

By the Kansas State Historical Society

TERRITORIAL CHARACTER: SAMUEL JONES

Samuel Jones was a southerner by birth. He brought his belief in slavery to Kansas Territory. He was the first sheriff of Douglas County. His conflicts with free-staters often led to violence.

What did Samuel Jones do before he came to Kansas Territory?

Samuel Jones was born in Virginia. He moved his family to Westport, Missouri, on the border of Kansas Territory. There, Jones was appointed postmaster. He quickly became involved with the proslavery movement. During the first election in Kansas Territory, Jones led a group of proslavery men into Kansas to disrupt the election. They destroyed the ballot box in Bloomington, Kansas.

Why did he come to Kansas Territory?

Samuel Jones' proslavery views brought him to the attention of the acting governor of Kansas. The governor, a fellow Virginian, appointed Jones sheriff of Douglas County. Lawrence, a center of free-state activity, was under his jurisdiction. Jones worked against the free-staters in any way he could.

