

CHAPTER EIGHT  
HENRY'S CAREER

*JONES, HENRY, son of Richard Jones, aged 8, bound to Master Sweep Tim Smythe until he reach the age of 18, recorded June 25, 1773*

Henry sat behind Neighbor Mooney on Neighbor Mooney's horse on their way into town. His head fell forward as he fell asleep, "Don't fall off, young fellow," Neighbor Mooney said. "We've yet a way to go through this swamp. You'd land soft but messy."

As they entered town Neighbor Mooney stopped at a house where he had business. He lifted Henry down and placed him on a bench in front of the house. "'Twill be but a few minutes and I will be back. See what you can see."

Henry noticed many new houses, some with two floors. He saw ladies walk by with long gowns that were pretty and he wished he could get one for his Mama. When he looked the other way, he caught his breath. There were tall ships with sails flapping in the breeze. Henry gasped. "One, two, three," and Henry remembered Abby making the children count the raisins and he missed the other children.

When Neighbor Mooney came out of the house he led his horse and Henry walked behind. "There," he said, "'tis the George Tavern where your Master

Smythe rents a room upstairs and your new home." Henry wished he didn't have to have a new home but he had to admit to himself that living on a second floor would be exciting. Every day he could look out the window and see the ships. Besides the tavern, there was a garden, smokehouse, water well and necessary in back. Neighbor Mooney went in and learned that Master Smythe was out on a job. "Humph!" he snorted, annoyed because of the additional delay, but he realized Henry couldn't help it and he did not dare to leave the boy yet.

"They're at the Carlyle Mansion, 'tis stone and on Cameron Street, ye'll not miss it, on the east, across from the Court House Square near the prison and courthouse," said the man at George Tavern. Neighbor Mooney seemed to know where he was going and Henry trotted right alongside, wondering to himself if he would ever be able to make his own way in this big town.

When they reached the big house that was the Carlyle Mansion, Henry started toward the front door but neighbor Mooney caught his shoulder and stopped him. Neighbor Mooney tied his horse to a post and led Henry around to the back and knocked. A serving woman came to the door and Neighbor Mooney said, "'Tis here that Master Sweep Smythe is working?"

"'Tis."

"I brung him his new apprentice," and he gave

Henry a gentle push on the back, just before the woman closed the door. Henry followed her to a wide fireplace where she leaned down and called, "Master Sweep Smythe, yer new apprentice is here." Henry heard a holler from above but no one appeared and the woman went back to her work. Henry finally sat down on the hearth, which was cold, and waited.

When Master Sweep Smythe and the older apprentice, Geoffrey, finally came down, Master Smythe said, "Follow us, Henry." They were both very covered with soot: faces, hands, arms and clothing. They carried brooms of birch twigs and stuffed bags. Master Smythe collected the money from the serving woman.

Geoffrey gave Henry a little poke for good measure. Henry followed them back to the George Tavern. They sat in the common room and had a loaf of bread and mugs of cider. Geoffrey broke off an exceedingly small piece of bread for Henry.

After they had supped, Master Smythe took a pinch of snuff and then they went up to their room. Master Smythe opened a cupboard and took Henry's sweep clothes from it. They weren't new but were clean, although stained. There was a cap worn tucked into the collar with an apprentice badge attached, shirt, breeches, and stockings and shoes, the first that Henry had ever had in his life!

The apprentices slept on a truckle bed pulled out

from under the Master's bed. That was also the first time for Henry in a bed but Geoffrey took up most of the bed and the cover.

In the morning Master Smythe gave Henry his own bag, which Henry found a bit big to see around as they walked up and down the streets but which helped him keep warm as they walked to their first job. Henry learned to cover himself with his bag in bed since Geoffrey left him no other cover. Master Smythe did not have to walk calling out his trade because he was fair and thorough and often had customers seeking him.

They went to the back of the house where they were to sweep the chimney and had breakfast with the servants: hot hashed venison, cold roast beef and ale. Henry began to think that working in town was not so bad; this was more than he had ever had at any meal and Geoffrey sat at the other end of the table and so could not take any of Henry's food.

Master Smythe gave him some instruction before they began to work, warned him to keep his mouth shut and his face turned down to protect his eyes as he climbed. He said he would go up first and Henry would follow. Master Smythe feared that Geoffrey would try to send as much soot down on Henry as he could.

Henry began to like his new life and all went well until Henry began to cough.