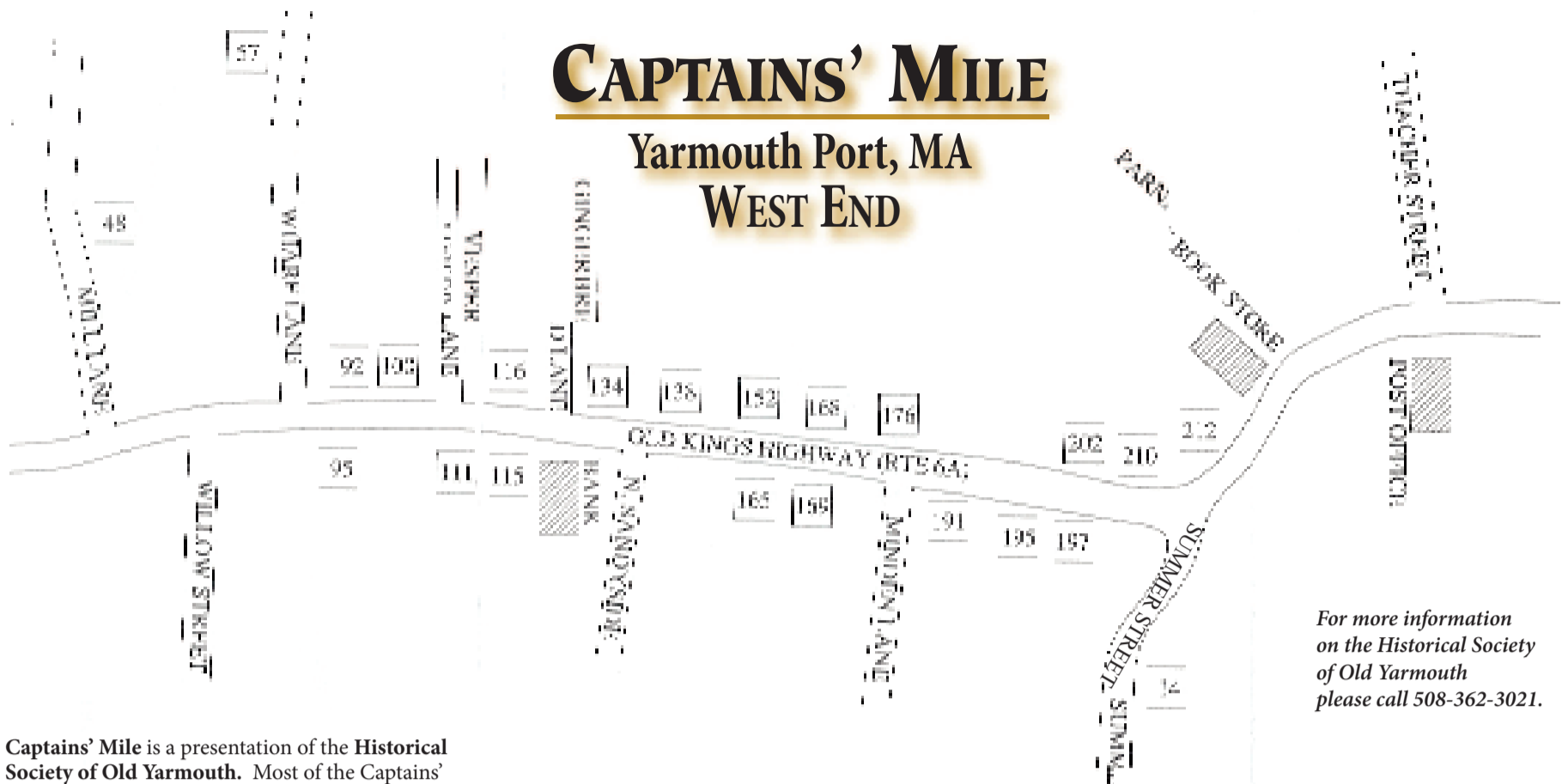


# CAPTAINS' MILE

## Yarmouth Port, MA WEST END



For more information  
on the Historical Society  
of Old Yarmouth  
please call 508-362-3021.

**Captains' Mile** is a presentation of the **Historical Society of Old Yarmouth**. Most of the Captains' homes described on the tour are private residences. Please be considerate of the owners' privacy.

### 48 MILL LANE Captain Ansel Hallet (1770-1832)

One of the pioneers of the packet industry, he commanded the *Betsy* after the war of 1812. Later he command the sloop *Messenger* which was grounded on a sandbar in Yarmouth Port harbor in 1832. As he dug beneath the ship in an attempt to free her, the vessel rolled over and crushed him to death.

### 57 WHARF LANE Captain Edward Hallet (1798-1878)

Captain Hallet commanded the packet sloop *Eagle Flight*. It made regular run between Boston and Yarmouth. Its cargo contained "Spirits" that were served in the Doane's Tavern (#450 Old King's Highway). In the "Great Sailing Match" of 1837 five vessels raced from Barnstable to Boston "*Commodore Hull*" was first; "*Eagle Flight*" was second.

### 92 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain John Eldridge (1798-1874)

Captain of transatlantic packet "*Liverpool*." Captain John and his two brothers, Captain Asa and Oliver, made Cape Cod captains famous. He began his seafaring life at age 12 principally commanding transatlantic packet ships. During the Civil War, he was in charge of the Union transport ships. He had a wonderful physique, tremendous strength and a powerful voice. When he retired his home became known for hospitality and grand manners. He was a cultured man who enjoyed the finer things in life, which he shared with his neighbors.

### 95 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Allen H. Knowles (1814-1875)

Captain Bangs Hallet built this home. When he was ready to retire, he swapped it for #11 Strawberry Lane with Captain Knowles. Captain Knowles was a Master Captain and part owner of the *Chariot of Fame*, in which he carried hundreds of passengers to Australia and New Zealand. He received a silver pitcher from the British Government for saving the crew of the British ship *Romulus*. A chair he needlepointed is on display at the Bangs Hallet House.

### 100 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Asa Eldridge (1809-1855)

Captain Asa Eldridge was the most famous of the Yarmouth shipmasters. In 1854, he set a record, sailing the *Red Jacket* from New York City to Liverpool, England in just 13 days and 1 hour. Almost 2 years later he lost his life on the steamer *Pacific* which sank in the Irish Sea during the voyage from Liverpool to New York. He was 46 years of age. His portrait and a daguerreotype are on display at the Bangs Hallet House.

### 111 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Rubin Howes

Henry Basset was the original owner of this home. His grandson, Captain Rubin Howes lived here and became an antique dealer upon retiring from the sea. His house is known as one of "The Three Sisters."

### 115 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Nathan Hallet (born in 1797)

Captain Nathan Hallet was one of the earliest packet masters. He was elected to the Alms House Building Committee in 1831. This is one of the older houses in Yarmouth Port.

### 116 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain George Taylor (born 1827)

His wife Abigail had a son George was born retarded. George never got over his son's disability. He sailed to China and never returned. He continued to send money home to provide for his wife and child.

### 134 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Frederick Howes (1812-1882)

Captain of ship *Climax*. This was Captain Howes' summer home. He is known for his invention of a sail called the "Howes Rig." It was more efficient and easier to handle than the single topsail. He was known as the commodore of the captains, the oldest, wisest and most impressive.

### 138 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Winthrop Sears (1818-1883)

Captain Sears built this house. He went to sea at 13 years and at 21

was the master of the brig *Robert Hall*. During the Civil War he commanded a vessel in the Union Transport System. He retired at age 55 and became a selectman, director of a bank, assessor and overseer of the poor. He also commanded barks *Tremont* and *Ocean Pearl*, the ship *Conquest*, and several steamers.

### 152 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain William Crowell (born in 1820)

Not much is known about Captain Crowell. As a sea captain, he was one of several Crowell family members to reside in Yarmouth Port. There are 43 sea captains from Yarmouth named Crowell.

### 165 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Bangs Hallet (1807-1893)

Captain Bangs Hallet built this house before he built the house at #95 Old King's Highway. Later this house was occupied by Frederick C. Swift, attorney, Justice of the First District Court, notary public and justice of the peace.

### 168 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain James Bacon Crocker (1804-1883)

Captain Crocker engaged in the East Indies and China trade. He commanded the *Eben Preble* which was said to have been one of the finest East Indiamen sailing from Boston. He retired before his 40th year and built this home for his family. He ran a general store at the corner of 6A and Willow Street (currently Fresh Picked). The original store burnt down in 1863. The replacement building was brought from Nantucket, where it had been a sperm oil candle factory.

### 169 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Nathaniel Matthews (1806-1885)

Captain Matthews commanded the famous clipper *Winged Arrow*. During his command of the *Morning Star*, he was sent by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to aid in their work for Foreign Missions to aid in their work in the South Sea Islands. He was admired for his personal appearance. He was a clerk and treasurer of the First Congregational Society.

### 176 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Josiah Gorham (1809-1875)

Captain Gorham commanded some of the finest ships that sailed from Boston, including the *Kit Carson*, built at Shiverick Shipyards in East Dennis. He and five of his six brothers became sea captains. The Register wrote, "His residence is a pretentious and substantial affair" indicating that the captain was a man of means and taste.

### 191 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Paddock Thacher (1797-1867)

Captain Thacher commanded the schooner *Commodore Hull* which was later commanded by Captain Thomas Matthews (#197 Old King's Highway). Later he commanded the sloop *Simon P. Cole*.

### 195 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain William Doane Loring (born in 1823)

Captain William Loring, a master mariner for 25 years, retired from the sea and ran a grain store. Captain of the bark *Governor Hinckley*.

### 197 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Thomas Matthews (born in 1808)

Captain Matthews succeeded Captain Paddock Thatcher (#191 Old King's Highway) as Commander of the *Commodore Hull* winning the "Great Sailing Match" in 1837. In 1841 he built the schooner *Yarmouth*. He spent much of his career racing to Boston, beating the times of the Barnstable Packets. When the railroads came he became a station agent for the railroad.

### 202 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Otis White (1826-1864)

Prentis White, the original owner, willed this house to his son Captain Otis White. Captain White commanded three ships in his short life, the *Competitor*, the *Renown*, and the *Ringleader*. In 1862, The *Ringleader* was wrecked off the coast of Formosa, the wreck caused by Chinese mooncussers. He died two years later at the age 37. His portrait hangs in the Bangs Hallet House.

### 210 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Isaac Myrick (born in 1792)

Captain Myrick commanded a packet which sailed between New York and Savannah for several years. After his sea career, he engaged in business in New York, then later became a Yarmouth merchant. There are two buildings joined together on this lot (#208 and #210).

### 212 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY Captain Henry Arey (1841-1913)

Captain Arey was a Civil War veteran. He commanded the gun boat *Wilderness*. At Fort Fisher, he towed a powder boat with the *Wilderness* and fired her cargo of 215 tons of powder in an attempt to blow up the fort.

### 14 SUMMER STREET Captain Edward Gorham (born in 1810)

Captain of packet *North*. Captain Gorham lived here from 1860 until 1900. He sailed the last packet boat to Boston in May 1871. This sailing was symbolic in that it ushered out the old way of life (packet ships) and introduced a new way of life (railroads).

## CAPTAINS' MILE Yarmouth Port, MA

A WALKING TOUR  
OF HISTORIC  
SEA CAPTAINS' HOMES  
LOCATED IN THE VILLAGE  
OF YARMOUTH PORT, MA.

Look for houses  
with the Schooner Plaque



Presented by the  
**Historical Society  
of Old Yarmouth**

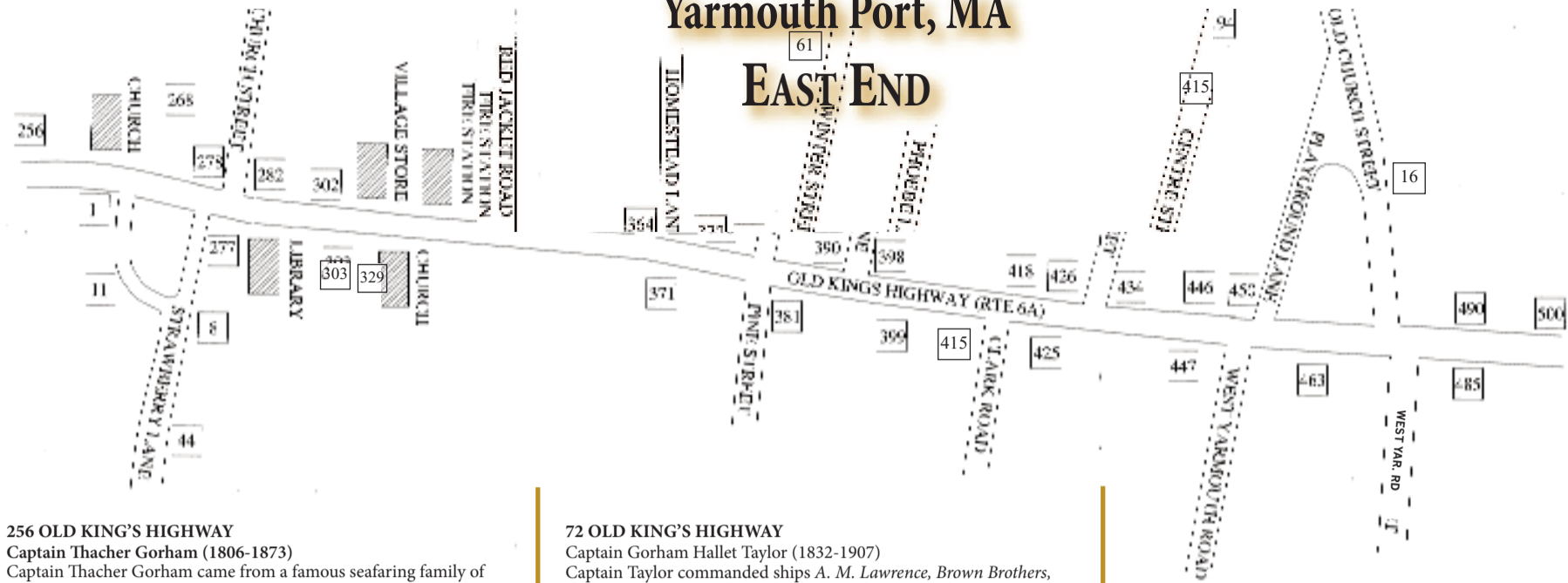


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Yarmouth's  
Tourism Fund.

# CAPTAINS' MILE

## Yarmouth Port, MA

### EAST END



#### 256 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Thacher Gorham (1806-1873)**

Captain Thacher Gorham came from a famous seafaring family of 7 brothers where all but one became sea captains. He commanded the ship *John and Albert*. One brother was a cobbler. His shop is now the Administration Office and Archives of the Historical Society.

#### 268 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Benjamin Hawes**

Captain Hawes built this house. A mariner and prominent member of the local militia. The house originally stood where the "New Jerusalem Church" is. It was moved to its current location in 1870.

#### 1 STRAWBERRY LANE

**Captain George Matthews (1810-1882)**

Captain Matthews, at age 19, was second mate on a ship sailing where the captain, his wife and the first mate died from yellow fever. Second mate Matthews brought the ship safely into home port. After this accomplishment he was granted command of the *National Eagle*. His picture and a model of the *National Eagle* are at the Bangs Hallet House. He also commanded the ship *Uncle Sam*.

#### 8 STRAWBERRY LANE

**Captain Edmund Hawes**

This house is currently known as the Edward Gorey house. It was originally built by Captain Hawes in 1820. Captain Hawes was lost at sea during a storm.

#### 11 STRAWBERRY LANE

**Captain Bangs Hallet (1807-1893)**

This was the house of Captain Allen Knowles. He swapped it for #95 Old King's Highway with Captain Bangs Hallet who was a captain in the China-India trade. This was Captain Hallet's retirement home. In 1846, Captain Hallet commanded the *Faneuil Hall* which carried a group of Baptist missionaries to Burma. Today this is the home of the Historical Society of Old Yarmouth. He also captained the brig *Pilgrim*, the bark *Burlington*, the ships *Herbert*, *Nantucket*, *Cato*, *Faneuil Hall* and *Gertrude*.

#### 44 STRAWBERRY LANE

**Captain Freeman Taylor (born in 1803)**

Captain of the schooner *Leo*. Captain Taylor served as a representative to the State Legislature. He was the father of 10 children and the father of Captain George Taylor (116 Old King's Highway).

#### 277 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Joseph Eldridge (1775-1856)**

Now known as the Colonial House Inn. Captain Eldridge moved into this home shortly after his marriage. After leaving the sea, he became a representative in the State Legislature. He lived in this house until his death in 1856.

#### 278 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Winthrop Baker (died 1878)**

Captain Baker built and lived in this house. The property was a gift to his wife, Sallie Hawes, from her mother. He died in Brockton.

#### 282 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Thacher Taylor (1798-1877)**

Captain Thacher Taylor was engaged in the fishing business and owned a storehouse on Central Wharf with Captain John Hawes. The storehouse was carried away in the storm of 1853. Captain Taylor was town Clerk, Treasurer, Selectman and Assessor.

#### 302 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Seth Taylor (1835-1911)**

Captain of clipper *Robin Hood*, ships *Fairwind*, *Fortune* and *Agenor*, Captain Seth Taylor was a famous Sea Commander. At age of 21, as the first mate on the *Robin Hood*, he brought her safely into port after the captain died at sea. His wife Hannah often went to sea with him and brought young son Seth.

#### 303 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Thomas Ryder**

Captain Ryder had this house built sometime between 1835 and 1845. He took up poultry farming when he retired from the sea. He was a long time member of the Boston Marine Society.

#### 329 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Joseph Henry Bray (1838-1894)**

Captain of schooners *Hattie S. Williams* and *William Lorman Roberts*. He was a pioneer in sailing large three-masted schooners.

#### 364 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Oliver Gorham (1813-1878)**

Captain Oliver Gorham was one of six Gorham brothers to become a sea captain. In 1874, while in command of the bark *Alice Campbell*, he rescued 6 men, (the captain, the first mate and 4 crew members) from the shipwrecked *Thomas B. Barkalow*, after they had been adrift for 11 days.

#### 371 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Nathaniel Taylor (1817-1867)**

Captain Taylor, a packet captain, commanded the schooners *Yarmouth* and *Lucy Elizabeth*. He built this house in 1845. Due to a severe arm injury, he relinquished his command and opened a dry goods store behind his home. He lived there until his death in 1867.

#### 72 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Gorham Hallet Taylor (1832-1907)**

Captain Taylor commanded ships *A. M. Lawrence*, *Brown Brothers*, *Cleopatra* and brig *American*. While commanding the *A.M. Lawrence*, he was challenged by a mutinous crew. One of the crew struck a blow to the captain's head. The captain called for his pistols. His six year old daughter got the pistols to her father, thus saved his life.

#### 378 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Isaac Matthew Bray (born in 1840)**

Captain of barks *H. G. Johnson* and *Western Belle*. Captain Bray moved the original half cape house that had been on this property to make room for his new home. The first floor of his house is laid out like a ship.

#### 61 WINTER STREET

Captain Joseph Gorham (died 1897) – He was one of 8 sons, all but one of whom became sea captains. He was the twin of Captain Benjamin Gorham. Joseph Gorham traveled to the Mediterranean 37 times. He was a mate on the *Burlington* under Captain Bangs Hallet when it was struck by lightning, burned, and sank.

#### 381 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Ezra Howes (1836-1896)**

J. M. Fisher, the original owner, ran a marble shop and granite works in the back of the home. He sold the house to Captain Howes, born in Dennis, who was an invalid, in the 1800's. The house still has the original marble surrounds on many of its fireplaces. In addition, there was a windmill located on the property.

#### 390 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Charles M. Bray (born in 1832)**

Captain Bray, commanded three masted schooners. When he retired he operated a lumber and building supply business out of his backyard. The store was located in a shed. His clientele were poor people to whom he sold items to at a cheaper price.

#### 398 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Sylvanus Robbins (1817-1886)**

Captain Robbins retired from the sea and became a farmer. His farm stretched from the back of his home to the bay. The glass panels in the front doors are a beautiful example of Sandwich glass.

#### 399 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Gorham Howland (born 1800)**

Captain Howland lived in this house, which is a wonderful example of the architecture popular on the Cape at the time. The house was built around 1825.

#### 415 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Nathaniel Matthews (1806 - 1885)**

**Captain Henry Bray (1821 - 1852)**

Captain Nathaniel Matthews, a prominent citizen of Yarmouth, who commanded many ships including the famous clipper *Winged Arrow*, acquired the property in 1835 from Ansel Matthews, who it passed to in 1834 from the estate of James Thacher, father of Ansel's wife Susan. The house was likely built circa 1815 when James Thacher acquired it from Joshua Hamblen. Captain Henry Bray and his wife Deborah Custis Bray purchased the property with 30 acres from Captain Nathaniel Matthews in 1850. Henry Bray, Captain and Master of the schooner *Susan*, died in Port Au Prince, Haiti of yellow fever in 1852 and was buried at sea. Deborah continued to reside in the homestead with their daughter.

#### 418 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Oliver Matthews (1810-1883)**

Captain Matthews' brothers, Samuel, Nathaniel and Richard were all Shipmasters. Oliver commanded the Brig *Isabel* and was forced to retire at an early age due to illness. He built this house and resided in it from 1835 until his death at the age of 73 in 1883. His portrait is in the Bangs Hallet House.

#### 425 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Sylvanus Whelden (1817-1886)**

Captain Whelden went to sea at the age of 14. At 21 years, he changed his name from Edward to Sylvanus. By 24 years he worked his way to captain and visited many ports including Hong Kong, Calcutta, Yokohama and Liverpool. He commanded the *Maria L. Davis* which was consumed by flames in Boston Harbor.

#### 426 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Edwin Thacher (1835-1918)**

Captain Thacher commanded many ships for the Boston firm of Howes & Crowell, the *Audubon*, *Fleetwing*, *Ericson*, *Glendon* and *Ringleader*. He made more money for the firm than any other captain in their employ. He rounded Cape Horn 18 times, sailing to India, China, Japan, Australia, and Europe. Captain Thacher was active in the mercantile business after he retired from the sea.

#### 194 CENTER STREET

**Captain Solomon Taylor (1810-1873)**

Captain of ship *Oxen Bridge*. Captain Taylor was a successful shipmaster. He built his house when he retired from the sea. He was a deacon of the First Congregational Church and treasurer of the library.

#### 434 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Edmund B. Hamblin (1823-1884)**

Captain Hamblin commanded the bark *Nathaniel Cogswell*, the ships *Regent* and *Ringleader*. He was known as a careful judicious commander. When he retired from the sea, he became a cranberry farmer. He suffered a fatal heart attack while in his cranberry bogs.

#### 438 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Thomas Long (born 1818) – Captain Long was born in**

Harwich and moved to Yarmouth when he was ten. He married Nabby Taylor in 1842, and it is probable that this house was built for him by Alfred Thacher. Kittredge identifies Long as being a deep water captain, being involved in the foreign trade.

#### 446 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Nehemiah B. Wheldon**

Captain Wheldon was owner of this house. He built it for his wife. They had two children who were born one year apart and who died within a few days of birth.

#### 447 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Cyrus Hall (1817-1900)**

Captain Hall went to sea when he was 10 years of age. He sailed the China seas in ships that were built for him, the brigs *Nellie Hastings* and *Moses Tower* and the schooner *Cyrus Hall*. He lived here until his death on February 11th, 1900. He was also captain of the ship *Pleiades*.

#### 450 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Elisha Doane (1768-1848)**

**Captain John Bearse (1702-1777)**

Little is known of Bearse's sea going days. Elisha Doane lived here after Captain Bearse. Doane built a whaling vessel, the *George Washington* along with several other vessels. This dwelling became the 3rd tavern to open in Yarmouth. It was a celebrated meeting place and became known as "Squire Doane's Tavern."

#### 463 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Seth H. Hamblin (1821-1908)**

Captain of bark *Nathaniel Cogswell*. Captain Hamblin lived ashore for many years. He was the brother of E. B. Hamblin who lived at # 434 Old King's Highway. He manufactured cranberry barrels. Seth was the Road Commissioner in Yarmouth and lived here until his death in 1908.

#### 485 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Samuel Thacher (1841-1901)**

Captain Thacher commanded the barquentine *Albert Schultz* and schooners *Puritan*, *R.S. Spofford* and *John Twohy*. The original owner of this house, Watson Thacher, owned a carriage shop across the street. Watson sold the house to Captain Samuel Thacher. Samuel owned and operated a marine supplies store located at #490 Old King's Highway.

#### 490 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Samuel Thacher (1841-1901)**

Captain Thacher lived at #485 Old King's Highway. This building was a marine supplies store which he built. He saw this as a more lucrative and less dangerous means of earning a living than "going to sea." He sold chains, anchors, stays, cables, ropes, and other marine supplies.

#### 500 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

**Captain Samuel Matthews Jr. (1801-1882)**

Captain Matthews commanded brig *Samuel Russell*, bark *Utah*, ships *Robin Hood* and *Ringleader*. On one of the voyages, a crew member broke his leg and Captain Matthews set the bone. He opened a dry goods store business when he retired from the sea. He was also a representative to the State Legislature and a Yarmouth Selectman.

#### 16 OLD CHURCH STREET

**Capt. Benjamin Matthews, Jr. 1823-1862**

Captain Benjamin Matthews Jr. bought 16 Old Church St. on 2/21/1850, next door to his Aunt and Uncle Isaac and Susannah (Matthews) Ryder. He was the son of Benjamin Matthews and Jerusha Homer. Benjamin's father was also a mariner. He purchased the home shortly before his marriage to Mercy Walker of Harwich. In the 1850 census he is listed as fisherman, the 1855 State census he is listed as seaman, and the 1860 census as Master Mariner. On his headstone at the Ancient cemetery in Yarmouth he has the title Captain. Captain Matthews passed away at age 39 in 1862 but the home remained in the family until 1938. The home was purchased from Elisha Doane daughters and sons-in-law after Elisha's death and presently on the property is remnants of the Northside Ropeworks and the Pond Village Schoolhouse.