

# Biography of John Hancock: Revolutionary, Statesman, and Founding Father



## Early Life and Education

John Hancock was born on January 12, 1737, in Braintree, Massachusetts, to a wealthy merchant family. His father, Thomas Hancock, was a

prominent merchant and politician, serving as a selectman and moderator of the town meeting of Braintree. John's mother, Mary Hawke, came from a family of Puritan ministers.



## The Baron of Beacon Hill: A Biography of John

**Hancock** by William M. Fowler

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 328 pages
Lending	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported



Hancock received a classical education at Boston Latin School and Harvard College. He graduated from Harvard in 1754, at the age of 17, with a degree in theology. However, he abandoned the idea of a career in the ministry and instead entered the family business.

### Merchant Career

After graduating from college, Hancock joined his uncle's trading firm, Thomas Hancock & Son. The firm was involved in a wide range of businesses, including importing goods from Europe and exporting American products such as fish, tobacco, and whale oil. Hancock quickly rose through the ranks of the company and became a successful merchant.

He established his own trading company in 1763 and became one of the wealthiest merchants in Boston. Hancock's business ventures made him a wealthy and influential figure in the community.

## **Political Career**

Hancock's wealth and influence drew him into politics. He was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1766, where he quickly became a leader of the resistance to British colonial policies.

Hancock was a prominent member of the Sons of Liberty, a secret organization that protested British taxation and other grievances. He played a key role in the Boston Tea Party of 1773, a protest against the British tea tax that helped to spark the American Revolution.

## **Founding Father**

Hancock was a delegate to the Continental Congress, which was formed to coordinate the colonial response to British policies. He served as President of the Continental Congress from 1774 to 1777, playing a leading role in the drafting and adoption of the Declaration of Independence.

Hancock's signature is one of the most recognizable signatures on the Declaration of Independence. His large and distinctive signature was a symbol of his bold and confident leadership.

## **Governor of Massachusetts**

After the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, Hancock returned to Massachusetts and served as President of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress, which governed the state during the Revolutionary War. In 1780,

he was elected as the first Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Hancock served as Governor for five years, during which time he oversaw the postwar recovery of the state and helped to establish a new government based on democratic principles. He was a popular and respected leader who played a key role in the founding of the United States.

### **Later Life and Legacy**

Hancock retired from public life in 1785 due to ill health. He spent his remaining years at his estate, the Hancock Mansion in Boston. He died on October 8, 1793, at the age of 56.

John Hancock was a towering figure of the American Revolution and a Founding Father of the United States. His signature on the Declaration of Independence is a symbol of his courage and determination in the fight for American independence. He was a successful merchant, a skilled politician, and a respected leader who helped to shape the course of American history.

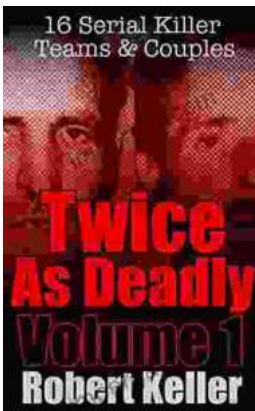
### **Additional Resources**

\* John Hancock: <https://www.history.com/topics/american-revolution/john-hancock> \* John Hancock: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/john-hancock/> \* The Hancock-Clarke House: <https://www.masshist.org/hancock-clarke-house>

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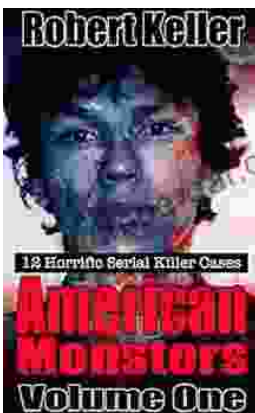


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