

Gerrish Shipyard



Looking down Water Street at the foot of Bromfield Street.
Courtesy of the Newburyport Public Library Archival Center.

William Gerrish (1730-1801), a descendent of the Newbury first settler William Gerrish, was one of many who carried on the business of shipbuilding below Salem Street in the south end.

George J. L. Colby writes in History of Essex County, 1878: "William Gerrish was the most wealthy of these and had his yard where the railroad now crosses Water Street. He owned the whole square bounded by Bromfield, Water, and Purchase Streets, and Somerby's Lane; and from Somerby's Lane around to Purchase Street all the houses, forty years ago were occupied by his descendants."

Mr. Gerrish married Mary Brown (1732-1803) in 1751 and they had twelve children.

He lived at present-day 178 Water Street known as the William Gerrish House today just east of his shipyard. The house faces Joppa Flats and is located on the north side of Water Street.



References:

178 Water Street, Vision Appraisal, City of Newburyport, 2026.

Clipper Heritage Trail, www.clipperheritagetrail.com

Custom House Maritime Museum

www.customhousemaritimemuseum.org

Historical Society of Old Newbury and Cushing Museum

www.newburyhist.org

Newburyport Public Library Archival Center

www.newburyportpl.org

Oak Hill Cemetery, Newburyport, Massachusetts

www.oakhillcemeterynewburyport.com

William Gerrish (1730-1801), Find a Grave, www.findagrave.com