1950 Census

John Q. Barrett[*]

In May 1950, United States census taker William C. Halley, Jr., enumerated residents in Fairfax County, Virginia.

In rural McLean, Mr. Halley visited Hickory Hill, an antebellum house located on about six acres of land. He spoke to one or both residents, a married couple. They had owned and lived in the property since 1941. They lived by themselves—their two children were grown, married, and had their own homes and families.

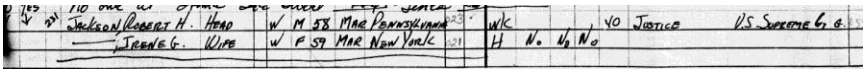
Mr. Halley learned that the man, age 58, was employed outside the home, and that the woman, age 59, was a homemaker.

This was, in that time and place, quite typical. Indeed, Mr. Halley made his notes on a preprinted Census form that categorized household residents as "Head," "Wife," and so forth. By implication, the census took the view that a married woman could not be the head of a household. At Hickory Hill, the man thus was enumerated as the "Head" of the household and his partner was enumerated as "Wife."

The man's work and business, however, were atypical. He worked, Mr. Halley, noted, for the government as a "Justice." His business was the "U.S. Supreme C".

This couple was, of course, Robert and Irene Jackson.

The April 1, 2022, official release of the 1950 U.S. Census includes their data:



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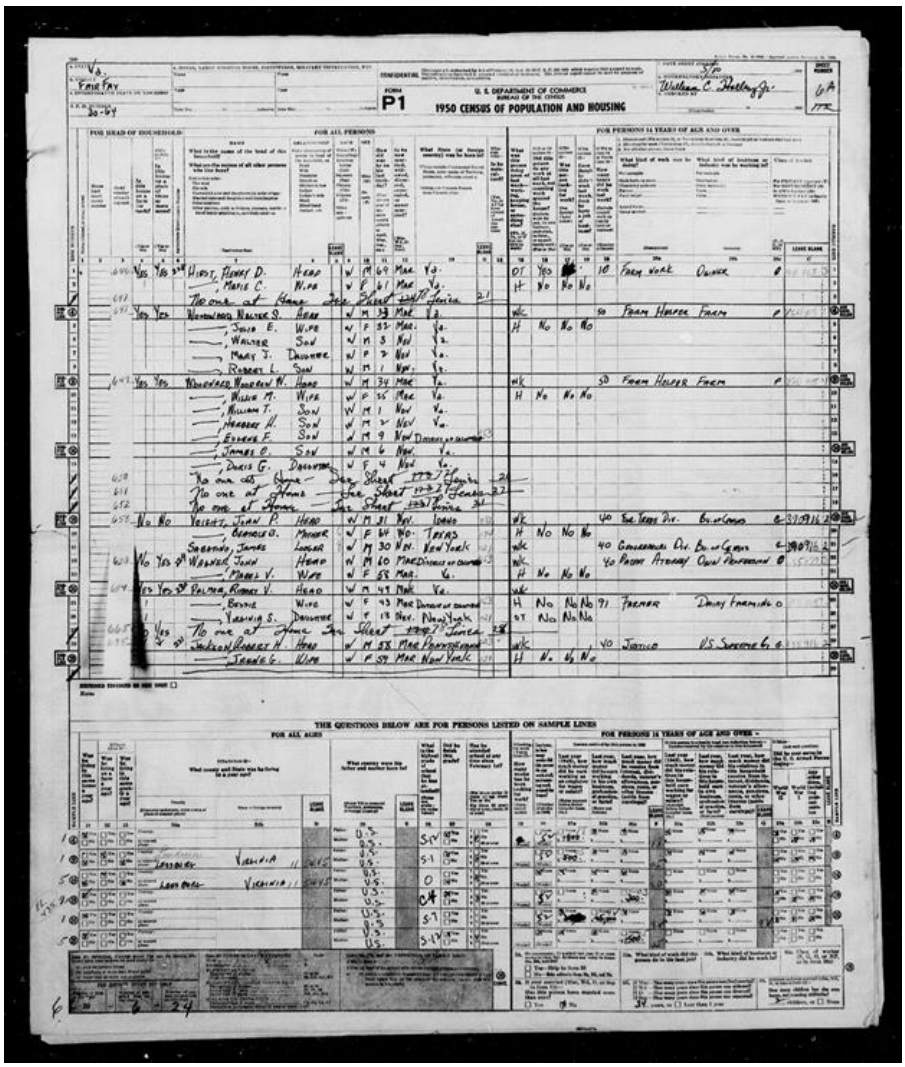
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
FORM P1
1950 CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING
FOR HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD
FOR ALL PERSONS
FOR PERSONS 14 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER
THE QUESTIONS BELOW ARE FOR PERSONS LISTED ON SAMPLE LINES
FOR ALL AGES
FOR PERSONS 14 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER