

# **ANNA HOLLAND JONES**

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## **Anna Holland Jones**

**On a cool summers eve sitting on the porch of her home she shared with her three aunts, Anna, Sophia and Emily at 1301 Shamrock Avenue in Monrovia California Helen Jones asked her aunt, Anna Holland Jones, that question that looms on the hearts of many. "So, what was it like when you were growing up?" The response told the story of a family that had endured much over the previous hundred and fifty years.**

**Anna Holland Jones was the first born of James Monroe Jones and Emily Francis arriving in this world on Sunday 2 September 1855 in the town of Chatham in Kent County in the Province of Ontario Canada.**

**James Monroe Jones was the oldest of seven children, three of which were born into slavery in North Carolina. Through great courage determination and fortitude and after being swindled out of an agreed upon purchase price James' father, Allen Jones, worked to raise the necessary funds to purchase his wife, Temperance, his three children at the time and his father, Charles, out of slavery in 1829 through the help of a Quaker.**

**After years of mistreatment and persecution Allen sold his property and personal effects whereupon he left North Carolina taking his family to the more favorable northern states. They eventually settled in the City of Oberlin in the county of Lorain in the state of Ohio. It was there that Allen Jones, a great believer in education, sent his six boys to Oberlin College. It was there at Oberlin College that Anna's father and four of her uncles graduated prior to the American Civil War.**

**Life brought many experiences as the Jones Family matured. James Monroe Jones relocated to Chatham, Ontario to raise his family and where he attended the John Brown Convention in 1858 prior to the raid on Harper's Ferry. He was known as one of the most gifted Gunsmiths and Artisans west of London.**

**His brother Charles Brougham Jones became a teacher. Their only sister, Bethany Jones, never married and remained at the family home where she took care of their father until his death in 1877. William Allen Jones who was a gold miner in British Columbia with his brother,**

Missouri. She taught the subjects of English Literature, History and Drawing in the College Preparatory School which was the only one of its kind when it was founded first as an Elementary School around the time of the American Civil War. Anna's tenure ended at Lincoln High in 1911.

Anna left Lincoln High to become the first black woman principal in Kansas City Missouri when she was appointed principal of Douglas High School on 3 August 1911. She remained at this post until her retirement in 1919.

Throughout her life Anna was quite active in various areas of the community. Her church affiliation began in 1875 when she joined the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Anna was an officer and member of the National Association of Colored Women. A group that was formed in 1896 by the merging of the the National Federation of Afro-American Women, the Women's Era Club of Boston, and the National League of Colored Women of Washington, DC and other smaller groups. An organization with the beginning mission "to furnish evidence of the moral, mental and material progress made by people of color through the efforts of our women". This mergence came to fruition in response to the exclusion of African American Women's Clubs from the 1893 World's Fair. Anna had attended Oberlin College with Mary Church Terrell a co founder of the group and its first president.

During her tenure as Chairman of the Department of Education for the National Association of Colored Women Anna wrote and delivered an article entitled "Women Suffrage and Social Reform". This article was published in Crisis Magazine in August of 1915.

As the presiding President of the Missouri State Association of Colored Women's Clubs for five years, Anna led a Federation that began with seven clubs at its inception in St. Louis, Missouri in 1900 and grew to over two thousand clubs by 1930. After adopting the motto of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs which was "Lifting As We Climb," it listed goals that were to raise the social status and promote the family life of black women. In 1904 Anna wrote the paper

**“How can we as Women Advance the Standing of the Race” touting the positive effects of Churches and Philanthropic Clubs.**

**Anna was also a member of the University Extension Society of Kansas City, Missouri was associated and worked with the YWCA and helped found the Book Lovers Club.**

**In 1900 Anna H. Jones and Anna Julia Cooper, another Oberlin College Alum were invited by W. E. B. Dubois to the Pan African Conference where the three headed up the Delegation from the United States. Anna was not only part of the executive committee of this delegation but would address the conference also. She spoke to the Conference on the topic of “The Preservation of Race Individuality.” She was said to have been a “brilliant linguist.” This conference was first organized to address the world wide problems of the African people and to further look at the European effort to conquer and politically dominate Africa.**

**Such an active life would not go without trouble and controversy. While living in her two story home with her sister Sophia in an affluent white neighborhood at 2444 Montgall Avenue in Kansas City Missouri they were the recipients of many threats and the home had been fire bombed.**

**Anna was the oldest of six children. Her sister Dr. Sophia B. Jones was the first African American woman to graduate with a Medical Degree from the University of Michigan and went on to establish the nursing program at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. Her youngest sister Emily P. Jones like her older sister pursued a career in teaching. Her brother George was a skilled carpenter whereupon he utilized these skills to build the family home in Michigan. It was George who came to California first finding and acquiring the property in Monrovia where he and the Jones girls came to retire.**

**The story of such a remarkable woman inspired by the perseverance and determination of her family would peek the interest of any young inquisitor.**

Elias Toussaint Jones became the first registered Dentist in British Columbia after the Dental Act of 1888. Although Elias had a Law Degree he became a teacher and was an early member and advocate of the NAACP. John Craven Jones, like his brothers James, Charles, William and Elias graduated from Oberlin College. John devoted his life to teaching and was the first teacher on Salt Spring Island in British Columbia. Junius B. Jones also known as James B. Jones, the youngest of Allen's children attended although did not complete his studies at Oberlin.

Although Anna was born in Chatham, Ontario she returned to the family home town to attend school. Anna attended Oberlin High School graduating in 1871. After graduating from high school she continued her schooling career by attending the college of her father and uncles whereupon she graduated from Oberlin College in 1875 with a Literary Degree. She was kept in such high regard at her alma mater that she was bestowed an Honorary Master of Arts in 1892 and in 1893 she was given a Bachelor of Philosophy degree.

From 1885 to 1892 Anna taught Literature, History and Zoology at Wilberforce University the oldest privately owned African American School in the United States where she was also the Dean of Women. Founded by Bishop Daniel Paine of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1856 the university was named after the abolitionist William Wilberforce. This school that is located about three miles outside of Xenia Ohio and that played a part in the Underground Railroad also bestowed an Honorary Master of Arts upon Anna in 1892. Her formal education was rounded off through courses that she took at Michigan State University and the University of Chicago.

Her teaching career which began at the age of eighteen spanned forty years of her life. In 1885 Anna found herself teaching at the Lincoln Institute. A historically African American Institution located in Jefferson, Missouri. This college which was later to be known as Lincoln University was founded in 1866 by members of the 62<sup>nd</sup> and 65<sup>th</sup> Colored Infantries most of whom were former slaves. She remained here as a teacher until 1892.

1892 brought about a move for this woman who was so dedicated to education. She began teaching at Lincoln High School in Kansas City,

**Anna left this world on Monday 7 March 1932 and was laid to rest in Live Oak Cemetery in an unmarked grave.**

**It is on the family property in Monrovia that after five generations descendants of the Jones family still reside.**