

William Eddings Baynard

By Lou Benfante

William Eddings Baynard was the son of Thomas Baynard and Sarah Calder (Caulder)- he was born February 12, 1800, on Edisto Island, South Carolina. Although he later owned several plantations on Hilton Head Island and in Bluffton, he always considered Edisto to be his home.

Thomas Baynard, his father, was born on Edisto Island in 1763 and died there in 1805. Thomas married Sarah Calder, daughter of Archibald Calder and Sarah Bailey, on July 8, 1784. He purchased the 600 acre Spanish Wells Plantation from the Mongins around 1790. Thomas and Sarah had four sons: John, who died young, Ephraim Mikell, Archibald Calder, and William Eddings Baynard.

Thomas' younger brother, William Baynard Jr., was born on Edisto Island in 1772, and died in 1802. He married Sarah Black in 1791 and settled on the 850 acre Muddy Creek Plantation which he purchased in 1792.

Ephraim Mikell Baynard (1796-1865), William Edding Baynard's older brother, lived the life of a recluse on his Edisto Island plantation, and was a very wealthy businessman, considered to be the first millionaire in South Carolina. After the Civil War he made a donation of \$166,000 to Charleston College. He is also reported to have given each of his 17 nieces and nephews a plantation with sufficient slaves to operate it.

Archibald Calder Baynard (1797-1865) was a graduate of the South Carolina College in Columbia, and later served in the South Carolina Legislature.

William Eddings Baynard eventually inherited Spanish Wells Plantation from his father and purchased Muddy Creek from his uncle William's estate. In the 1820's he also acquired Buckingham Plantation on the mainland. He was a very successful planter of Sea Island Cotton. There are legends which say that William Eddings Baynard won the 1,000 acre Braddock's Point Plantation from Col. John Joseph Stoney in a poker game. The poker game was reputedly played in Bluffton's "Card House." This house later became the residence of William's son, Ephraim, who managed the Hilton Head Island properties after his father's death. Actually, a deed from the Bank of Charleston conveyed Braddock's Point Plantation to William Eddings Baynard on December 17, 1845 for \$10,000. The Braddock Point house, now known as the Baynard Ruins, was built starting in 1793 by James Stoney (1772-1827). The site of the house covers 9.8 acres. The main structure, with its two foot thick tabby foundation measures 40'6" X 46'6 1/2" and also has a tabby chimney. Also in 1845, William Eddings Baynard purchased the Davenport House in Savannah, which served as the family's Savannah town house. He built a granite mausoleum in the cemetery of the Zion Chapel of Ease in 1846, which today is the oldest structure still standing on Hilton Head Island. It is an imposing gabled mausoleum, with a protecting iron fence fixed in granite posts.

Above the doorway, which originally was fitted with a pair of full-length white marble doors, are the raised letters: WM. E. BAYNARD

William Eddings Baynard married Catherine Adelaide Scott (born December 18, 1812 and died May 29, 1854) on July 19, 1829. She was the daughter of Joseph Adams Scott (1781-1826), the owner of Grasslawn Plantation, and she was also the niece of Squire Pope. Their main residence was on Edisto Island, where William owned a good deal of property. The couple had eight children.

William Eddings Baynard died May 2, 1849, at the Braddock's Point House (the Baynard Ruins). He was funeralized at the Zion Chapel of Ease by the Reverend Alsop Woodward, Rector of the parish. His body was transported on a black-draped wagon-hearse followed by the Baynard's formal black carriage and other carriages and buggies carrying the mourning family and relatives. It was the most impressive funeral cortege ever assembled on the Island and the roads from Braddock's Point through Lawton's Calibogia, Pope's Point Comfort, Fickling's Shipyard, and Pope's Leamington and Chaplin Plantations were lined with slaves, who had been given the day off from their regular duties to honor the deceased. All the Island planters attended. The front pews in the Zion Chapel of Ease were occupied by Mrs. Baynard, who was then five months pregnant, and her seven children. She was escorted by her brother-in-law, Ephraim. As the carved marble doors of the mausoleum were closed and locked, there was a great wailing which preceded the long procession back down the road to the Braddock's Point house. Another ghost story and legend recounts how Islanders, to this day, have claimed to have seen the dark, swaying procession making its weary way to the now empty mausoleum.

Catherine Adelaide Scott Baynard was only 42 years old when she died in 1854. She was laid to rest in the mausoleum beside her husband. They rested there undisturbed until the 1940's when vandals crashed through the marble doors and threw their caskets into a marsh.

During the Civil War, all the white settlers and plantation owners left the island, including Ephraim Baynard, William's son, who left the island in 1861. The tabby house was occupied by Union officers. The government siezed all the land on Hilton Head Island. William Baynard's heirs did not come forward to pay the taxes, penalties and interest of \$155 on the Braddock's Point plantation property, so the government purchased the land at auction for \$845. The Stoney/Baynard mansion was consumed by a fire in 1867. The Baynards repurchased the land in 1875 for \$533 in back taxes, with the exception of 45 acres at the tip of Braddock's Point which the government reserved as a possible site for a lighthouse. The Baynards never attempted to reside on the plantation again. In 1893 Elizabeth Baynard Ullmer executed a lawsuit against the other heirs to establish the claim of William's son Ephraim's children for a share of the estate. The court ordered the land sold to satisfy her claim and on February 19, 1894, William P. Clyde bought Braddock's Point and Spanish Wells for \$4,683.

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NEIGHBORHOOD CONCERNS

Residents of Buckingham Landing have been especially vociferous in their opposition to the plan over the last few years.

"It's just too expensive and we don't believe it's money well-spent," said Bill Marscher, who lives in the neighborhood. "It just seems like they can pick on us because we're a small community and not a gated community. I'd like to see them try something like this in Moss Creek or Hilton Head Plantation."

Kubic said they are making every effort to lessen the impact on the community.

"We worked really hard to be as least intrusive as possible on the marsh and the environment as possible," he said.

While their County Council representative, Baer, understands their plight, he said, "I also think what my constituents have to understand is that we have to keep the larger picture in mind and do what's best for the greatest number of people. I'm very sympathetic that this project will affect some of the 50 or so families in Buckingham Landing. The sheer fact of the matter is that they're going ahead with the flyovers. We have to do what's best for the greatest number of people."

Meanwhile, the fact is also that voters gave a thumbs-up to the plan in 2006, said Kubic.

"The flyovers are very similar to what happened with the Cross Island," he said. "At the end of the day people adapted to them – and they'll adapt to the flyovers."

The Lowcountry Baynards

BY LOU BENFANTE, HERITAGE LIBRARY FOUNDATION

Editor's Note: In celebration of the 350th anniversary of the sighting of Hilton Head Island, and the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Town of Hilton Head Island, a group of volunteers are organizing a 350/30 year anniversary blowout to commemorate both events with a town open house Sept. 30 and a beach party Oct. 5. Monthly proudly presents the following, the first in a series of historical articles leading up to the event.

Thomas Baynard, a post-Revolutionary War plantation owner, and his wife, Sarah Calder, had four sons. The Baynards purchased Spanish Wells Plantation in 1790 and owned other plantations on Edisto Island as well.

One son, John, died young. His brother, Archibald, was a scholar and member of the SC Legislature. Their other two sons, Ephraim Mikell and William Eddings, became very wealthy from growing Sea Island cotton on their plantations.

When Ephraim was a young man planning to be married, he spent a small fortune purchasing a carriage, silver service, etc., only to be jilted by the young lady. He then lived as a recluse and devoted his efforts to his business. As a result of his hard work and the demand for Sea Island cotton in England, he became the first millionaire in South Carolina. It is reported that he gave each one of his 17 nieces and nephews a plantation with sufficient slaves to operate it. Ephraim Mikell also made a donation of \$166,000 to Charleston College in 1864, which kept it from closing its doors. Inside the chapel of the College of Charleston, the following is etched in marble in honor of Ephraim Baynard, "who made possible the continued existence of the College when it seemed the War had utterly impoverished and almost destroyed the Southern institutions of learning."

William Eddings Baynard, who owned plantations on Edisto Island, inherited Spanish Wells from his father, purchased Muddy Creek Plantation from his Uncle William's estate, and bought Buckingham Plantation in Bluffton in the 1820s. There are rumors that he won Braddock's Point Plantation in a poker game with John Stoney, but in fact, he purchased Braddock's Point Plantation from the Bank of Charleston for \$10,000 in 1845. That same year, he



also acquired the Davenport House in Savannah.

He built a granite mausoleum in the cemetery of the Zion Chapel of Ease in 1846, which today is the oldest structure still standing on Hilton Head Island. It is an imposing gabled mausoleum, with a protecting iron fence fixed in granite posts. The doorway originally was fitted with a pair of full-length white marble doors. He only enjoyed his home in Braddock's Point for a few years. He died in 1849 at the Stoney/Baynard house which led to a most impressive funeral procession. The roads between his home and the mausoleum were lined with slaves, whose owners had given them the day off in his honor.

A black-draped wagon carrying his body led the procession, followed by the Baynard's formal black carriage and numerous other carriages which transported family and friends. His funeral was attended by all the island plantation owners — Stoney, Kirk, Pope, Lawton, Drayton and Seabrook.

His brother, Ephraim, escorted Mrs. Baynard, who was expecting their eighth child at the time, and her seven children. A ghost story recounts how islanders have claimed to have seen the dark funeral procession swaying as it makes its way between what is now the Baynard Ruins and the Baynard Mausoleum.

Island History



GHOSTS OF THE PAST—The Baynard vault in the cemetery at the corner of Hwy. 278 and Industrial Parkway.



REBUILDING—The remains of William F. Baynard's plantation home in Sea Pines which was built