

THE JONES FAMILY -FROM FOWLER TO FINE TO EDWARDS

The story of the Jones family, as it is known, starts in Massachusetts shortly after the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Levi N.H. (Nathan Hale?) Jones and Sarah "Sally" Exford were born in the vicinity of North Adams on the northwest border of the state. It was tried, through the New England Historical and Genealogical Society, to find Levi's ancestors, but it was not successful by mail.

Levi and Sally married in Massachusetts and later migrated to St. Lawrence County in New York State, probably along the Mohawk Trail, passing through Utica and northward on the War of 1812 military road. By the census of 1840 they had reached the Town of Fowler where they lived with their five boys. Since given names were not used in that census, and only approximate ages, the oldest boy cannot be identified, but the others were Levi O., William, Amos H., and Emery. Levi supported his growing family by working as a shoemaker.

The family soon moved on to the new community of Fine where their first daughter, Nancy was born in 1843. Their sixth son, David Anderson Jones, was also born in Fine on 28 Apr 1846.

The last two children of Levi and Sally are registered as having been born in Edwards in 1848 and 1849 which indicated that the family possibly lived on the border between the communities of Edwards and Fine. An 1858 map of the Town of Fine was perused and the L.N.H. Jones family was found on what is now known as the Power Plant Road just barely over the town line into Fine. (The 1865 map shows them in the same place.)

In 1850 Levi O. has moved back to Fowler indicating perhaps the oldest son may have been living there, but by 1860 he had returned to Fine to live, with a wife, Elizabeth, and three children.

During the Civil War Levi O. joined the army to fight the Confederates. His younger brother, David, who would have been only 15 years old at the start of the conflict, wanted to show his patriotism so he ran away from home to join the army, but was brought back by his father.

By 1864 David was a bit older and still wanted to fight for the Union, so on the 17th of August he went to the Town of Diana with his father and his father signed papers so his son could join the 10th Reg't, Heavy Artillery of NY. By doing this David was given a bounty of \$66.66 from the Town of Diana.

The copies of David Jones Civil War records, property of Kermit Jones, show that David could not write since he made an "x", - his mark - when signing his enlistment papers, although his father wrote his name to give permission for his son join the service. Then David went to Watertown to join his comrades.

The enlistment papers give a description of David A. Jones which allows the present generation an understanding of what their ancestor looked like. He is described as being 5'7" tall, with light complexion, gray eyes and brown hair. (A portrait of him, still a young man, shows him to be of slight frame, clean shaven, and having regular features.)

The records available indicate that he was sent to Petersburg, Virginia and apparently was there when the town was laid siege. Probably he was not in the heavy fighting, but in the background, with the horses and equipment, drawing the heavy artillery to the needed places. He was discharged at Petersburg, VA on 23 June 1865. Because of his military service, his widow was able to secure a pension for which she applied in Feb of 1917.

A family story concerning the time David was in the service tells about his father, Levi, who was a shoemaker, making him a pair of shoes. Levi made the shoes and asked a person from the area, who was going to the same place his son was stationed, to deliver the gift. The shoes were sent to David, but thought never to have reached him. The reason why not is lost in history, but apparently the thought meant a lot to the family since it has been told to succeeding generations.

After the Civil War the older children of Levi were marrying and settling down. The older boys stayed in Fine but the daughter, Nancy, who first married George Ferguson, was married, after Ferguson died, to Eli P. Earle and moved to Michigan. However, by 1879 neither Levi nor Sally is found in Fine so it is assumed they had both died and are buried there with no markers. The records in the Surrogate's Office, Canton, NY were checked in April 1990, but no Will nor Intestate File was found for Levi N.H. Jones. (The 1896 map was checked and there is an L.N. Jones located at the opposite end of the Power Plant Road just onto what is now Route 3. Who this is actually, is not known, but an open mind needs to be kept.)

On 17 Sep 1866 David Anderson Jones was married to Alida Jeanette Madison by Dr. Carley, J.P., of Town of Diana, Lewis Co. It is presumed they were married in South Edwards, probably at the home of her parents, Warren B. Madison and Margaret Bentley Madison. It is noted they were living with the Madisons in the 1870 census.

*****THE MADISON/MATTESON FAMILY IN EDWARDS*****

Warren Brayton Madison was born in 1812, the year Edwards was settled. Since his middle name is Brayton it is quite likely his parents were friends of Edwards first settlers, the Asa Brayton family. Perhaps that is why the Madisons also came to Edwards.

Margaret Bentley Madison was born in Vermont and nothing is known, at present, of her parentage, nor how she happened to come to Edwards.

Warren and Margaret Madison were married on 8 Aug 1847 in South Edwards by James Noble, J.P. when Warren was 35 and Margaret was 37. There was already a child, Charles, between the ages of one and two, so it is assumed he was an out-of-wedlock child of Margaret's, although perhaps she was a young widow. Warren and Margaret had one known child, Alida Jeanette, born 25 Nov 1849 in Edwards.

By 1850 Warren had moved his family to the Town of DeKalb where they were living in the household of the George W. and Fidelia Acres family. After the 1860 census the Madisons were back in Edwards where David Jones and Alida Madison met and were married, in 1866.

David and Alida lived with her parents in the So. Edwards/Shawville area until after the 1870 census. Possibly they stayed until after Alida's mother's death on the 9 Dec 1871. Next they are found farming beside Phineas Gates' house on the River Road, with Warren Madison in their household. Their neighbor on the other side was Eliza Madison, widow of Joseph Madison, presumed to be aunt by marriage, to Alida Madison Jones.

While living in Edwards, the David A. Jones family increased to six children consisting of three boys and three girls. Time passed and the children began to grow up and think of lives of their own. The oldest daughter, Effie, became attached to a South Edwards boy, Alvin Hall. By the spring of 1888 when Effie was one month shy of being 16, she and Alvin, who had just become 18, thought it best to get married. Their first child, of an eventual dozen, was born that summer and was named Rollie. His birth was not registered so, when later he needed proof of his age, he submitted an affidavit to the Town Clerk of Edwards sworn to by his father and his aunt, Marge Wood. On this paper Marge declared she had been the midwife at his birth. If this is actually true, it means Effie had a nine year old girl attending her first confinement!

Records do not show that David Jones owned any property until he purchased the farm at Jones Pond (formerly called Noble's Lake). Deeds were obtained to show the history of the farm. It was first purchased from Daniel McCormick of New York, by James Noble, a Scottish immigrant, on 1 March 1824 for \$131.44. and was comprised of 65.72 acres.

When David Jones bought the property, it owned by James Noble's widow and her children. It is believed that one of her sons, Benjamin Noble, was running the farm at that time, but was more interested in moving to Syracuse to become a streetcar conductor. Records searched showed that all the Noble family

signed off and on 9 Feb 1885 David A. Jones purchased the farm that became his family's home, for \$1600.

After the birth of Margaret, when Alida was 32, there is no evidence of pregnancies nor stillbirths until 1890. Perhaps it was during that period Alida became consumptive and her health deteriorated.

Alida, although ill with tuberculosis, became pregnant again in late 1889. It has been pondered as to why the family was in Fowler when Alida was ready give birth again, but a possibility can be considered. It is known that David had an older brother, name unknown, but is believed to have lived in the Town of Fowler. David had family responsibilities that were maybe too great for him handle alone at this time and his pregnant wife needed care, so possibly they took Alida to Fowler to David's sister-in-law where she could receive care. This does not necessarily mean that the whole family went. After all, the farm still had to be run and there were grown sons at home to tend the chores.

On 23 Aug 1890 Alida's last child was born, a son they named Harold Alida. Because Alida was seriously ill a housekeeper was hired. Lavina Drown, a maiden lady of age 35 years, from Hailesboro, was employed to help in the household, and watch after the new baby and Alida. (Alida's daughter, Effie, had her second child on 4 Aug 1890, just 19 days before her mother's baby was born. She named her Alida Jeanette after her mother.)

When the baby, Harold, was nearly six months old the family was ready to move back to the farm they had left months ago. They were probably returning at Alida's insistence that she wanted to die at home. Since it was winter and no one wanted Alida and the baby to suffer during the trip to Pond Settlement by horse and sleigh, a makeshift bed was fixed in the sleigh with straw packed around it. Then bricks were heated and placed in the improvised bed with blankets laid over upright posts to make a tent, generously covering all. Lastly Alida and the baby were tucked carefully inside to make the journey to their Pond Settlement home.

Alida succumbed to her illness on 10 Feb 1891 shortly after the Jones family, along with the housekeeper, Lavina Drown, were reunited in the house overlooking the Pond. She was buried in Gates Cemetery, making the first burial of the Jones family in that cemetery on the River Road, Edwards.

A news item of Fine dated 16 Feb 1891 states "Mrs. David Jones of South Edwards, died on Wednesday of last week. Several of her relatives from this town attended the funeral on Friday. She leaves a husband and several small children, the youngest aged six months, who greatly need a mother's influence and care."

Life had to go on and Lavina Drown was there to care for David Jones' family ranging from "Wat" age 24 years to the baby,

Harold, age six months. She became like a mother to the older children and was the only mother Harold ever knew. Lavina continued on as housekeeper, with her brother, Clinton Drown (whose first name was George), coming to live there also. [REDACTED] saw her employer's family through [REDACTED]

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Harold, age six months. She became like a mother to the older children and was the only mother Harold ever knew. Lavina continued on as housekeeper, with her brother, Clinton Drown (whose first name was George), coming to live there also and she saw her employer's family through happy times and tragedies.

In 1896 the son, Charles Madison Jones, presumed named for Alida's half brother, was ice skating on Soft Water Pond when he fell, and a stick (cut end of a Tag Alder) protruding through the ice, punctured his jugular vein. He was taken to the house and placed on a bed in a downstairs bedroom where he bled to death soon after, age 22 years. His was the second burial in the Jones family plot.

Howard Whitford, one of the young men who was in the group that night, related, in later years, that there was a immense trail of blood from the ice to the house because of the profuse bleeding from the wound on the neck of Charles Jones. The family today can still remember being told of the treatment for the bleeding when Charlie was brought home. Dry flour was applied to the puncture wound in effort to staunch the flow of blood.

A news item gives a graphic account of the accident which happened just a week before Christmas. - "South Edwards, Dec. 22, 1896. One of the most shocking deaths that had transpired in this section the last fifty years took place on the evening of the 17th inst. A party of young men and boys were assembled on Smith's pond for the purpose of skating and playing goal, among whom was Charlie Jones, son of David A. Jones of the Pond Settlement. While playing goal he was pursued in hot haste by Silas Wood and Ed Whitford in order to "get his tag" which caused young Jones to run near the shore of the pond, when he tripped and fell, striking his neck upon a projecting snag, piercing the jugular vein; he sprang up quickly as Whitford was about to place his hands upon him, and said: "Boys, I am bleeding to death" while at the same time the blood was spurting profusely from his neck. He then turned and with the aid on either side of Whitford and Wood, succeeded in skating to the head of the pond, a distance of 30 rods, marking his course by a trail of his own life's blood. While on his way he said, "Take me home" three times, and then said, "Take me to Frank Smith's." On arriving at the head of the pond he took off his hat placing it on the ground, then stooping, took off his boots and ran up the hill towards Smith's house with Whitford in pursuit, until he got near the fence when he staggered and would have fallen had not Whitford caught him and held him up the best he could until he got him over the fence where he fell to rise no more. Whitford and a young man by the name of Graham then carried him up to Smith's house and with the aid of Smith put him in Graham's buggy and took him home a distance of about a mile, where he breathed but a few minutes. Charlie Jones was the pet of his father's family."

By 1898 Lavina, "Vinie", had been with Jones family at least eight years, and on the 23 Feb 1898 she and David went to Fine

and got married. By this time she was 42 years old and he was 51 (he turned 52 in April).

In May of that same year, the daughter, Blanche, married a cousin, Willard Jones and moved to a home of her own in the South Edwards area. This still left a fairly large household for David and Vinie to be responsible for - Wat, Lin, Marge, and Harold were at home, plus Clinton Drown.

On 23 July 1898, when David and Vinie had been married just five months, to the day, they started to drive to Edwards in the horse and buggy. They got as far as the Javall farm when David slumped in the buggy suffering from a heart attack. They turned around and went home where David died nine hours later. (The death record reads "apoplexy"). He was buried in Gates Cemetery beside his first wife and Vinie was a widow before her first wedding anniversary.

Again, a news item from the County Historian's files gives us an account of the death of David Jones written in the time in which it occurred. - "Fine July 25 1898. Mr. David Jones, of South Edwards, brother of the late L.O. Jones of this town, died at 6 P.M. on Saturday last. Himself and family left home in the morning to spend the day with relatives in town, and secure a quantity of berries. On the way he was taken sick, and grew worse so fast, they decided to return home at once, which they did and immediately summoned a physician, but to no avail. He sank rapidly and expired the hour above mentioned. Hemorrhage of the brain was the cause of death."

The Surrogate's Office files were checked for a Will or Intestate File of David A. Jones, but none was found.

As was her custom, Vinie, who never married again, continued to watch after David Jones' family. While she lived on the farm, apparently she had no rights to the property because the next land transaction shows that David Jones remaining children signed over the farm to the second oldest son, Lincoln on 3 Dec 1907. It is known by Harold Jones' children that there was a verbal agreement at that time, to the effect that, when Lin no longer wanted the farm, it was to go to Harold. This agreement was not honored later and caused many hard feelings and bitterness.

As the children grew up, Vinie saw David's daughter, Marge, marry Silas Wood in 1899 and the youngest child, Harold, marry Olive Watson in 1912.

In 1909 her brother, Clinton Drown, died and, at his request, was buried in the Jones family plot.

Then in 1915 she buried another of her husband's children in Gates Cemetery. The oldest child, Warren, known as "Wat", had suffered from chronic Bright's Disease and died at home 21 Feb.

Wat, who always lived at home, was a fiddle player who played by ear, but didn't like to play in front of anyone. Because he was reticent about being in the limelight, he would sit at the top of the enclosed stairway to play the violin. His brother, Lin, was something of a tease and would stand downstairs and dance a jig as Wat played upstairs. As soon as Wat discovered Lin was dancing to his music the family would hear a resounding thud at the head of the stairs which signaled that Wat had put away his instrument in disgust, and that was the end of fiddle music for that day. The fiddle is still in the family today.

The death of Wat left just Vinie, and David's son, Lin, in the farmhouse purchased a quarter of a century before. Lin never married and ran the family farm while providing a home for his stepmother. Lin had a romantic interest in a relative, who was brought up in their home, but apparently it was never reciprocated as she married twice, but neither time to Lin Jones.

Time passed with the next generation growing, then, in 1937, two more of David Jones' children died. Blanche died in Feb 1937. Her obituary says "internal hemorrhages from an illness lasting two days". She was buried in Woodland Cemetery in Fine. Next, in July 1937, Effie died of heart problems and was buried in Gates Cemetery near her parents. Thus, David's widow buried two more of his children.

Lin died in 1942 of apoplexy while being cared for in the home of Libbie Webb, a relative who had lived in his household when she was a girl. It was during this time, on 1 Dec 1941, when Lin, incapacitated by a stroke, signed the farm over to Elizabeth (Libbie) Bevins Webb and her second husband, Alfred Webb, "for \$1.00 and other good and valuable considerations". John Lumley, the person who notarized the signature of Lincoln Jones, always laughed afterwards saying Libbie had to hold Lin's hand and help him sign his name to the paper because Lin was incapable of moving due to his illness. The question remains - Was this legal in the strictest terms?

In the meantime, David's son, Harold, and his wife, Olive, and their two sons had moved into the farmhouse to watch after Vinie, now an old, arthritic woman who sat in a padded chair by the Round Oak stove most of her waking hours.

Vinie Drown Jones outlived her husband of five months by nearly 45 years, and all of his children but the two youngest, Marge and Harold. She died at home, having been cared for, in her turn, by Harold and Olive Jones, who were able to continue living on the farm after Vinie's death.

When it came time for David and Alida Madison Jones two youngest children to leave this earth, they were the first ones to die in a hospital. Coincidentally, the hospital was in the Town of Fine, the township where their father arrived on the earth, bringing the family a full circle. While Marge Wood was

buried in the South Edwards Cemetery with her husband's family, Harold was buried in Gates Cemetery where so many of his family were resting.

David Anderson Jones' grandson, Kermit Jones, bought back the family farm in 1956. and Harold and Olive Jones were able to spend their final years on the land they called home. Kermit still owns, and lives on, the farm which has so many memories, and has kept the house looking much as it did in 1885 when the family first purchased the property.

5 May 1990 - A check was made of the family entry pages in the Jones Bible. It was discovered that a number of entries concerning marriage and birth dates have been changed. The reason for the change is not known, but some dates taken from this source probably would not be correct if history could be relived.

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