

Nathaniel Crow (1823 – 1912)

Nathaniel Crow's early life was difficult. In 1825 in Ohio, his father died suddenly, leaving his young mother with a pioneer farm to run and 5 young children. The oldest sons were sent away as bound boys, and in desperation, Patsy married a widower 30 years older. Nathaniel, only 2 years old, was allowed to stay with his mother and new stepfather, but his young life was not an easy existence.

In 1845, upon reaching the age of 21, Nathaniel received his inheritance from his father's will, giving him just enough to purchase a horse & saddle plus an extra \$25 in his pocket. An uncle on his mother's side, Dr. James Hull, was an early settler in northern Indiana, building his farm near Indian Village on what is now the Noble and Kosciusko County line. Nathaniel traveled alone on horseback from his childhood home in Champagne Co., Ohio, to the wilderness of Indiana. This is only about 12 years after the Indians were to move west.

Once in Indiana, he traded his earthly belongings to purchase 80 acres of unimproved land in Van Buren Township, Kosciusko County.¹ After several years of working the land and teaching subscription school, in 1850 Nathaniel Crow was able to purchase land along the eastern shore of what we know now as Lake Wawasee from the bankrupt Wabash Erie Canal Company.²

Nathaniel boarded with a neighbor, Joseph Moore and his wife Mary, just east of his newly purchased land. Mrs. Moore's younger sister, Miss Louisa Eliza Airgood would occasionally come for a visit from her mother's home in New Paris. Nathaniel and Eliza were married in October of 1852. Eliza had been born in Germany on Sept. 13, 1832 (we share a birthday!). Along with her parents and 2 sisters, she sailed to America she was 3 months old. She learned to walk on the ship's rolling deck. When they reached Lower Manhattan³ she was nine months old!

Together, Nathaniel & Eliza acquired a wealth of over 560 acres around Lake Wawasee, practically all of it within the former Flat Belly Reserve. They were one of the largest real estate owners in the county.

Of the 8 children born to Nathaniel & Eliza, four died in infancy or at a very young age, and 3 died as young parents. Nathaniel and Eliza provided land on the edge of the original 80-acre purchase to build the Lake Bethel Church in 1862, a one room schoolhouse and the Lake Bethel Cemetery.

Nathaniel and his wife, Eliza, are buried in the center of the cemetery. High on the very tall spire of their headstone is an inscription, "Earth to earth, dust to dust, in God we trust." In an area south of the small burial ground, if one looks closely, he can see the remains of the Lake Bethel Church of God which was used from 1858.

¹ Nathaniel Crow came to Kosciusko County from Ohio about 1845. He first bought 80 acres of land in Van Buren Township from J. R. Godman for \$33, the deed April 2, 1845, Section 6, T34N R6E, the west end of N ½ NW ¼ (Kosciusko County Deed Book 5, page 196). He sold this land February 9, 1853 to Edward and John Mathews for \$250. Nathaniel Crow bought **four parcels of land in Section 24, Turkey Creek Township**, Kosciusko County around Lake Wawasee. He first bought 80 acres from the Board of Trustees of the Wabash and Erie Canal. It was recorded May 31, 1850 as the W ½ NE ¼ Section 24 T34N R7E. It was filed with the clerk of the land office in Logansport, and purchased by Nathaniel Crow at the office at Delphi, Certificate number 1842. On September 5, 1860, Nathaniel and Eliza Crow deeded one acre of this land to Turkey Creek Township for a Union Church burying ground, the NW corner of W ½ NE ¼ Section 24 T34N R7E.

² This **canal** was never built in Kosciusko County, and was probably never intended to go through this county. Around 1827 to 1828, Congress allocated many acres of public land to be sold to finance this ambitious project, a canal to connect Lake Erie to the Wabash River. Only part of the project was ever built, a tremendous engineering feat in those primitive times. The project was doomed because of lack of adequate funding and unpredictable and unreliable levels of water in the canal, and ultimately because of the coming of the railroad in the 1860's ("The Wabash and Erie Canal", Rex M. Potterf 1970).

³ Mattie wrote the account from memory of the story told by her mother and grandmother. After arriving, they had 7 more children



Descendants of
Lucy Ann Crow
1860-1898
& Henry Doll

Theries & Minnie
Doll

Byron Doll

Louisa Dianna "Lulu"
Doll Gibbons

Lucy Ann Crow Doll (1860 – 1898) was born just prior to the Civil War in original log cabin Nathaniel built on his land.⁴ Lucy taught at the Lake Bethel School from 1880-1883. Lucy Ann Crow married Henry Hiram Doll in June, 1884, and they lived in LaGrange. IN.



"Lulu," Nathaniel, "Mattie"
Striebly School Reunion, 1910



Pictures taken on Crow's Nest front porch

Left (1909): *Patterson, "Lulu," & "Mattie"
Above (1911): "Mattie" & "Lulu" just before
Martha "Mattie" Crow wed Albert Fick

*Patterson later kidnapped Mrs. Sargent

Their first children, Joy Nell (1886–1889) & Nathaniel Lewis Doll (1888–1889) died young and share a headstone in the Lake Bethel Cemetery. Pneumonia struck the family in 1898 taking the life of Lucy Crow Doll, leaving 3 young children: Theries (age 8) and Byron, 5 years old and baby Louisa Dianna "Lulu" (around age 3).⁵ Mattie Crow took on the care of her sister Lucy's young daughter, "Lulu," raising her at Crow's Nest. Read in Eli Lilly's "Early Wawasee Memories" about Patterson's abduction of Mrs. Sargent. Lucy's boys, Theries & Byron, lived with family,⁶ helping their grandfather with the farm.

⁴ Lucy grew to adulthood in a frame house on the same site. The family later moved to the Crow's Nest on the high ground. Chuck Crow said his Dad would point out two brick houses on the east side of Turkey Creek Road, just north of either 1050N or Natti Crow Rd. saying that's where the original cabin was & subsequent frame house.

⁵ (1895-1989)

⁶ Theries at Crow's Nest (Sandi Fick Ulery) or by a series of stepmothers (Pete Doll family); Byron with Nellie & George Dull in the original Crow homestead a short distance from Crow's Nest; helped their grandfather on the farm.



Theries Doll born Aug. 4, 1890 to Lucy Crow & Henry Doll

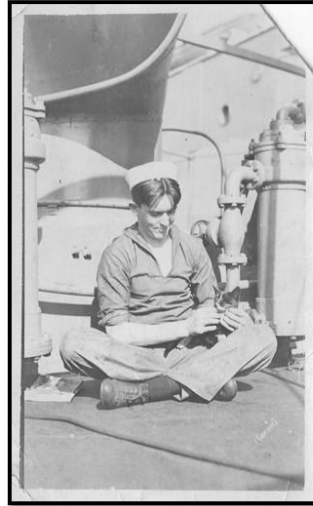


Eventually Theries considered Mr. and Mrs. Homer Harting as his foster family. About 1900, the Hartings moved to Kalkaska, MI. At age 14, Theries started logging in the nearby lumber camps. While there, he met & married Minnie Simon in 1913, and they came to IN, owning the farm that became Enchanted Hills – property which his grandfather, Nathaniel Crow, had owned. Theries and his sons had a maple sugar camp on that farm. Their home was built on a high bank overlooking Wawasee fairly near Crow’s Nest. In addition to farming, Theries did some earth work on Cedar Point using a horse and scraper, plus he worked with Don McCulloch from the time Don got into the excavating business in 1965 until Theries was 78 years old! Minnie and Theries had 3 sons, Herman “Mike” of Cromwell, Elvin, Arnold “Pete” of Milford, and a daughter, Ellabelle “Ellie” who married Jack Carr of Syracuse.



We’re grateful to Nathaniel Crow’s great grandson, Pete Doll, of Milford for these pictures and information!! Pete is retired from Chorettime Brock in Milford, and his wife Becky owned Doll’s Decorating there. Their son Dan works as a rocket scientist in Culpepper, VA; son Dave works for Brock Manufacturing (his wife Bobi is a hairdresser in Milford & my initial enthusiastic contact), and Dick is a nurse in Elkhart. Several grandchildren continue the Nathaniel Crow descendant line. Just last evening I was able to contact Darlene Doll who summers on Crow Road and found out that her husband’s father is Pete’s brother Elvin Louie!!! Her sons from Tipp City, OH are both in the audience today! I’ll be following up on that line of the family.

Byron Doll, born June 21, 1892 to Lucy Crow & Henry Doll



Theries' brother, Byron Doll (6/21/1892 – 4/7/1949) was in the Navy in 1912 and had several children.



SHS 1913



Their younger sister, Louisa Dianna "Lulu" (1895-1989) was raised mostly by her Aunt Mattie at Crow's Nest. She became a schoolteacher, and in 1915 went by train with a friend, Mary Miles (colorized oval; her father, George Miles, was the original Syracuse historian), to teach in a mining town in New Mexico (NE of Tucson)⁷. Most of the students only spoke Spanish, and her first words in Spanish were "sit down."⁸ In 1918, Lulu graduated from New Mexico Normal University and returned to IN, later marrying Arthur Gibbons of Ligonier and had several children.

⁷ Mogollon, NM is a ghost town worth visiting – halfway between Tuscon & Albuquerque in Gila Ntl. Forest off NM 180

⁸ Taken from an article about the girls' experiences that belongs to Anne Grayson, daughter of Louise Doll Gibbons