OU RG75.4.002t

Sac & Fox Agency

October 21, 1856

I have deemed it right and proper to make the following statement in relation to the burning of John T. Jones house on the 30th of August 1856 between midnight and day.

John T. Jones is an educated half breed Ottawa Indian who is paid his annual annuity by me in the same way that the balance of the tribe are. his relation to the Government is the same precisely as that of any other Indian within the limits of this Agency. he is married to a very intelligent white woman, a native as I understand of the State of Maine, who came out here several years ago as a Teacher or Missionary among the Indians. they are both members of the Baptist church and sustain as I understand a fair standing as such.

I have been here over three years as Indian Agent, and during that time I can safely say that in all my official and private business, and relations with Mr. Jones, I have never seen the first dishonorable act, or an untruth. I have paid the Ottawa Indians three annual payments and Mr. Jones has certainly never attempted by any unfair means to obtain their money, but on the contrary has aided and assisted me in giving them such advice as would induce them to not spend their money in extravagance and running to whiskey shops with it.

I have heard two reasons given why Mr. Jones house was burnt. one was, that he was knowing or concerned in the killing of Wilkerson, Doyle and others, commonly called

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the Pottawattamie Murder, in answer to that charge I would say, that Mr. Jones was not in the country at that time. he and the Ottawa Chiefs had left here for Washington City to make a Treaty with the Government. I am confident he had nothing to do with that murder or was knowing to it as before remarked. he was not in the country.

The other is, that he “has aided and assisted the free State party,” in regard to this charge, I have no evidence that it is true. he has invariably told me to the contrary , before his house was destroyed. he told me he never had, and if it could be established, he was willing to leave the Nation. Mr. Jones keeps entertainment and lives upon a very public Road, which is much travelled. he accommodates all who call upon him I imagine without regard to what may be their opinions in respect to the institution of Slavery. I am certain this is so. I take it for granted this last charge is founded upon the number of travellers who stop with him, and that is all the aid and assistance he has rendered either party in the Territory.

In regard to the value of the house and property destroyed, I would not take less than Six Thousand Dollars were it mine. he was certainly doing a good business and had a first rate stand. one among the best in the Territory and was well fixed.

As to who commited this act I am unable to say, whoever they were it was certainly wrong, and they are left without any one in this community to approve it. and I doubt whether the perpetrators themselves, could at this time lay their hands upon their heart, and say, I justify the deed. this

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statement is made whilst all the circumstances are fresh in my memory, as I understand Mr. Jones intends to urge upon the Government pay for the loss he has sustained.

B. A. James

Indian Agent

On the back of the letter

Statement of agt after

Mr Jones house was burned