

Jones, Johnston Blakeley ^[1]

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by Claiborne T. Smith, Jr., 1988

12 Sept. 1814–1 Mar. 1889

Johnston Blakeley Jones, physician, was born at Rock Rest, the plantation of his father Edward Jones in [Chatham County](#) ^[2]. Mary, his mother, was the daughter of Peter Mallett of [Fayetteville](#) ^[3]. Young Jones was named for Johnston Blakeley, a naval hero in the [War of 1812](#) ^[4] and his father's protégé. He attended the [Episcopal School for Boys in Raleigh](#) ^[5] and [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[6] (1831–35), then entered the Medical School of South Carolina at Charleston. For health reasons he went to France for two years, continuing his studies in the prominent hospitals of Paris. After returning to America, he obtained a medical degree at Charleston. Jones was a man of striking appearance and in his student days in Paris was known as "the handsome American."

In 1841 Jones settled in Chapel Hill to practice. On 13 May 1842 he was a member of the group of churchmen who organized the Church of the Atonement, later named the Chapel of the Cross. Kemp P. Battle, who knew him well during his residence in Chapel Hill, wrote of him: "Jones was a man of genius and an acknowledged authority in his profession. He was, however, except when aroused by a dangerous case, fond of his ease and without ambition. I have known him to come to my father's home by a circuitous route in order to avoid a call for his services and spend hours in talking and reading Don Quixote." Battle also mentioned that Jones experimented in synesthesia, particularly the correlation between the senses of taste and smell. When The University of North Carolina closed following the [Civil War](#) ^[7], Jones moved to Charlotte where he eventually built up a large practice. He was one of the prime movers in the reorganization of the [North Carolina Medical Society](#) ^[8].

On 21 Oct. 1841 Jones married Mary Ann Stewart, the daughter of Gabriel Long Stewart, at times a legislator from [Martin County](#) ^[9], and his wife Ann, the daughter of Dr. Simmons Baker. Jones and his wife had five children. The oldest, Edward, died in the Civil War. Two surviving sons, J. B. and Dr. Simmons B., lived in Charlotte. The two daughters were Caroline B. and Mrs. Lucien H. Walker.

References:

Samuel A. Ashe, ed., *Cyclopedia of Eminent and Representative Men of the Carolinas of the Nineteenth Century* vol. 2 (1892). ^[10]

Howard A. Kelly and Walter L. Burrage, *American Medical Biographies* (1920) ^[11].

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Authors:

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Origin - location:

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[Chatham County](#) ^[18]

[Chapel Hill](#) ^[19]

[University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#) ^[20]

[Raleigh](#) ^[21]

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