



## FOUNDING FEMALES Female Qualifying Ancestor Index

**Female Ancestor Number: 053**

**Name:** Jones, Mary (Porter)

**Dates:** (1707 - Sep 1761)

**Colonial Society:** PA

**Date added to ROA:** February 6, 2023

**Service: Woman of Distinction: School Mistress - Owner No. 8 Drinker's Alley**

**Authority:** Allinson, William J., comp. by, Memorial of Rebecca Jones (Philadelphia: Henry Longstreth, 1849), 4, 14, 16, 20, 35; Ring, Betty, Girlhood Embroidery: American Samplers & 06/10/2025 Page 23/44 Pictorial Needlework 1650-1850, Vol. II (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 338.

### **Biography:**

Mary Porter was the daughter of Thomas Porter (b. 1683) and Elizabeth Westbury, who were married at Christ Church, Barbados, 29 Jan 1706. When the Porter family arrived in Philadelphia is unknown.

Mary married William Jones at Christ Church in Philadelphia on 23 Feb. 1729. As a mariner, William Jones was not home in Philadelphia often, and ultimately he was lost at sea. During her marriage and after, she kept a school for small children at No. 8, Drinker's Alley, in a home she owned. She had a son Daniel Jones (1730-1771), who later moved to Mt. Holly, New Jersey, where he was an innkeeper and warden of St. Andrews Church. Her daughter Rebecca Jones was born 8 July 1739, nine years after her brother.

Much of what is known about Mary Porter Jones is from an autobiography written by her daughter Rebecca. She writes that as an infant, her father was much absent, and the care of her education and that of her brother was left to her mother, who "by hard labor, keeping a school, brought us up reputably, gave us sufficient learning, and educated us in the way of the Church of England." She also noted that when her mother's health started to fail in the spring of 1761, she was left with a "large school" which was their sole means of subsistence (which was known to be a nice living). Rebecca recalled her mother had a "noble disposition" and had "many good qualities" and lived "peaceable life among her neighbors." The main squabble between mother and daughter arrived when Rebecca left her Church of England upbringing to join the Society of Friends. A change Mary Jones eventually made peace with. Rebecca carried on her mother's school after Mary died.