



Samuel Merchant

(1812-1860)



Samuel and Sally "Mam" (Davis) Merchant

Samuel Merchant

On December 29, 1812, Samuel Merchant, the sixth child of Epes and Sally (Thomas) Merchant was born. As were many in his family, Samuel was a fisherman by trade and he raised a large family in Gloucester after his marriage to Sally Davis on June 8, 1834. Sally, also a Gloucester native, was born on August 17, 1812 to Samuel and Sally (Day) Davis.

A fisherman all his life, Samuel rose to be master of several vessels. He was skipper on the Richmond (82 tons), the Clinton (50 tons), the Clarion (72 tons -- the old tonage) as well as other vessels. As a fisherman he went after codfish and mackerel while sailing for his father's firm Epes Merchant & Son until about 1847. At about that time he and two of his brothers -- Gorham and Addison -- chose to continue in the fishing business together until their respective deaths. During part of this later time, his son William T. and son-in-law James L. Shute joined him in the operations of the fishing business.

During the time that Samuel worked in the fishing trade he also worked with Moses Lufkin (probably the first in the business) in the smoked halibut business. The smoke house was an old hen house on Eastern Ave. on the Thomas estate. The Lufkin business was located on Friends Island which eventually became known as Five Pound Island. It was in this business that Samuel made his money, six to eight thousand dollars. Perhaps this is why Shute & Merchant were one of the first fish businesses to add a large smoke house facility to their firm.

At the time of his father's death, Samuel also inherited the Land at the Head of the Harbor which eventually became the location for Shute & Merchant. In a news article dated October 23, 1839, it notes that Samuel was chosen on the town Whig Committee. He died on January 9, 1860 at the age of 47 years, 11 days.

For a period of time Samuel and Sally lived on Eastern Ave, in what had previously been the Hodkins home. He later purchased the estate that had been built by Benjamin Parsons, and the house was about 100 years old when his widow Sally was still residing there.

SMART OLD LADY
MRS. SALLY MERCHANT, 89 YEARS OLD, DOES HER OWN HOUSEWORK

Mrs. Sally Merchant, widow of the late Samuel Merchant, who was 89 years old on Aug. 19, is still keeping house for herself and doing her own housework herself. She has lived in the same house that she now lives in for more than 65 years. She is the mother of seven children, all of whom have passed away except one, who is the wife of James L. Shute, who would be glad to give her a home with him if she would live with them.

She is decesended from two of Gloucester's oldest families, her mother being the only daughter of Demic, son of David Day and her father Samuel Davis comes from the first Samuel born in 1703 (?) who came to Sandy Bay in 1715 with his father John Davis.

The first Samuel married Deborah, daughter of Thomas Harris, in 1725, and had a sone born in 1727, who was the second Samuel. He married Anna Baker Plummer, October 8, 1748, and had a sone born in 1750, the third Samuel. The latter married Margaret Grover (daughter of Deacon Ebenezer Grover) May 4, 1778, and a son was born to them in 1782, being the fourth Samuel who was the father of the widow, Sally Merchant. This fourth Samuel, had a son Samuel born April 19, 1807, who died in Bristol Maine, Nov. 9, 1884, leavinf another Samuel, born June 15, 1845, he being the sixth Samuel in a direct line from John Davis, who came from Ipswich to Sandy Bay in 1715.

newspaper article -- 1901

The children of Samuel and Sally (Davis) Merchant

| | | | |
|----------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| Samuel | 1834 - 1877 | Epes | 1842 - 1869 |
| Sarah Abigail | 1836 - 1927 | Ada B. | 1845 - 1853 |
| Epes | 1837 - 1840 | Lewis Holmes | 1849 - 1891 |
| William Thomas | 1840- 1896 | Effie | 1853/4 - 1854 |

additional information about their children

Samuel married Susannah Maria Snow, and they had the following children: Susie, Samuel L., Epes William and Ralph Stillman

Sarah "Abby" Abigail married James L. Shute, and they had the following children: James Lovell, Jr., Samuel Merchant, William Thomas, Abby Merchant, Frances Grover, Sally Merchant, Ada Marian, Edward Grove and Robert "Roy" Thomas

William Thomas married Eliza Wonson, and they had the following children: Effie Howard, Willie Frank, Nellie Wonson, Frederic "Fred" Wonson, Cora Fitch, William Thomas, Grace Center, Hattie Preston and Annie Bray

Epes had not married before his death at age 27

Lewis Holmes married Hannah V. P. Center, they had the following children: Helen B. and Abby Shute