

In his political allegiance he was changeable but only because of his commitment to certain fundamental principles. He was never entirely loyal to southern ideals before the Civil War. He believed that the holding of any people in a condition of involuntary servitude a flagrant violation of the most sacred principles of civil righteousness and for this reason he belonged to the Whigs. When the Whigs declined as the slavery issue became more intense, he joined the new Republican Party and was once a candidate for the Legislature. During Reconstruction, he denounced the Republicans and joined the Democratic Party. In 1888 he was elected to the Florida House of Representatives. His brother-in-law, Capt. John W. Whidden, was serving in the Florida Senate. He declined to seek reelection. He afterwards joined the Populist Party, but when it failed, his political activity ceased.

In 1893 Sarah (Payne) Hendry suffered a stroke of paralysis. This misfortune greatly hindered John's usefulness as a preacher as most of his time was required to take care of her. Sarah died December 20, 1897 and was buried in New Zion Cemetery.

Rev. Hendry again took up the ministerial work and served several churches. He returned among others to First Baptist Church of Wauchula as the pastor from 1900-1901. Earlier he had served it from 1876-1884 when it was known as Fort Hartsuff.

In December of 1898, John Hendry married Civy (or Civie) V. Thompson. They had four children:

2. John Francis Gary Hendry, born Sept. 10, 1899; died Sept. 18, 1904; buried in New Zion Cemetery.
3. Robert Hendry
4. Sarah Hendry, married Jerry Albritton.
5. Charlie Hendry

On February 4, 1907 John set out on a business trip and spent the day looking after his affairs, chatting with his friends, and transacting business on the streets of Wauchula. After leaving town, he drove to the home of his granddaughter, Mrs. Ab W. Carlton, where he was assisted from his buggy to the house. Soon after taking supper with the family, he suddenly expired without a struggle. He was buried beside his first wife, Sarah, in New Zion Cemetery. The Masonic order of Wauchula of which he had long been a member performed the last rites. The "Wauchula Advocate" eulogized: "He traveled more miles, organized more churches, baptized more people, married more couples, conducted more funerals, and soothed more aching hearts than any other minister in south Florida. He is gone. His life work is finished."

Civy (Thompson) Hendry later married a Mr. Jackson and is said to be buried in an unmarked grave in Fort Green Baptist Cemetery.

REFERENCES: John W. Hendry, A Pioneer Baptist Preacher of South Florida, prepared for New Zion Baptist Church by W. D. Payne, James M. Hendry, & Robert Roberts, The Advocate Press, Wauchula, 1907; "Pioneer Families of Polk County and South Florida: The Hendry Family" by Milton D. Wilson, Polk County Historical & Genealogical Library, 1944; Pioneer Florida, Volume III, edited by D. B. McKay, Southern Publishing Co., 1959; New Zion Baptist Church Cemetery records; "Centennial Services First Bapt. Church", Oct. 3, 1976, Wauchula; Manatee & DeSoto Co. marriages; Manatee Co. Marks & Brands; 1860 Hills. Co. census; minutes of the annual