

DANIEL AMASA JONES

And His Wabash & Erie Canal Connections

By Charles Davis
FAG #99514704

Col. Daniel Amasa Jones was born June 29, 1807 at Hartford, Connecticut. His grandfather, Israel Jones, was a trustee of Williams College and died very suddenly at the age of 92 years. He was a surveyor by profession. His son Amasa Jones, father of Daniel, was a seafaring man, who commanded a vessel cruising between Hartford and the West Indies. Amasa died in 1808. His widow moved with her infant son, Daniel, to North Adams, Massachusetts, where he spent his childhood.

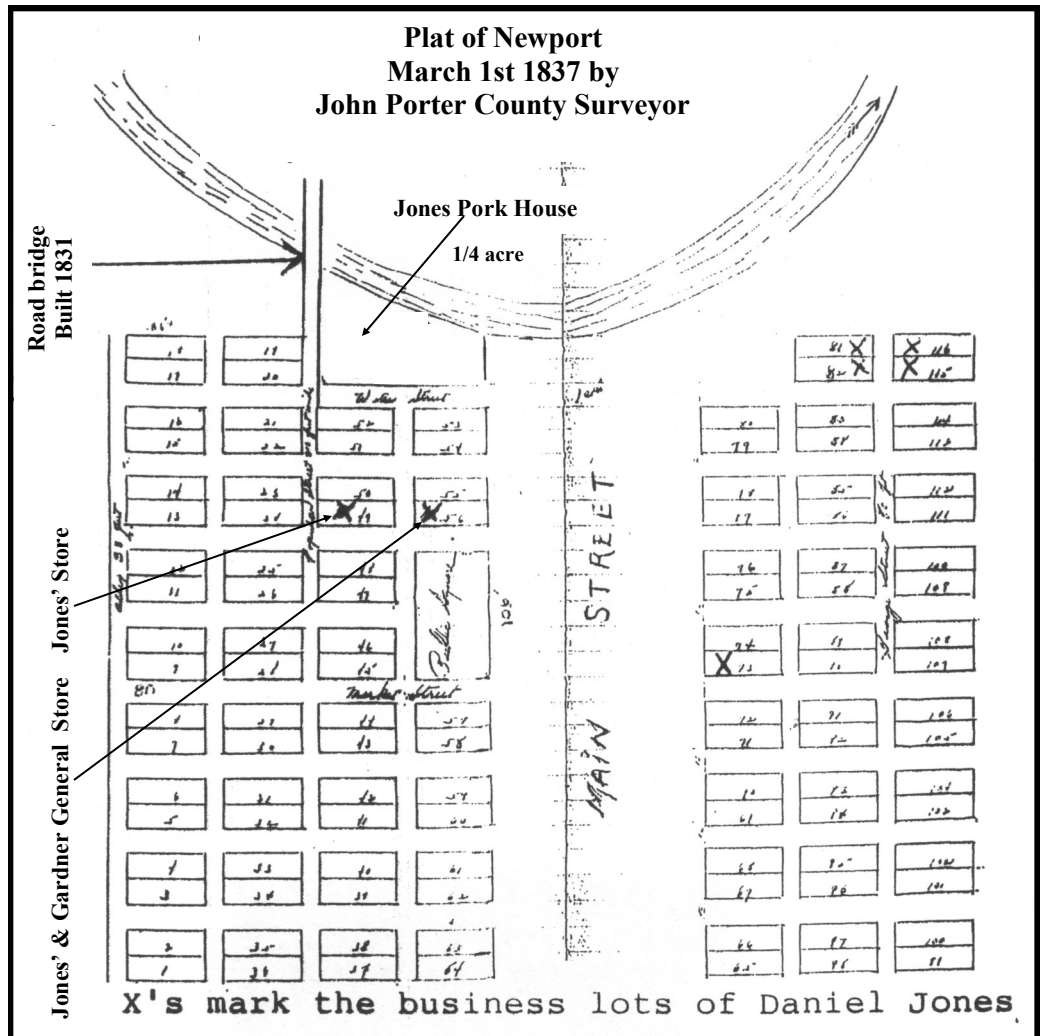
At the age of 17 Daniel went to Albany to act as a clerk in a store. Three years later he set out for Louisville, where he found employment in his brother's soap and candle factory. After making a successful journey to New Orleans in the interest of his brother's firm, he was promoted to a position of greater trust where he extended his acquaintance among the wholesale merchants of the city.

Around 1828 Daniel, age 21, moved to Newport, Vermillion county, Indiana at the time Newport was platted as a "village." B. F. Bowen states on page 36 of his *History of Parke and Vermillion Counties* that "Jones was shipping hogs, some of which died. These were rendered into soap, which was sold for goods that a wagon could hold." As described in the above, this is how Daniel got his start in that town. He first bought lot 71 for \$15.00 on June 30, 1830. Deed Record 2/214 That year he also got a vendors license from the county commissioners to sell merchandise and did so for the following years through 1849. On January 29, 1831, he bought lots 49 and 107 from William Webster. D.R. 2/294. On lot 49 he built and operated a store. Evidently his business ventures were successful.

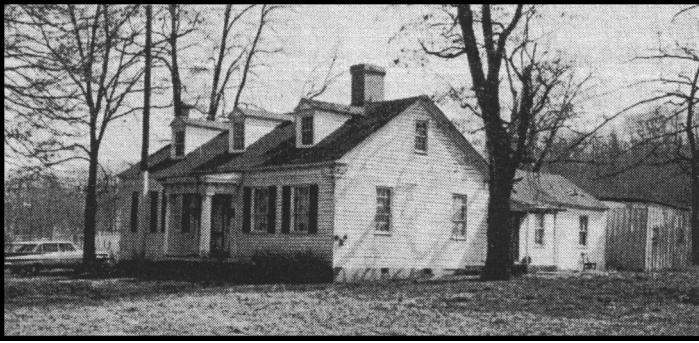
On January 21, 1832 Daniel bought a quarter of an acre of land adjoining the town to the Little Vermillion River and reserved the bed of the river. On this lot he built a pork house, and to satisfy a mortgage on it, Chester Munson and Sam Hedges set up a steam powered saw mill at this site agreeing to saw 2,000 feet of poplar planks in the space of 24 hours before the deadline of September 1, 1832. This description is found in the deed.

Daniel's next big move was buying an equal half of lot 56 from Samuel B. Gardner, making Gardner his partner in 1832. D.R. 2/463 They built a three story building and used it as a general store.

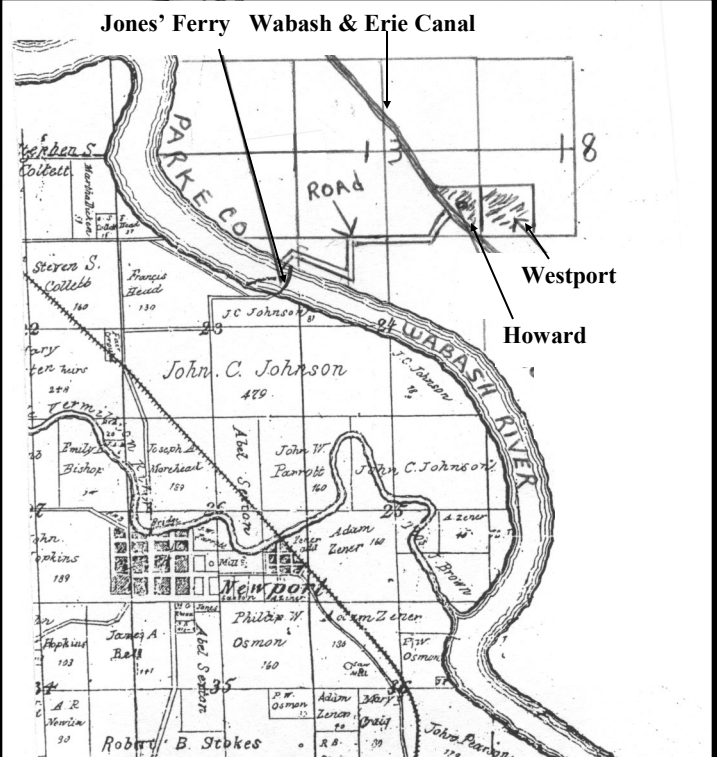
In June of 1834, Daniel Jones deeded one acre to the school district, described as the east half of the south-west quarter, on which to build a school. D.R. 3/334 In the following years he bought several more business lots and sold some including lot 71, the first lot he purchased in



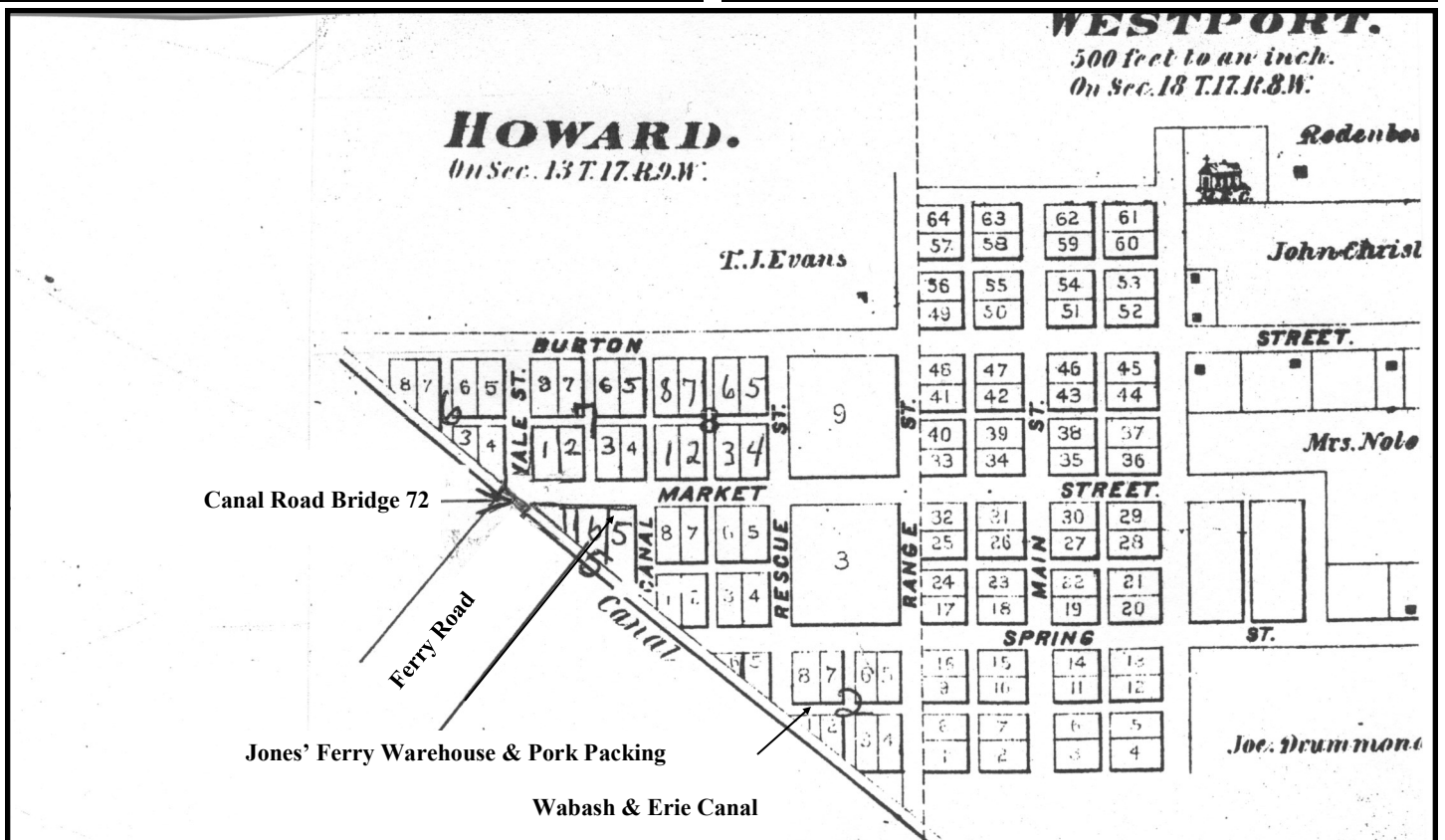
THE HOOSIER PACKET - JANUARY 2014



Above: Daniel Amasa Jones (1807-1886) home built in 1838 in Newport, Indiana that stood just west of the school.
Below: Filson-Jones-Johnson Ferry site with house built by Daniel Amasa Jones in 1844 two miles northeast of Newport near the Filson or Johnson Cemetery.



Above: 1872 plat map showing location of Newport, Howard, Westport, Jones Ferry, and the W&E Canal in Parke County.
Below: 1874 plat map of Howard/Westport showing Wabash & Erie Canal, Jones warehouse, and canal road bridge 72.



THE HOOSIER PACKET - JANUARY 2014

1832. The list of lots purchased is very long. He was a partner with Charles Cuthbertson on lot 73 and Benjamin Crane on lots 81-82 in the meat packing business.

Daniel married Mary Gould Harris on July 2, 1838 in Parke County. She was a sister of Persius E. Harris, a businessman in Rockville, and the daughter of Sam and Lydia Harris. She was born in 1820 in Vincennes, Indiana. By 1838 Daniel was well-to-do enough that he built a house for his bride just west of the school, which burned around 1969.

To further his shipping trade, on October 26, 1844 Daniel bought the Filson Ferry with 41.05 acres from the heirs of Thomas Filson (d. 1836 and buried in the Johnson cemetery near the ferry). D.R. 9/12 This land was located two miles northeast of Newport, Indiana. There he built a ferry house that was used to pack pork for the flat boats headed to New Orleans. Josephus Collett joined him in this business and was very successful. At this time construction began on the Wabash and Eire Canal from Lodi through Parke County. The ferry was dozed sometime in the 1990s. After the ferry was abandoned, the house was used as a family home for some time.

To extend his trade and shipping, Daniel bought lot 6 in block 5 in Howard, Parke County, from businessman John Gaw for \$126 on January 21, 1850. This lot was on the canal. The Parke County Tax List of 1851 values it at \$1,500. Daniel built a large canal warehouse on this lot. Lettering on it said, "D. A. Jones' Newport Landing." A great deal of wheat and corn was marketed there. Quite a large amount was brought to the warehouse from Vermilion County via the Jones Ferry.

Alfred Hadley, a surveyor for John Gaw, platted the town of Howard in February 1848 as an addition to Westport adjoining the two towns to each other. Today Howard is nothing more than a patch of ground. Samuel Chew Madden said back then, "now its nothing more than a watermelon patch." But Westport took on the name of Howard. "With all the stores and businesses there during the canal days, they felt like they were on the road to Buffalo."

Daniel supported education. He participated in building a 30' X 50', two-story, brick Seminary that had two rooms on each floor. It opened its doors in October 1851. It was constructed by Robert Nixon, Daniel A. Jones

DANIEL AMASA JONES' FAMILY

Name	Birth/Place	Death	Burial/Place	Marriage/Place
Amasa Jones	1757	1808		
m. Cynthia Jones	1771	1837		
<u>Daniel Amasa Jones</u>	6-29-1807 Hartford, CT	1-11-1886	Graceland Cem. Chicago IL	7-02-1838 Parke Co IN
m1 Mary Gould Harris	11-00-1820 Vincennes, IN	12-11-1855	Old Rockville Cem. Newport, IN	7-02-1838 ParkeCo IN
<u>Robert Harris Jones</u>	4-02-1839	11-05-1862	Old Rockville Cem. S. K L. 28	
<u>Isabella Cynthia Jones</u>	9-08-1841 Zanesville, OH	12-21-1868	Cedar Hill Cem Hartford Ct.	10-07-1862 Chicago IL
m. Francis Olcott Allen				10-07-1862 Chicago IL
Harris Hall Allen	1864	1864		
Clarence Jones Allen	6-07-1865 Titusville, PA	1943	Milwaukee, WI	
m. Elizabeth Seymour Steele				
Bessie Cynthia Allen	1868	1890		
<u>Mary Olivia Jones</u>	1843	1927		
m. Octavius Samuel Newell				
<u>Daniel Alexis Jones</u>	11-12-1845 Newport, IN	8-26-1885 Oxford, NB		3-16-1870 Parke Co IN
m. Mary C. Patterson	1851	5-05-1933 Oakland Cem Montezuma IN		divorced
m. William W. Stout	1837	2-02-1930 Oakland Cem Montezuma IN		
<u>William Jarvis Jones</u>	12-00-1847			
m.			widowed/living in boarding house 1900	
<u>Harriet Gould Jones</u>	1849			1878 Chicago IL
m. Nathan Henry Sabin				1878 Chicago IL
Ruth M. Sabin	1878			
Harriet H. Sabin	1885	2-19-1951 Williamstown IL		
<u>George Edwin Jones</u>	2-00-1854	9-04-1924 Graceland Cem Chicago IL		1875
m. Etta Imogene Price	1-06-1857 Chicago IL	9-09-1928 Graceland Cem Chicago IL		1875
m2 Harriet A. Knapp	1822	2-10-1905 Graceland Cem Chicago IL		1858

THE HOOSIER PACKET - JANUARY 2014

and his partner Charles Cuthbertson for \$2,757.50.

After three years of trade at Howard, Daniel sold the warehouse to Horace B. Smith of Vermillion County on March 28, 1854 for \$1,600. D.R. 17/10 I traced the owners of the warehouse to its end as H. B. Smith of Parke County sold it to Asher Norton of Vigo County for \$1,400 D.R. 17/10, the same day he bought it. Asher Norton of Cuyahoga, Ohio sold it to E. E. Boudinot of Vigo County for \$200.00 on August 27, 1869. D.R. 29/328 By this it seems business declined through here. I found no deed on it after this date until 1977. The Wabash and Erie Canal closed here in 1875.

On December 11, 1855 Daniel's wife, Mary, died in Newport at the age of 35 years. He took her body to Rockville, buried her in the old cemetery and erected a large marble marker in her memory. After her death, he began selling his holdings in Newport. When he sold lots 105-106 in 1856 he had moved to Licking County, Ohio. D. R. 15/304 He moved back to Vermillion County, Indiana and sold lots 115-116 for \$1,000 to Wm. Henderson in 1857. D. R. 15/553

In 1858 Daniel married Harriet A. Knapp. At this time your author knows nothing about her.

In 1859 Daniel was again in Licking County, Ohio when he sold lot 59 for \$500. On July 23, 1860 he sold the Jones Ferry to John C. Johnson for \$4,000. D.R. 19/98 The deed record shows him living in Cook County, Chicago, Illinois at this time.

Though he sold out at Newport, he bought and sold land and lots in and around Montezuma until about 1877. In 1868 he bought an interest in the Obrist and Davies Woolen Mill on lots 1/2/3/4 in Montezuma for \$2,000. D.R. 26/366 It was situated on the canal with a side cut for loading/unloading canal boats. It had a large mill stone on lot 4. Daniel and his partners sold the mill to Erastus M. Benson of Benson's Basin on April 20, 1871 for \$7,000. D.R. 30/425

1871 was the year the mill burned down along with Benson's canal boat "Indiana." It was this tragedy that hurt Mr. Benson financially. The location of the mill was on Market Street starting on the northwest corner of Market and North Street in the North Addition to Montezuma. In 2013 Leon Hann lives on this property. He mows the canal bed, which looks nice.

From Daniel Jones' business transactions he proved to be a very shrewd man. He knew when to buy and when to sell.

Daniel's son, Robert Harris Jones, died on December 21, 1862. Daniel brought him back to Rockville and buried him next to his mother Mary G. (Harris) Jones. His daughter Isabella Cynthia Jones Allen died at Zanesville, Ohio in 1868. She was buried in Zanesville's Cedar Hill Cemetery.

Daniel was so successful that he became a millionaire. He was also the President of the Chicago Board of Trade.

Before his death, Daniel would see another child die. His son, Daniel Alexis Jones, died in 1885 at the age of 45 in Oxford, Nebraska. Daniel Alexis Jones was married to Mary C. Patterson in 1870. Soon thereafter she divorced him. She was the daughter of James and Sharill (Collins) Patterson, who operated the Armiesburg, Indiana mill during the canal era. After the divorce, young Daniel led a wandering and unsettled life.

Before his death, young Daniel requested that he be taken to Rockville and be buried beside his mother, Mary. Honoring his request his partner on the Nebraska ranch exhausted every device to see that his body was shipped. Although he died at a place far removed from the railroad, the embalming was so perfect that the corpse reached Rockville after nine days with the appearance of one just fallen asleep. He was buried beside his mother. His obituary was in the *Rockville Tribune* on September 3, 1855. It does not say what caused his death.

Daniel Amasa Jones, our subject, passed away at his residence in Chicago, Illinois on January 11, 1886 and was buried in Graceland Cemetery beside his second wife, Harriet.



Graceland Cemetery, Chicago, IL

The people that traded and did business with Daniel thought he was a good and honest man. One of the good things he did was donate funds to build an addition to the Presbyterian Hospital in West Chicago. He was a long standing member of that faith, and when he died, he left \$10,000 to the Rockville Presbyterian Church as a memorial to his first wife and mother of his children, Mary Jones.

Sources:

THE HOOSIER PACKET - JANUARY 2014

Deeds in Recorder's offices in Rockville, Indiana and Newport, Indiana court houses.	<i>History of Parke and Vermillion Counties, Indiana.</i> Indianapolis, IN: B. F. Bowen & Co., 1913.
1837 Plat Map, Newport, Indiana Recorder's office	Obituary of Daniel Amasa Jones, <i>Chicago Tribune</i> 1-13-1886.
Find-A-Grave #99514704 Daniel Amasa Jones	O'Donnell, H. L. <i>Newport & Vermillion Townships.</i> 1968.
Find-A-Grave #99514944 Harriet A Knapp Jones	