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GENERAL JONES

by Mark H. Dunkelman

The lithograph was subtly doctored before it was donated to the museum. "Sherman at Savannah", rarely reproduced today, is an 1865 color print made after the original painting by Otto Botticher, depicting Major General William T. Sherman and a score of his generals trotting on horseback across a Savannah parade ground. Off to the right, a small group of mounted officers front a line of infantry presenting arms to the passing cavalcade. In the foreground of that group, an officer is pictured patting his horse's neck. On the copy of the lithograph hanging in the Cattaraugus County Memorial and Historical Museum in Little Valley, New York, that officer's image is retouched. His face is delicately repainted, and his original forage cap transformed into a full-brimmed black hat. Even his horse is painted over, from a light tan to a bright bay with white forelegs. Whoever gave the print to the museum many years ago wanted to make sure a local hero, Brigadier General Patrick Henry Jones, was included in a depiction of a moment of glory--even though General Jones was not part of the original picture.

General Jones is rarely included in the vast panorama of Civil War history, seldom listed in indexes or pictured on pages of the great flood of books that have appeared in the last century and a third. Usually he is left out, as he was left out of Botticher's lithograph. Even the tangible legacies of his service, his wartime relics, are hard to find, as I've learned in two decades of searching. As a subaltern and regimental and brigade commander, Jones--like hundreds of others of Civil War generals, North and South--played a minor role in the war, and what fame he won in

the 1860s was fleeting. When he died in 1900 a Cattaraugus County newspaper declared "his memory shall not fade among men", but his memory died with that generation. By all reckoning, however, Jones deserves to be remembered. He performed his bit part in the war well. His rise in rank from second lieutenant to general was no doubt aided by his ethnic background and political string-pulling, but the promotions were solidly based on battlefield and campaign merit. His commands battled and campaigned hard, and although along the way he was separated from them when wounded, captured, injured or ill, he kept returning to the front and finally was rewarded for his service by leading his brigade in triumph through Washington's avenues in the Grand Review of the Union armies, a brigadier's star on his shoulders. As one of a dozen Union generals born in Ireland, Patrick Henry Jones parlayed his success as a soldier into a promising postwar political career, but the latter years of his life, like his Irish origins, are shrouded in obscurity. Like so many other veterans of the conflict, his life was defined by his role in the war, and it is for his service that he should be recalled.

The scanty information about his early years in Ireland can be quickly summed up. He was born in County Westmeath on November 20, 1830, the first child (of an eventual seven) of James and Ellen (Lynch) Jones, and christened Patrick Henry after his paternal and maternal grandfathers. That neither his birth nor the marriage of his parents can be found in County Westmeath parish records is perhaps explained by a traditional family story--that the surname was changed to Jones from another name, possibly Mahaney, before the family left Ireland. Young Patrick was sent to school at age seven--one source says a grammar school in Dublin, another mentions a monastery in Tullow, County Wicklow--and remained for three years, leaving when his family joined the great tide of Irish emigration to the United States. The Joneses landed in New York City aboard the S.S. *St. Mark* on June 5, 1840 and traveled overland to the rugged, wooded hills of central Cattaraugus County, in the southwestern tier of New York State, where they settled on a farm in the town of Little Valley.

Patrick worked the farm with his parents, but they also made sure he continued his education, sending him to school in nearby Ellicottville, the county seat. In 1850, at age twenty,

