

# Thomas Jones of Wales

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Colonial Park Site of First Burials in Savannah. Graves later moved elsewhere

THOMAS JONES of Wales, formerly of London, a Clothworker, was a passenger on one of the trips of James Edward Oglethorpe to the Colony. He arrived on St. Simon's Island, Monday, September 18, 1738, and was immediately appointed Advocate of the Regiment, being asked by General Oglethorpe to inspect the store accounts at Savannah and to adjust the accounts of Thomas Causton. For this reason he became known as a hot and passionate man, and was generally complained about by the other citizens.

In May of 1739, Thomas Jones was appointed Storekeeper for the whole province and was paid an annual earnings of 30 pds. However, he soon quarrelled with Robert Williams which resulted in a fist fight, but their differences were later settled. In June he was appointed the Overseer of the Trust Servants in the Northern Division of the Province of Savannah. These were the indentured servants to the crown, who could not be freed until their service as indentures expired. After this they were freed and

usually granted 25 acres of land by the Crown.

In the Journal of the Earl of Egmont dated October 10, 1739, Thomas Jones was described: "That Mr. Jones is so utterly rash, passionate and cruel, that twas to be feared he would drive the Colony away by Spring.

That he declared he valued not the Trustees orders, but would obey those of Colonel Oglethorpe." This type of temperament was not unusual for the new colonists, given their frustrations and hardships. In 1740, twenty-five of the Trustees servants were employed by Thomas Jones on a new plantation located one mile south of Savannah, but the effort only produced 100 bushels of corn.

A complaint was made by Mary Townsend to the Palace Court that Mr. Jones had a store and supplied shops with goods at wholesale prices, but otherwise sold them retail. However, the crown continued to appoint Thomas Jones to certain offices and duties.

For one, he was made the third bailiff of Savannah and quickly became known as a man of resolution who was disliked by many. June 1, 1741, he was appointed one of the four assistants to Secretary William Stephens, Esquire, in the Town of Savannah, with John Pye elected as Clerk. However, was beset by John Pye who investigated grievances of the people, and began charging Thomas Jones with malpractice of the public accounts.

Yet in a letter from Harman Verelst to Thomas Jones, dated at Westminster, December 14, 1741, Jones was complimented for his good work and accounting methods.

"The Trustees are very well pleased with the exactness of the accounts you sent them by Captain (William) Thomson, and are well satisfied in your capacity to serve them." Finally, in February of 1771, Thomas Jones was granted 100 acres of land in St. Mathews Parish (Effingham County).

Thomas Jones died in Savannah on June 5, 1810. His wife, Eliza, died at

Savannah in 1817, her LWT dated 1/17/1817, Will Book F. In her Will, she named her mother, Mrs. Jane Rea, and the children of her husband: Jane Mary Jones and Martha Cowles Jones. The Chatham County Wills and Estates are available to members of Georgia Pioneers.