

MAY MARGARET HENDEE ECONOMY  
May 1, 1922 – October 21, 2014  
Introduction of May Margaret's Family Memories  
by Cynthia Ann Hendee Henry (her half-sister)  
May 2014



*May Margaret*

*Note photo of her sister, Eleanor.  
Denver 1945*

*photo of her then-husband, Gus, on bureau  
Denver 1943*

This is a collection of memories that May Margaret Hendee Economy wrote of her father, his siblings, and their parents. May Margaret is my half-sister, so these are also my relatives. They include:

- Our father, Frank Chester Hendee
- His parents, Frank Clark Hendee and Jennie Florence Seitz Hendee
- Our aunts and uncles
  - Aunt Vera
  - Uncle Harold
  - Aunt Mary
  - Aunt Ena



*May Margaret 1949*

In February 1997, May Margaret came to my house in Manteca, California for a visit of three days and stayed for two weeks. She decided to document her memories of our relatives, which was a wonderful project! During this time, I went to work while she stayed in my back game/computer/family history room writing in longhand at the round game table. While May Margaret could type, having done secretarial work for Daddy, she did not take to the computer. So, when I returned home each day, our evenings were spent with cups of tea, much laughter and endless word processing focusing on her revisions during that day. When I read of the laughter that she and Aunt Vera had shared, I fondly recall my fun time with May Margaret and her memory stories. While transferring this document to my current computer, I added the photos from my files.

For inspiration, May Margaret took down from my study wall a photo of the relative she was currently working on, propping it by her at the game table. She then traded pictures for the next account.

I do wish May Margaret had included any memories she had of our great grandfather, George Washington Seitz. Grandpa Seitz was a fifer in the Civil War and lived to the elderly age of 103½, dying in 1945. He held me on his lap when I was an infant, shown in a four-generation photo (*See page 26.*). So, May Margaret must have known him a little bit, she being 23 when he died. But, perhaps she did not get out to Los Angeles often enough to know him that well. I do not recall asking her if she could write a memory of him. No mention of his Civil War service from a personal angle was ever discussed in our family, so I don't know if Mother and Daddy knew how he felt about the war or any of the history during his long life. He was 23 when Abraham Lincoln was assassinated, so, along with that momentous event, slavery during his early lifetime, the ending of that institution, and this entire historic time and onward, George Washington Seitz was a living treasure trove of history. His own father, Daniel Seitz (*photo on page 31*), was born in 1791 when George Washington was president, so who knows what stories George could have shared. There are many newspaper articles in our family records about his Civil War service, and I believe his daughter, Jennie (Grandma Hendee), was quite proud of him. The lament of all family historians—thinking too late to ask questions of and about our ancestors...

As you read May Margaret's memories, keep in mind that all recollections are those of the teller and that we all see each family member from our own viewpoint and from memories perhaps long distant, as well as from one's own place in the family structure---an issue we discuss in my genealogy class. So, reading May Margaret's memories of people I knew, me being 22 years younger than she, was very interesting. She knew them when they were much younger than when I came along, and she had more frequent contact with some. I loved how she laughed with Aunt Vera! It was also poignant that May Margaret mentioned the loss of Vera and William's son, Billy. I do not recall ever knowing of him, though I may have. At any rate, May Margaret's comment, "Any parent having lost a child can understand" was made through the heartache of her own loss of her daughter, Diane. It was also strange to hear May Margaret refer to Vera's husband as "Bill," as I only recall him as "William." (Actually, I think Daddy called him "Bill.")

These memories also provide an unusual part of May Margaret's life, her venture into the Jehovah's Witness faith. I was vaguely aware of this, and it would come up now and then when I was with her over the years. But, these writings took me a little deeper inside her thoughts and actions. It was interesting to me that the issue apparently brought her some anxiety and some complications in family relationships.



*May Margaret dressed for a Halloween party 1989*



What little I know about my paternal family's involvement with the Jehovah's Witness faith is that our grandmother, Jennie Florence Seitz Hendee, and four of her five children followed this religion. I am not sure when they began, but it was a decision on Grandma Hendee's part once she was an adult. When I visited Cousin Virginia in January 2010, I asked her when Grandma Hendee found this path so important to her life. I do not recall that Virginia was too specific, but, perhaps it was in the 1930s. Jennie's husband, Frank Clark Hendee (May Margaret's and my grandfather), did not subscribe to this faith, nor did May Margaret's and my father, Frank Chester Hendee.

*May Margaret at Cake Arrowhead, California 1992  
(her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday party and reunion that she organized)*

Grandma Hendee's four other children, who were extremely devout members, were Aunt Vera, Aunt Mary, Aunt Ena and Uncle Harold. Their spouses were also JW members, as is Harold and Ethel's only child and my only first cousin, Virginia. (The reader can become better acquainted with Virginia, and see her drawing of her father, in my write-up "My Visit to Fairbury, Nebraska.") Their faith was the predominant focus in their lives, and remains so to Virginia and husband Joe, who are still alive as I write this. I had an absolutely delightful visit with Virginia and Joe, as noted in my Fairbury account. (They live in nearby Beatrice.) They were charming and fun hosts, serving a wonderful lunch, sharing

Virginia's marvelous art work with Cousin Susan (of our Wood line) and me, and taking me to visit their Kingdom Hall, which I was glad to share with them. The visit was a joy! I had only seen Virginia two other times. (I do not think I met her when my family visited Aunt Ethel and Uncle Harold in Lincoln when I was about 5. Virginia is 14 years older than I, and I believe not then still in the home.) I met Virginia and Joe at their wedding and saw Virginia and her two kids, Jodie and Jon, when Mike and I passed through Lincoln in 1972. So, I was thrilled to get in this very special time with my only cousin in 2012! (Jodie and Jon are both married and will not be having any children. Daddy is the only one from Jennie and Frank to carry on this Hendee line.)

I am so glad that May Margaret and I had this delightful time together. During those two weeks, we did other things, as well, including attending an already-scheduled play in Columbia with friends ("Forever Plaid"); we toured around that restored gold mining town. Being February, the trip through the foothills was beautiful---so green and with the gorgeous white almonds in full bloom! On the way back, we stopped at Knight's Ferry to walk through the covered bridge, the longest in California. We visited Bill's daughter and family in Kensington in the Bay Area. (Bill Ohs is the second husband of Nancy, May Margaret's sister, and my half-sister.) May Margaret also went into San Francisco twice by herself, taking a tour of Chinatown, and once with me; this included Alcatraz, Lombard Street, Coit Tower and a Chinese dinner.

May Margaret made a wonderful contribution to our family history with writing up her memories of our relatives and also letting us learn more about herself!



*May Margaret Albuquerque 2007*



*These three pictures show Cynthia Ann Hendee Henry (at computer) with her half-sister, May Margaret Hendee Economy, in February 1997. May Margaret is using photos of our relatives to write her memories of each. Cynthia entered the stories in the computer and made revisions that May Margaret worked on each day during her two-week stay at Cynthia's. The photo she is holding to the left is the 1918 one of our father, his siblings, and their parents. (See page 26.).*

## GRANDPA HENDEE

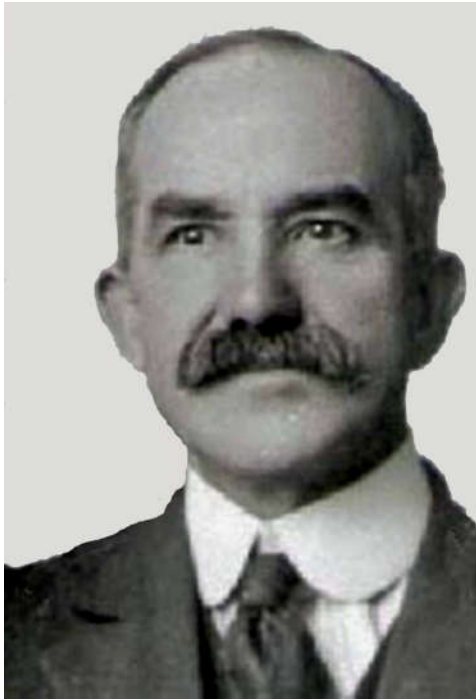
Frank Clark Hendee

3/11/1861 – 12/29/1940

by

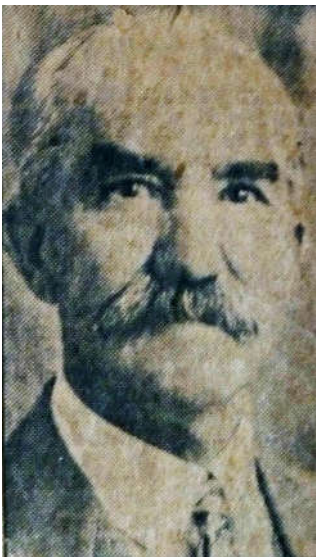
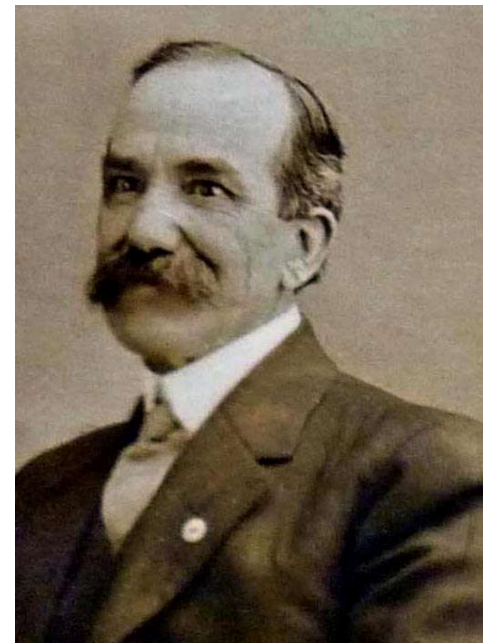
May Margaret Hendee Economy, his granddaughter

February 1997



What about Grandpa Hendee? Yes, what about him? It appears that he married Jennie, but she did not "marry" him. Emotionally, and in other ways, she apparently never made a close bond with him. He seems to be a shadowy figure--somewhere in the wings--never on center stage. People, to my recollection, did not talk much about him, neither to praise nor to blame. A photograph shows that I was part of a family celebration in Lincoln on his and Jennie's 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. The year was 1937. At age 15, my memory did not grasp him clearly. Perhaps he did not make any move to attract attention to himself or to speak his mind clearly.

As he is pictured in the family photograph of 1918, at age 57, he is a very nice looking man. He looks a bit tenuous. The expression in his eyes suggests he did not clearly connect with the environment around him. (Better not to connect and then feel non-consequential?) On my four lengthy visits to Lincoln, I don't ever recall seeing him. Explanation was given that he was always on the road as a salesman. He sold small coin purses and magazine subscriptions from door-to-door---a hard and lonely path, don't you think? My impression is that he loyally did what he had to and kept out of the way. He seemed a peripheral family member. I never heard in what part of the country he was working, how his health was, nor how his income helped or did not help.



My clearest memory of him is in Denver. I recall him stretched out on our couch in the living room of an afternoon. There he would rest from his day's selling work. Did he talk or visit with anyone? I don't know; now I wish I had sat down to visit with this lonely man---asked how his day went---shared some of my own experiences with him. In 1931, at age 9, this did not occur to me. As a matter of fact, no one suggested this to me.

In his younger years, before moving to Nebraska, he taught school in Illinois. He did not embrace the Jehovah's Witness religion. Hence, he was outside the family's mainstream of consuming dedication to the study and practice of their faith.

*Picture used in obituary*

When Jennie moved to Los Angeles to live with and nurse her father, George Washington Seitz, Frank finally joined her. Cynthia has a letter written by him, which will be part of the Family History Book each family member received, so perhaps we shall learn a bit more of his thoughts and feelings.

There is a sweetness and also sadness about this man. He seems a gentle phantom. He died in 1940 age 79. Perhaps he is at peace now.

## JENNIE FLORENCE SEITZ HENDEE

4/9/1866 – 4/23/1962

by

May Margaret Economy Hendee

her granddaughter

February 1997



1871

Our "Grandma Hendee" had an indelible personality. Whether I was in conversation with her or not, her presence was always in my awareness.

My earliest recollection of her goes back to 1936 to my first summer visit in Lincoln, Nebraska from my beloved Denver. Lincoln was hot, and Nebraska was flat. Those Colorado mountains seemed a world away. Yet, I did enjoy the three summer visits (plus one over an icy Christmas vacation). It seemed that after my parents' divorce, Daddy wanted Nancy and me to become better acquainted with his Lincoln family--hence, closer to him.

My aunts and uncles were loving and embraced us with open hearts. Grandma, however, did not spend much time with us. She was usually occupied with her two passions--first, her religion, Jehovah's Witnesses (known to them as "The Truth"). A secondary passion was exploring the family genealogy. With pride, she proclaimed that the French Hendee family could be traced back to that famous Frenchman, William the Conqueror. (Once I boasted of this to a friend. Then came a quick retort, "Two million other people can make the same claim!" That ended my bragging re William.)

Grandma also spent some time making very lovely beaded necklaces. I have a rather elaborate set with bright blue "stones." So, Grandma had an artistic side.

Grandma's conversations with Witness friends were always on matters of faith and scriptures, as well as the evils of smoking. Herein, the Witnesses were ahead of the times. Upon reflecting now, I don't recall her speaking of Frank, her husband. He was always gone to places selling coin purses or magazine subscriptions. Nor, do I recall her discussing any of her children (not even her favorite, the indomitable Chet). It was Aunt Vera who gave accounts of her siblings. She told great stories, sparked with humor.

My sister, Nancy, wrote a note to the family following Grandma's death in 1962. She commented on Grandma's good fortune in being able to devote her life to her two principal interests---mainly her faith and her genealogy. That is rather rare, isn't it? I don't think she was ever bored. Life seemed to be an adventure to her.

I first learned of the "J.W." religion from my mother, Renna. While she did not dwell on her opinions (adverse), she related that Mary (Chet's sister) told of Grandma's singling out a lovely home in Lincoln that she asserted would one day be hers. This would be after the fiery end of the world by Armageddon. It would annihilate all persons not of the Jehovah's Witness faith. Thus, Grandma would get her chosen house, it seems. (The conversation between Mary and Renna took place circa 1917.)

Regarding transmission of property received, this plan was amended, however. As scripture tells us, "The light grows brighter unto the perfect day." The big shift came with focus on a chapter in Revelation stating that 144,000 of the chosen would reign with Christ in Heaven, ruling the paradise set up on earth (after Armageddon, that is). If all this is to pass, Grandma and three of her children will be part of the reigning group. Ena will reside on the earthly Paradise. The renegade Chet--along with most of the rest of us--will be history, it seems.

I go into this much detail about the Jehovah's Witness religion, as it plays a consuming and central role in lives of the devotees who were family members. For me to "extricate" myself of this religion was an extended experience of great anguish and conflict. The transition left something of a void in my life.

--Back to Grandma--

My mother, Renna, had the common lack of affinity a woman often has toward a mother-in-law. This attitude was hardly ameliorated when Grandma would visit. Chet would have his mother ride beside him in the front seat while Renna rode, simmering, in the back. As usual, compliant Renna did not assert herself. I can just imagine Grandma assuming the arrangement to be perfectly appropriate.



*The picture above was taken of Jennie in 1881 at age 15. Note her long hair coming over her shoulder. The handwriting is Jennie's; it is always good to have handwriting samples of our ancestors.*

Jennie Florence Seitz and Frank Clark Hendee were married in 1887. She was 21 and he 26. One might say that he married her, but she did not "marry" him. It appeared that Frank played a secondary role in her scheme of things all their lives. Their marriage may have been fated from the time the vows were given, for Jennie had become headstrong and self-surviving, being doted on all her life as the sole daughter of George and Mary. There is a proverb which states "too much is as bad as too little." That critical balance of love and discipline can be elusive for parents.

Consider the world into which she was born in 1866 in Darke County, Ohio. Her father, George Washington Seitz, served as a fifer in the Civil War (Union side). George's grandfather (Lewis Seitz) lived during the American Revolution, and his father was born while George Washington was president. Jennie was born just one year to the day after the Battle of Appomattox and Lee's surrender and a year to the month after Lincoln was assassinated. In pre-Civil War days, we know that slavery still existed across the Ohio River from Jennie's birth state of Ohio. The industrious white farmers in Ohio presented a stark difference, both in labor effort and also in spirit, compared to the burdened work of the enslaved black people across the river.

Her great grandfather was (Elder) Lewis (or Ludwig) Seitz, Sr., born in Saxony, Germany in 1763 and arriving in America with his father, Johannes, and his mother, Catherine Diehl Seitz, possibly in 1764.

Now it is time to recognize George's father, and Jennie's grandfather, Daniel Seitz (*photo page 31*). Counting all of Daniel's 19 children (born by his two wives), George was number 16 of 19. We know George's genes were sturdy, as he lived to age 103½ until 1945; and his daughter, Jennie Florence Seitz Hendee, lived to be 96. Each of these ancestors lived to an older age than did any of their children, maybe because they dwelt in a simpler and less stressed world.

Returning to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and Daniel Seitz, we find that his first wife died at age 39, eight months after her eleventh child. Maybe she was worn out, poor thing.

During Revolutionary War times, and thereafter, women's average life span was about 35 years. Death from childbirth was very common. Daniel Seitz waited about one year to remarry after his first wife's death. In those times, there was an urgency to remarry with the loss of a spouse. On the one hand, the men needed a woman to tend the children, make the soap, and spin the wool. On the other hand, widowed women needed a man to plow, harvest and hunt.

Daniel's second wife, Catherine Beery, was his second cousin, one generation removed. Catherine's great, great grandfather and Daniel's grandfather were brothers (Abraham and Nicholas Beery) with both coming here from Switzerland. *(It is contested/doubted if Abraham actually is a direct ancestor. Cynthia Hendee Henry)*



1918

Turning again to a woman's lot in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, we find the role of women was bound to home and family. An unmarried woman faced a lonely and grim life, living on the charity of relatives. For entertainment, women held quilting bees and gatherings at barn- and house-raising, Family members entertained themselves during their limited leisure time. Most Americans were rather isolated on their farms. Many spent considerable time writing lengthy letters, often with a flourish and flair characteristic of the times. Once families pushed on to the beckoning frontier with promise of free farm land, they might never again see their relatives "back home." Farewells must have been poignant. Isolation and dependence of our farmer relatives on family members may have led to very strong bonding.

More about Jennie---her life spanned an extended 96 years, marked by technological and radical changes. She was born a year following the Civil War and lived through the Spanish-American War, the two World Wars, and the Korean War, dying in 1962.



When she traveled as a child, people rode horses or may have been sufficiently fortunate to have a horse-drawn buggy. Winter weather called for hot bricks to be put on the floor of the buggy to warm their feet. Blankets covered the lap and hung to the floor, holding in the warmth.

Grandma was usually preoccupied with her priorities and so was commonly "unpunctual." On one occasion when she had to catch a train, she realized she would be late. Rising to the reality of the occasion, she phoned the station and with regal persuasiveness, prevailed upon the station master to hold the train for her! What a woman!



If a woman of Jennie's time gained rights or dominance over a man, it was through the power of a tenacious personality. Jennie was a clear example. As with the riding arrangement of Chet and Renna, Jennie presumed whatever she willed to do would gain unquestioned acceptance. For example, Cynthia, at age 15 (1960), visited a California beach with her parents and sister, Linda. They put on their swim suits--then were totally

embarrassed to find their 94-year old grandma nonchalantly joining them, also presenting herself in a black swimsuit with her unadorned, aged figure. (Can you envision this?) Well, I'm sure Grandma enjoyed herself. Actually, some might envy her unflinching self-acceptance.

Cynthia said that in her growing years, there would be no Christmas presents from the Lincoln and California relatives. The Jehovah's Witnesses view Christmas as chronologically and scripturally wrong. It was not until she was an adult that Cynthia realized that she also was not acknowledged with birthday gifts, as the faith does not celebrate that occasion either. And so it was with the rest of the grandchildren.

One also might note that Grandma lived on the edge of poverty, really. Sales of coin purses and magazine subscriptions were not very profitable in those Depression years. Grandpa could not send home more than meager sums of money. He was a loyal and steady soldier, providing for his family as best he could on his lonely path.

In 1937, Jennie and Frank had been married 50 years. A celebration was planned. My father put the family in the car and embarked on the 500-mile trek from Denver to Lincoln. Traffic was very light, which was fortunate, as the highway had but two lanes. I think the car sped along at 30 miles an hour across the flat prairies. At first day's end, we reached North Platte, Nebraska.

In the dark of the night we cruised residential streets, assessing houses with window signs announcing "Rooms for rent." Finding an acceptable Victorian house, in we went and were bedded down--strangers among strangers. Oh yes, our "hosts" were very pleasant. Why didn't we go to a motel? Never heard of one--it was not until about the 1950s that motels sprouted up.

It was on this trip to Lincoln that I had the only meal I can remember in a restaurant with my father. I was so self-conscious when the "authoritarian" waitress took my order. Chet, of course, handled himself with aplomb.

Among your pictures, you should have one of the 50<sup>th</sup> reunion gathering in my grandparents' pleasant yard. The youngest person there was little 5-year-old Nancy, looking pert and cute. (*See page 27.*)



1944

As we consider Jennie's life--and our other ancestors, as well, we can easily lapse into the "critical eye of hindsight." The accounts of Jennie's life described herein do give examples of "strength and courage and perseverance." Because I actually knew her in a very limited way, I regret that this presentation is also necessarily limited.

As with us all, Jennie did the best she could with what life gave to her. I hope she is at peace and that love attends her.



AUNT VERA  
 Vera Lucile Hendee Roth  
 7/27/1888 – 4/1980  
 by  
 May Margaret Hendee Economy  
 her niece  
 February 1997



1894

The two of us--Aunt Vera and I--would spend much time in conversation while sitting at her white kitchen table. We talked of many things--rather, she did most of the talking; my part was to ask questions and to listen. There we were--the 15-year-old girl and the 50-year-old woman. She was my chief guide to the family's past. What I wanted most was to learn more about my father, Chet.

Vera lived with her husband Bill, in a modest frame house in Lincoln, Nebraska. Our acquaintance and love grew over three extended summer visits and one Christmas holiday. It was in 1937 when first Daddy offered to send my little sister, Nancy, and me to visit his branch of the family. She was 4, and I was 14. In Denver, we boarded the Union Pacific train for the long ride across 500 miles of prairie to Lincoln. At that time, it took about 10 hours. Mealtimes were welcome interludes. We were glad to eat the boxed lunches which our mother prepared--sandwiches, cookies, and fruit. Meals in the train's dining room were well beyond our modest budget. Still, the journey was sometimes tedious and lonesome.

To pass time, I read to Nancy and also wove squares for a green afghan on my small loom. I still have it, which brings back memories of our train trip. Once we reached the Lincoln depot, we received our grand reward: an enthusiastic welcome of warmth and affection. We felt so important!



*High school graduation at age 16 in 1905*

It was years later that I mused over Daddy's reasons for giving Nancy and me this opportunity to go to Lincoln. I came to believe that Daddy, still recovering from a painful divorce, probably hoped to facilitate building stronger ties between us and his family of origin, thus, indirectly, to himself. It worked and worked well.



*April 1894 Effingham, Illinois*

Despite Daddy's desire for closer family ties, he spoke little of his own feelings toward different family members. He always found it easier to talk about things, such as mountain adventures, rather than about relationships. In sharp contrast, Vera was a fluent and willing communicator of matters concerning the family. She was perceptive and of gentle nature. We laughed a lot together. With our talks, heart met heart.

Aunt Vera was the oldest of Daddy's five siblings. I can clearly recollect her face, framed with graying hair that was turning a soft white. Her deep chocolate brown eyes would dance with merriment when she was amused, which was frequent in our times together. We laughed a lot.

Always I will remember another of Vera's stories. It concerned a most unusual birthing. In 1901 when Vera was only 13, Jennie, her mother, was pregnant with her fourth child (Harold). She assigned young Vera the role of midwife. The time came for preparations to be made for the birth. A deep bowl of water was set on the floor. When labor pangs gave notice that the final phase was started, Jennie squatted over the bowl. Because Jennie's focus was on the progress of her birthing ordeal, she failed to notice Vera had made a serious mistake. Instead of standing in front of Jennie, she was behind her, readying herself to catch the babe as it emerged. With Jennie's focus on her preoccupation, she failed to notice where Vera was. Then, it happened! Out came tiny Harold and down he splashed into the bowl of water! Startled and surprised, Vera was able to race around Jennie and swooped the newborn from the bowl. Thereafter, all turned out well, for baby Harold lived a long and healthy life.



Vera's parents were both school teachers for a few years. (In their day, a college education was not a prerequisite to teaching.) From them, Vera acquired an appetite for learning. She excelled in English composition. Often she wrote a paper just before the "due date" and still came away with high marks. The excitement of learning for its own sake enlivened Vera all her years. She did use words very well, whether spoken or written.

She had a serious handicap: chronic low energy, which held her back from living a fuller life. During World War I, she was among the millions across the globe who were made severely ill by an influenza epidemic that usually led to death. Apparently, she never fully recovered her health. She then appeared to contentedly sit on the sidelines, letting life happen to her. Her mother, Jennie, a strong-willed woman, may have further hampered her development of sturdy confidence and appropriate assertiveness. Whatever factors molded her personality, she was more of a keen observer of life than an active shaper of events.



1918



*William Roth and Vera Hendee Roth 1940 Colorado*

She married laconic William Roth of Russian-German descent; if he said "Hello," he had said his piece. The two seemed a good fit: one talkative and one taciturn. For several years, they traveled in the United States as "pioneers" (missionaries with a small stipend of \$20 per month) of the Jehovah's Witness religion. This was a bold choice of faith. Essentially, they lived off donations of money, food, and clothing of fellow Witnesses. When their sense of mission was fulfilled, returning to Lincoln, Bill earned a modest income as a handyman. He was a diligent worker. How could he be otherwise? He was German, after all.

Bill and Vera had one child, Billy, who died in infancy. This loss was the sorrow of her life. Any parent having lost a child can understand.

Her devotion to her faith was the centerpiece of her life. She was confident that after Armageddon, she would be one of the 144,000 Witnesses chosen to reign with Christ over paradise reborn on earth. (Reference the book of Revelation.) Such faith was the lens through which she perceived the world.

I remember her with fondness.



*1948*

MARY LU HENDEE HUZZEY  
 January 14, 1893 – December 17, 1957  
 by  
 May Margaret Hendee Economy  
 her niece  
 February 1997



*April 1894*

My main contact with Mary was in 1940. Following a Jehovah's Witness convention in Detroit, Ena and I traveled with Mary and her husband, Clarence, through Illinois as we made our way back to Lincoln. In whatever circle she might be, she was given a warm welcome and a respected place. She loved people and was loved in return.

Mary had quiet dignity and poise. Integrity marked the way she approached life. Her temperament was always even and unruffled.

Although childless, she always kept a box of toys in her house to occupy a little visitor who might come to call with his parents. Here is an example of her thoughtfulness, even for small persons.



*Mary Lu Hendee Huzzey and husband, Clarence Huzzey*

If there is a heroine in the family, it is Mary. Perhaps due to her better health, she naturally moved into Vera's place and played the role of the oldest of the siblings---stalwart, responsible and caring---a person her family could always count on if help were needed. In the now-famous family photograph of 1918 (*page 26*). Mary symbolically stands tall and straight. She conveys a sober strength and purposefulness.

At Jennie's funeral in 1962, the family accepted the inevitable passing of the frail matriarch of 96 years of age. But, it was Harold's wife, Ethel, who observed that Mary's death in 1958 affected the family so differently and brought great sadness. The family lost a cherished and revered member. She was the strong one, the wise one—something of a steady loving mother-figure to all siblings. Deep grieving cast its pall over bereaved and sorrow-weighted hearts.



*1918*

After Great-grandpa Seitz died, Mary and Clarence moved to stay with Jennie in Los Angeles. So, they, too, benefitted from Chet's largess as the provider of comfortable housing.

Mary died in 1958 of a heart condition. She was 64. I wish I could have known this lovely and stalwart woman better.

"CHET"  
 Frank Chester Hendee  
 1/3/1896 – 2/16/1974  
 by  
 May Margaret Hendee Economy  
 his daughter  
 February 1997

Here he comes! You could recognize him even from a distance---so purposeful his stride--head held high--and shoulders squared atop his strong, straight back. He presented himself with an air mindful of self-worth. "I'm Frank Chester Hendee--call me 'Chet,'" he would say when being introduced. His arm reached out to give a firm handshake to match his open smile. Think of the impact such a meeting had, and Chet knew this advantage.

He exuded energy, and his confidence and vitality served him well at certain turning points in his life. His sturdy self-esteem developed early and almost inevitably, for he was his mother's older son, and, as his sister Vera claimed, Jennie's favorite child.

Today he would have been called "proactive," for his unswerving focus was to arrange his world to suit personal preferences and goals and to win the prizes of status, prestige and income. Of his parents' five children, he alone bolted the confines of family and religion, Jehovah's Witnesses, bespeaking an independence of mind and will.



1918

Early on, he had the capability and verve to personally forge a profitable economic niche for himself in the business world. With no one on the sidelines encouraging him on, essentially, he was author and architect of his success.

When the United States was moving toward joining World War I, Chet chose to take a job in Washington, D.C. as an accountant. His bride, Renna, asserted that his work on a railroad placed him outside the reach of the draft. By 1917, at the age of 21, he was married and the father of a son, Haynes, living hundreds of miles from Lincoln.

Here are a few words about Renna, Chet's first wife. Her widowed mother had to raise five children on \$40 a month. Even for the turn of the century, that was difficult. This mother was also quite stern, which seemed to cause Renna to doubt her own esteem. She became somewhat non-assertive, which later led to relationship problems with Chet. When growing up in her small Nebraska town, she regularly was chosen to sing the national anthem on July 4. Her voice was lovely. Her family held that German cultural trait of highly valuing education. Renna found satisfaction growing up as a "superior" student. She came within less than 1% of earning a university scholarship. In a time when few women went to college, Renna graduated from Nebraska Wesleyan University. Trained as a teacher (as were most "educated" women of her time), Renna taught only briefly in a country school (where she was also janitor). She did not have the aptitude for teaching, however.

After her marriage, she did not work. (When I grew up, I knew no housewife who did.) She took time to play different card games with us kids on long summer vacation days. Sometimes when ironing, she'd tell us of the vagaries of British and French royalty. She loved reading about them.

In 1934, when I was 12 and Nancy 2, Renna took a bold step. In the depths of the Great Depression, she decided she had to end the trauma of marriage and get a divorce. There was no job to go to. Chet tried to talk her out of it, but she had closed the chapter finally,

With the advent of World War II, many housewives took the opportunity to become "gainfully" employed. Renna got a clerical job at Lowry Air Base in Denver. She loved working and was always surprised when 4 o'clock came "so soon."

Renna had a sterling quality of valuing fairness in treatment of others. She also had grace and style to enhance her natural beauty. Most importantly, she had a good heart. Gus, my husband, called her a "saint." All I know for sure is that I loved her and love her still.

With the ending of the war, Chet's adventuresome spirit prompted him to personally survey many parts of the country so that he could choose to relocate self and family where his preferences could best be met. All things considered, Denver was his choice. Its seasonal weather was benign in contrast to the extremes of Nebraska. Very likely, he was most impressed by the majesty and beauty of the Rocky Mountains. So, in 1920, he found a small duplex at 805 South Logan Street where the family moved.

For the remainder of his life, the Rockies were the center of Chet's varied recreational pursuits. He loved the Mountain Club. He hiked to the summit of most peaks over 14,000', hunted elk and deer every year, and owned a partnership in a dude ranch—9,000' up in the mountains above Alamosa. For many years, each October he and his ranch partner, Bill, earned a handsome sum as guides to hunters from Texas searching for deer and elk. The mountains above the ranch were prime hunting grounds.

To keep himself in good physical shape, he joined the YMCA. There he went regularly to play handball. In later years, he also often walked from his home in southeast Denver downtown to his office building—a distance of approximately 10 miles. These activities evince his discipline and commitment to physical well-being.

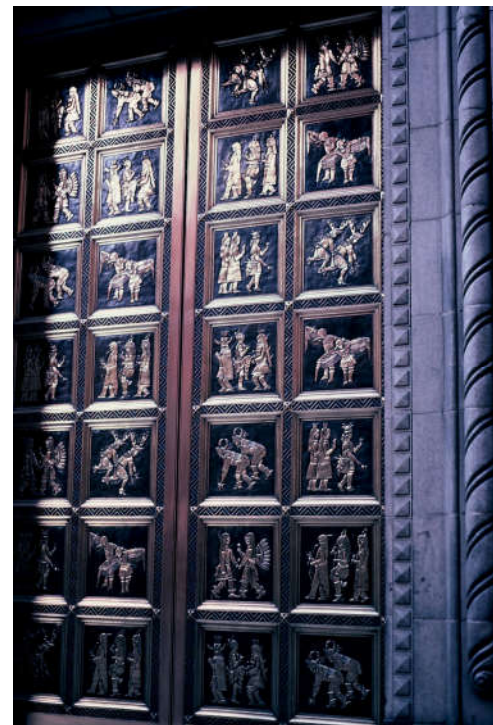
To find work as an accountant in Denver, he launched a personal drive, knocking on office doors to market himself. This brought him a partnership with a Certified Public Accountant (C.P.A.) having a well-established clientele, including the Brown Palace Hotel.

With the demise of the senior partner some years later, Chet became an entrepreneur, supervising several part-time employees including his daughter, Eleanor, who he said, was a very "accurate" worker. The tall Denver National Bank Building on 17<sup>th</sup> and Champa, where his office was located, seemed a world of mystery and prestige to May Margaret. As a small girl, she loved to cross the entry of marble floors, ride the elevator to his office on the sixth floor, then survey the street below.



*Entry to office of Frank Chester Hendee at 17<sup>th</sup> and Champa in downtown Denver--wonderful bronze door*

*This is the Ideal Cement Building/Denver National Bank Building, a historic landmark (photo by Cynthia in June 1982)*



Chet did well as a C.P.A, even during the Great Depression. Frequently, he would travel to outlying eastern Colorado towns to audit their city books. Doors seemed to open readily to his expertise. While he always had a good income---in bad times as well as good---his goal to be affluent often led him to invest in such ventures as non-productive gold mines or an oil well that could not be accessed. Still, he earned a decent living all through the Depression. His family was always housed, fed, and clothed, though their standard of living was austere. They never went out for a meal or even for dessert. Sometimes Renna took in roomers. For piano lessons for the children, she exchanged board and room with the teacher for a time.

Feeling completely self-sufficient, he apparently had no need for advice from others, including his wife. Hence, there was no reason to listen to her entreaties for a more appropriate balancing of his recreational time and his money in favor of the family. The family's financial status was often placed at risk, with Chet's drive to prosper overriding sound judgments regarding investments. Perhaps he felt drawn by the memories of a childhood that teetered on the edge of marginal security. Another factor was the marriage of his dominant mother to a docile husband. With all this, Chet was not known either to boast or to complain in May Margaret's memory.

His compliant wife, Renna, was no match for his determination to be the sole arbiter in these central areas of life. And so the slippery slope of alienation and frustration progressed beyond remediation. In 1934, after 17 years of marriage, Renna decided that, for her peace of mind and to provide a home that was less stressful for the children, she would pursue a divorce. The book closed. A relationship ended. Renna was no match for Chet. For his part, he did not want the divorce, but the die was cast.



Fortunately, time did important healing work. In 1942, Chet was ready to remarry, and his new wife was Laura Louise Moore. Doubtless, he must have gained in wisdom, but his stalwart determination to "have it his way" still asserted itself and also tripped him up. It was in the Colorado mountains that a significant event took place which I shall never forget. Involved were Chet and Laura Louise and also my new husband, Gus, and myself. Chet wanted to drive a car up a makeshift road on a steep mountain. He demanded loudly and repeatedly for Laura Louise to get in with him. She responded quietly and repeatedly, "No, I won't." From the sidelines, May Margaret nervously and silently implored Laura Louise to get in the car, or something "terrible" might happen. Perhaps Daddy might "explode," she feared. What finally happened? Chet drove the car up the mountain alone. A new and needful boundary was being forged. Daddy did not explode! Life did go on. Laura Louise was proving to be a match for Chet. His determination to "have it his way" was met with restraints.

*Chet and Laura Louise's wedding photo  
May 28, 1942*

From far away Nebraska, Aunt Vera observed to May Margaret that Chet's second wife was just like his first. Perhaps she also focused on education and their middle class values, such as commitment to family. A fuller picture would indicate significant personality differences. Laura Louise had a clear sense of her rightful boundaries and needs. She was alert to infringement upon them and before habit patterns could form, she could make a firm stand in her defense. We have seen this in the car incident.

She also knew how she wanted to arrange the structure of her life. She saw value in her having a job to give secure support to her needs and those of her daughters. With her Master's Degree in Education, she launched herself on a rewarding career in the Denver Public Schools, first as a junior high teacher and then as assistant principal. She found empowerment in having an independent income.

A married woman with a good income holds certain "aces." She gains an independence that brings empowerment to influence how the game is played. Hence, her marital status can be based on a higher degree of equality with her mate.

*Japanese Tea Garden  
San Francisco 1960*



When it came to making family investments, Laura Louise could put on the table her financial "ace": an educator's income. Also, she had a business acumen that helped Chet and her make productive investments.

Now comes a curious turn of events. A shift in Chet's political philosophy gradually correlated with his increasingly improved financial status. He became more conservative as he became more prosperous.

Let me give you some background in this matter. Years before his second marriage, when May Margaret was a young teenager, Chet took both her and her brother Haynes to hear speakers of a liberal political orientation. Several of these were made by the "Technocracy" movement advocates. The philosophy of this movement embodied economic issues. Before World War II, Chet took these children to America First meetings. This group protested the United States' movement toward war. He also went to several liberal speeches by a relative of Laura Louise's, perhaps a Mr. Holwell (*maybe my great uncle Raymond Holwell, R.V.—Cynthia*). In these years, Chet was something of an activist. At the same time, he joined the Masonic Lodge. Perhaps this was due in part to enhance business connections. Attending the speeches helped shape Haynes' and May Margaret's loyal alignment to the Democratic party. What a startling revelation it was for her to learn that in his later years, her father had become a Republican! Impossible! No, possible! Yes, possible. And what of Laura Louise? She remained the steadfast Democrat she had been all her life.

Among Chet and his siblings, differences in the family size each created presents interesting contrasts. One might ponder why of his parents' five children, Chet had the largest number of offspring. His brother, Harold, had one child, Virginia. The other three had raised none. Why this? The reason is that at that period the Jehovah's Witness's religion admonishes adherents to refrain from having children brought into this, the Devil's World. Armageddon was thought to come soon.

The Witnesses believed that with the imminent coming of Armageddon, whether this be in years promulgated: 1918, (World War I); 1942, (World War II), or sometime in the late 1990s. Expected is a violent and fiery ending of this world. Thereafter, paradise will be restored on earth. With the recreation of paradise, children could then safely be born. This is the precept that led most of Chet's siblings to be childless.

After fathering four children in his first marriage, Haynes, Eleanor, May Margaret, and Nancy, Chet fathered two girls in his second, Cynthia and Linda. (After being called "Sweetie" by her daddy for ten years, in 1932 May Margaret was dethroned by a new "Sweetie," her baby sister Nancy.)

With his second marriage, Chet gained a solid financial co-planner. As mentioned above, Laura Louise's business acumen helped them choose productive investments. Dear reader, you may recall one of his strong ambitions was to be financially successful. His political loyalties and leanings shifted as he made gains in material security. He then adopted increasingly conservative positions.

Together, Daddy and Laura Louise, given their combined incomes, were able to enjoy a life of many advantages---a lovely home in a quality neighborhood, send their daughters to good private colleges and take long summer trips as a family; their travels took them to various parts of the United States, across Canada, Mexico, and Alaska, and to Great Britain and elsewhere in Europe. After their daughters were grown and educated, they traveled to far corners of the globe.

My sister Nancy contributed the following comments about Laura Louise:

"My first recollection of Laura Louise was when I was about 8 or 9 and my father, Chet, took me to meet her in her apartment in Lakewood. She was a teacher at Lakewood High School and was very friendly to me---easy to relate with. They were probably going to go out that evening, and she was wearing stockings (probably silk, as nylon was very new). I was terribly impressed with Black Stockings. Anyway, she was nice to me and made me feel comfortable; I liked her. This was in the very early 1940s and, as you can tell, World War II was either going on or was imminent

In the ensuing years, she and Daddy were married and bought a home near our home; we could walk over to see them. When she had her first child, Cynthia, I also became a babysitter---one very inept babysitter I might add, for when Cynthia would cry and cry after her folks left, I didn't have the experience of caretaking babies, and finally I would just lie down and cry, too.

*In 1968, Chet went with Laura Louise to her birth area of Butler, Missouri. They visited the school near Adrian where the Holwell kids attended (Laura Louise's maternal family)*





Laura Louise took a hiatus from working while she raised her daughters. Linda followed a few years after Cynthia. But later Daddy developed pernicious anemia, and I guess because of his health, Laura Louise went back into teaching when Cynthia was in third grade, this time in the Denver Public Schools. When my first husband, Harry died, I went back to college to become a teacher, and I also joined the Denver schools---first Gove Junior High, then Smiley Junior High and later North High School. At each school, I would run into a few people who knew Mrs. Hendee, now an administrator at Merrill Junior High. When people who had taught at Merrill learned that my stepmother was Mrs. Hendee, they always spoke of her in most complimentary terms saying things like, "If it weren't for her, that school would never be as good as it is." Or, "I really like her." They always indicated their admiration for her effectiveness as an administrator and how helpful she was to the teaching staff. I knew these things were said in sincerity because the people making these remarks had nothing to lose if they had simply said, "Oh" when learning she and I were "related by marriage." Nor were they types who would try to impress me. I know this admiration stemmed from the fact that Laura Louise, unlike most administrators, did not barricade herself behind office walls nor assume the role of being an official of the school. Unlike many, she was right out there when passing bells sounded or before and after school. She was interacting with the kids in a pro-active way, far more than most administration staffs ever do. She even took over the role of acting principal when the real principal suddenly retired just before school started in the fall one year. She did not want that job, but she did it until a replacement was provided. The "downtown" office wanted her to remain as principal because of her skill and competence, but she declined.



She drove kids to their homes when they couldn't be tolerated at school. She interacted with them. After court-ordered racial integration, she even organized a girls' drill team, she and Chet going to drill team meets on weekends. *(Once, they took them to a mountain town to interact with another team. These were black girls. Many had never been to the mountains. Some were fearful, as Berthoud Pass did not have street lights. Laura Louise kept them all secure.---M.M.)*

The kids respected her. The teaching staff respected her. And her peers respected her. This was a devoted and determined, can-do public school teacher and later assistant principal. She might be intimidating to some, but I know numerous people who like and admire her, and I am one of them.

*Chet and Laura Louise in Australia 1971*

Later she joined the Unitarian Universalist church at the behest of a friend who also wanted her to become a member of the church's very scholarly women's book and study group, Opsimath. Well, she was one very popular member of that group and contributed regularly. *(In fact, Nancy has to call her far in advance to arrange a social event, as Laura Louise has so many engagements. M.M.)*

After a bout with cancer and some very troubling side effects, she sighed at her seventieth birthday party, which doubled as a Hendee family reunion, that she probably wouldn't be alive when it was suggested that we do it again in 10 years. Well, it is 1997, Laura Louise is 81, and after some vicious health problems, she is doing pretty well. She is active, very much the alert woman she always was and looking good *(and stylish-M.M.)*. She is a tough lady. But don't try to put anything past her. She really can dole out a vocal "what for."

--- Nancy Hendee Wilson (Ohs)

Now back to May Margaret:

As Laura Louise's middle stepdaughter, I will always be grateful for several things she did; it is important to me to acknowledge Laura Louise's generosity and openness of heart. Firstly, she invited me to spend at her home my first week after being dismissed from the hospital after Kathleen's birth. My own mother was working then. Also, she arranged family dinners for Chet's first family, along with Chet and herself and Cynthia and Linda. This hospitality and friendship opened the way for an ongoing relationship with her and the daughters and a continuing one with my father. It was because of Laura Louise's magnanimous nature and what her heart told her to do as the right thing. These were truly loving acts. Heartfelt thanks, Laura Louise.

Laura Louise made her career through education. She completed her Master's degree and wanted to teach a year or so prior to marrying Chet. She supervised student teachers when she, herself, was barely out of school. Her years were spent in the junior high setting, moving from Byers Junior High in Denver to be part of the opening staff of Merrill Junior High where she taught English until 1958. In fact, it was while the family was in Los Angeles at Mary's funeral that Laura Louise received the call at Jennie's house asking that she take the position of Coordinator of Instruction. This position later became that of Assistant Principal (in charge of curriculum), which she held, along with periodic Acting Principal, until her retirement in 1982.

In the opening chapters of his life, Chet appeared to live by a script that the people were there--or should be--to meet his chosen (and self-seeking) goals. At mid-life, with a very different relationship in his second marriage, he may have had a dawning of a new and more mature awareness; his emotion-backed demands could bring a high cost, thus out-balancing any payoff he had come to expect. Apparently, his inner perceptions shifted from a polarity that involved too much of self toward Aristotle's "Golden Mean," that embraced more sensitivity for the primary persons in his life. Hence, he moved toward greater balance and sensitivity, it seems. In later years, when I spoke with him privately, he seemed more at peace with himself. Fortune had smiled on him; he smiled back.

Mention should be made of a generous act by Chet and Laura Louise. His mother, Jennie, lived with her father, George Washington Seitz, in his Los Angeles home. When he died in 1945, Chet bought out relatives who would inherit a portion of the residence. Thus, his mother could remain living there. Jennie told Laura Louise that God answered her prayers to be able to continue living this home. Laura Louise answered, "Yes, and his name is Chet." One might observe that he regained his investment when Jennie Hendee died. While not maybe true, Chet and Laura Louise could have decided to make an alternative investment having a greater potential profit.

Perhaps the last time May Margaret saw her father was in 1973 when he was about 77. She stepped into his backyard. There he was tending the garden. He turned his head when she called, welcoming her with a warm smile. Her spirit quickened in response. The bond which had formed in her tender years whispered, "Yes, I'm happy to see you, for I love you."

He left various indelible imprints on May Margaret's mind. May I list several of these? When May Margaret was about 12, he spread out the editorial page of The Denver Post before her. Then he declared, "This is the most important part of the newspaper!" Treasures my father gave me:

Adventuresomeness: He always wanted to know what was on the other side of the hill.

Humor: Chet often had a delightful playfulness with May Margaret when she was a young child.

Love of nature: When May Margaret was small, Chet would make up nature stories involving, for example, a little trout searching for food in a mountain brook. When she traveled to the ranch with him, he would point out scenes of beauty that enhanced the trip for both of them. May Margaret loved them.

Intellectual curiosity: Shown by the newspaper incident, for example, and subscribing to the *National Geographic*, among other things.

Social concerns: Attending political meetings to listen to addresses of specific societal problems, including halting the unfolding movement toward World War II.

Altogether these interests and activities served to enrich his life and his responsiveness to its opportunities and challenges. His children then developed increased awareness in these areas and were likewise enriched.

After the visit when he was gardening, I did not see him alive again. Fresh in mind is the viewing of his body at the mortuary, impeccably dressed in a brown suit. Some family members took me to view his body, and I recall so clearly how Laura Louise patted him several times all over his chest. In telling Haynes' wife, Edi about this, she said, "Why she really loved him." Yes, and definitely he loved her, as well. Life brought good to both him and her.

Thank you for your gifts, Daddy, I love you.

May Margaret

FRANK CHESTER HENDEE

1/3/1896 ~ 2/16/1974



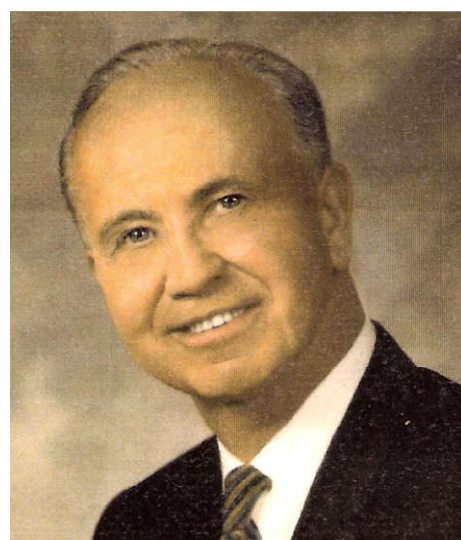
1910



1914



1942



1970

## HAROLD HARLOW HENDEE

11/6/1901 – 2/14/1981

by

May Margaret Hendee Economy

his niece

February 1997

Harold Harlow Hendee presents a wistful countenance to the world in a 1910 photograph. His large brown eyes have a questioning look, as if asking someone whether he is OK. He wears a dark double-breasted jacket with an elaborate Chinese-knot button hole. There is a wide fur collar that comes up to his chin line, giving a note of luxury to his attire. His coat suggests a child of affluence. Therein must be an unknown story. His expression seems to ask, "What do you want of me? If you tell me, I will do it, of course." Chet, his older brother by five years, looks confidently out at the world, ready to answer with aplomb any question that comes his way. Chet appears to be a very capable and caring older brother to Harold.



*Harold Harlow Hendee (l.) and Frank Chester Hendee (r.) 1910*



*5 months*

Harold never had a nickname--he was always "Harold." In a 1918 family photo, he seems to have developed more poise, yet was still shy. Here we are seeing progression of developmental years of a youth as we compare the two pictures.

My earliest recollection of meeting Harold personally was in 1936. This was during the lean years of the Great Depression in the days he was a shoe repairman. I can still see him in his shop, wearing a long apron and hammering nails into shoe soles. I felt comfortable with him right away. He was friendly, warm-hearted, and unassuming. His work with shoes appeared to satisfy him.



*9 months*

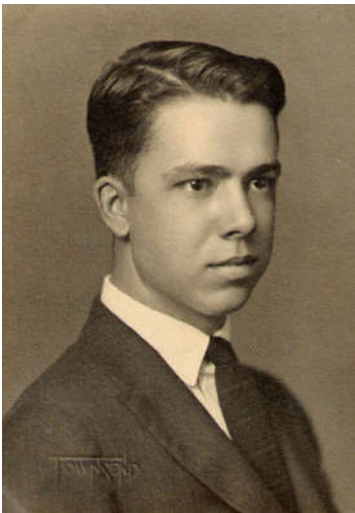
Four primary activities filled his life: his shoe shop, weeding the home vegetable garden, the Jehovah's Witnesses obligations, and his family, of course. To his faith, he was a fervent devotee. He was very fond of his pretty daughter, Virginia. She was 8 years my junior.

His wife, Ethel, was a nurse. Her salary was critically important to the family's well being. Early on, I knew she was the "engine" in the family and kept things humming along properly. In her linen closets, every towel was folded and stacked with machine-like precision. And so were all things impeccably ordered throughout the house. The large vegetable garden she managed also augmented the tight budget.

It so happened that Ethel subscribed to *Gourmet* magazine. I was surprised to learn that a Jehovah's Witness made a place in her life for the pursuit of elegant cuisine. Apparently, there were not objections for this seeming worldliness. Maybe it provided so much pleasure that objections were not even considered. To be invited to one of her dinners was a happy occasion. Anticipation was generated with the assurance of an unusual and tasty meal. One's appetite was unfailingly pleased.

In these depression years, occasionally, she would chide Harold for being careless about keeping track of money and being reluctant to ask his mother for the return of a 15 cent loan (then a sum worth remembering). Pickings were very slim in those days. Ethel was more mindful of monetary matters than was her easy-going husband. Accounting of all assets, regardless of their place in the total picture, she carefully monitored.

Now for a touch of romance, Ethel told me that when she first saw Harold, she was smitten by his beautiful deep brown eyes. (Reader, you have these two photographs in your collection, which I kept in front of me as an inspiration throughout writing these memoirs.) In addition, Harold was always courteous and a gentleman.



The pair complemented each other. She had a no-nonsense air of efficiency and achievement. He would work hard and long, but did not seem to take tasks so seriously. (What he did take most seriously was religious commitment.)

The next event of which I will write probably occurred in 1940. World War II was being waged furiously in Europe. Our country was being pushed toward war. Propaganda and posters were appearing on billboards.

The family had gone to spend a weekend at Ethel's parents' farm some miles north of Lincoln. On a Sunday, we (Jehovah's Witnesses) went about our routine of going from house to house to tell people about "The Truth" and hopefully help save them from Armageddon's destructive fury. In the afternoon, we gathered outside the Kingdom Hall before our meeting. Then an angry crowd formed about us. Accelerating to wrathfulness, people began shouting insults. They were incensed at these folk who did not salute the flag and at our men who refused to serve in the military. What kind of Americans were these? (As I write, I am becoming a bit teary-eyed.)

A circle of men surrounded Harold. They began to strike him in the face. My heart beat wildly; I was so afraid for him. He made no effort to defend himself, nor to say a word; but, his brown eyes opened wide in consternation. How it ended, strangely, I cannot now remember, but Harold was not seriously hurt. There were residues of fears, however. I will never forget that threatening crowd having crossed bounds of restraint and surging with overwrought emotions leading to physical excess and fear.

A few months later, I learned of a mob in a small Wyoming town having a confrontation with a group of Witnesses. They stripped one woman to the waist and forced her to march down Main Street with the flag. They forced other women to the ground, tearing at their pubic hair. We were reminded of biblical verses admonishing Christ's followers; I paraphrase, "Blessed are you for suffering for righteousness' sake." Also, God refines His people as "silver and gold." We took these scriptures and the violence experienced as proof that we were doing God's work. I mused that Harold would remain steadfast despite extremes of persecution.



For myself, I had nightmares of being harmed and attacked by mobs. My faith was troubled. Did I have the strength to endure these tests? Yet, the ugly turn of these hostile attacks made more resolute the faith of many Witnesses.

Years passed before I again saw Harold. It was about 1948 that he came to Denver to be schooled in accounting by Daddy, a C.P.A. How Harold came to want this major change in vocation was not told me. Certainly, he was reaching for a more ample income, possibly with Ethel's prompting. Perhaps Ethel was weary of worrying about small loose change. This change proved to be most advantageous. Subsequently, Harold opened an accounting office of his own, and the corner to prosperity had been turned.

In the 1960s, my brother, Haynes, visited Harold's office. The small shoe repair shop was long gone. Harold then had a nice professional suite in a complex of offices. He explained to Haynes as he pointed to the buildings in the block that he owned this one and this one and this one. Haynes was curious that Harold omitted mentioning only one of the several buildings---the corner one. He asked Harold about it. The quiet answer was, "Yes, we own that building, as well." Then the reason for the omission seemed clear. That building bore the name "Pete's Bar and Grill." Now how could a Witness explain owning a building rented to a saloon keeper? Here is another example of overlap into the world with the pristine separation from the larger society being sought.



1918

In 1969, years after I had, with anguish, divorced myself from the Jehovah's Witness religion, I last saw and talked with Harold. It was in late October after the leaves had turned to golds and reds and then fallen. My mother and I had been in Ohio completing the sorrowful task of finalizing my sister Eleanor's affairs. (At the age of but 49, she died that September of a stroke.) As our train trip was routed through Lincoln, we decided to ask Harold and Ethel if we might visit them. Hospitably, they said, "Of course." A delectable dinner was made by the gourmet cook, Ethel, of course. It felt so good to be with them. I was gratified at how warmly they treated Mother. Of course, they had been guests several times in her home, including during their honeymoon in 1929--forty years earlier!



Together in the living room. Harold followed his propensity to discuss "The Truth" and my position in relation to it. I had been sure he would do this and so prepared myself mentally and emotionally to handle myself calmly and with firmness. This did take planning and mental rehearsal, for it was a somewhat traumatic encounter for me.

Witness religion, despite his presenting well-honed (and to me, expectedly well-known) positions of persuasion... The theological dialogue once concluded, there were a few moments of complete silence. We just looked at each other. Then Harold asked, "What if you are wrong, May Margaret?" After a pause, I looked back at him and asked, "What if *you* are wrong, Uncle Harold?" With those exchanges the conversation and the evening ended. I felt awkward and incomplete.

Even now I have mixed feelings about our final visit. I was proud of myself that I could remain calm rather than let fear and guilt trip me up. This has happened when Witnesses have knocked at my door on a Sunday morning with their message. I have still a residue of conflicted emotions, so I can become defensive in such circumstances. Some growing and resolution remains to be worked through in my mind.

*Harold and wife Ethel at wedding of niece Cynthia Ann Hendee Henry in Denver 1966  
May Margaret also attended this wedding.*

I was sad that this fine man and I--who had had important and meaningful times together--were unable to join in the love and caring that still could be found in our hearts. He is gone now. We lost that opportunity, but my love for him still blesses me--and perhaps him as well.

## ENA VIRGINIA HENDEE PRICE

2/8/1907 – 9/18/1984

by

May Margaret Hendee Economy, her niece

February 1997



*Her mother wrote "precious" on the back*

It is a pleasure to write of Ena, the youngest. I met her on my first summer visit to Lincoln. I was 14. Ena then was 29. We spent hours of time together. I visited the doctor's office where she was a nurse. We talked of having lunch at the nearby restaurant for 15 cents, but somehow, we could not come by the financial backing!



*With her mother, Jennie Florence Seitz Hendee*

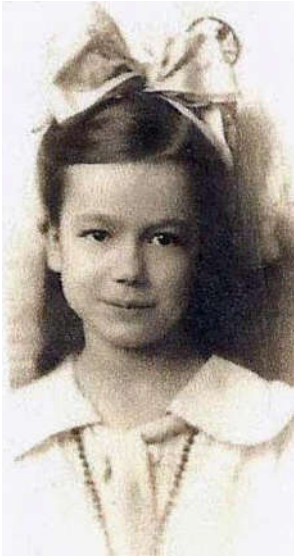


*July 1908 taken by Sara and Virginia Carimer (relatives)  
Effingham, Illinois College of Photography  
"Darling Ena" on back by Jennie*

I came to love her in the way a teenager may idealize an adult she admires. To me, she was almost perfect, and I was always happy in her company. She had a gentle humor and could connect with any family member in a winsome way. They would always have a welcoming smile for her when she greeted them with her demure charm. Over the course of my four extended visits, she came to reveal parts of her bitter-sweet past. Of this, there will be more later.



For now, let me speak more of her place in the makeup of the family. Born in 1907 when her mother was 41, Ena's next older sibling, Harold, was 10, and Vera, the first child, was 19, Ena seemed to acquire benefits and traits of both a favored youngest and an independent only child. In the family photograph of 1918, she alone wears a slight smile and a twinkle in her eyes. (In those times, people usually assumed a somber expression for something as serious as a studio photograph. With this you are probably familiar.)



1918

As a pert 10-year-old in that picture (*left*), she has a large dressy bow rising above the back of her head. Around her neck is a long chain. Her mother and father might actually be taken for grandparents! It may be that this distance between the generations gave her more latitude to develop spontaneity and her unique and quiet winning ways. All of this enlivened her nature. She might be seen as having a "free spirit." Sunshine did seem to follow her (as the song goes). Here (*right*) we see Ena as a lovely young woman as she gazes attentively out at us. While she seems direct, still she appears demure. Her slight smile suggests a readiness to have a friendly exchange--waiting for "the other" to initiate contact. With her slender arm extended and hand resting on a table--her stylish hat--her expression, this photograph is artistically composed, don't you think?



1923

I adored Ena. I will confess that when I was 15, once I did offend her when I informed her that she was then twice my age. Winsomeness and smile disappeared--for a moment. Oh, dear!

She seemed to have more freedom to develop an independence---as did Chet. Only the two of them chose a path of higher education. She became a registered nurse. Her experiences as a professional female may have caused her to question and hesitate adopting the Jehovah's Witness faith.

As a young adult, Ena met with hard choices. Having had three different relationships with men during her 20s, she became deeply conflicted over romance, financial security, and a promising marriage to an attractive professional man. Challenging these options was her ambivalence over making a full commitment to the Jehovah's Witness faith. She shared with me brief stories of these beaux and photographs of them, as well. I could only guess how wrenching these choices must have been: security in this world vs. security in the unseen next world. With these options, she could not have both. Where did certainty lie?



Indecision at last was resolved when she was about 32. Then she was finally baptized, symbolizing adherence to the faith. Once made, a rejection of God's "Truth" would mean forsaking His "Light." The consequential punishment meant being "cast into outer darkness" and everlasting death of one's immortal soul. What a grim perception ridden with fear... Best to trod the narrow and straight path...

Now, dear reader, you must recognize these are severe consequences indeed. Better to be undecided and uncommitted for a time. On the other side of the coin, Ena believed that once having accepted The Truth, she must adhere to it to be assured future life in Paradise.

After I came into her life, we traveled together to Jehovah's Witness conventions in Detroit and St. Louis. Then we began to lay plans to go "pioneering" together. This meant my leaving the security of home and family and setting up a household in a trailer while traveling to witness The Truth to the world. We would receive a very small stipend from the Jehovah's Witness headquarters.



Bread and butter, clothing and most financial costs of living would be born by ourselves. Can't you see two women arriving in a strange town, saying, in effect, "Here we are, and we do hope you have a little dinner left for us?"

I came within a hair's breadth of embarking on this path of faith. The bottom line was that I had not been directly introduced to Jehovah Himself and was not positive of His part of the bargain. In addition, I had no direct line to his headquarters. In other words, my faith was not sufficiently strong enough. (Please understand my attempt at humor!)

With the collapse of our plans to "pioneer" together, my relationship with Ena took a downturn. Being then 18, I took a job as a clerk in a wholesale house in Denver (childhood plans to attend college had been set aside with the Jehovah's Witness dictum that a college education in the "Devil's World" is a mistake.) Summer visits ended. Within two years, I had married Gus. By 21, I finally ended doubt and anguish over wavering faith in the Jehovah's Witness religion and wrenchingly "excommunicated" myself. This severance was one of the most emotional and difficult decisions I ever made. This was a type of death, ending a whole way of life. It also ended my close ties with Ena and the other Lincoln relatives, losses I deeply regretted.



In 1944, at age 37, Ena married a good man. Her husband, Floyd Price, was 10 years her junior. The newspaper gave her age as "over 21." They looked just fine together and seemed truly devoted to each other. He was a construction worker. I was happy for them. She once told me they had "unofficially" adopted a Jehovah's Witness as their daughter. This gave them a sense of family continuity--all the more important as they had no children of their own.

Sometime in the 1950s, they bought a furnished house in Price, Utah for \$1,200. (Yes, \$1,200!) In the 1960s, Gus, our daughter, Diane, and I visited them there. They were very hospitable and took us on a mountain picnic. Yet, Ena did not seem to want to make an effort to keep the relationship alive. As expected, her religion was her consuming interest; her chief loyalty was to other Jehovah's Witnesses. The caring was forever, I'm certain. She shall always be in my heart.

*Back to Cynthia-- And, so ends May Margaret's family accounts. We had a wonderful time together, both working on these and getting in some sightseeing. We particularly enjoyed special time together, sharing family memories, learning new tidbits from each other, and laughing a lot! We had fun creating this project--thank you. May Margaret!*

GROUP PHOTOS  
Hendee Family



*This photo was taken in 1918. Left to right back row: Harold Harlow Hendee, Frank Chester Hendee, Mary Lu Hendee front row: Jennie Florence Seitz Hendee, Vera Lucile Hendee, Ena Virginia Hendee, Frank Clark Hendee*



*Frank Clark, Jennie, Ena Hendee  
August 10, 1915*



*Frank Clark Hendee and Jennie Florence Seitz Hendee  
looking at Woman's Home Companion*



*Information and identifications below*

FIFTIETH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY  
 Jennie Florence Seitz Hendee and Frank Clark Hendee  
 1937  
 by Cynthia Ann Hendee Henry

Jennie Florence Seitz and Frank Clark Hendee were married on June 16, 1887. They celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 1937 in Lincoln. All five of their living children were present.

Adults in back row left to right:: Ethel Hendee, Harold Harlow Hendee, Ena Virginia Hendee Price, Eleanor Maxine Hendee, Jennie Florence Seitz Hendee, Frank Clark Hendee, Clarence Huzzey, Mary Lu Hendee Huzzey, May Margaret Hendee, Vera Lucile Hendee Roth, Frank Chester (Chet) Hendee

Children in front: Nancy Lee Hendee; Virginia Lee Hendee (first cousins)

- Ethel is the wife of Harold Harlow Hendee.
- Harold Harlow Hendee is the son of Jennie and Frank. Harold and Ethel are parents of Virginia Lee Hendee.
- Ena Virginia Hendee is the daughter of Jennie and Frank. Ena married Floyd Price.
- Eleanor Maxine Hendee is the daughter of Frank Chester Hendee and Renna Haynes Hendee (his first wife). Eleanor married Harold (Bud) Festerly.

- Jennie Florence Seitz Hendee is the wife of Frank Clark Hendee and the mother of Harold Harlow, Ena Virginia, Frank Chester, Mary Lu and Vera Lucille.
- Frank Clark Hendee is the husband of Jennie and the father of Harold Harlow, Ena Virginia, Frank Chester, Mary Lu and Vera Lucille.
- Clarence Huzzey is the husband of Mary Lu Hendee Huzzey. He and Mary lived with Jennie in L.A., taking care of her. After Mary died, Clarence stayed on until Jennie's death in 1966.
- Mary Lu Hendee Huzzey is the daughter of Jennie and Frank; she is the wife of Clarence Huzzey.
- May Margaret Hendee is the daughter of Frank Chester Hendee. She married Constantine (Gus) Economy.
- Vera Lucile Hendee is the daughter of Jennie and Frank Clark. She married William Roth.
- Frank Chester Hendee is the son of Jennie and Frank. He first married Renna Haynes Hendee; they divorced in 1935. In 1942, he married Laura Louise Moore. He is the father of Eleanor, May Margaret and Nancy. (Not pictured of his children: Harold Haynes Hendee, Cynthia Ann Hendee [born 1944], Linda Jean Hendee [born 1947])
- Nancy Lee Hendee is the daughter of Frank Chester Hendee and Renna Haynes Hendee. She married Harry Wilson and later married William Ohs. She and Virginia are first cousins.
- Virginia Lee Hendee is the daughter of Harold Harlow Hendee and Ethel Hendee. She married Julius Joseph (Joe) Robertson.



*William Roth, Vera Lucile Hendee Roth,  
Frank Chester Hendee, May Margaret  
Hendee, children Nancy Lee Hendee Paul  
Holoway not a relative Mt Evans,  
Colorado undated*



*Four-generations: Frank Chester Hendee (back left);  
Jennie Florence Seitz Hendee (back right); George  
Washington Seitz (seated with Civil War medal);  
Cynthia Ann Hendee (baby) Los Angeles 1944*



*Above: Cynthia Hendee (child), Laura Louise Hendee, Hendee, Harold Hendee, Linda Hendee (baby), Frank Chester Hendee, Nancy Lee Hendee, Lincoln 1948*



*Cynthia Ann Hendee with her grandmother, Jennie Florence Seitz 1946 Denver*



*Cynthia's first birthday with her parents and her half-sisters*

*Back row: upstairs roomer: Frank Chester Hendee; Eleanor Maxine Hendee Festerly*

*Front row: May Margaret Hendee Economy, Laura Louise Hendee, Nancy Lee Hendee Wilson*

*Baby is Cynthia Ann Hendee Denver 1945*



*Jennie (Grandma Hendee) and her daughters*

*left to right: Ena Virginia Hendee Price; Jennie Florence Seitz Hendee; Mary Cu Hendee Huzzey;  
Vera Lucile Hendee Roth      This was at a Jehovah's Witness assembly at La Guardia field in New York City in 1950.*



*Top row l. to r.: Vera Lucile Hendee, Frank Chester Hendee; Mary Cu Hendee  
Bottom row l. to r.: Harold Harlow Hendee; Jennie Florence Seitz Hendee; Ena Virginia Hendee; Frank Clark Hendee*

Father of George Washington Seitz  
Great great grandfather of May Margaret and Cynthia  
Born during George Washington's 2<sup>nd</sup> year in office



*Daniel Seitz*  
*December 17, 1791 – October 14, 1864*