

The Hendras of Humboldt County NV.

Written by David W. Beskeen

2nd great-grandson of James and Elizabeth Hendra

The Hope of a New Life

As the copper and tin mines in Cornwall located in the southwest corner of England began to fail in the 1860's, my Cornish mining relatives faced a difficult choice; stay in the land of their ancestors in almost certain poverty struggling to survive or undertake an enormous challenge and move to another country across a vast ocean where survival, opportunity, and success, though not guaranteed, were at least possible. In the middle 1800's as Cornish mining operations gradually skidded to a halt, opportunities for experienced miners were plentiful in other countries such as Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and of course the United States of America. Cornish miners were known worldwide to have excellent mining and engineering skills having mined the English landscape for centuries dating back to the early-middle Bronze Age 2150 BC. During the 1860's, the Gold Rush in California and other Western States was still in full swing and was a magnet for many Cornish miners including both my paternal grandparent's ancestral lines, the Hendra's and the Beskeen's. This chronicle is about my Hendra ancestors and their move from Guinear, Cornwall to Humboldt County, Nevada. Most of the information that follows is pieced together from different sources including family stories, over 100 newspaper articles, census records, and other documents in my possession.

The Hendra's of Guinear

The Hendra clan are easily traced back to the 1400's, having made their home in the Cornwall region of England where many cousins still live to this day. Mining being the economic engine of the region for generations was instinctive in the Hendra men who all took up the pick at an early age. My 2nd great-grandfather James Hendra followed his father as his father did before him by going into the mines as a teenager to scratch out a living below the English ground. At 19 years old James found love and on August 12, 1855, married my 21-year-old 2nd great-grandmother Elizabeth Penhale who was very pregnant with their first child, James Jr. who was born in October 1855. With a budding family and work in the mines drying up, eventually James and Elizabeth would come to face the many difficult realities of the times in which they lived. A move to the United States would ultimately be decided upon which would tear them from the land their families had lived for centuries.

Blazing the Migration Trail

Historically immigrants would often travel in extended family groups or would follow other family members. In James Hendra's case, he followed his older brother, Samuel M. Hendra to the U.S. However, Samuel was not the first Hendra in the family to emigrate to America; that distinction goes to James and Samuel's 2nd cousin Henry Hendra.

Henry Hendra (1818-1890)

Henry Hendra, being a self-described locomotive engineer, emigrated to the U.S. in 1856 hoping to take advantage of the trans-continental railway boom of the 1850's but returned to Cornwall by 1861. Unfortunately, not every migration story has a grand outcome as Henry Hendra's 2nd great-grandson, Peter Hendra states, "The attempted emigration of my great-great-grandfather Henry Hendra in the autumn of 1856 had less sensational results than that of Cousin James..." (Hendra, Peter, 1981, "Under the spreading family tree: some attempts at emigration"). What's interesting and somewhat curious is that even though Henry's dreams of life in the U.S. went unfulfilled, his failure was not enough to deter cousins James and Samuel from making their own way across the pond just a few years later. As for James and Samuel, their stories turn out quite differently than that of their cousin Henry as they would eventually find themselves in Nevada as miners, mine owners, and at separate times the owners of most of the mining town of Dun Glen.

Samuel Michell Hendra (1833-1902)

In 1863 Samuel M. Hendra, my 2nd great granduncle, decided to emigrate to the U.S. and immediately made his way to Star City in Humboldt County, Nevada. It's inconclusive, but I can't help but wonder if there was some connection between Samuel's decision to emigrate and the passing of James and Samuel's mother Eleanor (Michell) Hendra who died that very year. It is unclear what circumstances surrounded Samuel's choice of destination in the U.S., but Star City was the result. "Uncle Sam" Hendra, as he was known, made a life for himself as a miner and property owner. According to Samuel's obituary, he worked as a miner in Star City and Unionville until 1879 and then "...moved to Dun Glen and he and his brother-in-law S. C. Thomas, began mining operations in their own behalf." (May 13, 1902, *The Silver State*). Samuel would go on to own several mines and some of the businesses in the town of Dun Glen NV. Though all of Samuel Hendra's achievements are not completely known, one can conclude that he achieved some success as a property and mine owner.

James (1835-1900) and Elizabeth (Penhale) Hendra (1833-1925)

In April 1857, two years into their marriage, James and Elizabeth added a second child to their family, a daughter, Elizabeth Ellen named after her mother. In 1863 Samuel Hendra

emigrated to the U.S., and it will take James two more years before he is able to follow his brother. It is likely James and Elizabeth could not afford to sail with Samuel in 1863 and needed more time to save money for the journey; not to mention the fact that Elizabeth was pregnant with their third child and gave birth to a son, John Penhale, in May 1864.

Around the Horn

Finally in 1865, James was ready to set sail for the U.S. to meet up with his brother, Samuel, and secure a job before he sent for his wife and young family to join him. The Hendra family story has always been that James sailed a year ahead of the family which is verified in his obituary which states, "In 1865 he (James) came to this country and located at Star City..." (Aug 15, 1900, *The Silver State*). Details of James' trip across the Atlantic are unknown, but the tale Elizabeth told of her transatlantic crossing around the tip of South America (Cape Horn) in 1866 was quite legendary in the Hendra family as her story has been re-told by generations of Hendras in the years since.

The South American sailing route around Cape Horn was notoriously dangerous and was responsible for hundreds of lost ships and thousands of lost lives over the years due to severe climatic conditions such as strong currents and vicious storms producing high waves and hurricane force winds. As the story goes (as it was relayed to me by my grandmother, Vera. P (Hendra) Beskeen, as it was relayed to her firsthand by her grandmother Elizabeth Hendra), Elizabeth's trip was no less fraught with danger. According to Elizabeth, the most harrowing and desperate part of the trip was as they sailed around Cape Horn a horrible storm developed. As their ship continued through the storm it took on so much water that it began to sink. Elizabeth, along with her 11 yr. old son and the other passengers were enlisted to bail water from the ship to prevent it from sinking. She also spoke of the bitter cold, the exceptionally poor food, the dreadful living conditions, and the extremely rough seas which kept them sick for days. Elizabeth would confide to family that she was sure the ship was going to sink, and that they would all die long before they reached San Francisco, CA. However, Elizabeth and her three children survived their oceanic adventure and eventually reunited with James in Star City, NV. Now, a new life begins for this family in an inhospitable land that was in the American wild west.

Life in these United States

In 1865 when James arrived in Star City, NV he was taken on as a foreman with the De Soto Mine. James' ability to earn a job as a foreman soon after his arrival suggests his skill, knowledge, and experience were such to justify such a position. James was successful at his job and by 1867 was the manager of the De Soto Mine. The De Soto Mine was one of a few successful mines in the 1860's which was in part due to miners like James who in 1868

was credited with making "...a handsome strike in the De Soto mine. Star District will soon swing into line and roll out its quota of silver bullion..." (July 1, 1868, *The Evening News*). James' obituary asserts that he filled his position at the De Soto Mine "...with credit and satisfaction for several years..." (Aug 15, 1900, "The Late James Hendra," *The Silver Star*). By all accounts the Hendras flourished in Star City, successfully working in the mines, becoming part of their new community, and adding to their young family. Between 1867 and 1873 James and Elizabeth added four more children to the family which included: two girls, Alice Annie (1867) and Jane Nevada (1869) and two more boys Thomas Michell (1871), my great-grandfather, and Solomon Heidenfeldt (1873). The final score in the Hendra household was 4 boys and 3 girls all who lived to adulthood except 2nd son John Penhale who died at age 15 in 1879. To date I have no further information about John Penhale's death or burial, though he was supposed to have been buried in Unionville, NV. By 1874 James would become the De Soto Mine Superintendent and become a naturalized citizen in Winnemucca NV; two milestones certainly for any immigrant. I think it's safe to infer that by now the Hendras were growing comfortable in the land of their new home with roots being pushed deep into the Nevada soil.

The First Hendra Marriage in America

In 1874 the oldest daughter of James and Elizabeth, 17-year-old Elizabeth Ellen my great-granddaughter, was apparently quite a beauty for the time and was as one man put it "...the prettiest Cornish girl in the State of Nevada...who had many a sturdy miner...captivated by the handsome ways of the blooming daughter." (1874, "A Runaway Match", *The Silver State*). With such a beautiful daughter, John and Elizabeth certainly had their hands full shielding her from all the eligible bachelors as "She stood matchless and unrivaled as the acknowledged belle of Star City, the pride and joy of her parents and the idol of the village." (1874, "A Runaway Match", *The Silver State*). Apparently, bachelors from Star City and the surrounding towns were a constant presence around the Hendra home trying to see her to gain her favor as, "Suitors for her heart and hand from Dun Glen and Unionville and the surrounding country generally frequently visited Star City upon one pretext or another..." (1874, "A Runaway Match", *The Silver State*). However, Elizabeth was apparently uninspired by these potential suitors and had no preference for any one man until a "...young Cornish miner...met the fair maiden, and laying siege to the citadel of her affections, she surrendered unconditionally." (1874, "A Runaway Match", *The Silver State*). This young Cornish miner was 32 yr. old John Floyd, 15 years her elder. Unfortunately for Elizabeth her parents desperately tried to keep the young lovers separated and "...refused consent to her marriage with the man of her choice..." (1874, "A Runaway Match", *The Silver State*). Even by today's standards, a budding relationship like this would cause some serious concern if not outright panic in most families, but in 19th century small-town America, a 17 yr. old

woman consorting with a man 15 years her senior would have undoubtedly been met with severe constraints by the anxious parents.

But as history has shown again and again, true love is difficult to quiet in determined young hearts. One fateful night in late November 1874, Elizabeth slipped out of her bed as the Hendra household slept soundly to meet up with her intended; obviously a rendezvous planned well in advance. Elizabeth and her beau John Floyd hurriedly raced off to Mill City where they caught a 3 AM freight train to Rye Patch. That morning, November 19th, 1874, they were married by Justice of the Peace John Cody. That same morning Elizabeth's parents awoke to find their daughter absent from her bed and "...sought her in every conceivable place in the village, the mother, broken hearted, crying 'My daughter, oh my daughter!' but of course their search was in vain." (1874, "A Runaway Match", *The Silver State*). One can imagine this disturbing scene as Elizabeth's parents frantically looked for their daughter throughout the town in every conceivable place, thinking the worst must have occurred. As the search progressed, John Floyd was also found to be missing which prompted the Hendra family and many of Star City's miners to chase after the young lovers in "hot haste" to Mill City only to learn they were too late to stop the inevitable union. The most beautiful and eligible young woman in Star City was now married while "...the young lady's many admirers are disconsolate and refuse to be comforted. Star City mines and \$4 a day have no longer any attraction for them and several of them are preparing to emigrate to Panamint." (1874, "A Runaway Match", *The Silver State*). James and Elizabeth eventually accepted their new son-in-law who certainly became a close and trusted member of the family as he would work with his new father-in-law at times in various mining ventures during the 1880's. John and Elizabeth Floyd would go on to produce 6 children of their own, though sadly John would die in 1891 at the age of 45 after only 17 years of marriage to his beloved Elizabeth.

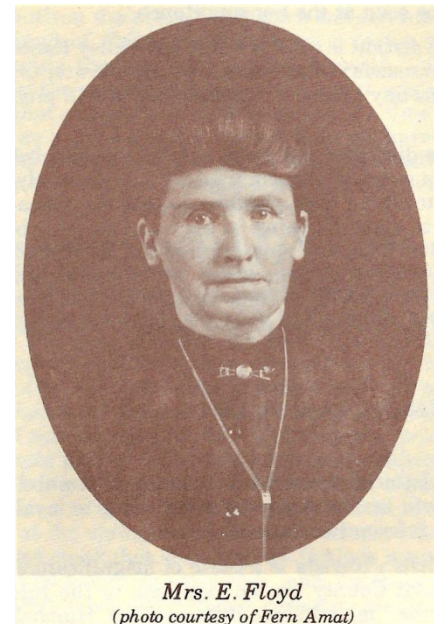


Figure 1: Author's great grandaunt Elizabeth E. (Hendra) Floyd oldest daughter of James and Elizabeth Hendra - ca. 1890. Photo published by the North Central Nevada Historical Society in the volume "Humboldt County 1905", by Allen C. Bragg.

Gold Found in Dun Glen...again!

Sometime after 1875 James and Elizabeth moved to Unionville where James took a position in the Arizona Mine under John C. Fall. Then around 1880 James moved his family to Dun Glen after gold was discovered there by Steve Thomas (Samuel Hendra's brother-in-

law). While Steve Thomas was looking for horses he sat down on a rock to rest and as he did so, he began “Idly breaking off a piece (of the rock and), he found that it was filled with specks of gold. In company with Captain Jim Hendra and Gilbert Ross, he at once located several claims...” (Aug. 18, 1908, “History of the Now Famous Mayflower”, *The Silver State News*). This, of course, was big news for the region as gold had been discovered once again in the Dun Glen area and soon Steve Thomas, Samuel Hendra, James Hendra and John Floyd will all find themselves in Dun Glen working several claims “...which included the Prince Royal, Mayflower, Lang Syne, Golden Chariot, now known as Golden Belle, and the Good Hope.” (Aug. 18, 1908, “History of the Now Famous Mayflower”, *The Silver State News*).

Throughout the 1880’s James Hendra worked on several claims that he owned and co-owned with his brother Samuel, John Floyd, and others providing him with some degree of success. In 1881, the abandoned Nachez mine eight miles from Dun Glen in the East Range was “...relocated by Messrs. Thompson, Anderson, Floyd and Hendra. They went to work on a large vein, and at a depth of twenty-five feet from the surface have a ledge three and a-half feet wide, six inches of which is ore that assays from \$500 to \$1,000 to the ton, and the rest which averages about \$75 to the ton.” (Nov. 7, 1881, “A Rich Mine” *The Silver State*). The Nachez mine would later be called the Golden Chariot Mine.

Hard Work Leads to Riches

By 1886 the Dun Glen mines operated by the Hendra brothers were doing quite well; so well in fact that a new Dun Glen mill was built and on “the evening of October 1st, the whistle of the new 5-stamp mill, just completed by Messers. S. Thomas & S. Hendra, announced the fact that steam was up and everything ready to test the machinery.” (Oct. 4, 1886, “New Mill at Dun Glen” *The Silver State*).



Figure 2: Author’s great-granduncle William M. Nelson on horseback in front of the Golden Chariot Mill, Dun Glen, NV – ca. 1900. This picture which shows the mill in operation may be the only one in existence.

Before the Golden Chariot Mill was erected in Dun Glen, most of the ore that was produced was stored near the mines in “dumps” until it could be worked by a horse-powered arrastra which was a very slow and laborious process. An arrastra was a primitive ore mill which comprised of a stone wheel powered by an animal that moved the stone in a circle over the ore crushing it. The Golden Chariot Mill definitely changed how much ore (up to 7 tons a day) could be worked and “Reports from the Dun Glen gold mines are very encouraging. The Ross mine is looking better than for some time past, and the mill is running steadily...and is turning out gold bars pretty rapidly.” (Oct. 26, 1886, “Dun Glen Mines” *The Silver State*) The Ross mine (also known as the Lang Syne) will turn out to be one of the most profitable mines in Dun Glen producing by some accounts around \$200,000 worth of gold (about \$6 million today).

Success continued into 1887 as the “...Ross Brothers and S. Thomas and S. Hendra are meeting with deserved success. Their mines and mills are in constant operation, and the



Figure 3: Unknown abandoned mine near Dun Glen NV. - ca. 1925. This picture could be a mine owned by Thomas M. Hendra.

shipments of bullion will compare favorably with any in the State.” (Feb. 16, 1887, “Dun Glen Property” *Reese River Reveille*). James and Samuel Hendra continued work on the old Nachez mine, now called the Golden Chariot, which was thought to be one of the most promising gold bearing leads in the Country. By 1888 it was reported that James Hendra

had “...plenty of ore in sight and excellent prospects for one of the largest and richest gold bearing claims ever developed in this part of Nevada.” (Dec. 15, 1888, “A Dun Glen Gold Mine” *Daily Nevada State Journal*).

It is not known when James’ three sons (James Jr., Thomas my great-grandfather, and Solomon) started working with their father, but by the 1890’s it is certain they were all working with him and prospecting claims of their own. The Hendra mining enterprise was still very much in operation in 1890 when General Buckner reported the “Hendra Brothers, Sam and James, are running a five-stamp mill on gold-bearing rock with good success. The ore pays well and the Hendras are getting rich as they deserve to be.” (Oct. 3, 1890, “Rich Ore and Paying Placer Mines” *The Silver State*).

The Town of Dun Glen

Along with being successful mine owners, the Hendra brothers would branch out and become business owners in Dun Glen. When gold was rediscovered in 1879 the town of Dun Glen had been depleted of much of its population as prospectors and their families had moved on to other places of opportunity. The town, however, still consisted of a small population with several businesses that you would expect in a small struggling mining town which included a store, hotel, and saloon. At some point in the 1880's Samuel Hendra would come to own some of these businesses. I am unsure who owned these businesses immediately prior to my great granduncle (maybe the Crook family), but Samuel's ownership was certain as he sold his properties to his brother James in 1889. In 1977 Vera (Hendra) Beskeen, my grandmother and the granddaughter of James Hendra, sent a letter to the Humboldt County Office of Recorder and Auditor requesting information on Dun Glen and its ownership. The Research Clerk at the time, Ruth Tipton, sent the following letter in reply which affirms the sale of the Dun Glen properties between Samuel and James which in part reads:

“On Nov. 15, 1889, S. M. Hendra of Humboldt County sold to James Hendra Senior of Humboldt County property in Dun Glen described briefly as follows: The Jones House, the Crook's Hotel building and outhouses, L.J. Crook's house, the butcher shop, the ZooZoo building (not sure it is a Z), large adobe barn, small adobe house, a 5 stamp quartz mill (Called the Golden Chariot or Thomas Hendra Quartz Mill) this making up about 5 acres of land.” (April 20, 1977, Letter received by Vera P. (Hendra) Beskeen).

The reference to the name L. J. Crook in the letter obviously refers to a family member, probably a son, of one of the original Dun Glen settlers, D. P. Crook who owned these properties previously. Without knowing for certain, I suspect there are very few artifacts, if any, that still exist from the town of Dun Glen. I consider myself privileged to possess two of four known wine glasses from the Dun Glen saloon which James Hendra owned, as shown in Figure 4. In 1993 my brother and I were each given two wine glasses by our grandmother Vera (Hendra) Beskeen, who had inherited them from her parents Thomas and Hattie Hendra.



Figure 4: Late 19th century wine glasses from the Dun Glen saloon owned by James Hendra - Dun Glen NV.

Death of James and Samuel Hendra

Between 1896 and 1900 there is little information on the status of the Hendra mines. I'm sure during this period James continued to work as much as he could, but it's likely that his three sons took on most of the responsibility for operating the family business. According to James' obituary he was in ill-health for several years before his death and was unable to do much work. Then, "Early in July he unguardedly exposed himself to a cool draft, took cold, and in spite of all medical skill and loving attendants could do, passed away peacefully on the evening of July 10, 1900." (Aug 15, 1900, "The Late James Hendra," *The Silver State*). James was 64 years old at the time of his death and was laid to rest in the old Dun Glen burial ground on July 12, 1900, though there is no grave marker for his grave today. At the times of James' death he was survived by his wife Elizabeth, and his six grown children and their families. James' brother Samuel would last another two years dying, "May 8, 1902 at Dun Glen, Nevada, of miners' consumption...aged 69 years..." (May 1902, "Death of an Old Miner," *The Silver State*). And though Samuel and his wife, Alice (who died in 1885) had no children of their own he was well taken care of in his last days by his "...only relatives...living in America...his nephews and nieces, children and grandchildren of his brother, James, whose self-sacrificing devotion and constant attention during his illness did much toward alleviating his suffering." (May 1902, "Death of an Old Miner," *The Silver State*). James and Elizabeth's children, including my great-grandfather Thomas, would now carry on the family name and mining endeavors into the 20th century, though in the end they will have very little to show for it.

Thomas Michell Hendra (1871-1933)

My great-grandfather Thomas M. Hendra was the third son born to James and Elizabeth Hendra in 1871 in Star City, NV. Like his father Tom spent his teenage and adult life mining in and around the hills of Dun Glen. In 1905 Tom married my great-grandmother Hattie Eliza Nelson (1879-1958) who was the youngest daughter of John and Eliza (Lane) Nelson, another longstanding Dun Glen mining and ranching family. Tom and Hattie Hendra will eventually have three children of their own, Lillian Isabell (1908), my grandmother Vera Pearl (1909), and Raymond Stanley (1913), though their first daughter Lillian will die 2 months after birth in September 1908. After his father died in



Figure 5: Author's great-grandparents and grandmother, Thomas, Hattie, and Vera Hendra on the porch of their home. Dun Glen, NV. - 1922

1900, Tom along with his two brothers continued working their claims, though there is far less information about my great-grandfather's mining exploits than that of his father's. I do know that he was directly involved with and owned the Silver Bell Mine and the Tulula Mine in Dun Glen. The Tulula Mine, "...property has been developed to a depth of several hundred feet, with good milling ore throughout. On the dump there are several hundred tons of ore that will pay handsomely to mill. The property has belonged to Tom Hendra for years." (Oct. 3, 1908, "Working Old Mines at Camp Chafey", *Reno Evening Gazette*). It was at the Tulula mine in late December 1908 as Tom and his brother Solomon were doing some assessment work on the mine preparing for work in the Spring when the unimaginable happened; a tragedy which would strike a deep blow to the Hendra family. One day while at



Figure 6: Author's great-grandfather Thomas M. Hendra's grave marker today, Dun Glen NV.

the mine an altercation occurred between Tom and Solomon and several other men, two of which were named Rooney and Clark. The result of the argument would leave Solomon dead having been shot in the head. Solomon would die that day right where he fell. Tom would find the will to keep working his claims after his brother's death and would do so for the rest of his natural life. Stories told to me by my grandmother about her family life in Dun Glen reflect a generally close-knit family where

music, singing, and dancing were a part of life. Tom Hendra would die in June 1933 at the age of 62. He would be buried in the old Dun Glen cemetery along with his parents and brother, Solomon. A burial marker for Thomas still exists today in Dun Glen.

Solomon Heidenfeldt Hendra (1873-1908)

My great-granduncle, Solomon (Sol), was the youngest Hendra child born in 1873 to James and Elizabeth. In 1900 he married my great-grandaunt Lucy Maebelle (Nelson) Hendra (1874-1920), the third daughter of John and Eliza (Lane) Nelson and the older sister of my great-grandmother Hattie (Nelson) Hendra. Yes, in small towns like Dun Glen it was not uncommon for multiple siblings of one family to marry multiple siblings of another family! Solomon and Lucy would have three children, Elizabeth Ann (1902), Eugene Noble (1905), and Cecilia Grace (1907). There is an interesting family tale about my great uncle Solomon's name, which I am unable to prove but with a simple handwritten note by my grandmother Vera (Hendra) Beskeen. Solomon was presumably named after a friend of the family named Solomon Heidenfeldt who having not been married or having any children of his own offered James and Elizabeth \$5000 to name their last boy after him. I have no way of knowing if this story is true or if money actually changed hands, however, the name

Solomon Heidenfeldt is obviously not a Cornish or family name which does lead me to believe that there might be something to the story. Who knows?

A Tragic End

Unfortunately, Solomon Hendra will not be remembered for his interesting name but for his death which occurred at the Tulula Mine in 1908. Solomon and my great-grandfather Tom were at the mine on December 29th, 1908, when he was murdered by a group of claim jumpers who tried to drive them from their claim. The account of the murder is chilling as the suspected ringleaders of the homicide Rooney and Clark,

“...in company with several other prospectors ordered Hendra from the premises, with the later refused to do. One of the witnesses of the tragedy states he saw Clark raise his hand as if signaling when someone concealed behind a large dyke fired. A score of deputy sheriffs have been pursuing the fleeing men in automobile since 3 o’clock. Crowds of excited miners parade the street tonight and threats of lynching are frequently heard.” (Dec. 30, 1908, “Sensational Murder Near Chafey Camp”, *The Tonopah daily Bonanza*).

To say the least, Solomon’s murder at just 35 years old hit the Hendra family hard as he left behind a young wife and three young children having only been married 8 years. Solomon was known as an industrious law-abiding citizen and his murder impacted the town of Dun Glen and the entire region. It was reported that “...a brother James Hendra of Chafey has offered a \$1000 reward for the murderer or murderers, dead or alive.” (Dec. 30, 1908, “Sol Hendra Shot Down Near Chafey By Assassin Who Fire From Ambush”, *The Humboldt Star*). By January of 1909 five murder indictments would be handed down for the murder of Solomon. Two of the men (Joe Rooney and F. V. Fuller) were never apprehended and brought to justice; one man (Patrick Mullally) was acquitted; and two men were found guilty. The two men found guilty of murder, Patrick Coak and Bernard Clark, were given long 10 and 30-year sentences, respectively. Coak would never leave prison alive.

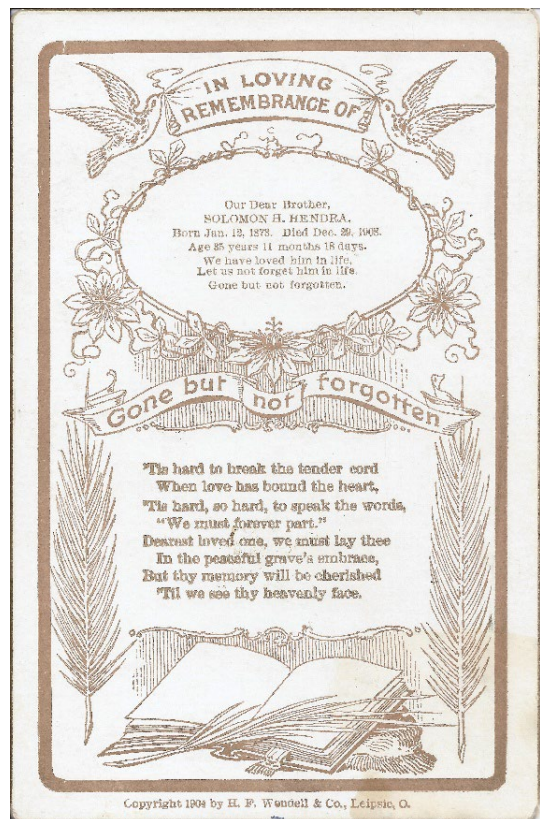


Figure 7: Solomon Hendra's funeral card - 1908

Bernard Clark would ultimately be granted a new trial in 1915 and be acquitted of murder in the second trial. A sad part of the Hendra family legacy for sure. Solomon's wife Lucy would die in 1920 of a stroke at just 42 years old having never remarried after her husband's murder and be buried in Mill City, NV.

Interestingly enough, Solomon's murder was not the first tragic event that had occurred at the Tulula mine. Solomon's murder, "...is the second tragedy in the history of the mine, which has been idle since the days of the Comstock boom. The former superintendent named Banks, an Englishman, was shot and killed 30 years ago by his Indian boy servant and the mine has not been in operation since. (Dec 30. 1908, "Young Miner Shot From Ambush at Mining Camp of Chafey", *Reno Evening Gazette*).

Selling Mines?

The first report of a Hendra mine sale was 1896. With all the reported success throughout the 1880's and 90's it is curious that by 1896 the Hendra brothers (James and Samuel) appeared ready to sell several of their mines. "The sale of the Hendra group of mines at Dun Glen was closed today, the first payment on the purchase price of \$20,000 being made. The mines, prominent among which is the Golden Chariot, a rich gold property, were sold by Samuel and James Hendra Sr.." (1896, "Dun Glen Mining Sale" *The Silver State*). It might be the case at this point that selling the mines for a good price was more desirable than working them. Or maybe the age and health of the Hendra brothers being 61 and 63 at the time had become an issue. One reason given for the sale was that the five-stamp mill the Hendra brothers built "...worked the ore satisfactorily, but the mill was of too small a capacity to net very large returns." (1896, "Dun Glen Mining Sale" *The Silver State*). The new owners from San Francisco appeared to have money and had planned to build a ten-stamp mill which would significantly increase the volume of ore able to be processed per day, up to 20 tons.

The news reports of the 1896 mine sale are interesting because they pose more questions than they answer. Though the sale was plainly reported as having been completed in 1896, a news article six years later indicates the Golden Chariot mine was still owned by the Hendras as, "Fifteen tons of ore from the Golden Chariot mine at Dun Glen has been shipped to the Reno reduction works for a test run. The mine is owned by the Hendra brothers, who recently bonded it to a Colorado company." (April 11, 1902, "Ore Shipment", *The Silver State*). Additionally, there is further evidence that the Hendras still owned some of their mines in 1905. That year the editor of *The Silver State* newspaper, Alvin C. Bragg, spent part of a year traveling 1200 miles by horse and buggy around the north part of Nevada reporting on ranches, farms, and mines. On one eleven-day trip he went to Mill City and Dun Glen. The following is some of what he reported:

“Drawing a little further up the canyon we came to the old Hendra Mill, with its stamps long since silenced, but ready to start again as soon as Dun Glen awakens...J. H. Hendra, his two brothers, Frank Nelson and the family of Sol Hendra, are all that are left in the old camp to tell of Dun Glen’s former greatness. J. H. Hendra is interested in the Hendra mines, four in number – the Good Hope, Golden Bell, Mayflower and Molly.” (May 4, 1905, “Humboldt County as Seen by Editor”, *The Daily Silver State*).

This clearly indicates that the Hendra family still owned the Golden Chariot, though the brothers mentioned in this later article refers to James Hendra’s three adult sons, James Jr., Thomas, and Solomon as James had died in 1900. Without direct supporting evidence, it seems the 1896 sale either did not occur as reported or at some time the mines in this sale reverted back to the Hendra family maybe due to a default or breach of contract.

Mine Sales 1902-1908

Several newspaper articles in 1907 and 1908 suggest some of the Hendra mines were sold in 1902 to the American Finance Company who by 1908 had abandoned work on the mines and allowed their lease to lapse. “The famous Hendra mines of Dun Glen, which were purchased by the American Finance Company of Philadelphia, will shortly resume operation on a substantial basis.” (April 1, 1907, “Dun Glen Mines to Resume Operation”, *The Daily Silver State*). Then there is a report in 1909 of a contract entered into in 1905 by Elizabeth Hendra, her daughter Elizabeth Floyd and her son James Jr. in which,

“...was stipulated...that Henry W. Kent of Chicago should have...an option to purchase from them those certain mining claims situate in Dun Glen mining district, known as the Mayflower, Golden Bell and Good Hope, and also the millsite known as the Hendra millsite, at an agreed to price of \$10,000...” (Jan. 8, 1909, “Big Suit is on Over Rich Chafey Claims”, *Tonopah Daily Bonanza*).

In the end I am unsure of the details of the 1905 sale and how it fits in with the story. However, from the information available to me it seems an initial sale of at least some of the Hendra mines did occur in 1902. Additionally, it is certainly true that in 1908 James’ wife, Elizabeth, and daughter Elizabeth Floyd were the owners of the Black Hole property which was part of the Mayflower Mine. The sale of the Black Hole property in 1908 was reported in several sources, one of which stated,

“E. S. Chafey and W. M. Sims are now the owners of the famous Black Hole property at Chafey. Last Monday Messrs. Chafey and

Sims were in Winnemucca and made the final payment on the Bonanza claims to Mrs. Elizabeth Hendra and Mrs. Elizabeth Floyd, the owners, who were in Winnemucca to receive the money...the total sum paid was \$30,000..." (Oct. 2, 1908, "Last Payment Made on the Chafey Mine", *Tonopah Daily Bonanza*).

The \$30,000 sales price (about \$1 million today) was considered steep at the time but would end up being just a tenth of what E. S. Chafey would extract from the ground. Chafey would go on to build a 30-ton stamp mill and by 1910 produce an estimated \$300,000 worth of gold worth about \$10 million today. The sale of the Black Hole mine by the Hendra's was the end of an era and would also be the end of any real chance at striking it rich. Dun Glen's population would surge, and its businesses would thrive because of the new boom. In an ironic twist of fate, my great granduncles James Jr. and Solomon Hendra are credited with discovering the black hole in 1903, "...while working under the direction of Superintendent Williams, James and Sol Hendra opened up a body of ore of a dark color, and the place was named 'Black Hole,' being situated on the Mayflower, near the line of the Good Hope." (Aug. 18, 1908, "History of the Now Famous Mayflower", *The Silver State News*).

Hendra Mining Legacy

I believe it's evident through the abundant newspaper accounts of the Hendra family's mining operations that one could reasonably assume they attained a substantial amount of wealth from their gold discoveries. Unfortunately, it is unclear today how much brothers James and Samuel, or James's children, actually profited from their mining efforts or what happened to the riches they attained. There has been some who have suggested that James was a boisterous hard-drinking man and if true that could explain why later generations of Hendras had nothing to show for James'



Figure 8: Author's grandmother Vera P. Hendra and great-grandfather Thomas M. Hendra in front of their home in Dun Glen, NV. - ca. 1911

success. What I can say for certain is there was no real wealth passed from James and

Elizabeth Hendra to their son, Tom, and this according to my grandmother Vera (Hendra) Beskeen. In fact, pictures of my grandmother's childhood and early adult years in Dun Glen show a fairly modest existence. I am not sure of all the circumstances that surrounded the various Hendra mining enterprises and business dealing over the years, but I do know that opportunities for wealth were either wasted, unattained or just simply missed.

Dun Glen: From Boom to Bust to Ghost

Dun Glen would be sparked to life again with the boom of 1908, but that success would be short lived and by 1913 the town would once again decline into extinction. Hendra brothers, Tom and James Jr., would continue to work their claims until their deaths. James Jr. who would never marry and died in 1919 at the age of 63 following surgery in Reno NV. He was subsequently buried in Winnemucca, NV. Elizabeth Hendra, matriarch of the Hendra family, would spend most of the rest of her life in Dun Glen with the exception of just a few years near the end. She would live a long life and pass away at the age of 91 in 1925.

Elizabeth would be buried in Dun Glen where her grave marker still exists to this day. By the early 1930's there were very few Hendras left in Dun Glen as most had either moved away or died as the town was in steep decline at this



Figure 9: Author's 2nd great-grandmother Elizabeth E. Hendra's grave marker today, Dun Glen NV.



Figure 10: Author's 2nd great-grandmother Elizabeth E. Hendra, wife of James Hendra in Dun Glen, NV. – ca. 1920

point in time. Once my great-grandfather, Tom, died in 1933 his wife, Hattie, would only remain in their Dun Glen house for a few more years. And to further add to the decline of Dun Glen, my grandmother, Vera Hendra, would marry my grandfather William H. Beskeen Jr. in 1933 and leave Dun Glen for good to make a life in Sacramento, CA. By 1938 both my great-grandmother, Hattie, and her son, my great-uncle Ray Hendra, would move from Dun Glen, ending 73 years of Hendras living, working, and dying in Northern Nevada. Hattie would eventually sell the Hendra family property to J. J. Ballard in the late 1930's and move to Sacramento to live near my grandparents. Buildings in Dun Glen and the surrounding countryside would steadily deteriorate, many having been abandoned and left to nature's devices. Unfortunately, of the handful of

Hendras buried in Dun Glen, only Thomas and his mother Elizabeth Hendra's grave markers are visible today, and these obviously are not their original markers.

Story in Pictures

I am very fortunate to be in possession of many of my grandmother Vera (Hendra) Beskeen's pictures and artifacts from the Hendra family in Dun Glen that she received from her mother Hattie Hendra. Many of these fine pictures are yet unidentified, which is a shame. The following are just a few of the many pictures I have of Dun Glen and the Hendra family which might be of further interest.



Figure 11: Back row L-R: Unknown, Alfred Springer, Thomas Hendra; Front row L-R: Solomon Springer, Elizabeth E. Hendra, Demaries Springer, Edgar Springer. Dun Glen NV. – ca. 1900. This picture, I believe, was taken at the Hendra Hotel on the occasion of James Hendra's funeral; notice Elizabeth is dressed in black and my great-grandfather Tom is wearing a formal vest with a pocket watch; not daily attire for either of them. The children pictured are Elizabeth Hendra's grandchildren from her daughter Jane Nevada (Hendra) Springer who lived in Washoe County at the time.



Figure 12: L-R Chafey Mill, Elizabeth Hendra's barn, Stonehouse, and home in Dun Glen, NV. – ca. 1925



Figure 12: Hendra Hotel & Saloon and outbuildings, Dun Glen, NV. – ca. 1925

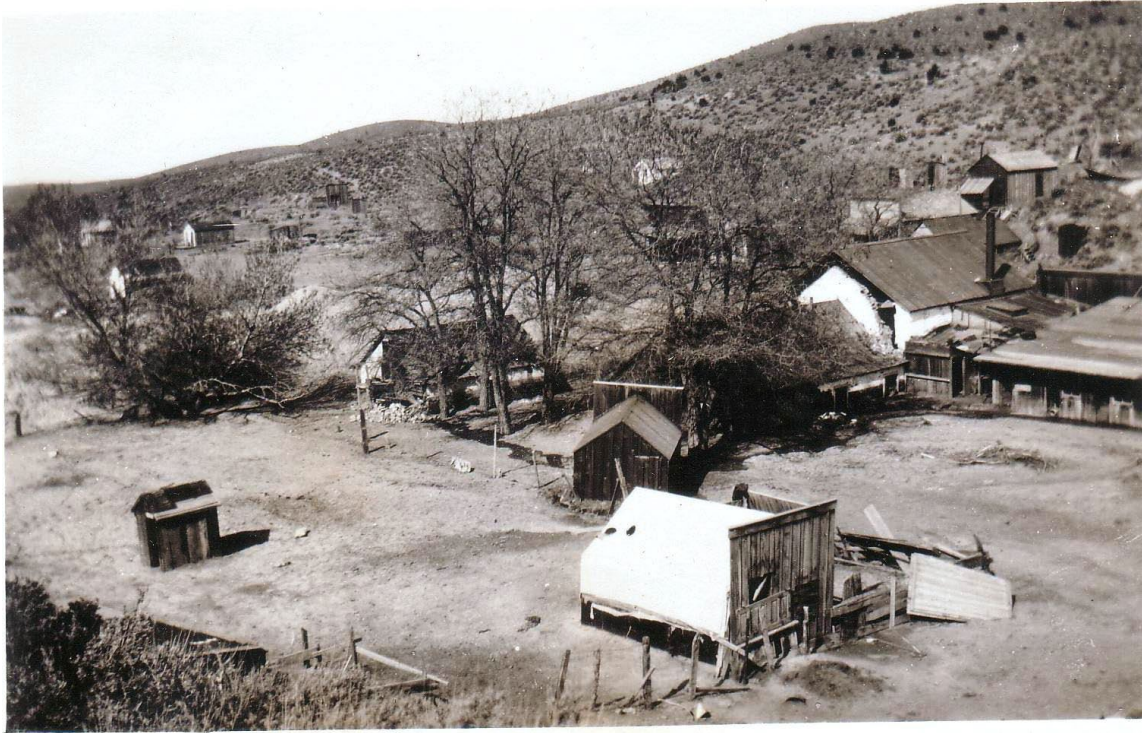


Figure 13: Rear view of Hendra Hotel & Saloon and outbuildings, Dun Glen, NV. - ca. 1925



Figure 14: Solomon and Lucy (Nelson) Hendra's house, Dun Glen, NV. - ca. 1925



Figure 15: Raymond, Hattie, and Thomas Hendra in front of their home, Dun Glen, NV. – ca. 1922

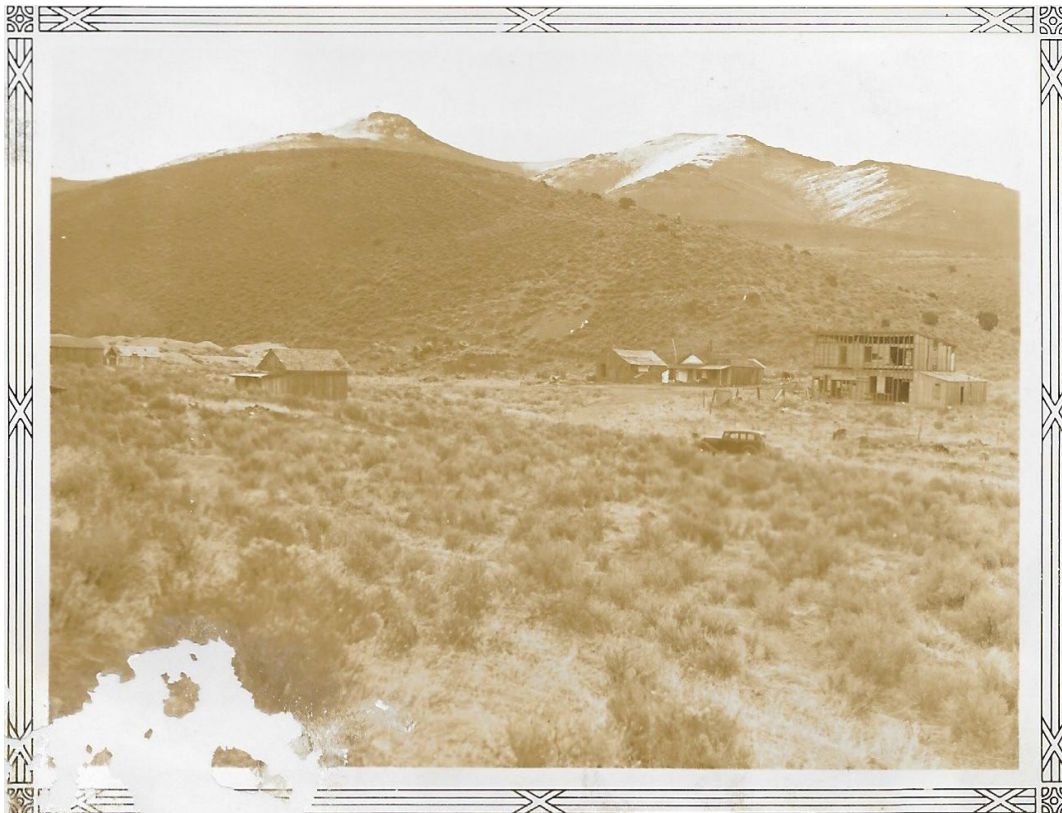


Figure 16: Elizabeth Hendra's Stonehouse and home in the distance, Dun Glen, NV. – ca. 1935. Notice the Chafey mill is now gone which would have sat on the hill to the left of the Stonehouse.