

easily burn, the Indians decided to burn it to the ground and they detailed me to burn it. -- I slipped through the popash (pond) and as I stepped out of the north side, a lone white soldier stepped out of the hammock on the other side. -- We stood still and he was looking me in the eyes as if to say 'Why don't you shoot and get it over with?' We stood this way a minute or so and I raised my rifle to kill him, a bunch of dogs started a fight and I knew the soldiers often carried dogs trained to track Indians. I decided I better run for the Big Cypress as fast as my legs could carry me. After the war I learned the brave soldier was Captain Hendry."

F. A. Hendry, wife Ardeline, their children James, Asbury, Laura, plus his sister Mary Jane (who on January 16, 1862 married Jehu J. Blount) and Zachariah Seward, a 21 year old clerk, were listed as a household in the 1860 Hillsborough County Census. Neighbors included: Bennett Whidden, F. C. M. Boggess, James L. Whidden, A. J. Hendry (his brother), E. T. Kendrick, J. I. Hooker, Lewis Lanier (his father-in-law), G. W. Hendry (his brother), H. S. Seward, Simpson Singletary (his brother-in-law, married January 30, 1850 Martha Ann Hendry), F. M. Durrance.

Francis A. Hendry was one of the prime movers in the organization of Polk County, which was established February 8, 1861 by the division of Hillsborough County, the eastern half becoming Polk. In November 1861, he was elected as a County Commissioner, along with Reading Blount, Isaac Waters, Joseph Mizelle. The same election selected H. S. Seward for the State Legislature, J. J. Blount as Clerk of the Circuit Court, L. W. Cornelius for Judge of Probate, H. L. Mitchell as State Solicitor, and E. T. Kendrick for Sheriff.

During the Civil War, he did service in the commissary department in the states of Georgia, Florida and South Carolina, C. S. A. In 1863 he raised a cavalry company, commanded by himself, Capt. Hendry's Co. A, 1st Battalion, Florida Special Cavalry, which was attached to Col. Charles J. Munnerlyn's Independent Battalion. Fort Myers, which had been abandoned at the end of hostilities in 1858, was reoccupied by Union troops in December 1863, and held until May 1865. U. S. forces used the fort as a base to make raids into the interior to gather cattle and recruit men. Hendry later estimated that 4,500 head of cattle were taken, some from as far away as Fort Meade. In February 1865, Captain Hendry, attached to Major William Footman Cow Cavalry, participated in the unsuccessful attack on Fort Myers. Capt. Hendry served until his surrender at Tampa at war's end.

After the war, he returned to his Fort Meade home where he continued cattle ranching and farming.

Francis resumed his role in civic affairs. During Reconstruction, he served as State Senator from Polk and Brevard counties. On Nov. 4, 1867, he answered a summons for jury duty at Bartow.

After purchasing cattle from J. C. Rockner of Fort Meade and Capt. D. Huges of Bartow, he, joining the herds with what he already possessed, drove 12,000 head of cattle across the Caloosahatchee River and pastured them on the prairies of Fort Thompson. In 1870, after disposing of his property at Fort Meade, he moved his family to Fort Myers and chose as his home one of the abandoned officers' quarters, which he refurbished.

When he settled in Fort Myers, there were only a few families there. Those known were Capt. Manuel A. Gonzalez, John A. Weatherford (Gonzalez's brother-in-law), and J. A. Vivas. Francis was soon followed by his brother, William Marion Hendry, brother-in-law Jehu J. Blount, and nephew, Frank J. Wilson (son of Adeline and James Wilson).