

B. Smith Haworth

OTTAWA UNIVERSITY

From the History of Miami Association
George Hine

In October, 1860, the Baptists of Kansas held their first General Association with the Baptist Church of Atchinson, Kansas.

During the meeting, quoting Mrs. E. F. Alderson, Mr. Alderson invited Rev. I. S. Kalloch and Ottawa Jones to dine with us. While we were dining they discussed the question of establishing a University to educate the white children as well as the children of the Indians. Mr. Alderson then and there proposed to establish a school on the Ottawa Reservation.

When they returned to the church Mr. Alderson's suggestions were presented to the Association which immediately adopted them.

Soon after the adjournment these three gentlemen laid out the present city of Ottawa and began the erection of Ottawa University. (End of quote.)

The act of the Kansas legislature granting to such bodies as the Ottawa University corporate existence, is numbered 36. The instrument issued to Franklin county and addressed to I. S. Kalloch, C. C. Hutchinson, John G. Pratt, J. T. Jones, James Wind, William Herr and Joseph King, petitioners for the incorporation of Ottawa University, was dated April 1, 1865. These men had succeeded in getting the Ottawas to donate 20,000 acres of their reservation for this purpose, to build our beautiful city and erect Ottawa University.

The school started not "on the hill" but somewhere down on Hickory street. The student body, in that day was limited to the children of the Indians.

Soon the Indians withdrew and the affairs were so adjusted that the school was left in the hands of the whites under the name of Ottawa University.

Dr. Philetus Phales was the first president; there was at that time only an Academic department. Two years later he resigned, the Institution being not financially able to keep him.

Dr. M. L. Ward was called from the east and the school was placed in his hands for two years to see what he could make out of the situation; after four years of most successful effort he was called to the State Agricultural College at Manhattan.

Rev. E. C. Anderson, pastor of the First Baptist church succeeded him. The college building burned in 1874, so not much was accomplished during Rev. Anderson's brief years work.

Dr. P. J. Williams, a teacher of wide reputation, succeeded him. He built up a strong Normal Course and was able to graduate a considerable number of young men and women. He was said to be the greatest educator the state has ever had. When Dr. Williams accepted a position with the State University his place was filled temporarily with Dr. T. M. Steward of Brown University.

Dr. M. L. Ward returned to Ottawa in the year of 1883 to guide the University over another critical time and during his four years service new departments were added to the University, the farm was plotted and the endowment was started, the enrollment was greatly increased; the first class was graduated in 1886.

In 1887 Prof. George Sutherland became acting president. He greatly increased the endowment.

He was succeeded by Dr. Franklin Johnson of Cambridge, Mass. His coming brought prestige to the school and commended it to the east. The American Educational Society proposed to give \$10,000 to the College provided Kansas Baptists raised \$25,000, a condition that was promptly met.

Dr. F. W. Colgrove took the presidency in 1893 and three years later, Rev. J. D. Riggs of Graville, Ohio, was called to the presidency.

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Dr. Riggs brought to his task rare scholarship and great financial ability. A new gymnasium was built. A disastrous fire destroyed the main building and it was built greater than before.

Dr. Riggs resigned in 1905 and Prof. R. A. Schwegler became acting president. He handled the affairs of the Institution with ability.

Dr. S. E. Price, pastor of the First Baptist church was called to the presidency in 1906. He comes from a family of educators. His rare ability is recognized; the endowment is growing, the College is increasing in size and more confidence on the part of the Kansas Baptists is expressed. (1908)