

Coker Cemetery History #31 – April 2014

by Bob Battaglia

Below is an obituary for Sol Jones who was the son of James Seaborn Jones and grandson of Amos Dickens Jones. Sol and his wife had no children. This obituary was in "The Examiner" newspaper (Navasota, TX). The estimated date of the paper is October 17, 1982. I have a copy but the date is cut off.

SOLOMON AMOS JONES

Funeral services for Solomon Amos Jones, 86, of 1519 Everett St., were held at 2 PM Saturday, Oct 16, from the chapel of the Lindley-Robertson Funeral Home.

The Rev. Donald G. Dilday, pastor of the First Baptist Church, officiated. Interment was in Oakland Cemetery under the direction of Lindley-Robertson.

Mr. Jones died at 4:05AM Thursday, Oct 14, at Grimes Memorial Hospital. Mr. Jones was born in San Antonio, June 6, 1896 the son of Martha Kesterson (my note - really Rebecca Kesterson) and Seborn (Seaborn) Jones. Mr. Jones was a member of the First Baptist Church of Navasota, becoming a deacon of that church Oct 28, 1951. Mr. Jones, a retired farmer and cattleman, was a veteran of WW I. He was a member of the Navasota Lodge No.299, AF. & AM. and a past worshipful master of the Jerusalem Chapter No.3 and a past most excellent high priest of the Jerusalem Council No.7 and a past thrice illustrious master of the Navasota Commandery No.80; and a past commander of the Arabia Temple in Houston, and of the KYOCR.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Lucille K. Jones of Navasota; one sister, Mrs. C.V. Love of Morro Bay CA; along with a number of nieces and nephews. Pallbearers were Henry Walters, Michael Moore, Robert T. Moore, Lloyd Pool, AC. Pratt, Bert Hansen, all of Navasota.

My Comments:

1. Sol Jones was a county judge between 1952 and 1956. Marcos Mallard (409-873-2553), the "town historian" has offered to help find the dates and then newspaper articles. My discussion with Mr. Mallard (a former mayor of Navasota) took place Oct 1995.
2. Brief discussion with the wife of one of the pallbearers (by phone in Sept 1995), Mrs. Lloyd Pool, knew Sol at the church and described him as well-loved and worked with the children extensively. Sol considered to be a very important asset to the church and the town.
3. The maiden name of Lucille Jones was Ketchum. After Sol's death, Lucille went to California with Mrs. Mary K. Olsen, a sister of Lucille's. Mary Olsen's daughter, Mary Ann Gilliam still lives in Yucaipa, CA. Talked to Mary Ann Gilliam 12/28/95 and learned her mother had died in Sept. 95. Mary Ann Gilliam said Sol's wife, Lucille, died in California in 1990.
4. Sol's surviving sister, Mrs. C.V. Love, was the youngest of Seaborn's children - Elsie Alden Jones who died in 1985. Her first husband was Herbert Collins and they had one daughter, Coleen Collins.
5. Sol was in the Army in WW I. He was in occupation force on West Bank of Rhine River. That group was known as "Watchman on the Rhine." Stationed in Koblenz, the task of this group was to make sure Germany stayed within the boundaries agreed to in the surrender terms.
6. Edward Jones, Jr visited with Sol and wife Lucille both in California and in Navasota. Sol had an old-style Texaco Station in Navasota with the hand-operated pumps that were used to refill the glass tank at the top of the pump. Sol also had a ranch with an old farm house and a goodly

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number of cattle. Edward Jr. remembers on one visit in 1942 helping Sol treat the cattle for pink eye. Sol and Lucille also traveled to California and played golf with Vern Love, Alden's second husband. Edward Jones remembers traveling to the Texas area in 1979 or 1980 and visiting Cecil Everitt's widow, Mildred, in Houston. Edward also went to Crowley, LA to visit Leland Everitt. He then visited Sol in Navasota. Sol by then was suffering from lung cancer, but he did not let it affect his life.

The following is a remembrance of Sol (pictured below as a young man) and Lucille Jones from their niece, Mary Ann Gilliam, who lived with them in Navasota several years. (Letter written Jan 1996).



When Uncle Sol's mother died in 1902, his father took the boys out to Nevada to work in the mining camps. Uncle Sol grew up in these camps with little or no guidance and under all the bad influences that went with living in the mining camps. He had about a fourth grade education. By the time he was 15 he was skinning mules in Fresno CA.

When we entered WW I Uncle Sol enlisted in the Army. He served in France driving an ambulance for the Medical Corps. When the war was over, Uncle Sol returned to the U.S. and took a troop train to San Francisco where he was discharged at Angel Island. While making this troop train trip across the U. S., he got off at one point and the train left him behind - he had to wait for the next one.

Uncle Sol was driving thru Navasota TX (comment - must have been very early 1920's) and stopped at the Sinclair Service Station. They had a tire vulcanizing shop that was not in use. He asked the owner about the shop and was told there was no one to work in it. Uncle Sol had learned how to vulcanize tires in the Army; the owner hired Sol to run the shop. Several years later Sol bought the Sinclair Station. Later, Sol met Lucille in Navasota and they were married there. Earlier I mentioned that Uncle Sol had a 4th-grade education. He became a self-educated man; he was a very well-read person.

In about 1938 Uncle Sol and Aunt Lucille took my mother, Mary, my older brother, Del and me into their home to live there until July 1944. Uncle Sol became a father figure to both Del and me. Uncle Sol had sold some tires and he had some money to invest. Mr. Lot, his friend and advisor, suggested he invest his money in cattle. Sol bought the cattle and rented a pasture from a local farmer. Later the I.L. Collie Camp place became available for rent. It was a 300 acre farm with a large 4 bedroom two-story farmhouse. Uncle Sol decided to lease the farm for 3 years. It was a God-send since 6 of us were living in a very small 3- bedroom house on Felder Street. Sol tried raising cotton and watermelon but was not successful. The farm was partly in Navasota's city limits. In the early 1950's young men in the town started approaching Sol about selling them a lot so they could build a home on it. This led to the development of the Jones' addition. It ended up being a nice housing development in Navasota. Then Uncle Sol started raising Black Angus cows.

When I was quite young I can remember all of us listening to the radio of an evening and Uncle Sol allowing me to play 'beauty-parlor' with his hair - he had so much patience with me. When Aunt Lucille would be mixing up biscuits she would give me some flour and dough. With my own rolling pin and biscuit cutter I made Uncle Sol some of my special biscuits. They were so hard! Uncle Sol, out of love for me, would eat my hard 'rocks'.

Every summer we drove to Artesia Wells for a family gathering. Uncle Sol stopped and bought Del and me an ice cream cone. He told me not to bite the bottom off the cone. I went ahead and did it anyway. Sol stopped the car and took my dripping cone and threw it into the field - never saying a

word - he didn't have to. I never disobeyed him again.

Uncle Sol was a very quiet man; I learned at an early age to listen and respect what he said. He had a profound influence on our lives. He had Del work with him on the farm repairing fences and the like. Aunt Lucille was very hard on my brother. Working with Sol, Del developed a closeness that had a tremendous impact on his life.

I have already mentioned the rough, crude environment Uncle Sol grew up in, in those mining towns of Nevada. All of this, which could have been a bad influence during his formative years, seemingly did not affect him. He grew up and developed into the most wonderful, kind and loving man I have ever known in my life.

In 1958 Uncle Sol and Lucille took me and my two daughters into their home. They took care of my two daughters, Gwen and Gail. They paid for me to attend Sam Houston State Teachers College in Huntsville TX. I took teacher training and graduated in August 1962. Then my daughters and I moved to Yucaipa CA where my mother lived."

The following is a remembrance of Sol and Lucille Jones from Mary Ann Gilliam's daughter, Gail (Gilliam) Elam (Letter written Jan 1996).

I'm a great niece of Uncle Sol. I lived with him in Navasota Texas from 1958 to 1962. I was 1-1/2 years old when we moved in and left when I was 5-1/2. Uncle Sol and Lucile took care of us while my mother was going to school. We lived upstairs in their 2-story house; it was about a 1/4 mile from the street. (The house has since been torn down for a housing development).

Uncle Sol had a lot of cows. I used to tell him 'you and me cows'. He had an old, old car which my sister and I crawled all over. We called the old car, Old Greenie. My Uncle Sol used to let me steer the car on a road behind the house. I really thought I was driving! We used to go to the local cafe and get a Coke many mornings. Then he took me for rides on the golf cart at the golf course.

Once I tasted Uncle Sol's buttermilk by accident, I haven't liked it since! He got me started in the habit of putting ketchup on a lot of my foods. He took me to church every Sunday (The First Baptist Church). He allowed us to keep a stray tan dog that my Aunt Lucille and I found wandering around a store downtown. We called the dog, Tex. I remember loving the smell of Uncle Sol's pipe; I still love the smell today. He used to make smoke rings.

After we moved to California, they came out every Christmas for a couple of weeks and also some summers until I was in my early 20's. During the summers, when I was ages 6 to 9, we would go to Navasota on the Sante Fe train which took 3 days one way - we would stay about 3 weeks. During those times we would also go to visit my Aunt Clara who had a large 2-story house in San Saba. Uncle Sol taught me how to shuffle cards. I used to comb his hair - he didn't have much. We used to play a lot of card games.

The last time I saw him I was 23 years old. We flew back on the Easter break (Spring of 1982). He was dying with cancer; he died in October 1982. He missed seeing my son who was born January 1983.

Uncle Sol was a giving, generous, loving, Christian, family person. He always took time for me. He was the father figure I didn't have. I have fond memories of him! "

The above description of "Uncle Sol Jones" says it all. What a wonderful tribute to person who lived a full, long and productive life!

If you have interesting stories, newspaper articles or photographs about our early Coker ancestors, please send them in. My email address is: bob@cokercemetery.com.