

## Captain Samuel Henry Thacher

Samuel H. Thacher was born in Yarmouth in 1841, the son of Deacon Samuel and Polly (Hamblin) Thacher. He grew up “down street” in his father’s home on the north side of Old King’s Highway at what is now 496 Route 6A.



Though Samuel’s father was a blacksmith, young Samuel, like many other Cape Cod boys, went to sea and by 14 he was a chief officer under his older brother Capt. Edwin Thacher. His first command was the ship *Garibaldi*, then *Valley Forge* and the *Carrolton*. Like all mariners he saw his share of troubles, with a piece in the *Yarmouth Register* in May of 1871 noting “Samuel Thacher 3d has met again with misfortune, having been wrecked off Rio Janeiro a short time since. He is expected home soon.”

Samuel married Betsey Ann Kelley-Hamblin in October 1865. They had four children: George, Isaac, Bessie and Mary. Betsey occasionally accompanied her husband on some of his trips.

Samuel sailed all over the world - England, India, China, taking cargo from one place to the next. It wasn’t an easy life, with leaking ships, owners who didn’t want to pay for repairs, and trying to ensure he made money on the cargo, and he could be gone for several years at a time. His son Isaac was allowed to go on one trip to Puerto Rico and Germany along with his mother, and recalled the sailors trying their best to score points with the captain by buying Isaac treats. When his mother got seasick Samuel would tell her to get in her hammock to help with the motion sickness. Samuel sometimes left a ship in places like San Francisco or Canada and came home “overland.” He must have seen some interesting things.

His final command was the ship *John Twohy* and he sailed her up into the late 1890s when declining health forced his retirement. He remained at his beautiful home at what is now 485 Route 6A, Yarmouth Port. He died of cancer at his son’s home in Everett, MA and was brought back to Yarmouth for his burial in Ancient Cemetery.



A painting of the ship John Twohy.