

DANIEL ANGELL JONES (1861-1936)

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This is one in a series of articles about prominent British and Irish field-bryologists of the past. The author would be very pleased to learn of any information which supplements its content.

A Social and Biographical History of British and Irish Field-bryologists is also available on-line at <http://britishbryologicalsociety.org.uk/>

Botanical career

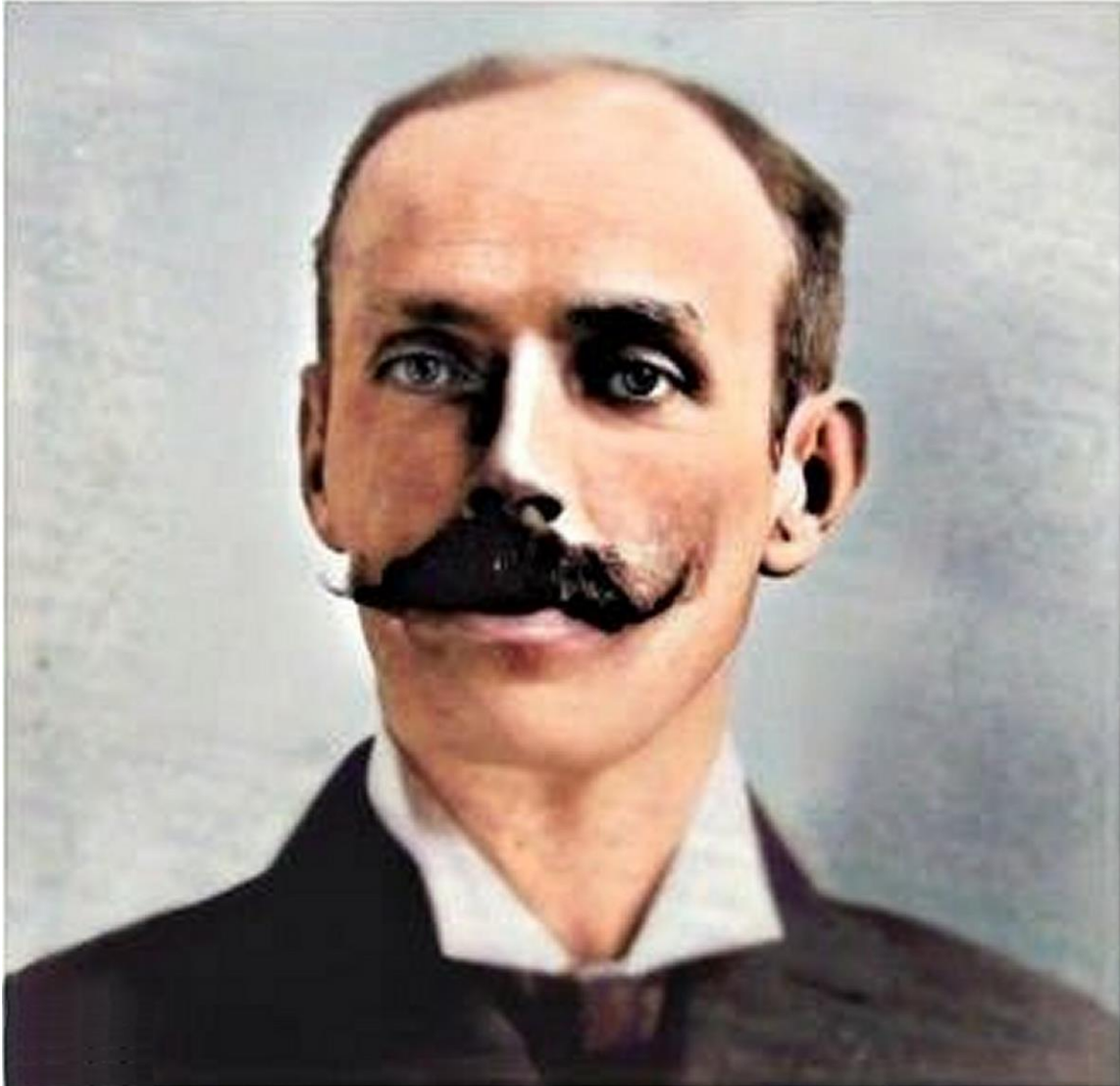
Like many botanists, Jones first took interest in flowering plants and ferns, and by 1898 had written *A Handbook of the Botany of Merioneth*, an unpublished manuscript which is now preserved in the National Museum and Gallery of Wales, Cardiff. He also published lists of bryophytes for Denbighshire and Anglesey.

Around that time, a teaching colleague and friend, Silvanus Jones Owen (1859-1912) of Croesor, Caernarvonshire stimulated Daniel Jones's interest in bryophytes, and the two men made numerous botanical excursions together. Jones began collecting bryophytes in Merioneth and Snowdonia in about 1900 and joined the Moss Exchange Club in 1901 or 1902.

In the next few years, Jones became as accomplished at identifying liverworts as mosses, finding rarities such as *Gymnocolea inflata* ssp. *acutiloba* on the Rhinogs, *Scapania nimbosa* on the Glyders (not seen again in Wales after his discovery in 1909), *Gymnomitrium corallioides* on Snowdon, *Lophozia longidens* on Cadair Idris, *Obtusifolium obtusum* in Cwm Moch and Cwm Cneifon, *Leptoscyphus cuneifolius* at Ganllwyd, *Riccia crozalsii* at several places along the coast, as well as several rare *Cephaloziella* species. Jones also excelled at mosses, finding rarities such as *Myurella julacea* on Snowdon, *Conostomum tetragonum* on Glyder Fawr and Snowdon, *Meesia uliginosa* at Aberffraw on Anglesey, *Aloina rigida*, *Dicranella crispa*, *Hageniella micans* and *Drepanocladus lycopodioides*, as well as an impressive range of rare *Bryum* mosses along the coast (*B. calophyllum*, *B. marratii*, *B. uliginosum*, *B. turbinatum*, *B. knowltonii* and *B. warneum*).

By 1906, Jones was sufficiently keen and well thought of as a bryologist to be distributing the packets of mosses and liverworts which were annually exchanged between MEC members. In 1907 he became Secretary of "Section II", the newly formed beginners' section of the Club. By 1923, more members were in the beginners' section than in the senior Section I, and Jones took a pivotal role in reorganising the two sections of the Moss Exchange Club as a unified British Bryological Society. Indeed, he led the meeting at Dolgellau, when members met to discuss and enact the change.

Jones became Secretary of the newly formed BBS in 1923, a position he held until becoming President in 1935-6. He also acted as Excursion Secretary at several BBS meetings. 49 members and friends met for a week at Harlech in 1931 and explored the surrounding country; this would be a good attendance at a BBS meeting in the early 21st century.



Daniel Angell Jones. Image from BBS Photographic Archive.

Jones was also a close friend of the botanist Professor John Lloyd Williams (1854-1945), and Jones's letters to Williams are preserved in the latter's correspondence in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Jones made few important bryological discoveries after 1920, and began to take increasing interest in lichens, which he also became accomplished at finding and identifying.

Hanes Harlech history group erected a blue plaque on April 4th, 2024, commemorating Jones and his bryological and other achievements.

5,000 of his bryophytes went to the National Museum and Gallery of Wales at Cardiff in 1920. Further plants are at the Natural History Museum in London, Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery, Merseyside Museum at Liverpool, and Warwick.

Family background and biography

Daniel Angell Jones was the first child of Daniel Jones (1825/6-1896), and Jane (*née* Jones, born 1833/4). Daniel Jones Sr. was the son of Job Jones (c.1784-1867), a farmer of Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd, near Ruthin, Denbighshire. Jane was the daughter of John Jones, a miller of Maentwrog, Merionethshire.

Daniel Jones Sr. was a master house-painter at Liverpool when his son was born on July 14th, 1861 but the family had moved to Portmadog, Caernarvonshire by 1863, where a second child, Emily, was born. By 1867/8 the family had moved again, this time to Harlech, Merionethshire, where Catherine (born 1867/8), Jane (1869/70), William (1871/2) and John (1873/4) entered the world. Thus, Daniel Angell Jones was the eldest of six children.

Daniel Sr., Jane and their six children settled in Harlech, and at the time of the 1871 Census were living at Shop Newydd, from where Daniel Sr. combined his career of house-painter with selling general provisions. By 1881 the family were living at Gwyndy Shop in Harlech, and Mr Jones's double career had resolved into retailing at the expense of house-painting, for he described himself as a grocer and general provisioner. Daniel Sr. died at Gwyndy Shop in 1896.

Daniel Angell Jones left Harlech to attend Botwnog Grammar School on the Llyn peninsula as a pupil. By the time of the 1881 Census Return, he was an assistant teacher at Widnes, Lancashire, and returned to Wales to teach at Machynlleth from 1886 until 1892. Then he moved back to Harlech, which remained his home until he retired in 1924. By 1901 he was living with his youngest brother John (who had followed his father into the grocery business) at Rock House, The Terrace (one of a terrace of houses near the steep winding road from the station to the castle, and now 5, Bronwen Terrace). John was still running the shop ('Plas Café') with his wife Sally in the 1920s.

In 1900, Daniel Angell Jones married Louisa Edwards (1872-1952) at Wrexham, and their daughter Jane Dilys was born at Broughton, Denbighshire in 1901. Louisa was a daughter of Thomas Edwards (1846-1899), a coal-miner at Broughton, who was in turn the son of Adam Edwards (1814/6-1884) of Bersham, a coal-miner. Daniel and Louisa also had a son Thomas Idris (1907-1975). In 1911 the family lived at 5 Bronwen Terrace, Harlech.

Harlech remained Jones's home, where he taught at the local council school, but he also lectured in agriculture at the University College of Wales in Bangor during the First World War, and he was awarded an M.Sc. in 1918.

Daniel and Louisa Jones lived at Rock House until 1924, when Daniel retired to Cheltenham. There, he may have enjoyed opportunities to botanise with his friend and bryological peer Henry Herbert Knight who had also retired there. However, Daniel and Louisa moved to Bristol in 1931, and were living at 11, Tyndall Avenue at the time of Daniel's death in 1936.

Perhaps Daniel and Louisa moved to Cheltenham and Bristol to live near their son Thomas Idris, who had qualified as a pharmacist. Thomas was living in Bristol when Daniel died in 1936. Thomas later moved to Mold in Flintshire, where he practised as a pharmacist until the late 1960s, when he retired to Anglesey. Louisa also left Bristol after Daniel died and was living in Bournemouth in 1939, but had joined Thomas and his family in Mold by 1950, and she died there in 1952. Jane Dilys became a schoolteacher and was working in Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk in 1939.

Acknowledgements

I thank Deborah Barton, Jim Maxwell and John Webster for kindly sharing information about Daniel Jones and his family.