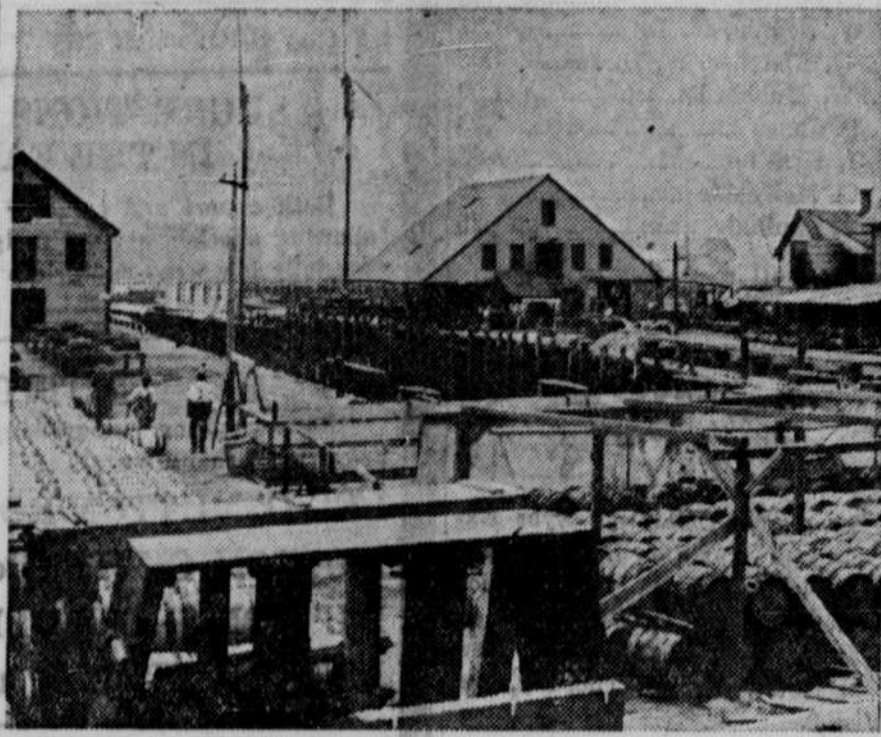


The Fishing Industry of New England, Founded by Basques in 1500, Is Oldest And One of Most Colorful in U. S. Today

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

THEY say that in this machine age there is little romance and adventure in modern business. Yet, amid many of the nation's great industries which have lost much of their "color" through mechanization, there is one that is still largely hand-operated and in which the individuality of those who follow that trade remains intact. That is the great New England fishing industry.



A typical scene on the piers at Gloucester, Mass., at the turn of the century showing mackerel ready for shipment.

It is probably the oldest continuously operated industry in the United States today for it goes back nearly 450 years to that summer day about the year 1500 when a small group of Basque fishermen set out from a little coastal town in France in their small fishing boat. They had little luck on their usual fishing grounds and as the days went by ventured farther and farther away from waters they knew. However, even in new waters lines and nets were still drawn up empty. This was their livelihood and it was necessary that they find a fishing ground which would yield them a full boatload before they returned home.

They continued their search for more lucrative fishing waters and after many weeks they came to a strange coast where trees were green and flowers were blooming. They set their nets and cast their lines and in an almost unbelievably short time the boat was filled. They set sail for home and upon their arrival regaled their fellow fishermen with stories of their astounding luck in waters "on the other side of the sea."

Thus was born an industry which was to play its important role in the colonization and development of the New World and to provide the archives of New England with many historic sea sagas.

As an indication of the potential wealth of the early New England fishing industry, Gosnold, first navigator on the coast, caught so many cod that one voyage of six months yielded him 2,100 pounds in money. Whereupon he remarked, "What sport doth yield a more pleasing content and less hurt or charge than angling with a hook crossing the sweet air from isle to isle, over the silent sterse of a calm sea."

Doughty Capt. John Smith of Virginia paid tribute to the industry with these words, "Let not the meanness of the word 'fish' distaste you, for it will afford as good food as the wines of Guiana and Potassie with less hazard and charge and more certainty and facility."

By 1504 the Basques were fishing regularly along the New England coast. As word spread among other fishermen of the Old World of this fabulous fishing ground, the adventurous Basques were joined by men of other nations. When the explorer Verrazano landed south of the Piscataqua river near Boston he found fisheries carried on by French, Basques and Portuguese.

Historic records of Massachusetts show that by 1615 there were 400 French and Portuguese and 200 English sails along the coast of New England. In 1623 a fishing vessel attempting to land at a settlement on the Maine coast was unable to complete the landing and "the master thought it good to pass into Massachusetts Bay." He left 14 men and returned to his home port in Spain. Next year the same vessel returned and left 32 men. There was established the village of Gloucester where much of the early history of the Massachusetts fishing industry was to be written.

By 1639 fish had become a medium of exchange and were being used as money. It was also due to fishing that all the arts of navigation flourished. In this same year the General Court of Massachusetts recognized the contributions its fishermen were making to the development of the New world by relieving them of military duty.

In 1643 the citizens of the then small village of Boston held a celebration and the whole citizenship turned out to pay honor to the launching of the "Trial," first vessel to be built in that city. Designed to carry on trade between the Old and New worlds, the "Trial" was forerunner of a long line of clipper ships which made colorful history for another century or so. Loaded with a cargo of salted and smoked fish, the "Trial" set sail for Balboa and Malaga. On her return trip she brought wine, fruit, oil, iron, and wool.

At the beginning of the Eighteenth century New England was beginning its trade with the West

Indies. Clipper ships took cargoes of fish to the Indies and there exchanged them for sugar, molasses or rum. These products in turn were taken to Africa and exchanged for slaves which were sold to the Southern colonies or exchanged for tobacco.

Fish for Appausement.

Meanwhile, Massachusetts was branching out in other directions. The first state in the colonies to



Miss Reba Onigman has the distinction of being the only woman fish commission merchant in the world. She operates at the Boston Fish pier.

have a mint, it coined what became known as the "pine tree" shilling pieces in 1652. Whereupon Charles II of England became displeased because he was not given a share of the profits. Massachusetts promptly sent appeasement in the form of "ten barrels of cranberries, two hogsheads of sump and 3,000 codfish."

At the beginning of the Eighteenth century cod fishing was in a prosperous condition. The annual production was about 330,000 quintals and the value of the fish exported was about \$700,000, there being 400 fishing vessels of about 50 tons each in Massachusetts alone. By 1731 more than 7,000 men were employed in the New England fisheries. A report of the Massachusetts fisheries made in 1837 shows what strides the industry was making. The total value of the cod and mackerel caught that year amounted to \$3,208,866 and the number of vessels engaged in fishing was 12,290, while the number of men employed had risen to 16,722.

Today, the New England fishing industry has reached such proportions that the annual catches amount to 670,000,000 pounds in round figures with a value of \$20,000,000. Products manufactured from the catch amount to an additional \$24,000,000. Center of this great activity is Boston where the "Stock Exchange" of the New England industry has headquarters and where the great fish plants pack, ice and ship millions of fresh fish annually.

Activity at the Boston fish pier gets under way officially at seven o'clock in the morning when the auction opens. In a huge unadorned room with its ceiling running up the four stories of the building, the auctioneers stand on a raised platform in the center. Around the platform cluster the buyers and it is they who decide the fortunes of the "farmers of the sea." For, the prices they bid for the catch determine the earnings of the men manning the fishing boats, who operate on shares.

Heroes of the Pier.

Many of these men are direct descendants of the Basque, Portuguese and Spanish sailors who first made their way to the "other side of the sea" in the Sixteenth century. Many still live in the same sturdy houses of wood and stone built by their earlier ancestors. There is keen rivalry among them for fishing honors of the year. The crew of the boat that chucks up the biggest catch become the glamour boys of the

Boston fishing world and are accorded the same admiration and popular homage as a big league baseball star or a college football hero.

They live well, these men who take the ever-present dangers of the sea in their daily stride, and they live with the carefree gaiety of those to whom physical hazards are all in the day's work. Steady enough, they eat little fish. Steak is a favorite meat, with plenty of vegetables and fruits, and woe to the cook whose pies emerge from the oven with other than a crisp flaky crust.

When auction of the catches has been concluded the work of unloading the boats begins. Each boat on its trip out takes on a load of shaved ice in which to pack the fish as soon as caught. This method brings the catch into port as fresh as it came from the nets. Unloaded in huge baskets and transferred to carts, the fish are rushed into big packing and distribution plants. Here they are made ready for millions who, until modern methods of mass merchandising took fresh fish 1,500 miles inland, had little opportunity to enjoy seafood except in a smoked, salted or canned state. This method of distribution has also removed fish from the status of a "Friday only" food item and now many families far away from the sea-coast enjoy fresh fish several times a week.

Meet Blue-Eyed Reba.

Exploring the activities on the fish pier you may be surprised to find a slender, blue-eyed woman in the thick of the auction or inspecting a basket load of fish swinging onto the pier from a boat, for in such an atmosphere one does not ordinarily expect to find a woman. She is Reba Onigman, who is in her eighth year as the only woman fish commission merchant in the world. Miss Onigman will tell you that she is "in a business that stinks." However, she will add in the next breath that "there's romance in the fish business," and she would not "give it up for the world."

Miss Onigman's daily schedule might dismay a good many less hardy women. She is up at five-thirty o'clock and down on the pier by six. From then on she is "just one of the men." She sells her fish at the auction, inspects the catches that come in on consignment for her and operates in a quietly business-like fashion that has won her the respect of the weather-beaten men with whom she deals. Winter finds her clad in high rubber boots and a Sou'wester. In summer she looks as dainty and fresh as though she were just starting off for some purely social feminine activity. Her blouse is crisply fresh and more likely than not a blue bow is tucked away in curly black hair lightly frosted with premature gray.

Another colorful personality whom you may meet in a morning's round of the fish pier is the commission merchant who started off merely peddling a few packages of fish from door to door. Then he persuaded a captain or two to let him handle a day's catch. Today, he is one of the wealthy men of the industry.

Thus, the fish industry goes. Fortunes are frequently made within the space of a few short months. The men who are its keystones—the sturdy simple fishermen who still speak the language of their Portuguese, French and Spanish forefathers—still lead lives filled with the color and adventure which are the heritage of those who "farm the sea." The boats set forth with the early tide and slip back into port at sunset or dawn. The great industry which served as a foundation for this country's earliest trading continues to flourish and to provide the nation with one of its most important sources of food.

IF YOU HAVE AN IDEA—

By R. H. WILKINSON
(Associated Newspapers.)
WNU Service.

THE summer after Charlie Reynolds graduated from college I got him a job as reporter on the Star. I'd been with the Star almost four years, and done pretty well, if I do say so, hence when I told the boss Charlie was my friend and a good man, it got him the position.

Jobs were scarce that year and Charlie was lucky, though he didn't seem to realize it. I felt a sort of responsibility for the kid because our parents were close friends, and I'd made his mother a half promise that I'd keep my eye on him when he came to the city.

Before a month had passed he had me worrying. It appeared that the mania for thinking up ideas and trying to put them into execution that had characterized him as a boy had become more pronounced with maturity. But he was smart and I thought maybe he'd get by if he kept his mouth shut.

"Just keep those grand ideas to yourself," I told him, "and you'll get along all right."

He looked at me sarcastically. "What good are ideas if you keep them to yourself?" he asked. "What if Edison and Fulton and Marconi and all the others had felt that way?"

"You're crazy!" I grinned. "That," said Charlie, "was what they told Fulton." He looked thoughtful and dreamy. I knew that look. It didn't help my worrying any.

"Listen," I said, "if you've gotta tell your ideas to any one, tell 'em to me."

"You?" he said scornfully. "Who are you? I'm going to tell 'em where they'll do some good."

I blushed. "All right," I said, "if you want to make a fool of yourself, go ahead. But when they throw you out on your ear, don't come belly-aching to me."

He snorted and started away, and I ran after him. "Listen," I said, "don't get sore. Ideas are all right, but they're no good unless you're smart. This isn't any time to go telling the boss you've got an idea that'll jack up his profits. You've only been on the Star a month, and there's a mile-long line waiting for your job."

He looked at me a minute, then nodded. "All right," he said, "I'll wait awhile, but ideas aren't any good if you keep them to yourself." The brooding look was still in his eyes and I knew my talk hadn't done much good. It made me feel bad, because Charlie and I had been friends since we were kids. When we were youngsters I was always getting him out of jams in which he had involved himself because of his ideas.

The Star was one of a chain of large papers owned by a man named Weatherbee. Weatherbee had started out with nothing and gone places in the journalistic world, and his success was due chiefly to ruthlessness and lack of feeling as far as his staffs were concerned. If a man wasn't producing, Weatherbee gave him the air without so much as hearing his story. You couldn't feel much love for a man like that.

And so when I heard that the old man was planning to pay the Star a visit some time soon, I began to worry more about Charlie. There'd be a shakeup sure, and more than likely Charlie would be fired. He wasn't producing as he should. He was spending too much time brooding and thinking up ideas.

At any rate, I planned to do all I could for the kid by saying a good word for him to Franklin, our city editor. Franklin thought well of me because I was steady and had never asked for a raise.

My interference might have helped, too, if Charlie, the fool, hadn't chosen the very day of Weatherbee's visit to suggest his idea to Franklin. At the time, Weatherbee was in conference with Michaels, the managing editor, whose office adjoined Franklin's with only a flimsy partition between.

My desk was just outside in the city room, and I knew there wasn't any chance of both Michaels and Weatherbee not overhearing, because Charlie's voice came to me clear and strong.

"Listen, Mr. Franklin," he was saying, "I got an idea that will increase the circulation of this paper. I've been thinking about it for a long time and—"

"Oh, so you've got an idea?" I heard Franklin interrupt sarcastically. "Well, let me tell you something, young man. Ever since you came to work for the Star you've done nothing but think up ideas, and I'm getting sick of it. We're paying you to be a reporter, and nothing else. We've got enough idea-thinker-uppers as it is."

"That's just the trouble," Charlie said angrily. "Your ideas are no good. They're too old. Just like you. You've been here so long you're getting stale. And so's the paper. You're so pigheaded you're not willing to listen to any one else. You're—"

"Get out!" Franklin roared. "Get out and stay out! You're fired! Do you hear? Fired! Telling me how to run a newspaper. Get out!"

There was a pause. Then the connecting door leading into Michael's

office opened, and I knew it was all over. Nothing I could say would help matters any now.

But it wasn't Michael's voice that broke the stillness. It was Old Man Weatherbee's. "Come in here, young man," he said sharply, "what's your name?"

And that's how Charlie got to be managing editor of the Ledger in Fenmore, which is another one of Weatherbee's papers. I didn't understand it at all, and had to ask Charlie for an explanation.

"Well," he grinned, "most of it was due to taking your advice. Remember you told me that ideas weren't any good unless you were smart too? Well, I got thinking about that and figured you were right. That's why I waited for Old Man Weatherbee to arrive, and chose the moment he was in the office next to Franklin's before suggesting my idea. It was tough, waiting, though, and I had to talk in a loud voice, which I disliked doing. But it worked. I knew it would because I knew that that's how Weatherbee had gone places himself—always being willing to listen to other people's ideas. And I knew that's the kind of men he wanted working for him. It was tough on Franklin, but you have to be ruthless these days if you want to get places—like Weatherbee is."

Which didn't mean anything to me. I didn't understand, not even after Charlie explained his idea which was something about a people's forum. Maybe I'm just dumb or unimaginative. Anyway, I don't know as I care, because I've got a new and better job—I'm city editor for Charlie on the Fenmore Ledger.

Two Girls for Bill

By H. LOUIS RAYBOLD
(McClure Syndicate—WNU Service.)

WILLIAM BRONSON, ordinarily known as Bill, had two slightly overzealous aunts. That is to say, they were too concerned with Bill's welfare. Nothing had ever been quite good enough where he was concerned.

And now the most difficult problem to settle was just where there was to be found a girl who was in any way suitable for their nephew to marry.

Now, ordinarily, these two good women got together on anything which concerned the boy of whom they were both equally fond, but at the time this story starts, Aunt Elizabeth was engaged on a little scheme of her own.

After all, there was nothing very dreadful about Aunt Elizabeth's little conspiracy. It had come to her attention that the daughter of an old friend, a Marjorie Marden, was running a tea-room in the next town.

Therefore, without saying anything to anybody, she drove to the tea-room and dropped in casually.

"And we'll expect you to supper next Tuesday," were her last words, as she resolved that Bill should be at home that night to meet her.

Now it is impossible to live all your life with a person and not get wind when there is something in the air. Tuesday morning when Aunt Louise saw that preparations for certain special dishes were under way she figured that her sister was going to ask a favor of Bill and was planning to approach him as from time immemorial it has been customary to approach a man—through his appetite.

It gave Louise an idea, however. Why not kill two birds with one stone? There was that nice young librarian she had been planning to have Bill bring to supper some night and what better night than one on which her sister was getting up a specially attractive menu? She could return a book to the library and make the invitation appear casual enough.

Bill was, as it happened, reclining in the couch hammock on the porch when his Aunt Louise went into the house by a side door. Only when he heard the strained tones of his Aunt Elizabeth did he become aware that something was going on.

"But Louise, I have already invited my old friend Marjorie's daughter to tea. She would make a nice wife for—"

"So that is the idea!" said Aunt Louise coldly. "Well it was with some such idea in mind that I asked the little librarian. I am sure she would be more desirable wife for Bill than any tea-room manager."

It was at this point that Bill woke up to the fact that his future wife was the cause of the whole trouble. "I guess," he said, "this will be as good a time as any to break the news." But first he stole upstairs to the telephone in his little study.

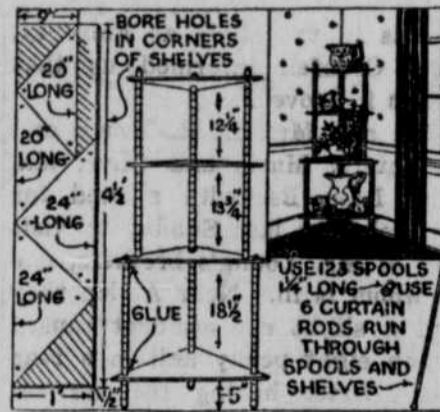
Ten minutes later he came downstairs to find two dignified women setting the table and not speaking to each other.

"I say, Aunt Lou and Aunt Bess," he said gently. "Set another place there will you? I've invited somebody to supper myself. A—friend of mine. Want you to give her the once-over, and if she meets your approval, she's going to be Mrs. Bill."

"William!" the outcry came from them both. "Yes, sir," said Bill. "She's Janet Jean Johnson." "The girl next door!" said Aunt Elizabeth. "The girl next door!" said Aunt Louise. "The girl next door," said Bill. "The darling."

HOW TO SEW

by Ruth Wyeth Spears



The sketch gives all dimensions and instructions. The triangle shelves are cut from one board as shown at the left. The second shelf from the bottom needs six holes each. All the others have three holes each. The design may be varied by using larger spools at the bottom for the first spool above and below each shelf. Use extension curtain rods to fit the holes in the spools. A little glue between spools makes the whatnot rigid. When finished, it may be stained or painted.

A HOME Demonstration Agent wrote me the other day to say that many of the women in her group had made the spool shelves described in SEWING BOOK 3 and the end tables of spools in Book 5. "One member has an interesting collection of pitchers and would like to make a corner whatnot for them," the letter continued. Well, here it is ladies! With the collection of pitchers all in place.

NOTE: These homemaking booklets are a service to our readers and No. 5 contains a description of the other numbers; as well as 32 pages of clever ideas with all directions fully illustrated. They are 10c each to cover cost and mailing. Send order to:

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AROUND THE HOUSE

For a little variety bake your pies in square or rectangular-shaped pans. Often they are easier to cut into equal portions from such a shape.

To keep marshmallows moist, store them in the bread box.

An alarm clock will save much worry in cooking. Set the alarm for the time the cooking is to be completed—or as a reminder for inspection. Undivided attention may then be given to the other household interests.

A siphon of charged water is an excellent fire extinguisher, as the carbonic acid gas in the water helps to stifle the flames. The siphon can be tilted, and the fluid will carry to a considerable height such as the top of a blazing curtain.

A novelty container which will hold several of the handsome vine plants is a clear glass bowl about five inches in diameter. Plants such as the ivy or philodendron will take root in such bowl filled with clear water, and the effect is stunning.

That wholesome, tangy outdoor taste... just heat and eat... delicious cold... healthful... economical... order, today, from your grocer.



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