

Gold-filled Victorian Pencil with Gemstone Top  
from Ethel Genevieve Hendee  
11/24/1881 – 7/31/1972  
by  
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3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" long

I certainly didn't know Cousin Ethel (Ethel Genevieve Hendee) well. She lived in New Canaan, Connecticut. We visited her when our family took a trip back east in 1962. She was 82 then. She never married. I



I remember her home as being lovely, with us sitting in kind of an old-fashioned parlor. She gave me a pretty glass and silver candy dish when I got married in 1966, which I used many times over the years and loved. Ethel was the daughter of Hosmer Hassan Hendee, brother of Frank Clark Hendee, father of Frank Chester Hendee, my father. So, she was Daddy's first cousin and my first cousin, once removed. Her vitals are 11/24/1881 – 7/31/1972. I don't know how we came to have the pencil. It has a retractable holder for the lead. Note the slit along the side. On many of these types of pencils, the finial at the top unscrews to hold extra lead, but I am unable to move any of the parts and don't want to force it.

*left to right: brothers Hosmer Hassan, Olin Wood, Frank Clark Hendee*

The variety of engravings all around and the design on the top are so delicate. The loop shows that it can also be used as a pendant...an unusual jewelry item. Based on similar pencils online, the stone could be an agate, a carnelian or an amethyst.



Since this was such a special item, I included it in my shadow box, about the only thing I ever created. In 1986, Mike and I took a trip through the mid-west, returning through Denver for a Hendee family reunion at Nancy and Bill's. While in the mid-west, we visited friends in Rockford, Iowa where we taught from 1966-68...a town of 1,000 people. We maintained friendships that have lasted to this day. Laurel showed me a shadow box she had crafted, and I was so impressed that, when the two ladies and I went antiquing, I bought an old frame, took the picture out and put together my own shadowbox using family treasures. I enjoyed it so much on the wall of my guest room! (Linda crocheted the beautiful bedspread.)



Cousin Ethel's pencil is shown under the blue arrow. The photo is that of my maternal grandmother, Minnie Nadine Holwell Moore.

My efforts to research the history of the heirloom were rather futile, though this type of item is easily found for sale on the internet. One had a yellow gemstone rather than my red one, and another looked like a pale blue or white. They were selling from \$37 - \$250 for more ornate styles.

Descriptions on eBay included the following terms, "floral design," "Pencil with Gem James T Bacon #P316," "VTG or Antique Bates & B Bacon Rolled Gold Mechanical Ring Top Pencil," "Slide pencil," "Antique Victorian gold & agate mechanical pencil hand engraved," "Antique Victorian Slide Pencil Amethyst Jewel Gold Filled Case Etched," "antique 1800s gold filled mechanical expandable pencil pendant pen fob," -"yellow end stone," etc.

I was intrigued with the possibility of it being "hand-engraved," such skill, if so. "VTG" means "vintage." It was nice to have the date in the 1800s. I wish I knew how this pencil came into Ethel's life.

This pretty pencil also comes with a supply of lead. I am sure the two containers shown here were not part of what were somehow received from Cousin Ethel, but went with other family history pencils I have had. These have been on display on my antique wooden what-not shelf.



Surely, Cousin Ethel Genevieve Hendee would be pleased that her sweet gift of years ago was so treasured.