**Jim Clark My Memories of Indian School**

Sometimes our minds wander, as mine is doing now.  Sometimes the memories are pleasant and sometimes not very.  I try to keep all of the good memories uppermost in my mind, so the thoughts here are some of the good memories I have.

I attended two Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools for my education:  Hayward Indian School in Wisconsin and Wahpeton School in North Dakota.  I was at Hayward for four years.  There were four buildings we students used:  boys building, girls building, school building, and the dining hall.  There was also a gymnasium and a small medical building.

We were assigned different duties each month.  We had a choice – do our chore either before breakfast or after, but have it done before school.  We were allowed to play outside after school until dinner, and then we had to do homework.

The good thing about homework was the building matron, who helped us with it.  The matron was a very kind woman.  She even held sewing classes to explain how to sew on buttons and darn socks and patch small holes in garments.  Her husband was the engineer for the school, and sometimes he helped with homework, too.  He was a golfer, and he used to pay the little boys who wanted to pick up golf balls, so the boys got some money.  In those days, a dime went a long way.

I used to work for the employees’ cook.  They burned coal for everything, like heating the building and cooking the food.  I was paid a quarter a week, so I could go to the movies in town on Saturdays and have 15 cents left over.  When I was bigger, I got to work at the dairy farm and also the horse barn feeding the animals.  No money there, so I always went back to the employees’ kitchen and put up coal and kindling for the quarter.

When we had a problem with one of our school subjects, we always got individual help from the teacher.  The help we got was, I think, better in the BIA school than in a public school.  I’m not downgrading public schools, but maybe class size has a lot to do with a student’s learning ability, because the class sizes in the BIA schools I was fortunate to attend were a lot smaller than the public schools are today.

In the morning, we lined up and marched to the mess hall and the classroom in military style.  Mr. Denomie always gave the orders.  He would say, “Attention – right (or left) face – forward march” and “Company halt – proceed to your classroom.”  I remembered this when I went into the service years later, so marching and drills were not new to me – in fact, it was a big help.

The last year, the Indian school was closed, so we were bussed to the public school in Hayward.  That was good, too, because we learned with non-Indian kids and got along with them very well.  We had made some real friends there.

My fifth year in BIA school was at Wahpeton Indian School in North Dakota.  The school rules and setup were almost identical to the school in Hayward, only I got to work at the dairy farm all year.  We had to work mornings before school and after school and weekends, but we were allowed time off for different occasions.  (And there was no quarter.)