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LETTERS AND RECORDS OF OTTAWA UNIVERSITY'S ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH  
AN INDIAN DEPARTMENT IN 1883 and 1884.

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On a circular from H. Price, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated April 14, 1883, is the information that industrial, agricultural, or mechanical schools in any of the States of the United States may care and support and educate Indian children at a cost not exceeding \$167.00 for each child per year. It also provided a limited sum to defray the traveling expenses of pupils from their homes to the schools.

Dr. M. L. Ward, President of Ottawa University, accordingly applied for permission to establish an Indian department in Ottawa University for 30 boys or 30 girls. Mr. H. Price asked the assistance of Jacob V. Carter, Sac and Fox agent, I.T.; John D. Mills, Cheyenne and Arapahoe agent, Darlington, I.T. via. Caldwell, Kans.; P. B. Hunt, K.S. and W. agent, Anadarko, I.T.; D. B. Dyer, Quapaw agent and others, including J. M. Haworth, Indian School Superintendent.

Dr. Ward soon found that other schools had invaded the field: Chiloecco School near Arkansas City were to get 50 Indian children; West Branch, Iowa, 50; a school at Philadelphia, Pa. was to get 50; and Carlisle, Pa. were to get 15 boys and 15 girls. By this time, the Indian parents began to refuse to send more children, as they were afraid the white man would have some unfavorable advantage over them, if too many children were taken away to school.

The Indian Agents urged Dr. Ward to take boys. Indian parents were slow about sending their girls to school, since they could sell a daughter at 12 to 15 years by marriage, for a good number of ponies, while they were anxious to have the boys go to school. But since the requirements for boys called for farming, gardening, and some of the trades of carpenter, blacksmith, wheelright, shoemaker, tinsmith, etc. while the girls were to be trained in all branches of house-keeping, dairy-work, and sewing, outside of their school work, and as Miss Elisabeth S. Morse was available to conduct the Indian Department, Dr. Ward insisted on asking for girls, rather than boys.

Consequently, only six Indian girls came the first year. In Jan. 16, 1884, the following were sent from Winfield, Kansas:

Elizabeth Wind, Wyandotte, aged 12 years  
Clara E. Faber, Wyandotte, aged 13 years  
Eva J. Johnson, Wyandotte, aged 12 years  
Delia Hicks, Wyandotte, aged 13 years  
Ella Barnett, Ottawa, aged 16 years.

On Jan. 23, 1884, Agnes McCarty, Modoc, aged 13 years, was sent from Baxter Springs, Ks. School duties began Jan. 21, with Miss Elisabeth S. Morse in charge and also serving as seamstress, Alice Boomer and D. Cole as student assistants, Mrs. Manly as matron and cook and Prof. Boyle, music teacher gave the girls two lessons a week in vocal music. Other subjects taken by the girls were Fifth Reader, Arithmetic, Language, Geography, Penmanship and hand sewing and general housework and one afternoon each week given to fancy work and crocheting, etc. The girls came with only one suit of clothing, so their sewing took on a practical value at first.

The girls seemed to improve in manners, intellectually and spiritually. Dr. Ward could soon report that they did not attract special attention because of unusual appearance or deportment. On April 17, 1884, Elizabeth Wind and Clara Faber united with the Baptist Church of Ottawa by baptism, where Evangelist O. L. Leonard was holding special meetings. Agnes McCarty, the little fat Modoc girl, caused much trouble by writing her parents that she was sick much of the time, the other girls were unfriendly and since she was evidently homesick, she was allowed to go home April 25th. Her brother had died the year before in a school conducted by the whites and her letters home greatly excited her parents, in spite of Dr. Ward's reassurances.

How long the Indian Department continued is not recorded in the papers I have. Permission was granted to continue the school the next year, ending in June 1885, and in the winter of 1886, Mrs. H. K. Stimpson is spoken of in "From the Stage Coach to the Pulpit," (written by Rev. H. K. Stimpson) as being the matron of the Indian Department of Ottawa University.

Summary by Howard Rounds, from records  
by Dr. M. L. Ward.