

Individual Narrative of Abram⁷ Divine Hedenberg [154] Son of James VanAlst Hedenberg and Elizabeth⁶ Leverich [61]

Abram Divine Hedenberg was born on 7 March 1809 at Newtown, Queens Co, New York, the son of James Van Alst Hedenberg and Elizabeth Leverich.¹

James Hedenberg is recorded as a head of household in the 1810 U.S. Census of Newtown, Queens Co, New York. The census tallies for the household include 3 free white males under age 10, which would account for Abram Hedenberg, as well as his older brothers David and Richard Hedenberg.² James Hedenberg is recorded as a head of household in the 1820 U.S. Census of Newtown, Queens Co, New York. The census tallies for the household include 2 free white males age 10 to 15, which would account for Abram Hedenberg, as well as his older brother Richard Hedenberg.³

On 21 July 1831, a citation regarding the probate of the estate of William Leverich of Newtown (brother of Elizabeth Leverich Hedenberg) was published in the *Long Island Farmer and Queens County Advertiser*. Among others, the citation is addressed to Abraham Divine Hedenberg of Augusta, Georgia, John Charles Hedenberg, Edward Leverich Hedenberg, and Richard Leverich Hedenberg, all of Newark, New Jersey.⁴

Further probate proceedings, i.e. a list of heirs cited in 1831, includes John Charles Hedenberg, Edward Leverich Hedenberg, and Richard Leverich Hedenberg, all of Newark, NJ; James L. Hedenberg of Manhattan, New York Co, NY; David Johnson Hedenberg of Troy, Rensselaer Co, NY; and Abraham Divine Hedenberg of Augusta, Georgia.⁵

No further information has been found pertaining to Abram Hedenberg in Augusta, Georgia. Abram Hedenberg is not found in the 1830 U.S. Census. City directories for Augusta do not start until 1841.⁶

By 1836, Abram D. Hedenberg is found in Newark, Essex Co, New Jersey. On 13 January 1836 the following notice was published in the *Newark Daily Advertiser*. "CARRIAGE REPOSITORY. -- The subscribers having entered into a co-partnership under the firm of Hedenberg, Mitchell & Co, for the purpose of transacting the Carriage business, on the corner of Broad and Mechanic Streets, No. 313, at the old stand formerly occupied by J. C. Hedenberg, intend keeping on hand a general assortment of finished Pleasure Carriages. All orders for Carriages will be thankfully received and punctually attended to. Also Carriages sold on commission. A. D. HEDENBERG. JAMES MITCHELL. M. A. WARD."⁷

Hedenberg, Mitchell, & Co., coach manufactory and carriage repository, is listed in the 1836-1839 Newark City Directories, located at 313 Broad Street at the corner of Mechanic St.^{8,9,10}



Hedenberg, Mitchell & Co - Carriages: 1836-1839
Mechanic and Broad Street (313 Broad), Newark, New Jersey
<1853 Map City of Newark: Rutgers University Special Collections>

A residential listing for Abram D. Hedenberg is not found in the 1836-1839 Newark City Directories. Since Abram was not married, he may have been boarding at the home of one of his several brothers who were living in Newark. However, Abram D. Hedenberg had a first cousin, Abraham Hedenberg, born 1806, son of John Charles Hedenberg, the brother of James Van Alst Hedenberg. The first cousin Abraham Hedenberg is listed in the 1836-1839 Newark City Directories, coach trimmer, Mechanic near Broad; then Harness maker 151 Market Street; residing at 78 Halsey Street. This Abraham remained in Newark, later operating a fruit, toy, and confectionary store, until he died in 1867; whereas Abram D. Hedenberg, born 1809, son of James Van Alst Hedenberg, moved on to Texas and Mississippi where he died in 1871.^{11,12,13,14}

The following notice was published in the *Newark Daily Advertiser* on 15 January 1839. "DISSOLUTION. -- The firm heretofore existing under the name of Hedenberg, Mitchell & Co, was dissolved by mutual consent, on the first day of December, 1838. The business of said firm will be settled by James Mitchell, who is authorized to sign and use the name of the firm in adjusting and closing the same. ABRAM D. HEDENBERG. JAMES MITCHELL. MARK A. WARD.^{15"}

A notice in the *Newark Daily Advertiser* on 3 September 1839, announced a Sheriff's Sale to be held on 28 September 1839: "Essex Circuit Court, Luke Davies and John M. Davies vs. Abram D. Hedenberg, James Mitchell and Mark A. Ward; Moses Sayre and James R. Sayre vs Abram D. Hedenberg, James Mitchell and Mark A. Ward ... the 2nd lot being the same conveyed to James Mitchell by A. W. Kinney and wife by deed in Book X4 of deeds, page 341: Beginning at the south westerly corner of Broad and Mechanic streets.^{16"}

The memoirs of Francis Richard Lubbock, an early governor of Texas, recalls "an occurrence at an early day shows how Houston failed to get a carriage factory and lost at least one good immigrant . Charles Hedenberg (son of James L. Hedenberg, grandson of James Van Alst Hedenberg), of the firm of Hedenberg & Vedder, commission merchants (of Houston, Texas), had induced an uncle of his to come out from New Jersey with the view of establishing a carriage manufactory." The uncle, who is not named, was apparently unimpressed with his initial visit to Houston, being particularly disturbed by the level of violence he observed. The uncle told his nephew "Charley, I have seen enough. I wish to return home immediately. I do not wish to see any more of Texas." ... he "immediately took his baggage to the boat ... left Texas, and never returned.^{17"}

However, the unnamed uncle may have changed his mind. Further probate proceedings for William Leverich, uncle of the Hedenberg brothers, the sons of James Van Alst Hedenberg and Elizabeth Leverich, provide a list of heirs at the time of final settlement in 1841, which included James L. Leverich and Abram D. Leverich of Houston. Abram was presumably the unnamed uncle from Lubbock's memoirs.¹⁸

On 13 November 1841, Abraham D. Hedenberg filed a petition for bankruptcy in Harris Co, Texas. The petition lists assets, without citing an amount, and debts amounting to \$39,342.50.¹⁹

The Republic of Texas was an independent sovereign country in North America that existed from March 2, 1836, to February 19, 1846. The Texas war of independence ended on April 21, 1836, but Mexico refused to recognize the independence of the Republic of Texas, and intermittent conflicts between the two states continued into the 1840s. The United States recognized the Republic of Texas in March 1837 as a territory. Texas was annexed by the United States on December 29, 1845 and was admitted to the Union as the 28th state on that day, with the transfer of power from the Republic to the new state of Texas formally taking place on February 19, 1846. The Mexican–American War was an armed conflict between the United States of America and the United Mexican States (Mexico) from 1846 to 1848.²⁰

In a deed dated 2 May 1842, Charles J. Hedenberg transferred property to his uncle Abraham D. Hedenberg, recorded in Volume H, page 73, of the Deed records of Harris County, Texas. The property consisted of multiple tracts of land, the purchase being supported by a mortgage granted by Messers Walton & Kemp, merchants of New Orleans, Louisiana.²¹

The Mier Expedition of 1842 included the company organized by Captain Nicholas Mosby Dawson in La Grange September 16, 1842 to go to the aid of other volunteers raised to expel from Texas the Mexican Army under General Adrian Woll which had captured San Antonio. Abraham D. Hadenburg was listed as a surviving soldier member of the Mier expedition. A group of 176 Texan soldiers, officers and enlisted men, were captured, escaped, and recaptured. Although the entire group was condemned to execution by Mexican General Santa Anna, diplomatic efforts on behalf of Texas by the foreign ministers of the United States and Great Britain led Santa Anna to compromise that only one in ten would die. In order to determine who would die, the new Mexican Commander Colonel Domingo Huerta had 159 white

beans and 17 black beans placed in a pot. In what came to be known as the Black Bean Episode, the Texas were blindfolded and ordered to draw beans. Officers and then enlisted men were ordered to draw. The 17 men who drew a black bean were allowed to write letters home and then executed by firing squad on the evening of 25 March 1843. According to legend, Huerta placed the black beans in last and had the officers pick first, so that they would make up the majority of those killed. According to his death notice in 1871, Abram D. Hedenberg was a member of this group, fortunately drawing a white bean.^{22,23,24}

On 2 September 1846, A.D. Hedenberg is named as a patentee, Thomas Toby Grantee, for 640 acres of land in Gonzalez District, Caldwell Co, Texas.²⁵ On 2 March 1870, Abram D. Hedenberg is named as a grantee, Ira Ellis patentee, for 320 acres of land in Robertson District, Tarrant Co, Texas.²⁶

Abram Hedenberg is listed in the 1870 U.S. Census of Natchez, Adams Co, Mississippi. Abram is named as the only person in his household, employed as a carriage maker, age 61, born New York. His household is listed adjacent to that of James L. Clark, carriage maker, and his wife Margaret.²⁷

No record of Abram D. Hedenberg is found between the years 1847 and 1869, a period of 22 years. Abram is not found in the 1850 or 1860 U.S. Census.^{28,29}

Abram D. Hedenberg died unmarried on 24 Jan 1871 at Natchez, Adams Co, Mississippi, at age 61. Abram was buried at the Natchez City Cemetery.³⁰



On 22 February 1871 the Pomeroy's Democrat of New York City reprinted the following article from the Natchez (Mississippi) Courier. "Drawing Lots for Life or Death [From the Natchez (Miss) Courier]. Death has taken from our midst in the person of Abram D. Hedenberg, a soldier who has not only survived the "Lost Cause", but who, after the battle of Mier, on the 25th and 26th of December 1842 - in the days of Sam Houston, when every tenth man captured was shot - in drawing lots for life, drew a white bean. The decimation took place by drawing black and white beans from a mug. The white signified exemption and the black ones death. One hundred and fifteen white beans were placed in the bottom of a mug, and seventeen black ones placed upon the top of them. The bones of his less fortunate companions now lie bleaching upon the plains of Saladin, a remembrance of patriots executed falsely, as robbers and intruders upon Mexico.³¹"

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Endnotes

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- ⁷*Newark Daily Advertiser*, Newark, New Jersey, 1832-1904. Hereinafter cited as Newark Daily Advertiser, 13 January 1836, page 3.
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