

Helen Bryan Chamberlain Jones was born July 4, 1904. She was the daughter of Claude Spencer and Laura Brafton Chamberlain of Kinston, NC.

A winsome but ~~headstrong~~ ^{independent} only child, from the outset she loved people, music and clothes; later acquiring equal enthusiasm for American history, politics and football.

She grew up in Kinston, attended Saint Mary's in Raleigh NC and graduated with a Certificate in "Expression and Music" (Organ.)

Returning home she was soon involved in the various social, civic and historical organizations appropriate for a young woman of the "old" Kinston set.

Her father was a dedicated mason and Shriner (holding both state and national offices). Because of his poor eyesight she often drove him throughout the Eastern United States on his various duties. She also accompanied him to Cuba in the 1920's.

During the Great Depression, she worked as a Reporter for the Kinston Free Press and, years later, letters from Washington to her family would on occasion be printed therein.

Her love for Colonial American history and her family's avocation for genealogy encouraged her serious involvement in the DAR. In the 1940's she was named State Vice-Regent.

The late Gertrude Caraway of New Bern, NC ~~to~~ ^{help} this writer that had Helen Bryan not married Brexton Jones and moved to Washington, DC, she, Gertrude, would never have become State Regent and ^{then} later, President General of the DAR.

After marrying Brexton in 1943(?) and moving to Washington DC, the new Mrs. Jones found the Capitol City - together with her enthusiasm for the Democratic party, the city's political/social life, the DAR and the Washington Redskins - was quite to her liking.

Petite (5 feet 4 inches tall and 98 pounds) vivacious and astute she was also always fashionably ~~and~~ dressed. Her double strand of "choker" of large "daytime" pearls became her signature ^{as a piece of conservative style} and she wore her clothes with great panache - and knew it. ^{sometimes to the envy of others} The Women's Democratic Club, the DAR, Goodwill Industries, the Girl Scouts, the North Carolina Society, Inaugural Committee and various other guilds and causes filled her calendar.

~~And~~ she always proved a ^{imaginative} ~~creative~~ and productive member.

She also found time for genealogical (sp?) research (including Harry Truman while he was still vice-president) and she regularly wrote home about her views of the Washington scene.

Unfortunately, by the early 1970's fading eyesight and "brittle" diabetes curtailed her activities and she and Braxton made plans to return to North Carolina upon his retirement.

For Braxton it was unexpectedly by ambulance to the Winston Hospital where he died of cancer in March of 1976. For Helen Bryan it was to start her life alone for the first time and as a widow which she did with ^{her usual grace} style and determination.

She died on the morning of November 1, 1984 and was buried in a not-yet-worn new dress and her requisite pearls next to her husband in the Hollywood Cemetery in Elizabeth City, NC.

Her direct family line ended with her death.

Historical research and genealogy again came to the fore and "Robert Wensley and his descendants" - a copy of which is in the Jagers Library holdings - is but one of her various efforts.