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The Original History And Condition of Ottawa University Read by Rev Robt Atkinson at a Meeting held June 3 1869 in the Chapel of the University

About the year 1834 the Bapt. Denomination commenced a mission among the Ottawa Indians of Blanchard Fork and Roche De Boeuf, who had just moved to the state of Kansas and by the blessing of God upon the untiring and self denying labors of the missionary (Rev Jotham Meeker) the tribe was lifted to a high state of civilization and Christianity, so much so that at one time nearly 78 of all the mail members of the tribe were brought to embrace the christian religion and unite themselves with the Indian Baptist church, this high state of religion took place after the death of the sainted Meeker, so of him it could truly be said he tested promises his labors and his work did follow him.

The Rev John T Jones a native Chippewa Indian was born in Canada ~~he having~~ embraced religion when quite young and received a liberal education at Hamilton N.Y. he came among the Ottawas in 1848 and was adopted by the nation. Mrs Jones (whose maiden name was Jane Kelley) a Native of New England was sent ~~cannot~~ out by the Bapt. Denomination as a missionary teacher to the Stockbridges in 1843 and was married to Mr Jones in 1845 and with her husband moved on the Ottawa Reservation in 1850.

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The coming of Mr & Mrs Jones among the Ottawas aided Mr Meeker very greatly in his Health affiliated work of civilizing and Christianizing the tribe and after his death Mr Jones continued taking an action and leading part in all the religious interests of the tribe and finaly was ordained as Pastor of the Indian Baptist Church which relation he still holds. Both Meeker and Jones alike ~~cherished~~ felt the importance of giving the children of the tribe a liberated education, but they differed in this. Meeker wanted the education to be in Indian, Jones wanted it in English.---Meeker was called from his labors before any more was made toward s the establishment of a school of a high grade among the tribe, but his long cherished dream for such an institution did not die with him, it had been sufficiently impressed upon the minds of the people while he was yet alive as to give them a leaning in this direction. After the death of Mr Meeker it was left for Mr Jones to deepen the impression this made and to prepare the leading men of nation to establish such a school as was thought they needed. A land endowment was thought of from the first and just before any step was taken towards the founding of a school the Chief and counselmen and the leading men of the tribe had decided to set a part a xxxx of their lands for this purpose. When ~~Just as~~ this desire for a school had become repe in these Indians. The White Baptists of Kansas not knowing of such a feeling healing among

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This people (Ottawa) took steps to found a school of learning and on the 27th of Feb, 1860 they obtained a charter from the Terretorial Legislator for a school to be called the Rodger Williams University. The Ottawas (being almost all Baptists this being the only Denomination that had a mission among them) hearing of the organization of the Institution by their White brethren sent an invitation to the Trustees of the Rodger Williams University to meet them for the purpose of making some arrangement where by (the Indians) might be able to have their children educated in this institution. A meeting accordingly took place in the school house of the nation on the 5th of Dec, A.D. 1860 There were present 8 Indians including the Chief and Counsel men) & 4 Whites ( a committee of the trustees) . The Indians expressed their feelings in the following manner. W e are very desirous to have our children educated, it is the unanimous and earnest wish of our people that when our children grow up they shall assume the habits and customs and be able to discharge the dutiesof American citizens. We believe this good object can be best accomplished through the Rodger Williams University.

The following agreement was then voluntarily and unanimously entered into. The Indians agreed to give to the Rodger Williams University 20,000 acres of average land with a fair proportion of timber and water. The Trustees agreed to raise funds to aid in the erection of school buildings and were to educate the children of the nation from the age of 4 to 14

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For 30 years, after which to give the Indians 10 scholarships forever in the University. The agreement was written out and signed by both the Indians and the Trustees.

The next step was to have a treaty made which would authorize the Indians to carry out this agreement. Such a treaty was made and proclaimed July 28, 1862.

In this treaty ~~instead of~~ it was deemed inadvisable to design ~~away~~ the school by any XXXXXXXXX or restrict the management of it to any denomination but to create a Board of seven Trustees with the power of self perpetuation. It named five of the Trustees giving them the right to choose the other two. The ~~first~~ five named in the treaty were all Baptists and the two chosen by them were from the same denomination so that all the members of the first Board of Trustees were all Baptists The same is true of the Board at the present time.