

**HON. JONATHAN
JACKSON, HIS
WIFE, AND MANY
MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY**

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Hon. Jonathan Jackson, His Wife, and Many Members of His Family by James Jackson

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JAMES JACKSON

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GENERAL REMARKS.

It is my design in the following pages to give some reminiscences of my late father, the Hon. Jonathan Jackson. These pages are not designed for publication. They are printed with a hope that they will afford some gratification to the descendants and friends of my father.

As I shall have occasion to state in what follows, my father passed what might be considered as the most important years of his life in the beautiful town, now the city, of Newburyport, although he was born and died in Boston. It is nearly sixty years since his decease. What follows might as well have been prepared at any time since that event, as now. If it had been done previously to the departure of my elder brother Charles, or my younger brother Patrick, the following memoir would no doubt have been in every way more perfect and, to me, more satisfactory. A few words will explain why my mind has been especially engaged of late, on a subject always interesting to me.

Some years since a library was established in Newburyport for the benefit of its inhabitants. It has, as I understand, been a growing institution, and a very valuable collection of books has already been made there. Within a year past, an old and ample and valuable house has been purchased for this library, and in this the people of Newburyport have desired to place testimonials in honor of their predecessors.

One of the oldest of the sons of this city now living, and who took an important part in establishing the library, though no longer residing among those sons, continues to the present day to feel a warm interest in the affairs of his native town, and to prompt all who are in any way connected with Newburyport to supply materials, however humble, for the purpose described. The photographs, and other pictures of the better known inhabitants of that city, such as could conveniently be procured, and likewise copies of the published works of those connected with the same city, have already been furnished to an amount of some value. Prompted by my friend, Colonel SWERT, the public-spirited gentleman above referred to, I began a few months since to furnish for the library some photographs, and on the back of each of them some brief memoranda in respect to them.

At a later period I procured photographs of my father and of my mother. When I had done this I designed to send copies to the library similar to those which I had supplied in other cases.

I then began to prepare similar notes for the photographs of my parents, but here I found it impossible to place them within the limits afforded on the back of my father's photograph.*

My own descendants are not few at this moment, and I feel that I have not much time now remaining to leave some account of one whom I venerated

* The portrait I have mentioned is a photograph taken by J. A. Whipple of Boston, in this month,—November, 1865,—from a painting by the distinguished Copley, in London, in the year 1784. To the very great accuracy of this likeness, I, who am now the only surviving child of Jonathan Jackson, can bear testimony. It was in May, 1785, that this picture was brought home from London, and I well remember that I very often sat so as to see and examine my father's face and figure, the expression of his countenance, and the dress which he continued to wear for some years after the portrait was finished. This was a coat of a deep blue color, with gilt buttons, the waistcoat being to my boyish eyes very handsome, with broad stripes. His whole dress was such as became the fashion of the times, a point as to which he was never negligent. He regarded Boston as his home, and lived there until he left college, but spoke to me often of long visits, during his boyhood and afterwards, to the residence of his uncle Josiah Quincy, Esq., at Braintree. He looked to this uncle as his best friend and counsellor, and from him he always sought and obtained sound advice. To the hospitable house of this uncle, that building now standing in the town of Quincy, and still most honorably known in every respect, my father always looked back with the strongest associations of love and gratitude.

most highly, and whose memory all of his descendants of sufficient age have been constantly learning to love and cherish.

Let me now proceed more formally to the details of my father's life, which were in fact already prepared before these prefatory remarks were written.

JONATHAN JACKSON

was born in Boston in June, 1743. His father was named Edward, and was a merchant. His mother was Dorothy Quincy, of Braintree, in the part of the town now called Quincy. Jonathan derived his name from his grandfather, who was from the Jacksons of Newton, Middlesex County.

Edward Jackson left only one son and one daughter; they survived their parents by many years. Their son entered the College at Cambridge when about fifteen years of age, and passed through his four years, as I believe, without reproach, though without special honors. He certainly did not make any pretensions to great learning, but was fond of reading. He had a valuable library, and I have reason to believe that he was much interested in history and in works of taste.

He was graduated in 1761.

When he left college, he engaged in preparing himself for a mercantile life, and for this purpose took up his residence in Newburyport, where he entered the store of Patrick Tracy, Esq., of whom I shall soon have something more to say. Mr. Jackson was probably influenced in his choice of this pleasant town, by a very close friendship which began in college, and bore a character which seems to have been almost romantic. It was certainly very strong, and continued to be so, as long as they lived. The friend to whom I have referred was Mr. John Lowell, son of the Rev. John Lowell, a congregational clergyman in Newburyport.

I once saw a few letters which had passed between them, written under fancy names, when they were very young, full of tender, warm and romantic feelings. They were not tame certainly in their style of conversation. They discussed all points in strong and decided language. "The differences among men are not very great,"—Lowell would say,— "men are influenced and moulded by external, or accidental circumstances."

"No," Jackson would maintain, "the peculiarity in each case is the result of an original bent or native tendency."

They often differed thus in opinion without any breach in love and good will. Mr. Lowell was

the stronger in intellectual powers, in the powers of imagination and in gifts of expression, which were shown in his eloquence at the bar, and in the social circle. He has scarcely left a descendant in either sex, not distinguished, as he was, for this talent.

Mr. Jackson cultivated good taste and good sense, and held to his convictions in spite of the logic of his more learned friend.

The two were not of the same class in college; Mr. Lowell preceded Mr. Jackson by one year.

These two young men lived together, independently, as bachelors. Mr. Lowell engaged in the practice of law, while his friend engaged in commerce and mercantile business. In the arrangement which they made, they both believed that they should continue bachelors permanently. I will not say that this was a boyish decision, but it was an unwise one. It may be added here, that they were both married early in life; and that, ultimately, Mr. Jackson was married twice and Mr. Lowell three times. Both, I believe, were made happy by each alliance.

Mr. J.'s first matrimonial connection was with Miss Barnard, daughter of the Rev. Mr. Barnard, of Salem. Her life was very short, and probably terminated by pulmonary consumption. After a

period, not very long, he contracted a second marriage. This was with Miss Hannah Tracy, the only daughter of Capt. Patrick Tracy, already mentioned, under whose guidance Mr. J. had pursued his mercantile education. Their marriage took place in the spring of 1772. She had then very lately arrived at the age of eighteen, and he had nearly reached that of twenty-nine years. It may be added here that Miss Gookin of Hampton, New Hampshire, was Capt. Tracy's second wife, and became the mother of all his children.

About the time of Mr. Jackson's second marriage he built a house in Newburyport, where he then hoped to spend his life. His friend, Mr. Lowell, erected next to it a house very similar to Mr. Jackson's. These were both wooden houses, large in size, and handsome for their day. These friends both supposed at that time that they should pass their lives in close proximity.

They had now arrived at the epoch when the American Revolution had in reality begun, though not yet in its formal shape. It was not far from the close of this Revolution that Mr. Lowell changed his residence to Boston. This was evidently a wise step on his part. He had arrived at a very high standing in his profession, and was a leading practitioner at the bar in Massachusetts. The change