

Mrs. Ella L. Jones

“One of the Best Women the Ladies Aid Society can boast of possessing.” --*Camp & Home*, Denver Colorado

Mrs. Ella L. Jones was elected the second National President of the Ladies Aid Society at the Order's third National Encampment, held in Patterson, New Jersey, in September 1889.

She was born Ellen Louisa Gardner in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, July 6, 1847, the eldest of Martin and Jane (Zerman) Gardner's four children. Her father was a machinist. She was only a school girl when the Rebellion broke out, but was glad to help the cause at the front by scraping lint and preparing bandages for hospital use. Although she saw little of the war, she experienced some of its hardships; was driven from home at midnight by the shelling of Carlisle by the gray coats.

On August 14, 1866, she married Nathan S. Jones in Carlisle. They were members of the First Lutheran Church there.

Born July 2, 1841, Nathan spent his early years on the family farm. He enlisted June 30, 1863, as a teamster in Co. B, 22nd Pennsylvania Cavalry (185th Pa). When his term expired, he re-enlisted January 27, 1864, as a private with Co. M, 22nd Pennsylvania Cavalry (3 yrs.). On June 24, 1865, as part of a war-end consolidation, he transferred to Co. M, 3rd Pennsylvania Provisional Cavalry, and was honorably discharged on October 31, 1865.

Ella and Nathan had four children: Ann C. (1869-1870), Ellen Nellie (1880-1909), Mary (1880-80), and Harry M. (1882-1882). They moved to Altoona in 1872, where he worked as a polisher with the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Nathan was an early member of Altoona's Lt. S.C. Potts GAR Post 62. The post was chartered in 1877 and Jones was elected to positions in 1881 and 1884.

Altoona's Lt. S.C. Potts Camp 12, was the tenth Camp that the Sons of Veterans mustered. It was organized in January 1882. The Camp's Ladies Aid Society had been active since 1884 or possibly before.

When Loyal Ladies League #8 organized in Altoona on August 27, 1884, Ella became a charter member. The group associated with the city's Lt. S.C. Potts GAR Post 62. A year later, when Pennsylvania's LLL held its first convention in Reading, Ella was elected treasurer. The LLL was active in New Jersey, Ohio, and Pennsylvania with over 200 new members.

After the LLL reorganized as the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1886, the Altoona group became LGAR Circle #8 and in 1888, Ella was elected its president.

Meanwhile, at the first National Ladies Aid Society Convention, on September 9, 1887, in Akron, she was elected to the National Council of Administration. The following year, at the Wheeling, WV, National Encampment, she was elected National vice President.

Ella was described as a bright woman and full of business. The St. Joseph News-Press (Missouri) said: “Her acquaintance was large and she was a prime favorite with the veterans and the Sons, who all were ambitious to show her every courtesy.”

Ella was re-elected LAS National President at the 1890 National Encampment, held in St. Joe, Missouri. Seventy-five delegates from four Departments (Illinois, Iowa, Ohio, Pennsylvania) and one provisional department (Missouri) were present. Although the Order was organized in 16 states. The membership of the LAS numbered 3,083.

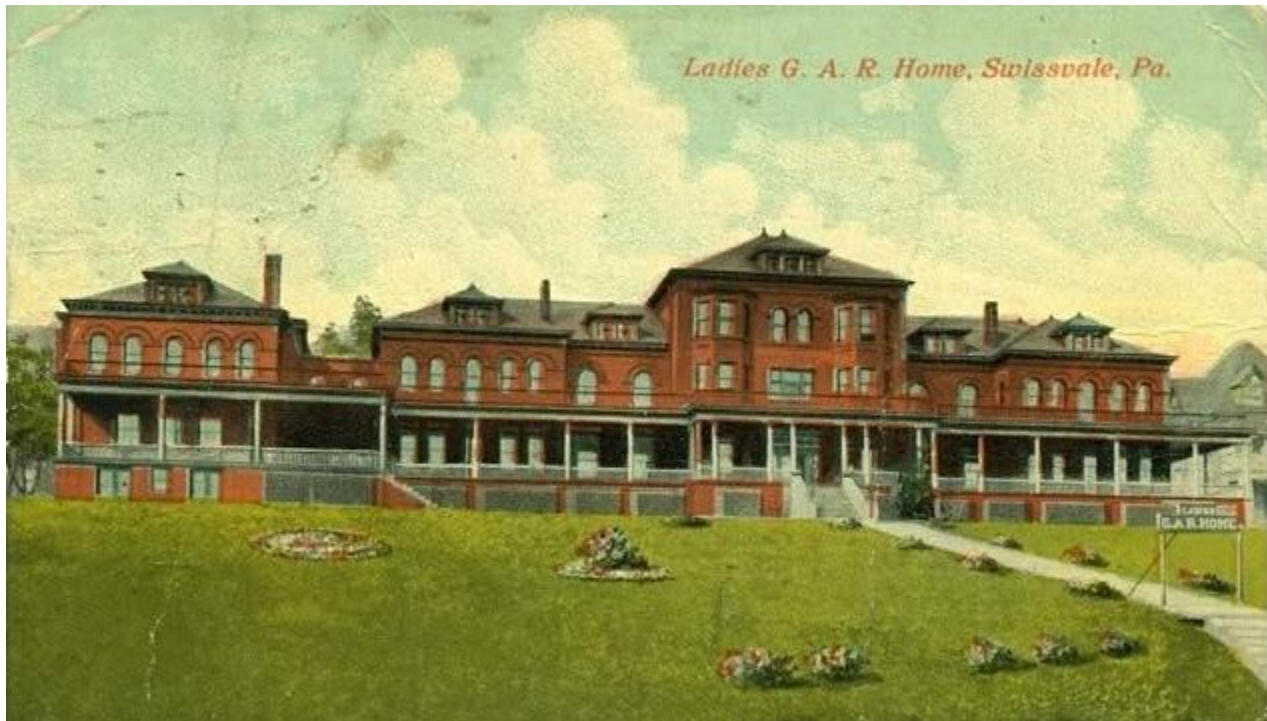
In March 1891, NP Jones visited Maj. Davis, his wife, and other friends in Pittsburgh and Allegheny, Pennsylvania. She reported that the LAS's membership had nearly doubled during the last year and that the treasury now had a surplus.

A month earlier, at the Pennsylvania Department LGAR convention, Ella was elected not only an alternate delegate to the National Encampment, but to the board of managers of the LGAR Home in Swissvale, Pennsylvania, too.

On August 28, 1891, Ella Jones stepped down after serving two years as LAS National President. She was presented a handsome badge in appreciation for her service.



After her term, she continued to serve the Allied Orders. She served as Circle #8 Treasurer in January 1892 and installed the officers of L.A.S. #3. In June 1892, she became the corresponding secretary of the LGAR Home's board of managers. In 1894, she served on the LGAR's Pennsylvania Department Council of Administration. She was the L.A.S.'s



National Treasurer in 1894-1898. In 1898, Ella was elected L.A.S. Pennsylvania Dept. President. In 1902 and 03, she was elected Secretary of Circle #8. In 1905, she was elected Circle president again. In 1907-09, she was Circle Treasurer.

Additionally, during this time, she was active in Olive Sisterhood #2, Daughters of Malta as the Keeper of Archives.

After her husband became sick in 1907, they moved in with their daughter, Nellie's family. Nathan Jones died on May 18, 1908. Besides Lt. S.C. Potts GAR Post 62, he had been a member of the Pennsylvania Railroad Veterans association, Pennsylvania Railroad relief, and Mountain City Independent Order of Odd Fellows Lodge No. 837.

Daughter Nellie died October 14, 1909 at age 29, leaving a husband and two children.

Alone now, Ella moved to Lebanon, Pennsylvania, and lived with her husband's relatives for a time.

Ella served as National President of the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1912-13. By 1910 when the Order's first official history was written, the L.G.A.R. had Departments organized in 29 states, membership of over 60,000, widows and orphans' homes established in various states, \$30,000 expended annually for veterans' relief, and U.S. Presidents as members.



On May 13, 1923, Ella was recognized by First Lutheran Church for 51 years of Sunday School work, 20 of them teaching.

Ella died suddenly of chronic myocarditis on March 19, 1929 at the L.G.A.R. Home in Swissvale, Pennsylvania. She was 81. Her funeral service was held at Carlisle's St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church and she was buried next to her husband and two infant children in Carlisle's Ashland Cemetery.

In addition to Circle #8 of the LGAR, Auxiliary #4 of the ASUVCW, and Olive Sisterhood #2 of the Dames of Malta, she also had been a member of Eleanor Lodge #21 of the Daughters of Rebeka.

By PCinC Steve Michaels with research assistance by PDC Kent Peterson and PDC Robert Wolz

Sources:

Altoona Mirror, Altoona, Pa., 19 Mar 1929

Altoona Times, Altoona, Pa., 1 Aug 1884, 20 Aug 1885, 10 Dec 1903

Altoona Tribune, Altoona, Pa., 4 Feb 1890, 16 Mar 1891, 28 Sep 1891, 6 Jan 1892, 7 Sep 1895, 20 Jun 1898, 18 Jan 1902, 5 Apr 1902, 26 Jan 1905, 14 Nov 1905, 12 Jan 1906, 11 Jan 1907, 15 Jan 1909, 3 Jul 1911, 8 Nov 1911, 14 Feb 1912, 4 May 1923, 20 Mar 1929
Federal Census: 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920
Harrisburg Telegraph, Harrisburg, Pa., 26 Oct 1887
Pittsburgh Daily Post, Pittsburgh, Pa., 6 Sep 1894
Pittsburgh Dispatch, Pittsburgh, Pa., 4 Mar 1891, 6 Sep 1891
Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, Pa., 6 Dec 1891, 3 Jun 1892, 9 Sep 1894
St. Joseph Gazette, St. Joseph, Mo., 27 Aug 1890
St. Joseph News-Press, St. Joseph, Mo., 25 Aug 1890
Wheeling Daily Intelligencer, Wheeling, WV, 17 Aug 1888

Additional Information on Ella Louise Gardner Jones:
by Wanda Langdon, PNP

Obituary:

MRS. EMMA L. JONES
Former resident of this city, died suddenly this morning at the Ladies of the G. A. R. home at Swissvale, Allegheny county. She was born in Carlisle, Pa., on July 6, 1847, and was a daughter of Martin and Jane Gardner, both deceased. She was married on Aug. 14, 1866, to Nathan S. Jones, deceased. She is survived by two grandchildren and a number of nieces and nephews scattered throughout the district. Her husband and three children preceded her to the grave. In 1872, she moved to this city with her family. She was a member of the First Lutheran church since that time. She was also a member of the Eleanor lodge, No. 21, of the Daughters of Rebekah, of the Olive Sisterhood of the Dames of Malta, of Circle, No. 8, of the Ladies of the G. A. R. and of auxillary, No. 4, of the Sons of Veterans. In the two last named orders, she held high office.

from the:

[Altoona Mirror](#)
[Altoona, Pennsylvania](#)
19 Mar 1929

Headstone of Nathan and Ella Jones:



Photo by J. Egolf

Find a Grave Memorial: 92466631

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/92466631/ellen-l-jones>

National President Ella Gardner Jones presided over the 3rd National Encampment of the ASUVCW then called the "Ladies Aid Society" held at Akron, Ohio. The proceedings can be read here:

1887 National Encampment Proceedings:

https://asuvcw.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/1887_Proceedings.pdf