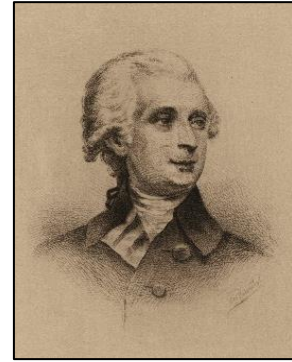


## Massachusetts: Jonathan Jackson

Jonathan Jackson was born in Boston, on June 4, 1743, but he moved to Newburyport, MA after graduating from Harvard in 1761.<sup>45</sup> Unlike many of his contemporaries, he was not a veteran of the American Revolution. Yet, Jackson's knowledge and personal prestige among his regional contemporaries proved to be invaluable during the 1790 census. As a resident of Newburyport, Jackson established a successful importation business and actively participated in local and state politics. When the Revolutionary War erupted in April 1775, Jackson assisted the cause of American independence by outfitting American privateers, selling supplies to the Continental army, and using his own finances to help bankroll the American war effort.<sup>46</sup> Collectively, Jackson's actions during the Revolution demonstrated his commitment to the new nation, despite the destruction of his business.



Printed Portrait of Jonathan Jackson, 1885.  
Courtesy of the New York Public Library

After the war, Jackson continued to participate in local and state politics, but he also sought to recoup his financial losses. Initially, Jackson attempted to resurrect his importation business, but he was unable to replicate his earlier success. Next, Jackson obtained a commission as officer in the federal forces that were tasked with ending Shay's Rebellion (August 1786–January 25, 1787). While both of these ventures proved to be unfruitful for Jackson's financial situation, they did help him become the first U.S. marshal for the District of Massachusetts.<sup>47</sup> Shortly after his inauguration in April 1789, President Washington received a host of applications and visits from people who were interested in securing a position for themselves within the new government. At first Jackson planned to lobby the President for the lucrative



1796 map of Massachusetts  
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

position of Collector of the Revenue. However, after learning that Benjamin Lincoln, his friend and former commander during Shay's Rebellion, sought the position, he settled for being Massachusetts's U.S. marshal.<sup>48</sup> Position secured, Jackson diligently carried out his marshal duties, including overseeing the enumeration of Massachusetts.<sup>49</sup>

During the 1790 census, Jackson had sixteen different deputies with local ties to their respective communities working as enumerators.<sup>50</sup> Each deputy was paid \$1 for every 100 people (in the county/rural

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup>"Assistant marshals for the state [Massachusetts]: 1790," in *Heads of Families/1790/A Century of Population Growth Massachusetts, Connecticut, & Rhode Island*, 2:11.

areas) or 500 people (in the cities).<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, a marshal and the district judge could pay a deputy an addition \$1 for every 50 people, if they believed it would help complete the census within the deadline.<sup>52</sup> Perhaps it was the density of Massachusetts's population, the deputies' local connections, or the fact that Massachusetts had previously conducted state censuses that enabled some enumerators, like Samuel Bradford of Boston, to work efficiently and make more than three dollars a day.<sup>53</sup>

Unlike some other states, the final 1790 schedules for Massachusetts were written on standardized forms. As W.S. Rossiter, former Chief Clerk of the Census Bureau (c.1903 - c. 1913), remarked, "the blanks [for the 1790 Massachusetts returns] were furnished or sold to the enumerators by the marshal".<sup>54</sup> Regardless of Rossiter's insinuation that Jackson may have abused his position as marshal for personal gain, Jackson and his deputies counted a total of 378,787 people, making it the most populous state in New England—a status Massachusetts still maintains today with a population of 6,902,149 people.<sup>55 56</sup>

Upon completing the enumeration, Jackson continued to serve as the U.S. marshal of Massachusetts for a couple more years, before accepting a more lucrative federal appointment as one of Massachusetts's three Inspectors of the Revenue.<sup>57</sup> After completing his career in the federal government, Jackson then served as the state treasurer of Massachusetts (1802-1806), the treasurer of Harvard University (1807-1810), and the first president of the Boston Bank. Jackson died on March 5, 1810, leaving behind children and grandchildren who continued to serve Massachusetts and succeeded in law, business, and medicine. In 1902, his great-grandson, Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., became one of the most influential and celebrated justices on the U.S. Supreme Court, where he served for almost 30 years, before finally retiring at the age of 90.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> *Gazette of the United-States*. [volume] (New-York [N.Y.]), 10 March 1790. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030483/1790-03-10/ed-1/seq-1/>. (Accessed October 16, 2019).

<sup>52</sup> *Gazette of the United-States*. [volume] (New-York [N.Y.]), 10 March 1790

<sup>53</sup> "History - The First Generation of United States Marshals/The First Marshal of Rhode Island: William Peck". W.S. Rossiter, "The First Census of the United States," pg. 46.

<sup>54</sup> W.S. Rossiter, "The First Census of the United States," pg. 44

<sup>55</sup> "Massachusetts". *Return of the whole number of persons within the several districts of the United States: according to "An act providing for the enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States," passed March the first, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-one*, pg. 33. PDF. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/content/census/en/library/publications/1793/dec/number-of-persons.html>. (Accessed October 7, 2019).

<sup>56</sup> "QuickFacts: Massachusetts," U.S. Census Bureau, last estimated release July 1, 2018, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/MA>. (Accessed October 7, 2019).

<sup>57</sup> "Spirits, Foreign and Domestic, Communicated to the Congress, November 1, 1791," *American State Papers*, NA, Finance 1:110. Retrieved from <https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsp&fileName=009/llsp009.db&Page=110>. (Accessed October 7, 2019).

<sup>58</sup> "History - The First Generation of United States Marshals/The First Marshal of Massachusetts: Jonathan Jackson."