

# The Great Promoter

After many years of debate among its executives, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad decided to expand northwest in 1905. Key to the success of the expansion was ensuring that the tracks were kept busy. To do this, the railroad launched a tremendous promotional campaign that brought people west to seed new towns and homesteads.

John Quincy Adams (no relation to the President) was the General Land and Townsite Agent for the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway. It was his job to buy land for the railroad and also to set up new towns along the right-of-way that would generate traffic. Three Forks was but one of these towns. Dozens of towns west of St. Paul got their start and names from the agents of the Milwaukee Land Co. Adams County in North Dakota was named after J. Q. Adams.

A.D. Jones was an Immigrant Agent for the Chicago, Milwaukee & Puget Sound Railway Co.

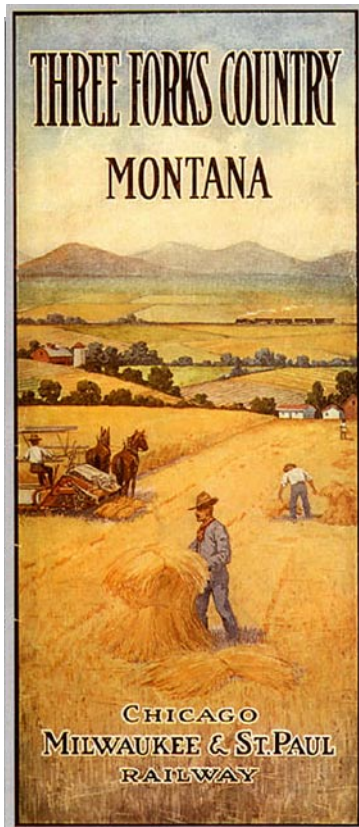
It was his job to lure homesteaders to sites along the railroad. Brochures, discounted fares, and exclusive excursion tours were used to promote the west. Dry land farming was touted as the next best thing and many a lecturer or seminar was given, again to lure farmers to western homesteads

A.D. Jones, C. E. Adams (J.Q.'s brother) and the Crowley brothers were also proprietors of the Three Forks Land Co. For a short time the Three Forks Land Co. was the local agency working with the Milwaukee Land Co. The second automobile in town was purchased in 1909 by the Three Forks Land Co. It was "a Buick touring car of the latest model." Jones and the Crowley brothers (Michael and William) could give touring

excursions of the area to potential buyers.

But Jones and the CM&PS Ry were not the only ones to promote the west. The Northern Pacific, with a spur line to Butte just south of the City, did its share of promoting. Shortly after the founding of Three Forks, the N.P. upgraded its track-side storage shed to a full fledged depot, so that by June 1910 the "Better Farming Special" had a nice place to stop. The Special was loaded with new farming implements, and a number of professors that gave demonstrations and lectures on agronomy, horticulture, husbandry, and veterinary medicine. The turn out in Three Forks was low since many farmers were in the middle of hay season.

In 1916, the Three Forks Herald hailed A. D. Jones as "one of the vigorous men who had an important part in establishing the new City of Three Forks, and in bringing to the attention of eastern farmers, capitalists and laborers the great opportunities for investment here, and it was due largely to his efforts that the Three Forks country has been settled by a sturdy, progressive people."



Left - Cover of promotional brochure c. 1908.

Above - C.E. Adams and A.D. Jones in front of their offices. Photo courtesy of the Headwaters Heritage Museum

Right - A. D. Jones photo on the front page of the Three Forks Herald May 1916.



HON. A. D. JONES

Below - Photo of the "Better Farming Special" stopped at the Northern Pacific depot on the south end of town, June 1910. Photo courtesy of the Headwaters Heritage Museum

