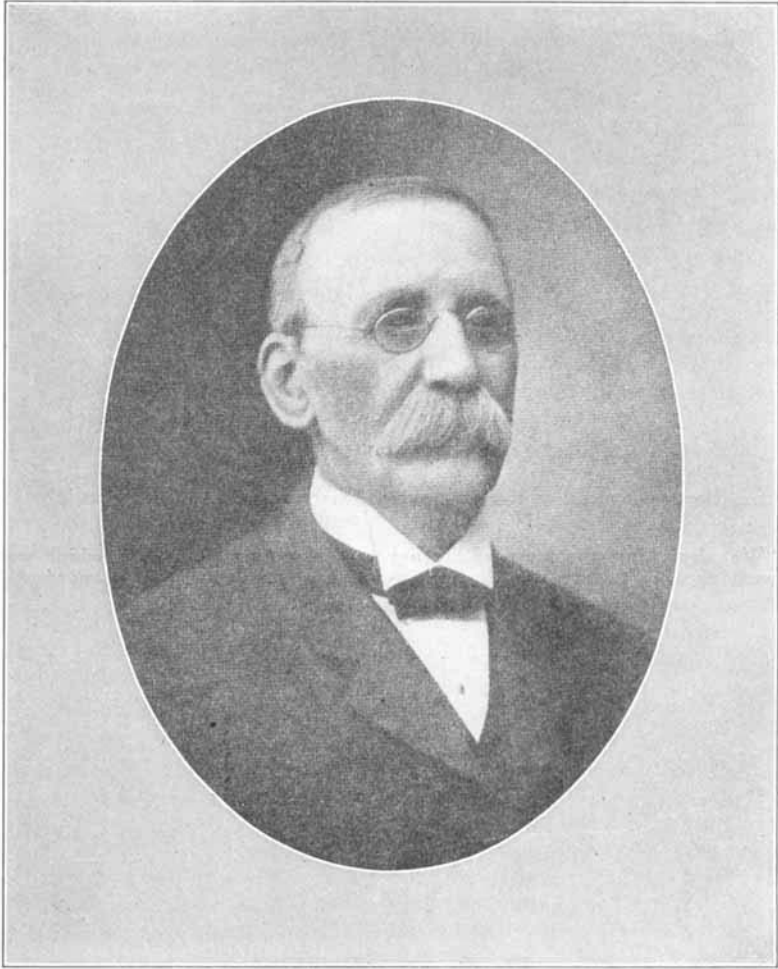


JOHN FRANCIS HANCOCK  
1834-1923

BALTIMORE, MD.

Became a member of the American Pharmaceutical Association in  
1863 and Its President in 1873

**"We sleep, but the loom of life never stops; and the pattern which was  
weaving when the sun went down is weaving when it comes up to-morrow."**



JOHN F. HANCOCK.

# JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION

VOL. XII

DECEMBER, 1923

No. 12

## JOHN F. HANCOCK. 1834-1923.

John Francis Hancock, one of the foremost figures of American Pharmacy, died of pneumonia at his residence in Baltimore on November 12, 1923, in his ninetieth year, after an illness of but four days.

He was born at Forest Home, Anne Arundel County, Md., on September 9, 1834, the son of John Hancock and Mary Leeke (Hancock). The old Hancock home, which is still standing, and in possession of the family, is an old stone house built by Stephen Hancock, who came to St. Mary's in 1664, the first settlement in Maryland, and is on Bodkin Creek immediately opposite the plantation that was originally settled by the ancestor of Charles Carroll of Carrollton.

His early education was had in the district schools and at the Forest Home Academy, where he prepared for Dickinson College with the idea of entering the ministry, but his father and several brothers and sisters having died in a typhoid-malarial epidemic during the summer of 1853, he was compelled to give up that plan for his life-work. On January 1, 1854, he went to Baltimore and was apprenticed in the drug store of Dr. J. L. Large, at Caroline and Baltimore Streets. A year after this Dr. Large was succeeded by Landis & Hancock, and shortly afterwards John F. Hancock became the sole proprietor of the business, which he conducted for many years. In 1899 he gave up the retail drug business and with his two sons began the manufacture of medicated lozenges and other pharmaceutical specialties. In 1903, his son William having died, he established the firm of John F. Hancock and Son, and is survived by his widow, three daughters and his son, James E. Hancock.

He was graduated from the Maryland College of Pharmacy in 1860 and became a member of the college the following year. Soon thereafter he became a member of the Board of Examiners and was president of the Maryland College of Pharmacy, 1872-74. He was given the honorary degree of master of pharmacy in 1871 by his alma mater. In 1907 the University of Maryland conferred upon him the honorary degree of doctor of pharmacy, and in 1908 the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy awarded him its honorary degree of master in pharmacy.

During his career he held many positions of prominence, serving as president of the American Pharmaceutical Association and as president of the Maryland

Pharmaceutical Association. In 1885 he was elected lecturer in pharmacy at the Baltimore College of Physicians and Surgeons, and served as member of the Maryland Board of Pharmacy for twelve years. He was an honorary member of the Pennsylvania Pharmaceutical Association, of the New Jersey Pharmaceutical Association and of the New Hampshire Pharmaceutical Association, and an active member of the Southern Maryland Society, and of the Sons of the American Revolution. He was a member of the School Board for Baltimore City for over ten years and for over twenty five years a member of the Board of Directors of the Baltimore Eastern Dispensary, and of the Board of Trustees of St. Mary's Industrial School. He was also the vice-president of the Free Summer Excursion Society, Baltimore's oldest and best known institution for the relief of the indigent poor.

Sixty years ago he became a member of the American Pharmaceutical Association and has rendered it a lifetime of devoted and valuable service. He was elected president for 1873-74. His ideals for pharmacy were of the highest. He was especially concerned in advancing the professional interests of pharmacy. In his presidential address he said:

"Pharmacy is one of the special branches of learning, which, when its votaries understand aright, they will confine their labors more closely to its specific duties. The better acquaintance with the several duties of these branches and the mutual dependence of each will come only through higher education, the application of which must be general, and the construction of mutual codes of ethical and aesthetical habits. The time has already arrived when the pharmacist is required to be something more than an artisan if he desires to perform his duties intelligently and in accordance with scientific principles, otherwise he is a pretender without the hope of honor, a detriment to the public good and an obstacle in the way of his more progressive brother.

"Pharmacy, as at present practiced in all parts of the United States, is so thoroughly disorganized in detail that it is perplexing to those who are endeavoring to advance its professional interests. The pharmacist is required to be a merchant and a professional practitioner of his science, and by this subsidy of interests he is frequently found incapacitated to harmonize his several duties. Those who aspire to equal honors in the two phases of their business experience should carefully guard against the rock upon which so many have been wrecked, and which constitutes an impediment to progress. By uniting the two interests on a just and generous platform, and letting them serve as handmaids to each other, in harmonizing of diverging interests, very much can be accomplished towards advancing commercial and professional pharmacy."

"Much water has passed under the bridge," so to speak, since these lines were penned, fifty years ago. To-day commercial pharmacy dominates professional, and if this dominance progressively increases, pharmacy will become a lost art. We cannot go back to the old days if we would, and probably would not if we could, but we should ever bear in mind relative values and govern ourselves accordingly. The profession of pharmacy is the backbone of pharmaceutical practice.

When the movement to establish a memorial to his friend, the late William Procter, Jr., the "Father of American Pharmacy," was inaugurated by the Association in 1904 it was but natural that Dr. Hancock should have been made chairman of the Committee on the William Procter, Jr., Memorial Fund. The result of his activity has been accumulation of the present trust fund now amounting to about \$11,000. He was continued as chairman of the committee until his demise. When the memorial is finally established it will be a monument not only to Procter, but also to Dr. Hancock's fidelity to the cause he fathered and for which he labored with such persevering efficiency for more than a score of years.

John F. Hancock was a man of unusual force of character and he was pleased to think that much of his moulding was due to his Scotch-English ancestry—that blending of the Celt and the Anglo-Saxon in which survive the brave and generous impulses of the one with the prudent and steadfast characteristics of the other.

He thought with Froude

"So far as one can look into that commonplace round of things which the historians never tell us about, there have rarely been seen in this world a set of people who thought more about right and wrong, and the judgment about them, of the upper powers—a conscientious sense that the worldly virtues are nevertheless very necessary virtues; that without these honesty, for one thing, is not possible, and that without honesty no other excellence, religious or moral, is worth anything at all."

The activating motive of his life was honesty—honesty to himself and to his fellow man. He confided in his friends and never betrayed a confidence placed in him, no matter what advantage he might secure thereby. While he never pressed his views unduly, he was firm for the right as he saw the right, even though he stood alone. He flattered nobody, he persecuted nobody, he belittled nobody, but was always frank and open. He was ever the courteous, kindly, tolerant, Christian gentleman and never the politician. He gave everybody his due, was true to his friends, generous to his adversaries; enemies he had none. The dominant notes of his personality were kindness and service; he lived for others. Like Abou Ben Adhem, he loved his fellow men more than he loved himself, and the memory of his being will stay with us through the years to come to stimulate and inspire, and through us, others. Just as the ripples on the water from a stone cast upon its surface may widen and extend on and on to infinity, so may the influence of a life like John F. Hancock live long after he has passed.

In concluding his presidential address to the American Pharmaceutical Association in 1874, Mr. Hancock referred to the passing of many members of the Association during the previous year, stating that "Like autumn leaves they have fallen in every direction, leaving with us only the golden tints of well-spent lives." He noted especially the death of William Procter, Jr., and paid a beautiful tribute to the latter's classic research work for the science and art of pharmacy, urging that his example be followed, so that "when the autumn of our lives shall come, it may be exclaimed of us.

'O, what a glory does this world put on  
 For him, who, with a fervent heart, goes forth,  
 Under the bright and glorious sky, and looks  
 On duties well performed, and days well spent;  
 For him the wind, aye, and the yellow leaves  
 Shall have a voice, and give him eloquent teachings,  
 He shall so hear the solemn hymn, that death  
 Has lifted up for all, that he shall go  
 To his long resting-place without a tear.' "

As the poet would write, John F. Hancock, of fervent heart with duties well performed and days well spent, has heard the voice of nature and the sweetly solemn hymn of death and has gone to his resting-place without a tear—with a smile upon his lips and immortality in his eyes.

The life of John F. Hancock has enriched his age. As he stood upon the threshold of the world to come he

"Calmly looked on either life, and here saw  
 nothing to regret, nor there to fear."

J. W. ENGLAND.