

Warm Valley Historical Project
Notes on interview with Edgar St. Clair and Pansy St. Clair
Interviewed by Sharon Kahin and Zedora Enos
June 30, 1991

SK: These are notes taken from an interview on June 30, 1991 for the Warm Valley Historical Project. The interviewers were Zedora Enos and Sharon Kahin.

Edgar St. Clair went to a day school at Ft. Washakie which was called... Which was the Ft. Washakie Day School. There were about 20 kids, one room school house and he went to school with the Agency kids.

ZE: He lived on North Fork Road.

SK: On North Fork Road at that time? And then he was saying that there were kids that lived on the River behind the flour mill? That there were a group of kids there that also went to the Agency School?

ZE: Yes.

SK: Right, OK. And then he said the Countryman School, and there's only a foundation left, was... do you want to describe where it was in relation to Frank Enos?

ZE: It's also on North Fork Road... about a quarter of a mile from Frank Enos, Senior's home, just right around the turn up above his house.

SK: And the other day school was right at Wind River. It was called the Wind River School. And the other day school was Sage Creek. Do you remember where that was located?

ZE: [no?]

SK: OK, we were also talking then about discipline at the government boarding school and Pansy St. Clair—told us of an incident that apparently was well known, about where one child was beaten so severely for discipline problems that he actually died in the dungeon or the cellar where they to put both boys and girls for discipline problems and she spoke of her parents telling her that they used a kind of a chain chord for disciplining children and Edgar St. Clair mentioned that oh yes, they used to get horse whipped quite a lot. We also discussed with him the changing of Indian names to English names and they told us that very often they would take an Indian name, a Shoshone name, and just used the last syllable of it to shorten it an make it... easier for people to pronounce... Do you want to? OK tell about it.

ZE: One name that she used as an example was Numbedo[?] and they used then Ahoa and it evidently was spelled in Indian and they pronounced it A-H-O-A, I believe.

SK: Ahoa, and then she also spoke with one boy who, when he had the Shoshone name of Bear and...what did they do with that name?

ZE: He just had the Indian name of bear and they couldn't figure [it] out, they just gave him the English name of Ernest and that was the brother.

SK: That was her brother?

ZE: Uh-huh.

SK: OK. And she said that sometimes she thought that they let the children pick what ever name... English name, they wanted and sometimes they just assigned them the English name. But she said that that was the first thing that happened when they went to school, was they were given the English name.

ZE: For discipline, they put them through a paddle line.

SK: Yeah.

ZE: The older boys would discipline the younger ones.

SK: Was that at the government school?

ZE: Uh-huh. That was at the government school. And he said they used the same method at Haskell, the Indian school that he went to.

SK: They also used it at St. Michael's. He was saying that sometimes, his paddle line had up to thirty boys in it. But it wasn't clear from the conversation that the paddle line had been used at the government school when this student was killed by the beating.

ZE: And then, if anybody died at that school, they had their own cemetery.

SK: At the government school?

ZE: At the government school.

SK: Yeah, they buried them right there.

ZE: So where is it at now?

SK: I don't know.

ZE: Well, that was the conversation that one of the ladies had one day was that some

of those houses that were built were built right on the cemetery, the school cemetery. The new housing across from the school.

SK: Oh, really? Across the highway from the school?

ZE: Uh-huh.

SK: It was built on the school cemetery?

ZE: Uh-huh.

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