

REBECCA JANE WALKER HANCOCK
MECHANICSBURG, ILLINOIS, 1870-1913

REBECCA JANE WALKER HANCOCK



Rebecca Jane Walker Hancock
27 Sep 1827 – 28 Mar 1913

THE FAMILY OF REBECCA JANE WALKER HANCOCK SETTLED IN MECHANICSBURG, IL ABOUT THE YEAR 1870. FOLLOWING THE CIVIL WAR, ANDERSON AND REBECCA WALKER HANCOCK OF CASEY CREEK, KENTUCKY DECIDED TO BRING THEIR FAMILY OUT OF THE CHAOS AND CRIME RAMPANT IN SOUTHERN KENTUCKY. IN THE FALL OF 1869, THE FAMILY OF 2 SONS AND 8 DAUGHTERS, A FEW SPOUSES AND GRANDCHILDREN, LEFT KENTUCKY FOR THE FERTILE PRAIRIE LANDS OF ILLINOIS.

REBECCA JANE WALKER, DAUGHTER OF GEORGE W. AND MARGARET ANN PEGGY CHESHIRE WALKER WAS BORN SEPTEMBER 27, 1827 IN SPENSER COUNTY, INDIANA. WITH HER OLDER SISTER SUSANNAH AND TWO OLDER BROTHERS, JOHN BURCH AND BENJAMIN CHESHIRE, THE PARENTS MOVED THEIR FAMILY ACROSS THE OHIO RIVER INTO SOUTH CENTRAL KENTUCKY. TWO MORE CHILDREN, A SON, JONATHAN HOWARD AND A DAUGHTER, MARGARET ELIZABETH M. WALKER WERE BORN AT CASEY CREEK. MARGARET CHESHIRE WALKER, ON THE DEATH OF HER FATHER IN 1832, RECEIVED A SUBSTANTIAL INHERITANCE THAT INCLUDED THREE SLAVES. THE COUPLE BOUGHT LAND AND FARMED, HOME SCHOOLED THEIR CHILDREN AND WERE ACTIVE IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL SOUTH CHURCH. GEORGE AND PEGGY SPENT THE REST OF THEIR LIVES AT CASEY CREEK, KY. WHILE THEIR SIX CHILDREN DEPARTED FOR OTHER STATES..

ON JUNE 24, 1844, REBECCA MARRIED ANDERSON JACKSON HANCOCK IN ADAIR COUNTY AT LIBERTY, KENTUCKY. ANDERSON WAS THE SON OF ANDY & MARGARET T. HANCOCK AND BORN 5 SEP. 1824 IN MERCER CO. KENTUCKY. REBECCA AND ANDERSON SETTLED IN ADAIR COUNTY AND OVER THE YEARS HAD A FAMILY OF 2 SONS AND 8 DAUGHTERS. IN 1861, THE SOUTHERN STATES WERE IN CONFLICT AND THE CIVIL WAR BEGAN. PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN CALLED THE KENTUCKY MEN TO VOLUNTEER FOR ONE YEAR OF SERVICE IN THE UNION ARMY. ANDERSON AND MANY OF HIS NEIGHBORS VOLUNTEERED. SEVERAL BATTLES AND SKIRMISHES OCCURRED IN ADAIR AND SURROUNDING COUNTIES AND GREAT HARDSHIP WAS VISITED ON THE CITIZENS. SOLDIERS OF BOTH ARMIES LIVED OFF THE LAND, DESTROYED CROPS AND CONFISCATED THE ANIMALS.

ANDERSON HANCOCK CAME HOME FROM THE WAR A SICK MAN WITH CAMP DYSENTERY. ADDED TO THIS WAS THE WORRY FOR THEIR OLDEST SON, GEORGE TAYLOR HANCOCK, WHO AT AGE 14, HAD RUN AWAY FROM HOME AND ENLISTED IN THE UNION ARMY. WHEN THE WAR WAS FINALLY OVER, REBECCA AND ANDERSON BEGAN TO PREPARE FOR THEIR JOURNEY TO ILLINOIS. IN THE FALL OF 1869, THEY LEFT KENTUCKY IN SEVERAL COVERED WAGONS WITH ALL THEIR POSSESSIONS. THEY GOT AS FAR AS EDGAR COUNTY NEAR PARIS WHEN ANDERSON BECAME SO ILL THAT THEY WERE FORCED TO STOP WITH RELATIVES FOR THE WINTER.

ANDERSON DIED ON MARCH 11, 1870 AT AGE 46. REBECCA AND HER CHILDREN CONTINUED THEIR JOURNEY ALONE WITHOUT HUSBAND AND FATHER. ONE OF REBECCA'S GRANDSONS WROTE ABOUT THE TRIP TO MECHANICSBURG. HE WROTE:

" I N COMPANY WITH MY GRANDMOTHER, REBECCA HANCOCK AND HER FAMILY , WE STARTED IN 2 COVERED WAGONS AND WE GOT AS FAR ON THE ROAD AS WHAT IS NOW PART OF THE 40 ACRES NORTH OF THE

MECHANICSBURG CEMETERY IN SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS. IT HAD BEEN RAINING FOR SEVERAL DAYS AND WE STAYED IN CAMP ABOUT SIX WEEKS AND IT RAINED SO MUCH THAT WE HAD TO RENT HOUSES AS MY UNCLE AARON TOOK DOWN WITH FEVER. MY FATHER RENTED 20 ACRES WITH A ONE ROOM LOG HOUSE WITH THE CRACKS FILLED WITH THE CLAY MUD AND A FIREPLACE MADE OF STICKS AND MUD. THE CHIMNEY WAS BUILT OF SMALL POLES ABOUT 2 FEET BY 3 FEET AND PLASTERED INSIDE WITH YELLOW CLAY MUD. WE LIVED ON THAT PLACE THREE YEARS."

"THEN MY FATHER MOVED US ONE MILE DUE EAST ON THE JOHNATHON PUTNAM FARM. LATER, HE BOUGHT 28 ACRES OF THIS FARM IN 1883. WE LIVED THERE FOR 30 YEARS. ON JULY 31, 1889, AT THE AGE OF 17 YEARS, 5 MONTHS AND 10 DAYS, I WAS MARRIED TO LOUISE MCGATH WHO WAS 15 YEARS AND 7 MONTHS OLD. WE WERE THE YOUNGEST COUPLE MARRIED ON RECORD IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS."
FROM JOURNAL OF GUY HARRISON BUMGARDNER BALDOCK.

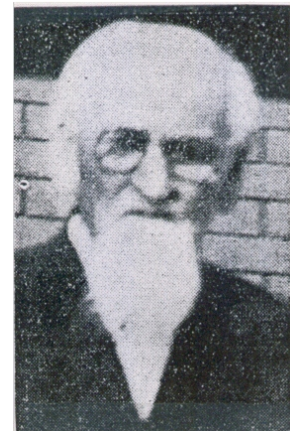
REBECCA HANCOCK STRUGGLED TO TAKE CARE OF HER FAMILY. ANDERSON'S CIVIL WAR PENSION OF \$12. PER MONTH HAD STOPPED. IN AN EFFORT TO HAVE IT RESTORED, REBECCA WROTE LETTERS, CONTACTED HIS COMPANY CAPTAIN, OBTAINED LETTERS FROM ANDERSON'S DOCTORS, AND THEIR KY NEIGHBORS AND FAMILY MEMBERS. FINALLY IN 1905, AFTER 35 YEARS, THE PENSION WAS RESTORED. THE PENSION OF \$12. PER MONTH AND A LUMP SUM OF \$596. WAS AWARDED TO HER EVEN THOUGH HER CHILDREN WERE GROWN AND MARRIED BY THEN.

DURING ALL THOSE YEARS OF STRUGGLE, REBECCA WORKED AT SHUCKING CORN, CLEANING HOUSES, QUILTING AND COOKING FOR THE SCULLEY FARM HANDS. SOMEHOW, SHE FOUND THE STRENGTH AND THE COURAGE TO RAISE HER FAMILY AND TAKE CARE OF HER GRANDCHILDREN. AT AGE 85, REBECCA WAS TAKEN ILL AND WENT TO ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL IN SPRINGFIELD OVER THE ILLINOIS TRACTION SYSTEM. SHE DIED AT 5 P.M. ON FRIDAY EVENING MARCH 28, 1913. FUNERAL SERVICE WERE CONDUCTED BY THE REV. G. F. WETZEL WITH BURIAL IN MECHANICSBURG CEMETERY. HER OBITUARY SAID THAT SHE WAS KNOWN AS GRANDMA HANCOCK AND WAS ONE OF THE BEST KNOWN AND RESPECTED LADIES OF MECHANICSBURG.

CHILDREN OF ANDERSON AND REBECCA WALKER HANCOCK

- 1. MARY FRANCES HANCOCK BALDOCK, 1845-1920**
- 2. MARGARET ELIZABETH HANCOCK COCHRAN, 1847-1917**
- 3. GEORGE TAYLOR HANCOCK, 1849-1943**
- 4. SUSANNAH CATHERINE HANCOCK YOUNG, 1851-**
- 5. ELIZABETH ELEN HANCOCK BUMGARDNER, 1856-1878**
- 6. REBECCA JANE HANCOCK BALDOCK, 1858-1940**
- 7. JOHN WILLIAM HANCOCK, 1861-1940**
- 8. NANCY WILMOTH HANCOCK, 1864-1864**
- 9. TABATHA ETTER HANCOCK, 1865-1880**
- 10. SARAH ANDY JACKSON HANCOCK ISSACS MILLER, 1869-1913**

**Rebecca's Great-Great-Granddaughter
Shirley Waterman Harris
May 30, 2007**



**George Taylor Hancock
Civil War Veteran-Union Army
Mechanicsburg, IL**