



# FRANK JONES'S MAPLEWOOD FARM

IN 1849 A 17-YEAR-OLD BOY NAMED FRANK JONES resolved to leave the family farm in Barrington to seek his fortune. With little more than the clothes on his back and \$7 in his pocket, he walked the 20 miles to Portsmouth. By his mid-30s he had amassed a vast fortune through a variety of entrepreneurial ventures including brewing, insurance, banking, shoe manufacturing, and many others. Concurrently, he had become a powerful political figure both locally and nationally.



## FRANK JONES

This portrait of Jones was probably executed in the late 1870s when he served two terms in the United States House of Representatives. In addition to the staggering responsibilities associated with his vast business interests, Jones was politically active for most of his adult life. Mayor of Portsmouth at the age of 35, he went on to exert powerful influence in Washington and was friend to three U.S. Presidents: Arthur, Garfield, and McKinley. Up to the day of his death on October 2, 1902, Jones was a larger-than-life figure who epitomized boundless energy, vision, and confidence.

Oil painting by Nellie Mathes Horn in 1901, after a photograph of Frank Jones from the mid-1870s. Courtesy of Portsmouth Athenæum.

## JONES MANSION

Following Jones's death in 1902, his wife Martha donated the mansion and 35 acres to Boris Sidis, a famed psychotherapist who catered to wealthy patients, likely including Mrs. Jones. Sidis operated his "Psychotherapeutic Institute" here until his death in 1923. This view of the mansion dates from around 1910.

Postcard, *The Sidis Psychotherapeutic Institute, Woodbury Avenue, Portsmouth.* Courtesy of the Portsmouth Athenæum.



## JONES'S MAPLEWOOD FARM ESTATE

Miles of fine gravel walkways, which Jones made freely available to the public, wound through manicured lawns adorned with statues and flowers. Stone-lined ponds, bridges, greenhouses, and enormous barns combined to make the estate one of the finest in New England. No doubt owing to his farmboy origins, Jones displayed a lifelong interest in animal husbandry and horticulture. Some of the unusual trees that graced the estate still stand in the yards of homes built after his holdings were sold off following his death.

Engraving, *Fanciful Bird's Eye View of Residence and Surroundings of Hon. Frank Jones*, from Hale's *History of Rockingham County*, 1882. Courtesy of the Portsmouth Athenæum.



## THE MEYERS FARM

Jones had earlier come to Portsmouth as a 14-year-old peddler of charcoal. Fatigued by the tedious journey atop a wagon pulled by six oxen, he stopped to rest in the barn on the Meyers farm, shown here at left in the photograph, as it looked in the 1860s.

In 1866 he purchased the farm and in the following two decades transformed the austere farmhouse into an elegant mansion. Through additional purchases he enlarged the grounds to encompass over 1,000 acres, shown in this c. 1860s photograph (above).

Davis Brothers Photographers, *Maplewood Farm, Before Frank Jones's Renovations*, 1865-1875. Courtesy of the Portsmouth Athenæum.



## MANSION INTERIOR

Despite the expense that he lavished on his mansion and grounds, Jones usually stayed at Maplewood Farm only during the month of August, preferring instead to lodge at his Rockingham Hotel in downtown Portsmouth. This photo of the drawing room exemplifies the splendor of the mansion's interior.

Photograph, *The Drawing Room of the Sidis Institute.* Courtesy of Portsmouth Athenæum.

Funding for this historical marker was donated by the following: Edward & Jean Baldassarre; Sherry Brandsema & Robert Hogan; Charles & Eva Cogswell; Aubrey, Emelie, Francine & Frederick Horvath; K.J. Knope & Fredrick McMullen; Walter G. Lewis & Patricia J. Taylor; Bob, Cindy, Joshua & Nathaniel Lister; Katherine R. Mallen; The Patch Family; George & Karen Pierce; Robert Proulx; The Sirmaian Family; H. Dixon & Monique Turner; George & Helen Weiss; and the City of Portsmouth (2012).

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