

Yarmouth's Proposed New Historic Districts: Gilman Road and Pleasant Street 8/13/24

Gilman Road Historic District

Historic Overview, Location, and Period of Significance



Reverend Ammi R. Cutter House and Pioneer Burial Grounds, c.1980s, Courtesy Yarmouth Historical Society

The third, and the earliest permanent, European settlement in Yarmouth began about 1715. It was centered on modern-day Gilman Road, near the intersection with Lafayette Street/Route 88, adjacent to the northern end of York Hill. This settlement had houses; a church, known as the Meeting House Under the Ledge, built 1729-39 and expanded in 1762; ¹ a school; a tavern; and a cemetery. Its location on the lower land below an area of hills and ravines led to the name "Under the Ledge." Little remains of this settlement beyond the Pioneer Burial Grounds and Old Ledge Cemetery, the Reverend Ammi R. Cutter House of 1730 at 60 Gilman Road, and what remains of Larrabee's Landing. This early village ceased to grow in the late 18th and early 19th centuries as people moved inland and settled near the intersection of Main and Bridge Streets. The congregation built a new church on Main Street in the Lower Village in 1818 and the Meeting House Under the Ledge was torn down in 1833. In 1838, a group of residents salvaged its original flaming arrow weathervane and mounted it on the hill above the site where the meeting house once stood. Over the years it was forgotten until 1968, when it was rediscovered and given to the Yarmouth Historical Society, where it is on display.²

In 1727, the Yarmouth peninsula and shore around Broad Cove were divided into 100 ten-acre parcels. Parcels were laid out to encourage a compact settlement, and to acknowledge the holdings of the 36 settlers then

¹ Rowe p. 120, 129.

² www.yarmouthmehistory.org; viewed 5-26-2024.

residing in the area. The boundaries in this Gilman Road District remain largely intact. The other 64 lots were allocated by a drawing, with each lotholder being entitled to another 40-acre tract in what is now mainland Yarmouth and North Yarmouth.

Two early cemeteries survive that were located near the site of the Meeting House Under the Ledge. The Pioneer Burial Grounds, established in 1731, is the earliest cemetery in Yarmouth, found across the street from the Reverend Ammi Cutter House at 60 Gilman Road.³ The Old Ledge Cemetery, established about 1770 at the intersection of Lafayette Street and Gilman Road, includes headstones from the 18th century into the 20th century.

While religious and industrial activities became centered in the Upper and Lower Villages in the early 19th century, the Gilman Road area remained agricultural, and buildings were built and/or expanded and lands divided or consolidated to support farming and related activities. Some residents of the area were ship captains or augmented their incomes as mariners or by working in the shipyards. Later on, property owners such as the Fels family, operated businesses in Portland or in town, or worked outside of agriculture. Their access to markets improved with Route One, opening in 1914 and the trolley line operating from 1898-1933. By the mid-20th century, owners of the farmsteads began to sell off farmland for suburban development.⁴

The Gilman Road Historic District centers on the triangular parcel of land bounded by Gilman Road, Princes Point Road, and Lafayette Street. It continues east on Gilman Road to include Larrabee's Landing, and south on Lafayette Street to include two farmsteads on the west side of the street. The period of significance is from the founding of the third European settlement of 1715 through 1940, when shipbuilding and related maritime industries had ceased, transportation by trolley and automobile were available, and farming and agriculture shifted toward suburban development.

Architectural Character

Today the Gilman Road Historic District retains much of its rural and agricultural character, with houses, barns and structures associated with farming set among rolling coastal land and fields. While there have been changes made to accommodate the automobile and to reflect contemporary living, many of the remaining historic properties still project a sense of their early origins, architectural styles, and purposes. Buildings are set relatively far apart, with open land and forest in between. The old burial grounds further contribute to the historic landscape, with burial markers that reflect the traditions of the 18th century through the early 20th century.



Rev. Ammi Cutter House, 60 Gilman Road, photo H Bassett

Gilman Road Triangle with Lafayette Street and Princes Point Road

While the heart of the early village, the Meeting House Under the Ledge is gone, it was built and then expanded as the focal point for life in the early settlement. Today, a sense of its importance is conveyed by the house at 60 Gilman Road, built nearby in

³ *Bronze plaque at the site.*

⁴ *Julie Larry, research on properties on Gilman and Larrabee's Landing, 2024.*

about 1730 for the Reverend Ammi Cutter, its first pastor. The Meeting House itself was about 150 yards to its west.⁵ The Cutter House is a symmetrical, hip-roofed Georgian style building with clapboard siding and six over six window sash. It retains its well-preserved attached barn, which likely dates from the mid-19th century, along with several outbuildings.



Pioneer Burial Grounds, photos H Bassett



Pioneer Burial Grounds with 60 Gilman

Across the street, and down sloping land is the Pioneer Burial Grounds of 1731, the oldest in Yarmouth. Two mid- to late-19th century houses stand nearby. The center-hall Greek Revival house built by John Young at 24 Gilman retains its original door surround, and the Italianate Joseph Young house of 1870 at 44 Gilman, with its cornice brackets and arch-topped windows in the gable end, features a well-preserved attached barn.



John Young House, 24 Gilman Road



Joseph Young House, 44 Gilman Road

⁵ *Wikipedia, viewed 5-27-24.*



Old Ledge Cemetery, Gilman Road and Lafayette Street, photo H Bassett

The Old Ledge Cemetery, established around 1770, is at the junction of Gilman Road with Lafayette Street. It slopes down toward the head of Broad Cove and includes headstones from the 18th into the early 20th century. Nearby, at 463 Lafayette, is the large-scale house of the Reverend Tristram Gilman, fourth pastor at the Meeting House Under the Ledge. Originally built c. 1771, it retains little of its original appearance, having been heavily altered over the years, including by noted Maine architect John Calvin Stevens c. 1905. The house at 509 Lafayette, a center-chimney Greek Revival cape and its well-preserved barn, retain much of their original character.

At 10 Princes Point Road, on the easterly side of the junction of Princes Point Road with Lafayette Street, is the drastically altered Wescustugo Inn, with its formerly welcoming front porch now enclosed with a monolithic brick facade. The Inn thrived during the latter days of the trolley with expanding automotive tourism, and as a local watering hole, and is now a commercial security business establishment.



Rev. Tristram Gilman House, 463 Lafayette Street



509 Lafayette Street

Three houses on Princes Point Road represent later architectural styles. Number 26 is an early 20th century bungalow, with a separate single story clapboard structure at the side that was used recently for commercial purposes. It has been given a recent extension to the rear and a new side porch all in a very compatible manner, serving as a good example of sound renovation practice. Also along this stretch of Princes Point Road is Number 68, the old Princes Point Schoolhouse, built in 1899, converted into a residence in 1940 with a loss of its historic features, but still retaining its distinctive schoolhouse proportions.

At 119 Princes Point Road (at the southwesterly side of the intersection of Gilman Road and Princes Point Road), the George A. Allen house is a simple Italianate one-and-a-half story clapboard building that connects with a two-story ell and attached barn.



26 Princes Point Road



George A. Allen House, 119 Princes Point Road



68 Princes Point Road

Outer Gilman Road



Samuel Stubbs House, 120 Gilman Road

To the east along Gilman, at 120 Gilman, is the Samuel Stubbs house, built in 1773 with its mid-19th century barn. In 1844, Captain Joseph Drinkwater built his two-story center-hall Greek Revival style house and attached English style barn, at 146 Gilman, which is similar in form to 161 Gilman.

Further out Gilman Road at 210 is the two and a half story brick house of Captain Rueben Prince, built c. 1817. In 1906, it was purchased by Josephine and Arthur Fels and updated by John Calvin Stevens soon after. Its remodeling in the Colonial Revival style, enhances its symmetrical design with a dramatic gable-roofed, arched entrance, decorative muntin patterns in the second floor window

above the entrance, and dormers on the third floor. There is an attached ell, a barn, and several ancillary structures. The Town-owned Fels-Grove Farm Preserve of 55 acres, with 17 acres on the north side of Gilman Road (together with the 9 acres of the Prince House holding, both draining to the Royal River) and 38 acres on the south side, draining to Broad Cove, are all under conservation easement and constitute former agricultural lands of the Prince House property.



Captain Joseph Drinkwater House, 146 Gilman Road



161 Gilman Road



The Captain Rueben Prince House at 210 Gilman Road was remodeled by architect John Calvin Stevens after Josephine and Arthur Fels bought it in 1906. Photos this page and the following page: J Larry.

Located just beyond the Conservation area on the right (south) side of Gilman Road, at number 299, the Allen Drinkwater house is an early center chimney house, likely built in the late 1700s with modern additions. Across the street, Larrabee's Landing Road veers off to the left in a loop with the two-story Greek Revival Edward and Eliza Doyle house of 1857 on the corner at 310 Gilman Road.



Allen Drinkwater House and Barn, 299 Gilman Road.



Edward & Eliza Doyle House, 310 Gilman

A short distance down Larrabee's Landing Road, Bucknam Farm Road on the left leads to a cul-de-sac subdivision. Just beyond the first house on the right a split rail fence demarcates a path leading to a bluff overlooking the historical Landing site and affording a good outlook down the Royal River. The Landing was named after Stephen Larrabee, one of the first 17th century settlers of Yarmouth who was killed in 1676 during an encounter with the Indigenous population on Jewell Island in Casco Bay. At the center of the loop at 38 Larrabee's Landing is Captain William Bucknam's Greek Revival cape of 1835, with several more recent additions and its barn, and his brother Charles' two-story, Greek Revival house of 1840 is at number 68. ⁶



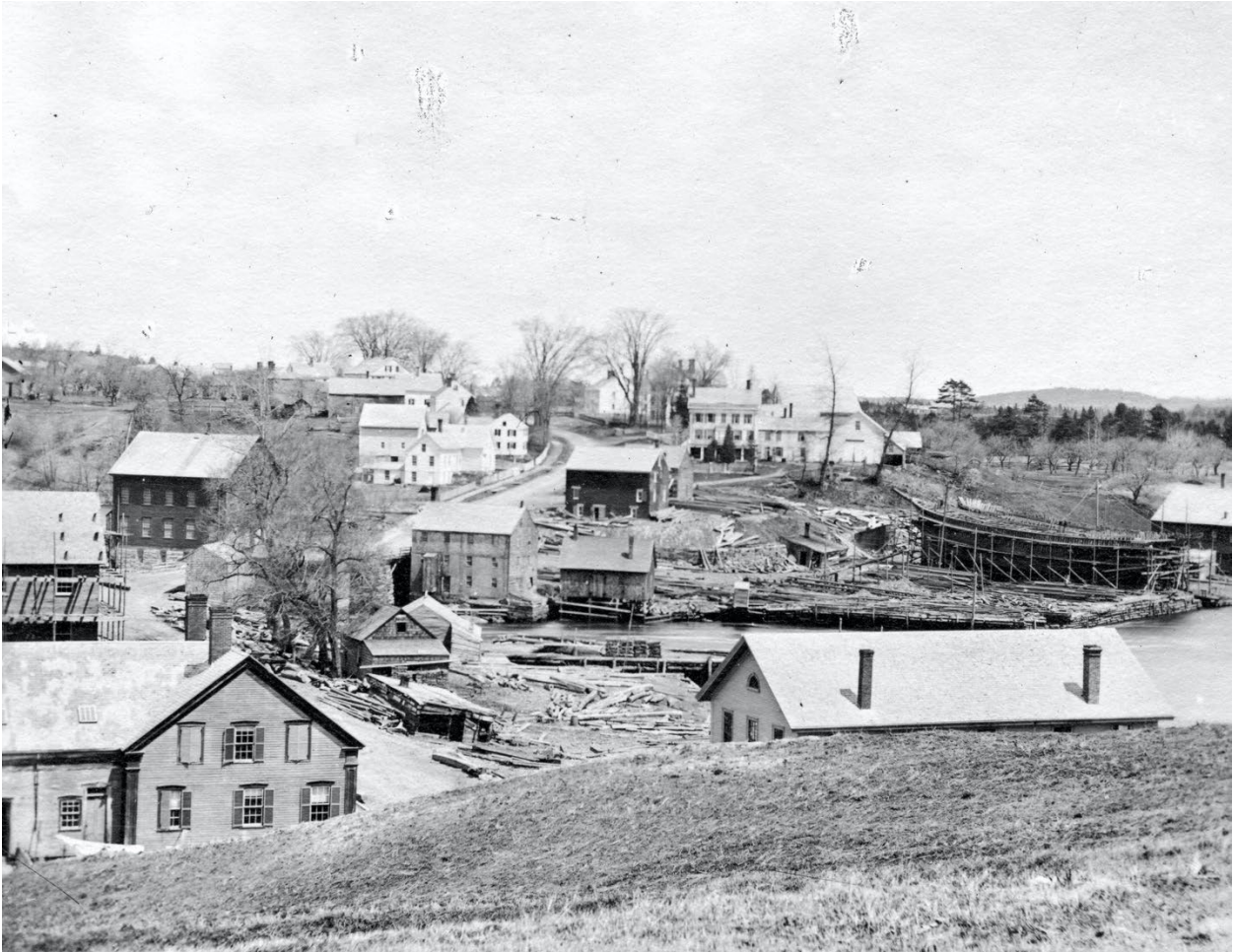
Larrabee's Landing Path off of Bucknam Farm Road



Captain William Bucknam House, 38 Larrabee's Landing Road (above right); Charles Bucknam House, 68 Larrabee's Landing Road (above left)

⁶ Julie Larry, *research on properties on Gilman and Larrabee's Landing*, 2024.

Pleasant Street Historic District



A vessel under construction at a working shipyard at right, East Main Street in the distance. Courtesy of Yarmouth Historical Society.

Historic Overview, Location, and Period of Significance

The houses along Pleasant Street were largely built in the mid-19th century as homes for the owners and workers at the shipyards and related businesses along the Royal River waterfront. Shipbuilding became a major industry in Yarmouth during the early 19th century, when the wharves were extended and the town raised funds to dredge the harbor and build a channel and breakwater, reaching its high point between 1850-75. Family names such as Loring, Seabury, Stubbs, Gooding, Walker, Blanchard and others are associated with these buildings and local businesses that were located just northeast of the district. Ship captains, ship builders and master carpenters, ironworkers, shipsmiths, riggers, sailmakers, caulkers, and block-makers thrived in Yarmouth during this era.⁷

While the majority of the buildings along Pleasant Street date from the shipbuilding period, there are several interesting exceptions. An original stone mile marker placed in 1761 along the Old King's Highway from Boston to Machias survives embedded in the retaining wall in front of 155 Pleasant Street.⁸ Until around 1800, the

⁷ Rowe, pp. 212-218)

⁸ inscription on plaque by the milestone.

road at Gooding's End continued down the hill, across Lafayette Street to Gilman Road.⁹ Today, in a field where Gooding's End terminates, a small cottage stands that was once part of the Royal River Cabins, a roadside haven from the 1930s to 1951. In the 1890s, Charles Gooding, a noted local photographer, developed what he hoped would be a major tourist attraction on Pleasant Street which included a viewing tower and a historical park. Only the footings from the tower remain.¹⁰

From 1898-1933, the Portland and Yarmouth Electric Railroad ran trolley services to Portland on a line that followed Pleasant Street into the Village.¹¹ There was a shed at Lafayette Street just beyond the northwestern edge of Pleasant Street, where the line connected to Brunswick, and a car barn and battery house at Brickyard Hollow.¹²

The two cemeteries at the foot of Smith Street overlook the harbor. In 1869, the Riverside Cemetery was established along the Royal River as a Civil War Memorial.¹³ In 1916, the Catholic Church bought land adjacent to Riverside to create Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery, which was laid out by landscape architect Carl Rust Parker.¹⁴



Mile marker of 1761 by 155 Pleasant Street, photo H Bassett



Trolley traveling on Pleasant Street, Courtesy of Yarmouth Historical Society

⁹ Rowe, p. xvii.

¹⁰ Aldredge, p. 13.

¹¹ Aldredge, p. 98.

¹² Hall, p. 90-91; Rowe p. 370.

¹³ Rowe, p. 362.

¹⁴ Rowe p. 294.

The district includes Pleasant Street, Gooding's End and Smith Street, including the area across Lafayette Street which encompasses Riverside Cemetery and Holy Cross Cemetery. The Period of Significance for the Pleasant Street Historic District is from 1760 through 1940. The 1761 marker, and the 1780-1800 period when the shift inland from the early settlement on Gilman Road began, mark the early phases. In 1925, the last ship was built in Yarmouth, thus marking the end of the shipbuilding era. Despite the loss of this economic activity, the combination of the presence of the trolley line until 1933, the beginnings of expanded automotive tourism in the area, and further development in the Lower Village, which has a 1940 era of significance terminal date lead us to a logical termination end date for this District of 1940.

Architectural Character

Today, Pleasant Street rises up a steep hill from Lafayette Street. Several large shipyards, including Hutchins & Stubbs, Lyman Walker, and Blanchard Brothers, and related businesses, used to be near its base. While those are gone today, an array of early to mid-19th century residences along Pleasant Street, many in the Greek Revival style, convey the aspirations and economic success of the business owners, specialized tradespeople, mariners, and workers who lived there. Scattered among these dwellings are several federal style and vernacular houses and farmsteads representing an earlier phase of the Town's evolution. Houses are spaced apart, and many include their original barns and outbuildings.



Giles Loring House, 35 Pleasant Street

Near the bottom of the hill, the Greek Revival Giles Loring house at 35 Pleasant Street retains its bold cornice and pilasters as well as its attached barn. Loring was one of Yarmouth's most important shipbuilders.

Further up the hill, at 51 Pleasant Street is a prominent brick house with Federal details significant for its strong connections to Yarmouth's seafaring and shipbuilding past: Enos Chandler, mariner; Lyman Walker, master shipwright; and shipbuilder Giles Loring all owned the house.



Lyman Walker House, 51 Pleasant Street, then and now. Historic image courtesy of Yarmouth Historical Society.

Across the street, 50 Pleasant Street was built by Daniel M. Stubbs, ca. 1859 and purchased by photographer Charles G. Gooding in 1864. The side-hall Greek Revival house has many original details including clapboard siding, pilasters, a cornice, original windows and an attached barn. Several other houses along this side of the street were owned by members of the Gooding family, including numbers 68, 78, and 86.



Above left, Daniel M. Stubbs House, 50 Pleasant Street. Gooding family members owned 68 Pleasant above right, 78 Pleasant lower left, and 86 Pleasant lower right.



The land starts to flatten out at the crest of the hill. Henry Hutchins, a yeoman and later a shipbuilder with Hutchins and Stubbs, owned the center hall Greek Revival house 85 Pleasant Street. It retains its original cornice, pilasters, door surround, and windows. Also in the Greek Revival style, the house at 97 Pleasant Street features a bold door surround, entablatures at the windows, pilasters, and cornice. This house offers an excellent example of a recently added rear ell, in keeping with the details of the main house.



Henry Hutchins House, 85 Pleasant Street



97 Pleasant Street

The house at 112 Pleasant Street at the intersection of Pleasant Street and Smith Street is one of the earliest in Yarmouth. The one and a half story clapboard house with a saltbox roof and English plan barn have evolved over time but retain much of their historic integrity. Just past Smith Street, the mid to late 19th century vernacular house at 122 Pleasant has decorative carved window surrounds on the second floor windows.



112 Pleasant Street, one of the earliest houses in Yarmouth, and its barn



122 Pleasant Street

Continuing on the other side of Pleasant Street, there are two well-preserved Greek Revival capes. The dwelling at 125 Pleasant Street has high-style details including an entry surround with a tablet and sidelights and retains original clapboard siding, bold pilasters and cornices, and an attached barn. Next door at 135 Pleasant Street, the house built for Penelope Seabury, whose family had a shipbuilding business, retains its distinctive pilasters and door surround.



125 Pleasant Street

Penelope Seabury House, 135 Pleasant Street

Located just before Pleasant Street turns down the hill, Gooding’s End features two mid-19th century houses with modern alterations that are associated with the prominent family of shipbuilders. In addition, a small cabin at the end of the street is one of the original Royal River cabins, moved to the site and said to have been where Eleanor Roosevelt once stayed in the 1940s.¹⁵

At this point Pleasant Street turns left and down the hill to rejoin Lafayette Street at the junction with the beginning of Princes Point Road. There remain several simple and well-maintained 19th and early 20th century dwellings heading down to Lafayette Street.

Smith Street



22 Smith Street

From the top of Pleasant Street, Smith Street heads down the hill with a large ravine at the left. Above the ravine, number 22 is a simple two-story side hall dwelling with an attached barn, while two smaller side-hall Greek Revival houses at numbers 28 and 44 are sited on lots further down the hill. Across the street, at 19 Smith, is a house with attractive Italianate pilasters, dentils, brackets and roof hoods and its attached barn. Further down, just before Smith Street intersects with Lafayette Street at number 27, is a wood-frame residence from around the turn of the 20th century, a well-preserved, shingled American four-square and its attached garage with a jerkin-head roof.

¹⁵ See *Yarmouth Historic Context Statement, Sept. 3, 2020, p. 6.*



19 Smith Street



28 Smith Street

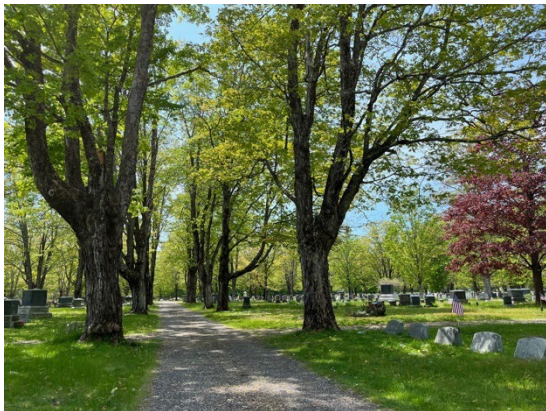


44 Smith Street



27 Smith Street

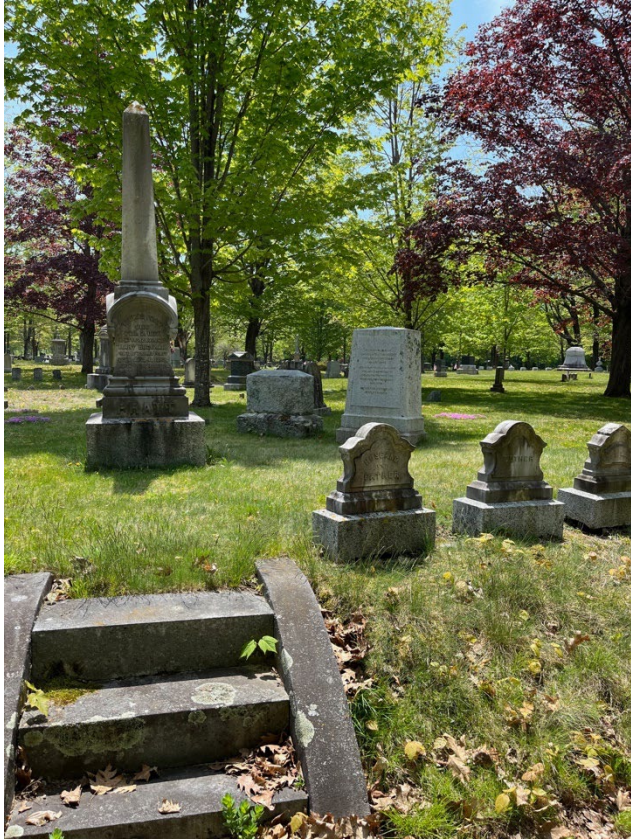
Riverside and Holy Cross Cemeteries



Riverside Cemetery

Smith Street crosses over Lafayette Street, leading to Riverside and Holy Cross Cemeteries, both of which reflect the attractive 19th century aesthetic of the tranquil and pastoral garden and well-treed cemetery. Riverside Cemetery, established in 1869 likely as a Civil War Memorial, begins at the end of Smith Street and is sited on 12 acres of largely flat ground on a bluff above the harbor. The main entrance is flanked by two gray stone pillars. Leading from Smith Street, there are three unpaved lanes on the left, each entered through stone pillars, all leading to a road that loops across the water side of the site. Each major route is flanked by mature maple trees, providing a very colorful autumnal viewscape, highly visible from Lafayette Street. The central of these side roads has a circle at the end and there is an arrangement of additional paths and roads that traverse the grave sites. On the opposite side of the main entry road, a simpler set of roads mirrors the design of the waterside burial ground, with its three side routes and

rear connecting loop. Graves in the cemetery date back as early as the 1700s and burials continue to this day, represented by a variety of headstones, monuments, and family plots. Among the notable historic burials in the cemetery are shipbuilders Henry Hutchins (1819-1889) and Lyman Walker (1836-1920), whose houses still exist on Pleasant Street.¹⁶ From 2019-21 two new cremation gardens and paths, a fountain and columbarium were added to the site, reflecting contemporary burial practices.¹⁷



Riverside Cemetery

The main entry road continues through Riverside until a stone wall, beyond which lies Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery established in 1916. The Catholic Church purchased the land which in the 1700s had been the Jacob Mitchell garrison, and later owned by the Whitcomb family.¹⁸ Originally laid out by landscape architect Carl Rust Parker, the cemetery has two loop roads on flat ground planted with a variety of trees.¹⁹ A new cremation garden was added in 2012 and land has recently been cleared to add to available burial sites.²⁰



Holy Cross Cemetery, All cemetery photos: H Bassett

¹⁶ Wikipedia, *Riverside Cemetery Yarmouth*, viewed May 30, 2024.

¹⁷ Northern Forecaster, July 27, 2021, "Cremation Garden Grows at Yarmouth's Riverside Cemetery."

¹⁸ Aldredge, p. 34.

¹⁹ Rowe, p. 294.

²⁰ Holy Cross Cemetery website, www.pothe.org/holy-cross-cemetery, viewed 5/30/2024.