


Alafia River, the extreme northern boundary of his ministry. He was listed as a tax payer in Polk County in 1861. On November 4, 1867 John W. Hendry was listed as a juror in Polk County along with J. M. Hendry, Eli English and others. Having succeeded in acquiring a pretty good stock of cattle and with the hope of finding a better range, as well as, to get more in the center of his ministerial field, he sold his place on the South Prong and with his cattle moved into Manatee County at a place near Brushy Creek. He made his home there for over thirty years. By persistence industry and good management he rapidly increased his property and in a short time was investing his means in various enterprises. The poor financial conditions following the Civil War had compelled Baptist ministers to be self supporting. Salaries were simply out of the question for some time. Grist milling, sawmilling, and merchandising were John's chief business ventures, but owing to a lack of proper experience these proved to be unprofitable and he returned to his old occupation farming and stock raising. He registered his  brand on July 31, 1872.

This move was accomplished in 1871 and in the following year at the suggestion of Rev. Hendry the membership of Maple Branch, or Fort Green, decided to establish a place of meeting near his home and changed the name of the church to New Zion.

There were seven, possibly eight, working churches in Manatee County with a membership ranging from 25 to 50. The annual association minutes for 1875 listed the following Manatee County churches: Benevolence, Friendship, Mt. Moriah, Mt. Pisgah, New Hope, New Zion and Mt. Pleasant. There was only one Baptist Association in all southern Florida, the South Florida, which extended from Hernando County on the north to Manatee County, the southern boundary. This made it quite inconvenient for the Manatee churches to attend its meetings, which were usually held with some church in Polk or Hillsborough County. John W. Hendry conceived the idea of dividing the South Florida Baptist Association by organizing the Manatee County churches into a separate body to be known as the Manatee Association. In 1875 he headed a delegation consisting of James M. Hendry, Capt. John W. Whidden, Daniel W. Carlton and himself to petition for separation and dismissal from the South Florida Association. After much controversy, the minutes of the tenth annual session of the South Florida Baptist Association held at Tenotasassa Church on Oct. 14, 1876 showed "That the letters asked for by the Churches, viz: New Zion, Mount Moriah, Mount Pleasant, Friendship, Alafia and Benevolence, be granted, the Clerk being instructed to give them to their delegates. That the book funds be divided pro rata between the South Florida Association and those Churches withdrawing." These six churches met at Friendship Church on Oct. 27, 1876 in their first annual session to form the Manatee Association.

In 1880 Manatee County the Hendrys were living in precinct #2 (Fort Green). Living with them were their daughter, Amanda E., age 21 and their granddaughter, Catherine C., age 3.

The population having increased brought strength to the churches as many ministers were added. Rev. Hendry soon gathered around him a number of co-workers which marked a period of rapid expansion of the new association and marked the greatest activity of Rev. Hendry as a preacher. Ezekiel J. Hull, R. E. Bell, Edmund Chancey, T. J. Sparkman, Isaac A. Redd, H. H. Norris, James M. Hendry, Henry Messer, A. T. Farabee, J. L. Durrance, J. H. Brantley, J. F. Gill were added to the ministerial roll.