Sturgis Library Archives

MS. 192
Nye Family of Barnstable Papers, 1807-1947

Extent: One box.

Scope and Content Note: The collection consists of deeds, legal papers, correspondence, and other items related to the Nye family of Barnstable.

Biographical and historical information: This branch of the Nye family on Cape Cod included Jabez, a noted boat builder; Marcus, Superintendent of Rainsford Island in Boston Harbor; Thomas, a fisherman; Daniel, a banker; and Lewis, also a banker and avid historian. The line of descent is:

Jabez Nye, 1781-1866
|
Marcus Morton Nye, 1826-1902
|
Thomas Hinckley Nye, 1873-1947
|
Daniel Lewis Nye, 1899- 1989
|
Lewis Cole Nye, 1930-1921

Jabez Nye lived at the homestead on Route 6A near Coggins/Hinckley Pond that once belonged to Governor Thomas Hinckley. Jabez married Polly Hinckley, a descendant of the Governor. Jabez was, at one time, a foreman ship builder at the Charlestown Navy Yard, but later built boats locally. Marcus spent five years in the 1850s in California mining for gold, and ten years sailing on a number of ships in the Atlantic Trade. Upon his return to Barnstable he ran a general store at the Hinckley homestead, and he was appointed Superintendent of Rainsford Island in Boston Harbor. From the early 1700s to the 1920s Rainsford Island served at different times as a quarantine hospital, unmarked burial ground for the diseased and criminals, almshouse, veterans' hospital, reform school, and resort.

The federal style home of Jabez and Marcus Nye burned in 1892, and only the store building remains today, which is now a private home. That same year Marcus purchased the house and land west of his property, belonging to Daniel Scudder. Later in the 20th century the house was purchased by noted author Kurt Vonnegut and is still owned by the Vonnegut family as of this writing in 2023.

Long time Librarian of Sturgis Library, Elizabeth Crocker Nye, was the daughter of Marcus Nye, sister of Thomas H. Nye, and beloved aunt of Daniel Lewis Nye. She died in 1960 at the age of 93.

Access: Unrestricted. Credit Sturgis Library Archives for publication purposes.

Acquisition: Donated by the estate of Lewis Cole Nye via Day Pitney LLP, Christiana Gianopulos, Attorney, West Hartford, CT.

Processed by: Lucy Loomis, May 2023. Materials added January 2026.

CONTENTS:

Two volume Genealogy of the Nye Family

Rolled loose in box – 1919 Barnstable High School Diploma completing the English course of study by Daniel Lewis Nye

Small folder 1:

- Miscellaneous information on the Barnstable Nye family ancestry
- Jabez and Marcus Nye house and store
- Obituary for Marcus Nye
- Obituary for Elizabeth Crocker Nye and photo of Librarian "Miss Nye" in from of Sturgis Library, and a photo of the Library circa 1936. (Originals and copies)
- Information on Daniel Lewis Nye
- Lewis Nye obituary
- Genealogical and historical information on the Nye family

Large folder 2:

- 1807-1820 – Four requests for payment to Jabez Nye from John Loring, Nathaniel Smith, Larned Sears, and Ebenezer Crocker
- 1807 – Deed from Desire Smith of Barnstable to Jabez Nye, for homestead in Barnstable. A second deed, dated the same day for the same property, is appended, from Jabez Nye to Desire Smith for half the price of the first transaction.
- 1816 – Three recommendations for Jabez Nye, boatbuilder from Joseph Bartlett, ____ Morton, Sr., and Nathaniel Spooner.
- 1820 – Pew deed from Joseph Crocker, guardian of Hitty Nye, 1/5th of the southerly half of a pew in the meetinghouse of the East Precinct of Barnstable.
- 1828 – Estate sale of property in Falmouth of the late Thomas Weeks to Ephriam Parker, both of Falmouth.
- 1828 – Deed from Ephraim Parker of Falmouth to Jabez Nye, Joshua Loring, and Isaiah Hinkley 40 rods of land and buildings on Shore Road in Falmouth.
- 1828 – Deed from Jabez Nye to sons William and Jabez, 18 acres of land to be divided equally
- 1852 – Estate sale to Jabez Nye for one fourth part of the Ephraim Parker place.

- Undated – Receipt for expenses on Ephraim Parker's house
- 1857 – Fragment of a letter from unknown writer "at sea." After leaving Angier, the writer notes that they have "lost another one of our number," Ephraim Eldridge of Barnstable. "He was taken sick at noon and died about two o'clock at night." This letter may have been written by Marcus Nye during his years in the Atlantic trade.
- 1874 – Deed from Freeman Taylor to Marcus Nye for salt meadow in Barnstable.
- 1883 – Probate Court document. Marcus Nye appointed special administrator for the estate of Mary L. Eldridge.
- 1884 – J.H. Loring (Joseph) letter to Marcus Nye from the western mining camp at Suisun, California, talking about getting tired of the mining life and longing to come home. He advised Marcus to "let" his home.
- 1884 – Account statement of Zarletta Gibbs from the estate of Freeman Gibbs.
- 1885 – Notary statement regarding Joseph Loring from California notary John Huckins.
- 1885 – Quit claim deed from Joseph Loring to Marcus Nye for Barnstable house and property belonging to his later sister Mary Eldridge.
- 1886 – Marcus Nye given power of attorney on Joseph Loring's behalf.
- 1895 – Marriage certificate of Thomas Hinckley Nye and Nellie Dexter Jones, married at the Unitarian Church.
- 1897 – Deed from Sarah Parker to Kate Nye for Barnstable Village land and buildings.
- 1899 – Certificate of birth for Daniel Lewis Nye
- 1900 – Deed from Sarah Parker, widow, to Thomas H. Nye, land and buildings in the village of Barnstable
- 1900 – Deed from Thomas Nye to Thomas Clay for real estate and buildings in the village of Barnstable.
- 1900 – Quit claim deed. Kate (Mrs. Lemuel) Nye releases all rights to her Barnstable Village property to Sarah A. Parker.
- 1914 – Barnstable Public Schools Grammar Department certificate to Daniel Lewis Nye.
- 1922 – Note from Clarence Bangs, real estate agent, telling Mr. Nye he will not stand in his way if he wants to sell his home to Mr. Daniels.
- 1925 – Estate document. Mortgage of the late Thomas Day given to Thomas Nye by Helen Day.
- 1925 – Deed from Thomas H. Nye to Daniel L. Nye for all the household furniture and furnishings in his dwelling house now occupied by Thomas' wife Nellie Nye.
- 1926 – To Elizabeth Nye, receipt of bank book at Hyannis Trust & Co. Savings Department in the name of Colleen Campbell for the benefit of Manta Demarest Nye.
- 1947 – Telegram from "Aunt Betty" (Elizabeth Crocker Nye) to her nephew Daniel Nye, notifying him that his father Thomas passed away suddenly and will be buried at Lothrop Hill Cemetery.

Small folder #3:

- Papers relating to an interest in 976 Phinney's Lane, Centerville. Research was done at the Registry of Deeds, Sturgis Library, and Barnstable Probate to determine Lewis Cole Nye as Daniel Nye's only child, potentially having an interest in the property.