

*Jester  
Whells*

Life

of

Abraham Jones

1818-1905

and

Margaret H. Jones

his Wife

1821-1899

## PREFACE

That this and future generations may know and remember something about that grand old Christian gentleman, Abraham Jones, who came as an emigrant from Wales over a century ago, and with many other Welsh families that followed, settled in and around Venedocia in Van Wert County, Ohio, built log houses, cleared the forest, drained the land, built rail fences and more important they built churches, "And they builded there an Altar too." We trust you will find it interesting to learn a little of the hardships of these "pilgrims in a foreign land" who are your forefathers.

In search of freedom perhaps, those of us who are older remember many of the names listed in the two following articles that have been translated from the Welsh language, as strong, devout Christian people. We can well be proud of our lineage, and that there is a trickle of Abraham Jones' blood flowing through our veins. He was truly a great man. We trust that his God will be our God and the God of generations yet unborn.

We learn from a bit of Church history by Rev. Edward Roberts at the dedication of Seion New Church in 1902, that the three first settlers who came to the Upper Settlement in 1850, just two (2) years after the three first settlers came to the Venedocia Settlement, were Mr. Abraham Jones, Hugh F. Jones and Thomas Hughes and their families. By 1854 when the first Church Services were held in Abraham Jones' log house, there were seven (7) families. In 1862 when the first Church was built there were sixteen (16) families; in 1902 when the second Church was built there were forty-three (43) families.

Our thanks to Mr. Minor Davis of Venedocia, Ohio, who is a member of Seion Church and cousin E. Blodwen Jones of S. Pasadena, Calif., who furnished us much of this information.

Please don't be too critical of our translation, some of it was just like looking for a needle in a haystack. It's been a long time since, - you know. T. A.



Abraham Jones



SEION TY LOG ABRAHAM JONES. 1854-1863



1863-1902  
DARLUN O'R HEN GAPEL—Mesurai 30 X 40 Troedfedd.  
SEION



1902  
CAPEL NEWYDD SEION, SWYDD VAN WERT, OHIO.

## "THEY THAT SLEEP"

From "Y Cyfaill" (The Friend), June, 1906  
By Rev. Edward Roberts, Venedocia, Ohio  
In memory of Abraham Jones, 1818 - 1905

"Here is, for the readers of "Y Cyfaill" a few notes in memory of one of God's noblest characters. Whoever came to the Welsh Settlement in Van Wert County soon came to know Abraham Jones. His religious zeal and evident godliness won the respect of everybody, he loved everybody and everybody loved him. He was like John the beloved disciple in his neighborhood, especially in Seion.

Let us hastily follow his life's journey through the world. He was a son of John and Jane Jones, "Lechwedd," Trefeglwys, Sir Drefaldwyn, North Wales. They had four children, two sons and two daughters, of which he was the youngest. He was born in Tanrallt, a small place in the neighborhood on June 15th, 1818. His parents were common people of ordinary circumstances, so we find him at the age of ten leaving his home, and going to work for his uncle in Trefaldwyn, near his home where he stayed for a year, then he went to Sir Faesydd to another relative where he stayed five years, then back to his uncle where he stayed four more years. He then went to live with Mr. Edward Bebb, in Darowen, Melinbyrhedyn, where he stayed for seven years. This was an important move for him for it gave his life a new direction, both in a religious and temporal way.

It was while here he first came to religion by joining the Calvinistic Methodist Church. His stay with the Bebb family at Darowen was a spiritual blessing to him, as it had been to many others, yet I believe that religion had a hold on him for a long time, ever since his birth, even though he was over 20 before he had become a church member. He had received religious advantages and also disadvantages. In the beginning he had godly parents, his father was noted for his religious zeal and godliness. In any religious meeting he was known to cry out, become excited, joyous and jubilant. He would walk many miles to hear the Gospel.

preached, made no difference to him what denomination, preaching service to him was an occasion for great rejoicing. He would become loud and elegant with the family, not only at the time of family worship, but on many occasions he would jump and prance like a lamb on the mountain side.

Yes, I think Abraham Jones was godly from his birth, but let us consider, too, that he had disadvantages at the beginning of his life in a religious way, not only because he turned his back on the home of his father, there was a religious disadvantage in his home, his mother was a member of the M.C. Church and his father was a Baptist, and to the Baptist did the rest of the family belong. Mr. Jones, too, felt that he was under a disadvantage, when he lived with his uncles, for there was a church law forbidding him to go to the children's meetings at church while he was a servant in their home. Another disadvantage, one of the uncle's wife possessed a Spirit of Persecution against all religion and any one that professed to be a Christian. When he came to Mr. Bebb's at Darowen the atmosphere for religion in his heart was different, it was allowed to unfold so he could, and did profess Christianity publicly. It was here he became acquainted with a Miss Margaret Howells who became his wife April 18th, 1845. This was one of the great blessings of his life both spiritual and temporal. "She done him good and no evil, all the days of her life." It is evident that his going to Mr. Bebb's family, and his coming to America also changed his outlook on life, for it was in 1847, with their first born, William H., they came to Cincinnati, Ohio, where they stayed for three years.

They then came to this settlement, where Mr. Bebb then lived in 1850 and settled on a wild 80 acre farm in a place now known as Seion or the Upper Settlement, where they lived all their lives.

The history of the religious cause in this Welsh Settlement goes hand in hand with this family. In their log house was the first Zion Sunday School and Church organized. For some years there was but one Church in this neighborhood, Salem at Venedocia, Ohio, four miles away. Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Jones and a few other families in this place then

called the Upper Settlement, made their way through the woods to Salem Church every Sunday, and also to the "Seiat" (Class Meeting) every Wednesday afternoon. Mr. Jones was chosen to be an Elder in Salen in 1858. When Seion Church was organized and built in 1863 he moved his membership there. He was made an Elder in the beginning and remained one until his death.

It was in his home, a log house, the meetings were held until the Church was completed in 1863. So the "Arc" was in his home for years, and it can be said that God blest him and his family like unto Obed-Edom of old, and all that he had for the sake of God's "Arc" (Read 1st Chronicle, 13 Chap. 12 to 14 Verse, Inc.). The story of this family in the Zion neighborhood was a repetition of the story of Obed-Edom of long ago. We don't believe that we ever knew a family that was so apparently under God's blessing than this family of Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Jones. Religion was always in first place with him in his desires and efforts.

He left Cincinnati and settled in the middle of the woods in Van Wert County because he thought it was possible to bring up his children easier in a religious way in the country than in the city. When others argued with him that he was making a mistake going from the advantages of the day school in the big city, he chose the Kingdom ahead of the more promising schools for him and his family. Time has proven that he was wise in his choice, not only did they raise their children to be a strength and a force in the cause of religion, they got to see all six of them, five sons and one daughter at the head of their own families. All settled round about them or their own farms, five of them adjoining, all prosperous.

We think that this above picture in this Settlement is second to none in America. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and these things will be given you in addition." He saw to it that the Kingdom came first. It was so apparent he had the face of God to guide him all the days of his life. None but heaven knows how much he gave to help others. To everyone of God's Ministers through the years they gave food and lodging. Yes, they gave

home and comfort, and reverence to them all alike, they had the same respect to the great, as to those of smaller stature, the noted men of God and the humble alike. His respect for, and faithfulness to the ministers that were permanent or for they that visited occasionally lasted to the end. There is no wonder that respect for God's ministers and religion is so evident in all their children.

He did not have ability and talent like some, but his Godliness and faithfulness was the secret of his influence. He got to live and see a grand new Church built at Seion and finished in 1903. He had as much hand in the building of this church as the first one. A short time before we began building the new church, he was taken quite ill, and when he began to get well he said he could not see why he was spared. He wondered if perhaps God had some task yet on earth for him to do. While meditating on his bed what this could be, there came to his mind, that he had been spared to build the new church.

The church had been split over where the new church was to be located, and the building had been set aside for some years. After he was well again and passed his 80th birthday, the old father was seen again going through the settlement collecting pledges for the new church, with the question of location left to a later day. He raised about 5,000 dollars (a big sum for that day). After this the Congregation decided to let him alone decide on the place. We believe sincerely that no other man could have done this except Abraham Jones. We believe, too, that God called him to do this work, as was Nahemiah Zarobabel of old.

When he saw the grand new church finished he felt as if his work was done. He would await the call home, with his youngest son in his old home, but it was a new house, grand and of brick. The old log house still stands, it was a very sacred place for the old father. It was always a great pleasure for him to take strangers there and show them just where the old pulpit stood, which the lower steps of the old stairway, and it was where the ministers stood to preach the gospel to the little settlement. It was with pride he would name the noted men of God that preached there years ago.

He was given the best of care and tenderness by his daughter-in-law and by all his children. He got to live and die among his children, who were living round about him, and every one doing his best to show him their love and respect. He was so genial and loving to everyone. The children and young people of the neighborhood always greeted him as Dadcu (Grandfather) Jones. He enjoyed nothing more than being with his grandchildren, teaching them to read the Bible, and talk to them about religion. This he was doing on a Sunday night, when the family came home from church. He told them of the good time he and the children had, reading the Bible.

After going to bed that same night, he had a stroke that caused his death. He slept in Jesus, October 28th, 1905. He was in his 86th year. On June 31st he was buried beside his wife in Venedocia Cemetery.

Those that spoke at his funeral were the Rev. D. Evans Jones, D. M. Jones, D.D., J. Hammond, M.A., Rev. H. W. Griffith and the writer (Rev. Edward Roberts, his Pastor). Rev. Edward Roberts also preached a Memorial Sermon the following Sunday at Seion and Salem by request, Text Psalm 92-12 "The Righteous flourish like the Palm Tree and grow like the Cedar of Lebanon." He was straight and beautiful in character like the Palm Tree whose leaf is always green and his life fruitful. Noted for his modesty and tenderness, yet at the same time he had the fortitude of the Cedar.

He left four sons — Richard H., Abraham B., Humphrey H., Griffith H., and one daughter, Mrs. John H. Reese to mourn and long for him. May the God of your father and mother be a God unto you and unto your posterity forever."

By: Rev. Edward Roberts, June, 1906  
Venedocia, Ohio



Margaret Howell Jones



A translation from the Welsh language, a Memorial to:  
Mrs. Margaret Jones, wife of Abraham Jones  
Seion Church, Van Wert County, Ohio  
By Rev. Edward Roberts, Venedocia, Ohio  
From "Y Cyfaill," April, 1900.

"Here is the wife of the faithful old father and deacon, Mr. Abraham Jones, following most of the old settlers to life eternal. Her passing has made a great void in the family and church, yet we do not hesitate to say that all turned to be an everlasting gain to her. She went to a better land, a more perfect church, a home far more excellent, yet we can do no less than mourn her passing and shed a tear.

It is hard for old acquaintances in Seion to think of the place without Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Jones coming to their minds. It is impossible for the preachers that paid a visit to Seion to think of the place separate from the cheerful faces and cozy home of these two faithful companions, because their home was always open to all preachers through the years.

But now we must say "And her place know her no more" for the two that were so fond of one another have been separated for a little while. Tho she had been ailing for two or three years the end came suddenly and unexpected to all. The two had gone to spend a few days with their only daughter, Mrs. John H. Reese. On Wednesday right she was taken ill. On the following Sunday, June 23, 1899, she passed away from the present of her daughter from her home on earth to her home in heaven, when she was 78 years of age.

We do not have the particulars about Mrs. Jones' family relationship in Wales, all we know is that she was born in 1821, some place in Sir Feirionyd, No. Wales. Her parents were Mr. and Mrs. William Howells. In the spring of 1845 she was married to Abraham Jones. After about two years they moved to America and landed in Cincinnati, Ohio, with their son, William H., where they stayed for about three years. Then they went to Van Wert County where they settled on a wild piece of land, all timber, in a Settlement that soon became known as Seion after the Church that was built there. And they lived there ever since.

Both were industrious, thrifty and successful in their relations to both worlds, the material and the spiritual. They were according to the conscientious testimony of all who know them, seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. As a neighbor she was kind, wise, peaceful and dear, possessed a keen sense of understanding people and their problems.

Her acquaintances had a high opinion of her judgment, her neighbors would naturally turn to her for advice and guidance in time of distress and illness. She was always ready to help.

A virtuous woman in the most extensive use of the word, one of Mr. Jones' principle blessings was his wife, an able companion to him, made his home like unto a little paradise on earth for him. Also was a good mother, always thinking of her household and preparing for their natural needs of feeding and clothing them and just as careful of their religious welfare. Both were careful to educate their children in the knowledge and teachings of Jesus, their children today are a strength and example to the cause of religion in this community. Usually the influence of the mother on the children is somewhat greater than that of the father. She had naturally a strong character, a queen in her home, teaching them in the fear of the Lord, and the way of truth and righteousness. We believe that these words are fully appropriate to her. "She directs the way of her family, she did not eat the bread of idleness, her family will arise and call her blessed, and her husband will praise her."

We do not know of anyone more fortunate in their children than are Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Jones, both in a material and religious way. We were privileged to see the six of them, all except the one that died when a young man, all settled in comfortable farm homes, two of the sons on one side of the road, the farms of the other two across the road, and the youngest son across the road to the homestead. One day the old father told me that he could walk from one farm to the other without stepping on no soil except his sons, and their only daughter is the wife of one of the most respected men in the community and lives some three miles away from the old home.

As a member of the church Mrs. Jones was unusually faithful and useful, her home a mecca for the cause of religion in Seion. Before the church was built, she was second to none in the grace of hospitality, her keenness, her faithfulness, her natural talent and her wisdom. Also her ability to recognize every wandering preacher that came along. She could give advice to one and rebuke the other and do it without anyone taking offense, make them all comfortable and to feel at home. She would wash, darn and mend their clothes, too. We could give some interesting happenings in this respect, it is best that we do not.

Mrs. Jones was so faithful and kind to the home ministers, too, it was a law that the minister stop at her home after preaching, for tea on his way home. I'm afraid it was one law I was guilty of breaking since I saw fit to go directly home from the church.

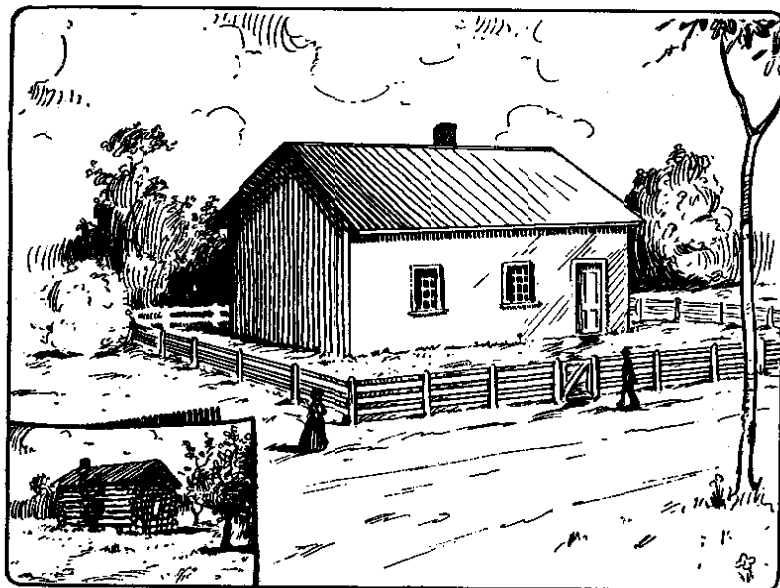
Well she has gone to enjoy her reward for her faithfulness. Her body was laid to rest in Venedocia Cemetery, but she went to her Savior. She left her faithful husband, four sons, which are Richard H., Abraham B., Humphrey H. and Griffith H. (their son William H. went home before her a little while), and her daughter, Mrs. John H. Reese, a brother, Humphrey Howells of Cincinnati, and a host of friends and relatives to mourn after her.

Let us be faithful like her to Jesus and we shall meet again.

“Melus fydd Ymwyn gyfarfod  
Yn Y pur ogoniant maeth;  
Melus fydd cydganu'r anthem  
O un galon ae un iaith;  
Melus meddwl  
Na bydd raid ymadael muy.”

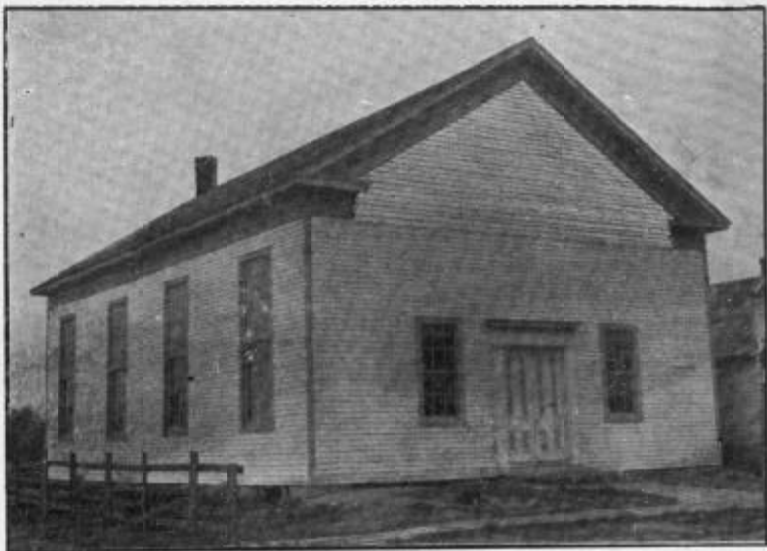
TRANSLATION

“Sweet will be the gentle meeting  
In the pure and endless glory;  
Sweet will be the anthem singing  
From one soul the old old story  
Sweet to think  
Not to part forever more.”



Y CAPEL CYNTAF. ADELADWYD YN 1853. COSTIODD \$300.

SALEM



AIL GAPEL. ADEILADWYD YN 1866. COSTIODD \$3,500.

SALEM



# Recollections of the First Welsh Settlement in Venedocia, Van Wert Co., Ohio

Translated from "Y Cyfaill," 1894—J.T.W.

By Mr. R. Jervis

The first detachment that came here comprised of three families; William Bebb, of Rhiwgriafol, Darowen, N. Wales; Thomas Morris, of Dolygweiddil, Trefeglwys, N. Wales, and the writer, R. Jervis, of Llanbryn-mair, N. Wales, and their families.

We left Wales, the dear old land of our fathers, early in the month of May, 1847, and after a happy voyage of six weeks and three days (there were sixty Welsh people on the ship) we landed safely in the port of New York; and from there after traveling westward for two weeks, we reached Cincinnati and Paddy's Run, Ohio, where we stayed until the following spring.

In October, 1847, Mr. Bebb and his cousin, Wm. Bebb, who was Governor of Ohio at the time, went on a journey through parts of Illinois and Wisconsin in search for a place to settle. They bought two or three sections of land from the Government, for a dollar and a quarter an acre, close to Rockland, Illinois, thinking at the time to begin a Welsh Settlement there, but for some reason they gave up that idea and took a second journey through Allen and Van Wert Counties, Ohio, and they bought land in York Township, Van Wert County, Ohio.

Beginning of April, 1848, we started out and travelled northward, one hundred and fifty miles, in a slow boat on the Miami Canal, which runs from Cincinnati to Toledo, Ohio, in search of our new home, which was already purchased. We reached Section Ten, eight miles from our settlement. As Bebb and Morris and their families had started out from Hamilton, and myself and family from Cincinnati, they reached the settlement some days before us. It was late Saturday night before we landed, so we had to stay there over Sunday, in an old disordered log-house with a dirty German family, but it was well for us to have

some kind of shelter. We shall never forget that Sunday while we live, we didn't understand one word those Germans said, and they were as ungodly as the devil would wish them to be. The next Monday morning, Bebb and Morris sent two wagons to fetch us, drawn, one by a team of horses, and the other by a pair of oxen. After a slow journey through the woods and brushes for eight miles, without seeing a house or a clearing for miles, we came at last, weary and hungered, safely to the end of our journey. The two families that preceded us were anxiously waiting for us. They prepared some kind of a log-cabin, which was erected in the woods, with about a quarter of an acre of clearing around it, and that is where the town of Venedocia stands today, and the beginning of the broad and prosperous settlement of Venedocia, April, 1848.

I can well remember the first night in our new home. After we had somewhat arranged the little things we had, before we went to rest for the night, and closed the "clabors" door, and put some muslin on the glassless window, and held a family prayer to ask Providence to watch over us, and our only child sleeping quietly and us ready to go to rest, we heard something scratching at the door, and making the most terrible noise. After awhile it shifted toward the clay chimney at the north end of the cabin, and scratched and made such awful cries as I never heard their likes. I took hold of my gun, which was loaded, and after waiting quietly for a moment, I gathered enough courage to go out—my wife carrying the candle. We opened the door and going out slowly and cautiously, we saw two beasts and I fired at them; one of them fell, but the other escaped. We learned afterwards they were only two porcupines.

As Mr. Bebb was not to have possession of his holding until the month of September following, they spent the summer months with Mr. Morris and his family. There was three-quarters of a mile between us and them, but there was a path that was kept red between us. At that time the land was thick with trees, was wet and uninhabited. No doubt it had been the hunting ground of the Indians, and the habitation of owls, wolves, and ravenous beasts

throughout the centuries. The Indians had departed for some years before we arrived, but rapacious beasts were still here, such as panthers, wolves, wildcats, etc.

As regards traveling conveniences, there were no railroads within 100 miles of us, if I remember right. The only means of transporting goods to the communities was by slow boat, and when the canal would freeze at the beginning of winter, everything had to be at a stand-still until the ice would melt again. There was a good flour mill in Section Ten, which is Delphos today, and there were two stores and a post office there. When we wanted to send a letter or to make small errands, we had to go to Section Ten to get them. When we had some butter and eggs to sell, we often took them there in a basket about nine miles distance, through thick forests and along wet winding paths. After we arrived there we were given five or six cents a pound for the butter, and five cents a dozen for the eggs in trade. To have any money was out of the question. When we went to the mill we would start about noon-time to reach there by night. We would tie the horses to the wagon, and we ourselves would stay in the mill-loft until next morning, and the four would be ready by the time it would be light enough for us to return home, so we could see our way through the woods. We always remembered to carry an axe along with us in case we would want to open a new track so as to escape some of the swamps. Sometimes we ventured too much, the horses could not go on, and we had to empty the wagon. A story comes to my mind about the Rev. Jenkin Jenkins, Minn. (Siencyn Ddwywaith). One day when standing aside of a swamp on the road, a man with a team of horses who was a stranger in that part came along. "Sir" he said to the Reverend, "is there a bottom to this swamp?" "Yes," he answered and on went the man with his horses, and deeper and deeper he sank in the swamp. Then he shouted in excitement as he look at Rev. Jenkins, "Man, why are you deceiving me?" and the Rev. coolly answered, "There is a bottom to it, but you are not near it yet." We, too, saw similar circumstances many a time. It would have been better for us many times to go round about than to venture straight along.

This State and some bordering States are comprised of wide open spaces, and it was difficult at that time to understand in which direction the water ran as the land seemed so level before it was cleared, but after that was done it appeared so much different. It is said that this settlement is the best agricultural land in northwest Ohio. As we were in a new country we met with much disadvantage, and diseases, such as fever, etc.

It would be appropriate at this junction to say something about our determined and courageous wives, who had been so faithful and a crown to us in every movement.

Mrs. Bebb was born in the Fanner, near Dolgelly, Merionethshire, N.W., and the wife of this writer a daughter of John Bebb, Canoly Wern, Llanbrynmair, both of them by now have risen from the dreary desert, to the blessed Paradise to live. The other wife is Mrs. Morris (Mrs. Evan B. Evans now) who is still with us. She is the daughter of the respected Deacon, Mr. Morris Jones, Cumbiga, Trefeglwys.

With regard to the religious cause, we went along in the following manner, until we secured a settled minister, except the occasional visits we had from outside preachers. Sunday morning at 10, we held a prayer meeting, or more appropriate a preaching meeting. After one of us had opened the meeting with a hymn, and read a part of Scripture and prayed, Mr. Bebb and Mr. Morris would read a sermon, and then close the meeting with a hymn and a prayer. Mr. Bebb had a volume of sermons by Rev. Charles, Carmarthen, and he read from this. Mr. Morris would read a sermon from a volume that was published in Liverpool. So we were privileged with a good sermon every Sunday.

At 2 P.M. we had Sunday School, which was carried on in the same manner as it was carried on by the Rev. T. Charles, of Bala, who established the first Sunday School in Wales and under whose direction Mr. Bebb in his younger days had been organizing Sunday Schools, so therefore he well understood his work.

At 6 o'clock, we had prayer meeting, when one would open and another closed the service, with myself very often somewhere in the middle.

Wednesday at 2 o'clock, a church or society meeting, Mr. Bebb would begin with Scripture reading and prayer. Mr. Morris would listen to the children saying their scripture verses. Then Mr. Bebb would rise, and with his remarks would open the "seiat." I well remember him saying that there are three special purposes for holding a society meeting. First, to give expression of our religious experience, to tell what God has done to our souls; second, to take notice of the outward circumstances of the church; third, that it was essential for the success of the religious cause to keep church discipline in the forefront, that to neglect this would be like an opening in the wall for the enemy to come in like a river. Then Mr. Morris would say a few encouraging words, exhorting us not to be disheartened if not blessed with the means of grace as we wished, and he reminded us of Jesus Christ's promise, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you." And with many other remarks these two dear and faithful deacons heartened us to carry on, trusting in the Lord that He would surely prosper us physically and spiritually, if we would only remain faithful to His work and cause. And after a few words by myself, Mr. Morris would close the meeting effectually with a prayer.

That was the first Welsh church meeting that was held in Van Wert County, April, 1848. We lived here for about five years without a regular minister. There were many ministers who visited us during this period. The first was the Rev. Michael Jones, of Bala. He preached on a Sunday night in the month of June, 1848, and this was the first Welsh sermon in Van Wert County. The Rev. David Jones (Cong.) Gomer, visited us in the summer and autumn following. The Rev. Howell Powell was here in April, 1849, and he stayed with us for a week or nine days, on his way to the M.C. Gymanfa in Newark, Ohio. He preached, held a "seiat," and performed the sacrament of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. He baptized Margaret Ann, the daughter of this writer (Mrs. M. H. Morgan now), the

first Welsh child that was born in the settlement. This was the time that we as a church sent a request with Rev. Howell Powell to be accepted into the union with the T.C. Gymanfa, which was to be held in Newark, Ohio, and our request was granted. No quarterly meeting had been established here at that time.

About the end of March or the beginning of April in the same year, D. M. Jones came here and settled among us; a religious young man, faithful and useful.

He afterwards married Laura, the eldest daughter of Mr. Bebb, the first marriage in Venedocia, and both remain with us to this day and are proverbial for their kindness and faithfulness.

There came in the same spring, David Owens, Edward Jones, Robert Richards, David Hughes, Rowland Evand, and their families. They were all church members, which was a great encouragement to us. We were quite happy and brotherly, and peace and quiet prevailed among us.

In October, 1849, the Rev. Robert Williams, and several others from Jackson, Ohio, visited us. Mr. Williams was here about a week and we had a feast under his ministry. As the boat was late in reaching Spencerville Saturday night, he, and others had to walk eight miles through the woods Sunday morning. He preached at 2 o'clock from the words in Acts 10:33, "Now, therefore, we are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." He was in our sight like Peter in the house of Cornelius.

In the year 1850, several ministers visited us; the Rev. W. Parry, Granville, Ohio, and the Venerable James Davies (Cong.) Gomer, Ohio. He preached quite often to us during his stay in Gomer, and with zeal and enthusiasm as were his custom. Maybe others were here at this period, but have escaped my memory.

During this year we began to talk about building a church, and the work was completed at the end of the year 1851. It was a frame building, measuring 20 by 30 feet. We paid for it without a cent of help from anybody. On

the day of its opening the Rev. Robert Williams and Evans S. Jones, Jackson, Ohio, preached.

A short time before we built the new church, we had a preaching appointment with the Rev. Hugh Rees of Cincinnati, who intended to stay for a short time while in our midst. By the time he arrived here he was very ill, and he died within a few days, which was a great disappointment to us. The Rev. James Davies, Gomer, and Edward Hughes (a young man from Cincinnati who had started to preach) officiated at the house, and the body was taken to Cincinnati for burial.

In 1852 we had a preaching meeting. There were three noted characters taking part in it; the Rev. David Williams, Pittsburgh, Pa., James Davies, Gomer, Ohio, and Samuel Roberts, Lianbrynmair, N.W. The three old veterans were at their best in preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ to us. The three are in heaven since many years.

In 1853, after much anxiety of having a minister to settle among us, at last we succeeded in having the Rev. Hugh Pugh, a native of Morionithshire, N.W., a worthy minister of the New Testament; a strong man in the Scriptures. He labored here for many years; faithful, industrious and acceptable, for a very little recompense because of the straitened circumstances of many of us.

Some years after Mr. Pugh came here, the Rev. H. P. Howell visited us. At that time he was at Paddy's Run, a young man beginning to preach. When he arrived here Mr. Pugh's daughter had died, and he himself was very sick. This was the first time for Rev. H. P. Powell to officiate at a funeral.

While praying for the sorrowing family, he asked most earnestly, if in accordance with the will of God, that Mr. Pugh's life be spared for fifteen years, for the sake of the religious cause in the neighborhood and his family, and strange to say he died in fifteen years from that time.

Space will not allow us to make particular note of the friends that came here from the year 1850 to 1852, such as Richard Evans, D. J. Jones, D. Davies, the black-

smith, John Richard, John M. Jones, J. J. Jones and their families, all of whom were an ornament to the settlement.

Also we would like to say a word about another detachment that came here about the same period, namely, Hugh F. Jones, Abraham Jones, Thomas Hughes, David Breese, Richard Thomas, and his brother, John Thomas, Edward Thomas, William Hughes, John Pritchard, J. George, and their families. They settled about four or five miles to the west of Venedocia, and that place is called the Upper Settlement. They walked on Sunday through the woods to Venedocia to worship in Salem Chapel, where they were members, before they built a church of their own. For the sake of convenience they all joined together to hold a religious service in the house of Abraham Jones, and the Ark of the Lord continued there for many days. It would not be inappropriate to paraphrase those words in 2 Samuel 6:11 — "And the Lord Blessed Abraham Jones and his household." A church was built there, convenient to the settlement, and was called "Capel Seion."

Abraham Jones  
1818 - 1905

Margaret Howell Jones  
1821 - 1899

William H.  
1846 - 1898

Sarah Breese  
1849 - 1929

Richard H.  
1851 - 1937

Jane Jones  
1853 - 1937

Abraham B.  
1853 - 1934

Margaret Alban  
1855 - 1931

Humphrey H.  
1856 - 1938

Kate Parry  
1854 - 1922

Griffith H.  
1858 - 1936

Mary Jenkins  
1860 - 1911

Mary Jane  
1860 - 1925

John H. Reese  
1853 - 1933

Benjamin  
Chalmers  
Alice  
Roger  
Lydia

Margaret  
Elizabeth  
Susan  
Abram  
Lazel

Howell  
Thomas  
Margaret  
Oscar  
Irvin  
Eunice  
Gladys  
Haydn

John  
Mary Anna

Margaret  
Blodwyn  
Ruth  
Isther  
Edward

This material was collected and the two memorials translated from Welsh to English by Thomas Alban Jones, grandson of Abraham Jones, on May 1st, 1958, when he was 78 years old. Death intervened and he was unable to see the final step of publication.



There follows a letter written by Tom to his pastor, which was read at his funeral service.

March 4th, 1952

Dr. Roy A. Burkhart

Dear Friend:

Thanks for your kind letter of January 25th. Your reference to the "Block of Wood" touched my soul again. Its sacred meaning abides with me always, I take it with me wherever I go.

Trees have meant so much to me thru the years, they have often taken me to strange places. Went again today to a place called "Tropical Trees," a park with trees from India, China, Africa, in fact all the tropical lands. The Bread Tree, the Crown of Thorns, the Acasia, all impressed me, helped to clarify their meaning.

Trees have been kind to me and mine. The product of the log has afforded me an opportunity to be helpful, and afforded me the means to live a happy and prosperous life. So thru the years we have become close friends, even since childhood. It was my privilege to be born in a house made of logs.

Emblematic in a way of humans, they live, they grow, they breathe, they struggle, they mature, they die. Their life span is akin to that of man. Some bear their fruit in their season, others contain within their bodies a wealth of use only after they are cut down. From them have come the homes, the cradle, the threshold, the chair, the door, the bed, the altar, the pulpit, the rocker, the coffin, yes the Cross. When we watch the poles and cross arms of our great communication system by the thousands, spread out all over the earth, carrying messages of joy, grief, pain, love, goodwill, day and night, in storm or sunshine, our thoughts goes back some two thousand years ago to the Cross on Calvary, that has brought the great message of Goodwill thru the ages and around the world to mankind.

It has been my privilege to go out into the big forest, among the Creator's giant trees, time and again, only to feel insignificant and humble. When the woodsmen fall a giant, with hats off, and in a sense of reverence and admiration, they look up and cry "Timber," a tribute to one that has survived and from within that trunk will come a product for the good of the human race.

Well this old tree, I call me, must soon fall to, the leaves are falling, the limbs are creaking, the life stream is waning, the bark is loosening, the roots insecure, maturity is nearing. We only hope that thru the years we bore some good fruit, and from the life of this tree there will be something of worth to those we leave behind, that somewhere thru the years someone was made better because we lived. Then when this tree of mine falls, there will be someone out of appreciation, in a still voice cry "Timber."

Humbly yours,

Tom.

The tree that never had to fight  
For sun and sky and air and light,  
That stood out in the open plain  
And always got its share of rain,  
Never became a forest king  
But lived and died a scrubby thing.

The man who never had to toil  
To rise above the common soil,  
Who never had to win his share  
Of sun and sky and light and air,  
Never became a manly man  
But lived and died as he began.

Good timber does not grow in ease;  
The stronger wind, the tougher trees,  
The farther sky, the greater length,  
The more the storm, the more the strength;  
By sun and cold, by rains and snows  
In tree or man good timber grows.

Where thickest stands the forest growth  
We find the patriachs of both,  
And they hold converse with the stars  
Whose broken branches show the scars  
Of many winds and much of strife —  
This is the common law of life.

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