Statement by Robt. Atkinson Treasurer of Ottawa University made to the xxx Comissionars Walter R Irvin, Luther A Smith, C. A. Williamson at Ottawa August 1872

I, Robt. Atkinson came to Kansas in January 1868 was sent out by Baptist Home Mission Society with a special mission to look into the affairs of Ottawa University that Society having been called on by some of the Trustees to take an interest in the financial condition of the Institution.

I met with the Trustees of said University on January 24th 1868 by their invitation- there were present at the meeting John T Jones, Joseph King, Wm Hurr, James Wind (Indian Trustees) John Wilson (Indian Chief) John G Pratt, I S Kalloch (White Trustees).

At this meeting I was asked by said Trustees to accept the position of Trustee and by them was ~~um~~ unanimously elected a Trustee to fill the vacancy made by the resignation of C C Hutchinson. I was also elected the same day to fill the office of Secretary and Treasurer of Board of Trustees ~~Ottawa University~~  which offices I have filled ever since.

Soon after I became a Trustee I was requested by the Chief and head men of the Ottawas to get the new University building finished so that their children could go to School in it. At this time Jan, 1868 the university building was unfinished (walls up and roof on). Both Indian and White schools had been carried on held in buildings in the town up to this time, but now suspended until the new “college” building ~~would~~ could be finished. On Investigation I found it would cost about $13000) thirteen thousand dollars to finish

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the building. Besides this sum I found it would require about ($17000) seventeen thousand dollars more to meet the presented indebtedness of the Trustees, debts that had been incurred in the erection of the building and the current expenses of the school (Indian & White).

About the first of Feb, 1868 I requested the Chief to call a meeting of the nation that I might learn from the people their feelings & views about the university. The meeting was called-- I was requested to be present—I made to that meeting a full statement of all the business of the Trustees So far as I knew it telling the nation, how much land had been sold, how much money received and what was done with it. This information seemed to satisfy them very much.

The Chief and others addressed me in ~~the~~ substance ~~of which was~~ as follows that they the Ottawas wanted to see the Trustees go forward & finish the building and open the school again, that they wanted the school to go on as it had (re both Indian and White departments) and they would do all they could to help them (the Trustees).

I asked them if it was their understanding and wish that the School should be under the management of Baptists. They answered me that they wanted no others to have the management, for they (the Indians) were Baptists.

I asked them in case I went East to get money.

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Reported so far as I know the condition of the university its property and indebtedness. Recommending on the strength of what the Indians had told me & the original agreement to ~~aid~~ we the Trustees to immediately xxx to finish the building and pay off the debts which would require as far as I had learned $30000. I stated to this meeting what I was told by the Indians as to their wishes & feelings.

On hearing my report it was recommended to have me go among the churches & raise the needed amount to do what I recommended and open the school as soon as possible.

At this meeting and immediately following it eleven ($11,000) thousand dollars were raised for the above objects. Among the donors were Nethen Bishop $1000 – Jacob Wycoff $1000 – Colgate & Trever $2000 – D. U. Wilson $1000 – J. B. Hoyt $1000 – First Bapt. Ch. Newark NJ $1000 – Washington Ave. Bap. Ch. Brooklyn $1000 – Tabernacle Bap. Ch. New York $1000 – Orange Bap. Ch. $900 – Ed Burt $500. I (after this) went among the churches of the Bap. Denomination visiting Chicago Ill., Cleavlond & Dayton Oh. - Dillisburgh & Philadelphia (Pa), Boston & Springfield, Mass, Hartford New Heaven & Norwich Ct. And many smaller cities & towns until I raised $30447.75 $26447.75 of which has been paid in $4000 remaining unpaid it being a donation of 100 town lots from the Town company of Ottawa said lots are in litigation.

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My total receipts and disbursements have been as follows

Paid on finishing building $13088.87

“ on expense of Indian school 2809.33

“ “ “ white school 6924.74

“ “ “nursery & farm 6132.53

“ current expenses including the payment

of $6906.09 on trust land 14680.16

Have notes to do mount of 16574.41 6021.04

Received from subscription 26447.75

“ “ sale of Trust land 13550.41

“ “ “ “ Collage endowment land 9920.00

“ “ proceeds of nursery & farm 4835.09

“ “ tuition of white school 717.35

“ “ interest on mony loned 2525.00

“ “ 6 Town lots & rightaway to RR 930.00

“ “ Rent of Indian School house 320.00 59245.60

By this exhibit it will be seen that I have ~~put~~ loned $6654.41 more on mortgage than I received from the sale of collage or endowment land (20000 acres) and had we been able to sell the Town lots our loanes would be over $25000 as all that will come from said lots will be put on interest as permanent indowment.