

Hon William Jones  
Rockport Weekly Democrat  
February 19, 1876

Prominent among the pioneers may be mentioned Wm. Jones, who came to the county after its organization. He settled in Jackson Township, about one mile west of the present site of Gentryville, where he sold goods for many years, and kept the post office in his store. The name of the post office was, until Gentryville was re-surveyed about the year 1848, "Jonesborough," taking its name from this gentleman. For a number of years Mr. Jones served as County Commissioner, and was a member of the Board in 1833, when the clerks office was burned, destroying the records and papers of that office (the Spencer County Courthouse burnt in 1833). After the burning of the office the Board met in the cooper shop of Jacob Myers. John Jones and Wm G. Thomas were also Commissioners at the time. In 1838 Mr. Jones was elected Representative of Spencer County, and elected in 1839 and 1840 for the counties of Spencer and Perry, and was the successor of Hon. Mason J. Howell, who had adored the position for six consecutive years.

From the time Mr. Jones came to the county he was engaged in the mercantile business at Jonesborough and Gentryville up to the spring of 1857, then he sold his interest to his partner, Mr. Wm. Thompson. He immediately started business at Dale, with his son Charles, and at Winslow with his son James I. Jones, so long and favorably known in this place in connection with the Novelty Mills, and the insurance business. Mr. Jones was an honorable man in all of his business interactions, and did more for the building up of the county surrounding him than any other man of the locality. He was a true friend to the poor, as many will testify whom he favored in many ways.

At the breaking out of the war this distinguished pioneer, prompted by patriotic motives, though in his reclining years, enlisted in the army as Lieutenant Colonel in the 53rd regiment Indiana Volunteers, and was a brave and generous soldier. At the battle of Atlanta, July 22nd 1864, a cannon shot from the enemy severed his head from his body, and thus ended one of Spencer County's noblemen.

The stranger's eye wept, that in life's brightest bloom,  
One gifted so highly should sink to the tomb;  
For in ardor he led the vain of the host,  
And he fell like a soldier-he died at his post.

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A Letter Copied from "Scrapbook of Spencer County Historical Society" by Federal Writers' Project, Fifth District, Indiana. Page 76

451 Melrose Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois  
April 10, 1938

To Whom It May Concern,

I certify that I, Mrs. N. L. Jones Daniel, am the grand daughter of Colonel William Jones of Jonesborough near where Gentryville, now is. That I have often heard my parents tell of when Abraham Lincoln split rails, was a general hand and helper, and when he clerked in Grandfather's store. As was the custom, he lived in Grandfather's home while working for him.

Grandfather lived in a double log house in Lincoln's time. This house had two rooms which opened into central hall or areaway. There were fireplaces at each end of the house and large logs were rolled from the areaway across the rooms and into the fireplaces. Grandfather was a subscriber for the Louisville Journal and also for the Western Register of Terre Haute. Besides these he possessed some books and was considered well educated.

Abraham was very fond of books and newspapers and when the day's work was over he would lie down before the fire to read. Grandfather liked to see the boy try to learn and the family often prepared a special light for his use. This light was crude and consisted of a piece of cloth twisted in a saucer of tallow. By this light and the added light of the burning logs the Great Lincoln often read the happenings of his day.

My parents often told me this and about when Abraham Lincoln split enough rails for Grandfather, to pay for a pair of boots. All of this I believe to be true.

Signed, Mrs. N. L. Jones Daniel