COOK CHRISTIAN TRAINING SCHOOL

Interdenominational Christian Training Center for Indians

4025 North 2nd Street • Phoenix, Arizona, 85012
Telephone AMherst 5-3378

June 1964

Editor W. H. Robertson
Yakima Herald Republic
Yakima, Washington

Dear Mr. Robertson:

Here is a group of human interest stories as intriguing and interesting as any we have ever written.

They are straight from the life of our Indian people and true in every detail.

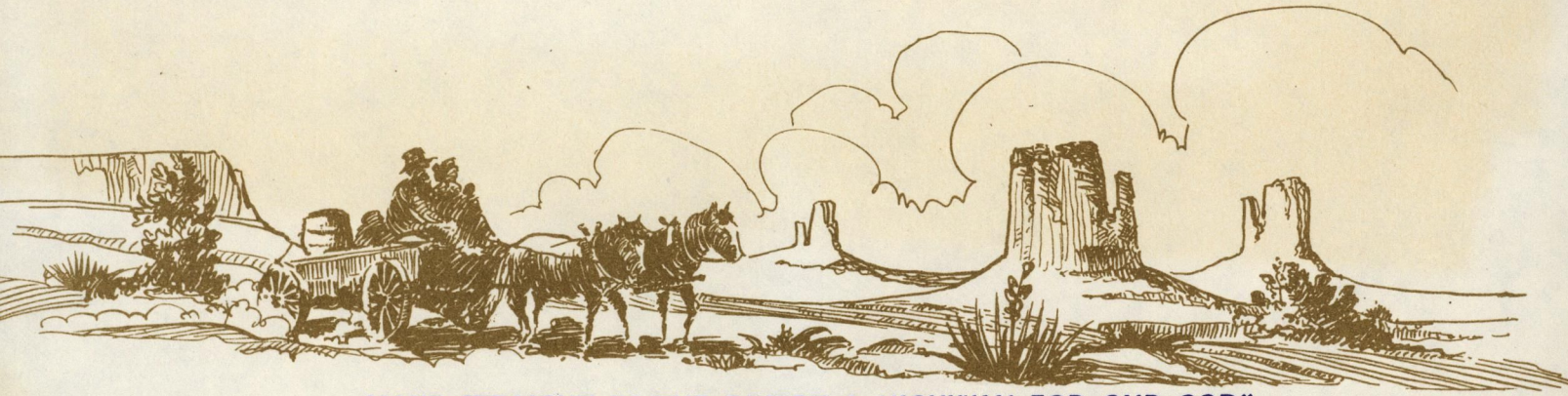
Look them over and use them if you can. There is no obligation, of course.

Cordially yours,

Geo W Smart

GWS:mt
Enclosures

George W. Smart, President
Cook Christian Training School



"MAKE STRAIGHT IN THE DESERT A HIGHWAY FOR OUR GOD"

[Enclosure. 1964, June, Smart]

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HE CRASHED THE WHITE HOUSE GATE

"Calvin, can I come in?" Horace Williams, full-blood Pima Indian and a graduate of Cook Christian Training School for Indians in Phoenix, Arizona, was standing outside the White House door of President Calvin Coolidge's office, knocking, knocking. "Calvin, this is Horace. Can I come in?" Horace did not think he was crashing a gate, or interrupting a very busy man. He just did as he might have done back home on his Arizona desert when he had a matter to discuss with the Government Indian Agent. So, naively, he called out, "Calvin, it's Horace. Can I come in?"

He needed to see the Chief Executive because he had been sent to Washington on urgent business. As was so often the case when Indian affairs were on the docket, Congress was dawdling over Senate Bill 966. But, meanwhile, the Pimas' crops were drying up, their cattle shrivelling for lack of water and their children going on short food rations, -- all because Caucasians on the upper reaches of the Gila River were taking most of the life-giving water on which the Pimas' agriculture and livlihood depended. So Horace Williams was in Washington to help lobby through a bill which would rectify the situation.

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But apparently it took white people a long time to pass a bill in both House and Senate, especially if it merely concerned Indians. Usually very patient, the Indian was frustrated by Congressional stalling over what seemed a very simple matter. That Gila River water had belonged to the Pima tribe for centuries; it was almost their life blood. Without it, their food and livdihood were gone. And yet, Caucasians upstream were brazenly channelling it off for their own use. So why should not the Great White Father and his government in Washington appropriate funds, build a strong dam, and store water in the rainy season so there would be enough water to irrigate the fields of both Indians and Caucasians? It sounded so simple, so easy, so just and right. But because it was only Indian business, Congress gave attention to everything else, except Senate Bill 966.

Finally the Pimas sent Horace Williams to help Dr. Dirk Lay, their missionary, who was working to secure a return of the Indians' irrigation water, to get action. A respected and influential Indian preacher of the Gospel, who secured his education at Cook Christian Training School in Phoenix, Horace Williams feared the face of no man. But he observed the proprieties, he had his credentials, he asked for an appointment, he arrived on time at the President's door. A knock, a call: "Calvin, it's Horace. Can I come in?" And then the reply from a man as simple

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homey, and forthright as Williams himself: "All right, Horace, come on in!" And man to man, the humble Indian preacher and the President of the United States sat down and discussed the problem of the Gila River water.

History does not record the inner feelings of President Coolidge at this unusual encounter. To the Cook School graduate, however, the simple, direct approach, the seeming familiarity appeared perfectly natural and proper, for does not the Constitution assert that we are all created equal? History does record that Coolidge and Williams met on a basis of their common humanity and citizenship, had their conference and came to a meeting of minds. The President urged action; when the fate of the bill was in doubt, he laid it on the line: "I very much want that bill passed today." It was.

The Coolidge Dam on the Gila River was built. The water began to flow into Pima ditches again and onto Pima fields. A source of friction and ill-will was removed. And once again, the worth of a graduate and the importance of Cook Christian Training School's program of education for Indian Americans was demonstrated. Over on the Pima Reservation there was for many years a picture hanging on the wall of a little adobe house, -- the autographed photo of Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States.

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FOR RELEASE AT WILL

"JUST ANOTHER INDIAN"

The fast freight train high-balled across the Nebraska prairies, roared over a bridge spanning a tributary of the Big Muddy at 60 miles per hour. It gave a low, moaning, warning whistle when it neared a grade crossing, and then a sharper "Hoo-oo hoo-oo hu-hoo-oo-oo" as it slowed down for the approach to a sleepy little town on the Winnebago Indian Reservation.

Suddenly a wild, piercing shriek from the whistle, the shrill screech of brakes hastily set, smoke and sparks from sand on the rails as the engineer brought his heavy train to an abrupt stop. But alas, too late! Beside the track lay the mangled, bleeding body of a man dead. Torso and limbs were torn apart; the head was never found. "Perhaps he can be identified by his finger prints," someone hopefully remarked when two severed hands were found. In a drunken stupor, acquired in a white man's saloon, he had wandered onto the railroad right of way and was killed by the rushing train.

The coroner came to gather up the remains and put them in a bag. A policeman was there to gather information and make an official report. A glance, a shrug of the shoulders. "Humph! Just another Indian," was the only eulogy which was spoken.

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Louis LaRose, a 19-year-old young Winnebago Indian, was there too. He had heard the shrill whistling, the grinding brakes. With nothing better to do, and driven by curiosity, he hurried down the tracks to the stalled train. He saw and heard all that was happening. "Just another Indian!" The words of the officer seared themselves into his mind and heart. Nauseated, agitated, but perhaps most of all humiliated by the callous remark, he turned quickly and left the scene.

But those searing words would not leave Louis' mind. "Just another Indian!" Was that what Causasians thought of him? If some accident befell him, would that be his epitaph? He was driven to take stock of himself. On occasion he too had imbibed too much liquor. He had broken the laws of both man and God. Because his mother was a Christian, he knew the inevitable penalty. But like most sons, his father was his model and he had followed his father's trail.

Now he did some very serious thinking. In what direction was he headed? What was his goal in life? What did he want to make of himself? The answers were slow in coming, but he knew that education was a necessary path to achievement in any field. He learned of Cook Christian Training School for Indians in Phoenix, Arizona, where an Indian of almost any degree of academic attainment could secure help in preparing himself to better serve God and man. Persuaded by a

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Reformed Church missionary on the Winnebago field, Rev. Wilbur De Cora, Louis entered Cook Christian Training School in the fall of 1961.

He was born at Winnebago, Nebraska, in 1942, but attended school for eight years in Utah. Back in Nebraska once more, he had three years in Winnebago High School, graduating in 1960. Louis was far from lazy, -- he was merely aimless. During two summers and part of the year following high school graduation, he worked with the cement crew of a road construction company in Iowa and his home state. A good worker, he was assured of summer vacation employment whenever he wanted it.

It was at Cook School that Louis La Rose really found himself -- and God. The fine lives of the staff members, he says, were the decisive influence. When he was speaking of his desire to be a missionary to his own people, someone asked, "What chappenge is there in that?" To which Louis replied without hesitation, "What greater challenge could there be? The greatest challenge in the whole world is to help people prepare to meet their God when their time is up."

In May 1964 Louis La Rose finished his three year course at Cook School and was graduated. A month later, having also studied at Phoenix College while enrolled at Cook, he received the Associate in

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Arts degree. With a newly purchased car, he hurried back to Nebraska for another summer's work on the road construction crew. "But I'm coming back," he said, "for my education is not complete. I'm going for the B.A. degree at Arizona State University. And I hope I can continue to live at Cook School, -- on the new campus which is going to be built in Tempe."

"But after you get that B.A., Louis, what then?"

"I want to be a Christian teacher of Industrial Arts among my own people, the Winnebagos of Nebraska."

No one imagines it will ever be said of Louis La Rose, -- "Just another Indian!"

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[Enclosure. 1964 June, Smart]

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Release at will

A CREE MOTHER'S HEART

"Mother, I'll be graduating from Cook Christian Training School for Indians next May. Can't you come out for the Commencement Exercises? Begin to save your money now!"

Eva Apetagon, from the Cree tribe at Norway House, Manitoba, Canada, was the speaker. She had enrolled in Cook Christian Training School in Phoenix, Arizona, three years earlier, had worked diligently and made a fine record both as a student and as a useful and popular member of the school family. Of course her little mother wanted to see her daughter graduate! But the road from Manitoba to Phoenix was long and full of hidden pitfalls. Even the cost of a Greyhound bus ticket seemed an insuperable obstacle. Still, she would try it, and she began to save her money. Local friends who wanted her to see her daughter graduate helped her too.

Faith and hope worked a miracle and at last Mrs. Apetagon was aboard the bus headed for Arizona. Days and nights went by. There were meal stops, there were bus changes to make, transfers to be effected, baggage to keep track of. Small wonder than if the little Indian lady from the Canadian backwoods got confused and boarded a wrogn bus. She

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realized it all too late when she heard the announcement: "Our next stop is Los Angeles."

As the bus driver helped his load of passengers to alight in the bustling terminal of the great metropolis, he could have had no idea of how hard and fast the heart of the Cree passenger was beating with secret fear. For the quiet, timid woman it had been a tiring and apprehensive trip, full of new and sometimes alarming experiences. Now she was in a huge, strange city where she did not belong, alone and acquainted with no one. What to do now?

As she waited in line to claim her baggage, her beautiful brown eyes cast nervous, timid glances over the throng around her. But the Lord's ministering angel was not far away. She heard another woman, quite near her, saying to a friend, "Yes, I'm taking the next bus out to Phoenix."

With the courage born of desperation, the shy Indian lady from Manitoba spoke up: "Oh, please, do you mind if I follow you? I go to Phoenix too, but I get lost and I speak not very good English." En route she told her new-found friend the purpose of her Phoenix trip, -- to see Eva, her daughter, graduate at Cook Christian Training School. Although she had saved rigorously, when departure time neared, she still lacked many dollars to pay for the round-trip bus fare. Loving friends and neighbors had chipped in to complete the needed funds.

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Finally there came the affectionate reunion with Eva, the sincere welcome by students and staff members, the restful comfort of a guest bedroom, the warmth of Christian fellowship, and the delightful sunshine and orange blossom fragrance of Arizona's Valley of the Sun. "My cup runneth over," she murmured to herself. But there was more to be poured into it -- Eva introduced as class president at the Senior Banquet, Eva leading the last chapel service of the school year, Eva sitting with a rapt look of real beauty while the Cook School choir sang at the Baccalaureate Service.

Then what joy filled Mrs. Apetagon's mother-heart as proudly she watched her daughter in a royal blue cap and gown lead the stately academic procession up the aisle of Phoenix Indian Church. It was the climactic moment for mother and daughter, culminating three years of hard work for both, when Eva received from the hand of the President of Cook School her beribboned diploma certifying she had completed her course with high credit.

It might seem that that was the end, but there was more to come. At Cook School the two highest honors given annually are the Citizenship Awards. Recipients are the young man and young woman recognized as most outstanding in character, school spirit, scholarship and Christian leadership. A closely guarded secret until after diplomas are presented, everyone wonders who the award winners will be.

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"We are very happy," the President was saying, "to present this year's Citizenship Award to Miss Eva Apetagon as being the most outstanding young woman in our school."

"It seemed as if I were frozen to my chair," said Eva afterwards. "I was sure it could not be me! Then someone nudged me and whispered, 'Get up! Get up! It's for you!"

Words of counsel and encouragement from the President, a closing anthem by the choir of Cook Christian Training School, a benediction -- and the graduating class went forth to life and to work. (For Eva, work was a position already awaiting her as Deaconess and Christian worker in a boarding school for Indian children at Norway House.)

And then Mrs. Apetagon's cup really spilled over, -- tears of joy and gratitude that even the supposedly stolid Indian nature could not restrain. To witness her daughter's triumph was worth all the cost and worry and hardship of the long journey from the ice and snow of Manitoba to the sun-drenched desert of Arizona. Cook Christian Training School would always have a warm spot in her heart.

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ONE MAN LOBBY

With troubled mind, Dirk Lay looked out across the dried-up fields in the Gila River bottom land. There was no doubt about it, the crops were dying when only half-grown. His Pima Indian friends would surely lose this year's crop. Sick at heart, he inspected their irrigation ditches. They were dry when at this time of the year they should be carrying a full head of water. He followed the main canal up to its junction with the Gila. In the bed of the river there was a mere trickle of water.

How come? What had gone wrong? For over 200 years those Pima fields had produced beautiful crops, irrigated by water from the Gila River. The Indians had been good farmers, self-respecting citizens. During the Civil War, their fields had supplied food to the Union troops; they had been a life-saving granary to the early settlers. Now those fields were barren, and their owners were becoming day laborers for the whites, or peddlers of wood for fuel. What had happened to cause the tragic change?

Rev. Dirk Lay, graduate of Hastings College and Dubuque Theological Seminary, farmer, self-supporting student and football captain, had come to Sacaton, Arizona, in 1910 to succeed Dr. Charles H. Cook, pioneer

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Presbyterian missionary to the Pima Indian tribe. With unbounded energy, he went up and down and across the reservation on his motorcycle, identifying himself with his Indian friends, learning their viewpoint, studying their problems, and making their cause his own. Dirk Lay, as a farmer's son, had known what it was to endure a drought and to lose a crop. With genuine compassion, he now faced up to the Pimas' diaster and what could be done about it. When he had confirmed the report that white settlers upstream were still draining off the water which by priority of use had for centuries rightfully belonged to the Indians, he resolved to do his utmost to remedy the injustice.

When it was proposed that the Federal Government should build a large dam high up in the mountain to the east, impound the waters of the Gila River and distribute them to both Caucasians and Indians, Dr. Lay saw a way out and gave the plan enthusiastic support. An appropriation from Congress of five and a half million dollars was needed, and to that end the San Carlos Bill was introduced. To help secure its passage, Dr. Lay and his wife went to Washington. Despite gloomy predictions of failure, Senator Ralph Cameron of Arizona introduced it - Senate Bill 966.

Tirelessly, Dirk Lay visited every senator seeking support for the Bill. He got some of them down on their knees to pray for its

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passage. By hundreds of letters to church groups and farm associations, he secured a deluge of letters and telegrams from their constituents, asking the Senators to vote for the San Carlos Bill. It began to look hopeful.

The Budget and Appropriations Committees reported Senate Bill 966 favorably. It was ready for its last reading. Because so many Bills were up for consideration, it was decided, with some misgivings, to put it on the "unanimous consent" calendar in order to secure early consideration. But it was taking a chance; one negative vote could mean defeat, and not all the Senators had agreed to support the measure.

A small bill appropriating $1500 was up. An Ohio Senator refused unanimous consent, pleading the economy platform on which so many had been elected. Up in the gallery Dr. Lay's heart went to his boots. If he gagged at a $1500 bill, what would the Ohioan do when the San Carlos Dam Bill was called up? It was read; unanimous consent was requested. The same Senator leaped to his feet. "Mr. President," he called out, "I pro.....". He never finished the sentence, or even the word. His extended arm fell, his knees buckled, he slumped into his seat speechless. Amazed, all eyes were riveted upon him. Silence, then the vote was called and a chorus of "Ayes" without a dissenting voice carried the San Carlos Bill to success.

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After the Senate adjourned, Lay asked the Ohio Senator what had happened. "You are a preacher," was the reply, "You ought to know. It was as if some unseen hand pulled me down and shut my mouth. To save my life I couldn't have spoken another negative word. How do you account for it?"

"Hundreds of churches have been praying," replied the missionary. "Besides, since sun-up today some fifty women at Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church have been on their knees on behalf of Senate Bill 966. There's the explanation, I believe."

It did not end there. The bill went to the House, where it might very well have got lost in the shuffle, especially as the session was now nearing its close. One morning a Texas Congressman steamed into Senator Cameron's office.

"Senator, what in H--- has broken loose in Arizona? In all my Washington years, I have never had such an experience! My office is crowded with mail bags filled with letters from Texas, urging me to vote for the San Carlos Dam Bill. Scores of telegrams this morning! Who are these Pima Indians anyway? They must have a million dollar lobby backing this Bill."

With a twinkle in his eye, Senator Cameron replied, "I want you to meet the lobby. This is Dr. Dirk Lay of Arizona who is lobbying for this Bill."

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In true Texas fashion, the Congressman exploded, "A one man lobby! Well, I'll be d----d!"

With persistent zeal, the "one man lobby" worked over all the members of the House as he had done the Senate, His supporters across the country bombarded their Congressmen on b half of the water project. On the final day before adjournment, there came a welcome assist from the President himself. To Speaker Gillette he phoned, "Mr. Speaker, I want that Bill passed today." Before Congress adjourned it was voted - unanimously.

The Coolidge Dam was built, the water began to flow. On the day it was scheduled to reach Sacaton, Dirk Lay was on the bridge spanning the Little Gila River early in the morning with his eyes aglow and his heart singing with joy and gratitude. "What hath God wrought!" New hope and new life were flowing into the Pima Reservation, through the faith, persistence, and hard work of a "one man lobby".

Dr. Lay's efforts for Indians did not end with the passage of the San Carlos Bill. During the long years when the Pimas' water was being siphoned off, the old experienced farmers died and their methods were lost. The younger generation had to be introduced to modern agricultural techniques. New land needed clearing, water channels needed renovating. Lay's church friends donated tractors, harvesters, and other equipment.

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He taught his Pimas bookkeeping and accounting, developed a program of loans and repayments, trained them in farm management principles. Once more, the Pimas could hold up their heads with dignity and self-respect.

Needing Indian helpers in his church work, Dirk Lay was an enthusiastic supporter of Cook Christian Training School for Indians, now located in Phoenix, Arizona. Some of its first graduates such as Horace Williams, Rev. Edward Jackson, Rev. Calvin Emerson, and Rev. William Peters who died last March, aged 84, returned to work with him on the Pima Reservation.

Dr. Lay's spirit of friendship, service, and compassion, which first created the "one man lobby" is perpetuated in Cook Christian Training School which seeks to prepare Indian young people to serve their fellow men, especially on the reservations, as did Dirk Lay a long generation ago.

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[Enclosure, 1964 June, Smart]

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(July, 1964)

FROM SPORTSMAN'S GUIDE TO SKY PILOT

It's a far cry and a long trail from being a guide for fishermen and hunters to becoming one of God's guides, a veritable "sky pilot". But that's the trail which a young Indian of the Cree tribe in Manitoba, Canada, is walking. How Harold Ogemow came to forsake his forest life for that of church worker and lay preacher is a fascinating story well worth the telling. Here it is.

When Mr. Harold Ensley of Kansas City won the World Champion Fresh-Water Derby in a recent summer, Ogemow was one of the guides. A slim, sunny-faced young Indian of the Cree tribe, Harold is now a student at Cook Christian Training School for Indians in Phoenix, Arizona, and hails from God's Lake Narrows in the Hudson Bay area of Canada. All his life he has known the woods, lakes, and streams of upper Manitoba. There he has hunted, fished, and trapped with singular success. Nature, God's great out-of-doors, is in his blood; it was his first love.

Not surprising, then, is it to find that with his knowledge of wood-craft and his fluency in English, Harold was enlisted as a sports-man's guide. He wielded a skillful paddle in the canoe; he knew where to find moose, caribou, and elk; he had an uncanny intuition in seeking

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out the shadowy reaches of stream and lake where the wall eyes, lake trout, northern pike, brook trout, and white fish were to be found. For him it was fun, it was an interesting job, it was financially rewarding, it gave him a livelihood, it enabled him to get married.

A Good Choice

When the officials of the Fresh-Water Fishing Derby needed guides for the contestants, Harold Ogemow was a natural. Along with his buddies, he piloted the competitors into the deep woods, to the best lakes, to the deepest pools. He worked alongside Mr. Ensley, a world famous fisherman from Kansas City, who eventually won the Derby at God's Lake.

But sharing the glory of a winner did not really satisfy Harold Ogemow. He wanted to be something even more than the best guide in Northern Manitoba. Son of a Christian family, he had become a Christian when he was about 12 years of age. His faith meant a great deal to him, and he wanted to share it with his Indian friends. As he grew up, he began to work in the church. For five years he served as a missionary's interpreter at Fort Quapell, Saskatchewan; for one year he worked as a lay preacher in Ontario. He was a leader of youth groups and a teacher in summer camps in the Hudson Bay region.

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For Harold, this experience in church work was very satisfying. When the opportunity came to acquire some real training, he grasped it. Although he had only a sixth grade education, his splendid leadership qualities were recognized by the Kenora Rainy River Presbytery of the United Church of Canada. Their promise of financial aid encouraged him to undertake the long trek from Hudson Bay to enroll in the Cook Christian Training School for Indians in Phoenix, Arizona.

The Long Trail

It was a journey of faith. Ogemow knew nothing about Arizona nor the way there, and never had he gone so far away from home. But he had God in his heart and a long railway ticket in his hand; these were this Indian guide's guide. From rail junction to junction, from city to city he went -- crossing Canada, crossing the border into a strange U.S.A., crossing the Great Plains, and then the barren, forbidding desert, the like of which he had never seen before. And so Harold Ogemow finally arrived in Phoenix and registered at the Cook Christian Training School in September 1961.

During his years at Cook School, he has been one of the very popular students. His ready smile, his cheerful disposition have

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endeared him to Faculty and classmates alike. He has carried extra-curricular responsibilities willingly and efficiently. This year he has been Fire Marshall for Cook School. Even with the women students he did not lost any popularity when at the beginning of his second year he brought with them his charming bride, Ingrid. Now they are the parents of a lovely baby girl about one year old. Her name is Lynn.

The Call of the Wild

But the North Country calls; there's work to be done for God, for the church and for the Indians. And so, although he had not yet completed the full year's work at Cook Christian Training School, his mission board asked Harold to return home early, in order that he might put in a long summer in work for the Indian churches. The school cooperated by permitting him to take his final exams early.

"But I'll be back next Autumn," the one-time Cree guide says, "I want to finish my four year course, receive Cook School's diploma, and then I'll go back to my people to be one of Jesus Christ's 'fishers of men', a guide, a sky-pilot for God."

"We are proud to have a share in preparing Harold Ogemow, and

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others like him, to be of service," says Dr. George W. Smart, president of Cook Christian Training School. "His cheerful disposition, his sunny smile, his readiness to lend a helping hand have made him a most valued member of our school family. It has been a real joy to have him, his delightful wife, and their bouncing baby with us on campus this past year, and we eagerly anticipate their return. They are the kind of people we like to invest in, the sort of folk Cook Christian Training School exists to help."

But there is a haunting question which bothers the school officials. Is it right to domicile this lovely, attractive family with such real potential in sub-standard housing, in a "ratty" cabin which you and I would avoid if we possibly could? It was built long ago, about 1914, at a cost of $600. It has no bathing facilities and is almost ready to fall apart. It is amazing that the Ogemows are willing to return next Autumn to such a shack.

To do something constructive about it, the Board of Trustees have decided to build a new campus where there will be adequate housing for all students. Soon a financial campaign will be underway. It is planned to move to the new facilities in the Autumn of 1965.

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