 1972, the college had built a library adjoining Shingwauk Hall to the east, a modern, single-storey structure with deep fascia in weathering steel atop a continuous band of windows (5.13). But the provincial government's policy not to pay for buildings built on leased land meant that, in order to recoup construction costs, the College would have to become the owner of the property.⁷⁴ The Church sold the land and buildings to the College, including thirty-seven acres fronting onto the St. Mary's River, in order to raise money. The Keewatinung Institute was thereafter evicted from the site.

Despite this unceremonious exclusion of Indigenous participants, so reminiscent of the rebuilding of the original Shingwauk Home in 1875 and contrary to the spirit of the Shingwauk Trust and the sharing agreement, the inaugural Shingwauk Reunion happened at the campus in 1981. Throughout the 1980s, an awareness developed of the damage done with the sale of the site to the college, but the situation between the three parties continued to be strained as the church attempted to sell off more trust assets. At the same time, some important steps were made in repairing the relationship between the college and the local Indigenous communities.⁷⁵

In 1989, the two-storey West Wing was added to Shingwauk Hall, with classrooms on the first level and the Arthur A. Wishart Library on the sec-



5.14 Wishart Library, Algoma University, 2013

ond. The addition was designed by Chris Tossel, an architect from Sault Ste. Marie who told me that the intention was to recognize the architecture of Shingwauk Hall but not “slavishly imitate” it, as well as create a “light link” or “pivot” that connected the existing building to the new.⁷⁶ The addition echoes the form of the two gabled projections of Shingwauk Hall, which appear at the front and rear of the building rather than side by side (5.14).

Parallel to larger political events, the Garden River First Nation initiated a lawsuit in 1991 “intended to break the logjam of indecision among the parties, and allow them to rebuild their relations on the original foundations—Chief Shingwauk’s Vision, the Shingwauk Trust, and First Nations/Canadian cross-cultural co-operation.”⁷⁷ That year, the second Shingwauk Reunion took place, marking a commitment by Algoma College to help the First Nations communities develop Shingwauk University. Reunions and gatherings took place in 1996, 2000, 2002, 2006, and every year since 2011—ten thus far.⁷⁸

It was not until 2006 that the Shingwauk Education Trust and the college formally renewed the commitment to establish Shingwauk Kinooaage Gamig (University) as an Anishinaabe degree-granting post-secondary institution. In 2008, Algoma became an independent university, and Shingwauk Kinooaage Gamig was established as a federated school with the aim of itself eventually becoming independent. It is located at both Ketegaunseebee (Garden River) and on the Algoma campus, where it occupies the old principal’s residence from 1937. Each summer, students and an elder build a wigwam, or teaching lodge, next to this building, and use it for traditional teaching throughout the fall. The academic focus of Shingwauk Kinooaage Gamig is Anishinaabe history, law, culture, literature, and language in programs that are open to Anishinaabeg students as well as those from other backgrounds.

When the West Wing was built in 1989, the original library addition from 1972 became the East Wing and now houses classrooms, offices, and the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre (SRSC), a joint initiative with the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association. The centre organizes the annual Gathering and Conference as well as other events, and holds ar-

chives from the Shingwauk IRS and other locations. Another addition, the North Wing, extends northwest from the link between Shingwauk Hall and the new library and encompasses the amphitheatre, classrooms, cafeteria, bookstore, and The Speakeasy, the campus pub. The original IRS building, still known as Shingwauk Hall, contains offices, seminar rooms, and various student services, including the Anishinaabe Student Centre.

The reappearance of the form of Shingwauk across the Algoma campus is a strange phenomenon given the difficult history in which it has been entrenched. Chris Tossell traces the origins of its architecture to that of the E-plan manor houses that appeared throughout England following the economic revival under Elizabeth I.⁷⁹ Although the external form of Shingwauk resembles these residences in that it features two gabled projections on either end and a smaller, central entry projection (the three horizontal lines of the “E”), the interior features peculiar to the Elizabethan plan were absent in Shingwauk and related residential schools. The most characteristic of these features was a long gallery on an upper level, with rooms on one side and windows on the other, which were used for exercise or to display collected objects.⁸⁰

Of course, residential schools had a completely different, carceral purpose from the English manors of the sixteenth century. Whereas the ultimate antecedent of R.G. Orr’s schools may have been the Elizabethan E-plan, it was filtered through the architecture of the industrial and boarding schools of the second half of the nineteenth century. This is true especially of the assembly or dining hall projecting from the rear façade, which was a typical element of IRS shared with earlier industrial schools (see 2.4), which the country mansions of Elizabethan England lacked. Shingwauk also bore some resemblance to Orr’s own boarding school, Ashbury College in Ottawa, which is not surprising given the intimate experience the architect must have had with this space.

Aside from the Arthur A. Wishart Library, the “Shingwauk motif” was employed on the Algoma campus for the Spirit Village Townhouses and Dr. Lou Lukenda Dormitory, also designed by Tossell and built in 2003 (5.15). The entrance of the newest student residence, the



5.15 Spirit Village Townhouses and Dr. Lou Lukenda Dormitory, Algoma University, 2013

New Dormitory, built in 2012, is “quite consciously evocative of the entrance to Shingwauk Hall,” according to the university’s president.⁸¹ The repetition of this form on the small scale of the campus is also evocative of the repetition of residential schools across Canada, and is for this reason problematic.

Shingwauk Hall is the heart of the university and an embodiment of the struggles of the Garden River First Nation and all Indigenous peoples affected by the IRS, as well as their troubled relationship with religious and secular settler entities. It has been a space of oppression, but it is also seen by many as the space of Shingwauk’s vision. It needs to be preserved, yet its tiresome duplication has smoothed over its memory, reducing it to a meaningless aesthetic gesture. Tom Wassaykeesic of Pickle Lake, a survivor of two IRS, writes of returning to Shingwauk over twenty years after it closed:

I stopped at the old school last summer. It is now part of a community college. There were some students milling around outside. I started thinking, if only they knew what had happened on these very grounds. Would they care? Would they like it if they had to go through the experience? I really don’t think so! Many of them looked like they weren’t even born yet when this place was once a residential school.⁸²

Another two decades on, the student body remains in an amnesic condition about the history of residential schools, despite having one on their campus.⁸³ Classes are held in rooms carved out of the old dormitories, faculty look out through office windows that were once the windows of infirmaries or staff bedrooms. The motif has pervaded the campus, but its significance has been lost. If we consider the building as the place that houses archives as well as an archive itself, we can see how it contributes to forgetting. According to Derrida,

the dwelling, this place where [archives] dwell permanently, marks this institutional passage from the private to the public, which does not always mean from the secret to the nonsecret.⁸⁴

The privacy of the IRS has yielded to the publicness of the contemporary universities, but its memory retains the patina of secrecy, potentiality, latency, virtuality. But this virtual past co-exists with the actual present, and



5.16 Classroom, Algoma University, 2013



5.17 Corridor, Algoma University, 2013

in various ways we bring it into being, in the process annulling the virtual “in order to reemerge as an actual that thereby produces its own virtualities.”⁸⁵ This can apply to both time and space, and is the reason why the archive, in its various guises, is always a question of the future.

Building as Archive: Parallel Collective Memories

The archive should challenge the future not only by reminding, but by providing the material from which the future emerges and through which it is actualized. The Shingwauk site could be interpreted as the result of a dialectical relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous elements, perpetually in conflict; it is a complicated place layered with settler appropriation and forgetting, but also Indigenous tradition and agency. But at any moment it is, like any IRS site, like any place, in the process of becoming, and is many things at once. Architecture plays only a small part in its story, but it can also become a catalyst for evolving relationships, which themselves create spaces.

At the Shingwauk Gathering and Conference, Jonathan Dewar, the director of the SRSC, led a session on survivor-led initiatives to transform the building. The key issues under discussion were how to better recognize survivors within the structure, as well as the lack of awareness around the history of Shingwauk in the contemporary context of Algoma University and its diverse student population. A relatively short conversation generated a multitude of suggestions, ranging from “getting stuff out of the archives and onto the walls”⁸⁶ to incorporating education about the IRS system into the orientation for incoming students. One survivor suggested a signage system that would point users of the building to where the dormitories, classrooms, and other spaces of the IRS used to be. Others suggested ways of honouring survivors such as hosting a “survivor in residence.” Another idea was to create reconstructions of parts of the former residential school, but not all were in favour of this approach.

These strategies have an inherent memorial function, but they are also ways of reaching out across space and time to impart the troubled memory of the residential schools to a public still largely ignorant of it. In 2008, only one third of Canadians was “familiar with the issue of Native people and residential schools” and only 5 percent were “very familiar.”⁸⁷ Much of the rhetoric calling for “moving on” from the residential schools may have to do with the idea, as Huyssen puts it, that

the past cannot give us what the future has failed to deliver. . . . Memory, after all, can be no substitute for justice, and justice itself will inevitably be entangled in the unreliability of memory.⁸⁸

It is necessary, proponents of this approach may claim, for Indigenous peoples to focus on the future and not on the past in order to overcome the harm done by the IRS. But as Huyssen himself notes in the same text, “memory discourses are absolutely essential to imagine the future,”⁸⁹ especially, I would argue, when such an enormous rift has developed between peoples. And whereas memory may be no substitute for justice, the two must coexist, since forgetting is no substitute for justice either. As Derrida notes,

There is no political power without control of the archive, if not of memory. Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and the access to the archive, its constitution, and its interpretation.⁹⁰

This participation includes access by those who have been oppressed, but also access to the truth by oppressors, bystanders, and allies alike. This has been the aim of the “truth” component of the TRC, which is essential in order to bring into being reconciliation. And Casey writes that when we engage in commemorative activity, “representation *cedes place to participation*.”⁹¹ This was my own experience when I participated in the opening ceremony of the Gathering, and in many other encounters during my research for this thesis. In many ways, this is just a beginning, a tentative document of something yet to come:

For a Western philosophical mind, the single most striking aspect of participation is its freedom from the constraints of contradiction. Thanks to participation, things can be simultaneously themselves and *not* themselves, here and also there, past as well as present.⁹²

One survivor who spoke at the Shingwauk Gathering and Conference in 2013 referred to Shingwauk Hall as being her home, citing the many years she had spent there as a child. Even in this we can sense that Shingwauk is not a single space but a series of evolving spaces, a childhood home, a university, a historical site, a site of trauma, a place of latent reconciliation, forgetting, or movement:

What makes ... *lieux de mémoire* is precisely that by which they escape from history. In this sense, the *lieu de mémoire* is a double: a site of excess closed upon itself, concentrated in its own name, but also forever open to the full range of its possible significations.⁹³

The purpose of exploring these significations would not be to attempt to subsume them into a cohesive whole but, rather, to recognize the past in the present and continue to bring about the future through this recognition—an openness to a future that is not predetermined, but nevertheless born out of the past. For Shingwauk and the Anishinaabeg, the teaching wigwam was never about forgetting their ways or becoming English, and this continues to be expressed in the present, with the development of Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig as a distinct institution that is related in different ways to the former residential school, Algoma University, and Shingwauk's original vision.⁹⁴



5.18 Towards the St. Mary's River, 2013

Notes

1. Louis Lowry, *The Giver* (New York: Yearling, 1993), 77-78.
2. J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 6.
3. Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History," *Representations* 26 (Spring 1989), 12.
4. Pierre Nora, "Reasons for the Current Upsurge in Memory," in *The Collective Memory Reader*, ed. Jeffrey K. Olick et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 439-40.
5. Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 12.
6. Professor Don Jackson, interview by author, Algoma University, August 6, 2013.
7. Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 24.
8. Jean L. Manore, "A Vision of Trust: The Legal, Moral and Spiritual Foundations of Shingwauk Hall," *Native Studies Review* 9, no. 2 (1993-1994): 4.
9. E.F. Wilson, *Our Indians in a New Light* (Halifax, NS: Holloway Bros., Printers, 1890), 9-10.
10. Algoma University College Library, Shingwauk Project Documents, deeds to Shingwauk Property, Instrument #TP263, quoted in Manore, "A Vision of Trust," 7.
11. E.F. Wilson, *Missionary Work among the Ojibeway Indians* (London: SPCK, 1886), 146f, quoted in *ibid.*, 7.
12. Manore, "A Vision of Trust," 7.
13. *Ibid.*
14. The girls' school was located on Great Northern Road. E.F. Wilson, "1877," in *His Illustrated Family Journal 1868-1908*, accessed August 22, 2013, <http://saltspringarchives.com/wilson/Journal/pages/Wilson049.htm>.
15. Government of Canada, *Report of the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs* (hereafter Annual Report), 1877, 83; 164.
16. Annual Report, 1891, 21.
17. Annual Report, 1880, 24.

18. Annual Report, 1882, 230.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association, "Bishop Fauquier Memorial Chapel & Cemetery Restoration Campaigns," accessed October 15, 2014, <http://childrenofshingwauk.ca/bishop-fauquier-memorial-chapel-cemetery/bfmcc-restoration-campaigns>.
22. Wilson lists "flooring, wainscots, sashes, doors, furniture, etc." as products of the factory. Annual Report, 1889, Part I, 21.
23. Annual Report, 1890, 19.
24. Government of Canada, *Sessional Papers of the Dominion of Canada* 25, no.10 (Ottawa: S.E. Dawson, 1892), 21, <https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=LZ45AQAAMAAJ&rdid=book-LZ45AQAAMAAJ&rdot=1>.
25. Annual Report, 1888, 20.
26. David A. Nock, "WILSON, EDWARD FRANCIS," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 14, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed November 21, 2014, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/wilson_edward_francis_14E.html.
27. See, for example, his report on the Shingwauk Home in the Annual Report, 1888, 21.
28. Annual Report, 1890, 19.
29. Don Jackson, interview.
30. Manore, "A Vision of Trust," 12.
31. Ibid.
32. NAC, RG 10, Vol. 6211, file 469-1, pt. 3, letter, Robert Abraham to D.C. Scott, 11 March 1919, cited in *ibid.*, 13.
33. N.A.C. RG 10, Vol. 6730, File 160-2 (1-3), MR C 8092, Rev. T. Westgate to Secretary, 29 October 1931, quoted in John S. Milloy, *"A National Crime": The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879 to 1986* (Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press, 1999), 104.
34. The Canadian Press, "Truth and Reconciliation: nearly 4 years of hearings wrap," *CBC News*, March 30, 2014, accessed October 30, 2014, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/truth-and-reconciliation-nearly-4-years-of-hearings-wrap-1.2591925>.
35. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, "Our Mandate," accessed October 30, 2014, <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=7>.

36. University of Manitoba, "Historic Agreement Signed on National Aboriginal Day," last modified June 21, 2013, <http://umanitoba.ca/news/blogs/blog/2013/06/21/historic-agreement-signed-on-national-aboriginal-day/>.
37. Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 33-34.
38. Wulf Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies," *History and Theory* 41 (May 2002): 182. With reference to Jan Assmann, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," *New German Critique* 65 (1995): 132. Emphasis mine.
39. "Insofar as it is archivable, an event is always *archiving*: an event is an archiving act even if there may not be a 'proper' archive and even if the archive of an event, as its interpretation, must always remain open." Eric Prenowitz, "Right on [à mème]: Translator's Note," in *Archive Fever*, 111.
40. Derrida, *Archive Fever*, 11.
41. Nora, "Between Memory and History," 12.
42. Derrida, *Archive Fever*, 36.
43. "Work Will Be Hastened on New Shingwauk Home," *The Globe*, July 23, 1930, 14.
44. Algoma University, "About the Arthur A. Wishart Library," accessed December 1, 2014, <http://library.algomau.ca/main/?q=node/278>.
45. "Sault Indian Home Near Completion," *The Globe*, May 18, 1935, 3.
46. Robert G. Hill, "Wilks, Thomas Raybould" in *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800 – 1950*, accessed October 15, 2014, <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/386>.
47. Annual Report, 1936, 30.
48. Manore, "A Vision of Trust," 13.
49. Annual Report, 1937, 163.
50. Don Jackson, interview.
51. Algoma District School Board, "Anna McCrea Public School Family Handbook," accessed November 23, 2014, [http://www.adsb.on.ca/sites/Schools/AMC/School%20Code%20of%20Conduct/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20family%20handbook%20--2014%20-%202015%20%20school%20year\[1\].pdf](http://www.adsb.on.ca/sites/Schools/AMC/School%20Code%20of%20Conduct/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20family%20handbook%20--2014%20-%202015%20%20school%20year[1].pdf).
52. Annual Report, 1960, 56.
53. Library and Archives Canada, RG10, accession number 1999-01431-6, box 205, file number 493/6-1-001, volume 7, letter from Mrs. Nan Rajnovich to R.F. Davey, Director, Education, Indian Affairs Branch, July 12, 1966.

54. See Phil Fontaine, interview by Barbara Frum, *The Journal*, CBC, 7:30, October 30, 1990, <http://www.cbc.ca/archives/categories/politics/parties-leaders/phil-fontaine-native-diplomat-and-dealmaker/shocking-testimony-of-sexual-abuse.html>, and Phil Fontaine, “We Are All Born Innocent,” interview by Sandra Bruderer and Linda Jaine, in *Residential Schools: The Stolen Years*, ed. Linda Jaine (Saskatoon: Extension Division Press, University of Saskatchewan, 1995), 43.

55. These were mainly residences for students attending non-segregated schools. Those still operating after 1990 included Poplar Hill and Stirland Lake High School/Wahbon Bay Academy, both in Ontario and closed in 1991, Akaitcho Hall in Yellowknife (closed 1994) and Grollier Hall in Inuvik (closed 1996) in the Northwest Territories, and Gordon’s IRS in Punnichy, Saskatchewan (closed 1996). Qu’Appelle IRS became White Calf Collegiate in 1973 and was operated by the Star Blanket First Nation until 1998. See Anna Brace, “Heritage Alternatives at Sites of Trauma: Examples of the Indian Residential Schools of Canada” (master’s thesis, University of York (UK), 2012). For a substantial list of closure dates, refer to 61-77.

56. See Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (hereafter RCAP), *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, 5 volumes (Ottawa: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). Chapter 10 (333-409) of vol. 1 deals with residential schools. Also available at http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/webarchives/20071115053257/http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/sgmm_e.html.

57. RCAP, *Looking Forward, Looking Back*, vol. 1, *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (Ottawa: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996), 33.

58. Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 27.

59. See Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return: Cosmos and History*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper, 1959).

60. “Although it would be wrong to draw hard and fast distinctions in this area, we have found that many Aboriginal people tend to take a cyclic perspective, while the linear approach is more common in the larger Canadian society.” RCAP, *Looking Forward*, 35.

61. “Absolute space” is David Harvey’s term and “conceived space” is Henri Lefebvre’s. See David Harvey, “Space as a Key Word,” paper for Marx and Philosophy Conference, Institute of Education, London, May 29, 2004, 2, <http://www.interactions.org/sites/default/files/space-as-key-word-david-harvey.pdf>, and Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 38-40.

62. Harvey, “Space as a Key Word,” 4.

63. Ibid.

64. RCAP, *Looking Forward*, 35.

65. Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1988), 59, quoted in Elizabeth Grosz, "The Future of Space: Toward an Architecture of Invention," in *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001), 122.
66. Grosz, "The Future of Space," 124.
67. *Ibid.*, 123.
68. *Ibid.*, 117-18.
69. David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), cited in Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 12.
70. Grosz, "The Future of Space," 119-20.
71. *Ibid.*, 112.
72. *Ibid.*, 130.
73. Jean Chrétien, quoted in Manore, "A Vision of Trust," 14-15.
74. Don Jackson, interview, and "From Teaching Wigwam to Shingwauk University: Algoma University College and the Shingwauk Trust," in The Shingwauk Project, *From Teaching Wigwam to Shingwauk University: Algoma University College Founders' Day 1992* (Sault Ste. Marie, ON: The Shingwauk Project, 1992), 27.
75. *Ibid.*, 28. These included increased co-operation and the establishment of a Policy on First Nations/Canadian Cross-Cultural Development, increased Indigenous representation on the College's Board of Governors, new academic courses, and the encouragement of Indigenous staff and students to work and study at the College.
76. Chris Tossel, interview by author, September 6, 2013.
77. "From Teaching Wigwam to Shingwauk University," 27.
78. The theme of the most recent Shingwauk Gathering and Conference, in 2014, was "Art and the Archive."
79. Chris Tossel, interview.
80. Mark Girouard, *Elizabethan Architecture: Its Rise and Fall, 1540-1640* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 71.
81. Dr. Richard Myers, Algoma University President, quoted in Rick McGee, "Algoma University's Newest Addition," *Algoma U Today Magazine*, Spring/Summer 2013, 18, accessed December 1, 2014, http://www.algomau.ca/media/styleassets/pdf/alumni_mag_spring_summer_13.pdf.

82. Tom Wassaykeesic, "Residential School: A Personal Perspective," in *Residential Schools: The Stolen Years*, ed. Linda Jaine (Saskatoon: Extension Division Press, University of Saskatchewan, 1995), 138.

83. Don Jackson, interview.

84. Derrida, *Archive Fever*, 2.

85. Grosz, "The Future of Space," 129.

86. When I visited the building, the corridors around the SRSC had exhibits generated from archival holdings and parts of Shingwauk Hall also had historical materials on display. What appeared to be called for was perhaps a dedicated, central space in which the archives could play a greater role in the everyday life of the institution, to moving "from the secret to the nonsecret."

87. This figure comes from a survey conducted by research firm Environics, cited in Chris Benjamin, *Indian School Road: Legacies of the Shubenacadie Residential School* (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 2014), X. It is possible that awareness has increased following the government's Statement of Apology and the TRC's many years of work.

88. Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 27-28.

89. *Ibid.*, 6.

90. Derrida, *Archive Fever*, 4.

91. Edward S. Casey, *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 200), 251. Emphasis original.

92. *Ibid.*, 248.

93. Nora, "Between Memory and History," 23-24.

94. Shingwauk Kinooomaage Gamig, "The Shingwauk & Algoma U Covenant," accessed December 1, 2014, <http://www.shingwauku.ca/about-us/school/the-covent>.

The Americas were called the New World some centuries ago. There was nothing new about it, I can assure you. It was simply an extension of the Old. A larger territory for the same greedy governments to exploit. The new is yet to be born. You are sitting in the very womb where the embryo is taking shape.¹

ZULFIKAR GHOSE, *The Triple Mirror of the Self*

As nonindigenous scholars seeking a dialogue with indigenous scholars, we ... must construct stories that are embedded in the landscapes through which we travel. These will be dialogical counternarratives, stories of resistance, of struggle, of hope, stories that create spaces.²

NORMAN K. DENZIN and YVONNA S. LINCOLN,
“Critical Methodologies and Indigenous Inquiry”

The truth about stories is that that's all we are.³

THOMAS KING,
The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative

Mohawk, Revised: A Reflection on (Re)Making Space

In concluding this thesis, I wish not to conclude, but to open up possibilities for divergence from what I have presented, what the spaces of residential schools have meant. At the four sites I have addressed, four waterways move towards and away from them: the Mohawk Canal, Birdtail Creek, the Assiniboine and St. Mary's Rivers. They flow on their distinct paths and eventually, after unfathomable distances and endless time, join, only to separate once more: cyclical and linear.

These sites, this thesis, was filled with birds, those trapped in old residential schools, but also those who made their nests in abandoned ones, like the ones Richard Wagamese's protagonist, Saul Indian Horse, encounters after surviving and returning to his old residential school, hearing "the flutter . . . from within and the coo of pigeons in the eaves."⁴ Or, the ones hanging back from piles of bricks that were once a residential school, sweetening the air with their songs. Chief Shingwauk's signature was a beautiful crane symbol, declarative of his belonging to the crane clan.⁵ The emblem of Algoma University is the thunderbird, whose powerful wings create thunder and awaken the wind. Birds embody freedom and power, but they can also be signifiers of danger or change, like canaries in a coal mine.⁶

Since 1972, the Six Nations of the Grand River and other First Nations have reused the buildings of the former Mohawk Institute to house the Woodland Cultural Centre (WCC). Originally developed by the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians, the WCC had nine member communities when it was established; currently, the support communities are the Six Nations of the Grand River, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, and Wahta Mohawks. This reduction is due largely to distance and the development of cultural centres in other areas to address distinctive cultures and languages.⁷

The WCC offers programming focused on language, education, and the arts, and comprises a museum, located in the transformed 1959 classroom building, and a library and archive, housed within the Mohawk Institute of 1904. The museum holds over 35,000 artifacts ranging from historical and archaeological material to contemporary art.⁸ According to a staff member, “Woodland is here to present an accurate image of First Nations people as we understand it. In that image, we want to highlight the culture, history, the arts, but all from our perspective.”⁹ This aim is complicated by the WCC’s location at the former Mohawk Institute site, because “the meaning of the space has not fully transitioned in everyone’s minds.”¹⁰ It is, like the Shingwauk site, many layered spaces existing concurrently. Tours of the building are given regularly, often by survivors, who emphasize what the building was like as a residential school. Parts of it are also rented out to Indigenous-owned businesses.

The Mohawk Institute is thus already transformed, past coexisting with present, expanding into the future. The latest changes at this site came when, in the fall of 2013, a community consultation was organized by staff to determine the future of the building, which is in need of extensive repairs. At the end of November 2013, they announced that, based on the collected feedback, the building will be preserved and repaired.¹¹ Out of 500 comments, only seven respondents preferred that the building should be demolished.¹² Although the building symbolizes indescribable pain for some survivors, the majority believe it should be upheld as evidence of oppressive government doctrines, whose consequences can still be felt today.

One result of this decision-making process was the launch in March 2014 of a campaign called “Save the Evidence,” intended to raise funds for renovations to the building.¹³ This campaign identifies the lack of funds, which has plagued the WCC since its inception, as a significant impediment to the realization of the transformation. The organization has managed the formidable task of developing the cultural centre despite this issue, but the physical infrastructure of the former residential school building requires massive investment that can no longer be delayed.

One possibility to consider as an augmentation to the WCC's independent fundraising is the designation of the WCC/Mohawk Institute as a National Historic Site (NHS). This existing system incorporates non-federally owned sites, which are eligible to apply for funding, although financial support is not guaranteed by such a designation.¹⁴ For example, the nearby Mohawk Chapel is designated a NHS and is not dependent on federal funding; however, it is likely that the exposure from its federal designation is of benefit to the Chapel, increasing its visibility and thereby its income. The designation of the WCC/Mohawk Institute as a NHS would itself be historic, as no IRS is so recognized despite the national character of the system.

Undeniably, such a process of designation would be fraught with the power dynamics associated with dealing with a federal entity, a problem demonstrated by the case of the St. Eugene IRS in Cranbrook, British Columbia. In 1996, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC), which is in charge of designating sites, events, and persons of "national historic significance," considered the "possible national significance" of the former Catholic-run St. Eugene.¹⁵ The owners of the building, the Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Tribal Council, had requested a designation of the site, along with financial assistance through the cost-sharing program mentioned above. The application was eventually rejected because the intended redevelopment of the school into a resort would alter it too drastically; the impending release of the report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples made the government reticent about commemorating a place that could prove to be embarrassing; and the site did not satisfy any other criteria established in 1988 by the HSMBC for schools of "national significance."¹⁶ The decision not to acknowledge the St. Eugene IRS as a nationally significant site, can, among other reasons, be traced to a paradigm elaborated by Elizabeth Grosz:

Architecture has thought time, with notable exceptions, through history rather than through duration, as that to be preserved, as that which somehow or provisionally overcomes time by transcending or freezing it.¹⁷

The HSMBC's decision might have been different if made today with increased awareness of the incredible impact IRS had on Indigenous peoples, although the proposed changes to the site might still have rendered it unpalatable to the Board. Nevertheless, Ktunaxa/Kinbasket successfully transformed the St. Eugene IRS into the St. Eugene Golf Resort & Casino in 2003, with government funding obtained through other channels. The controversy of this conversion is based largely on the seeming incongruity of redeveloping a place of trauma into a space of leisure and the attendant invisibility of the site's history. Yet the memory of the place remains, bringing forth the future, as the Ktunaxa elaborate on the St. Eugene website:

To our knowledge, the St. Eugene Mission is the only project in Canada where a First Nation has decided to turn the icon of an often sad period of its history into a powerful economic engine by restoring an old Indian Residential school into an international destination Resort for future generations to enjoy.¹⁸

The current heritage system is still largely based on fixity and accepted narratives. Rather than letting this system dictate what is of legitimate historical value and thus worthy of commemoration, I argue that this system should rid itself of its preconceived notions and allow itself to be altered based on the reality of the ongoing trauma of the IRS, so easily dismissed in mainstream settler society. As John Ralston Saul suggests by way of critiquing the nationalist sentiment that began around Confederation, "perhaps *the other* we denied and feared was actually the possibility of becoming something more complex, an integral part of that *other*."¹⁹

The WCC and its supporting communities may or may not be interested in pursuing the route of conventional heritage recognition in their development of a "living, tactile' museum and interpretation centre."²⁰ But the ways of thinking that accompany the transformation of the Mohawk Institute, the reimagining of its space in order to recreate its memory, whether conventional recognition is sought or not, will surely provide valuable lessons to the consideration of these difficult places, a tentative response to some of the relevant questions posed by Grosz regarding transformations of space and architecture:



6.1 Three-dimensional model of the Mohawk Institute, formerly on the “Where are the Children?” website (<http://www.wherearethekids.ca/>)

How ... can space function differently from the ways in which it has always functioned? What are the possibilities of inhabiting otherwise? Of being extended otherwise? Of living relations of nearness and farness differently?²¹

These questions are also being explored by way of virtual space, proposed as a way of engaging with the IRS in light of the inaccessibility and continued disappearance of extant structures. A video of a three-dimensional model of the Mohawk Institute, for instance, existed on the website for “Where are the Children?,” a physical and virtual exhibition on residential schools with archival and oral history components, produced by the Legacy of Hope Foundation.²² The video appears to have been taken down from the website, but showed exterior and interior scenes of the school along with testimony from survivors (6.1). The “Embodying Empathy” project by the English Media Lab at the University of Manitoba is similar in that it creates a virtual space to be filled with interactive objects and testimony (6.2). The creators of the project offer some pertinent questions that inform their work:



6.2 “Embodying Emphathy” (<http://embodyingemphathy.ca/>)

Do new forms of digital media and memory offer opportunities for better connecting all Canadians to their history? How might computer-generated virtual realities serve to facilitate the representation of residential schools, and thereby produce historical memory and empathetic connections capable of provoking in audiences a commitment to addressing Canada’s unsavory past?²³

Neither the Mohawk Institute model nor the “Embodying Emphathy” project has focused on rendering “realistic” representations of the schools from an architectural historical perspective but, one could easily argue, that is not their purpose. Although I don’t have an answer, a question deriving from this thesis would be whether there is a role for conventional architectural history to play in these types of depictions. Grosz calls the virtual “the realm of productivity, of functioning otherwise than its plan or blueprint,”²⁴ and in this sense digital modes of representation offer possibilities of addressing some of the issues of the invisibility of the IRS. Furthermore, in partial answer to the question I posed in the Introduction of whether architecture, as design and construction, has a role to play in addressing IRS sites, I would argue that it does in the sense of “practice,” and in being malleable enough to adjust to conditions it has not encountered before.

I have titled this conclusion “a reflection on (re)making space” because I wish to draw attention to the various ways in which “(re)making space” is manifest at the WCC/Mohawk Institute. Making space is the task of settler peoples: the space of listening and understanding rather than projecting, of not drowning out Indigenous voices. Remaking space is the right of Indigenous communities to determine for themselves how to remember, and how to bring their own future into being. A continual acknowledgment of the past is not a negation of the future but, rather, a way to call it forth. For example, the Two Row Wampum Treaty is an agreement made between the Haudenosaunee (then Five Nations of the Iroquois) and representatives of the Dutch government in 1613, and provides a living model for peaceful relations between Indigenous and settler peoples. The Treaty is represented by a wampum (shell bead) belt, with two rows of purple beads against a white background, the two rows symbolizing the courses of a Haudenosaunee canoe and a European ship. Side by side, they navigate the white river of peace and friendship, together but not interfering with one another.

Luce Irigaray, the Belgian-born French feminist philosopher, states that “to concern oneself in the present about the future certainly does not consist in programming it in advance but in trying to bring it into existence.”²⁵ So it is that I conclude, without really concluding, perhaps with many more questions than I started with. I hope that with this thesis, I have contributed to opening up a space and continuing a process, in the belief that to acknowledge the difficult past of the IRS, the resilience of survivors and their communities, is the only way into the future.

Notes

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3. Thomas King, *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 2003), 2.
4. Richard Wagamese, *Indian Horse* (Madeira Park, BC: Douglas & McIntyre, 2012), 195.
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6. I thank my thesis committee member, Dr. William Woodworth, for this observation.
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8. Woodland Cultural Centre, "Museum," accessed November 19, 2014, <http://www.woodland-centre.on.ca/museum>.
9. WCC staff member, quoted in Christina Cecelia Hovey, "Planning for the Memorialisation of the Indian Residential School System: A Case Study of the Woodland Cultural Centre, Brantford, Ontario" (master's thesis, Queen's University, 2012), 65.
10. Hovey, "Planning for the Memorialisation," 64.
11. Woodland Cultural Centre, "The Former Mohawk Institute Residential School Will be Saved!" November 29, 2013, <http://www.woodland-centre.on.ca/former-mohawk-institute-residential-school-will-be-saved>.
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15. Dana Johnson, "Issue Analysis: St Eugene Indian Residential School, Cranbrook, British Columbia" (Gatineau, QC: Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, 1996), 575. I thank Dr. Geoffrey Carr for forwarding this and related documents to me.
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23. English Media Lab, "Projects," accessed November 15, 2014, <http://embodyingempathy.ca/projects.html>.
24. Grosz, "The Future of Space," 130.
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