

James Henry Jones

(9 Aug 1818 – 18 Dec 1914)

Jones. On Friday, December 18, 1914 at the residence of his daughter, Mrs. William Lacey, Seat Pleasant, Md., James H. Jones in the 98th year of his age. Funeral from the chapel of Congressional cemetery, Monday, December 21 at 2 p.m. Relatives and friends invited.

Jones. Members of the Association Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia are respectfully invited to attend the funeral services of our late associate, James H. Jones, at Congressional cemetery, Monday, December 21 at 2 p.m.

Theodore W. Noyes, Pres.

Benj. W. Reiss, R.S.

The Evening Star, December 19, 1914, p. 5

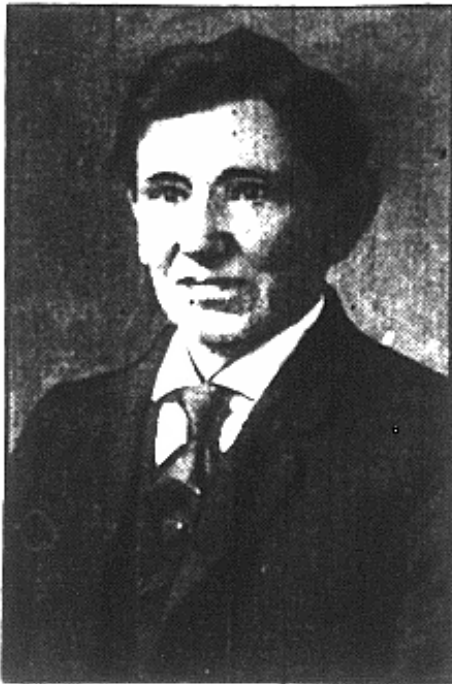
James Henry Jones Dies of Pneumonia

Dean of Association of Oldest Inhabitants

Had Reached Ninety-Eighth Year

Funeral Services to Be Held Monday Afternoon at

Chapel of Congressional Cemetery



James Henry Jones, dean of the Association of Oldest Inhabitants, having been in his ninety-eighth year, died a little after 1 o'clock yesterday at the residence of his daughter, Mrs. William Lacey, at Seat Pleasant, Md. Mr. Jones had been an invalid for several years, but had not been in especially bad health until Tuesday, when he experienced difficulty in his breathing, and was forced to take to his bed. Death was due to pneumonia.

Funeral services are to be held Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock at the chapel of Congressional cemetery, under auspices of Harmony Lodge, No. 9, I.O.O.F., of which the deceased at the time of his death was one of the oldest members. Interment will be in Congressional cemetery. The Association of Oldest Inhabitants will participate in the services.

Born in Montgomery County

Mr. Jones was born at Middlebrook, Montgomery county, Md., August 9, 1818. He was the son of James Edmonston Jones and Mildred Coleman Degge, both of Virginia. He was one year old when his mother died, and but six years old when he lost his father.

In 1825 his guardian, Jesse Leach, put him to work with John Barrett to learn the tailor's trade, and he remained with Mr. Barrett for two years. In 1827 he was sent to John Dickson's painting shop in Georgetown, and while with him he went at intervals to the Lancaster School, where Robert Old was the teacher.

Learned Painting Trade

When he was taken from school he was placed in Mr. Dickson's shop to learn the trade of painting, and worked there until 1837, when Mr. Dickson retired from business. Young Jones then went to Columbus, Ohio, where he remained until 1842, when he returned to Washington and opened a grocery store at the corner of 8th and M streets northwest. He afterward opened a notion store at the corner of 8th and L streets southeast, and subsequently formed a partnership with John Riggs in the house painting business.

During the civil war Mr. Jones was a master painter at the Washington navy yard. He retired from active business in 1884.

Carried Torch for Fire Company

When fourteen years old, Mr. Jones' friends say, he carried the torch for the old Vigilant fire company of Georgetown, and was present at the fire at the Treasury Department in 1833, and at the Post Office Department fire in 1835. He was present at the opening of the old Baltimore and Ohio depot, September 12, 1836, as a member of the militia.

It was one of Mr. Jones' boasts that he helped haul the corner stone of the Washington Monument to its resting place. He became a member of the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants in 1865 when that organization was in its infancy.

Was Twice Married

For the last several years he had been unable to attend any of its meetings, but a silent tribute was always paid him by the members of the association on his birthdays, as the years passed, and it was hoped that he would live to attain the age attained by but one member of the association, W.M. Starr, who lived to be an hundred years old.

Mr. Jones was twice married, his first wife being Miss Eliza P. Adams, who died in 1858. He next married Miss Martha C. Thomas, who died in 1890. Mrs. Lacey is his only living child. Twelve grandchildren and two great-grandchildren survive him.

The Evening Star, August 9, 1909, p. 7

Anniversary of His Birth

James Henry Jones Celebrating Today

Native of Maryland and Resident of Seat Pleasant --

Born August 9, 1818

James Henry Jones, a member of the Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia, and at present a resident of Seat Pleasant, Prince George county, Md., is today celebrating the ninety-first anniversary of his birth. He was born in Middlebrook, Montgomery county, Md., August 9, 1818, and came to reside in the District of Columbia in October, 1827.

Mr. Jones is a son of James Edmonson Jones, who was born in Virginia between 1780 and 1785, and Mildred Coleman Degge, also a native of Virginia. He was one year old when his mother died, and but six years old when he lost his father.

In 1825 his guardian, Jesse Leach, put him to work with John Barrett to learn to be a tailor, and he remained with Mr. Barrett for two years. In 1827 he was sent to John Dickson's in Georgetown, and while with him he went at occasional intervals to the Lancaster School, where Robert Old was the teacher.

When he was taken from school he was placed in Mr. Dickson's shop to learn the trade of painting, and worked there until 1837, when Mr. Dickson retired from business. Young Jones then went to

Columbus, Ohio, remaining there until he returned to Washington in 1842, when, he says, he spent eighteen months in lawsuits with his guardian, but lost everything.

He then engaged in the grocery business at 8th and L streets northwest, and formed a partnership with a Mr. Riggs in the painting business. He was employed in the Washington navy yard most of the time between 1482 and 1884, except during the Buchanan administration, part of the time as foreman and part as master painter. He retired as master painter in 1884.

Attached to Fire Company

When fourteen years of age Mr. Jones carried the torch for the old Vigilant fire company of Georgetown, and was present at the fire at the Treasury Department, in 1833, and at the old Post Office Department fire, in 1835. In 1843 he was a member of the Anacostia fire engine company.

He was present at the opening of the old Baltimore and Ohio depot, September 12, 1836, as a member of the militia.

He sang in the choir of the old Ebenezer, after the Fourth Street, and now the Trinity M.E. Church, of which he is still a member. He also sang in Wesley Chapel M.E. Church choir when Prof. Joseph Daniels, then a young man, was leader, and in a great choir which sang many years ago in the Smithsonian Institution.

One of Mr. Jones' proud boasts is that he helped haul the corner stone of the Washington Monument to its resting place. The hauling was done with ropes from the navy yard by workmen and citizens. While crossing the old canal the bridge gave way and word was sent to the navy yard. At noon the workmen there called a meeting and decided to go and assist in getting the stone to its proper destination. They formed a procession, with a band of music at its head, and while on their way up Pennsylvania avenue were met by Commodore McCauley, who stopped them and inquired what they were doing. After informing him they were on their way to move the corner stone to the Monument grounds, he replied, "All right; they need your assistance." The mayor of the city was informed of the situation also, and, said Mr. Jones, "He turned the job over to us. While waiting for the truck we braced the bridge so that we could cross it. When the truck came we put the stone on it and pulled it to where it now rests. It was about 5x3 feet in size."

Was Twice Married

Mr. Jones was twice married. His first wife was Eliza P. Adams of this city, and his second wife, Martha C. Thomas of Alexandria. He has living one son, Melville E. Jones, who married Ellen M.C. Taylor, and two daughters, Bettie M., who married W.H. Lacy, and Eva H., who married Charles R. Starr. He has twelve grandchildren, Genevieve P., James L., Melville E., jr., and Robert N. Jones, children of his son; Mildred I., Clara M., Minerva E. and William E., children of his daughter, Bettie M. Lacy, and Harry W., Theodore, Edwin F. and Martha A. Starr, children of his daughter, Eva H. Starr. He has three brothers, Thomas F., Robert Degge and William J. Jones, and two sisters, Elizabeth A., who married James Parsons, and Mary, who married John Angell, sr.

Although long past the three score and ten years of life that are prescribed as the limit of mankind, Mr. Jones is still bright in mind and in fairly good health. Today, surrounded by his family, he is recounting the incidents of the past with much interest and looking forward to the time when he confidently feels he will round out the full century, a wish with which his friends are in hearty accord.