

Title: D.A. Jones Biography. Page 1/13

Creator:

Subject: D.A. Jones, Clarksville, Illinois, United States, Miss Jessie Thompson, Whitby, Miss Frances Barton, beekeeping.

Description: A biography of D.A. Jones, one of Beeton's most famous residents. The three page biography covers, in detail, his life after his arrival in Beeton, right up to his death in 1910.

Publisher:

Contributor:

Date:

Type: Document

Format: JPEG / PDF

Identifier: 0022

Source: Beeton History Vertical File - New Tecumseth Public Library: Beeton Branch

Language: En

Relation:

Coverage:

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D.A. JONES

Thirty-one year old David Allanson Jones arrived in Clarksville in the 1860's, with a variety of experiences to his credit. He was born in 1836 in Ringwood, in York County and as a young man had moved to Illinois in the United States. Here he worked at farming, showing an interest in livestock. He later operated a training school for dogs and horses. When this failed he turned to selling books and fruit trees, earning enough money to return to Canada. Eventually he arrived in Clarksville, opening a store in partnership with his brother. In June 1867 he acquired his first fifty-acre property in Clarksville. Little did he realize how much he would change this small village and how much it would contribute to his life.

Shortly after his arrival he married Miss Jessie Thompson of Whitby. After her death he married Miss Frances Barton but had no family. Eventually he became Postmaster of the village—a position he would hold for nearly half a century. Thus D.A. Jones settled down and quickly became one of the leading citizens of the community.

Mr. Jones gradually became involved in many different enterprises. He delved into building, logging, lumbering, local politics and gardening. He also became one of the largest land speculators in the area. Over the years he acquired much of the land which the village eventually developed upon. These land holdings put him in such an influential position that he made many major decisions concerning the construction of buildings in the village. An example of this is the surveying of Centre Street. At one time the major street running north from Main was Patterson Street. Mr. Jones owned much land further west and he arranged to have a large gully, running north and northwest, filled in with gravel. After this was completed Centre Street was surveyed. He eventually became interested in beekeeping and its mysterious challenge became the driving force occupying his life.

VILLAGE LOTS FOR SALE.

The undersigned has for sale a large number of lots, in the
the registered Village of Beeton, at

PRICE TO SUIT PURCHASER,

Terms of Payment Easy.

Plans of the Village furnished on application. Lots can be
furnished in almost any portion of the Village.

Sales made on Monthly Instalment Plan

D. A. JONES, BEETON, ONT.

In 1870 he purchased two swarms of bees from a neighbour and he was now in business. Mr. Jones would, from this simple beginning, become the first commercial beekeeper in Canada. His contributions to the bee industry were impressive:

- pioneered large-scale honey production
- developed beekeeping equipment
- developed a better breeding stock
- printed a bee journal
- founder of the Ontario Beekeepers Association
- became internationally known abroad and referred to as the "Bee King" of the Nineteenth century; as a tribute to his endeavours the village name of Clarksville was changed by postal authorities to "Beeton" in 1875.

The change in the postal name had evolved out of confusion. The first location for handling mail in Tecumseth Township was on concession 7, the second, was on concession 6, and in 1860 the nearest hamlet was chosen. Clarksville was the village name but mail came addressed to "Tecumseh". This was confusing as there was another Tecumseh post office in Essex County. Because there was so much emphasis on bees in Clarksville, and to avoid confusion, the community was dubbed "bee town". Eventually the postal authorities eliminated the confusion by officially calling the post office Beeton.

So knowledgeable did Mr. Jones become in the art of beekeeping that he decided to devote his findings to a publication. Thus, **The Canadian Bee Journal** made its first appearance on April 1, 1885. It was printed by D.A. Jones and Company Ltd. of Beeton, as a weekly and sold for \$1.00 per year. It was published in Beeton for 8 years under the direction of Mr. Jones. Unfortunately, a fire in October, 1892 destroyed the entire plant. In conjunction with this bee journal this press also published **The Beeton World** and the **Canadian Poultry Journal**.

This fire ended the bee and poultry journals while **The Beeton World** continued as a popular source of news for several more decades.

Following the fire in 1892 Mr. Jones' bee empire slowly disintegrated. The loss of his plant, the expense of the importation of bees from Europe and Asia, the expense of his colonies and the infiltration of poor stock, contributed to his bankruptcy. Thus, in the short span of only twenty-three years D.A. Jones had vastly contributed to beekeeping, made his name internationally known and respected and put Beeton (Beeton) on the map.

He was not yet finished. After these financial difficulties he turned his energies into the building up of his community. The land which he owned was surveyed into plots and laid out into streets, along which were planted native soft maple, basswood, and elms, all pollen and nectar-producing trees. They were planted for the use of his loved bees as well as to beautify the village. D.A. Jones died quietly in his 75th year at his home in Beeton, in November, 1910. He was buried in the Presbyterian Cemetery, Beeton.

Thus, Robert Clark was the founder of the village and for a few years it was named after him. However, D.A. Jones became the motivating force behind the village during its growing years. For over fifty years this man administered the activities of the village and today he is considered the father of the community.

D.A. JONES DEAD

Founder of Beeton Passed Away After Brief Illness.

For Nearly Half a Century He Worked for the Town—Held the Office of Postmaster During Most of His Residence Here—Was Charitable and Kind and is Deeply Mourned.

Dead, at his residence in Beeton, on Sunday, November 20, 1910, David Alanson Jones, in his 75th year.

Although it was known he was very ill, the news of the death of Mr. D. A. Jones on Sunday morning came as a shock to everyone in town. He had always been an active and energetic man, both mentally and physically, but for some months was troubled with a weakness of the heart and the immediate cause of his death was angina pectoris.

He was born in the township of Whitchurch and spent his younger days on his father's farm. In the year 1864 he came to Beeton and in partnership with his brother Senator L. M. Jones, built a store and commenced a general mercantile business which was continued for a number of years, when his brother withdrew from the business and went to Brantford, and Mr. Jones leased the store, leading him free to form a company and start the business from which Beeton derived its name and which gained him the title of "The Bee King of Canada." The company was known as the "D. A. Jones, Limited" and a large factory was erected for the purpose of manufacturing all kinds of bee supplies and also sashes and door-hardware was given in this fac-

tory to a number of men the year round. Also in connection with this factory several apiaries were located in various parts of the township and during certain seasons the bees were moved to "Jones Island," on the east shore of Georgian Bay. While at the head of this firm Mr. Jones traveled extensively, making a trip to Palestine and Cyprus to study the condition of bees and to see if they would be suitable to this country. He was the first one to import the Italian queen bees into America, and also shipped bees to all parts of the world. Students came here from various parts of Canada, the United States and the Old Country to study the management of bees.

He was the sole exhibitor of honey at the first Industrial Exhibition at Toronto, and was a past president of the Canadian Beekeepers' Association. When he was actively engaged in this industry he also published *The Beeton World*, the *Canadian Bee Journal* and the *Canadian Poultry Journal*.

During his early residence he bought a tract of land which now comprises part of Beeton. This land was surveyed into plots and he laid out the streets of the village and planted the beautiful shade trees which now adorn the streets and will stand as monuments to his energies for some time to come. His whole aim was given to the building up of the town. How much the community owes him it is impossible to estimate. His many charitable acts and kindnesses will never be forgotten, but his good and amiable name is stricken from the ever lessening roll of our old settlers. His very last act in life was to send a consignment of clothing,

contributed by himself and others, to poor settlers in Parry Sound district, with whose conditions he was personally familiar.

In politics Mr. Jones was a strong Liberal and on two or three occasions he conducted exploring parties in the north country for the government, penetrating the wilderness from the main line of the C.P.R. near Sudbury, and on one trip going through Hudson's Bay as far north as Ballin's Bay, enduring great hardships.

He had been a life-long Presbyterian and contributed largely toward the erection of the Presbyterian church here. When the contents of his will is made known it is expected that all religious denominations and the citizens generally will be benefited by a provision made for the erection of a mausoleum in the cemetery.

He had been postmaster here almost continuously since his arrival in town, 46 years ago.

Beeton World
NOV 1910

D.A. Jones
MEMORIAL DAY

Beeton Ontario

June 1, 1957



David Allanson Jones

1836-1910

D. A. JONES MEMORIAL DAY

JUNE 1, 1957

2:00 p.m.

BEETON - ONTARIO

PROGRAMME

PRESBYTERIAN CEMETERY

Chairman - Dr. S. R. McKelvey
 Dedication of the Cairn - Rev. J. E. Taylor
 Selection by the Band - Hymn
 D. A. Jones - the Beekeeper - Mr. Eldon C. Ankenman,
 President, Ontario Bee-keepers' Association.
 Unveiling of the Cairn - Honourable W. A. Goodfellow,
 Minister of Agriculture, Province
 of Ontario - Introduced by Honour-
 able Rev. A. W. Downer

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PARADE TO BEETON COMMUNITY PARK

Welcome to Beeton - Mr. Thomas Little, Reeve of Beeton
 Welcome to Simcoe County - Mr. Fisher Ganton, Warden of
 Simcoe County
 D. A. Jones - the Citizen - Honourable W. E. Rowe
 Archaeological and Historical Sites
 Chairman Board, Province of Ontario - Mr. William Cranston
 Unveiling of Memorial Plaque - Honourable Bryan L. Cath-
 cart, Minister of Travel and
 Publicity, Province of Ont-
 ario - Introduced by Mr.
 George G. Johnston, M.L.A.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

- Prepared by P. W. Burke
 Ontario Agricultural College

DAVID ALLANSON JONES

David Allanson Jones was the first commercial beekeeper in Canada. His beekeeping enterprise became so large that he became known as the "Bee King" of the nineteenth century.

D. A. Jones was born at Ringwood in York County. During his lifetime he had many interests and activities. Before taking up residence at Clarkesville in Simcoe County he lived for a while in Illinois, where he went to work on a livestock farm. Later he operated a training school for dogs and horses. His most successful venture in the U.S.A. was selling books and fruit trees. Shortly after returning to Canada he set up a general store at Clarkesville in partnership with his brother, later Senator L. M. Jones. When his brother left the business to move to Brantford D. A. Jones leased the store to another merchant so that he would have more time to devote to other interests.

1 He bought some land and set out a village on part of his property. The unveiling of the D. A. Jones memorial on June 1, 1957, is ninety years to the day from the acquisition of his first fifty-acre property, June 1, 1867, at Clarkesville. For nearly half a century he was Postmaster of the Town. Besides other buildings, he erected an Agricultural hall and skating rink 60' x 150'.

On several occasions Jones conducted exploration parties into the north for the Government. On one trip he travelled through Hudson Bay as far north as Baffin Land.

Shortly after arriving at Clarkesville he married Jessie Thompson of Whitby, who predeceased him by two and one-half years. About eighteen months after his first wife's death he married Frances Barton of Toronto. He had no family.

His greatest contribution and his greatest claims to fame were in the beekeeping industry. He pioneered many aspects of the business in Canada, such as large-scale honey production, beekeeping-equipment manufacture, queen breeding, and the printing of a bee journal. It was a tribute to Jones' beekeeping endeavours that the post office name of "Clarkesville" was changed by the postal authorities to "Beeton" in 1874.

It is most appropriate that the Ontario Beekeepers' Association has participated in the presentation of memorials to his memory, as Jones was instrumental in starting the Association. He was the first president, in 1881.

Although Jones' father and grandfather had been beekeepers, the earliest recorded interest of D. A. Jones in beekeeping indicates he purchased two swarms of bees in Langstroth hives from a neighbour in 1870. On July 15, 1870, he patented "The Jones Perfection Bee Hive", which was a double-walled hive - the internal one all tin and glass. He used this type of hive for about ten years. In 1871 Jones wrote in the American Bee Journal

"I commenced here this spring with six stocks in movable comb hives and one in a box - seven in all. The box stock never yielded any surplus until transferred, and then only 31 lbs. in comb and five by the extractor - 36 lbs. in all. From my other 6 stocks I have taken nine swarms and 1707 lbs. of beautiful honey. ---I have now 16 stocks (the fall of the same year) all in good condition. I sling (extract-Ed.) them every three days."

In 1880 he produced 70,000 lbs. from about 400 colonies. The apiary foreman was paid \$12.00 per month and boys as assistants received 35¢ per day. That year he put up the first display of honey at Toronto National Exhibition and sold his crop there. By 1884 he was operating approximately 1000 colonies.

In 1886 Jones along with R. McKnight, S. T. Pettit, and S. Cornell, put on an exhibit of 30,000 lbs. of honey at the Colonial Exhibition, London, England. The honey was all sold by these men and a good price was returned to the beekeepers who had supplied the honey.

After the showing of the large exhibit at the Toronto Fair, Jones was hailed as the most successful beekeeper of the day. For several years students came to him for instruction and to work in his yards at Beeton. It was reported in *Gleanings in Bee Culture* that Jones had as many as 20-30 beekeeping students at once, who paid no tuition but did receive 10¢ per hour when there was work for them in the factory. The students assisted with the apiary work where possible as a part of their instruction. Many of those students later became well known in beekeeping circles of America. George Lang, deceased in 1938, was one of Canada's largest

comb honey producers. F. W. Jones (no relation to D. A. Jones) of Bedford, Quebec, was the founder of Jones and Son, Beekeepers' Supplies. R. F. Holterman was the first official lecturer in Apiculture at the Ontario Agricultural College, and was also for a time the Editor of the Canadian Bee Journal. Wm. Couse of Streetsville established a beekeeping and seed business in Peel County and was the last surviving Charter member of the Ontario Beekeepers' Association.

Jones entered the beekeeping equipment manufacturing business in 1872, and by 1875 sold his first comb foundation. By 1886 he was employing a large number of people, making various wood and metal beekeeping supplies, as well as sash and doors. At that time the business was controlled by a joint stock company of which Mr. Jones was the President. The Canadian Bee Journal of June, 1889, carried a descriptive catalogue of the D. A. Jones Company, Ltd., which described and pictured many items of beekeeping equipment invented and manufactured by Jones.

3 Honeybees were not native to this Continent and were brought in by the early settlers. New breeding stock had to be imported from Europe or Asia. As far as can be ascertained, Jones was the first to import bees from Overseas into Ontario. He could not interest the Government in importations of bees. In 1879 Jones and Frank Benton from the United States went to Cyprus and Palestine at Jones' expense in a quest for breeding stock of honeybees. An apiary was established on the Island of Cyprus for the raising of queens. In June of the following year Mr. Jones returned to his home in Canada with a large number of queens, leaving Benton behind to continue the work.

Jones had obtained several hives of Holy Land bees which were hived in clay cylinders about 30" long and with an inside diameter of 8". Transporting these bees to America appears to have been a difficult undertaking, but was crowned with considerable success. The clay cylinders containing the bees were conveyed by mules to Jaffa and then were brought to the Cyprus headquarters by boat. There small boxes about 6 inches square were prepared in which were fastened old combs containing honey. Hundreds of bees with queens were placed in them ready for shipment. Mr. Jones accompanied the bees to his home in Beeton in June of 1880.

The queens that Jones brought back from Cyprus and

Palestine were established in his apiaries near Beeton. From this foundation stock queens were shipped to islands in Georgian Bay for mating and were returned to Beeton after they had begun to lay eggs and thence mailed out as ordered. It was recorded by Mr. W. F. Clarke in *Gleanings in Bee Culture* of October, 1881:

"Palestine Island where the Holy Land bees were located is 16 miles from Parry Sound, approximately 100 miles from Beeton, 40 of which were travelled by rail and the remainder by steam-boat. The steam-boat used was on a regular route between Collingwood and Parry Sound and passed near a point of Palestine Island. From this Island bees and all needed supplies were distributed by sailing yacht and rowboat to the two other islands which are from six to eight miles apart. There are no bees at all that reach them except what Jones takes. Cyprus Island was devoted to the Cyprians, Italy Island to the Italian, and Carniola to the Carniolan bees. On each island there are a number of nucleus hives accompanied by a number of full colonies containing the best drones produced at the Beeton apiaries. A hive of bees could not live there on natural supplies. The bees gather very little and must be fed continually through the summer season. They are taken to these islands in the spring and returned to Beeton in the fall - this was rather a costly and tedious process."

4

The queen breeding undertaking of Mr. Jones was very unprofitable. The islands were used for only four seasons. Root reported in *Gleanings in Bee Culture*, October, 1884, that "he had visited the Georgian Bay Islands with D. A. Jones. On Palestine Island 30 - 40 nucleus hives were kept".

The queens raised from the imported stock were actually sold for as high as fifteen dollars and were distributed over Canada and the United States, but the repeat orders were not numerous as the bees were found too cross in temperament.

Jones began the publication of the first paper devoted to the interest of beekeeping in Ontario. The initial number of the *Canadian Bee Journal* made its appearance April 1, 1885. It was printed by D. A. Jones and Co. Ltd., of Beeton, as a weekly at \$1.00 per year. Jones remained its senior editor until June 15, 1893. The *Journal* printed on that date was the last issued by the office at Beeton. A fire swept through the entire plant, destroying both the equipment factory and the printing office. He had also published the

Beeton World and the Canadian Poultry Journal. Jones contributed many articles on bee management in the Canadian Bee Journal and also Gleanings in Bee Culture printed in the U. S. A.

Little was heard of Jones in the beekeeping world after the destruction of his plant at Beeton in 1893. The scourge of foulbrood sweeping the Province the latter part of the nineteenth century reduced his bees to a non-productive state. The expense of importation of bees and queen breeding, coupled with the ravages of foulbrood and the loss of his plant by fire, sent Jones into bankruptcy.

After these financial difficulties he turned his energies into the building up of his community, which seemed to be an ambition from the time of his first arrival. The land which he had bought was surveyed into plots and laid out into streets, along which were planted native soft maple, basswood, and elms, all pollen and nectar-producing trees. They were planted for the use of the bees as well as to beautify the village. At present some of these trees are still standing as a living monument to his memory.

5

Jones died in his 75th year at his residence at Beeton after a brief illness on November 20, 1910. He was buried in the Presbyterian Cemetery, Beeton.

Through the efforts of the Georgian Bay Beekeepers' Association, the Simcoe County Tourist and Industrial Committees, the village of Beeton, the Township of Tecumseth, and the Ontario Beekeepers Association a cairn bearing the following inscription will be unveiled:

Here in land he gave
For a church site
And in a community to which
He brought lasting
Beauty and fame lies
DAVID ALLANSON JONES
1836 - 1910
World renowned apiarist
And editor,
Born in Ringwood, Ont.,
He came here in 1867
To found his famous honey
Industry and his
Bee Journal.
The basswood, elm and maple
Trees which line our streets
And the flowers which
Abound in our countryside are
His living memorials.

The Archeological and Historical Sites Board of the Ontario Department of Travel and Publicity produced a plaque pictured below and which will be erected in the Community Park, Beeton.



THE ROLE OF BEEKEEPING IN THE AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY OF ONTARIO

6

The keeping of bees is perhaps one of the oldest forms of agricultural production, being at one time the major source of sugar and wax. The honeybee was not native to the American Continent but was brought here by the early settlers for this same purpose. Conditions for honey production proved so good on the New Continent that beekeeping thrived and in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century slowly developed into an industry under the leadership of men such as David Allanson Jones.

It is only in very recent years that the honeybee is receiving recognition for its true value in the agricultural economy - the role which it plays in the pollination of our many legume and fruit crops. The honeybee is the only pollinating insect directly under the control of man and can be moved readily from one area to another wherever its services as a pollinator are required. In recent years agricultural practices have tended to destroy the natural nesting places of the wild bees. Many areas are now absolutely dependent on the honeybee for pollination and this tendency will increase as our agricultural economy continues to be intensified.