Genealogy

Ephraim Jones (1750-1812) Augusta township

READING ROOM

FOOTNOTE 3. Ephraim Tanes
Augusta Tourship

whis connection with

Newsy Thoreau

Jones Aftermath

Henry Thoreau made the following entry in his journal:

My mother's mother was Mary Jones, only daughter of Col. Elisha Jones, Esq., of Weston. A Boston newspaper of Feb. 15, 1776 says "On Monday last, died, in this town, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, Elisha Jones Esq., late of Weston, for many years a magistrate, Col. of a Regiment of Militia, and a Member of the General Assembly. In the many departments in which he acted, he eminently showed the man of principle, virtue, &ct."1

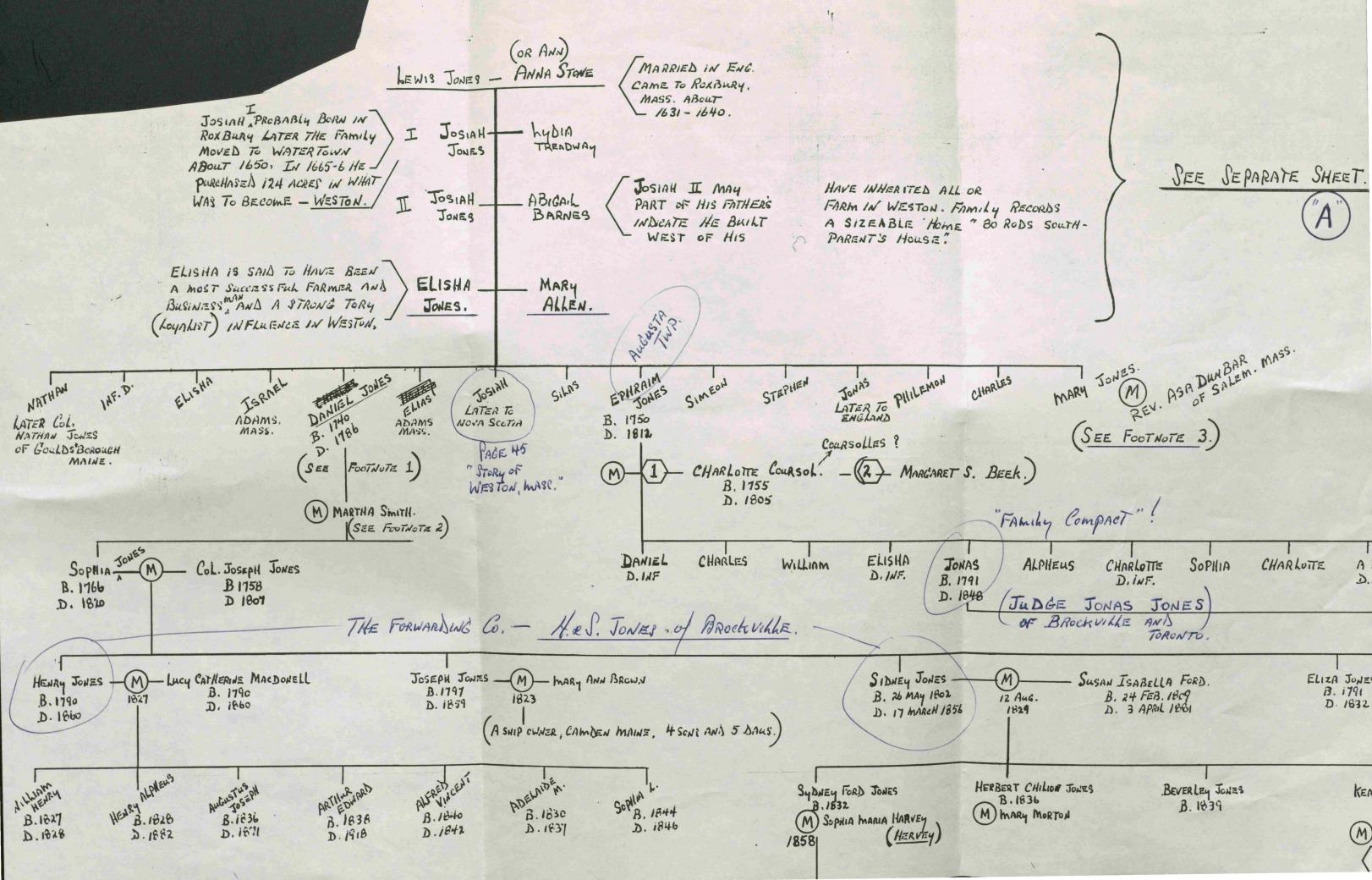
Elisha's daughter, Mary, married Rev. Asa Dunbar of Salem; their daughter Cynthia was Thoreau's mother. Besides a daughter, Elisha and his wife had fourteen sons, two of whom died in infancy, one at the age of eight, while the remaining eleven survived the father. When Elisha fled to Boston in late 1774 for protection from the unruly patriots, his wife remained in the family homestead, and her daughter and family moved in to keep house for her. Asa Dunbar became a resident of Weston,

JONES AFTERMATH

but by commuting weekly he continued to fill the Salem pulpit where he had preached for several years. Soon after the Dunbars moved to Weston, one of Elisha's sons, Josiah, got into trouble with the patriots for distributing proloyalist broadsides for General Gage. His arrest and imprisonment in the Concord jail made his brother-in-law, Asa, an object of suspicion and prompted Asa's neighbors to keep a close watch on him.

In June, 1775, Josiah and a fellow Tory prisoner, Jonathan Hicks, wrote a letter to the Provincial Congress, hoping that an honest declaration of their position would alleviate their difficulties. They claimed, "With perfect sincerity we do most affectionately wish prosperity to our native Land and the inhabitants..."2 They further stated that they took up their residence in Boston merely to avoid danger and that they were not conscious of having offended their American brethren in any other instance. If given their freedom, they would be ready to bind themselves under the most solemn obligations, never directly or indirectly to oppose the cause in which the Americans were seriously engaged. And being free, they could at least serve their country by supporting themselves through their common industry without being a public charge. In conclusion they added that if the Congress wouldn't release them wholly, "it would be a favor most thankfully accepted to have the privilege of the Yard: as the season is very warm."3 The Provincial Congress was not moved by the appeal; Josiah Jones and Jonathan Hicks remained behind bars.

Josiah's sister, Mary Dunbar, brought food to him from the farm in Weston. On June 17, the day of the Battle of Bunker Hill, she is said to have brought him cherries and other things, namely files with which he could cut away the window bars and make his escape. While this seems very early in the season for cherries to be ripe, there are several accounts of fruit trees in bloom on the nineteenth of April that year, and, if so, ripe



SOME OF THE DESCENDANTS

LEWIS AND ANN JONES

ROXBURY, MASS.

THROUGH THEIR SON JOSIAH AND GRANDSON JAMES

COMPILED FOR THE FAMILY

WILLIAM BLAKE TRASK

PALIFIE .

CITY OF BA

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