SOLOMON'S FATHER

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Solomon was a real person. There is no doubt about that. He lives in legend as a reader of history, an opium eater, and as one who, in spite of these addictions, served his community as a builder of houses and barns. Not only have I known people who knew him, but his reality is further confirmed by a gravestone in the cemetery of a small village in southern Wisconsin. This states that he was born in 1793 and died in this village in 186-. Having been born and having lived and died, one can assume that he had a father. This, however, is as far as one can go. It is a justified assumption, but where Solomon was born and who his father was are deep and important mysteries. The first that is known of Solomon is that in 1820, at the time his son Charles was born, he was living in a small village in south-central New York State. Before that all is silence. How he came there and whence he came and who his father was are unknown. They are, however, not past all conjecture or even discovery, and being, as I have said, important mysteries, I have lately set myself the task of solving them. It is the story of this quest, still unsuccessful, that I shall now relate.

I have said that these mysteries are important. They are, and to a steadily increasing number of people as Solomon's descendants increase and spread out over the land. Today they are important only to myself and my sisters and to my children and their children and our grandchildren, and to my first, second and third cousins and to their children and grandchildren. The point is that Solomon was our great grandfather and that this ignorance as to who his father was leaves all of us with a short family tree and an

escutcheon which, as my wife keeps insisting, may have in it a bar sinister or something worse. "Why", she says, "did Solomon speak so little of his father that none of his children even knew his first name?" I tell her that in those days of high seriousness and personal reserve, people were not called by their first names and that even my grandmother always called her husband "Doctor", never "Charles", to say nothing of "Charlie" or "Chuck". If men held no particular position in the church or community or Army, they were called simply Mr. or Squire, otherwise Elder or Deacon or Judge or Major or Colonel. That people's first names were often forgotten is not surprising.

I have known of this mystery in our family since I was a small boy, but only recently has it given me concern. For many years I was so engrossed in becoming myself and later so taken up with becoming an ancestor, that I had no time for such matters. Now, however, that these pressing concerns have been fairly well taken care of and I see my children and grandchildren taking over and myself approaching that well contented day when I shall become truly an ancestor and perhaps a legendary figure, I have decided to do what I can to locate Solomon's father and so supply myself and them with a family tree which will be respectable, at least in length.

Actually, I did not plan to go into the matter as deeply as I have. Had I known when I wandered into the Newberry Library and asked for the census of 1790 that I was to become as obsessed with the search for Solomon's father as I now am, I would not have gone. Having once spent a week trying to fill in the last spaces of a crossword puzzle and a month working out a double crostic I refuse any more even to start one. I know what it is to be caught in such gears. But I did not know that this quest was in the category "puzzle" and that entering upon it I would simply have to go on and on until

I became a great geneologist and, as is the way with that breed, had come almost to believe that a man is best judged by his ancestors and can scarcely be said to be a man at all unless he knows who they were.

But I did go into the library and I went in again and again; and since then I have gone into many other libraries and finally into so many graveyards in little villages in Rhode Island and New York State that I have become a devotee of graveyards and an authority on gravestone inscriptions. I have come to like them so much that the certainty that someday I shall come to rest in one has made the prospect of death far from unpleasing. And any unpleasantness that is left about it is further lessened by the knowledge that once there I can devote myself wholly to being a descendant and an ancestor. Even though I do not have the enviable prospect of being worshipped, which must make both life and death so pleasant to the Chinese, I am sure of holding eternally an absolutely unique and absolutely essential position in that succession of generations which is my line.

I assure you that length is all that I am after. I am not eager to become a Son of the American Revolution nor ambitious to borrow distinction from my ancestors. I will take them as they come and will respect them, as I tend to do anyone who has undergone the trial of living, however poorly.

I still wince when I realize that I have become a geneologist and when I see others in the libraries poring over this book and that book, as I am doing, I smile at them scornfully and refuse to consider myself as one of their vain and fatuous breed. But as time goes on and I see how and why I have become involved, quite against my will and judgment, I suspect that they too, starting casually, with nothing more than a natural curiosity, have been similarly caught and similarly possessed.

I would not advise anyone to start; but if one does start and does become involved, he will find it a gentle, harmless, and in many ways a rewarding pastime. As is so often the way with quests, whether they be for fish or buried cities or mountain peaks or even for money or any other goal that one sets himself in life, the rewards are usually incidental to the journeying rather than in the end itself. This is not to say that coming suddenly upon a sought-for grave or a despaired-of birth record is not exciting and rewarding, any more than that seeing a trout take one's floating fly is not an important part of fishing. They are what lead one out and on. But I do not care for the fish once I have caught them and I am sure that I would be more disappointed than pleased should I ever really find Solomon's father. I have come to enjoy the journeying. I have fallen in love with several of the elderly, gracious and helpful ladies who by some mysterious process are always selected as the curators of geneological archives. I have learned the delights of scholarship and have become an historian and a traveller. Simply because the census of 1790 or some chance reference in a county history has stated that Heads lived here or there at this time or that time, I have been led into the lovely hills and peaceful valleys around Kinderhook and Ghent and Beekman and into the similar lovely country around Paris Hill and Brookfield. I have made the long and perilous excursion to Little Compton and Tiverton, Rhode Island, and have followed the Heads westward along the Mohawk Valley and southward from Canandaigua through Bristol Valley and the vineyards of Naples to Alfred and Almond. I have learned much about the Heads and more about the people who first came into these places on the very heels of the Indians.

And besides all this, as I have said, I have become a devotee of

cemeteries. They have much to give and much to teach. Men would be better men were they to spend more time in them before coming in to take up permanent residence. Man is too rarely reminded of his mortality. Without the awareness which cemeteries teach of his brief tenancy on earth and the inevitability and finality of death, he can have no sense of proportion concerning life. While consideration of death may lead some to attempt to seize today and even to pound upon the tavern door, it is more likely to teach patience and humility, to chasten pride and make vanity appear purely vain.

Only in old cemeteries does death lose all its dreafulness and become wholly abstract and natural. And being natural, it becomes even beautiful. For those who lie there, the lonely business of living and the often painful business of dying are well over and those who missed and mourned them, they too are dead. "The generation of their peers are gone and none remembers them." A few snatches of hearsay are told of them for a generation or two and then not even that and they become no more than names upon headstones with no distinction between them. What of good and what of evil they did is quite washed out. They have become pure numbers in a finite series and being so remind us that even we, with all our I'ness and individuality, are neither more nor less than links in a chain of generations which stretches backward to Adam and will stretch forward to that last man - still unnamed - who will wind up the whole affair. It is a healthy consideration thus to regard even one's own death abstractly and as something which, being inevitable, is natural and therefore to be accepted and not feared. I am sure that it is dying that men fear, - not death. Dying is a messy and, as Villon says, usually a painful business. Death, I hope, is restful.

In spite of these rewards, I still regret that I ever started upon

this quest for Solomon's father. One of my favorite poems has been Browning's "By the Fireside". It runs:

"Oh well I know what I mean to do
When the long dark autumn evenings come".

I, too, well knew what I meant to do in those long dark autumn evenings. I had planned a definitive treatise on the Nature of Good and Evil, a History of the Philosophy of History, and an epic poem in the way of Parmenides and Empedocles. Why, then, was I running off after Solomon's father?

If a person is not used to old graveyards and happens into one for the first time his reaction is apt to be quite different from that which I have described. They are great deflators of man's sense of his own importance. Recently in Boston at a medical meeting, to which I had happened in by the way, as it were, on a journey in search of Solomon's father, my wife and I started out for a walk across the Common to the antique shops on Charles Street. We had scarcely left the hotel when we met Emile Holman, who was also at the meeting and who many years before had been a resident over me at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital. There was an air of strangeness about him that was almost frightening. When he stopped us, I felt as I imagine the wedding guest felt when stopped by the ancient mariner. His hair was blown and his eye wild. "You know", he said, "I have just walked through the graveyard over there on the common. There all those people lie who once were living individuals, probably many of them of some importance. Now all that is known of them is what is carved on those crumbling stones, a name and the dates of birth and death. And on many of the stones time has erased even those." Being something of a pedant, I quoted to him Aereperennius exegi monumentum and also something about "sluttish time" and its effect on

"marble and the gilded monuments of princes". Not to be outdone and recognizing that I was quoting Shakespeare, he said, still abstracted, "No, no, that is not it. This is how it impresses me. 'What is life? It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing'".

But it is of Solomon's father that I am writing. I have already said that in 1820 when Solomon was twenty-seven and his son Charles Rollin was born, he was living "on the border line" between Almond and Hornell, not far from Alfred, New York. That even at that time he was a reader of history is attested to by the fact that he named his first son after the author of Rollin's Ancient History. That his father might have been with him there and have died there before Charles was born is suggested by the fact that the first school teacher in Hornell was "old Head". This bit of information I received from Lucy Cadogan who heard it in a paper read before the Hornell Historical Society. It was from Lucy Cadogan's sister, Mary Cadogan Williams, whose place as the English teacher in Albion Academy mother took when Mary Cadogan married Mr. Williams, the superintendent, that I learned that Charles had been born on "the border line" between Almond and Hornell. Why he should have thus precisely located his birthplace seemed odd to me until, reading in a history of Steuben County, I found that in 1821 in a relocation of township boundaries a strip of land had been subtracted from Almond and added to Hornell.

Although Solomon was then living on this strip of land and while it is possible that his father had lately taught school in Hornell, the interest of Charles and his descendants attaches chiefly to Alfred, for it is there that he went to school and it was from there that after his graduation from

Alfred Academy in 1838 he and a friend by the name of Carpenter set out for Albion, Wisconsin.

I had always thought of Alfred Academy, which later became Alfred College, as a well housed and well organized institution. I was therefore greatly surprised to read in the history of Alfred that it was started only in 1836 and for two years had but one teacher who held his classes in the church. From the beginning there was a dispute as to whether it was right to use the Lord's house for a lay purpose and finally in 1838, after one of the students was caught kissing a girl behind the alter, the school was ousted from the church and a new home built for it.

These incidents are purely incidental. In the search for Solomon's father Alfred is chiefly important because it was founded and has since been inhabited to Seventh Day Baptists. I know this sect well for I was one of them when I spent my summers with my grandparents in Albion. They were Baptists (not to be confused with Adventists) and differed from the others of this sect only in the conviction that since God had commanded men to remember the Seventh Day to keep it holy, they should obey him implicitly. God's word was God's word and that was that. I have always believed that this precise respect for the wording of his decree, which they maintained even though the whole world had irreverently switched over to the First Day, was evidence of a deep and intimate regard for the Lord, and I know that they felt that because of this the Lord had a particular regard for them. Why not?

The names of the members of this sect are important. They were Babcocks, Burdicks, Randolphs, Coons, Greene, Potters, Stillmans, Saunders, Whitfords, Palmiters, Drakes, etc., etc. This sect and these families had come from England to Westerly, Rhode Island, in colonial times. As the country opened

up in the 18th and early 19th Centuries, their descendants had followed the water routes of western migration, the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers and later the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes, taking with them their faith and traditions and their names. All were or soon became relatives of one another.

They went first to Grafton, Rensaelear County, New York. I had known this from my childhood, for my grandmother, who was born there in 1833 spoke often, and as she grew older and approached her ninety-third year, more often of Grafton and Rensaelear County as she did also of Utica where the Potters next stopped for some years before going on, some of them to Battle Creek, Michigan, and my grandmother's family to Albion, Wisconsin.

Close to Grafton there is a Babcock Lake and a Potter Hill and in Grafton the cemetery is inhabited almost exclusively by Babcocks, Burdicks, etc., etc. They are the names of the people, most of them relatives, with whom I grew up in Albion and which I have found on nearly all of the gravestones in the cemeteries into which my quest has led me, - all, in fact, save those in which there were Heads. How important this is in identifying Solomon's father will appear later.

This migration in groups of families was the rule, doing much to mitigate the fear and loneliness of going into new lands. In his Journal of a Journey to the Western Islands, Samuel Johnson says of the great migration to America which was then going on, "Those who went first were probably such as could best be spared (actually they were the young and adventuresome), but the accounts sent by the earliest adventurers, whether true or false, inclined many to follow them; and whole neighborhoods formed parties for removal; so that departure from their native country is no longer exile. He that goes thus accompanied carries with him all that makes life pleasant.

He sits down in a better climate, surrounded by his kindred and his friends; they carry with them their language, their opinions, their popular songs and hereditary merriment; they change nothing but the place of their abode; and of that change they perceive the benefit".

The Seventh Day Baptists went thus and carried with them all of these things. They were, however, more closely held together by their narrow faith and their peculiar relation to God. It is well known that those who remained behind in the isolated communities of New England intermarried and became inbred. Those who went west together also intermarried so that as in Albion all of the farms for miles in each direction were those of relatives. One of my second cousins became by marriage Edith Potter Babcock. In the telephone directory in Utica I found an Edith Babcock Potter and going on to Grafton found Babcock Lake at the foot of Potter Hill.

Knowing from my grandfather that the Heads had also first settled in Rhode Island I had always assumed that they were members of this group, had been with them in Westerly and had accompanied them on the numerous stages of their migration. I had always wondered why there were so few Heads among so many Coons, etc., but had always explained this on the basis that one way or another good things are rare. As I went on, however, I was amazed to find no traces of Heads in the graveyards in Westerly or Grafton and Solomon and his family in Alfred and Albion. This proved to be an important clue to Solomon's father, but how important it was I did not realize until this summer when, on my way to the medical meeting in Boston, I turned aside to Paris Hill and Brookfield, New York, and later nearly exhausted my wife's uncommon patience by making a long and difficult trek to Little Compton, Rhode Island.

From the geneology of the Livermore family I had learned that about

1790 a Jonathan Head had come from Little Compton to Paris Hill and had there married Hepzibah Livermore; and in the records of another family I found that shortly after the Revolutionary War another of the Heads of Little Compton had gone to Brookfield, New York. In a history of Madison County in which Brookfield is located, I found also that there had been a Seventh Day Baptist Church in Leonardsville, just a few miles from Brookfield. From what I have since learned, I now feel that this was incorrect and that this church was truly in Brookfield. My interest in Brookfield had been further whetted by the discovery in a family album of a daguerreotype of a Mrs. Julia A. Head on the back of which was written "born in Brookfield, New York on June 8, 1817; died in Albion on November 26, 1870". This revealed that the Heads of Brookfield were definitely connected with those of Albion, but who Mrs. Julia A. Head was I had no idea. She was not the wife of Solomon or of either of his two sons.

After starting to drive east I obtained a map of New York State and in locating Brookfield found that it was a few miles south of Utica and that Paris Hill was on the same road a few miles nearer Utica. After spending the night in a motel in Syracuse, we drove on in the morning and turning off the Thru-way at Utica took the road south and came shortly to Paris Hill. It was a small village of a few stores about a square, a filling station and, besides the dwelling houses, two churches and two cemeteries. One of the churches was Episcopal, the other Congregational. A plaque in front of the former stated that it was the first one established in this area in 17 -- and had been the first seat of the bishopric. My wife let me off to go through the Episcopal graveyard while she drove back to get some gas at the filling station. In a few minutes she came back and called to me across the

graves, on which I had found no familiar names, that the man in the filling station was a Head and that he had all the "dope". It turned out that his name was Henkle but that his mother had been a Head. He referred us to his wife, who was also his third cousin, her grandmother having been a Head. He said that she and her father, a Mr. Wicks, who lived with them, knew everything about the family. He called her on the telephone and told her that we were coming down. We did so and found Mrs. Henkle a gracious woman and her father, Mr. Wicks, an interested and interesting man of 82 who had graduated from Cornell in 1897 and had been a broker in New York City for seventeen years with Lee Higginson and Company and later a banker in Utica. His wife was a Simmons of that family of Little Compton, one of whom had married the daughter of John Alden.

From them we learned that shortly after the Revolution three brothers, Jonathan, Joseph and Fobes, the sons of Joseph Head and Ruth Little, had come to Paris Hill from Little Compton. Jonathan had stayed there and there married Hepzibah Livermore. This was their line and they had the records of all of the ancestors and descendants of Jonathan and Hepzibah. Joseph, they said, had settled in Madison County. Of his descendants they knew nothing but told us that just out of North Brookfield there were now three Head brothers who owned contiguous farms, known as the Headson farms. I somehow neglected to find out what became of Fobes. I found out later from the Vital Records of Rhode Island that in 1790 Fobes was still in Little Compton and had there married. In the cemetery in Little Compton there were a number of members of the Fobes family.

We drove down to Brookfield and there found a Baptist Church and an old graveyard. To my surprise, this contained no Heads but many Babcocks, Burdicks, Saunders, Whitfords, Potters, Stillmans, Drakes, Coons, etc., etc.

These, of course, are the Westerly, Grafton, Alfred and Albion families and it is their presence here that makes me suspect that the Seventh Day Baptist Church was in Brookfield rather than in Leonardsville, where we found no Baptist Church and no old graveyard.

We drove over to the Headson farms and talked with Harlan and Junior. Harlan knew nothing about what concerned us, but referred us to his mother who was living with Junior and his family. Neither she nor Junior knew anything of their origin. She said that her husband's father maintained that they were not related to any of the other Heads thereabout. She told us that no one was now living on the original Head farm and when asked about graveyards told us that there was an old one up on Cole Hill where some Heads were buried. We barely made it up to Cole Hill on something less than the least of country roads. The cemetery was just that, - lying alone on the top of the hill surrounded by tilled fields and wild woods. It was still in use. In it we found a few Head graves, the oldest being that of Alexander who was born in 1818. Junior's mother told us that there was an Irwin Head who was an automobile mechanic living in Madison, and in the telephone directory for the area we found a Joseph Head living in New Berlin a few miles to the south of Brookfield.

As you can see, the expedition had been extremely rewarding. Here in Brookfield for the first time I had found Heads living in the same area as the Babcocks and Burdicks, etc., and I had learned from Mr. Wicks, who had never heard of Seventh Day Baptists, that all of the Heads of Little Compton and Paris Hill were Congregationalists. I began to see that the Heads were not of this Seventh Day Westerly group at all but had been drawn into it along the way, probably by marriage and probably here in Brookfield.

But these things sink in slowly, and when I left Brookfield and we had

spent a day with my wife's mother in Pittsfield, Massachusetts and we started to drive to Little Compton, I was still sure that it was close to Westerly. Of course it isn't, being actually as far east in Rhode Island as Westerly is west, so that what we had planned as a short and pleasant jaunt turned into a gruelling journey through the traffice of Providence and Fall River. It is not surprising that my wife's patience almost gave out and that she expressed herself warmly about the Heads in general and about one in particular.

But we did get to Little Compton. I should mention that while in Pittsfield I had gone to the public library, sought out the geneological department and there found again, as in the Newberry in Chicago, a gracious, charming elderly curator who, on learning my interest, brought me book after book. One of them was the Vital Records of Rhode Island in which were listed the births and deaths and the intentions and marriages of nearly everyone who had undergone these experiences from the time of the first settlements until well in the nineteenth century. Among them were the Heads, from Henry, born in England in 1647, married to Elizabeth in 1687 and died in Little Compton in 1716, on down through generation after generation.

Practically all of the second and most of the third generation lived and died in Little Compton or in the neighboring townships of Liverton, Rhode Island or Westport or Dartmouth, Massachusetts. But after that many and even most of those born there did not die there. Why this is so and what became of them is in part explained by the census of 1790 which shows a Henry Head in Beekman Township, Dutchess County, New York, a Jonathan in Ghent of Columbia County, and his two sons, Michael and Jonathan, in Kinderhook, a George in Northeast Township of Duchess County, and Lovet in Pittstown of Albany County. We already know that in 1790 or thereabouts Jonathan and Joseph were in Paris

Hill and Brookfield, and although Fobes and his wife and children were then still in Little Compton, he soon joined them. Only Daniel (1765-1814) of that family died in Little Compton.

Most of them went as young men and married in their new homes. Why they went and why the succeeding generations kept going is easy to understand. These early settlers of New England were yeomen farmers and their society was almost wholly agricultural. There was little or no industry and the villages needed only enough merchants and craftsmen to serve the people on the farms. Under these conditions overpopulation developed rapidly so that to go out and find new land was less a desire than a necessity. Each family wanted and needed a family-sized farm and in any area there are enough of these to supply only one of each generation. I do not know whether these English brought with them the law of primogeniture but the result was the same, - the younger sons had to go. Had there not been at this time an ever widening frontier brought about by the wars against the French and Indians and the English, industry and trade would probably have developed more rapidly and the wars would have been internecine rather than imperial. The great migration from the Scotch Highlands of which Samuel Johnson wrote followed immediately upon the final defeat of the Scotch by the English and the consequent suppression of the wars between the clans. But there was a frontier and the movement of the colonists onto and beyond it is a basic and determining part of the story of eighteenth and early nineteenth century America. It was the young men who went. They went because they were lured by the prospect of adventure in wider and fairer lands, but they went also because they had to. There was no longer any room at home. It is the intimate story of this movement that the American geneologist learns and it is this that makes American geneology so fascinating and so difficult.

There was still a frontier when I was a boy, - new land in the Indian country to be had for the taking; but this is gone now and its disappearance has had much to do with the wars and tensions in Europe and as our population increases it will have much to do with some imperial wars in the future when our people will, as Plato said, have to send out their armies to conquer foreign lands to provide room for their younger sons.

But as I was saying, we did arrive at Little Compton, but not until four o'clock in the afternoon and with only an hour to stay. It was my birthday, which was May 9, 1893, exactly 100 years after Solomon's. Heraclitus said that a generation is thirty years, the shortest time in which a man can become a grandfather.

There is a narrow strip of land in Rhode Island which used to be part of Plymouth Colony. It runs down from Fall River to the ocean between Narragansett Bay and the present Massachusetts border, - Little Compton is almost at the tip of it, not far from the ocean and the bay and little more than a stone's throw from the Massachusetts line. It is still a small village, serving an agricultural community, and although its younger sons can now go into the factories in Fall River, Providence and New Bedford, those who stay at home are still farmers, merchants or craftsmen. It is quite as charming as most New England villages are and it is characteristic of it and them that it is built around the past. In Little Compton the town square is also the church yard and the graveyard, so that one might say that its people spend their lives in brief orbit about the cemetery. The church is a Congregational Church.

Little Compton is the home of the Brownell Rose Gardens and while I did my turn in the cemetery my wife went down to buy some rose bushes. Apparently

the graveyard had grown outward from the church for the old graves were close in and their markers of native stone had flaked badly and eroded and been much overgrown with lichen. The inscriptions and carvings had been crude and shallow as if done by amateurs. Many of the inscriptions were illegible, but among those that could still be read I found no Heads and, greatly to my surprise, found only two in the whole place, those of Daniel, brother of Jonathan, Joseph and Fobes, and his wife Hannah Davenport. He had died in 1814 at the age of forty-nine and so was a contemporary of Solomon's father, having been twenty-eight in 1793 when Solomon was born.

The paucity of Head graves anywhere had led me to suspect either that they were all translated directly into heaven or that the family was committed to family graveyards. In Little Compton the latter explanation proved to be correct, as I learned later from a letter from Mr. Franklin Wilbour to whom I had been referred as the one who knew most about the early history of Little Compton. Family burying grounds on the farm and within view of the house were, of course, common in colonial times. Not only was it difficult to transport a body the many miles into the village, but a grave away from any habitation was apt to be disturbed by the Indians who had little respect for the white dead and a great desire for their clothes and trinkets. Wescot, the first owner of the farm on which we now live in Illinois, is for this reason buried just outside our kitchen window. My grandmother, who came to Wisconsin in 1848, spoke often of the Indians who still lived in a village on the shores of Lake Koshkonong and still wandered about the countryside. Often, she said, as she was working in the kitchen she would look up and find an Indian standing in the doorway watching her.

The graveyard in Little Compton contained relatively few family names.

It seems probable that these were the families that lived in or close to the village. The names were Wilbour, Brownell, Waite, Little, Hunt, Palmer, Simmons, etc., and there were a great number of each, running from the earliest times up to the present. These names are important because they are the same that we found in the Clover Hill cemetery in Beekman Township. These people, too, moved on together.

While I was investigating these matters, my wife, who talks easily with strangers, learned from the man at the Rose Garden than an Oliver Head had died in Little Compton just the year before at the age of seventy-seven. When asked what his occupation was, he replied that he believed that he peddled fish. A man whom I talked to in front of the Wilbour store told me that the buildings on the original Head farm had fallen down within his memory but that the foundation and the well were still there.

That was all that we had time for in Little Compton. It was, as I have said, my birthday and we were due for dinner with relatives in Cheshire, Connecticut. It proved to be a cold dinner, or at least one overdone, for what with the evening traffic through Providence and every city along the way, we did not arrive there until nine o'clock.

Later on this same trip we hunted through Beekman Township for traces of the Henry who was there in 1790. We found no trace of him or of any of his descendants and I found no mention of him in a book on the early gravestone inscriptions of Dutchess County. It seems probable that he stayed there only briefly and moved on and died elsewhere.

This was the last of our explorations on this trip and this is where we are now. We have not found Solomon's father, but we have learned much and now seem close on his heels. It is certain that he is one of a few persons. The

census of 1790 lists the names of all the Heads who were heads of families at that time and the Vital Records of Rhode Island tells us when they were born and whom they married. The fact that it was in Brookfield that the path of the Heads first touched that of the Westerly Seventh Day Baptists suggests strongly that Solomon was the son of Joseph. This is a reasonable conjecture, but it is still only that, and there are others who must be considered as being still in the running. The family rumor that Solomon's mother was a Hudson River Dutch woman puts the Ghent and Kinderhook Heads in the picture, as does the fact that grandfather went back to Castleton to medical school. Castleton is in this area. We still don't know who "old Head" was who taught school in Hornell, New York.

Thus, although we have learned much, there is fortunately still much to learn. I must go back to Paris Hill and Brookfield and Little Compton. I must look for traces of Lovet in Albany County and of George and William in Northeast Township in Dutchess County. And I must find out precisely where Solomon lived on the borderline between Almond and Hornell and in Hornell I must look for traces of "old Head". It will make at least one pleasant journey and probably several and will take me again into lovely country and old cemeteries and finally, perhaps, to Solomon's father and my goal, which is a family tree which is respectable, at least in length.