

From the files of the Northwest Florida Heritage Museum, Valparaiso FL

Nathey family

William Nathey Family Boggy Area Copy Original Homestead Map



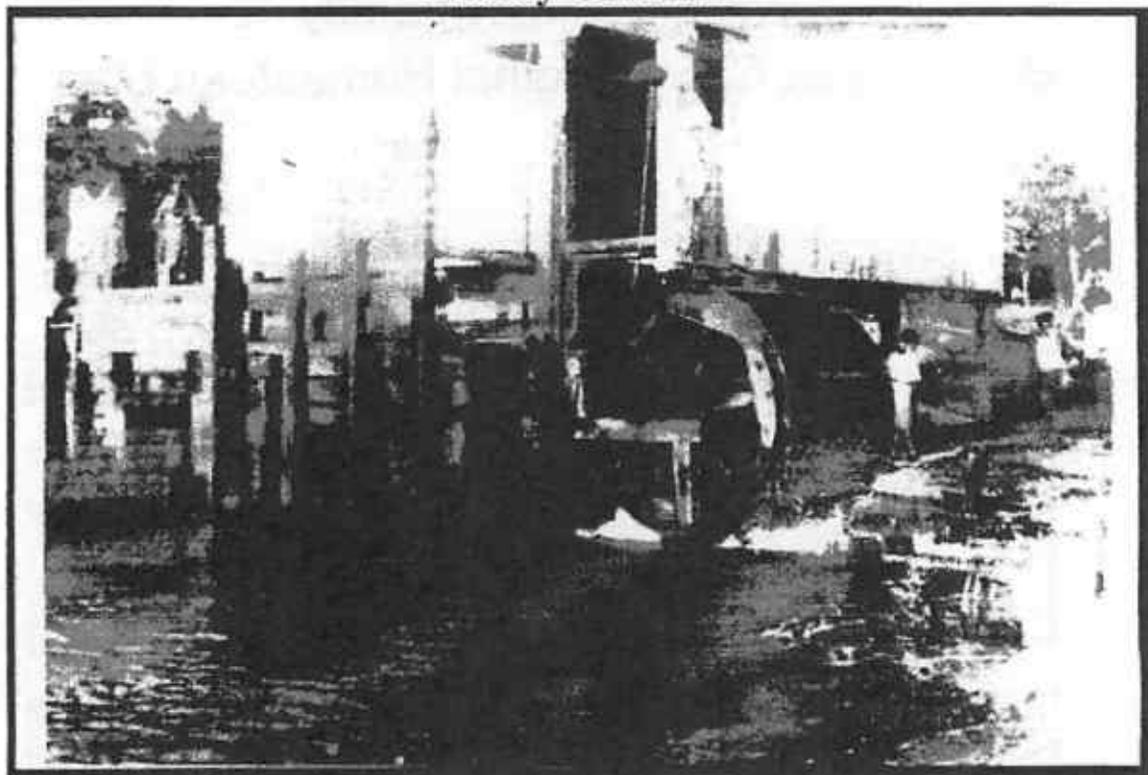
- ★ Site of Nathey Gristmill Built 1857
- William J. Nathey 143 Acre Homestead Head of Boggy Bayou on Juniper Creek

William Nathey, born in England in 1820, was one of the earliest European settlers in the Niceville area. In 1857 he built the Nathey Gristmill on public land. Although not operational for years, it was standing in 1920. .

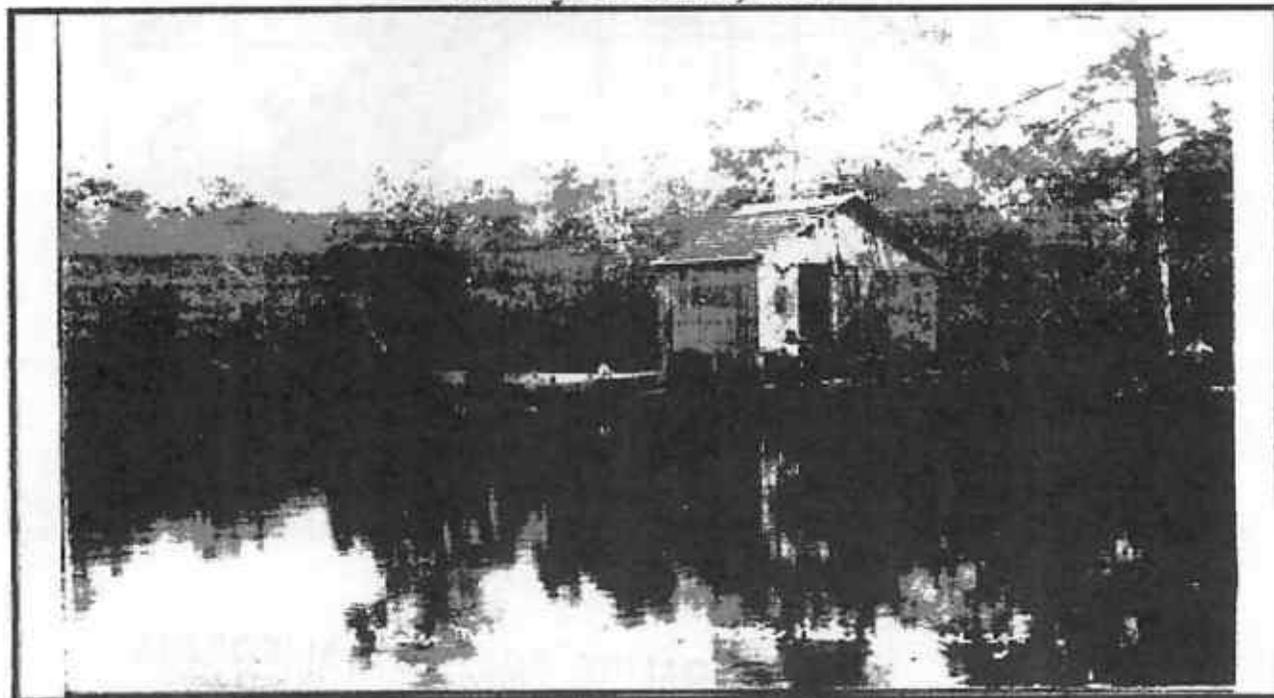
ORANGE COUNTY CALIFORNIA
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY



Nathey Gristmill



Nathey Gristmill, 1921



Nathey Family and Gristmill Stones, 12/02/2006



Back Row L to R: Richard Foust (Pat's son), Diane Nathey Luke, John Higgins, Elisa Nathey Mitchiner and Tom Mitchiner
Front Row L to R: Effie (Pat) Foust, Linda Holmes Howard, Lois Nathey Higgins, Betty Thames Blizzard, and Blayne Ignasiak (John and Lois's grandson)

The William Nathey Bridge

By Elisa Nathey Mitchiner

Visiting relatives in Okaloosa County is still one of my favorite things. During my childhood the first stop of our three day visit was at Aunt Cassie (my grandmother's sister) and Uncle Johnny's (my grandfather's brother). Dad bought mullet and fried them and we girls cleaned the kitchen. Aunt Cassie made sleeping pallets to accommodate us children overnight. We enjoyed being with our cousins, Farrell, Edward and Diane. The next day we visited our grandparents, Lewis and Loney Nathey.

As we crossed the Boggy Bayou Bridge, Dad told us that the land to the left and the right and for as far as we could see had belonged to his grandfather who was born there. His grandfather is William John Nathey, oldest child of William Nathey. My Uncle L.J. used the same words to tell the story years later as if they were told this many times while growing up.

William Nathey, born in England in 1820, is one of the earliest European settlers in the Niceville area. He came to the Florida Territory to export timber and shingles. Small flat boats called Lighters transported their product to ships docked in Choctawhatchee Bay. This continued through the 1860s.

Fifteen years before the Civil War, William and his wife lived at the head of Boggy Bayou. Their children and birthdates are: William John, 06/26/1846; George, 1849; L.M., 1856; Rosilla, 1860; and Ellison, 1863.

In 1857 William built the Nathey Gristmill on public land. Although not operational for years, it was standing in 1920. That land became part of Eglin Golf Course. The gristmill stones are the oldest artifact left by the first pioneer settlers. They are on display at the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida.

William John Nathey married Mary Jane Bolton on 01/16/1873. Their children and birthdates are: John Johnathan, 10/30/1873; Ida Jeanette, 01/27/1875; William Thomas, 04/10/1876; Rebecca, 07/09/1877; Lewis Jackson, 02/03/1880; George Richmond, 10/11/1881; Richard Edward, 01/31/1884; Ellison, 11/06/1888; and Quinnie Elizabeth, 12/03/1892.

On 06/01/1903 he received his 142.75 acres homestead. William John was born on this same land that his father first settled. William John continued his father's trade of making shingles. He sold them in Pensacola.

As oldest son, John Johnathan Nathey, inherited the homestead house that was moved twice for the widening of Highway 85. Among those born there is a nephew of John Johnathan and Cassie Wise Nathey, Randall Wise, Mayor of Niceville serving continuously since 1971.



After John Johnathan's death on 02/20/1970, at age ninety-six, the house was torn down.

The only bridge that connects Niceville and Valparaiso is on the Nathey Homestead. Before it was built, the only means of getting between Niceville and Valparaiso was by boat across Boggy Bayou. Over the years the bridge has been widened to its current six lanes.

To commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Nathey Gristmill the Florida House and Senate unanimously passed Senate Bill S138 designating the Boggy Bayou Bridge in Niceville as the William Nathey Bridge, effective 07/01/2007.

*From the files of the Northwest Florida Heritage Museum, Valparaiso, FL
Published in the Playground Daily News, Feb 20, 1970*

Niceville Pioneer Dead at 96 Years



JOHN NATHEY...
...pioneer dies.

NICEVILLE – John Nathey, Niceville pioneer, died Thursday afternoon in Fort Walton Beach Hospital at the age of 96.

Grandpa Nathey, as he was known to everyone in the Niceville-Valparaiso region, had resided in recent years with his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Leon Thames, 201 Seminole Avenue, Valparaiso.

The family home, where he and his wife the late Cassie Dora Nathey reared their family is located on Niceville's former West Main Street, now John C. Sims Parkway.

Born and reared in the Niceville area, Grandpa Nathey used to recall his walks as a little boy from his family home on Juniper Creek through the wilds to Sara Ann Bayou to visit a playmate, the only one in the neighborhood.

When Grandpa Nathey and his bride set up housekeeping in 1903, he made his living working in a saw mill owned by the father of the Spence Brothers, Wallace, Walter and Walker V. Spence, presently the mayor of Niceville.

Later he worked at the Eglin saw mill, retiring from that saw mill at the age of 72.

The Nathey family also operated a grist mill, remains of which still stand on the Eglin AFB Golf Course, and which provided corn meal and grist for the residents of more than 100 years ago.

Grandpa Nathey's grandfather, William Nathey brought the two huge stones from Alabama in 1857 behind an ox team. At the time the Nathey family started the mill, there were only four other families living in the immediate area.

His father, William Jonathan Nathey, also a native of Niceville, called Boggy then, homesteaded 160 acres of land which took in the entire northwest region of Niceville. To provide a living for his family, he smoked deer and wild turkey, cut cord wood and shingles which he shipped to Pensacola by sailboat to sell.

Grandpa Nathey is survived by another daughter, Mrs. W. B. Bengston of Fort Walton Beach and two sons, Grady L. Nathey of Pensacola and Willis J. Nathey of Niceville.

There are ten grandchildren, 25 great grandchildren and five great great grandchildren.

Editor's Note: Funeral services were held on Feb 22, 1970 in the First Baptist Church in Niceville with the Rev. Fred Stillman officiating. Burial was in the Rocky Cemetery.



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ESTATE RECORDS

Abstract	Summary of contents of a will or deed
Administrator	Person named in will to be a personal representative
Administrator (cta)	Person appointed by the court to act as personal representative for a deceased person who died testate, but who did not name an executor in his will (cta-cum testamento annexo)
Administrator (dnbeta)	Person appointed by the court to act in case the executor or an original administrator had died or is unable to serve for some reason (dbnde-bonus non)
Codicil	An addition or change to a will made at a later date
Court of Chancery	Court of Equity (rather than a court based on common law)
Docket	Record of the court
Executor	Person named in will to be personal representative
Holographic Will	Will written by hand by the testator
Intestate	Having made NO WILL
Legatee or Beneficiary	One named in will to inherit part of the estate
Letters Testamentary	Order of the Probate officer granting authority to an executor which permits him to act in settling an estate
Letters of Administration	Order of the Probate officer granting authority to an administrator, which permits him to act in settling an estate
Nuncupative	WILL—an oral will, not very common, sometimes used on battlefield
Orphans Court	Title to the Court of Pennsylvania which has jurisdiction over estates. In other states it might be known as Probate Court, or by some other term. Orphans Court Renunciation is a division of the Common Pleas Court.
Personal Representative	Executor or administrator in charge of settling an estate

