

## WILLIS CORNELIUS JONES

Willis Cornelius Jones, son of Robert Jones and Malinda (Ewing) was born in West Tenn., fifteen miles east of Bolivar, in Hardeman Co. His date of birth seems to be in question since one record shows "3 Sept. 1830", yet in his testimony before the Daves Commission in 1903, Willis Jones himself testified when asked his age "To the best evidence I can get, I will be 77 next August." (1826). He had one older brother, Alfred, whose birth date has been established as 24 Dec. 1827, so most likely the 1830 birth date is correct. He died at Amity, Arkansas about 1909 or 1912, as best we can determine and is buried in Jones Cemetery, Amity, Arkansas, though his grave is not marked. I have been told he gave the land for this cemetery, which bears his name, but this has not been substantiated by any documentary evidence. On a visit to this cemetery in the fall of 1964, Emma Howard, a step-daughter of Goodin Deaton, whose first wife was a granddaughter of Willis C. Jones, told me that she had been with Goodin Deaton many times as a young girl when he would go down to clean up at the cemetery. He told her that a grave immediately adjacent to those of his immediate family, marked with an upright rock, was the grave of the Jones who gave the land for the cemetery and that he was "related" to the family.

Willis C. Jones married on 3 February 1853 in Clark Co., Ark. (Book C, page 248) Mary Adeline (Folly) Wright, daughter of Richard and Elizabeth (Fowler) Wright, both natives of South Carolina. The Wright and Jones families had probably known each other for many years. They are both listed in the 1840 census of Pontotoc Co., Miss. The Wrights moved to that area from Ala. and S.C. and the Joneses moved there from Tenn.

Mary Adeline (Folly) Wright Jones was born 9 Feb. 1834 in Ga. or Ala. and died 29 March 1904 in Hot Springs, Arkansas. She is buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Hot Springs, Ark. and her grave has been located with a marker by descendants Myrtle Hardin and Minnie Montgomery, daughters of Malinda Jones Keith.

Willis C. Jones and his brother, Alfred Jones, both practiced medicine, and I understand that Willis Jones was quite noted in this area as a diagnostician. A descendant of Alfred Jones, Willis' brother, Mr. Granville Cubage told me that "Uncle Doc" was one of the most educated men he'd ever known, though he was "unschooled" - said he was one of the best baby doctors in this part of the country. He was also a Minister of the Gospel and his credentials are recorded in Marriage Book 4, p. 71, Hot Spring Co., Malvern, Arkansas as follows: "State of Arkansas, County of Clark, Nov. 17th A.D. 1867 - To all whom it may concern - Greeting - Know ye that we the undersigned acting by authority of and on behalf of the Christian Church do set apart our approved and well beloved Brother W. C. Jones to the work of the ministry, and we do recommend him to the faithful in Christ Jesus wheresoever the work of an Evangelist in the advancement of the Kingdom of our Lord may impel him", signed W.L. Harrison, Evangelist C.C. H. T. Merrell. Filed and recorded August 18, 1868 by A. H. Bassett, Clerk.

Goodspeed's History of Central Arkansas, published in 1889 states that Willis C. Jones came to Clark Co. in the early days and entered a quarter section of land which was covered with timber. Erecting a log house, he commenced the practice of medicine, being truly a pioneer in that county. Confederate pension records at the Arkansas History Commission in Little Rock, Arkansas show that W. C. Jones enlisted at Wayside in Hot Spring Co. in the spring of 1861 and served until the Confederate Army was disbanded. He served in Harrison's 4th Arkansas Infantry and later in Hanson's, Proctor's and Burke's Company under Col. J. R. Shaler and Captain R. Maxey. Application for pension was approved 8/21/1901. He and his family lived at Oms and Friendship, Ark. in both Clark and Hot Spring Cos. and later in Garland Co. They were listed in Valley Township, Hot Spring Co. in the 1880 census.

Granville Cubage says he remembers "Uncle Dock" as being about 5'8" or 9", neat and as well dressed as possible for the times - he was considered a "professional" man and dressed accordingly.

In Deed Book E. p. 299, Montgomery Co., Ark. Court House at Mt. Ida is a Warranty Deed between W. C. Jones and Mary A. Jones of the County of Clark for \$150. from M. C. O'Bryen, selling land in Montgomery Co. NW quarter of the NW qtr of Sec. 30 in T 4 S of the base line in R 21 W, 54 acres, 29 Jan. 1872, sworn before John A. Campbell, JP, filed 12 Mar. 1872, recorded 13 June 1872.

In the matter of the application of W. C. Jones for identification as a Mississippi Choctaw, when he was examined by the Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes in Muskogee, Indian Territory on Feb. 21, 1903, he gave his post office address as Hot Springs, Arkansas and stated he had lived there about a year and a half. He further stated that he claimed 1/8 Choctaw blood through his father, Robert Jones, and grandmother, Rebecca Box, under Article fourteen of the Treaty of 1830, which is as follows:

When asked if any of his Choctaw ancestors complied or attempted to comply with the provisions of that article, he replied "To the best of my knowledge, when we left Tenn. there was an Indian came up after us from the Choctaw Nation. I was going on 3 or 4 years old and I can't recollect his name." When asked if both his father and grandmother could speak the Choctaw language, he answered yes and stated that he himself understood the language, though not perfectly. He knew some words and could count - "If you wanted to tell a man he was a hundred years old, you said "Pocola Tualis".