

LILLIAN "LILLIE" VIOLA (WARDEN) JONES

(Mrs. Christopher Clemmons Jones)

Old Settler - Finney County, Kansas

Written by Delora Black

Consultants: Mr. and Mrs. Christopher C. Jones, Garden City, Kansas

** Additional information added about Lillian (Warden) Jones and her family*

Lillie (Warden) Jones came to Garden City, Finney County, Kansas, in 1886 with her family, the Wardens, during the big real estate boom. They were among the volumes of people brought here by the Santa Fe Railway project and the irrigation project. People flocked to Garden City, and within a short time, it had expanded into a prosperous city of the West. Rent was very high, and because there was such a large number of people, there was a shortage of houses. The Warden family finally succeeded in getting a two-room home for \$35 a month, and it was unfurnished.

The first people they became acquainted with were; Mr. H. M. Knox, owner of a grocery store, and John Craig, owner of a blacksmith shop. Lillie's father, George W. Warden, set up a harness shop and, at the same time, homesteaded land on a tract twelve miles northeast of Garden City. They were required to live on it for a certain amount of time, and the rest of the time, they lived in town.

On the first Fourth of July that the Wardens were here, the town held a big old-fashioned barbeque. Lillie Jones described the event, "They dug a large pit, especially for the fire purpose of the barbeque, and large iron railway ties were laid across that. Next, they laid one-quarter of a buffalo and several cows across these as they simmered and cooked on one side. Then they turned all of the meat to the other side with the aid of pitchforks. Women waited at tables fixed to hold the quarters of meat, which was cut up and distributed to the crowd".

In the fall of 1886, they held the first Fair on the old fairgrounds, located about two miles south of the cemetery. The cemetery is north of Garden City. The G. A. R. Boys and the Women's Relief Quarter were in charge of this Fair. The first organized band in Garden City played for the Fair, and Mr. George Warden was a band member. It was much like the fairs of today (1936). It had livestock shows, poultry exhibitions, household exhibits, and horseracing. One woman rode a buffalo.

When Lillie (Warden) Jones first arrived here, the school was in the old Methodist Church. She was eleven years old. Her teacher for that year was Miss Mary Hopper. There were four rooms upstairs and four rooms down. That divided the children into

two groups; the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth grades were upstairs, and held downstairs were the first, second, third, and fourth-grade classes.

Each group met in a room for morning exercises, which consisted of a bible verse reading, prayer, and singing. They met each morning in a sizeable open-spaced room, and when they completed their morning exercises, they drew petitions together for the different classes. They also needed to buy a piano for the children who put on a play at the Opera House. The Opera House, built in 1886 and 1887, was what we would now consider a motion picture house. However, there were not motion pictures in those days. Most of the plays performed in those days were by traveling troops who came to this area. They would stay one day or up to a week. Those who stayed a week gave prize tickets for sacks of flour, groceries, etc., and on the last night, they would give these away to the holders of the lucky numbers. The old Opera House is now the K. P. Hall in Garden City. Some of the old seats that were in the Opera House remain in the K. P. Hall today.

In the summer of 1886, the plague of Mountain Fever broke out. Doctors were puzzled, as they could not find the cause for the strange disease while it was raging. Five to six funerals were held every day and sometimes more. Mrs. Jones herself and her mother had the plague. The sister of Mr. Jones, Allie, who was 16 years old, died from it. Walking through the city cemetery, one can probably find more tombstones dated 1886 than any other year. One theory for the cause of the disease was the lack of a sewer system. Livery barns and places to keep livestock were common even in town in those days. Each home had a well. Since water is close to the surface, they dug the wells reasonably shallow. The waste from the barns would soak through the soil when it rained into the wells. People drinking the water would contract the disease germs.

In 1891, Lillie Warden married Mr. Christopher Clemmons Jones. They have been married for 46 years and have lived in Garden City most of this time.

Mr. Jones worked for the Governmental Experiment Farm in 1890. He and H. C. Brooks, his stepfather, ran the first steam plow ever brought to Garden City. It was a large steam engine-looking affair. Resembling a tractor in front, it had one large plow and several smaller ones.

Mr. Jones and many other young men of the town had a rip-roaring good time on Halloween nights. There were not a lot of police in those days, and they took advantage of this fact. One Halloween night Mr. Jones, with a few friends, took an old trolley car, the kind drawn by horses, and put it on top of the schoolhouse shed. There was another famous Halloween prank, still remembered by all of the old-timers, in which Mr. Jones would not admit his involvement. It was during the days of the first schoolhouse built in Garden City. At the top of the schoolhouse was a big belfry tower that held the school bell. By various means, a bunch of the boys boosted a

donkey up in this tower. It was easier to get the donkey up than it was to get him down. It took three days to get this same donkey down from this perch.

With all of our highways of today (1936), it seems impossible to imagine how old-timers had to travel in the earlier days. Mrs. Jones remembers the days of stagecoaches, and the small bumpy roads, made almost impossible at times by the blowing sand.

At the time of this writing, Mr. and Mrs. Jones were living in Garden City. Mr. Jones was the owner of a shoe repair shop.

Additional Information

LILLIAN "LILLIE" VIOLA (WARDEN) JONES

LILLIAN VIOLA WARDEN, daughter of George W. Warden (1848-1909) and Louisa Boggs (1852-1910), was born in 1874 in Illinois. Her family moved to Garden City, Finney County, Kansas, in 1886. She married CHRISTOPHER CLEMMONS "CLEM" JONES there on 9 Apr 1891 at her parent's home, by the Rev. P. G. Shanklin, the pastor of the Baptist Church. Clem Jones was born in 1866 in the state of Tennessee.

In 1908, they spent a short time in Newkirk, Kay County, Oklahoma, where Clem worked as a harness maker. About 1910, they moved back to Garden City, Kansas, where Clem was working as a shoemaker. He died in February 1946. Lillian died in April of 1946. They were buried at the Valley View Cemetery in Garden City.

Two daughters were born into their marriage:

HETTIE JONES (1892-1948) was married to Louis Dudley DeBelle (1881-1956) on 5 Nov 1928 in Independence, Jackson County, Missouri. They had one son, Donald Herman DeBelle, born on 23 Feb 1932 in Kirksville, Adair County, Missouri. Donald died on 8 Jan 1996 in Seattle, King County, Washington. About 1932, Louis and Hettie left Missouri and moved to Garden City, Kansas. Between 1935 and 1940, they moved to Colorado Springs, Colorado. They were buried there at the Evergreen Cemetery.

MABEL JONES, born on 11 Sep 1896 in Garden City, Finney County, Kansas, married Horace Foster on 30 May 1920. Horace died on 6 Jul 1945, and Mabel married again to William A. Wagner on 4 Nov 1946. William died on 25 Dec 1958. Mabel passed away on 15 Feb 1972 at the Cimarron Manor in Cimarron, Kansas, after a long illness. All were buried at the Valley View Cemetery in Garden City.

Newspaper Article

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The Garden City (Kansas) Telegram - 10 Apr 1944

PIONEER RESIDENTS HAVE BEEN MARRIED 53 YEARS

Celebrating fifty-three years of married life yesterday were Mr. and Mrs. Clem E. Jones of Ninth Street. They were married on 9 Apr 1891 in Garden City. Mrs. Jones was the former Lillian V. Warden, whose family came to Garden City to make their home in 1886.

The mother of Mr. Jones is the former Miss Mary Hopper. She is ninety years old. She was the first schoolteacher in the old Methodist Episcopal Church.

The Jones family now owns the Old Buffalo Jones home at 12 Ninth Street.

Newspaper Obituaries

CHRISTOPHER CLEMONS "CLEM" JONES

The Garden City (Kansas) Telegram - 16 Feb 1946

C. C. JONES DIES AFTER A LONG ILLNESS

Christopher Clemons Jones, 79, a resident of Garden City for 60 years, died early this morning at his home at 515 N. North Street, following a lengthy illness.

Jones, who was born in Nashville, Tennessee, came to Garden City in 1886. In 1890 he married Miss Lillian Warden, who survives him. He also is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Mabel Foster of Garden City and Mrs. Hettie DeBelle of Colorado Springs, Colorado, four grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. He operated a shoe repair and harness shop here for many years. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge and the Modern Woodmen of America.

Funeral services will be held Monday at 2:30 p.m. at the Garnand Chapel, and Rev. Marvin Brown will officiate. Burial will be at the Valley View Cemetery in Garden City.

LILLIAN VIOLA (WARDEN) JONES

The Garden City (Kansas) Telegram - 26 Apr 1946

MRS. C. C. JONES DIES THIS MORNING

Mrs. Lillian Jones, the widow of the late Christopher Clemons Jones, died this morning in a Garden City hospital following a short illness. She was 71 years of age.

She was a sister of A. B. Warden, 704 N. Seventh Street, and survived by two daughters, Mrs. Mabel Foster of Garden City and Mrs. Hettie DeBelle of Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Mrs. Jones, daughter of George W. and Louisa J. Warden, first came to Garden City with her parents in 1886. In 1890, she married Mr. Jones, who also had come here in 1886. In 1899, they moved to Newkirk, Oklahoma, and later to Oklahoma City but returned here in 1913. Mr. Jones operated a shoe repair and harness shop for many years. His death came only last February.

Mrs. Jones was a member of the Pythian Sisters, the Eastern Star's White Shrine, and the Royal Neighbors.

Cemetery Headstone

VALLEY VIEW CEMETERY
Garden City, Finney County, Kansas



INTERESTING NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

Thanks to Laurie Oshel, Assistant Director at the Finney County Historical Society Library in Garden City, Kansas, for providing this unique article.

1938

POLLY, PARROT OF C. C. JONES FAMILY, FAVORITE OF MANY PERSONS IN GARDEN CITY, HAS DIED

The death of an 'important character' in Garden City, a resident of this community for 25 years, occurred on December 23rd and failed to be recorded in the newspapers as it should have been. Everyone who has lived in Garden City for any length of time knew "Polly," a 40-year-old parrot belonging to Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Jones.

Polly had lived with the Jones family at their Main Street home for 25 years, and before that, she belonged to the mother of Mrs. Jones for 15 years. At the time of her mother's death, Mrs. Jones promised that she would always care for the bird, and during the ensuing years, she held to the promise.

Polly was a regular member of the Jones family. She often ate her meals with them, talked and played with them, and visited with their friends. Polly had her own special chair and liked nothing better than to start the day with a breakfast of buttered toast, coffee with cream and sugar, and perhaps a poached egg.

The parrot acquired wisdom with her years and was a judge of human nature. She had her likes and dislikes, just like a human being. When people called, whom she did not like, she set up such a cry and disturbance that she was often banished to the back rooms. On the other hand, when her favorites visited the Jones, she could talk in a pleasing, endearing tone. Polly was not fond of children, however, and often refused to perform for them. Animals, on the other hand, bothered her not at all.

Polly was a large bird, for a parrot, with a beautiful light green coloring. Along her wings were small feathers touched with yellow and red. Her discarded long tail feathers, containing blue, green, red, and yellow, have decorated many a headgear for the younger generation in Garden City.

Polly expressed her emotions in almost human tones. She could declare her glee and humor with loud laughter, then sob like a young child if she were displeased or sad. Unlike many parrots, Polly never swore, and if she even ventured a questionable word, she soon learned that "no nice parrot swears."

The mother of Mrs. Jones bought Polly for \$35 in 1898 and kept her until she died in 1913. Mrs. Jones assumed care of Polly at that time and she has been a constant member of the family since then.

Polly was never sick in her life, according to Mrs. Jones, and consequently, her death was a great shock to them. Mrs. Jones has often stated that she would not have taken any amount of money for Polly and that her death affected them as profoundly as if one of their relatives had died.